Charles William Dyson Perrins as a Collector of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts c. 1900-1920

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1 The name Charles William Dyson Perrins is well-known in manuscript studies thanks to the collection he built in the early twentieth century, published in a large format catalogue in 1920. If the name is known outside manuscript studies, it is probably in connection with the Lea and Perrins Worcestershire Sauce developed by his grandfather, which helped to make the family’s fortune, or for his philanthropic generosity. Yet despite the familiarity of Perrins’ name, the personality of the collector remains elusive, and descriptions of Perrins present him as a ‘modest, shy, bookish man’. Born on the 25th of May 1864, Perrins inherited the family business on the death of his father in 1887. However, he pursued a career in the army, serving with the Highland Light Infantry until 1892. In 1889 he married Catherine Gregory and they settled near Malvern, eventually moving into the Perrins family home, Davenham Bank. In 1898 they purchased Ardross Castle in Scotland, spending the summers there. Perrins’ enthusiasm for manuscripts appears to have developed as an extension of an
interest in rare books, presumably in the context of building libraries for his homes. He was purchasing early printed books from the dealer J. & J. Leighton before he began buying manuscripts from them in 1904.  

In the 1920 catalogue, Perrins' first purchases of manuscripts are ascribed to 1902, and although the information provided in that catalogue is not always reliable, Perrins appears to have begun buying manuscripts around this time. A transformational event for Perrins' manuscript collection, which later became a legend of the manuscript trade, occurred in July 1904, when he was offered the Braybrooke or Gorleston Psalter by the bookseller Henry Sotheran Ltd, having apparently gone into the bookshop in search of something to read on the train (Fig. 1). 

Perrins took the book to his country house near Malvern and invited Sydney Cockerell to give an opinion on whether it was worth the asking price of £5,250 (very approximately £500,000 today), which the well-known collector Henry Yates Thompson had already baulked at. Cockerell recommended the purchase of the manuscript, which not only propelled Perrins into an elite group of wealthy collectors, but was the start of a relationship between the two men that played a major role in shaping and publicising Perrins' collection. Cockerell's diaries provide valuable, if fragmentary, insights into Perrins' subsequent encounters with manuscripts. In 1907 Cockerell's monograph on the Gorleston Psalter was published, and in 1908 the Burlington Fine Arts Club exhibition of manuscripts, largely curated by Cockerell, was built around a core loan of fifty of Perrins' manuscripts, including the Psalter. Cockerell spent a considerable amount of time cataloguing the books exhibited in 1908, but his
subsequent appointment as director of the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge meant that the task of producing a catalogue of Perrins’ manuscripts was entrusted to Sir George Warner, retired Keeper of Manuscripts at the British Museum. That catalogue, containing 135 volumes, appeared in 1920. The 1908 and 1920 catalogues therefore provide snapshots of parts of the collection at two points in time. In addition, in 1907 Perrins sold some of his manuscripts at Sotheby’s, offering insights into the material that he no longer wanted to keep. By 1920 Perrins’ manuscript collecting had dramatically reduced, though he retained the manuscripts until his death in 1958.

Unlike Yates Thompson, Perrins left few clues as to the principles that guided his collecting. The aim of this article is therefore to examine the evidence for the choices made in acquiring, cataloguing and disposing of material, to begin to provide insights into the formation of Perrins’ collection, the nature of his taste, and his place within a wider network of collectors and scholars.

The first purchases made by Perrins, before his meeting with Cockerell in July 1904, presumably shed light on his own early taste. In this period, Perrins is recorded as buying from two well-known dealers: Robson & Co. and J. & J. Leighton. In addition, according to Warner’s catalogue, Perrins obtained six manuscripts at the sale of Walter Sneyd’s (d. 1888) collection at Sotheby’s in December 1903. Sotheby’s annotated sale catalogue records that one of these manuscripts was bought by the dealer Maggs Brothers. The others were purchased by someone using the name “Thomas”, and eight other manuscripts bought by “Thomas” at this sale were sold by Perrins in 1907 (including four manuscripts on paper). At a sale in 1902 “Thomas” is also listed as the buyer for a manuscript that Perrins sold in 1907. In Leighton’s records, the name Thomas appears as part of entries for Michael Tomkinson, and it seems that he was using this name as an alias. Tomkinson’s property, Franche Hall, near Kidderminster, was about 25 miles from Perrins’ house at Malvern. Perrins certainly obtained manuscripts that had been in Tomkinson’s collection, as some of the manuscripts that were in Perrins’ hands by 1908 had Tomkinson’s bookplates, however it is unclear whether he had acquired these manuscripts before his meeting with Cockerell. In addition, more of the manuscripts sold in 1907 may have been acquired before July 1904. However, in the first years of his collecting Perrins appears to have bought from a small number of established dealers and perhaps, via Tomkinson, at a major auction.

Warner’s catalogue preserved Tomkinson’s anonymity as a dealer in manuscripts, but if we assume that his information was correct and that Perrins obtained the manuscripts bought by “Thomas” and Maggs from the Sneyd sale in December 1903 or shortly thereafter, there are nineteen manuscripts on parchment that can located in Perrins’ collection before his meeting with Cockerell in July 1904. A further a manuscript bought by “Thomas” in 1902 may also have been in his ownership at this time. Of these twenty volumes, six were Books of Hours produced in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and another three were fifteenth- and sixteenth-century liturgical books. These were the most common types of books available and were often written about derisively. However, from the outset Perrins appears to have been interested in lavishly decorated manuscripts. Four of the manuscripts were included in the Burlington Fine Arts Club exhibition of illuminated manuscripts in 1908, with the sixteenth-century Ferial Psalter’s miniatures being described as ‘good examples of the art at a period of decline’ (Fig. 2).
Similarly, Perrins’ early purchases included three thirteenth and fourteenth-century Bibles, which were also produced in large numbers, but Perrins again chose examples with historiated initials. The remaining acquisitions on parchment in this period were more unusual. These were fourteenth-century manuscripts containing Gregory’s Dialogues (also included in the 1908 exhibition), Cicero’s *De Rhetorica*, material about St Jerome, and a chronicle; fifteenth-century volumes of Aristotle, Plutarch’s lives, and Statutes of England; and a sixteenth-century collection of Christian texts. With the exception of the Statutes of England, all of the manuscripts in this final group were made in Italy, suggesting that Perrins was particularly drawn to Italian Renaissance manuscripts. Similarly, Italian manuscripts from the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries made up roughly a third of the manuscripts sold in 1907. This may indicate that Perrins was interested in manuscripts as an extension of his enthusiasm for early printed books of the same period.

The prices paid by Perrins for manuscripts before July 1904 varied considerably (although the price data is not complete). At this time manuscripts could be obtained relatively cheaply. At the sale of the Sneyd manuscripts in 1903 the sixteenth-century collection of Christian texts fetched £4 15s and the chronicle £12 12s. The works on paper were cheaper, with “Thomas” obtaining a fifteenth-century manuscript (lot 76) for just 7 shillings. Yet Perrins was prepared to pay much larger sums. At the same sale, the copy of Gregory’s Dialogues sold for £220, and the Books of Hours for £190 and £280. If “Thomas” was buying on Perrins’ behalf, Perrins probably paid the sale prices plus a commission. However, if Perrins bought the manuscripts from Tomkinson at a later date he may have paid more. That Perrins was not watching the market closely is
suggested by his purchases from Leighton. In 1903 Leighton bought a copy of Plutarch’s *Lives* at auction for £15. It was then sold to Alfred Higgins for £19 10s. After Higgins’ sudden death in October 1903, Leighton repurchased the manuscript at the auction of Higgins’ manuscripts for just £10 10s. It was sold sixteen days later to Perrins for £24, giving Leighton an excellent profit. Similarly, Leighton had purchased a copy of the Statutes of England at the Higgins sale for £45 and a Bible for £70, selling them on to Perrins for £70 and £150 respectively. Perrins was not the only person with whom Leighton made such profits, but it is striking that the profit made on the Plutarch manuscript when sold to Higgins was much more modest.

