

AUGUSTINE, *Ad inquisitiones Januarii, De decem chordis, De haeresibus* (with associated letters exchanged by AUGUSTINE and QUODVULTDEUS), *De urbis excidio*; PSEUDO-AUGUSTINE, *De vita christiana, De cataclysmo, De vera et falsa poenitentia*, sermon 56 of the *Sermones ad fratres in eremo, De spiritu et de anima* (chapter 35); and *De decem plagis et decem praeceptis* (sermon 21)

In Latin, decorated manuscript on parchment  
England, c. 1450

*i* (modern paper) + *ii* (contemporary parchment bifolium) + 122 + *iii* (modern paper) folios on parchment, modern foliation in pencil, top outer recto, 1-122 (collation i-xv<sup>8</sup> xvi<sup>2</sup> [ff. 121-122, either two singletons or a bifolium]), some traces of quire signatures, a-p, and of numbering in Arabic numerals (now mostly cropped), horizontal catchwords inner lower margin, ruled in brown crayon with full-length vertical and horizontal bounding lines, some prickings remain three outer margins (justification 105-110 x 64-73 mm.), written in dark brown ink in a handsome Gothic bookhand with idiosyncratic decorative hairlines in twenty-three to thirty-one long-lines, with ff. 119v-122v possibly copied by the same scribe, but written in a larger hand with some cursive letterforms, guide notes for the rubricator in the outer margins, rubrics in red, guide letters for initials, one-line initials by the scribe in dark brown ink ff. 90v-110, otherwise two- to four-line plain initials mark text, additions, corrections, and marginal notes and 'nota' marks in the scribe's hand, additional corrections and marginal notes in at least one other fifteenth-century hand, many of the marginal notes partially cropped, vertical slit cut into the outer margin of f. 64 with no damage to the text. Bound in eighteenth-century mottled calf over pasteboards, gilt stamped spine with five raised bands and gilt-stamped label, "MANUSCRIPT," some cracking along upper joint and the top of the lower one, but binding is secure, with eighteenth-century shelfmarks on the front pastedown and twentieth-century ownership inscription on recto of front flyleaf and presentation inscription on recto of the second of the three final flyleaves. Dimensions 160-163 x 116 mm.

This handsome English manuscript includes a collection of works by St. Augustine. Some of his less common works are transcribed together with spurious works attributed to him during the Middle Ages. Marginal notes by contemporary readers make the volume a valuable witness to the reception of these works in the British Isles in the fifteenth century. By the nineteenth century, the codex was certainly in Scotland when it was owned by John Stirton (1871-1944), librarian at Balmoral Castle and domestic chaplain to the King.

## PROVENANCE

1. This manuscript's script and decoration suggest that it was written in England, most likely in the mid-fifteenth century. Augustine was widely read in the latter half of the fifteenth century, and this manuscript could have been made for a monastic library or copied for a well-to-do student of theology. The marginal notes include corrections not only by the scribe but also by another fifteenth-century reader, suggesting that this book was read carefully around the time of its production. One marginal note in the scribe's hand refers to a bracketed passage, and suggests further reading: "lege pro hoc scot[...?] et alios doctor[es?]" (f. 118).
2. There are two eighteenth-century inscriptions on the front pastedown with earlier shelfmarks, "D I.21" and "N<sup>o</sup>. 3. Cl. 2. Sh. 6." Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania,

MS Codex 699 contains two similar shelfmarks in the same hands (see digitization in Online Resources, recto of flyleaf i), and Ker and Piper list several manuscripts that contain shelfmarks similar to the second one in this present manuscript (see 1992, p. 159).

3. Belonged to John Stirton (1871-1944), book collector and writer, who served as librarian at Balmoral Castle, domestic chaplain to the King in Scotland, and minister of Crathie Kirk, in Crathie, Aberdeenshire from 1919 to 1941; his inscription on the recto of the first flyleaf, "Rev. John Stirton / The Manse / Crathie. / Aug 1919."
4. Presented to St. John's Kirk in Perth, Scotland by Stirton in 1926; his presentation inscription on the recto of the second of the rear flyleaves, "Presented to the Parish Church of St John the Baptist Perth by the Reverend John Stirton D.D. minister of Crathie and Domestic Chaplain to the King – a native of Perth." MS 1 at St. John's Kirk in Perth, Scotland, where it was described by N. R. Ker and A. J. Piper in vol. 4 of *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries*, Oxford, 1992 (see pp. 158-159).

