

# The Decorated Page

Di q tu quierl 7 dont uens  
Sire io uene dfrance droit  
vnl pdom q me retendrait  
feroit almofne 7 coriehe  
del feruioite fml boildie  
qail ql me donalt pal 7 dras  
dunoi fetu me retendras  
lo ueluy pal degne afaire  
Hegairel nepmee afaire  
Heneqer mie gnt merite  
p petit clain mō loier quire



mil leder  
me loit garas  
tinefme  
cp plans  
Setu estoies  
degut fait  
Almet trott  
ql ne fait  
lonē au loig  
dequq: ioj

qail fepdom uenoit amoz  
pluf lamerow enricef dons  
q toi ne feillce enpdons  
pdom me feroit bien uen  
qail io fuy uolt 7 uolt ken  
Sime uolt on deliueret  
7 dema tiere fml ieter  
vau feriant v. chrs  
allet lai dit biall fire ciers  
q onql ehrs nefuy  
Il mepert mlt bie q io fuy  
tant auet ia enmoi uer  
q mames endefpit ev  
Seuol pecece i euidiffies  
tolt el fire me deliffies  
allet ia roment eus  
7 bien me fui apceus  
q flater mesteu maic mal  
arant elu lefenefcal  
7 lempere ha dit  
tolt eu iabant fi ql enrit  
fonol uoel durement pier  
dererent cest soldoier  
Car il est uen calengier  
Hol enemil 7 uol uengier  
Sineqert altre fue ure  
Q la uande 7 la uefture

Sire le der me beneie

por cho neli faurons n mie

nl est y retenus

7 qnt literm et 3 uenus

q let u of uoelent qbat

7 leuoelent pforce en barre

eil atempeor dela

el pauf ceftri pdeca

dy lepreut q tant a fait

Hetient nul hom garet deplait

Hecambient ne marefcal

ven en est al fenefcal

Sire fait il liantre enuont

encontre calt q mal n fano

7 bien lai q io faul feroie

Seio deriere al remanoie

biall fire car me paffies

vnel armer pouret 7 ues

7 v. elcuer q let port

7 rouet ai ne qerplut fort

7 seio muer fire al pallages

cho ne miet pul uegul damages

ufenefcall fait q contoiz

vnel uier armet aborioz

quilt erent enrumellie

lia dmelement balties

7 un elcuer ucaria

ligut of puit uelataria

agut bruit est derome illue

tamante enlegne a or barue

Idout porter thalt baron

y lumaril .G.

dut mlt iabe 7 elcaru

eilgut ehrs enbary

car armet a qir qier fient

Sin iabent tolt cil q let uoient

but gal enfont 7 gut riles

sil ont leoz mlt deunfees

q let pluf bieles q i font

lgyv font uilain ql enfont

y ne respont une atols

laneust fait fil fust estols

7 leil teneat acaleuy

vengier fe uolra del q mug

tolt autrement q p renchiep

qail q il uigue al bestencier

Iluec endroit v genglerie

lamethier uerl cheualerie

King David, the psalmist, with a scroll,  
Wollaton Antiphonal (MS 250 f.213).



A trumpeter displays the Chaworth arms,  
part of an elaborate heraldic display,  
Wollaton Antiphonal (MS 250 f.246v).

Decoration of a medieval manuscript, like that of a modern web page, served a number of functions and took many different forms. A balance of text and image helps the reader to find his place and conveys implicit messages about the owner or author as well as being visually appealing.

The volume of *French Romances and Fabliaux* is the most important illustrated work in the Wollaton Library Collection. The French vernacular stories of knightly deeds and romance are illustrated by 83 miniatures. In the tale *Ille et Galeron* by Gautier d'Arras (*far left*), the hero Ille addresses the Emperor of Rome. Current research confirms an early 13th century date for the volume, supporting its claim to be the earliest fully illustrated surviving collection of romances.

