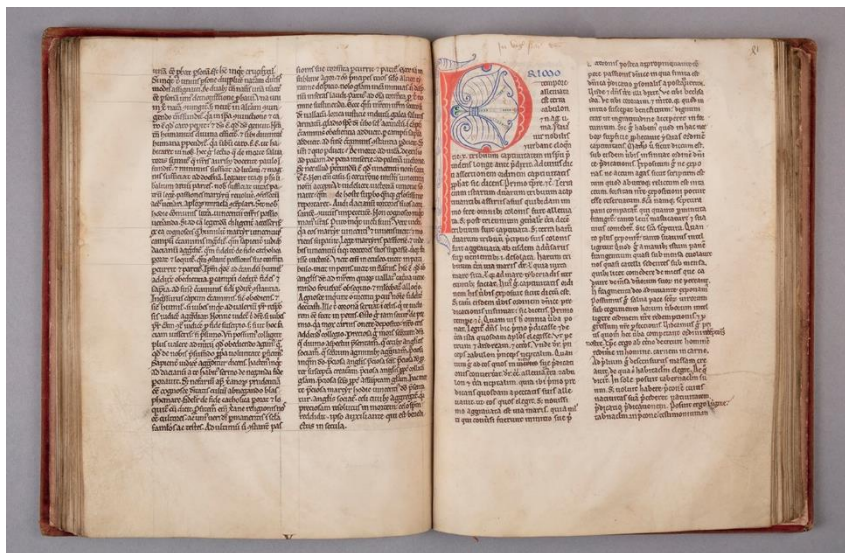


Peter Comestor, Adam of Evesham, Bartholomew of Exeter, and others
A Collection of Sermons
Western England, possibly Evesham
last quarter of the twelfth century



87 leaves, plus 2 two vellum flyleaves, 272 x 195 mm., manuscript on vellum, in Latin, COMPLETE, collation: i-vi⁸, vii⁷ [v cancelled after fol. 52, no loss of text], viii-x⁸, medieval foliation in arabic numbers, assembled in three sections, gatherings i-v (folios 1-40) with numerical signatures in ink, gatherings vi-ix (folios 41-79) mostly with catchwords, sometimes in plummet, and gathering x (folios 80-87); double column, 40 lines, written-space 197 x 138-147 mm., written in dark brown ink in several accomplished late Romanesque English bookhands, some headings in red (others left blank, or indicated by plummet guidewords or added later); some red paragraph marks and occasional small internal initials in red, FIFTY-ONE LARGE PAINTED INITIALS from 2 to 9 lines high (mostly 3-line, many with flourished extensions up and down the margins), mostly in red or green, sometimes divided leaving internal lines in white, seven initials in two colours, four initials in three colours: folio 1r, 6-line, red and green with infilling apparently in yellow, folio 13v, 4-line, red and green with infilling in yellow, folio 17r, 4-line in red with penwork in green infilled in yellow, and folio 41r, 9-line, divided red, with penwork in blue touched in brown; some original flaws in the vellum leaving holes or stitched repairs (older than the writing, which works around them), occasional marginal patches, probably medieval; many small marginal notes by several contemporary and early readers, some small diagrams, occasional stains (including folio 61, perhaps from medieval beer mug) and some thumbing, some shadowy damp staining in upper margins, generally in excellent medieval condition with wide margins mostly preserving the prickings; bound in old (perhaps eighteenth-century) pink velvet over pasteboards, paper endleaves, gilt edges, joints worn and beginning to crack

PROVENANCE

Even in the twenty-first century, Romanesque manuscripts from English monasteries still very occasionally emerge from having remained unknown and unrecorded in private hands since the Reformation. The present manuscript is a sophisticated anthology of high quality, doubtless from a monastic scriptorium. The extreme rarity of the only extant sermon of Adam of Evesham (no. 23 in the list below), hitherto known only in a single manuscript from Evesham Abbey itself, suggests that it was possibly copied there, although there are also three sermons

otherwise known in England only in a single manuscript from Exeter Cathedral (nos. 40, 44 and 50), and one recorded only at Hereford (no. 48). Although this is a late example, the first scribe still uses modest examples of the extended enclosed bowed 'g' in the last lines of text (e.g., folios 5v and 9v), noted by N. R. Ker as characteristic of "that region in the West of England centring of Gloucester, which was, we can still dimly realize, one of the great regions of book production in the twelfth century" (*English Manuscripts in the Century after the Norman Conquest*, 1960, p. 7).

