

Walter of Milemete, *Liber de nobilitatibus, sapiencijs et prudencijs regum*

2° f°: De Regis (fol. 2)
et ceteros (fol. 6)

Parchment (HSOS and FSOS). Fols: i + 81 (numbered fols 1-80, but an unnumbered leaf after fol. 79) + i (numbered fol. 81). Overall: 246mm x 160mm; writing area: 135mm x 73-75mm, placed within illuminated borders (left, right and top: 14/17mm wide; bottom: variable depth, between 35mm and 50mm). In long lines, 20 lines to the page. Full prickings often visible at the outer edge of the written area (i.e. inside the space marked for the borderwork); bounded and ruled in reddish crayon. Written in gothic textura quadrata, the contents quire by a different scribe from the remainder, and with some corrections, probably reflecting in-production changes of plan or situation. Punctuation by mid point. The manuscript appears as Watson *DMO* no. 761 (1:126) and plate 170 (fol. 16).

CONTENTS

Fols 1-2^v: *‘Hic incipiunt rubrice capitulorum huius libri de nobilitatibus Sapiencijs et prudencijs Regum Editi ad honorem illustris domini Edwardi dei gracia Regis anglie Incipi| [fol. 1^v] entis regnare Anno domini ab inca^rnacione Milesimo Tricentesimo vicesimo sexto.’*

Contents list for the following work.

Fols 3-4^v: full-page illuminations (see Decoration).

Fols 5-70^v: [placed to right of text in a second column:] *De inuocacione dei nominis in principio cuiuslibet operis.* [text:] In nomine patris et filij et spiritus sancti amen In principio cuiuslibet operis est [later, over erasure] nomen sancte et indiuidue | [fol. 5^v] trinitatis inuocandum --- in celis regnando cum deo et tota celesti milicia gloriam sempiternam Quod deus concedat qui sine fine uiuit et regnat Amen’.

The author is identified in the epistolary salutation at the start of ch. 2, ‘Suus humilis et deuotus Walterus de Milemete clericus’ (fol. 9); see Sharpe no. 1932 (737) and *BRUC*, 406. A full black-and-white facsimile was provided by M. R. James ed., *The Treatise of Walter de Milemete . . .*, Roxburghe Club (Oxford, 1913), 1-156. Cary J. Nederman, introducing his sparsely annotated English translation of the work in his edited *Political Thought in Early Fourteenth-Century England: Treatises by Walter of Milemete, William of Pagula, and William of Ockham* [Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, ccl] (Tempe AZ, 2002), 15-61, mentions (xiii) that there is a critical transcription of the text in Stanley Joe Bird, ‘A Speculum Principis for Edward III’ (unpublished MA thesis, University of North Carolina, 1975); no printed edition yet exists.

There is one loss of text through the removal of a leaf after fol. 32; it provided the conclusion of the chapter ‘de regis gratitudine’, and perhaps a full-page illumination on the verso, since fol. 33 begins the next chapter, ‘de profectu regalis litterature’, but without its heading.

Fol. 71: blank (the remainder of the bifolium concluding the text, pricked and ruled on the recto).

Fols 72-78^v: outline drawings of various military pursuits.

Fols 79-81: blank.

COLLATION 1⁴ 2-4⁸ 5⁸ (lacking fifth) 6-7⁸ 8¹⁰ (with a bifolium added as fifth and sixth) 9⁶ 10² [fol. 71] | 11² (lacking first, a stub) 12⁶ (lacking tenth; with two consecutive inserted bifolia, each sewn in separately, as fifth to eighth). Four catchwords (fols 35^v, 43^v, 63^v, 69^v). There are two sets of signatures, the first in the normal bottom right of the page

foot, a quire letter plus roman numeral, probably originally on all leaves in the first half of each quire, but most cut away: in this system, quires 2-8 = a-g, and h is assigned to the inserted bifolium of quire 8 (on fol. 54, both 'g iij' and below it, '3 7' in the crayon used for rules). In addition, a fuller set of signatures, although still very frequently cut away, appears in the upper right corner, composed of arabic numerals for both leaf and gathering; in this system, quires 2-9 = 1-8 (roman v appears on quire 5, first folio [fol. 29], f three times in quire 7, and ?g three times in quire 8). The signature '3 3' on both fols 23 and 27 suggests that signatures appeared on both halves of bifolia. At the top of fol. 56, the first leaf of the inserted bifolium, a partly cutaway instruction for binding: 'mediu<m ...> x'.

