

Fragmentology

A Journal for the Study of Medieval Manuscript Fragments

Fragmentology is an international, peer-reviewed Open Access journal, dedicated to publishing scholarly articles and reviews concerning medieval manuscript fragments. *Fragmentology* welcomes submissions, both articles and research notes, on any aspect pertaining to Latin and Greek manuscript fragments in the Middle Ages.

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Collections, Compilations, and Convolutes of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscript Fragments in North America before ca. 1900

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Abstract: Using evidence drawn from S. de Ricci and W. J. Wilson's *Census of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the United States and Canada*, American auction records, private library catalogues, public exhibition catalogues, and manuscript fragments surviving in American institutional libraries, this article documents nineteenth-century collections of medieval and Renaissance manuscript fragments in North America before ca. 1900. Surprisingly few fragments can be identified, and most of the private collections of them have disappeared. The manuscript constituents are found in multiple private libraries, two universities (New York University and Cornell University), and one Learned Society (Massachusetts Historical Society). The fragment collections reflect the collecting genres documented in England in the same period, including albums of discrete fragments, grangerized books, and individual miniatures or "cuttings" (sometimes framed). A distinction is drawn between undecorated text fragments and illuminated ones, explained by aesthetic and scholarly collecting motivations. An interest in text fragments, often from binding waste, can be documented from the 1880s.

Keywords: manuscript fragments, manuscript albums, American auction catalogues

I. Sources of Evidence for American Collections of Manuscript Fragments

Collections of manuscript fragments assembled in North America before 1900 have remained invisible, simply because traces of

* The research for this article was supported by the 2013 Folter Fellowship in

them are either confounding and difficult to analyze, or the fragments themselves challenging to identify.¹ Especially before about 1880, America's cultural institutions—learned societies, public and private libraries, colleges and universities, and museums—expressed little interest in complete manuscripts, and even less in components of them. The last two decades of the century saw an increasing yet modest interest in manuscript books, but seldom in fragments. Fortunately, the holdings of fragments by American institutions between 1800 and 1900 can be found in the *Census of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the United States and Canada* and the 1962 *Supplement* volume.² Scouring these resources for evidence of pre-1900 manuscript constituents yields a handful of important fragment collections as well as scattershot leaves, cuttings, and partial books. The numbers are surprisingly small. While this apparent dearth of fragments may be due in part to under-reporting in the *Census* and *Supplement*, the research presented here suggests that it stems from a genuine scarcity of them in institutional libraries before ca. 1900. However, unrepresented in the *Census* and *Supplement* volumes and in this article is manuscript binding waste in printed books belonging to these same institutions. The data

Historical Bibliography from the Bibliographical Society of America, and by the 2013 William H. Helfand Fellowship from the Grolier Club. I am grateful to Dr. Roland Folter for sharing his expertise on the American book trade and for enabling me to consult his personal collection of auction catalogues. An earlier version of this paper was delivered at Cornell University in 2014, and I am particularly grateful to Dr. Laurent Ferri, Curator of Pre-1800 Collections, for his critique of both versions. Eric J. Johnson at The Ohio State University generously shared images from de Ricci and Wilson's *Census* while my own university library was closed. Finally, I gratefully acknowledge suggestions for improvement made by the anonymous readers for *Fragmentology*, by Peter J. Kidd, and by the editor, William Duba.

- 1 For present purposes, "fragmentary" denotes individual manuscript constituents, although I make reference on occasion to more substantial components of pre-modern books. Unless I am discussing codices missing leaves or initials, these larger "fragments" represent less than 50% of the same parent manuscript.
- 2 S. de Ricci and W. J. Wilson, *Census of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the United States and Canada*, 3 vols., New York 1935, 1937, 1940; C. U. Faye and W. H. Bond, *Supplement to the Census of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the United States and Canada*, New York 1962.

would be onerous to compile and assess, as any potential fragments would have to be identified and evaluated in light of accession dates, potential re-binding, and past provenance.

Since the *Census* and *Supplement* were published in 1935–1940 and 1962 respectively, they do not necessarily cover nineteenth-century fragment congeries at all unless the collections remained intact through donation or inheritance. These circumstances make identifying fragment collections at institutions before ca. 1900 relatively straightforward, as these repositories have persisted. Yet the same situation makes it nearly hopeless to locate private collections of fragments in the *Census* and *Supplement* if they were dispersed in the nineteenth century (and anytime before 1935). In fact, important evidence for the private ownership of fragments before ca. 1900 must be sought in auction, exhibition, and private library catalogues. In presenting my findings here, I have consulted scores of such catalogues, few of which list medieval or Renaissance manuscripts at all. Of those that do record fragments—nearly all comprise illuminations—many of the entries remain baffling, since woolly descriptions render the scenes depicted in the miniatures untraceable, and even the book genres indeterminable. In the aggregate, however, auction, exhibition, and private library catalogues preserve indispensable and untapped information on fragment holdings in North American private ownership.

There is a limitation, however. By 1900 many American collectors had *theoretically* acquired fragments which would not be sold for decades. An object lesson is Coella Lindsay Ricketts, the owner of a Chicago business called “The Scriptorium” that produced hand-lettered certificates.³ Ricketts was born in 1859 and founded The Scriptorium in 1885. By the time of his death in 1941 he had collected hundreds of fragments, many now at the Lilly Library (Indiana University). Not a single one of them can yet be traced to the nineteenth century, although many remain unprovenanced.⁴

3 C. de Hamel, *Gilding the Lilly: A Hundred Medieval and Illuminated Manuscripts in the Lilly Library*, Bloomington, IN, 2010, 3.

4 *Census* I.660–63. In arriving at this conclusion, I have consulted Christopher de Hamel (personal communication) and analyzed the provenance information

Since Ricketts acquired a Dutch Book of Hours in 1891⁵—his first documented manuscript purchase—a sensible view of his fragment collecting suggests that he began to collect fragments after 1900 and *perhaps* earlier. The same caution applies to post-1900 catalogues featuring manuscript fragments and fragment collections. They may well record fragments gathered in the nineteenth century, but a difficulty lies in recovering the acquisition dates. For example, components of Edward Everett's library (d. 1865), including manuscripts, were inherited by his maternal nephew, Edward Everett Hale, and auctioned in 1910.⁶ Unless the fragments can be traced to a dealer's inventory, or the auction catalogue states where and when they were acquired, or the owner records (in correspondence, say) that they were purchased on a specific date, the appearance of such fragments on these shores will remain contingent. Given this limitation, the evidence I present here derives from auction catalogues antedating 1901, chiefly from the major auction houses in New York, Philadelphia, and Boston. This emphasis, incidentally, is not restrictive, but results from the book trade being centered in these cities. While my evidence cannot be conclusive, it is comprehensive enough to substantiate the observations made herein, especially for the years antecedent to ca. 1880. For the period afterwards, when the market for early manuscripts was expanding, more fragments may have been available than can be documented. Even if this assertion were true, as I have conceded, many of those alleged fragments may never be identified.

In addition to introducing the relevance of auction, exhibition, and private library catalogues for reconstructing manuscript ownership in America, my objectives in this article are:

1. To identify and analyze the evidence of fragment collections in North America before ca. 1900;

on all the Ricketts fragments in *Gilding the Lilly*. Twenty-three of them have post-1900 provenance, while seven are unprovenanced.

5 Census I.636.

6 *Catalogue of the Private Libraries of the Late Dr. William Everett, of Quincy, Mass. and of his Father, the Hon. Edward Everett, etc.*, Boston, 15–17 November 1910; see G. S. McKay, *American Book Auction Catalogues, 1713–1934: A Union List*, New York 1937, no. 6888. Subsequent references to American auctions will identify them by McKay numbers in the form [McKay 0000].

2. To show that Americans were compiling fragments in presentation formats identical to common English configurations—albums or grangerized books of pedagogical, historical, or aesthetic focus;
3. To pose specific case studies that highlight what can be ascertained from these early collections of fragments;
4. To speculate on some motivations that might underlie the formation of these rare collections.

In advance of presenting these specific findings, however, I should highlight three general observations that can be made about the fragment trade. First, the evidence of fragment ownership for the period, however slight, suggests a widespread disregard for fragments in the nineteenth century. Compared to the vigorous English trade in leaves and cuttings, North American buyers lagged behind the trend by generations. The divergence is due to the embryonic market for manuscripts, which did not begin in America until the 1830s, and which cohered only in the late 1860s, by which time enough manuscripts had become available for auctioneers and retailers to flourish.⁷ The American commerce in book constituents corresponding to the English practice emerged only in the second quarter of the twentieth century.⁸ Second, the present-day manuscript scholar who appreciates the remarkable information that fragments often convey will be struck by how little their nineteenth-century owners inferred from them. In most cases, the texts could not even be identified, let alone read. But even if owners of these fragments had been able to construe them, the inadequate scholarship of the day would have impeded any interpretation of their historical context. As Philippe de Montebello wrote about an illuminated cutting acquired by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1888 [Figure 1], “only recently has that letter V [...] been recognized as

7 S. J. Gwara, “Peddling Wonderment, Selling Privilege: Launching the Market for Medieval Books in Antebellum New York,” *Perspectives Médiévales* 41 (2020), 1–35, at 13–16.

8 On this phenomenon, see S. Gwara, *Otto Ege’s Manuscripts: A Study of Ege’s Manuscript Collections, Portfolios, and Retail Trade with a Comprehensive Handlist of Manuscripts Collected or Sold*, Cayce, SC, 2013.



Figure 1:
“Joseph Sold by
his Brothers”
in an initial V
by Giovanni
Pietro da
Cemmo,
ca. 1490.
New York,
Metropolitan
Museum of Art,
acc. 88.3.50

the work of Giovanni Pietro da Cemmo.”⁹ Finally, middle-class fragment connoisseurs in nineteenth-century America (often businessmen) differed from the bibliophile collectors of manuscript books in an important way. Fragment collecting entailed the conservation of cultural salvage, an antiquarian pretense. These early American “fragmentologists” treasured ancient specimens of artwork, script, or textual archetypes, while their bibliophile confrères typically sought handwritten volumes to represent the book antecedent to print. Fragment collectors therefore specialized in ways that bibliophile collectors did not, although the buyers of fragments usually acquired complete manuscripts, too. With respect to unilluminated text fragments (henceforth ‘text fragments’), however, the taste of the aesthete and the antiquarian rarely, if ever, coincided.

9 B. D. Boehm, *Choirs of Angels: Painting in Italian Choir Books, 1300–1500*, New York, NY 2009, 4–5.

II. The Rationale for Fragmentary Books and their Status among Collectors

While medieval and Renaissance manuscript books have been trafficked for centuries, the trade in fragments arose relatively recently. Sales of them are known from the eighteenth century.¹⁰ At that time, even complete, handsome, and desirable manuscripts were an exotic commercial specialty. The book trade, which was centered in London and Paris, took widespread interest in manuscripts and fragments only after the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars, when institutional and aristocratic forfeitures, not to mention monastic secularizations, released tens of thousands of early manuscripts. While this surfeit led to opportunities for enterprising booksellers, the small antiquarian market could not absorb even complete, desirable codices, let alone imperfect ones.¹¹ The business of selling miniatures therefore emerged, exploiting the desirable components of underappreciated, overscaled, sparsely illustrated, or damaged books. Valued largely as art objects rather than as book constituents, the saleable pictures and initials were simply cut out of them. Since a dismembered manuscript could yield dozens of luminous miniatures, sometimes even high-quality volumes were mutilated.¹² A premium may well have been charged to gather, compile, and arrange illuminations in an attractive portfolio, but selling manuscript components juiced profits by enabling bourgeois art connoisseurs, bibliophiles, and antiquarians to acquire affordable specimens of property once valued by elite connoisseurs or defunct cultural institutions. In other words, booksellers aimed to invent a

10 For a discussion of fragment collecting before this date, see R. S. Wieck, "Folia Fugitiva: The Pursuit of the Illuminated Manuscript Leaf", *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* 54 (1996), 233–54, at 233–34; S. Hindman et al., *Manuscript Illumination in the Modern Age: Recovery and Reconstruction*, Evanston, IL 2001, 5–45.

11 In antebellum New York the firm of Daniel Appleton & Co. rationed manuscript books to support higher prices; see J. H. Brown, *Lamb's Biographical Dictionary of the United States*, Boston 1900, vol. 1, 108 (s.v. Appleton, Daniel).

12 A. N. L. Munby explains how British import duties on bound books may have impacted the mutilation of manuscripts (*Connoisseurs and Mediaeval Miniatures 1750–1850*, Oxford 1972, 65).

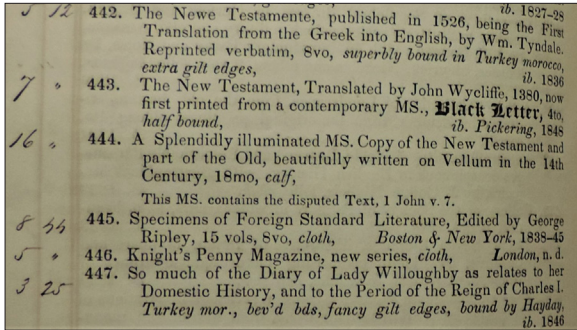


Figure 2: The first manuscript identified as incomplete (“part of the Old [Testament]”) in an American auction catalogue. *Catalogue of a Private Library*, Cooley, Keese & Hill, New York, 20 October 1848, lot 444

market for fragments by opening the market for manuscript books to middle class buyers.

A robust trade in fragments, particularly miniatures and cuttings, took off in England in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, but not until the twentieth century did it emerge in America. New World bibliophily explains this indifference to fragments. American collectors sought manuscript specimens on the same terms as printed books: condition, especially completeness, was paramount. Even the (few) early collectors of manuscripts with art-historical interests—Robert Gilmore, Jr. and James Jackson Jarves, in particular—favored codices.¹³ While many early manuscripts in America were unrecognizably imperfect before the Civil War, buyers

13 On Gilmore's art collection see E. B. Smith, *Medieval Art in America: Patterns of Collecting, 1800–1940*, College Park, PA 1996, 24–26; L. L. Humphries, *Robert Gilmore, Jr. (1774–1848): Baltimore Collector and American Art Patron*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of Virginia, 1998, vol. 1, 130. Gilmore owned one fine Book of Hours (Library of Congress MS 56), five printed Hours (probably illuminated, currently unidentified), a lavish folio bible (Princeton University, MS Garrett 28), and other manuscripts that may have been illuminated; on the Hours see S. Schutzner, *Medieval and Renaissance Manuscript Books in the Library of Congress*, Washington, DC, 1989, vol. 1, 339–44; on the collection as a whole, see S. J. Gwara, *Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the American South, 1798–1868*, Cayce, SC, 2016, 11–13. Jarves, America's first collector of medieval Italian panel paintings, owned one illuminated bible (arguably French), currently untraced (*Census* I.1087). Neither Gilmore nor Jarves is known to have collected fragments.

became more discriminating afterwards, especially by 1880.¹⁴ The first manuscript recognized as “fragmentary” in a North American auction was a bible sold in 1848 by James T. Annan of Cincinnati [Figure 2].¹⁵ By the 1870s, however, America’s premier manuscript collectors demanded complete manuscripts, and they began noting every imperfection. Among Henry Probasco’s forty-eight Western manuscripts of pre-1600 date, one was described in 1873 as missing ten leaves, a second as having “several leaves missing,” a third as wanting “one or more leaves [...] at beginning and end,” a fourth as “very imperfect,” a fifth as missing a single leaf, and a sixth as “first leaf wanting and many others robbed of illuminated capitals.”¹⁶ Probasco bought his manuscripts on a European tour in 1866–1867, and his regard for their condition in 1873 affirms the prevailing expectation for completeness. Of seven supreme illuminated manuscripts acquired by John Nicholas Brown between 1876 and 1887, only a Tours Book of Hours had considerable defects.¹⁷ Catalogued in 1878, William Medlicott’s impressive library of early manuscripts held only three fragments, one of them an incomplete text volume.¹⁸ A single illuminated page from a German copy of the *Brevissima sententia psalterii*—called “a leaf of a Speculum Humanae Salvationis”—had

14 Many manuscripts owned before 1900 were imperfect, and neither owners nor (necessarily) sellers had enough expertise to determine their state of completeness. The defective manuscripts identified in the nineteenth-century catalogues mentioned hereafter probably represented only a small proportion of incomplete manuscripts.

15 *Catalogue of a Private Library*, Cooley, Keese & Hill, New York, 20 October 1848, lot 444 [McKay 477].

16 [Henry Probasco,] *Catalogue of the Collection of Books, Manuscripts, and Works of Art, Belonging to Mr. Henry Probasco, Cincinnati, Ohio, (Oakwood, Clifton)*, Cambridge, MA, 1873, pp. 373, 375, 378, 382, 383(bis). All of the manuscripts were acquired during European travel in 1866–1867 (p. III).

17 *Census* II.2143; deaccessioned at Sotheby’s, 18 May 1981, lot 17.

18 [William G. Medlicott,] *Catalogue of a Collection of Books Formed by William G. Medlicott of Longmeadow, Mass.*, Boston 1878, no. 2672 (p. 275), Albertus Magnus (“twelve leaves [...] apparently imperfect”); no. 2706 (p. 279) illuminated kalendar said to date from ca. 1100. Lot 2706 was purchased by the New York bookseller, J. W. Bouton; see J. R. Hall, “William G. Medlicott (1816–1883): An American Book Collector and His Collection”, *Harvard Library Bulletin*, n.s. 1 (1990), 13–46, at 31.