The medieval endleaf includes the number "clxxxvi": if this was a library classification, which it looks like, this was a collection of considerable size. There was once a long tapering inscription at the end of the text (folio 87v), now thoroughly erased and over-written, no more legible by ultra-violet light but not necessarily irrecoverable by scientific means. These features, together with the distinctive medieval foliation, make it probable that the manuscript's monastic or cathedral library will eventually be identified.

TEXT

One of the literary developments of the twelfth century was the shift from use of homilies, usually in Carolingian compilations from ancient patristic sources, to the new sermons, often modern and written by preachers engaged with the contemporary world. Collections of such sermons varied immensely in content, and many were probably personal anthologies or were compiled for particular churches or monasteries. Every manuscript is different. The present collection comprises 51 texts. Of these, 21 appear to be unrecorded. Only two sermons here are explicitly attributed to an author, both naming Peter Comestor (nos. 1 and 18); both, in fact, appear to be otherwise unrecorded. Twelve texts in the collection are ascribed in other manuscripts to Peter Comestor (nos. 20, 21, 22, 24-30, 33 and 38), which makes it likely that nos. 1 and 18 may indeed be authentic but unique additions to Comestor's *oeuvre*. He was born in Troyes but by 1160 was a canon of Notre-Dame in Paris. His *Historia Scholastica* was one of the great and enduring texts of the Middle Ages and was one of the first productions of the Parisian schools. Only now is the first critical edition of the sermons of Peter Comestor being undertaken in Toronto. He died around 1178, more-or-less contemporaneously with this manuscript. The fact that the name of Peter Comestor is invoked here is itself evidence of a very new sense that attribution to a modern French author could add semblance of authority even in England. At the top of folio 1r is an added note about his tombstone in a house of canons outside the walls of Paris: "Hic iacet extra menia parisi in quondam cenobio canonicorum et scribitur supra tumba ... 'Petrus eram quem petra tegit dictusque comestor, nunc comedor, vivens docui nec cesso docere' ('I was once Peter who is now covered by a stone (*petrus*), and was called the eater (*comestor*) and now I am eaten; I taught when I was alive and I do not cease to teach').

Four sermons here are ascribed in other manuscripts to Nicholas of Clairvaux (nos. 4 and 12-14), who died c.1176, secretary to Saint Bernard; nos. 17, 19 and 51 are attributed elsewhere to Bernard himself. Three circulated elsewhere in the name of Geoffroi Babion (d. c.1158), of Angers (nos. 3, 6, 42) and four in that of Geoffroi de Saint-Thierry, dean of Troyes (nos. 10, 19, 22, 35). Others are known in anthologies ascribed with lesser certainty to Peter Damian, Hugh of St-Victor, Hildebert of Le Mans, and Ivo of Chartres. No. 11 is sometimes attributed to Aelred of Rievaulx.

The rarest and most tantalising sermons here are those of Bartholomew of Exeter (d. 1184), bishop of Exeter (nos. 44 and 50), hitherto known in a single English manuscript from Exeter (now Oxford, MS Bodley 449) and in an imperfect manuscript in Rouen; and the hitherto unique sermon of Adam of Evesham (d. 1191), abbot of Evesham (no. 23), recorded only in Oxford, Jesus College MS 11), from Evesham. The present manuscript was probably written in the lifetime of both of them. Therefore, future attention must focus on the 21 other unattributed and apparently unrecorded texts here, for the likelihood is that they include others by Bartholomew and Adam.

The texts here are:

(a) Part I. 1. Folio 1r, “*Sermo Magistri Petri Comestoris. Ecce dominus veniet & salvabit nos ... [Isaiah 62:11, first Sunday in Advent]. In his verbis loquitur propheta de adventu Repertorium der Lateinischen Sermones des Mittelalters salvatoris ...*”; not in J. B. Schneyer, Münster, 1969-90, apparently unrecorded.

2. Folio 1v, “*Vade inquit dominus ad ysaiaem in occursum Acahaz, tu & qui relictus est filius tuus iasub ... [loosely Isaiah 7, also Advent. De inferiori piscina postea sic ait, Congregastis ...]*”; not in Schneyer; cf. Migne, *PL*, CLXXVII, col. 572, in the appendix to Hugh of St-Victor

3. Folio 2v, “*Item de eodem. Dicite pusillamines confortamini, Ecce deus vester ... [Isaiah 35:4]. Ante adventum domini, fratres karissimi, in tanta caligne ...*”; Schneyer, II, p. 150, no. 1, as Geoffroi Babion.

