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THE PRE-MODERN MANUSCRIPT TRADE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES, ca. 1890–1945

Edited by **LAURA CLEAVER, DANIELLE MAGNUSSON, HANNAH MORCOS,** and **ANGÉLINE RAIS**

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACB	Alfred Chester Beatty
ASVe	Archivio di Stato, Venice
BEC	*Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*
BFAC	Burlington Fine Arts Club 1908 exhibition
BL	London, British Library
BM	Bibliothèque municipale
BMLF	Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana
BMQ	*British Museum Quarterly*
BnF	Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France
BNCF	Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale
BNM	Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana
BPL	Boston Public Library
CBL	Dublin, Chester Beatty Library
CBP	Chester Beatty Papers
CBPap	Chester Beatty Papyrus
CGF	Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation
CMA	The Cleveland Museum of Art
CNRS	Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique
EEDS	Early English Drama Society
GFN	Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Rome
ICCD	Istituto Centrale per il Catalogo e la Documentazione
KBR	Brussels, Koninklije Bibliotheek van België
MAD	Paris, Musée des arts décoratifs
MCG	Calouste Gulbenkian Museum
NAF	Nouvelles acquisitions françaises
NAL	Nouvelles acquisitions latines
NYT	*New York Times*
ODNB	*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*
OED	*Oxford English Dictionary*
PML	New York, The Morgan Library & Museum
SBT	Shakespeare Birthplace Trust
STA	London School of Economics, Selection Trust Archive
TLS	*The Times Literary Supplement*
UND	University of Notre Dame

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INTRODUCTION

LAURA CLEAVER

IN 1878 THE London bookdealer Bernard Quaritch (Figure 0.1, top left), together with the printers Charles Wyman and his brother Edward, founded a club for book-lovers called the "Sette of Odd Volumes." The name was inspired by books that appeared on the market separated from their original set, and the club's literature declared that the Sette was rendered complete through its meetings.[1] In a similar vein, the present volume unites disparate pieces of research about rare books, and more specifically about the trade in pre-modern manuscripts between ca. 1890 and 1945. Before the invention of the printing press in the mid-fifteenth century all books were written by hand, and manuscripts continued to be made in large numbers in the sixteenth century. The surviving books provide rich evidence for the circumstances of their creation, and often also for their subsequent history. The aim of this volume is to document the current state of research on the trade in such books in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and to explore how detailed studies of particular topics can be brought into dialogue with one another, if not to produce a complete set, then at least to amount to more than the sum of their parts and spark further discussion.

This book has its origins in a conference held at the School of Advanced Study, University of London, in September 2022. The conference was part of the "Cultural Values and the International Trade in Medieval European Manuscripts, ca. 1900–1945" (CULTIVATE MSS) project, funded by the European Research Council. The project examines the trade in medieval manuscripts in Britain, France, Germany, and the US between ca. 1900 and 1945, to assess the impact of that activity on the formation of library collections and the development of scholarship about the Middle Ages. The conference provided an opportunity for the project's researchers to present some of their findings, and to situate these within the context of current work in the field. Expanding the project's focus, the conference brought together scholars from the UK, Austria, Canada, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Switzerland, and the US. It included contributions from scholars who work in libraries and archives as well as those in universities, showcasing a range of perspectives on collections, manuscripts, archives, and provenance.

The "oddity" of the Sette of Odd Volumes was a recurrent theme in the humorous and satirical publications with which it documented its activities and sometimes commented on the rare book trade. A menu card for a meeting on October 25, 1904, depicted "Ye Ideal Collector." This was a bearded male "Renaissance" figure, surrounded by books,

1 William M. Thompson ed., *Þe Boke of Þe Odd Volumes From 1878 to 1883* (London: Wyman, 1883), 15.

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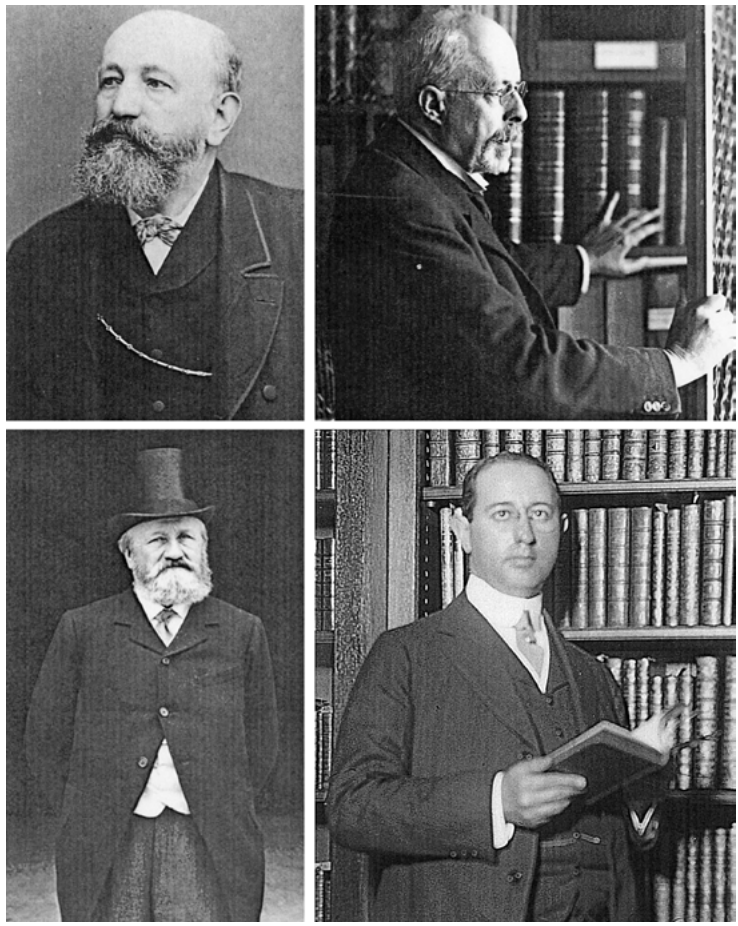


Figure 0.1. Clockwise from top left: photographs of Bernard Quaritch (courtesy of Bernard Quaritch Ltd.); Sydney Cockerell, November 1, 1933 (by Lafayette NPG x48552, courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery); A. S. W. Rosenbach, 1933 (Courtesy of the Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, LC-DIG-ggbain-30661); Henry Yates Thompson, July 1906 (by Benjamin Stone NPG x35220, courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery).

many of which alluded to the interests and nicknames given to members of the Sette (Figure 0.2). The letters A D at the end of the date were arranged to evoke the prints of Albrecht Dürer. While the image played on the idea of a collector as a lone genius, the caption, the variety of the books represented, and the prominent placement of Quaritch's enormous *General Catalogue* in the collector's desk, hinted at the perspective and importance of those involved in the trade in shaping collections. The desk also contained a volume labelled "illuminated manuscripts;" a reminder that in this era manuscripts usually formed part of wider libraries, but that illuminated manuscripts were emerging as a focus of both collecting and scholarly interest.

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A central hypothesis of this volume is that the trade in manuscripts was intertwined with the development of both collections and scholarship. The influence was not simply in one direction. Dealers suggested manuscripts to clients, but they often did so in the light of knowledge about their previous purchases. Similarly, both collectors and dealers paid people with expertise to write about some of the manuscripts they owned, often the ones they thought most important, which typically correlated with high prices. While some descriptions of manuscripts were largely copied from previous catalogues, therefore, as Angéline Rais's contribution (Chapter 6) explores, the trade also facilitated new scholarship. Moreover, scholars could learn from collectors, particularly in Britain where there was no formal training for the study or trade in manuscripts. In that context, Sydney Cockerell (Figure 0.1, top right), one of the most prolific British writers on manuscripts in this period, learned from his time working for the socialist, designer, and collector William Morris.[2] William Roberts, one of the subjects of Nigel Ramsay's essay (Chapter 22), gathered much of his knowledge from his work as a London sale-room correspondent, reporting on auctions for a wide public, while Seymour de Ricci (who bought and sold manuscripts) was able to draw upon his connections in the trade for assistance in compiling his *Census of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the United States and Canada* in the 1930s.[3] In another example of the blurred boundaries between collecting and scholarship, the English collector Henry Yates Thompson (Figure 0.1, bottom left) employed Cockerell and M. R. James, one of the few scholars to write on manuscripts in this era who held a university post, but Yates Thompson also wrote his own catalogue entries and lectures. Yates Thompson created a remarkable collection in which he aimed to have the one hundred finest illuminated manuscripts available, in theory selling books when he obtained ones he thought better. His diverse contributions to the study of manuscripts are the subject of Alexandra Plane's essay (Chapter 28), while Christine Jakobi-Mirwald contrasts James's career with that of his fellow student of the Middle Ages and fiction writer, J. R. R. Tolkien (Chapter 23). Away from the high-profile end of the market, Kate Falardeau's essay examines the impact of the trade on the study of an unilluminated copy of Bede's Martyrology (Chapter 24).

In addition to writing about manuscripts, there was a rich contemporary literature about the book trade. Accounts of particular families and firms were published as part of sales catalogues, typically marking an anniversary, or in journals related to the trade.[4] In

2 For Cockerell see Chapter 30 in this volume.

3 Nigel Ramsay, "Towards a Universal Catalogue of Early Manuscripts: Seymour de Ricci's Census of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the United States and Canada," *Manuscript Studies* 1 (2016): 71–89.

4 For example: A. Edward Newton, "Prolegomenon," *The One Thousandth Caxton Head Catalogue* (London: Tregaskis, 1931), vii–xi; Charlotte Quaritch Wrentmore, foreword to *A Catalogue of Books and Manuscripts Issued to Commemorate the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Firm of Bernard Quaritch 1847–1947* (London: Quaritch, 1947); "Foreword," *Maggs Brothers Ltd. Centenary Catalogue* 812 (London: Maggs, 1953); Hugh William Davies, "Some Famous English Bookshops, I: Notes on the Firm of J. & J. Leighton and the Old House at Brewer Street," *The Library World* 34 (1932): 149–55 and 177–82; George Smith, "Some Famous English Bookshops, II: The Oldest London Bookshop. Ellis, 29 New Bond Street," *The Library World* 34 (1932): 195–202; Herbert

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addition, those involved in selling books sometimes published memoirs and autobiographies, including E. Millicent Sowerby, Giuseppe Orioli, and Hans Peter Kraus, all of whose careers crossed national boundaries.[5] Frank Herrmann produced a rich history of Sotheby's auction house based on a reconstruction of the firm's archive and informed by his time working there, and Wesley Towner's *Elegant Auctioneers* drew on interviews and archival research for its account of American auction houses.[6] Moreover, there are many obituaries and a few substantial biographies of figures in the trade written by those who knew them, including that of the American dealer A. S. W. Rosenbach (Figure 0.1, bottom right).[7] Unsurprisingly, this literature paints a broadly positive view of the trade and its participants, and, in line with the attitudes of the time, is largely silent on aspects of the personal lives of those involved such as illegitimacy and homosexuality.[8]

Studies by contemporaries laid foundations for further research into aspects of the trade, such as the essays about Quaritch and the business he founded, published to celebrate the firms' one-hundred and fiftieth anniversary in 1997.[9] Over time more critical perspectives have been brought to bear on the trade and its participants, notably through the annual Book Trade History conference organized by Michael Harris, Robin Myers, and Giles Mandelbrote, and its related publications. Of particular relevance to the present volume is the collection of essays edited by Mandelbrote, *Out of Print & Into Profit*, published to celebrate the centenary of the Antiquarian Booksellers' Association in 2006, which confronts some of the more ethically questionable practices and complexities of the trade.[10]

While there is much about individuals' private lives that is only hinted at in surviving primary sources, some of the practices of the trade received public scrutiny at the time, of which the best-known is probably "the ring." This was an arrangement where dealers agreed not to bid against one another when they were not buying for a client, thereby conspiring to keep auction prices low. They then staged further auctions amongst them-

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Garland, "Some Famous English Bookshops, III: Notes on the Firm of W. M. Voynich," *The Library World* 34 (1932): 216–40.

5 E. Millicent Sowerby, *Rare People and Rare Books* (London: Constable, 1967); Giuseppe Orioli, *Adventures of a Bookseller* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1938); Hans Peter Kraus, *A Rare Book Saga: The Autobiography of H. P. Kraus* (New York: Putnam, 1978).

6 Wesley Towner, *The Elegant Auctioneers* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1970); Frank Herrmann, *Sotheby's: Portrait of an Auction House* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1980).

7 Edwin Wolf II and John F. Fleming, *Rosenbach: A Biography* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1960).

8 For a case of illegitimacy see Laura Cleaver, "George D. Smith (1870–1920), Bernard Alfred Quaritch (1871–1913), and the Trade in Medieval European Manuscripts in the United States ca. 1890–1920," *Manuscript Studies* 8.1 (2023): 61–94; Orioli, *Adventures of a Bookseller*, hints at his homosexuality, and oral tradition has it that Eric Millar was gay.

9 *The Book Collector: A Special Number to Commemorate the 150th Anniversary of Bernard Quaritch Ltd*. (1997).

10 Giles Mandelbrote, ed., *Out of Print & into Profit: A History of the Rare and Secondhand Book Trade in Britain in the Twentieth Century* (London: British Library, 2006).

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Figure 0.2. "Ye Ideal Collector," *Odd Volumes Year-Boke No. XVII* 1904–1905 (London: privately printed, 1909). Courtesy of Senate House Library, University of London.

selves to establish what they thought was the real price of an item, splitting any profit or loss evenly between the participants. This was common (and legal) in Britain and seems to have involved other European booksellers, though the involvement of American dealers is less clear. In preparation for the sale of part of Robert Hoe's library in New York in 1911, Bernard Quaritch's son, Bernard Alfred, wrote to the Parisian dealer Édouard Rahir stating his intention to hold what he called a "revision." He added "if it is found that it is not advisable to have it in New York, we may have one in Europe after our return. If it is so, do you wish me to have a revision of your books or not; or, do you prefer that they are bought outright in the sale room?"[11] In 1914 when the American dealer George D. Smith came to London, newspaper articles declared that he had "smashed"

11 London, Bernard Quaritch Ltd., Hoe Sale Letters, letter from Bernard Alfred Quaritch to Édouard Rahir dated April 6, 1911.

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the ring by paying high prices, but it had cost the other dealers nothing to bid Smith up and the practice continued.[12] More recently the extent and impact of this activity in the British trade has been examined by Arthur and Janet Ing Freeman, and it is an important reminder that behind headlines that emphasized competition in the auction room, dealers collaborated in the international trade in manuscripts.[13] The names of some dealers are therefore to be found in multiple essays in this volume.

Also not illegal, though frowned upon by many current scholars, was the practice of cutting up books. Dealers and collectors made a range of interventions in the physical forms of manuscripts, often having them rebound, either because an old binding was in poor repair, or to suit the overall appearance of their library. Rebinding was an opportunity to reconsider the contents of manuscripts, which might be broken into sections and bound as multiple volumes, sometimes in response to composite volumes made up of sections written at different times. The practice of removing individual leaves was not new in the period covered in this volume, and Margaret Connolly's essay (Chapter 7) examines the trade in albums of cuttings and fragments in the 1920s, many of which had been created in the nineteenth century. However, dealers in this period also offered individual leaves for sale, sometimes, but not always, taken from damaged books. Lisa Fagin Davis's essay examines what the remains of manuscripts dismembered by two of the best-known book-cutters, Otto Ege and Philip Duschnes, reveal about their practices (Chapter 8).

Theft, whether of leaves or books, was and is illegal, but it has been a recurrent problem in the trade, with cases where those with responsibility for caring for collections have been identified as stealing books receiving particular attention. Scholarship in the latter part of the twentieth century examined some nineteenth- and twentieth-century cases that attracted contemporary publicity. A. N. L. (Tim) Munby addressed the role of Count Guglielmo Libri in removing manuscripts from French public libraries in the nineteenth century, some of which were bought by the fourth Earl of Ashburnham, the dispersal of whose library seeded many early twentieth-century libraries, while the books identified as stolen were returned to France.[14] In the 1920s France experienced a similar case, as Amédée Boinet was convicted of stealing a thirteenth-century manuscript from the Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève in Paris, where he worked, apparently in order to buy gifts for his mistress.[15] However, such cases were probably only the tip of an iceberg. An anonymous annotator of a copy of the *Directory of Antiquarian Booksellers in the British Isles* for 1932 noted against the entry for Ulysses Bookshop in London: "Takes stolen property?" and against the firm of Davis and Orioli: "Untrustworthy (stolen property?)" (Figure 0.3). The extent and knowledge of a trade in stolen goods is difficult to

12 "American Smashes London Book Ring," *Sun* (New York), July 18, 1914, 1.

13 Arthur Freeman and Janet Ing Freeman, *Anatomy of an Auction: Rare Books at Ruxley Lodge, 1919* (London: Book Collector, 1990); see also Frank Herrmann, "The Role of the Auction Houses," in *Out of Print & Into Profit*, ed. Giles Mandelbrote, 3–34.

14 A. N. L. Munby, "The Earl and the Thief: Lord Ashburnham and Count Libri," *Harvard Library Bulletin* 17.1 (1969): 5–21.

15 "Steals MSS. to Buy Furs for his Girl," *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, January 9, 1927, E7. I am grateful to Pierre-Louis Pinault for sharing his work on this case with me.

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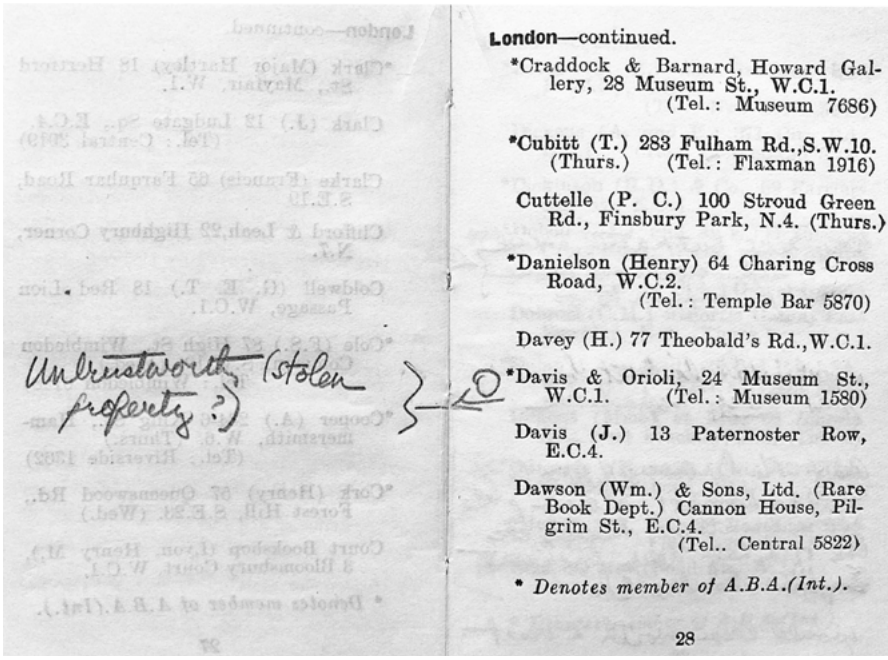


Figure 0.3. Annotated page from *Directory of Antiquarian Booksellers in the British Isles* (London: Antiquarian Booksellers' Association, 1932). Private collection. Author photograph.

reconstruct from this distance, but by tracing the subsequent histories of manuscripts taken from the Vallicelliana Library, Livia Marcelli's essay sheds light on how patterns of movement and the physical evidence of the manuscripts can provide insights into the trade in stolen books (Chapter 4).

Dealers and collectors could be creative in getting around laws designed to restrict the movement of books. Paola Paesano tells the story of Generoso Calenzio's efforts to "save" books from the Italian state and his heirs' subsequent attempt to sell them (Chapter 13). As Federico Botana's essay demonstrates, Italy required dealers to apply for export licenses to sell manuscripts abroad (Chapter 14). However, the dealer Leo S. Olschki (Figure 0.4, top left) was able to work round this restriction by taking books to Germany, whence they could be dispatched to America without conditions. Not all such activities were successful. In 1929 Frederic Ferguson of Quaritch Ltd. reported to Belle da Costa Greene (Figure 0.4, top right) at the Morgan Library that manuscripts due to be sold at Sotheby's as the "Property of a Nobleman" had been withdrawn because "they were smuggled out of Italy without permission of the Italian Government, which is now protesting against their sale."[16] Italy was not the only nation that tried to control

16 PML, ARC 1310 MCC Quaritch X, letter from Frederic Ferguson to Belle da Costa Greene, December 23, 1929.

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Figure 0.4. Clockwise from top left: photographs of Leo S. Olschki (left) and Jacques Rosenthal (right) (courtesy of Munich Stadtarchiv, DE-1991-NL-ROS-0472-05); Belle da Costa Greene (courtesy of the Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, LC-USZ62-93225); Alfred Chester Beatty, June 1924 (courtesy of the Trustees of the Chester Beatty Library); Henry E. Huntington, ca. 1917 (photCL 285, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California).

the movement of manuscripts in this way, and Katharina Kaska and Christoph Egger's essay (Chapter 5) demonstrates that similar arrangements involving dealers and brokers facilitated the sales of manuscripts from historic monastic collections in Austria during the economic depression of the 1920s, despite laws designed to prevent this.

While we may be tempted to judge the breaking of the spirit, if not always the letter, of such laws harshly, in other cases the movement of manuscripts and book-dealers between countries was prompted by unethical laws. From the 1930s, moving manu-

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scripts to Switzerland offered some dealers a partial reprieve from legislation allowing the seizure of Jewish property and the Aryanisation of businesses. The exodus of dealers and scholars from Germany in the 1930s has been a focus in German-language scholarship, and had a significant impact on both trade and scholarship in the regions where they ultimately settled.[17] The restitution of manuscripts after the Second World War has been addressed as part of broader interest in the seizure and transportation of artworks by the Nazis.[18] The latter has been facilitated by detailed documentation produced during and after the war, some of which provides insights into the pre-war history of books, such as the collections of the Rothschild family.[19]

While booksellers promoted themselves and their businesses to aid their trade, many manuscript collectors were, understandably, discreet about their collecting. Nevertheless, like the Sette of Odd Volumes' menu, much scholarship on manuscript collecting has focused on individual collectors, often in the form of biographical studies casting them as great men. Some of those involved in the trade made efforts to document collectors. Quaritch collected *Contributions Towards a Dictionary of English Book-Collectors* and de Ricci wrote an account of *English Collectors of Books & Manuscripts*.[20] In some cases, collecting has been understood as a cultural and philanthropic pursuit that might in some (usually undefined) way balance or even compensate for other aspects of individuals' activities, but sometimes it is only given minimal treatment in the context of a biographical study. Such biographies are important reminders that many collectors were not solely acquiring manuscripts: Henry Walters inherited and expanded his father's art collection, building a permanent home for it in Baltimore, and the American financier J. P. Morgan's New York library was also part of a much wider collection.[21] Collectors who founded institutions that bear their names and care for their collections are particularly likely to have had accounts of their collecting published. In addition to Morgan and Walters, examples include Henry Huntington (Figure 0.4, bottom left), whose library is in California, and Alfred Chester Beatty (Figure 0.4, bottom right), an American who did

17 Ernst Fischer, *Verleger, Buchhändler & Antiquare aus Deutschland und Österreich in der Emigration nach 1933: Ein biographisches Handbuch* (Stuttgart: Verband Deutscher Antiquare, 2011).

18 For example, Lynn H. Nicholas, *The Rape of Europa: The Fate of Europe's Treasures in the Third Reich and the Second World War* (London: Macmillan, 1994).

19 *Répertoire des biens spoliés en France durant la guerre 1939–1945*, 14 vols. (Berlin: Bureau central des restitutions, 1947–1949), vol. 7; Christopher de Hamel, *The Rothschilds and their Collections of Illuminated Manuscripts* (London: British Library, 2005).

20 Bernard Quaritch ed., *Contributions Towards a Dictionary of English Book-Collectors as also of Some Foreign Collectors* (London: Quaritch, reprinted 1969); Seymour de Ricci, *English Collectors of Books & Manuscripts (1530–1930) and their Marks of Ownership* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1930).

21 William R. Johnston, *William and Henry Walters, the Reticent Collectors* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999); Morgan has been the subject of many biographies, including Louis Auchincloss, *J. P. Morgan: The Financier as Collector* (New York: Abrams, 1990); Jean Strouse, *J. Pierpont Morgan, Financier and Collector* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1999).

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much of his manuscript collecting in London, but moved part of his library to Dublin.[22] In general, British and continental collectors have received less attention than their American counterparts, a notable exception being Christopher de Hamel's work on the Rothschild family in Britain and France.[23] However, collectors, like Yates Thompson or his fellow Briton Charles Dyson Perrins, who published catalogues of their collections (since dispersed) have also proved popular subjects. In this volume, four essays examine lesser-known collectors and the impact of their collections: Francesca Manzari studies the cuttings amassed by Vittorio Forti, who was both a dealer and a collector (Chapter 9), Nathalie Roman investigates how Paul Durrieu's scholarship intersected with his collecting (Chapter 21), Rhiannon Lawrence-Francis explores the collection of Edward Allen Brotherton, Lord Brotherton of Wakefield, who gave his manuscripts to the University of Leeds (Chapter 10), and Martina Lanza assesses the documentary evidence for the library of the Florentine collector Piero Ginori Conti (Chapter 12). In addition, Karen Winslow examines letters between Calouste Gulbenkian and Beatty as evidence for co-operation and the sharing of information as well as competition between well-known collectors (Chapter 11).

Most of the collectors celebrated in individual studies have been men, though a few "exceptional" women, including Isabella Stewart Gardner, Belle da Costa Greene, and Enriqueta Rylands have been added to the set.[24] Three essays in this volume focus on female collectors: Natalia Fantetti examines evidence of Gardner's first-hand engagement in the documentation and display of her collection (Chapter 19), Jill Unkel explores Edith (wife of Chester) Beatty's book-purchases (Chapter 20), and Toby Burrows analyses the data provided about female owners of manuscripts in de Ricci's *Census* (Chapter 18).

Even when collectors have previously been examined in groups, biography has proved a popular model, for example adopted by Clive Bigham for his study of the members of the Roxburghe Club, Donald Dickinson for his *Dictionary of American Book Collectors*, and most recently in de Hamel's *Posthumous Papers of the Manuscripts Club*.[25] Dickinson also produced a *Dictionary of American Antiquarian Bookdealers*, recognizing that collectors were part of a larger eco-system.[26] Dickinson's dictionaries, building on the work of Carl Cannon, indicate the extent to which research has developed along

22 Donald C. Dickinson, *Henry E. Huntington's Library of Libraries* (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1995); for Beatty see Winslow's and Unkel's essays in this volume.

23 de Hamel, *The Rothschilds and their Collections*.

24 Heidi Ardizzone, *An Illuminated Life: Belle da Costa Greene's Journey from Prejudice to Privilege* (New York: Norton, 2007); for Gardner see Fantetti in this volume; Elizabeth Gow and Julianne Simpson, "Enriqueta Rylands, the John Rylands Library and the Lutheran Legacy," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 93 (2017): 115–23.

25 Clive Bigham, *The Roxburghe Club: Its History and its Members, 1812–1927* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1928); Carl L. Cannon, *American Book Collectors and Collecting from Colonial Times to the Present* (New York: Wilson, 1941); Donald C. Dickinson, *Dictionary of American Book Collectors* (New York: Greenwood, 1986); Christopher de Hamel, *The Posthumous Papers of the Manuscripts Club* (London: Allen Lane, 2022).

26 Donald C. Dickinson, *Dictionary of American Antiquarian Bookdealers* (Westport: Greenwood, 1998).

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national lines (something which de Hamel's work deliberately avoids). In part this is a response to the practical challenges of accessing archival materials, however it has also been shaped by different relationships between collectors and the trade in different regions. François Avril argued that in France dealers were primarily regarded as fulfilling a practical purpose for collectors (while scholars such as Léopold Delisle and Henri Omont who worked in public libraries achieved international recognition for their work).[27] In America the dealers Smith and Rosenbach openly publicized their activities in the press, glorifying their trade. This formed part of a narrative of American economic superiority, which enabled its richest men (and occasionally women) to obtain cultural treasures from the rest of the world.[28] However, the transatlantic trade was successful in large part because American demand was met by European supply. Although the British press occasionally ran articles lamenting the loss of cultural treasures, therefore, unlike in France and Italy, no laws were passed to try to control the export of manuscripts in this period.

The wealth of a few private collectors, in America and elsewhere, had a major impact on the trade in this era. At auction, other collectors, whether building private libraries or managing institutions, could only obtain what was not driven above their budget. Institutions, in particular, tried to find ways around this. In France, from 1921 the Bibliothèque nationale was able to claim items at auction for the hammer price, thereby not contributing to the bidding.[29] In addition, many institutions tried to arrange private purchases. As Hannah Morcos's essay explores, the staff of the Bibliothèque nationale arranged a purchase from the remains of the enormous library amassed in the nineteenth century by the British collector Sir Thomas Phillipps (Chapter 15). Other national libraries did the same and, since the modern European boundaries did not exactly match medieval ones, the documentation for these sales sometimes provides insights into contemporary conceptions of a nation's heritage on the part of those involved with shaping collections. For example, in 1890 Phillipps's heir reported to the Belgian Royal Library that two of the manuscripts they were interested in had already been sold "to Holland."[30]

Paradoxically, rivalries fuelled the development of scholarship along similar nationalistic lines in many countries. In 1902 an exhibition of Flemish Primitives in Bruges included medieval manuscripts as part of a claim to a distinctive Flemish culture with

27 François Avril, "The Bibliophile and the Scholar: Count Paul Durrieu's List of Manuscripts Belonging to Baron Edmond de Rothschild," in *The Medieval Book: Glosses from Friends and Colleagues of Christopher de Hamel*, ed. James H. Marrow, Richard A. Linenthal, and William Noel ('t Goy-Houten: Hes & De Graaf, 2010), 366–76.

28 Danielle Magnusson and Laura Cleaver, *The Trade in Rare Books and Manuscripts between Britain and America c. 1890–1929* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022).

29 *The Protection of Movable Cultural Property I: Compendium of Legislative Texts*, UNESCO report (Paris, 1984), 129–30, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0006/000603/060309eo.pdf, accessed May 29, 2023.

30 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Phillipps-Robinson c. 711 fols. 122, 136v; A. N. L. Munby, *The Dispersal of the Phillipps Library*, Phillipps Studies 5 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960), 27–28.

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medieval roots.[31] However, the argument was complicated by the fact that many of the manuscripts displayed had been produced while the medieval county of Flanders was ruled by the kings of France, and in 1904 a much larger exhibition of French manuscripts was staged in Paris.[32] This included manuscripts from Yates Thompson's collection and was visited by Yates Thompson and Cockerell. In 1908 Cockerell's exhibition of illuminated manuscripts for the Burlington Fine Arts Club in London emphasized the importance of English manuscript art, an argument that was taken up by the critic Roger Fry.[33] As Plane explores, this was also part of the context for Yates Thompson's loans of manuscripts to the National Gallery in London, and later for Eric Millar's survey of English illuminated manuscripts, which is the subject of William Stoneman's essay (Chapter 30). Back on the continent, Gaia Grizzi explores how an exhibition of Italian manuscripts in Paris was also informed by contemporary ideas about national cultures (Chapter 29).

It might be expected that American collectors would be particularly interested in English-language material, but despite the popularity of early printed books associated with Shakespeare, A. S. G. Edwards demonstrates that the trade in this period showed little interest in English-language manuscripts (Chapter 2). Indeed, American collectors were highly selective in their purchasing. Danielle Magnusson's essay examines the complexities of the transatlantic market for early English drama, which reached record heights in the 1920s, driven by a small number of collectors (Chapter 3). In England meanwhile, James Ranahan's work demonstrates how the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust acquired its collections, including medieval material, away from the auction room in this period of high demand for anything connected with Shakespeare (Chapter 17).

In addition to arranging private sales, those working in libraries sometimes used their relationships with private collectors to try to influence auctions. As Director of the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, Cockerell tried to persuade his former employer, Yates Thompson, to sell manuscripts to Thomas Henry Riches, on the understanding that they would ultimately go to the museum.[34] When this plan failed, Riches provided a loan that enabled Cockerell to purchase the "Isabella Psalter" for the museum.[35] Part of the Psalter's appeal for Cockerell was that it had previously been owned by John Ruskin (and Cockerell had helped organize its sale to Yates Thompson). Alan Mitchell's essay (Chapter 25) examines the importance of such personal associations in determining the fate of manuscripts in the case of another Psalter owned by Ruskin. Similarly, as

31 *Exposition des Primitifs flamands: Section des manuscrits, miniatures, archives, sceaux, méreaux, monnaies et médailles* (Bruges: de Brouwer, 1902).

32 Henri Bouchot et al., *Exposition des primitifs français au Palais du Louvre et à la Bibliothèque nationale* (Paris: Palais du Louvre et Bibliothèque nationale, 1904).

33 [Sydney Cockerell], *Burlington Fine Arts Club: Exhibition of Illuminated Manuscripts* (London: Burlington Fine Arts Club, 1908); Roger Fry, "English Illuminated Manuscripts at the Burlington Fine Arts Club," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 13.65 (1908): 261–73.

34 BL, Add. MS 52656, fol. 7v.

35 The manuscript is now Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum MS 300; Stella Panayotova, "Cockerell and Riches," in *The Medieval Book*, ed. Marrow, Linenthal and Noel, 377–86; Stella Panayotova, "A Ruskinian Project with a Cockerellian flavour," *The Book Collector* 54 (2005): 357–74.

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Dongwon Esther Kim explores, when the Luttrell Psalter and Bedford Hours were sent to auction in 1929, staff at the British Museum used their connections at the Morgan Library to try to deter Americans from bidding and ultimately to secure a loan to help buy the manuscripts (Chapter 27). Such activities were not entirely selfless, as they made it much harder for British commentators to object to other purchases by Morgan, although the Wall Street Crash and subsequent depression meant that the British Museum very nearly failed to raise the money to retain the manuscripts and that, as Greene wrote to the Quaritch firm in 1930, "it is not possible for Mr. Morgan to spend any considerable sum of money at this time…every penny that can be spared must be used to feed and employ destitute people."[36]

The trade in manuscripts was impacted by international events including the two world wars and the economic depressions, felt particularly in Germany and Austria in the 1920s and more widely after the Wall Street Crash in 1929. Jérémy Delmulle and Hanno Wijsman's essay (Chapter 16) examines the evidence for the international effort to "restock" the University of Louvain's library following its destruction during the German advance into Belgium in 1914, only for the library to be destroyed again during the Second World War. A very different case of the situation of a manuscript in national discourses for political ends is provided by Nora Moroney's study of a sixteenth-century Irish manuscript primer (Chapter 26). She argues that the book's content and history both informed its twentieth-century provenance and usage.

An abundance of documentation about the trade in pre-modern books, found in letters, financial accounts, and the manuscripts themselves, preserved in libraries and in dealers' archives (not all of it yet catalogued), together with writing about the trade in the press and contemporary collectors' and dealers' catalogues, underpins the new research collected here. The essays adopt different approaches, informed by the different perspectives of those who work with collections and those trained in different disciplines. They are organized into three sections, focused on dealers and the market, buyers, and scholarly and creative engagements with the books. However, all three sections demonstrate the complex interwoven contemporary interests in early books. Although buyers are at the physical centre of this volume, therefore, dealers are placed first, as the market was fundamental in shaping collections. Similarly, although much scholarship in this period was supported by collectors, it could, in turn, shape collections and inform accounts of books used by dealers and auction houses. As Pierre-Louis Pinault's essay on Bernard Quaritch's involvement with clubs demonstrates (Chapter 1), dealers could be a lynchpin between different groups, and while the Sette of Odd Volumes poked fun at established groups including the Roxburghe Club, it also imitated many of their aims and practices. Through a series of case studies that aim to break new ground, the essays in this volume shed light on the complex connections that played a significant part in forming the collections and scholarship we use today, and, by extension, ideas about the Middle Ages and its books.

36 PML, ARC 1310 MCC Quaritch X, letter from Belle da Costa Greene to Bernard Quaritch Ltd. December 12, 1930.

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Part I

DEALERS AND THE MARKET

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Chapter 1

BERNARD QUARITCH LTD., BIBLIOPHILIC CLUBS, AND THE TRADE IN MEDIEVAL MANUSCRIPTS ca. 1878–1939

PIERRE-LOUIS PINAULT

THE MEMBERS OF famous bibliophilic clubs such as the Roxburghe Club, Grolier Club, or Société des Bibliophiles françois who collected medieval manuscripts are now much better known than the booksellers who helped them assemble or dispose of their collections. An exception to this generalization might be the London dealer Bernard Quaritch, whose business is still trading today (Figure 0.1, top left). Dealers were generally not accepted as members of European bibliophilic groups. The second article of the original statutes of the Société des Bibliophiles françois stated the position clearly: "*Article 2. Aucune personne faisant le commerce de livres ne pourra être admise dans la Société.*"[1] A draft disclaimer from the papers of the secretary of the Bibliographical Society of London made an exception, though with a significant nuance:

> (To all members of the Bibliographical Society who are connected with the retail book trade)…The Society is in no way a trade organization and is not carried on for profit. It is purely a private association of persons interested in bibliography and is entirely carried on by voluntary workers who receive no remuneration whatever for their labours. It cannot refuse to admit to membership such booksellers and others connected with the book-trade as are otherwise qualified, for many of these are distinguished bibliographers who have done much to advance the study of bibliography; but it only admits them *as bibliographers and not as traders*, and only, as has been already mentioned, on the express condition that their membership is not used for trade purposes or for their own monetary profit.[2]

However, club and society members' access to manuscripts depended on whether the books ended up in public institutions or in private hands following sales, a process in which dealers played a major role. At the same time, the trade had its own clubs, both professional and social, some of which imitated some of the activities of collec-

1 "No one involved in the book trade will be admitted to the Society."

2 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Eng. c. 8106. It is unclear whether this note ended up being published in the transactions of the Bibliographical Society or circulated among members.

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tors' clubs. In my doctoral research as part of the CULTIVATE MSS project, I have been exploring the following questions: to what extent did members of the same club use the same dealers? Were manuscripts that bibliophiles particularly wanted written about by clubs or societies? And if not, does this tell us something about the limited influence of clubs and societies on the trade in pre-modern manuscripts? There is a noticeable correlation between being a club or society member and high prices at auction: other members might decide to bid for items when they knew that the previous owner was a club or society member—and such a connection could, in turn, raise the value of their own collection.

Bernard Quaritch Ltd. offers a rich case study, as the founder of this bookselling company created his own club and maintained links with numerous other bibliophilic groups. The business was founded in London in 1847 by the Prussian-born Quaritch.[3] In the second half of the nineteenth century Quaritch came into contact with elite collectors, valued collections for probate, and gained pre-eminence in the trade not only in Great Britain but also in continental Europe and in the United States of America. After Quaritch's death in 1899, his son Bernard Alfred—known as Alfred to distinguish him from his father—took over the business until his death in 1913 at the age of forty-two. One of the firm's employees, Edmund Hunt Dring, then served as manager from 1917 to 1928, when he was succeeded by Frederic Sutherland Ferguson who held the post until 1960. The archives maintained by Bernard Quaritch Ltd. preserve commission books and letters exchanged with members of bibliophilic clubs, often bound at the end of sale catalogues. While not admitted as members in these groups, dealers like Quaritch therefore offer some of the most useful archival evidence to document how members of bibliophilic clubs built their collections.

This chapter explores how Quaritch and his successors connected the activities of two bibliophilic groups: the Roxburghe Club and the Sette of Odd Volumes. It sets out two principal points: first, that the Quaritch firm carefully maintained business relationships with members of the Roxburghe Club because it valued them as reliable contacts for its trading activities; and second, that the Sette of Odd Volumes, Bernard Quaritch's own creation, was partly inspired by the Roxburghe Club, albeit with some additional idiosyncrasies pertaining to its links with actors in the trade in rare books and manuscripts.

Quaritch and the Roxburghe Club

Founded in London in 1812 "to discuss the sale of the Valdarfer 'Boccaccio' for the record sum of £2,260 at the sale of the library of the Duke of Roxburghe," the Roxburghe Club is the oldest bibliophilic club still in existence.[4] A highly select and

3 See Nicolas Barker, "Bernard Quaritch," *The Book Collector: A Special Number to Commemorate the 150th Anniversary of Bernard Quaritch Ltd.* (1997) 3–34; see also Quaritch's entry in *ODNB*.

4 "Literary Notes and News," *Westminster Gazette*, June 20, 1898, 3. For an account of the early history of the Roxburghe Club, see Shayne Husbands, *The Early Roxburghe Club 1812–1835: Book Club Pioneers and the Advancement of English Literature* (London: Anthem Press, 2017). See also

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prestigious club limited to forty members, "aristocrats and millionaires…formed [its] nucleus."[5] Several generations of landed families have been well represented in its ranks since its beginning, including six Dukes of Devonshire, six Dukes of Buccleuch, five Dukes of Northumberland, and three Earls of Ellesmere. Members of the club were originally divided into three informal classes: those who inherited libraries, those who collected them, and those who controlled them. Until the second half of the twentieth century, the men meeting at the Roxburghe Club were part of socially homogeneous overlapping circles. By the end of the nineteenth century, a good proportion of members of the Roxburghe Club were well-established in elite late Victorian gentlemen's clubs in London such as the Athenaeum. James Ludovic Lindsay, twenty-sixth Earl of Crawford and ninth Earl of Balcarres, who was elected to the Roxburghe Club in 1877, was also a member of the Burlington Fine Arts Club and one of the founding members of the Bibliographical Society of London formed in 1892. However, not all Roxburghe Club members were actively interested in manuscripts. Some of the members who were not involved in collecting manuscripts benefited from Quaritch's services to acquire early printed books or profited from his advice regarding the dispersal of a collection.

Pre-eminent actors in the trade in pre-modern manuscripts such as Quaritch, his son Alfred, and the subsequent directors of the firm unsurprisingly had close links with members of bibliophilic clubs such as the Roxburghe Club. Having established his business in 1847, Quaritch soon seems to have attracted aristocratic clients, including William Amherst Tyssen-Amherst, first Baron Amherst of Hackney, who first entered Quaritch's shop in 1858, aged twenty-three, and built his taste for rare books in his proximity.[6] By the end of the century, Quaritch was well established, and he received frequent orders from wealthy clients, including members of the Roxburghe Club.[7] For example, at the Phillipps, Ashburnham, and Morris sales that took place between 1897 and 1898, Quaritch bought extensively for Lord Amherst, the Earl of Carysfort, the Earl of Crewe, Ingram Bywater, and Henry Yates Thompson, all of whom were members of the Roxburghe Club.[8] Other members of the Club who sent commissions for manuscripts to Quaritch in the 1910s and 1920s include Charles W. Dyson Perrins, Sir William Osler, Lord Aldenham, the Earl of Rosebery, Lord Crawford, and Alfred Chester Beatty. This situates Quaritch as the favoured supplier of rare books and manuscripts for members of the Club. Moreover, shifts in purchasing habits could occur: Perrins bought his first manuscripts from Robson and Co., a rather minor firm, then shifted to Quaritch (and others

Nicolas Barker, *The Roxburghe Club: A Bicentenary History* (London: Roxburghe Club, 2012).

5 Wilfrid Blunt, *Sydney Carlyle Cockerell, Friend of Ruskin and William Morris and Director of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge* (London: Hamilton, 1964), 192.

6 The main source for this is Toronto, University of Toronto, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, William Amhurst Tyssen-Amherst Papers (MS COLL 00206), which include early correspondence between Bernard Quaritch and Lord Amherst.

7 See *A Catalogue of Books and Manuscripts Issued to Commemorate the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Firm of Bernard Quaritch 1847–1947* (London: Quaritch, 1947).

8 London, Bernard Quaritch Ltd., Archives: Commission Book (1895–1899).

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WELL-KNOWN BOOK-BUYERS AT LORD AMHERST OF HACKNEY'S SALE AT SOTHEBY'S

The figures at the long table, beginning at the auctioneer Mr. Hodge's rostrum, show Lord Ridley with Lord Amherst of Hackney at his side. Next to the lady are Mr. Quaritch, Mr. Leighton, Mr. Tregaskis, and Mr. Maggs (with the soft hat). The figure in the silk hat on Mr. Hodge's right is Mr. W. Roberts, the writer on bibliography

Figure 1.1. "Well-Known Book-Buyers at Lord Amherst of Hackney's Sale at Sotheby's," from *The Sphere*, December 12, 1908, 21, public domain.

such as Leo Olschki) and started spending substantially larger sums of money around the time of his election to the Roxburghe Club in 1908.[9]

Unlike Perrins, who joined the Roxburghe Club in his mid-forties in the middle of creating his manuscript collection, and the Earl of Crawford who was elected to the Club at the age of just thirty, some bibliophiles who did business with Quaritch only became members of bibliophilic clubs at a later period of their life, sometimes towards the end of it, or at least well after the peak of their buying fever at auction. This was also a consequence of the restricted membership of clubs including the Roxburghe Club, which compelled them to wait until a place became available. For such men, election could stand as a sort of reward, a symbolic recognition of their long-term efforts gathering rich private collections of manuscripts and early printed books. Sir Robert Leicester Harmsworth is a relevant example: the director of Amalgamated Press, he only became a member of the Roxburghe Club in 1932 at the age of sixty-two. Nevertheless, he commissioned Quaritch to buy two pre-modern manuscripts for him at the Dewick sale held at Sotheby's on October 17–18, 1918.[10] Lot 108 was a fourteenth-century English manuscript of the

9 Laura Cleaver, "Charles William Dyson Perrins as a Collector of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts *c*. 1900–1920," *Perspectives médiévales* 41 (2020), https://doi.org/10.4000/peme.19776, accessed November 1, 2022.

10 London, Bernard Quaritch Ltd., Archives: Commission Book (1917–1920).

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Oculi Sacerdotis with no significant decoration apart from initials, which was bought for £35;[11] lot 121 was the prayer book of Lady Catherine Parr, queen consort of Henri VIII, dated 1541, which was bought for £29. At the Leighton stock sale held at Sotheby's on November 14, 1918, Harmsworth again bought two pre-modern manuscripts through Quaritch, including lot 620, an early fifteenth-century manuscript of John Wycliffe's *Poor Caitiff*, for £61.[12] Like Perrins, Harmsworth had started purchasing pre-modern manuscripts with small sums, and then moved to Quaritch and started spending more as he dedicated more resources to building his collection.

In addition to buying manuscripts, Roxburghe Club members occasionally decided to sell them. In 1908 Lord Amherst, who had been a member of the Roxburghe Club since 1887, had to part with his library after discovering that Charles Cheston, his solicitor and co-founder of the masonic lodge "Tyssen Amherst," had defrauded him, causing the loss of most of his fortune.[13] Alfred Quaritch tried unsuccessfully to negotiate with J. P. Morgan (who would be elected to the Roxburghe Club in 1912) and also with John D. Rockefeller to buy the Amherst Library *en bloc*.[14] In the end, the library was auctioned at Sotheby's in 1908 and 1909 (Figure 1.1). At these sales, Quaritch bought nineteen manuscripts. Of these books, lot 216, a fifteenth-century manuscript of the *Brut English Chronicle*, went into stock and was sold on to Harmsworth;[15] lot 332, an eleventh-century Gospels in Greek,[16] and lot 398, a thirteenth-century Gradual from a German monastery,[17] were sold on to Perrins (who had just become a member of the Roxburghe Club).

Several other Roxburghe Club members purchased early printed books through Quaritch at the Amherst sales: Lord Rosebery bought lot 737; lots 718 and 719 went to Lord Carysfort; lots 714, 734, and 759 to Lord Aldenham; lot 940 to Ingram Bywater; and lot 957 to Charles St John Hornby. Having learnt about the results of the Amherst sale, Lord Carysfort told Quaritch that he was "sorry to have lost the Charles 1st Bible," and added: "I suppose you bought it for some other client."[18] Quaritch had indeed bought this seventeenth-century printed copy of the Bible with royal provenance (lot 117) for Morgan for £1,000 plus £50 (5%) commission, that is twice the bidding limit set

11 Now Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Libraries, MS Codex 721.

12 Now Cambridge, MA, Harvard University, Houghton Library, MS Eng. 701.

13 London, Library and Museum of Freemasonry, Freemasonry Membership Registers: reg. no. 2242, fol. 18.

14 Margaret Leslie Davis, *The Lost Gutenberg: Obsession and Ruin in Pursuit of the World's Rarest Books* (London: Atlantic Books, 2020), 57.

15 This manuscript was last sold by Sotheby's at the sale of the sixth portion of the Harmsworth Trust Library on October 15, 1945 (lot 1951, £825).

16 This manuscript was last described in H. P. Kraus, *Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts*, catalogue 117 (New York: Kraus, 1967), no. 1.

17 Now Zürich, Schweizerisches Nationalmuseum, LM 26117.

18 Letter from Lord Carysfort to Bernard Alfred Quaritch, December 5, 1908. The letter is bound at the end of a copy of the Amherst sale catalogue at London, Bernard Quaritch Ltd., Archives.

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by Carysfort (£500).[19] This reveals how information was sometimes shared unevenly between a dealer and his clients. This also raises the question: were these fellow members of the most prestigious British bibliophilic club direct or indirect rivals in the auction room through the same dealer?

Direct competition did occur between fellow members of the Roxburghe Club and Quaritch was sometimes involved. The firm would occasionally receive multiple commissions to bid for the same book at auction. This informed them about their clients' interests, but also made it difficult to keep all their customers content. The founder and owner of the Ashendene Press, Charles St John Hornby became a member of both the Sette of Odd Volumes and the Roxburghe Club (to which he was elected in 1911). Among members of the Roxburghe Club, Hornby was one of Quaritch's most consistent clients when it came to purchasing (or attempting to purchase) pre-modern manuscripts. At the Huth Library sales, which began in 1911, he set a bidding limit of £150 for lot 3838, a fifteenth-century manuscript of Horace with decorated initials, which he lost at £240 to Leighton;[20] and a limit of £157 for lot 5734, a fifteenth-century manuscript of Petrarch with one large miniature, which he lost at £380 to Franco Moroli, who was also an occasional client of Quaritch's. At the 1918 Vernon sale, Hornby left a commission with Quaritch for lot 518 with a limit of £500.[21] This was a fifteenth-century Italian manuscript of Virgil with sixteen full-page miniatures.[22] It was lost at £710 to Henry Yates Thompson, who bought the manuscript at auction, without Quaritch's help. Yates Thompson was one of Quaritch's most lucrative clients and Hornby's fellow Roxburghe Club member. This masterpiece of late medieval Italian illumination put these two members of the same bibliophilic club at loggerheads as Yates Thompson had deemed it worthy to enter his one-hundred-item collection of the most select manuscripts and he was willing and able to pay a much larger sum. Quaritch also held a bid from Charles Ascherson for the same lot (£250 increased to £300), which shows that it was not only desired by Roxburghe Club members. Quaritch held yet another bid from the British Museum for the same lot (£100), further emphasizing how dealers were enmeshed in the fate of manuscripts. It was not uncommon for Quaritch to hold multiple bids for the same manuscript, but it seems that he tried to avoid commissions from Roxburghe Club members for the same items, perhaps aware that it was likely that they would exchange information.

Several members of the Roxburghe Club were allegedly not just Quaritch's clients but also his friends, including the aforementioned Earl of Rosebery and Lord Alden-

19 London, Bernard Quaritch Ltd., Archives: Commission Book (1903–1909). Belle da Costa Greene also had the whole set of Caxtons bought privately for Morgan, of which Carysfort was aware.

20 London, Bernard Quaritch Ltd., Archives: Commission Book (1910–1913). This manuscript was subsequently owned by Eric George Millar, who was elected a member of the Roxburghe Club in 1932. It was sold at Sotheby's on July 13, 1977 (lot 57).

21 George John Warren Venables-Vernon, fifth Baron Vernon, was elected a member of the Roxburghe Club in 1838.

22 This manuscript subsequently ended up in Hornby's collection, and then was owned by Major Abbey and auctioned by Sotheby's on March 25, 1975 (lot 2968, £23,000).

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ham.[23] Despite his reputation for being ill-tempered, "the Bismarck of the book trade" declared: "I like to be friendly with everybody."[24] Friendship between an aristocrat and their bookseller may sound improbable, but it appears to have been less incongruous in Great Britain than in France during this period.[25] Quaritch maintained an extensive correspondence and privileged relationships with the Crawford family, notably with the twenty-sixth Earl of Crawford. Not only was the latter among his most loyal customers, but Quaritch presumably named his first son Bernard Lindsay after him.[26] However, claims of friendship between dealers and collectors have sometimes been overstated to build a narrative celebrating the trade.[27] Instead, Margaret Davis has concluded that:

> The close relationship between Amherst and his hard-charging mentor and dealer couldn't be rightly called a friendship…[Quaritch] courts, cajoles and carefully stays on his side of the line as he guides his client's methodical collecting.[28]

Nevertheless, writing to Alfred Quaritch in 1899 about the recent death of his father Bernard, whom he had known "for nearly fifty years," Lord Amherst said he had "lost a true friend."[29] The complex relationships between dealers and clients thus challenge the sharp division created by the rules of some elite clubs. In this context, it seems that by his late fifties Quaritch's experience with members of the Roxburghe Club led him to create a group with similar aims, in which he would not only be admitted, but also in command.

The Sette of Odd Volumes: a Purpose-Built Club for Quaritch's Business?

In 1878, along with the printers Charles W. H. Wyman, who took the nickname "Typographer," and his brother Edward F. Wyman ("Treasurer"), Bernard Quaritch ("Librarian"), created the Sette of Odd Volumes. Among the founders were also Henry Bickers ("Publisher"), William Mort Thompson ("Historiographer"), and Edward Renton ("Herald"). The Sette was originally limited to twenty-one members, the same num-

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23 Seymour de Ricci, *English Collectors of Books & Manuscripts (1530–1930) and Their Marks of Ownership* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1930), 166.

24 "A Chat about Books with Mr. Quaritch," *Pall Mall Gazette*, December 19, 1884, 6.

25 See François Avril, "The Bibliophile and the Scholar: Count Paul Durrieu's List of Manuscripts Belonging to Baron Edmond de Rothschild," in *The Medieval Book: Glosses from Friends and Colleagues of Christopher de Hamel*, ed. James H. Marrow, Richard A. Linenthal, and William Noel ('t Goy-Houten: Hes & De Graaf, 2010), 366–76.

26 See Nicolas Barker, *Bibliotheca Lindesiana: The Lives and Collections of Alexander William, 25th Earl of Crawford and 8th Earl of Balcarres, and James Ludovic, 26th Earl of Crawford and 9th Earl of Balcarres* (London: Quaritch, 1978).

27 For example, de Ricci had a vested interest in promoting the trade.

28 Davis, *Lost Gutenberg*, 46–47.

29 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Eng. lett. d. 410, fols. 28v and 30r.

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ber as the volumes of Shakespeare's *Variorum* published in 1821. Each member was an Odd Volume, so that the Sette was only perfect when all of them were gathered. As was common in Victorian clubs including the Roxburghe Club, the Sette did not admit women as members and had a black ball policy, meaning that a single negative vote (or in some cases a set number) could prevent a candidate from being elected. Even though it was chiefly dedicated to bibliography and printing history, the Sette of Odd Volumes had some peculiarities (including idiosyncratic rules) that distinguished it from similar groups such as the Roxburghe Club or the Philobiblon Society.[30] Less well-known than the Roxburghe Club, the Philobiblon Society was active from 1853 to 1883.[31] Bibliophilia was also its main purpose and several of its most important members were simultaneously members of the Roxburghe Club, such as Henri d'Orléans, duc d'Aumale, then exiled in Twickenham, whose library is now in the Musée Condé in Chantilly. The Sette of Odd Volumes imitated and often parodied these earlier clubs.

The monthly dinners and after-dinner talks of the Sette of Odd Volumes made it a hybrid entity, somewhere between a dining club, a bibliophilic group, and a publishing society.[32] As with the Roxburghe Club (which held an annual dinner), publication was central to the Sette. Edward Heron-Allen, elected in 1883 with the nickname "Necromancer," proposed adding a rule asking each Odd Volume to present a book at some point (much like what was expected from members of the Roxburghe Club). This was accepted as: "7. Every Odd Volume shall be expected, within a reasonable period of the date of his admission, to make a literary, scientific, or artistic contribution to the Sette."[33] From 1880 onwards, the publications committee of the Sette produced numerous books, ranging from thin pamphlets to substantial volumes, dispatched in multiple series such as yearbooks, miscellanies, and opuscula.[34] These have become desirable for their rarity and bibliographical curiosity to both members and non-members, although, in theory at least, the publications were not for sale: some bore the note "*to be had of* NO *Bokesellers* [*sic*]."[35] The British art historian George Charles Williamson, a member of the Burlington Fine Arts Club and of the Grolier Club of New York, collected books issued by the Sette, of which he was elected a member in 1912 (nicknamed "Horologer").[36]

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30 See Colin Franklin, "B. Q. and the O. V.," *The Book Collector: A Special Number* (1997): 199–200; see also William Roberts, "Ye Sette of Odd Volumes," *The Bookworm* 3rd ser., no. 34 (1890): 305–11.

31 See David McKitterick, *The Philobiblon Society: Sociability and Book Collecting in Mid-Victorian Britain* ([London]: Roxburghe Club, 2019).

32 The Sette inspired the Club of Odd Volumes founded in Boston in 1887. It also had an ephemeral counterpart in Hong Kong which published a journal, *The Book-Plate.*

33 *Odd Volume Year-Boke. No. V. 1892–93* (London: Sette of Odd Volumes, 1893).

34 Charles W. H. Wyman, *B. Q.: A Biographical and Bibliographical Fragment* (London: Wyman, 1880).

35 The note is found, for example, in the front-matter to *The Year-Boke of the Sette of Odd Volumes*, 50, 1927–1928 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1929).

36 George Charles Williamson, *Behind My Library Door: Some Chapters on Authors, Books and Miniatures* (London: Selwyn and Blount, 1921), 129–39. Colin Franklin was also a collector and had Major Abbey's set.

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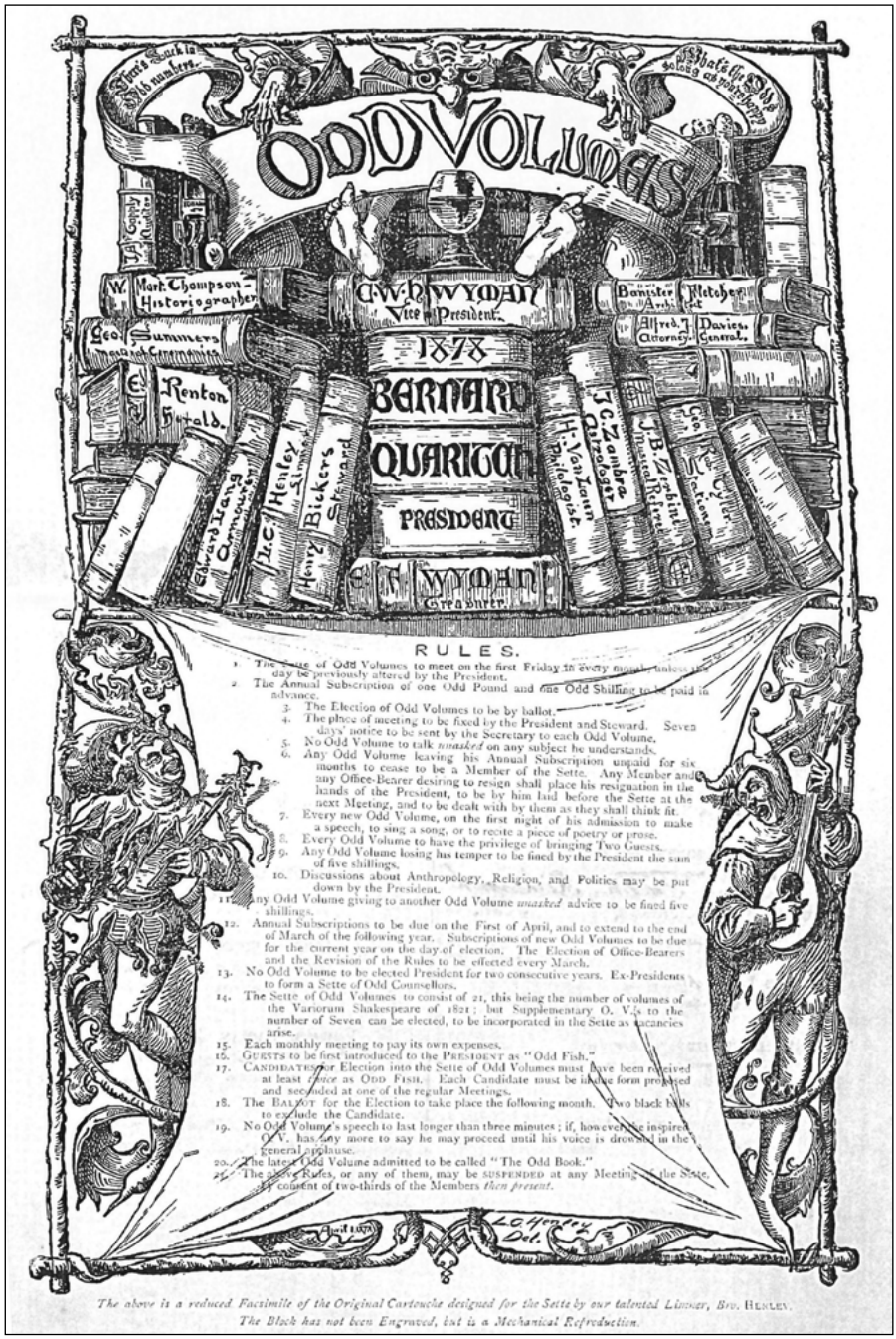


Figure 1.2. L. C. Henley, Facsimile of the Original Cartouche designed for the Sette of Odd Volumes, 1878. Courtesy of London, Bernard Quaritch Ltd.

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In 1932, Vyvyan Holland, Oscar Wilde's second son and a member of the Sette from 1926 with the nickname "Idler," gave a detailed account of the complete publication series of the Sette which he too collected.[37] At that date, the publications included a Miscellanies series numbered 1–20 and an Opuscula series numbered 1–93 on subjects ranging from *Chinese Snuff Bottles* to *Irish Wine*.[38] Manuscripts were occasionally mentioned in the irregularly issued *Year-Boke*. They were more thoroughly described in exhibition catalogues giving details of Quaritch's purchases at previous auction sales, which I shall discuss below. In total, four of the Sette's publications during Bernard Quaritch's lifetime concerned manuscripts.[39]

Although mainly a social club, the love of books was the Sette's unifying theme.[40] Several members were alternately in charge of illustrating the invitations or menus for upcoming meetings and these too became collectibles. This collective contribution to the imagery of a club is one of the Sette's singularities which is rarely seen on such a scale within other similar groups. Books were a recurring theme in the designs. The name of each Odd Volume would typically appear inscribed as the title of a bound book drawn on top of the rules and lists of members (Figure 1.2). Moreover, some members took nicknames that suggested a particular association with books. Henry Benjamin Wheatley, a member of the Early English Text Society and of the Bibliographical Society, and Hornby, a member of the Roxburghe Club, were both members of the Sette of Odd Volumes, with the respective nicknames "Recorder" and "Chapman." Edmund Dring was elected a member in 1920 with the nickname "Palaeographer," while the collector and benefactor of the Bodleian Library James P. R. Lyell, elected a member in 1924, was "Bibliographer."

The motto of the Sette of Odd Volumes, reproduced on its headed stationery, was: "Conviviality and mutual admiration." Another motto can be found on the early cartouche and lists of members: "There is divinity in odd numbers." This esoteric quote from Shakespeare has a particular meaning when one considers Quaritch's and other early club members' close links with freemasonry. While it is unclear whether Quaritch was a freemason, many of his associates were, including several of his fellow Odd Volumes members: most notably Charles Wyman was initiated at the Athenaeum Lodge

37 Vyvyan Holland, "The Publications of the Sette of Odd Volumes," *The Book-Collector's Quarterly* 2.5–8 (Autumn 1932): 1–20.

38 Respectively Opuscula no. 37 by Marcus B. Huish (1895) and no. 84 by Maurice Healy (1927). Holland, "Publications of the Sette," notes that no. 76 of the Opuscula series, published in 1924 by Ralph Straus, then the Sette's "Scribbler," included a comprehensive bibliography of the publications of the Sette of Odd Volumes up to that year. See Franklin, "B. Q.," 211.

39 *Catalogue of Manuscripts and Early-Printed Books Exhibited and Described by Bro. Bernard Quaritch, the Librarian of the Sette of Odd Volumes, at the Freemasons' Tavern, Great Queen Street* (London: Quaritch, 1885); Bernard Quaritch, *Opuscula No. XIV. A Short Sketch of Liturgical History and Literature. Illustrated by Examples Manuscript and Printed* (London: Wyman, 1887); *Odd Volumes' Year-Boke* (1889–1890), which includes the catalogue of the 1889 exhibition; Bernard Quaritch, *Palaeography. Notes Upon the History of Writing and the Medieval Art of Illumination* (London: privately printed, 1894).

40 See Franklin, "B. Q.," 212.

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in Islington in 1874.[41] In addition, Quaritch's old friend the twenty-sixth Earl of Crawford became a freemason while studying at Cambridge.[42] Alfred Quaritch was initiated at St Martin's Lodge on October 25, 1899.[43] The influence of freemasonry on the Odd Volumes' founders can be seen in the way they organized the Sette: it was designed as a brotherhood and members were solemnly called "Brethren." Several meetings were held at the Freemasons Tavern on Great Queen Street.[44] Moreover, some members took nicknames such as "Alchymist," "Architect," "Magnetizer," or "Necromancer," reminiscent of freemasonry or the occult. Indeed, a number of members of the Sette of Odd Volumes seem to have had close links with the occult: the Irish poet John Todhunter ("Bard" or "Playwright") and Scottish lawyer John Brodie-Innes ("Master of the Rolls") were both prominent members of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, a secret society which flourished in late-nineteenth-century Britain.[45]

The vast range of publications issued by the Sette was meant to promote books sold by Quaritch as well as the printing and illustrating skills of his fellow members. The club thus operated as a professional club intended for people involved in the trade and craftsmanship around the book. Some publications were based on exhibitions organized by the Sette, such as one of manuscripts and early printed books from Quaritch's stock held at the Freemasons Tavern on June 5, 1885, for which a catalogue was issued.[46] This included twelve pre-modern manuscripts and each manuscript except no. 7 was given an "estimated value," with a total of £4,189. The highest "estimated value" was £1,000 for no. 9, an early fifteenth-century illuminated book of hours which had once belonged to Sir John Talbot, first Earl of Shrewsbury (1387–1453).[47] It subsequently entered Yates Thompson's collection. The exhibition was reported in the press, together with the prices for some manuscripts, meaning that it reached an even wider audience.[48] The Earl of Crawford was among the guests and was one of the very few Roxburghe Club members (if not the only one) who accepted an invitation to the Sette's meetings.

In 1887, the Sette of Odd Volumes issued as no. 14 of its Opuscula series a catalogue of ninety-seven liturgical rare books and manuscripts preceded by a thirty-eight-page *Sketch of the History of the Liturgy* by Bernard Quaritch. The pre-modern manuscripts that were featured, mixed with early printed books and classified chronologically, were

41 London, Library and Museum of Freemasonry, Freemasonry Membership Registers: reg. no. 1491, fol. 70.

42 Barker, *Bibliotheca Lindesiana*, 235.

43 London, Library and Museum of Freemasonry, Freemasonry Membership Registers: reg. no. 2455, fol. 218.

44 *The Year-Boke of the Odd Volumes: An Annual Record of the Transactions of the Sette. Eleventh Year* (London: Wyman and Chiswick Press, 1890), 55.

45 See, for example, R. A. Gilbert, *The Sorcerer and His Apprentice: Unknown Hermetic Writings of S. L. Mac Gregor Mathers and J. W. Brodie-Innes* (Wellinborough: Aquarian Press, 1983).

46 See Franklin, "B. Q.," 203.

47 Now Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, MS 40-1950.

48 "Exhibition of Manuscripts and Early Printed Books," *Otley News and West Riding Advertiser*, June 12, 1885, 2.

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meant to serve as "examples" to illustrate the points made in the study. A bibliography with eight references was provided at the end.[49] Though the value of the books was not consistently noted, it was another opportunity for Quaritch to make his bibliographical rarities visible and appeal to customers. By the same logic, the Golden Gospels of Henry VIII was exhibited at the Sette of Odd Volumes in 1889 and valued at £2,500, with reports in local newspapers.[50] One of the Sette's subsequent publications gave an account of the acquisition of this manuscript by Quaritch at the Hamilton sale in 1889 along with a catalogue of the manuscripts displayed at this "*soirée*."[51] The purpose of such exhibitions, with the associated publicity, may have been to find a potential buyer for this expensive manuscript, for which Quaritch had paid £1,500, and which would cross the Atlantic and be sold to Theodore Irwin of Oswego less than a year later, on May 26, 1890. By that time, Quaritch, who sent his son Alfred on a business trip to the United States, would start warning his British clients that new American customers were entering the antiquarian book market in a predatory manner and threatened to "confiscate" part of Britain's written heritage.[52] The New York bookseller and Grolier Club member Frank H. Dodd was introduced by Bernard Quaritch as guest of the Sette during the year 1894–1895, which illustrates the ongoing transatlantic shift of the trade in rare books and manuscripts.[53]

No. 15 of the Miscellanies series issued by the Sette of Odd Volumes in 1886 reflected Quaritch's interest in bibliophilic clubs and learned societies.[54] It was limited to 255 copies "for private circulation only" and consisted of a seventy-page bibliographical list of publications issued by British, Scottish, and Irish learned societies and printing clubs. The introduction, written by William Mort Thompson, declared that an address by Quaritch and an exhibition of publications preceded this publication and was heard by a large audience. While a minority of these publications dealt with manuscripts, the fact that they were publicly displayed provided yet another overview of Quaritch's stock.

In 1894, the Sette of Odd Volumes issued a book based on an expanded lecture about palaeography and illumination which Quaritch had given to the members of the Sette the year before. It featured a ninety-three-page chronological study followed by an index and twenty-two full-page colour plates of manuscripts, some from Quaritch's stock,

49 See Franklin, "B. Q.," 200. Franklin quotes an article from the *Dictionary of National Biography* which expresses doubts about Quaritch having prepared this type of work on his own.

50 Now PML, M.23. See *St. James's Gazette*, June 18, 1889, 8; Franklin, "B. Q.," 204–5.

51 *Odd Volume Year-Boke. No. II. 1889–1890* (London: Wyman, 1892), 44–45.

52 Leslie A. Morris, "Bernard Alfred Quaritch in America," *The Book Collector: A Special Number* (1997): 180–97; see also Danielle Magnusson and Laura Cleaver, *The Trade in Rare Books and Manuscripts between Britain and America c. 1890–1929* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

53 William Manning ed., *The Year-Boke of the Odd Volumes, Seventeenth Year—1894–95* (London: Sette of Odd Volumes, 1897), 148.

54 William Mort Thompson, *O. V. Miscellanies No. 15. Report of a Conversazione given at Willis's Room, King Street, St. James's, on Tuesday, June 8th, 1886, by his Oddship Bro. Geo. Clulow, President, with a Summary of an Address on Learned Societies and Printing Clubs, then Delivered by Bro. Bernard Quaritch, Librarian* (London: Wyman, 1886); see Franklin, "B. Q.," 201.

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reproduced by William Griggs. In the foreword, Quaritch humbly acknowledged that the leading reference work in this field remained a book published the year before by Edward Maunde Thompson, then Principal Librarian of the British Museum and a member of the Roxburghe Club since 1892.[55] Copies of this lecture by Quaritch were gifted to his clients and acquaintances in Great Britain and overseas, including no fewer than five members of the Roxburghe Club: Lord Aldenham, Lord Crawford, Lord Rosebery, Maunde Thompson (who thanked him for his tribute), and Yates Thompson, but also to Léopold Delisle in Paris, the collector Robert Hoe in New York, and the dealer Ludwig Rosenthal in Munich.[56]

The example of the Sette of Odd Volumes under Bernard Quaritch's leadership shows that a club could also be a place where a professional dealer could take on the role of a putative scholar for the purpose of his own business. In one former member's opinion, the Sette was "a quaint, but in certain respects a moderately erudite body."[57] Clearly not created solely for the disinterested purpose of fostering scholarship on premodern manuscripts and early printed books, the Sette was used to promote items that Quaritch proposed for sale, and this was even stated as a central aim in one of its early publications: "The Sette has been in existence for many years chiefly as a trade advertising medium for some of our Brethren."[58] It did mimic some features of the senior Roxburghe Club, though with humour.

Conclusion

The relationships maintained by Bernard Quaritch and his successors with members of the Roxburghe Club demonstrate a clear strategy to secure long-term outputs for their trading activity in rare books and manuscripts. Sometimes the lines between professional relationships and friendships became blurred, but Quaritch (and his fellow dealers) would never be accepted into the clubs that brought together elite collectors. Quaritch's desire to gain an even more influential position in this market may have in turn benefited, in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, from his creation of the Sette of Odd Volumes, which showcased the manuscripts in his stock through exhibitions and publications, reaching a range of audiences.

55 Edward Maunde Thompson, *Handbook of Greek and Latin Palaeography* (New York: Appleton, 1893, reprinted 1912).

56 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Eng. lett. d. 411.

57 Holland, "Publications of the Sette," 20.

58 *Catalogue of Manuscripts and Early-Printed Books Exhibited and Described by Bro. Bernard Quaritch*, 206.

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Chapter 2

SELLING MIDDLE ENGLISH MANUSCRIPTS TO NORTH AMERICA UP TO 1945

A. S. G. EDWARDS

I HAVE A simple theme: Middle English manuscripts have generally had an unrewarding commercial history in North America. Evidence for this claim can begin with the earliest complete Middle English manuscript to arrive there as a consequence of commercial purchase.[1] Henry Tuke Parker, a Harvard alumnus, bought a copy of the *Prick of Conscience* at Sotheby's on July 28, 1863, lot 187, for seven guineas and promptly gave it to his alma mater.[2] Over eighty years later, in October 1945, another manuscript of this work that reached America was sold at Sotheby's for £20.[3]

The first American with any claim to be a collector of Middle English manuscripts is William G. Medlicott (1816–1883).[4] The manuscript that is now Houghton Library, MS Eng. 530, is a collection of fifteenth-century verse and prose works, which was acquired by Harvard after his death for $45.00.[5] He also had a copy of John Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*, possibly that which is now in the Newberry Library,[6] as well as a Middle

1 There are other manuscripts that arrived earlier in North America for which no record of purchase survives. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University, Houghton Library, MS Eng. 766, a manuscript of Robert Fabyan's *Chronicle*, was probably in North America by the seventeenth century; described in Linda E. Voigts, "A Handlist of Middle English in Harvard Manuscripts," *Harvard Library Bulletin* 33 (1985): 5–96 at 32–38, with no information about provenance. On Boston, Massachusetts Historical Society MS 1, Henry Daniel, *Liber Uricrismarum*, and on Ithaca, Cornell University Library, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, 4600 Bd. Ms. 14 +, a fragment of Nicholas Love's *Mirror*, see Scott Gwara, "Collections, Compilations, and Convolutes of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscript Fragments in North America before ca. 1900," *Fragmentology* 3 (2020): 73–139 at 132, n. 168.

2 It is now Cambridge, MA, Harvard University, Houghton Library, MS Eng. 515; for a brief description see Voigts, "Handlist," 17, where its provenance is not noted.

3 It was bought by E. P. Goldschmidt at the Harmsworth sale, October 15–16, 1945, lot 2087 and is now PML, B.13.

4 On Medlicott see the excellent study by J. R. Hall, "William G. Medlicott (1816–1883): An American Book Collector and His Collection," *Harvard Library Bulletin* 1 (1990): 13–46.

5 Described (inaccurately) in Voigts, "Handlist," 17–22; it was no. 2714 in the *Catalogue of the Collection of Books formed by William Medlicott* (Boston: Rockwell & Churchill, 1878).

6 Chicago, Newberry Library, MS 33.5; no. 2715 in the Medlicott *Catalogue*; sold for $125 (see Hall, "William G. Medlicott," 30, n. 58); for description see Paul Saenger, *A Catalogue of the Pre-1500 Western Manuscripts in the Newberry Library* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 60–61, where the possible Medlicott provenance is not noted.

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English *Brut* and what is described as "Wiclif," actually extracts from the *Pore Caitif*, both of which are untraced.[7] And in an untypical example of transatlantic reversal, a copy of Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Christ* once in his possession found its way back to England and is now in the John Rylands Library.[8] Medlicott's collecting of Middle English manuscripts was one aspect of a larger interest in manuscripts, both medieval and later.[9] But it is sufficiently extensive to warrant notice.

The only other indication of any form of systematic Middle English manuscript collecting in America in the late nineteenth century was more focused. In the early 1870s James Lenox, in separate transactions, bought three manuscripts of the Wycliffe Bible, all now in the New York Public Library.[10] But otherwise there are very few indications of interest in buying Middle English in North America in this period. This may have simply been part of a wider lack of appeal for text manuscripts in general and English ones in particular. For example, when the Grolier Club in 1892 held an *Exhibition of Illuminated and Painted Manuscripts*, it displayed a hundred western manuscripts. These were overwhelmingly Books of Hours or service books; only one secular manuscript was displayed, a Petrarch (no. 92); only one English manuscript was included (no. 51), a sumptuously illustrated Book of Hours.[11]

Such major late nineteenth-century English dispersals as those of the Phillipps manuscripts and of the Ashburnham Appendix in 1899 found little response across the Atlantic. Two Middle English manuscripts did come to Harvard from the Ashburnham sale, a copy of Lydgate's *Troy Book*, now Houghton Library, MS Eng. 752, and a *Brut*, MS Eng. 587; both made very modest prices.[12] Harvard's early collecting in this field was not sustained, nor was it paralleled by acquisitions by other university or public libraries. For institutional collecting in this field was overshadowed from the

7 Nos 2688 and 2738 respectively in the *Catalogue of the Collection Books formed by William Medlicott*.

8 It was no. 2863 in the *Catalogue of the Collection Books formed by William Medlicott*; it is now Manchester, John Rylands Library, MS Eng. 94; for description see Neil R. Ker, *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries III: Lampeter-Oxford* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), 415, where the Medlicott provenance is not noted.

9 The *Catalogue of the Collection Books formed by William Medlicott* records seventy manuscripts (nos. 2672–741), a number of them post-medieval, including some later transcripts of medieval works.

10 For descriptions and discussions of these manuscripts, now New York Public Library, MSS MA 64, MA 65, MA 66, see Jonathan J. G. Alexander, James H. Marrow, Lucy Freeman Sandler, *The Splendor of the Word: Medieval and Renaissance Illuminated Manuscripts at the New York Public Library* (New York: Harvey Miller, 2005), 77–85. It is reported there (85) that MA 66 was bought for £241 in 1874. MA 65 was purchased for £188 6s by Henry Stevens in 1859; see his *Recollections of Mr James Lenox of New York and the Formation of his Library* (London: Stevens, 1886), 108.

11 *Catalogue of an Exhibition of Illuminated and Painted Manuscripts* (New York: Grolier Club, 1892).

12 These were lots 6 in the Sotheby's sale on May 1, 1899 (to J. & J. Leighton for £3 10s) and 59 (to Maggs for £7 10s) respectively. They are described in Voigts, "Handlist," 31–32 and 22–24; in neither instance are details of provenance given.

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beginning of the twentieth century by the emergence of formidable private collectors, first Pierpont Morgan and in the following decade Henry Huntington. They became the major forces in America for Middle English as well for other medieval manuscripts, English and otherwise.

Among Morgan's earliest purchases was the first work of Chaucer to arrive in North America. This was a single lyric "To his Purse," included in a manuscript of Lydgate's *Siege of Thebes* that is now Morgan M.4. This was acquired in 1900, as part of his *en bloc* acquisition of the Theodore Irwin (1827–1902) library, for which Morgan paid $200,000. Irwin had owned the manuscript since at least 1887 when it appeared in his published catalogue and he may have acquired it directly from its sale at Sotheby's in July 1865, when it made £28 9s.[13] A little later Morgan also bought the first complete manuscript of the *Canterbury Tales* to reach North America when he got one of the four in the Lawrence Hodson sale at Sotheby's in 1906. It was bought there by Quaritch for £145 and sold to Morgan in February of the following year; it became his M.249.[14]

A decade later, in 1917, Huntington signalled his presence as a collector of medieval manuscripts when he bought the Bridgewater Library for a million dollars. He thereby acquired the sumptuous Ellesmere *Canterbury Tales* (MS EL 26 C 9) as well as other Middle English manuscripts, some mentioned below.

Other copies, sold separately, were less successful. In 1923 A. S. W. Rosenbach bought by private treaty from Thomas Fitzroy Fenwick, then guardian of the Phillipps manuscripts, four containing Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* in part or whole and a number of other Middle English manuscripts, twenty in all, for £11,500.[15] One of these, containing the Clerk's Tale together with a couple of his short poems, went immediately to Huntington (his MS HM 140). Eighteen years later, in 1941, the other three, one of which was a fragment, were still on his shelves, as was another important fragment that he had bought elsewhere. These were all included in his catalogue, *English Poetry to 1700*.[16] One of the Phillipps manuscripts (*olim* Phillipps MS 8136; no. 156), the most expensive, did leave his hands at around this time, going to Martin Bodmer, in Switzerland, who paid $48,000 against an asking price of $85,000 (now Cologny, Fondation Martin Bodmer Cod. Bodmer 48). Another (no. 159), the former Phillipps fragment (Phillipps MS 6570), was sold at some point after 1945 to the Chicago collector, Louis H. Silver.[17] The other fragment, of considerably more significance (no. 158), one of the few to include illustra-

13 *Catalogue of the Library and a Brief List of the Engravings and Etchings Belonging to Theodore Irwin, Oswego, N. Y.* (New York: Little & Co., 1887), 287, no. 1829.

14 See further A. S. G. Edwards, "What's It Worth? Selling Chaucer in the Twentieth Century," *The Chaucer Review* 48 (2014): 239–50.

15 For some discussion of Rosenbach's Middle English manuscript purchases from the Phillipps collection (on which this paragraph draws) see A. S. G. Edwards, "A State of Absolute Rarity: The Market for Middle English Manuscripts in the Twentieth Century," *The Book Collector* 65 (2016): 433–44.

16 Parenthetical numbers in the text are to items in this catalogue.

17 It is now Austin, University of Texas, Harry Ransom Center, HRC MS 46. It was sold from the Silver collection at Sotheby's, November 9, 1965, to Lew David Feldman for £2,000.

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tions and the other complete manuscript (*olim* Phillipps MS 8137; no. 157) did not sell. They are now part of the Rosenbach Museum and Library.[18]

The failure of American markets to be attracted to Rosenbach's Chaucer manuscripts invites some reflection. At one level it is puzzling. The Depression was over, and the wartime economy was booming. And in general, book collecting was a quite buoyant market. But there were few obvious American outlets for Middle English manuscripts. The Huntington was buying little then; university libraries were mostly getting them through donation: the only other *Canterbury Tales* to reach North America before 1945 was the one which was given to the University of Chicago in 1931 by an alumnus.[19] J. P. Morgan Jr. died in 1943; his long-standing librarian, Belle da Costa Greene, was in poor health and drawing to the end of her life. Morgan did make one final Chaucer purchase, acquiring the Campsall manuscript of *Troilus & Criseyde* (now PML M.817) for £2,250 in 1942.[20] It was only the second copy of Chaucer's poem to reach North America.[21] And it is an important one of Chaucer's work; it had been owned by Henry V, a fact that might have boosted its commercial appeal. But the selling price in wartime London was much less than those asked for any of Rosenbach's Chaucer manuscripts in his previous year's catalogue. Together with the general failure of Rosenbach's attempts to sell top end manuscripts of this kind it suggests a lack of enthusiasm for manuscripts of the poet's works, however significant. It was only after 1945, with the emergence of new markets in American university libraries, that there was any keener interest in acquiring the few manuscripts by the father of English poetry that became available.[22]

The lack of appeal that Chaucer's manuscripts had in the marketplace was matched by that for the massive Middle English poem by his contemporary and friend John Gower, the *Confessio Amantis*. The first manuscript of this to reach North America was the Fountaine family copy which was sold at Sotheby's, June 11–14, 1902, lot 378, and was purchased by Quaritch for £1,550, a high figure justified by the fact that it has over a hundred miniatures. Quaritch catalogued it at £2,200, a markup of close to forty percent. There were no takers and later in the year he sold it to Morgan for £1,727, roughly cost plus ten percent. It became Morgan Library M.126.[23]

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18 Philadelphia, Rosenbach Museum and Library, MSS f. 1084/1 and f. 1084/2.

19 See J. M. Manly and Edith Rickert, *The Text of the Canterbury Tales*, 8 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1940), 1:356–60; information about the donor is at 360. The university got another Middle English manuscript, of Lydgate's *Life of Our Lady*, from an anonymous donor in the same year; see Christopher de Hamel, "Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts from the Library of Sir Sydney Cockerell (1867–1962)," *British Library Journal* 13 (1987): 186–210 at 199.

20 It was sold at Sotheby's, August 11, 1942, lot 4.

21 The first is Huntington Library, MS HM 114, part of the Rosenbach bulk purchase from Fenwick in 1923 (*olim* Phillipps MS 8252).

22 See further, Edwards, "What's It Worth?"

23 For details of this sale see A. S. G. Edwards, "Buying Gower in Modern Times," in *John Gower in England and Iberia: Manuscripts, Influences, Reception*, ed. R. F. Yeager and Ana Hidalgo (Woodbridge: Brewer, 2014), 279–90, especially 282, 288.

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But this was the commercial high point for the Gower market. Morgan acquired two more manuscripts of the *Confessio*. The first, now PML M.125, had a sale history that began in the mid-nineteenth century, when it left the library of John, Earl of Loudun and Marquis of Hastings. In 1869, F. S. Ellis offered it for £150. It passed, probably directly, shortly after this, into the possession of the notable collector, William Bragge, and it was sold again, in his sale, Sotheby's, June 7, 1876, lot 176, where it was bought by Quaritch for £175. It was to appear subsequently in a series of further Quaritch catalogues until 1900, when Morgan bought it for £270. When inflation is taken into account over the twenty-four years that Quaritch had it in stock, this cannot be regarded as one of his most commercially successful sales.[24]

The third Gower Morgan acquired, now PML M.690, was bought from Maggs in 1924, who had got it from the Earl of Ravensworth's library. It was offered for £680 and seems to have been swiftly purchased. The price in real terms is probably not much of an advance on the £270 Morgan had paid a quarter of a century earlier for PML M.125. Both manuscripts are broadly comparable in overall quality.

The lack of market buoyancy for Gower was something that Maggs was to feel again. They bought another manuscript in 1936, which they sold for £175 and another in the following year, which they bought for £160, and which did rather better, selling for £350. Neither of these went to America. The first went to Switzerland, to the Bodmer collection; the second to the Lyell collection, now in the Bodleian Library.

Two copies of Gower were sold as part of wholesale collection purchases: as already noted, the so-called Stafford Gower went to Huntington with the Ellesmere manuscripts (now MS EL 26 A 17); and the copy now in the Folger Library, Washington, DC, MS SM 1, came with the W. T. Smedley collection in 1924. Other manuscripts, like the copies in the Newberry, Beinecke and the Princeton Taylor collections were only acquired after the war.[25] This last does warrant some consideration in the present context. What is now Princeton University Taylor MS 5 first appeared on the market in 1803 when Richard Heber bought it for £3 4s. In Heber's own sale in 1836 it advanced to £31, when it was acquired by Sir Thomas Phillipps. It was liberated from Thirlestaine House in 1923 by Rosenbach, in the bulk acquisition of Middle English manuscripts that I have already mentioned. He still had it in 1941, when he included it his *English Poetry* catalogue (no. 369) for a fairly modest $2,350. It did not sell, and it only found a buyer thirty-three years after Rosenbach has bought it, in 1956, after John Fleming took over Rosenbach's stock and sold it to Robert Taylor.[26]

The history of the other Gower manuscript at Princeton, Garrett MS 136, is only slightly less melancholy. This first came on the market in 1816 when it was in Liver-

24 See further, A. S. G. Edwards, "The Ownership and Sale of Manuscripts of John Gower's *Confessio Amantis* in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," *The Library* 23 (2022): 180–91.

25 Chicago, Newberry Library, MS 33.5; New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, MS Osborn fa.2.

26 For description and provenance, which the above supplements in a few respects, see Don C. Skemer, *Medieval & Renaissance Manuscripts in the Princeton University Library*, 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 1:411–13.

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pool from the library of the distinguished collector, William Roscoe. It was bought by the London dealers Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown for £6 10s. It then appeared in their *Catalogue of Old Books, in the Ancient and Modern Languages and Various Classes of Literature* (London, 1817), for twelve guineas. Its next recorded owner was again Phillipps. It became his MS 2298, apparently acquired from Thomas Thorpe, but I cannot establish the price. The low Phillipps number suggests that he acquired it probably at some point in the mid-1820s, but firm evidence is lacking. It appeared in the sale of Phillipps manuscripts at Sotheby's on June 8, 1899, lot 638, where it was bought by Quaritch for £60. Quaritch included it in several catalogues between 1899 and 1903. In the last catalogue in which it appears it was on offer for £120. It was sold in October 1905 to Robert M. Garrett.[27]

It took only six years for Quaritch to move this Gower, much better going than Rosenbach's thirty-three for the Taylor copy or the twenty-four years that Quaritch held PML M.125. But over ninety years its price had advanced from twelve guineas to £120 (if Garrett paid the asking price; since he was a regular Quaritch customer he may not have), an advance that again does not, allowing for inflation, seem to indicate a significant advance in market value.[28]

Finally, it is worth returning for a moment to Rosenbach's 1941 *English Poetry to 1700* catalogue. This included another, far more elaborate copy of Gower, with miniatures and fine illumination, which he offered for a hefty $16,500 (no. 368). In spite of its quality, it never sold, and it remains with the Rosenbach Museum and Library, MS f. 1083/29.[29]

The third major canonical Middle English work, William Langland's *Piers Plowman*, is associated pre-1945 with a single American collector, Huntington, who owned four manuscripts of it. Two of these, MSS HM 114 and 137 came from Rosenbach's block purchase of Middle English manuscripts from the Phillipps collection in 1923. Earlier, in 1918, Huntington had got MS HM 128, formerly in the Ashburnham Appendix and sold in 1899 to Quaritch for £41.[30] It had passed to the American collector Ross C. Winans and was acquired as part of another block purchase by George D. Smith for Huntington. Rosenbach also bought in 1924 for £700 what is now MS HM 143.[31]

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27 For description and provenance, which the above supplements, see Skemer, *Medieval & Renaissance*, 1:313–15.

28 Quaritch's unfortunate history with *Confessio* manuscripts is further emphasized by the copy that became New York, Columbia University, Plimpton MS 265. He included it in his Catalogue 344 (1916), no. 16 at £500. He did not sell it to Plimpton until 1924. The account in Derek Pearsall and Linne Mooney, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the English Manuscripts of John Gower's Confessio Amantis* (Cambridge: Brewer, 2021), 290 is incorrect.

29 See further, Edwards, "Buying Gower," 289.

30 He offered it in his Catalogue 193 (1899), no. 54 for £152.

31 It was sold at Sotheby's, July 24, 1924, lot 129. For discussion of the sale of *Piers Plowman* manuscripts see A. S. G. Edwards, "The Selling of *Piers Plowman* Manuscripts in the Twentieth Century," *Yearbook of Langland Studies* 27 (2013): 103–11.

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The price may have been boosted by the fact that it contained a fragment of Chaucer's *Troilus & Criseyde*.[32]

Overall, in commercial terms the history of the sale of Middle English manuscripts to North America before 1945 is a depressing one. Only very rarely is there a significant correlation between significance, rarity, and price. A couple of manuscripts stand apart from the trends that I have noted. The first is Huntington Library, MS HM 1, the unique exemplar of the Wakefield or Towneley plays (see Figure 3.1). The history of this manuscript has been largely told by Martin Stevens and I will not recount it now.[33] Suffice to note that it was bought by Rosenbach in 1922 at Sotheby's for £3,400, seemingly on commission for Huntington who paid £3,740 for it: that is, cost plus ten percent.[34]

This high price is a rare moment in the commercial history of selling Middle English manuscripts to North America. It was surpassed later in the same decade, on April 23–24, 1928, when Sotheby's sold books and manuscripts from the library of Henry Percy, ninth Earl of Northumberland. Lot 76 was a manuscript of the Middle English *Pilgrimage of the Soul*, in verse and prose and attributed incorrectly to Lydgate. It was bought by the American dealer, Gabriel Wells, for £5,800, on behalf of the New York Public Library, where it is now Spencer Collection MS 19.[35] The price is in every respect startling. One factor in its price was probably the twenty-four high-quality miniatures that it contained. More broadly, it may be a symptom of the fevered bibliomania that manifested itself immediately before the 1929 stock market crash, often symptomatized by the Kern sale in early 1929 in New York. But whatever the factors it remains an unprecedented price for a Middle English work in the first half of the twentieth century.

As will be apparent the story of Middle English manuscripts in America in the first half of the twentieth century is largely the story of two collections, those formed by Morgan, père et fils and by Huntington, and of two dealers, Quaritch and Rosenbach. The Morgans and Huntington were the collectors who made the American market in the early decades of the twentieth century. Their Middle English acquisitions were not limited to the poetic triumvirate of Chaucer, Gower, and Langland. By the early 1920s Huntington had, in addition to the Chaucer and Gower acquired with the Ellesmere manuscripts, several others from that source: one of Thomas Hoccleve's *Regiment of Princes* (MS EL 26 A 13) and prose works by John Fortescue (MS EL 34 C 18) and Edward

32 When I sought individual purchase records for these manuscripts when at the Huntington in 2016 I was told that none could be found.

33 Martin Stevens, "The Manuscript of the *Towneley Plays*: Its History and Editions," *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 67 (1973): 231–44.

34 I am indebted to Stephen Tabor of the Huntington Library for a copy of Rosenbach's invoice. The account of the sale of this manuscript in Edwin Wolf II and John F. Fleming, *Rosenbach: A Biography* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1960), 155, seems open to doubt.

35 For description see Victor Hugo Paltsits, "The Petworth Manuscript of 'Grace Dieu' or 'The Pilgrimage of the Soul' an English Illuminated Manuscript of the Fifteenth Century," *Bulletin of the New York Public Library* 32 (1928): 175–20; and Rosemarie Potz McGerr, ed., *The Pilgrimage of the Soul: A Critical Edition of the Middle English Dream Vision*, *Vol. 1* (New York: Garland, 1990), lxxx–lxxxiv, neither of which mentions the price.

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Plantagenet (MS EL 35 B 63). He bought extensively from Rosenbach's 1923 Phillipps purchase, including three manuscripts of the prose *Brut* (MSS HM 113, 131, 136), two of the *Prick of Conscience* (MSS HM 130, 139), a holograph manuscript of Hoccleve's verse (MS HM 111) and a further copy of his *Regiment of Princes* (MS HM 135), Hilton's *Scale of Perfection* and the *Northern Homily Cycl*e (MS HM 129). Elsewhere he got another *Brut* (MS HM 133), and two other manuscripts of the *Prick of Conscience* (MSS HM 125, 128), and another Hoccleve holograph (MS HM 744). He also had several works of Lydgate, including an elaborately illustrated copy of his *Fall of Princes* (now MS HM 264) bought by Rosenbach in 1924 for £1,100 and a copy of his *Life of Our Lady* bought by Smith for $1,025 in the Hoe sale of 1912, where it was the only Middle English manuscript (now MS HM 115).[36] Until recently no American library held more Middle English.[37]

The Morgan Library was more selective in it acquisitions. Pierpont Morgan bought the first of their two copies of Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Life of Christ* (M.226) in 1905 for $2,000, "much the highest price paid up until then for a manuscript [of it]."[38] The second (M.648), was bought by in 1920. It included sixteen miniatures, one of only two of the fifty odd manuscripts to include any. He got it for £350, considerably less than the earlier, much less elaborate copy. He also bought a couple of Wycliffe Bibles and a manuscript of Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*.[39] The only other comparable collectors in this field were George Plimpton, who made several important purchases, but on a smaller scale, and Garrett, who collected Middle English as part of a larger strategy of manuscript acquisition. They each owned about a dozen relevant manuscripts. Both collectors were connected with institutional libraries, Columbia and Princeton respectively, to which their collections passed. And both had largely completed their libraries before the slump in the 1930s. There were few others prepared to enter this field. Occasionally institutions seized an opportunity to acquire works that were generally the most common of those that survive, where supply usually exceeded demand in that period and hence were among the cheapest: two manuscripts of the *Prick of Conscience* reached North America and several of the prose *Brut*.[40]

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36 For MS HM 264 see A. S. G. Edwards, "Selling Lydgate Manuscripts in the Twentieth Century," in *New Directions in Manuscript Studies and Reading Practices: Studies in Honor of Derek Pearsall*, ed. Kathryn Kerby-Fulton and John Thompson (South Bend: University of Notre Dame Press, 2014), 207–19 at 210–11; for HM 115 see Mary Wellesley and A. S. G. Edwards, "Broken Up: The History of a Middle English Manuscript," *The Book Collector* 69.4 (2020): 643–51.

37 The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library through its recent acquisition of the Takamiya manuscripts now has the greatest number.

38 On the Morgan's acquisitions of these manuscripts see Christopher de Hamel, "The Selling and Collecting of Manuscripts of Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Christ* since the Middle Ages," in *Nicholas Love at Waseda*, ed. Shoichi Oguro, Richard Beadle, and Michael Sargent (Cambridge: Brewer, 1997), 87–97 at 94–95.

39 The Bibles are PML, M.362 (bought by Quaritch at Sotheby's, March 27, 1909, lot 896, Lord Amherst of Hackney sale) and M.400 (bought in 1910); the *Fall of Princes* is M.124, bought for £375 in April 1903; see further Edwards, "Selling Lydgate," 209.

40 Wellesley College MS 8, sold at Sotheby's, November 13, 1922, lot 376 and University of Pennsylvania Libraries, MS Codex 218 (formerly MS Eng. 8) (bought from Maggs, Catalogue 689

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The only private American collector active in acquiring Middle English manuscripts on any scale by the late 1920s was Boies Penrose, who in a brief period bought a Wycliffe Bible at the Leconfield sale, Sotheby's, April 23–24, 1928, lot 107 (£590 to Goldschmidt), and at the Delamere sale (Sotheby's, July 16–18, 1928, lot 558) an unusual manuscript that contained Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* and Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, a rare manuscript conjunction, together with other works (£980 to "Garstin"). Penrose subsequently acquired it in 1929, but when, under what circumstances, or for what price I have not been able to determine.[41] At the same sale he bought a copy of John Trevisa's translation of Higden's *Polychronicon* (lot 557; £410 to Goldschmidt).[42] Later in that year he bought a manuscript of Chaucer's *Astrolabe*.[43] But subsequently his focus was firmly on travel and exploration.[44] The only later Middle English manuscript that he bought was a copy of Mandeville's *Travels* in 1937.[45]

As to the dealers: Quaritch was an early cultivator of the American market, but often found himself confronting the resistance of collectors particularly for manuscripts. He sent his son Alfred to America for the first time in 1890 together with a selection of manuscripts, including a copy of Gower's *Confessio*. Alfred reported glumly to his father, Bernard: "The MSS the people don't understand or can't afford."[46] Few, including the Gower, sold. Alfred made annual trips over the next eighteen years, but they do not seem to have much discernible effect on the sale of Middle English works. In the United States Rosenbach, as we have seen, had limited success in selling works of this kind after Huntington's death, soon after which he seems to have lost the appetite for acquisition. After 1930 he did not visit England and found himself encumbered (like Quaritch) with stock he could not move, or only shift at a loss. Middle English manuscripts seem to have remained a largely commercially unrewarding market in North America during this period.

(1940), no. 170), offered for £150; for details of *Brut* manuscripts see A. S. G. Edwards, "Bruts for Sale," in *The Prose Brut and other Late Medieval Chronicles*, ed. Jaclyn Rajsic, Eric Kooper, and Dominique Roche (Cambridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2016), 218–31.

41 It was subsequently sold by Penrose at auction: *Sixteen Highly Important Manuscripts and Early Printed Books: to be Sold at Auction in Basel 27 September 1978* (Basel: Haus der Bücher, 1978), lot 2 for 195,000 Swiss francs and was acquired by Toshiyuki Takamiya; it is now New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, MS Takamiya 32.

42 Now owned by Senshu University, Japan, MS 1.

43 Acquired after its sale at Sotheby's, November 12, 1928, lot 72; it was sold from Penrose's collection at Sotheby's, November 9, 1971, lot 286 and is now Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, MS Takamiya 9.

44 For some account of his library see Boies Penrose, "Contemporary Collectors XXVIII: The Library at Barbados Hill, Devon, Pennsylvania," *The Book Collector* 10.3 (1961): 301–10. It does not mention most of the manuscripts noted here.

45 This is now Princeton University Library, Taylor MS 10.

46 Quoted in Leslie A. Morris, "Bernard Alfred Quaritch in America," in *The Book Collector. A Special Number* (1997): 180–97 at 190.

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Chapter 3

DOLLARS AND DRAMA

EARLY ENGLISH PLAYS AND THE AMERICAN BOOK TRADE 1906–1926

DANIELLE MAGNUSSON

ON JANUARY 10, 1922, Philadelphia dealer A. S. W. Rosenbach wrote to Henry E. Huntington, detailing the upcoming sale of a manuscript of medieval English biblical plays, anticipated to fetch £10,000–£15,000.[1] Today the manuscript is Huntington Library, MS HM 1 (Figure 3.1). Had the manuscript sold for £15,000, it would also have been more expensive than the Hours of Jeanne de Navarre, which had sold in 1919 for the record price of £11,800.[2] HM 1 would also have been more costly on its own than the twenty English manuscripts Rosenbach acquired from Thomas Fitzroy Fenwick in 1923 (costing £11,500 in total).[3] Moreover, at £15,000, the manuscript would have been only £100 less than the most expensive printed volume to have ever sold: a copy of *Venus and Adonis* which realized £15,100 or $75,000 in 1919.[4]

The manuscript lacked illuminations and possessed no known ties to notable literary or historical figures, raising the question of what led Rosenbach to believe that it could become one of the costliest books ever sold. In what follows, I will explore the American commercial appetite for early English drama between two pivotal sales, occurring in 1906 and 1926. This study will focus on the nationalistic beliefs, scholarship, and bibliophilic trends that influenced the commercial circulation of early dramatic literature.

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1 Correspondence relating to the sale can be found in San Marino, Huntington Library, HEH INST. ARCHIVES 31.1.1.39.1. My sincere thanks to Stephen Tabor of the Huntington Library for sharing the sale invoice: mssHEH 5:1.

2 The manuscript was acquired by Baron Edmond de Rothschild (now BnF, NAL 3145). Christopher de Hamel, "Cockerell as Entrepreneur," *The Book Collector* 55 (2006): 49–72 at 56.

3 This purchase included four Chaucerian manuscripts, two Langland manuscripts, and one astrological manuscript formerly belonging to John Dee. A. S. G. Edwards, "A State of Absolute Rarity," *The Book Collector* 65 (2016): 433–45 at 433.

4 Sold at a Britwell Court sale on December 16, 1919, to George D. Smith, buying on behalf of Huntington. Quaritch was the underbidder. Donald C. Dickinson, *Henry E. Huntington's Library of Libraries* (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1995), 131–32.

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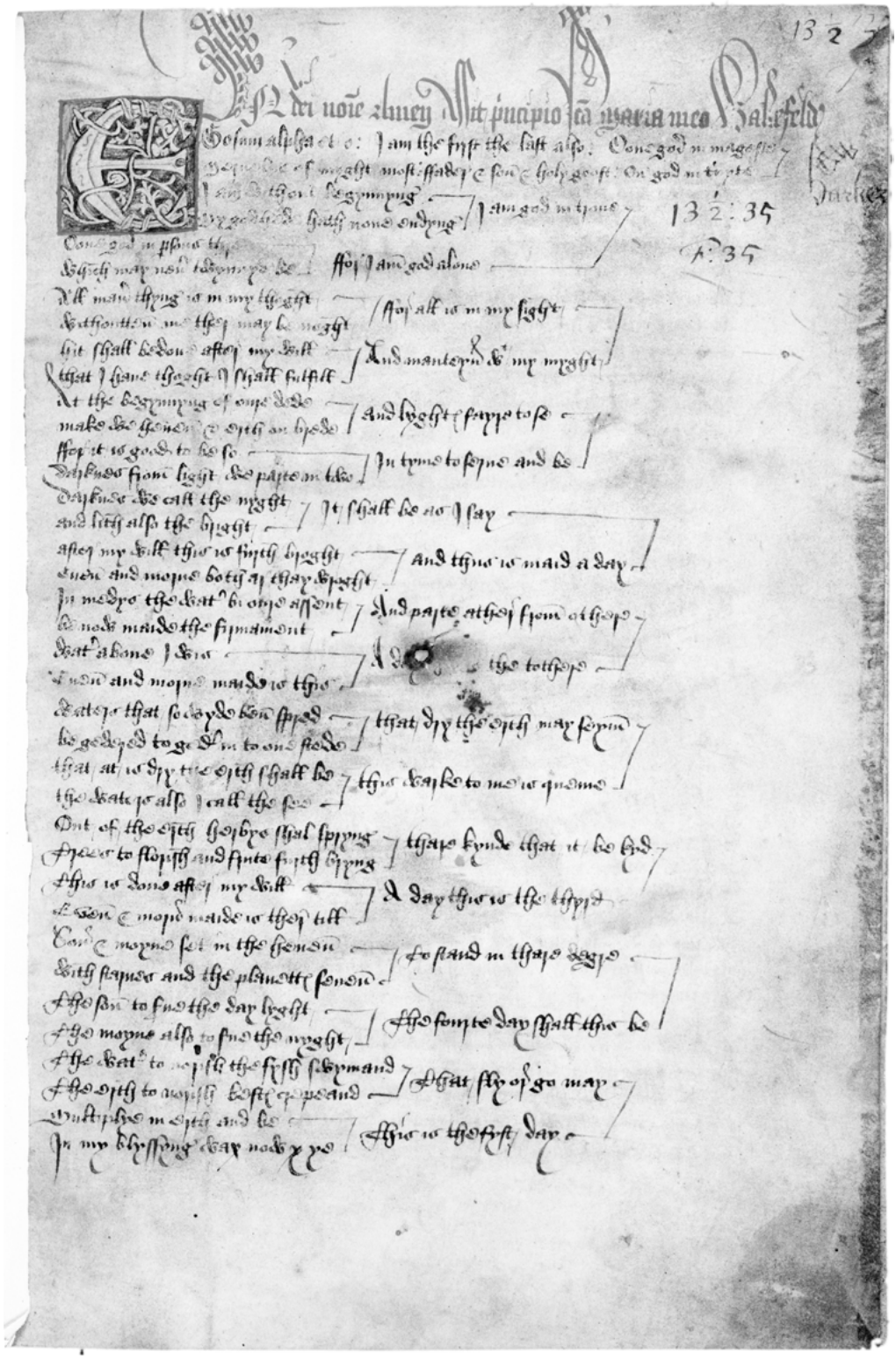


Figure 3.1. The Towneley Cycle, HM 1 fol. 1r, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

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It was not uncommon for early twentieth-century American collectors to regard English dramatic literature as national possessions *and* sound investments, perceptions rooted in prevailing notions about a shared Anglo-American heritage, rising market prices, provenance values, and active efforts by members of the trade.

Although swollen prices became less surprising as the century progressed (even dealers could be shocked by how well dramatic literature performed commercially), the profitability of medieval literary manuscripts was never guaranteed. E. P. Goldschmidt described the manuscript trade overall as "a peculiar business," writing that, "A manuscript lacking all pictorial decoration, whatever its contents or its historical interest, is a thing of little commercial value…from a business point of view the handling of old manuscripts without pictures in them is unattractive and unprofitable."[5] Furthermore, as A. S. G. Edwards has noted, Middle English manuscripts were not typically the most commercially successful rare books in the nineteenth or early twentieth centuries, and saleable, highly priced manuscripts were not necessarily profitable.[6]

Nonetheless in 1922, Rosenbach, arguably the leading bookseller in the world following his recent successes at the 1921 Britwell sale, appeared confident that collectors would pay enormous sums for a late medieval English drama manuscript.[7] Nineteenth- and early twentieth-century scholars insisted on the literary and historical significance of the manuscript, aware that it preserved one of the few remaining English cycles. The manuscript was believed to have been produced in or around Wakefield as a form of popular entertainment, with one prominent scholar even arguing that it contained the writings of England's "first great comic dramatist."[8] Among American dealers, Rosenbach was particularly well-positioned to turn scholarship to commercial advantage, having earned a PhD in early modern drama from the University of Pennsylvania. Rosenbach would have been acutely aware of how seldom such texts entered the market.

The earliest extant examples of "early English drama" are identified as having been written or printed prior to the emergence of London's commercial theatre around 1575. Particularly in manuscript, early dramatic literature suffered high attrition rates, leaving behind only a small body of works.[9] Play texts were lost for a multitude of reasons, including censorship, overuse by previous owners, material limitations, and, occasionally, deliberate destruction.[10] Throughout the course of the sixteenth century, loss rates decreased as plays were increasingly printed and subsequently preserved. Nonetheless,

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5 E. P. Goldschmidt, "The Period Before Printing," in *Talks on Book-Collecting*, ed. P. H. Muir (London: Cassell, 1952), 25–39 at 25–28.

6 Edwards, "A State of Absolute Rarity," 443. See also Chapter 2 in this book.

7 C. G. des Graz, "The Doctor," *The Book Collector* 1 (1952): 177–80 at 177–78.

8 Charles Mills Gayley, "The Later Miracle Plays of England," *International Quarterly* 12 (October 1905): 67–88 at 67.

9 According to Darryll Grantley, thirty-one non-cycle English manuscripts survive: eleven are in the British Library; five are in the Bodleian; two are in the Huntington; thirteen are elsewhere. See Darryll Grantley, *English Dramatic Interludes, 1300–1580* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

10 David McInnis, *Shakespeare and Lost Plays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 3–5.

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research indicates that of those plays produced between 1567 and 1642, as many as 744 have been lost, hundreds remain untraceable, and only 543 have survived.[11]

For the earliest plays that survived into the twentieth century, the shadow of Shakespeare both generated interest and, to some degree, skewed scholarly inquiry. It was commonplace for scholars to place dramatic literature within an evolutionary framework: with successive dramatic forms understood to replace older, inferior forms. As Carol Symes has argued, such an approach reduces medieval plays to "deracinated curiosities," and forces them to remain "medieval, unenlightened, crude, in order to undergird modernity's cultural superiority."[12] In 1908, distinguished scholar Felix E. Schelling (who Rosenbach studied under at the University of Pennsylvania) characterized medieval drama as possessing a "crude and realistic simplicity," and primarily serving as a "censor of morals and conduct."[13] Schelling remained predictably dismissive of the earliest dramatic forms, referring to such plays as "the old popular drama of the citizens," and observing in 1910 that the "accession of Queen Elizabeth found England without a genuine drama."[14] Rosenbach himself described medieval biblical plays as: "naïve and simple to a degree…reminiscent of the spirit of the pictorial representations to be found in the illuminated missals and other service books of the same period, where the treatment is equally naïve."[15] Medieval cycle plays, moralities, and early sixteenth-century interludes all suffered from the widespread conviction that literary significance was measured by proximity to Shakespearean drama.

However, those barriers to deeper scholarly examination—the antiquity of individual plays, perceptions of their simplicity, and a history of appealing to provincial audiences—drew the attention of both collectors and members of the trade. Moreover, scholars had established conditions that allowed dealers and collectors to connect any early play to the Shakespearean stage. While scholarly assessments do not always align directly with commercial pricing, as David Pearson explains: "Both dealers and collectors wish to find out what is known about the book in front of them, where it stands in the canon of cultural values, and particularly how rare it is."[16] A. W. Pollard expressed similar sentiments in 1910, noting that the most collectible books appeal to the collector's "eye, his mind or to his imagination, and many famous books appeal to all three."[17] Collectors could appreciate early plays not only for their association with Shakespeare, but also for their role in preserving aspects of pre-modern festivity and spiritual belief

11 McInnis, *Shakespeare and Lost Plays*, 1.

12 Carol Symes, "The History of Medieval Theatre/Theatre of Medieval History: Dramatic Documents and the Performance of the Past," *History Compass* 7 (2009): 1032–44 at 1036.

13 Felix E. Schelling, *Elizabethan Drama, 1558–1642* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1908), xxviii, xxiii.

14 Felix E. Schelling, *English Literature During the Lifetime of Shakespeare* (New York: Holt, 1910), 63.

15 A. S. W. Rosenbach, *A Book Hunter's Holiday* (Boston: Riverside Press, 1929), 234.

16 David Pearson, "Patterns of Collecting and Trading in Antiquarian Books," in *Out of Print & Into Profit*, ed. Giles Mandelbrote (London: British Library, 2006), 201–15 at 206.

17 A. W. Pollard, "Book-Collecting," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th edn., vol. 4 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910), 224.

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that might otherwise have been lost. In his study of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century collectors, Robert Alan Shaddy observed a tendency towards "books, manuscripts and other collectibles [that] allowed the recovery of an idealized past which had slipped or was slipping away from them."[18] The prolonged history of neglect suffered by such texts not only amplified their sentimental and emotional value, but also elevated their overall desirability among collectors.

In 1906, the discovery of an old book of plays in Ireland caught the attention of the trade. Seymour de Ricci provides an account of how the owner, curious to see if the book was valuable, tore out a page and sent it to Sotheby's for inspection.[19] After being assured that the book was indeed worth something: "he posted the book tied up with string, without even a wrapper round it."[20] The volume contained seventeen pre-Elizabethan printed plays, including three presumed lost and four unknown altogether. Sotheby's sold the plays in June 1906 for more than £2,000.[21] With lots ranging from £82 to £233, all went to the dealer Bernard Alfred Quaritch.[22] This sale prompted speculation about where valuable plays might surface next. In his 1907 *Recently Recovered "Lost" Tudor Plays*, John S. Farmer assured readers that, "in the most unlikely quarters and when least expected other lost plays of the Tudor period might turn up."[23]

Five of these plays eventually made their way into one of the most significant American collections of early drama: the library of Alexander Smith Cochran. With a fortune of $50 million dollars from his family's New York carpet business, Cochran "spent as though his resources were limitless."[24] Cochran purchased the plays from Quaritch on December 11, 1908, "apparently on the spur of the moment."[25] According to Edmund H. Dring, Cochran had originally intended to build a collection of English poetry, but Quaritch recommended he pursue drama in its place: this was a less crowded field.[26] Within just three years, Cochran had formed the greater part of his library. Cochran's collec-

18 Robert Alan Shaddy, "A World of Sentimental Attachments: The Cult of Collecting, 1890–1930," *The Book Collector* 43 (1994): 185–200 at 186.

19 Seymour de Ricci, *English Collectors of Books & Manuscripts (1530–1930) and Their Marks of Ownership* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1930), 177–78.

20 De Ricci, *English Collectors*, 177.

21 De Ricci gives the price of £2,000 in *English Collectors*, 177; Farmer gives a hammer price of over £2,600, in his *Recently Recovered "Lost" Tudor Plays* (London: EEDS, 1907), v.

22 Farmer also mentions this in his *Recently Recovered "Lost" Tudor Plays*, vi. However, Farmer additionally notes that "the rarest and best items of the collection, the 'lost' plays and unrecorded editions, were bought for the nation," vi. De Ricci, *English Collectors*, 178, claims that the biggest buyers were the British Museum and W. A. White.

23 Farmer, *Recently Recovered "Lost" Tudor Plays*, v; see also De Ricci, *English Collectors*, 177.

24 Alan Bell, "The Foundation of the Elizabethan Club Library," *The Book Collector* 35 (1986): 337–45 at 338; Walter Goffart, *The Industrialist and the Diva* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020), 39.

25 Bell, "Foundation," 340.

26 Gilbert McCoy Troxell, "The Elizabethan Club: Its Origins and Its Books," *The Yale University Library Gazette* 27 (July 1952): 19–28 at 24.

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tion was built relatively quietly, particularly given that his library would eventually be ranked third in importance for permanent American collections of early dramatic materials, surpassed only by the libraries of Huntington and Henry Clay Folger.

Several years into his collecting, Cochran wrote to his former Yale professor, William Lyons Phelps. Phelps had taught Elizabethan drama, and he remembered Cochran as a shy student with no special enthusiasm for the subject.[27] Cochran told Phelps that while living in England he amused himself by purchasing Elizabethan literature and offered to send Phelps a list of his collected items. Phelps recalled that when this list reached him, he nearly fell out of his chair.[28] Every item was one of extreme rarity, worth hundreds of thousands in total.[29] In 1911, Cochran gave his library to Yale, founding the Elizabethan Club with Phelps's help. Cochran's intention was to encourage undergraduates to discuss art and literature, telling Phelps that "the one thing he had missed at Yale was good conversation."[30] Yale was not uniformly enthusiastic about the Club, with one of the earliest librarians recalling that "very few thought that it was destined for anything more than complete and rather dismal failure."[31]

Cochran's focus seldom remained fixed on a single pursuit for long, and his collecting career was no different. Walter Goffart sums up Cochran's collecting as follows: he collected Shakespeareana and Elizabethan books for three years, gave his collection to the Club, added three further purchases, "then never again owned a rare book."[32] While Cochran's collecting had largely ceased by 1917, the Quaritch firm had guaranteed that his short-lived venture into collecting had proven remarkably successful. Cochran was initially reluctant to bid at the Robert Hoe sale, so Quaritch cautioned: "It is rarely that such opportunities occur to purchase the early English plays."[33] Quaritch also encouraged him to make private purchases from the Huth library in 1911, preceding the auction. This decision became a major transaction in the history of book collecting, with Cochran spending thirty thousand guineas to acquire forty-two prime lots.[34] However, despite his achievements as a collector, Alan Bell suggests that it was the "lukewarm reception" given to the Elizabethan Club by Yale in 1911 that ultimately brought Cochran's collecting to an end.[35]

Cochran's methods, heavily dependent on the knowledge of commercial agents, assertive acquisition, and the creation of a permanent institution to house his collection, quickly evolved into standard practice for American collectors. These undertakings were legitimized by the belief that early English literature played a vital educational and

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27 William Lyon Phelps, *Autobiography with Letters* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939), 292.

28 Troxell, "Elizabethan Club," 84.

29 Phelps, *Autobiography,* 293.

30 Phelps, *Autobiography*.

31 Troxell, "Elizabethan Club," 83.

32 Goffart, *Industrialist and the Diva*, 19.

33 Bell, "Foundation," 339.

34 Bell, "Foundation," 341.

35 Bell, "Foundation," 342.

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cultural role for the nation. As one theatre historian explained in 1917, "the heritage of today is a heritage which for fourteen hundred years has been ripening for the British Empire and America alike," insisting that "America still holds to the wisdom of her Shakespearean ancestors."[36] American collectors had traditionally regarded English literature through a patriotic lens. Without drawing a distinction between American and British audiences, the Grolier Club's 1902 *One Hundred Books Famous in English Literature* proclaimed that English literature "reads like a physical map by peak, river and coast, and sees in miniature the intellectual conformation of a nation."[37] By acquiring English books, especially Elizabethan texts, Americans were essentially safeguarding their own cultural heritage. When Folger decided to place his collection in the nation's capital, the justification given was simply: "I finally concluded I would give it to Washington; for I am an American."[38]

By 1924 the national practice of conserving early drama for the benefit of the American public had firmly taken root, with the *New York Times* declaring that American collectors enjoyed "preserv[ing] the results of their endeavors in book-gathering by converting their libraries into special organizations for the use of the public."[39] With so much dramatic literature permanently exiting the market, the American market had already begun to contract by 1923, even as auction prices continued to escalate. The *New York Times* attributed the vanishing commercial market to "the unwillingness of collectors here to part with these supreme monuments of English literature of which so many are in America."[40]

These developments were met with less enthusiasm on the other side of the Atlantic. As early as 1899, *The Athenæum* was openly appealing to the British public to take greater interest in early drama, arguing that "the dramatic literature of mediæval England is in many respects the most valuable and distinctly English of the literary productions of our country."[41] The article warned against "the earliest monuments of a great English art leav[ing] our shores."[42] In a 1919 article entitled "Selling the Nation's Heirlooms," scholar Frederick Boas petitioned for measures to be taken against the loss of rare books to foreign buyers. Boas wrote that "[English] dramatic poetry, is amongst the world's most precious possessions."[43] His praise extended to the works of lesser-known

36 Charles Mills Gayley, *Shakespeare and the Founders of Liberty in America* (New York: Macmillan, 1917), vii, 202.

37 George Woodberry, *One Hundred Books Famous in English Literature* (New York: Grolier Club, 1902), xiii.

38 Stephen H. Grant, *Collecting Shakespeare: The Story of Henry and Emily Folger* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014), 139.

39 "Notes on Rare Books," *NYT*, August 17, 1924, 19.

40 "Notes on Rare Books."

41 "Drama," *The Athenæum*, December 2, 1899, 769.

42 "Drama."

43 Frederick Boas, "Selling the Nation's Heirlooms," *The Nineteenth Century* 86 (August 1919): 262–65 at 262.

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dramatists and more eminent figures. Without explicitly mentioning Huntington, Boas expressed regret over recent acquisitions attributed to him, including items from the sale of Lord Mostyn's library.

Like the Irish Find of 1906, the Mostyn sale of 1919 involved the recovery of "lost" and extraordinarily valuable plays. There had been longstanding rumours that Mostyn Hall held valuable early plays, but little was known with certainty about the library's composition prior to the sale.[44] Readers of the Sotheby's catalogue were astonished at the 364 lots available for purchase.[45] While many of the items were of extreme rarity, some were unique copies, commercially available for the first time. This was not Mostyn's first sale: in 1907, he had anonymously tested the market with sixty-eight early plays.[46] According to the British press these were "mostly bought at high prices by American collectors."[47] Members of the American trade were enthusiastic about the upcoming 1919 sale, with *Publishers' Weekly* declaring that: "No such collection has ever been sold in England or America before."[48] British members of the trade had a more varied response: even at the risk of losing further Mostyn plays to American buyers, most members recognized the vital function auctions played in establishing pricing for items lacking an established commercial history.[49]

Although it came as no shock that the Mostyn plays performed well commercially, the prices exceeded predictions, raising over £40,800 across two days of sales.[50] The *Sunday Times* reported that the sale had "inflamed the public imagination," detailing how "A few fat old volumes, long mouldering in a cupboard, are pulled out, broken up and sold for £40,000."[51] Huntington alone spent £10,012 at the sale.[52] Members of the trade were stunned, declaring the Mostyn high prices of "early and little known English plays…one of the surprises of the season."[53] The *New York Times* characterized the bidding as "keen," with Quaritch and George D. Smith emerging as leading buyers and claiming the most expensive lots.[54] Quaritch spent £3,020 ($15,100) on a previously

44 Llewelyn Nevill Vaughan Lloyd-Mostyn, 3rd Baron Mostyn.

45 "Notes on Sales," *The Times Literary Supplement* no. 885, January 2, 1919, 12; *Catalogue of A Most Important & Interesting Collection of Early English Plays The Property Of The Lord Mostyn … Which Will be Sold by Auction … 20th of March, 1919* (London: Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge).

46 Seymour de Ricci, *Fulgens and Lucres* (New York: Smith, 1920), 9. Quaritch purchased twenty sixteenth-century plays from the Mostyn sale in 1907. Of these, eight ended up in the Elizabethan Club collection. See Bell, "Foundation," 343.

47 "Sixteenth Century Quarto Plays in the Sale-Room: The Mostyn Collection," *Illustrated London News*, February 8, 1919, 8.

48 *Publishers' Weekly*, March 1, 1919, 571.

49 "Rare English Plays," *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, January 31, 1919, 4.

50 *Publishers' Weekly*, April 19, 1919, 1097.

51 Edmund Gosse, "Gossip In A Library," *The Sunday Times*, April 6, 1919, 5.

52 Dickinson, *Henry E. Huntington's Library of Libraries*, 124.

53 *Publishers' Weekly*, May 3, 1919, 1235.

54 "Keen Bidding For Plays," *NYT*, March 22, 1919, 7.

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unrecorded copy of *Fidele and Fortunio*—listed in the catalogue as the foundation play for Shakespeare's *Two Gentlemen of Verona*.[55] Smith spent even more on the unique copy of *Fulgens and Lucres*, paying £3,400 ($17,000).[56] The British press labelled *Fulgens and Lucres* the earliest Elizabethan drama yet discovered.[57] *Publishers' Weekly* praised the play as the "bright particular jewel" of the sale, boasting that the copy "will come to America, its buyer paying the record price of the year, $17,000, for it."[58] For members of the trade, the results of the Mostyn sale proved that "London seems to be in accord with New York so far as its appreciation of Early English literature is concerned," and there were predictions that the success of the sale would lure other drama collections out into the market.[59]

There was indeed a surge of commercial activity following the Mostyn sale, fostered by the favourable market conditions of the early 1920s: motivated buyers were presented with unique opportunities. Prominent sales of early drama included the Herschel V. Jones sales of 1918 and 1919, the sale of William A. White's library in 1923 to Huntington for $260,000, and the 1926 sale of John L. Clawson's library.[60] The Clawson sale is now recognized as the "monetary peak of the enthusiasm for the Elizabethans," producing an average price per lot that broke all records in American book-auction history.[61] Scholars of early English drama must have observed the market in astonishment. As early as 1902, the *New York Times* reported that an American collector who had acquired a first edition of "Merry Devil of Edmonton" for £300 had been:

> scoffed at by certain bibliographical writers who cannot understand the present appreciation of rare examples of the early English drama. The other native collector who paid in February, 1901, the large sum of £620 for Shakespeare's 'Titus Andronicus,' 1611, was criticized by the same all-wise authorities, who referred to it as 'a fantastic price.'[62]

Collectors often justified their acquisitions by asserting that their libraries provided researchers with improved access to rare texts. As one of the original trustees of the Huntington Library insisted: "Manuscripts that have reposed in private coffers and books that have escaped the scholar in the safe retreat of country houses will soon serve for the production of new chapters in the history of literature."[63] Charles Mills Gayley, arguably the foremost American drama scholar of the period, openly acknowledged

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55 Lot 107; *Publishers' Weekly*, April 12, 1919, 1019.

56 Lot 226; *Publishers' Weekly*, May 3, 1919, 1235.

57 Gosse, "Gossip," 5.

58 *Publishers' Weekly*, May 3, 1919, 1235. Today the copy is Huntington Library 62599.

59 *Publishers' Weekly*, April 19, 1097.

60 Dickinson, *Henry E. Huntington's Library of Libraries*, 193.

61 Wolf and Fleming, *Rosenbach: A Biography*, 252–53.

62 "Early Plays. Their Rarity and Rise in Value," *NYT*, December 6, 1902, 35.

63 George Ellery Hale, "The Huntington Library and Art Gallery," *Scribner's Magazine* 82.1 (July 1927): 31–43 at 43.

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that access to rare texts was a genuine concern. In 1904 Gayley admitted that the "drawback to scholarship in America is a lack of original manuscripts…scholars of all kinds find it necessary to travel thousands of miles, and to spend thousands of dollars, for the purpose of consulting priceless manuscripts or early printed books."[64] However, for Gayley, what American scholars needed was not private collectors bringing more rare books to America, but access to a larger collection of facsimiles. Gayley proposed the creation of a Bureau for the Reproduction of Manuscripts, which would circulate photographic facsimile editions of rare texts to subscribing universities and libraries worldwide. Gayley advocated for the scheme at the 1905 International Congress at Liège for the Reproduction of Manuscripts, Coins, and Seals. The Congress passed a resolution "unreservedly endorsing" the scheme, and Gayley was assured of the "hearty cooperation" of leading European libraries, including the British Museum, the Bodleian, the Bibliothèque Nationale, Trinity College Dublin, and the Vatican.[65] There was also broad support at home, with the librarian at Brown University, H. L. Koopman, declaring: "I consider the facsimile reproduction of original manuscripts and unique or rare printed books to be a work of the highest importance to American scholarship."[66] Ultimately, however, securing sufficient financial support proved impossible, and Gayley's scheme was never implemented.[67]

If Gayley considered American private libraries an alternative to his Bureau for the Reproduction of Manuscripts, he kept these views quiet. Despite being largely based at the University of California, Berkeley, situated far from both East Coast and European libraries, Gayley produced pioneering scholarship on early English drama. Long before the Towneley manuscript arrived in California, Gayley identified the "Wakefield Master," a writer he believed to be responsible for the most significant literary works within the manuscript.[68] By 1905, Gayley had published a landmark study of early English Comedy as well as a successful "medieval" miracle play entitled *The Star of Bethlehem* (performed before both American and English audiences).[69] Acknowledging these and other contributions to literary scholarship, Gayley was granted honorary membership in the Elizabethan Club in 1912. As a member, Gayley would have had opportunities to interact with notable collectors, including Beverly Chew, George Plimpton, and William A. White. Gayley would also have crossed paths with fellow scholars like George Woodberry, who authored the Introduction to the Grolier Club's *One Hundred Books Famous in English Literature*, and Schelling.[70] Curiously, while Club membership could be reason-

64 "The Plan in Detail," *The Evening Post*, November 19, 1904, 30.

65 "International Congress on Facsimiles," *The Evening Post*, September 9, 1905, 22.

66 "Plan in Detail," 30.

67 Benjamin P. Kurtz, *Charles Mills Gayley* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1943), 181.

68 Gayley, "The Later Miracle Plays of England."

69 Charles Mills Gayley, *Representative Comedies* (New York: Macmillan, 1903); Charles Mills Gayley, *The Star of Bethlehem* (New York: Fox, Duffield, 1904).

70 *The Book of the Elizabethan Club* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1912), 41.

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ably expected to foster collaboration between collectors and scholars, Gayley showed little professional interest in private collections.

Though he argued that the Towneley manuscript's *Second Shepherds' Play* was a masterpiece that "excels any other play written before the sixteenth century," worthy of being "read in every college and known by every gentleman to-day," there is no evidence that Gayley advocated for American ownership when the manuscript became available for purchase.[71] The Huntington Library holds no correspondence between Gayley and Huntington.[72] This remained the case even after Huntington acquired the Kemble-Devonshire plays, a purchase which eventually brought 7,500 English plays and the earliest manuscript of the medieval Chester Cycle to California.[73]

Although Gayley appeared to resist the commercial aspects of early dramatic literature, American collectors typically made limited use of scholarly views, and primarily to bolster or facilitate commercial assessments. Even the most scholarly dealers, Rosenbach and Gabriel Wells, expressed reservations about scholarly involvement in the formation of collections. Wells remarked that, "Great readers are no respecters of books."[74] Rosenbach stated more bluntly that:

> It is a wonderful and magnificent thing that the gathering of books in this country is in the hands of leaders of her industries, the so-called business kings, and not in the hands of college professors and great scholars. The latter, generally, in forming a collection make a sad mess of it.[75]

While scholars and collectors shared an interest in the historical and political significance of individual plays, collectors were far more invested in provenance, a fact reflected in commercial narratives. For collectors, "provenance is at once a cachet of excellence and a sentimental link in a cultural chain which binds one age to another."[76] Many early English plays were admired for their outstanding pedigree. Some of the most distinguished nineteenth- and early twentieth-century collectors had acquired early drama, with De Ricci observing that, "Nothing is scarcer, nothing is more desirable for a collector than these…the earliest plays in English literature."[77] Members of the famous Roxburghe Club had collected drama, and some of the earliest Roxburghe publications featured dramatic texts. Roxburghe editions included: *A Proper New Interlude of the*

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71 Charles Mills Gayley, *Plays of Our Forefathers* (New York: Duffield and Co., 1907), 182; Gayley, *Star of Bethlehem*, xvi.

72 I wish to thank the staff of the Huntington Library for providing this information.

73 Dickinson, *Henry E. Huntington's Library of Libraries*, 66. Today the Chester Cycle is San Marino, Huntington Library, MS HM 2.

74 Gabriel Wells, "The Evolution of the Book Collector," *The Bookman* 51.2 (April 1920): 180–86 at 181.

75 A. S. W. Rosenbach, *Books and Bidders* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1927), 254.

76 Edwin Wolf II, "Some Books of Early English Provenance in the Library Company of Philadelphia," *The Book Collector* 9 (1960): 275–85 at 275.

77 Seymour de Ricci, *The Book Collector's Guide* (Philadelphia: Rosenbach, 1921), 312.

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World and the Child, Otherwise Called Mundus et Infans (presented to the Club by John Charles Spencer, Viscount Althorp in 1817); *Chester Mysteries* (presented by James Heywood Markland in 1818); *Two Interludes: Jack Jugler and Thersytes* (presented by Joseph Haselwood in 1820); *Magnyfycence: an Interlude* (presented by Joseph Littledale in 1821); and *Judicium, a Pageant. Extracted from the Towneley Manuscript of Ancient Mysteries* (presented by Peregrine Edward Towneley in 1822).

These early Roxburghe editions themselves became collectible. Huntington not only purchased original plays formerly belonging to Roxburghe members, but he also pursued association copies of the earliest Roxburghe publications. In 1914 Huntington acquired the copy of the *Chester Mysteries* signed by James Heywood Markland and dedicated to George John Spencer, second Earl Spencer. In 1922, Huntington purchased the sixth Duke of Devonshire's personal copy of the 1822 *Judicium*. Finally, in 1921, Huntington added a second signed copy of *Chester Mysteries* that had been presented to Viscount Althorp.[78]

While Roxburghe editions of dramatic literature facilitated early nineteenth-century scholarship, making certain texts available to many scholars for the first time, the spread of these reproductions did not appear to diminish the increasing values of original copies. Indeed, these publications may have effectively highlighted the patrician status of selected texts. Even facsimiles produced by scholarly societies could serve to broadcast the commercial viability of specific plays and individual copies. For example, prior to the First World War, John S. Farmer and W. W. Greg both contributed to a flurry of publications containing early English dramatic texts. Farmer undertook the reproduction of play texts for the Early English Drama Society, while Greg was engaged with Malone Society Reprints. In certain instances, these scholarly publications adopted language suitable for explicitly commercial publications. In the 1909 Malone Society edition of *Fidele and Fortunio*, the introduction does not dwell on the play's literary significance, emphasizing instead the physical attributes of the copy, past ownership, and prices achieved at various sales.[79] Even after the 1909 publication, the Mostyn copy realized the high price of £3,020 at the 1919 sale (lot 107). Conversely, there is little indication that publications placing greater emphasis on the literary significance of individual plays, such as Farmer's 1906 edition of *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, which incorporated quotations from Gayley, stalled rising commercial values within the rare book market.[80]

Despite surviving in relatively large numbers for a sixteenth-century Interlude (twelve copies in total), *Gammer Gurton's Needle* had a remarkably successful commercial history.[81] Throughout the nineteenth century, copies passed through signifi-

78 I thank Stephen Tabor for providing this information.

79 Anthony Munday, *Fidele and Fortunio*, ed. W. W. Greg (London: Chiswick Press, 1909), v–vi. This is not to suggest that Greg was personally attempting to enhance the text's market value. Greg's interest in scientific or investigative bibliography, particularly in relation to early modern drama, was well known.

80 *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, ed. J. S. Farmer (London: Gibbings, 1906), v–xiv. It is worth noting that some collectors did worry that reproductions would damage commercial values.

81 De Ricci, *The Book Collector's Guide*, 312: "Of hardly any Interlude more than four or five copies

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cant libraries, including those of notable figures like the Duke of Roxburghe, Frederick Locker-Lampson, George Daniel, Alexander Dyce, and Richard Heber.[82] In 1912, Huntington purchased the Hoe copy for $1,010. In July 1918, Jones acquired the Huth copy for £700, reselling it in December 1918 for $10,000. During the 1919 Mostyn sale, two copies of this play were sold, one for £1,000 and the other for £1,200.[83] Buyers were often attracted to the provenance of individual copies and *Gammer Gurton's* significance in the history of theatre was as one of the earliest English comedies, rather than specifically its literary content, which at least one contemporary scholar described as "no longer amusing to educated people," with dialogue containing a "very rudimentary kind of humour which turns on physically disgusting suggestions."[84]

Regardless of textual evaluations, there was a growing consensus among Americans that early plays represented worthy cultural and fiscal investments. By 1924 the *New York Times* was commenting on the strong market for early drama: "Whatever touches that magic name, Midas-like, is overspread with gold…the writings of Shakespeare and the Elizabethans are the most expensive single division of the literature that is being collected to-day."[85] One contemporary described American collectors "fling[ing] a fortune before a book," so that they could, "with a certain æsthetic pleasure…read the ticker tape of bidding in the open book market and see their purchases rise in value to undreamed of heights."[86] These high prices tempted collectors who had not previously considered selling. In 1922, White asked Rosenbach to price his 1598 copy of *Richard II*. In 1890 White had paid $348 for the volume, but Rosenbach estimated he could now get $50,000. White reportedly told Rosenbach: "I've never sold a Shakespeare quarto in my life, but I'm sorely tempted. I'm itching to tell my sceptical family that I wasn't such a fool when I invested money in what they considered playthings."[87]

Within this dynamic market, manuscript drama held a distinctive position. Esteemed by scholars and collectors for being more unmediated than print, manuscripts were perceived as having closer ties to playwrights and original performance conditions.[88] On the market, manuscript drama represented the merging of historical significance with commercial value. While not all literary manuscripts achieved commercial success, there was no question that a Shakespearean manuscript would prove extremely desirable for collectors. Folger wrote about the high value he personally placed on manuscripts,

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are known."

82 De Ricci, *The Book Collector's Guide*, 251.

83 Provenance and sales details from De Ricci, *The Book Collector's Guide*, 251.

84 Henry Bradley, "William Stevenson," in *Representative Comedies*, ed. Charles Mills Gayley (New York: Macmillan, 1903), 195–204 at 202.

85 "Notes on Rare Books," *NYT*, August 10, 1924, 19.

86 Montrose Moses, "Will Shakespeare in Washington," *The North American Review* 234.3 (August 1932): 139–48 at 142.

87 Wolf and Fleming, *Rosenbach: A Biography*, 160–61.

88 See Paul Werstine, "Plays in Manuscript," in *A New History of Early English Drama*, ed. John C. Cox and David Scott Kastan (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 481–99.

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declaring that: "I have felt that they are of greater interest than printed books."[89] As for Huntington, it is worth noting that his first three manuscript accession numbers were plays: the Towneley manuscript (HM 1), the Chester Cycle (HM 2), and John Bale's *King John* (HM 3).

Returning to our initial discussion of Rosenbach, in 1922 he had estimated that the Towneley manuscript might sell for £10,000–£15,000. Following the London auction, Rosenbach sent Huntington a triumphant telegram informing him that he had just acquired the manuscript for £3,400, far less than Rosenbach had predicted, but still a record price for manuscript drama.[90] The condition of the manuscript was not pristine, and its textual contents were unfamiliar to many. However, the manuscript had steadily risen in commercial value throughout the nineteenth century. The manuscript's antiquity, its past ownership by an early member of the Roxburghe Club, its perceived status within literary history, and the robustness of the market for early English drama all combined to establish the characteristics of an exceedingly desirable rare book.[91] Furthermore, the manuscript's somewhat enigmatic early history added to its allure: uncertainties persisted about its place of origin and the date of its production.[92] Nevertheless, what could be affirmed with certainty was that the manuscript had been "recovered" during the early nineteenth century within the aristocratic surroundings of Towneley Hall. All these factors contributed to Rosenbach's assessment of the manuscript's commercial potential, leading him to predict that the Towneley manuscript would rank among the most expensive books in trade history.

89 Grant, *Collecting Shakespeare*, 79.

90 This auction price and details of the sale can be confirmed in various sources, including Edwards, "A State of Absolute Rarity," 442. Correspondence in San Marino, Huntington Library, HEH INST. ARCHIVES 31.1.1.39.1.

91 The manuscript was owned by Roxburghe Club member, Peregrine Edward Towneley.

92 A comparison of sales catalogue entries highlights these uncertainties. The manuscript was first sold in 1814 from the library of John Towneley. In 1815 the manuscript was sold by John Louis Goldsmid, and in 1819 it was sold with the library of John North. In 1883, the manuscript featured in the Towneley library auction and remained with Quaritch until 1900. Subsequently, Edward Coates owned the manuscript until his death in 1921. See Martin Stevens, "The Manuscript of the *Towneley Plays*: Its History and Editions," *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 67 (1973): 231–44.

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Chapter 4

THE FATES OF THE MANUSCRIPTS FROM THE VALLICELLIANA LIBRARY OF ROME AT THE END OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

LIVIA MARCELLI

THIS ESSAY REPRESENTS a preliminary investigation into the disappearance of manuscripts from the Vallicelliana Library of Rome. These books were among the enormous number of premodern manuscripts that changed hands in the early twentieth century. However, they seem to have disappeared from the Library between 1798 and 1810 and, for the most part, have only been identified on the antiquarian book market a century later.

Between 1798 and 1814, Rome was twice invaded by the French army: first by the Jacobins when it became known as the Roman Republic (1798–1799); and then by Napoleon's troops, who annexed it to the French Empire (1808–1814).[1] The Vallicelliana Library of Rome was the library of the Congregation of the Oratory; it lost at least thirty-seven manuscripts from its shelves, which the Oratorians probably hid from the pillages of the occupying armies. These historical events are recounted in the memoirs of Ruggiero Falzacappa, librarian of the Congregation and an eye-witness of the invasion. He wrote about the many "well-meaning curators," who, rather than let the books and manuscripts be stolen, kept them hidden to give them back to their rightful owners, and how these individuals had been compelled to sell these items when they fell into poverty.[2]

The Library's most precious manuscripts were probably hidden during the time of the Roman Republic, but their final removal most likely occurred in the subsequent thirty-year period. In the first half of the nineteenth century, the contents of the manuscript holdings were assessed on several occasions. An inspection dated 1810, found at the end of the topographical inventory, identified almost fifty manuscripts as missing,

1 Marina Formica, *La Città e la Rivoluzione, Roma 1798–1799* (Rome: Istituto per la Storia del Risorgimento italiano, 1994). See also Andreina Rita, *Biblioteche e requisizioni librarie a Roma in Età napoleonica: Cronologia e Fonti romane*, Studi e Testi 470 (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 2012).

2 "Tenga pure la sacra Penitenzieria il religioso inviolabile segreto; non cerco prove perché ho per me la pubblica voce, e fama, e più di tutti ho il fatto"; Ruggiero Falzacappa, *Origine, progresso e stato della Biblioteca Vallicelliana nel 1838* (Rome, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, MS Z 107, 10); see also Chapter 13 in this volume.

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and a similar account can be observed in a report written by the librarian and dated 1838–1839. The disappearance of the manuscripts during the 1810s was mentioned several times in 1874, when the Vallicelliana was absorbed by the Italian State. According to official documents, on May 13, 1874, sixty-two manuscripts were missing, of which thirty-seven had been stolen during the French occupation. Yet various manuscripts that were not found in the aforementioned appraisals are now present in the holdings of the Vallicelliana. One manuscript (A24) was missing in 1810, present in 1837, but is missing again today, while another with the same history (E39) is currently on the shelves (see appendix). This seems to vouch for the fact that the Oratorians themselves had hidden the manuscripts in safe places, and in some cases—but unfortunately not the majority—the items were returned.[3]

In what follows, I will analyse some case studies from among the thirty-seven missing manuscripts. All but one of the items under investigation have been progressively tracked in different libraries around the world (see appendix). They mostly comprise works by classical Latin authors, illuminated manuscripts, Bibles, and copies of Dante's and Petrarch's literary works; and they appeared on the antiquarian book market between the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. Most of these manuscripts were traced to the British Library in London; others have been found in France and the United States. The titles, an approximate dating, and information about the material and the number of the leaves are known thanks to the topographical inventory in three volumes written by the librarian Vincenzo Vettori in 1749, which proved instrumental in recognizing the plundered manuscripts.[4]

Manuscript F111 is the best documented of the missing books. Recorded for the last time in the Vallicelliana in 1809, today it is preserved in the Cornell University Library in Ithaca, New York, with the shelf mark D51. It forms part of the Fiske Dante collection, the most important Dante collection in the United States alongside the one at Harvard created by Charles Elliot Norton in 1890.[5] The codex is dated to 1513 and contains *La Vita Nuova*, along with other works by Dante Alighieri, Guido Cavalcanti, Cino da Pistoia, and Guittone d'Arezzo.[6] The manuscript, besides being dated, is signed by Jacopo

3 Elena Pinto, *La Biblioteca Vallicelliana di Roma* (Rome: Società Romana di Storia Patria, 1932), 103. In other cases, the removal of items was not noticed because the manuscript was dismembered without damaging the binding.

4 Vincenzo Vettori, *Inventarium Omnium Codicum Manuscriptorum Graecorum et Latinorum Bibliothecae Vallicellanae Digestum Anno Domini MDCCXLIX*, 3 vols. (1749); *Index Alphabeticus Universalis Cognominum, Nominum Auctorum Sanctorum et Virorum Illustrium, Auctorum Vitarum et Monumentorum quae in Codicibus Manuscriptis Grecis et Latinis Bibliothecae Vallicellanae Continentur Digestus Anno Domini MDCCXLIX*, 2 vols. (1749). The volumes are preserved at the Vallicelliana Library.