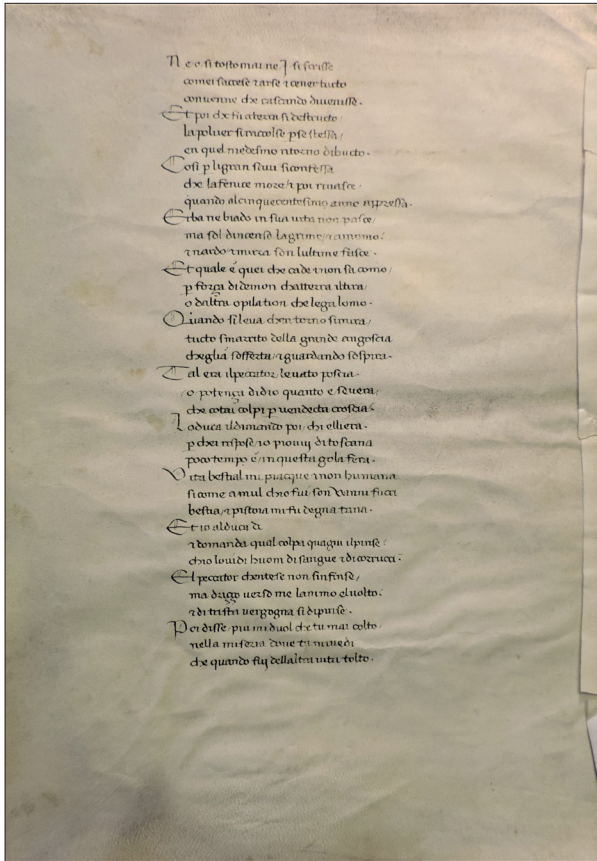


Figure 3: Single folio of Dante's *Inferno* acquired by Harvard professor Charles Eliot Norton in 1871. Harvard, Houghton Library MS Ital 55

been slipped into Jean Philibert Berjeau's 1861 edition of the text.¹⁹ Harvard art historian Charles Eliot Norton added the folio to his small fragment collection that included a leaf of Dante's *Inferno* acquired in 1871 [Figure 3] and three leaves of the St. Louis Psalter obtained by gift from John Ruskin in 1863.²⁰ Alexander Farnum was

19 *Census* I.932. The book and fragment were purchased together by Charles Eliot Norton, the Harvard art historian, and now reside at the Isabella Stuart Gardner Museum (acc. 7.2.22); on the identification see A.-M. Eze, "Italian Illuminated Manuscripts at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum", *Rivista di storia della miniatura* 16 (2012), 81–94, at 91.

20 The *Inferno* fragment is Harvard, Houghton Library MS Ital 55, from the estate of Baron Seymour Kirkup; see C. Y. Dupont, "Reading and Collecting Dante in America: Harvard College Library and the Dante Society", *Harvard Library*

proud to own “a fragment of an illuminated missal” from the collection of John Allan (see below): “54 pages of exquisite illuminations in gold and colors on vellum.”²¹ It was his sole early manuscript, however, and clearly an affordable specimen. According to the 1878 auction catalogue of George Strong’s library, the Civil War diarist typically bought “perfect” manuscripts. One of his many Books of Hours was confected from two different sources, while a single Psalter had cut-out miniatures and borders.²² Among nine manuscripts sold by Joseph J. Cooke in 1883 was a single Hours missing “some leaves.”²³ Leavitt’s auction house carefully noted defective manuscripts in its 1887 sale of General Rush Hawkins’ many manuscripts, only two of which had significant losses.²⁴ Finally, Leavitt’s 1886 and 1888 sales catalogues of property belonging to the Trevulzio dukes of Milan fastidiously noted holes, stains, alterations, missing leaves, and extracted initials.²⁵ In the 1888 catalogue, for example, “three leaves, on which were miniatures” were said to have been “extracted” from a breviary comprising lot 136, while “three or four pages” were “cut out” of a Psalter (lot 138). The 1886 Trevulzio sale was nota-

Bulletin 22 (2011), 1–92, at 23–24. On the Psalter leaves, which were reunited with the parent manuscript, see Wieck, “*Folia Fugitiva*” 241 and S. Panayotova, “A Ruskinian Project with a Cockerellian Flavour”, *The Book Collector* 54 (2005), 357–74.

- 21 *Catalogue of the Library of the Late Alexander Farnum, Esq., of Providence, Rhode Island*, Leavitt’s, New York, 18 November 1884, lot 532 [McKay 3125]. William R. Williams, Pastor of the Amity Baptist Church in New York, also owned a fragmentary specimen of the Gospels in a library of theology and church history (*Library of the Late William R. Williams, S.T.D., LL.D.*, Bang’s, New York, 12 October 1896, lot 717 [McKay 4559]).
- 22 *Catalogue of the Books, Manuscripts, Etc., of the Late George Strong, Esq., Bang’s*, New York, 4 November 1878, lots 815, 1308 respectively [McKay 2429].
- 23 Currently untraced; see *Catalogue of the Library of the Late Joseph J. Cooke, of Providence, Rhode Island, Part II*, New York, 1 October 1883, lot 1573 [McKay 2985]. The *Census* incorrectly states that Brown University bought two manuscripts, lots 1569 and possibly 1570, but 1570 is printed.
- 24 *The Hawkins Library*, New York, 21 March 1887, lots 1531–1584 [McKay 3437].
- 25 *Incunabulic Treasures and Medieval Nuggets from the Trivulzio Library of Milan, Italy, including Vellum Manuscripts of the Thirteenth to the Seventeenth Centuries*, New York, 6 February 1888 [McKay 3551]. A sale on 27 November 1886 devoted exclusively to manuscripts [McKay 3393] was similarly punctilious.

bly lackluster, possibly because of such candid descriptions. This abundant evidence and more like it conveys the misgivings about incomplete manuscript books that a Cornell librarian, George Lincoln Burr, expressed in 1885: “the collection of MSS. is indeed a rare one, though it is, to be sure, a sort of manuscript-hospital, so few of them are complete and in perfect condition.”²⁶ It should come as no surprise, then, that American bibliophiles shunned single leaves and cuttings.

Buyers with money and taste did not need to settle for fragments, but a second bibliological rationale reinforced their partiality for intact manuscripts. The authors, origins, dates, and provenance of codices could at least be asserted, but for fragments this key information was often lost. By this logic, complete (or nearly complete) Books of Hours were more desirable than single miniatures or compilations of miniatures. Naturally, a few collectors were willing to overlook completeness in favor of affordability, eye appeal, or representativeness. They acquired illuminations, almost exclusively from Books of Hours, as will be seen below. Text fragments, especially those deriving from binding waste (as most were, apparently), remained an antiquarian sideline. With ragged edges, scuffed and lacerated textblocks, unsightly scribbles in pen, and discolored residues from binding turn-ins, text fragments contravened the aesthetic for handsome, complete books. This prejudice implies that text fragments in North America before 1900 would have been exceptionally rare outside of bindings.²⁷

In America the nineteenth-century trade in fragments focused on miniatures extracted chiefly from Books of Hours, but by the end of the century small collections of Italian choir book leaves and cuttings materialize in New York. The esteem for such manuscript art was considerable, but expertise was slight. In Europe manuscript

26 George Lincoln Burr to Andrew Dickson White (Lucerne, 27 June 1885); George Lincoln Burr papers, Ithaca, NY, Cornell University, Kroch Library, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections #14-17-22. Burr was reporting on a collection of about forty manuscripts for sale in Bergamo.

27 In fact, the first American auction to include individual text leaves from early manuscripts seems to have taken place in 1902; see *Catalogue of a Small Collection of Valuable Books*, Bang's, New York, 7 February 1902 [McKay 541], lots 87 (miniature and text folio) and 88 (text folio).

Figure 4: Auctioneers attributed spiritual authenticity to crude miniatures like this from a Book of Hours owned in America before 1834. New York Public Library MS MA 24, f. 86



miniatures were treated as diminutive medieval “primitives” (panel paintings), for which there were negligible comparanda in North America.²⁸ Having been exposed to manuscripts in bookshops, libraries, and museums, European collectors could appreciate them for their artistry, contents, and historical provenance. But because American and Canadian buyers rarely encountered early manuscripts, they were simply construed as book analogues antecedent to print, or just conceivably as portrait miniatures, which were often painted on vellum. New World owners had no way to evaluate manuscript acquisitions, especially if purchased from a catalogue. The best reference books concentrated on illustrious manuscripts, not the kind generally available to Americans. This unfamiliarity was advantageous to booksellers, who exaggerated the quality of

²⁸ The American James J. Jarves (above, note 13) collected 119 primitives in Italy during the 1850s but could not find a buyer for the collection in America; see D. Arnheim et al., *Italian Primitives: The Case History of a Collection and its Conservation*, New Haven, CT 1972 and C. Snay, “Medieval Art in American Popular Culture: Mid-Nineteenth Century American Travelers in Europe”, in *Medieval Art in America*, 28–33.

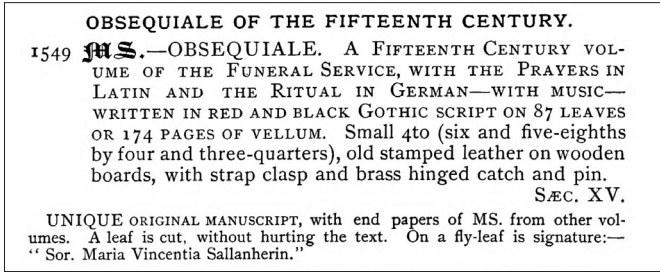


Figure 5: The description of an “Obsequiale” in the 1887 catalogue of Rush Hawkins’ library identifies its imperfections, annotations on its flyleaves, and “end papers of MS. from other volumes.” *The Hawkins Library*, Leavitt’s, New York, 21 March 1887, lot 1549

manuscript art to mislead American bibliophiles. However crude the execution of manuscript miniatures might be, an abundance of them in bright colors and luminous gold would boost prices. The crude miniatures, moreover, allegedly conveyed the spiritual authenticity of their “monkish” creators [Figure 4].²⁹

Because medieval and Renaissance fragments in North America are scarce before ca. 1900, they are difficult to document. In the following pages I have recorded as many as possible after searching scores of auction, bookseller, and library catalogues, and visiting modern libraries. Stand-alone illuminations are rarely met with in the sources. Collections of them are more common. A few were framed like paintings and in one or two cases deemed art-historical masterpieces. Since the taste for single miniatures in North America was practically non-existent before the late nineteenth century, the term “masterpiece” could not be said to represent any aesthetic standard. Albums of cuttings were more common, and at least fifteen American collections of illuminations can be identified for this period. While two groups of illuminated choir book leaves were donated to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1890 and 1896, only one album of miniatures known to me has survived (below, p. 108).³⁰ It seems that, in later years, portfolios of miniatures were

29 Gwara, “Peddling Wonderment”, 14, 23.

30 Eighteen Italian Antiphonal fragments at Brown University (Hay Library, MS Latin Codex 20A portfolio) that came from such an album may have been in North America before 1900, but the provenance remains undemonstrable; see F. Manzari, “Bibliofili, mercato antiquario e frammenti miniati: le peripezie dei

more profitably broken up and the constituents sold piecemeal. The opposite is true for text fragments, however: three collections reside in institutional libraries. Their survival is striking because text codices were far less desirable than illuminated ones—and text fragments practically not at all. The evidence I shall present suggests that the public took notice of text fragments in the 1880s. In fact, the Rush Hawkins catalogue prepared by Leavitt's in 1887 (see above) prominently and consistently identified pastedowns and flyleaves [Figure 5]. It was the first American auction catalogue to publicize text fragments. Importantly, the three extant fragment compilations that I analyze here were perceived as “collections” and esteemed for academic reasons, mostly as illustrative of ancient texts, historical languages, or archaic scripts.

III. Background: The History and Variety of Fragment Compilations in Europe

The cultural and bibliographical environment of fragment collecting in Britain had the greatest influence on the American trade in manuscript constituents. Especially relevant are the ways by which fragments circulated, either individually or grouped together. In Britain, the early-nineteenth century trade in fragments focused from the start on miniatures. Prized as artworks, these illuminations were often cut from manuscripts and gathered together in albums or pasted into other books as (extra-)illustration. The traffic in text fragments constituted at best a secondary market, which, over the course of the century, gradually grew in importance as dealers, having despoiled manuscripts of their high-quality miniatures, sold off the remaining pieces.

It is widely appreciated that the modern commerce in illuminations took off in London on 26 May 1825, when Christie's held the first known auction devoted exclusively to manuscript miniatures, all imported by the “Abate” Luigi Celotti (d. ca. 1846). Celotti

fogli di Vittorio Giovardi tra XVIII e XX secolo”, in *Frammenti di un discorso storico per una grammatica dell'aldilà del frammento*, ed. C. Tristano, Spoleto 2019, 205–25 and figs. I–VIII at pp. 222–25.



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Figure 6: A montage assembled from miniatures cut from a Sistine Chapel choir book. *New York, The Morgan Library, MS M.270*

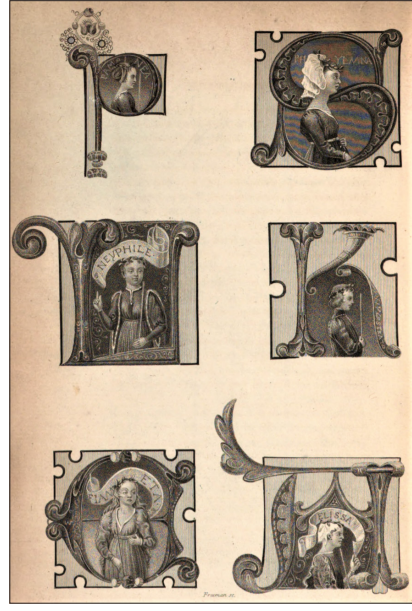


Figure 7: Miniatures reproduced in Thomas Dibdin's *Bibliographical Decameron* (vol. 1, London, 1817, between pages xii-xiii) make it seem as if they had been removed from a manuscript and mounted on the page of an album.

acquired “cheap” manuscripts and printed books on the continent, many of them stolen or extorted by French troops stationed in Italy.³¹ He shipped them to London, where they fetched higher prices. While these amounted to 276 items in Christie’s 1825 sale, other auctions of Celotti cuttings were organized. All told, the cuttings numbered well over 500. The lots included “montages” confected from fragments of Sistine Chapel choir books that had been looted in 1798 [Figure 6].³²

³¹ Hindman et al., *Manuscript Illumination*, 52–59. Much of the following discussion derives from this important book and from the equally influential article “*Folia Fugitiva*” by Roger Wieck.

³² Hindman et al., *Manuscript Illumination*, 55; A.-M. Eze, “Abbé Luigi Celotti and the Sistine Chapel Manuscripts”, *Rivista di storia della miniatura* 20 (2016), 137–52.

Celotti's collages were a neoteric and idiosyncratic art "genre." The traffic in cut-up manuscripts more commonly encouraged the compilation of albums containing manuscript constituents.³³ Dealers sometimes rucked up these convolutes. In 1790s Basel, the art dealer Peter Birman assembled an album of 475 illuminations, sold to a Swiss ribbon merchant named Daniel Burckhardt-Wildt.³⁴ Collectors (mostly English) also assembled personal scrapbooks. One buyer at the Celotti sale was the English art historian William Young Ottley, who was himself an art importer. He authored the 1825 Christie's catalogue, validating Celotti's vandalism as well as his own—for Ottley had the largest gathering then known of manuscript "cuttings", the term used to describe miniatures and historiated initials razored from manuscript pages. His collection was sold in 1838.³⁵ It comprised 1,000 illuminations, all "Italian Primitives" mostly acquired during a decade-long residency in Italy before 1801. Ottley's cuttings were justly famous. Dibdin reproduced two in his *Bibliographical Decameron*,³⁶ which shamelessly presented manuscript miniatures in a way suggesting that they could be cut out and mounted in miscellanies [Figure 7].³⁷

33 In many cases, these constituents came from the same source. For example, twenty-four miniatures from a *Legendary* now in the Morgan Library (MS M.360.1-24) and the Vatican (Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 8541) were pasted into an album in the seventeenth century by the owner, Giovanni Battista Saluzzo (d. 1642); see Hindman et al., *Manuscript Illumination*, 82. An album now in Toronto's Royal Ontario Museum had been assembled at least by 1894 with miniatures cut from the same *Gradual* (MS 997.158.157); see P. Binski and S. Panayotova, *The Cambridge Illuminations: Ten Centuries of Book Production in the Medieval West*, Turnhout, 2005, 156.

34 The album was sold by Sotheby's, 25 April 1983; see Hindman et al., *Manuscript Illumination*, 85. Birman also dispersed, but probably did not dismantle, the Hours of Étienne Chevalier, which survives as 47 1/2 miniatures, 40 of them separately mounted on panels (ibid., 70).

35 *Catalogue of the Very Beautiful Collection of Highly Finished and Illumined Miniature Paintings, the Property of the Late William Young Ottley, Esq.*, Sotheby's, 11 May 1838.

36 T. F. Dibdin, *The Bibliographical Decameron; or Ten Days Pleasant Discourse upon Illuminated Manuscripts and Subjects Connected with Early Engraving, Typography and Bibliography*, vol. I, London, 1817, between pp. cxii–cxiii.

37 Dibdin, *Bibliographical Decameron*, between pp. xii–xiii.

Ottley assembled albums of miniatures, as did many others, including James Dennistoun (d. 1855). He mounted approximately sixty miniatures bought on Grand Tours in the second quarter of the nineteenth century.³⁸ While this album had been concocted as part of an unexecuted academic project to illustrate the history of medieval art, most other compilations of cuttings and leaves known from this period were merely specimens, “regarded as a requisite component of a nineteenth-century book collection.”³⁹ Christopher de Hamel identified some of the most celebrated owners: “Great albums of medieval miniatures were formed, with miniatures trimmed and pasted down, including—among many—the Rogers and Rothschild albums now in the British Library [Samuel Rogers Album = British Library MS Add. 21412, now dismantled;⁴⁰ Rothschild Album (also known as the Ascott Album) = BL MS Add. 60630, now dismantled];⁴¹ the Boone, Goldschmidt and Weale albums in the Victoria and Albert;⁴² and those of Northwick, Crawford of Lakelands, and Lomax, all eventually dispersed in the twentieth century.”⁴³ To this

38 Wieck, “*Folia Fugitiva*”, 240; Hindman et al., *Manuscript Illumination*, 88–89.

39 Hindman et al., *Manuscript Illumination*, 91.

40 Ibid. The case is made here that the Rogers album was in fact created after the cuttings had been sold.

41 On the Rothschild album, see C. de Hamel, *The Rothschilds and their Collections of Illuminated Manuscripts*, London 2005, 13–14.

42 The “Boone” album was purchased from the London firm J. & W. Boone in 1866, the “Goldschmidt” album from J. & S. Goldschmidt in 1872. A Weale album is Victoria and Albert Museum, MSL/1883/2196; see Rowan Watson, *Victoria and Albert Museum: Western Illuminated Manuscripts*, London, 2011, vol. 2, 366–67 (cat. 64); other items from a Weale album now comprise British Library MS Add. 32058.

