

## POST SCRIPT

### AN EARLY CANON LAW MANUSCRIPT

One of the oldest known Canon law manuscripts was sold at Sotheby's on 6 December 1988 (lot 39). It is a copy of the eighth-century *Canones conciliorum*, written on 94 leaves of vellum, probably by an Irish or Northumbrian scribe working in Italy. The manuscript is one of six known manuscripts of the 'Sanblasianus' text, consisting of canons of general councils, the Symmachian forgeries, and the fifth-century decretals. It had belonged to the great manuscript collector Sir Thomas Phillipps (MS. 17849), and after several changes of ownership was acquired in around 1983 by the Paul Getty Museum, Malibu, California, the vendors. It is thought to be the oldest manuscript sold at auction in the last 50 years, and fetched £638,000.