

Audience And Amendment Of Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 383 In The First Half Of The Twelfth Century

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The manuscript Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 383 was produced s. xi/xii possibly at London, St. Paul's Cathedral, or else it was moved there early in the twelfth century. The manuscript is a collection of law-codes and related texts and has been described as an Anglo-Norman 'legal encyclopaedia' of Anglo-Saxon law. This paper will seek to contextualise the relationship between the manuscript and its audience and users in the first half of the twelfth century from a codicological perspective. Initial discussion will outline the evidence for the physical form of the manuscript in the early twelfth century. It will be argued that the manuscript was used as a series of unbound quires, and that the binding of the quires into codex form did not occur until significantly after the period in question.

The main emphasis of this discussion will be on the implications for the changing context of use that can be deduced from amendments made to the text-block. Particular focus will be given to the limning and rubrication of the manuscript, and the consequent restructuring of the *mise-en page* produced by these. This process made the law-codes and related texts more accessible to its users. Finally, the tract known as *Gerefa*, concerning the duties of an estates reeve, and its relationship to the other texts in the manuscript will be examined as a case study of the amendment process. Ultimately, it will be shown from the amendments to the *mise-en page* that the context of use of the manuscript and its audience changed throughout the first half of the twelfth century. Specifically, it will be demonstrated that the non-legal tract *Gerefa* was not an accidental inclusion, but was considered as an integral part of the collection and therefore, that the definition of 'legal encyclopaedia' is too narrow a category for the manuscript to be classified as.