

Epistolary of Cardinal Thomas Wolsey

2° f°: Sed dico

Parchment (FSOS). Fols: iii + 48 + iv. The very first and very last flyleaves paper added with the BINDING, all others original parchment, with the first and last of those being former pastedowns. Overall: 410mm x 300mm; writing area: 250mm x 155mm. Written in long lines, 18 lines to the page. No prickings, bounded and ruled in lead. Written in northern humanistic bookhand. Punctuation by point and double point. The border decoration on fol. 32 has '1528' twice inserted into small blank spaces; on this basis, our manuscript appears as Watson, *DMO* no. 762 (1:126).

Written throughout by Pieter Meghen, whose hand J. B. Trapp, in a series of articles, identified in about thirty books. He began his career in England as early as 1502 (when he copied what is now New Haven: Yale University Beinecke Library, MS. Osborn a50 – a codex unknown to Trapp – for Christopher Urswick), was routinely employed by Erasmus and Colet, and, after 1528, worked in and around the court, first for Wolsey and Nicholas Kratzer, the king's astronomer, then as 'Writer of the King's Books'. See 'Notes on Manuscripts written by Pieter Meghen', *Book Collector* 24 (1975), 80-96; 'Pieter Meghen 1466/7-1540 scribe and courier', *Erasmus in English* 11 (1981-82), 28-35; 'Pieter Meghen, yet again', *Manuscripts in the Fifty Years after the Invention of Printing* (London, 1983), 23-28. Trapp gave his most extensive listing of Meghen's books in 'Notes', where (91-92) this manuscript is no. 15, and the companion volume, Oxford: Magdalen College, MS lat. 223, no. 14. On Meghen, see also Andrew J. Brown, 'The Date of Erasmus' Latin Translation of the New Testament', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society*, viii (1984), 351-380, and David Rundle, *The Renaissance Reform of the Book and Britain* (Cambridge, forthcoming), ch. 4.

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Fols 1-45^v: '*ad Romanos* x. Fratres Corde creditur ad iusticiam ore autem confessio fit ad salutem --- [fol. 45] et salubris est cogi- [fol. 45^v] tatio pro defunctis exorare vt a peccatis soluantur'.

A lectionary with the epistles to be read on various feastdays, several relating to saints with a particular relevance to Wolsey: Cuthbert for Durham, Hugh of Lincoln, William of York – all bishoprics he held – as well as Frideswide, whose shrine was in his new college at Oxford, and his namesake, Thomas Becket. The name of the last was erased on both occasions it appears, presumably soon after production, as was the papal tiara in the two initials where it appears. The full list is provided with thanks to Cristina Neagu for her invaluable assistance; the date of each feast is added in square brackets and any historiated initials are noted in round brackets:

Fol. 1^r-2^r: St Andrew [30 November] (fol. 1^r: his martyrdom, before a crowd with a city in distance at back left)

Fol. 2^r: Immaculate Conception of Virgin Mary [8 December], 7 lines only; bottom half of page blank

Fol. 2^v-5^v: three Masses of Christmas [25 December] (fol. 4^v: the Adoration of the Shepherds, within a classicising loggia)

Fol. 5^v-7^r: St Stephen [26 December]

Fol. 7^r-8^r: St John the Evangelist [27 December]

