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NEWSLETTER OF THE SCONUL MANUSCRIPTS GROUP

No 1  
Editor: A G Watson

September 1978

EDITORIAL

At the first meeting of the SCONUL Manuscripts Group in October 1977 some interest was expressed in the publication of a Newsletter or Bulletin and at a subsequent meeting of the Group's Committee I volunteered to edit it. This first issue is experimental and tentative, produced in rather a hurry and aiming to do little more than give members an idea of what such a publication might look like, and a chance to express their opinions and wishes. If it becomes a regular publication, much of the content will derive from information supplied by members; the present issue, produced at a time when everyone seems to be on holiday, consists too much of what the editor happens to know himself or of information on which he can lay his hands quickly. Every item is, however, 'real' and I hope that some will be found useful. Members of the Group are urged to comment, either at the coming Annual Meeting or by writing to me.

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THE SCONUL MANUSCRIPTS GROUP

The Group (successor to the SCONUL Manuscripts Sub-Committee) held its first meeting at King's College London on 19 October 1977. In between the business meeting in the morning and an after-tea discussion on the future of the Group, papers were read by Mrs J B Alton on The Contemporary Scientific Archives Centre and by Miss Julia Sheppard on the Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives.

At the business meeting the following committee was elected: Chairman, Professor T J Brown; Secretary, Professor E F D Roberts; Treasurer, Miss E Yeo; Dr A I Doyle, Miss Joan Gibbs, Mr A E B Owen, Mr D G Vaisey, Dr D P Waley, Mr A G Watson.

At a meeting held later the same day the committee co-opted Dr N R Ker and Mr M B Parkes and agreed that any further co-options should include a modern specialist.

The next meeting of the Group will again be at King's College London, on 11 October 1978.

OTHER BODIES

This year's meeting of the British Records Association will be held on 28 and 29 November in the Wellcome Hall of the Royal Society, 6 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1. Architectural Records and Records and the Natural Environment will be the principal subjects for discussion.

A Scottish Records Association was inaugurated in March 1977. Its aims are similar to those of the British Records Association. It proposes to meet three times a year and the next Annual Meeting and Conference will be held in Dundee on 11 November 1978. The Secretary is C A McLaren, University Library, King's College, Aberdeen AB9 2UB. (From Archives, Spring 1978, p 146.)

The Rare Books Group of the Library Association is producing a guide to the location and content of all significant collections of books and manuscripts in British and

Irish libraries. Account will be taken of libraries of all kinds but family muniments, administrative or business archives still in private hands or deposited in record offices will be excluded. For the purposes of the survey the country has been divided into small areas each in charge of a regional organizer. The General Editor is Stanley Roberts, The John Rylands University Library of Manchester. (From The Library, 5th ser. xxxii/4 (Dec 1977), p 101.)

The Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine has recently established two posts in a new Centre for Contemporary Medical Archives. This will parallel the work of the Contemporary Scientific Archives Centre at Oxford, but will take only medical and biological science records, leaving Oxford to deal with the rest. Unlike the Oxford centre it will retain some records after processing them, although it will pass on those for which an obvious alternative depository exists.

A seminar for librarians responsible for manuscript and rare book collections was organized by LIBER (Ligue des Bibliothèques Européennes de Recherche) at the Nationalbibliothek in Vienna on 13-15 October 1977. The papers were as follows: Univ-Prof Dr O Mazal, 'Kulturpolitische Aufgaben und konservatorische Verantwortung von Handschriftensammlungen'; Dr Tilo Brandis, 'Die Benutzung von Handschriften und wertvollen Büchern im Handschriftenlesesaal'; HR DDR Franz Unterkircher, 'Erschliessung der Handschriften durch Faksimilierung'; Dr Wolfgang Milde, 'Die Handschriftensammlung zwischen Benutzungsbibliothek und Forschungsstätte'; Mr I R Willison, 'Management of the Rare Book Collections in National Research Libraries'. The paper by Dr Brandis has been published in Codices Manuscripti 4 (1978), pp 21-4. The Executive Board of LIBER has approved a proposal made at the seminar for the formation of a Group of Manuscript and Rare Book Librarians and invited Monsignor Paul Canart of the Vatican Library to organize the preparatory work for the Group's establishment. (From LIBER Bulletin, no 9/10 (1978), pp 134-7, and information issued by the office of the President.)

