

VELLUM LEAF FROM AN ILLUMINATED MEDIEVAL MANUSCRIPT

THE NETHERLANDS; Late XVth Century

Latin Text; *Lettre de Forme***Book of Hours**
(*Horae Beatae Mariae Virginis*)

FROM THE COLLECTION OF OTTO F. EGE

In the XVth century Books of Hours were as much in demand in the Netherlands as they were in France and England. In many of these books it is difficult to distinguish the Dutch Hours from those of Northern France or the Rhineland. In the middle of the century this whole area was interested in naturalism and made its illustrations so vivid that sometimes they approached those of our seed catalogues. It is not difficult to recognize carnations, pansies, columbines, and strawberries.

The style later became even more realistic when the naturalistic flowers were painted with cast shadows. When such flowery decorations are found on a rather heavy piece of vellum, entangled with the swirling acanthus leaf and accompanied by a heavy *lettre de forme* script, one can be fairly safe in assigning the leaf to the province of Brabant. It was a difficult technical achievement at this time to apply the gouache colors to gold leaf so that they would adhere without flaking.