Fol. 8^r-9^r: Feast of the Holy Innocents [28 December]
Fol. 9^{r-v}: St Thomas Becket [29 December], name now erased
Fol. 9^v: Feast of the Circumcision [1 January], 7 lines only; bottom two lines of page blank
Fol. 10^{r-v}: Epiphany [6 January] (the Adoration of the Magi, with black Balthazar)
Fol. 10^v-11^v: Presentation at the Temple [2 February] (fol. 11^r: Presentation)
Fol. 11^v-12^r: Translation of St Frideswide [12 February] (fol. 12: the saint as abbess with crozier, her ox by the Thames and Oxford – its southern wall and the medieval priory to Frideswide – in the background)
Fol. 12^r-13^r: St Cuthbert [20 March]
Fol. 13^r-14^r: Annunciation [25 March] (fol. 13^v: a standing Gabriel appears at the back of a kneeling Virgin at her devotions, following the model of Dürer's Little Passion, but with his initials replaced by 'MARIA' on the canopy and all in an ornate interior)
Fol. 14^{r-v}: Holy Saturday
Fol. 14^v-19^v: four Easter Masses [moveable feast] (fol. 15^r: Jesus, with the wounds of the passion, in a red cloak and carrying a crozier with the pennon of the Resurrection, appears to the Virgin, kneeling at prayer; reminiscent of the depiction in Dürer's Little Passion, but with the figures reversed and furniture altered)
Fol. 18^v-19^v: Low Sunday (*Dominica in albis*)
Fol. 19^v-21^r: Ascension [moveable feast, fifth Sunday after Easter] (fol. 20: the kneeling apostles and standing Virgin look up at Christ's feet disappearing into the sky, very close to Dürer's depiction in the Little Passion, but with haloes added)
Fol. 21^v-22^v: Pentecost Vigil
Fol. 22^v-27^r: four Pentecost Masses [moveable feast, 50 days after Easter] (fol. 23^r: the dove of the Holy Spirit sending down a golden shower on the Virgin and groups of apostles, each apostle with a tongue of fire; again clearly influenced by Dürer's Little Passion, but with haloes added, and placed in a classicising interior)
Fol. 27^r-28^v: Trinity [moveable feast, Sunday after Pentecost] (fol. 27^v: the Father and the Son seated on a high-backed exedra bench, the Son to the left in his red cloak with wounds, the crown of thorns, and a cross, the Father, with a papal mitre and resting his left hand on an orb, between them a hovering Dove)
Fol. 29^r-30^r: Corpus Christi [moveable feast-the Thursday after Trinity] (fol. 29^r: the Hebrews capturing the falling manna, perhaps influenced by the c. 1470 panel now in the Charterhouse Museum at Douai)
Fol. 30^r-31^r: William, Archbishop of York [8 June]
Fol. 31^{r-v}: Nativity of St John the Baptist [24 June]
Fol. 31^v-33^r: St Peter and St Paul [29 June] (fol. 32^r: the two saints below the Dove of the Holy Spirit – Peter's face and mitre now defaced)
Fol. 33^v-34^r: Visitation [2 July] (fol. 33^v: Mary and Elizabeth meet in front of a crenellated wall with gothic windows to the right of which is a building with Romanesque arches, the whole reminiscent of the depiction at BL, MS. Add. 3294, fol. 61, The Hours of Bona Sforza, with that miniature attributed to Gerard Horenbout; this, though, is the only instance in our manuscript of such a parallel with that volume)
Fol. 34^v: Translation of St Thomas Becket [7 July], his name now erased; only five lines, with initial never painted
Fol. 34^v-35: Relics Sunday [moveable feast, third Sunday after Midsummer] (fol. 34^v: two angels as acolytes with candles kneeling before the reliquaries which are presented on white cloth below a blue canopy)
Fol. 35^r-36^r: Feast of the Name of Jesus [7 August] (fol. 35^v: the baby Jesus being

hymned by angels, the Dove above; in the page's border, two praying angels in support)

Fol. 36^r-37^r: Assumption of the Virgin [15 August] (fol. 36^v: a plump Virgin ascends surrounded by four angels, the godhead above)

Fol. 37^v-38^r: Nativity of the Virgin [8 September] (fol. 37^v: exhausted St Anne attended by midwives and wet nurse, a window with diamond-shaped panes at back centre, perhaps influenced by Dürer's much busier depiction in his *Life of the Virgin*)

Fol. 38^r: Translation of St Cuthbert [4 September], bottom two lines blank

Fol. 38^v-39^v: blank

Fol. 40^r-41^v: All Saints [1 November] (fol. 40^r: the face of Jesus shines down from the heavens on a gathering of saints and the saved – including King Henry next to St George, and a balding Wolsey next to St Laurence with his gridiron; the pope's mitre at front centre now defaced)

Fol. 42^{r-v}: Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln [17 November]

Fol. 42^v-45^v: Dedication of the Church (fol. 43^r: Jesus, with disciples, coaxing Zacchæus from his tree, as told at Luke 19:1-10; the basic model for the miniature may be the woodcut which appears at *Auslegung des Lebens Jesu Christi* ([Ulm: Johann Zainer, c. 1482], fol. [79^r])

There are only two written lines on fol. 45^v; the remainder of that page and fols 46-48^v are blank but ruled.

COLLATION 1-4^s 5^s (leaves 4 and 5, fols 36 and 37, are singles pasted to stubs) 6^s. No catchwords (a fragment in the gutter, fol. 32^v) or signatures.

