

**THE DE GREY HOURS:  
An Intriguing Manuscript and its background**

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## **Abstract**

Treasured amongst the holdings of the National Library of Wales is the little-known manuscript which is the subject of this dissertation. It is an example of a Book of Hours, which was one of the most popular genres of manuscript production during the middle ages, and was named for a previous owner, a member of the De Grey family. This manuscript has received very little attention previously. The first objective of the dissertation was to investigate as far as is possible at this stage the origins and original ownership of the manuscript. To this end, the family history of the De Greys was researched and an outline of the results forms a substantial part of the dissertation. This research into the background of the De Grey Hours revealed some intriguing possibilities as regards its original ownership and a new proposition based on contextual evidence and evidence within the manuscript is set out for consideration. The other objective of this dissertation has been to investigate the structure and organization of this book of hours taking into account its textual contents and its extensive and rich programme of illustrations. The investigation of the illuminations produced evidence that points to what is probably the origin of the De Grey Hours, that is, the atelier or school that was responsible for its production.

# DE GREY HOURS

## Introduction

From the time of the Norman Conquest until that of the Tudors, the de Grey family<sup>1</sup> was a widely dispersed and powerful one, with some members throughout its history acting as advisers to kings, as ambassadors, sheriffs, judges, bishops, archbishops – elect and actual – constables of castles and country squires. Those who married mostly chose wealthy heiresses from influential families, and the de Gray women married into other notable families, thus extending the network.

This dissertation concentrates on the little-known manuscript of the De Grey Hours, NLW m/s NLW MS 15537C dated about 1450-55, now held in the National Library of Wales, and in the Middle Ages owned by a descendant of the third Baron Grey of Ruthin. Almost no attention has been paid to this manuscript in scholarship on books of hours and medieval manuscripts.

The Greys of Ruthin were one branch of a widespread and convoluted aristocratic family<sup>2</sup> which included baronies, earldoms, dukedoms, a marquessate and a viscounty.<sup>3</sup> Chapter 1 gives an overview of some prominent members of different branches of the family. As will become apparent, they had, besides their military and diplomatic skills, a great talent for marrying advantageously. They were also prominent in the Church, producing several bishops and an Archbishop of York, besides at least two members who were executed as traitors. The son of one of those traitors became the bibliophile William Grey, Bishop of Ely, whose generosity benefited generations of scholars.<sup>4</sup>

The De Grey Hours is referred to as 'Sir John Grey's book' in the pencilled note inside it which goes on to explain that he was the son of the first Marquis of Dorset, which makes him the great-great-grandson of the third Baron by his second

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<sup>1</sup> Also Gray or de Gray/de Grey, the name sometimes varying between generations of the same line.

<sup>2</sup> A partial family tree is given in Appendix 6, inside back cover.

<sup>3</sup> Cracroft's Peerage: [Cracroftspeerage.co.uk](http://Cracroftspeerage.co.uk) <accessed 21 November 2016>

<sup>4</sup> See Appendix 4.

marriage. In Chapters 3 and 4, I examine the manuscript in detail, and propose that the original owner was in fact an earlier Sir John Grey who was the third Baron's grandson by that same marriage.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> See family tree, Appendix 6, inside back cover.

## Chapter 1

### Family background and origins of the De Greys

The de Grey family ultimately descended from Reynold de Falaise, Lord of Croy in Normandy, through his son John de Croy (born c. 1033), two of whose sons came over and settled in England. One, Anschetil<sup>6</sup> de Greye, is recorded<sup>7</sup> as having accompanied William the Conqueror when he sailed for England in 1066. The other, Reynold (born c.1058) died at Water Eaton, Buckinghamshire, in 1097. His son and grandson married into the Bohun and de Clare families respectively, and his great-grandson was John de Gray, Bishop of Norwich.

John de Gray, (c.1160-1214) was an able administrator, consecrated in September 1200.<sup>8</sup> He influenced the career of his nephew Walter, younger son of his sister Hawise, who had married John de Gray of Thurrock, the branch descended from Anschetil himself. Bishop John was a loyal servant of King John and was well rewarded for it, receiving the archdeaconries of Cleveland and Gloucester in the first year of John's reign.<sup>9</sup> King John wanted him as Archbishop of Canterbury, but Pope Innocent III invalidated his election and consecrated Stephen Langton on 17 June 1207.<sup>10</sup>

In May 1213 Grey attested the charter by which King John surrendered his kingdom to the papacy and received it back as a fief, and after this played an important part in arranging the king's settlement with the church, travelling to Rome to discuss compensation for damages. Whilst there, his diplomatic skills helped greatly to calm pope Innocent's attitude towards John.<sup>11</sup> He was accepted as Bishop of Durham in February 1214. Unfortunately, he died in France on his return journey in October

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<sup>6</sup> Or Anketil, Ansketel.

<sup>7</sup> As 'Anquetil de Grai' in the plaque at the church of Dives-sur-Mer in Normandy, which lists all the knights who took part in the invasion of William the Conqueror. They heard mass there before setting off.

<sup>8</sup> R.M. Haines, 'Gray, John de (*d.* 1214)', Oxford Dictionary of National Biography [online] available: <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/11541>, <accessed 30 Jan 2017>

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*

1214, and was taken home for burial in Norwich Cathedral, though his monument has disappeared.<sup>12</sup>

The bishop's sister Hawise (c.1145–1214+) married John de Grey of Thurrock (c.1150 - ?), a great-grandson of Anschetil. Walter de Gray, archbishop of York (d. 1255), was her younger son.<sup>13</sup> Walter was educated at Oxford, and when chancellor Hubert Walter died in 1205, the bishop of Norwich, influenced the choice of chancellor in favour of his nephew.<sup>14</sup> Walter quickly became a favourite of King John, and helped delay John's excommunication in 1209. Thanks to the king, he became bishop of Worcester in 1214,<sup>15</sup> and Archbishop of York the next year. He went to Rome for the Fourth Lateran Council in November 1215 and received the pallium there, at a rumoured cost of £10,000.<sup>16</sup>

Walter Gray supported King John in his surrender to the pope in May 1213, and was with John at Runnymede in 1215; he is named in Magna Carta.<sup>17</sup> After John's death, he supported Henry III (Oct 1207–Nov 1272), who had great faith in him, making Gray his regent in his absence abroad between May 1242 and September 1243.<sup>18</sup> Walter was again asked to be regent in 1254, but did not wish to accept. He travelled to London to attend parliament in April 1255, dying at Fulham on 1 May.<sup>19</sup> His magnificent tomb is in the south transept of York Minster.<sup>20</sup>

In forty years as archbishop he revitalised his province and beautified it with his architectural patronage. York Minster received a new transept and Gray restructured

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<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> Charter of Hawise: *Hawisia de Grey vidua, pro animabus omnium antecessorum et consanguineorum, et precipue pro anima Johannis de Grey fratris mei quondam Norwicensis Episcopi, assensu Dni. Roberti de Grey filij et heredis mei, concessi et quantum ad patronam pertinet dedi Deo et Sce. Marie de Oseney et canonicis ibidem Deo servientibus ecclesiam de Cornewell ad donationem meam pertinentem in puram et perpetuam eleemosinam. Testibus Dno. Waltero de Grey, Wygorniensi Episcopus filio meo, &c.* [Blomefield, Norfolk I:478, cites 'Mss. penes P. L. Norroy, p. 15, excerpt. e Cartis per Ric. St. George.']

<sup>14</sup> R. M. Haines, 'Gray, Walter de (d. 1255)', *ODNB* [online] available: <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/11566>, <accessed 16 Mar 2017>

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> See Appendix 5, pp.107-8, for details of his tomb.

the chapter and its offices.<sup>21</sup> He rebuilt the choir of Beverley Minster,<sup>22</sup> and completed Ripon Minster<sup>23</sup> with a twin-towered facade.<sup>24</sup> Grey arranged new statutes and stipends for the resident canons at Southwell Minster,<sup>25</sup> and may have been involved in choosing the design for its new east end.<sup>26</sup> He also promoted the educational and professional ecclesiastical standards agreed by the Lateran Council by creating new prebends and increased benefices in order to recruit talented clergy.<sup>27</sup>

Walter de Gray descended from Reynold on his mother's side, and Anschetil on his father's. According to the Marquis de Sainte-Marie, who researched the Domesday book early in the nineteenth century:

Du nombreux documents de la fin du XI siècle permettent de croire qu'Anschitill de Gray sortait d'une famille riche et puissante par ses possessions dans le Bessin. Elle habitait la paroisse de Gray, dans l'arrondissement de Bayeux...<sup>28</sup>

Anschetil and Reynold's exact birthplace in France cannot be located precisely, but Graye-sur-Mer would have been within the domain of William I. After the Conquest, Anschetil was rewarded with the estate of Redrefield and the manor house known as Greys Court, in South Oxfordshire, and was also the lord of Standlake in West Oxfordshire. In the Domesday Book of 1086, he appears thus:

Radeford: Ansketel of Graye from Earl William: Mill.

Redrefield: Ansketel from Earl William.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> J. A. Miller, *The Building Program of Archbishop Walter de Gray: Architectural Production and Reform in the Archdiocese of York, 1215-1255* (New York: Columbia University Academic Commons 2012), available at: <http://hdl.handle.net/10022/AC:P:13226> <accessed 9 Jun 2017>

<sup>22</sup> See Appendix 5, p. 110.

<sup>23</sup> *ibid*

<sup>24</sup> J. A. Miller, *The Building Program of Archbishop Walter de Gray*.

<sup>25</sup> See Appendix 5, p. 111.

<sup>26</sup> J. A. Miller, *The Building Program of Archbishop Walter de Gray*.

<sup>27</sup> *ibid*

<sup>28</sup> (Numerous documents of the end of the eleventh century cause us to believe that Anschitill de Gray came from a rich and powerful family, from their possessions in the Bessin. They lived in the parish of Gray, in the district of Bayeux.) My translation from: De Ste-Marie, M. (1842). *Recherches sur le Domesday; ou, Liber censualis d'Angleterre, ainsi que sur le Liber de Winton et le Boldonbook*. Available online at: [archive.org](http://archive.org) <accessed 28 Nov 2016>

<sup>29</sup> Hinde, T. (ed), *The Domesday Book, England's Heritage Then and Now* (London: Guild Publishing, 1985), p. 218.



The majority of the Greys descended from Anschetil, most through his great-great-grandson, Henry Grey (c1155–1219) of Codnor (Derbyshire) and Thurrock (Essex), and his wife the Kentish heiress Isolde Bardolf<sup>30</sup> (d.1246). Three of their sons founded prominent families. Richard (b. by c.1198–d. by 1272) the eldest married Lucy de Humez, and from them descended the Greys of Codnor. Richard de Grey was a member of Henry III's military household. He had supported King John in the rebellion of 1216 and was given the lands of John de Humez (d. 1223), whose daughter he married.<sup>31</sup>

He served King John in various capacities, and went on the king's Gascon expedition in 1254. In 1255 he retired from court, and by 1256 was importing Gascon wine in the Portjoye, his own ship.<sup>32</sup>

He became a close associate of Simon de Montfort, and a member of the continuing royal council of fifteen until 1259, when he was replaced by the justiciar Hugh Bigod.<sup>33</sup> He was successively constable of Dover and Rochester castles and fought with de Montfort's troops against the king and prince Edward.<sup>34</sup> Captured outside Kenilworth Castle in 1266, his property was declared forfeit immediately after the battle of Evesham,<sup>35</sup> but was recovered under the terms of the dictum of Kenilworth. He died before January 1272, leaving his son John in possession.<sup>36</sup>

Agnes, daughter of Richard's brother William (c1204-?), married into the Luttrell family. Her grandson Geoffrey Luttrell was the commissioner of the magnificent Luttrell Psalter. The third son, Hugh de Grey of Chillingham (1203–30), died at the castle of Chillingham (now renowned for its wild white cattle).<sup>37</sup> Interestingly, his son John was born in Scotland, and it would appear that the Grey family spread into and

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<sup>30</sup> There is an interesting Time Team documentary about Codnor Castle in the time of Henry and Isolde, available at: <https://youtu.be/gMHVAJU-Oqg>

<sup>31</sup> R.C. Stacey, 'Grey, Richard de (d. before 1272)', *ODNB* [online] available: <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/11554> <accessed 28 March 2017>

<sup>32</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> <http://www.thepeerage.com/p15851.htm>

established itself in Scotland as well as England. According to Sir Robert Douglas (1694–1770):

[I]t is observable, that the Grays in Scotland carry the same armorial bearings with those in the north of England, which may be seen in their churches, tomb-stones, and other monuments of antiquity: and as Northumberland formerly belonged to Scotland, it is the general opinion, that lord Gray of Chillingham of that county, (whose predecessor came over with William the Conqueror) gave the lands of Browfield or Broxmouth, in the county of Roxburgh adjoining to it, to a younger son of his family, of whom all the Grays in Scotland are said to be descended.<sup>38</sup>

Hugh de Grey is the ancestor of the Grays of Heaton through the son John who was born in Scotland in about 1225, and who in turn had at least four sons by his wife Lucy. One of these sons was Thomas de Grey of Heaton (c.1266–1344), a renowned knight who fought for Edward I and Edward II in their Scottish campaigns from about 1297 onwards, and was captured at Bannockburn. He was Constable of Norham castle,<sup>39</sup> as was his son, also called Thomas (c.1328–69)<sup>40</sup> to whom we owe the details of Thomas senior's career.<sup>41</sup> Sir Thomas Grey senior was Constable of Norham Castle from 1319 to 1331 and withstood two sieges by the Scots.<sup>42</sup> In 1319 he received lands in Howick, near Alnwick, and in 1323 he was appointed sheriff of Norham and Islandshire.<sup>43</sup> His son Thomas the chronicler had himself become a knight before Thomas senior died, in March 1344.<sup>44</sup>

Thomas Gray the chronicler had livery of his family's manor of Heaton in April 1345,<sup>45</sup> and in January 1346 became constable and sheriff of Norham, like his father.<sup>46</sup> That year he fought at Neville's Cross, and in 1348 was given a commission to guarantee the truce of Calais in the borders. In 1355, he was captured by the Scots after

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<sup>38</sup> Robert Douglas, *The peerage of Scotland: containing an historical and genealogical account of the nobility of that kingdom, ... collected from the public records, and ancient chartularies of this nation*, p. 308 [online] <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/ecco/004896980.0001.000/1:124?rgn=div1;view=fulltext> <accessed 31 Jan 2017>

<sup>39</sup> J. C. Thiollier, 'Gray, Sir Thomas (d. 1369)', *ODNB* [online] available: [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/11355> < accessed 31 Jan 2017>

<sup>40</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> *ibid.*

sallying out of Norham Castle. He spent approximately two years imprisoned in Edinburgh Castle, and to amuse himself he began to write the *Scalacronica* in Anglo-Norman,<sup>47</sup> based on personal recollections of himself and his father, whose career provided him with much of the material used.