43 C. de Hamel, *Cutting Up Manuscripts for Pleasure and Profit* (The 1995 Sol M. and Mary Anne O’Brian Lecture in Bibliography), sixth printing, Charlottesville, VA, 1995, 12. On these collections, see Sotheby’s, 16 November 1925, lots 104–162; 29 March 1926, lots 368–379; and 21 May 1928, lots 1–14 (John Rushout, Lord Northwick, all from Celotti, according to S. de Ricci, *English Collectors of Books and Manuscripts (1530–1930)*, repr. New York, 1969, 116, n. 2); *The Lakelands Library: Catalogue of the Rare & Valuable Books, Manuscripts & Engravings of the late W. H. Crawford*, Sotheby’s, 12 March 1891, lot 2114 (William Horatio Crawford album); Sotheby’s, *The Dyson Perrins Collection, Part III: Fifty-Nine Illuminated Manuscripts*, 29 November 1960, lot 151 (John Lomax-W. O. Wade “album”).

group of connoisseurs belong Robert Curzon (14th baron Zouche), who compiled an album that has been widely dispersed; Robert Holford, who who obtained an album of sixty-five miniatures that had been prepared by a dealer; and Charles Brinsley Marlay, who bequeathed 245 extraordinary cuttings to the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge in 1912.⁴⁴ Dozens of other collectors owned minor albums, now mostly disassembled,⁴⁵ though some do crop up for sale on occasion.⁴⁶

The fragments and cuttings in these albums and others like them were considered artworks and coveted by moneyed connoisseurs. The text leaves left over from this vandalism were possibly discarded but more likely entered an antiquarian market as affordable specimens of pre-modern book arts.⁴⁷ In England, albums of text leaves can be documented from about 1700, but these were generally specialist compilations of historical or paleographical interest. John Bagford (d. 1716), for example, assembled leaves both to sell and to raise funds for a history of print which also included script as an antecedent. Thirty-six volumes of manuscript pieces survive in the British Library.⁴⁸ Records survive of leaves or albums sold to

44 Hindman et al., *Manuscript Illumination*, 63, 91.

45 In fact, two volumes of cuttings assembled by the art historian J. W. Bradley have lately been identified; see P. J. Kidd, "A Dispersed Album of Illuminated Cuttings [II]: The Collector(s) Identified", <https://mssprovenance.blogspot.com/2020/06/a-dispersed-album-of-illuminated.html>.

46 E.g., the Toronto album, mentioned above, and Collegeville, MN, St. John's University, Hill Museum & Monastic Library, Beane MS 3, the property of Christopher Lennox-Boyd (Christie's, 9 December 1981, lot 229); see E. C. Teviotdale, "A Pair of Franco-Flemish Cistercian Antiphonals of the Thirteenth Century and their Programs of Illumination", in L. L. Brownrigg and M. M. Smith, *Interpreting and Collecting Fragments of Medieval Books*, Los Altos Hills, CA, 2000, 230–58. For a more comprehensive list of such albums, see Hindman et al., *Manuscript Illumination*, 90–91.

47 A bifolium from the Hours of Étienne Chevalier surfaced in 1981, suggesting that the entire book, not just its miniatures, had been dispersed (Sotheby's, 14 July 1981, lot 37).

48 W. Y. Fletcher, "John Bagford and His Collections", *Transactions of the Bibliographical Society* 4 (1898), 185–201, at 197, though many of these contain late manuscripts, some by Bagford. Fletcher remarks (*ibid.*), "the collections also contain a large number of fragments of early Bibles, service books, decretals, lives of saints, etc. These consist almost entirely of vellum, and some

Samuel Pepys and Humfrey Wanley, and of an album given to one “John Sturt.”⁴⁹ Other Bagford albums have been alleged, all chiefly comprised of binding waste.⁵⁰ Similarly, Thomas Astle compiled an album of 152 specimen folios, including facsimiles, for a history of script.⁵¹ Comparable antiquarian collections gathered from bookbinders can also be found in the nineteenth century. In England, for example, the Oxford antiquary Philip Bliss bought leaves from the bindings of Oxford books that he found in local binderies. Eventually sold to Sir Thomas Phillipps, these are now dispersed internationally.⁵² The albums in all of the foregoing instances are unified by an academic enterprise (history of script, historical artworks) or common origin (Oxford bindings, single volumes).

Similar to the convolute was the “extra-illustrated” or grangerized book, a largely English practice in which books were cut apart and expanded with content-related pictorial materials. Most grangerized books had inserted prints: engravings, etchings, aquatints, and so on. As Lucy Peltz observes, nearly all grangerized books at the height of their popularity (ca. 1790–1870) constituted antiquarian cultural histories. She notes,

[...] the principles governing extra-illustration were less those of connoisseurial print collecting than of an individual reading the text. As a result, the end product of extra-illustration was a customized version of a mass-disseminated book that

of them are as early as the eighth century”. One Bagford album in America is Columbia, MO, University of Missouri, Ellis Library, *Fragmenta Manuscripta*; its companion volume is Cambridge, Cambridge University Library, SSS.3.14; see M. McC. Gatch, “*Fragmenta Manuscripta and Varia* at Missouri and Cambridge”, *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 9 (1990), 434–75.

49 M. McC. Gatch, “John Bagford as a Collector and Disseminator of Manuscript Fragments”, *The Library*, Sixth Series, 7 (1985), 95–114, at 96–97.

50 Gatch, “John Bagford”, 107. Bagford’s friend and bookseller colleague, Christopher Bateman, gave him access to “waste manuscripts”, which Bagford plundered of “old pieces of MSS” (*ibid.*, citing R. Steele, “John Bagford’s Own Account of His Collection of Title-Pages, etc.”, *The Library*, Second Series, 8 (1907), 223–24).

51 Hindman et al., *Manuscript Illumination*, 90.

52 C. de Hamel, “Phillipps Fragments in Tokyo”, in T. Matsuda et al., *The Medieval Book and a Modern Collector*, Cambridge, UK, 2004, 19–44, at 19–20.

represented the owner's engagement and intimacy with the contents of that volume.⁵³

Peltz proposes that extra-illustrated books competed with antiquarian expeditions as an armchair enterprise. A few examples with manuscript specimens have been documented, including the Lomax-Wade "album" mentioned above and a twelve-volume copy of Dibdin's 1817 *Bibliographical Decameron* with 547 miniatures, now dismantled.⁵⁴ While this volume was bound in the early twentieth century, it probably dates to the Victorian period.

As a commercial practice, dismembering manuscripts would have been rare before the Celotti sale, even in London and Paris where the book trade was centered. The story changes by mid-century. In 1880 William Blades, author of *The Enemies of Books* and popularizer of the word "biblioclast", wrote:

[...] I purchased at [...] Sotheby's a large lot of MS. leaves on vellum, some being whole sections of a book, but mostly single leaves. Many were so mutilated by the excision of initials as to be worthless, but those with poor initials or with none were quite good, and when sorted out I found I had got large portions of nearly twenty different MSS, mostly [Books of Hours], showing twelve varieties of fifteenth-century handwriting in Latin, French, Dutch, and German. I had each sort bound separately, and they now form an interesting collection.⁵⁵

This group must have amounted to hundreds of text leaves. The important consideration here is that these random fragments do not comprise a collection, nor were they ever mounted in an album. They were the discarded text leaves of manuscripts from which the saleable miniatures and initials had already been stripped. These leftovers were then peddled to uncritical buyers, including American

53 L. Peltz, "The Extra-Illustration of London: The Gendered Spaces and Practices of Antiquarianism in the Late Eighteenth Century", in *Producing the Past: Aspects of Antiquarian Culture and Practice, 1700–1850*, ed. M. Myrone and L. Peltz, Aldershot 1999, 115–34, at 116; see also L. Peltz, *Facing the Text: Extra-Illustration, Print Culture, and Society in Britain, 1769–1840*, San Marino, CA, 2017.

54 Hindman et al., *Manuscript Illumination*, 92. Dibdin's works were commonly extended, and while dozens of examples could be found, few had manuscript specimens. The Morgan Library acquired this copy, and its constituents have been separately conserved.

55 W. Blades, *The Enemies of Books*, London, 1880, 102–103.



Figure 8: Miniature stitched to a stub in a mutilated Book of Hours donated to Yale by Caroline Street. *Yale University, Beinecke Library MS 17, f. 84*



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Figure 9: Seventy-six of 114 miniatures from the Garin Hours remain, only eight of which are as large as the Pentecost depicted here. All of the full-page miniatures have been cut out. *New York, Morgan Library MS 27, f. 39v*

tourists who are known to have acquired innumerable manuscripts stripped of miniatures. For example, in 1869 the heiress Caroline Street donated a fragmentary Hours to Yale, a modest manuscript obtained abroad in 1845 [Figure 8].⁵⁶ Both of its surviving miniatures had been excised but subsequently stitched onto vellum stubs, probably through her intervention. Around the same time Obadiah Rich gave a mutilated Book of Hours, use of Limoges, to the Boston Athenaeum (MS 529). Even Theodore Irwin, the banker and businessman whose elite library was sold to J. P. Morgan, owned manuscripts with missing pages, such as Morgan Library MS M.27,

⁵⁶ New Haven, CT, Yale University, Beinecke Library MS 17; see *Census* 1.165 and B. Shailor, *Catalogue of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, Vol. 1: MSS 1–250*, Binghamton, NY, 1984, 32–34.

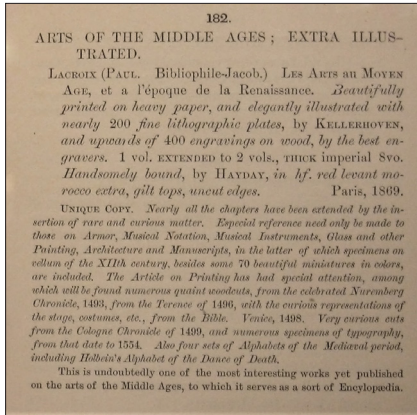


Figure 10: This copy of Lacroix's *Les Arts au Moyen Âge et à l'Époque de la Renaissance* was extended by the addition of original manuscript material. A *Superb Collection of Fine Art and Illustrated Works*, Leavitt's, New York, 26 March 1873, lot 182

the “Guerin/Garin Hours” of Rouen use acquired in 1860 [Figure 9].⁵⁷ Irwin was just getting started at this time and had not developed his taste. Scores of manuscripts in North America before ca. 1880 were similarly imperfect but still desirable to inexperienced aesthetes like him.

IV. Evidence of Fragment Connoisseurship from Auction and Exhibition Catalogues

Like their British counterparts, bourgeois American connoisseurs treasured extra-illustrated books or albums of fine miniatures, and often acquired single illuminations, sometimes mounting them in albums. Analogous compilations can be documented for the New World, although grangerized books can be found in only one instance. An 1873 auction catalogue entitled *A Superb Collection of Fine Art and Illustrated Works* describes an extra-illustrated copy of *Les Arts au Moyen Âge et à l'Époque de la Renaissance* by Paul Lacroix (second edition, Paris, 1869) [Figure 10].⁵⁸ The book was

⁵⁷ According to the curatorial file at the Morgan Library, this Hours was acquired ca. 1860 from D. Appleton & Co., a New York bookseller with a sideline in early manuscripts; see [Theodore Irwin,] *Catalogue of the Library and a Brief List of the Engravings and Etchings Belonging to Theodore Irwin, Oswego, N.Y.*, New York, 1887, 216, no. 1367.

⁵⁸ Leavitt's, New York, 26 March 1873, lot 182 [McKay 1756].

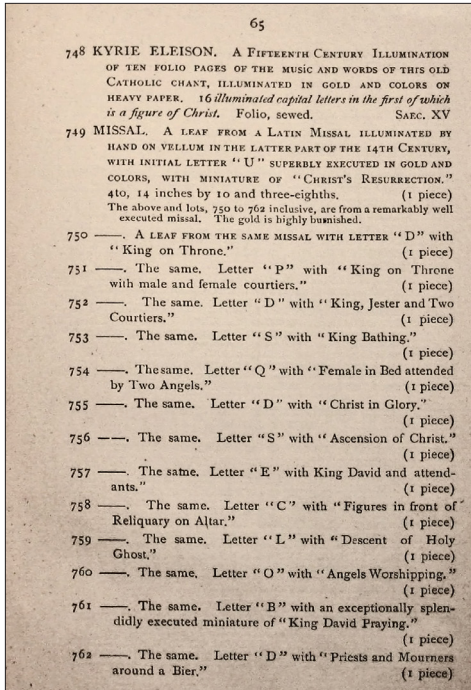


Figure 11: The Corey Library included these and other cut-out initials. *Catalogue of the Corey Library*, Leavitt's, New York, 28-29 November 1882, lot 749

published in two volumes, but the first volume of this unique copy had been "extended to 2 vols." with "specimens on vellum of the XIIth century, besides some 70 beautiful miniatures in colors." The fascicule may have been augmented between 1869 and 1873, if four years might be deemed long enough for more than seventy miniatures and leaves to have been found in New York bookshops.⁵⁹ Or perhaps the (unidentified) owner possessed the leaves in advance. A mere handful of manuscripts would have sufficed. For example, the Corey Library, auctioned in 1882, included fourteen lots of decorative initials from a book measuring 14" × 10 3/8" [Figure 11].⁶⁰ Given its size, the volume must have been liturgical. A fifteenth item in this series (lot 763) comprised a historiated initial of the Nativity

59 Since auction houses commonly imported manuscripts at this time to be auctioned, it remains possible that this volume had recently been consigned from abroad.

60 *Catalogue of the Corey Library*, Leavitt's, New York, 28 November 1882, lots 749-62 [McKay 2878].

mounted on card, while a sixteenth depicted a “King Surrounded by Courtiers” from a “very early missal” (lot 764). Lot 748 held ten folios from a choir book, presumably all the illuminated ones, since it was described as having “sixteen illuminated capital letters.” Had the initials all been excised, a motivated buyer at this auction could have amassed thirty-two specimens at once.

The extra-illustrated copy of Lacroix’s book reflected its anonymous owner’s connoisseurship. In addition to two early manuscripts (lots 124 [Book of Hours] and 292 [breviary]), his library also held facsimile volumes of *Lives of the Saints* (London, 1862), “with 51 exquisite full page miniatures in gold and colors” [lot 136]; *Golden Verses from the New Testament with Illuminations and Miniatures from Celebrated Missals and Books of Hours of the XIVth and XVth Centuries* (London, 1870) [lot 153]; Henri Delaunay, *Oeuvre de Jehan Foucquet: Heures de Maistre Estienne Chevalier* (Paris, 1869) [lot 221] and *Les Évangiles des Dimanches et Fêtes de l’Année* (Paris, 1864) [lot 279]. Emphasizing miniatures over text, the layout of these books may have suggested an extra-illustrated anthology of authentic cuttings. Roger Wieck made the same point in 1996: “[...] instructed by how-to manuals that presented manuscript painting as a series of dissected borders, cut initials and separate alphabets, it was only natural that people in the nineteenth century when confronted with the real thing [...] felt compelled to cut it up.”⁶¹ Both in Europe and America, “academic” studies of medieval graphic arts were convincing models for albums of miniatures.

As a work of reference, *Les Arts au Moyen Âge* was ideal for extra-illustration in terms of the antiquarian cultural history mentioned above. Its chapters on furnishings, decorative arts, militaria, transport, musical instruments, painting and portraiture, architecture, parchment and paper, manuscripts, scripts, miniatures, and bindings provide countless opportunities to insert medieval specimen leaves. Perhaps the “specimens on vellum” accompanied the chapter on parchment, but the seventy miniatures could, in theory, have illustrated any subject-matter. Not all specimen-books had an aesthetic or pictorial focus, however. A copy of David and

61 Wieck, “*Folia Fugitiva*”, 245.

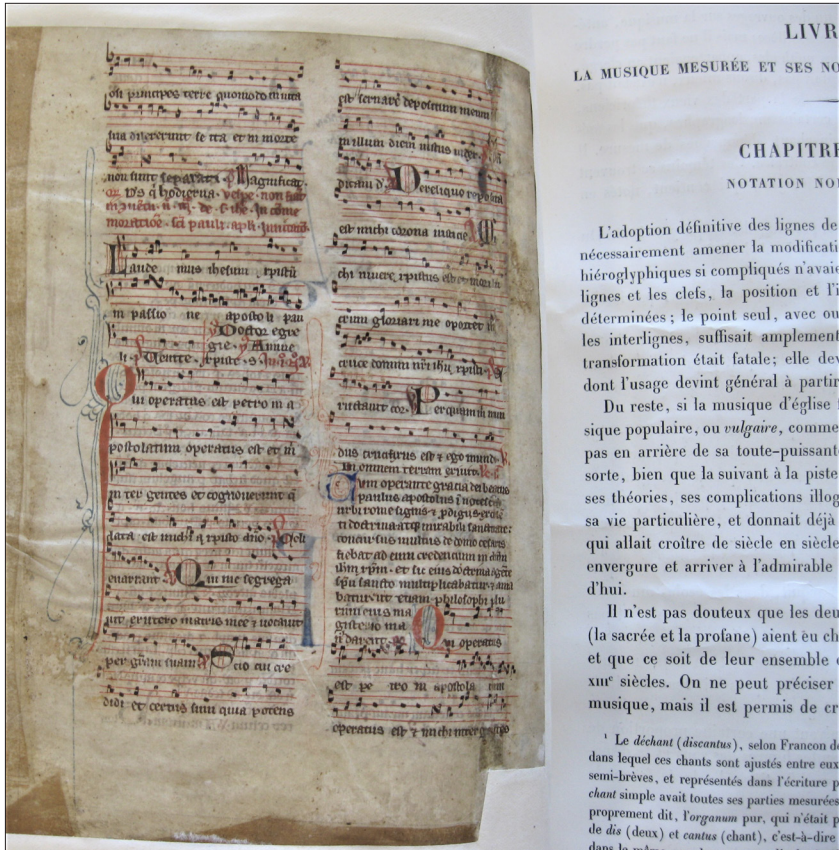


Figure 12: A rare grangerized book with manuscript fragments at Case Western Reserve University (ML 431 .D24).

