

Rob C. Wegman

Ockeghem, Brumel, Josquin: new documents in Troyes

As historians and performers of late medieval music we must learn to live with massive and sometimes heartbreaking losses of historical material. One cannot begin to count the number of churches in France and the Low Countries whose archives have perished for ever, leaving major gaps in the biographies of the composers who once worked there. Yet if in some respects we have far less documentary evidence than we would wish, in other respects we probably have more, much more, than we can handle. There are plenty of church archives that have survived virtually intact and undoubtedly contain gems of documentary evidence, yet are still waiting to be properly explored by musicologists.

A good example is the city of Troyes, situated about 100 miles south-east of Paris, and, with Reims, one of the two major urban centres of medieval Champagne (illus.1). Like Reims, the town boasts a magnificent cathedral, one whose musical life during the *ancien régime* was the subject of a monograph published in 1905 by Abbé Arthur Prévost.¹ So far as I know, however, the cathedral's archives have not been studied by musicologists in the more than 100 years since Prévost's study.

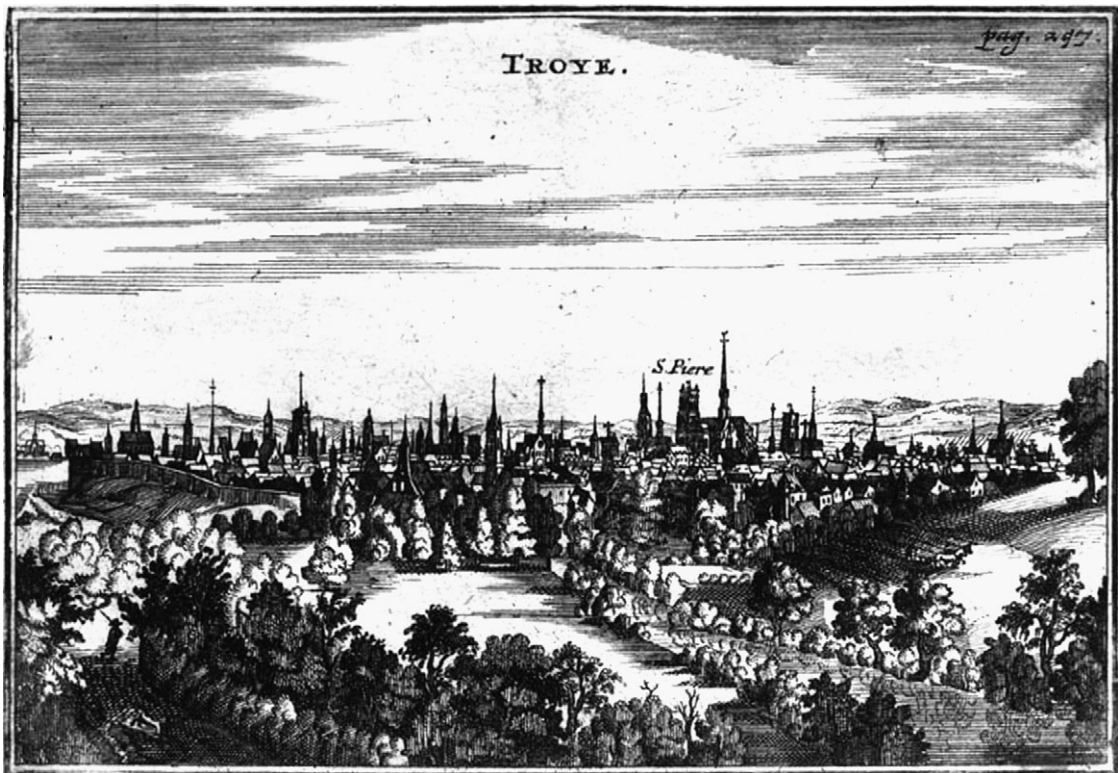
When I visited the Archives départementales at Troyes in the summer of 2006, I was astonished at the sheer wealth of documentary material waiting to be explored—indeed the large number of interesting references to music and musicians that had undoubtedly been seen by Abbé Prévost, but had never found their way into his book.² In what follows I will present some of the more tantalizing documentary references in the cathedral archives, those that involve some old friends—Ockeghem, Brumel and Josquin. So far as I know, none of these

composers ever lived in Troyes, and one of them probably never even set foot there. But all three had connections of some sort with the cathedral, and this is how their names ended up in its administrative records.

Johannes Ockeghem

15th-century musicians seldom appear to us more selfish and greedy, more quarrelsome and litigious, than when they fight with other clerics over benefices—those ecclesiastical positions, usually canonries or chaplaincies, that came with a steady income, but not necessarily with the obligation to do the work for it in person. Benefices were lucrative things for clerics to have, yet for that very reason they were also bitterly contested—not only between rival candidates, but also by those who had a political stake in controlling the benefice market: kings, princes, bishops, the pope and local clergy.

Johannes Ockeghem was better positioned than most musicians to play the benefice-hunting game to his material advantage.³ As the most distinguished musician at the French royal court, he enjoyed the powerful support of the King of France, and this brought him numerous advantages over other contenders. Sometime in the late 1450s, a few years after his arrival at the court, King Charles VII put him up for the distinguished position of Treasurer of the Abbey of St Martin at Tours. It would take several years of legal and political wrangling to secure that position, but once Ockeghem had obtained it, in the early years of the 1460s, he would keep it for the rest of his life.⁴ Other royal attempts to confer lucrative titles on the composer were not nearly so successful. In some cases he got bogged down in years of



1 View of the city of Troyes, dominated by the Cathedral of Saint-Pierre; engraving from 1643

litigation against rival candidates, or in disputes with the local chapters themselves—until he finally gave up and settled for something less troublesome, if also less lucrative.

Ockeghem's benefice career is quite well documented, thanks in large part to pertinent records surviving in the Vatican. Yet there is always the potential for more evidence to turn up in local and regional archives. One such discovery can now be reported for the Cathedral of Troyes. For a period of about ten years, from 1457 to 1467, the cathedral's financial records list 'messire Jehan Hocquegan' among the canons entitled to distributions (docs.1 and 2). Ockeghem's canonry at Troyes was not previously known to us from other documents, and since he held it as early as 1457, it now appears to be the second-earliest benefice he is known to have held.