In 1357 he was released. He accompanied Edward, the Black Prince to France in 1359, and was appointed a warden of the marches in 1361.<sup>48</sup> He married Margaret Pressen, heiress of William Pressen from near Wark in Northumberland. Their son, another Thomas, also became constable of Norham Castle, and through his marriage to Joan, daughter of John, Lord Mowbray (*d.* 1368), became the ancestor of the barons Grey of Powis, the barons Grey of Howick, and the earls Grey.<sup>49</sup> His grandson William (*c.* 1388–1436) became Bishop of Lincoln, and his great-grandson William (*c.* 1414–78) became Bishop of Ely, and a noted collector of books.<sup>50</sup>

Thomas Grey the Chronicler died in October 1369, when his son Thomas was ten years old. Through this son, he was the grandfather of yet another Thomas Grey (Nov 1384–Aug 1415). This one became notorious for his involvement in the Southampton Plot, a conspiracy to kill King Henry V on the eve of his departure for the campaign which culminated in the battle of Agincourt. Thomas was beheaded at Southampton on 2 August 1415.<sup>51</sup>

The Greys of Ruthin descend from Henry and Isolde's fourth son, John (*c.* 1205–66), who became Lord Grey of Wilton in 1290, having gained the castle of Wilton upon Wye plus other extensive lands in right of his first wife, Emma (*d.* by 1251), heiress of Roger de Caux of Water Eaton in Buckinghamshire.<sup>52</sup> Emma also inherited the estates of her mother, Nicola of Leigh. John de Grey being a younger son, most of his estates came to him from the crown and from his two marriages.<sup>53</sup> Emma and

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<sup>47</sup> Another important manuscript connected with the De Greys.

<sup>48</sup> J. C. Thiolier, 'Gray, Sir Thomas (*d.* 1369)', *ODNB* [online].

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>50</sup> See Appendix 4, p.89.

<sup>51</sup> T. B. Pugh, *Henry V and the Southampton Plot of 1415* (Gloucester: Sutton Publishing, 1988), pp 102-5.

<sup>52</sup> R. I. Jack, 'Grey family', *ODNB* [online] available: <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/54523> <accessed 22 November 2016>

<sup>53</sup> N. Vincent, 'Grey, Sir John de (*d.* 1266)', *ODNB* [online] available: <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/11542> < accessed 9 March 2017>

John were married before 1232 and had a son, Reynold Grey, first Lord Grey of Wilton (d. 1308), and at least three daughters. The baronial families of Grey of Wilton and Grey of Ruthin descend from them through Reynold.

In August 1253, John became seneschal of Gascony.<sup>54</sup> Soon after 1260 he had charge of Hereford castle and its county, followed by Nottingham castle and the shires of Nottingham and Derby in 1264.<sup>55</sup> For months after the defeat of the royalists at the battle of Lewes he held Nottingham for the king, surrendering in December 1264 to the troops of Simon de Montfort.<sup>56</sup> In August 1265 the royalists won the battle at Evesham and John de Grey regained Nottingham and Derby, which he held until his death early in 1266.<sup>57</sup>

John and Emma's grandson John, second Lord Grey of Wilton (d. 1323), split the lands between the sons of his first and second marriages. The elder son Henry (1280–1342) gained the Wilton title, but less than half the land, while the younger son Roger (c.1300–1353) inherited extensive lands in several counties, including the Welsh marcher lordship of Ruthin, which Edward I had granted to Reynold, first Lord Grey of Wilton, in 1282.<sup>58</sup> From 1325 Roger was summoned to parliament as Lord Grey of Ruthin. He married Elizabeth, daughter of John Hastings, first Lord Hastings and Lord Bergavenny, and in consequence her grandson, Reynold, the third Baron Grey, became heir to the main Hastings line when John Hastings, fourteenth earl of Pembroke, died in 1389.<sup>59</sup>

Roger and Elizabeth's second son, Reynold (1318/19–1388), succeeded to the title in 1353 as the second Baron Grey of Ruthin and married Eleanor (d.1396), daughter of John, second Baron Strange of Blackmere (d. 1349).<sup>60</sup> Their son Reynold (c.1346–18/10/1440) was the third lord referred to above, who gained the Hastings inheritance, thereby doubling the family's landholdings. On his father's death in 1388,

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<sup>54</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> R. I. Jack, 'Grey family', *ODNB* [online] available: <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/11553>, accessed 28 March 2017.

<sup>59</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> *ibid.*

Reynold inherited great estates in England and the castle and marcher lordship of Ruthin in north Wales.<sup>61</sup> The following year, the last Hastings male heir died, and in consequence Grey gained lands in East Anglia, Kent, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, and elsewhere when the widowed countess of Pembroke died.<sup>62</sup>

This far-reaching and influential family was important in the history of Wales for generations, and the third Baron Grey had a very significant place in that history. Like so many of the Norman-descended English aristocracy, he continued their traditions of land acquisition by the time-honoured methods of annexation of land from less powerful neighbours and the more peaceful one of matrimony with ladies from land-rich families. He did the latter twice, very successfully, with several children from each match. As to land annexation, however, his efforts to wrest land from his neighbour Owain Glyndwr were more problematic. They led ultimately to the rebellion of the Welsh under Glyndwr and to Baron Grey's suffering the humiliation of being captured and held to ransom by Glyndwr. The 10,000 marks demanded for his release took a sizeable amount from the family fortunes, and he had to swear that he would never take up arms against Glyndwr again. Eventually, the Glyndwr rebellion sputtered to an end and in about 1415 Glyndwr disappeared. However, Glyndwr was never caught and in due course vanished into legend, whilst Baron Grey married his second wife that same year and went on to have another large family.

His first wife was Margaret, daughter of Thomas, fourth Baron Ros of Helmsley, and they had three children. His heir was John (1386–1439), who died the year before him. His second wife was Joan (d. 1448), daughter of William, fourth Baron Astley. Reynold died on 30 September 1440, leaving as his heir his grandson Edmund Grey (Oct 1416–May 1490), son of John and his wife Constance Holland, a very wealthy and well-connected lady, and niece of Henry IV. Sir John Grey fought at Agincourt and became a Garter knight in 1435.<sup>63</sup> He predeceased his father, but his son Edmund later became the first earl of Kent.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> R. I. Jack, 'Grey, Reynold, third Baron Grey of Ruthin (c.1362–1440)', *ODNB* [online] available: [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/11553>, accessed 28 March 2017]

<sup>62</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> See Appendix 5, p. 113.

<sup>64</sup> Jack, 'Grey family', *ODNB* [online] <accessed 22 November 2016>

In approximately 1440, Edmund, fourth Lord Grey of Ruthin, married Katherine Percy (1423–c.1475), daughter of Henry Percy, the second earl of Northumberland. Their marriage is commemorated in the National Library of Scotland (afterwards NLS) manuscript of Nicholas Love's *Mirroure of the Lyfe of Christ*, a translation of the highly popular and influential pseudo-Bonaventure *Meditationes Vitae Christi*. This manuscript contains arms and a depiction of the couple<sup>65</sup> and was perhaps commissioned for their wedding. It is now National Library of Scotland, Advocates' MS 18.1.7. In 1465, Edmund Grey was made earl of Kent, soon after Anthony his eldest son married Joan Woodville, the king's sister-in-law. Anthony was knighted in 1465 but died childless in summer 1480.<sup>66</sup>

Reynold (3<sup>rd</sup> Lord Grey of Ruthin)'s second marriage, to Joan de Astley (1379–1448), produced seven children, all of whom married well, creating alliances with the nobility and gentry and spreading the family influence far and wide. Their son Edward (d. 1457), became Lord Ferrers of Groby in right of his wife.<sup>67</sup> Elizabeth Woodville, later Queen of England, married as her first husband their son John Grey (c.1432–61),<sup>68</sup> Reynold's grandson, whom I propose as the likely first owner of the De Grey Book of Hours.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> See Appendix 5, p. 112.

<sup>66</sup> See tomb brass, Appendix 5, p. 109.

<sup>67</sup> R. I. Jack, 'Grey family', *ODNB* [online] <accessed 22 November 2016>

<sup>68</sup> Her Ferrers mother-in-law's intransigence concerning her financial settlement resulted in her appealing to Edward IV.

<sup>69</sup> See Chapter 5.

## Chapter 2

### Form and Function of a Book of Hours

Books of Hours were the most popular type of book produced during a period of about three hundred years, from the mid-thirteenth to the mid-sixteenth century, when more Books of Hours were created than copies of the Bible.<sup>70</sup> This popularity was because they were used by lay people in their daily devotions, at a time when

[T]he laity's access to God was very much controlled and limited by others than themselves, [so] Books of Hours bestowed direct, democratic, and potentially uninterrupted access to God, the Virgin Mary, and the saints.<sup>71</sup>

The typical Book of Hours, as it had developed by the end of the fourteenth century, contained a calendar, gospel lessons, the Hours of the Virgin, the Hours of the Cross, the Hours of the Holy Spirit, two prayers to the Virgin called the *Obsecro te* and the *O intemerata*, the penitential Psalms and Litany, the Office of the Dead and about a dozen Suffrages illustrated by preferred Saints who could be applied to for help when needed.<sup>72</sup> These essential texts could be supplemented by various additional favourite prayers, so Books of Hours could be customised to suit the preferences of the person commissioning them. Different countries had slightly different preferences as to texts, as did different regions or towns within countries; accordingly, their

liturgical content is referred to as the "use" of a particular place. Rome, Paris, Rouen were common uses, and Books of Hours made for English use were normally Use of Sarum (Salisbury), as is the case with the de Grey Hours. Characteristically in books of hours for the use of Sarum, the Suffrages, or prayers to the Saints, are at the beginning of the book.<sup>73</sup>

Books of Hours were particularly associated with women. Male clerical advisers thought women needed the pictures as references to help them in their piety,<sup>74</sup> and

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<sup>70</sup> R. S. Wieck, *Painted Prayers, the Book of Hours in Medieval and Renaissance Art* (New York: George Braziller Inc in association with the Pierpont Morgan Library, 1998), p. 9.

<sup>71</sup> *ibid*, p. 14.

<sup>72</sup> *ibid*, p. 10.

<sup>73</sup> T. Kren, S. McKendrick, *Illuminating the Renaissance: The Triumph of Flemish Manuscript Painting in Europe* (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2003), p. 155, note 1.

<sup>74</sup> Wieck, *Painted Prayers*, p. 17.

they were frequently given as gifts to brides.<sup>75</sup> Children often learned to read from them at their mother's knee, so they were books for all the family, encouraging literacy and piety from an early age. Books of Hours occasionally occur in vernacular languages or small parts may be in a vernacular language, but the majority of them are in Latin, as is the De Grey Hours itself.

Besides being pleasing and instructive, the pictures acted as markers, helping navigation through the book, because Books of Hours were not paginated. Contemplating the illustrations which depicted the texts they marked helped the lay person to meditate in the same way as did the images in their churches, but in a more intimate way: "The entire celestial court, God and his cosmos, could be held within the palms of one's hands and taken home."<sup>76</sup>

A Book of Hours encapsulated the church's liturgical year in pictures. Those Saints who were the object of devotions and petitioning prayers were visible in the Suffrages, and were the same Saints seen in stained glass or at side altars in church.<sup>77</sup> It must have been a great consolation to those who owned these familiar books to have spiritual counsel immediately to hand, besides comfort in times of sickness. Most ailments had patron saints to which sufferers or their families could turn in times of trouble. Toothache, for instance, might be helped by Saint Appolonia, who had been tortured by having all her teeth pulled out, while Saint Margaret,<sup>78</sup> who had escaped from the belly of the Satan-dragon in a parody of birth, could help expectant mothers through the most dangerous experience they would ever have.

As mentioned above, Books of Hours were structured in sections following a conventional format, which could be varied according to the preferences of the buyer. The De Grey Hours contains most of the customary sections, namely: Calendar, Memorials (or Suffrages) of Saints, the Hours of the Virgin, the

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<sup>75</sup> *ibid*, p. 17.

<sup>76</sup> *ibid*, p. 22.

<sup>77</sup> *ibid*, p. 22..

<sup>78</sup> Folio 33v in the De Grey Hours depicts Saint Margaret.



