

## Early Uncial Support for **f<sup>35</sup>** in the General Epistles

I take it that Klaus Wachtel, in his *Der Byzantinische Text der Katholischen Briefe* [*The Byzantine Text of the Catholic Letters*], recognizes that the Byzantine **text** is early (though often deciding against it on internal grounds), thereby bidding adieu to the prevailing canard that the Byzantine text is late. I believe that the evidence presented below demonstrates the same for the **text** of **f<sup>35</sup>**.

I proceed to tabulate the performance of the early uncials (5<sup>th</sup> century and earlier) as they appear in the apparatus of my Greek text of the seven General Epistles, but supplemented from the *Editio Critica Maior* series. I use **f<sup>35</sup>** as the point of reference, but only tabulate variant sets where at least one of the extant early uncials (extant at that point) goes against **f<sup>35</sup>** (this is necessary, since most words have unanimous attestation).

Thirteen early uncials appear in my apparatus: P<sup>20,23,72,78,81,100</sup>, **Ⲛ**, A,B,C,048, 0173,0232. Only P<sup>72</sup>, **Ⲛ**, A,B,C are not fragments (048 is a variety of pieces, here and there). Codex C is missing basically chapters 4 and 5 of James, 1 Peter and 1 John [curiously, the same two chapters for all three books], as well as all of 2 John. Of course, P<sup>72</sup> has only 1 & 2 Peter and Jude. 0173 is the only one of them that never sides with **f<sup>35</sup>**: Out of the total of 795 variant sets, **f<sup>35</sup>** receives overt early attestation 77.9% of the time (619 ÷ 795).

Before drawing conclusions, I present the evidence (only combinations with at least one instance are tabulated). In passing, let me say that having neither secretary nor proof-reader, I do not guarantee complete accuracy, but a slip here or there will not alter the big picture, nor invalidate my conclusions.

|  | James | 1Peter | 2Peter | 1John | 2&3John | Jude | TOTAL      |
|--|-------|--------|--------|-------|---------|------|------------|
| <b>f<sup>35</sup></b> alone                    | 53    | 45     | 17     | 31    | 17      | 13   | <b>176</b> |
| <b>f<sup>35</sup></b> p <sup>72</sup>          |       | 7      | 1      |       |         | 1    | <b>9</b>   |
| <b>f<sup>35</sup></b> p <sup>100</sup>         | 2     |        |        |       |         |      | <b>2</b>   |
| <b>f<sup>35</sup></b> <b>Ⲛ</b>                 | 9     | 9      | 7      | 11    | 3       | 1    | <b>40</b>  |
| <b>f<sup>35</sup></b> A                        | 10    | 8      | 2      | 6     |         | 1    | <b>27</b>  |
| <b>f<sup>35</sup></b> B                        | 2     | 3      | 1      | 7     | 3       |      | <b>16</b>  |
| <b>f<sup>35</sup></b> C                        | 5     | 8      | 3      | 4     | 1       | 1    | <b>22</b>  |
| <b>f<sup>35</sup></b> 048                      | 1     |        | 1      | 1     |         |      | <b>3</b>   |
| <b>f<sup>35</sup></b> p <sup>20</sup> <b>Ⲛ</b> | 1     |        |        |       |         |      | <b>1</b>   |
| <b>f<sup>35</sup></b> p <sup>72</sup> A        |       | 3      |        |       |         |      | <b>3</b>   |
| <b>f<sup>35</sup></b> p <sup>72</sup> B        |       | 3      | 1      |       |         |      | <b>4</b>   |
| <b>f<sup>35</sup></b> p <sup>72</sup> C        |       | 3      |        |       |         |      | <b>3</b>   |

