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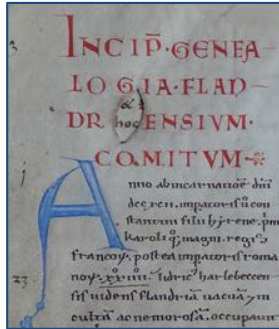


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Composing a Historical Compilation in the Twelfth Century: The Author's Manuscript of the *Genealogia Flandrensiū comitū* (or *Flandria Generosa*) from Saint-Bertin¹

By Jeff Rider, Wesleyan University

The core historiographical tradition of Flanders began, as far as we know, with a genealogy of the counts of Flanders probably composed at the Abbey of Saint-Peter in Ghent during the reign of Count Baldwin V (1035-1067) and then continued in various versions up until 1168.² This work was published in 1851 by Ludwig Bethmann in the *Monumenta Germaniae historica* under the title *Genealogia comitū Flandriae Bertiniana* (the Bertinian [i.e., from the Abbey of Saint-Bertin in Saint-Omer] *Genealogy of the Counts of Flanders*), although the work is usually entitled the *Genealogia Flandrensiū comitū* (*Genealogy of the Flemish Counts*) in the manuscripts containing it and, as was noted, was probably composed at the Abbey of Saint-Peter rather than that of Saint-Bertin. This Petrensiā *Genealogy* (that is,

¹ I would like to thank Rémy Cordonnier, the librarian in charge of the pôle Fonds Ancien et d'Etat at the Bibliothèque d'Agglomération of Saint-Omer, for his kindness, generosity and help with the preparation of this article and especially for taking and providing me with pictures of the manuscript discussed here. I would also like to thank the editors of this issue, Elizabeth Moore Hunt and Richard Leson, and the general editor of *Peregrinations*, Sarah Blick, for the invitation to contribute to this issue and for their help and patience.

² See Ludwig Bethmann, MGH SS 9 (Hannover, 1851), 305-08; idem, *Lettre à M. l'Abbé Carton sur les généalogies des comtes de Flandres*, Recueil de chroniques, chartes et autres documents concernant l'histoire et les antiquités de la Flandre-Occidentale, 1e série: Chroniques générales des Flandres (Bruges, 1849), 16; Jeff Rider "Vice, Tyranny, Violence, and the Usurpation of Flanders (1071) in Flemish Historiography from 1093 to 1294" in *Violence and the Writing of History in the Medieval Francophone World*, ed. Noah Guynn and Zrinka Stahuljak (Rochester, NY and Woodbridge, Suffolk, 2013), 56-57; and Georges Declercq, "Genealogia comitū Flandrensiū" in *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopedia-of-the-medieval-chronicle/genealogia-comitum-flandrensium-EMCSIM_01073 (accessed 25 October 2014).

from the Abbey of Saint-Peter) formed the basis of a subsequent *Genealogia [sic] comitum Flandrię* composed by Lambert, a canon of the collegiate church of Saint-Omer. Lambert continued the genealogy up through the beginning of the reign of Count Charles the Good (1119-1127) and included it in his *Liber floridus*, which he completed around 1121.³

Lambert's *Genealogy* formed in turn the basis of a genealogical history, or "dynastic genealogy" as Ann Kelders has called it, of the counts of Flanders from 792 to 1164 that was composed at the Abbey of Saint-Bertin in Saint-Omer, France and finished shortly after 1164.⁴ This work has been known as the *Flandria Generosa* (or the A version of the *Flandria Generosa* or the *Flandria Generosa A* to distinguish it from later versions) since 1643 when Jean Galopin, a monk at the Abbey of Saint-Ghislain, first published a version of it drawn from a manuscript at his abbey and gave it that title.⁵ However, the work is entitled the *Genealogia Flandrensium comitum* in the oldest manuscript containing it (Saint-Omer, Bibliothèque d'Agglomération de Saint-Omer, MS 746, 64r-68v), which is probably the author's manuscript, and this is the name by which I will refer to it.⁶ **(Figure 1)** This genealogy was intended for a learned, which is to say ecclesiastical, audience, was used as a source by many later Flemish and French historians, and