TEXTUAL PRESENTATION AND DECORATION Headings in red identify the occasions; also in red, scorings in the texts to guide oral reading. Openings and nomina sacra in display roman capitals. At the openings, full borders with miniatures, gold and pastel borders, including flowers, plants, birds, and heraldic symbols of Wolsey (see PROVENANCE); on one occasion (fol. 20), in the bottom border appear the royal arms, England quartering France modern, within the Garter, with lion and dragon supporters and the motto 'dieu et mon droit' on scrolls at far left and right (perhaps placed here as Ascension is the feast most often closest to the start of Henry VIII's regnal year); on another (fol. 36^v) the lower border diverges from the usual heraldic presentation and has instead a landscape scene, ships coming into a harbour town, a country monastery (and fishermen) in the foreground. There are two levels of incipit, the more elaborate with full border and historiated initial (listed above). Lesser occasions have a seven-line painted gold initial with designs of jewels and occasional floral decoration on a pastel ground (fol. 3, 3^v, 6, 7^v, 8, 9, 12^v, 14, 15^v, 16^v, 18, 19, 21^v, 24^v, 25^v, 26, 30, 31, 42, 44, 45); initials similar to these are to be found, for instance, in Oxford: Corpus Christi College, MSS. 13 & 14, for which Meghen was the scribe (Trapp, 'Notes', no. 8).

Hugh Paget, 'Gerard and Lucas Hornebolt in England', *Burlington Magazine* 101 (1959), 396-402 at 400, identified the illuminator as Gerard. He reproduced the Adoration of the Shepherds (fol. 4^v), both in full and in a detail purporting to show the remains of the artist's signature (figures 43, 45); no such signature is present. Lorne Campbell and Susan Foister, 'Gerard, Lucas and Susanna Horenbout', *Burlington Magazine* 128 (1986), 719-27 (719-21) provided further biographical detail of Gerard but they also raised doubts about his association with Wolsey. More recently, the attribution to him has been downright rejected, and the illuminator cast into anonymity as 'the Master of Cardinal Wolsey': Elizabeth Morrison in Thomas Kren and Scott McKendrick, *Illuminating the Renaissance. The Triumph of Flemish Manuscript Painting in Europe* (London, 2003), pp. 503-507. Following the dissertation of S. M. Hardie (unpublished MA thesis, University of Bristol, 1982), Morrison also notes the illuminator's debt to Albrecht Dürer's 'Small Passion' cycle of 1510. She also proposes that the illumination was made on the continent but, considering

the presence of Low Countries artists in England, there seems no reason to make that assumption; indeed, while the artist's Latin may be poor (see the discussion of Wolsey's motto in PROVENANCE), the facility with Wolsey's insignia, as well as the familiarity with the features of Henry and Wolsey (fol. 40^r) and ability to depict St Frideswide suggest, at the least, whoever it was, was under close guidance by an artist with English experience. What is more, a Westminster context is strongly suggested by the fact that the numbering and lettering that appears in these initials also appears in the royal charters relating to Cardinal College; see, in particular, TNA, E 24/20/1 and E24/6/1. Given that it is known that the Horenbouts were used as illuminators for royal documents, this evidence returns us to their milieu.

There are numerous discussions and reproductions of the manuscript. See AT no. 827 (83) and plate lvii (fols 4^v and 36^v); Otto Pächt, 'Holbein and Kratzer', *Burlington Magazine* 84 (1944), 134-39; *Treasures of Oxford* (London, 1953), no. 187 (catalogue of an exhibition at Goldsmiths' Hall); *Flemish Art 1300-1700* (London, 1953), no. 623 (166) (catalogue of an exhibition at the Royal Academy); James K. McConica, *English Humanists and Reformation Politics under Henry VIII and Edward VI* (Oxford, 1965), 69-72; J. B. Trapp and Hubertus S. Herbrüggen, *The King's Good Servant, Sir Thomas More 1477/8-1535* (London, 1977), no. 43 (37) with plate (fol. 4^v); Trapp 1981-82, figure 9 (34, fol. 32^v); Georges Dogaer, *Flemish Miniature Painting in the 15th and 16th Centuries* (Amsterdam, 1987), 161-67 (a discussion of the Hornebolts, with a reference to our manuscript at 166); S. J. Gunn and P. G. Lindley ed., *Cardinal Wolsey: Church, State and Art* (Cambridge, 1991), 40-42 and plates 10 (fol. 32) and 11 (fol. 36^v).