Undoubtedly the composer had won the canonry thanks to the political influence of his patron, King Charles VII, who was powerful enough to force the

hand of reluctant cathedral chapters and to appoint his own favourites in their midst.

Of course, such heavy-handed application of brute political force was bound to provoke resentment, if not outright hostility, against royal appointees. At first glance it might seem that there was no need for Ockeghem to worry about that, since the payment records indicate that he was a non-resident canon in any case. For all we know he never even set foot in Troyes, and simply sent procurators to collect his income for him. That, needless to say, would not have made him any more popular. And as we will see, the cathedral chapter was not entirely without means to make its displeasure felt where it was likely to hurt most—in Ockeghem's purse.

Consider the situation from the canons' point of view. A chapter member who lives hundreds of miles away, and who is never heard from except by proxy (and then only on pay-day), is useless



2 West front of the Cathedral of Saint-Pierre at Troyes, designed by Martin Chambiges in 1502, and constructed from 1506 onwards



3 Nave and choir of the Cathedral of Saint-Pierre at Troyes. Construction of the ambulatory and radiating chapels began around 1200. Several of the original stained glass windows in the ambulatory chapels, made c.1200–1240, are still in place today.

to the cathedral, an expense they can do without. The cathedral chapter may choose to fight the appointment of such a man, but if he happens to be the king's favourite, chances are that they will not be successful. On the other hand, once the royal appointee has been installed, there is no reason why the chapter should go out of its way to be especially helpful and welcoming to him. They are under no obligation, for example, to clear all legal and administrative hurdles for him before they become problems. When it comes to this, there is always bound to be some perfectly valid reason why payment of a canon's income cannot proceed and the revenues must accrue to the chapter instead. It doesn't really matter what the reason is: it may be a technicality, some hair-splitting legalism, or just a silly misunderstanding. Whatever the case, once payment has been suspended, the burden will be on Ockeghem to clear things up, and his very non-residency then becomes a serious handicap. Being hundreds of miles away from Troyes, he will be forced to spend money on scribes, messengers and procurators before he has even seen one penny from the cathedral. If such problems continue to arise, he may well end up deciding that the canonry is more trouble than it is worth, and seek to trade it for something else—in which case, good riddance.

The relevant chapter decisions at Troyes Cathedral, shown in doc.3, suggest that something like this was indeed going on. Unfortunately the chapter's deliberations during the first three years of Ockeghem's benefice have not survived, and so we do not know anything about the circumstances surrounding his installation. But when the records finally do pick up, in 1460, two things soon become clear: Ockeghem's appointment did not sit well with resident clergy, and the chapter was indeed tempted to resort to tactics of active unhelpfulness.

Two of the entries concerning Ockeghem, dated 13 June 1460 and 30 March 1463, are still quite matter-of-fact and will not concern us here. They confirm receipt, for the cathedral's records, of the so-called *litterae de fructibus percipiendis*, letters securing the privilege of absence for Ockeghem.⁵ Non-resident canons like him were required to have their employers or patrons send in such letters every

year—though their receipt was not always recorded in the chapter acts:

[Friday 13 June 1460]

Item, today certain royal letters were presented regarding *magister* Johannes Ockeghem, Treasurer of the Church of St Martin of Tours, and canon of Troyes, in which it was confirmed that he is in the service of our lord the King of France.

[Wednesday 30 March 1463]

Item, etc., other letters were presented regarding Johannes Ockeghem, confirming that he is chaplain of our lord the King of France.

If an absentee canon failed to fulfil this requirement, however, it could provide a welcome (and legitimate) excuse for the chapter to suspend payment of his income. Such problems did not always leave a record in the chapter acts either, though we will shortly encounter one example where it did.

A further entry in the chapter acts is not quite so matter-of-fact. On 15 January 1462, some five years after Ockeghem's installation, the canons seem to have come to the sudden (if belated) realization that the royal appointee had never provided proof of legitimate birth. Nor, to make matters worse, had he given the chapter satisfactory assurance that he was the son of free parents, and hence not born in servitude. Legitimate birth and free parentage had been longstanding requirements for the position of canon at Troyes Cathedral, as indeed they were in many other churches. Until Ockeghem had proved that he met those requirements, the chapter had no choice but to suspend his income:

[Friday 15 January 1462]

Item, the [lords of the chapter] are not content that *magister* Johannes Ockeghem will in future receive the gross income of his prebend, until such time as he will send an adequate procurator to swear under oath that he is of legitimate birth and born of free parents, exactly as he had promised to do.

In context, the issue here—arising five years after the composer's installation—sounds not just like a technicality but as a veiled insult. The chapter cannot seriously have meant to suggest that this man—the Treasurer of St Martin at Tours and a royal favourite—was illegitimate or of unfree parentage. Still, the burden of proof was on Ockeghem: if he was to enjoy the income from his canonry, then he should supply satisfactory proof, if necessary by coming to Troyes in person and giving a statement under oath.

One is not surprised to learn that this matter would not be resolved until seven months later, for in a case like this, there would have been no reason for the chapter to be particularly helpful. If the canons decided to suspend payment, why hasten to inform Ockeghem of that decision? All they really needed to do was instruct the accountant to withhold payment. If it took several months for the composer to find out, well, that was his problem: the chapter had never asked him to be non-resident. Had he lived in Troyes, Ockeghem would have been more than welcome to attend the meeting at which the problem was discussed, and who knows, maybe he could have cleared up the matter in one day. But if his non-residence caused him to lose seven months of income, then surely he had only himself to blame.

Even at this point, however, Ockeghem did not go to the trouble of visiting Troyes in person. On 4 August 1462, Jacobus Fouquet, himself a canon at the cathedral, came before the chapter, took the oath in his capacity as Ockeghem's legal representative, and swore that the composer was of free and legitimate birth:

[Wednesday 4 August 1462]

Item, on the aforesaid day, in the aforesaid chapter, lord Jacobus Fouquier, legal representative of *magister* Johannes Ockeghem, gave assurance that he is authorized to swear that the said *magister* Johannes is free, and born of legitimate marriage and of free parents, just as *magister* Johannes, or his procurator on his behalf, had promised to do at his installation. Because of this the lords lifted the hand which they had placed upon the gross prebend of the said *magister* Johannes.

