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History Corps Archive

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3-18-2015

# Episode 1 - How did you get to The University of Iowa Libraries, Special Collections?

Heather Wacha  
*University of Iowa*

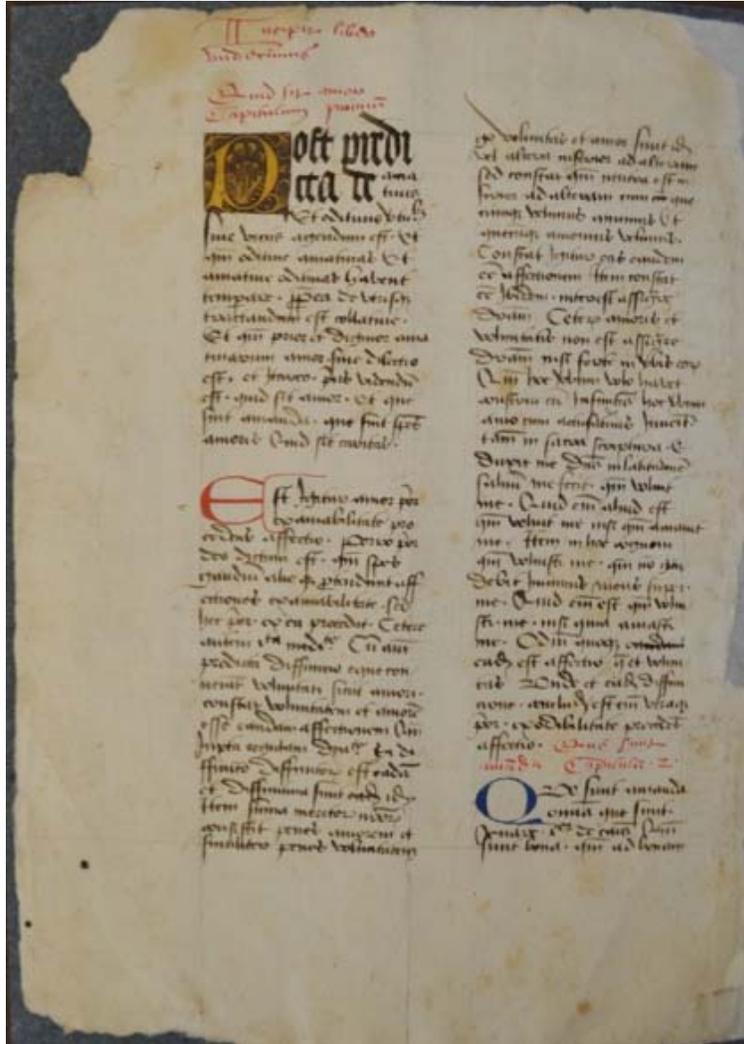
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# Episode 1 - How did you get to The University of Iowa Libraries, Special Collections?\*

Heather Wacha  
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18 March 2015



