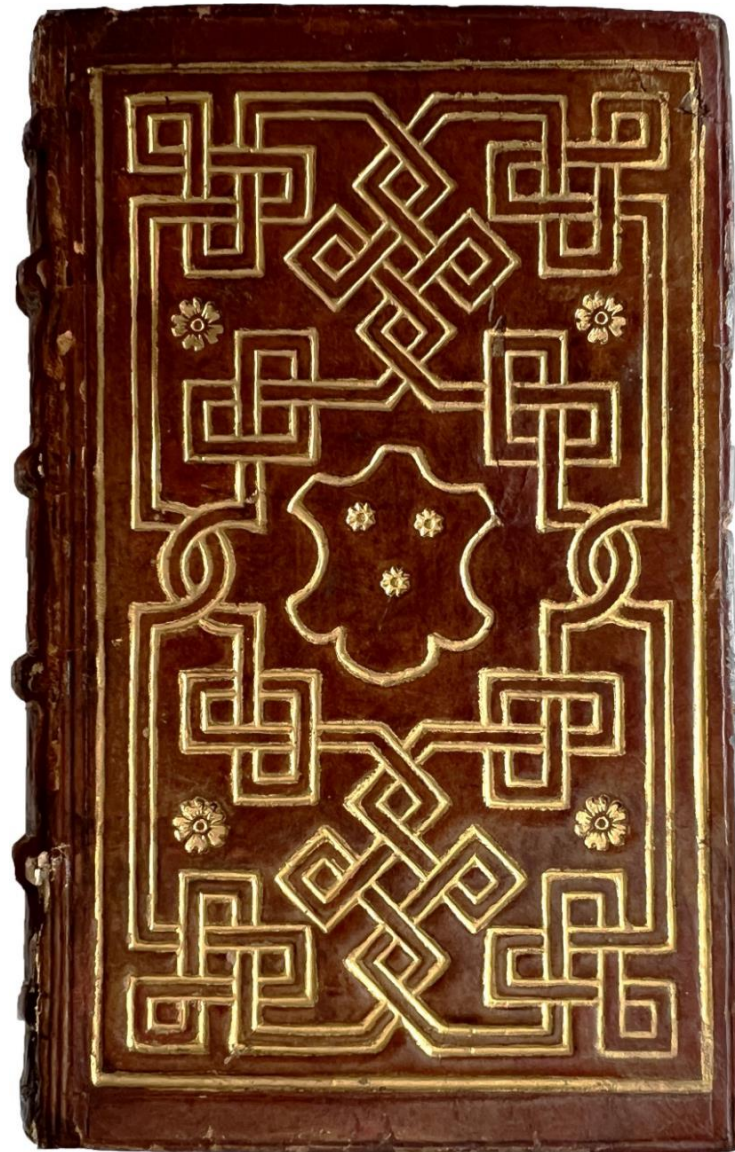


◆ MUSINSKY RARE BOOKS ◆

From the Outside In

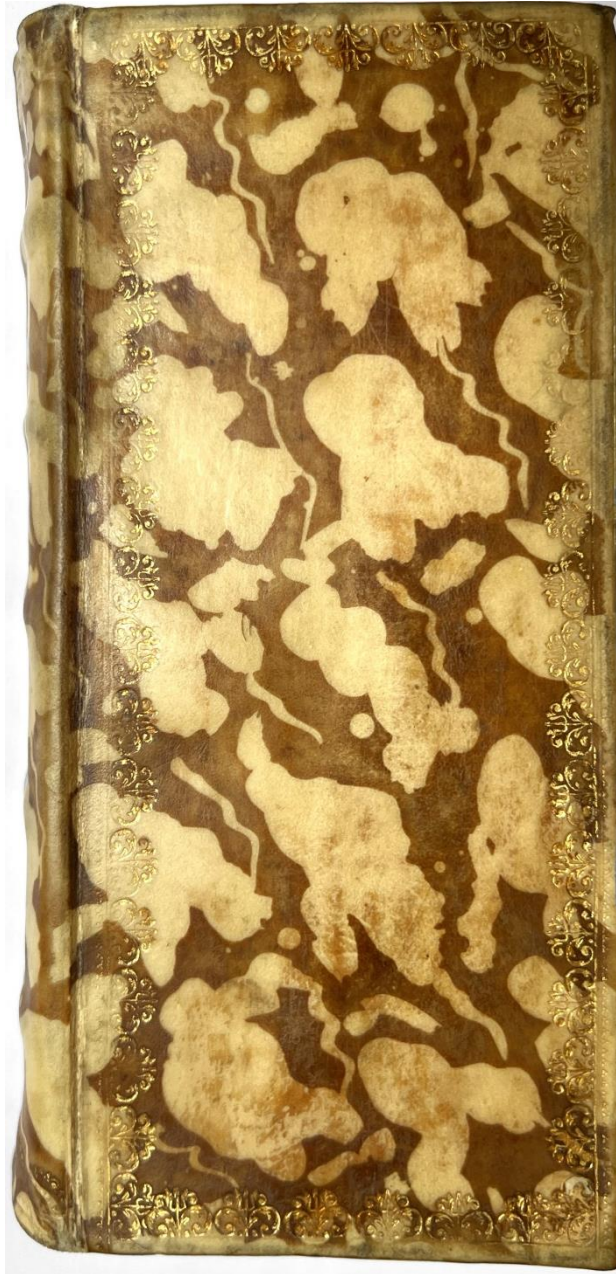


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*Danish whimsy*

1) “ABSTRACT ART” BINDING — HVALSØE, Hans Jacobsen (1656-1712). *De Bedendes Aandelige Kiaede, af 41 Led, eller Christendom[m]ens Articler Sammensanket*. Copenhagen: Joachim Schmidtgen, 1731.

Tall narrow 12mo (158 x 67 mm). [30], 652, 37 pp. Woodcut head- and tailpiece vignettes in two sizes (last leaf torn at gutter).

Contemporary parchment over pasteboards, the vellum treated before binding to create an unusual painterly effect, with areas of the natural color floating in a sea of brown, covers and head and tail of spine with gold-tooled floral roll border, edges gilt and gauffered with pricked decoration forming a monogram at center of fore-edge and floral design at corners, green Brokatpapier endpapers with added stencil coloring, white and green sewn endbands. A dried flower preserved between pp. 40 & 41. \$1,500

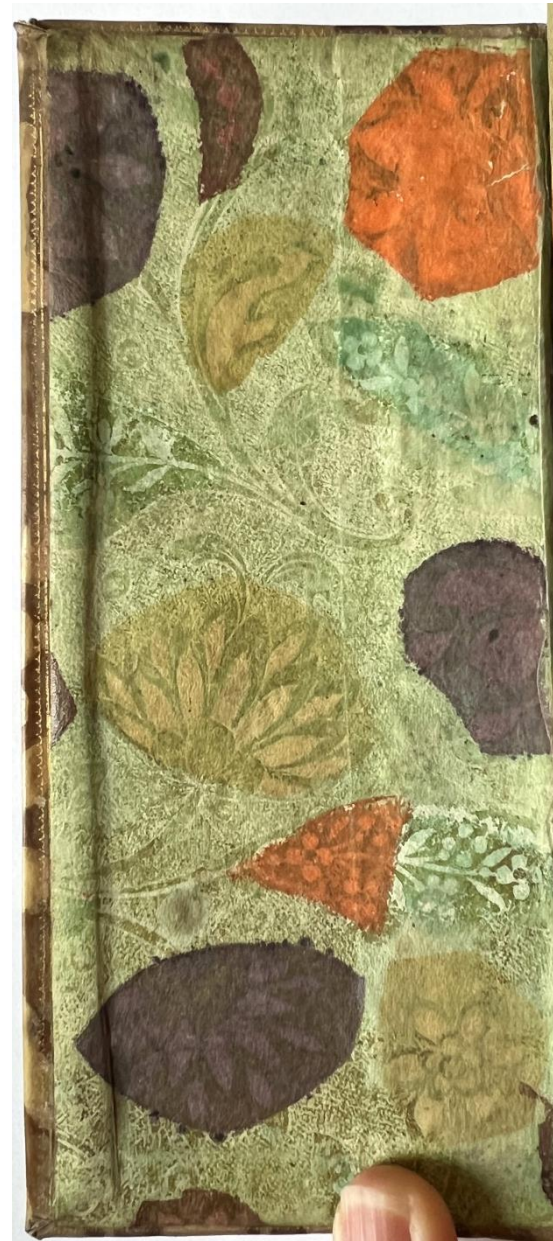
A whacky Danish stained vellum (i.e., parchment) binding on a popular devotional book, enlivened with folk-artsy woodcuts.

Hvalsøe’s “Spiritual Prayer Key,” which first appeared at the end of the 17th century, “was very widely distributed, especially among the rural poor” (*Dansk Biografisk Leksikon*, v. 9). I locate one other copy of this edition, at the Danish Royal Library (with the imprint cited as “1731-1733”). Although methods for coloring and staining parchment were described in most binding manuals of the period, the precise production method used to create the evocative,

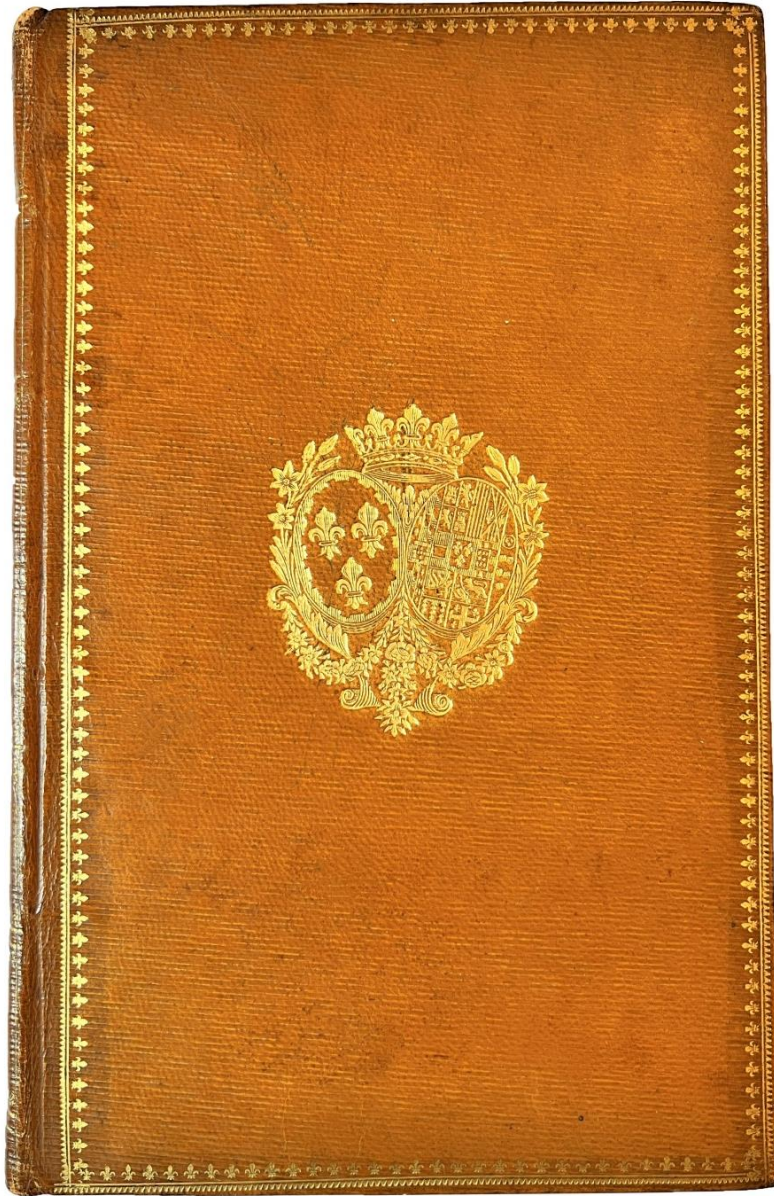


cloud-like pattern in the parchment covering this binding may have been a trade secret. A similarly treated binding, on another agenda-format mid-18th Danish prayer book, is held by the British Library and reproduced in Foot, Henry Davis Gift (vol. 2, no. 368). Stained dark red in an analogous but slightly more bubbly pattern, it is described as “probably made in Copenhagen.” Possibly the two bindings were the work of the same light-hearted forwarder.