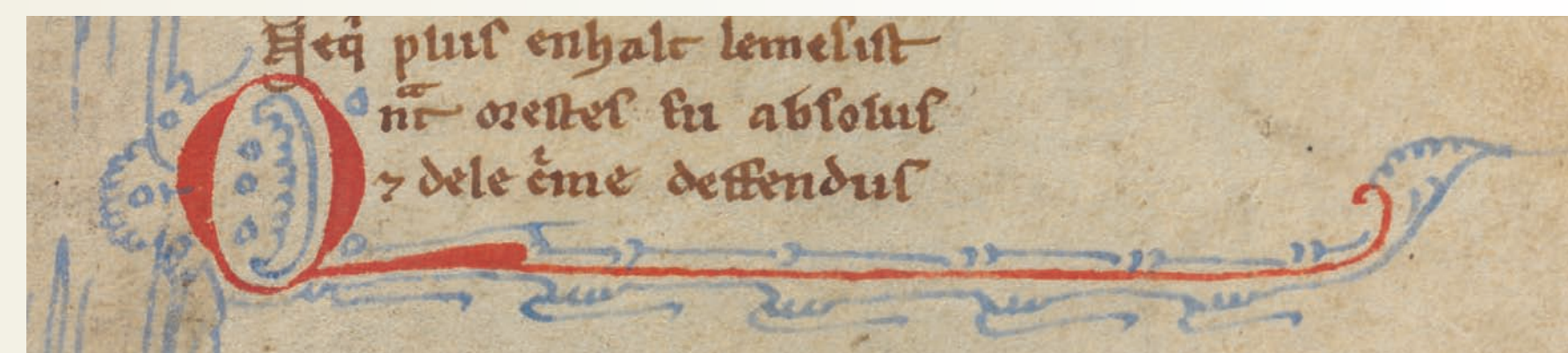
The full page shows the planning and execution of the decoration. Space was allocated for decorated initial letters, but the plan was changed to include miniatures instead. Verse lines are broken to fit the format. Elsewhere on the page, marginal flourishes in red and blue draw the eye to smaller decorated letters. The elaborate extension of letters into the bottom margin suggests that on this occasion the scribe was also responsible for some of the decorative flourishes.

The Wollaton Antiphonal, another major example of medieval book illumination, was made more than two centuries after the *Romances*. Its liturgical function places it in a different tradition. Many initials are 'historiated', depicting an image that can generally be linked to a long iconographic tradition: here the letter 'B' (for 'Beatus') is decorated with an image of King David to introduce the Psalms. Of particular interest are the heraldic elements, which firmly associate its splendid production with the status of its owner, Thomas Chaworth of Wiverton, Nottinghamshire.

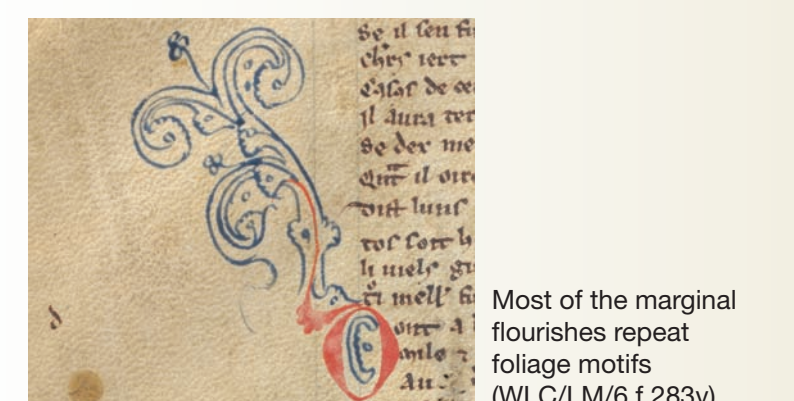
A dragon's head appears in occasional  
flourishes (WLC/LM/6 f.314).



The features of a man's head can be  
detected within this initial 'U'  
(WLC/LM/6 f.206v).



The initial letter Q appears frequently and gave particular scope for decorative flourishes  
(WLC/LM/6 f.147).



Most of the marginal  
flourishes repeat  
foliage motifs  
(WLC/LM/6 f.283v).

The tale of *Ille et Galeron* by Gautier d'Arras; folio  
with miniature showing Ille addressing the emperor  
of Rome (WLC/LM/6 f.164).