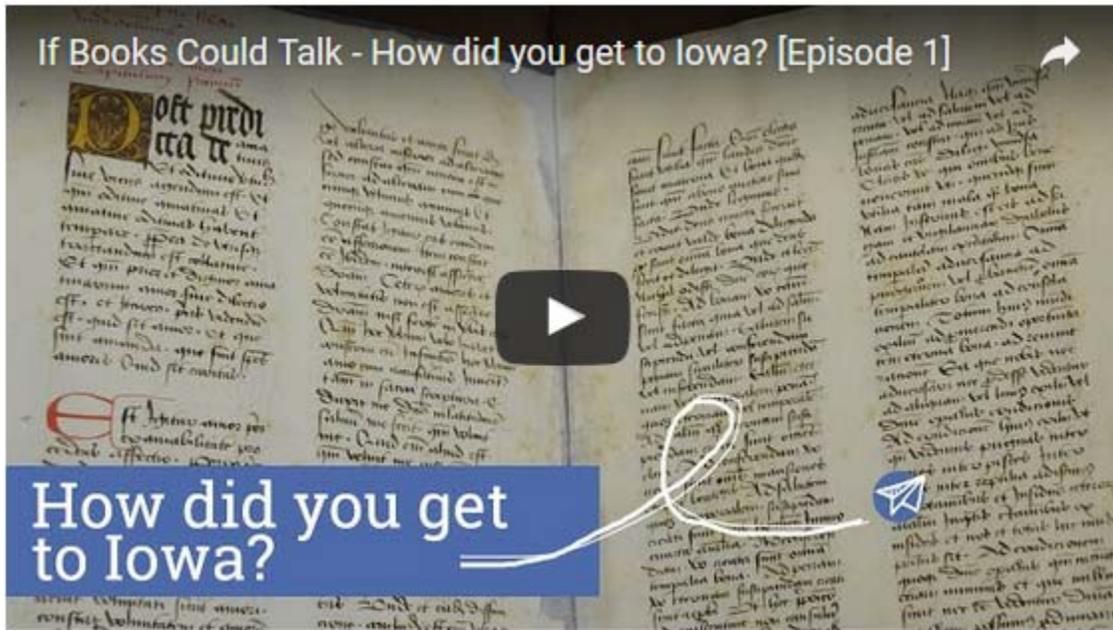
Verso 1. Iowa City, The University of Iowa Libraries, Special Collections, xMMs.Misc4, fol 1v.

\* Originally published in Omeka:  
<https://thestudio.uiowa.edu/historycorps/exhibits/show/books/episode1>

The University of Iowa has recently identified one of its medieval manuscripts and we want to ask it a question:

## How on earth did you end up at The University of Iowa Libraries, Special Collections?

Check out our video here:



What was previously thought to have perhaps been a fragment from the *Virtutibus et Viciis* of Guillemus Paradus has turned out instead to be a fragment from the *Speculum Universale* by **Radulphus Ardens**, a preacher and theologian active in France in the late twelfth century. In his translation of Ardens's *Speculum Universale* (also known as *Liber de vitiis et virtutibus, Summa*), Christopher P. Evans explains that Ardens's work is comprised of fourteen books and offers "one of the most comprehensive expositions of Christian ethics in the twelfth century."<sup>1</sup>

What sits in the vault at The University of Iowa is a fragment of the manuscript, eight folios from Book Eleven, and includes the last page of Book Eleven's table of contents and the beginning of the text. It is written in a fifteenth-century semi-humanist hand, on

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1 Radulphus Ardens, *The Questions on the Sacraments Speculum Universale* 8.31-92, ed. and trans. Christopher P. Evans (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 2010), 7.