4. Folio 3v, “*In vigilia natalis domini. Iudea et ierusalem nolite timere ... [II Chronicles 20:15 and Zechariah 8:15, Christmas Eve]. Adi xpistiane audi quicumque ex deo es, audi desiderium tuum, Audi aure cordis ...*”; not in Schneyer, apparently unrecorded.

5. Folio 4r, “*In die natalis domini. Consolamini consolamini popule ... Loquimini ad cor ierusalem, et advocare eam ... [Isaiah 40: 1-2, Christmas Day]. Vox clamantis in deserto ... Omnis vallis exaltabitur ... Ad adventum redemptoris nostri, fratres karissimi, totum genus humanum erat positum...*”; not in Schneyer, but also found in Cambridge, Jesus College MS 25, Lambeth Palace 185, and others.

6. Folio 6v, “*Item in eodem. Apparuit benignitas et humanitas ... Adquisierat si, fratres karissimi, genus humanum astucia diabolice fraudis ...*”; Schneyer II, p. 151, no. 3, as Babion; also ascribed to Hildebert of Le Mans (Migne, *PL*, CLXXI, col. 390

7. Folio 8r, “*Item de eodem. Hodie xpiste natus est, hodie salvator apparuit ... Hodie, fratres karissimi, xpistus nascitur in terris, ut nos...*”; not in Schneyer, apparently unrecorded.

8. Folio 8v, “*Sermo in Septuagesima. Non habemus hic manentem civitatem ...*” [Hebrews 13:14]. *Cum multa cotidie in humane fragilitatis conditione lamentando ...*”; Schneyer VIII, p. 426, no. 2; also found in Paris, Bibl de Mazarin, ms 1005.

9. Folio 9r, “*De Misericordia et Iudicium. Misericordia et veritas obiaverunt sibi ... [Psalm 85:11] “Karissimi polluta labia habeo ut loquor iustis ... et iudicium cantare tibi, Qui vivis...”*”; not in Schneyer, apparently unrecorded.

10. Folio 11r, “*Sermo in dominica post octave pentecoste. Deus time et mandata eius observa* [Ecclesiastes 12:13, first Sunday after Pentecost]. Rex Salomon quem per regibus et obtimatibus universis insignivit ...; Schneyer, II, p. 160, no. 1, as Geoffroi de Saint-Thierry.
11. Folio 13v, “*Sermo in nativitate beati Johannis baptistae. Hodie dilectissime dies illuxit insignis ...*”; Schneyer, IV, p. 250, no. 1; as Nicholas of Clairvaux; also attributed to Peter Damian (Migne, *PL*, CXLIV, col. 627), Pseudo-Bernard and Aelred of Rievaulx
12. Folio 17r, “*Sermo in die apostolorum Petri et Pauli. Hodierna dies dilectissimi clara est, et sollemnis ...*”; Schneyer, VIII, p. 708, as Peter Damian; also attributed to Nicholas of Clairvaux (Migne, *PL*, CXLIV, col. 469; J. Leclerq, ‘Les collections de sermons de Nicolas de Clairvaux, *Revue bénédictine*, LXVI, 1956, pp. 269-302.
13. Folio 19r, “*Item de fide. Dixit symon petrus ad ihesum, Ecce nos ...*[Matthew 19:27, on faith]. In huius patris nostri precipia sollemnitate ...”; Schneyer, IV, p. 250, no. 3, as Nicholas of Clairvaux; cf. Migne, *PL*, CXLIV, col. 548, as Peter Damian.
14. Folio 20r, “*Sermo de beata Maria Magdalena. Hodie misericordia et veritas ...*[Psalm 84:11]. Et multitudo miserationum domina in peccatricem ...”; Schneyer, VIII, p. 708, no. 26, as Nicholas of Clairvaux; cf. Migne, *PL*, CLXIV, col. 660, as Peter Damian.
15. Folio 22r, “*In annunciatione beate Marie. Egredietur virga de radice ...*[Isaiah 11:1]. Hodie fratres karissimi impletum est quod tam multa ...”; Schneyer, II, p. 793, no. 113, as Hugh of Saint-Victor; also VIII, p. 84, no. 3.
16. Folio 23r, “*Item de eadem. Ave inquit angelus maria gratia plena ...*[Luke 1:28]. O nova, O celesti nectare delibuta ...”; Schneyer, II, p. 163, as Geoffroi de Saint-Thierry; also IX, p. 376.
17. Folio 23v, “*De assumptione. Intravit ihesus in quoddam castellum ... Castellum ad quod ihesus ingreditur, est voluntaria pauperitas ...*”; possibly by Saint Bernard.
18. Folio 24r, “*Omelia Magistri Petri Comestoris de beata Maria. In illo tempore, Factum est com loqueretur ihesus ad turbas ... In sacris vigiliis beate marie semper virginis preclare assumptionis de evangelica lectione ...*”; not in Schneyer, apparently unrecorded.
19. Folio 31v, “*Item de beata Maria. Hic totum decurrat ingenium et aureus sermo tota ...*”; Schneyer, II, p. 163, no. 57, as Geoffroi de Saint-Thierry; sometimes also attributed to Nicholas of Clairvaux (Migne, *PL*, CXLIV, col. 717), Peter Damian or Saint Bernard.
20. Folio 33v, “*Item de eadem. Pulvis sum ego ... Propterea erubesco et vereor ...*”; Schneyer, IV, p. 644, no. 111, as Peter Comestor; also ascribed to Hildebert of Le Mans (Migne, *PL*, CLXXI, col. 627).
21. Folio 35v, “*De beato Petro apostolo. Nunc scio vere ... Legitur in annalibus quod gaius cesar herodem tetrarcham qui johannem decollavit ...*”; Schneyer, I, p. 276, and IV, p. 643, no. 97, as Peter Comestor.
22. Folio 38r, “*Sermo in dedicatione. Domum tuam domine ...* [Psalm 92]. Sicut enim poetice et vere dictum est parvum parva docent ...”; Schneyer, II, p. 168, no. 45, as Gebuinus of Troyes; also Migne, *PL*, col. CXCVIII: 1806, as Peter Comestor.

