

Binding with Béthancourt crest and shield

Jerome, *Saint*

Les Vies et Miracles des Saints Peres hermites d'Egipte, Scythie, Thebaide, et autres lieux. Descrites en partie, Traduictes du Grec et recueillies des Anciens Autheurs par S.t Ierosme Docteur de L'eglise. Nouuellement mises en Francois, augmentees de plusieurs vies fort approuuees: et enrichies de figures accommodees a l'histoire.

Paris, Widow of Guillaume Chaudière, 1605

QUARTO (240 × 170 mm), (462)ff. signed a⁴ e⁴ A–Z⁴ Aa–Zz⁴ Aaa–Zzz⁴ Aaaa–Zzzz⁴ AAaaa–XXxxx⁴ YYyyy² and irregularly foliated (10) 1–394, 399–434, 445–448 (18), with engraved title-page (platemark 212 × 154 mm) signed *C. de Mallery fe.* included in initial gathering, and fourteen engravings by repetition of eleven matrices (platemarks circa 110 × 145 mm) printed with the text, of which ten signed *Iaq. de Weert fe.* (or variation thereof, printed on folios A4r, C1v, L1v, O3v, Oo3v, Yy2v, Bbb2r, Iii3v, Iii4v, DDddd1r) and four signed *Jac. Vander Heyden scul.* (or variation thereof, printed on folios Kkk3r, Zzz3v, DDdd1r, Iii2v). Woodcut head-pieces; woodcut initials from several alphabets.

An extraneous engraving of Saint Jerome (platemark 160 × 110 mm) signed *Thomas de Leu sc.* is bound after A4.¹

Repairs in margins of folios C1, DDddd3, inscription deleted from upper margin of title-page, occasional stain in margins, otherwise in very good state of preservation.

PROVENANCE probably Galien II de Béthancourt (born 1580), his family insignia *d'argent au lion de sable, lampassé de gueules* on binding — Pierre Berès, his sale by Pierre Bergé & Associés, 'Pierre Berès: 80 ans de passion. 5ème Vente. Fonds de la librairie Pierre Berès. Des incunables à nos jours, 3ème partie', 13 December 2006, lot 474

BINDING contemporary French vellum over boards; broad gilt *dentelle* border (20 mm) and centrepiece enclosing the Béthancourt crest and shield, the flat back divided by rules into six compartments which are decorated by the same and similar ornaments combined with the family blazon (here accompanied by fleur-de-lys), title *Vies et | Mirac des SS | Peres Ermi | tes d'Egyp | Scyt et | Thebai* lettered directly on vellum; page edges gilded.

¹ This portrait by Thomas de Leu (c. 1576–1614) is not among his works listed in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, *Inventaire du fonds français. Graveurs du seizième siècle* (Paris 1932–1938), I, pp.461–546; II, 373–380.

FIRST PRINTING of this compendium of the lives and maxims of the desert fathers, dedicated to the royal finance minister Martin Ruzé de Beaulieu (1530–1613), and ‘achève d’imprimeur pour la première fois, le 25 Mars 1605’ by Gillette Hacte (widow of Guillaume Chaudière), under protection of a privilege granted on 16 June 1602 (for ten years).²

The book is illustrated by a fine series of engravings of hermit saints by Jacob de Weert and Jacob van der Heyden, apparently derived from prints by Johann I and Raphael Sadeler and from Adriaen and Jan II Collaert, all of which in turn depend from widely disseminated drawings of Marten de Vos.

The printmaker Jacob de Weert (1569–after 1605) worked in Antwerp before arriving in Paris about 1597 (in 1603 he is recorded as living in the rue St-Jean de Latran). Ten illustrations in our book (by repetition of seven matrices) are his versions of prints in Johann and Raphael Sadeler’s influential cycle *Solitudo sive Vitae Patrum Eremicolarum* (a series of title and twenty-nine prints), first published at Antwerp circa 1586 (see appended LIST OF PRINTS).³ De Weert’s matrices were also struck to produce a suite of single-sheet prints, the size and nature of which is uncertain.⁴

Jacob van der Heyden (1573–1645) was active at Strasbourg until about 1635 and thereafter at Brussels.⁵ Four illustrations in our book are his versions of prints in Adriaen

² Roméo Arbour, *Dictionnaire des femmes libraires en France (1470–1870)* (Geneva 2003), pp.131–132.