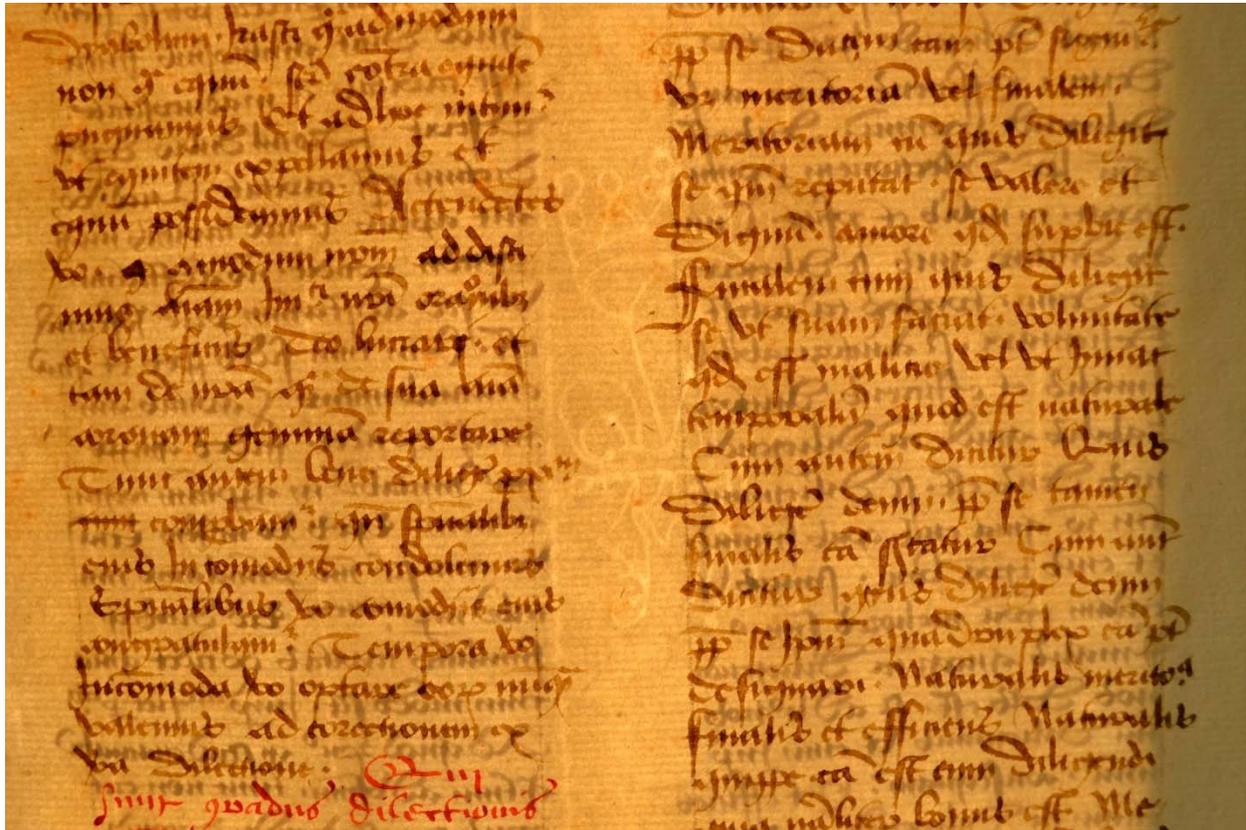
paper. A comparable, yet separate, manuscript (fifteenth century and on paper) is held at the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms lat. 3242.

131	Quot sunt spes timoris	155	De ira et gaudio sunt colla
132	De in hinc vita semp sit timor	156	De letitia quid sit
133	Qui sunt sex spes sunt horre	157	De comit
134	Que sunt filie spei etualid	158	Quot sunt spes caritatis
135	Que vna constantis ex spe	159	Quot sunt spes caritativum
	no timore	160	Que vna sit collatione
136	Que vna constantis ex spe		sponte leticie
137	Que vna constantis ex spe	161	Quot sunt spes spiritualis fine
	non spante	162	De tropha que carum in
138	De emulatione que sit		tribun
139	Que sunt spes emulationis	163	De severitate
140	Qui sunt precipue emulandi	164	De pudore
	vel mitandi	165	De castitate
141	De christis principalibus et vbi	166	De vna collatione bone
	sit mitandi		rationis
142	De spale supererete emula?	167	De mansuetudine
	usque vna hinc dicit	168	Quot sunt spes mansuetudin
143	De collatione vna bone emu		et que eaz sit vna
	lionis	169	De vna sit mansuetudo
144	Quid sit gaudium et q sit	170	Quod vna sit vna vna
	emē spes		mansuetudin
145	Quid sit sponte gaudium et	171	De vna collatione man
	que emē spes		suetudin
146	Que vna sit collatione bon	172	De vna vna vna vna
	emū		et vna vna vna
147	De vna christis secund		
	q homo habuerit vna vna		
148	De vna vna vna vna		
	probat hominem		
149	Que sunt spes spe		
150	De bone que spe		
151	De bona spe sine zelo		
152	De vna bone spe		
153	De vna vna spe		
154	Quomodo sit resistendum spe		

Table of Contents. Iowa City, The University of Iowa Libraries, Special Collections, xMMs.Misc4, fol. 1.