In 1904 Perrins spent considerably less on manuscripts than on the printed books that he purchased from Leighton, both in total and for an individual item, as he paid £270 for Pierre le Rouge’s *La mer des histoires*, published in 1488. On the 22nd of March alone he paid £950 to Leighton for ‘various books’ and his total expenditure for the year with Leighton was about £2,250. Yet even within the varied expenditure of the early years of Perrins’ collecting, the purchase of the Gorleston Psalter (a large, 32.5 x 23.5 cm, fourteenth-century, English, volume with illumination on every page) for £5,250 was completely unprecedented, and this explains why Perrins felt the need to consult someone more experienced. Cockerell was extremely well qualified to offer an opinion, as he knew the market well and was advising Yates Thompson as well as cataloguing his manuscripts. When he could, Cockerell was also buying manuscripts for his own collection, but something like the Gorleston Psalter was far beyond his means. Convincing Perrins to buy the manuscript was therefore also the beginning of a relationship that enabled both men to study the book over several years.

In the early days of his collecting Perrins appears to have bought sporadically, and to have purchased multiple manuscripts at a time. This pattern continued after his meeting with Cockerell, and Cockerell helped to facilitate some of his purchases. In November 1904, Cockerell’s diary records that he went ‘to see Mr Perrins and show him some MSS. Arundel 83, Apoc. 17333, Tenison Ps[alter] and the Little Bible in the case’. Most of these items were probably printed books, but they seem to have included at least one manuscript: a fifteenth-century copy of the Epistles of St Jerome later selected for the Burlington exhibition. In December 1904, Cockerell bought a thirteenth-century manuscript of the New Testament and Wisdom books with historiated initials at Sotheby’s that immediately went into Perrins’ collection, suggesting that Cockerell was either acting on his behalf or with Perrins in mind.

At the same time, Cockerell was educating Perrins about illuminated manuscripts. On the day after the Sotheby’s sale, his diary records ‘Met Dyson Perrins at the B[ritish] M[useum] in the morning and showed him some MSS. Arundel 83, Apoc. 17333, Tenison Ps[alter] and the Little Bible in the case’. The two highly illuminated Psalters were presumably deemed to be of interest to Perrins in the light of his recent purchase of the Gorleston Psalter. The inclusion of the Apocalypse is suggestive, because Cockerell was soon involved in an attempt to interest Perrins in an illuminated Apocalypse owned by Charles Fairfax Murray. On the 3rd of March 1905 Cockerell went with Perrins to see Murray, and Perrins ‘bought 7 good MSS’ from a selection that Cockerell and Murray had determined earlier in the week. The purchased volumes did not include the Apocalypse, but Cockerell wrote to Murray on the 12th of March stating that ‘I should like Perrins to have the Apocalypse to go beside his Braybrooke Psalter, & if ever you feel disposed to part with it at cost price I will do my best to persuade him. At the price
you named he did not seem at all tempted — & indeed I expect that for the present he feels that he has spent enough’. Perrins did buy the thirteenth-century Apocalypse in 1906, it became MS 10 in Warner’s catalogue and is now in the J. Paul Getty Museum (MS Ludwig III 1).

Perrins’ other purchases in 1905 appear to have been relatively modest, although more of the fifty-six pre-seventeenth-century manuscripts (including works on paper) sold in 1907 were probably purchased in 1905. Manuscripts were again purchased from Leighton, and Perrins also bought from two other dealers; J. Pearson & Co. and Bernard Quaritch Ltd. From Leighton, Perrins acquired a Book of Hours (made in York, c. 1300) and another copy of the Statutes of England, with historiated initials representing some of the kings. Pearson provided him with a late-fifteenth-century Italian Breviary, and from Quaritch Perrins bought a thirteenth-century English Psalter, a fifteenth-century French Book of Hours, and a thirteenth-century French Bible. A further Book of Hours, made in Italy at the end of the fifteenth century was also purchased privately in this year. It had previously been owned by Tomkinson and may have been bought from him. These examples demonstrate that despite his fondness for Italian books, Perrins was collecting a variety of material. What unites these manuscripts is that they were all richly illuminated, with figurative imagery.

Perrins’ interest in illuminated manuscripts was clearly running high in 1905 as he took the Gorleston Psalter around Europe to compare it with other manuscripts, often accompanied by Cockerell. This included visits to the Bodleian Library in Oxford, where they compared the Gorleston Psalter to the Ormesby Psalter (Cockerell observing that ‘on the whole it stood the test well, though there is nothing in it to equal the finest of the Ormesby pages’) and to Douai (where they compared it to the Douai Psalter and Cockerell declared Perrins’ manuscript ‘the richer’ but the Douai Psalter ‘by far the finer book’). Cockerell may not have shared these judgements with Perrins, but the belief of both men in the importance of the Psalter is demonstrated in their commitment to undertaking these journeys with the manuscript. In addition, Perrins showed the book to other collectors and scholars including Yates Thompson, Warner, and Charles St John Hornby. It is not hard to see why it was accepted as an exceptional manuscript. It is in very good condition and the extensive decoration includes a spectacular Beatus initial with a border extending the Tree of Jesse and incorporating scenes of Christ’s nativity (Fig. 1), other, smaller, historiated initials, a full-page image of the crucifixion (a later addition), and attractive, often intriguing, animals, human figures and grotesques in the margins, repaying repeated study. The hint at a noble medieval owner potentially provided by a coat of arms on f. 69 also intrigued Perrins, who noted it in his foreword to Cockerell’s monograph on the manuscript in 1907, although Perrins seems to have been less concerned about manuscripts’ provenance than Yates Thompson. His interest in the Psalter may also have contributed to his decision to buy some similar material, notably the Psalter of Richard of Canterbury (Warner no. 14), in 1907.

While studying the Gorleston Psalter, Cockerell continued to act as an intermediary for Perrins, bargaining for the thirteenth-century English Hours illuminated by William de Brailes (now British Library MS 49999) with the dealer Rosenthal during a visit to Paris in April 1906, and securing it for £1,350. This was probably the second most expensive manuscript Perrins had bought by that point, and Cockerell may have helped to convince Perrins of its importance. On that trip Cockerell and Perris also examined...
manuscripts at the Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève, visited the Musée Cluny and the Bibliothèque nationale and saw the Très-Riches Heures of the Duc de Berry at Chantilly. However, Perrins was also buying without Cockerell’s advice, sometimes leaving Cockerell unimpressed. On the 21st of May 1906 Cockerell’s diary records a visit to Malvern with Warner where he found ‘a new French Psalter which I had not seen before, a showy book c. 1270, but one that does not improve on acquaintance’.46 (This volume is now also in the J. Paul Getty Museum, MS Ludwig VIII 4, and contains a prefatory cycle of full-page painted and gilded images as well as historiated initials.) Similarly in 1907, Cockerell noted that Perrins ‘showed me a little, rather ugly Touraine Horae, c. 1480 that he had just bought’ (probably from Sothean) (Fig. 3).47

Figure 3
Book of Hours described by Sydney Cockerell as ‘rather ugly’, as reproduced in Warner’s catalogue of Perrins’ manuscripts, 1920.

