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HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH PSALTER AT SKÁLHOLT

THERE is now considerable material to be added to the article 'Fragments of an English Psalter in Iceland', published in 1967 in the Icelandic periodical *Andvari*.¹ The *Andvari* article deals with two vellum leaves with a Latin text in the National Library of Iceland, and one in the National Museum of Iceland. One of the leaves in the Nat.Libr., Í.B. 363 8vo, which has been badly cut, is adorned with an historiated initial at the beginning of Psalm 38, depicting the Adoration of the Magi burnt in gold (Photo 1). The other leaf, Lbs. fragm. 51, not only has text but also ornamental linefillings in blue and red. One side of the vellum leaf in the Nat.Mus., no. 4678, is void but the other is decorated with a full page picture of the Crucifixion, leaving no room for text. On the top of the leaf, however, is the following inscription: 'Istud psalterium pertinet domui de Carehowe' (This psalter belongs to the cloister at Carrow). This inscription is written in a different hand from the text on the Nat.Libr. leaves. However, the mode of decoration and the colours of the Crucifixion picture are so like the Magi miniature that all three vellum leaves must have come from the same manuscript, a psalter from c. 1290–1320. As explained in the *Andvari* article, the illuminations on the three leaves most closely resemble illuminations in English manuscripts from about 1300–1325 which D. Egbert names the Tickhill Psalter group.²

The three vellum leaves were evidently from a splendid old manuscript, but had been used here in Iceland for bookbindings. In the Arnamagnæan Institute in Copenhagen many Latin vellum leaves are to be found which long ago were used for the same purpose. But despite a thorough search before the publication of the *Andvari* article in 1967, no leaves or fragments were found there resembling those found in Iceland. It was in January 1972 that I first came across 29 vellum leaves in *Accessoria 7dV* which evidently originated from the same book as the leaves found in the Nat.Libr. and the Nat.Mus. in

