

The Bury Bible

Bibliorum Pars I

Codicology: Vellum, mm 522 x 360, (20.6 x 14 in.), ff. 357 (now bound in three parts), double columns of 42 lines. Cent. **xii**, in a magnificent round hand, and with splendid ornaments.

Collation: a² (1 canc.) I¹⁰ (wants 4 and 7: 8 is a double leaf), II⁸-XLIV⁸ XLV⁶ (wants 5, 6).

Provenance: The book comes from Bury St Edmunds Abbey¹. On the upper corner of f. 2r (first leaf of text) is a mark rather smaller than in most Bury books, but of the same kind: B. 1.

The press-mark shows that this was the first book in class B. The B here stands for *Biblia*.

Further, at f. 322r the edge of the leaf has been mended with a patch of vellum in cent. **xv** on which is sketched a crowned head (cut off at the neck) and a scroll inscribed *hic, hic, hic*. This represents St Edmund¹'s head, which called out "Here, here," to those who were searching for it after the martyrdom. It fixes the provenance in a very satisfactory way.

In the old catalogue (cent. **xii**, **xiii**) of the Abbey books preserved in a MS. at Pembroke College^[CPC047] and printed in my *Essays on the Abbey of Bury*, 1895, p. 23^[James 1895], the second item is "Bibliotheca in duo uolumina (!)": and in the *Gesta Sacristarum*, Arnold, *Memorials of Bury St Edmunds Abbey* (Rolls Series II, p. 290)^[Arnold 1892] in the account of Hervey¹ (sacrist under Anselm¹ in 1121-1148) this passage occurs:

"Iste Herveus¹ frater Taleboti prioris¹ omnes expensas inuenit fratri suo priori in scribenda magna bibliotheca et manu magistri Hugonis¹ incomparabiliter fecit depingi. Qui cum non inueniret in partibus nostris pelles uitulinas sibi accommodas, in Scotiae¹ partibus parchamenas comparauit."

This passage seems to refer specially to the illuminating of the Bible in question. I interpret it thus: that Hervey¹ found the money for his brother the prior to have a great Bible written, and had it painted after a matchless sort by the hand of Master Hugo¹. The latter not finding vellum to suit him in our district procured parchment from Ireland¹.

Clearly there cannot have been any difficulty in getting good vellum to write upon in England¹. But the special vellum required by the painter was a superior and rarer article. Now it will be found that in this Bible all or almost all of the paintings are done upon separate pieces of vellum which have been pasted down on the leaves of the book.

I have no hesitation therefore in identifying the volume before us with a portion of the Bible of Magister Hugo¹. It is most interesting to have a work of this artist preserved. Like many workers of his time, he exercised more than one craft. He is recorded to have made the bronze doors of St Edmund's Church¹, to have carved a fine rood for it, and to have cast a great bell.

Foliation: ff. i-iii + 242-347 + iv-vi.

Language: Latin.

Contents:

1.

242r-357v *The Bury Bible*

245r *Rubric:* Explicit Ysaias¹ propheta habet versus III D LXXX

245r Prol. to Jeremiah¹

245r *Incipit:* Ieremias¹ propheta cui hic prologus

245v The lower half has a picture, stuck on. Fine frame with pattern drawn in perspective on black ground.

Ground of picture blue with green panels. Above, Jeremiah¹ seated on rocks holds out white scroll to R. Below, on L., three soldiers attack a walled city (Jerusalem¹) which is defended by three within who throw red stones. These warriors have helmets, chain mail, and pointed shields

246r Decorative initial, stuck on

274v Prologue to Baruch¹

274v *Incipit:* Liber iste qui baruch nomine

275r Decorative initial (a green monkey in the middle: very good) stuck on

277r Epistle of Jeremy¹ (Jeremiah¹). Decorative initial, not stuck on

278r Hebrew alphabet. The forms of the letters are not given, but the names are given twice with different Latin equivalents

278r 1. Aleph doctrina - Tau signa

278v () 2. Aleph deus - Tau fortitude

278v *Rubric:* Incipit lamentatio Jeremie¹ prophete quod est in titulo chynoth cum absolutione litterarum hebraicarum

281r *Rubric:* Explicit Lamentatio Jeremie¹ prophete. Incipit oratio eiusdem (= Lam. v)

281r () *Rubric:* Explicit Ieremias¹ propheta habet uersus IIII CCCC L

281r () Prologue to Ezekiel¹

281r () *Incipit:* Ezechiel¹ propheta cum Ioachin

281r () with initial

281v Picture (and initial) stuck on. The picture is reproduced in colours in *Camb. Ant. Soc. Proc.* vol. VII, pl. VIII (I)^[CAS 1893].

The main grounds are blue and green. In C. a mandorla with Christ seated on the rainbow, holding open book on His knee and blessing. Four masks of winds blowing at top and bottom.

In 4 circles R. and L. formed by conventional branch-work are the Four creatures: L. top, Angel with book; below, lion with scroll. R. top, Eagle with scroll; below, ox with scroll, all nimbed and winged. At bottom in C. in (rather more than) half circle, Ezekiel^l half-length in pointed cap holding scroll in both hands and looking up

300r On the margin a deer is sketched and below it in pencil "halla" (?)

