



6 August: Special Collections display

Hunterian Psalter

England: c. 1170

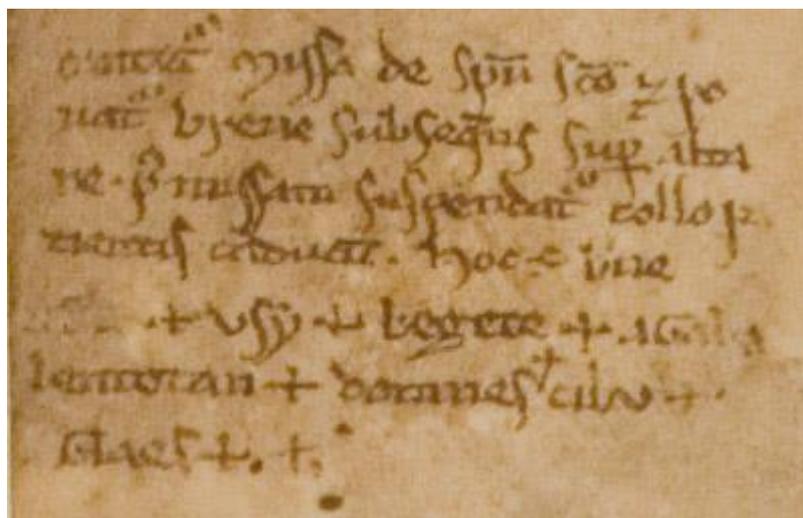
MS Hunter 229 (U.3.2)

One of a small group of elaborately illuminated twelfth century English psalters, this book is regarded as the greatest treasure of Dr William Hunter's magnificent eighteenth century library. Hunter acquired the manuscript in France amongst several other lots at the Jean-Louis Gaignat sale of 10 April 1769; he paid 50 livres and one sou for it - at the time, he was generally paying three times as much for early printed books.

The identity of the undoubtedly wealthy patron who commissioned the manuscript's production is unknown, although it may possibly have been **Roger de Mowbray** (d.1188), from one of the greatest Anglo-Norman families of the twelfth century; having been a crusader, he had a knowledge of the sacred sites of the Holy Land and also founded the Augustinian houses of Byland and Newburgh near to his castle in Thirsk. Given the number of northern saints commemorated in the calendar (Cuthbert and his translation, Wilfrid, John of Beverley and Oswald), it is likely that its first owner resided in a Northern Diocese while three commemorations of St Augustine point to a connection with the Augustinian Canons.

The manuscript's script and initials show close similarities to another English psalter now preserved in the Royal Library, Copenhagen (MS Thott 143), and it is probable that the two manuscripts were produced in the same scriptorium. The diocese of York is a reasonable place of origin, although Lincoln is another possibility. Neither this nor the Copenhagen Psalter has an entry in the Calendar for Thomas Becket, which suggests that they were completed some time before his canonization in 1173.

Several intriguing annotations and amendments hint at past owners of the manuscript. There are post twelfth century additions for a female supplicant (folios 208r-210v) following the Collects; the word endings are later changed to plural male. There is considerable marginalia in French throughout. Most enigmatic of all is a thirteenth century inscription found in the margin of the last folio; this appears to provide in Latin the instructions for the preparation and administration of an amulet - to be sanctified at the altar with the Mass of the Holy Ghost and then suspended from the neck of a person afflicted with epilepsy or, perhaps, in danger of death. The language of the charm seems to be in a corrupted form of Old English, rendering it incomprehensible but therefore, perhaps, more potent - 'an abracadabra function', as Brown and Voigts suggest.



Folio 21v depicts King David, the traditional author of the psalter. He is surrounded by his musicians, with the musical notes *ut, re, mi, fa* etc above the row of bells at the top.



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Josephus Jewish Antiquities and Jewish War
England: 12th century (second quarter)
MS Hunter 4 (S.1.4)

Flavius Josephus, a Jewish priest of aristocratic descent and a Pharisee, was appointed military commander of Galilee during the revolt of Judaea (A.D. 66-70). The Jewish revolt was crushed by Vespasian, and Josephus – basically pro-Roman and without sympathy for extreme Jewish nationalism – settled in Rome where he became a Roman citizen and where he wrote the two works contained in the volume. Although his chronology is faulty and his facts somewhat exaggerated, he manages to unite in one person the tradition of Judaism and Hellenism, providing a connecting link between the secular world of Rome and the religious heritage of the Bible.