³ See MGH SS 9 (Hannover, 1851), 308-12. The author's manuscript of the *Liber Floridus* is accessible online through the library of the University of Ghent, where it is preserved (<http://adore.ugent.be/OpenURL/app?id=archive.ugent.be:018970A2-B1E8-11DF-A2E0-A70579F64438&type=carousel&scrollto=0> [accessed 25 October 2014]). The title and first page of Lambert's genealogy may be found on f. 104r, where it is called *Genealogia comitum Flandrię*. See Raoul van Caenegem, "The Sources of Flemish History in the *Liber Floridus*" in idem, *Law, History, the Low Countries and Europe*, ed. Ludo Milis, Daniel Lambrecht, Hilde de Ridder-Symoens, and Monique Vleeschouwers-van Melkebeek (London, 1994), 72-75; *Liber Floridus*, http://www.liberfloridus.be/index_eng.html (accessed 25 October 2014); and Karen De Coene, Philippe De Maeyer, and Martine De Reu, eds., *Liber Floridus 1121: The World in a Book* (Tielt, 2011).

⁴ Ann Kelders, "Flandria generosa" in *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, ed. Graeme Dunphy (Brill Online, 2014), http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopedia-of-the-medieval-chronicle/flandria-generosa-EMCSIM_01009 (accessed 25 October 2014).

⁵ *Flandria generosa, seu Compendiosa series genealogiae comitum Flandriae, cum eorumdem gestis heroicis, ab anno Domini 792. usque ad 1212*, ed. Georges Galopin (Mons, 1643).

⁶ See Henri-Victor Michelant, *Catalogue général des manuscrits des bibliothèques publiques des départements*, vol. 3 (Paris, 1861), 333-334 (<https://archive.org/stream/cataloguegnr03franuoft#page/332/mode/2up>, accessed 25 October 2014). See also the Catalog collectif de France: http://ccfr.bnf.fr/portailccfr/jsp/index_view_direct_anonymous.jsp?record=eadcgm:EADC:D03011511 (accessed 25 October 2014).

had a strong influence on the historiography of Flanders and France during the later Middle Ages and the early modern period. As Jean-Marie Moeglin notes, “elle est traditionnellement

considérée comme le socle de l’histoire nationale flamande des derniers siècles du Moyen Âge.”⁷

I am currently preparing a new edition of this Bertinian genealogy, which will be the subject of this article, for the Royal Historical Commission of Belgium.

