

LES ENLUMINURES

PARIS CHICAGO

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Vulgate Part-Bible

In Latin, decorated manuscript on paper

Freiburg, Germany, 1466

i + 400 folios on paper, foliated in pencil, lacking the first and last leaves of the first gathering (the first blank, the last with Nehemiah 6:10–71), otherwise complete, (collation: i¹⁰ (of 12, i cancelled, xii missing), ii–xxxii¹², xxxiii¹⁰, xxxiv⁸), paperstocks include at least one watermark similar to Briquet's calf's head with eyes surmounted by a cross and a star, like Briquet 14540 (Wurzberg, 1464-9), catchwords, blind-ruled for two columns of 41 lines (justification 210 × 140mm), written in a fine textualis by Heinrich Brewtlein as far as mid-way through 2 Maccabees 15 (14 and 15 run together with no separation): 30 where it switches to a fine humanistic script for the remainder of 2 Maccabees and the added summaries, chapter initials throughout in red ink, spaces left blank for 9-11 line initials at the beginning of prologues and books, the upper margin of the first leaf excised with no loss of text, some margins frayed or repaired, some slight worming, but the condition otherwise generally very good. Contemporary signed and dated binding sewn on four bands laced into wood boards covered with blind-stamped dark brown calf, stamped with an inscription around the outer edge of the upper cover, quatrefoil tools on the lower cover, with small stamps including "ibs," "maria" on a scroll, and a splayed eagle, very worn and partially defective, restored and re-backed in 1990, the clasps rebuilt, modern paper endleaves. 310 × 210mm.

Fifteenth-century manuscript Bibles are rare, and those dating to after Gutenberg's historic, printed bible are even rarer. Signed by the scribe, dated, and in an original binding, the present copy provides evidence for why Bibles might still be copied even after printed versions were available, even in Germany, the very cradle of European printing. This Bible was customized for a specific patron in a way no printed Bible could be and included an unusually wide range of prologues before each biblical book. Surprisingly, then, the shortest texts in this book explain the need to commission this lengthy manuscript volume.

PROVENANCE

1. Written by the scribe Heinrich Brewtlein, in Gundelfingen (adjacent to Freiburg), on 1 July 1466, as recorded in his colophon at the end of Ecclesiasticus: "Finitus est liber iste per me Henricum Brewtlein In Gundelfing Anno domini milesimo quadringentesimo sexagesimo sexto in vigila visitationis Marie" (This book has been completed by me, Heinrich Brewtlein, in Gundelfingen, 1466 on the Vigil of the Visitation of Mary) (f. 175). The binding dates to 1468, and the remaining books following Ecclesiasticus may have taken an additional two years to copy, or the volume may have been bound later.
2. This is a rare and unusual example of a dated and localised binding: around the frame of the front cover in gothic letters is "dns albertus / feistmantel(?) / in gundelfing / ano. d. M. CCCC. Lxviii" (Dominus Albrecht Feistmantel in Freiburg, 1468). Feistmantel would have been the clerical owner of the book, and perhaps the commissioner, rather than the name of the binder.
3. Sotheby's, 7 December 1982, lot 48, sold to Alan G. Thomas

4. Alan G. Thomas (1911-1992), renowned English antiquarian bookseller and bibliophile based in Bournemouth, United Kingdom, with his price-code on f. 1v: Catalogue 46 (1984), no 2
5. Bought from Thomas by Martin Schøyen, Oslo, Norway and London, UK (born January 31, 1940), a Norwegian businessman, traveler, historian, and collector of books; The Schøyen Collection, MS 8, his bookplate on the front pastedown.