## TEXT

second unnumbered contemporary flyleaf, verso, list of the book's contents in a slightly later fifteenth-century cursive;

The final text within this manuscript is not included in this list of the contents.

ff. 1-17v, *Incipit epistola prima beati Augustini ad inquisitiones Ianuarij presbiteri*, incipit, "Dilectissimo filio Ianuario Augustinus in domino salutem. De hiis que me interrogasti malle prius nosse quid interrogatus ipse responderis ... si dominus voluerit alio tempore expediam," *Explicit epistola prima*, f. 4, *Incipit ad inquisitiones Ianuarij*, incipit, "Dilectissimo filio Ianuario Augustinus salutem. Lectis litteris tuis ubi me commonuisti ... hanc epistolam multis daturam atque lecturam," *Explicit epistolam secundam Augustini ad inquisitiones Ianuarij*;

Augustine, *Ad inquisitiones Ianuarii (Epistolae 54 and 55)*. Printed *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 33, cols. 200-223; ed. K. D. Daur, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina 31, 2004.

ff. 18-32v, *Incipit sermo beati Augustini de decem cordis*, incipit, "DOMINUS et deus noster misericors et miserator longanimis et multum misericors et uerax ... ut quod hic desideramus illic inuenimus";

Augustine, *De decem chordis (Sermon 9)*. Printed *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 38, cols. 75-91; ed. C. Lambot in Corpus Christianorum Series Latina 41, 1961.

ff. 33-35, *Incipit admonitio beati Augustini per quam ostenditur quantum bonum sit lectiones diuinas legere et quantum malum sit ab earum inquisitione desistere*, incipit, "Propicio christo fratres carissimi ita lectionem diuinam auido et sicienti animo semper accipiatis ... qui cum patre et spiritu sancto uiuit et regnat deus in secula seculorum. AMEN";

Pseudo-Augustine, Sermon 56, "Admonitio per quam ostenditur quod bonum sit lectionem diuinam legere," of the *Sermones ad fratres in eremo*. Printed *Patrologia Latina* vol. 40, cols. 1339-1341.

ff. 35v-51v, *Augustinus de vita christiana ad quandam viduam liber incipit*, incipit, "EGO peccator et ultimus insipientior que ceteris ... ut quod presentens prestare non possumus confermamus [corrected to "confermemus"] absentes";

Pseudo-Augustine, *De vita christiana*. Printed *Patrologia Latina* vol. 40, cols. 1031-1046. This text has been marked as corrected ("Corrigitur") in the margin at the end (f. 51v).

ff. 52-56, *Incipit epistola quodwltdei diaconi ad augustinum*, incipit, "Domino [inserted in the margin: "merito"] venerabili et vere beatissimo patri Augustino Episcopo; Quodwltdeus diaconus Diu trepidus fui ... sed malui iam gaudere dictantem quam adhuc occupare legentem. *Explicit epistola quodwltdei diaconi ad augustinum*"; f. 53, *Incipit epistola beati augustini episcopi ad quodwltdeum diaconum*, incipit, "Dilectissimo filio et condiacono Quodwltdeo Augustinus Episcopus. Acceptis litteris caritatis tue ... fac ut nouerim. deo viuas," *Explicit epistola augustini ad quodwltdeum*; f. 54v, *Incipit epistola quodwltdei diaconi ad augustinum*, incipit, "Domino merito venerabili ac beatissimo. Sacro patri Augustino. Quodwltdeus Diaconus. Vnum quidem reuerentie tue commonitorium ... saltem indefessa importunitas mereatur," *Explicit epistola quodwltdei diaconi ad augustinum*; f. 55, *Incipit epistola augustini ad quodwltdeum diaconum*, incipit, "Domino sinceriter dilectissimo fratri et condiacono Quodwltdeo. Augustinus in domino salutem. Cum mihi hec scribendi offerretur ... et in caritate christi ad curam pertinent nostram. deo viuas," *Explicit epistola*;

Quodwltdeus and Augustine, *De Haeresibus Sancti Augustini Epistolae Quattuor (Epistolae 221-224)*. Printed *Patrologia Latina* vol. 42, col. 15-19; ed. R. Vander Plaetse and C. Beukers, *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina* 46.2, 1969.

ff. 56-82, *Incipiunt capituli*, incipit, "I. Simoniam, ij. Menandriani ... lxxxix Nestoriani, lxxxx Eutichiani"; f. 57v, incipit, "Quod petis sepiissime atque instantissime. Sancte Fili Quodwltdeus. ut de heresibus aliquid scribam ... quid faciat hereticum diputabitur," *Explicit epistola augustini ad quodwltdeum diaconum*; f. 59v, *Aurelius(?) augustinus de diuersis heresibus(?) ad quodwltdeum diaconum Libe [sic] incipit*, incipit, "CUM DOMINUS ascendisset in celum ... quod capiti defuisset";

