Library Exhibition

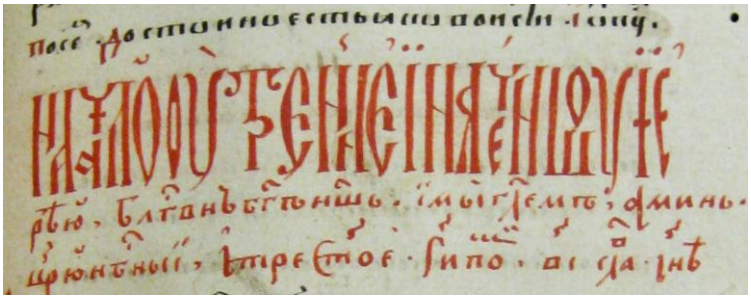
To 30th September 2012

Open to College Members during Library Opening Hours. Others contact:
library@sjc.ox.ac.uk

Liturgy: an Exhibition of Psalters, Breviaries & Prayer Books

Various Traditions

The 150 hymns and songs which make up the Book of Psalms have been one of the most influential parts of the Bible. First composed 2,500 to 3,000 years ago, they have formed a cornerstone of worship in various religious traditions, from Judaism to Rastafarianism. Whether sung by the Tribe of Levi from the steps of the Temple of Solomon, or by Boney M in silver flares on *Top of the Pops,* their lyrics have stuck in popular consciousness, resonating with peoples' lives and helping them structure responses to life events and crises. Within the numerous Christian traditions their recital has been an integral part of much worship, and has generated a rich seam of liturgical texts. Although the majority of the Library's holdings in this area were produced by the Western Church, it does have a few items from the wider Christian world showing points of conflict and contact with those other traditions.



16th century Russian Hours and Psalter

Written by several scribes in the later 16th century, this book of Orthodox liturgy is written in Church Slavonic in the Early Cyrillic alphabet. Church Slavonic has been the main liturgical language of the Slavic Orthodox nations, and still retains usage of this earlier form of Cyrillic, which was replaced in secular Russian literature by Peter the Great's reformed 'Civil Script' in the 18th century. In Orthodox worship all 150 Psalms are read through the course of a week during the evening and morning services. As with many liturgical books the Psalms form the basis for the Daily Office or prescribed prayers, but are supplemented by numerous additions. In this case they are preceded by the Horologion (or fixed format for services) and prayers before reading the Psalter, and followed by the Canticles (or Song of Songs), prayers to be said after reading the Psalter, Canons for various occasions and saints, and prayers for morning worship. *MS 90*

Conflict & Contact

Orthodoxy vs. Catholicism in 16th c. Lithuania. Cyrillic Psalter printed by the Orthodox Brotherhood in Vilnius, 1596

By 1596 the Commonwealth of Poland-Lithuania was the largest and most populous country in Europe, straddling the border between the Catholic and Orthodox worlds. Its elected rulers (who carried the title of both King of

Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania) were often Catholic, and supported by the Polish nobility. The current incumbent, Sigismund III Vasa, was particularly so, and was strongly in favour of the Counter-Reformation. In the eastern region of Ruthenia, however, many of the populace remained Orthodox. These were alienated by Sigismund's attempt to get the Orthodox church of the country to transfer its loyalties to the Pope at the Union of Brest in that year. As a result numerous lay Brotherhoods or *Bratstva* of Orthodox believers emerged to counter perceived Roman Catholic expansionism and cultural Polonization. They founded schools and set up printing presses to promote Orthodoxy, Ruthenian language and culture, and to publish books in Cyrillic. The Psalter shown here was produced by the Brotherhood founded in Vilnius. It opens with a woodcut showing King David writing, and is printed in an Early Cyrillic alphabet contemporary with MS 90. *HB4/1.d.1.17*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The first book printed in an Ethiopic language. Psalter in Ge'ez edited by Johannes Potken. Rome : Marcello Silber, 1513

