

THE MEDIEVAL
MANUSCRIPTS OF TRINITY
COLLEGE, OXFORD:
A DESCRIPTIVE CATALOGUE

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Mechtild of Hackeborn, *Liber spiritualis/specialis gratie*Low Countries or France; s. XV^{3/3}

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Part of a composite volume with an incunabulum—*Vita Ihesu a uenerabili uiro fratre Ludolpho Carthusiensi edita* (Louvain: Johannes de Westfalia, 1484×87): Rhodes, *Incunabula*, no. 1122; ISTC il00343500. Fols. i (modern paper flyleaf) + 62 (incunabulum, foliated 'ii', 'i'–'61') + 65 (manuscript, foliated '62'–'126') + i (paper end-leaf, foliated '127'). Modern pencil foliation. Different types and patterns of damage on the final leaf of the incunabulum (61^v) and the first of the MS. (62^r), and the total absence from the MS. of the hand(s) that liberally annotated the first thirty folios of the incunabulum indicate that the two items had independent early histories. Since no other incunabulum and MS. in the college collection were so treated, these are more likely to have been bound together before they were given to Trinity (1641) than thereafter.

DESCRIPTION

Paper. Watermarks: unicorn, several types (e.g. fol. 69, with a long curving neck, similar to Briquet 10101; fol. 70, with a short neck; fol. 73, akin to Briquet 10065).

Size: 282 × 200 mm. Text-block: 192 × 164 mm. Lines 32–4 (space, 6 mm; height of minims, 1 mm). Pricking: awl, at the four corners of the text-block area. Ruling: full hard-point grid in Qq. I–II; thereafter (from fol. 79 in Q. III) only a single ink vertical (defining the left-hand border).

Collation: I–II⁸, III¹², IV¹¹ (= 10 plus a singleton (fol. 93) between leaves 3 and 4); V¹⁴; VI¹². First leaves: 62, 70, 78, 90, 101, 115. Original catchwords throughout. 2^o folio: Eratque mire dulcedinis homo (63^r)

BINDING

Panelled style, s. xviii, probably by Sedgley; blind-tooled mottled and plain calf, a fleuron at each corner of the inner compartment, and two decorative rolls; gold-tooled armorial book-stamp of Trinity College on both covers; MS. number in gilt on spine; 5 raised bands; white and blue endbands; 297 × 210 × 34 mm.

CONTENTS

Fols. 62^r–126^r. Mechtild of Hackeborn, *Liber spiritualis*.

Fol. 62^r. *Incipit Prologus libri qui dicitur spiritualis gracie deuote uirginis Matildis*. Benignitas et humanitas saluatoris nostri dei que humano generi per ipsius incarnationem tam misericorditer apparuit cotidie magis ac magis clarescendo etiam vsque ad nos et in nobis in quos fines ... *Item alius prologus*. Liber iste licet totus de Reuelationibus et visionibus dici possit et fere in singulis lectionibus utilitas ... Fol. 62^v ... *Incipit liber spiritualis gracie*. Fuit uirgo quedam ab infantia adeo in benedictionibus preuenta ita vt prima nata ... Fol. 95^v ... *Incipit liber secundus qualiter deus animam inuitat*. Sabbato quodam dum ageretur memoria uirginis matris dei Hec ancilla χpi desiderabat ... Fol. 104^v ... *Incipit liber de anulo et lapidibus insignis*. Uirgo χpi ... Fol. 114^r ... *Incipit liber quartus* ... Pia hec et deuota ancilla feria vi^{ta} uidit dominum iesum expansis manibus in altari stantem ... Fol. 120^r ... *Liber quintus* ... Eximie pietatis hec uirgo ... Fol. 126^r ... sed tamen qui inter eos perfecti fuerunt super nos et patres nostros meliores erunt. Amen. *Explicit liber spiritualis* [*gratie*—obliterated here to be moved to a new line:] / *Gratie. Deo gratias*.

Printed: *Revelationes Gertrudianae ac Mechtildianae*, ii (Poitiers and Paris, 1877); Mechtild von Hackeborn, *Das Buch der besonderen Gnade. Liber Specialis Gratiae*, ed. K. Schmidt (Münsterschwarzach, 2010)—neither available to me. NB: there was originally a supplementary line of text in the upper margin of 69^v—now almost entirely cropped off. Fol. 126^v blank.

