

Rob C. Wegman

NEW DATA CONCERNING THE ORIGINS AND  
CHRONOLOGY OF BRUSSELS, KONINKLIJKE  
BIBLIOTHEEK, MANUSCRIPT 5557\*

For over half a century, the manuscript Brussels, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, No. 5557, generally considered one of the major sources of sacred polyphony dating from the third quarter of the fifteenth century, has been the subject of musicological interest. A descriptive inventory of the manuscript, which will be referred to in this article as BrusBR 5557,<sup>1</sup> was published by Charles van den Borren in 1933,<sup>2</sup> followed – some eight years later – by a stylistic analysis of its contents in the same author's *Etudes sur le XVe siècle musical*.<sup>3</sup> Watermarks, manuscript structure and handwriting have thoroughly been investigated by Sylvia W. Kenney; her article, *Origins and Chronology of the Brussels Manuscript 5557 in the Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique*,<sup>4</sup> published in 1952, forms the basis of our present knowledge of the manuscript. In addition to these contributions, a number of facts have come to light through research carried out by other scholars active in the field of fifteenth-century music.<sup>5</sup> Our present knowledge of BrusBR 5557 may now be summarized as follows:

1. The manuscript, a choir-book in folio (37 x 27.6 cm) written on paper, was probably compiled over a period of years or even decades. It comprises twelve gatherings, the first four of which constitute a homogeneous unit, written together at one time. The rest of the manuscript was probably compiled gathering by gathering, for the remaining gatherings form separate and independently conceived entities (except for the ninth and tenth gatherings, which belong together). During the process of compilation (according to Kenney after the tenth gathering had been added<sup>6</sup>), a number of motets by Antoine Busnois were copied as 'fillers' on the blank pages at the beginning or the end of separate gatherings.

2. The first four gatherings must have been compiled before 1477, for folio 2v bears the coat of arms which was used by the Burgundian dukes between 1430 and 1477. In the manuscript as a whole, Sylvia Kenney distinguished four different kinds of paper, the watermarks of which she identified as Briquet Nos. 393, 1740, 5185 and 7828. Specimens of these Briquet watermarks have been found dating from 1459 to 1480.<sup>7</sup>

3. The manuscript must have been used at the court of Burgundy, as it was commissioned by or on behalf of either Philip the Good or Charles the Bold. On the basis of its musical handwriting, Sylvia Kenney assumed all gatherings except 6, 7 and 8 to have been copied in the same workshop. Her suggestion that this workshop may have been Simon Mellet's in Cambrai has been rejected.<sup>8</sup>

4. The four gatherings that form the original nucleus of BrusBR 5557 contain

Masses by English composers (Walter Frye, John Plummer and Richard Cockx or Cokkes<sup>9</sup>). The anonymous Mass which is found in the ninth gathering is English in style, too. Each of the remaining seven gatherings is devoted to a Mass or a Magnificat by a Continental composer (Guillaume Dufay, Johannes Ockeghem, Antoine Busnois, Johannes Regis, Cornelius Heyns and one anonymous composer). Eight motets were added as 'fillers' connecting separate gatherings; they may have been copied under the supervision of their composer, Antoine Busnois, who was active at the Burgundian chapel until 1482.<sup>10</sup>

Fifteenth-century manuscripts of polyphonic music which were planned and written at one time usually offer a retrospective view of the musical developments in the period preceding their compilation. In establishing a chronology of these developments, a bibliographical investigation of manuscripts belonging to this type generally is of no use. Manuscripts which were compiled over a period of years or decades, however, often tend to reflect in their structure the changing musical tastes and customs of that period. They often show how the musical centers in which they originated tried to keep up with the latest musical trends by eagerly copying whatever they could get from elsewhere. BrusBR 5557 clearly belongs to the latter category: its several layers reflect the musical developments at one of the most progressive musical centers in fifteenth-century Europe, the Burgundian court. Hence, the establishing of the origins and chronology of BrusBR 5557 may be essential for a better understanding of the course of music history in the second half of the fifteenth century. In this article, a renewed attempt towards that goal will be undertaken through an investigation of the illuminations and watermarks of the manuscript. It will be seen that BrusBR 5557 owes its existence to one of the most splendid sorts of fifteenth-century occasions that could have given rise to the compilation of a new manuscript, a princely wedding.

#### *The Illuminations in the Original Nucleus*

Each of the five English Masses on fols. 2v-48r has the upper-voice initial on its first page illuminated by a small pen-and-brush drawing. These illuminations, in spite of their seemingly fanciful subject-matter (including e.g. an ostrich, a Turk and a unicorn), are by no means to be interpreted as merely playful *drôleries* such as occur abundantly in other manuscripts of this period. Unlike the latter, the Brussels illuminations appear to have specific meanings, and to refer intentionally to the political climate in which the manuscript originated.

A clear example of this is furnished by the first initial, heading, on folio 2v, Walter Frye's *Missa Summe trinitati* (Plate 1). In this illumination, the letter E (from *Et in terra*) contains in the lower half the coat of arms of Philip the Good and Charles the Bold as it was used between 1430 and 1477, and in the upper half their mutual emblem, the *fusil* (flint-and-steel). In addition to this, a male figure dressed in a

*houppelande* is depicted at the left side of the initial, and a naked figure, playing the shawm, at the top. From the presence of the coat of arms, Sylvia Kenney has already concluded that the original nucleus of the manuscript was written for the Burgundian court between 1430 and 1477.<sup>11</sup> This interval of time, however, may be narrowed down considerably, since it appears that the arms are depicted in a variant version pointing to particular political circumstances. For the sake of clarity, a heraldic description of the arms of Philip the Good and Charles the Bold will be given here, with the Brussels variants in parentheses:

Quartered per cross;

quarter I and IV *azure*, *semée* of golden *fleurs-de-lis* (absent), a *bordure* compony silver (white) and *gules*;

quarter II parted per pale:

- a. bendy of six pieces gold (light brown) and *azure*, a *bordure* *gules*,
- b. *sable*, a golden (light green) lion rampant;

quarter III parted per pale:

- a. see II.a.,
- b. silver (white), a *gules* lion rampant;

inescutcheon gold (white), a *sable* lion rampant.

(In this description, the quarters I and IV represent the duchy of Burgundy, II.a. and III.a. the county of Burgundy, II.b. Brabant, III.b. Limburg, and the inescutcheon Flanders.)

The variant colours for silver and gold can be easily explained: a paper manuscript intended for use like BrusBR 5557 was clearly not appropriate for expensive gold- or silver-leaf, and hence substitutes for these colours had to be found. Most significant, however, is the absence of *fleurs-de-lis* in the two quarters that represent the duchy of Burgundy in France, *viz.* I and IV. For a full understanding of the political meaning this absence must have had, it is important to know that in the fifteenth century, every duke or count dependent on the king of France had *fleurs-de-lis* in his coat of arms, these being traditionally the symbol of the French crown.<sup>12</sup> Their absence in the arms of one of them can be interpreted only as a refusal to acknowledge dependence on the French king. Of the two Burgundian dukes in question, this can have been only Charles the Bold, since he incessantly tried to escape from French authority, whereas Philip the Good had always kept considering himself an obedient vassal to the French king.

