

Cambridge: Jesus College, MS.Q.G.15 (James 63)Poggio, *epistolae* etc.England, s.xv²

I Paper (watermarks: *raisin* as Briquet no.12991-13006 [fol.17, 50]; *boeuf* as Briquet no.2814-2818 [fol.34]; *tête de boeuf* as Briquet no.15039-15061 [fol.69]). 198 × 146mm. 76 fol.s. Modern pencil foliation: 1-76.

II i¹⁶ wants 1, ii-iii¹⁶ iv²⁰ v¹² wants 7 (before fol.74), 11 & 12. No catchwords or quire signatures.

III 172 × 118mm. Border only ruled. Signs of prick-holes at each corner of the border.

IV Written throughout in one low-grade English gothic hand by a scribe who identifies himself as Thomas Armin (fol.27^v).

V No illuminations but initial letters involve florid pen-flourishing in late fifteenth/early sixteenth century style.

VI The only marginalia appear to be scribal with an occasional rubricated *maniculum* (eg. fol.7, 8, 17 etc.) and a few cropped notes (eg. fol.10).

VII Very simple early binding of skin over thick wood boards, with the clasp missing from the front and five holes which form a small cross on the back board.

2^o fo. decimam ecclesie...

* * *

[1] fol.1-3^v: **St. Bernard de Clairvaux**, letter to Raymund

tit.: Epistola barnardi ad Raymundum militem de / cura & modo rei familiaris utilius gubernande.

epist.: Gracioso & felici militi domino Raymundo Castri Sancti Ambrosij. Bernardus in senium adductus salutem. Doceri petisti a nobis ... perducatur sua dampnabilis senectus. / Explicit epistola Ba^ernardi ad Raymundum militem.

PL clxxxii col.647-651, with a different explicit.

[2] fol.3^v-4: letter on the death of the writer's brother, Galeotus

sine tit.

epist.: Magnifici viri dilectissimi nostri lugubres & funestas ... facile possetis imperio spoliari. Amen.

Not in Bertalot.

Later hand writes at start: *Lauerenti*.

[3] fol.4^v-5: **Filippo Maria Visconti**, letter on the defeat of the Genoese and Giovanni Giacomo Paleologo, marchese of Monferrato, by Niccolò Piccinino (October 1435)

tit.: Dux Mediolani

epist.: Edocet per singulos dies magis glorissimus deus ... cum letissimis sonis campanaris [*sic*]. Francisce.

Not in Bertalot.

For this incident, see *DBI sub* Adorno, Barnarba.

[4] fol.5^{r-v}: **Poggio Bracciolini**, letter to Pietro Donato (10 December 1426)

Extract from D. Rundle, 'Of Republics and Tyrants: aspects of quattrocento humanist writings and their reception in England, c. 1400 – c. 1460' (unpublished DPhil thesis, University of Oxford, 1997) 324

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tit.: Epistole pogij oratoris illustrissimi

epist.: Poggius p.s. dicit petro donato Episcopo Castellano. Ita me deus salvet ut ... officium quid Rogamus. Vale & me ama. Rome iiii^{to} dus [*sic*: idus]

Edited, without reference to this copy, in Harth, ii ep.I/3.

[5] fol.6^{r-v}: **Poggio Bracciolini**, letter to Giovanni Morroni da Rieti (20 January 1426)

tit.: Epistola poggij 2

epist.: Poggius Iohanni Aretino s.p.d. Quam [*sic*: Quoniam] mi Iohannes eciam non sollicitantem ... nomine meo. Vale & si me amas festina.

Edited in Harth, ii ep.I/7. The error here, naming the recipient *Aretino* rather than *Reatino* is, according to Harth, i p.lxxi, shared by three other manuscripts: BAV, MS.Vat.lat. 3910, fol.42, Venice: Biblioteca Marciana, MS.Lat.XIII/116, fol.123^v, BAV, MS.Pal.lat. 1592, fol.30.

[6] fol.6^v-7^v: **Poggio Bracciolini**, letter to Francesco Barbaro

tit.: Epistola poggij 3^a

epist.: Poggius p.s.d. francisco Barbaro v.c. posteaquam Recessisti a nobis ... [fol.7] me [fol.7^v] videas scripsisse. Vale & quum ad Guarinum scribis eum salutato.

