The Liturgy in Medieval England

This is the first comprehensive historical treatment of the Latin liturgy in medieval England. Richard W. Pfaff constructs a history of the worship carried out in churches – cathedral, monastic, or parish – primarily through the surviving manuscripts of service books, and sets this within the context of the wider political, ecclesiastical, and cultural history of the period. The main focus is on the mass and daily office, treated both chronologically and by type, the liturgies of each religious order and each secular “use” being studied individually. Furthermore, hagiographical and historiographical themes – respectively, which saints are prominent in a given witness and how the labors of scholars over the last century and a half have both furthered and, in some cases, impeded our understandings – are explored throughout. The book thus provides both a narrative account and a reference tool of permanent value.

Praise for the hardback edition

‘[a] magisterial overview … This is the book that it has been Richard Pfaff’s to write, and it has grown out of forty years of work on the primary manuscripts. It should find a hungry audience … it will become the essential work of reference for Medievalists seeking to understand the changing forms of Christian worship in England.’ James Willoughby, *The Library*

‘The book will serve for many as a standard reference; its self-contained chapters and ample cross-referencing are designed to facilitate this kind of use … As the first comprehensive survey [of what can be known about liturgical observance in England], the book will be an invaluable resource to many scholars who will be able to avail themselves of Pfaff’s vast knowledge.’ Katherine Zieman, *Journal of British Studies*

‘Pfaff’s prose is clear, frequently humorous, and free of academic jargon. The book’s usefulness and interest are further increased by discussion passim of liturgical historiography.’ Julian Luxford, *Times Literary Supplement*

‘This study of regular formal public worship in England c. 600-1535 is a work of immense scholarship and the fruit of decades of research’ Jane E.A. Dawson, *Expository Times*
The Liturgy in Medieval England

A History

Richard W. Pfaff
To my grandchildren,
Andrew, Helen, and Edward
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Preface

It may be helpful to the reader if some inadequacies obvious to the author of this book are acknowledged at the outset. The first has to do with its title, the justification for which is that it is more accurate than all conceivable alternatives – at least in expressing aspiration if not necessarily accomplishment. To call it *The Liturgical Books of Medieval England* would misrepresent what is attempted: a genuinely historical account of what can be known about the Latin liturgy as used in England during the middle ages, based primarily, but by no means exclusively, on evidence drawn from the surviving service books and fragments. A fuller explanation of this hope and what is involved in trying to fulfill it is provided in the Introduction. Here the reader is asked mainly to notice that the indefinite article is employed deliberately: what is offered here is a, with no pretence to being the definitive, history of the subject. But it is intended as a history, not as an inventory or conspectus of sources, nor as an introduction to an admittedly complex subject. If it were not palpably absurd, a more accurate title might be *An Essay on the History of Medieval England as seen through Liturgical Sources*.

The next inadequacy is apparent in the book’s length: it is too short. Treatment of the announced subject in a single volume, even one with the generous word-limit allowed me by Cambridge University Press, has required the almost complete omission of three large areas: (1) nearly everything having to do with distinctively episcopal liturgies (ordinations, consecration of virgins and other special classes of people, confirmations, dedications of churches and their equipment, coronations) and the books, usually called pontificals, that contain them; (2) pastoral liturgies, sometimes termed occasional offices, such as the rites for baptism, marriage, visitation of the sick, and burial of the dead – along with the separate books, normatively called manuals, in which these rites are often put together; (3) the liturgical aspects implicit in collections of private devotions and, specially important for the later middle ages, in Books of Hours. Consideration of each of these three areas could well fill a separate volume (and indeed has done so,
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specially in the case of Books of Hours, intensively studied for their art-historical importance).

A third inadequacy involves approach rather than content: that the dimension of music is almost completely ignored. Where the musical aspect plays a prominent part in a liturgical manuscript, this is generally indicated, and the nature of the chant books that are considered – graduals, antiphonals, processionals, tropers – is kept at the forefront when they are discussed. Friends who are eminent musicologists have agreed that this exclusion is necessary, as a matter of space as well as (I confess) of insufficient expertise. Nonetheless, I am aware of it, and regret it. Certain factors that temper the regret at least mildly are alluded to briefly in the Introduction.