In order to begin our investigation, we look to the manuscript itself, which offers **three important clues** as to its journey.

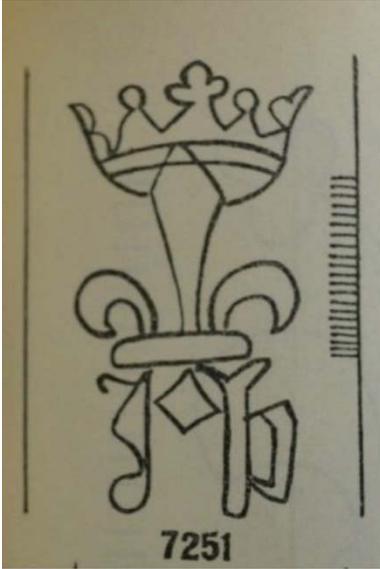
## CLUE 1 - THE PAPER AND ITS WATERMARK



Watermark. Iowa City, The University of Iowa Libraries, Special Collections, xMMs.Misc4, fol. 3.

Since this manuscript is written on paper, it may provide a watermark that would help identify its date and place of origin. Papermakers in Europe, from the thirteenth century onwards often integrated a watermark into their handmade paper in order to identify their paper from the paper made at other mills. In 1907, Charles-Moïse Briquet, Swiss water mark expert, published a collection of approximately 16,000 watermarks found in manuscripts held in European archives and libraries. Briquet has drawn detailed images of the watermarks he found. Researchers can search Briquet's images to try and find a match. If a match is found, the number of the watermark can be cross-referenced with more information about the manuscripts in which the watermark appears, namely when they were written and where they are held today.

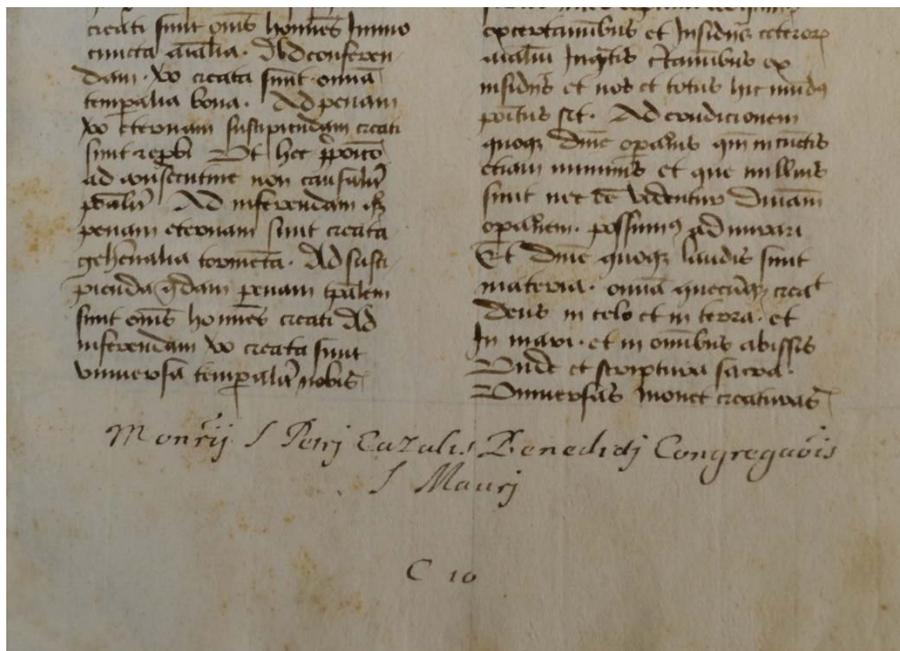
Briquet's invaluable encyclopedia holds a watermark very similar to the one in the Ardens manuscript, number 7251. Briquet notes that this specific watermark appears in



