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Written Culture at Ten Duinen: Cistercian Monks and Their Books, c. 1125-c. 1250

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CHAPTER 5

BOOKBINDINGS

When a manuscript is taken out of its archival box and set down on a scholar's desk for study, its bookbinding is the first physical feature that is seen and touched. Little attention is paid to it by many who consult manuscripts: whether contemporary to the book block inside it, or replaced just the year before the scholar's visit, the binding is rarely the main attraction and is, after a cursory once-over, flipped aside to get to the manuscript's sought-after innards. The binding is, however, integral to the book, key to its preservation, and part of what identifies an object as 'book' in our perception. There is a huge variety in bookbindings — their age, materials, aesthetic qualities, and technique of production — but for the most part, they consist of three basic components: front cover, spine holding the binding to the book block inside, and back cover. These components present an enormous variety of features which potentially convey a vast amount of information about the book inside, the past or current owner's preferences and needs, the available or favoured tools, materials, and technology, and generally speaking, the lifecycle of the book through use, damage, and perhaps rebinding.

In the same way that the manuscript's materials, preparation of folios and quires, methods of copying text, and reading aids discussed in the previous four chapters reveal much about the scribes and readers of Ten Duinen, bindings likewise contain their own clues. This chapter examines the physical features of these bindings — their leather coverings, furniture and decoration, stitching techniques and quire supports, and pastedowns — to examine which materials and methods were chosen to protect and present the manuscripts they contain.

5.1 Bookbindings in this Study

Bookbindings are sometimes excluded in codicological studies for various reasons: they are often post-medieval, and thus not of particular concern to the researcher; they are beyond the researcher's interests, expertise, or the practical limits of the study; or another scholar has already effectively published on the subject.¹ Ten Duinen's bindings do, however, have great potential value to a range of experts, from bookbinders and conservationists to book and library historians. One third of the bindings in my corpus are medieval, and a number are as early as the second half of the twelfth century: both the number of medieval bindings alone, and the proportion of medieval bindings to later bindings, is remarkable. The bindings, particularly the earliest examples, have already been discussed by scholars whose work has informed

¹ For example, Webber offers only a few lines on the bindings in her *Scribes and Scholars at Salisbury Cathedral*, citing Pollard's earlier work in 'The Construction of English Twelfth-Century Bindings'.

my own. Yet, they offer opportunities for further exploration. Some features of these bindings, particularly when considered together with codicological and palaeographical evidence in the manuscripts they hold — the date of the script, trimming of notes and foliation, layers of quire signatures, folios missing without leaving scraps or traces — challenge some previously published discussions of both the bindings and their book blocks.

My study's corpus survives in a range of bindings dating from the twelfth century to the twentieth. While previous chapters are generally confined to the period c. 1126–c. 1250, this chapter has a broader focus which includes bindings dating from long after the studied period. There are a few reasons for this approach. Firstly, as the following discussion reveals, dating these bindings with precision is often problematic. The outer limit of this study, taken as c. 1250, was chosen based on the approximate time at which scribes stopped writing 'above top line' in favour of writing 'below top line'.² While this is a reasonable turning point for features of the book block, it is arbitrary for bindings. It is more useful to study these bindings on their own terms than to impose an external rule onto them. Second, these bindings play a role in determining the dates (or at least chronology) of two important features of some Ten Duinen manuscripts, namely, foliation and shelfmarks. As discussed below, these unique features have often been attributed to (or near to) the period studied here, and are held as vital aspects of Ten Duinen's books, library history, and intellectual culture. Although my own observations demonstrate that the foliation and shelfmarks are both later additions than previously suggested, my study would be sorely lacking in the scholarly tradition of Ten Duinen's manuscripts were they, and likewise the bindings, ignored. Third, my research emphasizes the physical attributes of my corpus. Even later bindings, while having no bearing on medieval production or use, are inexorable parts of how these manuscripts reach us, and how we interact with them today. While reviewed very briefly, later binding eras, including modern, are reviewed nonetheless.

The 133 manuscript units of my corpus are found in fifty-seven manuscripts. This chapter divides their bindings into five categories: early Cistercian, later medieval, Campmans, early modern, and modern (Figure 5.1), and discusses each of them. First, however, it examines some of the practices of Ten Duinen's medieval library in several eras which left their traces on bookbindings, and what these traces tell us about how the abbey's monks stored, located, and accessed their books. Moreover, this chapter zooms in on the binding of **MS 130**, which proves to be particularly difficult to date because of its unusual mix of features.

² See Introduction 0.6, and Ker, 'From 'Above Top Line',' pp. 13–16.

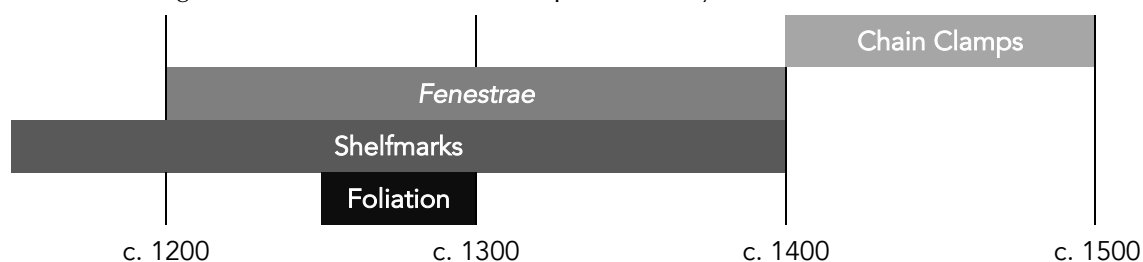
Figure 5.1. Corpus Binding Types

Binding Type	# of MSS (of 57)	% of Corpus	Shelfmarks (Bruges, OB, MS)
Early Cistercian	11	19%	10, 19, 27, 83, 93, 102, 105, 120, 130, 152, 166
Later Medieval	9	16%	15, 51, 79, 132, 156, 158, 233, 284, 507
Campmans	26	46%	9, 33, 48, 56, 59, 67, 72, 82, 88, 109, 111, 116, 118, 128, 131, 161, 163, 257, 280, 283, 285, 297, 302, 378, 379, 533
Early Modern	4	7%	139, 183, 234, 277
Modern	7	12%	17, 28, 47, 55, 62, 147, 532

5.2 Library Practices: Shelfmarks, *Fenestrae*, and Chain Clamps

Ten Duinen's bindings were adapted over time to optimize the utility of the abbey's library. They variously accrued three features — shelfmarks, *fenestrae*, and chain clamps — over the course of the Middle Ages that today offer us clues about how books were stored, located, and consulted. Just as foliation was added in the second half of the thirteenth century to aid readers in navigating through their books,³ shelfmarks were added to the abbey's earliest bindings sometime between c. 1150 and c. 1400 to organize the library and locate manuscripts within it.⁴ In the thirteenth through fifteenth centuries, *fenestrae* holding the titles of the works contained inside were added to back covers to help readers locate specific texts within the abbey's book collection.⁵ Finally, in the fifteenth century, bindings were fitted with chains to yoke books to the library's lecterns, protecting them from theft (Figure 5.2). The addition of these features to books produced centuries earlier speaks to the continued use of very old manuscripts by Ten Duinen's community.

Figure 5.2. Ten Duinen's Manuscript Features by Probable Production Period



³ Ten Duinen's foliation is discussed in Chapter 4.7.

⁴ This range has a later potential end date than is usually offered, as explained here and further in Chapter 5.4.

⁵ *Fenestrae* may have been added to bindings even earlier than the oldest extant examples. Several bindings in this group have either missing *fenestrae* or show traces of an earlier *fenestra* (for example, on MS 27).

These traces of Ten Duinen's library practices are covered only superficially here but bear mention in the broader context of my study: shelfmarks, *fenestrae*, and chain clamps are crucial to distinguishing which books belonged to Ten Duinen and which to its daughter house Ter Doest, as demonstrated by Derolez.⁶ They are reviewed primarily in the context of their appearance and incidence in my corpus. The development, use, and decline of Ten Duinen's library is a fascinating topic, but most of the earliest evidence of its organization originates after the period covered in this study. There is, however, excellent literature on the later library and similar libraries published by Vandamme, Geirnaert, Derolez, and others.⁷

Shelfmarks

There are seven bindings with shelfmarks — **MSS 10, 19, 27, 83, 102, 120, and 152** — which are made up of one large and one small letter (Figure 5.3 below), and one, **MS 130**, with a single letter. Derolez has identified them as **Ah, At, Gc, Be, Fb, Hg, Gx**, and **F** (in order of the manuscripts listed above).⁸ **MS 105** may have had a shelfmark as well, but a considerable portion of the leather covering is now torn away from its back, exposing the board beneath (Figure 5.4 below).⁹

The surviving shelfmarks appear in two colours — red, black, or both red and black (Figure 5.5 below) — and share similarities with other known examples of medieval shelfmarks. Shelfmarks containing a combination of letters and numerals survive from medieval libraries in the Low Countries, and indeed throughout Europe, although most were added in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.¹⁰ There are, moreover, several different medieval systems using shelfmarks. In some, the first letter indicated the location (perhaps a certain cupboard, shelf, or lectern), and the second letter or numeral pointed to its position there relative to other books. Instead of, or in addition to location, letters or numerals could also classify the book by genre.¹¹ Imagine this hypothetical scenario: a reader is searching for **MS 83**. The library's catalogue tells

⁶ Derolez, 'Ten Duinen of Ter Doest?'.
⁷ For an in-depth study of the features briefly discussed here see, Derolez, 'Ten Duinen of Ter Doest?'. For the library's history, see Vandamme, 'Het intellectuele en artistieke leven in de Duinenabdij', pp. 154–60; Vandamme and Geirnaert, 'Cisterciënzerbibliotheken'; Geirnaert, *Vlaamse cisterciënzers*; Huyghebaert, 'De bibliotheken'. Many studies of medieval monastic libraries, particularly those of England, have been published. For general studies detailing library practices including binding shelfmarks, *fenestrae*, and chaining, see, e.g., Streeter, *The Chained Library*; Christ, *The Handbook of Medieval Library History*, trans. Otto; Gameson, 'The Medieval Library'; and specific to the Low Countries, Derolez, 'Hoe lagen de boeken'.