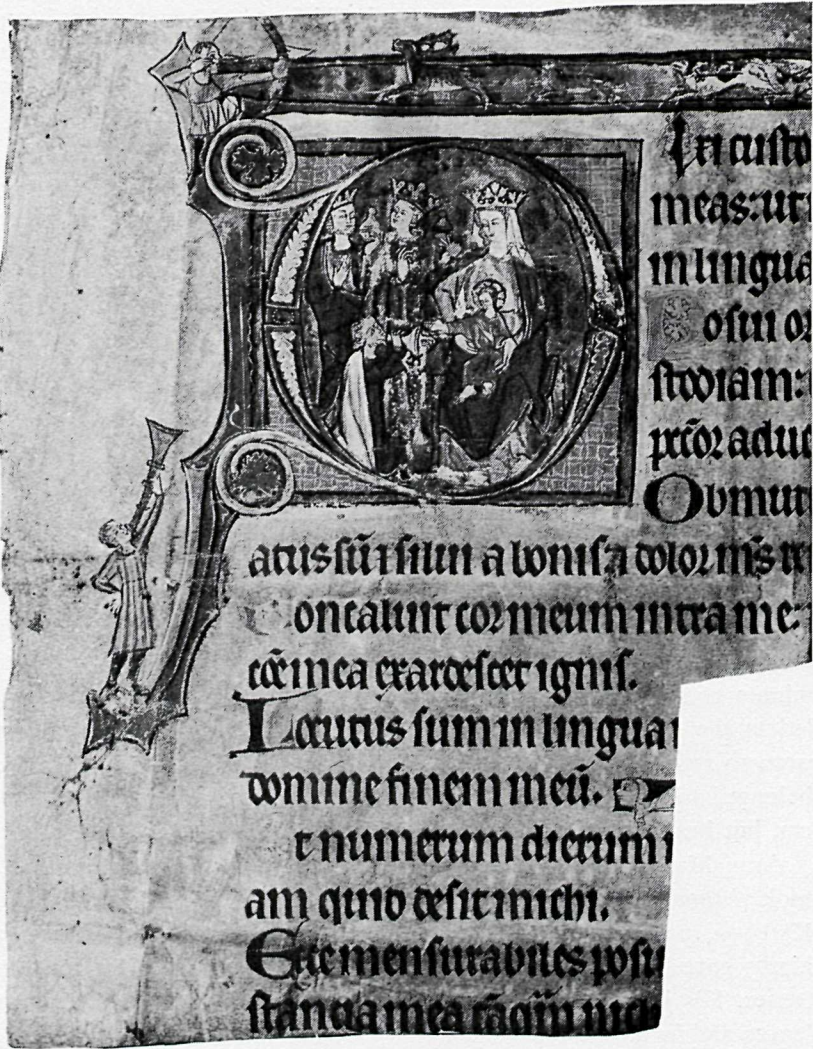


Figure 1 Adoration of the Magi. National Library of Iceland, Í.B. 363 8vo. —
 Photo: Gunnar Rúnar.

Iceland. The largest leaf measures 31.5×21.2 cm, although it has been somewhat cut. Inquiry about these leaves at the Arnarnagnæan Institute revealed the fact that they had been on loan at the time of the earlier search.

Certainly this was a very exciting discovery. All the leaves had been used for bookbinding. What immediately catches the eye is that among these 29 leaves there are some light in colour, unfaded and almost uncut, but others dark and badly damaged, and some look as if they had been soaked in water. On one of the light coloured leaves there is an historiated initial burnt in gold at the beginning of Psalm 80, *Exultate deo*, which shows the Resurrection of Christ (Photo 2). In style, colours, handwriting and linefillings, the resemblance to the Nat.Libr. initial and fragments is so close that there can be no doubt that they were all a part of the same manuscript.

These large, light coloured vellum leaves, most of them with multi-coloured, gold initials, were reminiscent of a manuscript seen somewhere before. This latter manuscript turned out to be a calendarium, AM 249a fol. (Photo 3), which had been photographed many years earlier, both in colour and black/white. This time the 29 leaves and the calendarium were all together in the Arnarnagnæan Institute so a minute comparison could be made of the originals. This comparison led to the conclusion that the illuminations, colour and handwriting were so much alike that the calendarium and the 29 leaves had once belonged to the same book. AM 249a fol. now measures 31.8×22.7 cm, but has obviously been cut considerably.

Arne Mann Nielsen, photographer at the Arnarnagnæan Institute, took photos of several of the 29 leaves. Back home in Iceland Stefán Karlsson, paleograph at the Árne Magnússon Institute in Reykjavík, kindly gave his opinion of the handwriting of the calendarium and the leaves. His judgement was that in all probability the writing on the leaves and in the calendarium was by the same hand.

On a slip at the beginning of the calendarium Árne Magnússon (1663–1730) wrote a note with the following information: 'Þetta Calendarium er framan af einu Psalterio Davidis, sem hefr vered vid Skálholltz kirkiu, og synest þangad komed vera fra Einglande' (This calendarium is from the beginning of a Psalterio Davidis, which has been in the church at Skálholt, and seems to have been brought thither from England).³ The fact that Árne Magnússon was of the opinion that the

psalter had been brought from England most likely was due to the handwriting or scribbles in English from the 16th century on folio 7 recto in the calendarium, which originally had been left empty. Kr. Kålund said: 'Bl. 7r er der med en kursivhånd fra 16. årh. skrevet forskellige udkast til kontrakter og lign., på engelsk, men — som det synes — nedskrevne i Island, samt navnet "Wyllym Bernard yss" (On folio 7r are written in a cursive 16th century handwriting various rough draughts for contracts and the like in English, but — as it seems — written in Iceland, together with the name 'Wyllym Bernard yss').⁴ I sent a photo of this page to D. H. Turner, Deputy Keeper, Department of Manuscripts in the British Library in London, and asked him whether he could find any meaning to this strange text. After consulting the Assistant Keeper, Janet M. Backhouse, along with two other colleagues, D. H. Turner replied: 'We feel it only amounts to scribbles, and ones not of an entirely serious nature. What we can decipher is as follows.