The works of Josephus were much appreciated by the Church Fathers and were well known in England during the Middle Ages. The scriptorium at which this manuscript was produced is not known, but M.R. James conjectured from a defaced ex libris that it had once been in the possession of **Reading Abbey**. Its large size suggests that it was possibly meant for reading aloud in a monastic refectory. Beautifully written, the manuscript contains a number of magnificent Romanesque initials of twisting foliage and fantastic beasts. In the initial 'A' exhibited here (folio 136r), the shafts and cross pieces of the letter are made from the body and neck of a dragon combined with a section of a panel or column.



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Bede: Writings on the Calendar, etc **England, Durham: 12th century (second quarter)** **MS Hunter 85 (T.4.2)**

Written in Durham by a number of scribes during the second quarter of the twelfth century, this manuscript is a compilation of several works mainly concerning the use of the Calendar, by the Venerable Bede, Abbo of Fleury, Hyginus, and others. It is closely related to, and in part probably copied from, another manuscript still at Durham (Hunter 100). Although its early ownership inscription has been excised, it still bears the Durham Cathedral pressmark 2a. 3i. T. dating from the period 1416-1446 when the books were placed in a new library.

The major work of the volume is Bede's treatise of 725 **On the Reckoning of Time**. Amplifying his earlier work **On Times**, the book was intended to provide Bede's students with a theoretical outline to increase their understanding of computation and the calendar. The text is introduced by an initial 'D' in red, green, blue, yellow and purple (folio 35r). It contains a seated representation of the author, identified by the inscription 'S. BEDA. P[resbiter]'; the opening words of the preface *De natura rerum et ratione temporum...* appear on the scroll he holds.

The second item in the manuscript is a copy of Bede's 19 Year Cycles, covering the period 1-1253 A.D. The main interest of this text lies in the accompanying annals, added until the year 1209. One of the scribes has been identified by David Rollason as that of Symeon of Durham. Symeon's hand has been recognised in some thirty manuscripts, mostly from Durham, suggesting that he was responsible for supervising the production of manuscripts as well as for writing texts.



6 August: Special Collections display

Gregory I: Pastoral Care
England: 10th/11th century
MS Hunter 431 (V.5.1)

This is one of a small group (comprising less than two dozen) of surviving manuscripts of the Fathers written in pre-Conquest Caroline minuscule.

This text of the Pastoral Care is of particular interest in that the first 102 folios appear to have been copied by three scribes in the early eleventh century from an exemplar in Welsh minuscule or, less probably, Irish minuscule, which they could not read correctly. They extend certain abbreviations wrongly and preserve abbreviations that they did not understand; common mistakes include writing *tunc* for *tamen*, *etin* for *etiam*, and *sunt* for *sed*.

In the twelfth century, the book was carefully corrected and fifty-six new leaves added. At this period, the book was in the keeping of the library of Worcester Cathedral. This has been established from the presence of some marginalia in the 'tremulous' Worcester hand – the hand of a late twelfth or early thirteenth century monk whose glosses have pinpointed the Worcester provenance of many manuscripts. An example of his distinctive hand is shown here in the margin of folio 16v.



6 August: Special Collections display

Boethius: The Consolation of Philosophy
England/Kelso?: c.1120-1140
MS Hunter 279 (U.5.19)

Although this manuscript has been sadly mutilated, remains of its illustrations have survived. The exhibited drawing (folio 45v) shows Ulysses reaching safety even as the crew of the ship have been changed into animals by Circe. The author of the gloss discusses the significance of the Circe myth as an illustration of the principle of the relationship of all physical bodies, which enables one to be turned into another. This illustration is unique among extant Boethius manuscripts and it may well reflect the importance given to this incident by this unknown commentator.

The provenance of this manuscript is unknown, although the inscription 'david dei gracia Rex scotorum' (folio 20r) in a contemporary hand referring to David I (1123-53) suggests a northern origin. Until recently, it was thought that Durham might conceivably be the place of its production. However, Dr Kylie Murray has now suggested a connection with Scotland. She argues that the manuscript contains few Durham characteristics, but that its unique illustrations more closely resemble the famous **Kelso** Charter, written at Kelso Abbey in 1159. This charter, which portrays an image of David I (1124-53) and Malcolm IV (1153-65), is the earliest illustrated documentary charter in the history of the British Isles.

The Tironensian order of monks who occupied Kelso Abbey were famed for their interest in decoration and illustration, which could convincingly explain the uniquely detailed and intricate illustrations in our manuscript. Identifying the manuscript as a product of David I's Scottish kingdom means that Boethius was being read in Scotland 300 years earlier than previously thought - proof that intellectual and literary cultures were flourishing in Scotland at a far earlier date than has been realised.



