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2018

## 04, Condition Report

Nalani Meinken

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*Condition on Receipt of Kerver's 1507 Printed Book of Hours for  
Portland State University*  
Nalani Meinken

***Acknowledgments***

Thank you to Dr. Anne McClanan for creating an inspirational University Studies Program that honed my research and writing techniques, allowed me to interact with Portland's local community, and allowed me to gear my project towards conservation of illuminated manuscripts, parchment, and leather.

Thank you to Professor Maud Pérez-Simon for sharing your passion and reminding me to enjoy the BoH and its images.

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Thank you to Jim Carmin, director of the John Wilson Special Collections at the Multnomah County Central Library, for taking the time to share your passion for bookbinding, illuminated manuscripts, and illuminated books with me.

**Table of Contents:**

- I. Introduction**
- II. Identification**
- III. Description of Materials**

**1) Condition Report of the Cover (Fig. 1- 6)**

- a) Support
- b) Medium/Media
- c) Surface coating
- d) Cover attachments
- e) Evidence of past treatment
- f) Cover condition characteristics
- g) Cover structure condition
- h) Cover photo documentation

**2) Overall Condition Report of the Book and Folios (Fig. 7- 26)**

- a) Support
- b) Medium/ Media
- c) Book attachments
- d) Evidence of past treatment
- e) Book condition characteristics
- f) Book structure condition
- g) Overall photo documentation

**3) Summary Condition Report**

- IV. Glossary**
- V. Bibliography**

**I. Introduction:**

The purpose of this report is to document the condition of Portland State University's (PSU) newly acquired 1507 Book of Hours (BoH) printed by Thielman Kerver.

**II. Identification:**

Custodian: Special Collections at Portland State University Library

Registration number: "1507 BoH" or "Thielmann Kerver's Printed BoH"

Alma IZ record number: 99902703930501853

Date acquired by PSU: January 2018

Moved to Special Collections: February 2018

Period of inspection: 04/02/2018 - 06/07/2018

Title: *Book of Hours*

Artist and publisher: Thielmann Kerver (Printer active 1497 - 1524)

Associated artists: Jean Pichore and Jean Philippe

Date of manufacture: June 23, 1507

Place of manufacture: Rue Saint-Jacques

Dimensions of cover: 12.8 x 19.6 cm

Dimensions of spine: 3.8 x 18.05 cm

Dimensions of folios: 10.8 x 18.0 cm

Girth: 31.4 cm

Identifying marks and inscriptions: Embossed "YHS" on leather cover and back panel.

### III. Description of Materials:

#### 1) Condition Report of the Cover (Figures 1- 6):

- a. Support:
  - i. Leather type: Calf leather over wood plank
  - ii. Wood type: Unknown.
  - iii. Present color: Medium to dark brown
  - iv. Present surface characteristics: Embossed leather with a floral pattern. “Tooled in blind with three sets of triple filets, an arabesque roll between the second and the third, and a central panel”<sup>1</sup> and the gold letters “YHS” on the front-panel and back-panel. “XVI” leather label on spine (Fig.1).
  - v. Method of manufacture: Hand-bound
- b. Medium/Media: Illustrated and illuminated book.
- c. Surface coating: Embossed leather on wooden panels.
- d. Cover attachments:
  - i. Lining: Inner lining made of parchment
  - ii. Fasteners: Clasps were removed probably due to the corrosion that penetrated the first 3 pages of parchment on the cover side. The holes were filled in (see evidence of past treatment on the cover with prior repairs).
  - iii. Seals: No wax seals. Only an embossed “YHS” with circular and rectangular floral patterns on both the front-panel and the back- panel (Fig.1 and 2).
  - iv. The Spine: The spine suffers extensive cracking from head to tail. The head and tail bands are in good condition, no cracks, tears, etc.
- e. Evidence of past treatment:
  - i. Previous repairs/inserts of the cover’s front panel: The original clasp attachments were removed and an unknown paste that resembles the hue of the leather-cover panel (medium brown) was used to fill in the front and back clasp-induced holes.
  - ii. Previous repairs/inserts on the back cover: The original clasp attachments were removed and an unknown paste that resembles the hue of the leather-covered panel (medium brown) was used to fill in the front and back clasp-induced holes.
  - iii. Tapes: No tapes visible on either the cover or the cover’s inner-front and inner-back panels.
  - iv. Residual Adhesives: Unknown. Requires lab testing to verify.
  - v. Paper Remnants: A total of 8 remnants of unknown script. 4 remnants under each of the past down papers of the front and back panels to support the binding bands.
  - vi. Fixatives: Plant starch or other organic fixative
  - vii. Cover related in-painting: None, unless the inserts that fill in the holes left by the clasp required painting.

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<sup>1</sup> Les Enluminures 2018.

f. Cover condition characteristics:

- i. Discoloration: Slight discoloration of the leather due to general use. Stable.
- ii. Stains due to poor quality materials (tapes/adhesives): The leather cover does not seem to suffer from poor quality adhesives.
- iii. Mold: None visible, requires lab testing to verify.
- iv. Staining: Brown-grey staining on the cover on the front and back panel's parchment lining. Location: 6.5 x 10.5 cm from the cover's top edge. (Fig 3 and 4).
- v. Insect damage: Visible insect damage of the cover on the front wood panel and front-panel parchment lining in the upper right-hand corner. Location: 2.0 x 3.80 cm. Extent of insect consumption: 0.01 x 0.5 cm. Two minor insect induced holes in the cover's front wood panel and front parchment lining. Location: 1.10 x 0.40 cm from the bottom right-hand corner of the front-panel. Extent of the damage: 0.4 x 0.2 cm.

g. Cover structural condition:

1. Embrittlement: Overall flexibility is good
2. Losses: See media loss of the leather covered panels and media loss of cover's spine.
3. Pin or tack holes: One 0.4 cm diameter hole in the front cover panel, 3.8 cm from the tail of the book and just bordering the spine and the spine's lowest band. This hole penetrates through the cover to the inner lining of the front panel.
4. Abrasions/Skinning: Abrasions on the tail end of the cover from normal use.
5. Thinning: Thinning leather in the upper right-hand corner of the front panel. Resulting in an asymmetrical corner, and exposure of the wooden support.
6. Overall planar distortions: No visible warping of the cover's front and back panels. In good condition.
7. Creases: No visible creasing of the cover's front and back panels. Regular use caused creasing, cracking, and flaking of the leather along the spine. Running from its head to tail (Fig. 6 and 7).
8. Attachment support/hinges causing distortion: None.
9. Flattened plate mark, paper surface or design: None.
10. Scratches: Minor scratches on the tail half of the cover's front and back panels, not deep. Noticeable scratch marks on the cover's tail due to vertical shelving.
11. Media loss/abrasion of the panels (front and back): Loss of leather on the upper right-hand corner of the front-panel and the lower left-hand corner of the back-panel bordering the spine. The back-panel's media loss results in an exposed section of its wooden support panel. Minor hole in

the cover's front leather panel. Location: 0.65 x 1.90 cm from the top left-hand corner. Extent of the hole: 0.015 x 0.4 cm

12. Media loss on the cover's spine: Surface leather missing around the books' bands, especially near the cover's back panel.
13. Cracking, flaking, cleaving, powdering or other structural insecurities: Increased cracking, flaking, and creasing on the spine resulting in minor surface leather loss along the spine, running from head to tail.