#### FORTHCOMING EXHIBITIONS

Exhibitions at the British Library Reference Division during the remainder of 1978 and until the summer of 1979 include The Scribe and his Work (until December); Slavonic Manuscripts (December-4 June); E M Forster (January-April); Diplomacy, 1400-1900 (June-August).

Exhibitions at the National Library of Scotland will include Mrs Oliphant, 1828-97 (November-December); Late Medieval Manuscripts (December-January), to coincide with a symposium on Late Gothic Art arranged by the Extra-Mural Department of Edinburgh University; Lord Rosebery, 1847-1929 (April-June).

#### PERSONAL

On 7th June 1978, at a ceremony in the Divinity School in the Bodleian Library, Dr Neil Ker was presented with a volume to mark his seventieth birthday - Medieval Scribes, Manuscripts and Libraries: Essays presented to N R Ker, ed by M B Parkes and Andrew G Watson (Scholar Press). It was gratifying that three of Dr Ker's collaborators in the first edition of Medieval Libraries of Great Britain (1941) were present - Professor Sir Roger Mynors, who made the presentation, and Professor C R Cheney and Dr R W Hunt, who contributed to the volume.

Professor Richard Rouse, University of California, is to be at All Souls College, Oxford, during the coming academic year. While in Oxford he and his wife hope to complete their edition of the thirteenth-century Franciscan Registrum librorum Angliae and the Catalogus scriptorum formerly ascribed to John Boston of Bury. It is hoped that these may form the first volumes in a projected corpus of medieval library catalogues of Great Britain, plans for which are under discussion.

SOME RECENT PUBLICATIONS

- B Bischoff, J Duft & S Sonderegger, Das Älteste deutsche Buch: Die 'Abrogans' - Handschrift der Stiftsbibliothek St Gallen. In Facsimile herausgegeben (St Gall, 1977)
- C de Merindol, La production des livres peints à l'abbaye de Corbie au xii<sup>e</sup> siècle: étude historique et archéologique, 3 vols. (Université de Liège, Service de reproduction des thèses, 1976)
- F Stegmüller, Repertorium biblicum medii aevi, vols 8-9 (Madrid, 1976 etc)
- S Hindman & J D Farquhar, Pen to Press; illustrated manuscripts and Printed Books in the First Century of Printing (College Park, Maryland, 1977)
- L M J Delaissé, J Marrow & J de Wit, The James A de Rothschild Collection at Waddesdon Manor. Illuminated Manuscripts (Fribourg, 1977)
- A Facsimile of Corpus Christi College Cambridge MS 61 [Troilus and Cressida], with Introd by M B Parkes & E Salter (Cambridge, 1978)
- The Findern Manuscript (Cambridge University Library MS Ff.1.6), with Introd by R Beadle and A E B Owen (London, 1977)
- The Auchinleck Manuscript (National Library of Scotland Adv.MS 19.2.1), with Introd by D Pearsall and I C Cunningham (London, 1978)
- J J G Alexander, Insular Manuscripts 6th to the 9th Century (A Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles, 1) (London, 1978)
- K Weitzmann, Late Antique and Early Christian Book Illumination (London, 1977)
- C Nordenfalk, Celtic and Anglo-Saxon Painting: Book Illumination in the British Isles 600-800 (London, 1977)
- F Mütherich & J E Gaehde, Carolingian Painting (London, 1977)
- J Williams, Early Spanish Manuscript Illumination (London, 1977)
- F Avril, Manuscript Painting at the Court of France: the Fourteenth Century (1310-1380), (London, 1978)
- J J G Alexander, Italian Renaissance Illuminations (London, 1977)
- A N L Munby, Essays and papers, ed N Barker (London, 1977)
- N Barker, Bibliotheca Lindesiana: the Lives and Collections of Alexander William, 25th Earl of Crawford ..., and James Ludovic, 26th Earl of Crawford (London, 1977)
- University of Birmingham, Guide to the Chamberlain Collection, by B S Benedikz (Birmingham, 1978)
- Lichfield Cathedral Library, A Catalogue of the Cathedral Library Manuscripts, comp by B S Benedikz (Birmingham, 1978)
- Glasgow University Library, Kelvin Papers. Index to the Manuscript Collection of Wm Thomson, Baron Kelvin, in Glasgow University Library (Glasgow, 1977)
- S A Jayawardene, 'Western Scientific Manuscripts before 1600: a Checklist of Published Catalogues', Annals of Science, XXXV (1968), 143-172.

