

Dombibliothek Hildesheim

The Albani Psalter

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Concept, design and production
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THE ILLUSTRATIONS

I The Calendar

The Albani Psalter calendar illustrations have received very little attention. Kauffmann dismisses the Occupations of the Months as ‘simplified to the point of obscurity’, while Wormald writes ‘These representations do not present any particular problems. They are very rudimentary in conception, not all the figures performing their accustomed duty.’¹ However, their simple style and lack of detail masks their fundamental importance in the development of Occupations of the Months in England.

Webster’s classic survey of *‘The Labors of the Months in Antique and Medieval Art’*, defines the models which evolved in the late Roman period. ‘What the Antique world had created was, above all, a form: the single figure usually enclosed within a frame either abstract or architectural, passive as regards any purposeful work, and referring to the occupations by means of attributes’.² Thereafter, particularly from the twelfth century onwards, the scenes become increasingly animated, filled with contemporary detail and eventually set in elaborate landscapes. It is precisely during the twelfth century that one can see the Occupations break out of their frame and expand with dynamic activities across the page of a manuscript.

Early English calendar illustrations follow three traditions. Two precocious Anglo-Saxon calendars fill a wide band across the whole page with rural activities, populated with groups of people, animals and implements.³ This formula had no immediate successors. Two much later examples contain the Occupations within roundels: the Albani Psalter and Cambridge, St John’s College, MS B.20 (c.1140). The St John’s roundels are paired with their Zodiac signs and are all arranged on a single page. Their figures constantly overstep the margins. The Albani Psalter uses the system applied to subsequent manuscripts, placing the Occupation at the head of each month. The third formula clusters activity in, or sometimes around, the KL monogram. In a Canterbury martyrology (not quite comparable to a calendar) of c. 1100–1120, Anglo-Saxon looking Occupations and Zodiac signs entwine with foliage.⁴ The Occupations are contained within the KL in the Shaftesbury and Winchester Psalters and Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Auct D.2.6, but by the end of the century, in the Hunterian Psalter, the image has shifted to the outer edge of the L and is breaking away from the initial, packed with contemporary details.⁵

Starting from the Classical prototypes, almost all the labourers are standing up, with obvious exceptions for warming and feasting. Unlike all the examples cited by Webster, all the Albani figures are seated, even when slaughtering a pig. They are unusually passive and all contained within their frame. In all these aspects (the single figure, the frame, passive with attributes) the Albani Psalter Occupations are closest to the classic criteria, while the other English examples of the twelfth century show stages of progressive development.

The Occupations for March and July appear to be a month early (see below) which suggests they may come from a continental model.⁶ In addition, the Albani Psalter has an unusual selection of paired scenes, providing less variety than the other English examples. Both March and April are flower bearers, both July and August deal with reaping, both September and October are concerned with the vintage, both November and December wield an axe.⁷ As a result, the cycle omits potential scenes of feasting, digging, pruning, acorn harvest, winnowing, wood gathering, weeding, sheep shearing. Even the grape scenes are not active picking and trampling but passive holding.

If calendar images are in any way designed to reflect the interests of their reader, these refer to a person who sits quietly, sealed within a frame from the outside world, for whom the activities of the natural year, from feasting to harvesting, are more symbols than reality.

Agricultural activities and implements feature in several of the psalm initials too. Page 338 shows a reaper with handful of corn and a sickle, and a sower grasping his basket of seeds. Page 340 shows two types of axe, one like the hatchet for dispatching pigs, and the other T-shaped. The latter is illustrated in the Bayeux Tapestry, where it is used for dressing planks. Collect 6 (p. 414) shows a mattock and pick axe, while p. 279 shows a spade and scythe. Although missing a pruning knife, the man grasping a branch on p. 339, is clearly performing agricultural work because the psalm refers to eating ‘the labour of your hands’, while Psalm 103:25 (p. 279) and Collect 6 make a general reference to ‘work’. The man on p. 254, Psalm 89, who holds two sprouting branches like the Flower-bearer, represents the transitory nature of life, like grass. These initials are all more vivid and active than the Calendar roundels, reinforcing the idea of a staid and static model for the Calendar scenes.

The Zodiac signs could indeed be described as ‘rudimentary’ and ‘simplified’, apart from Virgo (see below). They follow a sequence which begins with Aquarius assigned to January, the ‘normal’ relationship today and prevailing through the twelfth century. This is the association established in Isidore’s *Etymologies*.⁸ However, the Vitellius martyrology, Anglo-Saxon in appearance in spite of its early twelfth-century date, begins with Capricorn in January.⁹ Two models were clearly prevalent in the early twelfth century, both mentioned by Bede. In *De Natura Rerum* he assigns Aquarius to January, following Isidore but in *De Temporum Ratione* he promotes the order described in Ausonius’ *Eclogues* (16), starting with Capricorn in January.¹⁰ An English calendar c.1100, from Thorney or Ramsey highlights the issue at the start of the twelfth century, citing a poem in which January is Capricorn, but illustrating January as Aquarius.¹¹ Within this range, the Albani artist has selected the Isidore model which seems to oust the Ausonius model in subsequent English calendars.

Page 3 – January

For January, Janus is seated in a roundel, holding a bowl in his left hand and an irregular scalloped object in his right hand. This could be a piece of bread with bites taken out, as on the font at Brookland (Kent), or the lid of a ciborium as in the Hunterian psalter, or an indented paten.¹² He represents feasting and, with his two faces, the turn of the year. Aquarius wears a pair of trousers and pours water from a pitcher.

Page 4 – February

For February, a seated man wearing a furry cloak and hood, warms his hands by the fire. The two overlapping fish are Pisces.

Page 5 – March

In March, a seated man holds a green bough in which a bird sits. The Bloom bearer is normally found in April or May while March is usually Digging. A branch and bird together are found in May, representing Falconry, in the St John’s calendar.¹³ The sign is Aries, the ram.

Page 6 – April

In April, a seated man holds two flowering branches. The sign is Taurus, the bull.

Page 7 – May

In May, a seated man holds a falcon. Gemini, the twins.

Page 8 – June

In June, a seated man holds a scythe and whetstone. The sign is Cancer, the crab.

Page 9 – July

In July, a seated man holds a sickle with a long handle in one hand and a clutch of rather implausible corn stalks in the other. July is normal for Reaping in France, but it is early for England, where it usually occurs in August.¹⁴ The sign is Leo, the lion.

Page 10 – August

In August, a seated man holds a sheaf of corn, the harvest. The interior of his roundel has a purple circle, linking it to the purple background behind Virgo.

Virgo is disproportionately large compared with the other Zodiac signs. The Virgin Mary is incorporated with the star sign: the vigil and the feast of the Assumption of the Virgin are indicated in the adjacent calendar entries. She is emphasised by her purple frame. She has a halo, wings and holds a strange object rather like an ear of corn. In some calendars she appears like Demeter, holding a sheaf of corn, associating herself with the Occupation above.¹⁵ The object in this case might be corn or a fruitful branch.¹⁶ The latter would refer to the word play of *Virgo/Virga*, Virgin and rod or branch, emphasising the prophesy of Isaiah 11:1 ‘There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots’.

Virgo with wings, in a roundel, also appears on the portal of Autun Cathedral (c.1130) and in the Shaftesbury Psalter, a manuscript which shares other iconographical features with the Albani Psalter.¹⁷ Her promotion, from constellation sign to Mary, may explain why Virgo is larger than the other signs. This emphasis is a particular feature of the Albani Psalter calendar, not apparent in other contemporary English manuscripts. The Feast of the Assumption had a peculiar importance for Christina. She wished for a confirmation of her chastity before taking her vows and hoped for a heavenly sign at the time of the feast. Her moment came seven days later when she was greeted by a group of handsome angels who placed a magnificent crown on her head, addressing her as ‘Virgin of Christ’.¹⁸

Page 11 – September

For September, a seated man holds a bunch of grapes. Libra is a man holding the balance in his hand.

Page 12 – October

For October, a seated man holds a wine keg in his lap and raises a bowl in his hand.¹⁹ On the twelfth-century font at Burnham Deepdale, Norfolk, a man stands above the keg similar to this one, funnelling wine into it from a bowl.²⁰ The Norfolk man is clearly filling his cask, but the St Albans scene could be wine tasting. This is unusual: a man raises a bowl to his lips for October, in the thirteenth-century Baptistery at Parma.²¹ Although the grape harvest (September) is shown in other English twelfth-century manuscripts, for October normally they show treading the grapes, harvesting acorns or sowing. The sign is Scorpio, the scorpion.

Page 13 – November

For November, a seated man holds a narrow-headed hatchet. This may refer to slaughtering the animals for winter (shown on the next page for December) or cutting trees for firewood, as shown for June and July in the Anglo-Saxon calendars.²² In Italy, killing hogs and cutting wood are both popular activities for December.²³ The sign is Sagittarius the archer. He is like a fawn, with cloven feet and hairy legs.

Page 14 – December

For December, a seated man prepares to stun a pig with an axe. He holds the weapon so as to hit the pig with the butt, not the blade. The sign is Capricorn, the goat. A very similar goat appears on p. 135, Psalm 34.

II The Miniature Cycle

II.1 Sources

For most readers, the miniature cycle is the artistic highlight of the Albani Psalter. The origins of its iconography are explored and extensively illustrated in Pächt's masterly analysis.²⁴ It is the earliest extant English miniature cycle with full-page painted scenes since the tenth-century Benedictional of St Aethelwold.²⁵ Its iconography is connected to two slightly later cycles, the Eadwine Psalter and Pembroke College New Testament. All three are likely to be based on common Ottonian sources, from which they diverge with considerable inventiveness.²⁶ In the preliminary cycles of earlier English psalters, the theme tended to be the struggle against evil, featuring David and Goliath, the Devil and St Michael. The Albani Psalter instead focuses on Redemption through the Incarnation of Christ.²⁷ This theme set a standard for providing a New Testament cycle to precede the psalms, a feature developed in many subsequent books, including the Shaftesbury, Winchester, Copenhagen and Hunterian Psalters.²⁸

The images are based closely on Bible texts, requiring from the reader a certain fluency in identifying the gospel locations. Some scenes are out of sequence, some images compress two episodes. Particular emphasis seems to be placed on Christ's solitary Agony in the Garden, depicted in two scenes and placed startlingly before the Last Supper.²⁹

Without any accompanying words, the images provide suitable material for private contemplation. In this period, theologians like St Anselm and Aelred of Rievaulx were advising readers to practise affective meditation, allowing themselves to empathise deeply with the life of Christ.³⁰ The *Prayers and Meditations* of St Anselm were compiled for women, Adela, daughter of William the Conqueror (c.1072) and Matilda, Countess of Tuscany. The earliest surviving illustrated copy was made at St Albans by the Alexis Master, during Geoffrey's abbacy, so their contents were readily available for discussion.³¹ Anselm's passionate words rouse the reader to take part, for instance, in the Deposition: 'Would that I with happy Joseph might have taken down my Lord from the cross, wrapped him in spiced grave-clothes and laid him in the tomb'. The prayer to Mary Magdalene asks 'Recall in kindness what you used to be... and seek for me that same forgiving love. Draw me to him where I may wash away my sins' and later, after witnessing the Resurrection, tears which 'were rung from a heart broken and self-tormenting, now flow from a heart exulting.' Finally Mary speaks in triumphantly to the apostles 'I have seen the Lord, and he has spoken to me'.³²

Some scenes are particularly rare or innovative in an early twelfth-century context. These include the Annunciation with the Virgin holding a book, and the dove; the Return of the Magi; the fighting women at the Massacre of the Innocents; Christ with the chalice in the Garden of Gethsemane; and Mary Magdalene announcing the Resurrection. The Legend of St Martin is abruptly inserted in the Resurrection sequence.

The scenes are contained within richly coloured, gold rimmed borders. This represents a new departure from the fleshy acanthus frames of Anglo-Saxon art. The borders are filled with three-dimensional ribbon and meander patterns, compact floral and foliage designs. Pächt has traced these to late Ottonian manuscripts in Bavaria and Bohemia. They are also found on monumental wall paintings at St Jean, Poitiers and S. Maria in Pallara, Rome.³³ This determined search for foreign sources has overlooked the fragile evidence of English wall paintings where many key features of the miniature cycle are to be found. At the parish churches of Clayton, West Sussex, and East Shefford, Berkshire, there are borders painted in a three-dimensional way, and the acanthus design is found at Coombes, West Sussex. Moreover, extended

narrative sequences were being painted even in tiny parish churches in the later eleventh century, for instance at Hardham, West Sussex, where there are both Christological scenes and a narrative of St George. At Wareham, Dorset, St Martin and the Beggar is depicted in two registers. Solid rectangles of colour form the background to these figures, but at Clayton and Copford, Surrey, architectural features are used.³⁴

II.2 Aspects of Reality

In the Calendar commentary attention has already been drawn to depictions of the contemporary world, regarding agricultural implements. The more detailed illustrations of the full page miniatures (including the Alexis quire and the diptych, pp. 416–417) offer additional scope for observation of real life. Doors and musical instruments merit particular attention, while furniture, architecture, metalwork and costume are also significant.

Medieval doors were rotated in two basic ways: from a projecting harr post which swivelled in a socket at the bottom and top of the door frame; or from strap hinges riding over a hook attached to the door jamb. The harr post system was used from antiquity, particularly for operating the great bronze doors.³⁵ The miniature artist shows the operating details of these doors, including a washer or shoe in the lower socket, even though pivots and sockets are concealed on real examples. On p. 29 the system is shown correctly with the pivot on the outer edge of the door, while on p. 25 the pivots appear more randomly in the middle. Iron strap hinges are shown on pp. 34 and 55. These correspond to the normal Romanesque C-shape, with many surviving examples in England.³⁶ Two illustrations, pp. 49 and 57, combine both the harr post and the straps, an unlikely duplication of systems, but possibly a combination of two sources. The Gates of Hell depict an unusual hinge. The closest parallel comes from St Albans Abbey itself. The hinges created at the time of Abbot Robert de Gorham (1151–68) for the slype at St Albans are remarkably like those depicted in the psalter. Their distinguishing features are the lyre-shaped scrollwork, off-set from the edge of the door by a short strap.³⁷

Three versions of the rebec are shown in the psalter, on pp. 56, 417 and arguably on p. 371. While cymbals, trumpets and harp are instruments mentioned in the psalms, the rebec was a more recent invention, originating in Turkey.³⁸ The rebec is a bowed instrument with gut strings, a vaulted back and tapering outline. The schematic example played with its neck down is illustrated on p. 371. However David's waisted instrument, played between the knees (*a gamba*), is now defined as the medieval viol or figure-of-eight fiddle.³⁹ On p. 417, the body is well rounded with four semicircular sound holes. This reveals its descent from the medieval Turkish *rabāb* originally made from two half gourds. Its surface is neatly decorated, perhaps with metal or inlaid wood. The instrument on p. 56 is more sinuous and slender, gently waisted like a guitar, with less defined shoulders between the sound box and the neck. It has four circular sound holes. In both cases, the strings are attached to a loop or bridge which hooks over the end pin. On p. 56 the end pin is plain, on p. 417 it is elaborated like a fish tail. Both forms were depicted elsewhere. At Oloron Cathedral (Pyrenées-Atlantiques), two adjacent kings on the portal hold two different viols, one pear-shaped, one figure-of-eight, providing a close approximation to those shown on p. 56 and 417.⁴⁰ At the end of the neck, strings were attached to



Plate 1: St Albans Slype hinges, Victoria & Albert Museum (Society of Antiquaries of London)

pegs in a peg disc. This was usually a rounded or trapezoid enlargement at the end of the neck. Page 417 shows a workable peg board with its three-pointed terminal, but omits the pegs. These pegs normally projected to the front or the back (sagittal pegs). Page 56 shows the three pegs in an otherwise unknown setting, projecting from a circular orifice or funnel in the same direction as the neck. This is likely to be a technical misunderstanding or the result of a drawing convention which places the projecting pegs in the same plane as the neck.⁴¹

If the artist made a mistake in the direction of his pegs, at least he understood how the instrument was played. David's fingers on p. 56 stop the strings correctly and his right hand delicately holds the bow with the underhand grip.⁴² He plays in the waisted section of the sound box, enabling him to tilt the bow and rub each string separately. On p. 56, the bow is held across the upper bowl so that it plays all the strings together.⁴³ Two distinct bow constructions are shown. On p. 417, it is a simple piece of bent wood, closely related to the weapon, with the hairs looped over either end. On p. 56, the bow is made of a cleft stick with one fork broken off, leaving the other as the bow stick, with the thicker part as the natural handle.⁴⁴

Pächt disparaged the artist of p. 417, saying he neither understood the fingering nor the grip of the bow.⁴⁵ In this case, it is necessary to explore the function of the two Davids. On p. 56 he is alone, receiving inspiration from the dove, his face wrapt in spiritual enlightenment. He is in the process of composing the psalms. On p. 417 he is leading a group of musicians. He rests his left hand on the neck and shoulder of the viol while with his gaze and right hand he directs the harpist. David is not playing but briefly conducting. This moment picks up the joyful performance of Psalm 150 (p. 371), the great song of musical praise.

On page 417, the chime bells or cymbala are attached to a frame and struck by seated men with two hammers. The casting and tuning of such bells is described by the eleventh-century monk Theophilus, while Gregory of Tours describes the use of such bells in churches in the sixth century.⁴⁶ The other instruments, horns, gongs, harps (pp. 371, 377, 417) are very simplified or schematic.

A range of furniture is shown in the book, in particular thrones, tables, footstools, and accurate beds with coverings on pp. 53 and 57.⁴⁷ Many of the thrones are an opportunity for pattern making, notionally based on a boarded construction like that from Stanford Bishop, Herefordshire, or panelled construction like the Throne of St Peter, Rome. The seats on p. 44 and the upper left seat on p. 417 include the concept of a small decorative arcade, as found on the Romanesque wooden chair in Hereford Cathedral.⁴⁸ King David on p. 56 sits on a recognisable *sedes curulis*, the Roman seat of authority made with a folding X-frame. David's chair is distinguished by its animal feet and heads, typical classical details which survived into the middle ages and beyond. The so-called Throne of Dagobert (eighth to twelfth century) from St Denis Abbey is a prominent example.⁴⁹

The architecture has a clearly Romanesque appearance, with rounded arches, columns, capitals and dwarf galleries. In most cases it looks primarily decorative, combining busy clusters of turrets, crenellations and an array of high level windows and galleries. The rows of interior galleries (p. 38 and presumably p. 41, with twelve arches framing twelve disciples) correspond to the arcading depicted in the Bayeux Tapestry, at William the Conqueror's hall in Rouen. This design was also used on the great hall at Westminster, constructed by William Rufus (1079–99).⁵⁰ The Temple (p. 34) is the principal building with a complete structure. It consists of a single square tower, divided into stages by string courses and displaying a variety of openings, square, circular and rounded. The building is made of stone blocks, topped by a dwarf gallery and a roof of apparently rounded tiles, *tegulae*. Its doors are described above. These features tend to be found in the Rhineland and Italy, Speyer Cathedral providing a more complex example. Pomposa has a campanile divided in stages with a variety of openings; Parma Cathedral combines the campanile and high level dwarf gallery. The vaulted chamber of the Holy Sepulchre (pp. 49, 50) is found similarly disposed on the late eleventh-century wall paintings of St Angelo in Formis.⁵¹

Architecture serves to distinguish indoors from outdoors but its outstanding function in the Christ cycle is to control space within the composition. For instance, at the Visitation (p. 20) Mary and Elizabeth are contained by the nave while attendants flank in the aisles. Two arches of different sizes control the groupings of chief character and crowd on pp. 45 and 51. The arches in the Flagellation (p. 44) reflect the arc of the whips. The roof covering the dreaming Magi is echoed by the angle of the angel's wings below (p. 26), and the stoop of Mary's back is enhanced by the dome above her at the Entombment (p. 48).

In English manuscripts before the Albani Psalter, the majority of narrative scenes are not set within a building. An arch or curtain would suffice. Although whole buildings frequently appear in the Utrecht Psalter and its derivative Harley 603, these form part of the landscape.⁵² Equally in the *Life of St Cuthbert* (c.1100), people walk in and out of buildings, but in neither of these cases is architecture used to frame and control the entire scene.⁵³ The source for this specific handling of space is in Ottonian manuscripts like the Pericopes of Henry II, the Gospel Book of Otto III and the Golden Gospels of Echternach.⁵⁴ It is significant that the closest parallels in England are in the Pembroke New Testament and the *Life of St Edmund*, both connected to the Albani Psalter in terms of artists and iconography. The dividing of background into abstract panels of colour is also Ottonian.⁵⁵

Clothes seem to fall into two basic categories: classicising, traditional robes and cloaks worn by holy biblical figures, and more contemporary costume worn by ancillary figures. Thus the maidens at the Visitation (p. 20) wear clinging dresses with wide-open sleeves and a tight vest beneath; the soldiers at the Massacre and Arrest (pp. 30, 42) wear short tunics and leggings; the servant at the House of Simon (p. 36) wears a smart belt with decorative terminals. The figures in the Alexis illustration all wear contemporary clothes (p. 57). In the psalm initials, one can recognise clergy by their tonsure and occasionally a pallium (p. 412), but the colour of habits is generally bright and random. The Benedictine law-giver in Psalm 9:20 (p. 86) wears a brown cowl but coloured robes. In the Litany illustration (p. 403) the tonsured monk is gaily clad in blue, and the veiled women, presumably the religious ladies of Markyate, wear a multitude of colours. Our artists were not bound by any official colour scheme here, but neither were nuns' gowns closely regulated at this point in the twelfth century. Similar colour schemes apply to the pasted initial, Psalm 105 (p. 285). Armour and weaponry are not areas of great interest for our artists. Some soldiers are shown with the contemporary short coats of mail and simple conical helmets without any details of nasal guards (pp. 42, 74, 231, 370). The appearance of a Roman standard or signum on p. 416 and potentially on p. 42 is discussed later, (Geddes, VI).

Crowns appear in various forms: as a golden circlet (p. 302) or more usually as a headband closed above by intersecting arcs (pp. 149, 417). This type of crown is notionally the same as that depicted on St Edmund in his *Vita*, where it is shown in much greater detail with its fabric pendants.⁵⁶ Its model is essentially Ottonian: Emperor Conrad II (1024–39) added an arch to cap the imperial crown. On this crown is a plaque depicting David with similar headwear.⁵⁷ Evidence from Anglo-Saxon coinage indicates that Edward the Confessor had also adopted this type of closed crown by the 1060's.⁵⁸ Sometimes the crown is embellished with improbably large finials (p. 72, 294). Large fleur-de-lis finials are found on the 'Crown of the Golden Virgin' (c.983?) at Essen Minster.⁵⁹ The candlestick wielded on p. 190 is also an Ottonian type whose design was absorbed into English craftsmanship. The base has three feet, the stem has two knobs and the candle sits in a cup. Little detail is provided but in outline it resembles both the Ottonian candlesticks (c.996/1000) of Bernward of Hildesheim and the Gloucester Candlestick (1107/13).⁶⁰ Hidden and over-painted at the Third Temptation (p. 35) is a disc brooch decorated by five studs joined to form a cross. Although schematic, this is a similar form to a ninth-century brooch from the Pentney hoard, Norfolk.⁶¹ The chalices on pp. 39 and 40 have a

convex-sided base, with the appearance of palmate foliage covering a base rim. The cup, with a wide bowl and projecting lip is attached to the base by a circular knop. On p. 39 the cup is decorated with an unlikely semicircular radiating pattern, but on p. 40 there is a more convincing ring of pellets.⁶² Such rudimentary depiction does not require an authentic model but the shape of chalice is normal in the twelfth century and its attempt at decoration suggests a valuable object.⁶³ Although unusual attention to technical detail is shown in the depiction of viols and doors, the artists of the Albani psalter were essentially dealing with transcendental and traditional iconography in which contemporary life barely intruded. This lack of interest in detail contrasts with the innovative use of physical things to express figures of speech. Thus, the Alexis Master introduces an actual chalice in the Garden of Gethsemane (p. 39); Pilate visibly transfers the blood guilt to the Jews by sprinkling water (p. 45); a sun is introduced at Emmaus to indicate evening (p. 69); and Christ's miraculous disappearance at Emmaus is emphasised by an alarming pair of feet (p. 71).

II.3 Commentary

Page 17 – The Fall, Genesis 3:1–6

This is a splendid composition in which the rigid demarcation of space created by the tree is resolved into a deadly circle of sin by the participants. Satan, in the form of the fallen angel Lucifer, spews out the snake who gives the apple to Eve. She, facing the cause of her downfall, passes the apple to Adam who receives it with one hand and eats it with the other. This is a form of continuous narrative, compressing several separate dramatic moments into one scene.

Both Lucifer sending an emissary to perform the evil deed, and Adam and Eve, seated beside the tree instead of standing, are Anglo-Saxon features, illustrated in the Caedmon Genesis.⁶⁴ In the Anglo-Norman play *Le Mystère d'Adam*, written in the mid-twelfth century, Diabolus himself enacts the temptation while the apple is only passed to Eve by the serpent after he has left the stage.⁶⁵

Page 18 – The Expulsion from Paradise, Genesis 3:21–24

The action is divided by three arches which represent the gates of Paradise, guarded on the left by the cherub with the flaming sword. Adam and Eve, wearing skins God made for them and carrying a scythe and distaff, are driven out of Paradise by God. This tableau represents v. 24, with the angel guarding Paradise, and Adam and Eve on their way out of Eden, carrying the tools for their new working life.

Just two Old Testament scenes are used to introduce the extensive New Testament cycle which follows. The juxtaposition of the Expulsion and Annunciation provides an immediate visual link between Sin and Redemption.

Page 19 – The Annunciation, Luke 1:28–35

The Virgin sits in an aedicule, looking up in surprise from the open book which she was reading. Either we see the external thongs of its binding, or its pages, ruled but unlettered, face the reader. Herod, reading his prophesy, holds a similar lined but unlettered book (page 23). Elsewhere in the psalter (pp. 72, 294 and many more), where they are accompanied by text, such book pages are almost always inscribed with lettering by the Alexis Scribe which suggests that this book was also intended for letters but the scribe did not work on this quire.⁶⁶ Mary's right palm faces outwards in a gesture of surprise. In a book where the majority of faces are shown in profile, busily involved in their own narrative, Mary's three-quarters gaze engages with the viewer. The dove of the Holy Spirit, issuing from the angel's mouth on a visibly exhaled breath, flies towards Mary.

The 'Reading Annunciate' is an important iconographic rarity at this stage in the twelfth century, although it becomes more common in the later middle ages. In

Byzantine depictions, Mary usually holds a spindle, for weaving the veil of the Temple, according to the apocryphal gospel of James. The idea of the Virgin reading is found in Pseudo-Matthew where, during her youth in the Temple she excelled in studying the law and chanting the psalms. In Bible commentaries, both Ambrose and Bede mention that Mary had read about the prophecy that a virgin would conceive and bear a son. Odilo of Cluny (962–1049), in one of his sermons, asks what the Virgin was doing when the angel came and suggests that perhaps she was reading the prophets. By the twelfth century, Ailred of Rievaulx firmly states in a sermon that Mary was reading the book of Isaiah at the time.⁶⁷

Previous images show the Virgin with an open book on a lectern, but the open book in her lap is new in the St Alban's Psalter.⁶⁸ This innovation corresponds with what is known about Christina: her psalter 'lay open on her lap at all hours of the day for her use'.⁶⁹ Emphasis on the active, intellectual awareness of Mary is also connected with the cult of the Virgin, strongly promoted by Abbot Anselm of Bury St Edmunds, Eadmer of Canterbury and Osbert of Clare in the early twelfth century. In 1129 the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin was established by synodal decree in London.

The dove, an essential element of later Annunciations, is very rare at this date, but an earlier example is found in the Bohemian Coronation Gospels, 1085.⁷⁰ According to her *Vita*, a dove appeared before Christina's own birth, which probably occurred in the 1090's. It flew over from Huntingdon Priory and nestled in her mother's sleeve. This was a sign that Christina would be filled with the Holy Spirit.⁷¹

This dignified scene should be contrasted with the Annunciation in the Canticles, p. 394, where Gabriel boldly touches Mary's head, she swings her arms in opposite directions, and both hold a book inscribed with 'Hail Mary full of grace, the Lord'. The image is vigorous and unconventional.

Page 20 – The Visitation, Luke 1:39–56

Mary and Elizabeth embrace under an architectural construction, two aisles flanking a central nave or rotunda. The picture is symmetrically balanced by two female servants drawing aside the curtains.

Page 21 – The Nativity, Luke 2:7

A complex structure, looking more like the whole of Bethlehem than a stable, frames the Nativity. The Virgin lies diagonally on the right, her hand raised signifying speech, addressing the pensive Joseph. She seems to be looking up at the angel.

The star, visible in the under-drawing but not painted, and angel hover above the crib. Unusually, there are animals both above and below the crib. Nearly all Anglo-Saxon manuscripts place the crib, with its animals, below the Virgin's couch while Carolingian examples place the crib centrally between Mary and Joseph. The Albani Psalter clings on to both these traditions, retaining the beasts below the couch and placing the crib with more beasts centrally.⁷²

Page 22 – The Annunciation to the Shepherds, Luke 2:8–14

The Shepherds and their flock are sprawled on a hill on the right. The angel herald addresses them with one hand and raises his other palm to heaven. The first shepherd raises his palm frontally in surprise, like the Virgin at her Annunciation. The heavenly choir, looking both up and down, in a theatrically explicit manner proclaim 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, goodwill toward men' (Luke, 2:14). They are separated from the messenger by a triple-lobed golden cloud.