## h. Cover photo documentation:

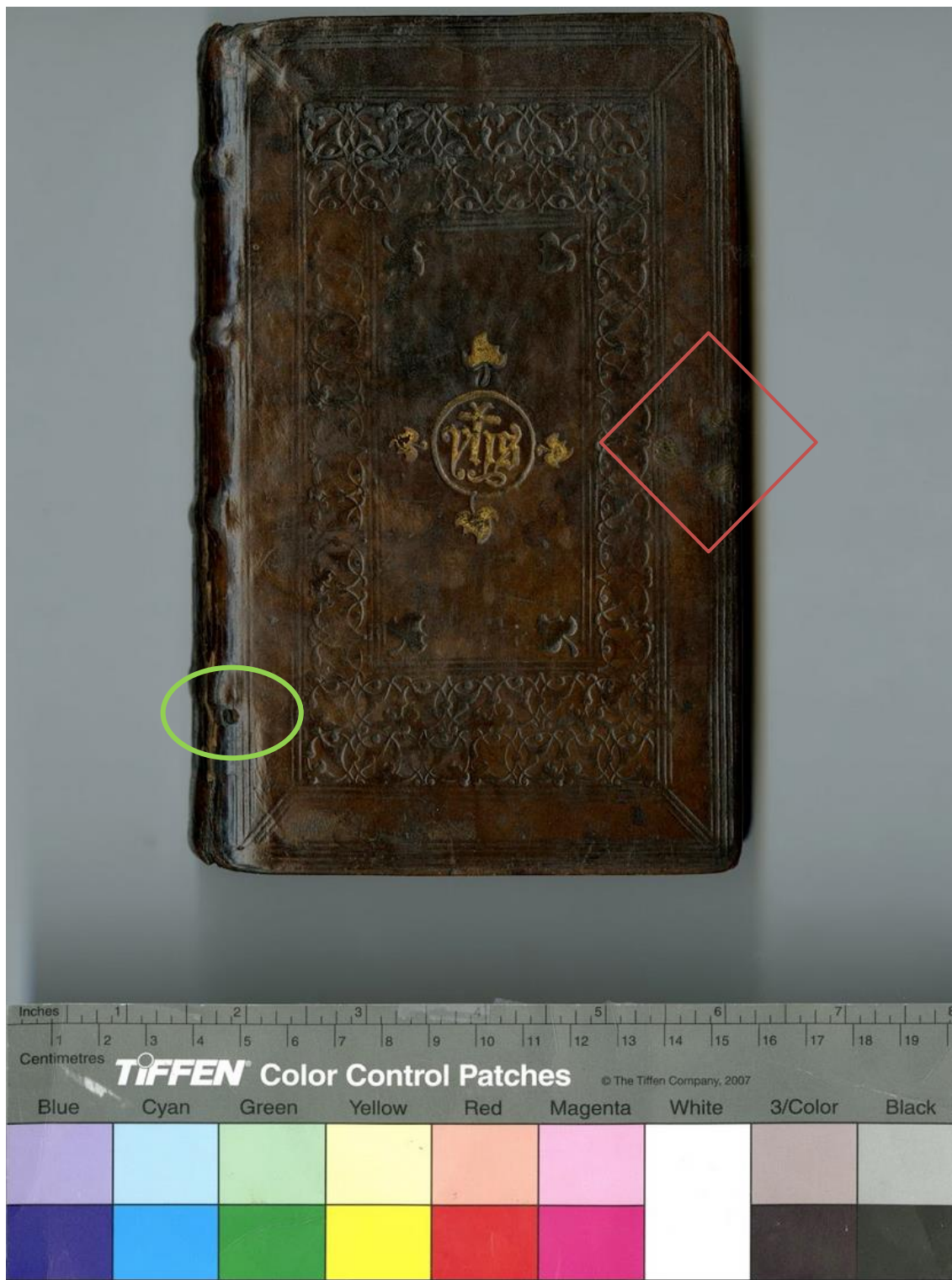


Figure 1: 16<sup>th</sup> – century contemporary calf leather covered front panel featuring an embossed, gilded, “YHS,” restored leather inserts where the claps were removed (outlined in orange), and a minor hole (outlined in green). Image provided by Les Enluminures 2018.