⁸ Derolez, 'Ten Duinen of Ter Doest?', 247.
⁹ That **MS 105** may have had a shelfmark is noted by Derolez, 'Ten Duinen of Ter Doest?', 254 n. 54.
¹⁰ On shelfmarks in libraries in the Low Countries, see Derolez, 'A Reconstruction' and 'Hoe lagen de boeken?'; see also van Acker, 'Bijdrage tot geschiedenis der librije van de Sint-Baafsabdij te Gent'.
¹¹ Derolez, 'A Reconstruction', pp. 116–17. It is unlikely that the letter indicated genre at Ten Duinen. While both manuscripts with **A** (**MSS 10** and **19**) are biblical — both contain Old Testament books, although **MS 10** is not glossed, and **MS 19** is — the two classed as **G** (**MSS 27** and **152**) do not share a genre. **MS 27** contains Bede's commentary on the Parables, while **MS 152** contains miscellaneous Victorine tracts. I do not know the criteria used by the monks to categorize their books, however, so it is possible they saw a connection between these texts that I am overlooking.

him that **MS 83**, which contains the Pauline Epistles with gloss and has the mark **Be**, is stored on shelf **B** in the book cupboard. All manuscripts classed as **B** are books of the New Testament, and because its secondary label is **e**, the searcher finds what he is looking for in the fifth position on that shelf of New Testament texts.

There are two known reasons for using different ink colours: according to the description provided in Richard de Fournival's mid-thirteenth-century *Biblionomia*, and the system used at Alzelle Abbey in the late fifteenth century, different colours were used to mark different types of text. Different colours could also indicate a more specific location where the book was kept. Around the end of the fifteenth century at Zevenborren and Rooklooster priories, both located in present-day Belgium near Brussels, books were stored on lecterns where the reader could find his book, take a seat, and consult it there. The lecterns were either double-sided or arranged in pairs: one was labelled black, and the other red, and the shelfmarks of their books were written in the corresponding colour.¹² Only black and red shelfmarks survive from Ten Duinen, although it is possible, if perhaps less likely, that they used other colours. Imagine then this second library scenario: a room with a row of double-sided lecterns with books stored on shelves above them.¹³ Each row is labelled **A** through **H**, with one side designated as black and the other as red. Again using **MS 83** as an example, the reader searches for his book by going to the second lectern in the row (**B**), and because the **Be** is written in black (with both letters framed in red to make them visible against the binding's dark leather), he finds the manuscript on the black side, fifth in sequence away from the aisle. These scenarios, although possible given evidence from other libraries, are purely speculative. Presumably the letters, and perhaps also the colour, indicated which section or shelf of the library they belonged to, but there are too few survivors to reconstruct how exactly this system worked. We can assume that there was a library catalogue or booklist that acted as a legend: readers or the librarian would scan the list for the titles sought and find their 'location code'.

Determining when shelfmarks were added and used in Ten Duinen's library is particularly problematic. Not only is it challenging to accurately date single oversized letters written in a display script, but they also appear on bindings which are in themselves difficult to date. Shelfmarks may have been introduced in the mid-twelfth century, dating back to the period of the earliest binding showing one (apparently **MS 83**), and continued through the thirteenth century with the letters added as new books entered the library. Alternatively, they were added in one effort, which would make them contemporary to or later than **MS 130**'s probably fourteenth-century binding.¹⁴ Because of these concerns, no attempt at a more precise date is forwarded here. I can only assert that **MS 130** is the latest binding to feature a shelfmark, and therefore whomever added it felt it necessary as late as the fourteenth century.

¹² Derolez, 'A Reconstruction', p. 117.

¹³ Ten Duinen's books were clearly stored above the lectern, as is explained in the subsequent discussion on chain clamps.

¹⁴ The dates of **MSS 83** and **130** are discussed in Chapter 5.3 and 5.4, respectively.



Figure 5.3. Bruges, OB, MS 27. Back binding with shelfmark **Gc**



Figure 5.4. Bruges, OB, MS 105. Binding may have had a shelfmark. Photo courtesy of Evelien Hauwaerts, Bruges Openbare Bibliotheek



Figure 5.5. Bruges, OB, MS 152. Shelfmark **Gx**

Fenestrae

Fenestrae are small ‘windows’ of transparent horn framed with thin ribbons of metal which hold the titles of their manuscript’s contents, enabling the reader to quickly confirm that she or he has found the volume sought after without picking up or opening the book. The *fenestrae* on Ten Duinen’s early bindings were added or replaced over the thirteenth (**MSS 105** and **152**; see Figures 5.4 and 5.5) and fourteenth centuries

(**MSS 19, 27, 47, 166, and 233**; see Figure 5.3).¹⁵ At Ten Duinen, *fenestrae* were always placed on the back cover near the bottom, usually centred but sometimes more towards the spine. Their placement is one of the principle means used to attribute manuscripts to Ten Duinen's medieval library rather than that of its daughter house Ter Doest. Derolez' detailed analysis of both Ten Duinen's and Ter Doest's bindings has found that while the former's *fenestrae* are always placed at the bottom of the back cover, those of its daughter house are placed in the middle or closer to the top of the back cover.¹⁶ Where *fenestrae* do not survive on medieval bindings, their traces are often still evident; see the rectangles of hair remaining on the leather covers of **MSS 102** and **120**, which were protected from abrasion by now-lost *fenestrae* (Figure 5.9 in Chapter 5.3 below).¹⁷ While it is possible that *fenestrae*, or at least the parchment bearing the book's title, were recycled from earlier bindings, it is reasonable to assume that they were simply remade as needed rather than pried loose from discarded bindings. If this is indeed the case, and since the script in the *fenestrae* of **MSS 105** and **152** appear to date to c. 1250–c. 1300, these bindings can be loosely dated to the period between their contents' production dates (c. 1200 and c. 1151–c. 1175, respectively) and c. 1300. Although now enclosed in a modern binding, the parchment strip from **MS 28**'s now-lost *fenestra* is pasted on its first folio. It appears to be the oldest example, palaeographically dating from c. 1225–1250 (see Chapter 5.5 and Figure 5.30 below).

Chain Clamps

Chaining books to lecterns was a common theft prevention technique in late medieval libraries, and evidence of these chains and their attachments can be found on manuscripts throughout Europe. In my corpus, a few manuscripts show traces of having belonged to the abbey's fifteenth-century chained library, either on the outside or inside of the front cover at the centre top. Holes from the nails that once held chain clamps to the front covers and impressions of the lost fixtures can be found on **MSS 93** (Figures 5.6 and 5.12), **132**, and **284**, while **MSS 102** and **158** retain part of their clamps on the inner front covers.¹⁸ Clamps or their traces can also be found on several additional later medieval bindings, as briefly reviewed in Chapter 5.5.

¹⁵ Derolez, 'Ten Duinen of Ter Doest?', 243–46. Derolez does not include **MS 233** in his discussion of medieval *fenestrae*: the *fenestra* itself is lost, and the current binding is late medieval (fifteenth or sixteenth century), but the parchment slip bearing the title is now pasted to f. 1^r, which enables me to offer a date for its former *fenestra* here. Likewise, **MS 47**, in a modern binding, holds its medieval *fenestra* slip on its first recto.

¹⁶ Derolez, 'Ten Duinen of Ter Doest?', 237–46.

¹⁷ For more on the *fenestrae* and their traces, see Derolez, 'Ten Duinen of Ter Doest?', 237–46.

¹⁸ My photograph of **MS 102**'s partial chain clamp is of poor quality, but that of **MS 158** is found in Chapter 5.5, Figure 5.26. A clear image of a fifteenth-century clamp featuring the abbey's coat of arms attached to **MS 476**'s front cover is found in Vandamme and Geirnaert, 'Cisterciënzerbibliothek', p. 63.