Edited, without reference to this copy, in Harth, ii ep.II/13.

[7] fol.7^v-8: **Poggio Bracciolini**, letter to Leonardo Bruni (27 September 1426)

tit.: Epistola Pogij 4^a \Ricardo Secretario episcopi Wyntoniensis/

epist.: Poggius p.s.d. leonardo Aretino v. consulari. Credo oblivione esse abste factum ... cicius efficias Rogo atque eciam Rogo. Vale ex Roma.

Edited, without reference to this copy, in Harth, ii ep.II/7.

[8] fol.8^{r-v}: **Poggio Bracciolini**, letter to Leonardo Bruni (26 October 1426)

tit.: Epistola pogij 5

epist.: Poggius p.s. dicit leonardo Aretino viro consulari. Audivi quo {quidem} nil gracias aures ... nullo modo est omittendum. Vale.

Edited, without reference to this copy, in Harth, ii ep.II/12.

[9] fol.8^v-9: **Poggio Bracciolini**, letter to Giovanni di Prato (1430)

tit.: Epistola pogij 6^a

epist.: Poggius p.S.d. Iohanni pratensi. Ita mihi recte agendi mens ... utile sed hec tu melius. Vale.

Edited, without reference to this copy, in Harth, ii ep.III/5.

[10] fol.9^v: **Poggio Bracciolini**, letter to Francesco Marescalo (30 January 1435)

tit.: Epistola pogij 7

epist.: Poggius p.S.d. Francisco Marestallo ferrariensi. Cum Scipione nostro ferrariensi quem non solum diligo ... sis facturus. Vale & me ama. Florencie.

Edited, without reference to this copy, in Harth, ii ep.IV/10.

[11] fol.10^{r-v}: **Poggio Bracciolini**, letter to Cosimo de' Medici (28 November 1434)

Extract from D. Rundle, 'Of Republics and Tyrants: aspects of quattrocento humanist writings and their reception in England, c. 1400 – c. 1460' (unpublished DPhil thesis, University of Oxford, 1997)

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tit.: Epistola poggij 8

epist.: Poggius Cosmo de medicis salutem. Ieronimum de Berdis dilexi semper ... parte accipias volo. Vale Rome.

Edited, without reference to this copy, in Harth, ii ep.IV/11.

[12] fol.10^v-11: **Poggio Bracciolini**, letter to Niccolo Loschi (20 September 1433)

tit.: Epistola pogij 9^a

epist.: Poggius p.s.d. Nicholao lusco. Litteras quas nuper ad doctissimum virum nuncium ... laudem & gloriam consequendam. Vale Rome.

Edited, without reference to this copy, in Harth, ii ep.IV/13.

[13] fol.11-12: **Poggio Bracciolini**, letter to Guarino (18 May 1436)

tit.: Epistola pogij 10^a

epist.: Poggius p.s.d. Guarino suo viro clarissimo Franciscus noster ferrariensis vir doctus ac ... omni virtute prestantissimo.

Edited, without reference to this copy, in Harth, ii ep.V/7.

[14] fol.12^v: **Poggio Bracciolini**, letter to Vasco Fernandez de Lucena (1436/7)

tit.: Epistola pogij 11^a

epist.: Poggius valasco portugalensi salutem. Nescio malicia ne feceris an oblivione ... satisfactum putabo. Bononie.

Edited, without reference to this copy, in Harth, ii ep.VI/2.

[15] fol.12^v-13^v: **Poggio Bracciolini**, letter to Vasco Fernandez de Lucena (17 June 1437)

tit.: Epistola poggij 12^a

epist.: Poggius valasco S. Expectam diucius quam tua presidia ... regni sui gloriam maculasse. Bononie.

Edited, without reference to this copy, in Harth, ii ep.VI/15.

[16] fol.13^v-14: **Poggio Bracciolini**, letter to Guarino (6 June 1437)

tit.: Epistola pogij 13^a

epist.: Poggius S.p.D Guarino suo Laurencius de prato prestantissimus ... sassaris[?] quoque ut peritus. Ames velim.

