



Otto F. Ege: Teacher, Collector, Biblioclast

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From “I Am A Biblioclast,” *Avocations 1* (1938):

Book-tearers have been cursed and condemned, but have they ever been praised or justified? I present for your consideration:

1. Never to take apart a “museum piece” book or a unique copy if it is complete.
2. To search for and make available to schools, libraries, collections, and individuals single leaves or units of mediaeval manuscripts, incunabula works, and fine presses.
3. To circulate leaf exhibits, supplemented with outlines, lectures, and slides, to organizations so as to engender an interest in fine books, past and present.
4. To encourage and inspire by these fragments the amateur calligrapher and private press devotee not to imitate the deeds of the masters of the book, but to think as they did to meet present day problems.
5. To build up a personal collection of books and important fragments to illustrate the *History of the Book* from the days of Egyptian papyrus and Babylonian clay tablets to the work of Updike and Rogers.

[...] Surely to allow a thousand people “to have and to hold” an original manuscript leaf, and to get the thrill and understanding that comes only from actual and frequent contact with these art heritages, is justification enough for the scattering of fragments. Few, indeed, can hope to own a complete manuscript book; hundreds, however, may own a leaf. (517)

The Six Ege Portfolios:

Original Leaves from Famous Books, Eight Centuries, 1240 A.D. – 1923 A.D.

Original Leaves from Famous Books, Nine Centuries, 1122 A.D. – 1923 A.D.

Original Leaves from Famous Bibles, Nine Centuries, 1121 – 1935 A.D.

Fifteen Original Oriental Manuscript Leaves of Six Centuries: Twelve of the Middle East, Two of Russia, and One of Tibet.

A Group of Eleven Original Leaves Showing the Evolution of Humanistic Book Hands and Roman Types from Jenson to Rogers.

☞ Fifty Original Leaves from Medieval Manuscripts. Western Europe: XII – XVI Century.