Such judgements are, of course, subjective, and the ‘rather ugly’ manuscript fetched the relatively high price of £10,500 at auction in 1959, making it the fourth most expensive Book of Hours sold at the auctions of Perrins’ manuscripts after his death. The Psalter sold at the same sale for £26,000.

Some of the purchases attributed to 1906 in Warner’s catalogue may in fact have been made in 1905 (as the seven manuscripts bought from Murray that year are not identified), but in 1906 the scale of Perrins’ collection of manuscripts increased substantially with the purchase of two large collections. In May, through Leighton, Perrins bought the whole of the collection that R. C. Fisher had intended to put up for sale at Sotheby’s.48 This was mostly early printed books, but included four manuscripts (two on paper).49 In July, Cockerell, attempting to persuade Yates Thompson to buy a manuscript, observed ‘Mr Perrins is masticating the Fisher collection & buying nothing just now, so you will not have him in the field against you’.50 However in late 1906 Perrins made what was probably the biggest single purchase of manuscripts of his
collecting career, buying at least thirty-three additional manuscripts from Murray. On the 29th of September Cockerell’s diary records that he lunched with Murray and learned that he was prepared to sell about one hundred manuscripts, worth £25,000. If Cockerell engineered Perrins’ second purchase from Murray it is not recorded in his diary. The volumes bought by Perrins included the Apocalypse rejected the previous year, and the earliest manuscript in his collection; a ninth-century Gospel Lectionary (previously in the Earl of Ashburnham’s collection, from which Murray had purchased it in 1901 for £320). The manuscripts acquired from Murray in 1905 and 1906 also included two copies of the Gospels in Greek and a Passover Haggadah in Hebrew and Aramaic. Yet whilst Perrins might have been interested in expanding the scope of his collection, most of the purchases from Murray were fifteenth-century volumes (on a wide range of subjects), once again seemingly selected primarily for their illumination. Indeed, in the introduction to the 1920 catalogue Warner observed that Perrins’ manuscripts had been ‘acquired mainly for their artistic interest without any particular regard to the nature of their literary contents’.

Perrins’ schooling had probably taught him to read Latin and some Greek. Moreover, the Renaissance Italian manuscripts that he bought were usually written in clear and legible hands (Fig. 4).

Figure 4
Ovid, as reproduced in Warner’s catalogue of Perrins’ manuscripts, 1920.

However, it is unlikely that he could read all the languages that were represented in his collection. In addition to the Hebrew manuscript bought from Murray, Perrins acquired manuscripts in French, Dutch, Spanish, Czech, Armenian, and Persian. This again suggests that the visual appearance of the manuscripts was a major part of their appeal. The manuscripts in Armenian and Persian were relatively late purchases (in
1911 and 1909 respectively), suggesting that Perrins’ interests broadened over time. Yet it was only with the publication of the manuscripts catalogue in 1920 that a clear distinction was drawn in Perrins’ collection between manuscripts and other books, serving as a reminder that he did not perceive these volumes solely as art objects.

In 1907, Perrins purged his collection, sending forty-three manuscripts on parchment produced before 1600 for sale anonymously at Sotheby’s on the 17th of June as part of a selection of rare books and manuscripts. One of the factors that seems to have been applied in deciding what to sell was the condition of the books, as many were either incomplete or stained. Cockerell may, once again, have played a part in guiding Perrins. On the 5th of April 1907 Cockerell began ‘regular work with Mr Perrins to whose manuscripts I have now arranged to give half my time’, working on the manuscripts at Perrins’ houses at both Malvern and Ardross. Although they were described as ‘a Selected Portion of the Choice and Valuable Library of Ancient Manuscripts and Early Printed Books’, some of the manuscripts sent to auction sold for less than Perrins had paid for them. Inevitably, material rejected from a collection is regarded as second best, and this may have helped to suppress prices, but it lends weight to the hypothesis that Perrins was prepared to pay high prices at the outset of his collecting.

The 1907 sale included printed books (on both parchment and paper) as well as manuscripts, underlining the status of manuscripts, even when illuminated, as books, rather than a clearly defined category of material in this period. Moreover, although the two items that attracted the highest prices were manuscripts (a copy of Ovid’s fables obtained from Murray sold for £200 (lot 336, now New York, Morgan Library M. 443) and a copy of the Roman de la Rose for £190 (lot 394)), manuscript material was not inherently more valuable than early printed books. The next highest price was for a fifteenth-century printed Psalter (£128, lot 373), and a sixteenth-century printed Book of Hours (lot 255) sold for more than any of the manuscript Hours (at £79). The printed Hours was described as ‘extremely rare’ and contained thirteen woodcuts attributed to Geoffroy Tory, and proved more desirable than the ‘very brilliant Manuscript’ of the same period with ten full-page and six small miniatures that fetched £55 (lot 253).

The tight-knit nature of the trade in manuscripts in this period is indicated by the sale of lot 191, a volume of saints’ lives that Perrins had apparently acquired from “Thomas” (who paid £4 15s for it in 1903), back to “Thomas” for £2 10s. Similarly, some of the manuscripts that had come from Murray were bought by Leighton and sold on to Murray. Dealers such as Leighton and Quaritch often bought back manuscripts that had previously passed through their hands, which had the advantage that they already had descriptions and records for them.

The 1907 sale of manuscripts and the recruitment of Cockerell were probably part of an attempt to organise Perrins’ rapidly growing collection that may also have involved the creation of a numbering system. The numbers were written on small round labels with the words ‘Perrins collection’ in blue and usually inserted into the back covers of the manuscripts. Christopher de Hamel suggested that the numbers might reflect the order in which manuscripts were acquired, but unfortunately this is does not appear to be the case. However, no labels appear in the manuscripts sold in 1907. This system was superseded by a second set of numbers, this time on larger, round labels with black boarders and the text ‘C. W. Dyson Perrins’ that were usually placed, together with a book plate, in the front of manuscripts. This second series of numbers matches the numbers used in Warner’s catalogue, where the manuscripts were organised by
country and then chronologically. The same labels were also used in the early printed books.

Cockerell’s work for Perrins in 1907 helped shape his plans for an exhibition of illuminated manuscripts, in which these objects would be displayed for their artistic qualities. By modern standards the exhibition took shape remarkably quickly, after the decision to hold it was approved at a committee meeting in December 1907. On the 16th of February 1908, Cockerell’s diary records that he ‘went through Perrins’s MSS for the Burlington Fine Arts Club Exhib. with Dr Warner and chose fifty’. The following week he was formally appointed to manage the exhibition, and began visiting public and private collections to select possible loans. Although Perrins’ collection provided a core for the exhibition, it did not allow Cockerell to display a canon of illumination from across Europe and throughout the Middle Ages (with an emphasis on English books), an aim also expressed by Yates Thompson in the context of his collection, though in reality his collection favoured manuscripts made in France. Perrins’ loans to the exhibition included books from France, Italy, Germany, England, Switzerland, Spain, Flanders and the Netherlands and from every century from the tenth to the sixteenth. However, of his fifty loans, the largest group were Italian, and almost half the manuscripts were dated to the fifteenth century. Indeed, more than half the manuscripts in Case N (‘Chiefly Italian, 14th-16th century’) came from Perrins (Fig. 5), presenting him as the most significant collector in this area.