Hours of the Cross, “Obsecro te” and “O intemerata”, Penitential Psalms, and the Office of the Dead. In addition, it has the Prayers of Saint Bridget at the beginning, and the Psalter of Saint Jerome at the end. A very interesting and rare feature, though not unique to the De Grey Hours, is that the two cycles of illustrations – the Passion Cycle and the Nativity Cycle – are staged in tandem, being shown on facing pages to one another.<sup>79</sup> Thus, the Agony in the Garden (Matins in the Passion Cycle) faces the Annunciation (Matins in the Nativity Cycle), and this continues throughout both cycles, with the Passion illustration always coming first, and being larger. Together, they draw attention to Christ’s humanity and place his suffering in a human context, so reflecting late medieval devotion among lay people in particular. Another aspect of this is shown by the incorporation of the image of the Instruments of the Passion, which appears in folio 203v, and can be seen as a meditative image, or a devotional image. These objects, called ‘Arma Christi’ and linked with the Passion of Christ in Christian symbolism and art, were believed to be the arms or weapons with which Christ conquered Satan, and were also viewed as arms in the heraldic sense.

Calendars in Books of Hours are perpetual calendars, so can be used in successive years.<sup>80</sup> Information in the Calendar indicated the times of the new and full moons during the year. The medieval calendrical system was based on the ancient Roman one, thus the month starts with the Kalends and lists the Ides and Nones. All other dates are worked backwards from these.

The Feasts which they list are usually saints’ days, but others commemorate significant events in the lives of Christ and the Virgin Mary. However, the moveable feasts like the Passion, the Resurrection, the Ascension, and the Descent of the Holy Spirit are not included, because their dates depend upon the date of Easter, which changes each year.<sup>81</sup> More local festivals can help to locate the region in which the Book of Hours was produced, and sometimes even the church in which it was used can be deduced.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> See example in Appendix 2, p. 80.

<sup>80</sup> Wieck, *Painted Prayers*, p. 26.

<sup>81</sup> *ibid*, p.26.

<sup>82</sup> *ibid*, p.26.

Although some Books of Hours can be attributed entirely, or largely, to one artist, the majority were produced by artists or workshops collaborating with one another. The De Grey Hours would certainly seem to be the result of such artistic collaboration.

The manuscript Book of Hours known as the de Grey Hours is held by the National Library of Wales (NLW MS 15537C), having been donated by Miss Margaret S. Davies in 1951. It was purchased by her sister, Miss Gwendoline E. Davies, as lot 42 in the Sotheby's auction of manuscripts and books from the collection of newspaper magnate and noted manuscript collector Henry Yates Thompson on 23 March 1920.<sup>83</sup> His bookplate appears on page two of the manuscript, with the date 1895. On the following page, another hand has noted in pencil the opinion that it dates to about 1470 and is English. From the date given (1859), this note would seem to have been made by the owner before Thompson, who also gives reasons for connecting it to the Grey family.

The De Grey Hours manuscript has received very little attention until now, although the National Library of Wales has included it in its Digital Gallery, which gives a brief description and opinion that it originated in Flanders in the mid-fifteenth century. Fortunately, the website has recently corrected a dating error which had previously assigned the De Grey Hours to 1390.

On the page with the bookplate of Henry Yates Thompson, a pencil inscription reads 'Sir John Grey's book (he was son of first Marquis Dorset). The bookplate itself is numbered '27' and gives a date of 8<sup>th</sup> May 1895. At first sight, the bookplate is puzzling, as apart from the date, it does not seem to make sense. It reads '£ b n e', then 'Quaritch' on the next line, and lastly the date. Thompson used a code to indicate the prices he paid,<sup>84</sup> and this note shows that he paid the rare-book seller, Bernard Quaritch of London<sup>85</sup> £150 for the De Grey Hours on 8 May 1895. Sadly, several applications to Messrs Quaritch for information as to the identity of the

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<sup>83</sup> Information obtained by email from the Enquiries Section of the National Library of Wales, 10 Aug 2017.

<sup>84</sup> C. De Hamel, *Meetings with Remarkable Manuscripts* ([London] UK: Allen Lane, an imprint of Penguin Books, 2016), p. 202.

<sup>85</sup> His company is still there, at 40 South Audley Street, Mayfair.

person from whom they obtained it (and who presumably made the following inscriptions) have been ignored.

There are two pencil inscriptions in the same hand. The first reads:

This MS of English Execution of the 15 Century  
I gave £ a s /-/- for. It contains  
26 large miniatures besides  
very numerous small ones  
capital letters etc. The binding  
is a very fine (word crossed out) probably of  
(word crossed out) not very long after  
the date (1470) of the MS. 1859

The second reads:

been painted

This fine Bk of Hours seems to have / for the family  
of the Lords Grey of Ruthyn from the various  
arms of their collateral branches  
emblazoned on the volume (see towards the  
end). In the Calendar also under the  
month of March, the death of Lady Elizabeth  
Grey, is noted in a contemporary hand  
probably by some relative. These Greys  
are now all extinct in the male line.

These two, originally blank, pages are followed by the first calendar page.

The Calendar pages give information as to where the manuscript originated, and to the latest date it could have been produced. Because the Kalends of October contains 'Remigu et bavionis', it would indicate that the manuscript may have been written in Bruges, where both Remigius and the otherwise rare St Bavo<sup>86</sup> were popular saints.<sup>87</sup> Certain elaborate details of the illumination suggest also that it was decorated by a group of artists working out of Bruges and connected with a very well-known workshop there. Also, since St Bernardinus of Siena (who died on 20 May 1444, was canonised by Nicholas V in May 1450, and whose cult spread rapidly) is not included, it would seem to confirm that the manuscript cannot be much later than 1450.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> C. De Hamel, *A History of Illuminated Manuscripts*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (London: Phaidon Press, 1994), p. 184.

<sup>87</sup> [www.medievalbooksofhours.com](http://www.medievalbooksofhours.com) <accessed 20 Jan 2018>

<sup>88</sup> De Hamel, *A History of Illuminated Manuscripts* p. 184.

In Flanders and the Netherlands in the fifteenth century, there was a flourishing manuscript book production and illumination industry. Luxury religious books had been produced in Bruges and Ghent since the early thirteenth century, and Brabant, Hainaut and Tournai were also centres of production.<sup>89</sup> Philip the Good (1396-1467) became Duke of Burgundy in 1419. He was a member of a junior line of the Valois dynasty which ruled in France. Under his rule, his country reached a pinnacle of prosperity, and the Duke maintained a splendid and extravagant court. According to Kren and McKendrick:

In the 1440s Philip the Good turned to manuscript illumination as a central component of his politics of splendor. He commissioned at least sixty manuscripts.<sup>90</sup>

His desire for beautiful, high-quality manuscripts like those collected by other members of the Valois family, including the duke of Berry, opened up opportunities for the most accomplished painters and illuminators to gain court patronage, thus encouraging the finest artists to turn their talents to manuscript illumination.<sup>91</sup> These artists took on apprentices and formed workshops to produce their luxury goods, and developed an export market for their work.<sup>92</sup> The majority of the many artists, scribes and illuminators supporting this industry never signed their work. For ease of reference, those who have been studied have been assigned names, based on notable books they have worked on or people they have worked for – either as individuals – for example ‘The Master of the Llangattock Hours’, ‘The Master of Edward IV’ – or in groups – ‘The Masters of the Gold Scrolls’, ‘The Masters of the Narrow Eyes’, etc. In many instances, a manuscript is the product of collaboration between several illuminators and their workshops.

One of the most influential and prosperous of these workshops was that of Willem Vrelant (c 1410-1481/2).<sup>93</sup> His original name was Willem Backer, and he came from Vreeland, moving to Utrecht and obtaining citizenship in 1449.<sup>94</sup> By 1454, he was

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<sup>89</sup> Kren & McKendrick, *Illuminating the Renaissance*, p. 3

<sup>90</sup> *ibid*, p. 3.

<sup>91</sup> *ibid*, p. 3.

<sup>92</sup> *ibid*, p. 3.

<sup>93</sup> He was also known as Guillaume Wielant, Willem Vredelant, Willem Vreeland, Willem Vreylant, Willem Wyelant.

<sup>94</sup> Kren & McKendrick, *Illuminating the Renaissance*, p. 117.

living in Bruges, as he is recorded that year as a founder member of the Bruges confraternity of Saint John the Evangelist.<sup>95</sup> This confraternity, founded by May 1454 at the abbey of Eekhout<sup>96</sup> catered for those who were not members of a trade guild, but were practising a craft concerned with the book trade, including parchment-makers, scribes, illuminators, and others. It is interesting that St John the Evangelist has a particularly prominent role in the De Grey Hours illustrations. The lists of the Bruges Confraternity of St John contain many female illuminators and apprentices, including some in Vrelant's workshop.<sup>97</sup> Philip the Good paid Vrelant for illuminating an extravagant historical manuscript for him in 1468.<sup>98</sup> Vrelant also produced numerous manuscripts for export and worked for other prominent patrons, including book collectors and some of the duke's closest aides.<sup>99</sup> Amongst the creations of his large and prolific workshop is a book of hours dated 1455–60, (now in Baltimore) the *Hours of Isabella of Castille* (c.1460), the *Chronicles of Hainaut* (1468) and individual miniatures in the *Hours of Mary of Burgundy* (c.1480). More than a hundred works attributed to him survive,<sup>100</sup> and the differentiation in their styles and workmanship shows that he must have had a large number of associates and assistants to be able to produce such a volume of work.<sup>101</sup>

H. L. Kessler, in his article about the Atelier of Willem Vrelant, is in no doubt that Vrelant produced preparatory drawings for his miniatures, which were then used as patterns by others.<sup>102</sup> My argument is that there is evidence to suggest that the De Grey Hours is a product of the atelier of Willem Vrelant. Kessler compares the Last Judgement scene from a Book of Hours held at the University of Chicago (MS. RBR. BX2160.A1.14=747355), folio 156v, with that in another Vrelant workshop manuscript: Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery manuscript W195, folio 76v:

The two compositions are virtually identical. In both, Christ is seated on a rainbow. His right arm raised in benediction and His left arm lowered. Blood

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<sup>95</sup> J. Paul Getty Museum website: [www.getty.edu/museum](http://www.getty.edu/museum)

<sup>96</sup> Kren & McKendrick, *Illuminating the Renaissance*, p. 18.

<sup>97</sup> *ibid*, p. 22.

<sup>98</sup> J. Paul Getty Museum website

<sup>99</sup> *ibid*

<sup>100</sup> H. L. Kessler, *A Book of Hours from the Atelier of William Vrelant* in: *Scriptorium*, Tome 18 n°1, 1964. pp. 94-99 available at: [www.persee.fr/doc/scrip\\_0036-9772\\_1964\\_num\\_18\\_1\\_3205](http://www.persee.fr/doc/scrip_0036-9772_1964_num_18_1_3205) <accessed 14 Dec 2017>

<sup>101</sup> Kren & McKendrick, *Illuminating the Renaissance*, p.117.

<sup>102</sup> Kessler, *A Book of Hours from the Atelier of William Vrelant*, p97.

flows from his wounds in thread-like streams. He wears a long cloak and His feet rest on an orb. Two angels, blowing long, curved trumpets, fly above his head; to His right kneels the Virgin Mary, to His left is John the Evangelist. Below Him, tiny, naked figures rise from rectangular graves. The ultimate source for the composition was certainly Roger van der Weyden's famous altarpiece in the Hôtel-Dieu in Beaune.<sup>103</sup>

He goes on to say that the hair and beard style, the clothing and its fastenings, position of the arms and feet all match, and concludes that they both derive from the same source 'and it is likely that this source was a workshop drawing by Vrelant'. Apart from the fact that there is no blood in the De Grey Hours' depiction of the Last Judgement (folio 147v), everything else that Kessler describes is present there, in identical form.<sup>104</sup> Christ's rainbow seat and orb footstool, the position of his arms and feet, his cloak, the angels with curved trumpets and the positions of the Virgin Mary and John the Evangelist and the tiny figures rising from their graves – all are present in the De Grey Hours image.<sup>105</sup> Something not described by Kessler, which is present in the De Grey Hours Last Judgement is the background to the whole scene, which is an attractive shade of terracotta, chased and covered entirely with a pattern of scrolling gold lines. These lines outline the figures and fill the spaces between them. Similar backgrounds occur in other scenes in the De Grey Hours, and are significant for their association with a group of illuminators connected with the Vrelant workshop. Art historians have given this group the generic name of Masters of the Gold Scrolls, because of their extensive use of gold-scroll patterning in their work.<sup>106</sup> Examples of this feature are provided in Appendix 1, while Appendix 2 contains images from the De Grey Hours showing the same feature.

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<sup>103</sup> See Appendix 2, p.71.

<sup>104</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>105</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>106</sup> Some examples of such work are shown in Appendix 1, pp.60-6..

## Chapter 3

### The De Grey Hours Calendar Section in Detail

The De Grey Hours manuscript is of Sarum use, and is bound in brown calfskin elaborately tooled in gold with an overall pattern back and front, scrolling corners and an oval central medallion. The front cover medallion has a crucifixion scene, while the one on the back shows the Annunciation. The binding is French, of the late sixteenth century. Some of the pages have been trimmed – this is very noticeable on the right-hand edge of folio 25r, facing the miniature of John the Baptist – and at that time all the page edges were gilded. The four originally blank pages in front were there when the manuscript was rebound because they are also gilded. It is probable that these were inserted when the manuscript was rebound, because the first Calendar page is very dirty compared with the rest of the manuscript, giving the impression that the original front cover may have become detached and lost, causing the January page to be exposed to wear for a time. The page size is 220–225 mm x 155 mm and the written area is 130–135 mm x 85–90 mm. All ruling is light red and very fine. The larger miniatures are approximately 50 x 90 mm, and the smaller ones 70 x 55 mm.