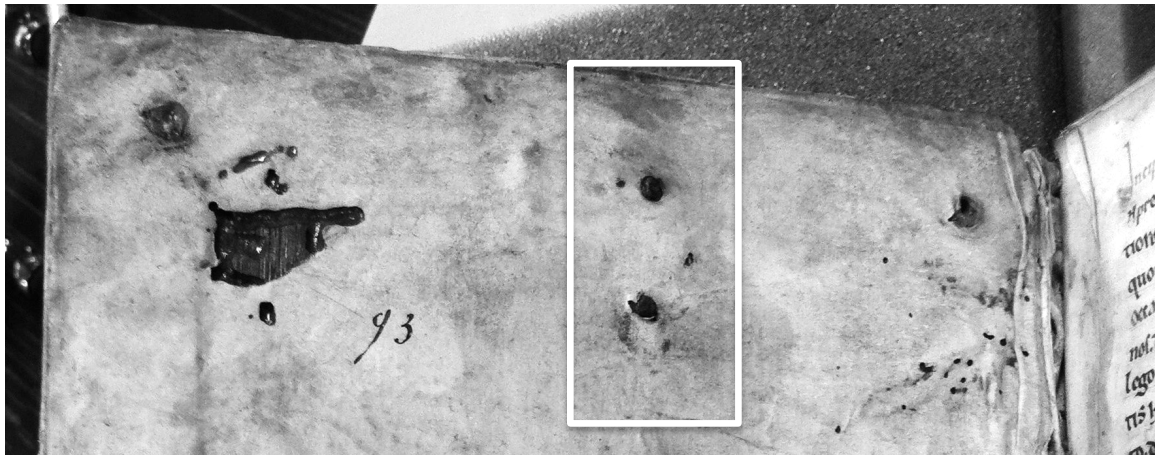


Figure 5.6. Bruges, OB, MS 93. Holes and impression from now-lost chain clamp inside front cover

Together the location of shelfmarks, *fenestrae*, and chain clamps reveal how books were stored at Ten Duinen for centuries: face down. The earliest feature, shelfmarks, are placed in various positions on the back cover, with no clear preference for one position (but never centred, perhaps because the middle of the back cover held a boss to protect it from the surface of a lectern, nor ever right at the tail of the book). This indicates that at the time shelfmarks were used, the whole back cover was exposed to view so that the shelfmarks could be used to identify particular volumes (as this system naturally relies on the identifying feature's visibility). The *fenestrae*, the earliest of which perhaps overlaps the period of adding shelfmarks (see Figure 5.2 above), are consistently placed in the bottom half of the back cover. This may be to avoid covering the shelfmarks, which were already present on at least some books and take up large areas of the back covers' middle and upper sections. As the text is correctly oriented for reading with the tail of the book (its bottom edge) pointed towards the viewer, one can assume that books rested this way, with tail facing out (as opposed to resting with the spine, opening edge, or top edge facing the viewer). The positions of these two library features tell us how the books were situated when not in use, but not the type of furniture — shelves, cupboards, or lecterns — they were stored on or in.

Remarkably, the third and latest features discussed here, chain clamps and their traces, reveal much about the kind of furniture that may have been used to store, and even consult books on, in Ten Duinen's fourteenth-century library. Firstly, that the books were chained at all indicates that they were stored on lecterns, as they offer a place to rest the book while reading as neither shelves nor cupboards do (Figure 5.7). Further, the clasps were attached at the head of the book on the front cover: not the tail, and not on the back cover. This means that the chained books were either (a) stored face down (so *fenestrae* were visible and the chains rested flat near their clasps at the books' heads) on a shelf *above* the slanted reading surface of the lectern, but never *below*, or that (b) they were stored on the lecterns' reading surfaces, face down, with chains running flat from the top of their front covers to the tops of the lecterns. This reasoning demands some imagination: if a book attached to the lectern at its head,

as we know Ten Duinen's books did, and is stored below the lectern, its chain would drape across the back cover, perhaps damaging it and blocking the view of the *fenestra* identifying the texts within. Likewise, if a book clamped at the top was stored on the lectern but the chain attached below or to the bottom of the lectern, the chain would drape down across the book or lectern itself or rest between the two, appearing less tidy, perhaps causing damage, and certainly requiring a longer chain. In either of these unfavourable storage situations the excess, poorly placed chain would also be a nuisance to the reader as it snaked between the desk and the book's front cover, perhaps making the heavy object unstable on its surface, and probably getting in the way and taking up valuable desk space if he wished to take notes. The same irritations would naturally result from attaching a chain to the tail of the book and storing it or chaining it above the lectern.¹⁹ In summary, to avoid these irritations, books stored or chained below the desk would have a chain clasp at the tail of the book, and books stored above the desk would be chained at the head, precisely in the manner as Ten Duinen's books.



Figure 5.7. Lectern with chained books, 'Librije' of St Walburga's Church in Zutphen, The Netherlands, 16th century. Photo courtesy of Julie A. Somers

¹⁹ Whether a book is best chained by its front or back cover depends entirely on which side should face the viewer when it is closed; if the front cover rather than the back cover contained identifying features, the clamp should be attached at the back to rest flat (and thus not strain or pull) on the shelf or lectern surface. If neither front nor back has identifying features, the front should again logically face outwards, as Western-language books are read, and generally also searched, from front to back. In Figure 5.7 of a lectern in the early modern chained library of Zutphen, The Netherlands, the books' front covers face up, the clamps are attached to the top of the back covers and rest flat on the lectern's surface, and the chain connects efficiently to a bar at the top of the lectern.

5.3 Early Cistercian Bindings

Only a small proportion of medieval bindings survive from the Latin West, due to the ravages of time, tastes of later bibliophiles and libraries, and misguided restoration efforts.²⁰ Consequently, one of the most remarkable aspects of Bruges Openbare Bibliotheek's Historisch Fonds is its significant number of medieval bindings — approximately 600 — including a number of early Cistercian bindings. As of 2012, twenty-three of these had been identified as original twelfth- or thirteenth-century bindings, including those of ten manuscripts in my corpus: **MSS 10, 27, 83, 93, 102, 105, 120, 130, 152, and 166**.²¹ Although **MS 19**'s binding is also classified as early Cistercian, it is not taken to be the book block's first binding. Internal evidence analyzed in this study indicates that the bindings of **MSS 10, 102, 130, and possibly 152**, while early, are also not the first bindings for the material they contain.²² These early Cistercian bindings are often loosely dated to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.²³ Derolez agrees that they are indeed old but argues that they may have been bound later in an archaic style, as was done at some other West Flemish Cistercian houses. As he rightly notes, a binding (with the exception of pastedowns, leather covering, and furniture) cannot predate its book block.²⁴ Several of the bindings in this group cannot be original or twelfth-century, either because evidence within the book block points to rebinding, or because the script's features do not support dating the book block itself to the twelfth century.²⁵ Whether original or secondary, twelfth-century or later, they are nonetheless uncommon and interesting.

While all identified as early Cistercian, these bindings show some variety. Their basic materials — thick oak boards cut to the size of the book block, covered in raw or vegetable-tanned leather — are also witnessed in the early bindings of Clairmarais and Ter Doest.²⁶ Several share particular characteristics that indicate that they were bound by the monks themselves, or perhaps a nearby artisan. Five are covered in medium-brown cow leather: **MSS 19, 27, 102, 105, and 120**. In the cases of **MSS 19** (Figure

²⁰ Gullick and Hadgraft, 'Bookbindings', pp. 96–97, 108–09.

²¹ More on twelfth- and thirteenth-century bindings from Ten Duinen and Ter Doest's libraries can be found at Blog Openbare Bibliotheek Brugge, 'Expertenoverleg over vroege cisterciënzerboekbanden'.

²² See Appendix D for an explanation of this evidence.

²³ Notably, Vandamme is the curator of Bruges Openbare Bibliotheek's Historisch Fonds, and is vice-president of *CORES* (Competentieplatform voor Conservering en Restauratie van Boeken en Archief). His dates for these and similar bindings might inform those provided by the Openbare Bibliotheek's online catalogue and articles. For examples of dating this binding type, see Vandamme, 'Het intellectuele en artistieke leven', p. 159. There are, however, some discrepancies between Vandamme's dating and those provided by the OB's online catalogue and articles (as of the time of writing; see Appendix D regarding **MS 102**); in these cases, precedence should be offered to Vandamme's expertise in published sources.

²⁴ Derolez, 'Ten Duinen of Ter Doest?', 231.

²⁵ E.g., **MS 166** is a thirteenth-century manuscript and thus cannot have a twelfth-century binding.

²⁶ Vandamme and Geirnaert, 'Cisterciënzerbibliotheken', pp. 62–63. An image of a twelfth-century Clairmarais binding is found on p. 62.