A C de la Mare, 'Humanistic Script: the First Ten Years', in Das Verhältnis der Humanisten zum Buch (Kommission für Humanismusforschung, Mitteilung IV, Boppard, 1977), pp 89-110.

British Library, Catalogue of Additions to the Manuscripts 1756-1782 (1977)

B M von Scarpatetti, Katalog der datierten Handschriften in der Schweiz in lateinischen Schrift vom Anfang des Mittelalters bis 1550. I, Die Handschriften der Bibliotheken von Aarau, Appenzell und Basel (Zürich, 1977)

M Hedlund, Katalog der datierten Handschriften in lateinischen Schrift vor 1600 in Schweden. I, Die Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek Uppsala (Stockholm, 1977)

#### IN THE PRESS

The Medieval Manuscripts of Keble College, Oxford: A Descriptive Catalogue, with Summary Descriptions of the Greek and Oriental Manuscripts, comp by M B Parkes (Scolar Press)

Catalogue of Dated and Datable Manuscripts c 700-1600 in The Department of Manuscripts The British Library, by Andrew G Watson (The British Library)

Cambridge University Library MS Ff.2.38, with Introd by F McSparran and P R Robinson (Scolar Press)

J J G Alexander, The Decorated Letter [in illuminated manuscripts] (Thames and Hudson)

Index of English Literary Manuscripts, ed T Hofman & J Horden, vol 1, 1450-1625, pts 1 & 2, comp by P Beal (Mansell)

#### FORTHCOMING REPRINTS AND A NEW CATALOGUE

Kraus Reprint is undertaking the reprinting of a number of catalogues of British manuscript collections, some of which have been out of print for many years. The Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Library of the University of Cambridge (1856-67) will be reprinted in the original 5 volumes (the separate index volume being merged with vol 5) with some introductory pages. Publication date and price will be announced shortly. Kraus is also discussing with certain Cambridge colleges the reprinting of M R James's catalogues of their collections of western manuscripts. Agreement has been reached with the Bodleian Library for the reprinting of the Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts (1895-1953) in about a year's time, and with the John Rylands University Library of Manchester for the reprinting of James's catalogue of their Latin manuscripts published in 1921, with amendments by Dr Frank Taylor. Dr Taylor and Dr N R Ker are working on a new volume covering Rylands manuscripts, also to be published by Kraus. This will contain descriptions of manuscripts handlisted by Tyson in the Bulletin of the John Rylands Library and by Taylor in his Supplementary Handlist (MSS Rylands Lat.184-447) plus about a dozen uncatalogued medieval accessions plus about another dozen Manchester University medieval manuscripts plus manuscripts from the Christie collection.