The manuscript has a companion volume, Oxford: Magdalen College, MS lat. 223, by the same scribe and the same illuminator, with the parallel gospel readings; it is a nearly exact twin sister, its dimensions closely congruent, as are the number of illustrations and their subjects. That manuscript, unlike ours, has no date but it is datable, since in it the arms of Wolsey are sometimes impaled with those of Winchester, another bishopric given him in 1529; it may be, though, that the volume was intended for use in 1530, as Cristina Neagu, 'Dating Wolsey's Lectionaries', *Christ Church Library Newsletter*, 4 (2008), 2-5 [freely available on-line] argues on the basis of the order of feasts. See further PROVENANCE below.

BINDING Tan morocco with incised pattern over wood, s. xx (by The Eddington Bindery, 1981). Sewn on six thongs. Pastedowns and endleaves modern paper. On the front pastedown a College bookplate and tag 'Church Congress Exhibition 292'.

The present binding apparently replaced one which, according to the former Sub-Librarian, John Wing (to whom thanks are due for his prodigious memory on this and many other points of detail), was reversed calf over leather, much like that used for the Chapter House manuscripts (see, in particular, MS 340). In other words, it would seem to have been rebound for ChCh in the last decades of the seventeenth century.

PROVENANCE The book was certainly produced for Thomas, Cardinal Wolsey, founder of Cardinal College, the predecessor of Christ Church: all the full borders include Wolsey's badges, his motto (e.g. fol. 10, 15: 'dominus mihi adiutor' [but, more often, as at fol. 3^v, 4^v, 11 etc 'aduator'; on two occasions, fol. 19 and 20, 'addvtor'; and once, fol. 34^v, 'additor']), and the full achievement of his arms. The latter is typically a cardinal's hat and mantling in lieu of helm, cherub supporters bearing crosses, the arms 'sable, on a cross engrailed argent, a lion passant gules, between four leopards' faces azure, on a chief or, a Tudor rose gules, barbed and seeded proper between two Cornish choughs sable, beaked and legged gules'. On seven occasions (fol. 10, 12, 13^v, 15, 17, 35^v, 40) the arms impale those of the see of York, 'gules, crossed keys argent, surmounted by a crown or'; Wolsey was provided to York from Lincoln on 15 September 1514. Three badges are used: the blue leopard's head above a gold crown (cf. our MS 339, fol. ix^v), twin gold columns (sometimes

– eg fol. 4^v, 10 – placed each side of the leopard’s head), and the silver crossed keys, surmounted by a closed crown, of York. The border work twice (fols 32, 43) includes the initials ‘T[homas] C[ardinalis]’.

The temptation is to assume Wolsey had this manuscript and its sister made for Cardinal College: Morrison in Kren and McKendrick states that they were ‘almost certainly commissioned’ (504) for the college. That St Frideswide is the only English saint to whom an initial is dedicated might appear to support that theory but it is thrown into question by the fact that only the translation of the saint and not her main feast of 19 October is remembered in this manuscript. The blank leaves (fol. 38^v-39) fall at a point which would allow for the possibility that the feast intended to be commemorated was hers. That the absence was not made good, however, leaves the volume inappropriate for use on the college chapel – as does the fact that the volume provides a set of readings which is not fully congruent with those established as the major and the minor double feasts to be celebrated in the college chapel in the 1527 revision to the Statutes (*Statutes*, 2: Cardinal, 167, superseding 59-60): it includes all the major (apart from the primary feast of St Frideswide), but of the minor omits the Transfiguration, and supplements them with four more not in either list (St John the Evangelist, Holy Innocents, St Thomas Becket [], Translation of St Cuthbert). The conclusion from the liturgical evidence must be that this volume was not intended for his Oxford college.

The same conclusion must be drawn for Wolsey’s other educational foundation, Cardinal’s College, Ipswich. James Willoughby has noted that the dating of 1528 in the border of the opening of the lection for the feast of St Peter and St Paul accords with the founding of that college, which occurred in that year and involved the suppression of the Augustinian priory dedicated to those saints: *The Libraries of Collegiate Churches*, Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues 15, 2 vols (London, 2013), 1:256. Willoughby stops short of attributing our volume to Ipswich and wisely so: the rota of feasts to be observed, listed at our MS 338, fol. 6^v-7, differs yet more from the cycle in the manuscript, with the statutes including St Nicholas (as a major) as well as the Transfiguration (as a minor) but omitting entirely St Frideswide, and not mentioning the four feasts listed above as in our manuscript but not required as special feasts at the Oxford college; in addition, Wolsey announces that he wishes the feast of the four Doctors of the Church and St Augustine of Canterbury to be celebrated ‘sicut in aliis inferioribus duplicibus’.