Edited, without reference to this copy, in Harth, ii ep.VI/13.

[17] fol.14^{r-v}: **Poggio Bracciolini**, letter to Vittorino da Feltre (13 November 1437)

tit.: Epistola poggij 14^a

epist.: Poggius p.s.d. victurino viro clarissimo. Licet nunquam antea mi victurine ... mutuuum fiet. Ama et rescribe.

Edited, without reference to this copy, in Harth, ii ep.VII/2.

[18] fol.14^v-15^v: **Poggio Bracciolini**, letter to Gian Francesco Gonzaga (February 1438)

tit.: Illustri principi domino Johanni francisco / marchioni mantue

epist.: Cum existimarem illustris princeps studia litterarum ... lucis sapienciam latere. Vale.

Edited, without reference to this copy, in Harth, ii ep.VII/5.

[19] fol.15^v-18: **Poggio Bracciolini**, letter to Carlo Marsuppini (10 February 1437)

tit.: Epistola poggij 16 / Doctissimo & eloquentissimo viro Carlo Aretino.

epist.: Poggius S.p.d. Carolo suo Aretino. v.c. Gravem dolorem suscepi prout equum ... animo affixam tene. Bononie v^o frebruariis [*sic*].

Edited, without reference to this copy, in Harth, ii ep.VI/10.

[20] fol.18-23: **Poggio Bracciolini**, letter to Leonardo Bruni (30 May 1416)

sine tit.

epist.: Poggius suo leonardo Aretino S.p.d Cum plurimis diebus ad balnea fuissem Jeronimus penas luit.

Edited, without reference to this copy, in Harth, ii ep.IV/6.

[21] fol.23-24: **Poggio Bracciolini**, letter to Leonello d'Este (25 October 1435)

sine tit.

epist.: Poggius p.s.d. equiti insigni leonardo [*sic*] Estensum. [fol.23^v] Existimo magnum pondus habere apud te ... tuo iudicio assentiri. Vale & mei memor esto.

Edited, without reference to this copy, at Walser, *Poggius*, p.438.

[22] fol.24^{r-v}: **Guarino da Verona**, letter to Leonello d'Este (June 1435)

sine tit.

epist.: Guarinus illustri viro d. Leonello estensi S. Nuncius ecce novus affertur ... sentenciam proferes.

Printed in R.Sabbadini *ed.*, *Epistolario di Guarino Veronese* ii {Miscellanea di Storia Veneta ser.3 vol.11} (Venice, 1916) no.669.

[23] fol.24^v-25^v: **Poggio Bracciolini**, letter to Francesco Barbaro (1435)

sine tit.

epist.: Poggius p.s.d. francisco Barbaro viro clarissimo. Licet sciam per multas esse occupationes ... ignorancie accusabis. Vale & mei ut soles memor. / Explicit Epistole poggij philosophi

Printed in Poggio, *Opera Omnia*, *ed.*R.Fubini, i (Turin, 1964) pp.356-7.

[24] fol.26-27: letter from a merchant community to Humfrey, Duke of Gloucester

tit.: Illustrissimo & litteratissimo principi & domino / domino humffrido duci Gloucestrie

epist.: Si velimus tociens humanitati vestre gratias ... omni rerum eventu singulariter commendatos.

Unprinted.

[25] fol.27^{r-v}: **Tommaso Fregoso**, letter to Humfrey, Duke of Gloucester (26 March 1442)

Extract from D. Rundle, 'Of Republics and Tyrants: aspects of quattrocento humanist writings and their reception in England, c. 1400 – c. 1460' (unpublished DPhil thesis, University of Oxford, 1997)

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tit.: Illustrissimo principi Domino humfrido Duci Glou/cestrie Thomas de campofregoso Ianuensis Dux

epist.: Nemo est civium nostrorum Illustrissime princeps ... votis omnibus commendamus. / Amen quod Tpmbs brmkn

Edited, without reference to this copy, by Sammut pp.229-30.