In October 1468, Charles the Bold extorted an extremely concessive treaty from the French King Louis XI, whom he had been able to capture at Péronne. In this so-called Treaty of Péronne, it was agreed that if Louis infringed any of its clauses (in view of their unilateral nature a most likely thing to happen), he would lose all rights to Burgundian territories dependent on the French crown. After this event, Charles, who as a duke was actually dependent on Louis XI, considered himself politically an

equal of his liege. In the summer of 1469, for example, he wrote in a letter to Duke Galeazzo Maria Sforza of Milan that peace between France and Burgundy was guaranteed only if Louis would remain content with his “extensive kingdom, just as he (Charles) is content with his state and principality”.<sup>13</sup> Four years later, in November 1473, Charles tried to arrange to have himself crowned king of Burgundy by the German Emperor Frederick III. The coronation itself was cancelled shortly before it was to take place, but Charles kept speaking, even two months later, of a “kingdom of Burgundy, usurped for a long time by the French and converted into a duchy”.<sup>14</sup> In view of this evidence it is clear that if omission of *fleurs-de-lis* signified independence from the French king, Charles the Bold most likely may have felt entitled to omit them. More than speculative evidence for this assumption is furnished by the *Amtliche Berner Chronik*, a chronicle of Berne written, from 1474 on, by Diebold Schilling, clerk of the court and town councillor of Berne. In this chronicle, the two illustrations depicting the battles of Héricourt and Murten (November 1474 and June 1476, respectively) clearly show an absence of *fleurs-de-lis* in the arms of Charles the Bold.<sup>15</sup> In sum, it seems reasonable to assume on the basis of the first illumination that the original nucleus of BrusBR 5557 was written during the reign of Charles the Bold, i.e. between 1467 and 1477.

The second illuminated initial (Plate 2) contains like the first *fusil*, the emblem of Philip the Good and Charles the Bold, now in the upper half of the letter K (from *Kyrie omnipotens pater*), and combined with a white flower in the lower half. The face of a woman wearing a veiled *hennin* set with pearls and gems is depicted in profile at the left side, and a dog, presumably a badger, is depicted at the top. Judging from its five petals, the white flower can be identified as a rose, this particular number of petals being, in heraldry, the rose’s distinguishing mark.<sup>16</sup> In an immediate context of exclusively English music, this rose quite obviously refers to the English Wars of the Roses (1455-85), in which the houses of York and Lancaster, having as their respective family emblems a white and a red rose, contested for the English throne. Because Charles the Bold was descended from the house of Lancaster through his mother, Isabella of Portugal, he like his father had always supported the Lancastrians against Edward IV of York, king of England (1461-83), when he was Count of Charolais. However, in order to provide himself with allies against Louis XI, he decided in 1465 to change his policy and to make friends with the English king. To this end, a treaty of friendship with Edward was signed in October 1466; around the same time, marriage negotiations were conducted with Margaret, sister of the English king. From this it can be concluded that the second illumination, in which the emblems of Burgundy and York are combined, reflects political relations as they were after the official treaty of friendship of October 1466. This confirms our previously stated assumption that the original nucleus of BrusBR 5557 was written between 1467 and 1477.

On 3 July 1468, the marriage negotiations eventually resulted in the wedding of Charles the Bold and Margaret of York at Damme, near Bruges. The badger at the

top of the second illumination may be considered a reference to this occasion, since in the fifteenth century the dog was an accepted symbol of marital faith. The woman at the left side, who apparently could afford to wear a *hennin* richly set with pearls and gems, obviously belonged to the highest classes of the fifteenth-century Burgundian society and may well have represented Margaret of York herself. The exact meaning of the second illumination, then, would read as follows: the houses of Burgundy and York (*fusil* and white rose) are joined through Margaret (woman at the left side), while the badger, representing marital faith, is guarding the marriage bond.

A bird, holding a crooked object in its bill, and a Turk, dressed in a long garment and wearing a turban, make up the subject matter of the third illumination, an initial D (from *Deus creator omnium*) (Plate 3). Judging from heraldic as well as anatomic evidence, the bird must represent an ostrich, the crooked object then being a horse-shoe. According to an old popular belief the ostrich was able to digest iron. Therefore it was usually depicted with a horse-shoe in its bill in heraldry.<sup>17</sup> From the anatomical point of view, the feet in the Brussels illumination are in accordance with those of the ostrich, although on the other hand it must be admitted that the characteristic ostrich-feathers are absent. As for the Turk, it is well-known that both Philip the Good and Charles the Bold fostered plans to check the progress of the continually advancing Ottoman Turks, especially after Constantinople had been conquered, in 1453. Although their foreign policy was already to a considerable extent influenced by this aim, the ultimate design of the Burgundian dukes was to organize another Crusade and to expel, at last, the infidels from the Holy Places in the east. As Johan Huizinga has pointed out,<sup>18</sup> the design of a new Crusade was closely connected with the ideal of chivalry that flowered during the later Middle Ages. Extremely fashionable was the chivalrous vow, usually undertaken at a banquet and sworn by a bird that was to be eaten after.<sup>19</sup> In the Middle Ages, vows of this kind were sworn by the heron, the peacock, the swan, and other birds, the most famous example being, of course, the Banquet of the Oath of the Pheasant, given by Philip the Good at Lille in 1454 and meant to initiate a new Crusade against the Turks. No mention can be found of an 'oath of the ostrich', which, in view of the third illumination, may be presumed to have been made. Nevertheless, it is not unlikely that such an oath has actually been undertaken, since the ostrich was of old considered a paragon of velocity and stamina,<sup>20</sup> and, by the way, is not too unsavoury either.

In the fourth illumination (Plate 4), a hawking young lady, dressed in a Burgundian *rôbe* and wearing a type of head-gear known as *bourrelet*, is enframed by the capital letter E (from *Et in terra*), while a unicorn darts out of the left side of this letter, turning its head towards the lady. A moth-like insect is flying above the scene. The theme of the lady and the unicorn was favourite among medieval artists, especially among book-illuminators. According to an ancient legend the unicorn was untamable and could be captured only by a beautiful young virgin, in whose

womb it sought refuge. In Christianity, the unicorn became a symbol of chastity and even of Christ himself. Thus, the theme appears in countless medieval works of art, the most famous example being perhaps *La dame à la licorne*, a series of beautiful tapestries manufactured around 1500 by an unknown Touraine artist, and now preserved in the *Musée de Cluny* in Paris.<sup>21</sup> It has often been assumed that these tapestries were intended as a wedding present. Clearly, the aspect of chastity renders the theme of the lady and the unicorn most suitable for representations at wedding occasions. Judging from her clothes and from her practising falconry, the lady depicted in the fourth illumination belongs to either court or nobility circles, and could therefore well be meant to represent the young English princess. The illumination, then, would attribute to Margaret of York the virtue of chastity in an allegorical way.<sup>22</sup>

I am not able to propose a convincing interpretation of the last illumination in the original nucleus of BrusBR 5557, an initial D (from *Deus creator omnium*; Plate 5). In this illumination, a bearded, half naked man, holding a scimitar in his right hand, is depicted at the left side of the initial. Possibly he represents a hermit or a saint, the scimitar being, in the latter case, one of his attributes. Inside the initial, a man, holding a cup in his left hand, is sitting on a three-legged stool, lifting his right hand, and looking at someone or something behind him. This man is dressed in a *houppelande*; he wears a plain cap and shoes *à la poulaine*. On the whole, his appearance is quite ordinary, so he may represent no person in particular. Possibly the juxtaposition of this relatively well-dressed, ordinary fifteenth-century man and a half-naked solitary has a moralizing purport, stressing the mutability of Man's material state.