In 1513 the newly installed Pope, Leo X, was determined to enjoy his papacy, and lavished money on exotic acquisitions (such as a pet elephant named Hanno who died after being treated for constipation with a gold-enriched laxative) and on learning (such as reforming the Roman University). Travellers came from across the Christian world and found a city avid learn their languages. Amongst the guests was an Ethiopian pilgrim named Thomas Walda Samuel who taught one of Leo's secretaries, Johannes Potken, the ancient liturgical language of the independent Ethiopian Church - Ge'ez. Rather like Latin, Ge'ez had ceased to be spoken in the Middle Ages but remained in use for literary and religious purposes. Potken then proceeded to publish this Psalter, the first book to be printed in an Ethiopian language, getting a suitable typeface cut by a printer from Regensburg at his own expense. In spite of his enthusiasm, throughout his preface Potken consistently refers to the language as 'Chaldean', another term for Aramaic, an entirely different language spoken in Biblical times in the Middle East. It is unclear whether Potken was genuinely confused as to the nature of the language he'd published or was simply using an exotic term to describe it. *Cpbd.A.2.*

Rites & rituals - Breviaries

In spite of their name breviaries (from the Latin 'brevis' or 'short' or 'concise') like the example displayed here, often run to over a thousand pages long. They are essentially an attempt to draw together all the different texts needed for the celebration of the liturgy in one volume, rather than having to use several. They bring together the Psalter with various Offices or services. The medieval breviary began to be standardized after the usage of the court in Rome during the 13th century. Although this Roman version was spread throughout

Europe by the newly founded mendicant orders, other versions still remained in use, notably the Sarum or Salisbury Breviary in England.

Christ's coat of arms: Device of the five Holy Wounds. 15th c. Sarum Breviary. England.

Blood pours from the five Holy Wounds received on the cross in this rather graphic armorial device from the beginning of a 15th century Breviary. The wounds, one for each piecing of the hands and feet, and another for the piercing of Christ's side with a spear, are designated as springs or fountains of grace, consolation, eternal life, etc. Such arms attributed to Jesus were a fairly common feature of iconography. Surrounding this example is a collar of S's – each S standing for a sacred word such as 'Saluatore' (Saviour), 'Spes' (Hope) and 'Sapiencia' (Wisdom). This collar is based on a livery collar, a symbolic golden chain made up of links of heraldic shapes (in this case the letter S), which denoted association with the Lancastrian monarchy. Whoever originally owned the manuscript, it appears to have ended up hidden away, possibly in Devon, as above the device is the 16th c. inscription: 'Found by me hughe fortescu In the howse of Iohn Robartes of Combmartyne' *MS 179*

Keeping it local: the Mass in Hereford. Hereford Missal. Rouen : Jean Richard, 1502.

The Sarum Rite flourished in England throughout the later Middle Ages. Several other dioceses, however, maintained their own local liturgies into the 16th century and some even made it into print before their suppression. The Hereford Rite had been in use since at least the 13th century, when, strangely, it was transported to a single church in Aiguebelle in Savoy, by an ex-bishop. It survives in three manuscripts and two printed books: a breviary printed in 1505 of which 3 copies remain; and a missal, or book of liturgy for the Mass, printed in 1502. The St John's copy of this latter is one of only 4 copies known. It contains both text and printed music for the service, and was obviously heavily used, judging by its poor repair. *Cpbd.b.2.u.1*

A Medieval Bestseller: the Book of Hours

King David faces demonic temptation: 15th c. Psalter and Hours, produced in Flanders.

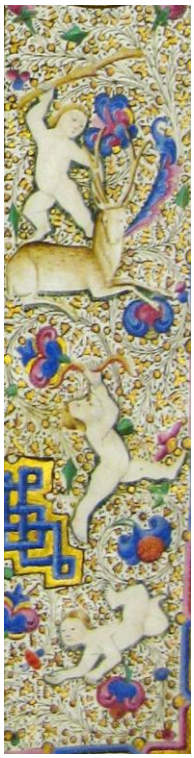
Although books of liturgy might not strike a chord with the tastes of 21st century audiences, they became enormously popular with medieval readers. This was particularly the case once

abbreviated versions of psalters and breviaries became available from the 13th century. These shortened, and often personalized, books of prayers are known as Books of Hours, and they survive in their thousands, being by far the most common type of illuminated manuscript. Initially the genre represented increased literacy amongst lay-people and a popular movement of liturgy out of a monastic setting and into the home.

