

Chant, Art, and Archives: How Late-Medieval Documents Reveal Liturgy

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Abstract: From the thirteenth century until the French Revolution in northern Europe, foundations, which were gifts to churches of perpetual incomes, established or embellished liturgical feast days with music and even art (sculpture, paintings). Using the history of the feast of the *Recollectio festorum beate Marie Virginis* that was founded in Cambrai and other foundations in Ghent as examples, this study argues that the documentation for such foundations, still unexplored, can explain the variety in the liturgy and assist with the dating of manuscripts and associated art and music. Useful types of documents are surveyed, and future research of this kind is proposed, with French inventories of archives that provide details of documents recording foundations as one starting point.

Keywords: *Virgin Mary, Guillaume Du Fay, Gilles Carlier, foundation, liturgical feast, music, art, archival documents/archives, Cambrai, Ghent, France, Van Eyck, Adoration of the Lamb*

According to a parchment charter with two seals hanging from it, on 20 October 1474, Gautier Henry, a wealthy clergyman who had sung at Cambrai Cathedral as a choirboy under the singer-composer Nicolas Grenon, made a foundation with an income to be paid out in perpetuity to the abbey of St. Aldegonde in the northern French town of Maubeuge. Henry's foundation would pay for the introduction and yearly celebration there on 25-26 August of a new Marian feast called the *Recollectio festorum beate Marie Virginis*, with plainchant composed by Guillaume Du Fay to texts written or compiled by Gilles Carlier as was

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