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A.3.16 'St. Augustine'¹*De Consensu Evangelistarum Libri Quatuor* / The Harmony of the Gospels1) **Headnote**

A.3.16 'St. Augustine'

De Consensu Evangelistarum Libri Quatuor / The Harmony of the Gospels²

Rochester Cathedral, England, s. xii in. (c. 1150)

2) **Contents**

191 folios + iv flyleaves, with 24 quires (no catchwords), but old markings (half the time letters, other half number) indicate end of quire. Medieval binding c. 1150, it appears that the book has been slightly trimmed, when it was (re)bound as a few marginal notes lack the outermost stroke.³

Language: Latin

Written and signed 'p(er) Iacob de Oxon'.⁴ A flyleaf has been added as the first page of the manuscript and here the scribe has written a table of contents. The medieval librarian has later added notes and page indications.

Contains a 'foreword' and seven books. The books concern Saint Augustine's own interpretation of the Gospels, the Sermon on the Mount, as well as his thoughts on the issue of blasphemy and the ten plagues of Egypt.

- a. 'Foreword'⁵ (an excerpt of text from Augustine's *Retractiones*)

OPENING: 'SENTENTIA DE LIBRO RETRACTATIONV(M) BEATI AVGVSTINI.⁶ PER EOSDEM ANNOS QUIB(US) PAVLATEM LIBROS de trinitate dictaba(m) scripsi (et) alios labore continuo int(er)ponens eos illo(rum) te(m)poribus'.

CLOSING: 'Hoc opus sic incipit. Inter om(ne)s diuinas autoritates'.

¹ This manuscript is from the 'Hidden Collection' of Rochester Cathedral Library.

² The original text by Saint Augustine of Hippo was written c. 400-415.

<http://faculty.georgetown.edu/jod/texts/augread.html>

³ The medieval librarian counts 2 of the first three flyleaves as part of the pages, thus, the medieval page numbers in the manuscript states that there are 193 folios.

⁴ See bottom right hand corner fol. 1r.

⁵ Fol. 1v

⁶ In red ink

1. *De Consensu Evangelistarum - Liber I*⁷

OPENING: 'INTER OM(NE)S DIVINAS AUTORITATES QUE (---)IS⁸ LITTERIS continent(ur)
evang(e)liu(m) merito excellit'

CLOSING: 'Vt his questionib(us) dissolutis ex hoc quoq(ue) appareat illius capitis me(m)bra
n(on) solu(m) idem sentiendo ueru(m) etia(m) conuenientia scribendo in corporis ipsius
unita te germana(m) seruasse concordiam'⁹

2. *Liber II*¹⁰

OPENING: 'QVONIAM SER MONE NON BREVI ET ADMODUM necessario quem libro uno
co(m)plexi sum(us) refutauimus eor(um) uanitate(m) q(ui) discip(u)los (christi)
evang(e)liu(m) conscribentes ideo conte(m)nendos putant quia ipsius (christi) quem lic(et)
n(on) ut d(eu)m tamen et hominem sapientia longe p(rae) ceteris excellentem
honorandu(m) esse non dubitant nulla scripta p(ro)ferunt(ur) a nobis'

CLOSING: 'In his que considanda nunc p(ro)posium(us) nichil afferunt questionis etia(m)
ceteri evang(e)liste q(u)i talia co(m)memorant'

3. *Liber III*¹¹

OPENING: 'IAM QUONIA(M) OMNIVM QVATTUOR NARRATIO INEO UERSATVR loco in quo
necesse est eos usq(ue) infine(m) parit(er) ambulare nec multu(m) digredi ab inuice(m)
sicubi forte alius aliquid co(m)memorat quod alius p(re)t(er)mittit uidet(ur) m(i)hi
expeditius nos demonstrare posse om(n)iu(m) euang(i)listaru(m) conuenientia(m) si ab hoc
iam loco om(n)iu(s) om(n)ia contexamus (et) in una(m) narration(m) faciemq(ue)
digeramus'.

⁷ Fol. 1r-18v, concerning the 'Authority, number, order, and plan of the Gospels.'

<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1602.htm>

⁸ Should be 'sanctis' (the green colour of the initial has corroded through the page and has taken a few letters with it).

⁹ There is an original tear on the last page of *Liber I* and first page of *Liber II*. It covers 4 (almost 5) lines and the scribe as written around it.