'In the name of god amen this indenture was mad in eyslonde the 12 day of apryll And in the yere of ye rayne of o^r soffrayne Lord kyng henry the eyght betwyn^e drombok? & thorlok ??? & the bere pote þ me hand your wyll.' 'Wyllym Bernard'. 'Wyllym Bernard yss a good fellow'. '... dothe I praye you ... and let the Coppe ...'.*

Francis Wormald, who was an expert on calendaria, has written an article on AM 249a fol., published in 1966 under the name 'An Early Carmelite Liturgical Calendar'.⁵ F. Wormald dates it 1294–1312, or around 1300, because of the illuminations and the handwriting. He adds: '... but the manuscript to which it was attached was certainly in England in the first half of the sixteenth century, since the name of St. Thomas Becket has been erased on 7 July and 29 December. This was done in 1538 as the result of an order by Henry VIII. On 12 March, 23, and 26 November the word 'pape' has been erased, also as the result of Henry VIII's order. The names of SS. Dominic, 5 August, and Francis, 4 October, have also been removed in the same way, but this seems to have been unofficial distaste since there was no

* Lecturer Davíð Erlingsson reads the word *Rote* after *Coppe*, and that word seems to fit well into the context. — According to Stefán Karlsson the name, occurring twice in the scribbles, is *Wyllym Barnard*.

.an.
 Proprius estis
 peccatis ue
 stris.
 Gaudebit la
 tus mea cu
 cantabo
 tibi: Quia
 mea qua
 redisti.

sup flum q̄ firmasti t̄.
Incensa igni i suffossa: ab inceptate uul
 tus tui peribunt.
 Et in man' tua sup uertu' dexte tue: i sup fili
 um hois que firmasti t̄.
Et no' discedimus a te unificabis nos: et
 nome' tuu' inuocabim'.
Que dicitur tuum conuertere nos: i ostende fa
 ciem tuam i salui erimus.



Et uitate dō aduitori
 no: iubilare dō iacob.
Sumite psalmū
 i date tympanum:
 psalterium iocūdu
 cum cythara.

Succinate ne come
 ma tuba: in iligui die sollempnitatis uestre.
Quia p̄ceptū in isel: i iudiciū deo iacob.
Testimonū i ioseph posuit iud' tū exeret

Figure 2 Resurrection of Christ. Arnamagnæan Institute in Copenhagen, AM Accessoria 7dV. — Photo: Arne Mann Nielsen.

general order for their removal.' The manuscript must therefore not have reached Iceland until after 1538.

If my conclusion is correct that the vellum leaf in the Nat.Mus. with the inscription 'Istud psalterium . . .' has been a part of this magnificent book, then it was owned by a nunnery of the Benedictine order in the 15th century, according to Montague Rhodes James's dating of the Carrow Psalter inscription in Baltimore, Ms34.⁶ This psalter has exactly the same inscription written in the same hand as the one on the vellum leaf with the Crucifixion in the Nat.Mus. These two psalters are from different periods, one of them made for Carmelite nuns. 100 to 150 years later a scribe at Carrow apparently gave these books a kind of *Ex Libris* for the Benedictine nunnery there. Up to this day only these two manuscripts with the Carrow inscription have been found. The nunnery at Carrow was located just outside the south gate of Norwich in Norfolk. It was closed down in 1536 at the time of the Reformation in England. A lively trade had existed for centuries between Norfolk and Iceland and in the 16th century Great Yarmouth in Norfolk became one of the main centers for ships sailing between England and Iceland.⁷ Therefore it is not improbable that the psalter was brought directly from Norfolk to Iceland. The book, judging from the clean vellum leaves and the calendarium, does not seem to have suffered any ill treatment before it came into the possession of the cathedral of Skálholt. It is not unlikely that the unknown Wyllym Barnard** brought this precious psalter with him, either to sell it or use it as a present to acquire some special favour. The book came to rest in Skálholt and was the property of the Cathedral. Originally, it was without doubt regarded as a treasure but its value had declined by the time Árni Magnússon acquired it, most likely during his long stay in Skálholt between 1702–1712. It is possible that boys at the Cathedral school were given permission to cut leaves from the psalter to use as bookcovers.