|                                       | James | 1Peter | 2Peter | 1John | 2&3John | Jude | TOTAL |
|---------------------------------------|-------|--------|--------|-------|---------|------|-------|
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>72</sup> 048   |       | 1      |        |       |         |      | 1     |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>100</sup> A    | 2     |        |        |       |         |      | 2     |
| f <sup>35</sup> ✕A                    | 12    | 3      | 6      | 10    |         | 1    | 32    |
| f <sup>35</sup> ✕B                    | 10    | 5      |        | 22    | 2       |      | 39    |
| f <sup>35</sup> ✕C                    |       | 1      | 1      | 5     |         | 2    | 9     |
| f <sup>35</sup> ✕048                  |       |        | 1      |       | 1       |      | 2     |
| f <sup>35</sup> AB                    | 4     | 2      | 1      | 12    |         | 2    | 21    |
| f <sup>35</sup> AC                    | 7     | 4      | 4      | 2     |         | 1    | 18    |
| f <sup>35</sup> A048                  |       |        | 1      | 1     | 2       |      | 4     |
| f <sup>35</sup> BC                    | 3     |        |        | 3     |         |      | 6     |
| f <sup>35</sup> B048                  | 1     |        |        | 1     | 1       |      | 3     |
|                                       |       |        |        |       |         |      |       |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>72</sup> ✕A    |       | 8      |        |       |         |      | 8     |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>72</sup> ✕B    |       | 4      |        |       |         | 1    | 5     |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>72</sup> ✕C    |       | 2      | 1      |       |         |      | 3     |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>72</sup> AB    |       | 12     | 3      |       |         | 3    | 18    |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>72</sup> AC    |       | 2      | 1      |       |         | 1    | 4     |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>72</sup> BC    |       | 1      | 13     |       |         |      | 14    |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>72</sup> C048  |       |        | 1      |       |         |      | 1     |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>81</sup> BC    |       | 1      |        |       |         |      | 1     |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>100</sup> ✕A   | 1     |        |        |       |         |      | 1     |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>100</sup> ✕B   | 1     |        |        |       |         |      | 1     |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>100</sup> AB   | 2     |        |        |       |         |      | 2     |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>100</sup> AC   | 1     |        |        |       |         |      | 1     |
| f <sup>35</sup> ✕AB                   | 13    | 13     | 1      | 10    | 1       | 3    | 41    |
| f <sup>35</sup> ✕AC                   | 8     | 4      | 1      | 11    |         | 2    | 26    |
| f <sup>35</sup> ✕A048                 |       |        | 2      | 3     | 1       |      | 6     |
| f <sup>35</sup> ✕BC                   | 17    | 1      | 2      | 17    | 2       | 2    | 41    |
| f <sup>35</sup> ✕B048                 |       |        |        | 2     |         |      | 2     |
| f <sup>35</sup> ✕B0232                |       |        |        |       | 1       |      | 1     |
| f <sup>35</sup> ✕C048                 |       |        | 1      |       |         |      | 1     |
| f <sup>35</sup> ABC                   | 8     | 5      | 2      | 15    | 3       | 2    | 35    |
| f <sup>35</sup> AB048                 | 2     |        |        | 4     | 1       |      | 7     |
| f <sup>35</sup> AB0232                |       |        |        |       | 1       |      | 1     |
| f <sup>35</sup> AC048                 |       |        | 2      |       |         |      | 2     |
| f <sup>35</sup> BC048                 |       |        | 1      |       | 1       |      | 2     |
|                                       |       |        |        |       |         |      |       |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>23</sup> ABC   | 1     |        |        |       |         |      | 1     |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>72,78</sup> AB |       |        |        |       |         | 1    | 1     |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>72</sup> ✕AB   |       | 9      | 4      |       |         | 4    | 17    |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>72</sup> ✕AC   |       | 4      | 1      |       |         | 1    | 6     |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>72</sup> ✕BC   |       | 6      | 10     |       |         | 3    | 19    |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>72</sup> ABC   |       | 8      | 4      |       |         | 5    | 17    |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>72</sup> AB048 |       |        | 1      |       |         |      | 1     |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>72</sup> BC048 |       |        | 1      |       |         |      | 1     |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>81</sup> ✕AB   |       | 1      |        |       |         |      | 1     |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>81</sup> ✕AC   |       | 1      |        |       |         |      | 1     |

|   | James | 1Peter | 2Peter | 1John | 2&3John | Jude | TOTAL |
|---|-------|--------|--------|-------|---------|------|-------|
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>100</sup> ⱼ BC   | 2     |        |        |       |         |      | 2     |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>100</sup> ABC    | 1     |        |        |       |         |      | 1     |
| f <sup>35</sup> ⱼ ABC                   | 1     | 11     | 4      |       | 2       | 7    | 25    |
| f <sup>35</sup> ⱼ AC048                 |       |        |        |       | 1       |      | 1     |
| f <sup>35</sup> ⱼ BC048                 |       | 1      |        |       | 1       |      | 2     |
| f <sup>35</sup> ABC048                  |       |        |        |       | 2       |      | 2     |
| f <sup>35</sup> AB048,0232              |       |        |        |       | 2       |      | 2     |
|   |       |        |        |       |         |      |       |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>72,78</sup> ⱼ AB |       |        |        |       |         | 1    | 1     |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>72,81</sup> ⱼ BC |       | 1      |        |       |         |      | 1     |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>72</sup> ⱼ ABC   |       |        |        |       |         | 1    | 1     |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>72</sup> ⱼ AB048 |       |        | 3      |       | 6       |      | 9     |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>72</sup> ⱼ AC048 |       | 2      |        |       |         |      | 2     |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>72</sup> ⱼ BC048 |       |        | 1      |       |         |      | 1     |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>72</sup> ABC048  |       | 1      | 2      |       |         |      | 3     |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>78</sup> ⱼ ABC   |       |        |        |       |         | 1    | 1     |
| f <sup>35</sup> p <sup>81</sup> ⱼ ABC   |       | 3      |        |       |         |      | 3     |
| f <sup>35</sup> ⱼ ABC048                |       | 3      | 3      |       |         |      | 6     |
|   |       |        |        |       |         |      |       |
| Total w/uncial                          | 127   | 155    | 95     | 147   | 38      | 48   | 619   |

