

MS. 324

Primer, in English with Latin rubrics England, perhaps London; s. xv in.

Text

The texts of Items 1–6 are printed from Cambridge, St. John's College, MS. G 24 (192) by Henry Littlehales, *The Prymer or prayer book of the lay people in the Middle Ages*, Part I: *Text* (London, 1891), and Part II: *Collation of MSS.* (London, 1892); and, confusingly, a few years later by the same editor, in two volumes with very similar titles, from CUL, MS. Dd. 11. 82: *The Prymer or lay folks' prayer book*, Part I, *Text*, EETS, 105 (London, 1895), and Part II, *Collation of MSS*, EETS, 109 (London, 1897). In these, the texts of thirteen manuscripts are collated, including the present one, with the *siglum* 'QC'. Ogilvie-Thomson, *IMEP VIII*, pp. xviii, 81–3, provides a detailed description.

The structure of the first quire, with two blank leaves before the start of the text, suggests that there was never intended to be a calendar or other prefatory material.

[Items 1–4 occupy quires 1–7]

1. (fols. 1–30v) Hours of the Virgin, with the Hours of the Cross intermixed (Littlehales, 1985 edition, pp. 1–36): '*Here bigynneþ þe mateyns of oure ladi. Domine labia mea.* Lord you schalt opene my lippis And my mouþ schal schewe þi preisinge ...' [Image]; lacking Ps. 94:8–8:1 (from '... hertis as in þe terr||' to '||ue heuenes Of þe mouþ ...'; *ibid.* p. 2) due to the loss of a leaf after fol. 3; lacking from the second response after the *Ave Maria* to the start of Lesson III (from 'maide of maidens. preie for us to ||' to '|| Holi modir of god þat disseruedist ...'; *ibid.* pp. 5–6) due to the loss of a leaf after fol. 4; lacking from part of the *Te deum* near the end of Matins, to very near the start of Lauds (from 'And þe holi goost oure ||' to '*Alleluia* God make me saaf. *Dominus regnavit.* ...'; *ibid.* p. 7) due to the loss of a leaf after fol. 5; lacking from the last line of the hymn *Patris sapientia* in Lauds in the hours of the Cross, to the last line of the hymn *Veni creator* before the first Psalm at Prime in the hours of the Virgin (from '... mankinde saaf to make ||' to '|| þe fadir & þe holi goost ...'; *ibid.* pp. 15–16) due to the loss of a leaf after fol. 14; ending imperfect in the first line of the final prayer (at 'Lord þou art maker & a3enbier||'; *ibid.* p. 36), due to the loss of a leaf after fol. 30.
2. (fols. 31r–37v) The Seven Penitential Psalms (*ibid.*, pp. 37–43), starting imperfect in Ps. 31:2 (at '|| man to whom þe lord arettide not synne ...'; *ibid.* p. 37), due to the loss of a leaf before fol. 31.
3. (fols. 37v–39v) The Fifteen Gradual Psalms (*ibid.*, pp. 44–46): '*Here bigynneþ þe .xv. salmes.* ...', the first twelve given by cue only, ending imperfect in the antiphon after the final psalm (at '*A. Parce domine.* Spare lord spare to þi ||'; the printed edition does not have the antiphon), due to the loss of four leaves after fol. 39.
4. (fols. 40r–42v) Litany and collects (*ibid.*, pp. 47–51); the litany starting imperfect near the end of the confessors at St. Dunstan ('Seint Dunstoon'; *ibid.* p. 49).

[Items 5–7 occupy quires 8–12]

5. (fols. 43r–66r) Office of the Dead (*ibid.*, pp. 52–78): ‘*Here bigynneþ placebo. & dirige Psalmus Dillexi quoniam* I louede; for oure lord schal heere þe vois of my preier. ...’. [\[Image\]](#)
6. (fols. 66r–78r) Commendation of Souls (*ibid.*, pp. 79–89): ‘*Here bigynneþ þe comendacions Psalmus Beati immaculati* Blessid be men wiþ oute wem in þe weie; ... *Here endiþ þe comendaciouns*’.
7. (fols. 78v–81v) An excerpt from *The mirror of Holy Church*, an English translation of Edmund Rich’s *Speculum Ecclesiae*, chapter 16, added in a slightly later hand on leaves originally ruled but otherwise blank: ‘*Here is a pater noster of þe expositioun of seynt Edmond of pounteney* Thou shalt undirstonde þat þo þat comen by fore þat is to seie *Pater noster qui es* techiþ us how we shulen preie ... wrecchidli þanne art þou departid.’ [\[Image\]](#) [\[Image\]](#) (the same excerpt occurs in Bodleian, MS. Eng. poet. a. 1 (the Vernon manuscript), BL, Additional MS. 60577, and a few others; see Ogilvie-Thompson, p. 83; discussed further by Ralph Hanna III, *The index of Middle English prose: handlist XII. Smaller Bodleian Collections: English miscellaneous, English poetry, English theology, Finch, Latin theology, Lyell, Radcliffe Trust* (Woodbridge, 1997), at p. xviii); fol. 82r–v ruled, otherwise originally blank.