SOME HISTORICAL THESES IN PROGRESS (Later lists will cover editions of cartularies and theses on relevant art-historical and literary topics)

A history of the older Gaelic manuscripts of Scotland (ie MSS written in the literary dialect common to Scotland and Ireland and written in the Gaelic script between the 12th and 18th centuries), R I M Black (Glasgow PhD)

Patristic writings in library catalogues of Frankish monasteries in the 9th century, J Butt (St Andrews MPhil)

The literary interests of the abbey of Corbie in the first half of the 9th century, D M Ganz (Oxford DPhil)

The library of York Minster, C B L Barr (York MPhil)

Bishop Leofric and the Exeter Cathedral Chapter (1050-72): a reassessment of the manuscript evidence, E M Drage (Oxford DPhil)

The library of Rochester Cathedral, c 1080-c 1150, K M Waller (Liverpool MA)

The production and circulation of glossed books of the Bible in the 12th and 13th centuries, C F R de Hamel (Oxford DPhil)

Early 12th-century Worcester Cathedral Priory, with specific reference to the manuscripts written there, E A McIntyre (Oxford DPhil)

Localization, operation and patronage of English illuminators' workshops, c 1190-1270, N J Morgan (London PhD)

Notaries in later medieval England, J W Napper (Edinburgh PhD)

English illuminated manuscripts, c 1380-1420, J Watts (York DPhil)

The library and manuscripts of Piero di Cosimo de' Medici, F A Ames-Lewis (London PhD)

The introduction of humanism into Scotland, with special reference to the evidence of humanistic handwriting, F Tait (St Andrews PhD)

#### OTHER WORK IN PROGRESS

Dr Colin Tite (London) is working on British Library MS Harley 6018 which contains catalogues of Sir Robert Cotton's collections dating from 1621 and later. He is attempting to work out the nature and relationship of the catalogues, which are a primary source for the history of the Cottonian collection.

Dr Nigel Palmer and Mr David Ganz (Oxford) and Dr Margaret Gibson (Liverpool) are preparing 'A Handlist of Anticlaudianus Manuscripts in the British Isles'.

The Index of Middle English Prose is under way, supervised by an Advisory Committee of British and American scholars who at present envisage three stages: (1) the compilation of a complete Index of M E Prose published 1476-1976; (2) the compilation of separate handlists of M E Prose by collection, covering all the major collections; (3) the publication of a comprehensive Index. (From The Library 5th ser. xxxii/4 (Dec 1977), p 402.)

#### PUBLICATION RECEIVED

Medieval Sermon Studies Newsletter began in summer 1977 with an issue of 5 pages; the third issue, summer 1978, has 23 pages and seems likely to turn into a journal. Having begun 'from the informal talking of a group of Bodleian readers' it has now achieved international coverage of work in progress on medieval sermons in many European vernaculars as well as Latin. For anyone working on medieval prose texts and medieval manuscripts it seems likely to be invaluable. Issues for 1978/9 can be obtained from the Editor, Gloria Cigman, Department of English, University of

Warwick, Coventry CV4 7AL, the present subscription being £1 (UK and Europe) and \$3 (elsewhere).

#### THE WARWICK CASTLE ARCHIVES APPEAL FUND

Members will be aware that an attempt is being made to raise £120,000 to buy the Warwick Castle archives for deposit in the Warwickshire Record Office. By mid September almost £100,000 had been raised but the appeal will stay open until the end of November. Donations should be sent to The Warwick Castle Archives Appeal Fund, The County Treasurer, PO Box 3, Shire Hall, Warwick.

#### SECURITY

Custodians of manuscripts need no telling about the importance of security, but recent events in Cambridge, as related by Arthur Owen, are a reminder that even the most apparently bona fide enquirers are not necessarily trustworthy. After a series of visits from a native of a Middle Eastern country whose references appeared to be impeccable, it was found that illuminated leaves had been removed from Persian manuscripts in the University Library and Trinity College Library to an estimated value of over £100,000. Fortunately the thefts came to light in time to enable almost all the leaves to be recovered, though some were already in the hands of dealers. The incident serves as a warning that precautions which may seem adequate are no defence against a determined thief and that anything which is readily saleable is potentially at risk.