

statistical data about the VMS. The most accessible general account is perhaps in Kahn [K], pp.863-872. Clear reproductions of a few VMS pages may be found in [K], [N], [T], and [Z], but not in [Br] or [D1].

W. F. Friedman and the VMS

Elizebeth S. and William F. Friedman's longstanding interest in the Voynich manuscript is well reflected in the holdings of the Friedman collection in the Marshall Library in Lexington, Virginia.

They became interested in the VMS as soon as Newbold began publicizing his theories about the VMS in the 1920s, and started an extensive correspondence on the subject with their friend John M. Manly, the University of Chicago Chaucer expert who, like Friedman, had served as a cryptanalyst in World War I. Friedman obtained photostats from Mrs. Voynich, and through her, started a correspondence with Father Theodore C. Petersen which lasted until the latter's death in 1966. Petersen's hand-made tracing onto onion-skin paper is now item 1620 in the collection, and is amply described on page 41 of D'Imperio's book. After making the copy, Petersen prepared elaborate indexes and frequency counts (both into notebooks and onto index cards — all now in the Friedman collection — but in the process scribbled up his copy with underlinings, colored pencil marks, and so on, to the extent that photocopies of his copy are often hard to make out.

Friedman's extensive VMS photostat collection is based in part on Petersen's, but it is now impossible to give a precise acquisition date or provenance for each photostat. Some were obtained from Mrs. Voynich, some were copied from Petersen's copy of photostats, some were copied from published images of VMS pages.

A bound set of photostats, item 1600 in the collection, was either made for Father Petersen in 1931, or is a copy of that set. (See D'Imperio, pp. 39 and 41 for slightly conflicting accounts; Tiltman [T, p.44] asserts that Friedman's photostats were copied from Petersen's, and Tiltman's from Friedman's.) It consists of 125 sheets of photographs, printed on large sheets of stiff photographic paper of varying sizes. One or two pages of the VMS is shown on each sheet, each page