Books of hours were particularly associated with female owners, and the first examples were produced for women. They spanned a wide variety of formats to appeal to a variety of audiences. Small, undecorated products were available for even quite impoverished readers, such as servants. At the top end, the de luxe Book of Hours carried specially composed prayers and beautiful full page miniatures. By the 15th century the wealthy cities of Flanders had become the focus for their production, and workshops produced them on commission. The calendar of saints in this example indicates that, although from Flanders, it was made for an English consumer. *MS 8*

Illustration & Navigation

Illumination performed several functions in medieval manuscripts. Firstly and most obviously it might illustrate the text, providing pictorial representation of the meaning of the words. In an age of limited literacy this was not a minor consideration – often the Book of Hours was the only book a person would possess, and they were frequently used to teach reading and literacy. Another important function of illumination was to help readers navigate through the text, highlighting where a particular passage or section began. Both these functions can be seen in this manuscript, which has an elaborately graded programme of illustration, moving from full page illuminations with borders on both pages for major divisions, down to illuminated initials for smaller divisions, helping a reader to locate themselves in the text.



Margins of Taste

Putti hunting and disporting themselves in border decoration. Hours (Roman Rite) produced in Naples, 15th c.

Parrots, peacocks and putti frolic in the border to the opening leaf to this Neapolitan Book of Hours. The putti also engage in deer- and rabbit-hunting with sticks and bows. None of this seems particularly in keeping with a pious text. Even the Biblical story illustrated in the medallion in the bottom border seems more bloodthirsty than improving, as David severs Goliath's head. Such seemingly inappropriate decoration indicates other important functions of illumination. Grotesques, birds and animals on borders provided entertainment and sometimes comic comment on the material they surrounded. Coats of arms could be inserted to mark ownership (although the medallion left for this purpose in the right hand border has been left blank). Finally the overall effect demonstrated the wealth and taste of the owner. The aspiration here was probably royal, as the illumination bears comparison with, and has been attributed to Cola Rapicano, the illuminator to the court of Aragon in Naples from 1451 to 1488. *MS 131*

A Family of Recusants

The calendar of feasts has been annotated to include significant dates in the life of the Weston family during the 1550s-1590s. The Westons were a Leicestershire-based family of staunch Catholics who became recusants after the death of Mary I. Written in the hand of William Weston (d. 1596), various births and deaths are recorded, including the death in 1558 of Hugh Weston, who tried and pronounced sentence on Thomas Cranmer and was later deprived of his deanery on a charge of indecency. Elsewhere the annotations also record the execution in 1571 of William Weston's father-in-law, John Story, who was the principle enforcer of Mary I's revived Catholicism, participating in the torture and burning of protestant sympathizers. On Mary's death he was removed to the Tower, but escaped twice and fled to Louvain where he pronounced himself a Spanish subject. Several years later he was kidnapped whilst examining ships for heretical literature, returned across the channel and then executed. It is possible that Story's association with the Duke of Alba may have resulted in this book coming to the Westons, or alternatively it may have come into their possession from the exploits of earlier members, one of whom participated in wars for the Aragonese against the Moors.

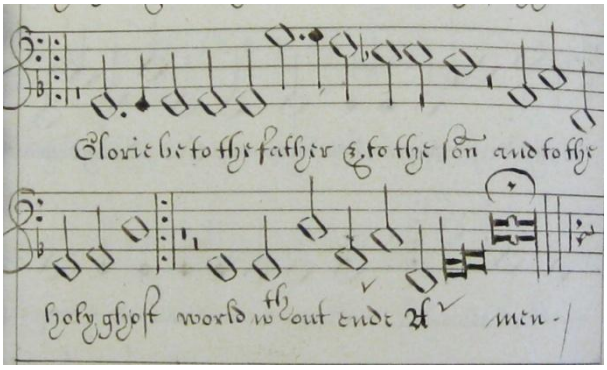
'Accompanied by the lyre'

King David as a harpist. 14th c. French Psalter

The word 'Psalms' translates loosely as 'songs' or 'hymns' originally accompanied by a lyre or harp. Traditionally many were believed to have been composed by David, who began his biblical career as a skilled harpist drafted in to soothe King Saul during his persecution by an evil spirit. Musical iconography is evident in many psalters and hours, with depictions of David playing various instruments, most often the harp - as here in this 14th century French Psalter - but also bells with mallets.