Figure 5
Case N at the Burlington Fine Arts Club exhibition of illuminated manuscripts, 1908 (reproduced from the catalogue). Perrins lent seven of the manuscripts in this case (top shelf: centre and right; second shelf: the two manuscripts in the centre; third shelf: the two manuscripts in the centre; bottom shelf: right).
23 The Burlington Fine Arts Club Exhibition of illuminated manuscripts was a popular success, attracting 5,053 visitors.64 In 1908 Perrins also received a different kind of recognition in the form of election to the elite Roxburgh Club. In the account of Club members published in 1921 Perrins was identified as the owner of 'a magnificent library of early illuminated books, incunabula and illuminated manuscripts'.65 However, in his choice of text presented to the club Perrins turned to his first interest, selecting an early printed book with woodcuts, produced in Italy in 1495, as the subject for his sponsored volume, which appeared in 1910.66

24 At the same time, Perrins was supporting a range of scholarship on manuscripts in his collection, and he was frequently lauded for the degree of access to his manuscripts that he allowed to scholars.67 Cockerell’s volume on the Gorleston Psalter appeared in 1907, complete with colour illustrations, cementing its position as an extremely important fourteenth-century manuscript. In addition three of Perrins’ manuscripts served as examples in the series of plates designed to teach palaeography produced by the New Palaeographical Society in 1907-8.68 In 1927 M. R. James published a volume on Perrins’ Apocalypse (a copy of which Perrins’ gave to his son Allan for Christmas that year), and in 1930 Cockerell published a volume on the artist William de Brailes, based, in part, on his time working for Perrins.69 However, in the wake of the success of the Burlington Exhibition, Cockerell was appointed director of the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, which made it impossible for him to continue his cataloguing work for Perrins. Instead, Warner took over, and spent the next decade on the catalogue of manuscripts, by this time restricted to works on parchment, that appeared in 1920. Throughout this period Perrins continued to acquire new manuscripts (such that the second numbering system can only have been finalised towards the end of Warner’s work). However, after 1908 the number of acquisitions seems to have reduced dramatically, with an average of five per year from 1909-13 and a further decline during the First World War. Thus although E. H. Dring of Bernard Quaritch Ltd. claimed in 1919 that Perrins was 'the only man who would spend £15000 or £20000 at a sale', this was no longer the case by the end of the war (and probably never represented an amount spent by Perrins on manuscripts alone).70

25 Even once Warner’s catalogue was published Perrins continued to buy manuscripts. When Yates Thompson announced the sale of his collection, Perrins wrote to him about the possibility of buying it, and declaring himself ‘apprehensive […] that your volumes will go to swell the Morgan collection in New York’, a concern shared by Cockerell.71 However, Perrins blamed the war for a negative impact on his business and ultimately failed to come to an agreement with Yate Thompson. Instead, he acquired manuscripts at the auctions of Yates Thompson’s books in 1920 and 1921.72 I have found no record of further purchases after this, although Perrins’ left a commission bid with Quaritch in 1925, when he was outbid by Alfred Chester Beatty, and the circumstances of acquisition of a group of manuscripts sold in 1961 remain obscure.73

26 The apparent dramatic decrease in acquisitions from 1908 may be a distortion created by the surviving records, but it may also indicate that Perrins felt that his collection had reached an appropriate size. Equally, the change in collecting may be linked to Perrins’ circumstances. An aspect of Perrins’ collecting that would benefit from further study is the role of his wives in supporting his activities. Cockerell was staying with the Perrins at Malvern in 1908, working on the Burlington exhibition, when Perrins’ wife Catherine suffered a debilitating stroke (or perhaps a series of strokes), leaving her
critically ill. Cockerell’s diary records that he continued with work on the manuscripts, and that one evening ‘with CWDP cut out pieces of paper of the size of each book that he is going to lend to the Burlington’, perhaps in an effort to distract Perrins.\footnote{74} Catherine survived and lived until 1922. In 1923 Perrins remarried, Florence (known as Frieda) Milne.\footnote{75} That she took an interest in the manuscripts is suggested by his decision to leave two manuscripts to her in his will: a Manual of Devotion and a Book of Hours (now British Library Add. MS 54782).\footnote{76} Despite the gift of the published book about the Apocalypse to his son Allan in 1927, Perrins did not leave manuscripts to his children. Instead the Gorleston Psalter and Nizâmi (Warner no. 134) were left to the British Museum and the rest of the manuscripts were to be sold at auction. Following Perrins’ death on the 29th of January 1958, three major sales of manuscripts were held in 1958, 1959 and 1960.

Perrins’ will, dated the 1st of December 1956 implies that the only manuscript owned by Perrins that was not included in the 1920 catalogue was the Hours of Elizabeth the Queen, purchased at Yates Thompson’s sale in 1920.\footnote{77} The other manuscript purchased at that sale had been given to Winchester Cathedral in 1948, however two Books of Hours sold in 1958 were also acquired after the publication of Warner’s catalogue, as were two manuscripts sold in 1960.\footnote{78} In addition, a further five manuscripts (three Psalters and two more Books of Hours) were sold as part of a sale of manuscripts in April 1961.

Most of the manuscripts bought by Perrins remained in his collection for half a century, and the sale in 1958 set a new record total for a one-day sale of books or manuscripts.\footnote{79} In contrast, most of the rare books were sold at four auctions in 1946-7, although some were also sold after his death and given away.\footnote{80} Eric Millar linked this to a decline in Perrins’ interest in printed books, quoting Perrins as having declared that ‘illuminated manuscripts are living things—especially those of the first rank—and are of constant interest, whereas printed books are dead!.\footnote{81} The money raised from the sales in the 1940s was invested in the Royal Worcester porcelain factory to protect skilled employment in the region.\footnote{82} The earlier sale of the printed books, together with the lack of a full catalogue like Warner’s of the manuscripts (although the Italian books were catalogued in 1914), has perhaps led to Perrins’ reputation as a collector primarily of manuscripts.\footnote{83} However, the inclusion of some early printed books in the 1958 sale suggests that Perrins continued to believe what he observed in the foreword to the 1914 catalogue of Italian books, that ‘it is more than interesting to observe the points of resemblance and of difference between the new form of book and the old, and to see how the limited skill of the artisan, the wood-block cutter, fettered and bound the efforts of the book-artist who had long before come to the height of his powers in the Illuminated Manuscript’.\footnote{84}

Each collection of medieval and renaissance manuscripts formed by a private collector is unique. Perrins appears to have been particularly interested in late medieval and Renaissance manuscripts, initially as an extension of his enthusiasm for early printed books. The guidance and assistance of Cockerell between 1904 and 1908 probably helped broaden his collection, with an emphasis on extensively illuminated material, even if Cockerell did not always approve of his choices. The relationship between Perrins and Cockerell also meant that Perrins’ collection played an important part in helping to establish the status of illuminated manuscripts as art objects through their use in the Burlington Fine Arts Club Exhibition. In creating his collection, Perrins was
probably also motivated, in part, by a sense of civic duty, which seems to have informed all areas of his life. Like the museum keepers with whom he collaborated, he was concerned that manuscripts should stay in Britain, and was generous in lending items to exhibitions and making them available to scholars. The publications, both of catalogues and monographs on particular works may have been an extension of this impulse. They had the added benefit of making the volumes selected for inclusion highly desirable when they eventually came to auction, in contrast to the manuscripts sold anonymously in 1907, ensuring that his name became associated with richly illuminated manuscripts in excellent condition.