[26] fol.28-73^v: **Johannes Lemovicensis**, *Morale Somnium Pharaonis*

tit.: Incipit dilucidarium lemonocensis de / Sompno pharaonis.

tract.: Victorioso principi potestates aereas debellanti ... gratiarum accio & vox laudis. Amen. / Explicit lemonocensis de Sompno Pharaonis.

Printed in his *Opera Omnia*, ed.C.Horvath (Veszprém, 1932) i, pp.69-126.

* * *

This manuscript, which includes a series of Poggio letters not otherwise known to have had an English circulation, was clearly made for private use by someone whose name is Thomas Armin (reading the code at fol.27^v). Unfortunately, nothing is known about him beyond this manuscript. Perhaps his name is a toponym: there is a Airmin or Ayrmin in Yorkshire, lands of which belonged to St.Mary's Abbey, York. Not only is Armin's own identity indeterminable; it is also unclear from what manuscripts he could have been copying. There is no obvious prototype for his selection of Poggio letters [see the discussion in Harth's edition of Poggio's *epistolario*; one codex, *BAV, MS.Vat.lat.3910 includes [4]-[9], [11]-[13] & [15] and shares the mistake in the protocol to [5]].

Despite the lack of helpful information about its provenance, this manuscript does provide insights into English perceptions of 'humanism' in the late fifteenth century. The reference written in a different ink at fol.7^v to *Ricardo Secretario episcopi Wyntoniensis*, by whom is meant Richard Petworth, is intriguing: neither the following letter nor any of the others mentions Petworth [on whom see c.vii pp.242-7 above]. It is unlikely that Armin, who was probably writing after Petworth's death, should add this phrase of his own accord. Presumably, then, the copy that Armin was

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transcribing showed signs that it had passed through Petworth's hands. So, this furnishes another piece of evidence connecting Petworth with the *fortuna* of Poggio's works in England.

The collection, however, does not just link Poggio and Petworth; it was also thought appropriate - by this scribe or his prototype - to connect these letters with two concerning Humfrey. These letters, however, are not the usual humanist correspondence; instead they are letters from Italian cities thanking him for his support of their merchant communities in England. Their copying here is one example of how Humfrey's name became connected not only with humanist learning but also with the political protection of Italians. Indeed, it is this feature that appears in William Worcester's *Boke of Noblesse* [ed.J.G.Nichols (London, 1860) p.45]; he remembers the duke for his martial exploits and his "gret tendirness and favore shewed and done to all straungiers" which gained him renown "thoroughe all cristyn roiaumes." It is only later that the comment is added that he also gave books to Oxford.

Also of interest is the perception of Poggio presented by this manuscript. The humanists, wishing to combine philosophy and eloquence, might have been pleased with Armin's interpretation of Poggio: he terms him *philosophus* (fol.25^v) but, equally, he sees him as a guide to epistolary style. The effect of this, however, can be to concentrate on the style of the works at the expense of their substance: for example, some of the shorter letters from the Scipio/Caesar controversy are copied into this manuscript (items [21]–[23]), omitting all the political and historical discussion of the debate [for contrasting reading, see **CUL, MS.Gg.i.34(i)**]. Like other English readers, Armin does not look only to the humanists for stylistic

guidance; the combination of humanist letters with St.Bernard (item [1]) also occurs in **London: British Library, MS.Harl.2268**.

The manuscript seems to have been in Catholic hands in the sixteenth century - note the scribble at fol.15^v: *the right faith is the church of Rome*. This is perhaps the hand of Richard Kagge who adds his name at fol.16 (erased) and fol.33^v.

At fol.1, it is recorded that this volume was given to Jesus College *ex dono Mr. Man Coll. Socij Jan 21 1685*.

* * *

M.R.James, *A descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the library of Jesus College, Cambridge* (London, 1895) pp.98-9; Harth, i pp.lxxi.
Colophons no.17850. Thomas Armin does not appear in *BRUO* or *BRUC* or in *CPL*. For a William Armin from Airmin, Yorkshire, see *CPatR, 1494-1519*, p.19 and *CCloseR, 1485-1500*, no.789. However, there was also an Armin family in Lincolnshire: see *CPatR, 1461-7*, p.508.