5.8), **102**, and **120** (Figure 5.9), the leather retains considerable hair, protected over centuries from abrasion by bosses and *fenestrae* which have since been lost.²⁷

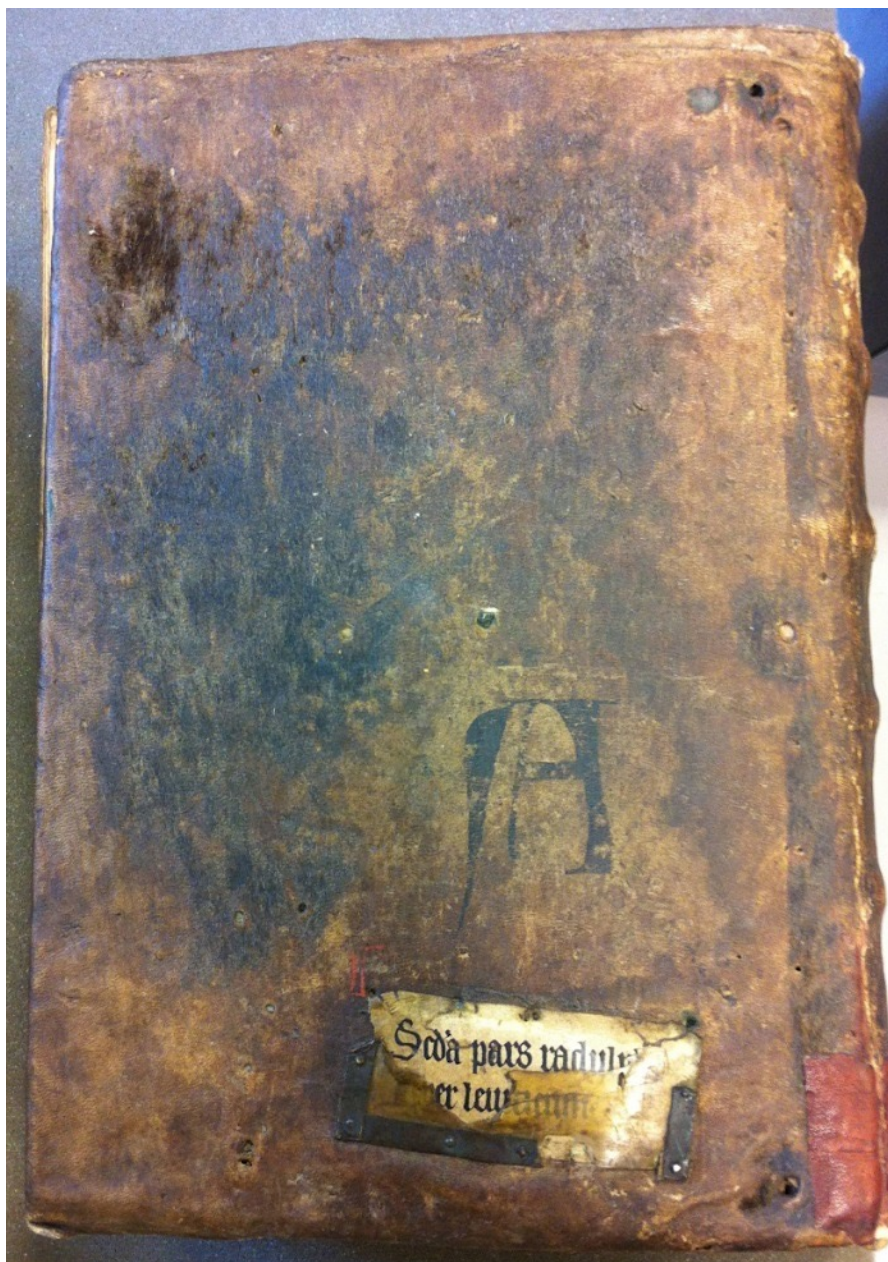


Figure 5.8. Bruges, OB, MS 19.
Binding back with significant hair remaining at the upper left corner

²⁷ In 1750, Dom Visser, the librarian of Clairmarais, wrote in what is now **St-Omer, Bibliothèque d'Agglomération de Saint-Omer, MS 850–2** that the hairy bindings in the abbey's collection were made of wild boar or bear. Van Regemorter 'corrected' this to deerskin in her 1951 account of Clairmarais's bindings, 'La reliure des manuscrits à Clairmarais aux XIIe–XIIIe siècles'. Lieftinck noted that the technique used for binding at Ten Duinen was the same as that of its daughter house, and that the leather was most certainly from a cow (*De libri en scriptoria*, p. 50 n. 2). In 2014, the Bibliothèque d'Agglomération sent hair samples from four of their ten hairy late twelfth- or early thirteenth-century bindings — **MSS 74, 206, 207, and 701** — to the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle for testing. Results indicated that they were probably cow skin; see Bibliothèque d'Agglomération de St-Omer's, 'Du nouveau sur les "Libri Pilosi" de Clairmarais'.



Figure 5.9. Bruges, OB, MSS 102 (left) and 120 (right).
Back covers with significant hair remaining where *fenestrae* were attached

MSS 105 and **152** (Figures 5.4 and 5.5 above) feature what appears to be vegetable-tanned leather covering their boards. They had smooth surfaces with some sheen, but are now somewhat cracked, wrinkled, and peeled. Similar (albeit darker) leather wraps over the boards of **MSS 10** and **83** (Figure 5.10).²⁸ These different methods used to prepare skin do not necessitate different binding periods; bindings covered with both types of leather contain book blocks datable from the mid-twelfth century through the second half of the thirteenth century. That these smooth bindings are indeed of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries is moreover supported by the fact that each of these manuscripts contains foliation undamaged by trimming, as it commonly is in manuscripts rebound after its application. If the binding of **MS 83** is contemporary to its book block, it is the oldest binding in my corpus; its contents are palaeographically datable to c. 1126–c. 1150 (probably nearer 1150).

Two additional manuscripts have early bindings: **MSS 93** and **166**. These differ somewhat from the other eight bindings in this category. A considerably lighter leather covers **MS 93** (Figure 5.10) of unknown origin; given its yellow tone, it may be

²⁸ There is a thirteenth-century *ex dono* on f. 138^v of **MS 83** (c. 1126–c. 1150), as well as foliation and a shelfmark, meaning it was copied elsewhere but reached Ten Duinen before 1300. A number of indications — the density of its script and number of lines, very small margins, high concentration of marginal notation, and execution of its initials — together indicate that **MS 10** is not from Ten Duinen's scriptorium either. Like **MS 83**, its current binding appears to be original.

sheepskin rather than cow.²⁹ Alternatively, it may simply be undyed while the others are, or perhaps it comes from a much lighter-skinned animal. As Szirmai notes, identifying leather species by surface or follicle appearance is often difficult — particularly as centuries of wear alter its appearance even more than original treatments — and therefore requires considerable expertise.³⁰



Figure 5.10. Bruges, OB, MSS 83 (left, binding back) and 93 (right, binding front)

²⁹ As noted, **MS 93**'s binding shows traces of a chain clamp. Derolez does not include it among the others noted as having (or having had) a chain clamp, nor does he attribute it to either Ten Duinen or Ter Doest. It has no foliation or shelfmark, so probably arrived at Ten Duinen after c. 1300, but in time to join its fifteenth-century chained library. Traces of a clamp are also found on the front cover of **MS 132**, also not noted elsewhere to my knowledge; like **MS 93**, it is not attributed to Ten Duinen or Ter Doest's library by Derolez, and besides this clamp, shows no other ownership evidence. The clamp's traces show concave edges, which consequently places it among Ten Duinen's, not Ter Doest's, belongings. The later medieval binding of **MS 284** also shows clamp traces on the outer front cover (noted by the Bruges Openbare Bibliotheek's online catalogue); the clamp had concave edges and should likewise be added both to Derolez's list of manuscripts with clamp traces and attributed to Ten Duinen. Derolez observes four or five different Ten Duinen clamp sizes ('Ten Duinen of Ter Doest?', 233–36). Moreover, while they share the same general concave shape, the details of their bottom edges differ; this may mean that chains were applied in stages. In my corpus there are examples of clamps with bottom edges that stretch straight across with two round cut-outs (**MSS 132, 158**), are wavy (**MS 102**, also with a stamped shield), or are forked with three points (**MSS 93** and **284**). For the chained library's dating, see Vandamme, 'Het intellectuele en artistieke leven', p. 160.

³⁰ Szirmai, *Medieval Bookbinding*, pp. 225–26.

Also covered in lighter leather, **MS 166** has metal supports in its spine (Figure 5.11). This characteristic, alongside other internal clues, indicates that this manuscript was not made at Ten Duinen, but was instead acquired from another monastery in their network. It does, however, feature a fourteenth-century *fenestra* placed in Ten Duinen's usual location at the bottom of the back cover, although it is shaped differently than the others in my corpus. **MS 166** lacks both foliation and a shelfmark: if the *fenestra* was indeed added at the abbey, it probably reached their library sometime after c. 1250 but before c. 1400.³¹



Figure 5.11. Bruges, OB, MS 166. Binding back and spine

³¹ Derolez identifies the scribe of this *fenestra* text as that of **MS 27**'s *fenestra* ('Ten Duinen of Ter Doest?', 244). I am unable to confirm or deny that claim, as there are no features of the hand that are, to me, certainly the same, nor defensibly dissimilar. The shape of the *fenestra* is also different; **MS 27**'s is rectangular like all other *fenestrae* of my corpus from Ten Duinen, not pointed like that of **MS 166**'s. Perhaps it was added elsewhere and is coincidentally placed where Ten Duinen placed their own *fenestrae*.

Of these bindings, several have damage that reveals how the cover boards are attached to the spine and the method used to stitch quires together. Some show evidence of having, or having had, a full or partial overcover, as indicated at the edges of the board where two different types of leather are joined by stitching, or by doubled layers of leather.³² Where it is possible to see these usually hidden features, they are in line with elements identified by Szirmai as characteristic of ‘Romanesque’ bindings of the second half of the eleventh to the end of the fourteenth century.³³ While space and visibility limit the detail to which their spectrum of features can be discussed here, I offer some brief observations.