At last Ockeghem could continue to enjoy his income—or so he may have hoped. Nine months later, on 23 May 1463, we learn that the chapter had managed to run into another problem: Ockeghem, or so it transpires, had failed to send in his privilege, the legal exemption without which the chapter was unable to pay his income. It is unclear for how long they had suspended payment this time. Yet it looks as if Ockeghem, or someone representing him, had threatened serious consequences if the chapter did not cease and desist at once. For it appears from the document that the canons decided to back down: they agreed to let the composer off just this once, though not without warning him to send in his privilege in future—otherwise, he was asking for trouble:

[Monday 23 May 1463]

Item, [the lords] agreed that Johannes Ockeghem shall have and receive his gross [yields] for the present year, even though he did not send in his privilege, and that if he wishes to partake in the said gross [yields], he should send it in future.

After this the chapter acts mention no further problems. Yet this means no more than that there was no need to discuss problems in the chapter meetings, not that problems had ceased to arise. In fact, after three years of intermittent trouble, it would be surprising if the authorities at Troyes Cathedral became totally agreeable and cooperative. Be that as it may, all we really know for certain is that Ockeghem gave up in the end, worn out, one suspects, by the chapter's active non-cooperation. On 3 August 1467, Pierre Helouin, cleric from the diocese of Lisieux, was sworn in as canon at Troyes, accepting the position left vacant after the recent resignation of Johannes Ockeghem. The king's first chaplain must have decided that he had had enough. He traded his position at Troyes for a chaplaincy in the Church of Sainte Madeleine of Braiz, in the diocese of Tours. The latter benefice may have been nominally less lucrative, but at least it was a lot closer to home, and for that reason far less likely to take up so much of his precious time and money.

The tale of Ockeghem's canonry at Troyes ties in with everything else we know about the composer's benefice career. He may have been a favourite of the king, but as a benefice holder he encountered resistance and opposition almost everywhere he went. It had taken years for him to secure the Treasurership at St Martin of Tours, since the chapter of that abbey had fought his candidacy tooth and nail, all the way to the Parliament of Paris. Similarly, in the 1460s Ockeghem would be engaged in an almost continuous legal battle over a canonry at Notre Dame of Paris, not only against a rival contender for the position, but also against the cathedral chapter itself—which evidently resolved to make life as difficult for him as possible. In the 1470s, it took three years of legal wrangling over a canonry at Chartres Cathedral before Ockeghem finally came to a settlement with the rival contender, to whom he conceded a portion of the income in return for the title.

If there is a common thread running through all of this, it is that Ockeghem at no time showed even the slightest interest in the churches at which he was appointed, that he avoided visiting them in person

if he could possibly help it and preferred to have procurators take care of his financial affairs. Perhaps he blamed his utter lack of interest on their hostility, just as the churches may have blamed him for being arrogant and aloof. Yet whatever the causes, the picture ends up looking the same: for Ockeghem, the bottom line about his benefices was money. For all his reputation as a saintly father later in life, it is hard to escape the impression that, as a benefice hunter, he got all the trouble he could have expected.

Antoine Brumel and Josquin des Prez

If the king's first chaplain and Treasurer of Saint Martin had ever taken the trouble to visit Troyes Cathedral, he would undoubtedly have been received as the distinguished personage he was, that is, with a welcoming gift of wine and bread. We know for a fact that Ockeghem was so honoured at visits to Cambrai in 1462 and 1464, and likewise at Bruges and Damme in 1484.⁶ Yet the relevant accounts at Troyes Cathedral, the so-called *comptes de la grand-chambre*, do not mention him even once as the recipient of a welcoming gift. The accounts do, however, record the expenses for welcoming gifts offered to other musical visitors—including the composers Antoine Brumel and Josquin des Prez. It is these records that I propose to discuss in the following pages.

Visitors to Troyes Cathedral fell broadly into two categories: those treated charitably, and those treated honourably. The former were travellers of all stations whom the cathedral helped on their way with a pittance or gratuity. The latter, on the other hand, were the truly distinguished guests and visitors—abbots, bishops, high-ranking lawyers, princes, ambassadors—who were welcomed with complimentary gifts of wine and bread. In the annual *comptes de la grand-chambre*, there are separate chapters for these two categories.

For most of the 15th century, singers are mentioned only in the first category, as travellers who happened to pass through Troyes on the road from Paris to Lyon. Typically we find one or two musicians in a year, sometimes none at all. Their number increases sharply after 1477, however, when northern Europe plunged into a state of almost continuous civil strife, warfare and economic depression, and

musicians would struggle to make a living. Document 4 presents a sample of entries from that year: in August, a young singer from Picardy receives alms, followed, three weeks later, by a young singer from Tours. In December, a pittance is given to a poor priest and tenorist, and several months later, to a poor singer named Jehan Cahouet. The list will go on and on in subsequent years.

Not all of the travelling musicians were necessarily poor. In 1487, for example, we find two Flemish singers who passed through Troyes on their way to some other destination, and who were given a *pour-boire* on 16 November (doc.5):

On the Friday after St Martin, given to two Flemish singers who passed on their way, 5 shillings.

Although we may never be able to prove it, there can be little doubt that these two musicians were Jacob Obrecht and Cornelio di Lorenzo, who had departed from Bruges about two weeks previously, travelled through France on their way to Ferrara, and whose arrival at Milan was still expected on 19 November, three days after the Troyes payment.⁷

But what about the second category, that of distinguished guests? In the final years of the 15th century, we do begin to find musicians among their number. Such visitors were not necessarily passing through Troyes on their way to some other destination, but usually had arrived in the city for a reason, and were welcomed there as friends of the cathedral. It is telling that Ockeghem never once appears among them. Yet some time in the spring of 1497, we do come across 'one named Brumel' as the recipient of a so-called *demi-present*, a gift of wine and bread for visitors who travelled alone, that is, without retinue (doc.6):

For a half-present made to one named Brumel, canon and singer of Laon in Lannoys, of four pints of wine at 8 deniers per pint, of four loaves of white bread at 5 deniers per loaf, and 3 deniers for the delivery, makes together 4 shillings and 7 deniers.