Less regrettable, perhaps, but equally glaring is the lack of attention paid to the dimension perhaps better encapsulated by the French phrase sentiment religieuse than by the English word “spirituality.” Just as the present work does not pretend to delve into the psychological, sociological, or anthropological aspects of Christian worship, it aims also to steer clear of the primarily theological aspects. So there will be no discussion of eucharistic doctrine as such, nor of the growth of Marian piety, both of which have a marked reflex in liturgical expression, nor of individual cults, above all that of Corpus Christi; still less, of the development of para-liturgical devotions like the Rosary or the Stations of the Cross (which in any case are mainly features of post-medieval spirituality). The general assumption here is that practitioners of worship in the middle ages were serious about what they did; but an effort is made to keep in mind that they were all also human beings, not angels. Such human characteristics as inattention, greed, family pride, and the desire to keep warm in frigid churches need therefore to be factored in to any attempt at understanding liturgical practice. Even if the observation that all history is social history is a truism, it may be a valuable one to keep in mind as we attempt to deal with an area of activity that is no less human because it involves matters primarily characterized as “religious.”

The length of this book (too long, it may be thought, as well as too short) requires a structure which, I believe, a glance at the table of contents will make plain. It requires, too, that each chapter be as self-contained as possible, even at the risk of a certain amount of repetition. Recognizing that few will probably wade through every page here, I have attempted to cast each chapter so that it can be read separately (but not, ideally, in isolation) from other chapters. This means that the book is heavily cross-referenced, so that readers of one part understand where they need to go to follow a specific point. This is particularly true
Preface

with respect to the many historiographical sections, discussions of the work of individual scholars from the past and (especially) of editions they have produced. These sections are meant to be a prominent feature of the present book, and I hope they will be found useful rather than tiresome. I hope also that readers will have a serious look at the Introduction before launching into any specific chapter. Much that is said there is not repeated elsewhere, especially the part headed “What the reader is presumed to know.”

One such matter, but not appropriate to that section, requires a word of explanation here: Latin. As this book studies the Latin liturgy of medieval England, there is no feasible way that all traces of that language can be eliminated. Despite the current trend to provide translations of anything in Latin and other learned languages in even scholarly books, that is simply not possible in this case. Much of the Latin quoted here is formulaic – it would be ridiculous to supply “Lamb of God” whenever the Agnus Dei is mentioned – and in many cases a point at issue is established only by comparing the exact (Latin) wordings of prayer-formulas. In booklists, also (a source heavily mined), what counts is the way a book is described, whether as vetus or imperfectus or sufficiens or whatever. That said, much Latin is either paraphrased or translated; this is particularly true of any passages of Tacitean or Horatian difficulty. The aim is that any reader with a small amount of Latin, some familiarity with the liturgy in general, and a modicum of ingenuity can follow the discussion with little or no difficulty.

In a work primarily concerned with sources and source-editions, keeping abreast of secondary literature is, while never unimportant, not the highest priority. I hope nonetheless to have taken reasonable notice of articles and monographs published through 2006, plus a very few of 2007. An effort to retain some sort of balance in the amount of attention devoted to various periods and aspects has required not taking full account of the spate of publications which has appeared recently on the late tenth and eleventh centuries – as much, it seems, as on the twelfth and thirteenth centuries combined. A new flood of scholarship can be expected as a result of the most outstanding for our purposes of the several enterprises aimed at digitizing collections of medieval manuscripts: that of making generously available online the rich treasures of the Parker Library at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge (www.corpus.cam.ac.uk/parker). I have been unable to take full advantage of these electronic resources, but have had the incomparable benefit of being able to consult, in person and over more than four decades, all of the relevant manuscripts in that collection as well as the great majority of the other codices cited in this book.
Finally, a word about the total lack of illustrations. This is deliberate (as well as an economy), given the two alternatives. The first is to furnish the dozens, perhaps even hundreds, of reproductions of manuscript leaves that would be needed for there to be anything like a representative sample of the variety of sources on which this work depends. The second would be to provide a tiny selection – say, eight to twelve leaves – from, inevitably, the best known codices: treasures like the Lindisfarne gospels, benedictional of Æthelwold, St Albans psalter, Stowe breviary, Sherborne missal. This would be exactly counter-productive, in implying that these celebrated specimens (each one famous for its illustrations) are what this book is really about. If some of these do receive a good deal of attention here, it is because they contain a lot of pertinent information rather than because they are exceptionally beautiful.

