RECONSTRUCTION OF 
A LIÈGE PSALTER-HOURS 

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In the sad history of crimes against books, British Library Add. MS. 28784 must be placed high on the list of scrapbooks headed by the Carmelite Missal, Add. MSS. 29704–29705. When acquired by the British Museum in 1871 Add. MS. 28784 was composed of a complete late fifteenth-century book of hours¹ embellished with sixteen inserted full-page miniatures from an earlier fifteenth-century book of hours² and with over 400 bits and pieces cut from a late thirteenth-century manuscript.³ These cut-outs enliven the broad empty margins of text pages in the first book of hours, and cover all areas of text on rectos and versos of the sixteen leaves of the second. The job of separating this composite manuscript into its three constituent parts was begun in 1876 when the sixteen inserted pages were removed from what is now Add. 28784A and bound separately to form Add. 28784B. Parts A and B are both bound in nineteenth-century blind-tooled red leather bindings. The much more difficult task of separating the thirteenth-century part has yet to be attempted.⁴ The purpose of the present investigation is therefore to identify the type of book it was, to determine the school of manuscript illumination to which it belongs and its approximate date, and finally to reconstruct its probable appearance.

Responsibility for the mutilation of the manuscript appears to rest with an anonymous eighteenth- or nineteenth-century French or Belgian owner.⁵ Whoever was responsible, however, was extremely neat and methodical in his work, pasting together pictures with the same subject and carefully preserving thirteen small two-storey towers with figures inside, four full-page miniatures, seventeen large historiated initials, 137 smaller figural initials, and a wealth of marginalia, decorated versals, and miscellaneous scraps of bar ornament which total about 250 in number. A complete list of the minor decorative elements is given at the end of this article.

Following the methodology established by Margaret Rickert in her reconstruction of the Carmelite Missal,⁶ we shall look first at the large historiated illuminations since they provide the most evidence for identifying both the type of book this was and its provenance. The tower figures are readily identifiable as the labours of the months and signs of the zodiac which would have illustrated a calendar.⁷ The cycle can be re-established as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>Feasting (A fol. 84°) / Aquarius (A fol. 84)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>Pruning / Pisces (A fol. 25)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

107
March  Hoeing / Aries (A fol. 20)
April  Flowerbearer / Taurus (A fol. 19)
May    Violist / Gemini (A fol. 16)
June   Woman picking flowers / Cancer (A fol. 18)
July   Mowing / Leo (A fol. 21)
August Reaping / Virgo (A fol. 17)
September Winemaking / Libra (A fol. 22)
October Sowing / Scorpio (A fol. 12)
November Feeding hogs / Sagittarius (A fol. 13)
December Butchering hog / Capricorn (A fol. 26)

The four full-page miniatures (preserved uncut) are each composed of two roundels surmounted by a gable and turrets, and flanked by six smaller roundels containing figures of saints, scenes of martyrdom, or narratives from the New Testament. Three of the miniatures have scenes from an infancy cycle in their large roundels: Tree of Jesse / Birth of the Virgin (B fol. 8); Nativity / Annunciation (B fol. 2); and Adoration of the Magi / Presentation (B fol. 5). The fourth miniature is a large initial B enclosing scenes of the Pentecost and Ascension (B fol. 15), inscribed on its frame ‘Beatus vir’. The manuscript was therefore undoubtedly a psalter preceded by a calendar and a cycle of scenes from Christ’s infancy in full-page miniatures. The subjects of two historiated initials also clearly indicate that the book was a psalter. An initial S with Jonah in the sea (B fol. 16) could only have illustrated Psalm 68 ‘Salvum me’ and an initial E (B fol. 3) with David playing bells is the usual illustration for Psalm 80 ‘Exultate’. The subjects of the other initials—a Virgin enthroned, two infancy scenes, a long series of ten Passion scenes, and two scenes from saints’ lives—are less recognizable. In addition, the Virgin enthroned, nine of the Passion scenes, and many of the miscellaneous scraps are clearly by a less accomplished artist which raises the question of whether the cut-outs are not in fact from two different manuscripts.