For example, **MS 27**’s lifted pastedowns and exposed lower spine show that the binding is generally consistent with other bindings of its era: the quire supports, or thongs, are alum-tawed leather split into two across the spine, and the quires are attached to them with a herringbone stitch.³⁴ The thongs are then threaded through the edge of the board, through to the top and across the outside of the board (not visible),³⁵ and then back through to the inside, exiting the inner board through holes staggered to maintain the integrity of the wood.³⁶ However, instead of the leather covering being a single piece folded over the board edges and secured to the inside as is often seen, the turn-ins do not as much ‘turn in’ as they ‘envelope’ (Figure 5.12).³⁷ They appear to be scraps of alum-tawed sheep leather, sewn to the cow leather outer cover around the edges. This envelope-style binding with two types of leather is also used for **MSS 10, 102, 105, 120, 152, and 166**.

The turn-ins of **MS 27** are made up of several pieces, which is also the case for those of **MSS 10, 102, 120, 130, and 152** of this group, as well as examples from Clairmarais.³⁸ Their shape indicates two practicalities: their irregularity suggests that they are scraps left over from other uses. Using these separate pieces, however, is not just resourceful; multiple pieces would be easier to work with when making such a covering. They were sewn onto or fixed down around the book in sequence, and then secured with pins or paste. Using the example of **MS 27** again, one can imagine the binder first setting the boards into the front and back corners, using the extra flexibility afforded by loose flaps or splits in the inner cover to pull the envelope over the edges. Once the corners had been fitted, the remaining loose pieces could be turned inside, drawing the outer cover taut to the spine, and then secured to the wood. The somewhat untidy inner covers were then neatly hidden away under pastedowns.

³² For a useful diagram of Romanesque overcover types, see Szirmai, *Medieval Bookbinding*, p. 165.

³³ Szirmai, *Medieval Bookbinding*, p. 142.

³⁴ Szirmai, *Medieval Bookbinding*, pp. 147–48.

³⁵ There is a hole in the front covering of **MS 19**’s binding which exposes the middle support running across the outside board. The entry point is closer to the spine than those of **MS 27**.

³⁶ Szirmai, *Medieval Bookbinding*, pp. 152–55.

³⁷ For the standard style of turn-ins and different methods of mitring their corners, see Szirmai, *Medieval Bookbinding*, pp. 162–64. This envelope cover is a variant of that described by Szirmai, *Medieval Bookbinding*, pp. 164–65.

³⁸ Multi-piece turn-ins may be present on other bindings but are hidden by intact pastedowns. They are visible in the digitizations of **St-Omer, Bibliothèque d’Agglomération, MSS 114, 213, 216, and 716**.



Figure 5.12. Bruges, OB, MS 27. Inside back cover with lifted pastedown revealing staggered alum-tawed sewing supports and scrappy inner 'envelope' covering



Figure 5.13. Bruges, OB, MS 27. Exposed spine at tail

The spine lining stretching from the spine's head to tail, of chamois or alum-tawed leather,³⁹ is visible on the exposed tail of the spine, and also from inside along the sewing supports.⁴⁰ While the kettle stitch linking the quires near the edge is visible, there are no true endbands in this binding. Endbands typically enter the boards diagonally at the head and tail (or very near them) and connect the binding to the quire edges. In **MS 27** there are only four parallel supports, with the outermost set about 30 mm from the edge; each can be seen where the board meets the book block in Figure 5.12, and the exposed support closest to the tail in Figure 5.13. It appears from stitching holes in the spine lining that selected quires were once attached to the two supports closest to the head and tail. In contemporary bindings with endbands, quires are similarly stitched through the spine lining with the stitches looping around the endbands.⁴¹

Like **MS 27**, **MS 105** has an envelope-style binding, as indicated by the stitched-together (as opposed to turned-in) edges and two leather types. The darker, tanned outer cover attaches to the alum-tawed or chamois inner layer at the edge.⁴² **MS 105** does not expose as much of its structure, but presents two features not illustrated by **MS 27**. Firstly, it has decorative endbands: they have straight stitches in alternating blue and plain thread, which is reasonably well-attested in contemporary bindings.⁴³ Unlike the binding of **MS 27**, however, it appears that a now-trimmed flap — remnants of which are visible at the head of the manuscript — had once attached to the binding's front cover and hung over or even wrapped around the opening edges to protect the book block (Figure 5.14).⁴⁴ A similar style of envelope binding with a flap extending from the front cover over the opening edges was described by van Regemorter in her study of Clairmarais's early bindings.⁴⁵ It is possible that flaps and extensions were also once present on the envelope-style bindings in this group, but have since been trimmed

³⁹ The spine lining could be either type of leather based on superficial appearance. According to Szirmai, *Medieval Bookbinding*, p. 157, chamois was most common in this period.

⁴⁰ Szirmai, *Medieval Bookbinding*, pp. 157–58.

⁴¹ For a detailed explanation of endband construction and useful diagrams, including of typical attachment points for supports, see Szirmai, *Medieval Bookbinding*, pp. 121–24.

⁴² It is also possible for a binding to have a second layer on the outside covers, an 'overcover', for protective or cosmetic reasons. That the inner leather of **MS 105** is partial, attached only at the edge and inside of the board, and not a full layer covering the entire outside of the boards, is apparent via the damage of **MS 105**'s binding. The spine lining provides a partial layer over the spine and part of the adjacent boards, while the inner covering wraps just around the opening edges where it attaches to the outer layer. The scraps of leather covering the mostly-exposed back board show only one layer: no under layer is revealed through a large hole mid-way through the top, nor near the *fenestra* where one might expect that such a layer would be protected from tearing away entirely by the secured edge.

⁴³ Szirmai, *Medieval Bookbinding*, pp. 160–61.

⁴⁴ An excellent diagram of Romanesque overcovers, with and without wrap-around edges, is found in Szirmai, *Medieval Bookbinding*, p. 165, and an image of an intact overcover with furnishings, on p. 166.

⁴⁵ Two such examples from Ten Duinen's daughter house are **St-Omer, Bibliothèque d'Agglomération, MSS 213 and 216**. Its outer covers are hairy like some of Ten Duinen's other bindings, and they are better preserved than **Bruges, Openbare Bibliotheek, MS 105**. They are digitized, alongside their respective catalogue information, in the Bibliothèque d'Agglomération's online repository; see also Van Regemorter, 'La reliure des manuscrits à Clairmarais'.

away and the remaining edges stitched down. In some cases, remnants of straps peek out from between the layers on a binding's front (Figure 5.15); perhaps they once wrapped over, or were hidden by, a now-lost protective flap.



Figure 5.14. Bruges, OB, MS 105. View from top (left) and bottom (right).
Photos courtesy of Evelien Hauwaerts, Bruges Openbare Bibliotheek



Figure 5.15. Bruges, OB, MS 166. Fore-edge with remnants of straps between outer and inner layers of front covering

5.4 Bruges, OB, MS 130: A Problematic Binding

Another binding classified as early Cistercian by the Bruges Openbare Bibliotheek remains to be discussed: **MS 130**. It is not considered alongside the other early bindings in Chapter 5.3 because it has several features which make it problematic to date. While containing material from Ten Duinen like other early bindings,⁴⁶ is the only blind-stamped binding in my corpus with a medieval shelfmark (Figure 5.16). Its *fenestra* is

⁴⁶ Two hands in **MS 130** are observed elsewhere, in **MSS 27** and **152**, also of Ten Duinen. They are identified as Scribes A and C in Chapter 2.6.

placed in Ten Duinen's preferred position at the lower back, but the metal of its frame is unique in its decoratively stamped pattern. While reported to be **MS 130**'s original binding,⁴⁷ it is later than all its c. 1150–c. 1250 manuscript units. There are moreover several hints that **MS 130**'s binding was added after 1300, and perhaps exemplifies a transition from the earlier tanned and hairy bindings described in the previous section towards the later embossed and red-tanned examples described in the next.

The appearance of **MS 130**'s outer covering is inconsistent with the common shiny vegetable-dyed red-brown of early blind-stamped bindings.⁴⁸ The sober brown of its stamped outer layer is accompanied by bright red leather, spotted especially around the bottom edges of the boards and as turn-ins stretching over the back cover (Figure 5.17). The brown turn-in on the opening edge of the back board perhaps once extended as a flap over the edge of the book block. Stored face-down, this protective flap would hang over the folio edges, and be held in place under the straps that once extended from the front cover to the back. Hints of deep red are also found in the back cover's gnarled top corner and in the hole left by the missing uppermost strap on the front. Perhaps its current colour is a result of exposure and aging, and the overcover had once been more vivid. Where the red turn-ins have been abraded (formerly covered by pastedowns, they have conceivably endured much less than the cover), the leather is similarly brown. The current dull brown is, however, punctuated with decoration: the overcover features a somewhat erratic pattern of embossed lines, stamped fleur de lys and, on the back only, four standing deer.

The fleur de lys and deer stamps, and the bright colouring of the turn-ins, are reminiscent of another Flemish binding, that of **Boston, Public Library, MS f. Med. 84**, probably c. 1275–c. 1300.⁴⁹ A fourteenth-century binding from Ten Duinen, that of **MS 476** shares stamps with **MS 130**'s binding. The book block of **MS 476** is datable to c. 1300–c. 1350 on palaeographical grounds, and its binding appears to be contemporary. It features the same fleur de lys stamp alongside the abbey's crest, which

⁴⁷ Blog Openbare Bibliotheek Brugge, 'Expertenoverleg'.

