

**Detmar Basse Müller Book of Hours**  
**Circa 1475**  
**Mss.264.02.R66**

American Philosophical Society  
2002  
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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	American Philosophical Society
<b>Title</b>	Detmar Basse Müller Book of Hours
<b>Date</b>	Circa 1475
<b>Call number</b>	Mss.264.02.R66
<b>Extent</b>	1.0 Volume(s)
<b>Extent</b>	1 vol. (93 leaves)
<b>Location</b>	LH-MV-E-7
<b>Language</b>	Latin
<b>Abstract</b>	<p>Books of hours were among the most common devotional texts of the Middle Ages. Produced throughout western Europe until the early 16th century, books of hours were important status items, often elaborately illuminated, that might be tailored to the specific tastes of well-heeled clients to reflect interests in particular saints or to incorporate other elements of their personal lives and religious, political, or social commitments.</p> <p>Although the specifics of its origin remain uncertain, the APS Book of Hours is organized in a fairly typical fashion. Beginning with a calendar specifying feast days and other holy days, the book includes readings from the gospels, prayers (Obsecro te, O Intemerata), the Hours of the Virgin, the Hours of the Cross, the seven penitential psalms (6, 31, 37, 50, 101, 129), the litanies and prayers, the office for the dead, and additional prayers devoted to Saints Barbara, Anthony, Margaret, and Sebastian. Each of the 22 sections begins with a full-page illustration, many with additional vignettes. An additional vignette of a figure of death is included</p>

in the office of the dead. The volume was donated to the APS by Detmar Basse-Müller in 1806.

**Preferred Citation**

Cite as: Detmar Basse Müller Book of Hours, American Philosophical Society.

## Background note

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Books of hours were among the most common devotional texts of the Middle Ages. Produced throughout western Europe until the early 16th century, books of hours were important status items, often elaborately illuminated, that might be tailored to the specific tastes of well-heeled clients to reflect interests in particular saints or to incorporate other elements of their personal lives and religious, political, or social commitments.

The several texts comprising books of hours descend from the texts that comprised the liturgical service book known as a breviary, including the Divine Office and the Hours of the Virgin. Typical books of hours almost invariably included a calendar of feast days and holy days, the Hours of the Virgin (with devotional readings for each of the eight canonical hours), the penitential psalms and litany of petitions to the saints, the Office of the Dead, and various suffrages of the Saints. To these could be added a variety of other texts, depending on the wishes of the patron, including selections from the four gospels, the stations of the cross, prayers to the Virgin Mary (the *Obsecro te* and *O intemerata*), and short Offices such as the Hours of the Cross. Books of hours increased enormously in popularity during the 13th and 14th centuries and were wide spread in western Europe until the time of the Reformation. Although always an expensive item, less elaborately illustrated (and therefore more affordable) books were available to families of lesser means.

The self-described "farmer of Zelienople," Detmar Basse Müller, was originally a textile merchant from Frankfurt am Main, Germany, but before the age of forty, he had transformed himself into an accomplished cosmopolite. Having established commercial ties in France and the Low Countries, he filled minor diplomatic posts representing Frankfurt to the French Republic during the latter stages of the French Revolution, and in those turbulent markets, he made and lost a minor fortune. It was while recovering from a bankruptcy in Paris in 1802, that he conceived of emigrating to the United States, and purchasing almost 10,000 acres near Pittsburgh, he established two "colonies": Bassenheim and Zelienople, the latter named for his eldest daughter, Zelig.

In Zelienople, Basse hoped to create a medieval barony with himself as Baron. He built an iron foundry and grist mill to support himself and began raising merino sheep, which at the time were considered particularly lucrative. Whatever his religious inclinations may have been, he entered into an agreement in 1804 to sell 4,000 acres to the Harmonialist commune led by the German pietist prophet, Johann Georg Rapp. The Rappites lived a truly communistic existence, sharing life and labor, worldly goods, and religion, and like several other sects of the time, they eventually adopted the vow of celibacy. Basse's stay in America, however, was fairly short lived. He returned to Europe in 1818 and spent the remainder of his life near Mannheim, Germany.

## Scope & content

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Although the specifics of its origin remain uncertain, the APS Book of Hours is organized in a fairly typical fashion. Beginning with a calendar specifying feast days and other holy days, the book includes readings from the gospels, prayers (Obsecro te, O Intemerata), the Hours of the Virgin, the Hours of the Cross, the seven penitential psalms (6, 31, 37, 50, 101, 129), the litanies and prayers, the office for the dead, and additional prayers devoted to Saints Barbara, Anthony, Margaret, and Sebastian. Each of the 22 sections begins with a full-page illustration, many with additional vignettes. An additional vignette of a figure of death is included in the office of the dead.