Briquet Watermark. Briquet, C. M., *Les filigranes. Dictionnaire historique des marques du papier dès leur apparition vers 1282 jusqu'en 1600. Special Collections x-Collection FOLIO Z237 .B5 1923*

a manuscript now held in Paris and dated 1475, as well as one other in Oxford dated 1476. This information adds credence to a late 15th century date for our manuscript, albeit a decade or so earlier than we had assumed. Briquet notes that other watermarks of similar design predominantly appear in manuscripts located in Paris or its environs. It seems most plausible to attribute the origin of our manuscript to Paris for several reasons. It is a theological treatise and the university in Paris attracted many aspiring theologians and teachers. Thus a teacher or scholar may have copied the manuscript, or had it copied, for his own use while in Paris. The watermark found in the Oxford manuscript could easily be explained by considering the scholarly connections between the universities of Paris and Oxford. Perhaps it belonged to a scholar who had been studying in Paris and the manuscript traveled with him when he moved or returned to Oxford, another one of England's preeminent universities in the 15th century.

## CLUE 2 - THE INSCRIPTION



Inscription. Iowa City, The University of Iowa Libraries, Special Collections, xMMs.Misc4, fol 2.

The inscription at the bottom of Fol. 2 of our manuscript offers another clue as to where the manuscript may have travelled or resided before it arrived in Iowa. The inscription is definitely *not* a 15th-century hand and appears to indicate the name of a monastery. The "C10" underneath resembles a type of notation similar to a library's call number today. Let's look at each of these aspects separately.

First, the name of the monastery in the inscription is that of the Monastery of Saint Peter of Chezal-Benoît, of the congregation of Saint Maur. This is an abbey that is located in the middle of France, near the city of Bourges. When we research the history of this abbey a bit further, a remarkable coincidence appears! This same abbey was at the center of a reform movement taking place a decade or so after our manuscript was written. Pierre du Mas arrived at Chezal-Benoît in 1479 and became its abbot. By 1490 Pope Innocent VIII approved a draft of reformed statutes that Du Mas and others had proposed. In 1497, the abbot of Saint-Sulpice of Bourges resigned and Guy Jouennaux, a lecturer at the University of Paris and writer, came from Paris to replace him. Upon his arrival, Jouennaux reformed Saint-Sulpice of Bourges in accordance with the statutes of Chezal-Benoît.<sup>2</sup> These two abbeys, in conjunction with two others, formed the core of a reform that spread throughout France. It is plausible that one of Chezal-Benoît's abbots or monks had studied or even taught in Paris in the 1470s or 1480s, and this same scholar may have brought his manuscripts with him, leaving them as part of the abbey's library when he died.

Second, the "C10" that appears underneath the inscription name likely indicated the place of the manuscript within the abbey's larger collection. In the Middle Ages, religious institutions could have substantial libraries, and many had an archival classification structure in place in order to make their manuscripts easily accessible to readers. Chests or cupboards were often labelled with a letter and their contents with sequential numbers. So perhaps our manuscript was held in a cupboard labelled "C" and held the tenth position within that cupboard.

These manuscripts are held today in the Bibliothèque municipale de Bourges and have the identical inscriptions as ours. One may have been held in the B cupboard, in the 16th position, and the other in the C cupboard, in the 6th position.

