

THE WINCHESTER BIBLE  
and the  
WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL  
MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION

CATALOGUE  
With Introduction

THE WINCHESTER BIBLE

On 2 reels of 35mm colour positive roll microfilm, with Introduction and 'Catalogue of the Initials' (printed separately) by SIR WALTER OAKESHOTT.

THE WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION

On 7 reels of 35mm silver positive roll microfilm, with Introduction and Catalogue by BARBARA CARPENTER TURNER.

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## THE WINCHESTER BIBLE

### INTRODUCTION By Sir Walter Oakeshott

Among the great series of XIIth century bibles the production of which can be associated with various English monasteries, the unfinished Winchester Bible was one of the latest; was largest in the size of its page; and was the most ambitious, the plans as time went on being extended - for instance to include some full-page illustrations - to give it a still richer appearance. These plans were never completely carried out although the work must be reckoned, from the changes in style it shows, to have extended at least over two, perhaps three decades: begun in the 1160's and finally abandoned still unfinished, possibly as late as the 1190's.

Six notable artists, their names unknown, but their different styles (and also from them, travels of some of them outside England) can be traced. The earliest, named the Leaping Figures Master from his love of representing dramatic movement, worked through both of the original volumes into which the work was divided. He chose initials that interested him, or which he was instructed to design; these designs sometimes completed by himself, sometimes by a later Master; sometimes they remain simply as sketches. The second in II Kings (generally now known as II Samuel), the 'Master of the Amalekiti' follows in that initial the Leaping Figures design so closely, that only a very detailed examination shows differences which are not the original designer's work; but in others, IV Kings for instance, has evidently been encouraged to work more independently. A third, the 'Apocrypha Drawings Master', trained (his style suggests) in St Albans, brought with an assistant whose work is more commonplace than those brilliant full-page drawings

for Judith and Maccabees by the Master himself. The fourth, the 'Morgan Leaf Master' (a Leaf now in America, which he illuminated on both sides) seems to have had two phases of working in Winchester, the first phase on 'I Kings' and the Morgan Leaf\*; a second represented by - for instance - Ezekiel and Daniel; perhaps a third phase also, in the later of the wall paintings in the Holy Sepulchre Chapel, in Winchester Cathedral. The fifth artist represented, like the Morgan Master, a Byzantinising style which influenced English art powerfully in the 1170's and 1180's; both this 'Master of the Genesis Initial' and the Morgan Leaf Master evidently learnt much from visits to Sicily. The sixth, 'Master of the Gothic Majesty' is named from the figure of a king he designed for Psalm 101. His only completed initial is for Isaiah. He is one of a group of artists found to have worked on the painting of the Chapter House at Sigena in Spain, it seems under the Morgan Master's supervision in the 1190's. One of Henry II's daughters was wife of a King of Aragon, another of a King of Sicily, and Winchester was a royal city - facts no doubt associated with these contacts, far beyond even the distant borders of Henry II's domains in Southern France. Their work in the Bible makes it possible to follow in detail in that book the share each had in its splendid decoration.

#### THE WINCHESTER BIBLE

Two reels of 35mm positive colour roll microfilm.

REEL A1 Volumes I and II.

REEL A2 Volumes III and IV.

Together with a detailed 28-page Catalogue of the Initials by Sir Walter Oakeshott (printed separately, and supplied with the microfilm).

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(\*) It now seems possible that his earliest work of all is that on the e. wall of the Holy Sepulchre Chapel in the Cathedral.