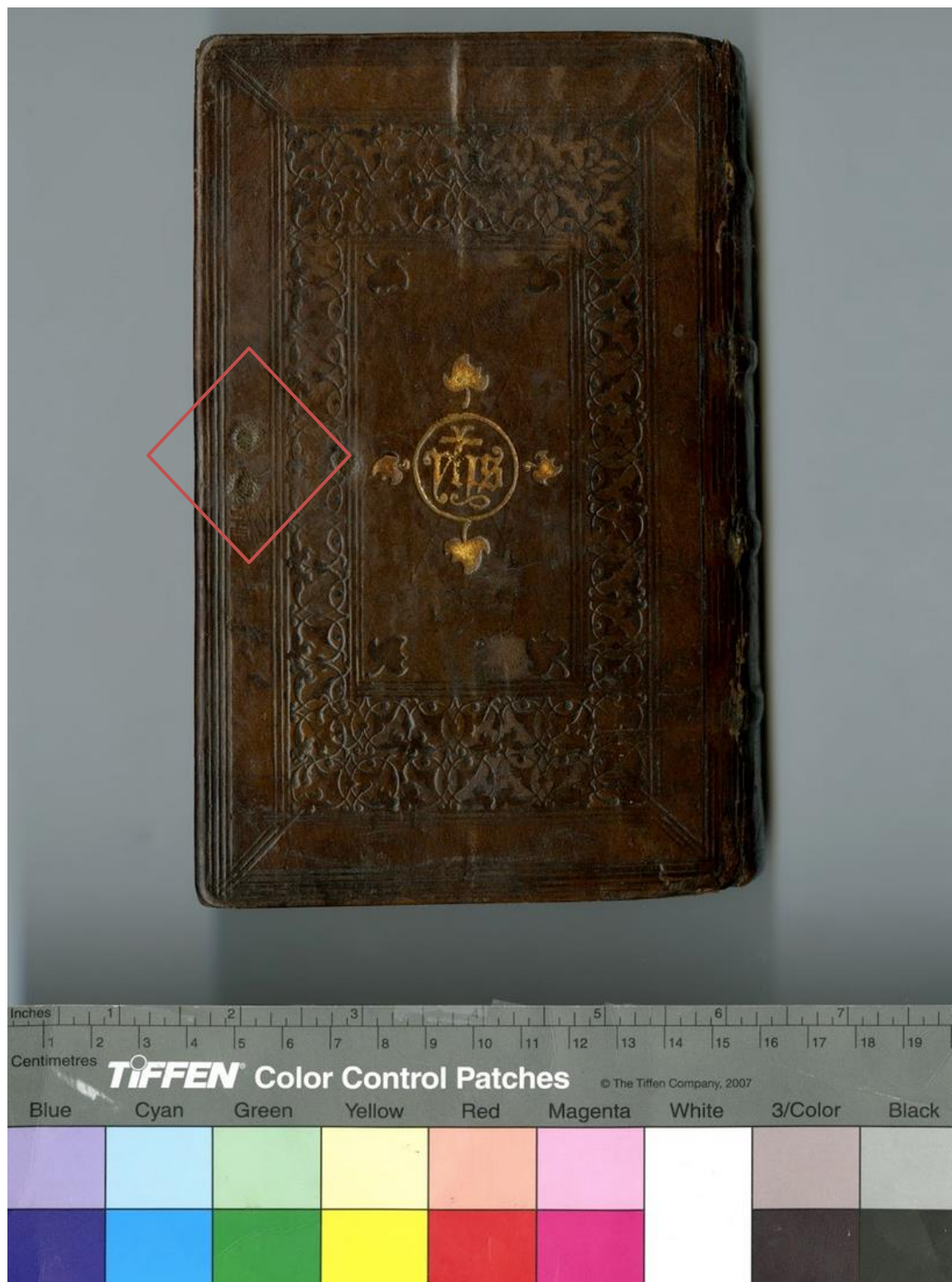
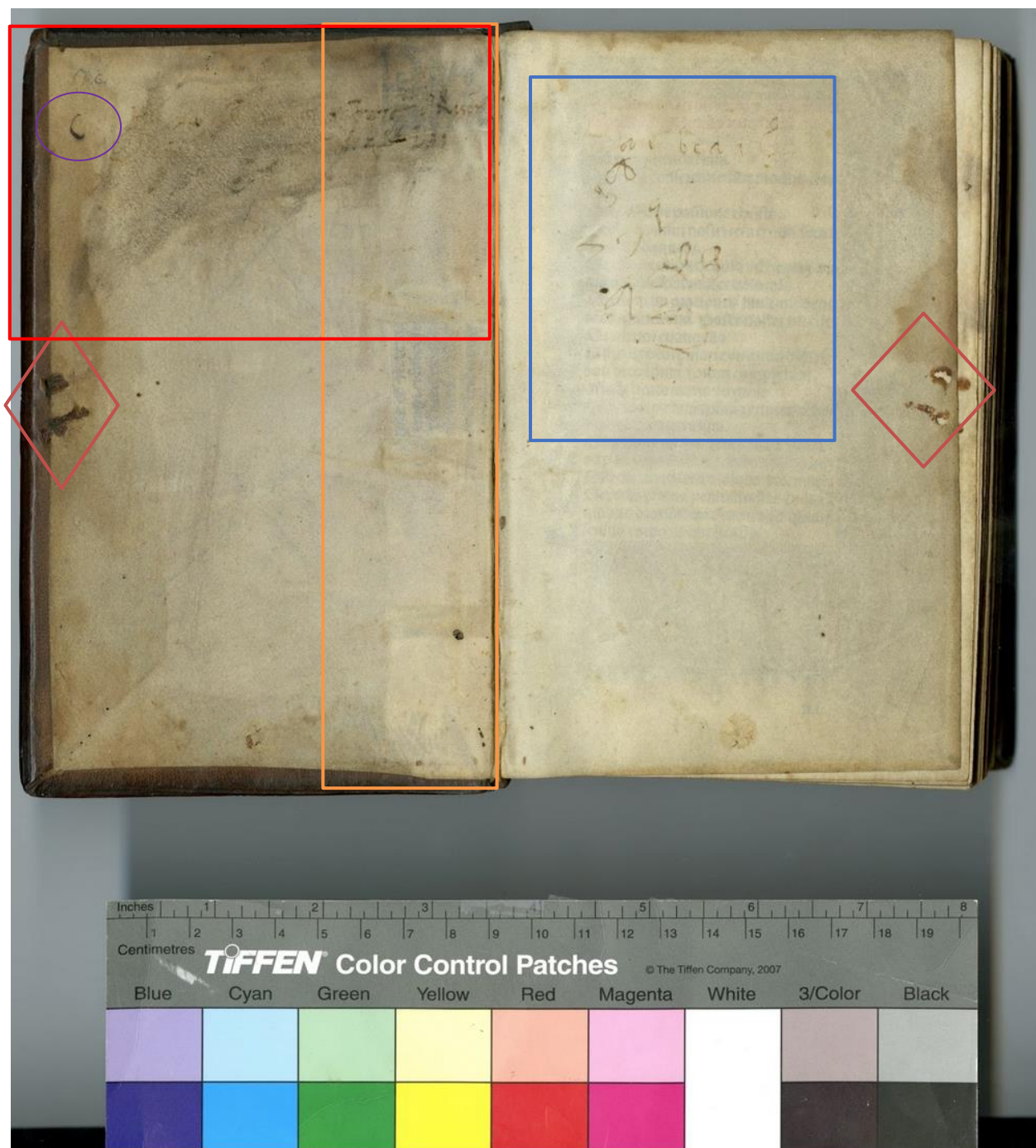
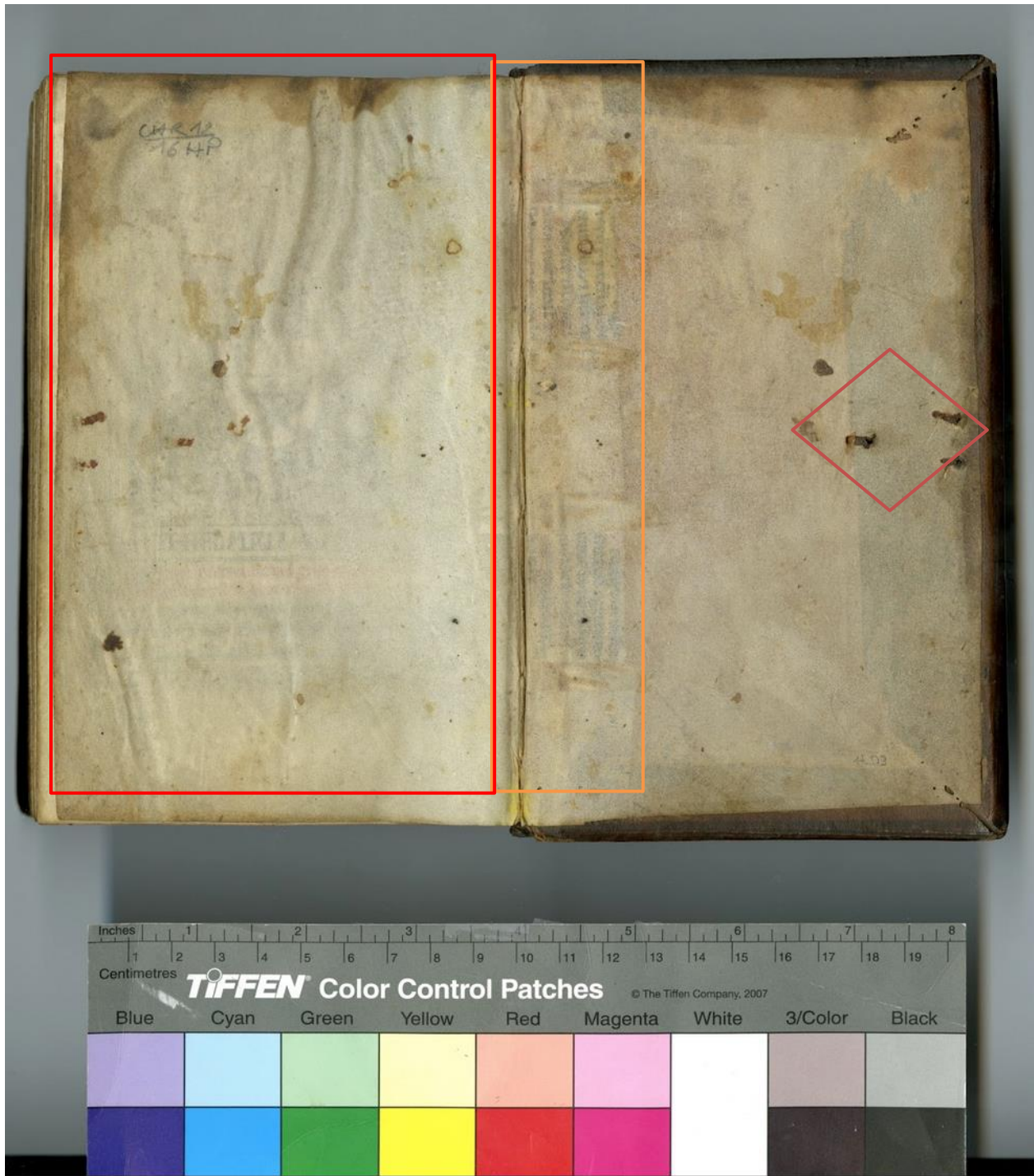