6 August: Special Collections display

Bede: Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles & Retractions on the Acts

England: mid 12th century

MS Hunter 438 (V.5.8)

Bede's reputation in the Middle Ages was primarily as a theologian. This manuscript contains his **Expositio Actuum Apostolorum** and **Retractatio in Actus Apostolorum**, together with the glossary of geographical names sometimes attributed to St Jerome but probably by Bede.

The book is written in Caroline minuscule and decorated with coloured ornamental initials in red, green, and violet. Large penwork initials mark the openings of major sections: their motifs of men and dragons fighting in the coils of entangling foliage are carried over from earlier Anglo-Norman manuscripts containing beasts and monsters. The initial 'A' shown here (folio 74r) depicts a lion and a winged dragon in a deadly embrace. It is a fine example of the controlled draughtsmanship of Romanesque art.



6 August: Special Collections display

Devotional and Philosophical Writings

England, London: c.1325-1335

MS Hunter 231 (U.3.4)

This compilation of thirty-eight texts includes six works from **St Augustine**, fourteen by or attributed to **Seneca**, Anselm's **Orationes**, and several anonymous works.

It was made for **Roger of Waltham** (d.1336), Canon of St Paul's, London, and Keeper of the Wardrobe of Edward II (1 May 1322 to 19 Oct. 1323). Lavishly produced, the manuscript is illustrated by thirteen historiated initials and three full-page pictures by the chief artist of the Teymouth Hours. Displayed here is one of these fully illuminated pages (p. 85). Divided into three compartments, it depicts: the face of God with angels bearing the soul of Bishop Germanus; St Benedict and St Paul contemplating the Creator; and Roger and another figure praying on either side of a diagram of the twelve spheres. Roger is also named as the supplicant in three other illustrations in the book.

It was exceptional for philosophical texts to contain illustrations in the fourteenth century, and it may be assumed that Roger was closely involved in their selection. He is also known as the author of a treatise on moral philosophy focusing on the virtues and duties of princes, largely based upon Seneca.



6 August: Special Collections display

Cartulary of Holy Trinity, Aldgate
England, London: 1425-1427
MS Hunter 215 (U.2.6)

Queen Matilda founded the Augustinian priory of the Holy Trinity in Aldgate in 1108. An important monastic house from its inception, it enjoyed royal patrons and the support of many of the citizens of London.

This volume of its charters was put together by **Brother Thomas de Axbridge** between 1425 and 1427. In the introduction he explains that he made it in order to facilitate the collection of rents, for, he says, 'the world has progressed to such evil and contradicts ancient facts unless copies of charters are everywhere produced in evidence'. He tells us that he made use of ancient books in its compilation, and arranged his work according to parishes. With its detailed record of leases, agreements, rentals and the like, the Cartulary provides a wealth of information, not only on the social and economic life of medieval London, but also on its topography and changing land use.

While the majority of the charters in the volume are in Latin, there are also some in Anglo-Norman and one in Anglo-Saxon, written out in a close imitation of Anglo-Saxon script. This text is particularly significant for being the earliest document relating to the 'Cnihtengild'. Originally dating from between the accession of Edward in 1042 and the death of Bishop AElfweard on 25 July 1044, it is a writ of King Edward declaring that his men in the guild of English 'cnihtas' are 'to have their sake and their soke within borough and without over their land and over their men, and as good laws as they had in the days of King Edgar and of the king's father and of Cnut'.



6 August: Special Collections display

Henry of Huntingdon *Historia Anglorum*

England: 14th century (first quarter)

MS Hunter 288 (U.6.6)

Henry states in the prologue that he was commanded to write his history of the English by Bishop Alexander the Magnificent. He based his text upon Bede, but also drew upon a wide range of other sources such as the Anglo-Saxon chronicles, Geoffrey of Monmouth and Nennius. After 1127, however, his narrative is probably original, written contemporaneously with the events described. The first version of the work ends at 1129, but Henry continued to add to it at various times, resulting in a number of variant 'editions' or versions of the text. This fourteenth century copy describes events up to 1146 (version 4). Annotated throughout by fifteenth and sixteenth century readers, a note at the end remarks that the text is incomplete, lacking details of Henry II's reign. Later versions of the work take the narrative up to 1154, the year of Stephen's death.

While the history was written both to inform and reform its readers, Henry also sought to entertain and move his audience. The description of Cnut attempting to rule the waves (vi, 17) - shown here on folio 71v - is one instance of a story so capturing the imagination of succeeding generations that it passed into the mythology of English history.