5 On the collection, see Thomas Frederick Crane, "The Dante Library," *Cornell Magazine* 6 (1894): 273–81. See also the digitized version of two leaves of the manuscript: https://rmc.library.cornell.edu/collector/dante/dante_6.html, accessed May 12, 2023.

6 The *Catalogue of the Dante Collection* describes the contents as: 1. *Vita nova di Dante Alighieri Fiorentino*; 2. *Canzoni XIV dell'Istesso*; 3. *Canzoni di Guido di Messer Cavalcante*; 4. *Canzoni e sonetti di Messer Cino da Pistoja*; 5. *Canzoni di Gitton* [sic] *d'Arezzo*; 6. *Argomento di 75 terzetti della prima*

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Antonio Benalio from Treviso.[7] After its disappearance from the Vallicelliana, it was purchased in 1858 by the Milanese lawyer Michele Cavaleri, who brought it to the Dante exhibition that took place in 1865 in Florence.[8]

It is useful here to sketch the history of the Cavaleri Museum of Milan, which experienced one of the greatest and most monumental losses in the history of Italian bibliographic and artistic heritage. Michele Cavaleri is known to have gathered an immensely rich collection by exploring antiquarian bookshops and acquiring manuscripts emerging from suppressed religious houses. Cavaleri proposed the purchase of his collection to the municipality of Milan, with the creation of a public museum to display it. A long and controversial series of legal processes followed, which ended with the city administration refusing his proposition, principally for political reasons.[9] The Cavaleri Museum collection was then sold in April 1872 to the naturalized French banker Enrico Cernuschi, thanks to the brokerage of Giuseppe Ferrari, a member of Parliament and friend of Cavaleri, who tried to avoid its dispersal.[10] In 1873, the Museum officially closed and 120 crates filled with manuscripts and artworks departed for Paris. Some kind of *damnatio memoriae* shrouded the event and the inventory of the Museum has never been found.

Subsequently, manuscript F111 passed into the hands of the collector and book merchant Daniel Willard Fiske, who may have acquired it from Cernuschi during one of his visits to Paris. Fiske's letters in 1893, together with the fact that he was using as a reference for his acquisitions William Coolidge Lane's catalogue of Harvard's Dante Collection,[11] demonstrate that his initially fortuitous interest in collecting Dante-related bibliographical antiquities became methodical from 1893.[12] At this time, "Dante-mania" was becoming established in American scholarly circles, which had looked upon the author with suspicion until the second half of the nineteenth century. In addition to

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parte della Commedia di Dante intitolata l'Inferno. See Theodore Wesley Koch, *Catalogue of the Dante Collection, presented by Willard Fiske*, 2 vols. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1898–1900), 1:83.

7 Laura Banella, "Leggere Dante lirico nel primo Cinquecento: Jacopo Antonio Benalio da Treviso," *Medioevo Letterario d'Italia: Rivista Internazionale di Filologia, Linguistica e Letteratura* 16 (2019): 75–97.

8 *Esposizione Dantesca in Firenze Maggio 1865*, 3 vols. (Florence: Le Monnier, 1865), 1:95.

9 The pieces had been exhibited in the Palazzo Busca (Milan) from April 1871 to November 1872, as the collector explains in Michele Cavaleri, *Il Museo Cavaleri e il Municipio di Milano* (Milan: Stabilimento Giuseppe Civelli, 1875). The collection comprised hundreds of manuscripts, parchment leaves, and illuminated books, including several dantesque copies and a dated manuscript of the Divine Comedy with tiny marginal notes. See also Silvio Mara, "Il Museo Cavaleri: Il mancato acquisto del Comune di Milano (1870–1873)," *Annali di Critica d'Arte* 9 (2013): 313–28.

10 Silvia Davoli, "I Corali di San Sisto nelle Collezioni ottocentesche: Michele Cavaleri ed Enrico Cernuschi," in *I corali Benedettini di San Sisto a Piacenza*, ed. Milvia Bollati (Bologna: Compositori, 2011), 67–78 at 73.

11 William Coolidge Lane, *The Dante Collections in the Harvard College and Boston Public Libraries* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1890).

12 Christian Yves Dupont, "Collecting Dante from Tuscany: The Formation of the Fiske Dante Collection at Cornell University," *Studies in Bibliography* 58 (2007–2008): 185–210 at 195.

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Italy, Fiske obtained Dante pieces from the London market, and he travelled extensively throughout Europe. He was in Paris in 1893, and it is likely that he purchased the manuscript thanks to the partial dismantling of the Cernuschi museum, which ended up dispersed among various private collectors.[13] As revealed by the preface to his Dante Collection catalogue, Fiske began to send materials to the Cornell Library in 1893, where he was the first librarian. In 1904, the Dante collection and the entire collection of books were bequeathed to the Library at Cornell.[14]

Manuscript B49 had an unusual trajectory, travelling to England and then returning to Florence. This codex has been the focus of much scholarly attention due to its musical content.[15] After being looted, it changed hands in England several times before eventually returning to Italy when it was acquired in 1884 by the Laurentian Library in Florence, together with items from the Ashburnham Library. This manuscript (B49) is now kept with the Ashburnham codices (MS Ashburnham 1051) and, following the incorporation of the collection into the Laurentian Library, was recorded as "belonging to the Escurial Library."[16] The manuscript is also marked with the *ex libris* of Augustus Frederick, duke of Sussex. After his death, some of his manuscripts were sold to Guglielmo Libri in 1844. In the Ashburnham catalogue, the manuscript is marked as part of Libri's library.[17] Libri's collection consisted of tens of thousands of manuscripts and printed volumes obtained from auctions, purchases of important private holdings, and, as it was demonstrated posthumously, through embezzlement.[18] After the first suspicion of theft, Libri sold a large proportion of his precious collection of manuscripts to Lord Bertram, fourth Earl of Ashburnham in 1847. In 1884, Ashburnham's heir, the fifth Earl, sold the Libri manuscripts to the Laurentian Library, together with some

13 Nino Del Bianco, *Enrico Cernuschi: Uno straordinario protagonista del nostro Risorgimento* (Milan: Angeli, 2006), 234–35.

14 Among the four thousand books in the Fiske collection that went to Cornell, there were seven Dante manuscripts, twenty-four Petrarch manuscripts, and two Boccaccio manuscripts. Dennis Dutschke, "Collecting Italian Manuscripts in the United States: Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, and Others," *Manuscripta* 51.1 (2007): 1–20 at 11.

15 The very rich bibliography on the manuscript includes Paul Oskar Kristeller, *Iter Italicum: A Finding List of Uncatalogued or Incompletely Catalogued Humanistic Manuscripts of the Renaissance in Italian and Other Libraries*, 6 vols. (London: Warburg Institute, 1963–1996), 1:93; and Margaret T. Gibson, Lesley Smith, and Marina Passalacqua, eds., *Codices Boethiani: A Conspectus of Manuscripts of the Works of Boethius*, 4 vols. (London: Warburg Institute, 1995–2001), 3:120–21n94.

16 It was ostensibly part of the bequest left to the Vallicelliana by the Portuguese humanist Achille Stazio (1524–1581). Following the incorporation of the collection into the Laurentian Library, it was described as: "De Musica Tractatus varii…Cod. membr. in folio, del XIV secolo. With drawings. In ancient times it belonged to the Escurial Library."

17 Seymour de Ricci, *English Collectors of Books & Manuscripts (1530–1930) and their Marks of Ownership* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1930), 131–38. On Guglielmo Libri see also Giuseppe Fumagalli, *Guglielmo Libri*, ed. Berta Maracchi Biagiarelli (Florence: Olschki, 1963).

18 In 1841 Libri was made secretary of a new commission set up to oversee the publication of a union catalogue of manuscripts in French public libraries. See A. N. L. Munby, "The Earl and the Thief: Lord Ashburnham and Count Libri," *Harvard Library Bulletin* 17.1 (1969): 5–21 at 6–7.

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other Italian manuscripts. The fifth Earl was not interested in collecting, so he sold part of his father's collection to the British Museum, and returned other components proven to be stolen to foreign libraries, in order to demonstrate that his father had purchased the implicated manuscripts in good faith.[19] The Escorial provenance of MS Ashburnham 1051 is put into doubt by more than one source: by the manuscript itself, in the form of an anonymous note on the first leaf;[20] and by those who endorsed the theory of Libri's forgery. Indeed, the false provenance is likely to have helped the circulation of the manuscript.

It is intriguing to observe that the contrived passage from the Escorial also recurs in two other missing Vallicelliana manuscripts. A recent study based on the accurate reproduction of the miniatures by Giuseppe Bianchini during the first half of the eighteenth century, tracked two Greek illuminated manuscripts back to their Vallicelliana origins: F90, an illuminated *Tetravangelo*, and D4/1, a lectionary.[21] Today they are held respectively by the British Library in London (Burney MS 19) and the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York (M.639). The former is recorded as missing since 1810, as only the printed version remained in the Library, in the collection of incunabula;[22] the latter had been sold at the auction of John Dent's library in London in 1827.[23] This transaction involved the London-based art merchant Samuel Woodburn, who was also involved in the history of MS Ashburnham 1051; and like the Ashburnham manuscript, F90 has a faked provenance associating it with the monastery of Escorial.[24]

Manuscript F90 is not the only Vallicelliana manuscript that reached the Burney collection in the British Museum in 1818, following the acquisition of Charles Burney's library from his son Charles Parr Burney. Indeed, seven illuminated manuscripts, most of which came from Florence and dated to the fifteenth century, were recently identified as part of the ongoing investigation into the British Library's Burney collection, that was initiated by the discovery of the two Greek manuscripts and the Ciceronian codex E53 (Burney MS 165), already identified.[25] Another dated manuscript, Vallicelliano D45, is

19 Natalia I. Petrovskaia, "L'Innocenza di Guglielmo Libri: Il Viaggio raro di Ashburnham 1051," *Dialogoi: Rivista di Studi Comparatistici* 2 (2015): 77–92 at 83.

20 The note is transcribed in Henri Cochin, "Sur le Socrate de Pétrarque. Le Musicien flamand Ludovicus Sanctus de Beeringhen," *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'École Française de Rome* 37 (1918/1919): 3–32 at 30. See also Andries Welkenhuysen, "Louis Sanctus de Beringen, ami de Pétrarque, et sa 'Sentencia subiecti in musica sonora' rééditée d'après le ms. Laur. Ashb. 1051," in *Sapientiae Doctrina: Mélanges de théologie et de littérature médiévales offerts à Dom Hildebrand Bascour O. S. B.*, ed. Roland Hissette, Guibert Michiels, and Dirk Van den Auweele (Leuven: [Abbaye du mont César], 1980), 386–427 at 396; and Petrovskaia, "L'Innocenza di Guglielmo Libri," 87.

21 Simona Moretti, "Sulle Tracce di Bisanzio: Due (anzi tre) codici miniati dispersi e ritrovati," *Rivista di Storia della Miniatura* 20 (2016): 57–70.

22 As for manuscript D4/1, it is likely that the disappearance was not immediately perceived because only the first codicological unit was stolen.

23 de Ricci, *English Collectors*, 99.

24 Moretti, "Sulle Tracce di Bisanzio," 63.

25 On manuscript E53 (Burney MS 165), see Terence J. Hunt, *A Textual History of Cicero's 'Academici*

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also now held by the British Library (Add. MS 24887), and was sold at the auction of Guglielmo Libri's library in 1861.

The only item possibly traced to the Bibliothèque nationale de France is B109: an Aldine edition of 1502 with manuscript notes written by the Portuguese humanist Aquiles Estaço. The copy had been absent from the Vallicelliana since the French invasions, and was identified with an item now preserved at the Bibliothèque nationale by the Latin scholar Berthold Louis Ullman in 1908 while completing his study of Catullo's manuscripts.[26] It is noteworthy that a letter by Aldo Manuzio had been removed from B106, a manuscript containing Estaço's letters, before the end of the nineteenth century.[27] The "double theft" of the Aldine edition and letter proves an in-depth knowledge of the library's holdings, a specific interest and an intention to sell them in particular to the market of collectors.

The identification of the missing manuscripts in some of the most famous collections in the world testifies to the extraordinary importance of the books from the Vallicelliana. The most encouraging fact, however, is that over thirty percent of these items were found thanks to random investigations, which augurs well for the identification of further missing documents in the future. To conclude, I will cite an example of a remarkable lost manuscript: R49, an illuminated copy of the *Divine Comedy* missing since the French invasions, which on the occasion of the Dantesque celebration of 2021 we attempted to locate in the principal available catalogues.[28] The manuscript was dubbed the *pulcherrimo* (the most beautiful) by the librarian Vincenzo Vettori in his index organized by author and title of the manuscripts. He described it as a volume adorned by beautiful figures, which was restated in the topographical inventory: "with beautiful miniatures."[29] This appreciation, very rare in the catalogues of that period, underlines the unusual magnificence of the codex, which has yet to be found.

Libri' (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 186.

26 Berthold Louis Ullman, *The Identification of the Manuscripts of Catullus cited in Statius' Edition of 1566* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1908), 18–19.

27 Ester Pastorello, *Inedita Manutiana 1502–1597: Appendice all'Inventario* (Florence: Olschki, 1960), 300.

28 The following resources were consulted: Marcella Roddewig, *Dante Alighieri, Die Göttliche Komödie: Vergleichende Bestandsaufnahme der Commedia-Handschriften* (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1984); Peter Brieger, Millard Meiss, and Charles S. Singleton, *Illuminated Manuscripts of the Divine Comedy*, 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969); Lucien Auvray, *Les Manuscrits de Dante des Bibliotheques de France: Essai d'un catalogue raisonné* (Paris: Thorin, 1892); Meta Harrsen and George K. Boyce, *Italian Manuscripts in the Pierpont Morgan Library* (New York: Morgan Library, 1953); *Catalogue of Manuscripts in the British Museum, New Series Vol. 1, Part 2: The Burney Manuscripts* (London: British Museum, 1834–1840); Gianni Pittiglio, "Le Immagini della Divina Commedia: Tradizione, deroghe ed eccentricità iconografiche tra XIV e XV secolo" (PhD thesis, University of Rome Sapienza, 2018); "Illuminated Dante Project," https://eadh.org/projects/illuminated-dante-project-idp, accessed May 12, 2023; and "Schoenberg Database of Manuscripts," https://sdbm.library.upenn.edu/, accessed May 12, 2023.

29 Vettori, *Inventarium*, 3: fol. 215r.

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The analysis of the different routes taken by the Vallicelliana manuscripts demonstrates the arduous process of tracing their movements. The reason for this is that the various trajectories comprise sales occurring at different times and pertaining to different collectors—not as one sale but as separate sales. Once a complete list of missing manuscripts has been published, the aim is to find all the manuscripts and rebuild the collection virtually, with the hope that they will all be preserved in public institutions.

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APPENDIX

List of the manuscripts and printed books with significant manuscript additions missing from the Vallicelliana Library since 1810.[30]

1	**A24**	*M. Boetii Severini Libri de consolatione philosophiae*. Parchment; 4°; fifteenth century.	
2	**B49**	*De musica tractatus varii*. Parchment; *folio*; fourteenth century; 170 fols.	Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, MS Ashburnham 1051
3	**B87**	*Apollodori Atheniensis bibliotheces sive de deorum origine libri tres grece*. Printed in 1555. Marginal notes by Benedetto Egio.	
4	**B109**	*Catullus, Tibullus, Propertius*. Printed in Venice in 1502. Marginal notes by Achilles Estaço.	BnF, RES P-YC-375?
5	**C58/I**	*Vitae sanctorum et opuscula variorum*. Parchment; 4°; fifteenth century; 109 fols.	
6	**C85**	*Crispi Sallusti de bello Iugurtino et de coniuratione Catilinae*. Parchment; 4°; Fabriano 1477; 80 fols.	BL, Burney MS 245
7	**C96**	*Q. Horatii Flacci Venusini opera omnia*. Parchment; 4°; thirteenth century.	BL, Burney MS 177
8	**C98**	*Trionfi di meser Francesco Petrarca poeta fiorentino*. Parchment; 8°; fifteenth century; 46 fols.	
9	**C117**	*Palladio Rutilio Tauro libri medici de lavori e coltivationi della terra portati dal latino all'italiano*. Parchment; 4°; fifteenth century; 155 fols.	
10	**C119**	*P. Terentii Afri comediae VI cum argumentis. Index comediarum: Andria, Eunucus, Heautontimorumenos, Adelfos, Phormio, Hecyra*. Parchment; 12°; fifteenth century; 209 fols.	No. 51 in Bernard Quaritch's catalogue no. 951 (1975).
11	**C132**	*Psalterium vulgatae editionis dispositum per hebdomadam iuxta ordinem divinorum officiorum cum figuris XII.* Parchment; 18°; fifteenth century.	
12	**D29**	*Valerii Maximi IX de dictis et factis memorabilibus Romanorum ad Tiberium Caesarem imperatorem*. Parchment; *folio*; 1429; 94 fols.	BL, Burney MS 208.

30 This information is derived from Vettori, *Inventarium*.

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13	**D45**	*Petri de Crescentiis civis bononiensis libri XII Ruralium commodorum.* Paper; *folio*; 1467.	Auction catalogue, books of Guglielmo Libri, July 18–26, 1861 (lot 4490); BL, Add. MS 24887.
14	**D57**	*Nonii Marcelli de proprietate Latini sermonis cum figuris praestantissimis Pennicillo expressis*. Printed; *folio*; 1476.	
15	**D60**	*Historia naturale di C. Plinio secondo tradotta di lingua latina in fiorentina per Cristoforo Landino fiorentino al serenissimo Ferdinando re di Napoli*. Printed; *folio*; 1476.	
16	**E9**	*Comedia di Dante Alighieri*. Paper; *folio*; 83 fols.	
17	**E17**	*Evangeliarum pervetustum continens IV Evangelia cum argumentis, capitulis et prologis S. Hyeronimi Presbyteri. Et Eusebii epistola ad Carpianum.* Parchment; 4°; tenth century; 231 fols.	
18	**E19**	*Biblia Sacra cum Prologis S. Hieronymi presbyteri, Rabani Mauri et aliorum*. Parchment; 4°; fourteenth century; 439 fols.	
19	**E20**	*M. Tulli Ciceronis epistolarum libri XVII emendati et collati cum antiquis manuscriptis codicibus anno Domini 1502*. Parchment; 4°; 225 fols.	
20	**E23**	*M. Tullii Ciceronis libri III de officiis ad Marcum filium*. Parchment; 4°; fifteenth century; 60 fols.	BL, Burney MS 150
21	**E25**	*Opere spirituali in versi del B. Frà Iacopone dell'ordine di S. Francesco da Todi; Profezie in versi di Frà Tomasuccio da Nocera e dell'Abbate Gioacchino.* Parchment; 4°; fifteenth century; 116 fols.	
22	**E27**	*De Sapientia divina et humana auctoris anonymi*. Parchment; 4°; fourteenth century; 142 fols.	
23	**E53**	*M. Tullii Ciceronis Tusculanarum quaestionum libri V ad M. Brutum. Eiusdem de finibus bonorum et malorum ad M. Brutum libri VI*. Parchment; 4°; fourteenth century; 184 fols.	BL, Burney MS 165
24	**E57**	*Marii Victorini rethoris urbis Romae Expositio in primum et secundum Rethoricorum Ciceronis*. Parchment; 4°; thirteenth century; 72 fols.	
25	**E58**	*Il Corbaccio invettive contro le donne di Giovanni Boccaccio*. Parchment; 4°; fourteenth century. With portrait of the author.	

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26	**F5**	*Q. Curtii Rufi Historiae Alexandri Magni libri duodecim desunt in codice primi libri duo necnon finis decimi et undecimus totus et principium duodecimi*. Parchment; 4°.	BL, Burney MS 168
27	**F8**	*Opuscula varia.* Parchment; 4°; 260 fols. (but in Venturelli's account, 1810, it is: *Quinto Curtio, Istoria di Alessandro Magno*).	
28	**F38**	*Publii Victoris de regionibus orbis liber. Sexti Rufi V.C. de regionibus urbis liber alter*. Paper; 4°.	
29	**F55**	*M. Vitruvii Pollionis de architectura libri X ad imperatorem Augustum quorum primis septem agit de aedificatione tum publicarum tum privatarum aedium. Octavus de aqueductibus, nono de gnomonice, decimo de mechanice*. Parchment; 4°.	
30	**F75**	*Eulistides. Poema auctoris veronensis anonymi de rebus Perusinorum et Laurenti Veronensis de Majoricano Triumpho Pisanorum.* Parchment; 4°.	Sold at Sotheby's June 5, 1899, lot 539 (Phillipps MS 6374).
31	**F78**	*Plutarchi vitae virorum illustrium romanorum latinorum et graeco(rum) in latinum translatae a Leonardo Aretino.*	
32	**F79**	*Componimenti poetici di M. Alain Charretier*. In Provençal French. Parchment; 4°.	
33	**F90**	*Commentarius de Familia Principum Comnenorum. Evangelia omnia grece cum figuris SS. Evangelistarum. Mosis Pentateuchus hebraice*. Parchment; 4°; 351 fols. [Missing only the Greek part].	BL, Burney MS 19
34	**F103**	*Guisiade tragedie novelle*. Paper; 4°.	
35	**F111**	*Vita nova di Dante Alighieri fiorentino. Canzoni dell'istesso. Canzoni* [Guido Cavalcanti, Cino da Pistoia, Guittone d'Arezzo]. Paper; 4°.	Ithaca, Cornell University Library, MS D 51
36	**R49**	*Commedia di Dante Alighieri con bellissime miniature*. Parchment; in *folio*; 218 fols.	
37	**R66**	*Giornale di entrata e uscita a mano del Rev. Padre Nicolò Gigli dal 1581 al 1591 riguardante la Congregazione*. Paper; 4°, sixteenth century.	
38	**R67**	*De Verona episcopis memoria ex probalis auctoribus decerpta et in Ughello pratermissa*. Paper; 24°.	

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Chapter 5

FUELLING THE MARKET

SALES FROM AUSTRIAN MONASTERIES 1919–1938

KATHARINA KASKA and CHRISTOPH EGGER

THE FIRST PART of this chapter is based on a recent book we edited, which explores the book sales from Austrian monasteries in the inter-war period,[1] while the second part introduces new information on some of the most important players in the Austrian manuscript trade.

Approach

Unlike other European countries, Austria still has a large number of monasteries with an uninterrupted tradition dating back to the Early and High Middle Ages. While the late eighteenth century dealt a significant blow to the monastic landscape of the Habsburg Empire, the process of dissolution started by Joseph II was never completed.[2] Many of the oldest and most important houses, such as St. Peter in Salzburg, Melk, Klosterneuburg, or Admont, escaped and are still active today. Consequently, large collections of manuscripts and early printed books remain where they were originally copied and collected, in private monastic hands. Up to the early twentieth century, these libraries were usually kept more-or-less intact. Disaster struck only in the 1920s and 1930s with the global depression that saw many monasteries fight for their economic survival. In a frantic search for valuables to sell to consolidate their finances, monasteries turned towards their cultural heritage and especially their libraries. They were helped by a

1 Katharina Kaska and Christoph Egger, eds., *"dass die Codices finanziell unproduktiv im Archiv des Stiftes liegen": Bücherverkäufe österreichischer Klöster in der Zwischenkriegszeit* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2022).

2 For a short overview see Friedrich Buchmayr, "Secularization and Monastic Libraries in Austria," in *Lost Libraries: The Destruction of Great Book Collections since Antiquity*, ed. James Raven (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 145–62.

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busy manuscript market that sent dealers and brokers, chiefly from overseas, scouting for new material throughout Austria. As the famous dealer E. P. Goldschmidt put it "In those years Austria was my principal happy hunting ground, and the financial straits in which the ancient monasteries and abbeys there found themselves afforded extraordinary opportunities for buying from them books which had stood on their shelves for centuries." [3]

Researchers have mainly been interested in looking for the current resting place of valuable manuscripts sold decades ago or, in more recent scholarship, to determine their path through various auction houses, dealers, and collectors.[4] This ties in with wider European research on the topic which, as this volume shows, mainly focuses on the fate of well-known manuscripts or important collectors and dealers. What has been missing, at least for Austria, is an investigation of the processes that led to the sales of manuscripts and, to a far greater extent, also of incunables and early print.

Our involvement in this research was by chance: in 2015 we came across a rich trove of material from the Cistercian monastery of Heiligenkreuz in Lower Austria. Among various other documents, mainly correspondence, was a library journal, which detailed sales and included personal observations by the then librarian Severin Grill. It gave an insight into the struggles with dealers, as well as within the convent during financial hardship in the 1920s. Thanks to the generous support by the monastery's manuscript librarian, Heiligenkreuz became the first monastery whose sale history was discussed in detail in a publication.[5]

After this initial success, we decided to continue and expand our bottom-up approach. In 2018 we invited scholars and librarians from monasteries all over the country to contribute to a conference on book sales from Austrian monasteries in the inter-war period. Using material from monastic archives, the Austrian National Library, and the Monuments office (*Denkmalamt*), they produced extensive case studies, which showcased general trends and important players in the trade in manuscripts and rare books. These contributions were collected in the 2022 publication and supplemented by articles on the economic situation of Austrian monasteries at the time, as well as on the

3 Ernst Philip Goldschmidt, "Recollections of Harvey Cushing and his Book-Collecting," *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 1 (1946): 229–34 at 232. For Goldschmidt's involvement in sales from Melk, see Christine Glassner, "In those Years Austria was my Principal Happy Hunting Ground: Zu den Handschriftenverkäufen des Stiftes Melk in der Zwischenkriegszeit," in *"dass die Codices finanziell unproduktiv im Archiv des Stiftes liegen"*, 117–32. For similar sentiments, see Hans Peter Kraus, *A Rare Book Saga: The Autobiography of H. P. Kraus* (New York: Putnam, 1978), 50.

4 Christine Glassner, "Schmerzliche Verluste: Zu den Handschriftenverkäufen des Benediktinerstiftes Seitenstetten in der Zwischenkriegszeit," *Studien und Mitteilungen aus dem Benediktinerorden* 131 (2020): 561–76.

5 Katharina Kaska, "Also muss die Bibliothek dran glauben: Versuchte und gelungene Handschriften- und Inkunabelverkäufe des Stifts Heiligenkreuz in der Zwischenkriegszeit," *NÖLA: Mitteilungen aus dem Niederösterreichischen Landesarchiv* 17 (2016): 387–417; Katharina Kaska, "Verkaufte Inkunabeln aus Stift Heiligenkreuz," Iter Austriacum (blog), December 27, 2016, www.iter-austriacum.at/bibliotheksgeschichte/verkaufte-inkunabeln-aus-stift-heiligenkreuz/, accessed September 20, 2023.

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provisions of state and church law that made the sales possible. Additionally, two key institutions, the Monuments Office and the Austrian National Library, and their role in the sales were discussed. In what follows we give an overview on the topic based on our publication.

The Economic Situation of Austrian Monasteries

Monastic economy, especially that of the oldest and most well-known Austrian monasteries, was traditionally based on income from land and forests. This model was already challenged by the agrarian reforms of 1848 (*Grundentlastung*). However, in the region of modern Austria the *Grundentlastung* did not lead to significant changes and monasteries mainly held onto their traditional ways. In several houses at least some additional income was generated by investment in local industries, electric power plants, and from rents and leases.[6]

In the aftermath of the First World War some monasteries found themselves on the periphery of a now greatly reduced country, cut off from their traditional trade routes, and struggling to sell their products (especially wood). Others lost control over their holdings, which were now part of another state. Income was reduced even further due to social reforms, which regulated working hours and provided social securities for workers on farms and in forests. At the same time hyperinflation and strict rent control made rents and leases practically worthless in the 1920s. While these world events were outside the monasteries' control, the decline of their economic situation was in many cases furthered by risk aversion, outdated administrative structures, and general lack of attention to economic matters. Furthermore, some abbots, perhaps influenced by patriotic fervour, invested large sums into war loans, which could never be recovered. However, even shrewd investments by enterprising abbots and a general overhaul of administrative procedures could not fully prevent sales of lands, real estate, and cultural heritage to secure their livelihood and preserve monastic buildings.

Protection of Cultural Heritage

Thanks mainly to the efforts of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, state institutions, chiefly the *k. k. Zentralkommission zur Erforschung und Erhaltung der Kunst- und historischen Denkmale* (later *Denkmalamt*, Monuments Office), had been well aware of the dangers to Austrian cultural heritage from international sales since the early twentieth century.[7] Implementing stricter laws, however, proved to be difficult, and details were still

6 Early modern monastic foundations that were not central to our research had a different economic structure based mainly on endowments. This section of the chapter is based on Peter Wiesflecker, "*… ist somit mit einem Abgang zu rechnen*: Zur wirtschaftlichen Lage österreichischer Ordensgemeinschaften in der Zwischenkriegszeit – ein Überblick," in *"dass die Codices finanziell unproduktiv im Archiv des Stiftes liegen"*, 15–26.

7 For the role of the Monuments Office, see Anneliese Schallmeiner, "In den meisten Fällern sind es Handschriften und Inkunabeln, die abgestoßen werden: Die Rolle der Denkmalbehörde bei den

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being discussed when a sharp increase in sales became noticeable after the fall of the Habsburg monarchy in 1918. Within the first month of the new Austrian Republic a new law to prevent the sale and export of objects of historical, artistic, and cultural importance was implemented (*Ausfuhrverbotsgesetz*). The Monuments Office was put in charge of assessing these objects and overseeing exports. After further adjustments and amendments, in 1923 a Heritage Protection Law (*Denkmalschutzgesetz*) was passed that included rules on sales and exports.[8] It defined cultural heritage to include immobile as well as mobile objects and thus also manuscripts and printed books. The preservation of these objects of historical, artistic, or cultural value, which were owned by public or church institutions, was seen as being in the public interest unless determined otherwise by the Monuments Office. It was therefore not possible to sell them without explicit permission, which could be given by the Monuments Office under special circumstances.

The decision for or against sales was largely based on the suggestions by consultants to the Monuments Office.[9] For manuscripts these were traditionally members of staff of the National Library. They determined whether books could be sold at all, whether they were allowed to leave the country, and finally, if that was not possible, whether they could be sold to Austrian private collectors or only to public institutions. This last case caused a large devaluation since Austrian public institutions could not pay market prices. Incidentally the National Library was the only institution that regularly bought manuscripts or expensive early printed books. It could therefore, at least in theory, directly influence the price it would have to pay, a fact that was rightly criticized by sellers at the time.

Another opportunity for the state to control sales of church property, even if not explicitly with respect to cultural heritage, was the *Katholikengesetz* of 1874,[10] which was only superseded by the Concordat of 1934. Within this framework, certain provisions allowed the state officials (in the *Kultusverwaltung*) to stop sales.

However, even without state intervention, the church itself was keenly aware of its responsibility. By the nineteenth century state and church institutions collaborated on the protection of cultural heritage. This collaboration intensified in the early twentieth century and in 1911, when the basic statute for the Monument Office was published, the diocese of Vienna published its own document on cultural heritage protection. The 1917 Code of Canon Law itself does not explicitly mention cultural heritage, but discusses sales in general. It also determines a hierarchy of permissions for sales depending on

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Veräußerungen und der Ausfuhr von Handschriften und Büchern aus kirchlichem Besitz in der Zwischenkriegszeit," in *"dass die Codices finanziell unproduktiv im Archiv des Stiftes liegen"*, 57–70.

8 *Österreichisches Bundesgesetzblatt* 1923/533, September 25, 1923.

9 On these consultants and their work, see Katharina Kaska, "Unabhängige Experten? Die Nationalbibliothek als Gutachter und Käufer von klösterlichem Buchbesitz," in *"dass die Codices finanziell unproduktiv im Archiv des Stiftes liegen"*, 71–96.

10 *Reichsgesetzblatt* Nr. 50/1874. The following is based on the detailed discussion of both church and state law: Stefan Schima, "Kirchenrechtliche und staatlich-rechtliche Aspekte klösterlicher Handschriften- und Buchverkäufe in der Zwischenkriegzeit," in *"dass die Codices finanziell unproduktiv im Archiv des Stiftes liegen"*, 27–56.

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the value of the object in question. If the value was higher than 30,000 gold Lire, it was necessary to get permission from the Holy See (*Romgrenze*). Further and slightly stricter provisions were made for the sale of *res pretiosae*, which could be interpreted to include manuscripts and books.

Legal and Illegal Sales

In theory, therefore, provisions from state and church law and a clear administrative process were designed to prevent sales of cultural heritage. Yet in practice the system did not work. Church officials and especially the Holy See judged most sales necessary in the light of the imminent financial collapse of the monastery in question. State institutions could do little to support monasteries plunged into debts that could not be alleviated by real estate sales. Likewise, it was not possible for the state to secure the upkeep of cultural monuments without the support of the monastic communities that inhabited the buildings. The special circumstances that made it possible for the Monuments Office to permit the sales were therefore established quite often.[11] The main goal was to try to protect some of the most valuable objects by permitting the sale of others. Several times in the 1920s and 1930s scholars and state officials drew up plans for a larger scheme, by which the state itself would either directly support monasteries as custodians of cultural heritage,[12] or take art objects into its possession and pay off monasteries' debts,[13] albeit to no avail.[14]

Furthermore, neither state nor church jurisdictions could prevent the large number of illegal sales that were either not registered by the Monuments Office or that reached it only after the fact. Manuscripts and especially printed books were sold illegally directly to dealers and brokers without the permission of state or church authorities. Almost all monasteries seem to have been involved at some point, some mainly selling off early modern print, others, like Lambach or Seitenstetten, parting with large numbers of manuscripts and incunables.

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11 See reports by the art historian Hans Tietze from the late 1920s: Hans Tietze, "Die Kunstverkäufe der österreichischen Klöster," *Zeitschrift für Denkmalpflege* 2 (1927/1928): 99–109; Hans Tietze, "Der Ausverkauf der österreichischen Klöster," *Der Kunstwanderer: Zeitschrift für alte und neue Kunst, für Kunstmarkt und Sammelwesen* 9/10 (1927/1928): 197–201.

12 Suggested in Tietze, "Ausverkauf," 201.

13 Suggested by the director of the Austrian National Library, Joseph Bick, in 1934, see Kaska, "Unabhängige Experten," 93–94. For similar suggestions, see also Schallmeiner, "In den meisten Fällen," 61–62.

14 Some small-scale attempts rescued the collection of St Lambrecht: Benedikt Plank, "St. Lambrecht," in *"dass die Codices finanziell unproduktiv im Archiv des Stiftes liegen"*, 277–79.

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Key Players

Dealers involved in selling Austrian monastic manuscripts include such famous names as Jacques Rosenthal, Karl Hiersemann, Ernst Philip Goldschmidt, and Hans Peter Kraus. Sometimes they were in direct contact with the respective monastic houses, at other times they did not acquire the books directly but bought from people who acted as brokers. These brokers were sometimes professional dealers, but more often private individuals who had recognized a business opportunity and were trying to make a quick profit. Frequently, therefore, they pursued their goals with rather ruthless and questionable methods. One such person was a certain Eduard Arié, whose dealings with the Cistercian abbey of Heiligenkreuz are fairly well known.[15] Another was the antiques dealer Emil Sokal, based in Baden near Vienna but in the 1930s active in Heiligenkreuz, St. Peter in Salzburg, Lambach, and Kremsmünster.[16] The early business activities of Adolf Weinmüller, who later became a famous (and infamous) Munich art dealer, included deals with—among others—Göttweig and Lambach.[17]

Joseph Satinover, a Shady Broker

A particularly colourful and bustling person was Joseph Satinover. His Austrian activities and methods will be described here in more detail because they provide a vivid picture of the approaches and methods used by brokers. Satinover was active in Austria in the 1920s and early 1930s. He set up quarters in Vienna's posh nineteenth district, Hohe Warte 34, appearing in the Viennese address register from 1926 to 1931 as a *Kunsthandel* (art dealer).[18] We will return to his earlier biography, which may provide an explanation for why he settled in Vienna. However first we will look at some records from monastic archives, which provide insights into the way he did business.

In December 1927 the abbot of the regular canonry of Vorau in Styria received a letter from Satinover, offering his services. The occasionally quite peculiar grammar and spelling of this and two more letters clearly indicate that German was not Satinover's mother tongue. According to the letter, Satinover was preparing to leave Europe but wanted to buy some objects (*einiges*) beforehand.[19] He was particularly interested in

15 Kaska, "Also muss die Bibliothek."

16 *"dass die Codices finanziell unproduktiv im Archiv des Stiftes liegen"*, see index.

17 Meike Hopp, *Kunsthandel im Nationalsozialismus: Adolf Weinmüller in München und Wien* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2012) for his later career; for the early years see the index of *"dass die Codices finanziell unproduktiv im Archiv des Stiftes liegen"*.

18 Adolph Lehmann's *Allgemeiner Wohnungs-Anzeiger*, published annually. A digitized version is accessible through the Wienbibliothek, www.digital.wienbibliothek.at/wbrobv/periodical/titleinfo/2316398, accessed May 12, 2023.

19 Letter from Satinover to Abbot Berger dated December 12, 1927. Vorau, Stiftsarchiv, 06/I.02.026 Verkauf. Handschriften, Inkunabeln, Frühdrucke, Drucke: "Sehr geehrter Herr Abt, vor meiner Rückreise aus Europa, möchte noch einiges erwerben. Mein Interesse ist mehr für schöne frühe Zeichnungen, Holzschnitts, Stichen, sowie Handschriften mit Miniaturen und frühe Druckbüchers. Für meine Person und strengst Discrezion, können Sie sich bei meinem lieben alten Freund Hofrat

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early drawings, woodcuts, engravings, illuminated manuscripts, and early printed books. He proposed to come to Vorau with his son Freddy before Christmas, promising a good price and payment in American dollars or Austrian schillings in cash. Of course, the business would be done with strict confidentiality. Anselm Salzer (who is called a "very good friend") and Abbot Theodor Springer, both of the Benedictine abbey of Seitenstetten in Lower Austria, could be approached to guarantee his integrity. The abbot of Vorau, Prosper Berger, politely declined the offer, telling Satinover that for the time being the canonry was not selling any art objects. Satinover immediately replied, again offering his services; should the abbot change his mind he or his son, who was well informed about his father's preferences, would always be ready to come to Vorau, examine the items, buy, and pay cash for them on the very same day.[20]

Satinover's third and last letter to the abbot of Vorau was sent in August 1928 from Boulogne-sur-Seine.[21] Again he urged the abbot to sell. He was especially interested in incunabula and illuminated manuscripts, and although he was now based in France he was very willing to receive the books by mail and would pay immediately by cheque. The abbot could be assured that the business would be conducted in absolute confidentiality—strictly *inter nos*—the abbot of the Benedictine monastery of Seckau and again Abbot Springer and his dear friend Father Salzer from Seitenstetten could testify to his trustworthiness.[22] After his first letter, Satinover was precise about the books he wished to acquire. Having studied the catalogue by Lampel,[23] and, *Handschr. in Steyermark etc.*, he gave a list of eight incunabula and six medieval manuscripts, two of which could hardly have been more prominent: Vorau MS 276 (XI) is the famous *Kaiserchronik* and MS 273 (VIII) the equally prestigious *Vorauer Volksbibel*. From the form of the references to the manuscripts it is possible to identify Satinover's source: he had used the *Beschreibendes Verzeichnis der illuminierten Handschriften in Österreich*.[24] It is not known if the abbot replied, but as all the books are still in the library at Vorau, Satinover was again unsuccessful. The letters are quite interesting for several reasons. Satinover's

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Pater Dr. Anselm Salzer in Seitenstetten oder S. G. Dr. Theodor Springer erkundigen um absolut vollständig sicher sein mit wem Sie zu thun haben. Ich würde noch vor Christmass mit meinem Sohn Freddy kommen und gleichzeitig einen Betrag Cassa in Dollars oder Schillings mitbringen und gut zahlen. Erwarte Ihre freundliche Antwort um mir meine Zeit zu arrangieren und mit sehr respectvollem Gruss ergebenst Joseph Satinover."

20 Letter from Satinover to Abbot Berger dated December 15, 1927. Vorau, Stiftsarchiv, 06/I.02.026: "Er weiss was ich liebe und er wird zu Ihnen mit Bargeld kommen anzusehen, kaufen und zahlen am selben Tag."

21 Letter from Satinover to Abbot Berger dated August 6, 1928. Vorau, Stiftsarchiv, 06/I.02.026.

22 Vorau, Stiftsarchiv, 06/I.02.026: "Ich sende Ihnen das Geld, check auf eine Bank in Wien oder Graz und Sie senden mir das Gekaufte – per Postpaket als Drucksache, eingeschrieben! Es ist sogar leichter und besser; da niemand davon was erfährt oder weisst. Habe viele Male auf diese Art gekauft..dass Sie mir ruhig verkaufen können und niemand wissen wird."

23 Theoderich Lampel, *Die Incunabeln und Frühdrucke bis zum Jahre 1520 der Bibliothek des Chorherrenstiftes Vorau* (Vienna: Österreichischen Leo-Gesellschaft, 1901).

24 Paul Buberl, *Die illuminierten Handschriften in Steiermark. Teil 1* (Leipzig: Hiersemann, 1911). The other manuscripts are MSS 130 (--), 195 (CXXV), 259 (L.A.), and 346 (XLVII).

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repeated hints at the strictly confidential execution of the deals comes close to a criminal offence, as he was not only suggesting that they bypass the official procedure to request a license to sell objects of cultural value, but also to avoid the export tax due on all sales to foreign buyers. At least with respect to the medieval manuscripts the abbot was very well advised not to give in to Satinover's attempts because it would have been only a question of time before the sale would have been discovered and the abbey might have been prosecuted by the authorities.[25] Indeed Abbot Prosper Berger was well aware of the legal obligations and painstakingly observed them when in 1926 Vorau sold some forty incunabula to the Viennese antiquarian bookseller V. A. Heck.[26]

Another interesting aspect is Satinover's repeated reference to the Seitenstetten monks. Salzer was a renowned philologist and literary historian who also served as librarian of the abbey,[27] and it may have been through this role that he came into contact with Satinover. Abbot Springer was an important personality in the history of the Benedictine order in Austria and succeeded in the financial consolidation of his monastery in the inter-war period.[28] Among other things Seitenstetten sold books and manuscripts, but it is not yet known to what extent Satinover was involved in these deals.[29] However, he certainly had a hand in the selling of an ivory plaque presented by Emperor Otto I to Magdeburg Cathedral. It left Seitenstetten sometime around 1926 and was acquired from Satinover by the American collector George Blumenthal, who in 1941 gave it to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, where it remains today.[30] In this case the abbey had attempted to bypass the official procedures and was found out, which caused a major scandal in 1929. Abbot Springer had to justify his actions and did so by putting the blame on Satinover: he had pretended to be a collector who wanted to keep the plaque for himself and was not planning to move the object outside Austria. Had Abbot Springer known what Satinover was up to, he would have never sold the ivory plaque. Abbot Springer and the government pressured Satinover, who at least pretended to try to get the ivory back, but to no avail.[31] The Austrian government also considered legal

25 See *"dass die Codices finanziell unproduktiv im Archiv des Stiftes liegen"*, index, for the cases of Lambach and Seitenstetten.

26 Ample documentation in Vorau, Stiftsarchiv, 06/I.02.026. This deal is interesting in many respects and will be studied elsewhere.

27 *Österreichisches biographisches Lexikon* 9 (Vienna: Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1988), 399–400. Salzer was born in 1856, entered religious life in 1875, and died in 1938.

28 See "Springer, Theodor," *Biographia Benedictina (Benedictine Biography)*, January 15, 2021, www.benediktinerlexikon.de/wiki/ Springer, Theodor, accessed May 12, 2023.

29 About the manuscripts, but unfortunately without the archival research necessary to find out about the background of the sales, see Glassner, "Schmerzliche Verluste," 565.

30 Accession Number: 41.100.157; see www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/467730, accessed May 12, 2023.

31 Letter from Bundesdenkmalamt, Zl. 7165/D ex 1929 to the Director of the Austrian National Library dated December 30, 1929, including a copy of Abbot Springer's report, Vienna, Austrian National Library, Archive, 15/1930: "Käufer ist in allen Fällen ausschliesslich Herr Satinover in Wien, Hohe Warte, gewesen. Die Absicht, die Objekte ins Ausland zu bringen, bestand natürlich bei

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action against the dealer, but in the end the affair came to nothing. We do not know if the abbot of Vorau ever asked Abbot Springer about Satinover, but if he had done so in 1929, he would certainly not have received a favourable answer.

Apart from Seitenstetten and the failed approach to Vorau, we know that Satinover did business with Salzburg-Nonnberg, Göttweig,[32] and Lambach.[33] At least in the latter case he immediately sold the acquired books to Jacques Rosenthal in Munich. It is therefore possible that he acted on Rosenthal's behalf or at least occasionally collaborated with him, but this remains to be verified. In May 1928 Satinover moved from Austria to France, perhaps to avoid prosecution by the Austrian authorities for tax evasion.[34] Interestingly, his earlier biography, patchy as it is, leaves a rather ambiguous impression, too.

According to an US draft registration card Satinover was born on May 5, 1880 in Galați, Romania.[35] It is very likely that a Giuseppe Satinover who in the early twentieth century was active in Genoa and Milan, is the same person. According to a newspaper article published in 1912,[36] he worked as representative of a French corn dealer in Genoa but also pursued private business interests, thus building a considerable fortune. Due to his dissolute lifestyle, he went bankrupt and had to leave Genoa.[37] In Milan he resumed his activities as a corn representative dealer and his private business activities, which involved dealing with jewellery, old paintings, and asset management for wealthy people. He soon ran into trouble again, being accused of fraud and embezzlement. The police tried to arrest him, but Satinover managed to escape. He resurfaced in New York, where in September 1918 he was registered for conscription. His profession was given

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der Stiftsverwaltung in keiner Weise. Im Gegenteile. Gerade die ausdrückliche Erklärung Satinovers, dass er die Bücher für sich kaufe und in Wien behalten werde, hat die Abschlüsse erst perfekt gemacht. Die Stiftsvorstehung war diesbezüglich damals wirklich in gutem Glauben und musste erst nach der späteren Übersiedlung Satinovers nach Paris in der schmerzlichen Weise erstmals wahrnehmen, dass sie hierin getäuscht worden sei. Ueber den Verkauf des Elfenbeinreliefs, ebenfalls an Satinover, hat der Gefertigte schon einmal ausführlich berichtet; es kann jetzt nur hinzugefügt werden, dass die versprochene Bemühung zur Rückstellung offenbar gar nicht ernst unternommen worden ist."

32 Bernhard Rameder, "Stift Göttweig zwischen den Kriegen: Verkauf und Erwerb von Kulturgütern in Notzeiten," in *"dass die Codices finanziell unproduktiv im Archiv des Stiftes liegen"*, 97–116. The abbess of Nonnberg recommended Satinover to the abbot of Göttweig.

33 Christoph Egger, "Irrungen und Wirrungen: Wanderungen Lambacher Handschriften im 20. Jahrhundert," in *"dass die Codices finanziell unproduktiv im Archiv des Stiftes liegen"*, 161–203.

34 Egger, "Irrungen und Wirrungen," 181n110.

35 "United States World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917–1918," database with images, FamilySearch (www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:K6J8-F5M, accessed December 26, 2021), Joseph Satinover, 1917–1918. Draft registration card, New York September 1918. We owe this document to Mitch Fraas. According to other documents he was born in Bucharest (Egger, "Irrungen und Wirrungen," 181), which is an error (see next footnote).

36 "Neuestes aus Rumänien," *Czernowitzer Tagblatt*, March 2, 1912, 2. As the article gives Galați as his place of birth and 32 years as his age, the identification of Giuseppe and Joseph Satinover is almost certain.

37 This information is in agreement with a newspaper report of June 8, 1910, about one Giuseppe Satinover's bankruptcy at Genoa: *Neues Wiener Journal*, June 8, 1910, 11.

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as art dealer. In May 1918 he filed a declaration of intent to become a citizen of the United States, resulting in 1922 in a formal petition of naturalization, naming a wife and three children, but the petition was denied.[38] In 1923 he was again in trouble. On February 1 the *New York Times* reported court procedures against him in connection with the alleged theft of a tapestry. The matter was settled in court,[39] but Satinover went bankrupt again and fled his creditors, taking at least some of his stock of pictures with him.[40] He returned to Europe; in the mid-1920s he started his art business in Vienna and his dealings with Austrian monasteries, as described above.[41] In the early 1930s he was back in Paris and resumed his art business there, then, so it seems, as a fairly respectable member of the profession. He died in Paris on June 8, 1936.[42] Satinover's area of expertise was paintings. It is unlikely that he had expert knowledge in medieval manuscripts and old books. However, like many others, Satinover was enough of a businessman to recognize an opportunity—such as the market for old books and manuscripts created by the economic troubles of the Austrian monasteries in the inter-war period.

38 New York, County Naturalization Records, 1791–1980, database with images, FamilySearch, see entry for Satinover, Joseph.

39 *NYT*, February 1, 1923, 11; and February 8, 1923, 8. Satinover's age is given as 43, which is consistent with 1880 as year of birth. Again, we are indebted to Mitch Fraas who alerted us to these articles.

40 "Art Dealer Sought by his Creditors. $ 150,000 Paintings Gone ...," *NYT*, August 24, 1923, 2.

41 The identity of the New York art dealer and the Viennese art dealer can be proven beyond doubt by a comparison of his signatures, for instance his signature on the draft registration card (1918) and on the letters to the abbot of Vorau (1927–1928).

42 Paris, Archives de Paris, 9D 154, État civil de Paris, Actes d'état civil, 9ème Arrondissement, March 19 to June 16, 1936, no. 626.

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Chapter 6

JACQUES ROSENTHAL'S MARKETING STRATEGIES

AN ANALYSIS OF THE *BIBLIOTHECA MEDII AEVI MANUSCRIPTA* (1925 and 1928)

ANGÉLINE RAIS

IN 1925 AND 1928, the Munich antiquarian bookseller Jacques Rosenthal produced the two-volume catalogue *Bibliotheca medii aevi manuscripta* (*BMAM*).[1] This work, compiled by the medievalist Ernst Schulz and containing entries for two hundred medieval manuscripts, targeted an international clientele.[2] It was published at a time of renewal for Rosenthal's business after the First World War and a period of hyperinflation, during which the firm had issued no catalogue of manuscripts. The subsequent improvement of the German economy and the development of medieval studies resulted in an increased demand for rare books in the mid- and late 1920s, stimulating the bookshop's activities. In addition, Erwin Rosenthal, Jacques's son, who earned a doctorate in art history, had joined the business in 1912 and had a considerable impact on its organization. His involvement is especially apparent from the contents of the firm's catalogues: whereas earlier entries offered minimal information about manuscripts, the later catalogues contained more extensive scholarly descriptions.

1 For the purpose of clarity, I refer to the books as they appeared in *BMAM* even if their description has since been revised. I provide the current location of manuscripts named in the text only. For the location of the other items and data discussed in this study, see the catalogue ("A List of Manuscripts Offered for Sale by Jacques Rosenthal in *Biblioteca medii aevi manuscripta* (Munich, 1925 and 1928)") available at https://zenodo.org/records/11221130, accessed May 20, 2024.

2 Anton Löffelmeier, "Das Antiquariat Jacques Rosenthal," in *Die Rosenthals: Der Aufstieg einer jüdischen Antiquarsfamilie zu Weltruhm*, ed. Elisabeth Angermair et al. (Vienna: Böhlau, 2002), 91–135 at 121–22. For the catalogue, see *BMAM*, 2 vols. [December 20, 1925 and October 28, 1928], catalogues 83 and 90 (Munich: Jacques Rosenthal, 1925–1928). For the firm's annotated copies, see Munich, Stadtarchiv, DE-1992-NL-ROS-1186 and 1193.

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Despite adopting an erudite approach, a dealer's catalogue remains a commercial tool, the purpose of which is not necessarily to describe every aspect of a book, but rather to make it desirable to customers. The aim of this essay is to investigate how Rosenthal achieved this result by examining his marketing strategies for selling medieval manuscripts. Besides information provided by the firm's working copies of *BMAM* (with clients' names and dates of sales), additional sources, such as library inventories, sale catalogues, the firm's archives, and the books themselves, help define Rosenthal's working methods. After an account of the bookshop and *BMAM*, I will reconstruct the provenance history of the manuscripts to show how Rosenthal obtained them. Then, I will analyse how he prepared the books for the sale. The next part will focus on the promotion of *BMAM* to understand how Rosenthal made it known to potential customers. Finally, I will look at the results of his efforts by identifying the buyers of these manuscripts. As well as attesting to his expertise, this investigation sheds light on how Rosenthal used effective techniques he had developed over many years.

Jacques Rosenthal and *BMAM*

Jacques Rosenthal started his career in 1874 in his brother Ludwig's bookshop, which had been established in Munich in 1867.[3] First, as an apprentice then as an employee, Jacques travelled throughout Europe to buy books and meet clients. In 1895, Jacques opened his own business, receiving a substantial part of his brother's stock. Through the sale of rare books, the publication of numerous catalogues, and collaboration with renowned scholars, Rosenthal quickly became successful. In 1911, he built one of the most luxurious shops in Germany, containing exhibition rooms, libraries, offices, stockrooms, and his own apartment. This period of prosperity ended with the First World War and its continuing economic consequences. The situation improved in the mid-1920s, but the firm was closed in 1935 during the process of Aryanization of Jewish properties.

BMAM was part of a series of fourteen catalogues Rosenthal issued between 1924 and 1930. Offering a select group of items, including incunabula in Gothic bindings or early printed broadsheets, these catalogues, designed as research projects, were written by specialists. Compiled in German and containing entries arranged alphabetically by author and title, *BMAM*, with its long introduction, indices of writers, subjects, scribes, former owners, and dates of production, a list of plates, and tables with prices in Reichsmarks printed on separate leaves, exemplified these scholarly publications.

Whereas the first volume of *BMAM* listed manuscripts dealing mainly with liturgy and theology, the second volume gathered scientific works and illuminated books. According to information provided by *BMAM*, ninety-nine items dated from the fifteenth century, forty from the fourteenth, thirty-three from the thirteenth, and eighteen from the twelfth century. Six remaining manuscripts were produced in the eleventh century, three in the tenth, and one in the ninth century. Although Italy was the predominant

3 On this, see Löffelmeier, "Das Antiquariat Jacques Rosenthal," 91–135.

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place of production, with seventy-six items, about forty-four manuscripts were written in modern-day Germany and twenty in France. Fourteen further books originated from Austria, Croatia, England, the Netherlands, Spain, and Switzerland. The place of production of about forty-six manuscripts was unrecorded.

As for prices, *BMAM* indicated a wide range of values: from 100 Reichsmarks for a ten-leaf treatise by Aristotle to 50,000 Reichsmarks for a copy of the *Grandes Chroniques de France* containing forty drawings with grisaille decoration.[4] 129 manuscripts cost less than 1,000 Reichsmarks, fifty-five less than 10,000 Reichsmarks, and ten were valued at between 10,000 and 50,000 Reichsmarks. Six books were, however, not priced, either because they found buyers before the publication of *BMAM* or because Rosenthal expected to obtain high sums for them.[5] Among these was a thirteenth-century Missal decorated with three full-page miniatures. As revealed by the price-code "MTJJJJ.-" written next to the entry in the firm's copy of *BMAM*, Rosenthal sold it for 60,000 Reichsmarks to Alfred Chester Beatty.[6] Yet, the highest price was for an eleventh-century Evangeliary, bound in boards covered in ivory furnishings and silver plaques. After unsuccessful discussions with the Berlin Königliche Bibliothek, Rosenthal tried to sell it to Belle da Costa Greene, director of the Morgan Library, for 100,000 Reichsmarks, with a discount of 10%. Although he sent the book to New York for consultation in early January 1927, Greene declined the offer.[7] A year later, Rosenthal sold it to Henry Walters of Baltimore.

Finding Rare Books

Information from archives and material evidence helps determine how Rosenthal purchased some (though not all) of these manuscripts. The items can be divided into five provenance categories. The first, identified through earlier catalogue entries, contains thirty-nine volumes bought from the European market. In addition to six manuscripts likely obtained in 1895 when he started his business, Rosenthal presumably acquired three books from his brother Ludwig and his nephew Isaak Halle, who was also based in Munich.[8] In addition, he offered eight items acquired from the Florentine bookseller Tammaro De Marinis, from Luigi Arrigoni in Milan, and from the firm J. & J. Leighton in London.[9] Furthermore, twenty-two books came from the sales of the libraries of Louis-

4 Nos. 13 (unlocated), 128 (Baltimore, Walters Art Museum, MS W.139).

5 Nos. 40 (Baltimore, Walters Art Museum, MS W.8), 73 (Princeton, University Library, Princeton MS 59), 139 (Baltimore, Walters Art Museum, MS W.30), 141 (Washington, DC, Library of Congress, M.2147.XII.M.1), 146 (Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin - Preussischer Kulturbesitz, MS lat. oct. 342), 165 (PML, M.855).

6 No. 165. On Rosenthal's code, see Peter Kidd, "The Use of Price-Codes (and Associated Marks) in Provenance Research," in *Chamberpot & Motherfuck: The Price-Codes of the Book Trade*, ed. EXHUMATION [Ian Jackson] (Narberth: McKittrick, 2018), 61–90 at 89.

7 No. 40. Rosenthal also offered this book to the New York Public Library for the same price, see Munich, Stadtarchiv, DE-1992-NL-ROS-8, pp. 18, 25, 50.

8 Nos. 2, 11, 25, 47, 57, 77, 102, 122, 183.

9 Nos. 34, 39, 48, 55, 71, 80, 85, 191.

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Lucien Le Caron (comte de Troussures), George Dunn, and Sir Thomas Phillipps, as well as from public sales organized at the Hôtel Drouot and Sotheby's.[10]

The second group comprises items from Austrian monasteries. Facing financial difficulties after the First World War, some religious houses sold property, including manuscripts and printed books.[11] Rosenthal was among the booksellers involved in the dispersal of these collections. In *BMAM*, he offered seven volumes formerly in the library of the abbey of Seitenstetten, including two bought on June 5, 1927 and August 30, 1927 (the date of acquisition of the other items is undetermined).[12] Four additional manuscripts came from the Benedictine monks at Lambach. Rosenthal purchased these from Joseph Satinover, active in the trade in the 1920s in Austria and later in France, on various occasions from June to November 1927.[13] As well as communicating through telegrams and meeting in Vienna, Satinover visited Rosenthal's shop and, on August 29, 1927, sold him an unknown number of manuscripts for 40,000 Reichsmarks, likely including some of the books recorded in *BMAM*.[14]

Like Austrian religious houses, German aristocratic families experiencing hardship following the war resolved to sell their libraries; they are Rosenthal's third source of books in *BMAM*. Among them were the Princes of Stolberg-Wernigerode. Before tasking the Berlin bookseller Martin Breslauer with organizing the dispersal of the collection in 1929, the family sold twenty-nine manuscripts, 125 incunabula, and many printed books to Rosenthal and to the Leipzig book-dealer Karl W. Hiersemann. In December 1927 Rosenthal bought a German version of John Mandeville's travels dated 1459 from the family.[15]

Rosenthal owned a fourth group of manuscripts with his colleagues. Annotations such as "Von Art ancien/Zürich im Kommission" or "gehört Art ancien/Zürich," in copies of *BMAM* indicate that Rosenthal offered thirty-four items belonging to L'Art Ancien, the bookshop established by his son Erwin in Switzerland.[16] Moreover, Rosenthal incorpo-

10 Nos. 4–5, 8–10, 16, 19, 23, 27, 29, 49, 52–54, 58–59, 73, 79, 88, 96, 121, 180.

11 See Chapter 5 in this volume.

12 Nos. 115, 117, 139, 161, 165, 167, 169. For the date of purchase of nos. 165 and 167, see Munich, Stadtarchiv, DE-1992-NL-ROS-4, p. 4339. On this, see Christine Glassner, "Schmerzliche Verluste: Zu den Handschriftenverkäufen des Benediktinerstiftes Seitenstetten in der Zwischenkriegszeit," *Studien und Mitteilungen aus dem Benediktinerorden* 131 (2020): 561–76.

13 For Satinover see Chapter 5 in this volume.

14 Nos. 113, 135, 144–45. For these purchases, see Munich, Stadtarchiv, DE-1992-NL-ROS-8 (various pages) and 478 (August 22, 29, 1927). The date of purchase is also provided by Rosenthal's stock-book: Munich, Stadtarchiv, DE-1992-NL-ROS-4, pp. 4338, 4345. See also Christoph Egger, "Irrungen und Wirrungen: Wanderungen Lambacher Handschriften im 20. Jahrhundert," in *"dass die Codices finanziell unproduktiv im Archiv des Stiftes liegen". Bücherverkäufe österreichischer Klöster in der Zwischenkriegszeit*, ed. Katharina Kaska and Christoph Egger (Vienna: Böhlau, 2022), 161–203.

15 No. 157 (New York Public Library, Spencer Collection MS 37). On this, see Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Nachl. 307 (Antiquariat Breslauer), II.8. Nr. 1.

16 Nos. 104, 107–8, 110–11, 116, 118, 126–27, 130–32, 138–39, 142–43, 153–54, 156, 158, 163–64, 168, 174, 176–77, 182, 185, 188–90, 192, 194, 197. L'Art Ancien owned half of nos. 160, 165, 169, and 171.

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rated four books he shared with his close friend, the Florence-based bookseller Leo S. Olschki, annotated "gehört ½ L. S. Olschki/Florenz."[17]

Finally, Rosenthal selected books from his stock, including sixteen manuscripts he had tried to sell between 1896 and 1911, documented in his previous catalogues.[18] Accession numbers visible in some volumes and preceded by the letters "LB," standing for *Lagerbuch* (stock-book), determine the date of entry in Rosenthal's stock for other manuscripts. These numbers were also recorded in the firm's stock-books. Information collected from these sources indicates that Rosenthal also offered at least sixteen books bought between 1912 and June 1927.[19]

Physical Interventions

Having selected the items for inclusion in *BMAM*, Rosenthal then prepared them for sale. This operation included various steps aimed at offering books in good condition, such as dusting the leaves and repairing broken bindings. Although *BMAM* gives limited information about bindings, it is possible to identify some manuscripts restored especially for this occasion. Such books were usually cheaply rebound in *Pappband* (boards covered in paper), *Halbpergamentband* (boards covered in half parchment), and *Pergamentband* (boards fully covered in parchment). That Rosenthal repaired some of these items for preservation purposes is revealed by a volume containing Bernard of Clairvaux's works described in his catalogue 17 (1899), as "Dérel.," (*dérelié*, unbound), and in a new *Pappband* binding in *BMAM*.[20]

However, it seems that financial motives also played a role in Rosenthal's interventions, especially with miscellanies. William Whobrey has demonstrated that Rosenthal sold several manuscripts from the library of Buxheim Charterhouse, formerly gathered in single volumes, to the Munich Bayerische Staatsbibliothek.[21] The fact that these items entered the library shortly after 1929, when Rosenthal's firm was in financial difficul-

17 Nos. 83, 128, 148, 167. Olschki owned half of no. 73. Nos. 73 and 83 appeared in Olschki's card index, in which they were designated by the letters "O[lschki]. R[osenthal]." followed by a number: see Florence, Biblioteca della Toscana Pietro Leopoldo: Catalogo Libreria antiquaria Olschki, Lucanus, MS 35558, OR 63 and Duns Scotus, MS 35052, OR 51. See also Federico Botana, "The Card Index of Leo S. Olschki: The Inner Workings of an Antiquarian Book Business," *La Bibliofilía* 123 (2021): 157–77.

18 Nos. 17, 22, 32, 45, 51, 66, 70, 89–90, 93, 103, 120, 134, 155, 160, 171.

19 Nos. 15, 41, 60, 65, 76, 87, 94, 100, 140, 147, 150–51, 159, 178, 196, 200. To these can possibly be added nos. 112, 114, 136, 175, 186. For their entry in the stock-books, see Munich, Stadtarchiv, DE-1992-NL-ROS-1–4, pp. 2607, 2696, 2866, 3166, 4136, 4181, 4230, 4237, 4277, 4325.

20 No. 22 (Trier, Stadtbibliothek, Hs. 2389/2344 8°). For the earlier description, see *Catalogus librorum universa catholicarum et literarum et rerum studia*, [May 10, 1899], catalogue 17 (Munich: Jacques Rosenthal), no. 2270, p. 148.

21 Munich, Staatsbibliothek, Clm 28376–82, 28389, 28403–7, 28408–12, 28417–21, 28422–28, 28435–42, 28443–46. My sincere thanks to William Whobrey for sharing this with me. See William Whobrey, "Charterhouse Buxheim and its Library," http://buxheimlibrary.org/, accessed March 6, 2023.

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ties, supports this hypothesis. *BMAM* contained other examples of breaking up volumes, including two works extracted from a book previously owned by Leander van Ess and Phillipps, which Rosenthal bought from Leighton in 1912 for £21 12s (about 442 Goldmarks).[22] Leighton's catalogue stated that the binding of this volume was broken and had been rebacked. Perhaps seeing the damage as an opportunity, Rosenthal removed four items from the manuscript. In 1914, he sold two of these, consisting of eighty-eight leaves and the medieval binding, to the Königliche Bibliothek for 750 Goldmarks.[23] After having sold the two other works at unknown dates, he purchased one of them back after 1912 for 80 Goldmarks (about 137 Reichsmarks in 1925) and the other in February 1921 for £6 (about 95 Reichsmarks in 1925).[24] Later, he offered these two parts for 300 and 375 Reichsmarks in *BMAM*, in which they are recorded in a *Pappband* binding, measuring the same size.[25] The profit realized from this sale was about 750 Reichsmarks.

Further evidence of this practice of breaking up books is provided by a copy of Arnaldus de Villanova's *De vinis medicinalibus*, containing thirteen leaves gathered in a *Pappband* binding but foliated 35 to 47, suggesting that it was formerly part of a larger book.[26] *BMAM* also included a ten-leaf copy of *Artefii liber secretorum* previously bound in a miscellany of six scientific works presented for sale by Halle in 1914.[27] A final example was a 1417 roll decorated with two large drawings by an Italian artist and containing *Peregrinationes totius terrae sanctae*, as well as the account of the monk Petrus

22 Nos. 58 (Williamstown, Williams College, Museum of Art, Chapin Library, MS 17), 65 (unlocated). For Leighton's catalogue, see *Catalogue of Manuscripts Mostly Illuminated, Many in Fine Bindings* (London: Leighton, [1912]), no. 97, pp. 31–32. Although Leighton valued the book at £24, he offered Rosenthal the usual trade discount: BL, Add. MS 45167. For exchange rate calculation, see Rodney Edvinsson, "Historical Currency Converter," www.historicalstatistics.org/Currencyconverter.html, accessed March 6, 2023.

23 Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, MS lat. quart. 752. I am grateful to Milton McC. Gatch for providing this information. The purchase price is known from the library's acquisition register: Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Accession journal of the Manuscripts Department, acc.no.1914.89.

24 Rosenthal was likely the buyer recorded under the code-name "Meynell" in the annotated copy of *Catalogue of Printed Books and a Few Manuscripts; the Property of the late William Borrer et al., Which will be Sold by Auction…February 22, 1921* (London: Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge, 1921), lot 422, p. 39, now in the British Library. The price of purchase of the second item is recorded in Rosenthal's stock-book: Munich, Stadtarchiv, DE-1992-NL-ROS-2, p. 2866. For a currency value convertor, see "Five Ways to Compute the Relative Value of a U.K. Pound Amount, 1270 to present," MeasuringWorth, www.measuringworth.com/calculators/ukcompare/, accessed March 6, 2023.

25 In *BMAM*, the height and the width were mistakenly inversed.

26 No. 109 (Sorengo, Fondation B.I.N.G., Bibliothèque internationale de gastronomie, MS 10). The fact that this manuscript was formerly bound with other items is also stated in a subsequent catalogue description. See *Catalogue of Printed Books and Manuscripts Relating to Wine and Food: The Property of Mrs. J. D. Simon…18th May, 1981* (London: Sotheby's, 1981), lot 211, p. 66.

27 No. 110 (unlocated). For Halle's catalogue, see *Manuskripte vom XI. bis zum XIX. Jahrhundert*, cat. 50 (Munich: Halle, [1914]), no. 40, p. 19. Besides the *Artefii*, two manuscripts extracted from the volume were offered in 1929 by Emil Hirsch, another Munich bookseller, see *Seltene und seltsame Bücher vergangener Zeiten*, cat. 55 (Munich: Hirsch, 1929), nos. 512, 527, pp. 223, 229.

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de Cruce's visits to holy places in Europe.[28] The *BMAM* entry specified that, despite the item's overall good condition, the first illustration was a little damaged and the second had been inserted in a passe-partout to preserve it. Recent scholarship has, however, suggested that financial reasons again motivated this intervention. In the 2005 catalogue of the *Fra Angelico* exhibition held at the MET, Pia Palladino demonstrated that the fragments were originally parts of a longer roll of seven drawings, designated by the letters A–F.[29] Palladino reconstructed their history, indicating that Rosenthal likely divided the roll in 1928 and dispersed the fragments. She reported that Rosenthal included drawings A and B in *BMAM* and sold them to the London collector Henry Oppenheimer in 1930, perhaps with drawing D. In 1938, the art historian Bernard Berenson stated that fragment C had previously been in Rosenthal's stock.[30] Drawings F and G later reappeared in the collection of Franz Koenigs, who possibly bought them from Rosenthal. As for drawing E, it presumably remained in Munich until 1961, when *Kunsthandlung* Julius Böhler sold it to the New York collector Walter C. Baker.

Cataloguing the Manuscripts

For the compilation of *BMAM*, Rosenthal called on Schulz, who, before joining the firm, had completed a doctoral thesis on the twelfth-century chronicler Godfrey of Viterbo.[31] Besides this, Schulz described rare books for booksellers, collaborated with the *Gesamtkalatog der Wiegendrucke*, the Berlin cataloguing project of incunabula, and published several essays on medieval literature and history. This shows that Rosenthal employed a skilled cataloguer and talented scholar who was fascinated by the Middle Ages.

Schulz wrote the entries in a consistent manner. In a first paragraph, he gave the author, title, material of the leaves, place and date of production, notes on the script and the decoration, number of leaves, format, and description of the binding. Afterwards, he provided contextual information about the work and described aspects of the book that deserved clarification. He also recorded ownership inscriptions and the volume's state of conservation. Transcripts of the various parts of the text usually closed the entry. To support his descriptions, Schulz included bibliographical references to relevant studies, specialized catalogues, and related manuscripts in public libraries. The length of the

28 No. 173 (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University, Houghton Library, MS Typ. 1001).

29 Pia Palladino, "Pilgrims and Desert Fathers: Dominican Spirituality and the Holy Land," in *Fra Angelico*, ed. Laurence Kanter and Pia Palladino (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2005), 27–39.

30 Bernard Berenson, *The Drawings of the Florentine Painters*, 3 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1938; repr. 1970), 2:159.

31 Hans Koch, "Ernst Schulz," in *Das Werck der Bucher: von der Wirksamkeit des Buches in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart: eine Festschrift für Horst Kliemann zu seinem 60. Geburtstag*, ed. Fritz Hodeige (Freiburg im Breisgau: Rombach, 1956), 242–53; Anton Löffelmeier, "Der Kosmos der Rosenthals: Bücherkenner, Künstler und Wissenschaftler," in *Die Rosenthals*, ed. Angermair et al., 137–64 at 144–47.

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entries varied from half a page to several pages, when valuable books, such as highly decorated manuscripts and volumes with precious bindings, required exhaustive analysis, and were sometimes illustrated with reproductions.

As well as offering detailed records, Schulz indicated why these manuscripts were relevant sources for academic research. In the introduction to the first volume of *BMAM*, he argued that in intellectually turbulent times, as the 1920s were, people felt the need to connect to a culturally stable and unified past. In his view, the Christian Middle Ages represented such a moment, and this analogy explained why scholars worked so passionately on the period. He also observed that, although some researchers drew conclusions from large amounts of material, others interpreted specific historical sources to answer bigger questions.[32] In *BMAM*, he adopted this second approach and produced comprehensive entries of the works, especially those where the texts were unedited or differed from a printed edition. Schulz's attitude to historical research therefore reveals why he described the manuscripts' contents at length: he considered that this information helped understand the society in which they were transcribed. Similarly, he paid great attention to annotations in the items because they provided evidence to analyse the book trade, the history of libraries, and readers' practices in the Middle Ages.[33]

Yet, despite its undeniable contribution to scholarship, *BMAM* was primarily a dealer's tool. This function becomes evident when one compares the records with further descriptions of the items and the manuscripts themselves. It seems that Schulz excluded specific material evidence, such as modern ownership marks visible in the books, including Phillipps's stamp or inscription and the stamp of the Vienna *Bundesdenkmalamt*, the institution that granted permission for cultural objects to leave Austria.[34] Such omissions were intentional, since these marks identified the manuscripts' immediate provenance and thus provided information about Rosenthal's methods for finding rare books. This tactic also explains why Austrian religious provenance was not clearly stated in the entries for the volumes coming from Lambach and Seitenstetten Abbeys. In doing so, Rosenthal concealed one of his trade secrets from his clients and competitors.

Advertising the Books

Once Schulz completed the catalogue, Rosenthal sent it to the printers. Imprint information demonstrates again that he collaborated with skilled workers, including Dr. C. Wolf and sons, the University of Munich's official printers. For the illustrations, he called on F. Bruckmann, the Munich art publishers known for printing Kandinski's works, while Orell and Füssli of Zurich were responsible for the coloured reproductions. Besides contributing to *BMAM*'s elegant appearance, such partnerships emphasize Rosenthal's financial investment in this project. Although it is unclear how many copies of *BMAM*

32 *BMAM*, 1:I.

33 See also Ernst Schulz, *Aufgaben und Ziele der Inkunabelforschung* (Munich: Mandruck, 1924).

34 Nos. 10 (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 28673), 106 (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 28511).

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were printed, Rosenthal's list of recipients attests to his enormous network, since almost eight hundred volumes were sent to individuals and institutions established all over the world. Among these were major American and European libraries, booksellers, collectors, and scholars, as well as lesser-known actors in the book trade, including the university libraries at Beijing and Tokyo, and His Eminence George Mundelein, cardinal and archbishop of Chicago.[35]

To reach further potential buyers, Rosenthal advertised *BMAM*. He not only announced the new issue in his own catalogues, but inserted notices in specialized journals, such as the *Börsenblatt für den deutschen Buchhandel*.[36] In addition, he invited experts to review *BMAM*, including Paul Lehmann, professor of medieval Latin philology at Munich, who praised the books offered and Schulz's scholarly achievements.[37] Further reports appeared in periodicals targeting researchers and book-collectors, such as *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* and *La Bibliofilía*, published by Olschki.[38] Scholars also examined individual manuscripts, including Alfred Stange, who produced a short study on a miniature in a Psalter decorated in the abbey of Herrenalb for the art history journal *Belvedere* in 1929.[39]

However, Rosenthal's greatest effort to promote the books was to relaunch in 1927 *Beiträge zur Forschung*, the journal he had founded in 1913 but which had ceased publication during the war. As he explained in an introductory note, this new issue presented modern contributions, since research had greatly evolved over the last decade and catalogue entries, especially those for manuscripts, now contained updated scholarly information.[40] Experts wrote articles featuring books from Rosenthal's stock for this journal, including those offered in *BMAM*. For example, Ludwig Bertalot, a specialist in Renaissance manuscripts, edited Gasparino Barzizza's *Epistolae* and the art historian Hans Wegener studied the illustrated *Biblia pauperum*.[41]

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35 For this list, see Munich, Stadtarchiv, DE-1992-NL-ROS-20 (not foliated). For the copy of *BMAM*'s first volume that Rosenthal offered Olschki and which bears the inscription "S[ehr] l[ieben] langjährigen Freund u[nd] hervorragenden Kollegen Herrn Leo S. Olschki in Verehrung überreicht. München, Dez[ember] 1925. Jacques Rosenthal." London, Senate House Library, CC25.61 [Rosenthal].

36 Redaktion des Börsenblatts, "Verzeichnis von Neuigkeiten, die in dieser Nummer zum erstenmal angekündigt sind," *Börsenblatt für den deutschen Buchhandel*, December 18, 1925, 7.

37 Paul Lehmann, "Mittelalterliche Handschriften," *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten*, February 3, 1926, 1.

38 G. Ficker, [untitled review], *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte:. Neue Folge* 8 (1927): 472–73; [untitled review], *La Bibliofilía* 30 (1928): 338–39.

39 No. 183 (Houston, Public Library, Finnigan 90 P (130884)); Alfred Stange, "Eine mittelrheinische Zeichnung von 1445," *Belvedere* 8 (1929): 1–3.

40 For this note, see copies of the first volume of *Beiträge zur Forschung* in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Hbh, Bb 410, NF 1/4, and Oxford, Bodleian Library, Per. 25805 d.40.

41 Nos. 120 (Hamburg, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, cod. Philol. 132b), 123 (New York Public Library, Spencer Collection MS 31). Ludwig Bertalot, "Die älteste Briefsammlung des Gasparinus Barzizza," *Beiträge zur Forschung. Studien und Mitteilungen aus dem Antiquariat Jacques*

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Selling Rare Books

The subsequent dispersal of the manuscripts helps assess Rosenthal's strategies. The firm's copies of *BMAM* and their stock-books indicate that some items sold quickly. Fifteen volumes found buyers before the publication of *BMAM*, thirty sold within a year, sixteen within two years, and seven within three years; nineteen remaining items sold at a slower rate up to 1935.[42] It is hard to understand precisely why some volumes sold better than others, for neither their price, date of production, author, work, decoration, binding, or their presence in Rosenthal's stock for a long time seem to have played a role in their dispersal. One noteworthy element is the fact that two purchasers acquired several items on a single occasion: the German book-collector and dealer Otto Vollbehr, established in the United States, bought fourteen books on May 18, 1926, and Olschki acquired ten on April 10, 1927.[43]

Comparing these results with those of sales through catalogues issued before 1914, it is notable that the location of the purchasers had changed. Prior to this, Rosenthal's customers lived in today's Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Hungary, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States.[44] From 1925 onwards, they were mainly established in Germany, France, Italy, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The disappearance of numerous European clients reflects the global shift of economic power towards America following the war. This also illustrates the arrival of new buyers. Although Rosenthal had long-standing working relationships with Olschki, Maggs Bros., Wilfrid Voynich, the Königliche Bibliothek, and the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, purchasers such as the collectors Martin Bodmer of Zurich, Annette Finnigan and Edwin R. A. Seligman, both living in New York, the dealers Ernst P. Goldschmidt, based in London, and Lathrop C. Harper in New York, and public institutions, such as the Dortmund City and State Library, the Hamburg State and University Library, and the Library of Congress, all acquired manuscripts presented in catalogues for the first time.[45]

Despite having secured these customers, Rosenthal only sold eighty-seven of the two hundred manuscripts. The other books remained in his shop until its closure, and some can be traced in his successors' stock: twenty-five were offered by L'Art Ancien, seventeen by Albi Rosenthal, his grandson who worked in Oxford, and thirty-seven by Ber-

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Rosenthal, München. Neue Folge 2 (1929): 39–84; Hans Wegener, "Die italienische Biblia Pauperum der Sammlung Rosenthal," *Beiträge zur Forschung...Neue Folge* 3 (1930): 17–22.

42 Nos. 73, 96, 109, 132, 135, 137, 139, 141, 146, 152, 165–66, 180, 192, 198 (before publication); 1–2, 4–5, 16–18, 21, 25, 27, 29–30, 38, 54, 58, 68, 71, 77–78, 86, 105, 111, 120, 124, 128, 133, 144, 151, 167, 174 (within one year); 33–34, 37, 39, 51, 80, 85, 94–95, 98, 115, 147, 168, 173, 193, 196 (within two years); 6, 10, 40, 104, 108, 118, 183 (within three years); 8, 11, 19, 23, 28, 55, 70, 74, 90, 93, 106, 121–23, 127, 131, 172, 177, 199 (until 1935 and unknown date).

43 Nos. 33–34, 37, 39, 51, 80, 85, 94–95, 98 (Olschki); nos 1–2, 16–17, 21, 25, 27, 29–30, 38, 54, 68, 71, 78 (Vollbehr).

44 For buyers' names, see the firm's annotated catalogues in Munich, Stadtarchiv, DE-1992-NL-ROS-1117, 1119–35, 1137, 1139–46, 1150–56, 1158–62.

45 Nos. 19, 58, 74, 77, 90, 96, 120, 141, 147, 151–52, 183.

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nard M. Rosenthal, another grandson established in the United States.[46] The subsequent history of thirty-four further items has not yet been reconstructed.[47] Again, it is difficult to explain precisely why some books did not find buyer. Yet, the fact that Rosenthal managed to sell eight of the ten expensive manuscripts valued at between 10,000 and 50,000 Reichsmarks, as well as the two items priced at 60,000 and 100,000 Reichsmarks attests to his indisputable expertise.[48]

Conclusion

The mixed results from the *BMAM* catalogue suggest that Rosenthal's firm never fully recovered from the war and its consequences, compounded by the political changes in Germany of the 1920s and the financial crisis in 1929. However, this analysis has shown that Rosenthal invested a lot of effort, money, and skill into selling the manuscripts. He not only offered volumes he had owned for a long time but increased his supply by buying books on the local and international market, as well as from Austrian and German owners, and by using his colleagues' stock. While it is hard to know whether he dismembered some items for preservation and/or financial reasons, Rosenthal tasked a meticulous cataloguer to produce state-of-the-art entries, which would appeal to scholars and collectors fascinated by the Middle Ages. Furthermore, besides reaching buyers all over the world, *BMAM* was advertised in the specialist press to make the manuscripts known to a learned readership. Developed over his fifty-year career, these sophisticated strategies contributed to the success of Rosenthal's firm. Although *BMAM* was one of his last catalogues, its preparation, Schulz's descriptions, and the provenance history of these books show that Rosenthal influenced how members of the antiquarian book trade valued these manuscripts.

46 Nos. 15, 22, 52, 60, 76, 107, 116–17, 126, 130, 138, 158, 160–61, 163–64, 171, 182, 185–86, 188–90, 194, 197 (L'Art Ancien); 7, 20, 31, 44, 53, 62, 91, 129, 145, 148, 157, 162, 169–70, 178, 187, 191 (Albi Rosenthal); 3, 35, 42–43, 45–48, 50, 56–57, 63–64, 66, 69, 72, 75, 81–82, 84, 87, 89, 92, 97, 99, 101, 114, 119, 125, 134, 140, 142, 155, 175, 179, 195, 200 (Bernard M. Rosenthal).

47 Nos. 9, 12–14, 24, 26, 32, 36, 41, 49, 59, 61, 65, 67, 79, 83, 88, 100, 102–3, 110, 112–13, 136, 143, 149–50, 153–54, 156, 159, 176, 181, 184.

48 Nos. 4, 40, 86, 123, 128, 135, 144, 147, 165, 167.

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Chapter 7

FROM DRAWING ROOM TO SALE-ROOM

ALBUMS OF MEDIEVAL MANUSCRIPT CUTTINGS IN THE 1920s

MARGARET CONNOLLY

THE VICTORIAN PERIOD was the height of the fashionable craze for collecting anything that might be mounted on paper leaves and bound into albums and scrapbooks: subjects included prints, drawings, watercolours, engravings, silhouettes, photographs, autographs, bookplates, postage stamps, calling cards, playing cards, Christmas cards, valentines, pressed flowers, and even banknotes. Albums of leaves and cuttings from medieval manuscripts had begun to emerge before 1800 but the heyday for making such volumes was undoubtedly the nineteenth century.[1] The personal energies invested in their assemblage resulted in objects that were highly regarded by their original creators but not necessarily by others; this lack of transferrable esteem is apparent from the way that James Dennistoun's family disparaged his album of illuminated manuscript cuttings, apparently referring to them as "Uncle Denny's scraps."[2] On the other hand, the intrinsic value of individual cuttings was widely recognized by both collectors and sellers. When albums were consigned to the sale-room their most frequent fate was disassembly, either prior to their trip to market or shortly afterwards in the hands of dealers; consequently, few such volumes remain intact today. In a recent preliminary study I documented twenty-two albums of medieval cuttings that preserve their original format, or where all the constituent elements of a disbound volume have been retained together; I also listed a further eighteen dismantled or currently untraced examples.[3] Scholarly attention has tended to focus on a very few famous albums such as those owned by Dennistoun and Daniel Burkhardt-Wildt, giving the impression that such collections

1 See Sandra Hindman, Michael Camille, Nina Rowe, and Rowan Watson, *Manuscript Illumination in the Modern Age: Recovery and Reconstruction* (Evanston: Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, 2001), 80–91; for a general overview of albums see Samantha Matthews, *Album Verses and Romantic Literary Culture: Poetry, Manuscript, Print, 1780–1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020).

2 Hindman, Camille, Rowe, and Watson, *Manuscript Illumination*, 87.

3 Margaret Connolly, "The Album and the Scrapbook," *Florilegium* 35 (2018): 31–51.

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were the preserve of the serious collector, and that all were of substantial size and grandeur (Burkhardt-Wildt's contained approximately 475 items).[4] Yet the Victorian predilection for the activity of album-making suggests that there must have been many more examples of rather less splendid albums of cuttings than have survived to the present day. The aim of the present essay is to uncover evidence of the trade in albums of medieval leaves and cuttings in the early twentieth century, and thereby to extend knowledge of this type of "medieval" book. It will identify specific examples, most of which can no longer be traced, and will generally increase information about the contents and format of such volumes, and about the kind of people who owned, bought, and sold them.

This essay focuses on the 1920s, a decade notable for fashionable change, and a period when death and inheritance would naturally have brought many Victorian collections to the market.[5] Auction was not the only way to acquire manuscripts, and there were many sale-rooms, including outside London, but a study of this length must necessarily be selective and the investigation has been restricted to sales at Sotheby's between 1920–1929 (a total of at least 340 sales). I have consulted approximately 75 percent of the catalogues for this decade, mostly via the hard-copy run at St Andrews University Library and in a few instances online.[6] Although the St Andrews holdings are not complete and coverage of the years 1923–1925 is especially thin, nevertheless this corpus is sufficiently extensive to provide a representative view of sales at auction during the 1920s.[7]

The study was further delimited by the book-like format of the album. It does not include portfolios of leaves, or cut-out miniatures and initials kept loose in solander cases, or a combination of such items offered as "a parcel," even though these indicate a similar interest in curating fragmentary medieval manuscript materials. Typical of such collections was the "parcel" of leaves from manuscripts ("many with musical notation, some with initials in colours") and early printed books, which had belonged to David Secretan Jones, vicar of Oystermouth, Swansea.[8] A similarly mixed "parcel" (a manuscript leaf; a cut-out illuminated initial K; manuscript leaves with ornamental initials; leaves from More's *Dialogue against Tyndal*, and leaves and facsimiles from early Bibles) was the property of Mrs. Elizabeth Green, widow of the Quaker historian Joseph Joshua Green.[9] Also not included in this survey are numerous lots offering single leaves or indi-

4 *Catalogue of Single Leaves and Miniatures from Western Illuminated Manuscripts…Which will be Sold by Auction…25th April, 1983* (London: Sotheby, 1983).

5 Arguably the following decade, after the financial crash of 1929, might have yielded more evidence of the simple monetarization of collections.

6 For comparison Cambridge University Library holds 341 catalogues for this decade, see www.lib.cam.ac.uk/files/sothebys.pdf, accessed May 12, 2023; just eleven are digitally accessible, see: www.arlima.net/librairies/sotheby/, accessed May 12, 2023. St Andrews holds 247 catalogues for this period.

7 I am pleased to acknowledge the research assistance of Emma Gatrell and Zachary Vincent in assembling and checking this data for me during 2021–2022.

8 *Catalogue of Printed Books and a Few Manuscript…Which will be Sold by Auction…May 29, 1922* (London: Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge, 1922), lot 1031, p. 96.

9 *Catalogue of Printed Books and a Few Manuscripts, also of Autograph Letters & Historical*

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vidual cut-out illuminated initials, framed or loose, unless there is some clear indication that the items were formerly housed together in an album. Accordingly, the "superb illuminations" that had belonged to John Rushout, second Lord Northwick, and which arrived on the market in two portions in 1925 and 1928, do not feature here. I have not had access to the 1925 catalogue, but the fourteen lots of the 1928 catalogue were all presented individually on sunk mounts, and some had recently been exhibited as separate items.[10] On the other hand, the "magnificent series of illuminations on vellum" that had been owned by Robert Holford and then by his son, George Lindsay Holford, which was presented for sale in 1927 as a series of framed individual miniatures and groups of initials, is included because of the clear evidence that these cuttings had formerly been kept in a scrapbook at Dorchester House.[11]

Previously Holford's was the only album, albeit disassembled, that I knew had been sold during the 1920s: from this survey of Sotheby's sale catalogues for the decade I can now identify several more. Sales at auction usually cover a number of days, and make clear which lots were to be offered on each day, but in this essay references to sale catalogues will refer to the first day of the sale only. Catalogues of this period did not publish estimates of prices, and they only provide evidence that an item was *entered* for sale, not whether it was actually sold. Information about the outcome of a sale (prices attained by different lots; the identities of buyers), may sometimes be retrievable from annotated catalogues; for Sotheby's the annotated auctioneer's copies of the printed sale catalogues up to 1970 are held at the British Library.[12] However, even unannotated sale catalogues contain valuable data. Their lot descriptions can provide information about an item's contents, format, appearance, and condition, and although individual entries vary in the level of detail provided about an album, cumulatively they extend knowledge of the genre, sometimes also yielding information about ownership and provenance.

Documents...Which will be Sold by Auction...31st of July, 1922 (London: Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge, 1922), lot 343, p. 27. See the anonymous "Obituary, Joseph Joshua Green," *The Journal of the Friends Historical Society* 19.1 (1922): 32.

10 *Catalogue of Valuable Printed Books, Illuminated Manuscripts, Autograph Letters and Historical Documents...Which will be Sold by Auction...November 16th, 1925* (London: Sotheby, 1925); *Catalogue of Superb Illuminations from the Collection of the late John, Lord Northwick (The Second and Final Portion)...Which will be Sold by Auction ...21st of May, 1928* (London: Sotheby & Co., 1928).

11 *The Holford Library Part 1: Catalogue of the Magnificent Series of Illuminations on Vellum...Which will be Sold by Auction...12th of July, 1927* (London: Sotheby & Co., 1927), lots 1–48, comprising more than 120 individual items (leaves, cuttings, initials, miniatures, composite borders). The discovery of the scrapbook is referenced in Robert Benson, ed., *The Holford Collection Dorchester House with 200 Illustrations from the Twelfth to the end of the Nineteenth Century*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1927), 1:xvii. On Holford see Peter Kidd, "The Holford Album," Medieval Manuscripts Provenance (blog), June 20, 2020, https://mssprovenance.blogspot.com/2020/06/the-holford-album.html, accessed May 12, 2023.

12 BL, SC Sotheby (1); I am very grateful to A. S. G. Edwards for checking details of recorded prices of items discussed in this essay. On the use of catalogues and annotated catalogues see his "Medieval Manuscripts, the Collector and the Trade," in *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval British Manuscripts*, ed. Orietta Da Rold and Elaine Treharne (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 284–94.

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The Albums

Three albums offered only as "Other Properties" in 1920, 1926, and 1927, cannot be linked to individual owners but they nevertheless provide insight into the contents of such volumes. For convenience I will refer to these otherwise anonymous albums by the code names of their sales. Lot 190, offered on the first day in the sale of July 26, 1926 (Ganger), comprised sixty-seven miniatures, apparently all illuminated and on vellum, from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, cut from Books of Hours and *ducali*, a particular category of Venetian state documents that had elaborate opening leaves.[13] This was folio-sized, as was the album offered in the sale of June 27, 1927, lot 609 (Delphi) which had fewer but more varied contents from fifteenth- and sixteenth-century vellum manuscripts.[14] As is often the case, the wording of the Delphi lot description admits some ambiguities: the materials, seemingly forty-nine in total, were "pasted in an album, unbound" and comprised a mixture of eight large painted initials from various manuscripts; eight fragments from Books of Hours and choir books; and thirty-three fragments of Flemish borders "decorated with flowers and insects in natural colours on a coloured ground." More varied still was the "Illuminated MSS. Scrap-book" offered in the sale of December 13, 1920 (Stirrup).[15] Its twenty manuscript items were a mixture of leaves and cuttings from different sources and periods:

> six leaves from a French XVth Century Book of Hours, on vellum, each with a large arched miniature and full floreate borders, finely executed in gold and colours; three leaves from a similar Horae with small miniatures and three-quarter borders to the text; four very large historiated initial letters on vellum, containing miniatures (3 English, 1 Italian) of the XIVth Century; two leaves from a Flemish Horae, XVth Cent., with large arched miniatures and full borders (no text); two full-page miniatures (about 6 3/4 by 6 *in*.) [171 × 152mm] from a XVth Cent. French Service Book, representing the Infant Christ in the Temple and the Annunciation, both very finely executed (the latter slightly rubbed); three small square miniatures from a XIIIth Cent. English MS.

These were accompanied by "some photo reproductions of early woodcuts," creating an eclectic combination of medieval and modern, original and reproduction, which may explain this volume's description as a "scrap-book" rather than an album.

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13 *Catalogue of Valuable Printed Books, Illuminated and Other Manuscripts...Which will be Sold by Auction...26th of July, 1926* (London: Sotheby & Co., 1926), lot 190, p. 27. On the collecting of *ducali*, see Helena Katalin Szépe, *Venice Illuminated: Power and Painting in Renaissance Manuscripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018), 259–87.

14 *Catalogue of Valuable Printed Books, Illuminated and Other Manuscripts, Autographs Letters and Historical Documents...Which will be Sold by Auction...27th of June, 1927* (London: Sotheby & Co., 1927), lot 609, p. 35.

15 *Catalogue of Valuable Illuminated and other Manuscripts and Printed Books...Which will be Sold by Auction...December 13th, 1920* (London: Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge, 1920), lot 418, p. 51.

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Certain themes and organizational principles begin to emerge through the testimony of these and other lot descriptions. Many albums were collections of the religious miniatures typically found in Books of Hours (the Annunciation, Nativity, Flight to Egypt, and so on), or of illuminated initials that depicted individual saints. Sometimes an entire cycle of illustrations from the same source was preserved, so that the album essentially constitutes a highly condensed picture-book version of the original medieval manuscript. Especially tightly focussed was the album that belonged to G. C. Willoughby, Esq., of 4, Bedford Square, London. This was a collection of ten large miniatures depicting saints and biblical scenes, "cut from illuminated choir books," with all but the tenth taken from the same fifteenth-century Italian manuscript.[16] Mrs. Simpson Rostron of South Warnborough Manor, Basingstoke, had a similar picture-book album that was made up of thirty-one full-page miniatures (that is, complete leaves rather than cuttings) from a fifteenth-century vellum Book of Hours.[17] The two albums that had belonged to the journalist and scholar William Stebbing were also thematically coherent: their contents, images of saints and biblical scenes, derived entirely from fifteenth-century French Books of Hours.[18] The eleven miniatures in the smaller volume (lot 673) presented a traditional sequence of illustrations from a manuscript Book of Hours; the forty-four miniatures in the larger volume (lot 674) offered a more expansive series depicting events from Christ's life, death, and resurrection, in this case taken from a *printed* Book of Hours, with gilt Renaissance frames painted around each image. The fifty-seven miniatures and initial letters in the album that Mme Etienne Mallet possessed were similarly religious but of Italian origin, taken from choir books. The description of the initials delineates three series, graded by size and splendour:

> a fine series of large initials (about 170 mm × 170 mm.) painted in gold (or in colour with gold relief) on elaborate grounds of scriptural scenes painted in monochrome etc.; large ornamental initials in liquid gold on coloured grounds; a series of 22 large and elaborately designed initials apparently taken from the same manuscript to foliate and interlacing designs, with outlines and arabesque work in white.

However, the wording does not quite make clear whether all three series derived from the same source.[19]

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16 *Catalogue of Valuable Printed Books and Illuminated Manuscripts…Which will be Sold by Auction… 15th of April, 1929* (London: Sotheby & Co., 1929), lot 283, pp. 52–53. For the tenth miniature see Gary Vikan, ed., *Medieval & Renaissance Miniatures from the National Gallery of Art* (Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 1975), 22–25.

17 *Catalogue of Valuable Illuminated Manuscripts, Printed Books and Autograph Letters…Which will be Sold by Auction…June 19th, 1922* (London: Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge, 1922), lot 433, pp. 49–50; see further about this volume below.

18 *Catalogue of Valuable Printed Books, Illuminated and Other Manuscripts…Which will be Sold by Auction…21st of February, 1927* (London: Sotheby & Co., 1927), lots 673–74, p. 100. On Stebbing, see Martha S. Vogeler, "Stebbing, William (1831–1926), journalist and author," in *ODNB*.

19 *Catalogue of a Collection of Very Important Illuminated Manuscripts and Fine Printed Horae, with*

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A collection that was clearly of more miscellaneous origins had belonged to Lewis Fry, lawyer and MP for Bristol, and member of the Quaker chocolate dynasty. His blue morocco gilt-edged album was folio-sized and contained thirty-two cuttings (eighteen miniatures, ten initials, and four borders) that derived from English, French, and German manuscripts. The borders and initials, which were large, came from fifteenth-century choir books, whilst the miniatures were from a fifteenth-century French Book of Hours and a thirteenth-century English manuscript of an unspecified kind. Though from disparate sources, Fry's album had a strong thematic concern with death. The English miniatures included one of a deer-hunt and another of an execution, and one of the French miniatures was of a burial service. The largest initial depicted the Last Judgment, and others the plague of murrain, and a monk with the figure of Death; another initial (a "D") offered: "a curious scene of a woman (?) in bed, at her side a man anointing her eyes from a vial, above the woman's head a bird is flying upwards, from outside a child is seen approaching carrying a fish and escorted behind by an angel."[20]

Cuttings of initial letters were prized not just for their pictorial properties. The alphabet itself proved to be a tremendous attraction to the collector, and albums might be made up solely of cuttings of initials, sometimes also organized along alphabetical principles. Richard C. Fisher of Hill Top, Midhurst, West Sussex had a small quarto collection, bound in calf, of more than ninety illuminated capitals taken from fifteenth-century manuscripts and printed books, mostly on vellum. Many of these had been carefully extracted to preserve their "delicate spray terminals in gold and colours;" in the album they were arranged alphabetically "extending to the letter U."[21] This description closely recalls the characteristics of the collection of "ornaments and letters" that was personally assembled by Esther Cory in the early nineteenth century; this survives as Glasgow University Library, MS Euing 26, and features several alphabetical sequences of single or multiple cut-out letters.[22] Similarly, Miss Lavinia Halswell's collection of "initial letters, cut from printed books and manuscripts" was arranged alphabetically in a calf-bound album; and an album that had belonged to Mrs. Tuer was described as "Ornamental Alphabets" and consisted of an alphabetical arrangement of a mixed set of cuttings ("some woodcut, some engraved, some illuminated by hand").[23]

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a few Early Illustrated Books, formed...by Henri Auguste Brolemann...Which will be Sold by Auction... 4th of May, 1926 (London: Sotheby & Co., 1926), lot 159, p. 62.

20 The scene depicts events from the apocryphal book of *Tobit* (my thanks to Laura Cleaver for this identification). *Catalogue of Valuable Printed Books, Illuminated and other Manuscripts and Autograph Letters...Which will be Sold by Auction...May 22nd, 1922* (London: Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge, 1922), lot 253, p. 32.

21 *Catalogue of Printed Books and a few Manuscripts...Which will be Sold by Auction...22nd of April, 1929* (London: Sotheby & Co., 1929), lot 630, p. 67.

22 Described by Neil R. Ker, *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries*, 4 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969–1992), 2:877; see also Connolly, "The Album and the Scrapbook," 35–38.

23 *Catalogue of Valuable Printed Books, European & Oriental Miniatures & Manuscripts...Which will be Sold by Auction...27th of April, 1927* (London: Sotheby & Co., 1927), lot 404, p. 88; *Catalogue... 27th of June, 1927*, lot 174, p. 22.

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Albums came in a mixture of shapes and sizes, but sometimes their dimensions can only be inferred from the category (folio, quarto etc.) of the sale in which they were offered. The anonymous Ganger and Delphi albums, and those owned by Willoughby, Fry, and Halswell were all folio-sized; the anonymous Stirrup album and those owned by Rostron, Mallet (lot 159), Fisher, and Tuer were quarto-sized; and Stebbing's two albums and Mallet lot 9 were octavo-sized. Their bindings, when specified, ranged from plain to handsome. The binding of the anonymous Ganger album was sheep, Fisher's was calf, and Halswell's "rough" calf; Tuer's was "vellum gilt." Morocco, in various colours, was the most typical covering, and these volumes were frequently gilt-edged. The anonymous Stirrup volume was half red morocco and Stebbing's second album was old red morocco gilt; Willoughby's album was "stamped in blue morocco," and Fry's was blue morocco gilt. Mrs. Rostron's was olive morocco gilt, fashioned by the London bookbinder Francis Bedford. The most splendid were the two albums offered for sale by Mme Mallet.[24] One (lot 159) was described as "bound in blind stamped brown morocco, inside dentelle border, silk linings, g[ilt] t[op] in a cloth case." The other (lot 9), was equally fine but reveals a different kind of binding technique. This extensive collection of cuttings, including ivy-leaf borders and grotesques, had been pasted onto thirty-four paper leaves and "inserted in a fine 18th century red morocco dentelle binding, probably by Douceur, from the first volume of the Italian translation of Lucretius, 1755 8vo;" in other words, a small (octavo) eighteenth-century printed book had been gutted so that its fine binding could be repurposed as the outer shell for this illuminated medieval manuscript material. These two finely bound albums also had a distinguished heritage, as is explained below.

The Inheritors

Sales of books were sometimes anonymous, with items offered under the capacious heading "Other Properties," or discreetly described as "The Property of a Gentleman" and (more rarely) "The Property of a Lady;" albums that appear under these headings offer few clues about the identities of their owners. On the other hand, albums included in the sales of named individuals may sometimes furnish multiple levels of information because their immediate sellers were often just their *last* owners who had acquired them through inheritance. The appearance of such albums for sale in the early twentieth century can thus provide retrospective views of the possession (and possibly even the creation) of such objects in the nineteenth century.

Sometimes the line of inheritance is very clear. The property of Miss A. B. Shoberl, offered in fifty-one lots in the sale of July 8, 1929, included many early nineteenth-century works published by Frederic Shoberl, such as the complete forty-three-volume set of *The World in Miniature* (lot 312).[25] Frederic Shoberl was a journalist and writer, and

24 *Catalogue…4th of May, 1926*, lot 9, p. 4; lot 159, p. 62.

25 *Catalogue of Printed Books and a few Manuscripts…Which will be Sold by Auction…8th of July, 1929* (London: Sotheby & Co., 1929), lots 287–337, pp. 33–37. See G. Boase and N. Banerji, "Shoberl [Schoberl], Frederic (1775–1853), journalist and writer," in *ODNB*.

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Annie Bertha Shoberl was his great-granddaughter; the death of her father, Henry Collium Shoberl, of Kingston, Surrey, in February 1929 was presumably the impetus for the sale. No album of cuttings was included, but the raw materials for the making of such albums were all present. Lot 333 consisted of "a parcel" of loose leaves: two from a missal of ca. 1100, and two more from another missal of ca. 1150, along with fifteen other leaves or fragments that had been recovered from bindings, and two more vellum leaves that were blank. Lot 325 was a blank paper album of eighty leaves of "stout laid paper, mottled calf, back elaborately gilt and lettered 'Gems', an earlier lettering 'German School' having been erased"—evidently this folio-sized eighteenth-century album had already been repurposed more than once.[26] Should a bespoke construction be preferred, lots 326 and 327 offered substantial quantities of different kinds of blank paper, and lot 328 "five bindings from which the books had been removed," of different sizes, in morocco or calf. This cache of materials demonstrates how albums might be put together, and is especially interesting given Frederic Shoberl's influential contribution to nineteenth-century album culture. As the editor of *Forget-Me-Not*, the first literary annual in English, he was instrumental in promoting the concept of the album, especially amongst women.[27] The raw materials for album-making also featured in the sale of May 4, 1926. Scattered throughout this sale were three sets of leaves taken from illuminated manuscripts, now kept loose (lots 20, 26, and 27); two sets of illuminated initials and ornaments, about 160 in total, also loose (lots 142a and 143); and a set of four miniatures cut from a large early sixteenth-century service book (lot 160). In addition, there was a French Book of Hours that lacked its miniatures (lot 64) and another fragmentary Hours (lot 65). All these items were presented for sale "by Order of the present Owner," Mme Mallet. When other married women consigned materials to the sale-room it was often because they were recently widowed and had to dispose of their husbands' collections, but in this instance Mme Mallet had inherited in her own right. She was born Blanche Bontoux, the great-granddaughter of the French commercial broker Henri Auguste Brölemann, and it was his collection of "Very Important Illuminated Manuscripts and Fine Printed Horae," formed a century before, that she was selling.

In other cases, ownership and lines of inheritance are slightly less clear. The album of "ornamental alphabets" sold by the executors of Mrs. Tuer in 1927 was part of what the sale catalogue headlined as "Books from the Collection of the late Andrew *L.* Tuer Esq." (my emphasis).[28] Yet both the timing of this sale and its contents point to a connection with the Victorian stationer and publisher Andrew *White* Tuer.[29] The choicest part of his

26 Its dimensions are given as 484 × 358 mm.

27 See Katherine D. Harris, *Forget Me Not: The Rise of the British Literary Annual, 1823–1835* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2015).

28 *Catalogue of the Well-Known Collection of Children's Books of the XVIIth, XVIIIth and XIXth centuries…Which will be Sold by Auction…17th of July, 1900* (London: Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge, 1900).

29 See Lucy Peltz, "Andrew White Tuer (1838–1900)," in *ODNB*. I cannot account for the discrepancy in the middle initial except to note that apparently the orphaned Tuer changed his name to reflect that of his great-uncle Andrew White.

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library had been sold shortly after his death and the items offered in 1927 must have constituted the rump of his collections that had been retained by his widow, Thomasine Louisa Tuer (née Louttit) who died in 1926. Peltz notes that Tuer had a reputation as "an ardent antiquarian and a voracious collector," and this is reflected in the variety and number of albums that appear in this sale. There were albums of old banknotes (lot 19), bookplates (lot 31), Christmas cards (lot 44), fashion plates (lots 46–47), silhouettes (lot 189), and valentines (lot 216); in addition there were five albums of "scraps" (lot 188) and a scrapbook of old ballads (lot 18A). Also included were items of correspondence sent to Tuer at the Leadenhall Press (lots 10–18).

Death was generally the force which propelled albums onto the market, as is sometimes overtly stated in the sale catalogues ("Miss Lavinia Halswell (deceased), 26 Kensington Gate W.;" "the late R. C. Fisher Esq."). On other occasions sellers were divesting themselves of property during their lifetimes. For example, Mrs. Simpson Rostron (born Christina Jane Riley) died in 1924 but had sold her album two years previously; she was the widow of a Surrey barrister and Justice of the Peace who had died in 1907, and the album may originally have been his. Sometimes the occasion behind the sale needs to be teased out. George de Grey, eighth Baron Walsingham, sold a considerable number of illuminated initials and miniatures in 1927.[30] He had succeeded to the title in March 1919 on the death of his father, and it is not immediately obvious what might have prompted the sale in 1927 except that his mother, Elizabeth Henrietta Grant, died that year, perhaps indicating that the collection had been hers. These initials and miniatures were sold individually, but they may have belonged in an album that had been dismantled for the sale.

After Sales

The album offered for sale at Sotheby's in December 1920 (Stirrup) was subsequently withdrawn.[31] I know nothing about the fortunes of several others, but some may be traced a little further. Several were bought by dealers or booksellers. Lewis Fry's album was bought by James Tregaskis; the smaller Brölemann/Mallet album (lot 9, May 4, 1926) was purchased by Leo S. Olschki; the sheep-covered album sold anonymously in 1926 was bought by Charles Sawyer; and the oblong folio album sold in 1927 was bought by Ellis.[32] The names recorded as the buyers of the two albums that had belonged to William Stebbing (Last (?) and Behrens) are not ones that I recognize. The range of prices achieved by these albums varied considerably. At the cheaper end, in 1927

30 *Catalogue…27th of April, 1927*, lots 707–41, pp. 139–45 (comprising fifty-six individual items from Books of Hours and manuscript Bibles, some with musical notations, mostly Italian, thirteenth to fifteenth century in date).

31 *Catalogue…December 13th, 1920*, lot 418, p. 51.

32 Charles J. Sawyer's business was based in Grafton Street, London; on Ellis see George Smith and Frank Benger, *The Oldest London Bookshop* (London: Ellis, 1928), 65–68. See also David Pearson, *Provenance Research in Book History: A Handbook* (London: British Library, 1994), 159–60 (Ellis), 166 (Sawyer), and 168 (Tregaskis).

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Stebbing's smaller album of eleven fifteenth-century manuscript miniatures (lot 673) fetched £5 5s and his larger collection of forty-four miniatures from an incunabulum (lot 674) raised £20; the previous year Sawyer had paid £33 for an album of sixty-seven miniatures (Ganger). These prices seem roughly aligned, suggesting that a reasonable price for a single cutting might have been about ten shillings. Quantity was not the only factor however, and another collection of initials and fragments ("at least 49"), sold in the sale of June 27, 1927 (lot 609, Delphi), raised only £6 5s. Prices must have been influenced by the nature and calibre of the contents of an album, as well as the quality of its binding. Fry's volume contained only thirty-two miniatures and yet Tregaskis paid £150 for it. Brolemann's smaller volume consisted of thirty-four leaves of paper and cannot have contained many more items than Fry's unless the individual cuttings were very small; the high price paid for it by Olschki (£200) doubtless reflected the volume's eighteenth-century binding.[33]

These book dealers may have been buying with the intention of selling the albums on intact, but this outcome seems less likely than what Gabriel Wells termed "disseveration."[34] The sale catalogues for the 1920s are full of lots that offered single miniatures and illuminated initials and detached leaves, sometimes framed and glazed. Indeed, the lot description for Willoughby's album positively invited a purchaser to break up the volume, declaring that it was "an attractive collection of miniatures, most of which would be considerably enhanced in effect by being framed."[35] Aesthetics were far from the only consideration. It cannot have escaped anyone's notice that greater profits could be realized through piecemeal sales. Their greater potential yield is amply demonstrated through the sale of Holford's album in separate lots in 1927, for which some buyers and prices are recorded: Quaritch bought seven lots, paying a total of at least £438, and Wells bought three, paying £376.[36]

In most instances therefore it seems probable that these albums were purchased with disassembly in mind, and that their appearances in the sale-room during the 1920s constituted their final outings as intact objects. Further research on individual fragments may establish the truth of this assumption, but there was at least one exception to this fate. The album of thirty-one leaves from a French Book of Hours that Mrs. Simpson Rostron sold in June 1922 remains intact. It became the property of the Lancashire industrialist, Robert Edward Hart, who was actively building his collection of rare books

33 For a brief history of Olschki see the firm's website: https://en.olschki.it/la-casa-editrice/la-nostra-storia, accessed May 12, 2023.

34 Quoted from the brochure that accompanied sales of individual leaves from the Gutenberg Bible, see www.mccunecollection.org/Incunabula%20Leaf%20Biblia%20Latina, accessed May 12, 2023.

35 *Catalogue…15th of April, 1929*, lot 283, pp. 52–53.

36 *Holford Library Part 1*. Specifically, Quaritch bought lots 29 (no price given), 30 (£140), 34 (£140), 36 (£60), 37 (£38), 38 (£30), and 39 (£30); Wells bought lots 31 (£180), 32 (£16), and 35 (£180); and two other purchasers were Jambert, who bought lot 33 (£90), and Drew (?) who bought lot 40 (£60). I thank A. S. G. Edwards for this and other information that has improved this essay.

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and manuscripts, coins, and other artifacts during this period, buying directly at sales, from local booksellers, and from London firms such as Maggs.[37] It is not clear whether Hart bought the album directly from the sale or via an intermediary, but a bookseller's code on the front pastedown (meo/-/-) might yield some information about that or its earlier history.[38] The album is now Blackburn Museum and Art Gallery MS 20984, and remains undisturbed in its nineteenth-century Bedford binding.[39]

The construction of albums of cuttings from medieval manuscripts in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries involved the plunder and destruction, directly or indirectly, of older, more valuable books. Western manuscripts were not the only victims of this treatment. Initials and miniatures from Indian, Persian, and Turkish sources were also displayed in albums, or kept loose, or framed. These materials, from disparate periods and cultures, were presented and preserved in identical ways to their medieval counterparts, and are testimony to the porous boundaries between the album of cuttings, artistic portfolio, and travel scrapbook. Yet whilst the Victorian album may have constituted a new environment for western medieval miniatures and initials, the same was not necessarily true for non-European materials. In the sale of November 15, 1926 a significant collection of Indian miniatures owned by Sir Malcolm MacGregor of MacGregor, was presented as separate items, through fifty-one lots, each with a detailed description.[40] If MacGregor had kept the miniatures in an album, that album had already been disassembled for the sale, but as the heading to this section of the catalogue makes clear, these items shared a collective origin: they had in fact *come from* albums, just not albums constructed by MacGregor himself, nor his ancestors. Their origins were the much older albums that had belonged to the library of Rāja Chait Singh in the fortress of Bijaigurh; in the violent late eighteenth-century conflicts in northern India they became spoils of war and thereby displaced from their proper historic and cultural contexts.

This is a renewed reminder that the album of cuttings was a transitory form of presentation. It was also one that was more common than the small number of surviving examples suggests. Albums did not just feature amongst the collections of famous bibliophiles: many of the individuals named in this essay were more ordinary and less wealthy book collectors whose libraries were of a smaller scale. As collections changed

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37 On Hart and his collections see Cynthia Johnston, ed., *A British Book Collector: Rare Books and Manuscripts in the R. E. Hart Collection, Blackburn Museum and Art Gallery* (London: University of London Press, 2021).

38 If Laura Cleaver is correct in relating this to Tregaskis's code "Mayflowers," the price would be £186 (e-mail correspondence April 28, 2023).

39 I am grateful to Anthea Purkis, Curator, Blackburn Museum and Art Gallery, for information about this manuscript, from a description by Ed Potten, e-mail correspondence November 10, 2022, and particularly to Catherine Yvard for sharing her unpublished research about this volume with me. See also Ker, *Medieval Manuscripts*, 2:101–2; for a facsimile of one leaf (fol. 11) see *Medieval and Early Renaissance Treasures in the North West* (Manchester: Whitworth Art Gallery, 1976), 32 and plate 15.

40 *Catalogue of Valuable Printed Books & Manuscripts…Which will be Sold by Auction…15th of November, 1926* (London: Sotheby & Co., 1926), lots 473–546, pp. 75–81. Such collections appeared in great numbers throughout the sales of the 1920s.

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hands through death and inheritance, albums moved down through family generations and into different, possibly humbler households. This descent also followed a trajectory from drawing room to sale-room. The appearance of albums at auction in the 1920s was a significant moment of transition. For many albums this may have been the objects' first encounter with the trade. Post-sale, most albums were probably broken up, and their individual components subsequently sold again at greater profit: this is demonstrable in some instances and assumed in others. Such breaking-up may also have happened pre-sale, and the thousands of individual cuttings and detached manuscript leaves that also feature throughout the 1920s Sotheby's catalogues are testimony to an unknown number of nineteenth-century albums that have vanished without trace.

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Chapter 8

BUYING AND BREAKING WITH PHILIP AND OTTO

LISA FAGIN DAVIS

THE LATE THIRTEENTH-CENTURY manuscript known as the Beauvais Missal is a beautiful example of northern French manuscript production, written in an expert Gothic praescissa and beautifully illuminated (Figure 8.1). It is also in pieces. The story of the Beauvais Missal is painful, but in many ways it is not unusual. The manuscript was given to Beauvais Cathedral in the early fourteenth century and remained there for several centuries. The cathedral library was dispersed during the French Revolution at the end of the eighteenth century, as were most ecclesiastical collections. The Missal disappeared at that time but surfaced again several decades later as part of the collection of Didier Petit de Meurville.[1] In 1843, the Beauvais Missal—newly bound and gilt by Lyon binder Bruyère—was purchased by Henri Auguste Brölemann, a commercial broker in Lyon, from whom it passed through several generations to his great-granddaughter and heiress, Mme Etienne Mallet. She sold the manuscript at Sotheby's on May 4, 1926 (lot 161) for £970 to the dealer William Permain. In 2014, British scholar Peter Kidd discovered that Permain was acting as an agent for none other than William Randolph Hearst, who brought the manuscript to the United States. Hearst owned the codex for sixteen years before selling it for $1,000 in October 1942 through Gimbel Brothers, to the New York dealer Philip Duschnes.[2]

Duschnes counted among his friends and business associates fellow bookdealer Otto F. Ege, who was among the most prolific of the early twentieth-century American biblioclasts. Ege spent most of his career as a professor of art history at the Cleveland Museum of Art and at Case Western Reserve University in Ohio. As a bookdealer, he is best known for breaking apart manuscripts and early printed books in the 1930s and 1940s and

1 *Catalogue de la collection formée par M. Didier Petit, de Lyon* (Lyon: Lesne, 1843), lot 354.

2 Peter Kidd, "The Beauvais Missal: A New Piece of the Provenance," *Medieval Manuscripts Provenance* (August 4, 2014) https://mssprovenance.blogspot.com/2014/08/the-beauvais-missal-new-piece-of.html, accessed October 24, 2022.

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Figure 8.1. Leaf from the Beauvais Missal (Cleveland Museum of Fine Arts, Acc. No. 1982.141, verso). Courtesy of the Cleveland Museum of Art's Open Access Initiative.

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selling them leaf by leaf at a massive profit. He was not the first to do this, but he was particularly profligate. Like his associate Duschnes, Ege had recognized how economies of scale would work in his favour if he sold 250 leaves to 250 buyers instead of one manuscript to one buyer. Hundreds, if not thousands, of rare books and manuscripts were destroyed and scattered by dealers like Ege and Duschnes. Much work has been done in recent years in identifying and tracing the dispersal of leaves from these broken books.[3] This essay will not repeat those efforts but will investigate the actual practice of biblioclasm, exploring material evidence in order to understand the methods of destruction wrought by biblioclast: scissors and blade.

Ege defended his biblioclasm with, what he considered, the noble and altruistic goal of putting a little bit of the Middle Ages within the economic grasp of even the humblest collector or smallest institution. In a 1938 article in a "hobbyist" journal called *Avocations*, Ege explained:

> Book-tearers have been cursed and condemned, but have they ever been praised or justified?...Surely to allow a thousand people 'to have and to hold' an original manuscript leaf, and to get the thrill and understanding that comes only from actual and frequent contact with these art heritages, is justification enough for the scattering of fragments. Few, indeed, can hope to own a complete manuscript book; hundreds, however, may own a leaf.[4]

Ege's actions were certainly misguided, but he was correct in one important respect; small collections throughout the United States that could never have afforded to buy entire codices are the proud possessors of significant teaching collections of medieval manuscript leaves. Today, several thousand leaves from several hundred manuscripts that passed through Ege's hands can be identified in at least 115 North American collections in twenty-five states. Duschnes, for his part, offered hundreds of leaves for sale over the course of his career. The two dealers together account for a significant number of leaves currently found in North American public and private collections.

In 1995, Christopher de Hamel asserted that "By the end of his life, Ege had virtually gone into partnership with Duschnes."[5] This statement is borne out by my recent survey of 105 Duschnes catalogues from 1922 to 1955. This survey identified 496 offerings of single leaves in eighteen catalogues, representing at least 120 different manuscripts of which at least forty-seven can be confidently identified with manuscripts whose leaves were also scattered by Ege.[6] Duschnes's earliest leaf offerings are found in Catalogue

3 See especially Scott Gwara, *Otto Ege's Manuscripts: A Study of Ege's Manuscript Collections, Portfolios, and Retail Trade: with a Comprehensive Handlist of Manuscripts Collected or Sold* (Cayce: De Brailes, 2013); Lisa Fagin Davis, *Reconstructing the Beauvais Missal* https://brokenbooks2.omeka.net, accessed October 25, 2022; and various studies on the Fragmentarium website https://Fragmentarium.ms, accessed October 24, 2022.

4 Otto F. Ege, "I am a Biblioclast," *Avocations* 1 (1938): 517.

5 Christopher de Hamel, *Cutting up Manuscripts for Pleasure and Profit* (Charlottesville: Book Arts Press, 1996), 18.

6 These include Gwara, *Otto Ege's Manuscripts*, Handlist Nos. 3, 4, 12–13, 15, 16, 18, 24, 30, 33,

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34 (1939). From 1939 until 1948, he and Ege each offered leaves from dozens of the same manuscripts, easily identifiable by the common descriptive language they used.[7] For example, both dealers described leaves of the Beauvais Missal using the overly precise date of 1285 and the phrase "the first flowering of Gothic interest in nature." Ege may have been the one writing the shared descriptions; indeed, after Ege's death in 1951, the descriptions of manuscript leaves in Duschnes's catalogues no longer reflect the language of Ege's descriptions as used by his widow Louise. Beginning in the 1950s, Duschnes seems to have become more interested in selling miniatures and portfolio collections rather than focusing on text leaves. As regards sales of single leaves, without Ege's prose the Duschnes descriptions in the 1950s are generally too vague to make clear connections between leaves he was selling and those being offered by Louise Ege, and the leaves illustrated in the Duschnes catalogues from this period do not correlate with leaves Louise was marketing (the exceptions are found in the shared portfolios they both marketed). This sea-change suggests that manuscripts acquired by either dealer in the 1940s were candidates for shared leaves while those acquired after Ege's death may not have been. This hypothesis has important implications for the case studies to be addressed below.

The relationship between the Ege business and Duschnes did continue in one important respect after Otto's death. Louise continued Otto's work by bringing a pet project to fruition, using leaves of dozens of different manuscripts and early printed books to create thematic "portfolios," many of which are still housed as discrete collections. The three most common of these portfolios are titled *Fifty Original Leaves from Medieval Manuscripts*, *Original Leaves from Famous Bibles*, and *Original Leaves from Famous Books*.[8] The leaves were hinged into custom mattes with a distinctive red-fillet border ("vermillion" in Ege's parlance) and Otto's (or Louise's) handwritten notes across the bottom, identified with Ege's letterpress label, and housed in custom buckram boxes. As early as 1951, Duschnes was offering the *Original Leaves from Famous Books: Nine Centuries* series using the same language as was used to market the identical Ege set. The *Fifty Original Leaves* sets, however, were marketed and sold exclusively by Mrs Ege.

With very few exceptions, the leaves in these portfolios are always sequenced in the same order, so that, for example, leaf No. 3 in one set comes from the same manuscript as No. 3 in every other set of the same title. Forty *Fifty Original Leaves* portfolios were assembled; thirty-one have been located.[9] Across those thirty-one boxes are thirty-

37–38, 40–45, 47, 49, 50, 52–53, 56, 59–61, 66–67, 71, 73–74, 77, 82, 100, 119, 122, 125, 143, 151–52, 166, 169, 175, 228, 233, and 237.

7 Gwara, *Otto Ege's Manuscripts*, Handlist Nos. 30–31.

8 For more on these various collections, see Gwara, *Otto Ege's Manuscripts*, and Barbara Shailor, "Otto Ege: Portfolios vs. Leaves," *Manuscripta* 53.1 (2009): 13–27.

9 To the twenty-nine sets recorded by Gwara (*Otto Ege's Manuscripts*, 106–7) may be added No. 3 (the Ege Family's personal portfolio)—acquired from Otto and Louise Ege's grandchildren by the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library in 2015 (shelfmark TBD)—and Set No. 1—found in a basement in Ohio in 2020, auctioned at Christie's London on December 8, 2020, lot 9, and acquired by the Houghton Library at Harvard University (MS Typ. 1294). The sets are generally numbered,

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one leaves from each of those fifty manuscripts. These portfolios, therefore, represent a coherent—and intrinsically American—corpus of leaves that can be affiliated with a discrete number of manuscripts, leading to the realistic possibility of the recovery and study of at least a portion of many of these codices.

This work has been facilitated in large part by the 2013 publication of Scott Gwara's seminal study, *Otto Ege's Manuscripts*. In this volume, Gwara has given each dismembered codex associated with Ege a handlist number, greatly simplifying the task of research and reference. For example, instead of describing one particular leaf as a mid-fifteenth-century copy of Jerome's *Contra Jovinianum* that has two columns and forty-one lines per page, we can simply refer to it as Handlist 35. These Gwara Handlist numbers will be used throughout this essay. The field was also expanded significantly in 2015 by the acquisition by the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale of the Ege family's private collection, which includes dozens of whole and previously unstudied Books of Hours, hundreds of single leaves, archival files, and the carcasses and remnants of several dismembered codices.[10]

The remains of these broken books represent significant—and generally unstudied—material evidence, shedding light on Ege's biblioclastic praxis as well as providing new provenance evidence for these once-intact codices. The following case studies will demonstrate the kind of conclusions that can be drawn from the study of that which survives. Each case adds a new piece of evidence, and together they take us into Ege's workshop, allowing us to bear witness to his biblioclastic process.

First, the Beauvais Missal, also known as Handlist 15. Duschnes purchased the Beauvais Missal in mid-October 1942. On October 1 of that year, several weeks *before* the sale, Ege wrote a letter to Lima (Ohio) Public Librarian Freda Silver in which he referred to "nine new items, the FINEST, Beauvais, France 1285 (will be sent shortly)."[11] This chronology suggests that Duschnes and Ege agreed in advance to buy, and to break, the Beauvais Missal. Almost immediately after the 1942 sale of the Beauvais Missal, in fact, Duschnes began offering leaves for sale, for $25, $30, or $40 each, depending on the number of illuminated initials on the particular leaf.[12] After removing the leaves he intended to offer for sale, Duschnes apparently passed the remnants on to Ege, who distributed leaves through his usual means, by gift or sale. Many single leaves of the Beauvais Missal were sold between 1942 and Ege's death in 1951, but others remained in stock. Forty of these became No. 15 in the *Fifty Original Leaves* portfolios.

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although one set, at Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts, is unnumbered.

10 An exciting new resource is under development, as Eric Johnson, the curator at Ohio State University who has scoured the state looking for Ege leaves on behalf of the OSU, recently found several notebooks at the Lima (Ohio) Public Library recording their transactions with the Eges beginning in the 1940s, with details about dates, prices, and items. Johnson has been working for several months on a soon-to-be-public database of this material.

11 Letter from Otto F. Ege to Freda Silver, dated October 1, 1942, Lima Public Library, Special Collections, SLPA—Ege Correspondence/1942–1949.

12 Philip C. Duschnes, *Catalogue no. 54* (November 1942), no. 25.

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As of this writing, with thanks to librarians, collectors, curators, and scholars worldwide, my Beauvais Missal digital reconstruction includes 122 catalogued and sequenced leaves of the original 309.[13] With such a large number of leaves to work with, there is now enough data to begin to draw some conclusions about the manuscript. For example, the distribution of identified leaves within the manuscript allows us to formulate hypotheses about the dismantling and dispersal of the Missal. The manuscript is the second of a multi-volume set (the others are untraced). It is a summer volume, preserving temporale and sanctorale propers for March–November (in addition to the expected calendar, canon, commons, and special masses). A large number of Sanctorale leaves in July and August are found in *Fifty Original Leaves* sets and can be therefore definitively associated with Ege rather than Duschnes. This suggests that Ege was working with several quires from that particular section. The large number of recovered Sanctorale leaves relative to the other sections may also be because the Sanctorale leaves tend to have more decoration than leaves in the other sections, presumably making them more marketable. Duschnes, for example, priced the leaves according to the number of initials they preserved, as noted above. It is noteworthy that every recovered leaf has at least one initial, as leaves without initials would likely have been unmarketable and may even have been discarded.[14]

This kind of analysis can be profitably applied to other Ege-sourced leaves. Since 2015, the final project in my annual introduction to manuscript studies at the Simmons University School of Library and Information Science has been a digital reconstruction and study of one of the Books of Hours whose leaves are found in the *Fifty Original Leaves* portfolios.[15] Because there are thirty-one known portfolios, thirty-one leaves from the target manuscript can be easily identified. Each student is assigned one leaf of the manuscript to catalogue in the Fragmentarium database. The students work together to put the leaves in order, creating a digital reconstruction, also in Fragmentarium. Finally, the cumulative evidence of the entire group of leaves is used to investigate the Use, contents, origin, and provenance of the reconstructed manuscript, using online resources such as the Schoenberg Database of Manuscripts. Thus far, the class has studied Handlist numbers 28, 29, 30, 31, 46, 47, and 48. While the conclusions that have been drawn regarding the individual manuscripts are beyond the scope of this essay, certain patterns are beginning to emerge in the data regarding the surviving leaves, conclusions that may shed additional light on the collaborative biblioclasm practiced by the Eges and Philip Duschnes.

To conduct this analysis, I have tabulated the number of identified leaves from each section of each Book of Hours, counting only the leaves that can be definitively identified with Ege, that is, those found in one of the *Fifty Original Leaves* portfolios (Figure 8.2).

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13 Davis, "Reconstructing the Beauvais Missal" and *Beauvais Missal (Virtual Reconstruction)*, https://fragmentarium.ms/overview/F-4ihz, accessed October 24, 2022.

14 See Lisa Fagin Davis, "Reconstructing the Beauvais Missal: A Progress Report," *Digital Philology: A Journal of Medieval Cultures* 13 (2024): 9–53 (https://doi.org/10.1353/dph.2024.a926884).

15 "The Medieval Manuscript from Charlemagne to Gutenberg," https://fragmentarium.ms/courses/slis, accessed October 24, 2022.

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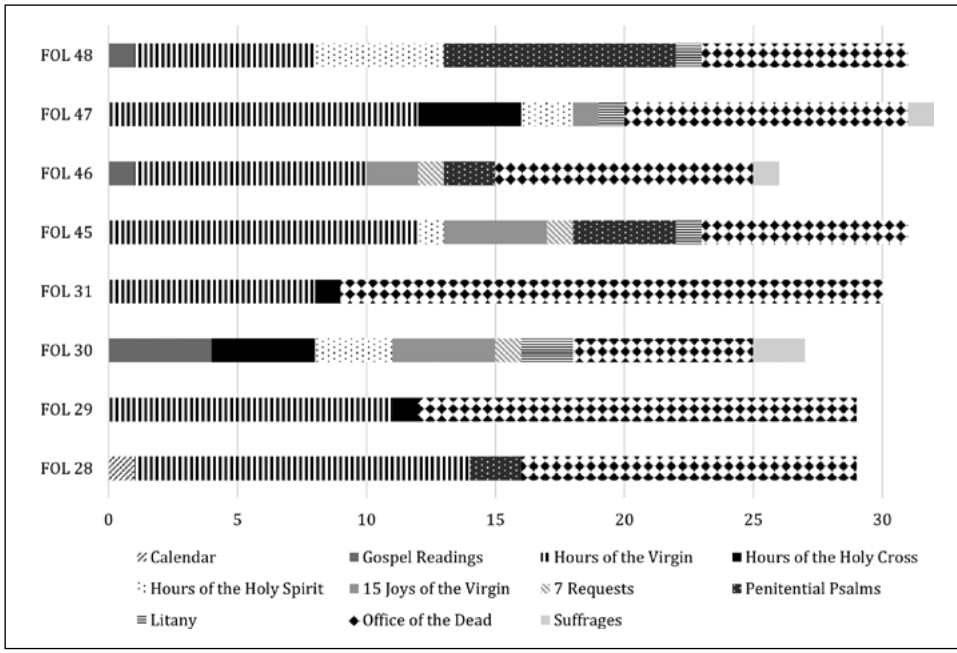


Figure 8.2. Recovered Leaves of Ege-Sourced Books of Hours. Author diagram.

In several cases, leaves have been identified outside of portfolios, but since those typically cannot always be confidently identified with Ege and may have been distributed by Duschnes, such leaves are not included in this analysis. Of the seven manuscripts studied by the Simmons students so far, only one, Handlist 47, can be confidently identified in Duschnes catalogues.[16]

Based on the data visualized in Figure 8.2, it seems initially clear that leaves from the Office of the Dead appear to be over-represented, especially when compared to the number of leaves from the Hours of the Virgin. In one example, Handlist 30, there are no identified leaves from the Hours of Virgin at all. An analysis of the leaf-count for these two sections in fifteen of the Books of Hours catalogued by Roger Wieck tests the assertion that the Office of the Dead is over-represented in the Simmons projects (Figure 8.3).[17] The cumulative results reveal an even more striking contrast. An astonishing 43% of Ege-sourced leaves come from the Office of the Dead, while only 29% come from the Hours of the Virgin. On average, the folio count for the Hours of the Virgin in the con-

16 Philip C. Duschnes, *Catalogue 74* (1945), item 23; *Catalogue 79* (1947), item 226; *Catalogue 88* (1948), item 26. It is possible that leaves from some of the other target manuscripts may have been distributed by Duschnes as part of mixed lots or lots with overly-vague descriptions, or sold out of his shop in New York City, and thus are not definitively identifiable in his published catalogues.

17 Roger Wieck, *Time Sanctified: The Book of Hours in Medieval Art and Life* (Baltimore: Walters Art Gallery, 2001), Catalogue, 171–225.

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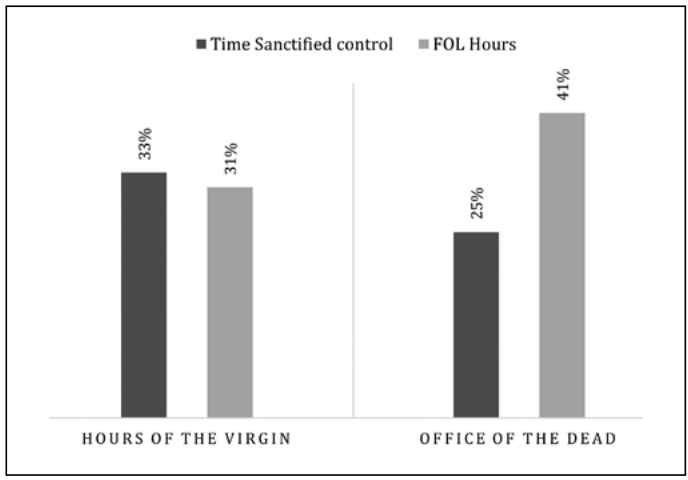


Figure 8.3. Control Group vs Ege-Sourced Books of Hours. Author diagram.

trol group is 25% greater than the number of leaves required to record the Office of the Dead, and the two sections comprise 33% and 25% of the contents respectively. In the *Fifty Original Leaves* sets, then, leaves from the Office of the Dead do indeed appear to be significantly over-represented, appearing nearly twice as often as might be expected. If leaves of these Books of Hours could be definitively identified in Duschnes catalogues, one might confidently argue that the over-representation of leaves from the Office of the Dead sheds light on how the Eges and Duschnes collaborated, with Duschnes generally working with the front of a volume and passing the back half on to the Eges. Until evidence affiliating more of these manuscripts with Duschnes comes to light, however, this hypothesis remains unproven.

What of the material evidence? As we move through the remaining case studies, we will rewind the biblioclastic process, from leaf to bifolium to quire to codex. First, single leaves. Several leaves that can be definitively associated with Ege's section of the Beauvais Missal preserve an untrimmed gutter edge. Scissors or a guillotine would have left a trimmed edge where the leaf was cut out of the codex, while an untrimmed, intact gutter is the result of a bifolium being carefully removed from its quire before being divided into its constituent leaves, resulting in visible sewing holes along the gutter edge. These untrimmed edges suggest that Ege's biblioclastic praxis—inevitably and irreparably destructive—was at the same time a deliberate and careful deconstruction.[18] This contention is supported by the remnants of other Ege manuscripts.

A disbound remnant of eighteen leaves from Handlist 1 was acquired by Stanford University in 1985 and is now Misc. MS 305 (Figure 8.4). Single leaves of this mid-twelfth-century glossed Bible were used as No. 1 in the *Fifty Original Leaves* portfolios, but were being marketed by Ege as early as 1944. They do not appear in Duschnes's

18 For example: Beauvais Missal (Fragment), Albany, State Library of New York, *Fifty Original Leaves from Medieval Manuscripts*, No. 15, https://fragmentarium.ms/overview/F-jfyx, accessed October 24, 2022.

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catalogues, suggesting that the acquisition, dismemberment, and dispersal of this manuscript were handled by Ege alone, and that we can attribute the condition of this remnant entirely to Ege. In the disbound Stanford remnant, we find not only intact gutter-edges but intact *bifolia*. We have moved one step backwards in the process of dismemberment—the final step would have been the division of conjoint leaves which, in the case of these bifolia, never occurred. The Beauvais Missal was not so lucky; there are no conjoint bifolia known to survive.

The remnants of Handlist 4 are particularly instructive for understanding the difference between the biblioclasm practiced by Ege and that of Duschnes. When whole, Handlist 4 was a mid-thirteenth-century manuscript of 210 leaves recording ninety-two sermons on the Psalms attributed to Philip the Chancellor, a text often referred to as a *catena* or Chain of Psalms.[19] The manuscript's precise origins are unknown, although by the late fourteenth century it had entered the collection of the Servite Library of San Marcello al Corso.[20] It was sold by Erik von Scherling in 1937, and leaves were being marketed by Duschnes by 1940.[21] Although leaves of the manuscript were used by the Eges as No. 4 in the *Fifty Original Leaves* sets in the early 1950s, Ege was marketing leaves of this manuscript as early as 1944.[22] In other words, because Ege and Duschnes are known to have marketed leaves from this manuscript, we can compare the material evidence of leaves from the same source-manuscript that were offered for sale by both Ege and Duschnes.

The largest known remnant of this manuscript is University of Notre Dame (UND) cod. Lat. b. 11, a group of sixty-five leaves (fols. 1–60 and fols. 206–210; Figure 5).[23] Although the bifolia are disbound, they are still attached by remnants of glue on the spine (Figure 8.5). Nearly all the next thirty-two leaves in the sequence established by Ariel Brecht are found in *Fifty Original Leaves* portfolios (spanning from folio 68 (Ohio

19 On this manuscript, see: Ariel Brecht, "MS Ege 4: A Preacher's Companion" (masters' thesis, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, 2021); David T. Gura, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts of the University of Notre Dame and Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame (IN)* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2016), 204–13; David T. Gura, "The Medieval Provenance of Otto Ege's 'Chain of Psalms' (FOL 4)," *Fragmentology* 4 (2021): 95–99; Gwara, *Otto Ege's Manuscripts*, 117–18; Peter Kidd, "Otto Ege's 'Chain of Psalms' Manuscript," *Medieval Manuscripts Provenance*, 13 July 2019, https://mssprovenance.blogspot.com/2019/07/otto-eges-chain-of-psalms-manuscript.html, accessed October 24, 2022; Yin Liu and Ariel Brecht, "Leaf 4 in Otto Ege's Fifty Original Leaves Portfolio – A New Identification: Sermons by Philip the Chancellor," *Florilegium* 33 (2016): 167–81.

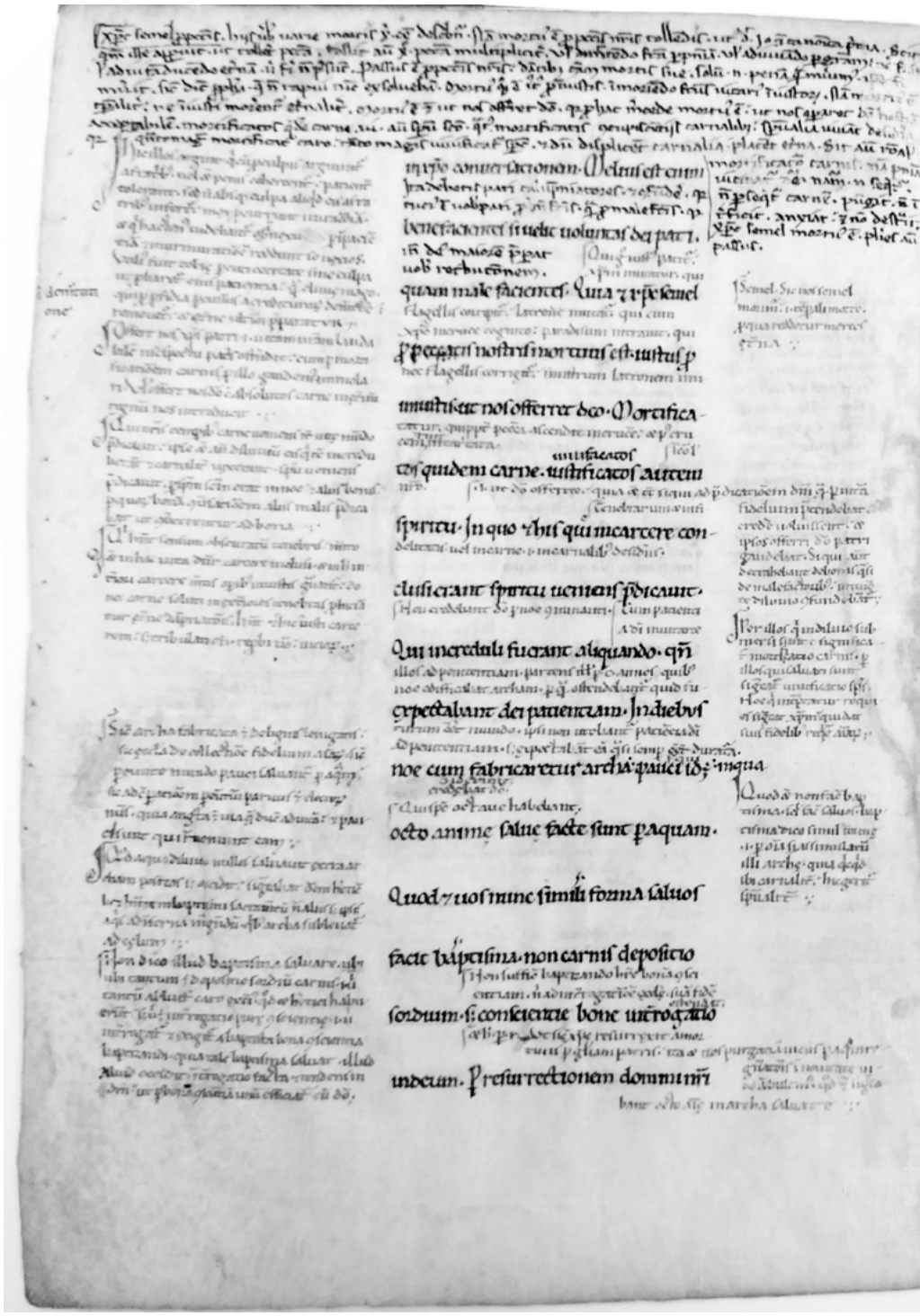
20 Gura, "Medieval Provenance," 98.

21 Erik von Scherling, *Rotulus* 4 (Winter 1937), item 1838 (identified by Kidd, "Otto Ege's 'Chain of Psalms' Manuscript"). See https://sdbm.library.upenn.edu/entries/152036, accessed October 24, 2022. For the earliest Duschnes sale of leaves from this manuscript, see *Catalogue 42* (1940), item 2. Duschnes continued to offer leaves from this manuscript throughout the 1940s.

22 Otto F. Ege, *101 Original Leaves & Sets of Leaves from Medieval Manuscripts, Incunabula, Famous Bibles, and Noted Presses* (Lima: Lima Public Library, 1944), no. 18. See Gwara, *Otto Ege's Manuscripts*, 255 (fig. 43).