³ Although engraved images of hermits had been produced before, the Sadelers were the first to publish a series of prints of hermits, and more particularly, prints depicting hermits ‘praying and meditating in idyllic natural surroundings in such a way to present this secluded existence as an attractive proposition’; see Thea Vignau-Wilberg, *In Europa zu Hause: Niederländer in München um 1600 / Citizens of Europe: Dutch and Flemish artists in Munich c.1600*, catalogue of an exhibition of the Staatliche Graphische Sammlung München (Munich 2005), pp.365–382 (quotation p.373). On the title-page of the Sadelers’ publication they claim that their knowledge of the hermits was obtained from the hagiographies of St. Jerome.

⁴ Single-sheet impressions of five of De Weert’s prints are in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York; see *The Illustrated Bartsch, 70: Part 2 (Supplement): Johan Sadeler I*, by Isabelle de Ramaix (New York 2003), pp.169–218, nos. 7001.348–7001.377. No single-sheet impressions of De Weert’s ‘Machaire d’ Alexandre’ and ‘Saint Apollonius’ are located; however, one of Saint Maccarius of Egypt – a subject not appearing in our book – is described (*Illustrated Bartsch* 70, Pt.2, 7001.370 C2). These six prints are perhaps part of the otherwise unknown suite ‘La vie des Saints 15p. in-4 en Larg’ recorded by Charles Le Blanc, *Manuel de l’Amateur d’Estampes* (Paris 1854), IV, p.197.

⁵ See F.W.H. Hollstein, *German engravings, etchings, and woodcuts, ca. 1400–1700* (Blaricum 1984), XIII A, pp.9–82; Ulrich Thieme and Felix Becker, *Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler* (reprint Leipzig 1978), XVII, pp.17–18 (our publication not described).

Collaert’s *Solitudo sive vitae foerminarum anachoritarum*, a series of title and twenty-four plates, published as a kind of supplement to the male hermits in Sadeler’s *Solitudo* (see appended LIST OF PRINTS).⁶ The four prints apparently are part of a larger series engraved by Van der Heyden, the composition of which again is not known.⁷

The title-plate, signed by the printmaker Karel van Mallery (1571–after 1635),⁸ is adapted from the title-plate of the Sadelers’ suite of hermit engravings entitled *Oraculum Anachoreticum*, published in 1600.⁹ Depicted in the centre is an ‘oracle grotto’ with a statue of Christ the Good Shepherd flanked by reliefs of David killing Goliath and Abraham sacrificing his son (lettered respectively *Humilitas* and *Obedientia*), with foreground figures personifying Silence and Peace.

The work enjoyed enduring popularity, being reprinted at least a dozen times before the end of the century.¹⁰ After 1622, the translator is identified on the title-pages as René Gaultier (1560–1638), well-known by his translations of Spanish spiritual literature.¹¹ The De Weert and Van der Heyden matrices were not used to illustrate any subsequent edition (several editions feature copies of their prints; most are not illustrated). Even late editions (e.g.

⁶ Hollstein, *Collaert*, XIII A, nos. 284–307; Ann Diels & Marjolein Leesberg, *The New Hollstein Dutch & Flemish etchings, engravings and woodcuts, 1450–1700. The Collaert Dynasty: Part IV* (Ouderwerk aan den IJssel 2005), pp.12–35 (series of title and twenty-four plates).

⁷ Three of Jacob Van der Heyden’s prints in our volume were unknown to Hollstein, however four other copies by him from *Solitudo sive vitae foerminarum anachoritarum* are described (*The New Hollstein: Collaert*, IV, nos. 769, 772, 776, 778; Hollstein, *De Vos*, XLIV, nos. 924, 927, 931, 933).