Decoration

The start of major texts with fine four-sided foliate borders and six- (fols. 1r, 43r) or five-line initials (fols. 18r, 20v, 23r, 27r, 46v, 66r); offsets show that similar decoration was on leaves now missing (see e.g. fol. 30v); psalms, prayers, etc. with two-line initials in gold with blue penwork or blue with red penwork; verses etc. with one-line initials in gold with blue penwork, or blue with red penwork (guide-letters occasionally visible, e.g. fol. 4r); line-fillers in gold and blue. [\[Image\]](#) [\[Image\]](#) [\[Image\]](#) [\[Image\]](#)

Kathleen Scott (Scott, *Later Gothic MSS.*, II, p. 85) compares the style of the borders with those of Huntington Library, HM 19920, which she attributes probably to London.

Physical description

Parchment, of good quality; c.235 x c.160 mm.

ff. 83, the first formerly a pastedown; foliated several times: a sporadic 19th(?)-century ink foliation occurs only on pages with the start of major texts, and is out of sequence after fol. 21; a 20th-century pencil foliation occurs throughout; both these foliations were executed when the present fol. 1 preceded fols. 2 and 3; another hand numbered fols. 1–3 in correct textual sequence. When the volume was re-sewn and rebound in 2002–3 it was decided to restore the first three leaves to their correct textual sequence.

Quires mostly originally of eight leaves each, with a flesh-side outermost; 1⁶⁻² (2nd and 4th leaves missing, after fols. i and 1) (fols. i–3), 2⁸⁻² (2nd and 4th leaves missing after fols. 4 and 5) (fols. 4–9), 3⁸⁻¹ (6th leaf excised, after fol. 14) (fols. 10–16), 4⁸ (fols. 17–24), 5⁸⁻² (2nd and 8th leaves missing, after fols. 25, 30), 6⁸ (fols. 31–38), 7⁶⁻² (2nd and 3rd leaves missing, after fol. 39) (fols. 39–42) | 8–12⁸ (fols. 43–82); catchwords occur throughout in the centre of the lower margin, bounded by double horizontal lines, and enframed with decorative scrolls usually shaded and coloured red and yellow [\[Image\]](#)

[Image] [Image]; leaf signatures (not original) from ‘a’–‘g’, and ‘a’–‘e’, placed at the intersection of the outermost pairs of rulings in the lower fore-edge corner [Image].

Ruled in brown ink, with 18 horizontal lines for the text, the top two and bottom two extending the full width of the page, between single vertical bounding lines; the spaced ruled for writing *c.*145 x *c.*95 mm.; all four margins with a further pair of ruled lines; prickings do not survive.

Written with 17 lines per page in a fine gothic textura script.

Secundo folio: ‘ue heuenes’ (fol. 2r; original 2nd leaf missing).

Binding

Medieval wood boards covered with 17th(?)–century brown leather; originally sewn on six thongs, the sewing entirely missing by 1998; the edges of the leaves decorated in green and red. The boards have six horizontal channels with traces of white thongs; the back board with two holes (with corresponding holes in fol. 82) from a strap-and-pin fastening; the front board has corresponding recesses at the fore-edge [Image] [Image]; the former pastedown also has a corresponding copper-stain at the fore-edge. The leather cover of the boards appears to come from another larger book, since the fore-edge turn-ins are unusually wide, and have blind and gilt tooling that must originally have been on the outer face of a previous binding [Image]. Resewn and rebound in 2002–3.

Provenance

1. Written in England in the early 15th century; in the mid 16th century prayers and hymns to the Virgin, and the litany, were defaced.
2. Humfrey Addams, 1574: inscribed ‘Homfrey’ (fol. 4v, lower margin), and ‘Homfrey addams is my name for with my handes I write the same | the lorde kepe him from sin and shame and then he shall have the | Best Gains’ with ‘1574’ written twice nearby [Image] (fol. 182r, sideways down the outer margin); he perhaps also wrote ‘lord be mercyfull unto us and shewe’ [Image] (fol. 42v); inscribed ‘Jhon’ (fol. 19v, lower margin) perhaps by the same hand as on fol. 4v; another hand added an alphabet from ‘a’–‘o’ on fol. 42v [Image].
3. Inscribed 17th(?)–century ‘o Lord in thee is all my trust’ (fol. 54r, lower margin), apparently by the same hand that added leaf signatures ‘hi’–‘hiii’ [sic] on fols. 40–42.
4. Queen’s College: acquired probably between 1712 and 1723, since it appears as an original entry in the shelflist in MS. 557 (under ‘Office’); bookplate on fol. [i]v; former shelfmark: ‘S. 20’ (once on fol. [i]v, twice on the bookplate); ‘Archives’ inscribed twice on the bookplate; inscribed in pencil ‘Coxe No. 324’ (fol. [i]r), and ‘324’ once on fol. [i]r, once on [i]v, and once on the bookplate; there is a trace of a printed paper label on the fore-edge of the back board.

Bibliography

Coxe, *Catalogus*, p. 77.

William Maskell, *Monumenta ritualia Ecclesiae Anglicanae: The occasional offices of the Church of England, according to the old use of Salisbury, the Prymer in English, and*

other prayers and forms, with dissertations and notes (2nd. edn., 3 vols., Oxford, 1882),
noticed at vol. II, p. xxxvii, n. 62.

Alexander & Temple, *College libraries*, no. 396.

Status; Draft