- involving p<sup>20</sup> -- 1
- involving p<sup>23</sup> -- 1
- involving p<sup>72</sup> -- 153
- involving p<sup>78</sup> -- 3
- involving p<sup>81</sup> -- 4
- involving p<sup>100</sup> -- 12
- involving ⱼ -- 356
- involving A -- 356 (this number is correct; it just happens to be the same as the other)
- involving B -- 378
- involving C -- 285
- involving 048 -- 62
- involving 0232-- 4

I will now list the singular readings for each of these uncials:

|                 | James | 1Peter | 2Peter | 1John | 2&3John | Jude | TOTAL |
|-----------------|-------|--------|--------|-------|---------|------|-------|
| p <sup>72</sup> |       | 33     | 12     |       |         | 17   | 62    |
| p <sup>78</sup> |       |        |        |       |         | 2    | 2     |
| ⱼ               | 11    | 25     | 13     | 18    | 5       | 4    | 76    |
| A               | 8     |        | 5      | 10    | 2       | 2    | 27    |
| B               | 7     | 10     | 3      | 8     | 4       | 5    | 37    |
| C               | 3     | 7      | 7      | 5     | 2       |      | 24    |
| 048             | 1     |        | 1      | 4     | 3       |      | 9     |

Each of these twelve uncials is plainly independent of all the others. The total lack of pattern in the attestation that these early uncials give to f<sup>35</sup> shows just as

plainly that  $f^{35}$  is independent of them all as well, quite apart from the 22.1% without them. But that 77.9% of the units receive early uncial support, without pattern or dependency, shows that the  $f^{35}$  text is early.

I invite special attention to the first block, where a single uncial sides with  $f^{35}$ ; each of the seven uncials is independent of the rest (and of  $f^{35}$ ) at this point, of necessity, yet together they attest 15% of the total ( $119 \div 795$ ). Since there is no pattern or dependency for this 15%, how shall we account for these 119 early readings in  $f^{35}$ ? Will anyone argue that whoever 'concocted' the first  $f^{35}$  MS had all these uncials in front of him, arbitrarily taking 9 readings from  $P^{72}$ , 2 from  $P^{100}$ , 40 from  $\aleph$ , etc., etc., etc.? Really now, how shall we account for these 119 early readings in  $f^{35}$ ? (Should anyone demure that the 5<sup>th</sup> century MSS included really are not all that early, I inquire: are they copies, or original creations? If they are copies their exemplars were obviously earlier—all of these 119 readings doubtless existed in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.)

Going on to the next block, we have another 148 readings where there is no pattern or dependency;  $119 + 148 = 267 = 34\%$ . Really now, how shall we account for these 267 early readings in  $f^{35}$ ? Going on to the next block, we have another 224 readings where there is no pattern or dependency;  $267 + 224 = 491 = 61.8\%$ . Really now, how shall we account for these 491 early readings in  $f^{35}$ ? Going on to the next block, we have another 100 readings where there is no pattern or dependency;  $491 + 100 = 591 = 74.3\%$ . The final block brings the total to 77.9%.

To allege a dependency in the face of this EVIDENCE I consider to be dishonest.  $f^{35}$  is clearly independent of all these lines of transmission, themselves independent. If  $f^{35}$  is independent then it is early, of necessity.  $f^{35}$  has all those early readings for the sufficient reason that its text is early, dating to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, at least. But if  $f^{35}$  is independent of all other lines of transmission (it is demonstrably independent of  $K^x$ , etc.) then it must hark back to the Autographs. What other reasonable explanation is there? Should anyone wish to claim that  $f^{35}$  is a recension, I request (and insist) that he specify who did it, when and where, and furnish evidence in support of the claim. Without evidence, any such claim is frivolous and irresponsible.