23 Gura, *Descriptive Catalogue*, 204–13.

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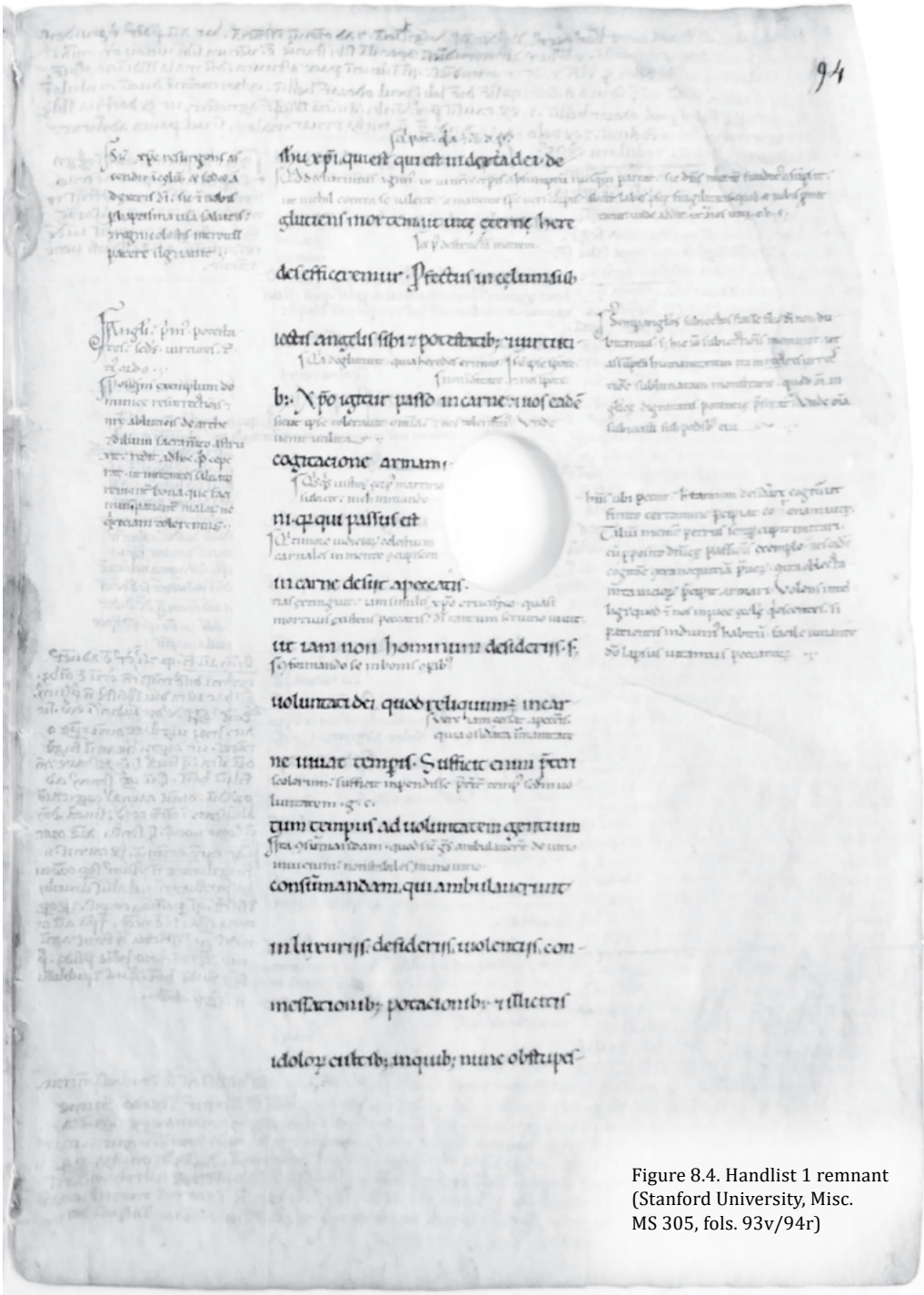


Figure 8.4. Handlist 1 remnant (Stanford University, Misc. MS 305, fols. 93v/94r)

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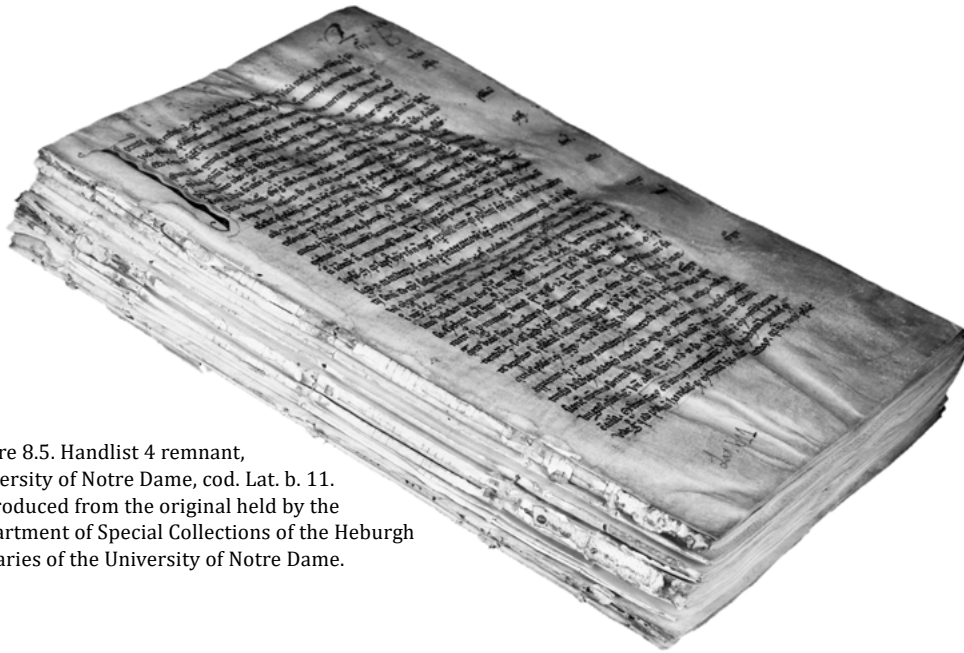


Figure 8.5. Handlist 4 remnant, University of Notre Dame, cod. Lat. b. 11. Reproduced from the original held by the Department of Special Collections of the Heburgh Libraries of the University of Notre Dame.

State University) to folio 128 (Cleveland Public Library), with two leaves in this span in private hands).[24] In other words, most of this span of leaves can be definitively associated with Ege. Leaves in that subgroup—all of which are in their original portfolio collections if not still in their original matting—retain an untrimmed gutter edge. This evidence of the careful dismantling of the codex is in keeping with the evidence of leaves from other Ege-sourced manuscripts, such as the leaves of the Beauvais Missal described above. These leaves follow the Notre Dame remnant closely in sequence; it can be inferred that the remnant, and the following quires, were likely in Ege's hands. The remnant's intact condition can likely be attributed to Ege's handling.

Brecht records eight additional leaves, all of which come from later in the manuscript, spanning fols. 108–191. The last recorded leaf before the UND remnant's Index is from the Art Gallery of Ontario's *Fifty Original Leaves* set, folio 201, but the others in this later section have no known Ege provenance. The untrimmed gutter edges of the known-Ege leaves contrast dramatically with the analogous edges of those that are not definitively Ege-sourced, which are neatly trimmed. For example, *Fifty Original Leaves* No. 4 at the University of Minnesota is untrimmed along the gutter edge, while a second Handlist 4 leaf in the collection that is not in the *Fifty Original Leaves* set is clearly trimmed.[25] There is of course no way to ascertain exactly when these leaves were trimmed, but as they all come from the back of the manuscript, it is possible that they were from the section of the manuscript dismembered by Duschnes, cut out of the manuscript or trimmed by him before sale.

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24 Brecht, "MS Ege 4," Appendix A.

25 University of Minnesota, Special Collections and Rare Books, Otto F. Ege, *Fifty Original Leaves*, MS 4 https://umedia.lib.umn.edu/item/p16022coll210:149?q=Ege+manuscript+4 as compared to Manuscript 35 https://umedia.lib.umn.edu/item/p16022coll180:101?q=MS+35, accessed October 24, 2022.

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Figure 8.6. Handlist 14 remnant, Yale University, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Otto F. Ege Collection, GEN MSS 1498, Box 95. Author photograph.

Handlist 14 represents the next step back towards the unbroken codex. Leaves of this luxurious early fourteenth-century Carthusian lectern Bible became No. 14 in the *Fifty Original Leaves* portfolios (Figure 8.6).[26] The manuscript was sold by Sotheby's in 1931 to Hastings, then went through Hoepli and several other owners and dealers before being sold by Parke-Bernet in 1948.[27] A leaf of the manuscript photographed for Ege's microfilm archive in 1952 represents the earliest evidence of the dismemberment of this manuscript.[28] Duschnes is not known to have offered leaves of Handlist 14, suggesting that it was indeed Ege who acquired and dismantled the manuscript and that the condition of any remnants can be attributed to his handling.[29] Hundreds of leaves remained

26 For the association of this Bible with the Carthusian order and a list of known historiated leaves, see Peter Kidd, *The McCarthy Collection: Volume III: French Miniatures* (London: Ad Ilissum, 2018), no. 60, 199–202.

27 See the Schoenberg Database of Manuscripts, https://sdbm.library.upenn.edu/manuscripts/2241, accessed October 24, 2022.

28 Scott Gwara, private correspondence, September 2022.

29 Gwara contends that Duschnes offered leaves of this manuscript in the 1960s, but an examination of the images in the cited catalogues reveals that these were from a different early fourteenth-century lectern Bible. See Gwara, *Otto Ege's Manuscripts*, 121.

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unsold, including several large remnants. A group of more than 210 leaves belongs to Martin Schøyen.[30] Another large remnant was acquired by the Beinecke Library as part of the Ege Family Collection in 2015.[31] In addition to a significant number of intact bifolia, this remnant includes the boards, described in 1948 as "seventeenth[-]century calf… worn and repaired," in which the remnant bifolia are loosely laid. With intact bifolia laid in their original boards, we have moved one step closer to the unbroken codex.

The next step backward in our chronology of biblioclasm is exemplified by Handlist 2, a late twelfth-century Missal recently identified by Katherina Kaska as having originated at Stift Hohenfurth in Vyšší Brod in the modern-day Czech Republic.[32] These remnants are intact bifolia that, at least when photographed in 1987, were still sewn into their binding. Ege acquired the complete manuscript at the same 1948 Parke-Bernet sale at which Handlist 14 was sold. In that catalogue, the binding was described as "full white blind-stamped pigskin leather, apparently late fifteenth century, one remaining metal boss; binding defective, many leaves loose or partly loose." As Peter Kidd pointed out, the remains of the bosses can be clearly seen inside the lower board, and the turn-ins do appear to be pigskin.[33] The book's condition, with loose leaves, was one of the ways Ege justified his biblioclasm; if the manuscript was already defective, he reasoned, what was the harm in taking it apart? The manuscript originally had 173 leaves; forty were used as No. 2 in the *Fifty Original Leaves* portfolios, four have been identified outside portfolios, a group of twenty-six leaves was sold at Sotheby's in 1985, and thirty-five were still sewn into the binding as of 1987. The binding was exhibited in New York City in 1987 by The Book Arts Gallery in a show focusing on damaged manuscripts titled "The Effects of Time." The binding and its thirty-five leaves were said to have been loaned from "The Otto Ege Collection," but the remnant's current location is unknown. The last visible leaf, however, is part of a bifolium that was given to Leonard Hansen by Louise Ege. Hansen gave it to Barbara Shailor, who in turn gave it to the Grolier Club in New York City, where it is now MS 45.

It is in objects like the remnant of Handlist 2 that we can explicitly discern Ege's actual biblioclastic praxis. Duschnes did not sell leaves from this manuscript, and so, as with the previous example, the condition of this remnant can be ascribed entirely to Ege. He could have cut out the leaves with scissors, or removed the spine with a guillotine to free the leaves. Neither of these occurred. Even in an older black-and-white photo, it is clear that the manuscript was carefully dismantled one bifolium at a time,

30 Sold at Sotheby's, December 11, 1984, lot 39 (purchased by Maggs). See Martin Schøyen, private collection MS 223.

31 The *In Principio* leaf, reproduced in the 1948 catalogue, was also acquired by Yale as part of the Ege Family Collection.

32 Katherine Kaska, "Hohenfurth, Emil Hirsch und Otto Ege," *Iter Austriacum* (April 15, 2018), www.iter-austriacum.at/bibliotheksgeschichte/hohenfurth-emil-hirsch-und-otto-ege, accessed October 24, 2022.

33 Peter Kidd, "A 12th-century Cistercian Missal Formerly Owned by Otto Ege," *Medieval Manuscripts Provenance* (August 18, 2015), https://mssprovenance.blogspot.com/2015/08/a-12th-century-cistercian-missal.html, accessed October 24, 2022.

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leaving the remnant bifolia sewn in and the snipped sewing threads and cords visible. With remnant bifolia still sewn into the boards, we have come as close as we can to the intact codex.

An analogous—but traced—example tells a similar story.[34] The binding and attached remnants of Handlist 12, a thirteenth-century French Psalter, were acquired by the Beinecke Library in 2019 and now comprise MS 1226. This manuscript was an early acquisition by Ege, purchased from Grafton & Co. in 1928 and codified in the de Ricci *Census* as Ege's manuscript No. 13.[35] The binding is described there as eighteenth-century brown calf, and while the front and back boards have not been imaged, that description is consistent with what can be seen around the edges of the open remnant. In 1935, the manuscript was described as having 153 leaves, but was already defective, making it a prime candidate for dismantling. Today, the binding retains only sixteen leaves. Duschnes was selling leaves from this manuscript as of 1945, but the binding and its remnants remained in Ege's hands.[36] The condition of the remnant—showing evidence of the careful disassembling of the codex—can therefore be entirely ascribed to Ege.

By examining the material evidence of leaves, bifolia, quires, sewing, and boards, we can begin to understand the biblioclasm practiced by the Eges and Duschnes. The Book of Hours leaves suggest that Duschnes may have removed leaves from the front of some of these volumes, sending the back halves to the Eges for dismantling. The Eges, for their part, disassembled their codices methodically and with care. This was done by releasing a quire from the spine by cutting through the cords and sewing, snipping the threads in the gutter, lifting out the bifolia one by one, and, in the final step, by cutting conjoint leaves apart. This process preserves the gutter edge and sewing holes. Duschnes, on the other hand, seems to have either cut leaves out along the gutter or trimmed the gutter edges as part of preparing the leaves for sale. It is likely no coincidence that the identified remnants are all from manuscripts sacrificed for the *Fifty Original Leaves* sets, carefully curated assemblages produced by Otto and Louise.[37] The Eges were butchers, certainly, but they seem to have practiced their biblioclasm with care, even with a loving hand. This careful destruction, this loving dismemberment, is a contradiction that is difficult for the modern bibliophile to reconcile. But the Eges and their biblioclastic ilk, including Philip Duschnes, have always been studies in contradiction.

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34 There are at least two additional examples of bifoliate remnants attached to their Ege-era boards, but as their conditions are similar to those that have already been described, they are not explored here: Handlist 39 (remnant: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Lat. class. e. 52) and Handlist 35 (remnant: New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Ege Family Collection, GEN MSS 1498, Box 105).

35 Seymour de Ricci, *Census of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the United States and Canada*, 3 vols. (New York: Wilson, 1935–1940), 2:1939.

36 Philip C. Duschnes, *Catalogue 74* (1945), item 10.

37 The identified remnants are from Handlist numbers 1, 2, 4, 12, 14, 35, and 39.

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Part II

BUYERS

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Chapter 9

ILLUMINATIONS FROM NORTHERN AND CENTRAL ITALY IN THE COLLECTION OF THE DEALER VITTORIO FORTI

FRANCESCA MANZARI

THE DEALER VITTORIO FORTI has stayed out of the spotlight until very recently. His name was rarely mentioned, and always briefly, as the business partner of the famous bibliophile and dealer Tammaro De Marinis,[1] with whom he started working in the book trade in the early twentieth century. Federico Botana has recently shed new light on this shadowy figure when he discovered and published a small group of letters written by Forti to De Marinis at the beginning of the twentieth century from Istanbul, where De Marinis was conducting rather dubious dealings to procure manuscripts to sell to John Pierpont Morgan.[2]

In this article I will introduce a group of reproductions of eighty fragments, presumably documenting a stage in Forti's collection of illuminations dating approximately from the end of the Second World War. This hitherto unknown material helps to further investigate a little-known dealer—apparently specializing in illuminated leaves and cuttings—and allows us to build a clearer picture of the dissemination of detached illuminations from Italy to the United States after the war, filling in gaps in the provenance history of many significant fragments.

I first came across Forti's collection over twenty years ago, while researching illuminated manuscripts from the Abruzzi, when I noticed a detached leaf with the

1 Franca Petrucci Nardelli, "Tammaro De Marinis," in *Collezionismo, restauro e antiquariato librario: Atti del Convegno internazionale di studi (Spoleto, June 14–17, 2000)*, ed. Maria Cristina Misiti (Milan: Bonnard, 2003), 78–79.

2 Federico Botana, "Tammaro De Marinis, Vittorio Forti, and the Acquisition of Islamic Manuscripts for J. P. Morgan in Constantinople in 1913," *Manuscript Studies* 7 (2022): 237–69. On De Marinis, also see the forthcoming proceedings of the conference *"Multa renascentur." Tammaro De Marinis studioso, bibliofilo, antiquario, collezionista* (Venice, October 14–15, 2019); Gaia Grizzi is preparing a doctoral dissertation on De Marinis at the École des chartes.

Francesca Manzari is Full Professor at the University of Rome "Sapienza," where she teaches History of Illumination. She is currently working on a book on Italian devotional manuscripts and Books of Hours (ca. 1250–1425). She is indebted to Federico Botana for sharing so much of his own research on Vittorio Forti. She is especially grateful to Peter Kidd for his invaluable suggestions, and to Paola Benussi, Costanza Lisi, Francesca Nemore, and Andrea Pelizza for their help with archival research. All details of the material of the ASVe were checked thanks to the help of Benussi and Pelizza (Venice, Archivio di Stato) and specifically the information on the previously unpublished recovery of appendix nos. 13 and 36 and a part of no. 10.

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Figure 9.1. Rome, ICCD, Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale,
n. inv. D7783, Coronation of the Virgin
(su concessione del Ministero della Cultura – ICCD. Divieto di riproduzione).

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Coronation of the Virgin, mentioned as part of the Forti collection, in Rome, in the 1956 edition of Mario Salmi's book on Italian illumination.[3] Years later, I unexpectedly discovered a folder containing thirty-three black and white photographs of eighty fragments, comprising images of cuttings and detached leaves, mounted on cardboard and labelled as formerly in the Forti collection in Rome.[4] The leaf with the Coronation of the Virgin (now Cleveland, The Cleveland Museum of Art, 1953.24) appeared among the photos (Figure 9.1), as did a second leaf, with the Nativity, detached from the same manuscript (now Princeton, University Art Museum, y1958-17). At the time, I was mainly interested in the history of the manuscript from which the two leaves had been detached, an Antiphonary, illuminated for the Acquaviva family by the Beffi Master in the early fifteenth century and dismembered before the mid-twentieth century.[5] It was after an invitation to collaborate with the CULTIVATE MSS Project, that I started researching Forti's collection, or rather his dealer's stock, comprehensively.

A Fragmentary Biography

In her 2003 essay on Tammaro De Marinis, Franca Petrucci Nardelli wrote that *avvocato* Vittorio Forti started his career as the business partner of De Marinis, at the beginning of the twentieth century. The two shared an antiquarian bookshop in Florence, first based in Via Strozzi 2, then in Via Pellicceria 10 (close to Forti's home in the same street), and finally in Via de' Vecchietti 3/5. They parted in 1914, before

3 The first edition was published in 1954: Mario Salmi, *La miniatura italiana* (Milan: Banca Nazionale del Lavoro, 1954). It was enlarged and republished as: Mario Salmi, *La miniatura italiana*, 2nd edn. (Milan: Electa, 1956). The image of the Coronation is fig. 51, with the caption: "Roma, Collezione Forti."

4 Rome, ICCD, Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale (GFN), nos inv. D7776–88; D10264–75; E86450–66. Each photo comprises one or more illuminations. In addition to these, the folder contained three reproductions of paintings also in Forti's collection (D10272; D10273; D10275). The photos are no longer filed under the heading "Ex-Collezione Forti, Rome," where I found them over fifteen years ago, but have been rearranged according to the three donations by the art historian Federico Zeri to the GFN, one in 1967 (D7776–88) and two in 1972 (D10264–75; E86450–66). The black and white negatives were printed and labelled after reaching Rome. I would like to thank Elena Berardi and Simona Turco for their help with the photos. The third lot (E86450–66) is already digitized and available online: https://fotografia.cultura.gov.it/iccd/, accessed May 12, 2023. I hope that the first two will shortly be online and that it will also be possible to digitize the labelled photos on their cardboard frames.

5 For a reconstruction of the Acquaviva Antiphonary from its surviving leaves and fragments, see Francesca Manzari, *Il Messale Orsini per la chiesa di San Francesco a Guardiagrele: Un libro liturgico tra pittura e miniatura dell'Italia centromeridionale* (Pescara: Zip, 2007), 115–18; Francesca Manzari, "Entry 38," in *Illuminare l'Abruzzo: Codici miniati tra Medioevo e Rinascimento*, ed. Gaetano Curzi et al. (Pescara: Carsa, 2012), 233–39; Francesca Manzari, "Entries 69a–b," in *Le miniature della Fondazione Giorgio Cini: Pagine, ritagli, manoscritti*, ed. Massimo Medica and Federica Toniolo (Cinisello Balsamo: Silvana, 2016), 241–45.

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De Marinis established a new shop in Piazza Strozzi 5.[6] Forti then moved to Rome, where he was active as a dealer, at least from the early 1920s.[7]

Investigating Forti's biography, I discovered that he was born in Florence, on August 4, 1881, to Raffaele Forti and Ada Herzer,[8] and that in 1941 he lived in Rome, in Via Panama 102/104, where he probably worked both as a lawyer and as a dealer,[9] until his death, estimated to have taken place in 1980.[10] Forti came from a Jewish family. His mother—Ada Herzer, born in Ancona to Samuele Herzer and Rosa Zaban, on July 18, 1869—is mentioned in papers from the *Questura* in Rome concerning Vittorio's younger brother Bruno, an engineer, born on November 18, 1895. Bruno was under police control from February 10, 1939, and surviving reports also mention Vittorio, referring to further documents, which are yet to be found.[11] Ada's properties in Milan were seized during the war,[12] and she and her son Bruno were arrested in Rome, dur-

6 Petrucci Nardelli, "Tammaro De Marinis," 78–79. The 1916 *Annuario Toscano*, however, lists De Marinis in Piazza Strozzi, and Forti in the shop in Via Vecchietti; *Annuario Toscano: Guida amministrativa, commerciale e professionale della Regione* (Florence: Ariani, 1916), 180–81.

7 The acquisition register of the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana describes a fifteenth-century manuscript with the works of Cicero, recording that it was bought from "libraio V. Forti di Roma" for 3250 Lire (Florence, BML, Inventario dei codici laurenziani "Acquisti e Doni," no. d'ingresso 11954). Thanks to Federico Botana these acquisitions can be dated to the 1920s.

8 Forti's date of birth is mentioned in the lists of the officials in the Italian army in the First World War: in January 1918 he is cited, among the "Ufficiali di Complemento-Tenenti di Artiglieria," as "Forti Vittorio, di Raffaele, born 4.8.81:" *Annuario ufficiale delle forze armate del Regno d'Italia. I. Regio esercito, II.2, Ufficiali di complemento* (Rome: Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, 1938), 206. His father Raffaele came from a family of textile dealers with a shop on Piazza della Signoria (on the corner with Via Calimaruzza) 1884–1892, and then in Palazzo Lavison, 1906–1920 (Archivio di Stato di Firenze, Camera di Commercio I. A. A. di Firenze, Tribunale civile e correzionale di Firenze, poi Tribunale civile e penale di Firenze, Registro delle Società, Inventario Società nn. 1–3600, 1883–1923, ed. Isabella Raffaeli, nos. 89, 466, 1260).

9 In 1941, in an announcement referring to his designation as the administrator of a company dealing with real estate (A. V. I. A. S), Forti is described as born in Florence, the son of Raffaele, and residing in Rome, in Via Panama 102: *Foglio Annunzi legali della provincia di Roma* 79 (1941), 1801.

10 I am indebted to Federico Botana for Forti's presumed date of death in 1980, as he pointed out that Forti is mentioned as having lived until 99 years of age in an article by René Zandbergen, www.voynich.nu/extra/trivia.html#tr06, accessed May 12, 2023. The same address is in the heading of a letter from Forti to H. P. Kraus, dated August 5, 1975 (PML, curatorial files for M.496), mentioned in this article; see Botana, "Tammaro De Marinis," 264n110.

11 Rome, Archivio di Stato, Questura, Ebrei, FOR, vol. 25, fasc. 1. Bruno and Vittorio collaborated in the company "La Penetrazione," in charge of working on pavements in Milan, founded in 1928 and still active in 1938; *Annuario industriale di Roma e del Lazio* (Rome: Tipografia del Senato, 1938), 305; *Guida degli amministratori e dei sindaci delle società anonime delle casse di risparmio degli Enti parastatali ed assimilati* (Rome: Tipografia Laboremus, 1929), 283.

12 Milan, Intesa Sanpaolo, Historical Archives, Ente Gestione e Liquidazione Immobiliare (E. Ge. L. I.), Fascicolo 22926 F, Herzer Forti, Ada.

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ing the raid of October 16, 1943, and deported to Auschwitz, where they both died.[13] Nothing further is known about Vittorio during the 1930s and 1940s. Although much remains to be discovered about his life and his collection of illuminations, from which he sold leaves and cuttings to libraries and museums, especially in the United States, a particular stage in it is documented by the black and white photographic prints now in the Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale (GFN), in Rome.

The Reproductions of a Stage in Forti's Collection

Mounted on cardboard frames and labelled "ex-Collezione Forti, Roma," the thirty-three black and white photos represent eighty items, cuttings, and leaves, detached from approximately thirty-four medieval and Renaissance manuscripts, mainly of Italian origin (see appendix). The negative plates were a gift to the Italian national photo library from the art historian Federico Zeri. The negatives were printed when they reached the GFN, in three lots, between 1967 and 1972. The labels were then added, stating "ex-Collezione Forti, Roma," the school and date of the reproduced illuminations and also the GFN inventory number of each negative.[14] It is very likely that, at that point, the illuminations in Forti's collection had already been dispersed and that this information was added thanks to indications from Zeri himself, to whom the attributions noted on the labels can presumably be assigned. Forti probably consulted Zeri about his illuminations and then left the negatives with the art historian, who later sent them to the GFN, as he used to do with material that he was not interested in keeping in his famous photo archive, once stored in his villa in Mentana.[15]

It is difficult to determine exactly when the photos of Forti's fragments were taken and if this took place in a single campaign or in different stages. Even more mysterious is when and how Forti acquired the reproduced illuminations. They seem to pertain to the dealer's stock between the very late 1940s, when some of them went missing from a public collection, and the very early 1950s, when many of the photographed items reappeared in the United States (see appendix).

13 Bruno died on January 31, 1944; http://digital-library.cdec.it/cdec-web/persone/detail/person-2807/forti-bruno.html, accessed May 12, 2023.

14 The labels, partly typewritten and partly handwritten when I first consulted them over fifteen years ago, have since been replaced with typewritten ones.

15 The Fondazione Zeri, Bologna, preserves copies of the photos, but only those of the paintings have been digitized and are available online. The prints in Bologna were made when the negative films were sent to Rome and "ex-Collezione Forti" has been added on some of them in Zeri's handwriting, while on others it has been written by a different hand. I thank Francesca Mambelli for checking this for me.

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The Itineraries of Forti's Fragments in Italy and across the Ocean

Some of the fragments come from manuscripts which were dismembered in the early twentieth century, as sister leaves are present in collections assembled in the 1920s, such as Ulrico Hoepli's, which was catalogued by Pietro Toesca in 1930.[16] An example is two leaves illuminated by the Beffi Master (D7783–84), detached from a manuscript known only through its dispersed leaves and cuttings, two of which were in the Hoepli collection.[17] The Cleveland leaf was already in the United States in 1952, having been bought directly from Forti.[18] The Forti provenance of the Nativity in Princeton is only documented through the presence of the photo among the others, as this information is not registered by the Museum, to which the leaf was given in 1958 by Alastair B. Martin. It was already in the United States in 1955, however, as it appeared in one of the catalogues of the New York dealer H. P. Kraus.[19] Kraus also sold another leaf from the same manuscript, the Adoration of the Child (formerly at Stamford, Connecticut, in the collection of the Xerox Corporation),[20] but this one is not reproduced among Forti's photos. Another two fragments from the same manuscript are now in the Fondazione Cini in Venice (Inv. 22115–16), to which they came from the Hoepli collection,[21] and one was in the Lehman collection in New York (formerly The Metropolitan Museum, Lehman MS 61, now dispersed).[22] Yet another fragment, with a historiated letter, by the same illuminator and possibly from the same manuscript, now at the National Gallery in Washington (B-14-961), was in the Rosenwald collection in New York, deriving from Erwin Rosenthal's collection,[23] while various other cuttings with illuminated letters by this artist are probably from the same manuscript.[24] It is not clear if any of these passed through Forti's hands before or after the surviving black and white photos were taken, but many of his fragments have companions elsewhere, among others in the former Hoepli, Lehman, and Rosenwald collections. For example, various hitherto untraced items, including three fragments by Neri da Rimini (E86450–51, E86454), and two cut-

16 Pietro Toesca, *Monumenti e studi per la storia della miniatura italiana: La collezione di Ulrico Hoepli* (Milan: Hoepli, 1930).

17 Manzari, "Entry 38," 233–35.

18 According to the Museum's website, the leaf was bought from Forti from the J. H. Wade Fund in 1952; www.clevelandart.org/art/1953.24, accessed May 12, 2023.

19 See appendix no. 9.

20 Manzari, *Messale Orsini*, 116. The leaf was at Stamford, CT, in 2006, when I was preparing this publication. The illuminations owned by the Xerox Corporation have since been dispersed or moved (communication by Peter Kidd).

21 Toesca, *Monumenti e studi*, 122–23; Manzari, *Messale Orsini*, 115–17; Manzari, "Entry 38," 233–35; Manzari, "Entries 69a–b," 241–45.

22 Pia Palladino, *Treasures of a Lost Art: Italian Manuscript Painting of the Middle Ages and Renaissance* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum, 2003), 60–62; Manzari, *Messale Orsini*, 117; Manzari, "Entry 38," 234; Manzari, "Entries 69a–b," 241–45.

23 Manzari, "Entry 38," 234–35; Manzari, "Entries 69a–b," 243–45.

24 For an updated list see Manzari, "Entries 69a–b," 243–44. I have recently come across more cuttings by the Beffi Master, thanks to Peter Kidd, and hope to review them in a forthcoming article.

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Figure 9.2. Rome, ICCD, Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, n. inv. E86457, Noah's Ark; Deacon with a cross; Apostle (su concessione del Ministero della Cultura – ICCD. Divieto di riproduzione).

tings photographed together (E86457), representing Noah's Ark by Niccolò di Giacomo and a prophet by a collaborator of the Murano Master (Figure 9.2), have sister leaves in the Cini—formerly Hoepli—and Lehman collections (see appendix). It is possible that Forti bought these fragments from the same sources as Hoepli did in the 1920s, or even from Hoepli himself.

At least five groups of fragments photographed in Forti's collection appeared in Kraus's catalogues at some point,[25] but it is not certain that the New York dealer bought this material directly from Forti, or that the two dealers were acquainted in the 1950s.[26] There might have been an intermediary between them, and either Hoepli—in whose collection many sister leaves appear—or Leo Samuel Olschki, father-in-law of Erwin Rosenthal and active in Florence, Vittorio's home town, may have played this role.[27]

25 See appendix nos. 4–6, 9, 12, 14, 22. The Stamford Adoration of the Child was also sold by Kraus, but it is not among the Forti photos.

26 They were certainly on friendly terms in the mid-1970s, as it appears from a letter written from Forti to Kraus on August 5, 1975 (PML, curatorial files for M.496).

27 For these bookdealers, see Luca Montagner, *L'antiquariato Hoepli: Una prima ricognizione tra i documenti e i cataloghi* (Milan: EDUCatt, 2017). New information may come from Federico Botana's research on Olschki's activity as a dealer.

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Many of the fragments in Forti's collection, however, were sold to museums and libraries in the United States by Forti himself, as shown by the available provenance data (see appendix). A great many of them are in Cleveland, in the Cleveland Museum of Art, all with accession numbers dating between 1953 and 1955, like the Annunciation (E86455/B) from a Florentine late fifteenth-century Medici Book of Hours (CMA, 1953.280). A fifteenth-century Lombard cutting with Christ in Glory among the Saints (E86453/A) was bought in 1953 (CMA, 1953.282), while another Florentine cutting with the Resurrection (E86456), assigned to Francesco d'Antonio del Chierico, was acquired in 1955 (CMA, 1955.76). The Forti provenance of the last two items is not recorded by the Museum but can be deduced by the presence of their reproductions among the photos. Remarkably, a group of nine cuttings (D7782), from a north-Italian thirteenth-century Bible, were not a sale, but were a gift from Forti, in 1954. A larger group of twenty-four cuttings, probably from the same manuscript, also among the photos of the dealer's collection (D7779–D7881), is now in the McCarthy Collection, again bought through Kraus, but in 1981.[28]

The Illicit Provenance of a Group of Venetian Cuttings and Leaves

Yet another Forti leaf, from a Venetian manuscript (D7787), was bought from Kraus in 1955 by the Houghton Library (formerly Typ. 405).[29] It was recognized by Giordana Mariani Canova as the first leaf from the *Mariegola della Scuola di Sant'Anna di Castello*, detached from a manuscript still in the State Archives in Venice (ASVe).[30] It was returned in 1975 and tipped back into the manuscript (ASVe, Scuole Piccole e suffragi, b.24, *olim* Sala Margherita LXXVI.8, fol. 3).[31]

During her survey of Venetian manuscripts in the Boston and Harvard area in the 1970s, Mariani Canova also identified the fragmentary manuscript with the *Mariegola della Madonna della Valverde* from 1392 (*olim* ASVe, Sala Margherita, LXXVI.23), then in the Boston Public Library (formerly f.Med. 203),[32] but without its opening

28 These cuttings were photographed in three groups (D7779–81). Forti had twenty-five fragments, so one, with Judith and Holofernes, reproduced in the first group, is now missing. The fragments, catalogued by Gaudenz Freuler, appear among the *addenda* in Peter Kidd, *The McCarthy Collection*, 3 vols. (London: Ad Illissum, 2021), 3:364–65.

29 Lyle Humphrey, *La miniatura per le confraternite e le arti veneziane: Mariegole dal 1260 al 1460* (Verona: Cierre, 2015), 230–32, cat. 16.

30 I am greatly indebted to Paola Benussi and Andrea Pelizza. I hope to further investigate this material with their collaboration and with Federica Toniolo, whom I would like to thank for her help, together with Giordana Mariani Canova, Alessandro Martoni, and Helena Szépe.

31 The leaf had been described in Bartolomeo Cecchetti, *Sala diplomatica Regina Margherita* (Venice: Naratovich, 1880), 123–24, cat. 12. On the recovery see Rodney G. Dennis, "How to Determine that One Is not a Legitimate Owner," *Harvard Review* 2 (1992): 114–17.

32 Giordana Mariani Canova, "Manoscritti miniati veneti nelle biblioteche di Cambridge e Boston (Mass.)," *Arte Veneta* 29 (1975): 97–104. Mariani Canova wrote about the theft from the ASVe in: Giordana Mariani Canova, *Miniature dell'Italia settentrionale nella Fondazione Giorgio Cini* (Venice: Neri Pozza, 1978), 67–68.

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leaf.[33] This portion of the dismembered manuscript had been acquired in 1960 from the New York dealer Philip Duschnes and it was returned to the ASVe in 2017 (now reg. B1).[34] The opening leaf from this manuscript (D7785) is still missing. Frequently mentioned and reproduced since the mid-nineteenth century,[35] this illuminated page was cited in connection with Forti in 1999 by Filippo Todini, who claimed to have seen it in Forti's collection in Rome, obviously sometime before the dealer's death in 1980.[36]

These Venetian leaves and manuscripts were part of a large theft from the ASVe,[37] carried out during the years following the Second World War but discovered only in 1949. The illuminated manuscripts from which the leaves were taken had been on show since 1879 in a special display, set up in glass cases in the *Sala diplomatica Regina Margherita*, in the ancient library of the Frari Convent, which houses the Archive.[38] The illuminations from these Statutes and *Mariegole*, some still reproduced in publications by the ASVe in 1940,[39]

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33 On this manuscript, dismembered and sold after the theft see Lyle Humphrey, "The Lost 1392 Mariegola of the Scuola di Santa Maria della Misericordia o della Valverde, Rediscovered," in *Miniatura: Lo sguardo e la parola: Studi in onore di Giordana Mariani Canova*, ed. Federica Toniolo and Gennaro Toscano (Cinisello Balsamo: Silvana, 2012), 163–69; Humphrey, *Miniatura*, 282–92, cat. 25. The fragment formerly in Boston, with the bookplate of the collector Michael Zagayski, is available online, see appendix no. 10.

34 See appendix no. 10.

35 Cesare Foucard, "Della pittura sui manoscritti di Venezia," *Atti della Imp. R. Accademia di Belle Arti in Venezia* 10 (1857): 27–147 at 58, 72n37; Edward Cheney, "Remarks on the Illuminated Official Manuscripts of the Venetian Republic," *Philobiblon Society Miscellanies* 11 (1867–1868): 14–17; Cecchetti, *Sala diplomatica*, 124–25, no. 15; Rodolfo Pallucchini, *La pittura veneziana del Trecento* (Venice: Istituto per la Collaborazione Culturale, 1964), 219, fig. 692 (here already cited as formerly in the ASVe); Humphrey, "The Lost 1392 Mariegola," 163–64.

36 Filippo Todini, "La 'Mariegola' della Scuola Grande della Misericordia di Venezia e il problema di Lorenzo Veneziano miniatore," in *Una collezione di miniature italiane: Dal Duecento al Cinquecento*. Part III, ed. Filippo Todini (Milan: Studio Nella Longari, 1999), 5, 8n2. Humphrey, citing Todini, refers to Forti as "the Roman art dealer Vittorio Forti, active from the 1950s until his death in 1974"; Humphrey, "The Lost 1392 Mariegola," 163; Humphrey, *Miniatura*, 292.

37 A list of the recorded stolen leaves was published online by Lisa Fagin Davis in her blog "Manuscript Roadtrip: Be on the Lookout!": https://manuscriptroadtrip.wordpress.com/2017/04/21/manuscript-road-trip-be-on-the-lookout/, accessed May 12, 2023. Two other items have since been returned (nos 4 and 30 in Davis's list, see appendix below).

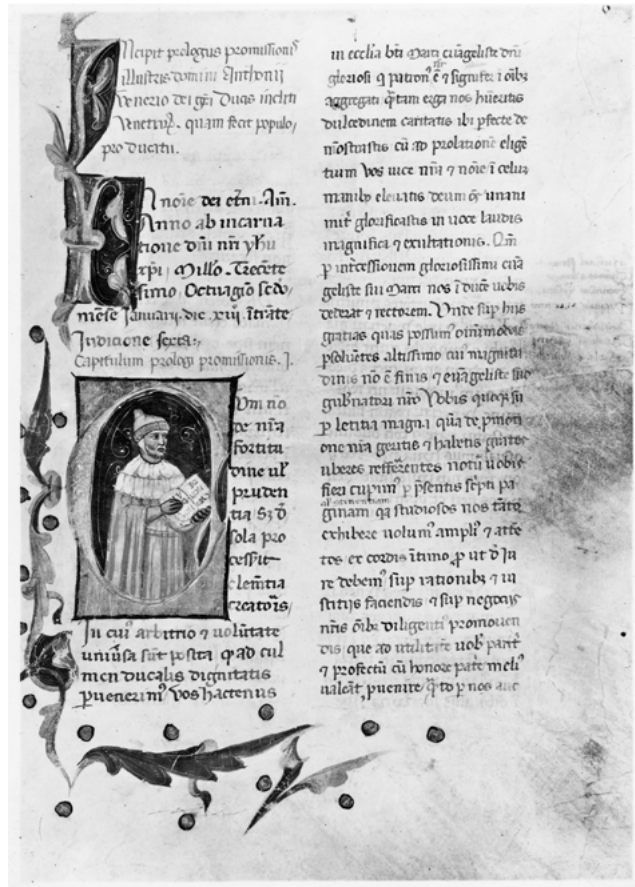
38 This permanent exhibition, comprising illuminated manuscripts, bindings, documents, drawings, maps, autographs, and prints, was closed in 1970. It had been dismantled and reinstalled several times during the war, but the disappearance of many manuscripts and leaves was discovered only in 1949; Humphrey, *La miniature per le confraternite*, 45–46n126. The exhibited works were described in 1880 in Cecchetti, *Sala diplomatica* (fifty-nine items in the section "Codici e documenti con miniature," at 123–40), and they are mentioned in many publications from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

39 The full-page illumination of the Statutes of the confraternity of San Liberale at Treviso and the opening leaf of the *Mariegola della Madonna di Valverde* from 1343 were reproduced in 1940; see Andrea Da Mosto, *L'archivio di Stato di Venezia: Indice generale, storico, descrittivo ed analitico*, 2 vols. (Rome: Biblioteca d'Arte, 1940), 2:pls. X–XI.

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were probably stolen sometime between 1946 and 1949.[40]

At least eleven fragments from this theft appear among the photos in Forti's collection,[41] having reached it not long afterwards, as can be assumed by the supposed date of the photos. Another one of them (D7788) is the opening of the *Promissione del doge Antonio Venier* (*olim* Sala Margherita LXXVI.12), also returned, and now with the original manuscript (ASVe, Collegio, Promissioni ducali, reg. 3, fol. 7r) (Figure 9.3).[42] Among those that have been recovered, in 2007, is the leaf with the Virgin and Child and a kneeling member of the confraternity (E86461) from the *Mariegola della Scuola dell'Annunziata ai Servi* (ASVe, Scuole piccole e suffragi, b.81, *olim Sala Margherita* LXXVI.30), described in detail by Bartolomeo Cecchetti in 1880.[43] A leaf with the portrait of a *Consigliere ducale* (E86452/B) was returned in 2019: it was one of the leaves detached from the *Promissione del doge Andrea Dandolo e Capitolare dei Consiglieri ducali*



40 Humphrey, "The Lost 1392 Mariegola," 164.

41 D7776–77, D7785, D7787–88, D10266, E86452/A–B, E86461, E86466. I think that E86458/B can be added to these, as argued below. At least another six, among leaves and cuttings, are also of Venetian origin and might comprise fragments not yet identified as coming from the ASVe: E86457/C, E86462–64/A–C. See appendix.

42 Helena K. Szépe, *Venice Illuminated: Power and Painting in Renaissance Manuscripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018), 78, fig. 3.1. The leaf was described in Cecchetti, *Sala diplomatica*, 121, no. 6.

43 The leaf was acquired by the Archives in 2007 (communication by Benussi and Pelizza). See Cecchetti, *Sala diplomatica*, 127.21; *Enluminures | Illuminations: Moyen Age Renaissance Middle Ages* (Chicago: Les Enluminures, 2001), 88–89 (here attributed to Leonardo Bellini). Another Forti fragment, a historiated letter with a Prophet at the *incipit Kyrie eleyson* (E86460), is also reproduced in the same catalogue, 76–77.

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Figure 9.3. Rome, ICCD, Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, n. inv. D7788, Doge Antonio Venier (su concessione del Ministero della Cultura – ICCD. Divieto di riproduzione) left; and Venice, ASVe, *Collegio, Promissioni ducali*, reg. 3, fol. 7r (su concessione del Ministero della Cultura – ASVe. Divieto di riproduzione) right.

(ASVe, Collegio, Promissioni, reg. 2, *olim* Sala Margherita LXXVI.4, fol. 62r), illuminated in 1343, from which two leaves are still missing (fols. 6r, 39r).[44] Another photo, pasted on the same cardboard mount (E86452/A), represents a detail of the leaf with the prophet Daniel by Martino da Modena, detached from the 1471 *Mariegola dei Merciai* (ASVe, Scuole piccole e suffragi, b.312). This was acquired by Georges Wildenstein before 1963 and it is still exhibited in the Musée Marmottan in Paris (Wildenstein Collection, M.6061).[45]

Three other leaves are still missing (D7776; D7777; E86466), but they are unequivocally recognizable among those described and reproduced in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: the opening leaf from the *Capitolare degli ufficiali straordinari sopra Ragioni* (ASVe, Cinque Savi alla mercanzia, 1 serie, b 22 bis, *olim* Sala Margherita LXXVI.24), described in detail in 1880 and partly reproduced;[46] the opening leaf of the *Madonna di Valverde Mariegola* from 1343 (ASVe,

44 Described in Cecchetti, *Sala diplomatica*, 126.18. The leaf, sold twice in London (see appendix no. 20) was returned by Christie's to the ASVe in 2019 with the intervention of the Carabinieri del Nucleo Tutela del Patrimonio Culturale. On this recovery see Anna Melograni, "Il foglio del 'Capitulare Consiliarum' rubato dall'Archivio di Stato di Venezia di recente recuperato e la Promissione del doge Andrea Dandolo," *Bollettino d'Arte* 103 (July–December 2018): 213–16.

45 See appendix no. 19.

46 The opening is described in Cecchetti, *Sala diplomatica*, 121–22.7. The detail of the illumination in the lower margin was reproduced with an engraving by Foucard in 1857 (Foucard, "Della pittura," pl. 3) and with a photograph by Agostino Pertusi, "*Quaedam regalia insignia*: Ricerche sulle insegne del potere ducale a Venezia durante il Medioevo," *Studi Veneziani* 7 (1965): 3–124, pl. XXII.

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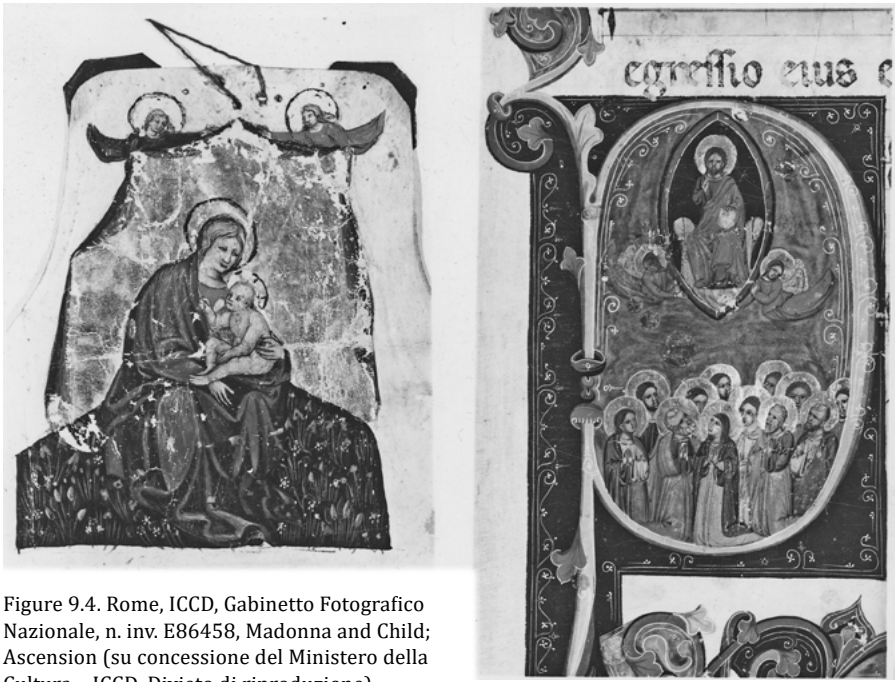


Figure 9.4. Rome, ICCD, Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, n. inv. E86458, Madonna and Child; Ascension (su concessione del Ministero della Cultura – ICCD. Divieto di riproduzione).

reg. A1 ter, *olim* Sala Margherita LXXVI.3), also described in 1880 and reproduced in 1940;[47] and the full-page illumination with St. Liberale as a knight, from the *Mariegola della Scuola di San Liberale di Treviso* (ASVe, Scuole piccole e suffragi, b.396bis, *olim* Sala Margherita LXXVI.7), reproduced in 1940.[48]

One further fragment, a historiated initial P, with the Ascension (E86458/B), can plausibly be connected to a liturgical series on show in the Sala Margherita (ASVe, Reg. 114–17). The stylistic similarities of this letter with the historiated initial with the Three Marys at the Tomb (Figures 9.4–9.5), from the Easter Office in the early fourteenth-century Antiphonary from San Marco (formerly ASVe, Reg. 116, fol. 46r), reproduced in 1940,[49] are so accurate that the letter with the Ascension must come from the leaf with this Office in the same manuscript, recorded as missing (Reg. 116, fol. 83r).[50]

47 Cecchetti, *Sala diplomatica*, 124.14; Da Mosto, *L'archivio*, 2:pl. XI; Humphrey, "The Lost 1392 Mariegola," 164–65, nn. 15, 22; Humphrey, *Miniatura*, 184–90, cat. 9.

48 Da Mosto, *L'archivio*, 2:pl. X.

49 For the opening of the Easter Office from ASVe, Reg. 116, fol. 46r: Da Mosto, *L'archivio*, 2:pl. XII.

50 This very unlucky series of volumes (formerly ASVe, Reg. 114–18) was severely plundered in the 1940s, as shown by the descriptions published in the 1990s (see below). The third volume (formerly ASVe, Reg. 116) contained an illuminated opening for the Easter Office (fol. 46r) and one for the Ascension (fol. 83r). Unfortunately, the whole series disappeared in 1996. Some of

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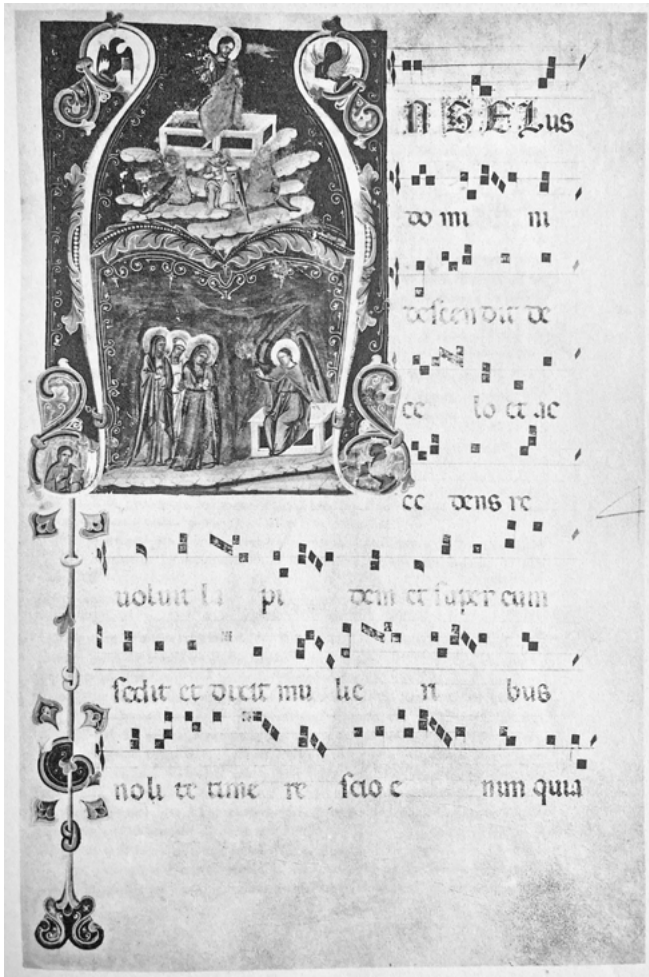


Figure 9.5. Venice, formerly ASVe, Reg. 116, fol. 46r, Resurrection. Andrea Da Mosto, *L'archivio di Stato di Venezia: Indice generale, storico, descrittivo ed analitico*, 2 vols. (Rome: Biblioteca d'Arte, 1940), 2:pl. X. Public domain.

the decorated initials have since reappeared on the market: two historiated letters from Reg. 114 surfaced in the Ligabue collection (Susy Marcon, *Frammenti d'arte: Miniature della collezione Ligabue* (Trebaseleghe: Il Punto, 2009), 26–35) and were returned to the ASVe in 2010, while a third from the same volume went unsold in 1996 (Sotheby's June 18, 1996, lot 18). For an updated reconstruction of the series: Susy Marcon, "L'arte veneziana durante il dogato di Giovanni Soranzo (1312–1328): l'antifonario Marciano," in *Il codice miniato in Europa: Libri per la chiesa, per la città, per la corte*, ed. Giordana Mariani Canova and Alessandra Perriccioli Saggese (Padua: Il Poligrafo, 2014), 257–75. On the liturgical series, before its disappearance in 1996; Giordana Mariani Canova, "La miniatura nei libri liturgici marciani," in *Musica e liturgia a San Marco: Testi e melodie per la liturgia delle ore dal XII al XVII secolo*, ed. Giulio Cattin, 3 vols. (Venice: Fondazione Levi, 1990), 1:176–79; Susy Marcon, "I codici della liturgia di San Marco," in *Musica e liturgia a San Marco*, ed. Cattin, 1:242–48; *I libri di San Marco: I manoscritti liturgici della basilica marciana*, ed. Susy Marcon (Venice: Il Cardo, 1995), 121–26.

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The facial details, foliage, and even the white lead motifs decorating the interior rim of the letter, are all so close to the letter visible in the reproduced leaf, that I am quite certain of the identification of this as the eleventh fragment in Forti's photo collection coming from the theft in the *Sala Margherita*.[51]

Apart from the leaf from the 1392 *Mariegola di Valverde*, seen by Todini, none of these fragments had been related to Forti before, and again the connection is proved by the photo collection. Other leaves reproduced in Forti's collection are certainly of Venetian origin, and further research may lead to more identifications.[52] The large number of illuminations from the eastern regions in north and central Italy—especially the Veneto, but also Friuli, Emilia, and Abruzzi—among the photographed items suggests that these were the areas from which Forti, or his providers, sourced his material, and hopefully it will be possible to shed further light on these issues in the future.

One Last Problematic Item: A Fake among the Fragments?

An interesting instance, among Forti's photos, is the reproduction of a leaf (D7778) from one of the liturgical books for San Marco in Venice (Figure 9.6). This Missal, stored in the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana since 1801 (Venice, BNM, Cod. Marc. Lat. III, 111 (=2116)), is part of a famous liturgical set commissioned by Doge Andrea Dandolo in the mid-1340s, comprising a Gospel Lectionary (BNM, Cod. Marc. Lat. I, 100 (=2089)) and one with the

51 D7777–78, D7785, D7787–88, D10266, E86452/A–B, E86458/B, E86461, E8666. They represent an eighth of the total photos.

52 At least seventeen of the eighty fragments are of Venetian origin. See appendix.

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Figure 9.6. Rome, ICCD, Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, n. inv. D7778, Procession towards St. Mark's Basilica (su concessione del Ministero della Cultura – ICCD. Divieto di riproduzione) left; and Venice, BNM, Cod. Marc. Lat. III, 111 (=2116), Procession towards St. Mark's Basilica (su concessione del Ministero della Cultura – Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana. Divieto di riproduzione) right.

Epistles (BNM, Cod. Marc. Lat. I, 101 (=2260)).[53] Unlike the Gospel Lectionary, however, which was cut up before reaching the library (fragments are now in Berlin, London, Montreal, and elsewhere),[54] the San Marco Missal was never damaged, and it has no missing leaves. Indeed, the leaf in question is still safely in the manuscript and was never detached from it.[55]

This raises many questions: why is its photo in Forti's collection and why does it have the appearance of a detached leaf? Is it possible that one leaf in his collection was a copy? In the late nineteenth century, after the publication of the volumes *Basilica di San Marco* by the Venetian publisher Ferdinando Ongania, illustrated by various portfolios containing chromolithographs, there was a fashion in Venice for reproducing works of art from San Marco.[56] This min-

53 Mariani Canova, "Miniatura," 184–87; Marcon, "I codici," 253–57; *Libri di San Marco*, 130–31.

54 For example, see Beatrice Alai, *Le miniature italiane del Kupferstichkabinett di Berlino* (Florence: Polistampa, 2019); Helena K. Szépe, "Fragmented and Forgotten: Italian Manuscripts in Arts, Design, and Natural History Museums: The Collectors L. Celotti and J. A. Ramboux, and Newly Discovered Miniatures by The Master of the Antiphonal Q of San Giorgio, the Master of Cardinal Antoniotto Pallavicini, and the Disassembled Italian Hours Master," *Rivista di storia della miniatura* 26 (2022): 154–76.

55 I would like to thank Susy Marcon for ascertaining this for me. The manuscript has recently been restored.

56 I am indebted to Susy Marcon for this information. See Camillo Boito ed., *La Basilica di San Marco in Venezia, illustrata nella storia e nell'arte da scrittori veneziani*, 24 vols. (Venice: Ongania,

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iature, representing a procession in front of the Basilica itself, is one of the most significant scenes in the manuscript, but had the illuminated leaf been made as a copy, it is difficult to imagine that the poor condition of the leaf would have been reproduced.

Some details, like the heavily damaged parchment sheet and the partial detachments in the gold leaf bezants, make the hypothesis of a work deliberately produced as a fake plausible. Nevertheless, the possibility of a facsimile, made with the intention of obtaining an antique-like effect, cannot be ruled out. In whichever case, the copying of the page was carried out by tracing the script and the decoration, possibly from a photograph, as the forms of the decoration and the distribution of the letters on the lines of the writing area are precisely replicated. The letters, nonetheless, are more rigid and angular and sometimes clearly differ from the original. The faces, especially those of the angels in the roundels in the left margin and those of the bishop and clerics, are entirely different, making it impossible to consider Forti's image a photographic reproduction of the original leaf.[57] The label of the photo does not state that this was a copy, so even if the illuminated parchment leaf had been produced as a copy and not deliberately faked, by the time it reached Forti's collection, this had either been forgotten, or was concealed.

This dubious object casts further shadows on the already suspicious dealings carried out by Forti. Although his biography still largely remains to be reconstructed, it is certain that, though inclined to remain in the shade in comparison with contemporary dealers like Hoepli, Olschki, and De Marinis, Forti too was in contact with some of the foremost Italian art-historians of his time. Salmi and Todini both mentioned his collection, and Zeri acquired the negative plates of the photos of the fragments, certainly before the end of the 1960s, either when he was asked for attributions for the illuminations,[58] or after Forti had sold the whole collection.[59]

A Broader Perspective

Not all the material which passed through Forti's hands as a dealer in the 1950s and 1960s appears among the surviving photos. Other illuminations can be traced to sales carried out by Forti in those years, including a bifolium with a Resurrection by the Neapolitan artist Cristoforo Orimina, again bought by the CMA in 1954 (CMA, 1954.145),[60]

1880–1893).

57 I shall discuss this possible fake in greater detail in a forthcoming article.

58 This is indirectly confirmed by a short entry on the Coronation in Cleveland published in 1963, where the attribution to the Beffi Master is ascribed to Federico Zeri: *Pages from Medieval and Renaissance Illuminated Manuscripts from the Xth to the early XVIth centuries*, ed. William Mathewson Milliken (Berkeley: University of California, 1963), 22, cat. 30.

59 This is more convincing, both because, as Peter Kidd pointed out to me, Forti would not have needed the negatives after the sale, and because all the photos were clearly marked as formerly in the Forti collection, obviously following indications by Zeri. It is to be hoped that new information on the relationship between the two will surface when Zeri's archive becomes accessible.

60 See Francesca Manzari, "Un nuovo foglio miniato della bottega Orimina, un Graduale smembrato e la figura di un anonimo miniatore napoletano del Trecento," in *Storie di artisti: Storie di libri.*

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and the only known southern-Italian illumination sold by Forti. Also in Cleveland is a cutting with the Annunciation (CMA, 1986.151), bought in 1967 by Norman Zaworski, and later gifted by him to the Museum, where it is described as from Avignon, although it can be associated with Lombardy on stylistic grounds. This is the latest date I have come across, as all other sales date from the 1950s. Although his main interest seems to have been in detached leaves and cuttings, Forti also sold panels and whole manuscripts, like a remarkable Florentine Book of Hours (Boston, Public Library (BPL), q.Med. 200), acquired from him by the BPL in 1959.[61]

A survey of all manuscripts and illuminations sold by Vittorio Forti still needs to be carried out and the reasons for their absence from this group of photos needs to be understood. This essay is just an introduction to this hitherto unknown photographic material, documenting a vast collection, or perhaps just the stock, assembled and sold by Forti in the years after the Second World War.

L'editore che inseguiva la Bellezza: Scritti in onore di Franco Cosimo Panini (Rome: Donzelli, 2008), 293–312.

61 On January 20, 1959. On this manuscript's long and interesting provenance history (it had been bought by Heinrich Eisemann at the Cockerell sale in 1956), studied by Bill Stoneman and Lisa Fagin Davis, I refer to: Francesca Manzari, "Entry 230," in *Beyond Words: Illuminated Manuscripts from Boston Collections*, ed. Jeffrey F. Hamburger et al. (Boston: McMullen Museum of Art, 2016), 285–86.

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APPENDIX

1. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. D7776 (Donazione Zeri 1967)

Leaf, opening with figure initial with a monk brandishing a sword; illumination with three officials in the lower margin. Venice, XIV[1].

Excised from: *Capitolare degli ufficiali straordinari sopra Ragioni (Officiali supra litore*).

Original location: ASVe, *Cinque Savi alla mercanzia*, 1 serie, b 22 bis, *olim Sala Margherita* LXXVI.24, fol. 3v. This leaf was the second illuminated opening in the manuscript, as shown by the offset on the remaining fol. 4r. The main opening, once fol. 1v, is also missing. The manuscript remains at the ASVe.

Davis List no. 24 (https://manuscriptroadtrip.wordpress.com/2017/04/21/manuscript-road-trip-be-on-the-lookout/, accessed September 9, 2023).

Bibliography: Foucard, "Della pittura," pl. III; Cecchetti, *Sala diplomatica*, 121–22, no. 7; Pertusi, "*Quaedam regalia*," pl. XXII.

2. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. D7777 (Donazione Zeri 1967)

Leaf, opening with illumination with the Madonna of Mercy among the members of a confraternity, in upper margin; figure initial with Christ blessing, over a bending figure. Venice, ca. 1343.

Excised from: *Mariegola della Scuola di Santa Maria di Valverde*.

Original location: ASVe, *Scuola grande della Misericordia*, reg. A1 ter, *olim Sala Margherita* LXXVI.3, fol. 1r. Only the opening leaf was stolen, as shown by the offset on the blank leaf alongside fol. 2r. The manuscript remains at the ASVe.

Bibliography: Cecchetti, *Sala diplomatica*, 124, no. 14; Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*, 2:pl. XI; Humphrey, *Miniatura*, cat. 9.

3. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. D7778 (Donazione Zeri 1967)

Leaf, opening with illumination with a Procession in front of San Marco and decorated borders. Venice, XIV[1]. Master of the San Marco Missal

Copy or falsification from the Missal of San Marco (Venice, BNM, Cod. Marc. Lat. III, 111 (=2116), fol. 165v). The original leaf was never detached and is still in original location.

Bibliography: on the manuscript, see Mariani Canova, "Miniatura nei libri liturgici," cat. 14, pl. XLIII.

4. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. D7779 (Donazione Zeri 1967)

9 cuttings comprising the rectangular frames of the historiated letters. Emilia Romagna?, XIII ex.

Excised from: Bible.

Present location: McCarthy Collection, BM 1832. Minus one cutting representing Judith and Holofernes.

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First reappeared: 1981.

Provenance: sold by H. P. Kraus, New York, 1981; Christie's, June 26, 1991, lot 38; Georg Friedrich Zeileis collection, no. 1832; Sam Fogg, 2005.

Sale catalogues: H. P. Kraus, *Illuminated Manuscripts from the Eleventh to the Eighteenth Centuries*, *Catalogue 159* (New York: Kraus, 1981), no. 26; Illuminated Manuscripts, Valuable Printed Books … 26 June 1991 (London: Christie's, 1991), lot 38; Friedrich Georg Zeileis, *Più ridon le carte: Buchmalerei aus Mittelalter und Renaissance*, rev. Aufl. (Gallspach: Zeilis, 2004), 30–33.

Bibliography: Freuler, in Kidd, *McCarthy Collection*, 3:364–65.

5. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. D7780 (Donazione Zeri 1967)

8 cuttings (circular cuttings, as the letter forms and frames have been cut away). Emilia Romagna?, XIII ex.

Excised from: Bible.

Present location: McCarthy Collection, BM 1832.

First reappeared: 1981.

Provenance: as no. 4 above.

Sale catalogues and bibliography: as no. 4 above.

6. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. D7781 (Donazione Zeri 1967)

8 cuttings (circular cuttings, as the letter forms and frames have been cut away). Emilia Romagna?, XIII ex.

Excised from: Bible.

Present location: McCarthy Collection, BM 1832.

First reappeared: 1981.

Provenance: as no. 4 above.

Sale catalogues and bibliography: as no. 4 above.

7. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. D7782 (Donazione Zeri 1967)

9 cuttings (comprising the rectangular frames of the historiated letters). Emilia Romagna?, XIII ex.

Excised from: Bible.

Present location: Cleveland, CMA, 1954.131.1–9.

First reappeared: 1954.

Provenance: gift by Vittorio Forti.

Bibliography: for possible companions, see Freuler, in Kidd, *McCarthy Collection*, 3:364–65.

Already connected to Vittorio Forti.

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8. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. D7783 (Donazione Zeri 1967)

Leaf, opening with illumination with the Coronation of the Virgin and decorated borders. Abruzzi, XIV ex.–XV in. Beffi Master.

Excised from: Acquaviva Antiphonary.

Present location: Cleveland, CMA, 1953.24.

First reappeared: 1952.

Provenance: acquired from the J. H. Wade Fund, 1953.24.

Bibliography: Salmi, *La miniatura italiana*, 2nd edn., fig. 51; *Pages from Medieval*, ed. Milliken, 22, cat. 30; Manzari, *Il Messale Orsini*, 117–18; Manzari, "Entry 38," 235; Manzari, "Entries 69–b," 243.

Already connected to Vittorio Forti.

9. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. D7784 (Donazione Zeri 1967).

Leaf, opening with illumination with the Nativity, decorated letter with coat-of-arms and decorated borders. Abruzzi, XIV ex.–XV in. Beffi Master.

Excised from: Acquaviva Antiphonary.

Present location: Princeton, University Art Museum, y1958-17.

First reappeared: 1955.

Provenance: sold by Kraus, New York, 1955; in 1958 gift to University Art Museum by Alastair B. Martin (class 1938).

Sale catalogue: H. P. Kraus, *Catalogue 75* (New York: Kraus, 1955), no. 72.

Bibliography: Manzari, *Messale Orsini*, 116; Manzari, "Entry 38," 233; Manzari, "Entries 69–b," 243.

Connected with Forti after the discovery of the photo collection (Manzari, *Messale Orsini*).

10. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. D7785 (Donazione Zeri 1967)

Leaf, opening with historiated initial with the Madonna of Mercy among the members of a confraternity, rich decorated borders with figures in roundels and the Flagellant brothers adoring the Christ tied to the column. Venice, 1392 (dated in upper margin).

Excised from: *Mariegola della Scuola di Santa Maria di Valverde* from 1392.

Original location: ASVe, *Scuola grande di Santa Maria della Misericordia*, reg. B1, *olim Sala Margherita* LXXVI.23.

Recovered: The manuscript was dismembered after the theft. Only parts of the manuscript were recovered: a fragmentary portion of the manuscript (formerly BPL, f.Med. 203) in 2017. A text leaf was sold by Christie's in 1994 (June 29, 1994, lot 8), while four illuminated leaves (formerly Toledo, Museum of Art, inv. 2001.13 A–D) were recovered in 2018 (information from Paola Benussi and Andrea Pelizza). These fragments are back in the ASVe, while the opening leaf is still missing.

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Davis List no. 3.

www.digitalcommonwealth.org/search/commonwealth:0v838921z (digitization of fragment formerly BPL, f.Med. 203), accessed May 12, 2023.

First reappeared: 1999.

Provenance: see Humphrey, *Miniatura*, cat. 25.

Sale catalogue: *Illuminated Manuscripts, Illustrated Books ... 29 June 1994* (London: Christie's, 1994).

Bibliography: Cecchetti, *Sala diplomatica*, 124–25, no. 15; Pallucchini, *Pittura veneziana*, fig. 692; Todini, "La 'Mariegola,'" 5; Humphrey, *Miniatura*, cat. 25 (with bibliography and sale catalogues for the different parts of the manuscript).

Already connected to Vittorio Forti.

11. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. D7786 (Donazione Zeri 1967)

5 leaves, full-page illuminations with: Madonna and Child among angels; Visitation; Annunciation to the Shepherds; Presentation in the Temple; Coronation of the Virgin by the Trinity. Flanders, XV^{2}. Guillaume Vrelant?

Excised from: Book of Hours.

Present location: Cleveland, CMA, 1954.140.1–5.

First reappeared: 1954.

Provenance: acquired from the J. H. Wade Fund, 1954.140.1–5.

12. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. D7787 (Donazione Zeri 1967)

Leaf, opening with historiated letter with St. Anne, the Virgin and the Child among lay devotees, full borders and St. Peter in medallion in the lower margin. Venice, ca. 1350–1360. Giustino di Gherardino da Forlì (attribution by Federica Toniolo).

Excised from: *Mariegola della Scuola di Santa Anna di Castello*.

Original location: ASVe, *Scuole piccole e suffragi*, b.24, *olim Sala Margherita* LXXVI.8.

Recovered: 1975. Only the opening leaf was stolen. Given back by Harvard, Houghton Library in 1975 (formerly MS Typ. 405).

Davis List no. 8.

Present location: ASVe, tipped back into original manuscript.

First reappeared: 1955.

Provenance: sold by H. P. Kraus, New York, 1955.

Bibliography: Cecchetti, *Sala diplomatica*, 123–24, no. 12; Humphrey, *Miniatura*, cat. 16.

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13. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. D7788 (Donazione Zeri 1967)

Leaf, opening with historiated letter with Doge Antonio Venier. Venice, ca. 1382. Master of the Carresini Chronicle.

Excised from: *Promissione del Doge Antonio Venier.*

Original location: ASVe, *Collegio, Promissioni*, reg. 3, fol. 7r.

Recovered. Only the opening leaf was stolen.

Present location: ASVe, with the original manuscript.

Bibliography: Cecchetti, *Sala diplomatica*, 121, no. 6; Szépe, *Venice Illuminated*, 78, fig. 3.1.

14. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. D10264 (Donazione Zeri 1972/I)

Leaf, opening with historiated letter with Judith holding a sword and the head of Holofernes. Florence, XV^2. Francesco d'Antonio del Chierico.

Excised from: Antiphonary.

First reappeared: 1956.

Sale catalogues: H. P. Kraus, *The Eightieth Catalogue* (New York: Kraus, 1956), no. 13.

Bibliography: Annarosa Garzelli, *Miniatura fiorentina del Rinascimento, 1440–1525* (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1985), fig. 234.

15. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. D10265 (Donazione Zeri 1972/I)

Leaf, opening with historiated letter with the Pentecost. Florence, XV^2.

Excised from: Antiphonary.

16. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. D10266 (Donazione Zeri 1972/I)

Leaf, full-page illumination with the Crucifixion, full borders with figures in medallions, St. Mark in lower margin. Venice, XV ex.–XVI in.

Excised from: *Mariegola della Scuola della Beata Vergine Annunziata di Santa Maria Mater Domini* (identification suggested by Paola Benussi and Andrea Pelizza, based on the descriptions after the theft).

Original location: ASVe, *Scuole uffrag e uffrage*, b.80, *olim Sala Margherita* LXXVI.26. The manuscript remains at the ASVe. The offset on the paper flyleaf alongside fol. 1r is rectangular, allowing the suggested identification.

17. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. E86450 (Donazione Zeri 1972/II)

Fragment, historiated letter V with standing Evangelist. Emilia Romagna, XIV in. Neri da Rimini (https://fotografia.cultura.gov.it/iccd/fotografie#k.text=E086450, accessed May 12, 2023).

Excised from: Antiphonary?

Bibliography: for possible companions, see Freuler, *McCarthy Collection*, 1:132–35.

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18. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. E86451 (Donazione Zeri 1972/II)

Fragment, historiated letter V with the Coronation of the Virgin. Emilia Romagna, XIV in. Neri da Rimini (https://fotografia.cultura.gov.it/iccd/fotografie#k.text=E086451, accessed May 12, 2023).

Excised from: Antiphonary?

Bibliography: for possible companions, see Freuler, *McCarthy Collection*, 1:132–35.

19. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. E86452/A (Donazione Zeri 1972/II)

Leaf, historiated letter C with Prophet Daniel. Venice, XV[2]. Martino da Modena (https://fotografia.cultura.gov.it/iccd/fotografie#k.text=E086452, accessed May 12, 2023).

Excised from: *Mariegola dei Merciai*.

Original location: ASVe, *Scuole piccole e suffrage, Arti*, b.312, *olim Sala Margherita* LXXVI.35.

Only the opening leaf was stolen. The manuscript remains at the ASVe

Present location: Paris, Musée Marmottan, Wildenstein Coll., M.6061.

First reappeared: 1963.

Provenance: acquired before 1963 by Georges Wildenstein.

Bibliography: Foucard, "Della pittura," 60, 72; Cecchetti, *Sala diplomatica*, 127, cat. 22; Lyle Humphrey, "Su Martino da Modena a Venezia: la Mariegola dei merciai del 1471 e la committenza della comunità lucchese," *Arte Veneta* 68 (2011): 7–33 at 27n12.

20. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. E86452/B (Donazione Zeri 1972/II)

Leaf, historiated letter I with a *Consigliere ducale*. Venice, XIV[1]. Master of the San Marco Epistulary (https://fotografia.cultura.gov.it/iccd/fotografie#k.text=E086452, accessed May 12, 2023).

Excised from: *Promissione del Doge Andrea Dandolo e Capitolare dei Consiglieri ducali*.

Original location: ASVe, *Collegio, Promissioni*, reg. 2, *olim Sala Margherita* LXXVI.4, fol. 62r.

Recovered: February 2019.

The reproduced leaf (fol. 62r) was given back in 2019, while fols. 6r and 38–40, comprising illuminated initials, are still missing. The manuscript remains at the ASVe.

Davis List no. 4.

Present location: ASVe, with the original manuscript.

First reappeared: 1999.

Provenance: Maggs, 1999; Christie's, 1999; handed back by Christie's through Carabinieri TPC.

Sale catalogues: Maggs Bros. Ltd., *Illuminations, Catalogue 1283* (London: Maggs, 1999), cat. 3; *Valuable Illuminated Manuscripts, Printed Books and Autograph Letters, Wednesday 2 June 1999* (London: Christie's, 1999), lot 2.

Bibliography: Cecchetti, *Sala diplomatica*, 126, no. 18; Melograni, "Il Foglio."

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21. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. E86453/A (Donazione Zeri 1972/II)

Cutting, historiated letter with Christ among the Saints and angels (portion of). Lombardy, XV[2] (https://fotografia.cultura.gov.it/iccd/fotografie#k.text=E086453, accessed May 12, 2023).

Present location: Cleveland, CMA, 1953.282.

First reappeared: 1953.

Provenance: acquired from the J. H. Wade Fund, 1953.282.

22. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. E86453/B (Donazione Zeri 1972/II)

Cutting, historiated letter S with Pentecost. Austria, ca. 1420 (https://fotografia.cultura.gov.it/iccd/fotografie#k.text=E086453, accessed May 12, 2023).

Excised from: Antiphonary.

Present location: PML, MS M.878.

First reappeared: 1956.

Provenance: sold by H. P. Kraus, New York, September 1956.

Bibliography: Gerhard Schmidt, *Malerei der Gotik: Fixpunkte und Ausblicke*, 2 vols. (Graz: Akademische Druck- u. Verlagsanstalt, 2005), 1:22, 454, pl. 14.

23. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. E86454 (Donazione Zeri 1972/II)

Fragment, historiated letter with Christ and Virgin enthroned. Emilia Romagna, XIV in. Neri da Rimini. (https://fotografia.cultura.gov.it/iccd/fotografie#k.text=E086454, accessed May 12, 2023).

Excised from: Antiphonary?

Bibliography: for possible companions, see Freuler, *McCarthy Collection*, 1:132–35.

24. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. E86455/A (Donazione Zeri 1972/II)

Cutting, illumination with the Massacre of the Innocents. Flanders, 1500–1520 (https://fotografia.cultura.gov.it/iccd/fotografie#k.text=E086455, accessed May 12, 2023).

Excised from: Book of Hours.

First reappeared: 1963.

Provenance: Mortimer Brandt Coll. 1297-3; on sale in Catalogue 1963, no. 9; Les Eluminures, 1996.

Sale catalogues: Harry Bober, *The Mortimer Brandt Collection of Medieval Manuscript Illuminations* (New York: Institute of Fine Arts, 1963), no. 9; *Medieval and Renaissance Miniature Painting* (Akron-London: Bruce Ferrini and Sam Fogg, 1989), lot 11; Les Enluminures, *Catalogue 5* (Paris: Les Eluminures, 1996), 74, cat. 28.

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25. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. E86455/B (Donazione Zeri 1972/II)

Leaf, full-page illumination with the Annunciation and fully decorated borders with medallion with the Nativity in lower margin. Florence, XV^2. Master of Riccardiana 231? (https://fotografia.cultura.gov.it/iccd/fotografie#k.text=E086455, accessed May 12, 2023).

Excised from: Book of Hours for the Medici family.

Present location: Cleveland, CMA, 1953.280.

First reappeared: 1953.

Provenance: sold by Vittorio Forti; acquired from the J. H. Wade Fund, 1953.280.

Bibliography: Garzelli, *Miniatura fiorentina*, fig. 535.

Already connected to Vittorio Forti.

26. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. E86455/C (Donazione Zeri 1972/II)

Cutting, illumination with Martyrdom of St. John evangelist. Flanders, 1500–1520 (https://fotografia.cultura.gov.it/iccd/fotografie#k.text=E086455, accessed May 12, 2023).

Excised from: Book of Hours.

First reappeared: 1962.

Provenance: Maggs November 1962; Ferrini and Fogg 1989.

Sale catalogues: Maggs, *European Miniatures and Illuminations*, Bulletin 2 (November 1962), cat. 19.

Bibliography: Raymond Lister, *The Miniature Defined* (Cambridge: The Golden Head, 1963), III.

27. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. E86456 (Donazione Zeri 1972/II)

Cutting, historiated letter R with Resurrection. Florence, XV^2 (https://fotografia.cultura.gov.it/iccd/fotografie#k.text=E086456, accessed May 12, 2023).

Excised from: Antiphonary?

Present location: Cleveland, CMA, 1955.76.

First reappeared: 1955.

Provenance: acquired from the J. H. Wade Fund, 1955.76.

28. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. E86457/A (Donazione Zeri 1972/II)

Fragment, historiated letter D with Noah's Ark. Bologna, XIV^2. Nicolò di Giacomo (https://fotografia.cultura.gov.it/iccd/fotografie#k.text=E086457, accessed May 12, 2023).

Excised from: Antiphonary?

Bibliography: for possible companions, see Freuler, *McCarthy Collection*, 1:121–27.

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29. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. E86457/B (Donazione Zeri 1972/II)

Cutting, historiated letter E with deacon carrying a cross. Venice or Bologna?, XIV in. (https://fotografia.cultura.gov.it/iccd/fotografie#k.text=E086457, accessed May 12, 2023).

30. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. E86457/C (Donazione Zeri 1972/II)

Cutting, historiated letter with bust of a Prophet. Venice, XIV^{2}. Murano Master, Collaborator of (https://fotografia.cultura.gov.it/iccd/fotografie#k.text=E086457, accessed May 12, 2023).

Bibliography: for possible companions, see Palladino, *Treasures of a Lost Art*, 125–26; Peter Kidd, *Medieval Manuscripts Provenance*, 22 August 2020: https://mssprovenance.blogspot.com/2020/08/another-hachette-lehman-yale-cutting.html#more, accessed May 12, 2023.

31. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. E86458/A (Donazione Zeri 1972/II)

Fragment, illumination with Madonna and Child seated before a drapery held by angels. Northern Italy?, XIV^{1}. (https://fotografia.cultura.gov.it/iccd/fotografie#k.text=E086458, accessed May 12, 2023).

32. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. E86458/B (Donazione Zeri 1972/II)

Fragment, historiated letter P with the Ascension. Venice, XIV in. Masters of the San Marco Antiphonary (https://fotografia.cultura.gov.it/iccd/fotografie#k.text=E086458, accessed May 12, 2023).

Excised from: Antiphonary.

Original location: ASVe, Reg. 116, fol. 83r (this identification is suggested in my text. This leaf does not appear to have been reproduced). The illumination possibly from same volume as the opening for Easter Office reproduced in Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*, 2:pl. XII (formerly Reg. 116. 46r).

Bibliography: For Reg. 116, see: Marcon, "L'Arte veneziana" (with earlier bibliography).

33. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. E86459 (Donazione Zeri 1972/II)

4 leaves, full-page illuminations from a Calendar: September/October/November/December. Paris?, ca. 1515–1520. Jean Pichore, workshop. (https://fotografia.cultura.gov.it/iccd/fotografie#k.text=E086459, accessed May 12, 2023).

Excised from: Book of Hours.

Present location of parent manuscript: PML, M.286 (purchased in 1907 from Olschki).

First reappearance of 2 leaves: 1999.

Sale catalogues: Christie's, *Valuable Illuminated Manuscripts…2 June 1999*, lot 19 (December); *Valuable Manuscripts and Printed Books…2 June 2010* (London: Christie's, 2010), lot 202 (October).

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34. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. E86460/A (Donazione Zeri 1972/II)

Fragment, historiated D with Pentecost. Friuli, XIV in. (https://fotografia.cultura.gov.it/iccd/fotografie#k.text=E086460, accessed May 12, 2023).

Excised from: Antiphonary?

First reappeared: 1972.

Sale catalogues: Sotheby's, December 11, 1972, lot 16A.

Bibliography: for possible companions, see Freuler, *McCarthy Collection*, 1:143–44.

35. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. E86460/B (Donazione Zeri 1972/II)

Fragment, historiated Letter K with Prophet. Emilia or Verona?, XV[1]. (https://fotografia.cultura.gov.it/iccd/fotografie#k.text=E086460, accessed May 12, 2023).

Excised from: Gradual?

First reappeared: 2001.

Provenance: Les Enluminures, 2001.

Sale catalogues: *Enluminures* | *Illuminations*, 76–77, cat. 31.

Bibliography: For possible companions, see: Gaudenz Freuler, *Italian Miniatures: From the Twelfth to the Sixteenth Century*, 2 vols. (Cinisello Balsamo: Silvana, 2013), 1:334–41, cat. 29.

36. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. E86461 (Donazione Zeri 1972/II)

Leaf, opening with historiated Letter A with Madonna and Child with a member of the confraternity holding banner with a cross. Venice, XV[2]. Leonardo Bellini? (https://fotografia.cultura.gov.it/iccd/fotografie#k.text=E086461, accessed May 12, 2023).

Excised from: *Mariegola della Scuola dell'Annunziata dei Servi.*

Original location: ASVE, *Scuole piccole e suffragi*, b.81, fol. 1r.

Recovered: 2007 (acquired by the ASVe). Only the opening leaf was stolen. The manuscript remains at the ASVe.

Davis List no. 30.

Present location: ASVe, with the original manuscript.

First reappeared: 2001.

Provenance: Les Enluminures, 2001.

Sale catalogue: *Enluminures* | *Illuminations*, 88–89, cat. 37.

Bibliography: Cecchetti, *Sala diplomatica*, 127, no. 21.

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37. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. E86462 (Donazione Zeri 1972/II)

Leaf, full-page illumination with the Sacred family and a member of Correr family. Venice, XVI[2]. Alessandro Merli? (attribution by Alessandro Martoni). (https://fotografia.cultura.gov.it/iccd/fotografie#k.text=E086462, accessed May 12, 2023).

Excised from: Dogal Commission (Correr family).

38. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. E86463 (Donazione Zeri 1972/II)

Leaf, full page illumination with Madonna and Child, St. Vincenzo Ferrer, St. Mark and a lay person (on the steps: AN AET SUE / XXV). Venice, XVI[2]. Walters Master? (attribution by Alessandro Martoni). (https://fotografia.cultura.gov.it/iccd/item/IT-ICCD-PHOTO-0065-001077, accessed May 12, 2023).

Excised from: Dogal Commission.

39. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. E86464 (Donazione Zeri 1972/II)

3 cuttings, historiated letters: John the Baptist/ Prophet/ Visitation. Venice, 1480s–1490s. Collaborator of Benedetto Bordon. (https://fotografia.cultura.gov.it/iccd/fotografie#k.text=E086464, accessed May 12, 2023).

40. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. E86465 (Donazione Zeri 1972/II)

Fragment, historiated initial A with Christ adored by angels, and Saints holding instruments of the Passion in the lower part. Umbria, XIV in. (https://fotografia.cultura.gov.it/iccd/item/IT-ICCD-PHOTO-0065-001089, accessed May 12, 2023).

Excised from: Antiphonary?

Bibliography: for possible companions, see Freuler, *McCarthy Collection*, 1:165–66.

41. Rome, ICCD, GFN, n. inv. E86466 (Donazione Zeri 1972/II)

Leaf, full-page illumination with San Liberale. Veneto, XIV[1]. (https://fotografia.cultura.gov.it/iccd/item/IT-ICCD-PHOTO-0065-001095, accessed May 12, 2023).

Excised from: *Mariegola della Scuola di San Liberale di Treviso.*

Original location: ASVe, *Scuole piccole e suffragi*, b.396 bis, *olim Sala Margherita* LXXVI.7, fol. 1r.

Only the illuminated leaf was stolen. The manuscript remains at the ASVe.

Bibliography: Cecchetti, *Sala diplomatica*, 124, no. 13; Da Mosto, *L'Archivio*, 2:pl. X.

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Chapter 10

THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY

HOW LORD BROTHERTON LOST OUT ON A BOOK AND FOUNDED A LIBRARY

RHIANNON LAWRENCE-FRANCIS

THE YEAR 2022 was particularly significant for Special Collections at the University of Leeds. It marked exactly one hundred years since the University Library's greatest benefactor, Lord Brotherton of Wakefield, bought his first rare book and established what was to become the Brotherton Collection. The motivation behind that purchase was the failure to buy a medieval manuscript at auction, but what possessed a man in his late sixties, who had hitherto never shown any interest in rare books and manuscripts, to embark upon a book-buying adventure so late in life?

Edward Allen Brotherton was born in Ardwick, Manchester on April 1, 1856, the eldest of Theophilus, a yarn-agent, and his wife Sarah's nine children (Figure 10.1). When he was twenty-two his mother gave him £200 to start his own business and suggested that he advertise for partners. Very soon Dyson Bros. and Brotherton, manufacturers of ammonium sulphate, had their first premises in Wakefield.[1]



Figure 10.1. Photograph of Sir Edward Allen Brotherton by Jas. Bacon and Sons. Courtesy of the University of Leeds.

1 See also James Donnelly, "Brotherton, Edward Allen, Baron Brotherton," *ODNB*, version September 28, 2006.

Rhiannon Lawrence-Francis is a Curator in Special Collections and Galleries at the University of Leeds. As well as being involved in research development, acquisitions, and the management of cataloguing projects, she is also responsible for the exhibition program at the Treasures of the Brotherton Gallery which opened in 2016. She is as much interested in collectors as collections and intends to continue her research into Lord Brotherton and Leeds University Library's other major early twentieth-century benefactors. Thanks are due to her Leeds colleagues Michael Brennan and Ruth Burton for sharing their insights into the provenance of the Shakespeare folios and Lord Brotherton's philanthropy respectively.

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Figure 10.2. Photograph of Dorothy Una Ratcliffe. Courtesy of the University of Leeds.

Brotherton's aim was to make chemical manufacturing processes as efficient and economical as possible. In just three years he had earned enough to buy out the Dysons, and Brotherton & Co. was born. The business went from strength to strength. Brotherton was a generous and philanthropic man who shared his success with his family, his workers, and the general public. To celebrate the coronation of Edward VII in 1902, and again in 1906 to celebrate his own fiftieth birthday, he opened bank accounts with the Yorkshire Penny Bank containing a shilling for every child registered at a public elementary school in Wakefield. He also founded the Brotherton Charity Trust for Wakefield's men and women in need. In September 1928, Brotherton celebrated fifty years of work with another generous act. He visited his nine factories and gave each employee a gold sovereign for every year that they had worked for him. Pensioners and the widows of men who had worked for the company were also rewarded.

Brotherton was also keen supporter of the newly established University of Leeds. The University was founded in 1904, but its origins go back to the nineteenth century with the founding of the Leeds School of Medicine in 1831 and then the Yorkshire College of Science in 1874. Brotherton's significant donations to the new University included the endowment of a Chair in Bacteriology in 1922, but he is perhaps best known, in bibliographic circles at least, for the transformative impact a later gift had on the University Library and its Special Collections.

It was not until Lord Brotherton was approaching his sixty-sixth birthday that his interest in rare books was piqued by the proposed sale of a medieval manuscript. In February 1922, the mid-fifteenth-century manuscript of the Wakefield Mystery Plays, also known as the Towneley Cycle, was offered for sale at Sotheby's in London.[2] As soon as the sale of the Towneley manuscript was announced, Lord Brotherton's niece, Dorothy Una Ratcliffe or D.U.R. as she was also known, received many communications from north country men and women of letters asking her if she would engage her uncle's help in buying and keeping the manuscript in Yorkshire (Figure 10.2). Dorothy was mar-

2 *Catalogue of The Towneley Mysteries and The York Missal, the property of the late Sir Edward F. Coates … 8th of February, 1922* (London: Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge, 1922). Until the 1970s, scholars dated the manuscript to the fifteenth century or earlier. Scholars now tend to believe that the manuscript was produced in the mid-sixteenth century. See Alexandra F. Johnston, "The Towneley Plays: Huntington Library, MS HM 1," in *Early British Drama in Manuscript*, ed. Tamara Atkin and Laura Estill (Turnhout: Brepols, 2019), 55–70.

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ried to Lord Brotherton's nephew and heir, Charles. Lord Brotherton was a widower and Dorothy, a writer and poet with a deep interest in English literature, assisted him with his public duties, acting as Lady Mayoress when he was Lord Mayor of Leeds. The Town Clerk of Wakefield also wrote to Lord Brotherton directly suggesting a subscription list be opened to secure the manuscript. Lord Brotherton had also been mayor of Wakefield, as well as its Member of Parliament, and matters to do with the city were close to his heart.

Dorothy recounted what happened next in her address to the Council of the University of Leeds some ten years later.[3] On February 7, 1922, Lord Brotherton and Dorothy went to London and visited Julius Gilson, Keeper of the Manuscripts at the British Museum. They learned that the Museum, although keen to acquire the Towneley manuscript, could not afford to bid more than £1,400. On February 8, Lord Brotherton, Gilson, and Dorothy consulted with Edmund Dring of Quaritch the booksellers and they decided that Dring should bid up to £1,400 on behalf of the British Museum. If that did not secure the manuscript, Dring would then bid up to £3,250 on behalf of Lord Brotherton. He did not advise paying any more.

At the auction things did not go as planned. The dealer Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach of Philadelphia was in the room, acting on behalf of the Californian millionaire Henry Huntington.[4] The bidding rose, reaching the agreed limit of £3,250. Dring put up one more bid—another £100—in a final, desperate attempt to secure the manuscript for Lord Brotherton, but Rosenbach was undeterred, and the hammer eventually fell at £3,400. The manuscript is now HM 1 in the Huntington Library in California (see Figure 3.1).

On seeing his niece-in-law's disappointment (which was echoed in the regional press),[5] Lord Brotherton promised to take Dorothy to Quaritch and ask Dring to help them choose another book. They selected a fine and perfect copy of Andrew Marvell's *Miscellaneous Poems*, a first edition printed in 1681. Marvell was a Yorkshireman and a Member of Parliament for Hull, facts that would not have been lost on Lord Brotherton. This book was to become the first volume in the Brotherton Collection.

Dorothy described how initially she and her uncle "played many a spirited game of Long Auction Bowls," frequenting auction houses and visiting bookshops across the country, but they soon realized they did not have the specialist knowledge or understanding of commercial values to build up a great library.[6] In 1923 Lord Brotherton engaged the help of John Alexander Symington, the son of a local second-hand bookseller John Simpson Symington. Lord Brotherton had taken a liking to the young man

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3 Dorothy Una Ratcliffe, *Statement to the Council of the University of Leeds concerning the Brotherton Library* (Leeds: Brotherton Library, 1933).

4 See Edwin Wolf II and John F. Fleming, *Rosenbach: A Biography* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1960), 155. Thanks to Danielle Magnusson for sharing details of her findings in the Huntington Library archives, including letters and telegrams from Rosenbach to Huntington updating him on the quest for the Towneley manuscript.

5 "Wakefield Mysteries," *The Yorkshire Post*, February 9, 1922, 6; "The Towneley MS," *The Sheffield Daily Independent*, February 10, 1922, 3.

6 Ratcliffe, *Statement*, 3.

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when he visited Symington Senior's shop early in his book-collecting career.[7] On inquiring who was behind a scrapbook compilation entitled *Old Leeds*, he was introduced, serendipitously, to the owner's son. The older man soon appointed the young Symington as his personal librarian, with Dorothy's approval.

The pace at which they bought material was quite staggering. By 1930, the year of Lord Brotherton's death, the collection contained over thirty-five thousand books and pamphlets, four thousand deeds, thirty thousand letters and four hundred other manuscripts, an acquisition rate of approximately thirty items every day for eight years. They looked out for specific items they wanted to buy as well as purchasing whole libraries when they came up at auction.

Brotherton and Symington were keen that the library should contain examples of fine illuminated manuscripts from the Middle Ages. When the London bookseller Charles Sawyer sent an advance listing of the latest medieval manuscripts he had for sale, Brotherton bought the whole lot in one audacious move. The original Sawyer list survives in the collections at the University Library in Leeds, dismantled, pasted onto new leaves and rebound as one of the Brotherton Collection catalogues. This is no doubt the work of Symington since it bears his notes and annotations. In one swoop Brotherton had added fine examples of medieval manuscripts from France, Germany, the Low Countries, and Italy to his collection.[8]

The level of Brotherton's involvement in the day-to-day work of amassing his library is questionable. In a letter to Symington written in 1932 Dorothy acknowledged Symington's expertise but suggested that she was the collector with the passion for beautiful books and that her uncle's primary role was to supply the funds for acquisitions.[9]

Regardless of who was driving the collecting activity, by the middle of the 1920s Brotherton and Symington had gathered a large and important collection of manuscript and print items. In 1926 Symington wrote a guide to the art and literature held at Roundhay Hall, Brotherton's home in north Leeds, and made clear in the introduction that it included only a few of the most special items in the collection—and that the catalogue itself, even at this stage, ran to over thirty volumes.[10] Symington clearly took his cataloguing work very seriously, creating lengthy typewritten cards that were bound into loose-leaf binders and marked on the spine with the relevant sub-collection.

Symington's catalogue records are often extravagant and hyperbolic, and not always scholarly. For example, in a later publication, he reproduced, without attribution, sections of text from Samuel Leigh Sotheby's catalogue written for the sale of the Kloss

7 John Smurthwaite, *The Life of John Alexander Symington, Bibliographer and Librarian, 1887–1961: A Bookman's Rise and Fall* (Lewiston: Mellen, 1995), 10.

8 The first medieval manuscript acquired by the University Library in 1925 was *Le Manuel des péchés*, an Anglo-Norman didactic verse treatise. It was presented by a group of local benefactors, one of whom was none other than Lord Brotherton.

9 Smurthwaite, *Life of John Alexander Symington*, 11.

10 J. Alexander Symington, *Roundhay Hall: the Library of Col. Sir Edward Allen Brotherton Bart., LL. D.* (Leeds: privately printed, 1926).

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library in 1835 and a related monograph published in 1840.[11] Symington stated that Brotherton's copy of the works of Ovid printed in Parma in 1477 was "of particular interest as an association book, in that it originally belonged to Philipp Melanchthon, the great reformer, whose profuse and clever sketches appear in the margin."[12] An examination of the evidence in the incunabulum reveals that this was not the case: the drawings and annotations are the work of Oswald von Eck, who doodled in the margins as a student in Ingolstadt in the 1540s.

Brotherton welcomed researchers and other interested people to Roundhay Hall to look at his collection, all the while considering what he might eventually do with his ever-growing library of rare books and manuscripts. He and Symington met with other collectors and librarians, and after conversations with Mr. Wise of the Ashley Library and Dr. Henry Guppy of the John Rylands Library in Manchester, Brotherton decided that his ambition was to create a library that in years to come could rival not only the Rylands, but the Bodleian in Oxford, the Vatican Library, and the Bibliothèque nationale in Paris.

At the same time, different conversations were happening at the University of Leeds which had a significant storage issue with its own collection of books. The library had outgrown its accommodation situated under the Great Hall, and books were scattered in around fifty different locations across the sprawling campus. The University needed new facilities urgently, and an ambitious plan modelled on the reading room of the British Museum had been drawn up. The plan, with its grand circular reading room (slightly larger than the one at the British Museum, in a daring show of Yorkshire bravado) and marble pillars was spectacular, but the question was, where could the university find the £100,000, to realize their ideas?

In 1927 the Vice-Chancellor of the university was Sir James B. Baillie. He knew that Lord Brotherton was a keen supporter of the University and he decided to ask him for the entire amount. Brotherton had been a generous philanthropist throughout his life, and after some persuasion, he agreed to fund the whole operation. On June 24, 1930, there was a ceremony at which Brotherton himself laid the foundation stone. At the ceremony he made a statement in which he outlined his ambitions for the library that was to bear his name:

> As one who has spent the greater part of his life in Yorkshire, I am proud of our County; as a citizen of Leeds, I am proud of the city, and I believe in giving our young people the best chance to make its future even better than its past. I like to think that all students will have the opportunity to wander freely through the rooms of a great library. But a great library in a great University is a trust for the Nation at large, and should not be looked upon as exclusively available for its own students. I hope that in the course of time, this library building may

11 J. Alexander Symington, *The Brotherton Collection: A Catalogue of Ancient Manuscripts and Early Printed Books Collected by Edward Allen Baron Brotherton of Wakefield* (Leeds: privately printed, 1931).

12 Symington, *Brotherton Collection*, 87.

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> be rich enough in books of all kinds to attract scholars from all parts of Great Britain and from countries abroad.[13]

He concluded his statement by confirming that in addition to the money he would give for the building of the library, his desire was that his collection of rare books and manuscripts would also be housed therein and that this would be "held by the university in perpetual trust for the nation." Furthermore, he would endow the collection, to allow it to be accessed and developed.

The laying of the foundation stone was Lord Brotherton's last public appearance. In September 1930 he fell ill, and on October 21, 1930, he died. His magnificent library was built and in 1935 the collection was officially handed over to the library. On October 6, 1936, the Brotherton Library was opened, with the wood-panelled Brotherton Room as a designated space for his collection.

During the intensive eight year collecting spree from 1922 until his death in 1930, English literature, and particularly seventeenth-century English drama became a priority for Brotherton, Dorothy, and Symington. It comes as no surprise that they added copies of each of the four seventeenth-century Shakespeare folios to their collection, but that they achieved the "Holy Grail of book collecting" in only four years between 1922 and 1926 is quite extraordinary. Brotherton bought his copy of the First Folio in 1924 from a major American book dealer (and competitor of Rosenbach), Gabriel Wells.

Wells had purchased the First Folio in 1922 (for $9,500) at an auction in the Anderson Galleries, New York, from a sale titled "The Splendid Library of the late Theodore N. Vail of New York."[14] Vail had died in 1920. As Head of the American Bell Telephone Company (later AT&T), he had overseen a communications revolution that established the telephone as a necessity of everyday life, instituting phone services between New York and San Francisco by 1915, and America and Europe a year later. Vail's biographer Albert Paine described his "collector's love of books" and "tendency to buy generously when he was in the mood—by wholesale, so to speak—it being always easier to buy two pictures than one, and collections of bric-a-brac rather than a single piece."[15] Vail himself said "I don't understand my fad for collecting...if I ever get rich enough I am going to have a collection of a curious sort. I am going to have the finest example of each kind of art in the world."[16] The First Folio was presumably acquired as part of this plan.

The Second, Third, and Fourth folios in the Brotherton Collection all have a northern English provenance. The Brotherton copy of the Second Folio was once in the library of the mill owner and book collector Sir Thomas Brooke at Armitage Bridge, three

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13 Lord Brotherton's speech at the laying of the foundation stone to the Brotherton Library is quoted in *The Brotherton Collection of Books and Manuscripts* (Leeds: Brotherton Library, 1936), 7–8.

14 "Shakespeare Folio is Sold for $9,500," *NYT*, May 6, 1922, 11; Victor Gray, *Bookmen: London: 250 Years of Sotheran Bookselling* (London: Sotheran, 2011), 261.

15 Albert Bigelow Paine, *In One Man's Life: Being Chapters from the Personal and Business Career of Theodore N. Vail* (New York: Harper, 1921), 176.

16 Paine, *In One Man's Life*, 334.

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miles south of Huddersfield. Brooke owned copies of all four Shakespeare folios and bequeathed them to his younger brother Sir John Arthur Brooke who was also a director of Armitage Bridge Mills. His library was auctioned by Sotheby's, London, in May–June 1921, a year before Lord Brotherton started his own collection.[17]

Lord Brotherton's copy of the rare Third Folio had two previous Yorkshire owners, the first being Christopher Coleby (d. 1727), Rector of Middleham, Wensleydale. In 1774 his widow Margaret gave it to Jo[h]n Yarker (possibly of Leyburn, North Yorkshire, who died in 1813). The first few pages of its text of *The Tempest* contains detailed marginal notes, markings and underlinings, perhaps for a performance of the play. This copy also has a contemporary binding in calf whereas the other three folios have been rebound in red goatskin with elaborate gold-tooling. Finally, Brotherton's copy of the Fourth Folio bears the Bewick-style bookplate of Dr. John Cresswell of Rothbury House in Heaton near Newcastle. It is hard not to wonder about the motivations and emotions of collectors and the excitement they might have felt on securing such magnificent items for their libraries. The manuscript that began Lord Brotherton's great book-buying adventure, the Wakefield Mystery plays, of such significance to Yorkshire and the place Brotherton had been mayor, ended up in California. It must have given the entrepreneur great satisfaction to have played his part in repatriating one of the most important and influential printed books in English literary history, Shakespeare's First Folio, from New York to Yorkshire.

Unfortunately, Symington does not seem to have kept any sort of detailed accession records, or if he did they are not now part of the collections at Leeds. As a result there is still much work to be done on Lord Brotherton and Symington and their collecting methods. Many of the early print items do, however, contain cuttings from auction catalogues and other evidence of provenance, and one can see that they were purchasing entire libraries as they came up for auction as well as cherry-picking fine examples of medieval manuscripts and annotated incunabula at sales. Brotherton's ambitions for the future of his library show him to be a man of purpose and vision, and his importance as a collector during the early twentieth century should not be overlooked.

The transfer of the collection to the University in the 1930s following Lord Brotherton's death did not go well for Symington. This self-taught bibliophile was not respected by the professional librarians at the University of Leeds and negotiations between Dorothy, her now-estranged husband Charles, and the University were fraught. Lord Brotherton was taken ill suddenly in the autumn of 1930 and had not updated his will to reflect the wishes described in his speech as he laid the foundation stone for the library he hoped would house his collection. Symington did ultimately become Keeper of the Collection at the University Library and continued to curate the vast holdings, but he was dismissed from his post in 1938 following a scandal.

There is certainly evidence of some very opaque dealing between Symington and others. For example a letter written in 1947 from Symington to the head of the Library of

17 *Catalogue of the Valuable and Extensive Library of the Late Sir John Arthur Brooke, Bt.…May 25th, 1921* (London: Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge, 1921).

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Congress Music Division, Harold Spivacke, suggests that Symington may have removed material from the Brotherton Collection and sold it to the Library of Congress for his own personal gain.[18] Rutgers University Library in New Jersey has on its shelves the John Alexander Symington Collection of original manuscripts and correspondence. The collection arrived in three consignments in 1948, seventeen cases in all, purchased directly from Symington in a sale secured by Leslie A. Marchand who, in an article written later that year, described the whole acquisition process with great zeal.[19]

Is it simply coincidence that the writers represented therein almost completely duplicate the English literature holdings of the Brotherton Collection in Leeds? Lord Brotherton is unlikely to have understood the importance of keeping collections together and may well have given Symington permission to remove large portions of material to enhance his own personal library, but in the words of Symington's biographer, "the balance of probability is that Symington, realizing that only he had full knowledge of the Collection's contents, simply helped himself."[20]

Regardless of what may have happened to some of his acquisitions after his death, Brotherton's bequest can be seen as the foundation collection of what we now know as Special Collections at the University of Leeds. There were already some rare books and manuscripts in the University Library, but the sheer size of the Brotherton Collection meant the University now had a very substantial collection of rare and unique material. Brotherton's generosity established the University of Leeds Library as a suitable final home for many other important private collections. Individuals like Blanche Legat Leigh, formerly Lady Mayoress of Leeds, donated her exceptional collection of historic cookery books and manuscripts in 1939, including several rare incunabula.[21] In the same year Harold Whitaker of Halifax presented his collection of maps, atlases, and road books to the Library, a collection at the time considered the most valuable of its kind in private hands.[22]

More recently, significant organizations and institutions have deposited their collections with the University Library for safekeeping. Special Collections at Leeds looks after the Ripon Cathedral Library with its magnificent collection of medieval manuscripts, including a thirteenth-century Bible, and the Ripon Cathedral Dean and Chapter Archive. Books and extensive archival and manuscript material from the Yorkshire Archaeological and Historical Society are lodged with Special Collections, including the

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18 This letter, and the sale by Symington of a portion of a substantial collection of material relating to the composer Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy (the rest of which remains in the Brotherton Collection at Leeds), is discussed in Ralf Wehner, "'There is probably no better living authority on Mendelssohn's Autograph:' W. T. Freemantle und seine Mendelssohn-Sammlung," *Mendelssohn-Studien* 16 (2009): 139–86.

19 Leslie A. Marchand, "The Symington Collection," *The Journal of the Rutgers University Library* 12.1 (December 1948): 1–15.

20 Smurthwaite, *Life of John Alexander Symington*, 119.

21 "Two Gifts to Leeds," *The Yorkshire Post*, November 16, 1939, 4.

22 "Gift to Leeds University: Maps on Playing Cards," *The Yorkshire Post and Leeds Mercury*, December 28, 1939, 3.

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Court Rolls of the Manor of Wakefield. As a result of these and many other donations, acquisitions, and deposits, the wider holdings of Special Collections at Leeds now stand at over 300,000 printed items, hundreds of thousands of manuscripts and pieces of archival material, as well as artworks, coins, and museum objects. Five of the collections at Leeds have been awarded Designated status by the Arts Council England, identifying and celebrating them as being of international significance.

The English Literature collection was accorded Designated status in 2005, and Lord Brotherton's books and manuscripts are at its heart. Had Dring been able to secure the Towneley manuscript for Lord Brotherton on February 7, 1922, he may never have bought another rare book. As the University of Leeds marks the hundredth anniversary of the Brotherton Collection, it seems fitting to acknowledge Dr. Rosenbach, the "Terror of the Auction Room," for his tenacity in the face of competitive bidding on behalf of a distinguished honorary Yorkshireman.[23]

23 Wolf and Fleming, *Rosenbach: A Biography*, 190.

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Chapter 11

BECOMING A GENTLEMAN COLLECTOR

ALFRED CHESTER BEATTY'S INFLUENCE ON CALOUSTE SARKIS GULBENKIAN'S MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION

KAREN DESLATTES WINSLOW

MANUSCRIPT COLLECTING IS often characterized as something done by individuals or families and as a competitive process, symbolized by the "battles" of the auction room. However, friendships can also shape collections, as demonstrated by the thirty-year relationship between fellow bibliophiles Calouste Sarkis Gulbenkian and Sir Alfred Chester Beatty. Correspondence in the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation documents the unusual (for the time) collecting friendship between Beatty and Gulbenkian. Professionally, Gulbenkian focused on the growing oil industry in the first half of the twentieth century, especially in the Middle East after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, while Beatty concentrated on copper mining. Gulbenkian's customary percentage for negotiating deals was five percent, a practice that earned him the nickname "Mr Five Percent," while Beatty was called the "King of Copper."[1] Both men amassed fortunes and devoted much of their spare time to creating remarkable manuscript collections. Today, Gulbenkian's collection is in Lisbon, and Beatty's manuscripts are in Dublin.[2]

1 See Jonathan Conlin, *Mr. Five Per Cent* (London: IPS-Profile Books, 2019); Arthur J. Wilson, *The Life and Times of Sir Alfred Chester Beatty* (London: Cadogan, 1985).

2 For Gulbenkian's manuscript collections, see João Carvalho Dias, ed., *European Illuminated Manuscripts in the Calouste Gulbenkian Collection* (Lisbon: Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, 2020); *The Rise of Islamic Art 1869–1939* (Lisbon: Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, 2019); João Castel-Branco Pereira, *The Collector and his Tastes: Calouste S. Gulbenkian 1869–1955*, trans. Richard Trewinnard (Lisbon: Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, 2006); João Carvalho Dias, *From Paris to Tokyo: Art of the Book in the Calouste Gulbenkian Collection: 19 July to 8 October 2006* (Lisbon: Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, 2006); João Castel-Branco Pereira, "Calouste Gulbenkian: The Collector as Creator," in *'Only the Best' Masterpieces of the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, Lisbon*, ed. Katharine Baetjer and James David Draper (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000), 3–15; Richard Ettinghausen, *Persian Art: Calouste Gulbenkian Collection* (Lisbon: Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 1972); Basil Gray, *L'Art de L'Orient islamique: Collection de la Fondation Calouste Gulbenkian* (Lisbon: Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, 1963). For an overview of Beatty's European and Islamic manuscript collections, see Hyder Abbas, "'We Want Quality and Condition:' The Formation of Chester Beatty's

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Beatty's Islamic collection of over 6,100 items includes some of the earliest known Qur'ans, individual folios of Mughal calligraphy and paintings, Persian manuscripts, and a small group of loose bindings. Beatty significantly culled his European collection during his lifetime. A small collection of twenty-two manuscripts remains, including biblical, liturgical, and devotional books. Gulbenkian's Islamic collection, considerably smaller than Beatty's, includes approximately 175 items, including Qur'ans and Armenian Bibles, manuscripts, single-leaf miniatures, and paintings, and several loose bindings. Gulbenkian's European collection, similar in size to the remains of Beatty's collection, includes twenty-four manuscripts, an incunable, and eleven single leaves and fragments, produced between the twelfth and sixteenth centuries.

When the two men met in 1924, Beatty was the foremost collector of Islamic manuscripts and a leading collector of European illuminated manuscripts. Gulbenkian was showing increasing interest in the same collecting areas. The correspondence between these men reveals a confidential arrangement to ensure they acquired what they wanted for the lowest prices possible. The letters also shed light on the nature of their friendship and Beatty's influence on Gulbenkian's manuscript-collecting strategy. Although Beatty, an American, and Gulbenkian, an Armenian, could be considered outsiders in European manuscript collecting circles, Beatty helped Gulbenkian adapt to the model of a gentleman collector. Both men took up residence in London and did much of their collecting on the London market. Christopher de Hamel noted several criteria for a gentleman collector during the heyday of Henry Yates Thompson's book-collecting activities.[3] First, a gentleman collector always paid ten percent when offering items for auction. Second, he rarely discussed or recorded what he had spent. It was uncouth to sell one's collection while still alive. In particular, a British gentleman collector should never allow his collection to fall into the hands of, as M. R. James famously wrote: "Boches, Jews, and Transatlantics."[4] However, as noted by de Hamel, Yates Thompson broke all the rules of

South Asian Manuscript and Miniature Collection," in *Arts of South Asia: Cultures of Collecting*, ed. Allysa B. Peyton and Katharine Anne Paul (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2019), 95–127; Laura Cleaver, "The Western Manuscript Collection of Alfred Chester Beatty (ca. 1915–1930)," *Manuscript Studies* 2 (2017): 445–82; Charles Horton, "'No Duds!' The Manuscript Trading of Alfred Chester Beatty," *The Book Collector* 65 (2016): 207–34; Charles Horton, *Alfred Chester Beatty: From Miner to Bibliophile* (Dublin: Townhouse, 2003); Brian Patrick Kennedy, "The Collecting Technique of Sir Alfred Chester Beatty," in *Art is My Life: A Tribute to James White*, ed. Brian Patrick Kennedy (Dublin: National Gallery of Ireland, 1996), 107–19; Viola Barrow, "Chester Beatty and his Library," *Dublin Historical Record* 40.4 (1987): 133–42; Richard James Hayes, "Foreword," in *The Chester Beatty Western Manuscripts: Part I…3 December 1968* (London: Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge, 1968), 9–10; Richard James Hayes, "Contemporary Collectors XVIII: The Chester Beatty Library," *The Book Collector* 7 (1958): 253–64.

3 Christopher de Hamel, "Was Henry Yates Thompson a Gentleman?" in *Property of a Gentleman: The Formation, Organisation and Dispersal of the Private Library 1620–1920*, ed. Robin Myers and Michael Harris (Winchester: St. Paul's Bibliographies, 1991), 77–87.

4 The comment is made in a letter from M. R. James, Bloomington, Indiana University, Lilly Library, Thompson, H. Y. MSS 1917–1922, No. 2. See also J. Q. Bennett, "Portman Square to New Bond Street, or, How to Make Money Though Rich," *The Book Collector* 16 (1967): 325–26.

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a gentleman collector, setting the stage for a new definition for future generations of book-collectors.

When Beatty and Gulbenkian entered the London scene, being commercially focused was less frowned upon in book-collecting circles. However, protocols still existed for interacting with dealers and auction houses, loaning works for exhibitions, and supporting scholars and museum curators. Before meeting Beatty, Gulbenkian routinely asked for discounts when purchasing reference books, refused to pay commissions based on winning bids plus auctioneer's fees, and used bartering techniques with dealers to cull his collection of unwanted items.[5] These were not the activities of a classic gentleman collector. Beatty may have wanted to share the fundamentals of a gentleman book collector, a role he had mastered with Sydney Cockerell's help.[6] While sharing one's insight is certainly a gentlemanly thing to do, the correspondence highlights that Beatty's desire to limit competition for the books he wanted most was also a motivating factor in pursuing a relationship with Gulbenkian.

A Collecting Friendship

In 1932, eight years into their friendship, Gulbenkian outlined how he thought his collection differed from Beatty's in a letter to Frederic Sutherland Ferguson at Quaritch Ltd. Gulbenkian viewed Beatty as a scientific collector who wanted to have all eras in his collection.[7] In contrast, Gulbenkian declared that his goal "had always been" to have a small number of works of the highest quality and best periods. He clarified that this meant works from the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries, with beautiful miniatures in perfect condition. While Gulbenkian was probably referring to his European manuscripts, based on an analysis of his purchases, this was not his strategy for any part of his collection before meeting Beatty in 1924.

Gulbenkian's first recorded Islamic book art purchase was a seventeenth-century Qur'an in a lacquered flap binding decorated in flowers.[8] The work, previously owned by British Army officer William Brereton, was plundered from the Emperor of China's palace in 1860. Other than its spoils-of-war provenance, nothing is extraordinary about this Qur'an. Gulbenkian waited seven years before purchasing his second manuscript,

5 Bernard A. Quaritch to Calouste Gulbenkian, December 16, 1912, CGF, LDN60; Gulbenkian to G. J. Demotte, November 5, 1914, CGF, LDN69; Hagop Kevorkian to Gulbenkian, April 5, 1917, CGF, LDN118.

6 Cleaver, "Western Manuscript Collection," 445–47.

7 "Comme vous le savez, je ne suis pas, comme M. Beatty, un collectionneur scientifique ayant en vue de posséder toutes les époques dans sa collection. Mon but a toujours été de n'avoir qu'un nombre très restraint d'ouvrages de la plus haute qualité et des meilleures époques. Pour être plus précis, je me limite du XIVè au XVIè siècle pour les ouvrages avec très belles miniatures de la plus parfaite conservation." Gulbenkian to F. S. Ferguson, March 23, 1932, London, Bernard Quaritch Ltd. Archives.

8 LA155, purchased July 18, 1900, Christie's sale: lot 144, Reference A7.14.6. CGF, Inventory of manuscripts 1957, MCG01937. See also Dias, *Paris to Tokyo*, 39.

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a collection of Persian poems.[9] Most of his purchases between 1900 and 1918 were Qur'ans, frontispieces from Qur'ans, and a few loose-leaf paintings. Initially, he mostly purchased from dealers; however, by 1921, he had settled on a few go-betweens, mainly of Armenian descent, to bid on his behalf at important auctions. His purchases were also becoming more varied, with increased interest in single-leaf paintings and important manuscripts, some from the Mughal Imperial Library. However, many items were newer than the sixteenth century.[10]

Until 1919, Gulbenkian had shown no interest in European manuscripts. Indeed, in 1909, Joseph Duveen noted Gulbenkian's lack of interest: "The only thing I bought there was a missal by Gerard David, one of the most wonderful things I have ever seen but it is no interest to *you* of course."[11] However, a month before the first Yates Thompson sale on June 3, 1919, Gulbenkian asked E. H. Dring of Quaritch for his thoughts on the best manuscripts in the collection.[12] A year later, Gulbenkian approached Belle da Costa Greene to determine whether a plan existed to sell any of the manuscripts acquired before Pierpont Morgan's death in 1913.[13]

In January 1923, Beatty wrote to Gulbenkian, enclosing a letter of introduction from their mutual acquaintance Hermann Marx.[14] In his letter, Beatty wrote "If at any time you would like to see some of my books, it will give me great pleasure to show them to you." His reasons for wanting to meet Gulbenkian were probably three-fold. Beatty probably sincerely desired to show his collection to Gulbenkian as a fellow collector. Due to Gulbenkian's recent flurry of acquisitions, he may also have wanted to better understand Gulbenkian's interests to avoid bidding against each other and keep prices low. Beatty may have also wanted to meet Gulbenkian to explore potential business opportunities.[15]

The first indication of a meeting is a brief letter followed by a telegram sent by Beatty to Gulbenkian on December 27, 1923.[16] Beatty was coming to Paris and hoped to see Gulbenkian's treasures and items he was considering for purchase. By March 1924,

9 Reiza Khan Monif to Gulbenkian, November 26, 1907, CGF, MCG02155.

10 At least seventeen items Gulbenkian purchased during this time dated from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, including (in order of purchase): LA155, LA176, M50, LA179, M60, LA154, parts of M44, LA162, LA191, R24, LA163, binding of LA177, M9, M7, M16, M15, possibly M12, and M11, CGF, Inventory of manuscripts 1957.

11 Joseph Duveen to Gulbenkian, April 1, 1909, CGF, LDN93.

12 E. H. Dring to Belle da Costa Greene, June 11, 1920, PML, Morgan Archives, 156438. Gulbenkian acquired two manuscripts during the first Yates Thompson auction using the intermediary Devgantz: *Consolation de la philosophie* by Boethius, ca. 1450–1460 (LA136) and *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* (RVF), *Triumphi* by Petrarch, ca. 1468–1470 (LA1299). See "A Passion for Illumination: European Illuminated Manuscripts in the Calouste S. Gulbenkian Collection," December 4, 2020, https://gulbenkian.pt/museu/en/articles/a-passion-for-illumination/, accessed May 12, 2023.

13 Dring to Greene, June 11, 1920.

14 Alfred Chester Beatty to Gulbenkian, January 11, 1923, CGF, LDN1169.

15 Conlin, *Mr. Five Per Cent*, 177–78.

16 Beatty to Gulbenkian, December 27, 1923, CGF, LDN500.

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Gulbenkian and Beatty had become friendly.[17] Their meeting in January went well, and they were trying to arrange for their wives to meet. Gulbenkian wanted Beatty's opinion about a Book of Hours he was considering for purchase. Beatty praised the manuscript with heraldic devices, comparing the borders to a manuscript made for the Medici recently listed in the Yates Thompson sale. He concluded his letter to Gulbenkian by sharing his approach for valuing manuscripts: beautiful things in limited supply will go up in value, and excellent provenance is worth at least £500.[18] Beatty added that cropped pages take away from a book's appearance, as does inconsistency in skill level when more than one artist was involved.

Over the next several years, Beatty shared more criteria for evaluating European and Islamic manuscripts as he assumed the mentor role in the relationship. In mid-April 1924, Gulbenkian began corresponding with the dealer Joseph Baer & Co. of Frankfurt concerning a Book of Hours once owned by Henry VIII.[19] Baer believed the manuscript was a "really quite exceptional work by a first-class artist" and not an "Atelier book."[20] When Gulbenkian asked Beatty about the manuscript, Beatty responded "I think it is a coarse and poor example of a poor period, and neither myself nor my friend at the Museum would recommend you buy it."[21] His friend was probably Eric Millar at the British Museum, who assisted Beatty with his western manuscript collection.[22]

In May 1924, Beatty asked Gulbenkian to inform the dealer Fredrik Robert Martin that he was not interested in a manuscript.[23] Beatty's wife, Edith, was planning to give it to Beatty as a present, and he suspected Martin was playing them off each other to get a "big price." This correspondence is the first hint that one of Beatty's motivations for forming a friendship with Gulbenkian was to keep costs low. Similarly, in late 1926, Gulbenkian and Beatty were presented with a Persian manuscript by Mir Ali, "the greatest calligrapher of Persia," with miniatures attributed to Behzād, offered by the US-based dealer Ali-Kuli Khan.[24] Beatty thought Khan's price was ridiculous.[25] He also suggested that Gulbenkian avoid the deal worrying that interest by either of them would cause Khan to increase the price further.[26]

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17 Beatty to Gulbenkian, March 31, 1924, CGF, LDN00535.

18 Beatty to Gulbenkian, March 31, 1924.

19 Joseph Baer to Gulbenkian, April 17, 1924, CGF, LDN546.

20 Baer to Gulbenkian, May 23, 1924, CGF, LDN00535.

21 Beatty to Gulbenkian, June 10, 1924, CGF, LDN00535.

22 Cleaver, "Western Manuscript Collection," 461.

23 "I have finally decided to take the Martin manuscript as my wife wants to give it to me as a present and she has offered Sassoon Six hundred guineas for it. Therefore, if you will let Martin know that you are not interested, he will probably close the matter. Personally, I think the price is a very fair one though Martin is trying to play us off one against the other in order to get a big price." Beatty to Gulbenkian, May 15, 1924, CGF, LDN00535. The manuscript in question is not known.

24 Ali-Kuli Khan to W. Gedney Beatty, October 14, 1926, CGF, MCG02663.

25 Beatty to Gulbenkian, November 18, 1926, CGF, LDN00636.

26 "Personally I do not think it is worthwhile following up because the price to my mind is

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In August 1924, Gulbenkian purchased a sixteenth-century Persian manuscript that had been in a British family's collection since 1689.[27] Soon afterwards, he sent it to Beatty for his thoughts on repairing the binding. Beatty responded positively, felt confident his "man" could restore it, and would be happy to coordinate the repair.[28] In November 1926, Gulbenkian considered a late twelfth-century German manuscript for purchase. Beatty discussed the potential purchase with "a friend…from the British Museum…who also had a friend who is an expert on German books."[29] They all agreed it was a fine example of German work but not in the same class as French or English works of the same period. Beatty felt the book was better suited for *his* collection and recommended that Gulbenkian "stick to the manuscripts of a period when the art of the country was at its highest."[30] Ultimately, Gulbenkian followed Beatty's suggestion and relinquished his option on the German manuscript, allowing Beatty to buy it.[31] Not only was Beatty dictating Gulbenkian's collecting focus, but his hesitancy to share the names of his experts and museum friends demonstrated his desire to maintain control of his network of contacts at the start of their relationship.

In October 1924, Gulbenkian again considered purchasing a European manuscript. Beatty suggested he compare the manuscript to another version in the Bibliothèque nationale de France and recommended he only buy it for £5,000–£6,000.[32] Beatty's suggestion that Gulbenkian study the collection at the Bibliothèque nationale was something he did many times himself.[33] Gulbenkian did as instructed and decided that the version in Paris was superior; the manuscript under consideration ultimately went to the Morgan Library in New York.[34]

In October 1928, Beatty and Gulbenkian considered buying manuscripts from the Soviet Union, but they had concerns about the provenance, and the pricing was not

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ridiculous and the trouble is that if we show too much interest, it will simply mean that we put the price up against ourselves." Beatty to Gulbenkian, November 18, 1926.

27 Colnaghi Art Gallery to Gulbenkian, August 27, 1924, CGF, MCG01317. Now LA180.

28 Beatty to Gulbenkian, October 6, 1924, CGF, LDN00535.

29 Beatty to Gulbenkian, November 8, 1926, CGF, LDN00636.

30 Beatty to Gulbenkian, November 8, 1926.

31 Beatty to Gulbenkian, November 18, 1926. The only German manuscript recorded in Beatty's collection purchased in 1926 is W MS 62, Conrad of Saxony, *Speculum Beate Marie Virginis*, acquired at Sotheby's on May 5, 1926 (Brollemann-Mallet sale), lot 155, Cleaver, "Western Manuscript Collection," 474.

32 Beatty to Gulbenkian, October 27, 1924. CGF, LDN00535.

33 Cleaver, "Western Manuscript Collection," 449. "Am having a very interesting time at the Bibliothèque nationale. I am going through their Oriental Collection systematically and seeing practically all the Manuscripts illustrated in Blochet's book." See also Abbas, "We Want Quality and Condition," 99.

34 *Livre de la chasse*, PML, M.1044.

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competitive.[35] Gulbenkian offered to send an expert to explore the origin of the manuscripts and test the dealer's willingness to negotiate. In a follow-up letter, Gulbenkian wrote to Beatty "You know how very much I rely on your comradeship, and I feel sure that by proceeding shoulder to shoulder, we shall ultimately succeed."[36] Beatty agreed with this assessment of the relationship, believing their constant search for perfection, coupled with their unique access to experts (presumably he meant museum employees), ensured the pair would acquire a "fair share of the fine things" at a reasonable price.[37] That same month, Gulbenkian received a Persian manuscript from the dealer Emil Hirsch for inspection. Much to Hirsch's annoyance, Gulbenkian would only decide on the manuscript after receiving Beatty's opinion. Gulbenkian wrote to Beatty, asking, "is this something *we* [my emphasis] should not miss?"[38] Gulbenkian and Beatty almost seemed to be building a single collection, each responsible for their own parts instead of separate ones.

After a few years of correspondence and meetings, Beatty and Gulbenkian had a genuine friendship. They freely discussed European and Islamic manuscripts being auctioned and items they sought for their collection. Each confirmed that the other was not interested in a particular manuscript before buying it and relayed details of their purchases, including prices. For example, in 1926, Beatty wrote to Gulbenkian about a tenth-century Bible which Quaritch had bought for £2,050 and let him have for a commission of 10 percent.[39] Similarly, in 1935 Gulbenkian told Beatty:

> Rosenthal began by asking £3800 and myself basing my counteroffer on the price I had paid for the Ayala Hours (£800), I proposed £1500. At first, Rosenthal refused, but gradually he came down to £1750 and finally, yesterday, we concluded the bargain, and I purchased the book for £1650.[40]

Beatty and Gulbenkian realized these conversations benefited them and gave them an advantage over other collectors.[41] As they became more acquainted with each other's collections, Beatty and Gulbenkian searched for items for each other. When Sir Edward Denison Ross sent Beatty a lacquered mirror, Beatty informed Ross that he did not collect such objects but had a "friend" who did (not mentioning Gulbenkian's name).[42]

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35 "Everybody has been influenced by the great sham campaign of stolen goods about which so much propaganda is being made." Gulbenkian to Beatty, October 4, 1928, CGF, LDN743 or LDN793 (file name is illegible).

36 Gulbenkian to Beatty, October 26, 1928, CGF, LDN743 or LDN793.

37 Beatty to Gulbenkian, August 5, 1925, CGF, LDN00593.

38 Gulbenkian to Beatty, October 30, 1928, CGF, LDN743 or LDN793.

39 Beatty to Gulbenkian, June 9, 1926, CGF, LDN00636.

40 Gulbenkian to Beatty, February 19, 1935, CGF, MCG02160.

41 See Beatty to Gulbenkian September 7, 1925, CGF, LDN00593; Gulbenkian to Beatty, November 30, 1927, CGF, LDN702.

42 Beatty to Ross, December 24, 1925, Chester Beatty Papers, number 1283.

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Becoming a Gentleman Collector

Initially, Beatty and Gulbenkian maintained a low-key friendship, providing opportunities for both men to hear comments about each other. At the beginning of 1925, Beatty wrote to Gulbenkian that a prominent dealer in Cairo was spreading rumours that Gulbenkian had purchased the "MacGregor book for a very big price."[43] Beatty noted "he does not know we are friends." Gulbenkian's reputation may have been another reason Beatty was not keen to advertise the friendship. Four years before the two met, Beatty told Dring that he had never heard anyone say a good word about Gulbenkian.[44] At the time Dring was making remarks about the "extremely mean bullying Armenian financier" to Greene.[45] When Greene inquired about Gulbenkian's reputation, Dring responded "Should you decide to deal with him directly, he is a very disagreeable man to have any transactions with, and if you offer a $100 note for $75, he will offer you $50 for it."[46] Perhaps Beatty's comment was his way of trying to rise above the general gossip and keep an open mind. Nevertheless, Gulbenkian needed public relations assistance to be accepted into the London rare book market, and his reputation was thoroughly sullied amongst the contacts he needed the most.

Ironically, after Gulbenkian met Beatty, and perhaps at Beatty's suggestion, Quaritch became one of Gulbenkian's primary intermediaries at London auctions. Beatty made sure Quaritch represented Gulbenkian well on the auction floor. On one occasion, when Gulbenkian asked Dring to bid on an Armenian Bible, Beatty was concerned the opening offer was too low and recommended Dring start higher, fearing Gulbenkian would lose it.[47]

Beatty also set an example of how Gulbenkian could build goodwill with museum curators by helping improve their holdings. Eleven months after meeting Beatty, Gulbenkian donated three small Indian paintings of the Rajput school to the British Museum.[48] In 1929, Gulbenkian supported the British Museum's campaign to acquire the Luttrell Psalter.[49] He also matched Beatty's donations to help the Museum buy the Bedford Book

43 The letter is dated 1925; however, the only recorded manuscript purchase from the Sir Malcolm MacGregor collection occurred in November 1926. It was for an Armenian Bible (LA152), purchased through Quaritch at Sotheby's (lot 552). The year "1925" appears to be written in a different hand on the letter and may have been added later, erroneously. Beatty to Gulbenkian, February 10, 1925, CGF, LDN00593.

44 E. H. Dring to Belle da Costa Greene, June 11, 1920, PML, Morgan Archives, 156438.

45 Dring to Greene, June 11, 1920.

46 Dring to Greene, June 11, 1920.

47 Beatty to Gulbenkian, November 18, 1926, CGF, LDN00636. Now LA152, acquired in London through Quaritch at Sotheby's November 15, 1926, lot 552, CGF, Inventory of manuscripts 1957.

48 Laurence Binyon to Gulbenkian, December 18, 1924; Binyon to Gulbenkian, December 27, 1924, both CGF, LDN00535.

49 Gulbenkian to Beatty, July 1, 1929, CGF, LDN796; Frederic Kenyon to Gulbenkian, August 23, 1930, CGF, MCG02852.

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of Hours.[50] The two men were recorded as "jointly" giving £1,000 to the fund for both manuscripts.[51]

In 1925, Beatty entered into a joint purchase agreement with the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) to acquire the Minto Album (a set of forty album pages originally part of several imperial Mughal albums), with Beatty donating the single-leaf paintings he did not want to the museum.[52] To create more incentive for the joint purchase, Beatty paid twice the standard commission to Quaritch, who acted as their intermediary in the bidding process.[53] Four years later, Gulbenkian followed Beatty's example: buying coins at auction and presenting half to the British Museum, writing:

> I received a letter from the British Museum asking me to assist them in purchasing coins to the extent of 980 pounds, either in whole or in part. I do not know whether I did something against etiquette, but I replied that I would be willing to buy the lot and present half to them. I thought I would follow your example because, If I'm not wrong, you told me some time ago that you had purchased manuscripts with the V&A, that they had taken part and yourself another part.[54]

Gulbenkian wanted confirmation that he followed the protocol of a gentleman collector navigating relationships with museum curators. Gulbenkian also followed Beatty's example by loaning objects to the 1931 International Exhibition of Persian Art and providing Arthur Upham Pope with colour plates from his collection for *A Survey of Persian Art* (in both instances, Gulbenkian acquiesced reluctantly).[55] Beatty seemed to enjoy sharing his gentleman collector know-how with such a teachable and appreciative student as Gulbenkian, who readily applied his learning and mirrored Beatty's actions at every turn.

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50 J. Theys to Kenyon, August 21, 1930, CGF, LDN985.

51 "The Luttrell Psalter and the Bedford Book of Hours," *BMQ* 5.4 (1931): 129.

52 Charles Horton, "Prelude to the Albums – Imperial Splendor: The Mughal Library of Sir Alfred Chester Beatty," in *Muraqqa' Imperial Mughal Albums from the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin*, ed. Elaine Wright, Susan Strong, and Wheeler M. Thackston (Alexandria: Art Services International, 2008), 8; Susan Stronge, *Painting for the Mughal Emperor: The Art of the Book, 1560–1660* (London: Victoria & Albert Museum, 2002), 148–49.

53 Horton, "Prelude to the Albums," 7–8.

54 Gulbenkian to Beatty, July 6, 1929, CGF, LDN796.

55 Edward Herbert Keeling to Gulbenkian, November 7, 1930; Keeling to Gulbenkian, December 5, 1930 both CGF, MCG01504; Gulbenkian to Arthur Upham Pope, December 31, 1930, CGF, LDN1025; Pope to Gulbenkian, March 4, 1931, CGF, MCG01504 and LDN1087; Gulbenkian to Pope, March 13, 1931, CGF, LDN1087.

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A Cooling Off Period?

In December 1928, the Parisian dealer Ispirian offered Gulbenkian an Indo-Persian astronomical book and an astronomical instrument.[56] Gulbenkian was not interested in the book but thought Beatty might be. Ispirian admitted Beatty had seen the book. Gulbenkian was probably surprised Beatty had not mentioned the manuscript; perhaps Beatty pre-emptively decided it did not meet their exacting conditions. However, Beatty's withholding of this information was an early warning sign that perhaps their relationship was not as transparent as Gulbenkian thought. Gulbenkian continued to write to Beatty, asking for advice, but Beatty did not always respond. He also managed to pass through Paris occasionally without meeting Gulbenkian. Perhaps sensing things were starting to unravel, in July 1929, Gulbenkian wrote to Beatty, thanking him for helping to enrich his manuscript collection.[57] Moreover, now that Beatty was more focused on Islamic manuscripts, he hoped Beatty would have more time and inclination to assist him with his European manuscript collection. In March 1932, Gulbenkian received advance notice from Quaritch that Beatty planned to sell his entire collection of European manuscripts.[58] Five days later, Gulbenkian wrote to Ferguson at Quaritch requesting details about the collection. Gulbenkian acknowledged his friendship with Beatty and his knowledge of the collection, but he had never examined the collection with the eyes of a buyer.[59] Gulbenkian probably thought it was odd that Beatty had not mentioned his plans to sell his European manuscripts. Nevertheless, Gulbenkian wrote to Beatty, offering to host an exhibition of the collection, and commenting that there were some big buyers in Paris.[60]

On three separate occasions in 1935–1936, Gulbenkian asked Beatty's opinion about Islamic items he was considering for purchase. Beatty felt the large Persian miniature of a queen undergoing a caesarean operation was a "little tired and not worth adding to his fine specimens."[61] In response to Gulbenkian's concerns about a manuscript that might have later added miniatures, Beatty felt many of the pages were perfect and the manu-

56 Ispirian to Gulbenkian, December 19, 1928, CGF, LDN743 or LDN793.

57 Gulbenkian to Beatty, July 1, 1929, CGF, LDN796.

58 In a later dated letter, Gulbenkian mentioned he received a letter from Ferguson dated March 18 announcing the sale. Gulbenkian to Ferguson, March 23, 1932, Quaritch Archives.

59 "Je connais un peu la collection de M. Chester Beatty, mais je ne l'ai jamais examiné avec des yeux d'acquéreur ; ma connaissance est donnée imparfaite, et je vous serais très obligé de me dire quels sont les livres que vous croyez pouvoir m'intéresser." Gulbenkian to Ferguson, March 23, 1932.

60 "Vous ne m'avez rien dit de vos intentions de vous défaire de vos beaux manuscrits. J'ai reçu les avis précurseurs et des offres de service, de divers côtés. Il me semble que ce serait une bonne chose à l'instar des Allemands, de faire un petite Exposition à Paris, avant l'exposition de Londres. Comme vous savez, il y a quelques gros acheteurs à Paris, et cela jetterait peut-être un nouvel éclat en tant que publicité. Si je puis vous être utile en quelque chose, je suis tout à votre disposition." Gulbenkian to Beatty, March 25, 1932, CGF, LDN1103.

61 Beatty to Gulbenkian, May 17, 1935, CGF, PRS361.

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script was "well worth buying."[62] He suggested Gulbenkian dismember the manuscript and keep only the choice folios, a practice he also employed.[63] For the final manuscript, Beatty responded "the binding is of no value at all, and you have such a perfect collection that I would be very sorry to see you put it with others."[64] Beatty seemed open to advising Gulbenkian, but he almost always discouraged him from adding to his collection. Significantly, Beatty was buying an enormous quantity of Islamic material at the time and told his librarian about the ease of purchasing Rajput and Indian paintings in Cairo.[65] However, in a letter to Gulbenkian, Beatty jokingly assured him not to worry—he had not found any Behzāds or European manuscripts in Paris, Turkey, or London.[66] Another time, when Beatty was on holiday in Cairo, he wrote to Gulbenkian "I suppose by the time I return; you will have bought up the fleeting supply of MSS in Europe."[67] In the same letter, Beatty downplayed the availability of manuscripts in Cairo:

> Here there does not seem to be very much. The Persian MSS I have seen here are all rubbish; many of them have new miniatures. I have one nice Arabic MSS, not very important, simply calligraphy with two miniatures at the beginning, the date about 1400. It would not interest you as you are not collecting that kind of MSS.
>
> PS. There are some very elaborate fake sixteenth-century Persian Bindings in the market here.[68]

This friendly banter demonstrated that while Beatty misled Gulbenkian about the availability of manuscripts in Cairo, he also viewed him as a rival for items back home. Most interesting is the evaluation of what Gulbenkian purchased before and after he met Beatty (Figure 11.1). After meeting Beatty, Gulbenkian's collecting focused on bindings and frontispieces from Qur'ans and Armenian Bibles. Single-leaf paintings and calligraphy, areas of focus for Beatty, are almost absent from Gulbenkian's later purchases.

On May 27, 1941, Gulbenkian's representative in London, Avetoom Hacobian, wrote to Beatty, asking his opinion about an upcoming sale of Persian and Indian miniatures and manuscripts.[69] Still waiting for a reply, Hacobian sent a second letter on June 5.[70] Beatty and his acting secretary attempted to call Hacobian several times, but telephone

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62 Beatty to Gulbenkian, September 5, 1935, CGF, MCG02641.

63 Catherine Yvard, "Minute Masterpieces: Study of a Late Fifteenth-Century French Book of Hours CBL WMs 89," 2 vols. (PhD thesis, Trinity College Dublin, 2005), 1:24; Sheila Powerscourt, *Sun Too Fast* (London: Bles, 1974), 220; Horton, "'No Duds!,'" 216.

64 Beatty to Gulbenkian, May 1, 1936, CGF, MCG02219.

65 Abbas, "We Want Quality and Condition," 114.

66 Beatty to Gulbenkian, November 25, 1924, CGF, LDN00535.

67 Beatty to Gulbenkian, February 10, 1925, CGF, LDN00593.

68 Beatty to Gulbenkian, February 10, 1925.

69 Avetoom Hacobian to Beatty, May 27, 1941, CGF, LDN2100.

70 Hacobian to Beatty, June 5, 1941, CGF, LDN2100.

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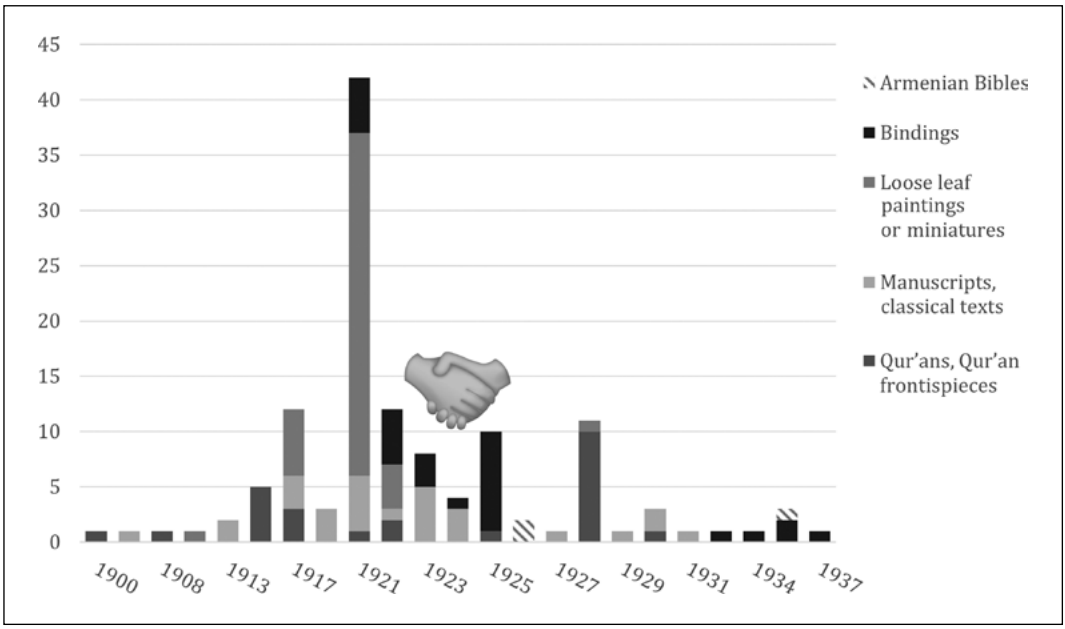


Figure 11.1. Calouste Gulbenkian's Collecting Strategy Before and After Meeting Alfred Chester Beatty in 1924. Diagram by author.

lines were down due to bombing raids in London.[71] The following day, Beatty's acting secretary F. H. Wright wrote to Hacobian "Mr Beatty greatly regrets he is not in a position to advise him as he is also a collector of Persian manuscripts and may be a bidder at the sale himself."[72] With Beatty unwilling to advise Gulbenkian, Hacobian turned to Ferguson at Quaritch. Ferguson responded "most of these manuscripts are not, I think, important enough to be considered by Mr Gulbenkian."[73] Whether Ferguson truly believed this to be the case or whether he represented Beatty in the auction is unknown. Nevertheless, the sale revealed that the nature of the advisory relationship between Beatty and Gulbenkian had changed.

In 1942, Gulbenkian considered purchasing farmland in the United Kingdom. Hacobian asked Beatty his thoughts. Beatty responded "I cannot see why Mr Gulbenkian is bothering himself about it; with luck, we will probably be on this planet for about another ten years. If he and I could carry our savings to the next world, then there might be some argument in favour of his suggested project."[74] Gulbenkian did not pursue the farmland idea. Instead, Gulbenkian and his wife left France for Lisbon after Russian

71 Hacobian to F. H. Wright, June 6, 1941, CGF, LDN2100.

72 Wright to Hacobian, June 6, 1941.

73 Ferguson to Hacobian, June 7, 1941, CGF, LDN2100.

74 Beatty to Hacobian, January 1, 1942, CGF, LDN2102.

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and British forces' joint occupation of Persia in 1941 had made his diplomatic status in France untenable.[75]

In 1950, Beatty sent a copy of his *Rubyiat* publication to Gulbenkian, writing "I am sorry that our paths do not often cross, as I remember so well our many meetings in Paris."[76] In 1952 when Gulbenkian's wife Nevarte died, Beatty sent a telegram expressing his deepest condolences.[77] Two years later, Gulbenkian sent a telegram of heartfelt congratulations to Beatty for his knighthood.[78] These two telegrams would be the last of the pair's known correspondence, a friendship lasting over thirty years.

While Beatty may have initiated contact with Gulbenkian to form a bidding alliance, the two formed a genuine friendship based on their interest in manuscripts. It was unusual for British gentleman collectors to have such revealing discussions about their collecting strategies—but Beatty and Gulbenkian were not British. Beatty not only served as a mentor to Gulbenkian, but also set an example in the ways of a gentleman collector. Beatty encouraged Gulbenkian to donate items and help fund acquisitions for public museums. Beatty's involvement in the 1931 Persian Art Exhibition may have influenced Gulbenkian's decision to loan items. He also helped Gulbenkian refine his collecting strategy, which conveniently did not include items of interest to Beatty. On several occasions, Gulbenkian stated he was only looking for the highest quality works from the best periods and was not a comprehensive collector like Beatty. He seemingly came to this conclusion with Beatty's encouragement. Gulbenkian was naive about their relationship. He believed they were two men cut from the same cloth—sharing a common pastime and having similar resources to acquire anything they desired. Acquiring manuscripts was easy. Getting them for bargain prices made the quest exciting. However, several hints exist that Beatty liked maintaining the upper hand in the relationship and was not always forthright about his purchases. Several years into their friendship, the letters are much more one-sided, with Beatty responding less frequently.[79] In 1953, Gulbenkian claimed his collection was "always and exclusively guided by his own taste and judgement."[80] And while he admitted seeking advice, he felt his collection was truly his "after my own heart and soul."[81] Whatever guidance Beatty had provided years earlier had become a distant memory.

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75 Conlin, *Mr. Five Per Cent*, 238.

76 Beatty to Gulbenkian, July 25, 1950, CGF, PRS4037.

77 Beatty to Gulbenkian, September 7, 1952, CGF, PRS4037.

78 Gulbenkian to Beatty, December 6, 1954, CGF, PRS4037.

79 Material in the Chester Beatty archives was unavailable during my research and might help to clarify their relationship further.