To concentrate for a moment on the work of the first artist, one is left with seven historiated initials of very disparate subjects in addition to the calendar, full-page miniatures, and the Beatus page. A comparison of these initial scenes with the English, French, and Belgian cycles established by Haseloff quickly reveals that these unrelated subjects are actually typical of psalters made in Liège. The cut-outs lack initials for Psalms 26, 52, and 109 but the extant initials can be listed in order as follows:

Psalm 1  Pentecost / Ascension (B fol. 15)
Psalm 2  Martyrdom of St. Lambert (B fol. 11)
Psalm 38 Flight into Egypt, *bas de page* Annunciation to Shepherds (B fol. 6*)
Psalm 51  Massacre of Innocents (B fol. 4*)
Psalm 52  (Initial missing), marginal scene First Temptation of Christ (B fol. 7*)
Psalm 68  Jonah (B fol. 16)
Psalm 80  David playing bells (B fol. 3)
Psalm 97  Miraculous Mass of St. Giles (B fol. 13)
Psalm 101 Gethsemane (A fol. 3)

The Liège psalters are unique among the French and Flemish cycles described by
Fig. 1. Reconstruction of Add. MS. 28784, Psalm 2
Fig. 2. Psalm 2, Liège, Bibliothèque de l'Université, MS. 431, fol. 12.
(Reproduced by courtesy of the Université de Liège)
Haseloff in giving an historiated initial to the second psalm. There is no liturgical reason to emphasize this psalm, a fact which the Liège artists acknowledge by making this initial smaller than those of the other psalter divisions. (In Add. 28784 the initial of Psalm 2 is 32 mm. square, the other historiated initials about 50 mm. square.) The primary reason for its embellishment is artistic. In Liège psalters the Beatus initial is on a verso facing the text of Psalms 1 and 2. Together these two historiated initials form a double frontispiece to the psalter. While the initial of Psalm 2 is smaller than the other historiated initials, the margins on this page are generally much more elaborately decorated than on these other pages (figs. 1 and 2). Following the text of Psalm 1, the initial Q of Psalm 2 falls in the lower left corner of the textblock and its initial tail extends around two or three sides of the page. Searching among the miscellaneous scraps in Add. 28784, the tail of the Q and a bar of foliate spirals that went part way across the lower margin can be found on fol. 12 of Part B. The right-hand side of this foliate bar is on fol. 83 of Part A, but the two pieces do not match exactly, so apparently their ends were trimmed off after they were separated. The piece from the right-hand side ends on the far right in a caryatid who holds up a thin grey bar which resembles the bases of the calendar towers. There is in fact one tower too many for a calendar. On A fol. 85 one finds the lower storey of a tower containing a figure of David playing a harp. The grey ground line corresponds with the grey bar held up by the caryatid. On A fol. 85 one finds the upper storey containing the figure of St. Christopher. The two tower pieces fit together perfectly along a jagged cut. The probable appearance of the Psalm 2 page can thus be reconstructed as one sees it in the drawing.

The layout of this page most closely resembles that in Liège University MS. 431, another late thirteenth-century Liège psalter which is somewhat earlier in date stylistically than Add. 28784 (fig. 2). A comparison of its psalm initials with the cut-outs indicates that this manuscript may have been the model for many of Add. 28784’s compositions. At Psalm 68 for example, the figure of Jonah in the sea is flanked in both manuscripts by two turrets crammed with onlookers which represent the towns of Joppa and Tarshish (figs. 3 and 4).

Liège 431, like most thirteenth-century Liège psalters, contains canticles, a litany, the hours of the Virgin, and the office of the dead in addition to its calendar and psalter. So, it seems reasonable to assume that Add. 28784 also had these offices. The remaining historiated initials in Add. 28784 by the second artist adhere very closely to the subjects usually illustrating these texts in Liège psalters.