No similar bindings are reproduced in Larsen, *Danish Eighteenth-century bindings* (Copenhagen 1930), which focuses principally on leather bindings.



*The bride's souvenir*



2) **BERRY, Marie-Caroline, princess of Bourbon-Sicily, duchess of (1798-1870), owner — [ANDRIEUX, François-Guillaume-Jean-Stanislas (1759-1833)].** *Les Étourdis, ou Le Mort supposé ... représentée sur le théâtre de la cour, le lundi 24 juin 1816, a l'occasion du mariage de S.A.R. Mgr. Le Duc De Berry.* Paris: Vente, 1816.

8vo (200 x 125 mm). [4], 82 pp. Wove paper. Some light foxing. Gold-tooled citron straight-grained morocco with arms of the Duchesse de Berry, pink glazed paper endpapers, gilt edges, by Simier, with his ticket as *Relieur du Roi*.

*Provenance:* the Duchesse of Berry, supra-libros and Rosny bookplate, sale, Paris 1837, lot 920; Alexis Rouart (1839-1911), booklabel; Eugène Aubry-Vitet (1845-1930), bookplate.

\$3,750

THE DUCHESS DE BERRY'S PERSONAL COPY, BOUND FOR HER BY RENÉ SIMIER, of a special edition of Andrieux's popular play, performed on the occasion of her marriage.

An Italian princess whose grandfather and father were Kings of the Two Sicilies, Maria Carolina's childhood in Naples and Palermo was cut short at the age of 16, when she was married to Charles-Ferdinand d'Artois, duc de Berry, nephew of Louis XVIII and second son of the future Charles X, the last king of France. She had three pregnancies in rapid succession and was pregnant again when her husband was assassinated by a Bonapartist in 1820. That son, Henri de



Chambord, the last legitimate descendant of Louis XV, was recognized by Royalists as Henri V.

The Duchess's famously colorful life included a secret remarriage, attempts to foment a royalist insurrection, and a spell in prison. She was a lifelong devotee of the theater, an important patron of the arts, and an eminent bibliophile, who had her books bound in various colors of morocco, almost all by René Simier père. As noted on his ticket, Simier was also binder to King Louis XVIII and the royal family. He has been called the greatest French binder of his generation: his "variety and technique were superb; he had no superior and few rivals during his career" (Ramsden, *French Bookbinders*, p. 150). Forced into exile from France after her failed, coup, the Duchess was obliged to sell the important library that she had assembled at her chateau in Rosny-sur-Seine; the sale held in Paris in 1837 attracted a fiercely competitive crowd.

François Andrieux, elected to the Académie française in 1803, was a gifted creator of intricate comedies who loathed Lamartine and the Romantic school. *Les Étourdis*, first performed in 1787, was his most durably popular play, praised for its brilliant versification, witty dialogue, and original characters.



This touching association copy later belonged to Alexis Rouart, art collector and an early collector of Japanese woodcuts, and to Eugène Aubry-Vitet, archivist-paleographer and historian, and confidant of another royal pretender, Henri, comte de Paris.

OCLC records 2 copies only, at Stanford and Duke; NUC adds U. Penn.

Quérard, *La France littéraire*, I, p. 61 (other editions); *Catalogue de la riche bibliothèque de Rosny* (Paris: Bossange, 1837), no. 920; *Catalogue de livres rares et précieux très-bien conditionnés* (Paris: Labitte, 1872), no. 170. See also P. Guibal, "La bibliothèque de la duchesse de Berry au château de Rosny," in *Les relieurs du roi de France: l'atelier Simier* (sale catalogue, Paris, Lafon-Castandet 2 June, 2010), pp. 5-10.



*Black tulip: a 16<sup>th</sup>-century Italian panel-stamped binding*

3) **BOOK OF HOURS, use of Rome, in Italian.** *Officio de la gloriosa Vergine Maria ordinato con li tre officii.* Venice: [Domencio Farri? for] Giovan[ni] Griffio, 1549.

12mo (146 x 74 mm). [24], 173, [1] leaves. Roman and gothic types. Red and black printing throughout, including of title woodcut (allegorical figure of Charity); 40 metalcut and woodcut illustrations, printed from 28 plates or blocks, including a full-page Annunciation metalcut, the rest half-page or smaller; one large woodcut initial with a monk (printed twice), a few small initials.

Contemporary parchment over pasteboards, covers each with a different gold-stamped figurative panel stamp within an arabesque border showing one half of an Annunciation scene: Mary on front cover and the Angel on the back cover, each framed in parallel blind-rules, edges gilt and gauffered. (Rebacked and restored in rather glaring modern white parchment, endpapers renewed). \$8,500

A SIXTEENTH-CENTURY VENETIAN ILLUSTRATED BOOK OF HOURS, IN A RARE ITALIAN PANEL-STAMPED BINDING. This internally fresh copy, possibly the only survivor of the edition, appears never to have been subjected to daily use.

Sixteenth-century Italian printed books of hours (usually titled *Officium BVM*, in Italian *Officio*, or, later, *Uffizio*) appear rarely on the market, and most of the few extant editions are represented in only one or two copies. They are, in fact, almost as rare as those printed in the fifteenth century. Although the first recorded Italian printed books of hours (Venice: Jenson, 1474) “precedes by eleven years the





earliest dated Parisian edition” (Dondi, p. xxxviii), large-scale production of this essential domestic liturgical book was soon dominated by Paris. In Italy, these usually small-format books were printed for a predominantly local use (cf. Dondi, pp. 22-23). Commercial production of printed books of hours, aiming at (and reaching) a broader public, was a French phenomenon, and the number of extant French editions vastly outnumbers their Italian counterparts.

We have little way of knowing the extent of publication of 16th-century Italian *Horae*, i.e., how many editions were printed, and in what kind of average pressruns, but it is clear that these books were produced in far greater numbers than surviving copies would suggest. Devotional books such as these were part of the bread and butter of printers’ business. As is always the case, this most regular, everyday segment of overall book production now represents a tiny fraction of the corpus of surviving books; and to complicate matters, even more so than for their 15th-century predecessors, which until publication of Dondi’s masterful census were also poorly described and analyzed, our knowledge of these 16th-century books suffers from a lack of bibliographical control, with only very spotty crossover between editions listed in Bohatta, Essling,



Sander, EDIT-16, USTC, and the major online OPACS like OCLC.

*The edition:* Giovanni Griffio (or Ioannes Gryphius) was son of the Reutlingen printer Michael Greif and brother of the powerful Lyonese publisher Sebastian Gryphius. The two brothers had trained in Venice; when Sebastian emigrated to Lyon to join the Compagnie des Libraires, Giovanni remained there, setting up his own shop in or before 1544. Griffio’s imprints show a preponderance of classics, medicine, and law, but about a quarter of his surviving output was in Italian (and again, fewer of those more “popular” books have survived). This book of hours may have been printed for him rather than by him: rather than one of his usual devices, all of which incorporate gryphons, the title-page is adorned with a color-printed allegorical woodcut of Charity within an ornamental border, the device of the printer Domenico Farri, whose dates of activity EDIT-16 gives as from 1555 to 1600. The same woodcut appears on the title of a Missal published by Griffio in 1548-1549 (Edit-16 CNCE 11571). Were both these books in

fact printed by Farri, moving back the earliest dates of his activity? Finding examples of the metalcut or woodcut material used in the *Officio* in other imprints by either Farri or Griffio would help settle the question, which for now remains unanswered.

*Text & illustrations:* Like French books of hours of the second half of the 16th century, this Venetian pocket devotional book contains everything a devout layperson would need for their daily liturgical duties, including a basic primer of Christian dogma and essential prayers, printed between the calendar (a plenary calendar, with one saint per day) and *lunario*, and the Hours or Offices proper. This edition includes no fewer than three different Offices of the Virgin: the “regular” Office, the Office for the days from Advent to Christmas (*Natività*) and the Office from Christmas to Candlemas (*la Purificazione de la Madonna*). These are followed by the usual Penitential psalms, Litany, various prayers, Office of the Dead, Office of the Cross, and Office of the Holy Spirit. Also included are a Mass of the Virgin. As noted by Dondi (pp. 201-2), the contents of Italian Hours are generally simpler than those of French *Horae*, partly because the Italian books were usually printed in smaller formats.

The Hours are printed in a semi-gothic type, while the prefatory calendar and devotional primer are in a small roman type, which is also used from fol. 153 (N8) to the end, apparently simply in order to fit the remaining text into the last two and a half quires. The 30 larger text illustrations (including 10 repeats) were printed from at least three series of metalcuts or woodcuts. The first consists of half-page metalcuts, shaded, with foreground and background scenes filling the entire space, and within double rule borders.



Series 2 contains smaller cuts, somewhat worn, also with double borders. Three taller narrow woodcuts are from a third series. The full-page Annunciation metalcut stands alone, as it belongs to none of these series. Most of the cuts from Series 2 and 3 are flanked by ornamental vertical border cuts to fill out the width of the text-block; the Flight into Egypt cut on 31r has instead a narrow vertical metalcut of saints printed on the right side.

Besides the larger woodcuts and metalcuts are 10 small cuts printed from 8 blocks or metalcuts, showing saints, the Virgin and Child, Mary Magdalene, the Resurrection, Crucifixion, and St. Margaret, with dragon and cross.