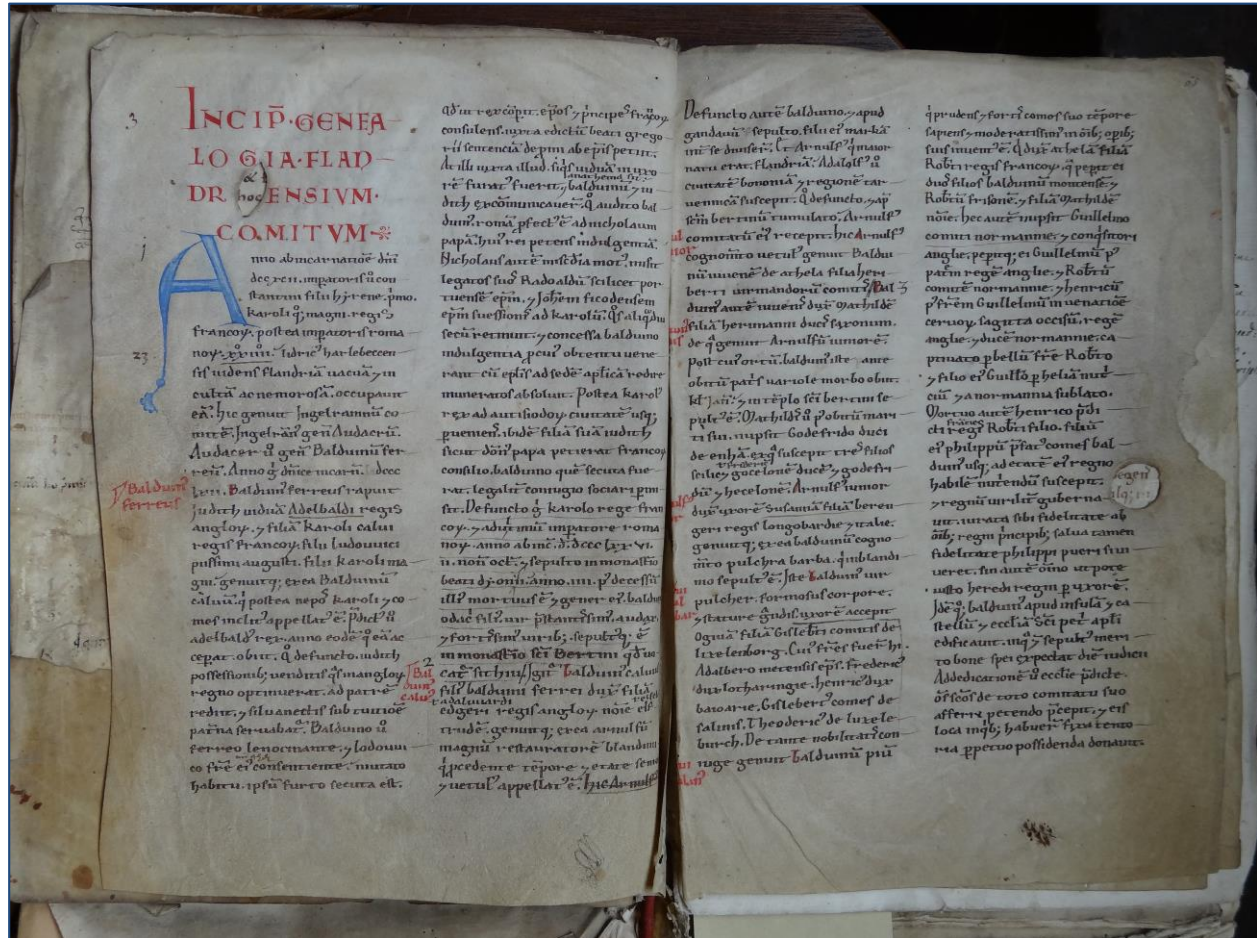


Figure 1 *Genealogia Flandrensiu comitum*, Saint-Omer, Bibliothèque d’Agglomération de Saint-Omer (BASO), ms. 746-1, f. 64v-65. Photo: © BASO.

⁷ Jean-Marie Moeglin, “Une première histoire nationale flamande” in *Liber Largitorius: Etudes d’histoire médiévale offertes à Pierre Toubert*, ed. D. Barthélemy and J-M. Martin (Geneva, 2003), 456. See also *Narrative Sources from the Medieval Low Countries*, NaSo ID: F001, “Genealogia comitum Flandriae; Flandria Generosa A,” http://www.narrative-sources.be/colofon_en.php (accessed 25 October 2014).

Saint-Omer was one of the principal towns of Flanders in the twelfth century. It had developed between two poles: the count's castle and the neighboring collegial church of Saint-Omer (of which Lambert was a canon) on high ground to the southwest and the Abbey of Saint-Bertin in the valley of the Aa river to the northeast.⁸ The city had a merchant guild before 1127 and was one of the cities of Flanders in which William Clito made a triumphant entry when he became count in 1127.⁹ William granted the town a charter, which was renewed and expanded by successive counts throughout the twelfth century.¹⁰ The provost and at least some of the canons of the church of Saint-Omer played an important role in the administration of the castellany of Saint-Omer and it is noteworthy that the text of the inquest into the assassination of Count Charles the Good in 1127 “fu mis devers le prouvoost Ogier de Saint-Omer pour garder” (was given to Ogier, the provost of Saint-Omer, to keep) suggesting that the church of Saint-Omer was considered a sort of official archive for the county where one could deposit important documents for safe-keeping.¹¹ The Abbey of Saint-Bertin, an important intellectual center with a large library and an active scriptorium, was also one of the two most important burial sites for the counts of Flanders – the other was the Abbey of Saint-Peter in Ghent.¹² Jealous of its role as

⁸ On the history of Saint-Omer during this period, see Arthur Giry, *Histoire de la ville de Saint-Omer et de ses institutions jusqu'au XIV^e siècle* (Paris, 1877); Alain Derville, *Histoire de Saint-Omer* (Lille, 1981); and Jeroen Deploige and Helena Vanommelaeghe, “Lambert's World: Saint-Omer until the Early Twelfth Century” in *Liber Floridus 1121*, 34–55. The church of Saint-Omer, the site of the count's castle and the ruins of Saint-Bertin are visible at <http://www.patrimoines-saint-omer.fr/uk/Les-monuments-historiques> (accessed 26 October 2014).