Figure 2: 16<sup>th</sup> – Century contemporary calf leather covered back panel featuring an embossed, gilded, “YHS,” and restored leather where the clasps were removed (outlined in orange). Image provided by Les Enluminures 2018.



**Figure 3:** 16<sup>th</sup> – century binding with calf leather front pastedown end panel featuring staining from previous mold damage (outlined in red), rust induced holes where clasps were removed (outlined twice in orange), minor insect damage (outlined in purple), underlining remnants to support the 5 binding bands (outlined in green), and a scribble from a previous owner (outlined in blue). Image provided by Les Enluminures and colored outlines added by author. 2018.





**Figure 4:** Calf leather, rear pastedown, and back panel parchment featuring minor staining (outlined in red), rust induced holes where clasps were removed (outlined in orange), water induced creasing on the cover parchment (outlined in red), and underlining remnants to support the five binding bands (outlined in green). Image provided by Les Enluminures and colored outlines added by author. 2018.



**Figure 5:** Head of spine featuring creases and crackling of the calf leather with a paper pasted label reading, "XI." Photo by author. 2018.



**Figure 6:** Tail of spine featuring creases and crackling of the calf leather with minor holes along the lower bands. Photo by author. 2018.

## 2) Overall Condition Report of the Book and Folios (Figures 7- 26):

- a. Support:
  - i. Paper type: Parchment/vellum
  - ii. Present color: Tannish-grey and yellowing
  - iii. Present surface characteristics: Book's face has residual gold edge and uneven fore-edge (Fig. 7).
  - iv. Method of manufacture: Hand bound with wool, hemp, or other organic fibrous material.
  - v. Number of quires: 19<sup>2</sup>
- b. Medium/Media: Illustrated with metalcuts and various illuminated majuscule throughout the book.
- c. Book attachments:
  - i. Mount: Unknown adhesive used to attach the quires to the cover's leather bound wooden panels and spine.
  - ii. Front and back pastedown material: Parchment with unknown adhesive.
  - iii. Clasps: Removed and filled in with unknown similarly colored material or leather inserts (Fig. 8).
- d. Evidence of past treatment:
  - i. Previous repairs/ inserts: Folios c.v; i.viii; o.i; q.ii; and r.ii.
    1. Folio c.v. — "D" majuscule restored (Fig. 9)
    2. Folio i.viii. — Moses's cloth was penciled in (Fig. 10). Verso — majuscule "D" restored (Fig.11).
    3. Folio o.j. — Lower right-hand skull motif penciled in (Fig. 12). Verso — Lower left-hand tri-skull and crossed bones motif penciled in (Fig. 13).
    4. Folio q.ii. — bottom band, right floral motif replaced and penciled in (Fig. 14). Verso — majuscule "D" replaced and restored (Fig. 15).
    5. R.vi. verso — Restored majuscule "S" (Fig. 16) resulting in a blank patch of restorative material on r.vi. (Fig 17).
  - ii. Tapes: Unknown tapes used to repair the following folios: C.v; i.ii.; o.j.; q.ii.; and r.ii.
  - iii. Residual Adhesives: Unknown adhesives used to repair: C.v., i.ii., o.j.; q.ii., and r.ii.
  - iv. In-painting: C.v. — majuscule "D" restored; q.ii. — majuscule "D" restored, and r.vi verso — majuscule "S" restored.
  - v. In-pencilling on the following folios: C.v.verso — dragon's head and floral background, i.viii. — Moses's robes, o.j. and o.i verso — Tri-skull and crossed bones motif, q.ii. verso — Bottom band, right-hand floral pattern.
- e. Book condition characteristics:
  - i. Discoloration: Medium yellowing due to body oils and from general use. Parchment remains stable.

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<sup>2</sup> Les Enluminures 2018.

- ii. Fading: No noticeable fading on the folios.
- iii. Foxing: No noticeable foxing.
- iv. Mold/ stains on folios: T.v. to back pastedown parchment, possible mold stain damage. Requires lab testing to verify.
- v. Tidelines: T.v. to back pastedown parchment, possible mold damage. Requires lab testing to verify.
- vi. Accretions: No noticeable accretions.
- vii. Surface soiling: Penciled additions on the book's front and back free end papers.
- viii. Fingerprints: One major fingerprint on folio a.iiij. (Fig. 18).
- vi. Previous retouching: C.v; i.viii; o.i; q.iiij; and r.iiij.
- vii. Non-original markings/notations: Cover parchment (Fig. 19), b.iii.— crescent mark [possibly ballpoint pen](Fig. 20), c.v. — “U.M. IUTOV” (Fig. 21), r.viii.— “mem?atio” (Fig. 22), t.viii. — “1507” (Fig. 23), rear page protector parchment — “B?H 144”<sup>3</sup> bottom left-hand corner (Fig.24), verso — “<sup>C?AR12</sup>”<sub>16HP</sub> top left-hand corner (Fig. 25), and rear pastedown parchment — “H-09” on bottom right-hand corner (Fig 26).

f. Book structure condition:

- i. Flexibility: Parchment remains stable and flexible.
- ii. Tears/breaks: Minor tear on c.viii.
- i. Losses: C.v; i.viii; o.i; q.iiij; and r.iiij but restored with unknown paper/paste.
- iii. Thinning: None
- i. Overall planar distortions: Planar distortion on the front cover pages when the book was closed due to pressure exerted by the previously removed clasp.
- i. Creasing and wrinkles: Notable creasing on folio d.viii.
- i. Folds: One minor fold on e.viii verso.
- i. Attachment support: Fragile hinges both on the front and back cover panels.
- i. Flattened plate mark, paper surface or design: None.
- i. Trimmed edges: Minor trimmings resulting in an uneven fore edge.
- i. Media loss/abrasion: Minor media loss but restored with unknown supplemental square folios. Judging from the material's thinness, the material used could be parchment or layered Japanese Washi paper. Requires lab testing.

