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THE DE VILLERS BOOK OF HOURS

by

Kenneth R. Williams

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

History

Approved:

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1996

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ABSTRACT

The De Villers Book of Hours

by

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Utah State University, 1996

Major Professor: Dr. Norman L. Jones
Department: History

Created in France during the late fifteenth century, the illuminations, text, and family genealogy (added by one of many owners) found in De Villers Book of Hours make it an excellent example among other French books of hours from this period. In addition to acting as a repository of the style and iconography of French fifteenth-century illumination, the book's rich decorative program and varied textual content provide a remarkable document of contemporary devotional piety.

This thesis provides the first detailed description and analysis of the De Villers Book of Hours. Following a description of books of hours in general, the overall make-up of the De Villers Hours is addressed, including the decorative program with a suggested method and example for description, a sample of textual transcription, comments on the provenance, a brief discussion of the family genealogy, and a concluding section with a sample collection register and worksheet for cataloging.

(65 pages)

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To my parents and brothers, who have provided support and encouraged me throughout my academic career, I will be forever grateful. To my wife, Wendy, son Branson, and daughter Megan, I am grateful for their faith and continuous support.

Kenneth R. Williams

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INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT

DESCRIPTION

“When a visitor has seen all the sights of a town, the streets and squares, museums, galleries and churches, he has seen something of a country, and has begun to know it. But he does not yet know its people. He cannot comprehend a nation until he has seen its books.”¹

Books of Hours, compendia of prayers, devotions, readings, were the late medieval best-sellers. Derived from the prayer books of the Catholic Church, they were produced as the personal prayer books of the laity. No two hours appear alike; each example, no matter the quality, has something individual and unique to tell us.² Their popularity makes Books of Hours the largest single category of medieval illuminated manuscripts extant. The name *hours* comes from their central and essential text, the Hours of the Virgin, *parvum officium beatae Virginis Mariae* (little office of the Blessed Virgin Mary), consisting of certain psalms, lessons, hymns, responses, prayers, and antiphons. As reflected in its popular title, the core of all Books of Hours was said at particular times of the day or more specifically during the eight periods, or “hours” of the liturgical day: matins, lauds, prime, terce, sext, none, vespers, and compline.³

These devotions formed the canonical hours in which the daily liturgy or divine office (a much fuller service said by the clergy) of the church was celebrated. The little office remains shorter, considerably simpler, and much less variable than the Divine Office. In medieval times devout layfolk followed the example of the religious and

obtained these personal prayer books to better follow the Church's complicated program of daily devotion. This practice also served a worldly purpose, as a status symbol or gem to many rich bibliophiles as witnessed in numerous wills and inventories where Books of Hours were regarded as important and precious objects whose owners left careful instructions for their disposal.⁴

Books of Hours always served an important function during the Medieval and Renaissance periods in Europe. Throughout the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries, the Catholic Church underwent changes that caused many political, social, and especially religious conflicts. Religious books, including the popular Hours, were adopted by nobility as prayer books or as guides during such times when religious practice was in a state of change and upheaval. They guided private worship and meditation by assisting in the practice of prescribed prayers, hymns, psalms, and litanies, associated with many of the Catholic saints.⁵

The fifteenth-century De Villers Book of Hours (c. 1480-90), held by Utah State University's Special Collections and Archives, represents an outstanding example of such a book. This book of hours, now a part of the Hatch Memorial Library, was presented to Utah State University in October of 1953, by L. Boyd and Anne McQuarrie Hatch. The Hatch Memorial Library functions as an authentic seventeenth-century reading room brought to the United States as a part of the collection of William Randolph Hearst and later bought and presented to Utah State University by Mr. and Mrs. Hatch. Since 1953 this volume has remained in the Hatch collection and any earlier provenance has proven

sketchy at best. We assume that the De Villers Hours was created in Northern France and illuminated by an artist, or multiple artists. The Hours of the Virgin and Office of the Dead are of the regular and very popular Roman usage with masculine forms, thus allowing the inference that the original owner was a man. The occurrence of saints Benignus and Philibert supports the localization around Langre and Dijon. Furthermore, a rare inclusion of a genealogy, with birth, death, marriage, and baptismal information dating from 1543 to 1622 of the Pierre De Villers family, supports this localization claim.

The De Villers family was well established in the upper bourgeoisie of Dijon with its male members serving as lawyers and active in the government of Burgundy. The dates prove this family to have been early, if not original, owners of the book. Regrettably, no further information survives about its owner until the purchase of the book by L. Boyd and Anne McQuarrie Hatch and subsequent presentation as a gift to Utah State University. Through time the book has erroneously been attributed to the Hearst Collection. However, accession records show that the book was collected privately by the Hatch family separately from their purchase of the Hatch Library from Hearst.⁶

The De Villers Book of Hours, written in Medieval Latin during the time of the Humanist Popes, and shortly following the sack of Constantinople (1453), contains the traditional prescribed lists of saints to worship at appropriate times, psalms in their honor, and prayers for religious holidays. These common contents were established by the Abbé Leroquais who prescribed the essential, secondary, and accessory texts appropriate for

inclusion in books of hours. More specifically, the De Villers Book of Hours includes the following sections:

1. Full calendar in French with entries alternating in red and blue ink, and the major feasts in gold. January (pages 9-10), February-May (pages 1-8), June-December (pages 19-32).
2. Pericopes of the gospels (pages 33-40). John 1:1-14; Luke 1:26-38; Matthew 2:1-12; Mark 16:14-20. Passion according to John (pages 41-54). John 18:1-19.
3. Hours of the Virgin, use of Rome (pages 55-104).

| | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| Matins (pages 55-68) | |
| Lauds (pages 69-83) | Rubric (page 68) |
| Prime (pages 84-88) | Rubric (page 83) |
| Terce (pages 89-93) | Rubric (page 88) |
| Sext (pages 94-97) | Rubric (page 93) |
| None (pages 98-101) | Rubric (page 97) |
| Vespers (pages 102-04, 11-14) | Rubric (page 101) |
| Compline (page 15-18) | Rubric (page 14) |
4. Short Hours of the Holy Cross and Holy Spirit (pages 105-114).
5. Penitential Psalms: 6, 31, 37, 50, 101, 129, 142 in the Vulgate numbering (pages 115-126) and litany of Saints (page 123).
6. Office of the Dead, use of Rome (pages 127-167).
7. Obsecro te or prayer to the Virgin (pages 168-173).
8. Prayer of Saint Gregory in seven parts (pages 173-175).
9. Suffrages of Saints John the Baptist, Christopher, and Barbara (pages 176-179).
10. Notes on the marriage, and on the birth and baptism of the children of Monsieur Pierre de Villers and Jeanne de Chissiret, 1603-1621 (pages 180-181).

The artist of the De Villers Hours used numerous illuminations to reinforce the subject matter and to provide a visual experience along with the written and readable aspects of the manuscript. These illuminations include common scenes from the Annunciation, the birth of Christ, the Passion, and important biblical and legendary figures such as King David, Saul, Saint Christopher, and Saint Barbara. We also find illustrations of the Four Evangelists, John the Baptist, Jerome, and Job. The illuminations contain many of the familiar iconographic images and symbols associated with certain individuals and incidents from their legendary lives and include the following:

1. [p. 33.] 11-line. St. John the Evangelist, holding the chalice full of snakes in reference to his overcoming poison (gospel pericope).
2. [p. 35.] 11-line. St. Luke with his symbol the winged ox (gospel pericope).
3. [p. 37.] 11-line. St. Matthew with his symbol the winged man or angel (gospel pericope).
4. [p. 39.] 10-line. St. Mark with his symbol, the winged lion (gospel pericope).
5. [p. 41.] above 5 lines of text, a full-page miniature of Christ in the garden of Gethsemane, and below, apostles sleeping (passion according to John).
6. [p. 55.] above 5 lines of text, a full-page miniature of the Annunciation, and below, the Immaculate Conception as shown by the meeting of Joachim and Anna at the Golden Gate (matins of the Hours of the Virgin).