As always in documents of this kind, the accountant took care to specify the dignity and status of the recipient—which in Brumel's case was not especially high ranking: he is described as a canon and singer from the Cathedral of Laon in Lannoys.⁸ Had we not known Brumel as a renowned composer, one might well have wondered what was so special about this guest.

Yet if it seems odd to find so modest an ecclesiastic treated with such honour, then another entry, written two years later, must appear well-nigh inexplicable. On 12 December 1499, the cathedral offers a *demi-present* to an individual described simply as ‘a singer named Josquin des Prez’ (doc.7; illus.4).

For a half-present made to a singer named Josquin des Prez, in the house of the master of the choirboys, of four pints of *vin de beaulne*, to wit, two white and two claret, at the price of 12 deniers per pint of claret, and the white wine at 15 deniers, fetched at [the tavern] *La Samaritaine*. And four loaves of white bread of 16 deniers, and 3 deniers for delivery. Which makes altogether 6 shillings and 1 denier. And the said present was made on the twelfth day of December, thus 6 shillings and 1 denier.

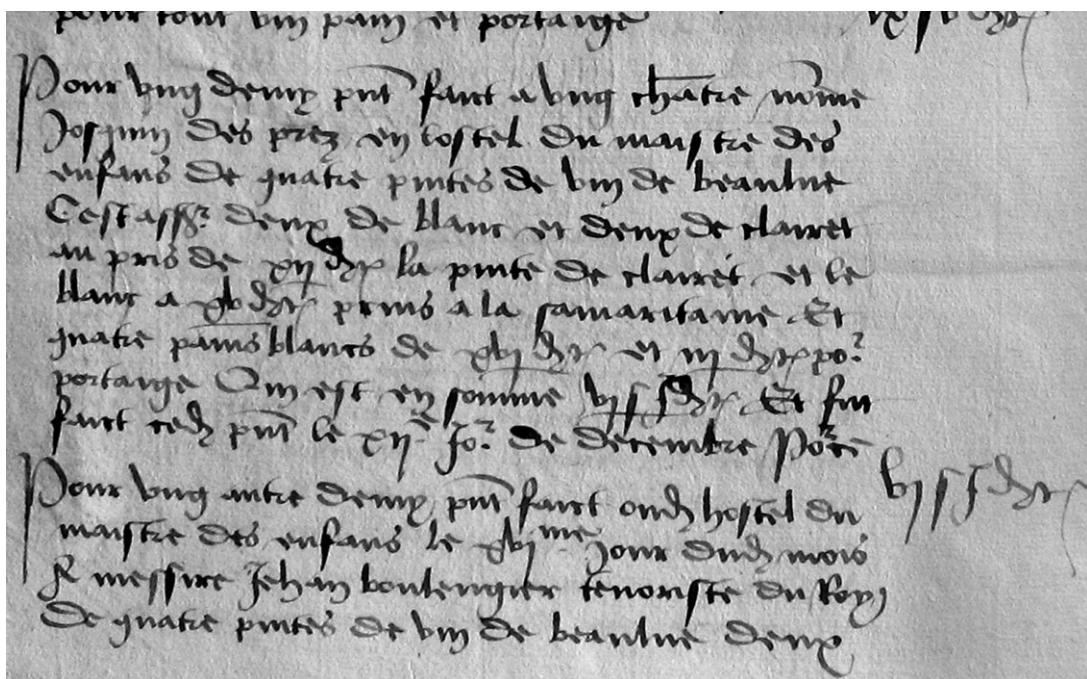
Surprisingly, for so famous a composer, the entry provides no further information about this man, nothing to justify the expense made for him: no ecclesiastical title, no affiliation, no nationality, not even his place of residence—let alone the business that brought him to Troyes. All we learn is that he was a singer, which was not much of a distinction at

all. Plenty of the individuals who received alms and pittance were described in the records as ‘a singer named so-and-so’, just like Josquin was here.

Compare this with the very next entry in the same account, a welcoming gift made four days later to another musician. Now the recipient is described as ‘messire Jehan Boulengier, tenorist of the king’.⁹ This is clearly a distinguished man, an ordained priest, associated with the French royal court, and having in fact the title of king’s tenorist—a position of considerable social distinction, as I have argued elsewhere.¹⁰

For another half-present made in the said house of the master of the choirboys on the sixteenth day of the said month [of December] to *messire Jehan Boulengier*, tenorist of the king, of four pints of *vin de beaulne*, two of claret and two white, to wit the white wine at 15 deniers per pint and the claret at 12 deniers, fetched at *La Samaritaine*. And four loaves of white bread at 16 deniers. And 3 deniers for delivery, makes altogether 6 shillings and 1 denier.

What were these two musicians—Josquin apparently unemployed or independent, Boulengier in the service of King Louis XII—doing in Troyes, having



4 Welcoming gift from the cathedral chapter of Troyes to ‘a singer named Josquin des Prez’, on 12 December 1499, followed, four days later, by a similar gift to Jehan Boulengier, tenorist of the King of France. Both musicians were apparently staying with the master of the choirboys of the cathedral, Étienne des Jardins. (Troyes, Archives départementales de l’Aube, G1868, Comptes de la grand chambre 1499/1500, f.55v)

arrived there, apparently, within four days of each other? And why were they given such a warm welcome by the cathedral?

The documents do not tell us, but they do provide one important clue. In both cases, the welcoming gift was presented at the house of the cathedral's chief musician, Etienne des Jardins (or Stephanus de Ortis), master of the choirboys. This is unlikely to be coincidence: Josquin and Boulengier must have come to Troyes to visit the local choirmaster and stay with him as his guests—and thus, since the choirmaster was in the cathedral's employ, as the cathedral's guests. This apparent meeting must have been planned some time in advance: it is hard to imagine that the visits of Josquin and Boulengier could have been timed so closely unless there had been prior correspondence between them. But what sort of business would have required the musicians to meet in Troyes?