Lussy's *Histoire de la Notation Musicale*⁶² at Case Western University (Cleveland, OH) was augmented with about twenty text fragments of medieval and early modern music, including English sacred polyphony and unique ballads familiar to Shakespeare [Figure 12].⁶³

62 E. David and M. Lussy, *Histoire de la Notation Musicale depuis ses Origines*, Paris, 1882.

63 On the choir book, see (most recently) G. R. K. Curtis and A. B. Wathey, "Fifteenth-Century English Liturgical Music: A List of the Surviving Repertory", *Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle* 27 (1994), 1–69, at 23, 51. On the ballads, see R. W. Duffin, *Shakespeare's Songbook*, New York, 2004. About a dozen other medieval items remain unstudied. The fragments are thought

Although the volume was plausibly assembled around 1882, it may not have resided in North America before its donation in 1940.

Books augmented with manuscripts were rare in the New World. Specimen albums were more abundant, and two can be documented before the Civil War. In 1856 the Englishman Joseph Sabin catalogued the “*Bibliotheca Splendidissima*” of Andrew Ellicott Douglass (d. 1901).⁶⁴ This was the largest and most important auction of medieval manuscripts conducted in the antebellum period. Douglass prized a “scrapbook” (lot 1128*), described as follows:

A large Atlas folio book, containing a large number of vellum leaves and cuttings from folio Missals, or Mass-books, presenting gorgeous specimens of illuminated borders, with fruits, flowers, and miniatures. Large capital letters, in many instances six inches in height, inclosing miniatures of sacred subjects, all richly heightened with gold and colors; also, two exquisite miniatures, from 12mo. missals, in the finest style of art.

Douglass’s album contained diverse cuttings on which we can only speculate. The phrase “folio Missals, or Mass-books, presenting gorgeous specimens of illuminated borders, with fruits, flowers, and miniatures” suggests grand illuminated missals or Books of Hours. “Large capital letters [...] inclosing miniatures of sacred subjects” sound like cuttings from illuminated choir books. “Two exquisite miniatures, from 12mo. missals, in the finest style of art” seems to describe small Books of Hours, Psalter-Hours or breviaries. (These two items may have been independent of the album.) Curiously, the asterisked lot number implies that this volume was not found

to have come from the collection of the musicologist Edward Francis Rimbauld; see Sotheby’s, 31 July 1877, lots 1400–1403, 1381, 1916 and others mostly purchased by “J. Marshall”, probably Julian Marshall, a collector of “ancient music”; cf. B. Quaritch, ed., *Contributions towards a Dictionary of English Book-Collectors*, Part XII, “An Alphabetical Roll of Book Collectors from 1319 to 1898 by W. C. Hazlitt”, London, 1898, 21; A. Searle, “Julian Marshall and the British Museum: Music Collecting in the Later Nineteenth Century”, *The British Library Journal* 11 (1985), 67–87. Relevant in this context are three grangerized copies of Blades’ *The Enemies of Books* at the Free Library, Philadelphia, but at least one of them seems to have been assembled in England (Wieck, “*Folia Fugitiva*”, 236 and 251, n. 21). It is uncertain whether the others were grangerized in America.

64 J. Sabin, *Bibliotheca Splendidissima: Catalogue of a Sumptuous Collection of Books, etc.*, Bangs Brothers & Co., New York, 15 December 1856 [McKay 719].

among Douglass' manuscripts but was added to them at the sale. They might have belonged among his albums of etchings, engravings, or drawings, with (say) lot 2486, vellum miniatures of a nun and St. Francis, and lot 2604, a collection of drawings of saints, ex-Countess von Plettenberg. To Douglass or Sabin, these separately shelved albums of cuttings ostensibly belonged to a different book-genre, and compilations of prints were logical analogues. Especially before the Civil War, the professional vocabulary used to describe manuscripts imitated that of printed books.

The New York collector John Allan, who came to own thirty pre-1600 manuscripts by the time of his death in 1864, also gathered an album of manuscript specimens. In Sabin's 1864 auction catalogue,⁶⁵ this scrapbook was described as holding "Gothic Or-nated Letters and Fragments selected from Ancient MSS. Some of them exquisitely finished. Folio, *half morocco*" (lot 42). Allan had a "leading passion for 'illustration',"⁶⁶ and perhaps his impulse to acquire rarities in any condition explains the compilation of such a miscellany.⁶⁷ It must have been sizeable. The album sold to "Brooks" for \$9.50,⁶⁸ a price suggesting an impressive scope. Allan probably compiled this assortment himself, as he was an inveterate grangerizer and derided for spoiling hundreds of prints in supplementing his anthologies.⁶⁹ The miscellaneous character of the collection suggests the same. Allan's books were sometimes re-bound, so that

65 J. Sabin, *A Catalogue of the Books, Autographs, Engravings, and Miscellaneous Articles Belonging to the Estate of the Late John Allan*, Bangs, Merwin & Co., New York, 25 April 1864 [McKay 1025].

66 [Evert A. Duyckinck,] *Memorial of John Allan*, New York, 1864, 17. Duyckinck estimates that Allan produced about a hundred extra-illustrated volumes (ibid. 25). William Loring Andrews, who knew Allan as an octogenarian, remarked, "Mr. Allan was the first New York book-collector to be bitten with this passion for 'illustration'" (*Gossip about Book-Collecting*, New York, 1900, vol. 1, 31-32).

67 Andrews, *Gossip*, 25: "If a book or print were rare, its condition appears to have been regarded as a secondary consideration."

68 "Brooks" was the *nom de vente* of "Hayett", according to W. Gowans, *A Catalogue of the Library and Antiquarian Collection of John Allan, Esq., with the Names of Purchasers and the Price Each Article Sold For*, etc., New York, 1865, 15.

69 Ibid. 17-20; see Andrews, *Gossip*, 27 ("probably the labor of his own hands").

any binding waste in his miscellany may have come from his own library, if he did not purchase it from local binderies. As a serious collector of manuscripts, however, he would not have cut “Gothic Ornated Letters”—especially those “exquisitely finished”—from his own books.⁷⁰ Although Allan’s circle of generous friends may have given him these initials, they were most likely picked up in New York bookshops, printshops, or binderies. Allan visited them routinely.⁷¹ Ultimately, his lost album represents the best evidence we have of the trade in manuscript fragments in antebellum New York.

The interest in fragments grew after the Civil War, although it remained insignificant compared to the rocketing postwar market for unspoiled illuminated and text manuscripts. Especially from the 1870s, albums of leaves and single cuttings are more frequently reported in auction, library, and exhibition catalogues. On 10 December 1878 Leavitt’s in New York auctioned Irving Browne’s library, which held “the most extensive collection of extra illustrated works ever offered by auction in this country.” Lot 557 comprised six “missal paintings” bound in an album.⁷² Three of the subjects were identified: “the ‘Kiss of Judas,’ ‘Baptism of St. John,’ ‘Raising of Lazarus’ Daughter.” The “Kiss” sounds like the betrayal in Gethsemane from an English or northern European Book of Hours. The unusual “Baptism” may have come from a choir book, although a late Book of Hours is more likely. The description “Lazarus’s Daughter” appears to reference Jairus’ daughter, an idiosyncratic subject for any manuscript. It seems possible, in fact, that the subject is the “Raising of Lazarus” from the Office of the Dead or “Dormition of the

70 The sources that document Allan’s collecting suggest his regard for rare books, and in the *Memorial of John Allan*, Duyckinck extolled Allan’s appreciation for illuminated manuscripts, which were housed in a secretary in Allan’s bedroom: “the choice collection of books of Emblems and Missals, a sacred and peaceful host, appealing to the devotional feeling of the worshipper of the antique, which graced the secretary by the window in the sunniest spot in the house” (8–9). Duyckinck also remarks, “it was not often that Mr. Allan made marginal or other written comments in his books” (ibid. 32).

71 According to William Loring Andrews, Allan *daily* “haunted” the shop of Mr. William Gowans, a pioneer seller of secondhand books (W. L. Andrews, *The Old Booksellers of New York and Other Papers*, New York, 1895, 25).

72 *A Catalogue of the Unique Library Formed by Irving Browne, Esq., of Troy, NY*, Leavitt’s, New York, 10 December 1878, lot 557 [McKay 2444].

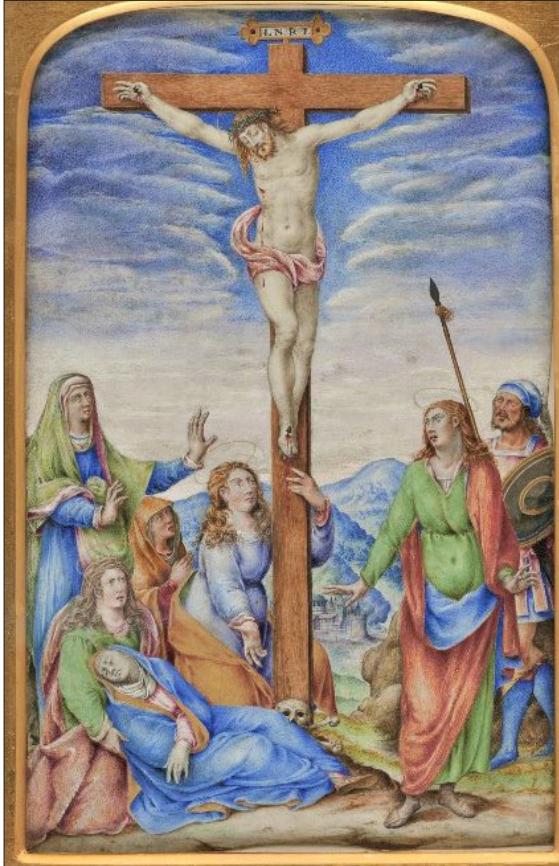


Figure 13: Crucifixion miniature loaned by Robert Hoe to the Grolier Club exhibition of 1892. Brooklyn, NY, Brooklyn Museum, acc. 11.499

Virgin” from Compline in the Hours of the Virgin. This compilation appeared with a group of three “Manuscripts on Vellum” that included two Books of Hours, one with “an exquisite initial miniature as frontispiece” (lot 556).

A modest album of fragments was exhibited at the Grolier Club in 1884, described as,

a volume—containing eleven leaves only, laid down on vellum, of a book of hours, belonging to the family of Crequy, of France. The borders in flowers, shells, birds, etc., most exquisitely done.⁷³

73 “V. Exhibition of Manuscripts: Illuminated Manuscripts”, *Transactions of the Grolier Club* 1 (1885), 24–28, at 25. This album was later sold by Henry F. Sewell

This compilation seems to have contained illuminated borders only, not miniatures. The total of eleven leaves sounds like an unillustrated Book of Hours with four-sided borders and illuminated initials. Also included in the Grolier Club exhibition were “two large ornamented initials in frame” (otherwise undescribed), “five leaves, on parchment, from [a] Spanish cantoral of the sixteenth century”, and an initial from a thirteenth-century Apocalypse.⁷⁴ The five choir book leaves may have boasted large historiated initials or miniatures.

This short list of exhibited fragments expanded substantially when, eight years later, the Grolier Club mounted a larger display of illuminated manuscripts. Five disjunct miniatures, two albums of fragments, and six single leaves from the same Flemish manuscript were loaned to the 1892 exhibition.⁷⁵ The large-scale miniatures included a “Crucifixion” by Giulio Clovio [Figure 13].⁷⁶ The other ten may have been selected from many others, but the pedestrian quality of certain Hours in the exhibition suggests that these miniatures were the sole examples. The volume of fragments with decorative borders exhibited in 1884 was not re-exhibited in 1892. One new congeries included six leaves that originated in a single Book of Hours: a “Nativity” (Prime), “Adoration of the Magi” (Sext), “God Speaking to David” (Penitential Psalms), “Resurrection” (Office of the Dead), and two “Holy Families” (Presentation? Flight

(Bang’s, New York, 9 November 1896, lot 1828 [McKay 4568]). On this historic exhibition, see G. Ong and E. Holzenberg, *For Jean Grolier & His Friends: 125 Years of Grolier Club Exhibitions and Publications, 1884–2009*, New York, 2009, ref. E2 and P4. Peter Kidd informs me that this album comprised lot 126 in the 1864 Sotheby’s sale of John Boykett Jarman.

- 74 “V. Exhibition of Manuscripts”, 27, 28. A “Passio Domini” with seventeen miniatures said to be sixteenth-century Italian was probably not a convolute.
- 75 *Catalogue of an Exhibition of Painted and Illuminated Manuscripts*, The Grolier Club, New York, 1892; see Ong and Holzenberg, *For Jean Grolier*, refs. E30 and P31. I do not count the “Passio Domini” (mentioned above), which was also exhibited at this time (*Catalogue of an Exhibition*, 25, no. 55). The miniatures included a “Crucifixion” attributed to Clovio (23, no. 52), initial O with Trinity and Apostles (36, no. 83); initial N of “Morning after the Resurrection” (38, no. 89); initials of the “Martyrdom of St. Luke and Fall of the Idols” and of the “Crucifixion of St. Francis”, both attributed to Boccardino (40, no. 95).
- 76 Brooklyn, NY, Brooklyn Museum of Art, acc. 11.499.

into Egypt?).⁷⁷ One portfolio of twenty illuminations held “a series of small Italian miniatures” illustrating “the Passion of Christ and pictures of Saints.”⁷⁸ These might have been taken from an illuminated ferial Psalter, but, if not Italian, they may be from the Suffrages and Office of the Virgin in a northern Book of Hours illustrated with a Passion cycle of miniatures. Impossible to interpret is, “A Volume Containing a Series of Thirty-two Early Miniatures, upon Vellum, of Initial Letters, Historiated with Figures,” said to be “cut from various manuscripts.”⁷⁹ The likely sources of “early” historiated initials would be bibles, breviaries, and Psalter-Hours.

The 1892 catalogue ran to forty pages. With one notable exception, the fragments and albums came near the end, appearing on pages 36–40. They were items of less compelling artistic or bibliographical standing than the complete books listed on pages 1–35. The “Clovio” was different, however. It was an acknowledged masterpiece with papal provenance,⁸⁰ so it was situated in the exhibition among the chief treasures, between “a remarkable and sumptuous volume of unusual historic and artistic interest” called “*Horæ Pembrochianæ*” (no. 51) and a small, “exquisite” Book of Hours “of the school of Giulio Clovio” (no. 53).⁸¹ The esteem for this “Crucifixion” miniature may be due less to its artistic pedigree than to its owner, Robert Hoe, the Grolier Club founder and patron. He acquired it from the London firm of Bernard Quaritch in 1891, perhaps with the intent of exhibiting it at the Grolier Club.⁸² Other

⁷⁷ *Catalogue of an Exhibition*, 36 (no. 85).

⁷⁸ *Catalogue of an Exhibition*, 37 (no. 87).

⁷⁹ *Catalogue of an Exhibition*, 39 (no. 94).

⁸⁰ S. Hindman and M. Heinlen, “A Connoisseur’s Montage: The ‘Four Evangelists’ Attributed to Giulio Clovio”, *Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies* 17 (1991), 154–78, 181–82, at 176–77.

⁸¹ Respectively: Philadelphia Museum of Art, acc. 1945.65.2 (Philip S. Collins Coll.), see Faye and Bond, *Supplement* 470–71 and illustrations in J. R. Tanis, ed., with J. A. Thompson, *Leaves of Gold: Manuscript Illumination from Philadelphia Collections*, Philadelphia, 2001, no. 14; Philadelphia, Free Library, MS Lewis E 109, see *Census* II.2040; E. Wolf II and A. S. W. Rosenbach, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the John Frederick Lewis Collection of European Manuscripts in the Free Library of Philadelphia*, Philadelphia, 1937, 119–21 (with plates).

⁸² C. Shipman, *A Catalogue of Manuscripts Forming a Portion of the Library of Robert Hoe*, New York, 1909, 129, 131; cf. *Catalogue of the Library of Robert Hoe*

cuttings in Hoe's collection betray his taste for Italian miniatures in the style of Clovio. As it turns out, Hoe also owned the albums of twenty illuminations and thirty-two historiated initials exhibited at the club, but none of the other large initials, apparently.⁸³ Incidentally, an album of eight miniatures from a Book of Hours with three others from a Psalter were posthumously catalogued in the Hoe collection (1909) but may not have been in his possession before 1900.⁸⁴

Hoe stands out as a collector of single miniatures, as few Americans were buying them. I have already mentioned single items in the Corey library, sold in 1882. Similarly idiosyncratic was the Chicagoan Rushton M. Dorman, who cultivated a taste for sumptuous illuminated manuscripts. Yet he also acquired two miniatures, a kalendar detached from a Book of Hours, an album of "thirteen exquisite miniatures of scenes in the Life of Christ" attributed to the school of Jean Fouquet, and a portfolio of eleven miniatures from a single Book of Hours bound in purple velvet.⁸⁵ Since Dorman had assembled a *bibliothèque de travail* for his illustrated work on *The Origin of Primitive Superstitions and their Development into the Worship of Spirits and the Doctrine of Spiritual Agency among the Aborigines of America* (Philadelphia, 1881), it is tempting to imagine his fragments as evidence of "primitive superstitions" in medieval Europe. The auction catalogue regarded his library as having "only the antique about it in order to contrast more strongly with the living issues of the present in art, religion, philosophy and science."⁸⁶ Common

of New York, Anderson, New York, 24 April 1911, lots 2152–2153 [McKay 6972].

- 83 Shipman, *Catalogue*, 129–31, where eight groups of miniatures are described. They do not match the descriptions in the 1892 Grolier Club exhibition. Many of Hoe's initials now reside at the Brooklyn Museum: two folios illuminated by a follower of Jean Fouquet, sold at the 1884 Firmin-Didot sale and possibly Hoe's by 1900 (acc. 11.507, framed); two Italian initials (N with "Christ and the Woman of Samaria" and L with "Prodigal Son"), both from the same manuscript (acc. 11.498, framed together); initial R with a "Resurrection" on a folio of an Italian choir book, ca. 1500 (acc. 11.500); see *Census* II.1196.
- 84 Shipman, *Catalogue*, 129; *Catalogue of the Library of Robert Hoe*, lot 2151.
- 85 *Catalogue of the Library, Manuscripts and Prints of Rushton M. Dorman, Esq., of Chicago, Illinois*, Leavitt's, New York, 5 April 1886, lots 2–3, 7*, 13 [McKay 3313].
- 86 *Library of Rushton Dorman*, ii. Charles Sotheran reviewed the sale and proposed that, "Mr. Dorman's collection admirably illustrates the evolution of



Figure 14: Miniature of St. Lawrence by Don Simone Camaldolese donated to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1890. New York, NY, Metropolitan Museum of Art, acc. 90.61.2

Figure 15: Miniature of St. Andrew by the Master of the Riccardiana Lactantius, one of seven illuminated leaves from the same antiphonal donated to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1896. New York, NY, Metropolitan Museum of Art, acc. 96.32.10



Figure 16: Miniature of a funeral procession by Mariano del Buono. New York, NY, Metropolitan Museum of Art, acc. 96.32.16



Figure 17: Initial P with interlace, mid-thirteenth century. New York, NY, Metropolitan Museum of Art, acc. 96.32.4

medieval subject-matter like St. Margaret emerging from the belly of a dragon or a mischievous devil stealing St. John's inkwell would qualify as "primitive superstitions." Most other collectors interested in fragments were satisfied with a miniature or two. Henri de Pène du Bois of Brooklyn owned a single one of "The Judgement of Solomon", which more likely depicts the Massacre of the Innocents.⁸⁷ Simeon Henry Remsen owned a "finely illuminated drawing on parchment" called "Holy Family" and perhaps a second of "St. Joseph with the Infant Christ."⁸⁸ Finally, the fabulously rich Adolph

typography from the period when the mediæval illuminator made way for the rude xylographical artist" ("Book Auction Intelligence", *The Bookmart*, March 1886, 304–5, at 304).