Canticles: Noli me tangere (at Confitebor) (B fol. 16)
Matins: Virgin enthroned (B fol. 7)
Lauds: Betrayal (B fol. 1)
Prime: Christ before Pilate (B fol. 9)
Tierce: Flagellation (B fol. 9)
Sext: Christ carrying cross (B fol. 10)
Nones: Crucifixion (B fol. 11)
Vespers: Deposition (B fol. 12)
Compline: Three Maries (A fol. 120)
Office of the Dead: Limbo (B fol. 14)
One can therefore hypothesize that Add. 28784 was the work of a master artist and an unskilled assistant who divided work on this manuscript at the break between the psalter and canticles. Since the small figural initials and marginalia are also identifiably the work of these two artists they presumably were also responsible for the minor decoration in their respective halves of the book.  

This hypothesis is supported by the discovery at the Pierpont Morgan Library of a psalter by this same assistant, which at present contains only a psalter, canticles, and litany (fig. 5). Comparing the initials of the canticles in the two manuscripts shows that the artist took somewhat greater pains with the psalter. Morgan 155 was made for an aristocratic lady named Margaret des Pres, a member of the prominent Liège family who were seigneurs of Colonster. The vast number of marginal hart hunts and jousting knights in Morgan 155, not found among the Add. 28784 cut-outs, may therefore be attributable to the aristocratic taste of the patron.

Despite his aristocratic patronage, the Colonster artist’s work seems naive and inept in comparison with the sophisticated technique of the main artist of Add. 28784. His line is shaky, his figures awkwardly drawn with total disregard for anatomy, while his drapery falls in shapeless lumps with ill-defined folds. What he lacks in competence, however, this artist more than makes up for in sheer exuberance and eclecticism (fig. 6). His psalm initials have become full-page compositions by the simple trick of enclosing Add. 28784’s full-page double roundel miniatures within an enframing initial and capping it with gables and turrets. The initial tail, foliate bar, and caryatid of Add. 28784’s Psalm 2 page again support an inhabited two-storey tower in the margin; and, as if all of this were not more than enough for one page, the artist fills any remaining space with marginalia. To fill his roundels at Psalm 38, the Colonster artist combines the initial of Psalm 38 and bas de page scenes from Add. 28784 (fig. 7). At Psalm 52 one finds the first and second Temptations of Christ in roundels, which supports the identification of the marginal first Temptation scene on B fol. 7 of Add. 28784 as part of its missing page for Psalm 52.

The direct dependence of the Colonster artist on Add. 28784 makes M 155 potentially an extremely valuable witness to the original appearance of the text pages in Add. 28784. Further evidence is provided by a second psalter by this atelier, Brussels, Bibliotheque Royale, MS. IV-141, which is the work of a different artist. This psalter has also been mutilated so that only the three large historiated initials for Psalms 26, 51, and 97 are extant. Comparing the measurements, ruling patterns, page layout, and minor decoration in these two psalters with the cut-outs will aid in reconstructing the format of plain text pages and of pages with either small figural initials or large historiated initials in Add. 28784.

The three psalters are basically the same size. The largest uncut full page in Add. 28784 measures 140 × 95 mm, but it has probably been cropped somewhat when cut out. Brussels IV-141 measures 135 × 100 mm, and M 155 160 × 110 mm. Ruling lines in light-brown ink on several full-page cut-outs show that its textblock was framed by a simple grid of vertical and horizontal lines measuring 75 × 55 mm, and containing nineteen lines of text. The script was a minute formal Gothic bookhand (two words of which are visible
Fig. 3. Psalm 68 and Confitebor initials. British Library, Add. MS. 28784, B fol. 16
Fig. 4. Psalm 68, Liège, Bibliothèque de l'Université, MS. 431, fol. 68. (Reproduced by courtesy of the Université de Liège)
Fig. 5. Confitebor, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS. 155 fol. 149. (Reproduced by courtesy of the Pierpont Morgan Library)
Fig. 6. Psalm 38, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS. 155, fol. 37.
(Reproduced by courtesy of the Pierpont Morgan Library)
on A fol. 64v) in black ink. A fragmentary word in brown ink on A fol. 67 attached to decoration by the M 155 artist suggests that a different scribe may have begun work when the second artist did, but there is not enough text visible to verify this. Judging by the length of Brussels IV-141, which like Add. 28784 is a psalter-hours and not just a psalter, Add. 28784 probably contained well over 250 pages since Brussels IV-141 in its present fragmentary condition contains 246.20