If the textual evidence militates against associating this manuscript with either of Wolsey’s foundations, it does – with its two feasts of his name saint and two of St Cuthbert – appear more personal to the cardinal, and it would seem likely that this was intended for one of his private chapels. Wherever, though, it was kept, it – and its sister volume – became legally crown possessions at his attainder. It is not clear where they were when sequestered – we can exclude the possibility they were with Wolsey at Cawood Castle when he was arrested on 4 November 1530, as the books mentioned there (Cardinal College ones) include missals and antiphoners but no lectionaries (on this, see also Introduction, ‘Before Christ Church’); it does appear, however, that they entered the royal collection. James P. Carley once tentatively identified our manuscript and its sister volume with a paired gospel-lectionary set, each with silver and gilt work weighing about twenty pounds, which were kept with royal treasures and appear in accounts of 1532 and 1547: *The Libraries of King Henry VIII*, Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues 7 (London, 2000), H5.4-5 (267), with discussion at lii-iii. Prof. Carley has now rejected that identification, since the Magdalen manuscript is now in a binding by ‘the King Edward and Queen Mary’ binder. His latest findings are presented in id., ‘Thomas Wolsey’s Epistle and Gospel Lectionaries: Unanswered Questions and New Hypotheses’, *Bodleian Library Record*, forthcoming. The Magdalen volume was certainly in Winchester in 1556, when it was used to administer the oath taken by Bishop John White on his enthronement (the text written inside the upper

board in a contemporary hand). We might assume that both travelled there together, particularly given (as Carley demonstrates) our manuscript was later present in that cathedral city.

We must leave aside as evidence the inscription in an informal hand at fol. 48 (s. xvi; offset on facing fol. 47^v), since it is erased and illegible. The next definite information is that of its donation to ChCh in 1614, by one John Lant. The Library Donors' Book, p. 30^a records that he gave three printed medical books – 'Hippocratis Chirugia latine fol. 1544', now On.1.12 (bound with Charles Estienne, *De dissectione partium corporis* (Paris: apud Simonem Colinaeum, 1545), binding sixteenth-century); 'Opera Rasis 2^{bus} vol. fol.' (Venice: Bernardinus Benalius, 1509), now MSS 370 & 371 [*sic*], and 'Platerus de corporis humani statura et vsu' ([Basel]: Froben, 1583), now On.3.2 – and with them 'Manuscript Cardinal: Wolsey fol.'. Three Lants, presumably brothers (the others being James and Richard), were Christ Church choristers c. 1564 (one of them, Richard, became precentor and died in Oxford, 1577). John Lant was a student of Christ Church in 1572, and received the degrees of BA and MA in 1575/6 and 1579, respectively. He was licensed to practise medicine in 1594/5 (AO 881). James Carley provides an explanation as to how Lant came to be able to give this manuscript to his *alma mater*: he was organist at Winchester Cathedral by 1602; we also know that he was an associate of John Chappington, a relative of Samuel Chappington who inserted his signature in our manuscript's sister volume. Carley, thus, hypothesises that the twin manuscripts were probably de-accessioned from Winchester Cathedral's collection, were both owned by Samuel Chappington and ours passed from him to Lant. Presumably, Lant was inspired to part with the precious volume and give it to ChCh by the news that the library was being 'restored' in these same years (see Introduction, 'From the *Restauratio*').

The manuscript certainly attracted interest after its arrival in Christ Church. It was examined by John Evelyn on 12th July 1654: 'Thence to Christ-Church, in whose Library was shew'd us an Office of Hen: 8, the writing, Miniature & gilding whereof is equal if not surpassing any curiosity I had ever seene of that kind: It was given, by their founder, the Cardinal Wolsy', cited from *The Diary of John Evelyn*, ed. Guy de la Bédoyère (Woodbridge, 1995), 89. It was also seen, albeit briefly, by Thomas Hearne on 1st February 1706, when he spent more time perusing MS 180: 'I saw a thin Folio MS^t Book, w^{ch} was cardinal Wolsey's & is most curiously illuminated' (*Remarks*, 1:175).

The manuscript includes two former shelfmarks at its front flyeaf (fol. ii). At very top right is 'B.2.9', cancelled, relating, it would seem, to the Old Archives Catalogue (see Appendix II). Below that and to its left is the New Library's 'E.2' (see Appendix IV).

A sign of its continuing status as a 'treasure' is that, in the later nineteenth century, this manuscript (along with MSS 92 and 178) was displayed in a glass cabinet in the Upper Library: Thompson, 247. The manuscript is now fully digitised and available on the Library's website.

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