

360. Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Bodley 381 (2202)

John the Deacon, "Life of Gregory the Great"

[Ker 311, Gneuss 570, 570.1]

HISTORY: A 10c manuscript containing John the Deacon's "Life of St. Gregory the Great" (*BHL* 3641). John the Deacon (ca. 825–880/882) compiled a life of Gregory the Great in 873–876 at the instigation of Pope John VIII, whom he commemorates in his preface. The life is interspersed with letters from the papal register and provides a representation of Pope Gregory as the spiritual leader of the Christian world and a model of sanctity (Leonardi 1991: 5.569). At the same time, John the Deacon's description of Gregory as the "pontifex et Anglorum gentis apostolus" (Hayward 2004: 29) underlines the importance for the cult of Gregory in England. This manuscript is one of three copies of John the Deacon's "Life of Gregory" in England (Whatley 2001: 243). Another indication of the presence in England of what is presumably a copy of this work derives from a booklist that has been linked to Peterborough (Lapidge 1994: 156). The origin of this book is not entirely clear: Dumville (1994: 183) classified the book as "non-English," while Gneuss (no. 570.1) believes it may have been written in England or by an English scribe on the Continent. There are OE glosses: 'theod ware' on f. 18v; 'ic þingige | satago' on f. 185r. A set of prayers to St. Augustine on f. 192v shows that the manuscript was at Canterbury in the 12c.

Further information regarding the provenance of this manuscript can be gleaned from a now separate binding sheet (Bishop 1953: 438), consisting of one sheet of a Bible manuscript written in 'an artificial type of Anglo-Saxon majuscules,' probably at St. Augustine's Canterbury, at the end of the 8c (Lowe 1935: 2.244). The leaves, which derive from a large quarto manuscript, contain parts of the Acts of the Apostles. The binding sheet was removed in January 1897, and is now Oxford, Bodleian Library, Lat. bib. b. 2 (P), belonging with British Library Royal 1.E.vi, an incomplete part Bible (Gneuss, no. 448). A reference to the binding sheet is found on the inside of the front cover of Bodley 381, where it reads: 'Formerly belonging to St. Augustine's. Canterbury. see MS. Lat. bibl. b. 2 (P), | which was taken out

of this volume by me in Jan. 1897. E. W. B. Nicholson.' This removed binding sheet has 14c(?) shelf marks of St. Augustine's (for details see Barker-Benfield 2008: 3.1747) and an inscription showing that the manuscript was given to Sir Thomas Bodley in 1601 by the mathematician and manuscript collector Thomas Allen (1540?–1632) of Gloucester Hall (Ker, *Cat.*, p. 376). Other sheets from the same Bible, Royal MS 1 E vi, and Canterbury Cathedral Library and Archives, Additional MS 16+, show that the abbey regularly used discarded leaves for binding purposes (Budny 1997: 1.695; see also Barker-Benfield 2008: 1.442–43 [no. 190]).

Ff. i and ii of Bodley 381 (Gneuss, no. 570.1) are from a *Liber comitis*, or *comes* book, being a capitulary containing the prophecies, epistles, and gospels read at mass, a predecessor of the later lectionary (referred to as a lectionary by Lenker 1999: 151). According to Bischoff (2004: 361) and Lapidge (2006: 171), these folios were written in north-eastern France, in the third quarter of the 9c; Bishop (1949–1953: 438) dated them to ca. 840–880, and allocated them to Corbie (cf. Gneuss, no. 570.1).

CODICOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION: Membrane; containing i + II + ii + 192 + ii folios ([α], i–iii, 1, 1–192, 193–194). The folios measure 257–260 × 182–188 mm., written space 173 × 129 mm., ruled in dry point for 23 long lines. There are double vertical bounding lines and single horizontal bounding lines (the first and the last lines of the text) extending into the margins as far as the prickings. Prickings are visible in the outer margins for all horizontal lines, and in the top as well as in the lower margins for the vertical bounding lines. On only a few folios are they lost by trimming. The imprint of the ruling in this manuscript is consistently on the hair side. Conversely, the imprint of the prickings is very clearly on the flesh side, which shows how the parchment was pricked with the flesh side up, and was later ruled with the hair side up. Writing is on top-line with an average line height of 8 mm. The left-hand gutter between the vertical bounding lines is empty, but for capital letters; on the left, the gutters occasionally contain the ends of lines. F. 192r contains 11 irregular lines at the top, ruled in ink. The organization of the quires is completely regular: all consist of four bifolia; the hair side on the outside and, subsequently, hair faces hair and flesh faces flesh (HFHF). Only quire VI is irregular, HFFH on the four outside rectos.

The manuscript is written in caroline minuscule. The OE words are in the same hand as the Latin marginalia, and show an insular *g* (Ker, *Cat.*, p. 375). There are simple red initials of two to three lines high. The chapter

titles and the roman numerals in the margins are in red. Occasionally, the red has oxidized completely and changed to silver.

The manuscript is bound in brown leather on heavy pasteboard or wood, with a string of ornamentation on the board, vertically, off the spine. The spine was renewed, with the old leather pasted back on, but is again showing signs of damage. On the inside of the binding it reads: 'Formerly belonging to St. Augustine's, Canterbury: See MS. Lat. Bibl. b.2 (p), | which was taken out of this volume by me in Jan. 1897. E. W. B. Nicholson'; twice in pencil: 'ms. Bodl. 381'; and once on a stamp: 'S.C. 2202.'

There are five flyleaves. F. [α] is an unnumbered modern blank paper leaf. Ff. i and ii are parchment leaves deriving from a 9c manuscript (see above), measuring 244 × 180 mm. They were trimmed to fit the size of this book, and therefore only 196 × 114 mm. of the written space remains, ruled for 26 long lines (first line only half visible) with single vertical bounding lines extending into the margins. There are no prickings visible. The split bifolium consists probably of two half sheets, pasted together at the back with strips of paper. Flesh is on the outside, hair on the inside. F. i has been repaired by a vertical strip of paper pasted on to the outer margin. The text on the flesh sides is vague, and there is damage on f. i, presumably from a copper nail in the binding. This damage plus the remains of glue on the outside of these folios indicate that these leaves were probably taken from an older binding. Visible just above the present foliation is another one, '1; '2.' There are two further paper flyleaves (iii, 1), probably originating from the date of the binding: f. iii is blank but for the shelfmarks; f. 1 is blank. Two similar paper flyleaves occur at the end of the book.

COLLATION: i + II + ii + 192 + ii. I² two half sheets (ff. I–II); II–XXV⁸ (ff. 1–192).

CONTENTS:

f. [α] blank (paper).

ff. i–ii 10c flyleaves from a list of Latin lections from the Gospels, deriving from a *Liber comitis*, or *comes* book: f. i recto: '[. . .] Usq(ue) multa est IN caelo . . . aute(m) congregate in horreu(m) / meu(m)'; f. i verso: 'Nauī. Usq(ue) & esto sana a plaga . . . fiat mihi secundum uerbum tuum'; f. ii recto (line 2): 'i s(e)c(un)d(um) ioh(annem) cap(ut) xxiiii sic enim dilex(it) d(eu)s mundu(m) . . . & non est in d(eu)m diues.'; f. ii verso: 'V iii K(a)l(endas) nat(a)l(is) s(an)c(t)i urbani die xxvi men(s)is mai . . . Luc(ae) cap(ut) clxxxī Homo quidam [. . .].'

f. iii blank, except for the shelfmarks on recto: '(2202)', 'Bodl. 381.'