80 Gulbenkian to John Walker, February 10, 1953, CGF, MCG02324.

81 Gulbenkian to John Walker, February 10, 1953.

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Chapter 12

A PRIVATE LIBRARY AND THE MAKING OF THE MIDDLE AGES IN FLORENCE

PIERO GINORI CONTI'S COLLECTION

MARTINA LANZA

THE HOLDINGS OF the National Library of Florence (Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale), like many historic libraries, are the result of a gradual process of accumulation, which continues today. One of the more recent acquisitions of the National Library is the collection of manuscripts and antiquarian books that belonged to Piero Ginori Conti, Prince of Trevignano. Born in Florence in 1865, Ginori Conti was an important Italian businessman.[1] His wealth came partly from his family and partly from his marriage to Adriana Larderel in 1894.[2] He further increased his wealth by managing the Larderello geothermal company created by Florestano de Larderel, his father-in-law. During the fascist period, Ginori Conti was a senator, consul, and minister of State. His enormous economic potential and political power enabled him to become one of the most important buyers of everything circulating on the Italian and international antiquarian market. In addition to manuscripts, Ginori Conti collected incunabula, *cinquecentine*, paintings, coins, medals, and many archival documents. Moreover, Ginori Conti published studies based on his books. In this way, he shaped his own interpretation of the Middle Ages.

To date, there has been no study of the Ginori Conti library before 1939, the year of the prince's death and subsequent dispersal of part of his collection on the antiquarian market. In order to trace as many manuscripts with Ginori Conti's provenance as possible and identify the ways in which the collection was dispersed, I began my research using the archives of the Manuscripts and Rare Department of the National Library of Florence, which contain important documents for the history of the dispersal of the col-

1 For Piero Ginori Conti's biography, see Fulvio Conti, "Ginori Conti, Piero," in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 55 (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 2000), 43–45.

2 The Ginori Conti family is an old and wealthy Florentine family; the oldest document concerning this family is dated 1304. For the reconstruction of the family history see Luigi Passerini, *Genealogia e storia della famiglia Ginori* (Florence: M. Cellini E C. alla Galileiana, 1876).

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lection.[3] The papers were presented in no particular order, and therefore needed rearranging to reconstruct the various pieces of the story.

The oldest document is dated 1940. On June 1, 1940, the notary Franco Franchi took an inventory of the prince's collection. Ginori Conti's intention had been to establish a foundation in his name that could ensure the preservation and accessibility to scholars of his entire library. However, a clause in his will allowed family members to opt not to create the foundation, and the erosion of the family holdings by the Second World War prompted the dispersal of the collection. During the war years, the books were kept in boxes: first at the bank Cassa di Risparmio of Florence and then in the home of Piero's son, Giovanni Ginori Conti, in Florence. Part of the family's papers reached the Florence State Archive in 1961.[4] These papers mainly concern the administration of the family's farms. There are also registers containing various scholarly writings belonging to the family library. Part of the manuscript collection was donated to the National Library of Florence;[5] coins and medals are kept at the Bargello Museum, and Giuseppe Mazzini's documents were destined for the Istituto per la storia del Risorgimento italiano in Rome. The donation of the manuscripts to the National Library of Florence was the result of lengthy negotiations between 1940 and 1961. The negotiators of the agreement were Alberto Giraldi, director of the National Library of Florence, and Giovanni Ginori Conti. Giraldi, in collaboration with a commission of experts, compiled four lists dividing the possessions according to their cultural but also their economic value.

My study will be limited to manuscripts but, in order to give an overview of the entire holdings, I will briefly list the other valuables in the 1940 inventory. These are 1,432 pieces of gold and coins of various sizes, 3,939 pieces of silver, and 1,348 pieces of copper, a painting by Rembrandt, and one by a member of the Florentine school. In addition, there are premodern books such as incunabula, *cinquecentine*, and rare books of historical interest. These historical books have been variously dispersed. For example, the *Liber cathecumeni* printed in Florence in 1496,[6] went to the National Library, while Francesco Petrarch's *Vite dei Pontefici e Imperatori Romani*, printed in Florence in 1478, is now at Cambridge University Library (sold by the Italian bookseller Carlo Alberto Chiesa).[7] Other examples are the fifty-eight Savonarola incunabula, now in the Württembergische

3 Archivio Manoscritti 42 and Archivio Manoscritti 43.

4 The inventory can be viewed at the Florence State Archives and online at: https://archiviodistatofirenze.cultura.gov.it/asfi/fileadmin/risorse/allegati_inventari_on_line/n442_inventario.pdf, accessed May 12, 2023.

5 The topographical inventory of the Ginori Conti manuscripts in the National Library of Florence can be consulted in Manuscripts and Rare Books Department, Catalogue 77. The transcribed inventory can be viewed on the library's website: www.bncf.firenze.sbn.it/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Inventario-topografico.pdf, accessed May 12, 2023.

6 For a description of the incunabulum, see Piero Scapecchi, ed., *Catalogo degli incunaboli della Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze* (Florence: BNCF, Nerbini, 2017), 273.

7 Chiesa will be discussed in more detail below. See the record on this incunabulum on the "Material Evidence in Incunabula" website: https://data.cerl.org/mei/00561425, accessed May 12, 2023.

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Landesbibliothek in Stuttgart (five of these were also owned by Giuseppe/Joseph Martini, the Italian scholar, collector, and bookseller) and the twenty-nine incunabula in the Staatsbibliothek in Munich (seven of which were also owned by Martini).[8] Many others can be found periodically on the antiquarian market, such as Gaetano Vascellini's *Statute di Firenze parte I*, printed in Florence for Giovanni Chiari in the eighteenth century, present in Pandolfini's catalogue dated November 26, 2018;[9] and Jacopo Passavanti's *Specchio di vera penitentia*, printed in Florence for Bartolomeo de' Libri in 1495 in catalogue forty-seven of the Libreria Antiquaria Mediolanum, Milan.[10] Ginori Conti also owned the first edition of the illustrated Italian book on arithmetic printed in Florence, published ca. 1491 by Lorenzo Morgiani. The latter was included in a Sotheby's catalogue in September 2018 as part of the auction of the library of Erwin Tomash, which reveals that it was owned by Édouard Rahir before Ginori Conti.[11] Ginori Conti probably purchased Rahir's book during the Hoepli auction in 1931 and Tomash bought it at a Christie's auction in 1991.[12] Furthermore, in October 2022 the catalogue of the Florentine auction house Gonnelli featured *Saggi di naturali esperienze fatte nell'Accademia del Cimento* by Lorenzo Magalotti. The book, printed in Venice in 1711, includes Ginori Conti's *ex libris*.[13]

Before the dispersal, Ginori Conti's collection of manuscripts and rare books was divided into four lists by the committee: A, B, C, D. List A contains manuscripts destined for the National Library of Florence. List B comprises manuscripts that the heirs would not be able to sell for a certain period of years. List C includes manuscripts that could also be sold abroad. Finally, List D contains the codices and incunabula that were free of any constraints.[14]

List A corresponds to what is contained in the Ginori Conti Collection of the National Library. This collection consists of several units: a group of 114 letters addressed to Niccolò Machiavelli (Ginori Conti 23); the personal archive of Niccolò Michelozzi, secretary

8 Further information can be found in Edoardo Barbieri, "Il catalogo degli incunaboli di Giuseppe Martini, 1934," in *Da Lucca a New York a Lugano: Giuseppe Martini libraio tra Otto e Novecento. Atti del convegno di Lucca, 17-18 ottobre 2014*, ed. Edoardo Barbieri (Florence: Olschki, 2017), 107–26 at 112–14. What follows will show that some manuscripts belonging to Martini were acquired by Ginori Conti.

9 The book was lot 94 in the auction: *Argenti, numismatica e libri*, November 26, 2018 (Florence: Pandolfini); www.pandolfini.it/it/asta-0276/illustrati-700-vascellini-gaetano-statue-di-.asp, accessed May 12, 2023.

10 The printed book is no. 7 in *Libri antichi e rari, Catalogo 47* (Milan: Libreria Antiquaria Mediolanum), 15–16. The catalogue can be consulted at www.libreriamediolanum.com/catalogo/Catalogo_47.pdf, accessed May 12, 2023.

11 *The Erwin Tomash Library On The History Of Computing*, September 18, 2018 (London: Sotheby's, 2018), www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/2018/the-library-of-erwin-tomash-l18409.html, accessed September 29, 2023.

12 See *Erwin Tomash Library*, lot 98.

13 *Asta 36: Libri, autografi e manoscritti*, October 11–12, 2022 (Florence: Gonnelli, 2022), lot 263, p. 106.

14 I have transcribed these lists and intend to publish them in a forthcoming study.

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of Lorenzo il Magnifico (Ginori Conti 29); and manuscripts and account books from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Some of the manuscripts from list B can be traced, following their sale. For example, List B contains a book of accounts by Lorenzo Ghiberti of 1441. Today, this manuscript is held by the National Library of Florence (Nuove Accessioni 1181), having been acquired at Sotheby's on July 9, 1969.[15] List B also includes the Commentary of Jacopo di Dante Alighieri and others on the *Divina Commedia*.[16] The latter manuscript is the Poggiali-Vernon codex belonging formerly to Gaetano Poggiali, Lord Vernon, Martini, and then to Ginori Conti. In 1964 it was bought by the Frati Minori Conventuali of Ravenna.[17] List B also contains a manuscript that was illuminated as a commission by Alfonso II of Aragon, duke of Calabria, heir to the throne of Naples, around 1470.[18] During the fifteenth century, Alfonso of Aragon's codex belonged to Domenico Mellini, tutor of Piero di Cosimo de' Medici. In the early nineteenth century, it was acquired by Count Gaetano Melzi and later became part of Martini's collection. When this was sold at a Hoepli auction in 1935, the codex became part of the Ginori Conti library. After the dispersal of this part of Ginori Conti's collection, the manuscript was acquired by the Biblioteca della Società Dantesca (Florence, Biblioteca della Società Dantesca Italiana, MS 3).[19]

List C contains thirty-four manuscripts, including codices containing texts by Gregorio Dati, Galileo, and Boccaccio, a thirteenth-century illuminated Antiphonary of the Bolognese school, and 247 autograph manuscript folders by Giuseppe Mazzini.[20] In addition, this list comprises a file of twenty-eight original letters to Cosimo il Vecchio

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15 *Catalogue of Western Manuscripts…Which will be Sold by Auction…9th July, 1969* (London: Sotheby & Co.), lot 40.

16 This codex is described in Piero Ginori Conti, "Il codice dei commenti alla Commedia Poggiali Vernon, oggi Ginori Conti," *Studi danteschi* 23 (1938): 99–105.

17 This manuscript (Centro Dantesco dei Frati Minori Conventuali di Ravenna, MS 1) is described in *Mostra di codici ed edizioni dantesche* (Florence: Sandron, 1965), 95–96n130 bis. Another codex belongning to Lord Vernon, Giuseppe Martini, and Piero Ginori Conti is now Tours, BM, MS 2103.

18 The codex is described by Domenico de Robertis in *All'ombra del lauro: documenti librari della cultura in età laurenziana*, ed. Anna Lenzuni (Milan: Silvana, 1992), 19; and on Mirabileweb: www.mirabileweb.it/manuscript-rom/firenze-biblioteca-della-società-dantesca-italiana-manoscript/LIO_138401, accessed May 12, 2023; and in Tammaro De Marinis, *La biblioteca napoletana dei re d'Aragona*, 4 vols. (Milan: Hoepli, 1947), 2:63–64. In the same volume, the bookseller describes the dedication copy of work by Giannozzo Manetti, *De dignitate et excellentia hominis*, written for Alfonso V of Aragon. De Marinis claimed it belonged to Ginori Conti's collection (p. 105). José Ruysschaert, however, denied that the manuscript belonged to Ginori Conti; José Ruysschaert, "L'envoi au roi Alphonse d'Aragon du 'De dignitate et excellentia hominis' de Giannozzo Manetti," *La Bibliofilía* 73 (1971): 229–34, cited in Jonathan J. G. Alexander and Albina C. de la Mare, *The Italian Manuscripts in the Library of Major J. R. Abbey* (London: Faber and Faber, 1969), 36–38 and table XIV. Manuscript J. A. 3212 belonged to De Marinis who sold it to Professor Federico Patetta. Finally, in 1928 it was purchased at the Hoepli sale by Charles St. John Hornby.

19 The Biblioteca della Società Dantesca Italiana in Florence has two codices of Ginori Conti provenance: MSS 3 and 4.

20 Today these autographs are in the Istituto per la storia del Risorgimento italiano in Rome, Fondo Mazzini—Ginori Conti.

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and letters from Vittorio Alfieri, Ugo Foscolo, Giacomo Leopardi, Vincenzo Borghini, Michelangelo Buonarroti, Antonio Vespucci, and others. Finally, List D contains 189 manuscripts mainly on historical subjects, manuscripts about the fifteenth-century Florentine laws, statutes of merchandise, manuscripts about the Strozzi family of Florence, histories of the Medici family, and others.

According to these lists, Piero Ginori Conti's manuscript collection, including codices, autographs, and letters, consisted of about 1,407 shelfmarked items. Half of the collection is made up of manuscripts on historical subjects (55%) and the other half is made up of manuscripts on literature (28%), religion (2%), account books (2%), science (5%), art (2%), and theatre (6%). A clear marker that distinguishes Ginori Conti's codices is the *ex libris*. This consists of the family coat of arms surmounted by a princely crown and two angels above a view of Florence.[21]

The Missing Codices and the Testimony of Carlo Alberto Chiesa

The missing codices number more than two hundred. I have identified about sixty manuscripts: two codices at the State Archive in Florence (MS Acquisti e doni 359 written by Filippo di Lorenzo Benci,[22] and an eighteenth-century codex, *Il priorista*, with the old shelfmark 107). The Ginori Conti Collection of the State Archive is being inventoried and is currently inaccessible; there may be further Ginori Conti manuscripts there. Other codices identified are Gregorio Dati's History of Florence, now in the Biblioteca Comunale Forteguerriana in Pistoia (Acquisti e doni 6),[23] and one codex in the Biblioteca Roncioniana in Prato (Manoscritti roncioniani, Q.II.7 (85)).[24] The latter is *Storia del Sacro cingolo* (title in List B); this codex belonged to the Florentine bookseller and bibliophile Leo Olschki before it was in the Ginori Conti library and after the dispersal of his collection it was sold to the Biblioteca Roncioniana by the Gonnelli auction house in 1966.[25] Another codex is in a private collection in Prato and five manuscripts are in the Biblioteca Moreniana of

21 The *ex libris* can be found in Egisto Bragaglia, *Gli ex libris italiani: Dalle origini alla fine dell'Ottocento*, 3 vols. (Milan: Bibliografica, 1993), 3:no. 2331.

22 More information about the copyist Lorenzo Benci can be found in Giuliano Tanturli, "I Benci copisti. Vicende della cultura fiorentina volgare fra Antonio Pucci e il Ficino," *Studi di Filologia Italiana* 36 (1978): 197–313. *Catalogue…9th July, 1969*, lot 37. A description of the manuscript is available on Mirabileweb: www.mirabileweb.it/manuscript/firenze-archivio-di-stato-acquisti-e-doni-359-manoscript/179211, accessed May 12, 2023.

23 A description of the manuscript is available at Manus Online: https://manus.iccu.sbn.it/web/manus, accessed May 12, 2023.

24 See Simona Bianchi et al. eds., *Manoscritti Medievali della Toscana 2: I manoscritti medievali della provincia di Prato* (Florence: Regione Toscana, 1999), 40–41n25 and table XX; and Manus Online.

25 *Libri d'occasione, alcuni rari ed incunaboli, testo di lingua del 1389, priorista fiorentino, veneziani del '700, edizioni cominiane, autografi*, December 1965–January 1966 (Florence: Gonnelli, 1965), lot 386, pp. 50–51.

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Florence.[26] These manuscripts were all acquired via Gonnelli. A further volume is in the Biblioteca Nazionale Braidense in Milan.[27] The latter was acquired by the Library in 1925, when Ginori Conti was still alive. Six manuscripts are at the Biblioteca Riccardiana in Florence,[28] and four manuscripts are at the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana.[29] The National Library of Florence acquired five codices of Ginori Conti's provenance from sales at Sotheby's,[30] Gonnelli's,[31] and Christie's. The manuscripts bought from Christie's have the *ex libris* of Giannalisa Feltrinelli (Nuove Accessioni 1402 and 1406, both were acquired in 1997).

Many of Ginori Conti's manuscripts are no longer in Italy. One of these is the *Decameron* that belonged to Martini, which was later acquired by Ginori Conti, and then by Chiesa (now Cologny, Fondation Martin Bodmer, Cod. Bodmer 38).[32] Seven manuscripts are in Philadelphia at the University of Pennsylvania: codices 446,[33] 1256,[34] 1439,[35] 1440,[36] 1441,[37] and Lawrence J. Schoenberg collection 175 and 379.[38] Two other Ginori

26 A description of the codex, now housed in Prato, is available on Mirabileweb. See Manus Online for descriptions of Biblioteca Moreniana Acquisti Diversi 278–81; Acquisti Diversi 284. These are recorded in list D.

27 Manz.B.XXXIII.16; see Manus Online.

28 Ricc. 4006 (with Walter Sneyd's *ex libris*); Ricc. 4011; Ricc. 4099; Ricc. 4102; Ricc. 4103 (this codex bears the *ex libris* of Landau-Finaly); Ricc. 4129. These manuscripts were sold by the antiquarian bookseller Renzo Rizzi between 1968 and 1977. The last one was sold by Gonnelli in 1981, see Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, Catalogo delle Nuove Accessioni, Manoscritti Nuove Accessioni, MS, sec. XX.

29 BMLF, Acquisti e doni 655, 717, 830, and 831. The first manuscript was sold by Gonnelli in 1965, see BMLF, Catalogo Sala Studio 91.1, *Inventario dei codici Laurenziani 'Acquisti e doni'*, MS, sec. XX, fol. 59r–v; the second codex was acquired at the Libreria Fortuna in 1978, and Acquisti e doni 830 and 831 were sold by the Ginori heirs in Florence in 1987, see BMLF, Catalogo Sala Studio 91.2, *Inventario di codici Laurenziani 'Acquisti e doni'*, MS, sec. XX, fol. 5r and fols. 45r–47r.

30 This is Lorenzo Ghiberti's accounts book, dated 1441 (see above). It is now Nuove Accessioni 1181.

31 Nuove Accessioni 1339 and 1338.

32 See Vittore Branca, *Tradizione delle opere di Giovanni Boccaccio*, 2 vols. (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e letteratura, 1991), 2:94–95.

33 The codex was sold by Davis & Orioli (London) in 1965 for £90. A description of the codex can be found on the website of University of Pennsylvania Libraries: https://franklin.library.upenn.edu/, accessed May 12, 2023. I would like to thank Mitch Fraas for his assistance.

34 The manuscript was purchased in 1966, but unfortunately no vendor record was preserved.

35 The codex was sold by Renzo Rizzi (Milan) in 1963 for 80,000 Lire.

36 The manuscript was sold in 1963 probably by Rizzi.

37 This codex is composed of seventeen volumes. They were purchased from Rizzi in 1963 for $3,000.

38 The owners of the first codex were Piero Ginori Conti, Robert B. Honeyman (San Juan Capistrano), John D. Stanitz (Cleveland), and Lawrence J. Schoenberg. The second codex was acquired by Lawrence J. Schoenberg at Sotheby's on May 19, 2000. The owner donated this codex to University of Pennsylvania Libraries in 2012. Descriptions of all the books in Philadelphia are available on the University of Pennsylvania Libraries' website.

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codices now abroad are the correspondence of Carlo Clusius, housed in the University of Leiden Library, and the letters between Giorgio Vasari and Giovanni Caccini that are at the Pierpont Morgan Library, which were sold by Chiesa.[39]

To date, most of the manuscripts identified were sold through auction houses. However, the family itself was also involved in directly selling the codices and old printed books such as the manuscripts Acquisti e Doni 830 and Acquisti e Doni 831 of the Biblioteca Laurenziana that were sold by the heirs in 1987. One of the earliest periods of the dispersal of the collection was recorded by Chiesa, one of the most important antiquarian booksellers of the twentieth century.[40] Chiesa states that he was the first person to be able to choose what to buy from the Ginori Conti collection.[41] The antiquarian bookseller describes Ginori Conti as the greatest Italian collector between the two wars. Chiesa's account also allows us to imagine what Conti's library looked like physically: its furnishings, the arrangement of books, and the shelving. Chiesa describes a room full of shelves, where books, manuscripts, letters, and documents were placed in three rows. The antiquarian bookseller wrote that during the two hours he spent in that house, from four to six in the afternoon, he ran from shelf to shelf among the unsorted books and documents, as if he were hunting a prey. Thanks to Chiesa's book, we know that he acquired a letter by Bartolomeo Ammannati; three manuscripts of the *Sfera* by Gregorio Dati; a manuscript of the Buondelmonti family; a letter by Vincenzo Borghini; and three Dante manuscripts. This list also includes the manuscript of the *Decameron*, the Clusius correspondence, and the Vasari correspondence, which are also now abroad.

The Scholar and the Ghost-Writers

Ginori Conti published several studies about the manuscripts in his possession. In 1938, for example, he published the previously unpublished letters of Clusius, a prominent sixteenth-century botanist, to Matteo Caccini.[42] After Ginori's death, these documents were acquired by Chiesa. Ginori also wrote about the correspondence of Vasari and Vincenzo Borghini.[43] Other examples of Ginori Conti's publications are *Rime antiche secondo la lezione di un testo a penna del sec. XIV della raccolta del principe Piero Ginori Conti*

39 The letters are described on the PML website in the Corsair Online Catalogue (MA 2477.1–67).

40 Carlo Alberto Chiesa, "*Un mestiere semplice.*" *Ricordi di un libraio antiquario* (Milan: Officina Libraria, 2016), 52–55.

41 Information about the ancient books belonging to Ginori Conti and sold by Chiesa can be found in Cristina Dondi, *Printed Books of Hours from Fifteenth-Century Italy: The Texts, the Books, and the Survival of a Long-Lasting Genre* (Florence: Olschki, 2016), 159–61.

42 Piero Ginori Conti, ed., *Lettere inedite di Charles de l'Écluse (Carolus Clusius) a Matteo Caccini, floricultore fiorentino. Contributo alla storia della botanica* (Florence: Olschki, 1939).

43 Piero Ginori Conti, ed., *L'apparato per le nozze di Francesco de' Medici e di Giovanna d'Austria nelle narrazioni del tempo e da lettere inedite di Vincenzo Borghini e di Giorgio Vasari* (Florence: Olschki, 1936).

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(Florence: Fondazione Ginori Conti, 1940); *I fioretti dei traditori di Manetto Ciaccheri*;[44] *La vita del beato Ieronimo Savonarola*;[45] *Un antifonario miniato della scuola bolognese* (Florence: Fondazione Ginori Conti, 1940); and *Carte Cambi da Querceto, sec. XV–XVI* (Florence: Fondazione Ginori Conti, 1939).

Other scholars also wrote on the texts collected by Ginori Conti, including Roberto Ridolfi, son of Maria Luisa Ginori Conti, Piero's sister. Thanks to these studies, I can add to my list another missing Ginori Conti codex.[46] A further example is the study of Giuseppe Gentili which explored three previously unpublished nautical charts written between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries.[47]

Ginori Conti's reputation as a scholar is, however, undermined by the contents of the National Library of Florence, Ginori Conti 24, which contains documents and sixteen parchment leaves concerning Pietro di Dante Alighieri. Teresa de Robertis identified a note dated "Vallombrosa 2 settembre, 1938" (Vallombrosa, September 2, 1938) initialled "P. G. C." and the subscription "Lavori in corso del prof. Piattoli p(er) me" (Professor Piattoli's works in progress for me).[48] Professor Renato Piattoli probably applied his skills as a palaeographer and codicologist to identify interesting pieces to increase the Ginori Conti collection. Moreover, as de Robertis recognized, four studies published under Conti's name were written by Piattoli.[49] Piattoli was not the only "ghost-writer"

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44 Manetto Ciaccheri, *I Fioretti dei traditori*, ed. Piero Ginori Conti (Florence: Fondazione Ginori Conti, 1940). The registration of this bibliographic record found in the Olschki publishing house's paper file is followed by the annotation: "Trascrizione dei sonetti del popolano rimatore fiorentino vissuto a cavaliere del Tre e Quattrocento, scarsamente noti e studiati. Il Codice Ginori Conti da cui è stratta questa trascrizione è il più antico che porti il testo completo di questo interessante ternario" ("Transcription of the sonnets of the Florentine commoner who lived at the turn of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, which are scarcely known and studied. The Codex Ginori Conti from which this transcription is excerpted is the earliest to bear the complete text of this interesting ternary").

45 Piero Ginori Conti, ed., *La vita del beato Ieronimo Savonarola. Scritta da un anonimo del sec. XVI e già attribuita a fra Pacifico Burlamacchi. Pubblicata secondo il codice ginoriano* (Florence: Olschki, 1937).

46 For example, Roberto Ridolfi, "Lorenzo Poggio e le sue sconosciute Istorie," *La Bibliofilía* 65 (1963): 188–94. Ridolfi mentions a manuscript of Lorenzo Poggio consisting of 132 fols. for sale at the Gonnelli auction house in 1963: *Codici, manoscritti e autografi, libri vari e di cultura, alcune edizioni gotiche*, October 15, 1963 (Florence: Libreria Antiquaria L. Gonnelli & Figli, 1963), lot 336, p. 42. On Ridolfi, see Mauro Moretti, "Ridolfi, Roberto," in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 94 vols. (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1960–), 87:475–78.

47 Giuseppe Gentili, *Di alcune carte nautiche dei secoli XV–XVII conservate a Firenze nella Biblioteca del Principe Piero Ginori Conti* (Florence: Mariano Ricci, 1936).

48 See Dante Alighieri, *Le Opere, vol. 7: Opere di dubbia attribuzione e altri documenti danteschi*, ed. Teresa de Robertis et al. (Rome: Salerno Editrice, 2016), xxxvii.

49 These were: Renato Piattoli, *Le magone della verna del ferro di Pisa e Pietrasanta sotto la gestione di Pietro dei Medici e Comp., 1489–1492* (Florence: Fondazione Ginori Conti, 1939); Piero Ginori Conti, "Il codice dei commenti alla Commedia Poggiali Vernon, oggi Ginori Conti," *Studi danteschi* 23 (1938): 99–105; Renato Piattoli, *Vita e opere di Pietro di Dante Alighieri: Con documenti inediti* (Florence: Fondazione Ginori Conti, 1939); and Renato Piattoli, *Rime antiche, secondo la lezione di un testo a penna del sec. 14. della raccolta del principe Ginori Conti* (Florence: Fondazione Ginori Conti, 1940).

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for Ginori Conti. The names of two other scholars are documented in the Olschki publishing house's card catalogue preserved today at the Regione Toscana headquarters in via Farini in Florence. That archive contains fifteen records of books published under the name of Piero Ginori Conti. However, some of these records have annotations revealing that the real author of the works was not Ginori Conti. The entry for Ginori Conti, Piero, *Il vetro per ottica in Italia e l'istituto del boro-silicio in Firenze* (Florence: Tipocalcografia classica, stampa 1938) is annotated "L'autore ha pagato il libro ma non l'ha scritto" (The author paid for the book but did not write it). On another card, the cataloguer, while writing the bibliographical record, denies Ginori's authorship as follows: "Ginori Conti, Piero (ma non è lui l'autore), *Un libro di ricordi e di spese di Lorenzo e Vittorio Ghiberti*. Firenze, 1939." Again, "Ginori Conti, Piero. *Bibliografia delle opere di Savonarola.* Vol. I. *Cronologia e bibliografia delle prediche. Con contributi storici e filologici di Roberto Ridolfi*. Firenze, Olschki, 1939" is followed by the annotation in red: "L'autore è Ridolfi; G. C. non ci ha messo che i soldi" ("The author is Ridolfi; G. C. only put in the money"). On the entry for "Ginori Conti, P. *La Basilica di S. Lorenzo di Firenze e la famiglia Ginori*. Firenze, 1940" we find: "Il vero autore di quest'opera è Umberto Dorini" ("The real author of this work is the archivist Umberto Dorini"). Another card contains the same title and in this case there is a particularly incisive annotation. The writer, "L. M.," expresses her disapproval of the count's actions.[50] She affirms that Ginori signs works written by other scholars to whom he gives in return the crumbs of his immense wealth:

> Il principe Ginori Conti poneva il suo nome sopra libri e pubblicazioni scritti da altri che pagava con le briciole del suo immenso patrimonio. Egli si arrogava con ciò il diritto di mistificare la posterità. Tanta è la potenza del denaro e, spesso, la vanagloria dei ricchi!
>
> Prince Ginori Conti placed his name on books and publications written by others that he paid for with the crumbs of his immense fortune. He thereby arrogated to himself the right to mystify posterity. Such is the power of money and, often, the vainglory of the rich!

50 Thanks to the suggestion of Teresa de Robertis and David Speranzi these initials can be attributed to the name of Luciana Mosiici.

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Conclusions

At the beginning of this research, the aim was to reconstruct Ginori Conti's manuscript collection which was lost during the Second World War. The task has turned out to be more challenging than anticipated. Consulting the Gonnelli's catalogues, for example, we periodically find manuscripts with a Ginori Conti provenance, which are not documented in the archival lists. Of lot 132 in the auction catalogue of 1968, for example, we read: "(Firenze). *Stemmi e scritte sepolcrali di S. Maria Maggiore, S. Ambrogio, S. Niccolò soprarno, S. Jacopo tra i fossi e S. Spirito di Firenze*." This codex has the Ginori Conti's *ex libris* but it is not in the lists B, C or D with the other missing manuscripts.[51] As we have seen, other manuscripts of Ginori Conti provenance appeared in many other auction catalogues: for example, in the catalogues of the bookseller Rizzi in the 1960s and 1970s, in the catalogues of Davis & Orioli in the 1960s; and in Christie's and Sotheby's catalogues in the 1990s.

This demonstrates how manuscripts, as well as printed books, with Ginori Conti's provenance were purchased by public institutions and private individuals around the world.[52] The latter often resold their purchases, and books with Ginori Conti's *ex libris* continue to appear on the antiquarian market. Many grey areas remain in this affair, for example, not all the manuscripts that I have identified are present in the inventory drawn up by Franchi, including the manuscripts sold by the Ginori Conti heirs to the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana. The heirs probably sold other unlisted manuscripts, and these are very difficult to locate. Many booksellers were involved in the sale of the manuscripts, including Olschki, Martini, Hoepli, De Marinis, and Chiesa, but also Renzo Rizzi, Libreria Fortuna, and Davis & Orioli. Yet, the various steps that took the books from the Ginori Conti library to local and foreign collections are not always clear. It would also be interesting to investigate how these manuscripts reached Ginori Conti's house. Some manuscripts identified have *ex libris* from possessors prior to Ginori Conti, such as the Poggiali-Vernon codex or the *Storia del sacro cingolo* now in Prato. Finally, were Piattoli, Dorini, and Ridolfi the only "ghost-writers" in the service of Ginori? Did they only have the role of writing in the count's stead or were they also the book's agents? This research was intended to provide many answers, but at this moment it ends with many more questions.

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51 *Recenti acquisti e varia. Traduzioni italiane del Cinquecento*, March–April, 1968 (Florence: Libreria L. Gonnelli & Figli), lot 132. In the same auction catalogue lot 420 was another Ginori codex: Cavalca Domenico, *Trattato di pazienza*. This manuscript contains the *ex libris* of Ginori Conti and Walter Sneyd, whose library was sold at Sotheby's in London in 1903. In *Trenta manoscritti e cento opere a stampa* (Florence: Libreria L. Gonnelli & Figli, Spring 1974), lot 10, p. 6, we find David Pietro's *Ricordi di prigionia sull'Amba di Magdala dal 1856 al 1868* accompanied by a printed book with the Ginori Conti *ex libris*: Osio Egidio, *La spedizione inglese in Abissinia: Giornale di viaggio* (Rome: Perino, 1884). Gonnelli probably received the manuscript and the book from the same seller.

52 An epistle by Francesco Petrarch bought by E. P. Goldschmidt & Co. in 1933 and sold to Piero Ginori Conti, for example, was recently spotted by Laura Cleaver in New York, Grolier Club, E. P. Goldschmidt & Co. Stock Book 5.

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Chapter 13

THE "CALENZIO DEAL" AND THE AUCTION OF THE OLDEST VALLICELLIANA CODICES, 1874–1916

PAOLA PAESANO

ON JULY 21, 1916, the Sammartini auction house in Via Ripetta in Rome, "by legacy of the important Library of Fr. Generoso Calenzio," proposed to auction "Rare books—Ancient and Modern Manuscripts on parchment—Codices of the Vallicelliana Library—Papal bulls—Parchments—Prints—Engravings—Engraved copper plates and more."[1] The date on the cover of the auction catalogue was corrected from July 17. The cover also declared that "The auction will take place in Rome, in Via della Chiesa Nuova, n. 14," which was Calenzio's private house, in the street that runs along the east side of Borromini's Oratory Complex that houses the Vallicelliana Library. The explicit reference to the "Codices of the Vallicelliana Library," is surprising, raising the question of whether their sale, along with the other possessions of the late Calenzio, was due to the shamelessness or ignorance of the heirs or seller. They may have been unaware that the Vallicelliana Library had been owned by the Italian State since 1874 and that the manuscripts, even though held in the personal library of this Oratorian father, could certainly not be alienated.[2]

The news of the auction caused a scandal in the Roman press. On July 21, 1916 (the intended date of the auction), the *Messaggero*, one of the capital's most popular newspapers, published an article in defence of Umberto Sammartini, legal expert, owner of the auction house, and major suspect, and of Raffele Rizzacasa, who was managing the estate. The paper assigned all responsibility to "those who should have supervised the patrimony of the State."[3] The author claimed:

1 "Libri rari—Antichi e Moderni Manoscritti in pergamena—Codici della Biblioteca Vallicelliana—Bolle pontificie—Pergamene—Stampe—Incisioni—Plance in rame incise ed altro. La vendita si eseguirà in Roma, in Via della Chiesa Nuova, n. 14."

2 The Vallicelliana Library, before being forfeited to the Italian state in 1874, belonged to the Congregation of the Oratory of St. Philip Neri founded in 1575 by the church of Santa Maria in Vallicella, better known to Romans as Chiesa Nuova. The Library was established, for public use, in 1581 with the testamentary bequest of Portuguese humanist Achille Stazio (Vidigueira, 1524–Rome, 1581). Generoso Calenzio (Naples, 1836–Rome, 1915) was admitted to the Congregation of the Oratory of St. Philip Neri in 1863.

3 "I codici antichi e gli oggetti dello Stato messi all'asta pubblica," *Il Messaggero*, July 21, 1916, 3.

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> The news we disclosed produced no small impression, also because investigations made by various parties would have revealed obvious negligence attributable to those who should have been guarding the state's assets. It is not necessary to say that on our behalf we have made some precise researches; and we have been able, this way, to establish the truth of this serious matter. Meanwhile, we hasten to mention that Mr. Umberto Sammartini, the well-known court expert who lives in Via Ripetta 153 has no fault in all this business. Mr. Sammartini proceeded with great caution, he did not fail to warn the Directorate of Fine Arts, when he was commissioned to direct the public auction to offer the items for sale, the paintings, the rich library and all other valuable objects belonging to the legacy of Father Generoso Calenzio.[4]

The article also stated that: "the heir and Mr. Sammartini had no knowledge of the origin of the books."[5] This is a remarkable claim, given that the sale catalogue declared that the codices had belonged to the Vallicelliana Library. Indeed, it seems that the article was prompted, and perhaps even commissioned, by Sammartini, whose innocence is proclaimed repeatedly, as the conclusion states: "Mr Sammartini, for his part, wrote us a letter proclaiming his complete lack of responsibility—something that no one doubted—in all this business, in which he appeared only as an expert."[6]

The next day, the Director General of Fine Arts, Corrado Ricci, who denied Sammartini's good faith, responded in the same newspaper:

> Distinguished director, out of respect for the truth, please publish that it is false that the Directorate General of Fine Arts was informed by the experts Sammartini of the auction they were going to do, and that it has got from them those catalogues (thin and inaccurate) on which he ordered the first halt. As for the appropriateness of the second stoppage, requested following further research, it should be noted that it has served to retain almost all the objects on which the definitive verification will be carried out.
>
> Believe me, with respect, your most devoted Corrado Ricci.[7]

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4 "La notizia da noi divulgata ha prodotto non poca impressione, anche perché da indagini da varie parti compiute sarebbe risultata una evidente negligenza imputabile a coloro che averbbero dovuto vigilare sul patrimonio dello Stato. Non occorre dire che per conto nostro abbiamo fatto delle ricerche precise; e abbiamo potuto, in tal modo, stabilire la verità su questo grave fatto. Intanto ci affrettiamo ad accennare che il Signor Umberto Sammartini, il noto perito giudiziario che ha la sua casa in Via Ripetta 153 non ha in tutto questo affare alcuna colpa. Il signor Sammartini ha proceduto con grande cautela, non ha mancato di avvertire la Direzione delle Belle Arti, quando venne incaricato di dirigere l'asta pubblica per offrire in vendita gli oggetti, i quadri, la ricchissima biblioteca e tutti gli altri oggetti di valore appartenenti all'eredità di padre Generoso Calenzio."

5 "l'erede e il Signor Sammartini erano ignari della provenienza dei libri."

6 "il signor Sammartini, da parte sua, ci ha scritto una lettera per proclamare—cosa di cui del resto nessuno dubitava—la sua completa irresponsabilità in tutto questo affare, nel quale egli non figurava che come perito."

7 "Ill.mo direttore, la prego, per rispetto alla verità, di pubblicare esser falso che la Direzione

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However, in the journalist's preface to the letter, the insinuation about the lack of state protection was not dropped:

> They are trying to ascertain how it has been possible for so many years, that no one noticed the disappearance of the precious codices of the Vallicelliana. Note that some of these codices are of truly outstanding value, and of absolute rarity, such as one belonging to the ninth century that has unfortunately been lost.[8]

These, briefly, are the facts reported by the newspapers. However, the archives of the Vallicelliana Library allow us to nuance this story with additional documentation and details of the manuscripts knowingly selected for the public auction. This essay examines this additional information and the circumstances of the recovery of most of the valuable manuscripts.

The Return of the Manuscripts

The most useful document for the reconstruction of the final phase of the "Calenzio deal" is the detailed report to the Ministry of Education that the Director of the Vallicelliana Library, Giacomo Cordella, wrote on July 24, 1916.[9] The story began a few months earlier, when Cordella gave the manager of Calenzio's estate a formal warning to open the house in Via della Chiesa Nuova that contained the library, presumably believing it to contain volumes belonging to the Vallicelliana Library. The manager did not comply. After more than a month, the manager finally answered, promising Cordella that he would notify him as soon as he received authorization to sell the property, to allow him to do the inspection. Cordella recorded: "While I waited confidently, the bomb exploded. It had happened that the heirs appeared, and the expert Sammartini acting for them, and the manager had delivered the property, forgetting the commitment made to me." On July 11, the Director obtained an administrative block on the transfer of assets in order to proceed with the inspection. In his report, Cordella noted that it was easy to

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Generale delle Belle Arti sia stata informata dai periti Sammartini dell'asta che stavano per fare, e che essa abbia avuto da loro quei cataloghi (meschini ed imprecisi) sui quali ordinò il primo fermo. Quanto poi all'opportunità del secondo fermo, chiesto in seguito a ulteriori ricerche, è da notare che esso è valso a trattenere quasi tutti gli oggetti sui quali dovrà compiersi la verifica definitiva. Cosicché, da lamentare non è che la vendita di alcuni vetri cimiteriali, la cui cornice, però, anziché 'mirabile', è priva di qualsiasi valore. Mi creda, con rispetto, dev.mo Corrado Ricci." Corrado Ricci's Letter in "Come sparirono i codici della Vallicelliana e i preziosi vetri cimiteriali," *Il Messaggero*, July 22, 1916, 4. Corrado Ricci, Director General of the Superintendency of Galleries and Museums, was among the creators of L. l. 364 (June 10, 1909) "For antiquity and fine arts," the first true national law of protection; it was followed by the Regulation issued with R.D. 363 of 1913. See also Chapter 14 in this volume.

8 "Si sta cercando di accertare in che modo sia stato possibile per tanti anni, che nessuno si accorgesse della sparizione dei preziosi codici della Vallicelliana. Si noti che alcuni di questi codici sono di valore veramente rilevante, e di assoluta rarità, come uno appartenente al IX secolo, e che purtroppo è perduto."

9 Biblioteca Vallicelliana, Archivio Storico, Faldone 28 "Miscellanee varie."

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recognize several Oratorian bound volumes belonging to the library, and he was pleased by the collaboration of Salvatore Domenicano, representative of the heirs (the Troisi sisters), and of Sammartini, who spontaneously gave him five old Vallicelliana codices; perhaps too "spontaneously." These were none other than codices marked B7, B8, D38, E15, and E26, some of the oldest and rarest volumes of the original core of the library (see appendix).

Having obtained five priceless books without needing to search, the next day Cordella continued his inspection, helped by the bookseller Attilio Nardecchia, who is a key character in this story. Nardecchia was the founder of Nardecchia Stampe e Libri Antichi, which is still active in Via di Monserrato, Rome. He began trading in 1895, abandoning the medical profession, and soon devoted himself to ecclesiastical books. This was the era of the suppression of religious confraternities and the consequent state confiscation of ecclesiastical collections caused serious losses of books, alongside the development of a flourishing antiquarian market. In Nardecchia's case, commercial luck and his growing bibliographical skills intertwined, making him a valuable consultant for an educated and efficient official like Cordella. Nardecchia was well-respected in the Italian scientific and academic world, and even by Pope Pius XI, who "esteemed him and held him dear."[10] It should also be noted that Pius XI played a not insignificant role in the Calenzio affair: when he was prefect of the Vatican Library the refusal to accept Calenzio's legacy was due to him. That is a subject for another occasion, but the non-acceptance of the bequest inadvertently caused its exposure to the private trade.

Let us return to the inspection. On the second day:

> In the afternoon of the second day the Greek codex B16 was found on top of a shelf, from whose cover the signatures had been scraped. Made a load of these six parchment codices, a group of ancient bulls and diplomas, several paper manuscripts of the sixteenth century related to the oratory, and many printed books, which I reserved to make comparisons in the library, I took my leave by issuing Domenicano a summary receipt, and declaring that on my behalf I no longer thought it necessary to stop [the sale]. I would need a great dialectical effort to prove that I was not in a hurry: but I noticed it two days later, when, rummaging through this archive, I deduced that other manuscripts might be in the same house.

The codex marked B16, datable to the tenth to eleventh centuries (later owned by Achille Stazio) is a Chrysostomic miscellany, composed of four sections (the first three of the eleventh century, the fourth datable between the tenth and eleventh centuries) containing a collection of texts of the most famous of the sacred orators.[11] Cordella was a trusting person and he persuaded himself of the good faith of Sammartini and Domenicano

10 Cf. La storia [della famiglia Nardecchia], http://web.tiscali.it/nardecchia/, accessed September 14, 2023.

11 John Chrysostom (344/354–407). The hand of Achille Stazio appears in every section of the codex identifying the works or recording which texts are already published.

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thanks to the spontaneous delivery of the five codices already mentioned and their "repeated protests of complete ignorance," even despite the accidental discovery of the sixth manuscript. However, from the moment that Cordella realized more manuscripts might be in the house and requested a new halt to the sale his attitude changed radically. From trusting he became suspicious of those involved.

During the period of the administrative block, we must imagine Cordella frantically consulting the old catalogues of Vallicelliana manuscripts, which did not always include key identifying details, and the records of different inventories. During this inspection, he discovered another precious codex marked D53 at the bottom of a shelf, hidden behind a large folio. This was a composite volume in four sections of the eleventh to sixteenth centuries, containing patristic texts, annotated by the humanist Achille Stazio. However, Cordella attributed this theft not to Sammartini, Domenicano, or Calenzio's heirs, but rather to an earlier loss, dating back, at least, to the 1890s as there are several inventories in which the seven magnificent codices were already missing.

The Removal of the Manuscripts

At this point we turn to an earlier story, which led to the events of 1916. The chronological extremes of the Calenzio affair can be defined as 1874, when Vallicelliana manuscripts were concealed by Calenzio during the application of the so-called "subversive" laws of the Church Estate, and 1916 when his estate was offered for auction. The sale of the unique Vallicelliana books was not Calenzio's intention. Instead the theft of the foundation manuscripts of the collection was designed to "save" the Oratorian treasure from state forfeiture, seen by the clergy at the time as an abuse and ruin, and denounced as such.[12]

The state forfeiture was undoubtedly a historical, social, cultural, human, as well as political and patrimonial trauma for men like Calenzio. Its outcome (and the even more serious one it could have had if the books had been sold), demonstrates the jealousy, destructive and self-destructive passions aroused. The concept of "cultural heritage" as we understand it today, was obviously alien to the uncompromising Catholic Calenzio.[13] As Salvatore Settis has observed:

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12 A file of the dossier "Calenzio" kept in the historical archive of the Vallicelliana Library bears the hand-written note, probably by Calenzio, on the front: "Biblioteca Vallicelliana," and on the back: "Biblioteca Vallicelliana – Documenti per la storia del vandalismo italiano durante il secolo XIX" (Vallicelliana Library—Documents for the history of Italian vandalism during the nineteenth century).

13 He was the author of a *Vita e apologia di Bonifacio VIII* (Naples: Pelella, 1862); of three works on the Council of Trent: *Saggio di storia del Concilio generale di Trento sotto Paolo III* (Rome: Sinimberghi, 1869); *Esame critico letterario delle opere riguardanti la storia del Concilio di Trento* (Rome: Sinimberghi, 1869), and *Documenti inediti e nuovi lavori sul Concilio di Trento* (Rome: Sinimberghi, 1874); of a *Dissertazione intorno alle varie controversie di storia e archeologia ecclesiastica* (Rome: Poliglotta, 1869); a *Vita di Martino Lutero* (Rome: Poliglotta, 1873); of a rebuttal to historical memoirs of secular tendency against any form of juspatronate: *Metropolitanae Ecclesiae Napoletanae provisiones concistoriales a saeculo XV ad XIX ex authenticis documentis in*

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> The designation patrimony, or national patrimony, emerged then [in nineteenth-century Europe] as a radical innovation, the attribution of a legal personality to the Nation, that is, to the people, to the collectivity of citizens, and corresponded to the acute awareness of the centrality of heritage in promoting culture and defining national character.[14]

Calenzio's behaviour was also in opposition to the spirit of the edicts of Chamberlain Pacca, which aimed to prioritize public cultural interests over private profit.[15] Calenzio's biographer, Francesco Malgeri portrayed him as a "lively and witty spirit," emphasizing his originality and sometimes his oddity.[16] He was described as "typically Oratorian," with the traits of the original, and partly anecdotal, eccentricity of St. Philip Neri (founder in 1575 of the congregation of the Oratory, which is the birthplace of the same Vallicelliana library). In contrast, the *Messaggero* balanced an account of his "vast culture" with the claim of an "unbalanced mind."[17]

In the papers of the historical archive of the library (in particular, folder "miscellaneous 28"), Calenzio's work is characterized by messy and nervous writing, with thick pen strokes, frequent erasures and deletions, corrections, and additions. There are often multiple copies of the same text, and particularly relevant for this study are his lists, made on several occasions, of the Vallicellianan books considered most valuable by him.

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lucem editis (Rome, 1878); and of *La vita e gli scritti del cardinale Cesare Baronio* (Rome: Vatican, 1907), his most important historical work.

14 "La denominazione di *patrimoine*, o *patrimoine national*, germogliò allora [nel secolo XIX in Europa] su una radicale innovazione, l'attribuzione di una personalità giuridica alla Nazione, cioè al popolo, alla collettività dei cittadini, e corrispose all'acuta consapevolezza della centralità del patrimonio per promuovere la cultura e per definire il carattere nazionale," Salvatore Settis, *La tutela del patrimonio culturale*, in *Dizionario di Storia* Treccani, (2011) (www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/la-tutela-del-patrimonio-culturale_(Dizionario-di-Storia)/, accessed September 14, 2023).

15 "Particularly relevant were Pacca's initiatives in the area of cultural and artistic heritage, which were among the camerlengo's attributions and for which he had among his collaborators Carlo Fea and Antonio Canova. As early as 1814 the establishment of the post of inspector of paintings, entrusted to Vincenzo Camuccini, inaugurated a campaign of restoration in a long-neglected area. An edict regulating sales of archives and manuscripts came out in March 1819, which was followed on April 7, 1820, by the better-known 'Pacca edict' on antiquities and excavations. Resuming a legislation of 1802 in light of the French administrative experience, it established a territorial administrative network under the Roman Fine Arts Commission, and subjected both the trade in antiquities and works of art and archaeological excavations to strict control. The document, described as an 'affirmation of public cultural interests over private profit' in which 'scientific insight and administrative policy' were welded together for the first time in Italy…still inspired unified legislation," David Armando, "Pacca, Bartolomeo," in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 2014), vol. 80, www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/bartolomeo-pacca_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/, accessed September 18, 2023. See also Chapter 14 in this volume.

16 Francesco Malgeri, "Calenzio, Generoso," in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani* 16 (Rome: Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana, 1973).

17 See "I codici antichi," 3.

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The lists do not include anything more than the historical catalogues of the Vallicelliana manuscripts (the "Giustiniani"[18] of the seventeenth century and the "Vettori"[19] of the eighteenth century, from which Calenzio extracts basic data). However, the content and execution of the lists suggest an irrepressible attachment to those texts he considered sacred. These were the constitutive manuscripts of the Oratory's history, and working tools of the educated fathers, who had dedicated their lives to religious study and the writing of ecclesiastical history, above all Cesare Baronio, to whom Calenzio seems to have been devoted and with whom he may have identified as a writer.

In discussing Calenzio, inevitably we come to the terms "to steal" and "to hide" in order to describe his actions. However, "to smuggle" might be a better description, meaning to stealthily and deftly subtract, with the intention of securing the books. In Calenzio's case his theft was without profit, but not without consequences. Calenzio believed so firmly in the idea of "saving" the Oratory's bibliographic treasure that he went so far as to engineer a fake overseas shipment of the books. However, in this, paradoxically, he made actions blatant. On April 4, 1871, he wrote to the brothers of the Oratory in London, begging them to pretend that they had received sixty-eight codices on his list:

> Most esteemed Father, the House is now almost all lost: the Sacristy and the Oratory will become courtrooms. For the Library, of which we are still masters, there is nothing else but to save the oldest and most precious codices: I have hidden them: however, the Provost is pleased to pretend that he has sent them to them in London: therefore a mock receipt should be made from them stating that the following codices have been delivered to them: [there follows an extremely scanty list, of signatures only, corresponding to sixty-eight medieval codices dated between the ninth and thirteenth centuries]. Let the letter be signed by the Provost, and if necessary also by the Deputies, and addressed to me as Librarian, pretended sender. This is the greatest benefit they can render us in such mournful times for the Congregation of Rome mother of all Congregations. Servant of His Reverence Generoso Calenzio of the Orat[ory] of Rome, and Librarian of the Vallicelliana.[20]

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18 Fabiano Giustiniani, *Index Universalis Alphabeticus Materias in omni facultate consulto pertractasas, earumque Scriptores, & locos designans, Appendice perampla locupletatus. … Fabiani Iustiniani Genuensis Congregationis Oratorii Presbyteri* (Rome: Ex Typographia Reverendæ Cameræ Apostolicæ, 1612).

19 Vincenzo Vettori, "Inventarium omnium codicum manuscriptorum graecorum et latinorum Bibliothecae Vallicellanae digestum anno domini MDCCXLIX" (topographical, in three volumes) and "Index alphabeticus universalis cognominum, nominum auctorum sanctorum et virorum illustrium, auctorum vitarum et monumentorum quae in codicibus manuscriptis grecis et latinis Bibliothecae Vallicellanae continentur digestus anno domini MDCCXLIX" (alphabetical, in two volumes).

20 "Stimatissimo Padre, la Casa è ormai quasi tutta perduta: la Sacrestia e l'Oratorio diventeranno Corti di Tribunali. Per la Biblioteca, di cui siamo ancora padroni, non c'è altro che salvare i più antichi e preziosi codici: io li ho nascosti: però il Preposito ha piacere di fingere di averli mandati a loro in Londra: perciò dovrebbesi fare da loro una finta ricevuta di essere stati a loro consegnati

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We do not know whether this letter was sent and we have no answer from the London community, but fortunately, despite the unknown number of volumes that disappeared in those dramatic years, none of the codices selected for the fake London export are missing today.

In 1886 the monumental complex of the Girolamini in Naples, with its adjoining library, was declared a national monument by the new Italian State. Generoso Calenzio wanted the same treatment for the House of Oratorians, which had been designed and built by Francesco Borromini, especially since the Girolamini had later become affiliated with the Congregation of the Oratory of St. Philip Neri. The fate of the Girolamini library in recent years, with its spoliation leading to the arrest of its director in 2012, raises the question of whether regime changes in themselves are a cause of devastation.[21] However, sad though it is to relate, such devastation is caused by failure to oversee the laws of the state, which the Italians, in contrast, were able to do in the case of Calenzio and the Vallicelliana codices, despite being in the midst of the First World War.

i seguenti codici: [segue un elenco estremamente scarno, di sole segnature, corrispondenti a 68 codici medievali databili tra il IX e il XIII secolo]. La lettera sia firmata dal Preposito, e se occorre anche dai Deputati, e diretta a me come Bibliotecario, finto mittente. Questo è il più gran beneficio che ci possono rendere in tempi sì luttuosi per la Congregazione di Roma madre di tutte le Congregazioni. Servo di Sua Riverenza Generoso Calenzio dell'Orat.[orio] di Roma, e Bibliotecario della Vallicelliana." Draft letter, Vallicelliana Library, Calenzio Dossier.

21 See Sergio Luzzatto, *Max Fox o le relazioni pericolose* (Turin: Einaudi, 2019).

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APPENDIX

Manuscripts found in Generoso Calenzio's home in July 1916

See also https://manus.iccu.sbn.it/web/manus, accessed September 11, 2023.

B7, a thirteenth-century Bible, with contemporary and later annotations. These include a title added by the librarian Vincenzo Vettori (1740–1749): "Biblia sacra vulgate versionis, una cum alia interpretatione librorum Baruch et Esther, nuper edita in vindiciis vulgate editionis a presbytero Iosepho Blanchino veronensi congreg. orat. romani presb." In the centre of the front cover, Vettori himself notes: "Codex saeculi XI."

B8, an eleventh-century Benedictine missal, containing texts for year-round celebrations: one of the few manuscripts that preserve the Roman liturgy prior to the Gregorian Reform, from the monastic community of Saint Eutizius, one of the oldest monastic complexes in Italy and most important for Western monasticism.

D38, the Decretals of Pseudo-Isidore, the false decretals of an Isidore Mercator (also a false name not to be confused with Isidore of Seville), which includes letters of popes, mostly apocryphal, and authentic conciliar canons. The work, entitled *Isidori Mercatoris Collectio epistolorum Decretalium Summorum Pontificum et Conciliorum*, was compiled between 847 and 852 in France. This example is dated to the tenth century.

E15 is a manuscript in three parts: the first contains a Sacramentary and a Penitential of the first half of the eleventh century, originally from the Basilica of St. Lawrence in Damasus in Rome; the second is of the second half of the century; the third is composed of five pieces belonging to a Sacramentary of the end of the eleventh century.

E26 is a ninth-century collection of *libelli* with works by Bede (from the cosmographic and chronological works) in Caroline minuscule with autograph notes of Agobardo (Bishop of Lyon d. 840) in Visigothic; other notes are attributed to Florus of Lyon who studied the codex, dated between 840 and 848. Perhaps the same hand drew the monogram of Charlemagne. The manuscript, of Lyonese origin, which survived the fire of the abbey of Saint-Martin de l'Ile-Barbe caused by the Huguenots (1562) and came into the possession of the monk Jean Dubois, was donated by the latter to the Oratorians in 1605–1607, which were the golden years of Oratorian acquisitions, when the congregation reached its highest prestige.

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Chapter 14

THE ACQUISITIONS OF FLORENTINE PUBLIC LIBRARIES 1900–1935

FEDERICO BOTANA

BETWEEN THE MID-EIGHTEENTH and the early twentieth century, Italy witnessed one of the greatest exoduses of medieval and Renaissance manuscripts. The Napoleonic invasions of the 1790s and the dissolution of religious corporations in the 1800s played a key role.[1] When the French troops arrived, however, Italy was a conglomerate of decaying states; impoverished aristocratic families had already started dispersing their libraries, and this continued well into the nineteenth century.[2] By the early 1900s important manuscripts were being sold to foreign collectors by influential bookdealers who traded internationally, notably Leo S. Olschki and Tammaro De Marinis, who operated from Florence; Giuseppe/Joseph Martini, who started his business in Lucca, emigrated to New York, returned to Italy in the 1920s and finally settled in Lugano; and Ulrico Hoepli, based Milan, who from the early 1920s organized auction sales in Italy and Switzerland which attracted buyers from all over the world.[3]

From the Unification of Italy in the 1860s, the preservation of cultural patrimony became a matter of concern for intellectuals and politicians. Public libraries, especially the newly instituted national libraries, had an important place in the government's cul-

1 Marie-Pierre Laffitte, "Napoleon et les confiscations de livres dans les monastères italiens," and Emmanuelle Chapron, "Bibliothèques et suppressions ecclésiastiques en Toscane de Pierre-Léopold à Napoléon," in *How the Secularization of Religious Houses Transformed the Libraries of Europe, 16th–19th Centuries*, ed. Cristina Dondi, Dorit Raines, and Richard Sharpe, Bibliologia 63 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2022), 223–46, and 273–86 (respectively).

2 See Gianna del Bono, *Storia delle biblioteche fra settecento a novecento* (Rome: Vecchiarelli, 1995).

3 On these dealers, see Christina Tagliaferri and Stefano de Rosa, *Olschki: Un secolo d'editoria*, 2 vols. (Florence: Olschki, 1982); Romeo de Maio, "Tammaro De Marinis," in *Studi di bibliografia e di storia in onore di Tammaro De Marinis*, ed. Romeo de Maio, 4 vols. (Verona: Mardersteig, 1964), 1:ix–xxix; Edoardo Barbieri, ed., *Da Lucca a New York a Lugano: Giuseppe Martini libraio tra otto e novecento* (Florence: Olschki, 2017); Luca Montagner, *L'antiquariato Hoepli: Una prima ricognizione tra i documenti e i cataloghi* (Milan: EDUCatt, 2017).

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tural agenda.[4] As now, the most important manuscript collections in Florence were concentrated in three state-owned libraries: the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, the Biblioteca Riccardiana, and the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale. The Laurenziana, attached to the Basilica of San Lorenzo and inaugurated in 1571, preserves most of the Medici manuscripts and those from the library of San Marco. The Riccardiana, in the old Palazzo Medici, houses the library of the Riccardi family, who bought the palace in 1659; it was acquired by the Napoleonic government in 1813 and opened to the public in 1815. The Nazionale acquired its name in 1885. It had been opened to the public in 1747 as Biblioteca Magliabechiana, became the repository of most manuscripts from Florentine religious corporations after their suppression in 1808, and was merged with the grandducal Biblioteca Palatina in 1861. These libraries continued expanding their manuscript collections in the early twentieth century, but their choices were limited, as foreign collectors could pay astronomical prices for a book. New laws were issued to restrict the export of manuscripts, but they were not effective enough. After the First World War, however, the number of manuscripts leaving the country decreased, and by 1930 the government was helping libraries more than ever before. Yet, more than ever before, it was also a politicized issue.

The Laws

In terms of legislation for the protection of cultural patrimony, Italian states had been ahead of other European nations for centuries. Edicts intended to control the export of works of art and antiquities were introduced in the Granducato of Tuscany in 1602 and in the Papal States in 1646.[5] Both states continued issuing increasingly restrictive regulations, which culminated with the 1820 edict by Cardinal Bartolomeo Pacca.[6] For manuscripts, the 1702 edict by Cardinal Spinola prohibited their removal from Rome without official authorization; in 1754 Tuscany did the same, followed by Milan in 1804, and by Venice in 1817.[7] In Rome, in 1820, Cardinal Pacca decreed that no manuscript of any sort could be sold without the approval of the Prefect of the Vatican Archives.[8]

The first major change brought by Unification was the royal decree of 1866 transferring all properties of religious congregations to the State.[9] Monks and priests resisted handing over their libraries to secular institutions: manuscripts and books could procure them an income in difficult times, and, in reality, public libraries could not accom-

4 See Gianna del Bono, "Politica degli acquisti e gestione delle raccolte alla Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze durante le direzioni Chilovi e Morpurgo," in *Per una storia delle biblioteche in Toscana*, ed. Paolo Traniello (Pistoia: Settegiorni, 2016), 117–40.

5 Andrea Emiliani, *Leggi, bandi e provvedimenti per la tutela dei beni artistici e culturali negli antichi stati italiani, 1571–1860* (Bologna: Nouva Alfa, 1996), 28–32, 56–57.

6 Emiliani, *Leggi*, 100–11.

7 Emiliani, *Leggi*, 132–33, 144–45.

8 Emiliani, *Leggi*, 97–100.

9 Regio decreto 7 luglio 1866 (no. 3036), *Gazzetta Ufficiale*, July 8, 1866.

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modate such a volume of material. New legislation was urgently needed at a national level; several legislative projects were presented to parliament, but none was adopted until 1902, when the Legge di Tutela del Patrimonio Monumentale (known as Legge Nasi) was approved by the Senate.[10]

The Legge Nasi granted protection to every "object of antiquity" (objects of cultural importance older than fifty years).[11] Libraries, like art collections, were declared inalienable; not a single item could be sold without the authorization of the *Ministero della pubblica istruzione* (Ministry of public education).[12] Objects of antiquity could not be exported without an official licence; when the licence was granted, the objects were subject to a progressive tax.[13] The law introduced the *diritto di prelazione* (right of pre-emption) conferring on the State the right of first refusal over objects at risk of being exported, which they could then buy at the price fixed by the seller, minus the export tax.[14] A new version of the law, sanctioned in 1909, introduced more precise definitions of the objects that were granted protection, reinforced the *diritto di prelazione*, and categorically prohibited the exportation of objects of such artistic or historic importance whose removal would cause "serious damage to history, archaeology or art."[15] A new law, sanctioned in 1939 and still in force today, introduced even stricter regulations and more severe consequences for those who violated the law.[16]

In Florence, export certificates for manuscripts were issued by the Galleria dell'Accademia until 1904, when the task was reassigned to the Laurenziana.[17] However, the *Inventario dei Codici Laurenziani acquisti e Doni* (the inventory of new acquisitions and donations of the library) documents that the Laurenziana blocked the export of a manuscript and exerted the right of pre-emption in 1899, which is even more surprising when we consider this happened three years before the Legge Nasi—it is possible, however, that the decision was informed by the Tuscan law of 1754, which had already introduced the right.[18] The manuscript (now BMLF, Acquisti e doni 233), containing commentaries on Juvenal by the humanist Domizio Calderini, was executed in Florence in the 1480s for Matthias Corvinus, king of Hungary.[19] According to the inventory, it was illuminated by Attavante degli Attavanti, the most celebrated Florentine illuminator of

10 Emiliani, *Leggi*, 201–15.

11 Legge 12 giugno 1902 (no. 185), *Gazzetta Ufficiale*, Art. 1.

12 Legge 12 giugno 1902, Art. 2.

13 Legge 12 giugno 1902, Art. 8.

14 Legge 12 giugno 1902, Art. 9.

15 Legge 28 giugno 1909 (no. 364), *Gazzetta Ufficiale*, June 28, 1909, Arts. 1, 5, 6, 8, 9.

16 Legge 1 giugno 1939 (no. 1089), *Gazzetta Ufficiale*, August 8, 1939.

17 Leo S. Olschki, "Le fiscalità italiane nell'esportazione di libri antichi," *La Bibliofilía* 6 (1904–1905): 210–12.

18 BMLF, *Inventario dei codici Laurenziani acquisti e doni*, fol. 20v, no. 233; for the law, see Emiliani, *Leggi*, 40.

19 See Csaba Csapodi, Klára Csapodi-Gárdonyi, and Tibor Szánto, *Bibliotheca Corviniana*, trans. Zsuzsanna Horn (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1969), 51.

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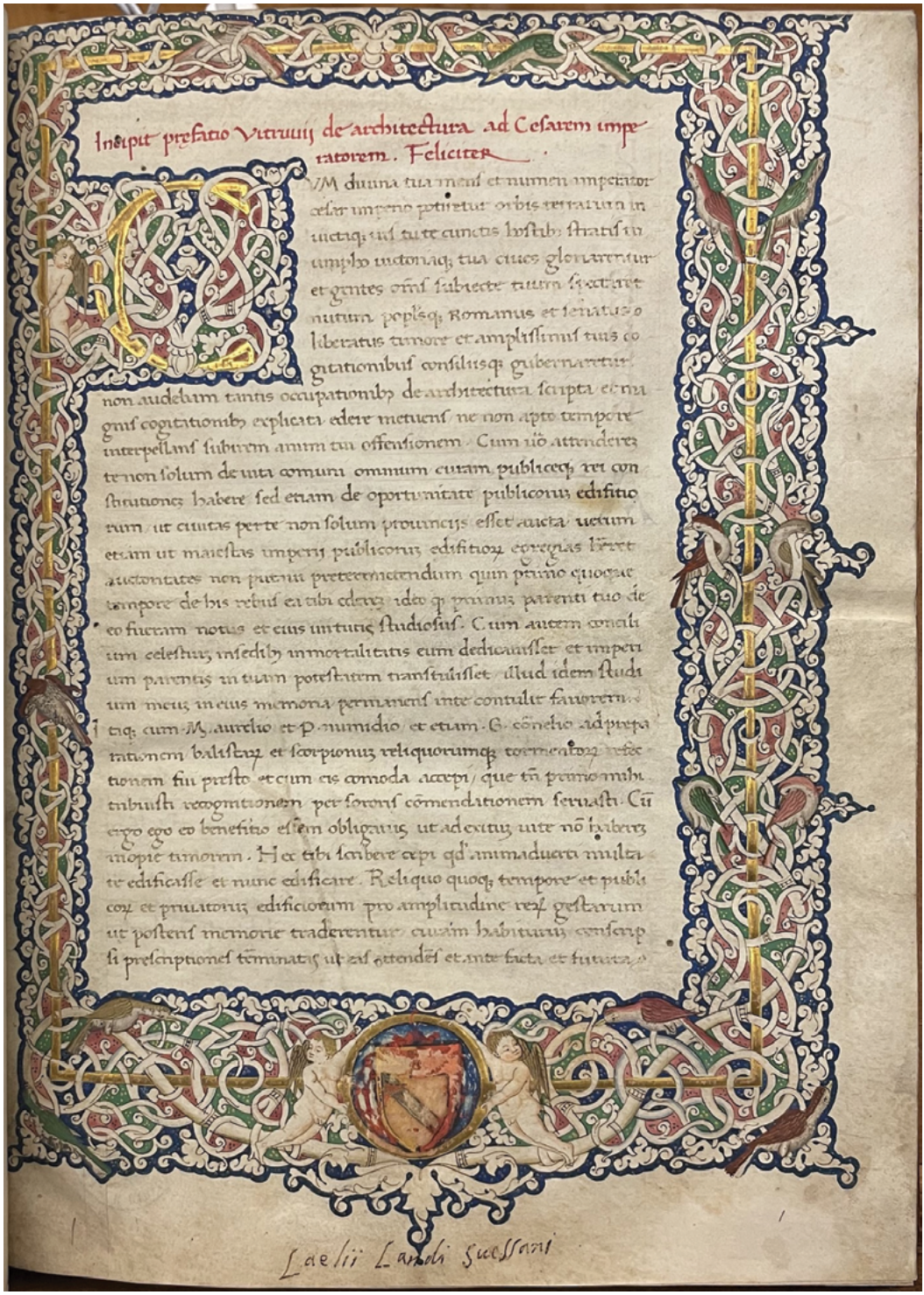


Figure 14.1. Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, MS Acquisti e doni 297, Vitruvius, *De architectura*, fol. 1r, mid-fifteenth century. Photo: Federico Botana (courtesy of the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana).

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the Renaissance.[20] We also learn that the manuscript's possessor, Stefano Bardini, was about to sell it to the Austro-Hungarian government. Bardini, a famous antique dealer and collector, is described in a note in the inventory as a "great and notorious 'fabricator' of antiquities, especially of miniatures from the XIV–XV centuries, of busts of the 1500s, etc."[21] The note is signed Enrico Rostagno, who was at the time curator of manuscripts at the Laurenziana, of which he became director in 1923.[22]

Rostagno exerted the *diritto di prelazione* on at least one other occasion, around 1918, when Olschki requested a license to export three manuscripts and one incunabulum—according to Olschki, writing in 1916, his firm was "almost the only" antiquarian bookseller that bothered requesting export licences.[23] The manuscripts, now BMLF, Acquisti e doni 297–99, include: Vitruvius's *De Architectura*, executed in Florence about 1450 and embellished with an illuminated border containing the arms of an unknown cardinal (Figure 14.1); Cicero's *Epistulae ad familiares*, also executed in mid-fifteenth-century Florence, but for Filippo Strozzi whose arms can be seen in the illuminated border; and Horatius's *Carmina*, signed and dated 1460 by the copyist Alessandro di Jacopo da Montebodio, which belonged in the eighteenth century to Cardinal Braschi, the future Pius VI.[24] For the four items Olschki received the sum of 7,540 lire, corresponding to the 8,000 lire that he was expecting to be paid by a foreign client minus the export tax. Like the manuscript saved from the hands of Bardini, those obtained from Olschki had a special importance for Florentines.

The Nazionale and the Laurenziana: Acquisitions 1905–1916

Despite the laws, important Italian manuscripts continued to leave the country to end up in the hands of wealthy collectors in the United States. Well-known examples are the two fifteenth-century Florentine manuscripts from the library of Matthias Corvinus that were sold to J. P. Morgan by Tammaro De Marinis, via the antique dealer Alexandre Imbert, for $101,549, together with a Missal with miniatures supposedly by Jean Fouquet.[25]

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20 See Annarosa Garzelli, *Miniatura fiorentina del Rinascimento, 1440–1525*, 2 vols. (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1985), 1:219–63.

21 BMLF *Inventario*, fol. 20v: "grande e noto 'fabricatore' d'antichità, in specie di miniature del sec. XIV–XV, di busti del 500, ecc., ecc. Enrico Rostagno." On Bardini, see Anita Moskowitz, *Stefano Bardini "principe degli antiquari": Prolegomenon to a Biography* (Florence: Centro Di, 2015).

22 See Giorgio de Gregori and Simonetta Buttò, *Per una storia dei bibliotecari italiani del XX secolo* (Rome: AIB, 1999), 153–54.

23 Letter from Leo Olschki to Attilio Bompani, July 28, 1916, Florence, Casa Editrice Leo S. Olschki, Archivio Storico (hereafter Archivio Olschki): "E la Laurenziana non può attestare che noi siamo quasi gli unici che ci assoggettiamo a tale prescrizione?"

24 BMLF *Inventario*, fols. 29v–30r. The incunabulum was Titus Livius, *Historiae Romanae decades* (Rome: Sweynheym and Pannartz, 1472).

25 PML, M.496 (Didymus, *De Spirito Sancto*, 1488), M.497 (Cicero, *Opera*, 1470–1475). For the invoice, see the curatorial file for M.496. See also Csapodi, Csapodi-Gárdonyi, and Szánto, *Bibliotheca Corviniana*, 57–58.

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De Marinis acquired the two Corvina volumes from Wilfried Voynich, who obtained them—illegally—from the Jesuits at Rome.[26] In the same year, Olschki procured two illuminated Italian manuscripts for Morgan for 50,000 francs each, then the equivalent of £1,960 or 50,000 lire—francs and lire were paired one-to-one at the time.[27] Between 1907 and 1911, he sold three Dante manuscripts to Morgan: an illuminated fourteenth-century *Commedia* with, according to the invoice, the arms of the Capponi family, for 30,000 francs; a fifteenth-century *Commedia* for 16,500 francs; and a rare copy of the *Comentum super poema Comedie Dantis* by Dante's son, Pietro Alighieri, dated to 1358, for 27,000 francs.[28] Letters sent by Olschki to Belle da Costa Greene record that he could not obtain an export permit for the *Comentum*, so he travelled with the manuscript to Germany and sent it to Morgan from Munich.[29]

Not even for the love of Dante could Italian public libraries afford such prices. Like Morgan, the Laurenziana and the Nazionale acquired manuscripts from Olschki and De Marinis. A large portion—the majority in the Nazionale—however, came from Florentine dealers who rarely, if ever, traded internationally—Bruscoli, Gonnelli, Gozzini, and Seeber—and from an array of individuals—especially in the case of the Laurenziana—including members of the nobility (Prince Giovanni Magherini Grazziani, Countess Adelaide Alberti, and Count Alberto Douglas Scotti), historians (Gian Francesco Gamurrini, and Pietro Stromboli), a translator of Nietzsche (Attilio Rinieri de Rocchi), a geologist (Irene Bittanti), and a notorious forger of antique musical instruments (Leopoldo Franciolini).[30] The prices paid to these individuals, like those paid to the dealers mentioned above, were usually moderate compared to those asked by Olschki and De Marinis.

Between 1900 and 1945, the Laurenziana bought about 130 medieval and Renaissance manuscripts, the Nazionale between 160 and 180, and the Riccardiana only sixteen (Morgan amassed roughly the same number as the three libraries combined in just five years).[31] Whilst Morgan was spending millions of dollars, Florentine libraries were

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26 The lot comprised about thirty items, including the famous manuscript now at Yale University. See Dániel Pócs, "Egy corvina története: Battista Spagnoli Mantovano: Parthenice Mariana (Pontosításokkal a Pierpont Morgan Library M496 és M497 jelzetű corviná inak provenienciájához)," *Ars hungarica* 43 (2017): 301–54 at 330–36.

27 PML, M.508, *Vita Christi*, ca. 1520, with seventeen miniatures attributed to Zanobi Strozzi; M.498, devotional miscellany, ca. 1375–1400, with two full-page miniatures ascribed to the Sienese school. For the invoice, see L. S. Olschki, March 25, 1912, Morgan Collections Correspondence (hereafter MCC), 1887–1948 (ARC 1310). The Latin Monetary Union (1867–1915), paired French, Swiss and Belgium francs, and Italian lire.

28 Now PML, M.289, M.341, and M.529. For the invoices, see L. S. Olschki, April 20, 1907, March 6, 1909, MCC, ARC 1310.

29 Letters from Leo S. Olschki to Belle da Costa Greene, June 5 and 25, 1909, MCC, ARC 1310 (the second letter confirming the manuscript had been shipped).

30 Libreria Antiquaria Carlo Bruscoli (1870–1940). Still trading: Libreria Antiquaria Gonnelli (1875–), Libreria Antiquaria Gozzini (1850–), Libreria Internazionale Seeber (1861–). The manuscripts sold by the persons listed here (in the same order): BMLF, Acquisti e doni 256, 226, 290, 260, 292, 274, 225, 255. See BMLF *Inventario*.

31 Sources: BMLF *Inventario*; BNCF, *Registro cronologico d'ingresso: Acquisti*, vols. 16–24

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spending mere thousands of lire. Between June 1905 and June 1916, the Laurenziana spent 11,334 lire on twenty-nine medieval and Renaissance manuscripts, and the Nazionale 11,174 lire on 120 medieval and Renaissance manuscripts.

The average price paid by the Nazionale for a manuscript was 93 lire; the highest was 500 lire, which the library only paid for two manuscripts; of the other 118 manuscripts, just ten were bought for more than 200 lire, sixteen for between 101 and 200 lire, and the rest, that is eighty-four, were bought for less than 100 lire each. Of these eighty-four, thirty were bought for between 25 and 50 lire, and twenty-two for less than 25 lire. Only five manuscripts acquired in this period by the Nazionale are illuminated, but just with a few decorated initials, and the library bought many in poor condition and unbound. Meanwhile, the average price paid by the Laurenziana was 390 lire. Whilst both libraries spent roughly the same proportion of their budgets on manuscripts priced between 100 and 500 lire, the Laurenziana bought seven manuscripts at prices higher than 500 lire, and the Nazionale none for more than 500 (see Table 14.1). Conversely, the Nazionale bought fifteen manuscripts for less than 20 lire, and the Laurenziana none for less than 20.

Table 14.1: Manuscript acquisitions by the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana and the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale of Florence, 1905–1916.

Price range	Laurenziana	Nazionale
1001–1600 lire	4 MSS (= 13.8% of total)	0 MSS
501–1000 lire	3 MSS (= 10.3% of total)	0 MSS
201–500 lire	6 MSS (= 20.7% of total)	10 MSS (= 8.3% total)
101–200 lire	4 MSS (= 13.8% total)	16 MSS (= 13.3% total)
20–100 lire	12 MSS (= 41.4% total)	79 MSS (= 66% total)
2–19 lire	0 MSS	15 MSS (= 12.5% total)
	Total MSS: 29 **Total spent: 11,334 lire**	**Total MSS: 120** **Total spent: 11,174 lire**

Let us now look in detail at a few examples, starting with the Nazionale. The two most expensive manuscripts (500 lire each) are: a *zibaldone sacro* (religious commonplace book), supposedly an autograph by the Franciscan Angelo Carletti di Chivasso, and an early fifteenth-century copy of Dante's *Commedia* (BNCF Nuove Accessioni 349 and 482).[32] The first, bought from De Marinis, in addition to being an autograph, is written on parchment and has an attractive old binding (Figure 14.2). The second, bought from Bruscoli, is written on paper and in merchant cursive; however, as noted above, foreign

(1904–1947) (hereafter *Registro* A16–24); Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, *Registro cronologico di entrata*, vols. 2–7 (1886–1951), *Registro cronologico delle operazione inventariali* (1928–1931).

32 BNCF, *Registro* A18, acc. nos. 1332/954, 1393/807.

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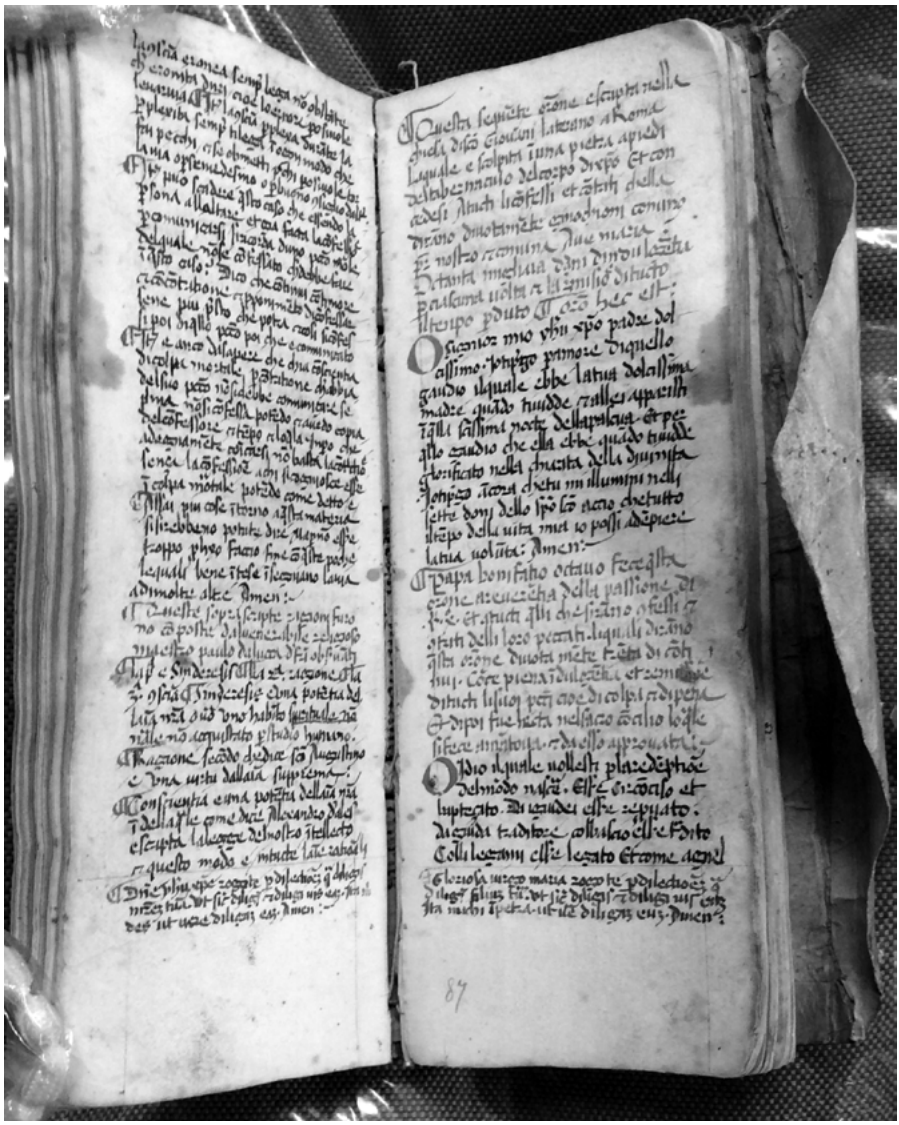


Figure 14.2. Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Nuove accessioni 349, Angelo Carletti di Chivasso, *Zibaldone sacro*, fols. 86v–87r, fifteenth century. Photo: Federico Botana (courtesy of the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze).

collectors were paying astronomical prices for Dante, who has a central place in Italian culture, especially in his native Florence.

Examples in the middle range include a paper manuscript containing religious poems by Bernardo Pulci, and another paper manuscript containing Petrarch's *Canzoniere e Trionfi*, both dating from the fifteenth century and bought from De Marinis

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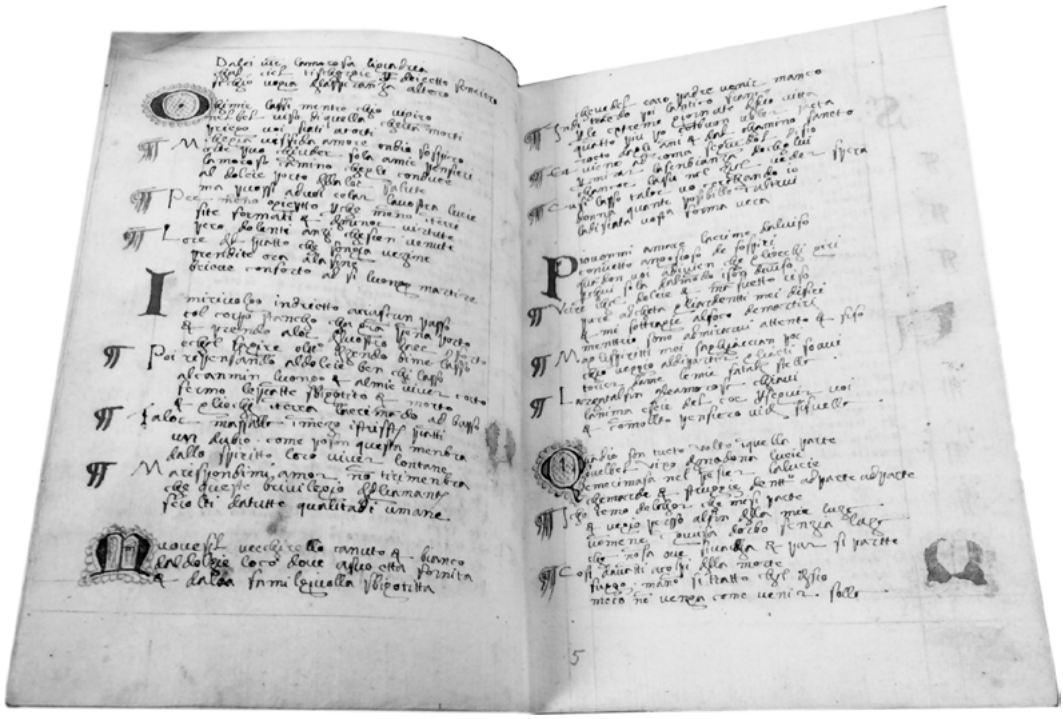


Figure 14.3. Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Nuove accessioni 341, Petrarca, *Canzoniere e Trionfi*, fols. 4v–5r, fifteenth century.
Photo: Federico Botana (courtesy of the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze).

for 140 and 230 lire, respectively (BNCF Nuove Accessioni 340 and 341).[33] Both manuscripts were probably copied by readers for their own use.[34] Bernardo Pulci, merchant and protégé of the Medici, is one of the most celebrated popular poets of the Quattrocento. Whilst Petrarch is one the greatest Tuscan poets, manuscripts of his works are not as rare as those of Dante; however, this one contains colourful filigree initials executed by the copyist (Figure 14.3). The manuscripts in the lower price range consist mainly of common-place books—for instance, the *ricordi* of Malatesta Gabuzzio (a notary from Montobaldo in Le Marche), acquired from Bruscoli for 20 lire, and a late fourteenth-century *laudo fiorentino* (legal pleadings and sentences), also bought from Bruscoli but for just 3 lire (BNCF Nuove Accessioni 493 and 173).[35]

The prices paid by the Laurenziana suggest more selective choices (Table 14.1). Of the 11,334 lire spent in medieval and Renaissance manuscripts by the library in 1905–1916, almost two thirds, 7,273 lire, were spent on seven items from the Thomas

33 BNCF *Registro* A18, acc. nos. 1332/945–46.

34 See Federico Botana, *Learning through Images in the Italian Renaissance: Illustrated Manuscripts and Education in Quattrocento Florence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 3–4, 19–49.

35 BNCF *Registro* A16, acc. no. 1120/037, A18, acc. no. 1405/426.

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Phillipps collection. The first and most expensive of these was Diogenes Laertius's *Vitae philosophorum*, executed in Florence in 1455 and bought from De Marinis in 1909 for 1,600 lire (BMLF, Acquisti e doni 259 (olim San Marco 323)).[36] The manuscript had been stolen from the library of San Marco in 1797, later entered Phillipps's hands, was auctioned in London in 1895, and by 1908 was with De Marinis, who advertised it for sale for 2,000 lire—thus he appears to have offered the library a 20 percent discount.[37]

The other six manuscripts were acquired at the Phillipps sale at Sotheby's in London in June 1910 by Bernard Quaritch at the request of the Italian Ambassador.[38] Rostagno, who received the auction catalogue two weeks in advance, must have contacted the Ministero della pubblica istruzione with a list of desiderata, as he did later for Boccaccio's *Teseida*, and the Ministero communicated the request to the Ambassador in London.[39] The six manuscripts, now BMLF, Acquisti e doni 262–67 include the *Cronica del Abadia Florentina 1418* and the *Fratres praedicatorum contra clerum Florentiae* (both chronicles compiled in the fifteenth century); poems by Lorenzo il Magnifico de' Medici and his son Giuliano, duke of Nemours (early sixteenth century, probably copied for Giuliano); the *Satires* and the life of Persius, signed and dated October 11, 1451 by the copyist Tomasinus filius Laurentii de Leva; Petrarch's *Epistolae de rebus senilibus* (fourteenth century) with a note of possession by the Venetian humanist Francesco Barbaro, dated 1424; and a fragment of a twelfth-century manuscript of Seneca's *Epistles* which had passed through the hands of the notorious Venetian abbot turned art dealer Luigi Celotti.[40] None of the seven Phillipps manuscripts acquired by the Laurenziana between 1909 and 1910 include miniatures. The *Vitae philosophorum* is written on parchment and has a large illuminated initial, and the compilation of poems by Lorenzo and Giuliano de' Medici has a colourful foliage border but is made of paper, like the two Florentine chronicles. The Persius, the Petrarch, and the Seneca manuscripts are on parchment, but only the second includes a pen-work initial; the other two have no decoration at all. In summary, like the manuscripts acquired by the Nazionale, those acquired by the Laurenziana were mainly of historical and literary interest.

36 BMLF *Inventario*, fol. 24r.

37 *Manuscrits et livres rares mis en vente à la librairie ancienne T. De Marinis* (Florence: De Marinis, 1908), no. 26.

38 BMLF *Inventario*, fol. 24r–v. London, Bernard Quaritch Ltd., Quaritch Archives: Commission Book 8 (1910–1913), 480.

39 Letter from Sotheby's to Enrico Rostagno, May 24, 1910, BMLF, Carteggio Rostagno, 1831.

40 *A Further Portion of the Classical…of the Late Sir Thomas Phillipps…Which will be Sold by Auction…6th of June, 1910* (London: Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge, 1910), lots 328, 333, 561, 654, 656, 724. The most expensive were the Medici poems at £52 (1,324 lire) and Petrarch's *Epistolae* at £61 (1,553 lire).

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Boccaccio's *Teseida*, Hoepli, and the Italian State

The acquisition of Giovanni Boccaccio's autograph of the *Teseida* by the Ministero della pubblica istruzione marks a turning point in the contributions of the State to public manuscript collections in Italy (Figure 14.4). It was also a great achievement for Rostagno, by then director of the Laurenziana, who had probably witnessed with sadness many precious manuscripts leaving Italy. Rostagno recorded the *Teseida* in the *Inventario dei Acquisti e Doni* in May 1929.[41] We learn there that it was acquired at the Hoepli auction of April 7–9, 1927 in Milan.[42] He wrote "It is undoubtedly the autograph of Boccaccio."[43] In the 1830s, the manuscript belonged to the erudite printer Étienne Audin de Rians (known in Italy as Stefano Audin) who knew it was an autograph and published the text in 1840.[44] It was then acquired by Lord Vernon; but when it was sold at Sotheby's in June 1918, neither Vernon's heirs nor Quaritch, who bought the manuscript, seemed to know it was Boccaccio's autograph.[45]

Rostagno wrote that when he saw the reproduction of the manuscript in Hoepli's catalogue, he immediately recognized Boccaccio's handwriting, so he provided the Ministero with a list of fifteen desiderata, without mentioning that one of them was Boccaccio's autograph, to "avoid spreading the rumour."[46] He explained:

> If they suspected the exceptional value of the manuscript, who could have rescued it from the greed of the Americans or the English, who would have fought for it with thousands of dollars or sterling? Certainly, the Ministero could not have bought it for only 5,100 lire![47]

The estimate in the catalogue was actually 6,000 lire. Rostagno informed some trustworthy friends about his discovery, notably the philologist Michele Barbi, who authenticated the manuscript. Rostagno concluded his account with a bold statement: "This is the real, genuine, precise story, of what happened, was said or written about this codex, of which

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41 BMLF *Inventario*, fol. 34r–v.

42 *Manoscritti, miniature, incunabuli, legature, libri figurati dei secoli XVI e XVIII*, April 7–9, 1927 (Milan: Hoepli, 1927), lot 356.

43 BMLF *Inventario*, fol. 34r: "È indubitabilmente autografo del Boccaccio" (underlined in the original).

44 Etienne Audin, *Il libro dell'Amazonide overo della guerra di Theseo ducha d'Athene* (Paris: Crapelet, 1840).

45 *Catalogue of a Choice Selected Portion of the Famous Library Removed from Sudbury Hall…Which will be Sold by Auction…10th of June, 1918* (London: Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge, 1918), lot 81.

46 BMLF *Inventario*, fol. 34r–v: "Esaminando io preso il Ministero il Catalogo Hoepli ... nel facsimile della tav. C riconobbi subito la scrittura del Boccaccio. Perciò raccomandai caldissimamente al ministero, in particolare al prof. ispettore bibliotecario Gallo, l'acquisto in 1ª linea dei Mss. '87. 354. 356. 357' in 2ª linea dei n. 29. 38. 61. 76. 100. 151. 269. 303. 344. 34 & 55....Tacqui sull'autografia del cod. 356, per non metter il campo a rumore" (underlined in the original).

47 BMLF *Inventario*, fol. 34v: "Se si subodorano questo pregio insigne del Ms., chi l'avrebbe potuto sottrare all'avidità degli americani e degli inglesi, che se lo sarebbero disputato a migliaia di dollari o di sterline? Certo il Ministero non l'avrebbe più potuto avere per sole lire 5100!"

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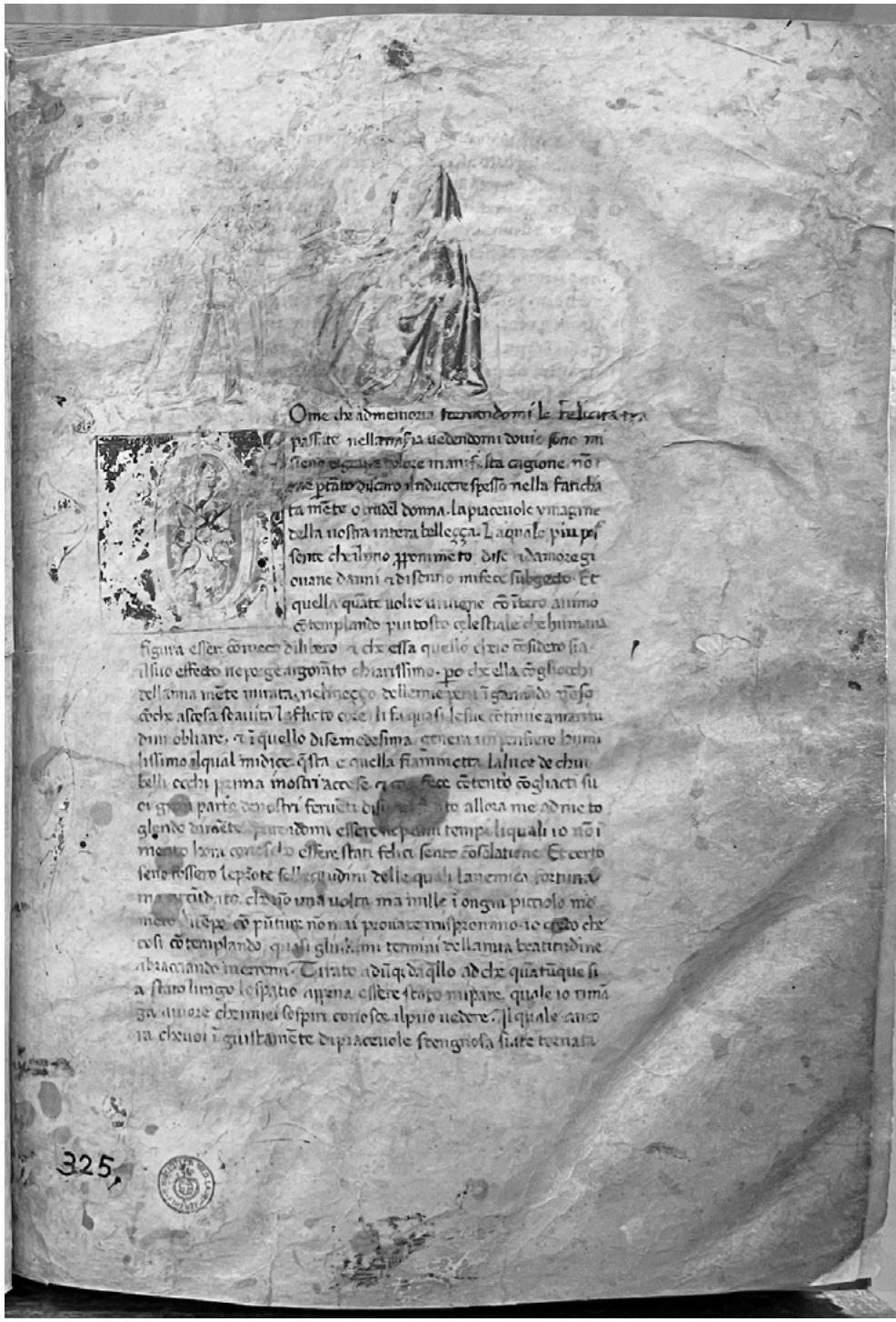


Figure 14.4. Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana,
MS Acquisti e doni 325, Boccaccio, *Teseida*, fol. 1r, ca. 1348–1350.
Photo: Federico Botana (courtesy of the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana).

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the assignation to the Laurenziana it is not possible to say how dear it is to me!—I am happy and proud."[48] The Laurenziana already housed the autographs of eleven works by Boccaccio, in addition to several manuscripts copied or glossed by him.[49] By the time the *Teseida* joined the library, the news had already reached the press; apparently, the events were not accurately reported, and this seems to be the reason behind Rostagno's detailed account in the inventory.[50]

Besides the six Phillipps manuscripts acquired in London in 1910, only two other manuscripts that entered the library between 1900 and 1927 are recorded in the *Inventario* as gifts from the Ministero.[51] However things changed by 1927. With the *Teseida* the library received three other manuscripts bought at the same auction for a sum of 37,285 lire (then worth £500), including the only extant copies of the vernacular version of the *Aeneid* by Ciampolo di Meo degli Ugurgieri of Siena, and the commentaries on Dante and Petrarch by Mino di Vanni d'Arezzo.[52] In the following five years, the Ministero obtained for the Laurenziana at least two other manuscripts from Hoepli, and many more for other libraries across Italy, which were usually allocated according to their origin—for example, the *Relazione dei viaggi* by Alvise da Ca' da Mosto was sent to the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana.[53] For the Laurenziana, the Ministero also acquired manuscripts from Jacques Rosenthal of Munich: in 1928, he provided four manuscripts, supposedly from the Certosa di Garegano, for a total of 11,153 lire, and in 1933 a manuscript of Petrarch's *Canzoniere e Trionfi* for 17,616 lire.[54]

The bounty was soon to end. In 1934, for the sale of Martini's collection organized by Hoepli in Lucerne, the Nazionale of Florence sent the Ministero a list containing eight desiderata, but only acquired two manuscripts.[55] The autograph of Leon Battista Alberti's *Elementi di matematica*, included in the list, ended up at Harvard.[56] The Biblioteca Nazionale's budget began decreasing from year to year: between 1933 and 1934,

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48 BMLF *Inventario*, fol. 34v: "Questa è la storia reale, genuina, precisa, decchè sia stato, detto o scritto a proposito dio questo codice, della cui assegnazione alla Laur. è a me cara non è possibile dire quanto!—Sono lieto e orgoglioso. Enrico Rostagno."

49 See "List of Manuscripts," in *The Cambridge Companion to Boccaccio*, ed. Guyda Armstrong, Rhiannon Daniels, and Stephen J. Milner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), xvii–xxiii.

50 Pio Rajna, "Un codice autografo della 'Teseide' di Giovanni Boccaccio," *Il Marzocco*, February 10, 1929, 4, in response to an article by Salvatore Battaglia published in *La Fiera letteraria* on February 3, 1929.

51 BMLF Acquisti e doni 237 and 274.

52 BMLF Acquisti e doni 314, 326–27, 328; *Manoscritti, miniature, incunabuli*, lots 87, 354, 357.

53 BMLF Acquisti e doni 330, 336; Venice, BNM, Cod. Marc. Ital. VI, 454.

54 BMLF Acquisti e doni 315–17, 338, 371.

55 Letter from Domenico Fava (?) to the Ministero dell'Educazione Nazionale, August 13, 1934, BNCF, Archivio Storico 2607 (Librari italiani). *Bibliothèque Joseph Martini, première partie livres rares et précieux d'autres provenances* (Milan: Hoepli, 1934), lots 41 (Poggio Bracciolini, *De varietate fortuna*), 104 (*Vita di S. Paola*), now BNCF Nuove Accessioni 693 and 94.

56 *Bibliothèque Joseph Martini*, lot 239; now Cambridge, MA, Harvard University, Houghton Library, MS Typ. 4221.

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the library spent 55,897 lire on books and manuscripts; 37,500 lire between 1934 and 1935, and just 24,406 lire between 1935 and 1936.[57] The Wall Street crash of 1929 and the cost of the Italian invasion of Ethiopia in 1935 were probably among the causes.

Patriotic Acts

The Ministerio's increasing participation in the acquisition of manuscripts for public libraries was motivated, it is reasonable to suppose, at least in part, by the exacerbated nationalism that swept Italy from the 1910s. The return of Borso d'Este's Bible to Modena in 1923 can be seen as a defining moment. This magnificent Renaissance Bible was in Paris about to be sold by an antique dealer to a banker in the United States.[58] At the request of Mussolini himself—who had been asked to intervene by De Marinis—the Milanese industrialist Giovanni Tréccani contributed 3,300,000 francs so that "the most beautiful manuscript in the world"—as described in the Italian press—"returns to its motherland."[59]

Indicative of a new attitude are probably the series of articles that began appearing before the outbreak of the First World War in *La Bibliofilía*, the bibliophilic journal founded and directed by Leo Olschki. In the first article, published in December 1913 under the title "Salvaguardiamo il Patrimonio artistico nazionale: Un grido di alarma" ("Let us protect the National Artistic Patrimony: A wakeup call"), Olschki compelled the Italian government to take immediate action to protect illuminated manuscripts in public libraries, still at the mercy of thieves' scalpels.[60] A short anonymous feature amongst the "Notizie" in the same issue, entitled "Una 'rapina' Francese dei manoscritti leonardiani," called on the French government to return the twelve Leonardo da Vinci notebooks at the Institut de France to Italy.[61] In December 1917, the "Notizie" denounced the sale in London of a collection of original documents from the Medici archives, including autographs by Leonello d'Este, Lorenzo il Maginfico, Angelo Polizziano, and Ludovico Sforza.[62] The "Notizie" of June 1918 included a feature lamenting the ongoing dispersal of private archives, and concluded by reporting the victory of the Italian government at London's High Court of Justice, which ruled that the documents from the Medici archives pertaining to state affairs should be returned to Italy.[63]

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57 BNCF, *Registro* A22 (1933–1938), 95, 161, 238.

58 See Ernesto Milano, "La Bibbia di Borso d'Este. L'avventura di un codice," in *La Bibbia di Borso d'Este: commentario al codice*, 2 vols. (Modena: Panini, 2005), 1:15–72.

59 Carlo Tridenti, "Il più bel Codice del mondo torna alla Patria italiana," *Il Corriere d'Italia*, May 11, 1923, 3.

60 Leo S. Olschki, "Salvaguardiamo il Patrimonio artistico nazionale," *La Bibliofilía* 15 (1913): 329–31.

61 "Una rapina Francese," *La Bibliofilía* 15 (1913): 355–58.

62 Carlo Frati, "Per una vendita di documenti Medicei," *La Bibliofilía* 19 (1917): 281–84.

63 "Per la conservazione dei nostri archivi privati," *La Bibliofilía* 20 (1918): 153.

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In at least two instances Olschki collaborated with the Italian government to save manuscripts for the nation. In 1914, he liaised between his friend Jacques Rosenthal and the Ministero to facilitate the return to the Cathedral of Mantua of three miniatures stolen from the fifteenth-century Missal of Barbara di Brandenburgo, which Rosenthal had acquired in Bologna.[64] In 1934, together with his son Aldo, Olschki engaged in arduous negotiations with Lathrop C. Harper in New York so that a rare manuscript of Dante's *Commedia*, copied in Istria between 1398 and 1400 and including the commentary by Benvenuto da Imola, was returned to Italy from the United States.[65] In addition, he donated manuscripts to public libraries on at least two occasions: in 1898, he presented the Laurenziana with a fourteenth-century manuscript of Dante's *Vita nuova*, and in 1906 he offered the Biblioteca Classense in Ravenna a copy of Dante's *Inferno* with the commentary by Cristoforo Landino.[66] Despite all this, and having been awarded the titles of *commendatore* and *cavaliere*, with the promulgation of the racial laws Leo Olschki was forced to move to Switzerland in 1938, where he died in 1940.

Conclusion

Before the First World War, Florentine public libraries could not compete financially with American collectors like Morgan. The first *Legge di tutela* was not effective enough to stop the export of valuable manuscripts. Yet, despite that and their financial limitations, the Nazionale and the Laurenziana succeeded in obtaining manuscripts of significant historical and literary interest. The Laurenziana appears to have preferred manuscripts with a strong connection to Medicean Florence and its humanists, continuing a tradition that can be traced back to its foundation. The Nazionale seemingly prioritized quantity over quality, which seems consistent with its new role of central national library. After the First World War, the Italian State seems to have provided more help to public libraries to acquire manuscripts than ever before, but for both political and economic reasons the times of bounty were soon over. It must be admitted, however, that the available documentary sources are fragmentary—the Nazionale's administrative archive, for instance, was almost completely destroyed by the 1966 flood. To arrive at a thorough understanding of the situation, we need to include other libraries in Italy, notably the Braidense in Milan, the Marciana in Venice, and the Nazionale of Rome. The results of my research in Florence, however, strongly suggest that developments in Italy

64 Archivio Olschki, C 1045–47. On the theft, see Giuse Pastore, "Furto e recupero di miniature del Messale e successive vicende dal 1913 al 1991," in *Messale di Barbara Brandenburgo Gonzaga: commentario all'edizione in facsimile*, ed. Giuseppa Zanichelli (Bologna: Il Bulino, 2012): 28–31.

65 Now Venice, BNM, Cod. Marc. Ital. IX, 692. For the correspondence, Archivio Olschki C 698–744. On the manuscript, see Valentina Petaros Jeromela, "I due codici e la tradizione del commento rambaldiano alla Divina Commedia," *Annales: Series Historia et Sociologia* 25 (2015): 677–704.

66 BMLF Acquisti e doni 224; Medardo Morici, "Per un Codice dell' 'Inferno' dantesco-landiniano, donato dal Comm. Leo S. Olschki alla Classense di Ravenna," *La Bibliofilía* 9 (1908): 401–9. Now Ravenna, Biblioteca Classense, MS 655. See Floriana Amicucci, "L'Inferno e scritti danteschi di Ficino e Landino," in *Dante e la divina commedia in Emilia Romagna*, ed. Gabriella Albanese, Sandro Bertelli, and Paolo Pontari (Milan: Silvana, 2021), 222.

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were similar to those in other European nations: an educated middle class increasingly conscious of the cultural value of medieval manuscripts; bookdealers, politicians and scholars who would intervene to safeguard the cultural capital of the nation. Whatever their personal agendas were, their actions have helped us to understand that a despoliation of medieval manuscripts on the scale of that which occurred in Italy between 1796 and 1914 should never happen again.

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Chapter 15

PRIVATE PURSES AND "NATIONAL" POSSESSIONS

THE FRENCH ACQUISITION FROM THE PHILLIPPS LIBRARY (1908)

HANNAH MORCOS

IN 1908, HENRI Omont, curator of manuscripts at the Bibliothèque nationale, finalized the acquisition of 272 volumes from the immense library amassed by Sir Thomas Phillipps, following four years of negotiations with his grandson, Thomas Fitzroy Fenwick.[1] The history of the Bibliothèque nationale's acquisition, however, dates back much further. On July 24, 1886, Léopold Delisle, manuscript scholar and director of the Bibliothèque nationale, wrote to inform the Ministre de l'Instruction publique that he had been indirectly approached about the sale of the Meerman manuscripts in the Phillipps collection, which once belonged to the Collège de Clermont in Paris.[2] Gerard Meerman had acquired the manuscripts in Paris around 1764, and his son Johan Meerman inherited and added to the collection, before Phillipps purchased over 650 manuscripts following the library's dispersal in 1824.[3] Delisle explained that the contents, as well as the origins of the manuscripts rendered them of prime interest to France.[4] Yet, he declined to buy them in the knowledge that the Bibliothèque nationale would not be able to obtain funding for such a large purchase. Delisle was embroiled in

1 From 244 Phillipps manuscripts, the Bibliothèque nationale acquired 233 new shelfmarks, which formed 272 volumes.

2 BnF, Fonds Mortreuil, 2005/028/039, fol. 2. Delisle's letter was composed three days before Fenwick's letter to Theodor Mommsen about the potential sale of the Meerman collection to the Royal Library at Berlin. See A. N. L. Munby, *The Dispersal of the Phillipps Library*, Phillipps Studies 5 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960), 22.

3 A. N. L. Munby, *The Formation of the Phillipps Library up to the Year 1840*, Phillipps Studies 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1954), 25–28.

4 "Par leur contenu autant que par leurs origines, ils ont pour la France un intérêt de premier ordre." Fonds Mortreuil, 2005/028/039, fol. 2r.

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trying to finance the return from England of the stolen Libri and Barrois manuscripts, unwittingly acquired by the fourth Earl of Ashburnham.[5] A year later, the Meerman manuscripts went to Berlin for £14,000.[6]

By 1888, Delisle had successfully acquired the stolen Libri and Barrois manuscripts and his focus turned to the dispersal of the Phillipps collection. The *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes* published a brief update on recent acquisitions by the German, Belgian, and Dutch governments, paying special attention to the source of funding in each case.[7] The report noted that the German purchase of the Meerman manuscripts was financed by a syndicate of bankers, whilst special grants funded the Belgian and Dutch acquisitions. The account concluded with the words of Samuel Muller, the archivist involved in the Dutch negotiations, who commented that the current generation was paying dearly to make amends for the "negligence" of past generations.[8] His lament over their failures to safeguard the nation's manuscripts seemingly resonated with the editors of the journal, which included Delisle. Three years later, Delisle echoed Muller's comments, whilst highlighting the contemporary imperative to remedy past mistakes in a publication on the recent acquisitions of the Bibliothèque nationale. Following a public call for greater investment in the library, Delisle asked if France would remain a mere "spectator" of the dispersal of large English private collections formed from "our spoils."[9] In his view, by not buying the "French part" of the Phillipps collection, France would commit a further act of negligence. The reparation of past losses and the recuperation of the "glorious monuments of our history and our literature" offered an opportunity to rejuvenate an institution considered from abroad as the greatest expression of France's "intellectual grandeur."[10] His public challenge to act on behalf of the national interest and for the global reputation of the Bibliothèque nationale betrays the curators' ongoing battles and foreshadows future struggles with the French government to secure funding to reinstitute such "losses."

In the same year, a group of French scholars visited the Phillipps library to catalogue the manuscripts deemed relevant to France. Following the trip, Omont published

5 Léopold Delisle, *Catalogue des manuscrits des fonds Libri et Barrois* (Paris: Champion, 1888).

6 Munby, *Dispersal of the Phillipps Library*, 26.

7 Anonymous, "Les manuscrits de Cheltenham," *BEC* 49 (1888): 694–703.

8 "Les manuscrits de Cheltenham," 703.

9 "La France restera-t-elle simplement spectatrice de la dislocation des grandes collections de manuscrits que de riches amateurs avaient formées en Angleterre depuis un siècle et dont nos dépouilles leur avaient fourni les principaux éléments?" Léopold Delisle, *Manuscrits latins et français ajoutés aux fonds des nouvelles acquisitions pendant les années 1875–1891*, 2 vols. (Paris: Champion, 1891), 1:lxxxv. All translations are my own unless otherwise stated.

10 "En négligeant d'acheter la partie française des collections de sir Thomas Phillipps, laisseronsnous échapper la merveilleuse occasion qui nous est offerte de réparer des pertes douloureuses, de sauver de glorieux monuments de notre histoire et de notre littérature, d'activer plusieurs genres de travaux d'érudition et de relever l'éclat d'une institution que tous nos gouvernements ont entourée de leur sollicitude, et qui, surtout aux yeux de l'étranger, est un des plus éloquents témoignages de la grandeur intellectuelle de la France?" Delisle, *Manuscrits latins et français ajoutés*, 1:lxxxv–lxxxvi.

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an overview of the items of historical interest, and Count Paul Durrieu, art historian and curator at the Louvre, produced an assessment of Phillipps's illuminated manuscripts, two thirds of which he identified as originating in France (encompassing Flanders and other regions under Burgundian rule).[11] Their reports were complemented by various articles on the medieval literary manuscripts in French by Paul Meyer, romance philologist and director of the École des chartes.[12] The Phillipps library was particularly rich in Anglo-Norman literature, on which Meyer had published several articles.[13] Together their publications formed an inventory of the items of interest to the Bibliothèque nationale and simultaneously claimed the manuscripts as belonging to the medieval heritage of modern France.

Despite the attention paid to the Phillipps library, it took almost two decades before Delisle and his colleagues made any significant acquisition for the Bibliothèque nationale. The Phillipps auctions offered the curators opportunities to recuperate some materials of interest. The largest purchase occurred in 1903, when the London-based dealer Bernard Quaritch bought over fifty lots on commission for the Bibliothèque nationale, amounting to 144 new shelfmarks.[14] Omont used this sale as a starting point for opening the negotiations with Fenwick for an *en bloc* purchase in January 1904.[15] After numerous setbacks, including the retirement of the formidable Delisle in February 1905, Omont finally settled the transaction in spring 1908.[16] This essay examines both the manuscripts desired and those eventually acquired for the Bibliothèque nationale to explore the economic dynamics and cultural claims underlying the purchase. The first section considers the historical manuscripts purchased in 1908 and the individuals involved in their export from and return to France. I then identify the attempts to

11 Henri Omont, "Manuscrits relatifs à l'histoire de France conservés dans la bibliothèque de sir Thomas Phillipps à Cheltenham," *BEC* 50 (1889): 68–96; and "Manuscrits relatifs à l'histoire de France conservés dans la bibliothèque de sir Thomas Phillipps à Cheltenham (suite et fin)," *BEC* 50 (1889): 180–217; see also Henri Omont, "Manuscrits relatifs à l'histoire de Paris et de l'Île-de-France conservés à Cheltenham," *Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire de Paris et de l'Île-de- France*, 16 (1889): 43–53; Paul Durrieu, "Les manuscrits à peintures de la bibliothèque de sir Thomas Phillipps à Cheltenham," *BEC* 50 (1889): 381–432. He entitled the first section: "Manuscrits enluminés dans le royaume de France (y compris les provinces du Nord, telles que la Flandre, qui ont fait partie au XVe siècle des États de la Maison de Bourgogne)" (386).

12 Paul Meyer, "Notice sur quelques manuscrits français de la bibliothèque Phillipps, à Cheltenham," *Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque nationale et autres bibliothèques* 34.1 (1891): 149–258. For a summary of his previous publications on Phillipps manuscripts, see 155n2.

13 For example, Paul Meyer, "Notice et extraits du MS. 8336 de la Bibliothèque de Sir Thomas Phillipps à Cheltenham," *Romania* 13 (1884): 497–541.

14 Henri Omont, "Manuscrits de la bibliothèque de sir Thomas Phillipps récemment acquis pour la Bibliothèque nationale," *BEC* 64 (1903): 490–553. The commission with Quaritch also included lots for the Archives de la Gironde and Musée Condé, Chantilly.

15 Letter from Omont to Fenwick, January 24, 1904, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Phillipps-Robinson c. 716, fols. 1–2.

16 Delisle, nonetheless, continued to play a role and, in November 1905, even attempted to get the Institut de France to fund the purchase on behalf of the Musée Condé. For a succinct overview of the "French negotiations," see Munby, *Dispersal of the Phillipps Library*, 31–36 at 35.

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buy manuscripts of literary importance in the early exchanges, and the book Durrieu considered the artistic "pearl" of the collection in the aftermath of the negotiations.[17] In doing so, this study demonstrates how the librarians and scholars curating the national collection reconciled Fenwick's prices with challenging financial circumstances, all the while attempting to rectify past mistakes. Indeed, the financial means and motivations of private individuals—in response to and against the contemporary national claims made about these manuscripts—played a central role in determining their fates.

The Phillipps manuscripts successfully acquired for the Bibliothèque nationale in 1908 comprised a range of historical documents of "French origin," including cartularies, account books, and charters, dating from the tenth to the nineteenth centuries.[18] The cartularies constituted the most important block, both in terms of significance and price. Delisle had been purposefully buying cartularies for the Bibliothèque nationale throughout the previous decades and valued them as the most "solid" basis for accessing the medieval past.[19] He claimed that a ministerial decision in 1798 called for cartularies to be reunited in the national collection and that since then its curators had been "zealously" battling against foreign establishments and collectors to fight for their acquisition.[20]

Amans-Alexis Monteil was involved in both salvaging such manuscripts and selling them to Phillipps. His varied career combined the roles of archivist, collector, historian, and dealer of manuscripts, but not necessarily in that order.[21] Monteil primarily acquired and sold historical documents and records dispersed by the Revolution, scavenged from parchment sales, or put on the market by unwitting archivists.[22] He gave these previously overlooked artefacts new value and promoted innovative practices for their preservation, while simultaneously profiting from the importance he attributed to them through his scholarship and marketing practices.[23] Phillipps began acquiring Monteil's manuscripts in the early 1820s via the Parisian *libraire* Jean-François Royez, who

17 Durrieu, "Les manuscrits à peintures," 386.

18 See Henri Omont, *Catalogue des manuscrits latins et français de la Collection Phillipps acquis en 1908 pour la Bibliothèque nationale* (Paris: Leroux, 1909), I.

19 "Les cartulaires sont une des bases les plus solides de tous les travaux auxquels peut donner lieu l'histoire du moyen âge." Delisle, *Manuscrits latins et français ajoutés*, 1:xxxv.

20 Delisle, *Manuscrits latins et français ajoutés*, 1:xxxv–vi.

21 Monteil was the archivist at the library of the École militaire de Saint-Cyr between 1815 and 1819 and soon after started selling manuscripts. See Jean-Loup Lemaître, "Amans-Alexis Monteil (1769–1850) et les manuscrits," *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes* 164 (2006): 227–50 at 242; Chris Warne, "Amateurs and Collectors: Amans-Alexis Monteil and the Emergence of a Professional Archive Culture in Nineteenth-Century France," *Australian Journal of French Studies* 33.1 (1996): 45–72.

22 Warne, "Amateurs and Collectors," 48.

23 Amans-Alexis Monteil, *Traité de matériaux manuscrits de divers genres d'histoire*, 2 vols. (Paris: Duverger, 1835). This *Traité* was essentially a priced sale catalogue, but its introduction outlined Monteil's manifesto for the preservation of historical documents, such as binding rolls and loose leaves in codices. He expanded on this in a second edition, published the following year. See Lemaître, "Amans-Alexis Monteil"; and Warne, "Amateurs and Collectors," 50–51.

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was succeeded by his widow in 1823.[24] When Madame Royez announced her intended retirement to Phillipps in 1827, she introduced him to Monteil as someone with whom he might develop a similar relationship.[25] Monteil swiftly allied himself with Phillipps, initially sending him a copy of his *Histoire des français des divers états aux cinq derniers siècles*, which cited several manuscripts that had already entered Phillipps's library.[26] In November 1828, Monteil wrote to Phillipps, promising him first refusal of the manuscripts featured in the forthcoming volume of his *Histoire* and stating that he would not sell anything to the Bibliothèque du Roi before consulting Phillipps.[27] In one letter, he requested transcriptions of two cartularies from Bordeaux on behalf of the Bibliothèque du Roi, admitting that he had sold them for financial reasons and that the French librarians regretted their loss.[28] Seven months later, Monteil repeated the request and confessed that he had recently sold a number of the aforementioned manuscripts to the Bibliothèque du Roi, because the librarians feared that they too would soon cross the Channel.[29] This is the last letter from Monteil in the Phillipps-Robinson papers, but his manuscripts continued to enter Phillipps's library.[30] Despite imploring the nation to appreciate its "written monuments," Monteil had been complicit in their export, while the French librarians were slow to acknowledge their value and Phillipps's interest in them.[31] In consequence, Monteil's manuscripts accounted for around one fifth of the documents bought from Fenwick for the Bibliothèque nationale, including obituaries and martyrologies, significant series of charters and accounts, and at least eight of the thirty medieval cartularies.[32]

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24 On Royez, see Luc Marco, "Le renouveau du marché des livres de commerce à Paris en 1802," *Philosophia Scientiæ* 22.1 (2018): 43–61.

25 See letters from Madame Royez to Phillipps, July 26, 1827 and December 17, 1827, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Phillipps-Robinson b. 122, fols. 214–15, 220–21.

26 Letter from Monteil to Phillipps, November 29, 1827, Phillipps-Robinson b. 122, fol. 216. See Amans-Alexis Monteil, *Histoire des français des divers états aux cinq derniers siècles*, 2 vols. (Paris: Janet et Cotelle, 1827–1828).

27 Letter from Monteil to Phillipps, November 13, 1828, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Phillipps-Robinson c. 424, fols. 232–33; letters from Monteil to Phillipps, November 25 and 30, 1829, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Phillipps-Robinson c. 426, fols. 89–90.

28 The manuscripts in question were the cartularies of Saint-Séverin and Saint-André (Phillipps MSS 71 and 82).

29 Letter from Monteil to Phillipps, June 21, 1830, Phillipps-Robinson c. 429, fols. 105–6.

30 It is unclear whether Phillipps bought manuscripts directly from Monteil after 1830. Some manuscripts acquired from Thorpe in 1836 (Phillipps MSS 8539–10185, see [Thomas Phillipps], *Catalogus librorum manuscriptorum in bibliotheca D. Thomæ Phillipps, Bart., A. D. 1837* ([Broadway: Middle Hill], 1837–), 137), belonged to Monteil's collection, such as Phillipps MS 8872 (BnF, NAL 1947). On Monteil's sales, see Lemaître, "Amans-Alexis Monteil."

31 "Partout l'ignorance détruit également les monuments écrits." Amans-Alexis Monteil, *Traité de matériaux manuscrits de divers genres d'histoire*, 2 vols. (Paris: Duverger, 1836), 1:vii.

32 The cartularies from Monteil acquired in 1908 include: Phillipps MSS 68 (BnF, NAL 1927), 1321 (NAL 938), 1322 (NAL 930), 1335 (NAL 931), 2970 (NAL 1935), 2971 (NAL 1936), 2973 (NAL 1934), 4372 (NAL 2413).

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Omont secured for the Bibliothèque nationale all the cartularies identified in his article on the historical manuscripts in the Phillipps library, apart from those that had been sold since its publication.[33] Alsace-Lorraine was under the control of the German Empire when the local archives acquired four cartularies from Metz (Phillipps MSS 76, 1320, 2246 (and 13639), 10456 (and 13619)) and a number of other historical documents related to the region from Fenwick in 1890 and 1891.[34] The Conseil départemental de la Gironde funded their own purchase in 1894, including three cartularies from Bordeaux (Phillipps MSS 69, 71, and 82).[35] In addition, the Belgian national archives acquired a thirteenth-century cartulary from Liessies Abbey (Phillipps MS 8839) at the Phillipps auction in June 1899 (lot 821).[36] The Bibliothèque nationale's curators had commissioned Quaritch to buy this lot and increased their limit from £150 to £210—the highest maximum bid set by the Bibliothèque nationale for any of the Phillipps sales during this period.[37] However, this fell well below the final price of £307, deemed "excessive" by French scholars.[38] Despite Liessies being located within the borders of modern France, the Belgian Government ensured the acquisition of this manuscript from an abbey of importance to the history of Hainault.

Fenwick knew the importance of the cartularies to the Bibliothèque nationale and priced them accordingly. He valued the two earliest cartularies (Phillipps MSS 67 and 70) at £500 each—the highest value given to any of the manuscripts of interest to the French—in a list compiled at the start of the negotiations in May 1904.[39] In subsequent lists, the eleventh-century cartulary, or "Livre noir" of the Abbey of Saint-Florent-lès-Saumur (Phillipps MS 70; BnF, NAL 1930) retained this valuation.[40] The figure of £500 equated to over 12,500 francs in 1908, which was more than the Bibliothèque nationale had ever spent on a single manuscript using their allowance for acquisitions.[41]

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33 Omont, "Manuscrits relatifs," 70–71.

34 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Phillipps-Robinson c. 712.

35 Omont introduced Jean-Auguste Brutails, a fellow *chartiste* and archivist at the Archives de la Gironde, to Fenwick in November 1889. See Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Phillipps-Robinson c. 713, fols. 1–2. Most of the items acquired had been owned by Monteil. See Jean-Auguste Brutails, "Documents bordelais de la bibliothèque de Sir Thomas Phillipps," *BEC* 55 (1894): 227–29 at 228.

36 Brussels, Archives générales du Royaume, Archives ecclésiastiques 16706.

37 London, Bernard Quaritch Ltd., Quaritch Archives: Commission Book 6 (1899–1903), 37.

38 See Amand d'Herbomez, "*Étude sur l'abbaye de Liessies (1095–1147)*, par le P. M. Jacquin," *BEC* 64 (1903): 624. The review considers a study produced for the Belgian Royal Historical Commission soon after the acquisition of this cartulary. See P. M. Jacquin, "Étude sur l'abbaye de Liessies, 1095–1147," *Bulletin de la Commission royale d'histoire* 71 (1902): 283–400.

39 Phillipps-Robinson c. 716, fols. 340–46. Phillipps bought these two manuscripts and Phillipps MS 2861 from Royez between 1822 and 1823 for 2,400 francs (fol. 272).

40 Phillipps-Robinson c. 716, fols. 321, 353. Fenwick reduced the price of the twelfth-century Cartulary of Fontevrault (Phillipps MS 67; BnF, NAL 2414) to £400 in a list dated November 7, 1905 (fol. 331), and to £250 in another list (fol. 353).

41 In 1900, 10,000 francs (approximately £396) was spent on an illuminated sixth-century copy of the Gospel of Matthew in Greek on purple vellum (BnF, Sup. grec 1286). See Henri Omont, "Peintures du manuscrit grec de l'Évangile de saint Matthieu, copié en onciales d'or sur parchemin pourpré, et

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Table 15.1: Phillipps manuscripts bought for the Bibliothèque nationale by donors (1908).

Phillipps MS no.	BnF shelfmark	Contents	Fenwick's valuations	Donor
7404	NAL 1921	Cartulary of the Abbey of Saint-Quentin, Beauvais (twelfth century)	£110–140	Thérèse de Rothschild
7410	NAL 1933	Cartulary of the Priory of Saint-Maurice, Senlis (fourteenth century)	£28–45	Thérèse de Rothschild
2973	NAL 1934	Cartulary of the Templars of Sommereux (thirteenth century)	£70–150	Thérèse de Rothschild
2841	NAF 10685	*Conseil de Pierre de Fontaines* (thirteenth century)	£30–35	Thérèse de Rothschild
77	NAL 929	Cartulary of the prebends of the Cathedral of Laon (thirteenth to fifteenth centuries)	£65–150	Edmond de Rothschild
876	NAL 936	Cartulary of the University of Paris (fourteenth century)	£100	Edmond de Rothschild
2863	NAL 937	Statutes and Privileges of the Faculty of Law, University of Paris (fifteenth century)	£35–50	Edmond de Rothschild
2275	NAL 939	Cartulary of the Church of Reims (thirteenth century)	£40–65	Maurice Fenaille
8076	NAL 1963	Martyrology of Ado of Vienne; Obituary of the Priory of Cassan, Beziers (twelfth century)	£60–100	Maurice Fenaille
811	NAF 10683	*Établissements de Saint Louis* (thirteenth century)	£25–35	Maurice Fenaille
810	NAF 10684	*Établissements de Saint Louis* (fifteenth century)	£10–16	Maurice Fenaille

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Faced with budgetary restrictions, as well as Fenwick's inflated prices and insistence on a single payment as opposed to instalments, Omont had no other choice than to look beyond the state's purse.[42]

The twenty most expensive manuscripts, including almost half of the cartularies, were bought with donations totalling £2,320. This amounted to over half the figure paid to Fenwick for the 1908 acquisition (£4,125).[43] The state paid the remaining £1,805 (45,125 francs) for the majority of the manuscripts.[44] Two of the major donors were members of the Rothschild family.[45] Thérèse de Rothschild, widow of Baron James Édouard de Rothschild (one of the founders of the Société des anciens textes français, alongside Paul Meyer), gifted four manuscripts to the library (see Table 15.1).[46] Baron Edmond de Rothschild funded the purchase of three manuscripts. In addition, the industrialist and collector, Maurice Fenaille paid for four.[47] The donations thus guaranteed the most important patrimonial artefacts for the Bibliothèque nationale, while state funding completed the less costly bulk of the purchase.[48] The French press lauded their generosity, publicly praising the role of these three donors in "this patriotic rescue mission."[49]

In the introduction to the published catalogue of acquisitions from the Phillipps library, Omont lamented the considerable body of manuscripts related to France that remained in Cheltenham, especially the witnesses of "our literature."[50] Omont had pursued a number of these manuscripts in May 1904, when he first visited Fenwick accompanied by Meyer. The list of manuscripts that they wished to consult featured a selection

récemment acquis pour la Bibliothèque Nationale," *Monuments et mémoires de la Fondation Eugène Piot* 7.2 (1900): 175–86.

42 Omont had initially proposed spending £1,000 per year from the annual budget for acquisitions (approximately £1,252 in this period). See Henry Marcel et al., *La Bibliothèque nationale* (Paris: Laurens, 1907), 31.

43 Letter from Omont to Fenwick, March 22, 1908, Phillipps-Robinson c. 716, fols. 185–87.

44 BnF, Département des manuscrits, Archives modernes 518, no. 1555.

45 See François Avril, "Dons de la baronne James Édouard et du baron Edmond James de Rothschild au Département des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque nationale 1902–1908," in *Les Rothschild, une dynastie de mécènes en France*, ed. Pauline Prévost-Marcilhacy, 3 vols. (Paris: Somogy, 2016), 1:82–85.

46 She had previously donated two manuscripts to the Bibliothèque nationale (BnF, NAL 1815 and 1835), and thirteen autograph volumes of Brantôme (NAF 20468–80). See Henri Omont, *Nouvelles acquisitions du Département des manuscrits pendant les années 1891–1910* (Paris: Leroux, 1912), XXXIII.

47 On their donations, see BnF, Inventaire 9, Registre des entrées du Département des manuscrits: dons, 1895–1948, fol. 77r. The inventory does not identify the source of the most expensive item in Fenwick's lists (Phillipps MS 70; BnF, NAL 1930) and a handful of other manuscripts funded by donation.

48 Almost two thirds of the manuscripts bought using the Bibliothèque nationale's budget cost 100 francs or less.

49 "cette patriotique œuvre de sauvetage." See M. D., "Les nouvelles acquisitions de la Bibliothèque nationale," *Le Temps*, May 8, 1908, 2.

50 Omont, *Catalogue*, x.

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of medieval works in French, including chronicles, and a handful of volumes preserving classical and medieval Latin texts, in addition to the historical documentation that they eventually acquired.[51] Fenwick wrote that he was not prepared to sell every item that might be solicited and that he would explain more when they met.[52] Whilst his explanation is absent from the correspondence, Fenwick's lists of manuscripts, as well as his general approach to the dispersal of the medieval literary manuscripts in French, suggest his decisive role in their fates.[53]

Fenwick's first list of "French MSS" responded to Omont's by recording both the items that had already been "sold" and his valuations of the available manuscripts.[54] The Belgian Government had bought five manuscripts in 1900, including two fifteenth-century manuscripts of Jean Froissart's *Chroniques* probably produced in Paris (Phillipps MSS 131 and 24258; Brussels, KBR, MSS II 2551 and II 2552).[55] Fenwick had proposed these manuscripts to the Belgian curator Joseph van den Gheyn in 1899 as part of a "collection" judged to be "of Belgian origin or interest."[56] Fenwick's inclusion of the two Froissart manuscripts, whose Parisian origins he may not have known, offers another example of the conflicting ways these remnants of the medieval past could be claimed for modern nations. The medieval author's origins and patronage connected him to Hainault, but also to England following the marriage of Queen Philippa of Hainault to Edward III. The manuscripts of Froissart's *Chroniques* were predominantly produced within the region of modern France, but were also sold to English clients as was possibly the case with Phillipps MS 24258.[57] Meyer and Omont selected the copies of Froissart along with the other medieval manuscripts in French on the basis of their language and the value of the texts to scholars, as well as their potential affordability (they notably did not pursue any of the generally more expensive Arthurian romances).

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51 Phillipps-Robinson c. 716, fols. 253–64. Omont included these "chronicles" in his overview of the historical manuscripts, see "Manuscrits relatifs," 74–75.

52 Draft letter from Fenwick to Omont, May 21, 1904, Phillipps-Robinson c. 716, fols. 19–20.

53 Fenwick was highly calculated about the material available to purchase privately, holding back "the romances and the illuminated MSS" from negotiations with the British Museum, Bodleian, and Cambridge University libraries in 1890. See Munby, *Dispersal of the Phillipps Library*, 46.

54 Phillipps-Robinson c. 716, fols. 340–46. Fenwick repeatedly told Omont that he preferred to work from a total figure rather than attribute individual values to manuscripts; yet in his own calculations, he priced manuscripts individually. Omont insisted that individual figures were needed both to obtain credit for the purchase and to determine their selection. Letter from Omont to Fenwick, May 18, 1904, Phillipps-Robinson c. 716, fols. 17–18.

55 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Phillipps-Robinson c. 715, fols. 70–118. On the Belgian purchases, see Munby, *Dispersal of the Phillipps Library*, 28–31. I thank Godfried Croenen for sharing information on the two Froissart manuscripts. See also Godfried Croenen, "The Reception of Froissart's Writings in England: The Evidence of the Manuscripts," in *Language and Culture in Medieval Britain: The French of England, c.1100–c.1500*, ed. Jocelyn Wogan-Browne et al. (York: York Medieval Press, 2009), 409–19.

56 Draft letter from Fenwick to Joseph Van den Gheyn, October 30, 1899, Phillipps-Robinson c. 715, fols. 7–8. See also Munby, *Dispersal of the Phillipps Library*, 31.

57 See Croenen, "Reception," 415–16.

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Table 15.2: The most expensive medieval manuscripts crossed off the first list of "French MSS" (May 1904), in descending order of Fenwick's valuations.[58]

Phillipps MS no.	Contents	Fenwick's valuation (1904)	Current location
10190	Capitularies of Charlemagne (ninth century)	£200	New Haven, Yale University Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, MS 413
8336	Trilingual miscellany, including the works of Nicole Bozon, Walter de Bibbesworth, etc. (fourteenth century)	£200	BL, Add. MS 46919
8345	*Waldef* (unique copy); *Gui de Warewic*; *Otinel* (thirteenth/ fourteenth century)	£180	Cologny, Fondation Martin Bodmer, Cod. Bodmer 168
8193	Jean Cuvelier, *Chanson de Bertrand du Guesclin* (fourteenth/ fifteenth century)	£170	New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, MS 990
3340	Noyon Sacramentary (tenth century)	£150	BL, Add. MS 82956
222	*Orson de Beauvais* (unique copy) (thirteenth century)	£150	BnF, NAF 16600
236	Christine de Pizan, etc., *Débat sur le Roman de la Rose* (fifteenth century)	£136	Berkeley, Bancroft Library, UCB 109
1277	Jean Froissart, *Chroniques* (fifteenth century)	£100	KBR, MS IV 1102
4760	Register of Letters of Pope Innocent VI (fourteenth century)	£80	Last recorded at Sotheby's, November 28, 1967, lot 98
3713	Raoul de Houdenc, *Roman des Eles*; *Donnei des Amants* (unique copy) (thirteenth century)	£60	Cologny, Fondation Martin Bodmer, Cod. Bodmer 82

58 Phillipps-Robinson c. 716, fols. 340–46.

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The selection included books of insular origin, whose value Fenwick appraised from an English perspective as opposed to the continental view which posited them in relation to the French of France.[59] Two of the highest priced manuscripts crossed off the first list were important witnesses of Anglo-Norman literary culture (Phillipps MSS 8345 and 8336), claimed simply as "Poèmes français" by Omont, but valued by Fenwick at £180 and £200 respectively (see Table 15.2). In the same vein, Fenwick gave Phillipps MS 3713—a thirteenth-century manuscript of English origin containing the unique copy of the *Donnei des Amants*—the value of £60 despite it being formed of only twenty-four folios.

All the most expensive items crossed off the first list contain medieval literature in French (both continental and insular), with the exception of the Capitularies of Charlemagne (Phillipps MS 10190), the Noyon Sacramentary (3340), and the Register of Letters of Pope Innocent VI (4760).[60] Fenwick attributed £150 to the copy of *Orson de Beauvais* (222) from northeastern France, rendering it more expensive than any thirteenth-century manuscript of *chanson de geste* sold at the recent Ashburnham "Appendix" (1899) and Ashburnham-Barrois (1901) sales.[61] It is not insignificant that this manuscript and several of the insular books preserved *unica*. Nonetheless, Fenwick's prices were relatively high for largely esoteric text manuscripts without significant illumination or adorned bindings, and did enough to deter Omont and Meyer from pursuing them.

Fenwick did not fix a value to every item on the first list, including five medieval manuscripts in French. There may have been existing expressions of interest, or the potential that their sale would have been refused by the Court of Chancery.[62] In the case of the thirteenth-century insular copy of the *Chanson d'Aspremont* (Phillipps MS 26119; Cologny, Fondation Martin Bodmer, Cod. Bodmer 11), one of twenty-four extant witnesses of this *chanson de geste*, Fenwick may have avoided fixing a price because of the inflated figure that his grandfather paid. Meyer witnessed it achieve £100 at the Savile sale in London in 1861, alongside several other expensive purchases of "poésies françaises" made on behalf of Phillipps.[63] A second manuscript of the *Chanson*

59 In his study of Phillipps MS 8336, Meyer distinguished the continental texts from those of insular provenance, acknowledging the importance of Anglo-Norman authors such as Nicole Bozon, whose works he edited for the Société des anciens textes français. See Meyer, "Notice et extraits;" *Les Contes moralisés de Nicole Bozon frère mineur*, ed. Lucy Toulmin Smith and Paul Meyer (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1889).

60 Omont repeatedly attempted to acquire Phillipps MS 10190, but Fenwick would not capitulate and eventually sold the manuscript to Alfred Chester Beatty for £500 in 1923. See letter from Beatty to Fenwick, February 23, 1923, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Phillipps-Robinson c. 719, fols. 58–59.

61 See Hannah Morcos, "*Mission littéraire en Angleterre*: Paul Meyer and the Quest for Medieval French Manuscripts at the Ashburnham-Barrois sale (1901)," *Romania* 141 (2023): 166–95.

62 I thank Tony Edwards for highlighting the potential limitations placed on the material by the Court of Chancery.

63 Paul Meyer, "Vente des manuscrits de la famille Savile," *BEC* 22 (1861): 272–80. The high prices paid included £380 for the unique copy of the *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal* (Phillipps MS 25155; PML M.888), which Meyer subsequently edited, *L'histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal, comte de Striguil et de Pembroke, régent d'Angleterre de 1216 à 1219, poème français publié pour la Société de l'histoire de France*, ed. Paul Meyer, 3 vols. (Paris: Renouard, 1891–1901).

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Table 15.3: Trajectories of manuscripts containing medieval French works crossed off the first list of "French MSS" (May 1904), ordered by occasion of dispersal.[64]

Phillipps MS no.	Contents	Fenwick's valuation (1904)	Occasion of dispersal
3950	Enguerrand de Monstrelet, *Chroniques*	£15	1911 (Sotheby's, April 24, lot 219)
8075	Adenet le roi, *Berte aus grans piés*, *Enfances Ogier*; Herbert le Duc de Dammartin, *Foulque de Candie*	—	1946 (direct negotiation with Brussels)
24172	Jean de Vignay, *Jeu des échecs moralisé*	—	1946 (Sotheby's, July 1, lot 28)
8345	*Waldef*; *Gui de Warewic*; *Otinel*	£180	1948 (Robinson catalogue 77, no. 64)
8336	Trilingual miscellany, including the works of Nicole Bozon, Walter de Bibbesworth, etc.	£200	1949 (Robinson catalogue 79)[65]
6664	Collection of religious poems and saints' lives	£20	1950 (Robinson catalogue 81, no. 48)
3713	Raoul de Houdenc, *Roman des Eles*; *Donnei des Amants*	£60	1953 (Robinson catalogue 83, pp. 1–3)
7078	Baudouin d'Avesnes, *Chroniques de Hainaut*	—	1957 (Kraus catalogue 85, no. 9)
236	Christine de Pizan, etc., *Débat sur le Roman de la Rose*	£136	1969 (Sotheby's, November 25, lot 462)
26119	*Chanson d'Aspremont*	—	1969 (Sotheby's, November 25, lot 452)
222	*Orson de Beauvais*	£150	1973 (Sotheby's, November 28, lot 585)
8193	Jean Cuvelier, *Chanson de Bertrand du Guesclin*	£170	1973 (Sotheby's, November 28, lot 592)
1277	Jean Froissart, *Chroniques*	£100	1976 (Sotheby's, November 30, lot 871)
21910	*Voeux du faisan*	—	1976 (Sotheby's, November 30, lot 881)
833	Gautier de Metz, *Image du monde*	£50	1979 (Kraus catalogue 153, no. 64)

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	Price	Current Location
	£12	Manchester, John Rylands Library, MS Fr. 55
	?	KBR, MS II 7451
	£600	Unknown. Bought by Davis and Orioli in 1946.
	£1,250	Cologny, Fondation Martin Bodmer, Cod. 168
	£8,500	BL, Add. MS 46919
	£400	KBR, MS IV 1005 (since 1974)
	£2,250	Cologny, Fondation Martin Bodmer, Cod. 82
	£3,500	New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, MS 339
	£5,800	Berkeley, Bancroft Library, UCB 109
	£4,800	Cologny, Fondation Martin Bodmer, Cod. 11
	£3,600	BnF, NAF 16600
	£2,800	New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, MS 990
	£2,400	KBR, MS IV 1102
	£3,000	KBR, MS IV 1103
	$20,000	Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preussischer Kulturbesitz, MS 305

d'Aspremont (lot 26) also fetched £100 at the Savile sale, and reached the even higher price of £155 at Guiglielmo Libri's sale in 1862, before plummeting to £26 when it re-entered the market at the Ashburnham "Appendix" sale in 1899 (lot 150; BL, Add. MS 35289).[66] Fenwick clearly took into account what his grandfather paid, whilst following the market closely.[67]

Fenwick withheld most of Phillipps's medieval literary manuscripts in French from the auction room, where they might have been more attainable for the Bibliothèque nationale during the early twentieth century.[68] Only Enguerrand de Monstrelet's *Chroniques* (Phillipps MS 3950) appeared at auction during Fenwick's lifetime; it fetched £12 at the 1911 sale (lot 219), which was £3 less than his valuation in 1904. The rest of the manuscripts containing medieval French works did not leave the Phillipps collection until after Fenwick's death and the purchase by W. H. Robinson Limited in 1946 (see Table 15.3).[69] The sole manuscript acquired by the Bibliothèque nationale was the unique copy of *Orson de Beauvais* (Phillipps MS 222; BnF NAF 16600), which raised £3,600 at auction in 1973.[70] The majority of the other medieval

64 The data on the manuscripts have been compiled from the *Schoenberg Database of Manuscripts* (https://sdbm.library.upenn.edu/), *Biblissima* (https://portail.biblissima.fr/), and the IRHT's databases: *Bibale* (https://bibale.irht.cnrs.fr/) and *JONAS* (https://jonas.irht.cnrs.fr/), all accessed May 29, 2023.

65 *Phillipps Manuscript 8336 [Catalogue 79]* (London: Robinson, 1949).

66 See Paul Meyer, "Chronique," *Romania* 28 (1899): 474–75. On prices at the "Appendix" sale see Léopold Delisle, "Vente des manuscrits du comte d'Ashburnham. Second article," *Journal des savants* (August 1899): 510.

67 Munby, *Dispersal of the Phillipps Library*, 54. For Fenwick's record of Phillipps's sources and purchase prices, see Phillipps-Robinson c. 716, fols. 272–77.

68 According to Munby, he deliberately held back from auction the "greatest treasures." Munby, *Dispersal of the Phillipps Library*, 55.

69 Munby, *Dispersal of the Phillipps Library*, 94–112.

70 *Bibliotheca Phillippica: Medieval Manuscripts: New Series: Part VIII…28th November 1973* (London: Sotheby & Co., 1973), lot 585.

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French literary manuscripts initially pursued for the Bibliothèque nationale remained in Europe, but not in France.

Even in the early stages of negotiations the French did not contemplate including any of the richly illuminated manuscripts identified by Durrieu.[71] Yet, three months after the deal was finalized, Omont wrote to Fenwick to inquire about the manuscript described by Durrieu as the "pearl" of the collection.[72] The Bibliothèque nationale already had two leaves from this thirteenth-century illuminated Bible (BnF, NAL 2294), and Omont attached photographs to his letter. Fenwick swiftly dismissed his interest, emphasizing that the manuscript was far beyond the library's resources and that he already had several interested buyers.[73] Omont probed further in a second letter by asking Fenwick to specify the price, noting that they might rely on the current generosity of donors if the library's budget were insufficient.[74] Fenwick replied with the huge price tag of £10,000, which Omont deemed a potentially "insurmountable obstacle" to its reunion with the leaves held in Paris.[75] He persisted, however, and asked Fenwick for photographs of the manuscript so that he might tempt a collector to return it to France, whether for their own collection or as a gift to the national library.[76] Yet, no further progress was made. In 1916, Belle da Costa Greene agreed to pay £10,000 for the manuscript on behalf of John Pierpont Morgan Jr., after it had been initially refused by his father six years earlier.[77] Thus the manuscript classified by Durrieu as one of the masterpieces of French gothic art became the Morgan Library's "Crusader Bible" (now PML, M.638)[78]

The French claims to the Phillipps manuscripts held little weight without financial backing. When the opportunity finally emerged to purchase the "French part" of the collection for the Bibliothèque nationale, Omont had to settle for what Fenwick made available and seek alternative means of funding to secure the cartularies deemed essential for constructing the nation's medieval past. Many of these items had survived thanks to the efforts of Monteil, but he had also facilitated their exile in the Phillipps library, leaving the French librarians of the early twentieth century to call on private collectors to rectify their predecessors' past "negligence." Fenwick's strategic approach to the disper-

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71 The first list did, however, include the fifteenth-century Italian manuscript of St Cyprian (Phillipps MS 4361; Budapest, National Széchényi Library, Cod. Lat. 529), owned by Matthias Corvinus and later by Chrétien-Guillaume de Lamoignon. See Phillipps-Robinson c. 716, fol. 256; Durrieu, "Les manuscrits à peintures," 419.