The parchment is in remarkably good condition, with little cockling and only a few wormholes. Folio 144v is probably the worst and is still sound and legible. Apart from the first Calendar page, which is very grubby, the remainder of the manuscript has glowing colours and brilliant touches of gold which seem to leap off the page, and it is difficult to realise its actual age. At least two artists seem originally to have worked on this Book of Hours, one concentrating on the Calendar illustrations and another – possibly more than one – completing the larger pictures and the historiated initials, plus another, somewhat later one, who added the escutcheons. The paintings are very accomplished, as are the script with its fine pen work flourishes, the writhing borders and the decorative scrolled gold ornamentations. By contrast, the escutcheons are clumsy and thickly painted, and manifestly by a different artist. The Calendar section miniatures are well done, but somewhat coarse and clumsy in comparison with the larger ones, which considerably surpass them. The artist (or artists) responsible for these sculptures and models and gives expression to faces

which are only five or six millimetres long. The face of the infant Christ turning to look at his mother whilst pointing at the priest in the Temple scene is exquisitely modelled, and only three millimetres long.

At the top of each calendar page is a double miniature, plainly framed in gold, with a gold dividing line between the two parts. Each miniature is 36 mm high and 40 mm wide. Top margins are 21 mm, and bottom ones 50–55 mm. In each instance, the zodiac sign for the month is shown on the right and the traditional activity of the month to the left. These small miniatures seem to have been painted in the characteristic manner of one of the members of a group art historians have named the Masters of the Narrow Eyes,<sup>107</sup> because of the slit-like eyes of their figures. These were part of a larger group of artists called the Masters of the Gold Scrolls,<sup>108</sup> who were associated with the workshop of Willem Vrelant,<sup>109</sup> which flourished in Bruges around the middle of the fifteenth century. The elaborate diapered backgrounds and gold-scrolled frames of some of the images are typical of the work of these Masters.<sup>110</sup> It is noteworthy that the calendar illustrations are mostly down-to-earth, concentrating on the seasonal activities of the rural year, rather than any courtly lifestyle, as found in the *Très Riches Heures*,<sup>111</sup> with the features of some of the participants correspondingly rustic.

**January**'s zodiac sign of Aquarius, the water-bearer, is a naked man standing upon a grassy sward dotted with flowers and pouring water onto the grass from a pot held in both hands. The background is an arch diapered with gold lines on a terracotta background. In the diamond-shaped spaces are flowers, alternating red and pale blue, with a darker blue centre. The spandrels are filled in with the darker blue with curling wisps of light blue, and on the grass in the bottom right is a blue-flowered plant.

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<sup>107</sup> See Appendix 2, p. 74.

<sup>108</sup> See page 21 and Appendix 1, pp. 64-70.

<sup>109</sup> See chapter 2, pp. 19-21.

<sup>110</sup> See Appendix 1, pp. 64-70.

<sup>111</sup> See, for example J. Dufournet, *Les Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry* (Madrid: H. Kliczkowski, 2002).



January's activity of the month is traditionally feasting or warming by the fire. Here, a bearded man wearing a long robe of rich blue with a pattern of dots, sits in a curved wooden chair and warms his hands at a fire blazing in a hooded stone fireplace. His robe has a wide fur collar and is split, showing reddish hose; he wears a matching blue, fur-trimmed, hat. His room has two decorative pillars supporting an arch. The roof is blue, and the walls plain, unadorned stone. Two windows are shown, without glass or shutters, and the floor is chequered in two shades of green.

The two gold initial letters KL marking the Kalends are contained in a frame of blue decorated with white. The spaces inside and between the letters are terracotta, filled with a fine embellishment of golden scrollwork. Springing from the middle left of the frame is a decoration which spreads above and below and consists of scrolling penwork lines with small flowers and seed pods. The majority of the lettering is in black, with special feast days, and the name of the month, in red. The Dominical letters are given in every month. Spacing columns are filled by a double vertical line in blue with blue scrolling, or in gold with gold. All the calendar pages follow this pattern.

**February's** zodiac sign is Pisces, and the traditional activity is tree-pruning. The two grey (perhaps originally silver) fish swim in opposite directions against a background of terracotta and gold. Their scales and eyes are visible, and a white line connects the mouths of the fish. The background has a ruled gold frame with elaborate scrollwork, whereas underneath the fish themselves is a diapered pattern with flowers as in January. A row of pale blue flowers with darker blue centres separates the two fish.

The month's activity shows a young man wearing a short, waisted blue tunic with long sleeves. He faces left, and his hair curls out from underneath a tight-fitting cap. His hose are russet, and in his right hand he brandishes a large knife with a long, curved blade and long handle. He is seen against a background landscape of hills and trees with a blue sky, and a distinctively shaped mountain. Two leafless trees

stand left, with a ladder leaning against the nearer one, and chopped-off branches on the ground. Yellow spring flowers are emerging.<sup>112</sup>

**March's** zodiac sign is Aries, and the traditional activity is chopping wood. The Aries ram stands on a flowery sward, his right foreleg raised and bent. His head is tilted upwards and he looks as if he is smiling. His horns are only slightly curved, not curled round, and he closely resembles a Soay ram. There is a large rock in the left foreground, and the background is deep blue, with an elaborate golden scrolled frame as in February,<sup>113</sup> and a diapered centre section with red and blue flowers alternating.

The wood chopping activity shows a sturdy coarse-featured man with brown crew-cut hair and no cap, facing right and vigorously swinging a large axe well back over his head. He holds it in both hands, so his elbows are by his ears. He wears a long-sleeved russet tunic with a waist and full skirt, ending at mid-thigh. He has grey-blue hose, and large, brown knee length boots with baggy wide tops. He is chopping up old fencing and making it into neat, corded bundles. He stands on a grassy sward peppered with flowers, and in the background small hills and flowering trees lead up to a distant mountain similar to February's, and blue sky. In the calendar, the death of Lady Elizabeth Grey is noted against the Ides.

**April's** zodiac sign is Taurus, and the traditional scene is a procession. This Taurus bull is lying down and looks more like a calf; not at all fierce. His cloven hoofs are visible, and his horns small. He lies on a verdant sward liberally dotted with flowers, and his background is the same deep blue, diapered, flowered and framed by gold-scrolls as in March.

On the left, six tonsured men are processing towards the arched, open door of a grey stone church. A buttress is to the left of the door, and a blue and brown chequered floor visible inside. The men are tonsured, but are not wearing either monastic dress or church vestments. They all have voluminous, floor length gowns with long sleeves and narrow gold borders round neck, hem and wrists. Three wear

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<sup>112</sup> See Appendix 2.

<sup>113</sup> See Appendix 2 for February image.

russet, two dark blue and the remaining one light blue-grey. The first three in the procession are carrying branches upright in their hands, so this is possibly intended as a Palm Sunday procession. They are walking on flower-studded grass; a grey wall is shown behind them, and in the background, small hills with flowering trees lead to a distinctive mountain. In the front right corner, part of another stone wall shows that they are in an enclosed area.

**May's** zodiac sign is Gemini, and the traditional activity is hawking. The Gemini twins are asexual, naked men with brown hair, facing one another and reaching towards each other as though about to wrestle. They stand on a flowered grassy sward against an arched, diapered background the duplicate of January's.

The young man hawking to the left rides a white horse with russet trappings. These seem to have had gold spotted decoration, though little remains. The horse faces left, with right foreleg raised and bent, and the rider holds the reins in his right hand, looking right and extending his left hand to hold a large brown hawk. The hawk's breast and fore-wing edge were gilded. The man has hair just short of his shoulders, under an almost conical cap with a gold ornament, and he wears a full, long-sleeved, waisted tunic reaching mid-thigh, with narrow gold borders at neck, sleeves and hem. Below this are blue-grey hose. The horse stands on flowery grassland, surrounded by rocks. Small hills with trees are in the middle distance, with sloping grassland dotted with trees leading up to a hillside castle in the top left of the picture; three towers, blue roofs and gold finials stand out against a blue sky.

**June's** zodiac sign is Cancer, and the traditional activity is mowing. This zodiac sign has a very different background, with a gold circle fitting neatly into the square. The roundel is filled in with deep blue, with a pattern of circles surrounded by dots, looking like little suns, and the spandrels are terracotta, with greyish waves crossed by lines, which may have originally been silver. On the gold-patterned blue roundel, looking rather like a plate, is positioned the greyish-brown Cancer crab, except that this crab has the elongated body, fan-shaped tail and oversized front claws of a lobster.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> See Appendix 2, pp. 74-5.

At left is a man holding a long-handled curved sickle. It has a short side handle at an angle of ninety degrees, like a scythe, but the blade is not set sideways. Tufts of long, cut grass lie on the ground about him, while shorter grass is underfoot. He has shoulder-length brown hair under a high-crowned blue cap with a fur edging, and wears a matching blue full-skirted tunic reaching just above knee length, with a nipped-in waist and long sleeves. His hose are russet. A background landscape of low green hills and grassland dotted with trees stretches back to the distant mountain, and in the top left corner is a castle similar to the one in May.

**July's** zodiac sign is Leo, and the traditional activity is harvesting. The somewhat elongated, golden-brown Leo lion, with an oddly human face, stands on his back legs. He regards the viewer, and his front paws are held straight in front of him. He stands on a flower-strewn grassy sward, against an arched, gold-diapered background as for January. The colour in the spandrels here is russet red, with white decorative scrolling.

The month's activity shows a man with light-brown, shoulder length hair, wearing a greyish-green cap with a turned-back brim in russet brown. He wears a full-skirted, long-sleeved, waisted blue tunic which almost reaches his knees over russet hose. He holds a sickle in his right hand, while his left reaches out to grasp the corn to cut it. The corn towers well above his head, and he is standing on a flowery meadow. In the background are the familiar green hills and trees leading up to a mountain and blue sky.

**August's** zodiac sign is Virgo, and the traditional activity is threshing corn. Virgo is a maiden with waist length, waving golden hair. She wears a deep blue floor length dress patterned with golden spots. The neckline has a golden edging, while the hem, wrists and high waistline are ornamented with double bands of gold. Her right arm is raised as if about to wave or bless. She stands in the middle of a room with three arched windows with diamond panes of glass. Each window is framed by an arch which stands on an ornamental pillar. Three arches, four pillars; the two to the right and left are brown, twisted columns, while the rear two are green twisted columns. The green columns support a red roof and the brown columns a blue one.

The arch ribs are picked out in gold. The walls of the room are of unadorned stone, but the floor has an elaborate tiled pattern of squares in red and circles in blue, alternating.

The traditional activity shows a man threshing corn. A sheaf of corn lies on the familiar flower-strewn sward, and he holds his flail up above his head with both hands. He is bare-headed, with short brown hair, and wears a short blue tunic with a nipped-in waist and long sleeves, ornamented with gold at neckline, wrists and hem edge. His hose are russet, and he wears large dark brown ankle boots. The background is deep blue, with horizontal lines in an irregular pattern and patches of curling scribble in a dark grey which may have been originally silver, and intended to represent a summer sky with clouds

**September's** zodiac sign is Libra, and the traditional subject is a scene of treading grapes. Libra's scales are carried by a female figure with golden hair flowing over her shoulders. She wears a long-sleeved, high-necked dress in deep blue, with the skirt so long it forms folds on the floor. The scales themselves are white, and the chequerboard floor is of tiles in a plain mid-green and a marbled green-grey. The background is formed by the wall of the room, which is of plain grey stone up to dado height. Above that is the elaborate diapered pattern of gold with terracotta and blue flowers, as seen before.

To the left an enormous straight-sided vat of barrel staves bound with withies stands in the centre of the picture. A smaller barrel lies on its side in the front right corner, with a funnel in its bung-hole. To the left, a jug almost the height of the vat stands on its footed base on a green ground. The funnel and jug are both grey, perhaps originally silver. Surrounding the vat, except for the front, are upright poles around which plants trail. These support what were possibly intended to be bunches of grapes but look more like roses. Blue sky with little clouds forms the background. A man stands in the vat, almost up to his knees in bluish-purple grapes. He is treading the grapes, and his right hand rests on the side of the vat. His sole garment appears to be a voluminous white tunic with short (or pushed up) sleeves, which reaches to mid-thigh. and has a V-neck. He has short brown hair in a 'pudding-basin' style, and it seems that he has stripped to his shirt for his task

**October's** zodiac sign is Scorpio, and the traditional activity is sowing the fields. The Scorpio scorpion is strongly reminiscent of the Cancer lobster-on-a-plate effect. The circular 'plate' background is terracotta in this instance, with a gold border and the same pattern reminiscent of suns and moons in gold. The spandrels are filled in with mid-blue and have the wavy line in white crossed with fine, straight white lines, as before. The scorpion itself is mid-brown with an elongated, tapering and segmented body. It has five pairs of legs, and the front pair of large claws. Its eyes are huge; in fact, it looks as if it is wearing glasses. The tail is segmented and curves to the right, with another large claw on the end of it.

To the left, the castle with towers, blue roofs and gold finials reappears perched on a hillside against a background of blue sky with a few wispy clouds. Low green hills and grassland dotted with trees stretch back to the same oddly-shaped distant mountain. In the foreground a man is sowing grain in a ploughed field. He wears the long-sleeved blue tunic with gold edging over russet hose and wide-topped, knee length boots. Tied over his right shoulder is a white cloth which falls to make a pouch hanging to the left of his waist, to hold seed grain, and he is about to dip his left hand into it. He has short brown hair in a pudding-basin cut. In the calendar section, St Bavo is mentioned along with Remigius, on the first of October.

**November's** zodiac sign is Sagittarius, and the traditional activity is fattening pigs. Sagittarius is usually a centaur, but the beast section here looks more like a deer than a horse. It is leaner, with an indication of cloven hoofs, and the tail is not that of a horse. He stands on his back legs on a flower-strewn greensward with front legs raised. The human torso wears a blue, waisted tunic with a red frill where the two bodies join. His shoulder length hair is brown, and he wears a blue cap trimmed with brown fur. His bow is in his left hand and he draws the string with his right. In the background the familiar castle and the landscape culminate in the same distant mountain, against a blue sky.