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<sup>3</sup> \* “?” means an illegible notation\*

g. Overall photo documentation:





Figure 8: Evidence of corrosion induced damage on the front cover page due to previously removed clasp. Photo by author. 2018.





Figure 9: Folio c.v. — Restored majuscule "D." Photo by author. 2018.



Figure 10: Folio c.v. verso — Pencil restoration of dragon's head in lower right band. Photo by author. 2018.



Figure 11: Folio Lviii. — Moses leading the exodus from Egypt (cloth penciled in). Photo by author. 2018.



Figure 12: Folio i.viii. verso — Restored majuscule "D."  
Photo by author. 2018.



Figure 13: Folio o.j. — Lower right-hand skull motif that was penciled. Photo by author. 2018.



Figure 14: Folio o.j. verso — Lower left-hand skull motif that was penciled. Photo by author. 2018.



Figure 15: Folio q.ij. — Bottom band, right floral motif replaced and penciled in. Photo by author. 2018.



Figure 16: Folio q.ij. verso — Majuscule "D" replaced and restored. Photo by author. 2018.

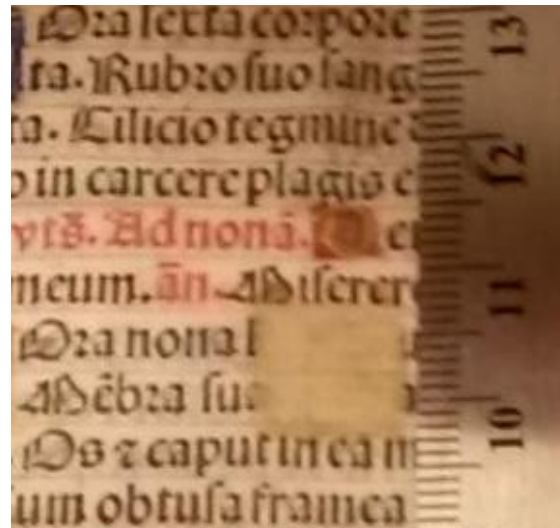


Figure 17: Folio r.vi — A blank patch of restorative material. Photo by author. 2018.

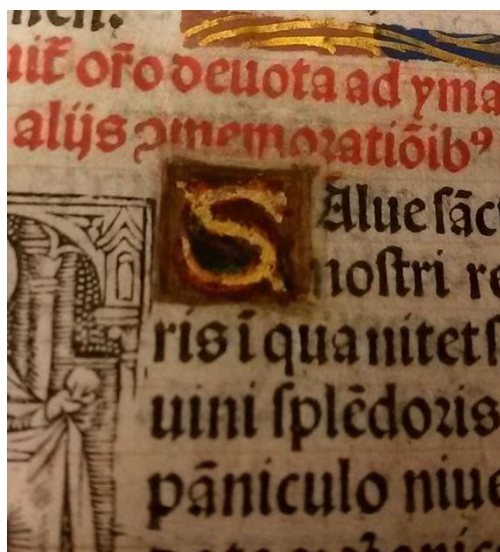


Figure 18: Folio r.vi. verso — Restored majuscule "S." Photo by author. 2018.



**Tabula ad inveniendum  
festa mobilia quolibet anno.**

| Diebus<br>Littera  | Aureus nu-<br>merus. | Inter-<br>ualū | Septimā<br>passi. | Carnis<br>pauis. | Zeta<br>pasche | Quinq̄<br>agesimā | corp̄<br>xpi. |
|--------------------|----------------------|----------------|-------------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------|---------------|
| i iij ix xij xvi   | viii                 | 5.             | feb 21            | fe 9             | ap 14          | mar 28            | ma 8 iun      |
| ii v xii xvii      | vi                   | 22             | ia 7              | fe 26            | ma 30          | ap 14             | ma 25 ma      |
| iii vi xiii xviii  | ix                   | 12             | fe 28             | fe 16            | ap 21          | ma 4              | iun 15 iun    |
| iiii x xvi xxi     | vii                  | 29             | fe 14             | fe 2             | ap 7           | ma 21             | ma 1 iun      |
| v vj xij xvii      | x                    | 19             | ia 7              | mar 23           | ap 28          | ma 11             | iun 22 iu     |
| vi ix xiv xix      | viii                 | 16             | fe 22             | fe 10            | ap 15          | ma 29             | ma 9 iun      |
| vii x xvii xxii    | vi                   | 123            | ia 8              | fe 17            | ma 1           | ma 15             | ma 26 ma      |
| viii xi xvi xxi    | ix                   | 13             | fe 1              | fe 17            | ap 22          | ma 5              | iun 16 iu     |
| iiii vj xij xvii   | vii                  | 130            | ia 15             | fe 3             | ap 8           | ma 22             | ma 2 iu       |
| v vj xij xvii      | x                    | 120            | fe 8              | mar 24           | ap 29          | ma 12             | iun 23 iu     |
| i vi ix xiv xix    | viii                 | 27             | fe 23             | fe 11            | ap 16          | ma 30             | ma 10 iu      |
| ii v xii xvii      | vi                   | 224            | ia 9              | fe 28            | ma 2           | ma 16             | ma 27 ma      |
| iii xi xvi xxi     | ix                   | 214            | fe 2              | fe 18            | ap 23          | ma 6              | iun 17 iu     |
| iiii vj xij xvii   | vii                  | 231            | ia 16             | fe 4             | ap 9           | ma 23             | ma 3 iu       |
| v vj xij xvii      | x                    | 221            | fe 9              | mar 25           | ap 30          | ma 13             | iu 24 iu      |
| i vi ix xiv xix    | viii                 | 38             | fe 24             | fe 12            | ap 17          | ma 31             | ma 11 iu      |
| ii v xii xvii      | vi                   | 325            | ia 10             | fe 29            | ma 3           | ma 17             | ma 28 ma      |
| iii xi xvi xxi     | ix                   | 315            | fe 3              | ma 19            | ap 24          | ma 7              | iu 18 iu      |
| iiii vj xij xvii   | vii                  | 31             | fe 7              | f. 5             | ap 10          | ma 14             | ma 4 iu       |
| v vj xij xvii      | x                    | 318            | ia 3              | fe 22            | ma 26          | ap 10             | ma 21 iu      |
| i iij vj xij xvii  | vii                  | 42             | fe 18             | fe 6             | ap 11          | ma 25             | ma 5 iu       |
| ii x xvi xxi       | vi                   | 426            | ia 11             | fe 30            | ma 4           | ma 18             | ma 29 ma      |
| iii vii xi xiv xix | ix                   | 416            | fe 4              | mar 20           | ap 25          | ma 8              | iu 19 iu      |
| iiii ix xiv xix    | viii                 | 49             | fe 25             | fe 13            | ap 18          | ma 1              | iu 12 iu      |
| v xvi              | x                    | 419            | ia 4              | fe 23            | ma 27          | ma 11             | ma 22 ma      |
| i iij vj xij xvii  | vii                  | 53             | fe 19             | fe 7             | ap 12          | ma 26             | ma 6 iu       |
| ii vii xi xiv xix  | vi                   | 527            | ia 12             | fe 31            | ma 5           | ma 19             | ma 30 ma      |
| iii vii xi xiv xix | viii                 | 510            | fe 26             | fe 14            | ap 9           | ma 2              | iu 13 iu      |
| v xvi              | x                    | 520            | ia 5              | fe 24            | ma 28          | ap 12             | ma 23 ma      |
| viii xi xiv        | ix                   | 517            | fe 5              | mar 21           | ap 26          | ma 9              | iu 20 iu      |
| i iij vj xij xvii  | vii                  | 64             | fe 20             | fe 8             | ap 13          | ma 7              | ma 7 iu       |
| ii vii xi xiv xix  | vi                   | 628            | ia 13             | fe 1             | ap 6           | ma 20             | ma 31 ma      |
| iii vii xi xiv xix | viii                 | 611            | fe 27             | fe 15            | ap 20          | ma 3              | iu 14 iu      |
| v xvi              | x                    | 621            | ia 6              | fe 25            | ma 19          | ap 13             | ma 24 ma      |
| viii xi xiv        | ix                   | 618            | fe 6              | ma 122           | ap 27          | ma 10             | iu 21 iu      |