72 Durrieu, "Les manuscrits à peintures," 386. Letter from Omont to Fenwick, July 23, 1908, Phillipps-Robinson c. 716, fols. 237–38.

73 Draft letter from Fenwick to Omont, August 5, 1908, Phillipps-Robinson c. 716, fols. 239–40.

74 Letter from Omont to Fenwick, August 10, 1908, Phillipps-Robinson c. 716, fol. 241.

75 Letters exchanged between Omont and Fenwick, August 24 and 29, 1908, Phillipps-Robinson c. 716, fols. 242–44.

76 Letter from Omont to Fenwick, October 1, 1908, Phillipps-Robinson c. 716, fols. 245–46.

77 Munby, *Dispersal of the Phillipps Library*, 68–69. See also Christopher de Hamel, *The Posthumous Papers of the Manuscripts Club* (London: Allen Lane, 2022), 487–92.

78 Durrieu, "Les manuscrits à peintures," 387.

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sal of his grandfather's library resulted in most of the medieval literary manuscripts in French entering collections outside of France in the second half of the twentieth century. As for the most prized illuminated book, he indulged in American money, eschewing Omont and his supportive patrons.

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Chapter 16

PROVENANCE RESEARCH ON LOST MANUSCRIPTS

THE CASE OF LOUVAIN UNIVERSITY LIBRARY (1919–1940)

JÉRÉMY DELMULLE and HANNO WIJSMAN

THE HISTORY OF private manuscript collections and the book market at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century and that of institutional libraries preserving manuscripts in the same period generally constitute two largely separate worlds, that only partially overlap, for example in the occasional acquisition to complete a pre-existing rich book collection. It is seldom that a twentieth-century institutional library—one not founded by a collector—is composed solely of manuscripts that were still in private hands or circulating among booksellers only a few years earlier. In this respect, the dossier of Louvain University Library in the inter-war period is an interesting case for two reasons. It is a collection of manuscripts that is "fictitious" (in the sense that it does not correspond to the usual logic of the formation of libraries), and which was constituted by the simultaneous acquisition of about eight hundred manuscripts from very diverse origins; moreover, it existed for barely twenty years, since, after having been constituted in the wake of the destruction of the library during the First World War, it was almost entirely destroyed by fire during the Second World War. This essay is an opportunity for us to present for the first time an ongoing project to reconstitute this lost library, which the Section of Codicology, Library History, and Heraldry of the IRHT is carrying out in collaboration with the libraries of the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven and of the Université catholique de Louvain, as well as a broader project, that of a new database *Deperditi: Making Missing Manuscripts Talk* (https://deperditi.irht.cnrs.fr), on lost or destroyed medieval manuscripts, by focusing on the initial results of a survey of private collections from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

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A Short History of a Short-Lived Collection

The tragic history of the twice burned Louvain University Library is well known.[1] The first destruction of the library occurred at the very beginning of the First World War, on August 25, 1914. It was caused by a firing orchestrated by the German army which completely consumed the building and the collections of the University Library. However, the contents of the old library are largely known, thanks to information compiled before the war by the historian Édouard de Moreau and published in 1918.[2] They corresponded, roughly, apart from recent acquisitions, to the state of the library when it was founded in the seventeenth century as a result of the merging of the book collections from the various faculties and colleges in the city.

The construction and supply of a new library was decided upon in 1919, as part of the war reparations. Article 247 of the Treaty of Versailles was entirely devoted to this issue:

> Germany undertakes to furnish to the University of Louvain, within three months after a request made by it and transmitted through the intervention of the Reparation Commission, manuscripts, incunabula, printed books, maps, and objects of collection corresponding in number and value to those destroyed in the burning by Germany of the Library of Louvain.[3]

This request was to be prepared over time. Therefore, the *Office de la restauration de la bibliothèque de l'université de Louvain* was installed, to decide which volumes should be claimed from Germany. It was headed by Louis Stainier, administrator-inspector of the Royal Library of Belgium.[4]

It was decided that Germany would earmark part of the four million German Goldmarks intended to repair the library's losses to buy manuscripts available on the market.

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1 See, in chronological order, Christian Coppens, "Une bibliothèque imaginaire: De Leuvense Universiteitsbibliotheek 1914–1940," *Ex officina: Bulletin van de Vrienden van de Leuvense Universiteitsbibliotheek* 2 (1985): 64–69; Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *Die Bibliothek von Löwen: Eine Episode aus der Zeit der Weltkriege* (Munich: Hanser, 1988); Christian Coppens et al. eds., *Leuven in Books, Books in Leuven: The Oldest University of the Low Countries and its Library* (Leuven: Universitaire Pers Leuven, 1999), 131–53; Jan van Impe, *The University Library of Leuven: Historical Walking Tour* rev. edn. (Leuven: Lipsius Leuven, 2012; first edn. in Dutch: 2003), 15–41; Chris Coppens et al. eds., *Leuven University Library: 1425–2000* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2005), 121–298; Mark Derez, "The Flames of Louvain: A Library as a Cultural Icon and a Political Vehicle," in *What Do We Lose When We Lose a Library? Proceedings of the Conference Held at the KU Leuven 9–11 September 2015*, ed. Mel Collier (Leuven: University Library, KU Leuven, 2016), 25–36.

2 Édouard de Moreau, *La bibliothèque de l'Université de Louvain "1636–1914"* (Extract of the *Revue des questions scientifiques*), (Leuven: Fonteyn/Ceuterick, 1918), appendix 1 "Liste de quelques manuscrits qui ont péri dans l'incendie de la Bibliothèque," 50–80.

3 English text in Charles I. Bevans, ed., *Treatises and Other International Agreements of the United States of America 1776–1949*, 13 vols. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1968–1976), 2:43–240 at 158 (Part 8, "Reparation," section 2, "Special Provisions").

4 Louis Stainier, "L'Office de la restauration de la Bibliothèque de l'Université de Louvain," *Annuaire de l'Université catholique de Louvain* 83 (1934–1936): CLXXVIII–CCI.

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The book dealer Karl W. Hiersemann in Leipzig was chosen to coordinate the *Einkaufsgesellschaft Löwen* specially created for that aim.[5] Thus, paradoxically, these war reparations which were supposed to be to the benefit of Belgium and to the detriment of the German state also contributed to a flourishing period for the German book market. The selection of the manuscripts was entrusted to a committee of experts, including, for Belgium, Louis Stainier and Alphonse Bayot, former attaché to the Manuscripts Section of the Royal Library and professor at the University of Louvain; for the Germans, the State Commissioner Richard Oehler, librarian at the University Library of Bonn, and Georg Leidinger, director of the Manuscripts Section at the Bavarian State Library. It took five conferences between 1921 and 1924 for the two sides to come to an agreement.[6] In total, 357 manuscripts were brought to Louvain from Germany and arranged in a G. series. Another collection, consisting mainly of donations from Belgian collectors and aristocrats, was added to this first set and constitutes D. series, with shelfmarks ranging from 317 to 786.[7] Thus, the inter-war Louvain Library was an ephemeral collection with a wide variety of provenances: direct donations (especially from Belgian, English, and American donors), and manuscripts bought from German dealers or collections with money provided by the German war repayments.

Of the more than eight hundred manuscripts in the library at the time, only thirty-nine survived the flames caused by the Battle of Louvain in May 1940.[8] Although a summary catalogue of the incunabula was published,[9] the general catalogue planned by Bayot and announced by Stainier never appeared.[10] At the time of the fire, the assistant librarian in charge of the university's manuscript collections, Canon Léopold Le Clercq, was in the process of drawing up the catalogue, but his files and notes unfortunately also perished in the flames.[11] In other words, fate could hardly have taken a greater toll on this library, and the task of historians who want to reconstitute it is difficult.

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5 For a first approach, see Christian Coppens, "Einkaufsgesellschaft Löwen GmbH," in *Lexikon des gesamten Buchwesens (LGB²)*, ed. Severin Corsten et al., 3 vols. (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1987–1989), 2:440; the archives relating to this "purchasing association" are kept in the Saxon Economic Archives (Sächsische Wirtschaftsarchiv). Among the principal manuscript providers, special mention should be made of Jacques Rosenthal from Munich, from whom at least twenty manuscripts were obtained; we thank Angéline Rais for sharing her data on Rosenthal's catalogues with us.

6 Stainier, "L'Office de la restauration," CXC–CXCII; and "La nouvelle collection d'incunables de la bibliothèque de l'Université de Louvain," in *Congrès international des bibliothécaires et des bibliophiles tenu à Paris du 3 au 9 avril 1923. Procès-verbaux et mémoires*, ed. Fernand Mazerolle and Charles Mortet (Paris: Jouve, 1925), 154–65 at 155.

7 For the G. series, see the statistical table published by Stainier, "L'Office de la restauration," XCI.

8 See Maurice Hélin, "Archives et bibliothèques de Belgique pendant la guerre," *Revue du Moyen Âge latin* 1 (1945): 437–40. We do not exactly know what the number of six hundred manuscripts he laments to have been lost corresponds to (437–38).

9 Louis Stainier, "De nieuwe verzameling Incunabelen van de universiteitsbibliotheek te Leuven," *Het boek: Tijdschrift voor boek- en bibliotheekwezen. Second Series* 12 (1923): 244–52; and "La nouvelle collection."

10 Stainier, "L'Office de la restauration," CXCIV.

11 See Robert Plancke, "Répertoire des manuscrits de classiques latins conservés en Belgique,"

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Reconstituting the Louvain Manuscript Collection of the Inter-War Period

Library historians are used to working on book collections—especially medieval ones—which are entirely dispersed and of which little or nothing is known, but one does not expect this to be the case for a twentieth-century library. In order to try, as best we can, to make up for the irreparable loss caused by the 1940 fire, we are fortunate to have at our disposal several kinds of sources and documents which help us to reconstruct more or less accurately the contents of this ephemeral library.

The most complete source, which will serve as the base-line document for our project, is the catalogue compiled by Léopold Le Clercq, probably from personal notes, in the 1940s and 1950s to replace his catalogue, still unfinished when it disappeared in the fire. This catalogue was never published, but the original handwritten copy is now kept in the archives of the KU Leuven Library.[12] For most manuscripts it gives a brief codicological description (number of leaves, approximate dating), a fairly general indication of contents, and some indications of provenance.

This first document can be supplemented by numerous notes taken in the 1920s and 1930s by a Belgian Benedictine monk, Dom Donatien De Bruyne. He was working, among other things, on the medieval library of St. James's Abbey in Liège and he played an important role in the decision to "repatriate" the Liège manuscripts to Belgium from the collections of the Princes von Fürstenberg in Herdringen Castle, kept at that time in the Academia Theodoriana in Paderborn.[13] Several notebooks or loose leaves filled with notes on the library's manuscripts remain in the archives of the library of the Abbey of Maredsous in Belgium and have so far only partially been exploited. With the logistical help of the young Dom Cyrille Lambot, then a professor at the University of Louvain, De Bruyne provided a brief description of the contents of all the manuscripts in the library—and not only those from Liège—but above all a dating and a record of many provenance indications and various shelfmarks visible in the books or on their bindings.[14]

Revue des études latines 18 (1940): 141–86 at 144, which specifies that Le Clercq was preparing the catalogue in 1938 (the date of the compilation of this article, which was published two years later; see 142). Christine Mortiaux-Denoël and Étienne Guillaume, "Le fonds des manuscrits de l'abbaye de Saint-Jacques de Liège: II. Dispersion et localisation actuelle," *Revue Bénédictine*, 107 (1997): 352–80 at 358 probably mistakenly attribute the making of this catalogue to A. Bayot.

12 A typescript copy of it is available on request from the library staff.

13 On the fate of St. James's manuscripts from the eighteenth to the twentieth century, see Christine Mortiaux-Denoël, "Le fonds des manuscrits de l'abbaye de Saint-Jacques de Liège: I. Jusqu'à la vente de 1788," *Revue Bénédictine* 101 (1991): 154–91; Mortiaux-Denoël and Guillaume, "Le fonds des manuscrits de l'abbaye de Saint-Jacques de Liège: II."

14 Denée, Bibliothèque de l'abbaye de Maredsous (no shelfmark). We are grateful to Dom Pierre-Maurice Bogaert for drawing our attention to the existence of these papers and allowing us to make use of them. On the deposit of the Fürstenberg Library at Paderborn from 1919 to 1975 and for a list of sixty-five manuscripts from this collection transferred to Louvain, see Karl Hengst, "Die Erzbischöfliche Akademische Bibliothek in Paderborn," in *Ein Jahrhundert Akademische Bibliothek*

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These two complementary sources, which may or may not be consistent with each other (they particularly differ concerning the dating of handwriting), give a fairly precise and homogeneous idea of the contents and materiality of the library's lost volumes. In some cases, it is possible to have an even more intimate knowledge of one or more volumes thanks to the work, published or unpublished, of researchers who had access to the riches of this library during its short existence. The role of the Institut de recherche et d'histoire des textes, founded in 1937, should be highlighted here. In 1939, Marie-Thérèse Vernet-Boucrel was sent to Louvain on one of the Institute's first missions abroad to make detailed descriptions and photographs of the manuscripts of Latin classical authors, only a few months before the fire in May 1940. The descriptions she published in *Mélanges Félix Grat* in 1949 of fourteen manuscripts are by far the most substantial we have of manuscripts from the collection.[15] In addition to the Classics, the Flemish manuscripts were thoroughly analysed in the 1920s by Willem Lodewijk de Vreese, whose handwritten files of his *Bibliotheca Neerlandica Manuscripta* are now kept in Leiden University Library.[16] Not all the library's manuscripts were examined so systematically during this period, but several critical editions have taken into account the evidence of lost manuscripts, which allow philologists to link one particular volume to one particular branch of the textual tradition; and it is worthwhile to systematically search the bibliography and the archives of scholars for descriptions and transcriptions that might reveal some other characteristics of a manuscript that the catalogue does not describe in detail.[17]

Finally, reproductions of all or part of each volume provide another useful source: old photographs, microfilms, or plates and/or facsimiles published in research works or sales catalogues.[18] Currently, around thirty *codices Lovanienses* that were destroyed

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Paderborn: Zur Geschichte des Buches in der Mitteldeutschen Kirchenprovinz mit einem Verzeichnis der mittelalterlichen Handschriften in Paderborn, ed. Karl Hengst (Paderborn: H & S, 1996), 11–36, esp. 21, 33–36.

15 Marie-Thérèse Vernet-Boucrel, "Quelques manuscrits de classiques latins à la Bibliothèque universitaire de Louvain," in *Mélanges dédiés à la mémoire de Félix Grat*, ed. Jeanne Vielliard et al., 2 vols. (Paris: Pecqueur-Grat, 1946–1949), 2:351–86.

16 All his unpublished descriptions have been digitized and can be found on the *BNM* website, "Bibliotheca Neerlandica Manuscripta: Documentation on Middle Dutch Manuscripts Kept Worldwide," Universiteit Leiden, https://digitalcollections.universiteitleiden.nl/view/collection/bnm, accessed August 28, 2023.

17 To give just two examples, there is the case of MS †G. 170, a manuscript from the second half of the thirteenth century, which was one of the two known witnesses to the Anglo-Norman version of *Beuve de Hantone* and which was described and used for editing the text (before its arrival in Louvain) by Albert Stimming, *Der anglonormannische Boeve de Haumtone* (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1899), IV–VIII. Another manuscript, †G. 71 (sixteenth century), containing a collection of ascetic and spiritual works written in Brabantine dialect, was studied in Louvain by several scholars and some of the texts it contained have come to us thanks to the transcriptions published in the interwar period: see, among others, Mattheus Verjans, "De geestelijke hand," *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 5 (1931): 81–88 at 86–87.

18 The known examples mainly concern the manuscripts that disappeared during the 1914 firing. Moreover, a large number of them were used in the preparation of Canon Edmond Reusens's

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in 1940 can be studied in full or in part in such a way. Research still needs to be carried out to enrich this first collection, mainly in photographic or filmographic collections, which, it is hoped, will bring to light other vestiges of these lost books.[19] Even though they are very incomplete, these reproductions are of crucial importance, particularly for palaeographers, who can now, thanks to advances in the discipline, revise or refine dates put forward almost a century ago, for philologists, but also for those interested in history and provenance of manuscripts.

Unlike most similar attempts to reconstruct dispersed book collections, our aim is not to know what has become of these volumes: we unfortunately know the answer. It is rather a question of trying to virtually reconstitute both their textual and material content. To do this, we have a multitude of varied and complementary sources at our disposal. We will now consider how this can be done and what methods should be adopted to give the most accurate account of the contents of the library and the materiality of its books.

A first step, which we hope to achieve in the near future in collaboration with An Smets, conservator of the special collections of the KU Leuven Library, is to provide a comparative and cumulative catalogue, which gives a "blind description" of the lost manuscripts based on the existing testimonies, pointing out all the characteristics attested by several sources as highly reliable, while also underlining the divergences that may exist between sources. To the sources concerning the Louvain library in particular, others can be added: these include the catalogues of the booksellers from whom manuscripts were purchased (direct provenance) and, if a former possessor is known, other possible inventories of the library in question (indirect provenance), in order to compare different descriptions and gather as much information as possible.

This data will be integrated into the *Deperditi* database. This project consists of drawing up the "identikit" of destroyed, damaged, or missing manuscripts, mainly lost during wartime, based on all known testimonies (either concordant or discordant). It aims to gather all available information on the books: description, transcription, collation, use in a text edition, various mentions in bibliography, etc. These descriptions, which will be verified, completed, and corrected in the long term as new discoveries are made, are freely accessible in the dual form of a relational database of the type of the IRHT Bibale database,[20] and a virtual library associated with it.

Éléments de paléographie (Leuven: Reusens, 1899). Thanks to this work, some thirty reproductions of these disappeared manuscripts have been preserved; see Moreau, *La Bibliothèque*, 50–80; *Deperditi* website, https://deperditi.irht.cnrs.fr.

19 These include the photographic collections of the Villa I Tatti near Florence, the microfilms of the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library at St. John's University, some series in UC Louvain's Archives Department, and some private collections.

20 "Bibale" is accessible online at https://bibale.irht.cnrs.fr, accessed August 28, 2023. On this database, see Hanno Wijsman, "The Bibale Database at the IRHT: A Digital Tool for Researching Manuscript Provenance," *Manuscript Studies* 1 (2016): 328–41.

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Some Recent Provenances of the Manuscripts

The lost Louvain manuscript collection included 827 items (357 in the G. series and 470 in the D. series), of which some 270 were pre-1600 manuscripts (about two hundred in the G. series and seventy in the D. series). The eighteenth century alone represented about 40 percent of the material. In the framework of our ongoing research, we will highlight some recent provenances of the medieval manuscripts († indicates that a manuscript is known to be destroyed).

The D. series contained many Belgian gifts, almost all of which were seventeenth- and eighteenth-century documents. Several members of the Belgian noble and political elite donated manuscripts from their private collections, mostly genealogical and heraldic manuscripts. Nineteen items (†D. 528–46) were given by an erudite priest, Jean Paquay from Bilzen in the province of Limburg. These were mostly archival documents, but also included a fifteenth-century manuscript of St. Jerome's letters (†D. 530). A certain "L. de Ridder" (likely a Louis de Ridder who remains to be fully identified), gave a very eclectic group of thirty items (†D. 372–85, †D. 512–27), most of which were from the eighteenth century or remain completely unidentified for the moment, but three are sixteenth-century prayerbooks in Dutch and two others were a fifteenth-century *Algorismus et de computo* by Johannes de Sacrobosco and a *Recueil ascétique* dated to 1415.

At least three volumes came from the library of a German collector, Friedrich von Schennis. Indeed three (partly) microfilmed manuscripts bore his "Ex-libris Friderici de Schennis": †G. 107 (Cicero, *De senectute* et al.), †G. 172 (Ovid, *Metamorphoses*), †G. 211 (Lucan, *Bellum civile*, thirteenth/fourteenth century). This *ex libris* can also be found in surviving manuscripts in other libraries around the world, for example in an eleventh-century New Testament in Greek, now in the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago (Jesuit-Krauss-McCormick Library, MS Gruber 119) and in a fifteenth-century Italian Cicero manuscript, now in the Bodmer Collection in Cologny (Cod. Bodmer 50). Von Schennis was a scion of a wealthy Swiss family, who became a painter and lived most of his life in Germany, especially in Düsseldorf and Berlin. He painted mostly landscapes and lived, according to several sources, in Berlin the life of a "bohémien" and dandy. Interestingly, he also was a collector of medieval manuscripts, specifically containing classical texts. These three von Schennis's manuscripts came to Louvain from Hiersemann.[21]

Many manuscripts came to the Louvain Library from Hiersemann's shop, including †G. 107, †G. 112 (a fifteenth-century *Missale Romano-Seraphicum*), †G. 172, †G. 190 (a twelfth-century *Liber sacramentorum Augsburgensis*), †G. 211, and several Middle-Eastern Christian manuscripts (including †G 134, †G. 151, †G. 197, †G. 203, †G. 224). Since the aim of the *Office de la restauration de la bibliothèque* was to reconstruct a university library with many kinds of texts in various languages, it was interested in a great variety

21 *Katalog 460: Handschriften, Inkunabeln und wertvolle Ausgaben der Klassiker des Altertums, der Humanisten und Neulateiner enthaltend den betr. Teil der Bibliothek des † Kunstmalers F. von Schennis und andere Sammlungen* (Leipzig: Hiersemann, 1918), respectively lots 468 and 115 (Lucan's manuscript is not mentioned in this catalogue).

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of manuscripts. The choice of the three von Schennis manuscripts bought from Hiersemann, as well as a Missal, a Sacramentary, and several manuscripts with Christian texts in Syriac and Arab, may be partly explained by a specific interest in classical, as well as religious manuscripts for the library of a university with a broad intellectual interest which was also a Catholic university. However, the decision must also have originated in the simple chance of which manuscripts were available at that moment. Indeed, in 1921 Hiersemann had just recently bought the von Schennis library, full of classical texts, and he had a substantial stock of Middle-Eastern Christian manuscripts.[22]

In her 1939 description of †G. 211 (Lucan, *Bellum civile*), Marie-Thérèse Vernet-Boucrel transcribed the *ex libris* "Henry Drury 1819 very ancient ms." (which we can check on the existing photo) and attributed it to "Rév. Henry Drury."[23] There may be some confusion here between Henry Drury (1778–1841), who was schoolmaster at Harrow, and a friend of Lord Byron, and a Reverend Henry Drury (1812–1863), who was indeed a rector, vicar, and archdeacon. While the second is more likely to have been referred to as "Reverend," the mention of the year 1819 must lead us to conclude that the *ex libris* belongs to the first one, which is indeed confirmed by the handwriting of others of his notes and *ex libris*.[24]

The presence of at least ten manuscripts from Sir Thomas Phillipps in the Louvain collection is not surprising because Phillipps's manuscripts flooded the market in the early twentieth century. They are all part of the G. collection, so in the early 1920s they came to Louvain from German collections:

†G. 108 Radulphus Flaviacensis, *Super Leviticum*, thirteenth century (Phillipps MS 426).

†G. 109 *Histoire de la Passion de Notre Seigneur*, fourteenth/fifteenth century (Phillipps MS 1330).

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22 *Katalog 500: Orientalische Manuskripte: Arabische, syrische, griechische, armenische, persische Handschriften des 7.–18. Jahrhunderts* (Leipzig: Hiersemann, 1922). Middle-Eastern manuscripts in Louvain were fairly accurately reported before they were destroyed: see Arnold van Lantschoot, "Inventaire sommaire de manuscrits arabes d'Égypte (Bibliothèque de l'Université de Louvain. Fonds Le Fort, série A: Mss. chrétiens)," *Le Muséon* 48 (1935): 297–310; Willi Heffening, "Die islamischen Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek Löwen," *Le Muséon* 50 (1937): 85–100; Jean Simon, "Répertoire des bibliothèques publiques et privées d'Europe contenant des manuscrits arabes chrétiens," *Orientalia. Nova Series* 7 (1938): 239–64 at 252–53; and "Répertoire des bibliothèques publiques et privées d'Europe contenant des manuscrits syriaques," *Orientalia. Nova Series* 9 (1940): 271–88 at 279–80; Louis-Théophile Lefort, *Les manuscrits coptes de l'Université de Louvain*, vol. 1 *Textes littéraires* (Leuven: Bibliothèque de l'Université, 1940); Bernard Outtier, "Le sort des manuscrits du Katalog Hiersemann 500," *Analecta Bollandiana* 93 (1975): 377–80.

23 Vernet-Boucrel, "Quelques manuscrits," 380. The digitized microfilm is available on the ARCA website: https://arca.irht.cnrs.fr/ark:/63955/md5370795p47, accessed August 28, 2023.

24 See for instance Henry Drury's notes in Cologny, Fondation Martin Bodmer, Cod. Bodmer 3; New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, MS 265; BL, Add. MS 82956.

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†G. 145 Sulpicius Severus, *Gesta Sancti Martini Turonensis*, thirteenth/fourteenth century (Phillipps MS 3688).

†G. 147 *Pontus et la belle Sidoine*, fifteenth century (Phillipps MS 3594).

†G. 157 Cicero, *De inventione*, etc., twelfth century (Phillipps MS 9455).

†G. 211 Lucan, *Bellum civile*, thirteenth/fourteenth century (Drury; Phillipps MS 3388; von Schennis; Hiersemann).

†G. 213 *Varia patristica*, twelfth century (Phillipps MS 1123; George Dunn).

†G. 215 *Recueil théologique et philosophique*, thirteenth century (Phillipps MS 9240; Hermann Suchier).

†G. 229 Suetonius, *De vita Caesarum*, fifteenth century (Aloysius Marsuzi; Frederick North, fifth Earl of Guilford; Phillipps MS 7829).

†G. 261 *Scander sive calamitatum ab immanissimo Turco Christianis illatarum flebilis querimonia* (Complaint on the Christian war against the Turks), early sixteenth century (Phillipps MS 11021).

Manuscript †D. 408 (Sallust, *De coniuratione Catilinae*; *Bellum Iugurthinum*) bore Sir Charles Geisler Thomas-Stanford's bookplate, described and photographed in 1939. Thomas-Stanford was a British politician and classical philologist.[25] He used at least two bookplates in his manuscripts and other books. Both show his quartered arms, his motto "Aequus in arduis," and his full name.[26] His library, sold on March 18, 1909 at Sotheby's, is supposed to have been bought *en bloc* by the Philadelphia collector and bookseller A. S. W. Rosenbach.[27] However, Thomas-Stanford may not have sold everything he had. The Louvain Sallust, an Italian manuscript from the middle of the fifteenth century, was a gift to Louvain University Library, and though for the moment we have not found information on the donor, it seems quite possible it was Thomas-Stanford himself, since not only his bookplate but also his armorial binding are prominently present.[28]

Another English bibliophile, who built up a substantial library at Woolley Hall, Berkshire, was George Dunn.[29] His collection included many medieval manuscripts, espe-

25 See https://bibale.irht.cnrs.fr/99650, accessed August 28, 2023.

26 The bookplate in †D. 408 is also found in an incunable (*Fasciculus temporum*, 1481) sold at Christie's on April 23, 2021, lot 160. The other bookplate is for example pasted into an incunable (Giannantonio Campano, *Opera*, 1495), now kept in Bryn Mawr College Library, fC–73.

27 On Rosenbach's buying activity, see Edwin Wolf II and John F. Fleming, *Rosenbach: A Biography* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1960); George Bodmer, "A. S. W. Rosenbach: Dealer and Collector," *The Lion and the Unicorn* 22 (1998): 277–88.

28 On his armorial binding, see "British Armorial Bindings." University of Toronto Libraries. https://armorial.library.utoronto.ca/stamps/ITHO001_s2, accessed August 28, 2023.

29 A warm thanks to Bill Stoneman who is preparing a list of Dunn's manuscripts and their

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cially from the Phillipps and Ashburnham sales. His bookplate ("From the Library of George Dunn of Woolley Hall near Maidenhead") is easy to recognize.[30] After his death his library was sold at Sotheby's between 1913 and 1917.[31] Four of his manuscripts ended up in the Louvain collection. We do not have any precise clues yet as to how exactly they came to Louvain, but since this collection was sold in London between 1913 and 1917 and all four manuscripts were part of the G. series, they definitely were part of German collections, or, most probably, owned by German booksellers, around 1920:

G. 124 St. Bernard, *Sermones*, twelfth century (Benedictine Abbey of Grammont; Sotheby's, March 8, 1900, lot 703; London, J. & J. Leighton, booksellers; George Dunn; Sotheby's, February 11, 1913, lot 403; London, J. & J. Leighton, booksellers).

†G. 187 Julius Solinus, *Liber de situ orbis terrarum*, thirteenth century (George Dunn; Sotheby's, February 11, 1913, lot 654; London, J. & J. Leighton, booksellers; Munich, Gottlob Hess, booksellers).

†G. 213 *Varia patristica*, twelfth century (Sir Thomas Phillipps; Sotheby's, March 8, 1900, lot 499 A-B; London, J. & J. Leighton, booksellers; George Dunn; Sotheby's, February 2, 1914, lot 1188; London/New York, Erhard Weyhe, booksellers).

†G. 233 Humbert of Romans, *Expositio regulae beati Augustini*, 1460 (Florence, Howell Wills; Sotheby's, July 11, 1894, lot 1702; George Dunn; Sotheby's, February 11, 1913, lot 640; London, J. & J. Leighton, booksellers; Sotheby's, November 2, 1920, lot 3635).

Manuscripts also came to Louvain from the United States. Susan Minns was one of the first women to study at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She is best known for the various collections she built up throughout her life. Among other things, she collected representations of death, particularly books and prints depicting the Danse macabre.

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provenances and, following the discussion at the conference, shared his provenance data on these manuscripts with us. Some of these have been listed here: https://bibale.irht.cnrs.fr/7833, accessed August 28, 2023.

30 See https://bibale.irht.cnrs.fr/97232, accessed August 28, 2023. It is for example also found in a manuscript (Thomas Aquinas, *Compendium theologiae*; Hugh of St. Victor, *Adnotationes in psalmos*) recently sold by Les Enluminures, TM 359, www.textmanuscripts.com/medieval/binding-aquinus-compendium-60641, accessed August 28, 2023.

31 *Catalogue of the Valuable & Extensive Library Formed by George Dunn, Esq.…Which will be Sold by Auction…11th of February, 1913* (London: Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge, 1913); *Catalogue of the Valuable & Extensive Library Formed by George Dunn, Esq.…Which will be Sold by Auction…2nd February, 1914* (London: Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge, 1914); *Catalogue of the Valuable & Extensive Library Formed by George Dunn, Esq.…Which will be Sold by Auction…22nd November, 1917* (London: Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge, 1917).

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In 1922, she chose to sell this collection, but when the sale was already prepared and the catalogue, containing 1,020 lots, printed, she was informed by Whitney Warren, the American architect of the Louvain Library, about the situation in Louvain. Thereupon, she decided to donate the considerable sum of $12,500 to Louvain University Library on the condition that the money had to be spent at her sale.[32] Thus, among about four hundred other—printed—documents, seven manuscripts came to Louvain, including four fifteenth-century Books of Hours (use of Paris, Rouen, and Rome). Four of these manuscripts survived the war and are still in Leuven.[33]

†D. 328 *Officium defunctorum*, eighteenth century (Minns, lot 405, as twelfth/thirteenth century).

D. 329 *Horae*, use of Paris, fifteenth century (Minns, lot 416).

D. 330 *Horae*, use of Rouen, fifteenth century (Minns, lot 419).

D. 331 *Horae*, use of Rome, fifteenth century (Minns, lot 409).

D. 332 *Horae*, use of Rome, fifteenth/sixteenth century (Gaetano Milio Marieri di Ficarea; Minns, lot 413).

†D. 333 *Extraits patristiques sur la mort*, in a Slavonic language, sixteenth century (Minns, lot 427).

†D. 334 *Prières pour les défunts et les oraisons pour demander une sainte mort*, seventeenth century (Minns, lot 426).

Conclusion

One of the interesting aspects of the *Office de la restauration de la bibliothèque de l'université de Louvain* was that it sought to "replace" a lost collection and therefore set out to consciously explore which manuscripts had equivalent value. However, though the commission estimated the monetary value of the destroyed library building and modern printed books, it finally concluded that it was impossible to estimate the value of the lost manuscripts and incunables. It chose only to provide a list of numbers and categories of the lost manuscripts and stating that for the sake of the replacement of the collection, the *scientific* value of the manuscripts was more important than the exact number or the trade value of the manuscripts.[34] For a university collection, this may not seem a very surprising way of thinking. However, it is interesting to follow the line of thought from the point of view of our twenty-first-century research in which it may be all too obvious that manuscripts are unique, that their specific provenance is part of that

32 *Leuven in Books*, 159–61; *Leuven University Library*, 286.

33 Leuven, Bibliotheek KUL, MS 1016.

34 Stainier, "L'Office de la restauration," CLXXXIV.

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uniqueness, and that the replacement of a collection by another one of the same value is a tricky enterprise.

Though the context of war reparations is very political, it is obvious, both from the explicit aims formulated by the *Office de la restauration de la bibliothèque*,[35] and from the analysis of the contents of the library, that the selected manuscripts were much more than a collection with a Belgian national interest. Certainly, there were some manuscripts in Middle Dutch and even more specifically in Brabantine or Limburg dialects, while the acquisition of eighty-eight manuscripts from St. James monastery can be seen as a "repatriation" of (part of) a lost "national" collection. However, Louvain University also had other goals. First, as a Catholic university, many religious items, medieval and modern, were included. Moreover, the medieval or humanist manuscripts containing classical texts can be seen as a more general acquisition by the oldest university of the Low Countries with a long-standing intellectual tradition. Finally, a rather small but significant range of manuscripts in Greek, as well as in Syriac, Arab, Coptic, and other non-European languages show the desire to achieve a broad intellectual and geographic scope. At the time, Louvain already had a rich tradition of studies in non-western cultures and languages.

This inter-war Louvain collection has largely (though not completely) escaped the attention of provenance researchers, firstly because many were donated, not sold (thus leaving no trace in sales catalogues as being sold to Louvain University Library), and secondly because they were burned a few years later, along with all the documentation on their cataloguing and their acquisition. Reconstructing (as far as possible) the inter-war Louvain collection is therefore a challenge, but one that touches upon many of the problems and questions provenance researchers are used to encounter, maybe even all of them.

35 Stainier, "L'Office de la restauration," CLXXX–CLXXXV.

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Chapter 17

TO BUY, OR NOT TO BUY?

MARKET FORCES AND THE MAKING OF THE SHAKESPEARE BIRTHPLACE TRUST'S COLLECTIONS

JAMES C. P. RANAHAN

THE SHAKESPEARE BIRTHPLACE Trust is a small charitable organization, formed in 1847 through the direct action of market forces, when a public subscription campaign succeeded in raising £3,000 to save Shakespeare's Birthplace for the nation. This campaign was instigated in response to the demand "to rescue it at all events from the desecrating grasp of those speculators."[1] This referred to attempts by the American showman P. T. Barnum to purchase and dismantle the historic building for transfer to America.[2] Since 1847, the Trust has grappled with market forces, finding itself in direct competition with wealthy collectors and well-resourced collecting organizations for items within its collecting remit.

As the Trust has never had a surplus of disposable income, all purchases have had to be carefully budgeted for and gifts received with gratitude. This helps to explain the nature of the Trust's collections and the patterns of acquisition that have developed over 175 years. In this chapter this pattern of acquisition will be considered for the period 1890–1945, with a focus on medieval documents, which have been a feature of the Trust's collections almost from its creation. This is due, in part, to the Shakespeare family being active in a locality whose institutions (Stratford Borough and Holy Trinity Church) created and kept records during the medieval and the Early Modern periods. This paper focuses on documents up to 1600, but with a permitted extension to 1623, in honour of an iconic product of this time of transition: Shakespeare's First Folio.[3]

1 "Editorial," *The Times* (London), July 21, 1847, 5.

2 Roger Pringle, "The Rise of Stratford as Shakespeare's Town," in *The History of an English Borough: Stratford-upon-Avon 1196–1996*, ed. Robert Bearman (Stroud: Sutton, 1997), 160–74 at 171.

3 William Shakespeare, *Mr William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies* (London: Jaggard and Blount, 1623).

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Collections at the Trust

The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust is charged with preserving Stratford-upon-Avon's historic sites and landscape associated with William Shakespeare and his family. An Act of Parliament directs us to maintain manuscript, library, and museum collections relating to the life, times, and works of William Shakespeare.[4] Given our focus on Shakespeare the historical person and literary figure, the Trust's collections are generally known for Early Modern and later items, but we also have a sizeable medieval collection. This reflects our location in the medieval new town of Stratford-upon-Avon, its sometimes-tense relationship with the pre-existing settlement of Old Stratford, and the direct involvement of the Shakespeare family in the affairs of both.

Taking the Manuscript Accession Register as a guide, the pattern of acquisitions for the period 1890–1945 has been examined and is summarized in the Appendix (Table 17.1).[5] Of 133 accessions in that time, twenty-seven relate to the twelfth to sixteenth centuries (representing 20 percent of the Trust's total acquisitions in the studied period). The items range from individual pieces to collections of estate papers, where cartularies, surveys, and correspondence coexist with accounts and what would now be categorized as operational records. The distribution of these medieval holdings across the centuries shows a preponderance of collections relating to the sixteenth century (nineteen out of twenty-seven), with an almost even split across the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries.

Shakespeare's Folios: An Early Modern Interlude

The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust is honoured to care for three First Folios, the first collected edition of Shakespeare's plays, which were collated and published in 1623, seven years after his death.[6] Whilst they are landmarks of the Early Modern period and underpin a seventeenth-century publishing phenomenon, their individual printing histories ensure that each copy can be regarded as a unique item whilst their separate provenance profiles reflect the varied acquisition patterns that have shaped our collections.[7] The first of the three First Folios to be received was the Wheler Folio, named after Robert Bell Wheler, a Stratford antiquarian who purchased this copy for his own collection in about 1820.[8] It is appropriate however to also regard the Wheler Folio as being named for his sister, Anne (Figure 17.1). She donated this copy to the Trust in 1862. This generous act laid the foundation of what would become a collection of eighteen Folios across four editions cared for by the Trust (Appendix, Table 17.2).

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4 Shakespeare Birthplace, &c., Trust Act 1961, The Charities (Shakespeare Birthplace Trust) Order 2017.

5 An internal document of the SBT.

6 "Shakespeare's First Folio" BL, www.bl.uk/collection-items/shakespeares-first-folio, accessed May 5, 2023.

7 "How is Each Folio Unique?" Folger Shakespeare Library, www.folger.edu/shakespeare/first-folio/faq, accessed May 5, 2023.

8 SBT, SR - OS - 37/1623, 8300002X.

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Our second First Folio is the Ashburnham Folio.[9] Its early provenance is not yet fully understood, but it was acquired by the fourth Earl of Ashburnham, for his private collection, in about 1830. The Earl was a passionate collector and he paid £52 10/- for the volume (estimated now at about £2,500). His son, the fifth Earl, sold the collection in stages and in 1898 Sotheby's offered this First Folio for sale. The Trust raised funds via public subscription and Henry Sotheran, the rare book dealer, purchased it on behalf of the Trust. The price was now £585 (now over £36,000).[10] Such values reflect the changing market in which the Trust operated.

The third First Folio cared for by the Trust is the Halliwell Folio owned by the Royal Shakespeare Company and placed on deposit with the Trust.[11] This volume was also sold at Sotheby's, in 1889 from the sale of James Halliwell-Phillipps's library, when it raised £95.[12] It was purchased by Charles Edward Flower, a Stratford brewer. Flower donated the volume to the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, now the Royal Shakespeare Company.

These three First Folio examples show the distorting effect of market forces, but also how public-spirited donations, together with formal deposits have helped organizations like the Trust, develop a wide range of collections. In general, for the period 1890–1945, it depended on donations (63 percent of all accessions), contrasting with purchases (31 percent) and deposits (just 6 percent). However, for medieval manuscripts, the acquisition pattern for the same period is mainly purchases (45 percent), then donations (33 percent), with deposits making 22 percent, a notable difference from the overall pattern. This pattern is summarized in the Appendix (Table 17.1) and will be examined in detail below, but it worth considering the Shakespeare Documents first.

The Shakespeare Documents

The Shakespeare Documents are key archival sources for understanding William Shakespeare's life.[13] These manuscripts, dating from Shakespeare's lifetime, name him and provide an evidential basis for understanding the narrative of his life and how this inspired and influenced his creative works. They provide glimpses into his personal life, family affairs, property, and business dealings, as well as his context within a period of history that saw major changes in cultural, religious, and socio-political contexts.

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9 SBT, SR - OS - 37/1623, 83000011.

10 *Book-Prices Current* 12 (1898): 457, no. 5039; Anthony James West, "Sales and Prices of Shakespeare First Folios: A History, 1623 to the Present (PART ONE)," *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 92 (1998): 465–528 at 526; "Searching for Shakespeare's Book: The Ashburnham folio" Explore Shakespeare blog, SBT, www.shakespeare.org.uk/explore-shakespeare/blogs/searching-shakespeares-book-ashburnham-folio/, accessed May 5, 2023; West (following Sidney Lee) indicates that this First Folio was purchased by Sir Arthur Hodgson on behalf of the Birthplace Trustees. Hodgson was a five-time mayor of Stratford-upon-Avon.

11 SBT, SR - OS - 37/1623, 81000014.

12 West, "Sales and Prices," 525.

13 "The 'Shakespeare Documents', a documentary trail of the life of William Shakespeare," UNESCO, https://en.unesco.org/memoryoftheworld/registry/257, accessed May 5, 2023.

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Figure 17.1. Photograph of Anne Wheler, © Shakespeare Birthplace Trust. Courtesy of Shakespeare Birthplace Trust.

The importance of the Shakespeare Documents is recognized by their being inscribed on the UNESCO Memory of the World Register. They consist of ninety manuscripts, held by a range of institutions, including the British Library, The National Archives (United Kingdom), and the Folger Shakespeare Library (Washington, DC).[14] The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust holds a third of these, mainly acquired by donation or deposit. An important donation made by Anne Wheler is the Quiney Letter of 1598, the only known example of a letter addressed to William Shakespeare.[15] This was written by Richard Quiney in London, seeking a loan, but it was not sent.[16] An equally significant deposit is the composite Parish Register deposited with the Trust by Holy Trinity Church.[17] This volume records many of the life events of the Shakespeare family, including the baptism and burial of Shakespeare himself.[18]

In exceptional circumstances, the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust is prepared to purchase examples of the Shakespeare Documents when they come to market, but usually with major financial assistance. Falling outside the main focus of this paper, but illustrating the point well, is the example of the Warwick Shakespeare Deed. Dating from 1602, this conveyance of 107 acres in Old Stratford to William Shakespeare was deposited with the Trust in 1970, as part of a varied group of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century documents. The depositor subsequently withdrew these documents, offering them for sale at Sotheby's in 1997. Having failed to reach the auction's reserve price, the Warwick document was subsequently sold to a private, overseas buyer, but a temporary export bar was placed on it by the UK government. The Trust succeeded in securing funds from the V&A Purchase Fund and the Heritage Lottery Fund (now the National Lottery Heritage Fund), to save the War-

14 The "Shakespeare Documents" are held by the British Library, College of Arms, Folger Library, London Metropolitan Archives, The National Archives (UK), SBT, and Worcestershire Archives and Archaeology Service, detailed in "UNESCO gives 'Shakespeare documents' cultural status on its Memory of the World register," *Shakespeare & Beyond*, Folger Shakespeare Library, https://shakespeareandbeyond.folger.edu/2018/01/19/unesco-shakespeare-documents-cultural-status-memory-of-the-world/, accessed May 5, 2023.

15 SBT, ER27/4, *Richard Quyney to William Shakespeare 1598*.

16 Stephen Porter, *Shakespeare's London. Everyday Life in London 1580–1616* (Stroud: Amberley, 2011), 120–21.

17 SBT, DR243/1, *Composite register of baptisms, marriages and burials 1558–1776*.

18 Michael Wood, *In Search of Shakespeare* (London: BBC Books, 2003), 32, 377.

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wick Document, although only one other record from the group was recovered for the Trust (a list of plays performed at the Cockpit Theatre, Whitehall in 1638).[19]

Acquisition by Purchase

In 1896 the Trust purchased the Will of Edward Measty (1584) at Sotheby's.[20] This will is part of a much larger collection purchased, relating to the English Midlands, originally amassed from various sources by the self-confessed biblio-maniac Sir Thomas Phillipps and now known as Phillipps Miscellanea.[21] The Measty Will is one of twelve purchases out of twenty-eight in the period 1890–1945, which contain documents dating from before 1600 (43 percent, compared with just 31 percent of all accessions purchased during this time (see Appendix, Table 17.4). This level of purchases underlines both the Trust's interest in medieval documents, and its commitment to, and integral position within, the antiquarian movement.

Whilst items relating to Shakespeare studies were the mainstay of Trust acquisitions in this period, an increased focus on local and family history saw much effort put into wider purchases. Four purchases were from specialists and eight were arranged privately. Of the specialists, the Measty Will purchase from Sotheby's has already been referenced. Maggs Brothers sold a warrant signed by Queen Elizabeth I to the Trust, whilst Birmingham-based Lowe Brothers sold a View of frankpledge with little court for the manor of Rowington, 1529–1530.[22] Thomas Thorp, Bookseller of Guildford, sold the Trust a transcript of the Bushley Registers.[23] Indeed, documents purchased from Sotheby's, Maggs, Lowe and Thorp, along with the similarly named London bookseller Thomas Thorpe, feature in many of the Trust's collections.[24]

Of the eight purchases arranged privately, three main themes are notable. The vendors were all men (but see below for the important role of women in the acquisition of medieval documents in this period). Only four men were involved and one of these sold four of the five transcripts bought by the Trust (see below). The private vendors were W. H. Charles, seller of Warwickshire Miscellanea,[25] R. Hyde Linaker, (the Aston Family Papers),[26] Cecil Ralph Ferrers of Baddesley Clinton (the Ferrers Family Papers),[27] and Reverend James Harvey Bloom, an antiquarian. Harvey Bloom regularly sold items to the Trust and of his five medieval sales in this period, the only original documents

19 SBT, DR232, *Shakespeare Documents 1602–1658*.

20 SBT, ER47/1/1, *Will of Edward Measty*; *Bibliotheca Phillippica…Which will be Sold by Auction… 10th day of June, 1896* (London: Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge, 1896), lot 1294.

21 SBT, ER47, *Phillipps Miscellanea*.

22 SBT, ER115 *Warrant to supply tabard to Ralph Brooke 1592*; SBT, ER10 *Rowington Manorial*.

23 SBT, ER105 *Bushley Registers*.

24 Thomas Thorpe, Bookseller, 5 Old Bond Street, London.

25 SBT, ER65 *Warwickshire Miscellanea*.

26 SBT, ER112, *Aston Papers*.

27 SBT, DR3, *Ferrers of Baddesley Clinton*.

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were those signed by Henry Carey and his son Robert, relatives of Queen Elizabeth I.[28] These Carey Documents had a national perspective and appealed to the Trust because of Henry Carey's patronage of William Shakespeare.[29] Harvey Bloom's other offerings had a more local appeal, being transcripts of medieval documents held by a range of institutions. His antiquarian interests led Harvey Bloom to produce transcripts of Stratford Charters, ca. 1196–1547, Stratford Manorial Documents, 1520–1552, the Bishop of Worcester's Registers, 1310–1598, and Whitchurch Manorial Documents, 1566–1696.[30] Such transcripts collectively formed a research-effective resource by making accessible in a single location material that strongly augmented original documents held by the Trust. Transcripts were also cost-effective, permitting the Trust to expand its medieval resources, in line with the prevailing antiquarian ethos of producing, collecting, and using transcripts.[31] This dual impact of transcripts helps to explain their appeal for the Trust, which also purchased transcripts of the Bushley Registers from Thorp. Even in the internet age, transcripts of historic documents have an enduring attraction, although their cost-effectiveness must be assessed against contemporary market forces. A recent example is the 2021 auction sale of a transcript produced in 1836 of Shakespeare's Marriage Licence Bond, dated November 11, 1582. With an auction estimate of £200–300, strong bidding resulted in the transcript being sold for £8,500 plus costs.[32]

Women and Medieval Manuscripts at the Trust

Although all the private vendors of medieval items in the period 1890–1945 were men, women were interested in and actively collected medieval manuscripts. Constance Wellstood made a significant contribution to the development of the Trust's collections while serving as Secretary (1942–1945).[33] Wellstood had worked closely with her husband Frederick, whilst he was Secretary and Librarian to the Trust and replaced him on

28 A. J. Loomie, "Carey, Robert, first earl of Monmouth (1560–1639), courtier," *ONDB*, version September 23, 2004.

29 SBT, DR11, *Carey Family Documents*; Alan H. Nelson, "His Literary Patrons," in *The Shakespeare Circle*, ed. Paul Edmondson and Stanley Wells (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 276–79.

30 J. Harvey Bloom's transcripts are: SBT ER56 Stratford Manorial Documents, ER58 Whitchurch Manorial Documents, ER61 Stratford Charters, ER63 Bishop of Worcester's Registers.

31 A discussion of the reconstruction of a now lost cartulary by antiquarians is contained in the pre-publication note for David Crouch ed., *The Metham Family Cartulary: Reconstructed from Antiquarian Transcripts* (Leeds: Yorkshire Archaeological and Historical Society, December 20, 2022).

32 Lot 244, Dominic Winters Auctions, South Cerney, Cirencester: Shakespeare (William). Transcript of Bond for Marriage Licence 1836 (Relating to Bond now at Worcestershire Archives dated November 28, 1582). This transcript was provided by the Worcester Registrar at the request of Sir Thomas Phillipps, "The Saleroom" The Saleroom, home of art and antique auctions, www.the-saleroom.com/en-gb/auction-catalogues/dominic-winter-book-auctions/catalogue-id-srdom10167/lot-412009a6-2ab7-4494-b91d-acef00fab7fc, accessed March 29, 2021.

33 Constance Wellstood became interim Secretary in 1942, after the death of her husband.

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his death, overseeing significant medieval deposits from the Lords Leigh (see below) and the Rainsford and Dighton families. Both these deposits contain estate papers relating to former monastic lands acquired after the dissolution of the monasteries, respectively Stoneleigh Abbey and Evesham Abbey for the Leigh family,[34] and Gloucester Abbey, for the Rainsford and Dighton families.[35]

During the period 1890–1945, Women made four of the nine "medieval" donations. The Trust's debt to Anne Wheler has already been noted, not least because of her generosity with regard to the Wheler Folio. This was specifically bequeathed to Anne by her brother, at a time when the market value of Shakespeare's First Folio was widely known and understood. Yet Anne chose to donate this financially valuable asset to the Trust, seemingly prioritizing its cultural and symbolic significance to the organization charged with honouring Shakespeare's life and works in his home town.

Janet Ryland similarly donated material collected by another, in this case her late husband, John William Ryland, F. S. A. As an antiquarian and historian of Rowington and neighbouring parishes in the Arden, Ryland amassed an important collection of manuscripts relating to this part of Warwickshire. Following her husband's death in 1928, Janet organized a series of donations to the Trust. Amongst the earliest, made in 1930, is the account book of John Hall's Charity, 1553–1589.[36] Such donations should not be construed as passive transfers of her husband's work. The pattern of donations by Janet Ryland over four years indicates that she was actively engaged in the process, ensuring that each donation reflected key aspects of her husband's research.[37] Also, as if following the example of Wheler, Janet Ryland chose to prioritize the cultural and symbolic significance of an early printed book to the Trust, in this instance "Holinshed's Chronicles,"[38] recognized as a source for many of Shakespeare's works including Macbeth and King Lear.[39] Like Wheler, Ryland chose to place books closely associated with Shakespeare's creative output in a location closely associated with portrayals of his life. This points to decisions by both women that were informed by what are now recognized as markers of signification and cultural valuation, framed within narratives of place.[40] Both women chose not to capitalize on market values, which in the case of Ryland's copy of *The Firste*

34 Andrew Watkins, "The Medieval Abbey: Its Lands and its Tenants," in *Stoneleigh Abbey. The House, Its Owners, Its Lands*, ed. Robert Bearman (Stoneleigh: Stoneleigh Abbey, in association with the SBT, 2004), 198–213.

35 SBT, DR33, *Rainsford and Dighton Families of Clifford Chambers*.

36 SBT, ER95/2, *Account Book of John Hall's Charity, Rowington, 1583–1589*.

37 Donations by Janet Ryland include SBT ER95 *Rowington Papers* (1930); SR - OS - 93/ *Holinshed's Chronicles* (1933); ER110 *John W. Ryland's Research Papers* (1934); ER113 *Bidford-upon-Avon Church Wardens' Accounts* (1934).

38 SBT, SR - OS - 93/, 83026207.

39 SBT, SR - OS - 93/, 83026207; John Julius Norwich, *Shakespeare's Kings* (London: Faber & Faber, 1999), 4–5.

40 Nicola J. Watson, *The Author's Effects. On Writer's House Museums* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 96.

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Volume of the chronicles of England, Scotlande and Irelande by Raphael Holinshed (1577), was enhanced by a detailed provenance record for the period 1598–1933.[41]

Mrs. M. A. Ellis of Redditch provided the Trust with a remarkable donation of medieval and Early Modern records in 1940. Covering the period 1250–1696, the Cookes Family Papers contain many deeds with seals intact, a notable and marketable feature of medieval collections, where working documents were not always handled and stored as well as they could have been.[42] Little information is currently available for Mrs. Ellis, nor for our final women donors, Mary and Katherine De Winton, highlighting the need for further research to ensure that their contribution to medieval collections at the Trust, and potentially elsewhere, is fully understood and documented.

The De Winton sisters from Brecon, Wales, made a notable donation in 1938, providing the Trust with a copy of *Leicester's Commonwealth*, a 1594 version of the original from a decade earlier.[43] This donation is worth considering as a further example of vendors rejecting market values when deciding to dispose of assets. Like Anne Wheler and Janet Ryland, the De Winton sisters donated material which represented both the Middle Ages and the Elizabethan age of transition towards the Early Modern period. However, their donation of the *Commonwealth* points to the religious and social turmoil of this era. It is widely seen as a Roman Catholic attack on the morals and standing of Robert Dudley, first Earl of Leicester and provides a contentious example of Reformation era propaganda. The pattern of their donations suggests a wide interest in the Reformation period.[44] Acquisition patterns by the Trust also indicate its increasing interest in later history, for instance the 1936 purchase from Maggs Brothers of the Proclamation of the main Gun Powder Plot conspirators.[45] Researchers and collections professionals need to thank Anne Wheler, Janet Ryland, Mrs. Ellis, and the De Winton sisters for their generous donations of medieval manuscripts, as well as their male fellow-benefactors. Without such generosity and public spiritedness, the Trust would have had a much narrower pattern of acquisition, given the market forces driven by individual collectors and larger collecting organizations.

41 The Ownership and Custodial History record shows: Francis Douce, April 6, 1598; Jo. Seymour, 1670; John Edge, April 26, 1714; John Edge, 1737; Paulin Abingdon, 1884; Donated by Mrs J. W. Ryland, 1933. SBT, SR - OS – 93/, 83026207.

42 SBT, ER139, *Cookes Family of Tardebigge*.

43 SBT, ER131, *Leicester's "Commonwealth."*

44 Donations by the De Winton sisters include STRST: SBT 1930-2, *Bust of Dean Balsall, warden of the College of Stratford 1495–1490* (the Collegiate Church of Holy Trinity) (1930); ER131, *Leicester's Commonwealth 1594* (1938).

45 SBT, ER123, *The Gunpowder Plot Proclamation*. Published in 1605, this purchase has been included in the main total, not the "medieval" totals.

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Figure 17.2. Detail from illuminated charter of "Inspeximus," Elizabeth I, DR10/803, © Shakespeare Birthplace Trust. Courtesy of Shakespeare Birthplace Trust.

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Acquisition through Deposit

The Trust holds the Gregory Papers, a significant deposit dating from 1150 until 1920.[46] This consists of the estate and family papers of the Gregory (later Gregory-Hood) family of Stivichall, near Coventry. It contains over 2,600 items, with a strong focus on medieval cartularies, deeds, and devotional material (including a thirteenth-century illuminated calendar).[47] An illuminated inspeximus charter with an image of Elizabeth I, of 1572, demonstrates the continuing relevance of medieval documents in Shakespeare's time, as the queen confirmed claims to lands whose previous ownership was traced to the twelfth century (Figure 17.2). As a formal deposit, this collection represents a form of acquisition that developed in 1919–1939, was turbo-powered by the Second World War, and would become a significant element of collection acquisition in the post-war period. To clarify, individuals or organizations placing items on deposit with the Trust, retain ownership of those items.

For the Trust, nothing was received on deposit until 1934, when a series of Early Modern deeds were transferred through the good office of the British Records Association. The first deposit of medieval manuscripts was received in 1935, from the former Lords of the Manor of Clifton-on-Dunsmore.[48] Dating from 1544, this included a range of quasi-judicial and property records, including Views of Frankpledge with Court Baron and rentals. Not until 1939 was another deposit received, when the Throckmorton Family Papers and the Vyner Estate Papers were deposited, dating respectively from the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries.[49] From 1940, there was a flurry of very large deposits, due to the threat posed by enemy action. Such action impacted the Gregory Papers, when the old estate office was bombed during the Coventry Blitz, resulting in the loss of most eighteenth and nineteenth century estate records.[50] By 1945, the Trust was caring for medieval and later papers of families associated with historic houses and their estates, including the Ferrers at Baddesley Clinton, Throckmortons at Coughton Court, Fetherstons at Packwood House, and the Lords Leigh at Stoneleigh Abbey.[51] This pattern continued after the Second World War, further strengthening the Trust's holdings of medieval manuscripts and establishing formal deposits as a cornerstone of its acquisition model.

46 SBT, DR10, *Gregory of Stivichall*.

47 The calendar is SBT, DR10/1406/b.

48 SBT, ER119, *Clifton-on-Dunsmore Manorial Records*.

49 SBT, DR5, *Throckmorton of Coughton*; SBT, DR4, *Vyner of Eathorpe*.

50 SBT, DR10, *Gregory of Stivichall*.

51 SBT, DR3, *Ferrers of Baddesley Clinton*; The Fetherston Papers were one of the few estate collections donated to the Trust: SBT, DR12, *Fetherston of Packwood*; SBT, DR18, *Leigh of Stoneleigh*.

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Saved for the Nation

Market forces and their distorting effect on the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust's operating environment have been features of its collections since its inception. So too has the totemic impact of Shakespeare's associations with national identity, with public subscriptions having helped the Trust at key moments, for example in 1847 when the historic Birthplace building itself was threatened and in 1898 to purchase the Ashburnham First Folio.[52] The Second World War introduced an alternative means of manuscripts being "saved for the nation," through salvage activities on premises directly or indirectly affected by enemy action. Documents were recovered by salvage crews and placed with relevant record offices. In the Trust's case, a collection of papers recovered from a damaged solicitor's office covering the period 1561–1925 were donated by Stratford-upon-Avon Salvage Officials.[53] Since the Second World War, formal fund-raising activities have continued, augmented in specific cases by government fiscal initiatives. The Throckmorton Papers provide an interesting example, as whilst noted above as being an early deposit, in 1997 ownership of this collection of 3,400 items transferred to the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust. This occurred when the Commissioners of Inland Revenue accepted the collection, in lieu of inheritance tax, and the Minister of the Arts allocated ownership to the Trust.[54] This is a case of market forces dictating a specific monetary value for medieval manuscripts, well beyond the Trust's financial resources, but with approved fiscal arrangements enabling the Trust to retain the collection "for the nation." Generally, however, the Trust is required to counter market forces by focusing wherever possible on donations, and, from 1934, formal deposits.

Conclusion

In an era of immense demand for books and documents by and about Shakespeare, particularly from America, the case of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust sheds light on the movement of manuscripts away from the market and the glare of associated press coverage. The collection provides insights into how definitions of what pertains to Shakespeare are shaped, in part, by the institution that holds them: in this the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust finds a parallel in the Folger Library, in Washington, DC. Yet in contrast to the Folger Library, the Trust's holdings are substantially the result of donations and deposits by people whose names are not now well-known. Among these are a significant number of women, as well as people with connections to the local region. The Trust therefore plays an important role in preserving manuscripts (as well as the more famous Folios) for the town as well as the nation, making them available to the research community.

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52 Pringle, *Rise of Stratford*, 171; SBT, *Trust Minutes Volume 2*, TR2/1/2, 1898.

53 SBT, DR27, *Robert Lunn & Lowth*.

54 SBT, DR5, *Throckmorton of Coughton*.

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APPENDIX

Table 17.1: Shakespeare Birthplace Trust Acquisition Pattern 1890–1945.

	All acquisitions	**Medieval acquisitions**
Donations	84 (63%)	9 (33%)
Purchases	41 (31%)	12 (45%)
Deposits	8 (6%)	6 (22%)
Total	**133**	**27**

Table 17.2: Summary of Shakespeare's Folios cared for by Shakespeare Birthplace Trust.

Edition	**Donated**	**Purchased**	**Deposited by Royal Shakespeare Company**	**Total**
First Folio (1623)	1	1	1	3
Second Folio (1632)	2	0	5	7
Third Folio (1664)	3	0	1	4
Fourth Folio (1685)	1	0	3	4
Total	7	1	10	18

Table 17.3: Shakespeare Birthplace Trust Donations of Medieval Items 1890–1945.

Year	**Type**	**Ref.**	**Title**	**Dates**
1896	Donor (male)	ER46	Fillongley Register Transcripts	1538–1652
1898	Donor (male)	ER49	Abstracts of Wills – Transcripts	1530–1631
1930	Donor (female)	ER95	Rowington Volumes	1553–1837
1933	Donor (male)	ER109	Gibbs/Solihull Manorial	1551–1745
1934	Donor (female)	ER113	Bidford Churchwardens	1583–1681
1938	Donor (female)	ER131	Leicester's Commonwealth	1594
1940	Donor (female)	ER139	Bentley Papers	1250–1696
1941	Donor (male)	DR12	Fetherston of Packwood	1407–1849
1943	Salvage	DR27	Papers from solicitor's office	1561–1925

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Table 17.4: Shakespeare Birthplace Trust Purchases of Medieval Items 1890–1945.

Year	Type	Ref.	Title	Dates
1896	Auction	ER47	Phillipps Miscellanea	1567–1819
1904	Private Sale	ER56	Stratford Manorial (Tr. – Transcript)	1520–1552
1907	Private Sale	ER58	Whitchurch Manorial Documents (Tr.)	1566–1696
1909	Private Sale	ER61	Stratford Charters (Tr.)	ca. 1196–1547
1911	Private Sale	ER63	Bishop of Worcester's Registers (Tr.)	1310–1598
1913	Private Sale	ER65	Warwickshire Miscellanea	1583–1831
1933	Dealer	ER105	Rowington Frankpledge	1529–1530
1933	Dealer	ER107	Bushley Registers (Tr.)	1535–1812
1934	Private Sale	ER112	Aston Family Papers	1447–1753
1934	Dealer	ER115	Warrant of Queen Elizabeth I	1592
1939	Private Sale	DR3	Ferrers Family and Estate Papers	1200–1900
1939	Private Sale	DR11	Carey Family Documents	1591–1618

Table 17.5: Shakespeare Birthplace Trust Deposits of Medieval Items 1890–1945.

Year	Type	Ref.	Title	Dates
1935	Deposit (male)	ER119	Clifton-on-Dunsmore Manorial Records	1544–1878
1939	Deposit (male)	DR4	Vyner Family Papers	1528–1890
1939	Deposit (male)	DR5	Throckmorton of Coughton	ca. 1200–1880
1940	Deposit (male)	DR10	Gregory of Stivichall	1150–1920
1942	Deposit (male)	DR18	Leigh of Stoneleigh	1100–1999
1945	Deposit (male)	DR33	Rainsford & Dighton Families	1544–1769

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Chapter 18

WOMEN AS OWNERS AND COLLECTORS IN DE RICCI'S *CENSUS OF MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE MANUSCRIPTS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA*

TOBY BURROWS

IT IS A truism that nearly all the most-studied manuscript collectors of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are men—often memorialized in the form of personal libraries and named institutional collections. While this reflects the broad pattern of ownership, the nature of the commercial market, and the scale of collecting, there were nevertheless a significant number of women who owned and collected manuscripts during this period. Some evidence for this can be seen in the *Census of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the United States and Canada*, which contains information about sixty-five women who were active between the 1920s and the 1950s. Sponsored by the Library of Congress and the American Council of Learned Societies and edited by Seymour de Ricci and William J. Wilson, the *Census* appeared in three volumes between 1935 and 1940.[1] After publishing a specimen entry in 1930, to a positive response, de Ricci sent out more than four thousand questionnaires to institutions and private collectors. The information in the *Census* is current for the early 1930s; Mrs. Edith Rockefeller McCormick's death in 1932 is recorded, for example.[2] As well as the questionnaires, de Ricci arranged to get manuscripts from more distant states sent to the Library of Congress for inspection. A *Supplement*, compiled by C. U. Faye and W. H. Bond, eventually appeared in 1962.[3] The *Supplement* was the result of a circular sent to the original contributors in 1957, so that information is current as of the mid- to late 1950s; the compilers do not seem to have attempted to identify new private owners. Together, these volumes list about fifteen thousand items (codices and documents) dating from before ca. 1600.[4] While the *Census* focuses on institutional collections, it also covers private collections.

In the preface to the *Census*, de Ricci sounds an apologetic note in justifying the inclusion of private collections:

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1 Seymour de Ricci, with the assistance of W. J. Wilson, *Census of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the United States and Canada*, 3 vols. (New York: Wilson, 1935–1940).

2 de Ricci, *Census*, 1:616.

3 C. U. Faye and W. H. Bond, *Supplement to the Census of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the United States and Canada* (New York: Bibliographical Society of America, 1962).

4 Nigel Ramsay, "Towards a Universal Catalogue of Early Manuscripts: Seymour de Ricci's Census of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the United States and Canada," *Manuscript Studies* 1 (2016): 71–89.

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> May we add that, with solitary exceptions, this is practically a first attempt towards listing in any country the contents of private libraries? That we have done so at all, in the face of some adverse criticism, is because we feel that, in the United States and Canada, private ownership of early manuscripts is essentially a transitory feature of book-collecting. Nearly all valuable manuscripts in private hands are destined in the near future to become public property. Actually during the compilation of these lists, several important groups have been given or bequeathed to the public and it is no secret that many others are more or less formally promised to various institutions. We therefore felt fully justified in including in our work private holdings and we are deeply grateful to the numerous collectors who have generously allowed us to list their possessions.[5]

His reasoning—that we should document these private collections because they would end up in institutions—seems to play down the distinctive value and inherent interest of private collecting. In the case of women collectors, in fact, most of the collections described in the *Census* and the *Supplement* cannot be traced in institutions today: thirty-nine of fifty-eight collections were "untraced" in 2015.[6] Nevertheless, the *Census* provides a fascinating—and possibly unique—window into private manuscript collecting in North America in the earlier and mid-twentieth century, particularly by women, who are largely unrepresented in the existing histories of manuscript collecting. These women can be studied as a group to show the varied social origins of owners and collectors, the different kinds of manuscripts they owned, and the processes by which they acquired them. Women were part of a network of gifts, exchange, and inheritance around medieval manuscripts, and not simply participants in a male-dominated commercial market. Kate Ozment describes her work on the book collectors of the Hroswitha Club as "a step forward in the process of recovering and making visible the ways that women collectors have participated in the study of rare books in the United States."[7] In a similar way, this essay aims to recover and make visible the role of women in collecting and owning medieval manuscripts.

Women as Owners

Fifty-four women are listed in the original *Census*, together with two cases where a woman is mentioned first in a pair: Dudrea Parker and her husband Sumner Parker, and Phyllis W. Goodhart and her father Howard L. Goodhart.[8] For two further couples, the husband is listed first (John and Alice Garrett, and Mr. and Mrs. Percy S. Straus). There is

5 de Ricci, *Census*, 1:x.

6 Melissa Conway and Lisa Fagin Davis, "Directory of Collections in the United States and Canada with Pre-1600 Manuscript Holdings," *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 109 (2015): 273–420.

7 Kate Ozment, *The Hroswitha Club and the Impact of Women Book Collectors* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023), 62.

8 For full details, see the Tables in the Appendix to this chapter.

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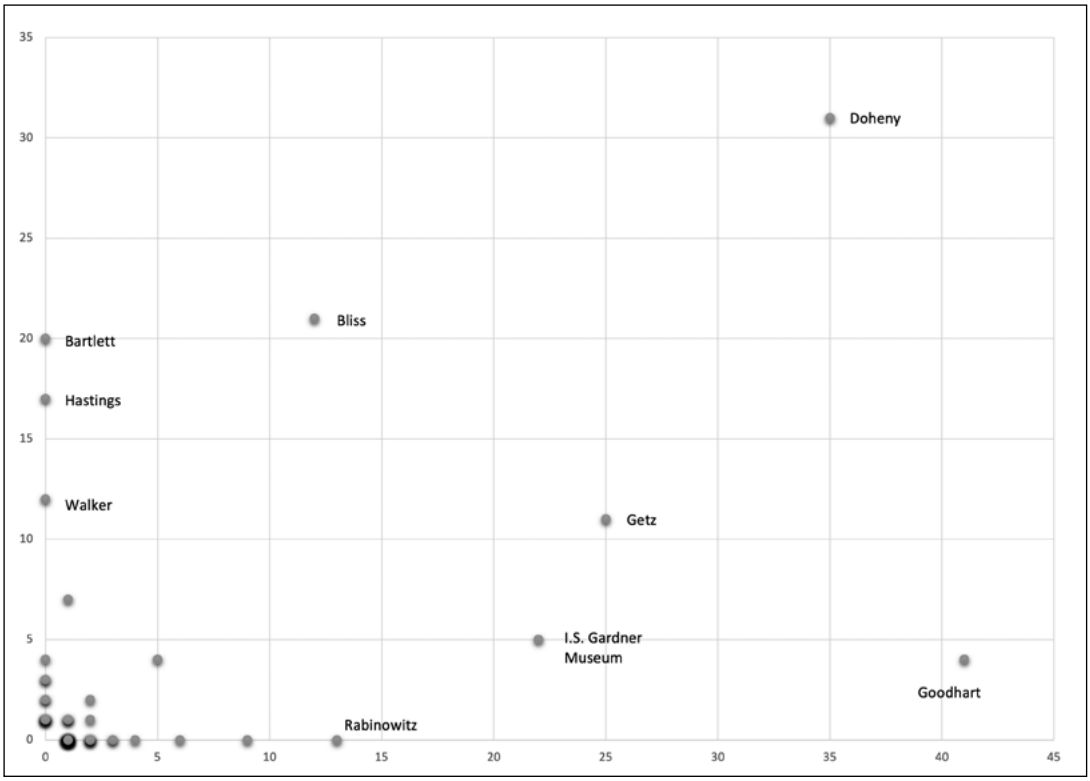


Figure 18.1 *Census* holdings of codices (horizontal) and documents or leaves (vertical). Diagram by author.

also the museum named after Isabella Stewart Gardner, while several other women are mentioned as custodians or previous owners of manuscripts, including Belle da Costa Greene and Phoebe Hearst.

The *Supplement* lists eleven women, as well as six couples with the husband named first; nine of these women and one of the couples (the Garretts) had previously appeared in the *Census*. Phyllis Goodhart was now married, and appeared jointly with her husband John Dozier Gordan. The other forty-four women named alone or first in the *Census*, as well as one couple with the woman named second, no longer appear. In total, then, across the two surveys, there are fifty-eight women as owners (on their own or named first) as well as seven couples with the women named second. This essay focuses mainly on these fifty-eight, especially in the figures given below.

On the whole, these women owned only a small number of codices and documents (including single leaves). The average holdings were 3.31 codices and 2.56 documents (excluding the Gardner Museum and the couples with the husband named first). The largest collections were those of Phyllis Goodhart Gordan (who had the most codices), Mrs. Estelle Doheny (who had the most items in total), Mrs. Milton E. Getz, Mrs. Hannah

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Rabinowitz, and Miss Susan Bliss. Thirteen women owned documents or leaves only, ranging from a single item to twenty (Henrietta Bartlett), with an average of five.

Table 18.1 shows the numbers of women, while Table 18.2 shows the size of their collections, excluding the couples with the husband named first. The figures include the average numbers of codices and documents, as well as the ranges and the overall totals, which amount to 195 codices and 151 documents. Figure 18.1 shows the range of individual holdings, with codices on the horizontal axis and documents or leaves on the vertical axis.

Table 18.1: Number of women as owners in the *Census* and *(Supplement)*, excluding institutions.

	Women	**Couples (man first)**
Census	56	2
Supplement	11 (2 new)	7 (5 new)
Total	58	7
Untraced collections	38	4

Table 18.2: Collection sizes in the *Census* and *(Supplement),* excluding couples and institutions.

	Codices	**Documents / Leaves**
Average	3.3	2.5
Range	0–41 (43)	0–31
Total	195	151

Figure 18.2 shows the locations of women in the *Census*. There is a clear concentration in the northeastern United States, with some around the Great Lakes and rather more in California. There are very few in the midwest or the southern states. It is possible that the numbers outside the northeast are somewhat understated, because of the methodology adopted by de Ricci and Wilson in having manuscripts from more distant locations sent to the Library of Congress, and asking local agents to send reports to the compilers, as was the case with the bookseller Alice Millard in Pasadena. Nevertheless, it seems unlikely that this approach had a significant effect on the pattern of geographical distribution, if only because the map also reflects the distribution of booksellers and antique dealers—and of wealth generally—in the United States in the early 1930s.

Acquiring Manuscripts

There are some interesting patterns in the ways by which the women acquired their manuscripts. Many women bought manuscripts from booksellers and agents, some British, but mostly North American and based primarily in the northeast. One of the collectors, Millard, was an active bookseller. The other main North American deal-

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Figure 18.2. Geographical distribution of women listed as owners in the *Census*. Diagram by author.

ers were Dawson's (Los Angeles), Charles E. Goodspeed (Boston), A. S. W. Rosenbach (Philadelphia), Scribner (New York), and Wilfrid Voynich (New York and London). British suppliers included Maggs, Quaritch, Davis & Orioli, E. P. Goldschmidt, W. H. Robinson, and James Tregaskis, while European dealers included Leo S. Olschki in Florence and Jacques Rosenthal in Munich. In some cases, manuscripts appear to have been bought as souvenirs while travelling in Italy or France, such as the purchases by Miss Eva Matthews Sanford, of Oneonta, in Paris and Rome in 1931, and those of Dudrea Parker and her husband in Toulouse, the Hague, and Paris between 1927 and 1931.[9]

There is very little evidence of these women buying directly at auctions. Getz may have bought some manuscripts directly from the American Art Association or Anderson Galleries in New York, but is more likely to have acquired them via Dawson's. Goodhart seems to have had the most extensive network of dealers, as well as the largest collection of codices. In the *Census*, she and her father are reported as having bought from Cullum, Maggs, the Voynich estate, Brentano, Davis & Orioli, P. M. Barnard, Dobell, Goldschmidt, L. C. Harper, Dawson, and Quaritch, as well as at the William B. Gourley sale in 1936 and possibly at Sotheby's in 1934. Two manuscripts had been bought directly from Admont Abbey near Salzburg, Austria.[10]

Other methods of acquisition were also quite common. Several women inherited manuscripts from fathers or husbands. Relatively typical was Mrs. William Emerson

9 de Ricci, *Census*, 2:1855, 902.

10 de Ricci, *Census*, 2:1675–84, 2339–40.

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(née Frances White) of Cambridge, Massachusetts, who was the daughter of "the great bibliophile" William Augustus White of Brooklyn.[11] All four of her manuscripts (two Books of Hours and two Offices of the Blessed Virgin Mary) had previously belonged to her father. She seems to have inherited two of these after his death in 1927, while one had been given to her in 1920 and another in 1900, when she was about thirty.[12] Her sister, Mrs. E. Allen Wood of Greenwich, is also mentioned as having inherited one of their father's manuscripts, but is not otherwise listed in the *Census*. Their cousin, Annie van Sinderen, is noted as owning an Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary, but the entry for that manuscript describes it as being owned by her husband Adrian, along with three other manuscripts "inherited…from his father-in-law Alfred T. White, the brother of William Augustus White."[13] In at least one case, manuscripts passed from grandmother to grand-daughter; Mary Weld, aged 21 in 1922, inherited a Book of Hours and a *Vigiliae minores* which had been owned by her grandmother Mrs. William G. Weld (née Caroline Goddard) and had been on loan to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts since 1880.[14]

Gifts were also quite common, usually between friends and relatives but sometimes from more distant connections. Henrietta Bartlett of New Haven, bibliographer and Shakespeare scholar, owned a leaf from a choir book which had been given to her by the banker and collector Beverly Chew, whose library she catalogued.[15] He gave another leaf from the same manuscript to Mrs. W. Lanman Bull of New York—probably Sara Worthington "Tasie" Bull, the widow of W. Lanman Bull Sr., rather than her daughter-in-law, Matilda Heppenheimer Bull.[16] The late Miss Sarah Orne Jewett had owned a fifteenth-century French muster roll which had been given to her by Charles Eliot Norton for Christmas 1900.[17] A note in Miss H. S. Wheeler's entry records that "Mrs. William H. Brainerd has a very lovely illuminated leaf which Miss A. Lathrop gave her, I think, for a wedding present." Miss Lathrop, of New York, appears to have given another leaf from this manuscript to Miss Constance Alexander, and to have been given the leaves herself by "her friend, Miss Lizette Fisher"—probably all alumnae of Wellesley College.[18]

There is a clear preference in the types of codices these women collected. Liturgical books predominated, especially Books of Hours, but also Graduals, Missals, Breviaries, Offices, Processionals, and Antiphonals. Bibles, theological and exegetical texts, litera-

11 de Ricci, *Census*, 1:1055–56.

12 The index card in the Grolier Club for one of the Office manuscripts includes a pencil note "Bought by Mrs Emerson" but there is no reason to believe this; the manuscript was clearly bought by her father at a Sotheby's sale in 1892 (Grolier Club, W. A. White Card File, "Horae," card 1). My thanks to Laura Cleaver for drawing this to my attention.

13 de Ricci, *Census*, 1:1056; 2: 1204–5.

14 de Ricci, *Census*, 1:962.

15 Kurt Zimmerman, "De Ricci and Bartlett's 1921 Book Collector's Guide: An Icon of the Golden Age," *American Book Collecting* blog, June 29, 2016. www.bookcollectinghistory.com/2016/06/de-ricci-and-bartletts-1921-book.html, accessed October 12, 2023.

16 de Ricci, *Census*, 2:1668.

17 de Ricci, *Census*, 1:750.

18 de Ricci, *Census*, 1:1079.

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ture, and historical texts were also owned, but relatively infrequently. Mrs. Edward L. (Estelle) Doheny's significant collection, as it stood in the mid-1930s, was fairly typical in its scope: three Books of Hours, two Bibles and the Epistles of St. Paul, a Missal, a Biblical commentary, Cassiodorus on the Song of Songs, the Speculum of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and a volume of Petrarch.[19]

The Goodhart collection was the most diverse and extensive, and largely ignored liturgical manuscripts in favour of classical literature (Cicero, Ovid, Statius, Lucan), patristic works (Augustine, Jerome, Gregory the Great, John Chrysostom), and a few medieval authors (such as Jacobus da Voragine).[20] Getz, on the other hand, had no fewer than fourteen Books of Hours, together with four Bibles, an Antiphonal, and several theological and exegetical works.[21] Mrs. Morris Hawkes (née Eva Van Cortland Morris) was unusual in owning only a copy of a French chivalric romance, *Floriant et Florete*.[22]

The documents in these collections tended to focus on royal and aristocratic autographs. Getz owned an album of sixteenth-century French royal autographs, Mrs. Edith Rockefeller McCormick of Chicago a letter of Catherine de' Medici, Ruth Granniss of New York (librarian of the Grolier Club 1906–1944) a letter of Charles VI, and Mrs. Charles C. (Kate) Bovey of Minneapolis four sixteenth-century French royal letters.[23] Susan Bliss of New York also owned an album of French royal autograph letters, as well as codices of marriage contracts, armories, and the statutes of the Order of the Garter; she and her mother, Mrs. George T. Bliss, had donated more than ninety items relating to Mary Queen of Scots to the Bibiliothèque nationale de France in 1927.[24] Other documentary materials included a roll containing an inventory of Edward I's jewels, owned by Goodhart (and formerly by Thomas Phillipps); the 1440 French muster-roll owned by the late Miss Jewett; and thirty-nine Flemish charters and legal documents (seventeen earlier than 1600), owned by Mrs. Jean J. Hastings of Washington Grove.[25] There were also a sizeable number of individual leaves and initials from liturgical and theological manuscripts.

It is important to note that many women collected other types of materials, and that manuscripts were often not their main collecting interest. There were several serious art collectors among them as well as collectors of rare books, sometimes with a specific focus. Dudrea and Sumner Parker, in addition to their four Books of Hours, Antiphonary, and four French documents in the *Census*, collected books and objects relating to Edgar Allen Poe, and amassed a large collection of "tapestries, rugs, porcelain, paintings, and antique furniture," as well as a collection of eighteenth-century dolls' houses.[26]

19 de Ricci, *Census*, 1:20–211; 2:2242–43.

20 de Ricci, *Census*, 2:1675–84, 2339–40.

21 de Ricci, *Census*, 1:12–16.

22 de Ricci, *Census*, 2:1686.

23 de Ricci, *Census*, 1:12–16, 616; 2:1685, 1140.

24 de Ricci, *Census*, 2:1662–66.

25 de Ricci, *Census*, 1:750, 904–45; 2:1684.

26 de Ricci, *Census*, 1:902; Cloisters Castle, "The Cloisters: History," www.cloisterscastle.com/about/history, accessed May 12, 2023.

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Mrs. Myrtle Crummer only had a single Book of Hours in the *Census*, but she and her husband Le Roy (professor of medicine at the University of Nebraska) put together an extensive collection of books and manuscripts on medical history (now at the University of Michigan), were acquaintances—and rivals—of Henry Wellcome, and also collected "Dickens and various later authors."[27]

Mary Hyde appears in the *Supplement* with her husband Donald, as joint owners of "the Hyde Collection." They had sixty-two manuscripts, all but one of which had been bought in 1948 from Robert Borthwick Adam of Buffalo, consisting of mainly sixteenth-century autograph letters and documents.[28] These formed part of their Samuel Johnson collection, which is now the Hyde Collection at Harvard University, described as "the world's finest private collection of 18th-century English literature."[29] She later went on to form an Oscar Wilde collection, now in the British Library.

Belle Skinner, of Holyoke, focused on developing her collection of nearly ninety early musical instruments, complemented by a late fifteenth-century Gradual. This collection is now at Yale University.[30] The late Mrs. J. H. Poole (née Caroline Boeing) of Pasadena owned a fifteenth-century Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary which had once belonged to Charles Dyson Perrins, but her main interest was in collecting Native American baskets. More than 2,500 of these, together with various other artefacts, were donated in 1942 to the Southwest Museum of the American Indian in Los Angeles, now part of the Autry Museum of the American West.[31] They were housed in a new wing of the museum named after her.

Overall, these women acquired their manuscripts through gifts and inheritance as much as from the commercial marketplace, where they bought mostly from dealers rather than at auctions. Male collectors tended to focus more on buying from auction houses. While the women owned a variety of different types of texts, they seemed to have greatly preferred liturgical books. Their interest in archival materials mostly involved royal and aristocratic documents, and they also acquired individual manuscript leaves and initials. Quite a few were collectors in a broader sense, encompassing rare books, art, and historical objects of various kinds. This paralleled the similarly broad interests of many of their male contemporaries.

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27 de Ricci, *Census* 1:19; Frances Larson, *An Infinity of Things: How Sir Henry Wellcome Collected the World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 134–36; "The Le Roy Crummer Collection," Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, 2017; https://exhibitions.kelsey.lsa.umich.edu/art-science-healing/collectors1.php, accessed May 12, 2023.

28 Faye and Bond, *Supplement*, 314–15.

29 Bruce Redford, "Mary, Viscountess Eccles," *The Guardian*, September 16, 2003, www.theguardian.com/news/2003/sep/16/guardianobituaries.obituaries, accessed May 12, 2023.

30 de Ricci, *Census*, 1:1063; William Skinner, *The Belle Skinner Collection of Old Musical Instruments, Holyoke, Massachusetts: a Descriptive Catalogue* (Philadelphia: Beck Engraving, 1933); Susan E. Thompson, "The Belle Skinner Collection of Musical Instruments: Sixty Years at Yale," *News, Yale School of Music*, March 11, 2021, https://music.yale.edu/news/belle-skinner-collection-musical-instruments-sixty-years-yale, accessed May 12, 2023.

31 Victoria Bernal, "Happy Birthday to the Adventurous Caroline Boeing Poole," *The Autry Files*, September 15, 2020, https://theautry.org/research/blog/happy-birthday-adventurous-caroline-boeing-poole, accessed May 12, 2023.

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Social Settings

The women who appear in the *Census* and its *Supplement* fall into four main social groups:

- The wealthy: the wives and daughters of industrialists who had made fortunes in mining, banking, oil, railroads, manufacturing, timber, shipping, and finance.
- Professionals: the wives and daughters of lawyers, architects, engineers, and doctors.
- Scholars: professors, teachers, and librarians, together with the wives and daughters of scholars.
- The remainder: who are hard to classify and came from a range of occupations and backgrounds.

There are nine women who have proved impossible to trace; these presumably were not from the wealthy or professional groups. Unsurprisingly, the largest group were the wives and daughters of wealthy industrialists. Their family money came from a wide range of industries, with banking, oil, and railroads the most common. They made up at least half of the traceable collectors. The group of wives and daughters of professionals was smaller; they were clearly less wealthy, but still socially quite significant. A significant group came from the world of education, scholarship, and academia—either as scholars and librarians in their own right, or as the wives and daughters of scholars. Finally, there was a relatively small group of women working as artists, writers, and similar occupations, sometimes with a husband who worked in business or one of the professions. They included a political activist, a bookseller, a government clerk/typist, and the wife of a railroad conductor.

Among the wealthiest of the wealthy collectors was Estelle Doheny, the second wife of Edward Doheny, who made a huge fortune in the oil industry but was eventually disgraced by the Teapot Dome bribery scandal. Initially a client of Millard's in the early 1930s, Doheny continued collecting after her husband's death in 1935, under the careful cultivation of Rosenbach, and by the 1950s owned about 7,000 books and 1,300 manuscripts. A major patron of the Catholic Church and a Papal Countess, she donated her collections to two religious institutions, which sold them off in 1987 and 2001.[32] The 1987 sale realized a record $38 million.[33]

Another wealthy Californian collector—though less well-known or documented than Doheny—was Estelle Getz. She was the daughter of a successful Californian banker

32 Robert O. Schad, "The Estelle Doheny Collection," *The New Colophon* 3 (1950): 229–42; Margaret Leslie Davis, *Dark Side of Fortune: Triumph and Scandal in the Life of Oil Tycoon Edward L. Doheny* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); Margaret Leslie Davis, *The Lost Gutenberg: The Astounding Story of One Book's Five-hundred-year Odyssey* (London: Atlantic Books, 2019).

33 *The Estelle Doheny Collection from St. Mary's of the Barrens, Perryville, Missouri: Fine Printed Books and Manuscripts, Friday, 14 December 2001* (New York: Christie's, 2001), 15.

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and property developer, Kaspare Cohn, and wife of the banker Milton Getz, with a lavish Spanish-revival house in Beverly Hills frequented by the Hollywood set in the 1930s. Her collection, assembled mainly in the 1920s, included manuscripts previously owned by George D. Smith, William Morris, and Phillipps, and was dispersed in two sales in New York in 1936. Apart from three manuscripts bought by Otto Ege, it remains largely untraced. She also owned a sixteenth-century Aztec manuscript, which is now in the New York Public Library.[34]

Susan Bliss had one of the largest collections among the women in the *Census*: twelve codices and twenty-one leaves and documents. She came from a very wealthy background: her father was a banker, while her mother was the daughter of a successful cotton merchant. She was a significant benefactor to Yale, Princeton, Harvard, and numerous other institutions, including the Metropolitan Museum—to which she donated in 1944 the "Welcome" window from her family's New York house, featuring stained glass by John La Farge with a portrait of Susan herself. She also donated the library from the house (including the room itself) to Bowdoin College in Maine. The card catalogue of her rare book collection still survives, with about 18,000 entries.[35]

Another large collection was that of Goodhart—initially assembled with her father Howard. By the time of the *Supplement* she was married to John Dozier Gordan, a Curator at the Library of Congress, and the contents of the collection had changed somewhat.[36] She collected across a wide variety of subjects, and bought from a range of dealers. She was a distinguished Renaissance scholar—the Renaissance Society of America has a prize named after her—but she also came from a very wealthy family, so she is perhaps the only one of these collectors who belongs in both the wealthy and scholarly groups. Her great-grandfather was one of the original Lehman brothers, and her uncle was Arthur Goodhart, Master of (and benefactor to) University College Oxford—the first American to become the master of an Oxford college. Phyllis was a significant benefactor to Bryn Mawr College, where her manuscript collection is now housed.[37]

Phyllis Goodhart was a member of the Hrotswitha Club, formed in 1944 as an alternative to the Grolier Club, which did not admit women as members until 1976.[38] Ozment describes the Hrotswitha Club as "the most significant group of women book collectors in US history."[39] Among its founder members were librarians and scholars from New York and New Jersey who feature in the *Census*. Ruth Granniss was the librarian

34 de Ricci, *Census*, 1:12–16.

35 "Susan Dwight Bliss (1882–1966), collector, philanthropist," *Rare Book Collections @ Princeton* (blog], April 2, 2009, https://blogs.princeton.edu/rarebooks/2009/04/susan-dwight-bliss-1882-1966-c/, accessed May 12, 2023.

36 de Ricci, *Census*, 2:1675–84, 2339–40; Faye and Bond, *Supplement*, 398–404.

37 Patricia Labalme, "Phyllis Goodhart Gordan – A Memoir," *Renaissance Quarterly* 47.1 (1994): 150–52.

38 New York, Grolier Club, "Hroswitha Club: Records and Publications, 1944–1999" (finding aid), www.grolierclub.org/default.aspx?p=v35ListDocument&ID=755370972&listid=11461&listitemid=122614&ssid=322536&dpageid=&listname=, accessed March 13, 2024.

39 Ozment, *Hroswitha Club*, 2.

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of the Grolier Club. In the *Census*, she is listed as owning one French royal document, which had formerly belonged to Charles Eliot Norton (now untraced).[40] Her friend and fellow graduate of the Pratt Institute, Henrietta Bartlett, worked with de Ricci on his *Book Collector's Guide* of 1921—though without appearing as a co-author. Her collection amounted to twenty leaves and nine initials—mostly from liturgical manuscripts, and is now at Yale.[41]

Another founder member of the Hrotswitha Club was Eleanor Cross Marquand, the daughter of a New York banker and widow of the Princeton art historian Professor Allan Marquand, who had died in 1924. She owned a Book of Hours and an Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary, both inherited from him. Her own interest was in early botanical illustration and symbolism, and her collection of books and other materials on this subject is now in the New York Botanical Garden.[42] Belle da Costa Greene was also a founder member of the Hrotswitha Club. Although not recorded as a collector in her own right, her work in documenting the holdings of the Morgan Library is acknowledged in the *Census*, with de Ricci praising her "unselfish and sympathetic cooperation extended over some fifteen years of common efforts towards more accuracy and fuller information."[43]

A significant number of other women belonged to the world of academia and scholarship, either in their own right or through their families, usually their father. Mrs. William B. Bowers (née Rosamond Forbes) was the daughter of the director of the Fogg Art Museum at Harvard, Professor Edward Waldo Forbes. She was an artist, and owned a Book of Hours given to her by her father, and an initial G from a manuscript of the Decretals.[44] Two sisters were the owners of Greek manuscripts bequeathed by their father: Mrs. Elizabeth Angel and Mrs. Clara Day St. John.[45] They were the daughters of Thomas Day Seymour, Professor of Greek at Yale, and alumnae of Bryn Mawr College. Elizabeth was married to the British sculptor John Angel, while Clara was the wife of Rev. Dr. George Clair St. John, headmaster of Choate School in Wallingford, Connecticut, from 1908 to 1947.[46]

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40 de Ricci, *Census*, 2:1685; Mildred Abraham, "Ruth Shepard Granniss (1872–1954), Grolier Librarian, scholar, & lecturer," *Gazette of the Grolier Club* n. s. 57 (2006): 24–49.

41 de Ricci, *Census*, 1:173; Kurt Zimmerman, "The Hunt for Early American Women Bibliographers," *American Book Collecting* [blog], October 30, 2017, www.bookcollectinghistory.com/2017/10/the-hunt-for-early-american-women.html, accessed May 12, 2023.

42 de Ricci, *Census*, 2:1186; New York Botanic Garden, "Eleanor Cross Marquand Papers (PP)," www.nybg.org/library/finding_guide/archv/marquand_ppf.html, accessed May 12, 2023.

43 de Ricci, *Census*, 2:1361–62.

44 de Ricci, *Census*, 1:1054; Smithsonian Archives of American Art, "Oral history interview with Rosamond Forbes Pickhardt, 1995 Feb. 13," www.aaa.si.edu/download_pdf_transcript/ajax?record_id=edanmdm-AAADCD_oh_215823, accessed May 12, 2023.

45 de Ricci, *Census*, 1:178; 2:1652; Faye and Bond, *Supplement*, 387.

46 Yale University Library, *Guide to the Seymour Family Papers*, Series IX and X. 1980. https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0440, accessed May 12, 2023.

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Other women from the world of academia and scholarship included Miss Alpha L. Owens, owner of one document and two philosophical and theological codices.[47] After acquiring a PhD from Johns Hopkins University, she was a Professor of Modern Languages at Morris Harvey College in West Virginia from 1929 to 1947.[48] One of her codices is now at the University of Kansas; the others are untraced. The nine manuscripts owned by Mrs. William Alfred Quayle (Allie Hancock Davis) in the *Census* are also now in Kansas, at Baker University. Her father, Rev. Werter R. Davis was the first President of Baker University. She had been widowed three times; William Quayle, her third husband, had been President of Baker University in the 1890s and had originally acquired the manuscripts. They were all liturgical: three Books of Hours, two Breviaries (one formerly owned by Phillipps), two Rituals, one Diurnale, and one Missal—a somewhat surprising collection, perhaps, for a man who was a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church.[49]

Outside the worlds of the wealthy and scholarly, a range of other women owned one or more medieval manuscripts. Among them was Mrs. Minerva L. Crane, the widow of newspaper editor Augustus Crane, who ran the *Elizabeth Daily Journal* in Elizabeth. She owned a two-volume genealogy of Pierre de Luxembourg, obtained in Florence in 1929.[50] Mrs. Maynard Ladd (Anna Coleman Watts) was a sculptor, educated in Paris and Rome, and married to a Boston physician. When he moved to France in 1917 as director of the Children's Bureau of the American Red Cross, she became involved in the facial reconstruction program there, creating new faces for mutilated soldiers out of galvanized copper, painted to match the skin tone. She was appointed Chevalier of the Légion d'Honneur in 1932. As well as owning a fifteenth-century Book of Hours, on loan to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, she wrote a novel, *Hieronymus Rides*, which was based on a medieval romance.[51]

Mrs. William Sherman (Flora) Walker was a political activist. The former wife of a Seattle businessman, she moved to Washington, DC, in the late 1920s and became a conservative lobbyist as chairman of the National Defense Committee of the Daughters of the American Revolution.[52] Her collection consisted of twelve single leaves from nine

47 de Ricci, *Census*, 2:2194–95.

48 N. Kıvılcım Yavuz, "Manuscript of the Month: A Manuscript, Wrapped in a Mystery, Inside an Enigma," *Inside Spencer: the KSRL Blog*, April 1, 2020, https://blogs.lib.ku.edu/spencer/manuscript-of-the-month-a-manuscript-wrapped-in-a-mystery-inside-an-enigma/, accessed May 12, 2023.

49 de Ricci, *Census*, 1:726–27; "William Alfred Quayle," in Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Alfred_Quayle; Find a Grave, www.findagrave.com/memorial/142195203/allie-hancock-perry_-_robbins_-_quayle, accessed May 12, 2023.

50 de Ricci, *Census*, 2:1158.

51 de Ricci, *Census*, 1:954; Caroline Alexander, "Faces of War," *Smithsonian Magazine* February 2007, www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/faces-of-war-145799854/, accessed May 12, 2023.

52 Simon Wendt, "Defenders of Patriotism or Mothers of Fascism? The Daughters of the American Revolution, Antiradicalism, and Un-Americanism in the Interwar Period," *Journal of American Studies* 47.4 (2013): 943–69; Kirsten Marie Delegard, *Battling Missi Bolsheviki: the Origins of Female Conservatism in the United States* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 97–100.

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manuscripts of the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries, "containing fragments of liturgies with musical notation, canon law, sermons, etc., several removed from bindings."[53] It is unclear how she acquired them, and they are now untraced.

Mrs. Jean J. Hastings, owned a collection of thirty-nine Flemish documents, seventeen of which were old enough to be listed in the *Census*. She described them as "a gift from the son of a former American consul in Belgium"—though his identity, and the circumstances involved, remain a mystery. She was a typist for the United States government—possibly in the office of Senator Robert D. Carey of Wyoming, since he arranged to have the documents lent to the Library of Congress for examination for the *Census*.[54] Her husband, who was a foreman for a road contractor, died in 1937 leaving her a widow with five young children. The Flemish documents are untraced.

Mrs. W. A. (Bird Gertrude Euans) Hawker, from Grand Rapids, owned a single leaf from an Antiphonal, which she said she had owned for "the last forty years." It was large (51 × 35 cm) with a coat of arms featuring "a lion rampant gules" and the motto "a domino factum est istud," and probably originated in a South German abbey.[55] She came from a farming family in Iowa and had completed four years of high school. Her husband, who was sixty-five in 1930, had been a conductor on the Pere Marquette Railroad in Michigan for at least thirty years, and was the son of a blacksmith.[56] Perhaps she had been given it as a wedding present, since she married in 1889? Or perhaps it was a family heirloom of some kind? It was clearly important to her, since she sent it to the Library of Congress for examination for the *Census*.

One of the most interesting women in the *Census* was Alice Millard (née Parsons), praised by de Ricci for her work in bringing manuscripts—and culture generally—to Southern California.[57] A teacher from a relatively modest background (her father worked in a butter factory), she married the Chicago rare book seller George M. Millard in 1901. They moved to California in 1914, where they set up George M. Millard Books. After his death in 1918 Alice carried on the business for nearly twenty years, while also expanding into antiques.[58] With clients including William Andrews Clark, Henry Huntington,

53 de Ricci, *Census*, 1:507.

54 de Ricci, *Census*, 1:904–5.

55 de Ricci, *Census*, 2:1136.

56 United States Federal Census 1930, Grand Rapids City, Ancestry.com, www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/6224/images/4608259_00353, accessed May 30, 2023.

57 Michele V. Cloonan, "Alice Millard and the Gospel of Beauty and Taste," in *Women in Print: Essays on the Print Culture of American Women from the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, ed. James P. Danky and Wayne A. Wiegand (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006), 159–78.

58 Margaret Leslie Davis, *The Lost Gutenberg: Obsession and Ruin in Pursuit of the World's Rarest Books* (London: Atlantic Books, 2020), 110–16; Robert Rosenthal, "Los Angeles & Chicago, Two Cities, Two Bibliophiles," in *A Bibliophile's Los Angeles, Essays for the International Association of Bibliophiles on the Occasion of Its XIVth Congress* (Los Angeles: University of California, 1985), 3–27; Madison Lowery, "The curious case of George M. Millard Books," Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation, *Dispatches from the Presidio Neighborhood* [blog], March 27, 2015, https://sbthp.wordpress.com/2015/03/27/the-curious-case-of-george-m-millard-books/, accessed May 12, 2023.

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and later Doheny, she was sufficiently successful to commission a house in Pasadena from Frank Lloyd Wright. Millard's private manuscript collection consisted of a Bible, a legal manuscript, and two liturgical leaves.[59] They are now in the Huntington Library, together with her papers and book collection.

These women mainly belonged to two worlds. Those from the wealthiest families, whether as wives or daughters, collected widely and acted as benefactors to museums, universities, and colleges. Those from the world of scholarship were academics and librarians, involved in curating and studying manuscripts and rare books. There was relatively little overlap between these two groups, with the important exception of the Hrotswitha Club, which provided the basis for a network where the scholarly and the wealthy could demonstrate their common interest in medieval studies. Outside these groups were a small number of other women, including artists, writers, and a bookseller, for whom the *Census* served as a kind of temporary, informal network.

Conclusion

Collecting and collections may simply be a reflection of the "magpie instinct" to bring together "shiny baubles," as the archivist Joan Schwartz recently suggested—in contrast with archives with their coherent purpose and gradual accretion over time.[60] However the women recorded in the *Census* seem to have found sufficient significance in their ownership of manuscripts and documents to go to the trouble of reporting them to a national stock-take, in which the very wealthy rubbed shoulders, metaphorically, with scholars, artists, typists, and wives of railroad conductors.

While the wealthy women and the wives of aspirational professionals liked to demonstrate their culture and taste (and wealth) through collecting, manuscripts were usually only one aspect of a broader program of collecting other kinds of artistic and cultural objects, building and decorating lavish houses, and participating in philanthropic activities. For the scholars and librarians, manuscripts reflected their intellectual and curatorial interests, as well as expressing their artistic and cultural leanings. But what are we to make of the other collectors who do not readily fit into these groups? What value and meaning did manuscripts hold for them? They seem to have been more likely to acquire fragments, single leaves, and documents, and to acquire manuscripts through gifts and inheritance. This phenomenon is not necessarily limited to women collectors; Sydney Cockerell, for example, constantly used gifts of manuscripts to enhance his friendships and social connections.[61] However, in general, these women seem to have been less focused on auctions and competitive acquisitions than male collectors like Cockerell. For a significant number of these women, manuscripts (especially single leaves) often

59 de Ricci, *Census*, 1:24–25.

60 Joan Schwartz, "Between Analogue Photographs and their Digital Surrogates," Leverhulme Lecture, V&A Museum, London, October 27, 2022.

61 Christopher de Hamel, "Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts from the Library of Sir Sydney Cockerell (1867–1962)," *British Library Journal* 13 (1987): 186–210.

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circulated in the context of social networking and family relationships. These kinds of relationships are also an essential part of the social meaning of manuscript collecting.

For all de Ricci's defensiveness about the inclusion of private collectors, the *Census* provides an important insight into the world of private manuscript ownership in the earlier twentieth century. Despite his prediction of the demise of private collecting, there are still many manuscripts, leaves, and documents in private hands. In the art world, there are several sites where private collectors can record and share information about their collections, including *Collecteurs* and *Artscapy*. A similar approach to documenting private owners could do much to help our understanding of the ownership of medieval and Renaissance manuscripts today. However the *Census* is of particular and enduring value in illuminating an often-neglected network within the world of manuscript collecting. The women and their manuscript collections recorded in the *Census* are an important corrective to male-dominated histories, providing glimpses of a different approach to the collecting and ownership of manuscripts.

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APPENDIX

Table 18.3: Women Named as Owners in the *Census* and *Supplement*.

Name	Location	Codices	Single items	**Census reference** (all references are to the *Census* unless otherwise stated)	Conway–Davis
Angel, Elizabeth Day Seymour, Mrs.	New York	1	0	2:1652; *Supplement*, 387	76
Barney, Alice C., Mrs.	Washington, DC	1	0	1:489	25
Bartlett, Henrietta, Miss	New Haven	0	20	1:173–74	20
Bliss, Susan D., Miss	New York	12	21	2:1662–66	77
Boggs, Elizabeth, Miss	Beverly Hills	1	0	1:11	3
Bovey, Kate (Mrs. Charles C.)	Minneapolis	0	4	2:1140	56
Bowers, William B., Mrs.	Cambridge, MA	1	1	1:1054	50
Boyer, Blanche B., Prof.	South Hadley	1	0	1:1065	32, 55
Bull, W. Lanman, Mrs.	New York	0	1	2:1668	78
Clark, E. P. S., Mrs.	Boston	1	0	1:951	46
Crane, Minerva L., Mrs.	Elizabeth, NJ	1	0	2:1158	62
Crummer, Myrtle, Mrs.	Hollywood	1	0	1:19	4
Diman, Louise, Miss	Providence	1	0	2:2152	109
Doheny, Estelle, Mrs.	Los Angeles	35	31	1:20–21; 2:2242–43; *Supplement*, 9–15, 18	8
Dohrmann, A. B. C., Mrs.	San Francisco	3	0	1:31	13
Emerson, William, Mrs.	Cambridge, MA	4	0	1:1055–56; *Supplement*, 285	50
Garrison, Elisha E., Mrs.	Greenwich, CT	1	0	1:156	17
Getz, Milton E., Mrs.	New York	41	4	1:12–16; 2:2240–41; *Supplement*, 9	3
Goodhart, Phyllis W. (and Howard L. Goodhart)	New York	41	4	2:1675–84, 2339–40	79

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Name	Location	Codices	Single items	Census reference (all references are to the *Census* unless otherwise stated)	Conway–Davis
Gordan, Phyllis Goodhart (and John Dozier Gordan Jr.)	New York	43	0	*Supplement*, 398–404	79
Granniss, Ruth Sheppard, Miss	New York	0	1	2:1685	79
Hastings, Jean J., Mrs.	Washington Grove, MD	0	17	1:904–5	44
Hawker, W. A., Mrs.	Grand Rapids	0	1	2:1136	56
Hawkes, Morris, Mrs.	New York	1	0	2:1686	79
Hellman, C. Doris (Mrs. Morton Pepper)	New York	1	0	*Supplement*, 405	79
Hooper, Alice Foster Perkins, Mrs.	Manchester by the Sea, MA	1	0	1:1063	51
Jewett, Sarah Orne, Miss	South Berwick, MN	0	2	1:750	41
Kyreakou, Ethel, Mrs.	Washington, DC	2	0	2:2275	25
Ladd, Maynard, Mrs.	Boston	1	0	1:954	47
Lambert, Elizabeth W., Mrs.	New York	2	0	2:1701	80
Lathrop, A., Miss	New York	1	0	2:1701	80
Mabury, Bella, Miss	Los Angeles	1	0	1:22	9
Marquand, Allan, Mrs.	Princeton	2	0	2:1186	65
McCormick, Edith Rockefeller, Mrs.	Chicago	1	1	1:616; *Supplement*, 165	32
Millard, George Madison, Mrs.	Pasadena	2	2	1:24, 2:2243	10
Nichols, Austin P., Mrs.	Haverhill, MA	1	0	1:1062	51
Noble, Eugene Allen, Mrs.	Providence	1	0	2:2154	109
Owens, Alpha Loretta, Miss	Barboursville, WV	2	1	2:2194–95	119
Parker, Dudrea, Mrs. (and Sumner Parker)	Brooklandville, MD	5	4	1:902	45

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Name	Location	Codices	Single items	Census reference (all references are to the *Census* unless otherwise stated)	Conway–Davis
Pearson, Edward J., Mrs.	New York	6	0	2:1721	81
Pontius, Adele, Miss	Cincinnati	1	0	2:1927	91
Poole, John Hudson, Mrs.	Pasadena	1	0	1:25	11
Pratt, Vera H., Mrs.	New York	6	0	2:1809–10	81
Price, Christine, Miss	Berkeley	1	0	1:10	2
Quayle, William Alfred, Mrs.	Baldwin, KA	9	0	1:726–27, 2:2286	39
Rabinowitz, Hannah, Mrs. (and Louis Rabinowitz)	Sands Point, NY	13	0	*Supplement*, 412–14	86
Reynolds, J. C., Mrs.	Jacksonville	1	0	2:2277	27
St. John, Clara Day, Mrs.	Wallingford, CT	1	0	1:178; *Supplement*, 103	21
Sanford, Eva Matthews, Miss	Oneonta (Census); Sweet Briar, VA (Suppl.)	0	3	2:1855; *Supplement*, 525	117
Serpell, Althea, Miss	Norfolk, VA	1	7	2:2175–76	116
Sherwood, Merriam, Dr.	New York	0	1	2:1821	83
Skinner, Belle	Holyoke	1	0	1:1063	51
Taylor, G. Winship, Mrs.	Baltimore	1	0	2:2296	43
Thomas, Marie W.	Denver	3	0	1:153	16
Tinker, Edward Laroque, Mrs.	New York	0	1	2:1844	84
Walker, William Sherman, Mrs.	Washington, DC	0	12	1:507	26
Weld, Mary, Miss	Boston	2	0	1:962	47
Wheeler, H.S., Miss	Wellesley	0	2	1:1079	53
Witmer, Eleanor M., Miss.	New York	0	1	2:1854	84

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Table 18.4: Couples with Husband Named First.

Name	Location	Census Reference	Conway–Davis
Foulet, Alfred and Margaret	Princeton	*Supplement*, 313	65
Garrett, John and Alice	Baltimore	1:862–64; *Supplement*, 200	43
Gutman, Mr. and Mrs. Nelson	Baltimore	*Supplement*, 200	43
Hyde, Mr. and Mrs. Donald	Somerville, NJ	*Supplement*, 314–15	66
Loomis, Dr. and Mrs. Roger S.	New York	*Supplement*, 405	81
Spitz, Joel and Maxine	Glencoe, IL	*Supplement*, 166–67	34
Straus, Mr. and Mrs. Percy S.	New York	2:1841	84

Table 18.5: Other Women Mentioned in the *Census.*

Name	Location	*Census* reference	Notes
Alexander, Miss Constance G.	Unknown	1:1079	Also has a Gradual leaf (see H. S. Wheeler)
Bliss, Mrs. George T.	New York	2:1662–66	She and Susan Bliss gave ninety-three manuscripts, books & relics of Mary Queen of Scots to the BnF in 1927
Brainerd, Mrs. William H.	[New York?]	1:1079	Also has a Gradual leaf given by Miss A. Lathrop (see H. S. Wheeler)
Greene, Belle da Costa	New York	2:1361–62	Thanked for her work on the Morgan Library entries
Hearst, Mrs. Phoebe A.	[Pleasanton], CA	1:3–7	Previous owner of nineteen manuscripts donated to University of California Berkeley (died in 1919)
Mathewson, Mrs. Gertrude H.	Berkeley	1:10	Previous owner of *Officium BVM* now owned by Christine Price
McCormick, Elizabeth Day	Chicago	*Supplement*, 165	Cousin of Edith Rockefeller McCormick; owned a Greek Apocalypse manuscript and bought a New Testament manuscript from Edith's estate in 1942
Naumberg, Mrs. Aaron	[Cambridge, MA?]	1:1051	Bequeathed *Officium BVM* to the Fogg Museum in 1930

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Name	Location	*Census* reference	Notes
Van Sinderen, Mrs. A. [Annie]	Brooklyn	1:1056	Noted as owning one vol. of an *Officium BVM*, the other vol. of which was owned by Mrs Emerson—but this MS is later listed as owned by her husband Adrian (*Census* 2:1205), among four manuscripts "inherited…from his father-in-law Alfred T. White."
Wood, Mrs. E. Allen	Greenwich, CT	1:1055–56	Sister of Mrs Emerson—owner of 1 leaf

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Chapter 19

"A MOST FASCINATING AND DANGEROUS PURSUIT"

THE BOOK COLLECTING OF ISABELLA STEWART GARDNER

NATALIA FANTETTI

ISABELLA STEWART GARDNER is a difficult woman for the modern researcher to pin down.[1] She destroyed a lot of her correspondence towards the end of her life, although a substantial amount has survived in the collections of others and in the documents she kept for display in the museum.[2] She was also fond of saying "Don't spoil a good story by telling the truth."[3] As a result, it becomes necessary to separate fact from fiction and to dig deeper into the surviving sources. The basic facts of her life, however, are well-documented. Gardner was born in New York on April 14, 1840, to a wealthy family who had the means to privately educate her, and who later sent her to finishing school in Paris.[4] Having returned to America in 1858, she married John (known as Jack) Lowell Gardner, one of Boston's most eligible bachelors, two years later.[5] After the death of their only child in 1865, the Gardners went to Europe as a cure for Isabella's consequent depression. This journey would prove to be a pivotal moment, as she came back to Boston a changed woman, and soon became known for her colourful personality and outrageous antics.[6] Gardner began collecting works of art on her travels as well as at

1 I examine Gardner's collecting and scholarship in the context of female manuscript collecting in my PhD thesis, "Women's Contributions to the Medieval Manuscript Trade 1900–1945." This chapter draws heavily on that research.

2 Louise Hall Tharp, *Mrs. Jack: A Biography of Isabella Stewart Gardner* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1965), 320.

3 Morris Carter, *Isabella Stewart Gardner and Fenway Court* (London: Heinemann, 1926), 34.

4 "Isabella Stewart Gardner: An Unconventional Life," *Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum*, www.gardnermuseum.org/about/isabella-stewart-gardner, accessed November 8, 2022.

5 Christina Nielsen, with Casey Riley and Nathaniel Silver, *Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum: A Guide* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017), 4; "Gardner: An Unconventional Life."

6 Tharp, *Mrs. Jack*, 36, 43.

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home in Boston, and, after Jack's death, plans were set in motion to build a magnificent museum to house her collection. She is primarily known today either for her eccentricities or for her art collection, both of which have been extensively written about.[7] However, her book collecting is often excluded from the critical conversation or condensed into a single sentence that highlights the fact that she collected books before she collected paintings.[8] Although the exact date of Gardner's first rare book or manuscript purchase is not known, we do know that her acquisitions were largely spurred on by the lectures and readings she attended by Charles Eliot Norton, the first of which was a series of readings of Dante in 1878.[9] We also know she was purchasing books from "the Boston-based dealer-auctioneer C. F. Libbie and the luxury goods store Shreve, Crump and Low" in the early 1880s, and that Norton became her library advisor in 1886, which marked a turning point towards rarer volumes.[10]

Indeed, it seems that by 1886 the book-buying bug had well and truly bitten, with Gardner writing to Norton, "Books I fear, are a most fascinating & dangerous pursuit, but one full of pleasure."[11] "Dangerous" is a rather odd way to describe book collecting; after all, it is not a pastime that regularly involves life-or-death situations. It is, however, a passion that can become dangerously addictive as one purchase leads into the next, and I suspect that Gardner was hinting at this. Books were also arguably the hook into her wider collecting, and as a result, wider spending, which might suggest danger of a financial kind. This underlines the point that the lack of interest paid to Gardner as *a collector of books* is a major critical oversight, as it is fundamental to understanding her as a collector. Gardner undoubtedly saw herself as a serious bibliophile, making her book collecting a substantial part of her acquisitive personality, and so it should be assessed with according seriousness. Using material from the Gardner Museum archives and analysing the museum space, I aim to highlight how Gardner engaged with her collection beyond the process of acquisition, as well as how she utilized artistic placement within the museum's design to express her bibliophilic self.

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7 For a biography of Gardner that highlights her eccentricity see Douglas Shand-Tucci, *The Art of Scandal: The Life and Times of Isabella Stewart Gardner* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1998). Gardner is often written about in volumes centring on women art collectors and/or women philanthropists, which tend to ignore the book collecting, as in Diane Sachko Macleod, *Enchanted Lives, Enchanted Objects: American Women Collectors and the Making of Culture, 1800–1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008).

8 For example, Aline Bernstein Saarinen, *The Proud Possessors: The Lives, Times, and Tastes of Some Adventurous American Art Collectors* (New York: Random House, 1958), 36.

9 Elizabeth Anne McCauley, "A Sentimental Traveler: Isabella Stewart Gardner in Venice," in *Gondola Days: Isabella Stewart Gardner and the Palazzo Barbaro Circle*, ed. Elizabeth Anne McCauley, et al. (Boston: Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, 2004), 3–52 at 5.

10 Anne-Marie Eze, "Une femme bibliophile: Isabella Stewart Gardner's Book of Hours by Jean Bourdichon and French Books," in *Bourdichon's Boston Hours*, ed. Anne-Marie Eze and Nicholas Herman (Boston: Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, 2021), 11–23 at 17.

11 Cambridge, MA, Harvard University, Houghton Library, Norton Papers, bMS Am 1088, 2494, letter from Isabella Stewart Gardner to Charles Eliot Norton, July 12, 1886.

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Gardner's Scholarly Scrapbooking

As William P. Stoneman and Anne-Marie Eze have observed, Gardner, unlike most of her collecting contemporaries, wrote not one but two catalogues of her rare books and manuscripts, published in 1906 and 1922. Both catalogues were "issued in large print runs and distributed widely to fellow book lovers, art collectors, and libraries."[12] They were entitled *A Choice of Books from the Library of Isabella Stewart Gardner* and *A Choice of Manuscripts and Bookbindings from the Library of Isabella Stewart Gardner Fenway Court*, respectively, and the second catalogue was written with the help of Morris Carter, who would become the first director of the Gardner Museum.[13] These published catalogues, however, were not the first time that Gardner had attempted to list the major works in her collection. A handwritten book catalogue completed by Gardner in the museum's archives dates to 1900, thus predating the earlier catalogue by six years.[14] From the archival material that survives, including the handwritten catalogue and research files for the 1922 published catalogue, we can go beyond the initial statement of fact that she compiled her own collection catalogues to critically assess just what the work entailed. These materials provide an insight into how Gardner saw her collection of books, as well as showing which facets of the books and manuscripts preoccupied her.

Beginning with the research files, it is possible to gain insight into Gardner's thinking process in its earlier stages, before they had been honed into catalogue form. There are six folders of loose pages, comprised of clippings and notes relating to the books and manuscripts ahead of the 1922 catalogue. These files often include photograph reproductions of either the bindings or miniatures of importance, and sometimes both. A pattern emerges regarding the types of documents that are preserved. There are three main types: 1) an image of a binding with a cut out and pasted catalogue entry; 2) an image of a miniature with information about the artist as well as to which manuscript it relates; 3) an image of a binding with an important former owner noted above and information regarding the volume below, normally relating to its provenance. The use of and arguably, reliance on, reproduced images highlights the importance of the visual element in Gardner's book collecting. This is compounded by the fact that in the files in which a miniature is displayed, information is often also given about the miniatures in the rest of the manuscript.

Though it was common practice in catalogues to make a point of mentioning illustrations, Gardener's interest in visual art suggests that it was more than following convention for her. She had bought her first painting in 1873, a "mild enough affair" by Emile

12 William P. Stoneman and Anne-Marie Eze, "Illuminating the Charles: Collecting Manuscripts in Boston," in *Beyond Words: Illuminated Manuscripts in Boston Collections*, ed. Jeffrey F. Hamburger, et al. (Boston: McMullen Museum of Art, 2016), 15–19 at 18.

13 Stoneman and Eze, "Illuminating the Charles," 18.

14 This is known as Boston, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum Archives, ARC.009130, the date of which we know thanks to how it has been catalogued. See "Book Catalog, 1900," www.gardnermuseum.org/experience/collection/24301#object-details, accessed November 8, 2022.

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Jacque, as one of her biographers called it.[15] Arguably, part of the reason for not branching out into the acquisition of European masterpieces sooner was money related. Anne Higonnet notes that "In 1891, immediately after she inherited a fortune from her father and three years before she began working with Berenson, she emerged as an astute collector," identifying Vermeer's "The Concert" as a masterpiece before Vermeer's works were fashionable, and buying it at a sale in Paris that year.[16] Notably, even contemporary art experts were impressed at her purchase (and the price she had negotiated for it), with one remarking that "it was probably worth five times what she had paid for it."[17] As such, it can be said that Gardner had a naturally keen eye for visual art. There is also cause to believe that she had a particular liking for manuscript illuminations. Bernard Berenson, ever the savvy salesman, once tried to sell her a painting by Raffaellino del Garbo by comparing it to one, writing to her in 1902 that "It is as lovely as the illuminated page of a medieval manuscript."[18] The only reason to make the comparison would be if manuscript illuminations appealed to her; it would hardly have made for a very useful sales tactic otherwise.

Gardner's other primary concern appears to have been provenance. From her correspondence with Berenson it is clear that the importance of provenance was no momentary preoccupation, nor was it limited to books. In a letter from 1900, she asks him: "Please send me when you possibly can a complete list of the provenance of the pictures I have had through you. I mean from whom I bought them, and where they came from."[19] This preoccupation is reflected in both the research files and the handwritten catalogue of 1900. For example, instead of the more common practice of using the title of the work or the type of book as the heading, many of her files have who the volume formerly belonged to written at the top of the page, with examples including Anne of Austria and King Henry VIII of England, both of whom had the royal associations that Gardner particularly liked. In some of the files in which a dealer catalogue entry has been pasted in, provenance data regarding famous, and particularly royal, former owners have been underlined in red—perhaps as a reminder to include such information when compiling her own catalogues.

The making of the handwritten catalogue of 1900 is further evidence that Gardner had a personal interest in provenance. In a letter to Berenson in 1900, Gardner mentioned a catalogue that she had been preparing, writing that "I have begun to make a lit-

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15 Tharp, *Mrs Jack*, 46–47. There is a slight caveat: this is the earliest painting to have made it into the final collection at Fenway Court.

16 Anne Higonnet, *A Museum of One's Own: Private Collecting, Public Gift* (New York: Periscope, 2009), 48.

17 Rachel Cohen, *Bernard Berenson: A Life in the Picture Trade* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 118.

18 Rollin van N. Hadley, ed., *The Letters of Bernard Berenson and Isabella Stewart Gardner 1887–1924* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1987), 309.

19 Isabella Stewart Gardner to Bernard Berenson, January 19, 1900, *Letters of Bernard Berenson*, ed. Hadley, 201. Further instances of Gardner asking for information about provenance appear on 220, 248, 269.

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tle catalogue for my own amusement. I post the photographs of my originals into a book and write the provenance etc. etc."[20] Whilst this may be in reference to the "photograph album known as *Catalogue MCM: The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in the Fenway*," it could equally be talking about the handwritten book catalogue.[21] What the letter and the catalogues show is that Gardner enjoyed investigating the provenance of her collection and embarked on these projects purely for her own satisfaction. This is compounded by the fact that the 1900 book catalogue was custom bound, making it unlikely that it was ever intended for publication.

If it is assumed that the catalogue was written for Gardner's personal use, this potentially explains some of its idiosyncrasies. The roughly alphabetical categorization that she used in the 1906 published catalogue has a predecessor, for the handwritten catalogue was also ordered in that way.[22] Given that in the 1922 catalogue (the only one in which she had the additional assistance of Carter) the alphabetical categorization had been abandoned, it is safe to assume that this was her preferred means of organization.[23] Moreover, the alphabetization is a little idiosyncratic, as sometimes the books were organized by type, such as "Bibles," by author, such as "Dante" or modern scholars like "Bernard Berenson," or even by press if it was of note, like the "Aldine Press." Even when the type of book is the same, as in the case of Books of Hours, these are variously listed under "Hours," "Horae," and "Heures," depending on the volume's origins. This habit of changing languages may in fact be related to Gardner's own interest in languages, as she had learnt French growing up and Italian in later life.[24]

The most fascinating thing about the handwritten catalogue, however, is its work-in-progress, multimedia format. As well as inserting a few pasted pages that follow the same format as the research notes (reproduced images, notes underneath), Gardner added materials that related to her book and manuscript purchases. For example, there is an entry from a dealer's catalogue pasted in for the fourteenth-century Dante manuscript that Gardner bought through the London bookdealer Ellis at the Ashburnham sale, with "To be sold by Sotheby on June 10 1901," handwritten above it.[25] The slightly later date of 1901 suggests that Gardner was actively adding things into her catalogue over a period of time. In another example, there is an article from *The Athenæum* dated November 30, 1889, regarding a printed Book of Hours that once belonged to Catherine de' Medici and Mary Queen of Scots that Gardner inserted in the catalogue. Alongside the article she also included a more personal item, namely, a letter from Ellis dated Octo-

20 Hadley, ed., *Letters of Bernard Berenson*, 210.

21 Casey Riley, "Commerce and Connoisseurship: Isabella Stewart Gardner's *Catalogue MCM*," in *Photography and the Art Market around 1900*, ed. Constanza Caraffa and Julia Bärninghausen (Florence: Mitteilungen Des Kunsthistorischen Institutes, 2020), 93–108 at 97.

22 See Isabella Stewart Gardner, *A Choice of Books from the Library of Isabella Stewart Gardner* (Boston: no publisher, 1906).

23 See Morris Carter and Isabella Stewart Gardner, *A Choice of Manuscripts and Bookbindings From the Library of Isabella Stewart Gardner Fenway Court* (Boston: Merrymount Press, 1922).

24 McCauley, "Sentimental Traveller," 4, 7.

25 Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum Archives, ARC.009130.

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ber 12, 1892, regarding the more recent provenance of the book.[26] This corresponds to an entry that Gardner has written on the opposite page:

> *Heures a l'usage de Rome toutes au long sans Req'rir…avec Calendrier et Almanach* (1514–30) Printed on vellum. 8vo Paris, Simon Vostre 1574. Belonged to CathV erine de Medicis, Francis II, Marie R. Queen of Scots, Cardinal de Lorraine with their autographs.[27]

The gathering of information from various sources both personal (like the letter) and industry-based (like the article) and juxtaposing them together is in essence scholarly scrapbooking, allowing her to build something of disparate yet related parts to make a whole. It shows that Gardner was utilizing different sources to research and produce the most complete histories of her books.

Eze has noted that Gardner had a particular interest in collecting volumes that had once been in royal collections or the collection of famous female bibliophiles, to the extent that she bought a copy of Ernest Quentin-Bauchart's two-volume, illustrated, *Les femmes bibliophiles de France* at auction in 1891.[28] In collecting works associated with such women, Gardner was putting herself forward as one of their number; namely, as a great bibliophile herself. However, by collecting and collating secondary material to ultimately produce a catalogue, she went one step further. The clippings and notes in their various iterations prove that she was engaged in a project of further reading, revision, and editing. In doing so, Gardner interacted with her collection in a more wide-ranging way, going beyond the books and manuscripts themselves and reading around them. They are idiosyncratic and at times haphazard records that retain that air of scrapbooking that was popular amongst many women in her social class at the time. Nonetheless, it can still be classified as scholarly work, and ought to be taken in the context of a woman who came to book collecting in middle-age and never received a formalized education in bibliography, during an era in which, as Donna M. Lucey reminds us, "women were discouraged—if not banned—from intellectual pursuits."[29] Even if it was as an art collector that she became famous, Gardner clearly saw herself as a book collector as well. And it is this self-conception of Gardner's as a bibliophile that I will now turn to, as well as how it is manifested within the make-up of the museum itself.

Gardner the Bibliophile in the Museum

The Gardner Museum is largely preserved as Gardner designed it, due to the stipulation in her will that nothing could be added to the collection, and that the placement of objects could not be altered. This, as Corrine Zimmermann, Brooke DiGiovanni Evans, and Cynthia Robinson point out, means that visitors "encounter the founder's vision as

26 Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum Archives, ARC.009130.

27 Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum Archives, ARC.009130.

28 Eze, "Une femme bibliophile," 23.

29 Donna M. Lucey, *Sargent's Women: Four Lives Behind the Canvas* (New York: Norton, 2017), 178

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imagined in her own time."[30] For researchers, the layout and positioning of the collection also functions as an analytical source, as they give an insight into Gardner's thought processes. Within the spatial context of the museum, the books may at first seem overshadowed by other items. For as fascinating as books were to Gardner, they would not remain her sole acquisitive passion, with her collection eventually encompassing paintings, sculptures, architectural pieces, antique furnishings, and art objects. It would be hard to make the case that books were the focus of her institution, which is very much unlike her contemporary Enriqueta Rylands, who also made rare book and manuscript purchases at the upper end of the market and exhibited an extraordinary amount of control over the institution that she built to house her collection. Both women kept notes about their book purchases, and both had a very specific idea of what they wanted and how they wanted it done.[31] You could argue that Gardner was more hands-on than Rylands, given stories such as the one in which "impatient with her painters' work on the walls of her courtyard," she "seized the sponges and pots of paint, hitched up her skirts, climbed a ladder, and demonstrated exactly what she wanted."[32] However, Rylands's rare book and manuscript purchases far outstripped Gardner's: Rylands's three major, *en bloc* collection purchases alone consisted of the Spencer collection (forty-three thousand printed books, four thousand being incunables); the Crawford collection (six thousand manuscripts in various languages); and the Passerini collection (six thousand volumes of Dante literature, including incunables and manuscripts).[33] This compares with three thousand rare books (forty-two of them being illuminated manuscripts and eleven being incunables) that currently reside in the Gardner Museum.[34] Furthermore, Rylands did not collect other forms of art like paintings and sculpture in any significant number. Arguably this is because it was her intention to build a standalone, memorial library, whereas Gardner had no such goal. Gardner's institution would be first a home and, ultimately, a museum, a kind of institution far more open to personal interpretation, giving her full artistic and intellectual freedom to create something that would reflect its founder: diverse of taste, complex of character, and not easy to categorize.

Thus Gardner's institution is an all-encompassing feast for the senses that brings together a multitude of art forms. As Linda J. Docherty writes, Gardner's Fenway Court "dissolved the line between architecture and objects," functioning not as a container

30 Corrine Zimmermann, Brooke DiGiovanni Evans, and Cynthia Robinson, "Living with the Founder: Constraints and Creativity," *Journal of Museum Education* 45.2 (2020): 109–114 at 110.

31 The chief evidence of Enriqueta Rylands's notes come in the form of a copy book held in the archives at the John Rylands Library in Manchester. In it she lists manuscripts according to language, listing the prices paid for them, as well as handwritten copies of correspondence related to the Crawford sale. See Manchester, John Rylands Library Archives JRL/6/1/6/1/6.

32 Higonnet, *Museum of One's Own*, 95.

33 "Our history," *University of Manchester Library*, www.library.manchester.ac.uk/rylands/about/our-history/, accessed November 21, 2022; Moses Tyson, *The First Forty Years of the John Rylands Library* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1941), 12.

34 "Collection," *Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum*, www.gardnermuseum.org/experience/collection, accessed November 21, 2022; Stoneman and Eze, "Illuminating the Charles," 17.

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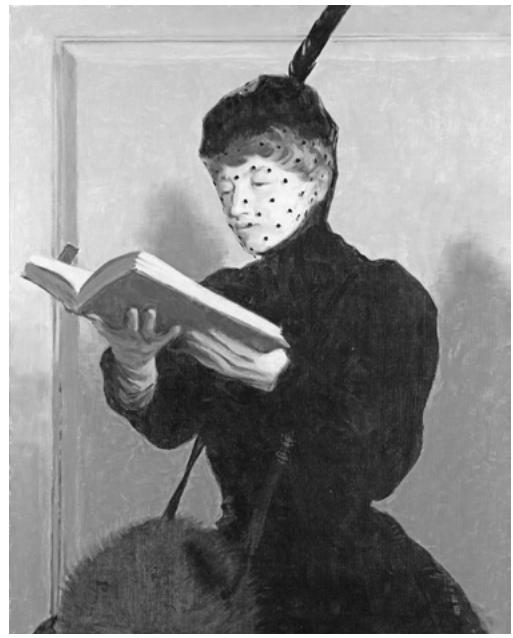


Figure 19.1. Martin Mower, *Isabella Stewart Gardner*, 1917. Oil, 83 × 66 cm. Courtesy of the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston.

for works of art, but rather a curated symphony of colour, texture, and type.[35] With so much going on, it is unsurprising that when visiting the museum your eyes are drawn to more obviously spectacular items: the famous courtyard, the large-scale paintings like Titian's "Rape of Europa," and the rich, antique furnishings. Yet, if you look more closely, books are present nearly everywhere. After all, three thousand volumes are not a small collection. Books are hidden in alcoves in between doorways above eye level, shelved in cabinets big and small, sometimes with an indication as to their contents with a note about their author or theme, and sometimes not. Once you start looking for books, it becomes apparent that Gardner had amassed a large collection. For our purposes however, the main volumes of interest are the premodern ones, and for this we venture upstairs to the third floor of the museum, to the Long Gallery. This, incidentally, was where some of the papers discussed in the earlier section used to be kept, these having been removed and placed into the archives in 2004.[36]

There are several reasons why the placement of the Long Gallery within the scheme of the museum is important when considering Gardner's book collecting. Firstly, the third floor, comprising the Long Gallery, Titian Room, Veronese Room, Gothic Room, and Chapel, houses some of the showstoppers of Gardner's collection, and the rooms are created to reflect the brilliance of the objects. The yellows and pale greens that permeate the first and second floors give way to rich blues and reds, as well as deep wooden panelling. The colours are richer, reflecting the increasing richness of the objects housed there. Due to the higher ceilings and bigger windows, it is also the floor in which the most natural light floods through, which enhances the grandeur of its contents.

Secondly, although the Gardner Museum in its present form seemingly runs in a loop, with visitors invited to roam freely through the rooms, upwards and downwards, this has not always been the case. There was originally a terminus to a visit to the museum, in the Long Gallery, in which the rarest of Gardner's books and manuscripts,

35 Linda J. Docherty, "Collection as Creation: Isabella Stewart Gardner's Fenway Court," in *Memory & Oblivion*, ed. Wessel Reinink and Jeroen Stumpel (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1999), 217–21 at 219.

36 See note on the front of "Folder 1: ISG Notes for 'A Choice of Manuscripts and Bindings,'" Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum Archives. It states that the documents in the folder were "Removed from underneath English Authors case, Long Gallery, 2004."

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including her Dante collection, continue to be housed.[37] Docherty has drawn parallels between Dante's *The Divine Comedy* and the layout of the museum, suggesting that it is a visual translation of the literary work.[38] She argues that the Long Gallery more specifically references *Paradiso*, as the room is filled with Marian iconography and is only reached after making the journey around and upwards, which mirrors "Dante's ascent to the Empyrean" and the final "vision of Mary, who grants him the beatific vision."[39] This is a compelling argument, especially when considered in conjunction with the fact that Dante's works also reside in this room. However, regardless of whether this was Gardner's intent, it is telling that she initially decided to end visits to her museum in this room. Gardner was never one to shy away from a final flourish, and the combination of the grandeur and placement of the room demonstrate that it was engineered to have a lasting effect on the visitor and highlight the value of the items held within it.

Staying on the religious theme, although Gardner incorporated religious imagery and artefacts throughout the museum, at the very end of the Long Gallery is the Chapel. Regularly used as a working religious space in which Mass was held during Gardner's lifetime, it is still the place of her yearly memorial service.[40] Furthermore, it was also the place where Gardner wished to lie before her funeral, as she dictated to Carter before her death.[41] In that sense then, it was and still is a sacred space. Juxtaposing the chapel with her most priceless books and manuscripts not only draws parallels with some of the volumes themselves, as some of them are religious texts, but by means of association, elevates them to a similarly sacred state.

As a final piece of evidence for Gardner's bibliophilia as expressed within the fabric of the museum, I want to turn to one of the four portraits of Gardner in the museum. The Martin Mower portrait was painted in 1917, using a photograph thought to have been taken at the home of fellow bibliophile Henry Yates Thompson a decade earlier as its basis, and it now hangs in the Short Gallery.[42] Whilst the inclusion of a portrait that depicts Gardner engrossed in reading already speaks to her bibliophilia, its setting in the Short Gallery provides a comment on how she saw herself. Gardner was a master of artistic placement and set everything in her museum in its place for a particular reason. It is not the focal point of the room in which it hangs, unlike the famous John Singer Sargent portrait in the Gothic Room. Instead, the Mower portrait is one of many paintings displayed in the Short Gallery, a more "informal" and "personal" room that also includes

37 Linda Docherty, "Translating Dante: Isabella Stewart Gardner's Museum as *Paradiso*," *Religion and the Arts* 22 (2018): 194–217 at 213.

38 Docherty, "Translating Dante," 206.

39 Docherty, "Translating Dante," 213.

40 Adrienne Chaparro, "Remembering Isabella: Her Yearly Memorial Service," *Gardner Museum Blog* (April 12, 2022), www.gardnermuseum.org/blog/remembering-isabella-her-yearly-memorial-service, accessed September 14, 2022.

41 Morris Carter and Isabella Stewart Gardner, Note about Funeral Dictated to Morris Carter, 1924, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum Archives, ARC.008642.

42 Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum P33w35, photograph by Otto Rosenheim.

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several family portraits.[43] It is hung up high above two other paintings and is fairly small. If you do not know what to look for, you might not notice it or recognize that it depicts the museum's founder. Its setting directly contrasts with that of the Sargent portrait, which is displayed in a much more showy and public fashion. They differ too in the presentation of Gardner: unlike the confident woman looking out of the Sargent painting, Mower's Gardner is introverted, obscured from the viewer by the veil, and focused on her book. The contrast therefore suggests that the Mower portrait is emblematic of the private Gardner. It provides an indication of how she wanted to be seen at her most personal, and it is telling that it is with a book in hand.

Conclusion

Tharp writes that when it came to Gardner's book collecting, it was far more of a private affair than her painting collection, with the fact that she collected rare books only being known to friends prior to the publication of the catalogues that brought her collection to the notice of the wider public.[44] There is a sense that Gardner had two personalities: the one more glamourous and eccentric lived out in public, and the other more intellectual and bookish confined to private settings. Both sides of her character undoubtedly existed, and yet in critical and popular discourse, it is the idea of the maverick with a penchant for pretty things that has won out.

However, if we consider both evidence from behind the scenes in the archives and what is "hidden" in plain sight in the museum layout itself, it soon becomes clear that a reassessment of Gardner's book collecting is due, for it is not the passing interest of a dilettante that the relative lack of critical interest would suggest. The plethora of clippings and notes, as well as the primacy given to her most valuable books and manuscripts indicate otherwise. Morris Carter, in the first published biography of Gardner, noted of the museum, that "every detail of it is personal."[45] It was made to reflect the founder as much as it was to act as a cultural institution. And that founder's passion for book collecting was such that she wove it into the fabric of the building that would both outlive her and bear her name.

43 Nielsen, Riley, and Silver, *Gardner Museum*, 105–106.

44 Tharp, *Mrs. Jack*, 317.

45 Carter, *Gardner*, 191.

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Chapter 20

THE COLLECTOR, EDITH BEATTY (1886–1952)

JILL UNKEL

> [Edith] was a grand person and a wonderful judge of all works of art—manuscripts, paintings and furniture.[1]

IN 1955, ALFRED Chester Beatty wrote the above description of his late wife Edith, in a letter to the Harvard University Library curator Philip Hofer. Chester was writing in response to Hofer's recent publication of a sixteenth-century manuscript of Manuel Philes's *De animalium proprietate* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University, Houghton Library, MS Typ. 222H),[2] in which Hofer noted that the manuscript, "was given to him [by Edith] in July 1952, only a few weeks before Edith died, on the very day they met."[3] Building on previous research into Edith Beatty's collections of furniture and paintings, as well as Edith and Chester Beatty's early forays into buying manuscripts,[4] this essay will further develop our understanding of this "wonderful judge of all works of art" (Figure 20.1).

As a Person

She was born Edith Dunn in New York on January 9, 1886, one of three children to Jessie (née Robertson) (who moved from Perth, Scotland, to New York in 1873) and John Dunn (born in Ireland, who emigrated to the United States in the 1850s). Unfortunately,

1 Copy of a letter from A. Chester Beatty (hereafter ACB) to Philip Hofer, January 24, 1955, Dublin, Chester Beatty Library (hereafter CBL), Chester Beatty Papers (hereafter CBP) CBP/C/07/1/040.

2 All collection numbers this essay refer to the present location of the Chester Beatty collection in Dublin. Current manuscript shelfmarks take the form CBL, W 000. See Appendix for previous Beatty manuscript numbers where applicable, which took the form W.MS.000.

3 G. W. Cottrell Jr. and Philip Hofer, "Angelos Vergecios and the Bestiary of Manuel Phile," *Harvard Library Bulletin* 8 (1954): 323–39. The manuscript was included in Harvard University, *Illuminated & Calligraphic Manuscripts, An Exhibition Held at the Fogg Art Museum and Houghton Library, February 14–April 1, 1955* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard College Library, 1955), no. 134, pl. 36.

4 Madeleine Korn, "Collecting Modern Foreign Art in Britain Before the Second World War" (PhD thesis, University of Reading, 2001), 1:221–40, 2:594–625; Fionnuala Croke, *Chester Beatty: The Paintings from the National Gallery of Ireland* (Dublin: CBL, 2012); Laura Cleaver, "The Western Manuscript Collection of Alfred Chester Beatty (ca. 1915–1930)," *Manuscript Studies* 2 (2017): 445–82.

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Edith's first twenty years are as yet unclear.[5] According to Beatty's biographer, Arthur Wilson, in 1907 (aged twenty-one) Edith married Carol Dater Stone.[6] Carol's father (Charles Francis) was a lawyer with Davies, Stone & Auerbach, and a professor of law at New York University from 1871 to 1885.[7] A photograph of the young couple appeared in a 1908 edition of the *Evening Journal* after Carol went missing for a few days in the Green Mountains, near Benington.[8] The marriage ended in divorce around 1911.

Edith married a second time to the widower (and later mining magnate and bibliophile), Chester Beatty, in 1913.[9] Chester's first wife, "Ninette" Grace Madeleine Beatty née Rickard, had died of typhoid fever in April 1911.[10] Two years later, when Chester moved to London with his children—Ninette (12) and Chester Jr. (6)—Edith joined her fiancé, and on June 21, 1913, they were married at the Kensington Registry office.[11] Edith's new brother-in-law, W.



Figure 20.1. Edith Beatty, Philip de Laszlo (1869–1937), 1916, London (England), CBL, Wx 85 © Trustees of the Chester Beatty Library. Courtesy of the Trustees of the Chester Beatty Library.

5 Information about Edith's parents provided by Laura Cleaver. Edith's brothers are mentioned in a letter from Edith to Abraham Shalom Yahuda, July 31, 1928, Jerusalem, National Library of Israel, Yahuda MS Var 38 no. 217. Yahuda was Beatty's principal supplier of Arabic manuscripts between 1927 and 1949.

6 "When she came of age in December 1907," Arthur J. Wilson, *The Life and Times of Sir Alfred Chester Beatty* (London: Cadogan, 1985), 136. Wilson worked for Rhodesian Selection Trust from 1951.

7 J. Gardner Bartlett, *Simon Stone Genealogy* (Boston: Stone Family Association, 1926), 491–93; "Death notice," *The Evening Post*, April 29, 1910, 9.

8 "Lost in Green Mountains," *The Evening Journal*, August 19, 1908, 3.

9 Beatty made his fortune as a mining engineer turned financier, with his initial wealth acquired through interests in North American mines. Before Christmas 1914, he founded the mining company Selection Trust, alongside his brother, William Gedney Beatty (hereafter Gedney), Harold Titcomb, and Arthur Kelsey. Wilson, *Life and Times*, 140.

10 Beatty married first Grace Madeleine "Ninette" Rickard on April 18, 1900, at St. John's Cathedral in Denver. *New York Tribune*, April 1, 1900, 12.

11 Beatty, Ninette, Chester Jr., and Gedney landed at Plymouth on April 20, 1913. Edith appears to have arrived in London separately, "I thought you would be interested to know that Mr. Beatty has announced his engagement to Mrs Edith Dunn Stone of New York. Both are now in London, and I am under the impression that they will be married there." Memo from Lucius W. Mayer (mining engineer on Beatty's staff) to Mr. Hodges dated June 17, 1913, CBP/A/01/4/02.

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Gedney Beatty, penned, "Mrs Stone is charming and we are delighted with the event."[12] The speed of their relationship apparently astonished Beatty's London staff: "Your brother's engagement and marriage was a great surprise to everyone here, and I hope he will have all the happiness he deserves."[13] The new familial admiration was clearly reciprocated, as Edith presented Gedney with a manuscript copy of a Vitruvius, a fitting gift for an architect.[14]

Edith often acquired historic books with the intention of presenting them to others as personal gifts. In these cases, she liked to memorialize the gift by writing inscriptions into the books. She evidently encouraged her new husband to do the same: a copy of *Gardens: Old and New* (CBL, AJ721) that Chester presented to Edith in 1917 contains the teasing note: "Given to me this 6th day of December 1917 by my husband who was so absolutely lacking in the power of expression that he didn't know what to write to his own wife. Edith Beatty."

The couple honeymooned in Europe, with the New York *Sun* noting their presence in Paris on July 1913 at the Ritz and again in late September at the Astoria.[15] In London, they resided at 24 Kensington Palace Gardens ("Baroda House"), bought by Chester in 1912 and redecorated to his taste under Gedney's supervision.[16] Some new furnishings were commissioned specifically for Edith, including a satin-wood cabinet to display Japanese *inrō* for her boudoir, presumably for a collection she already had.[17]

It appears that the couple did not at first intend to become permanent residents in London, and they were listed among the *Elite of New York* in 1914.[18] They remained members of both the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Museum of National History, with tickets purchased for the MET Opera for at least the following two seasons.[19] Indeed, Edith did not initially warm to London, writing (ca. 1914) to Chester's secretary in New York, "London is the same old grey city but I am trying very hard to like it this year."[20] Early plans may have included frequent crossings of the Atlantic. The pair sailed to New York on the RMS Lusitania in January 1915, returning on March 27 on the Rotter-

12 Letter from Gedney to Mayer, June 20, 1913, CBP/A/01/4/02.

13 Letter from Mayer to Gedney, July 2, 1913, CBP/A/01/4/02.

14 Copy of cable from Edith to Gedney, July 14, 1920, CBP/A/01/4/02. The manuscript was perhaps the fifteenth-century *De architectura* that Gedney bequeathed to the Metropolitan Museum in 1941 (41.100.1); it had been purchased in a Sotheby's sale on July 13, 1920, by Quaritch, the day before Edith's cable to Gedney. Two printed books in the Dublin collection are inscribed to Edith from Will, both were Christmas presents (AK223 and AG393).