The book of hours consists of 93 parchment leaves (including front fly leaf) sewn into a binding of quarter vellum over pressed-paper boards covered with red velvet. The outer dimensions are 23x16cm, however there is an indication that the leaves may have been trimmed slightly at some point without impact on the text. Each section of the text is initiated with a more or less elaborate illustration, usually set off by naturalistic floral borders that may include other, related scenes. The text includes numerous illuminated initials, with floral borders marking subsections.

Based on the provenance of the manuscript through Detmar Basse Müller and on stylistic grounds, the manuscript is probably of French origin, and probably dates from the late 15th century, based upon the incorporation of pages from early printed books into the boards. Although the identity of the family for whom this book of hours was produced is not recorded, four coats of arms are incorporated into the text (folios 22, 26 verso, 76, and 93). From back to front, these are a quartered shield with silver and red fields populated by black and silver lions rampant, respectively (93), a gold cross on red field (76), a halved shield with cross on left and quarters of lions rampant on right (26 verso), and a halved shield with lions rampant (as previous) on left and blue bande with crows? (22). The cross may suggest an origin in Savoie.

## Administrative Information

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### Publication Information

American Philosophical Society 2002

## Provenance

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### Acquisition Information

Gift of Detmar Basse Muller, May 1806.

### Processing Information

Recatalogued by rsc, 2003.

## Related Materials

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### Related Material

The APS has a second [Book of Hours \(Mss.264.02.R662\)](#), donated by Timothy Matlack in 1811.

## Indexing Terms

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### Genre(s)

- Illuminated manuscripts
- Manuscript Essays
- Miscellaneous
- Printed Material

### Personal Name(s)

- Basse Müller, Detmar, 1764-1836

## **Subject(s)**

- Beyond Early America
- Books of Hours--France
- Religion

## **Other Descriptive Information**

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Dating to the 15th century, this Book of Hours was donated to the APS in 1806.



## Contents

## Collection Inventory

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**Contents**


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Calendar	folio 1
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*Illustration:* Various small images

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Gospels
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John	folio 8
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*Illustration:* John

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Luke	folio 9 verso
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*Illustration:* Luke

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Matthew	folio 11
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*Illustration:* Matthew

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Mark	folio 12 v.
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*Illustration:* Mark

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Prayers
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Obsecro te	folio 14
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*Illustration:* Lamentation

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O intemerata	folio 17
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*Illustration:* Madonna and child

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Officium Beatae Mariae
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Matins	folio 20
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<i>Illustration:</i> Annunciation to the Blessed Virgin	
Lauds	folio 31 v.
<i>Illustration:</i> Visitation of the Blessed Virgin to St. Elizabeth	
Prime	folio 39
<i>Illustration:</i> Annunciation to the shepherds	
Terce	folio 41 v.
<i>Illustration:</i> Nativity	
Sext	folio 44
<i>Illustration:</i> Adoration of the Magi	
None	folio 46
<i>Illustration:</i> Presentation in the temple	
Vespers	folio 48
<i>Illustration:</i> Flight into Egypt	
Compline	folio 51 v.
<i>Illustration:</i> Coronation of the Virgin	
Hours of the cross	folio 54
<i>Illustration:</i> Crucifixion	
Unknown	folio 57
Psalms, litanies, prayers	folio 60
<i>Illustration:</i> King David	
Officium Pro Defunctis	folio 70
<i>Illustration:</i> Job on the dung heap	

## Contents

None	folio 72 v.
<i>Illustration:</i> Vignette of death	
St. Barbara	folio 88
<i>Illustration:</i> Martyrdom of Barbara	
Anthony	folio 91
<i>Illustration:</i> Anthony	
Illumination to prayer to St. Anthony the Abbot	ca. 1475 1.0 Item(s)
Illumination to prayer to St. Anthony the Abbot , ca. 1475	
<a href="http://diglib.amphilsoc.org/fedora/repository/graphics:3469">[http://diglib.amphilsoc.org/fedora/repository/graphics:3469]</a>	
Margaret	folio 92
<i>Illustration:</i> Margaret on serpent	
Sebastian	folio 93
<i>Illustration:</i> Martyrdom of Sebastian	