This copy belonged to William Cecil, Lord Burghley (1520-1598).



6 August: Special Collections display

Prose Brut

England: 15th century

MS Hunter 74 (T.3.12)

The prose Brut chronicle is a comprehensive history of England from its first discovery and settlement to what were, for its original readers, modern times. In both the Middle Ages and the early Renaissance it served as the standard account of English history, and it is often cited as being the most popular secular work of the fifteenth century. Much of its appeal has been attributed to its dramatic style; there are many descriptions of vivid battle scenes and elaborations on the mythical elements of history.

Over 240 manuscript copies of the work are still extant and versions exist in Latin, Anglo-Norman French and English. In its original form, the chronicle ended with the death of Henry III in 1272, but the work was constantly rewritten and updated: the final 'continuation' (printed by William Caxton in 1480 as the **Chronicles of England**) ends with the death of Henry VI in 1461.

We have six manuscript copies of the Brut in Special Collections - all late fifteenth century versions of the text. This copy is a fairly high grade manuscript. It is well written in English in a neat Anglicana script (with some secretary features) by three scribes. The original text (ending the chronicle in 1419) has been augmented by an incomplete continuation (copied from Caxton's printed version).

Events from the beginning of the reign of King Arthur are recounted in the pages shown here.



6 August: Special Collections display

Manuscript compendium of medical writings
Southern France or Northern Italy: late 8th/early 9th century
Sp Coll MS Hunter 96 (T.4.13)

Apart from a fragmentary palimpsest in the National Library, this is the earliest western manuscript in Scotland. Written in a pre-Carolingian script, it was probably produced in southern France or northern Italy in the late eighth or early ninth century. A compilation of various medical texts, it constitutes a working handbook of medical conditions, both acute and non-acute, with remedies. Beginning with a list of about one thousand drugs and plants, it includes works by several unknown authors as well as Galen's **Treatise on acute ailments** and **On the examination of urines**, and Hippocrates' **Epistle**.

Decoration takes the form of coloured capitals (at the beginning of each major section) and plaited strapwork. The initial shown here incorporates a bird-like grotesque figure.

Hunter bought this manuscript at the sale of the library of the Dutch classical scholar, Pieter Burmann (Leiden, 1779).



6 August: Special Collections display

Manuscript of Medical Writings
Southern Italy: 10th Century
Sp Coll MS Hunter 404 (V.3.2)

A compilation of medical works, the main text in this volume is the **Commentary on the Aphorisms** of Hippocrates. Born in about 460 BC, Hippocrates was a Greek philosopher who is regarded by many to be the father of modern medicine. Over seventy medical works have been attributed to him.

This manuscript dates from the early 10th Century. The text is written in the characteristic Beneventan script of South Italy. It is enlivened by a number of penwork initials ornamented with heads, birds and fish. The drawings are heightened with the same red ink as is used in the headings, and were probably the work of the scribe.

The manuscript is important as one of a small group of surviving early texts which may be connected with the important medieval medical school at Salerno, founded in the 9th century.



6 August: Special Collections display

Sedulius: Easter Song, and other texts

Netherlands: 11th century

MS Hunter 57 (T.2.15)

The chief work in this manuscript is the **Easter Song** by the early 5th-century Christian poet Sedulius. Based stylistically on Virgil, it gives an account of Biblical miracles. This copy is incomplete, lacking two central gatherings. It is accompanied by other works by and about Sedulius.

The manuscript's decorated initials are characteristic of a tradition of stylized leaf scroll found with variations across much of Western Europe in this period. A grotesque lion figure inhabits the initial 'P' at the beginning of the Easter song.



6 August: Special Collections display

Boethius: The Consolation of Philosophy

Italy: 11th century

MS Hunter 272 (U.5.12)

Another copy of the most famous work of Boethius (c. 480-524), friend and adviser to the Ostrogoth king Theodoric. His **Consolation of Philosophy** is a poetic dialogue in 39 sections interspersed with prose. It was written while Boethius was in prison awaiting execution. It subsequently occupied a central position in medieval literature, being frequently translated and much imitated.

This 11th century manuscript is beautifully written in a very clear hand, and is heavily annotated. Large initials of a foliate or knot pattern mark the beginning of each of the five books. The initial 'P' at the start of book one is the only one of these to incorporate a figurative element in its lion motif (compare with the Sedulius also displayed here). The blue is of unusual intensity, while the central shaft of the upright column of the P was originally embellished with silver which has now oxidised.