These plates or blocks were almost certainly used for other books, possibly in earlier, now lost editions of the *Officio de la gloriosa Vergine*. The full-page Annunciation cut, showing the Virgin under a colonnade, loosely copies a woodcut or metalcut used in an Italian *Officio* published in Venice by Gregoris de Gregoriis in 1512 (see Essling I, 479). Both cuts show God the Father at the upper left; in the 1512 cut he is releasing a small messenger-putto who descends carrying a cross. The putto is absent from this metalcut, which has a small break in the back arch of the colonnade just where his leg would have crossed it.

I have not found the other metalcuts or woodcuts in any of the Venetian Offices of the Virgin reproduced by Essling or Sander, or in institutional copies of other editions that have





been digitized or for which I have obtained reproductions. Besides the larger woodcuts and metalcuts are 10 small cuts printed from 8 blocks or metalcuts, showing saints, the Virgin and Child, Mary Magdalene, the Resurrection, Crucifixion, and St. Margaret, with dragon and cross. Full contents and a list of the large illustrations are available on our website, [here](#).

**Binding:** The gold-blocked panel stamps of the binding (each measuring approx. 122 x 62 mm.) together showing the Annunciation, reflect the contents of the book. The type of thick parchment, the purely local uses of such Italian Books of

Hours, the style of the panels' arabesque borders and of the gaufered edges — all testify to the binding's Italian origin. Its decoration is unusual, as (apart from small medallion or cameo stamps) PANEL STAMPS WERE RARELY USED IN ITALY DURING THIS PERIOD. "In Italy the panel stamp is not entirely unknown, but it is rare, and unquestionable examples are difficult to find" (Goldschmidt, *Gothic and Renaissance*

*Bookbindings*, p. 68). There are no examples in the British Library or Folger bookbinding databases, and Tammaro de Marinis recorded none. E.P. Goldschmidt knew of, and reproduced, only one example of a comparable panel-stamped Italian binding, also of the Annunciation, on a copy of a Psalter published in Lyon for Frelon, 1542 (op. cit., no. 194, plate LXIX). The Lyonese connection may be relevant: although Goldschmidt was certain that his binding was Italian, the design and/or the stamp itself may have originated in Lyon. Perhaps ours was a kind of publisher's binding: Griffio, who must have maintained close contacts to Lyon via his brother, may have seen and handled books from France in panel-stamped bindings, and he may have commissioned a pair of similar but locally produced stamps for use on special copies of small format devotional books, which the customer could purchase ready-bound.

This edition was described in the 18th century by Giacomo Maria Paitoni, from a copy then in the library of the Augustinians of San Stefano in Venice; that convent was suppressed by the French regime in 1810 and its contents disbursed. Our copy bears no marks of provenance, other than its exceptional binding; it could perhaps be the copy described by Paitoni, no others being recorded. It is worth noting that of the seven pre-1600 editions of *Officii* listed by Paitoni, only three, including this one, are still recorded in extant copies.

**References:** Giacomo Maria Paitoni, *Biblioteca degli autori antichi greci, e latini volgarizzati* (Venice, 1766-67), 5: 210-211. Cf. Cristina Dondi, *Printed books of hours from fifteenth-century Italy* (Florence, 2016). Cf. Tammaro de Marinis, *La Legatura artistica in Italia nei secoli XV e XVI* (Venice, 1960). Not in Bohatta, EDIT-16, USTC, OCLC, KVK, etc.

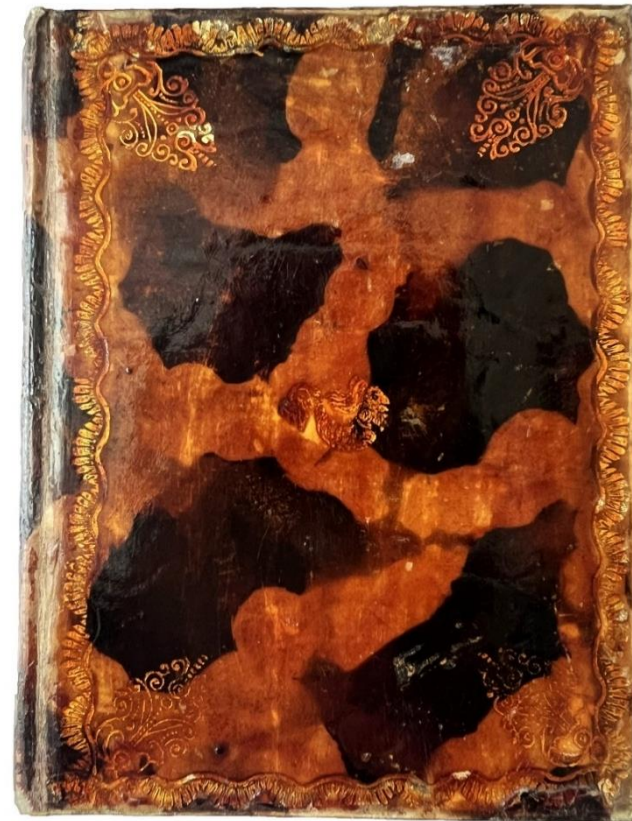
*A septet in faux tortoiseshell*

4) **CAMOUFLAGE BINDING — ROMEIN, Thomas.**  
*Nieuw Leeuwarder almanach na de Nieuwe Styl, Over het jaar ... 1757.* Leeuwarden: P[ieter] Koumans, [1756-1757].

Bound with six other almanacs printed in Leeuwarden. Seven vols. in one, 16mo (85 x 72 mm). Roman & gothic types, except as noted.

Case binding of contemporary parchment over binder's boards, covers and spine painted and varnished to resemble tortoiseshell, gold-tooled wavy roll border, fleurons at angles, and a different small grotesque figure (a human-headed fish) at center of each cover, smooth spine paneled in 4 compartments, each with a decorative leafy tool, liners and free endleaves covered in a white textile, blind-embossed similarly to the covers (different tools, with a bird at center instead of grotesques), gilt edges, 15 blank leaves at front and 43 at rear, all but the two closest to the text with odd pin-pricks in tight patterns (small rubbed areas to front cover, loss of varnish to backstrip, lower joint broken and the liner unglued); contemporary board slipcase covered in blind-stamped green paper. \$2,750

A rare Sammelband of Dutch almanacs and almanac-like publications from Leeuwarden, the largest city of Friesland, bound together in an unusual, presumably local binding, of vellum or parchment CONVINCINGLY PAINTED AND VARNISHED IN REDDISH-BROWN AND DARK BROWN TO LOOK LIKE TORTOISESHELL.



*Contents:* 1) Romein: Collation: A-B<sup>8</sup>. [32] pp. Gothic types, red & black printing throughout, typographic astrological symbols. Title woodcut view of Leeuwarden with the city arms, anatomical man woodcut on last page.

2) *Nieuw-jaars wensch van de Friesche postryders, voor t'jaar 1757.* Leeuwarden: Willem Everlein, [1756]. A<sup>8</sup>. 16 pp. Roman types.



3) *Namen der E. achtbare Heeren van de magistraat ende vroedtschap; als mede wanneer yder hopman en fendrik binnen Leeuwarden met zyn volk de wagt heeft voor het jaar 1757.* Leeuwarden: Pieter Koumans, [1757].

C<sup>8</sup>. [16] pp. Small woodcut arms on title. Clearly part of a larger edition.

4) *Naam-register der predikanten welke zedert de Reformatie binnen Leeuwarden hebben gestaan.* Leeuwarden: Wigerus Wigeri, [1756].

No signatures. [16] pp. Woodcut title ornament. Lists 77 preachers of Leeuwarden, from 1566 to 1756.

5) *Aanwysinge van de Kerkelyke Ordeninge in 't gemeen door de VII. provintien, En van de Kerkelyke Bestelinge in Friesland In het byzonder.* Leeuwarden: Pieter Koumans, 1757.

A-B<sup>8</sup>. [32] pp. Small stain to f. B4.

6) SPRONGH, C. *Het Klein Chronykjen van Oost- en West-Friesland.* Leeuwarden: Pieter Koumans, [1756 or 1757].

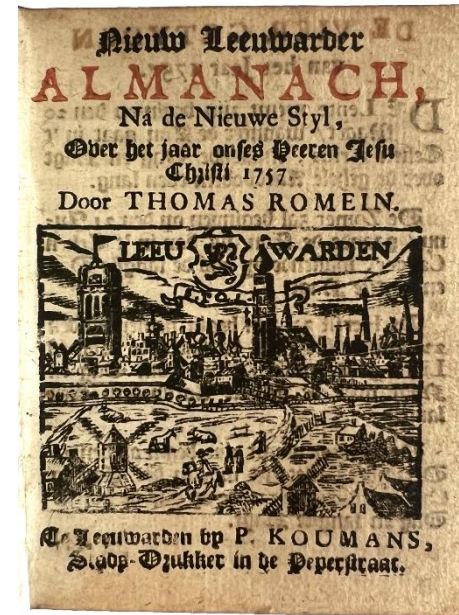
A-B<sup>8</sup>. [32] pp. Gothic types. The chronicle ends in October 1756.

7) MAGINI, Giovanni Antonio. *De oprechte Italiaansche waarsegger, Op 't Jaar ... 1757. Gepractiseert door Don Anthonio Magino.* [N. p.], "Gedrukt na de ce cotype van Bonnoien uit des auteurs eigen schriften" [?Leeuwarden: Pieter Koumans, 1756].

A<sup>8</sup>. [16] pp. Woodcut of a surveyor and an astronomer on title.

Except for the first almanac, of which a run starting in 1752 is held by Tresoar, the Leeuwarden archive, neither OCLC nor the Short-Title Catalogue Netherlands list other copies of these editions, although other years are known for numbers 1, 2, and 6.

No. 2, a New Year's almanac, is the only known publication with the imprint of William Everlein (two other years, 1776 and 1777, recorded). Pieter Koumans, "town printer in the Peperstraat," was active from 1730 to 1779. Wigerus Wigeri



was a Leeuwarden printer and bookseller, active from 1747 to 1794. He identifies himself in the imprint to no. 4 as a printer and bookseller in the Rotterdamse Erasmus, but in the imprint of one of his 1755 publications (Jan Althuysen, *Friesche rymtery*) he called himself a bookbinder (*Bynder*), as noted by the CERL Thesaurus. Perhaps he was responsible for this curious binding.