¹⁰ Fol. 18v-74r, The 'Harmonization of Matthew with the other Gospels, up to the Last Supper'

<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1602.htm>

¹¹ Fol. 74r -112r, The 'Harmonization of Matthew with the other Gospels, beginning with the Last Supper'

<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1602.htm>

CLOSING: 'Tollet(ur) eni(m) impius ut n(on) uideat claritate(m) d(omi)ni (et) i(m)pii lumen n(on) uidebunt. Haec est aut(em) inq(u)it uita aet(er)na ut cognoscant te unu(m) ueru(m) d(eu)m (et) que(m) misisti i(esu)m (christum) sicut in illa aet(er)nitae cognoscit(ur) q(u)o seruos p(er)ducet p(er) forma(m) serui ut lib(er)i co(n)te(m)plent(ur) forma(m) d(omi)ni'

4. *Liber IV*¹²

OPENING: 'NUNC IAM QUONIAM MATHEI NARRATIONE(M) CONTEXTIM consid(er)antes (et) ei tres alios conferentes usq(ue) infine(m) in nullo eos ut sibi u(e)l int(er) se repugnare docuim(us)'.
CLOSING: 'Et q(u)ia illud preceptu(m) uerissimu(m) ac saluberrimu(m) est quanto magnus es tanto humilia te in omnib(us) q(u)i euang(e)lista (christum) longe ceteris alti(us) co(m)mendat apud(eu)m discip(u)lis pedes lauat'

5. *De sermone domini in monte*¹³

OPENING: 'SERMONEM que(m) locutus est d(omi)n(us) i(esu)s n(oste)r (christus) in monte sicut in euang(e)lio se(cun)d(u)m math(eu)m legimus si quis pie sobrieq(ue) consid(er)auerit puto q(u)o d inuenit in eo q(u)antu(m) ad mores optimos p(er)tinet p(er)fectu(m) uite (christi)ane modu(m)'.¹⁴

CLOSING: 'Sed ia(m) co(m)mode f(i)eri puto ut hic lector ta(m) longo uolumine fatigat(us) respiret aliquantulu(m) (et) ad cet(er)a se reficiat in alio libro consid(er)anda'

In Monte is clearly the most well used part of the manuscript. It is possible to identify six different readers by their very distinct way of noting. One reader has read the book cover to cover (makes small ·d·'s in the margin), whereas others have just marked passages in *In Monte*.

¹² Fol. 112r-120r, concerning 'Passages unique to Mark, Luke or John' <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1602.htm>

¹³ Fol. 121v-148r, 'Concerning the first part of the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5)' <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1601.htm>

¹⁴ The next folio begins with an even bigger initial and with the words 'CUM VIDISSET AUTEM IESUS TURBAS MULTAS ASCENDIT IN MONTEM.' (fol. 121r)

*De sermone domini in monte II*¹⁵

OPENING: 'MISERICORDIAM USQ(UE) AD CVIVS TRACTATIONEM liber p(r)imus terminu(m) accepit seq(u)it(ur) cordis mundatio unde iste sumit exordiu(m)'

CLOSING: Sed siue iste ordi inhis considerandus sit siue aliq(u)is alius facienda s(un)t que audiu(i)m(us) a d(omi)no si uolumus edificare super Petram'

6. *De blasphemia*¹⁶

OPENING: 'MAGNA QUESTIO EST DE RECENTI EVANGELICA LECTIONE p(ro)posita cui soluende q(u)antu(m) ad nos attinet i(m)pares sum(us)'

CLOSING: 'De his aut(em) que forte potuim(us) (et) cogitando vestigare (et) expedire dicendo illi s(un)t agende gr(ati)e aq(u)o quevisim(us) a q(u)o petiuim(us) adque(m) pulsauim(us) ut habe(re)m(us) unde (et) nos meditando alerem(us) (et) uob(is) loquendo ministraremus'

7. *Eaidem de decem legis p(re)ceptis et de totidem*¹⁷ *plagis egypti.*¹⁸¹⁹

OPENING: 'NONEST SINE CAVSA FR(ATRE)S DILECTISSIMI. QUOD PRECEPTOR(UM) (ET) legis d(e)i numerus cu(m) numero plagaru(m) q(u)ib(us) Aegyptus p(er)cutit(ur) exaegari uidet(ur).

CLOSING: Locat(us) dente noxiu(m) a(n)i(m)al viii fals(u)m n(on) dicere testimoniu(m) ix

¹⁵ Fol. 148r-175r, 'Concerning the second part of the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 6-7)'

<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1601.htm>

¹⁶ Fol. 175v-187r

¹⁷ Someone, possibly the scribe, has corrected the 'd' into a 't', but without crossing out the 'd'.