23. Folio 39v, “*De passione beati Vincentii martyri. Preciosa in conspectus domini ...*[Psalm 115:15]. Solet humana preciosa diligere querere non habita...”; not in Schneyer; by Adam, abbot of Evesham, printed from Oxford, Jesus College MS 11, fols. 133v-134v, on pp. 151-54 and 158-59 of D. C. Cox, ‘The Literary Remains of Adam, Abbot of Evesham (1161-1189)’, *The Journal of Medieval Latin*, XX, 2010, pp. 113-66.
- (b) Part II. 24. Folio 41r, “[In vigilia nativitatis domini]. Primo tempore alleviate est terra zabulon ...[Isaiah 9:1]. Ysaïas vir nobilis et urbane x tribuum captivitatem in spiritu providens ...”; Schneyer, IV, p. 644, no. 109, as Peter Comestor.
25. Folio 43r, “*In ephiphania domini. Qui sedes super cherubim appare ...* Frequenter scripserat nobis promissiones de adventu salvatoris ...”; Schneyer, IV, p. 644, no. 117, as Peter Comestor (Migne, *PL*, CLXXI, col. 409).
26. Folio 44r, [Dominica prima quadragesime, first Sunday in Lent]. “Qui habitat in adiutorio ...[Psalm 90:1]. Inclinauit altissimus celos ...”; Schneyer, IV, P. 644, no. 114, as Peter Comestor (Migne, *PL*, CXCVIII, col. 1754).
27. Folio 46r, [In annunciatione domini]. “Egredimini filie syon ...[Song of Songs 3:11] Gloriosa dicta sunt sepe de gloriosa matre dei ...”; Schneyer, IV, p. 639, no. 44, as Peter Comestor (Migne, *PL*, CXCVIII, col. 1772).
28. Folio 47v, “Apprehendent septem mulieres ...[Isaiah 4:1]. Ad litteram propheta desolationem...”; Schneyer, IV, p. 637, no. 8, as Peter Comestor (Migne, *PL*, CLXXI, col. 476).
29. Folio 50r, [In letantia maiori] “Adhuc esce eorum errant ...[Psalm 77:30]. Ad litteram exprobrare propheta...”; Schneyer, IV, p. 636, no. 5, as Peter Comestor (Migne, *PL*, CXCVIII, col. 1775).
30. Folio 53r, [De beatissima Magdalenam] “Super tribus sceleribus moab ... [Amos 2:1] Amos tecuites vir propheta...”; Schneyer, IV, p. 645, no. 129, as Peter Comestor (Migne, *PL*, CLXXI, col. 671).
31. Folio 56r, “In lectione apostolica que nobis recitata est ... et elemosinarium largitate redimere ...”; not in Schneyer; Migne, *PL*, XXXIX, col. 1946, as Pseudo-Augustine, *De igne purgatorio*.
32. Folio 57v, “Trahe me post te [Song of Songs 1:3]. Quatuor sunt que separant et retrahunt a deo ...”; not in Schneyer, apparently unrecorded.
33. Folio 59r, [In Annunciatione]. “Surge aquilo et veni ...[Song of Songs 4:16]. Videndum est quis loquatur et quibus ...”; Schneyer, IV, p. 645, no. 130, as Peter Comestor.
34. Folio 60v, [In cena Domini, Good Friday]. “Egredimini, deliciatis et infirmis animabus ...”; not in Schneyer, apparently unrecorded
35. Folio 62r, [In dominica passionis]. “Fidelis sermo ...[I Timothy 1:5]. Series amabilis, contexto dulcis, in qua fructus ...”; Schneyer, II, p. 162, no. 39, as Geoffroi de Saint-Thierry; elsewhere attributed to Peter Comestor.