APPENDIXES

Preliminary handlist of western medieval and renaissance manuscripts on parchment owned by Charles William Dyson Perrins

Perrins collected a wide range of manuscript material, including works on paper, in languages including Arabic, Armenian, Czech, Dutch, French, Greek, Hebrew, Italian, Latin, Persian, and Spanish. For the purposes of this list, I have restricted entries to works on parchment (and the analysis of the article focuses on manuscripts in Latin). Even with these limits, the list will be incomplete, and is therefore only intended as a preliminary guide to manuscripts that passed through Perrins’ collection. I would be very happy to learn of additions that can be made, both of further manuscripts and details of where manuscripts are now.

Abbreviations and notes:
- 'Acquired after' indicates that the manuscript was sold at a sale on this date.
- de Marinis: Librarie Ancienne T. De Marinis & C.
- Maggs: Maggs Bros. Ltd.
- Olschki: Leo S. Olschki Ltd.
- Quaritch: Bernard Quaritch Ltd.
- Sotheran: Henry Sotheran Ltd.
- Thomas is probably a pseudonym for Michael Tomkinson of Franche Hall, Kidderminster.
- * Included in the Burlington Fine Arts Club Exhibition of 1908 (note that manuscripts may not have been owned by Perrins at that point).


MS 2 Gratian, Decretals. Acquired from de Haas, 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 9 Dec. 1958, lot 4, £6,000, to Patch. Now Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum, MS Ludwig XIV 2. (Also numbered 137 while in Perrins’ collection).*
MS 3 Iona Psalter. Acquired from Quaritch, 1905 (who bought it in June that year for £341), sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 101, £6,000, to Quaritch. Now Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland MS 10,000.*

MS 4 Hours (the de Brailes Hours). Acquired from J. Rosenthal, April 1906, £1,350, sold 1958 to the British Museum. Now British Library, Add MS 49999. (Also numbered 27 while in Perrins’ collection).

MS 5 Bible (the de Brailes Bible). Acquired from Olschki, 1915, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 59, £4,000 to Maggs. Now Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Lat bib e 7.

MS 6 Bible. Acquired from John Ruskin’s representatives, 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 9 Dec. 1958, lot 5, £5,200 to A. Rau. Now Yale, Beinecke Library MS 387. (Also numbered 77 while in Perrins’ collection).*


MS 8 Bible. Acquired from Robson & Co., 1902, sold Sotheby’s, 11 Nov. 1960, lot 105, £600 to W. & G. Foyle Ltd.

MS 9 Psalter with Peter Lombard’s commentary. Acquired at Sotheby’s, sale, 7 Mar. 1913 (via Quaritch), lot 11, £510, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 103, £4,000 to Quaritch. Now Liverpool, Public Libraries f091 PSA 65/32036.


MS 11 Oscott Psalter. Acquired from St Mary’s College, Oscott, via S. C. Cockerell, 1908, sold 1958 to the British Museum. Now British Library, Add. MS 50000. (Also numbered 52 while in Perrins’ collection).*

MS 12 Hours. Acquired from Leighton, 16 Dec. 1905, £195, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 110, £1,500 to Maggs. Now British Library, Add. MS 89379.*


MS 15 Llanbeblig Hours. Acquired Sotheby’s, 10 May 1907 (via Quaritch), lot 177, £101, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 115, £2,600 to Quaritch. Now Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales MS 17520A. (Also numbered 8 while in Perrins’ collection).

MS 16 Hours. Acquired from Leighton, 1904, £30, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 70, £280, to Francis Edwards Ltd. Now British Library, Add. MS 71638. (Also numbered 91 while in Perrins’ collection).


MS 18 Beauchamp Hours. Acquired from the estate of Lord Malcolm of Poltalloch, in 1905 or 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 9 Dec. 1958, lot 19, £18,000. Now New York, Morgan Library MS M.893.

MS 19 Psalter. Acquired from Quaritch, 1915 (offered for sale in Quaritch’s catalogues for £525), sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 120, £2,100. Leaves removed from this MS are now British Library, Add. MS 54324.

MS 20 Polychronicon. Acquired from Leighton (after 29 Mar. 1905)*, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 121, £1,550. Now University of South Carolina Early MS 61.


MS 23 Gregorian Sacramentary. Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 97, £17,000. Now Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum, MS Ludwig V 1. (Also numbered 54 while in Perrins’ collection).*

MS 24 Gospels. Acquired from Quaritch, 1908, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 51, £8,000 to Maggs. Now Brussels, Royal Library of Belgium, MS IV 99.

MS 25 Peter Lombard, Commentary on the Psalter. Acquired from Sotheran in or after 1907 (when it was listed for sale at £315), sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 102, £2,200 to Meyerstein.

MS 26 Hugh of Folieto and Isidore of Seville, Tracts of Moralized Natural History. Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 9 Dec. 1958, lot 7, £36,500. Now Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum, MS Ludwig XV 3.*


MS 29 Bible. Acquired from Quaritch 1905, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 60, £1,900 to J. Saunders.


MS 31 Bible. Acquired from Quaritch 1905, sold Sotheby’s, 9 Dec. 1958, lot 6, £3,200 to Heilbrun.*

MS 32 Psalter. Acquired from Leighton, 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 62, £26,000 to H. P. Kraus. Now Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum, MS Ludwig VIII 4. (Also numbered 60 while in Perrins’ collection).*

MS 33 Decretals of Gregory IX. Acquired by 1908, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 109, £2,500 to Maggs. Now San Marino, Henry E. Huntington Library, MS HM 1999. (Also numbered 110 while in Perrins’ collection).*

MS 34 Psalter etc. Acquired Sotheby’s, 7 Mar. 1913, lot 12 (via Quaritch), £500, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 107, £1,500 to A. Rau.

MS 35 Hours. Acquired from Olschki, 1912, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 67, £6,200 to the Barber Institute of Fine Arts. Now Birmingham, Barber Institute of Fine Art.

MS 36 Gilles le Muisit, Poems. Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 112, £25,000, to H. P. Kraus. Now Brussels, Royal Library of Belgium, MS IV 119.

MS 37 Hours. Acquired before 1908, sold Sotheby’s, 9 Dec. 1958, lot 17, £4,000, to A. Rau. Now New York, Morgan Library, MS M.960.*

MS 38 Hours. Acquired from Leighton, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 69, £2,000, to C. W. Traylen.

MS 39 Valerius Maximus, Facta et Dicta Memorableia. Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 68, £10,000, to Marlborough Fine Arts. Now Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz HS 94.