15 "Harry Welles Sings," *The Sun*, July 13, 1913, 62; "Other recent arrivals," *The Sun*, September 21, 1913, 52.

16 CBL, Chester Beatty Trust papers (hereafter CBT) 1016.

17 Letter from Gedney to Marshall in London, December 30, 1913, CBP/A/01/4/02.

18 "Mr. & Mrs. A. Chester (Edith Dunn) Beatty," *Elite of New York*, 1914, B 32.

19 CBP/A/01/4/02.

20 Letter from Edith to Gruver, summer 1914/1915, London School of Economics, Selection Trust Archive (hereafter STA).

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dam.[21] Not two months later the Lusitania was torpedoed by a German U-boat, resulting in the loss of almost 2,000 lives.[22]

Despite the conflict across Europe, society life seems to have continued much as normal. In 1915, Edith bought an Overland car, had her portrait painted by John Singer Sargent (NGI.7468), and spent $54,751 on jewellery.[23] Jewellery continued to be a focus of Edith's collecting interests even two decades later; when she attended the opening night of the opera *Ariane*, one gossip columnist judged that Edith's taste for jewellery was on a par with that of the Sultana of Johor.[24] In comparison to Edith's 1915 spend on jewellery, in the same year Chester spent $1,569 on antiques, $1,908 on snuff bottles, and $2,051 on books and manuscripts.[25] Edith's early collections also included clothing and furs.[26] It was not all diamonds and mink, however. At times during this period, Edith feared she would not see "dear old New York for some time."[27] She also made her own contributions to the war effort in London, running "a factory in her house of ten girls and ten machines," and later offering part of Baroda House as an American Red Cross hospital for recovering officers.[28]

Edith eventually warmed to London and especially to their country estate, Calehill Park in Kent (bought by 1918), where she took to riding and breeding racehorses.[29] At one point Edith's stud farm located on the Calehill estate was home to ninety-two horses.[30] Indeed, thousands of newspaper listings from the 1920s and 1930s record Edith as a racehorse owner at various meetings.[31] She was celebrated as one of the few "women owners" who raced both Jockey Club and National Hunt Rules.[32] In 1925, the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* offered:

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21 Letter from Gedney to Gruver, December 24, 1914, CBP/A/01/4/02.

22 They knew at least two people who were lost on the Lusitania. Gruver to ACB, May? 1915, CBP/A/01/4/02.

23 CBP/A/01/4/02. In the previous year, Edith had acquired a tiara for £1,200, CBP/A/01/4/02.

24 "Panorama," *The Tatler*, April 28, 1937, 149.

25 CBP/A/01/4/02.

26 Sydney Cockerell, director of the Fitzwilliam Museum, noted Edith's extravagant spending on clothing: BL, Add. MS 52657, fol. 52v. See also Letter from Edith to Gruver, ca. 1914–1916, STA.

27 Letter from Edith to Gruver, ca. 1914–1916, STA.

28 Letter from Gedney to Gruver (?), September 11, 1914, CBP/A/01/4/02. Photographs of the hospital from 1918 are preserved in the Library of Congress, and appeared in the press.

29 *The Chronicle and Courier*, March 29, 1918, 6.

30 "Women in Sport: Varied Interests," *The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, December 6, 1924, 660.

31 The earliest reference I found to Edith participating in horse racing was a farmer's race in 1922 in which her horse placed second, *Kentish Express and Ashford News*, April 15, 1922, 6. Two years later, a newspaper columnist noted, "Mrs Chester Beatty owns a couple of fillies, of whom I preferred April's Lady," "Racing of the Week," *The Sportsman*, February 18, 1924, 8.

32 "Women in Sport: A Successful Owner," *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, June 18, 1927, 848; "Woman's Year on the Turf," *The Sketch*, December 7, 1932, 432.

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> Congratulations to Mrs. Chester Beatty on having scored her first racing win already, though she is practically a newcomer to the game…Mrs. Beatty is a woman with many and varied interests…her house is one of the chief centres for the more artistic and musical of London's social sets, for many of her great number of friends, whom she delights to entertain, belong to the artistic world. They do not, however, interfere with her interest in horses.[33]

Edith's horses competed in Britain, Ireland, France, and Egypt where she was listed alongside King Fuad as a horse-owner of note.[34] In England, Edith was cited alongside Lady Ludlow, Alice Sedgwick (*née* Mankiewicz), as racehorse owners and among the great music devotees in London: "not only giving musical parties, but having musical people around them."[35] On her further interests, *The Sketch* published, "Mrs Chester Beatty, for instance, whose Pigskin won the City and Suburban so satisfactorily for backers last week, is very knowledgeable about works of art."[36]

As a Traveller

For their first Christmas together, in 1913, Edith presented Chester with a copy of Georg Ebers's *Egypt: Descriptive, Historical and Picturesque*, published in 1878 (CBL, AK270/271).[37] The gift was appropriate as the family were set to take an extended holiday to Egypt. The party of six—which included Ninette (13), Chester Jr. (6), a maid, and nurse—departed New York on the SS Caronia on January 31, 1914.[38] They stayed at Shepheard's Hotel in Cairo, particularly well-situated for the many antiquities dealers marketing to wealthy travellers.[39] The holiday, which included a three-week cruise up the Nile, had a lasting impact on the couple's future lifestyle and foreshadowed their broadening collecting interests. From 1928, they become permanent winter residents in Cairo.[40] With Edith writing about her love of Egypt, it is no surprise that the couple

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33 "Women in Sport: Varied Interests," *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, March 14, 1925, 584.

34 "A Sporting Paradise," *The Graphic*, November 1, 1930, 204; Vartash, "Talk of the Turf," *The Sketch*, November 2, 1932, 224.

35 "Out-of-Door Gossip: Music as a Complement," *The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, March 2, 1929, 504.

36 Marigold, "What Every Woman Wants to Know," *The Sketch*, April 27, 1938, 179.

37 A second book is also inscribed to Chester for Christmas 1913: Francis Alphonse Wey's *Rome* (AK233).

38 Letters from Beatty to Cunard Steamship Company, November 18, 1913 and January 9, 1914, CBP/A/02/01.

39 For more on Beatty's collecting activities in Egypt, see Jill Unkel, "An Old Story Retold: The Acquisition of the Chester Beatty Biblical Papyri," *The Chester Beatty Biblical Papyri at Ninety*, ed. Garrick V. Allen et al. (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2023), 51–82.

40 Letter from Beatty to Yahuda, February 14, 1928, Jerusalem, National Library of Israel, Yahuda MS Var 38, no. 217; Letter from Beatty to Maurice Nahman, April 23, 1928, CBP/B/03/151.

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Figure 20.2. Adoration of the Magi, Coëtivy Hours, attributed to the Dunois Master, 1443–1445, Paris, CBL, W 082, fol. 53 © Trustees of the Chester Beatty Library. Courtesy of the Trustees of the Chester Beatty Library.

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purchased an estate in Cairo around 1930.[41] Their "blue brick" house (*Bait el-azraq*), designed by architect Gaston Rossi, was "built by Mrs. Chester Beatty, wife of the well-known collector, on the banks of the Nile…[and] overlooks a pinewood and the Great Pyramids."[42]

The salesrooms of Cairo's antiquities dealers appear to have been a strong draw. Both Edith and Chester's signatures are recorded in the visitors' book of notable dealer Maurice Nahman.[43] A receipt from Nahman preserved in the Chester Beatty Archive (hereafter Archive) records a purchase made by Edith in 1925 of three small objects including a bronze Coptic lamp.[44] While the current whereabouts of those objects are unknown, the fate of other acquisitions made in Egypt is recorded. Alan John Bayard Wace, then deputy keeper in the Department of Textiles, acknowledged Edith's presentation of a Coptic embroidery to the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1928.[45] To the British Museum, she presented a collection of New Kingdom papyrus scrolls that she had purchased in Egypt between 1928 and 1930.[46] Referring to additional scrolls for sale with the same (presumed) provenance, English Egyptologist Alan H. Gardiner wrote, "They are hymns and rituals which may or may not be interesting—anyhow they are not (if you will pardon the expression)—not in the same street as the two best of the papyri which Mrs. Chester Beatty bought."[47] Although initially thought to come from Thebes,

41 "I love this land and always feel at home here." Edith wrote from the Semiramis Hotel, Cairo to Yahuda, February 16, 1928, Yahuda MS Var 38, no. 217.

42 "Egypt's Grandeur: Palaces and Pyramids, Scenes on the Nile and Suez Canal," *The Graphic*, October 31, 1931, 166; Mercedes Volait, *Architectes et architectures de l'Egypte moderne, (1830–1950): Genèse et essor d'une expertise locale* (Paris: Maisonneuve and Larose, 2005), 362–65.

43 Edith signed Nahman's visitors' book about 1928. In 1935, Chester signed the book with their Cairo address. New York, Brooklyn Museum, N362 N14. On Nahman, see Elizabeth Dospěl Williams, "'Into the hands of a well-known antiquary of Cairo': The Assiut Treasure and the Making of an Archaeological Hoard," *West 86th: A Journal of Decorative Arts, Design History, and Material Culture* 21 (2014): 251–72; Iman R. Abdulfattah, "A Forgotten Man: Maurice Nahman, an Antiquarian-Tastemaker," *Guardian of Ancient Egypt: Studies in Honor of Zahi Hawass* (Prague: Charles University, 2000), 105–23.

44 Papers related to gifts from Edith to the V&A, CBP/A/02/08.

45 Although no receipt is preserved in the Archive, it was very likely purchased during their stay in Egypt the previous winter as Edith was certainly in touch with Nahman at that time. Letter from Nahman to ACB, April 4, 1928. CBP/B/03/151. In May, Nahman confirmed that he sold several items to Edith, Letter from Nahman to ACB, May 8, 1928, CBP/B/03/151.

46 Of a total of nineteen scrolls, Edith purchased and presented Chester Beatty Papyrus (hereafter CBPap) II–V, VII (see Appendix). Jointly, Edith and ACB presented CBPap IX, while Chester purchased and presented all but one of the remaining scrolls. H. R. Hall, "The Chester-Beatty Egyptian Papyri," *BMQ* 5.2 (September 1930): 46–47; Alan H. Gardiner, *Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum*, Third Series: Chester Beatty Gift (London: British Museum, 1935). The only scroll Beatty kept was CBPap I. For this scroll (and a few additional fragments) he paid the dealer Phocion J. Tano £420; Gardiner acted as Beatty's agent: Letter from Gardiner to Beatty, March 26, 1928, CBP/B/05/022; Alan H. Gardiner, *The Library of A. Chester Beatty: Description of a Hieratic Papyrus with a Mythological Story, Love-songs, and other Miscellaneous Texts: the Chester Beatty Papyri, No. 1* (London: Walker, 1931).

47 Letter from Gardiner to Beatty, March 28, 1928, CBP/B/05/22.

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contemporary research would indicate that the whole set of scrolls was looted from the French archaeological site at Deir el-Medina.[48]

Following the couple's 1914 trip to Egypt, a visit to China and Japan in 1917 further broadened their collecting interests.[49] Photographs of their holiday are preserved in an album assembled by Edith.[50] Six months from their initial embarkation, Chester, Edith, and Ninette (16) left Japan for San Francisco, with Chester's secretary in New York, Esdras Ludwig Gruver writing to Gedney, "they bought a lot of beautiful things which you will be very interested in."[51] On their return to London, Sydney Cockerell, director of the Fitzwilliam Museum (Cambridge), noted "a very agreeable evening" during which he saw a lot of Edith's newly bought Chinese embroideries and snuff bottles.[52] Research by Mary Redfern has highlighted "off-hand remarks" that suggest "works now in the permanent collection [of the Chester Beatty] were acquired for Edith" during that trip.[53] Chester wrote to the dealer S. H. Kuhn: "If you run across any very fine, genuine imperial embroideries or wonderful priest robe embroideries, Mrs. Beatty would like you to get them for her."[54] Redfern has linked two yellow robes on a receipt from Kuhn with robes in the Beatty collection (CBL, C 1051 and C 1052), and a priest's robe with "500 figures" to the Daoist "robe of descent" Edith presented to the V&A in 1928 (T.91-1928).[55]

As a Collector and Gift Giver

Edith's earliest European manuscript purchase may have been an eleventh- or twelfth-century copy of Jerome and Origen's *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul*. This was auctioned at Sotheby's on November 20, 1912, and later noted in the 1969 Sotheby's sales catalogue as "a present from his wife."[56] It is unclear if Edith purchased it at the 1912 auction or acquired it later. If it was purchased in 1912, was it a gift to her future hus-

48 Unkel, "An Old Story Retold." Gardiner correspondence (1935), Oxford, Griffith Institute, AR 39–50.

49 Chester Jr. (9) stayed in London with Edith's mother. See CBP/A/01/4/02; BL, Add. MS 52654, fol. 17r.

50 CBP PA 27. A photo of a banquet hosted by Mr. Yamanaka, Japan, April 1917 was published by Mary Redfern, "On Doctor's Orders: Chester Beatty's 1917 Journey to China and Japan and the Development of his East Asian Collection," *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society* 83 (2018): 59–79 at 62.

51 Letter from Gruver to Gedney, July 20, 1917, CBP/A/01/4/02.

52 BL, Add. MS 52661, fol. 15v.

53 Redfern, "Doctor's Orders," 75.

54 Copy of a letter from Beatty to Okita, July 27, 1917, CBP/B/03/040; Redfern, "Doctor's Orders," 75.

55 Receipt from Kuhn, April 2, 1917, CBP/B/03/040; Redfern, "Doctor's Orders," 75.

56 Phillipps MS 21163. *Catalogue of Important and Interesting Historical & Ecclesiastical Manuscripts … Which will be Sold by Auction … 20th of November, 1912* (London: Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge, 1912), lot 131; *The Chester Beatty Western Manuscripts: Part II…24 June 1969* (London: Sotheby & Co., 1969), lot 42 (W.MS.105). On the Beattys' relationship with Cockerell, see Cleaver, "Western Manuscript Collection," 445–82.

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band? More certain is the purchase she made in 1919, when she convinced Henry Yates Thompson to part with his fifteenth-century French Coëtivy Hours (CBL, W 082; Figure 20.2). The inscription on the flyleaf reads, "To A. Chester Beatty from his loving wife Edith Beatty."[57] This was a gift befitting a wedding anniversary, as the manuscript itself had been commissioned on the occasion of the marriage of Marie de Rais and Prigent de Coëtivy. However, that the Coëtivy Hours had been a gift did not prevent Chester from attempting to dispose of it in the 1930s.[58]

In 1920, Edith identified another volume for her husband, this time an Italian copy of Cicero's *Orationes* made for Lorenzo de Medici ca. 1480 (CBL, W 124). This was purchased from Cockerell and presented to Chester in 1921. As with the Coëtivy Hours, it was also included in Beatty's 1930s Sotheby's sales, and there sold to Quaritch. However, the volume took a circuitous route back to Edith, as its numerous inscriptions record. Edith added to the flyleaf, "Recovered by the good offices of Sir Sydney Cockerell, July 23rd 1947, bless him, Edith Beatty."[59] Edith's relief on Cockerell's resourceful return of a once-deaccessioned manuscript gift suggests that she had been upset by her husband's decision to sell it. The manuscript is now part of the Beatty collection in Dublin, having reverted to Chester on Edith's death in 1952.[60]

Edith evidently enjoyed offering manuscripts as gifts, particularly to mark significant occasions with her husband. Her largest purchase in this vein was made in November 1925. Under the pretext of horseracing, Edith visited the Cheltenham house of Thomas Fitzroy Fenwick, grandson of the famed collector Sir Thomas Phillipps, where she negotiated the purchase of eight manuscripts from the Phillipps collection for a total of £21,800, intended as surprise gifts for Chester. These were: Dictys Cretensis's *Trojan War* (*De bello Troiano*) (CBL, W 122); Statius, *Thebaid* (CBL, W 076); *Epistle* by Francesco Barbaro (CBL, W 113); Pontano, *Opera* (CBL, W 108); Augustine's *City of God* (CBL, W 043); *Garden of Knowledge* (*Viridarium*) (CBL, W 080); Lactantius, *De divinis institutionibus*; and Paul the Deacon, *Homiliary*. Edith wrote to Fenwick following their meeting, "I beg to confirm the purchase of the following books [list above]…These I shall pay for when they are delivered to London."[61] A. N. L. Munby later noted that the collec-

57 Jill Unkel, *Miniature Masterpiece: The Coëtivy Hours* (Dublin: CBL, 2018). Other books were acquired from Henry Yates Thompson in 1919. June accounts 1919, see CBP/A/01/4/02.

58 *Catalogue of the Renowned Collection of Western Manuscripts the Property of A. Chester Beatty, Esq., The First Portion … Which will be Sold by Auction…7th of June, 1932* (London: Sotheby & Co., 1932); *Catalogue of the Renowned Collection of Western Manuscripts the Property of A. Chester Beatty, Esq., The Second Portion…Which will be Sold by Auction…9th of May, 1933* (London: Sotheby & Co., 1933).

59 "Sold my Medici Cicero (formerly Yates Thompson's) to Mrs. Beatty." Note added later: "She gave it to her husband and it got sold at Sotheby's in his sale of 7th June 1932, lot 27, when he was in difficulties owing to the slump. I bought it back at Sotheby's for Edith Beatty 28 July 1947 SC 1 Sept 1949." BL, Add. MS 52657, fol. 45v.

60 CBP/C/07/1/141.

61 Copy of letter from Edith to Fenwick, November 1925 (undated), CBP/B/03/162. Both Edith and Chester had previously purchased manuscripts from the Phillipps collection. Chester first visited the Phillipps collection in Cheltenham on October 6, 1920, after which he purchased

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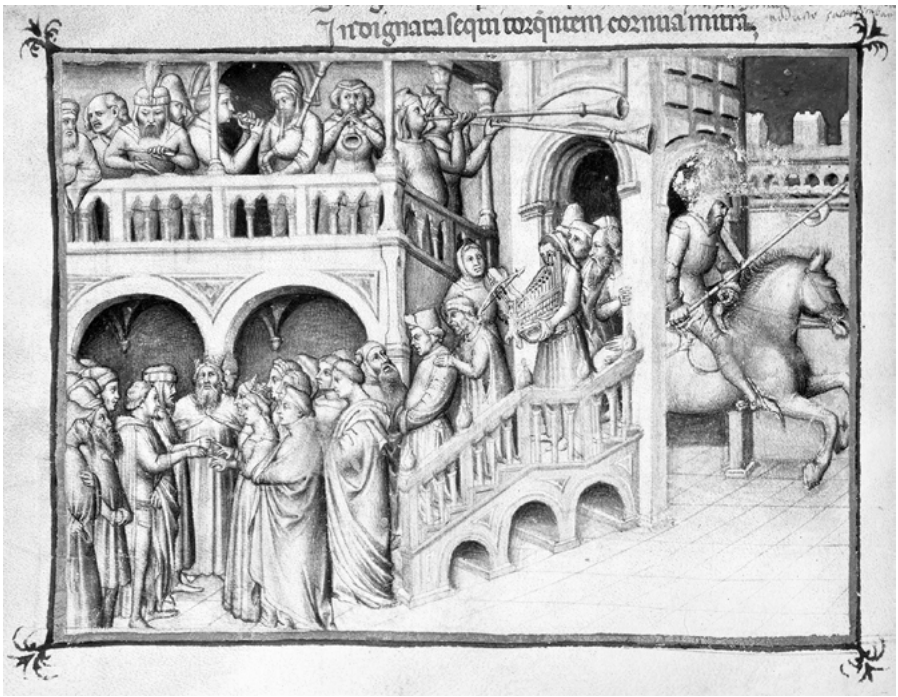


Figure 20.3. Marriage of Argia and Deipyle to Polynices and Tydeus, Thebaid of Statius, attributed to Jacopo Avanzo (fourteenth century) or Altichiero da Zevio (ca. 1350–ca. 1390), ca. 1380, Padua, CBL, W 076 © Trustees of the Chester Beatty Library. Courtesy of the Trustees of the Chester Beatty Library.

tion "included two books which for forty years Fenwick had been resolute in his refusal to sell at any price."[62] One was the *Thebaid* of Statius, "one of only two Meerman manuscripts Fenwick had refused to sell to the Prussian Government in 1887."[63] The other was the copy of Dictys Cretensis's *Trojan War* that Fenwick had refused to sell to Chester "as recently as August 1924."[64]

Edith's surprise gift may also indicate a competitive streak between the couple as two active collectors. Chester had already shown strong interest in Fenwick's collection, having purchased a number of manuscripts in 1920.[65] The above eight manuscripts, as

twenty-four manuscripts and two fragments from Fenwick. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Phillipps-Robinson c. 719; Cleaver, "Western Manuscript Collection," 450–51.

62 Excerpt from publication, copy sent by Munby to Beatty, October 18, 1957, CBP/C/07/1/058. A. L. N. Munby, *The Dispersal of the Phillipps Library*, Phillipps Studies 5 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960), 71–77.

63 CBP/C/07/1/058.

64 CBP/C/07/1/058.

65 Cleaver, "Western Manuscript Collection," 450–51.

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Toby Burrows has noted, included three of the top fifteen listed by Chester in his earlier notes on the "order in which Mr F places manuscripts."[66] The *Thebaid*, listed as number two behind the *Book of the Chase*, was described by Chester as, "a beautiful book… not for sale except at a high price £3000–£5000," to which he added that he, "would be glad to add such a book to my collection." (Figure 20.3).[67] The Dictys Cretensis, at number six, was, as Chester wrote, "most remarkable…would like to secure the book. It is probably worth £3000–£4000. Mr Fenwick does not wish to sell same. Would probably… take £4500 to £5000 for it."[68] Edith paid £7,000 for each. Paying well over Chester's estimates, she clearly set out not to make a bargain or even pay market price, but to secure the manuscripts for her husband. The third book from Fenwick's list was the *Epistle* of Francesco Barbaro, for which Edith paid £3,000. Of the other books purchased that November, Chester had written as follows: *Viridarium*, "The drawings of the beasts and animals in the margins are quite good but the writing is atrocious. Not interested;" *De civitate Dei*, "this book was priced £1200 before that was too high;" and he had rejected Paul the Deacon's *Homiliary* due to its high asking price of £300. On a more positive note, Chester scribbled "fit for any museum" about Pontano's *Opera*. Edith, on the other hand, was more animated in her excitement, writing to Fenwick: "Needless to say on arrival [Baroda House] I was bombarded with questions [from Chester]—'Had I seen any books—if so which?' &c. &c. To which I replied, 'I spent the whole evening with the *Book of the Chase* No. 10298,' mentally hoping the Lord would forgive me…I know in my soul I will not be strongminded enough to keep the books until Xmas, so when they arrive I will give him one a day, reserving the two great ones for Xmas and birthday in February."[69] Of the at least nineteen Phillipps manuscripts and single folios now in the Chester Beatty, Dublin, six were among those purchased by Edith in 1925.[70]

As with her husband, Edith's manuscript interests were broad. Her dedication note in a richly illuminated "Collection of Traditions" (*Jami' al-usul li-ahadith al-rasul*), produced in Timurid-ruled Shiraz (Iran) in 1436 (CBL, Ar 5282, Figure 20.4), reads, "To my dear husband on our 11th wedding anniversary, June 21st 1924, from his wife, Edith Beatty."[71] Edith also inscribed a seventeenth-century Indian Qur'an (CBL, Is 1562), "Dad

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66 "Notes by Mr. A. Chester Beatty on the Phillipps Collection." Notebook now at Sotheby's, London. Edith used the notebook as a guide in November 1925. "Thomas Phillipps and Alfred Chester Beatty," *Reconstructing the Phillipps Collection: Toby Burrows: News from an EU project aimed at reconstructing the manuscript collection of Sir Thomas Phillipps*, https://tobyburrows.wordpress.com/tag/edith-beatty/, accessed September 5, 2022.

67 Pencil note added by Joan Kingsford Wood, Beatty's librarian at Baroda House: "Received from Office Oct. 7. 1946." "Notes…on the Phillipps Collection."

68 "Notes…on the Phillipps Collection."

69 Excerpt from a letter Edith wrote to Fenwick, November 13, 1925, quoted in CBP/C/07/1/058. Cockerell saw the recently acquired collection on December 2, 1925: BL, Add. MS 52662, fol. 58r.

70 CBL, Arm 558, W 017, W 022, W 029, **W 043**, W 066, **W 076, W 080**, **W 108**, **W 113**, **W 122**, W 143.8, W 167, W 169, W 173.1–3, W 179, and W 191 (Edith's purchases in bold).

71 This manuscript has an eighteenth-century Istanbul library seal (owned by[?] Şehid Ali Pasha, aka Silahdar Damat Ali Pasha (1667–August 5, 1716), Ottoman vizier and general), but it is not clear

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Figure 20.4. Double-page illuminated frontispiece, *Collection of Traditions* (*Jāmi'al-uṣūl li-aḥādith al-rasūl*), Majd al-Dīn ibn al-Athīr (d. 1210), text copied by Muḥammad ibn Ḥājjī al-Ḥāfiẓ, Timurid Shiraz (Iran), Ramadan 839H (March 1436), CBL, Ar 5282 © Trustees of the Chester Beatty Library. Courtesy of the Trustees of the Chester Beatty Library.

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with love from Ede, Feb. 7th 1929." Glimpses of her support of Chester's collecting practices can also be gleaned from the Beatty Archive. On a letter from Liberty & Co, Edith noted, "Please draw Mr Beatty's attention to this": a large Qu'ran and a Jami dated 1502–1503 (908H). No manuscript of that date by the Timurid poet Nūr al-Dīn Jāmī exists in the collection.

Edith's manuscripts collection swelled after 1933, following Chester's disappointing attempt to sell his European manuscripts. Two of three planned sales were held at Sotheby's, London, but bidding was both financially and personally embarrassing.[72] Following the cancelled final sale, Chester presented most of his "Western manuscripts" to Edith, the Coëtivy Hours being among the exceptions.[73] Edith, however, continued to present her husband with rare works. Her Christmas gift to Chester in 1937, was an illuminated Greek glossed Job dated to 1577 (CBL, W 136); in 1947 she presented him with an Armenian Gospel book completed in 1596 (CBL,

where Edith bought it. On Chester's interest in Timurid manuscripts, see Moya Carey, "The 'Greatest of all Bibliophiles': Baysunghur in the Collection of Chester Beatty," *Orientations* 51.3 (2020): 2–9.

72 *The Chester Beatty Western Manuscripts: Part I…3 December 1968* (London: Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge, 1968); *Chester Beatty Western Manuscripts: Part II;* Cleaver, "Western Manuscript Collection," 447–48.

73 "In the Estate of Mrs. Edith Beatty, Deceased: Manuscripts," no. 64 was marked as "Delete," with a note pencilled that read, "Coëtivy Hours, belonged to ACB," CBP/B/07/1/141.

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Figure 20.5. Evangelist portrait and opening of the Gospel of Matthew, Gospel book, Martiros Khizants'i, 1596, Constantinople (Istanbul, Turkey), CBL, Arm 573.10 © Trustees of the Chester Beatty Library.

Arm 573) (Figure 20.5), and in April 1948 she gave him a book bound by Viennese bookbinder, Georg Friedrich Krauss (CBL, BB769). Inscriptions in other books still in the collection reveal volumes gifted in the other direction: a copy of *The Odyssey of Homer* (Emery Walker, 1932) which was given to Chester by its publisher Wilfred Merton in 1937 (CBL, AB699), was, only two weeks later, re-gifted to Edith, "Because this is more her line than mine."

Edith also purchased manuscripts for her own collection. In 1920, she bought herself a fragment of the tenth-century Corvey Gospels from the Phillipps Collection.[74] In January 1929, she purchased an Arabic manuscript, "Biographical Dictionary of Prominent Women" (*Akhbar al-nisa'*), by 'Ali ibn Muhammad ibn 'Ali ibn Jamil al-Mu'afiri al-Malaqi dated 1185–1186 and produced in Damascus (CBL, Ar 3016) from the scholar and book-dealer Abraham Shalom Yahuda.[75] In July of

74 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Phillipps-Robinson c. 719 fol. 23; Cleaver, "Western Manuscript Collection," 451.

75 "Purchased by Mrs Beatty from Dr. Yahuda…Pro Yahuda, Jan. 1929," CBP/B/02/3/02. This

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the same year, she acquired a fourteenth-century "Book of Devotions" from the Sotheby's Holford sale through Maggs Bros. It was also Edith who purchased a copy of Crescentius's *Liber ruralium commodorum* dated 1427 from a Sotheby's sale on April 19, 1948. As research and digitization of the collections of the Chester Beatty continue, it is expected that other manuscripts that passed through Edith's hands will come to light through similar inscriptions, particularly within the Islamic collections. Her guiding interests may explain the number of Arabic, Persian, and Turkish manuscripts dedicated to horses and their care in the collection.

Edith's personal collecting reached its zenith in the 1930s, when refurbishments at Baroda House led her to make a flurry of purchases to decorate the newly renovated rooms. By her efforts the ground floor was revamped with French furnishings and *objets d'art*, its walls hung with paintings by Impressionist, Post-Impressionist, Cubist, and other Modernist artists. What had been Chester's Chinese dining room became a French drawing room, hung with Degas's *A Roman Beggar Woman*, Renoir's *Mother and Child*, Pissarro's *The Hermitage at Pontoise*, and Courbet's *Low Tide at Trouville.*[76] Edith also collected works by contemporary artists, including a Raoul Dufy painting of Ascot (1935).[77] When in 1936, Gaston Derys published *Mon Docteur le Vin* with original watercolours by Dufy, the artist presented a signed copy to Edith (CBL, AB712).

Chester's Adam-styled drawing room was similarly restyled, with a French Baroque flair and "flowers arranged in the French manner."[78] Furniture here included a luxurious lacquer-veneered commode designed by Joseph Baumhauer, and two French circular tripod tables purchased from the Duveen Brothers.[79] Writing to Edith in September 1937, Joseph Duveen remarked that the rooms were scarcely recognizable from their previous incarnations, "You may pride yourself upon possessing the finest collection of pictures and works of art in London, and I would like, if I may, to felicitate you upon the discriminating taste you have shown."[80] He highlighted several pieces as particularly

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manuscript has no internal annotation (such as a typical gift dedication by Edith), but was catalogued in the first volume of Chester's "Arabic Rare Texts" notebooks, and published in A. J. Arberry, *The Chester Beatty Library: A Handlist of the Arabic Manuscripts*, 8 vols. (Dublin: Walker, 1955–1966), vol. 1 as part of Chester's collection of Arabic manuscripts; Moya Carey "'Am Offered Cufic House': Network Communication in A. S. Yahuda's Exchanges with A. Chester Beatty," in *A. S. Yahuda as Cultural Broker: Between Near Eastern Philology and the Manuscript Trade*, ed. Stephanie Luescher, Marina Rustow, and Samuel Thorpe (Berlin: De Gruyter, forthcoming).

76 Croke, *Chester Beatty*, 17. *The Bystander* wrote that Edith was a collector of Matisse, Renoir, van Gogh, the classics of the "modern" French school: Mirón, "Not-so-Private Views," *The Bystander*, January 1, 1935, 29. The Degas is now in the Birmingham, City Art Gallery (1960P44), Renoir in a private collection, Pissarro in Cologne, Museum Wallraf-Richartz (WRM 3119), and Courbet in Liverpool, Walker Art Gallery (WAG 6111). Korn "Collecting Modern Foreign Art," 2:594–625.

77 CBP PA 35; Marigold, "Marigold in Society," *The Sketch*, January 6, 1932, 9.

78 "Today's Gossip: Period 'Flower Power,'" *The Daily Mirror*, January 4, 1934, 9.

79 CBP PA 31; CBP PA 32.

80 Letter from Joseph Duveen to Edith, September 20, 1937, Correspondence: Beatty-Behrman (1913–1955), Duveen Brothers records (1876–1981), Los Angeles, Getty Research Institute, Box 350, Folder 6. Online Archive of California, https://oac.cdlib.org/, accessed October 23, 2023.

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outstanding, including the aforementioned commode, whose pendant was already in the V&A (Jones Collection, 1013-1882). Edith's reply to Duveen gives an unusual insight into her collecting appetite and strategy:

> I don't suppose there is anyone in the world who has had the quantity of beautiful things pass through his hands that you have—therefore, I value your appreciation more than I can say…What angers me, though, is that no matter what new acquisition I get, they slip into place and one is only aware of a lack somewhere else. I am told so repeatedly that the joy of collecting is to do it slowly, that I feel like the odd man on the jury when I disagree. It's not my nature to want to do things slowly.[81]

As a Former Owner

While in her lifetime, she amassed a substantial and valuable collection of manuscripts, paintings, furniture, and *objets d'art*, following her death in 1952 Edith's collection met a more fragmented fate than that of her husband. Aside from a few personal gifts, institutional donations, and sales, Edith made no future provision for most of her acquisitions. A small number of donations were made to the British Museum,[82] and at least one sculpture and a few prints were presented to the Fitzwilliam Museum.[83] Edith sold several manuscripts shortly before she died, including the Corvey Gospels, which she had purchased from the Phillipps collection in 1920.[84] This went to the Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, through Maggs Bros., in 1952. She sold three further manuscripts through Maggs Bros. to the Morgan Library, New York, in 1951–1952 (MSS M.855, M.860, and M.862). These three had originally been purchased by Chester but were presented to Edith after 1933.

As already noted, the transfer of ownership included manuscripts Edith had gifted to her husband, including the Dictys Cretensis (Figure 20.6). In 1947, James Wardrop, then assistant keeper at the V&A, wrote, "I…have received a reply in which [Edith] agrees in principle to the loan [of the Dictys Cretensis]…but regrets her inability to further the matter owing to her illness."[85] She had indeed lent her collection to exhibitions in

81 Letter from Edith to Duveen, September 21, 1937, Correspondence: Beatty-Behrman (1913–1955), Duveen Brothers records (1876–1981), Los Angeles, Getty Research Institute, Box 350, Folder 6. Online Archive of California.

82 Funerary dishes (1927,1214.8), likely purchased in 1917, and a Han dynasty Watchtower (1929,0716.1), which she acquired from the Johnstone Christie's sale in 1929 to present to the museum.

83 Prints by Charles Meryon—*Le Pompe Notre-Dame, Paris* (P.1698-R) and *Le Petit Pont, Paris* (P.1697-R)—were presented to the Fitzwilliam Museum in October 1920, a statuette of a woman, possibly Hera, dated to the sixth century BCE (GR.10.1928) was given in 1928, and in 1949, Edith presented a bronze portrait of Oriel Ross (M.6-1948) by Jacob Epstein.

84 Cleaver, "Western Manuscript Collection," 470.

85 Letter from Wardrop to Wood, August 15, 1947, CBP/B/07/1/095.

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Figure 20.6. Wooden horse outside Troy, Dictys Cretensis, *De bello troiano*, by Bartholomew Sanvito (ca. 1435–1518) for Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga, 1461–1483, Rome, CBL, W 122 © Trustees of the Chester Beatty Library. Courtesy of the Trustees of the Chester Beatty Library.

the past, including a 1932 exhibition of *Nineteenth-Century Masterpieces* and a 1938 *Cezanne Centenary*.[86] The nature of her illness is not explained within the Archive, but five years later Edith died at the age of sixty-six, on August 5, 1952.[87]

In press obituaries, Edith was remembered as a racehorse owner, the wife of copper magnate and collector A. Chester Beatty, and—in her own right—as one of the best-known collectors of modern paintings.[88] Her estate was valued at £587,389 (duty £284,774), and, dying intestate, her collection passed to her husband, who had moved to Dublin (without her) in 1950. Most of Edith's manuscripts and printed books were shipped to Dublin in the 1950s, and some remain in the collection of the Chester Beatty today. Her paintings were not. A list preserved in the Archive and titled "In the Estate of Mrs. Edith Beatty, Deceased: Manuscripts" details 109 manuscripts.[89] About six hundred

86 The *French Art Exhibition* was held at the Burlington House, to which Edith lent *Les Tuileries* by Pissarro. "The French Art Exhibition: Nineteenth-Century Masterpieces," *Illustrated London News*, February 2, 1932, 23. The Cezanne centenary exhibition was held at the Galerie Paul Rosenberg, Paris and Rosenberg and Helft's, London (April 19–May 20, 1939); Iris Brooke "Art Notes," *The Sphere*, April 29, 1938, 188.

87 In 1949, on behalf of his brother, Anthony Blunt, Wilfrid Blunt wrote, "[Anthony] does not know whether she [Edith] is seriously ill…if not, he would much like to know whether her Impressionist paintings would be visible and in this case whether there is any chance that she would also be willing to lend." Letter from W. Blunt to Wilkinson, October 13, 1949, CBP/B/03/033.

88 "No Will in Her £587,000 Estate," *The Yorkshire Evening Post*, June 19, 1952, 7; "Death of Mrs. Chester Beatty," *Hartlepool Northern Daily Mail*, August 6, 1952, 5. "Art Gifts to the Nation," *Irish Weekly and Ulster Examiner*, October 9, 1954, 3.

89 The manuscripts were numbered to 107, but four numbers were used twice (13a, 76a, 78a,

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volumes of printed books (with little indication of content) were also shipped to Dublin. Here, only inscriptions on fly leaves and end-papers attest to Edith's prior ownership. A letter to Edith from Chester's first librarian, Francis Kelly, found inside an album entitled *Modes of Costumes Historiques* (CBL, Wep 3080), lends support to the suspicion that at least some of the fashion volumes in the Chester Beatty were among those acquired by Edith for her own enjoyment.[90]

In memory of Edith, Chester planned a publication highlighting some of the finest pieces from her collection of French paintings and furnishings.[91] He suggested that the catalogue include the "Marie Antoinette secretaire or commode, near Cezanne's *Le Garçon au Filet Rouge*" and the Louis XVI *secrétaire à abattant* "under the Toulouse-Lautrec."[92] Of the pictures for colour reproductions he suggested Van Gogh's *The Old Peasant* (Stavros S Niarchos Collection F 444 JH 1563),[93] the Cezanne noted above (New York, Museum of Modern Art 190.1955), Degas's *Les Repasseuses* (Norton Simon M.1971.3.P/M.1979.17.P), and Manet's *Brioche* (New York, Metropolitan Museum 1991.287).[94] In February 1956, both the draft furniture catalogue entries and image proofs were in hand. The publication, however, never came to fruition. This was probably owing to the death of Chester's librarian, J. V. S. Wilkinson, in January 1957, and, a few months later, that of Wilfred Merton, owner of Emery Walker (the intended publisher).

Chester had already donated a selection of works from Edith's collection to various museums in her memory. To the V&A, he presented a panelled room (W.5:1-1955), a daybed by Jean-Baptiste Tilliard (W.5:1,2-1956), the set of Louis XVI chairs mentioned earlier (W.6-1956 and W.7-1956), and the Louis XVI secretaire noted above, together with a commode by Stockel (W.23:1to3-1958).[95] Other museum donations that Chester

85a) and two were deleted (37, 106). In addition, Chester presented no. 29 (the Salvin Hours) to the British Museum in 1955 (BL, Add. MS 48985), "In the Estate of Mrs. Edith Beatty, Deceased: Manuscripts," CBP/C/07/1/141.

90 Letter from Francis Michael Kelly, Beatty's first librarian at Baroda House, to Edith, undated, CBP/B/06/1/01. Only about twenty of the six hundred items can be positively identified. The only printed books specifically listed in her estate were the *Racing Calendar*, 1817–1937, the two-volume set of Eric G. Millar, *The Library of A. Chester Beatty: A Descriptive Catalogue of the Western Manuscripts*, 2 vols. (London: Oxford University Press, 1927–1930) (four copies); Thomas W. Arnold, *The Library of A. Chester Beatty, a Catalogue of the Indian Miniatures*, 3 vols. (London: Walker, 1936); Thomas W. Arnold, *Chronicle of Akbar the Great* (Oxford: Roxburghe Club, 1937) (CBL, AB719); Jacob Baart de la Faille, *Les faux van Gogh* (Paris: van Oest, 1930) (AD763); and Jacob Baart de la Faille's *L'oeuvre de Vincent van Gogh*, 4 vols. (Paris: van Oest, 1928) (CBL, AD766, AD767, AD768, AD769); CBP/C/07/141.

91 John Wooderson, Beatty's secretary at Selection Trust, Memorandum, "In the Estate of Mrs. Edith Beatty: Book describing Mrs. Beatty's Collections," January 21, 1953, CBP/C/01/21.

92 Letter from Wooderson to Merton, February 27, 1953, CBP/C/01/21.

93 Madeleine Korn, "Collecting Paintings by Van Gogh in Britain before the Second World War," *Van Gogh Museum Journal* 7 (2002): 136–37.

94 Letters from Wooderson to Merton, February 27, 1953; March 10, 1953, CBP/C/01/21.

95 Credit line: "Bequeathed by Edith Beatty to Sir Alfred Chester Beatty, by whom given to the Museum in her memory."

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made of objects formerly owned by Edith were not gifted in her memory, so her name is not recorded in the provenance or credit line. While the statue of *Cupid and Psyche* by Claude Michel Clodion was intended to be included in the mooted publication, and therefore formerly in Edith's collection, the credit and object history lines on the V&A website (A.23-1958) read only "given by Sir Chester Beatty F. S. A."[96]

Some of Edith's paintings were kept by the family, but others were sold by Chester to cover death duties.[97] Bonnard's *Ruelle à Vernonnet* is in the National Gallery of Scotland (GMA 2982) and Renoir's *Bather* is now in the National Gallery in London (NG6319), both were sold in Chester's lifetime. A Degas painting of *Dancers in a Rehearsal Hall*, which formerly hung in Edith's boudoir, is now thought to be in a private collection, while Van Gogh's *The Rocks* is held by the Houston Museum of Art in Texas (74.139).[98] Courbet's *Low Tide* and Seurat's *Ville d'Avray, White Houses* are both in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool (WAG 6111 and 6112), bought in 1961.[99] Van Gogh's *Sunflowers*, which hung in Edith's Rococo drawing room at Baroda House, remained with the family until it too was sold at auction in 1987 and there purchased for the Yasuda Fire and Marine Insurance Company in Japan.[100] Chester's promised gift to the National Gallery of Ireland of "a collection of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist paintings as a memorial to his wife" was never made good.[101]

Several of the manuscripts in Edith's collection are now preserved in the Chester Beatty.[102] As noted above, these were transferred to Chester after Edith's death in 1952. An export licence to Ireland was granted in July 1953, despite the "moral" objection raised by the keeper of manuscripts at the British Museum, A. J. Collins. His plea for an export stop attests to the significance of Edith's collection:

> The ninety-eight MSS. described on the attached schedule are the remains of the finest (and indeed the only important) collection of illuminated and other early manuscripts formed in this country since the First World War. Some of the most splendid volumes were dispersed at auction in 1932 and 1933, the remainder passing by gift from Mr. Chester Beatty to his wife. Mrs. Chester

96 Listed as "winged man carrying away a sleeping lady." "Baroda House Furniture: Photographs in Colour," p. 2 (no. 34), CBP/B/01/21/1.

97 Dublin, Trinity College Dublin MS 8133(9); cited in Brian P. Kennedy, *Alfred Chester Beatty and Ireland 1950–1968: A Study in Cultural Politics* (Dublin: Glendale Press, 1988), 115, no. 34.

98 Both the Degas and the Van Gogh were sold through Arthur Tooth & Co., "Recent Acquisitions," *London Illustrated News*, November 17, 1962, 797.

99 Frank Davis, "A Page for Collectors," *London Illustrated News*, May 11, 1963, 734.

100 "A Van Gogh Goes for Gold," *London Illustrated News*, March 28, 1987, 70. The descendants of Paul von Mendelssohn-Bartholdy are currently seeking restitution of the painting, claiming it was sold under duress in 1934, "Seeking return of Van Gogh Sunflowers painting sold under Nazi coercion, German Jewish banker's heirs sue Japanese insurance company," *The Art Newspaper*, December 16, 2022, www.theartnewspaper.com/2022/12/16/nazi-loot-van-gogh-sunflowers-german-jewish-banker-heirs-sue-sompo-museum-art, accessed December 18, 2022.

101 Kennedy, *Alfred Chester Beatty and Ireland*, 84–87.

102 CBP/B/07/1/141.

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IN THE ESTATE OF MRS. EDITH BEATTY, DECEASED

MANUSCRIPTS

THE REFERENCES ARE TO E.G. MILLAR'S CATALOGUE OF THE WESTERN MANUSCRIPTS 4 vols., 1927-30

VI 1.	St. Augustine, Sermons, MS. on vellum, Italian, VIII-IX century, probably from the abbey of Nonantola, modern white pigskin (Millar, No.5.)	400. 0. 0.
2.	Bede. Commentary on the Canonical Epistles and Apocalypse, MS. on vellum, Italian, VIII-IX century, probably from Nonantola, modern white pigskin (Millar, No.7.)	450. 0. 0.
3.	Ansegisi Capitula, and other works, MS. on vellum, eleven decorated initials, School of Tours, IX century, calf (Millar, No.11) Book of Kells?	300. 0. 0.
VI 4.	Canons of the Council of Aix-la-Chapelle, MS. on vellum, Italian (Nonantola?), IX-X century, boards, vellum back (Millar, No.12)	450. 0. 0.
5.	Canons of the Council of Aix-la-Chapelle, MS. on vellum, German, X century (belonged to monastery of Schonberg), old pigskin (Millar, No.13)	520. 0. 0.
6.	Canons Conciliorum et Decreta Romanorum Pontificum, MS. on vellum, German X century, pigskin (Millar, No.14)	360. 0. 0.
VI 7.	Latin Gospels, MS. on vellum, Flemish, c. 1000. from Stavelot Abbey (Millar, No.17)	950. 0. 0.
8.	St. Gregory, Homilies on Ezechiel, MS. on vellum, French (Limoges) XI-XII century, velvet binding with gilt corner pieces etc. (15th century?) (Millar, No.18)	620. 0. 0.
9.	Latin Gospels. MS. on vellum, German, XII century, velvet (Millar, No.20)	120. 0. 0.
10.	Latin Bible (Genesis - Ruth only), MS. on vellum, English, XII century, from Walsingham Priory, pigskin (Millar, No.22) In library 18.12.57 Delete	500. 0. 0.
11.	St. Augustine. Works. MS. on vellum, English (Bury St. Edmunds Abbey) XII century, original white leather binding (Millar, No.26)	140. 0.0.
12.	St. Luke, Gospel with gloss, MS. on vellum, English (St. Augustine's Abbey, Canterbury), XII century, original white leather binding (Millar, No.27)	110. 0. 0.
13.	Job, glossed, MS. on vellum, Flemish (?), 12th century, purple morocco by Lewis (Millar, No.29)	300. 0. 0
13a.	Bible (Isaiah - I Corinthians only), French (Limoges?) XII century, velvet (Millar, No.30)	360. 0. 0.
14.	Latin Bible, MS. on vellum, English (Abbey of Pipewell in Northamptonshire) XII century, white pigskin (Millar, No.34)	280. 0. 0.
15.	Haymo, Commentary on the Pauline Epistles, MS. on vellum, French (Pontigny) 13th century, brown morocco (Millar, No.36)	200. 0. 0.

Figure 20.7. Page 1 of 7, Manuscripts in the Estate of Mrs. Edith Beatty, Deceased, 1952, London, CBP/C/07/141 © Trustees of the Chester Beatty Library. Courtesy of the Trustees of the Chester Beatty Library.

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> Beatty died recently, and owing (so I am under the impression) to her intestacy, they have again become the property of her husband. He applies for the licence because he has made Eire his domicile.[103]

Although a number of manuscripts were noted as being of National Importance (NI) (Figure 20.7), the licencing office saw no case for submission to the Reviewing Committee, and export licence was granted.

Today, thirty-six manuscripts inventoried in Edith's estate are numbered among the Chester Beatty collections in Dublin. The remainder were removed from the bequest by two codicils Chester added in 1965 and 1966 to his Irish will. The first withdrew twenty-seven manuscripts from the intended bequest to the Library Trustees, all but four of which had been part of Edith's estate.[104] The second codicil excluded "all manuscripts having English, French, Flemish, Belgian, Dutch, Italian, or Spanish provenance other than those currently on display at the Library."[105] All excluded manuscripts instead passed to Chester's residual estate following his death on January 19, 1968: seventy-five were sold through Sotheby's in 1968 and 1969.[106] All but six of those had been in Edith's estate.[107]

Conclusion

This chapter has revealed a little more about Edith Beatty as an energetic, resourceful, and competitive art collector and indeed "a wonderful judge of all works of art," while also proposing that she made numerous contributions to the museum collection that today bears only her husband's name. It is true that the wealthy couple's exceptional spending power in the salesrooms of London, Paris, Cairo, and beyond was fuelled by the profitability of Chester's consultancy in global mining finance. Nonetheless Edith and Chester Beatty's art collections *were* separate. This chapter demonstrates that the pair had different tastes, negotiating strategies and visions, but that they understood each other's respective collections as independent passion projects. Edith's gifts to Chester identified materials she knew that he would like, and vice versa. Chester's conscious decoupling from his western manuscripts after 1933 resulted in a transfer to Edith's ownership: there is no sense that they co-owned these treasures. Chester's 1950

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103 Letter from A. J. Collins to E. T. S. Adamson, Export Licencing Branch, July 17, 1953, application no. 18/2/3152/53, London, The National Archives T 218/409.

104 Codicil dated September 17, 1965, and signed August 18, 1966. Four of the manuscripts on the list did not form part of Edith's estate: no. 14 (W.MS.114), no. 25 (W.MS.180), no. 26 (W.MS.198), and no. 27 (W.MS.199).

105 Codicil signed November 17, 1966.

106 *Chester Beatty Western Manuscripts, Part I*; *Chester Beatty Western Manuscripts, Part II*.

107 Not in Edith's estate: lots 30 (Jaume Domenche, *Universal History*, 1454–1455, Spain, W.MS.180), 34 (Giraldi-Guicciardini Hours, ca. 1500, Florence, W.MS.92), 49 (Bible, thirteenth century, England, W.MS.128), 70 (Missae de Virgine, late-fifteenth century, Florence, W.MS.114), 74 (*Statues of the Order of the Garter*, ca. 1563, England, W.MS.199) and 75 (*Proprium missarum de sanctis*, 1623, Venice, W.MS.106).

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move to Dublin with "his" collection emphatically circumscribed that separation, as did his two later codicils that pushed many of Edith's manuscript collections to the auction house rather than into his bequest to the people of Ireland. For Edith's remarkable collections of paintings and furniture, it is not clear what she intended. According to its then director, J. B. Manson, Edith promised to leave her collection of modern pictures to the Tate Gallery.[108] Edith and Chester collected independently, and yet cohabiting led inevitably to contrasts of opinion: as Chester recalled, Edith particularly teased her husband over his taste in paintings:

> My wife collected good paintings. She had a wonderful eye. Manets, Utrillos, five Van Goghs, quite a few Cezannes including *Boy with the Red Waistcoat* and a couple of smaller versions of *The Bathers*—these were some of the pictures she bought many years ago…She always said I was a rotten judge of painting. When I stored my canvases somewhere safe during the last war she said: "You don't think Hitler's going to bother to bomb *your* pictures!".[109]

Even at the Chester Beatty, a now public museum, the collecting history of the founder's wife is not well recorded, despite her fingerprints on manuscripts in the collection. Only hints of Edith's acquisitions have so far been uncovered, often hidden within private letters related to her husband's collecting. As recorded in newspapers, Edith was as well-known for her horse-breeding and artistic tastes as she was for being the wife of a mining magnate. As the editor of *The Studio* noted in 1932, Edith's collection was an "expression of a personal taste."[110]

108 Tate Gallery Board Meeting, November 27, 1934, cited in Korn, "Collecting Modern Foreign Art," 1:240.

109 Quoted in Sheila Powerscourt, *Sun Too Fast* (London: Bles, 1974), 225.

110 C. Geoffrey Holme, "A Modern Picture Collection," *The Studio* 104.473 (August 1932), 77–81.

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APPENDIX

Table 20.1: Manuscripts acquired by Edith Beatty. This list does not include the manuscripts given to Edith by Chester after 1933. For a full list of these, see CBP/C/07/1/141.

Acquisition date	Description
1912 (?)	Jerome and Origen's *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul*, eleventh/twelfth century, Italian (W.MS.105).
1919	Coëtivy Hours, Dunois Master, 1443–1445, Paris.
September 1920*	Cicero, *Orationes*, ca. 1480, Italy.
December 17, 1920	Corvey Gospel, tenth century, Germany (W.MS.10).
July 1920	Vitruvius
June 21, 1924	Collection of Traditions (*Jami'al-usul li-ahadith al-rasul*), 1436–1437 (839H), Timurid-ruled Shiraz (Iran).
November 1925	*Thebaid* of Statius, Jacopo Avanzi or Altichiero, ca. 1380, Padua.
November 1925	Dictys Cretensis's Trojan War (*De bello troiano*), Bartolomeo Sanvito, 1491–1483, probably Rome.
November 1925	Epistle of Francesco Barbaro (*Franciscus Barbarus epistolae*), Giovanni Marco Cinico, 1472, Naples.
November 1925	*Ioannis Ioviani Pontani opera*, Giovanni Pontano, fifteenth century, Italy.
November 1925	Augustine's City of God (*De civitate Dei*), ca. 1135, Nonántola.
November 1925	Garden of knowledge (*Viridarium*), a medieval encyclopaedia, 1386–1425, Avignon.
November 1925	Lactantius, *De divinis institutionibus/Divinae institutiones*, fifteenth century, Lombardy (W.MS.121).
November 1925	Paul the Deacon, *Homiliary* (*Summer part*), ninth century, Reichenau (?) (W.MS.110).
1927	Qur'an, sixteenth century, Iran.

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	Source and inscription	Sale/current location
	Purchased by Edith Beatty possibly from Sotheby's sale November 20, 1912, lot 131 (Phillipps MS 21163), "a present from his wife."	Sold Sotheby's June 24, 1969, lot 42, £3,000, to Leo S. Olschki.
	Purchased from Henry Yates Thompson, £4,000; "To A. Chester Beatty from his loving wife Edith Beatty."	CBL, W 082
	Purchased from Sydney Cockerell; "To A. Chester Beatty from his loving wife Edith Beatty. 1921."	Sold Sotheby's June 7, 1932, lot 27 to Quaritch. Reacquired 1947 (see below).
	Purchased from the Phillipps Collection, MS 14122, £500.	Sold by Edith to Walters Art Gallery through Maggs Bros., October 1952; Walters Art Museum, MS W.751.
	Quaritch (?); gifted to W. Gedney Beatty.	MET 41.100.1 (?)
	"To my dear husband on our 11th wedding anniversary, June 21st 1924, from his wife, Edith Beatty."	CBL, Ar 5282
	Purchased from Thomas Fitzroy Fenwick (Phillipps MS 1798), £7,000; gifted to A. Chester Beatty.	CBL, W 076
	Purchased from Fenwick (Phillipps MS 3502), £7,000; gifted to A. Chester Beatty.	CBL, W 122
	Purchased from Fenwick (Phillipps MS 6640), £3,000; gifted to A. Chester Beatty.	CBL, W 113
	Purchased from Fenwick (Phillipps MS 7084), £2,000; gifted to A. Chester Beatty.	CBL, W 108
	Purchased from Fenwick (Phillipps MS 12269), £1,500; gifted to A. Chester Beatty.	CBL, W 043
	Purchased from Fenwick (Phillipps MSS 134 and 3948), £450; gifted to A. Chester Beatty.	CBL, W 080
	Purchased from Fenwick (Phillipps MS 137), £300; gifted to A. Chester Beatty.	Sold Sotheby's May 9, 1933, lot 58, £250, to Rosenthal, now Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, MS Ludwig XI 1; Initial M Getty (83.MN.120)
	Gifted to A. Chester Beatty (Phillipps MS 6659).	Sold Sotheby's December 3, 1968, lot 2, £14,000, to Martin Breslauer, now Cologny, Fondation Martin Bodmer, Cod. Bodmer 128.
	Purchased from Sydney Cockerell; "Sydney C. Cockerell Cambridge Aug. 19 1912;" "To my husband Xmas 1927 Edith Beatty."	CBL, Is 1547

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Acquisition date	Description
1928–1930	Blinding of Truth by Falsehood, Nineteenth Dynasty, Thebes (Papyrus CB II).
1928–1930	Dream Book, Nineteenth Dynasty, Thebes (Papyrus CB III).
1928–1930	Hymns of Amen and Ra, Nineteenth Dynasty, Thebes (Papyrus CB IV).
1928–1930	Medical treatise on diseases of the rectum, Nineteenth Dynasty, Thebes (Papyrus CB V)
1928–1930	Magical papyrus, Nineteenth Dynasty, Thebes (Papyrus CB VII).
1928–1930	Ritual of the Cult of Amenhotemp I, Nineteenth Dynasty, Thebes (Papyrus CB IX).
1929	Qur'an, 1670–1671 (1081H), India.
January 1929	Biographical dictionary of famous women (*Akbar al-nisa'*) by 'Ali ibn Muhammad ibn 'Ali ibn Jamil al-Mu`afiri al-Malaqi, 1185–1186 (581H), Damascus.
July 1929	*Book of Devotions*, Johannes de Ecclesia, fourteenth century, Bruges (W.MS.77).
After 1933	The Tours Gospels, 857–862, Tours (W.MS.8).
After 1933	Gospel Book, ca. 855–865, probably St Amand (W.MS.9).
After 1933	The Seitenstetten Gradual, ca. 1260–1264, perhaps Salzburg (W.MS.48).
After 1933	Manuel Philes's *De animalium proprietate* ("On the Nature of Animals"), Angelos Vergecios, 1565, Paris (?) (MS.GR.10).
1937	*Book of Job, with catena*, Ioasaph Doryanos, January 15, 1577–1578, Crete.
July 23, 1947*	Cicero, *Orationes*, ca. 1480, Italy.
August 25, 1947	Armenian Gospel book, Martiros Khizants'i, 1596, Constantinople.
1948	Crescentius, *Liber ruralium commodorum*, 1427, Italian, arms of Pius VI (W.MS.174).

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	Source and inscription	Sale/current location
	Purchased from Maurice Nahman (?); Given to the British Museum, 1930.	British Museum, EA10682.
	Purchased from Nahman (?); given to the British Museum, 1930.	British Museum, EA10683.
	Purchased from Nahman (?); given to the British Museum, 1930.	British Museum, EA10684.
	Purchased from Nahman (?); given to the British Museum, 1930.	British Museum, EA10685.
	Purchased from Nahman (?); given to the British Museum, 1930.	British Museum, EA10687.
	Purchased from Nahman (?); given to the British Museum jointly with A. Chester Beatty, 1930.	British Museum, EA10689.
	"Dad [A. Chester Beatty] with Love from Ede Feb. 7th 1929."	CBL, Is 1562
	Purchased from Yahuda.	CBL, Ar 3016
	Holford sale, Sotheby's July 29, 1929, lot 8, purchased by Maggs Bros. and resold in saleroom to Edith Beatty.	Sold Sotheby's December 3, 1968, lot 21, £14,000, to Quaritch.
	Acquired by Beatty through Quaritch, 1919, £1,775; gifted to Edith, after 1933.	Sold 1952 by Edith Beatty through Maggs Bros. to the Morgan for £15,750, now PML, M.860.
	Acquired by Beatty from Phillipps Collection (MSS 2165 and 21787), December 17, 1920, £1,500; gifted to Edith, after 1933.	Sold 1952 by Edith Beatty through Maggs Bros. to the Morgan for £7,875, now PML, M.862.
	Acquired by Beatty from Jacques Rosenthal, 1927; gifted to Edith, after 1933.	Sold by Edith Beatty, 1951, to Morgan Library, now PML, M.855.
	ACB MS.GR.10 (MS. W.60C); gifted to Edith, after 1933.	Given by Edith to Philip Hofer, July 1952; presented to Harvard (Department of Graphic Arts) in memory of Mrs. Beatty by Philip Hofer (MS Typ. 222H).
	"To A. Chester Beatty from his wife Edith Beatty. Xmas 1937."	CBL, W 136
	"Recovered from the good offices of Sir Sydney Cockerell, July 23rd 1947, bless him, Edith Beatty."	CBL, W 124
	Sent from Egypt by Sgt. Barbour, received 25 August 1947. "Given by Mrs. Beatty" (CBP/B/02/2/21).	CBL, Arm 573
	Robert Hoe and Herman Marx collections; apparently bought by Chester and later resold or given away, early book-label no. 44; Marx sale Sotheby's, April 19, 1948, lot 32, bought by Edith.	Sold Sotheby's December 3, 1968, lot 26, £5,000, to Rainer; sold by Librairie J.-M. LeFell (Paris) to Lawrence J. Schoenberg, June 1998; sold by Schoenberg 2010; now private collection.

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Chapter 21

PAUL DURRIEU (1855–1925)

ART COLLECTING AND SCHOLARLY EXPERTISE

NATHALIE ROMAN

PAUL DURRIEU WAS a key figure in art history at the turn of the twentieth century. His more than six hundred publications shaped research on illumination considerably and are still essential references today. During his lifetime, Durrieu built up an extensive personal art collection, which is now scattered throughout the world. Until now, his collection has not been thoroughly studied as a whole.[1] However, based on new documents and archival studies, a large part of his collection can be reconstructed, showing that he was an ardent collector. His friend and biographer Alexandre de Laborde noted: "Durrieu avait rassemblé de précieux manuscrits, pieusement conservés par la famille, qui, sans être des têtes de colonnes, représentent une collection des plus estimées chez un particulier, collection qui, tout en faisant sa joie, lui servait de champs d'études."[2] The findings of my research show that he did acquire first-rate manuscripts and paintings. Unlike John Pierpont Morgan or Calouste Gulbenkian, Durrieu had limited financial resources. However, his specialized knowledge and research enabled him to discover new objects. By examining acquisition dates, buying opportunities, and prices paid, this chapter aims to outline Durrieu's acquisition strategies. It pays particular attention to his relationships with art dealers, focusing on personal correspondence and the content of manuscript descriptions, which have significantly shaped our modern scholarly approach when dealing with medieval and Renaissance manuscripts.

1 For an overview of Durrieu's collection, see Ariane Bergeron-Foote and Sandra Hindman, *Three Illuminated Manuscripts from the Collection of Comte Paul Durrieu*, cat. 11 (Paris: Les Enluminures, 2004).

2 Alexandre de Laborde, *Le Comte Paul Durrieu (1855–1925): Sa vie – ses travaux* (Paris: Picard, 1930), 23–24. ("Durrieu assembled precious manuscripts, carefully preserved by the family, which, without being the very best examples, represented a highly esteemed collection, moreover a collection that while giving him joy served his field of study.")

Nathalie Roman is an art historian working at Lausanne and Neuchâtel Universities. She is completing a thesis on illuminated manuscripts made by Jean Pucelle in the early fourteenth century. She is particularly interested in women's patronage in France and Savoy, the history of art history, and how the history of illuminated manuscripts was shaped at the turn of the twentieth century. She is deeply grateful to the experts who helped identifying several manuscripts: François Avril, Bodo Brinkmann, Gregory Clark, Christopher de Hamel, Sandra Hindman, Inès Villela-Petit, and Roger Wieck.

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Figure 21.1. Le Jay Hours, Master of Jacques de Besançon. From Paul Durrieu, *Jacques de Besançon et son oeuvre un grand enlumineur parisien au XV^e^ siècle* (Paris: Champion, 1892), pl. V. With permission of the Bibliothèque nationale de France.

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Building a Connoisseur's Collection

A brief overview of Durrieu's career allows us to appreciate his scholarly background and understand how he became a central figure in the study of the history of illumination.[3] After graduating from the École des chartes (1874–1878), he joined the École française de Rome (1878–1880) and conducted research in Neopolitan archives. Having been trained as a historian, he dedicated himself to art history. Durrieu was then encouraged by Léopold Delisle to join the Louvre as curator of the Paintings and then Drawings and Engravings Departments (1881–1898). During this time, he also carried out significant research on manuscripts, sharing his findings with the learned societies to which he belonged: the Société nationale des Antiquaires de France, Société de l'École des chartes, and Société de l'histoire de France. His insatiable appetite for scholarship is also attested in his building of a personal art collection.

Collecting was a family tradition: Durrieu's father also collected art.[4] In 1874 his family offered him money as a *baccalauréat* gift to buy his first manuscript.[5] No publication or archival document listing Durrieu's belongings has yet been found. I have therefore had to rebuild his collection by consulting provenance tools and catalogues.[6] Information on his collecting is also found in his publications, in which he referred to his own manuscripts and sometimes even provided reproductions (Figure 21.1).[7] He often

3 Nathalie Roman, "Paul Durrieu (1855–1925), l'œil d'un historien: La leçon de méthode à Émile Mâle," *Histoire et civilisation du livre* 17 (2021): 139–54.

4 In 1860 Henri Durrieu acquired a German Mystical Hunt tapestry (unlocated) dated to 1549, which he offered to his granddaughter, Gabrielle (married name: de Charnacé) probably as a birth gift. On this, see Paul Durrieu, *Bulletin de la Société nationale des Antiquaires de France*, February 4, 1894, 105 and March 21, 1894, 117; Paul Durrieu, "La légende du roi de Mercie dans un livre d'heures du XV[e] siècle," *Monuments et mémoires de la Fondation Eugène Piot* 24 (1920): 149–82 (with a reproduction). Petrarch's *Triumphs* tapestries were acquired by his father in 1884.

5 According to de Laborde, *Le Comte Paul Durrieu*, 4, Durrieu named it "le manuscrit de l'examen"; Véronique Long, *Mécènes des deux mondes: Les collectionneurs donateurs du Louvre et de l'Art Institute de Chicago, 1879–1940* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2007), 70.

6 For provenance databases and websites consulted, see Schoenberg Database of Manuscripts, https://sdbm.library.upenn.edu; Bibale, https://bibale.irht.cnrs.fr; Peter Kidd, "Medieval Manuscripts Provenance," https://mssprovenance.blogspot.com/2022/; Jean-Luc Deuffic, "Heures manuscrites identifiées," https://sites.google.com/site/heuresbookofhours/, all accessed May 15, 2023.

7 The Le Jay Hours, dated to 1492 (unlocated) was attributed to Jacques de Besançon in Paul Durrieu, *Jacques de Besançon et son œuvre* (Paris: Champion, 1892), 38 (pl. XIX), 67–68 (pl. V). Durrieu identified a group of forty-seven manuscripts produced by this flourishing Parisian workshop, whose activities spanned the second half of the fifteenth century. Since Durrieu's publication, the composition of the workshop has been clarified to include Master of Jean Rolin, Master of Jacques de Besançon, and Master François. See François Avril and Nicole Reynaud, *Les manuscrits à peintures: 1440–1520* (Paris: Flammarion, 1993), 256–62; Charles Sterling, *La peinture médiévale à Paris: 1300–1500*, 2 vols. (Paris: Bibliothèque des arts, 1987), 2:214–29, entry 15; Mathieu Deldique, "L'enluminure à Paris à la fin du XV[e] siècle: Maître François, le Maître de Jacques de Besançon et Jacques de Besançon identifiés?" *Revue de l'art* 183 (2014): 9–18.

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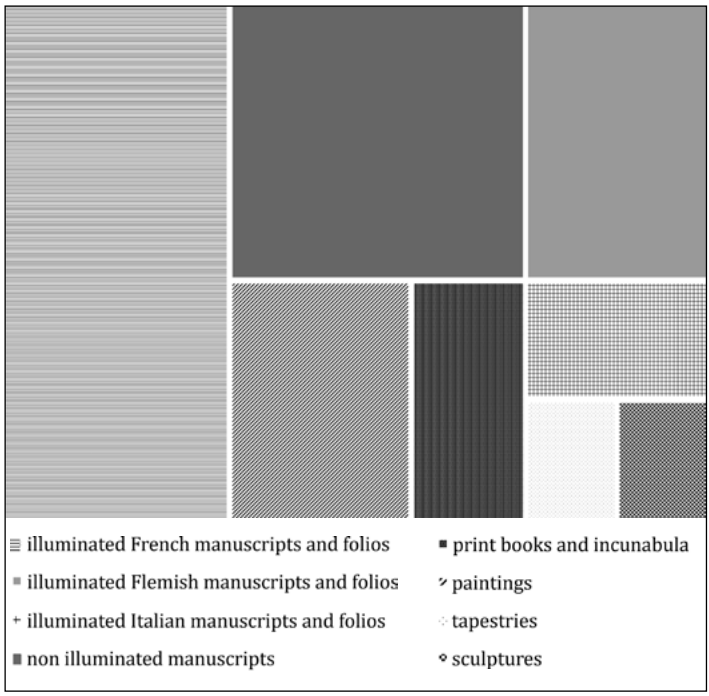


Figure 21.2. Diagram of the structure of Paul Durrieu's collection. Author diagram.

shared his comments first with his colleagues of the Société nationale des Antiquaires.[8] His notebooks and correspondence are also rich sources of information.

This chapter can only provide a short overview of Durrieu's collection.[9] It demonstrates that Durrieu started his collection as a student and continued it throughout his life. His collection was rich and large: to date, sixty-six works of art and manuscripts can be listed. The collection mainly included illuminated manuscripts, but also panel paintings, manuscripts without decoration, tapestries, sculptures, and incunabula (Figure 21.2). The nature of his collection bears witness to his approach as a connoisseur. His primary interest was French Renaissance art, with its major artists being Jean Fouquet, Jean Bourdichon, and the Claude de France Master. Durrieu acquired the so-called Baudricourt Hours (BnF, NAL 3187 and fol. 13bis) (Figure 21.3), as well as an Augustinian Breviary (private collection), a small Book of Hours (BnF, NAL 3203), and a fragment of the *Livre des secrets de l'histoire naturelle* (Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, MS 124), all attributed by the scholar to Fouquet.[10] Throughout his life, Durrieu published

8 Paul Durrieu, "La question des œuvres de jeunesse de Jean Fouquet," in *Centenaire 1804–1904. Recueil de mémoires publiés par la Société des Antiquaires de France* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1904), 111.

9 This paper is part of a global research project regarding Durrieu's collection.

10 These manuscripts are no longer attributed to Fouquet, but to the Master of the Munich Boccaccio, the Master of the Geneva Boccaccio, or to his workshop: François Avril, *Jean Fouquet : Peintre et enlumineur du XVe siècle* (Paris: Hazan, 2003). On the Baudricourt Hours, see Avril and

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Figure 21.3. Baudricourt Hours, Bibliothèque nationale de France, NAL 3187, fol. 74v. With permission of the BnF.

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on Fouquet, reconstructing his complete body of work.[11] As a Louvre curator, he purchased the St. Martin folio (Paris, Louvre, RF 1679) from the Hours of Etienne Chevalier and rediscovered at the Louvre the St. Margaret folio (Paris, Louvre, MI 1093). Durrieu's admiration for Fouquet was shared by his contemporaries: at the exhibition *Les primitifs français* in 1904, a whole section was dedicated to Fouquet.[12]

The second major focus of Durrieu's French collection was the king's painter Jean Bourdichon.[13] Durrieu acquired a luxurious manuscript of *Douze Césars* (BnF, NAF 28800) containing sixteen medal portraits of the emperors by the artist.[14] As early as September 1888, he saw a parent manuscript (Basel, University library, Historical Museum deposit, Comites Latentes 258) when visiting Sir Thomas Phillipps's library, and was the first to compare it to the Grandes Heures of Anne of Brittany (BnF, Lat. 9474), attributing it to Bourdichon.[15] From the same circle, he also owned two folios with representations of St. Mark and St. Luke painted by the Master of Claude de France.[16] In addition to these focal points of his collection, Durrieu also collected major French illuminators, such as Jacquemart de Hesdin and the Boucicaut Master (although now the manuscript is attributed to the Mazarine Master). He also brought to light several illuminators from the second half of the fifteenth century, such as the Master of Jacques

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Reynaud, *Les manuscrits à peintures*, 147–48; on the Breviary (use of Augustinian Hermits), see Bergeron-Foote and Hindman, *Three Illuminated Manuscripts*, 4, 24–31; on the Hours (use of Paris) see Avril and Reynaud, *Les manuscrits à peintures*, 151–52; on the fragment of the *Livre des secrets*, see Jean Porcher, *Les manuscrits à peintures en France: du XIIIe au XVIe siècle* (Paris: BnF, 1955), 53–54; Eberhard König, *Französische Buchmalerei um 1450. Der Jouvenel-Maler, der Maler des Genfer Boccaccio und die Anfänge Jean Fouquets* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 1982), 11, 37, 253, 255; Adeline Ariane, *The* "Livre des secrets d'histoire naturelle" *or* "Livre des merveilles du monde"*: The Durrieu Manuscript* (Paris: Livres anciens Ariane Adeline, 2021).

11 Paul Durrieu, *Deux miniatures inédites de Jean Fouquet* (Nogent-le-Rotrou: impr. Daupeley-Gouverneur, 1902); Durrieu, "La question"; Paul Durrieu, "Découverte du 45e feuillet des Heures d'Etienne Chevalier," *Compte-rendus des séances de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres* 67.1 (February 9, 1923): 58–59.

12 Henri Bouchot et al., *Exposition des primitifs français au Palais du Louvre et à la Bibliothèque nationale* (Paris: Palais du Louvre et Bibliothèque nationale, 1904), 16–25 (section "Louvre"), 43–45 (section "Bibliothèque nationale"). Durrieu played a major role in the discovery of Fouquet. See Paul Durrieu, *Les antiquités judaïques et le peintre Jean Fouquet* (Paris: Plon-Nourrit 1908), 84–86.

13 Bouchot, *Exposition des primitifs français*, 57–58 ("Louvre"), 56–57 ("Bibliothèque nationale"); Émile Mâle, "Jean Bourdichon et son atelier," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 32.2 (July 1904): 441–57.

14 Jörn Günther sold Durrieu's manuscript in 2013. See Jörn Günther, Wilhelmina Wüstefeld, and Erene Rafik Morcos, *Parchment and Gold. 25 years of Dr Jörn Günther Rare Books*, cat. 11 (Stalden: J. Günther Antiquariat, 2015), no. 43, pp. 222–29. The manuscript was listed as a "trésor national."

15 Paul Durrieu, "Les manuscrits à peintures de la bibliothèque de Sir Thomas Phillipps à Cheltenham," *BEC* 50 (1889): 405–7 at 407: "Aucun des manuscrits français qu'il me reste à énumérer ne peut plus être comparé, comme intérêt, même de très loin, au volume des Douze Césars."

16 The folio representing St. Mark is still untraced. That with St. Luke is in a private collection and was sold by Les Enluminures. See *France 1500: The Pictorial Arts at the Dawn of the Renaissance*, cat. 15 (Paris: Les Enluminures, 2010), 122–23.

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Figure 21.4. Calendar miniature for January (second half) and February (first half) illuminated by the David Master. Durrieu Hours (now private collection, sold by Heribert Tenschert in 2022), © Heribert Tenschert. Courtesy of Heribert Tenschert.

de Besançon.[17] He explored French regional schools and illuminated manuscripts at the time when printing was thriving.[18]

Flemish illuminated manuscripts formed another large part of Durrieu's collection: a Calendar illuminated by the David Scenes Master (private collection, sold by Ten-

17 For example, the Pseudo-Jacquemart de Hesdin Hours (Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, MS 36) and the Mazarine Master Hours (Cologne, Renate König Collection, MS 5). The Mazarine Master is now distinguished from the Boucicaut Master: Gabriele Bartz, *Der Boucicaut-Meister. Ein unbekanntes Stundenbuch*, cat. 42 (Ramsen: Heribert Tenschert 1999).

18 For example, the Psalter-Hours of Jean II de Vy and Perette Baudoche (Metz, BM, MS 1598), see Bergeron-Foote and Hindman, *Three Illuminated Manuscripts*, 12–21; Pierre Sala's *Dits moraux des philosophes* (Lyon, BM, MS 7685), see Günther, Wüstefeld, and Morcos, *Parchment and Gold*, no. 42, pp. 218–21; the Cochon Hours (now dismembered in private collections), see, https://mssprovenance.blogspot.com/2019/05/a-dismembered-book-of-hours-once-owned.html#more, accessed May 30, 2023; and *L'Ethiquette des Temps* (BnF, NAF 19736), see Avril and Reynaud, *Les manuscrits à peintures*, 421.

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Figure 21.5. Pieter Huys, *La tentation de saint Antoine*, ca. 1520–1577, Paris, Musée du Louvre, RF 3936. Photo © RMN-Grand Palais (musée du Louvre)/Gérard Blot. Used with permission.

schert in 2022, Figure 21.4), the Prayer Book of Charles the Bold (Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, MS 37), which he attributed to Philippe de Mazerolles (now Lievin van Lathem), the so-called Gruuthuse Hours (private collection, sold by Günther in 2014), a Carthusian Book of Hours (private collection), and four folios painted by Simon Bening from Enriquez Ribera's Book of Hours (Last Supper at the Cleveland Museum of Art, 2002.52), a Book of Hours (use of Rome) painted by the Mildmay Master (private collection), and more.[19] As early as 1891, Durrieu had defined the Ghent-Bruges school, based on the Grimani Breviary, as a product of the southern Netherlands produced between the last quarter of the fifteenth and the mid-sixteenth century.[20] Durrieu's interest in Flemish illumination distinguishes him from his French contemporaries.

19 On the Calendar, see Eberhard König, *Tage und Werke: illustrierte Kalendarien in Manuskripten aus Flandern 1270–1520*, cat. 87 (Ramsen: Heribert Tenschert, 2021), no. 8, pp. 389–428; Christopher de Hamel, *Western Manuscripts and Miniatures … 20th June 1995* (London: Sotheby's, 1995), lot 109, pp. 169–77; on Charles the Bold's Prayer Book, see https://www.getty.edu/art/collection/object/103RWT?tab=bibliography, accessed May 15, 2023; on the Gruuthuse Hours, see Günther, Wüstefeld, and Morcos, *Parchment and Gold*, no. 52, pp. 272–75; on Bening's folios, see Sandra Hindman, Laura Light, and Matthew J. Westerby, *Ribera Book of Hours*: *Simon Bening and the Enríquez de Ribera Prayerbook* (Paris: Les Enluminures, 2021); on the Mildmay Hours, see *Importants livres anciens, livres d'artistes et manuscrits*, May 11, 2012 (Paris: Christie's, 2012), lot 61, pp. 4–5.

20 Paul Durrieu, "Alexandre Bening et les peintres du bréviaire Grimani," *Gazette des beaux-arts* 409.6/3 (July 1, 1891): 55–69.

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Durrieu and the Art Market

Between 1877 and 1917 Durrieu obtained books from sales and dealers mainly in France, Germany, and Italy, and even in the United States. From French collections came the *Gien league chart* (Benjamin Fillon sale, 1877), Gregory's *Homilies* and *Liber pastoralis* and Vincent Ferrer's *Sermones* (Bachelin-Deflorenne sale, 1878), the Baudricourt Hours (Spitzer sale, 1893), *The Temptation of St. Anthony* painting by Pieter Huys (Mantz sale, 1895) (Figure 21.5), and the *Livre des secrets de l'histoire naturelle* (Gélis-Didot sale, 1897). From German dealers came a Book of Hours by the Mazarine Master, a Ferrara Hours bought from Jacques Rosenthal in 1905, the *Chroniques de Saint-Denis* bought from Rosenthal in 1907, a folio S by Belbello da Pavia from C. G. Boerner in 1908, and the Carthusian Book of Hours from Rosenthal in 1909. The Italian dealer Leo S. Olschki was the source of the Cochon Hours sometime after 1911, and *L'Ethiquette des temps* by Alexandre Sauvaige was in Robert Hoe's sale in New York in 1912. In addition Durrieu obtained the Psalter-Hours Perette Baudoche sometime before 1888, the Le Jay Hours, another small Book of Hours he attributed to Jacques de Besançon (before 1892), two paintings (a Flemish *Veronica* and *Abraham, Sarah and the Angel* by Jan Provost), folios by the Master Claude de France (before 1904), the Comeau Hours (before 1906), the Prayer Book of Charles the Bold (before 1910), folios illuminated by Philippe de Mazerolles (before 1910), a Ghent-Bruges Calendar, the Gruuthuse Hours (before 1913), and the *Douze Césars* before 1917.

Durrieu obtained a few manuscripts, such as Charles the Bold's Prayer Book, directly through a private contact, but he mainly bought at public sales. He was probably accustomed to attending auctions as a Louvre curator. Hence, in 1889 he purchased the St. Martin folio from the de Conche heirs, the *Matheron* diptych (Paris, Louvre, RF 665) at the Chazaud sale in 1891, and *The Parable of the Blind Men* (Paris, Louvre, RF 829)—recorded as by Pieter Bruegel the Elder—at Henri Leys's workshop sale in 1893.[21]

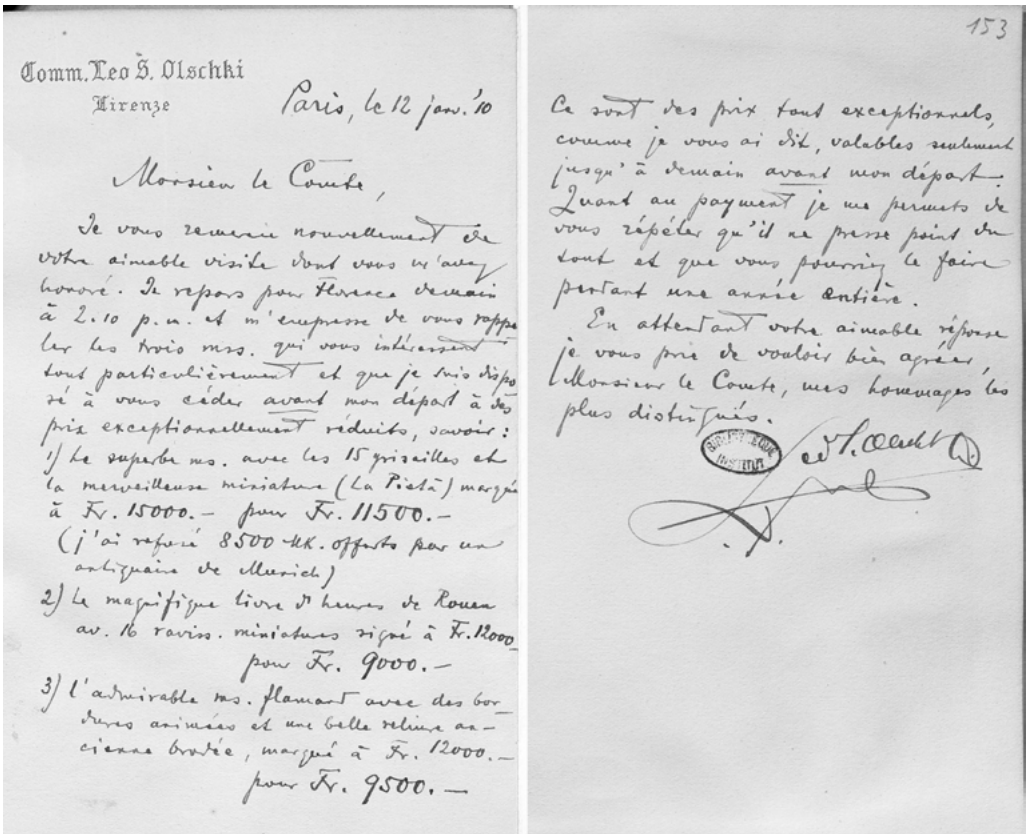
De Laborde's statement regarding Durrieu's possessions—"sans être des têtes de colonnes"—must be reexamined: not only are his illuminated manuscripts now in prestigious collections, but their purchase value was not that modest. In 1878, he purchased two books from the Silos Abbey: a Ferrer's *Sermones* for 35 francs and Gregory's *Homilies* (BnF, NAL 2616) for 180 francs.[22] Delisle's enthusiasm concerning Silos's library was likely a decisive factor in the purchase.[23] Durrieu's purchases increased in both volume and value: in 1893, he was able to pay 3,600 francs for the Baudricourt Hours, in 1907 6,500 marks for the *Saint-Denis chronicle* (private collection) with Jeanne de Bourbon's arms, and two years later he bought the Carthusian Book of Hours illuminated by Bening

21 Durrieu's attribution of *The Parable of the Blind Men* to Pieter Bruegel the Elder was controversial.

22 *Catalogue de livres rares … et de manuscrits du IXe au XVIIIe siècle*, June 1, 1878 (Paris: Bachelin-Deflorenne, 1878), 20, lot 32, and 29, lot 49.

23 François Avril et al., *Manuscrits enluminés de la péninsule ibérique* (Paris: BnF, 1982).

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Comm. Leo S. Olschki
Firenze

Paris, le 12 jan. '10

Monsieur le Comte,

Je vous remercie nouvellement de votre aimable visite dont vous m'avez honoré. Je repars pour Florence demain à 2.10 p.m. et m'empresse de vous rappeler les trois mss. qui vous intéressent tout particulièrement et que je suis disposé à vous céder avant mon départ à des prix exceptionnellement réduits, savoir:

1) le superbe ms. avec les 15 grisailles et la merveilleuse miniature (La Pietà) marqué à Fr. 15000.– pour Fr. 11500.–
(j'ai refusé 8500 ℳ offerts par un antiquaire de Munich)

2) Le magnifique livre d'heures de Rouen av. 16 raviss. miniatures signé à Fr. 12000 pour Fr. 9000.–

3) l'admirable ms. flamand avec des bordures animées et une belle reliure ancienne brodée, marqué à Fr. 12000.– pour Fr. 9500.–

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Ce sont des prix tout exceptionnels, comme je vous ai dit, valables seulement jusqu'à demain avant mon départ. Quant au payment je me permets de vous répéter qu'il ne presse point du tout et que vous pourriez le faire portant une année entière.

En attendant votre aimable réponse je vous prie de vouloir bien agréer, Monsieur le Comte, mes hommages les plus distingués.

Figure 21.6. Letter from Leo S. Olschki to Paul Durrieu, January 12, 1910. Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Institut de France, MS 5723B pièce 153.

probably for 12,000 marks.[24] His collection grew in value as he made it his field of study, through the fame of his publications. The amounts for which several works of art lent to the 1913 Ghent exhibition were insured show substantial increases: for instance, the Carthusian Hours were insured for 30,000 francs and *The Temptation of St. Anthony* for 18,000 francs.

Sometimes, Durrieu could not afford a manuscript: in 1919, he commissioned Bernard Quaritch Ltd. to purchase Henry Yates Thompson's Boethius with a price limit of £800.[25] Durrieu was probably interested in this volume because he believed that it was illuminated by the Master of the Coëtivy Hours (Vienna, Österreichische National-

24 Bergeron-Foote and Hindman, *Three Illuminated Manuscripts*, 4.

25 Letter from Durrieu to Quaritch dated May 28, 1919, London, Bernard Quaritch Ltd, Sc 1354; letter from Quaritch to Durrieu, Paris, Institut de France, Correspondance 5722-A–H, 160.

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bibliothek, Cod. 1929), whose style he had identified in 1892.[26] In the end, Calouste Gulbenkian acquired it for £900 (Lisbon, Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, LA136).[27]

Although Durrieu could not compete with very rich collectors like Gulbenkian, the Rothschilds, or Henry Walters, he had a substantial personal fortune. The wages he earned while working at the Louvre (1881–1898) were not sufficient for his collector's appetite.[28] It should not be forgotten that the annual salary of a textile worker was around 1,300–1,800 francs between 1896 and 1914.[29] Durrieu's purchases can also be analysed by comparing them with acquisitions made by public institutions, which had limited means compared to private buyers at that time. In the 1870s, the national museums could not spend more than 150,000 francs a year and the Bibliothèque nationale had at its disposal 31,500 francs in 1906 (a budget considered insufficient given the high prices).[30]

Relationships between Dealers and Connoisseur-Collectors

Durrieu was a well-known collector: several archival documents indicate that he was regularly contacted by dealers prior to sales. Thus, Olschki sent him a letter from Paris, with photographs, dated January 12, 1910. Thanking Durrieu for a visit, Olschki proposed three manuscripts offered "à des prix exceptionnellement réduits" until the following day (Figure 21.6).[31] The first was a small Book of Hours priced at 15,000 francs offered to Durrieu for 11,500; Olschki emphasized its grisaille miniatures and "wonderful Pieta." There were no photos to accompany this comment, but these two characteristics allow its identification with a Book of Hours produced in Flanders around 1480–1490 with eight full-page miniatures, two in blue grisaille and the others in full

26 Paul Durrieu, "Notes sur quelques manuscrits français ou d'origine française conservés dans des bibliothèques d'Allemagne," *BEC* 53 (1892): 119–22.

27 See François Avril, "Consolation de la Philosophie," in *European Illuminated Manuscripts in the Calouste Gulbenkian Collection*, ed. João Carvalho Dias (Lisbon: Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, 2020), 302–5. On Gulbenkian's collection, see François Avril, "Calouste Gulbenkian, Collector of Painted Manuscripts," *European Illuminated Manuscripts*, ed. Dias, 19–26.

28 Long, *Mécènes des deux mondes*, 43: "À Paris un diplomate bénéficie d'un traitement de base [annuel] de 40,000 francs, tandis qu'un attaché à la conservation d'un musée gagne en moyenne 2000 francs et qu'un conservateur peut recevoir jusqu'à 11,000 francs."

29 Hansjörf Siegenthaler and Heiner Ritzmann-Blickenstorfer, *Historical Statistics of Switzerland* (Zurich: Chronos, 1996), 448. At this time Swiss and French francs were equivalent.

30 Véronique Long, "Les collectionneurs d'œuvres d'art et la donation au musée à la fin du XIXe siècle: l'exemple du musée du Louvre," *Romantisme* 112 (2001): 45–54 at 46: "Les faiblesses du musée [du Louvre] résident également dans l'insuffisance des crédits d'acquisition: de 100 000 francs par an entre 1852 et 1870, ils passent à 75 000 francs par an entre 1870 et 1877, pour remonter et se stabiliser à 150 000 francs annuels dès 1878."; see also Henry Marcel et al., *La Bibliothèque nationale* (Paris: Renouard & Laurens, 1907), 31. I thank Hannah Morcos for this reference.

31 Letter from Leo Olschki to Durrieu, January 12, 1910, Paris, Institut de France, Correspondance 5722- N–Z, 153. On Olschki see Bernard M. Rosenthal, "Cartello, clan or dinastia? Gli Olschki e I Rosenthal 1859–1976," *La Bibliofilía* 114 (2012): 39–60; Federico Botana, "The Card Index of Leo S. Olschki: The Inner Workings of an Antiquarian Book Business," *La Bibliofilía* 123 (2021): 157–77.

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colour, in Olschki's later catalogues (1910 and 1911).[32] The photographs published in the catalogue and the access number make it possible to identify the manuscript as that bought by Walters in November 1912 (Baltimore, Walters Art Museum, MS W.431).[33] Walters acquired more than 250 manuscripts from Olschki and was certainly able to pay the catalogue price. If that was the case, Olschki would have made a good profit: he had paid 4,500 francs for the manuscript ca. 1908–1910.[34] The artistic merits of the manuscript—the use of grisaille and the quality of the Pietà—are described with enthusiasm in the catalogue. Olschki also underlined its perfect state of conservation and sixteenth-century purple velvet embroidered binding. Durrieu could certainly have been interested in the artistic quality of the manuscript, as well as its area of production.[35] Or perhaps he was looking for a manuscript for his daughter, as this was a small-format manuscript (115 mm × 85 mm), in an embroidered binding. By 1913, she owned the very small Gruuthuse Hours (80 × 61 mm) and practiced embroidery.[36]

Olschki proposed another northern manuscript in his letter to Durrieu—priced at 12,000 francs but offered for 9,500 francs—and added a photograph (of the folio representing the scene of the Flight to Egypt). Produced by the Ghent-Bruges school (as defined by Durrieu), this Flemish Book of Hours also appeared in Olschki's catalogues (in 1910 and 1911), where it was described as being in perfect condition with twelve large miniatures, twenty-three smaller miniatures, richly decorated borders, and an English sixteenth-century binding.[37] The layout and style of this manuscript are similar to the Gruuthuse Hours. This manuscript, now in the Walters collection (MS W.435), is attributed to illuminators active around 1470–1490, whose style was influenced by the

32 *Manuscrits sur vélin avec miniatures du Xe au XVIe siècle*, cat. 74 (Florence: Olschki, 1910), 35–36, no. 22, pl. IX; Leo S. Olschki, "Quelques manuscrits fort précieux (continuation)," *La Bibliofilía* 13 (1911): 18.

33 Roger Wieck, *Time Sanctified: The Book of Hours in Medieval Art and Life* (Baltimore: Walters Art Gallery, 1988), 105 (fig. 75), 136 (fig. 131), 217 (entry 101). Produced in Flanders, this manuscript was probably painted by a group of artists referred to as the Associates of the Master of Antoine Rolin in whom Durrieu was interested. On this, see Paul Durrieu, *Les miniaturistes franco-flamands des XIVe et XVe siècles* (Gand: Siffer, 1914).

34 I thank Federico Botana for photographs of Olschki's cards relating to this manuscript with its access number (31351) and price code. On Olschki's indexing system and price codes, see Botana, "Card Index," 161–62, 165–66. On the use of codes by merchants, see Peter Kidd, "The Use of Price-Codes (and Associate Marks) in Provenance Research," in *Chamberpot and Motherfuck. The Price-Codes of the Book Trade*, ed. Exhumation [Ian Jackson] (Narbeth: McKittrick, 2018), 61–90.

35 Lilian Randall et al., *Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the Walters Art Gallery*, 3 vols. (Baltimore: Walters Art Gallery/Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 3:455–459, no. 285.

36 Durrieu owned the Gruuthuuse Hours from at least 1913, since he lent it to the Ghent exhibition (April 26 to November 3, 1913) and insured it for 18,000 francs. On this, see Paris, Institut de France, notebook, MS 5726-5. In 1917, Louis de Farcy mentioned Durrieu's daughter's needlework. On this, see Paris, Institut de France, Correspondence 5722 A–H, 178.

37 *Manuscrits sur vélin*, no. 23, pp. 36–37, pl. VIII; Olschki, "Quelques manuscrits," 15–17.

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Master of Edward IV.[38] Purchased by Olschki shortly before he offered it to Durrieu, it shows the contemporary enthusiasm for Flemish and Ghent-Bruges manuscripts, which were regularly offered for sale.[39] For instance, in 1912, Ludwig Rosenthal offered six "superb" fifteenth-century Flemish Books of Hours in his small catalogue.[40] In addition to Durrieu's known interest in the Ghent-Bruges school, Olschki, who also emphasized the marginal decoration in his letter, may also have offered him this manuscript because of its beautifully embroidered binding.[41] With a third offer, a Book of Hours (use of Rouen) (unlocated), priced at 12,000 francs with special price of 9,000, Olschki encouraged Durrieu's research on French sixteenth-century book illumination. The style of the miniatures reproduced indicates that it was done most probably by Master Ango.[42]

Olschki was not the only dealer to offer works of art to Durrieu: in 1919, Martin Namias wrote to him about a painting probably painted by Parmigianino and in 1922 Ulrico Hoepli brought another grisaille Book of Hours to his attention.[43] Sometimes, the proposals were not so direct and show how thin the division between collector and scholar was.

From Collector to Scholar and Vice Versa

On March 19, 1913, Morton Bernath in Leipzig reported the sale by Hans Boerner of a French Book of Hours to Durrieu and attached two photographs.[44] The tone of the letter indicates a personal relationship between the scholar and the young art historian.

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38 On this, see Walters MS W.435, Book of Hours, www.thedigitalwalters.org/Data/WaltersManuscripts/html/W435/description.html, accessed May 15, 2023; Randall et al., *Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts*, 2:447–55, no. 284; Wieck, *Time Sanctified*, 132–33, 217.

39 On Olschki's card number (31457) used between 1908–1910, see Botana, "Card Index," 162.

40 *Bibliotheca liturgica Pars. I*, cat. 150 (Munich: Ludwig Rosenthal's Antiquariat, 1912), 25–26.

41 At the time of this transaction, the artists of these manuscripts had not been identified. In the following years, their work was identified. In 1913, it was mainly Friedrich Winkler who characterized the style of an artist and definitively named him the Master of the Dresden Prayer Book, according to the manuscript he illustrated that was then in the Dresden Saxon State and University Library (MS A.311). Considered today as one of the most important Flemish miniaturists, this master was active from 1460 to 1515 in Bruges, Amiens, and for clients in Hainaut. He collaborated with many other illuminators and new works are still assigned to him. Although the manuscript proposed by Olschki may not have been decorated by the Master of the Dresden Prayer Book, it was produced in his circle and follows the codes of the Ghent-Bruges school with its large borders combining objects and figures with naturalistic flowers.

42 It is not in Myra D. Orth, *Renaissance Manuscripts: The Sixteenth Century* (London: Harvey Miller, 2015).

43 Letter from Martin Namias to Durrieu dated February 4, 1919, Paris, Institut de France, Correspondence 5723 I–M, 143; letter from Ulrich Hoepli to Durrieu dated July 14, 1922, Paris, Institut de France, Correspondence 5722 A–H, 256.

44 Letter form Morton Bernath to Durrieu dated March 19, 1913, Paris, Institut de France, Correspondance 5722 A–H, 345. On Boerner, see Georg Jäger and Reinhard Wittmann, "Der Antiquariatsbuchhandel," in *Geschichte des deutschen Buchhandels im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. Ernst Fischer, 3 vols. (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010–2020), 1:250.

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Bernath had obviously already met Durrieu's wife and daughter, as he mentioned the latter's interest in music history.[45] Bernath likely met Durrieu when he was working on Leipzig's library holdings for his dissertation, in which he mentioned a manuscript of Valerius Maximus, attributed to the Master of the Golden Fleece, discovered by Durrieu in 1903.[46] The manuscript briefly mentioned in Bernath's letter appeared in Boerner's catalogue, with a complete record and photographs.[47] It was a Book of Hours with full-page miniatures probably illuminated by the workshop of the Master of Rohan; I propose to name this manuscript the Thouroulde Hours (after the Rouen family it belonged to). It is no surprise that it was brought to Durrieu's attention, as he had published a facsimile of Martin Le Roy's Hours in 1912 for the Société française de reproductions des manuscrits à peintures. The miniatures of that manuscript were attributed to the Rohan Master.[48] Durrieu reconstructed and extended the Rohan Master's corpus and proposed identifying him as an illuminator from the Angevin Lescuier family.[49] The creativity of the Rohan Master was already well-known and had been praised by Emile Mâle in 1904.[50] Boerner had advertised the Thouroulde Book of Hours in 1912, but he did not establish a link with the Rohan group.[51] In 1913, Boerner was aware of Durrieu's

45 In 1912, aged twenty-six, Bernath completed a thesis entitled "Studien über die Miniaturhandschriften der Leipziger Stadtbibliothek" at the University of Fribourg (Switzerland). In the following years, he travelled to the United States, then launched a journal, *Archiv für Kunstgeschichte* in Leipzig, which was stopped by the war. He published *Die Malerei des Mittelalters* (Leipzig: Alfred Kröner, 1916), as well as several articles in well-known art history journals. In the 1920s, he worked in the art trade in Stuttgart, but had to stop this activity in 1933, because he was a Jew. See Anja Heuss, "Morton Bernath: Ein Kunsthistoriker wird Kunsthandler," in *Ausgrenzung, Raub, Vernichtung: NS-Akteure und Volksgemeinschaft gegen die Juden in Württemberg und Hohenzollern 1933 bis 1945*, ed. Heinz Högerle et al. (Stuttgart: Landeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2019), 407–14.

46 Paul Durrieu, *L'histoire du bon roi Alexandre, manuscrit à miniatures de la collection Dutuit* (Paris: Librairie de l'art ancien et moderne, 1903); Morton H. Bernath, "Notice sur quelques beaux manuscrits à peintures conservés en Allemagne," *Bulletin de la Société française de reproductions de manuscrits à peinture* 2 (1912): 108–14.

47 *Gotische Miniaturmalerei*, cat. 25 (Leipzig: Boerner, 1913), no. 9, pp. 15–17, Ill. X.

48 Paul Durrieu, *Les Heures à l'usage d'Angers, de la collection Martin Le Roy, reproduction des plus belles miniatures du XVe siècle, accompagnée d'une notice* (Paris: Société française de reproduction des manuscrits à peintures, 1912). Durrieu saw this manuscript during a trip to Strasburg with Delisle for the Hamilton sale. He suggested that this item's decoration was similar to the Grandes Heures de Rohan (BnF, Lat. 9471). On this, see "Notes sur quelques manuscrits précieux de la collection Hamilton, vendus à Londres au mois de mai 1889," *Bulletin de la Société nationale des antiquaires de France* [8] (1889): 160.

49 Paul Durrieu, "Le maître des 'Grandes Heures de Rohan' et les Lescuier d'Angers," *Revue de l'art ancien et moderne* 32 (1912): 161–83.

50 Émile Mâle, "La miniature à l'exposition des primitifs français," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 32.2 (July 1904): 52–53.

51 The Book of Hours mentioned was dismembered. On this, see *Manuscripte und Miniaturen des XII. bis XVI. Jahrhunderts, Handzeichnungen des XV. bis XVII. Jahrhunderts*, November 28, 1912 (Leipzig: Boerner, 1912) lot 7, pp. 6–7. I could not find the buyer and thank Carlo Schmid (C. G. Boerner) for checking their remaining archives. The Thouroulde Hours manuscript was

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1912 publications, which surely allowed him to appraise the manuscript at 7,500 marks (equating to 6,080 francs).[52]

Through his network, Durrieu was informed of manuscripts about to be on the market in advance, as an expert and a potential client. His friend Jacques Rosenthal probably brought a Book of Hours (Cologne, Renate König Collection, MS 5) priced at 3,500 marks to his attention.[53] Durrieu had met Jacques in 1878, when the dealer was training in Paris under the guidance of Delisle.[54] Martin Breslauer had also most likely met Durrieu while training with the antiquarian Dorbon in Paris.[55]

As a major connoisseur, dealers often consulted Durrieu, and not necessarily as a potential buyer. In February 1913, as Breslauer was preparing his next catalogue, he proposed to send Durrieu photographs and a manuscript he had mentioned to him a few months earlier in Paris.[56] This manuscript was the Da Costa family's Book of Hours (KBR, MS IV 1260).[57] This important manuscript was described by Breslauer, who mentioned several famous painters from the Ghent-Bruges school, although he could not assign it with certainty.[58] The purpose of Breslauer's letter was likely not commercial, as the price, which was not mentioned in the catalogue, was certainly too high for Durrieu. Indeed, the value of manuscripts illuminated by Bening had skyrocketed: in 1910,

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dismembered after 1925. It was still complete in *Manuscrits avec miniatures…provenant du cabinet d'un amateur, vente par Jules Meynial*, November 30, 1925 (Paris: Librairie Jules Meynial, 1925), lot 71, p. 14, the manuscript was dismantled before 1937; see *Catalogue de dessins anciens… enluminures du XVIe siècle, composant la collection d'un amateur*, February 22, 1937 (Paris: Drouot, 1937), lots 36–52. Several leaves are in private collections, one leaf was acquired in 1964 by the Nationalmuseum in Stockholm (NM B 1906), other folios are on the art market.

52 *Historical Statistics of Switzerland*, 837.

53 *Auswahl seltener und werthvoller Bücher Bildhandschriften, Inkunabeln und Autografen*, cat. 36 (Munich: Jacques Rosenthal, 1905), no. 248a, p. 60. On the links between France and Flanders through travelling artists, see Paul Durrieu, "Jacques Coene, peintre de Bruges établi à Paris sous le règne de Charles VI 1398–1404," in *Les Arts anciens de Flandre*, 7 vols. (Brussels: Verbeke, 1906), 2/1:17; Durrieu, *Miniaturistes franco-flamands*, 10. Durrieu attributed it to the Boucicaut Master, nowadays, the manuscript is assigned to the Mazarine Master.

54 Elisabeth Angermair et al., *Die Rosenthals. Der Aufstieg einer jüdischen Antiquarsfamilie zu Weltruhm* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2002), 94.

55 Jäger and Wittmann, "Antiquariatsbuchhandel," 254; Ernst Fischer, *Verleger, Buchhändler und Antiquare aus Deutschland und Österreich in der Emigration nach 1933: ein biographisches Handbuch* (Stuttgart: Verband Deutscher Antiquare, 2011), 39. On Breslauer, see Angéline Rais, "Trading Medieval Manuscripts in Berlin: Martin Breslauer, c. 1900–1945," https://blog.sbb.berlin/trading-medieval-manuscripts-in-berlin-martin-breslauer-c-1900-1945/, accessed May 15, 2023.

56 Letter form Martin Breslauer to Durrieu dated February 6, 1913, Paris, Institut de France, Correspondance 5722 A–H, 62.

57 Bodo Brinkmann, *Die flämische Buchmalerei am Ende des Burgunderreichs der Meister des Dresdener Gebetbuchs und die Miniaturisten seiner Zeit*, 2 vols. (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997), 1:335–41, 384 and 2:ill. 61–62, fig. 354–65. The artists involved were the Master of the Dresden Prayer Book, the Wodhull-Haberton Master, and the Edwards Master.

58 *Das schöne Buch im Wandel der Zeit, nebst Anhang: Autographen*, cat. 22 (Berlin: Martin Breslauer, 1913), no. 1, pp. 1–2.

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another Da Costa Hours (PML, MS M.399) was sold to Morgan for $30,000![59] In this case, Breslauer required Durrieu's expertise.[60] This correspondence shows how close and intertwined the contacts between dealers and scholars were and how they shaped the values of illuminated manuscripts.

Conclusion

Through his expertise, Durrieu was both a client of bookdealers and a contributor to manuscripts' value. The development of the Flemish manuscript market shows how knowledge was closely interwoven between merchants and scholars and shaped the history of illumination by developing a new area of research. The field of manuscript collecting followed the progress of art history research. It is therefore clear that the permanent revision of the scale of values was driven by complex motivations, in which the progress of scholarly research and merchants' interests played key parts.[61]

59 Thanks to Roger Wieck for this information.

60 Durrieu also helped numerous local archivists and librarians. On this, see Roman, "Paul Durrieu," 144.

61 Francis Haskell, *Rediscoveries in Art: Some Aspects of Taste, Fashion and Collecting in England and France* (London: Phaidon, 1976).

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Part III

SCHOLARLY AND CREATIVE ENGAGEMENTS

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Chapter 22

SEYMOUR DE RICCI AND WILLIAM ROBERTS

RECORDERS AND ANALYSTS OF THE MARKET

NIGEL RAMSAY

THE LATE NINETEENTH and early twentieth centuries were a golden age for the freelance chroniclers and analysts of the European art world. There was even a living to be had from writing for the journals, reviews, magazines, and newspapers that then proliferated.[1] The two men who are the subject of the present chapter were particularly successful in making their mark in this world, but they may be said to represent merely the apex of a much larger realm of art critics, reviewers and historians. They owed their success to their ability to write in an informed way on a range of topics: each must have written more than one article every week, and each was able to offer a range of pertinent facts to back up his judgment.

Seymour de Ricci had formidable talents that ranged widely and, when he chose, he went deeply into a variety of cultural fields: bibliography, especially historical, epigraphy, numismatics, art history (of almost all periods) and more.[2] Today he is best known for his *Census of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the United States and Canada*, published in three awkwardly sized volumes between 1935 and 1940. It does not quite meet all the standards set by later catalogues of medieval manuscripts such as those by the late Neil Ker, but for details of provenances of manuscripts and, quite simply, for the sheer scale of its scope—about 15,000 manuscripts, described in 2,343 pages—it is an astonishing achievement.[3] Sadly he fell ill and died when barely sixty, when he had really

1 See for example Helene Roberts, "Exhibition and Review: The Periodical Press and the Victorian Art Exhibition System," in *The Victorian Periodical Press: Samplings and Soundings*, ed. Joanne Shattock and Michael Wolff (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1982), 79–107.

2 Accounts of de Ricci have been given by E. P. Goldschmidt, "Seymour de Ricci, 1881–1942," *The Library* 4th ser., 24 (1943–1944): 187–94; Jean Porcher, "À la Bibliothèque Nationale: Le legs Seymour de Ricci," *BEC* 105 (1944): 229–33; and Nigel Ramsay, "Seymour de Ricci (1881–1942)," in *ODNB*.

3 For instance, the *Census* does not generally include the incipits (opening words) of texts. See Nigel Ramsay, "Towards a Universal Catalogue of Early Manuscripts: Seymour de Ricci's Census of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the United States and Canada," *Manuscript Studies* 1 (2016): 71–89.

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only scratched the surface of the task of preparing the *Census*'s projected successor, an equivalent compact census for Great Britain![4]

William Roberts is far less well known (see Figure 1.1).[5] An examination of his lifetime of bibliographic and journalistic activities will, however, show that these offer a useful parallel or foil to set beside those of de Ricci. Roberts was born in in 1862 and died in 1940; he did not go to university, his formal education having concluded with his time at Daniel's School at Madron, in Cornwall. He began writing about rare books and book-collecting in the 1880s, when he was in his twenties, profiting from the intense popularity that book-collecting was then enjoying. He cut his teeth as a reporter of book-world news when he held the post of editor of *The Bookworm*, a book-collectors' monthly magazine or review, from about 1889 until 1894, when its seventh and final volume was completed. He wrote several notes on general book-related news for every issue; more importantly, he also raised its scholarly standards, both by writing articles that had some original value (such as a series of accounts of contemporary collectors) and by attracting or commissioning such articles from others. It was here, for instance, in 1891, that Edward Burbidge first set out in a general way how he had been able to reconstruct the dispersed library of Archbishop Cranmer.[6]

Roberts's own articles, of which the longer and more significant ones were signed, became more detailed and filled with precise information of a sort that would appeal to readers with a bibliographic interest. Over time, his accounts of collectors also had more details of their printed books and, sometimes, manuscripts, and, increasingly, more about their medieval manuscripts. His portraits of the collectors Alfred Henry Huth and Henry Hucks Gibbs (later Lord Aldenham) are two cases in point.[7]

As medieval manuscripts rose in price, it must have become easier to justify giving more space to them. Virtually no mention was made of medieval manuscripts in the *Bookworm* in 1888 or 1889, but in 1892 Roberts wrote five pieces about them, one being a long review of J. H. Middleton's *Illuminated Manuscripts in Classical and Medieval Times*, and another a four-page article about three illuminated leaves that were in the Magniac sale at Christie's.[8] In 1892 and over the next two years he reported on the inauguration and first few meetings of the Bibliographical Society.[9]

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4 See Joan Gibbs, "Seymour de Ricci's 'Bibliotheca Britannica Manuscripta,'" in *Calligraphy and Palaeography: Essays Presented to Alfred Fairbank*, ed. A. S. Osley (London: Faber & Faber, 1965), 81–91.

5 A fulsome obituary was published in *The Times*, April 11, 1940, 8, and a short editorial note in *Notes & Queries* 178 (1940): 288. Use has also been made in this article of his entry in *Who Was Who, III: 1929–40* (London: Black, 1941), 1152.

6 E. Burbidge, "Archbishop Cranmer's Library and its Recovery," *The Bookworm* [4] (1890–1891): 209–14; supplemented by Burbidge at 335–36.

7 "Bookworms of Yesterday and To-day: Mr A. H. Huth," *The Bookworm* [3] (1889–1890): 225–31 (with anon. supplementary note at 327–28), and, in the same series, "Mr Henry Hucks Gibbs, MP," *The Bookworm* [4] (1890–1891): 193–97.

8 "Illuminated MSS" and "Illuminated MSS in the Market," *The Bookworm* [5] (1892): 289–96, 337–40. Both are unsigned but will have been written by Roberts in his editorial capacity.

9 His reports begin with one on its foundation on July 15, 1892, followed by an account of W. A. Copinger's inaugural address as its president: *The Bookworm* [5] (1892): 285–86, and [6] (1893): 57–59.

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One has the sense that he was keen to make *The Bookworm* a "serious" bibliographic review; its cessation after the seventh year suggests that he found it impossible to carry enough readers with him.

In the 1890s Roberts also began writing about the world of paintings—the selling of paintings in the salerooms, and especially at Christie's—and the more specialized field of painters and engravers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Like de Ricci, he was what we might call a freelance, supporting himself by journalism and cataloguing as well as writing books about artists and book-collecting. He must have had some private means, however. Writing about the sale of the painter George Romney's library as part of the Romney sale at Christie's on May 24, 1894, Roberts commented that "Many of the books were presentation copies from the authors to the artist. I purchased several at the sale."[10] Like most freelances, Roberts depended on having one or two influential patrons or supporters: in his case, this seems principally to have been Thomas Humphry Ward.[11] Ward is today best known for having been married to the novelist who always called herself Mrs Humphry Ward, but he was a well-known and influential writer in his day, being the chief art critic for *The Times* from about Christmas 1880. He and Roberts collaborated on two books—a two-volume study of the eighteenth-century painter George Romney, in 1904, and a catalogue of the paintings belonging to J. Pierpont Morgan, in 1907. Their friendship must, I think, have gone back to at least 1895, when Roberts began as *The Times*'s saleroom correspondent. Roberts was not the paper's first chronicler of the saleroom, for he was preceded in such a post by George Redford, but he certainly made a great success of the role, and continued in it until the early 1930s.

Roberts lacked the social connections and financial clout of de Ricci, and indeed cannot be compared with him in scholarly or intellectual terms. He was a contributor to both literary and art journals and reviews, like the *Magazine of Art* and *Notes & Queries*, rather than to the scholarly journals where de Ricci featured so often. Gradually, however, he built up a reputation as an accurate and well-informed writer, and from 1903 he was a regular contributor to *The Connoisseur* (an art magazine that was not quite on the same scholarly level as, say, *The Burlington Magazine*, although each had the merit of paying its contributors). In 1912 he contributed eight entries to the *Supplement* to the *Dictionary of National Biography*, including the art dealers Sir William Agnew, Martin Colnaghi, and Sir Joseph Duveen.

Roberts's position was enhanced by three particular strengths. Firstly, his numerous studies of eighteenth-century artists and writings on their works gave him a general credibility as an authority on paintings and their attributions and authenticity, so that he could plausibly pose as an all-round expert on older paintings, including Old Masters. His position with *The Times* reinforced that credibility, even though his saleroom reports were unsigned, like all its employees' articles. *The Times* was the leading newspaper of record at that time, and only a few other papers, such as the *Daily Telegraph*

10 "George Romney," *Notes & Queries*, Ser. 9, 5 (1900): 426.

11 See John Sutherland, "Ward [née Arnold], Mary Augusta [known as Mrs Humphry Ward] (1851–1920)," in *ODNB*.

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and *Illustrated London News*, then had a saleroom correspondent who reported on a regular, weekly if not daily, basis. Roberts's opposite number at the *Telegraph* was A. C. R. Carter, a rather more flamboyant character, but essentially another freelance writer on art and the salerooms. Carter was best known as the editor and compiler of a well-known reference work, *The Year's Art* (1894 to 1952), but he also wrote on art and on literary topics for the *Telegraph* for half a century, as well as contributing to *Apollo*, *The Burlington Magazine*, and the *Studio*.[12]

A further string to Roberts's bow was that early in his career he built up a very large collection of auction catalogues, for sales of both books and paintings. As early as 1900 he was able to say that he had "some" that were not to be found in the British Museum.[13] Like de Ricci, Roberts came to use his collection to great effect, to assess the way in which prices were changing for particular books and specific works of art and, more generally, to chart the history of paintings in the salerooms over the previous two centuries. When he reported for *The Times* on a sale of paintings, he was frequently able to add usefully to what the auctioneer had written about the principal lots' provenances and the prices for which they had been sold in earlier auctions.

Roberts made sure that he enjoyed close relations with Christie's, which at that time was the leading English saleroom for the more important paintings, and especially Old Masters. In 1897 he published a two-volume history of Christie's and the principal sales that it had held. This was accomplished with the aid of many months' study of the firm's own set of catalogues, supplemented occasionally by his own collection—from which he gave some catalogues to Christie's to make good its gaps.[14] It is evident from his saleroom reports that he was at particular pains to write up the sales held by Christie's: it was evidently a two-way relationship. If he saw the firm as failing in its responsibilities, however, he was ready to be openly and bruisingly critical, as over its sale in June 1895 of the Henry Doetsch collection, where he commented on the catalogue's "superfluous preface and pedigrees more or less imaginary;" "the annals of picture sales cannot furnish a fiasco so deservedly complete as that which attended this sale."[15]

12 *Who Was Who,* V: 1951–60 (London: Black, 1961), 188.

13 "Catalogues of English Book Sales," *Notes & Queries*, Ser. 9, 5 (1900): 429–31 and 490–92, and 6 (1900): 22–24, 83–85 and 142–44; also separately printed as *Catalogues of English Book Sales* ([London]: 1900), in an edition of twenty-four copies. The list is arranged alphabetically, by name of book-owner.

14 *Memorials of Christie's: A Record of Art Sales from 1766 to 1896*, 2 vols. (London: Bell & Sons, 1897).

15 William Roberts, "The Picture Sales of 1895," *The Nineteenth Century* 38 (1895): 466–73. For further comment on this sale see Gerald Reitlinger, *The Economics of Taste: The Rise and Fall of Picture Prices, 1760–1960*, 3 vols. (London: Barrie & Rockliff, 1961–1970), 1:199–200; and cf. A. C. R. Carter, *Let Me Tell You* (London: Hutchinson, 1940), 51–52.

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Roberts and de Ricci Compared

It should be clear from this that de Ricci and Roberts had a great deal in common. As professional or full-time freelance writers in the book and art worlds they had contemporaries who followed very similar paths. George C. Williamson, for instance, followed a career trajectory that was extremely close to those of both men. De Ricci and Roberts were exceptional, however, in their use and even, one might say, their dependence, on older saleroom catalogues. Beginning early in his life, de Ricci formed a collection which came to number 80,000 or more. He was always looking out for copies of catalogues that were annotated with prices and the names of buyers. His daughter Jacqueline once told me that he would readily buy a whole box of catalogues if it contained even just one or two that were usefully annotated in that way. He bequeathed his entire collection to the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris and it is now almost all consultable there today, the only exceptions being some hundreds that have been given away by exchange, as duplicates.[16]

Roberts disposed of some of his catalogues, for book sales, to de Ricci, in about the early 1930s, and so these too are now in the Bibliothèque nationale. His bound-up set of catalogues of sales of paintings was sold in the auction of his library held shortly after his death by Sotheby's, on July 22–23, 1940, as part of lot 116, described as "a very fine and extensive collection of sale catalogues of Paintings etc., some of great rarity, especially English, French and American Sales, dating from the 18th century to the present day, many bound up in cloth according to year (a stack)." The purchaser, for £54, was Zwemmer, perhaps acting for the dealer-collector Martin B. Asscher, from whom they subsequently passed to the art historian E. K. (later Sir Ellis) Waterhouse; certainly, a 144-volume set (comprising 5,150 catalogues) which had been part of this lot was acquired by Waterhouse and later came from him to the Paul Mellon Centre, London.[17] From these, it is easy to see what use Roberts made of his catalogues: like all his books, they were liable to be repositories for notes, some made many years afterwards, newspaper cuttings, and other clippings and so forth, as well as letters received in connexion with sales.[18]

For de Ricci, sale catalogues served in a slightly different way. They were to be used to the full, indeed, filleted or gutted for their information; but after they had been read and details had been extracted of what they had to offer by way of information, they could be put aside. For de Ricci, what mattered most was his files of notes derived *from* the catalogues, rather than the catalogues themselves.[19] If one looks at his collection of

16 For instance, a few dozen are in the Huntington Library, San Marino.

17 I am extremely grateful to the Library staff of the Paul Mellon Centre, Bedford Square, London, for letting me consult this set of bound-up books and detached papers. Most of the catalogues are of sales by Christie's.

18 *Catalogue of Printed Books…Which will be Sold by Auction…22nd of July, 1940* (London: Sotheby & Co. 1940), title page: "very many of the Books contain Newspaper Cuttings, Notes or Reproductions."

19 Goldschmidt, "Seymour de Ricci," 192–93.

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sale catalogues in the Bibliothèque nationale, it is only comparatively rarely that one finds his own handwriting in them, other than perhaps the prices or names of buyers.[20] (His practice was different where published catalogues of collections were concerned: these he would annotate liberally.) Should it be said that de Ricci was more disciplined in his use of sale catalogues?

De Ricci and Roberts used the information that they derived from sale catalogues in rather varying ways. For de Ricci, the provenance information that he extracted from them was material to be brought to bear in tracing the history of specific printed books and manuscripts through the salerooms. As he observed in the *Census of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the United States and Canada*, every medieval manuscript in North America had come from Europe and so, by definition, was likely to be traceable in the sales records of Europe. Consequently, if he inspected every manuscript *in situ* in the United States and Canada and made careful notes of all the inscriptions, coats of arms, dealers' and auctioneers' marks and numbers, and all else that had been added to its pages and binding, he then "only" had to marry this up with what he had extracted from his and other sets of sale catalogues and dealers' catalogues to arrive at a re-created but highly reliable hypothetical or reconstructed history of each such volume.

This was the de Ricci method, it might be said, and to a greater or lesser extent he deployed it in much of his work, throughout his life: it was the perfect way, as he saw it, to catalogue printed books and manuscripts at long range. We see it in his early works, such as his censuses of Caxton's printings (1908) and Gutenberg's Mainz Bibles and other works (1911), and, to a considerable extent, in his ever-useful Sandars Lectures of 1929, *English Collectors of Books & Manuscripts (1530–1930) and their Marks of Ownership*.[21] This last is exactly what it professes to be: a survey of individual collectors and how they had their books bound or otherwise indicated their ownership, and the subsequent fate of each collection. De Ricci hardly steps back to consider broader changes in taste or fashion or in the strength or otherwise of the market: that was not his intention.

Roberts was not such a born cataloguer of books, even if he was a natural annotator. He was, however, well able to step aside from reporting on individual sales to take a wider look at the market. For *The Times* he would often note the prices that paintings had fetched in the past, as well as who had owned them—information that was not necessarily given in the sale-catalogue. He was also able to see in prices some indication of how the market was moving; as he once wrote, nothing shows changes in taste so clearly as the prices achieved by modern art, contemporary and not-quite-contemporary. That led him to produce essays, replete with tables of prices, which he published year by year on each preceding season's sales, in a succession of art-world annuals and journals, such as the *Magazine of Art* and, later, *The Connoisseur*. It is tempting to see this approach to the art market as having been shaped by his experience of watching trends in prices in

20 His practice did perhaps change in the last few years of his life, when he took to entering the later owners of manuscripts that might feature in his projected Census of medieval and Renaissance manuscripts in British libraries, known by its working title as Bibliotheca Britannica Manuscripta.

21 Seymour de Ricci, *English Collectors of Books & Manuscripts (1530–1930) and their Marks of Ownership* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1930).

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the book market: the sums paid in the saleroom for books are of course far easier to compare than those paid for paintings, but many of the same basic factors are always at work. In 1901 Roberts published an account of "The Present Rage for Mezzotints" in which he included two tables of prices. This exemplified his approach admirably and the subject-matter could be said to represent a halfway house between the two markets: that for old, rare, and private-press books and that for Old Master, British, and Modern paintings.[22]

Book-Collecting in the 1890s and Subsequent Decades

Roberts's approach to the market and its prices seems to have been novel. He brought to the art world the price-watching of the book world. Public interest in particular sales of works of art and antiquarian books and early manuscripts had long been enormous, if the sale was seen as significant and high prices were achieved. Such, for instance, were the Strawberry Hill sale, of Horace Walpole's collection, in 1842, the sale of Ralph Bernal's collection of works of art etc. in 1865, and the Hamilton Palace sales, which included many of the printed books and manuscripts collected by William Beckford, in 1882. Many newspaper columns were filled with details of the prices fetched by individual lots in these and other high-profile sales. At a less newsworthy level, sales of manuscripts and, to some extent, antiquarian books, commonly featured in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for as long as this monthly remained a significant repository of antiquarian, literary and social news, until about the 1860s. The scholarly world naturally took a keen interest in the movement of manuscripts and rare books, and after the *Gentleman's Magazine* had abandoned that element of its coverage, such periodicals as *The Athenæum* made some effort to offer similar reports.

Paintings formed part of a separate world, however: it was a newer, more popular world. Writing in 1907, Humphry Ward suggested that it had received a crucial impetus when the Royal Academy held the first of its exhibitions of Old Master paintings, in 1870.[23] Certainly, the interest in sales of Old Masters grew rapidly in the late nineteenth century, and the appointment of George Redford as Saleroom Correspondent of *The Times* was one manifestation of that. In 1888 he published a two-volume treatment of *Art Sales*. The first volume offers accounts of major sales of paintings and works of art, with many examples of prices realized, while the second is a minutely detailed record of individual paintings' prices, as reached in the salerooms.[24] However, it does not attempt to offer any analysis or discussion of the market or changing fashions.

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22 "The Present Rage for Mezzotints," *The Nineteenth Century* 50 (1901): 257–64.

23 T. H. Ward, introduction to William Roberts, *Pictures in the Collection of J. Pierpont Morgan, at Prince's Gate & Dover House, London: English School* (London: privately printed, 1907).

24 George Redford, *Art Sales: A History of Sales of Pictures and other Works of Art, … Including the Purchases and Prices of Pictures for the National Gallery*, 2 vols. (London: Bradbury, Agnew & Co., 1888). "Issued to Subscribers Only, at Five Guineas." The notices of sales reprinted from *The Times*, from 1859 to 1888, in vol. 1:157–453, are doubtless all by Redford.

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The antiquarian book market offered scope for an alternative approach to the question of prices and their increase or decrease: clearly, it was, in principle, reasonable to compare the differing prices fetched by copies of the same edition of the same book at public auctions. A flurry of publications about the "rare" or antiquarian book market came out in the 1890s, Roberts himself putting together a book called *Rare Books and their Prices: With Chapters on Pictures, Pottery, Porcelain and Postage Stamps* (1895), based largely on articles which he had published in a couple of literary reviews.[25] This was a fairly slight work and comprised a set of discursive accounts of various sales and comments on changing fashions in collecting. Soon, if not already, however, he must have realized that the study of book prices on a more systematic basis had a value of its own. Gustave Brunet had shown the way in his work on the French book and art markets, *Curiosités bibliographiques et artistiques: livres, manuscrits et gravures qui, en vente publique, ont dépassé le prix de mille francs; tableaux payés plus de cinquante mille francs* (1867).

In England, Brunet had an imitator for the book market from 1888 onwards, in the form of *Book-Prices Current: A Record of the Prices at Which Books have been Sold at Auction*, listing what were deemed collectible books, from the 1886–1887 season onwards. This was put out by *The Bookworm*'s publisher, Elliot Stock, and, more successful than *The Bookworm*, established itself as an annual, sold by subscription; it continued to be published until 1948. Over the four years 1896 to 1899 it had a rival in the form of the slightly more ambitious series of four substantial annuals edited by "Temple Scott" on *Book Sales of 1895*. Scott's arrangement was sale-by-sale, each sale having an introductory paragraph; after the first year, he gave buyers' names as well as the prices fetched, and he also added a good many useful notes on individual books. In the fourth volume he provided tables of prices fetched by different publications of Robert Louis Stevenson and Kipling and the productions of the Kelmscott Press over each of the four years. Scott's total lists of books were greater than those of *Book-Prices Current*: 5,695 entries in the first volume, as many as 6,883 in the second, 5,673 in the third and a still considerable 3,939 in the fourth.[26] The series was then terminated: its appeal to the dealers and collectors at whom it was aimed cannot have been sufficiently wide to make it a profitable venture.

A successor nevertheless soon sprang up, in the form of *Book-Auction Records*: this was first published in 1903, for the 1902–1903 season, and continued to be published to 1997.[27] Neither *Book-Prices* nor *Book-Auction Records* included more than a tiny number

25 See "Rare Books and their Prices," *The Nineteenth Century* 33 (1893): 952–65; "The First Edition Mania," *Fortnightly Review*, old ser. 61 (=new ser. 55) (1894): 347–54; and cf. "Classic–Collecting. A Comparative View, 1775–1893," *The Bookworm* [7] (1894): 25–29 (on the Greek and Roman classics).

26 Temple Scott (i.e., J. H. Isaacs), *Book Sales of 1895* (London: Cockram, 1896); and similarly titled volumes for 1896, 1897 and 1897–1898, the last being published in London by George Bell & Sons and in New York by Macmillan, 1899.

27 The first volume was originally issued as *Sale Records*; it was then republished, for a slightly different time-period (October to September) as *Book-Auction Records*. Quarterly and then annually, it continued to be produced until vol. 95 (1997).

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of manuscripts, however. Roberts wanted to do something slightly more ambitious. As early as 1897, in his *Memorials of Christie's*, he wrote that his aim was not to rival or duplicate Redford's work; rather, he looked back to, and to some extent modelled his *Memorials* on, Charles Blanc's two-volume book *Trésor de la curiosité, tiré des catalogues de vente* (1857–1858).[28] That was for paintings alone, however. Roberts must have wanted to move back into the world of books. He achieved this in 1918.

Roberts's "Notes on Sales" in the *Times Literary Supplement*, 1918 to 1931

In addition to his reporting on sales of works of art for *The Times*, from 1918 until 1931 Roberts was also the saleroom correspondent for its weekly literary review, the *Times Literary Supplement*. This proved to be the ideal outlet for his bibliographic interests, and it was in this capacity that he may be said to have produced his best work. He was by no means limited to writing about book-sales: it is clear that he was given a free hand to tackle anything that he deemed relevant to the readers' interests. In different weeks he wrote reviews of books and catalogues that were of more-or-less strictly bibliographic interest, surveys of auctions and book-dealers' catalogues, reviews of exhibitions, and much that fell into no clear category. To take as a sample just a few of his articles that were published in 1925, he covered sales of literary portraits over the previous year, the publication of an Index Bibliographicus (of periodicals) by the League of Nations, the sale of books and typescripts from the library of Joseph Conrad, the sale—or rather, failure to sell—of the Cardigan manuscript of Chaucer's poems (now Austin, University of Texas, Harry Ransom Center, HRC MS 143), the sale by Hoepli in Florence of part of the stock of printed books and manuscripts of the scholar-dealer Tammaro De Marinis, the publication in English of the works of Hans Christian Andersen, sixteenth-century English editions of the works of Honoré d'Urfé and the cuttings from medieval manuscripts that had been collected by William Young Ottley.[29]

Often, Roberts explored sidelines and gave details that went far beyond what a mere reading of the book under review would have yielded. For instance, it is clear from his notes on an exhibition in Paris by Messrs Maggs of printed works by the French poet Ronsard that he was in close touch with de Ricci, who had overseen this show and must have given him background information; likewise his notes on the sale of historic books from the library of the Royal Society included discussion of the Society's disposal to Quaritch in 1892 of books that had once belonged to the Nuremberg humanist Willibald Pirckheimer.[30]

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28 Charles Blanc, *Trésor de la curiosité, tiré des catalogues de vente*, 2 vols. (Paris: Renouard, 1857–1858).

29 *TLS*, January 15, 1925, 44; June 4, 1925, 388; February 26, 1925, 144; March 19, 1925, 207 (and cf. April 16, 1925, 272 for the Chaucer being unsold at £2,700); May 7, 1925, 320; February 5, 1925, 92; June 25, 1925, 436; and November 5, 1925, 724.

30 *TLS*, March 12, 1925, 176, (April 30, 1925), 304 (and cf. 346 for a report on prices fetched at the sale on May 4).

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Roberts also felt freer to introduce a more personal note than he would ever have done in *The Times* itself—or than one can imagine de Ricci ever doing in any of his discussions of sales. Thus, when reviewing the nine-hundredth catalogue of the dealer James Tregaskis, he remarked on how the firm had been founded by Mrs Mary Bennett (later Mrs Tregaskis), one of the first women booksellers to attend auctions in London (creating "almost as much sensation in bookselling circles at the time as women auctioneers [had] caused on entering the rostrum during the Great War"), and how "Mrs Bennett found an excellent friend and customer in Mr Yates Thompson, who caused many pleasant things to be said of her pluck and business abilities in the *Pall Mall Gazette*."[31]

With time, Roberts became more adventurous, readier to look at the market as a whole. Late in 1919 he published a survey of "Art and Book Sales During and After the War," in a serious literary and political journal, *The National Review*.[32] Here, for perhaps the first time, he brought together his two main fields of interest, paintings and books, and looked at their markets over the five years from 1914 to 1919, in France, the US and, just a very little, Germany. Manuscripts, medieval and later, feature here, too. There were sales of manuscripts from the collection of Sir Thomas Phillipps in these years, as well as of the Alfred Morrison collection of autograph letters and historical documents. In looking at the 1918–1919 season and its remarkable strength, Roberts commented that "It is revealing no secret in stating that Messrs. Christie's season was ended with the biggest turnover in the history of the firm," while he thought that "that of Messrs. Sotheby's must be well above the average." At Sotheby's the first two portions of the stock of W. J. Leighton the bookseller fetched £17,096, a further selection from the Phillipps library fetched £9,207, while twenty-eight manuscripts and two printed books sold by Yates Thompson on June 3, 1919 realized £52,360 "in one short afternoon."[33] Roberts singled out from the Yates Thompson sale the Hours of Jeanne de Navarre, which Lord Ashburnham had bought for 70 guineas in 1847, and Yates Thompson had bought for about £500: it was now sold for £11,800, "by far the highest amount ever paid at auction in this country" for a manuscript.[34] The record remained unbroken until the sale of the Bedford Psalter for £33,000 ten years later, in July 1929.

The rise in prices of medieval manuscripts had perhaps rekindled Roberts's interest in the world of manuscript books. He was sufficiently struck by a "superb" manuscript of the *Roman de la Rose* (now Morgan Library, M.948), executed for François I of France ca. 1520, and with a full-page portrait-miniature of the king receiving the book from the scribe, which reached £2,100 in the sale of part of Lord Vernon's library, June 10, 1918, that he wrote a long letter to the *Times Literary Supplement* in which he established its saleroom history.[35]

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31 *TLS*, June 4, 1925, 388.

32 "Art and Book Sales During and After the War," *The National Review* 74 (1920): 375–87.

33 "Art and Book Sales," 378.

34 "Art and Book Sales," 383. The Hours are now BnF, NAL 3145.

35 "The Vernon MS of the 'Roman de la Rose,'" Letter, *TLS*, July 11, 1918, 325. Even by the then

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The Sale of Printed Books and Manuscripts to the United States of America

Given its importance in the book and art markets, it was perhaps inevitable that both de Ricci and Roberts were drawn to involvement with the US and its leading collectors and dealers. Each perhaps began his connexion with its collectors by preparing a catalogue for the most prominent collector of the day, J. Pierpont Morgan; but Morgan was based in London for much of the time in the early twentieth century, keeping part of his collection there until the repeal of US customs duties on works of art in 1909.[36] Both de Ricci and Roberts went to the US for what might be called professional reasons, Roberts as early as 1915,[37] possibly staying for a year or two; de Ricci first in 1918, but then more or less annually thereafter, for a few weeks or even months.[38]

De Ricci was a cosmopolitan figure in every way, of mixed Italian-Irish-English-French origins and upbringing, steeped in European culture of all centuries, and at home in half a dozen languages. He is unlikely to have seen any harm in the sale of English—or French, German, Italian or Hispanic—books or manuscripts to the US. He enjoyed close social relations with certain US dealers, such as A. S. W. Rosenbach, and temperamentally he may be guessed to have felt at home there. Roberts, by contrast, for all his love of French eighteenth-century history, books and works of art, was more the archetypal Englishman who felt that what had entered English collections ought to stay in English ownership: he clearly felt pangs of regret that so much was crossing the Atlantic, presumably never to return. On the other hand, like Bernard Berenson, Hofstede de Groot, and W. R. Valentiner, he was perfectly ready to act as one of the advisers of Joseph Widener in the formation of his important collection of paintings (now partly in the National Gallery of Art, Washington).[39]

Every painting is unique, and there have at all times been more objections to the export of oil paintings than to the export of printed books. It was in response to the

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standards of Sotheby's, the attention given to provenance in the Vernon sale catalogue was remarkably slight.

36 De Ricci produced three rather thin catalogues of collections of antiquities purchased *en bloc* by Morgan (*Germanic Antiquities* and *Merovingian Antiquities* (both published in Paris: Berger, 1910) and *Gallo-Roman Antiquities* (Paris: Berger, 1911)), as well as a substantial *Catalogue of Twenty Renaissance Tapestries from the J. P. Morgan Collection* (Paris: Renouard, 1913). Roberts's catalogue of *Pictures in the Collection of J. Pierpont Morgan* included Dutch, Italian, French and Spanish paintings.

37 He was in Philadelphia at the start of March 1915 when written to by James B. Townend, of *American Art News*. Paul Mellon Centre, Roberts Collection, letter inserted in Christie's sale catalogue of the Sheffield Portraits etc., December 11, 1909.

38 If Roberts was the author of the unsigned article "Book Collecting in America," published in *The Bookworm* [6] (1893): 71–78, then it might be inferred that he went there as early as 1892 or at least at the start of 1893, since this article gives the impression of being based on first-hand knowledge.

39 W. G. Constable, *Art Collecting in the United States of America: An Outline of a History* (London: Nelson, 1964), 119.

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outflow of artistic masterpieces that the National Art-Collections Fund was set up in 1903.[40] Manuscripts are in a different category of course, but here it may be noted that the sales of the Bridgewater Library and archives of the Earl of Ellesmere (1917), the Battle Abbey charters and archives (1923) and the vast archives of the Duke of Buckingham, of Stowe House (1921)—all bought by Henry Huntington, although the latter acquisition was made only in 1925—were followed by the passing of legislation that was specifically intended to check the removal from England of manorial documents (court rolls and also account rolls), on the basis that these might form part of the proof of title to real property.[41]

Roberts seems not to have been troubled by American purchases of medieval English manuscripts, but he did from time to time remark on the acquisition of English paintings by American collectors and occasionally he even commented—as if disapprovingly—on the presence of US and Continental dealers in the London salerooms.[42] As early as 1895, when writing about the sale of the Henry Doetsch collection, with its many over-restored and over-catalogued works, he remarked that "It is a relief to know that many of these pictures have gone to America."[43] Given that eighteenth-century English portraits were both at the height of collecting fashion as well as being one of his particular specialities, it was perhaps inevitable that he would find cause to lament the consequences of that fashionability, even as he seized the opportunity to profit from his expertise in such paintings.

Conclusion

Men like Roberts can easily be disparaged as mere amateurs who posed as professionals, commentators without real expertise, men who lacked the connoisseurship to distinguish the fake or restored work of art from the genuine, and were akin to literary hacks. Brian Allen once wrote of Roberts that he was ready to authenticate any painting for £5.[44]

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40 The National Art-Collections Fund added illuminated manuscripts to its remit within the next quarter of a century. In 1920 it gave £1,000 to the British Museum towards the cost of a twelfth-century illuminated manuscript of Bede's Life of St Cuthbert (BL, Add. MS 39943), and in 1929–1930 it helped the British Museum in the purchase of the Luttrell Psalter and made a crucial last-minute gift of £10,000 towards the cost of the Bedford Psalter. See D. S. MacColl ed., *Twenty-Five Years of the National Art-Collections Fund 1903–1928* (Glasgow: Glasgow University Press, 1928); and Chapter 27 in this volume.

41 See e. g. Roger Ellis, "The Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts: A Short History and Explanation," in *Manuscripts and Men: An Exhibition of Manuscripts, Portraits and Pictures, held at the National Portrait Gallery, London…1969* (London: HMSO, 1969), 1–36 at 20–21. The Law of Property legislation of 1922–1924 placed all manorial documents under the oversight of the Master of the Rolls, and thus of the Public Record Office.

42 For instance, in his article in *The Times*, November 1, 1919, headlined "Old Masters Bought by Americans. New York Dealers in London." This prompted letters from Robert Witt, vice-chairman of the National Art-Collections Fund, and others.

43 "The Picture Sales of 1895," *The Nineteenth Century* 38 (1895): 466–73.

44 Brian Allen, "Paul Mellon and Scholarship in the History of British Art," in *Paul Mellon's Legacy:*

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That is surely unfair. Roberts lived at a time when the reading public wanted something more than dealers could offer, by way of cataloguing and more general publication: there was a burgeoning demand for writings about the art of the past and for detailed reports of the contemporary art market, and only freelance writers like him could fill the gap. In England at least, the curatorial staff of art galleries and museum were generally discouraged from writing about the art market and, especially, the trade. The same was true of the leading libraries, headed by the British Museum: their more senior staff were expected to engage in "literary" activities (such as involvement in the Bibliographical Society) and to distance themselves from dealers. Nor were the curatorial staff of art galleries and museums numerous enough at this date to undertake the kind of writing that Roberts and his like produced, for instance about collectors and collections.

There are more positive things to be said about de Ricci and Roberts, too. In England and the US, both men developed a fresh line in their writings. Each man was highly capable, accurate, and reliable, and just as de Ricci achieved a near-miracle of compression in his cataloguing of medieval and Renaissance manuscripts, so too can Roberts be credited with raising the standard of writing about the art and rare books market to a new level. Each man, too, believed passionately in deploying all the resources that a deep and wide-ranging bibliographic expertise could bring to bear on the documentation of works of art of all types and periods. Sale catalogues offered the crucial underpinning for much of their work, but they were also awake to the possibilities offered by archival materials. Roberts, for instance, used the account books of the dealers Annoot and Gale (of Bond Street) to explore the prices paid for both paintings and French furniture in the 1850s and 1860s,[45] and the stockbooks, day-books and other papers of the leading dealer in paintings, John Smith, to draw attention to their value for provenance research, while also stressing that ninety percent of the firm's purchases were unprofitable, failing to find a buyer.[46] In his readiness to use and draw attention to the value of archival materials of this sort, Roberts was blazing a trail and may even be said to have been ahead of de Ricci. Both men, however, can be said to share the credit for ensuring that provenance research would be seen as an integral element of art historical research, and that this needed to be underpinned by the study of auction catalogues.

A Passion for British Art. Masterpieces from the Yale Center for British Art, ed. John Baskett et al. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 43–53 at 45.

45 "Collecting as an Investment," *Connoisseur* 7 (1903): 44–50. These he compared with the prices paid at Christie's, February 20–21, 1903, for Sir Edward Page Turner's collection—partly acquired from Annoot and Gale.

46 "The John Smith Business Books," *Apollo* 27 (1937): 158–60; this was preceded by a short article, "Art History in the Ledger: A Dealer and his Clients," *The Times*, December 15, 1936, 17. Roberts's article in *Apollo* was seemingly his last significant publication. He had been bequeathed the Smith archive earlier that year, and had immediately given it to the Victoria & Albert Museum. See Charles Sebag-Montefiore and Julia I. Armstrong-Totten, *A Dynasty of Dealers: John Smith and Successors, 1801-1924: A Study of the Art Market in Nineteenth-Century London* (London: Roxburghe Club, 2013), 30, 428.

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Chapter 23

STORIES OF AN ANTIQUARY

THE LEGACY OF M. R. JAMES

CHRISTINE JAKOBI-MIRWALD

> I shall from the upset beg to excuse me, for all these that through misluck and an overweening forknowledge of the English speech mistakenhoods may befall me, my good-heart readers. Ever must my plea of an amateur be that I have in my studies of the foresaid only so far as the early twelfth yearhundred's beginning bestrided. And this last, is it from our today's times forgettinghood or our much to be bewailed speechshapelearningness's unwisdomship, is of a nineteenth yearhundred period's togethergatheringreceivingsaloon sad unbefitted.[1]

THIS POMPOUS INTRODUCTION by a "Professor Merganser" is the beginning of a *canard* written by a twenty-three-year-old in 1887. It goes on to introduce a hitherto unknown supplement to John Mandeville's travels with a description of the Parthenon, where we read "But treuli to seien thise ymages ben al wrought in the wurschipe of Seynt denis Aropagite for because that hethen men of Parisius maad smyte of his hede, therefore han men of Atenys, that is his byshoprike, wroughten his ymage without a hede."[2] It is very telling that M. R. James (Montague Rhodes, "Monty" to his friends) enters the scholarly world with a spoof—a genre which has, regretfully, fallen into disuse in periods of publish or perish and peer reviewing. Not only did he produce some witty gems of the genre—he continued to defy the standards of staid, stuffy, sleep-inducing scholarship throughout his life.

James's lasting contribution to manuscript studies in Britain are some thirty manuscript catalogues, published between 1895 and his death in 1936 (five alone in 1905), of collections in Cambridge, Eton, Lambeth, and the John Rylands Library in Manchester,

1 [Montague R. James], "Athens in the Fourteenth Century…by Prof. E. S. Merganser," in *The Legacy of M. R. James*, ed. Lynda Dennison (Donnington: Shaun Tyas, 2001), 236; cf. Richard William Pfaff, *Montague Rhodes James* (London: Scolar Press, 1980), 79.

2 [James], "Athens," 238.

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as well as those of private collectors including Henry Yates Thompson and J. P. Morgan. Further, he wrote monographs for members of the Roxburghe Club. His wide-ranging interests included evidence for medieval libraries and biblical illustration, particularly of the Apocalypse. Yet while his scholarly work may even be taken for granted in Britain, its main focus on British subjects makes his name somewhat less familiar to scholarship abroad.