Page 23 – The Three Kings before Herod, Matthew 2:1–6

Here begins a detailed cycle of five scenes concerning the Magi. Herod is seated in his distinct space, holding an open book, while a sword bearer stands behind

him. Facing him, and gesticulating in animated fashion, the three kings stand in order of seniority, led by the oldest with a white beard. The star shines beyond the margin.

This is a conflation of two separate scenes. In the first, Herod consults the prophecy of Micah with the scribes, to locate Bethlehem as the birthplace of the Messiah. In the second episode, Herod tells the kings where to go.⁷³

Page 24 – The Journey of the Three Kings, Matthew 2:9

Led by the youngest magus, the kings ride to Bethlehem, following the star. They journey from left to right. A particularly theatrical effect is achieved by pairing this scene with p. 27, the Return of the Three Kings, where they troop from right to left, this time led by the old man.

Page 25 – The Adoration of the Magi, Matthew 2:11

The Virgin and Child, on a throne and in profile, receive the offerings of the kings. The scene is in an aedicule with doors on the left. The mysterious cloaked figure on horseback who disappears through the doors on the left, is obviously the last king from the previous page. This convention, to express movement, occurs in a Carolingian ivory where the three kings are seen riding to the right, away from Bethlehem. Here the rump is the first king's horse leaving the scene.⁷⁴

Page 26 – The Dream of the Magi, Matthew 2:12

The kings, with realistically different poses, including one showing bare feet, are warned by the angel to return home without visiting Herod again. The folds of the bed and the angel's wings are echoed by the roof above.⁷⁵

Page 27 – The Return of the Magi, Matthew 2:12

The kings return, in reverse order to their first journey. Stimulated by events, two are engaged in animated discussion. Splendid Romanesque trees interrupt the panelled background

Page 28 – The Presentation at the Temple, Luke 2:22–28

The Virgin offers her child to Simeon who receives him with veiled hands. The tiny Christ blesses Simeon. Two female attendants, paired for symmetry, bear the offering of doves. They stand in a domed building, beneath an altar lamp. The same scene is shown on p. 395, in the Cantic of Symeon, but here the grouping of figures is more intimate and less formal. In both cases Joseph, mentioned in the gospel, is omitted, and females bring the doves.⁷⁶

Page 29 – The Flight into Egypt, Matthew 2:14

The holy family, led by Joseph's son James, proceed from left to right. James, glancing back at his troupe, leads them into a building. Mary rides side saddle with her legs facing away. Joseph holds a walking stick in his right hand and shoulders an axe and water bottles.

The feature of James leading the party derives from the apocryphal text *Protoevangelion Jacobi* which was familiar to the Byzantine church.⁷⁷

Page 30 – The Massacre of the Innocents, Matthew 2:16–18

The measured serenity of the preceding miniatures gives no warning of the unbridled violence in this scene. It is a conflation of two episodes, divided by the central tree. The sword bearer or armiger provides the moving link by looking backwards at Herod and walking forwards into the mayhem. His pointing finger, echoing Herod's, transfers the king's instructions into action. Some of the women helplessly weep and scream but two fight back: at the top right one woman tries to stay the soldier's arm, while another at bottom right appears to be biting the soldier's leg.

The armiger, not mentioned in the gospel, already features in Byzantine and Anglo-Saxon images of the story.⁷⁸ He becomes a much more significant character in liturgical drama. The Massacre of the Innocents developed from an epilogue in the play of the Magi into a separate piece, the *Ordo Rachelis*, named after Rachael ‘weeping for her children’. In the thirteenth-century Fleury play book the armiger suggests the massacre himself, in order to appease Herod’s wrath, (see Geddes, IV).

Latin liturgical plays tend to dwell on the helpless misery of the mothers, the inconsolable weeping of Rachael. However, the theme of defiant mothers fighting back gradually develops in art from the twelfth century onwards. On the north tympanum of Notre Dame, Paris, c.1250, a mother tries to grasp the point of a sword with her bare hand. In a psalter from ?Amiens, 1270–80, a mother tries to scratch out the soldier’s eyes.⁷⁹ The theme emerges in vernacular dramas from the late middle ages where it degenerates into a bawdy brawl.⁸⁰

Page 31 – The Return from Egypt, Matthew 2:20–21

The scene is the same as the Flight into Egypt, but in reverse. Mary’s legs face outwards and Joseph still grips his staves with the same hands.

Pächt, describing this scene as a ‘rarissimum of medieval iconography’, was only able to find one earlier western example in an eleventh-century lectionary from Salzburg,⁸¹ but the scene also features on the eighth-century Ruthwell Cross. The cross omits the Flight into Egypt and here the Return symbolises the journey back into light from the dark desert. Bede refers to ‘the secret monastic life of the desert’ and a return to the Promised Land for those monks who did not stray. The Return was a feast celebrated (on 9/10 January) in the early church in Northumbria and Ireland.⁸²

The scene is rare in manuscripts but is such an obvious theatrical device, completing a calm frame to the Massacre scene. It features in the *Ordo Rachelis*, the miracle play from Fleury.⁸³ It is not necessary to suggest a direct connection between Ruthwell and St Albans: the appearance of both images may have been prompted by different liturgical activities.

Page 32 – The Baptism, Matthew 3:13–17; Mark 1:9–11; Luke 3:22

Christ stands in the River Jordan which covers his naked, sexless body like a cloak. One hand is blessing, the other, rather ineffectively, attempts to cover his nakedness. John, holding a phial of oil, and wearing his camel skin cloak administers the blessing. Two angels are symmetrically placed in attendance and the dove of the Holy Spirit descends from above.

Page 33 – The First Temptation, Matthew 4:3–4; Luke 4:3–4

Christ and the devil stand under a palm tree. The devil holds the stones, asking Christ to turn them into bread. Christ replies, raising his forefinger ‘It is written that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God’. The devil has wings, a beak and clawed feet.⁸⁴

On this page, and in the Second Temptation, Christ rather pointlessly clutches a rectangular fold in his gown. This can be explained by similar scenes in the Christ cycle from the Eadwine Psalter. Here Christ logically holds a rectangular book in this space, to indicate ‘It is written’.⁸⁵

Page 34 – The Second Temptation, Matthew 4:5–7; Luke 4:5–8

Christ stands on the roof ridge of a church which has a bell tower on the right, a dwarf gallery under the eaves and a great door.

The devil taunts Christ to jump off the roof. The gestures of the devil on the right, pointing up and down, emphasise the text ‘He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone’ (Matthew 4:6). Christ, with his pointing finger, replies ‘Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God’.

Page 35 – The Third Temptation, Matthew 4:8–12 Luke 4:9–12

The devil has taken Christ to a high mountain to show him all the kingdoms of the world and material wealth. The devil points to the pile of treasure and Christ refutes him. The painted treasure comprises a gold crown, bowl and ring. That is rather a small pile for this scene, and much more treasure was originally intended. Sketched beneath the paint are a scattering of jewels, another ring and a smart gem-studded circular brooch.

Page 36 – Christ in the House of Simon the Pharisee, Luke 7:36–50

Christ sits at the end of a long table, rebuking Simon the Pharisee and pointing to Mary Magdalene below. She anoints his feet from a chalice-shaped bowl and wipes them with her hair. Behind Christ an attendant enters bearing another jar. The assembled company are eating a variety of fish, meat, fowl, and loaves, one of which is marked with a cross like the sacrament.

The tablecloth is particularly intricate, showing blue embroidery and a white check damask pattern. The meal and tablecloth are similar to the Last Supper, p. 41.

Simon is incredulous that Christ should even allow the sinner Mary Magdalene near him at table, while Christ, pointing to her, explains that her love and penitence have brought forgiveness. The two others ask ‘Who is this that forgives sins also?’

Luke 7:38 says Mary first stood behind Christ, and then wiped his feet with her hair. In other examples, Mary is shown twice in the same scene, to indicate both of her actions, forming a continuous narrative. Here her initial pose has been replaced by an attendant.³⁶

The story above is taken directly from Luke 7:36–50, but its context and meaning derive from the other gospels. In Matthew 26:6–12 and Mark 14:3–8, the parallel scene involves a woman anointing Christ’s head not his feet, and this provides an introduction to the Passion because Christ says ‘She hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial’. In John 12:1–8, the washing of the feet is performed in the house of Lazarus by Mary, the sister of Martha. Here there is no mention of the preliminary scene, Mary bringing in the ointment, and the table discussion is between Jesus and Judas, with no mention of the others’ comments. However, it is the John text (12:12–15) which proceeds directly to the Entry to Jerusalem, like the picture sequence in the Albani Psalter (p. 37). The details of table cloth and meal, repeated at the Last Supper, p. 41, provide a strong visual prompt that this scene serves as a prologue to the ensuing Passion cycle.

Mary Magdalene creates a significant feminine frame to the Passion through this scene and her subsequent annunciation of the Resurrection to the apostles (p. 51).³⁷ In a way, this scene allows a woman the closest possible access to the Eucharist itself, the culmination of Christian worship. Whereas the Last Supper scene (p. 41) is a harsh depiction of betrayal and denial, this meal brings in the concept of sacrifice and redemption through the intimate relationship between Christ and Mary.

Like Mary Magdalene in this scene, Christina was humiliated and slandered, accused of being a ‘loose woman’ but she nonetheless retained her tactile intimacy with Christ.³⁸

Page 37 – The Entry into Jerusalem, Luke 19:35–36; John 12:13

Christ enters Jerusalem on an ass. John 12:13 mentions the crowd greeting him with palm leaves while Luke 19:35–36 mentions strewing garments in his path. A young man is in the tree gathering palm branches. The twelve apostles follow behind. This scene provides one of the closest parallels with the Pembroke cycle, and thus is evidence that a common visual ancestor was known to both artists.³⁹

Page 38 – The Washing of the Feet, John 13:4–9

The apostles are arranged in two registers. The upper group is distinguished by the rear view and hidden profiles while in the lower row each disciple clutches a raised bare foot. Christ, on both knees and wearing a towel tucked around his waist,

washes Peter's feet and talks to him. Peter draws up his garment and holds his forehead. Peter has just asked why Christ should wash his feet. Jesus, holding Peter's foot, replies 'If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me', and Peter's gestures emphasise his words 'Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head' (John 13:8–9). The two disciples on the right, at the end of the scene are asking whom Jesus means when he says one of them shall betray him (John, 13, 22). Judas on pp. 41, 42 has a receding hair line, like the disciple on the bottom row, second from the right.

The two rows of apostles in this scene are an iconographic innovation. The rear views in the upper row derive from Pentecost scenes, as shown on p. 55. In the foot washing scene it is a convenient way of hiding the apostles' legs which would otherwise dangle over the lower row. The position of the apostles in the lower row, clutching their feet, is clarified in Byzantine examples such as the mosaics of Monreale where they are actually removing their sandals.⁹⁰ The St Albans artist has omitted the footwear.

In Byzantine examples Christ rather airily walks about.⁹¹ A vivid Anglo-Saxon feature is the position of Christ on both knees. In the eleventh-century Tiberius Psalter, the kneeling Christ is preceded by an inscription 'Hic fecit Ih[esu]s mandatum' (Jesus made this commandment) instead of the biblical 'I give the commandment'.⁹² This is a dramatic rendering of the abbot's liturgical action of kneeling to wash the feet of the poor on Maundy Thursday. Christ's commandment to love one another is performed rather than given.⁹³

In the Bible, this scene is followed immediately by the Last Supper which takes place in the same room. The Agony in the Garden which follows (pp. 39, 40) is thus startlingly out of sequence.

**Page 39 – Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane, Matthew 26:36–40;
Mark 14:32–34; Luke 22:39–45**

The disciples sleep while Christ goes off alone. His right hand points to the chalice and his left is raised in prayer. He is saying 'Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me', and an angel appears to strengthen him (Luke 22:39–45). The miniature follows Mark (14:32–41) who names the sleeping disciples as Peter, James and John while their names and number are kept vague in Luke.

The comforting angel is a Byzantine motif, not found in Ottonian painting. The cup, a figure of speech in the gospel, is literally represented here, an innovation by the Alexis Master, and only found incidentally in one earlier Byzantine text. It is also shown in the related cycle from the Eadwine Psalter.⁹⁴ The cup becomes an important feature of late medieval iconography with 'the prayer of the chalice' becoming a part of the Gethsemane story.⁹⁵

The Byzantine tradition depicts the Gethsemane episode in one scene: Christ is shown both alone in prayer and again, as a continuous narrative, rebuking the sleeping disciples. In the Albani cycle, the disciples are depicted in this scene as a foil to Christ's isolation at the top of the page, and they are repeated in the rebuking scene on the following page (p. 40).

A similar image of prayer and chalice is depicted in the initial to Psalm 101 (p. 270).

**Page 40 – Christ and the Sleeping Apostles, Matthew 26:40–5;
Mark 14:37–42; Luke 22:45–6**

Following Mark 14:37–42, Jesus returns to the disciples and finds them sleeping. He is saying 'Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? Couldst thou not watch me one hour?' The others stay asleep 'for their eyes were heavy'. The chalice remains alone on the hill, a reminder of Christ's solitary agony and an emotional counterpoint to the frustration with his companions.

Christ carries a tau crozier, like a shepherd prodding his feckless flock: he reminds Peter 'The spirit is ready but the flesh is weak'. He also says 'For it is written, I will smite the shepherd and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad' (Matthew 26:31).

The solitary struggle and lonely chalice, emphasised by two separate scenes, are particularly appropriate for contemplation by an anchoress. The eucharistic symbol

of the cup is important here because the following scene of the Last Supper is not one of communion but betrayal.

Page 41 – The Last Supper, John 13:21–27

The last supper takes place in an arched space, supported by four turrets. The disciples sit on a raised semicircular table, with Christ on a seat of honour on the far left. As Judas receives the sop, a minute devil enters his mouth at the same time. John rests his head on Christ's bosom while the other disciples, in an animated but formulaic manner, either listen to Christ or talk to each other. The meal is fish and bread, served on the smart tablecloth, but there is no cup and the bread is not consecrated (see p. 36).

Jesus is saying 'Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. The disciples looked one to another, doubting of whom he spake. He lying on Jesus' breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it? Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot. And after the sop, Satan entered into him' (John 13:21–27). At the same time, Jesus looks directly at Peter, about to explain Peter's denial to him.⁹⁶

The scene is about betrayal and denial, not the institution of the eucharist. The same moment, offering the sop to Judas, is found in the related cycles of the Pembroke New Testament and Eadwine Psalter.

Page 42 – The Betrayal, Matthew 26:47–52; Mark 14:43–48; Luke 22:47–52; John 18:1–10

Three episodes are depicted at once. Judas kisses Christ whose right hand is held up to heal Malchus' ear. The crowds grab and arrest him on the right. On the left, Peter is cutting off Malchus' ear with a sword. The background is filled with crowd and soldiers, so Peter and Judas (barefoot) are the only apostles present. In the gospels, the crown bear swords, staves, lanterns and torches. Here they wield spears and two spatulate implements which are like the signum or Roman standard used in the scene of St Alban's martyrdom.⁹⁷

Page 43 – The Mocking of Christ, Mark 14:65; Luke 22:64; Mark 15:17–20; Matthew 27:28–29; John 19:2

Christ is blindfolded, wearing the crown of thorns. He wears a red cloak with purple lining. The tormentor on the left spits in his face and places a rod, or mock sceptre, in his hand. The man on the right hits his head with a stick. At his feet, two others kneel in mock adoration.

This scene is a literal depiction of two episodes from three sources: the blindfolding and mocking *before* Peter's denial (Mark 14:65, Luke 22:64) and the scene *after* the interview with Pontius Pilate where the crown of thorns and purple robe are placed on Christ (Mark 15:17–20; Matthew 27:28–29; John 19:2). A close adherence to the text is significant because the composition of the scene with the blindfolded Christ is new. It makes a poignant parallel with the Presentation at the Temple (p. 28), also symmetrical with Christ at the centre. In the earlier scene Christ is flanked by maidens bringing doves of sacrifice; here he is flanked by tormentors and he is the sacrifice.

Mark: 'And some began to spit on him, and cover his face and to buffet him ... [Later] And they clothed him with purple and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his head. And began to salute him, Hail, King of the Jews! And they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon him, and bowing their knees worshipped him'.

Luke, after Peter's denial: 'And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him in the face'.

Matthew, after Pontius Pilate: 'And they stripped him and put on him a scarlet robe. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand; and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying Hail, King of the Jews!'

The iconic and ritualised coronation which is depicted here derives from Middle-Byzantine sources, such as Paris, Bib. Nat. Gr.74, f. 55v. The western alternative showed more narrative action with Christ being dragged along by tormentors.

The feature of the blindfold which Pächt considered to be an innovation by the St Albans artist becomes more frequent in later Flemish and German works by, for example, Pol Limburg and Grünewald. The blindfold has clearly appeared in this image because the artist has looked at two separate episodes in the gospels.⁹⁸

Page 44 – The Flagellation, John 19:1; Luke 23:16

The scene is divided unequally under two arches. Christ, with lanky locks of hair, and his curved back poignantly exposed to the tormentors, is tied to the central column. The man on the right is delivering a back-hand blow while the one on the left holds Christ's binding cord. Pilate sits on the side holding a whip in his right hand and making an equivocal open-palmed gesture with his left hand. (His fore-finger has been mistakenly over painted in blue.)

The scourging is mentioned in John 19:1 and Luke 23:16 and it takes place after Pilate's first interview at which he wishes to release Christ with a beating. It happens *before* the mocking with the crown of thorns. Pilate's whip and open palm indicate his words 'I will therefore chastise him and release him'.

Back views of Christ are rare in medieval art, but this scourging fulfils the text of Isaiah 50:6 'I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting'. A close comparison is found in a Carolingian ivory in the Louvre which includes the detail of Christ's right foot turned to show the sole and his straggly hair. A rear view is also shown in the Stuttgart Psalter. The presence of Pilate as instigator of this scene is quite clear from the gospel, but he features more frequently in later art.⁹⁹

Page 45 – Pilate washes his hands, Matthew 27:24–25

This narrative is effectively framed by the arches. On the left, one assistant holds Pilate's sleeve while another washes his right hand, holding a bowl and pouring water from a bottle. Pilate is addressing the throng and visibly sprinkles water over them. The crowd is answering back.

This literal representation comes from Matthew 27:24–25. 'When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be upon us and our children'.

The scene is unusual because it omits Christ who is usually bound before Pilate, and it is exclusively an altercation between Pilate and the Jews. The gesture of flicking the water transfers the blood guilt from Pilate onto the Jews. This gesture seems to be an innovation by the St Albans artist, transferring a figure of speech into visible form.

Page 46 – Carrying the Cross, Matthew 27:31; John 19:17

An over-sized Christ, stripped to the waist, carries the cross himself, as in John 19:17. The man pushing from behind and the other turning in front are Byzantine features. The weeping Daughters of Jerusalem, mentioned in Luke 23:28 are not shown. It is rare to find Christ stripped to the waist on the road to Calvary, but after the mocking and crowning with thorns 'they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him and led him away to crucify him' (Matthew 27:31). It is a logical visual continuity from the Flagellation.

Page 47 – The Descent from the Cross, Matthew 27:57–59; Mark 15:43–46; Luke 23:50–53

Joseph of Arimathea stands with his back to the cross, supporting the limp form of the dead Christ. His arms have been detached from the cross and are being tenderly held by Mary and John, The cross is cut from a living tree, the *lignum vitae* type.

A small figure at the bottom removes a nail from Christ's foot. A woman and man flank Mary and John. They are possibly one of the Three Marys and Nicodemus. Two ministering angels crouch above. The label, on which the letters INRI should be inscribed, is blank. This is another example (like Mary's book at the Annunciation, p. 19) where lettering has been overlooked in the section of the miniatures.

The normal arrangement for the Descent from the Cross shows one of Christ's arms still attached above his head, and Mary holding the other arm lower down, giving the scene a strongly diagonal composition. In the Albani Psalter it is almost symmetrical, with Mary and John balancing each other statically as they normally do in a Crucifixion.¹⁰⁰

The Albani Psalter is exceptional in omitting the Crucifixion altogether but this composition serves as its highly charged emotional substitute. The reader was probably supposed to look up at this stage and contemplate a crucifix sculpture. Romanesque murals of the Passion at Ickleton (Cambridgeshire, not far from Huntingdon) and Kempley (Gloucestershire) also show this mixture of painting and sculpture, leaving a gap in the picture cycle for contemplating the Rood.¹⁰¹

Page 48 – The Entombment, Matthew 27:59–60; Mark 15:46; Luke 23:53; John 19:38–40

The scene takes place in a domed edifice. Christ's naked body, wrapped in a transparent shroud is lowered into a strigillated sarcophagus (with S-shaped carvings). Mary stands behind the sarcophagus bending over her son, her arched back parallel to the dome above. Joseph of Arimathea holds Christ's shoulders while two younger men are at his feet, one of them, probably Nicodemus, holding a jar.

Although the scene appears to take place within a building, the columns are all behind the characters which suggests it is more like a stage set, the 'monumentum' mentioned in liturgical plays.¹⁰² Although the gospels clearly say the tomb was cut into the rock, a stone sepulchre begins to appear in western depictions from the 10th century. The sarcophagus also served as an essential and convenient prop in liturgical plays. A close parallel for this scene is found on the wall paintings of St Angelo in Formis, Italy.¹⁰²

Page 49 – The Harrowing of Hell, Apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus

Christ tramples on the broken gates of Hell. The devil, with long pointed ears is bound by handcuffs and a neck halter. Christ, aided by two angels, heroically leans forward to pull first Adam and then Eve out of hell.

Hell is a hybrid, represented below in the Anglo-Saxon way as the gaping jaws of a monster, but above, the spewing furnace is an Italian type. An Anglo-Saxon hell-mouth is shown in British Library, Cotton MS Tiberius C.VI, f. 14; while the Italian furnace is depicted in the eleventh-century Sacramentary of Ivrea.¹⁰⁴

The gates are also a hybrid: according to the Gospel of Nicodemus they were made of brass. The projection on the lower gate shows they a classical type of harrung door (rotating around its projecting pin), but the elaborate hinges made of iron scrolls are English. The doors depicted in the Ivrea Sacramentary are harrung while the hinges in the Anglo-Saxon Tiberius psalter have curled straps.

Page 50 – The Three Women at the Sepulchre, Matthew 28:1–7; Mark 16:1–7; Luke 24:1–10

Four soldiers guard the tomb, according to Pilate's instructions. (Matthew 28:1–7). The three women led by Mary Magdalene bring spices which they carry in a jar, and a censer. The angel, holding a lily sits on the empty tomb. He tells the women not to be afraid and points to the right indicating the absence of Christ's body, 'He is risen, he is not here' (Mark 16:1–6). The setting, in a domed space with exotic trees, is the same as the Entombment (p. 48).

Page 51 – Mary Magdalene announces the Resurrection to the Apostles, Mark 16:9–10; John 20:18

A column divides the scene into unequal parts, with Mary Magdalene isolated commandingly in her own rectangle while the eleven apostles crowd together under an arch. Mary is telling the disciples that she has seen the risen Lord (John 20:18).

At this date Mary Magdalene's announcement to the apostles is rare in western art, but the scene became an essential element in the liturgical Easter play *Quem quaeritis* by the twelfth century.¹⁰⁵

Mary's authoritative role as 'apostle to the apostles' derives from her witness of Christ's risen body in the previous scene. Christina's visions of Christ, both as a baby and pilgrim, give her similar authority, particularly over Abbot Geoffrey.¹⁰⁶

Page 52 – The Incredulity of Thomas, Mark 16:14; Luke 24:33–43; John 20:24–28

Christ stands tall and central, revealing his palms and feet to the group of assembled apostles. Through a rent in Christ's clothing, Thomas puts his finger in the wound.

This scene combines two episodes, Christ showing his hands and feet to all the apostles, and his later encounter with doubting Thomas. In the Thomas scene, Christ normally raises one hand and draws aside his clothes over the wound with his other hand. Because he is simultaneously showing his hand and wound in this scene, the artist has left a gap in his clothing.

This Thomas scene follows directly after the Magdalene scene, just as it does in the *Peregrinus* play where both scenes, of the hands and wound, are also combined.¹⁰⁷ In the gospel of Luke 24:13–31, the scenes of Christ's appearance on the road to Emmaus precede the showing of wounds (verses 36–49). In the Albani Psalter the Emmaus episode appears at end of the Alexis quire, pp. 69–71. The omission of the Emmaus scenes from the miniature sequence might indicate that the Alexis quire was already in existence.

Page 53 – The Legend of St Martin, Sulpicius Severus, *Vita Martini*

The Resurrection cycle is abruptly interrupted by the St Martin legend.

In the lower scene, St Martin, riding from the right, cuts his cloak in half to share it with a naked beggar who carries a water bottle and stands outside a city gate. In the upper scene, Martin lies dreaming and a vision appears to him of Christ wearing the same cloak. This is the only miniature divided into separate panels of narrative. In order to fit them in, the frame is omitted from the bottom of the image. Similar divisions of the legend into two panels are found in manuscripts of the eleventh and twelfth centuries.¹⁰⁸

The appearance of this legend within the Life of Christ is hard to explain.¹⁰⁹ The facing pages of 52 and 53 provide a commentary on the recognition of Christ. Thomas and the disciples needed to see Christ physically in order to believe while Martin gave to the beggar without knowing he was Christ.

Page 54 – The Ascension, Mark 16:19; Luke 24:50; Acts 1:9–11

The Virgin stands surrounded by the apostles, gazing up at the feet of Christ which are disappearing into a cloud. On either side of Christ two angels point vigorously, illustrating the words 'Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven' (Acts 1:9–11).

Mary is not mentioned in the Bible at the Ascension but she features in Byzantine and Anglo-Saxon illustrations. However, theologically she is understood to be the cause of the Ascension through Christ's incarnation: 'And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but that he came down from heaven', John 3:13.¹¹⁰ Schapiro identified the image of Christ's feet disappearing into a cloud, witnessed from below by the

apostles, as a feature deriving from an Anglo-Saxon homily: ‘nor did the cloud rise up, but he took the cloud before him’.¹¹¹ The innovation in the Albani Psalter is to transfer this motif of the disappearing feet to the Supper at Emmaus (p. 70).

This scene, together with Mary Magdalene’s annunciation to the apostles, and Mary at Pentecost, shows an important female emphasis in the life of Christ. This demonstrates both the growing cults of the Virgin and Magdalene, and the feminine spirituality of Christina whose life mirrored these scenes. Christina also witnessed Christ’s miraculous disappearance.¹¹²

Page 55 – Pentecost, Acts 2:1–3

Mary and the apostles are seated in a locked circular enclosure. The apostles are in profile, looking at the dove, but Mary faces forwards. They sit with palms raised. The dove of the Holy Spirit descends from above. In Acts (2:1–3) Mary is not mentioned on the scene, but as with the Ascension, she represents the incarnation without which there would be no Pentecost. Theological justification for this was explained by Odilo of Cluny (c.962–1049) whose homily on Mary at both the Ascension and Pentecost emphasises her role in the incarnation.¹¹³

As mentioned above, this scene reinforces the feminine emphasis in Christ’s life. Christina also witnessed the Holy Spirit descending as a dove.¹¹⁴

Page 56 – David as Musician

David sits on a fine folding chair playing a viol or rebec held between his knees. His music and psalms are inspired by the dove of the Holy Spirit whispering in his ear. On either side of David are a sheep and goat, reminders that the humble shepherd became king. Although David most commonly plays a harp as mentioned in the Bible, variations crept in: he plays a rebec in contemporary illustrations from Rochester and Canterbury.¹¹⁵

The presence of the sheep and goat also implies a reference to the Last Judgement (Matthew 25:3). This fits in to the discourse at the start of the Psalms (pp. 71–2) where the main theme of the Psalter is defined as the fight between good and evil, sin and redemption. It also makes a fitting conclusion to the life of Christ, ending in judgement and redemption.

III The Alexis Quire

The Alexis quire contains several disparate items. They seem to have been added at different times for different purposes. The illustrations are presented in various formats: the Alexis story is an unframed frieze of continuous narrative; the Emmaus images are framed, recalling the Miniature cycle, but are coloured with soft washes and represent one scene each; the fighting knights are a lightly coloured sketch; and the Beatus ‘B’ is an historiated initial in solid colour and gold, reflecting the appearance of the remaining psalm initials.

Page 57 – Alexis

The *Chanson of St Alexis* is preceded by a unique illustration painted in delicate washes. The image is a continuous narrative, proceeding in separate episodes from left to right. Buildings frame each scene as in the miniature section, but here the figures are set deep within a convincing space and the sections of building control a span of time. The scenes unfold like tableaux from a play: the prologue immediately below tells us that ‘we have heard readings and song’ about Alexis, so the story was performed.

In the first scene, Alexis gives his bride parting gifts of a ring and sword-belt, medieval signs of fidelity. They stand above an untouched marriage bed and the

dove of divine inspiration guides Alexis towards his departure. Above them, in lines of alternating red and green, are the Latin words ‘Blessed Alexis, the chosen youth’ and ‘O blessed wife, forever bound to grief’.