To the left, a man with short brown hair, wearing a blue tunic edged in gold over russet hose, raises a large stick (held in both hands) high over his head in a vigorous motion, so that his elbows are beside his ears. He faces right, and before him three

lean, brown bristly pigs stand under some trees. On the grass underfoot are strewn nuts, acorns or beech mast that the man is dislodging from the trees for the pigs to eat. The background is grassland and a hill with trees. On the written pages for November and December, white paint has been used, either to obscure errors or to hide show-through from the next page. The other calendar pages do not have this.

**December's** zodiac sign is Capricorn, while for the traditional activity of the month, an unsuspecting pig is about to be slaughtered. The Capricorn goat stands on a flowery sward, against a semicircular background diapered in gold on terracotta, within an elaborate squared-off border filled with gold scrollwork. In the diapers are the red and blue flowers alternately. The spandrels are filled with the familiar blue with white scrolling. The billy goat is white and bearded, with long, swept-back horns, and stands facing left, his right front leg raised and bent.

To the left, one of the fattened pigs from last month is about to be slaughtered. It is brown and hairy with a long, curled tail and stands quietly facing left, before the man who is about to kill it. He has brown hair and is wearing the familiar blue tunic and cap, with russet hose. They are standing on grass, with rocks in the foreground. Trees, rocks and grassland sweep up to the distant mountain, against a blue sky. The man is holding his axe two-handed, lifting it well above his head, so again his elbows are by his ears, and he is about to bring it down in a mighty stroke.

With the exception of hawking in May, all the calendrical activities are rustic, down-to-earth and tied to the land.

## Chapter 4

### Detailed description of the De Grey Hours Miniatures

Immediately following the December calendar, on folio 13r, is a very decorative page which begins the prayers of St Bridget of Sweden. Each prayer begins with 'O' and consequently they are called the Fifteen Oes. The text occupies a small area of the page, and is written in a neat Gothic bookhand. Sometimes the scribe cannot resist putting an exuberant little curlicue at the end of a line or adding a very fine up-and-down twist to a full stop. The fineness of these lines is amazing, and the fineness of the flourished penwork on the minor decorated initials is also remarkable.

Comparison with the Villeneuve Hours, a manuscript produced in Bruges about 1450 and illuminated by the Master(s) of the Gold Scrolls<sup>115</sup> reveals that the script and its embellishments are so similar that they may even be by the same hand.<sup>116</sup>

The letter 'O' beginning the first prayer in the series differs from the subsequent ones in that it is more elaborately decorated. The letter itself is a rich cobalt blue, with a crenellated design of light and medium blue, and light blue dots. The centre of the letter is filled in with a stylised iris-type flower with petals of pale blue shaded with darker blue and having green on the underside. Curling leaves at the bottom are in shades of brown. The letter invades the floriate frame to the left, and to the right has its own square gold frame, with the two spandrels filled in with terracotta, and having a linear design in white. The entire prayer is contained within a frame comprised of zig-zags in blue, against a golden background. Within the space formed by each zig-zag is a curling leaf which springs from the zig-zag itself. Outside this border is a narrow white frame which in turn is edged by a narrower blue frame with more scrolling leaves which sometimes encroach upon the white. Beyond this again, and reaching to the edge of the page itself, is a vibrant scrolling, writhing border with more naturalistic fruits, leaves and berries as

well as the familiar stylised curling leaves. The leaves and flowers are coloured in different shades of red, green, etc, then further embellished with hatching or rows of

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<sup>115</sup> [www.medievalbooksofhours.com](http://www.medievalbooksofhours.com) <accessed 27 Jan 2018>

<sup>116</sup> See Appendix 2, pp. 83-4.



minuscule dots to divide a leaf or following the line of a curve. These are so tiny they are barely visible, but their presence sculpts the shape perfectly. Some areas of this border are touched with gold also. The initial impression is as intense, and dense, as a carpet page in the Lindisfarne Gospels. This type of border is repeated throughout the manuscript.

Each page in this section has nineteen lines of text, and each prayer begins with a decorated letter 'O' in gold, contained within a blue square with white lines following the square shape. Each 'O' is filled in with a terracotta colour which has a decorative bird, animal or other emblem inscribed upon it in gold. Springing from the left edge of each framed letter is a similar decoration to those which appear in the Calendar, spreading into the margin above and below, and consisting of scrolling penwork lines with small flowers and seed pods, very similar to those forming the border of the initial prayer in the sequence. This sequence ends on folio 19v, and folio 20r is blank.

Folio 20v: **The Trinity**, shows God sitting in a triangular wooden chair with a canopy, and holding the crucified Christ stretched across His knee. Christ's skin is pearly; he wears a loincloth, his crown of thorns and a cruciform halo, and his feet rest on a golden orb which represents the earth. His wounds are still bleeding. His eyes are closed, his brown hair reaches his shoulders, and he has a small forked brown beard with a moustache. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, God was frequently depicted as a pope, and here He is dressed in a cloak and papal tiara of a rich blue, which is a representation of divinity, and a symbol of heaven, being the most costly pigment and so the most worthy to represent Him. The cloak is lined in red and edged with gold and gold embroidered bands, the red representing the Earth, or blood, and being symbolic of humanity. His tiara has a gold cross as a finial, and the robe showing beneath the cloak is white. God has a restrained forked brown beard and a large golden cruciform halo. Such cruciform halos are conventionally used to represent the persons of the Holy Trinity. It would seem that the representation of the Holy Spirit, usually in the form of a dove, is missing, although the device on the gold brooch which fastens God's cloak could be a dove, though this is difficult to confirm. The faces of both God and Christ are very well modelled.

The canopy back is terracotta, with gold scrollwork borders and a central panel diapered with gold lines and containing the same alternating red and pale blue flowers with darker centres as appear in backgrounds in the Calendar section. Its top is jade green, and behind the chair, a greyish-blue stone wall rises to dado height, with above it tiles in gold, red and cobalt forming an arched shape. The two spandrels are filled in with cobalt and have wispy scrolling in light blue, similar to that in some of the Calendar pages. The floor appears to be a low dais, and is comprised of small, patterned tiles laid to form larger squares in colours of jade, terracotta, white and cobalt blue. Two edges of this apparently triangular dais are shown, of the same colour as the stone wall, and the remaining triangles thus formed in the corners are filled in with jade green. The triangular chair is again a reference to the Trinity, as are the several other triangles which appear in the picture. None of the more conventional attributes of the Holy Spirit is obvious. The whole is enclosed in a decorative border with gold edges, formed of panels of cobalt and terracotta and decorated with scrolling and geometrical patterns in gold. These elaborate decorative panels of gold scrolls appear in many of the miniatures and are typical of the group known as the Masters of the Gold Scrolls associated with Willem Vrelant's workshop in Bruges.<sup>117</sup> Each corner has a decorative pattern resembling a tile with a flower in the centre, in gold.

Folio 21r contains a prayer to the Trinity 'De sancta trinitate', intensely and richly decorated like folio 13r, though in this instance the border enclosing the prayer is formed of interlacing heart and diamond shapes, filled in with leaves and small flowers.

There follows in the De Grey Hours a series of portraits of saints (ff. 24v–35v). Other saints' portraits are depicted in historiated initials between folios 54r and 58r. One striking factor about the saints depicted is that many of them wear a strange type of halo. Intensive searching has failed to elicit any information about these. They are gold and look very much as though a small skin has been stretched over a hoop to dry. Occasionally, even the Virgin Mary is painted with this type of halo, though she usually has a plain circular golden one with a double-lined border in black. It is possible that only one of the artists collaborating on this manuscript used

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<sup>117</sup> See Appendix 1, pp. 64-70, for further examples.

this type of halo, so that its presence signifies the work of that particular artist: The Master of the Skin Halo?

Folio 24v: **Saint John the Baptist**. The saint sits in the centre, looking and pointing with his right hand at the Lamb of God to his left, which is standing in front of some trees and looking back at him. It has a cruciform halo, and the presence of the lamb, and his pointing at it, shows that he is the Baptist. He wears a long, coarse brown tunic, covered with a voluminous terracotta cloak, and his arms and feet are bare. He has a ruddy complexion, shoulder length brown hair and a small, forked beard. He has the golden stretched-skin halo, and holds a large book with black covers and a clasp. Between him and the viewer is a large rock, and he sits on rough grass with more rocks behind him. In the distance is a landscape remarkably similar to some in the Calendar with tree-dotted fields stretching up to a castle on a hill, and in the far distance is a very distinctively shaped hill and a background of blue sky. This suggests that the landscape is generic for this school or workshop or region of illuminators.

A later inscription has been erased from the bottom margin of folio 23r. This could perhaps be read in the right light conditions, and another longer hand-written note of five and a bit lines has been erased from the bottom margin of folio 25v. This is still almost legible; 'et' can be read, so it could be Latin or French.

Folio 26v: **Saint John the Evangelist**, standing upon a floor tiled in two shades of green, facing right and looking at the eagle which is one of his attributes. He appears to be blessing it with his right hand, and in his left he holds the golden chalice which is another of his attributes. He wears a floor-length robe of a rich red with long sleeves and neckline bordered in gold. Over this he has a trailing cloak of cobalt blue, lined in white and patterned with gold stars and suns. His reddish-blond hair reaches his shoulders, and he has a golden stretched-skin halo. Behind him is an arch of tiles like those in the Trinity miniature. Below this is the familiar terracotta diapered in gold, with alternating blue and red flowers and scrolling golden border. Saint John the Evangelist was the patron saint of the Bruges Confraternity of artists and artisans concerned with book and manuscript production, and to which Willem Vrelant belonged.

Folio 28v: **Saint Thomas of Canterbury**, whose presence strongly suggests that this manuscript was tailored for the English market. He is depicted immediately prior to his martyrdom, kneeling on a limestone step before the altar in the cathedral. He is clean-shaven, with a grey tonsure. His expression is serene, although he has already been struck once on the top of his head and blood is flowing through his hair and over his face. He wears a long white cassock, over which his chasuble is rich blue, patterned in gold and lined with red; he has the golden stretched-skin halo. A gold chalice stands on the altar, which is covered by a white cloth. The altar front is edged with jade green and below that is terracotta, with a scrolling pattern in gold. Behind the altar, against the stone wall, is a panel of cobalt blue with gold stars.<sup>118</sup> The scene is framed by pillars of slatey-blue which are topped by stone capitals rising into arches. In the background, an open door shows a green hillside and blue sky, and to the right is another pair of pillars, twisted ones in red, and springing from them are blue-painted arches. Two diamond-paned windows with rounded heads are shown, with a smaller one over the doorway. The main part of the floor is of square tiles, in two shades of green.

Behind Becket stand three assassins, all wearing armour with surcoats over. The two closest to Becket have parti-coloured surcoats, one side terracotta, the other cobalt with gold patterning. The third, standing at the back near the door, wears a cobalt one with gold patterned borders at neck and hem. He also has a helmet and is clean-shaven. He has a full beard and shoulder length hair of golden brown and wears a hat with a tall red crown and white fur brim. Neither he nor the man who stands to the left of the picture has a visible weapon. The remaining assassin is the one who has struck the initial blow, and is about to strike again, as he has his sword raised high in his right hand, ready to swing down. He is clean-shaven, with dark brown hair, and wears a distinctive striped turban-style hat.

Folio 31v : **Saint George**, England's patron saint. He is depicted against a background of rocks and fallow fields leading up to a very large castle with seven towers, beyond which blue mountains with a few trees rise against a blue sky. Saint

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<sup>118</sup> See Appendix 2, pp. 71-2, for a comparison with the same scene by the Mildmay Master.

George is stabbing the rather small brown dragon with his lance. Not much bigger than a large dog, it is cornered in the bottom right of the picture and is throwing back its head and breathing fire as he stabs it in the neck. George is wearing dark grey plate armour with an open helmet, and long golden spurs; he has shoulder-length brown hair and wears a stretched-skin halo. His horse is dun-coloured, and its saddle-cloth is deep blue with gold scrolling, while the trappings are red with gold decoration and fittings. George's shield is white and concavely curved, with the red cross of St George upon it. Kneeling so close by that she looks as though she is riding on the shield is the sacrificial princess. She has long blonde hair, a golden crown and wears an elaborate dress of deep blue with a panel of white and long deep pink sleeves. She leads the the lamb which is the other part of the sacrifice.

Folio 33v: **Saint Margaret.** She is imprisoned in a building with four windows, all heavily barred, including the dormer and a small round one in the gable. The building's walls are in two shades of terracotta, and the roof is blue. Blue sky is visible in the background with two trees on the left. Surrounding the building is a castellated wall of grey stone blocks, with three towers, all having arrow slits. A brown wooden door with black iron hinges and handle sits between the two left-hand towers, and the foreground is green grass and weedy-looking plants. Margaret herself is visible through the largest of the windows, emerging from the body of the Satan-dragon which has swallowed her. The dragon is pale green and cream, with cloven feet and a big red mouth. Part of her cloak still protrudes from its mouth as she emerges somewhere by its shoulders. She is a young girl with long golden hair and her halo is the golden stretched-skin one. Her long-sleeved tunic is pink, and her cloak deep blue with a white lining. The background to her cell is dark, with golden rays coming from the top left corner and surrounding her.