⁹ For the customs of the guild, see Georges Espinas and Henri Pirenne, “Les coutumes de la gilde marchande de Saint-Omer,” *Le Moyen Age: Revue d'histoire et de philologie* 5 (1901), 190–194. William Clito's triumphant entry is described by Galbert of Bruges, *The Murder, Betrayal, and Slaughter of the Glorious Charles, Count of Flanders* [66], trans. Jeff Rider (New Haven, 2013), 114–115, and also mentioned by Walter of Théroutanne in his *Vita Karoli comitis Flandriæ* [46], 26–30 (“*Vita Karoli comitis Flandriæ*” et “*Vita domni Ioannis Morinensis episcopi*” quibus subiunguntur poemata aliqua de morte comitis Karoli conscripta et quaestio de eadem facta, ed. Jeff Rider, *Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Medievalis*, 217 [Turnhout, Belgium, 2006], 71).

¹⁰ See Giry, *Histoire de la ville de Saint-Omer*, 371–402.

¹¹ “Enqueste et jugement de chiaus qui le Conte Charlon avoient ochis,” l. 154–155, ed. Jeff Rider, in Walter of Théroutanne, “*Vita Karoli comitis Flandriæ*” et “*Vita domni Ioannis Morinensis episcopi*,” 209. On the administration of the domain of the counts of Flanders and the role the clergy of the collegial churches attached to the count's castles played in it, see Jeff Rider, *God's Scribe: The Historiographical Art of Galbert of Bruges* (Washington, DC, 2001), 17–20 and 25–27.

¹² On the intellectual climate at Saint-Bertin, see Karine Ugé, *Creating the Monastic Past in Medieval Flanders*

the principal necropolis of the counts of Flanders, Saint-Bertin took on the role of writing and preserving their history and indeed that of the whole county, and was in this sense comparable to Saint-Denis in France. It is thus not surprising that the genealogy of the counts should be of great interest in Saint-Omer and that a version of the genealogy that had probably first been drawn up at Saint-Peter's Abbey in Ghent in the eleventh century should have made its way to Lambert at the church of Saint-Omer before 1121 and that Lambert's genealogy should then have traveled down the hill to Saint-Bertin.¹³

We are exceptionally fortunate to possess either the author's manuscript of the Bertinian *Genealogy* or at least the manuscript from which all other copies derive, which is preserved in the public library of Saint-Omer. This manuscript consists of the last five leaves of an eight-leaf parchment quire, whose first three leaves have been cut off, sewn into the first volume of a large, two volume codex belonging to the library of Saint-Bertin, to which I will hereafter refer as *S*. The two volumes contain a variety of works, mostly saints lives, but also chronicles in French and Latin, lists of the abbey's possessions, offices of Saints Omer and Bertin, etc. All but two of the thirty-two works they contain are written on paper and most were copied in the seventeenth century. The codex thus seems to be a miscellany copied by a monk of Saint-Bertin in the seventeenth century into which he inserted a couple of pre-existing manuscript works on parchment he found, presumably, in the abbey library. The *Genealogy* begins on the left-hand page of the first of the five remaining leaves of the quire (f. 64v of the codex). The right-hand page of this leaf (f. 64r) contains the end of the fourth-century Saint Gregory of Elvira's *De fide*

(York, England, 2005).