Central to the entire composition, larger than the other figures and, most unusually almost full face, the bride stands weeping in the doorway. Her hand is on her cheek. Above her are the consoling words ‘The final gifts are given to the chaste bride. The ring and sword-belt, the end of words and hail!’

In the next scene, Alexis steps out from his home. He then boards a ship, paying the boatman his fare, and the hand of God emerges from the ship’s sail to bless his departure. The final caption reads ‘The blessed Alexis is received into the ship’.

The iconography of this picture appears to be unique but other early illustrations of the Alexis cycle, focusing on the later stages of the story, exist. The eleventh-century wall paintings in San Clemente, Rome show the end of the legend, significantly depicted in continuous narrative backed by the arches of a *scenae frons*, as in the psalter.¹¹⁶ While Pächt explored exotic sources for the Alexis Master’s iconography (Roman wall paintings and sarcophagi) he deliberately rejected a source much closer to home.¹¹⁷ Illustrated versions of the Comedies of Terence were known in England at this date and their dramatic conventions thoroughly understood.¹¹⁸ The most relevant example, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Auct.F.2.13, made around 1150 actually belonged to St Albans in the early thirteenth century.¹¹⁹

Whether the Alexis Master ever saw the Bodleian Terence is irrelevant here: he clearly understood the conventions of its model. The Terence illustrations descend through Carolingian revivals, directly from depictions of the Roman theatre. They appear like a short frieze across the page, comprising a sequence of episodes and conversations. In early versions (like Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale Lat. 7899, ninth century) the scenery is schematic, limited to the occasional door frame constructed of slender posts and lintel. In the Romanesque Bodleian version, this scenery has solidified to splendid sequences of intricate aedicules with fancy roofs and elaborate doors and hinges. Very similar buildings to the Alexis are shown in the Bodleian text, f. 4v, while f. 9v even shows a farewell taking place in the doorway. The gesture of Alexis’ bride, curled hand to cheek, is a convention of Roman drama, regularly employed in Anglo-Saxon art.¹²⁰ The final close connection with the Comedy illustrations is the use and positioning of captions just above the protagonists’ heads, particularly clear on the Bodleian Terence f. 30v.¹²¹

The choice of scene and use of coloured script add a visual gloss to the poem, highlighting certain aspects to its reader. The Prologue and lines 1–103 are written in alternating red and blue ink. This brings the tale to the point (the end of p. 59) where Alexis has sailed from home and his wife is left grieving. This is precisely the span covered by the illustration, with one exception. In the poem, the nameless bride plays a minor role but in the picture she is the central, pivotal character. Both the caption above her, and lines in the prologue, give a positive slant to her abandonment: supreme consolation will come to the chaste bride who takes delight in heavenly joys and virginal marriage (Appendix 2). Both Alexis and his wife are beatified in the rubric (‘Beatus Alesis; sponsa beata’). In the poem, Alexis simply ‘remembers his heavenly Lord’ when he decides to forsake his marriage bed. In the illustration, this reminder appears in the form of a dove, whose inspiration is discussed below.

While there were institutional reasons for selecting the Alexis Chanson because a chapel had been recently dedicated to him at St Albans Abbey, the way the text and



Plate 2: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Auct.F.2.13, f. 12

image are presented suggest more personal motives. The first part of the tale, displayed with the coloured letters, superficially resembles Christina's flight from her arranged marriage to follow a life of chastity.¹²² However Christina linked her own marital situation to Burthred, not surprisingly, with the female saint Cecilia and her husband Valerian.¹²³ Christina did not weep for her spouse nor did they tenderly exchange gifts. A closer parallel to the chanson illustration arose in 1136 when Geoffrey was summoned to Rome, Christina prepared gifts for his departure (the comfortable, personally stitched undergarments) and her 'countenance was bathed with tears, her heart torn with sighs'.¹²⁴ Like Alexis, Geoffrey had left his home and found a new life serving God in a foreign land while he sustained a spiritual and chaste relationship with Christina. Echoing the chanson prologue, Christina 'cherished Geoffrey and venerated a fellow and companion of heavenly not earthly glory ... How they despised the transitory, how they yearned for the everlasting.'¹²⁵

Page 69 – Christ on the Road to Emmaus

The story of Christ's appearance at Emmaus is told in three framed scenes (Luke 24:13–31). The full page illustrations are painted in delicate colour washes, unlike the intense colours of the preceding Christ cycle. The commentary, inserted after the illustration, is squeezed haphazardly into the space available, with no rulings for the lines.

Christ is dressed like a pilgrim (described as 'peregrinus' in the Vulgate of Luke 24:18). He wears the pilgrim's cap, shaggy cloak, and carries the bag. Whereas the gospel simply says 'advesperascit' (evening approaches), the adjacent text introduces the instruction 'aspice solem' (look at the sun). This action becomes the main motif of the picture, with the appearance of the sun, pointing hands and staves, and Christ's turned head. Both disciples point towards the sun. The older of the two disciples touches Christ's shoulder, making him turn. The younger disciple appears to be holding two staves together (note the double curve at their base) which, with Christ's steady hand, also point to the sun.

Page 70 – The Supper at Emmaus

Christ, dressed as before, is seated at table with the two disciples. As Christ breaks the bread, the disciples recognise him and raise a hand in astonishment. Two loaves and a fish are on the table (in Luke 24:30, the text says Jesus broke the bread). In this illustration, the bread is marked with a cross, like the host. When Christina has her 'Emmaus experience', giving a meal to a stranger who subsequently departs, she served bread and fish.¹²⁶

Page 71 – Christ disappearing at the Supper at Emmaus, Discourse on the Spiritual Battle (Appendix 1)

Christ rises from the table and disappears through the roof of the house. The disciples' gestures show their astonishment. 'And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight' (Luke 24:31).

Christ vanishing in this way at the supper is an innovation of the Albani Psalter, but the vanishing feet have a long pedigree in Anglo-Saxon Ascension scenes.¹²⁷ By coincidence, a close successor to this Emmaus scene is found on the late twelfth-century enamel plaque at St Godehard's church Hildesheim.¹²⁸

In Luke's gospel, Christ's appearance at Emmaus takes place *before* his appearance to the Apostles (verses 36–49). If a strict chronology was applied to the miniature cycle, these scenes should therefore occur between pp. 51 and 52, but this was clearly never intended. The location of the Emmaus scenes, divorced from the Christ cycle by the Chanson of Alexis, was considered haphazard by Goldschmidt, simply a space filler to complete the quire.¹²⁹ Pächt and Holdsworth found more significant reasons for their existence and location.¹³⁰ The Emmaus scenes are a gloss on the Life of Alexis: Christ and Alexis were both poor pilgrims, unrecognised until they left the

world. But more personally, both stories were mirrors for Christina. On three occasions she was visited by ‘a certain pilgrim’ whom she was unable to recognise. The first time he was received hospitably but did not linger; the second time he was entertained to a meal by Christina and her sister who served him like Mary and Martha; and the final time he joined in a service with Christina and her nuns, but disappeared afterwards even though all doors were locked.¹³¹ There may be yet another reason why the Emmaus story is separate from the Christ cycle, why the pictures are in wash rather than full colour, and why they are accompanied by a snippet of text. Like the Alexis chanson, they may be illustrating performance rather than silent meditation (see Geddes IV).

Pages 71 and 72

The Emmaus sequence and Beatus page were, I would argue *contra* Kidd, planned in a single campaign. Both pages provide a wider margin on one side to make room for the Discourse. The Discourse was written to explain the illustrations on p. 72, and on p. 71 anticipates the horsemen ‘who are placed on the other side’.

Page 72 – Discourse continued/Psalm 1 (Appendix 1)

At the top are two horsemen, drawn as a light sketch, very close to the trimmed edge of the page and beyond the normally respected upper margin of the book. The opposing horses have a saddle cloth, and saddle held by a dangling girth. The knights wear a green tunic under a coat of mail, and they have conical helmets. The soldier on the right has a sheath for his sword. With one raised arm, they each wield a sword. Their bodies are protected by shields. Broken lances pierce the bodies of the knights and blood spurts out. The accompanying text provides a rare twelfth-century example of words which explain the meaning of images. It shows the close intellectual link between the author and the artist, and teaches the reader how to look at a picture.

The function of the knights is explained at the start of the discourse, on page 71: ‘This verse speaks of the leaders who are placed on the other side [of the page, on p72]. The comparison is about the holy war on earth in the church and the great joy with the angels in heaven.’ It is a *Psychomachia*, war between good and evil. ‘Just as these visible arms have been prepared with iron and wood [the swords and lances], so that they may bring about evil and human slaughter, [these men, pierced by their lances, are dying], likewise on the other hand it is necessary for each one of us who is established in war and penitence, to be armed with faith and love, so that we may approach the heavenly blessings and obtain the angelic crown of life.: He who is victorious shall truly live; he who falls with his reins (heart) broken shall perish...If at some time we are struck through by sword or spear or flying arrow, yet we shall not fall to the ground in vain.’

Below them is the initial B, the first letter of Psalm 1, *Beatus vir*, painted in full body colour. The outline of the letter is defined by double gold bands, forming compartments filled with ornament. Within the bows of the letter, King David sits on a throne. He is playing his harp, holding a book and being inspired by the Dove of the Holy Spirit. His book is inscribed with the words: ‘Annu[n]tiatione[m] s[an]c[t]i sp[iritu]s e[ruc]tavit beatus d[avid] psalmista quem d[eus] elegit;’ ‘The blessed psalmist David, whom God has chosen, has gushed forth the annunciation of the Holy Spirit.’ These words were also written at the foot of the page, but they have been erased.¹³² David is commonly inspired by the Dove, but this one is exceptionally large and vigorous.¹³³

The Discourse explains the symbolism of this figure in a thoughtful and personal way: ‘It has seemed to me that the plan here is that the psalmist himself, who was zealous in wisdom and sounded forth such divine power, should be drawn in the appearance of a king, and placed honourably in the middle of this B, and hold his harp in his right hand against his chest, and in his left hand have his own psalter, in

which is written the blessed annunciation [written on the pages of David's book, p. 72, 'The blessed psalmist David, whom God has chosen, has gushed forth the annunciation of the Holy Spirit'.] For in that holy zeal he has made known to us the way of salvation and our redeemer, who enlightens us and builds up the holy church. It has seemed to me that the sound of his harp signifies the voice of the holy church, and his book, which he held in great affection, signifies the wisdom of prophecy.'

The Alexis quire begins and ends with the dove of the Holy Spirit, firstly inspiring Alexis to lead a holy life of chastity, and secondly inspiring David to write and perform the psalms. Both David and Alexis are linked by the titles 'blessed' and 'chosen'. Geoffrey and Christina experienced a momentous vision of the dove 'far more beautiful than any other' descending around the abbot's head, a scene presumably commemorated in the Litany (p. 403). He was 'either possessing the dove or being possessed by the dove', an active moment like that of David's inspiration. After this vision the abbot, filled with the Holy Spirit, 'would be able to aspire only to things above'.¹³⁴

Thus, all the illustrations in the Alexis quire, while justifiable in their own right, may also be interpreted as a gloss on events recorded in Christina's *Vita*.

IV Drama and the Albani Psalter

Ever since Emile Mâle proposed that liturgical drama provided a source for iconographic innovation on these pages, art historians have questioned which came first, the drama or the art.¹³⁵ Kidd has demonstrated that specific details in these scenes do not require a dramatic precedent, but this verdict precludes a wider appreciation of what was happening in both manuscripts and drama at this time. Starkly presented in printed form by Young, the six versions of the relevant *Peregrinus* play, written down between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries in France and Sicily, probably bear little resemblance to the dramatic performances which were actually taking place.¹³⁶ Symes has demonstrated that writing these early plays down was a process of fossilisation, codifying a wide variety of orally transmitted and improvised performances which were much older than the formal script.¹³⁷ Within the Albani Psalter is a range of images which find later parallels in the written form of the plays. This suggests that around the middle of the twelfth century, both artists and producers were seeking to inject a visual and emotional immediacy to religious texts. Scholars have commented in general about the 'performative quality of the imagery', full of gesticulation, action and emotional arousal, in both miniatures and initials.¹³⁸ Whoever designed the images of David playing viols was obviously interested in the technical details of contemporary instruments. We have unequivocal evidence that Abbot Geoffrey was involved with drama. He produced a play about St Catherine, borrowing costly vestments from St Albans for costumes, while the prologue and body of the Alexis chanson announce its performance, and the continuous narrative of its illustration is linked to illustrations of classical plays.¹³⁹

Many details in the Emmaus scenes and elsewhere in the book are shared with the plays. On stage and in the psalter, the Emmaus episode is portrayed in three scenes instead of the more common two episodes.¹⁴⁰ The written text above p. 68, Luke: 13–31, abbreviates or omits verses 19–24, in a similar way to the plays. In the gospel, dusk is indicated by the spoken word 'advesperascit (evening approaches)'. In the later plays, the setting sun is introduced as a descriptive phrase ('sol vergens ad occasum').¹⁴¹ The innovative words on p. 69 'Aspice solem (look at the sun)' are presented as dramatic dialogue, accompanied by appropriate gestures. The other phrase introduced on p. 69, 'tristes animo' (sad at heart), provides an emotive 'stage' direction for the two disciples. In these small details, one sees not necessarily the dependence of an image on a liturgical play but the interface where silent images are

given an oral and dramatic dimension. Walking sticks, although an obvious attribute for travellers, are not in the gospel. Pächt commented that Christ should be carrying a palm branch or a cross (Rouen version) but on p. 68 he apparently carries a 'double staff'.¹⁴² In the Rouen play, it is the disciples who carry staves and the disciples who point, 'portantes baculos...trahentes baculum ostendentes castellum'.¹⁴³ In this image, it is unlikely that Christ would be pointing backwards over his shoulder. It is more logical to see the disciple on the left pointing forwards, while he says 'Look at the sun'. He may be holding two sticks together. At the meal (p. 70), the bread is marked with a cross, like a host. Luke merely says Christ broke the bread and blessed it. The Saintes play says Christ divided the host ('dividit Dominus hostiam'). Young raises the possibility that this could be the remains of the consecrated wafer from Holy Thursday.¹⁴⁴ Christ's dramatic levitation on p. 71 seems to be simply borrowed from established Ascension iconography. However, later Ascension plays record pulleys and other machinery used on stage to raise the body. Even in the twelfth century, it would have been technically possible to achieve this detail in an innovative Emmaus play.¹⁴⁵

Relationships with dramatic staging need to be extended beyond the Emmaus story, to include the choice of other scenes within the book. The Beauvais, Fleury and Carmina Burana texts go on from Emmaus to show the episodes of Christ with the disciples and Christ with Doubting Thomas combined into one scene, just as the Albani Psalter shows on p. 52.¹⁴⁶

Although Mary Magdalene announcing the resurrection is a 'rarissima of Christological subjects', there are clear Byzantine precedents for the Albani iconography.¹⁴⁷ This scene is a vivid part of the plays, appearing after Emmaus in the Rouen version, and after Thomas in the Sicilian version.¹⁴⁸ Magdalene also appears in the *Victimae Paschali* liturgical drama, and dialogue from this play is included in speech scrolls in the Gospels of Henry the Lion (1170s–1180s). This latter image is an explicit example of the interface between illumination and oral delivery.¹⁴⁹

Within the Nativity cycle, two episodes are illustrated with dramatic finality: the arrival and departure of the Magi (pp. 24, 27); and the Flight to and Return from Egypt (pp. 29, 31). Both of these are justified by the gospels but the design of the scenes shows theatrical credibility: they simply reverse the direction of movement. While Pächt demonstrated iconographic precedents, the Return from Egypt image remains rare. However both returning scenes form a neat completion in the plays.¹⁵⁰ Page 30 provides an early image of women fighting back in the Massacre of the Innocents scene. By the fifteenth century, this motif has developed into a bawdy brawl in vernacular plays.¹⁵¹ The eleventh-century liturgical text, the *Ordo Rachelis*, simply described grieving mothers but the scene provided ample opportunity for unscripted impromptu reactions. In the same scene, the Armiger (not in the gospel) is depicted in Byzantine and Anglo-Saxon sources long before he becomes a speaking character in the thirteenth-century Fleury play-book.¹⁵²

The Fall (p. 17) is elaborated by featuring Lucifer, upside down as a fallen angel, sending his emissary the serpent through his deceitful mouth. The characters had already been separated in Anglo-Saxon art but they became a feature of the early twelfth-century vernacular play *Le Mystère d'Adam*.

The Albani Psalter is singled out for its stage details, but many of these features also occur in roughly contemporary manuscripts. In Cambridge, Pembroke College, MS 120, f. 4v, all three figures wear pilgrim cloaks, both disciples and Christ carry staves and one apostle points to the sun. The bread is marked with a cross. The scene is followed by the combined appearance of Christ to Thomas and the disciples. In the Eadwine Psalter leaf, both disciples carry staves and look at the sun while Christ carries a palm, whereas at the meal Christ moves off sideways. The Winchester Psalter, which combines the Thomas and Apostles scene, shows Christ and one apostle with staves not pointing anywhere, while one apostle has a shaggy pilgrim's cloak.¹⁵³

These examples indicate that there is a definite visual connection between the illuminations and liturgical plays, both employing similar motifs independent of the gospel. Artists and dramatists are applying considerable imagination to make the stories more vivid and contemporary. In these examples, we cannot conclude like Pächt that 'it is not the Gospel text, but its dramatised version which is the starting point for the English twelfth-century illuminator'. Rather, we see a pool of imaginative ideas emerging which were used by both artists and dramatists. In the person of Abbot Geoffrey, directing a play and scriptorium, the two media meet.

V The Initials of the Psalms, Litany and Prayers

The historiated initials of the Albani Psalter are one of the most engaging parts of the manuscript. Their bright colours and energetically contorted figures provide an immediate visual appeal while their subject matter teases the mind. At their most direct level, they aim to provide a visual cue for the words of the adjacent text, but the subtlety of the word/image relationship is explored in Kidd, Chapter II.4. The pictures may relate to the rubric, or the adjacent psalm/prayer, or words on another page, or occasionally words from another psalm. The reader is invited to look for clues, often helped by vigorously pointing fingers. In most cases, the answers are nearby but some images require additional information.

V.1 Iconography

This account aims to provide a basic explanation of the activities within each letter, letting the words of the psalm or prayer itself provide the description. In a few instances this does not seem sufficient and further texts are required to explain why some details appear. Dodwell has amply explained that this basic level of visual identification was only the start of a medieval reader's understanding of the scriptures. In order to fathom God's mysteries, all spiritual texts and in fact the whole of God's creation, needed to be examined literally, morally, allegorically and spiritually.¹⁵⁴ The St Albans initials provide a feast for interpretation, allowing scholars to enhance the meaning of the busy figures from many points of view. Dodwell, while identifying several patristic sources and the *Diadema Monachorum* of Smaragdus, particularly emphasised their relevance to monasticism and the *Rule of St Benedict*.¹⁵⁵ Haney concentrated on the influence of St Anselm.¹⁵⁶ The present writer, elsewhere, has explored the personal relevance of the initials to Christina and Geoffrey.¹⁵⁷

Textual sources (principally the Psalms) are particularly important because the design of these initials is so original. Although many earlier illustrated psalters exist, none had systematically attempted to compress so much meaning into single initials. Literal but expansive illustrations of the psalms have a long ancestry, characterised by the Carolingian Utrecht Psalter and its followers made in Canterbury.¹⁵⁸ These present a panoramic scene, with numerous figures set in a landscape, depicting many episodes of the psalm. The other approach concentrates on the initial. In the ninth-century Corbie Psalter, a few initials derive from the psalm while others expand on the life of David. In the late eleventh century, it is the commentaries on the psalms which develop the compact and dynamic historiated initials most like those in the Albani Psalter. There are St Jerome's *Epistles and Sermons* from Cîteaux, volumes of St Augustine's *Enarrationes in Psalmos* from St Amand, Flanders and also, more significantly from Geoffrey's home town of Le Mans.¹⁵⁹ Each psalm in the Le Mans commentary is introduced by a small title in red ink and many of the initials are historiated. They share with the Albani Psalter both

a close literal correlation to the text and an emphatic use of pointing gestures. Inevitably, within any scheme which aims at a literal depiction of the psalms, there may be some overlap with other versions if they choose to illustrate the same phrase,¹⁶⁰ but the outstanding achievement of the St Albans initials is their sustained originality.

Interpretation in this commentary is kept to the minimum, but some issues require explanation. The most obvious diversion from the text is the figure of Christ, with his crossed nimbus, appearing throughout this book of the Old Testament. This is due to a long-established Christian convention that David's psalms prefigure the coming of Christ. The rubrics on p. 72, the start of Psalm 1 confirm this: 'The blessed psalmist David, whom God has chosen, has gushed forth the annunciation of the Holy Spirit'. St Jerome observed that David sang the psalms both as himself and in the person of Christ or the Church.¹⁶¹ Thus, David appears in various guises. Most frequently he wears a crown (e.g. Psalms 20, 22); sometimes he is bareheaded (Psalm 16); sometimes he wears a neat spotted cap (Psalms 118:25, 139, 145; but, the spotted hat is also worn by 'the just' in Psalm 141). Most unusually, he also wears a halo. David's saintly qualities are emphasised on p. 72, where he is called 'The blessed psalmist David, whom God has chosen' (*Beatus David psalmista quem deus elegit*). This gives him an equivalent appellation to St Alexis (*Beatus Alesis puer electus*, p. 57) but the application of a halo does not follow clear rules.¹⁶² In some cases the figure is clearly 'the good man': Psalm 14, 'He that walketh without blemish'; Psalm 17:26, 'With the holy, thou art holy'; Psalm 118:57, 'I have not forgotten thy law'; Psalm 118:106, 'I am determined to keep the judgements'. In Psalm 15 a nimbed man holds a cup: the cup holder is clearly the psalmist (verse 15: 'The Lord is the portion of my cup') but the halo links him to verse 3, 'The saints who are in his land'. However in Psalm 57 the nimbed psalmist is being punished, 'Thou hast cast us off and destroyed us' and in Psalm 43 he describes himself as abject and humble. In the remaining examples the role of the nimbed psalmist appears neutral.

'The hand of God' appearing from on high generally represents the Deity (Psalms 21,34) except in the Litany initial where he is personified beside Christ. He is also shown in the Pater Noster and Apostles' Creed and Psalm 99. The Virgin Mary receiving the Magi in Psalm 71 provides another intrusion from the New Testament, linked by the liturgical use of this psalm at Epiphany. In addition, several of the initials depict monks, hardly surprising for a book made in a Benedictine monastery where the psalms were recited every day.

The familiar menagerie of Romanesque animals inhabits many initials. How much these contribute to the meaning of the letters is debateable. The animals fall into three groups: purely decorative, clearly narrative and problematic. Frequently, decorative animal heads spew the bow of the letter, like D in Psalms 13 and 14. In other cases they are clearly part of the narrative of the psalm. The tail of Q in Psalms 41, 51, 79 and 90 is provided by a dragon who interacts with the figures in the letter and whose presence can be justified by textual sources. Psalm 90 illustrates precisely 'Thou shalt trample under foot the lion and the dragon'. Psalm 41 draws on the familiar image of stag and serpent, mentioned by Augustine and Physiologus. In Psalm 51, the image of a woman whose heel is attacked by a dragon derives from God's curse on the serpent in Genesis 3:15. The dragon, trapped at the bottom of the initial by the ring of the letter, in Psalm 79 may be a gloss on the words 'Things set on fire and dug down shall perish at the rebuke of thy countenance.' But the dragons in psalm 53 and 5, who busy themselves exclusively with forming the letter, do not add noticeable meaning to the illustration.

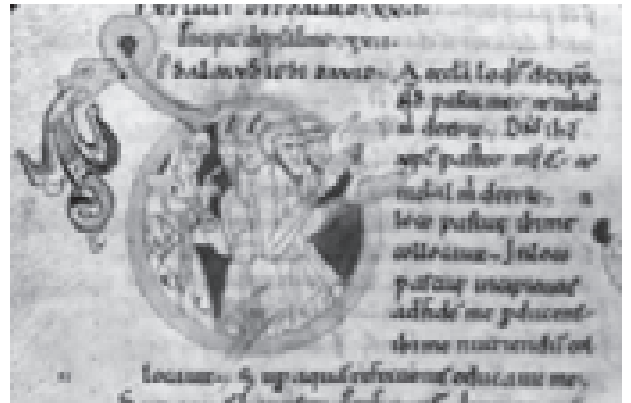


Plate 3: Le Mans, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 228, f. 37v)

A range of heads animate the terminals of letters: birds, bears, dogs and monsters are used on Psalms 54, 58 and 80. These appear to be simply decorative heads, but the imprisoned beasts with both heads and feet in Psalm 75 vividly reflect Augustine's commentary about the taming of wild passions.

The problematic group may provide a gloss on the text but their meaning is not explicit. Following the stifled bestial passions of Psalm 75, there are two dogs in Psalm 76. While the beasts of Psalm 75 are stuck, the dogs of Psalm 76 are vigorously extricating themselves from the letter. The fox in Psalm 49 probably stands for 'all the beasts of the woods', while the wolf and dragon, excluded from the protective enclosure of the initial to Psalm 104, may represent the repelled enemies of Israel.

Two birds perch atop adjacent psalm initials (87, 88). The first is a raptor who grasps the green scroll in its beak;¹⁶³ the second is a crowing cock. They stand out amongst the initials because they are coloured with only a light wash. Neither is mentioned in the psalm. Augustine provides an avian gloss for Psalm 88 showing that, as God cares for David, he also cares for us, taking us under his wings like a bird. However, the many attributes of a crowing cock, explained at length in the Bestiary, do not include shelter under his wings.¹⁶⁴

The capitals 'A' in Psalms 24 and 28 form a visual pair, with ravaging beasts attached to the top of the letter. Psalm 28 does not specifically mention the dragon and fox who are attacking the letter, but it deals with God's power to control his creation. These two threatening animals are rendered powerless outside the letter. Psalm 24 has a similar design of beasts tangled against the top of the letter, but no animals are mentioned. They may be a metaphor expressing the tone of the psalm: the saved soul is within the letter and the lost soul has its feet caught in a snare (v. 15), 'consider my enemies for they are multiplied' (v. 19).

Interlace frequently forms a decorative terminal (Psalms 64, 88:20, 99). However in some instances it becomes a snare mentioned in the text. In Psalm 30, the psalmist's feet are placed on the snare, as required by the words. In Psalm 34, he is contained within a frame while the snare exists independently below, enlivened by the extended tail of a goat.

Exegesis greatly enhances the understanding of the initials, but should we assume that the creator of the designs sat with his tomes of Augustine, Smaragdus, Ambrose, Jerome and Benedict at hand? Some details cannot easily be explained without them. A sample is provided here, but more instances are included in the commentary below, with references. Psalm 7 refers to persecutors who 'seize upon my soul like a lion' but they are illustrated as devils. St Augustine comments that the devil is like a roaring lion. Psalm 41 refers to the hart panting for water but the illustration shows a stag consuming a serpent. This imagery is familiar from *Physiologus* but it is applied to this psalm by Augustine. Psalm 51, describing malice, does not mention a purse, ring, man, woman, and possibly children. Augustine criticises those who worship God to obtain worldly success, hoping 'he will make me rich in this world and will give me children and a wife'. In Psalm 82 Christ holds a star (not mentioned in the text) in his hand and punishes unbelievers. Revelation 1:16 and 2:1 describe the Lord holding seven stars in his right hand but the context of this illustration is the punishment of unbelievers. Augustine explains that unbelievers put their trust in a star rather than God. Smaragdus explains the levels of symbolism in Psalm 79, adding an explanation for the turtle doves which are not in the text. As shown (Kidd, IV.6.2), Psalm 53 was provided with a little gloss (the Greek letters, alpha and omega) which was subsequently overpainted. These letters linked the image to St Augustine's commentary where the relatively neutral use of the word 'judge' in the psalm is given an eschatological meaning. This small detail provides clear evidence that St Augustine's interpretation was being associated with this psalm. If simply an excuse to depict the Last Judgement were required, the powerful words of Psalm 49 provide a traditional source, but this initial merely shows the psalmist/Christ instructing.

The naked sinner leaping over bulls in Psalm 21 presents quite a different figure from the dejected person of the text. Goldschmidt associated the nakedness with verse 19, ‘They parted my garments’ but this ignores the frantic tone of the image.¹⁶⁵ Jerome explains that the calves represent lust and incontinence, for which the wanton figure is more appropriate. In Psalm 93, a cleric is being ordained by Christ. The *Rule of St Benedict* states that the abbot stands for Christ in a monastery. Psalm 118:33 does not specify the types of vanity to be avoided. The temptations in the initial are those described by Ambrose. Psalm 102 merely refers to the eagle renewing its youth. The illustration shows how this is done, by flying to the heavens and plunging into water, imagery derived from the Bestiary.

Two initials, for the Litany and Psalm 105, point to a connection with Christina of Markyate, although this is not universally accepted. In the Litany, a group of women pray to two similar bearded men, with a dove standing on their heads: the Trinity. Amongst the women a tonsured cleric genuflects and points. Dodwell considered the women represented ‘the Church’; Haney understood it as a direct representation of the Trinity, invoked by the adjacent words. However Nilgen recognised the scene as Christina’s vision of the Trinity, shared with Geoffrey. Peter Kidd’s observation on the folded wings of the dove confirms the close relationship to the text of Christina’s life.¹⁶⁶ The significance of the initial pasted into Psalm 105, showing Christina and a group of monks reaching out to Christ, is explained in Kidd, Chapter II.5.