7. [p. 69.] 10-line. Visitation or meeting of Mary and Elizabeth in the hill country
(lauds of the Hours of the Virgin).
8. [p. 84.] 10-line. Nativity (prime of the Hours of the Virgin).
9. [p. 89.] 10-line. Annunciation to the shepherds (terce of the Hours of the
Virgin).
10. [p. 94.] 10-line. Adoration of the Magi (sext of the Hours of the Virgin).
11. [p. 98.] 10-line. Presentation in the Temple (none of the Hours of the Virgin).
12. [p. 102.] 10-line. Flight into Egypt (vespers of the Hours of the Virgin).
13. [p. 15.] 10-line. Coronation of the Virgin by God the Father as the Dove
hovers overhead (compline of the Hours of the Virgin).
14. [p. 105.] above 5 lines of text, a full-page miniature, the Crucifixion with
Mary and John the Evangelist to Christ's right and the Jewish leaders to
his left, and below, the Road to Calvary (short hours of the Holy Cross).
15. [p. 110.] above 5 lines of text, a full-page miniature, Pentecost showing the
descent of the Holy Spirit as a dove upon the gathered disciples and Mary
(Short Hours of the Holy Spirit).
16. [p. 115.] above 5 lines of text, a full page-miniature, David kneeling in
prayer, his psaltery on the ground beside him, and below, David as a
young man with his slingshot and Goliath with his hand to his head in pain
(Penitential Psalms; authorship of the psalms was traditionally ascribed to
David).

17. [p. 127.] above 5 lines of text, a full-page miniature, the Three Living and the Three Dead at a roadside cross, and below, Job on the dungheap being consoled by his friends (Office of the Dead in which the readings are taken from the book of Job).
18. [p. 133.] 10-line. St. Jerome in the desert, beating his chest before an altar on which stands a crucifix, with his lion looking on (first nocturn of matins of the Office of the Dead, in which the first psalm, Ps. 5, "Verba mea auribus percipe: which also opens the so-called "Psalter of St. Jerome," an abbreviated "psalter" built up of a string of verses selected out of the 150 psalms).
19. [p. 141.] 10-line. Job on the dungheap as his wife throws slops out of the window (second nocturn of matins of the Office of the Dead).
20. [p. 151.] 10-line. Job on the dungheap being ridiculed by his wife (third nocturn of matins of the Office of the Dead).
21. [p. 168.] 11-line. Virgin and Child in an enclosed garden as a metaphor for the fruitful virginity of Mary (Obsecro Te).
22. [p. 173.] 10-line. Mass of Saint Gregory. Gregory sees a vision of the risen Christ as he elevates the host at the consecration, thus eliminating his doubts about the real presence of Christ in the consecrated bread.
23. [p. 176.] 10-line. Saint John the Baptist standing in the desert pointing to the Lamb of God that rests on the book in John's hand (suffrage of Saint

John the Baptist).

24. [p. 177.] 10-line. Saint Christopher carrying the Christ Child across the river (suffrage of Saint Christopher).
25. [p. 178.] 10-line. Saint Barbara holding the palm of martyrdom and reading from a book with the tower in which her father shut her up in the background (suffrage of Saint Barbara).

The De Villers Book of Hours was produced on unnumbered sheets of fine vellum with twenty-one lines of text per page. Text and illuminations appear on both sides of each leaf with marginal lines marked by pin holes at the top and bottom. The book was rebound at an undetermined date, resulting in the loss of the original pagination. Currently the volume's pagination is: 9-18; 1-8; 19-122; 124-126; 123; 127-181. Upon rebinding, the original leather cover of the volume was retained. The cover's decoration includes an impression of the annunciation on both the front and back. The book is currently housed in a leather slipcase incorrectly inscribed as a fifteenth century breviary.

This thesis establishes the preliminary work necessary for a more extensive textual study of the book and its artwork. The work found here includes a short discussion of each section found in the De Villers Book of Hours. For example, six months of the calendar has been transcribed, selections from the gospels and the entire genealogy have received full transcriptions, and a sample of the Psalms and the entire litany have been transcribed as well. The thesis concludes with a sample collection register and a cataloging worksheet, making it possible for on-line cataloging of the De

Villers Hours so that other scholars may know of this book for research purposes.

Surprisingly, even though many books of hours survive, the majority remain unknown to scholars due to their complicated language, intrinsic value, and fragile condition.⁷

Regrettably, this thesis only begins the process of a more comprehensive study with much more work remaining in order to establish a precise location and possible pinpoint of the actual date of creation. Such a study would require an examination of the illuminations and decorative program, a thorough textual analysis, and a comparison with related manuscripts, a task not possible or appropriate here.

CALENDAR PAGES

Books of hours open with the essential text of a calendar recording the fixed feasts of the liturgical year and the anniversaries of important saints. Some calendars remain selective, including only those saints universally venerated such as the apostles, martyrs, and confessors of the early church. Other calendars encompass saints of a particular local interest for the owner of the manuscript. Most calendars demonstrate the relative importance of the various feast days by incorporating the use of red, blue, and gold lettering (hence red letter days). Usually such feasts as the Annunciation and the Assumption, together with those of the apostles and evangelists, receive gold inscriptions. At times the use of gold was used for feasts of purely provincial significance, such as that of St. Genevieve of Paris, offering clues to the provenance of the book. Most calendars, however, provide a feast or a saint's name for every day of the year in order to fill space, as is the case in the De Villers Hours; their universal veneration throughout the Catholic world renders them useless in localizing books of hours.

This manuscript includes a full calendar in French with entries alternating in red and blue ink, and the major feasts in gold, including the popular French feasts of Saint Philibert (20 August) and Saint Benignus (24 November). Benignus also appears in the litany, offering a weak clue as a localizable feature with Philibert venerated in Savoy and Benignus associated with Dijon and Langres.

The two columns to the left of the saints' names list the Golden Numbers

representing the 19-year metonic cycle, shown in the text as roman numerals i-xix, and the Dominical Letters, a-g, representing the seven days of the week. These numbers and letters form the basis for a complicated equation identifying the Sundays in any given year and “...enable the reader to determine the Sunday for Easter, the most important feast of the Christian year, but a movable one whose date depends on both the lunar and solar year.”⁸ Unfortunately, the Golden Numbers and Dominical Letters cannot assist in discovering the date of copying of any particular manuscript since they follow the same arrangement in all calendars.

The following transcription includes the first six months of the calendar from the De Villers Hours.⁹ Questionable names have been bracketed in the traditional manner with emendations added in italics.

KL Janvier a xxxi. iours.
La lune.xxx.

- iii a La circoncision.
b Oct. Saint estienne.
xi c Ste. geneviefve.
d Oct. des innocens.
xix e Saint symeon.
viii f Le iour des roys.
g Saint [?].
xvi a Saint lucien.
v b S: pol hermite.
c Saint guillaume.
xiii d Saint Saturinin.
ii e Saint faron.
f Saint fremin.
x g Saint felix.
a Saint mor.

[cont. next page]

- xviii b Saint marcel.
vii c Saint anthonie.
d Saincte prisce.
xv e Saint lomer
iiii f Saint sebastien.
g Saint agnes
xii a Saint vincent.
i b Saincte emerece.
c Saint basile.
ix d Saint pol.
e Saint policarpe.
xvii f Saint iulien.
vi g Saincte agnes.
a Saint valeri.
xiii b Saint basile.
iii c Saint metrain.

KL fevrier: a xxviii. iours.
La lune.xxix.

- d Sainte Jude [in red ink]
xi e La nostre dame. [in gold]
xix f Saint blaise.
viii g Saint auintin.
a Saincte agathe.
xvi b Saint amant.
v c Saincte helene.
d Saint salomon.
xiii e Sainte audeberte.
ii f Saint helene
g Saint *seurin*.
x a Saint eusabe.
b Saint iulien.
xviii c Saint valentin.
vii d Saint [?].

[cont. next page]

- e Saint iulien.
xv f Saint donast.
[xxx] g Saint cloust.
a Saint elentere.
xii b Saint front.
i c Saint genaen.
d Saint pierre.
ix e Saint policarpe.
f Saint mathias.
xvii g Saint *paufm*.
vi a Saint felix.
b Saint aubert.
[xiii] c Saint romain.