It must almost be taken for granted that Árni Magnússon separated the calendarium from the book and preserved it well. Usually he did not hesitate to separate calendaria from the psalters in his own possession. Árni Magnússon seems to have had a great interest in calendaria; this one can deduct from the many calendaria he collected and

** It should be mentioned that in 1533 a man named Phillip Barnarde owned two ships that sailed from Yarmouth to Iceland (8).

treasured. He often wrote notes on his *calendaria* telling where he got them and that he had separated them from old or ancient psalters. The psalters, on the other hand, he left behind or used for bookcovers, however beautifully they were illuminated. Because of this ill treatment, Icelandic medieval art history lost an invaluable source of information. Árni Magnússon himself used a part of our psalter for bookcovers immediately after tearing the book apart. The vellum leaves covering AM 707 4to, written by Árni Magnússon himself, and AM 708 4to which was corrected by him,⁹ are still so clean that they must have been taken right out of the psalter for that purpose. Seemingly Árni Magnússon himself used more leaves out of the great psalter for binding books which he had acquired in Iceland or abroad (see AM Accessoria 7dV). However, a part of the psalter seems to have been lost when the book came into his hands or it was left in Iceland and was used by others for bookbinding.¹⁰

In *Illumination in a Manuscript of Stjórn*,¹¹ I compared the illuminated pages from the Carrow Psalter in Iceland and illuminations of the Tickhill Psalter group with three Icelandic manuscripts and took, as a matter of course, the precaution that if M. R. James' dating of the writing 'Istud psalterium . . .' in the Baltimore psalter to the 15th century was correct, if so, then another manuscript of the same school must already have been in Iceland in the 14th century. Now I believe that it has been fully proven that M. R. James was right in his dating of the above mentioned inscription of the Baltimore Carrow Psalter to the 15th century, and as the Skálholt Carrow Psalter bears the identical inscription it must be of the same date.

The Skálholt Carrow Psalter cannot have arrived in Iceland before 1538 (see Francis Wormald and the 16th century scribbles on the *Calendarium*) and therefore cannot have had any influence on Icelandic illumination of the 14th century. An English manuscript of the Tickhill Psalter group must have already found its way to Iceland in the first half of the 14th century and its illuminations had a profound influence on Icelandic illumination of the same century.

I am indebted to the staff at the Arnamagnæan Institute in Copenhagen for their excellent assistance during my research, and to Derek H. Turner, Deputy Keeper at the Department of Manuscripts in the British Library in London and Janet M. Backhouse, Assistant Keeper at the