87 *The Library and Art Collection of Henry de Pène du Bois of New York*, Leavitt's, New York, 13 June 1887, lot 356 [McKay 3482].

88 *Catalogue of the Valuable Miscellaneous Library of William H. Post, Esq., of New York City ... The Second Part of the Collection of the Late Simeon Henry Remsen, Esq., of New York*, Leavitt's, New York, 22 May 1883, lots 1536*, 1537 [McKay 2966].



Figure 18: “Assumption of the Virgin” by Niccolò di Ser Sozzo, ca. 1340. *New York, NY, Metropolitan Museum of Art, acc. 96.32.12*

Sutro of California acquired an “album” of three mediocre, soiled, and damaged miniatures from a fifteenth-century French Book of Hours in 1883.⁸⁹ He owned four complete manuscripts of Buxheim provenance, as well as English and Italian documents.⁹⁰

89 *Census* I.26, reporting that they came from the Munich dealers, Ludwig and Jacques Rosenthal. This album is now [San Francisco, California State Library, Sutro Collection MS 6](#).

90 See respectively: R. Dillon, “The Sutro Library,” *News Notes on California Libraries* 51 (1956), 338–52, at 342; W. E. Parker, “Items from the Halliwell-Phillipps

Back in New York, the 1884 exhibition at the Grolier Club, and its 1892 *reprise* in particular, may have sanctioned the ownership of choir book leaves and cuttings. In 1888 the Metropolitan Museum of Art received a medieval miniature among two artworks donated by Coudert Brothers, a law firm. Giovanni Pietro da Cemmo painted a historiated initial V depicting Joseph sold by his brothers, ca. 1490 [Figure 1].⁹¹ Mrs. A. M. Minturn bequeathed five more fragments in 1890,⁹² and in 1896 the museum received fourteen leaves, one bifolium, and one fragment comprising two bifolia from Louis L. Lorillard.⁹³ With the exception of a radiant cutting by Don Simone Camaldolese [Figure 14],⁹⁴ Minturn's Italian, Austrian, German, and French fragments were artistically prosaic and two considerably damaged. The Lorillard collection is more significant. More likely assembled by an Italian aficionado or Florentine bookseller than by the yachtsman Lorillard, the leaves remain important for establishing a neoteric appreciation for fine Italian miniatures at American museums. Most of the items originated in Florence, and seven come from an Antiphonal illuminated there by the Master of the Riccardiana Lactantius, ca. 1450–1475 [Figure 15].⁹⁵ Two Gradual leaves from the second half of the fifteenth century have been attributed to Mariano del Buono, another Florentine miniaturist

Library in Sutro Branch, California State Library", *News Notes of California Libraries* 41 (1946), 249–54; G. T. Dennis, "An Inventory of Italian Notarial Documents in the Sutro Library, San Francisco", *Manuscripta* 9 (1965), 89–103.

91 New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, acc. 88.3.50. A late sixteenth-century gouache on vellum, "Adoration of the Shepherds" by an anonymous Cremonese artist (acc. 88.3.68), cannot be considered manuscript art.

92 Cutting of St. Lawrence attributed to Don Simone Camaldolese, ca. 1385 (acc. 90.61.2); a Venetian leaf depicting the Visitation, ca. 1400 (acc. 90.61.3); a French missal folio, ca. 1450 (acc. 90.61.4); a leaf from an Austrian choir Psalter, late fifteenth-century, with a depiction of David (acc. 90.61.5).

93 Most are discussed in Boehm, *Choirs of Angels* (above, n. 9). On the fragment of four leaves, which seems Bolognese, see K. Ilko, "An Illuminated Fragment of the *Postil on the Lenten Gospels* by Albert of Padua", *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 53 (2018), 128–35.

94 Boehm, *Choirs of Angels* 32.

95 D. E. Booton, "The Master of the Riccardiana Lactantius: Folios from a Florentine Choir Book", *Miniatura. Arte dell'illustrazione e decorazione del libro* 5/6 (1993–1996), 61–66.

CATALOGUE.	
Missals and MSS. Prior to the Invention of Printing.	
1. New Testament, in Latin, 8vo, double columns.....	circa 1250
This elaborate and beautiful specimen of calligraphy is done in colors, by a German scribe, in gothic character, on fine prepared vellum, and is undoubtedly of the period stated.	
2. MS. on vellum, Benedictiones Dominicales	13th century
Highly illuminated in gold and colors.	
3. Missal on vellum	(Copied in 1746)..... 15th century
4. Elegantiarum, Laurentii Valle,	circa 1430
A remarkably interesting and excessively rare work, entirely manuscript, Colored Initial letters. On vellum and paper.	
5. Fragments of Illuminated Kalendar, on parchment,	circa, 15th Century
6. A thin roll of Egyptian Papyrus.....	
7. Leaves of a Tamil School Book on Palmetto leaf	
8. Two Burnese MSS.	
9. An illuminated MS. of the Koran in Arabic.....	
10. A Coptic MS. of the Gospel of St. John	
11. Latin Breviary MS. on vellum,	circa 1350
An extremely rare and beautiful specimen.	
12. Book of Hours, MS. on vellum, in Latin and Dutch.....	1412
13. Page of a Breviary, on vellum,	circa 1450
14. MS. Book on Vellum, Illuminated.....	Liège 1501
Probably a breviary, an extremely curious and interesting specimen.	
15. Capitals from a Missal	16th Century
16. Fac Similes of National Manuscripts from William the Conqueror to Queen Anne. Selected under the direction of the Master of the Rolls, and Photozincographed by command of H. M. Queen Victoria, by Col. Sir Henry James, R.E., Director of the Ordnance Survey—in three volumes.....	
Ordnance Survey Office, Southampton	
17. Facsimiles of National Manuscripts of Scotland. Selected under the direction of the Right Hon. Sir Wm. Gibson Craig, Bart., (Lord Clerk Register of Scotland), and Photozincographed by command of H. M. Queen Victoria by Col. Sir Henry James, R.E., Director of the Ordnance Survey	Ordnance Survey Office, Southampton 1867

Figure 19:
Fragments
loaned to the
1877 Caxton Ex-
hibition held
in Montreal.
*Condensed
Catalogue of
Manuscripts,
Books and
Engravings
on Exhibition
at the Caxton
Celebration,
etc., Montreal,
1877, p. 1*

[Figure 16].⁹⁶ Three have decorative rather than historiated initials, one of them mid-thirteenth century [Figure 17]. The prize of this group is a magnificent illumination of the Assumption by the Florentine master, Niccolò di Ser Sozzo, ca. 1340 [Figure 18].⁹⁷

This overview of fragment collecting in nineteenth-century America does not apply to Canada. While one early manuscript in

⁹⁶ Boehm, *Choirs of Angels*, 51 and illustrations 54–55 (pp. 44–45).

⁹⁷ Boehm, *Choirs of Angels*, illus. 40 (p. 35); W. M. Milliken, “An Illuminated Miniature by Niccolò di ser Sozzo Tegliacci,” *Art in America and Elsewhere* 13 (June 1925), 161–66.

the Dominion seems to have been imported specifically for sale,⁹⁸ the country had no domestic market for early manuscripts. Collectors usually bought complete specimens from European catalogues. Yet the ownership of fragments is documented in the *Condensed Catalogue* of the 1877 “Caxton Celebration”, which had been hastily organized by the Montreal collector Gerald Ephraim Hart. Hart exhibited illuminated “capitals” from a sixteenth-century missal [Figure 19].⁹⁹ These do not seem to have been mounted in an album. He also loaned an unknown “Fragment” (probably an unidentifiable text leaf) and “Four leaves from a breviary (missal).” Exhibited by others were “Fragments of an Illuminated Kalendar, on parchment” loaned by the Kuklos Club of Montreal and a “Page of a Breviary, on vellum” provided by the Montreal numismatist, Robert W. McLachlan. The fragments belonged with “Missals and MSS. Prior to the Invention of Printing”, which included a number of complete manuscripts contributed by American bibliophiles.¹⁰⁰

V. Collections of Text Leaves

A. University Ownership: An Album at New York University

While I have uncovered only one of the foregoing albums of illuminations, most of which which seem likely to have been dismantled, an album of text leaves survives intact at New York University (NYU).¹⁰¹ In 1884 the New York physician Homer L. Bartlett

98 B. Dunn-Lardeau and R. Virr, “La Redécouverte d’un Exemplaire des Heures Enluminées de 1516 Imprimées de 1516 par Gilles Hardouin”, *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch* 89 (2014), 144–70, at 159–60.

99 *Condensed Catalogue of Manuscripts, Books and Engravings on Exhibition at the Caxton Celebration*, etc., Montreal, 1877, pp. 1, 49–50.

100 See S. J. Gwara, “Je me souviens: The Forgotten Collection of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts Owned by Gerald E. Hart of Montreal”, in *Between the Text and the Page: Studies on the Transmission of Medieval Ideas in Honour of Frank T. Coulson*, ed. H. Anderson and D. T. Gura, Toronto, 2020, 255–88, at 263–65.

101 When the first volume of De Ricci and Wilson’s *Census* was published in 1935, the American Antiquarian Society owned twelve fragments “from Latin manuscripts (xiii–xv c.), mainly taken from bindings, including a leaf from a xiv-c. Bible (book of Habbakuk).” Since these were mentioned neither

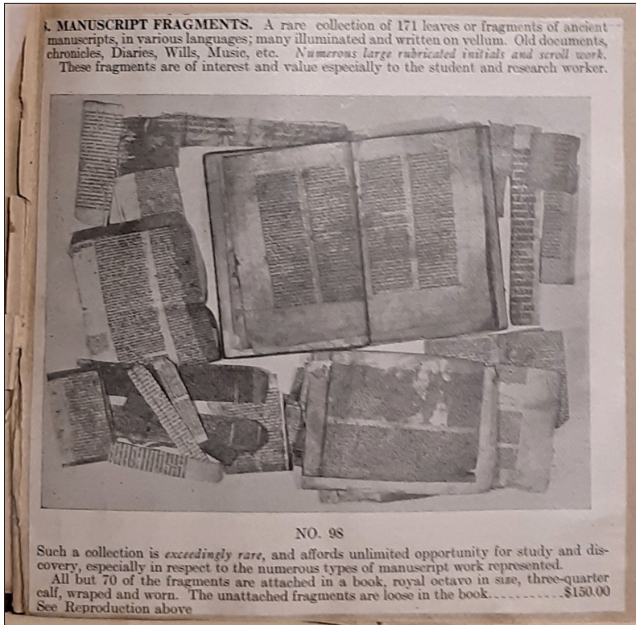


Figure 20: Book-seller advertising in the NYU album. New York, NY, New York University MSS 535

donated a volume of 171 manuscript fragments, all binding waste, to his alma mater NYU, now catalogued as MSS 535.¹⁰² Details of the original contents can be gleaned from a bookseller's catalogue entry pasted to a front flyleaf [Figure 20]. It states that 101 of the fragments were "laid in"—meaning that they were pasted onto paper sheets. An examination of bifolia reveals basting by which they had been

in Nathaniel Paine's *Remarks on the Manuscripts in the Library of the American Antiquarian Society* (Worcester, MA, 1903) nor in Charles Henry Lincoln, "The Manuscript Collections of the American Antiquarian Society" (*Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 4 (1909), 59–72), the leaves cannot be attested in the collection before 1935. Furthermore, they have been unlocated since before 2015 (see M. Conway and L. F. Davis, "Directory of Collections in the United States and Canada with Pre-1600 Manuscript Holdings", *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 109 (2015), 273–420, at 338).

¹⁰² This is not the Allan album. While the dates 1844 and 1845, which are found on some fragments, coincide with Allan's *floruit*, and the size of the Bartlett album (322 mm × 222 mm) conforms to Allan's "Folio", the binding of Allan's album was said to be half morocco, while the NYU volume is half calf. Its untidy annotations, furthermore, do not match Allan's conspicuously fine penmanship.

attached to the sheets, or else sewn right into the binding. In fact, a photograph that accompanies the description shows a bifolium apparently stitched into the gutter and trimmed to the size of the textblock.

The Bartlett album may have come from anywhere in North America, although Bartlett himself resided in Brooklyn. It remains uncertain, too, whether it had been purchased from a European source, even as late as 1884. An inscription yields ambiguous provenance information. Two vellum fragments (leaves 16–17) comprising an independent unit were pasted to a paper bifolium. Each was framed by ink rules and identified with penciled labels: 1. “fragment of a Chronicle from the death of Alfred to Athelstan”; 2. “Sermo de Spiritu Sancto.”¹⁰³ This anonymous compiler also wrote, “From Mr. Gough.” Ruling out titled owners, three candidates seem possible: 1. Henry Gough (d. 1905), an antiquarian and binder to the British Museum. The NYU album looks like the collection of a binder, and the majority of fragments are English. 2. Richard Gough (d. 1809), a wealthy antiquarian whose library contained a manuscript fragment called, “Fragment of an Old English Chronicle, beginning with Brute and ending with King Henry the Fifth.”¹⁰⁴ This description closely resembles “fragment of a Chronicle from the death of Alfred to Athelstan” cited above. Lot 4128 in Gough’s 1810 Sotheby’s sale comprised “Fragments of manuscripts, &c.” 3. The New York temperance advocate, John B. Gough, who apprenticed as a binder at the “Methodist Book Concern” in 1833.¹⁰⁵ Gough practiced the trade in New York for less than a year, however. Of these candidates, Richard Gough seems most likely to be the “Mr. Gough” whose fragments ended up in the NYU convolute.

Whoever assembled the Bartlett album drew on multiple sources over time. The two Gough fragments represent one stratum, but an annotation on a front flyleaf states: “The documents on the first

103 English, fourteenth century: 1.=William of Malmesbury’s *Gesta regum Anglorum*; 2.= unidentified sermon on the Holy Spirit.

104 Sotheby’s, 5 April 1810, lot 4309.

105 J. B. Gough, *An Autobiography of John B. Gough*, Boston, 1848, 16. Established in 1789, the Methodist Book Concern was a publisher of religious books focusing on Methodism. Gough also worked at Burlock and Wilbur, a New York bindery.

six pages were given to me about 1844 by Mr. Henry(?).¹⁰⁶ These six comprise: 1. Glossed Bible, France, ca. 1300; 2. commentary, France, 13th century, with headings, i.e. *De consuetudine*, *De postulatione*, *De baptismo*; 3. Commentary, with heading *De sortilegiis vel divinationibus*; 4. Sermons, *In Dominica quarta XL*; 5. Glossed Bible. Paris, ca. 1220, with list of the benefactors of Oxford University ending with Queen Mary; 6. Elizabethan document.¹⁰⁷ Two leaves then follow, one French, one Italian: Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, ca. 1350; Gratian, *Decretals*, ca. 1200. The decretals leaf bears an annotation dated 8 January 1845. Counting the Gough leaves, these folios comprise a third stratum. Then come seven documents from the reigns of Henry VIII, Elizabeth, and James I (9–15). They form a thematic unit with items 18–22, five documents from the reign of Henry VIII, although it cannot be known whether they were all acquired at the same time. These two groups of documents were bisected by the Gough leaves. One other stratum may be hypothesized. When the album was assessed in 1978, it was stated that the phrase “among my Uncle’s Papers” appeared “on the last attached document,” which would be item 101, a late Middle English record. Five and perhaps six strata may be securely identified, therefore.

While it is impossible to deduce precisely how the album was compiled, the archaeology of these strata imply that it belonged to an antiquarian or bibliophile, not a commercial binder. The compiler probably began his album in 1844, after coming into possession of leaves from Mr. Henry—. Two fragments followed in 1845, then a series of documents, which were divided by the Gough bifolium, an earlier, independent acquisition. Perhaps some—or all—of the remaining leaves were acquired in bundles from binderies, booksellers, or even from Gough’s estate. If so, three sources of fragments may be hypothesized: acquaintances, family (an uncle), and commercial agents.

106 When the album was disassembled, the conservators removed and sequenced the leaves in their exact sequence in the album. The individual leaves were similarly treated, but it cannot be determined whether they were sequenced as originally numbered.