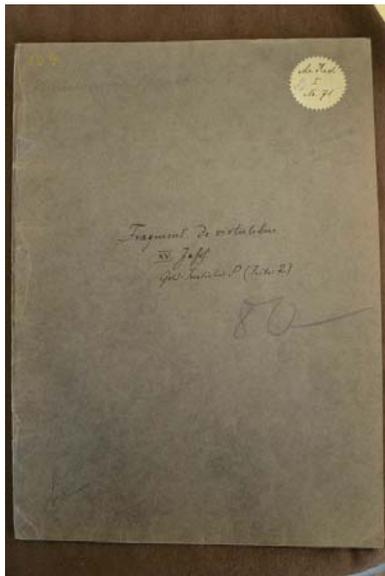
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2 Guy-Marie Oury "Les Bénédictins réformés de Chezal-Benoît," in *Revue d'histoire de l'Église de France*, Tome 65, no. 174 (1979): 89-106, at 90-91.



all religious institutions, seizing their manuscript collections and sending them to newly-established state archives and libraries. Two important considerations arise. First we can see that other manuscripts from Chezal-Benoît were sent to the municipal library in Bourges. The handwriting of their inscriptions appears to be identical to our manuscript's inscription. So we can say without a doubt that our manuscript did indeed spend time at the Abbey of Chezal-Benoît at some point in its journey. Furthermore, when examined as a group, these inscriptions seem to indicate that sometime around the French Revolution, an archivist, likely a monk from Chezal-Benoît conducted an inventory of the abbey's manuscripts and labelled their location within the abbey. That our manuscript is NOT in the municipal library of Bourges with the other manuscripts leads us into the next clue!

### CLUE THREE - THE MYSTERIOUS COVER



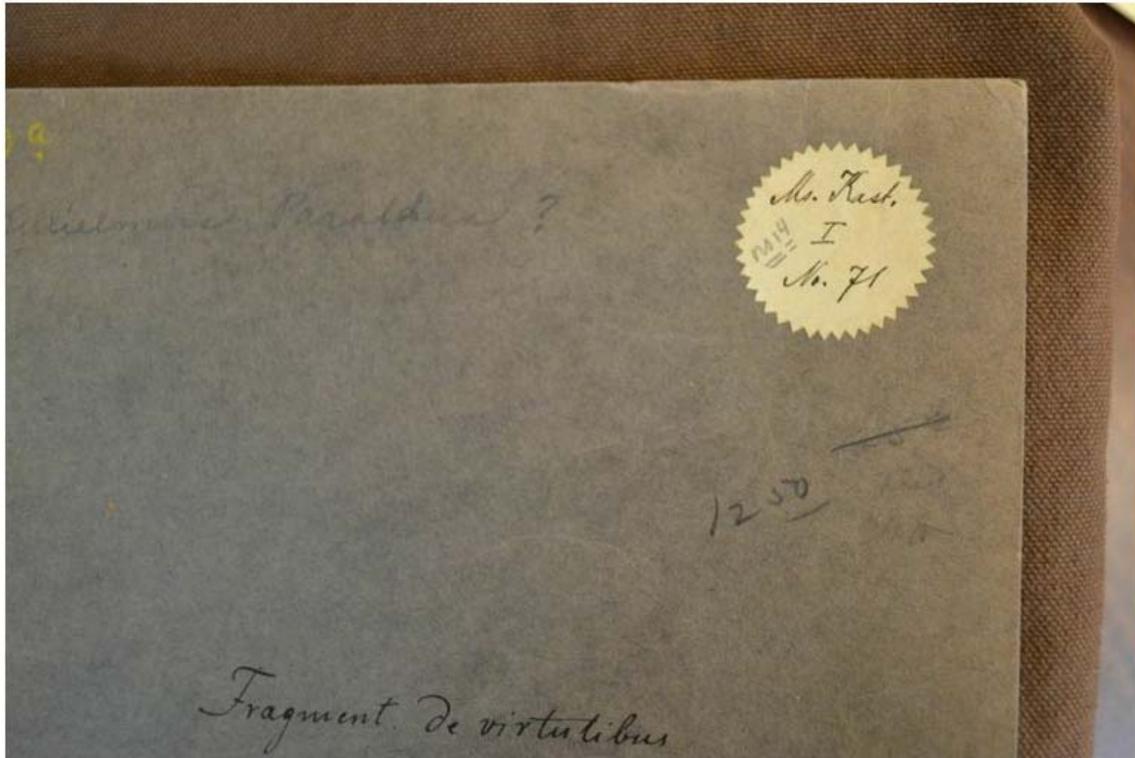
Cover. Iowa City, The  
University of Iowa Libraries,  
Special Collections,  
xMMs.Misc4