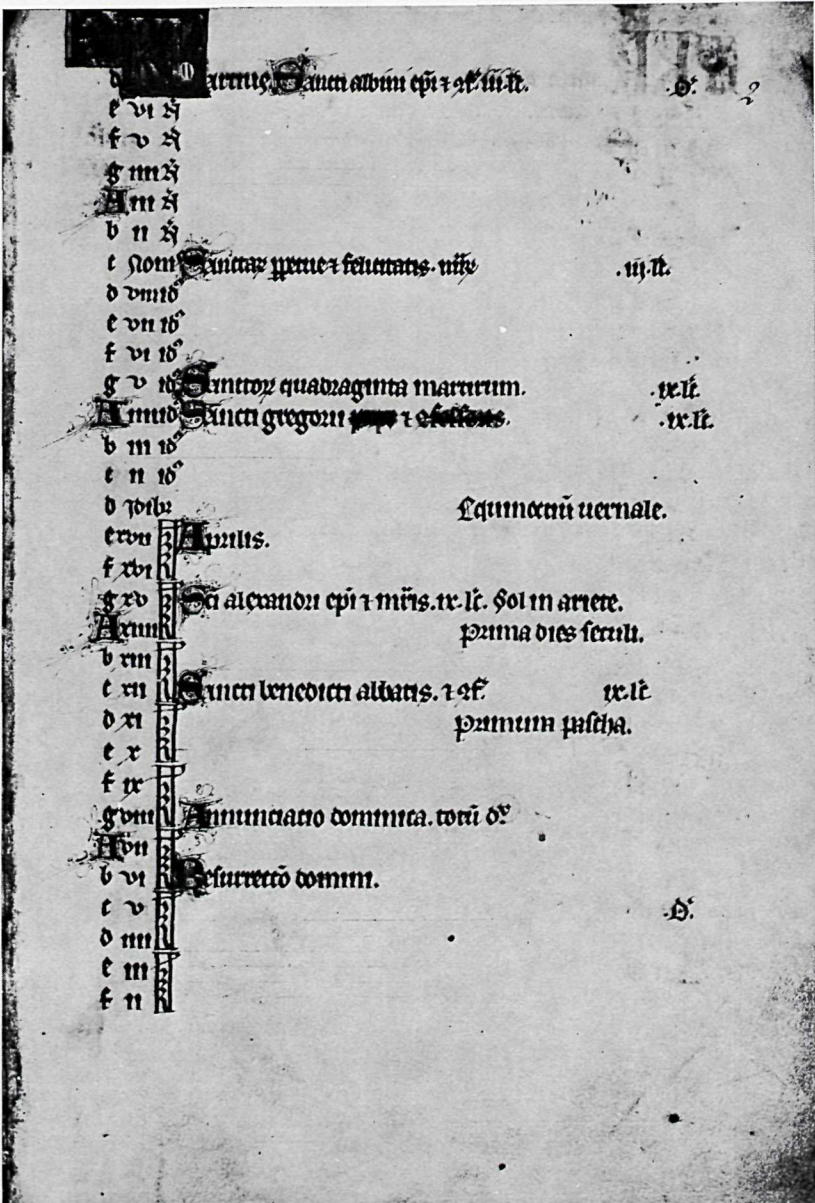


Figure 3 Calendarium page, March. Arnamagnæan Institute in Copenhagen, AM. 249a folio, f.4v. — Photo: Arne Mann Nielsen.

same institute, for solving the English scribbles on fol. 7r in AM 249a fol. Last but not least, I want to express my gratitude to Stefán Karlsson, paleographer, for his invaluable comments.

¹ Selma Jónsdóttir, 'Enskt saltarabrot á Íslandi', ('Fragments of an English Psalter in Iceland'), *Andvari*, Reykjavík 1967, pp. 161–170.

² Donald Drew Egbert, *The Tickhill Psalter and Related Manuscripts, A School of Manuscript Illuminations in England during the Early Fourteenth Century*, Princeton University Press, 1940.

³ *AM 249a fol.*

⁴ *Katalog over den Arnamagnæanske Håndskriftsamling*, vol. I, København 1888, p. 226.

⁵ Francis Wormald, 'An Early Carmelite Liturgical Calendar from England', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, vol. XXXIX, November 1966, pp. 174–180.

⁶ Montague Rhodes James, *The Carrow Psalter, A Descriptive Catalogue of Fifty Manuscripts in the Collection of Henry Yates Thompson*, Cambridge, University Press, 1902, p. 6.

⁷ Björn Þorsteinsson, 'Enskar heimildir um sögu Íslendinga á 15. og 16. öld', *Hið íslenska bókmenntafélag*, Reykjavík 1969, pp. 62–67.

⁸ *Diplomatarium Islandicum, Íslenskt fornbréfasafn*, vol. XVI, p. 723.

⁹ *Katalog over den Arnamagnæanske Håndskriftsamling*, vol. II, København 1892, p. 122.

¹⁰ Selma Jónsdóttir, *op. cit.*

¹¹ Selma Jónsdóttir, *Illumination in a Manuscript of Stjórn*, Almenna bókafélagið, Reykjavík 1971, part I.

