

Hours of St. Denis

Parchment (FSOS). Fols: iii + 281 + iii (numbered fols 282-84). A correct original foliation in red at the top of each leaf. Overall: 195mm x 135mm; writing area: 105mm x 58mm (the area with full borders 168mm x 110mm: inner and upper borders c. 18mm wide; outer 35mm; lower 43mm). In long lines, 20 lines to the page. No prickings; a single set of bounding lines and full ruling, all in red ink; all bounding lines extend to the edge of the page but the text lines nearly always sit fully within their borders. Written in French bastard secretary (*lettre bâtarde*); punctuation by point and punctus elevatus. The scribe has not been previously identified but appears to be Jean Dubreuil, who signed Lyons: Bibliothèque municipale, MS 5154 (Hours of Jacques of Langeac). On the scribe and his connexions with the illuminator of this volume, Maître François, see Thomas Kren, 'Seven Illuminated Books of Hours Written by the Parisian Scribe Jean Dubreuil, c. 1475-1485' in Bernard J. Muir ed., *Reading Texts and Images. Essays on Medieval and Renaissance Art and Patronage in honour of Margaret M. Manion* (Exeter, 2002), 157-200.

2° f: -doribus sanctorum (for 'splendoribus...')

CONTENTS

1. Fols 1-96^v: 'Deus in adiutorium meum intende Domine ad adiuuandum | [fol. 1^v] me festina Gloria patri --- patris et filij et spiritus sancti descendat et maneat super nos Amen'.

Hours for the 'superuigilia beati dyonisiij' (with twelve lessons); beginning at fol. 75^v, the variations 'In superuigilia quando non est dies dominica'.

2. Fols 96^v-226^v: '*In die Ad matutinas* Deus in adiutorium meum intende Domine ad adiuuandum me festina --- Pergo o miles cristi in nomine domini et roboratus preliare bella dei tui'.

Hours for the feast of St. Denis (twelve lessons in Matins). Followed by a sequence of variant readings, for, e.g., 'Prima die in qua non est dominica' (fol. 182), the second day at 197, third at 203, fourth at 208^v, fifth at 215, sixth at 221, each with only three lessons.

3. Fols 226^v-68^v: '*Si dominica infra octabas euenerit Ad matutinas* | [fol. 227] Deus in adiutorium meum intende Domine ad adiuuandum me festina --- hic corpora pio amore amplectimur eorum precibus adiuuemur Per dominum'.

Readings for the Sunday in the octave (twelve lessons).

4. Fols 268^v-81: '*Ad matutinas omnia vt in die excepto quod non dicentur antiphone nisi vna tantum in quolibet nocturno et ad laudes similiter non dicatur nisi vna Ad benedictus antiphona Orauit macarius* | [fol. 269] *Lectio prima* Quartus a clodoueo qui primus regum francorum ad cultum dei --- ac eorum memorias auro puro gemmisque preciosissimis exornauit Tu autem domine miserere nostri Deo gracias'.

The subsidiary readings for the octave.

COLLATION 1-20⁸ 21¹⁰ (one added after sixth as fol. 167) 22-34⁸ 35⁶. Catchwords centred, most of them cut away; no signatures.

TEXTUAL PRESENTATION AND DECORATION Headings in red. At the openings of the hours, painted initials, in two styles: six-line white lombards formed from vine-like shapes on red grounds with gold leaf and flowers at the centre with a 35 mm wide border bar; or a red, blue, or gold lombard on a red and blue ground. A substantial number of the

latter incorporate animal designs, e.g. a dragon forming a D (fol. 84), a grasshopper within the initial (fol. 83^v), or a similarly placed frog (fol. 152^v, 172). Within the text, alternate one- and two-line gold champes with red and blue; line fillers of the same. In later portions, some irregular division of the text by ochre-slashed capitals.

Extensively illuminated, within full borders, all but the first (entirely gold leaf) alternating geometrically divided areas of gold leaf with flowers, birds, and babwynes and areas of blue vine on the unpainted page:

(a) Fol. 1: the patron (in a surcoat with the same arms as in the border at the page foot) kneeling before St Denis as a bishop, with a three-line gold leaf champe on blue ground.

(b) An extensive sequence, sixty-six images in all, six-line scenes from the life, martyrdom, miracles, and translation of St Denis, each next to a text initial within a full border. These appear at the openings of the appropriate lessons narrating the saint's life. At the end of the volume (fols 276-80), four further examples, half the text area each.

See AT no. 777 (76) and plate xlvi (fols 1, 247^v); they identify the artist as Maître François, on whom see François Avril and Nicole Reynaud, *Les Manuscrits à Peintures en France, 1420-1520* (Paris, 1993), 45-52 (without mention of our manuscript).

BINDING Red leather over millboards, with gold vine and bud stamp around a central lozenge (goldstamp on the inner border of both boards), s. xix. Sewn on five thongs. A tab at the foot of the spine, now partly covered, 'Arch. W. Misc. . . .'. Pastedowns and endpapers modern marbled paper, a ChCh bookplate on the front pastedown. At the front, the marbled leaf and two modern paper flyleaves; at the rear, two modern paper flyleaves and the marbled leaf (282-84).

PROVENANCE Guy XV (François), count of Laval from 1484 until his death in January 1501, is identified as the original patron and owner by his arms in the border and in the miniature on fol. 1. In this image, he wears the collar of the order of Saint-Michel, to which he was admitted in 1484. On his political career, see Malcolm Walsby, *The Counts of Laval. Culture, Patronage and Religion in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century France* (Aldershot, 2007), esp. 32-40.

Thereafter, the descent of the book is uncertain until its donation to Christ Church: at fol. i^v, both 'From Abp. Wake's Collection' (s. xix) and the old ChCh shelfmark 'Arch. W. Misc. 26' (the number cancelled; cf. also the tab on the spine). That this manuscript was among those given by William Wake (1657-1737) is confirmed by its appearance in the donor's autograph schedule of his intended bequest (MS 352/8, fol. 1^v) under quarto volumes as 'Legend' S. Dionysij, Curiously illuminated'. Given Wake's time in France, from June 1682 to September 1685, the possibility cannot be excluded that he bought the manuscript (and, equally, perhaps, MSS 94 and 100) there. On him and his bequest, see the Introduction (The Age of Catalogues).

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