Over the many years which this work has taken to complete I have received much help and encouragement, both from institutions and from individuals. Among the former, I am grateful for support in the form of multiple research grants from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; of a fellowship at the National Humanities Center; of visiting fellowships at Magdalen College Oxford (an *alma mater* in many ways and for many years, going back to matriculation in 1957) and Magdalene College, Cambridge; and of a generous Emeritus Fellowship from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

The assistance of librarians at the many libraries – over sixty in Britain alone – at which I have worked is by no means taken for granted; but to list them all (for many libraries, more than one) would be inexpressibly tedious. In all I have seen well over five hundred manuscripts in preparation for this book, as well as a great many printed books, early and modern. That translates into an immense amount of fetching, recording, and returning on the part of library staff members. I have received also a large amount of learned assistance from scholarly librarians, not least at many cathedrals; several are thanked at specific points in the footnotes.

Standing on the shoulders of other scholars is now a cliché, not to mention precarious. If I were to attempt to leap onto shoulders of any giants of the past, it would be those of the two scholars whose names appear most often on these pages: J(ohn) Wickham Legg (who died fifteen years before I was born) and Neil Ker (a cherished friend and mentor, who died in 1984). A reader who has any awareness of their achievement – to which might be added those of Edmund Bishop, M.R. James, and Dom David Knowles – should be well positioned to understand the kinds of approaches this book tries to take. A long alphabetical list of all those living colleagues to whom I owe gratitude would be as
Preface

tedious as a list of librarians. Again, many are thanked in the footnotes, in connection with specific points, but a few more general obligations need to be spelled out here. With great generosity Nigel Morgan provided me with the early gift of a database he drew up (with the assistance of Nicholas Rogers) of all the English liturgical books in manuscript of which he could find any mention; he is modest about acknowledging the limitations of this database, and I hope that such use of it as I have made does not reflect adversely on either his generosity or his acumen. Brave souls who have read one or more entire chapters include George Hardin Brown, Barbara Harvey, Christopher (Drew) Jones, Sherry Reames, and Elizabeth Teviotdale; and Linda Voigts has ploughed valiantly through almost the entire typescript. I have prized their kind encouragement no less than their expertise, but they should not be held accountable for any of the numerous flaws that remain. Further encouragement has come, often at times of drooping confidence, from Margaret Bent, Sarah Foot, and Elizabeth Livingstone in Oxford; Eamon Duffy, Joan Greatrex, Rosamond McKitterick, Susan Rankin, and Tessa Webber in Cambridge; Brenda Bolton in St Albans; Nicolas Bell, Alan Thacker, and Christopher Roberts in London (whom I also thank for a great deal of hospitality as well as five decades of friendship); and here in Chapel Hill from Jaroslav Folda, Michael McVaugh, Francis Newton, and Janet Sorrentino. Two major boons were made possible by the Mellon Fellowship: the invaluable help of David Carlisle as a research assistant, and the superb indexing skills of Julia McVaugh. Anna Oxbury has been a wonderfully cooperative, as well as acute, copy-editor. A great debt is owed to Siegfried Wenzel for providing over many years a model of perseverance and exact scholarship, as well as an unflagging supply of both cheer and needed criticism; that this work would ever have been completed without his exhortations is doubtful.

A final word of thanks must go to my son David, who after reading drafts of several chapters suggested the four-word goal that I have kept prominently displayed on my desk: “comprehensive but not exhaustive.” I shall be delighted if this book is thought even remotely to have achieved that goal.
Sigla and editorial conventions

Libraries

Religious orders/institutes

In general, abbreviations are either conventional or obvious: brev. = breviary/breviarium; bull. = bulletin; cath. = cathedral; c. or col. = column; coll. = college; Fest. = Festschrift, followed by the name of the honoree (long explanatory subtitles are generally omitted); fol. = folio; fols = folios; jnl = journal; lib. = library; mm = millimetres; MS(S) = manuscript(s); p(p). = page(s); s(aec). = saeculum [“century”]; sacr. = sacramentary/sacramentarium; rev. = review (or revue); soc. = society; trans. = transactions. In measurements of MSS, height precedes width; size of written space, where known and useful, follows in brackets. Rectos of MS leaves have no special indication, versos are so specified (e.g., fol. 62v). Printed books of the late fifteenth and sixteenth century are usually designated by place of publication and year (e.g., Rouen 1506); the printer’s name is given only if needed to avoid ambiguity or if specially relevant. The simple designation Cat. will always refer to the main catalogue of (Latin medieval) manuscripts in a particular collection, where possible as listed in P. M. Kristeller, Latin Manuscript Books before 1600, 4th edn by S. Krämer, Monumenta Germaniae historica, Hilfsmittel 13 (Berlin 1993).
Sigla and editorial conventions xix