KL mars: a xxxi. iours.

La lune xxx.

| | |
|------|--------------------|
| iii | d Saint aubin. |
| | e Saint faron. |
| xi | f Saint fortunat. |
| | g Saint adrien. |
| xix | a Saint eusebe. |
| viii | b Saint victorin. |
| | c Saincte felice. |
| xvi | d Saint pantaleon. |
| v | e Saint [?]. |
| | f Saint alexandre. |
| xiii | g Saint gorgon. |
| ii | a Saint gregoire. |
| | b Saint martin. |
| x | c Saint leon. |
| | d Saint longin. |

[cont. next page]

| | |
|-------|----------------------------|
| xviii | e Saint <i>ayine</i> |
| vii | f Sainte gertrud. |
| | g Saint alexandre. |
| xv | a Saint theodore. |
| iiii | b Saint <i>vibam</i> . |
| | c Saint benoist. |
| xii | d Saint saturnin. |
| i | e Saint victorin. |
| | f Saint agapit. |
| ix | g Nostre dame. |
| | a Saint maxime. |
| xvii | b S. <i>iehan</i> hermite. |
| vi | c Saint rogat. |
| | d Saint eustache. |
| xiiii | e Saint quentin. |
| iii | f Saincte sabine. |

KL Avril a xxx. iours.

La lune xxix:

| | |
|-------|--------------------------|
| | g Saint valeri. |
| xi | a Legypaeinie. |
| | b Saint pancras. |
| xix | c Saint ambroise. |
| viii | d Saint helen. |
| xvi | e Saint sixte. |
| v | f Saint tymothe. |
| | g Saint perpetin. |
| xiii | a Saint apolomer. |
| ii | b Saint aubert. |
| | c Saint leon. |
| x | d Saint iust. |
| | e Saint eufeme. |
| xviii | f Saint <i>tiburce</i> . |
| vii | g Saint maxime. |

[cont. next page]

| | |
|-------|-------------------------|
| | a Saint [?]. |
| xv | b Saint pierre. |
| iiii | c Saint <i>fremin</i> . |
| | d Saint leon. |
| xii | e Saint <i>vibam</i> . |
| i | f Saint robert. |
| | g Ste. oportune. |
| ix | a Saint george. |
| | b Saint [?]. |
| xvii | c Saint marc. |
| vi | d Saint <i>spire</i> . |
| | e Saint anastaise. |
| xiiii | f Saint vital. |
| iii | g Saint pierre. |
| | a Saint eutrope. |

KL May: a xxxi. iours.

La lune xxx:

| | |
|-------|---|
| xi | b S. iaqs s'. phelippe. c Saint [?]. |
| xix | d Saincte croix. |
| viii | e Saint siluain f Saint hilaire. |
| xvi | g Saint iehan. |
| v | a Saint [?]. b Saint sixte. |
| xiii | c Saint nicolae. |
| ii | d Saint gordian. e Saint mamet. |
| x | f Saint achile. g Saint [?]. |
| xviii | a Saint victor. |
| vii | b Saint ysidoire. |

[cont. next page]

| | |
|-------|--------------------------------------|
| | c Saint honore. |
| xv | d Saint perpetin. |
| iiii | e Saint yues. f Saint eustache. |
| xii | g Saint [?]. |
| i | a Saint marcelin. b Saint didier. |
| ix | c Saint iust. d Saint theodore. |
| xviii | e Saint <i>vibam</i> . |
| vi | f Saint augustin. g Saint bede. |
| xiiii | a Saint germain. |
| iii | b Saint maxime. c Saint felix. |
| xi | d Sainte peronelle. |

KL Juing: a xxx. iours.

La lune xxx:

| | |
|-------|--------------------------------------|
| | e Saint nicomede. |
| xix | f Saint marcellin. |
| viii | g Saint richier. |
| xvi | a Saint quirin. |
| v | b Saint boniface. c Saint Claude. |
| xiii | d Saint <i>arefine</i> . |
| ii | e Saint medard. f Saint felicien. |
| x | g Saint landri. a Saint barnabe. |
| xviii | b Saint ferin. |
| vii | c Saint eufeme. d Saint basi/e. |
| xv | e Saint modest. |

[cont. next page]

| | |
|-------|---------------------------------------|
| iiii | f Saint forieu. g Saint avit. |
| xii | a Saint marcellin. |
| i | b Saint gervais. c Saint baudiere. |
| ix | d Saint lieffroy. e Saint paulin. |
| xvii | f Vigile. |
| vi | g Saint iehan bapte. a Saint eloy |
| xiiii | b Saint iehan. |
| iii | c Saint [?]. d Vigile. |
| xi | e Saint pierre. f Saint martiel. |

PERICOPE OF THE GOSPELS

Pericopes, a sequence of extracts from the Four Gospels which generally follow the calendar, form a synopsis of the story of man's path to redemption. These secondary selections appear not in biblical order but in an order dictated by their content and use in the missal, the service book used by priests at mass. Miniatures of the Four Evangelists accompany the gospels with each saint appearing with his traditional symbol: Matthew with a man, Mark with a lion, Luke with an ox, and John with an eagle or chalice full of snakes.

First the opening passage of John *In principio erat verbum* (In the beginning was the Word) proclaims the godhead, declares Christ's divinity, then progresses through the witness of John the Baptist, and Christ's rejection. Luke follows John and contributes the story of the Incarnation, beginning with the Annunciation and the acceptance of God's will. Matthew's gospel extract presents the Christmas story with the coming of the Magi, Herod's fear of the coming Messiah, the Magi's worship of Christ, their gifts, and return home. Mark provides the last of the gospel extracts, telling how Christ appeared to the eleven remaining disciples after the Resurrection, his command to go forth and preach salvation and his granting of miraculous powers, and final ascension.

The De Villers Hours uses the standard set of pericopes from the gospels: John 1:1-14, the gospel lesson for the mass on Christmas Day on the pre-existence of Christ; Luke 1:26-38, the gospel lesson for the mass on the feast of the Annunciation (24 March);

Matthew 2:1-12, the gospel lesson for the mass on the Epiphany (6 January) on the birth of Christ and the adoration of the Magi; Mark 16: 14-20, the gospel lesson for the mass of the feast of the Ascension (40 days after Easter) and on the sending-forth of the apostles. This text also includes a selection from the Passion according to John (18: 1-19), an accessory text, possibly added at the request of the patron who commissioned the book.

The following transcription includes the texts of the De Villers pericopes for John, Luke, and Mark with the original line order maintained and all emendations of the original text appearing in italics.

JOHN 1:1-14 (pp. 33-34)

1. Initium sancta evvangelium secun-
2. dum iohenem
3. In principio
4. erat verbum
5. et verbum
6. erat apud
7. deum. et deus
8. erat verbum
9. hoc erat in
10. principio
11. apud deum.

12. Omnia per
13. ipsum facta sunt. et sine ipso fac-
14. tum est nihil. Quod factum est.
15. in *ipso* vita erat et vita erat lux
16. hominum. et lux *in* tenebris lucet
17. et tenebrae eam non comprehe-
18. derunt. Fuit homo missus a deo
19. cui nomen erat iohannes. hic
20. venit *in* testimonium ut testimonium
21. perhiberet de lumine, ut omnes.

