THE BREVIARY OF LEONARDUS HASLINGER

WITH HIS TRACT IN GERMAN ON FISHING TECHNIQUES INCLUDING THE EARLIEST KNOWN COLLECTION OF FLY TYING PATTERNS

An extraordinary discovery of a tract of four closely written pages of recipes for catching fish such as trout, grayling and chub, in the summer months with artificial flies, baits and pots; the earliest recorded collection of fly-tying patterns known to exist, pre-dating the famous Tegernsee manuscript by more than 30 years.

Breviary, Summer portion, in Latin, with additions in German, rubricated manuscript on paper. [Austria, probably before 1452, with additions c.1460s]
A truly remarkable and unexpected feature of the manuscript is the added fishing tract found on leaves at the end of the volume dating from the mid-15th century. The tract begins with detailed descriptions of combinations of coloured feathers and silks used for making fly-fishing hooks to be used in the summer months covered by the Breviary itself, followed by descriptions of baits and attractants for use when angling, and catching fish with nets, traps, etc. What also sets this tract apart from other early documents of medieval fishing is the fact that we can link it with an individual. Leonard Haslinger, a secular priest, is known to have been at Admont Abbey prior to his ordination, from evidence in the Breviary. He was later parish priest at Thalheim, in the Traun Valley, which was also the place of his birth. The river Traun is a tributary of the Danube flowing from the foothills of the Alps and is still a favoured place to fly-fish for trout and grayling. Regulations for fishing on the Traun, including with a ‘feathered hook’, are known to date from 1419, and fishing rights were held by monasteries such as Sankt Florian and Kremsmünster, among others.

We are grateful to Professor Richard C. Hoffmann for his expert advice on the fish-catching texts. He informs us that the ‘fly-tying patterns’ in the first section of ‘how one should bind hooks’ are a generation older than those found in the famous Tegernsee manuscript of c. 1500 (see his: Fishers’ Craft and Lettered Art: Tracts on Fishing from the End of the Middle Ages (University of Toronto Press, 1997) and the English patterns found in the Treatise of Fyschyng wyth an Angle, printed by Wynkyn de Worde in 1496 in the second Boke of Saint Albans.

A full appreciation of the Haslinger Breviary including a transliteration and translation of the tract is being prepared by Professor Hoffman and Peter Kidd for publication in 2015.

Dating: Although there is no way to precisely date the addition of the text to the volume, its script appears to be approximately contemporary with the main text of the Breviary as well as the two additions that flank it. It is very suggestive that one of the documents is explicitly dated 1452, and mentions the Abbot who presided at Admont until 1466, and the other is datable to between 1458 and 1464. These two documents would only have been of relevance within the lifetime of John and Leonard Haslinger, whom they concern, and thus they are most likely to have been added in the 1460s or only slightly later. If this insertion of the fishing text is, therefore, around the same date as the addition of the two documents – let us not forget that it is physically sandwiched between them in the volume – it pre-dates the Tegernsee manuscript of c. 1500, potentially by some 30-40 years.

Provenance: 1. Apparently written, probably in the 1440s, for the use of the priest Leonard Haslinger: an added charter in favour of Leonard (fol.214r) is dated 1452; an added papal petition (fol.211v) doubtless dates between 1458 and 1464, and names Johannes Haslinger of Gmunden (north-west of Admont, in the Traun Valley), his brother Leonard, John his father, and Margaret his mother; the Johannes Bedellus tables (fols.77r–79v) are apparently a somewhat later addition of 1462/3 on leaves that were left blank at the end of the Temporale.

As seen in the added petitions Leonard Haslinger had strong links to Admont Abbey, situated on the River Enns, which has the world’s largest surviving monastic library. The added texts at the end of the volume name Leonard Haslinger as a ‘continual commensal’ at the abbey, as well as the Abbot, Prior, Cellarer, and Warden, and ‘the whole convent of the church of Admont, of the Benedictine Order, in the diocese of Salzburg’. The Breviary is not, however, of Admont use. The main text of the present volume suggests a localisation in the Passau diocese within
the archdiocese of Salzburg, including, for instance, the feasts of St Rupert (founder and first bishop of Salzburg) and Virgilius (bishop of Salzburg, and builder of St Rupert’s Cathedral).


