

Noted Antiphonal

In Latin with French rubrics, decorated manuscript (stenciled) on paper

France (Amiens), c. 1775-90

ii + (dark paper without laid lines, i, lifted pastedown) + ii (paper) + 534 pages + ii (dark paper, ii, lifted pastedown) on paper, apparently without watermarks, paginated, top outer corner in stenciled roman numerals, complete (collation, i⁸ ii-v⁶ vi-vii⁴ viii⁴ [+1, pp. 83-84, following 4] ix-x² xi-xxxviii⁴ xxxix⁴ [-4, cancelled] xl-xlv⁴ xlvi³ [structure uncertain, complete] xlvii⁶ xlviii³ [structure uncertain, complete] xlix-lxiii⁴ lxiii⁴ [-4, cancelled with no loss of text] lxx⁴), occasional stenciled catchwords inside lower margin, ruled in lead with single full-length vertical bounding lines, and with lead rules for text lines (438-420 x 243 mm.), layout varies, but with up to eleven lines of stenciled text, corresponding to eleven four-line staves with square musical notation, text, musical notation (probably), some running titles, page numbers and initials made with stencils, flourishes, liturgical directions, and some running titles in a cursive script written by hand, black running titles with page numbers, stencil of the sacred heart, p. 39, major feasts begin with decorative borders in black ink most seemingly drawn by hand, and large stenciled initials in black ink, using a decorative "font," pastedowns have been lifted, and together with the first and last flyleaves, are very crumpled and wrinkled, pp. 1-3, rust stains in the outer margins, p. 1, mold stain, lower margins, many quires are partially detached from the binding. Bound in its ORIGINAL BINDING of brown leather over very thick pasteboard, blind tooled with double fillets forming a diamond shaped center panel enclosed in a rectangle, lettered on the lower board, "Trepant/ Libraire-Relieur/ Peronne," spine with six raised bands and with a system of white leather straps, laced through at the head and tail, possibly for reinforcement or to hold place-markers (?), heavy metal corner pieces and fittings on the upper and lower edges, two semicircular brass fittings, upper board, which fastened to pins, lower board (straps now missing), back cover warped and scratched, torn at the fore edge, but intact, front cover with wear and some tears, spine torn in the middle and at the bottom, leaving part of the spine uncovered. Dimensions 500 x 323 mm.

This is an impressive large-format Choir Antiphonal. Its text and probably the musical notation were produced using stencils; a number of elaborately decorative "fonts" are featured, also stenciled. Some running titles, liturgical directions, and border decoration were added by hand. The use of stencils to produce complete books is a fascinating chapter in the history of the book, which flourished in France and Germany in the eighteenth century. This volume represents an excellent opportunity to acquire a complete example of this craft.

PROVENANCE

1. The overall appearance of the volume, and the stencils used, suggest a date towards the end of the eighteenth century. It was undoubtedly made for use in the diocese of Amiens; note the feast of John the Baptist on the Monday following Quasimodo or Low Sunday (first Sunday after Easter), a custom of Amiens, which had a relic of his head (feast is usually 29 August), translation of St. Firmin, (14 January), St. Follian (19 January), Honoré, bishop of Amiens (16 May), St. Firmin, third bishop of Amiens (1 September), "la susception des sanctes reliques" (8 November), Warlais et Luxor (19 November), Fuscien, Victoire et Gentien (11 December), and the Reception of the Face of John the Baptist (13 December); on p. 405, a full office is supplied for St. Firmin, first bishop of Amiens, and "patron du diocese" (25 September). Included are the Feast of

the Sacred Heart of Jesus, observed in France from 1756 (although it was observed locally earlier), and the feast of the Reception of the Face of John the Baptist (13 December), celebrated in the diocese of Amiens from 1796 on December 17th.

The style of the display stencils may be compared to the stencils in the Antiphonal from the Paris workshop of Bery on the pont Notre-Dame. Benjamin Franklin purchased a set in 1781 in Paris, which are now in the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia (Kindel 2003, p. 75, figure 11, specimen sheet).

This manuscript is for secular use, with nine antiphons in three groups of three at matins, and five psalms for vespers. The feasts and saints included were clearly for use in the Diocese of Amiens. The exact institution it was made for has not been identified, but since it is secular use, we can tell that it was not made for a monastery following the Benedictine Rule. It may have been made for use in the cathedral or for a house of Franciscans, Dominicans, or Augustinian Canons. It seems unlikely that it was made for a parish church or a chapel, places where the Office was unlikely to be celebrated in public in church with a full Choir.

