

Ordinances of the Confraternity of the Immaculate Conception, London

2° f°: Sensuit (fol. 3)
les laudes (fol. 4)

Parchment (HSOS). Fols: 7. Overall: 331mm x 245mm; writing area: 211mm x 153mm. In long lines, 33 lines to the page (excepting fol. 2^f which has 32). Signs of pricking; bounded and ruled in red ink. Written in French bastard secretary (lettre bâtarde): it has been assumed that there are three scribes at work (eg Joanna Frońska at S. McKendrick, J. Lowden and K. Doyle ed., *Royal Manuscripts. The Genius of Illumination* (London, 2011), 177) but, while item 1 is in a more florid grade than the items following, there are enough similarities to be confident that this is the work of one hand. Punctuation by point, punctus elevatus, and virgula, occasional double point on fol. 2^{r-v}, point only thereafter. The manuscript appears as Watson, *DMO*, no. 764 (1:126), on the assumption that the first six leaves must date from the foundation of the fraternity in 1503; given, though that item 3 goes up to 1517, the earlier date cannot be accepted as the date of production.

CONTENTS

Fol. 1: blank

Fol. 1^v: illumination (see below)

1. Fols 2^{r-v}: ‘Alhonneur et louenge de la tresglorieuse Royne du monde sainte Marie vierge et mere --- treshumblement prions que ainsi soit.’

2. Fols 3-6: ‘*Sensuit lordonnance de la confrarie de la tres sacree et immaculee conception de la benoiste vierge marie mere de nostre saulueur et redempteur Ihesu crist qui fut ordonnee en lan de nostre seigneur Mil cinq cens et troys le xxxij. Jour de mars . . . En lhonneur de la benoiste trinite et de la tres sacree et immaculee conception de la benoiste vierge marie Nous les maistres et freres dessus nommez de ladite confrarie et par le conge et licence du tresnoble --- des iiij. festes nostre dame y comprises xvj. s pour chacun quartier.*

Both items 1 and 2 are unpublished. The text is available in English translation in Justin Colson, ‘Alien Communities and alien Fraternities in Later Medieval London’, *The London Journal*, 35 (2010), 111-43 (136-41).

Fol. 6^v: blank but ruled

3. Fol. 7^{r-v}: ‘*Sensuyent tous les noms de ceulx qui ont este maistres de la purissime conception de nostre dame. | Et tout premierement | Iehan heute | [I]ehan martin le Ieune | Mil cinq centz et troys --- Guillem quapendu | Iacques louuel | Mil cinq cens xvij.*’

The list is presented in two columns (not ruled), each entry occupying three lines, with names to left on first and third lines of entry, bracketed with the year to the right, placed on second line.

In bottom right margin of fol. 7^r, there is a partially erased note of which the following can be reconstructed: ‘Bartholomew ... | F[or]jaye | .. dd to Richarde Foraye of | sayde conf[r]aternitie’ are visible (s. xvi).

COLLATION 1⁶⁺¹ (+7). No catchwords or signatures.

TEXTUAL PRESENTATION AND DECORATION Each paragraph of the ordinances, and the first entry of item 3, opens with an initial in a single style, the letter in light gold on a pink or blue background. The text is divided by ochre-slashed capitals; they also appear in the list of masters, up to the foot of fol. 7 (the entry for 1509). There is also a swag capital at the head of the list of masters.

There are two fully illuminated pages:

(a) fol. 1^v: at the centre, Joachim embracing Anna outside the Golden Gate, viewed through an open portcullis; in the foreground, Henry VII and his queen, kneeling at reading stands in prayer, with their three sons and four daughters. At the top, in the border, the royal arms, supported by dragon and greyhound; in each border pane, a red Tudor rose and a portcullis with its chains, along with flowers and insects. In each corner, a narrative illustration (clockwise from top left): Anna with the virgin, naked in a mandorla, in her womb; the priest in the temple refuses the offer of Anna and Joachim, and angelic annunciations to each of the couple (face of the Virgin at bottom right rubbed). The full page is often reproduced and is provided in colour at *Royal Manuscripts*, 176.

(b) fol. 2: an eleven-line high A made of stylised trunk and boughs, with the crowned red rose inside it; borders as the previous page, with Tudor rose, Beaufort portcullis, flowers and insects.

