



*Poole 16 (CV verso)*

## 5. Missal

Abbey of St. Peter, Erfurt, Prussia, after 1337

Poole 16

288 leaves; 32x21cm. (23x14cm); vellum

German Gothic script; one full-page miniature; over 760 penwork initials in blue and red

Calf-binding over oak boards, stamped with the key of St. Peter, the emblem of the abbey, on the front cover

This *missale estivale* is a liturgical book containing the prayers of the Mass according to the Roman rite. The contents are as follows: the Necrology (Ir and IIr-v); Calendar of the Church year (IIIr to VIIIr); Opening Prayers of Petition (VIIIr to XIIr); Gloria and Credo (XIIv); Proper of the Season (XIIIr to CIVv); Prefaces to the Canon and the Canon of the Mass announced on folio CV verso by a full-page miniature not original to the book (CIIr to CIXv); Proper of the Saints (CXr to CCXXIr); Common of the Saints (CCXXIV to CCLIIIr); Votive Masses, beginning with a Mass for the Congregation (CCLIIIr to CCLXXVr); the Common of the Saints resumes and includes Propers for the Feasts of the Holy Cross and Clare of Egypt (CCLXXVr to CCLXXXVr); Office of the Plague (CCLXXXV to CCLXXXVIIr). A smaller leaf (17.5x24cm.) containing an Office for St. Adolas, the first Bishop of Erfurt (Aug. 26), was inserted between folios XII and XIII.

The Gothic script is regular, large (.8cm.), and clearly legible in brown-black ink and enhanced by excessive flourishes, as is typical of fourteenth-century German manuscripts (Thomson, no.44). Each single-column text page contains 24 lines, with the exception of the first gathering where pages contain 32 lines. Marginal pricking for line ruling is visible along the outer edge of most folios. In some cases the pricking is very close to the edge and in some cases it has been trimmed off. Text pages are well-worn due to the frequent use by both the priest and reader. Leaves are marked by small leather knobs used as page turners by the priest to locate various readings and prayers during the Mass. Some have been replaced by leather tabs. The largest of the 27 page turners which remain (approx. 1.7cm. in diameter) marks the *Te igitur*, the essential and most sacred prayer of the Mass in which the bread and the wine are consecrated by the priest.



The front and back covers of the Lilly missal do not match since the emblem of St. Peter's Key on the front cover does not appear on the back of the book. Further, only the back cover shows indentations for two mounts for straps used to fasten the book. As a rule, missal covers were identical so that the book appeared the same for ceremonial or display purposes whether it was facing up or down on the altar. The Lilly missal binding reveals that the original front cover has been replaced, since the spine is not one continuous piece of leather but two pieces vertically joined; and the quires are sewn to that portion of the spine which is one with the back cover. Both covers are lined with parchment leaves containing a highly abbreviated commentary(?) in a later Gothic script.

The Lilly missal was written after 1337 at the Benedictine Monastery of St. Peter at Erfurt. Archives collected by Alfred Overmann in *Urkundenbuch der Erfurter Stifter und Klöster* (Magdeburg, 1926) record the life of this Abbey and contain administrative documents from the abbacies of: Andreas (d.1300), Johannes (d.1321), Volmarus (d.1337), and Dietrich (d.1362). Monastic documents record their administering of properties tended by local religious houses. These records show that St. Peter's Abbey held a leading ecclesiastical position in Erfurt in the fourteenth century.

The Necrology and Calendar in the missal provide insights into the date and donation of the book and the history of St. Peter's Abbey. The Necrology contains a list of the monks at the Erfurt Abbey between 1284 and 1376 (Ir, IIr, IIv). The earliest part of the Necrology has sixty-three names on folio IIr-v in the hand of the original scribe; the manuscript can be dated after 1337 since only one entry appears in the Necrology by the original scribe after that date, and then the hand changes (W. Gordon Wheeler, unpublished notes, Lilly Library). Sixty entries have been made by different scribes one or two at a time after 1337 on folio IIv; and forty entries are included after 1362 on folio Ir.