f. I [1] blank

John the Deacon's "Life of Gregory the Great":

ff. 1r/1–2r/16 Dedication to Pope John VIII (d. 882): **INCIPI(T) PREFATIO IN UITA S(AN)C(T)I GREGORII | PONTIFICIS ET ANGLORUM GENTIS AP(OSTO)LI.** | 'Beatissimo ac felicissimo d(omi)no iohanni . . . & in futuro a peccatorum | nexibus merear misericorditer liberari. p(er) ie(s)um chr(istu)m d(omi)n(u)m | n(ost)r(u)m. **EXPLICIT PREFATIO.**' (PL 75.61–62);

[Note: Minor additions and corrections on ff. 1r/17 'p(er)ceperas' > 'percipiebas,' 1r/18 'cognovissem,' 1v/14 and 2r/1. On f. 1r (top) there is the name of 'Tho(mas), Allen D.D.,' and the press marks 'S 7,' 'NE.D.4.1.' | '(2202):']

ff. 2r/17–3r/22 List of chapters, Bk. 1: **INCIPIUNT CAPITULA.** | (line 18) 'I. De genere beati gregorii . . . xlv. Ubi discretionis eius p(er)fecta qualitas indicatur.' **EXPLICIUNT KAPITULA.** (PL 75.63);

ff. 3r/23–27r/22 Bk. 1: **INCIPIT DE GENERE BEATI GREGORII.** || 'GREGORIUS GENERE ROMANUS. ARTE PHILOSOPHUS; | gordiani uiri clarissimi'; ends: 'in libello alio suffragante | d(omi)no referantur.' **EXPLICIT LIBER PRIMUS | UITE BEATI GREGORII PONT(IFICIS).** (PL 75.63–86);

OE Content: f. 18v/7 Above 'theodorus' in a clearly A-S hand is the gloss 'theod ware,' glossing 'theod' and 'orus,' respectively.

[Note: Interlinear and marginal corrections in this part are, e.g. f. 3v/3 'romanę sec(ul)i'; they are more frequent on ff. 5v and 6r. Corrections occur also on f. 25r/11 'm(en)te(m),' 26r/17 'late(re).' 'N(ota)' signs occur on ff. 6v and 7r. Occasionally, the guide letters of the initials are in the margin, e.g. f. 8r/1. The lower margin of f. 6r contains the sketch of a hand.]

ff. 27r/22–28v/22 List of chapters, Bk. 2: **INCIPIUNT | CAPITULA.** || 'I Ubi gregoriu(s) seruu(s) | seruorum d(e)i se scribens. mediocribus uestim(en)tis \ amicti(tur) . . . Quale de eo somnium heremita cognouerit.' **EXPLICIUNT CAPITULA.** (PL 75.87) [chap. nos. end at f. 28r/9 with 'xxiii' (chap. 29 in PL)].

ff. 28v/22–68r/7 Bk. 2: **UBI GREGORIUS SERUU(S) | SERUORU(M) DEI SE SCRIBENS MEDIOCRIBUS UESTIM(EN)TIS \ AMICTITUR** || (beg. 29r/1) 'AIE IA(M) NUNC Q(UONIA)M ATHLETAE CH(RIST)I GREGORII UIRILITER | in gymnasio s(an)c(t)ae'; ends: 'ut quę secutura | sunt auxiliante d(omi)no tertius p(er)sequatur.' **EXPLICIT LIBER SECUNDU(S) UITAE BEATI | GREGORII ROMANI PONTIFICIS.** (PL 75.87–126);

[Note: Scattered marginal and interlinear corrections with expunction marks on f. 46v/1; f. 50r/3 'animæ.' On f. 60r, 'A B C' has been added in the lower margin.]