V.2 Design and Function

As mentioned above (Kidd, I.2.1) the psalter was used as a primary tool for teaching Latin, and most experienced clergy would know the words by heart, even if they were not fully understood. The design of these initials is particularly helpful and encouraging for a reader: they serve as an exemplar of the most up-to-date teaching methods in the twelfth century. In the St Albans Abbey library was an early twelfth-century copy of classical teachers’ texts: Cicero’s *Rhetorica de Inventione* and Pseudo-Cicero *Rhetorica ad Herennium*.¹⁶⁷ These deal, in part, with training the memory accurately. *Ad Herennium* recommends that information be set, mentally, in familiar backgrounds, to aid recall. ‘Visualise whatever needs to be remembered in a specific familiar background. And recall by association. To represent the likeness of words with images: the image must be very striking and novel, with bright clothes and bold accoutrements or comic aspects too. Every one responds to images differently so each person should develop their own vocabulary of memorable image prompts’.¹⁶⁸ The bright and comic psalm initials fulfil this mnemonic requirement admirably while subtleties within the psalm initials prompt further discussion of patristic commentaries.

Further recommendations, almost exactly contemporary with the psalter, justify the increasing use of pointing fingers and little books of rubric within the initials. Hugh of St Victor (1096–1142) was the pre-eminent teacher in Paris during Geoffrey’s life. St Albans was copying his work almost as soon as it was written, illustrating him as the model teacher.¹⁶⁹ Hugh, like Cicero, deals with techniques for memorising, particularly the psalms. He explains how impressing words on the mind requires an almost photographic memory, greatly enhanced by providing a high visual impact. ‘It is of great value when we are reading to take pains to imprint on the memory through the imagination not only the number and order of the verses or sections in books, but also at the same time the *colour, shape, position and placement of the letters; where we saw this was written down and where that; in what part (of the book) and in which place (on the page) we saw it positioned—whether at the top, in the middle, or near the bottom; in what colour we discerned the shape of a particular letter, or the ornament on the surface of the parchment. I think there is nothing so effective for exciting the memory as meticulously paying attention to the surroundings of things, to those features which can occur accidentally and externally*’[my emphasis].¹⁷⁰ The rubric text which, increasingly

through the psalter, pops up in the little books or is frantically signalled at the side of the initial, fulfils Hugh's instructions. The strident use of coloured inks in the Alexis quire performs a similar function of making words and layout memorable.

V.3 Commentary

Page 74 – Psalm 2 – *Quare fremuerunt gentes*

Soldiers wearing chain mail, armed with spears and shields confront Christ. 1 *Why have the Gentiles raged, and the people devised vain things?* 2 *The kings of the earth stood up, and the princes met together, against the Lord and against his Christ.* Christ strikes back: 9 *Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron.*

Under-drawings show the soldier on the right had a cuff on his mail shirt, and had a sword and belt.

Page 76 – Psalm 3 – *Ego dormivi et soporatus sum*

The bearded psalmist sleeps on his bed. A second beardless figure rises up behind the bed. Christ grasps his hand and blesses him. 6 *I have slept and taken my rest: and I have risen up, because the Lord hath protected me.*

Visible under-drawing shows that the hem of Christ's cloak was sketched with complex folds but was painted straight, and the foliage flourish at the top had an extra twining frond. A gap has been left in the (very neat) gilding to allow the overlap of this tendril.

Page 77 – Psalm 4 – *Cum invocarem exaudivit me deus*

A man with an open mouth points to Christ's ear. In distress he calls upon Christ who hears him. 2 *When I called upon him, the God of my justice heard me.*

Page 78 – Psalm 5 – on book: *Introibo in domum*

The crowned psalmist holds up a book inscribed with the rubric: 8 *I will come into thy house.* He walks into the domed building, opening its door.

Page 80 – Psalm 6 – *Lavabo per singulas noctes lectum meum*

The psalmist is sprinkling his bed with an aspergillum in one hand, while his other hand indicates that his tears are also washing the bed. The flood of tears seems to have set both the bed and psalmist afloat. 7 *Every night I will wash my bed: I will water my couch with my tears.* For a monk the bed was a dangerous place of relaxation and pleasure which was duly sprinkled with holy water each night before retiring. The cross on the psalmist's head probably means he is a good Christian. In Revelation 7:3 the servants of God are marked by a sign on their forehead.

Page 81 – Psalm 7 – *Domine deus meus in te speravi salvum me fac.*

At the top, the psalmist is being saved from his devilish persecutors. 2 *O Lord my God, in thee have I put my trust: save me from all them that persecute me.* Below, his soul is being dragged from his mouth to be torn to pieces by devils. The psalm mentions lions as the predators: 3 *Lest at any time he seize upon my soul like a lion,* but here there are devils. Referring to this psalm, St Augustine observes that devils are interpreted as lions in I Peter 5:8: *The devil, like a roaring lion, prowls around looking for someone to devour.*¹⁷¹ On the bottom rim, a sinner's body is being trampled under foot into the earth: 6 *Let the enemy pursue my soul, and take it, and tread down my life on the earth, and bring down my glory to the dust.*

Under-drawing reveals a far more complex image. There is an extra devil behind the shoulder of the upper man; a rectangular shape extended beyond his cloak hem; along the lower edge, a long-nosed devil faces left; and a crushed body lies trampled under the devil's feet.

Page 83 – Psalm 8 – Ex ore infantium et lactentium

The initial is divided into four sections to represent the four quarters of the *whole earth*. Above are the mothers with babe and suckling child. *3 Out of the mouth of infants and of sucklings thou hast perfected praise*. Below, a man encourages his child to contemplate the heavens while another mother suckles her child. The starry skies represent heaven: *4 For I will behold thy heavens, the works of thy fingers: the moon and the stars which thou hast founded*. The suckling, little child, and four corners of the earth are all mentioned in Isaiah 11:6–12, the prophesy of Christ's coming.

There is drawing visible of a foliage flourish at the top, and a cushion for the upper left seat. The mother on the upper right had a more complex neck line to her cloak.

Page 84 – Psalm 9:1 – Convertantur peccatores in infernum

Christ looks down from heaven to the psalmist who offers him praise. *2 I will give praise to thee, O Lord, with my whole heart*. The poor and needy who will be succoured sit smiling beside him. *10 And the Lord is become a refuge for the poor*. Cowering in the jaws of hell are the wicked: *18 The wicked shall be turned into hell*.

Page 86 – Psalm 9:20

The law-giver sits in a mandorla. *21 Appoint, O Lord, a lawgiver over them*. Without a halo and wearing a brown cowl, he appears to be St Benedict, the monastic law-giver. In the Benedictine Rule the abbot represents Christ in the monastery, which is why he sits in a mandorla, a space usually reserved for God or Christ.¹⁷² Below, the psalmist addresses him and holds a sinner: *20 Let the Gentiles be judged in thy sight*.

This scene was intended to contain many more imploring sinners whose heads and bodies can be seen sketched to the left and right of the psalmist. Photographed against the light, a further head is visible under the blue area to the left of the psalmist.¹⁷³

Page 89 – Psalm 10 – Quoniam ecce peccatores intenderunt arcum

At the top of the initial the psalmist puts his trust in God, raising his hand to heaven. *2 In the Lord I put my trust*. Below the interlace, the wicked enemy prepares his bow and arrow. *3 For, lo, the wicked have bent their bow; they have prepared their arrows in the quiver*.

Page 90 – Psalm 11 – Disperdat dominus universa labia dolosa

Below, the psalmist asks for help, pointing to the sinner: *2 Save me, O Lord*. Christ destroys the flattering lips and boastful tongue with a tau crozier. *4 May the Lord destroy all deceitful lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things*. At the same time he offers a gesture of safety to the godly oppressed man: *6 Now will I arise, saith the Lord. I will set him in safety*. Under-drawing shows the psalmist's finger originally pointed the other way, towards Christ. A tighter arc was also drawn within the lower bow of the S. Above, a third man stood behind the saved person. There are some ambiguous designs under the left side of Christ's cloak which appear more complex than a wavy hem.

Page 91 – Psalm 12 – on book: Usquequo

David asks Christ: *1 How long, O Lord, wilt thou forget me unto the end?* Christ, seated on a throne holds up a book with those words.

Page 92 – Psalm 13 – Dixit insipiens

Christ raises a warning finger: *2 The Lord hath looked down from heaven upon the children of men*. The fool turns, his head covered, unable to see Christ *1 The fool hath said in his heart: There is no God*. The psalm says that *all have turned aside*

together: there is none who do good but here there is a group of men facing Christ. Their leader strips the fool of his robe. The *Rule of St Benedict* recommended corporal punishment for the sin of pride, and denial of God was the most extreme form of human pride. ‘Let him chastise the wicked and the hard of heart, and the proud and disobedient at the very first offence with stripes and other bodily punishments, knowing that it is written: “The fool is not corrected with words” (Proverbs 29:19).’¹⁷⁴ This figure may be stripped for the lash.

Page 94 – Psalm 14 – Domine quis habitabit in tabernaculo

The psalmist with his halo has been glorified for fearing the Lord. He points to the start of the psalm. He is asking Christ: *1 Who shall dwell in thy tabernacle?* Christ listens, holding a scroll, while the reply probably comes from the pointing angel: *2 He that walketh without blemish, and worketh justice: 3 He that speaketh truth in his heart, who hath not used deceit in his tongue: Nor hath done evil to his neighbour: nor taken up a reproach against his neighbours.* Hence the goodly psalmist wears a halo.

Page 95 – Psalm 15 – Dominus pars hereditatis meae et calicis mei

The psalmist, blessed with a halo, holds up a chalice to Christ. *5 The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup.* St Augustine explains: ‘Let others drink deep of death-dealing pleasures; the Lord is the cup allotted to me’.¹⁷⁵

Page 96 – Psalm 16 – Exaudi domine iustitiam meam

Christ, with wings and tau crozier holds up his hand in blessing and leans towards the psalmist. The psalmist addresses Christ with one hand and points to the psalm text with the other. *1 Attend to my supplication. 6 Give ear unto my prayer. 8 Protect me under the shadow of thy wings.*

Page 98 – Psalm 17:1 – on book: Diligam te domine

The crowned psalmist holds up a book inscribed with the rubric: *2 I will love thee, O Lord.* Christ is seated on a throne blessing him.

Page 101 – Psalm 17:26 – Cum sancto sanctus eris

A man grasping a gold rectangular object is flanked on the right by the psalmist, and on the left by a group of onlookers. The caption, *26 With the holy; thou wilt be holy;* refers to the strengthening power of the psalmist over the other men. The golden object held by the man may be some physical or moral armament, as in verse *35 Who teacheth my hands to war: and thou hast made my arms like a brazen bow.* Dodwell interprets this gold band as a girdle: *33 God who hath girt me with strength.*¹⁷⁶ St Augustine interprets this verse in terms of a belt to protect his chastity: ‘God girded me that I might be strong, and that the loosely-flowing folds of concupiscence might not impede my actions or my steps’.¹⁷⁷

Page 104 – Psalm 18 – Tamquam sponsus procedens de thalamo suo

Christ, carrying a flowering branch, steps out of a doorway: *6 As a bridegroom coming out of his bride chamber.* In John 3:29, Jesus is described as the bridegroom. St Augustine links this phrase directly to Christ: ‘He proceeded from a virgin’s womb where God was joined with human nature as a bridegroom is united with his bride’.¹⁷⁸ The sun peeps out from behind the building. *6 He hath set his tabernacle in the sun.* The flowering rod refers to Isaiah’s prophesy (11:1) that the saviour would be like a flower from the rod of Jesse. This image of the bridegroom walking out of a doorway is a parallel for one scene of the Alexis illustration, p. 57.

Page 106 – Psalm 19 – Domine saluum fac regum et exaudi nos in die

The holy man in the centre, distinguished by the cross on his hat, addresses Christ

on the left: *9 Hear us in the day that we shall call upon thee.* He points to David, crowned and with knees bent in supplication on the right: *9 O Lord, save the king.*

Page 107 – Psalm 20 – *Posuisti in capite eius coronam de lapide precioso*

Christ blesses the supplicant David and puts a crown on his head: *4 Thou hast set on his head a crown of precious stones.* In spite of the distinct wording of the psalm, the crown is simply golden with foliage crests.

Page 109 – Psalm 21 – *Circumdederunt me vituli*

From beyond the margin of the page the hand of God reaches down in blessing. The naked and fearful sinner, *10 drawn out of the womb*, complains: *13 Many calves have surrounded me: fat bulls have besieged me. 14 They have opened their mouths against me, as a lion ravening and roaring.* He leaps over a herd of calves with lions above them. However, the lions are not roaring, and his foot is on the horn of one of the calves: *22 Save me from the lion's mouth; and my lowness from the horns of the unicorns.* According to St Jerome, calves symbolise lust and incontinence, hence a threat to the naked flesh above.¹⁷⁹ The vulnerable soul is therefore escaping from the lusts of the flesh with God's helping hand. Imagery reminiscent of the Passion, introduced in verses 2 and 17–19, is ignored by the artist.

Page 112 – Psalm 22 – *Dominus regit me*

David and Christ clasp each other in intimate embrace. Christ places in David's mouth the tiny naked body of a soul: *3 He hath converted my soul.* They stand on clear water: *2 He hath brought me up, on the water of refreshment.*

Page 113 – Psalm 23 – *Attolite portas principes vestras*

David, assisted by Christ, lifts up a door and opens the entrance for the crowned Christ to come in. *7 Lift up your gates, O ye princes, and be ye lifted up, O eternal gates: and the King of Glory shall enter in.*

Page 115 – Psalm 24 – *Ad te domine levavi animam meam*

David, on his knees, looks upwards: *15 My eyes are ever towards the Lord.* His hands present an open offering gesture, while his soul is gently drawn from his mouth by Christ: *1 To thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul. 20 Keep thou my soul, and deliver me.* Christ inclines his head with a gesture of blessing: *16 Look thou upon me, and have mercy on me.* A flourish of beasts and foliage swells the top of the letter.

Page 117 – Psalm 25 – *Lavabo inter innocentes manus meas*

An acolyte pours water so that the priest can wash his hands at the Offertory, during the celebration of Mass. *6 I will wash my hands among the innocent; and will compass thy altar, O Lord.* These are the exact words which a priest utters during the Mass. Below, a group of small tonsured figures, monks attending mass, gather before the altar on which there is a golden chalice. *12 In the churches I will bless thee, O Lord.*

Page 119 – Psalm 26 – *Dominus illuminatio mea*

A beam of light enters David's eye as he points to the psalm and he cranes around to see Christ in the heavenly realm. *1 The Lord is my light.* Christ is throned in majesty holding an open book, with angels adoring both above and beside him.

This initial marks the eight-part liturgical division of the psalter with its large size and extensive coloured letters.

Page 121 – Psalm 27 – *Et refluuit caro mea*

The naked psalmist, grasping a flower bud, runs through exuberant flowers and leaves. *7 And my flesh hath flourished again.* He points to Christ in majesty above,

whose hands bless and hold a book. The flowering bud represents the saved. Numbers 17:5: *Whoever of these I shall choose, his rod shall blossom.*

Page 123 – Psalm 28 – Vox domini in virtute

The head of Christ looks down on trees and water. 3 *The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; the God of majesty hath thundered, The Lord is upon many waters.* 5 *The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars.* The psalm lists God's power over animals, in particular the calf, the son of unicorns and the stag. Instead of showing these, the top of the initial is beset by a splendid fox and dragon.

Page 124 – Psalm 29 – Exaltabo te domine quoniam

King David, mouth open in praise, is being acknowledged by Christ. 2 *I will extol thee, O Lord, for thou hast upheld me.*

Page 126 – Psalm 30 – In manus tuas domine commendo spiritum meum

The psalmist, with his feet in a mesh of interlace, lifts up his hands in a gesture of offering. Christ leans his head over to listen and reaches down with open arms to lift David up. 3 *Bow down thy ear to me.* 5 *Thou wilt bring me out of this snare, which they have hidden for me.* 6 *Into thy hands I commend my spirit.*

The large initial I extends into the space allotted to the small capital O (bottom left). Scratches and traces of erasure indicate the O was moved to the left after the initial I was painted. The finial on David's crown remains unpainted.

Page 129 – Psalm 31 – In chamo et freno maxillas eorum constringe

The psalmist is twisted and crouching at the bottom of the initial, being trampled on by two sinners. 4 *I am turned in my anguish, I am turned around in my trouble.* 7 *Deliver me from them that surround me.* Above, Christ sits with a goad in his hand, and with two bridles clamps the jaws of frantically writhing sinners. 9 *With bit and bridle bind fast their jaws, who come not near unto thee.* 10 *Many are the scourges of the sinner.*

Page 131 – Psalm 32 – Exultate iusti in domino

Christ looks down on a gathered throng of the just who look up, praising him. 1 *Rejoice in the Lord, O ye just: praise becometh the upright.* 13 *The Lord hath looked from heaven: he hath beheld all the sons of men.*

Page 133 – Psalm 33 – Benedicam dominum in omni

Christ sits above, with his hand raised in blessing, and holding a book. The psalmist, below, points to the text which exhorts continual blessing and praise. 2 *I will bless the Lord at all times, his praise shall be always in my mouth.*

Page 135 – Psalm 34 – Apprehende arma et scutum

The psalmist reaches up to take the sword and shield which descend from the blessing hand of God above. 2 *Take hold of arms and shield: and rise up to help me.* The psalmist points to both God and the text. A goat monster, similar to Capricorn in the calendar, is caught up in the interlace. This may refer to the snares of the enemy: 8 *Let the net which he hath hidden catch him: and into that very snare let them fall.*

Page 139 – Psalm 35 – Filii autem hominum in tegmine alarum

The psalmist with his golden cap reaches up to the protective wings of Christ and points towards the words of the psalm. Next to him stands a group of the sons of men, likewise protected by Christ. 8 *But the children of men shall put their trust under the covert of thy wings.*

Page 140 – Psalm 36 – on book: Delectare

In the upper part of the initial, Christ sits on the cross bar speaking intimately to the psalmist. The psalmist stands pointing beyond the barrier of the letter and beyond

the blue realm of heaven, to a glum woman in the green terrestrial zone. She holds a book with the word ‘Delight’ written on it. The point of the psalm is to *4 Delight in the Lord, and he will give thee the requests of thy heart.*

St Augustine dwells on ‘the requests of your heart’. He writes, ‘Distinguish this cry of your heart from the cravings of your flesh; draw the distinction as clearly as you possibly can’.¹⁸⁰ The artist has explicitly delivered this instruction, placing the woman beneath the bar of the letter, separated from the men. A comparison with the composition of ‘N’ in Psalm 61, indicates that the ‘Saved’ are on the upper side of the bar. The *Rule of St Benedict* uses this psalm as an exhortation to chastity: ‘And in regard to the desires of the flesh, we must believe that God is always present to us, as the prophet saith to the Lord: O Lord, all my desire is before Thee’.¹⁸¹

Page 143 – Psalm 36:27 – Iniusti punientur

Christ looks down from heaven, beating the sinner and protecting the just. *28 The unjust shall be punished, and the seed of the wicked shall perish. 29 But the just shall inherit the land.*

Page 145 – Psalm 37 – Quoniam iniquitates meae supergressae sunt capud meum

Bowed by sin and guilt, the psalmist performs an astonishing dancing contortion. *5 For my iniquities are gone over my head. 7 I am become miserable, and am bowed down even to the end.*

Page 147 – Psalm 38 – Dixi custodiam

The psalmist points to his offending tongue and to the words of the psalm. Christ leans over to listen. *2 I said: I will take heed to my ways: that I sin not with my tongue. I have set guard to my mouth. 13 Hear my prayer, O Lord.* The coloured capital letters below indicate an eight-part division in the psalms.

Page 149 – Psalm 39 – Expectans expectavi

The crowned psalmist sings a new song with open mouth, pointing to the text. *2 With expectation I have waited for the Lord, and he was attentive to me. Christ looks down helpfully. 4 And he put a new canticle into my mouth, a song to our God. 14 Look down, O Lord, to help me.*

Page 152 – Psalm 40 – Beatus qui intellegit

The psalmist, blessed with a halo, helps the poor and needy who reach up for rescue, while their enemies are turned away. *2 Blessed is he that understandeth concerning the needy and the poor. 3 Deliver him not up to the will of his enemies.*

Page 154 – Psalm 41 – Quemadmodum desiderat cervus

A stag devours a serpent. The psalmist points to the stag and to the psalm title (not the text itself). Christ leans over to listen. The psalm refers to the stag longing for water, and does not mention the serpent. *2 As the hart panteth after the fountains of water; so my soul panteth after thee, O God.* The illustration is allegorical: St Augustine wrote that when the stag ate the serpent (evil) it developed a great thirst and came to drink the pure waters of baptism. ‘These snakes represent your vices; put the snakes of your iniquity to death, and you will long all the more keenly for the font of truth’.¹⁸² The stag devouring a serpent to restore his strength is a popular image derived from Physiologus, illustrated in the Bestiary.¹⁸³

Page 156 – Psalm 42 – on book: Emitte lucem tuam

A nimbed figure points to his eye and holds up a book with the text: *3 Send forth thy light.* Beneath are three people, good and bad. *1 Distinguish my cause from the nation that is not holy: deliver me from the unjust and deceitful man.* Two

clamouring men, reach up for the light of the book, while the third, with an excess of hair clutches the letter frame. According to St Augustine, Christ is the Light of the World (John 1:9) and he will deliver us, distinguishing our cause from unholy people.¹⁸⁴ The believers reach for the Light. The hairy man represents worldliness: St Augustine believed that hair represented vanity, the superfluity of worldly things. Baldness (*calvus*) was associated with the virtue of Calvary.¹⁸⁵

The wild hair of the worldly man originally flowed beyond the letter frame.

Page 157 – Psalm 43 – Deus auribus nostris audivimus

The nimbed psalmist sits thoughtfully pointing to his ear and the psalm text, while Christ leans over attentively. *2 We have heard, O God, with our ears.*

Page 160 – Psalm 44 – Lingua mea calamus scribe

The seated psalmist points to his tongue and holds a quill. *2 My tongue is the pen of a scrivener that writeth swiftly.*

Page 162 – Psalm 45

The saviour, a strong warrior, carries a spear and shield. The psalmist points to the text: *2 Our God is our refuge and strength: a helper in troubles. 10 Making wars to cease even to the end of the earth. He shall destroy the bow, and break the weapons: and the shield he shall burn in the fire. 8 The Lord of armies is with us: the God of Jacob is our protector* The beckoning psalmist walks out of the initial. *9 Come and behold ye the works of the Lord.*

Page 163 – Psalm 46 – Omnes gentes plaudite

A choir master leads the song of praise while the choristers joyfully clap hands. *2 O clap your hands, all ye nations: shout unto God with the voice of Joy.*

Page 164 – Psalm 47 – Magnus dominus

The letter M forms a building with two towers and a roof. Christ leans out from above, watching the group of praising men below. The tallest man sings praises to God, pointing to the text: *2 Great is the Lord, and exceedingly to be praised in the city of our God.* The other men in the building, although without attributes, may represent the kings of the earth: *5 For behold the kings of the earth assembled themselves: they gathered together.*

Page 166 – Psalm 48 – Audite haec omnes gentes

Two large and two small figures are contained within the initial. They are the earth-born, children of men, the rich and poor. One large man points to the text and points to the ear of his neighbour: *2 Hear these things, all ye nations: give ear, all ye inhabitants of the world. 3 All you that are earthborn, and you sons of men: both rich and poor together.*

Page 168 – Psalm 49 – Deus deorum dominus locutus

Christ summons ‘the earth’, men and animals, for judgement. *1 The Lord hath spoken: and he hath called the earth. 5 Gather ye together his saints to him.* A bushy-tailed fox devours the foliage at the side of the initial: *10 For all the beasts of the woods are mine.*

Page 171 – Psalm 50 – Averte faciem tuam

Within a complex building, the crowned psalmist urgently asks Christ to have mercy on his sins. Christ sends a cleansing ray onto a naked white baby which is held up by its sinful mother. *7 For behold I was conceived in iniquities; and in sins did my mother conceive me. 9 Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed: thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow.*

Page 173 – Psalm 51 – on book: *Quid gloriaris in malitia*

Christ sits holding a staff and book. His chastising rod is poised to root out iniquity: *7 Therefore will God destroy thee for ever; he will pluck thee out, and remove thee from thy dwelling place: and thy root out of the land of the living.* He points to a book inscribed: *3 Why dost thou glory in malice?* A man embraces a woman, dangling a purse in front of her, and offering her a ring. *9 Behold the man that made not God his helper: But trusted in the abundance of his riches: and prevailed in his vanity.* The woman's foot is being gnawed by a snake/dragon. Behind them are five onlookers.

This important initial departs from the text of the psalm which defines Malice in abstract terms like injustice, deceit, riches and vanity. Instead, the illustration introduces a woman falling for temptation, like Eve who was told by God that the serpent would lie in wait for her heel (Genesis 3:15).

St Augustine provides a subtle explanation for the man, woman, purse and ring, and possibly also the smaller figures. He explains that many people rely on God with an eye to temporal well-being. 'They say to themselves, "I worship my God because he will make me rich in this world, and will give me children and a wife". We should rather love God for his own sake, not for the sake of temporal advantage.'¹⁸⁶ So Malice here is depicted as worldly success: wealth, a wife and children, being subtly undermined by the dragon.

The exceptional size of this initial marks a three-fold division in the psalter. The letters [*uid gloriaris*] have been omitted after the initial Q.

Page 175 – Psalm 52 – on book: *Dixit insipiens*

The seated man in the centre turns his head away from Christ and discourses with other foolish children of men who gaze aimlessly upwards. *1 The fool said in his heart: There is no God. 3 God looked down from heaven on the children of men: to see if there were any that did understand, or did seek God. 4 All have gone aside, they are become unprofitable together, there is none that doth good, no not one.*

The multi coloured lettering after the initial marks an eight-fold division in the psalter.

Page 176 – Psalm 53 – on book: *Deus in nomine tuo*

Christ, holding a book, blesses the nimbed man who approaches him. The man, pointing to the words of his own book, asks: *3 Save me, O God, by thy name.* Dragons threaten at the edge of the initial.

As pointed out above, Christ's book was originally inscribed with the letters Alpha and Omega, but they were painted over. The introduction of these letters creates an eschatological dimension, referring to Christ at the Last Judgement. *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, which was, and which is to come, the Almighty* (Revelation 1:8). This connection is made by St Augustine's commentary on verse 3, *Save me, O God, by thy name and judge me in thy strength.* He links the word *judge* with Christ's second coming. 'He came to die in weakness but he will come again to judge in the power of God. Anyone who refuses to believe in the name which has been glorified through weakness will be terrified by the advent of the judge in power'.¹⁸⁷ By obscuring these letters, the painter has robbed the initial of its deeper Augustinian meaning.

Page 177 – Psalm 54 – *Quis dabit mihi pennas sicut columbe*

King David, holding a golden book, has sprouted wings and a dove flies off from a bush. *7 Who will give me wings like a dove, and I will fly and be at rest?*

Page 180 – Psalm 55 – *Miserere mei deus quoniam*

A violent aggressor kicks and hits a humbly kneeling tonsured man who points to Christ for mercy: *2 Have mercy on me, O God, for man hath trodden me under foot.*

Christ is flanked by two male heads. The choice of a monk, not mentioned in the text, indicates he is displaying the monastic virtue of humility in adversity, prescribed by the *Rule of St Benedict*.¹⁸⁸

Page 181 – Psalm 56 – In te confidit anima mea

The psalmist offers his naked and trusting soul to Christ who is flanked by two haloed figures. *2 My soul trusteth in thee.* Both this and the previous psalm (55) are based on the letter M for *Miserere*. They have similar compositions, one fulfilling the other. In psalm 56, the petitioner is attacked; in psalm 57 his soul is gently saved.

Page 183 – Psalm 57 – Furor illis secundum similitudinem serpentis

At the top, a sinner sits astride a dragon/serpent. They face each other with mouths open, looking like one another. *4 They have spoken false things. 5 Their madness is according to the likeness of a serpent.* Below, a snake charmer grasps the serpent and holds a charm in his hand. The snake stops its ear with its tail: *5 Like the deaf asp that stoppeth her ears 6 Which will not hear the voice of the charmers.*

Page 184 – Psalm 58 – Ab insurgentibus in me libera me

Christ, holding a scroll, leans over and repels a devil by poking him in the mouth with a stick. A nimbed man points to Christ's saving action and to the devils below. *2 Deliver me from my enemies, O my God; and defend me from them that rise up against me. 12 Scatter them by thy power; and bring them down, O Lord, my protector 13 For the sin of their mouth, and the word of their lips: and let them be taken in their pride.* Below, four mischievous devils point and wave flesh hooks.

Page 186 – Psalm 59 – Deus repulisti nos

Christ knocks the nimbed psalmist off balance with a deft kick, and at the same time blesses him. *3 O God, thou hast cast us off, and hast destroyed us; thou hast been angry, and hast had mercy on us.* The image is particularly vivid as the psalmist reaches out to steady himself on the rim of the letter.

Page 188 – Psalm 60 – on book: Exaudi deus

The nimbed psalmist, pointing to Christ, clutches a tablet inscribed with: *2 Hear, O God, my supplication: be attentive to my prayer.* Christ responds, receiving the tablet, blessing and leaning over to hear.