Folio Ir of Poole 16 contains part of an Erfurt necrology of monks deceased between 1361 and 1376 and, thus, post-dates the Necrology in the hand of the scribe. This page is unrelated to the Poole 16 text; its verso contains part of the Proper for the Mass for the Feast of the Visitation, which suggests that this folio was removed from another missal and inserted here so that the names of the deceased monks on the recto might continue to be remembered during the liturgy.

A translation of the inscription found above the Necrology (Ir), identifies the donor of the Erfurt missal:

A missal, summer part, John, a layman of Rasdorf once of happy memory, had prepared which He [John] died on St. Margaret's Eve, and bequeathed to us the sum of thirty soldi a year for pious uses, to be paid on the anniversary of his death. This book belongs to St. Peter of Erfurt.

The Calendar (VIr) includes a rubricated entry at July 11 with the name of the donor: "John of Rasdorf died by whose generosity this book was written." The Calendar primarily includes saints of the Roman martyrology; but certain additions reflect the northern origins of the manuscript, for example: Erhard (Jan. 8), whose relics are now in Erfurt; Godehard, Bishop of Hildesheim in A.D. 961 (May 4); Gangolf (May 11); and Willibrord (Nov. 21). Even the Frankish King Dagobert (A.D. 603-639) is commemorated on January 19 in the Calendar of the missal as the founder of the Abbey: "obit t[sic]ebertus rex fundator huius loci" (IIIr). Godehard of Hildesheim and Othmar, the first Abbot of St. Gall (Nov. 16), are also included in the Proper of Saints.

The miniature opposite the opening prayers of the Canon of the Mass (the *Te igitur*) (CVv) is equally divided into two rectangular zones with line drawings of the Trinity above and the Crucifixion below. The recto of this folio contains part of a prefatory prayer not a part of the rest of the text indicating that the miniature was taken from another manuscript. The Trinity, enclosed within a quatrefoil frame, is identifiable as the German *Gnadenstuhl*, or "Mercy Seat of God," in which a seated God the Father supports the crucified Christ, while the dove of the Holy Spirit hovers at the left of Christ's head. The corners of the outer rectangular frame contain symbols of the four Evangelists. An early example of this iconography is found on the Lothar Cross, about A.D. 1000, in Aachen (Kirschbaum, 535). The "Mercy Seat" is common iconography in liturgical books, such as a fourteenth-century graduale in Cologne, written about 1320 for the Dominican cloister of the Holy Cross (Codex 173, folio 34r).

The lower half of the Lilly miniature shows Christ crucified with two monks kneeling in veneration at either side of the cross. St. John the Evangelist and the Virgin Mary stand on the left with St. John the Baptist, wearing a cloak and holding a book on the

right. The wounded side of the body of Christ (proper right) is rubbed away, and ultra-violet light indicates a pale lemon yellow fluorescence in this area, perhaps the result of liturgical ritual, during which the priest kissed Christ's wound in commemoration of the past event and the sacrifice to come during the celebration of the Mass. Slight traces of paint reveal that blood originally spurted from the wound in an arched direction. The flow of blood and the circular shape of the wound have been repainted.

A special office against the plague has been added at the end of the Erfurt missal. The addition of this office combined with the large number of mid-fourteenth-century deaths in the Necrology suggest that the book was in use during the Black Death, which ravaged Europe between 1347 and 1351 and devastated southern Germany and the Rhine Valley. It seems that among the plague victims were many monks from the monastery of St. Peter in Erfurt.

#### *PROVENANCE*

Leander van Ess of Marburg, early nineteenth century; Sir Thomas Phillipps, 1824; William H. Robinson Ltd., 1946; acquired by George A. Poole, Jr. from Robinson, 1955; Indiana University, 1958

L.A.M.