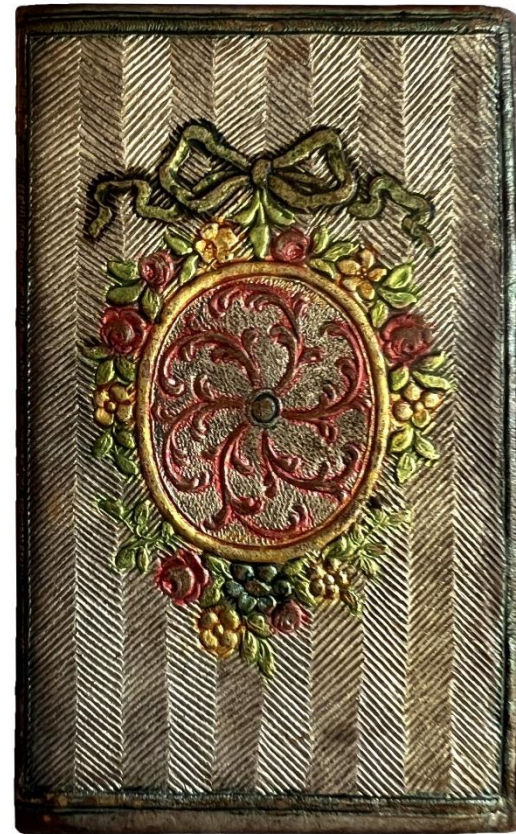
18th century Germany in one's pocket

5) **EBNER, Johann Peter**, publisher. *Calender auf das Jahr nach Jesu Christi unsers Heilandes Geburt 1793*. Augsburg: J. P. Ebner, [1792].

32mo (73 x 45 mm [binding size 75 x 46 mm]). [64] pages, printed on pale green paper. Text within rule borders, title and the 24 calendar pages printed in red & black. 14 engraved plates, all finely hand-colored: engraved title (*Almanach 1793*) and frontispiece signed by Johann Paul Thelot after Samuel Baumeister, and 12 numbered plates; 4 blank leaves at end, including two leaves of HEAVILY COATED REWRITEABLE PAPER FOR NOTES.

CONTEMPORARY PUBLISHER'S BINDING of embossed and hand-colored silver-glazed leather over pasteboards, text sewn on recessed supports, covers stamped, painted and lacquered with a central oval gold frame enclosing a spiral of red tendrils, encircled by a multicolored flowery wreath topped by a green ribbon, on a striated ground of vertical stripes formed by diagonal hatching in alternating directions; spine with sinuous green embossed vine, gilt edges, pink pastedown endpapers; in original two-part brown shagreen case with decorative blind-tooled borders and stamped title KALENDER, lined in green paper, with 2 extra small compartments for styluses. *Provenance*: pencil inscription on front flyleaf, "F. Delarue, 1793." \$4,000

AN IMPECCABLY PRESERVED MINIATURE ALMANAC, with colored plates and in one of Ebner's "trademark" embossed colored bindings.



For each month a first page, on a recto, with its German name and lunar phases, precedes the double-page calendar; between each month is an engraved plate, with an explanatory moralizing poem on the facing verso. Each year of Ebner's almanacs had a different theme, and this year's was "emblems from the realm of nature," as stated on the verso of the title: "*Die Gegenstände auf den Tafeln sind Emblemata aus dem Reiche der Natur.*" Thus plate 1 shows a doctor examining a vial of urine, an emblem of seeking the roots of sin; in plate 3 a dancing bear, whose reward is bread,



epitomizes human greed and desperation, plate 8 shows a well-dressed couple in a very un-natural drawing room, illustrating a poem on the misery of the “golden chains” of marital entrapment, and plate 10 shows a man on a hill, with



Augsburg in the distance, watching a firework (rocket) explode, its vain splendor symbolizing life’s spurious glories. The calendar is followed by predicted eclipses and a list of European royalty.

Johann Peter Ebner published his delightful Augsburg almanacs from 1784 to 1803. I have also had one, for 1789, printed in French and published in the Hague (now in a private collection). I locate 5 further institutional copies of Ebner almanacs in the US. It appears that all were issued in his specially produced bindings, each year with a different design. Most seem to have been printed on colored paper, and in some the plates were hand-colored; a few include printing in gold or silver ink.

Descriptions of the few recorded examples betray divergent understandings of the materials and techniques used in these rather mysterious bindings: in the *Bulletin Mensuel Damascene Morgand* for June 1889, the binding of a copy with the French title *Almanac pour l’année 1799* is described as “maroquin argenté, fleurs et carquois repoussés et coloriés.” The Clements library at the University of Michigan describes the binding of its 1798 *Calender* as “possibly contemporary brown paste paper, embossed blind” The 1797 example in the Boston Athenaeum, which has all the bells and whistles, is described as in “silver-coated calf, elaborately blind stamped, ornamented in painted hues of blue, green, red, and gold.” The Morgan Library holds a copy in “blind-stamped silver wrappers,” which comes with its own miniature writing kit.

Thieme-Becker 3: 82 (Baumeister) and 32:593 (Thelot or Thelott).



*The rich man sighs, the poor man smiles*

6) **EBNER, Johann Peter**, publisher. *Calender auf das Jahr nach Jesu Christi unsers Heilandes Geburt 1794*. Augsburg: J. P. Ebner, [1793].

32mo (74 x 45 mm [binding size 77 x 48 mm]). [64] pages, printed on pale green paper. Text within rule borders. Title and the 24 calendar pages partly printed in gold ink, every other page opening lightly varnished or lacquered. 14

engraved plates, all finely hand-colored: engraved title (*Almanach 1794*) and frontispiece signed by J. P. Thelot after S. Baumeister, 12 numbered plates; 4 blank leaves at end, of which two of coated rewriteable paper for notes.

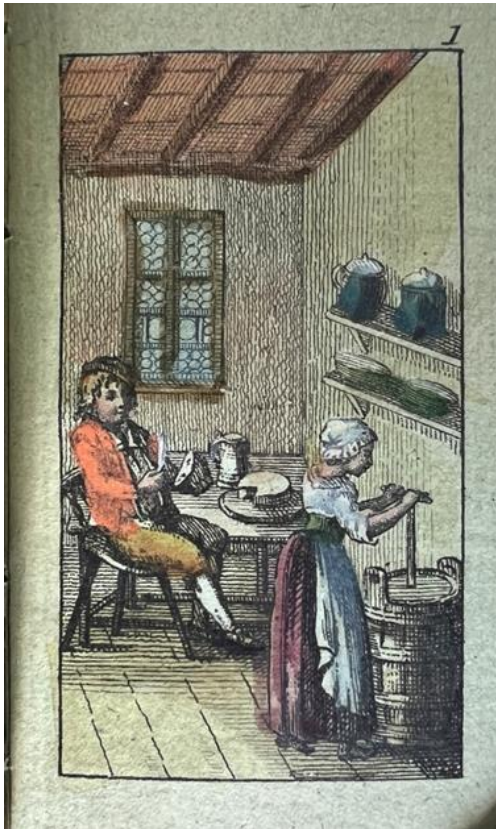
CONTEMPORARY PUBLISHER'S BINDING of embossed and hand-colored silver-glazed leather over pasteboards, text sewn on recessed supports, covers stamped, painted and lacquered with a classical urn on a plinth beneath a garland, set within a niche formed by 4 receding planes, within an ornamental border, the ornaments repeated on spine, gilt edges, yellow pastedown endpapers (slight rubbing to joints and extremities); in original two-part brown shagreen case with decorative blind-tooled borders and stamped title, lined in green paper, the ornamental frame continuing onto the lining, with 3 extra small compartments for two styluses and a thin notebook. \$4,500

A SUPERB AND VERY RARE MINIATURE ALMANAC, WITH COLORED PLATES AND GOLD PRINTING, in a different embossed colored binding produced by or for Ebner.

This year's theme, as announced on the title verso, is "thoughts on country life." It could also have been called "thoughts on digestion": the verses compare the effect on the bellies and appetites of the daily life of hard-working country farmers vs. that of idle gentlemen.

The verses, all appropriately illustrated, are narrated by the farmer: here is the gist: "I only like to eat what I have planted and reaped by the sweat of my brow. But look at the rich man with his bellyaches, he seeks an appetite in the food itself; he should come help me in the fields, let him take an axe in his hands, that would banish nausea! He'd sit down





with a bowl of milk and hunger would find him ... and then with his belly filled he would have no trouble sleeping. I only feel my stomach at lunch and dinner time.... I never leave food on my plate, I'm so happy to eat. Work is the key to health and happiness. I love my trees, and their fruit; I let my kids eat as much as they want, and then I tell them, remember kids, if you want to reap you must sow! My



garden is so full, I don't need to go to the market to buy my cabbage — and if the rich man knew this he wouldn't have to either. My work is my interest and capital and I am repaid one hundred-fold. When I'm tired at the plow, I just think of those full ears of grain waving at me." The calendar is followed by predicted eclipses and a list of European royalty.

*A Jewish woman's miniature prayer book*

7) **HEBREW PRAYER BOOK.** Miniature manuscript prayerbook for a woman, on vellum: *Seder Tefilot Ha-Nashim Ha-Meyuhadot La-Hen...* [The Order of Prayers Exclusively for Women. This book belongs to Perla, the wife of the honorable A[braham] H[ayyim] Menasci (or Menasse)]. [Italy, second half of the 18th century].

MANUSCRIPT ON VELLUM, leaf size 75 x 46 mm., binding size 82 x 58 mm. 24 leaves, numbered [1], 22 leaves, [1]; the last leaf blank but lightly ruled on recto. Written in brown ink in a fine square Hebrew script, 12 lines to a page. Title lettered within an architectural frame with a garland of blossoms and filigree leaves. In fine condition.

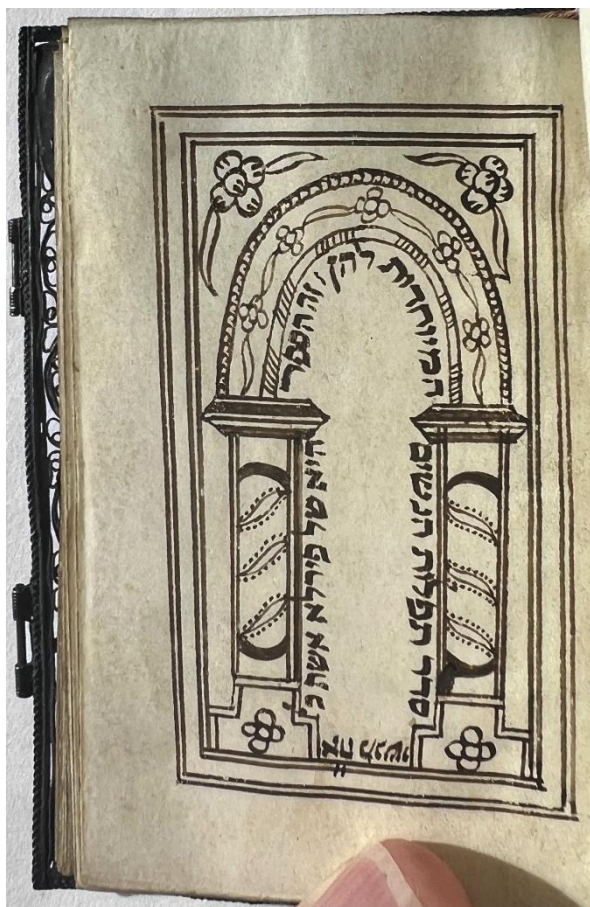
SILVER FILIGREE BINDING, probably late 17th-century, the filigree of volutes and curling tendrils over a metallic(?) backing with traces of gilt, both covers decorated with a PAINTED CERAMIC OVAL CENTERPIECE AND MATCHING HEART-SHAPED CORNER-PIECES, ten semi-precious and glass "jewels" mounted around the centerpiece (upper cover lacking one cornerpiece and one jewel); the secular paintings showing putti below love-related mottos in Italian; the spine with similar filigree; one (of two) fore-edge clasps, two catches, gilt edges; the text block sewn into pasteboards covered in orange-red silk (visible on turn-ins), attached, apparently with adhesive, to the silver covers; bronze-coated paper pastedown endleaves, plain free endleaves. *Provenance:* purchased from an American estate. \$30,000



A NEAR-MINIATURE HEBREW MANUSCRIPT PRAYERBOOK ON VELLUM, CONTAINING PRAYERS SPECIFICALLY FOR WOMEN, PRESERVED IN A JEWELLED SILVER FILIGREE BINDING WITH DELICATE PAINTED PLAQUES, one of a group of similar bindings whose origins remain mysterious.