In the illuminations of BrusBR 5557, we have found references to Charles the Bold's foreign policy towards France, England and the sultanate of the Turks. In itself, this is a most exceptional fact, since illuminations in fifteenth-century manuscripts of polyphonic music usually avoid references to political topics: in most cases one either finds innocent *drôleries*, which at their most daring may contain sexual allusions, or illuminations of a strictly religious character. The unusual care, then, which was taken here to record current political circumstances indicates that the manuscript was probably written for an occasion of special political significance. This particular occasion I assume to have been Charles the Bold's wedding to Margaret of York in 1468. Even without the clear hint to it in the second illumination, this marriage would have been the most obvious occasion, for no other political event during Charles the Bold's reign could have required on equally strong grounds the performance of five polyphonic Masses of English composers. Moreover, there is evidence to suggest that at least one of these Masses has been specially composed for the marriage. This Mass, a work of Walter Frye, is based on an unidentified cantus firmus bearing the incipit *flos regalis*, a significant title in view of the political situation in Frye's native country. Sylvia Kenney assumed this cantus

firmus to be the antiphon *Flos regalis Ethelreda* from the feast of St. Ethelreda, particularly in view of the circumstance that a 'Walter cantor' is mentioned in 1443-4 and 1452-3 in the records of Ely Cathedral, of which Ethelreda is patron saint.<sup>23</sup> She did not mention, however, that there exists another chant that could have served as cantus firmus of this Mass, namely the responsory *Flos regalis sanguinis* from the feast of St. Udalricus.<sup>24</sup> The latter chant is important to our discussion as the date of Charles the Bold's marriage to Margaret of York, 3 July, coincided with the date at which this responsory was annually sung: the feast of St. Udalricus was celebrated on 4 July, but as the responsory belonged to its vigil, it was sung the evening before. Of course, nothing has been proved as long as the cantus firmus of Frye's Mass has not been definitely identified, but this coincidence, together with the evidence gathered above, strongly suggests that Walter Frye composed his Mass on occasion of the marriage of Charles the Bold and Margaret of York, choosing the responsory *Flos regalis sanguinis* as a cantus firmus for its apt alluding to both the date and the political significance of this marriage.<sup>25</sup>

However this may be, the crucial point of our discussion is that the original nucleus of BrusBR 5557 was written for the marriage and that it can be dated in or shortly before 1468. The marriage to an English princess being the occasion, we may now understand why the Burgundian court commissioned a manuscript containing exclusively English music: it appears that the original nucleus of BrusBR 5557 provides a text-book example of what Reinhard Strohm called fifteenth-century music distribution through "political and dynastic alliances between European states".<sup>26</sup>

#### *Paper and Watermarks*

Sylvia Kenney's investigation of the watermarks of BrusBR 5557, in the early fifties, was carried out according to the principles established by the famous filigranologist Charles-Moïse Briquet. These principles imply that a given sheet of paper can be dated  $X \pm 15$  years if its watermark resembles another watermark, dated X.<sup>27</sup> Obviously, no precise dating of the various layers of BrusBR 5557 could be arrived at through watermark research at that time. During the past twenty-five years, however, methods of paper and watermark research have made extraordinary progress, particularly as a result of the efforts of scholars such as Alan Stevenson<sup>28</sup> and Theo Gerardy.<sup>29</sup> As a result, it is possible now to date a given sheet of paper far more accurately, in some cases even with a margin of only four years. Present-day methods of paper and watermark research are aimed at the identification of sheets of paper that have been manufactured with the same paper-mould, or rather, with the same pair of moulds, for paper-mills always used two closely related moulds at the same time. Paper coming from the same mould generally was used within a period of four years, for moulds were almost always worn-out within two years of paper-manufacture, and the paper made with them was rarely stored longer than two years before use.<sup>30</sup> In order to prove that two sheets of paper come from the same mould,

the comparison of watermarks alone is not sufficient. Watermarks were often deformed, deteriorated or shifted by the process of paper manufacture; besides, different moulds sometimes had identical watermarks. Therefore, other marks left by the mould are to be taken into account as well. According to Gerardy, any scientific description of paper should include the following so-called mould parameters:<sup>31</sup>

1. the size of the sheet in its original (untrimmed) state;
2. the distance between the watermark and the upper and lower edges of the (untrimmed) sheet;
3. the number of chain lines;
4. the distances between the chain lines; if all or most of these distances are equal, the chain number (N, i.e. *Normalfeld*);
5. the position of the watermark, indicated by the numbers of the chain lines enclosing the watermark (counted from the left);
6. the laid number, i.e. the number of laid lines per 100 mm.;
7. the position of the mould side of the sheet; this can be either A (*abgewandt*) or Z (*zugewandt*);
8. if present, other characteristic marks left by the mould.

One is allowed to conclude that two sheets of paper with the same watermark are identical if their mould parameters are in accordance. This being the case, one of two identical sheets may be dated  $X \pm 4$  years if the other is dated X. Greater precision can of course be achieved if several differently dated specimens of a particular paper-type have been found.

In examining the paper of BrusBR 5557, a special difficulty presents itself in the fact that the manuscript has been trimmed, probably when it was bound.<sup>32</sup> Exactly how much paper has been cut from the manuscript cannot be established, as we have found no untrimmed specimens of paper-types identical to one of the Brussels paper-types, but it is possible to make an estimation on the basis of the following data:

1. Briquet has found that the commonest sizes of French fifteenth-century paper measured about 60 x 41.5 cm (large size) and 43 x 30.5 cm (small size).<sup>33</sup>
2. The bifolios of BrusBR 5557 measure 56 (top) to 55 cm (bottom) x 37.3 (middle) to 37.5 cm (left and right edges).
3. In the manuscript, the distance between the watermark on a sheet in normal position and the upper edge is about 1.5 cm larger than the distance between the same watermark and the lower edge on a sheet turned upside down. Hence, from the lower edge some 1.5 cm more must have been cut than from the upper edge.
4. The distance between the watermark on a sheet with *zugewandt* mould side and the fold in the middle is the same as the distance between the same watermark on a sheet with *abgewandt* mould side and the fold in the middle. Hence, when the manuscript was made, the sheets were folded exactly in the middle. As a consequence, the left and right edges must have been trimmed to the same extent.



Assuming that the Brussels paper originally measured about 60 x 41.5 cm, we may estimate that about 1.5 cm was cut from the upper edge and about 3 cm from the lower edge; from both the left and right edges a strip of about 2.5 cm must have been cut. As a consequence of the trimming of BrusBR 5557, the examination of the first two mould parameters mentioned above is rendered pointless, for these can be evidential only if the sheets are untrimmed. For this reason, these mould parameters have been left out of consideration here.

Turning now towards the data yielded by our examination of the paper of BrusBR 5557 (see Appendix), we find that six different kinds of paper have been used in the manuscript (labelled a to f). Of these, three kinds of paper (*viz.* a, b and c) have a similar watermark, consisting of the French royal coat of arms (three *fleurs-de-lis*) and a pendant initial t. Large-size kinds of paper bearing this type of watermark are found to have been used in northern France, the Low Countries and north-west Germany during the period 1459-1483.<sup>34</sup> As the pendant t confirms, they were manufactured in Troyes, presumably in the paper-mill of Jean le Bé.<sup>35</sup> The three types found in BrusBR 5557 together occupy nine of the twelve gatherings of the manuscript. Whereas the use of both a and b is confined to one layer each (gatherings 1-4 and 5, respectively), c is found divided over three separate layers (gatherings 6, 9-10 and 11). The latter fact is important to our discussion, for it enables us to conclude that these three layers must have been written all within the same period of four years. Paper identical to one of the paper-types a, b or c has not been found. However, there is a pair of watermarks, found in Mechlin (1464-5) and published by Gerhard Piccard in his watermark collection *Wasserzeichen Lilie*,<sup>36</sup> that appears to be exactly the same as that of the Brussels kind of paper b. Unfortunately, Piccard has supplied no source references in his collection, so the mould parameters of this Mechlin paper cannot be examined.<sup>37</sup>

Piccard's collection of lily watermarks cited above contains eighteen large-size kinds of paper that have the same type of watermark as a, b and c. As we are dealing here with a clearly defined group of paper-types made by the same paper manufacturer within a period of about twenty-five years, a comparative study of even a single mould parameter could yield important information on general chronological developments within this group. Fortunately, Piccard mentions the distances between the chain-lines of every paper-type contained in his collection, and on the basis of this mould parameter we are able to distinguish three chronological sub-groups (Figure 1).