(p. 34)

1. crederent per illum. Non erat ille
2. lux sed ut testimonium perhiberet
3. de lumine. Erat lux vera quae il-
4. luminat omnem *hominem* venientem
5. *in* hunc mundum. In mundo erat
6. et mundis per *ipsum* factus est et
7. mundus eum non cognovit. In
8. propria venit et suieum non re-
9. ceperunt. Quotquot autem recepe-
10. runt eum. dedit eis protestatem filios

11. dei fieri. his qui credunt *in nomine eius*
12. qui non ex sanguinibus neque
13. ex voluntate carnis neque ex vo-
14. luntate viri. sed ex deo nati sunt.
15. Et verbum caro factum est. Et
16. habitauit *in nobis*. et vidimus
17. *gloriam eius gloriam quasi unige-*
18. *niti a patre. plenum gratiae et*
19. *veritatis. Deo gracias:*

LUKE 1:26-38 (pp. 34-35)

20. Squencia sancta evvangelum.
21. secundum lucam *gloria tibi deo*
(p. 35)
1. In ello te
2. pose. missus
3. est angelus
4. gabriel a deo
5. in civitatem
6. galilee. cui
7. nomen na-

8. zareth ad *vir-*
9. ginem des-
10. ponsatam
11. viro cui no-
12. men erat ioseph. De domo david
13. et nomen virginis maria. Et in-
14. gressus angelius ad eam dixit
15. Ave gratia plena dominus
16. tecum benedicta tu *in* mulieri-
17. bus. Quae cum audisset turbata est [*turbata est* repeated in text]
18. *in* sermone eius.
19. et cogitabat qualis esset ista sa-
20. lutatio. et ait angelus ad ea.
21. Ne timeas maria invenisti enim

(page 36)

1. gratiam apud deum. Exxe cona-
2. cipies *in* utero et paries filium.
3. et vocabis nomen eius Ihesum.
4. hic erit magnus *et* filius al-
5. tissimi vocabitur. et dabit illi
6. dominus deus sedem david pa-

7. tris eius. et regnabit *in* domo
8. iacob *in* aeternum. Et regni eius
9. non erit finis. Dixit autem ma-
10. ria ad angelum. Quomodo
11. fiet istud *quoniam* virum non cog-
12. nosco. Et respondens angelus
13. ad eam dixit. *Spiritus* sanctus
14. superveniet in te. et virtus al-
15. tissimi obumbrabit tibi. Ideo-
16. *que* et quod nascetur ex te sanc-
17. tum vacabitur filius dei. Et
18. ecce elizabeth cognata tua. et
19. ipsa concepit filium *in* senectute
20. te sua. et his mensis est sextus
21. illi *quæ* vocatur sterilis. quia
(p. 37)

1. non erit *impossibile* apud deum
2. omne verbum. Dixit autem ma-
3. ria. Ecce ancilla domini fiat mi-
4. hi secundum verbum tuum.
5. Deo gracias.

MARK 16:14-20 (page 39)

14. *Saint* marcum.

15. In illo *tem-*

16. *pore*. Recum-

17. *bentibus illis un-*

18. *decim*

19. *apparuit*.

20. *illis et*

21. *exprobavit*

(p. 40)

1. *incredulitatem illorum et durtiam*

2. *cordis. quia hiis qui viderant*

3. *eum resurexisse non crediderunt.*

4. Et dixit eis. Euntes *in mundum*

5. *universum praedicate evange-*

6. *lum omni creaturae. Qui credid-*

7. *erit et baptzatus fuerit salvus*

8. *erit; qui vero non crediderit con-*

9. *demnabitur. Signa autem eos*

10. *qui crediderint haec sequentur.*

11. In *nomine* meo *daemona* eiicient lin-
12. quis loquentur novis, serpentes
13. tollent, Et si *mortiferum* quid bibe-
14. rint non eis nocebit. Super *aegros*
15. manus *imponent* et bene habebunt.
16. Et *dominus* quidem *Ihesus* *postquam* locutus
17. est eis assumptus est in caelum, et sedet
18. a dextris Dei. Illi autem profecti praedi-
19. caverunt ubique. Domino cooperante et
20. sermonem confirmante sequentibus
21. signis. Deo gracia:

HOURS OF THE VIRGIN

The essential text of The Hours of the Virgin, the *sine-qua-non* of a “Book of Hours,” sets out a series of psalms, readings, and prayers said at the eight canonical hours of the day (matins, lauds, prime, terce, sext, none, vespers, and compline, corresponding more or less to midnight, dawn, daybreak, 9 a.m., noon, 3 p.m., sunset, night). Intended for the laity, this simplified form of the very complicated Divine Office required of those under religious orders (monks and nuns) serves as an ample guide to untrained lay folk. The Divine Office changes according to the season of the liturgical year, according to the day of the week, and according to the importance of the feast of that day and, therefore, becomes a very complicated book to use, but the text of The Hours of the Virgin (as in the De Villers Hours) remains for the most part constant and simple in comparison. According to Wieck, “One of the great attractions of the Hours of the Virgin for the lay devotee is their simplicity. This is not the case with a breviary whose complicated texts require an attentive mind schooled in the intricacies of Church liturgy. With a *Horae* in hand, one prayed with the same basic Hours of the Virgin every day.”¹⁰

Internally to the text of The Hours of the Virgin, the specific readings and antiphons vary in books used in different dioceses. Like the Calendar and Office of the Dead, the Hours of the Virgin had textual variations in its text that differed in various dioceses. These textual variations constitute the “use.” Over time, criteria developed to

recognize the varying liturgical uses based on the reading (or “capitulum”) and the antiphon that precedes it for the two canonical hours of prime and none. Thus, the four snippets of text in a book of hours used in the diocese of Paris differ from those used in the diocese of Rouen, and likewise from those of Canterbury, etc. This test allows one to say that the De Villers Hours incorporates the *use* of Rome. The patron who commissioned this book may have chosen the use of Rome for its popularity and for reasons of prestige but it does not mean that the book was used in Rome since the Roman usage appears off and on throughout Europe. The selection below presents those key phrases that make this Hours of the Virgin the use of Rome.

Prime

| | | |
|------------|-----------|-------------------|
| p. 87 | Antiphon | Assumpta est. . . |
| | Capitulum | Que est ista. . . |
| pp. 100-01 | Antiphon | Pulchra es. . . |
| | Capitulum | In plateis. . . |

SHORT HOURS OF THE HOLY CROSS
AND SPIRIT

Shorter than the Hours of the Virgin, the secondary texts of The Hours of the Holy Cross and Spirit consist of seven, rather than eight, of the canonical hours (they combine matins and lauds into one section) with each consisting of only a hymn and a prayer. There are no lengthy psalms or long lessons that take up so much space in the hours of the Virgin.

In many manuscripts, the Hours of the Cross and Spirit follow one right after the other, as in the De Villers Hours. This placement within an *Horae* remained flexible but they often appear after the Hours of the Virgin. According to Wieck, this placement encouraged the reader, if time permitted, to include these two Hours following those devoted to Mary.¹¹ As might be expected, the miniature accompanying the Hours of the Cross almost always depicts the Crucifixion of Christ and the most frequent illustration for the Hours of the Holy Spirit depicts the Pentecost with the Dove of the Holy Spirit sending down rays of light.¹²

PENITENTIAL PSALMS AND
LITANY OF SAINTS

The De Viller Hours includes the traditional and essential Penitential psalms (Pss. 6, 31, 37, 50, 101, 129, 142 in the Vulgate numbering) and a litany of eleven martyrs and saints. The Penitential Psalms comprise the oldest segment of text in a book of hours. Augustine, who died in 430, kept near his bed during his final illness those “few Davidic psalms of penitence” and the set of seven psalms as we know them today were later referred to by Cassiodorus (d. 580) by this name. Readers must note that the numbering of the psalms differs in the Vulgate (Catholic, and thus all medieval bibles) from the way the psalms are counted in the Hebrew and Protestant traditions. The order of the Psalms in the De Villers Hours follows the traditional pattern:

| | |
|------------|--------------------------|
| Psalm 6: | Domine ne in furore. . . |
| Psalm 31: | Beati quorum. . . |
| Psalm 37: | Domine ne in furore. . . |
| Psalm 50: | Miserere mei Deus. . . |
| Psalm 101: | Domine exaudi. . . |
| Psalm 129: | De profundis. . . |
| Psalm 142: | Domine exaudi. . . |

The litany of saint, which follows the Psalms, was originally recited during processions with one person calling out the name of the saint and everyone else responding “*ora pro nobis*” (pray for us). The saints in the litany receive the traditional hierarchical arrangement: Trinity and Mary; Angels; John the Baptist and Apostles; Martyrs; Confessors; Virgins. The saints chosen for the list that comprise a litany often indicate a

particular veneration tied to certain localities. The De Villers litany includes Benignus whose association and veneration in the northeastern French city of Langres offers one of few localization clues.