Contents of the “Fifty Original Leaves” Portfolios

Leaf # Ege’s Identification

1. Switzerland (?): New Testament (*Testamentum Novum, cum Glossis Bedae, Hieronymi, et Gregorii*). Early 12th C. Latin text; Revived Carolingian script.
2. Spain (or Southern France): Missal (*Missale Plenarium*). Middle 12th C. Latin text; Revived Carolingian script.
3. Italy: Lectionary: Middle 12th C. Latin text; Revived Carolingian script.
4. France: Psalter. Late 12th C. Latin text; Caroline Minuscule.
5. France: Bible. Early 13th C. Latin text; early Angular Gothic script.
6. England: Cambridge Bible. Early 13th C. Latin text; early Angular Gothic script.
7. England: Aurora. Early 13th C. Latin text; early Gothic Script.
8. England: Gradual. Early 13th C. Latin text; early Angular Gothic script; Gregorian notation.
9. France (Paris): Bible. Middle 13th C. Latin text; Minuscule Angular Gothic script.
10. Germany: Psalter. Illuminated. Middle 13th C. Latin text; Angular Gothic script.
11. Italy: Bible. Middle 13th C. Latin text; Rotunda Gothic script.
12. France: Psalter. Illuminated. Middle 13th C. Latin text; Angular Gothic script.
13. England: Oxford Bible. Middle 13th C. Latin text; Angular Gothic script.
14. France: Bible. Illuminated. Late 13th C. Latin text; Angular Gothic script.
15. France (Beauvais): Missal (*Missale bellovacense*). Illuminated. Late 13th C. Latin text; Transitional Gothic script.
16. France: Breviary. Illuminated. Late 13th C. Latin text; Angular Gothic script.
17. England: Psalter. Illuminated. Late 13th C. Latin text; Angular Gothic script.
18. France: Breviary. Late 13th C. Latin text; Angular Gothic script.
19. Italy: Vulgate Bible. Illuminated. Early 14th C. Latin text; Transitional Rotunda script.
20. Netherlands: Psalter. Illuminated. Early 14th C. Latin text; Angular Gothic script.
21. France: Hymnal. Illuminated. Early 14th C. Latin text; Angular Gothic script; Gregorian notation.
22. Germany (Würzburg): Missal (*Missale Herbipolense*). Early 14th C. Latin text; Gothic script; transitional Early Gothic notation.
23. France: Breviary. Illuminated. Middle 14th C. Latin text; Angular Gothic script.
24. England: Book of Hours. Illuminated. Middle 14th C. Latin text; Angular Gothic script.
25. Germany: Psalter. Illuminated. Late 14th C. Latin text; Gothic script.
26. France (Rouen): Missal. Illuminated. Late 14th C. Latin text; Angular Gothic script.
27. Italy: Antiphonal. Early 15th C. Latin text; Rotunda Gothic script; Gregorian notation.
28. Northern France: Book of Hours. Illuminated. Middle 15th C. Latin text; Angular Gothic script.
29. France: Book of Hours. Illuminated. Middle 15th C. Latin text; Angular Gothic script.
30. France: Book of Hours. Middle 15th C. Latin text; Angular Gothic script.
31. France: Book of Hours. Middle 15th C. Latin text; Angular Gothic script.
32. Italy (Florence): Gradual. Illuminated. Middle 15th C. Latin text; Rotunda Gothic script; square notation.
33. Germany: Missal. Middle 15th C. Latin text; Angular Gothic script.
34. Italy: Psalter. Middle 15th C. Latin text; Rotunda Book Hand; square notations.
35. France: Writings of St. Jerome (*Sanctus Hieronymus, Contra Jovinianum*). Middle 15th C. Latin text; Lettre de Somme.
36. France: Book of Hours. Illuminated. Middle 15th C. Latin text; Angular Gothic script.
37. Italy: Epistolary. Middle 15th C. Latin text; Rotunda or Round Gothic script; square rhetorical neumes.
38. France (Limoges): Missal (*Missale Lemovicense Castrense*). Middle 15th C. Latin text; Angular Gothic script.
39. Italy: Livy’s *History of Rome (T. Livii ab Urbe Condita Libri)*. Middle 15th C. Latin text; Humanist script.
40. Italy: Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Sentences (Super Primo Libro Sententiarum)*. Late 15th C. Latin text; Humanist Book Hand.
41. France: *Dialogues* of Gregory the Great (*S. Gregorius Magnus, Dialogi*). Late 15th C. Latin text; Lettre Bâtarde.
42. Germany (Würzburg): Psalter. Late 15th C. Latin text; Angular Gothic script; Gothic notation.
43. Netherlands: Book of Hours. Late 15th C. Latin text; Bold Angular Gothic script.
44. Germany: Bible. Late 15th C. Latin text; Semi-Gothic script.
45. France: Book of Hours. Illuminated. Late 15th C. Latin text; Gothic script.
46. Northern France: Book of Hours. Illuminated. Late 15th C. Latin text; Gothic script.
47. Netherlands: Book of Hours. Illuminated. Late 15th C. Latin text; Angular Gothic script.
48. Netherlands: Book of Hours. Illuminated. Late 15th C. Latin text; Lettre de Forme.
49. Germany: Missal. Early 16th C. Latin text; Lettre Bâtarde.
50. France: Book of Hours. Illuminated. Early 16th C. Latin text; Cursive Gothic script.

Locations of the Ege Manuscript Portfolios

Box # Location

2. The Ohio State University (Columbus, OH)
5. Ohio University (Athens, OH)
6. The University of Massachusetts (Amherst, MA)
9. The Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County (Cincinnati, OH)
11. The Buffalo and Erie County Public Library (Buffalo, NY)
13. The University of Minnesota (Minneapolis, MN)
15. Kent State University (Kent, OH)
19. The State University of New York (Stony Brook, NY)
22. The Cleveland Public Library (Cleveland, OH)
23. Kenyon College (Gambier, OH)
24. Indiana University (Bloomington, IN)
25. The University of Saskatchewan (Saskatoon, SK)
27. The University of South Carolina (Columbia, SC)
28. The Pierpoint Morgan Library (New York, NY)
29. The Lima Public Library (Lima, OH)
30. Denison University (Granville, OH)
32. The University of Colorado (Boulder, CO)
33. Private collection (Sold by Christie's in June of 1997)
35. Rochester Institute of Technology (Rochester, NY)
36. The Ontario College of Art and Design (Toronto, ONT)
37. Case Western Reserve University (Cleveland, OH)
38. The University of North Carolina (Greensboro, NC)
39. Private collection (Sold by Christie's in January of 1980)
- . Smith College (Northampton, MA)
- . The Ege "Family Portfolio" (New York City)