⁸ The print is not listed by F.W.H. Hollstein, *Dutch & Flemish etchings, engravings and woodcuts 1450–1700* (Amsterdam [1955]), XI, pp.159–160.

⁹ Hollstein, *Sadeler*, XXI, no. 437; Hollstein, *De Vos*, XLIV, no. 1050; Vignau-Wilberg 2005, pp.371–372, 391–392.

¹⁰ 1622 (Lyon: P. Rigaud), 1623 (Lyon: s.n.), 1624 (Paris: P. Le Mur), 1634 (Paris: J. Germont), 1640 (Paris: C. Boudinier), 1649 (Lyon: s.n.), 1659 (Rouen: C. Malassis), 1660 (Lyon: P. André), 1668 (Paris: E. Loyson; also issued under imprints of Aubovin, P. Baudouin le fils, J. Du Bray, M. Dauplet, J. Laisné, M. Le Febvre, and H. Seneuse), 1677 (Rouen: Widow of P. de La Motte), 1696 (Rouen: Besongne).

¹¹ ‘L’exemplaire de la Bibliothèque nationale (Lyon, chez Pierre Rigaud, 1622; livre I seulement; cote H.15474) reproduit, outre l’approbation des docteurs, le consentement du procureur du roi (daté du 23 juin 1617) qui autorise la publication du livre par Pierre Rigaud’ (‘Epilogue: les formes modernes de la légende’ in *Pélagie la Penitente. Métamorphoses d’une légende*, edited by Pierre Petitmengin, Paris 1984, II, p.374 note 4). The existence of our first edition is doubted: ‘L’approbation porte la date du 5 avril 1600, mais le livre ne fut peut-être pas publié avant 1622’ (p.374).

For Gaultier’s other translations, see Raymond Foulché-Delbosc, *Bibliographie hispano-française, 1477–1700* (reprinted New York 1962), pp.185–186; A. Vermeylen, in *Dictionnaire d’histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques* (Paris 1984), V, cols. 62–64.

1677) still reprint the dedication to Martin Ruzé de Beaulieu (now subscribed by Gaultier, instead of by the publisher, as in our first edition).

Eight other copies of this first edition are known to the writer

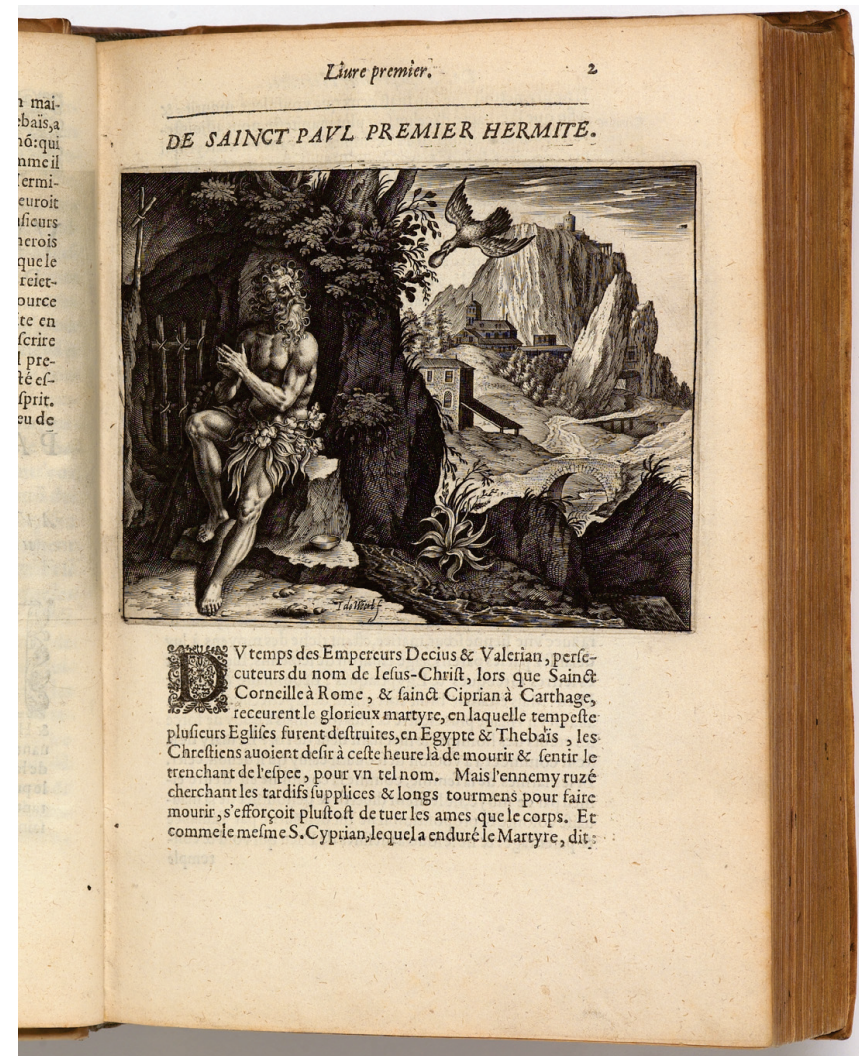
- Alençon, Bibliothèque municipale, V-2-15 Fonds Ancien 2
- Angers, Bibliothèque municipale, 3025 Histoire 2
- Antwerp, Bibliothèque publique¹²
- Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, E.163c
- Nîmes, Bibliothèque Carré d'art, 23148 Registre Valz
- Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania, Rare Book & Manuscript Library, 245 V832
- Québec, Musée de la civilisation, 273.1.18
- Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, 42 S. 22

Our copy was bound for a member of the Béthencourt family of Rouen, probably Galien II de Béthencourt, who was born in 1580, and in 1624 inherited the office of councillor of the court to the Parlement. Another binding decorated by the same armorial supralibros is in the Bibliothèque nationale de France (shelfmark O1 461A), on *Histoire de la première découverte et conquête des Canaris* (Paris 1630), a work edited by Pierre de Bergeron for Galien II de Béthencourt, who had inherited the famous manuscript (in possession of the family until 1928, when sold to the Bibliothèque de Rouen, now its Ms 129).¹³

REFERENCES Jean Dagens, *Bibliographie chronologique de la littérature de spiritualité et de ses sources, 1501-1610* (Bruges 1952), p.172 (imprecisely cited); F.W.H. Hollstein, *Dutch & Flemish etchings, engravings and woodcuts 1450-1700* (Rotterdam 1998), LI, p.262, nos. 75-81

¹² Cited by Frans Hendrik Mertens, *Bibliotheca Antverpiensis. Catalogue méthodique de la bibliothèque publique d'Anvers* (Antwerp 1846), II, p. 243 no. 6683 (not traced in library OPAC).

¹³ Supralibros reproduced by Eugène Olivier, Georges Hermal, and Robert de Roton, *Manuel de l'amateur de reliures armoriées françaises* (Paris 1924-1935), pl. 1781.



Engraving by Jacob de Weert

List of Prints

Jacob de Weert

- 'Saint Paul Premier Hermite' (folio A4r), a copy in reverse (with a different background) of Sadeler's print of Saint Paul the Hermit (Hollstein, *Sadeler*, XXI, no. 378; *Illustrated Bartsch* 70, Pt.2, 7001.349 C1) after Maarten de Vos (Hollstein, *De Vos*, XLIV, no. 965a)
- 'Saint Antoine Abbe' (C1v), a copy in the same direction of Sadeler's print of Saint Anthony of Egypt (Hollstein, *Sadeler*, XXI, no. 379; *Illustrated Bartsch* 70, Pt.2, 7001.350 C1) after Maarten de Vos (Hollstein, *De Vos*, XLIV, no. 966a)
- 'Saint Hilarion' (L1v), a copy in reverse¹⁴ of Sadeler's print of Saint Hilarion (Hollstein, *Sadeler*, XXI, no. 380; *Illustrated Bartsch* 70, Pt.2, 7001.351 C2) after Maarten de Vos (Hollstein, *De Vos*, XLIV, no. 967a)
- 'Saint Macaire Romain' (O3v), a copy in the same direction of Sadeler's print of Saint Maccarius of Alexandria (Hollstein, *Sadeler*, XXI, no. 400; compare *Illustrated Bartsch* 70, Pt.2, 7001.371, no copy by De Weert known) after Maarten de Vos (Hollstein, *De Vos*, XLIV, no. 987a)
- 'Saint Iean Eleemon' (Oo3v), a copy in the same direction of Sadeler's print of Saint John the Almsgiver (Hollstein, *Sadeler*, XXI, no. 388; *Illustrated Bartsch* 70, Pt.2, 7001.359 C2) after Maarten de Vos (Hollstein, *De Vos*, XLIV, no. 975)
- 'Saint Jean d'Egypte' (Yy2v), copy in the same direction of Sadeler's print of Saint John of Egypt (Hollstein, *Sadeler*, XXI, no. 388; *Illustrated Bartsch* 70, Pt.2, 7001.359 C2) after Maarten de Vos (Hollstein, *De Vos*, XLIV, no. 975)
- 'Saint Apollonius' (Bbb2r), a copy in reverse of Sadeler's print of Saint Apollonius (Hollstein, *Sadeler*, XXI, no. 385; compare *Illustrated Bartsch* 70, Pt.2, 7001.356, no copy by De Weert known) after Maarten de Vos (Hollstein, *De Vos*, XLIV, no. 972a)
- 'S. Piamon' (Iii3v), a copy in reverse of Sadeler's print of Saint Piamon (Hollstein, *Sadeler*, XXI, no. 405; *Illustrated Bartsch* 70, Pt.2, 7001.376 C2) after Maarten de Vos (Hollstein, *De Vos*, XLIV, no. 992a)
- 'S. Iean' (Iii4v), a copy in the same direction of Sadeler's print of Saint John of Egypt (Hollstein, *Sadeler*, XXI, no. 385; *Illustrated Bartsch* 70, Pt.2, 7001.359 C2) after Maarten de Vos (Hollstein, *De Vos*, XLIV, no. 975)¹⁵

¹⁴ Hollstein wrongly asserts that both prints are in the same direction. The four lines of verse which appear on all the Sadeler plates are not copied by De Weert.

Jacob van der Heyden

- 'Machaire d'Alexandre' (DDddd1r), a copy in the same direction of Sadeler's print of Saint Maccarius of Alexandria (Hollstein, *Sadeler*, XXI, no. 400; compare *Illustrated Bartsch* 70, Pt.2, 7001.371, no copy by De Weert known) after Maarten de Vos (Hollstein, *De Vos*, XLIV, no. 987a)¹⁶
- 'S. Marie Egyptienne' (Kkk3r), copy in reverse of Adriaen Collaert's print (*The New Hollstein: Collaert*, no. 769) after Maarten de Vos (Hollstein, *De Vos*, XLIV, no. 924)
- 'Sainte Euphraxie' (Zzz3v), copy in reverse of Adriaen Collaert's print (*The New Hollstein: Collaert*, no. 778) after Maarten de Vos (not in Hollstein, *De Vos*, XLIV)
- 'Sainte Euphrosine' (DDdd1r), copy in reverse of Adriaen Collaert's print (*The New Hollstein: Collaert*, no. 776) after Maarten de Vos (not in Hollstein, *De Vos*, XLIV)
- 'S. Pelagie' (Iii2v), copy in reverse of Jan II Collaert's print (*The New Hollstein: Collaert*, no. 772) after Maarten de Vos (not in Hollstein, *De Vos*, XLIV)

¹⁵ De Weert's copy of Johann I Sadeler's print of Saint John of Egypt was reused for the lives of both Saint John the Almsgiver (Joannes Eleemosynarius) and Saint John of Thebes (neither Saint is depicted in the Sadeler cycle).

¹⁶ The publisher repeats De Weert's print of Saint Maccarius ('the Younger') of Alexandria for the life of Saint Maccarius ('the Elder') of Egypt.