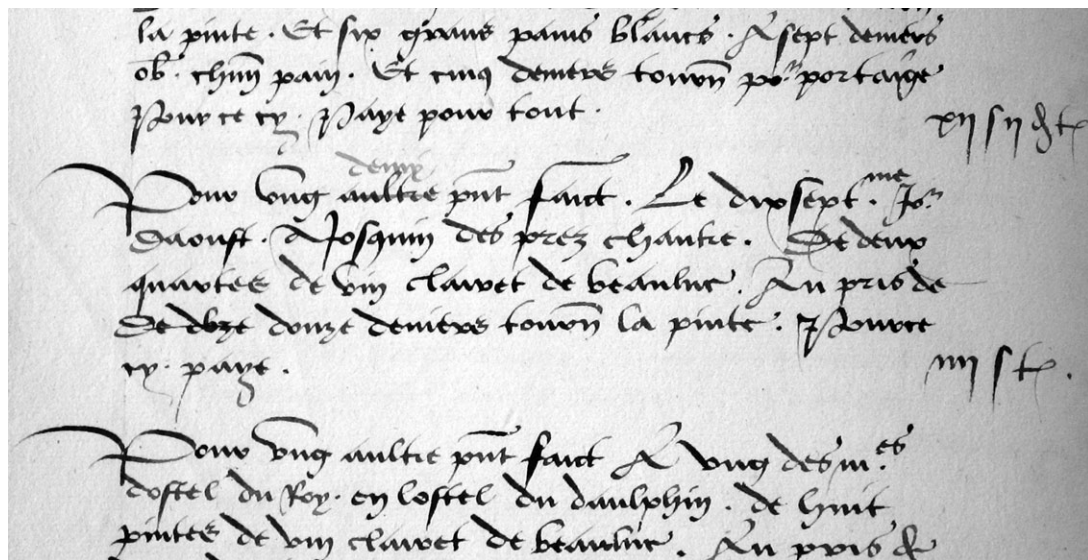
A further clue is provided by an entry nine years later (doc.9). On 7 June 1508 the cathedral offered a gift of wine and bread to 'several singers who are gathered together in the house of the master of the choirboys'. These singers, too, must have come from outside Troyes, otherwise they would not have received a welcoming present. Like Josquin

and Boulengier they were offered wine and bread at the choirmaster's house, where they were gathered together in what appears to have been a professional meeting of some sort:

For another present made on the seventh day of June to several singers who were gathered together in the house of the master of the choirboys of this church, to whom the lords [of the chapter] had ordered it to be made. Of eight pints of wine, both white and claret, of which the claret has cost 10 deniers per pint, and the white wine 8 deniers. Of six loaves of white bread at 5 deniers per loaf, and for the delivery of the said present, 5 deniers, altogether 8 shillings and 11 deniers.

Reasoning back from this later entry, it may be suggested that a similar meeting of singers had taken place in December 1499, with Josquin and Boulengier as the most distinguished participants. Quite possibly the gift to Brumel, in the spring of 1497, had also been made on the occasion of such a meeting. It is even possible that yet another singers' meeting took place in 1501. On 17 August of that year, there is once again a welcoming *demi-present* to a man described now as 'Josquin des Prez, singer', though there is no indication this time that he is staying with Etienne des Jardins (doc.8; illus.5):

For a half-present made on the 17th day of August to Josquin des Prez, singer, of two quarts of claret *de beaulne*, at a price of 12 deniers per pint, and, for this, paid 4 shillings.



5 Welcoming gift from the cathedral chapter of Troyes to 'Josquin des Prez, singer' on 17 August 1501 (Troyes, Archives départementales de l'Aube, G1873, Comptes de la grand chambre 1501/1502, f.72v)

Altogether this would give us four singers' meetings at Troyes: in 1497, 1499, 1501 and 1508.

It is well known that formal meetings among singers and composers must have taken place more often in the late 15th century.¹¹ Perhaps the custom originated in imitation of the so-called minstrel schools, international gatherings of minstrels and trumpeters that are known to have been held annually in the period 1313 to 1447.¹² Unfortunately the evidence for singers' meetings is mostly indirect and circumstantial. Usually the relevant documentation is simply a brief financial record from the institution hosting the meeting. For example, in August 1484, the Church of St Donatian at Bruges paid for six jugs of wine at a dinner held by the church musicians on the occasion of a visit by Johannes Ockeghem and others.¹³ Unfortunately, such payment records are seldom especially informative. Yet perhaps we may gain a better idea from parallels in the other arts. Recently I discovered, quite by chance, the following payment in support of a meeting of painters, made by the city of Lille in 1473 (doc.10):

To Piettre van Malle, painter, 9 lots of *vin de beaulne*, fetched by Jehan Desbons from Collart Martin at the said command, presented on the first day of August in honour of the fact that on this day, [Piettre] held at his own expense in this city a congregation of painters from the cities of Ghent, Bruges, Brussels, and other cities from the lands of my lord the Duke [of Burgundy] and feasted them, at which feast he conducted himself honourably with some notable persons of the law of the city [of Lille]. Said wine at the price of 7 shillings per lot, makes, amounting, with 18 deniers for delivery, to 64 shillings and 6 deniers.

To judge from this example, one might plausibly suppose that the meetings at Troyes were in fact organized by the master of the choirboys, Etienne des Jardins, and that he had sent out formal invitations. If this was the case, then Josquin—who would be described only a few years later as having difficulty getting along with fellow singers—appears to have shown himself as more gregarious and companionable than he is often given credit for.