Fols 56-57 form an inserted bifolium, signed as such. This presents the end of the chapter 'de moralibus virtutibus', with the following chapter beginning on fol. 58. This presentation may reflect a mid-production change of plan linked to the decision to provide the double, full-opening miniature on fols 59^v-60. This illustration, in turn, is succeeded by the page, almost entirely devoted to illuminations, opening the following chapter 'de preliis regis et eius prudencijs in bellis habendis et de militum exercicijs et alterius armate gentis' (fol. 60^v).

Certainly indicative of some change of programme is the opening of the volume. The introductory table of contents promises as the first chapter 'De orationibus et diuinis precibus regi conuenientibus Et de historijs actuum nostri creatoris a Rege Intuendis'. But this material does not appear, and the current incipit is the item presented in the table as the second entry.

TEXTUAL PRESENTATION AND DECORATION All the text pages have full borders, with illustration and coats-of-arms. Headings in red and historiated initials at chapter openings. The text is divided by champe type paraps, gold leaf with blue or alternate blue and violet.

There is extensive illumination, including six full-page and fifteen half-page miniatures, all exhaustively described James, xxiv-xxxv; at lxiv-lxxii of James's facsimile, A. van der Put discusses the extensive heraldic materials. Two of the artists are identifiable in the companion volume, BL, MS Additional 47680, and this MS may be associated with a London atelier also responsible for BodL, MSS Douce 231, e Musæo 60, and several other books; see PA 3, nos 575, 577-80, 587, 610 (53, 54, 56). There is further discussion at Lucy Freeman Sandler, *Gothic Manuscripts, 1285-1385*, 2 vols (London, 1986), no. 84 (2:91-93, the index entry 2:208). Sandler, in addition to extensive references, identifies hands in this MS with a number of books beyond those held in Oxford, including her nos 86 and 88 (2:94-98), as well as Cambridge: Gonville and Caius College, MS 257/662.

For the most detailed discussion of the artistic programme, see Michael Michael, 'The Iconography of Kingship in the Walter of Milemete Treatise', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 57 (1994), 35-47 (with seven plates), reporting findings from his 'The Artists of the Walter of Milemete Treatise' (unpublished Ph. D. thesis, University of London, 1987), a copy of which the author kindly deposited in ChCh. Michael argues ('Iconography', 37) that the miniatures were executed in two separate stages between the invasion of England by Isabella of France in September 1326 and the death of Edward II in September 1327.

The full-page illuminations include:

Fol. 3: St George presenting Edward III with the arms of England

Fol. 3^v: mounted knights, approaching the facing recto

Fol. 4: the storming of the Castle of Love with ladies throwing flowers at the attackers; on this genre of image, see Veronica Sekules, 'Women and Art...' in Jonathan Alexander and Paul Binski ed., *Age of Chivalry: Art in Plantagenet England 1200-1400* (London, 1987), 41-8 at 47; Michael Camille, *Mirror in Parchment: The Luttrell Psalter and the Making of Medieval England* (London, 1998), 118-9 and nn; and for the 1330 Valentine's Day pageant

potraying the image for Edward, Juliet Vale, *Edward III and Chivalry* (Woodbridge, 1982), 42 and 122-3 n11.

Fol. 4^v: Edward III seated to the left of his mother, Isabella of France, above their blazons, and with an angel presenting each with a flower

Fols 59^v-60, a full opening: a battle scene among mounted warriors (those in the arms of England on the left), with the wounded, severed heads, and a 'pilour' stripping a corpse at the page foot