¹³ The similarity between the names of Petrenian and Bertinian genealogies is sufficient to suggest that the author of the Bertinian *Genealogy* had a copy of the Petrenian *Genealogy* at his disposal as well as a copy of Lambert's *Genealogy* but there is still more work to do before this can be determined conclusively. For this essay, I will presume that the author of the Bertinian *Genealogy* had a copy of only Lambert's work.

orthodoxa contra Arianos,¹⁴ while the end of the *Genealogy* on the left hand page of the last leaf of the quire (f. 68v) is crowded and runs to the very bottom right of the page, suggesting that these five leaves once belonged to a larger manuscript in which the *Genealogy* was written on some leaves that had been left blank after the end of the copy of the *De fide orthodoxa*.

In the preface to his edition of the work in the *Monumenta*, Ludwig Bethmann suggested that this manuscript of the *Genealogy* was the author's manuscript and my own study of the early manuscripts of the work has confirmed that it is at least the one from which all others descend.¹⁵ The originality of the manuscript can be demonstrated in traditional ways – it contains, for example, no independent omissions – but also in other more intriguing ways that allow us to follow in some detail the way in which the author of the *Genealogy* composed his work. The beginning of line 19 of f. 65r2, (**Figure 2**) for example, reads: “[predi]cti regis Roberti filio” (son of the aforementioned King Robert) with “Francie” (of France) written directly above “regis” (king). Since the hand and the ink in which *Francie* is written are the same as those of the

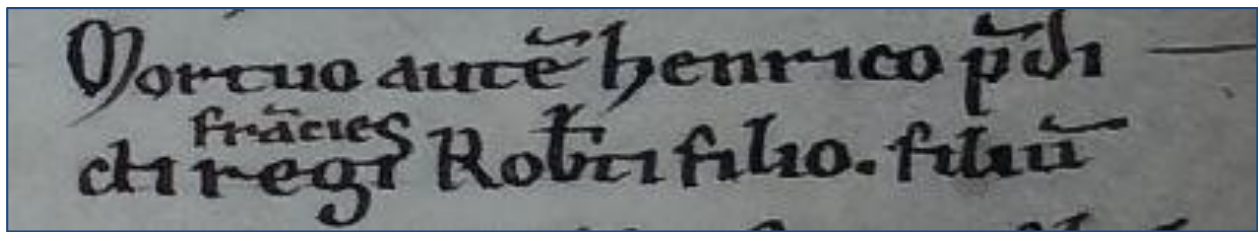


Figure 2 *Genealogia Flandrensium comitum*, Saint-Omer, BASO, ms. 746-1, f. 65r2. Photo: © BASO

¹⁴ Gregorius Iliberritanus, Gregorius Iliberritanus (Ps.), Faustinus Luciferianus, *Opera quae supersunt. Dubia et spuria. Opera*, ed. V. Bulhart, J. Fraipont, M. Simonetti, CCSL 69 (Turnhout, 1967), 245-247 (also PL 17, 566-568).

¹⁵ See Bethmann, MGH SS 9, 314 and 317, and *Lettre à M. l'Abbé Carton sur les généalogies des comtes de Flandres*, 19. It is curious that Bethmann emended the text of this manuscript in numerous places in his edition of it with readings from later copies even though he recognized that it was the author's; the text he prints is a good, but not entirely faithful copy of the author's manuscript.

rest of the text, one normally assumes on a first reading of this manuscript that the copyist either omitted the word *Francie*, which was in the text he was copying, but noticed and corrected his error by writing the missing word above the line, or that he added the word himself because he felt that the reader might not understand what king was being referred to here. Since the other early copies of the *Genealogy* all include *Francie* in their text, a natural first conclusion is that the copyist of *S* must have omitted this word and then noticed and corrected his error.

It is intriguing, however, and telling that some copies of the text (e.g., Brussels, Royal Library, MS 9823-34) have the reading “Francie regis” (of France the king) while others (e.g., Saint-Omer, Bibliothèque d’Agglomération MS 769) read “regis Francie” (the king of France) and yet others (e.g., Paris, BnF, Baluze 42) “regis Francorum” (the king of the French). There seems to have been a difference of opinion between at least two early copyists, who do not seem to have been sure whether the word *Francie* should come before or after *regis*. The reading to which these copyists were reacting must have been ambiguous in some way, as is the reading of *S*. There is in fact no correct reading of *S* since one could resolve its addition of *Francie* above the line as either *Francie regis* or *regis Francie*. Faced with this ambiguity, one copyist reacted by placing *Francie* before *regis*, while another reacted by placing it after *regis*.