MS 40 Hours. Acquired Sotheby’s, 17 Dec. 1903 (buyer listed as Thomas), lot 381, £310, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 117, £2,100, to J. J. Simon.*
MS 41 Poupaincourt Hours. Acquired from Leighton, 12 Jan. 1906, £325, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 77, £4,800, to Pierre Berès.*
MS 42 Hours. Acquired from Robson & Co. 1902, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 129, £500, to E. L. Hauswedell.*
MS 43 Hours. Acquired by 1908, sold Sotheby’s, 9 Dec. 1958, lot 30, £750, to W. & G. Foyle Ltd.*
MS 44 Hours. Acquired from Quaritch, 1905, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 131, £2,400, to Francis Edwards Ltd. Now Geneva, Bibliothèque de Genève Comites Latentes MS 11.*
MS 45 Hours. Acquired from Sotheran, 1907, £420, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot [85] £10,500, to Pierre Berès.*
MS 47 Ferial Psalter. Acquired from Robson & Co., 1902, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 145, £1,200, to J. R. Abbey.*
MS 49 Psalter. Acquired Sotheby’s, 7 Mar. 1913, lot 10 (via Quaritch), £186, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 98, £4,000, to H. P. Kraus. Now New York, Morgan Library, MS G. 62.
MS 50 Lectionary. Acquired after June 1905, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 52, £2,200, to Maggs. Now Brussels, Royal Library of Belgium MS IV 266.
MS 53 Bible. Acquired 1907, sold Sotheby’s, 9 Dec. 1958, lot 12, £4,100, to Laurence C. Witten. Now Vatican Library, Vat. Lat. MS 14430.*
MS 54 St Gregory’s Dialogues. Acquired Sotheby’s, 17 Dec. 1903 (buyer listed as Thomas), lot 345, £220, sold Sotheby’s, 9 Dec. 1958, lot 15, £1,900, to Laurence C. Witten. Now Geneva, Bibliothèque de Genève Comites Latentes MS 20. (Also numbered 12 while in Perrins’ collection).*
MS 55 Hours. Acquired from Jacques Rosenthal, 1912, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 66, £1,400, to Maggs.*
MS 56 Theological Treatises. Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 65, £2,200 to H. P. Kraus.*
MS 57 Dante, Divine Comedy. Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 9 Dec. 1958, lot 14, £14,200, to Patch, now New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library MS 428. (Also numbered 83 while in Perrins’ collection).*
MS 58 Praise of Jerome. Acquired Sotheby’s, 17 Dec. 1903 (buyer listed as Maggs), lot 372, £32, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 114, £1,000 to Dawsons of Pall Mall.
MS 59 Itinerario di la Gram Militia. Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 72, £1,700, to Maggs. Now Milan, Biblioteca nazionale Braidense, Manoscritti AC VIII.34.
MS 60 Terence, Comedies. Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 9 Dec. 1958, lot 16, £2,400, to Pierre Berès.
MS 61 Breviary. Acquired Sotheby’s, 7 Mar. 1913 (via Quaritch), £72, sold Sotheby’s, 29


MS 63 Rules of the Schuola di Sancto Giovanni Evangelista. Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 119, £1,600, to Major J. R. Abbey.*

MS 64 Aristotle, Política et Economía. Acquired Sotheby’s, 16 Dec. 1903 (buyer listed as Thomas), lot 50, £19, sold Sotheby’s, 9 Dec. 1958, lot 22, £1,350, to Patch.

MS 65 Jerome, Epistolae. Acquired 1904 from George Reid, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 124, £680, to E. P. Goldschmidt & Co. Now Chicago, Newberry Library MS 102.2. (Also numbered 115 while in Perrins’ collection).*

MS 66 Hours. Acquired 1906 from S. Rosen, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 122, £1,700, to Carlo Alberto Chiesa.*

MS 67 Hours. Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 80, £3,000, to Maggs. Now Baltimore, Walters Art Museum MS W.767.*

MS 68 Plutarch, Vitae. Acquired from Leighton, 18 May 1904, £24, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 81, £500, to Laurence C. Witten.

MS 69 Plutarch, Vitae. Acquired from Leighton, 1904, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 125, £600, to Charles Traylen.

MS 70 Cicero, Rhetorica. Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 126, £600 to Dawsons of Pall Mall.

MS 71 Meschino de Durazzo. Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 73, £17,500, to Heinrich Eisemann.*

MS 72 Hours. Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 9 Dec. 1958, lot 28, £10,000, to Marlborough Rare Books. Now Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum, MS Ludwig IX 13. (Also numbered 20 while in Perrins’ collection).*

MS 73 Jerome, Epistolae. Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 74, £1,700, to Arthur Rau.

MS 74 Epistolae. Acquired from de Marinis, 1908, sold Sotheby’s, 9 Dec. 1958, lot 25, £2,200, to Pierre Berès.

MS 75 De consultandi ratione. Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 133, £1,100, to Maggs.*

MS 76 Breviary. Acquired from J. Pearson & Co., 1905, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 82, £650, to Quaritch.

MS 77 Hours. Acquired from Olschki, 1912, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 132, £220, to Alan G. Thomas.

MS 78 Hours. Acquired from S. C. Cockerell between 28 Mar. 1905 and 26 Aug. 1907, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 83, £600, to H. C. Bodman.

MS 79 L’arte de lo ben morire. Acquired from de Marinis, 1912, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 75, £7500, to Laurence C. Witten.

MS 80 Treatise in praise of chastity. Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 84, £650, to Albert Ehrman. Now Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Broxbourne 85.7. (Also numbered 3 while in Perrins’ collection).

MS 81 Plautus, Comœdiae. Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 76, £1,600, to Quaritch. Now Cologny, Fondation Martin
Bodmer, Cod. Bodmer 138. (Also numbered 108 while in Perrins’ collection).
MS 82 Virgil. Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 9 Dec. 1958, lot 35, £2,700, to Quaritch.
MS 83 Lo Libro de la Menescalsia de li Cavalli. Acquired from de Marinis, 1908, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 137, £1,200, to Maggs.
MS 85 Julius Caesar. Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 136, £3,200 to Heinrich Eisenmann. Now Cologny, Fondation Martin Bodmer, Cod. Bodmer 44. (Also numbered 85 in the earlier sequence while in Perrins’ collection).
MS 86 Jerome, Epistolae. Acquired from Quaritch, 1909, sold Sotheby’s, 9 Dec. 1958, lot 19, £1,300, to Ernst Philip Goldschmidt. Now Chicago, Newberry Library MS 102.5.
MS 87 Ovid. Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 9 Dec. 1958, lot 36, £5,400, to H. P. Kraus. Now Cologny, Fondation Martin Bodmer, Cod. Bodmer 124. (Also numbered 103 while in Perrins’ collection).*
MS 88 Breviary. Acquired from Olschki, 1913, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 140, £550, to J. J. Simon.
MS 90 Hours. Acquired from Jacques Rosenthal, 1911, sold Sotheby’s, 9 Dec. 1958, lot 32, £4,600 to H. P. Kraus.
MS 91 Hours. Acquired from Davis of Bond Street, 1910, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 142, £8,000, to National Gallery, Melbourne, Australia. Now Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria, 869-5.
MS 92 Hyginus, Astronomica. Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 143, £2,100 to Dawsons of Pall Mall.
MS 94 Office of the Passion for the last three days of Holy Week. Acquired 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 88, £1,000 to R. R. Atkinson.*
MS 95 Hours (Mirandola Hours). Acquired 1905, sold 1958, to the British Museum. Now British Library, Add. MS 50002. (Also numbered 30 while in Perrins’ collection).*
MS 96 Gradual. Acquired after 24 May 1911, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 128, £280 to Maggs.
MS 98 Missal. Acquired from Quaritch, 1909, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 64, £11,000 to the City of Ghent.
MS 99 Histories of Thebes and the Destruction of Troy. Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 9 Dec. 1958, lot 26, £16,600, to Patch. Now Cologny, Fondation Martin Bodmer, Cod. Bodmer 160. (Also numbered 50 while in Perrins’ collection.)
MS 100 Hours. Acquired by 1908 from Edward Samuel Dewick, sold Sotheby’s, 9 Dec. 1958, lot 27, £5,500, to the Bibliothèque royale de Belgique. Now Brussels, Royal Library of Belgium MS IV 91.
MS 101 Speculum Historiale. Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold


MS 103 Hours. Acquired Sotheby’s, 17 Dec. 1903 (buyer listed as Thomas), lot 384, £190, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 87, £2,000, to Quaritch.*


MS 106 Hours. Acquired from Quaritch, 1912, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 144, £15,000, to Fl. Tulkens.