Figure 19: Folio a.iiij. (bottom, right-hand corner) — Major inked 2.5 x 3.5 cm fingerprint. Photo by author. 2018.

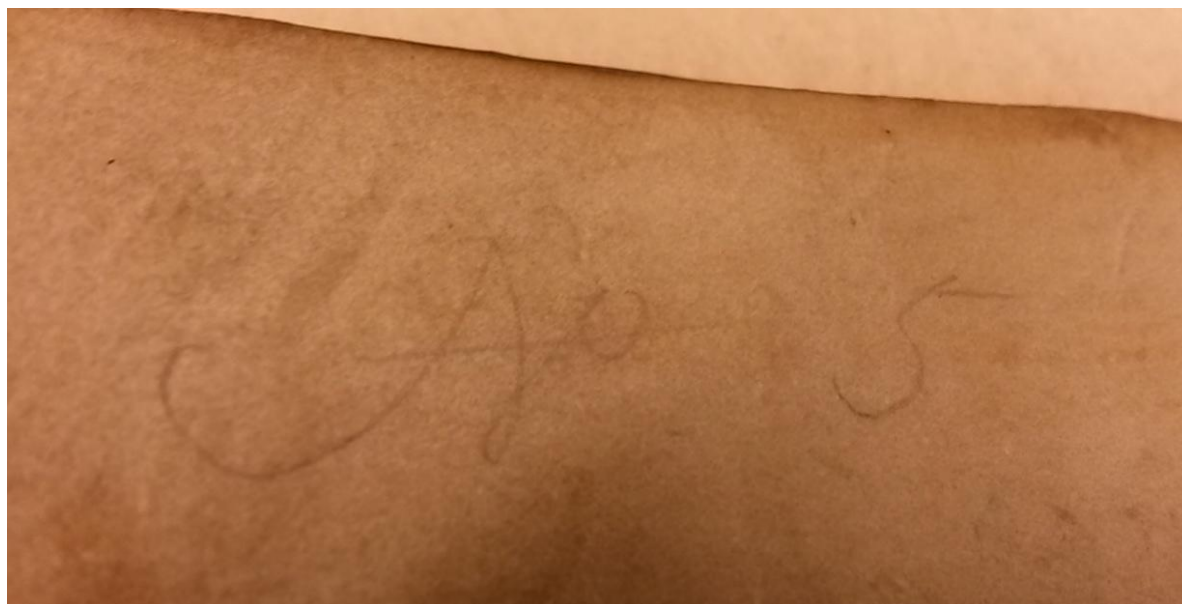


Figure 20: Front page protector parchment (top-left) — “Ao 5” penciled in. Photo by author. 2018.

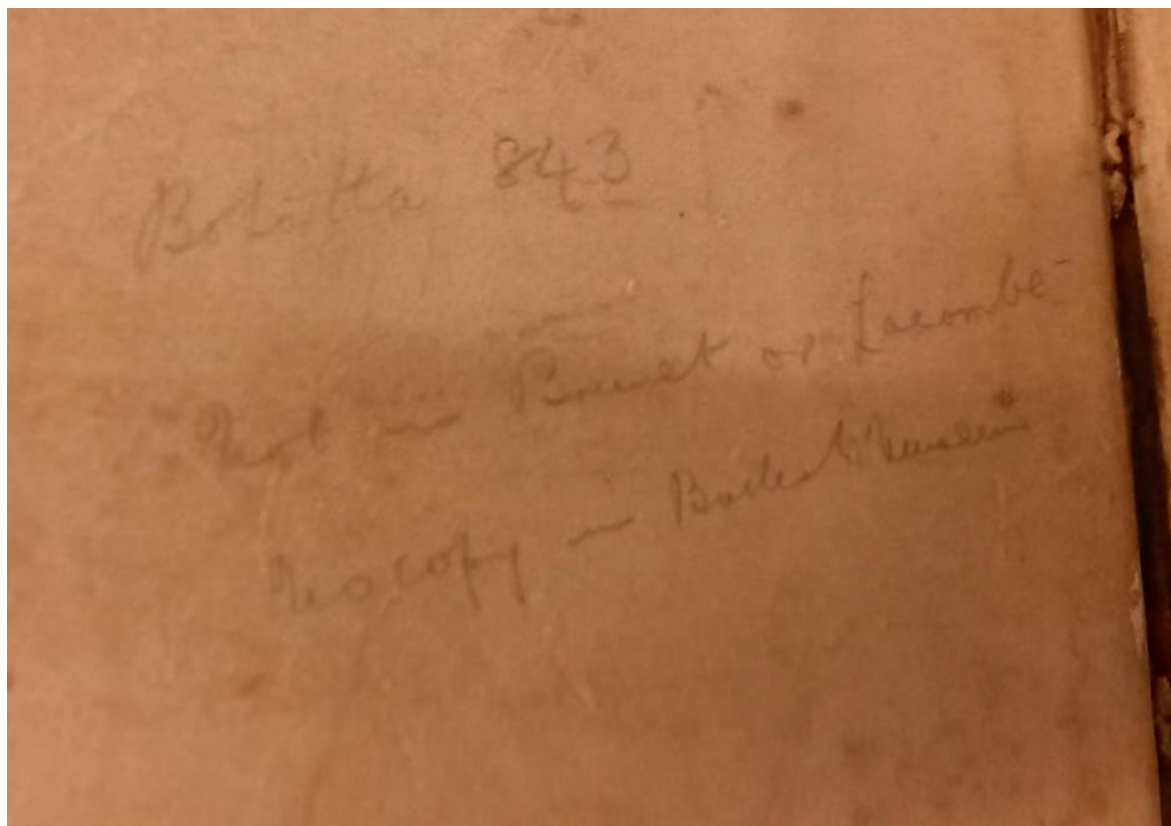


Figure 21: Front page protector parchment (middle) — “Bol?lta 843...?no copy- B?” penciled in. Photo by author. 2018.