SCRIBES AND SCRIPT

The scripts are Secretary/Bastarda-Secretary hybrids. The individual hands are difficult to separate; nevertheless, it is clear that certain stints consisted of one whole quire plus a couple of lines at the beginning of the following quire. (1) Fols. 62^r–70^r/line 3. Textualis for rubrics. Stint begins with 'Iesu', presumably as

an invocation, at the top of 62^r. (2) Fols. 70^r/line 4–78^r/line 5. Textualis for rubrics to 76^r, thereafter Hybrid Secretary. (3) Fols. 78^r/line 5–80^v/line 2; 80^v/line 22–?87^r. Textualis for rubrics to 79^r, thereafter Hybrid Secretary (with a fere-Textualis on 86^v). (4) Fol. 80^v/lines 3–21. (?5) (or possibly still scribe 3, having reformulated his/her hand). Fols. 87^v–101^r, line 1. Textualis used for first line of Bk. II (95^v) as also for first words of following chapter (96^r). Rubrics in Hybrid Secretary. (6) Fols. 101^r, line 1 (last two words)–115^r/line 6. Rubrics: Hybrid Secretary. Rounded display capitals for the first two words of Bk. III (104^v). (7) Fols. 115^r/line 7–126^r. Rubrics: Hybrid Secretary.

DECORATION

Books and chapters headed by simple red initials, 2 to 6 lines high, generally plain, two (both on 103^r) elaborated with crude penwork flourishing, one (109^v) adorned with a simple foliate form in red. Explicit-

colophon in enlarged Textualis, shadowed and flourished rudimentarily in red (126^r); red also used to obliterate the first, misplaced 'gratie'. Very simple red flourishing applied to descenders in lower margins on four pages (81^r, 95^v, 101^r, 114^v). Sentence capitals generally stroked in red.

PROVENANCE

(1) Francis Combes of Hempstead, Herts, who matric. Trinity 1601, d. 1641 (printed bookplate on fol. ii^r: 'Liber Collegii Sanctae & Individuae Trinitatis Oxon. Ex dono Francisci Combes Armigeri & eiusdem Collegii olim convictoris. 1641'). (2) Trinity College in 1641 as part of the Combes bequest. Bernard, p. 64, no. 1944 (as MS. 7, reporting only the Ludolphus). College shelfmarks: fore-edge, '10' and '12' or 'R'; fol. 1^r, pencil '7', ink '32'; fol. 62^r, pencil '7/32'. (Fol. ii^r bears an ink '89' and '4' of uncertain date.)

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Jerome, *Commentarii in Euangelium Matthaei*

England (West, ?Lanthony Secunda); s. XII^{2/4}

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Parchment: stout and fairly even-toned; some Hs have suede-like texture. Arranged HF, FH throughout. Occasional very neat patches (e.g. 62, 66). Fols. i (modern paper flyleaf) + i (medieval sheet reused as flyleaf, foliated '1') + 108 (foliated '2'–'109') + i (modern paper endleaf). Modern pencil foliation.

Size: 308 × 200 mm. Written area: 214 × 120 mm. Lines 32 (space, 7–8 mm; height of minims, 3–4 mm). Pricking: awl; prickings survive in all three outer margins. The pricking impressions are boldest on the first recto of the quire and steadily dwindle thereafter—implying that quires were generally pricked folded, in one go. Ruling: hard point on each Hs. Text-block flanked by double vertical boundaries; the first, third, last, and antepenultimate horizontals extended.

Collation: flyleaf (a raised pastedown, foliated '1': an imperfect bifolium, opened and trimmed to fit the board of a former binding). I–IX⁸, X¹⁰ (leaves 3 and 8 [fols. 76 and 81] singletons); XI–XII⁸, XIII¹⁰. Contemporary signatures: bold capital letters on final verso, centre, of lower margin (more or less cropped), from

'A' on Q. I to 'M' on Q. XII.

2^o folio: de homine exorsus

BINDING

Panelled style, s. xviii, probably by Sedgley; blind-tooled mottled and plain calf, a fleuron at each corner of the inner compartment, and two decorative rolls; gold-tooled armorial book-stamp of Trinity College on both covers; MS. number in gilt on spine; 318 × 214 × 49 mm. The frontleaf (fol. 1) was evidently the pastedown in a former binding; however, the pattern of metallic stains from binding furniture that it bears does not match that on fol. 2. Nor is this pattern echoed on the endleaf, fol. 109, which (as offsets of text on the verso indicate) once had a similar leaf abutting it.

Flyleaf (fol. 1).

Service book fragment; s. XII^{2/3}

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

An imperfect bifolium, opened and cut down. Parchment: seemingly thinner and smoother than that of