The Brussels paper-types a, whose chain-lines are 41.0 to 42.4 mm apart, and b, whose chain-lines are 41.8 to 42.6 mm apart, belong to the first of these chronological sub-groups, and paper-type c, whose chain-lines are 38.8 to 40.0 mm apart, to the second.

Each of the three kinds of paper that make up the remainder of BrusBR 5557, *viz.* d, e and f, is used in only one gathering of the manuscript (gatherings 7, 8 and 12, respectively). Paper-type d bears a crescent watermark which belongs to a type that

distances between chain-lines:	41-43 mm	37-41 mm	29-34 mm
Piccard-numbers in collection	1589-90	1593-4	1605-7
<i>Wasserzeichen Lilie</i> (1983):	1591-2	1596-7	1608-10
	1595	1567 and 1598	1611-2
		1599-1600	1613-4
		1601-2	1615
		1603	1616-7
		1604	1619
		(1618)	1620-1
period:	1462-6	1466-76 (1480)	1477-83

Figure 1: Survey of the distances between the chain-lines of nineteen large-size paper-types related to the paper-types a, b and c in BrusBR 5557.

can be traced back into the fourteenth century.<sup>38</sup> Because of the exceptional simplicity of this type of watermark, the search for paper identical to paper type d is not very likely to lead to quick results, as this search still depends on the relative similarity between a given watermark and a watermark published in a collection. Even close resemblances may prove deceptive: Kenney, for example, identified watermark d as Briquet No. 5185 (earliest citation: 1468), but the watermark does in effect no more resemble this Briquet watermark than it does e.g. Briquet No. 5173 (earliest citation: 1387).<sup>39</sup>

Paper-type e bears an anchor watermark; like a, b and c it must have been manufactured in Troyes.<sup>40</sup> Specimens of paper bearing the same type of watermark as e are found in northern-French sources dating from the period 1463-1490.<sup>41</sup> One of these sources, a manuscript containing records of daily sessions held by the Paris municipality from 21 May 1476 to 4 May 1480,<sup>42</sup> appears to have been made up entirely from paper identical to the Brussels paper e. The four-year span during which paper-type e must have been used, and in which, consequently, gathering 8 must have been written, can easily be determined, for the Paris manuscript covers almost exactly four years. Thus, gathering 8 can be dated 1476-1480.

The hunting horn watermark of paper-type f, finally, closely resembles the watermarks of four kinds of paper used in Ghent, Mechlin and Louvain between 1465 and 1475.<sup>43</sup> No identical paper has as yet been found. The mould parameters of this paper-type, however, suggest that it was manufactured around the same time as paper-type a.

The mould parameters, and reproductions of the watermarks of the six paper-types of BrusBR 5557 are given in the Appendix below. In a so-called Stevenson-diagram is indicated how every bifolio is bound into the manuscript (i.e. upright or upside down, *zugewandt* or *abgewandt*).

## Provenance

The strongest clue to the place where BrusBR 5557 was probably copied is, of course, its connection with the marriage of Charles the Bold and Margaret of York at Damme, near Bruges, in 1468. As stated above, the five English Masses of the original nucleus may be assumed to have been performed during the wedding festivities, and the manufacture of the manuscript may have been just one of the many wedding preparations that were organized in Bruges in the months preceding the occasion. The connection with the marriage may explain the relationship between BrusBR 5557 and Bruges which was noted by Reinhard Strohm in his study *Music in Late Medieval Bruges*.<sup>44</sup> Close similarities exist, particularly, between the repertory of BrusBR 5557 and that of LucAS 238, which must have been copied in Bruges around 1467-1470.<sup>45</sup> According to Strohm: "It is as if the compilers of the two manuscripts had tried to avoid duplication, while drawing on closely related sources. This presupposes some kind of contact, however, between the compilers or their advisors."<sup>46</sup> If BrusBR 5557 should indeed have been copied in a Bruges workshop for use in this town, the manuscript must have remained there for at least about fifteen years after 1468, for all of its gatherings except 7 and 8 are written by hands coming from the same workshop.<sup>47</sup> One of these hands, moreover, entered a Mass by the Bruges composer Cornelius Heyns.

Numerous traces in BrusBR 5557 indicate that the manuscript must have been used very intensively. In the original nucleus, for example, small paper labels have been pasted to the vertical edges of folios that contain the beginning of a new Mass, probably in order to find these folios quickly during rehearsals.<sup>48</sup> Other traces in the manuscript concern details of musical performance. In the contratenor voice-part of the Benedictus-Osanna of John Plummer's Mass, on fol. 18r, the word 'osanna' has been scratched in with a needle between 'osan' and 'na'.<sup>49</sup> On fol. 129v, which contains the superius and tenor of the *Cuius regni* of Regis' *Missa Ecce ancilla Domini-Ne timeas*, a singer of the tenor voice part has connected the syllables of 'perficientur in te' (from the Marian antiphon *Ecce ancilla Domini* which is cited in this voice part) with thin ink dashes with the notes on which he intended them to sing. In the Credo and Sanctus of Cornelius Heyns' *Missa Pour quelque paine*, resolutions of the canon notation of the tenor have been written out by a later fifteenth-century hand.<sup>50</sup> If as a result of intensive use of the manuscript a folio was torn, a piece of paper was cut and pasted carefully upon the tear.<sup>51</sup> Traces such as these confirm our impression that BrusBR 5557 was a manuscript intended for use, not for display. This means that fifteenth-century users of the manuscript did not value it for its physical qualities but for its usefulness, which depended on the relative up-to-date quality of the compositions contained in it. By 1500, when the repertory of BrusBR 5557 was clearly outdated, it must have been one of those many 'worthless' old choirbooks that were stored in trunks and were mentioned only indirectly and slightly in inventories such as the one made at Bruges in 1504.<sup>52</sup> "Item, plusieurs et divers livres

de chant servant à la chapelle, de petite valeur; ensemble plusieurs quayers de diverses choses, tous rassamblez et mis ensemble en ung coffre à part.” It may have been by virtue only of its connection with Charles the Bold’s wedding, an occasion which kept stirring the imagination of many minds for a long time, that BrusBR 5557 escaped destruction or did not end its existence as binding material in the covers of sixteenth- or seventeenth-century folios: after all, not even the beautifully illuminated parchment manuscript LucAS 238, the manuscript most closely related to BrusBR 5557, was secure from the hands of seventeenth-century bookbinders.

### *Summary and Conclusions*

BrusBR 5557 is a compilation of sub-manuscripts and loose gatherings that may have existed independently before they were finally bound in one volume. The most important sub-manuscript of BrusBR 5557 is the so-called original nucleus (fols. 2r-49v), which was written in or shortly before 1468 on occasion of Charles the Bold’s marriage to Margaret of York at Damme, near Bruges. Both this occasion, and the ties with Bruges composers (Busnois, Heyns) and a Bruges manuscript (LucAS 238) suggest that this part of the manuscript, as well as the layers written in similar hands on related paper-types (gatherings 5, 6, 9-10, 11 and 12), were copied for the Burgundian court at Bruges.

The only layer of BrusBR 5557 which probably existed prior to the original nucleus is the fifth gathering, containing Dufay’s *Missa Ecce ancilla Domini*. If the paper of this gathering would turn out to be identical with the Mechlin paper-type bearing the same pair of watermarks, this layer could be dated 1461-8 (i.e. 1464-5 ± 4 years); anyhow, the distances between its chain-lines suggest a probable date of 1462-6.