6 August: Special Collections display

Treatises by Anselm, etc
Flanders?: mid 12th century
MS Hunter 244 (U.4.2)

This twelfth century manuscript contains four works by Anselm, as well as four other works. Anselm was first Prior then Abbot of Bec in Normandy, and later Archbishop of Canterbury (1093-1109). The volume opens with his study on atonement, the dialogue **Cur deus homo** (Why God became Man), originally written in Rome in 1097 during a prolonged absence from his see. It was the most important contribution in the Middle Ages to the theology of the Redemption: Anselm countered the theory that Satan had a claim on man, and demonstrated the necessity of the Incarnation.

The manuscript contains several large initials composed of animal forms, including this 'G' in the shape of two interlocked dragons (folio 71v). It comes from a text of Honorius, Bishop of Autun's **Elucidarium**.



6 August: Special Collections display

Edwin Morgan: Beowulf

Printed book (Aldington: Hand and Flower press, 1952)
Sp Coll S. P. 120

Typescript
MS Morgan E/3/1

Correspondence
MS Morgan E/3/2

Student notes
MS Morgan B/1/2

Special Collections holds the papers of Edwin Morgan (1920-2010), the outstanding Scottish poet of the later twentieth century. A former student and member of staff at the University, he was Poet Laureate of Glasgow, 1999-2005 and was appointed the first Scots Makar, or National Poet, in 2004.

Extending over 20 linear metres, the papers include over 1500 drafts of his poems and translations, 16 volumes of scrapbooks and over 90 boxes of correspondence. As well as a poet and educator, the papers also document his influential work as a literary critic and his creative partnerships with artists, musicians and theatre companies.

Shown here is a printed copy of his version of **Beowulf** (1952), as well as some associated archival material, including an annotated typescript of the poem and a selection of correspondence with his publisher, Erica Marx of the Hand and Flower press. Also displayed is one of Morgan's student notebooks on English language, comprising his indexed notes on Beowulf. Dated 1945, Morgan matriculated at the University of Glasgow in 1937. His studies were interrupted by war service in 1940, when he served with the Royal Army Medical Corps. In 1947, he graduated from the University with a first in English Language and Literature.



6 August: Special Collections display

The Gospels of the fower Evangelistes ...

London : John Daye, 1571

Sp Coll Hunterian Bv.3.21

This is the earliest printed edition of the Gospels in Old English ‘translated in the olde Saxons tyme out of Latin into the vulgare toung of the Saxons, newly collected out of auncient monumentes of the sayd Saxons’. It was produced by John Day, who specialised in printing and distributing Protestant literature and pamphlets, and produced many small-format religious books, such as ABCs, sermons, and translations of psalms. This book was printed at the instigation of Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury, and with the assistance of John Foxe (whose famous Book of Martyrs was also published by Day).

Day had the first-ever font of Anglo-Saxon type cut for an edition of Aelfrics’ writings, printed in 1567. The font may have been designed by François Guyot, a French type-founder known to have worked for Day and who lived in his household.

An inscription in this copy indicates that it was gifted by William Laud (1573–1645) to St John’s College, Oxford, in 1617; Laud became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1633 and was executed in 1645.



6 August: Special Collections display

Edmund Gibson: Anglo-Saxon Chronicle
Oxford: Sheldonian Theatre, 1692
Sp Coll Bi5-e.7

Edmund Gibson (1669-1748), Bishop of London, edited this, the second printed edition of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. It draws on Abraham Wheloc's 1643 edition (based on MS London, British Library, Cotton Otho B.xi, destroyed in the Ashburnham House fire of 1731); MS Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud Misc. 636; and transcripts of MSS London, British Library, Cotton Tiberius A.vi and Domitian viii. Gibson's was the first scholarly edition of the Anglo Saxon Chronicle, and prints the Latin and Saxon texts in parallel.

This copy has been in the possession of the University of Glasgow since 1699. An inscription on the title-page records that it was donated by William Nicholson, Archdeacon of Carlisle.



6 August: Special Collections display

Ebenezer Thomson: Staef-craeft, or Anglo-Saxon grammar; (an elementary course)

Ayr : David Macarter, 1823

Sp Coll Mu20-g.24

Ebenezer Thomson (1783-1861) taught Latin and Greek at Ayr Academy.

This elementary grammar includes excerpts with accompanying translations or glosses from several Old English works of literature, including the poem Judith, Alfred the Great and the Anglo Saxon chronicle. According to the title-page, it was intended for use by “students in the academy”.