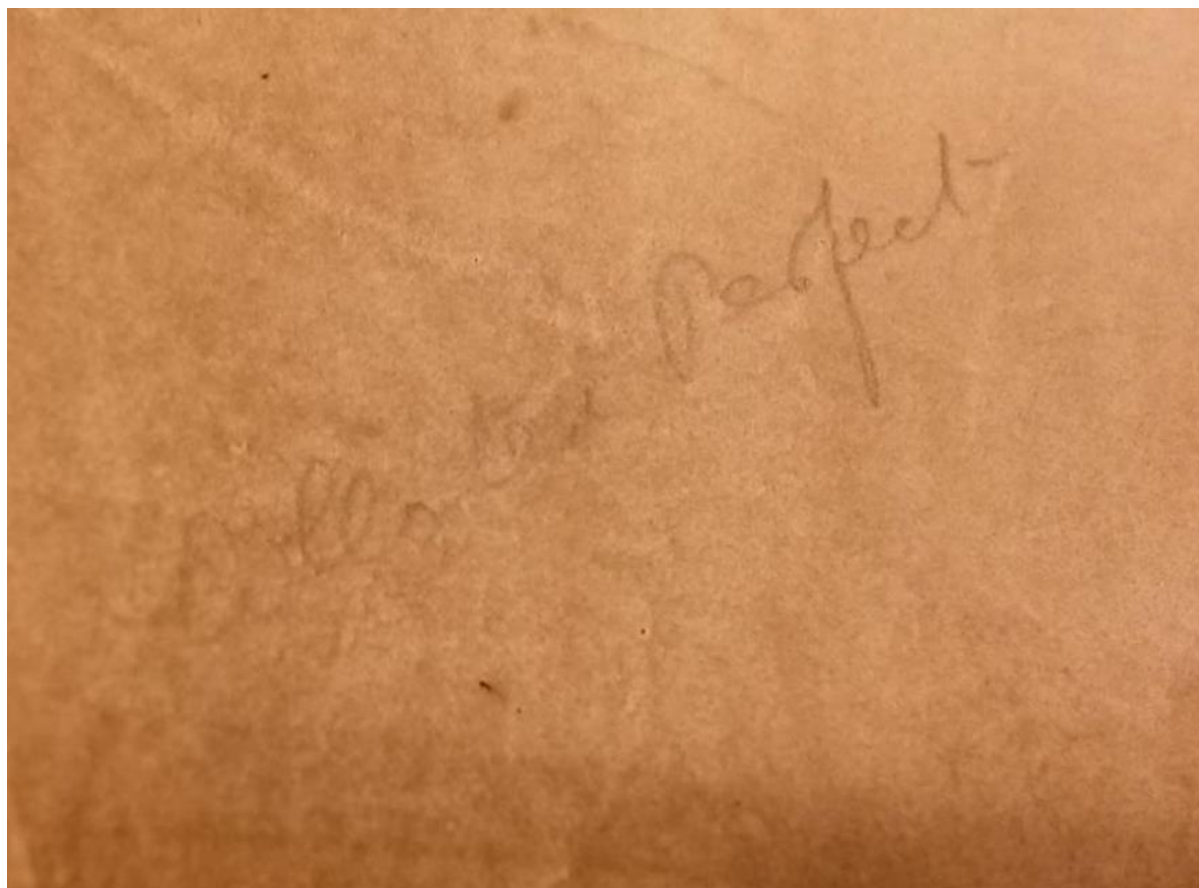


Figure 22: Front page- protector parchment (bottom left-hand corner) — “W??sted Perfect” penciled in. Photo by author. 2018.



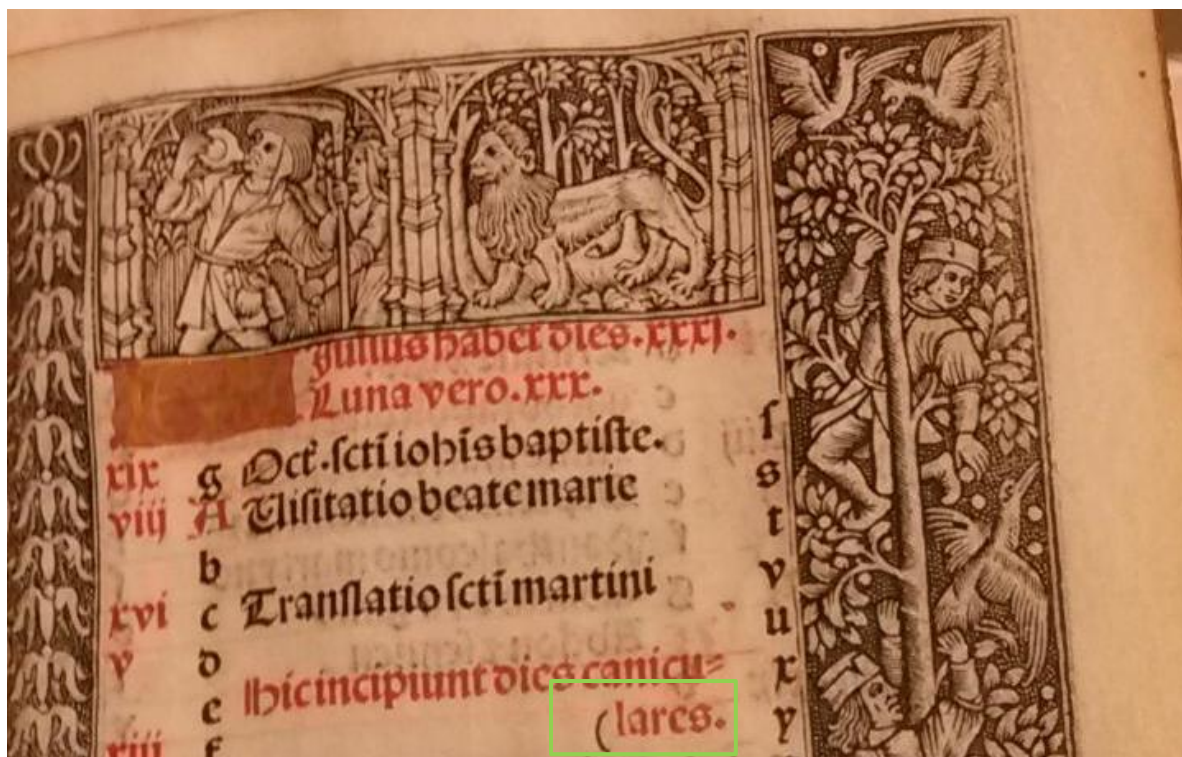


Figure 23: Folio b.ij. (mid-page) — Black inked crescent notation (outlined in green). Possibly ball point pen. Photo by author. 2018.

