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BIBLE, with Prologues attributed to Saint Jerome and the Interpretation of Hebrew Names  
In Latin, decorated manuscript on parchment  
[England, c. 1230]

*472 leaves plus eight later parchment endleaves at front and eight at end (lacking ten leaves, flyleaf + [V] later vellum leaves + [2] blank leaves + i<sup>14</sup> [16-2] (no text missing in first quire) ii<sup>14</sup> [16-2] (lacking 2 ff. between ff. 29-30), iii<sup>16</sup>, iv<sup>14</sup> [16-2] (lacking 2 ff. between ff. 48-49), v-xiv<sup>16</sup>, xv<sup>14</sup> [16-2] (lacking 2 ff. between ff. 241-242), xvi-xvii<sup>16</sup>, xviii<sup>15</sup> [16-1] (lacking 1 folio after f. 255), xix<sup>16</sup>, xx<sup>15</sup> [16-1] (lacking 1 f. between ff. 324-325), xxi-xxiii<sup>16</sup>, xxiv<sup>15</sup> [16-1] (lacks first folio of quire before f. 382), xxv-xxviii<sup>16</sup>, xxix<sup>13</sup> [16-3] (lacking only last folio of table after f. 473 ; two other folios must have been blank) + [8] blank vellum leaves), modern foliation in pencil in the lower margin, pen in the upper, two columns of 52 lines written in black ink a small gothic bookhand with ascenders into the upper margin, between five verticals and 53 horizontals ruled in plummet (justification 140 x 79 mm.), an additional pair of horizontals in the upper and lower margin, the Interpretation of Hebrew names in three columns of 60 lines between eight verticals and 61 horizontals, versal initials touched in red, letters of running headings and chapter numbers alternately of red or blue, two-line chapter initials alternately of red or blue with flourishing of contrasting color, SEVENTY-THREE "PUZZLE" INITIALS WITH INTRICATE FILIGREE PEN-WORK, six lines high, the divided staves of red and blue flourishing of the same colors (some headings and flourishing slightly cropped, occasional blurring, of red ink, leaves at beginning and end darkened, ff. 461-472 repaired and stained, a further dozen leaves with repairs to margin, dampstaining at edges of lower corners of first 32 and final 30 leaves). Paneled brown morocco gilt by Bedford (lower third dampstained, slight rubbing to head of spine). Dimensions 186 x 118 mm.*

An English copy of the standardized Parisian Bible in a portable size, with English peculiarities of text, decoration, and an early English provenance. Whereas Bibles were made in great numbers in Paris for the university and mendicant markets, they are considerably rarer from England. Minor textual variants between French and English copies still warrant further study.

#### PROVENANCE:

1. The manuscript has several features characteristic of Bibles produced in England, and various documentary features of the script, including the use of papal knots in the ascenders into the upper margin, indicate a date not later than c.1230. The Bible clearly remained in England. Translations into English of the running headings are written in a sixteenth-century hand and an inscription recording Elizabethan ownership and the gift of the book,

once on the final leaf, is transcribed in the nineteenth-century auction catalogue entry that is pasted on the verso of the first modern endleaf. It reads "Guido library ex dono Rici Broughton vni Justic dne Regine Elizabeth Com Angles Caernaruon & Merioneth 1594."

2. Note in mixed Anglo-Norman and Latin: "Le fiue de nouveau testament de nostre sergo erit consummatus" and again "Sit ut vinum semper bibere aut semper aquam contrarium est alterum uti delectabile" (f. 350).
3. Alexander Peckover, Baron of Wisbech (1830-1919), two armorial bookplates inside upper cover, one before and one after he was raised to the peerage in 1907, his name, address and the date September 1874 on the first of the modern vellum endleaves. This is followed by his description of the manuscript (ff. i-v verso) and a transcription of Bedford's bill of 5 August 1875 for binding (□5) and restoration "the whole of the volume damped, pressed & smoothed, & every leaf mended or spliced in the back occupied 128 hrs □9.12's." Peckover also records that Bedford mislaid the leaf with the Elizabethan ownership inscription.
4. William Foyle (1885-1963), Beeleigh Abbey, Essex, his sale, London, Christie's, 11 July 2000, lot 10.
5. Private Collection.