Choral settings too are often incorporated in later manuscripts, as below, sometimes with initials incorporating depictions of a choir in song. *MS 204*

Byrd, Gibbons, Tallis: music for the Psalms. 17th c. English Partbook.



The Psalms have lent themselves to continuing musical re-invention in most ages. Composers as various as Bach, Bernstein, Stravinksy and Reich have all turned their hand to producing musical settings. From 19th century hymns, (Psalm 23, 'The Lord is My Shepherd'), to 20th century reggae (Psalm 137, 'By the Rivers of Babylon'), they have infiltrated popular music. The partbook displayed here begins with settings by several 16th and 17th century composers of Anglican Church music, including William Byrd, Orlando Gibbons and Thomas Tallis. By the 16th century partbooks, designed for the individual performer, had replaced the larger communal choirbooks, as a cheaper and more flexible alternative. This example dates from around ca. 1635 and may have been used at St George's Chapel in Windsor. *MS 180*

'Ye popes owne derlynge'

King David wrestles a Lion. 15th c. English Psalter

This late medieval English Psalter contains a sequence of seven illustrations. The subjects of illustrations to psalters and hours were fairly standardized with certain images becoming fixed to certain texts. Variations could occur, however, and this particular manuscript uses a scheme that emerged in English shops in the early fifteenth century based on scenes of David's life suggested by the Books of Samuel – here he kills a lion unaided (the animal skulking underneath seems to be a unicorn). Indeed this manuscript appears to be a direct imitation of a psalter produced for John, Duke of Bedford, by the workshop of the illuminator Herman Scheere (now in the British Library). *MS 293*

16th century insults

Directly beneath the illumination can be seen a 16th century ownership inscription showing that the book belonged to William Smallwood. Smallwood was a Fellow of both Magdalen and St John's, and apparently bursar at St John's during the early 1560s. He was deprived of his fellowship twice for 'grievous offences' including absence. That he wasn't entirely well thought of is indicated by two 16th century inscriptions accusing him of papistry. One in

English reads ‘the honer of thys [book] y[s and] hathe bene and shall be ye popes owne derlynge’. The other, in Latin, translates as ‘Among the offspring of the papists there has arisen none greater than William Smallwood’.

A Portrait of the Artist as an Anchorite

Self-portrait of John Lacy experiencing a vision of the Crucifixion from his cell. Book of Hours made by Lacy in Newcastle over the period 1420-1434.

From behind the iron bars of his cell a monk, dressed in the black and white habit of the Dominican order, looks out to see a vision of Christ on the cross (now defaced), the Virgin Mary and St John. A speech scrolls from his mouth. Unfortunately most of this is now lost but the name of the speaker can still be made out as the second word, ‘Lacy’. This is one of only two known English self-portraits in a medieval manuscript, as John Lacy was the Dominican anchorite who produced this book. Over a period of around 14 years he remained in his cell attached to the Dominican Priory in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, engaged in contemplation, worship, and writing the 151 leaves that form this collection of liturgy. Lacy also provided colourful, if not exactly fine, illuminations throughout: gilt and floral borders and initials; a sequence of some 42 illustrations of saints; an apocalypse; and numerous musical staves. The texts he uses switch between English and Latin, and to avoid accusations of Lollardy he had to include a special plea that the two not be separated. Once the book was finished he bequeathed it in perpetuity to the vicars of the Church of Saint Nicholas. *MS 94*

Between print and paint: a Royal relic?

David spies on Bathsheba in the bath. ‘Queen Mary’s Mass-Book’. Sarum Hours, Paris : Germain Hardouyn, 1530

It is hard to say why this book should fall open naturally at this picture of a voluptuous Bathsheba performing her ablutions, but it does give an indication of the continuing market for luxury books of hours into the age of print, and for their need to appeal to the more sensuous. Although the text is printed, it is printed on vellum rather than paper, and the illustrations and borders have then been overpainted and gilt by hand in order to reproduce the effect of a manuscript. Germain Hardouyn,

originally working with his brother Gilles, was one of the foremost producers of these sumptuous editions, and is described as an 'illuminator' rather than simply a colourist. How and when this item came to the Library is unknown, but by the early 18th century it was being shown to foreign visitors. A German guest, Konrad von Uffenbach, saw it in 1710, and it was described to him as 'Queen Mary's mass-book'. It is unclear whether this was true, or which Mary was being referred to. Tradition has it that it belonged to Mary of Modena, the wife of James II, who fled into exile with him after the Glorious Revolution. The fine black morocco binding certainly dates to 100 years later than its contents and looks similar to those crafted by Samuel Mearne, the royal binder to Charles II (James's brother and predecessor). *HB4/6.a.3.14*