⁴⁸ In addition to this colouring, de Hamel also found that a large proportion of contemporary blind-stamped books came from Paris, contained glossed bibles, and were first bindings rather than rebindings (*Glossed Books*, p. 64). None of these are true of **MS 130**, which contains *De consideratione* by Bernard of Clairvaux, the miracles of Pope Eugene III, and two short anonymous tracts. De Hamel also notes that red stamped covers were often hidden with plainer overcovers when they entered monastic libraries (*Glossed Books*, p. 64); while the red leather here is hidden away on the inside, stamped red-brown bindings were chosen for Ten Duinen's books in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

⁴⁹ **Boston, Public Library, MS f. Med. 84**'s stamps are noted by Schmidt-Künsemüller, who dates the binding to c. 1250–c. 1300 (*Blindstempelteinbände*, pp. 34, 150). The manuscript as a whole is dated to c. 1250 by Bond, *Supplement to the Census*, p. 208. The Digital Commonwealth catalogue suggests the binding is c. 1400. The manuscript is digitized; its script and decoration place it at c. 1275–c. 1300, and while the original leather is a deep burgundy on the outside cover, its turn-ins are the same bright red as **MS 130**'s. As for its date, there is no clear indication that **MS f. Med. 84** has been rebound. A date as late as c. 1400 is unlikely; a luxury manuscript — **MS f. Med. 84** contains illuminated miniatures — would doubtfully need rebinding within a century, nor was it likely to have been unbound or in a limp binding for the same reason. Thus, the binding shares the same date as its contents.

was also used as a metal stamp on the chain clamps of the fifteenth-century library.⁵⁰ The similarities between **MS 130**'s binding and these two examples suggest it has a considerably later date than those bindings described in Chapter 5.3.



Figure 5.16. Bruges, OB, MS 130. Binding front and back.
Photos courtesy of Evelien Hauwaerts, Bruges Openbare Bibliotheek



Figure 5.17. Bruges, OB, MS 130. Inside back cover with red turn-ins.
Photo courtesy of Evelien Hauwaerts, Bruges Openbare Bibliotheek

⁵⁰ The same Ten Duinen crest stamp appears on both the leather cover and metal chain clamp of **MS 476** (Derolez, 'Ten Duinen of Ter Doest?', 232; Vandamme and Geirnaert, 'Cisterciënzerbibliotheken', p. 63). The narrower of the two fleur de lys stamps on **MS 130** is also found on **MS 476**.

It is entirely possible for different parts of a binding to originate from different periods — for example, the leather covering, furnishings, and pastedowns may all be later additions or repairs — which can complicate dating. Potential replacements aside, there are a number of intrinsic features in **MS 130**'s binding that are characteristic of medieval bindings later than those of the early Cistercian group with which it has been identified, and which push it into the fourteenth century. Firstly, its boards are cut somewhat thinner and have slightly curved or 'cushioned' edges which, unlike the square-cut edges of Romanesque bindings, is a trait of Gothic bindings.⁵¹ Its distinctly curved spine sticks out beyond the edges of the smaller-cut boards (Figure 5.18),⁵² and it has raised bands typically caused by using vegetable cord sewing supports instead of flat leather thongs.⁵³ Moreover, the supports enter through the top surface of the boards instead of through their edges, thus do not stretch across the inner cover as earlier bindings (compare the inner cover of **MS 27** in Figure 5.12 with that of **MS 130** in Figure 5.17).⁵⁴ Considered against Szirmai's expert criteria for dating bindings, several of this binding's fundamental features settle its creation within the fourteenth century.



Figure 5.18. Bruges, OB, MS 130. Manuscript tail with smaller-cut boards and curved spine evident.
Photo courtesy of Evelien Hauwaerts, Bruges Openbare Bibliotheek

⁵¹ Szirmai, *Medieval Bookbinding*, pp. 151–52, 218–20.

⁵² As a trait of Gothic bindings, see Szirmai, *The Archaeology of Medieval Bookbinding*, p. 192.

⁵³ Although none of the supports is fully exposed, that they are cord is apparent from holes in the spine, although restoration paste makes the material of the endband support ambiguous. On cord as a trait of Gothic bindings, see Szirmai, *Medieval Bookbinding*, pp. 183–84.

⁵⁴ According to Szirmai, 'A typological characteristic of Gothic bindings is that the slips of the sewing supports enter the boards over the bevelled spine edge' (*Medieval Bookbinding*, p. 222). Their path over the edge of the board instead of through it is easily seen on **MS 130** in the bands' raised surfaces, and at the exposed endband support on the top back of the binding (Figure 5.19). The surviving endband is clearly a single cord, and it appears that the three primary supports are as well. Single supports are reportedly common in the Low Countries in the early fifteenth century; see Szirmai, *Medieval Bookbinding*, pp. 184–85.



Figure 5.19. Bruges, OB, MS 130. Endband support entering through top of back board.
Photo courtesy of Evelien Hauwaerts, Bruges Openbare Bibliotheek

Chapter 4 demonstrated that contrary to the findings of prior publications placing it in the first half of the thirteenth century, Ten Duinen's foliation instead dates to c. 1250–c. 1300 (probably to the third quarter of the century) based on the foliated pastedowns and flyleaves in **MS 10**.⁵⁵ Because the first quire of **MS 130** was not foliated with the rest of the material in its binding, as is standard in all other foliated manuscripts in my corpus, it follows that the first quire was not bound with the other units sharing its binding until after foliation.⁵⁶ As such, the binding of **MS 130** necessarily post-dates foliation. It is unsurprising based on appearance alone that **MS 130**'s binding post-dates the mid-thirteenth century, or even 1300. Asserting a later date for **MS 130**'s binding, as well as that of **MS 10** (it contains post-c. 1250 material), has implications for the dating of Ten Duinen's medieval shelfmarks.

Derolez states that shelfmarks were abandoned by the fourteenth century.⁵⁷ If **MS 130**'s binding was constructed before 1300, this would be true, given that shelfmarks are only otherwise found on demonstrably early bindings. Indeed, all material held in bindings with shelfmarks is pre-1300, and in fact, barring the pastedowns and flyleaves of **MS 10** and the table of contents found in **MS 130**, it is actually no later than the first quarter of the thirteenth century. Despite most of the contents and the partial foliation of **MS 130** being pre-1300, several features of its binding as outlined above, are probably not. All shelfmarks do look to be roughly contemporary to one another, but that does not mean that they all date to the twelfth or thirteenth centuries: they could have been added at any point between the production date of each of these bindings

⁵⁵ See Chapter 4.7.

⁵⁶ Rebinding is most quickly detected in my corpus by the partial trimming of foliation. The foliation found in most of **MS 130** is difficult to assess: it is very close to the edge on some folios which points to trimming, but in cases where it is damaged, one could argue that it is damaged by erosion to the folio edge rather than trimming. Its closeness to the folio edge in and of itself suggests it has been trimmed by rebinding but deserves further scrutiny before a more concrete claim can be made.

⁵⁷ Derolez, 'Ten Duinen of Ter Doest?', 247.

and the earliest intact binding without one, which has not been determined.⁵⁸ Shelfmarks are clearly absent on bindings produced later than the early Cistercian group — those of my corpus are discussed next — but, unfortunately, no study has yet been published on those bindings, and I have not examined enough of Ten Duinen's manuscripts in medieval bindings excluded from my corpus to suggest firm boundaries for the practice of shelfmarking. At the time of writing, no continuity between the early Cistercian bindings and later embossed and stamped bindings has yet been established; perhaps **MS 130** is the nearest evidence of this transition. There is certainly opportunity for deeper assessment, which in addition to being singularly valuable, may lend a more accurate end-date for Ten Duinen's use of library shelfmarks.

5.5 Later Medieval Bindings

Apart from the collection of early Cistercian bindings and **MS 130** discussed above, there are nine additional manuscripts in my corpus with medieval bindings: **MSS 15, 51, 79, 132, 156, 158, 233, 284, and 507**. These date to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.⁵⁹ Most are covered in glossy reddish-brown vegetable-tanned leather with either an embossed geometric pattern, single-ornament blind stamping, or both, in styles common in Continental Europe in the thirteenth through fifteenth centuries (Figure 5.20).⁶⁰

The binding of **MS 507** features roll stamping, which places it between the late fifteenth and mid-sixteenth century, when first roll and then panel stamping gained momentum in Flanders.⁶¹ Five of these manuscripts are from Ten Duinen's scriptorium — **MSS 15, 51, 79, 156, and 233** — and one apparently made elsewhere but owned by the abbey prior to c. 1300 — **MS 158**⁶² — ensure that their current bindings were added, either by the monks or by professional binders, while belonging to Ten Duinen's library. A stamp of the abbey's crest, two simple crossed croziers on a shield

⁵⁸ **MS 476**, as noted above, may share one of **MS 130**'s stamps, namely the narrower of the two fleur de lys designs. **MS 476** has been dated by Vandamme and Geirnaert to the fourteenth century (Cisterciënzerbibliotheken', p. 63 n. 22); its script, by my assessment, is datable to c. 1300–c. 1350, and its binding probably shares the same approximate date. **MSS 476** and **158** (discussed below) also share a stamp of Ten Duinen's crest; these three bindings may be roughly contemporary based on shared stamps, although metal stamps could have long lives. **MSS 476** and **158** may be contenders for the earliest shelfmark-free bindings, should an expert wish to investigate more closely.