This diminutive manuscript of women's prayers was written in Italy; external documentary evidence points to Rome. It belongs to a genre of 18th-century pocket-sized manuscripts





containing prayers for women, often given to them by their husbands at the time of their marriage. Some of these manuscripts are generic, mentioning no names. The present manuscript identifies both the recipient and her husband, who may have been the scribe: the title identifies the owner as Perla, wife of A. H. Menasci (or Menasse); Perla's name reappears in three prayers, where she is identified as the daughter of Consuelo. The manuscript is undated and not

localized, but the paleography and text point to Italy, and it can be dated to the mid- to late 18th century.

The text includes the appropriate prayers and blessings for candle lighting on the eve of the Sabbath, a series of supplications to be recited at various points before, during and after ritual immersion in a mikveh (ritual bath), and prayers for the several stages of pregnancy. Women near the end of their terms are encouraged to pray that their child not be born on the Sabbath in order that no one need inadvertently violate the Sabbath on their behalf. Also included are a prayer to be recited before marital relations; a prayer to be recited by a mother upon rising from her bed, that she will be able to nurse her child successfully; and a prayer to be recited by a woman who has merited the birth of a son, on the occasion of the child's circumcision.

The name Abraham Hayyim Menasci is also found in the colophon of a manuscript book of prayers written in Italy, 1790 (Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary, New York, MS. 4656 / ENA 1466). The text of that book, *Tikkun Hasot* (Midnight Rectification), is a Jewish ritual prayer recited each night after midnight as an expression of mourning over the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem; the second half of the text comprises verses of praise and longing for the presence of God. In the JTS volume, following the Hebrew colophon, the scribe, Abraham Hayyim Menasci, inscribes a second colophon in Italian and signs his name as *Abram Vita Piazza*. Similarities in the scribal style of the two manuscripts, including similar paratextual markings, suggest that Abraham Hayyim, the scribe of the 1790 manuscript, may also be the scribe of the present undated manuscript.

References are found to members of the Menasci family living in both Rome and Livorno. Rome, however, seems

more likely as the place where this manuscript was created, because Rome had a Jewish ghetto and Livorno did not. Furthermore, a permission was granted by Pope Pius VII in 1814 to Abram Vita Piazza (=Abraham Hayyim Menasci), allowing him and Sabato Alatri to leave the Roman ghetto (exhibited in *16 ottobre 1943, La razzia*, Rome, Casina dei Vallati, 19 Sept. 2015-15 Jan. 2017; reproduced in the exhibition catalogue, p. 16). This is another indication that localizes both the JTS Piazza / Menasci manuscript and the present manuscript to Rome.

The style of the title-page, with its decorated pen-and-ink pillared arch, closely resembles the title-page of a similar manuscript, dated 1740 and localizable to Italy, offered at Sothebys New York on 19 December 2007, [lot 183](#). Our manuscript may thus date closer to the mid-18th-century; the name of Abraham Hayyim Menasci may have been handed down from father or grandfather to son or to grandson. (Full contents on our website, [here](#))

*Binding:* The delightful silver filigree binding covering this manuscript probably pre-dates it. This is not a case of deception or of sophistication: silver bindings were often used and re-used (as case bindings) to cover books considered precious; they were often religious books. The painted ceramic plaques of our binding depict putti and bear secular mottos in Italian, all related to love. The central cartouches read “*Leale e secreto*” and “*verso il mio sole*” and the heart-shaped corner-pieces “*Chiero* [i.e., chiaro] *et puro*,” “*amore non ha timore*,” “*amare sopra tutto*,” “*bon la trovar --*,” “*Duo son uno*,” “*Invidia c’ombre* [i.e., è ombra?] *d’amor[e]*,” and again “*verso il mio sole*.” THAT SUCH LOVE MOTTOS WERE CONSIDERED APPROPRIATE TO COVER A PRAYERBOOK MAY CONTRADICT SOME MODERN IDEAS OF RELIGIOSITY, BUT THE (PROBABLY NEWLYWED) HUSBAND WHO

GAVE THIS LITTLE GIFT TO HIS WIFE NO DOUBT CONSIDERED THE BINDING A PERFECT COVER FOR HIS TOKEN OF LOVE.

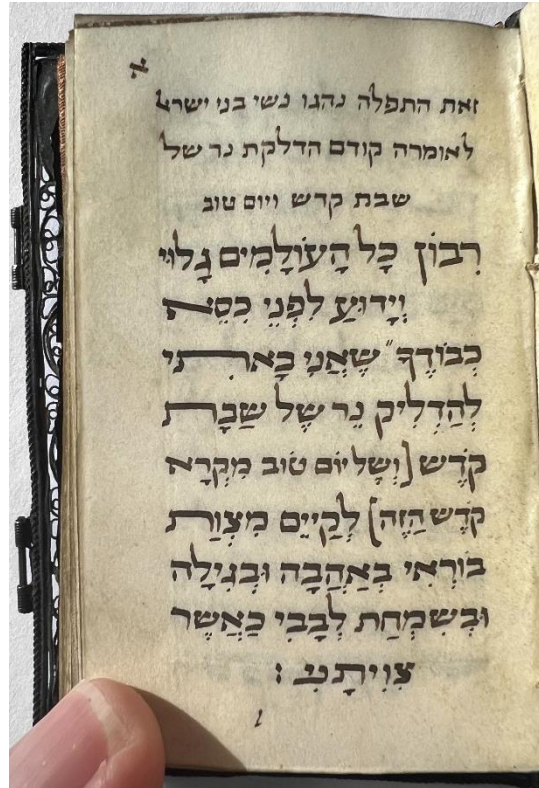
We have located eleven other analogous small silver bindings with similar painted ceramic center- and cornerpiece plaques (occasionally referred to as enamels) and arrays of inset “jewels,” of colored glass or semi-precious stones. One is also on a Hebrew manuscript, containing Hebrew prayers, on paper, comprising blessings recited at the wedding feast, liturgical hymns recited in honor of the bride and groom, prayers recited at the meal following a circumcision and prayers and liturgical hymns recited at the circumcision ceremony. That manuscript (in a private collection) is similarly ascribed to Italy and is dated to the first half of the 18th century. The plaques of that binding also contain secular love mottos, but they are in French rather than Italian. (This information kindly shared by Sharon Mintz.) Eight of the other bindings are on editions of the *Office of the Virgin*, in either Latin or Italian. All but one of these were printed in Paris in the 1670s and 1681; the outlier was printed in Venice in 1693. Of the Paris imprints, five bear the imprint of Michel Dauplet, bookseller, *colporteur* (a seller or peddler of religious books) and *doreur* (a decorator of bindings), and the editions are dated 1673; and two were published by the Paris bookseller Claude II Herissant, in 1676 and 1681. One further binding is empty, and another is on an irrelevant 20th-century manuscript, in a private collection.

These twelve bindings are of two different types: nine, including this one, are worked in a filigree style, with swirling filigree volutes, and three are in a floral *ajouré* or openwork design with stems, leaves and blossoms. All but one of the bindings are miniature. Only on the two Jewish manuscripts and the empty binding (belonging to Patricia



Pistner) are the plaques painted with secular motifs and mottos: all the rest show religious scenes or figures, with no inscriptions. Ours is the only example with the captions in Italian. For a census of the bindings, see [our description online](#) (the census expands on the list of bindings provided by Jan Storm van Leeuwen in *A Matter of Size*, no. 123).

These silver bindings may date to the last quarter of the seventeenth century, based on their contents. Their place of production has not been conclusively identified. Filigree silverwork is notoriously difficult to localize (“filigree work, whether in silver or gold, is an area in which precise dating and attribution are in general frequently impossible, especially in the period c1500–1900” (British Museum, curatorial notes to a silver filigree casket, Waddesdon Bequest 220, BM collections database). Because so many of the bindings cover *Offices of the Virgin* with Paris imprints, and because their publisher Michel Dauplet is described as a *doreur*, it is possible that all of the bindings were produced in Paris, perhaps with his involvement. On the other hand, several of those printed prayer books have an Italian connection, and at least some of the bindings may have been produced in Italy. None of the *Officii* are in French, instead they are in Latin or Italian. Books printed in France were copiously exported to Italy, and of course Turin, and Piedmont, were part of the Duchy of Savoy at that time. One of the bindings



is found in Turin, another (at Dartmouth) is on a Venetian *Officium* (with a Paris connection; see no. 10 in the census).

**References:** For further information on this genre of Hebrew women’s prayers, see Rabbi Nina Beth Cardin, *Out of the Depths I Call to You: A Book of Prayers for the Married Jewish Woman* (Northvale, N.J.: Aronson, 1992), and Chava Weissler, *Voices of the Matriarchs: Listening to the Prayers of Early Modern Jewish Women* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1998).

On the binding, see P. Pistner & J. Storm van Leeuwen, *A Matter of Size: Miniature Bindings and Texts from the Collection of Patricia J. Pistner* (New York, 2019), no. 123; F. Malaguzzi, *Collezioni del Museo*

*civico d'arte antica di Torino: legature* (Turin, 2011), no. 92; Luigi Mallé, *Smalti - Avori del Museo d'Arte Antico* (Turin, 1969), pp. 113-114; G. Fletcher, *Judging a Book by its Cover: Bookbindings in the Collections of the Grolier Club* (NY, 2023), no. 3.13.

Grateful thanks to Dr. Sharon Mintz for her research and cataloguing of the manuscript, and to Dr. Jan Storm van Leeuwen for generously sharing his notes on these bindings, as well as to Patricia Pistner, George Fletcher, Jamie Cumby, Jay Satterfield, and María Isabel Molestina for their help.

