

MS. 386

Augustine, *Homilies on St. John's Gospel*, in Latin England(?); s. xii^{4/4}

Text

(fols. 1r–194v) St. Augustine, 124 homilies on the Gospel of St. John: ‘*Aurelii augustini doctoris yponensis episcopi omelie in ewangelium domini nostri ihesu christi secundum iohannem incipiunt. Incipit sermo primus ab eo quod scriptum est. In principio erat uerbum usque ad id. & tenebre eam non comprehenderunt* [i.e. John 1:1–5] *Intuentes quomodo audiuius ex lectione apostolica. ... [fol. 194v:] ipse compellere meum terminare. Explicit amen. Aurelii augustini doctoris omeliae liber in euuangelium dominum nostrum ihesu christi secundum iohannem explicit. quas ipse prius colloquendo ad populum habuit. & inter loquendum a notariis exceptas eo quod habite sunt ordine. uerbum ex uerbo dictauit.*’ (ed. Radbodus Willems, *In Iohannis Euuangelium tractatus CXXIV*, CCSL, 36 (Turnhout, 1954); Migne, *PL*, XXXV, cols. 1379–1976 and 1377)

Decoration

Homilies 1 and 50 with fine zoomorphic initials (fols. 1r [\[Image\]](#), 127r [\[Image\]](#)); others with parted initials in red and green (fol. 94r, 103v, 112v, 167r) [\[Image\]](#), or red and brown (fol. 8v, 22r, 102r) [\[Image\]](#); added(?) ‘penwork’ flourishing in leadpoint added to some plain red initials (fols. 136v, 147r, 148r) [\[Image\]](#); other initials in plain red.

The initial on fol. 54v has a man’s head, in profile, added in England in the 15th-century. [\[Image\]](#)

Physical description

Parchment, c.430 x c.285 mm. (apparently the original dimensions), of good quality; the first leaf especially creased and worn; the whole of the lower margin of fols. 122, 153, and 156, cut away, and part of the lower margin of fols. 172–175; with a place-marker at fol. 135.

ff. 194, foliated in modern pencil; there is also a 13th(?)–century foliation on most leaves in leadpoint Arabic numerals in the bottom gutter corner on both recto and verso [\[Image\]](#), omitting ‘22’, and thus running one behind the correct foliation thereafter; perhaps at the same time similar numeration of the sermons was added in the upper margin.

Quires mostly of eight leaves each: 1–21⁸ (fols. 1–168), 22¹⁰ (fols. 169–178), 23⁸ (fols. 179–186), 24⁶⁺² (fols. 187–194, the last two leaves inserted, with two corresponding wide stubs before fol. 187); catchwords to the right of the middle of the lower edge, in quires 1–3, and 5; quire numbers in ink in lower-case roman numerals (except ‘I’) in the middle of the lower margin ‘I’–‘xxiiiij.’.

Ruled in leadpoint, with 44 horizontal lines in two columns, the first and third from the top and bottom, as well as the 22nd and 24th, extending the full width of the page, between single vertical bounding lines, extending the full height of the page; the ruled space c.305–10 x c.185–90 mm., each column c.85–90 mm. wide; prickings survive in all four margins.

Written 'above top line'; fols. 1r–2r written 'below top line', thus with only 43 lines of writing per page; in an early gothic script with biting of letters; the ampersand and tironian 'et' are used; single 'i's are dotted, as are stressed syllables; using the low and mid-height point, the tick-and-point, *punctus interrogativus* and *punctus flexus* punctuation [Image]; capital letters are coloured red sporadically, including those on fol. 1r.

Secundo folio: 'uerba. in principio'.

Binding

Original sewing on four wide slit alum-tawed straps, laced into (?)original heavy oak boards with rounded edges flush with the text-block, and held in place by wood wedges, covered with ?later brown leather, blind-tooled in a simple lattice pattern. [Image]

Provenance

1. Written very possibly for a Cistercian house, to judge by the *punctus flexus* punctuation; inscribed in red ink, apparently by the rubricator: '*Hic est liber sancte marie de m[...]*' (fol. 194v) [Image]. Michael Gullick kindly confirms that the manuscript is probably English, not French as stated in Temple & Alexander: if the house is Cistercian and English, the candidates with short names beginning with 'M' are: Margam, Meaux, Melrose, or possibly Merevale; it could therefore perhaps be the manuscript from Meaux (Yorshire), listed in David N. Bell, *The libraries of the Cistercians, Gilbertines, and Premonstratensians*, CBMLC, 3 (1993), p. 40 no. Z14.34: 'Item Augustinus super Iohannem liber unus'.
2. 15th(?)-century additions include running-headers with the sermon number in red and brown roman numerals, and the numbering of each sermon next to the rubric, in similar numerals, in groups of four, lettered a–d: 'Ia'–'Id', 'IIa'–'IIId', etc., to 'XXId'. A 15th-century hand has marked a reference to Sixtus and Laurence (fol. 82r).
3. 16th-century scribbles include 'weight', upside down (fol. 194v).
4. 18th-century inscriptions on the inner face of the front board; 'Sermones S^{ti} Augustini' on the front turn-in.
5. Queen's College, fol. 2r inscribed in pencil 'F 2'; the College bookplate and the inner face of the front board inscribed in pencil '386'; the spine with a small label printed 'I'.

Bibliography

Coxe, *Catalogus*, p. 89.

Alexander & Temple, *College libraries*, no. 648.

Franz Römer, *Die handschriftliche Überlieferung der Werke des Heiligen Augustinus, Band II/2: Grossbritannien und Irland: Verzeichnis nach Bibliotheken*, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse, 276 (Vienna, 1972), 309.

Status: Draft.