107 I have identified the fragments in this and subsequent sections.

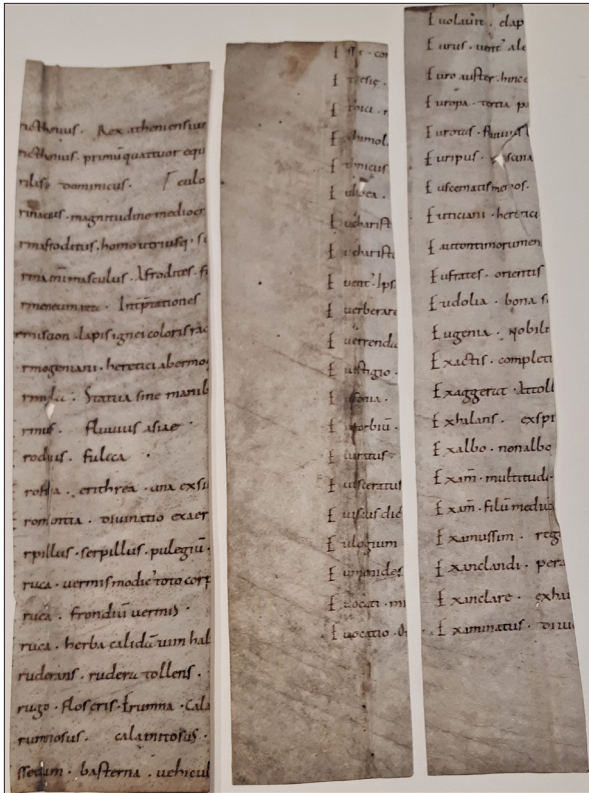


Figure 21: These strips of a late ninth-century manuscript were placed at the end of the Bartlett album, suggesting that they were thought to be written in Humanistic Minuscule. *New York, NY, New York University MSS 535*

While the fragments are slightly disordered in terms of contents and date, a general pattern can be discerned—noting, of course, that the album may have been re-organized at any point after its receipt by NYU in 1884. First, a significant majority of the fragments are English and French. Very few are Italian, German or Spanish. Naturally, the NYU fragments would have derived from antiquarian (fifteenth- and sixteenth-century) printed books. Second, the fragments get larger the further one gets in the album, except that bifolia were stitched or basted near the middle, where about fifty pages have fallen out. One can see the original format in a photograph from the bookseller's catalogue: item 35 (glossary of biblical subjects) has been bound into the album. Stitching such large and heavy leaves onto flimsy paper would explain why the middle pages disintegrated. Third, whoever organized the album

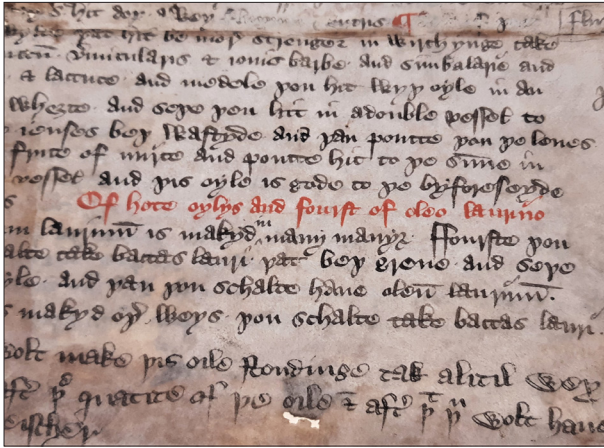


Figure 22: Fragment of Middle English at the end of the album. New York, NY, New York University MSS 535



Figure 23: The fragments often overlapped, but because they were glued on single edges, the leaves could be turned over, revealing the pages below. New York, NY, New York University MSS 535

was able to recognize the relative dates of the script styles, except in the case of ninth-century strips from a glossary [Figure 21]. After the appearance of independent units described above, the leaves are roughly chronological, with a few explicable misattributions. In particular, the Caroline Minuscule of the glossary seemed late to the

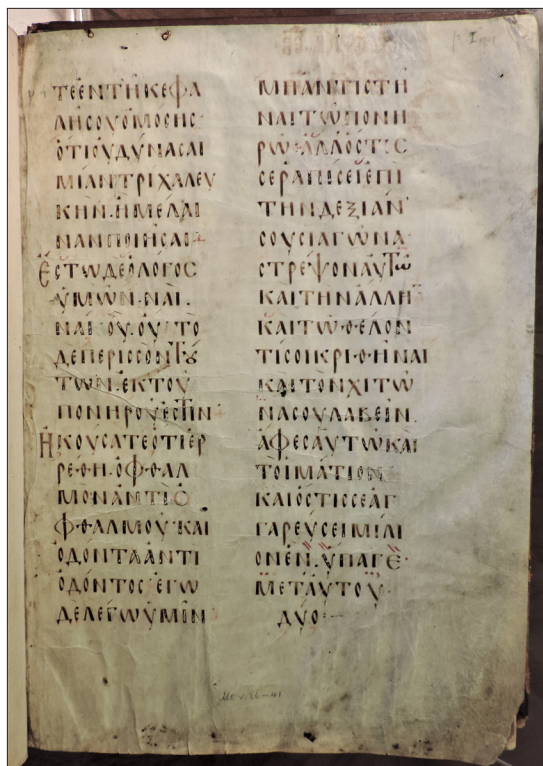


Figure 24: Fragment of a Gospel book in Greek Uncials obtained by Harvard in 1820. *Harvard, Houghton Library MS Gr 6*

compiler because Humanistic scripts were based on early Caroline. Documents are included in this group of “late” fragments. Fourth, in most cases bifolia were not separated and fragments from the same parent manuscript were kept together (e.g. items 24–25, 32–35, 42–45, 63–66, 92–95), although three fragments of the “St. Jacques III” bible concordance were separated (items 52, 77–78). Finally, the last pages of the album seem to have been reserved for oddities: Middle English [Figure 22], Greek, and a few thirteenth-century strips of music. Given this alleged chronological arrangement, the album may not have been assembled gradually but all at once, after the leaves had been acquired and organized.

A flexible and compact layout characterizes the Bartlett album. Early pages can hold one or multiple fragments which are glued to the paper along one side and neatly arranged (often centered).

Page layouts, in fact, can be detected from the glue residue and rough paper. Many leaves overlap. In some instances large leaves cover smaller ones, with layering of as many as four folios per page [Figure 23]. Since only the edges were glued down, the pages could be turned over, revealing the fragments below. This arrangement must have strained the paper because the glue was laid down in an eighth-inch width: turning over the leaves could easily crease the page. Yet the compiler was careful with the glue and never pasted down the whole leaf, unlike Mr. Gough. He also made sure to have the cleanest page face up. The compiler also selected the best-proportioned fragments, as long and narrow strips such as those used for spine enforcement were found loose with the album. The book-seller's photograph shows detached large leaves and small strips. It seems that, as proposed above, the large leaves fell out, while the small strips were never mounted.

B. University Ownership: The Collection of A. D. White, President of Cornell University

Bartlett's donation to NYU was not only generous, it was also eccentric. American universities did not typically acquire manuscript books, let alone fragments, at this early date. In 1820 Professor Edward Everett sold Greek manuscripts to Harvard that included six folios in Uncial script datable to ca. 975–1025 (Houghton Library, MS Gr 6) [Figure 24].¹⁰⁸ These leaves formed a cover to MS Gr. 12, a Gospel Lectionary, ca. 1100. The Uncial manuscript was a fortuitous acquisition, the unsought component of a more desirable codex. In fact, the first university in America to seek out manuscript fragments was actually Cornell, a land grant university founded in 1865. Fragments owned in the nineteenth century by its president Andrew Dickson White were donated to the institution as early as 1887.¹⁰⁹ For decades, however, White had been making his personal library

¹⁰⁸ N. Kavrus-Hoffmann, "Catalogue of Greek Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the Collections of the United States of America, Part V.1: Harvard University, The Houghton Library", *Manuscripta* 54 (2010), 64–147, at 108–12.

¹⁰⁹ White agreed to donate the library in 1887, but it was not formally handed over until 1891, when a new library building was finished.



Figure 25: President White acquired this initial, informally dubbed the “Munich S”, while on tour in Europe with his wife and daughter in 1876. Cornell University, Kroch Library, Rare and Manuscript Collections

available to the university community, chiefly to the faculty.¹¹⁰ The fragments were gathered on at least five occasions, not including serendipitous acquisitions of binding waste. George Lincoln Burr (d. 1938),¹¹¹ President White’s personal librarian from 1878 and from 1892 a professor of History at Cornell, bought cuttings, leaves, and fragments while traveling through Europe in 1885–1886 and 1887–1888. Burr was ostensibly enrolled in Professor Friedrich Karl Biedermann’s seminar in Leipzig but out of term bought rare books on President White’s behalf. White himself had set a collecting precedent by buying a large initial S (191 mm × 175 mm)—which came to be dubbed the “Munich S”—while on a European vacation with his family in 1876 [Figure 25].¹¹² It derives from a mid-fifteenth century

¹¹⁰ Evidence of such consultation would be ephemeral, but in 1886 acting librarian George William Harris taught a course on bibliography and remarked (*Outlines of Elementary Lectures on Bibliography Delivered in Cornell University*, Ithaca, NY, 1886, 2): “for the greater number of manuscripts, incunabula, etc., used to illustrate the lectures, thanks are due to ex-President WHITE, who kindly permitted his valuable collection to be drawn upon for this purpose.” I am grateful to Laurent Ferri for this reference.

¹¹¹ H. Guerlac, “George Lincoln Burr”, *Isis* 35 (1944), 147–52.

¹¹² Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Library, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Collection #6532, Medieval Manuscripts Fragments, Box 1, Folder 16; see R. G. Calkins, “Medieval and Renaissance Illuminated Manuscripts in the

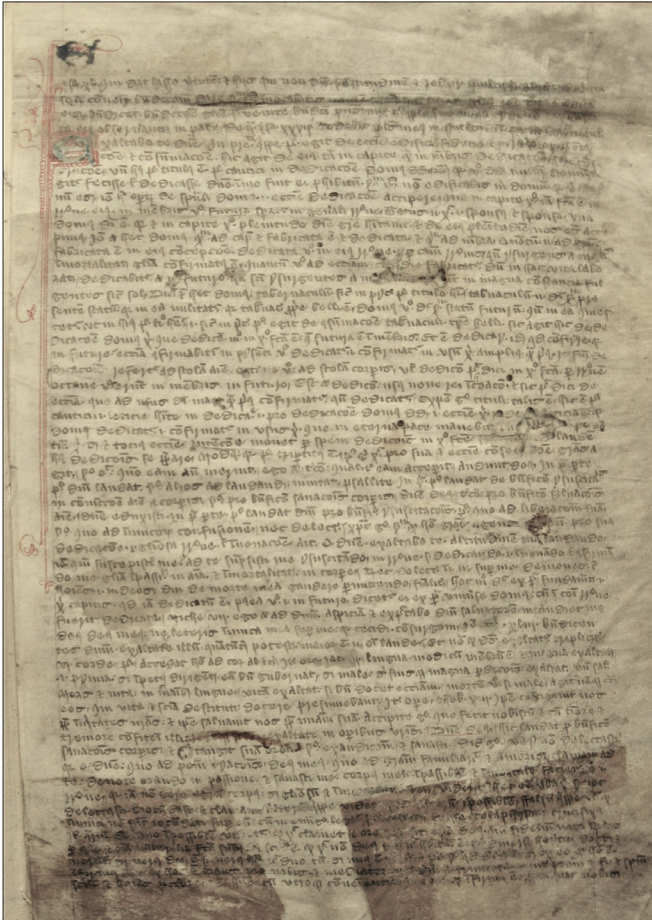


Figure 26: In 1876 President White purchased this unidentified Psalm commentary in London from his Yale confrère Henry Stevens. Cornell University, Kroch Library, Rare and Manuscript Collections

German, Austrian, or perhaps Bohemian Gradual, probably cut from the text for Pentecost.¹¹³ Before 1878, when Burr was appointed White's personal librarian, White already owned other illuminated

Cornell University Library", *Cornell Library Journal* 13 (1972), 3–95; see now no. 17 in the revised online edition (2003): https://rmc.library.cornell.edu/pdf/medieval_calkins.pdf.

- 113 While the gradual "Domine prevenisti" is prescribed in the *Liber usualis* for the Common of Abbots, the instruction, "Sequentia 'Sancti Spiritus' Canitur" suggests the sequence "Veni sancti spiritus" for Pentecost. The chant beginning with "S" would open the introit "Spiritus Domini"; see Benedictines of Solesmes, *The Liber Usualis*, Turnhout, 1961, pp. 1207, 880, 878, respectively.

and text fragments, including two folios from a choir book.¹¹⁴ Two others were more exotic. While in London in 1876, White bought two bifolia from Henry Stevens, one containing Nicholas Love's Middle English *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*.¹¹⁵ The second came from an English manuscript, ca. 1400, and preserved a Psalm commentary [Figure 26].¹¹⁶ These and similar fragments must have been abundant as inexpensive souvenirs and collectibles for bibliophilic tourists.

Burr's European book-buying is well documented in letters, diaries, and ledgers.¹¹⁷ In spring 1885, following his Leipzig term, he traveled south. On 6 May he wrote to President White that he "rummaged the bookstores" in Florence and bought multiple fragments from the firm of Luigi Gonnelli. On 9 May 1885 he wrote:

I found a roll of miscellaneous scraps of manuscript a half-dozen folio leaves in a hand which at once struck me as Anglo-Saxon and which on more careful study and comparison with Silvestre proves to be a fragment of a copy of the Homilies of Bede, dating probably from the 10th century. I bought them at once for fr. 12, and Professor [J. Willard] Fiske thinks it decidedly "a find." I also ventured to take several sheets of music, with handsome illuminated initials, for fr. 13.¹¹⁸ [Figure 27]

Burr purchased three choir book bifolia with good initials,¹¹⁹ two folios of a Romanesque Italian Atlantic Bible,¹²⁰ one mid-twelfth-century Italian folio of Chrysostom¹²¹ and one apparently from the *acta*

114 Collection #6532, Mapcase Folder 2. Few of the other cuttings he owned at this time can be identified at present.

115 Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Library, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, 4600 Bd. Ms. 14 +. The work was a translation of the *Meditationes de vita Christi* attributed to the anonymous "Pseudo-Bonaventure." Stevens was an American rare book dealer educated at Middlebury, Yale, and Harvard, who went on to buy for libraries worldwide. Like President White, Stevens belonged to the Yale Skull and Bones society.

116 4600 Bd. Ms. 46.

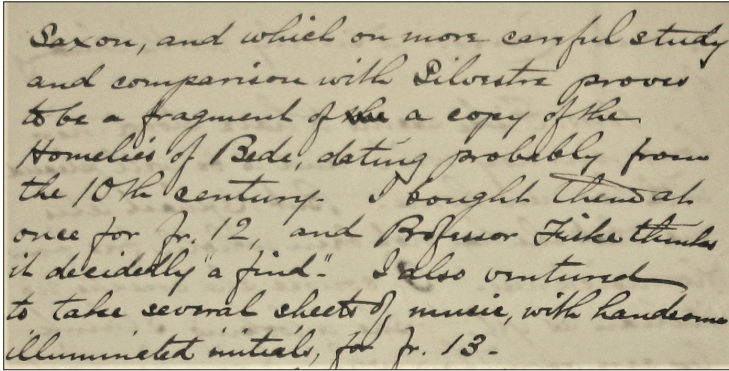
117 Above, note 26. Since the early manuscripts preceded the cut-off date of the Reformation, they were not catalogued in Burr's *Catalogue of the Historical Library of Andrew Dickson White*, vol. I, Ithaca, NY, 1889.

118 George Lincoln Burr (GLB) to Andrew Dickson White (ADW), 9 May 1885.

119 Collection #6532, Mapcase Folder 3; Calkins, "Manuscripts" no. 37.

120 Collection #6532, Box 1, Folder 4 (Book of Judith; Ezra and Nehemia).

121 Collection #6532 Box 2, Folder 8bis; Calkins, "Manuscripts" no. 21. On loose sheets with this manuscript Burr wrote, "the enclosed folio sheets (four pages of manuscript), a fragment of an old manor-roll, written in hands of the 13th and 14th centuries, was bought [by] me from a bookseller at Lucca, Italy, in <http://fragmentology.ms/issues/3-2020/collections-compilations-convolutes>



Saxon, and which on more careful study and comparison with Silvestre proves to be a fragment of ~~the~~ a copy of the Homilies of Bede, dating probably from the 10th century. I bought them at once for fr. 12, and Professor Fiske thinks it decidedly "a find." I also ventured to take several sheets of music, with handsome illuminated initials, for fr. 13.

Figure 27: On 9 May 1885 Burr wrote to President White detailing some of his rare book and manuscript purchases. Cornell University, Kroch Library, Rare and Manuscript Collections

of the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste,¹²² and three mid-twelfth-century Italian leaves of Bede's homilies which he thought were Anglo-Saxon.¹²³ The five text fragments had been wrapped in a bifolium from a vellum rental (Italy, ca. 1300) once used to cover a ledger.¹²⁴ Although inaccurate, Burr's assumptions on the date (ca. 1000, he concluded) and origin of the homilies suggest his interest in acquiring ancient fragments. Burr in this case was exercising permission to buy affordable items of historical interest, since more expensive codices required White's approval by letter or telegram. Burr's focus on fragments, including binding waste, may be gauged from a document he once discovered in an early printed book. This complete letter orders a horse for George, Duke of Saxony, and the title "Herzog zu Sachsen" in a letter dated 1499 contradicts authorities known to

1888. He had rolled it about the old leaves of early date (1000 A.D.–1500 A.D.) to be found elsewhere in this portfolio." Yet this and the other leaves treated in this section were arguably bought in 1885.

122 Collection #6532, Box 1, Folder 3; a parallel can be found in *Bibliotheca Casinensis seu Codicum Manuscriptorum qui in Tabulario Casinensi Asservantur*, Monte Cassino, 1877, vol. 3, 59–60 (ex "Florilegium Casinense").

123 Collection #6532, Box 1, Folder 2; Calkins, "Manuscripts" no. 20. Burr's notebook recorded this transaction as "Anglo-Saxon MS. of Bede" and "3 other illum. MSS." Since Burr stated that he bought "a half dozen folio leaves", because the count here is six leaves, perhaps the Chrysostom or other fragments were acquired in Lucca.

124 The ledger, which had the shelfmark B.63, is unidentifiable at present.

Burr on the date of Duke George's accession in 1500—when the title of “Herzog” would have been bestowed.¹²⁵ If Burr was charmed by ancient and illuminated fragments, he was intrigued by the potential insights of fragmentary historical records.

On his 1884–1886 venture Burr acquired many of Cornell's most notable manuscript books, some in Italy (1885), some in Paris (1886). He did not buy any fragments in Paris, however. By mid-March of 1886 Burr was visiting Trier, where he struck a deal with the librarian, Dr. Max Keuffer, to buy duplicates of early printed books from the Stadtbibliothek: “While the library is not at all in haste to sell, [Dr. Keuffer] regards this with reason as a particularly favorable opportunity.”¹²⁶ Naturally, Burr sought the rarest and best incunable copies, but he was especially attracted to those with manuscript pastedowns, flyleaves, and covers.¹²⁷ In a letter to President White, he boasted, “all the early works here [...] are in superb condition: bound in richly stamped leather with clasps, and the binding lined with old MS. (often of the 8th, 9th, or 10th century).”¹²⁸ Burr became obsessed with this binding waste, and his arrangement enabled Cornell to acquire its oldest Western manuscript specimens—all fragmentary—especially a ninth-century copy of a bible produced at St. Maximin's, Trier.¹²⁹ Burr described it to President

¹²⁵ Wolfgang Hildebrand, *Wolffgangi Hildebrands Neu-vermehrt, vortrefflich, ausserlesen curieuses Kunst und Wunderbuch*, Frankfurt: Henning Grossen, 1704 [Witchcraft BF1603 .H64 1704]. See G. L. Burr, “Duke George”, *The Nation* no. 1157 (1 September 1887), 172. This was the first publication of any manuscript fragment in White's library. Burr himself noted the chronological anomaly associated with the Duke's title.