Of the remaining gatherings, only gathering 8, containing Ockeghem’s *Missa Quinti toni*, can be dated with a reasonable degree of precision: 1476-80. Paper-types related to the paper of this gathering are found only in northern-French sources; hence, this layer may have been copied in that region, possibly in Paris.

The historical importance of BrusBR 5557 is twofold. First, the manuscript provides us with central or near-central versions of most of the compositions contained in it. Second, it gives us an insight into the musical life at the Burgundian court in Bruges. By following, almost step by step, the development of the sacred musical language during the sixties and seventies of the fifteenth century, BrusBR 5557 particularly attests to the quickly changing styles and tastes at the court during this period. Significantly, no more additions were made to the manuscript after about 1480 or 1485: by then, the music history of the fifteenth century had entered into a new phase, which was to be dominated by younger composers as Obrecht, Isaac, Martini and Josquin. That the origins of their style, however, are found in the motets of the Bruges composer Antoine Busnois in BrusBR 5557,<sup>53</sup> means that the manuscript was compiled at a crucial time and place in the history of Renaissance music.



Plate 1: BrusBR 5557, fol. 2v

The image shows a page from a medieval manuscript, likely a book of hours or a liturgical book. The page is dominated by a large, ornate initial letter 'D' in the center. The 'D' is filled with intricate patterns, including a face with a crown and a large, stylized floral motif. The initial is surrounded by decorative flourishes and a small figure in the upper right corner. To the right of the initial, there are several staves of musical notation. The first staff shows a single note on a four-line staff. The second staff shows a single note on a four-line staff. The third staff shows a single note on a four-line staff. The fourth staff shows a single note on a four-line staff. Below the musical notation, there is a line of Latin text in a Gothic script: "sta de se amu na pli".

Plate 2: BrusBR 5557, fol. 10v

The image shows a page from a medieval manuscript. The central feature is a large, decorative initial letter 'S' rendered in a complex, interlaced black and white pattern. Inside the 'S', a swan is depicted in profile, facing left. To the left of the swan, a man with a beard and a turban-like headpiece is shown, pointing his right hand towards the swan. The entire scene is set against a background of stylized, swirling patterns. To the right of the initial, there are several staves of musical notation. The first staff shows a clef and a few notes. Below it, the word 'Eu' is written in a Gothic script. Further down, another staff shows a clef and notes, with the word 'pie' written below it. Below the initial and the first musical staff, there are two more staves of musical notation. The first of these staves has the Latin text 'sanctes, conuulantes regu' written below it. The second of these staves has the Latin text 'riu au est Temper sine' written below it. The musical notation consists of square notes on a four-line staff.