*Generations have treasured it*

8) LE COURT, Benoît, owner — JUVENCUS, Gaius Vettius Aquilinus; SEDULIUS, Caelius; ARATOR, Subdiaconus. *Sacra Poësis*. Lyon: Jean I de Tournes & Guillaume Gazeau, 1553.

16mo (111 x 72 mm). 316 pp., [2] blank leaves. 3 parts, parts 2 and 3 with half-titles. Italic (text) and roman types (preface). Printer's double viper woodcut device (Cartier *Vip. o*) on title, type-ornament headpieces, woodcut initials. Ruled in red throughout (slight discoloration, inkstains on f. a2v).

Contemporary Lyonese calf, both covers stamped in gold with a geometric interlace panel, four small rosettes, and the central arms of Benoit le Court; spine with four raised bands and two faux bands, in 7 gilt-paneled compartments, each with a rosette, edges gilt and gauffered (joints worn).

*Provenance:* Benoît Le Court (or Lecourt, ca. 1500-1559), supra-libros; with Librairie Damascène Morgand, Paris, *Répertoire méthodique*, part 1 [1893], item 2727, and several later catalogues up to 1920; Édouard Rahir (owner of Damascène Morgand from 1897), bookplate (sale, Paris, part 1, 7-9 May 1930, lot 123); sold to Librairie Lardanchet, Paris; Anton W. M. Mensing, Dutch art dealer and auctioneer (1866-1936) (sale, Sotheby's, London, 15-17 December 1936, lot 337); sold to Librairie Lardanchet, Lyon (Catalogue 41, [1937], item 68); Paris, Binoche et Giquello, 19 October 2016, lot 64; sold to T. Kimball Brooker (sale,

Sotheby's New York, part 1, 11 October 2023, lot 55).  
\$12,000



THIS VOLUME BELONGED TO THE MOST CELEBRATED SIXTEENTH-CENTURY LYONESE BIBLIOPHILE, THE JURIST BENOÎT LE COURT, whose gold-tooled arms occupy the center of the stamp on each cover. It contains the first de Tournes edition of an anthology of three early Christian poets, intended for the use of students.

Juvencus' 4th-century rendering of the Gospels in proper Virgilian Latin, was fed to schoolboys for generations: "the cold correctness of the work recommended it to the taste of the Middle Ages, when it was frequently quoted, imitated, and copied" (*The Catholic Encyclopedia* [1919], 8: 586). It is joined by



Sedulius' early 5th-century *Carmen paschale*, another adaptation of the Gospels, in hexameters, and the 6th-century Ligurian poet Arator's *De Actibus Apostolorum*, also in epic verse.

These works were already out of fashion: in the dedication to the humanist Cardinal Georges d'Armagnac (ca. 1501–1585), the anonymous editor complains that today's readers, avid for novelty, no longer read these old models of pure Latin. But no doubt relying on school orders, De Tournes issued two more editions, from Lyon in 1566 and Geneva in 1588.

The family armorial of Benoît Le Court ("*D'azur à trois molettes d'or*"), misattributed by Guigard, was first correctly identified at the end of the 19th century. Although no inventory survives, 85 volumes from Le Court's library, containing over 200 titles, have been identified to date from his various armorial binding stamps and from purchase inscriptions (by Hélène Lannier, in her 2018 doctoral dissertation). His library forms "THE MOST HOMOGENOUS ENSEMBLE AVAILABLE TO US OF SIXTEENTH-CENTURY LYONESE BOOKBINDING" (Toulet, p. 147). Le Court was not a wealthy or princely collector: he was a prosperous bourgeois of *la Robe*, and most of his books were soberly bound. Although he corresponded with contemporary poets, and he himself published a couple of humanist texts (including a Latin juridical commentary on Martial d'Auvergne's *Arrests d'Amour*), many of the texts in his library were theological, not surprisingly for a curé (of the village of Coise) and one of seven jurist-officers of the Lyon Cathedral, known as "Chevaliers de l'église de Lyon."

The interlace panel stamp of the present binding appears to be a unique survival, being recorded on no other bindings. A different *entrelac* panel stamp was used on another small

format (sextodecimo) book with Le Court's arms, a 1548 Lyonese edition of Livy (the copy was in the collection of Mme. T. Belin, sold in 1936), in which the interlaces are curved rather than mostly right-angled as here. The binder of both is unknown. In his chapter on Lyonese bookbinding, in *Le Siècle d'or de l'imprimerie lyonnaise*, Jean Toulet praised the two bindings as belonging to a handful of bindings from Le Court's library which were given "exceptional decors." (Our binding is pictured in Toulet's article, but is incorrectly identified as the Livy, which is not illustrated.)

Many of Le Court's books originally had a purchase inscription inside the front pastedown, some including the cost of the binding. Unfortunately in this volume any early inscriptions were (visibly) erased.

Cartier, *Bibliographie des éditions des de Tournes* (1937), no. 250; Adams J-793; BM/STC French, p. 248; Gültlingen, *Bibliographie des livres imprimés à Lyon au seizième siècle*, IX p. 174, no. 254. On the provenance and binding: Baudrier, *Armorial des bibliophiles de Lyonnais, Forez, Beaujolais et Dombes* (1907), pp. 347-349; J. Toulet, "L'École lyonnaise de reliure," in *Le Siècle d'or de l'imprimerie lyonnaise* (1972), pp. 147-148, & fig. 135; H. Lannier, *Benoît Court: un juriste humaniste et ses livres* [doctoral dissertation], Université Lumière Lyon 2, 2018; H. Lannier and Wm. Kemp, "Du nouveau sur la bibliothèque de Benoît Lecourt," *Réforme, Humanisme, Renaissance* 78 (2014): 47-73.

(See cover illustration.)



*A boy's toy*

9) **MASONIC BINDING.** *Almanach royal, année MDCCLXXIII.* Paris : Le Breton, 1773.

8vo (192 x 120 mm). 566 pages. 5 leaves are cancels, as called for in the *Avis au relieur* on the last page (the 5 cancels were originally the last 5 leaves of the final quire).

Contemporary French gold-tooled morocco, covers tooled with a triple rule frame enclosing a wide dentelle border incorporating emblems of the Freemasons, comets, and a pair of hands shaking each other, at center a Masonic triangle whose border band is filled with dots, with a comet tool at each corner and the initial P at center; spine in six gold-tooled compartments with title and date in two compartments, large and small fleurs-de-lis in the others, gilt edges, blue endpapers; in fine condition (small dark spot to upper cover, a couple of other insignificant small marks), leather-backed cloth folding case. *Provenance:* small booklabel inside folding box, "Bibliophilia / AG / Bern," with an image of a binding press. \$5,500

A fine Masonic binding on the *Almanach royal* for 1773.

This was an important year for the Freemasons in France. In 1773 they reorganized their disparate and often schismatic loges into one hierarchically organized *Grand Orient de France*, whose grand master was none other than Louis-Philippe d'Orléans, later known as Philippe-Egalité for his support of radical reform of the French monarchical system. Masonic lodges, open to bourgeois and artisans as well as



aristocrats, were in many parts of France a venue for new social connections and the philosophical opening toward new ideas, and they were to take an active part in the elections to the Estates General in 1789. Nevertheless, as the Revolution intensified, the dangers of being associated with an exclusive, secretive and originally aristocratic club were not lost on Louis-Philippe, who renounced his position in the winter of 1793; this had little effect on his terrible fate (he was guillotined less than 9 months later).

Women and atheists are still excluded from this “charitable fraternity.”

The dentelle of this well-preserved binding is built up from individual tools, unlike the Dubuisson bindings that decorate so many *Almanachs royaux*. The initial *P.* at the center of each cover may represent a member’s name.

#### *Mixed media*

**10) PAINTED MOSAIC BINDING.** *Gothaischer genealogischer Kalender auf das Jahr 1820. Sieben und Fünfzigster Jahrgang.* Gotha: (Reyhers for) Justus Perthes, [1819].

Small 12mo (110 x 72 mm). [54], 128, [24], 157, [5] pages, the last blank. Engraved frontispiece, engraved title, 10 engraved plates of which 3 double-page (unsigned), 6 by Böttger and other engravers after Johann David Schubert, and one stipple-engraved portrait after Bolt, folding letterpress table.

Contemporary mosaic binding of brown calf, covers paneled with gilt fillets enclosing a frame of green onlaid calf hexagons, each with a gilt dot at center, and a central oval panel containing a MOUNTED OIL LANDSCAPE PAINTING ON FINE LINEN, the painting on the front cover showing ruins, and that on the rear cover a tall column on a pedestal with a cross at top, both under red-tinged romantic skies; the paintings lacquered and framed in gilt dots, smooth spine with large black calf and small red calf onlays, gilt-lettered and tooled, board edges and turn-ins gilt, glazed marbled endleaves, gilt edges; original slipcase of pink glazed boards (lower cover with a couple of small scratches, small rubbed area on spine, slipcase rubbed).

*Provenance:* C. Sachse, small letterpress slip bound in after title; Edward Clément-Magdeburg, sale (*Almanach de Gotha und Gothaischer Hofkalender, Sammlung Edward Clément-Magdeburg*), Berlin: Martin Breslauer, 18-19 June 1913, lot 496; Ernst Kyriss (1881-1974), bookbinding scholar: sale, Hartung u. Hartung, sale 65, 15-16 May 1991, lot 1907.

\$5,500

A copy of the *Almanach de Gotha* in a fine mosaic binding incorporating delicately mounted oil paintings of imaginary “Roman” ruins. Possibly commissioned in Gotha by the almanac publishers, the small oval oil paintings of this binding were carefully lacquered, either before or after being mounted on the covers, creating a seamless effect. Creating this intricate, unsigned binding required several more steps than did the Austrian enamel-like almanac bindings popular during the Biedermeier period, in which the paintings were applied to metallic surfaces which were simply used as covers (cf. *A Matter of Size*, 148 & 149, and von Arnim *Einbandkunst* nos. 143 & 157).



The three folding plates of the almanac show Roman monuments, a classical nostalgia that is echoed in the romantic ruins of the paintings on the covers. Originally titled the *Gothaischer Hofkalender*, published in French and German from 1766 on, this was the almanac's 57th year: by now it was well established as the Bible of European nobility, a role that it would play well into the 20th century. Following the calendar and the lists of dynasties and families, most of the annual issues contained historical essays; in this issue an account of the end of the 16th-century Kalmar Union (uniting Denmark, Norway and Sweden) is illustrated with six plates. A stipple-engraved portrait of Ferdinand I, King of the Two Sicilies, completes the illustrations.