MS 107 Manual of Devotion. Possibly obtained from Michael Tomkinson, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 89, £2,800, to Fl. Tulkens.


MS 109 Hours. Acquired 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 9 Dec. 1958, lot 20, £2,150, to Radoulescu. Now Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum, MS Ludwig IX 9. (Also numbered MS 34 while in Perrins’ collection).*

MS 110 Hours. Acquired from Quaritch, 17 Dec. 1903 (buyer listed as Thomas), lot 382, £280, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 139, £2,200, to H. P. Kraus.


MS 112 Fueros de Aragon. Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 9 Dec. 1958, lot 8, £28,000, to Patch. Now Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum, MS Ludwig XIV 6. (Also numbered as 101 while in Perrins’ collection).*

MS 113 Hours. Acquired from Leighton, 1904, £40, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 78, £800, to Fl. Tulkens. Now Brussels, Royal Library of Belgium MS IV 375.*

MS 114 Hours. Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold 1958 to the British Museum. Now British Library, Add. MS 50004. (Also numbered 89 while in Perrins’ collection).*

MS 115 Breviary. Acquired from J. Pearson & Co., sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 130, £480 to Quaritch. Now British Library, Henry Davis MS 656.

MS 116 Mass for the Feast of the Epiphany. Acquired from Harris of Bond Street, 1911, sold Sotheby’s, 9 Dec. 1958, lot 40, £3,000, to A. Rau.

MS 117 Peter Lombard, Psalm Commentary. Acquired from Sotheran, 1907, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 53, £20,000 to H. Baer. Now Bremen, Focke Museum(?).

MS 118 Augustine, Confessions. Acquired from Jacques Rosenthal, 1909, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 99, £19,000, to Ab Sandbergs Bokhandel. Now Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek Ms. Patr. 33m. (Also numbered 60 while in Perrins’ collection).

MS 119 Bible of Justemont Abbey. Acquired from Sotheran, 1907, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 100, £20,000, to Clifford.

MS 120 Gospel Book. Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 9 Dec. 1958, lot 3, £39,000, to H. P. Kraus. Now Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum, MS Ludwig II 3. (Also numbered 70 while in Perrins’ collection).*
MS 121 Missal. Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 57, £9,000. Now Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum, MS Ludwig V 4. (Also numbered 72 while in Perrins’ collection).

MS 122 Fables. Acquired from Quaritch, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 138, £3,500, to Dawsons of Pall Mall.


MS 125 Bible. Sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 118, £1,500, to Maggs.

MS 126 Hours. Acquired from Quaritch, 1910, sold Sotheby’s, 9 Dec. 1958, lot 24, £2,000, to John Francis Fleming. Now New York, Morgan Library MS M.921.

MS 127 Psalter. Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 104, £62,000, to H. P. Kraus.*

MS 128 Gradual. Acquired Sotheby’s, 5 Dec. 1908, lot 398, £1650 (via Quaritch), sold Sotheby’s, 9 Dec. 1958, lot 10, £33,000, to Schweizerisches Landesmuseum. Now Zurich, Schweizerisches Nationalmuseum LS 26117.

MS 129 Gospels (Greek). Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 9 Dec. 1958, lot 2, £4,000, to Patch. Now Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria MS Felton 710/5. (Also numbered 71 while in Perrins’ collection).

MS 130 Gospels (Greek). Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold Sotheby’s, 29 Nov. 1960, lot 113, £1,500, to Quaritch.

MS 131 Gospels of St Luke and St John (Greek). Acquired Sotheby’s, 5 Dec. 1908, lot 332, £300 (via Quaritch), sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 56, £4,400, to Quaritch.

MS 132 Sharaknotz. Acquired from Ludwig Rosenthal, 1911, sold Sotheby’s, 9 Dec. 1958, lot 13, £1,000, to H. P. Kraus.

MS 133 Kalilah va Dimnah. Acquired from Quaritch, 1909, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 91, £6,200, to H. Eisemann.


MS 135 Koran. Acquired from Quaritch, 1908, sold Sotheby’s, 1 Dec. 1959, lot 92, £1,700, to H. Eisemann.

**Part B:** Manuscripts sold at Sotheby’s, 17 Jun. 1907


[137] Lot 19 Ambrose, Opera. Sold to Bertram Dobell, £4, 10s.


[140] Lot 38 Augustine, de conflictu vicorum et virtutum. Sold to Bertram Dobell, £2 6s.

[141] Lot 47 Bartholomeus de Pisis. Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold to Leighton, £51 (sold on to Charles Fairfax Murray).

[142] Lot 52 Cronica Venetiarum. Acquired Sotheby’s, 16 Dec. 1903 (buyer listed as Thomas), lot 192, £12 12s, sold to Ellis, £2 8s. Now Princeton University Library, Garrett MS 156.

[143] Lot 53 Bernard of Clairvaux. Sold to Symes, £1 12s.

[144] Lot 56 Bible. Sold to Bertram Dobell, £4 18s. Now London, Society of Antiquaries
MS 956.

[145] Lot 57 Bible. Acquired Sotheby’s, 16 Dec. 1903 (buyer listed as Thomas), lot 96, £48, sold to Leighton, £36.

[146] Lot 120 John Chrysostom. Sold to Bertram Dobell, £1 1s.

[147] Lot 122 Cicero, de Rhetorica. Possibly acquired Sotheby’s, 21 Apr. 1902, lot 520 (buyer listed as Thomas), sold to Bertram Dobell, £1 15s. Now Yale, Beinecke Library Marston MS 8.


[151] Lot 181 Evangelia, etc. Sold to Harriss(?), £51.

[152] Lot 191 Saints Lives, etc. Acquired Sotheby’s, 17 Dec. 1903, lot 293 (buyer listed as Thomas), £4 15s, sold for £2 10s to Thomas.

[153] Lot 234 Jerome. Sold for £2 14s to Thomas.


[156] Lot 248 Hours. Sold for £30 to Leighton.

[157] Lot 249 Hours. Acquired after 19 Jun. 1903, sold for £33 to Francis Edwards Ltd.

[158] Lot 250 Hours. Sold for £30 to Leighton.


[160] Lot 252 Hours. Sold for £8 15s to Francis Edwards Ltd.


[162] Lot 260 Horace. Sold for £10 10s to Leighton.

[163] Lot 261 Horace. Acquired from Charles Fairfax Murray, 1905 or 1906, sold for £61 to Leighton (sold on to Charles Fairfax Murray).


[165] Lot 286 Lanfranc, Concordantiae Bibliae. Sold for £1 6s to Bertram Dobell.


[168] Lot 308 Italian poem. Sold for £1 10s to Leighton.

[169] Lot 313 Missa S. Mariae Magdalenae, etc. Sold for £11 to Hollis.

[170] Lot 317 Missal. Sold for £30 to Thomas.