Page 189 – Psalm 61 – Nonne deo subiecta

King David offers his soul, a small naked body, to Christ. The soul reaches up in a gesture of adoration and Christ blesses him. *2 Shall not my soul be subject to God? for from him is my salvation.* The composition of this initial may be compared to Psalm 36. It is clear from both initials that the 'Saved' are above the bar of the letter N.

Page 190 – Psalm 62 – Ad te de luce vigilo

King David approaches Christ with a lighted candle and points to the text, *2 O God, to thee do I watch at break of day.* Christ's head is illumined by a sunburst, showing he is daybreak, the True Light (John 1:9). He holds a scroll in his hand and blesses David. David's candle indicates he is approaching through the darkness of dawn.

Page 192 – Psalm 63 – Quia exacuerunt ut gladium

At the top of the initial is a group of four men. *11 The just shall rejoice in the Lord.* Below, the unjust whets his tongue with his sword and another bends his bow, bending his back fantastically at the same time, to shoot the just by surprise. *3 Thou hast protected me from the assembly of the malignant; from the multitude of the workers of iniquity. 4 For they have whetted their tongues like a sword; they have bent their bow a bitter thing, 5 To shoot in secret the undefiled.*

Page 193 – Psalm 64 – Ad te omnis caro veniet

Christ is being praised by angels and men. 2 *A Hymn, O God, becometh thee in Sion: Christ blesses the men beneath in an intimate and physical way: He holds one man's hand and rests his feet comfortably on the man's shoulders. 3 All flesh shall come to thee. 5 Blessed is he whom thou hast chosen and taken to thee: he shall dwell in thy courts.* The men are pointing to the words of the text which refer to the hymn of praise.

To the left of Christ's feet are two more drawn faces which have been partially over painted in blue.

Page 195 – Psalm 65 – Transivimus per ignem et aquam et eduxisti nos

Christ lifts the man by his arms from the danger into the cool blue of heaven. 12 *We have passed through fire and water, and thou hast brought us out into a refreshment.* At the base of the initial are blue water and a layer of brown which should refer to the fire and water of the rubric, but may refer to verse 6: *Who turneth the sea into dry land, in the river they shall pass on foot.* With backlighting, three fish are visible drawn in the water. Around and overlapping the man's foot is a drawing in the shape of a twining flower. It might represent the flames of the rubric or the snare of verse 11: *Thou hast brought us into a net.* Part of this can just be seen spilling over the edge of the initial into the clear parchment on the right. Complex green folds of Christ's and the man's robe have been painted over.

Page 197 – Psalm 66 – Deus misereatur nostri

Christ leans forward to bless a tonsured monk who kneels before him, clasping his foot and sleeve. 2 *May God have mercy on us, and bless us.* Introducing a monk into this initial is quite appropriate because Psalm 66 was the first psalm sung every day by monks at the dawn service of Lauds.¹⁸⁹

Page 198 – Psalm 67 – Exurgat deus

Christ tramples on two devils and pokes them with his crozier, pointing in admonition. 2 *Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered.* The leaf adjacent to the devils remains unpainted.

Page 200 – Psalm 67:20 – Verumtamen deus confringet capita inimicorum

Christ leans out of heaven to strike an embracing couple with a sword. The sword touches the man's hair. Beside them, another embracing couple look aghast. The two women wear red dresses, the colour of lust. 22 *But God shall break the heads of his enemies: the hairy crown of them that walk on in their sins.* The psalm does not specify lustful couples for this image, although the 'hairy crown' is perhaps suggestive of a woman's hair. Verse 31, referring to the congregation as bulls and cows harks back to the image of lust in psalm 21. 31 *Rebuke ... the congregation of bulls with the kine ('in vacuis', cows) of the people.*

The tree may represent the Garden of Eden, a reminder of the first sin.

Page 202 – Psalm 68 – Salvum me fac deus

Christ sits with adoring angels on either side, rescuing the psalmist by his hair. The psalmist, drowning in a swirl of water, is stuck in the mud by his feet. He cries out, and water pours from his throat. With one hand he implores Christ, and with the other he points to the torrent of water. 2 *Save me, O God: for the waters are come in even unto my soul. 3 I stick fast in the mire of the deep: and there is no sure standing. I am come into the depth of the sea: and a tempest hath overwhelmed me. 4 I have laboured with crying; my jaws are become hoarse.* There are seven fish in the sea.

The psalmist's feet are unpainted, presumably because they are stuck in the mud. Under the two right fish there is the drawing of another creature with an open mouth. The line beneath the S has been partly erased and rewritten.

The large initial and multi-coloured letters indicate an eight-fold division in psalms.

Page 204 – Psalm 68:17 – Exaudi me domine

Christ sits facing away from the psalmist. The psalmist's tongue hangs from his mouth: *31 I will praise the name of God with a canticle.* He points to Christ's ear and tries to turn his head. *18 And turn not away thy face from thy servant: for I am in trouble, hear me speedily.*

Page 207 – Psalm 69 – Deus in adiutorium meum intende

Christ leans down from heaven to draw the naked sinner out of a dragon's mouth beneath the sea. With his rod he attacks the dragon's mouth. The sinner clutches desperately to Christ's head and garment. *2 O God, come to my assistance; O Lord, make haste to help me. 3 Let them be confounded and ashamed that seek my soul.* The sinner is being saved as requested and the enemy thrown into confusion, but the image of drowning and the dragon are beyond the text. In this psalm St Augustine comments that 'the dragon lies in ambush, he is the enemy'.¹⁹⁰

Page 207 – Psalm 70 – Rubric and on book: In te domine

The psalmist clutches a book with the words: *1 In thee, O Lord, I have hoped.* With his pointing finger he communicates his hopes directly to Christ above who leans down, blessing.

Page 210 – Psalm 71 – Reges tharsis et insulae munera offerent

The Virgin, holding a lily, sits with Christ holding a book on her lap. He is blessing the three kings who are bearing precious gifts. *10 The kings of Tharsis and the islands shall offer presents: the kings of the Arabians and of Saba shall bring gifts.* This scene, clearly coming from the New Testament, is explained by St Augustine. He refers to the words as a prediction of the Adoration of the Magi (Matthew 2:11), 'for a reader disposed to contemplation'.¹⁹¹ This psalm is used as a text at the offertory during the Mass of Epiphany.¹⁹²

Page 213 – Psalm 72 – Quia inflammatum est cor meum

The psalmist is stripped to the waist, bending over. He cranes around to fix his eyes on Christ in heaven. This image does not easily match the rubric. *21 For my heart hath been inflamed, and my reins have been changed.* The kidneys (reins) were considered to be the seat of emotions and affections. St Augustine explains: 'Perhaps he is admitting what tempted him... when those temporal things brought me delight, my emotions were stirred'. *23 I am become as a beast before thee.* 'He became like a beast in his craving for earthly things'.¹⁹³ As a result, he is stripped to the waist for punishment. *14 And I have been scourged all the day; and my chastisement hath been in the mornings.*

Page 216 – Psalm 73 – Tu confregisti capita draconum

Christ smites the dragon's head with a hammer. Crushed beneath the beast, an Ethiopian starts to eat it. *14 Thou hast broken the heads of the dragon: thou hast given him to be meat for the people of the Ethiopians.*

The dragon has only one head whereas the Vulgate text of the Albani Psalter refers to several ('capita draconis'). The illustration is therefore literally closer to the Roman version of the psalter where only one head is mentioned ('Tu confregisti caput draconis'). This is the text used by St Augustine in his commentary. He writes, 'You broke the dragon's head in pieces. Its head represents the beginning of sin'. There is only one head on the equivalent dragon in the Utrecht Psalter.¹⁹⁴

Page 218 – Psalm 74 – Confitebimus tibi deus

The jubilant nimbed psalmist sings praises to Christ, pointing both up to heaven and to the text exhorting praise. *2 We will praise thee, O God.* Christ looks down in blessing. He holds a tablet and is accompanied by three of the just who have been exalted. *8 For God is the judge. One he putteth down, and another he lifteth up.*

Page 220 – Psalm 75 – Ibi confregit potentias arcuum scutum

The letter N is formed by four beasts stuffed through the uprights. Their strangled heads pant frantically, their bodies are encased and only their feet protrude. Between them, Christ breaks the spear, sword, bow and shield. *4 There hath he broken the powers of bows, the shield, the sword, and the battle.*

The beasts symbolise the sins of the flesh, tightly encased by the letter. St Augustine understands v. 3–4 as the struggle of the sinful body to overcome desire. ‘Sinful thoughts and the pleasure they arouse will not leave you alone. You must keep your members under control when your evil cravings arise. Suppose anger has surged up; hold your hand, keeping close company with God. Surge up it may, but it will have found no weapons.’¹⁹⁵ These weapons of desire are being destroyed.

Page 221 – Psalm 76 – In die tribulationis meae

The psalmist, on his knees, with hands raised, calls out to Christ for mercy, by day and by night. Above, in the starry sky, Christ is blessing and holding a book. He is flanked by Day and Night, and stars. *2 I cried to the Lord with my voice; to God with my voice, and he gave ear to me. 3 In the day of my trouble I sought God, with my hands lifted up to him in the night, and I was not deceived.* Two dogs pull themselves out of the stems of the initial.

Page 223 – Psalm 77:1 – Attendite popule meus

In the centre of the initial is an eagle on a pole. David/Moses stands on the left, addressing an assembly of twelve people. The words and phrases in this psalm refer to Deuteronomy 31:19. Here God instructed Moses to remind the twelve tribes of Israel about the law by singing a canticle. *1 Attend, O my people, to my law.* God would then offer protection: ‘As the eagle, enticing her young to fly and hovering over them, he spread his wings’. Deuteronomy 32:11.

Page 227 – Psalm 77:36 – Et pluit super eos sic pulverem carnes

Birds come tumbling out of the sky and four men pick them up to eat. *27 And he rained upon them flesh as dust: and feathered fowls like as the sand of the sea. 28 And they fell in the midst of their camp, round about their pavilions. 29 So they did eat, and were filled exceedingly.* This refers to Numbers 11:31–32, when the Israelites complained that manna from heaven was not enough, so God sent them quails.

Page 231 – Psalm 78 – Deus venerunt gentes

Two soldiers advance on a man cowering in the temple. At their feet lie three decapitated corpses. *1 O God, the heathens are come into thy inheritance, they have defiled thy holy temple: they have made Jerusalem as a place to keep fruit. 2 They have given the dead bodies of thy servants to be meat for the fowls of the air: the flesh of thy saints for the beasts of the earth. 3 They have poured out their blood as water, round about Jerusalem and there was none to bury them.*

**Page 233 – Psalm 79 – Cibabis nos pane lacrimarum, on book:
Cibabis nos pane**

A tonsured monk holds in one hand a small cup and in the other a book which he appears to eat. The book is inscribed *6 How long wilt thou feed us with the bread of tears: and give us for our drink tears in measure?* Christ, in the heavenly sphere is

flanked by two birds. With his right hand he is pouring fluid from an inverted vessel into the monk's container. The monk suffers remorse because *7 Thou hast made us to be a contradiction to our neighbours*. There are trees on either side of the monk. *9 Thou hast brought a vineyard out of Egypt ... 10 ...Thou plantedst the roots thereof, and it filled the land*. The vine is beset by five beasts and a dragon. *14 The boar out of the wood hath laid it waste: and a singular wild beast hath devoured it*. The dragon is trapped below ground: *17 Things set on fire and dug down shall perish at the rebuke of thy countenance*.

The illustration is concerned with remorse. Exactly the right amount of tears of repentance is being poured into a measure, and the book is a metaphor for eating the bread of tears. The sparrow on the monk's head is a symbol a saved soul (cf. Psalm 123. *7 Our soul hath been delivered as a sparrow out of the snare*). The *Diadema Monachorum* of Smaragdus explains the other details which are not mentioned in the psalm. The trees are a reminder of Adam's sin in the Garden of Eden. The five beast heads (only one is mentioned in the psalm) represent the five senses and their temptations. The birds beside Christ are turtle doves which Moses ordained as a sin-offering (Leviticus, 5:7). Smaragdus explained that these two birds were offered for sins of commission and sins of omission. These sins are dissolved by the grace of tears which must be precisely the right amount, neither effusive nor simply tears of satisfaction.¹⁹⁶

Page 235 – Psalm 80 – Dilata os tuum et implebo illud

Christ bends down from heaven and fills the psalmist's mouth with a rod. *11 Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it*. The rod is the Word of God, according to Isaiah 11:4 'He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth'. Two other men are being lifted to safety, clutching Christ's hand. *8 Thou calledst upon me in affliction, and I delivered thee*.

The large size of this initial, followed by multi-coloured capitals, marks an eight-fold division of the psalms.

Page 237 – Psalm 81 – Deus stetit in sinagoga deorum

This is a scene of judgement. Christ stands in a temple with men grouped on either side. *1 God hath stood in the congregation of gods: and being in the midst of them he judgeth gods*. To the group on the right, the blessed, he turns benevolently. *6 I have said: You are gods and all of you the sons of the most High*. The sword points to the group on the left. *7 But you like men shall die: and shall fall like one of the princes*.

There is one additional head behind the damned on the left, and two extra faces on the right. The drawings show these men had scalloped or curly hair lines.

Page 238 – Psalm 82 – Sicut ignis qui comburit silvam

Christ is seated on a throne, holding a star in one hand, pointing at trees on a hill and blowing upon them. The psalm exhorts God to punish unbelievers: *14 O my God, make them like a wheel; and as stubble before the wind. 15 As fire which burneth the wood: and as a flame burning mountains: 16 So shalt thou pursue them with thy tempest: and shalt trouble them in thy wrath*. According to St Augustine a forest represents sterility and mountains loftiness. This is what the enemies of God's people are like—barren of righteousness and full of pride. Meanwhile, unbelievers put their trust in the stars rather than God. Thus, God contrasts their belief in the star which he holds, and his power to destroy them like fire.¹⁹⁷

Page 240 – Psalm 83 – Etenim passer invenit sibi domum

There are two trees in whose branches are birds and nests. At the bottom two parents feed their young, while in the top two nests a single bird feeds and a smaller one

watches. *4 For the sparrow hath found herself a house, and the turtle a nest for herself where she may lay her young ones.*

Page 242 – Psalm 84 – *Converte nos deus salutaris noster*

Christ leans out from heaven, blessing with one hand and grasping one of the righteous with his other hand. Below him, the blessed look up in adoration. *2 Lord, thou hast blessed thy land. 5 Convert us, O God our saviour: and turn off thy anger.*

Page 243 – Psalm 85 – *Custodi animam meam quoniam sanctus sum*

The psalmist plucks at Christ's ear and points to the worthy soul issuing from his mouth. *1 Incline thy ear, O Lord, and hear me: for I am needy and poor. 2 Preserve my soul, for I am holy.*

Page 245 – Psalm 86 – *Diligit dominus portas syon*

A bishop carrying a crozier and wearing a cope, blesses a building. He is accompanied by five men, three of whom are tonsured clerics. The scene is reminiscent of a bishop consecrating a church. *2 The Lord loveth the gates of Sion.* The psalm has been interpreted in an ecclesiastical way, with the bishop representing Christ and Sion representing the Church.

The lower finial of the initial descender has been cropped. This indicates that the entire psalter section of this book was intended to have slightly longer pages.

Page 246 – Psalm 87 – *Estimatus sum cum descendentibus in lacum*

The psalmist is drowning beneath the waves, surrounded by four fish. *5 I am counted among them that go down to the pit 8 All thy waves thou hast brought in upon me. 17 Thy wrath hath come upon me: and thy terrors have troubled me. 18 They have come round about me like water all the day.* Instead of a pure white soul issuing from his mouth, he spews up forked brown tongues: *4 For my soul is filled with evils.* He raises his hands up to Christ. *10 O Lord: I stretched out my hands to thee.* His forked tongue, resembling a tree branch, passes from the sea to the heavenly sphere. Psalms 18 and 27 also use a tree branch to symbolise regeneration or new birth. Christ, flanked by two other figures, leans over to listen. *3 Let my prayer come in before thee: incline thy ear to my petition.* A bird, painted in a light wash, holds part of the green frond in its beak, and perches on the top of the letter.

This bird forms a visual pair with the cock in Psalm 88.

Page 248 – Psalm 88 – *Oleo sancto meo unxi eum*

Christ anoints David with oil. *21 I have found David my servant: with my holy oil I have anointed him.* This text occurs later on in the psalm, beyond the next initial, on p. 250. A crowing cock, painted in a light wash, stands above the scene. St Augustine, referring to the eternal blessing of the Lord (v. 53) writes: 'May he who gathers us like chicks under his wings cherish us'.¹⁹⁸ The psalm refers to God caring for David while Augustine gives this protection an avian metaphor.

Page 250 – Psalm 88:20 – *Tunc locutus es in visione*

On the right, the five holy ones receive a vision in their sleep. *20 Then thou spokest in a vision to thy saints.* St Augustine identified these as the five prophets.¹⁹⁹ Christ addresses them with a raised finger watched by a small figure on the left. Christ equally addresses the tall central figure holding a book or scroll, identified as David. *20 I have laid help upon one that is mighty; and have exalted one chosen out of my people. 21 I have found David my servant.*

Page 254 – Psalm 89 – *Mane sicut herba transeat*

A young man stands on the left holding two sprouting branches. *6 In the morning man shall grow up like grass; in the morning he shall flourish and pass away.* Facing

him is a stooped old man holding a crutch and another branch. *6 In the evening he shall fall, grow dry, and wither.*

Page 256 – Psalm 90 – Super aspide et basilisk ambulabis

Under Christ's feet are a basilisk, asp, lion and dragon. He tramples on them and prods them with his tau crozier. He carries a book with a jewelled cover. *13 Thou shalt walk upon the asp and the basilisk: and thou shalt trample under foot the lion and the dragon.*

Page 258 – Psalm 91 – Justus ut palma florebit

Standing in a verdant garden, the just man holds a palm frond. *13 The just shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow up like the cedar of Libanus.*

Page 259 – Psalm 92 – Dominus regnavit

Christ reigns in a medallion, flanked by two men. The medallion is supported by two men and two women representing the world. *1 The Lord hath reigned, he is clothed with beauty: the Lord is clothed with strength, and hath girded himself. For he hath established the world which shall not be moved.*

Page 260 – Psalm 93 – Beatus homo quem tu erudieris domine

The psalmist on the left points to Christ above. Christ wears a golden cap, perhaps in this case representing an abbot's mitre. As heavenly abbot, he places a stole around the neck of a tonsured cleric, in the service of ordination. The cleric kisses the hand of Christ-abbot. *12 Blessed is the man whom thou shalt instruct, O Lord: and shalt teach him out of thy law.* This illustration has been modified from the text in order to apply to a monastic context. According to the *Rule of St Benedict*, the abbot stands for Christ in the monastery, and the priest is being ordained so that he can teach God's law.²⁰⁰

Page 263 – Psalm 94 – Ploremus coram domino qui

Christ in heaven is flanked by two figures, one with a halo. Christ holds a blank book and blesses the weeping man below. Beside him are seven more men, adoring the Lord. *6 Come let us adore and fall down: and weep before the Lord that made us.*

Page 264 – Psalm 95 – Cantate domino canticum novum

Christ holds a closed book and blesses the psalmist. The psalmist, like a joyful conductor, leads on the group of six praising men and points to Christ. *1 Sing ye to the Lord a new canticle: sing to the Lord, all the earth.*

Page 266 – Psalm 96 – Confundantur omnes qui adorant sculptilia

Two of the blessed adore Christ in heaven. Christ leans over to cast terror upon the heathen demons below. *7 Let them be all confounded that adore graven things, and that glory in their idols. Adore him, all you his angels.* The composition of this initial makes a pair with Psalm 94, contrasting the blessed and sinners below Christ.

[Psalm 97 – Excised page] This page probably had a splendid large initial because psalm 97 marks a liturgical division in the psalter.

Page 267 – Psalm 98 – Moveatur terra

Christ sits on a throne with one foot on a stool and the other on the green earth. He prods the earth with his crozier. *1 Let the earth be moved. 5 Adore his footstool, for it is holy:*

Isaiah 11:4 refers to God striking the earth with the rod of his mouth. Hence the abbot's crozier was a symbol for preaching the Word. The Word is making the earth

green, giving it ‘the spirit and life’ (John 6:64). The position of Christ’s feet derives from St Augustine’s commentary on this psalm where he links the text to Isaiah 66:1, ‘The Lord said, Heaven is my throne, but the earth is my foot stool.’ St Augustine wonders how one can adore a footstool without idolatry, but Isaiah explains that it is God’s earth, and from the earth comes the flesh of Christ’s incarnation.²⁰¹

Page 268 – Psalm 99 – Jubilate deo

The head of God looks out at a group of people, whose expressions are more glum than rejoicing. Their leader, wearing a red spotted skull cap like that in Psalm 93, holds up a pair of tablets. Behind him is a man with tonsure and stole, bearing a flowering rod. A group of other people cluster behind them. The psalm is one of universal praise, 2 *Sing joyfully to God*, but the illustration does not demonstrate this clearly.

Dodwell named the figures as Moses carrying the tablets of the law, followed by Aaron the priest with his flowering rod. He identified Moses confessing the sins of Aaron and the Israelites (Exodus 32), whose sins of rebellion are represented by Aaron’s rod (Numbers 17:10). God’s face is mysterious at the time of Moses’ confession. In Exodus 34:14 the Lord says: ‘My face shall go before thee’ but in verse 20, God says ‘Thou canst not see my face: for man shall not see me and live’. Moses, whose shining face emerges in this episode, is usually depicted with horns (due to a linguistic misunderstanding) not a red skull cap. An easy interpretation of this scene would be the Children of Israel, led by Moses and Aaron, all praising God, as the psalm requires. However, the texts of these episodes concern sin and confession, and the illustration does not look joyous.

Page 269 – Psalm 100 – Non habitabit in medio domus meae tua qui facti superbiam

Christ thrusts aside two sinners with forks. The fork spears the jaw of the man on the right. 7 *He that worketh pride shall not dwell in the midst of my house: he that speaketh unjust things did not prosper before my eyes*. Christ does not look at them but turns his head to the cross above. 5 *With him that had a proud eye, and an unsatiable heart, I would not eat*. 6 *My eyes were upon the faithful of the earth*.

Page 270 – Psalm 101 – Domine exaudi orationem

The psalmist asks for God’s attention in his hour of need. It is illustrated by Christ pointing to a chalice or cup which is placed above him on a striped background. Behind are some ornamental panels and sprays of flowers. Christ’s prayer is heard by a small figure without a halo. 2 *Hear, O Lord, my prayer: and let my cry come to thee*. 3 *Turn not away thy face from me*

St Augustine interpreted this psalm in terms of Christ praying to God. ‘When did God turn his face away from his Son? ... for here below I am in trouble, and you are above.’²⁰² The cup may refer to verse 10: *For I did eat ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping*, again amplified by St Augustine. ‘Eat ashes as your bread, then, and drop tears into your drink, for through a feast like this you will make your way to God’s table’.²⁰³

The garden setting and Christ kneeling before a chalice provides a parallel to p. 39, The Agony in the Garden where the chalice is distinguished by a cross, and the listening figure is the comforting angel, with wings. (Luke 22:42–43). This is a penitential psalm, a prayer for the afflicted, which therefore has a resonance with Christ’s cry in the Garden of Gethsemane.

The large initial and coloured writing indicates a three-fold division of the psalms.

Page 274 – Psalm 102 – Renovabitur ut aquile iuventus tua

An eagle soars up to heaven and then plunges head first into water. Physiologus explained that when an eagle felt it was growing old and blind, it would fly up

towards the sun, burning its old feathers and the film from its eyes. It would then plunge three times into a stream of water and emerge rejuvenated. *5 Thy youth shall be renewed like the eagle's.* This scene is depicted in illustrated twelfth-century Bestiaries.²⁰⁴

Page 276 – Psalm 103 – Qui facis angelos tuos spiritus

Christ walks upon the wings of the wind, personified at the bottom of the letter. He blows onto a naked body which he holds in his hands. Christ's breath transforms angels with the power of the Holy Spirit. *3 Who walkest upon the wings of the winds. 4 Who makest thy angels spirits.* There is a barely visible red line between Christ's and the angel's mouths.

Page 279 – Psalm 103:25 – Ortus est sol et congregati sunt. Exhibit homo ad opus suum

Under a starry sky, a man goes off to work with a mattock over his shoulder. *23 Man shall go forth to his work, and to his labour until the evening.* Beside him are three lion cubs roaring for the rabbit which hides behind them. *21 The young lions roaring after their prey, and seeking their meat from God.* The sun shines above the initial. *22 The sun ariseth, and they are gathered together: and they shall lie down in their dens.*

The passage begins at v. 25. The rubric is taken from v. 22–23

Page 280 – Psalm 104 – on book: Laetetur cor quaerentium dominus

Christ, flanked by two nimbed figures, holds a book inscribed with the words *3 Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord.* Below, the psalmist points to the words of the book, encouraging the two weary and barefoot travellers to seek God. *4 Seek ye the Lord, and be strengthened: seek his face evermore.* The remainder of the psalm recounts the wandering of the Children of Israel, travellers seeking the promised land: *13 And they passed from nation to nation, and from one kingdom to another people.* The letter form protects its contents from the attacking wolf and dragon: *24 He strengthened them over their enemies.*

Page 282 – Psalm 104:23 – Convertit aquas eorum in sanguinem

Christ thrusts his goad into the partly-red waters and the fishes die. *29 He turned their waters into blood, and destroyed their fish.* This refers to Exodus 7:20–21, where Aaron turned a river into blood and the fish died.

Page 285 – Psalm 105 – Parce tuis queso monachis clementia IHV

This initial is painted on a pasted patch. See Kidd Chapter II.5.

Christ stands in the blue heavenly part of the initial reaching out to touch a woman. She stands with four monks, in the green terrestrial zone, but through her intercession she is able to reach Christ himself. One monk rests his hand on her shoulder and reaches towards Christ with a similar gesture to the woman. The delicate tenderness of this composition is echoed more stridently, with the same message, in the Harrowing of Hell (p. 49). Here Christ reaches out to grasp Adam's outstretched right hand while his left arm is bent at the elbow. Behind him, Eve touches his bending arm and reaches forwards with her other hand, like the monk behind Christina. In each case, extra figures crowd behind the main characters, begging for deliverance.

This illustration can be interpreted on four levels. Keeping resolutely neutral, it shows a woman leading some monks to Christ, or perhaps one monk ushering her forwards.²⁰⁵ However, given the historical context, it is likely that she is Christina. She may be simply interceding for the monks of St Albans, as indicated by the rubric, *Spare your monks I beseech you, merciful kindness of Jesus.* After her first meeting with Geoffrey, 'all he asked for was her intercession with God'.²⁰⁶ She was

considered an intercessor on a par with St Alban himself. ‘As our blessed patron St Alban had her from the Lord as co-operator in building up and furthering his community on earth, so he had her afterwards as sharer of his eternal bliss in heaven.’²⁰⁷ Or, she is introducing several monks to the monastic life: ‘there were in our community certain souls whom she cherished more than those of other monasteries, some of whom owed their monastic vocation to her’.²⁰⁸ Or lastly, it is more personal. Geoffrey is using her as a bridge to Christ. He prayed to Christina and she prayed to Christ.²⁰⁹ In a vision Geoffrey ‘gave her a sign with his eyes and head, he humbly begged her to introduce him to the persons standing at her side in the divine presence’.²¹⁰

The form of the letter C, made of a single gold band, is not used on the other C initials. The rest have a hollow bow, filled with ornament. The foliage, with tightly curled tips, is found on Princeton, University Library Garrett 73, f. 1r, Haimo’s Commentary on Isaiah, made at St Albans.²¹¹

Neither the image nor the rubric derives from the psalm text which concerns the deliverance of the Children of Israel through the help of Moses.

Page 288 – Psalm 105:32 – Et imolaverunt filios suos: et filias suas demoniis

The Israelites are decapitating their sons and daughters as part of a heathen sacrifice. The large figure on the right stands with a scourge and a shield with twelve studs. *37 And they sacrificed their sons, and their daughters to devils.* This episode in the psalm is not mentioned previously in the Old Testament. The shield is the breastplate of judgement, set with twelve studs for the twelve tribes of Israel (Exodus 28:15–21). The scourge was a particular punishment for adultery (Leviticus 19:20) with a bondservant, and idolatry was a spiritual form of adultery.

Page 290 – Psalm 106 – De regionibus congregavit eos

Christ draws to himself those he has saved. He leads the four saved men by red cords and clasps the first man by his hand. *2 He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy: and gathered out of the countries.* The four figures represent people from the four areas: *3 From the rising and the setting of the sun, from the north and from the sea.* According to St Augustine, ‘Redeemed people are to be found all over the world.’²¹²

The red cords, with which Christ draws the men to safety, are not explained in the psalm. St Augustine’s commentary distinguishes collective from individual salvation. The whole race of Israel was brought safely through to the promised land. ‘They experienced these things collectively and at the same time. In our case it happens differently: we are not gathered all at once to a single city, but little by little and one by one, as we come to believe.’ The cords are a way of depicting individual salvation among a group of people.²¹³

This initial complements the C of the previous psalm, 105, p. 285. In psalm 105, those seeking salvation approach from the left to implore Christ. In psalm 106, the prayer is answered with a similar composition, showing redemption in action.