¹²⁶ GLB to ADW, 29 March 1886. Even today this transaction bears the whiff of scandal.

¹²⁷ Burr's interest in such binding waste was relatively novel. As noted above, the Rush Hawkins sale of 1887 was the first American auction to note manuscript pastedowns and flyleaves of potential interest to collectors. These were usually described as “older” or “earlier.” As Burr reconnoitered the library at Trier, he noted its “rich collection of MSS. and incunabulae [sic].”

¹²⁸ GLB to ADW, 12 April 1886.

¹²⁹ Juan de Torquemada, *Quaestiones evangeliorum tam de tempore quam de sanctis*, Basel: Johann Amerbach, not after 1484 (Rare Books BX1756 .T68 1484+). In the accession catalogue, Burr wrote, “binding lined with leaves of a Carolingian MS.” There are six fragments, now catalogued as Collection #6532, Box 2, Fold-er 7. In his journal Burr noted the “Liber Aureus”, referring to the Ada Gospels

White with characteristic enthusiasm: “Bound with the volume [Juan de Torquemada, *Quaestiones evangeliorum*] are four leaves of MS. of the time of Charlemagne and doubtless from the school of Alcuin at Tours.”¹³⁰ Identifying them as eighth-century, Burr had the fragments removed to be photographed for the Pontifical Bible Commission (post 1902), yet insisting they: “[...] be restored to that volume after photographing them.” They never were. A second book (Pierre Bersuire, *Liber bibliae moralis*) had three manuscript leaves “of a handsome manuscript” which Burr dated 900 AD, also with an origin at St. Maximin’s.¹³¹ A third was “bound in a leaf of vellum MS.” which happens to be a Romanesque folio from Germany of St. Augustine’s *De doctrina christiana*.¹³² Clearly, Burr was not above cutting out flyleaves, despoiling pastedowns, and removing covers, though he usually recorded the parent volume, as he did in the preceding instances.¹³³

While in Trier, Burr learned of manuscripts for sale at Kyllburg, possibly from the picturesque convent of St. Thomas there: “I learned

(Trier, Stadtbibliothek Cod. 22). In a letter to President White (GLB to ADW, 17 April 1886), he compared the script of the St. Maximin bible fragments to that of the Ada Gospels, concluding, “their resemblance is remarkable.”

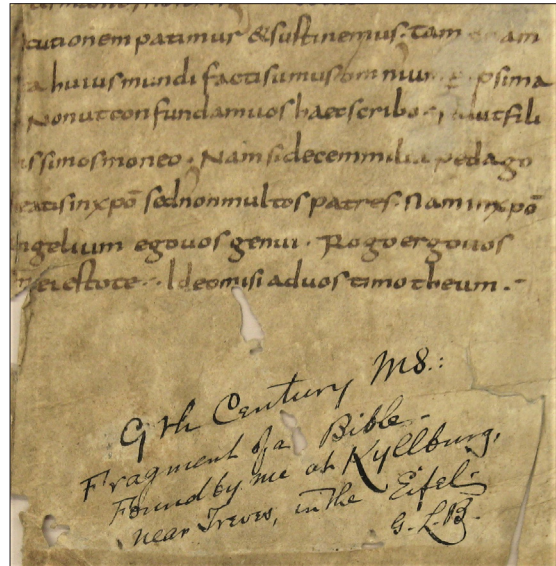
¹³⁰ GLB to ADW, 17 April 1886.

¹³¹ Ibid., “With this too are bound three leaves of a handsome MS. of about 900 A.D.—or perhaps a half-century earlier. This volume also from St. Maximin. The MS. leaves referred to here and above were used by the monks who bound these books, in the 15th century, as lining to the oaken covers and as fly-leaves, the codices from which they came having probably having fallen to pieces from age.” The source was Pierre Bersuire, *Liber bibliae moralis*, Cologne: Unkel, 1477 [Rare Books BS548 .B53 1477+]. This volume apparently yielded one scrap from a twelfth-century German breviary (Collection #6532, Box 2, Folder 6) and one strip of a bifolium cut from a tenth-century breviary (Collection #6532, Box 2, Folder 4). However, given that Burr counted three fragments (and only three in the *Quaestiones evangeliorum*) and that he would have recognized Carolingian Minuscule of early date, it seems entirely possible that the binding waste from this book got mixed up with specimens from other sources.

¹³² As stated in a marginal addition to the accession catalogue. Its binding was originally described as “Vel (old MS)”; the source was Georg von Puerbach, *Theoricae novae planetarum*, Cologne, 1591 (History of Science QB361 .P51 1591 tiny).

¹³³ Yet a large Italian fragment on vellum of Livy’s *Historiae* III.4–7 was clearly a pastedown and flyleaf of a book that has gone unrecorded.

Figure 28: An inscription by Burr commemorates the discovery of this ancient fragment, which he obtained on an excursion to Kyllburg. Cornell University, Kroch Library, Rare and Manuscript Collections



of a collection of old books and MSS. for sale at Kyllburg up in the Eifel, and have an invitation to come up there, which I shall avail myself of in a few days. The MSS. are, I suspect, strays from the convents etc. the time of the Revolution, and I hope to find something worthwhile.”¹³⁴ In fact, he bought yet another ninth-century fragment, now marked in fountain pen: “9th-Century MS.: Fragment of a Bible—Found by me at Kyllburg, near Treves, in the Eifel. G. L. B.” [Figure 28].¹³⁵ This fragment contains *capitula* for I Corinthians plus text from chapters 3–4. One can sense his exhilaration for this acquisition, the only one he ever annotated in ink. Fragments were affordable and recognized as historical artifacts that, at the very least, illustrated the kind of books lost from the historical record.

Burr came home in 1886, but not before befriending Dr. Gerhard Hennen “the bibliomaniac,” who proved instrumental in obtaining manuscript fragments for the White Library. Indeed, having detected Burr’s own bibliomania, Hennen apparently gathered

¹³⁴ GLB to ADW, 8 April 1886. In a letter dated 14 June 1886, Burr wrote that he had visited Schloss Malberg and examined “a maze of ancient Urkunden.” Could this bible fragment have been a purchase or gift from the archivist?

¹³⁵ Collection #6532, Box 2, Folder 5.

inexpensive fragments throughout 1887, some of which he sold to Burr in that year, and again in 1888 after Burr had returned to Europe for a second time (departing on 22 December 1887). A letter to Burr dated 6 January 1888 mentions two manuscripts dated 1438 which librarian O. D. Wright had received in Ithaca: “one has 28 leaves, the other 30.”¹³⁶ By this time Dr. Hennen had already sold Burr a copy of Girolamo Visconti’s treatise on witchcraft entitled, “*Opusculum in quo probatur lamias esse hereticas*,” etc., complete in one quire.¹³⁷ If, as Seymour de Ricci suggests,¹³⁸ Hennen bought the manuscript from J. Hess of Ellwangen, he was preemptively “shopping” on Burr’s behalf.

On 4 March 1888 Burr acquired a second, larger group of fragments from Hennen, whom he visited in Düsseldorf.¹³⁹ Writing to President White from Zurich on 5 May 1888, Burr noted the range, abundance and relative affordability of Dr. Hennen’s congeries:

Curious among the trifles [...] a considerable body of fragments of medieval MSS., including some as old as Charlemagne’s time, one fragment of a 10th century *Catalogus Haereticorum* (perhaps that of St. Philastrius), that graphic visio in monkish (...) of the rich man’s soul in hell [...] one or two papal bulls, an *Algorismus*, or mediaeval arithmetic, a *Computus cirometralis*, part of the apocryphal book of Abdias, and plenty more that I haven’t yet identified. Such things are not hard to

¹³⁶ The “Algorismus” and “Computus cirometralis” mentioned below.

¹³⁷ 4620 Bd. Ms. 48. In a penciled inscription on the last folio, Hennen described it as, “Autograph des Vicecomes aus dem Besitz Tosi’s des Musikers”, perhaps thinking of Pier Francesco Tosi, the Italian castrato, d. 1732. De Ricci suggests Paolo Antonio Tosi, publisher and bibliographer (d. 1851). This gathering was acquired with nine early seventeenth-century manuscripts on witchcraft, many fragmentary, also obtained from Dr. Hennen; each of them was wrapped in an incunable page, which Burr identified in the library catalogue as Hain 4602. Burr describes his acquisition of the manuscript in G. L. Burr, “A Witch-Hunter in the Book-Shops”, *The Bibliographer* 1 (1902), 431–46 (with facsimile of the opening page).

¹³⁸ *Census* II.1246.

¹³⁹ Burr kept a small ledger with entries for “European Trip, 1887–88”; on 4 March he wrote, “Pd. Dr. Hennen for books + Mss.” These were enumerated on a subsequent page of the ledger (see below) and described to President White in the letter of 5 May (below). He wrote to White because he paid Hennen for a manuscript fragment of the “Visio Filiberti” (which probably represents the “graphic visio” mentioned in the letter) on this date.

find, when one knows where to look for them; and they cost little when sought in the right quarter.¹⁴⁰

Burr's ledger contains a list of these manuscript fragments, most of which are also described in the accession catalogue (s.v. 4 Dec. 1888):¹⁴¹

Notebook	Accessions
Trier, Edicts, 16th–18th century. MS. 6.00	Trier Edicts, 16.–18. Centuries: MS. ¹⁴²
Trier. Urkunde, 1482. MS. 2.00 ¹⁴³	
Parabola Salomonis. MS. 5.00	Parabolæ Salomonis: MS. (26 ff.) ¹⁴⁴
Psalterium fragment. MS. of 800 A.D. 8.00	Psalterium fragment, ca. 800 A.D. ¹⁴⁵
Leaf of a Catal. heretic., ca. 850. 3.00	Leaf of Cat. of Heretics, ca. 900 A.D. ¹⁴⁶
Abdias. MS. frag., 2.00	Leaf of Abdias' Apoc. gospel. ¹⁴⁷
Gradual, MS. fragments, ca. 1200. 4.00	Gradual: fragments, ca. 1200. ¹⁴⁸
MS. fragments (various), 5 pieces. 4.00	Miscellaneous fragments of mediæval MS. (18 pieces).
MS. fragments (various), 7 pieces. 4.00	
MS. fragments medicine-pedagogy, ca. 1375. 3.50	Med.-pedagogy. MS., ca. 1400. ¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁰ GLB to ADW, 5 May 1888.

¹⁴¹ The Hennen manuscripts were accessioned after Burr returned to Ithaca and, because he was teaching in the fall of 1888, not until early December.

¹⁴² "Statutten Buch der Statt Trier" (4600 Bd. Ms. 428 ++).

¹⁴³ Unidentifiable at present.

¹⁴⁴ An unidentified commentary on the Parables (4600 Bd. Ms. 12 + Misc. Bd. Ms. 12). Other portions likely to have come from the same parent manuscript are the "Algorismus" and "Computus cirometralis" identified below.

¹⁴⁵ Probably Collection #6532, Box 2, Folder 1; possibly Box 2 Folder 15.

¹⁴⁶ Unidentifiable at present. Burr writes that he showed White a partial transcript of this fragment in the fall of 1887, so Hennen must have sent it and the fragments dated 1438 on approval.

¹⁴⁷ Cornell University Library, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, 4600-1562. This bifolium preserves portions of Jerome's commentary on Obadiah.

¹⁴⁸ Unidentifiable at present.

¹⁴⁹ 4600 Bd. Ms. 297 +, two pastedowns; see C. S. Northup, "Dialogus Inter Corpus et Animam: A Fragment and a Translation", *PMLA* 16 (1901), 503–25. The *Dialogus* belongs to a composite source, the components given by Northup. It seems possible that the *Dialogus* is the graphic "Visio" that Burr wrote of.

Notebook	Accessions
Algorismus.	Algorismus: MS. (28 ff.) ¹⁵⁰
Computus cirometralis. [bracketed: "sent me earlier."] 30.00	Computus cirometralis: MS. (30 ff.) ¹⁵¹
	Echternach Abbey revenue list, ca. 1600 ¹⁵² and
	twelve other pieces.

The prices were in Deutsche marks, and the sums were trivial for the most part. Some of these are challenging to identify in the Cornell collection, and most will probably remain unknown: the ancient Psalter fragment, which is possibly Box 2, Folder 1; the Gradual pieces, the "various" or "miscellaneous" fragments. The miscellaneous pieces total twelve in the notebook but as many as thirty in the accessions list.¹⁵³ The assortment impresses the most: scripture, liturgy, devotional, scientific, music. Burr (Hennen?) was clearly selecting representative textual specimens.

Acquisitions during this 1888 trip represent the fourth identifiable stratum of fragments acquired for Cornell. Others potentially acquired after this date are uncertain. For example, Burr misremembered buying certain fragments (mentioned above) at Lucca in 1888. Yet it seems plausible that he did obtain a partial quire of "criminal statutes" there (Box 4, Folder 11), in wrappers from an even earlier Lucchese statute collection (Box 3, Folder 18).¹⁵⁴ While other unprovenanced fragments in the Cornell collection might well have been obtained at this time as well, their date of acquisition is more

¹⁵⁰ Iohannes de Sacro Bosco, *De arte numerandi*, on paper (Misc. Bd. Mss. 146). This was written in the same hand as the "Computus cirometralis," (Misc. Bd. Ms. 115) which bears an internal date of 1438 and supplies a provenance at Ewig Priory, Attendorn, a house of Augustinian Canons founded in 1420. Burr conjectured that the *Parabola* might also be dated 1438.

¹⁵¹ Misc. Bd. Ms. 115.

¹⁵² Rare and Manuscript Collections, 4600-0728.

¹⁵³ The "Echternach Abbey revenue list, ca. 1600 and twelve other pieces" may designate the fourteen folios comprising the Echternach inventory of wheat and wine dues.

¹⁵⁴ The presentation in wrappers seems to be the source of Burr's confusion, as the 1886 fragments also came wrapped in a manuscript fragment.



Figure 29: White acquired this unusual initial featuring the Adoration of the Magi. Cornell University, Kroch Library, Rare and Manuscript Collections



Figure 30: A 16th-century Adoration of the Magi acquired by White. Cornell University, Kroch Library, Rare and Manuscript Collections

problematic. De Ricci recorded that President White bought a breviary folio as well as a group of ten miniatures and cuttings, including the “Munich S,” “around 1895.”¹⁵⁵ We know, however, that the “Munich S” had been in the collection at least by 1878. Furthermore, White was in Ithaca in 1895, and it seems somewhat implausible that he would have acquired Italian miniatures while serving as minister to Russia (1892–1894) or as ambassador to Germany (1897–1903). Perhaps he traveled to Italy at the end of his Russian consular appointment, however.¹⁵⁶

Whatever their circumstances of their acquisition, the unusual cuttings White allegedly acquired “around 1895” both broadened and complemented the pre-modern book art already in his library.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁵ *Census* II.1237. The breviary folio remains unidentified.

¹⁵⁶ A timeline for White’s residence in Europe can be found in *Autobiography of Andrew Dickson White* (New York: Century Co., 1904–1905), vol. II.

¹⁵⁷ According to Burr’s lecture notes on illuminated manuscripts: “a collection of detached initials from similar liturgical works and of leaves from the great folio psalters serve only to illustrate the art of illumination.”



Figure 31: Initial from a miscellaneous group of cuttings that White seems to have acquired around 1895. Cornell University, Kroch Library, Rare and Manuscript Collections

At least seven items, including six initials, can be confidently identified:

1. “Adoration of the Magi”, cutting on vellum. Southern France, perhaps Savoy, ca. 1450.¹⁵⁸ [Figure 29]
2. Border with bird; Initial M. Two cuttings on vellum. Central Italy, ca. 1350.¹⁵⁹
3. “Adoration of the Magi” in initial E. Northern Italy, ca. 1475.¹⁶⁰ [Figure 30]
4. Bifolium from a Choir Psalter. Northern Italy, fifteenth century.¹⁶¹
5. Initial V (U), cutting on vellum from a choir book. Italy, ca. 1450.¹⁶²
6. “Saint Peter and Saints”. Italy, ca. 1525.¹⁶³

Five other cuttings of late decorative initials (Box 1, Folders 12, 18–19, 21 [two items]) may also belong to this group [Figure 31], making up approximately “ten miscellaneous cut initials” that De Ricci mentions as White’s 1895 purchase. Coincidentally, White’s focus on illumination in the 1890s corresponds with donations of illuminated leaves to the Metropolitan Museum in the same decade.

¹⁵⁸ Collection #6532, Box 1, Folder 11; Calkins, “Manuscripts”, no. 18. I am grateful to Christopher de Hamel for this attribution. He suggests that the miniature shows both French and Italian influence.

¹⁵⁹ Collection #6532, Box 1, Folders 9.1, 9.2; Calkins, “Manuscripts”, no. 25.

¹⁶⁰ Collection #6532, Box 1, Folder 13. Calkins, “Manuscripts”, no. 35.

¹⁶¹ Collection #6532, Box 1, Folder 15. Calkins, “Manuscripts”, no. 36.

¹⁶² Collection #6532, Box 1, Folder 12. Calkins “Manuscripts”, no. 38.

¹⁶³ Collection #6532, Box 1, Folder 20. Calkins “Manuscripts”, no. 51.