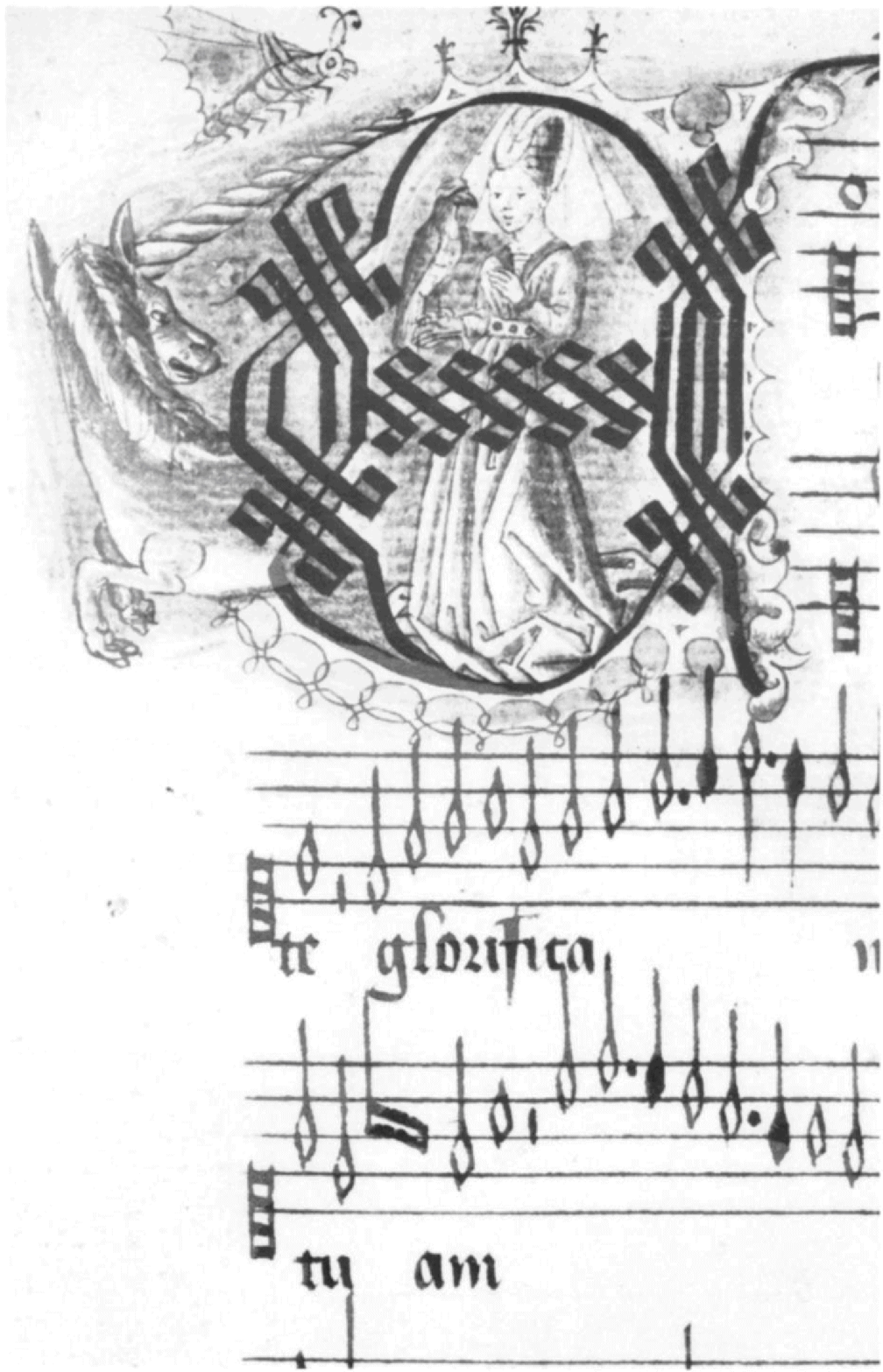


Plate 4: BrusBR 5557, fol. 30v





Plate 5: BrusBR 5557, fol. 38v

- \* I am most indebted to my teacher, Prof. C. J. Maas, for encouragement, advice and correction during the preparation of this article. I also would like to thank Drs. J. van der Zanden for reading the first draft and offering many valuable suggestions, and Dr. H. Landy for correcting the English version of this article.
1. This siglum is employed in *Census-Catalogue of Manuscript Sources of Polyphonic Music 1400-1550*, Renaissance Manuscript Studies, vol. 1 (Neuhausen-Stuttgart 1979).
  2. C. van den Borren, *Inventaire des manuscrits de musique polyphonique qui se trouvent en Belgique*, in AcM 5 (1933), pp. 66-9.
  3. C. van den Borren, *Etudes sur le XVe siècle musical* (Antwerp 1941), pp. 144-251.
  4. S. Kenney, *Origins and Chronology of the Brussels Manuscript 5557 in the Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique*, in RBM 6 (1952), pp. 75-100. This article was rewritten later as Chapter 3, *The Masses of Frye : The Brussels Manuscript 5557* (pp. 35-61) of S. Kenney, *Walter Frye and the Contenance angloise* (New Haven, London 1964). References will be to the second publication only, as it contains a few data not present in the first.
  5. Notably: A. Planchart, *Guillaume Dufay's Masses : Notes and Revisions*, in MQ 58 (1972), p. 22; M. Staehelin, *Möglichkeiten und praktische Anwendung der Verfasserbestimmung an anonym überlieferten Kompositionen der Josquin-Zeit*, in TVNM 23 (1973), p. 81; G. Curtis, *Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale MS. 5557, and the Texting of Dufay's "Ecce ancilla Domini" and "Ave regina caelorum" Masses*, in AcM 51 (1979), pp. 73-86. I have not been able to consult G. Curtis, *The English Masses of Brussels BR ms. 5557* (Ph.D. diss., University of Manchester, 1979), as the John Rylands University Library of Manchester is not willing to sell or loan copies of this thesis.
  6. Kenney, *op. cit.*, p. 50.
  7. Kenney, *op. cit.*, p. 39; C.-M. Briquet, *Les filigranes : Dictionnaire historique des marques du papier* (Geneva 1907).
  8. Kenney, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-7; her assumption is refuted in: C. Wright, *Dufay at Cambrai : Discoveries and Revisions*, in JAMS 28 (1975), p. 198, and Curtis, *op. cit.*, p. 85.
  9. F. Ll. Harrison, *Music in Medieval Britain* (London 1958), p. 456.
  10. W. Stephan, *Die burgundisch-niederländische Motette zur Zeit Ockeghems* (Kassel 1937), p. 89. See also E. Sparks, *The Motets of Antoine Busnois*, in JAMS 6 (1953), p. 217.
  11. Kenney, *op. cit.*, p. 36.
  12. C. Pama, *Rietstap's Handboek der Wapenkunde* (Leyden 1961), p. 269.
  13. R. Vaughan, *Charles the Bold : The Last Valois Duke of Burgundy* (London 1973), p. 58.
  14. *Ibid.*, pp. 151-2.
  15. D. Schilling, *Amtliche Berner Chronik*, Tome III (Berne, Burgerbibliothek). Reproductions in: K. Schelle, *Karl der Kühne* (Essen n.d.) on the pages facing p. 145 and p. 193. Since Schilling himself joined in the battles of Héricourt and Murten, he may be considered to be a reliable eye-witness.
  16. J. B. Rietstap, *Handboek der wapenkunde* (Leyden 1943), p. 207.
  17. *Ibid.*, p. 184.
  18. J. Huizinga, *Herfsttij der Middeleeuwen* (Groningen 1919), pp. 90-2.
  19. *Ibid.*, pp. 86-8.
  20. H. Kits Nieuwenkamp, *Encyclopedie van de heraldiek* (Amsterdam, Brussels 1961), p. 216.
  21. The most thorough study of the unicorn in medieval art and literature is J. W. Einhorn's

*Spiritualis unicornis – Das Einhorn als Bedeutungsträger in Literatur und Kunst des Mittelalters* (Munich 1976).

22. One might object that in times when the virginal state of an intended bride was only taken for granted, any stressing of it was unnecessary and might even cause suspicion. It appears nevertheless that, shortly before her marriage, the virtuousness of Margaret of York was not wholly undisputed. In fact, rumours went around that she had already given birth to a son (Vaughan, *op. cit.*, p. 48). Rumours such as these may have induced the anonymous illuminator of BrusBR 5557 to defend the honour of the English princess with his pen and brush.
23. G. M. Dreves, *Analecta hymnica* (Leipzig 1886-1922) XXVIII, p. 293; see Kenney, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-21.
24. Dreves, *op. cit.*, p. 225.
25. The other four Masses of the original nucleus contain, as far as can be judged at present, no direct references to the marriage. But it is perhaps significant, in view of Charles the Bold's royalty pretences discussed above, that the Trinity Sunday responsory *Summe trinitati*, on which one of Frye's other Masses is based, was used often for the reception of a king and queen (Harrison, *op. cit.*, p. 259). Nor may it pass unnoticed that two English compositions that are based like Frye's *Missa Nobilis et pulchra* on chants from the feast of St. Catharina of Alexandria, *viz.* Byttering's motet *En Katharinae solemnia* and the *Missa Sponsus amat sponsam* by Robert Fayrfax, have been connected with royal marriages by Manfred Bukofzer and Hugh Benham, respectively (see: M. Bukofzer, *English Church Music in the Fifteenth Century*, in NOHM III, p. 170; H. Benham, *Latin Church Music in England 1460-1575* (London 1977), p. 229). Perhaps the mystical marriage of St. Catharina to the infant Jesus, to which many chants of this feast refer, made their use as a *cantus firmus* appropriate in compositions on occasion of weddings.
26. R. Strohm, *European Politics and the Distribution of Music in the Early Fifteenth Century*, *Early Music History* 1 (1981), pp. 310-1.
27. Briquet, *op. cit.*, pp. xviii-xxiii.
28. A. Stevenson, *Paper as Bibliographical Evidence*, in *The Library* 17 (1962), no. 3.
29. Th. Gerardy, *Datieren mit Hilfe von Wasserzeichen* (Bückeberg 1964); Th. Gerardy, *Der Identitätsbeweis bei der Wasserzeichendatierung*, in *Archiv für Geschichte des Buchwesens* 9 (1969), coll. 733-78; Th. Gerardy, *Die Beschreibung des in Manuskripten und Drucken vorkommenden Papiers*, in *Codicologia* 5 (Leyden 1980), pp. 37-51.
30. Gerardy, *Datieren*, p. 63ff.
31. Gerardy, *Die Beschreibung*, pp. 41-2.
32. This trimming has caused the Magnificat on fol. 62v-69r to become anonymous, with only a slight trace of the composer's name left on its first page. The same thing probably happened to the *Missa Pour quelque paine*, which is attributed to Cornelius Heyns in the Vatican manuscript Cappella Sistina 51. At the top of the first page of this Mass in BrusBR 5557 (fol. 99v) we find, besides the erroneous nineteenth-century ascription to Johannes Ockeghem, the trace of an inscription which may have been the composer's real name.
33. Briquet, *op. cit.*, p. 4.
34. See: Briquet, *op. cit.*, no. 1740, and G. Piccard, *Wasserzeichen Lilie* (Stuttgart 1983), nos. 1567 and 1589-1621.
35. Briquet, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

36. Piccard, *op. cit.*, nos. 1591 and 1592.
37. In a letter dated 25 January 1983, Dr. Natale of the Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart informed me that although the largest part of Piccard's watermark collection is now in possession of the archive, the tracings of the Mechlin watermarks still belong to Piccard's private collection; as a result, he was not able to provide source references of the Mechlin watermarks.
38. Briquet, *op. cit.*, nos. 5173-8.
39. Briquet, *op. cit.*, no. 5173.
40. V. Mošin, *Anchor Watermarks* (Amsterdam 1973), pp. 2-3.
41. *Ibid.*, nos. 97-9, 101 and 109.
42. Paris, Archives nationales, ms. Z<sup>1H</sup> 18; reproduction of one watermark in Briquet, *op. cit.*, no. 393.
43. G. Piccard, *Wasserzeichen Horn* (Stuttgart 1979), nos. V.81-4 and X.38-41.
44. R. Strohm, *Music in Late Medieval Bruges* (Oxford 1985).
45. *Ibid.*, p. 123.
46. *Ibid.*, p. 141.
47. Kenney, *op. cit.*, p. 47.
48. BrusBR 5557, fols. 10r/v, 20r, 30r/v, and 38r.
49. On the same folio, in the space between the contratenor and tenor voice-parts of the Benedictus-Osanna of Plummer's Mass, the following words have likewise been scratched in with a needle:
 

amen dico	dico a amen dico
amen dico amen	amen dico vobis
	vobis
	amen dico vobis
50. BrusBR 5557, fols. 104v and 106v.
51. On fol. 89v of the manuscript, this must have been done before a later fifteenth-century hand entered the Busnois motet *Alleluia verbum caro*, for the scribe of the latter motet has written the initial T (from *Tenor*) partly upon the restoration paper. Similarly, we find a jocular Flemish verse in a fifteenth-century hand on restoration paper on fol. 120v (see: Planchart, *op. cit.*, p. 22).
52. Kenney, *op. cit.*, p. 37.
53. Sparks, *op. cit.*, p. 226.