## TEXT

Old Testament:

ff. 1-4, General Prologue;

ff. 4-22, Genesis;

ff. 22- 35v, Exodus;

ff. 35-45v, Leviticus;

ff. 45v-58v, Numbers;

ff. 58v-71, Deuteronomy;

ff. 71-71v, Prologue to Joshua;

ff. 71v-80, Joshua;

ff. 80-89v, Judges;

ff. 89v-91v, Ruth;

ff. 91v-92, Prologue to 1 Samuel;  
ff. 92-104, 1 Samuel;  
ff. 104-104v, Prologue to 2 Samuel;  
ff. 104v-114, 2 Samuel;  
ff. 114-126, 1 Kings;  
ff. 126-137, 2 Kings;  
ff. 137-137v, Prologue to 1 Chronicles ;  
ff. 137v-147v, 1 Chronicles;  
ff. 147v-148, Prologue to 2 Chronicles;  
ff. 148-161, 2 Chronicles;  
f. 161, Prayer of Manasses;  
ff. 161-164v, 1 Ezra;  
ff. 164v-169v, Nehemiah;  
ff. 169v-170v, 2 Ezra;  
ff. 170v-176v, 3 Ezra;  
ff. 176v-184, 4 Ezra;  
ff. 184-185v, 5 Ezra;  
f. 186, Prologue to Tobit;  
ff. 186-189v, Tobit;  
f. 189v, Prologue to Judith;  
ff. 189v-194v, Judith;  
ff. 194-195, Prologue to Esther;  
ff. 194v-199v, Esther;

ff. 199v-200, Prologues (primus et secundus) to Job;

ff. 200-209v, Job;

f. 209v, Liturgical notes;

f. 210, Prologue to Proverbs;

ff. 210-218v, Prologue to Proverbs;

ff. 218v-221v, Ecclesiastes;

ff. 221v-222v, Song of Songs;

ff. 222v-223, Prologue to Wisdom;

ff. 223-228v, Wisdom;

f. 228v, Prologue to Ecclesiasticus;

ff. 229-243v, Ecclesiasticus;

f. 244, Prologue to Isaiah;

ff. 244-261, Isaiah;

ff. 261, Prologue to Jeremiah;

ff. 261-282v, Jeremiah;

ff. 282v-283, Prologue to Lamentations;

ff. 283-284, Lamentations;

f. 284v, Prologue to Baruch;

ff. 284v-287, Baruch;

f. 287, Prologue to Ezekiel;

ff. 287v-305v, Ezekiel;

ff. 305v-306, Prologue to Daniel;

ff. 306-314, Daniel;

f. 314, Prologue to Hosea;  
ff. 314-317, Hosea;  
f. 317, Prologue to Joel;  
ff. 317-318v, Joel;  
f. 318v, Prologue to Amos;  
ff. 318v-320v, Amos;  
f. 320v, Prologue to Obadiah;  
ff. 320v-321, Obadiah;  
f. 321, Prologue to Jonas;  
ff. 321-321v, Jonas;  
f. 321v, Prologue to Micah;  
ff. 321v-323, Micah;  
f. 323, Prologue to Nahum;  
ff. 323-324, Nahum;  
f. 324, Prologue to Habakkuk;  
ff. 324-324v, Habakkuk;  
f. 324v, Prologue to Zephaniah;  
ff. 324v-325, Zephaniah;  
f. 325, Haggai (lacks beginning);  
f. 325, Prologue to Zechariah;  
ff. 325-328v, Zechariah;  
f. 328v, Prologue to Malachi;  
ff. 328v-329, Malachi;

f. 329v, Prologue to 1 Maccabees;  
ff. 329v-341v, 1 Maccabees;  
ff. 341v-342, Prologue to 2 Maccabees;  
ff. 342-350, 2 Maccabees;  
f. 350v, blank;