Sometimes there are also musical compositions that appear to have originated in the context of professional meetings. Obvious examples are Loyset Compère's motet *Omnium bonorum plena*, for a meeting held probably in or near Cambrai in the early 1470s (and organized, in all likelihood, by Compère himself), and perhaps Josquin's *Illibata*

Dei virgo nutrix, some time before the mid-1490s. And Bonnie Blackburn has kindly drawn my attention to the anonymous song *La plus grant chière de jamais*: its text celebrates 'the biggest party ever', held by the Burgundian court composers Robert Morton and Hayne van Ghizeghem at Cambrai, where they were served 'fine dishes', and sang and played to their heart's content on soft instruments.

Most of these musicians' meetings appear to have been local or regional affairs, just like the meeting of painters at Lille in 1473. It has often been noted that nearly all the musicians mentioned in Loyset Compère's *Omnium bonorum plena* had connections with Cambrai. Similarly, if Jehan Boulengier attended musicians' meetings at Troyes, it is undoubtedly because he had close ties with that city: he was a canon at the nearby collegiate church of St Étienne, and would later possess a canonry in the cathedral as well. And although Brumel, in 1497, had to travel 120 miles from Laon, at least he could follow a direct and well-travelled route, the road from St Quentin to Troyes.

By the same token, if Josquin visited Troyes on two occasions in 1499 and 1501, we may take it that he was resident within about a 100-mile radius of that town. Not that this necessarily tells us much: he could well have been living in Paris, for example, though in that case it seems strange that he did not travel together with the royal musician Jehan Boulengier. Then again, one could just as easily assume that he lived in Orléans, say, or Reims, or perhaps even Bourges. All this is guesswork, of course: the only thing we can say with reasonable plausibility is that by the late 1490s, Josquin was in a position to attend professional meetings with musicians who must have lived within about three or four days' travel of Troyes—which in turn suggests that he was living some place within that radius. He was honoured with a welcoming gift, even though he was a musician without a clearly defined social or ecclesiastical position. In all probability, it was the choirmaster's formal invitation that entitled him to this honour.

In 1499, the cathedral's accountant, who evidently did not know any better, was unable to describe the composer as anything more than 'a singer named Josquin des Prez'. Two years later, in 1501, he changes the wording subtly but tellingly: now the recipient is described as 'Josquin des Prez,

singer'. In this latter record, one might say, the man is not defined by his title, his position, his nationality or his affiliation, but, like any true celebrity, by his name—which at this time may have begun to carry some of its later magic.

How do these documentary discoveries fit into the bigger historical picture? For Ockeghem one can say that they shed additional light on what was in any case the best-documented side of his life: his career as a benefice hunter. More particularly, they confirm the pattern revealed by other evidence: that Ockeghem valued benefices for the income they would give him, but was reluctant to involve himself personally in the business of procuring them or securing their income. His apparent lack of interest may have inclined cathedral chapters to think less of him, and to be as unhelpful as they were likely to get away with. Certainly this seems to have been the case at Troyes. It may also have made the composer vulnerable to challenges and obstructions of any kind, whether the petty nuisances put in his way at Troyes, or the legal proceedings in which rival candidates sought to entangle him. No composer seems to have had as much trouble as Ockeghem to obtain and then hold on to his benefices.

As for Josquin, apart from the strong indication that he lived in northern France around 1499–1501, the Troyes documents provide an illuminating background to his motet *Illibata Dei virgo nutrix*. The text of this setting reveals that it was a singers' motet like Compère's *Omniium bonorum plena*, composed some time before the mid-1490s presumably for a formal meeting of musicians. It now appears that Josquin did in fact attend such meetings at Troyes in 1499, and quite possibly in 1501. It is entirely possible that the occasion for which he composed *Illibata* has left documentary records as well. The Troyes documents, along with many other recent discoveries about Josquin, encourage us to keep looking for such evidence—even in seemingly unlikely places, or in archives that have already been combed by music historians.

Document 1

Archives départementales de l'Aube (hereafter ADA), G1982–G1984:

Troyes Cathedral, Comptes des gros, 1440–72.

The comptes des gros contain lists of canons, both resident and non-resident, whose distributions are collected by others on their behalf. Ockeghem's name appears in the lists from 1458/59 until 1466/67.

G1983	1457/1458	f.147r	—
G1982	1458/1459	F.57r	Hoquegan
G1983	1459/1460	f.71r	Hoquegan
	1460/1461	ff.162r and 179r	messire Jehan Hoquegan
	1461/1462	ff.198r and 222r	Hoquegan
	1462/1463	ff.248r and 270r	messire Jehan Hocquegan
	1463/1464	ff.294r and 315r	messire Jehan Hocquegan
	1464/1465	ff.355r and 337r	messire Jehan Hocquegan
G1984	1465/1466	ff.6v and 27v	Hocquegan
	1466/1467	ff.50v and 75r	maistre Jehan Hoquegan
	1467/1468	ff.96r and 118r	—
	1468/1469	ff.148r and 175r	—

Document 2

ADA, G2100: Troyes Cathedral, Comptes du cellier, 1452–64.

The comptes du cellier contain separate chapters listing payments to non-resident canons. Ockeghem's name appears for the first time in 1457/58, and he is still listed in 1463/64, which is the last extant account before 1488/89.

1456/1457	ff.170r and 177r	—
1457/1458	f.215r	maistre Jehan Hoquegan
	f.254r	maistre Jehan Hoquegan qui possite la prebende messire Jehan Pestelart
1458/1459	f.267v	—
	f.303v	maistre Jehan Hoquegan
1459/1460	f.312r	messire Jehan Hoquegan
	f.338r	messire Jehan Hocquegan
1460/1461	account not extant	
1461/1462	account not extant	
1462/1463	f.351r	—
1463/1464	f.406r	m. Jehan Hocquan listed among those who are 'priuiligiez'

Document 3

ADA, G1276: Troyes Cathedral, Chapter Acts, 1460–7.

f.31r (Friday 13 June 1460)

Ista die pro parte magistri Johannis Okeghen, thesaurarii ecclesie Beati Martini Turonensis et canonici Trecensis, presentate fuerunt quedam littere regie in quibus cauetur quod ipse est in seruicio domini nostri francorum regis.

f.76r (Friday 15 January 1462)