![Image: Psalm 38, British Library, Add. MS. 28784, B fol. 6v]

Determining the layout of text pages in Add. 28784 is complicated by the conflicting evidence provided by M 155 and Brussels IV-141. In M 155, all psalm verses begin with one-line penwork initials against the left-hand edge of the textblock; and line endings—bars or lively dragons—fill any space at the end of a verse (fig. 5). In Brussels IV-141 the textblock is solid; verse initials fall wherever a verse begins; P-S (Psalmus) rubrics mark
the beginning of a new psalm; and there are no line endings (fig. 8). Add. 28784 most likely resembled Brussels IV-141 rather than M 155 because the latter’s introduction of line endings is unique among Liege psalters. Unlike French-Flemish and Flemish psalters such as Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum MS. 248 or Morgan 72, the verse initials are not set off in a bar in the left-hand margin. Instead, they are within the textblock along the left-hand rule, and occasionally the scribe simply begins a new verse within the textblock indicating that he was not comfortable with the practice. The many dragon cut-outs in Add. 28784 are too tall to have fitted between the horizontal rules, and are therefore all part of initial tails or were independent marginalia rather than line endings.21 Any bar-shaped scraps pasted into Add. 28784 are irregular enough in outline to be identifiable as parts of initial tails; there are no decorated bars similar to the line endings in M 155. One also finds verse capitals attached to the tops and sides of small figural initials, indicating that verses began within the textblock as well as occasionally falling against the left-hand rule. Typical text pages in Add. 28784 might therefore resemble this drawing (fig. 9).
Add. 28784 is much more richly decorated than Brussels IV-141. Its verse initials and Psalmus rubrics are blue or gold with red or blue penwork. Text pages without a figural initial are embellished with a thin gold bar along the left-hand rule decorated with red and blue penwork which forms chains of capital letter Js (fig. 3). Small figural initials are four lines high with initial tails curling tendril-like along the textblock and into the top and bottom margins, ending in boxed spiral terminals which balance gold balls on their tips. The initials contain bust-length figures of saints, clerics, and prophets. There may have been an occasional foliate initial as well, for one such initial is preserved on B fol. 13. I and J initials form towers enclosing full-length figures. Pages with four-line initials are also decorated with marginalia: hybrids, dragons, and birds inhabit the top and bottom margins or stand or sit on the boxed terminals of initial tails.

The artist of Add. 28784 employs a deep, rich palette of burnished gold, deep blue, olive green, vermillion, warm brown, deep maroon, rose, and slate blue-grey. Bars of foliate spirals across the bottom margin have identifiable ivy, grape, and clover leaves. The figures have hair that falls in deep springy curls and drapery that falls in soft deep folds. They twist and bend in supple movement, as one sees especially in the figures of the shepherds at Psalm 38 (fig. 7). Through the movement of his figures and their disappearance behind the initial frame, the artist suggests the existence of spatial depth as do his grassy hillocks and the rudimentary tip-tilted perspective of altar and crib. The scene within an initial is free to spill out into the lower and outer margins unifying the page in one narrative; and unvarying stereotyped facial features have given way in at least one scene to real emotion as the distraught mothers in the Massacre of the Innocents tear their hair, claw their enemies, and wail open-mouthed in grief.

This style is characteristic of late thirteenth-century French manuscripts and is shared by two books from the Rhine-Meuse region datable to the 1290s. One is Darmstadt 2777, a theological miscellany from the abbey of St. Jacques in Liège written and illuminated about 1296 (fig. 10). The other is the Mishneh Torah manuscript written in Cologne in 1295–6, now Budapest, Academy of Sciences, Kauffman MS. A77/I–IV. Add. 28784 can therefore be dated to the 1290s.