APPENDIX

I. The structure of the manuscript BrusBR 5557.

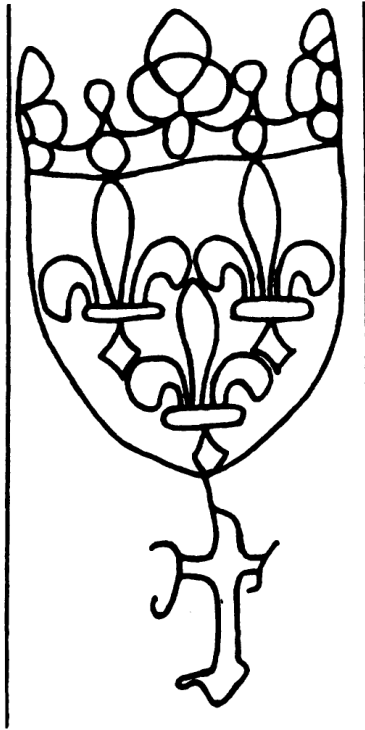
gatherings	paper-types	musical contents	folios	musical handwriting (Kenney)
1-4	a	Walter Frye: <i>Missa Summe trinitati</i>	2v-10r	A
		John Plummer: <i>Missa</i> (with prosula <i>Omnipotens pater</i> )	10v-20r	
		Richard Cox: <i>Missa</i> (with prosula <i>Deus creator omnium</i> )	20v-30r	
		Walter Frye: <i>Missa Flos regalis</i>	30v-38r	
		Walter Frye: <i>Missa Nobilis et pulchra</i>	38v-48r	
		Antoine Busnois: <i>Anthoni usque limina</i>	48v-50r	B
5	b	Guillaume Dufay: <i>Missa Ecce ancilla Domini</i>	50v-61r	A'
6	c <sub>a</sub>	anonymous: <i>Magnificat secundi toni</i>	62v-69r	D
		Antoine Busnois: <i>Noel noel</i>	69v-70r	B
7	d	Antoine Busnois: <i>Magnificat sexti toni</i>	70v-76r	C
		Antoine Busnois: <i>Ad cenam agni</i>	76v	B
8	e	Johannes Ockeghem: <i>Missa Quinti toni</i>	77r-83r	E
		Antoine Busnois: <i>Anima mea liquefacta</i>	83v-84r	B
		Antoine Busnois: <i>Victimae paschali</i>	84v-86r	
		Antoine Busnois: <i>Regina celi</i>	86v-88r	
		Antoine Busnois: <i>Regina celi</i>	88v-89r	
Antoine Busnois: <i>Alleluia verbum caro</i>	89v-90r			
9-10	c <sub>b</sub>	anonymous: <i>Missa</i>	90v-99r	A'
		Cornelius Heyns: <i>Missa Pour quelque paine</i>	99v-109r	
11	c <sub>b</sub>	Guillaume Dufay: <i>Missa Ave regina caelorum</i>	110v-120v	A''
12	f	Johannes Regis: <i>Missa Ecce ancilla Domini-Ne timeas</i>	121v-136r	A''

II. Mould parameters of the paper-types used in BrusBR 5557.

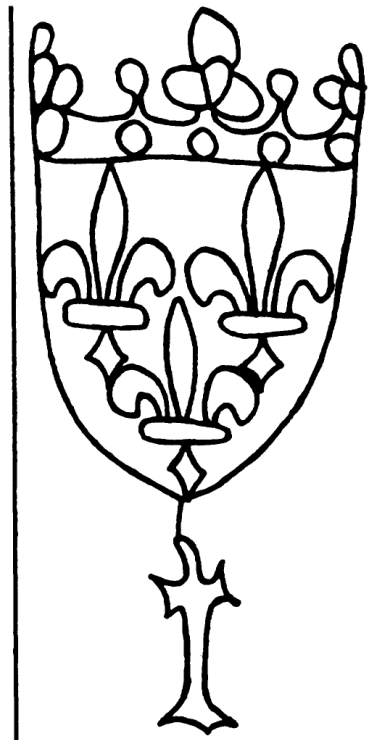
paper-type	number of chain-lines	distances between chain-lines (mm)	chain number N (mm)	position of watermark (chain-lines enclosing the watermark, counted from the left)	laid number (number of laid-lines per 100 mm)	position of mould side (zugewandt or abgewandt)
a <sub>1</sub>	1 + 13 + 1	24 + 12N + 24	42.4	4/5	61	A
a <sub>2</sub>	1 + 13 + 1	24 + 12N + 26-28	41.0-42.0	4/5	61	Z
b <sub>1</sub>	1 + 14 + 1	24 + 13N + 24	41.8-42.6	5/6	61	A
b <sub>2</sub>	1 + 14 + 1	23-24 + 13N + 23-24	41.8-42.4	5/6	61	Z
c <sub>1a</sub>	1 + 14 + 1	21-25 + 13N + 20-22	38.8-39.6	5/6	77	Z
c <sub>2a</sub>	1 + 14 + 1	22 + 13N + 18-20	38.8-39.6	5/6	77	A
c <sub>1b</sub>	1 + 14 + 1	22-24 + 13N + 20-22	38.8-39.4	5/6	77	Z
c <sub>2b</sub>	1 + 14 + 1	18-19 + 13N + 22	38.8-40.0	5/6	77	A
d <sub>1</sub>	1 + 14 + 1	18 + 13N + 23-24	37.6-38.8	5/6	80	A
d <sub>2</sub>	1 + 14 + 1	23-24 + 13N + 18	37.6-38.8	5/6	80	Z
e <sub>1</sub>	18	17N	31.3-32.1	5/6	91	Z
e <sub>2</sub>	18	17N	31.3-32.0	5/6	91	A
f <sub>1</sub>	1 + 13 + 1	25 + 12N + 25	41.7-42.5	4/5	61	A
f <sub>2</sub>	1 + 13 + 1	25 + 12N + 25	41.8-42.5	4/5	61	Z