Folio 35v: **Saint Barbara.** She is approaching her tower, which is not much larger than she is, but has three slit windows to honour the Trinity, and a blue, pointed roof. She carries a book in her right hand and stands on a grassy sward which terminates in a large rock. To one side is a flowering tree, and beyond a path zigzags between rocky mounds with trees dotted about until it reaches a large castle with seven towers, five having blue, cupola-shaped roofs with flying pennants. Another pennant flies from Barbara's tower. In the far distance is a mountainous landscape and blue

sky. What appears to be a large threatening grey cloud is actually a result of something being spilt on the page, as it has smudged the blue painted border over onto the sky. Saint Barbara has very long golden hair and wears a pink robe with long sleeves and a trailing hem. Over this is a deep blue cloak with a restrained decorative border in gold, and she has the golden stretched-skin halo.

### **The Hours of the Virgin and The Hours of the Passion**

The miniatures appear in two sequences, set in parallel throughout the Hours of the Virgin, the Passion Sequence and the Nativity Sequence. In each facing-page pairing, the image from the Passion Sequence comes first.<sup>119</sup>

Folio 37v: **The Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane.** Christ is central, wearing a long, voluminous robe which falls in folds about him as he kneels, its border edged with a narrow gold pattern. His hair is long and brown, and he wears a small brown beard and moustache and a cruciform halo. Hovering in the air a little above his eye level is a golden chalice, and in a quarter-roundel in the top right corner of the picture is God, bareheaded, with grey hair and beard and wearing a blue cloak. Golden rays spread out from Him in all directions, and some are reaching Christ where he kneels. The garden boundary is delineated by a planked wooden fence with a serrated top edge, behind which can be seen a group of armed soldiers led by Judas, with gingery hair and beard. The soldiers' faces are all different, though only 3mm long. Behind them the landscape recedes rockily into the distance, where a castle sits surrounded by trees, with hills behind.

In the foreground, the grey-haired Saint Peter lies asleep. He wears a long light brown tunic and a blue cloak with gold decorative edging, and his feet are bare. Saint James is kneeling behind his younger brother, John. James has short dark hair and a neat forked beard. His grey tunic is just visible under his red cloak, and his eyes are shut. The golden-haired Saint John is clean-shaven, and sits with eyes closed and head resting on his left hand. A large, closed black book is on his knee.

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<sup>119</sup> See Appendix 2, p. 80, for a double-page spread showing the Crucifixion and the Presentation in the Temple (ff. 74v and 75r) from the De Grey Hours.

His long-sleeved floor-length robe is the same colour as Peter's, and his cloak is the same blue with gold decoration. All three of them have identical golden stretched-skin haloes.

Folio 38r: **The Annunciation.** The Virgin sits at her canopied desk, reading, with books propped open on the back of the shelf. Two further books lie flat on the shelf, and a scroll unrolls between them. The book Mary was reading is open on the lower shelf of the desk, below which a hanging of red and gold brocade falls to a wooden dais on the floor. Mary's feet rest on the dais, covered by the folds of her dress, and her wooden chair is upholstered in red with a gold pattern. Behind this, the wall has stone up to dado height, then is decorated in red with gold patterns. God looks down from a quarter-roundel in the top left corner. He wears a green robe and his hair and beard are white. The golden rays radiating from him extend towards the angel and Mary and end in gold scrolling. On the grey-tiled floor stands a golden pot with a lily, symbolising Mary's purity. The golden-haired angel kneels and looks down before her. He is dressed in a long white robe under a red cloak with gold patterning and a green lining; it also seems to be edged with fur and is held at the throat with a large gold brooch. The angel's wings are narrow, and deep blue, and his words to Mary are contained in a scroll which winds in the air between them. Mary herself is dressed in a voluminous pink gown, held in by two belts, with a high round neck and long sleeves. Her cloak is deep blue, which is a symbol of heaven and represents her divinity; it falls in folds to trail on the floor, showing its decorative gold edging. Her very long, golden wavy hair is uncovered, to underline her virginity, and her halo is a plain gold one with a double black border. This miniature begins the Hours of the Virgin.

Folio 45v: **The Betrayal of Christ.** In the garden of Gethsemane with its wooden fencing and rocks, Christ is in the centre, wearing his long grey gown with gold decorative borders, his feet bare. He has a plain halo with a double edge and indications of rays, and his hair and beard are brown. He is being apprehended by a gang of soldiers and officials. Judas is just pulling away after having kissed him. Judas's hair and beard are blond and he wears a camel-coloured cloak over a pink robe. The soldiers have plate armour covered by deep blue surcoats decorated in gold. One, guarding Judas, wears a turban-style hat, the others morions. The

citizenry and officials wear different styles of hat. The man holding Jesus's arm wears over his armour an intricately pleated surcoat in pink with an elaborate gold epaulette on the left shoulder, and his small beard and moustache are white. In the foreground, Saint Peter brandishes a sword and is attacking a recumbent Malchus, the high priest's servant whose ear Peter cut off. Peter is tonsured, with grey hair and beard. This image of him is relatively crudely painted and he seems to be squashed into a too-small space. He wears the golden stretched-skin halo, and his tunic is red, underneath a deep blue cloak with gold border. Malchus is dark-haired and clean-shaven; wearing an elaborate short tunic in pink over another whose dark sleeves cover the rest of his arms. His right shoulder has a decorative gold epaulette, but despite his ornate clothing, he is barefoot.

Folio 46r: **The Visitation** of the pregnant Virgin Mary to her cousin Elizabeth, herself then pregnant with John the Baptist. Mary stands left, wearing a trailing pink robe under a cloak of deep blue which also covers her head. Her neck is bare and she has a plain gold halo with a double border. She and Elizabeth face one another, reaching out their hands. Elizabeth wears an overdress of grey-blue with a narrow gold border and a high black girdle with gold embellishment, under which is a pleated black underskirt decorated with gold. Over these is a trailing red cloak with gold patterning. A white wimple covers her neck and she has a shoulder length white headcloth. Her halo is the same as Mary's. They stand in a rocky landscape, with behind them a castle having five round blue-domed towers standing among trees against a blue sky with clouds.

Following this is a series of historiated initials (ff. 53r–58r), starting with the dove of the Holy Spirit and continuing with Saints. The Archangel Michael is the first of these, followed by Saints Peter and Paul together, Saint Andrew with his X-shaped cross, Saint Stephen, Saint Laurence with his gridiron, Saint Nicholas holding a golden crozier, Saint Anthony of Egypt with pigs, and finally Saint Sebastian being shot full of arrows. Most of these have gold scrolls in the background.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> See Appendix 2, p. 81, for some examples.



Folio 61v: **Christ brought before Pilate.** With long brown hair and neat forked beard, wearing a long grey, gold-edged gown which falls in folds to his bare feet, he faces Pilate. His hands are bound, but hidden by the fall of his sleeves. He has a bright gold cruciform halo. Two men restrain him; to the left is a white-bearded man in plate armour, including helmet, gorget and gloves but with normal black boots. His surcoat is blue with gold borders and pattern, and has pink short sleeves with gold borders. The other man clutches Christ's left arm with his bare hand. He has grey short hair and beard and wears a waisted tunic with a scalloped hem reaching to mid-thigh, bordered and patterned in gold. Its sleeves are short, with white fur trim, and long red sleeves from an under-tunic show below. He wears red hose. They face Pilate; behind them two more soldiers wearing red surcoats and helmets carry spears. Three other men beside them wear elaborate hats. One has brown hair and is clean-shaven, with a green tunic and red, gold-patterned hat with upturned brim. Another has gingery hair and beard and is looking away from the drama in front of him. His tunic is pink with a wide collar of dark grey-blue, and his tall hat curves forward to a point. It has a divided, upturned white brim. The third man is in pink tunic and hat with an ermine brim. His hair and beard are brown. Another man stands beside Pilate's seat. His fair curly hair and beard are topped by a rounded hat in pink, and his long gown is the same colour, with a wide ermine collar. Behind the onlookers, an open door shows a landscape of a rounded green hill with blue sky behind. All the faces in this miniature are beautifully observed and painted. Beside the door, a stone wall holds an oblong, diamond-glazed window. Pilate is seated on an architectural throne with a canopy. The very high back is decorated in terracotta with gold diapering and blue and white flowers. Its roof of red with gold suns and stars is edged with green. The throne's arms seem to be supported by short greyish veined marble columns with carved limestone bases and finials. Another similar column stands to Pilate's right, separating him from the man in pink. Pilate has shoulder length grey hair and beard, his high-crowned hat is rich blue with gold embellishment and deep ermine brim. His gown is the same blue with gold patterning, and its hem and sleeve edges are trimmed with ermine. His black shoes have long pointed toes which curve up slightly and are resting on the tiled green floor.

Folio 62r: **The Nativity**. The naked Christ child lies on the ground, on a fold of Mary's robe, with a full head of golden hair and radiating gold rays. More gold rays stream down to him, with the dove representing the Holy Spirit, and he has a cruciform halo. This way of depicting the Nativity was derived from the vision of St Brigid of Sweden (canonised 1391).<sup>121</sup> Mary kneels on the bare rocky ground, which becomes green as it stretches away behind her. The stable is a thatched roof supported by wooden poles, with only one stone wall, at the back and incomplete. In front of it is a water trough with an ox and ass drinking. The background is barren ground stretching back to green hills with trees and blue sky. The star is just visible at the top centre, shedding its golden rays onto the stable. Mary wears a voluminous, long-sleeved full length pink robe under a deep blue cloak bordered in gold. Her uncovered golden hair stresses her virginity, and it streams to her waist. She has a plain gold halo with double border. Joseph has no halo, and kneels on one knee opposite her, with Christ between them. Joseph's hair and beard are grey and his voluminous robe pink, with a wide grey collar bordered in gold. He raises both his hands towards the child, and Mary raises her right hand, with a fold of her cloak tucked under her arm.

Folio 66v: **The Scourging of Christ**, takes place in a room with another room leading off it, shown through an open doorway. Four spectators stand in another open doorway to the left, one being Pilate, dressed as before, but this hat has brown fur trim. Beside him is a high priest with blond hair and beard, wearing a tall golden head-dress with side flaps reaching his shoulders. His long red robe has a deep blue collar embellished with gold. Peering over their shoulders are two clean-shaven men, one a helmeted soldier wearing red, and the other in black, with a gold-embroidered blue hat. Behind them is the rounded green hill with blue sky. In the centre of the picture, a deep red pillar springs out of a wide carved base and supports two blue arches. Christ is bound with his back to this pillar and stands on its wide base, wearing only a loincloth. His body is thin, with ribs visible, and his hair and beard brown, with a golden cruciform halo. His cheeks are very red, but the rest of his skin is pearly, and the modelling of the flesh over ribs, breastbone and knees particularly well done. Stretched across the scene, behind the pillar, is a light green curtain with gold patterning, falling in deep folds. Close attention shows that the artist has

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<sup>121</sup> [www.medievalbooks](http://www.medievalbooks) of hours.com <accessed 20 Jan 2018>.

repositioned Christ's right arm, as the ghost of its original position shows against the curtain. The floor of the room is elaborately patterned tiles in shades of blue, green, terracotta and white. Three men are scourging Christ, one to the left and two to the right of the picture. They are all bareheaded, and the one to the left wears armour under a short-sleeved waisted pink tunic with gold hem and neckline. He is clean-shaven, with short brown hair. The two others have dark brown and curly blond hair and beards respectively. The blond one is nearer the viewer, wearing armour with a sleeveless terracotta tunic over; at his left hip, he carries a curved scimitar in a black scabbard with gold decoration. The darkhaired man has a blue tunic with gold decorated cuffs and hem over red hose and rather baggy knee-length boots. All three raise their arms high, holding the thick handles of scourges whose white knotted thongs curl in the air.

Folio 67r: **Annunciation to the Shepherds.** Three shepherds are shown in a verdant landscape of small hills, trees and flowering bushes. In the distance, a river flows past a large castle with seven towers, most with domed blue roofs and gold finials, sited amongst trees on a hillside. Blue mountains rise against a blue sky in the distance. Placed centrally against the sky at the top is the angel, head, arms and outspread wings all in gold, with golden rays streaming from him. He carries a scroll, on which the words 'Gloria in' can be read. The remaining word is presumably 'excelsis' but is illegible. Three well-dressed shepherds fill the foreground, with six sheep lying down. The shepherd on the right has seen the angel and kneels on one knee with his hands stretched prayerfully in front of him. His hose and head-covering are pink, and he is clean-shaven, with grey hair. His blue robe is kilted up, but falling down at the back, and it has gold on the hem and sleeve. The other shepherds have not noticed the angel, as both are standing upright, and the middle one is playing the bagpipes. He has a forked brown beard and brown hair under a gold-embellished blue hat with fur edging. His hose are grey and his knee-length tunic red, with long sleeves; his short cloak matches his hat and has gold edging and decoration. The shepherd on the left is bareheaded but has a black hat with a large brim slung over his shoulder. His hair and thick beard are reddish-blond. He wears red hose and a short blue tunic with gold embellishment and long sleeves under a slightly longer pink over-gown which splits up the front to show the blue gown and

has the left sleeve pushed up to show the blue sleeve. His collar is green, and he carries a spear, presumably to defend the sheep.

Folio 70v: **Christ carrying the Cross.** He wears the same grey gown with gold at the hem, and bare feet. On his brown hair is the crown of thorns, and his halo is cruciform and golden. The cross is T-shaped, positioned over his right shoulder. A man in the right front corner stands his booted right foot on its bottom end, perhaps to brace it for lifting. His dark brown boots are knee-high and baggy, and he carries a scimitar in a black scabbard. He has a small white beard and wears a morion on his head. His short, waisted blue tunic has gold embellishment and long sleeves, and a large gold epaulette on the left shoulder. His hose are pink, and he wears a fearful expression. A group of eleven men is crowded into the right side of the picture, around one arm of the cross, and they all have different expressions, mostly thoughtful or fearful. Eight are soldiers wearing armour and helmets. Two of these have white beards, while the rest are clean-shaven. The other three men all have beards and wear elaborate headgear. Two have blue hats with tall crowns and ermine trimming, while the third has an elaborately shaped turned-back brim on his blue hat, liberally decorated with gold. To the other side of Christ stand the Virgin Mary and Saint John. Mary wears her long pink robe with the voluminous gold-bordered blue cloak covering her hair and falling in folds to the ground. Saint John has a grey gown with red cloak and is bareheaded. Both have the golden stretched-skin halo. The ground on which they all stand is flower-strewn grass, rising to a rocky outcrop behind which is a large castle with towers and blue domed roofs. In the distance, the river leads towards oddly-shaped blue mountains with blue sky behind.