¹⁸ Fol. 187v-189v

¹⁹ Unlike the other texts in this manuscript, this text has been proved to be a pseudo-Augustinian text. It is believed that the author of the text is Caesarius of Arles (469/70- †542). 'Copies of this sermon on the ten commandments and the ten plagues, which [Jacques-Paul] Migne prints as PSEUDO-AUGUSTINE, SERMO 21 (PL 39.1783-86), appear in Oxford, Trinity College 28, fols 89v-91r; and Vatican Reg.lat. 338, fols 88v-89v. Two early twelfth-century copies appear in Cambridge, Jesus College Q. G. 4 (52) (s. xii1, Durham), fols 39-44 (see Gameson 1999 p 66 [no. 103]), and Rochester, Cathedral Library, A.3.16 (s. xii1 [pre ?1124], Rochester) (Gameson p 147 [no. 817]). Copies of an unidentified sermon on the ten commandments and the ten plagues, in all likelihood this one by Caesarius, are attested in the twelfth-century catalogues of the libraries of the Abbey of the B.V.M. at Reading and of Rochester Cathedral priory (Sharpe et al. 1996 p 434 no. B71.92d and p 473 no. B77.9d).'

<http://www.bede.net/saslc/samples/c/caesarius.pdf>

dense tenebre ix n(on) c(on)cupisces uxore(m) p(ro)ximi x mors p(ri)mogent(i)co(rum) x
n(on) concupisces ulla(m) re(m) p(ro)ximi.

This last part of the manuscript appears different, compared to the others. It is written much closer to the margin and contains many corrections. Judging by the hand, the text is written by the same scribe, but it is arguably not his finest work, and the text appears to be incomplete, which may explain the blank folios that follow. The incompleteness is further underlined by the missing explicit.

In general, the manuscript is very neatly written with very few mistakes and no cross-outs, and the scribe himself has written missing lines under the block of text.

3) Physical Characteristics

Number of leaves: 4 flyleaves +191 folios, last two fol. have been ruled, but contain no text.

Writing support: parchment (vellum).

Collation: iii+1⁸, 2-23⁸, 24⁸+i. Flyleaves original, three glued to cover, fourth sewn into manuscript.²⁰ Table of content on flyleaf iir, appears to be original, + library notes added in later medieval hand. Same hand has added the running header (Lib(er) 1, 2, 3, 4, In Monte, Blasphemia)²¹ and the page numbers (which are also medieval in character).

Measurements: 250 mm x 293 mm (writing space 130 mm x 200 mm)

One column. First line of writing above the top ruled line. 31 lines per page.

The BINDING: Greyish coloured leather, flesh side out, four thongs. 'Bound almost certainly at Rochester about 1150. The sewing, the boards, and the tabs at head and tail of the spine are original: a piece of whittawed leather²² has been put over the old back, and used to line the outer

²⁰ The second pastedown is loose, allowing one to see the additional pastedown underneath.

²¹ No header for 'In Decem Preceptis'

²² 'Leather produced by tawing a skin with aluminum potassium sulfate. [...] The skin was tumbled in drums with an aqueous alum solution then neutralized in a sodium carbonate solution. It produced a soft, pliable white leather. [...] However, the treatment is reversible and washed out with water. As a result, many alum

corners of the old boards. [...] The top head band and the next band are broken at the front hinge inside the leather.'²³ The oak boards are 11 mm thick. The leather (sheepskin) bears no visual evidence of having been decorated, nor does anything indicate that clasps are missing. All four corners have been repaired.²⁴

Original medieval bookmark: 5 strings of leather, one missing and one appears to be of original length.

The book has been repaired, this indicates its value. The repair is visible on fol.1, where it is evident that silk has been used to repair the damage the green ink has caused to the page.

The modern repairs are very well done (1983) and mainly noticeable if one examines the cords, as these are much brighter than the original ones. It is, however, a shame that the medieval repairs have been altered, as it would have been interesting to see the original workmanship.

Which style: According to N. Ker, the book is 'written no doubt at Rochester itself as appears from the character of the script'.²⁵ The script is definitely a form of English Protogothic Bookhand. It was very common to use a form of Caroline miniscule to copy Latin, and this particular form spread across England in the late 11th and early 12th century.²⁶ This indicates that the manuscript may have been written a bit earlier than 1150, though it was 'practised until the early thirteenth century'.²⁷

Characteristics: a = a, et = &, r = both r and 2, e = e, the script makes use of both u and v. The o's are less rounded than in Caroline miniscule and the 2-shaped r does not necessarily indicate the -*orum* abbreviation.

Initials come in four different sizes; beginning of book = 7 lines, chapters = 5 lines, index/subtitles 3 lines, other 1½ line.

Ruling: dry point. The very visible and somewhat uneven prick marks indicate pricking by hand.

tawed skins were treated with fats and waxes to add water resistance.'

http://cameo.mfa.org/wiki/Alum_leather [Accessed 19-02-16]

²³ Graham Pollard, 1. May 1961, Library Note, Rochester Cathedral Library

²⁴ Not modern repair. See Library note, 'Binders note' (1983) Rochester Cathedral Library.