Page 292 – Psalm 106:25 – Deus stetit in synagoga

Christ is in heaven, his hand raised in blessing. The head beside him was originally drawn with a halo which has been painted over. Below are seven men praising him. *32 And let them exalt him in the church of the people: 38 And he blessed them, and they were multiplied exceedingly:* The rubric *God stood in the synagogue* is misplaced, taken from Psalm 81. The choice of seven people may relate to the monks’ duty, explained in the *Rule of St Benedict*, to praise God seven times a day.²¹⁴

Page 294 – Psalm 107 – on book: Exurge psalterium. meus est galaad et meus est David, wearing his crown, holds a book with the words *3 Arise, my psaltery: 9 Galaad is mine, and [Manasses] is mine.* He points to a building. St Jerome

associated the words *Arise psalterium* with the monastic *Opus Dei*: monks should praise God with psalter and harp.²¹⁵ David points to the church where the service should take place. The psalter is notably absent from the picture.

Page 296 – Psalm 108 – *Locuti sunt adversum me lingua dolosa*

Christ, in heaven, flanked by two nimbed figures, pulls David up by the hand. 26 *Help me, O Lord my God; save me according to thy mercy.* 27 *And let them know that this is thy hand.* With his other hand Christ pierces a sinner's lips with his crozier. On the other side, another sinner with open mouth grasps at David. 3 *They have spoken against me with deceitful tongues.*

Page 299 – Psalm 109 – *Dixit dominus domino meo, on book: sede a dextris*

At the bottom left, in the earthly zone, the nimbed Christ holds a staff and reaches up to God's right knee. 2 *The Lord will send forth the sceptre of thy power out of Sion.* A group of adoring worshippers stand to the right. One is a woman and there are two extra sketched heads in the background. God sits above, flanked by angels. He holds a book inscribed with the words, 1 *Sit thou at my right hand.* He points to the throne on his right, occupied by a winged angel.

The large initial and multi-coloured capitals indicate an eight-fold division in the psalter.

Page 300 – Psalm 110 – *Redemptionem misit populo suo*

Two tonsured priests, vested for mass with the alb, chasuble and stole, both hold a chalice and link their other hands in blessing. The figure on the left, with a cross halo, is Christ. Between them, David sits on a throne holding an empty book which probably represents the covenant. He points to the rubric. 9 *He hath sent redemption to his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever.* Redemption has come through the covenant and through the sacrament which is taking place over his head. The chalice is a reminder of Christ's sacrifice: 4 *He hath made a remembrance of his wonderful works, being a merciful and gracious Lord:* 5 *He hath given food to them that fear him.*

Page 302 – Psalm 111 – *Dispersit dedit pauperibus*

The just man wears a golden circlet and carries a golden horn. He blesses the naked poor and his assistant puts clothes on them. 9 *He hath distributed, he hath given to the poor: his justice remaineth for ever and ever: his horn shall be exalted in glory.* Specifically giving clothes is not mentioned in the text but clothing the naked was one of the virtues enjoined by the *Rule of St Benedict*.²¹⁶

Page 303 – Psalm 112 – *Laudate pueri dominum*

Christ stands blessing a group of four adoring people. Six heads were drawn at the bottom of the letter L, two heads have been painted over. 1 *Praise the Lord, ye children.*

Page 304 – Psalm 113 – *Quid est tibi mare quod fugisti et tu iordanis*

Joshua, at the top of the letter, wielding a rod, commands two priests to carry the ark of the covenant through the River Jordan whose waters have divided to let them pass. 5 *What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou didst flee: and thou, O Jordan, that thou wast turned back?* Below and to the left, men hold stones. The tribes of Israel picked up stones to build a memorial of this miraculous passage (Joshua 3–4).

Page 306 – Psalm 114 – on book: *O domine libera animam meam*

The central figure carries his own naked soul on his back. He is being attacked by four men who stone him: 3 *The sorrows of death have encompassed me: and the*

perils of hell have found me. I met with trouble and sorrow. He points to the rubric: **4 O Lord, deliver my soul.**

The stoning of the sinner is not specifically mentioned. Stoning was the punishment for adultery and Stephen the first martyr was stoned to death. However, the figure is unlikely to be Stephen because it lacks a nimbus. The book is placed in the space left for the rubric but no one is holding it.

Page 307 – Psalm 115 – on book: **Calicem salutaris**

The psalmist holds up the book inscribed with the **13 chalice of salvation**. In his other hand he holds a chalice. Christ watches him benignly while on the other side an evil man shoots an arrow at the psalmist: **15 Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.**

Page 308 – Psalm 116 – on book: **Laudate dominum omnes gentes**

The head of Christ looks out from the top of the letter. David, with a halo, holds up the book inscribed **1 O praise the Lord, all ye nations**. He points down to five men who are praising God.

Page 309 – Psalm 117 – **Aperite mihi portas iustitiae**. on book: **Haec porta dominum**

A welcoming angel opens the gates with one hand and holds the book with the other. The book is inscribed: **20 This is the gate of the Lord, the just shall enter into it**. The psalmist also holds the book and prepares to enter the doorway: **19 Open ye to me the gates of justice: I will go into them, and give praise to the Lord.**

Page 312 – Psalm 118:1 – on book: **Beati immaculati in via**

A naked innocent soul raises his hands in prayer to the psalmist. David holds open the book inscribed **1 Blessed are the undefiled in the way**. His right forefinger touches the soul's head and the book. Two fingers should be used for a true gesture of blessing, so the finger is indicating the text and referring to the soul.

Page 313 – Psalm 118:9–10 – **In toto corde meo exquisivi te**

The young man points to his heart and to the text of the psalm while looking up at Christ above. The words he indicates are: **11 Thy words have I hidden in my heart that I may not sin against thee**. The rubric reinforces the gesture to his heart: **10 With my whole heart have I sought after thee.**

Page 314 – Psalm 118:17 – on book: **Increpasti superbos maledicti**

Christ leans down from heaven, chastising proud sinners with a rod. **21 Thou hast rebuked the proud: they are cursed who decline from thy commandments**. David holds the book inscribed with the rubric, pointing to the sinners. The sinners have long hair, a worldly excess (see Psalm 42).

Page 315 – Psalm 118:25 – on book one: **Dormitavit anima mea**

Christ looks out of heaven, blessing the psalmist. The psalmist holds the book with the rubric. **28 My soul hath slumbered**, and points to the sleeping soul.

Page 315 – Psalm 118:33 – on book two: **Averte oculos meos**

The image is contained within the letter L (*Legem*) which is divided into four sections. At the top, Christ looks out, blessing the psalmist. On the stem of the letter, the psalmist holds up the book with the rubric: **37 Turn away my eyes (that they may not behold vanity)**. He points to the vanities illustrated in the compartment below. The final compartment, to the right, contains trees and the word *Legem* (Law). None of the following detail is mentioned in the psalm text but is developed from psalm commentaries.

On the left a man looks at the hawk on his wrist and carries a fancy stole (a type used to depict Pomp in an Anglo-Saxon *Psychomachia*).²¹⁷ St Ambrose's commentary on the psalm warns readers to avert their eyes from secular pomp and avoid looking at a woman to desire her.²¹⁸ Facing him, a woman holds a flowering branch and small circular object in her hands, possibly an apple. Eve was visually seduced by the fruit, 'fair to the eyes and delightful to behold' (Genesis 3:6). While the man looks at his temptations with appreciation, the woman's eye expresses horror and disdain.²¹⁹ The next man offers the woman a gold coin and grasps her hand, tempting with avarice and lust, but she draws back, raising her hand in blessing. St Augustine's comment on v. 36 '*Incline my heart into thy testimonies and not to covetousness*', examines the word 'covetousness' in terms of 'love of money or avarice'.²²⁰ St Ambrose warns against coveting gold and silver necklaces. He sees vanity entering through the eyes, as through a window. 'Fornication may enter through the window of her house'.²²¹ Consequently, the compartment of vanities, enclosed within a house, is topped by an array of roof tops.

The psalm text written in the final compartment (*Legem*) explains how to avoid these temptations: *33 Set before me for a law the way of thy justifications, O Lord: and I will always seek after it.* St Ambrose advises that that readers should, instead, be nourished by the sky, the necklace of stars at night, the beautiful globe of the moon, the earth and sea which are God's works.²²² These are represented by the three trees and water.

Three trees (or leafy rods), of similar size but different nature, feature in the Legend of the Holy Rood Tree. Three pips from the Tree of Knowledge, taken from Eden when Adam lay dying, grew into three rods of cedar, cypress and pine, representing the Trinity. The three rods were found, carried about and plunged in and out of water by Moses and David. Eventually fused into one tree, it lay as a sacred beam before the Temple and was later used for the crucifix. Many versions of the legend in this form were in circulation by the early twelfth century.²²³ By the end of the century, the green, red and white colours had entered the literature. The version interpolated into the Holy Grail legend explains that Adam and Eve took a branch from the tree of life when they left Paradise. Eve planted the branch which grew into a white tree. It turned green when Adam and Eve consummated their relationship and red when Cain slew Abel beneath it. The trees, which eventually become the wood for the crucifix, represent redemption following the Fall.²²⁴ These colours also had a liturgical meaning which was being established in the early twelfth century, relating to seasons of the ecclesiastical year.²²⁵

This page combines two divisions of Psalm 118 together. Verse 37 occupies the whole width of the page, a device normally used to indicate one of the major liturgical divisions of the psalms. This planned use of space assigns spectacular importance to this illustration.

The particular vanities selected may have some application to Christina. The women's poses represent awareness of temptation and its rejection. The aristocratic young man offering the blandishments of a prosperous life style is reminiscent of her husband Burthred. Christina repudiated his advances and those of her family by brandishing a little branch of flowers given to her by the Virgin Mary.²²⁶ She eventually rejected the worldliness of silk dresses and luxurious furs, replacing them with a rough habit.²²⁷ Bishop Ranulf Flambard, a slave to lust, had attempted to buy Christina's favours with rich gifts. 'From London he brought her silken garments and rich ornaments ... but she looked on them as dirt and despised them'.²²⁸

Page 316 – Psalm 118:41 – *Adveniat super me*

Christ blesses the psalmist, holding the tablet of the law in his hand. The psalmist points to his own head for blessing, and points to the adjacent words of the psalm: *41 Let thy mercy also come upon me 44 So shall I always keep thy law, for ever and ever.*

Page 317 – Psalm 118:49 – Cantabiles mihi erant iustificationes tue, on book: In loco peregrinationis meae

Christ blesses a barefoot pilgrim who holds up a book with the rubric: **54** *Thy justifications were the subject of my song, [on the book] in the place of my pilgrimage.*

Page 318 – Psalm 118:57 – Funes peccatorum circumplexi sunt me

Two demons try to bind the nimbed psalmist with cords. **61** *The cords of the wicked have encompassed me.* He points to Christ, **61** *but I have not forgotten thy law,* and points to the rubric.

Page 319 – Psalm 118:65 – Bonum mihi quia humiliasti me

The psalmist is on his knees with his back to Christ. He points to the rubric: **71** *It is good for me that thou hast humbled me.* At the same time he twists to face Christ who holds the tablet of the law in his hand: **69** *I will seek thy commandments with my whole heart.*

Page 320 – Psalm 118:73 – Manus tuae fecerunt me

Christ grasps the naked psalmist by the forehead and chest. These areas represent the soul and the body. The psalmist points to the rubric: **73** *Thy hands have made me and formed me.*

Page 321 – Psalm 118:81 – Defecerunt oculi mei

Christ, holding the tablet of the law, blesses the psalmist. The psalmist points to his failing eye and the rubric: **82** *My eyes have failed [for thy word, saying: When wilt thou comfort me?]*

Page 322 – Psalm 118:87 – on book: In aeternum domine verbum tuum permanet

The psalmist holds the book with the rubric: **89** *For ever, O Lord, thy word standeth firm in heaven.* He points up to Christ above, his finger reaching through into the heavenly zone.

Page 323 – Psalm 118:97 – Super inimicos meos prudentem

The crowned psalmist points to the rubric: **98** *[thou hast made me] wiser than my enemies.* Craning his head remarkably, he also points to an older bearded man resting on a stick behind him. **100** *I have had understanding above ancients: because I have sought thy commandments.* The psalmist's feet are constrained by the rim of the initial. **101** *I have restrained my feet from every evil way*

Page 324 – Psalm 118:105 – Anima meam manibus meis semper

The nimbed psalmist points to the rubric: **109** *My soul is continually in my hands.* In the other hand he offers his soul up to Christ. Christ, holding the law, looks down, blessing.

Page 325 – Psalm 118:113 – Declinate a me maligni

The psalmist points to the rubric with one hand: **115** *Depart from me, ye malignant.* With the other, open palmed, he offers himself to Christ's safekeeping: **114** *Thou art my helper and my protector.*

Page 326 – Psalm 118:121 – Suscipe servum tuum

Christ is enthroned, holding a crozier. With his other hand he pulls the psalmist up. **122** *Uphold thy servant unto good.* The crowned psalmist kisses Christ's foot, a gesture of monastic humility. He points to a proud onlooker who stands facing Christ. **122** *Let not the proud calumniate me.* The rubric seems to be an afterthought on the design of this page, squeezed out by the exaggerated size of the initial.

Page 327 – Psalm 118:129 – Os meum aperui et attraxi spiritum

Standing under an arcade the psalmist opens his mouth, inhaling. 131 *I opened my mouth and panted (attraxi spiritum/drew in the spirit)*. Facing him are three pairs of birds, surmounted by a cross, with strings leading them to the psalmist. The Holy Spirit is represented here in two ways: by the breath and by pairs of birds.

Augustine develops the metaphor of inhalation and the Holy Spirit. ‘He drew in the Breath. He drank in the good Spirit, through whom he was able to do what he could not do unaided’.²²⁹ Dodwell suggested the pairs of birds represent the gifts of the Holy Spirit as enumerated in pairs by Isaiah 11:2. ‘The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord.’²³⁰ The Holy Spirit is represented by a bird in Psalm 138.

Page 327 – Psalm 118:137 – on book: Tribulatio et angustia

Christ looks out on the unhappy psalmist: 135 *Make thy face to shine upon thy servant*. The psalmist holds up his book with the rubric: 143 *Trouble and anguish have found me*. He rests his cheek heavily on his hand: 136 *My eyes have sent forth springs of water*.

Page 328 – Psalm 118:145 – Clamavi in toto corde

The psalmist on his knees, with mouth open, points to the rubric: 145 *I cried with my whole heart*. His other hand points to his heart. Christ looks out attentively from heaven. 145 *Hear me, O Lord*.

Page 329 – Psalm 118:153 – on book: Vide humilitatem

The penitent and barefoot psalmist crouches, holding the book with the rubric: 153 *See my humiliation*. He points to his hair, by which Christ is pulling him up: 153 *Deliver me*. Christ leans out of heaven to rescue him.

Page 330 – Psalm 118:161 – Septies in die laudem dixi tibi

The psalmist holds an open blank book and points to the rubric: 164 *Seven times a day I have given praise to thee*. He is on his knees looking up to Christ who leans out of heaven. The image is very neutral and does not develop the visual potential of the text. The rubric is required to discover what the psalmist is doing. Considering that this phrase is a key tenet of the *Rule of St Benedict* (Rule, chapter xvi), that monks should perform the Opus Dei in the seven offices of the day, the picture avoids any direct monastic reference.

Page 331 – Psalm 118:169 – Erravi sicut ovis quae periit

The psalmist points to the rubric: 176 *I have gone astray like a sheep that is lost*, and with his other hand he points to a sheep in the jaws of a wolf. Christ looks out from heaven at the rubric.

Page 332 – Psalm 119 – Sagittae potentis acutae

Two men point their bows and arrows at the psalmist: 4 *The sharp arrows of the mighty*. The psalmist is calling out: 7 *When I spoke to them they fought against me without cause*. He points to the rubric and the archers. Christ looks at the rubric.

Page 333 – Psalm 120 – Auxilium meum a domino, on book: Levavi oculos meos

Christ stands blessing the nimbed psalmist. The psalmist looks up to him holding the book with the rubric: 1 *I have lifted up my eyes [to the mountains]*. He points to the rubric in the text: 2 *My help is from the Lord*.

Page 334 – Psalm 121 – Laetatus sum in his, on book: In domum domini ibimus

The smiling psalmist stands within a tower, looking up. He holds a book with the rubric: *1 We shall go into the house of the Lord*, and points to the rubric in the text: *1 I rejoiced at the things.*

Page 335 – Psalm 122 – Ecce sicut oculi servorum

David raises his eyes to Christ in the heavenly sphere above, pointing to him with one hand and pointing to the gathered people with the other hand: *1 To thee have I lifted up my eyes, who dwellest in heaven.* The people are looking at David. The woman and man touch hands: *2 Behold as the eyes of the servants [are on the hands of their masters, as the eyes of the handmaid are on the hands of her mistress: so are our eyes unto the Lord.]* The text does not expect the men and women to touch.

Page 336 – Psalm 123 – Benedictus dominus qui non dedit nos

Christ holds a tau crozier and lifts up one of the saved by his wrist. One of the flanking nimbed figures points to the rubric and to the people below. One group of smiling people are being saved; the other are baring their teeth and snarling: *6 Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given us to be a prey to their teeth.* The nimbed figures may be the righteous, already saved, *7 Our soul hath been delivered.*

Page 337 – Psalm 124 – Qui confidunt in domino sicut

Christ leans out to bless the psalmist. The psalmist points to Christ and to the true believers who are surrounded by Mount Sion. *1 They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Sion. 2 In Jerusalem. Mountains are round about it: so the Lord is round about his people.*

Page 338 – Psalm 125 – Qui seminant in lacrimis, on book: In exultatione metent

The psalmist points to the rubric: *5 They that sow in tears*, and holds the book with the rubric: *5 They shall reap in joy*: Below, one man reaps with a sickle and another scatters seeds from a bag. *6 Going they went and wept, casting their seeds. 7 But coming they shall come with joyfulness, carrying their sheaves.*

Page 338 – Psalm 126 – Surgite postquam sederitis qui manducatis panem doloris

The crowned psalmist points to the rubric *2 Rise ye after you have sitten, you that eat the bread of sorrow*, and points to the people eating bread below. He explains the message to the man clasping his arm. Three people sit below, at a table spread with loaves of bread marked with a cross.

Page 339 – Psalm 127 – Labores manuum tuarum quia manducibus

Christ looks out at the psalmist who points to the rubric: *2 For thou shalt eat the labours of thy hands.* With the other hand he points to a young man tending an olive tree. *3 Your children [will be] like young olive trees.*

Page 340 – Psalm 128 – on book: Supra dorsum meum fabricauerunt

The psalmist holds a book with the rubric: *3 [The wicked] have wrought upon my back.* Two men assault him on his back and head with an axe and an adze.

Page 341 – Psalm 129 – on book: Fiant aures tuae intendentes

The psalmist is crouched on his knees, twisting to face Christ. *1 Out of the depths I have cried to thee, O Lord.* He holds a book with the rubric: *2 Let thy ears be attentive [to the voice of my supplication].* He points to Christ's listening ear above.

Page 342 – Psalm 130 – Sicut ablactus super matre sua

Christ looks out mercifully at the humbly kneeling psalmist. 1 *Lord, my heart is not exalted: nor are my eyes lofty*: The psalmist points to a mother and weaning child and also straight to his own heart or soul. 2 *If I was not humbly minded, but exalted my soul: As a child that is weaned is towards his mother, so reward in my soul*.

Page 343 – Psalm 131 – Si dederō somnum oculis meis

The psalmist promises to stay awake until he finds a place for the Lord. He points to the rubric: 4 *If I shall give sleep to my eyes, or slumber to my eyelids*.

Page 345 – Psalm 132 – Sicut unguentum in capite

The major figure in this initial stands on the right, gesturing upwards to a group of six figures and pointing with a raised finger, indicating speech or admonition, to a tonsured cleric. The cleric, one hand wrapped across his body, the other hand raised in blessing, mirrors the pose of Christ above. In the upper scene, four figures gaze adoringly at Christ, while the fifth figure scowls with possibly a clenched fist behind his back. The rubric from verse 2 *Like the precious ointment on the head, [that ran down upon the beard, the beard of Aaron]* refers to Exodus 29:7, 30:23–30, where Aaron, God’s chosen priest was consecrated with holy unction.

This psalm is associated with communal harmony, reflecting the words of verse 1: *Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell in unity*: St Augustine applies this psalm to monasticism: ‘These words of the psalm, this lovely sound, has given birth to monasteries. Brothers and sisters who longed to live as one were awakened by the song’. St Jerome associates it with the healthy corporate life in a monastery.²³¹

The scenes appear to contradict both verse 1 and 2. Earlier illustrations of this psalm show the anointing of Aaron, a sign of his divinely appointed status, but here there is no approving unction.²³² Moreover, the cleric is tonsured and almost beardless, not the Aaron of Exodus but a contemporary priest. The scene of Christ with harmonious brethren excludes one, perhaps Judas. The gesturing psalmist and the cleric’s mirrored pose, link the priest to Christ’s situation above. The psalm does not mention the resentful man but St Augustine goes on to consider dissension, heresy and false monks. ‘There are spurious monks too. We know some of them, yet the dedicated brotherhood of real monks is not discredited by those who profess to be what they are not’.²³³ This may refer to Geoffrey’s situation at St Albans where his policies, particularly regarding money and Christina, led to factions among the community and ultimately an attempted coup by Prior Alchinus in 1146.²³⁴ The unction of approval is withheld from him and he is reminded of disharmony even among Christ’s disciples.

Page 345 – Psalm 133 – Benedicite dominum

The dancing psalmist points to the rubric and raises his palm in prayer. Inside a house, 1 *all ye servants of the Lord: Who stand in the house of the Lord, raise their arms in praise*. 2 *In the nights lift up your hands to the holy places* Outside there are stars in the sky.

Page 346 – Psalm 134 – Qui percussit primogenita egypti

The avenging angel strikes off the head of a man, while four others look on. Behind are the corpses of four headless animals. 8 *He slew the firstborn of Egypt from man even unto beast*.

Page 348 – Psalm 135 – Et excussit pharaonem et virtutem eius in mari rubro

The children of Israel, clean and dry, turn their backs to the Red Sea and look up to heaven. Behind them an Egyptian is drowned in the sea. 14 *And brought out Israel*

through the midst thereof 15 And overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea. Two other heads are drawn to the left of the faces.

Page 350 – Psalm 136

The body of the letter forms the river filled with fish. Around it sit a remarkable congregation of despondent and grieving people, homesick in a foreign land. Three women are included among them. One man hangs up his harp on the willow tree. 1 *Upon the rivers of Babylon, there we sat and wept: when we remembered Sion: 2 On the willows in the midst thereof we hung up our instruments.* At the bottom two men seem to be engaged in discourse, perhaps planning retaliation: 8 *O daughter of Babylon, miserable: blessed shall he be who shall repay thee thy payment which thou hast paid us.*

Page 351 – Psalm 137 – In conspectu angelorum psallam tibi

The nimbed psalmist points to the rubric: 1 *[I will sing] praise to thee in the sight of his angels.* He gestures towards two angels, praising with hands raised, who stand before Christ. Christ blesses them.

Page 352 – Psalm 138 – Quo ibo a spiritu tuo

The all-knowing Christ blesses the psalmist. David points to the rubric: 7 *Whither shall I go from thy spirit,* and with his other hand points to the ever-present spirit (the bird) who descends on his head.

Page 353 – Psalm 138:11 – On upper book: Si ascendero in caelum tu illic.

On lower book: **Si descendero in infernum ades**

David is crowned and wearing wings: 9 *If I take my wings early in the morning.* He points up to one book with the rubric: 8 *If I ascend into heaven, thou art there.* Christ looks out from above. He also points down to a second book with the rubric: 8 *If I descend into hell, thou art present.* Christ looks up from the pit. The rubric is taken from the preceding part of the psalm.

Page 355 – Psalm 139 – Acuerunt linguas suas

The psalmist points to the rubric and to the sinner behind him who sticks out an evil pointed tongue: 4 *They have sharpened their tongues [like a serpent: the venom of saps is under their lips].*

Page 357 – Psalm 140 – Pone domine custodiam ori meo, on book: Dirigatur oratio mea

Christ leans out from heaven to place a curb on the lips of the psalmist: 3 *Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth: [and a door round about my lips].* David holds up a book with the rubric: 2 *Let my prayer be directed.* In his other hand he holds a censer wafting his prayers to heaven: 2 *Let my prayer be directed as incense in thy sight; the lifting up of my hands, as evening sacrifice.*

Page 358 – Psalm 141 – Corripiet me iustus, on left book: Corripiet me iustus, on right book: Oleum autem peccatoris

This initial starts Psalm 141, but it illustrates verses in Psalm 140.

David, holding two books, cries out to Christ: 1 *I have cried to thee, O Lord, hear me.* On the left, the just man prepares to beat him with a stick, as mentioned in the rubric and in the left book: 5 *The just shall correct me.* A sinner attempts to anoint him with oil, as mentioned in the second book: 5 *Let not the oil of the sinner fatten my head.* The sinner also trips David up with a snare: 9 *Keep me from the snare, which they have laid for me.*

Page 359 – Psalm 142 – on book above initial: **Domine exaudi oratio**, on book within initial: **Et non intres in iudicium**

On the left, David holds aloft the book with the rubric: **1 Hear, O Lord, my prayer; [give ear to my supplication]**. Christ, who is lifted up by David, serves as an intercessor for the prayer, knocking on the rim of heaven to obtain God's attention. On the other side are two men wearing golden hats, wielding sticks of authority and holding a book with the rubric: **2 And enter not into judgment**. St Augustine explains that these well-dressed figures of authority are the proud. 'Who would ever want to go to law against God, except those who aspire to set up a justice of their own? ... How can I approve any righteousness in you, where all I find is pride that I must condemn?' They are contrasted with David, beneath Christ, 'a humble suppliant'.²³⁵

Page 361 – Psalm 143 – **Domine inclina celos tuos et descende Fulgura coruscationem**

Christ leans out from heaven, smiting four cowering men with his rod. Darts of lightening, like arrows, descend on the people. **5 Lord, bow down thy heavens and descend: touch the mountains and they shall smoke. 6 Send forth lightning, and thou shalt scatter them: shoot out thy arrows, and thou shalt trouble them**. The men, crouched in an energetic chorus line, have shaggy long hair, a sign of worldly vanity and pride. St Augustine offers two explanations for the cowering men, not mentioned in the psalm. 'Who are these bent heavens? The apostles, humbled under God, for they are the heavens who proclaim God's glory.' More likely, in view of their hair and lightening, they are a second group: 'But there were some people who conspired for evil ends, who came together to make common cause against the Lord and his anointed. They gathered, they hatched their plots. *Flash your lightning and you will scatter them*'.²³⁶

Page 362 – Psalm 143:9 – **Qui das salutem regibus**, on book: **Deus canticum novum**

Christ reaches out from heaven, grasping David by the hand to pull him out of the water. **7 Put forth thy hand from on high, take me out, and deliver me from many waters**. David, open mouthed, is singing and holding a book with the rubric: **9 To thee, O God, I will sing a new canticle**. David the king is being saved: **10 Who givest salvation to kings**.

The under-drawing of David's robes is clearly seen beneath the water.

Page 363 – Psalm 144 – on book: **Exaltabo te deus meus**

Christ is in heaven, his hand raised in blessing. The psalmist offers up in front of him a book with the text: **1 I will extol thee, O God**.

Page 364 – Psalm 144:10 – **Confiteantur tibi domine omnia opera tua**

Christ looks out from heaven, listening to the psalmist. The nimbed David points to the rubric and to the group of praising people. **10 Let all thy works, O Lord, praise thee: [and let thy saints bless thee]**.

Page 366 – Psalm 145 – **Exibit spiritus eius et revertetur in terram suam**

Christ looks out from heaven. David lifts his soul whose arms are outstretched in praise: **2 Praise the Lord, O my soul**. He points to a man in a sarcophagus, from whose mouth a bird representing his spirit, flies out: **4 His spirit shall go forth, and he shall return into his earth**.

Page 367 – Psalm 146 – **Humilians autem peccatores usque ad terram**

Christ tramples a sinner beneath his feet and prods him with the crozier. The psalmist points to this in the rubric: **6 The Lord bringeth the wicked down even to the ground**. He also points to the meek. **6 The Lord lifteth up the meek**. The Lord

receives the meek into his protection. The meek are praising God, their raised hands forming a separate and disconnected element of the picture: **1 Praise ye the Lord, because psalm is good.**

Page 368 – Psalm 147 – Qui emittet eloquium suum terrae

Christ hurtles downwards. Emerging from his mouth is a bird who flies down a shaft to the earth. **15 Who sendeth forth his speech to the earth.** Earth is depicted as a block of ice surrounded by melting water: **18 He shall send out his word, and shall melt them [ice crystals]: his wind shall blow, and the waters shall run.**

Page 369 – Psalm 148

Christ looks out from heaven. The psalmist exhorts the whole of creation to praise the lord. Assembled below are men and women, beasts, birds, fish and trees. **7 Praise the Lord all ye deeps: 9 fruitful trees and all cedars: 10 Beasts and all cattle: serpents and feathered fowls: 12 Young men and maidens: let the old with the younger, praise the name of the Lord.**

Page 370 – Psalm 149 – Et gladii ancipites in manibus eorum

Christ looks out, blessing. A group of eight women stand in a building with hands raised: **1 Let his praise be in the church of the saints.** They watch three soldiers with drawn swords face two devils: **6 The high praise of God shall be in their mouth: and two-edged swords in their hands 7 To execute vengeance upon the nations, chastisements among the people.** The text does not indicate that the holy ones should be depicted as women, but women are also shown for this scene in the Utrecht Psalter.²³⁷

Page 371 – Psalm 150 – Laudate eum sono tubae

3 Praise him with sound of trumpet: praise him with psaltery and harp. 4 Praise him with timbrel and choir: praise him with strings and organs. 5 Praise him on high sounding cymbals: praise him on cymbals of joy: let every spirit praise the Lord.²³⁸

Christ looks out to hear the praise. David plays the harp. Below a choir master faces his troupe, holding two hand bells. Two musicians blow horns. The fourth figure in the troupe holds two flat spatulate objects. According to the text they should be cymbals or stringed instruments. The object in the man's left hand looks like a simple rebec, played under the neck, missing strings but with the finial to fasten them. He requires a bow in the other hand but instead has another object with a similar outline to the rebec.