III. Watermarks

paper-type a

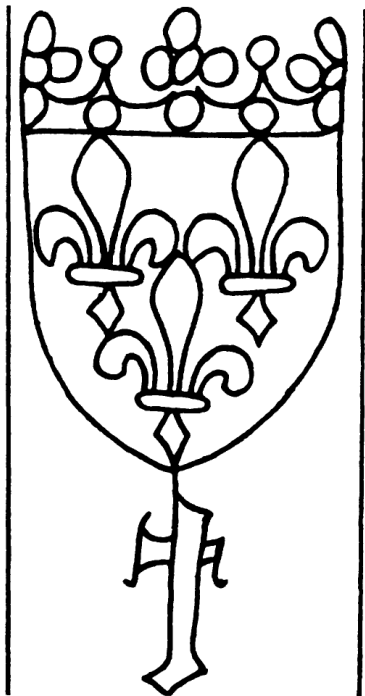


watermark a<sub>1</sub>

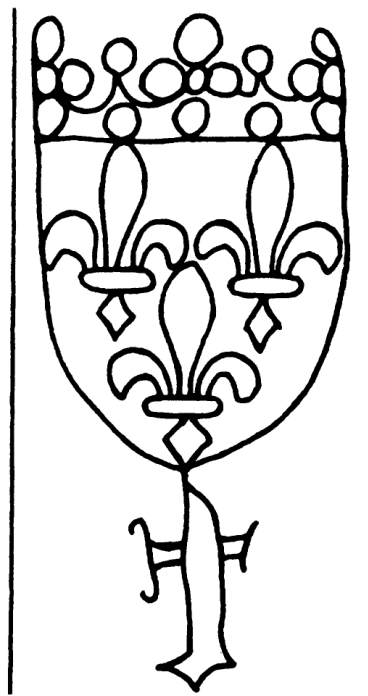


watermark a<sub>2</sub>

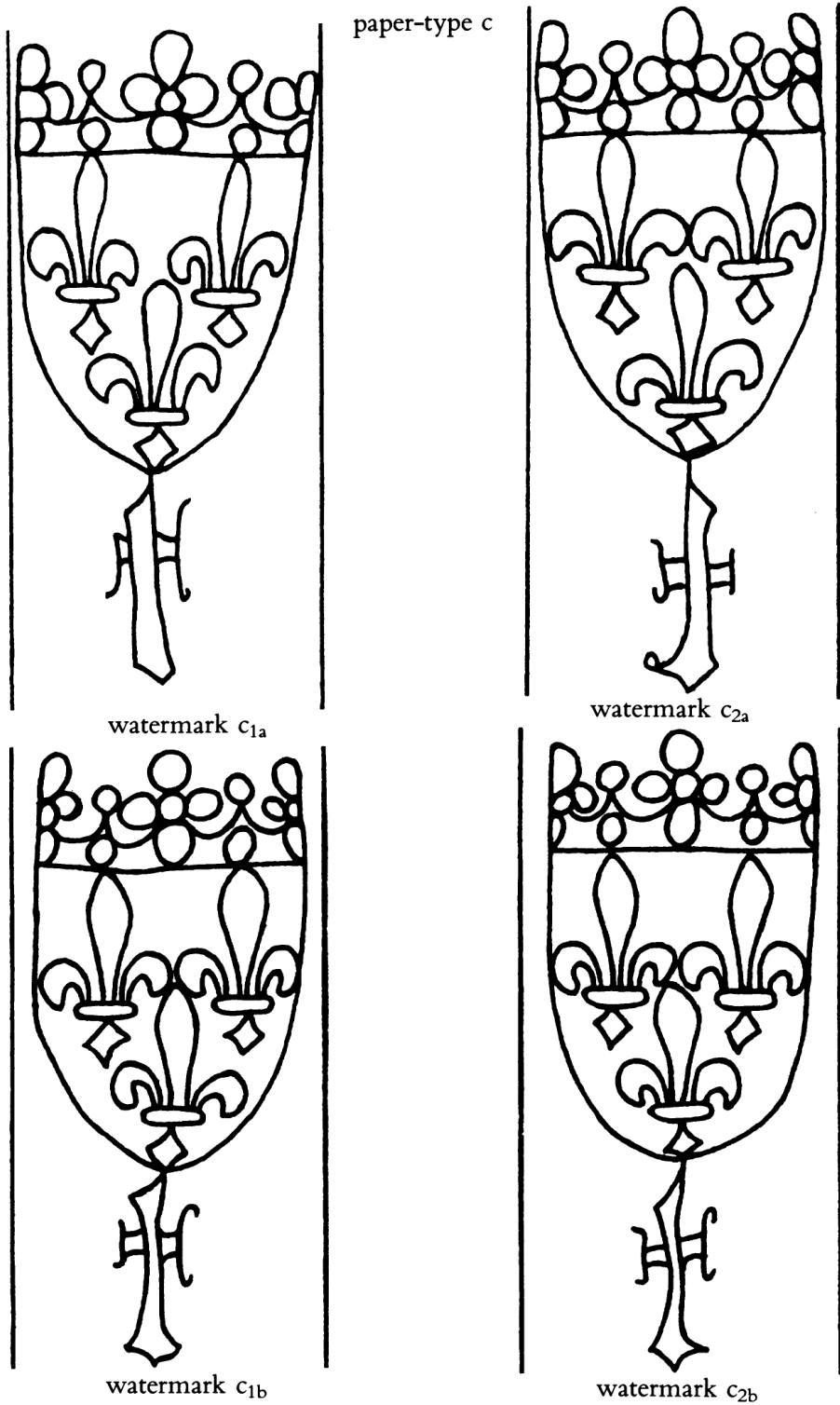
paper-type b



watermark b<sub>1</sub>



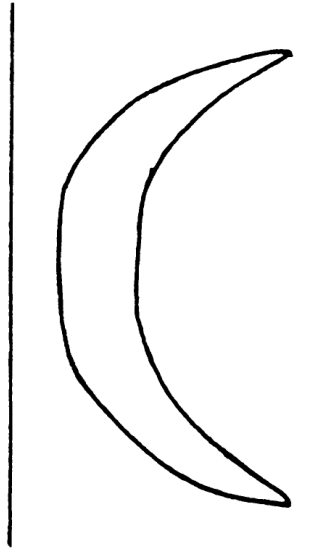
watermark b<sub>2</sub>



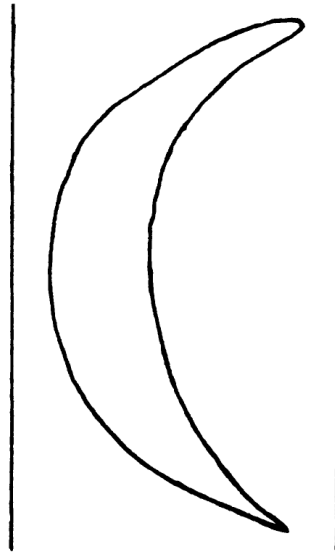
Paper-type c has two different pairs of watermarks ( $c_{1a}$  and  $c_{2a}$ , and  $c_{1b}$  and  $c_{2b}$ ), but only one pair of moulds. During the use of this mould-pair, one of the watermark-pairs must have been replaced by the other.



paper-type d

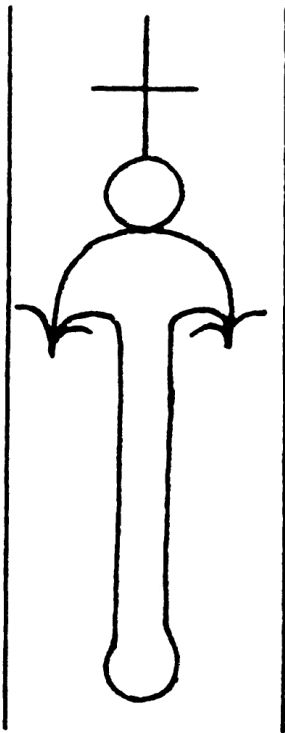


watermark  $d_1$

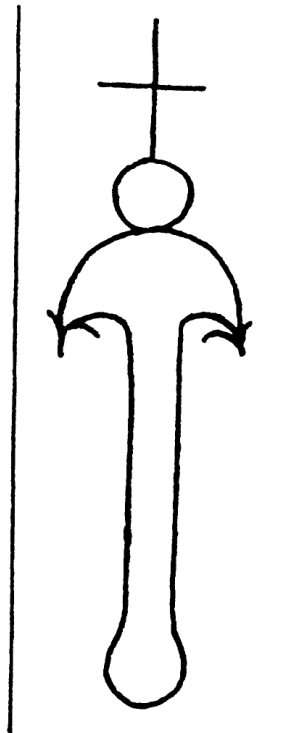


watermark  $d_2$

paper-type e



watermark  $e_1$



watermark  $e_2$