**Physical description:** Paper, the leaves c.215×145mm; i (medieval parchment) + 214 + i (medieval parchment) leaves; foliated in 20th-century pencil; two text leaves missing and five blanks cancelled, else complete; collation: 1–412 (fol.1–48), 512–1 (last blank cancelled; fols.49–69) | 612 (fols.60–71), 712–3 (6th–8th leaves cancelled; fols.72–80) | 812, 912+1 (9th leaves, Kylian and his companions (fols.116r–120v), Kunigund (fols.121r–v), Oswald (fol.139r–v), Wenceslas (fols.173r–174r), Wenceslas (fols.195v–197r), Willibrord (fols.197–200v), Othmar (fols.201v–202v), and Virgilius of Salzburg (fol. 207v); some rubrics include mention of the ‘antiquam breviarium’ (fols.151v, 162v, 194v).

Text: [items 1 occupies quires 1–5]


2. (fols.60r–76r) Temporale: continued: ‘Dominica prima [- dominica xxv] post octavam pentecostes…’.

3. (fols.77r–79v) Johannes Bedellus’s table of dates, filled-in only from 1462 onwards, and with ‘1463’ at the top of the page; the main column has a series of single words, ‘Percepte/Dilecte/Verba/Johannis/Bedelli/Verbigene… Coniunget/Cristus/Beatis/Amen’, below which is ‘Septimane a nativitate Christi usque estomichi’ and five more columns of numbers for the concursents, Sunday Letters, Golden Numbers, etc. (edited by B. Bischoff, ‘Ostertagstexte und Intervaltafeln’, in Mittelalterliche Studien, 2, 1967).

4. (fols.81r–210v) Sanctorale, Summer portion, with feasts from St Petronella (31 May) to the vigil of St Andrew (29 November); ‘Incipit de sanctis infra Ascensio et Pentecosten primo de sancta Petronella’, including Achatus and his 10,000 companions (fols.87r–89v), an inserted leaf with Elizabeth (with rubrics in German) (fol.101r–v), the Dedication of a church (fols.113v–115v) ending imperfect in vespers due to the loss of two leaves, Kylian and his companions (fols.116r–118r), Heinrich (fol.121r–v), Oswald (fol.139r–v), Donatus (fols.140v–142v), Hermes (fols.156r–157v), Adrian (fols.160v–162v), Kunigund (fols.162v–164r), Emmeram (fols.172v–173r), Rupert of Salzburg (fol.173r–174r), Wenceslas (fol.175r), Maximilian (fol.181v), Coloman (fols.182v–183r), Hedwig (fols.183v–185v), Gall (fols.185v–187r), Willibrord (fol.197r), Bricius (fols.199v–200v), Othmar (fols.201v–202v), and Virgilius of Salzburg (fol. 207v); some rubrics include mention of the ‘antiquam breviarium’ (fols.151v, 162v, 194v).

5. (fol.211r) Added prayer to Catherine: ‘Ave Katharina martyri et regina…’.

6. (fol.211v) Added copy of a petition to the Pope, asking permission to choose a confessor: ‘Beatisime pater animarum saluti devotorum oratorum vestrorum Johannis Hasling/ de Gmundi clerici S.V. familiaris continuo commensalis et Leonardi presbiteri eius fratri, ac Johannis eius patris, ac Margarethe eius matris, Pataviensis [i.e. Passau] diocesum salubrius consolatur supplicant humiliter…’, at the bottom of the page is ‘Papa Pius secundus’, who was pope from 1458 to 1464.

7. (fols.212r–213v) Added collection of fish-catch recipes in German, entered under three headings: (a) (fols.212r–v) ‘Item nota wie man angl vassen schol auf daß gantz iar vnd nach yegeleichen monatt (Note how one shall prepare hooks for the whole year and according to every month), followed by six paragraphs, 8–9 lines each, of ‘artificial fly’ recipes, each for a specific month and each for a line of several dressed hooks, beginning ‘In dem ersten may so nim vinsters gefider und schwartz… (In May take a dark feather and black and light brown under so it gives a good shine underneath…)’;


9. (fols.214v) A mnemonic table of Old Testament lections, headed ‘Imposimio hystoriariam’, with 7 columns headed with the names of biblical books.}