Prayers for the Pocket

The personal nature of prayer books and other books of liturgy is indicated by the fact that they were often produced in small formats so that they could be carried around easily, perhaps in a pocket. Often these small books contained only particular parts of the liturgy, such as the Office for the Dead or the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin.

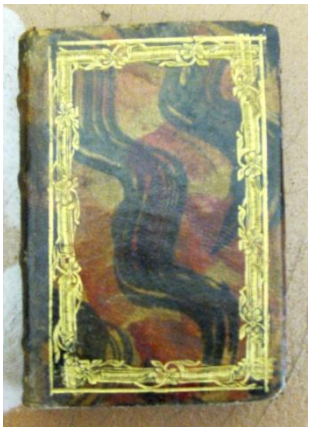
Burial scene by the 'Fastolf Master'. 15th c. Office of the Dead, England.

The graveyard scene in this miniature manuscript is unusual for an English production. The Office of the Dead was more usually illustrated with a group of priests chanting. The fact that a scene of a bound corpse and grave are used here is one indication that the illuminator of this manuscript was not originally English, but was part of a mid-fifteenth century fashion for importing illuminators from across the channel to work with English scribes. The anonymous artist in question here has been dubbed the 'Fastolf Master' because of his work on a manuscript for Sir John Fastolf, and he apparently started his career in northern France, working in Paris and Rouen. The Office for the Dead was usually recited for all souls in purgatory but could be made more specific if recited on the anniversary of a death. *MS 208*

Printed pocket books

17th c. binding with Jesuit device. The primer, or, Office of the Blessed Virgin Marie, Rouen : Jean Cousturier, 1633 & L'office de la Vierge, Venice : Francesco Pitteri, 1768

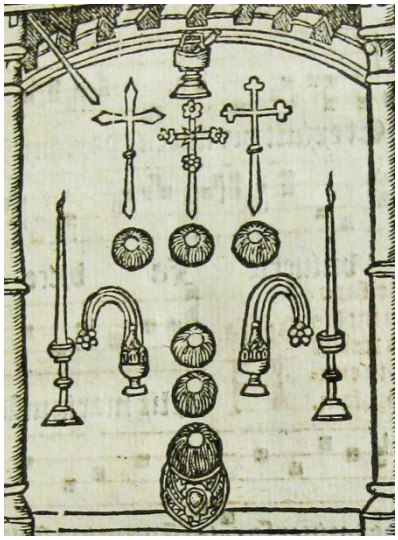
Two portable small format printings of the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin, which had previously formed a standard part of Books of Hours. The 17th century edition to the right was printed in Rouen in English and Latin. It is one of several similar editions printed in northern France, chiefly at St Omer, which functioned as a base for English Jesuits, during the first half of the 17th century. This binding also bears the gold-tooled device of the Jesuits and was probably produced as part of a programme of publications for the education and instruction of English Catholics in exile.



The tiny book to the left dates to over a hundred years later, and was printed in Venice. It has devotional engravings throughout, and a more decorative marbled binding. *Q.scam.2.u.21 & Ψ.scam.2.l.12*

From Catholicism to Protestantism in England

Plans of clerical positions from a Sarum Processional, Antwerp : Willem Simon, 1558