Despite the high quality of the cut-outs which might serve to justify the undertaking, actual physical reconstruction of the psalter does not seem possible. The diminutive scale of the manuscript and the minimal amount of text preserved on the backs of the small figural initials (which are 20 mm. square) would make identification of the individual psalm initials and their placement extremely difficult. In addition, most of the miscellaneous pieces of initial tails and marginalia were cut from outer margins and would thus have no text on their backs at all. Equally discouraging is the difficult technical problem of separating two valuable miniatures of thirteenth- and fifteenth-century date without damaging either piece of parchment. It is ironic that Add. 28784 appears to be one of the finest manuscripts illuminated in Liège in the thirteenth century, which renders doubly regrettable its present mutilated condition.
Fig. 10. Tree of Life, Bonaventura, *Lignum Vitae*. Darmstadt, Hessisches Landes und Hochschulbibliothek, MS. 2777 fol. 43
Catalogue of Text-Page Fragments

Hand 1 (H1)—Master Artist.
Hand 2 (H2)—Morgan 155 Artist.

J-chains—Penwork decoration along the left-hand edge of the textblock (accompanied by a gold bar) which resembles chains of capital letter Js (also called sawtooth patterns).

Notes in parentheses give the original position of the piece.

Part A

Fols.

27 H1—E with saint, tail with trumpeter ending in left-hand corner-piece.
28 H1—E with female saint, tail across bottom margin with a woman spinning seated on the right-hand corner. Female grotesque from bottom margin. Dog-headed vertical bar with verse initial attached (right margin). Dragon.
H2—C with saint. Box spiral platform with archer. Bar with ape spinning. P-S bar.
H2—Dragon with castle on back.
31 Two moths, dragon-fly, and flower (naturalistic, post-medieval).
H1—Two human-dragons and dragon.
32 H1—Woman-dragon. Fox. Bar with archer (lower right corner).
H2—Human-dragon. Bar with dragon (top of page).
36 H1—Winged dragon. Serpent with ears (top left corner).
H2—Two human-headed dragons (one from top of page). Human-headed bird on left corner-piece. Wingless dragon (top of a page).
41 H1—Dog. Dragon biting tail.
H2—L with saint. P with saint. Human-headed grotesque.
47 H1—C with prophet. Two birds and dog.
H2—C with female saint. Q with tonsured white monk. Top right corner-piece.
51 H1—Fox.
H1—Left corner-piece with rabbit. Two pieces of border strip.
Fols.

56
H1—M with two figures. B with king and long tails. Lion running. Dragon. Dragon (upper
left corner).
H2—B with brown monk. Left margin piece.
56v
H1—E with saint and long tails. Fragment of a tail.
H2
H1—D with saint and tail. Two dragons.
H2—L with man, and tail fragment.
57v
H2—L with saint. C with saint. Border strip with lower left corner.
H1—Ram charging to right.
58
H1—E with saint.
H2—M with man and woman, with tails.
H1—D with prophet.
H2—D with brown tonsured monk. M with man and woman. Praying woman (white over
brown) on boxed spiral platform.
Border strip.
59v
H2—C with man.
H1—I niche with female saint, spiral tails.
62
H1—N with saint. E with female saint and tails with dragon and bird.
H2—U with tonsured brown monk.
Two border strips.
62v
H1—D with saint. I with bishop. Two dragons.
H2—A with woman. Border piece.
63
H1—D with female saint. Green bird.
H2—Q with woman. D with man and tails. Two spiral pieces.
63v
H2—N with knight. E with man, white bird perched on top. L with black monk, and tails
with bottom margin dragon. Top left border strip.
64
H2—M with man and woman. D with brown monk. Tail fragments.
64v
H1—N with saint with sword, tails and two words of text with P-S rubric.
H2—D with man. Dragon biting foot.
66
H1—Dragon.
66v
Two cornerpieces.
67
H1—B with female saint and two-bodied dragon at top of page. E with tonsured monk, black
over white. Blue heron.
H2—Bottom margin piece: dragon with boxed spiral tail on which sits virgin and unicorn
stabbed by man with spear.
67v
H2—E with saint.
Marginal tails.
68
H1—D with haloed monk in grey with book, blessing. Dragon with bishop’s head.
68v
H1—Green bird.
69
H2—L with woman.
H1—I with prophet. Dragon.
69v
H1—D with woman (white veil, brown robe).
Corner strip.
**Part A**

**Fols.**

70. H2 — T with man.

74° H2 — Dragon from top margin.