[171] Lot 318 Missal. Acquired Sotheby’s, 18 Dec. 1903, lot 517 (buyer listed as Thomas), £12 10s, sold for £7 to Barnard.


[176] Lot 394 Roman de la Rose. Acquired after 14 May 1902, sold for £190 to Thomas.

[177] Lot 410 Secreta Secretorum Aristotelis. Acquired after 3 May 1904, sold for £81 to
Francis Edwards Ltd.


**Part C: Other manuscripts**


[181] Hours. Acquired Sotheby’s, 22 Jun. 1921 (via Quaritch), lot 93, £2,600, sold Sotheby’s, 9 Dec. 1958, lot 37, £6,200, to A. Rau.


**NOTES**

5. Warner, *Descriptive Catalogue*, pp. 33, 117, 128, 129; see also the appendix to this article.
Devotional, Historical, Classical and Poetical Manuscripts, a large number of very rare Italian, German and French Woodcut Books, etc., 17 Jun. 1907.

11. See appendix: Warner nos 8, 42, 46, 47 came from Robson & Co. in 1902; Warner nos 16, 21, 30, 68, 113 came from Leighton in 1904.

12. Warner nos 40, 54, 58, 64, 103, 110.


14. See appendix: 1907 lot 122.

15. For example. British Library, Add. MS 45165 f. 190v.


18. For the alternative possibility that Cockerell was involved with arranging purchases by Perrins from Tomkinson see Stoneman, ‘Variously Employed’ p. 348.

19. See appendix: 1907 lot 122.


21. See appendix: Warner nos 40, 42, 47, 103; Burlington Fine Arts Club Exhibition, p. 85.

22. See appendix: Warner nos 8, 30, 1907 lot 57.

23. See appendix: Warner nos 21, 54, 58, 64, 68, 1907 lots 52, 122, 191.


27. Leighton, ledger for 1903-4, British Library Add. MS 45164 f. 179.


29. Leighton, ledger for 1903-4, British Library Add. MS 45164 f. 177v.

30. Ibid. ff. 177v, 179.

31. de Hamel, 'Cockerell as Entrepreneur', pp. 54-6; S. Panayotova, I Turned it into a Palace: Sydney Cockerell and the Fitzwilliam Museum (Cambridge, 2008), pp. 31-5.


33. See appendix: Warner no. 65.

34. Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge, Catalogue of Valuable Books & Manuscripts, 7 Dec. 1904, lot 672; see also Cockerell, ‘Diary 1904’, f. 67.

35. See also Panayotova, I Turned it into a Palace, p. 35.


37. S. C. Cockerell, ‘Diary 1905’, British Library Add. MS S2642, ff. 26v–27r. 1 Mar.: ‘went to Fairfax Murray’s to go over some MSS that Mr Perrins is to see on Friday’; 3 Mar.: ‘to lunch with Mr Perrins at the Conservative Club & with him to the Watts Exhib. & on to Fairfax Murray’s where Mr P. bought 7 good MSS’.


41. See appendix: Warner no 95.
42. Cockerell, ‘Diary 1905’, 9 Jun., f. 41; 10 Jul., f. 45v; See also de Hamel, ‘Cockerell as Entrepreneur’, p. 65; Panayotova, I Turned it into a Palace, p. 34.


45. S. C. Cockerell, ‘Diary 1906’, British Library Add. MS 52643, f. 27v. ‘In evg. again to Rosenthal’s to bargain with him over a little MS Horae of the 13thc (English), which I bought for P for £1350’. Cockerell was plausibly also involved in the purchase of Warner no. 2 as the diary also records a visit to de Haas.


49. Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge, Catalogue of the Valuable and Interesting Library of R. C. Fisher Esq., 21 May 1906, lots 62 (on paper); 239 (on paper); 429 (Warner no. 89); 517 (Warner no. 48).


51. Warner, Descriptive Catalogue, p. vii; ‘Commentary’, The Book Collector, 7 (1958), p. 119; for a different assessment see de Hamel, ‘Cockerell as Entrepreneur’, p. 65; (Panayotova, I Turned it into a Palace, p. 35 follows de Hamel); see also S. de Ricci, English Collectors of Books & Manuscripts (1530-1930) and their Marks of Ownership (Cambridge, 1930), p. 178.


55. See appendix: Warner nos 132, 133.


59. See de Hamel, Hidden Friends.

60. de Hamel, Hidden Friends; see appendix.


68. E. M. Thompson et al., Facsimiles of Ancient Manuscripts, etc.: first series (London, 1903-12), plates 122, 141-2, 188.

69. The copy of James’ work given to Allan is now in the library of Trinity College Dublin.

70. New York, Morgan Library Archive, ARC 1310 Q, Quaritch VI 1918/19.


72. See appendix, Part C: [179], [180], [181].

73. Quaritch Archives, Commission Book for 1921-6, p. 1850.
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74. British Library, Add. MS 52645, f. 25.
75. See Bigham, Roxburghe Club, p. 103.
77. See appendix [180].
78. See appendix Part C.
84. Ibid. p. v.
85. In Leighton’s records it is listed as having been sold to Thomas for £200; British Library Add. MS 45172, entry for 29 Mar. 1905.

ABSTRACTS

The manuscript collection of Charles Dyson Perrins is well known among scholars, in large part due to the publication of an imposing and detailed catalogue by George Warner in 1920. Perrins has become associated with spending large sums of money on manuscripts and the account of his purchase of the Gorleston Psalter following a visit to a bookshop in search of something to read on the train is a legend of the trade. The first sale of his manuscripts after his death in 1958 achieved a record total. However, like most early twentieth-century collectors, Perrins’ catalogue only contains a selection of the manuscripts that passed through his hands. Reconstructing the larger collection therefore sheds light on the choices made in creating and publishing parts of his manuscript collection. Perrins began collecting manuscripts as an extension of his interest in early printed books and maintained a strong interest in late medieval and renaissance manuscripts. The influence of a small group of collectors and scholars, and in particular Sydney Cockerell, helped shape Perrins’ manuscript collection and publicise it through its use as the basis for the Burlington Fine Arts Club exhibition of illuminated manuscripts in 1908 and the creation of monographs on particular volumes as well as the 1920 catalogue. In contrast, only part of the printed collection ever received a published catalogue. Cockerell may also have been involved in Perrins’ decision to sell some of his manuscripts, anonymously, in 1907. These decisions have had significant consequences for the long-term ownership of and scholarship on these manuscripts, and provide a case study of the impact of early twentieth-century collectors on the development of the study of medieval books.
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Subjects: Apocalypse, De rhetorica, Heures à l’usage de Tours, Heures de la reine Élisabeth, Mer des histoires, psautier Braybrooke, psautier de Douai, psautier de Richard de Cantorbéry, psautier Gorleston, psautier Ormesby, psautier Tenison, Roman de la rose, Très Riches Heures du duc de Berry

Keywords: beatus, bible, bibliophily, book of hours, breviary, collection, haggādāh, manuscript studies, psalter, trade in medieval manuscripts, gospel

Parole chiave: beatus, libro, bibliofilia, breviario, collezione, commercio dei manoscritti, libro d’ore, salterio, studio dei manoscritti, vangelo

Mots-clés: beatus, bible, bibliophilie, bréviaire, collection, étude de manuscrits, commerce des manuscrits médiévaux, haggâdâh, livre liturgique, livre d’heures, psautier

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