- 1f. ff. 68r/8–69v/11 List of chapters, Bk. 3: INCIPIUNT CAPITULA. | 'I. Quibus gregorius studiis commissam sibi regebat aecc(esi)am . . . lx. Quod gregorius pestem uniuersalis nominis; | a totius aecclesie uniuersitate reppulerit. EXPLICIUNT KAPITLA [sic] LIBRI TERTII. | UI-TAE BEATI GREGORII ROMANI PONTIFICIS. (PL 75.125);
- ff. 69v/12–116r/19 Bk. 3: QUIBUS GREGORIUS STUDIIS COMMIS-SAM SIBI RE|GEBAT AECCLESIAM. CAPITULUM. I. | 'TALI-BUS UENERABILIS PAPA GREGORIUS. | commissam sibi diuinitus aecc(esi)am'; ends: 'apud om(n)ipotentem d(eu)m custodirent suum.' | EXPLICIT LIBER TERTIUS UIŦ BEATI GREGORII | ROMANI PONTIFICIS. (PL 75.125–170);

[Note: Scattered marginal and interlinear corrections. F. 72 is damaged in the lower margin. On f. 96r/8 a correction has been erased, presumably 'scribens.']

- ff. 116r/20–119v/21 List of chapters, Bk. 4: INCIPIUNT CAPITULA. | 'I. De temperantia gregorii . . . cv. Deuisione [sic] scriptoris qui ab emulo terreri potuit. & a beato gregorio | meruit consolari. EXPLIC(IUNT) CAP(ITULA). (PL 75.169–170);
- 1h. f. 119v/21–191v/6 Bk. 4: INCIPIT LIBER QUART(US). | UITE BEATI GREGORII ROMANI PONTIFICIS. | 'HAEC ERGO EST BEATI GREGORII UNIUERSALIS || plena rationis'; ends: 'quę ualeo minime | denegasse cognoscar.' | EXPLICIT LIBER QU'A RTUS VITĚ | BEATI GREGORII. | ROMANI PONTIFICIS. | DEO GRATIAS. AMEN. (with neumes above 'amen') (PL 75.171–242).

[Note: Corrections in a different hand start to appear, with an underlining, on f. 129v/9; and interlinear references to the text on ff. 134v/12, 136r/13. Ff. 179r/lower margin: '& cum ei spatia longiora suppeterent'; f. 181r/upper margin 'obliuioni mandauit'; f. 181v/14: 'in te(m)plo d(e)i nemu(s) plantari p(ro)hibet(ur)'; on f. 182r/upper margin: 'indignu(m) uehem(en)t(er) existimo ut uerba celestis oraculi restringa(nt) sub regul(is) donati.' The latter is a famous dictum from Gregory's epistle to Leander at the beginning of the *Moralia in Iob* (Adriaen 1979: 7/220–222).]

OE Content: f. 185r/7–8 OE gloss: 'ic þingige | satago' (ed. Napier 1900, no. 59; Ker, *Cat.*, p. 375).

- f. 192r blank, but for eleven horizontal lines, ruled in ink at the top of the page forming two empty musical five-line staves, a type that came in use at the end of the 15c.
- f. 192v six lines of prayers; in a 13c hand, beg. 'Ora pro nobis s(an)c(t)ę AVGVSTINE amice d(e)i & hanc uirtute(m) tuis adde'; 12c Latin prayers to St. Augustine: 'Agustine pat(er) tu primus signa [t]ulisti. |

Tu(m) lauro dign(us) laurenti(us) iste sec(u)l(i)s.' A Roman 'II' in green and the letters 'a b c d e' are vaguely visible at the top.

[Note: On a parchment leaf belonging to the former binding of this manuscript are the 14c St. Augustine's shelfmark and ex libris: 'Vita sancti Gregorii pape. Distinctio [[altered to 'Distinctione']] IX^a Gradus **HH** V cum H'; 'Liber sancti Augustini Cantuariensis'; 'A'; and a 17c inscription: 'THo Allen: Dono Dedit.' The leaf is now Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Lat. bib. b.2. (P), (2202*).]

PHOTO NOTE: On ff. i, ii, just above this foliation, is another one, '1', '2', not visible on the fiche.

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