Common Latin abbreviations are sometimes employed when devotional formulas are cited: dne, dns = domine, dominus; Dq = Deus qui; ds = deus; mis = misericors; omps = omnipotens; qs = qu(a)esumus. Two widely used prayer formulas are abbreviated as a whole: Osd = omnipotens sempiterne deus; per = per dominum nostrum Iesum Christum. All other abbreviations should be self-explanatory.

Wherever it is useful to suggest similarity or identity of wording, spellings have been normalized into forms most often found in printed texts (usually v for consonantal u, less consistently e for ae or e). Punctuation and capitalization (especially in the case of proper nouns) have generally been modernized. The goal being to enable the reader to use this book in conjunction with the many tools available for liturgical study, especially collation tables, concordances, and indexes, pragmatic considerations have taken precedence over any desire for perfect consistency.
Bibliographical abbreviations

Basic reference tools, journals, and source collections.

AA. SS.: Acta Sanctorum (Antwerp, Brussels, etc., 1643–; cited by month and day).
ACC: Alcuin Club Collections (London 1899–).
Anal. Boll.: Analecta Bollandiana (Brussels 1882–).
ASE: Anglo-Saxon England (Cambridge 1972–).
BAA Conf. Trs: British Archaeological Association Conference Transactions 1978– [for 1975 conf.–].
CBMLC: Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues (London 1990–).
CCSL: Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina (Turnhout 1954–).
Bibliographical abbreviations


Eph. Liturg.: Ephemerides Liturgicae (Rome 1887–).


HBS: Henry Bradshaw Society (London 1891–).


Bibliographical abbreviations


SCH: Studies in Church History (papers from Ecclesiastical History Society meetings; London, etc. 1964–).


SS: *Surtees Society* (York and London, etc. 1835–).

Bibliographical abbreviations


Editions of liturgical texts

Fulda Sacr.: G. Richter and A. Schönfelder, ed. Sacramentarium Fuldense sacculi X (Fulda 1912; repr. as HBS 101, 1980).
Bibliographical abbreviations


St Augustine’s Missal: M. Rule, ed. *The Missal of St Augustine’s Abbey, Canterbury* (Cambridge 1896).


Sarum Missal (Dickinson) or SMD: F. H. Dickinson, ed. *Missale ad usum insignis et praeclarae ecclesiae Sarum* (Burntisland 1861–83).


Bibliographical abbreviations

Nicknames for manuscripts frequently referred to

(For a full list of all manuscripts cited, see Index of Manuscripts, organized by libraries)

Æthelwold benedictional BL Add. 49598
Abp Robt benedictional Rouen, B.m. 369 (Y.7)
Arsenal missal [Legg’s “A”] Paris, Bibl. Arsenal 135
Bainbridge pontifical CUL Ff.6.1
Barnwell antiphonal CUL Mm.2.9
Beauchamp missal Oxf., Trin 8
Bologna missal [Legg’s “B”] Bologna, Bibl. univ. 2565
Bosworth psalter BL Add. 37517
Bury St Edmunds missal Laon, B.m. 238
Caligula troper BL Cott. Calig. A.xiv
Canterbury benedictional BL Harley 2892
Cistercian missal CUL Add. 4079
Coldingham breviary BL Harley 4664
Cosin gradual Durham UL, Cosin V.v.6
Crawford missal [Legg’s “C”] Manchester, JRUL lat. 24
Darley, Red Book of CCCC 422
Durham collectar Durham cath. A.IV.19
Durham missal BL Harley 5289
Eadui psalter BL Arundel 155
Eadwine psalter TCC R.17.1
Ely breviary-missal CUL Ii.4.20
Evesham pontifical Bodl. Barlow 7
Exeter pontifical BL Add. 28188
Exeter/preSarum missal Exeter cath. 3515
Exeter/Sarum missal Exeter cath. 3510
Gilbertine massbook Lincoln cath. 115
Giso sacramentary BL Cott. Vit. A.xviii
Gloucester antiphonal Oxf., Jesus 10
Guisborough diurnal Cbg., Sidney 62
Nicknames for manuscripts frequently referred to

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