The following transcription includes a selection from Psalm number six and the entire litany from the De Villers Hours. Textual emendations appear as italics and unknown names have been placed in brackets.

Psalm 6

1. Domine ne *in* furore tuo arguas me: neque *in* ira tua corripias me.
2. Miserere mei do[-]omine *quoriam* infirmus sum sana me *domine* quoniam conturbata sunt omnia ossa mea.
3. Et anima mea turbata est valde: sed tu *dominus* *quousquo*. . .

Litany of Saints

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Sancta maria | Sancte iacobe |
| Sancta dei [?] | Sancte iohannes |
| Sancta virgo [?] | Sancte philippe |
| Sancte michael | Sancte bartholomee |
| Sancte gabriel | Sancte thomas |
| Sancte raphael | Sancte matheew |
| [?] sancta angeli et. ar. | Sancte iacobe |
| [?] sancta beatorum [?] | Sancte symon |
| Sancte iohannes bapta | Sancte thadees |
| [?] | Sancte mathias |
| Sancte petre | Sancte barnabis |
| Sancte paule | Sancte lucam |
| Sancte andrea | Sancte marcel |

[?]

[?]

[?] inocentes

Sancte stephane

Sancte laurenti

Sancte vincenti

Sancte clemens

Sancte sebastiane

Sancte ger[?]

Sancte protha[?]

Sancte benigne

Sancte georgi

Sancte [?]

[?]

Sancte silvester

Sancte leo

Sancte gregori

Sancte ambrost

Sancte ierominie

Sancte augustine

Sancte nicolae

Sancte eligi

Sancte benedicte

Sancte [?]

[?] sancti confessores

*Sancta maria magdalena**Sancta maria egyptiaca*

Sancta annia

Sancta agatha

Sancta [?]

Sancta lucia

Sancta cecilia

Sancta [?]

Sancta barbara

Sancta geno[?]

Sancta fides

Sancta ipes

Sancta *caritas*

[?] [?] virgines

[?] [?] sancte dei

OFFICE OF THE DEAD

Called “office” rather than “hours,” the Office of the Dead, an essential text to books of hours, has only texts for vespers, matins, and lauds. The longest service, that at matins, is divided into three parts, each called a nocturn, and each containing three readings. The response, that portion of the liturgical service requiring the audience to recite a phrase or verse, constitutes the criteria for determining the liturgical use of the Office of the Dead. Like the Calendar and Hours of the Virgin, the text for the Office of the Dead varies from region to region, which helps define the usage. The responses of the Office of the Dead in this manuscript follow the use of Rome:

first nocturn:

| | |
|--------|--------------------|
| p. 139 | Credo quod. . . |
| p. 140 | Qui lazarum. . . |
| p. 140 | Domine quando. . . |

second nocturn:

| | |
|--------|--------------------|
| p. 148 | Memento mei. . . |
| p. 149 | Heu michi. . . |
| p. 150 | Ne recorderis. . . |

third nocturn:

| | |
|--------|---------------------------------------|
| p. 159 | Peccantem me. . . |
| p. 160 | Domine secundum. . . |
| p. 161 | Libera me domine de morte eterna. . . |

OBSECRO TE

The *Obsecro te*, prayer to the Virgin, occurs as a secondary text in almost all books of hours, although its actual position within a book remained more flexible. On rare occasions this prayer uses feminine forms (“pray for me, your humble maid. . .”). Almost always the prayer “O Intermerata” follows the prayer to the Virgin. Rather oddly, the “O Intermerata” was not incorporated into the De Villers Hours. Translations of the *Obsecro te* have proven difficult to find. Following is a brief selection of a translation of the *Obsecro te* from Wieck:

I beseech you, Mary, holy lady, mother of God, most full of piety, daughter of the greatest king, most glorious mother, mother of orphans, consolation of the desolate, the way for those who stray, salvation for those who hope in you, virgin before giving birth, virgin while giving birth, virgin after giving birth, fountain of pity, fountain of salvation and grace, fountain of piety and joy, fountain of consolation and kindness through that holy, unutterable joy with which your spirit rejoiced in that hour when the Son of God was announced. . . .¹³

SEVEN PRAYERS OF SAINT

GREGORY THE GREAT

This accessory text, most likely included at the request of the patron, contains seven short prayers addressed to the crucified Christ. Each prayer begins the same way: “O Domine ihesu christe adoro te in cruce pendentem. . . .” followed by the verse of the prayer. Tradition attributes these prayers to Saint Gregory, the sixth-century pope and a Father of the Church, and, as in the De Villers Hours, the prayers usually accompany a miniature depicting the Mass of Saint Gregory. According to one legend, Gregory was celebrating a Mass during which one of his assistants doubted the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. During the Mass, Christ himself appeared on the altar, allaying any doubts as to the real nature of the Communion wafer.¹⁴

SUFFRAGES OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST,
ST. CHRISTOPHER, AND ST. BARBARA

Suffrages, also called Memorial (*memoriae*), consist of four short elements: an antiphon, a versicle, response, followed by a short prayer requesting the help of certain saints, and sometimes indicate a book's origin by the choice of saints. This is an essential text to books of hours but one that remained flexible in its number of saints included. The number of saints invoked can vary. The saints included in the De Villers Hours are too common and too few to be useful in determining where the book was produced. Note that they do follow the "rule" of hierarchy as presented in the litany with John the Baptist followed by the martyr Christopher and the Virgin Barbara.

The following transcription represents the entire suffrage dedicated to John the Baptist. All textual emendations appear in italics.

(p. 175)

17. De Sancto iohanne bap^ta.a

(p. 176)

1. Interna
2. [?] [?]
3. non furrei
4. inatos iohen
5. baptista.

6. fuit homo
7. [?] a
8. deo [?] cui
9. nomine erat
10. iohannes.
11. oremus oratio
12. Oresta quefuimus omnes
13. deus. ut familia tua
14. per tuam fabitis nice
15. bat et beati iohannes precurso
16. ris host anienta sectando
17. ad eum quem predicat segura
18. perueniat. Dominus [?] [?]
19. [?] filium tuum. [?]

GENEALOGY OF PIERRE DE VILLERS

AND JEANNE DE CHISSIRET

The De Villers family was well established in the upper bourgeoisie of Dijon with most of its male members engaged as lawyers and active in the government of Burgundy. Chronologically, the first recognizable personage named in the notes is Philippe de Villers, grandfather and godfather of the firstborn son of the same name. The grandfather was born on the same day as the grandchild, 1 January 1543, the child on 1 January 1607. We thus have the correct birth date for the grandfather, which had been estimated at 1545 (correcting what is clearly a typographical error of 1645) perpetuated by Papillon.¹⁵ Papillon supplies Philippe's death date of 1622, as well as the epitaph which Philippe's sons ordered placed on their parents' tomb in the church of St. Michel in Dijon. From the epitaph, we have the information that Philippe's wife was Jeanne Humbert, and that she died in 1614 at 63 years of age. Jeanne Humbert is also mentioned in the notes in this manuscript as the godmother to her granddaughter by the same name, born in 1613. Papillon mentions briefly the Pierre de Villers (d. 1650), son of Philippe and Jean, who according to this manuscript married Jeanne Chisseret in 1603 and had the following nine children by her: Philippe (b. 1607), Perrette (b. 1608, but died 4 or 5 hours later), Marie (b. 1609), Charles Claude Emanuel (b. 1611), Nicholas (b. 1612, but died sometime before 1615 since the name was given to another child in that year), Jeanne (b. 1613), Nicholas (1615), Bernard (b. 1617), Anne Philiberte (b. 1621). Two of the godparents

have been identified in biographic sources: godfather to Charles Claude Emanuel de Villers in 1611 was Charles-Emanuel de Gorrevod, Count of Pont-de-Vaux, member of the Order of the Golden Fleece, and elevated to the rank of Duke by Louis XII of France in 1623.¹⁶ In 1612 the first child named Nicholas was born. His godfather was Nicholas Gagne, Lord of Perigny and Treasurer-General of France in Burgundy.¹⁷ Other family names of godparents, although not the specific individuals, are also listed in the Dictionnaire de la Noblesse such as *Petit*, which originated in the diocese of Langres.¹⁸ The Dictionnaire de Biographie Francaise lists the family names *Arviset* and *Boisselier* both originating in Burgundy and with at least one person who was born and died in Langres.