Idem, non sunt contenti quod de ceteris magister Johannes Obkekan non habeat de ceteris grossos fructus sue prebende donec et quousque miserit procuratorem sufficientem ad iurandum quod est de legitimo matrimonio et liberis parentibus procreatus prout ipse promiserat.

f.93r (Wednesday 4 August 1462)

Item, die predicta facta fuit fides in predicto capitulo per dominum Jacobum Fouquier, procurator magistri Johannis Okegan, de procuracione sufficiente ad prestandum iuramentum, quod dictus magister Johannes est liber et solutus, ac de legitimo matrimonio et ex liberis parentibus procreatus, prout ipse magister Johannes aut eius procurator pro eo promiserat facere in sua prima receptione et hoc medio domini leuauerunt manum quam apposuerant super grosso prebende de dicti magistri Johannis.

f.108v (Wednesday 30 March 1463)

[*in margin:* presentatio litterarum Johannis Hoquegan]

Item, etc., presentate fuerunt alie littere pro parte Johannis Hoquegan continentes qualiter est capellanus domini nostri francorum regis.

f.113r (Monday 23 May 1463)

Item, consenserunt quod Johannes Obkegan habeat et percipiat suum grossum pro anno presente, non obstante quod non misit suum priuilegium et de cetero illud mittat se uelit percipere dictum suum grossum.

ff.207v–208r (Monday 3 August 1467)

[*in marg.:* Recepcio canonici. Facta fuit fides de procuratore sufficiens continens clausulam sequentem quod est liber ex vtroque parente et de liberis parentibus procreatus et exoneus fuit de

premissis facta dum receptus fuit per illos qui se obligant.]

Ista die honorabilis vir Petrus Helouin, clericus Lexouiensis dyocesis, receptus fuit ad canonicatum et prebendam huius ecclesie Trecensis, per resignationem sibi factam de ipsis per honorabilem virum dominum Johannem de Olkgem, domini nostri regis prothocapellanum, per permutationem factam inter ipsos ad capellaniam perpetuam Beate Marie Magdalenes de Braiz [?] Turonensis dyocesis, in personam domini Jacobi Fouquier, presbyteri canonici Trecensis dicti Petri Helouin procuratoris, qui quidem procurator prestavit iuramentum iuramentum [*sic*] solitum presentibus domino Petro Hazard presbytero et Leonardo Beyan ciuis Trecensis. Et quoniam procurator virtute crinis receptus fuit dictus canonicus non continebatur ista clausula item quod dictus Petrus est liber et de liberis parentibus ex utroque parente procreatus et de legitimo matrimonio, predictus Leonardus et Thomas le Macon se obligant insolid. ad pecuniam viginti libri t. de faciendo dictum iuramentum per dictum canonicum persone seu mittere procuratorem continens dictas clausulas infra annum pro ipsum Petrum.

Document 4

ADA, G1860: Troyes Cathedral, Comptes de la Grand-Chambre, 1472–8.

f.351v (4 August 1477)

A ung jeune chantre de Picardie baillé en aulmo-sne par l'ordonnance de messieurs le iiij.^e jour de ce mois [aoust] six grans blancs qui valent v sc. vj den.

f.352r: 'ung jeune chantre de Tours' (27 August 1477); f.353r: 'ung poure presbytre tenoriste' (24 December 1477); *ibid.*: 'ung poure chantre appellé Jehan Cahouet' (26 January 1478); f.354r: 'ung tenoriste' (23 April 1478).

Document 5

ADA, G1863: Troyes Cathedral, Comptes de la Grand-Chambre, 1485–9.

f.65v (March 1486)

A Simonnet vicaire a Saint Estienne de Troyes baillé par l'ordonnance de chappitre pour aler a Cambray parler a ung nommé Anthoine et veoir se

il voudroit venir par deca pour monstrier aux enfans de cuer, x sc.

f.146r (16 November 1487)

A deux chantres flamens qui passaient leur chemin baillé par l'ordonnance de chappitre le vendredi apres la Saint Martin d'yver, v sc.

Document 6

ADA, G1867: Troyes Cathedral, Comptes de la Grand-Chambre, 1496/7.

f.110v (some time between March and June 1497)

Pour vng demy present fait a vng nommé Brumel, chanoine et chantre de Lan en Laulnois, de quatre pintes de vin a huit deniers tourn. la pinte, de quatre pains blancs a v den. t. le pain, et iij den. tourn. pour le porter, valent iiij sc. vij den. tourn.

Document 7

ADA, G1868: Troyes Cathedral, Comptes de la Grand-Chambre, 1499/1500.

Welcoming gift from the cathedral chapter to 'a singer named Josquin des Prez', on 12 December 1499. He was apparently staying with the master of the choirboys, Etienne des Jardins (Stephanus de Ortis).

f.55v (with duplicate on f.229r)

Pour vng demy present fait a vng chantre nommé Josquin des Prez en l'ostel du maistre des enfans, de quatre pintes de vin de beaulne, cest assavoir deux de blanc et deux de claret, au pris de xij den. tourn. la pinte de claret, et le blanc a xv den. tourn. , prins a La Samaritaine. Et quatre pains blancs de xvj den. tourn. , et iij den. tourn. pour portage. Quj est en somme vj sc. j den. tourn. Et fut fait cedit present le xij.^e jour de decembre pour ce vj sc. j den. tourn.

Four days later, Jehan Boulengier, tenorist of the King of France, likewise received a gift from the chapter while staying with the master of the choirboys. Jehan Boulengier held canonries in Troyes Cathedral (G1278, f.147r) and in the collegiate church of St Etienne at Troyes, where the chapter acts refer to him as 'Jehan Liray alias Boulangier, tenoriste de la chapelle du roy nostre sire' (6 G 13, f.206r; 19 May 1500).*

f.55v (16 December 1499)

Pour vng autre demy present fait oudit hostel du maistre des enfans le xvj.^{me} jour dudit mois a messire Jehan Boulengier, tenoriste du Roy, de quatre pintes de vin de beaulne, deux [f.56r] de claret et deux de blanc, cest assavoir le blanc a xv den. tourn. la pinte, et le claret a xij den. tourn. prins a La Samaritaine. Et quatre pains blancs de xvj den. tourn. Et iij den. tourn. pour portage pour ce pour tout vj sc. j den. tourn.