Augustine, *De haeresibus*. Printed *Patrologia Latina* vol. 42, col. 21-50; ed. R. Vander Plaetse and C. Beukers, *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina* 46.2, 1969; English translation, *De Haeresibus: A Translation with an Introduction and Commentary*, trans. Liguori G. Müller, *Patristic Studies* 90, Washington DC, Catholic University of America, 1956. Arabic numerals 1-90 in the outer margins (partially cropped) mark the correspondences between the text and the chapters numbered in Roman numerals in the opening table of contents. This text was also marked as corrected ("Corrigitur") in the margin at the end (f. 82). Two additional heresies, Nestorian and Eutichian (numbered 89 and 90, respectively), are not original to Augustine's text and have been added here to both the table and the text. A marginal note in the scribe's hand at the head of the chapter on the Nestorian heresy observes, "Hoc opus videtur(?) relinqui imperfectum ab augustino" [this work seems to have been left unfinished by Augustine] (f. 81v).

ff. 82v-90, *Incipit liber beati augustini de cathaclismo*, incipit, "Quoniam in proximo est dies redemptionis nostre ... saltem uestris orationibus pascar";

Pseudo-Augustine, *De cataclysmo sermo ad catechumenos*. Printed *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 40, col. 693-700.

ff. 90v-110, *Incipit liber beati augustini ypponensis episcopi de vera et falsa penitencia. Capitulum primum*, incipit, "Quantum sit appetenda gratia penitentiae ... et in ipso stabilis in odorem suauitatis. AMEN";

Pseudo-Augustine, *De vera et falsa poenitentia*. Printed *Patrologia Latina* vol. 40, col. 1113-1130.

ff. 110v-117, *Incipit sermo beati augustini ypponensis episcopi de excidii urbis Rome*, incipit, "Intueamur primam lectionem sancti danielis prophete ... sed faciet cum temptatione etiam exitum ut sustinere possitis";

Augustine, *De urbis Romae excidio*. Printed *Patrologia Latina* vol. 40, col. 715-724; ed. M. V. O'Reilly, *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina* 46.2, 1969; earlier edition with English translation, *Sancti Aurelii Augustini De Excidio Urbis Romae Sermo: A Critical Text and Translation*, ed. and trans. M. V. O'Reilly, *Patristic Studies* 89, Washington DC, Catholic University of America, 1955.

ff. 117v-119, *Qualiter homo factus est ad ymaginem et similitudinem dei*, incipit, "TANTA dignitas humane conditionis ... que in secundo reformauit. Deo gratias";

Pseudo-Augustine, *De spiritu et anima*, chapter 35. Printed *Patrologia Latina* vol. 40, col. 805-806.

ff. 119v-122v, *Incipit liber beati augustini episcopi de .x. preceptis et decem plagis egipti*, incipit, "NON EST sine causa dilectissimi quod preceptorum legis dei numerus cum numero plagarum ... non solum in sua sed et aliena//"

Pseudo Augustine(?), *De decem plagis et decem praeceptis* (Sermon 21). Printed *Patrologia Latina* vol. 39, col. 1783-1785. Arabic numerals 1-9 in the margin track the Ten Commandments and plagues that furnish the content of this sermon. The ending of this text is lacking.

The importance of St. Augustine in the history of Western thought can hardly be exaggerated. In the words of a recent scholar, Augustine from the Middle Ages to the present "has remained the most prominent and most widely studied author in Western Christianity," second only to biblical writers such as Paul (Drobner, 2000, p. 18). He was a prolific writer, composing more than one-hundred and twenty works (James O'Donnell estimates that Augustine left behind 5,000,000 words that survive today). These works survive in a vast number of manuscripts, which are being catalogued in the series *Die Handschriftliche Überlieferung der Werke des heiligen Augustinus*, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse, Bd. 263, 267, 276, 281, 289, 292, 350, 601, 645, 685, 688, 791, Vienna, Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1969- <2010>, as well as in numerous printed editions. The first complete printed edition of his work was produced in Basel by Johannes Amerbach from 1505 to 1517. In the modern era, Augustine is still read and studied in a wider, non-religious context, for he is valued as a philosopher and as the author of what is widely considered to be the earliest known Western autobiography, the *Confessiones*.