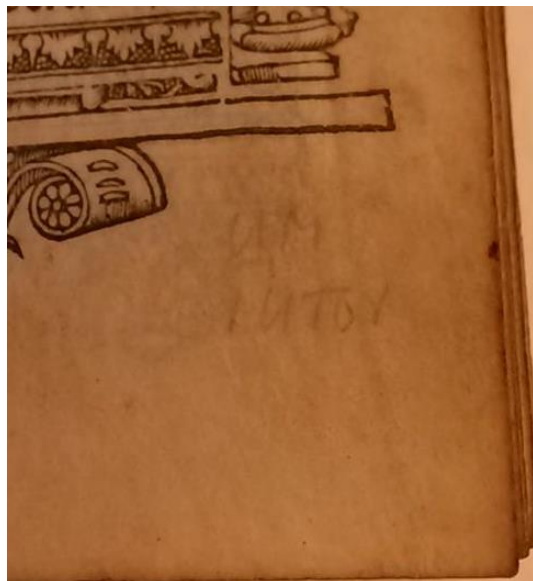


Figure 24: Folio c.v. (bottom right-hand corner) — "U.M. IUTOV" was penciled in. Photo by author. 2018.



Figure 25: Rear page protector parchment (top left-hand corner) — "(C?AR12)/16HP" was penciled in. Photo by author. 2018.



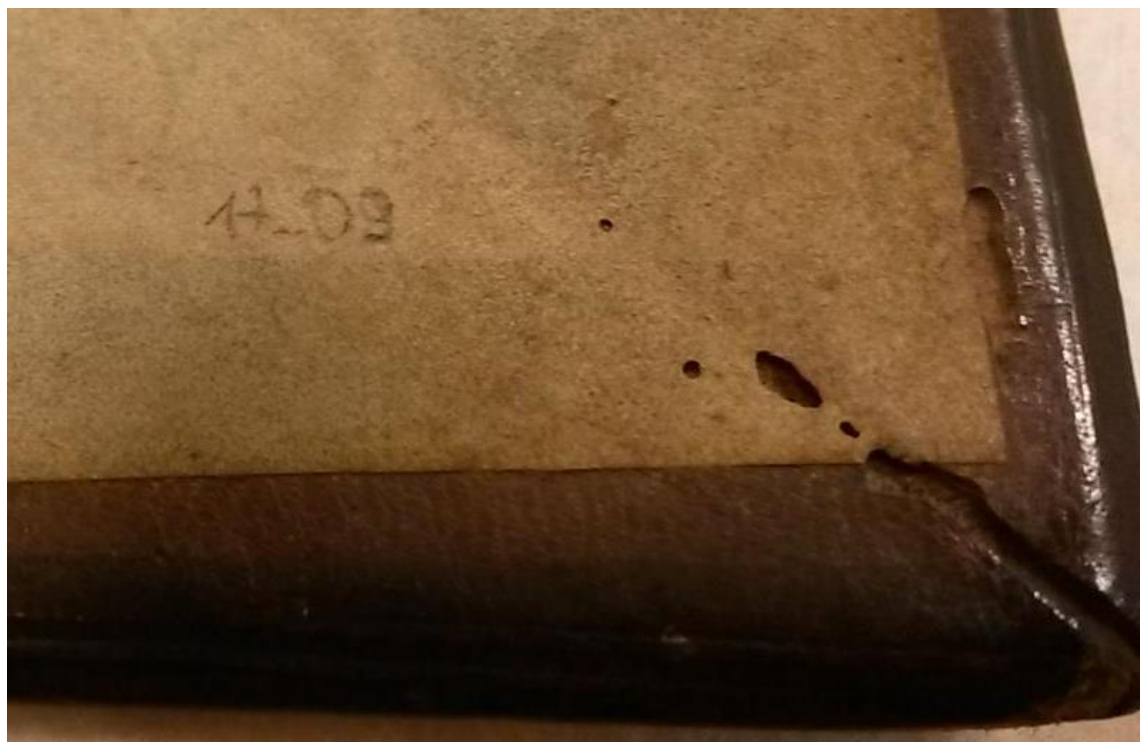


Figure 26: Rear pastedown parchment (right-hand bottom corner) — "H-09" was penciled in and minor perforation (unknown source). Photo by author. 2018.

### 3) Condition Report: Summary of Findings

This is a summary of the of Portland State University's newly acquired Book of Hours by Thielman Kerver. It's one of only two surviving printed Book of Hours by Kerver in 1507.<sup>4</sup> This BoH's measurements are as follows: front and back panels are 12.8 x 19.6 cm, a spine of 3.8 x 18.05 cm, and a girth of 31.4 cm. Its contemporary 16<sup>th</sup>-century binding cover consists of embossed calf leather with a paper spine label wrapped over two wood panels and is in a stable condition. The original clasps were removed, and a total of six small remnant holes (3 holes on the front panel and 3 on the back panel) have been filled in with inserts (possibly leather). There is a small hole on the lower left-hand corner of the front panel bordering the spine's lowest band. This hole penetrates through the cover to the inner lining of the front panel. Minor insect damage appears on the front and rear wooden panels and the head and tail of the book's bindings are in excellent condition, though the type of insect is currently unknown and requires lab testing to verify. The leather spine cover is fragile and hairline cracking of the leather run from head to tail. The hinges are semi-fragile but still in good condition.

The folio's dimensions are 10.8 x 18.0 cm and feature 19 large metalcut illustrations, Kerver's unicorn colophon, two illustrated tables, and 36 small illustrative metalcuts. The main text is "Latin with a few texts in French, and one Spanish Prayer."<sup>5</sup> Overall, the front and back pastedown parchments and 19 quires (8 pages per quire) are all intact, though both pastedown parchment bear corrosive marks and holes where the clasps were previously in contact with the parchment.<sup>6</sup> Evidence of restoration is visible on a few of the pages with decorated majuscules. C.v., q.iiij., and r.vj.'s majuscules "D's" and "S" were restored with an unknown paper,

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<sup>4</sup> Les Enluminures pg. 1. 2018

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

adhesive, and selection of red, blue, and gold pigments; in addition, in-penciling was found on c.v. verso's image of a dragon head with a floral background, on i.viiij.'s image of Moses's robes, on o.j. and o.j. recto's images of tri-skull and crossbones motif, and on q.iiij. verso's bottommost right-hand band of a floral pattern. Note that most of these restorations are on areas where finger traffic and finger oils are expected to occur from regular use.

There is a single noticeable finger print on folio a.iiiij., a major crease on d.viii., and a minor tear on c.viii. Handwritten additions after the book of hours was published include the following. "Ao 5...Bo?lta 843...? No copy ~ B?", was penciled in on the front protector parchment. An unoriginal left bracket notation was found mid-page on b.iiij.. "U.M. IUTOV" was penciled in on c.v and "(C?AR12)/16HP" was penciled in on the top left-hand corner of the rear page-protector parchment. Also, "H-09" was penciled in on the right-hand bottom corner of the rear pastedown parchment.

In conclusion, this rare Thielmann Kerver BoH is in a good and usable condition. Continued access and responsible use of this BoH should be encouraged to ensure its flexibility and longevity and help to serve and engage the local community with the wonders of rare books and special collections.

#### **IV. Glossary:**

Fore-edge: the edge of a book, book section, or illustration opposite the backbone.

Foxing: brownish spots on old paper.

Majuscule: a large letter (such as a capital).

#### **V. Bibliography:**

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