This copy belonged to Edward Clément, who assembled what the bookseller Martin Breslauer called “the most important private collection of Almanacs de Gotha ever formed.” In the 1913 sale catalogue, Breslauer described it as *prachtvoll* (magnificent), although his description of the oil paintings as being on silk seems mistaken, as they appear to have been painted on linen. A later owner was Ernst Kyriss, whose taste evidently ran to the 19th century as well as his area of expertise, gothic bookbindings.

Cf. P. Pistner & J. Storm van Leeuwen, *A Matter of Size: Miniature Bindings and Texts from the Collection of Patricia J. Pistner* (2019); M. von Arnim, *Europäische Einbandkunst aus sechs Jahrhunderten: Biespiele aus der Bibliothek Otto Schaefer* (Schweinfurt, 1992); on the illustrators, see Thieme-Becker 4: 244 (Bolt) and 30:305 (Schubert).



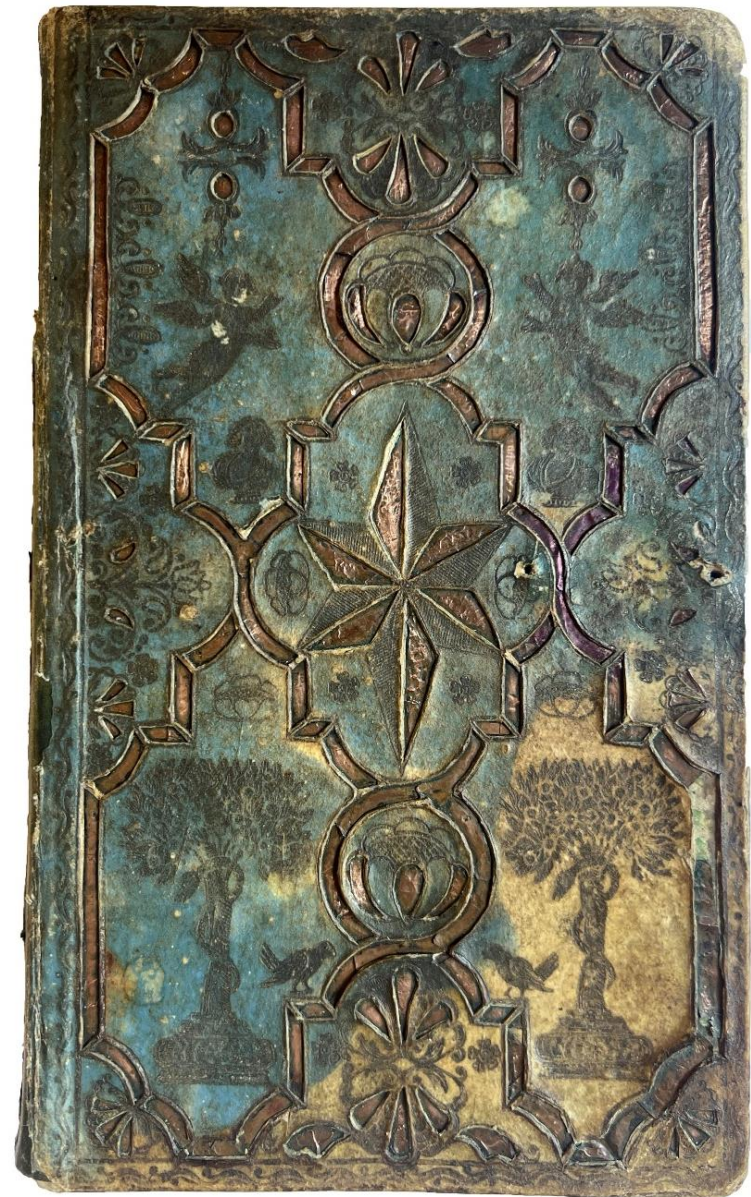
*Pierced vellum with a twist*

11) PARCHMENT CUT-OUT BINDING — KÖSTLIN, Cosmann Friderich (1711-1790). Pierced parchment binding with metallic backing, on: KÖSTLIN, Cosmann Friderich (1711-1790). *Kirchen Gesangbuch, begreifend vierhundert so wol alte als neue Lieder*. Esslingen: Gottlieb Mäntler, 1763.

8vo (binding size 174 x 106 mm). 624, [16] pp., woodcut head- and tail-pieces (foxing, pp. 138-139 soiled and torn).

Contemporary parchment over boards, covers cut out to an interlace pattern, with a stylized six-pointed star at center and small tear-drop shaped cut-outs, all revealing a copper backing, covers and spine turned largely green from oxidation of the copper (verdigris), the interstices of both covers identically tooled and stamped in a silver alloy (*Zwischgold*) with a pair of facing angels, two impressions of the tree of the Garden of Eden enwrapped by the snake, two classical busts, birds, blossoms, and floral pointillé tooling, spine with cut-out flower blossoms and ornamental tooling, holes for an apparently later fore-edge clasp, gilt edges, later marbled endpapers (the silver-gilt oxidized, a few strips of the copper backing lost, chipping to an ornament on lower cover, joints and extremities rubbed, skillful repair to front joint).

*Provenance:* “Rosina Honoldin von meinem Lieben Verstorbenen Grosse papa zu Confirmation Esslingen Decb 1796” (inscription: a confirmation gift from her beloved late Grandpa); initials following imprint, AEM. \$3,750



AN UNUSUAL AND ONCE SPECTACULAR PRESENTATION BINDING on a popular church psalter. Tooled in silver-gilt and decorated with cut-outs backed in a bright copper, it is a late example of the kind of pierced “vellum” binding that was popular in late 16th and early 17th-century Germany. The unusual use of copper backing evokes the slightly later vogue, especially in the German-speaking lands, for “dressed prints,” prints enlivened with multi-layered onlays and cut out for insets, including copper-covered paper backings.

I locate no other examples of pierced vellum bindings revealing metallic backings; most were backed in textiles, but the technique for cutting the parchment was the same. It was described thus by Anshelmus Faust in 1612: “First you line the vellum with paper, mark it, gild it (off the book), then ‘put it on a thick pasteboard and hammer stamps or tools [through the vellum] in all sorts of ways as you want it, but the tools need to be sharp, like those shoemakers use when they want to pierce the leather of shoes ... Then take a piece of satin or taffeta in whatever colour you fancy, cover the under side of the vellum with strong glue and put the satin taffeta over it” (Faust, *Beschrijvinghe ende onderwijsinghe ... des boeckbinders handwerck*, manuscript in Flemish and French, Antwerp, 1612, published by the Bibliotheca Wittcockiana in 1987, translated and cited by Foot, p. 77).

The main cut-out pattern combines elements from two model interlace patterns for tooling with gouges, proposed by C. E. Predinger in *Der Buchbinder und Futteralmacher*, vol. 1 (1741), figs. 12 and 16 (reproduced by Foot, pp. 88 and 89, figs. 45 and 46), while the central star uses strategically selected portions of Predinger’s model for tooling geometrically composed star-shaped designs (Foot, p. 84, fig. 41).

The tools of angels, pairs of busts, and tree of Eden may indicate that the songbook was bound as a husband’s wedding gift to his wife, presumably soon after publication of the hymnal. If so, thirty years later, the groom, now an elderly widower, gave the book to his granddaughter on the occasion of her confirmation; he died soon after.

This binding must have been eye-popping when new. At the center of both covers near the fore-edges the copper within the cutout pattern is bright fuchsia-colored. Possibly all of the coppery backing was this color; this section may have preserved the sheen by having been covered by a now missing fore-edge clasp. The latter would have covered up part of the pattern and thus would seem to have been added later, possibly in the 19th century, probably along with the endpapers.

OCLC lists a digitized copy of this songbook at Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek. Not (yet) in VD-18. Cf. Mirjam Foot, *Bookbinders at work: their roles and methods* (London 2006); with thanks to Professor Foot and to Jan Storm van Leeuwen for their helpful comments on the binding.



*Atlantic blue*

12) **PORTUGUESE EMBROIDERED BINDING** — *Diario ecclesiastico para o Reino de Portugal, principalmente para a cidade de Lisboa para o anno de 1828*. Lisbon: Impressão Regia, [1827 or 1828].

24mo (99 x 55 mm). 200 pp., hand-colored folding map of Portugal.

Embroidered binding of dark blue silk over pasteboards, covers and spine richly adorned with “blossoms” of nearly translucent sequins and purl, at center the arms of the Kings of Portugal, the shield composed of red foil, its charges of embossed embroidery and delicate pieces of purl, with a complex crown of purl and sequins, edges gilt and gauffered (lacking a few sequins and bits of purl, sewing loose in upper joint). \$3,750

An embroidered binding on the official Portuguese Church almanac. Published from ca. 1760 to 1849, first by the Oratorians of Lisbon (the *Congregação do Oratório*), until about 1834, when it was continued by Vicente Ferreira, the *Diario* is often found in embroidered bindings, in an unusual variety of styles and colors. This lavish example with its midnight-blue ground is particularly eye-catching. The main part of the almanac contains the ecclesiastical calendar, with copious details of saints' days, and local and monastic commemorations and festivities. The rest is devoted to catalogues of the Portuguese, Brazilian, and European royal and imperial families, a shorter list of church dignitaries, and a few practical tables, of sunrises and sunsets in Lisbon, tidal charts, etc.



*A treasure binding for every household*



13) **REPOUSSÉ METAL BINDING** — [COCHEM, Martin von (1634-1712)]. *Zlatý Nebeský Kljč ... k obzvlásstnjmu užjwánj a potěssenj pobožného Ženského Pohlawy*. Gindřjcho-Hradcy [Königgratz]: Alois Josf Landfrasa, 1814.

Large 8vo (184 x 115 mm., binding size 200 x 125 mm). [17] 10-799 [*recte* 798], [10] pp. (bound without quire Bbb, pages 778-793). Eight woodcut plates including frontispiece. Title and calendar printed in red and black (repairs to margins of about 16 leaves in quires C-E, affecting a few letters, finger soiling, a few marginal tears).

Contemporary Bohemian binding of REPOUSSÉ BRASS-PLATED METAL mounted over leather-covered boards; each cover with an embossed design of punched and embossed spirals and flowering leafy sprigs set with 6 glass “jewels,” spine with similar punch-dotted decor, with 3 hinges, at joints and at center, large fore-edge clasp attaching on front cover, gauffered edges, plain front endpapers, marbled lower pastedowns (free pastedown cut away); a few small dents, a couple of small black stains to front cover. \$2,400

A popular Czech prayer book by the prolific Capuchin priest Martin von Cochem, intended specifically for women, as indicated in the sub-title (“to the special use and delight of the pious Female Sex”), illustrated with densely carved woodcuts, its binding SMASHINGLY COVERED IN BEATEN AND PUNCH-DOTTED METAL.

Martin von Cochem’s text was translated into Czech by the Capuchin Edelbert Nymburský and first published in 1727.