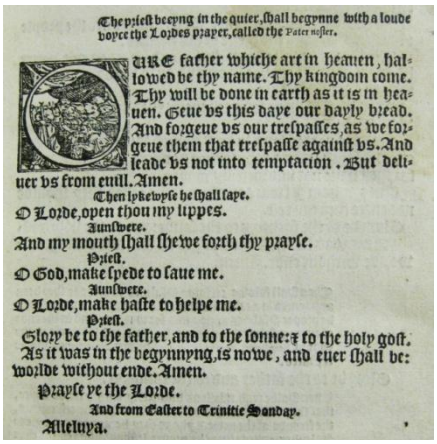


At first glance these diagrams are difficult to interpret. It is only when the observer realises that the shaggy round symbols are the tonsured heads of monks viewed from above that it becomes apparent that these are diagrams of positions to be maintained by participants in a religious service. This particular book outlines the various processions that formed part of the Sarum Rite, the version of the Catholic liturgy that was dominant in England throughout the Middle Ages. English churches and cathedrals were apparently longer than their continental counterparts, lending themselves to more elaborate and frequent processions, often accompanied by special hymns. This became a distinctive feature of the Sarum Rite, as did the beauty and richness of the embroidered vestments used, known on the continent as *Opus Anglicanum* or 'English Work'.

During the reign of Henry VIII additional emphasis was placed on the Sarum Rite in order to create a more uniform national liturgy, and other local uses (such as the Hereford Rite illustrated elsewhere in the exhibition) were discontinued. It was suppressed during the reign of Edward VI as the Protestant reformers were in the ascendant, but restored by the Catholic Mary Tudor. This edition dates from a few months before Mary's death, and is one of the last printings of the Rite as a living liturgy, before its final suppression at the beginning of Elizabeth I's reign. Although it was used for a few more year by English

Catholics in exile, it was eventually replaced in 1568 by the new Roman Breviary authorised by the Council of Trent. *Cpbd.A.4.4*

An English Prayer Book


The prieſt beeyng in the quier, ſhall begynne with a loude voyce the Lordes prayer, called the Pater noſter.

OURE father whiche art in heauen, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heauen. Geue vs this daye our dayly bread. And forgeue vs our treſpaſſes, as we forgeue them that treſpaſſe againſt vs. And leade vs not into temptacion. But deliuer vs from euill. Amen.

Then ſyrſt hymſelfe he ſhall ſaye.

O Lorde, open thou my lippes.

Anſwere.

And my mouth ſhall ſhewe forth thy prayſe.

Prieſt.

O God, make ſpede to ſaue me.

Anſwere.

O Lorde, make haſte to helpe me.

Prieſt.

Glory be to the father, and to the ſonne: & to the holy goſt. As it was in the begynnyng, is nowe, and euer ſhall be: worlde without ende. Amen.

Prayſe ye the Lorde.

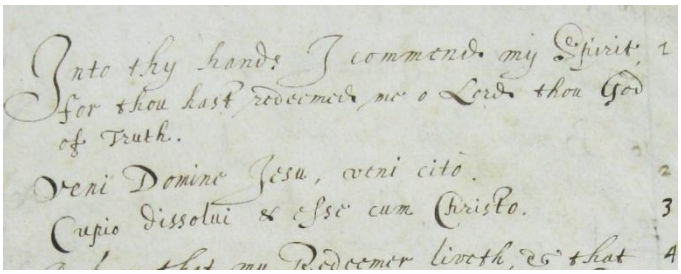
And from Eaſter to Trinitie Sonday.

Alleluya.

Lord's Prayer from the first edition of the *Book of Common Prayer*, London : Edward Whitchurch, 1549

Although Henry VIII had separated the English Church from that of Rome, he was not a thorough-going Protestant, and had retained the Sarum Rite, with minor modification, as the English church's liturgy. It was only during the reign of his son, the child-king Edward VI, that Protestant reformers gained the upper hand in the political and religious life of England, and religious change accelerated. One of the main reformers was the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer. Drawing on numerous sources, including the Sarum Rite, Cranmer drafted a new liturgy in English. The first version of this was published in full in 1549. Although there were radical changes, such as the change from Latin to English, and the move to include the whole congregation in regular communion, that hinted at the more inclusive intentions of the reformers, Cranmer saw its introduction as a gradual step on the road to real reform and fully intended there would be further editions. Even so its imposition did contribute to social unrest, and to rioting, particularly in Cornwall, where congregations didn't speak English. Other causes for consternation appeared to be the dropping of all those magnificent processions that everyone enjoyed, the extra cost of bread and wine for the entire congregation, and annoyance at having to undertake regular worship, which was usually reserved for marriages and funerals. For his pains Cranmer was eventually burnt as a heretic on Broad Street during Mary I's brief ascendancy , but the *Book of Common Prayer* continued as a basis for Anglican worship under Elizabeth I. *Cpbd.b.1.u.2*