James's name came up, however, when I was tracing the history of the term "historiated initial,"[3] an obviously French-derived word,[4] for which Hanns Swarzenski provided the hint: "historiated initial—as Montague Rhodes James would have said."[5] Since many earlier catalogues were written in Latin, and the mid-nineteenth-century catalogue of Cambridge University Library mentioned "illuminated" or "grotesque initial letters," some "containing figures or beasts," but not "historiated,"[6] it seems likely that it was indeed James who casually introduced the term on the first page of his first manuscripts catalogue: "There are a few historiated initials, usually of good exhibition."[7]

James is still a popular figure in the English-speaking world, but not as a scholar. His thirty-odd *Ghost Stories*,[8] written for annual Christmas Eve readings to students, are very much present in print, radio, TV, even on stage.[9] In this context, a comparison with another, more famous, scholar-cum-bestseller author comes to mind—for who, given the name J. R. R. Tolkien, would primarily think of the influential Anglicist and *Beowulf* translator? A comparison of the lives and work of James and Tolkien is

3 Christine Jakobi-Mirwald, *Text—Buchstabe—Bild: Studien zur historisierten Initiale im 8. und 9. Jahrhundert* (Berlin: Reimer, 1998).

4 First used by Charles Cahier, in Charles Cahier and Arthur Martin, *Nouveaux mélanges d'archéologie, d'histoire et de littérature sur le Moyen-Age*, 4 vols. (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1874), 2:114; cf. Jakobi-Mirwald, *Text—Buchstabe—Bild*, 13–14, no. 23.

5 Hanns Swarzenski, "A Chalice and the Book of Kings," in *De artibus opuscula XL. Essays in Honour of Erwin Panofsky*, ed. Millard Meiss (New York: New York University Press, 1961), 440; cf. Jakobi-Mirwald, *Text—Buchstabe—Bild*, 13, no. 21.

6 Charles Hardwick and Henry Richards Luard, ed., *A Catalogue of the Manuscripts Preserved in the Library of the University of Cambridge*, 5 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1856–1867), 3:375: "illuminated" passim, "grotesque" for instance.

7 M. R. James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Eton College* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1895), 1; Christine Jakobi-Mirwald, "To Find out All that I Could about Various Matters and to Make Friends—Der Wissenschaftler und Geister-Erzähler M. R. James," in *Kunst Kritik Geschichte: Festschrift für Johann Konrad Eberlein*, ed. Johanna Aufreiter et al. (Berlin: Reimer, 2013), 434.

8 The stories were published between 1904 and 1936, for details see Rosemary Pardoe, "A Chronological Listing of M. R. James's Ghost Stories" (last edited 2007), www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~pardos/MRJStories.html, accessed May 15, 2023.

9 Rosemary Pardoe, "M. R. James on TV, Radio and Film" (last edited December 2010), www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~pardos/MediaList.html, accessed May 15, 2023; Wikipedia, "M. R. James: Adaptations" (last edited on 24 October 2022), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M._R._James#Adaptations, accessed May 15, 2023.

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revealing, for the generation which separates them witnessed lasting changes in the academic world.[10]

James was born in 1862, the son of a country vicar, and grew up at Great Livermere in Suffolk.[11] The family had been one of the oldest slave-owner dynasties, running sugar plantations in Jamaica since Cromwell's time, and the abolition of slavery had forced them back to England in the time of James's grandfather.[12] Like all men of the family, he received the highest-standard education at Eton and King's College, Cambridge,[13] where he was to spend most of his life as a student, fellow, dean (in 1889), provost (in 1905), and university vice chancellor (1913–1915). He had no teaching responsibilities, enjoyed free lodging and a place at High Table, and remained a lifelong bachelor, although at the time the celibacy mandate for fellows had been lifted.[14] For decades, he worked at the Fitzwilliam Museum, beginning as assistant of classical archaeology in 1884 and directing it from 1893 to 1908.[15] The First World War and a campus bereaved of an entire student generation, for whom James had to write eulogies and memorials, turned him away from Cambridge and back to Eton, where he became provost in 1918, and where, in 1930, he was awarded the Order of Merit.[16] In 1936, he died there of cancer aged seventy-three.

An early academic career, in this case at Oxford, also formed the life of Tolkien.[17] Born in 1892 in South Africa and raised and home-schooled in Warwickshire by his widowed mother, he was orphaned at the age of twelve. His precocious linguistic abilities secured him scholarships and after school he read English language and literature at Exeter College, Oxford. Graduating in 1915, he returned to Oxford after five years at Leeds and taught at Pembroke and Merton Colleges from 1925 to his retirement in 1959. He died in 1973 aged eighty-one. Thirty years James's junior, Tolkien was a war

10 Jakobi-Mirwald, "To Find Out All that I Could"; Patrick J. Murphy, *Medieval Studies and the Ghost Stories of M. R. James* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2017), 9, no. 29.

11 For James's biography, see *Alumni Cantabrigienses: A Biographical List of All Known Students, Graduates and Holders of Office at the University of Cambridge*, ed. John Venn and John Archibald Venn, 10 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922–1953), 2/3:547–48; Samuel G. Lubbock, *Memoir of Montague Rhodes James* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1939); Pfaff, *Montague Rhodes James*, with an exhaustive biography focusing on James's scholarly life; Michael Cox, *M. R. James: An Informal Portrait* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), primarily on the fictional work; Murphy, *Medieval Studies*, attempts "to understand the ghost stories…in conversation with his scholarly work" (185).

12 Pfaff, *Montague Rhodes James*, 1–16; Murphy, *Medieval Studies*, 54–56.

13 M. J. James, *Eton and King's: Recollections, mostly Trivial, 1875–1925* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1926); Pfaff, *Montague Rhodes James*, 17–47.

14 Murphy, *Medieval Studies*, 12.

15 Pfaff, *Montague Rhodes James*, 92–102, 152–56; cf. Stella Panayotova, *I Turned It into a Palace: Sydney Cockerell and the Fitzwilliam Museum* (Cambridge: Fitzwilliam Museum, 2008), 8–9, 21, 45–49, 56, 111, 148–57.

16 Pfaff, *Montague Rhodes James*, 244–47, 387–88; Murphy, *Medieval Studies*, 19, 165–73.

17 Humphrey Carpenter, *J. R. R. Tolkien: A Biography* (London: George Allen & Unwin/Houghton Mifflin, 1977); Tom A. Shippey, *J. R. R. Tolkien, Author of the Century* (London: Harper Collins, 2000).

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veteran who, unlike many of his school friends, survived a traumatizing half year on the Somme. Unlike James, he had a family with four children and did not live on campus, and unlike James, he was obliged to teach and to grade papers, both of which he did reluctantly. For his character, it is telling that he devoted much time to a tale titled *Leaf by Niggle*.[18] He saw himself as "a pedant devoted to accuracy, even in what may appear to others unimportant matters" and "a hobbit in all but size"[19]—his hobbits lead simple, rural lives, enjoy their meals, and smoke pipes. After attaining a chair at the age of thirty-three, his biographer stated that "nothing else really happened."[20]

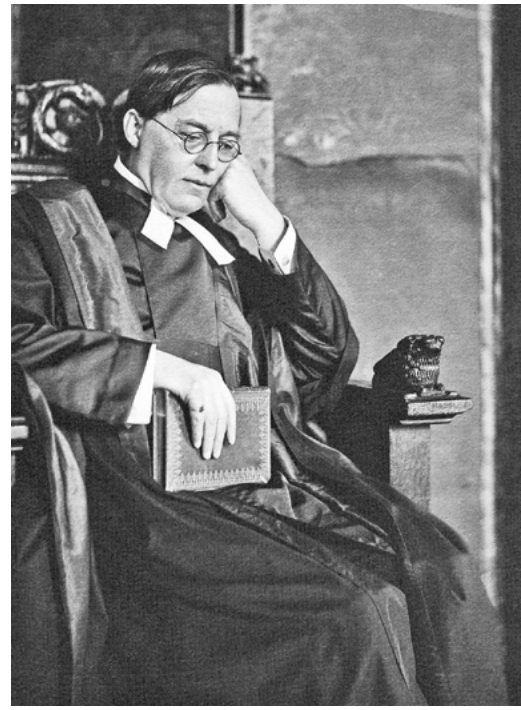


Figure 23.1. Photograph of Montague Rhodes James by Olive Edis, 1910s NPG x6034. © National Portrait Gallery, London. Courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery.

Nevertheless, Tolkien became the subject of a cinema biopic in 2019 and the result, a calmly staged view of pre-First World War student life, was a pleasant surprise.[21] Similarly, several TV documentaries have presented James and his *Ghost Stories*: in 1995 with actor Christopher Lee,[22] who had enrolled at Eton under James as provost, gone on to impersonate him in 2000 for the BBC,[23] and who had met Tolkien. In 2013, Mark Gatiss went beyond the *Ghost Stories* and was even shown manuscripts in the Fitzwilliam Museum by Stella Panayotova.[24]

Like Tolkien, James led a rather uneventful life, was a member of a society of aspiring writers (the "Chitchat Society" as opposed to Tolkien's "Tea Club of the Barrovian Society" and "Inklings"), an, albeit less prominent, Anglo-Saxon scholar, and both smoked pipes and were arachnophobes.[25] Still, they must have been all but opposites.

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18 J. R. R. Tolkien, "Leaf by Niggle," *The Dublin Review* 216, 432 (1945): 46–61, repr. in J. R. R. Tolkien, *Tree and Leaf* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1964).

19 J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Letters of J. R. R. Tolkien*, ed. Humphrey Carpenter (London: Allen & Unwin/Houghton Mifflin, 1981), 372, no. 294 (1967), no. 213 (1958), 288–89.

20 Carpenter, *J. R. R. Tolkien*, 111; Shippey, *Tolkien*, x.

21 *Tolkien*, dir. Dome Karukoski (Fox, 2019).

22 *A Pleasant Terror—The Life and Ghosts of M. R. James*, by Michael Cox and Clive Dunn, dir. Clive Dunn (Anglia TV, 1995).

23 *Ghost Stories for Christmas*, dir. Eleanor Yule (BBC1, 2000).

24 *M. R. James—Ghost Writer*, by Mark Gatiss, dir. John Das (BBC2 TV, 2013).

25 Murphy, *Medieval Studies*, 9, 12, 21–22, 25, 172–83; Pfaff, *Montague Rhodes James*, 114.

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Unlike Tolkien, whose unimpressive speaking voice is documented in interviews, James had all the jovial self-assurance and eloquence shared by a third scholar-cum-bestseller author: Tolkien's friend C. S. Lewis. Unlike them, James did not teach,[26] but he entertained some of his students in breakfast gatherings and in his "Shakespeare Society" with readings and private performances.[27] From his early days he acted in staged plays and was attested a remarkable talent.[28]

The cloistered, sheltered, homosocial life James led resulted in an arrested development of which he himself was aware, and which is reflected in many photos of a seemingly ageless person (Figure 23.1).[29] An emotional life strictly kept private has given rise to speculation,[30] some of it anachronistic, since very affectionate and caring mentor–student relationships, such as the one with his later illustrator James McBryde, were not extraordinary at the time.[31] It is also impossible to understand James's stubborn opposition to change outside his social context and time. The same applies to some unfortunate antisemitic and misogynist statements—he vocally opposed women in university careers—and a failure to distance himself from his family history, all of which is troubling from a modern viewpoint.[32] As for his position within the humanities, it is interesting to compare James with Tolkien, his junior by three decades. From his childhood years, Tolkien had been a self-professed philologist,[33] who, despite his humanistic formation, developed an exclusive focus on pre-conquest English language and literature, and saw himself as an anti-Romanist with no liking for the Latin (let alone French) language or classical culture. His dismissal of all post-Norman elements in the English language bordered on the obsessive: "For instance I dislike French."[34] His slender but enduring scholarly *oeuvre* is dwarfed by an epic epistolary output and, above all, his immensely popular fictional work.[35] Yet he saw his fiction as "fundamentally linguistic in inspiration…the invention of languages is the foundation. To me, a name comes first

26 Pfaff, *Montague Rhodes James*, 68.

27 Cox, *M. R. James*, 65–67; Paul R. Quarrie, "M. R. James at Eton," in *The Legacy of M. R. James*, ed. Dennison, 11–22, 19–20; Murphy, *Medieval Studies*, 20, 220 (no. 106).

28 Lubbock, *Memoir of Montague Rhodes James*, 40; Pfaff, *Montague Rhodes James*, 53–54; Murphy, *Medieval Studies*, 20–21.

29 Murphy, *Medieval Studies*, 133: "The truth is I am a very immature creature."

30 See Cox, *M. R. James*, 127–29; Murphy, *Medieval Studies*, 12–16, esp. no. 65; cf. Quarrie, "James at Eton," 14; Pfaff, *Montague Rhodes James*, 23.

31 Pfaff, *Montague Rhodes James*, 110–14, 147, 149, 170, 221, 223; Cox, *M. R. James*, 127–29; Murphy, *Medieval Studies*, 12–13; "James McBryde: King's own Dr Seuss," *King's College Archive Centre* (May 2012), www.kings.cam.ac.uk/archive-centre/online-resources/online-exhibitions/james-mcbryde-kings-own-dr-seuss, accessed May 15, 2023.

32 Murphy, *Medieval Studies*, 151–54, 145–47. The statement that "at one time we possessed 3,160 slaves," cited by Murphy, *Medieval Studies*, 55 with no. 20, rather seems to betray a sort of pride.

33 Shippey, *Tolkien*; Peter Gilliver, Jeremy Marshall, and Edmund Weiner, *The Ring of Words: Tolkien and the Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), esp. 45–86.

34 Tolkien, *Letters*, no. 213 [1958], 288–89.

35 On his letters: Tolkien, *Letters*; Carpenter, *J. R. R. Tolkien*.

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and the story follows."[36] A single-minded interest in words and (artificial) languages, fostered by his short term as a collaborator on the *Oxford English Dictionary*, led to the creation of Tolkien's myths, where a name (Earendil) or words like wraith, ent, or, most famously, hobbit, could bring forth entire storylines.[37]

James also began writing in his teens and was very keen on languages, but his curiosity was far broader in scope:

> At this time, in fact, all antique knowledge seemed immensely desirable; and so I did what I called Archaeology, which meant exploring every accessible church in the holidays and writing copious notes on everything I saw. It all sounds dreadfully priggish, and I have no doubt my Divinity papers at Temple Grove and my Sunday Questions at Eton were a sad blend of ignorance and misplaced erudition; but to me it was all fresh and delightful. Nothing could be more inspiriting than to discover that St. Livinus had his tongue cut out and was beheaded, or that David's mother was called Nitzeneth.[38]

Throughout his life, he continued in an almost stubborn refusal to fit into an academic drawer. Within

> a remarkable 'middle' period in the history of the humanities often understood today in terms of an undisciplined amateurism yielding to enduring institutions established by university professionals. James himself is a fascinatingly liminal figure in this narrative, and not only on account of his shadow career writing ghost stories.[39]

As in the case of Tolkien, this "shadow career" was a direct result of his scholarly one. Yet where Tolkien spun worlds from words, James looked for the haunting element within his own world in his books with the telling title *Ghost Stories of an Antiquary*.

An antiquary is what we would today call an antiquarian (originally an adjective).[40] From the sixteenth to the mid-eighteenth century, antiquaries were wealthy amateurs

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36 J. R. R. Tolkien, *Letters*, no. 165 (1955, letter to Houghton Mifflin), 219; cf. Tom A. Shippey: *The Road to Middle-Earth* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1982, repr.); Shippey, *Tolkien*, xiii; Gilliver, Marshall, and Weiner, *Ring of Words*, 49–50; J. R. R. Tolkien, *A Secret Vice: Tolkien on Invented Languages*, ed. Dimitra Fimi and Andrew Higgins (London: Harper Collins, 2016), 24.

37 On Tolkien's contributions to the *OED* see Gilliver, Marshall, and Weiner, *Ring of Words*; J. R. R. Tolkien and E. V. Gordon, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1925); J. R. R. Tolkien, *Beowulf. A Translation and Commentary, Together with Sellic Spell*, ed. Christopher Tolkien (London: Harper Collins, 2014); on Cynewulf, Christ II: *Eala Earendel engla beorhtast ofer middangeard monnum sended*; see Tolkien, *Letters*, no. 297 (1967), 385–86; cf. Gilliver, Marshall, and Weiner, *Ring of Words*, 54–59, 119–21, 142–52; Shippey, *Tolkien*, 121–28.

38 James, *Eton and King's*, 14, quoted after Nicholas Rogers, "Some Curiosa Hagiographica in Cambridge Manuscripts Reconsidered," in *The Legacy of M. R. James*, ed. Dennison, 194.

39 Murphy, *Medieval Studies*, 8.

40 Its first occurrence in this sense, according to the *OED*, was in 1586 ("archaeologist" in 1824); cf. the BL blog on "Antiquarianism," www.bl.uk/picturing-places/themes/antiquarianism, accessed

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with the leisure to pursue activities concerning "physical remains" in fields which later were to become archaeology, art history, and auxiliary disciplines, as opposed to texts (philology and history). The historical phenomenon today is termed antiquarianism, with the outdated antiquary relegated to society titles (and a whisky brand).[41] The modern noun antiquarian is used either in the context of the ancient book market—or in a derogatory sense for "the type of man who is interested in historical facts without being interested in history."[42] However, the patronizing image of well-dressed gentlemen leisurely digging up mounds and villas is every now and then corrected when archaeological digs confirm the careful documentations and interpretations of early antiquaries, such as Edmund Tyrell Artis.[43]

During James's time, the new disciplines of the humanities were already in the process of establishing rigid boundaries, and "the paradoxical sense that James was both the quintessential professional and yet also something of an amateur,"[44] is evidenced by his work—both aspects of it. Academically, he started in archaeology and philology, but his precocious interest in hagiography and local and regional cults gave him a definite edge in dating and localizing manuscripts.[45] The subjects of his publications range from a Latin Plutarch, apocrypha, apocalypses, hagiographical studies, medieval sculpture, windows and tapestries, organs and organists, translations from the Greek, Latin, and Danish, manuscript monographs, facsimiles, countless reviews, and the manuscript catalogues mentioned above.[46]

In cataloguing, James acquired skills, connoisseurship, and expertise in a very idiosyncratic manner.[47] However, he was highly discriminating and, if uninspired, would unabashedly say so: the papers of a 1995 symposium in his honour are replete with polite versions of the term "sloppy."[48] The most prominent instance is the catalogue of the manuscripts in Cambridge University Library, never published but in progress in

May 15, 2023; Arnaldo Momigliano, *The Classical Foundations of Modern Historiography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 54–79; Murphy, *Medieval Studies*, 15–18.

41 The Society of Antiquaries, founded in 1707, had 3,300 members in 2020, cf. their online journal SALON www.sal.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/salon/, accessed May 15, 2023.

42 Momigliano, *Classical Foundations*, 54.

43 See Catherine Collins, "Archaeological Test Pit Excavations in Castor, Cambridgeshire, in 2009–2011," in *Access Cambridge Archaeology* (2018), https//doi.org/10.5284/1051099, accessed August 1, 2023.

44 Murphy, *Medieval Studies*, 8.

45 Rogers, "Curiosa Hagiographica," 195.

46 Nicholas Rogers, "Bibliography," in *The Legacy of M. R. James*, ed. Dennison, 239–67 (440 entries).

47 Richard William Pfaff, "M. R. James and the Liturgical Manuscripts of Cambridge," in *The Legacy of M. R. James*, ed. Dennison, 175: "he was learning—that is, teaching himself—to catalogue manuscripts"; cf. Richard William Pfaff: "M. R. James on the Cataloguing of Manuscripts: A Draft Essay of 1906," *Scriptorium* 31.1 (1977): 103–18.

48 Pfaff, "M. R. James," 181, 192.

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1926–1930.[49] In this period, some 1,100–1,200 manuscripts were sent to James's home at Eton, in batches of ten to twenty at a time, each book accompanied by a form sheet with shelf mark, title, language, size, support, number of leaves, columns, and lines already filled in.[50] Books he did not like he would simply label "not described by me."[51] If he did so against his will ("I may be said to have finished that lot—very nasty scrubby little things, too, many of them"), he provided acerbic comments ("You thought you had downed me with that little lot—horrid books of astronomy and Augustine—I sometimes tell my friends I feel more inclined to call him Disgustin").[52] After James's death, the catalogues remained unfinished, but available to scholars,[53] who at first "are delighted that there is an unpublished description by James which they can look at. Somehow, the evident rush of enthusiasm is not sustained, and the description is soon handed back to the counter, without comment."[54] Still, we must not forget that he was then in his sixties and one unfinished catalogue is balanced by some thirty finished ones. Even if James's scholarly work has been described as wanting, modern expectations of discipline specialization have skewed that image.[55] His knowledgeable, well-written articles have not aged poorly,[56] nor has his casual, engaging style,[57] which he put to good use in his fiction.

James's stories are part of a tradition of ghosts in literature, which goes back to the beginning of writing, even if he set new standards.[58] Tolkien's fiction was even more influential, unwittingly generating the new "fantasy" genre in the wake of the *Lord of the Rings*, a genre with mostly escapist-esoteric worlds which he did not care for, since he "did not think that he was entirely making it up. He was 'reconstructing'…an imaginative world which he believed had once really existed, at least in a collective imagination."[59] As for the ghost stories, they came into their own in the Victorian age after the rise of the hugely popular, though not respectable Gothic novel in the eighteenth century.[60] Sheri-

49 Pfaff, *Montague Rhodes James*, 325–30; Jayne Ringrose, "The Legacy of M. R. James in Cambridge University Library," in *The Legacy of M. R. James*, ed. Dennison, 23–36.

50 Ringrose, "Legacy of M. R. James," 26–29.

51 Ringrose, "Legacy of M. R. James," 31.

52 Ringrose, "Legacy of M. R. James," 29–31.

53 Ringrose, "Legacy of M. R. James," 35–36; Murphy, *Medieval Studies*, 125–29.

54 Ringrose, "Legacy of M. R. James," 23.

55 Murphy, *Medieval Studies*, 1–9.

56 See M. R. James: *The Wanderings and Homes of Manuscripts* (London: The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge/Macmillan, 1919): even taking some nationalist slurs (12) and the recommended use of chemical reagents into account (61): the latter also applies to the draft manuscript edited by Pfaff, "M. R. James on the Cataloguing of Manuscripts," 107).

57 A tradition successfully continued by Christopher de Hamel, most recently in *The Posthumous Papers of the Manuscripts Club* (London: Allen Lane, 2022).

58 Irving L. Finkel, *The First Ghosts: Most Ancient of Legacies* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2021).

59 Shippey, *Tolkien*, xv.

60 Jane Austen, whose posthumously published *Northanger Abbey* (1818) is a sparkling parody of the genre, attests that this applied to novels in general.

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dan Le Fanu's collection *In a Glass Darkly* (1871) markedly influenced James's stories,[61] and their reading at Christmastime may be a tradition started by Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* (1843).

With his ironic take on the "prefabricated Gothic chills,"[62] James's stories can in many ways be seen as quintessentially "medieval" ghost stories, even if they are not set in a remote past or location. The English, French, and Scandinavian towns, abbeys, universities, and libraries, which James knew from his travels, mostly by bicycle, provide the settings where, as a rule, a more or less autobiographical protagonist cannot resist the allures of an invented or real medieval object or artefact such as a text, crown, book, or stained-glass window.[63] The stories are infused by James's knowledge and medieval images like the Codex Gigas devil influenced his hairy and spiky rather than sheer and sheeted ghosts.[64] Even today, the stories evoke the feeling of "if I am not very careful, something of this kind may happen to me,"[65] despite their setting in a largely bygone world. Although James's demurred, "as for the fragments of ostensible erudition which are scattered about my pages, hardly anything in them is not pure invention,"[66] they owe a considerable part of their appeal to the amount of detail, knowledge, and involvement which went into them.

One of James's stories provides "a remarkable example of medievalism that outpaces both in publication date and in its imaginative enthusiasm the committed scholarship upon which it is based."[67] The stained-glass windows at Ashridge Park, which he was able to attribute to Steinfeld Abbey in Germany, set the scene for *The Treasure of Abbot Thomas* (printed in 1904), two years before he published an article on the subject. The article was described by Murphy, with obvious glee, as "hardly uncharacteristic of James's prodigious, meticulous academic output: the reticent notations, the restrained lack of speculation or theoretical excess, the discipline of bland identification and stone-faced observation, each entry neatly divided with a plastered space of antiseptic white."[68] And he could not resist adding that "none rejoiced more than James when a printer's error made Abbot Thomas von Eschenhausen…put up a painted *widow* in the south aisle of his abbey church."[69]

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61 Pfaff, *Montague Rhodes James*, 417; Murphy, *Medieval Studies*, 4.

62 Murphy, *Medieval Studies*, 2, 22.

63 BL, Harley MS 3589 appears in: *Casting the Runes* (*More Ghost Stories,* 1911); cf. Andrew Dunning, "The Medieval Cartulary behind a Ghost Story," BL, *Medieval Manuscripts Blog* (27 August 2017), https://blogs.bl.uk/digitisedmanuscripts/2017/08/index.html, accessed May 15, 2023.

64 Stockholm, National Library of Sweden, A 148 (Bohemia, thirteenth century), fol. 289r; cf. Murphy, *Medieval Studies*, 5.

65 M. R. James, preface to *More Ghost Stories* (London: Edward Arnold, 1911), quoted after Murphy, *Medieval Studies*, 185.

66 M. R. James, preface to *Ghost Stories of an Antiquary* (London: Edward Arnold, 1904), 3.

67 Murphy, *Medieval Studies*, 32.

68 Murphy, *Medieval Studies*, 39–40.

69 Murphy, *Medieval Studies*, 37, quoting Nicholas Barker, "After M. R. James," *The Book Collector*

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James's earliest story, *Canon Alberic's Scrapbook*,[70] written in 1894, features a manuscript cuttings album bought by an "Englishman (let us call him Dennistoun)"—the name of a real collector notorious for the practice of cutting up manuscripts which the narrator condemns.[71] The following excerpt highlights James's brilliant language, as well as two cardinal virtues he displayed in his scholarly, as well as his fictional work: curiosity and close observation.

> The…sacristan [was] an unexpectedly interesting object of study. It was not in the personal appearance of the little, dry, wizened old man that the interest lay, for he was precisely like dozens of other church-guardians in France, but in a curious furtive, or rather hunted and oppressed, air which he had. He was perpetually half glancing behind him; the muscles of his back and shoulders seemed to be hunched in a continual nervous contraction, as if he were expecting every moment to find himself in the clutch of an enemy. The Englishman hardly knew whether to put him down as a man haunted by a fixed delusion, or as one oppressed by a guilty conscience, or as an unbearably henpecked husband. The probabilities, when reckoned up, certainly pointed to the last idea; but, still, the impression conveyed was that of a more formidable persecutor even than a termagant wife.[72]

Conclusion

Roughly three generations have passed since James's death and one generation since the 1995 conference in his honour, when Jayne Ringrose stated, somewhat defensively: "M. R. James's descriptions remind us of a world where a gentler scholarship prevailed."[73] In today's even less gentle academic world, a new inspection of his legacy can be inspiring—starting with the careful observation and curiosity he recommended.[74] It goes without saying that curiosity is preferable to affected knowledge or an unwillingness to admit to ignorance.

Next, there is the "secret vice" of storytelling.[75] A comparison with Tolkien highlights the differences between polymath and philology specialist. Yet, James and Tolkien have

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19 (1970): 7–20 at 8.

70 James, *Ghost Stories of an Antiquary*, 3–28.

71 James, *Ghost Stories of an Antiquary*, 5. On James Dennistoun, see Pfaff, *Montague Rhodes James*, 114; Murphy, *Medieval Studies*, 9 and nos. 25–26; cf. Janet Backhouse, "Manuscripts on Display: Some Landmarks in the Exhibition and Popular Publication of Illuminated Books," in *The Legacy of M. R. James*, ed. Dennison, 38–39.

72 James, *Ghost Stories of an Antiquary*, 4–5.

73 Ringrose, "Legacy of M. R. James," 36.

74 James's address to the assembly at Shrewsbury School in 1918: "I commend to you the virtue of inquisitiveness, of curiosity"; Murphy, *Medieval Studies*, 165 with no. 1.

75 This title of a famous talk of Tolkien on invented languages (held in 1931, see Tolkien, *A Secret Vice*) may be borrowed to describe another medievalist's "byproducts."

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in common that their highly successful, brilliantly written creative works are firmly rooted in their scholarly work—with no detriment to the latter. Quite the contrary: skilful storytellers are arguably among the most compelling representatives of their disciplines, as evidenced by the Assyriologist Irving Finkel today.[76] Coincidentally, his recent book also deals with ghosts.[77]

Then there is James's disarming honesty. I have argued elsewhere that the pretence of disinterest, a result of the nineteenth-century separation of medieval studies as an academic discipline from amateurish medievalism, is not always conducive to serious research, and that honestly stating one's interests results in more transparency.[78] By largely refusing to conform to academic rules, James managed to marry his "medievalist" enthusiasm to his medieval studies—nonchalantly coining the term "historiated initial" on the way.

It is this position within a transitory time within the humanities which appears to be his most pertinent legacy today, again arguably a transitory moment.[79] Consider the following quote:

> Yet the manuscript studies that most interested James…also tended to encourage forays into a number of increasingly self-enclosed fields as well as to consider subjects not tamely residing in any one domain. Investigations into 'the wanderings and homes of manuscripts' tended to soften hardening boundaries separating the study of literature, biblical studies, historical linguistics, and art history (as well as requiring great skill in ancillary arts such as palaeography and codicology). Beyond this, there was the material fact of the medieval manuscript itself. James was fascinated by books in every dimension—their place in time, their space on the shelf, the way the sheepskin codex engages senses other than sight.[80]

Much of this summary reads like a funding application for an interdisciplinary research project in the humanities. In these times, the "ancillary" arts can only survive if the strictly divided disciplines, already defied by James, unite in collaboration.

Today's (loosely) Tolkien-based fandom little realizes that the Oxford scholar derived the original model for his escapist worlds from the early medieval culture of the languages he was researching and then creating. Similarly, the horror genre is generally

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76 For instance: Irving L. Finkel, *The Lewis Chessmen and What Happened to Them* (London: British Museum, 1995); and Irving L. Finkel, *The Ark Before Noah: Decoding the Story of the Flood* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2014).

77 Finkel, *First Ghosts.*

78 Jakobi-Mirwald, *Text—Buchstabe—Bild*, 153–63; Jakobi-Mirwald, "To Find Out All that I Could," 435–36, concerning the relabelling of two groups of manuscripts at the court of Charlemagne ("Adagruppe" to "Hofschule" and "Palastschule" to "Group of the Coronation Gospels") supposedly neutral, in fact the expression of a personal predilection, which resulted in a decided, but never openly admitted, shift in scholarly attention; Murphy, *Medieval Studies*, 1–8, 15–18, 30, 39.

79 Murphy, *Medieval Studies*, 8.

80 Murphy, *Medieval Studies*, 10.

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oblivious of the strictly antiquarian approach of one of its role models, who created a very distinct brand of medievalism in his *Ghost Stories of an Antiquary*. With them, and with his idiosyncratic medieval studies, James had a decisive and lasting impact on the image of the Middle Ages. His curiosity, close observation, personal involvement, broad and largely self-taught knowledge, and enviable way with words are timeless qualities and today's scholars can do worse than take a leaf out of his book: "I believe there never was a time when I have had more of a programme than to find out all that I could about various matters and to make friends."[81]

81 Pfaff, *Montague Rhodes James*, vii; Pfaff, "M. R. James," 193; Murphy, *Medieval Studies*, 134 with no. 31.

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Chapter 24

PHILLIPPS MS 24275 AND THE NINETEENTH- AND EARLY TWENTIETH-CENTURY HISTORIOGRAPHY OF BEDE'S MARTYROLOGY

KATE FALARDEAU

OXFORD, BODLEIAN LIBRARY, MS Lat. liturg. d. 43 (Italy; late twelfth-/early thirteenth-century) contains texts suited for the daily meeting in chapter after Prime, including the *Regula S. Benedicti*, a chapter homiliary, a martyrology, and an obituary.[1] The incomplete martyrology within this manuscript is attributed to Bede: on folio 49r, the rubric reads "Incipit martirologium expositum a uenerabili Beda presbytero." Henri Quentin posited that this text was perhaps related to an Italian group of manuscript copies of Bede's Martyrology, although it does not seem that he had been able to examine the manuscript himself.[2] The text of the manuscript is indeed largely congruent with Bede's, although it has been abbreviated and supplemented with material from other martyrologies.[3] Bede's Martyrology is, at its most fundamental level, a calendrical list of martyrs with historical information concerning when, where, and by what means the martyrdoms took place. It is the earliest surviving example of an historical martyrology. Emphasizing his innovative contribution to the martyrological genre, Bede described his Martyrology as an historical text in the bibliography of his own works in his *Historia*

1 Peter Kidd and Bodleian Library Staff, "MS. Lat. liturg. d. 43," Medieval Manuscripts in Oxford Libraries: A Catalogue of Western Manuscripts at the Bodleian Libraries and Selected Oxford Colleges, January 7, 2017, https://medieval.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/catalog/manuscript_6477, accessed May 15, 2023.

2 Henri Quentin, *Les martyrologes historiques du Moyen Âge: Étude sur la formation du martyrologe romain* (Paris: Gabalda, 2nd edn. 1908), 45, n. 5.

3 Although there is no critical edition, see Quentin, *Les martyrologes historiques*, 47–111; Bede and Florus, *Édition pratique des martyrologes de Bède de l'Anonyme lyonnais et de Florus*, ed. Jacques Dubois and Geneviève Renaud (Paris: CNRS, 1976). For an English translation, see Felice Lifshitz, trans., "Bede, Martyrology," in *Medieval Hagiography: An Anthology*, ed. Thomas Head (New York: Garland, 2000), 179–98.

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ecclesiastica (ca. 731).[4] Although the text of the Martyrology dates to the first quarter of the eighth century, only manuscript copies produced between the ninth and thirteenth centuries survive.

Despite this evidence of continued, if not overwhelming, medieval interest in and/or use of Bede's text, the majority of modern scholarship on the historical import of martyrologies has looked to other works.[5] The eventual liturgical dominance of Usuard's Martyrology, an historical martyrology written over a century later that drew upon Bede and others, is no doubt partially responsible. Crucially, however, the questions investigated by scholars of medieval liturgy and of medieval manuscripts during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries play a prominent role in the discussion, or the lack thereof, of Bede's Martyrology today. When Quentin referred to the martyrology of MS Lat. liturg. d. 43 in the first decade of the twentieth century, the manuscript was part of the enormous collection created by Sir Thomas Phillipps in the nineteenth century. The ways in which this particular copy of Bede's Martyrology was catalogued, valued, and examined between 1890 and 1945 illustrate contemporary assessments of the significance of Bede's Martyrology.[6] Moreover, Phillipps MS 24275, as it was then known, provides an opportunity to think through the effects the trade in medieval manuscripts had upon scholarship on the martyrological genre and on Bede's text more specifically during this period. The relationship between economic exchange, connoisseurship, and scholarly assessments of the cultural and/or historical value of manuscripts was often a reciprocal one. The aesthetic and academic import of Phillipps MS 24275 was, as now, socially and culturally constructed. Assessments of Bede's Martyrology show the same processes of construction, on a larger scale. As the essays in this collection illustrate, these processes can, and should, be examined historically. Although the faith-driven research questions underpinning scholarship on martyrologies between the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries would not seem to have much in common with current studies, their conceptions of the significance of Bede's Martyrology remain influential.

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4 Alan Thacker, "Bede and His Martyrology," in *Listen, O Isles, Unto Me: Studies in Medieval Word and Image in Honour of Jennifer O'Reilly*, ed. Elizabeth Mullins and Diarmuid Scully (Cork: Cork University Press, 2011), 126–41 at 127; Bede, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. and trans. Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 570–71.

5 Exceptions include Quentin, *Les martyrologes historiques*; Bede and Florus, *Édition pratique*; Thacker, "Bede and His Martyrology." For overviews of the text and its influence, see Lifshitz, "Bede, Martyrology," 169–78; George Hardin Brown and Frederick M. Biggs, "Martyrology," in *Bede: Part 2, Fasicles 1–4* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018), 279–92. For analysis of Bede's Martyrology in relation to other martyrologies, see Michael Lapidge, "Acca of Hexham and the Origin of the Old English Martyrology," *Analecta Bollandiana* 123 (2005): 29–78; Frederick M. Biggs, "Bede's Martyrologium and the Martyrologium Hieronymianum," *Analecta Bollandiana* 134 (2016): 241–78.

6 For recent analysis of the value of catalogues as historical sources in their own right, see Arthur der Weduwen, Andrew Pettegree, and Graeme Kemp, ed., *Book Trade Catalogues in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2021).

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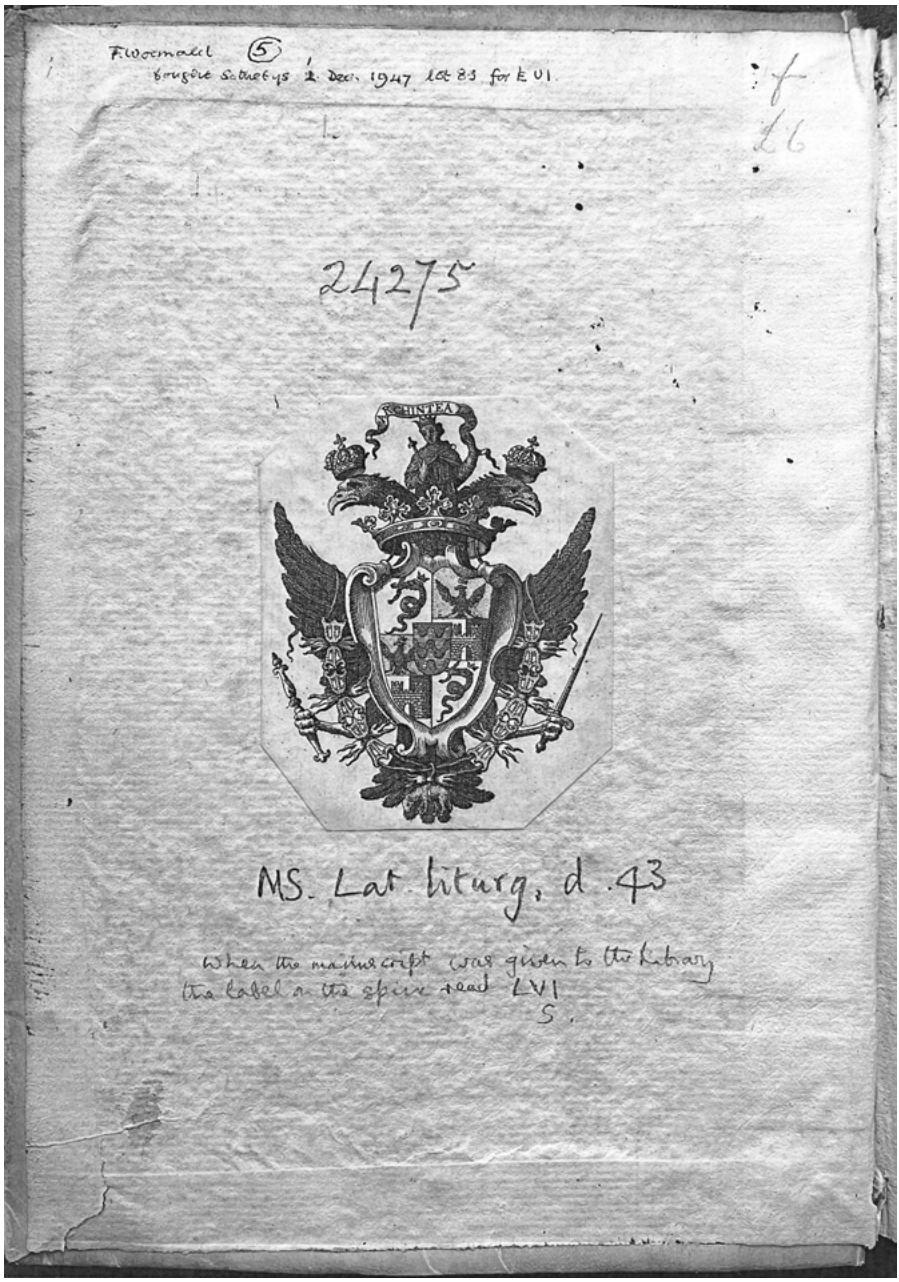


Figure 24.1. Front pastedown of Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Lat. liturg. d. 43. With permission of The Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford.

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An overview of the provenance of MS Lat. liturg. d. 43 provides an understanding of its life as a commodity during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. According to Arjun Appadurai, "the commodity situation in the social life of any 'thing' [is] defined as the situation in which its exchangeability (past, present, or future) for some other things is its socially relevant feature."[7] Under this framework, the manuscript was not a commodity in its medieval context; once at the monastery of San Saba, its "socially relevant feature" was use in the morning meeting in chapter, based on its contents.[8] After the post-medieval dispersal of the libraries of many continental religious institutions, the "socially relevant feature" of liturgical manuscripts such as MS Lat. liturg. d. 43 became exchangeability. The widening temporal and cultural distance between, for instance, the monks of San Saba and the later owners of this particular manuscript encouraged the proliferation of narratives about Western European religiosity and its relationship to contemporary life—narratives that were intimately related to the growing market for medieval manuscripts.[9] The "commodity situation" in the "social life" of MS Lat. liturg. d. 43 encompasses shifts from collector to collector, accumulating different value judgments and cultural baggage before finally arriving at the Bodleian Library in 1973, where it remains today.

I focus on the provenance of the manuscript following its acquisition by Phillipps. Prior to 1863, however, the manuscript was part of the library of Count Carlo Archinto as MS LVI 5 (or S?).[10] The front pastedown of MS Lat. liturg. d. 43 includes a bookplate reading "ARCHINTEA LAVS" (Figure 24.1). It is probable that Archinto had the manuscript rebound sometime following the last decade of the seventeenth century. The watermark found on its paper flyleaves consists of a crown, a star, and the letters "G" and "B." This is almost identical to an example from Rome dated to 1691.[11] The library of Count Archinto was sold in Paris on March 21, 1863, although the catalogue from this occasion does not include this manuscript.[12] It was presumably not amongst the most

7 Arjun Appadurai, "Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value," in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 3–63 at 13.

8 On the morning chapter assembly, see Michel Huglo, "L'Office de Prime au chapitre," in *L'Église et la mémoire des morts dans la France médiévale*, ed. Jean-Loup Lemaître (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1986), 11–18; P. Schepens, "L'Office du chapitre à Prime," *Recherches de science religieuse* 11 (1921): 222–27.

9 See Appadurai, "Introduction," 48.

10 According to a note written on the lower front pastedown of the manuscript. I am indebted to the summarized provenance information in Kidd and Bodleian Library Staff, "MS. Lat. liturg. d. 43." For further information on Archinto, see Carlo Frati, *Dizionario bio-bibliografico dei bibliotecari e bibliofili Italiani dal sec. XIV al XIX* (Florence: Olschki, 1933), 32–33; Marino Parenti, *Aggiunte al dizionario bio-bibliografico dei bibliotecari e bibliofili Italiani di Carlo Frati*, 3 vols. (Florence: Sansoni Antiquariato, 1952–1960), 1:46, 49.

11 Edward Heawood, *Watermarks Mainly of the 17th and 18th Centuries* (Hilversum: Paper Publications Society, 1950), 88 (reproduced pl. 152).

12 See *Catalogue d'une petite collection de livres rares et précieux imprimés et manuscrits provenant de la bibliothèque de feu M. le Comte Archinto de Milan, dont la vente aura lieu le samedi, 21 mars 1863* (Paris: Potier, 1863).

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rare or striking examples available for purchase. Nevertheless, it was acquired by the London booksellers Messrs. Boone at this sale.[13] Their price-code is written in pencil on the lower left corner of the back pastedown.[14] The manuscript then entered Phillipps's collection.

What reasons may Phillipps have had for purchasing this particular manuscript? In the preface to the ca. 1828 printing of his catalogue, Phillipps gives some idea of his broader motivations and preferences: "In amassing my Collection of MSS. I commenced with purchasing everything that lay within my reach, to which I was instigated by reading various accounts of the destruction of valuable MSS…My principal search has been for Historical & particularly unpublished MSS., whether good or bad, and more particularly those on Vellum."[15] Like many other contemporary collectors, Phillipps saw his collecting activities as preserving the past; undoubtedly, the status and taste a gentleman was able to display through his library was also a factor.[16] It is unlikely that Phillipps acquired MS Lat. liturg. d. 43 because of the martyrology that it contains. As I discuss below, Bede's Martyrology had been printed and/or edited numerous times by the late nineteenth century and therefore would not have reflected Phillipps's interest in unpublished works. Any work by Bede, however, would have been valuable to the English collector due to his status as a venerable English author, practically a Church Father of his age. It is possible that Phillipps would have felt a particular need to preserve a manuscript containing a text by such an esteemed author who had lived and worked in his own country, and whose writing could be seen to have had considerable influence upon the development of the nation's culture and intellectual life.

This would not have been out of step with other book collectors during this period. In his assessment of English book collectors between the sixteenth and early twentieth centuries, Seymour de Ricci equated their activities with patriotism: "Personal vanity,

13 On the business, see George Smith and Frank Benger, *The Oldest London Bookshop: A History of Two Hundred Years* (London: Ellis, 1928).

14 Messrs. Boone bought a number of manuscripts from the Archinto sale. See Peter Kidd, *Medieval Manuscripts from the Collection of T. R. Buchanan in the Bodleian Library, Oxford* (Oxford: Bodleian Library and University of Oxford, 2001), xxi, n. 30. On price-codes, see Peter Kidd, "The Use of Price-Codes (and Associated Marks) in Provenance Research," in *Chamberpot & Motherfuck: The Price-Codes of the Book Trade*, edited by EXHUMATION [Ian Jackson] (Narberth: Bruce McKittrick, 2018), 61–90.

15 A. N. L. Munby, *Phillipps Studies in Two Volumes*, 2 vols. (London: Sotheby Parke-Bernet, 1971), 1.1:18. A recent assessment of Phillipps's collecting is Toby Burrows, "'There Never Was Such a Collector since the World Began:' A New Look at Sir Thomas Phillipps," in *Collecting the Past: British Collectors and Their Collections from the 18th to the 20th Centuries*, ed. Toby Burrows and Cynthia Johnston (London: Routledge, 2018), 45–62.

16 Toby Burrows and Cynthia Johnston, "Collecting the Past: Manuscript and Book Collecting in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," in *Collecting the Past*, ed. Burrows and Johnston, 1–7 at 5–6; on the latter point, Annika Bautz and James Gregory, "Introduction," in *Libraries, Books, and Collectors of Texts, 1600–1900*, ed. Annika Bautz and James Gregory (New York: Routledge, 2018), 1–8 at 3.

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the mainspring of collecting, has continually given way to local and national pride."[17] In 1919 M. R. James made explicit the nationalism, then particularly pressing, that often underlay the collecting of pre-modern manuscripts, writing in religious tones:

> Our concern is what exists to-day, or what did exist until the nation, which has contributed so largely to learning and history in the past, turned apostate, and to its lasting shame destroyed and dispersed what more ignorant men had spared. The mischief Germany has done—and it will be long before we learn the full extent of it—she has done with open eyes.[18]

James also remarked upon the early nineteenth-century fascination with copies of classical texts.[19] As a portion of the historiography of Bede's Martyrology demonstrates (discussed below), Bede could certainly be considered a classical author at the time, and as such, relevant to contemporary understandings of the makeup of the cultural patrimony of England. Perhaps indicative of this viewpoint, in an article published shortly after the end of the Second World War, Charles Beeson remarked that not one of the surviving manuscript copies of Bede's Martyrology is English.[20] One gets the impression that this would have been somewhat disappointing for English scholars and book collectors who felt national pride in Bede and his work.

Catalogues of the Phillipps library reveal a greater interest in Bede as an author than in martyrologies as a genre. Phillipps MS 24275 was not included in Phillipps's printed catalogue, which only extends to 23,837 items. This catalogue, however, does name fourteen martyrologies, including: MSS 1844 ("Hieronymi Martyrologium"), 6651 ("Martyrologium Regula & Obituarium Abbatiæ de Bigardis"), and 6774 ("Bedæ Martyrologium. transcript").[21] The latter is an early modern copy of a ninth-century, Frankish example of Bede's text.[22] This manuscript is probably representative of Phillipps's collecting of Bede's works as important cultural and historical artifacts, rather than a particular interest in the Martyrology. The same catalogue names thirty-four works attributed to Bede, including the Martyrology transcript, ranging from biblical commentaries, to the

17 Seymour de Ricci, *English Collectors of Books & Manuscripts (1530–1930) and Their Marks of Ownership* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1930), 193.

18 M. R. James, *The Wanderings and Homes of Manuscripts* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge/Macmillan, 1919), 12.

19 James, *Wanderings*, 89.

20 Charles H. Beeson, "The Manuscripts of Bede," *Classical Philology* 42.2 (1947): 73–87 at 75.

21 Thomas Phillipps, *The Phillipps Manuscripts: Catalogus Librorum Manuscriptorum in Biblioteca D. Thomæ Phillipps, Bt., Impressum Typis Medio-Montanis 1837–1871* (London: Holland Press, 1968), 3–4 (nos. 305, 345, 364), 15 (no. 1338), 20–21 (nos. 1844, 1913), 26–27 (nos. 2189, 2270), 33 (no. 2934), 39 (no. 3335), 58 (no. 4070), 70 (no. 4402), 99 (no. 6651), 101 (no. 6774).

22 Hermann Degering and Emil Jacobs, *Neue Erwerbungen der Handschriftenabteilung, I. Lateinische und Deutsche Handschriftenerworben 1911* (Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1914), 1. The transcript, now Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preussischer Kulturbesitz, MS theol. lat. fol. 722, is a copy of Montpellier, Bibliothèque interuniversitaire, Section Médecine, MS H 410.

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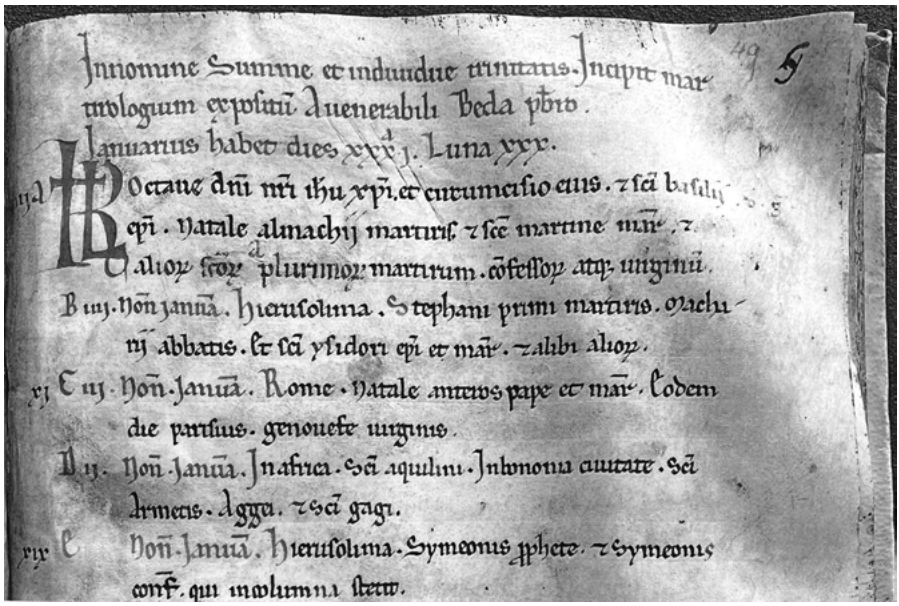


Figure 24.2. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Lat. liturg. d. 43, fol. 49.
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Historia ecclesiastica, to scientific works.[23] After Phillipps's death in 1872, Sir Edward A. Bond was contacted to conduct a valuation of the library as part of the probate process.[24] Correspondence between Samuel Higgs Gael, a trustee of the estate, and Bond reveals the difficulty of the task.[25] In a letter dated June 25, 1873, Gael wrote,

> There are 3 facts which I should also think right to be stated in your valuation: 1. Many of the MSS were not found in their places in the catalogue; 2. Many MSS are enlisted twice, Thus it appears that several in the list are also in the additional catalogue; 3. That a more complete catalogue & list could not be prepared (a) for want of time as it would take years to do this, (b) for lack of

23 Phillipps, *Phillipps Manuscripts*, 3 (nos. 255 and 256), 5–6 (nos. 460, 467), 9 (no. 816), 11–15 (nos. 902, 1022, 1056, 1089, 1092, 1159), 19–21 (nos. 1661, 1664, 1750, 1832, 1873, 1895), 26 (nos. 2166, 2225), 31 (nos. 2651, 2701), 35 (no. 3069), 75–76 (nos. 4605, 4642), 101 (no. 6774), 147 (no. 9310), 150 (no. 9428), 172 (no. 10614), 202 (no. 11727), 204 (no. 11825), 206 (no. 11902), 214–16 (nos. 12200, 12262, 12298).

24 On the dispersal of the collection, see Munby, *Phillipps Studies in Two Volumes*, 2.5; Anthony Hobson, "The Phillipps Sales," in *Out of Print & into Profit: A History of the Rare and Secondhand Book Trade in Britain in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Giles Mandelbrote (London: British Library, 2006), 157–64.

25 See New York, Grolier Club, Manuscripts and documents relating to the Bibliotheca Phillippica, 1794–1886 (bulk 1800–1864), RLIN ID No.: NYGG03-A12.

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> means. It would cost 20 per cent on the value of the MSS to catalogue them properly.[26]

Bond, did, however, manage to catalogue a portion of the uncatalogued and/or duplicated material. A copy of this catalogue now in the Bodleian Library describes Phillipps MS 24275 as "Regula de S. Benedict Saec XIII. Martyrologia &c."[27] Despite the rubric attributing the martyrology to Bede in the manuscript, it is unattributed in this catalogue (Figure 24.2). Moreover, this catalogue does not name any other martyrologies; it does, however, contain another three works attributed to Bede.[28] Finally, the volume of Heinrich Schenkl's *Bibliotheca Patrum Latinorum Britannica* dedicated to the Phillipps library, published in 1892, lists the contents of MS 24275 as "Regula S. Benedicti," "Lectionarium," "Capitula conventus Aquisgranensis," "Martyrologium Bedae," and "Obituarium," contrasting with previous catalogues' lack of attribution of the martyrology.[29] Including MS 24275, this catalogue identifies forty-seven works by Bede in the Phillipps collection, up to MS 30499.[30] The discrepancy in the quantity of works by Bede between the catalogues reveals that for Phillipps, and subsequently Bond on behalf of the trustees, the attribution of a text to Bede was not always worthy of note, or perhaps was not known. The *Regula S. Benedicti* was the patristic text of MS Lat. liturg. d. 43 that was considered noteworthy or was perhaps more easily identified, according to the catalogues, which mention it whenever the manuscript is described.

Although not amongst the last Phillipps manuscripts to be sold, MS 24275 was certainly not the first to find a new owner. Not included in the first twenty-two sales after Phillipps's death, the manuscript was part of the sale of the majority of the remainder of the collection to the Robinson brothers in 1946.[31] From there, it was included in one of nine sales allocated to Sotheby's.[32] The manuscript was purchased by Quaritch for £48 on December 1, 1947, and then became part of the collection of Francis Wormald.[33] The catalogue for this sale described the manuscript as:

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26 Grolier Club, Manuscripts and documents relating to the Bibliotheca Phillippica, RLIN ID No.: NYGG03-A12.

27 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Phillipps-Robinson e. 466, fol. 40r.

28 MS Phillipps-Robinson e. 466, fols. 44r, 76r, 77r.

29 Heinrich Schenkl, *Bibliotheca Patrum Latinorum Britannica*, 3 vols. (Vienna: C. Gerold's Sohn, 1891–1908), 1.2:150.

30 Schenkl, *Bibliotheca Patrum Latinorum*, 1.2:2–3 (nos. 163, 255–56), 16 (no. 407), 19 (nos. 460, 467), 20 (no. 474), 26–28 (nos. 816, 902), 32 (no. 1022), 34 (nos. 1056, 1089, 1092), 36 (no. 1159), 42–43 (nos. 1347, 2068), 45 (no. 2166), 48 (no. 2225), 51 (nos. 2651, 2701), 55 (no. 3069), 57 (no. 3131), 61 (no. 3615), 69 (no. 4240), 74 (no. 4605), 76–77 (nos. 4642, 4654), 81 (no. 4725), 87–88 (no. 6659), 107 (no. 9428), 111–13 (nos. 10614, 11727, 11825, 12200), 115 (no. 12262), 128 (no. 15601), 131 (nos. 16249, 16250), 143 (nos. 20680, 20713), 149–50 (nos. 23033, 23062, 24232, 24275), 152–53 (nos. 25137, 25402, 26075).

31 Hobson, "Phillipps Sales," 157.

32 Hobson, "Phillipps Sales," 157–58.

33 *Bibliotheca Phillippica. Catalogue of a Further Portion of the Renowned Library Formed by the Late Sir Thomas Phillipps…Which will be Sold by Auction…1st of December, 1947* (London: Sotheby

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> LECTIONARY. Regula S. P. Benedicæ. Lectionarium Sanctorum, et de Tempore Capitula Comentis … pro reformatione Status Monastici, Italian MS. on vellum of the 13th Century, with calendar, 85 [leaves] (*measuring 8 1/2in. by 6in.*), *numerous large initials in red, some with marginal pen ornamentation*, 4to, *vellum*.[34]

This list of contents is copied from, but does not reproduce in full, an early modern contents list on a front flyleaf of the manuscript. Although the "lectionary" would be classified as a chapter book today, this term was not developed until the late twentieth century.[35] Suggestively, neither "Bede" nor "martyrology" appears in the description. The relatively poor condition and number of similar manuscripts on the market were more influential upon its perceived valuation than the author or genre of its texts. Two leaves from a ninth-century martyrology appeared in the same sale, purchased by Bond for £42; the catalogue notes that, "leaves of such an early date in fine preservation are rare."[36] Another instance of this viewpoint is lot 109, a Psalter in a "remarkably clean state," "bright and clean," with illuminated miniatures.[37] By comparison, MS 24275 is neither of early date nor clean, and does not contain illuminations; the late twelfth- or early thirteenth-century manuscript includes traces of use such as marginal annotations, repairs to the parchment, and areas where parchment has been trimmed for other uses.[38] Some portions of the martyrology are damaged and difficult to read.[39] The dominant perspective at the time of what qualities make a manuscript valuable differs substantially from my perspective as an historian, in which material indications of use are some of the most important evidence for the purposes and significance of the manuscript during the Middle Ages. A well-known anecdote about A. N. L. Munby's early collecting of medieval manuscripts in which he repaired an automobile using "a thick leaf from a water stained and ruined Antiphonal" perfectly illustrates the discrepancy.[40] It is perhaps not coincidental that the leaf used to patch up the Bugatti was from a liturgical manuscript, pieces of which are commonly found as waste in late and post-medieval bindings.[41]

& Co., 1947), lot 83, p. 15; MS Lat. liturg. d. 43, front pastedown. On Wormald as a book collector, see Julian Brown, "Francis Wormald, 1904–1972," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 61 (1975): 522–60 at 532–59; A. S. G. Edwards, "A. N. L. Munby's Collecting of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts," *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 15.3 (2014): 57–72 at 65 notes that "collecting manuscripts was as an extension of [Wormald's] academic concerns."

34 *Bibliotheca Phillippica*, lot 83, p. 15.

35 Jean-Loup Lemaître, "Liber Capituli, Le Livre du chapitre, des origines au XVIe siècle: L'Exemple français," in *Memoria: der geschichtliche Zeugniswert des liturgischen Gedenkens im Mittelalter*, ed. Karl Schmid and Joachim Wollasch (Munich: Fink, 1984), 625–48.

36 *Biblioteca Phillippica*, lot 88, p. 16.

37 *Biblioteca Phillippica*, lot 109, p. 20 (a miniature from which is reproduced as pl. 3).

38 For instance, MS Lat. liturg. d. 43, fol. 53v.

39 See, for example, the lower portion of MS Lat. liturg. d. 43, fol. 69v.

40 Edwards, "Munby's Collecting," 59.

41 See, for instance, the ninth-century sacramentary now dispersed within the bindings of a

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As a liturgical text superseded in most places by Usuard's Martyrology and later by the Roman Martyrology, a manuscript copy of Bede's Martyrology would not have been of practical, liturgical interest to nineteenth- and twentieth-century Christians, even those in religious orders.

Bede's Martyrology was, however, set apart from other historical martyrologies by virtue of the early scholarly attention granted to its author. The sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries saw editions of the Martyrology created out of a desire to identify and reproduce the complete works of Bede.[42] In a similar vein, a number of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century scholars discussed Bede's Martyrology in relation to his larger body of work, largely due to his perceived status as a patristic author. The Martyrology was included in reconstructions of the library holdings of the Middle Ages by Gustav Becker in 1885, the *Mittelalterliche Bibliothekskataloge Deutschlands und der Schweiz* series from 1918, and Max Manitius in 1935.[43] The presence of texts by Bede in such lists reveal his perceived place in church and intellectual history, inevitably part of a larger progress narrative culminating in the present. Additionally, contemporary listings of medieval libraries and manuscripts reflected current geopolitics. Manitius remarked, "incidentally, with today's uncertain demarcation of borders between different countries in Europe, Germany is not only thought of in its great medieval extent, but the states of the north and east, which were dependent on its church and its culture, are also included (Poland, Hungary, Denmark, Scandinavia with Iceland)"—uncertain indeed in 1935.[44] As an "Anglo-Saxon [sic]," Bede would have been claimed as a Germanic thinker as well as an English one in nationalistic assessments of medieval scholarly and religious culture.[45] Further reflecting interest in Bede as a quasi-classical author, Charles Jones published on scientific texts falsely attributed to Bede in 1939, and M. L. W. Laistner and H. H. King published a list of extant manuscripts of his works in 1943, including a list of twenty-one copies of his Martyrology.[46] As discussed, in the case of Phillipps MS

number of manuscripts in the holdings of the Universitätsbibliothek Würzburg: Hans Thurn, *Die Pergamenthandschriften der ehemaligen Dombibliothek*, 3 vols. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1970–1984), 3.1:84.

42 See Bede, *Opera Bedae Venerabilis Presbyteri, Anglosaxonis*, ed. Johannes Hervagius, 8 vols. (Basel: Ioannem Heruagium, 1563), 3:cols. 380–486; Bede, *Venerabilis Bedae Presbyteri Anglo-Saxonis Viri Sua Aetate Doctissimi Opera Quotquot Reperiri Potuerunt Omnia*, ed. Antonius Hieratus and Ioannes Gymnicus, 8 vols. (Cologne: Sumptibus Antonij Hierai and Ioannis Gymnici, 1568–1630), 3:cols. 277–362; Bede, *Historiæ Ecclesiasticæ Gentis Anglorum: Libri Quinque*, ed. John Smith (Cambridge: Typis Academicis, 1722).

43 See Gustav Heinrich Becker, ed., *Catalogi Bibliothecarum Antiqui* (Bonn: Cohen et Filium (Fr. Cohen), 1885); Paul Lehmann et al. eds., *Mittelalterliche Bibliothekskataloge Deutschlands und der Schweiz*, 4 vols. and supplement (Munich: Beck, 1918–2009); Max Manitius, *Handschriften antiker Autoren in mittelalterlichen Bibliothekskatalog*, ed. Karl Manitius (Leipzig: Harrassowitz, 1935).

44 Manitius, *Handschriften*, vii–viii (my translation).

45 An example of the equation of Germanic and "Anglo-Saxon" culture, is, for instance, Manitius, *Handschriften*, 1.

46 Charles Williams Jones, *Bedae Pseudepigrapha: Scientific Writings Falsely Attributed to Bede*

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24275, understandings of Bede's importance as an author probably affected the perceived monetary and cultural value of manuscripts of his works.

Conversely, Bede's Martyrology first caught the attention of the liturgists in the late seventeenth century. The aim of these scholars—to trace the development of the monastic traditions and Roman liturgy of their time—and the editions produced through their efforts came to dominate scholarship on medieval liturgy.[47] Between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, earlier editions of Bede's text were consulted, re-edited, and reprinted; of particular note is the 1668 edition by the Bollandists.[48] At the beginning of the twentieth century there was still, however, no critical examination of Bede's text. One probable reason for this was that, as Laistner and King would later note, "extant MSS professing to contain Bede's Martyrology are very numerous, but the majority do not offer his original and uninterpolated work; for this type of hagiographical composition was added to and worked over in different localities, until the Bedan core was scarcely recognizable under the mass of later accretions."[49] Early scholarship on martyrologies was also not overly favourable towards Bede's text. In his book on martyrologies published in 1900, Hans Achelis identified the Hieronymian Martyrology as the richest source of information about the early Christian church, and therefore the most important example of the genre.[50] He declared, "church history is interested in the MH, not in the later works," although he did acknowledge that, "Bede tried to make a fresh start, and his work was prominent for a time."[51] Quentin, however, did not agree with Achelis's poor assessment of historical martyrologies and even attempted to create a full edition of the various examples for the Bollandists' *Acta Sanctorum*.[52] In a letter to Albert Poncelet dated June 12, 1901, Quentin wrote, "I have received and copied or collated all the manuscripts of Bede which served your elders and many others still (about 30, just for Bede)."[53] On June 15, Poncelet replied enthusiastically, "for years I

(Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1939); M. L. W. Laistner and H. H. King, *A Hand-List of Bede Manuscripts* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1943).

47 Eric Palazzo, *A History of Liturgical Books: From the Beginning to the Thirteenth Century*, trans. Madeleine Beaumont (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1998), 20.

48 See Bede, "Martyrologium Venerabilis Bedae Presbyteri Ex Octo Antiquis MSS. Acceptum, Cum Auctario Flori Ex Trium Codicum Collatione Discreto," in *Acta Sanctorum: Martii Tomus Secundus*, ed. Godefroid Henskens and Daniel Papebroch, 60 vols. (Paris: Palmé, 1863–1870), 8:v–xl; Bede, "Martyrologium, cum auctario, notis et appendicibus," in *Venerabilis Bedæ Anglosaxonis Presbyteri Opera Omnia. Tomus Quintus*, ed. Jacques Paul Migne, Patrologia Cursus Completus Series Latina 94 (Paris: Apud editorem, 1850), cols. 797–1148.

49 Laistner and King, *Hand-List*, 90–91.

50 Hans Achelis, *Die Martyrologien: Ihre Geschichte und ihr Wert* (Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1900).

51 Achelis, *Martyrologien*, 239, 233 (my translation).

52 See Bernard Joassart, ed., *Éditer les martyrologes, Henri Quentin et les Bollandistes, Correspondance* (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 2009), 16–23.

53 Joassart, ed., *Éditer les martyrologes*, 53 (my translation). "Elders" here refers to the seventeenth-century edition of Bede's text by the Bollandists.

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have regretted not having on hand a sure text of Ado…and moreover an authentic text of Bede."[54] Although Quentin did not complete the edition, his book on historical martyrologies, published early in the twentieth century, remains useful today. The study of this text would not seriously resume until the work of Jacques Dubois in the mid and late twentieth century.[55]

How, then, might the pre-1945 trade in medieval manuscripts have affected and been affected by scholarship on Bede and his Martyrology? There were some divergences. Scholars of Bede's text at the time did not examine the material and codicological contexts of the manuscripts they studied. Booksellers and book-buyers, conversely, explicitly valued manuscripts with certain material characteristics. Many of the broad facets, however, are similar. Both groups did not view traces of use as significant. Certain scholars and collectors felt a national or even ethnic affiliation with Bede as an author that inflected their activities. It is probable that the authenticity of the text, and how difficult it was to determine, was central to both scholarly and economic assessments of Bede's Martyrology. Both collectors and scholars viewed the Martyrology as peripheral to contemporary religious practice. The emphasis on the Roman Martyrology in the work of Quentin, Dubois, and their contemporaries partially explains the attention given to Usuard's Martyrology, assessed as the later martyrology's direct ancestor.[56] Conversely, Bede himself was much more important than his Martyrology for most academics and collectors.

54 Joassart, ed., *Éditer les martyrologes*, 55 (my translation).

55 See Jacques Dubois, *Les Martyrologes du Moyen Âge latin* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1978); Jacques Dubois, "Obituaires et martyrologes," in *L'Église et la mémoire des morts dans la France médiévale* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1986), 119–32; Jacques Dubois, *Martyrologes d'Usuard au Martyrologe romain: Articles réédités pour son soixante-dixième anniversaire* (Abbeville: Paillart, 1990); Jacques Dubois and Jean-Loup Lemaître, *Sources et méthodes de l'hagiographie médiévale* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1993).

56 Quentin, *Les martyrologes historiques*, 4.

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Chapter 25

MANUSCRIPTS AND MEANING

THE BIOGRAPHY AND VALUE OF JOHN RUSKIN'S BLUE PSALTER, BRUSSELS, BIBLIOTHÈQUE ROYALE DE BELGIQUE (KBR), MS IV 1013

ALAN MITCHELL

WHAT'S IT WORTH? Oscar Wilde described a cynic as "a man who knows the price of everything, and the value of nothing," and a sentimentalist as "a man who sees an absurd value in everything."[1] The value of a rare book or manuscript can be measured in a range of ways, by its content, its historic significance, or perhaps less objectively by its artistic merit. A price realized at auction might give a simplistic answer to its financial worth, but even this barely hints at the impetus behind the zeal of the winning bidder. Why was a wealthy collector (or museum curator) willing to pay a certain price to acquire a particular volume at a specific date? What was the inspiration that drove their fervour? Jealousy, greed, rivalry in the saleroom? Christopher de Hamel has described book collecting as, "a strange disease" in which a passion can easily turn into an obsession, "the chase and the joyful triumph of acquisition."[2]

Provenance research can not only tell us who owned a manuscript or book at a particular time or place, but perhaps more interestingly may reveal a whole range of clues to the interface between the material object and its users.[3] Throughout a manuscript's life, owning it, seeing it, and touching it, will have impacted and enriched a succession of individuals' lives. Each user will have chosen different criteria through which to assess its value, not necessarily measurable or objective criteria, but often highly personal and subjective ones. As a case study, this chapter considers a thirteenth-century manuscript

1 Oscar Wilde, *Lady Windermere's Fan* (London: Mathews and Lane, 1893), 95.

2 Christopher de Hamel, "Cockerell as Collector," *The Book Collector* 55 (Autumn 2006): 339–66 at 354.

3 For a broader discussion of these themes, see David Pearson, *Provenance Research in Book History* (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 2019).

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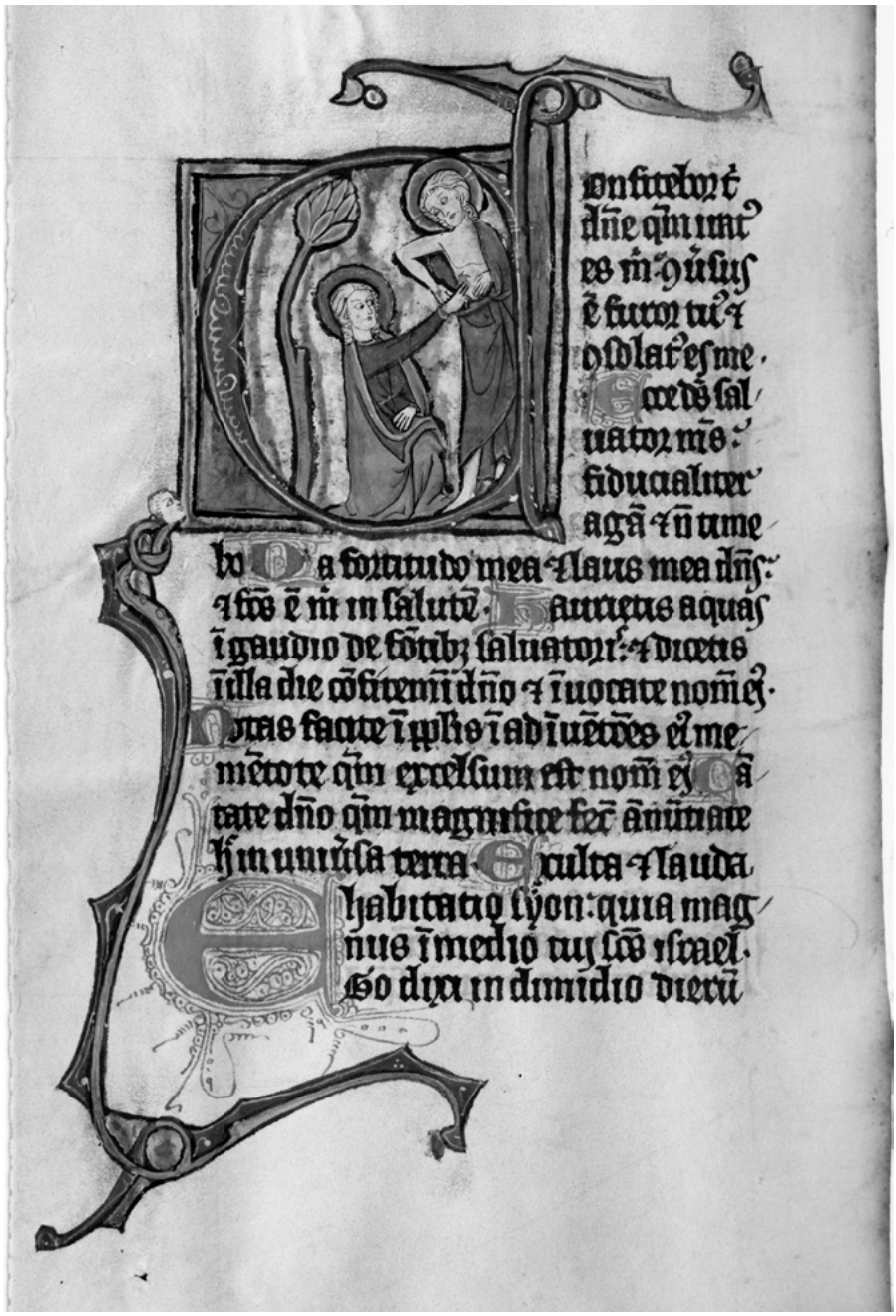


Figure 25.1. Christ and Mary Magdalene, The Blue Psalter, Liège, mid-thirteenth century. Ink and gold leaf on vellum, 14.8 × 9.8 cm. KBR, MS IV 1013, fol. 153v. Copyright KBR.

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now held in the KBR (the Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique in Brussels), which I will refer to as the Blue Psalter, a name given to it by John Ruskin when it was in his collection.[4]

The Blue Psalter is one of a group of around forty surviving manuscripts made in the Mosan region around Liège in modern-day Belgium between 1250 and 1330. More accurately it should be described as a Psalter-Hours, comprising a Calendar and Psalter, followed by six Old Testament canticles, prayers, the Hours of the Virgin, and Office of the Dead. It has 250 folios, measuring 14.8 × 9.8 cm, with twenty-four miniatures on the calendar pages, a full-page *Beatus* and twenty-one historiated initials. The borders are enriched with plump ivy leaves and distinctive spiky extensions from pinwheel terminals stretching out from the bodies of exotic creatures (Figure 25.1).

Judith Oliver has dated the manuscript to ca. 1280 and suggested it was probably made by an artist arriving in the region from Paris, adopting local iconographic styles, almost certainly for one of the beguinages in Liège.[5] It was probably a private commission, a gift from a wealthy or aristocratic family to a daughter or widow when she entered a beguinage. A clue is in the feminine forms used in some of the prayers, for example there is a petition for "*ton ancelle*" (your handmaiden) (fol. 8), and some of the women depicted in the imagery have the *falie*, the white veil and mantle characteristic of beguine dress. In the litany, the prayers between the Psalter and the Offices (fols. 162–67), there are two mentions of Lucia, perhaps a reference to the name of the original owner. The manuscript's initial value, its meaning, its worth, was linked (in part at least) to its role as a liturgical resource. The criterion which it needed to meet to fulfil its purpose was that it had all the psalms and offices that a beguine would require for her daily prayer.

The original owner would have taken the manuscript into the beguinage and on her death, say in the early 1300s, the manuscript probably remained there. There is an addition to the calendar for August 29, 1349 (fol. 4v) which invites us to pray for another woman, Agnes, wife of Odonis de Soumagne, a town close to Liège. As far as we can tell, this is where the manuscript remained until the early nineteenth century when most of the beguinages closed and unwanted liturgical resources were sold off relatively cheaply to the new generation of collectors. At some point its value transitioned from being a personal prayer book to an asset kept in a treasury that could be sold off to the highest bidder, a spiritual value morphing into a financial value.

The manuscript emerges again in the collection of John Ruskin: artist, author, critic, but also collector. As James Dearden observed, "Ruskin had the means to allow his collecting instincts to run riot."[6] He began collecting illuminated manuscripts around 1850, an excellent window of opportunity before the international trade really took off. Ruskin wrote to Sir Charles Newton on January 20, 1854, "If you come across any very interest-

4 The Blue Psalter, KBR, MS IV 1013, Liège, ca. 1280; James S. Dearden, *The Library of John Ruskin* (Oxford: Oxford Bibliographical Society, 2012), 266.

5 Judith Oliver, *Gothic Manuscript Illumination in the Diocese of Liege (c.1250–c.1330)* (Leuven: Peeters, 1988), 248.

6 James S. Dearden, "John Ruskin, the Collector, With a Catalogue of the Illuminated and Other Manuscripts formerly in his Collection," *The Library* 21 (1966): 124–56 at 124.

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ing MS.—interesting I mean in *art*, for I don't care about old texts—and can secure it for me, I will instantly reimburse you to the extent of fifty pounds; only I should expect a great deal for that price out of those old convent lumber-rooms."[7] Ruskin has a contested reputation among bibliophiles due to the stories of his cutting up medieval manuscripts, for example, the well-known comment in his diary on January 3, 1854: "cut missal up in evening—hard work."[8] De Hamel, however, has argued that such examples have been exaggerated: "Of almost a hundred illuminated manuscripts owned personally by Ruskin, he removed and gave away sample leaves—in fact—of only four, two of which had already been partially dismembered by Jarman."[9] To Ruskin a medieval manuscript was "a means towards an end," to be used as much as a teaching tool as a collector's item.[10] He was not planning to sell off manuscript fragments as would soon become the fashion. Instead, his actions were tied to his passion as an educator.[11] He framed individual pages, shared them, and used them for his lectures in Oxford. He took a pragmatic approach and yet, after he set up the Guild of St George Museum in Sheffield in 1877, he sent the curator, Henry Swan, a Bible saying, "This will baptise their eyes," suggesting a performative, quasi-sacramental value.[12]

It is not clear when the Blue Psalter was purchased by Ruskin, but it was in his collection by 1862, because on January 3 that year he gave it away, to Rose La Touche, the young Irish girl with whom he was infatuated, on her fourteenth birthday. The Blue Psalter documents this through an inscription on the front flyleaf: "Posie with St C's love." Posie was Ruskin's nickname for Rose; St C is an abbreviation for St Crumpet, her nickname for Ruskin.[13] Ruskin had first met Rose when she was only nine in 1858 and by the 1860s she featured regularly in his diaries and letters "not just as a favourite drawing pupil…but as a force for stability in his unsettled life, and almost as a spiritual guide."[14] From our twenty-first century perspective, this immediately rings alarm bells of possible grooming behaviour, a middle-aged man, a celebrity, giving gifts to a young, impres-

7 Letter from Ruskin to Sir Charles Newton, January 20, 1854, Edward Tyas Cook and Alexander Dundas Ogilvy Wedderburn eds., *The Works of John Ruskin*, 39 vols (London: Allen, 1903–1912), 36:162.

8 Joan Evans and John Howard Whitehouse eds., *The Diaries of John Ruskin* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1956–1959), 488.

9 Christopher de Hamel, *Cutting up Manuscripts for Pleasure and Profit* (Charlottesville: Book Arts Press, 1996), 14. For the exploits of J. B. Jarman, see Janet Backhouse, "A Victorian Connoisseur and his Manuscripts: The Tale of Mr. Jarman and Mr. Wing," *BMQ* 32.4 (1968): 76–92.

10 Roger S. Wieck, "*Folio Fugitiva*: The Pursuit of the Illuminated Manuscript Leaf," *The Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* 54 (1996): 233–54 at 241.

11 See also Stella Panayotova, "A Ruskinian Project with a Cockerellian Flavour," *The Book Collector* 54 (2005): 357–74.

12 Alice H. R. H. Beckwith, *Victorian Bibliomania* (Providence: Museum of Art, 1987), 12.

13 The significance of nicknames is discussed in Linda M. Austin, "Ruskin and Rose at Play with Words," *Criticism* 28 (1986): 409–425.

14 John Lewis Bradley and Ian Ousby, *The Correspondence of John Ruskin and Charles Eliot Norton* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 24.

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sionable teenager.[15] On the other hand, the gift of a Book of Hours was not an uncommon practice in this period and later that year, Ruskin also gave a Book of Hours to Rose's sister Emily for her eighteenth birthday on March 15, 1862.[16] Anthropologists still debate gift theory and how best to understand material gifts which may be seen to represent a physical embodiment of love, but which tacitly announce an expectation of reciprocity.[17]

What possible value might a medieval manuscript have had to Rose? There is a prayer that begins Ave Rose florie (fol. 246) that may have appealed, and we know she had a strong religious faith. The fragment of her diary that has survived from 1867 when she was nineteen is more like a spiritual autobiography, littered with quotations from the gospels and the psalms.[18] Ruskin had numbered the folios of the Psalter and on a rear flyleaf highlighted the psalms that begin each section and the images that match the Offices. Perhaps he hoped that Rose might use it as a prayer book again. At Ruskin's suggestion she studied Greek from the age of thirteen so it is possible she may have been able to read the psalms in Latin.[19]

Ruskin proposed marriage to Rose on her eighteenth birthday in 1866. She turned him down and her parents refused him permission to see her when she visited London. She died, unmarried, aged twenty-seven on May 26, 1875. The Psalter is mentioned in Ruskin's diary again on July 8, 1875 so presumably had been returned to him by her parents.[20] The relationship between Rose's parents and Ruskin had deteriorated from 1868 onwards after they were in contact with his former wife, Effie (married to John Millais in 1855) and one can imagine that the manuscript had a contested or even negative value. Perhaps they wanted rid of it, something symbolic of part of their daughter's life they would rather not remember. However, if a gift has value to the recipient, it may also have ongoing significance to the giver. While it is hard to conjecture the importance of the Psalter to Rose, when it returned to Ruskin its sentimental, emotional value may have increased. He kept her letters and a lock of her hair in a rosewood box, a shrine to her memory.[21] Perhaps the Psalter lived there too.

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15 For commentary on the relationship between Ruskin and La Touche, see Tim Hilton, *John Ruskin: The Later Years* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 262–64.

16 Dearden, *Library of John Ruskin*, 172.

17 For gift theory, see John Sherry, "Gift Giving in Anthropological Perspective," *Journal of Consumer Research* 10 (1983): 157–68.

18 Van Akin Burd, ed., *John Ruskin and Rose La Touche: Her Unpublished Diaries of 1861 and 1867* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979).

19 Burd ed., *John Ruskin and Rose La Touche*, 110. See also, Rayner Unwin ed., *Gulf of Years: Love letters from John Ruskin to Kathleen Olander* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1953), 63.

20 Ruskin Diary RF MS 20, pp. 18ff, 1875, cited in Dearden, *Library of John Ruskin*, 267. Emily's Book of Hours was not returned but was inherited by her daughter. In the 1940s both Rose's Psalter and Emily's Hours were reunited in J. R. Abbey's collection.

21 Cook and Wedderburn, *The Works of John Ruskin*, 35:lxxvi; Wilfrid Blunt, *Sydney Carlyle Cockerell, Friend of Ruskin and William Morris and Director of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge* (London: Hamilton, 1964), 41.

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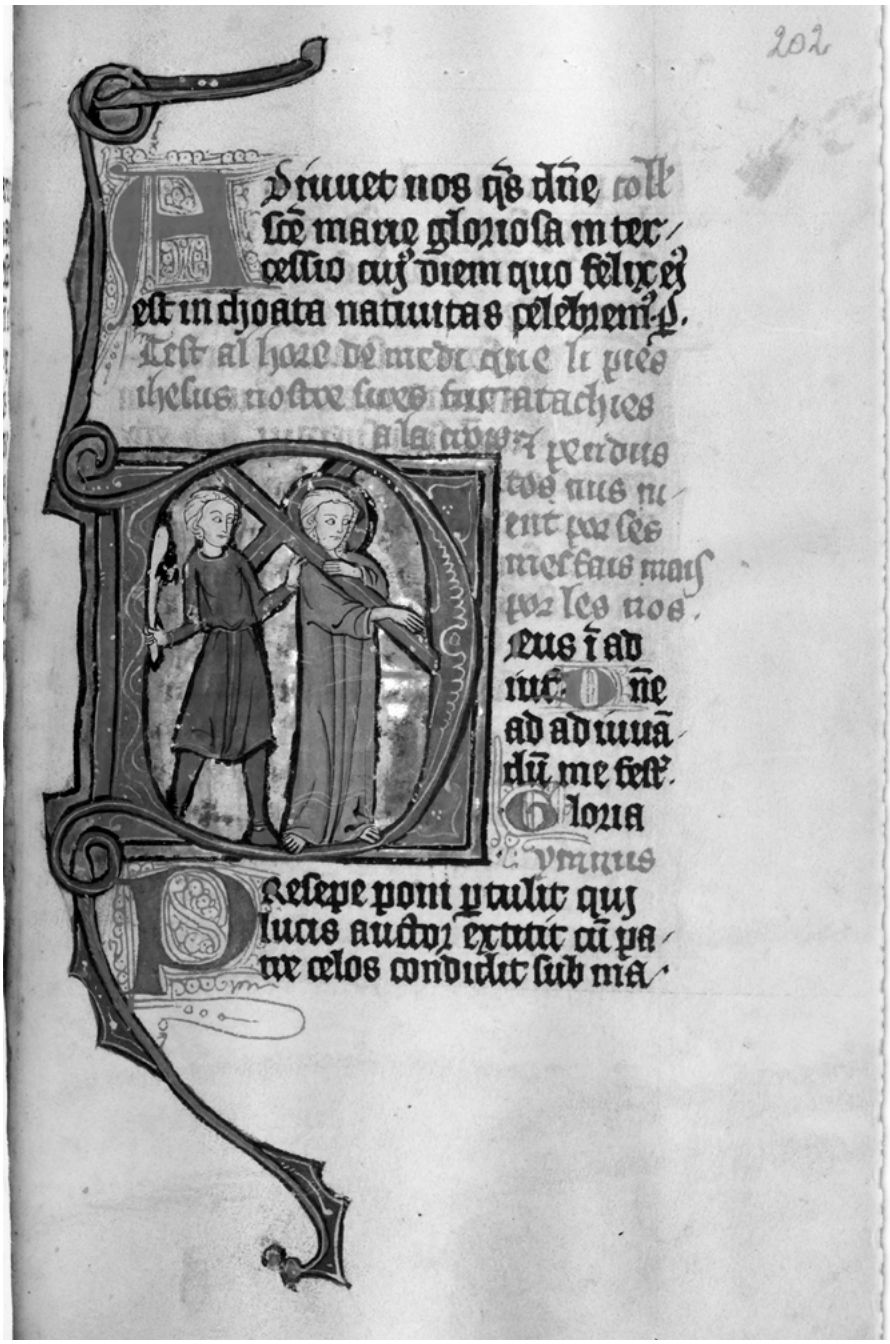


Figure 25.2. Christ carrying the cross, The Blue Psalter, Liège, mid-thirteenth century. Ink and gold leaf on vellum, 14.8 × 9.8 cm. KBR, MS IV 1013, fol. 202r. Copyright KBR.

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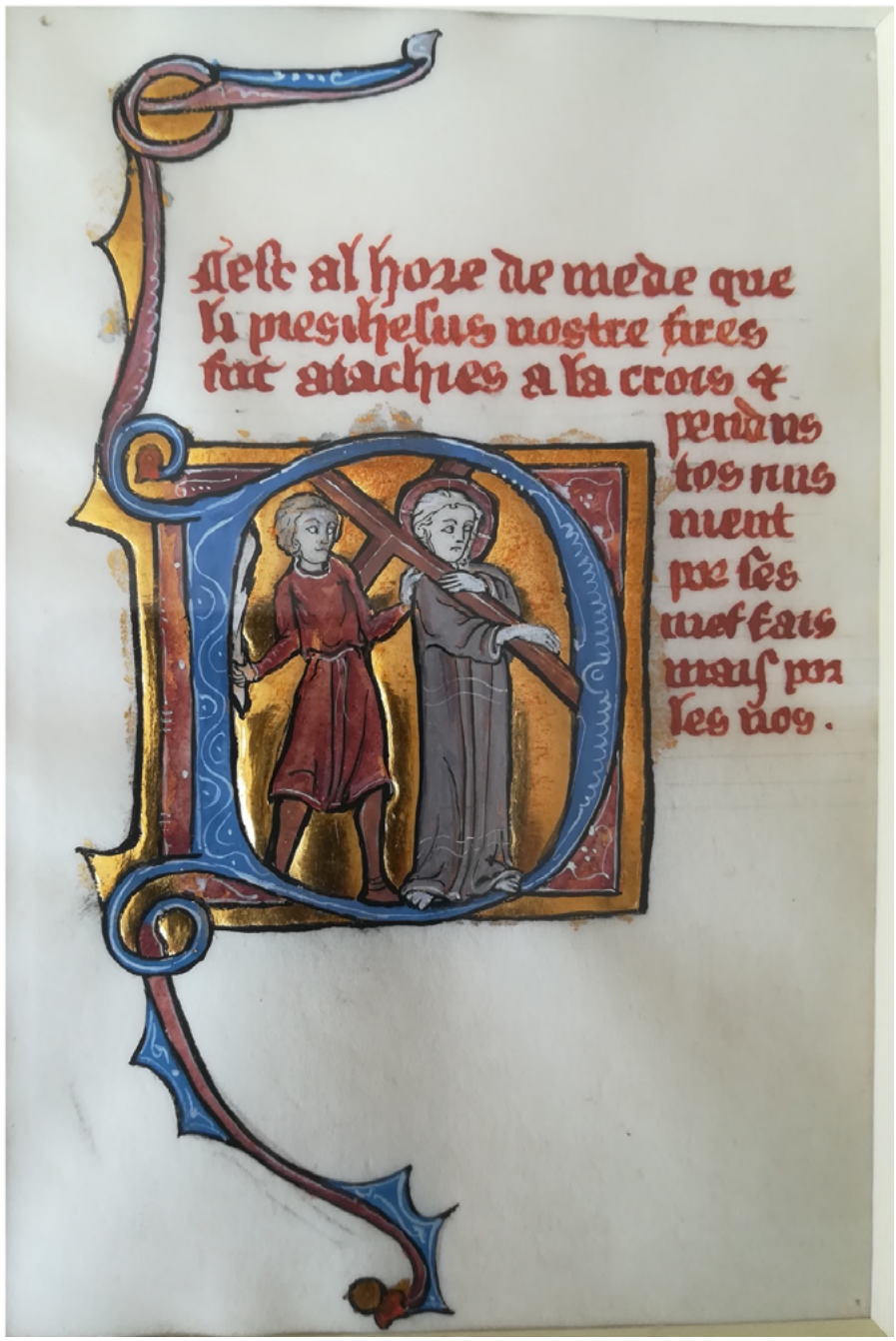


Figure 25.3. Christ carrying the cross copied by Phoebe Anna Traquair, ca. 1887. Ink, watercolour and gold leaf on vellum, 12.4 × 9.6 cm. Private collection.

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More than twenty years later, in 1887, Ruskin sent the Blue Psalter to another young woman. This time it was Phoebe Anna Traquair, a young Irish artist living in Edinburgh whom he had never met. It seems that she had written to him asking for advice on illumination and he responded by saying that the best way to learn is from studying the medieval masters. He loaned her the thirteenth-century Brantwood Bible and then the Blue Psalter, "I send you another book, more interesting than anything I have yet asked you to examine. Keep it as long as you care to."[22]

Traquair made copies of the historiated initials in the Blue Psalter in inks and gold leaf on fine vellum, a formative process in her artistic development (Figures 25.2 and 25.3).[23] She would go on to become one of the leading Arts and Crafts artists in Scotland and made some of the finest illuminated books of the modern era, including her version of Dante Gabriel Rossetti's *Willowwood* sonnets (Figure 25.4).

The meaning and value of the Blue Psalter to Traquair was as an exemplar to be copied. This reflects what we see in the different acquisition policies at this period of the British Museum, which valued items for their historic importance, and the South Kensington Museum (later the V&A), whose collection was specifically intended to be a source of design history to inspire contemporary artists. The latter probably had the most impact in shaping popular views in Victorian medievalism.

In 1854 Ruskin wrote that he, "would infinitely rather own a finely illuminated book than a picture…a beloved thing, to be handed down from father to son, and from generation to generation."[24] This indeed is exactly what happened to Traquair's copy of the Blue Psalter which was passed down through her family. It was sold at auction in Edinburgh in July 2000 after which it was broken up and the individual pages framed and sold off.[25] Perhaps this is a good compromise, the original Psalter is preserved but the copy has been dispersed into private collections.

Traquair returned the manuscript and Ruskin referred to it for a final time in his diary in 1889.[26] He died in January 1900 and the Blue Psalter was sold in 1905 to another famous collector who added his bookplate to the inside cover, "FROM THE LIBRARY OF / C. H. St JOHN HORNBY / SHELLEY HOUSE, CHELSEA." What is the material evidence telling us here? A bookplate is much more than a sign of ownership, it is symbolic of power, possession, wealth, and pride. In a similar way, the binding history is intrinsic to the manuscript's story. The current binding is by Katherine Adams and at the bottom of the verso of the first fly leaf, she has written in red ink, "Rebound by K. Adams 1905." There is also a stamp on the bottom margin in the centre, "BOUND BY HAYDAY." James

22 Letter from Ruskin to Traquair, June 23,1887, now bound with *The Dream*, Victoria & Albert Museum, MSL/1936/1765. Earlier in 1887 Ruskin had loaned Traquair the Brantwood Bible (now BL, Yates Thompson MS 22) which he had bought from Quaritch in 1876.

23 Alan Mitchell, "John Ruskin and Phoebe Anna Traquair: Medieval Manuscripts and the Scottish Arts and Crafts Tradition," *British Art Journal* 23.2 (2022): 66–72.

24 Cook and Wedderburn, *Works of John Ruskin*, 12:484–85.

25 *Shapes Auctioneers*, July 1, 2000 (Edinburgh: Shapes Auctioneers, 2000), lot 39.

26 Ruskin Diary RF MS 10a, p. 152, 1889, cited in Dearden, *Library of John Ruskin*, 267.

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Figure 25.4. D. G. Rossetti, "Willowwood III" by Phoebe Anna Traquair, 1890. Ink, watercolour and gold leaf on vellum, 19.3 × 15 cm. National Museums Scotland, K.2010.58.3. Image © National Museums Scotland.

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Hayday was active in London in the 1840s and 50s. He was sometimes commissioned to do presentation bindings and in 1851 at the Great Exhibition he showed an example "in morocco in a style suitable for ecclesiastical books."[27] Ruskin always referred to the manuscript as his Blue Psalter and Dearden suggested that perhaps the current midnight-blue morocco was Adams giving a nod to the previous binding (presumably by Hayday) that it had enjoyed when owned by Ruskin.[28] The 1905 date suggests it was rebound when Hornby acquired the manuscript although again we might query his motivation. It seems unlikely that the binding was falling apart. It had been passed around quite happily between Ruskin, La Touche in Ireland, and Traquair in Scotland in its previous state. However, a fine binding is much more than a protective covering; it is another symbol of ownership. Over one hundred bindings for Hornby by Adams are known and he used her as a binder for Ashendene Press books from 1902. To some collectors, a binding may even include a sensual element. Sydney Cockerell once wrote, "I think I must one day put all my beautiful Katie bindings in a row, & caress them in turn."[29]

The value of a manuscript, and the reputation of a collector, can be enhanced when it is shown to other connoisseurs or put on display to the general public. In 1908 Hornby loaned the Blue Psalter to the spectacular exhibition of illuminated manuscripts held at the Burlington Fine Arts Club in London.[30] Over two hundred manuscripts were gathered from all the major collectors of the period, seventeen from Henry Yates Thompson, eighteen from J. Pierpont Morgan, fifty from Charles Dyson Perrins, and just one from Hornby: the Blue Psalter.

Cockerell, so often the spider in the web pulling various threads that connect networks, was effectively the curator of the exhibition. He never owned the Blue Psalter, but he made his mark on it, literally, in a sequence of notes dated 1907 on the verso of the flyleaf which carries Ruskin's inscription to Rose. Cockerell had first met Ruskin at Easter 1887, curiously the weekend that Traquair was in correspondence with Ruskin.[31] It is certainly conceivable that Cockerell would have had the opportunity to handle the Blue Psalter at this time. His biographer Wilfred Blunt records that in the following year, 1888, "Cockerell was even allowed to take his turn at holding the precious rosewood box."[32]

The 1907 notes suggest that Cockerell had been doing serious research on Liège psalters, perhaps in preparation for the 1908 exhibition. In 1920 he added further notes to the manuscript in a different ink (presumably with Hornby's permission) noting that

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27 Howard M. Nixon, *Five Centuries of English Bookbinding* (London: Scolar Press, 1978), 202.

28 Dearden, *Library of John Ruskin*, 267.

29 Letter from Cockerell to Adams, cited in Christopher de Hamel, "Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts from the Library of Sir Sydney Cockerell," *British Library Journal* 13 (1987): 186–210 at 192.

30 [Sydney Cockerell], *Burlington Fine Arts Club: Exhibition of Illuminated Manuscripts* (London: Burlington Fine Arts Club, 1908), 57.

31 Letter from Traquair to Ruskin April12, 1887 (the Tuesday after Easter Sunday) in which she thanks him for the loan of the Brantwood Bible. Mack Collection L101, Ruskin Library, University of Lancaster.

32 Blunt, *Sydney Carlyle Cockerell*, 41.

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one of the Liège books with which he had earlier compared the Blue Psalter was now in the Fitzwilliam Museum where he was director from 1908 to 1937.[33] The value of the manuscript to Cockerell in this context was as a scholar and researcher identifying an important survivor of a particular school of illumination from the thirteenth century. Cockerell however was a complex personality, not only a curator, but also a collector, fixer, and go-between. The Psalter may also have had a commercial value to him. After Ruskin's death, Cockerell visited Brantwood again from April 4 to 11, 1902, and he advised Joan and Arthur Severn on how best to dispose of Ruskin's collection. He purchased two manuscripts for himself and negotiated the sale of items to Yates Thompson.[34] He almost certainly also played a part in the sale of the Blue Psalter to Hornby a few years later. Hornby bought it from the Severns for £150 in June 1905 and Cockerell's diary records a payment of £15 received from Hornby on 21 June which looks remarkably like a 10% commission on the sale.[35] In 1902 he had turned down the offer of a commission on the Yates Thompson's sales instead asking the Severns, "to be entrusted with the rebinding of all of the illuminated manuscripts then in fragments at Brantwood."[36] Cockerell may also have played a part in having the Blue Psalter rebound by Adams for Hornby.[37]

Hornby died on April 26, 1946, and on September 16, Major J. R. Abbey purchased twenty-nine manuscripts from his collection. Cockerell was given the responsibility of dispersing Hornby's library, and he offered Abbey first refusal to buy Hornby's medieval manuscripts *en bloc*, but demanded an answer within just twelve hours. Abbey took the bait and bought the complete collection, including the Blue Psalter, for the offer price of £40,000, an excellent example of an avaricious collector purchasing a complete library from a previous owner.[38] Perhaps he did not particularly want the Blue Psalter, but he did want the kudos of owning or preserving Hornby's collection.

Abbey added his bookplate and then he too loaned the manuscript out for exhibitions including the Arts Council exhibition, *Ruskin and his Circle* in 1964.[39] In the exhibition catalogue the Ruskin provenance is discussed in detail. By the 1960s, the manuscript's value to Abbey, and probably its financial value, was enhanced by its previous

33 Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, MS 288, Liege, ca. 1280, no. 142 (page 68, plate 97) in the catalogue of the 1908 Burlington Exhibition. Cockerell's notebooks, including one on Psalters, are now at Senate House Library, MS 809/box 13/1.

34 Christopher de Hamel, "Cockerell as Entrepreneur," *The Book Collector* 55 (2006): 49–72 at 61. Ruskin purchased a Bible (now BL, Add. MS 52778) and the Ruskin Hours (now Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, MS Ludwig IX 3 (83.ML.99)); Yates Thompson purchased the Psalter of Isabelle of France (now Fitzwilliam MS 300) and the Brantwood Bible (now BL, Yates Thompson MS 22).

35 Dearden, *Library of John Ruskin*, lxxxv; BL, Add. MS 52642, fol. 77v.

36 Correspondence between Cockerell and Joan Severn, Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, MS 54-2002. See also Dearden, *Library of John Ruskin*, lxxxiii.

37 Dearden, *Library of John Ruskin*, xxix.

38 A. R. A. Hobson and A. N. L. Munby, "Contemporary Collectors XXVI John Roland Abbey," *The Book Collector* 10.1 (1961): 40–48 at 42.

39 *Ruskin and his Circle* (London: Arts Council of Great Britain, 1964), no. 174.

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ownership, whereas in 1908 the Burlington catalogue omitted to mention that it was once owned by Ruskin. Perhaps in the 1900s the Ruskin name did not "add value" in the same way that it did by the 1960s and certainly does today. There is a prescient line in a letter of April 11, 1880, from Ruskin to Bernard Quaritch when he was offloading excess books from his collection:

> My shelves are too short for my books—and my life for the reading of them… You will find here and there a good book among them—and a few signed as mine, which on that ground may perhaps be thought worth houseroom by foolish people, some day or other.[40]

Abbey went on to amass a collection of over 1,300 books and manuscripts. When he died in 1969 his library was sold, raising almost £1,000,000. The Blue Psalter was lot 2915 in a sale on June 4, 1974, where it was purchased by Maggs Brothers.[41] Finally, on November 9, 1974, it was acquired by the KBR for £19,800.[42] Had it been bought by a library in the United States it might be fully digitized by now and therefore accessible to scholars, but in Belgium it has a local meaning, a heritage value. It has returned nearer to Liège, its place of creation eight hundred years ago, and therefore can be interpreted in the context of research into the beguinages of the thirteenth century and contribute to debates on repatriation.

The Blue Psalter has been a prized possession of its various owners over the centuries, but they will have had very different reasons for valuing its importance. We could consider the value of a Book of Hours solely through the lens of its function as a prayer book, its original use. The manuscript quite clearly has been used; many thumbs have left their dirty marks on the bottom right-hand corner of each folio. Yet today its spiritual value as a prayer book is minimal. A prayer book in a library is rather like a silent violin in a museum display cabinet; it hints at the promise of something more precious than itself.

From its birth this was also more than just a prayer book. The ornamentation is not merely ornamental. The illuminations enhance the visual appeal but also draw attention to the owner's status, wealth, and good taste. It has always had a financial value and must have been a costly project when it was first commissioned, though when the beguinage closed its resale value was probably low. Perhaps Ruskin got a bargain. Nevertheless, he was happy to give it away to La Touche for nothing. Its free loan to Traquair was inspirational. She may not have honed her skills and become the mature artist we know today if it had not been for Ruskin's encouragement and affirmation.

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40 Letter from Ruskin to Quaritch, April 11, 1880, Charlotte Quaritch Wrentmore ed., *Letters to Bernard Quaritch, 1867–88* (London: Quaritch Ltd, 1938), 24. Many of these books were sold at auction a few months later at Puttick & Simpson, *Catalogue of an Assemblage of Fine Books, Books of Prints & Manuscripts*, June 30–July 1, 1880 (London: Puttick & Simpson, 1880), with the heading, "Many of them having the autograph of John Ruskin." See, Dearden, *Library of John Ruskin*, lxxix.

41 *Catalogue of The Celebrated Library of the late Major J. R. Abbey: The Eighth Portion…4th June 1974* (London: Sotheby & Co., 1974), lot 2915. Sold to Maggs Brothers for £17,000.

42 KBR accessions register, November 9, 1974.

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Of course, the manuscript's survival has been of value to scholars. To the cultural historian, it is a tangible artefact that complements contemporary texts and imagery in other sources. Its public display in exhibitions will have helped to shape popular attitudes, informing both Victorian and twentieth-century medievalisms. While art historians tend to fetishize the original state of an artwork as it left its maker's studio, this methodology instead revels in a manuscript's successive incarnations across its timeline and through the hands of successive owners. The annotations, the binding history, the provenance, all add to the story and to the manuscript's value. The Blue Psalter's importance, and the criteria on which its meaning has been assessed, has ebbed and flowed as it has passed through the hands of different collectors, scholars, dealers, librarians, and curators, not forgetting the women, Lucia in the beguinage, Rosie the teenager, and Phoebe Anna the artist.

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Chapter 26

TRANSLATION, TRADITION, AND TRACING THE HISTORY OF AN IRISH MANUSCRIPT PRIMER

NORA MORONEY

IN 2011, QUEEN Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom visited the Republic of Ireland in what was widely hailed as an "historic" and culturally significant occasion. She was the first British monarch to visit the neighbouring country in over a century. As part of the state visit, the queen was presented with a facsimile of a sixteenth-century manuscript entitled *Treatise on the Irish Language and Alphabet*, more generally known as the Irish Language Primer. It was a gesture of particular symbolic resonance. Originally written for Queen Elizabeth I (nominally in order for her to interact with her Irish subjects), its historic parallels and royal provenance were considered fitting for the occasion. In its intended use as a language primer or grammar, it embodied notions of cultural meeting, interaction, and crossover that had been woven through Anglo-Irish relations since the era of the first Elizabeth. Indeed, central to coverage of the two-day event in 2011 were questions of language and culture, with the five words of Irish spoken by the British monarch at a state dinner highlighted by commentators as a meaningful acknowledgement of her recent gift.[1] The facsimile of the *Treatise*—itself a rare book, as only two official copies exist—now resides in the Royal Collection. The choice of this manuscript as the official state gift was therefore an illuminating gesture, foregrounding Ireland's rich history of manuscript and print culture and underpinned with political symbolism.

As a document, the primer can help us to understand the value and visibility of the Irish language throughout its history. Tracing the movement of the manuscript across space and time—establishing its "antiquarian footprint," in other words—is a valuable exercise in bringing to light not only the primer's importance to early Irish language development on the page, but how it has been perceived and presented. Its material history can be mapped broadly onto the shifting value of Irish language history in a collector's market, though, as always, care should be taken in conflating financial value with cultural or historical value. David Pearson has taken a broader view, identifying a "matrix of influences, including cultural and academic values, developments in histori-

1 Michael Parsons, "President gave Queen 'speake Iryshe' book written for Elizabeth I," *The Irish Times*, May 31, 2011, 12.

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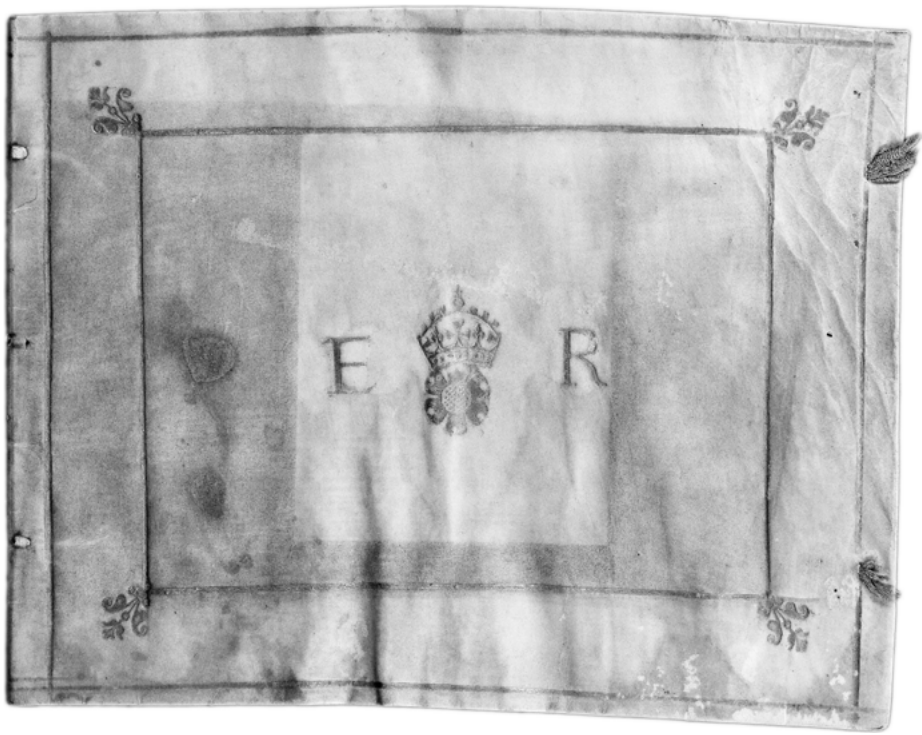


Figure 26.1. The Benjamin Iveagh Library, Irish Primer, outside front cover
© The Benjamin Iveagh Library, by kind permission of the Governors and Guardians of Archbishop Marsh's Library.

cal bibliography and the availability of material" when assessing such questions.[2] This chapter considers the provenance and sale history of the Elizabethan primer, placing it in a context of late-nineteenth and twentieth-century book collecting across England, Ireland, and the US. Using the primer as a lens into the world of Irish language manuscript production, it widens the focus to explore issues of translation and the cultural interfaces that have characterized the history and journey of the primer to the present day.

The item in question is a relatively unassuming booklet, measuring 12.6 × 16.8 centimetres and containing twelve folios, amounting to eighteen pages of text (Figure 26.1). It is bound in a limp vellum cover of dark cream colour, with an armorial stamp and the letters "E R" embossed in gold on both the front and back. Around this is a simple fillet border with floral corner decorations. The armorial stamp consists of a crown over a rose and was a relatively common heraldic Tudor device. According to the catalogue of the British Armorial Database, similar designs appeared on various books throughout

2 David Pearson, "Patterns of Collecting and Trading in Antiquarian Books," in *Out of Print & Into Profit: A History of the Rare and Secondhand Book Trade in Britain in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Giles Mandelbrote (London: British Library, 2006), 201–14 at 202.

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her reign, including a 1538 edition of *Il Petrarcha con l'espositione* and a 1590 text of *The Faerie Queene* (both in the Royal Library, Windsor Castle).[3] Other critics have noted the similarity in binding to the contemporary manuscript of "Verses presented to Queen Elizabeth" produced at Cambridge in the same year, perhaps suggesting the same binder at work.[4] Notwithstanding these ambiguities, the intent of the binding and crest was clearly meant to curry favour with the monarch and ties the primer into a tradition of dedicatory volumes produced in this era.[5]

The treatise was composed by Christopher Nugent, an Anglo-Irish lord from county Westmeath, sometime around 1564. Denis Casey, in his comprehensive study of the primer and its various contexts, elaborated on Nugent's background as one of the "old English" aristocracy in Ireland of the sixteenth century.[6] As a future Baron Delvin, Nugent trod a careful line between pride in his English heritage and emotional affiliation with aspects of Gaelic culture through patronage of the arts, knowledge of Irish, and his Catholic religion. It is generally assumed that Nugent wrote the primer while at Cambridge University between 1563 and 1565, although the document itself is undated.[7] Elements of the work correspond with developments in print, especially the decorative first letter of the introduction (an "A" surrounded by an elaborate illustration)—a device more commonly seen on, and presumably meant to mimic, contemporary woodcuts (Figure 26.2).[8] Although a relatively short and unadorned manuscript, its design and care in composition were clearly meant to underscore Nugent's awareness of the political importance attached to learning the language. In reality, however, the primer "reveals more about a not-untypical Anglo-Irish lord's attitude to Irish than about its recipient's."[9]

The first two-thirds of the document consist of prefaces, in English and Latin, explaining the reason for the production of the grammar. Nugent addresses himself to

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3 John Morris and Philip Oldfield, "British Armorial Bindings," University of Toronto; see https://armorial.library.utoronto.ca/content/il-petrarcha-con-l%E2%80%99espositione-d%E2%80%99alessandro-vellutello and https://armorial.library.utoronto.ca/content/faerie-queene-1, accessed May 15, 2023.

4 Elizabeth Leedham-Green, *Verses Presented to Queen Elizabeth I by the University of Cambridge, August 1564: Cambridge University Library MS Add. 8915* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Library, 1993).

5 Such volumes were commissioned by both institutions and individuals with the aim of patronage and personal advantage, and had been in evidence for a number of decades by the time of Nugent's work. See the online catalogue record of "Cambridge University: Verses presented to Queen Elizabeth" (Add. MS 8915) at https://archivesearch.lib.cam.ac.uk/repositories/2/resources/8121, accessed May 15, 2023.

6 Denis Casey, *The Nugents of Westmeath and Queen Elizabeth's Irish Primer* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2016), 47.

7 Casey, *The Nugents of Westmeath*.

8 Pádraig Ó Macháin, "Two Nugent manuscripts: the Nugent Duanaire and Queen Elizabeth's Primer," *Records of Meath Archaeological and Historical Society* 23 (2012): 121–42 at 135.

9 Patricia Palmer, *Language and Conquest in Early Modern Ireland: English Renaissance Literature and Elizabethan Imperial Expansion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 80.

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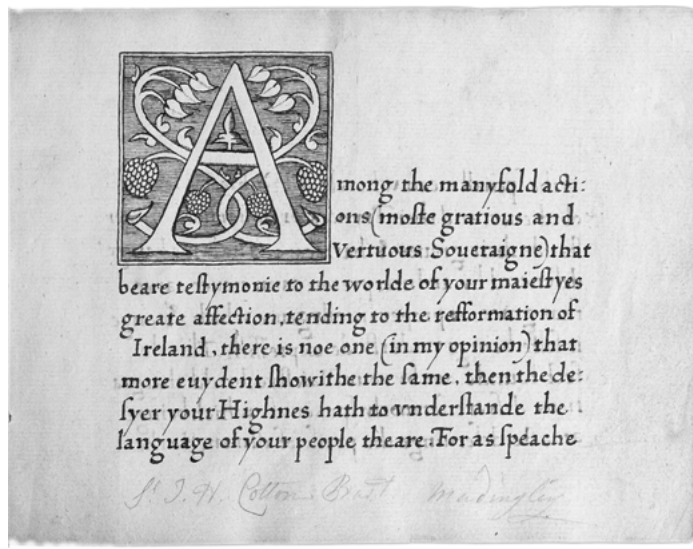

Among the manyfold acti-
ons (moste gratious and
Vertuous Soueraigne) that
beare testymonie to the worlde of your maiestyes
greate affection, tending to the reformation of
Ireland, there is noe one (in my opinion) that
more euydent showithe the same, then the de-
syer your Highnes hath to vnderstande the
language of your people theare. For as speache

Figure 26.2. The Benjamin Iveagh Library, Irish Primer, fol. 2r © The Benjamin Iveagh Library, by kind permission of the Governors and Guardians of Archbishop Marsh's Library.

the queen, stating that he wrote it for her to assist "the desyer your Highnes hath to understand the language of your people theare."[10] Placing himself as the conduit for language acquisition—in essence bridging the divide between the English monarch and many of her Irish subjects—was a deliberate positioning by Nugent. As a member of one of the Anglo-Irish aristocracy's more troublesome families, this primer made him appear "more than just a supporter of government policy; he was advertising himself as a man with the linguistic and cultural wherewithal to implement it."[11] The preface also alludes to aspects of Irish history, declaring "I thought it not inconuenyent to ioyne therto the originall of the nation also; to the ende your maiestye knowinge from whence they came, & theire tongue deryued, might the soner attaine to the perfection thereof."[12] The tone is flattering and ingratiating, clearly meant as a gesture of loyalty and favour towards the queen. The Latin section elaborates on this history, referencing the antiquity of the Gaelic race and language. It has been read as an attempt to move Tudor imaginings of the Irish away from the barbarous and uncivilized ideas at play during this time, and towards a sense of the language as worthwhile and indeed politically useful.[13]

Both the English and Latin sections are written in a neat Roman script: presumably in Nugent's hand, though this cannot be verified. The last section, "The Irish Alphabet," is titled in a Gothic script and introduces the characters of the Irish script (Figure 26.3).

10 Christopher Nugent, *Treatise on the Irish Language and Alphabet* [1564?], Dublin, Farmleigh House, Benjamin Iveagh Library, fol. 2r.

11 Casey, *The Nugents of Westmeath*, 28.

12 Nugent, *Treatise on the Irish Language*, fol. 3r.

13 Ó Macháin, "Two Nugent Manuscripts," 138.

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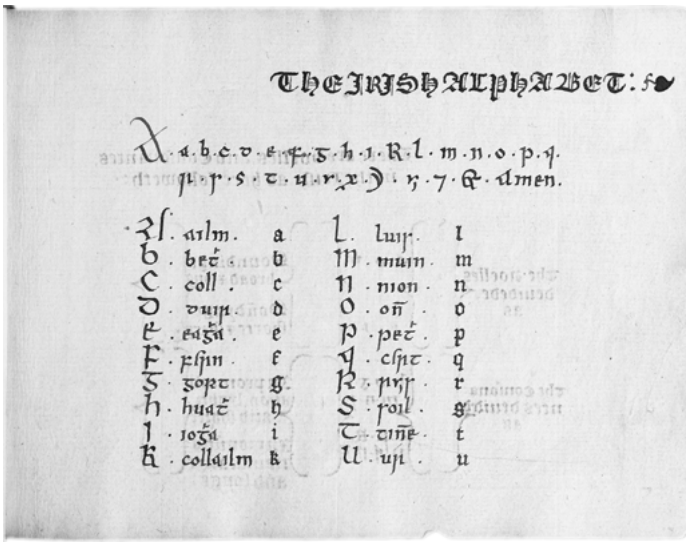


Figure 26.3. The Benjamin Iveagh Library, Irish Primer, fol. 8r © The Benjamin Iveagh Library, by kind permission of the Governors and Guardians of Archbishop Marsh's Library.

The primer then lays out the basic grammatical structure and pronunciation guide for the language. The final few pages provide translations of words and phrases from Irish into both Latin and English. Translation can be an act laden with political significance. In this case it is important to note that only six phrases were provided by Nugent as examples of translation: "How doe you;" "I am well;" "I thancke you;" "Cann you speake Iryshe;" "Speake Latten;" "God save the Queene off England." Whether we can consider these politically pointed statements is a discussion for another time, but it is worth noting that the last phrase quietly omits the latter part of Elizabeth's full title as Queen of England *and Ireland*. While these phrases certainly reveal a civility, they also insist on moving the conversation—quite literally—towards Latin as the *lingua franca* of the day.[14]

We should, of course, be careful of reading too much into fragments of text; largely because many of the details of this primer remain shrouded in doubt and questionable notions of "authorship." Indeed such a definitive notion can obscure the range of figures and input behind early print and manuscript production. One of the more important individuals to consider in this case is Séan Ó Cearnaigh (John Kearney), Nugent's direct contemporary at Cambridge and author of the first Irish book printed in Ireland, *Aibidil Gaoidheilge, & Caiticiosma* (1571). Like Nugent's primer, this was also a grammatical and educational tract, containing depictions of the Irish alphabet and instructions for reading the language. The fact of Ó Cearnaigh's proximity to Nugent at Cambridge—though there is little evidence that they ever interacted—has led some critics to question whether Ó Cearnaigh had a hand in composing the Queen Elizabeth primer. There are some close similarities between the depictions of the alphabet in both, as well as the inclusion of letters in the Roman alphabet not found in Gaelic. Notwithstanding, the

14 Casey, *The Nugents of Westmeath*, 47.

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later grammar can help contextualize the contemporary approaches towards language learning and its development in print in the late sixteenth century.

The question of a direct relation between the primer and Queen Elizabeth is, like many historical aspects of the book, a thorny one. Nugent states in his introduction that the queen had specifically requested the volume, and there is no reason to disbelieve this. But whether this request took the form of an official commission or a mere passing comment on her "desyer" to learn the language is a topic of debate. The queen's visit to Cambridge University in 1564 provides a compelling historical moment on which to pin the composition of the primer, and indeed it seems likely that she would have interacted with her Irish subjects there. Whether the primer ever found its way to the queen is doubtful, however, considering that it seems to have spent most of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries at Cambridge (as discussed below). The primer's link to its royal subject and dedicatee is therefore at most a tentative (and textual) one. Its stated intent does not imply readership, though this should not obscure the significance of the production of the primer. In claiming that the monarch should and perhaps did learn Gaelic, the primer embodies an association between Elizabeth and the Irish language that was to take political and cultural form throughout her reign. The much-vaunted meetings between queen and insubordinate Irish subjects Shane O'Neill and Gráinne Mhaol may or may not have included any Irish (an assumption which Hiram Morgan has termed "gesture politics"), but it was certainly the case that she heavily pushed for the creation and dissemination of religious works printed in a newly commissioned Irish type.[15]

The significance of this manuscript primer is therefore embedded in the cultural and political entanglements over the Irish language in sixteenth-century Ireland. The Elizabethan years heralded some of the most important developments in the representation of the language on the page, with the first translation of the Bible (both New and Old Testaments) begun at the behest of the queen. The late sixteenth century also saw an acceleration of the policy to convert large swathes of the Catholic population to Protestantism, though this policy through print was uneven and secondary to the more direct Tudor methods of controlling the Gaelic-speaking peoples.[16] Much like the Elizabethan religious texts of the time, then, the primer serves both practical and ideological purposes. The queen's sponsorship of Irish-language translation of the Bible some years after this primer reflected an interest in and promotion "not of the language per se, but of texts and practices in Irish which would enhance the Protestant Reformation."[17] Language learning and writing in this era was closely entwined with the cultural and religious diplomacy of Elizabeth's reign, and a keystone in her efforts to portray her role as a promoter of humanist education and civility.[18]

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15 Hiram Morgan, "'Never Any Realm Worse Governed': Queen Elizabeth and Ireland," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 14 (2004): 295–308.

16 Morgan, "Never Any Realm Worse Governed."

17 Tony Crowley, *Wars of Words: The Politics of Language in Ireland, 1537–2004* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 18.

18 Richard A. McCabe, "Ireland's Eliza: Queen or *Cailleach*?" in *Elizabeth I and Ireland*, ed. Brendan

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Sale History

The second half of this chapter will trace the journey of the primer through various collections and libraries in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It first emerges in this era at Madingley Hall, Cambridge, where it was reportedly discovered in a cupboard in the 1850s during renovations when the house was being prepared for Edward, Queen Victoria's son, to live in during his time at the University. This corroborates the evidence of the primer itself, which bears the signature of "Sr J. H. Cotton Bart Madingley"—referring to John Hynde Cotton (1686–1752), owner of Madingley during these years. After it was discovered, it turns up in the library of Lough Fea, in Carrickmacross, County Monaghan. This was the celebrated collection of Evelyn P. Shirley, whose two properties of Lough Fea and Ettington Hall, Warwickshire, had extensive holdings of Irish material in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. We know the primer was here because Shirley (very usefully) published a catalogue of his library in 1872.[19] Shirley was an astute collector and certainly aware of the value of this manuscript—he wrote to the scholar and collector John T. Gilbert in 1877, inviting him to come and see the primer at Lough Fea for himself:

> I cannot find the little treatise of Lord Delvin made for Queen Elizabeth on the Irish language, because it is locked up at Lough Fea. I shall be going there in July or August, and if you could come and see me there, you can judge what should be said in your Report on Historical Manuscripts on the original.[20]

Gilbert's work on the Historical Manuscripts Commission was not only an important watermark for the serious study of early manuscripts in Ireland, but helped bring the primer to a broader consciousness for the first time. He later published extracts from the primer in his 1882 book *Facsimiles of the National Manuscripts of Ireland*.

The primer was sold from Lough Fea in the 1920s. The Shirley estate, like those of many Irish and English landholders, was facing increasing financial pressures during the early decades of the century. Evelyn Shirley had died in 1882, and his library at Lough Fea was largely decimated by the infamous "book raids" on Ireland and England by A. S. W. Rosenbach in 1928.[21] However the Elizabethan primer was part of an earlier sale, of June 1924. The Sotheby's catalogue lists the primer as part of over 70 lots from the "well-known Irish library at Lough Fea," describing it as a "manuscript of historic interest in fine preservation."[22] Interestingly, it dates the primer to 1580, suggesting that

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Kane and Valerie McGowan-Doyle (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 15–39 at 24.

19 Evelyn Philip Shirley, *Catalogue of the Library at Lough Fea, in Illustration of the History and Antiquities of Ireland* (London: Chiswick Press, 1872).

20 As quoted in Rosa Mulholland Gilbert, *Life of Sir John T. Gilbert* (London: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1905), 215.

21 See Leslie A. Morris, *Rosenbach Redux: Further Book Adventures in England and Ireland* (Philadelphia: Rosenbach Museum & Library, 1990).

22 *Catalogue of Valuable Printed Books, Autograph Letters, and Historical Documents, Comprising the Townshend Papers…Which will be Sold by Auction…14th of July, 1924* (London: Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge, 1924), lot 514, pp. 92–93.

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it was composed while Nugent was locked up in the Tower of London. This has been contested by later scholarship; as detailed above, it is now thought more likely to be the product of Nugent's years at Cambridge. The primer was bought at this auction by Maggs for £48, and it promptly appeared in their catalogue of that year. The catalogue entry drew upon Gilbert's research, and referenced the potential original use of the manuscript: "such as her majesty might have used at her interviews with O'Neill and other Irish chieftains."[23] Most notably, however, the catalogue listed the manuscript as sold. While somewhat unusual, this practice of marking catalogue entries as sold was by no means unique, although in this case the primer was the only item in the catalogue marked as such. What is more intriguing is the reason it was listed in this way—why not exclude it from the catalogue altogether? Possible grounds for keeping it in include the timing of its sale (as the catalogue was going to press), and the undoubted publicity effect of advertising that a prestige item in Maggs's coffers had been bought quickly.

The Sotheby's sale of 1924 did garner some interest and commentary in the press. *The Times* reported that:

> A large number of scarce books and pamphlets on Ireland and Irish subjects, being a selection from the library at Loughfea, Carrickmacross, and the property of Major Evelyn Shirley, formed an unusual feature in the book sales at Sotheby's yesterday, the 75 lots producing £1,074 2s. As one of the chief purchasers was the firm of Hodges, Figgis & Co., the Dublin booksellers, a considerable portion of the books will presumably find their way back to Ireland.[24]

This theme of repatriation is one that underpins not only the Elizabethan primer throughout its later history, but commentary on the many Irish books and manuscripts that were bought and sold outside the country during the twentieth century.[25] 1924, for instance, was a year in which there was much movement of Irish material on the market. The ongoing dispersal of the Phillipps collection in this period included considerable collections of Irish manuscripts; ones that "touch Irish history at every point."[26] In New York, meanwhile, possibly the most important sale of an Irish private library happened in the Anderson sales room when the collection of John Quinn was auctioned between 1923 and 1924. This high-profile sale, with its detailed and lavishly produced catalogue, brought into focus the demand for Irish literature and history, and formed the cultural touchstone for a growing interest in Irish material which was filtering through in the London papers.[27]

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23 *Books, Manuscripts and Bindings, Remarkable for their Rarity, Beauty and Interest*, Catalogue no. 456 (London: Maggs Bros., 1924), no. 217, p. 163.

24 "The Sale Room," *The Times*, July 17, 1924, 15.

25 See, for example, the quarterly issues of the *Irish Book Lover* (1909–1957), which contained regular notices of sales and auctions of Irish material.

26 "Notes on Sales," *TLS*, October 16, 1924, 9.

27 *Complete Catalogue of the Library of John Quinn Sold by Auction in Five Parts*, 2 vols. (New York: Anderson, 1924).

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After the Maggs sale, the picture becomes a little cloudy. It is not entirely clear where or to whom the primer was sold—though one can assume that the client was a regular or valued customer of Maggs, considering they bought it pre-catalogue publication. There is, however, evidence to suggest that the manuscript ended up in the US during the 1920s. In a letter of September 11, 1924, the Chicago bookseller Walter M. Hill wrote to an E. F. Carry to discuss the possible purchase of the manuscript. Hill declares the primer a "unique" object, having examined it in person, and arranges to have it sent to Carry to consider adding it "to your collection of Irish books and MSS."[28] Edward F. Carry was a Chicago-based businessman who directed the Pullman railroad company for over a decade, and had Irish ancestry. As with other wealthy industrialists in early twentieth century America, his interest in book collecting was as much a statement of cultural and literary refinement as it was of economic capital. In Carry's case, his considerable library of Irish material reflected a deeply-felt historical affiliation with his country of ancestry, alongside an interest in transportation and railway history.[29] Whether the sale to Carry went ahead cannot be confirmed, though it seems probable; both considering Carry's Irish collection and because the letter was preserved alongside the primer in its current home.

The Carry library was dispersed after his death in 1930, with some parts being absorbed into the John Crerar collection at the University of Chicago Library in 1950. The trail for his Irish material, including the primer, unfortunately runs dry here. The next record is in the Christie's sale catalogue of November 1980. According to an Irish newspaper report of that year it had apparently come from the sale of material from Chetham's library in Manchester.[30] This, however, was a mistake, with the primer actually listed as the only lot under "The Property of a Gentleman" (lot 289). It was sold for £6,700 to Benjamin Guinness, via his London agent H. D. "Dick" Lyon. Listed at a reserve (or estimate) price of £4,000–£5,000, the actual price realized represents a significant demand for the primer, and a remarkable increase in valuation from its sale to Maggs earlier in the century. The catalogue entry represents a more sustained focus on the history and significance of the primer, with detailed descriptions of both the content and binding. The entry also considers the questions of provenance and dating in depth, remarking that

> Delvin approvingly links Elizabeth's interest in the Irish language with the possible 'reformation of that Contrie', and although it is undated, the manuscript possibly belongs to the years circa 1584–7, when he was in high favour with the Queen and compiled his 'Articles for reformation of certain abuses in Ireland.'[31]

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28 Letter from Walter M. Hill to E. F. Carry, September 11, 1924, Dublin, Farmleigh House, Benjamin Iveagh Library.

29 "Edward F. Carry, 1867–1930," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 23 (1930): 353–57.

30 *Evening Echo*, December 3, 1980, 11.

31 *Valuable English Literature, Early Printed Books and Manuscripts…19 November 1980* (London: Christie's), lot 289, p. 81.

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This is a departure from the Sotheby's estimation of 1580 as a date of composition, though without a named author or citations in the entries there is little way of knowing how either of the catalogue writers arrived at these conclusions.

The Benjamin Iveagh Library

Since its accession to the Guinness's collection in 1980, the Elizabethan primer has been regarded as an important document for a range of reasons, and it is generally classed as one of the highlights of this collection. The Benjamin Iveagh Library is the former book collection of Benjamin Guinness, third Earl of Iveagh and heir to the Guinness brewing fortune. Iveagh started collecting in 1967, soon after he moved to Farmleigh House in Dublin and took the reins of the family company. Farmleigh already had a modest gentleman's library when Benjamin moved in, largely concentrated on works on brewing and history from the nineteenth century built up by Benjamin's great-grandfather, Edward Cecil Guinness, first Earl of Iveagh. During his relatively short lifetime, Benjamin added to this a considerable collection of Irish books and manuscript material. These included eighteenth-century fine bindings, a range of early modern works, literary archives, and a large selection of rare first editions of Irish writers. The collection stands at over five thousand items, still housed in the double height oak-panelled room at Farmleigh House. Once the private library of an apparently very private man, the material today comprises some of the finest books in any of Ireland's national literary collections.

The library expanded rapidly from Benjamin's early forays into collecting in the 1960s, with material purchased from booksellers and auctions around Ireland and Britain. Indeed, the source of material was divided almost evenly between Irish and English sellers. The acquisition of the primer at the 1980 sale would have been a typical one for Iveagh, as much of the valuable Irish material appearing on the market in these years came through the large auction houses. Most notable here, however, was the role of Lyon. As a private bookseller and agent, Lyon was a lynchpin in the development of the library and Iveagh's most trusted advisor on the London market. He is a recurrent presence in the library acquisition records dating from 1971, buying frequently for Iveagh, and was reportedly given a carte blanche at auctions for high-profile items.[32] Lyon's success in bidding on the primer is matched by other purchases: in the same year he secured for Iveagh the first edition of James Joyce's *Ulysses* for £1,800, and in 1982 he brought in Sean O'Casey and Lady Gregory manuscripts, Maud Gonne and George Bernard Shaw letters, and the impressive collection of Lennox Robinson papers that remains one of the highlights of the library.

Iveagh was an astute and educated collector: he clearly researched each purchase carefully, assessing it within the context of both his library and the antiquarian market at the time. Almost every item in his collection is in superb condition, a sign of the resources that he was able to apply to his collecting. He was helped in this by his wife Miranda who acted as the first librarian in Farmleigh, taking detailed notes for the acces-

32 "H. D. Lyon Obituary," *The Times*, August 7, 2004, 14.

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sions register and corresponding with booksellers and binders over the years. By the 1990s Iveagh had become one of the most respected and prolific collectors in Ireland. His collection offers an alternative story of Irish private libraries, which in the twentieth century is mainly one of dispersal, sale, and destruction. The Farmleigh library, by contrast, is a rare example of a complete collection preserved as it had been envisioned and built. When Iveagh died in 1992, Farmleigh was left empty with receding family involvement in the brewery in Dublin, and most residing in the UK. After the sale of the house to the Irish state in 1999, the books were kept in the house on loan from the Guinness family. There was a desire on both sides to see the library maintained as it had been for the life of its creator. In 2008 the library was formally gifted to Marsh's Library in Dublin, but with the books staying in Farmleigh and maintained by the Office of Public Works (OPW). It is now a fully catalogued collection open to researchers and readers through Marsh's Library.

Significance

The Elizabethan primer ended up in Benjamin Guinness's collection in Dublin through a relatively circuitous route over the previous hundred years. Why is this important? There are a number of elements to consider here. Firstly, the journey across the Irish sea—in both directions—was one that was relatively common for Irish manuscripts throughout their history. The National Library of Ireland and Trinity College acquired much important material (like the Ormonde state papers and the extensive collection of Sir William Betham manuscripts) through the Phillipps sales in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, some of which had in turn come from Irish estates and country houses.[33] Thus this primer, while at first glance unusual in having been composed abroad, in fact reflects some of the key themes of early Irish print and manuscript circulation in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The Catholic centres of Louvain and Rome were the source of much Irish language printing in these years, producing influential grammatical texts such as Francis O'Molloy's *Grammatica Latino-Hibernica* (1677) and Aodh Buadh Mac Crúitín's *English-Irish Dictionary* (1732) which were filtered back to Ireland. These multiple channels of exchange and communication have always been a feature of embattled languages, and the books from this era illustrate what we might call an exiled sense of Irish cultural identification. There is therefore scope to see the primer within (or prefiguring) the lexicographical tradition in later Irish print culture. In the context of the Farmleigh collection, the primer is merely the pinnacle of a subset of grammars and dictionaries, even if its importance can only be stated as "somewhat vaguely reflect[ive of] the spirit of an age when second-language teaching was a matter of great intellectual importance."[34] Nevertheless, the cultural exchange that it embodies is one that is consistently echoed throughout the Irish language elements of the collection.

33 See A. N. L. Munby, *The Dispersal of the Phillipps Library*, Phillipps Studies 5 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960), 80–85.

34 Casey, *The Nugents of Westmeath*, 38.

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Related to this, the primer's provenance history in many ways reflects its subject, that of the meeting of two languages and cultures, and the political, social, and linguistic questions embodied in this interface. There has been some critical attention devoted to the "interpersonal and intercultural drama underwriting the primer's genesis," and its peripatetic journey embodies various complex sets of identities at play within sixteenth-century Irish language learning, touching on elements of Irish, English, Latin, and Gaelic linguistic heritage.[35] It contains links to established centres and modes of learning (Cambridge and Latin, respectively), and brings them into dialogue with native Irish speakers. Form and content thus provide a useful, if not entirely consistent, parallel within which to frame the manuscript's cultural resonance. Over the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the primer moved between libraries in Cambridge, Ulster, the United States (probably), and Dublin. This is especially relevant for its most recent purchaser, Benjamin Iveagh, for whom the notion of an intellectually cosmopolitan Anglo-Irish identity—as reflected in a colourful provenance history—was central to his collecting. Like Nugent, Iveagh saw himself as both English and Irish, and his library highlights Irish contributions to literature, history, language, theology, and intellectual thought across seven centuries.

The presentation of a facsimile to Queen Elizabeth II in 2011 was therefore a gesture that would have appealed to Iveagh's emotional and intellectual identification with both the Irish language and an aristocratic heritage. Part of his motivation in collecting the primer (alongside some of the most important works in the Irish print and manuscript canon) was to provide a fitting home and context for it. Indeed, he was eager to promote the value of Irish material in Ireland, once writing to a friend how pleased he was that his Irish books "repose" in the Farmleigh library instead of being lost in an "obscure" archive abroad.[36] While it is important not to overstate the "repatriation" element to Iveagh's collecting impetus—there is little evidence that he saw his library as part of a national project—there is no doubt of his belief and pride in the richness of this uniquely Irish collection. There maintains a strong vision of national reimaginings and cultural reconciliations inherent in this collection, and ones which the Queen Elizabeth primer both symbolizes and reflects back from the sixteenth century.

35 Christopher Martin, "Denis Casey, *The Nugents of Westmeath and Queen Elizabeth's Irish Primer*" (review), *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 49 (2018): 562.

36 Letter from Benjamin Iveagh to Mark Hely Hutchinson, October 1, 1982, Dublin, Farmleigh House, Benjamin Iveagh Library.

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Chapter 27

THE BEDFORD PSALTER AND HOURS

MAKING AND UN-MAKING NATIONAL IDENTITY IN THE ACQUISITION OF AN "ENGLISH" MANUSCRIPT

DONGWON ESTHER KIM

IN THE SUMMER of 1929, the Bedford Psalter and Hours and the Luttrell Psalter (British Library, Add. MSS 42130 and 42131 respectively) were acquired within three days of each other from the Weld Estate of Lulworth Castle, Dorset. The history of their acquisition has been extensively treated by Janet Backhouse and by Michael Camille.[1] Backhouse's essay brought to light the correspondence exchanged between the involved parties—which include the familiar names of Eric G. Millar, Belle da Costa Greene, Frederic Kenyon, and Frederic S. Ferguson, as well as many others—and revealed the complexities involved in acquiring these two manuscripts in the interwar years. Camille, on the other hand, was invested in the examination of the Luttrell Psalter and its interpretation as a "mirror in parchment," reflective of the societies in which the manuscript was created and has been received throughout its long life.

While the Luttrell Psalter had been established in the scholarly and public consciousness as an English national treasure for nearly a century by the time of its sale, the Bedford Psalter and Hours was largely unknown. The goal of this essay is to examine the construction of the Bedford Psalter and Hours's national value and the interpretation of its perceived Englishness throughout the acquisition process. Specifically, I am interested in the project of establishing the Englishness of the manuscript around its artist, known simply as "Herman" before 1935. As part of the current collection of essays centred around the trade of medieval books and the making of the Middle Ages, I aim to explore the instability in the process of evaluating medieval manuscripts for their potential to contribute to the desired history of the nation-state in the interwar period.

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1 Janet Backhouse, "The Sale of the Luttrell Psalter," in *Antiquaries, Book Collectors, and the Circles of Learning*, ed. Robin Myers and Michael Harris (Winchester: Oak Knoll Press, 1996), 113–28; Michael Camille, *Mirror in Parchment: The Luttrell Psalter and the Making of Medieval England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

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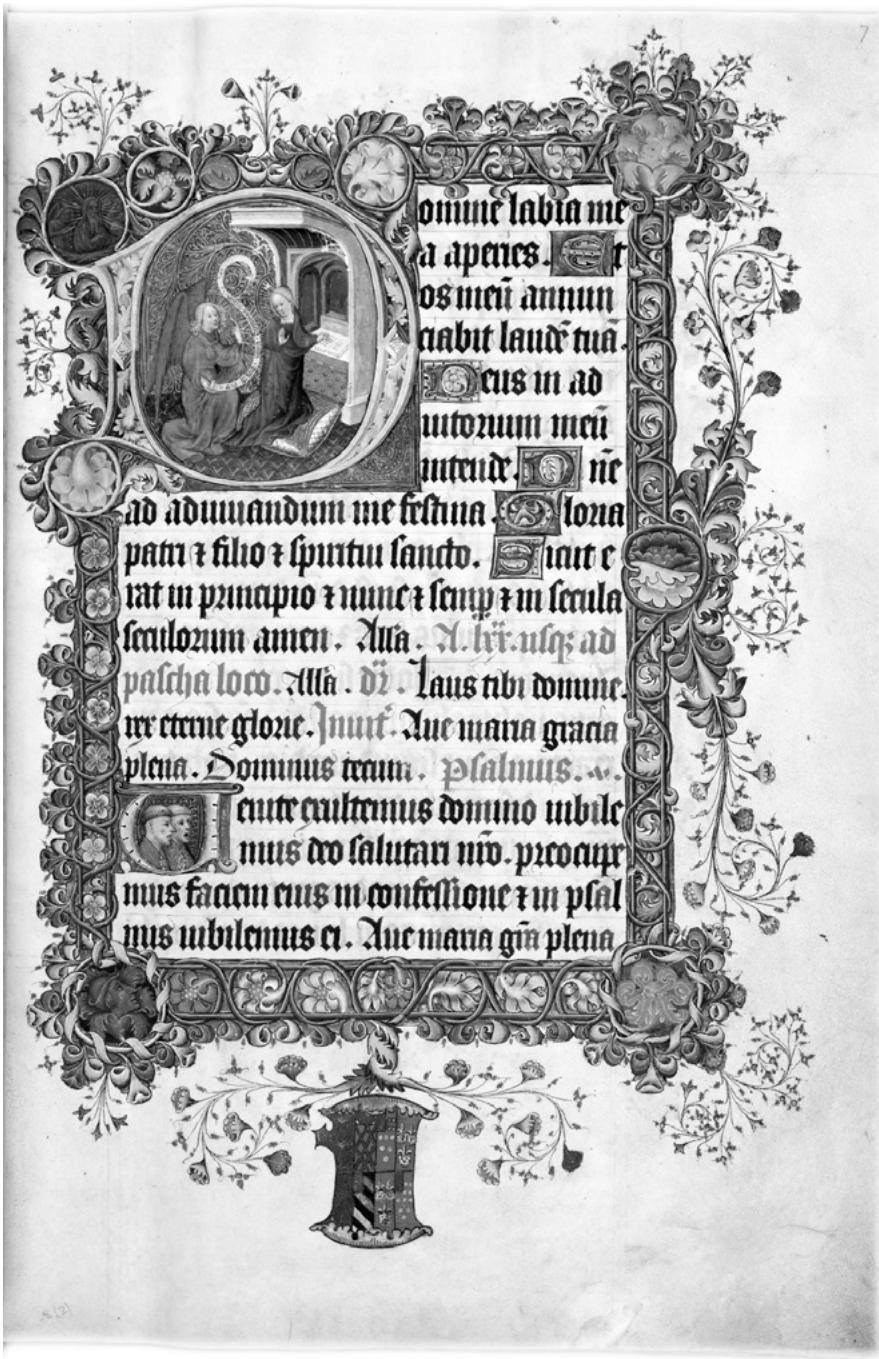


Figure 27.1. Incipit of the Little Hours of the Virgin Mary. The Bedford Psalter and Hours. London, British Library, Add. MS 42131, fol. 7r. With permission of the British Library.

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Figure 27.2. Incipit of the Psalter. The Bedford Psalter and Hours. London, British Library, Add. MS 42131, fol. 73r. With permission of the British Library.

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When Herbert Weld, the then-executor of the Lulworth Estate, began showing interest in selling the two manuscripts in 1928, the staff of the British Museum were sent into frenzy over the Luttrell Psalter, which had been on permanent loan to the Museum since 1896. In contrast, little was known about the Bedford Psalter and Hours. Once Weld brought the book to London to be shown at the Society of Antiquities meeting on November 1, 1928, however, the Museum quickly became interested and began working toward its possible acquisition alongside the Luttrell Psalter. By November 6, it was known that John, Duke of Bedford (1389–1435), was the patron of the manuscript, and Weld called it "the Bedford Hours" in his letter to Julius Parnell Gilson on this date.[2] The duke's name appears in gold in a line-filler on folio 21r ("I comminde me vn to 3ow. I pray god saue þe duke of Bedford"), and his arms and crests are seen on the incipits of the Psalter and the Hours (fols. 7r and 73r, Figures 27.1–2).