Following is the transcription of the De Villers genealogy found in the back fly leaf of the DeVillers Hours. The text has been transcribed in the original line order with all emendations in italics.

Memorial du mariage de Pierre de Villers
et Damoiselle Jehanne Chisseret

Nous susines promis de nos articles
accordes le quatorziesme Juillet mil
six cent et trois.

Nous susines espouses en l'eglise
 Magdelaine le troisesme Aoust mil
 six cent et trois et la solemnite de
 nostre mariage fut le cinquiesme
 Jour dudit mois.

Le lundi premier Jour du mois de Janvier *mil*
 six cent et sept

[# tie mark in text to note in the margin: environ sur les quatre heures du soir]

nasquit Philippes
 de Villers nostre fils aisne et eust
 pour parrain monsieur Philippes de Villers
 son ayeul paternal, qui estoit ne a
 pareil Jour en l'an 1543.

[* tie mark in text to an illegible note in the text]

Le dimanche troisesme Jour du mois d'Aoust mil
 six cent et huict ladite damoiselle de
 Chisseret se delivra au sixiesme mois
 de sa grossesse d'une fille qui eust
 baptisme auquel on [?] donna le nom

de Perrette et ne *vit* que quatre
 ou cinq heures estant *le meme*
 Jour que nous avions *este espouses*.

Le dimanche vingtiesme du mois de Novembre
 [cancellation of "nasquit"] mil six cent et neuf
 [#tie mark in text to note in the margin: environ sur les six heures du matin]

nasquit

Marie de Villers nostre fille aisnee
 a pareil Jour que ledit sieur de Villers
 son pere et eust pour parrain monsieur
 le Conseillier Arviset et Damoiselle
 Perrette Petit femme de monsieur Jehan
 de Villers son oncle.

Le sabmedi troisisme decembre mil six cent et
 unze environ le midi nasquit Charles Claude
 Emanuel de Villers qui eust pour parrain Monsieur
 le Conte de Pont de Vaux et Pour marraine
 Madame de Tallemay.

Le mardy dixhuictiesme de mois de Decembre
mil six cent et douze ladite Damoiselle Chisseret
se delivra d'una fils qui eust le nom de Nicolas
et eust pour parrain monsieur le Thresorier
Gagne et Mademoiselle Colgenot.

Le vendredy quinziesme Novembre mil six cent
et treize nasquit Jehanne de Villers entre trois
et quatre heures du matin et eust pour parrain
Monsieur le maistre des Comptes de la Grange
et pour marraine Damoiselle Jehanne Humbert
sa grande mere et a este baptisee a S. Michel.

Le vendredy vingtiesme Mars mil six cent et quinze
environ les deux heures et demie du matin
nasquit Nicolas de Villers qui eust pour parrain
Monsieur Humbert maistre des comptes et pour
marraine Damoiselle Catherine Arviset femme
de *monsieur Paud* Boixxelier Conseillier a la
Cour et commissaire aux requestes.

Le sabmedy dixhuictiesme Mars entre
neuf et six du soir mil six cent dixsept
nasquit Bernard de villers qui eust pour
parrain Monsieur Jasques de la Grange advocat
en parlement et pour marraine damoiselle
Anne Humbert femme de monsieur l'advocat
Michot.

Le huictiesme Juin mil six cent vingt et ung
entre quatre et cinq du soir nasquit Anne
Philiberte de Villers qui eust pour parrain
Monsieur le Recepteur Petit et pour marraine
Damoiselle Philiberte Chisseret femme de
monsieur de Boligny.

JEROME ILLUMINATION

Along with the Latin text in the De Villers Hours, we find illuminations that reinforce the subject matter and provide a visual experience as well as a written and readable interaction with the manuscript. These illuminations include common scenes from the Annunciation, the birth of Christ, the Passion, and important biblical and fictional figures such as King David, Saul, Saint Christopher, and Saint Barbara. We also find illustrations of the Four Evangelists, John the Baptist, Jerome, and Job. These illuminations contain many of the familiar iconographic images and symbols associated with certain individuals and incidents from their lives.

The subject matter surrounding the illuminations, unlike that of the text, tends to concentrate on the legendary, rather than accepted Catholic biblical tradition. The legends remained with the people and Emile Male in Religious Art claims:

The church, however, with her habitual moderation, judged them [the legends] less severely, and did not wish to deprive simple hearts of the spiritual sustenance they found in the ancient tales; she thought it wise to make allowance for the world of dreams. We see her indulgent for the apocryphal gospels and the *Golden Legend* as she was for the *Revelations* of Maria of Agreda, so harshly judged by Boussuet.¹⁹

Pere Delehaye's quotation in Jacobus de Voragine's The Golden Legend says:

[T]he curious thing about legends, hagiographical or otherwise, is that behind the ultimate author who puts them down in writing, there is a hidden "author," anonymous and minifold, whose memory stretches back through generations: this "author" is the masses, the people themselves.²⁰

The unknown artist of the De Villers Book of Hours falls within Delehaye's definition of

the “people’s” author and unknowingly perpetuates legendary tendencies of the masses. This anonymous artist also echoes Bohatec’s thesis that we learn more about a people from their books than from anything else that a society produces. The legendary deeds of these religious figures demonstrate

. . . not so much the particular personalities and deeds of a certain number of individuals, as the ideals of the people from whose heart the legends sprang. All heroes are legendary: they personify the aims and dreams of the masses who worship them. The saints are the heroes of the medieval [and Renaissance] folk.²¹

Perhaps the most legendary saint within the De Villers Hours, and the illumination chosen to represent an example of treatment for all illuminations in this manuscript, appears in the miniature of Saint Jerome. According to Herbert Friedmann, Saint Jerome was “noted more for his scholarship than his sanctity, and his life offered little drama of the kind that distinguished the lives of certain other saintly figures.”²² By accident, however, the many legends surrounding Saint Gerasimus became confused with Geronimus (Jerome) by ignorant or uninformed monks who unknowingly produced a type of cult figure within the Catholic Church.²³

The legend of Jerome compiled by Jacobus de Voragine in The Golden Legend directly inspired the iconography found within this illumination of Jerome. As stated in The Golden Legend, Jerome, a cardinal priest of the Roman church, helped a lion with a wounded paw. The lion, viewed by Jerome and his monks as a gift from God, and adopted by them, functioned as a shepherd for the ass responsible for carrying wood to the monastery. The lion in the De Villers Hours, although poorly executed, appears with

a wounded and bleeding paw and looks to Saint Jerome for assistance. This lion represents Jerome's compassionate character and, although injured, appears quite happy when compared to the penitent figure of Jerome himself.

The emaciated and ragged figure of Jerome kneels and executes the well known self-flagellation associated with this penitent saint. Jerome's insistence on self denial, which many artists portray, stems from the words of Voragine's popular legends:

For as long as I dwelt in the desert, in the vast solitude, burnt with the heat of the sun, which provides a fearsome abode for the monks, I thought that I was in the midst of the delights of Rome. My twisted members shuddered in their sackcloth, my squalid skin was as black as an Ethiop's. Daily I wept, daily I groaned; and when sleep finally beat me down, my bare bones were bruised on the hard ground. Of food and drink I say naught since even sick men drink cold water, and to them also it is somewhat of a luxury to eat cooked food. Yet, while I lived thus, the companion of scorpions and wild beasts, oftentimes I imagined that I was surrounded by dancing girls, and in my frozen body and moribund flesh the fires of concupiscence were lighted. For this I wept incessantly, and subjugated the rebellious flesh with week-long fasts. Often I joined the days with the nights, nor stayed from beating my breast until the Lord restored my peace of spirit.²⁴

Clearly the De Villers Hours image of penitent Jerome originates in the legends or folklore of the people. The penitent figure, according to Herbert Friedmann, became popular in other schools but "by and large, French artists apparently did not busy themselves to any extent with this theme."²⁵ This may explain why the earliest known French version of penitent Jerome dates to about 1490 in an illuminated manuscript in the Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, California.²⁶ If Friedmann's argument proves correct we can then assume that penitent Jerome in the De Villers Hours is a rarity and the Utah State University manuscript dated at c. 1480-90 would represent an early known

French rendition of penitent Jerome.