Folio 71r : **The Adoration of the Magi.** The stable is a thatched roof supported on poles, but this time the back wall is planked like a wooden fence, with a serrated top edge. Behind it a landscape of fields and flowering trees rises to a castle at the top left. This castle has two round towers with blue domed roofs, each with a gold finial. The sky is clear blue, and the star blazes gold in the top centre. Mary sits front right, with the naked Christ child on her knee. His hair is gold, face well modelled, and he has a cruciform halo in gold and black. Mary's long pink gown is gathered in by a high belt. Over this, her ample blue cloak covers her hair and falls in draped folds to the floor, showing its gold edging, and she has a normal plain halo. Lying beside a

rock in the foreground is a golden crown. Its owner kneels bareheaded before mother and child, proffering a decorated golden box. His hair and beard are grey and his fawn cloak, lined in white fur, covers his left shoulder and trails over his voluminous pink gown which has short sleeves with a decorated edging. Underneath is another gown or tunic of deep blue, the gold-edged long sleeve of which shows. Behind him stand two more kings, left hands raised in greeting, on grassy sward rising up to a large rock. The one on the left is clean-shaven, with wavy shoulder-length blond hair, wearing a golden crown. His deep blue pleated robe falls to the floor, ornamented with golden stars, crescents, and deep embellished gold hems. He carries an elaborate golden orb in his right hand, decorated in black. The remaining king has shoulder-length brown hair and a neat forked beard. He wears a golden crown and a calf length grey robe with a deep white fur collar and a pattern of gold circles with central dots. Showing under this robe is another, floor-length one, of pink. He carries what looks like a golden chalice, but this is slightly obscured by the head of the first king.

Folio 74v: **The Crucifixion**, with Christ central on a T-shaped cross. In the background on the right against a darkening sky, a semicircle of gold represents the sun going into eclipse. To the left, Mary sags at the knees and looks away from the cross. She wears her long pink robe and her blue cloak covers her head and trails on the ground. It has a simple gold decorative border, and she has the golden stretched-skin halo, as does St John, who stands behind her. He is bareheaded and his wavy golden hair falls to his shoulders. His gown is grey, and his red cloak with white lining falls to the ground. Behind him again is another female Saint, probably Mary Magdalene, whose hair and dress are completely covered by her grey cloak. Her halo is also of the skin type. Beside her stands a man with grey wavy hair and beard, holding a spear in his right hand. In his left he holds up a sponge. His long-sleeved gown is grey, with an ermine fur collar. Another four people stand at the right side of the cross, balancing them out. The first is very richly dressed, with brown hair and beard. He wears a large scimitar in a black scabbard with gold ornament. His pointed black shoes turn up slightly. His gown is rich blue, gold edged and patterned, and falls to calf length over a pink under-tunic. He has a deep ermine shoulder cape, and on his head more ermine forms the shaped turned-up brim of his deep blue hat with gold ornament. Behind him stand two men; one with plate armour

on his legs and feet, and a short pink tunic over. It has a nipped-in waist and long sleeves. His hair and beard are grey, and he wears a light grey turban-style hat with gold ornament. The other is young and clean-shaven, wearing dark grey hose under a bright red knee-length tunic with gold embellishment and a close-fitting dark grey cap. Right at the back, we see the head and shoulders of a fourth man, wearing a deep blue high crowned hat with a turned-up fur brim on his red-gold hair. He also has a neat beard and moustache. They all stand on greensward which stretches back to distant fields and a large castle or walled town with towers, blue roofs and domes and gold finials. There are blue mountains behind, and the lowering sky. The emaciated Christ hangs on his cross, wearing only a loincloth, his hair darker and lank with sweat, and his wounds dripping blood. He has a cruciform halo, and the *Titulus Crucius* with INRI on top of the cross.

Folio 75r: **The presentation of the infant Christ in the Temple.** Mary holds out the naked baby, who has red-gold hair and a cruciform halo, to a priest who is about to wrap him in a voluminous white cloth with a delicate decorative border in red. The priest is clean shaven, with brown hair and wears a long white gown and a white and brown bishop's mitre. Over everything, he has a long cloak trailing behind him, deep blue with gold patterning and light brown fur edging. Beneath the child and between the priest and Mary is an altar. Its front is diapered with wavy gold lines; in each lozenge is a flower like those in the Calendar section. A shallow wooden dais stands in front of the altar. Mary stands in her long-sleeved floor length pink robe with high belt. Her hair is wavy, golden-blonde, and reaches her waist, uncovered in token of her virginity, and she has a plain gold halo with a double border. Her deep blue cloak falls in copious folds to the floor and is edged with a simple gold stripe-and-dot border. Behind Mary stands another woman, with her light brown hair in the same elaborate style of high 'earphones' as the woman in Jan van Eyck's Arnolfini portrait of 1434.<sup>122</sup> Here the style is topped by a white pleated turban with a veil hanging down behind. Her dark grey pleated gown has a red cloak patterned with gold suns over it. Joseph stands at centre back behind the altar, wearing a red gown and dark grey cloak. His hair and beard are grey. Two other men stand behind the priest, one in a long-sleeved green floor-length gown. His moustache, beard and hair are

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<sup>122</sup> See Appendix 2, p. 73, for comparison with the De Grey Hours.

reddish gold, and he has a white turban with light grey pattern. The other man wears a red gown with gold neckline decoration. He has a deep blue turban with gold pattern, and his hair and beard are brown. They stand in a room of grey stone, with two diamond-paned windows. The vaulted roof is deep blue with ribs picked out in gold and supported by green columns. The floor of the room is of patterned terracotta tiles, and the open door reveals a green hill with trees and a blue sky beyond.

Folio 78v: **The Descent from the Cross**. Christ, wearing a flesh coloured loincloth and his crown of thorns, hangs in the right arm of Joseph of Arimathea. Christ's eyes are closed and his neat forked beard and shoulder length hair are brown. He has a cruciform halo. The richly dressed man to the right of the picture with arms raised is probably Nicodemus. A large white cloth covers Joseph's arm, and he wears a long medium-grey gown with white fur trimming and a matching high crowned hat. His hair and beard are gingery, and he is balanced somewhat precariously on a ladder propped against the cross. Christ's arms stick stiffly down, and his feet are still together as if nailed, though the nail is not visible. Nicodemus wears a rich blue calf length tunic with gold patterning. Its hem and long sleeves are edged in white, and it has a deep ermine collar. Beneath it, a long pink gown falls in pleats to his ankles, showing black pointed shoes with turned up toe. His tall-crowned hat is grey, with an upturned pink brim, and his hair and beard are brown. Behind him stands a grey-bearded man in a red knee-length tunic with dark grey hose and a blue hat.

To the left is Mary in the same pink robe with blue cloak covering her head. She reaches her right hand towards Jesus's right one. Behind her is John in his grey gown and red cloak, blond head bare. Mary Magdalene stands behind him, her black gown covered by a pink cloak which also covers her head. All three have the skin halo, and all have expressions of calm resignation. They stand on grass punctuated with rocks and beyond that, a bare field stretches to a river with bushes to one side and a large castle or town on the other. This has towers with domes and roofs of blue with finials. In the far distance is a blue, distinctively shaped hill with sky behind. The eclipsed sun is indicated by a gold half circle, and to the left, golden rays stream down.

Folio 79r: **The Massacre of the Innocents**, though only one baby is involved. A glum but passive-looking mother kneels or squats on a rocky road, holding her naked, blond baby. The mother wears a rich blue robe with gold pattern and edging to hem, neck and long sleeves. Her blonde hair cascades to her elbows from under a white pleated turban. The entire baby is only 13 mm long, but exquisitely painted. The highlights on its pearly skin bring it to life. A soldier grasps the baby's right arm with his left hand, and leans forward threateningly. We see him from behind, and he wears a short grey tunic decorated in gold over pink hose. His head is covered in a metal helmet shaped like a British WW2 one. Herod, crowned in gold, passes by unmoved, with three other men. Herod's horse is light brown and his saddlecloth richly dagged and edged in gold. His reins and trappings are brown with gold decorations and buckles. Herod himself has grey hair and beard and wears a short deep blue waisted tunic embellished with gold, and with a full dagged sleeve edged in gold which trails down over his saddle. Pale plate armour shows beneath.

One of his companions wears a full length, bright red hooded robe with white fur edging to the hood and cape collar. He looks at the king, raising both hands, while his mount goes on unguided. He has a dark brown moustache but no beard. His dark grey horse may be a mule, as it has rather long ears. Its trappings are similar to the king's, but less rich. His whole appearance suggests an ecclesiastic. Behind them ride two more men, one just visible in pink tunic, with a plate helmet and gorget, and the other riding a grey horse with similarly decorated trappings. His tunic is grey, decorated with gold, and he wears a jaunty light brown hat with a pointed crown curving forwards and a large, upturned white brim. Behind them, fields with occasional trees stretch away into the distance where blue mountains stand against a blue sky. In the middle of this vista, a large rock stands to the right and a castle with towers and blue roofs to the left.

Folio 84v: **The Entombment of Christ**. Here, the emaciated body of Christ, with cruciform halo and loincloth, lies on his shroud with his right hand resting on the edge of the stone table tomb into which he is being lowered by two richly dressed men. The one on the left, wearing a long blue robe decorated in gold, is Joseph of Arimathea; here his hair and beard are grey. He has a close-fitting grey cap



decorated with gold, black pointed shoes and a deep red collar. The other man is probably Nicodemus, wearing a blue cloak over a pink gown with a deep cape collar. His hair is brown, and he wears the same hat as in the Deposition miniature. Saint John is on one knee in front of the tomb, raising his left hand towards Christ's right one. He wears a long-sleeved, full-length pink tunic under a deep blue cloak lined in white. He has the golden stretched-skin halo, and on the floor beside him is a golden object which could be a lamp. Behind the tomb stands the Virgin Mary, hair covered by her blue cloak with gold-decorated border. Mary Magdalene is with her, in the same black gown and pink cloak as the Deposition scene. Their eyes are fixed on Christ's face and they have expressions of sad resignation. The female saint standing the other side of the Virgin looks towards the feet of Christ. She has a brown headcloth covering her hair and wears a grey gown under a red cloak. All three have the golden stretched-skin halo. Behind them a large rock rears up to the left and beyond that the landscape rolls away in tree-studded fields to a distant castle with blue domes and blue roofs. Beyond that again are blue hills and a dusky blue sky.

Folio 85r: **The Flight into Egypt.** The donkey, its expression of patient endurance, carries Mary, who is perched sidesaddle holding the infant Christ in his swaddling clothes. He is blond and has a cruciform halo. Mary is wearing a pink gown which covers her feet and has wrapped her gold-embellished cloak around her baby. She has a plain halo. The donkey has a bridle but no reins and Mary is not holding onto it or guiding it in any way. Joseph is walking and turning to look at them. He wears a knee-length pink tunic with long sleeves and a grey collar. His hose are grey and he has big, knee-high, floppy brown boots. His high-crowned hat has a turned-back brim. The road is dusty and rocky; behind them fields and trees recede into the distant mountains, standing out blue against a blue sky. In the middle distance is a castle with towers and blue domes and roofs.

This folio is succeeded by a section with eleven magnificent historiated initials, comprising the Virgin and Child, then the Pietà, showing the Virgin with Christ crucified and St John, the Virgin's presentation in the Temple as a child, Adam and Eve in the Garden, with the serpent twined round a tree. The serpent has literally been defaced. Next are the empty Calvary crosses, the head of Christ and the

several wounds in Christ's side, hands and feet, treated separately. Next, comes the Crucifixion again; this time Christ is accompanied by the two thieves, and all is packed into a space approximately 3.7 X 3.9 cm on folio 108r. Several of these also have golden-scrolled backgrounds.

Folio 147v: **The Last Judgment.**<sup>123</sup> Christ is shown in glory, floating centre-stage, seated on a golden arched rainbow and with his bare feet resting upon a golden globe. His long hair and forked beard are brown, his expression serene and detached, and he wears only a voluminous slatey-blue cloak with silver-patterned green lining and gold edging, which is fastened on his breast with a gold brooch. The cloak is capacious enough to cover a large part of the golden bow, as well as Christ's body. He has a cruciform halo. Christ is flanked and framed by two deep blue angels blowing curved trumpets in the top right and top left of the picture. The background is terracotta, with gold scrolling all over. Christ's right hand is held up in blessing, while his left is stretched out and downwards, almost touching the angel's trumpet on that side.

To the left of the picture is the Virgin Mary, wearing the same pink dress and cobalt blue robe as she does elsewhere, and on the other side is Saint John. He has blond hair, long grey tunic and the same red cloak lined in white that he has worn previously. Mary's hands are together in an attitude of prayer, and John's reach out towards Christ; they both have calm, serene expressions and the skin halo. Below them, the grass-covered ground shows several open graves with bodies emerging, whole and in their prime. Two of them are tonsured, and two others with golden-blond hair seem to have feminine faces.<sup>124</sup>

Folio 188v: **Souls being raised to Heaven.** A man with short dark hair and a woman with long blonde hair, both naked and with hands together in prayer, are being borne heavenwards in a large white cloth held by two angels. Their empty graves lie open in the grass below. Both angels are asexual, with wavy golden hair and lifted wings of brown, lined with malachite green. They wear white robes

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<sup>123</sup> See Appendix 2, p. 78.