The line drawings of fols 72-78^v, perhaps only unfinished outlines for painted pages, depict: fols 72, 73: knights defending a castle; fol. 72^v: a man-propelled rolling siege engine; fol. 73^v: defenders repelling an effort to scale the walls of their castle; fol. 74: two soldiers operating an engine to throw flaming materials; fols 74^v-75: a similar machine, in this case windmill-like, throwing beehives, with the bees flying out to attack a castle and its defenders opposite; fol. 75^v: miners with pickaxes being protected from defenders' stones by soldiers with raised shields; fol. 76: a bowman with a flaming pot attached to his bolt; fols 76^v-77: soldiers erecting a rolling siege tower with ropes, and defenders of the castle; fols 77^v-78: soldiers control a balloon with a hauser, while it floats over a walled city with a flaming bomb to be dropped; fol. 78^v: a soldier operating a catapult. These are likely to represent a history of Richard I's exploits on the Third Crusade; cf., for example, the illustration of fols 74^v-75 with the contemporary London romance, *Richard Coer de Lion* 2655-80, 2902-20, 2935-42, ed. Karl Brunner, *Der Mittlenglische Versroman über Richard Löwenherz* (Vienna, 1913); and see R. Hanna, *London Literature, 1300-1380* (Cambridge, 2005), pp. 116-24. The two-page pictures generally do not coincide with the bifolia from which the quire is constructed.

Notes recording the blazon – presumably instructions to the illuminators – were written and then removed by rewashing in the bottom margin of a dozen folios: fol. 5^v, 12, 12^v, 13^v, 15, 15^v, 17, 18, 18^v, 20, 27, 28, 28^v; they are all recorded by Michael, 'Artists', 378-84. There is also the conclusion of an instruction in the upper corner signature area of fol. 66: 'non sc<..>ptura'.

See AT no. 283 (29-30) and frontis. (fol. 27, in colour). In addition to James's facsimile and the studies mentioned above, images from the manuscript have frequently been discussed and reproduced. See, among others: E. G. Millar, *English Illuminated Manuscripts of the XIVth and XVth Centuries* (Paris, 1928), 21-23, plates 51-53 (fols 4^v-5, 35^v-36, 66^v-67); Margaret Rickert, *Painting in Britain: The Middle Ages*, 2nd edn. (Harmondsworth, 1965), 135, plate 137 (fol. 68); Lilian M. C. Randall, *Images in the Margins* (Berkeley CA, 1966), figures 165 (fol. 69^v), 320 (fol. 46^v), 452 (fol. 36), 689 (fol. 29), and 694 (fol. 64^v); J. J. G. Alexander, 'Painting and manuscript illumination for royal patrons in the later Middle Ages', Scattergood-Sherborne, 141-62 at 141-42 (cf. plate 1, of BL Additional 47680); Sandler, plates 217 (fol. 3) and 222 (fol. 68); Camille, *Image on the Edge: The Margins of Medieval Art* (London, 1992), 110 plate 58 (fol. 68); and Camille 1998, 78 plate 22 (fol. 46^v).

BINDING A red velvet chemise, embroidered in gold thread (shieldshaped designs, perhaps intended to receive embroidered armorial material), identified by Giles Barber, *Textile and Embroidered Bindings*, Bodleian Library Picture Books special series 2 (1971), 4, as Italian, s. xv, and illustrated as his plate 1. The chemise is lined with tawed skin, to which are sewn pink leather pouches to take the boards of the binding, which are white leather over wood. The boards sewn on seven thongs, as in Pollard's Figures 4 and 5, s. xiv. Although the embroidered covering may be of Italian manufacture, the binding as a whole does not appear to have originated in Italy. Indeed, Frederick Bearman, 'The Origins and Significance of Two Late Medieval Textile Chemise Bookbindings in the Walters Art Gallery', *The Journal of the Walters Art Gallery*, 54 (1996), 163-87 (166) proposes that it is 'more appropriately understood as an English fifteenth-century(?) textile chemise binding, made of contemporary red velvet with embroidered decoration, possibly of Italian manufacture'. We have a vague *terminus post quem non* for the binding, in as much as a note has been added at

the top of the final flyleaf ('nisi domine / illust[rissime] Reverendissime'; fol. 81) in a secretary script of the mid-fifteenth century. A further suggestion may be added: it may perhaps have been at the point of providing the chemise that pieces of thin material were stitched to the top of several folios, in order to protect the illumination; James records (xxxvii) six locations where these '(blue) silk guards' remain (fol. 14^v, 27, 43, 46^v, 50, 59^v); on one other occasion, some of the thread remains (fol. 24), while in nine instances, the holes for the thread alone survive (fol. 1, 3, 4, 8, 18, 21, 37, 44, 51). On the practice of silk guards generally, see Christine Sciacca, 'Raising the Curtain on the Use of Textiles in Manuscripts' in Kathryn M. Rudy and Barbara Baert ed., *Weaving, Veiling, and Dressing: Cultural Approaches to Textiles and their Religious Functions in the Middle Ages*, Medieval Church Studies, 12 (Turnhout, 2007), pp. 161-90.