The scholarly achievements of Saint Jerome appear more subtle than any other iconographic image in the illumination. The lion, whose injured paw bleeds upon the ground, holds open a book with his healthy paw. This represents the sacred books read by Jerome following his fever and violent dream which lead him to study sacred texts.

But at one time, as he himself relates in his letter to Eustochium, he read Tully by day and Plato by night, finding no pleasure in the unpolished speech of the prophetic books. Then, about the middle of Lent, he was stricken with a fever so sudden and so violent that his whole body went cold, and the vital heat lived on only in his breast. . . Jerome gave an oath, and said: "O Lord, if ever I possess or read profane books, I shall have denied Thee!" At these words he was dismissed, and suddenly revived, to find himself wet with tears, and his shoulders dreadfully bruised from the blows which he had undergone. Thenceforth he read the Sacred Books with as much zeal as ever he had devoted to the pagan writings.²⁷

Following Jerome's dream he "became the foremost Christian scholar of this time, a remarkable linguist, and a man of great industry and devotion. His translation of the scriptures from Greek and Hebrew into Latin, the Vulgate, is still used by the Roman Catholic Church, in revised form, as its authorized version of the bible."²⁸ Emile Male in Religious Art claims that "Saint Jerome is the scholar whose eyes have gone dim over books."²⁹ Quite possibly, however, the anonymous artist of this illumination chose to address the penitent Jerome and only slightly hint at the scholarly side of the ancient scholar. Jerome's penance, however, defends the most important sacraments of the period and illustrates that the artist was fully aware of what they implied.

The foremost represented sacraments in religious art include the sacrament of penance, such as Peter weeping over his denial, Mary Magdalen weeping over her sins,

and the sacrament of the Eucharist. In art the saints often receive the Eucharist prior to being united with God. Perhaps in an attempt to be forgiven of what he considered insurmountable sins, the figure of Jerome, in the De Villers Hours, participates in both sacraments at once and therefore may receive a greater forgiveness from the smiling Christ.

Jerome includes himself in the sacrament of the penance by kneeling at the altar before the crucifix, and beating his breast with a rock to drive out the evil thoughts that plagued him throughout his life. Ironically the animated *Christus Triumphans* smiles at the penitent and statue-like Jerome, perhaps signifying that his sins have been forgiven. With the sacrament of the penance so obviously addressed within this image, the sacrament of the Eucharist appears with much more subtlety.

The altar of the Eucharistic Sacrament appears at the foot of Christ, suggesting the ultimate sacrifice and the well established practice of communion in the Roman Catholic Church. The altar may also be close to Christ to reinforce the idea of transubstantiation and the reality of the bread and wine which will change, upon consecration, into Christ's body and blood.

The tree, which appears behind Jerome, not only adds depth to the two-dimensional surface, but suggests the popular idea of the trees in the Garden of Eden and Adams and Eve's expulsion from there. The large tree also echoes the cross, which appears directly across from the crucifix and helps to frame the image of Jerome within a confined and controlled space.

The sacramental imagery surrounding Saint Jerome may be attributed to Eusebius of Cremona, who tells us how Saint Jerome at the age on ninety “desired to receive communion for the last time in the presence of his disciples. Supported by them, he receives the sacrament with moving fervor and pronounces an eloquent prayer.”³⁰

Jerome’s sacrifice of body and penitent spirit appears effective since Christ acknowledges his effort with a smile and sends forth rays of light, or stigmati, to pierce the subject. The rays, which radiate from the crucifix, fly toward the kneeling Jerome and we sense that this event is taking place at the precise moment of Jerome’s ecstasy and realization of the forgiveness of his sins. The powerful sacramental imagery unites the composition and reinforces the obvious religiosity of the illumination.

The formal elements of the work shed some light upon the message that the artist attempts to convey. The line used in this illumination defines the visual forms and sets up the sense of perspective achieved by the artist. The strong vertical lines of Jerome, the crucifix, the tree, and perhaps the lion, draw your attention upward toward the figure of Christ. Once the lines draw you to the crucifix, the rays of light, which emanate from Christ himself, draw us back to the central figure of Jerome and his penitent actions. Also, the horizontal lines, created by the dream-like landscape, the arms of the cross, and the altar, create the depth and spacial feeling that this picture possesses.

The line is perhaps one of the most interesting features of this illumination. With the presence of such strong horizontals and verticals, the eye naturally looks to other shapes. There appears to be a series of overlapping triangles within this work. The

figures of Christ and Jerome function as the most important unit created by the triangle. Also, the lion and Jerome produce a triangle of a lesser degree. The most intriguing shape rises up in the atmospheric background and appears to be a mountain or a large building. If a building, we may assume that it is a religious edifice, perhaps, the Abbey of Mont St. Michel in the Sea of Peril off the coast of France. Begun about 1020 by Abbot Hildebert and Richard II of Normandy, grandfather of William the Conqueror, the building summarizes medieval architecture, a glorious mixture of Norman, Norman Romanesque, and Early High, and Late Gothic styles.³¹

The perfected science of linear perspective, an Italian invention, does not appear within this image or others in this manuscript. However, if not perfected, it is at least attempted within this illumination. The square object, directly behind the lion and the altar table, creates a primitive sense of three-dimensionality. This simple method is similar to that used by Giotto in his arena chapel frescoes. Giotto uses simple linear perspective within his buildings, paralleling what we see here. The atmospheric perspective strengthens the overall character of this picture. The bright colors of the main figures differ significantly from the hazy and mysterious background. The colors within the foreground include light shades of brown, blues, and bright whites, and gold. The background, however, appears a very dark blue with the hills and mountains appearing almost black. This severe contrast, coupled with the light source directly behind Christ, creates a beautiful sense of depth to a simple and primitive illumination.

In conclusion, this image, although rather simple when compared to Italian

artworks of the same period, achieves a simplistic beauty through the artist's steady but rather untrained hand. The iconography associated with Saint Jerome adds to this illumination and was handled in a very traditional manner by the artist. We must note, however, that the image of the lion appears more monkey-like, possessing a significant problem because other animals rendered in the De Villers Hours are executed with superb detail and realism. Perhaps the artist had very few examples of lions from which to work since another lion in the manuscript appears in the same monkey-like fashion.

The discovery that the earliest known penitent figure of Jerome dates to the 1490s adds to the value of this manuscript. If the DeVillers Hours has been dated correctly, Utah State University may hold one of the earliest examples of this image and perhaps more images within the manuscript contain such rare qualities. If this is the earliest image, we can also conclude that the value of this rarely used manuscript as a research tool will increase.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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APPENDIX B: CATALOGING WORKSHEET AND
COLLECTION REGISTER

| MARC tag | Indicators | Description |
|----------|------------|---|
| 245 | 0 0 | #a De Villers Book of Hours, #f [ca. 1480-90]. |
| 300 | b b | #a 1 volume (181 unnumbered pages, 21 lines per page, rebound out of order); #b vellum; #c 21 cm. |
| 351 | b b | #a Organized into subdivisions: Calendar, Pericopes of the gospels, Passion according to John, Hours of the Virgin, Short Hours of the Holy Cross and Spirit, Penitential Psalms and Litany of Saints, Office of the Dead, <i>Obsecro Te</i> , Prayer of Saint Gregory, Suffrages, Notes on the marriage and family of Pierre de Villers and Jeanne de Chissiret. |
| 500 | b b | #a 21 text lines per page with illuminations (25 miniatures with elaborate borders). Hours of the Virgin and Office of the Dead follow the use of Rome. |
| 500 | b b | #a Family genealogy added after publication on back fly leaf. |
| 500 | b b | #a Bound in leather with an impression of the annunciation on the front and rear covers. Volume stored in a leather case inscribed incorrectly as a breviary. |
| 500 | b b | #a Cite as: De Villers Book of Hours. |
| 506 | b b | #a Access restricted. Not available for distribution or publication. #c Access by appointment and written permission only. |
| 520 | 8 b | #a The <u>De Villers Book of Hours</u> , is a prayer book intended for used by the lay men and women who |

wished to imitate the clergy in their requirement to recite daily the Divine Office, a complicated series of prayers that changed daily.