Augustine was born in 354 in Thagaste in North Africa. His mother, Monica, was a Christian; his father, Patricius, converted only on his deathbed. Of modest means, Augustine nonetheless

received a good education and studied at Carthage. After various spiritual and moral struggles, known to us through his *Confessiones*, Augustine was baptized by St. Ambrose in Milan in 387; he became Bishop of Hippo in 395, a position he held until his death in 430.

The present manuscript contains five brief works by Augustine. The first, *Ad inquisitiones Januarii*, two letters touching on Augustine's views on the sacraments, was written in 400. *De decem chordis*, is an often cited sermon on the Ten Commandments. *De urbis Romae excidio*, a sermon composed by Augustine in 410 in response to the Sack of Rome in that same year, resonates powerfully with the views articulated in his *City of God* (written between 413 and 427). *De haeresibus*, the longest and latest of Augustine's works to be included here, was written c. 428-429 at the request of Quodvultdeus, then deacon of Carthage, and is preceded here by the exchange of letters between Quodvultdeus and Augustine in which this request was expressed. Quodvultdeus had asked that Augustine prepare a handbook for clergy and laity offering instruction on the various heresies that had come into existence since the coming of Christ.

This manuscript also contains six works falsely attributed to Augustine (all but one specifically attributed to Augustine here). Numerous pseudo-Augustinian works circulated under his name during the Middle Ages. In fact, pseudo-Augustinian texts like the *Sermones ad fratres in eremo*, one of which is included here, were just as popular at the time, if not more so, than genuine works by Augustine, and they contributed significantly to medieval reception of Augustinian thought. Augustine's *Retractationes*, or *Reconsiderations*, composed c. 426-427, lists Augustine's writings with his comments regarding their composition and publication and thus offers an invaluable means of discerning which works attributed to him are authentic and which are spurious.

Why these particular texts were chosen for inclusion in this manuscript is an interesting question that bears on the history of the reception of Augustine in the fifteenth century. Based on an informal survey of the catalogues of the surviving manuscripts with texts by St. Augustine in England (see especially *Die Handschriftliche Überlieferung der Werke des heiligen Augustinus*, 1972, Bd. 282) and of the Schoenberg Database, the sermon *De decem chordis* stands out as the most popular of the works by Augustine within this manuscript, though it was less popular than some of the manuscript's pseudo-Augustinian works, notably *De spiritu et anima*. *De haeresibus*, along with the associated correspondence between Augustine and Quodvultdeus, was also relatively popular and often appeared in collections of Augustinian or, more generally, patristic works with *De decem chordis*. *De urbis Romae excidio* is the least common of the Augustinian texts in the manuscript. It and *Ad inquisitiones* are generally found in specifically Augustinian collections, rather than in multi-author patristic collections. Further study of the fifteenth-century reader's annotations may shed light on the specific interest in these texts and the context of their transcription and use.

## LITERATURE

Brown, Peter. *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography*, London, Faber and Faber, 2000.

Drobner, Hubertus R. "Studying Augustine: an Overview of Recent Work," *Augustine and his Critics, Essays in Honor of Gerald Bonner*, ed. Robert Dodaro and George Lawless, London, Routledge, 2000, pp. 18-34.

Fitzgerald, Allan D. *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*, Grand Rapids, MI, W. B. Eerdmans, 1999.

*Die Handschriftliche Überlieferung der Werke des heiligen Augustinus*, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse, Bd. 263, 267, 276, 281, 289, 292, 350, 601, 645, 685, 688, 791, Vienna, Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1969-  
<2010>.

Ker, N. R. and A. J. Piper. *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries*, vol. 4, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1992.

O'Donnell, James J. *Augustine, Sinner and Saint: A New Biography*, London, Profile, 2005.

## ONLINE RESOURCES

Augnet (life and works of Augustine, with extensive bibliography)

<http://www.augnet.org/default.asp>

Mendelson, Michael. "Saint Augustine," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2010

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/augustine/>

Nuova biblioteca Augustiniana (comprehensive Italian site on Augustine and his writings, including his works in Latin, from the *Patrologia Latina* edition, and Italian translations)

<http://www.augustinus.it/index2.htm>

O'Donnell, James J. *Augustine of Hippo*

<http://faculty.georgetown.edu/jod/augustine/>

Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania, Ms. Codex 699 (fully digitized)

[http://dla.library.upenn.edu/dla/medren/detail.html?id=MEDREN\\_2487493](http://dla.library.upenn.edu/dla/medren/detail.html?id=MEDREN_2487493)

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