Document 8

ADA, G1873: Troyes Cathedral, Comptes de la Grand-Chambre, 1501/2.

f.72v (17 August 1501):

Pour vng demy present fait le dix-septième jour d'aoust a Josquin des Prez, chantre, de deux quartes de vin claret de beaulne, au pris de douze deniers tournois la pinte & pourre cy payé iiij sc. tournois

Document 9

ADA, G1875: Troyes Cathedral, Comptes de la Grand-Chambre, 1507/8.

f.226r (17 January 1508):

Pour vng present fait le jour Saint Anthoine a monseigneur Boulangier, chanoine de ceste eglise et chantre du roy nostre sire, estant en l'ostel de monseigneur de Troyes. De huit pintes de vin claret prins en l'ostel du pourcelot a dix deniers tournois la pinte. De six pains blancs a quatre deniers tournois le pain. Et pour le portage dudit present cinq deniers, valent ix sc. j den. tournois.

ff.226v–227r (7 June 1508):

Pour vng aultre present fait le septieme jour de juing a plusieurs chantres estans assemblez en la maison du maistre des enfans de cuer de ceste eglise, ausquelz messires le feirent faire. De huit pintes de vin tant blanc que claret, dont le claret a cousté dix deniers tournois la pinte, et le blanc huit deniers. De six pains blancs a j cinq deniers tournois le pain. Et pour le portage dudit present cinq deniers tournois, valent viij sc. xj den. tournois.

Lille, Archives municipales, 16212, City Accounts 1472/3.

f.76r (1 August 1473):

A Piettre van Malle, pointre, ix los de vin de beaulne prins a Collart Martin par ledit Jehan Desbons dudit command, presentez ledit premier jour d'aoust pour

honneur de ce que ledit jour il tint a ses despens en ceste dicte ville une congregacion de pointres des villes de Gand, Bruges, Bruxelles, et autres villes des pays de monseigneur le duc [de Bourgogne] et les festoia, ale quelle feste il se conduisi honnourablement avec aucuns notables de la loy de ladite ville. Ledit vin au pris de vij sc. le lot monte parmi xviii den. de portaige, lxiii sc. vj den.

Rob C. Wegman is a musicologist specializing in the 15th and early 16th centuries. His monograph The crisis of music in Early Modern Europe, 1470–1530 (New York: Routledge, 2005) recently appeared in paperback. rwegman@princeton.edu

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1 Abbé A. Prévost, 'Histoire de la maîtrise de la cathédrale de Troyes', *Mémoires de la Société académique d'agriculture, des sciences de l'Aube*, lxix (1905), pp.213–371; reprinted in *La vie musicale dans les provinces françaises* (Geneva, 1972–93), v.1.

2 See H. d'Arbois de Jubainville, *Inventaire-sommaire des Archives départementales antérieures à 1790*, Ser. G: Archives ecclésiastiques (Troyes, 1873–96). The inventories for the other churches in Troyes can be accessed on the website of the Archives départementales de l'Aube; see http://www.archives-aube.com/index_inventaires.htm (accessed 6 September 2007). The wealth of material in this archive is astonishing: there is a musicology Ph.D. waiting to be written here. Art historians have made excellent use of these documentary resources in reconstructing the building history of the cathedral; see S. Murray, *Building Troyes Cathedral*:

the late Gothic campaigns (Bloomington, 1986).

3 For this and what follows, see A. Roth, 'Anmerkungen zur Benefizialkarriere des Johannes Ockeghem', *Collectanea*, i: *Capellae Apostolicae Sixtinaeque Collectanea Acta Monumenta*, iii (Vatican City, 1994), pp.97–232.

4 The most exhaustive and, for now, definitive analysis of the relevant documentation is the article by A. Magro, "'Premierement ma Baronnie de Chasteauneuf': Jean de Ockeghem, Treasurer of St Martin's in Tours", *Early Music History*, xviii (1999), pp.165–258.

5 I am most grateful to Alejandro Planchart for explaining this requirement to me, and for sharing documentation from St Gery's, Cambrai, showing its precise implications and workings.

6 C. Wright, 'Dufay at Cambrai: discoveries and revisions', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, xxviii (1975), pp.175–229, at p.208; exhibition catalogue *Johannes Ockeghem en zijn tijd* (Dendermonde, 1970), p.115.

7 R. C. Wegman, *Born for the muses: the life and Masses of Jacob Obrecht* (Oxford, 1994), p.141.

8 Brumel's association with Laon Cathedral around this time is confirmed by the chapter acts of Notre Dame of Paris, where the composer is described on 5 January 1498 as

'magister Antoine Brumel, priest and canon of Laon' ('magister Anthonius Brumet presbyter canonicus laudunensis'). See C. Wright, 'Antoine Brumel and patronage at Paris', in *Music in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. I. Fenlon (Cambridge, 1981), pp.37–60, at pp.48 and 58.

9 Perhaps identical with the *petit vicair*e Boulenghier who worked at Cambrai Cambrai in 1474; see C. Wright, 'Musiciens a la cathedrale de Cambrai, 1475–1550', *Revue de musicologie*, lxii (1976), pp.204–28, at p.212. Theodor Dumitrescu kindly drew my attention to a publication discussing Jehan Boulengier's service as tenorist at the court of Lorraine between 1489 and 1496: P. Desaux, 'Pierquin de Thérache, maître de chapelle et compositeur des ducs René II et Antoine de Lorraine', in *Symphonies Lorraines: compositeurs, exécutants, destinataires*, ed. Y. Ferraton (Langres, 1998), pp.29–76.

10 R. C. Wegman, 'From maker to composer: improvisation and musical authorship in the Low Countries, 1450–1500', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, xlix (1996), pp.409–79, at pp.444–9.

11 Wegman, 'From maker to composer', pp.471–7.

12 R. Wegman, 'The minstrel school in the late Middle Ages', *Historic Brass Society Journal*, xiv (2002), pp.11–30.

13 Above, n.6.