Prayers at the Death of King James

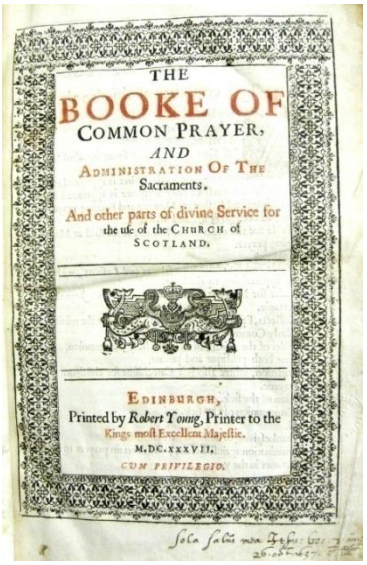

Into thy hands I commend my Spirit, 1
for thou hast redeemed me o Lord thou God
of Truth.
Veni Domine Jesu, veni cito. 2
Cupio dissolui & esse cum Christo. 3
this my Redeemer liveth, &c that 4

William Paddy's account of the deathbed of King James I and transcription of the prayers recited. From the end papers of Paddy's copy of the *Book of Common Prayer*, London : Robert Barker, 1615

James I had been ill for several months before his death on the 27th March with kidney problems, arthiritis, fever, then a stroke and finally dysentry. William Paddy, being the King's personal physician, was called to his bedside at the palace at Theobalds (near Cheshunt in Hertfordshire) in March of 1625. Together with John Williams, Bishop of Lincoln and Keeper of the Great Seal (whose new library at St John's College, Cambridge was

being built at the time), Paddy advised the King that there was little that could be done for his body and to look his spiritual well-being. He also made a record of the prayers said at the king's bedside and an account of the event on the end-papers of this, his copy of the *Book of Common Prayer*. This had obviously been presented to him by the King as it bears a lavishly gold-tooled binding incorporating the Royal arms. Paddy had been the King's physician for 22 years. He outlived his charge by nine years, and on his death left almost everything to the College, including 682 volumes to the Library. He is buried in the Chapel. *Cpbd.b.2.u.5*

Igniting the Nations


THE
BOOKE OF
COMMON PRAYER,
AND
ADMINISTRATION OF THE
Sacraments,
And other parts of divine Service for
the use of the CHURCH of
SCOTLAND.
EDINBURGH,
Printed by Robert Young, Printer to the
Kings most Excellent Majestie.
M.DC.XXXVII.
CUM PRIVILEGIO.

William Laud's Scottish *Book of Common Prayer*, Edinburgh : Robert Young, 1637

The title page of the book which helped precipitate the British Civil Wars of the 17th century, and led to the decapitation of both its editor and his monarch. Since its first publication the *Book of common prayer* had been revised several times as the religious establishment struggled to find a formula that satisfied the various religious factions. William Laud (1573-1645), Archbishop of Canterbury during the reign of Charles I, and builder of this Library (see portrait at the far end of this room), attempted to impose liturgical uniformity from the top. His revision of the *Book of common prayer* for the Scottish church was part of this drive. This was bitterly resented by the Presbyterian congregation in Edinburgh. As the minister in St Giles Kirk in Edinburgh began to read it out, a market trader named Jenny Geddes allegedly launched her stool at his head, and rioting ensued. This unrest led to the signing of the National Covenant against the religious reforms in 1638. It was, amongst other matters, the King's need for resources to confront the rebellion of the Covenanters successfully that forced him to recall Parliament for the first time in eleven years. Once called Parliament refused to consider his requests for money until their grievances were heard. It was Charles's mishandling of Parliament from this point on that ensured the outbreak of war. Laud was beheaded by the Parliamentarians in 1645. *Cpbd.b.2.u.2*

Personalizing Prayer

Decorated binding to *Book of Common Prayer*, Oxford : University, 1706

This handsome 18th century binding to a *Book of Common Prayer* issued during the reign of Queen Anne indicates the continuing personalization of prayer books. The ornament on the front cover reads 'Mary Hawkins January 1st 1720' *HB4/6.a.4.20*