Afdrif enska saltarans í Skálholti

ÁGRIP

Í ANDVARAGREIN 1967¹ voru leidd að því rök að þrjú skinnblöð, Í.B. 363 8vo (1. mynd), Lbs. fragm. 51 og Þjms. 4678, væru öll úr sama handritinu, enskum saltara sem hefur verið í eigu Carrow-klausturs og verið skrifaður um það bil 1290–1320. Á þessum skinnblöðum eru lýsingar sem bent var á að væru skyldastar lýsingum sem D. Egbert hefur flokkað kringum Tickhill-saltarann og tíma-sett um 1300–1325.²

Árið 1972 kom í ljós að 29 blöð í Accessoria 7dV í Árnasafni eru sýnilega úr sama saltara og þau þrjú skinnblöð sem fjallað var um í Andvaragreininni. Nokkur þessara blaða eru ljós og heilleg (2. mynd), en önnur hafa orðið fyrir meira hnjaski. Þessi blöð hafa verið tekin utan af bandi bóka í Árnasafni.

Lýsingar og rithönd þessara saltarablaða minntu á messudagarímið AM 249a fol. (3. mynd), og náinn samanburður benti til þess að lýsingar, litir og skrift væru af sama uppruna.

Árni Magnússon hefur látið þá vitneskju í té að þetta messudagarím sé framan af saltara í Skálholti, sem virðist vera frá Englandi,³ enda er í handritinu krabb á ensku frá 16. öld,⁴ sem hefur nú verið lesið að töluverðu leyti, og er ljóst að það sem þarna stendur er skrifað á Íslandi á stjórnarárum Hinriks VIII. (1509–47).

Francis Wormald, sem var sérfróður um messudagarím, skrifaði grein um AM 249a fol. 1966⁵ og tímasetti það 1294—1312. Handritið taldi hann hafa verið enn á Englandi á fyrra helmingi 16. aldar, þar sem skafið væri út í ríminu í samræmi við tilskipun Hinriks VIII. frá 1538.

Messudagarímið hefur í öndverðu verið gert fyrir Karmelítasystur, en sé sú ályktun rétt að blaðið með árituninni úr Carrow-klaustri sé úr sömu bók, hefur bókin verið í eigu systra af Benediktsreglu á 15. öld; sú var tímasetning M. R. Jones á sams konar áritun með sömu hendi í öðrum enskum saltara.⁶

Carrow-klaustur var í Norfolk, og milli Norfolk og Íslands voru tíðar skipaferðir um langan aldur, ekki síst frá Yarmouth á 16. öld.⁷ Það er því trúlegast að saltarinn hafi borist beint til Íslands frá Norfolk skömmu eftir siðaskipti á Englandi (1536), og vera má að hann hafi verið gefinn Skálholtskirkju af Wyllym þeim Barnard, sem nefndur er í enska krabbinu frá stjórnarárum Hinriks VIII.⁸

Árni Magnússon hefur fengið þetta handrit til eignar, trúlega á Skálholtsárum sínum 1702–12. Hann hefur hirt messudagarímið, en notað blöð úr saltaranum utan um bækur.⁹ Einhver blöð úr saltaranum hafa þó verið horfin úr honum þegar Árni eignaðist bókina ellegar orðið eftir hér á landi og verið notuð af öðrum til bókbands.¹⁰

Í bókinni *Lýsingar í Stjórnarhandriti* 1971¹¹ voru lýstu blöðin sem hér voru nefnd í upphafi borin saman við þrjú íslensk handrit frá 14. öld, en sá varnagli var að sjálfsögðu sleginn að væri Carrow-árituninni réttilega skipað á 15. öld, hlyti annað handrit af sama skóla að hafa verið hér á landi þegar á 14. öld. Nú virðist sýnt að Carrow-saltarinn hefur ekki borist hingað fyrr en á árunum 1538–47, þannig að það er ekki hann heldur annað handrit enskt af Tickhill-saltara-flokknum, sem hefur haft djúptæk áhrif á íslenskar handritálýsingar á 14. öld.