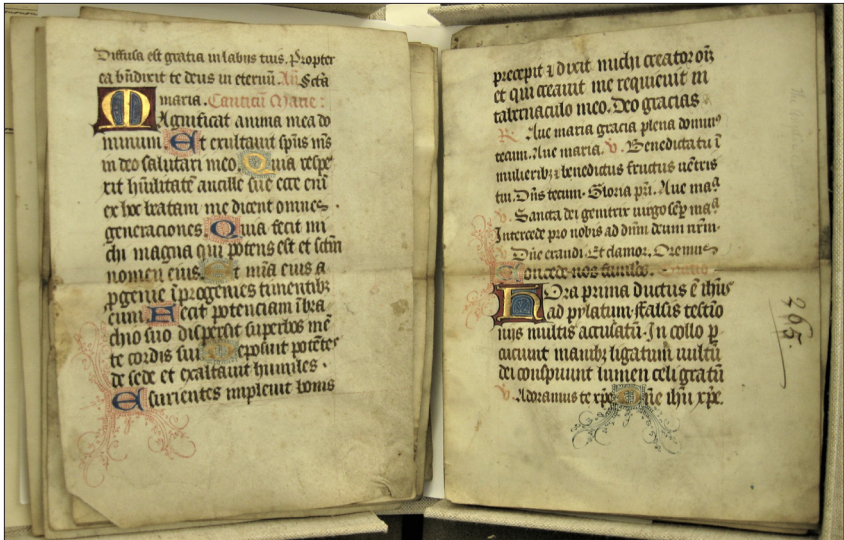


Figure 32: A fragmentary Hours acquired by the Watkinson Library between 1866 and 1886. Hartford, CT, Trinity College, Watkinson Library

The White Library periodically added fragments to its collection. Its last verifiable nineteenth-century fragment purchase was sixteen leaves (two quires) of *De octo partibus orationis* by Donatus, acquired in 1897 from Spürgatis (Leipzig), catalogue 55.¹⁶⁴ Burr had been appointed Professor of Medieval History at Cornell in 1892, and while he retained his title of Librarian of the Andrew Dickson White Library, he was focused on developing the witchcraft and Reformation collection. Nonetheless, he continued to pursue early manuscript acquisitions, as de Ricci explained:

Cornell University also owns a considerable number of minor vellum fragments, hardly worth listing in detail, and which have been mainly secured as practice-material for the classes in palaeography. Most of them are from the bindings of old books and a number are still attached to them.¹⁶⁵

After the White Library was donated to Cornell, its focus changed. Manuscripts were no longer collected in quantity, even

¹⁶⁴ *Census* II.1237; p. 2, item 8 in the Spürgatis catalogue.

¹⁶⁵ *Census* II.1254.

though some acquisitions continued to be made through Burr's tenure.

C. Manuscript Fragments at a Learned Society

While some library companies and learned societies held manuscript codices in the nineteenth century, only two have fragments that I have been able to document. One resided at the Watkinson Library (Hartford, CT). Between 1866 and 1886, the Watkinson acquired twenty-two soiled and disbound folios from a Flemish Book of Hours [Figure 32].¹⁶⁶ They were donated by George D. Sargeant, who died in 1886. These leaves have little value except to convey the range and quality of fragments available in North America at the time. Far more consequential is an unstudied American fragment collection at the Massachusetts Historical Society in Boston. The Society's founder, Jeremy Belknap, highlighted a need to acquire manuscripts as part of the institution's mission. He penned a "Plan of an Antiquarian Society, August 1790," in which he proposed a society "for the purpose of collecting, preserving, and communicating the antiquities of America." Each member, by Belknap's charge,

[...] shall engage to use his utmost endeavors to collect and communicate to the Society manuscripts, printed books, and pamphlets, historical facts, biographical anecdotes, observations in natural history, specimens of natural and artificial curiosities, and any other matters which may elucidate the natural and political history of America from the earliest times to the present day.¹⁶⁷

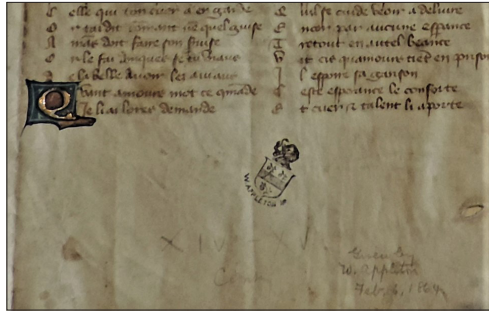
The society first met on 24 January 1791. On 27 December of that year Belknap donated the second documented Middle English manuscript in America,¹⁶⁸ called, according to an inscription on a flyleaf, "in the history of the English language an interesting document." It could be said to "elucidate the natural and political history of America from the earliest times."

¹⁶⁶ *Census* I.159. The manuscript is now held by Trinity College, CT.

¹⁶⁷ Quoted in C. Deane and C. Smith, "Introduction", *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* 1 (1791–1835) [1879], v–xxxvi, at xii.

¹⁶⁸ *Liber uricrisarium* by the English Dominican Henry Daniel, who lived in the second half of the fourteenth century. His *Liber* is dated 1379, but the MHS manuscript is mid-fifteenth century. The Fabyan Chronicle now at Harvard was written in late Middle English but dates to ca. 1510 (see *Census* I.954; now Harvard, Houghton Library MS Eng 766).

Figure 33: Appleton used two library stamps on these leaves, and each bears a penciled date of acquisition (6 February 1864). *Collection of the Massachusetts Historical Society*



Other pre-modern manuscripts were donated in 1802,¹⁶⁹ 1803, 1816, 1817, 1840, 1857, and 1864. Perhaps in recognition of Belknap's Middle English donation, benefactors gave early manuscripts in similarly exotic languages, particularly Middle Welsh, Greek, and Old French. While all of these arguably elucidated the history of settlement in North America, the 1864 donation of fourteen manuscript leaves and bifolia in Old French was especially notable.¹⁷⁰ These fragments represent eight texts, six in verse and two in prose. If we can trust the account that “fourteen pieces of ancient manuscripts” were donated, one item seems to be missing.

The donor of these leaves, William Sumner Appleton,¹⁷¹ was a member of the Society and served as its assistant librarian. He probably acquired the fragments as a collection during a Grand Tour in 1862.¹⁷² Stamped with the Appleton crest or a library marque “w. APPLETON, JR. / BOSTON,” they bear penciled notes, “Given by W. Appleton Feb 6 1864” [Figure 33]. The six verse-texts include: one

169 The *Laws of Hywel Dda*, ca. 1350, in Old Welsh, was donated in 1802 by “Miss Lucretia Graves.” Its acquisition was reported in meeting minutes from January 1803: “The following donations have been made to the Society since the meeting of January 26, 1802 [...] a Book brought out of Wales in the ancient character, from Miss Lucretia Graves”, in “Quarterly Meeting, January, 1803”, *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* 1 (1791–1835), 150–56, at 153. The manuscript was deaccessioned and sold in London by Sotheby's on 10 July 2012 (lot 23).

170 N. B. Shurtleff, “Annual Report of the Librarian”, *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* 7 (1863–64), 355–59, at 356.

171 Charles C. Smith, “Mémorial of William Sumner Appleton”, *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, s.s. 17 (1903), 516–31.

172 Smith, “Mémorial”, 518.

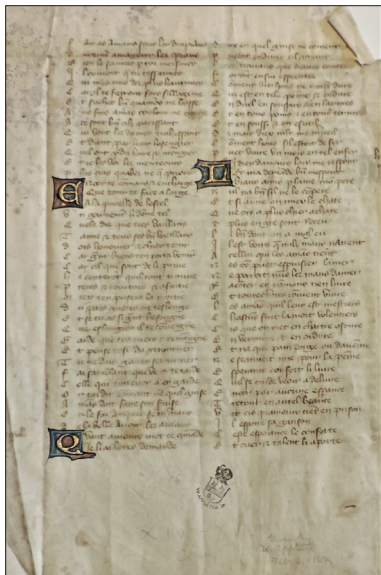


Figure 34: This bifolium of *Roman de la Rose* was unknown to scholarship until very recently. Collection of the Massachusetts Historical Society

Figure 36: While the *Roman de Tristan* was very popular in thirteenth-century France, finding this bifolium in a mid-nineteenth-century American collection is astonishing. Collection of the Massachusetts Historical Society

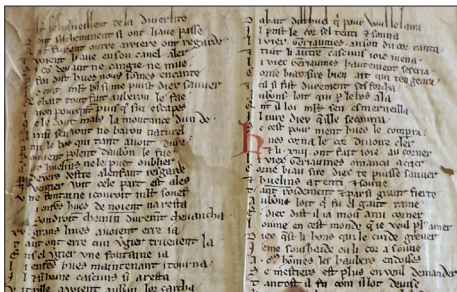
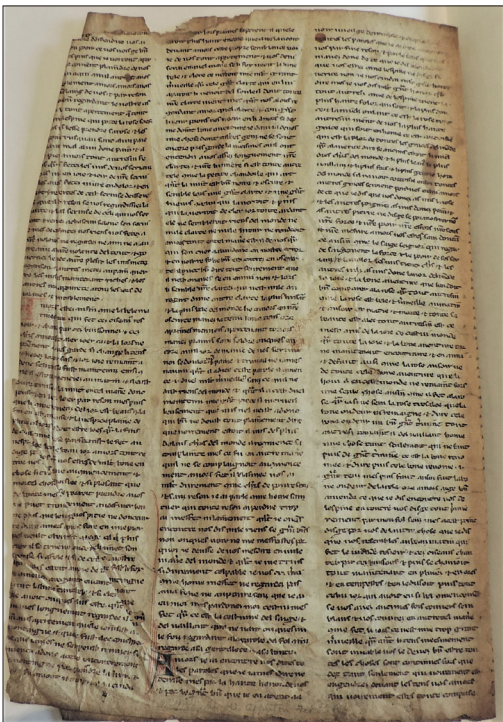


Figure 35: Appleton donated this bifolium of *Huon de Bordeaux*, a very popular romance in medieval France. Collection of the Massachusetts Historical Society



bifolium of *Roman de la Rose* [Figure 34],¹⁷³ three bifolia of the allegorical *Pélerinage de la vie humaine*,¹⁷⁴ a bifolium of an unidentified “Mistère de la Passion,”¹⁷⁵ a bifolium of the *chanson de geste* known as “Huon of Bordeaux” [Figure 35],¹⁷⁶ two folios of the *Chevalier au Lion* (the romance of Yvain) by Chrétien de Troyes,¹⁷⁷ and, in two small pieces, a “continuation” of *Perceval*, Chrétien’s grail romance.¹⁷⁸ Fragments in French prose include a large bifolium of the *Roman de Tristan* [Figure 36],¹⁷⁹ a single leaf of the French translation of the *Ordo iudiciarius* by Tancred of Bologna, and (allegedly) two folios “prepared for illumination” of the French translation by Raoul de Presles of St. Augustine’s *City of God*. This Raoul de Presles seems to have gone missing.¹⁸⁰ All of the manuscripts originated in bindings—as pastedowns, padding, covers and spine reinforcements.

¹⁷³ Boston, Massachusetts Historical Society, Special Colls., Appleton O.S. Folder 3. Apparently folios 1 and 10 of a quinion used as the cover of a ledger; F. Lecoy, *Le Roman de la Rose par Guillaume de Lorris et Jean de Meun*, Paris, 1965–70, vv. 2453–2608, 3253–3412, with many textual deviations.

¹⁷⁴ Appleton O.S. Folder 5. The text comes from the second recension, ed. J. J. Stürzinger, *Le Pélerinage de Vie Humaine*, London, 1893, vv. 5342–5497; vv. 5800–5952. An intervening bifolium is missing. A second group of two bifolia (Appleton O.S. Folder 6), less ornate, contains vv. 11,526–11,648; 11,787–11,912; 12,195–12,325; 12,447–12,568. This group of leaves was intended to be illustrated, but the miniatures were never added.

¹⁷⁵ In de Ricci’s nomenclature (*Census* I.939). Probably from the same source as the less ornate bifolia of the *Pélerinage*.

¹⁷⁶ Appleton O.S. Folder 1. P. Ruelle, *Huon de Bordeaux*, Brussels, 1960, vv. 3709–4079. Only three complete manuscripts of *Huon* are known, and this bifolium has continuous text. For an edition and textual analysis, see K. V. Sinclair, “Un nouveau manuscrit de la version décasyllabique de Huon de Bordeaux”, *Le Moyen Âge* 85 (1979), 445–64.

¹⁷⁷ Appleton O.S. Folder 2. W. W. Kibler, Chrétien de Troyes: *The Knight with the Lion, or Yvain (Le Chevalier au Lion)*, New York, 1985, vv. 3867–4026, 4987–5148.

¹⁷⁸ Appleton O.S. Folder 2. Continuation of the Old French *Perceval* by Chrétien de Troyes; see W. Roach, *The Continuations of the Old French Perceval of Chrétien de Troyes*, vol. 1, Philadelphia, 1949, vv. 5482 (14,438)–ca. 5501 (14,457); ca. 5520 (14,476)–5538 (14,494), and ca. 5443 (14,399)–5460 (14,416)–5565; (14,521)–5582 (14,538). The text has significant lexical variants.

¹⁷⁹ Appleton O.S. Folder 4. R. L. Curtis, *Le Roman de Tristan en Prose III*, Cambridge, 1985, 197.25–202.56, 214.33–220.17.

¹⁸⁰ O. Bertrand, *La Cité de Dieu de Saint Augustin Traduite par Raoul de Presles (1371–1375)*, Paris, 2013, 66. De Ricci identified this fragment as Raoul’s

The rarity of the contents and relatively uniform focus (verse texts and romances) suggest that it had been compiled in France and sold by a collector, binder, or bouquiniste.¹⁸¹

As an example of fragments available in mid-century Europe, Appleton's portfolio of Old French verse cannot be rivaled by any other North America historical society, Athenaeum or library company. But what value did they hold for Appleton and for the Society's membership? On the one hand, they were illustrative of elite European culture. Representing vestiges of medieval French secular entertainment—chivalric romance, pious allegory, and love theory—the fragments exemplified “valuable works in almost every department of historical literature.”¹⁸² On the other hand, they had an additional “value” as scribal artifacts. The Society's *Proceedings* for 1864 include the following remarks: “The most valuable additions to the library have been as follows [...] From William Appleton, Esq. [...] fourteen pieces of ancient manuscripts, illustrative of the style of chirography at different periods of time.”¹⁸³ These remarks probably characterize Appleton's own understanding of his gift, which is notable precisely because its contents range in date from the twelfth through the fifteenth centuries. It is in fact a representative history of French vernacular paleography, and the first of its kind in North America.

commentary on *Aeneid* I, but the incipit he cites identifies the text decisively (*Census* I.939).

181 Probably on the same journey Appleton acquired a mortgage dated 1405 and signed by Louis duc d'Orléans in favor of the Celestines of Sens. He donated this document in 1863 and published it in “October Meeting,” *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* 7 (1863–64), 152–54, with a color plate of the seal following page 154.

182 T. C. Amory, Jr., “Annual Report of the Librarian,” *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* 8 (1864–65), 262–67, at 263. Amory pleads for funds to “enrich” the library “with the ancient historians, chronicles and memoirs of mediæval Europe.”

183 N. B. Shurtleff, “Annual Report of the Librarian,” *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* 7 (1863–64), 355–59, at 356.

VI. Conclusion: Speculations on the Cultural Contexts of Fragment Collecting in Nineteenth-Century America

The preceding evidence reveals two kinds of fragment collections in North America, both dependent on specific collecting rationales. Private collectors gathered “aesthetic” compendia of miniatures and cuttings illustrative of medieval and Renaissance book arts. These could be loose folios like those given in the 1890s to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, but they were more often pieces pasted into albums, and probably trimmed to enhance their eye-appeal. They could also be bound in grangerized books to produce cultural histories illustrative of period arts, but this configuration is documentable in only one instance. A second kind of collection could be called “academic” or “pedagogical.” The New York University album, for example, was ostensibly donated as a student resource. While no donor correspondence survives, an advertisement emphasizes the album’s utility to students and researchers [Figure 20]:

A rare collection of 171 leaves or fragments of ancient manuscripts, in various languages [...] Old documents, chronicles, Diaries, Wills, music, etc. [...] of interest and value especially to the student or research worker [...] unlimited opportunity for study and discovery, especially in respect to the numerous types of manuscript work represented.

The representative contents and loose chronological organization of the NYU album seem broadly academic, suggesting a concern for paleography, format, and textual exemplification. Its objectives overlap with Appleton’s donations to the Massachusetts Historical Society. The collection of Old French verse and prose not only showcased medieval literary achievements and textual formats but also exemplified three centuries of paleographical development.

The Cornell fragments differed in pedagogical utility, however. They enhanced an extensive collection of early manuscripts that elucidated President White’s research subject, the “warfare” of science with Christianity.¹⁸⁴ Although Burr thought the fragments, like

¹⁸⁴ A. D. White, *A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom*, 2 vols., New York, 1896. These volumes developed ideas published in “The

documents, would highlight historical moments or illustrate Great Man historiography, White viewed medieval books as evidence of credulous Catholic piety. For example, he was fascinated by the way philosophy or belief took form aesthetically. In 1896 he remarked, “the various stages in the evolution of scholastic theology were also embodied in sacred art, and especially in [...] missal painting.”¹⁸⁵ Manuscript illuminations propagandized theology, when, for example, Creation was depicted as physical labor and God as an architect.¹⁸⁶ Obsessed in the 1880s by the influence of Protestant dogma on Catholic piety and popular religion, White sought sixteenth-century manuscripts that highlighted either theological conservatism or challenges to orthodoxy. As collectors, both White and Burr would have interpreted illuminated manuscripts and miniatures against their prevailing Reformation bias—although Burr was utterly transfixed by the artwork. In other words, White’s library, including the manuscripts ultimately reflected the contours of his scholarly interests.

All of these emphases derived from trends emergent in the diverse cultural environments of the New World. The aesthetic focus responded to bourgeois specimen collecting, the souvenir culture of elites materially detached from their Old World origins. Whether shopping on Grand Tours or by catalogue, moneyed American bibliophiles could still indulge in the refined pursuits of European collectors. The academic collecting rationale responded to the antiquarianism of America’s learned societies: documentary history, preservation, and illustration. “Curious” manuscript specimens became objects of artifactual study in American universities based on the German research university, especially at Cornell and Johns Hopkins. President White was in fact responding to the focus of *Kulturgeschichte* that he absorbed as a graduate student in

Warfare of Science”, *Popular Science Monthly* 8 (February and March 1876), 385–409 and 553–70, reissued as a book under the same title later that year (New York, 1876).

¹⁸⁵ White, *History*, 11.

¹⁸⁶ White, *History*, 3.

Germany. Collections of manuscript fragments that survive from nineteenth-century America therefore reflect intellectual ideals established in the period for private connoisseurship and public higher education.