

Special Preface on Parker Library Manuscripts

The manuscripts in this volume share a common process in their recent lives and these interventions are worth noting as part of an inclusive history of these books. Beginning in the early 2000s, the collection of manuscripts in the Parker Library at Corpus Christi College in Cambridge were digitized for the *Parker Library on the Web* database. Each manuscript was assessed for conservation purposes before being approved for photography. In 2004–05, fifty manuscripts were photographed in a pilot campaign, and the remainder photographed throughout the decade. Around thirty manuscripts were disbound for photography and, for conservation reasons, have not yet been rebound. In the early stages of the project, bindings were not photographed, so many manuscripts' bindings were re-photographed to supply images, and even now some images of bindings do not appear in the project database. The project also required that each page had to have a given number that corresponds with the digital image. In many cases, whole manuscripts that had never previously been completely or continuously paginated or foliated were given numbers by Professor Nigel Morgan, Dr. Neil Coates, and other members of the digitization team. In some instances, those books which already had partial or erroneous numbering had to be corrected. Earlier numbering was often limited to the main text block, so when the endleaves were being photographed for the project, they too had to be assigned a page reference; in most cases, medieval (original) leaves were given a roman number; those added in "modern" bindings were assigned a lower-case letter. Some modern bindings — such as those by J.P. Gray — included new endleaves that were given roman numbers when they came back to the library; these numberings are retained. The foliation/pagination as it stands in *Parker Library on the Web* is now considered the definitive version, even where it might differ from standard references like M.R. James' *Descriptive Catalogue* or Neil Ker's *Catalogue*. These are the foliation/page numbers given in this volume, though older foliations or paginations are sometimes supplied for the sake of reference and clarity. Photography for the *Parker Library on the Web* database was finished in July of 2009 and the project launched 1 October 2009.

Special thanks to Steven Archer, Curator and Digital Projects Librarian at the Parker Library for this information.