

319a. London, Victoria and Albert Museum 661

Pictorial Preface to a Psalter

(with Cambridge Trinity College R. 17. 1 [85],

London, British Library, Add. 37472(1) [165a],

New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, M. 521 and M. 724 [332a])

[Ker —, Gneuss —]

HISTORY: A single illustrated leaf thought to be from the “Eadwine Psalter” (Cambridge, Trinity College R. 17. 1 [85]) dated to 1155–1160 from Christ Church, Canterbury, and forming part of an introductory cycle of illustrations for the Psalter, along with the three leaves London, BL Additional 37472 (1) [165a] and New York Pierpont Morgan Library M. 521 and M. 724 [332a]. Likely removed from the “Eadwine Psalter” in the early 17c before the latter came to Trinity College, perhaps when bound in London. All four leaves were present in the W. Young Ottley sale of 1838, this leaf as lot 132 (*Ottley Sale Catalogue* 1838), purchased by Lloyd for £2.2s; sold by N. P. Simes through Christie’s London on 9 July 1886, lot 1095 (Kauffmann 1975: 95); the leaf was purchased by the Victoria and Albert Museum along with a number of other leaves in 1894 from Charles Fairfax Murray for £50, the date on the receipt marked 31 August. Transferred to the Department of Prints and Drawings on 8 June 1906. The leaf was originally identified referenced under the pressmark “816–1894”.

CODICOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION: A single leaf measuring 395 × 295 mm. which, with London, BL, Additional 37472 (1) and New York, Pierpont Morgan Library M. 521 and M. 724 (see James 1936–1937), probably formed a sequence of illustrations that once stood at the front of the “Eadwine Psalter,” Cambridge, Trinity College, R. 17. 1 (see Gibson et al. 1992: 25–42). The leaf is suspended in a perspex frame that is wrapped in protective quilting and boxed. The leaf is divided into 12 frames on each side (some of which are subdivided into two, yielding 22 scenes on one side and 19 on the other). As in the companion leaves, the dominant colors are blue, green, and red, with pink, white, yellow also used, and all in various shades. Gold is used on all the borders of the frames.

CONTENTS: The panels portray scenes from the life of Christ, beginning with Christ before Annas and the denial by Peter (recto) and ending with the Ascension and Pentecost (verso). For a detailed description of the contents, see the description of New York, Pierpont Morgan M. 521 and M. 724 [332a].

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