

MEDIAEVAL & RENAISSANCE MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS AT OXFORD COLLEGES

SECTION II. ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The Illuminated Manuscripts of the Oxford Colleges fall mainly into two categories: firstly the Psalters, Books of Hours and University Bibles of the thirteenth century onwards. These were produced by English and French workshops for private lay devotions, and were post-Reformation acquisitions. (With the exception of Magdalen Ms 223 and Wolsey's Epistolatory, Christ Church Ms 101, none of the colleges' original service books survived the Reformation). The second group consists of 15th century luxury humanist and law texts richly decorated with magnificent calligraphy and penwork; they were bequeathed by early humanist scholars.

Oxford was a leading centre of book production throughout the Middle Ages, and the work of one artist, William de Bariles, is outstanding. His name occurs in documents recording the activities of lay workshops that served the growing demand for texts from the university.

SECTION II. ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS/NEW COLLEGE

One of the most interesting and unique manuscripts in the colleges is Thomas Chaundler's *Collucciones and Allocutiones*, a panegyric on William Wykenham who had founded the college in 1379. (Ms 288). The four miniatures, dated c.1463, look to Flemish models and include remarkable topographical views of the college. Elsewhere the standard is maintained. There is a fine group of law texts with interesting miniatures (Mss 174, 189-90, 207, 208) and another group of 15th century Books of Hours, both Flemish and French.

Of the English manuscripts the Psalter with miniatures and historiated initials by the Oxford illuminator William de Brailes (Ms 322) is rightly the most famous, but a very fine copy of John Gower's poem *Confessio Amantis*, 1450 (Ms 266) is also worth noting. The French manuscripts include two good Bibles (Mss 1, 7) the second containing instructions to the illuminator and preliminary drawings, and an Apocalypse manuscript c.1280 (Ms 65). The text of the latter is French with a gloss and incorporates 66 pictures many with inscribed scrolls. It was owned by Domina Johanna de Boun.

LIST OF CONTENTS OF REELS

<u>REEL</u>	<u>Ms</u>	<u>Title/Description</u>
1	1	Bible (Paris) 13th c.
2	7	Bible c.1220
	63	Thomas Aquinas. Commencing on St Paul's Epistles before 1444

<u>REEL</u>	<u>Ms</u>	<u>Title/Description</u>
3	65 174	Apocalypse (French) c.1280 Justinian. Parvum Volumen etc. 13th c.
4	189-90	Henry de Bohic. Commentary on Gregory IX. Decretais c.1400
5	207 208 255	Boniface VIII. Sext with gloss c.14 Gratian. Decretum. With gloss c.14 Guido Faba Rota Nova (Spanish) c.13
6	266 288	John Gower Confession Amantis 1450 Thomas Chaundler. Colluccionnes and Allocutiones on William Wykeham c.1463
7	322	Psalter (Oxford) 1240-50
4	370	Book of Hours (Flemish) c.1450
	372	Book of Hours (Flemish) c.15

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