≠b The De Villers Book of Hours includes the following sections written in Medieval Latin: full calendar in French, standard pericopes of the gospels (John 1:1-14, Luke 1:26-38, Matthew 2:1-12, and Mark 16: 14-20), Passion according to John (John 18:1-19:42), Hours of the Virgin (use of Rome), Short Hours of the Holy Cross and Holy Spirit, Penitential Psalms and litany of Saints, Office of the Dead (use of Rome), *Obsecro te*, Seven Prayers of Saint Gregory the Great, Suffrages of Saints John the Baptist, Christopher, and Barbara. The book also contains Notes on the marriage, and on the birth and baptism of the children of Monsieur Pierre deVillers and Jeanne de Chissiret, 1603-1621 (written in French).

- 530 b b ≠a Photocopy of text and color slides of miniatures available for consultation at Special Collections Research Room≠cFor use in repository only. Not available through interlibrary loan.
- 540 b b ≠a Restricted: Information on reproduction rights available from Special Collections and Archives Curator.
- 541 b b ≠c Gift of: ≠a L. Boyd and Anne McQuarrie Hatch.
- 545 b b ≠a The De Villers family was well established in the upper bourgeoisie of Dijon. Most male members served as lawyers and were active in the government of Burgundy with some members of the Order of the Golden Fleece and one elevated to the rank of Duke. Their family genealogy, added to the back fly leaf of the book, supports the assumption that they were the original, if not, early owners of the book. Most family members were buried in the tomb at the church of St. Michel in Dijon.

- 546 b b #a In Latin; genealogy in French.
- 555 8 b #a Unpublished inventory available in Special Collections and Archives Research Room.
- 561 b b #a Originally collected by L. Boyd and Anne McQuarrie Hatch and presented as a gift to Utah State University.
- 581 b b #a Williams, Kenneth R. "De Villers Book of Hours," Masters Thesis, Utah State University, Department of History, March 1996.
- 581 b b #a Williams, Kenneth R. "Penitent Jerome," in Proceedings: Scholars Day. Utah State University, Honors Department, 1991.
- 600 3 4 #a De Villers
- 610 2 0 #a Catholic Church#x Liturgy#x Texts
- 650 b 0 #a Illumination of books and manuscripts#z France #y 15th century.
- 650 b 0 #a Manuscripts, Medieval.
- 650 b 0 #a Manuscripts, Latin.
- 650 b 0 #a Books of hours#z France#y 15th Century.
- 650 b 0 #a Devotional Calendars#z France#x History and social life.
- 651 b 0 #a France#x History
- 655 b 7 #a Books of hours#2 aat.
- 655 b 7 #a Illuminated Manuscripts #2 aat.
- 655 b 7 #a Illuminations #2 aat

- 655 b 7 #a Initials#2 aat.
- 655 b 7 #a Liturgical manuscripts#2 aat.
- 655 b 7 #a Miniatures (illuminations)#2 aat.
- 655 b 7 #a Religious calendars#2 aat.
- 655 b 7 #a Manuscripts#z France#y15th Century#2 aat
- 655 b 7 #a Manuscripts#z France#y Medieval#2 aat.
- 655 b 7 #a Manuscripts#z France#y Renaissance #2 aat.
- 655 b 7 #a Borders#2 aat.
- 852 b b #a Utah State University.#b Merrill
Library#b Special Collections and
Archives#e Logan, Utah 84322-3000#d U.S.A.

DEVILLERS BOOK OF HOURS (USE OF ROME), [c.1480 -90].

1 volume (181 unnumbered pages), 23 slides, 20 color prints, research files, and xerox copy of text.

DESCRIPTION: The De Villers Book of Hours, is a prayer book intended for use by the lay men and women of the Middle Ages who wished to imitate the clergy in their requirement to recite daily the Divine Office, a complicated series of prayers that changed daily.

The De Villers Hours includes the following sections written in Medieval Latin: full calendar in French, standard pericopes of the gospels (John 1:1-14, Luke 1:26-38, Matthew 2:1-12, and Mark 16: 14-20), Passion according to John (John 18:1-19:42), Hours of the Virgin (use of Rome), Short Hours of the Holy Cross and Holy Spirit, Penitential Psalms and litany of Saints, Office of the Dead, *Obsecro te*, Prayer of Saint Gregory the Great, Suffrages of Saints John the Baptist, Christopher, and Barbara. The book also contains Notes on the marriage, and on the birth and baptism of the children of Monsieur Pierre de Villers and Jeanne de Chissiret, 1603-1621 (written in French).

ARRANGEMENT: The volume is organized into traditional subdivisions: Calendar, Pericopes of the gospels, Passion according to John, Hours of the Virgin, Short Hours of the Holy Cross and Spirit, Penitential Psalms and Litany of Saints, Office of the Dead, *Obsecro Te*, Prayer of Saint Gregory, Suffrages, Notes on the marriage and family of Pierre de Villers and Jeanne de Chissiret. The slides and prints are arranged in the order that they appear in the manuscript. Research are arranged alphabetically by topic with the slides and photographs arranged in the order they appear in the manuscript.

ACCESS RESTRICTIONS: Access is restricted: material extremely fragile. Access by appointment and/or written permission only. Not available for distribution or publication.

RELATED RECORDS: Williams, Kenneth R. "De Villers Book of Hours," Masters Thesis, Utah State University, Department of History, March 1996 and Williams, Kenneth R. "Penitent Jerome," in Proceedings: Scholars Day. Utah State University, Honors Department, 1991.

PROVENANCE: This is a book of hours showing northern French illuminations of the late fifteenth century. The Hours of the Virgin and Office of the Dead are of the regular Roman usage with masculine forms used allowing the inference that the original owner was a man. The occurrence of saints Benignus and Philibert support the localization around Langre, Savoy, and Dijon. An owner included a genealogy of birth, death,

marriage, and baptismal information dating from 1543 to 1622 of the Pierre De Villers family. The De Villers family was well established in the upper bourgeoisie of Dijon with its male members serving as lawyers and active in the government of Burgundy. The dates prove this family to have been an early, if not original, owners of the book. No further information has been obtained until the book was collected by L. Boyd and Anne McQuarrie Hatch and subsequent presentation as a gift to Utah State University in October of 1953. The book was then added to the Hatch Memorial Library, an authentic sixteenth-century reading room, acquired by the Hatch family from William Randolph Hearst.

PROCESSING NOTE: This volume was rebound at an undetermined date with subsequent mistakes made in repagination. Correct pagination can be found in the container list.

CONTAINER LIST

| <u>Box</u> | <u>Description</u> |
|------------|--|
| 1 | Full calendar in French: January (pages 33-40), February-May (pages 1-8), June-December (pages 19-32). |
| | Pericopes of the gospels (pages 33-40). |
| | Passion according to John (pages 41-54). |
| | Hours of the Virgin (pages 55-104). |
| | Short Hours of the Holy Cross and Holy Spirit (pages 105-114). |
| | Penitential Psalms and Litany of Saints (pages 115-126). |
| | Office of the Dead (pages 127-167). |
| | Obsecro te (pages 168-173). |
| | Prayer of Saint Gregory (173-175). |
| | Suffrages of Saints John the Baptist, Christopher, and Barbara (pages 176-179). |

| <u>Box</u> | <u>Description</u> |
|------------|--|
| 1 cont. | Notes on the marriage, and on the birth and baptism of the children of Monsieur Pierre de Villers and Jeanne de Chissiret (pages 180-181). |
| 2 | Color slides of illuminations. |
| 3 | Research notes. |
| 4 | Color prints of illuminations. |
| 5 | Photocopy of text. |