Hours of the Virgin. Dol. XV cent.

Hours of the Virgin for use at Dol, in the archdiocese of Rennes, Brittany.

Manuscript on vellum, written and illuminated in Brittany, in the 16th century (ca. 1468), for a man who is portrayed on fol. 109.

Decoration: There are 31 pictures of unusual technique and original treatment. The artist appears to have been of a purely provincial school, whose character was not affected by the usual "pattern" of French work of this period. The colouring is vivid and naturalistic. Silver is sometimes used with a wind-swept effect in skies and architectural details.

Text: The script is heavy and rough, written in a poor brown ink. Good gold initials and coloured line endings. The last 9 leaves contain the prayer in French, "Glorieuse virge roigne".

174 leaves (7 x 5 1/3 inches) 16 lines. 12°.

Binding: French, 16th century brown morocco tooled with the fleur-de-lis and ermine, instruments of the Passion and Annunciation. In blue morocco case by Duprez Leheuy, lettered, "Horae Beatae Mariae Virginis - etc."

History: An inscription on the 2d fly-leaf states that the book was used by Françoise d'Amboise, foundress of the community of Nazareth, ca. 1480. According to Anselme, Françoise d'Amboise, the 17th child of Pierre d'Amboise (fl. 1463-1473) was a nun at Fontevrault. An 18th century book-plate on the 4th fly-leaf has the motto: "Dieu écrit droit sur la ligne courbe". Richard Bennett collection.

Cf. MSS. 63 and 173 for Breton style. (For full description see Morgan Cat. MSS. 1906, no.77.)
Add. Cards (continued)

Use - Dol, Diocese of
  " - Rennes, Archdiocese of
Provenance - Ambicis, Françoise d', fl. 1480
  " - Nazareth, convent near Lièvre, Belgium
Provenance: - Mottces: "Dieu écrit droit sur la ligne
courbe" (18th cent.)

Bindings - Passion, Instruments of - XVI cent.
  " - Brittany-XVI cent.
  " - Annunciation - XVI cent.
  " - French-XVI cent.

(Icôno-
ography) Jesus Christ - Passion
  " - Entombment
  " - Notre-Dame, Birth - Patron presenting fruit

John Baptist, Birth of

MPH: 1932

Bindings - Chev. Duprey, 20th cent.

Mary the Virgin - Hymns & Prayers
  " - Glorieuse Vierge réjouie en qui passa la vertu divine

Hours of the Virgin. Dol. XV cent
  fol. 166
Kalendar in red and black. Hours of the Virgin. The third page of Lauds rewritten.


Short Passion according to John. Prayer on the Passion and Sacrament. After 1176 the text of an almost blank leaf has been removed, and the text pasted on to 1176. Memoriae. Two leaves added after 121. Office of the Dead. Glorieuse uierge roigne en qui par la  uertu diuine.

Ends f. 174b imperfect.

Et de cieux qui vous seruiront. Et de celuy qui se dict ci.

In the Kalendar:

29. Gildasii Abb.

8. Salomonis M.
13. Licii Ep. M.

Mar. 3. Ginglayi Abb.
28. Gundrian M.

May 19. Yvoni C. in red.

June 3. Liphardi C.
17. Hervel C.
21. Menenni Abb. in red.
25. Eligii Ep. in red.

July 1. Theobaldi, Lunari in red.

Sept. 1. Egidii Abb. in red.
Oct. 1. Sulini C.
16. Michaelis archang. in red.
21. XI millium virginum in red.
22. Marie Solome in red.

15. Maconi Ep. in red.


In the Litany:

Confessors: Julian, Maclou, Guillermus, Sanson, Yvo, Paternus, Robert, Albinus, Goluninus, Bernardinus.

These saints indicate the north-west of France, probably Brittany, as the source of the book.

The borders are of line and leaf work, with insertions in gold and colour.