2. Bound by Trepant in Péronne, near Amiens (back cover, see binding description above).

3. Second front flyleaf, f. ii, in pencil "Par Platier [?]."

4. Private Collection, USA.

TEXT

Pp. 1- 185, Temporal from the first Sunday in Advent to the Sunday the Sunday following Easter ("Le dimanche de Quasimodo"), followed by the Decollation of John the Baptist, including the usual feasts from the sanctorale following Christmas, then continuing with the second Sunday after Easter through the Monday after Pentecost;

Pp. 185-209, Sanctoral from Andrew (30 November), Conception of the Virgin, Purification, Annunciation and the Invention of the Cross (3 May);

Pp. 210-259, Temporal from Trinity Sunday to the twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost, including the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, followed by Vespers and Compline for the Sundays after Pentecost;

Pp. 260-298, Proper of Saints beginning with the translation of St. Firmin (14 January) to the Apostle Thomas (21 December) including Follian (19 January), Joseph (19 April), Honorius, bishop of Amiens (16 May), Joachim and Anne (27 July), Firmin, bishop of Amiens (1 September), Guardian Angels (2 October), Reception of the Relics (8 November), St. Francis Xavier (3 December), Fuscien, Victoire and Gentien (11 December), and the Reception of the Face of John the Baptist (13 December).

Pp. 298- 326, Epiphany, Ascension, Trinity Sunday, and the Nativity of the Virgin;

Pp. 327-336, Dedication of a Church;

Pp. 337-448, Proper of Saints, with full offices including Nativity of John the Baptist (24 June), Peter and Paul (29 June), Visitation, Transfiguration, Assumption, Nativity of the Virgin, Exaltation of the Holy Cross (14 September), Firmin "Patron du diocese" (25 September), All Saints, and the Dedication of a Church;

Pp. 449-488, Common of Saints;

Pp. 489-518, "Chants divers," including "Venite," eight settings, and "Te Deum";

Pp. 519-534, Office of the Dead, with the responsories to the lessons as follows: *Velociter exaudi*; *Peccavi valde*, *Non intres iudicium*, *Deus meus ne sileas a me*, *Ego dominum aspiciam*, *Clamavi ad te* (not included in Ottosen 1993).

ILLUSTRATION

This is an impressive volume, with carefully stenciled pages, and restrained, sober decoration, all in the same brown ink. The heavy stenciled letters used for the text and the large initials are balanced by liturgical directions and some running headlines in a fanciful cursive script, that appears to have been written by hand. Most feasts begin with simple rules or narrow borders and a large stenciled letter. More elaborate borders are found on pp. 15, 235 and 260. More important feasts begin with rubrics in an elaborate stenciled display font, with fanciful borders drawn by hand featuring fleur-de-lis, hearts and other decorative motifs: pp. 166 (Pentecost), 210 (Trinity Sunday), 214 (Corpus Christi), 235 (Sacred Heart of Jesus), 337 (John the Baptist), 377 (Assumption), 405 (St. Firmin), and 425 (All Saints). There is a stencil of the Sacred Heart on p. 39.

Choir books form a distinctive category of liturgical manuscripts. Most were copied in a very large format that enabled a group of singers to share one manuscript. The main Choir book for the Divine Office (prayers said throughout the day and night by members of religious orders at the offices of Matins, Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers and Compline) is the Antiphonal or Antiphonary. This Antiphonal contains all the musical texts for the Office, except the Psalms: antiphons, invitatories, responses, and Hymns for major feasts. The two main cycles of the liturgical year are the Temporale, or Proper of Time, which includes the feasts celebrating the life of Christ, organized around the moveable feast of Easter, and the Sanctorale, which includes the feasts of Saints. In this manuscript (as in many Antiphonals), the Temporale and Sanctorale are intermixed.

In terms of its format, layout, and general organization, this volume is a direct descendant of the liturgical Choir manuscripts copied in the later Middle Ages and in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (and occasionally later). The script, however, although it was clearly not produced by type face, was also not written by hand, but instead was produced by a stencil. The stenciled letters can be recognized by the small breaks in the body of the letter (stencil-templates must avoid contiguous shapes that would cause them to fall apart).