Page 372 – The Canticle of Isaiah (Isaiah 12:1–6) – Haurietis aquas in gaudio de fontibus saluatoris canticum ysaie prophete

A kneeling figure looks up to Christ and points at a man who draws water issuing from the foot of the crucifix. Isaiah 12:3: *You shall draw waters with joy out of the saviour's fountains.* The prophecy of Isaiah does not mention the rest of the imagery. However Christ's waters of everlasting life, mentioned in John 4:14, provide the Christological link to the lamb and crucifix, the symbols of salvation.

Page 373 – The Canticle of Ezekiel (Isaiah 38:10–20) – Ego dixi in dimidio Scriptura ezechiae regis iudae. Vadam ad portas inferi

Christ looks down from heaven to the jaws of hell below. Two demons stand in hell, holding the gates. King Hezekiah points to a book with the rubric: Isaiah 38:10 *I said: In the midst of my days I shall go to the gates of hell:* He points to his failing eye: **14: My eyes are weakened looking upward: Lord, I suffer violence, answer thou for me.**

Page 375 – The Canticle of Anna (I Samuel 2:1–10) – Donec sterilis peperit, canticum anne

Eli the priest, with his tonsure, halo and crozier, sits on his seat by a post in the temple. The temple is an elaborate domed structure with striped columns and a dome.

1 Samuel 1:9, *Eli the priest sitting upon a stool, before the door of the temple of the Lord.* Anna, barren for many years, brings Samuel, the child God gave her, as an offering to the temple (1 Samuel 1:20–28). The child descends from God above. Anna’s arm is raised to indicate her song of praise (the adjacent canticle, 1 Samuel 2:1–10).

Page 377 – The First Canticle of Moses (Exodus 15:1–19) – Canticum moysi prophete. cantemus domino

Moses, with his golden rod, exhorts the children of Israel to praise God. The canticle comes from Exodus 15: 1 *Then Moses and the children of Israel sung this canticle to the Lord.* The Israelites, both men and women, carry golden bell-shaped instruments. The canticle stops at the end of verse 19. However, the illustration shows one woman with an instrument talking to another female. This illustrates verse 20, not mentioned in the text, a situation where women independently praise the Lord: *So Mary the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand: and all the women went forth after her with timbrels and with dances.* A timbrel is normally understood as a type of tambourine, with a skin stretched over a frame but the instruments held here look more like hand bells, as used in Psalm 150.

Page 379 – The Canticle of Habakkuk (Habakkuk 3:2–19) – Canticum abbae prophete

The text of the canticle is Habakkuk 3, but the narrative illustration comes from the book of Daniel 14:32–37 (now in the Apocrypha as Bel and the Dragon, 33–38). The letter D is divided into three separate scenes. An angel picks up Habakkuk who is carrying a pitcher and a pot (drink and food), by the hair. The angel deposits Habakkuk with his supplies above Daniel, who is shown below in the den of lions.

Page 383 – The Second Canticle of Moses (Deuteronomy 32:1–43) – Canticum moysi ad filios israhel. audite

The canticle comes from Deuteronomy 31:1–43 Moses sits with a pen and knife in his hands, writing the word: 1 *Hear, [O ye heavens, the things I speak.]* Behind him the sons of Israel listen and watch: 1 *Let the earth give ear to the words of my mouth.* Two angels keep guard above. The canticle concerns the action of listening and yet Moses is shown writing rather than speaking. This indicates the close relationship between the silent words on a page, and the action of reading them aloud.

Page 389 – The Ambrosian Hymn: “Te deum ...” – TE DEUM

Christ is flanked by the cherubim and seraphim, all holding blank books. Cherubim and seraphim cry out in endless call: *Holy. Holy. Holy:* Below are two tonsured figures wearing stoles and holding croziers. The upper figure holds an open book, the lower a closed book or tablet. *The holy church acclaims you.* The two figures, with tonsures, pallia and pastoral staffs, are doubtless St Ambrose and St Augustine who were considered to be authors of the Te Deum.

Page 391 – The Canticle of the Hebrew Boys (Daniel 3:57–88) – Ymnus trium puerorum benedicite

An angel points to the rubric and to the three boys in the fiery furnace below. Nebuchadnezzar’s men watched as an angel saved the three Jews from the flames. The song was sung by the children in the furnace (Vulgate Daniel 3, now in the Apocrypha). An extra row of flames was drawn beneath the purple paint.

Page 393 – The Canticle of Zachariah (Luke 1:68–79) – Apparatio gabrielis arcangelis zacharie

The archangel points to the rubric: *The appearance of the archangel Gabriel to Zacharie.* Zacharias the priest, with tonsure and stole, stands before an altar holding

a chalice (Luke 1:9–20, refers to an incense burner). The archangel announces that the old priest shall produce a son, and at the same time, with a touch on the lips, strikes him dumb. Zacharias utters the canticle later when he names his son John, and his voice returns (Luke 1:64).

Page 394 – Magnificat. The Canticle of the Virgin Mary (Luke 1:46–55) – Magnificat canticum sancte marie. On the book: *Aue maria gratia plena dominus*

The angel Gabriel places his hand on Mary's forehead: *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee.* (Luke 1:35) He and Mary hold a book with the words *Hail Mary full of grace the lord [is with you]* (Luke 1:28). Mary looks at Gabriel and points to the rubric, the first words of the canticle, *Magnify* (Like 1:46–55). The figures stand under two arches, the column between them resembling a palm tree.

Page 395 – The Canticle of Simeon (Luke 2:29–32) – Canticum sancti symeonis

The illustration is the presentation at the Temple (Luke 2:22–38). In the gospel, Mary and Joseph bring Jesus to the temple to offer a pair of doves in sacrifice and Simeon blesses them. He utters the canticle in thanksgiving. In this image, Christ and Mary offer the blessing, Joseph is omitted, and a woman, perhaps Anna carries three doves. All three visitors are nimbed. The same scene, also without Joseph, is shown on page 28, with Simeon in a doorway and a female attendant.²³⁹

Page 396 – The Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9–13) – Oratio dominica

A bearded man, wearing gloriously rich clothes, points to God, who is in heaven. *Our Father, who is in heaven.*

Page 396 – Apostles' creed – Symbolum apostolorum

In the centre, a tonsured man points to God who is flanked by angels: *I believe in God the Father almighty.* He also points to *Christ one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten son of God.* Christ looks up to God, blessing. Beside him is Mary, linked to her son by the dove of the Holy Spirit: *was incarnate by the Holy Ghost from the Virgin Mary.* Three men watch on the right.

The P and C of *Pater Noster* and *Credo* are linked by one stem which extends the whole length of the page.

Page 397 – The Angelic Hymn – Ymnus angelicus

A tonsured priest raises his hands in a prayer of praise: *We praise you.* On the right a nimbed man holds his hands together in prayer: *Receive our prayer.*

Page 398 – Nicene Creed – on book: credo in unum deum patrem

A cleric with pallium with hands raised, points to the open book on an altar: *I believe in one God, Father [almighty].* Christ looks down from heaven. The altar has legs which appear to be of turned wood and is covered with an elaborate embroidered cloth.

Page 399 – Athanasian Creed – Fides catholica secundum athanasium, on book: quicumque uult salus esse an

A nimbed and tonsured figure holding a crozier sits on the left. He points at a man holding the book with the rubric: *Whosoever wishes to be saved.* Behind, are more men seeking salvation.

Page 403 – Litany – Incipit letania. On the left book: *Pater de celis deus. miserere fili redemptor mundi dues miserere.* On the right book: *Spiritus sancte deus. Miserere. Sancta trinitas unus deus miserere*

A tonsured monk genuflects between two groups of women who hold up books. The books are inscribed with the beginning of the litany. The left book reads *God the Father of heaven have mercy. God the Son, redeemer of the world, have mercy.* The right book reads *God the Holy Spirit have mercy. Holy Trinity, one God, have mercy.* By holding the books aloft, it is the women who are appealing to the Holy Trinity. The bobbing monk is attracting attention to their prayers. The leading woman, on the left, reaches from the temporal zone into the heavenly zone. On the left stand two similar nimbed figures, blessing, with the dove of the Holy Spirit on their heads. They are the Holy Trinity.

The humans in this image do not derive from the text but are a deliberate choice, whereby a group of women, assisted by a monk, appeal to the Holy Trinity. This suggests that the litany is for these women and they are the ones who say it. The dove was originally drawn with outspread wings, but they have been painted closed, in repose.

This image covers not only the full written section of the page but is allowed to extend from the gutter to the outer edge of the parchment. In terms of size and content, it is the climax of the psalter initials. The extended horizontal frames of the letter almost obscure the design of the initial K. The initial is so large, there is no space for the accompanying text 'YRIE ELEISON'. The *Incipit* rubric is forced into the upper margin, above the Athanasian Creed. The last four lines of the Athanasian creed have been assimilated into the image, the lines highlighted with coloured bands, to blend in with the figurative compartment below.

In Christina's vision she 'saw herself in a kind of chamber, pleasing in its material, design and atmosphere, with two venerable and very handsome personages clothed in white garments. Standing side by side, they differed neither in stature nor beauty. On their shoulders a dove far more beautiful than any others seemed to rest. Outside she saw the abbot trying without success to gain entrance to her ... she pleaded with the Lord to have mercy on her beloved'.²⁴⁰ The deliberate alteration of the dove from outstretched to closed wings may be an attempt to reflect the vision of the dove at 'rest' more accurately. Talbot considered that this invocation of the Holy Trinity must have been painted after the formal dedication of Markyate to the Holy Trinity in 1145.²⁴¹ However, the illustration clearly reflects Christina's vision which is recorded in her Life after her profession c.1131 and before the accession of King Stephen in 1135.²⁴²

Page 409 – Litany – Deus in adiutorium meum intende

Christ looks out from heaven onto a man who points to the rubric: *God to my help hasten.* With his other hand he points to a devil trying to waylay him. The devil clutches his groin. *Let them be thrown into confusion and be ashamed: who seek my life.*

Page 411 – Collect 1 – Deus cui proprium est misereri

Christ blesses a praying tonsured cleric: *O God whose nature is ever to show mercy.*

Page 412 – Collect 2 – Pretende super famulos tuos

Christ looks out from heaven and a bird, *the breath of Thy life-giving grace*, descends. Below, on the right, a tonsured figure holding a crozier (an abbot) points to the rubric: *Send forth upon Thy servants and upon the flocks entrusted to their care, the breath of Thy life-giving grace.* On the left, a tonsured figure with a pallium and crozier (a bishop) points to three gathered laymen.

Page 412 – Collect 3 – Pretende

A man wearing a diadem guides Christ's blessing hand down towards the gathered congregation. The prayer calls for God's blessing [*Send forth your blessing*] on his servants and handmaidens, but no women are shown.

The hem of the green cloak was drawn jagged. There are under-drawings of two additional heads behind the two laymen in the foreground.

Page 413 – Collect 4 – on book: *et hostium sublata formidine*

The supplicant asks God in heaven for peace and freedom from his enemies. He holds a book with the rubric: *and being moved from the fear of enemies*, and points to two devils.

Page 413 – Collect 5 – *Vre igne sancti spiritus.*

The collect asks God to purify the body and heart by the *fire of the Holy Spirit*. The bird's head of the Holy Spirit issues like a tongue of fire from God's mouth towards the astounded supplicant.

Page 414 – Collect 6 – *Actiones nostras quas domine.*

The prayer asks for God's blessing on the actions of the day: *So that every work of ours may always begin with you and through you end happily*. Christ sends down the dove of the Holy Spirit to two men working in the field with mattocks. Agriculture is not mentioned in the text but this is chosen as typical work.

Page 414 – Collect 7 – on book: *Spirituales nequitiae repellantur*

The supplicant holds up a book and points to the rubric: *the spirits of wickedness be repelled*. Christ repels an evil demon with a goad.

Page 414 – Collect 8 – on book: *Ut destructis*

The supplicant holds up a book with the rubric: *that [enemies] be destroyed*. He points to a demon who is being goaded by Christ.

Cologne recto – Collect 9 – *Hostium nostrorum quis domine*

The supplicant points to Christ and the demon. Christ prods the demon with a goad. *Destroy the pride of our enemies*.

Cologne recto – Collect 10 – on book: *Animabus quis domine*

A leader wearing a green hat points to God above and to two naked men who stand behind two devils. *Lord the prayer completes in the souls of your pleading servants and handmaids. so that you may free them from all their sins*. The words of the prayer are on behalf of both men and women, but the illustration only shows men. A third face is visible behind the naked figures.

Cologne recto – Collect 11 – on book: *Deus qui es*

Christ looks out from heaven, prodding some demons with his goad. A crowned figure holds a book inscribed with part of the prayer. Facing him are two figures wearing mantles, and there are two further figures in the under-drawings behind them. *Watch over us with your protection ... having repelled all the deceiving tricks of the enemy*.

VI The St Alban and David 'Diptych'

As explained, these two pages may not have faced each other as they do today, but were originally intended to be glued back-to-back (see Kidd II.7). According to this arrangement, David was facing left towards his psalter while the headless body of St Alban concluded the book. Together, they provide a defining coda for 'The St Albans Psalter'.

Page 416 – The Martyrdom of St Alban

On the left, the judge stands holding the staff of office in his hand. The executioner sheathes his sword while his eyes drop out. As Alban falls, decapitated, his soul is

rescued from his mouth by an angel. On the right, a man holds a signum or Roman standard on a long staff. Alban's soul, in the form of a dove, is ushered to Christ and his angels in heaven.

Alban was the first recorded Christian martyr in Britain, killed for protecting a Christian the during the Roman persecutions at Verulamium (the Roman town which developed into the present St Albans). His first executioner converted to Christianity and the eyes of the second executioner fell out. The medieval abbey grew up near the site of his grave.²⁴³ This is the earliest surviving depiction of the Martyrdom, although more scenes from Alban's life were probably shown on his gilded tomb, decorated with figures in high relief and commissioned by Geoffrey.²⁴⁴ Geoffrey also commissioned a great hanging for the altar, showing the Invention of St Alban.²⁴⁵ The signum is similar to one shown on the gravestone of Flavinus, now at Hexham Abbey.²⁴⁶ A sixth-century text of St Alban's martyrdom, by Gildas, refers to 'the presence of wicked men who displayed the Roman standards to the most horrid effect'.²⁴⁷

The next surviving scene of the martyrdom, in *La Vie de Seint Aubin* (Dublin, Trinity College, MS 177, f. 38a), deviates from the psalter in a significant respect and has given rise to some misunderstanding.²⁴⁸ This manuscript was made at St Albans by Matthew Paris around 1235. In place of the standard bearer, it shows a Christian picking up St Alban's personal cross which had been given to him by Amphibalus. The illustration thus shows aspects of the story which were added to the new Vita written by William the Monk in the later twelfth century, including the gift of a cross to Alban by his friend Amphibalus, and the subsequent rescue of the relic. The so-called cross of Amphibalus having 'long lain hidden' in London was acquired by Abbot William of Trumpington (1214–36) and was described in a fourteenth-century inventory as a cross 'the top of which is shaped like a ferula, and there is on it an image of the Crucified one, fashioned in an ancient style'.²⁴⁹ According to the illustration, this was a small hand-held crucifix distinguished by a circular disc (like a ferula) on top.²⁵⁰ Wormald suggested that the history of this cross developed in stages. In the psalter, a Roman signum correctly illustrates the legend as it was known in the early twelfth century. Then, the new Life of St Alban by William the Monk transformed the Roman signifer into a pious Christian rescuing the new attribute of St Alban's cross (not described in any detail). Lastly Abbot William bought a relic which, according to Wormald, may have been a relic of a Roman signum'.²⁵¹ Kjølbbye-Biddle's analysis demonstrates it is unlikely that anyone could have mistaken the signum of the Psalter with the relic acquired by Abbot William or drawn by Matthew Paris. Roman signa were well understood in the psalter, with other examples appropriately deployed at Christ's Arrest, p. 42, while St Alban's relic appears to be an ancient type of Coptic cross.²⁵²

Page 417 – David an his Musicians

David sits in the centre holding a viol between his knees. He is flanked by two harpists. Above, two men hold gongs and play horns while at the bottom two seated men strike chime bells or cymbala with hammers. The figures are arranged comfortably within well balanced frames, unlike David's frame on p. 34 which bulges around his bowing hand.

David playing the contemporary viol instead of his biblical harp was still a novelty in the early twelfth century. In the Anglo-Saxon Tiberius Psalter (c.1050) and Stephen Harding Bible (1110), a rebec player joined the band. In France, the crowned Elders of the Apocalypse on the Moissac portal (c.1115), play viols or rebecs. However on the Porte de Miègeville, Saint-Sernin, Toulouse (c.1110–1115), a single royal viol player is likely to be King David, and he occurs again, alone in the Winchester Psalter (c.1150). David is traditionally accompanied by four musicians, Asaph, Eman, Ethan and Idithun, playing a wide variety of instruments including

bells, horns, harps and percussion instruments. The St Albans image with seven musicians is an unusually large group, particularly from early twelfth-century England. It emphasises the role of energetic contemporary performance.²⁵³

VII Some Conclusions on the Illuminations of the Albani Psalter

Peter Kidd's Chapters III and IV have demonstrated in detail how the Albani Psalter was created over a period of time, using a number of different artists and scribes and with each section created for a separate purpose. However, even under these circumstances, it is possible to discern particular themes emerging from the illuminations. My conclusions have been developed more fully elsewhere.²⁵⁴ Historical background from *The Life of Christina of Markyate* allows the interests of both Christina and Geoffrey to emerge from the psalter.

In the Calendar, quite apart from the written evidence, Virgo is given especial emphasis, linking the sign to both the developing cult of the Virgin and to Christina's own associations with chastity and the Feast of the Assumption. The Miniatures, dealing with the predominantly masculine life of Christ, manage to include women in 18 out of 39 scenes (excluding David and Emmaus). In many cases, women are active participants if not key performers. At the Annunciation, the Virgin holds an open book in her lap, in the same way as Christina did. A dove appears in this scene, as it did before Christina's own birth. Women fight back at the Massacre of the Innocents, defying male aggression as Christina did. Mary Magdalene introduces and completes the Passion, providing this masculine climax with a feminine frame. Christ praying alone in the Garden of Gethsemane incorrectly precedes the Last Supper. Here solitary communion with Christ, suitable for Christina in her anchorhold, replaces the masculine ceremony of the Eucharist. Instead the Last Supper is portrayed as the moment of male betrayal and denial. At the entombment, Mary supplants Joseph of Arimathea in the centre of the image, instead of more commonly holding Christ's head to one side. In terms of Christina's own experiences, she often acted as witness to Christ, like Mary Magdalene. She held him as a baby, saw him with the Trinity, and served him as a pilgrim. Like Mary at Pentecost, she experienced the descent of the Dove of the Holy Spirit, and like the disciples at Emmaus she experienced the mysterious disappearance of Christ.²⁵⁵

In the Alexis Quire, the Chanson is laid out to emphasise aspects of the poem which were significant to both Christina and Geoffrey, in particular the chaste marriage, grieving departure, and ultimate rewards for a chaste relationship in heaven. The Emmaus scenes reflect parallel episodes in Christina's life.

The priority of the psalm initials was to expand on the text, but even here we see some choices which would reflect Christina's interests, particularly in the large initial to Psalm 118 (p. 315), and the somewhat rueful reflection in Psalm 132 (p. 345) of monastic discord, potentially caused by Geoffrey's support of Christina. The prominent initial to the Litany (p. 403) can only be explained in terms of Christina's vision.

Kidd has shown, with conclusive new evidence, that the initial to Psalm 105 (p. 285) covered an erased image and was subsequently painted in situ. Supported by the rubric, it shows Christina acting as intercessor for the monks of St Albans. One monk is privileged to touch her and join the chain of gestures which lead to Christ. Christina's reputation was on this high level while under the protection of Abbot Geoffrey. Koopmans has shown how Geoffrey's policies were overturned during a murky 'coup' after his death.²⁵⁶ Under the abbacy of Geoffrey's nephew, Robert de Gorham (1151–66), some contacts resumed but Christina's transcendent reputation

was neither restored nor promoted. A scribe from the abbey was seconded to add the obits to the calendar, and it was arranged for Abbot Robert to bring Pope Adrian IV embroidered gifts from Christina, when he went to Rome in 1155.²⁵⁷ Motivation to add the pasted initial, with its particularly intimate iconography and rubric written in the first person asking for intercession, was therefore more likely before the death of Abbot Geoffrey in 1146.

Ideas from an impressive intellectual, assisted by a very experienced artist and a copious library, lay behind the choice of images. We see their collaboration at its closest on p. 72 where the text describes the meaning and appearance of the images. Two of Abbot Geoffrey's known talents were as a schoolmaster and play producer. The dramatic character of the illustrations and the didactic appearance of the initials have been explored above. The use of Latin captions to the French Chanson and the two versions of Pope Gregory's letter may have a similar educational purpose.

Geoffrey's generosity towards his beloved and her establishment at Markyate was controversial, causing murmurs of disapproval among the monks.²⁵⁸ He justified the appearance of the psalter with the introductory discourse about the struggles between worldliness and spirituality. In a stumbling sentence, he explained that its prologue is the outcome of discussions about heavenly love and the honour of spiritual war. Christina, notwithstanding her charms and religious mein, could be demanding, stubborn and somewhat petulant. She required 'frequent pleadings and humble sweetness of the abbot' in order to take her vows, an event which took place around 1131.²⁵⁹ She could provide Geoffrey with spiritual guidance and intercession, but she could also deliver a storm of grief to dissuade him from travelling to Rome in 1136: 'she knew how to love to supreme advantage'.²⁶⁰ Christina provides the last word on the profound nature of these illuminations which echo so much about her extraordinary relationship with the abbot: 'She on her side would not receive what she needed from anyone unless it was prompted by spiritual love and holy compassion.'²⁶¹

Appendix 1

The Discourse, pp. 71–72 of the manuscript, translated by Patrick Edwards

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This verse speaks of the leaders who are placed on the other side [of the page, on p. 72]. The comparison is about the holy war on earth in the church and the great joy with the angels in heaven. And therefore the holy figures, armed in a manly spirit, are made friends of Christ and heavenly athletes. Whoever wishes to be a son of God and a worthy heir of the heavens, and whoever wishes to gain the glory and inheritance which the devils lost when they fell from the kingdom of God, by night and day let him watch in eye and heart that war and (fight for) justice which he here observes drawn out. Just as these visible arms have been prepared with iron and wood, so that they may bring about evil and human slaughter, likewise on the other hand it is necessary for each one of us who is established in war and penitence, to be armed with faith and love, so that we may approach the heavenly blessings and obtain the angelic crown of life. And just as they are puffed up, bodily, with pride and malice, likewise we must be tamed, spiritually, in humility and divine blessing. Just as they are given over, bodily, to anger and evident madness, so must we be in peace and wisdom, spiritually. Just as they do not cease from reaching out mutually with the eye of the body to all their limbs, we likewise, on the other hand, with the eyes of the heart must always keep watch with all virtue (with the eyes of the heart) against our adversary who is constantly lying in wait to ambush us. Our

adversary wishes and reckons to rain down upon our head every evil that arises in their struggle. They never grant sleep to their eyes nor oblivion to their oblivious (?) heels (spurs), and let the sharp point of our meditation always have provident reason and a breaking forth of a zeal for goodwill (?). Let each be sure in heart, that unless he destroys his visible adversary, he himself shall be killed, but we, unless we kill our invisible adversary, we ourselves shall be killed. He who is victorious shall truly live; he who falls with

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This began from the other part [Continued from overleaf]

his reins (heart) broken shall perish. Here we have declared the highest truth, and if he desires it, let him hold it as for himself. Just as those are manly and prudent in the pursuit of equal justice, so too we must be manly and perfect in the constancy of our steadfastness. If at some time we are struck through by sword or spear or flying arrow, yet we shall not fall to the ground in vain, if we are proved manly, but we shall only be made more perfect in God, and shall be doubly girt around with faith and hope, so that, safe in the presence of God, we may be crowned. But in our spirits we must set in order every art which these two warriors prepare in their bodies. Because the blood of the holy martyrs and worthy virginity illuminate the book of life and go before the love of heaven, he who marvels at the divine countenance and strives by night and day according to its meaning, and purifies himself constantly, gains approval against the last day and the divine battle, which is foretold in the scriptures to come about between the holy church and the antichrist who strike through themselves in turn and shall disturb the human race. There have been named in the books of the saints those companies and all those virtues which the holy church teaches and shall bring with her. It is written about wisdom, the queen, who leads the way to good counsel, (that) she shall sit upon a white warhorse, and shall smite over the lost army. Her blow will be of great worth, and will overcome all. Upon that war and divine inheritance there meditate, by day and night, good people of the cloister and manly hearts that are temperate and chaste, and every faithful disciple. There are yet two members of the human race alive in heaven who will pour forth their blood and will bring that war to its conclusion. That war shall end in great toil and a hundred thousand bucketfuls of blood; great shall be that shout. By night and day the good and evil prepare themselves. The ungodly are zealous in wickedness, and glorify themselves in flattery, and desire pride and discord. The godly are zealous in justification, and glorify themselves in confession, and desire peace and pure devotion.

You [singular] recently heard our word and that verse which shall be written in the name of heavenly love, and in honour of the spiritual war, lest any one of those talkers, who investigate, should rebuke us. It has seemed to me that the plan here is that the psalmist himself, who was zealous in wisdom and sounded forth such divine power, should be drawn in the appearance of a king, and placed honourably in the middle of this B, and hold his harp in his right hand against his chest, and in his left hand have his own psalter, in which is written the blessed annunciation [written on the pages of David's book, p. 72, 'The blessed psalmist David, whom God has chosen, has gushed forth the annunciation of the Holy Spirit'.] For in that holy zeal he has made known to us the way of salvation and our redeemer, who enlightens us and builds up the holy church. It has seemed to me that the sound of his harp signifies the voice of the holy church, and his book, which he held in great affection, signifies the wisdom of prophecy, and that divine prediction, and for that reason spiritual people love the psalter and desire its own divine teaching, because it sows sweetness in their hearts. [Erased from the end of the text, but deciphered by Otto Pächt under ultraviolet light (1960, p. 148, n. 4): 'The blessed psalmist David, whom God has chosen, has gushed forth the annunciation of the Holy Spirit'. These letters could not be discerned in 2002.]

BLESSED IS THE MAN

Appendix 2

The Prologue to the *Chanson of Saint Alexis*, p. 57 of the manuscript, translated by Margaret Jubb

Here begins the pleasant song and pious account of that noble lord named Eufemien and of the life of his blessed son about whom we have heard readings and song. By God's will and his own wish he (Eufemien) begat this one son. After the birth this was a child beloved of God himself and he was brought up with great affection by his father and mother. His youth was honourable and devout. Out of regard for sovereign piety he commends his young bride to the true living Bridegroom who is one sole creator and who reigns in the Trinity. This story is a pleasing grace and a supreme consolation for the pious minds of all those who live purely in chastity and worthily take delight in heavenly joys and virginal marriage.