TEXT

ff. 1-385, Latin part-bible, with prologues as follows: f. 1, prologue to Ezra, *Utrum difficilius* [Stegmüller 330], f. 1v 1 Ezra; f. 7v Nehemiah; f. 15v, 2 Ezra; f. 25, prologue to Tobit, *Mirari non desino* [Stegmüller 332], f. 25v, Tobit; f. 31v, prologue to Judith, *Apud hebreos* [Stegmüller 335], f. 32, Judith; f. 40, prologue to Esther, *Librum hester; Rursum in libro* [Stegmüller 341 and 343, copied as one prologue], f. 40v, Esther; f. 48v, first prologue to Job, *Cogor per singulos* [Stegmüller 344], f. 49, second prologue, *Si aut fiscellam* [Stegmüller 357]; f. 49v, Job; f. 66, first prologue to Psalms, *Scio quosdam* [Stegmüller 443], f. 66v second prologue, *David filius Yesse* [Stegmüller 414], f. 67, third prologue, *Psalterium Romae* [Stegmüller 430], f. 67, fourth prologue, *Psalterium inquirendum* [Stegmüller 426], f. 68, fifth prologue, *Canticum psalmorum* [Stegmüller 369], f. 68, sixth prologue, *Damasius episcopus*, [Stegmüller 384], f. 68v, seventh prologue, *Beatissimo pape damaso* [Stegmüller 398], f. 69 Psalms; f. 115, first prologue to Proverbs, *lungat epistola* [Stegmüller 457], f. 69, second prologue, *Tribus nominibus* [Stegmüller 456], third prologue, *Tres libros* [Stegmüller 455], f. 116, Proverbs; f. 129v capitula list and prologue for Ecclesiastes, *Memini me* [Stegmüller 462], f. 130, Ecclesiastes; f. 135, Song of Songs; f. 137v prologue and capitula list for Wisdom, *Liber sapientie* [Stegmüller 468], f. 138, Wisdom; f. 147v, the first prologue to Ecclesiasticus *Librum Iesu* [Stegmüller 473], f. 147v, the second prologue is the biblical introduction to Ecclesiasticus, copied as a prologue, and a capitula list for Ecclesiasticus, f. 149 Ecclesiasticus; ff. 175v–179v are ruled but blank; f. 180, prologue to Isaiah, *Nemo cum prophetas* [Stegmüller 482], f. 180v, Isaiah; f. 212v, first prologue to Jeremiah, *Ioachin filius iosie* [Stegmüller 490], f. 212v, second prologue, *Ieremias anatholites* [Stegmüller 486], f. 212v, third prologue, *Ieremias propheta excelsus* [Stegmüller 487], f. 213, fourth prologue, *Ieremias ex tribu* [Stegmüller 5201], f. 213, fifth prologue, *Ieremias propheta* [Stegmüller 487], f. 213v Jeremiah; f. 252 Lamentations; f. 255v, prologue to Baruch, *Liber iste* [Stegmüller 491], f. 255v Baruch, f. 260v; prologue to Ezechiel, *Ezechiel propheta* [Stegmüller 492], f. 260v, Ezechiel; f. 295, prologue to Daniel, *Danielem prophetam* [Stegmüller 494], f. 296, Daniel; f. 310v prologue to the minor prophets, *Non idem ordo est* [Stegmüller 500], f. 310v, second prologue, *Temporibus ozie*, [Stegmüller 507], f. 311, third prologue, *Duplex apud hebreos* [Stegmüller 504], f. 311 Hosea; f. 316, prologue to Joel, *Sanctus johel* [Stegmüller 511], f. 316 Joel; f. 317, prologue to Amos, *Josias rex* [Stegmüller 515], f. 318, Amos; f. 322, first prologue to Obadiah, *Jacob patriarcha* [Stegmüller 519], f. 322, second prologue, *Hebrei* [Stegmüller 517], f. 322v, third prologue, *Abdias quanto brevior* [from the *Glossa Ordinaria*] f. 322v, Obadiah; f. 323v, prologue to Jonah, *Jonam prophetam* [Stegmüller 7379,4], f. 323v, Jonah, f. 325, first prologue to Micah, *Temporibus ioathe* [Stegmüller 526], f. 325, second prologue, *Micheas secundum hebraicam* [Stegmüller 7379,5], f. 325v, Micah; f. 328, first prologue to Nahum, *Naum prophetam* [Stegmüller 528], f. 328v, second prologue, *Cum Jonas et Naum* [from the *Glossa Ordinaria*], f. 328v Nahum; f. 330, first prologue to Habbakuk, *Quatuor prophete* [Stegmüller 531], f. 331, second prologue to Habbakuk, *Habacuc propheta amplexans* [Stegmüller 530], f. 331,