Like a manuscript, this book was produced as a unique copy, but most of its text was not written by hand, but was instead compiled using metal stencils; the musical staves seem to have been drawn with a rake, the notation is probably stenciled. Page numbers and some running titles in this volume are stenciled, but other items were added by hand, including liturgical directions (or example p. 6), and cross references (for example p. 127), some running titles, and calligraphic

flourishes added on V and R (for example, p. 20). The decorative borders were also added by hand.

Stenciled liturgical manuscripts, most of them very large Choir manuscripts with musical notation like this one, are an extremely interesting artifact in the history of the book that flourished in France and Germany in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Gilles Filleau des Billettes composed an extensive account of the process for the "Description des Arts et Métiers" of the French Royal Academy of Science c. 1700; it was unpublished until it was used by Diderot in his Encyclopedia (Eric Kindel of the University of Reading, and Fred Smeijers reconstructed the stenciling apparatus and procedures described by Des Billettes; see Kindel 2003, p. 70, note 14). In his description he suggests the practice originated c. 1620-60. Another early historian of these books, Fischer van Waldheim, writing c. 1800, suggested that they were invented by a Trappist monk in 1674. The volume copied by a canon at Reims in 1680 is an early example; (see <http://ccfr.bnf.fr/>).

Most examples of these completely stenciled books date from the later half of the eighteenth century and the early years of the nineteenth. The practice flourished in Germany in the monasteries around Mainz (see Schreiber 1927; Gottron 1938; Rodrigues 1973; and Rosenfeld 1973); the most famous practitioner was Thomas Bauer (d. c. 1780), who entered the Carthusian monastery in Mainz in c. 1720. Three books stenciled by him are now, Mainz, Stadtbibliothek II 137, 142 and 145 (Rodrigues 1973). Numerous stenciled books were also produced in France, although they have been less carefully studied (see O'Meara 1933). The earliest commercial makers of stencil letters were working in Paris in the 1780s, although there probably were others earlier. By the second quarter of the nineteenth century, this process was no longer used for liturgical books. In Germany the practice ceased when the monasteries were disbanded at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

It is hard not to be struck by the labor that was required to produce a volume like this Gradual. Would it not have been easier to simply to copy the volume by hand? Eva Judd O'Meara asked William Addison Dwiggins, a modern stencil maker in the US in the 1930s-50s, this question; Dwiggins's opinion was that stenciling was quicker than writing. Certainly the books produced by this method have their own striking aesthetic appeal.

It is difficult to judge how many stenciled choir books are still extant. Descriptions of these books often fail to recognize the process. There has been no attempt at a general census. Gotton (1938, listed below), identified forty examples in German institutions. O'Meara (1933, listed below) mentioned that there are probably "a score or more" in the Bibliothèque nationale de France; she listed a further fifteen or so probably examples in French municipale libraries. Single leaves from stenciled choir books are not uncommonly offered for sale amidst the numerous manuscript leaves from late medieval and early modern Choir books offered by dealers. This volume, in contrast, offers the opportunity to acquire a complete stenciled volume, still in its original binding.

LITERATURE

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Rosenfeld, Helmut. "Der Gebrauch der Schablone für Schrift und Kunst seit der Antike und das schablonierte Buch de 18. Jahrhunderts," *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch* (1973), pp. 71-84.

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ONLINE RESOURCES

Introduction to liturgical manuscripts:

"Celebrating the Liturgy's Books"

<http://www.columbia.edu/itc/music/manuscripts/>

Huglo, Michel and David Hiley. "Antiphoner," in *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*

<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/>

and

<http://www.law-guy.com/dummygod/Entries/S01034.htm>

Initiation aux manuscrits liturgiques, Jean-Baptiste Lebigue (aut.), Paris-Orléans, IRHT [Aedilis]
<http://aedilis.irht.cnrs.fr/initiation-liturgie/propres-office.htm>

Eric Kindel, Reading University, staff profile, with bibliography of his articles on stencils
http://www.reading.ac.uk/typography/about/Staff_list/e-t-kindel.aspx

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<http://typefoundry.blogspot.com/2010/03/lettres-jour-public-stencil-lettering.html>

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<http://stbride.org/friends/conference/temporarytype>

Odile Blanc, "Séminaire: stencil letters, letters au pochoir," 31 January 2003, Institut d'histoire du livre
<http://ihl.enssib.fr/siteihl.php?page=122>

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