Footnotes

- ¹ Kauffmann, 1975, p. 78; Wormald, 1960, p. 10.
² Webster, 1938, p. 36.
³ London, British Library, MS Cotton Julius A. VI; London, British Library, MS Cotton Tiberius B.5, both eleventh century. Webster, 1938, pp. 36, 53–6, 134–36.
⁴ London, British Library, MS Cotton Vitellius C. XII. (Kauffmann, 1975, p. 6, cat. 18) This series is incomplete and erratic. Some initials have just the Zodiac sign, some combine the Zodiac with the Labour.
⁵ Shaftesbury Psalter, London, British Library, MS Lansdowne 383; Winchester Psalter, London, British Library, MS Cotton Nero C.VI; Hunterian Psalter, Glasgow, University Library, MS Hunter 229. Described in Webster, 1938, pp. 88–93, 170–4.
⁶ Webster, 1939, p. 403.
⁷ With his more attenuated blade, November might refer to the common winter activity of chopping wood (without the wood), while December wields an axe with a heavy butt, ready to stun the pig.
⁸ Isidore, 2006, 3: lxxi: 23–33.
⁹ London, British Library, MS Cotton Vitellius C. XII. (Kauffmann, 1975, p. 6, cat. 18).
¹⁰ Bede, 1975, *De Natura Rerum*; chapter XVII, pp. 208–10; Bede, 1999, Chapter 16, p. 54–55.
¹¹ Oxford, St John's College, MS 17. Kauffmann, 1975, p. 56, no. 9. The poem is *Tetrastichon authenticum* in Baerhens 1883, p. 206, no. 12.
¹² Brookland: Webster, 1938, illus. 90; Wormald suggests the indented paten, Wormald, 1960, p. 10; Barb, 1956, pp. 40–67. The ciborium lid has a knob on top and is shown in the Hunterian Psalter, f. 1v, http://special.lib.gla.ac.uk/images/psalter/H229_0001rdetail.jpg.
¹³ Webster, 1939, p. 403.
¹⁴ Webster, 1939, p. 403; Webster, 1938, pp. 150–165.
¹⁵ Hourihane, 2007, p. lxii.
¹⁶ Heslop, 1988, p. 166, suggests it might be a distaff like that carried by Eve on p. 18, but tradition links Virgo with harvest attributes or a palm leaf.
¹⁷ British Library, Lansdowne MS 383, fol. 6v, August. Kauffmann, 2001, pp. 256–75.
¹⁸ Talbot, 1959, p. 129.
¹⁹ Knapp (1999, p. 92) identifies the objects as a rasp and ?a piece of parchment.
²⁰ Webster, 1938, p. 170, illus. 91.
²¹ Webster, 1938, p. 144, illus. 47.
²² Webster, 1938, illus. 33a, 34b.
²³ Webster, 1938, p. 176.
²⁴ Pächt, 1960, pp. 54–125.
²⁵ London, British Library, MS Add. 49598.
²⁶ Eadwine Psalter leaves: New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS 724 and MS 521; London, British Library, MS Add. 37472; London, Victoria & Albert Museum, MS 661. Cambridge, Pembroke College, MS 120. This important topic is not explored here, but see Parker, 1969, pp. 263–302; Kauffmann, 1975, pp. 31–2, no. 66, no. 35; Henderson, 1992, pp. 35–42; Parker, 1969, pp. 263–302.

- ²⁷ Openshaw, 1993, pp. 36–7. Earlier cycles of spiritual battle, Southampton Psalter, Cambridge, St John's College, MS C.9; London, British Library, Cotton MS Tiberius C.VI.
- ²⁸ Shaftesbury Psalter, London, British Library, MS Lansdowne 383; Winchester Psalter, London, British Library, Cotton MS Nero C.VI; Copenhagen Psalter, Copenhagen, Royal Library, MS Thott 143, 2°; Hunterian Psalter, Glasgow, University Library, Hunter MS U.3.2; Kauffmann, 1975, cat. nos. 48, 78, 96, 95.
- ²⁹ I have suggested (Geddes, 2005b, pp. 103–4) that this emphasis on Christ's lonely suffering would create more empathy for a solitary anchoress, rather than the sociably male scene of the Last Supper.
- ³⁰ Aelred, 1982, pp. 41–103; Anselm, 1973.
- ³¹ Verdun, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 70. Thomson, 1982, I, no. 79, p. 124.
- ³² Anselm, 1973, pp. 98, 205.
- ³³ Pächt, 1960 p. 97v–104. Many comparisons are shown, pls. 131–136.
- ³⁴ Park, 1984; Park, 1990, pl. 2; Geddes, 2005b, pp. 63–64.
- ³⁵ Classical bronze doors survive from the Pantheon and the Curia in Rome. Early wooden examples are from Sta Sabina, Rome and San Ambrogio, Milan. Salomi, 1990.
- ³⁶ An example like that on p. 57 is found at Kempsey, Gloucestershire. Geddes, 1999, pp. 75–131, illus. 4.40.
- ³⁷ The St Albans hinges are now in the Victoria & Albert Museum, London. Geddes, 1999, pp. 63, 139.
- ³⁸ Bachmann, 1969, pp. 73–77; Remnant, 1986, pp. 56–60; Grove, 2001, vol. 8, pp. 767, 773, vol. 26, pp. 663–74, vol. 20, pp. 898–99; Woodfield, 1984, pp. 9–14.
- ³⁹ Bachmann, 1969, pp. 74–5; Remnant, 1986, pp. 56–60; Geddes, 2005b, pp. 110–113.
- ⁴⁰ Bachmann, 1969, p. 77, pls. 9, 25, 39, 64, 56. Relief on a Byzantine ivory casket, Museo Nazionale, Florence, Coll. Carrand, no. 26. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS lat. 11550, f. 7v. Cambridge, St John's College, MS B.18, f. 1; Portal sculpture, Oloron Cathedral, outer archivolt, right. The Stephen Harding Bible c.1110–15 (Dijon, Bibliothèque Publique, MS 14, vol. III, fol. 13v) shows an instrument almost exactly like Albani Psalter p. 417.
- ⁴¹ Bachmann, 1969, 30, pl. 2, describes pegs in a similar upright position in British Library, Add. 11965, f. 86. He concludes they are the result of a drawing convention which reduces the projecting pegs to a single plane with the neck.
- ⁴² Bachmann, 1969, p. 90.
- ⁴³ Both methods were illustrated. Bachmann, 1969, pl. 64, 56, 53.
- ⁴⁴ Remnant, 1986, p. 17.
- ⁴⁵ Pächt, 1960, p. 155.
- ⁴⁶ Blades, 1984, pp. 198–200; Theophilus, 1979, pp. 176–179.
- ⁴⁷ For example, pp. 19, 21, 23, 25, 28, 30, 36, 41, 44, 72, 417.
- ⁴⁸ Eames, 1977, Stanford Bishop (?twelfth century) p. 211, Hereford Cathedral (late twelfth century) p. 210, pls. 54–56.; Throne of St Peter (eleventh century), Gaborit-Chopin, 1991, p. 64.
- ⁴⁹ Gaborit-Chopin, 1991, pp. 63–68. In the Anglo-Saxon British Library, Cotton MS Tiberius C.VI, David sits in a similar folding chair.
- ⁵⁰ Fernie, 2000, pp. 84–86.
- ⁵¹ Pächt, 1960, p. 72, pl. 112 f.
- ⁵² Utrecht, Universiteitsbibliotheek, MS 32; London, British Library, Harley, MS 603.
- ⁵³ St Cuthbert: Oxford, University College, MS 165.
- ⁵⁴ Mayr Harting, 1999, pls. 97, 98, 101. Munich, Bayerisches Staatsbibliothek, Clm. 4452; Clm. 4453; Nuremberg, Germanisches National-Museum, Codex Aureus Epternacensis, in Kahsnitz et al., 1982.
- ⁵⁵ Pächt, 1960, pp. 115–118; Petzold, 1986.
- ⁵⁶ New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS 736, p. 42; Pächt, 1960, p. 118, pl. 139.
- ⁵⁷ Schramm and Mutherich, 1962, pl. 67.
- ⁵⁸ Backhouse et al. 1984, p. 185, cat. no. 233.
- ⁵⁹ Lasko, 1994, pl. 129.
- ⁶⁰ Lasko, 1994, pls. 152, 199.
- ⁶¹ Webster and Backhouse, 1991, pp. 229–230.
- ⁶² The chalices on pp. 95, 117 and 270 are purely schematic.
- ⁶³ English twelfth-century chalices: Zarnecki, 1984, cat. nos. 293, 321, 322, 323, 324. For a rim with pearls instead of pellets, Abbot Suger's chalice, St Denis: Gaborit-Chopin, 1991, p. 175.
- ⁶⁴ Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius MS 11, p. 20; Pächt, 1960, pp. 57, 80, pl. 108. See also Gellrich, 2000, pp. 106–7, on the duplicity of the scene: Satan's two tongues and the doubling of other motifs.
- ⁶⁵ Studer, 1949, p. xxii; Pächt, 1960, p. 57, pl. 108.
- ⁶⁶ Mary's book is inscribed on the capital at Ainay: Pächt, 1960, pl. 117a.
- ⁶⁷ Pächt, 1960, pp. 63–7, pls. 116–18.

- ⁶⁸ The ninth-century Brunswick casket, and the tenth-century Benedictional of St Aethelwold (London, British Library, Add. MS 49598) show the lecturer. In the Cluny Lectionary and Bohemian Coronation Gospels she has a closed book on her lap. Pächt, 1960, pl. 118.
- ⁶⁹ Talbot, 1959, p. 99.
- ⁷⁰ Prague, Univ. Lib. MS. XIV A 13/1; Pächt, 1960, p. 67, pl. 117c. Among English manuscripts which illustrate the dove, all later than the Albani Psalter, are the Winchester Psalter, British Library, Cotton MS Nero C.IV, f. 10r; New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M. 724 v; Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Auct. T. infra 1.10 (misc. 136) f. 118v.
- ⁷¹ Talbot, 1959, pp. 34–5.
- ⁷² Pächt, 1960, pp. 54, 82, pl. 102.
- ⁷³ Pächt, 1960, pp. 55, 83, pls. 104, 105.
- ⁷⁴ From Metz, in Lyons, Pächt, 1960, pl. 105c.
- ⁷⁵ Pächt, 1960, p. 83.
- ⁷⁶ Pächt, 1960, p. 84, pl. 125.
- ⁷⁷ Pächt, 1960, pp. 60, 84, pl. 112a and d.
- ⁷⁸ Rome, Vatican, MS Reg. lat. 12, f. 87v; Paris, Bib. Nat. MS. Grec 74; Monreale mosaics. Pächt, 1960, p. 85, pl. 128a and b.
- ⁷⁹ Philadelphia, Free Library, Widener 9, f. 3v.
- ⁸⁰ Oosterwijk, 2003, pp. 14–33. In the Chester ‘Gouldsmythes Playe’ the mothers lay about the soldiers, attacking them with rocks and distaffs.
- ⁸¹ Innsbruck, Universitätsbibliothek Cod. 301, f. 8. Pächt, 1960, p. 85, pl. 112d.
- ⁸² Meyvaert, 1992, pp. 129–30.
- ⁸³ Pächt, 1960, p. 86; Young, 1933, II, p. 113.
- ⁸⁴ The devil with wings, beak and claws is found in the Anglo-Saxon psalter, London British Library, MS Cotton Tiberius C. VI. The winged devil also has Byzantine ancestry, being found in the Chludoff Psalter and Monreale mosaics, Pächt, 1960, p. 86, pls. 107, 124e, 124c.
- ⁸⁵ London, British Library, Add. MS 37472 verso. Heslop, 1992, p. 31.
- ⁸⁶ In Perpignan, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 1, f. 103 and Admont, Stiftsbibliothek, MS 289, f. 83. Pächt, 1960, pl. 127a, b.
- ⁸⁷ Carrasco, 1999, pp. 67–80.
- ⁸⁸ Talbot, 1959, pp. 172–175, 118–19.
- ⁸⁹ Cambridge, Pembroke College, MS 120, f. 2v, in Kauffmann, 1975, pl. 94.
- ⁹⁰ Pächt, 1960, pl. 127e.
- ⁹¹ Pächt, 1960, pl. 127e.
- ⁹² London, British Library, Cotton MS Tiberius C.VI, f. 11v. Pächt 1960, pl. 127c.
- ⁹³ Schapiro, 1943, p. 150.
- ⁹⁴ New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS 521 v; Kauffmann, 1975, pl. 178.
- ⁹⁵ Pächt, 1960, p. 61, 89, pl. 113d. Athens, Nat. Lib. MS 211, Homilies of John Chrysostom, ninth century. Shortly after the Albani Psalter, the chalice also features in the Eadwine Psalter leaf, New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, M 521.
- ⁹⁶ Pächt, 1960, pp. 58–9.
- ⁹⁷ Pächt, 1960, p. 90.
- ⁹⁸ Pächt, 1960, pp. 61–2, 90, pl. 114.
- ⁹⁹ Stuttgart Psalter, Stuttgart, Landesbibliothek, MS Bibl. F. 23, f. 43v; Pilate at the scene: Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, MS 36, 1950, f. 84v, Italian psalter c.1260. Pächt, 1960, pp. 58, 91, pl. 110a, c, e.
- ¹⁰⁰ Pächt, 1960, p. 70, pl. 120–121.
- ¹⁰¹ Park, 1987, p. 159 and 1991, p. 31.
- ¹⁰² ‘Ad monumentem venimus gementes’. Young, 1933, I, p. 309.
- ¹⁰³ Pächt, 1960, 72, pl. 112c and f.
- ¹⁰⁴ Ivrea, Biblioteca Capitolare, Cod. LXXXVI, f. 65. Pächt, 1960, pl. 106.
- ¹⁰⁵ The disciples ask, ‘Dic nobis, Maria, quid uidisti in via?’ Young, 1933, I, p. 479; Pächt, 1960, 63, pl. 115.
- ¹⁰⁶ Talbot, 1959, pp. 107, 132–9.
- ¹⁰⁷ Pächt, 1960, p. 78; Young, 1933, I, p. 481.
- ¹⁰⁸ Pächt, 1960, p. 95, pl. 130a and c. Tours, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 1018, f. 9v; Trier, Stadtbibliothek MS 1378, f. 132v.
- ¹⁰⁹ Pächt, 1960, p. 50. Is St Martin, in some way, a substitute for the Emmaus story, illustrated on pp. 69–71? The Emmaus story (Luke 24:13–35) immediately precedes Christ’s appearance to the apostles (Luke 24:36) in the gospel. For attempts to justify the inclusion of St Martin: Haney, 1997, p. 153–68; Geddes, 2005b, 113–14.
- ¹¹⁰ Dushman, 1997, p. 523.
- ¹¹¹ Schapiro, 1943, p. 140.
- ¹¹² Talbot, 1959, p. 182–9.
- ¹¹³ Pächt, 1960, pp. 67–70, 95, pls. 119b, c, d, 137.

- ¹¹⁴ Talbot, 1959, pp. 156–7.
- ¹¹⁵ Cambridge, Trinity College, MS O.4.7, f. 112. Florence, Biblioteca Medicea-Laurenziana, MS Plut. 12.17, f. 2v.
- ¹¹⁶ Pächt, 1960, p. 120, pl. 141a.
- ¹¹⁷ Pächt, 1960, pp. 120–122; Pächt, 1962, p. 59, n. 2.
- ¹¹⁸ Jones and Morey, 1931; Dodwell, 2000, pp. 101–154.
- ¹¹⁹ Thomson, 1982, I, pp. 35, 101. He believes the Terence was probably made at St Albans around 1150.
- ¹²⁰ Dodwell, 2000, XIV, XL, pp. 74–8, 111–122.
- ¹²¹ The initial for Psalm 18 (p. 104) has a similar structure. Both show a bridegroom coming out of his marriage chamber, with similar building, gestures, movement and meaning.
- ¹²² This was first pointed out by Talbot, 1959, p. 26; Pächt, 1960, p. 136.
- ¹²³ Talbot, 1959, pp. 50–51.
- ¹²⁴ Geddes, 2005b, pp. 115–6; Talbot, 1959, p. 161.
- ¹²⁵ Talbot, 1959, p. 157.
- ¹²⁶ Talbot, 1959, p. 185.
- ¹²⁷ Schapiro, 1943, pp. 135–152; Dushman, 1997, pp. 543–45.
- ¹²⁸ Brandt, 1988b, pp. 98–101.
- ¹²⁹ Goldschmidt, 1895, p. 37.
- ¹³⁰ Pächt, 1960, pp. 73–9; Holdsworth, 1978, p. 192.
- ¹³¹ Talbot, 1959, p. 182–8.
- ¹³² Pächt, 1960, p. 148, n. 4. Pächt was able to read these words under ultra violet light, but they are no longer legible.
- ¹³³ Earlier English examples are London, British Library, Cotton MS Tiberius C VI, f. 30v, Cambridge, Trinity College, MS B 5 26, f. 1r. Dodwell, 1954, pl. 10a and b.
- ¹³⁴ Talbot, 1959, p. 157.
- ¹³⁵ Mâle, 1922, p. 138.; Pächt, 1960, pp. 74–78; Swarzenski, 1963, p. 81.
- ¹³⁶ Evidence comes from six versions of the Peregrinus play, a liturgical drama performed on Easter Monday. They come from Anglo-Norman Sicily and Beauvais (twelfth century), Fleury, Rouen and Benediktbeuren (thirteenth century) and Saintes (fourteenth century) Young, 1933, I, pp. 451–483, II, p. 522.
- ¹³⁷ I would like to thank Carol Symes for her advice on early medieval drama. Symes, 2008, forthcoming.
- ¹³⁸ Goldschmidt, 1895, p. 43; Carrasco, 1999, p. 71; Heslop, 1988, p. 169; Camille, 1985, pp. 27–28.
- ¹³⁹ *Gesta Abbatum*, p. 73, ‘quemdam ludum de Sancta Katerina, quem ‘Miracula’ vulgariter appellamus, fecit’. Symes, 2007, pp. 7–13; Symes, 2004, pp. 377–417.
- ¹⁴⁰ Another manuscript using three scenes, Cambridge, Pembroke College, MS 120, is closely derivative of the St Albans Christ cycle.
- ¹⁴¹ Young, 1933, I, plays from Saintes p. 453, Sicily, p. 460, Beauvais, p. 468.
- ¹⁴² Pächt, 1960, p. 74.
- ¹⁴³ Young, 1933, I, p. 461. ‘portantes baculos ... trahentes baculum ostendentes castellum’.
- ¹⁴⁴ Young, 1933, I, p. 454.
- ¹⁴⁵ Muir, 1995, pp. 142–43.
- ¹⁴⁶ Young, 1933, I, pp. 464, 470, 474–75, 481.
- ¹⁴⁷ Pächt, 1960, p. 62–63, pl. 115. Paris, Bib. Nat, MS Grec 74, f. 162; Florence, Laurenziana, MS. Plut VI, 23, f. 97; Young, 1933, I, p. 479.
- ¹⁴⁸ Young, 1933, I, pp. 462, 479.
- ¹⁴⁹ Pächt, 1960, p. 77–78, pl. 115b, Gospels of Henry the Lion, Wolfenbüttel, Herzog-August-Bibliothek cod. Guelph 105 Noviss. 2°, f. 171; Young, 1933, I, p. 479–81. De Hamel, 1983, p. 20.
- ¹⁵⁰ See Pächt, 1960, pp. 55, 84, 85. Young, 1933, II, Fleury play-book, Return from Egypt, p. 113; Departure of Magi, pp. 73, 89.
- ¹⁵¹ Oosterwijk, 2003, pp. 3–53.
- ¹⁵² Young, 1933, II, pp. 110–111.
- ¹⁵³ Eadwine Psalter leaf: London, Victoria & Albert Museum, MS 661v; Winchester Psalter, London, British Library, Nero C.IV. Kauffmann, 1975, illus. 99, 180; Wormald, 1973, illus. 29.
- ¹⁵⁴ Dodwell, 1960, pp. 181–4.
- ¹⁵⁵ Dodwell, 1960, pp. 184–97.
- ¹⁵⁶ Haney, 2002, pp. 266–305.
- ¹⁵⁷ Geddes, 2005b, pp. 94–101, 108–113.
- ¹⁵⁸ van der Horst, 1996. Utrecht, Universiteitsbibliotheek, MS 32; London, British Library, Harley MS 603; Cambridge, Trinity College, MS R.1.17; Paris Bibliothèque Nationale, MS lat. 8846.
- ¹⁵⁹ Corbie Psalter, Amiens, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 18; Jerome, Epistles and Sermons, Dijon, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 135; Augustine Ennarationes in Psalmos, St Amand, (2 vols) Valenciennes, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 39; Paris, Bib. Nat. MS Lat. 1991; and from Le Mans. Le Mans, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 228. Swarzenski, 1963, pp. 77–85.

- ¹⁶⁰ Haney catalogues at length similar episodes which appear in earlier psalters (2002, pp. 439–654) but this does not detract from the original composition and fresh thinking in the St Albans Psalter.
- ¹⁶¹ Jerome, PL, xxvi, col. 834.
- ¹⁶² In Psalms 14, 15, 17:26, 43, 53, 58, 59, 60, 74, 116, 118:57, 118:106, 120, 123.
- ¹⁶³ The object in its mouth is clearly part of the green foliage, not an egg as cited by Haney, 2002, p. 100.
- ¹⁶⁴ <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/bestiary/translat/38v.hti>.
- ¹⁶⁵ Goldschmidt, 1895, p. 95.
- ¹⁶⁶ Dodwell, 1960, p. 271; Haney, 2002, p. 336–7, 652; Nilgen, 1988, pp. 160–2; Chapter II.6.
- ¹⁶⁷ London, British Library, Harley MS 2624; Thomson, 1982, I, 93, no 23.
- ¹⁶⁸ [Cicero] 1954, p. 30.
- ¹⁶⁹ The miscellany produced by the St Albans scriptorium in the 1140s contains no less than 36 items of Hugh's work. Thompson, 1982, I, 107, no. 49, pp. 30, 47, 107. Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud. misc. 370, c.1140. According to Wormald, the Victorine miscellany was probably written by the same scribe as the dedication charter of Markyate Priory, BL Cotton MS Ch XI, 8. Wormald, 1960, p. 277.
- ¹⁷⁰ Clanchy, 1993, pp. 172–3. A complete translation of Hugh of St Victor, *De Tribus Maximis Circumstantiis Gestorum* is in Carruthers, 1990, pp. 261–6. The St Albans copy of *De Tribus Maximis* no longer survives but it is recorded in a fourteenth-century catalogue. Given the early reception of Victorine material at St Albans and the close personal connections between St Albans and St Victor in the mid twelfth century, Geoffrey may well have been aware of this item which was written about 1130. Rouse, 1991, p. 259; Hunt, 1978, pp. 251–54; Green, 1943, pp. 484–493.
- ¹⁷¹ Augustine, 2000, III/15, p. 114.
- ¹⁷² *Rule*, chapter ii.
- ¹⁷³ Pächt, 1960, pl. 161.
- ¹⁷⁴ *Rule*, chapters ii, xxviii.
- ¹⁷⁵ Augustine, 2000, III/15, p. 183.
- ¹⁷⁶ Dodwell, 1960, p. 212.
- ¹⁷⁷ Augustine, 2000, III/15, p. 195.
- ¹⁷⁸ Augustine, 2000, III/15, p. 200.
- ¹⁷⁹ St Jerome, PL, xxvi, 881.
- ¹⁸⁰ Augustine, 2000, III/16, p. 95.
- ¹⁸¹ *Rule*, chapter vii.
- ¹⁸² Augustine, 2000, III/16, p. 241.
- ¹⁸³ <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/bestiary/translat/13r.hti>.
- ¹⁸⁴ Augustine, 2000, III/16, p. 258.
- ¹⁸⁵ Augustine, 2000, III/17, p. 20; Augustine, 2000, III/15, p. 400; Augustine, 2000, III, 16, p. 235.
- ¹⁸⁶ Augustine, 2000, III/17, pp. 28–9.
- ¹⁸⁷ Augustine, 2000, III/17, p. 46.
- ¹⁸⁸ *Rule*, chapter vii.
- ¹⁸⁹ *Rule*, chapter xii, xiii.
- ¹⁹⁰ Augustine, 2000, III/17, p. 401.
- ¹⁹¹ Augustine, 2000, III/17, p. 464.
- ¹⁹² Ursula Nilgen, pers. comm.
- ¹⁹³ Augustine, 2000, III/17, p. 488.
- ¹⁹⁴ Augustine, 2000, III/18, p. 26; Dodwell, 1960, p. 231; Haney, 2002, p. 534.
- ¹⁹⁵ Augustine, 2000, III/18, p. 58.
- ¹⁹⁶ Dodwell, 1960, p. 233–4; PL, cii, Smaragdus, *Diadema Monachorum*, col. 611–14 cap. xv–xvii.
- ¹⁹⁷ Dodwell, 1960, p. 235; Augustine, 2000, III/18, p. 183; Augustine, 2000, III/15, p. 378.
- ¹⁹⁸ Augustine, 2000, III/18, p. 301.
- ¹⁹⁹ Augustine, 2000, III/18, p. 385.
- ²⁰⁰ *Rule*, chapter ii.
- ²⁰¹ Dodwell, 1960, p. 241; Augustine, 2000, III/18, p. 475–6.
- ²⁰² Augustine, 2003, III/19, p. 48.
- ²⁰³ Augustine, 2003, III/19, p. 56.
- ²⁰⁴ <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/bestiary/comment/61v.hti>.
- ²⁰⁵ Haney, 2002, p. 572.
- ²⁰⁶ Talbot, 1959, p. 139.
- ²⁰⁷ Talbot, 1959, p. 127.
- ²⁰⁸ Talbot, 1959, p. 127.
- ²⁰⁹ *Gesta Abbatum* 1, p. 104.
- ²¹⁰ Talbot, 1959, p. 157.

- ²¹¹ Thomson, 1982, I, 25, 33, 116; II, pl.120.
- ²¹² Augustine, 2003, III/19, p. 225.
- ²¹³ Augustine, 2003, III/19, p. 225.
- ²¹⁴ *Rule*, chapter xvi.
- ²¹⁵ PL, xxvi, 1150.
- ²¹⁶ Dodwell, 1960, p. 247; *Rule*, chapter iv, 15.
- ²¹⁷ BL Add. MS 24199, f. 21v, in Dodwell, 1960, p. 251.
- ²¹⁸ Ambrose, V, p. 97, para 29, ‘averte ab omni saeculari pompa’; p. 98, para 30, ‘si videris mulierem ad concupiscendum eam, intrauit mors per fenestram’.
- ²¹⁹ Dodwell, 1960, p. 251, interprets the woman holding a flower and apple, symbols of worldliness and temptation.
- ²²⁰ Augustine, 2003, III/19, p. 391.
- ²²¹ Ambrose, V, p. 99, para 30, ‘a fenestra enim domus suae intrat fornicaria’.
- ²²² Ambrose, V, p. 98, para 98.
- ²²³ Meyer, 1881; Napier, 1894, pp. xxxi–xxxii, xli.
- ²²⁴ Matarasso, 1969, pp. 224–229.
- ²²⁵ St. J. Hope and Atchley, 1918, 17–37, 79–84.
- ²²⁶ Talbot, 1959, p. 75–77.
- ²²⁷ Talbot, 1959, p. 93.
- ²²⁸ Talbot, 1959, p. 45.
- ²²⁹ Augustine, 2003, III/19, p. 473.
- ²³⁰ Dodwell, 1960, p. 254.
- ²³¹ Augustine, 2004, III/20, p. 175; Jerome, PL, xxvi.
- ²³² In the Utrecht Psalter, Harley 603 and the Stuttgart Psalter the anointing takes place, so its omission in the St Albans Psalter is a deviation both from the text and earlier illustrations. Utrecht, Universiteitsbibliothek, MS 32, f. 75v; British Library, MS Harley 603, f. 68v; Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, MS Biblia folia 23, f. 149v.
- ²³³ Augustine, 2004, III/20, p. 177.
- ²³⁴ Koopmans, 2000, pp. 683–90.
- ²³⁵ Augustine, 2004, III/20, p. 349.
- ²³⁶ Augustine, 2004, III/20, pp. 372–73.
- ²³⁷ Haney, 2002, p. 637.
- ²³⁸ <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/view.jsp?artid=349&letter=T>.
- ²³⁹ The composition is very similar to the Ottonian manuscript, New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS. 781, f135v, in Pächt, 1960, Pl. 125e.
- ²⁴⁰ Talbot, 1959, pp. 156–7.
- ²⁴¹ Talbot, 1959, p. 26.
- ²⁴² Nilgen, 1988, p. 163.
- ²⁴³ Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, 2001, pp. 45–77; Bede, 1976, pp. 44–47.
- ²⁴⁴ *Gesta Abbatum*, pp. 81–3; Biddle, 2001, pp. 151–52.
- ²⁴⁵ *Gesta Abbatum*, p. 94.
- ²⁴⁶ Phillips, 1977, pl.2; Kjølbye-Biddle, 2001, pp. 85–110.
- ²⁴⁷ Sharpe, 2001, p. 31.
- ²⁴⁸ Dublin, Trinity College, MS 177, f. 38a, in Kjølbye-Biddle, 2001, fig. 5; Wormald, 1960, pp. 7–9.
- ²⁴⁹ Kjølbye-Biddle, 2001, p. 95.
- ²⁵⁰ Kjølbye-Biddle, 2001, pp. 94–5.
- ²⁵¹ Wormald, 1960, p. 9.
- ²⁵² Kjølbye-Biddle, 2001, pp. 87, 97, 101–4.
- ²⁵³ Tiberius Psalter: London, British Library, MS Cotton Tiberius C,VI, f. 30v; Stephen Harding Bible, Dijon, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 14, vol III, f. 13v. Remnant, 1986, pl. 2, 20, Appendix on Bowed Instruments in Groups, pp. 152–158. Bachmann, 1969, pl. 43, 41, 56.
- ²⁵⁴ Geddes, 2005b, pp. 89–121.
- ²⁵⁵ Talbot, 1959, pp. 118–19, 156–57, 182–88; 172–75.
- ²⁵⁶ Koopmans, 2000, 685–98.
- ²⁵⁷ See *Gesta Abbatum*, I, p. 127.
- ²⁵⁸ Discourse, p. 72: ‘lest any of those talkers who investigate should rebuke us’. In general Geoffrey’s generous payments for the Markyate community caused dissent at the abbey: Koopmans, 2000, 675–81. *Gesta Abbatum*, I, 102 ‘although the convent of St Albans murmured over such expenses and grants’.
- ²⁵⁹ Talbot, 1959, pp. 147, 15; Geddes, 2005b, pp. 126–27.
- ²⁶⁰ Talbot, 1959, p. 161–65.
- ²⁶¹ Talbot, 1959, p. 133.

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