⁵⁹ All show evidence of rebinding, whether trimmed notes and/or foliation, or in margin proportions.

⁶⁰ On leather, see Szirmai, *Medieval Bookbindings*, p. 162; on tooling, pp. 166, 243. For similar fifteenth-century single-ornament blind stamping from the southern Netherlands, see Colin, 'Quelques reliures provenant des anciens Pays-Bas'.

⁶¹ Szirmai, *Medieval Bookbindings*, pp. 243–45. For an extensive study of Flemish panel stamping, see Fogelmark, *Flemish and Related Panel-Stamped Bindings*. For examples of both single-ornament and roll blind-stamped bindings from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, see Husby et al., 'Blind Tooling' and 'Panels and Rolls' in *Hand Bookbindings*.

⁶² Although clearly at Ten Duinen at the time of both foliation (which is trimmed) and fitting of its present binding, according to two inscriptions on the back flyleaves reading 'Liber Sancti Johannis Baptiste', **MS 158** seems to have moved to another abbey.

with 'DUNIS' above, is found pressed into the leather of **MS 158**'s binding, which also survives on the binding and chain clamp of fourteenth-century **MS 476**.⁶³



Figure 5.20. Bruges, OB, MSS 233 and 507, front covers.

MS 233 has an etched lattice pattern, and palm, fleur de lys, flower, and star blind stamps. MS 507 was decorated with a roll stamp with flowers, leaves, and vines

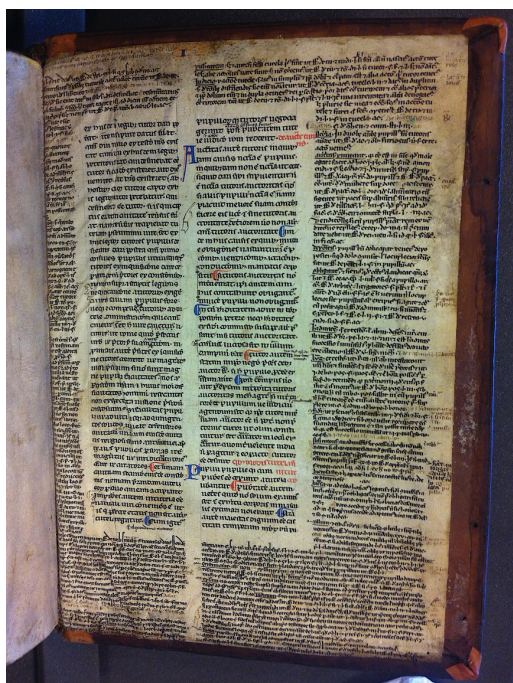


Figure 5.21. Bruges, OB, MS 79. 13th-century *Institutiones Iustiniani* pastedown

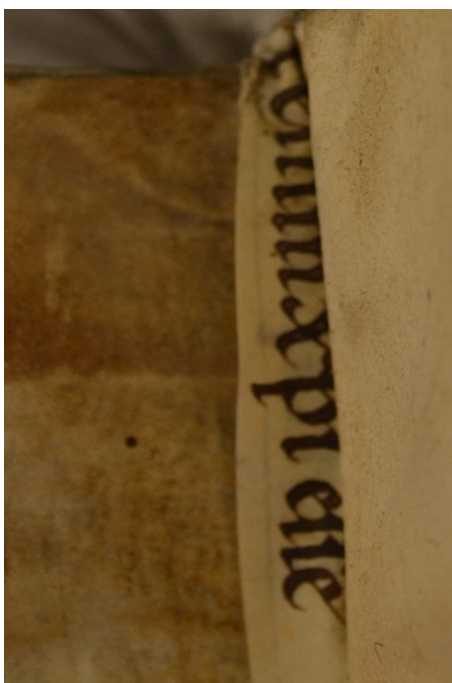


Figure 5.22. Bruges, OB, MS 507. 12th-century fragments in spine

⁶³ Stamped bindings make notoriously poor photo subjects, but clear images of the *Dunis* crest on the binding and chain clamp of **MS 476** can be found in Derolez, 'Ten Duinen of Ter Doest?', 228–29.

All but **MSS 233** and **284** include folios recycled from earlier manuscripts; **MSS 158** and **507** reuse parchment from the twelfth century, **MSS 15** and **79** (Figure 5.21) from the thirteenth century, and **MSS 51** and **156** from the fourteenth century. Small fragments used to reinforce the spine peek between quires in **MS 507** (Figure 5.22), and the alum-tawed leather covering of **MS 132**'s boards is largely torn away to reveal a late thirteenth-century liturgical fragment (Figure 5.23).⁶⁴ Three of the later medieval bindings in my corpus, **MSS 132**, **158**, and **284**, also show evidence of having belonged to Ten Duinen's fifteenth-century chained library, with either remnants of a chain clamp itself, or traces of one, on their front covers (Figures 5.23–5.25).⁶⁵



Figure 5.23. Bruges, OB, MS 132, front. Thirteenth-century fragment under fourteenth-century covering, hole from chain clamp

⁶⁴ On leather types, see Szirmai, *Medieval Bookbindings*, p. 162. A brief description of alum- or white-tawed leather and its production processes can be found in Vest, 'White Tawed Leather', 67–68.

⁶⁵ See Chapter 5.2 for surviving chain clamps and traces.



Figure 5.24. Bruges, OB, MS 158. Fifteenth-century chain clamp on inside front cover



Figure 5.25. Bruges, OB, MS 284. Fourteenth-century front cover with outline of fifteenth-century chain clamp

5.6 Campmans, Early Modern, and Modern Bindings

The most common type of binding in my corpus, known as the Campmans binding, encloses twenty-six of the fifty-seven manuscripts (46 per cent, see Figure 5.1). These bindings were part of a larger restoration program of both the community and its books during the abbacy of Bernard Campmans (1623–1642). By the time of his appointment, Ten Duinen had undergone a long period of uncertainty. Forced from their abbey in Koksijde by violent conflict in 1578, the monks were only able to resettle on their nearby farm, Ten Bogaerde, in 1597. Ter Doest, the abbey's nearest daughter house, had been placed under the commendatory abbacy of the Bishop of Bruges in 1561; having faced considerable challenges in the intervening years, Ter Doest's last two monks joined the motherhouse in 1624, effectively dissolving their community.⁶⁶ Ten Duinen consequently also absorbed Ter Doest's library at this point. Again facing growing unrest in the region following the collapse of the Twelve Years Truce (1609–21) between the Habsburgs and the Dutch Republic, in 1627 Campmans fled with his community to Bruges. The monks took up residence in Ter Doest's former refuge house on the Potterierei, and began to build a new abbey, now the Grootseminarie, in 1628.⁶⁷

Campmans's rebinding effort was underway soon after Ten Duinen, with its newly expanded library, relocated to Bruges. Hundreds of books were probably sorted through, and the worse-for-wear (unsurprisingly a considerable proportion, given their long lives) were sent for rebinding at the Bruges workshop of Karel van Brussel. A late thirteenth-century manuscript in a Campmans binding, **MS 470**, boasts an ownership inscription on its opening flyleaf dated 1628. Perhaps this was added when the manuscript returned from the binder. The other manuscripts in Campmans bindings were presumably rebound around the same time, although such a large undertaking could have spanned years.⁶⁸ Notably, 1628 is also when librarian Carolus de Visch, a monk of Ten Duinen since 1618, catalogued the library, adding a detailed list of contents to the first flyleaf or folio of each manuscript.⁶⁹ **MS 470**'s inscription is not in his familiar hand: a sense of ownership over these books — the largest Cistercian collection in the southern Low Countries at the time⁷⁰ — was apparently also felt by other monks of the abbey.

All Campmans bindings feature high-quality calf leather over wooden boards, with a border of three embossed lines, the crest of Ten Duinen (and Campmans himself) stamped in gold on front and back, and the title gold-stamped on the spine (Figure 5.26).⁷¹ Each binding contains watermarked paper pastedowns and flyleaves, and cord supports.

⁶⁶ These two remaining monks died early in 1625; see van Royen, 'Het monastieke leven', pp. 78–79.

⁶⁷ Beernaert, 'Abdij Ten Duinen in Brugge', p. 34; van Royen, 'Het monastieke leven', pp. 78–79.

⁶⁸ **MS 470** is too late to be a part of my corpus but because it is attributed to the thirteenth century in the *Corpus Catalogorum Belgii*, I have viewed it. It is the only dated ownership inscription I have seen, and the only one providing an approximate date for the manuscript's binding.

⁶⁹ Vandamme and Geirnaert, 'Cisterciënzerbibliotheken', p. 158.

⁷⁰ Vandamme, 'Het intellectuele en artistieke leven', pp. 158–59.

⁷¹ Vandamme, 'Het intellectuele en artistieke leven', p. 158.



Figure 5.26. Bruges, OB, MS 470 and MS 297. Front of Campmans binding (MS 470) and exposed Campmans spine (MS 297)

In addition to Campmans bindings, there are other early modern bindings in my study's corpus found on **MSS 139, 183, 234, and 277**. Although of unknown origins, **MS 139** had belonged to Ten Duinen since the second half of the thirteenth century at latest as indicated by remnants of foliation. It contains a number of interesting fragments: a charter dated 1558 from the aldermen of the Brugse Vrije (the largest castellany in the county of Flanders) wraps around the book block to form the front and back pastedowns, the last folio is reinforced with a twelfth-century musical fragment and unidentified thirteenth-century scrap,⁷² and various fragments reinforcing the spine peek out from between quires (Figure 5.27).