Pastedowns of old parchment, conjoint with flyleaves (fol. i, 81); a ChCh bookplate on the front pastedown. For a discussion of the binding in a wider context, see Jan Storm van Leeuwen, 'The Well-Shirted Bookbinding. On chemise bindings and Hülleneinbände' in T. Croiset van Uchelen et al., *Theatrum Orbis Librorum: Liber Amicorum Presented to Nico Israel on the Occasion of his Seventieth Birthday* (Utrecht, 1989), 277-305 at 294 (no. 6).

PROVENANCE The codex was certainly prepared in London for Edward of Windsor, the eldest child of Edward II and Isabella of France, the keeper of the realm from 26th October 1326, and king as Edward III, crowned on 1st February 1327. It was one of two books on the art of kingship presented to Edward by Milemete, King's Clerk (illustrated in the half-page miniature on fol. 8^v, at the head of the epistle that forms ch. 2). The second manuscript, formerly Holkham Hall, MS 458, is now BL, MS Additional 47680, a copy of the *Secretum secretorum*, discussed by James, *Treatise*, xxxviii-lxiii (with selected leaves reproduced at 157-86), and *Royal MSS*, no. 63 (228-29); as James indicated (xi), our manuscript was intended to supplement the *Secretum*.

The precise timing of the production of the manuscript has evoked discussion and it has even been proposed that Milemete originally began the work 'with Edward II in mind and later modified [it] for his son': Libby Karlinger Escobedo, "To the Illustrious Lord Edward:" A Re-evaluation of Audience and Patronage in the Milemete Treatise and the Companion *Secretum Secretorum*, *Manuscripta*, 50 (2006), 1-19 (17), reprised at greater length in ead., *The Milemete Treatise and Companion Secretum Secretorum. Iconography, Audience, and Patronage in Fourteenth-Century England* (Lewiston, NY, 2011). That argument is unconvincing. It draws attention to the alterations made to the text in our manuscript, though those interventions are subtle and often merely grammatical improvements (eg., fol. 5^v, 'superesse' presumably written over 'superest'; here and in subsequent quotations italics signify corrections). The most significant changes occur in the second textual section, the 'Epistola allectiva' that begins on fol. 8^v, which opens 'Excellentissimo et illustri domino suo domino Edwardo divina provisione Regi Ang [fol.9] lie Domino Hibernie Et Duci Aquitanie. Suus humilis et devotus Walterus de Milemete clericus reverenciam et honorem ^ac^ fidele devocionis obsequium seipsum et...' (note that Milemete's name itself has not been altered). The invocation to the king must refer either to Edward II before his son was invested with the duchy of Aquitaine in 1325 or to Edward III after his father's deposition. Which Edward is meant is revealed later in the same section at fol. 10 where the recipient is addressed: 'quod vos domine rex dux et comes filius primogenitus et heres illustris domini nostri Regis nuper anglie...'. The recipient is clearly Edward of Windsor, though the changes suggest the text may have been drafted before the overthrow of his father in the autumn of 1326 and then not revised with complete consistency at the point of the construction of the manuscript, only to be made consistent by the scribe at the final stage. This scenario can also apply to the heraldic programme, conceptualised in Edward II's reign for a manuscript to be given to the king's school-age son, and not fully updated in the changed circumstances following the deposition.