75 H1 — B with saint with sword.

75° H2 — Male-headed dragon from bottom margin.

76 H2 — Ditto.

76° H1 — Q with woman saint. Rabbit and dragon heads.

79 Gold rocaille (naturalistic, cf. fol. 31).

H2 — C with woman and tails. Two cornerpieces.

79° H2 — L with man. D with St. Francis stigmatized, preaching to birds.

H1 — Bird on bottom margin cornerpiece.

80 H1 — B with male saint.

H2 — Woman-headed grotesque on lower right cornerpiece.

Border strip. P-S hyphen.

80° H2 — A with woman. Two border strip pieces. 

81 H2 — D with tonsured black monk. Rabbit. 


82 H1 — Q with prophet.


82° H1 — D with prophet.

83 H1 — U with prophet. Bird on lower right cornerpiece. P-S. Cornerpiece.

83° H1 — Blue dog running to right.

H2 — S with woman. Dragon.

84 H1 — I with female saint with sword. Rabbit running to right.

H2 — Two dragons.

84° H2 — A with monk in red-brown.

85 H1 — D with prophet. Ram butting to left (see fol. 58).

85° H2 — Dog with tail in pieces.

88 H1 — D with saint.

88° H2 — D with black monk.

89 H2 — L with man.

89° H1 — S with prophet.

90 H2 — N with woman.

90° H2 — E with man and tails.

Gold bar with blue and red J-chains from a text page (three on fol. 91, others on 91°, 92, 92°, 93 (three), 93° (two)).

91° H1 — Cat on boxed spiral.

H2 — D with man.

92 H1 — Two corner spirals, dragon biting tail.

H2 — Bar fragment.

92° H2 — Fox. Bird. Spotted monkey with two apples on bottom margin strip.

Corner spiral.

93 H1 — Bird. Grotesque (lower left corner).

93° H1 — Rabbit. Bird on spiral.
Part B
Fols.

1 Montage over fifteenth-century page: text page gold bar. Verse initials. 2 P-S.
   \[H1\]—Human-headed dragon.
1x \[H1\]—U with man with tail beginning with human head.
   Three border strip fragments.
2x \[H1\]—D with prophet.
   Gold bar with J-chains and two small tail fragments.
3 (Psalm 80 page): Top—brown monk and black nun grotesques. Bottom—female-headed dragon. All \[H1\].
   Pasted on: \[H1\]—I with female saint in grey.
   Three spiral and tail pieces.
3x \[H1\]—E with saint with cross, tail begins with female head.
   Cornerpiece fragment.
4 \[H2\]—E with man.
   P-S bar. Cornerpiece fragment.
4x \[H2\]—Border piece bar.
5x \[H1\]—O with saint.
   Two gold bars with J-chains.
6 \[H2\]—C with man.
   Two cornerpiece fragments.
6x Montage over Ps. 38 page: \[H1\]—two dragons. Pasted on: \[H1\]—D with prophet with scroll.
   A with praying saint. Four gold bars with J-chains (fragments), verse initials. Three bits of border strips (one by \[H2\]).
7 Montage over matins page: female grotesque playing plucked instrument in bottom margin of original page (\[H2\]). Pasted on: \[H2\]—I with black nun. \[H1\]—U with prophet with scroll.
   Verse initials. Border bar bits.
7x Two bits of border strips.
8x C with woman (\[H2\]). Spiral piece. Gold bar with J-chain and verse initial.
9 \[H2\]—B with female saint.
   Two P-S, and border strip pieces.
9x \[H2\]—E, L, D, and O with women, L with man, L with saint and L with red monk. Border strip with head at end and red dog.
10x \[H2\]—T with female saint and P with monk. Two gold bar fragments with J-chains. Border bar fragment.
11 Two P-S bars.
11x \[H2\]—I with sainted nun. I with bishop flanked by dragon. Tail beginning with dragon head.
   Bottom margin bar with white bird, two grotesques with bells and spinning top. A with
Part B
Fols.