There is no evidence that specifies when our manuscript arrived at the University of Iowa. However, we do have the cover in which it arrived, telling us that the manuscript did not pass directly from the Abbey of Chezal-Benoît near Bourges, France into The University of Iowa's Special Collections.

A plausible scenario would be that the manuscript fell into the hands of a bookseller sometime after the above archivist labelled each manuscript and shortly before or during the transfer of the collection from the abbey to the City Library of Bourges. The cover pictured here shows a title in German/Latin (*Fragment. de virtutibus*), the date of the manuscript in German (15th century / *XV Jahrh.*), an indication of the gold initial P in German (*Gold-Initiale P*), and an author suggestion ("Gulielmus Paraldus?") in pencil at the top left.

In the upper right hand corner lies an elusive clue that we are hoping one or more of our viewers/readers may have seen before - *Ms Kast. I, No. 71* in ink, and *no. 14* in pencil. The no 14 likely refers to a number attributed to it by Seymour De Ricci, when he published his *Census of Medieval Manuscripts in the United States*. However, might the "Kast." refer to the name of a previous collector, or perhaps bookseller? And the two

pencil marks that suggest prices (12.50 and 80)? Were these sale prices at some point? Do you think it passed through the hands of more than one bookseller?



Cover closeup. Iowa City, The University of Iowa Libraries, Special Collections, xMMs.Misc4

While awaiting your comments and suggestions, we can at least surmise that at some point, this manuscript passed through a German-speaking country or area and this furnishes us with a very logical connection to its arrival in Iowa. Shortly after statehood in 1846, Iowa experienced a large influx of immigrants from Germany. In 1869 the state printed a brochure that encouraged immigrants to come live and settle in Iowa. It was published in five languages, including German and expounded upon the attractive physical, social, educational, and political dimensions of Iowa. Immigrants from Germany figured as the largest group and many settled in southeast Iowa. In 1880, 34% of all foreign-born Iowa inhabitants had come from Germany. By 1900, this had grown to 40%.<sup>3</sup>

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3 Dorothy Schwieder, "History of Iowa," *Iowa Official Register* (Iowa Publications Online, 1999-2000.) Accessed at <http://publications.iowa.gov/135/1/history/7-1.html>.

Many of these immigrants became prominent citizens and later travelled back to Germany for visits. One such example was Charles A. Ficke, a lawyer and politician from Davenport, Iowa, who immigrated to Iowa as a child in 1852. In his autobiography, he describes at least four trips he later made to Europe, noting in particular his visits to Germany, often to see family, in 1894, 1912, 1922, and 1928. Although Ficke mentions only one instance where he bought a rare book while on a trip to Egypt, he often speaks of purchases of art while visiting Europe. While we cannot connect our manuscript to Charles A. Ficke, his example provides a viable suggestion as to how the manuscript arrived at its current location.

## CONCLUSION

In the late 12th century, Radulphus Ardens probably never imagined that a future scholar in the late 1400s would have wanted to study a copy of his treatise, let alone that the same manuscript would travel across the Atlantic ocean to end up on another continent in another university. While the fragment of his work held at the University of Iowa Special Collections discloses information as to parts of its journey over the course of five centuries, there is still more to learn. If you have any thoughts or suggestions about this book's journey, or would like to see the manuscript in real life, please do not hesitate to email me, Heather Wacha, at [heather-wacha@uiowa.edu](mailto:heather-wacha@uiowa.edu) or tweet the Special Collections twitter account @UISpec Coll.

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