As well as the copy made by Milemete, there was another manuscript of the *Secretum*, on this occasion in French translation, made for Edward in these years; it is now Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS fr. 571 and was given to Edward by Philippa of Hainault as part of her betrothal gift; see Sandler, no. 96 (2:103-5), Michael Michael, 'A manuscript wedding gift from Philippa of Hainault to Edward III', *Burlington Magazine*, 127 (1985), 582-99, and id., 'Towards a Hermeneutics of the Manuscript: the physical and metaphysical journeys of Paris, BnF, MS. fr. 571' in Peregrine Horden ed., *Freedom of Movement in the Middle Ages: proceedings of the 2003 Harlaxton Symposium* (Donington, 2007), 305-17; Michael associates this book with the Statutes of England in Cambridge MA: Harvard Law School, MS 12. Also contemporary is the small psalter, London: Dr Williams's Library, MS Anc. 6, with arms of Edward and Philippa, described by Ker, *MMBL*, 1:428-29; and Sandler, no. 74 (2:81-82); Lynda Dennison associates that book with the central 'Queen Mary Psalter' atelier, 'An Illuminator of the Queen Mary Psalter Group: the Ancient 6 Master', *The Antiquaries Journal*, 66 (1986), 287-314. See further Susan H. Cavanaugh, 'Royal Books: King John to Richard II', *The Library*, 6th ser., 10 (1988), 304-16 at 311-12.

The continuing high honour in which this manuscript continued to be held in the century after its royal recipient's death is reflected by the luxury binding it received – more usual for a religious text – and the protection provided for the illumination. It received less kind attention from a doodler who, on two occasions, copied a detail of the illumination (fol. i^v, 5). Its whereabouts in these years are unknown and, in the sixteenth century (as Thomas Hearne was later to note), it escaped the attentions of the bibliographers, John Leland and John Bale. That is not to say the manuscript was totally ignored by antiquaries: there is a set of seventeenth-century annotations identifying the people mentioned by their coats-of-arms (fol. i^v, 1^v, 2, 2^v, 4^v, 6^v, 9, 10?, 11?, 11^v, 19, 31).

At fol. i, the donation to Christ Church is recorded: 'Bibliothecae Ædis Christi Oxon Librum hunc donavit Gulielmus Carpender Parochiae de Stanton super Vagam in Agro Herefordensi Rector Ejusdem Ædis olim Alumnus A.D. 1707'. Noted in the Donors' Register, MS LR 1, p. 230^b (the column headed 1706 but the donation recorded as 1707): 'Gualteri de Mellimet Librum de nobilitatibus sapientijs et prudentijs Regum MS', along with the gift of our MS 125 (on which, see below). Carpender, a Herefordshire man, was at Christ Church through the Commonwealth period, as a Pauline exhibitor 1647-53, receiving degrees of BA and MA in 1649/50 and 1652 respectively; he was the Whyte Professor of Moral Philosophy 1657-60. He was vicar of Staunton-upon-Wye from 1660 and of Calveton (Bucks.) from 1661 (AO, 240). The brace of manuscripts he gave perhaps formed a testamentary bequest, since Carpender should have been at least 65 in 1707.

In fact, the manuscript was within the curtilage of Christ Church at least a little before the specified year of donation. It was inspected at Christ Church by Thomas Hearne (who recognised that it had a twin in Milemete's *Secretum* manuscript); his extensive account, *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, ed. C. E. Doble, 11 vols (Oxford, 1885 – 1921), 1:298/27-8, 299/1-37 appears under the date of 25th October 1706. In addition, Milemete was to receive an entry in Thomas Tanner, *Bibliotheca Britannico-Hibernica* (London, 1748), 527, where our manuscript is described as 'codex hic extat pulcherrime exaratus in bibliotheca doct. Aldrich, aedis Christi decani apud Oxonienses'. That phrasing suggests that Tanner was writing not when he was a canon of Christ Church (1724 – 1735) but rather before Aldrich's death in 1710. Armed with these two pieces of information, we may hypothesise that the manuscript was in the hands of the dean before it was placed in the library.

Its arrival in Oxford was not quite the end of the manuscript's travels: at the lower board there is a small and slightly smudged note where the last letters are frustratingly hard to decipher; James reconstructed it as '1712/13 March 4th returnd tynlly(?)' but the last letters may be 'by Hine (followed by a long downward flourish)'.

The former New Library shelfmark 'E.11' appears at the front pastedown, at fol. i^v and fol. 1 lower margin (see Appendix IV). This refers to its position in the Archives but, in the later nineteenth century, it (along with MSS 101 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.

Version date: 15th November 2015