As part of his efforts to dissuade interested buyers, Eric Millar, then Assistant Keeper of Manuscripts at the British Museum, wrote to Belle da Costa Greene in New York, whom he had befriended earlier in the year:

> The Louterelle Psalter, which, as you know, has been on deposit here for upwards of twenty years, and a fine English fifteenth century Psalter and Hours belonging to the same owner, are I am afraid coming into the market, and we are making a desperate effort to save them both for the nation…You know the importance of the Loutrelle Psalter as a national monument…it has been in constant use in the Students' Room, and it is almost as bad as if one of our best known books, such as Queen Mary's Psalter, were to come up for sale.[3]

Greene responded three weeks later, apologizing for the delay and describing her life as "more hectic than a cork in Niagara Falls." She had nonetheless been able to convince A. W. Rosenbach and Lathrop Harper to "stay off" the Luttrell Psalter.[4] By April, a plan in which her employer, John Pierpont Morgan, Jr., would anonymously underwrite the cost of both manuscripts as an interest-free loan to the Museum for one year was in place.[5]

Millar's letter highlights the firm place of the Luttrell Psalter as the Museum's priority object to be acquired "for the nation." Nationalist rhetoric was characteristic of this time period: in her historiography of English gothic illumination scholarship, Kathryn Smith observes a broad and underlying "nationalistic ring" driven by a "desire to identify and highlight those genres, forms, and characteristics of the material that 'may be regarded as specially English.'"[6] In addition to being influenced by contemporary

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2 Letter from Herbert Weld to Julius Parnell Gilson, November 6, 1928, BL, Add. MS 74095, p. 8. All letters cited below, unless otherwise noted, are from this file.

3 Letter from Eric G. Millar to Belle da Costa Greene, January 8, 1929, pp. 14–15.

4 Letter from Millar to Greene, January 30, 1929, p. 19.

5 Letter from Millar to Greene, April 2, 1929, p. 25.

6 Kathryn A. Smith, "'Specially English': Gothic Manuscript Illumination, c. 1190–Early Fourteenth Century," in *A Companion to Medieval Art: Romanesque and Gothic in Northern Europe*, ed. Conrad Rudolph, 2nd edn. (Malden: Blackwell, 2019), 569–600 at 570, 587. The quotation in Smith comes

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politics, many manuscript historians, including Millar, had inherited the medievalism of John Ruskin, William Morris, and others that sought to articulate a distinct Englishness among other continental or even British styles.[7] English-illuminated psalters from ca. 1250–1350 earned special admiration from Morris for their "fertility of invention, splendour of execution, and beauty of colour."[8] Thirty years later, Millar echoed these words when he praised the emergence of "'vigour and forcefulness,' 'fertility of invention,' and 'splendid sense of design and colour' which 'gradually overcame' French 'influence,'" and proclaimed their "boldness and virility" as the defining character of national book art in contrast to French "delicacy and refinement."[9] The Luttrell Psalter's strange, quaint, and merry marginalia—and their rough but bold style—provided much fodder that could be considered "specially English."

Despite being a little-known discovery, the "fine 15th-century [Bedford] psalter and hours" was also being positioned in Millar's letter as an object to be "saved for the nation." Weld, even as he was actively pursuing the sale of the manuscripts, also engaged with the nationalist rhetoric, assuring Gilson that "I shall do my best to keep the M.S.S. in England. Nothing short of confiscation…would make me part with them."[10] This desire to retain the book in England was, no doubt, partly due to its association with the Luttrell Psalter, a record "so valuable for the illustrations it affords of English manners and customs during the first part of the fourteenth century" as it was described in 1839.[11] While the Luttrell Psalter remained the Museum's priority, Gilson's identification of the name of the artist in two separate colophons in English on folios 124r and 232v ("Herman 3our meke seruant" and "I am herman 3our owne seruant," Figures 27.3–4) further added to the Bedford book's national importance.[12] In early July, Ferguson, managing

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from Sydney C. Cockerell, *The Gorleston Psalter: A Manuscript of the Beginning of the Fourteenth Century in the Library of C. W. Dyson Perrins* (London: Chiswick Press, 1907), 1.

7 For an introduction to the issue of "influence" in English gothic art, see Smith, "Specially English;" and Lucy Freeman Sandler, "Illuminated in the British Isles: French Influence and/or the Englishness of English Art, 1285–1345," *Gesta* 45 (2006): 177–88.

8 William Morris, "Some Notes on the Illuminated Books of the Middle Ages (1894)," in *The Ideal Book: Essays and Lectures on the Arts of the Book*, ed. William S. Peterson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 7–14 at 11, 13.

9 Smith, "Specially English," 582; and Sandler, "Illuminated in the British Isles," 177, citing Eric G. Millar, *English Illuminated Manuscripts of the Xth to XIIIth Centuries* (Paris: van Oest, 1926), 44, and *English Illuminated Manuscripts of the XIVth and XVth Centuries* (Paris: van Oest, 1928), ix. See also Jaś Elsner, "Style," in *Critical Terms for Art History*, ed. Robert S. Nelson and Richard Shiff, 2nd edn. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 98–109 at 104.

10 Letter from Herbert Weld to Julius Parnell Gilson, January 11, 1929, p. 17.

11 John Gage Rokewode, "Remarks on the Louterell Psalter: An Illuminated Manuscript of the First Part of the Fourteenth Century," in *Vetusta Monumenta*, 7 vols. (London: Society of Antiquaries of London, 1747–1906), vol. 6. See Backhouse, "Sale of the Luttrell Psalter," 114, and Camille, *Mirror in Parchment*, 33–34, for more on the public reception of the Luttrell Psalter.

12 Eric G. Millar, "The Luttrell Psalter and the Bedford Book of Hours," *BMQ* 4.3 (1929): 63–66 at 64–65 mentions that the discovery of the artist was "one of the last works" of Gilson before his death in June 1929.

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Figure 27.3. "Herman 3our meke seruant." The Bedford Psalter and Hours. London, British Library, Add. MS 42131, fol. 124r (detail). With permission of the British Library.



Figure 27.4. "I am herman 3our owne seruant." The Bedford Psalter and Hours. London, British Library, Add. MS 42131, fol. 232r (detail). With permission of the British Library.

director of Quaritch, wrote to Greene praising the artistic quality of the Bedford Psalter-Hours among English manuscripts, describing it as "a really superb book in wonderful condition. I doubt whether you have so fine an English manuscript of the period even in the Morgan library."[13] This positive assessment of the English artist's skill helped reaffirm the Museum's desire to acquire both Weld manuscripts that were up for sale.

Just three days before the scheduled auction on July 29, an overlooked clause of English inheritance law transferred the Lulworth Estate heirlooms from Weld to Angela Mary Noyes, widow of Weld's nephew, Richard Weld-Blundell, who had died in action in 1916.[14] While Herbert had insisted on selling by auction, Noyes promptly agreed to a private sale of the Luttrell Psalter to the Museum for 30,000 guineas (£31,500). Only the Bedford manuscript went to the saleroom, where it fetched £33,000, beating the previous record for a medieval manuscript, which had been a comparatively measly £11,800.[15] In the weeks before the auction, Ferguson had quoted to other interested buyers of the Bedford Psalter and Hours an estimated hammer price in the range of £12,000 to £15,000.[16] The final price, then, was a surprise to all involved.

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13 Letter from F. S. Ferguson to Greene, July 2, 1929, p. 28.

14 Born Angela Mayne, Angela Noyes was a distant cousin of the Weld family. By the time of the auction, Angela had married the poet Alfred Noyes. The transfer of the heirlooms from Weld to Noyes is told in detail in Backhouse, "Sale of the Luttrell Psalter," and Camille, *Mirror in Parchment*.

15 This record was held by the Hours of Jeanne de Navarre (now BnF, NAL 3145), sold from the collection of Henry Yates Thompson in 1919.

16 Letter from Ferguson to Cortland Bishop, July 1, 1929; and letter from Ferguson to Calouste Gulbenkian, July 2, 1929, London, Bernard Quaritch Ltd. Archives. These letters were sent before the deal was made with Noyes, and Ferguson asks that the interested inquirers refrain from bidding on the Luttrell Psalter to give the Museum the best chance to acquire the manuscript. Many thanks to Alfred Pasternack of Bernard Quaritch Ltd. for accommodating my visit to the company archives at very short notice.

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As would be revealed in 1931, the price for the Bedford Hours was bid up by one Lilian Westby, whom Noyes had recruited to pose as a potential buyer. This scam was exposed when Westby sued Noyes for the payment of her promised commission from the auction.[17] This scandal deserves a fuller discussion for what it might reveal about the monetary value of medieval manuscripts among other topics, but my interest in this essay lies in the British Museum's willingness to pay £33,000—more than double Ferguson's high-end estimate—and the apparent evaluation of the significance of the Bedford Psalter and Hours to national interests at this moment in time. "Both MSS. secured for joint total £64,000 white-hot greetings and gratitude," read Millar's succinct and ecstatic cable to Greene sent moments after the auction.[18] Morgan paid this sum in full, as planned; the day after the sale, the *Daily Telegraph* detailed the role of an "anonymous friend" in the Museum's acquisition of the manuscripts.[19]

Then came financial pressure. On August 5, a *Times* article revealed Morgan to be the anonymous benefactor and made clear his conditions: should the Museum fail to make the repayment within one year, the books would become Morgan's property.[20] A public subscription scheme was launched to prevent this. No one questioned that the Luttrell Psalter, already revered as "a national monument of the first importance" for its "remarkable series of marginal drawings, illustrating English mediaeval life," deserved its place in the national museum.[21] This was not true of the Bedford Psalter and Hours, still a recent discovery that barely existed in public knowledge. Tasked with raising an enormous sum of money in a short period of time, Millar and his colleagues set out urgently to establish the national value of the Bedford book.

The fear of the dispersal of historic objects was palpable across the British Isles. Post-war peace in Europe was fragile, and American "robber barons" like William Randolph Hearst, Henry Walters of Baltimore, and the Morgan family were eagerly purchasing from estate sales of the declining British aristocracy; anxiety in England about the loss of tangible pieces of national history to the New World was widely reported.[22] When, for example, the Carrow Psalter, made for the nuns of Carrow Abbey in East Anglia (Baltimore, Walters Art Museum, MS W.34), was tabled for auction during the 1920 sale of Henry Yates Thompson's illuminated manuscripts, the people of Norwich mounted a city-wide campaign to retain the book, but to no avail.[23] In the end, the manuscript

17 Backhouse, "Sale of the Luttrell Psalter," 126.

18 Cable from Millar to Greene, July 30, 1929, p. 63.

19 A. C. R. Carter, "Two Generous Acts. Offer of £33,000 'Horae,'" *The Daily Telegraph*, July 30, 1929, 13. This article is clipped and saved in Ferguson's annotated copy of the *Catalogue of the Luttrell Psalter and the Bedford Horae…Which will be Sold at Auction…29th of July, 1929* (London: Sotheby & Co., 1929), at London, Bernard Quaritch Ltd. Archives.

20 "The Luttrell Psalter. Mr. Morgan's Offer," *The Times*, August 5, 1929, 13.

21 The direct quotations are from Millar, "Luttrell Psalter," (1929): 63.

22 Sara Ahmed, "Affective Economies," *Social Text* 22.2 (2004): 117–39 at 120, 126; Camille, *Mirror in Parchment*, 21–22. Camille frequently uses metaphors of piracy ("robber barons," "booty," "plundering") as part of his rhetoric.

23 For the sale of the Carrow Psalter, see Lynley Anne Herbert, "Ownership, Censorship, and Digital

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sold to Walters for £4,200. It was likely no accident that *The Times*'s article included a report of Morgan's visit to London to see the new acquisitions, during which he agreed that the Luttrell Psalter must be kept in England, but remarked that he "would like the other book himself."[24] The article did further work of establishing the Englishness of "the other book" by describing it as "English work," and pointed out some of the most recognizable figures among the program of portrait heads decorating 290 of the book's 300 minor text divisions: "There are also numerous portraits, one being almost certainly of Henry IV…while yet another is probably of Henry V, and a third, if more conjectural, is not unlikely to be of the Duke of Bedford himself."[25]

That these portraits—many of them of the duke's contemporaries—were executed so skilfully by an English artist, as seen in Ferguson's evaluation, was an asset to the Museum's efforts, and would become a key part of the argument for the book's national significance. Millar concluded (and art historians generally agree to this day) that the artist was the same Herman who wrote "si quis amat non laborat quod herman" in the background of a miniature of Archbishop Chichele in the Chichele Breviary (London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS 69, fol. 1r). The quality of the illuminations was proclaimed as one of the Bedford Psalter and Hours's main virtues: unlike the Luttrell Psalter which was "artistically inferior" in comparison to the finest fourteenth-century examples like the Gorleston Psalter (British Library, Add. MS 49622),[26] the Bedford book was a work of "the first quality," and was:

> of importance in showing that the Duke, who has hitherto been regarded as a patron of foreign artists only, was not above employing artists on this side of the Channel when he could find them.[27]

Frederic Kenyon's request for financial assistance to the Prime Minister Ramsay Macdonald also made mention of this patronage: he described the manuscript as "the work of a named English artist, executed for the brother of Henry V," in its own right an important relic of the nation's past, though "of the two…the Luttrell book is the

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Repatriation," in *The Long Lives of Medieval Art and Architecture*, ed. Nicola Maria Camerlenghi, Jennifer M. Feltman, and Sarah Thompson (New York: Routledge, 2019), 165–85.

24 "Luttrell Psalter. Mr. Morgan's Offer," 13.

25 See Sylvia Wright, "The Author Portraits in the Bedford Psalter-Hours: Gower, Chaucer and Hoccleve," *The British Library Journal* 18 (1992): 190–201 at 190.

26 At the time, the Gorleston Psalter was in the collection of Charles William Dyson Perrins, who bequeathed it to the British Museum in 1958.

27 Millar, "Luttrell Psalter," (1929), 64, 65. John's taste for French illumination has been described as the "Bedford Trend" in Millard Meiss and Elizabeth Home Beatson, *The Limbourgs and Their Contemporaries* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1974), 363–64. See also Elizabeth Salter, *English and International: Studies in the Literature, Art and Patronage of Medieval England*, ed. Derek Pearsall and Nicolette Zeeman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 269–70; Sylvia Wright, "Bruges Artists in London: The Patronage of the House of Lancaster," in *Flanders in a European Perspective: Manuscript Illumination around 1400 in Flanders and Abroad: Proceedings of the International Colloquium, Leuven, 7–10 September 1993*, ed. Maurits Smeyers and Bert Cardon (Leuven: Peeters, 1995), 93–109.

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most important."[28] Macdonald responded favourably, committing £7,500 to match the National Art-Collection Fund's contribution.[29]

The funds raised went first to securing the Luttrell Psalter. Donation letters archived in the British Library make clear that, by March 1930, the Museum was making a targeted effort "towards the purchase of the Bedford Book of Hours."[30] In June, an impassioned M. R. James wrote to *The Times*:

> May I add yet another, and urgent, appeal to those who have the means, that they will help to secure a home in England for the Bedford Psalter?…It is but a matter of weeks, and then…we shall lose for ever one of the very few first-class monuments of English art which are not yet permanently housed…It is a very great opportunity for a lover of England that now awaits to be taken…Will not someone respond?[31]

The wording makes clear that James saw the retention of the Bedford book as a national matter.

The Museum certainly cut it close: Harold Idris Bell's letter to Gilbert Wills, first Baron Dulverton, sent just days before Morgan's deadline reports frankly that the "last attempt to save the Bedford Psalter and Hours for the nation…if the MS. is not to go permanently to America stands at the moment of writing at £19,100."[32] In the end, the fundraiser generated over 1,200 unique donations, and totalled £64,850 when added to the joint contribution of £15,000 from His Majesty's Government and the National Art-Collections Fund, and a withdrawal from the Museum's emergency reserves. Most donations, coming from individuals, churches, guilds, schools, and other groups were small; some were just a shilling. The large donations of over £1,000 came almost exclusively from British bibliophiles whose private collections had been, or would be, sold and dispersed: Yates Thompson (in memoriam), Charles Dyson Perrins, and Alfred Chester Beatty with Calouste Gulbenkian. Morgan himself donated £500, and Sotheby's £105.[33]

With the successful repayment of Morgan's loan, two forthcoming publications were announced: first, a catalogue and reproduction of all miniatures in the Luttrell Psalter, to be followed by a catalogue of "at least the 'portrait gallery'" in the Bedford Psalter-Hours, to be "of great value…as evidence of the national physiognomy of the early fif-

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28 Letter from Frederic Kenyon to Ramsay Macdonald, August 1, 1929, London, The National Archives, ART.Museums T 162/287/1.

29 Letter from Macdonald to Philip Snowden, October 1, 1929, The National Archives, ART. Museums T 162/287/1.

30 Letter from T. G. Blakeney to anonymous recipient, March 1930, p. 90.

31 M. R. James, "The Bedford Psalter," *The Times*, June 16, 1930, 15.

32 Letter from H. I. Bell to Lord Dulverton, July 1930, p. 120. The letter is not precisely dated, but Bell points out the July 30 deadline as the coming Tuesday.

33 The full list of donors was published in "The Luttrell Psalter and the Bedford Book of Hours," *BMQ* 5.4 (1931): 129–45. The withdrawal from the Museum reserves is mentioned in "Luttrell Psalter" (1930), 45.

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teenth century."[34] The Luttrell Psalter catalogue, comprising a long introduction by Millar and 185 plates, was published in 1932.[35] The Bedford volume, however, never appeared; instead came a revelation about the Englishness of the book and its artist.

A few decades before the acquisition, there had been some doubt about the origin of "Herman," the artist of the Bedford Psalter and Hours and, among others, the Chichele Breviary, described in 1873 as being "adorned with numerous very delicate small miniatures, capital letters, and elegant borders, by an English artist early in the fifteenth century."[36] Sydney Cockerell, however, had remarked in 1908 that the name "Herman" may point to the German origin of the artist, and linked the Chichele Breviary to a Bible in the British Museum (British Library, Royal MS 1 E IX) which also contains the known motto "si quis amat non laborat" along with inscriptions in German in two of its initials.[37] The discovery of Herman's name in the Bedford book brought Cockerell's comment back to life and, in 1934, William A. Shaw wrote a defence of Herman's Englishness.

To Shaw, the name was "not foreign at all. Herdman or Herman and Hardman or Harman are all philologically identical. It is a good, ordinary, English family name." He continued: it was "plain that the border illuminations in these Herman MSS. are derived from, or are an elaboration and refinement of, the marginal illuminations of the Gorleston Psalter," painted in fourteenth-century Norwich, "that marvellous fountainhead of native English art," echoing Morris and Millar. Having found the surname "Herman" in East Anglian records from as early as 1244, Shaw mused if our Herman himself might be from Norwich.[38] This link between Herman and Norwich was the desired conclusion in the narrative of English art, but Shaw stopped short of definitively claiming Herman's place of origin. Regardless, he thought it impossible that the illuminator was "of foreign extraction. He was decidedly English."[39]

Shaw's theory fell apart the following year when Margaret Rickert, an American art historian at the University of Chicago, spotted a previously unnoticed inscription in a book of devotions of Sarum use that had been in the British Museum since 1847 (British Library, Add. MS 16998, fol. 37r; Figure 27.5): "hermannus scheerre me fecit."[40] This sen-

34 Millar, "Luttrell Psalter" (1930), 46. The contemporary interest in a "national" "physiognomy" is symptomatic of the tendencies to conflate nationality and ethnicity with biological properties, which continues to affect scholarship across all disciplines today.

35 Published as *The Luttrell Psalter: Two Plates in Colour and One Hundred and Eighty-Three in Monochrome from the Additional Manuscript 42130 in the British Museum* (London: British Museum, 1932).

36 Samuel Wayland Kershaw, *Art Treasures of the Lambeth Library: A Description of the Illuminated Manuscripts, Etc., Including Notes on the Library* (London: Pickering, 1873), 5.

37 [Sydney Cockerell], *Burlington Fine Arts Club: Exhibition of Illuminated Manuscripts* (London: Burlington Fine Arts Club, 1908), 72, no. 148.

38 William A. Shaw, "The Early English School of Portraiture," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 65.379 (1934): 171–84 at 176.

39 Shaw, "Early English School of Portraiture," 181.

40 Margaret Rickert, "Herman the Illuminator," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 66.382 (1935): 39–40. For a brief history of the manuscript in the British Museum, see Eric G. Millar, "Fresh

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Figure 27.5. John the Evangelist, with Herman Scheere's name in the background ("hermannus scheerre me fecit"). London, British Library, MS Add. MS 16998, fol. 37r. With permission of the British Library.

tence, written within a miniature of John the Evangelist, confirmed the artist's authorship with his full name. Parts of the *si quis amat* motto, as well as the artist's style, linked this manuscript to the other works attributed to the artist who had hitherto been known as "Herman," including the Bedford Psalter and Hours. Rickert found further documentary evidence that pointed to the artist's continental origin: two wills of men from the Rhine region, both written in London in 1407, invoked "Herman lymnour" as a witness along with two other men from Cologne.[41] Although she could not be certain, Rickert felt

Materials for the Study of English Illumination," in *Studies in Art and Literature for Belle Da Costa Greene*, ed. Dorothy Miner (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954), 286–94 at 294. The name Hermannus Scheerre (also Skereueyn) has been since identified in documents recording the rent of a shop in Paternoster Row, London's centre of book production near St Paul's Cathedral, from ca. 1410. See C. Paul Christianson, "A Community of Book Artisans in Chaucer's London," *Viator* 20 (1989): 207–18 at 210, and *A Directory of London Stationers and Book Artisans, 1300–1500* (New York: Bibliographical Society of America, 1990), 157–58.

41 Rickert, "Herman the Illuminator," 40.

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that his association with other Cologne natives living in London, as well as "the German character of his name," was a compelling counterargument to Shaw's claims.[42]

It is unlikely that Rickert's findings solely caused the planned work on the most expensive medieval manuscript in England to cease; it is clear, however, that the new information about Herman Scheerre undermined much of the foundation on which the value of the Bedford manuscript had been built. While the manuscript's patron and its display of the so-called "national physiognomy" certainly contributed to its perceived Englishness, much had been riding on the belief that the book's paintings were the work of a renowned English artist.[43] That Herman settled and worked in London, collaborated with other local artists,[44] wrote in English, and worked for some of the most prolific English patrons of his time, like Chichele and the Duke of Bedford, was little consolation to Millar, Shaw, and others. The nationality of the Bedford Psalter and Hours was constructed, in the first place, to meet a need, and it dissipated quickly when the Englishness of Herman, its artist, was found to be imperfect.

The dedicatory plate on the front pastedown of the Bedford Psalter and Hours records that the manuscript was "saved in 1929 for Britain by one American."[45] In 1930, the same book was saved from the hands of that same American by a rallying nation; just a few years later, another American had come along to take it away, at least metaphorically. One of Millar's last mentions of the Bedford Psalter and Hours occurred in 1954, in the conclusion of a short essay dedicated to Belle da Costa Greene, his great friend who had mediated between Morgan and the British Museum:

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42 Rickert, "Herman the Illuminator," 40. The exact origins of Herman are still debated. See Charles L. Kuhn, "Herman Scheerre and English Illumination of the Early Fifteenth Century," *The Art Bulletin* 22.3 (1940): 138–56; and Susie Vertongen, "Herman Scheerre, the Beaufort Master and the Flemish Miniature Painting: A Reopened Debate," in *Flanders in a European Perspective*, ed. Smeyers and Cardon, 251–65.

43 While the patron's role in the production and creation of medieval art alongside that of the maker is now widely recognized, this was not necessarily the case in the twentieth century. See, for example, Jill Caskey, "Whodunnit? Patronage, the Canon, and the Problematics of Agency in Romanesque and Gothic Art," in *A Companion to Medieval Art*, ed. Rudolph, 287–307.

44 For evidence of Herman's collaborative work practices with other artists in the London area, see J. J. G. Alexander, "Foreign Illuminators and Illuminated Manuscripts," in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain, Vol. III, 1400–1557*, ed. Lotte Hellinga and J. B. Trapp (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 45–64, at 47–52; Margaret Rickert, *Painting in Britain: The Middle Ages* (London: Penguin, 2nd edn. 1965), 166–68.

45 On the conflation of Britain and England in the dedicatory plates of the Luttrell Psalter and the Bedford Psalter and Hours, see Camille, *Mirror in Parchment*, 20. The situational use of "England" and "Britain" as synonyms and their distinction and conflation in different contexts are, in their own right, complicated consequences of racialization within the British Isles that requires more space than I am able to give here. See Michelle R. Warren, "Making Contact: Postcolonial Perspectives through Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britannie*," *Arthuriana* 8.4 (1998): 115–34; Linda Colley, "Britishness and Otherness: An Argument," *The Journal of British Studies* 31 (October 1992): 309–29.

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> It remained for an American scholar, Miss Margaret Rickert, to give us what is at present the last word on the subject of Herman, and this from a manuscript which had been at the British Museum since 1847, but had escaped the notice of all English students.[46]

That Millar remained attached to the possibility of Herman's English origin shows when he hastens to add that Rickert "inclined on good grounds to the belief that Herman was of German origin, although she was careful to point out that more positive evidence was needed before this could be proved."[47]

As part of an exhibition of British medieval art that he helped to organize in 1939, Millar displayed a Book of Hours painted by Herman Scheerre that he had bought for himself in 1934; the catalogue description of the manuscript makes no mention of Herman's last name, an omission that resonates with the exhibition's goal of exhibiting "British art" but also the political tensions in Europe on the brink of war.[48] The story of the Bedford Psalter and Hours—including this postscript about the concealment of known information about the artist—is a demonstration of the inherent instability in the work of assigning a nationality to medieval artefacts. The contemporary nationalist view of style and the figure of the artist inevitably led to the subsequent interpretation of the genius of the artist in the service of unstable nation-states. What was known about the manuscript between 1929 and 1935 had much potential to contribute to the desired narrative of English medieval book illumination. The work of "Herman," the named English artist of the late Middle Ages whose skill was comparable to that of the continental artists, was worth the price of £33,000; the work of Herman Scheerre, however, could not have been worth the same, though the discovery of his last name had changed nothing about the material itself.

46 Millar, "Fresh Materials," 294. Rickert earned her PhD in art history at the University of Chicago in 1938.

47 Millar, "Fresh Materials," 294.

48 J. G. Mann, ed., *Catalogue of an Exhibition of British Medieval Art* (London: Burlington Fine Arts Club, 1939), 19, no. 14. Millar is listed as a subcommittee member of the exhibition organized for the occasion of the International Congress of Art History which met in London in 1939 with few participants from Italy and Germany.

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Chapter 28

THE NATIONAL COLLECTION THAT NEVER WAS

THE "FAILURE" OF HENRY YATES THOMPSON'S EXPERIMENTAL NATIONAL GALLERY EXHIBITION

ALEXANDRA PLANE

"HENRY YATES THOMPSON, the opinionated, mean, prejudiced, and secretive collector of fine manuscripts."[1] This is the negative description of Yates Thompson, generally regarded as the leading manuscript collector of his time, in the introduction to the dictionary of *Nineteenth-Century British Book Collectors and Bibliographers*. Yates Thompson is (in)famous for his commerciality, evident in his constant weeding and selling of his books and his pedantic recording of prices paid. That earned him the title of the 'first modern bibliophile' in the classic account of his collecting: Christopher de Hamel's "Was Henry Yates Thompson a Gentleman?"[2] This essay considers Yates Thompson's *non-commercial* motives as a collector, by turning away from the saleroom to reconstruct an exhibition he organized at the National Gallery which was previously unknown to scholarship. In doing so, it sheds new light on the more public-minded aspects of his collecting, particularly his decision not to give his manuscripts to the nation.

Yates Thompson became a particularly unusual collector for his time with his controversial decision to sell many of his books towards the end of his life, rather than

1 William Baker and Kenneth Womack, eds., *Nineteenth-Century British Book Collectors and Bibliographers* (London: Gale Research, 1997), xvi.

2 Christopher de Hamel, "Was Henry Yates Thompson a Gentleman?" in *Property of a Gentleman: The Formation, Organisation and Disposal of the Private Library 1620–1920*, ed. Robin Myers and Michael Harris (Winchester: St Paul's Bibliographies, 1991), 77–89. This built on Josiah Q. Bennett, "Portman Square to New Bond Street, or, How to Make Money though Rich," *The Book Collector* 16 (1967): 323–39. De Hamel's findings were developed by William Stoneman, "Henry Yates Thompson, Gentleman: 'an unusual collector with commercial motives just a shade larger than was common'," in *The Medieval Book: Glosses from Friends and Colleagues of Christopher de Hamel*, ed. James H. Marrow, Richard A. Linenthal, and William Noel ('t Goy-Houten: Hes & De Graaf, 2010), 344–54.

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to give them to an institution. After receiving letters of protest from Sydney Cockerell and M. R. James, who had catalogued many of his manuscripts for him, Yates Thompson sent a lengthy reply to the latter, giving his reasons for selling. This correspondence was partly published in an article which noted that Yates Thompson mentioned lending manuscripts to an exhibition, the outcome of which made him unhappy.[3] An examination of the original letter provides Yates Thompson's full remark: "At one time I had a notion of giving them to the National Gallery for the instruction of the public in the history of painting from the IXth to the XVIth Century." Yates Thompson went on to say that he trialled this by loaning "a dozen of them for exhibition there for a couple of years."[4]

This exhibition has not been treated in any accounts of Yates Thompson. In order to learn more about it, we must begin in the archives of the National Gallery.[5] Preserved there is the letter in which Yates Thompson made the offer of this exhibition.[6] Writing on August 2, 1909, he began:

> The suggestion which I venture to make to the Trustees of the National Gallery is that it is worthy of consideration whether it would not be well to exhibit in conjunction with the pictures on the walls of the Gallery specimens of the paintings in books which preceded & led up to the oil paintings of the XIV:th and later centuries. Of these a consecutive series might be displayed beginning with the Irish and Byzantine products of the VIII:th to the XII:th centuries and passing in seriation to the XVI:th century when Book Illumination was finally merged in the art of the Renaissance period.
>
> I have prepared from my own collection a show-case in which are displayed four M.S. Volumes and two picture pages which give a fair idea of the best French work from the year 1300 a.d. to about 1520, and I am willing, if desired to lend case and contents for exhibition in the gallery for twelve months on the following conditions viz:-
>
> 1. That the volumes should not be taken out or disturbed except in my presence.
> 2. That I should be permitted to turn over a fresh page once in each month. [This to prevent too long exposure to the light of any one page.]

Yates Thompson went on to list his proposed volumes for display (see Appendix, with my identifications of where these manuscripts are today).

The Minutes of the Gallery's Board of Trustees show that this offer was met with some uncertainty. At their meeting on August 10, they resolved that:

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3 Bennett, "Portman Square to New Bond Street," 325–26.

4 Draft letter from Yates Thompson to M. R. James, September 1918, Bloomington Indiana, Lilly Library, Thompson, H. Y. MSS item 3, pp. 2–3.

5 My thanks to Marco Keiller of the National Gallery Archive for his assistance in identifying documents.

6 Letter from Yates Thompson to Sir Charles Holroyd, August 2, 1909, London, National Gallery Archive NG7/367/9.

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> in the absence of a quorum, and in view of the fact that acceptance of works of this description would be a new departure, Mr Yates Thompson be thanked for his offer, and requested to allow it to remain open until the next meeting of the Board before which date it was hoped that the Trustees would be able to examine the works in question.[7]

By their next meeting, in November, the trustees had come around to a more favourable view. The minutes recorded that the offer be accepted "on the understanding that the exhibits should be previously approved by the Director."[8] The minute book later marked the arrival of the case and its contents on December 1, 1909.[9] In his diary, Cockerell mentioned a visit to see the case with Yates Thompson on December 20.[10] The annual report for 1909 recorded that Yates Thompson had lent:

> a case of illuminated manuscripts admirably illustrating the application of painting to this purpose. The works exhibited are examples of early French and Italian Masters and show the growth of the art of picture-making and its development from small pictures in books to the larger paintings of the same schools on the walls of the Gallery.[11]

One small detail in this account stands out as odd—Yates Thompson's offer had been of an emphatically *French* set of books, not French *and* Italian. Manuscript codices were entirely outside the usual remit of the National Gallery, and so the loans register recorded only "Illustrated M.S.S.. 1 case," rather than an itemized list.[12] With no detailed information on the items in the Gallery's archives, we must turn to contemporaneous periodicals for more information. Fortunately, an account of the exhibition was published in the *Athenæum*.[13] It was written by Maurice Walter Brockwell, an art writer and lecturer who published numerous art books and catalogues, including several of the National Gallery collections.[14] His article contains sufficiently detailed descriptions of each manuscript for them to be identified and mentions the room in which they were displayed: the Octagon Hall. There is even enough information to identify the pages at which the manuscripts had been opened by Yates Thompson for the display's early visi-

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7 Minutes of the Board of Trustees, dated August 10, 1909, London, National Gallery Archive, NG1/7, 397–98.

8 Minutes of the Board of Trustees, August 10, 1909, 402.

9 Minutes of the Board of Trustees, August 10, 1909, 405.

10 "Breakfasted again with the Yates Thompsons & went with Henry Yates Thompson to see his case of MSS at the National Gallery," December 20, 1909, BL, Add. MS 52646. With thanks to Bill Stoneman for this information.

11 Report of the Director of the National Gallery for 1909, April 6, 1910, London, National Gallery Archive, NG17/6, 233.

12 Register of loans to the National Gallery, London, National Gallery Archive, NG19/1, 17.

13 [Maurice Brockwell], "The National Gallery," *The Athenæum*, January 1, 1910, 21.

14 While the article was published anonymously, Brockwell can be identified as the author because an extract from it was quoted under his name in Maurice Brockwell and W. H. James Wheale, *The Van Eycks and their Art* (London: Lane, 1912), 92.

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tors. The items are listed in the Appendix (Table 28.2), with the folios at which they were open.[15] The list shows that the exhibition was indeed a mix of French and Italian books, rather than the solely French items initially proposed by Yates Thompson.

Further articles document some visitors' responses to the exhibition. Charles Lewis Hind informed readers of the *Art Journal* that they "need not go all the way to Chantilly to see a perfect missal painting. There is one in the National Gallery, lent by Mr. Yates Thompson."[16] He was referring to one of the Fouquet pages, which he compared to the "magnificent, horrible, drunken Silenus" by Rubens, "facing it, a few feet across the gallery" and concluded "Ugh! Would that I had been born in the fifteenth century." Another article in the *Athenæum* in March alerted readers that the pages of the manuscripts had recently been turned and new openings could be viewed.[17] The exhibition was also mentioned in several books, including two based on earlier articles, and another which reproduced paintings in the Louvre.[18] Coverage even extended internationally, with an account published in February in the *Zeitschrift für Bücherfreunde*, the publication of the Gesellschaft der Bibliophilen, Germany's oldest bibliophilic organization.[19] It described the exhibition's contents as part of Yates Thompson's "erstklassigen Sammlung von Miniatur werken" (first-class collection of miniature works).[20]

The letter from Yates Thompson to James quoted above described the loan of manuscripts to the Gallery as lasting for a *couple* of years, not just one. Further investigation in the Gallery's archive reveals that Yates Thompson wrote to the Gallery on January 4, 1911, offering to swap the French and Italian manuscripts with "English miniatures of the XIIIth: XIVth, & XV centuries for exhibition on loan during the present year."[21] His offer was "gratefully accepted" by the Board at their meeting on February 14.[22] This generated even less of an archival paper trail than the first phase of the loan, with no record in the correspondence, loans register, minute book or annual report of exactly which manuscripts were exhibited. Once again, we are fortunate in being able to unearth this information from a periodical. An article in *The Antiquary* described each of the books on display at enough length to identify them.[23] It concluded with the remark that the

15 The manuscripts are now all digitized (apart from the one in a private collection), so it is possible to recreate the exhibition digitally, as I did for my conference presentation.

16 C. Lewis Hind, "The Consolations of an Injured Critic, II," *The Art Journal* (1910): 108–9. Later republished in C. Lewis Hind, *The Consolations of a Critic* (London: Black, 1911), 22–23.

17 "The National Gallery," *The Athenæum*, March 19, 1910, 350.

18 See Brockwell and Wheale, *Van Eycks*; Hind, *Consolations of a Critic*; Maurice Brockwell and Paul G. Konody, *The Louvre: Fifty Plates in Colour* (London: Jack, 1910), 55.

19 Otto von Schleinitz, "Beiblatt," *Zeitschrift für Bücherfreunde* N. F., 1.2 (1909/10): 112.

20 von Schleinitz, "Beiblatt," 112.

21 Letter from Henry Yates Thompson to Sir Charles Holroyd, dated January 4, 1911, London, National Gallery Archive, NG7/387/3.

22 Minutes of the Board of Trustees, dated February 14, 1911, London, National Gallery Archive, NG1/8, 44.

23 "At the Sign of the Owl," *The Antiquary* 47.3 (1911): 110.

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Figure 28.1. The Taymouth Hours, London, British Library, Yates Thompson MS 13, fol. 68v. With permission of the British Library.

Taymouth Hours was open at a page showing "a willowy huntress shooting at a rabbit, who sits up calmly looking at the coming bolt, as if aware that women cannot aim straight." This comment reveals that the page on display at the time must have been fol. 68v (Figure 28.1).

These were not the first exhibition loans made by Yates Thompson. In 1876, he had lent nine manuscripts to an exhibition of illuminated manuscripts at the Art Club in his native Liverpool.[24] In 1904, he had loaned nine manuscripts to the "Exposition des Primitifs français," an exhibition of early French illustrated manuscripts at the Bibliothèque nationale. These were placed in a separate display case, marked "XX."[25] He was one of only five individual owners to lend to this major exhibition, and with his nine manuscripts outstripped the other four, who only contributed one or two items each. Yates Thompson's involvement can be attributed to his friendship with Léopold Delisle, head of the Bibliothèque nationale and one of the exhibition's organizers. Finally, in 1908, Yates Thompson had been on the organizing committee and one of the most generous contributors to the landmark Burlington Fine Arts Club illuminated manuscripts exhibition, loaning seventeen items.[26]

The 1904 "Primitifs français" exhibition had a lasting impression on Yates Thompson. In his second set of Sandars lectures, in 1905, he used his opening address to express "the

24 *Catalogue of a Loan Exhibition of Illuminated Manuscripts Exhibited at the Club Rooms, Myrtle Street, October 1876* (Liverpool: Liverpool Art Club, 1876), items 80–88.

25 Henri Bouchot et al., *Exposition des primitifs français au Palais du Louvre et à la Bibliothèque nationale* (Paris: Palais du Louvre et Bibliothèque nationale, 1904), 2–4.

26 [Sydney Cockerell], *Burlington Fine Arts Club: Exhibition of Illuminated Manuscripts* (London: Burlington Fine Arts Club, 1908).

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hope that some day our authorities in London may be disposed to imitate in this respect the French example."[27] He envisaged a bringing together of British and Irish manuscripts from the British Museum, Cambridge, Dublin, Durham, Lambeth, Oxford, and private collections. However, by 1909 he had taken matters into his own hands. His National Gallery exhibition was unlike the "Primitifs français" and other exhibitions listed above in almost every respect. Firstly, it was comprised solely of items from one individual's collection, rather than from the collections of numerous individuals and sometimes institutional owners. Its second unusual feature was its long duration. The "Primitifs français" exhibition ran for three months from April 12 to July 14, 1904. By contrast, Yates Thompson's first set of manuscripts arrived in the National Gallery on December 1, 1909, and the second set was returned to him on January 18, 1912: a total length of just over two years.[28]

The third unusual feature was the venue. In 1905, Yates Thompson had imagined the British Museum as the obvious venue and organizer of such an exhibition.[29] This did not come to pass, and instead he eventually approached the National Gallery. The choice of a national cultural institution is indicative of his vision for the exhibition to be an English version of the "Exposition des Primitifs français," itself a response to the 1902 "Exposition des primitifs flamands" in Bruges. The National Gallery also displayed the sort of early European paintings with which he wanted his manuscripts to be in dialogue as an illustration of the history of painting. That this was seen by them as an innovative and somewhat radical plan is evident in the Trustees' remark that "acceptance of works of this description would be a new departure."[30] Yates Thompson's vision represented an evolution from the exhibition design of the "Primitifs français," where the manuscripts were exhibited in a separate venue to the paintings.

Why, then, was Yates Thompson's unusual proposal accepted by the Gallery Trustees? The Board minutes show that they rejected numerous other proposals not felt to suit the Gallery, but Yates Thompson may simply have been too alluring a potential supporter to risk offending. He had already made a significant gift to the Gallery in 1894 of a very large porphyry bust now known as the "Dying Alexander."[31] This was considered such an important donation that it merited a press release in *The Times* and was placed as the Gallery entrance's centrepiece.[32] More recently, Yates Thompson had been a generous donor to the Dulwich Picture Gallery, initiating and funding a major expansion which saw the wall space doubled, the pictures rehung and catalogued, and the display lighting improved.[33] He had made the initial proposals for this in late 1908 and the new

27 Henry Yates Thompson, "Two Lectures on Illuminated Manuscripts," 1905, BL, Add. MS 37338, 1–3.

28 Register of loans to National Gallery, NG19/1, 17.

29 Thompson, "Two Lectures," 1–2.

30 Minutes of the Board of Trustees, August 10, 1909.

31 Letters from Yates Thompson to Sir Edward Poynter, dated May 7 and 10, 1894, London, National Gallery Archive, NG3/2141/1–2.

32 "National Gallery," *The Times*, June 7, 1894, 6; "National Gallery," *The Times*, July 3, 1894, 11.

33 Giles Waterfield, *Soane and After: The Architecture of the Dulwich Picture Gallery* (London: Dulwich Picture Gallery, 1987), 40–48.

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additions were begun in 1909–1910. This was exactly the period when he approached the National Gallery about the exhibition, so they must have been acutely aware of his attractiveness as a potential donor. The exhibition also did not pose too much of an imposition in practical terms: it was effectively "ready-made," with Yates Thompson providing an exhibition case as well as its contents, and selecting pages for display.

Despite the Gallery's accommodativeness and the apparent success of the exhibition—at least among those visitors whose reactions are preserved in publications—Yates Thompson's trial loan did not become a permanent one: he never offered his manuscripts to the Gallery, or indeed to any other national institution. This brings us to the question of what went wrong. The wording of Yates Thompson's letter to James, quoted above, suggests that he contemplated giving many of his manuscripts to the Gallery, not just those which featured in his exhibition. But he went on to profess a deep unhappiness about the outcome of his plan. In the letter, he explained why the loan was unsuccessful: "I assure you that it gave me more pain than pleasure to see them there: each exposing one or two pages to the 'regard bête du passant indifferent'" (ignorant stare of the indifferent passer-by). He concluded that he judged the trial loan a "failure."[34]

The rather patronizing remark in French about the exhibition's visitors is an unattributed quotation. Yates Thompson also included a French quotation in his 1918 announcement to the world that he was going to sell his manuscripts. He wrote that "these precious manuscripts…shall go, in the language of Edmond de Goncourt's will, 'aux héritiers de mes goûts'" (to the inheritors of my tastes).[35] The quotation in his letter to James is also from this source. Goncourt was a well-known, idiosyncratic French collector who had died in 1896. It is possible that Yates Thompson had met him; many of his early purchases were made in Paris before Goncourt's death. Seven sales of the various collections of Edmond and his brother Jules took place in 1897. At the top of each sale catalogue was printed a facsimile of Edmond's handwritten wish for his possessions to be sold after his death, from which Yates Thompson was quoting.[36] The fact that he did not attribute the words to Goncourt in his letter to James suggests that Yates Thompson expected him to be familiar with them. Indeed, Goncourt's last wish did seem to be known among English artistic circles. It was included in a report on the forthcoming Goncourt sales in *The Studio: An Illustrated Magazine of Fine and Applied Art* in 1897.[37] It may have been popularized in England by the print historian Alfred Whitman, who first included it in an 1899 article in *Country Life Illustrated* on "How to Choose Old Prints," and subsequently in his 1901 *Print-Collector's Handbook*.[38]

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34 Draft letter, p. 3.

35 Henry Yates Thompson, *Illustrations from One Hundred Manuscripts in the Library of Henry Yates Thompson*, 7 vols. (London: privately printed, 1907–1918), 7:inserted Post Scriptum page.

36 For example, *Bibliothèque des Goncourt...dont la vente aura lieu Hotel Drouot*, March 29, 1897 (Paris: Motteroz, 1897), vii.

37 "The Editor's Room," *The Studio* 10 (1897): ii.

38 Alfred Whitman, "How to Choose Old Prints," *Country Life Illustrated*, December 9, 1899, 738; Alfred Whitman, *The Print-Collector's Handbook* (London: Bell & Sons, 1901), 104.

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Yates Thompson's repeated quotations show the effect Goncourt's words had had on him. It is worth including them in full here in order to understand the context of Yates Thompson's extracts:

> Ma volonté est que mes dessins, mes estampes, mes bibelots, mes livres, enfin les choses d'art qui ont fait le bonheur de ma vie, n'aient pas la froide tombe d'un musée, et le regard bête du passant indifférent, et je demande qu'elles soient toutes éparpillées sous les coups de marteau d'un commissaire-priseur et que la jouissance que m'a procurée l'acquisition de chacune d'elles, soit redonnée, pour chacune d'elles, á un héritier de mes goûts.[39]

> My wish is that my drawings, my prints, my trinkets, my books—in short the works of art which have made my life happy—should not receive the cold tomb of a museum and the ignorant stare of the indifferent passer-by, and I ask that they all be scattered under an auctioneer's hammer-blows and that the joy which the acquisition of each of them brought me be passed on, for each of them, to an inheritor of my tastes.

Yates Thompson went on in his letter to James to say that "My real wish is that they shall go into private hands. Personally I have greatly enjoyed their possession because they were mine and because I could handle them & look at them whenever I wanted."[40] He concluded by saying "In short I think that these art treasures are by the nature of the case more suitable for private than for public collections." His language drew a distinction between the collector's intimate, tactile relationship with their "treasures," and the general public who ignorantly glanced at a page through the glass of an exhibition case. Understanding the influence of Goncourt on Yates Thompson, which has not been previously considered in accounts of his collecting, helps to explain this attitude. Goncourt was famous not only for his collections themselves, but also for his writing on collecting, literature, and art. He expressed these ideas in his book *La Maison d'un Artiste*, a systematic description of the house he shared with his brother, in which they kept and displayed their art collections. It included an account of his collection of eighteenth-century printed books, manuscripts, and ephemera, kept in a *cabinet de travail* filled with "volumes a la portée de la main, et qu'un doigt peut atteindre" (volumes within hand's reach, touchable by a fingertip).[41] Goncourt had a vehemently anti-institutional view on the display of collections, abhorring what he described as the "cold tomb of a museum."[42] He emphasized the value of having one's collections in one's own house, describing how living with his objects constantly created new ways of viewing and appreciating them.[43]

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39 *Bibliothèque des Goncourt.* (English translation my own).

40 Draft letter, pp. 4–5. The word "real" has been struck through.

41 Edmond de Goncourt, *La maison d'un artiste* (Paris: Charpentier, 1881), 238–39. Goncourt's "modern books" were kept in a separate space on the floor above.

42 *Bibliothèque des Goncourt*.

43 Dominique Pety, "La collection au XIX^{e} siècle: l'art chosifié," in *La production de l'immatériel:*

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Yates Thompson's repeated quotations from Goncourt suggest that these ideas influenced his eventual view that his manuscripts were "art treasures" that should remain in private collections.

Yet this did not mean that Yates Thompson believed that his collections should be unknown or unknowable to the public. His letter to James goes on to say that he has also enjoyed owning them because "with the help of more capable friends [he] could give the fullest possible account of them and reproduce samples of their art excellence as a safeguard against future accidents."[44] He referred here to his publication of catalogues and facsimiles of his manuscripts, which made his books "without question the best-known private collection in the world."[45] It was the final volume of his facsimile series that bore the public announcement of his intention to sell, inserted as a small "Post Scriptum" page at the front. He wrote that he had decided to sell them by auction, "Now that I have done all I can by way of description and reproduction of these fascinating works of art."[46]

The facsimile volumes and catalogues did of course increase the fame and consequent monetary value of his manuscripts, but they were not merely marketing strategies. Close examination of them reveals multiple motivations behind publication, from promoting international cooperation, particularly in reuniting fragments with parent volumes, to encouraging and documenting the development of reprographic techniques, and preserving a likeness of the manuscripts should they be destroyed during the First World War or other disasters such as fire or flood.[47] The altruistic nature of these motivations is further demonstrated by his commissioning of facsimiles of manuscripts he did not own.[48] Even more tellingly, as early as 1868 he had been a founder and Vice-President of the Holbein Society, which aimed to produce facsimiles of illustrated early printed works, accompanied by alternative language texts for people who could not read Latin.[49]

Yates Thompson also sought to share his manuscripts through lectures. In 1901, he gave "A Lecture on Some English Illuminated Manuscripts" at the University of Cambridge, where he had been made Sandars Reader. He described himself as "showman of some dozen volumes," which he used to illustrate his talk together with lantern slides.[50] In 1906, he addressed the Royal Society of Arts on "Some Illuminated Manu-

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Théories, représentations et pratiques de la culture au XIXe siècle, ed. Jean-Yves Mollier, Philippe Régnier and Alain Vaillant (Saint-Etienne: l'université de Saint-Etienne, 2008), 144–45.

44 Draft letter, p. 5.

45 De Hamel, "Was Henry Yates Thompson a Gentleman?," 86.

46 Yates Thompson, *Illustrations*, 7:inserted Post Scriptum page.

47 Henry Yates Thompson, *Facsimiles of two "Histoires" by Jean Foucquet* (London: privately printed, 1903), 10; Thompson, *Illustrations*, 6:iii.

48 For example, Henry Yates Thompson and Dom P. Blanchard, *Les Heures de Savoie* (London: Chiswick Press, 1910).

49 "The Holbein Society," *The Reliquary* 9 (1868): 124–25.

50 Henry Yates Thompson, *A Lecture on Some English Illuminated Manuscripts* (London: privately printed, 1902), 9.

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scripts of Continental Europe," telling his audience that his aim was "not to instruct, so much as to exhibit."[51] He used only lantern slides, rather than bringing books with him, and explained that the structure of his talk was influenced by George Warner's recent rearrangement of the British Museum's exhibited manuscripts by country. His National Gallery exhibition was, then, the culmination of these earlier exhibitions, publications, and lectures. The lists of exhibited manuscripts (see Appendix) note whether the items had been included in these previous events, showing that while there were some lesser-known items, Yates Thompson generally drew on a small group of "star" items for public engagement. However, these would have been unknown to many of the National Gallery exhibition's visitors: Yates Thompson was reaching out to a far broader audience than earlier exhibitions such as those at the Burlington Fine Arts Club.[52]

It is clear, then, that Yates Thompson's two-year exhibition at the National Gallery was a pivotal moment in the history of his collection. Had he found this a positive experience, he might have given at least some of his manuscripts to the nation. This would have considerably altered the collections of the institution(s) receiving them, but also those—particularly in America—that would not have been able to acquire them in his later sales. It also would have changed the trajectories of the manuscripts, some of which have since undergone physical alteration or are now untraceable. Yates Thompson was not opposed to institutional donations in principle—indeed he gave generously to a huge range of institutions—but as to the fate of his manuscripts, the jewels of his collection, he was clearly influenced by Goncourt and his own understanding of his role as a collector, as "only a Collector of art bijoux," to use his words.[53] The National Gallery exhibition shows that he saw the manuscripts as art objects, key components of a continuous artistic tradition not confined solely to codices. In publishing extensive catalogues and facsimiles of his manuscripts, which he sent to many public libraries, he made them permanently publicly accessible as art historical resources. Simultaneously, by then selling many of them, he was able to recoup some of his costs and to pass the manuscripts on to be prized by other collectors. Reconstructing this previously unknown exhibition therefore changes our understanding of Yates Thompson as a collector, and the fact that these manuscripts spent a year each on display in the National Gallery is an important addition to their object biographies. In conclusion, *loaning* his manuscripts to the nation discouraged Yates Thompson from *giving* his manuscripts to the nation, but despite this he was far from "secretive" or "mean," as he was portrayed in the opening quotation of this essay. He wanted the public to have access to his collection, but only on his terms.

51 "Proceedings of the Society," *Journal of the Society of Arts* 54 (1905–1906): 461.

52 See Stacey J. Pierson, *Private Collecting, Exhibitions, and the Shaping of Art History in London: The Burlington Fine Arts Club* (London: Routledge, 2017).

53 Draft letter, p. 2.

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APPENDIX

Table 28.1: Yates Thompson's proposed French MSS exhibition, August 1909. BFAC = Burlington Fine Arts Club 1908 exhibition, PF = *Exposition des primitifs français* 1904 exhibition, SA = Society of the Arts 1906 lecture, SL = Sandars Lecture, 1901. The numbers refer to exhibition catalogue entries.

1.	"A page of an antiphonary date about 1300." Beaupré Antiphonary, now Baltimore, Walters Art Museum, MS W.759 BFAC 61–62; SA
2.	"A Pontifical made for Reginald de Bar Bishop of Metz—about 1300." Metz Pontifical, now Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, MS 298 PF in facsimile (not yet owned by Yates Thompson)[54]
3.	"a M.S. Volume date about 1300 of the Romance of Lancelot." Lancelot du Lac, now PML, M.805 BFAC 144
4.	"a book of Hours (about 1440 a. d.) with paintings by Francois Foucquet." Dunois Hours, now BL, Yates Thompson MS 3 PF 115; SA
5.	"a page from the 'Faits des Romains jusqu'à César' with a painting by Jean Foucquet of Tours." Faits des Romains (Jean Fouquet leaf), now Louvre, RF 29493 BFAC 119
6.	"a book of Hours (date about 1520 being a specimen of French art influenced by Italian." [*sic*.] Tilliot Hours, now BL, Yates Thompson MS 5

54 Yates Thompson included the facsimile volume of it beside the Verdun Breviary in his *Primitifs français* exhibition case. The Pontifical's owner, Sir Thomas Brooke, would later bequeath it to him. *Exposition des primitifs français*, 10.

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Table 28.2: French and Italian MSS exhibition, December 1909–February 1911.

1.	"A series of drawings made probably in or near Siena, about 1325 …" Vita Christi,[55] now PML, M.643
2.	"The Horae of Bonaparte Ghislieri of Bologna…" fol. 132v Hours of Bonaparte Ghislieri, now BL, Yates Thompson MS 29
3.	"A Florentine prayer-book of about 1490…" fol. 104v[56] Yates Thompson MS 93, now private collection[57]
4.	"A prayerbook…written and illuminated in 1502, on the occasion of the marriage of Laudomia de' Medici…" fol. 117v Hours of Laudomia de' Medici, now BL, Yates Thompson MS 30 BFAC 257
5.	"The Book of Hours of Jean Dunois…" fol. 162r Dunois Hours, now BL, Yates Thompson MS 3 PF 115; SA
6.	"The Metz Pontifical…" fol. 23v Metz Pontifical, now Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum MS 298 PF in facsimile[58]
7.	"Book of Hours, which was written and illuminated probably at Paris about 1444…" fol. 141r Coëtivy Hours, now Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, W 082 PF 112
8.	"A page from a manuscript of the 'Faits des Romains'…" Faits des Romains (Jean Fouquet leaf), now Louvre, RF 29493 BFAC 119

55 This is the only item not described in sufficient detail to identify the opening. Yates Thompson had facsimiled eleven pages from this book in 1908, so we can assume he selected one of these for display. Yates Thompson, *Illustrations*, 2:5–6.

56 While the manuscript is now inaccessible, the folio can be identified because Yates Thompson later facsimiled it. Thompson, *Illustrations*, 6:pl. LXXV.

57 With thanks to Christopher de Hamel and Mitch Fraas for confirming this.

58 *Exposition des primitifs français*. See n. 54.

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Table 28.3: English MSS exhibition, February 1911–January 1912

1.	"The Venerable Bede's *Life and Miracles of St Cuthbert*…" Bede, Prose Life of Cuthbert, now BL, Yates Thompson MS 26 BFAC 17
2.	"A Psalter made for the Carehowe Nunnery…" Carrow Psalter, now Baltimore, Walters Art Museum, MS W.34 SL
3.	"Apocalypse for St. Augustine's Monastery at Canterbury…" Apocalypse, now Lisbon, MCG, Inv. LA139 SL
4.	"The famous Psalter which was begun about 1325 for a member of the St. Omer family…" St. Omer Psalter, now BL, Yates Thompson MS 14 BFAC 68; SL
5.	"Taymouth Horae…" Taymouth Hours, now BL, Yates Thompson MS 13 BFAC 66; SL
6.	"Book of Hours of 'Elysabeth ye Quene'…" Hours of Elizabeth the Queen, now BL, Add. MS 50001 BFAC 153; SL
7.	"Book of Hours and Psalter of Lady Neville…" Wingfield Psalter, now New York Public Library, Spencer Collection MS 3 SL

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Chapter 29

EXHIBITING ITALIAN BOOKS OUTSIDE ITALY

TAMMARO DE MARINIS AND THE 1926 *EXPOSITION DU LIVRE ITALIEN*

GAIA GRIZZI

IN 1926 SEYMOUR de Ricci published three articles in the *Bulletin du bibliophile et du bibliothécaire* examining French, English, and American bibliophily during the first quarter of the twentieth century. He began by stating: "In the first quarter of the twentieth century, the history of bibliophily has been at least as much the history of booksellers as of book lovers."[1] The same year, the Italian bookseller Tammaro De Marinis organized, with de Ricci's help, the *Exposition du livre italien* in Paris (Figure 29.1). The exhibition featured 1,034 manuscripts, printed books, and bindings dating from the eleventh to the eighteenth century, and was divided between two separate venues: the Bibliothèque nationale and the Pavillon de Marsan (Union centrale des arts décoratifs).[2] This event, described in *The Times* as a "happy reminder to the obligation we owed to Italy as lovers of books,"[3] or in more flamboyant terms as "the apotheosis of the Italian book,"[4] demonstrates De Marinis's attempt to become known as one of the booksellers who made book history. Comprising loans from around fifty French and Italian libraries

1 "Dans le premier quart du XX^{e} siècle, l'histoire de la bibliophilie a été au moins autant l'histoire des libraires que celle des amateurs"; Seymour de Ricci, "Les amateurs de livres anciens en France de 1900 à 1925," *Bulletin du bibliophile et du bibliothécaire* 5 (1926): 54–65 at 54. All translations are my own unless otherwise stated.

2 The exact opening dates are May 21, 1926, for the Bibliothèque nationale and May 26 for the Pavillon de Marsan. The closing date was June 28, 1926.

3 "Early Italian Books," *The Times*, June 30, 1926, 17.

4 Seymour de Ricci, Musée des arts décoratifs, and Bibliothèque nationale, *Exposition du livre italien: mai–juin 1926, catalogue des manuscrits, livres imprimés, reliures* (Paris: [s. n.], 1926), 6.

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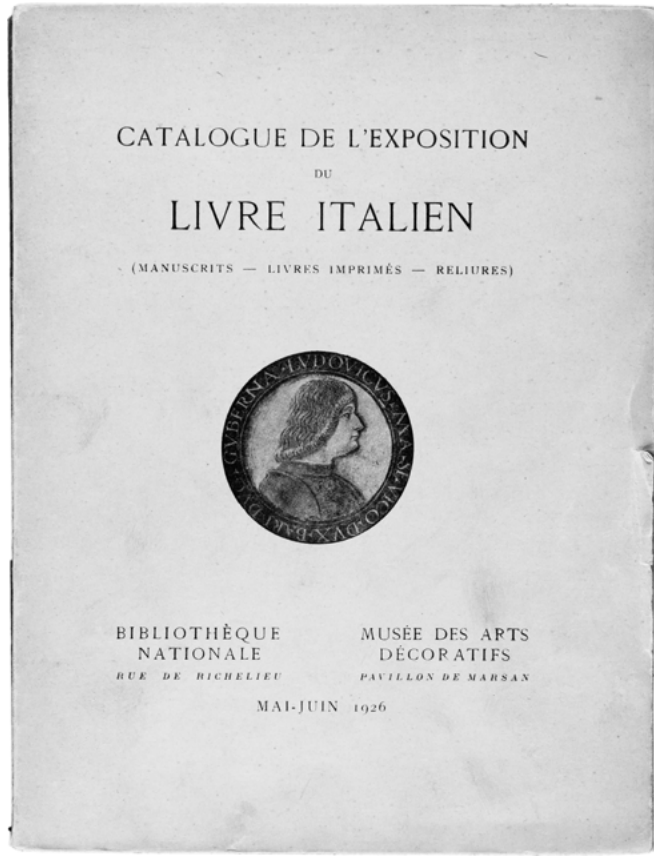


Figure 29.1. Cover of *Catalogue de l'exposition du livre italien*, 1926. Venice, Fondazione Cini, Fondo De Marinis. Per gentile concessione della Fondazione Giorgio Cini.

and several private collectors (both European and American), the *Exposition du livre italien* provides an excellent case study of how booksellers have contributed to the history of bibliophily.

It would only have been possible to concretize the idea of the *Exposition* within a favourable cultural and political context. In this regard, we should note an earlier exhibition: the *Mostra storica della legatura artistica* also curated by De Marinis and held in Florence, at the Palazzo Pitti in 1922. In 1926 the Italian government was asked to reciprocate the exhibition loans made by the French government in 1922.[5] The 1922 exhibition was a collaboration between De Marinis, de Ricci, and Amédée Boinet. The latter, administrateur de la Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève in Paris, also curated the *Exposition du livre français au Musée des arts décoratifs* in 1923, a clear model for the 1926 exhibition.[6] An international network of book specialists, with different backgrounds and institutional roles, who collaborated on various exhibition projects over that period, was thus established. To obtain loans, De Marinis made use of his contacts, including several high-level collectors, dealers, and librarians, but was particularly reliant on the support of the art critic and journalist Ugo Ojetti. Ojetti, a member of the 1926 exhibition's

5 Paris, Musée des arts décoratifs, (hereafter MAD), D1/154.

6 MAD, D1/154.

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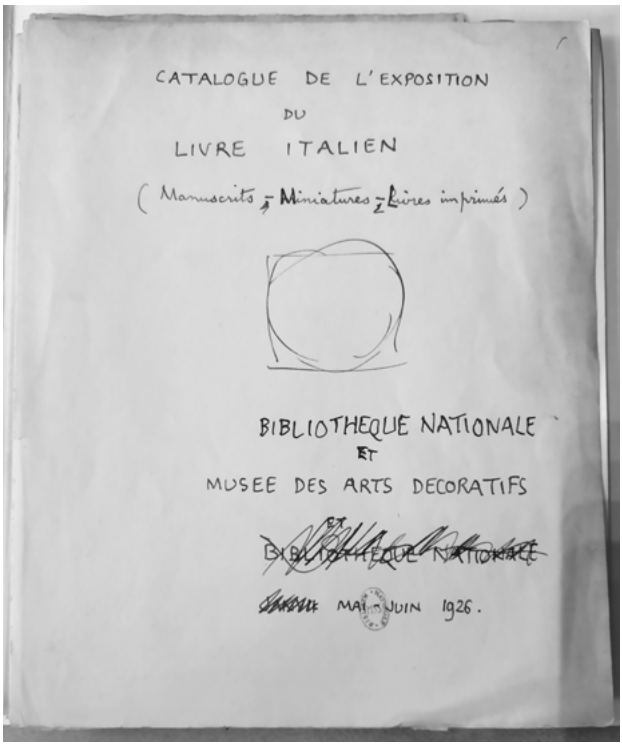


Figure 29.2. De Ricci's sketch of the cover for the exhibition catalogue. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fonds Seymour de Ricci. Courtesy of the BnF.

organizing committee, aimed to use exhibitions of Italian art abroad as a means of cultural propaganda.[7] Benito Mussolini himself intervened on several occasions, both to facilitate loans to Italian libraries and rectify organizational issues.[8] The collaborative efforts and behind-the-scenes work that brought about the 1926 *Exposition* aimed to promote a cultural discourse that fostered the rare and ancient book as an instrument to express *italianità* and bring international prestige to Fascist Italy. Exhibitions of books spread widely in the 1920s, even within Italy and were often intended to celebrate recent acquisitions, for example in 1925 for the "return" of Borso d'Este's Bible to Modena (an operation orchestrated, as is well-known, by De Marinis). Similarly, in 1929, exhibitions took place across Italy in conjunction with the first World Library and Information Congress, and in 1934 a major exhibition opened in Rome at Palazzo Carpegna.[9] Indeed, the Fascist policy of rare book acquisition was very active, principally to stop the exodus of bibliographic treasures.[10] This brief contextual analysis demonstrates that the 1926 *Exposition du livre italien* was, in fact, part of a broader phenomenon of book exhibitions.

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7 Marta Nezzo, *Ugo Ojetti: Critica, azione, ideologia: Dalle biennali d'arte antica al Premio Cremona* (Padova: Il poligrafo, 2016).

8 Rome, Archivio Centrale dello Stato, D 2615, Scavi; musei, gallerie, oggetti d'arte, esportazioni, Divisione seconda (1925–1928), b. 99, fasc. 2195.

9 Enrico Castelnuovo and Alessio Monciatti, eds. *Medioevo, medioevi: Un secolo di esposizioni d'arte medievale* (Pisa: Ed. della Normale, 2008); Andrea de Pasquale, "Bibliothèques et musées: exemples italiens," *La fabrique du patrimoine écrit: objets, acteurs, usages sociaux*, ed. Fabienne Henryot (Villeurbanne: l'ENSSIB, 2020), 271–84.

10 Italy, Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione. Direzione Generale delle Accademie e Biblioteche, *La mostra delle biblioteche italiane a Palazzo Carpegna [Roma 27 Maggio–15 Luglio 1934]* (Rome: Biblioteca d'Arte Editrice, 1934). See also Chapter 14 in this volume.

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Although the project was probably the result of a long-standing desire of De Marinis, the exhibition itself was organized quickly. In a letter dated November 25, 1925, the Neapolitan bookseller expressed his gratitude to Roland Marcel, then administrator of the Bibliothèque nationale, for having agreed to host the event, while de Ricci mentioned that it only took a month to write and print the exhibition catalogue.[11] Despite de Ricci's and De Marinis's outstanding commitment and experience, the limited time dedicated to the organization of this exposition suggests that it should not be interpreted as a summary of brand-new research. Rather it should be considered as a moment of verification, a sort of visual audit of the knowledge acquired so far, or even an opportunity to formulate new hypotheses. A richly illustrated catalogue with six hundred facsimiles and reproductions was to be published after the exhibition by the publisher John Holroyd-Reece. Unfortunately, this project was never completed (Figure 29.2).[12]

From amongst the vast collection of Italian manuscripts at the Bibliothèque nationale, De Marinis picked sixty items, all displayed in a single room on the ground floor of rue de Richelieu along with other items. The sources for making a well-considered choice of manuscripts from the Bibliothèque nationale were vast. Particularly noteworthy were Léopold Delisle's *Cabinet des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque impériale* (1868), and for Italian manuscripts Antonio Marsand's *I manoscritti italiani della Regia Biblioteca parigina*, continued by Gaston Raynaud (1882).[13] The manuscripts were primarily selected for their illustrations. The vast majority were from the fourteenth century (twenty items) and fifteenth century (thirty-seven pieces) and were part of the Aragonese and the Sforza collections. We can see here, in embryo, the core of the research from which De Marinis would develop *La Biblioteca napoletana dei Re d'Aragona* and which would inspire other scholars, including Élisabeth Pellegrin with her *La bibliothèque des Visconti et des Sforza*.[14]

The desire to identify and, moreover, reconstruct a dispersed heritage was perhaps the principal driving force that led to the paradox of planning, for the first time, an exhibition of Italian books with a nationalist slant, but hosted abroad. It is, however, impor-

11 On this, see the letter from de Tammaro De Marinis to Roland Marcel dated November 25, 1925, BnF, E24/16 and 2005/028/563 (I am grateful to Anne Leblay-Kinoshita for pointing out this reference); de Ricci, *Exposition du livre italien*, 12.

12 A part of this publication project is still at the BnF and an analysis of it is the subject of my doctoral thesis. BnF, NAF 28414. I am very grateful to François Avril for telling me about this archival fund's existence and to Jocelyn Monchamp for granting me access.

13 Léopold Delisle, *Le cabinet des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque impériale [puis nationale]: étude sur la formation de ce dépôt, comprenant les éléments d'une histoire de la calligraphie, de la miniature, de la reliure et du commerce des livres à Paris avant l'invention de l'imprimerie* (Paris: Imprimerie impériale, 1868); Antonio Marsand, *I manoscritti italiani della Regia Biblioteca parigina*, 2 vols. (Paris: dalla Stamp. reale, 1835–1838); Gaston Raynaud, *Inventaire des manuscrits italiens de la Bibliothèque nationale qui ne figurent pas dans le catalogue de Marsand* (Paris: Picard Champion, 1882).

14 For these, see Tammaro De Marinis, *La biblioteca napoletana dei Re d'Aragona*, 4 vols. (Milan: Hoepli, 1947–1953); Élisabeth Pellegrin, *La bibliothèque des Visconti et des Sforza, ducs de Milan: Supplément* (Florence: Olschki, 1969), funded by De Marinis.

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tant to cite at least one precursor of this type of research on Italian books dispersed in major collections abroad, especially in France: Giuseppe Mazzatinti. Best known for his monumental work *Inventari dei manoscritti delle biblioteche d'Italia* (thirteen volumes, 1891–1906), Mazzatinti surveyed and catalogued Italian manuscripts in French libraries on behalf of the Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione on ministerial commission and published *La biblioteca dei Re d'Aragona in Napoli* (1897).[15] It may seem surprising at first glance that De Marinis, a bookseller, carried out this reconstitution of dispersed books, whereas antiquarian book-dealers were often accused in the 1920s of being responsible for the ongoing exodus.[16] This is, however, a lot less surprising if we consider that provenance was an important criterion, particularly in the art market at the beginning of the twentieth century.

We do not have any pictures of the exhibition layout, either for the Bibliothèque nationale or for the Musée des arts décoratifs, but we can deduce some aspects of the display from newspapers of the time and archival sources.[17] Apparently, at the Bibliothèque nationale a "mixed" setting associating the manuscripts with ivories, bronzes, medals, carvings, or cameos from the Cabinet des Médailles was chosen, while the walls were covered by tapestries and drawings lent by the Louvre.

The second part of the show, held at the Musée des arts décoratifs, was a customized selection of rare books from various sources, but predominantly from public libraries in Italy and France. The material was divided into five rooms. The main room, *la grande nef*, contained most of the manuscripts, along with tapestries on the walls.[18] A large double-sloping display case had been specially brought in from the Museo di San Marco in Florence and towered in the centre of the "nave," displaying the show's highlights.[19] The four smaller rooms of the Musée des arts décoratifs, which overlooked the Tuileries Gardens, contained a few printed books, bindings, and only six manuscripts, along with a significant number of single leaves and cuttings.[20] In total, the exhibition catalogue listed 170 pieces in the manuscript section, consisting of one hundred manu-

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15 Giuseppe Mazzatinti, *Inventario dei manoscritti italiani delle biblioteche di Francia*, 3 vols. (Rome: [s. n.], 1886–1888); Giuseppe Mazzatini, *La biblioteca dei re d'Aragona in Napoli* (Rocca S. Casciano: Licinio Cappelli Editore, 1897).

16 Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione, *La mostra*, 208.

17 BnF, E24/16; MAD, D1/154; Venice, Fondazione Cini, annotated copy of the exhibition catalogue by Tammaro De Marinis; Antonio Boselli, "La mostra del libro italiano a Parigi," *Emporio* 63.378 (June 1926): 348–60. See also Gaia Grizzi, "La terra del libro," in *Multa Renascentur: Tammaro De Marinis studioso, bibliofilo, antiquario, collezionista*, ed. Ilenia Maschietto (Venice: Marsilio, 2023), 76–87.

18 de Ricci, *Exposition du livre italien*, cat. 1025–34.

19 Florence, Galleria delle statue, Verbale di Consegna degli oggetti d'arte per la mostra del libro italiano, April 28, 1926.

20 Boselli, "La Mostra," 352. Two manuscripts, the Sforza-Savoia Legendary and the Sforza Codex (cat. 193–94, now Turin, Biblioteca Reale, MSS Varia 124 and 75), were placed on ancient lecterns. Surrounded by a group of bindings, two enormous Choirbooks, one by Lorenzo Monaco (cat. 270, BMLF, Corali 3) and the other by Attavante (cat. 274, BMLF, Corali 4), dominated the centre of the room.

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scripts and seventy cuttings,[21] all dating from the tenth to the fifteenth centuries. Once again, the best represented centuries were the fourteenth century, with forty-five works listed in the catalogue, and the fifteenth century with 114 works. A first glimpse of this chronological split, along with the layout, emphasizes two theories that regularly arise in early scholarship on Italian manuscripts. The first stressed the difficulty of defining an "Italian art" before the twelfth century (only five manuscripts were catalogued before that date), the second the idea of progress in the arts, suggesting that Italian miniature painting reached its apogee in the fifteenth century.[22]

Although most loans came from French or Italian libraries, providing the exhibition with a strong institutional character, several came from private owners. These included from Sir George Lindsay Holford, Antonio Cornazzano's *Del modo di regere e di regnare*, made for Eleanor of Aragon;[23] the *Baths of Pozzuoli*, lent by Leo Olschki;[24] and the *Cronaca Crespi* signed by Leonardo da Besozzo.[25] Additionally, the Morgan Library sent four major loans:[26] the Gospel Book of Matilda of Tuscany,[27] the Missal of Domenico della Rovere,[28] the *Fior di Battaglia*,[29] and Didymus's *De Spiritu Sancto* from the library of Mathias Corvinus.[30] Private loans of single leaves or cuttings were more abundant: thirty-three from Georges Wildenstein, twenty-one from Ulrico Hoepli, four from Arthur Sambon, three from De Marinis, and one from Olschki. Fifteen items came from Parisian libraries and museums, including l'Arsenal, Sainte-Geneviève, Mazarine, and the Louvre. A few others were requested from other French cities: two from Avignon, one from Lyon, and one from Le Havre. The latter two were the Missal of Thomas James, bishop of Dol, signed by Attavante from Lyon exhibited with its sister leaf from Le Havre.[31]

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21 Regarding De Marinis and cuttings see Federica Toniolo, "Tammaro De Marinis e la miniatura," in *Multa Renascentur: Tammaro De Marinis*, 51–65.

22 This statement has ancient origins and can be associated with Vasari. It was then used constantly in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, notably by Seroux d'Agincourt. It remains topical and was still stated, for example by John A. Herbert in 1911.

23 PML, M.731 (cat. 243). The 1926 exhibition catalogue mistakenly transcribed the inscription as "Leonora Maria Gonzaga," while it was correctly transcribed in [Sydney Cockerell], *Burlington Fine Arts Club: Exhibition of Illuminated Manuscripts* (London: Burlington Fine Arts Club, 1908), cat. 267, p. 129.

24 Cologny, Fondation Martin Bodmer, Cod. Bodmer 135 (cat. 187), formerly owned by De Marinis, exhibited with its twin manuscript from Rome, Biblioteca Angelica, MS 1474, (cat. 188).

25 de Ricci, *Exposition du livre italien*, cat. 148.

26 BnF, NAF 28414. According to the organizers, these were the first overseas loans from the Morgan Library.

27 PML, M.492 (cat. 135).

28 PML, M.306 (cat. 222).

29 PML, M.383 (cat. 228), formerly Libreria Antiquaria T. De Marinis, *Manuscrits et livres rares*, cat. 8 (Florence: De Marinis, 1908), no. 31, plate IX.

30 PML, M.496 (cat. 281), formerly Libreria Antiquaria T. De Marinis, *Manuscrits, incunables et livres rares*, cat. 12 (Florence: De Marinis, 1913), no. 15, plate VIII.

31 Lyon, BM, MS 5123 (cat. 273); Le Havre, Musée d'art moderne André-Malraux, inv.36.1 (cat. 272).

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Coming from several different cities, the loans from Italy were more numerous and varied. Twenty-nine items arrived from Florence: eighteen from the Biblioteca Laurenziana, nine from the Nazionale, two from the Riccardiana, and one from the Bargello. Fourteen manuscripts were lent by the Estense library in Modena, and eleven arrived from Bologna, from the state archive, the city library, and the university library. Six came from Rome and five from Naples. Only a few loans were received from Venice, Turin, Parma, Pavia, Milan, and Brescia.

At the same time, the major Italian lenders were striving to contribute to a broader knowledge of their collections through illustrated publications and, in some cases, in-house exhibitions. This is made clear in the preface to the catalogue of reproductions of illuminated manuscripts from the Laurenziana written by its director Guido Biagi and published in 1914 by the Librairie Ancienne T. De Marinis:

> These reproductions…may well, I deem, furnish useful material for the yet unwritten history of miniature painting in relation to illuminated manuscripts. Up to the present this history has been neglected both by bibliographers and art critics, as the ornamentation of books comes neither within the scope of palaeography nor within that of the history of painting...For this volume, the first of a series which it is hoped may comprehend miniatures and valuable manuscripts in various Italian collections, I have selected only a few of the most characteristic that are to be seen in the glazed cases, at present all too scarce, in the Laurenziana, whose treasures it is my ambition to expose in an ordered Exhibition that shall form the Museo del Libro...In compiling this Album we have followed the example set by the British Museum in its *Reproductions from illuminated manuscripts* edited by George F. Warner.[32]

This statement reaffirmed the need to create a national history of Italian miniatures and the desire to use two complementary tools for this purpose: illustrated albums and exhibitions. A similar need was expressed by Paolo d'Ancona in 1906, while presenting his proposal for a corpus of Italian miniatures.[33] D'Ancona complained about the lack of photographs or facsimiles, necessary tools to establish school affinities or the style of an artist with the appropriate comparisons, a methodology used in the French albums of the Comte de Bastard d'Estang.

Of the various political and personal objectives that brought about the realization of the *Exposition du livre italien*, one that is of particular interest is De Marinis's desire to provide new material for scholarship on Italian manuscripts. This exhibition offered a unique opportunity to see many masterpieces side by side, compare them, organize

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The reunion of these two pieces was not a scholarly novelty. On this, see Emile Bertaux, "Le Missel de Thomas James," *La Revue de l'art ancien et moderne* 20 (1906): 129–47.

32 Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana and Guido Biagi, *Reproductions from Illuminated Manuscripts: Fifty Plates from MSS. in the R. Medicean Laurentian Library* (Florence: De Marinis, 1914), 5–6.

33 Paolo d'Ancona, "Proposta di un corpus della miniatura italiana," in *Atti del congresso internazionale di scienze storiche (Roma, 1–9 Aprile 1903)*, 12 vols. (Rome: Loescher, 1904–1907), 5:47.

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knowledge, verify recent hypotheses, and even to promote new approaches. In the main nave of the Pavillon de Marsan, the manuscripts were divided by region, school and, where possible, by artist. Many signed or dated works, both manuscripts and single leaves, could be compared to each other. We can imagine the organizers struggling to find the right place, in the right showcase for each school, in the right chronological succession for every single manuscript. In the Bibliothèque nationale, the fifteenth century was the most represented, especially by works of the Florentine school. However, the lack of homogeneity in the material exhibited should not necessarily be attributed to the taste of the organizers. Instead it may have been due to the fact that a comprehensive history of the Italian miniature had not yet been written.[34]

The first attempt to write a history of Italian miniatures was made by Gaetano Milanesi in 1850 in his *Nuove indagini*, based mostly on material from Siena and Florence.[35] From 1866 to 1870, at the request of the Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione, Milanesi, accompanied by the artist Carlo Pini, undertook a journey across Italy in search of illuminated manuscripts. Of this venture, only the preface was published in 1871.[36] It can be read as an assessment of the situation. Milanesi affirms:

> I started writing a historical essay…about miniatures in Italy…A beautiful subject, as everyone sees, pleasant and perhaps new among us: as up to now there has been no one, as far as I know, who has dealt separately and systematically with this art…much greater is the number of writers of France, Germany, and England, who have published very splendid works with a set of coloured plates, facsimiles, and more. But since they were focused on their local art, they are of little use to the historian of the Italian miniature.[37]

34 BnF, NAF 28414. One of the organizers' major sources was undoubtably Francesco Carta, Carlo Cipolla, and Carlo Frati, eds., *Monumenta palaeographica sacra. Atlante paleografico artistico compilato sui manoscritti esposti in Torino alla mostra d'arte sacra nel 1898* (Turin: Bocca, 1899).

35 Carlo Milanesi, Gaetano Milanesi, and Carlo Pini, *Nuove indagini con documenti inediti per servire alla storia della miniatura italiana* (Florence: Le Monnier, 1850). See also Piergiacomo Petrioli, *Gaetano Milanesi: Erudizione e storia dell'arte in Italia nell'Ottocento. Profilo e carteggio artistico* (Siena: Accademia degli Intronati, 2004); Piergiacomo Petrioli, "Il carteggio di Gaetano Milanesi," November 8, 2022 www.artivisive.sns.it/progetto_milanesi.html, accessed May 16, 2023; Ada Labriola, "Miniature rinascimentali riprodotte nel XIX secolo," *Rivista di Storia della Miniatura* 20 (2016): 155–69.

36 Gaetano Milanesi, "Della Miniatura in Italia," *Nuova antologia di scienze, lettere ed arti*, 16.2 (1871): 467–73.

37 Milanesi, "Miniatura," 467–69: "Io ho preso a scrivere un Saggio Istorico...intorno alla miniatura in Italia...Argomento bellissimo, come ognun vede, piacevole e forse nuovo tra noi; non essendo stato fino ad ora nessuno, ch'io sappia, il quale separatamente e con ordine abbia trattato di quest'arte...Della Miniatura...assai maggiore è il numero degli scrittori di Francia, Germania, ed Inghilterra, i quali hanno pubblicato opere splendidissime col corredo di tavole colorate, facsimili, ed altro. Ma trattando essi per lo più di quest'arte presso di loro, ben poco se ne può giovare la storia della miniatura italiana."

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The beginning of the twentieth century saw an abundance of studies, articles, and major publications on Italian miniatures. Also noteworthy is the remarkable publication by Pietro Toesca about the Lombard school.[38] Despite this, in his 1912 review of *Illuminated Manuscripts* by John Alexander Herbert, Lionello Venturi wrote:

> One can indeed feel how the author has only worked on what he personally knows in the British Museum without studying directly the enormous amount of artistic material still existing in Italy. Having read the three chapters dedicated to Italian miniatures, one is convinced that we need to make a greater contribution to these studies, which are very popular abroad, because many beautiful works of art the churches and libraries are dispersed outside Italy.[39]

Between 1901 and 1926, Adolfo Venturi published his *Storia dell'arte italiana* devoting several chapters to the history of Italian miniatures.[40] Just before the exhibition, in 1925, *La miniature italienne* by d'Ancona appeared, which described his work as the "first attempt of this kind which would at least bring together in a synthetic table the notes scattered all over the places, extracted from articles, newspapers, almost always lacking stylistic considerations about works of art."[41]

In his article entitled "Gl'insegnamenti dell'esposizione parigina del libro italiano,"[42] published one year after the exhibition, de Ricci explained that De Marinis had visited all the major Italian and French libraries again before making his final decisions about which works deserved a place in the 1926 exhibition. He thus gave us the account of a connoisseur who, since photographs were rarely available at that time, relied upon direct experience of each work of art. The figure of Bernard Berenson also immediately comes to mind. In a letter to Belle da Costa Greene, dated October 25, 1926, De Marinis recounted his meeting with the famous art historian during four concerts conducted by Toscanini at La Scala in Milan.[43] Beyond the personal encounter between these two men,

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38 Pietro Toesca, *La pittura e la miniatura nella Lombardia, dai più antichi monumenti alla metà del Quattrocento* (Milan: Hoepli, 1912); see also Pietro Toesca, *Storia dell'arte italiana*, 2 vols. (Turin: [s. n.], 1913–1927).

39 Lionello Venturi, "John A. Herbert, Illuminated Manuscripts," *L'Arte* 15 (1912): 231–32: "e si sente invero come l'A. si sia ristretto a quanto egli personalmente conosce nel British Museum senza aver fatto uno studio diretto sull'enorme quantità di materiale artistico ancora esistente in Italia. Realmente alla lettura dei tre capitoletti dedicati alla miniatura italiana viene la persuasione della necessità che vi è di dare da parte nostra maggior contributo a questi studi, che all'estero incontrano molto favore, per la conoscenza di tante belle opere artistiche sparse per le chiese e le biblioteche d'Italia."

40 Adolfo Venturi, *Storia dell'arte italiana*, 14 vols. (Milan: Hoepli, 1901–1926).

41 Paolo d'Ancona, *La miniature italienne du Xe au XVIe siècle*, trans. P. Poirier (Paris: Van Oest, 1925), preface.

42 Seymour de Ricci, "Gl'Insegnamenti dell'esposizione parigina del libro italiano," *Dedalo* 7 (1927): 138–78. See also Tammaro De Marinis, "Le livre italien à la Bibliothèque nationale et au Musée des arts décoratifs," *La revue de l'art ancien et moderne* 50 (1926): 65–72, 167–74.

43 Letter from Bernard Berenson to Belle da Costa Greene dated October 5, 1926, PML, ARC 3291, De Marinis T. I am grateful to Philip Palmer for sharing this document.

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Figure 29.3. Illustration from: Seymour de Ricci, "Gl'insegnamenti dell'esposizione parigina del libro italiano," *Dedalo* 7 (1927), 151, showing a detail of Kane MS 44 now at Princeton, University Library.

Berenson's theories, his fascination for the Italian Renaissance, his connections within the art market, and above all, the emphasis he placed on a visual approach to the works of art had a significant impact on the *Exposition*.

The exhibition should therefore be understood as a testing ground, an instant to challenge the knowledge of the time. A concrete example helps us here. In 1912, Toesca recognized the same hand in a group of manuscripts and decided to name the artist the Master of the Vitae imperatorum after an Italian translation of Suetonius's *Vitae imperatorum* (Bibliothèque nationale de France, It. 131), dated 1431 and commissioned by Filippo Maria Visconti.[44] This manuscript was exhibited in 1926 at the Bibliothèque nationale (catalogue no. 58), along with Dante's *Inferno* (BnF, It. 2017, catalogue no. 14), which Toesca had attributed to the same artist. For the Pavillon de Marsan venue, the catalogue listed under no. 199 a "*Missale Romanum* of the beginning of the fifteenth century, Lombard school, from the Marchese Girolamo d'Adda."[45] This manuscript, lent

44 Toesca, *Pittura*, 529–32.

45 "MISSALE ROMANUM. Début du XV^{e} s. — École lombarde. De la bibl. du marquis d'Adda," de Ricci, *Exposition du livre italien*, 50.

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Figure 29.4 Tammaro De Marinis with Albi Rosenthal, 1968. Venice, Fondazione Cini, Fondo De Marinis. Per gentile concessione della Fondazione Giorgio Cini.

by Maggs, is now at the Morgan Library and currently attributed to Master of the Vitae imperatorum.[46] The following entry in the catalogue, no. 200, was a miniature lent by Hoepli now in Venice, Fondazione Giorgio Cini.[47] De Ricci assigned it to the Lombard school and he transcribed the inscription on the miniature as *Quidam frater mediolanensis ordinis m. opus explevit in M.CCCC.XXXVIIII.*[48] This renowned miniature is currently attributed to the so-called Olivetan Master (Fra Girolamo da Milano), an artist whose style is very similar to that of Master of the Vitae imperatorum.[49] The next item in the catalogue, no. 201, Suetonius, *De vita Caesarum*, lent by Grenville Kane, is now in Princeton University Library (Figure 29.3) and also currently attributed to the Master of the Vitae imperatorum.[50] De Ricci indicated that this manuscript was copied in 1433 by Milanus Burrus for Guiniforte de la Croce, once again referring to the Lombard school to define the miniatures.[51] Of all the pieces assigned to the Lombard school, these three items were evidently grouped together because of their stylistic similarities. The dated and "signed" works offered a basis from which to identify the others. However, de Ricci did not disclose attributions to any specific (or anonymous) artist in the exhibition catalogue. By bringing together and displaying to a large audience the works of an artist or "school" that had previously been hidden away and scattered

46 PML, M.937.

47 Venice, Fondazione Giorgio Cini, inv. 22099.

48 Anna Melograni provides the following transcription: *Quidam frater mediolanensis ordinis montis oliveti hoc opus explevit in m cccc xxxviiij*, meaning "a certain brother from Milan of the Olivetan order completed this work in 1439." See Anna Melograni, "Maestro olivetano," in *Le miniature della Fondazione Giorgio Cini: Pagine, ritagli, manoscritti*, ed. Medica Massimo and Federica Toniolo (Cinisello Balsamo: Silvana editoriale, 2016), 399–400, cat. 153.

49 Alison Stones, "An Italian Miniature in the Gambier Parry Collection," *Burlington Magazine* 111 (1969): 7–12.

50 Princeton, University Library, Kane MS 44. On this see Don Skemer, *Medieval & Renaissance Manuscripts in the Princeton University Library*, 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 2:99–103.

51 See also Robert Hoe and Carolyn Shipman, *A Catalogue of Manuscripts Forming a Portion of the Library of Robert Hoe* (New York: Priv. print., 1909), 168–71; *Catalogue of the Library of Robert Hoe of New York…to be sold by auction by the Anderson Auction Company, May 1, 1911* (New York: Anderson Auction Company, 1911), lot 2511, p. 401.

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between several different libraries, this exhibition not only drew together all the knowledge of the time on Italian miniatures, but initiated new discussions and hypotheses. This ultimately means that the *Exposition du livre italien* was a crucial visual source, providing a strong foundation for further research to fill the much-lamented gap in the history of the Italian miniature.

De Marinis's ambition to cultivate a deeper understanding and appreciation of Italian books beyond Italy's borders acted as a catalyzing force, converging the endeavours of booksellers, scholars, institutions, and political powers alike. Nevertheless, while the exhibition illuminated Italy's bibliophilic treasures, it also accentuated persistent gaps and challenges within the domain of Italian miniature scholarship. Paradoxically, it might be this very inability to provide definitive conclusions that transformed this event into a cornerstone for future exploration and discovery.

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Chapter 30

A REFERENCE BOOK FOR SCHOLARS AND COLLECTORS

ERIC MILLAR'S *ENGLISH ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS* (1926–1928)

WILLIAM P. STONEMAN

AS PART OF our collective study of the international trade in pre-modern manuscripts 1890–1945 and the making of the Middle Ages this chapter seeks to understand the relationship between the private collecting of manuscripts and the public scholarship based on them by investigating Eric Millar's fundamental study of English illuminated manuscripts. Millar's two-volume survey of English illuminated manuscripts from the tenth to the fifteenth centuries (1926, 1928) was followed in 1945 by his "Fresh Materials for the Study of English Illumination."[1] This chapter seeks to determine whether the ownership of a pre-modern manuscript played a role in its use in scholarship. How could references to such manuscripts contribute to scholarship at a time when photographic reproduction and digitization were not as widespread as they are now? Could manuscripts that were physically inaccessible in private collections contribute effectively to a scholarly discourse like Millar's?

Millar's work has been largely superseded by the six-part *Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles*, published between 1976 and 1996 under the general editorship of J. J. G. Alexander. Millar's work is most frequently cited in documentary lists of previous citations of manuscript studies, but now rarely consulted for its actual content. Alexander himself, along with Elżbieta Temple, Michael Kauffmann, Nigel Morgan, Lucy Freeman Sandler, and Kathleen Scott, in their combined efforts, more than doubled the corpus of Millar, who worked alone.[2] Collectively they created a total of 775 manuscript

1 Eric G. Millar, *English Illuminated Manuscripts from the Xth to the XIIIth Century* (Paris: Van Oest, 1926); Eric G. Millar, *English Illuminated Manuscripts of the XIVth and XVth Centuries* (Paris: Van Oest, 1928); Eric G. Millar, "Fresh Materials for the Study of English Illumination," in *Studies in Art and Literature for Belle da Costa Greene*, ed. Dorothy Miner (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954), 286–94.

2 J. J. G Alexander, ed., *A Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles*, 6 vols. (London: Harvey Millar, 1976–1996): J. J. G. Alexander, *Insular Manuscripts from the 6th to the 9th Century*

William P. Stoneman retired in December 2018 as Curator of Early Books and Manuscripts at the Houghton Library of Harvard University. He has been at Harvard since 1997 when he became the Florence Fearrington Librarian of Houghton Library. In 2013 he stepped back to become Curator of Early Books and Manuscripts at Houghton and to work with colleagues on the 2016 exhibition *Beyond Words: Illuminated Manuscripts in Boston Collections*.

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entries compared to Millar's 342, but it is revealing with respect to changing interest in and understanding of individual manuscripts and their role in a scholarly survey that a Millar record does not automatically lead to inclusion in one of the volumes of the collective survey. Some of these manuscripts are no longer considered English, but others are apparently not considered as essential to the scholarly narrative as they once were.[3]

Eric George Millar was educated at Charterhouse and Corpus Christi College, Oxford. After graduation he entered the British Museum's Department of Manuscripts in 1912 where he spent his entire career except for interruptions for national service in both the First and Second World Wars. He was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries in 1921 and received a D. Litt. from Oxford University in 1931. He was Sandars Reader in Bibliography at Cambridge University in 1934. He was made Deputy Keeper of the Department of Manuscripts at the British Museum in 1932, made Keeper in 1944, and he retired in 1947.[4]

Millar was both a distinguished scholar and a perceptive collector; he became a member of the Roxburghe Club in 1932 and its Secretary in 1936. After his death he was the subject of a double issue of the *British Museum Quarterly* in 1968, prepared by his departmental colleagues and also separately published as book.[5] This reflected his role as a scholar and collector by including both a bibliography of his publications by Janet Backhouse and a list of the sixty-seven medieval manuscripts he had collected over his lifetime compiled by Derek Turner.[6]

The photograph used as the frontispiece in the volume in honour of Millar shows him with two of his greatest manuscripts; these were among the twenty medieval manuscripts he bequeathed to the British Museum Library. The uppermost manuscript is the York Psalter, no. 28 in Turner's list of Millar's collection and now British Library, Add. MS 54179. Millar holds in his hands a copy of *La Somme le Roy*, decorated by the Parisian illuminator Honoré, no. 33 in the list of his collection and now British Library, Add. MS 54180. Surely this gives a sense of how he wished to be remembered, as a collector as much as a scholar; he is not holding copies of any of his numerous scholarly works. In this memorial prepared by his colleagues, Francis Wormald concluded his introductory

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(1978), vol. 1; Elżbieta Temple, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts, 900–1066* (1976), vol. 2; C. M. Kauffmann, *Romanesque Manuscripts, 1066–1190* (1975), vol. 3; N. J. Morgan, *Early Gothic Manuscripts, 1190–1285* (1982 and 1988), vol. 4; Lucy Freeman Sandler, *Gothic Manuscripts, 1285–1385* (1986), vol. 5; Kathleen Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts, 1390–1490* (1996), vol. 6.

3 Among these are Millar no. 82 (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 717: Jerome on Isaiah), Millar no. 245 (Cambridge, Christ's College Library, MS 8: Book of Hours), Millar no. 247 (BL, Harley MS 2356: Psalter), and Millar no. 259 (Durham, Durham Cathedral Library, MS A.I.3: Nicholas de Lyra on Pentateuch).

4 "Dr. E. G. Millar: Expert on Medieval Manuscripts," *The Times*, January 15, 1966, 10; supplemented on January 19, 1966, 14. Another anonymous obituary appeared in *The Book Collector* 15.1 (1966): 65–66.

5 *BMQ* 33.1–2 (1968); *The Eric George Millar Bequest of Manuscripts and Drawings, 1967: A Commemorative Volume* (London: British Museum, 1968).

6 Janet Backhouse, "A Bibliography of Eric Millar," *BMQ* 33.1–2 (1968): 7–9; and D. H. Turner, "List of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts owned by Eric Millar," *BMQ* 33.1–2 (1968): 9–16.

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remarks by writing that: "there can be little doubt that Millar's scholarship enhanced his collections, but it is equally true that his collecting enhanced and sharpened his scholarship. In both he served his beloved Museum well."[7]

Some sense of Millar's personal network of collectors and scholars can be recreated by the fact that he wrote the entry for Henry Yates Thompson in the *Dictionary of National Biography*;[8] it was Yates Thompson who had invited him as a student to breakfast in order to meet Sydney Cockerell. Millar wrote anonymous obituaries for Cockerell and for Charles Dyson Perrins.[9] Millar also wrote an obituary for Wilfred Merton.[10] Millar was the compiler of the two-volume descriptive catalogue of the western manuscripts in the collection of Sir Alfred Chester Beatty (1927, 1930).[11] The third volume of this catalogue was used as a reference in the second volume of Millar's *English Illuminated Manuscripts* (1928) where it was described as forthcoming, but it never appeared. Backhouse observed that: "it was a source of lifelong regret that the sale of the collection prevented the completion of this ambitious project." Backhouse is also worth quoting in her general description of Millar's scholarly achievements: "His work, meticulous in detail, and economic in words, broke new ground and laid solid foundations for later scholars, particularly those who followed him in the investigation of illumination, an area not well served by previous generations."[12]

In addition to Cockerell, Millar followed in the footsteps of another great English manuscript scholar, Montague Rhodes James.[13] James's catalogues, especially those of the Cambridge college libraries and Pierpont Morgan's collection, and Cockerell's achievements in collecting and curating, provided both subjects and models that Millar pursued. Cockerell's work on the 1908 Burlington Fine Arts Club Exhibition of Illu-

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7 Francis Wormald, "Eric George Millar," *BMQ* 33.1–2 (1968): 6.

8 Eric G. Millar, "Yates Thompson, Henry," *Dictionary of National Biography, 1922–1930* (1937), 836–37.

9 "Commentary," *The Book Collector* 11.3 (1962): 283–86; "Commentary," *The Book Collector* 7.2 (1958): 118–20.

10 Eric G. Millar, "Mr. Wilfred Merton: Book Production at Its Best," *The Times*, November 8, 1957, 13.

11 Eric G. Millar, *The Library of A. Chester Beatty: A Descriptive Catalogue of the Western Manuscripts*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1927–1930).

12 Janet Backhouse, "Millar, Eric George (1887–1966)," *ODNB* version: 23 September 2004.

13 On James, see Richard William Pfaff, *Montague Rhodes James* (London: Scolar, 1980); and Lynda Dennison, ed., *The Legacy of M. R. James: Papers from the 1995 Cambridge Symposium* (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2001). On Cockerell, see Wilfrid Blunt, *Sydney Carlyle Cockerell, Friend of Ruskin and William Morris, and Director of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge* (London: Hamilton, 1964); Christopher de Hamel's 2004 Sandars Lectures: "Cockerell as Entrepreneur," *The Book Collector* 55 (2006): 49–72; "Cockerell as Museum Director," *The Book Collector* 55.2 (2006): 201–23; and "Cockerell as Collector," *The Book Collector* 55 (2006): 339–66; Stella Panayotova, *I Turned It Into a Palace: Sydney Cockerell and the Fitzwilliam Museum* (Cambridge: Fitzwilliam Museum, 2008); and most recently Stella Panayotova, "Sydney Cockerell: A Bibliophile Director-Collector," in *Collecting the Past: British Collectors and their Collections from the 18th to the 20th Centuries*, ed. Toby Burrows and Cynthia Johnston (London: Routledge, 2019), 79–97.

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minated Manuscripts was critical in this regard. There are fifty-nine names in the List of Contributors to the exhibition: twenty-six institutions and thirty-three individuals.[14] The twenty-six institutions accounted for seventy-three manuscripts. More than half of that number of manuscripts (forty-one) came from eight Oxford (thirteen manuscripts) and seven Cambridge (twenty-eight manuscripts) colleges; given the availability of several of James's recently published catalogues of college collections, it is not surprising that Cambridge outnumbered Oxford. Also included in the List of Contributors were the Royal Collection (listed first) and the Society of Antiquaries of London, Lambeth Palace, Advocates Library of Edinburgh, Eton College, University of Glasgow, Hereford Cathedral, Oscott College, the Royal College of Physicians, Sion College, the Victoria and Albert Museum, and Winchester Cathedral. The British Museum Library and the Bodleian Library were not then permitted to loan material by the terms of their constitutions.[15] These two institutions were thus major additions by Millar to the corpus of English manuscripts surveyed by Cockerell.

Thirty-three individuals exhibited 197 manuscripts at the Burlington Fine Arts Club, but of these thirty-three private owners only nineteen were actually members of the Club. Cockerell himself, for example, was not a member and never became one. This reliance on non-members is most probably a result of Cockerell's knowledge and influence; he knew many of them personally. Thus 197 of the 270 manuscripts exhibited, a full 73 percent of the 1908 exhibition, was private property. This is indicative of the number and quality of medieval and Renaissance manuscripts then still in private ownership, but what is almost even more remarkable is that 119 of 270, nearly 44 percent of the entire exhibition, was owned by only five individuals. The lender of the largest number of manuscripts was Perrins (fifty), followed by Morgan (eighteen), Yates Thompson (seventeen), Major George Lindsay Holford (seventeen), and Cockerell himself (seventeen). Yates Thompson would, in fact, have surpassed Pierpont Morgan if we were to consider the five manuscripts which were formerly his and which were included in the exhibition from the collections of other owners;[16] although it is also worth noting that Yates Thompson had really stopped acquiring by the date of the exhibition.

In the introduction to the catalogue of the Burlington Fine Arts Club catalogue Cockerell was explicit about the impetus for his exhibition in 1908:

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14 [Sydney Cockerell], *Burlington Fine Arts Club: Exhibition of Illuminated Manuscripts* (London: Burlington Fine Arts Club, 1908); Janet Backhouse, "Manuscripts on Display: Some Landmarks in the Exhibition and Popular Publication of Illuminated Books," in *The Legacy of M. R. James*, ed. Dennison, 37–52. Backhouse also records that "a special illustrated edition was published after the exhibition had taken place" (47), but she mistakenly gives the number of contributors as fifty-eight; she has apparently failed to count "His Majesty the King" whose name heads the list, but is separated discreetly from the other contributors.

15 Backhouse, "Manuscripts on Display," 50.

16 See William P. Stoneman, "Henry Yates Thompson, Gentleman: 'An Unusual Collector With Commercial Motives Just a Shade Larger Than Was Common,'" in *The Medieval Book: Glosses from Friends and Colleagues of Christopher de Hamel*, ed. James H. Marrow, Richard A. Linenthal and William Noel ('t Goy-Houten: Hes & De Graaf, 2010), 344–54.

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> It is true that in the last few years there have twice been temporary exhibitions of the greatest importance at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. But these have been confined to the art of France of the outstanding nobility of which, at its best periods, the present exhibition gives sufficient evidence. While, however, France, Italy, and the Netherlands are well and typically represented, a special effort has now been made to bring together the finest examples of English workmanship. Private collectors and public institutions, among which must be specially named the Colleges of Oxford and Cambridge, whose manuscript treasures are scarcely known even to their owners, have responded generously to the appeal. Over eighty of the manuscripts here collected were written in this island, and all the stages of the national style, from the rise of the Winchester school in the tenth century to the wane in the middle of the fifteenth, of an equally characteristic school, may be readily followed…What that supremacy [of English miniature-painting] meant is well illustrated by such books as the Benedictional of St. Æthlwold, the Hereford Gospels, the Bury St. Edmunds New Testament and Life of St. Edmund, the two Durham Lives of St. Cuthbert, and the outline drawings in the Waltham St. Aldhelm, the Bede from Ramsey, and the Hereford St. Chrysotom. All these show a mastery of technique and an energy of imagination which cannot be too much admired…Nevertheless the skill of hand and power of design which are seen to such advantage in the English books of the ninth to the twelfth century, which comprise the majority in Case A, show no falling off in Case B, which contains an incomparable series of Psalters, mainly of the thirteenth century, from Canterbury, York, St. Albans, Peterborough, Salisbury, and other great monastic centres.

And Cockerell went on in considerable detail up to Case L ending with "a remarkably beautiful volume written and illustrated by Thomas Chaundler, Chancellor of the University of Oxford."[17]

In 1904 Cockerell had visited the first of the French temporary exhibitions of medieval and Renaissance manuscripts which had been arranged at the Bibliothèque nationale in Paris to supplement an exhibition of "Primitifs" at the Louvre.[18] His diaries, now in the British Library, document that he was there in June with Emery Walker and in April and July for the opening and the closing of the exhibition with the Yates Thompsons.[19] Cockerell was working part time for Yates Thompson and nine of his manuscripts

17 Cockerell, *Burlington*, ix–xi.

18 Henri Bouchot et al., *Exposition des primitifs français au Palais du Louvre et à la Bibliothèque nationale* (Paris: Palais du Louvre et Bibliothèque nationale, 1904).

19 His diary for 1904 is BL, Add. MS 52641 and records visits to the exhibition on June 5–6 and July 10–14. In his annual summary Cockerell wrote: "I had stayed in Paris with the Yates Thompsons for a night on my way out, & in the hour or so at my disposal when I was returning I looked in at the Exhibition of manuscripts which had been arranged at the Bib. Nationale to supplement the very interesting collection of 'Primitifs' at the Louvre. This showed me that I should have to cross again to study them more closely, and I was able to do this twice, in June and July, with much satisfaction."

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were in the Paris exhibition in a vitrine all by themselves.[20] In 1907 Cockerell returned to Paris for the *Exposition de portraits, peints et dessinés du XIIIe au XVIIe siècle* which took place between April and June of that year.[21]

Cockerell's 1908 exhibition is key to understanding Millar's work and Millar used Cockerell's catalogue of the exhibition frequently as a reference. Millar's survey twenty years later still relied on manuscripts from the libraries of many of the same institutions and private collectors. However, it was focused solely on English manuscripts and, of course, it was never conceived as an exhibition (with the accompanying challenges of loans and display) so Millar was able to include manuscripts in both the British Museum and the Bodleian Library. This had a huge impact. The British Museum contributed 109 manuscript entries to Millar's survey and the Bodleian Library thirty-three. There are 317 numbered entries in Millar's two volumes and twenty-five more in "Further Materials" for 342 in total. Thus, the British Museum was the owner of a third of all the manuscripts covered. Forty-three of the 342 manuscripts were in private ownership when they were recorded by Millar and all but five are now in public institutions. The slow but steady movement of manuscripts out of private collections into public repositories has marched on.

The five Millar entries not now in public institutions include a Bible that was the property of the Lord Aldenham (Millar no. 153), and presumably is still with his descendants; a Book of Hours, decorated by Herman Scherre and which belonged to Chester Beatty and was purchased at his sale by the Earl of Berkeley (Millar no. 279);[22] a Psalter owned by the Earl of Leicester (Millar no. 256), still at Holkham Hall; the Becket leaves now in the Wormsley Library of Sir Mark Getty (Millar no. 169); and a Bible which was formerly owned by Emery Walker and until recently on deposit at the Holy Land Experience theme park in Orlando, Florida (Millar no. 151).

Perhaps more surprising is the fact that nineteen manuscripts, close to half of the forty-three manuscripts then in private ownership and used by Millar, are now in UK institutions: British Library (thirteen), Fitzwilliam Museum (three), Bodleian Library (one), National Library of Scotland (one), and the National Library of Wales (one). Fifteen are in the United States: Pierpont Morgan Library and Museum (seven), the Getty (two), Huntington Library (two), the Beinecke Library at Yale University (one), the Walters Art Museum (one), the New York Public Library (one), and the Philadelphia Museum of Art (one). And there are one each in public institutions in Dublin, Stockholm, Paris, and Lisbon. Millar was at the British Museum Library while all this material was moving around, and it is probably no coincidence that thirteen of the forty-three manuscripts then in private hands and now institutionalized are in the British Library. That

20 In a letter to George Dunn, dated April 21, 1904, Cockerell wrote: "I am back from my wanderings, & have had the best of times. I hope that all is well with you. So far as I can judge I have not missed seeing many fine books by being away. There is a stunning exhibition in Paris now—but *miniatures*, & perhaps not specially in your line." BL, Add. MS 52714, fol. 88.

21 *Bibliothèque Nationale, exposition de portraits, peints et dessinés du XIIIe au XVIIe siècle, Avril–Juin 1907, Catalogue* (Paris: Librairie Centrale des Beaux-Arts, 1907).

22 See also Kim in this volume.

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is almost one third of the manuscripts then in private hands are now in the institution from which he operated.

Millar does not make it easy to keep track of these movements, however. It is telling that the 1945 supplement, published in a probably not easily accessible festschrift, makes no effort to update the previous 317 entries, or even the forty-three manuscripts recorded as in private ownership, and only discusses the twenty-five manuscripts that have come to his attention since he completed the earlier volumes.

More than half of these forty-three manuscripts then in private ownership were, or had been, in the collections of three men. The largest number (twelve) belonged to Perrins,[23] the catalogue of whose collection was written by Millar's British Museum colleague, George Warner, and published in 1920. Beatty owned six,[24] and Millar was at work on Beatty's catalogue which appeared in 1927 and 1930. Ten manuscripts had formerly been in the collection of Yates Thompson.[25]

Millar knew of the then location of all but five of his 342 entries; one was the fragmentary leaves from a life of Thomas of Canterbury in the collection of a family in France and not seen since 1885.[26] Four had formerly been in the collection of Yates Thompson. It is interesting that Millar gives the Yates Thompson sale date (Sotheby's, London, March 23, 1920) and lot numbers for manuscripts when he knew the current private owners (Thomas H. Riches, Perrins, and Beatty), but for three of the four where the current owner was unknown to him, he did not include the sales catalogue reference, nor did he include it for the one manuscript the British Museum acquired at the Yates Thompson sale.[27] To assert that he is suppressing the most recent information may be too strong a verb, but one wonders if he is still hoping that these four manuscripts might come back on the market and be gathered in by the British Museum? It is also certainly possible that he did not know "officially" where these four manuscripts were, or were headed, and thus could not say publicly. The manuscripts are now at the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore, the Gulbenkian Museum in Lisbon, the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, and the New York Public Library.[28] Another alternative explanation is that Millar was making it comparatively easy for anyone interested to find out how Riches, Perrins, and Beatty had acquired the manuscripts they then owned. With sale date and lot number it is also only one small step away to discover what they paid for them.[29]

In his review of the first volume of Millar's survey, Otto Homburger quoted H. P. Mitchell who had expressed "his surprise 'that since Westwood's pioneer work of fifty-five years ago no English scholar, with the resources of photographic reproduction at command, should have attempted a comprehensive and adequately illustrated survey

23 Millar nos. 110, 129, 140, 144, 147, 180, 197, 212, 224, 280, 281, 287.

24 Millar nos. 70, 93, 142, 201, 309, 310.

25 Millar nos. 97, 133, 183, 201, 217, 227, 242, 260, 280, and 316.

26 Millar no. 169.

27 Millar no. 97 (BL, Add. MS 39943, now Yates Thompson MS 26).

28 Millar nos. 133, 183, 227, and 316.

29 Millar nos. 201, 260, and 280.

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of this subject.'" [30] Homburger went on to observe that the plates deserved the highest praise and that "the choice of manuscripts to be illustrated shows a complete mastery of the material. From several copies of foremost importance pages are here reproduced for the first time." Mitchell was, of course, referring to *Fac-similes of the Miniatures & Ornaments of Anglo-Saxon & Irish Manuscripts executed by J. O. Westwood, M. A., drawn on stone by W. R. Tymms, chromolithographed by Day and Sons, Limited* (1868). In addition to Westwood, Millar also frequently used, where applicable, the facsimiles of the Palaeographical Society (465 plates with transcriptions in two series) published between 1873 and 1894 and the New Palaeographical Society (452 plates with transcriptions in two series) published between 1903 and 1930.[31] He also referenced unpublished photographs at the Victoria and Albert Museum, for example for manuscripts at Durham Cathedral Library.[32]

It is also deeply revealing that the last column for each manuscript he listed, Millar tellingly labelled "Bibliographical References," though they are, in fact, not primarily bibliographical at all, but photographic. He did not always refer to earlier catalogue descriptions of the manuscripts except if they had plates. Examples include his no. 186 (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Canon. Bib. Lat 62: Apocalypse) which includes no reference to the earlier "Quarto" catalogue description of 1854.[33] Even more telling are three British Museum Library manuscripts which include no reference to earlier descriptions published by Millar's own Department.[34] This may reflect Millar's bias as an art historian. Text, language, and provenance were of interest, but mostly for their impact on the art.

It is also worth noting that the column labelled "Remarks" provided a brief description of the decoration. Millar assumed that British Museum catalogues, gallery guides and sets of postcards, Roxburghe Club publications, and other private publications were readily available for access to descriptions and images. He cited the volumes of plates that accompanied the Yates Thompson catalogues and also the privately published and heavily illustrated monographs on individual manuscripts in the Yates Thompson and Perrins collections.

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30 Otto Homburger, "Review of Millar (1926)," *The Art Bulletin* 10.4 (June 1928): 399–402.

31 Palaeographical Society, *Facsimiles of Manuscripts and Inscriptions*. First Series. 260 facsimiles in 3 vols. in 13 parts (London: Clowes and Son, 1873–1883); Second Series. 205 facsimiles in 2 vols. in 10 parts (London: Clowes and Sons, 1884–1894); New Palaeographical Society, *Facsimiles of Ancient Manuscripts*. First Series. 250 facsimiles in 2 vols. in 10 parts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1903–1912); Second Series. 202 facsimiles in 2 vols. in 13 parts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1913–1930).

32 Millar nos. 234 and 235.

33 H. O. Coxe, *Catalogi codicum manuscriptorum Bibliothecæ Bodleianæ pars tertia codices Græcos et Latinos Canonicianos complectens* (Oxford: E Typographeo Academico, 1854).

34 Millar no. 198 (BL, Egerton MS 1551: Book of Hours) which does not include a reference to *Catalogue of Additions to the Manuscripts in the British Museum in the Years 1848–1853* (London: British Museum, 1868); and Millar no. 199 (BL, Harley MS 3487: Aristotle) and Millar no. 200 (BL, Egerton MS 928: Hours) both of which do not include references to *A Catalogue of the Harleian Manuscripts in the British Museum*, 4 vols. (London: Printed by command of His Majesty King George III, 1808–1812).

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Again Millar was well aware of Cockerell's thoughts on this matter. In his "Postscript to the Illustrated Catalogue" of the Burlington Fine Arts Club exhibition, published in 1909, Cockerell wrote about the importance of illustration in catalogues.

> It would be well if a rule were made that in all but ephemeral catalogues of manuscripts there should be an illustration of every book described, as a single illustration will usually convey more than many pages of description…[The photographs in this catalogue] are approximately of the scale of the originals except a very few plates in which the size of the volumes necessitated a reduction of scale. As often as possible the open book is shown, and not only an isolated page. All students and lovers of manuscripts will appreciate the importance, which is nevertheless usually ignored, of thus reproducing the book as a whole, and of showing the relation of the miniatures to the text which they adorn, but which is often itself so beautiful as scarcely to need such adornment.[35]

Millar only partially responded to Cockerell in his "Introductory" remarks to the first volume.

> It has obviously been impossible to give a general ensemble of the collection as was successfully done by Mr. S. C. Cockerell in the first eight plates of his Catalogue of the great exhibition of illuminated MSS held at the Burlington Fine Arts Club in 1908. This would have been the only way of showing the MSS in their relative proportions to one another, for the taking of all the plates on a uniform scale would have meant the reduction of some of the smaller examples to an almost microscopic size, and the main object of the whole series, which is to demonstrate the great and at some periods the unique position held by English manuscripts, would have been defeated.[36]

The primary component of each of the two volumes of Millar's survey was the one hundred plates in each volume. These must have been produced at considerable expense and it is clear that Millar was trying to use new images when he could. The centrality of the photographs is telling revealed, for example, by the fact that nos. 309 through 317 are not illustrated with plates. These are, to be sure, manuscripts of lesser art-historical importance or much worn, but it means that the second volume can end on no. 308's plate 100, a high spot, the Abingdon Abbey Missal (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 227).

It is also worth noting two examples of the influence of contemporary events on Millar's work; they may seem to be minor, but they are telling. In a discussion of bestiaries, Millar observes:

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35 Cockerell, *Burlington*, [xxix].

36 Millar, *English Illuminated Manuscripts* (1926), xxii.

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> This resemblance in the compositions makes it safe to assume that the various books were produced in the same atelier, a matter that is in fact beyond dispute; but the number of artists employed in this atelier and the actual share taken by them in the different productions must always remain an open question. Anyone who has studied a product of a modern atelier, in which several artists have collaborated in a uniform style,—such as for example the exquisite Roll of Honour of the R. A. M. C. executed by Mr. Graily Hewitt and his assistants and now in the Chapter House of Westminster Abbey—will realise the extreme difficulty in distinguishing mediaeval artists apart.[37]

The topic continues, of course, to be of interest to art historians and palaeographers as we try to distinguish similar hands at work in the same manuscript, or in different manuscripts, but the work of Hewitt and the commission to write and decorate a manuscript to honour the members of the Royal Army Military Corps who died in the First World War has probably not been used to illustrate this point since. In fact, Millar knew that Hewitt was assisted by two unnamed women: Madelyn Walker in 1922–1924 and afterwards primarily by her pupil, Ida Henstock.[38]

Contemporary events also come out in another revealing way in Millar's second volume in a discussion of the Douai psalter (Millar no. 213). It is described in the Handlist as: "Formerly [the] masterpiece of [the] East Anglian School. Completely ruined by damp, 1914–1918." Elaboration is provided in an earlier discussion.

> Unhappily it was buried at the time of the German invasion, instead of being removed to a place of safety, and when recovered it was found to have been entirely destroyed by damp…The New Palaeographical Society has the honour of preserving in reproduction six pages of this great book; the Beatus page and the Crucifixion on the scale of the original and four others on a reduced scale, but I do not know of any other published reproductions, and the tragic fate of this masterpiece emphasises more than ever the necessity for complete facsimiles of the more important manuscripts. It is particularly galling that no such facsimile should exist in the case of the Douai Psalter, in spite of the full resources of photography and modern processes which had been available for so many years.[39]

Millar appears to feel the loss by the French of this masterpiece of English art not only as a scholar, but as an Englishman. Why is it "particularly galling that no such facsimile should exist in the case of the Douai Psalter" and why does the English- and mostly British Museum-based New Palaeographical Society have "the honour of preserving in reproduction six pages"?

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37 Millar, *English Illuminated Manuscripts* (1928), 12.

38 Janet Backhouse, "Pioneers of Modern Calligraphy and Illumination," *BMQ* 33.1–2 (1968), 71–79 at 77.

39 Millar, *English Illuminated Manuscripts* (1928), 8–9.

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In a probably not unrelated discussion Millar also appears to struggle with the concept of what makes a manuscript English.

> During the course of the fifteenth century foreigners were introduced into England in increasing numbers, and it becomes a matter of very great difficulty to decide exactly what manuscripts may be regarded as English for our present purpose. It is frequently the case that books were written by English scribes and ornamented with penwork or illuminated initials of a distinctly English type, while the miniatures are markedly foreign in character, often having a Flemish or Dutch appearance, and are no doubt the work of some of these resident foreigners. I leave out altogether the large number of Sarum Horae which were produced abroad for the English market; these are seldom more than mediocre quality, and are merely "shop" copies.[40]

To sum up, as we look at the international trade in pre-modern manuscripts between 1890 and 1945, scholarly works like Millar's provide an opportunity to see the outsized and long-lived role played by a handful of collectors such as Yates Thompson, Perrins, Morgan, Beatty, and institutions like the British Museum. Millar's survey also reminds us of the impact of reproductive technologies, especially photography. Works such as Millar's were written against a backdrop of economic and political events, including two world wars; they can also serve to remind us of changes in scholarly interest looming on the horizon. Art history will be impacted by the rise in the study of Old and Middle English.[41] By linking the Millar entries to other records in the Schoenberg Database of Manuscripts, and to records that will be created in the future, it will also be possible to see the coming interest in dated and datable manuscripts, for example, where the work of Andrew Watson on manuscripts at the British Library and in Oxford libraries and Pamela Robinson on manuscripts in Cambridge libraries, has been so transformative;[42] the work of Neil Ker in his five-volume *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries*;[43] and of other catalogues like Roger Mynors on *Durham Cathedral Manuscripts*, and Mynors and Rodney Thomson on the *Manuscripts of Hereford Cathedral Library*, to choose a few

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40 Millar, *English Illuminated Manuscripts* (1928), 38.

41 See for example, Neil R. Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts containing Anglo-Saxon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957, reprinted 1990); Carleton Brown and Rossell Hope Robbins eds., *The Index of Middle English Verse* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943); and its *Supplement*, ed. Rossell Hope Robbins and John L. Cutler (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1965) has spawned Julia Boffey and A. S. G. Edwards eds., *A New Index of Middle English Verse* (London: British Library, 2005), and the Digital Index of Middle English Verse www.dimev.net/, accessed May 16, 2023.

42 Andrew G. Watson, *Catalogue of Dated and Datable Manuscripts c. 700–1600 in the Department of Manuscripts, The British Library*, 2 vols. (London: British Library, 1979); Andrew G. Watson, *Catalogue of Dated and Datable Manuscripts c. 435–1600 in Oxford Libraries*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984); Pamela R. Robinson, *Catalogue of Dated and Datable Manuscripts c. 737–1600 in Cambridge Libraries*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Brewer, 1988).

43 Neil R. Ker, *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries*, 5 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969–2002).

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examples.[44] Ker's work, supplemented by that of Watson, on *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain* and especially in its electronic successor, MLGB3,[45] which now has images, will also have an impact we are only beginning to appreciate. Textual tools such as Richard Sharpe's *Handlist of the Latin Writers of Great Britain and Ireland before 1540*,[46] which includes manuscript and textual references is an important model that deserves to be imitated and developed further. The work begun by Ker, Mynors, and Richard Hunt on the Corpus of Medieval British Library Catalogues,[47] now hopefully nearing completion, was in the future for Millar and his users.

This study of Millar's work suggests that manuscripts owned by private collectors did play an important role in contemporary scholarship made increasingly possible by reproduction, especially photography, but this same photography would also appear to have facilitated the movement of these same manuscripts from private ownership into public collections as their importance was more completely understood and appreciated.

44 Roger A. B. Mynors, *Durham Cathedral Manuscripts to the End of the Twelfth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939); Roger A. B. Mynors and Rodney M. Thomson, *Catalogue of the Manuscripts of Hereford Cathedral Library* (Rochester: Boydell & Brewer, 1993).

45 Neil R. Ker, *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain: A List of Surviving Books* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1941, 2nd edn. 1964, repr. 1987); Andrew G. Watson, *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain: A List of Surviving Books: Supplement to the Second Edition* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1987); and Medieval Libraries of Great Britain (MLGB3) http://mlgb3.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/, accessed May 16, 2023.

46 Richard Sharpe, *A Handlist of the Latin Writers of Great Britain and Ireland before 1540* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997) and *Additions and Corrections, 1997–2001* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2001).

47 Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues, 16 vols. (London: British Library/British Academy, 1990–).

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Conclusion

CONSEQUENCES

LAURA CLEAVER

THE ESSAYS COLLECTED here do not pretend to be a perfect or complete set. Each case study is informed by the interests and disciplinary perspectives of its authors, examining aspects of the trade in pre-modern manuscripts in Austria, Belgium, Britain, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, and the US and its impact. Yet although each tackles a focused topic, the recurrence of names across different essays testifies to the international networks within which books moved, demonstrating that together the case studies shed light on parts of an eco-system. Collectively, the case studies suggest a general picture of manuscripts as objects of increasing financial value allied to ideas of their potential political and cultural significance. The varied nature and condition of the material can also be associated with different levels of demand. The essays suggest that the early twentieth-century book trade had important consequences for the formation of collections and the development of scholarship, and informed popular ideas about the Middle Ages and its culture. In this they provide a basis for an agenda for future research.

Mapping the Network

The transfers of manuscripts described in these essays, supplemented by information from the Schoenberg Database of manuscripts, can be used to produce a network graph.[1] In Figure 31.1 edges (lines) represent the movement of manuscripts between seventy firms or individuals, marked as nodes (dots), selected from those mentioned frequently in this volume. No attempt has been made to weight elements of the diagram to show the number of manuscripts passing between the collectors and dealers, and the diagram does not attempt to map the entire network within which manuscripts moved in this period: many more connections may yet be identified. In the period of this study, some manuscripts only travelled along one edge, between two individuals, while others moved multiple times, sometimes returning repeatedly to a dealer's stock. Unsurprisingly, the London-based dealer Bernard Quaritch Ltd. is well-connected in the diagram, both because of the firm's leading role in the trade in manuscripts, but

1 See John Hinks and Catherine Feely eds., *Historical Networks in the Book Trade* (London: Routledge, 2017).

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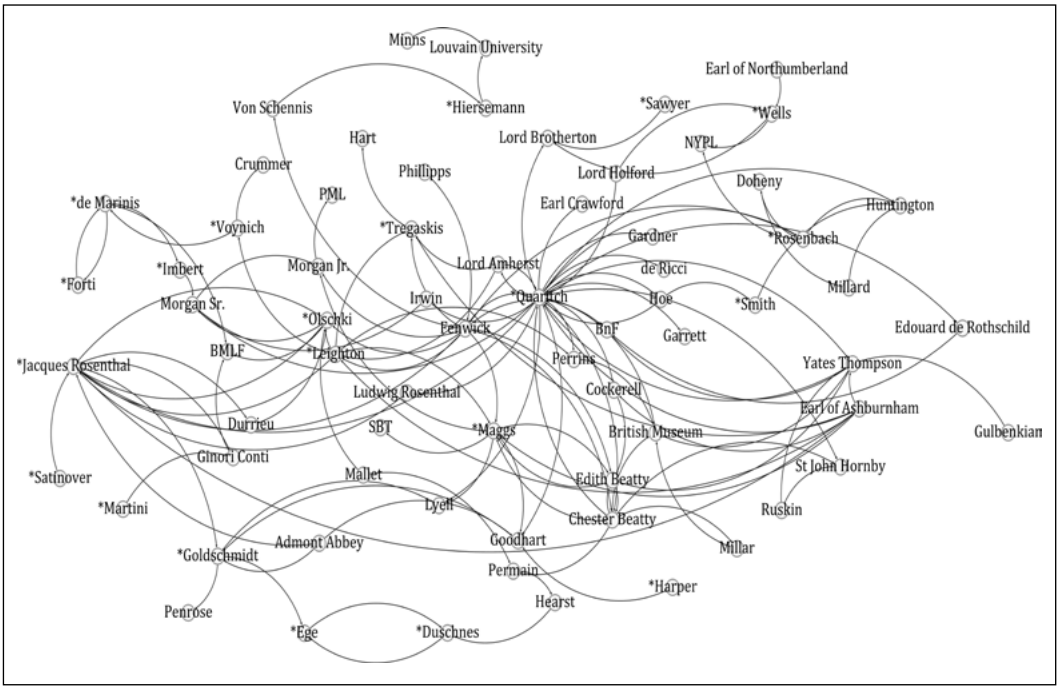


Figure 31.1. Transfers of manuscripts between seventy individuals and institutions mentioned in this volume. Dealers are identified with *. Author diagram.

also thanks to its rich archives, to which many of the authors of these studies have had access.

The diagram demonstrates how museums and libraries, large and small, depended on the same dealers as the richest private collectors, as well as receiving manuscripts as gifts from some of those collectors. It serves as a reminder that the movement of manuscripts was not solely dependent on financial resources, but also on contacts, and access to collections. I have opted not to include auction houses in the diagram, on the grounds that they did not own manuscripts, but the many connections to Thomas Fitzroy Fenwick (Sir Thomas Phillipps's heir) document both sales at auction and private transactions. These connections are among those that mark the movement of manuscripts between countries, as Phillipps's books are now widely dispersed. Some of the collections represented in the diagram were later returned to the market, but others, including the Biblioteca Medicae Laurenziana, Bibliothèque nationale de France, British Museum, Huntington Library, Morgan Library, and Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, remain locations where manuscripts acquired in this era are to be found today.

Collections

As many of the essays in this volume have shown, the activities of the trade in pre-modern manuscripts shaped the collections in which we now encounter books. The taste and interests of the wealthiest collectors drove up prices, particularly for extensively illuminated manuscripts in an excellent state of preservation. This meant that those with smaller resources could only obtain what was left. However, despite rhetoric about

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voracious American buyers, large quantities of manuscript material continued to be available on the market throughout the period. Indeed, the market for Middle English material was sluggish. In addition, both individual and institutional collectors found ways to obtain material without involving auctions or dealers, by arranging private purchases and facilitating gifts. Even here, however, individual curators pursued strategies that determined the nature of the collections they managed, often focusing on material from a particular region, defined by its language, contents, provenance, or a combination of these factors. Such areas of collecting "strength" then provided a rationale for further development.

Manuscripts often provided valuable clues about the circumstances of their production and early use, which were used to inform assessments of a book's region of origin. More recent provenance also played a significant role in a book's appeal to some collectors. Sydney Cockerell appears to have tracked the movements of manuscripts associated with William Morris, borrowing some from J. P. Morgan for the 1908 Burlington Fine Arts Club Exhibition.[2] Later in his career, Cockerell deployed a range of strategies to try to determine the fates of manuscripts owned by Henry Yates Thompson, including personal pleading, arranging loans from donors, and writing articles for the press. Similarly, in the aftermath of the auction of part of Yates Thompson's collection in 1920, Julius Gilson of the British Museum observed that

> the modern collector has also done much himself to make his possessions more valuable. He has catalogued them and reproduced them by photography, and has employed competent scholars to elucidate their meaning and point out their relationships to similar work elsewhere. [Sir Thomas] Phillipps, after all, had little active appreciation, and what he did to make public his manuscripts was ill-directed and of little use to scholars or the public.[3]

Research on Yates Thompson's collection and those of some other well-known collectors of the period has been facilitated by the extensive catalogues they sponsored (and sometimes authored). However, Yates Thompson and other prominent collectors also disposed of manuscripts anonymously, most of which have received far less attention.[4] Knowledge about collections and the manuscripts they contain requires cataloguing and management. In large collections the volume of material often presents a challenge, while smaller libraries typically struggle for resources. It is not uncommon for the most recent catalogue description of a manuscript to be an accession record produced in the period covered by this volume, which may, in turn, be partially or wholly derived from

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2 [Sydney Cockerell], *Burlington Fine Arts Club: Exhibition of Illuminated Manuscripts* (London: Burlington Fine Arts Club, 1908).

3 Julius P. Gilson, "Illuminated Manuscripts," *The Observer*, March 28, 1920, 8.

4 Christopher de Hamel, "Was Henry Yates Thompson a Gentleman?" in *Property of a Gentleman: The Formation, Organisation and Dispersal of the Private Library 1620–1920*, ed. Robin Myers and Michael Harris (Winchester: St. Paul's Bibliographies, 1991), 77–87; Laura Cleaver, "Charles William Dyson Perrins as a Collector of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts c. 1900–1920," *Perspectives médiévales* 41 (2020), https://doi.org/10.4000/peme.19776, accessed November 1, 2022.

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a sales catalogue record. In the drive to make metadata available online, some of these records are now being transposed to a new format without much, if any, reflection on the circumstances of their creation.

Some of the libraries founded in the period of this study had funds to support scholarship, both in-house and by welcoming researchers pursuing a wide range of inquiries. Private collectors sometimes sponsored publications on individual manuscripts in their collections, and it was a rule of the Roxburghe Club that members must present a book to the group. Access to many private collections (including the remains of the Phillipps library) was possible, though it required the co-operation of the owner. Institutional libraries were usually more accessible, and some private libraries, for example those of Morgan and Henry Huntington, became research institutions in this period. Through their publications and exhibitions, institutional libraries not only shaped perceptions of their collections, but also contributed to a growing field of scholarship. Strikingly some books that had a very high profile on the market, received less publicity following their purchase. For example, the Golden Gospels of Henry VIII, an early medieval gospel book on purple parchment later owned by Henry VIII, was widely advertised by Quaritch in his bid to sell it for £2,500/$12,500. Eventually bought by the American collector Theodore Irwin, the manuscript was later purchased by Morgan, but was not typically cited as a highlight of his collection. While being in a famous collection could raise the profile and value of a book, therefore, it could also diminish an individual volume's "star quality."

Scholarship

A recurring theme in this volume has been the importance of the trade in manuscripts as a driver of new scholarship. Here the lines between scholar, collector, and dealer often become blurred. High-profile dealers across Europe employed specialists to study and describe the manuscripts in their stock, and in this context it is worth noting that some books spent more time in a dealer's stock in this period than they did in a private collection. In addition, dealers published journals with research pertaining to items they had in stock, as well as about books and collecting in general, thereby raising the profile of their professional activities. These included Leo S. Olschki's *La Bibliofilía*, Jacques Rosenthal's *Beiträge zur Forschung*, and A. J. Bowden and George D. Smith's *American Athenaeum*. In addition, some scholars were also collectors (albeit usually limited by an institutional salary). These included Cockerell, Paul Durrieu and Eric Millar.

The membership of the Bibliographical Society in Britain highlights the challenge of distinguishing between trade and scholarly expertise, as although dealers were only allowed to join in a personal capacity, the membership list features many people who worked in the trade, including Martin Breslauer, Percy Dobell, E. H. Dring, F. S. Ellis, Maurice Ettinghausen, F. S. Ferguson, Herbert Garland, E. P. Goldschmidt, Benjamin and Ernest Maggs, Bernard Alfred Quaritch, James and Hugh Tregaskis, and Wilfrid Voynich.[5]

5 *The Bibliographical Society 1892–1942: Studies in Retrospect* (London: Bibliographical Society, 1949).

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Further dealers were to be found among the Society's overseas members, including Lathrop Harper, A. S. W. Rosenbach, and Jacques and Ludwig Rosenthal. The value of organizations, such as the Bibliographical Society or the American Grolier Club, which facilitated the movement of information and books among their networks, is hinted at in a letter from A. W. Pollard at the British Museum to the American collector Beverley Chew, introducing Voynich, who was attempting to expand his business into America. Writing on Bibliographical Society notepaper, Pollard declared that Voynich had "done good work for the British Museum during the last twenty years, & I have come to regard him not only as a dealer but as a friend."[6]

Pollard's letter noted that Chew would probably be familiar with Voynich's catalogues, serving as a reminder that dealers' catalogues, as well as collectors', were recognized as significant resources and markers of status. The survival of so many catalogues is partly a result of their production quality: even smaller firms sometimes included images of manuscripts in their catalogues and some of the most luxurious resemble collectors' catalogues. By comparing catalogue entries, we can see the extent to which descriptions were copied verbatim between dealers and auction houses and when changes occurred. In addition, catalogues help trace the movement of manuscripts, sometimes allowing relatively precise assessments of when dealers bought and sold books.

While dealer and collection catalogues were primarily aimed at a specialist audience, exhibitions (whether organized by dealers, clubs, or libraries) introduced a wider public to manuscripts. Exhibitions also provide insights into the use of pre-modern books in creating wider cultural narratives. In particular, manuscripts were identified as evidence for the cultural, textual, linguistic, and particularly artistic, origins of modern nation states. These arguments were developed despite abundant evidence of monastic provenance that demonstrated the importance of pan-European networks, and the problem of texts originally written in one location that survived in copies produced elsewhere. The 1902 Flemish exhibition's claims about the region's place in the history of art prompted the 1904 exhibition of French manuscripts, which in turn helped to inform other exhibitions in this period.[7] Yet while exhibitions in different regions made slightly different claims about the nature and significance of their medieval past, and the objects associated with it, informed by the surviving material, the state of scholarship, and the availability of loans, the idea of books as literary and artistic patrimony became increasingly entrenched throughout Europe. In contrast to European institutions circumscribed by national politics and funding, American collectors could choose manuscripts to create a particular version of European heritage. While collectors such as Huntington and Henry Folger invested in early English printed material, with some associated manuscripts, Isabella Stewart Gardner, Huntington, and Morgan acquired

6 New York, The Grolier Club, Beverly Chew Papers, Miscellaneous correspondents: Letter from A. W. Pollard to Beverley Chew, November 18, 1914.

7 *Exposition des Primitifs flamands: Section des manuscrits, miniatures, archives, sceaux, méreaux, monnaies et médailles* (Bruges: de Brouwer, 1902); Henri Bouchot et al., *Exposition des primitifs français au Palais du Louvre et à la Bibliothèque nationale* (Paris: Palais du Louvre et Bibliothèque nationale, 1904).

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illuminated manuscripts from across Europe, apparently selecting for what they considered to be artistic merit, and demonstrating less concern for place of origin. Similarly, in Britain Yates Thompson declared that he sought to own manuscripts from throughout the Middle Ages and across Europe (although the most common place of origin of manuscripts in his published catalogues was France).[8]

Selling the Middle Ages

The question remains of the impact of all this activity on popular ideas about the Middle Ages. This is complicated by the wealth of nineteenth-century medievalism. While the publications of the Sette of Odd Volumes satirized works by poets such as Alfred Lord Tennyson, damsels in distress rescued by knights in shining armour remained popular in literature and illustrations that owed as much, if not more, to the nineteenth century as they did to the Middle Ages. Similarly, the cover illustrations for Tregaskis's catalogues included a range of allusions to pre-modern books in imagery that played with stereotypes of the Middle Ages. An image by Paul Hardy shows a woman in a tall, pointed hat, accompanied by a young man holding a dagger, being shown a large book, apparently with illuminated initials, by a figure probably representing William Caxton, the first English printer. The figures are set in an interior containing a printing press with a man in the background at work on a book. Above the scene, the words "The Caxton Head Catalogue" are depicted as if handwritten and with initials reminiscent of medieval designs (Figure 31.2). Other covers explicitly celebrated manuscripts, including one by Walter Crane of a monk at a desk illuminating a manuscript, accompanied by a cat. Details such as the familiar domestic cat helped to bridge the gulf between medieval production and modern consumption, while the other image emphasized that such books had always been items to be bought, sold, and admired, locating their new owners in a venerable, idealized tradition. In this, the images resonate with Yates Thompson's belief that in the Middle Ages "the greatest potentates…vied with one another for the possession of these treasures."[9]

In the late nineteenth century, illuminated manuscripts provided aesthetic inspiration for artists like Anna Traquair and William Morris and his circle. While Traquair and others aimed to make accurate copies, Morris justified his collection of manuscripts, in part, on the grounds that they informed his creation of new books, notably at the Kelmscott Press.[10] Similarly, Cockerell's wife, Florence Kate née Kingsford, illuminated books produced by other private presses, using medieval works as inspiration for modern creations, just as M. R. James and J. R. R. Tolkien did in their fiction. In an inter-

8 Henry Yates Thompson, *Descriptive Catalogue of Fourteen Illuminated Manuscripts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1912), xiv.

9 Henry Yates Thompson, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Second Series of Fifty Manuscripts (Nos. 51 to 100) in the Collection of Henry Yates Thompson* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1902), vii.

10 "The William Morris Library," *The Times*, November 3, 1898, 13; see also Paul Needham ed., *William Morris and the Art of the Book* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976); Michaela Braesel, *William Morris und die Buchmalerei* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2019).

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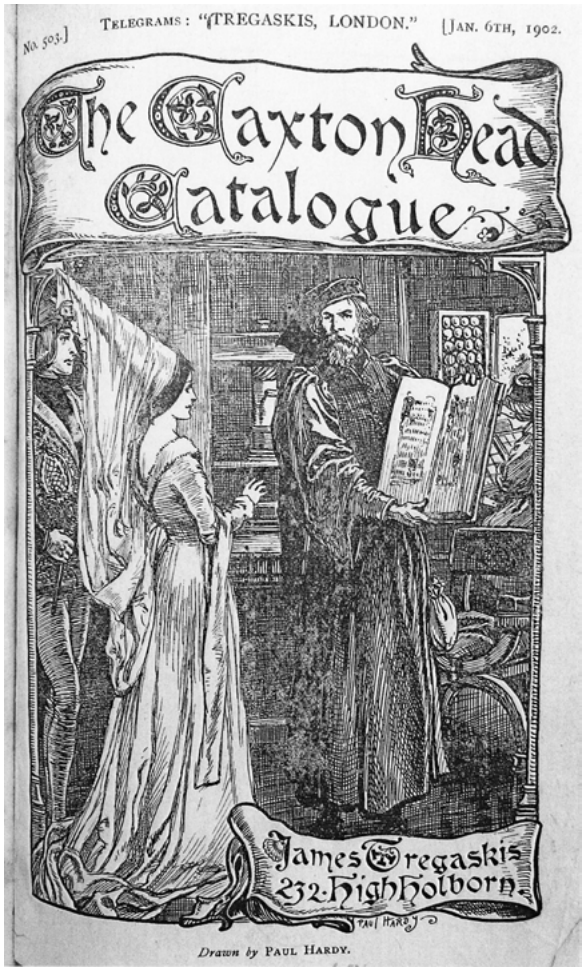


Figure 31.2. Paul Hardy, cover image used on James Tregaskis's catalogues ca. 1902. Copy in the Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford, reproduced with permission.

view about early printed books in 1891, Morris argued for wider access to early books, claiming that under socialism "We should have a public library at each street corner…I should not then have to buy all these old books, but they would be common property, and I could go and look at them whenever I wanted them, as would everybody else," an important reminder that although pre-modern manuscripts were much cheaper than they are today, they were still beyond the reach of most of the population, for whom even the costs (in time and money) of attending exhibitions were prohibitive.[11]

Nevertheless, medievalism, like the trade in manuscripts, was an international phenomenon with wide appeal. During the First World War all sides produced propaganda with images of medieval knights, to encourage investment in war loans or recruitment.[12] One poster declared "Joan of Arc saved France, Women of Britain Save Your Country, Buy War Savings Certificates," while a French poster showed the American army accompanied by the ghosts of medieval knights.[13] (This kind of imagery has been embraced by white supremacists.[14]) Yet while such images might ultimately trace their origins to depictions

11 "The Poet as Printer: An Interview with Mr. William Morris," *The Pall Mall Gazette*, November 12, 1891, 1–2.

12 See Mark Girouard, *The Return to Camelot: Chivalry and the English Gentleman* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 276–93.

13 London, Imperial War Museum PST 10296; PST 7030.

14 Andrew Albin et al. eds., *Whose Middle Ages? Teachable Moments for an Ill-Used Past* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2019).

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in illuminated manuscripts, they were both modernized and sanitized, with no hint of blood (often included in medieval imagery), let alone the destruction of machine-gun warfare.

An article in 1916 identified "chivalry" as a motivation for the decline in book purchases in Britain the early months of the war, on the grounds that it was unsporting to buy items when those serving in the army could not.[15] In the wake of the catastrophic loss of life during the First World War ideas about chivalry were radically redefined. The destruction of manuscripts, including, but not limited to, the library at Louvain, helped to entrench the idea of these holdings, as well as individual books, as national patrimony and as a vulnerable resource. In 1941, a sale of books "for the Distress Fund in Aid of Booksellers who have suffered loss from Bombing" included a fifteenth-century manuscript Book of Hours, repurposing a medieval book in the context of modern warfare.[16] Yet the trade weathered both world wars and the intervening economic turbulence, and throughout the period there continued to be enough material available to allow new collectors to begin to build libraries.

Towards a Research Agenda

An incomplete set of books can be a prompt for further research. Similarly, the essays collected here highlight several areas that would benefit from further study. The role of women has been a recurring theme. The existing literature over-represents the contributions of rich, white men. There is scope both to write detailed studies of individual female collectors, but also to explore how gender, race, and class intersected with opportunities to be involved in the book trade, moving beyond "exceptional" cases. In addition, women's place in the networks that connected the trade could be a fruitful area for further study. For example, women were admitted to the Bibliographical Society in Britain, and dominated the library training classes at the Pratt Institute in New York (and therefore its alumni network). Such work might facilitate an account of the contributions of a more diverse community on its own terms, rather than following the model of heroic biographies associated with white men.

The formal and informal networks that connected those involved in the collecting, trade, and scholarship of manuscripts would also benefit from further research. These can be reconstructed from the membership of clubs and societies, but also from dealers' lists of clients, correspondence, staff, and sales-records. Indeed, dealers' and collectors' archives have proved rich sources of information and further cataloguing to make them more accessible is desirable. In this context, in particular, the expertise of those working in libraries and archives is invaluable. The development of reproductions of manuscripts, circulation of images, and creation and knowledge of facsimiles would also benefit from further investigation.

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15 W. M., "Bookworms in War," *The Times*, January 4, 1916, 11.

16 *A Catalogue of Books and MSS…July 3rd, 1941* (London: Hodgson & Co., 1941), lot 56.

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The growing body of research on the book trade provides a foundation for a more in-depth analysis of its relationship to wider medievalism. Medievalism is a rich field of study, but the use (or lack of it) of the primary sources for medieval culture by those writing about or depicting medieval themes and subjects would benefit from further work. Similarly, more consideration might productively be given to the ways in which nineteenth-century medievalism shaped the buying and selling of medieval books in the early twentieth century.

Manuscript collections were very rarely formed in isolation. The research collected here therefore provides a basis for a comparative study of the market for other book sales, and in particular for the creation of collections of early printed books and incunabula. It was not unusual for collectors to begin by collecting early printed books and then progress to manuscripts, seeing them, as Morris did, as part of the history of book technology. Tregaskis's shop, "the Caxton's Head" referenced the first English printer, while the Gutenberg Bible and other incunabula fetched higher prices than manuscript material throughout this period.

To counteract the legacies of ideas about manuscripts as items of national patrimony, which has resulted in large bodies of scholarship developed on national lines, this research showcases the value of a connected, international research community. Collaborative research illuminates the importance of the international trade, the movement of people and books, common expectations and practices, and regional forces and differences within the trade. This work has the potential to go beyond questions of repatriation (though this is still an important area of work) to explore patterns in the movement of books, the driving factors of the international trade (legal and illicit), and the consequences for the creation of collections. In addition, multidisciplinary perspectives from historians, art historians, book historians, manuscript specialists, librarians, archivists, and provenance experts allow for rich insights into the manuscripts and their trade, the people involved, their sometimes-complex contributions, and the consequences for our understanding of pre-modern books. This volume is therefore not intended to be the last of any set.

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