H1—Dragon with pointed ears. Dragon with two hearts on its tail and blue-striped cat. Two battling grotesques, male and female, with lion heads for sleeves, carrying clubs and shields. Cornerpiece.


12' H1—C with prophet. E with saint and dragon tail. D with prophet. Small head from initial tail.


P-S. Gold bar with J-chains and gold songbird. Four border strips. Verse initial.


13' H1—A with woman.

Border strip fragments.

14 H1—Ivy bar with prophet holding scroll standing on back of caryatid with spear. Lower right corner with dog. Female grotesque grasping baby and sword, tail a bar of spirals. Two peacocks.

H2—Four dragon bar border strips.

Two bits of border strips.


15' H2—M with man and woman.

Fragmentary gold bar with J-chains. Two border strip bits.

16 H1—A with saint with palm. Dragon head.


16' H2—B with woman. Deer.

Gold bar fragment with J-chains. Curl of foliage from a spiral bar.

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1 The hours manuscript has 141 folios with rubrics and a litany in French. The inclusion of SS. Maurontius, Amatus, and Grudinellus in the litany indicates that it was made for use in Douai; and the style of the miniatures suggests a date in the 1480s.

2 The full-page miniatures appear to be Flemish in style and date from the third quarter of the century. Acquired in July 1871 from the Revd. J. C. Jackson, Add. 28784 was foliated in September 1871 and at that time had 141 folios. The sixteen inserted leaves were removed in October 1876 and bound separately to form Part B in a binding designed to resemble the existing binding of Part A. Three of these leaves received double foliation in 1871 (fols. 3, 8, and 15 of Part B were formerly fols. 37 and 38, 86 and 87, and 134 and 135 in Part A). Thus at present Part A consists of 141 folios minus the sixteen leaves of Part B and three double numberings, leaving 122 folios.

3 One also finds a few naturalistic insects, a flower, and a rocaille ornament cut from some sixteenth-century (?) manuscript on Add. 28784A, fols. 31 and 70.

4 For previous studies of Add. 28784 see: British Museum, Catalogue of Additional Manuscripts 1861-1875, pp. 551-2; Carl Nordenfalk, ‘Insulaire und kontinentale Psalterillustration’, Acta Archaeologica, x (1939), p. 120; Mirella Levi d’Ancona, The Iconography of the Immaculate Conception in the Middle Ages and Early Renais-

5 Notes in French by three modern hands occur on fols. 1v-2. One says that the added miniatures are eleventh or twelfth century in date (referring to the cut-outs or the added full pages?) while another French-speaking owner has pencilled below the April tower cut-out on fol. 19 aout.

Another Mosan victim of the international mania for cutting up old manuscripts was a beautiful early fourteenth-century Breviary for the use of the cathedral of St. Lambert in Liége, now Darmstadt, Landesbibliothek, MS. 394 which had a large number of its initials cut out by children in Liége as early as 1805. Leo Eisenhofer and Hermann Knaus, Die Liturgischen Handschriften der Hessischen Landes- und Hochschulbibliothek Darmstadt II (Wiesbaden, 1968), no. 103, p. 254.


7 Seven of the twelve KL (Kalends) monograms are also preserved on A fol. 70 (two), 80v, 81, 93v, and B fols. 1 and 5v.

8 While full-page miniatures are also found at major textual divisions within many thirteenth-century psalters, the probable placement of these miniatures before the psalter in this reconstruction reflects the unvarying practice of the school which produced this book.

9 Günther Hasloff, Die Psalterillustration im 13. Jahrhundert: Studien zur Geschichte der Buchmalerei in England, Frankreich, und den Niederlanden (Kiel, 1938), table 20. Add. 28784 was identified as a Liége psalter by Carl Nordenfalk in his 1939 review of Hasloff (see n. 4), but his proposal has subsequently been overlooked.