307r *Rubric*: Explicit Ezechie^l propheta habet versus III CCC XL

307r () Prologue to Daniel^l with initial

307r () *Incipit*: Danielem^l prophetam iuxta septuaginta

307v Decorative initial to text, stuck on

317v *Rubric*: Explicit Daniel^l propheta habet versus mille DCCC^{tos} L^{ta}

317v Prol. beati Hieronimi^l presbiteri in liber XII^{im} prophetarum qui apud hebreos dicitur Thareasra

317v () *Incipit*: Non idem ordo

318r Prol. in Osee^l

318r *Incipit*: Temporibus loathan

318r () Osee^l. Initial stuck on

321v *Rubric*: Explicit Osee^l propheta

321v () Arguments to Joel^l

1.

321v () *Incipit*: Iohel^l filius fatuhel^l

2.

321v () *Incipit*: Iohel^l qui interpretatur

3.

321v () *Incipit*: Iohel^l de tribu ruben

322r Initial stripped off. On this leaf is the sketch of St Edmund^l's head

323r Arguments to Amos^l

1. (With initial)

323r () *Incipit*: Amos^l propheta

2.

323v () *Incipit*: Ozias^l rex

3.

323v () Amos^l pastor

324r Initial not stuck on. Amos^l nimbed, seated, holds scroll. Green ground

326v Arguments to Obadiah^l

1.

326v () *Incipit*: Jacob^l patriarcha

2.

326v () *Incipit*: Abdias^l qui interpretatur

327r Initial stripped off

327r () Arguments to Jonah^l

1.

327r () *Incipit*: Jonam^l sanctum hebrei

2.

327v () *Incipit*: Jonas^l columba

327v Initial, not stuck on

328v Arguments to Micah^l

1.

328v () *Incipit*: Temporibus loathan^l

2.

328v () *Incipit*: Micheas^l de morasthi

328v () Initial not stuck on. Micah^l in cap and mantle and tunic holds scroll. He stands in a kind of running attitude. Green and blue ground

330v Arguments to Nahum^l

1.

330v () *Incipit*: Naum^l prophetam

2.

331r () *Incipit*: Naum^l consolator

331r Initial not stuck on

332r Arguments to Habakkuk^l

1. (With initial)

332r () *Incipit*: Quatuor propheta

2.

332v () *Incipit*: Abbacuc^l amplexans

3.

333r () *Incipit*: Abbacuc^l luctator

333r Initial stuck on

334r Arguments to Zephaniah^l

1. (With initial)

334r () *Incipit*: Tradunt hebrei

2.

334v () *Incipit*: Sophonias^l speculator

334v Initial stuck on

- 335v Arguments to Haggai⁰
1. (Initial)
- 335v () *Incipit*: Moriente dario
2.
- 335v () *Incipit*: Aggeus⁰ festiuus
- 335v () Initial, not stuck on
- 336v Arguments to Zechariah⁰
1 (Initial)
- 336v () *Incipit*: Secundo anno darii filii
2.
- 337r () *Incipit*: Secundo anno darii regis
3.
- 337r () *Incipit*: Zacharias⁰ memor
- 337v Initial, not stuck on
- 341v Arguments to Malachi⁰
1.
- 341v () *Incipit*: Ultimum duodecim
2.
- 341v () *Incipit*: Malachias⁰ interpretatur
3.
- 341v () *Incipit*: Malachias⁰ aperte
- 342r Initial, not stuck on
- 343r *Rubric*: Explicit Malachias⁰ propheta prophetarum xii III DCCC versus sunt
- 343r () Prologue to Job⁰
1.
- 343r () *Incipit*: Cogor per singulos
with initial
2.
- 343v () *Incipit*: In terra quidem habitasse
- 344r Capitula
- 344v Picture, stuck on (2/3 of page). Frame mainly red blue in triangles, ground blue and green.
Above on R. Job⁰ kneels on rocks. The Divine Hand on R. On L. his seven sons and three daughters face R. Below on red ground, separated off by cusped line, Job⁰ seated on rocks, in blue loincloth only. His wife on L. holds a blank scroll.
The initial and first words of text are introduced in the lower L. corner
- 357r Several supplementary prologues, viz.
- 357r Prol. in Job⁰
- 357r () *Incipit*: Si aut fiscellam
- 357r () Arg. in Job⁰
- 357r () *Incipit*: Job⁰ exemplar
- 357v Arg. in Danihelem⁰
- 357v () *Incipit*: Daniel⁰ interpretatur iudicium
- 357v () *Rubric*: Ieronimus⁰ de libro duodecim prophetarum
- 357v () *Incipit*: Duodecim prophete in unius
- 357v () Arg. in Sophoniam⁰
- 357v () *Incipit*: Iosiam⁰ regem iude

CCC: space available for notes on the current status of the encoding

- text: copied from James.txt BA
- markup: BA
- markupCheck: checked by BA, CF
- msCheck: NJM 01/08/08
- remarks: