

penwork, or in blue paint decorated with red penwork. Each Office within the book opens with a brightly coloured border. These are: Leaf 17v: Three-sided border of trefoils and stylized flowers with, at foot, a miniature of a Carmelite friar kneeling before a shield.

Leaf 26v: Full illuminated border showing the instruments of the Passion: the cross, spear, nails, hammer, pliers, whip, post, cock, etc.

Leaf 28v: Three-sided border of trefoils and formal flowers over patterned background of pink, gold and brown dotted with gold.

Leaf 30v: Full-page decoration. Central miniature of David kneeling in prayer before a medieval walled castle and city; his harp lies before him and an angel of vengeance flies over the city. Within the full border is a smaller miniature of David killing Goliath.

Leaf 42v: Full-page decoration. Central miniature of the Annunciation with, in the background, the Devil in a tree handing an apple to Eve. Grisaille border of trefoils on matt gold with strawberry, peacock, bird and housefly in full colour.

Leaves 58r ff: Three-sided illuminated borders to each of the canonical hours from Prime onwards.

Leaf 72v: Full-page decoration. Central miniature of the Raising of Lazarus. Border of trefoils and a bird on matt gold.

The borders are of high standard, but the painted figures are rather expressionless and are sometimes slightly rubbed.

The manuscript is neatly bound in early nineteenth century stamped mottled calf. The spine is labelled simply 'UFFIZIO', the Italian for 'Office'. The whole book is now preserved in a green box.

In the study of medieval manuscripts the 'provenance' is often of great importance. It appears likely that the original owner of this manuscript was the Carmelite friar whose 'portrait' appears on leaf 17r at the beginning of the Psalms of Degree. Here a friar, holding a banderole reading *O mater dei, memento mei*,²⁰ kneels before a shield showing the Risen Christ. He wears the traditional dark brown habit of the Carmelites, covered with the white cloak bestowed upon Simon Stock by the Virgin Mary and introduced into the Carmelite Order by the command of Pope Innocent IV. Beneath is what appears to be his name: 'F. + . P. d'ARGENT'. While most Books of Hours of the late fifteenth century were produced in commercial workshops, there was still a trade in commissioned manuscripts. When a Book of Hours was specially written out for a particular subscriber, the patron's name and portrait were often inserted to add a personal touch to the finished manuscript. In this manuscript the tiny letters inserted by the scribe at the beginning of each sentence as a guide to the illuminator would seem to show that this book was not produced solely by one person. It is therefore unlikely that Friar d'Argent wrote it himself for his own use. There would appear to be two alternatives. Either the friar, despite his