10 Two knights with swords raised attack a bishop and his assistant at mass. The bishop is stabbed in the shoulder, his assistant grasped by the neck by their two assailants. The scene resembles depictions of the martyrdom of St. Lambert, patron saint of Liége, seen in Liége psalters such as Liége University, MS. 431 (fig. 2), although the cut-out initial omits the one readily recognizable element of the story—pikemen on the roof of Lambert's chapel. See Marguerite Bribosia, 'L'iconographie de Saint Lambert', Bulletin de la Commission royale des monuments et des sites, vi (1955), pp. 85-248.

11 Liége psalters depict either the first or second Temptation of Christ at Ps. 52 so it is very likely that the second Temptation was the subject of the missing initial and the first Temptation was illustrated in the margin.

12 St. Giles, identified by the hart beside him, raises a chalice at mass attended by Charlemagne and his sister Gisela. An angel appears above the altar with a banner which according to legend identified the sin the king could not bring himself to confess and announced its remission through the strength of the saint's prayers. For the comparable scene in Liége 431 see Rita Lejeune and Jacques Stienon, La Légende de Roland dans l'art du moyen age (Brussels, 1966), vol. i, pp. 149-150, pl. V.

13 In most thirteenth-century psalters the Beatus initial is on a recto; the only notable exception to this practice being the English Windmill Psalter (Pierpont Morgan Library MS. 102) with its spectacular initials B and E on facing pages at Ps. 1.

14 The two pieces are exactly the same height and length, but one has a red vine and the other a blue one. On another page which had such a bas de page bar (the Ps. 97 page, intact on B fol. 13), the colours change in each quadrant so a difference in colour does not mean the two do not belong together.

15 It is certain that Add. 28784 also contained a litany, for the Ky monogram of the Kyrie introducing the litany is pasted on A fol. 68v.

16 Of the 137 surviving small figural initials, 52 are by the master artist and 85 by his assistant. Thus only a fraction of those which would have decorated the manuscript have survived for there are 139 minor psalms in the psalter; and nearly 150 small initials would have been needed for the canticles and the lessons, hymns, psalms, capitulae, and collects of the hours and office of the dead.

17 The Colonster arms, checky or lozengy of azure and argent with a chief argent, 3 martlets gules, occur in the margin on fol. 75. A bas de page cycle of scenes from the life of St. Margaret on fols.
13'–21 gives us the lady’s name but her arms on fol. 53 remain unidentified (if indeed the pen- and-ink drawing of a lion rampant sable on an uncleared parchment ground is finished work).


19 The textblock in Brussels IV–141 is somewhat smaller (78 × 50) with seventeen lines of text; in M 155 it is larger (82 × 50) with nineteen lines. The scribe of M 155 also ruled his work with pairs of horizontal framing lines in place of single ones.

20 Brussels IV–141 lacks its calendar and any preliminary miniatures it might have had, as well as ten pages with historiated initials. It presumably did not have an office of the dead as it ends 'Deo Gratias' on fol. 246 and the verso of this page is blank.

21 Bar-shaped line endings, one of which is visible in the top line in fig. 3, are part of the underlying fifteenth-century text pages, for minor decorative elements of the later book were not covered. Great care has been taken to exclude these elements from the list of cuttings in the catalogue.

22 Darmstadt 2777 was made for one Simon of Tongres who was ordained in 1296, according to a marginal note. Since this event is only mentioned in the margin, the manuscript presumably predates his ordination, but the figure style can not be more than a few years earlier at most. See J. Oliver, ‘The Crise Benédicte and Revival at the Abbey of St. Jacques in Liège c. 1300’, Quaerendo, viii (1978), pp. 320–36.


24 However, on the backs of the full-page miniatures (B fols. 2, 5, 8, and 15) one might hope to discover vernacular poems such as are found in many Liège psalters including Liège 431. See Keith Sinclair, ‘Les Manuscrits du psautier de Lambert le Bègue’, Romantia, lxxvi (1965), pp. 22–47.
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