The archaic appearance of this metal binding was intended: an inexpensive form of “*Prachteinband*,” it recalls medieval Byzantine treasure bindings of precious metals. Bindings like this one, in which the covers were encased in base metal, are associated with eastern European and Russian liturgical books, produced for the Orthodox church, which clearly influenced the choice to thus solemnize this Bohemian Catholic devotional book. A 1778 edition of this prayer book, offered in 1996 by the Prague booksellers Antikvariat U Karlova Mostu, was similarly bound, with “massive chased brass mounting” (P. Voit, *Bohemica 1500-1800* [Prague, 1996], vol. 2, 570).

*Unrecorded Goetheana*

14) **ROHLFS, Matthias** (1726-1794). *Hamburgischer verbesserter Schreib-Calender aufs 1776. Jahr, als das 444. Schalt-Jahr...* Hamburg: Heinrich Christian Grund, [1775].

32mo (binding size 82 x 56 mm). [64] pages, printed in red & black, woodcut astrological symbols, 21 engraved plates, in 3 series, each opening with a double-page plate (the first is the frontispiece), and with six single-leaf plates each numbered 1-6, all hand-colored under the direction of the publisher and highlighted with gold and silver paint; interleaved. IN FINE CONDITION. A splash of red ink from the coloring in margin of one plate.

PUBLISHER’S TEXTILE BINDING of dusky purple silk over binder’s board, covers blocked in *Zwischgold* with acanthus leaf border and central floral motif, gilt edges, coppery bronze-varnish endpapers (rubbed, some fraying); contemporary marbled paper-covered slipcase. \$4,800



A BEAUTIFULLY PRESERVED German almanac with hand-colored illustrations, preserved in its original and EARLY PUBLISHER’S CLOTH BINDING. This very rare edition includes A PREVIOUSLY UNNOTICED ILLUSTRATION OF *THE SORROWS OF YOUNG WERTHER*, and other references to Goethe. It seems to have escaped the notice of Goethe’s bibliographers and collectors.

Consisting of a detailed calendar containing astronomical information and saints’ days, with a dozen pages of informational texts at the end (tides, eclipses, lists of



Hamburg religious services and postal messengers), the appeal of this and apparently a few other almanacs by Rohlfs lay in the brightly colored illustrations, unrelated to the text, all highlighted with gouache and “Glimmer,” an expressive German term for shiny mineral colorings resembling silver and gold, echoed in the copper endpapers and the silver-gilt floral stamping of the binding.



The present almanac contains a larger than usual number of illustrations, with 21 engravings on 24 leaves rather than the 6, 12, or 14 plates found in other Rohlfs almanacs (see below). Largely sartorial elements are added to the engraved designs by the gold, silver, and gouache coloring. The illustrations



consist of AN HOMAGE TO THE RECENTLY DECEASED YOUNG HAMBURG ACTRESS MAGDALENA MARIA CHARLOTTE ACKERMANN, who died in May 1775 at the age of 17. Her bust portrait hangs on a funeral monument in the double-page frontispiece, and the plates depict scenes from plays, selected from among the allegedly 116 plays in which she had performed: Goethe’s *Clavigo* and *Götz von Berlichingen*, Lessing’s *Emilia Galotti*, the singspiel *Romeo und Julie*, loosely adapted by Friedrich Wilhelm Gotter (who gave it a happy ending) from C. F. Weisse’s translation of Shakespeare, and lesser known plays like *Die Gunst der Fürsten*, a supposed translation from the English. Each scene is shown above four lines quoted from the play in



question, with the title given at the top in the first and third series. The engravings in the second series appear to be from a single, unidentified play, with lighthearted scenes of flirting and love pledges.

Ackermann's death threw all of Hamburg into deep public mourning (unprecedented for a mere actor); it explains the inclusion here of a scene from one other work by Goethe, not a play, but one of the most popular novels ever written, *Die Leiden des Jungen Werthers*. Its presence among the illustrations (depicting Werther in the act of shooting himself) is likely due to one of the rumors that flew around the young actress's death: that it was a copy-cat suicide inspired by "Werther-Fever."



The second and third two double-page plates have different imprints: "Hamburg zu bekommen bey dem Buchbinder J. Cornelius, in der ersten Brandts-Twitt 1776" and "Hamburg zu bekommen bey dem Buchbinder G. Dalençon am Berge, 1776." Like French almanacs, these German calendars were

sold by a special class of bookseller, a "stationer-bookbinder" rather than a regular *libraire* or *Buchhändler*. Under the present title, this Hamburg almanac ran from 1701 to 1776, making this the last issue. Following in the steps of his father Nicolaus, Rohlf's was a mathematician, astronomer, writing and arithmetic teacher, and calendar-maker, from Buxtehude.

Rohlf's Hamburg almanacs were often issued in differently colored silver-gilt blocked silk. THEY ARE AMONG THE EARLIEST KNOWN EXAMPLES OF PUBLISHER'S TEXTILE BINDINGS. In the US I locate three other examples of the *Hamburgischer verbesserter Schreib-Calender*: from 1767, at the Morgan Library (Julia Wightman collection), in green silk, from 1774, at Harvard / Houghton (calf binding, the almanac very worn and lacking engravings), and from 1781, at Cornell (sold by us), in green silk. Houghton also holds a copy of Rohlf's *Verbesserter Königlich Schleswig-Holsteinischer Schreib-Calender* for 1765, which is in a similar green silk gold-blocked binding.

VD18 90936949 (1701-1776, locations not given). Not found in the following Goethe bibliographies / catalogues: Goedeke, *Grundriss* (1912); Meyer, *Verzeichnis einer Goethe-Bibliothek* (1908), which does include other almanacs; *Katalog der Sammlung Kippenberg*: Goethe, Faust, Alt-Weimar (1913); Fink, *Verzeichnis von Salomon Hirzels Goethe-Sammlung der Universitäts-Bibliothek Leipzig* (1932); and *Goethe's Works ... A Catalogue Compiled by Members of the Yale Univ. Library Staff* (1940).

*A touch of flash*

**15) SILVER-GILT BINDING.** A rococo embossed silver-gilt binding, on a suite of 17th-century engravings of saints. The binding probably Augsburg, ca. 1725-1750.

Agenda-format, binding size 155 x 78 x 24 mm. Contents: 143 small engravings (most 48-50 x 35-37 mm.), comprising 11 engravings for each saint, trimmed to borders and mounted on 78 leaves of wove paper.

18th-century German embossed silver-gilt binding, both covers with a large oval cartouche, containing a scene of the Crucifixion on the upper cover and the Resurrection on lower cover, both covers with cherubs within ornamental foliage at the four corners, the pair at top holding a cartouche with a scene of the Entombment on upper cover, and of the Ascension on lower cover, the pair at the foot holding laurel wreaths and flanking a winged angel's head; spine with embossed flowers, ribbons and foliate ornaments above and below a central scene of Moses with the brazen serpent, at top a monogram of the letters CJ; two chased metal fore-edge clasps, attaching on upper cover; lined in later (19th-century) green watered silk, edges gilt and gauffered. Gilding renewed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Housed in a folding cloth felt-lined folding case, upper cover with morocco gilt label with Abbey's named coat of arms; his paper shelf-mark label JA 2680 on lower cover.

*Provenance:* unidentified monogram on binding; Major John Roland Abbey (1894-1969), bookplate; see Hayward, *Silver Bindings*, no. 17; Bernard Breslauer, anonymous sale,







Sotheby's, 10 May, 1985, "Silver and Enamel Bindings," lot 26. \$12,500

A STUNNING EMBOSSED SILVER-GILT BINDING, ALMOST CERTAINLY PRODUCED IN AUGSBURG, FROM THE COLLECTION OF MAJOR ABBEY.

The binding dates from the "last phase of baroque and the fully developed rococo" (Hayward), the final, culminating period of Augsburg craftsmanship in embossed silver. Describing this binding and two others from the collection, Hayward wrote: "the most finely worked book-covers in the Abbey Collection date from the second quarter of the Eighteenth Century.... The subjects are the familiar scenes from the life of Christ, but treated even in the small compass of a book-cover with extraordinary dramatic force.... The designs were probably derived from a contemporary illustrated Bible, but their effectiveness is greatly enhanced by the relief in which they are rendered, and by the strong contrasts of light and shade" (p. [3]). To accentuate the pathos, the silversmith or designer chose to highlight minor characters: in the dramatic Crucifixion scene the most deeply embossed figures, occupying the foreground, are two soldiers throwing dice at the foot of the cross; similarly a centurion is the largest and most solid figure in the Resurrection scene on the lower cover.

The binding encloses an album of 143 small unsigned 17<sup>th</sup>-century Flemish engravings of Franciscan saints, neatly mounted on wove paper. The Antwerp engraver and print publisher Philips Galle had initiated the vogue for "Franciscan" prints with his series of engravings of the Life of St. Francis, first produced before 1580 (cf. Sellink, pp. 129-131). The present suite contains 13 series, each with 11 small engravings depicting a saint or group of saints, as follows: St. Francis, The 5 Martyred Saints, the 7 Martyred Saints,

Anthony of Padua, Bonaventura, Ludovicus Episcopus, Bernardino of Siena, John of Capestrano, Didacus (Diego of Alcalá), Clare of Assisi, Elizabeth of Hungary (*S. Elizabeth vidua*), Louis (of France) and Elzear. With one exception (John of Capestrano instead of St. Ivo of Brittany), these were the saints chosen by Hendrik Sedulius, guardian of the Antwerp Franciscans, for his *Imagines Sanctorum Francisci*, printed and illustrated by Philips Galle in 1602, but that quarto-format work only includes one large engraving per saint, each accompanied by a page of text. The precise source of this more extensive small format suite remains to be identified. Each engraving has a caption citing a chapter number.

Major John Roland Abbey assembled the largest English book collection of his generation. His first love was bindings, and among these he brought together an exceptional group of silver bindings, some of which were described and illustrated by John F. Hayward in an article published in *The Connoisseur* in 1952. The present binding is number 17; Hayward noted its earlier regilding, as well as the “fine quality” of the embossing. Bernard Breslauer later bought the collection en bloc from Abbey’s widow, “and in 1985 Bernard consigned the collection (with some additions from his own stock) to Sotheby’s London. Despite Sotheby’s well-illustrated and informative catalogue, the sale was calamitous: of the fifty-eight silver and enamel bindings, only fourteen met the reserve” (Laird, p. 67). This binding was not one of them.

Cf. M. S. Sellink, *Philips Galle (1537-1612): engraver and print publisher in Haarlem and Antwerp* (PhD thesis, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, 1997, online). J. F. Hayward, *Silver Bindings from the J. R. Abbey Collection*, offprint from *The Connoisseur*, October 1952. Cf. M. Laird, “Bernd (Bernard) Hartmut Breslauer (1918-2004): A Personal Memoir,”

*Gazette of the Grolier Club* 72 (2023), 59-92. Thanks to Mr. Laird for sharing the unpublished sale results from B. Breslauer’s own catalogue, in his possession.