These illuminations are attributed to the workshop of the Master of the *Speculum humane salvationis* (ie BL, MS Harl. 2838, on which see *Royal Manuscripts*, 174-75): K. Broekhuijsen, *The Masters of the Dark Eyes. Late Medieval Manuscript Painting in Holland* (Turnhout, 2009), no. 58 (229). The details of the opening illumination are particularly close to another work from the same Master, Wells: Cathedral Library, MS 6, written by Pieter Meghen and dated to 1517, on which see Broekhuijsen, *Masters of the Dark Eyes*, no. 60 (232-33), with images of the two manuscripts at fig. 44 and 45 (note the similarity in design of the reading stands and the depictions of the faces). For a discussion of the iconography in the context of manuscript painting, s. xviⁱⁿ, see Kathleen Scott, 'The Illustration and Decoration of the Register of the Fraternity of the Holy Trinity at Luton Church, 1475-1546', Griffiths FS, 155-83 at 172 and 182-83 nn55-58. See AT no. 823 (82), who call the hand Flemish, and plate lvi (fol. 1^v).

BINDING According to Katerina Powell of the Oxford Conservation Consortium (8th November 2011), the limp vellum binding is contemporary with the manuscript and the paste-downs are hand-made paper. Binding sewn on five thongs. In both covers, two stubs from green ribbon ties to close the volume. A ChCh bookplate on the front pastedown. No flyleaves.

PROVENANCE The context of the production of the manuscript is provided by Colson, 'Alien Communities', 121-24 and by Frońska at *Royal Manuscripts*, 177. In one important detail, however, these need to be revised: the date assumed for its creation has been 1503, the year of the foundation of the Confraternity, with item 3 added later. However, as one scribe worked through this manuscript, with no sign of the work being done at separate sessions, the last date in the manuscript must be the *terminus ante quem non* for its production. As that last item is a list by year, it strongly suggests that the last entry, 1517, is the year in which he was writing. This hypothesis may be supported by the illumination: as Frońska notes, the depiction of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York in prayer is 'an ideal and atemporal adoration' because the Queen herself and three of the seven children were already dead by the time of composition of item 2. The fictive or memorial nature of the miniature is enhanced further if we recognise that the king also was dead at the time of painting, the illumination an act of pious remembering of the moment of foundation. The supposition of its date is reinforced by the similarity between our manuscript and Wells MS 6 (noted above).

The manuscript is not mentioned by Janet Backhouse, 'Illuminated Manuscripts associated with Henry VII and Members of his Immediate Family' in Benjamin Thompson ed., *The Reign of Henry VII* (Stamford, 1995), 175-87, but Scott, 2:366 includes this in her list of those manuscripts which 'can be added to his evident ownership or suggested as possibly owned by [Henry VII]'. The re-dating of the manuscript disposes of this possibility which was already unlikely since, as Frońska emphasises, it was clearly available for use by the

Confraternity in 1517. The half-legible note at bottom right of fol. 7, seemingly adding further names to the list, also militates against the possibility that it was ever in royal hands and supports the suggestion that this was owned by the Confraternity. The only other intervention in the manuscript is a note by someone with merely pretensions to being *litteratus*; it begins above the image of the Virgin at fol. 1^v and continuing on the opposite recto: ‘marius [*sic*] | in manibus tuus [*sic*] commendo sperito meo o domino [*sic*]’ (within the top bounding lines, s. xvi).

It has been suggested that this manuscript was bequeathed to Christ Church by William Wake (Colson, ‘Alien Communities’, 123). Though there is a pencil note recording the location ‘Wake Archives Supra’ (inside the front cover, s. xx), this cannot be taken as proof that it came by that route. This volume does not appear in Wake’s schedule of manuscripts given to ChCh, MS 352 / 8, though that in itself is not conclusive evidence. More decisive is the internal evidence which demonstrates its presence before Wake’s bequest was incorporated into the collection. At very top right of fol. 1, there is the Old Archives number ‘A.2.12’, deleted; this section of the Old Archives Catalogue was an addition to the original arrangement, made during the Librarianship of Richard Hind, 1748-53; this suggests that the volume arrived in the Old Library in the second quarter of the eighteenth century, and perhaps close to the middle of the century (see Appendix II). Just below that shelfmark at fol. 1 is its replacement, written by Edward Smallwell: the New Library number of ‘E.7’, which also appears at top left of the front pastedown (see Appendix IV). It will be remembered that Wake manuscripts were not included in Smallwell’s sequence of shelfmarks.

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