⁷² The notation seems to be deliberately placed, but the script is written in a somewhat inexpert or inconsistent hand. Perhaps the scribe's strength was in writing music and not text.

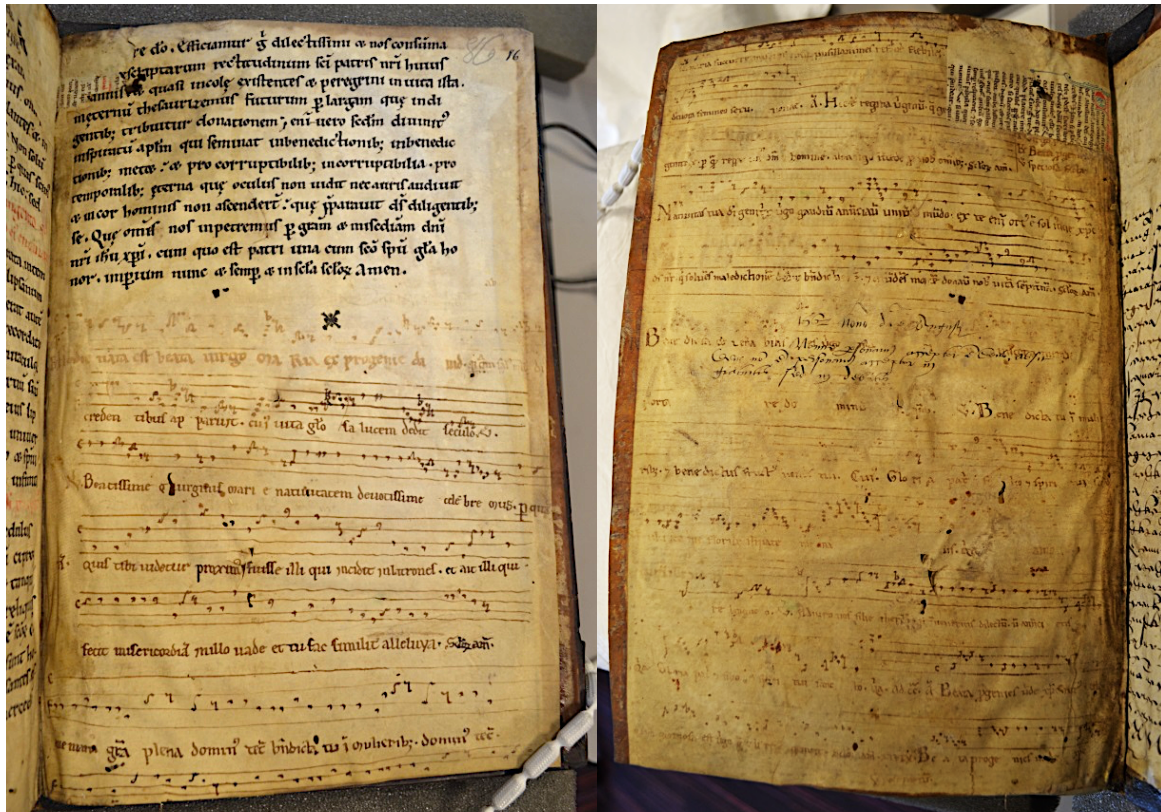


Figure 5.27. Bruges, OB, MS 139, f. 86^{r-v}.
Recycled 12th-century music patched with unidentified 13th-century scrap

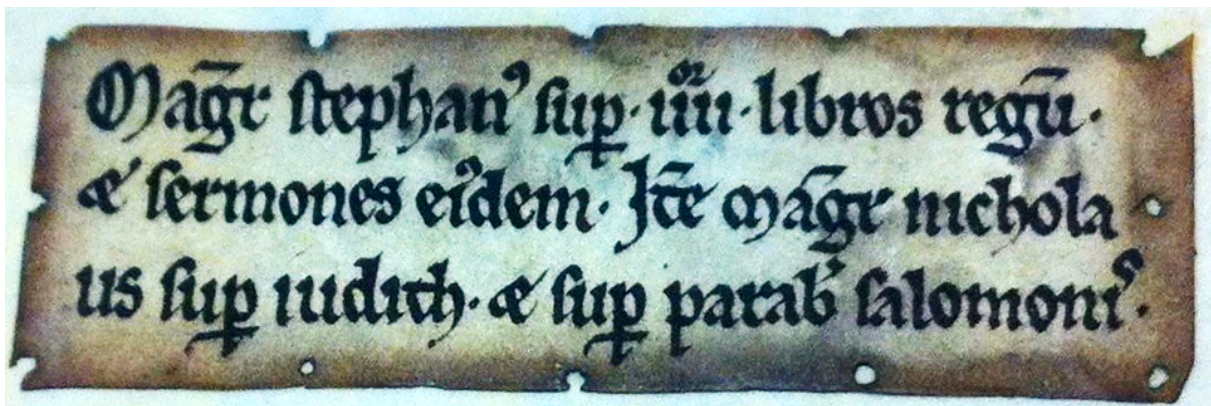


Figure 5.28. Bruges, OB, MS 28, f. 1^r. Former *fenestra* title preserved in modern binding

The remaining seven manuscripts in my corpus — **MSS 17, 28, 47, 55, 62, 147, and 532** — are in modern bindings of various periods and styles. The piece of parchment from **MS 28**'s former *fenestra* is now on f. 1^r (Figure 5.28) and, as it is palaeographically datable to the first or second quarter of the thirteenth century, I believe it to be the oldest example.⁷³ The parchment from **MS 47**'s *fenestra* is likewise

⁷³ **MSS 105 and 152** also have thirteenth-century *fenestrae*, however the hand of the parchment strip from **MS 28** is much less angular and has fewer 'Gothic' traits, such as biting and breaking in the *ductus* of bows. It is not included in Derolez's study.

preserved on its first paper flyleaf, while the former spine title of **MS 532**, in a humanist hand, is now affixed to its front pastedown.⁷⁴

5.7 Conclusions

Bookbindings are often left out of studies focusing on the physical features of medieval manuscripts. It is rare to encounter so many surviving medieval bindings in one collection, and so many from a single abbey, as are found in Bruges Openbare Bibliotheek's Historich Fonds. The oldest of these, the eleven classified as 'early Cistercian', are most relevant to the present investigation.

Bindings have a remarkable potential to speak about the life of a book. Like our own skin, these outer shells of books bear the marks of age, exposure to the elements, injury, and repair. Many of the twenty medieval bindings surveyed here offer glimpses, albeit partial, of Ten Duinen's library over the course of the Middle Ages. There are three distinctive features added over centuries to the abbey's books: medieval shelfmarks, *fenestrae*, and chain clamps. Each are discussed here.

This chapter also examines ten bindings classed as early Cistercian.⁷⁵ Several bindings containing material made at Ten Duinen boast hair, probably cow, that has survived for roughly 800 years due to the protection of bosses and *fenestrae*.⁷⁶ Like their book blocks inside, these bindings may have also been made by the abbey's monks. Vegetable-dyed leather and what is possibly sheepskin cover several more of the oldest bindings.⁷⁷ The binding techniques used in Ten Duinen's earliest manuscripts are considered with several illustrative examples, including the complicated binding of **MS 130**.

Chapter 5 also provides a brief overview of the remaining medieval bindings from the fourteenth through sixteenth centuries, examining their decoration, techniques, and tendency to include scraps scavenged from earlier manuscripts and documents as pastedowns, flyleaves, and spine reinforcement. Campmans bindings, the seventeenth-century binding type enclosing nearly half of the manuscripts in my corpus (26 of 57), are summarily discussed in terms of their history and appearance. An ownership inscription in **MS 470** dated to 1628 suggests that this mass rebinding effort began in the same year Ten Duinen relocated from the coast near Koksijde to the rich cultural centre of Bruges. Finally, the seven manuscripts in my corpus with modern bindings are briefly reviewed. The modern binding of **MS 28** retains the parchment strip from its predecessor's *fenestra*, which is the oldest example witnessed in my corpus. The inclusion of this old binding scrap within its new binding establishes a potential *terminus post quem* for the first uses of *fenestrae* in the abbey's library.

⁷⁴ This spine title is contemporary to, and perhaps in the same hand as, that of several manuscripts included in and excluded from my corpus, including **MSS 27, 83, 93, 113, 130, 166, and 534**.

⁷⁵ Bruges, OB, MSS 10, 19, 27, 83, 93, 102, 105, 120, 152, and 166.

⁷⁶ Hairy bindings are found on **MSS 19, 102, and 120**.

⁷⁷ Respectively **MSS 10, 83, 105, and 152, and MSS 93 and 166**.

Chapters 1 through 4 analyzed the book block to shed light on how Ten Duinen's monks constructed, copied, and interacted with their books. This chapter queried its bindings for additional evidence of book culture at the abbey, namely, the location, storage, and preservation of the community's manuscripts. Having explored the physical features of my corpus's manuscripts from inside to outside, the final segment summarizes and synthesizes the findings of each chapter to affirm what this study has revealed about Ten Duinen's books in the first century of their Cistercian foundation, and more importantly, what these findings mean for the study of manuscripts more broadly.