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[ARITHMETIC]. *Cayer d'arithmetique pour François Bonnefoy*,
In French, illustrated manuscript on paper
Southern France (Provence), Avignon region, dated 1803

[2]-225 pp. + 4 unfolding leaves, preceded by 2 flyleaves and followed by 1 flyleaf, complete (collation: i²⁴, ii¹⁴, iii²⁰, iv¹⁶, v²², vi¹⁸ [20-1, with xix likely blank cancelled]), very neatly written in a slanted cursive script, in pale grey ink, on blue paper (papier bleuté), with watermarks with the name of the papermaker or paper mill: "Geoffroy - Malaucene", text set on in frames traced in red-orange ink, headings in red, decorative letters on all pages highlighted in colored wash, many decorative flowers and birds throughout, 14 full-page watercolor drawings of flowers, plants, busts in profile, birds, pages acting as separators and marking the major sections of the textbook (in all 6 cayers), large full-page drawing colored in wash and gouache of a mounted officer [Napoleon as First Consul]. Bound in a contemporary marbled tan sheepskin, smooth spine, gold-tooled smooth spine adorned with gilt vases in alternance with friezes, title-piece in red that reads "Cayer d'arithmetique," edges in red (Drawing of the mounted figure a bit wrinkled; a few marginal stains and foxing; overall in very good clean condition). Dimensions 405 x 265 mm.

Most interesting textbook for arithmetic, commercial reckoning and letter-writing, decorated with numerous watercolor drawings (including an impressive representation in gouache and watercolor of Napoleon on his horse). The manuscript was written for teaching a certain young lad named François Bonnefoy, and was copied on paper likely originating in South-Eastern France. The present manuscript is an excellent witness to pedagogical practices in early Napoleonic France.

PROVENANCE

Script and watermarks confirm date of 1803, and suggest Southern France as a probable place of origin for this manuscript. The watermarks are by a papermaker named Geoffroy, associated with the place name Malaucene. The latter is a town in modern-day Vaucluse, above Avignon. It appears the present manuscript was likely copied in the region of Avignon.

There are two bifolia that have been stiched to the back flyleaf. A note states that the bifolia were copied by a young boy named Victor Apolinaire Bonnefoy, aged nine years old at the time, entrusted to the Confraternity of the Penitents Gris in Bonnieux (there is indeed a town called Bonnieux [Vaucluse] located east of Avignon) before he passed away in 1827. The note reads as follows: "Cette chiffre et écriture a été faite de ce deus petit feuillet par Victor Apolinaire Bonnefoy agé de neuf ans demi [decedé le 13 novembre 1827], depuis six mois dans la confrerie des penitens gris ou il a été le premier acompagné par le penitens gris de la confrerie ou tout les ecoliers de de

Bonnieux...[signed] J. Bonnefoy, pere" [There is indeed a *Chapelle des Penitents gris* in Bonnieux, Luberon region, dept. Vaucluse]. Another note, probably written by a strict teacher, reads: "Si vous faites quelques griffonnage sur votre cahier ou que vous en déchiriez quelque page je vous punirai severement suivant les lois de la classe" [If you scribble on your pad or tear pages from it, I shall punish you severely according to the laws of the classroom]. Text in the hand of the young boy starts: "Travaillez pour l'amour de Dieu qui vous le commande et comme adam dans un esprit de penitence...", this text copied a number of times as a writing exercise, and signed Victor Bonnefoy 1821.

TEXT

p. 1, [Arithmetic Textbook], rubric, *L'arithmetique*; incipit, Les grands hommes de tout temps ont pris un goût particuliers et un plaisir incroyables a l'arithmetique a cause de son excellence et dignitee...;

p. 2-10, Preliminaries, rubric, *Definition de l'arithmetique*; p. 9, repeated rubric, *L'arithmetique*, incipit, "L'arithmetique est l'art de compter juste ou la juste et fidelle sciences des nombres...";

p. 11, Title-page, *Cayer d'arithmetique pour Francois Bonnefoy. 1803.*

p. 12, blank;

p. 13-159, Adding, Subtracting, Multiplying, Dividing, beginning with rubric, *De la numeration*; p. 14, *Livret en pyramide*; p. 17, *Addition. Premiere regle d'arithmetique*;

pp. 160- 199, Various rules and practical applications for commerce and merchandising, with headings such as *Regle de Cent*, *Table d'interest*, *Regle d'interest*, *Liquidation*, *Regle de trois ou de proportion*, *Regle de compagnie ou autrement de marchand*, *Bourderau* etc.;

p. 200, blank;

pp. 201-206, *Maniere de dresser et d'ecrire les memoires de sa depense de chaque jour de la semaine*; [followed by] *Question*: "Un homme plaisant étant allé à la foire pour vendre un cheval fut abordé par un gentilhomme...";

pp. 207 -225, Models of letter-writing, beginning "Lettre d'un fils à son pere"; "Autre d'un fils à sa mere"...; "Lettre d'un marchand à son correspondant"; Models of fables: "La poule aux oeuf d'or"; "Le renard et les raisin [sic]";

p. 226, blank;

Final unfolding page, with a Table of contents: *Table des regles contenues au present cayer.*

This charming manuscript contains a manual of arithmetic, commercial reckoning and letter-writing, copied for a young boy named François Bonnefoy, as specified on the title-page (p. 11). Its large folio format allows for clear didactic explanations and exercises destined to teach the basics

of mathematical reckoning. The book is divided into six "cayers" of mathematical explanations and exercises, with an additional 19 pages at the end that provide examples of letter-writing for youths to assimilate and imitate.

The book was destined for an identified youth named François Bonnefoy. The age of the destined student is not specified however. Added later and mounted on the last flyleaf are two bifolia from an exercise book with writing exercises by a certain Victor Apolinaire Bonnefoy, copied a little under twenty years after (in 1821), before the young student deceased in 1827. The textbook is a good example of textbooks still hand-copied in Napoleonic France, made to measure for use within a family in Southern France.

ILLUSTRATION

This textbook is decorated with numerous watercolor drawings, peppering the pages and sometimes acting as separators between different sections (or "cayers") of the textbook. In addition to the flowers, plants and birds, there are a number of bust profiles, drawn in a very naive or amateur style, almost childlike. There is a very curious representation of a mounted figure on a horse, with a raised arm and a sword, coiffed with a bicorn hat (bicorne) with a cocarde and feathers [panache tricolore] (drawing highlighted in watercolor and gouache) [p. 172]. Undoubtedly this is a representation of Napoleon in 1803, when he was still First Consul, a year before he crowned himself Emperor on 2 December 1804. It is interesting to see how such a political and patriotic figure makes his way into didactic and educational manuals such as the present textbook. It appears the decoration of the present manuscript was conceived to enliven and brighten the apprenticeship of arithmetic and the rudiments of commercial reckoning, probably somewhat arid to the young student.