The pictures are:
1. Matins of the Virgin. Divided by a column. Gabriel on l., with gold scroll inscribed in red Ave det. (minus). The Father, seen over the roof of the building, sends forth the Dove. The Virgin prays under a stone canopy on r.

2. Lauds. Visitatio, in the grass court of a stone building; Elizabeth on r.


6. (At end.) Christ seated, a transparent bandage over His eyes; a staff between His bound hands; two men on l., and two on r. mocking.

7. Tercia. The Scourging. Christ at column in c.; a spectator behind on l.; the room hung with blue and gold.


9. Tercia. Two shepherds; angel in sky with scroll inscribed, le vos de gran (?)

10. Tercia of the Holy Ghost. The Deposition. The Virgin, John, and another Mary sit on l.; three men take the body from the Cross.

11. Sext of the Virgin. In a stone building; the Virgin (crowned) with the Child seated on l.; a bed behind. Joseph stands by. Two kings are in the room; one enters by a porch on r.

12. Sext of the Cross. Three men nail Christ to the Cross; two rulers stand on r.


14. None of the Virgin. In a green building; she places the Child on a gold altar; Joseph stands at the end; Symeon, in cope, on r.; maid enters porch on l., with basket; another kneels by the Virgin.

15. None of the Cross. Christ crucified with the thieves. Group of John, the Virgin swooning, and three Maries, on l.; horsemen on r.

16. None of the Holy Ghost. Herod, in blue gown, between two councillors, throned, on r. Three dead children lie before him; on l. a mother; and three soldiers killing children.


18. Vespers of the Cross. Hexagonal pink stone building. The Entombment. Joseph and Nicodemus at the head and feet. Near the head the three Maries; then two men anointing the body; then the Virgin and John.
19. **Vespers of the Holy Ghost.** Christ on L, with long gold-headed cross-staff. He takes the hand of Adam, who with Eve and another is in a great red silver Hell-mouth on R; a small devil flees below.

20. **Compline.** In a hall. Christ on a green seat with two cushions on it. The Virgin kneels on L; an angel bears her train; two stand beyond, and another, in air, crowns her. Christ has crown and orb.

21. **Compline of the Cross.** Christ in cope, crown and orb stands in a semicircle of angels; one on L holds cross, lance and nails; one on L, column, reed and sponge. Polygonal canopy, pink, above.

22. **Compline of the Holy Ghost.** Christ throned on the rainbow showing His wounds; the Virgin on L showing her breast. John Evangelist on R; three nude figures on earth below; one on its back.

23. **Seven Psalms.** David crowned, in a depression, in green landscape; harp on R. The head of Christ in the sky.


25. **Obsequy.** Pietà. The Virgin with the body of Christ on her knees.

26. **O intermurate.** The Virgin crowned, and the Child in a wooden chair; Joseph on R with apple. Background of lozenges, gold with quatrefoils.

27. **Salve regina.** The Virgin, crowned, and the Child seated alone in a tile-paved room. Background of gold in squares with patterns.

28. Peter with key and book; Paul with sword, and book in room. Background of dark red with gold pattern in squares.

29. Birth of John Baptist. Anne in canopied bed on L. Seated nurse and maid standing hold the child between them; Zacharias sits on R writing S IOHAN in red on gold tablet; fireplace behind him.

30. **Office of the Dead.** In a pink-vaulted church; on L, coffin with blue and gold pall; three mourners on L; crossbearer, acolyte and two clerks on R.

31. **Glorieuse uierge.** The Virgin, crowned, and Child on a pink throne in a room. Background of gold with blue and red rosettes and dots.

These pictures are rough in execution but gay in colour, and the treatment is often interesting. The skies in many of the outdoor scenes are curiously done in silver washed over with blue. Silver is also copiously used in the architecture.
Morgan MS. No. M. 84

For printed text or notices of this MS. see:

New York, Research Center for Musical Iconography. Inventory of Musical Iconography 3: The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts, comps. Terence Ford and Andrew Green, New York, 1988,

no. 392, [fol. 88].