New Testament:

f. 351, Prologue to Matthew;  
ff. 351-363, Matthew;  
f. 363, Prologue to Mark;  
ff. 363-371, Mark;  
f. 371, Prologue to Luke;  
ff. 371-383, Luke;  
f. 383, Prologue to John;  
ff. 383-392v, John;  
f. 393, Prologue to Romans;  
ff. 393-397v, Romans;  
f. 397v, Prologue to 1 Corinthians;  
ff. 397v-402v, 1 Corinthians;  
f. 402v, Prologue to 2 Corinthians;  
ff. 402v-405v, 2 Corinthians;  
f. 405v, Prologue to Galatians;  
ff. 405v-407, Galatians;  
f. 407, Prologue to Ephesians;

ff. 407v-409, Ephesians;  
f. 409, Prologue to Philippians;  
ff. 409-410, Philippians;  
f. 410, Prologue to Colossians;  
ff. 410-411, Colossians;  
f. 411, Prologue to 1 Thessalonians;  
ff. 411-412, 1 Thessalonians;  
f. 412, Prologue to 2 Thessalonians;  
ff. 412-413, 2 Thessalonians;  
f. 413, Prologue to 1 Timothy;  
ff. 413-414, 1 Timothy;  
ff. 414-414v, Prologue to 2 Timothy;  
ff. 414v-415, 2 Timothy;  
ff. 415, Prologue to Titus  
ff. 415-415v, Titus;  
f. 415v, Prologue to Philemon;  
f. 416, Philemon;  
f. 416, Prologue to Hebrews;  
ff. 416-420, Hebrews;  
f. 420, Prologue to Acts of the Apostles;  
ff. 420-432v, Acts of the Apostles;  
ff. 432v-433, Prologue to James;  
ff. 433-434, James;

f. 434, Prologue to 1 Peter;  
ff. 434-435v, 1 Peter;  
f. 435v, Prologue to 2 Peter;  
ff. 435v-436, 2 Peter;  
ff. 436v-437, 1 John;  
ff. 437-437v, 2 John;  
ff. 437v, 3 John;  
ff. 437v-438, Jude;  
ff. 438v, Prologue to Apocalypse;  
ff. 438v-444, Apocalypse;  
f. 444v, blank;  
ff. 445-472v, Hebrew names (Az to Thraties: lacks ending).

This Vulgate Bible is a handsome and early copy of text that had only been standardized in Paris a few years before. Whereas Bibles of this type and portable format were produced in large numbers in northern France, their production in England was much more restricted and their appearance on the market is correspondingly rarer.

The standardized Paris Bible took its final shape by about 1230. It includes a canonic sequence of texts, prologues, numbered chapters, running titles, and so on. As in commonly the case with English thirteenth-century Bibles no Psalter was ever part of our manuscript: "Quite a number of Bibles do indeed omit the Psalms altogether, especially copies made in England." (De Hamel, 2001, p. 129). Another variation from the standard Vulgate text is a provision of Ezra I-V, of which only I and II are part of Jerome's Vulgate and are the only ones divided into chapters.

## DECORATION

Each book opens with a large "puzzle" initial with divided staves of red and blue and extensive and intricate flourishing of the same colors. The blue is the bright pale shade that is so distinctive and typical of English thirteenth-century decoration. Compare the red scrolled design of the infill and the formation of the initials with blue and red scalloped decoration with two manuscripts, both decidedly English, now in Paris and both assigned to the second quarter of the thirteenth century (BnF, MS lat. 163, a Bible, and 17843, a copy of Aristotle; Avril and Stirnemann, pp. 72-73, 82, ill.).



## LITERATURE

Avril, F. and Patricia Stirnemann. *Manuscrits enluminés d'origine insulaire VIIe-XXe siècle*. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, 1987.

De Hamel, Christopher. *The Book. A History of the Bible*, London, Phaidon, 2001.

## ONLINE RESOURCES

BibleGateway

<http://www.biblegateway.com/>

Theology, Liturgy and the Bible on the WWW (Mediaevum.de)

<http://www.mediaevum.de/theol3.htm>