Habbakuk, f. 332v, first prologue to Zephaniah, Tradunt hebrei [Stegmüller 534], f. 333, second prologue to Zephaniah, In titulo generatio [from the *Glossa Ordinaria*], f. 333, third prologue to Zephaniah, Josiam regem [*Glossa Ordinaria*], f. 333v, Zephaniah; f. 335, first prologue to Haggai, Ieremias propheta [Stegmüller 538], second prologue to Haggai, f. 335v, Cum Cyrus rex Persarum occiso [*Glossa Ordinaria*], f. 335v, Haggai; f. 336v, first prologue to Zechariah, Secundo anno [Stegmüller 539], f. 337, second prologue to Zechariah, Zacharias memor [Stegmüller 540], f. 337, third prologue to Zechariah, Cyrus rex persarum [*Glossa Ordinaria*], f. 337v Zechariah; f. 343, first prologue to Malachi, Deus per Moysen [Stegmüller 543], f. 343v, second prologue to Malachi, Malachi interpretatur [*Glossa ordinaria*], f. 343v, third prologue to Malachi, Malachias latine [*Glossa Ordinaria*], f. 343v, fourth prologue to Malachi, Sciendum [*Glossa Ordinaria*], f. 344, Malachi; f. 345v, first prologue to 1 Maccabees, Domino excellentissimo [Stegmüller 547], f. 346 second prologue to 1 Maccabees, Reverentissimo [Stegmüller 553], f. 346v, third prologue to 1 Maccabees, Maccabeorum libri [Stegmüller 552], f. 346v, fourth prologue to 1 Maccabees, Machabeorum duo libri [Stegmüller 551], f. 346v, 1 Maccabees; f. 369, prologue to 2 Maccabees, Secundus liber historie [*Glossa Ordinaria*];

ff. 385v-399, a summary of the books from 1 Ezra to Malachi (the last of the prophets), with marginal keywords.

The tradition goes that few Bibles were copied after the thirteenth century, especially after the Black Death. This narrative is usually coupled with a comment about Gutenberg's bible in 1455 making new hand-copied bibles unnecessary. Nevertheless, this Bible was copied in 1466 and offers abundant evidence for a culture in which customized books were normal. The commissioner of this manuscript (possibly Dominus Albrecht Feistmantel himself) wished for an unusually compendious collection of prologues for his Bible, prologues that could not be supplied by a printing house, where every Bible edition (more or less) featured the traditional set.

The entire Bible was presumably originally made in four volumes, the present being the second of these. The first volume would have contained the Old Testament from Genesis to 2 Chronicles, the third would have had the Gospels, and the fourth, the Epistles with Revelation. The text has numerous differences from the standard Vulgate of this period, some of which point to older practices of bible copying, but others may point to the age of print. Some books have capitula lists, for example, and several have unusual prologues. Feistmantel must have had a real passion for short Bible commentaries in the form of prologues to Biblical books: the standard thirteenth-century Bible contained sixty-four such prologues from Genesis to Apocalypse, and this part-bible features sixty-one in one portion of the Old Testament alone (Ker, 1969, vol. 1, pp. 96-7). Moreover, whilst the scribe, Heinrich Brewtlein, displays a fast but lovely professional hand, full of the hairline strokes common to the period, he also employs oddly inaccurate spellings, incorrect words, elisions, and the like mistakes that suggest perhaps that he copied from rather poor exemplars. These infelicities make identification of many of the multitude of prologues challenging. Nevertheless, these prologues are likely to be part of the reason Feistmantel commissioned a manuscript rather than purchased a printed Bible—only in a fully customized, manuscript volume could he acquire all of these unusual prologues.

LITERATURE

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Light, Laura. "The Thirteenth-Century Bible: The Paris Bible and Beyond", *The New Cambridge History of the Bible. Volume two, c. 600-1450*, eds. Richard Marsden and E. Ann Matter, 2012, pp. 380-391.

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Stegmüller, Fridericus. *Repertorium biblicum medii aevi*, Madrid, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1950-61, and *Supplement*, with the assistance of N. Reinhardt, Madrid, 1976-80.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Latin vulgate <https://catholicbible.online/vulgate>

Repertorium biblicum (searchable Stegmüller) <https://www.repbib.uni-trier.de/cgi-bin/rebhome.tcl>

Sacra Pagina: la Bible latine glosée au Moyen Âge (searchable *Glossa ordinaria*) <https://gloss-e.irht.cnrs.fr/>

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