36. Folio 64r, [De epiphania domini]. “Hodie celesti sponso iuncta est ecclesia ... Currunt cum muneribus ... Gaudiis fratres dilectissimi succedunt gaudia ...”; not in Schneyer, apparently unrecorded.
37. Folio 67v, [In purification sancte marie]. “Adorna thalamum tuum syon ... Vere clara, immo preclara solempnitas hodierna ...”; not in Schneyer, apparently unrecorded.
38. Folio 71r, [Sermo de trinitate]. “Fluvius egrediebatur de loco voluptaris ... Verbum domini est, quod audistis per os meum, Cibum grandium est verbum hoc ...”; Schneyer, IV, p. 641, no. 68, as Peter Comestor.
39. Folio 73r, [In capite Ieiunii, Ash Wednesday]. “Hodie mater ecclesia filios suos in quibus detrimentum se sensisse cognoscit ...”; Schneyer, III, p. 880, no. 49, and VIII, p. 707, no. 4, as Ivo of Chartres (Migne, *PL*, CLXII, col. 579); also ascribed to Geoffroi Babion.
40. Folio 74r, [In die palmarum, Palm Sunday]. “Rogate que ad pacem ... [Psalm 121:6]/ Debitum ieiunii annuente domino soluimus ...”; Schneyer, I, p. 433, no. 126, as Bartholomew of Exeter.
41. Folio 74v, [Item de eodem]. “Cum appropinquisset dominus ... Dominus noster ihesus xpistus pro salute generis humani passurus ...”; not in Schneyer, apparently unrecorded.
42. Folio 76r, [In festo sancti Johannis evangeliste, sed pete signum manus in folio sequenti]. “Vulpes foveas habent ... [Matthew 8:20]. De impietate hominum dominus et redemptor noster fratres karissimi ...”; Schneyer, II, p. 151, no. 3, as Geoffroi Babion.
43. Folio 77v, “Audi Israel mandata vite ... Inveterasti in terra aliena ...”; not in Schneyer, apparently unrecorded.
- (c) Part III. 44, Folio 79r, “*Sermo in die festivitate pasche. Cantate deo psalmum ... Paschalis festivitas monet nos aliquid dicere ad exortacionem...*”; not in Schneyer; the opening paragraph published from Oxford, MS Bodley 449, fol. 92r, in A. Morey, *Bartholomew of Exeter, Bishop and Canonist, A Study in the Twelfth Century*, Cambridge, 1937, p. 111.
45. Folio 80r, [In ascensionis domini] “Xpistus qui descendit ipse est ... [Ephesians 4:10]. Videamus fratres karissimi que sit ista descensio...”; not in Schneyer, apparently unrecorded.
46. Folio 82r, [De spiritu sancto] “Veni creator spiritus ... Domine et patres ac mei fratres verba ista...”; not in Schneyer, apparently unrecorded.
47. Folio 83v, “*Sermo in die pentecostis. Veni sancte spiritus ... Deus spiritus est et immo etiam rogandus est...*”; not in Schneyer, apparently unrecorded.
48. Folio 84v, “Initium sapientie timor domini [Ecclesiastes 1:16]. Timor est initium et porta per quam intratur ...”; not in Schneyer; occurs in Hereford Cathedral O.II.8, folios 66r-67r, ascribed to Saint Bernard.
49. Folio 85r, [De trinitate] “Rex virtutum dilecti ... Psalmista immo spiritus sanctus super hec verba...”; not in Schneyer, apparently unrecorded.
50. Folio 86r, “Furor illis secundum ... Fratres ne tamen sitis auditores verbi, sed pro verbo commodo ...”; Schneyer, I, p. 433, no. 125, as Bartholomew of Exeter.

51. Folio 86v, [In quadragesima] “Quis dabit mihi pennas ...[Psalm 54:7]. Ecce alter petrus qui periclitatur in mari, Ecce ionas alter qui naufragatus ...”; not in Schneyer; occurs in Lincoln Cathedral MS 201, folio 11v, ascribed to Saint Bernard.