<sup>124</sup> See Page 23 for description of other depictions of this scene by the Vrelant workshop.

underneath long pink tunics, split at the sides, and they are looking at the souls they carry. The background is rich blue, patterned with gold lines.<sup>125</sup> Typical of the Masters of the Gold Scrolls, these frame the angels, but higher up they turn into rays emanating from Heaven, which is depicted as a three-quarter orb, bounded by a wide deep-cobalt border. Inside it, against a background of red with gold rays and stars, is God, flanked by two more angels. God wears a grey robe under a green cloak held with a gold brooch. He carries a golden globe in his left hand, and his right is raised in blessing. His hair and beard are grey, and he wears a blue and gold papal tiara, backed by a cruciform halo. The angels both wear white, and are looking down at the happenings below, hands together in prayer. These angels too have golden hair, but their wings are grey. Each of the four angels in this picture has its wings in a different position, suggestive of movement.

Folio 203v: **Christ as the Man of Sorrows**, rising from his tomb and surrounded by the instruments of his humiliation and torture. He wears a loincloth and his crown of thorns, and has a cruciform halo. Draped on the side of the table tomb is his seamless grey gown, falling over to the base where a large pair of dice lies, together with a decorated bronze vessel. Also draped over the tomb's side is his blood-spattered white shroud. Balanced on its handle on the back edge of the tomb is a surprisingly modern-looking claw hammer. The cross rears up behind Christ's body, and is topped with the *Titulus Crucis* 'inri' sign. The ladder leans diagonally against it to the right, next to the sponge on a stick, with the spear forming another diagonal to the left. Against a blue background hatched with darker blue, four heads float on the right. At the top is the head of king Herod, with golden crown and red-gold hair and beard.

Below him is Pontius Pilate, with brown hair and beard and wearing a red hat with turned back fur brim. Next is the head of the high priest, with brown hair and beard and wearing a bishop's mitre; at the bottom and nearer to Christ is the bareheaded Judas Iscariot as he appeared at Gethsemane. Perched on the red pillar encircled with ropes, where Christ was whipped, is the black cockerel which crowed when Peter betrayed him. Next to the pillar is a scimitar, while above

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<sup>125</sup> See Appendix 2, p. 79.

that are two flails with knotted cords, and three very large nails. Near the nails is a pair of hands, representing those of Pilate when he washed them. This is the last image in the book.

## Chapter 5

### De Grey Family Armorial Links

According to the information which accompanies the National Library of Wales digital version of the De Grey Hours, the early 16<sup>th</sup> century inscription in the March Calendar refers to the death of Elizabeth Grey, wife of Sir John Grey of Blisworth, and a hand-written inscription on the page containing Henry Yates Thompson's bookplate says 'Sir John Grey's book (He was son of first Marquis Dorset)'.

The National Library of Wales information also says that the coats of arms shown in the manuscript are associated with that family. Careful checking has proved that statement to be correct. However, their information is faulty, presumably having been taken from the pencilled remarks made beside each escutcheon in the manuscript in a hand similar to that of the inscription on the bookplate page. The first coat of arms which occurs does so on

f.112r, and is listed as 'Arms of De Quincy, Earls of Winchester'. This coat of arms: Gules, seven mascles or conjoined 3:3:1<sup>126</sup> was certainly borne by the de Quincy family in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, but the Earldom of Winchester lapsed after the death of Roger de Quincy on 25 April 1264.<sup>127</sup> His lands were divided amongst his daughters, and his coat of arms descended to the De Ferrers family of Groby through the marriage of his daughter Margaret to William Ferrers (c. 1240-1287), a younger son of William Ferrers (d. 1254), fifth Earl of Derby.<sup>128</sup>

The De Ferrers family was an important and influential one, and Reynold de Grey (1362-1440), third Lord Grey of Ruthin, arranged the marriage of Edward (c.1415-57), his eldest son by his second wife Joan de Astley (1379-1448) to the De Ferrers heiress Elizabeth (c.1419-83), *suo jure* the sixth Baroness Ferrers of Groby. Edward thus became Baron Ferrers of Groby in right of his wife. It is the Ferrers, not de Quincy, coat of arms that appears on f.112r. Edward was also the sixth Baron Astley, succeeding his mother in 1448. This is significant,

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<sup>126</sup> See Appendix 3, p. 85.

<sup>127</sup> Richard D. Oram, 'Quincy, Roger de, earl of Winchester (c.1195–1264)', *ODNB* [on line] available: <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/22966>, <accessed 11 Sept 2017>

<sup>128</sup> Erich Acheson 'Ferrers Family (*per.c.* 1240–1445)', *ODNB*, <accessed 10 Sept 2017>.

because another of the coats of arms shown in the De Grey Hours is that of the Astley family (f. 118r).<sup>129</sup> The next coat of arms (f. 124r) is that of the De Greys of Ruthin.<sup>130</sup> Thus far, we have the arms of Edward de Grey's wife, and his mother and father, in that order.

Edward de Grey and Elizabeth Ferrers had a son, John (c.1432–1461), and this son was the first husband of Elizabeth Wydvile or Woodville (c.1437–92), who subsequently married King Edward IV. On folio 161r appear the Woodville family arms.<sup>131</sup> John was at least twenty-five when his father died in December 1457. The title passed through his mother, who outlived him, so although his father was summoned to parliament as Baron Ferrers of Groby, John never carried that title, being known simply as John Grey, knight. When civil war broke out in the late 1450s John Grey supported king Henry VI. John was a commissioner of array for Leicestershire in December 1459 and was appointed to lead men against the duke of York in April 1460. He was killed on 17 February 1461, fighting for the Lancastrians at the second battle of St Albans.<sup>132</sup>

John Grey had two sons by Elizabeth Woodville, whom he married about 1455: Thomas (c.1455–20/9/1501) and Richard (c.1457–83). When Thomas married in 1466, the chosen bride was Anne Holland, heir to the Duke of Exeter and niece to Edward IV. When she died childless in about 1474, Thomas made another very good marriage to a great heiress, Cecily Bonville (c.1460–1529), the seventh Baroness Harington. Her mother, Catherine, had married William, Lord Hastings after the death of Cecily's father. There is another Hastings link to this family, in that Reynold, the third Lord Grey of Ruthin, was the heir of his Hastings grandmother. The Hastings family arms appear (f. 137r),<sup>133</sup> as do those of the Bonvilles (f. 145r)<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> See Appendix 3, p. 86.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid*, p. 85.

<sup>131</sup> These arms are wrongly painted, as the device has been rotated by ninety degrees, and the shield is yellow, not white. Consultation with the College of Arms has revealed that there is no escutcheon matching this design, and Garter King of Arms is of the opinion that the painter misunderstood the description as to orientation, and either the original white backing has yellowed with age, or it was copied from an inaccurate original. He is of the opinion that it is intended to be the Woodville arms. See Appendix 3, pp. 87-8..

<sup>132</sup> Rosemary Horrox, 'Grey, Sir Richard (d. 1483)', *ODNB* [online], available: <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/11557>, <accessed 19 Sept 2017>

<sup>133</sup> See Appendix 3, p. 86.

<sup>134</sup> *ibid*, p. 86.

and the Haringtons (f. 168r).<sup>135</sup> By his marriage to Cecily, Thomas de Grey became Lord Harington and Bonville. One other coat of arms appears, being that of Aymer de Valence (f. 151r),<sup>136</sup> which is linked with Hastings. Aymer de Valence (d. 1324) had no legitimate heir, and a Hastings nephew succeeded him as Earl of Pembroke.

Thus far, all the armorial links point firmly to Thomas Grey, son of John Grey and Elizabeth Woodville. He became the seventh Baron Ferrers of Groby, first Earl of Huntingdon, and first Marquis of Dorset. Thomas had fourteen children with his wife Cecily Bonville, whom he married in July 1474, and according to the National Library of Wales, their son John was the owner of the De Grey Hours. However, the manuscript seems to date from about 1450/5.<sup>137</sup> Since St Bernardinus of Siena (canonised in 1450, and whose cult spread rapidly) is not included, it would seem to confirm that the manuscript is not much later than 1450.<sup>138</sup> John Grey, the son of Thomas and Cecily and grandson of John Grey and Elizabeth Woodville, was born in about 1485. It is possible that he bought or otherwise acquired it when it was already more than thirty years old, but equally, he could have inherited it or received it as a gift from his parents or grandparents.

Thomas Grey was the first child of his parents, John Grey (c. 1432–61) and Elizabeth Woodville (c.1437–1492), and he was born in about 1455. The De Grey Hours could have been purchased new at that time, in celebration of his birth, or of the marriage of his parents. It would still have been Sir John Grey's book, but an earlier John Grey, and it raises the intriguing possibility that it was at one time used by the beautiful and enigmatic lady who became Edward IV's controversial queen. Where the coats of arms appear in this manuscript, they are shown in the bottom margin, below the text. The lower margins of the manuscript are deep, and it is likely that the significant coats of arms were added some time after it was purchased, in order to show ownership and display the network of powerful and influential families linked to their owner. The workmanship of these escutcheons would seem to confirm this, as they are crudely painted in comparison with the rest of the

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<sup>135</sup> *ibid*, p. 85.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid*, p. 87.

<sup>137</sup> C. De Hamel, *A History of Illuminated Manuscripts* 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (London: Phaidon Press, 1994), p. 184.

<sup>138</sup> *ibid*, p. 184.

manuscript. This must have been done for Sir Thomas Grey, because all of the armorial bearings are connected to him, and none has reference (as might be expected) to the family of Catesby, into which his son John – putative owner of the De Grey Hours manuscript – married. He had married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir William Catesby, thus creating further influential connections which might have been expected to be indicated, had the armorial bearings been included at the instruction of this later Sir John Grey.



## Conclusion

The De Grey family, with origins lying in pre-Conquest Normandy, and with its connections stretching into many of the most influential families of the Middle Ages, can be associated, directly or indirectly with some important manuscripts remaining to us from that time:

The De Grey Hours manuscript might seem to be merely a pleasing example of a mid-fifteenth century book of hours, but it is more intriguing than that. Its history before its purchase by Henry Yates Thompson is unknown, but pencilled notes made by its previous owner indicate that it was believed to have been owned by the Sir John Grey who was a son of Thomas Grey, first Marquess of Dorset. That is quite likely, though the evidence does not suggest that he commissioned it, but that it passed down to him through the family.

My argument, for the reasons given in Chapter 5, is that it was probably purchased by the Sir John Grey who was son of Edward de Grey and Elizabeth Ferrers of Groby, and grandson of Reynold, third Baron Grey of Ruthin. He is often overlooked, because he died young, being killed in battle (on the losing side) at about thirty years of age, and because his widow made a glittering and controversial second marriage to King Edward IV. However, Sir John had a successful military career fighting for King Henry VI until the second battle of St Albans, where he was killed. He had two children with his wife Elizabeth Woodville, whom he married in about 1455. The first child, Thomas, was born in about the same year, which is also the approximate date that can be assigned to the De Grey Hours manuscript. *The Mirrour of the Lyfe of Christ*<sup>139</sup> was probably commissioned to celebrate the marriage of John's cousin Edmund Grey to Katharine Percy in about 1445, so it is not unlikely that John himself bought a manuscript to celebrate either his marriage or the birth of Thomas, or both, ten years later. There was a much earlier family precedent for this, as Sir Richard de Grey, second Baron Grey of Codnor (c.1281–c.1335) had commissioned the Grey-Fitzpayn Hours (Fitzwilliam Museum,

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<sup>139</sup> See Page 14 and Appendix 5, p. 112.

Cambridge, MS 242) to commemorate his marriage in 1300/01 to Joan (d. 1308), daughter of Robert, Lord Fitzpayn.<sup>140</sup>

Since the coats of arms shown in the manuscript are all relevant to Sir John's son Thomas, I propose that they were added subsequently to the deep bottom borders on Thomas's instructions. It could be argued that Thomas himself was the original purchaser once he grew up, but although an exact date for the manuscript, the wedding, and Thomas's birth cannot be proved, the probability that they are roughly contemporary seems significant, as does the manuscript's being known as 'Sir John Grey's book' and not 'The Marquis of Dorset's book'. I propose also that this manuscript was produced between about 1450 and 1455 by the Masters of the Narrow Eyes who worked on the Calendar, and the Masters of the Gold Scrolls, who illuminated the rest of the manuscript. All of these masters were associated with the workshop of Willem Vrelant in Bruges.<sup>141</sup> There is also another link between Edward IV (and therefore Elizabeth Woodville) and the workshop of Willem Vrelant. The artist known as the 'Master of Edward IV' has been identified by Van Buren as Willem Vrelant's apprentice and successor Adriaen de Raet.<sup>142</sup> It is intriguing to speculate that the De Grey Hours could have been the original link between Edward IV and the Vrelant workshop.

I propose that Thomas Grey was given or inherited the manuscript purchased by his father to celebrate his birth (or his parents' wedding) and that he took the opportunity to enrich it with the coats of arms emphasising his powerful connections. Had these been added by Thomas's son, the later John Grey who was said to have owned the manuscript, they would surely include the arms of the powerful Catesby family into which he married, and they are not shown. Interestingly, if the original purchaser were the first husband of Elizabeth Woodville, it means that she, famous beauty and future queen, must have handled and used it regularly, making it something more than an ordinary Book of Hours.

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<sup>140</sup> J. Harthan, *Books of Hours and their owners* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1979), p. 45.

<sup>141</sup> See discussion, Chapter 2, pp. 21-24.

<sup>142</sup> *Illuminating the Renaissance*, p. 296 and also Note 19.

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