²⁵ N. Ker, Library note, Rochester Cathedral Library

²⁶ *Introduction to Manuscript Studies* p. 146

²⁷ *Ibid.*

Format: one column

Incipits and Explicits: in red ink and capital letters.

'AURELII AVGVSTINI YPPONIENSIS EPISCOPI DE CONSENSU EVANGELISTARUM LIBER PRIMUS INCIPIT.'

'EXPLICIT LIBER PRIMUS. INCIPIT LIBER SECUNDUS.'

'EXPLICIT LIBER SE(CUN)D(U)S. INCIPIT TERTIUS.' 'EXPLICIT LIBER TERTITUS. INCIPIT QUARTUS.'

'AVRELII AVGVSTI YPPONIENSIS EPISCOPI DE CONSENSU EVANGILISTARUM LIBER QUARTVS EXPLICIT.'

'AVRELII AVGVSTINI DE SERMONE D(OMI)NI IN MONTE LIBER PRIMUS INCIPIT.'

'EXPLICIT LIBER I INCIPIT SECONDUS.'

'EXPLICIT LIBER II SANCTI AVGVSTINI EP(ISCOP)I DE SERMONE D(OMI)NI IN MONTE.'

'INCIPIT LIBER SC(IANT)I AVGVSTINI EP(ISCOP)I DE BLASPHEMIA IN SP(IRITU)M S(AN)C(TU)M.'

'EXPLICIT LIBER S(AN)C(T)I AVGVSTINI EP(ISCOP)I DE BLASPHEMIA IN SP(IRITU)M SANCTUM.'

'INCIPIT DE DECEM LEGIS PRECEPTIS (ET) DE TOTIDEM PLAGIS EGYPTI LIBER S(AN)C(T)I AVGVSTINI EPISCOPI.'

Ink colour: black

Initials ink colour: green, purple and red (and a little bit of blue).

Number of lines: 31

Initials (height and colour): Two coloured elaborate initials, four or five lines high. Colours: red, green and purple. The initials change in appearance. The second initial, which opens *De Consensu Evangelistarum - Liber I*, is much more elaborate than any of the other initials, and in a very different style. The bottom of the J is in the shape of a dragon's head. It looks like two different

illuminators have made them. This is particularly evident on fol. 20v, where the capital Q still contains some elaborate lines in pencil, but where the current design is very different, but in line with the capitals in the remainder of the manuscript.

Very good condition. Big worm whole on fol.178-184. Minor tears and only few irregularities in the vellum. The manuscript is arranged hair-flesh-flesh-hair.

4) Provenance

On the bottom of the second flyleaf is written; 'Liber de Clausto Roffens' in the librarian's hand and 'p(er) Iacob de Oxon' in the scribe's hand. In a medieval hand (probably by the librarian's) the words 'Eccl. Cath. Roffens' has also been added to the second pastedown, further underlining the book's place of belonging.

According to a library note, this book was:

originally in the library of St. Andrew's priory, Rochester, the forerunner of this [the current] cathedral. It was compiled in the first half of the twelfth century by Jacob or James, a monk in the priory who came from Oxford, and the rather spikey character of the script would suggest that he wrote it here [at Rochester] in the priory scriptorium.²⁸

The book is in excellent condition, but it has clearly been used, as many different hands have made marginal notes – whereof one is in an Elizabethan hand.²⁹

The reader who marks with a 'd' has read the book prior to its binding, as some of his a's have been trimmed slightly, the same appears to have been the case for the reader who marks with s. Both readers tend to place their markings on the outer side of the prick marks. A different reader also marks with 'S', but he writes his much closer to the actual text.

There are no additional library marks as the book has been at Rochester Cathedral Library since the 12th Century.³⁰

²⁸ Note, Rochester Cathedral Library

²⁹ fol. 137r

³⁰ See Benedictines: The shorter Catalogues: Rochester. B77. Catalogue, 1123 and 1202. (B77.*9a = B79.*4, B77.*9b, B77.*9c) www.mlg3.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/authortitle/medieval_catalogues/B77/

As the catalogues of Rochester mention the manuscript as early as in 1123, one must assume that the production of the manuscript took place sometime before that. As the writing style (English Protogothic Bookhand) was not used before late 11th century, one can argue that this manuscript must have been produced at Rochester between c.1080 and 1123. It has not been possible to learn more about the scribe, Jacob from Oxford, and it is therefore not possible to narrow the production date any further.

From the marginal notes it is clear that the manuscript has been used for studies and, possibly, for writing sermons, and it is evident that there have been several different readers. The book is not a 'display book'; it lacks the grandeur of such books, but the wide margins, and the almost flawless work of the scribe, indicate its value.

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