A third copyist, faced possibly with the reading *regis Francie* in his exemplar and, influenced perhaps by the expression “Roberti regis Francorum” (Robert, king of the French) that is used in the fourth line of the same column, seems to have chosen to change *Francie* (of France) to *Francorum* (of the French). It is possible, however, that the model of this copyist was also *S* and he felt that the word *Francie*, written above the line, was not only ambiguous but less authoritative than the rest of the text and that he resolved the ambiguity by emending *Francie* to *Francorum* and placing it after *regis*. It thus seems that at least two independent copies were

made of *S*, one of which resolved the ambiguity as *Francie regis*, a second of which resolved it as *regis Francie*, and possibly a third independent copy that emended *Francie* to *Francorum* and placed it after *regis*.

What I find most interesting, however, is the insight the addition of *Francie* above *regis* gives us into the thought of the compiler of *S*. Since King Robert II of France, the “aforementioned king” referred to in l. 19, was last mentioned in l. 4 of this same column and then merely as the father of Countess Adela of Flanders, and since the text mentions two other Roberts – Count Robert I of Flanders and Duke Robert Curthose of Normandy – and two kings of England – William Rufus and Henry – between lines 4 and 19, the compiler must have felt that members of his audience might have some trouble remembering who this “aforementioned King Robert” was and added “of France” to help them out. There is no known source for this passage, which was perhaps therefore written by the compiler, so the absence of *Francie* from the initial version of the text and its later addition above the line show us that the compiler reread his text soon after he wrote it, decided that a reader or a *fortiori*, a listener, might be confused because of the two Roberts and two kings that appear between the first and second mentions of Robert II, and added “of France” to make things clearer for readers. This is banal – which of us has not added a similar qualifier in a similar situation? – but it is remarkable precisely because it is so familiar to us. The compiler of the *Genealogy* was revising his work exactly as we do although his medium forced him to write *Francie* above the line rather than inserting it in the line the way my word processing program allows me to do. If he had had a computer, he would undoubtedly have inserted the word in the line after he reread the passage.

The *Genealogia* is a surprisingly original work. Roughly seventy percent of it has no known source, while the remaining thirty percent is a compilation that adds passages from other

works to Lambert's *Genealogy* with small changes to weave the various sources together and some longer original passages. The passage that starts seven lines from the bottom f. 64v2 and ends in the eleventh line of f. 65r1 offers us a good example of this process of compilation, which can sometimes be quite complicated. **(Figures 3-4)** In the following transcription of this passage, which I have broken into lines corresponding to those of *S*, passages taken over from Lambert's *Genealogy* are printed in blue while passages taken over from Folcuin of Saint-Bertin's *Gesta abbatum Sithiensium* (*Deeds of the Abbots of Saint-Bertin*) are printed in red.¹⁶ Words struck through are ones that the compiler dropped from the passage he took over from an existing work while a double strike through indicates words he wrote and then struck out or erased. When a word contains a mixture of colored and black type, it means that the compiler took over a word from an existing text (the letters in color) but changed its declension or case (letters in black), for example, so it would fit into his text.

. . . Igitur Balduinus autem caluus,
 filius Balduini Ferrei, duxit filiam
 +Adaluuardi +Elfet
 Edgeri, regis Anglorum, nomine Elf-
 trudem, genuitque ex ea Arnulfum
 magnum, restauratorem Blandiniensis cenobii,
 qui procedente tempore et etate senior
 et uetulus appellatus est. ~~Hic Arnulfus~~
 [65r1] Defuncto autem Balduino et apud
 Gandauum ~~¶~~ sepulto, filii eius markam
 inter se diuiserunt et Arnulfus, qui maior
 natu erat, Flandriam, Adalolfus uero
 ciuitatem Bononiam et regionem Tar-
 uennicam pariterque Sancti Bertini suscepit abbatiam. Quo defuncto et apud
 Sanctum Bertinum tumultato, Arnulfus frater eius abbatiam cum reliquo
 comitatu eius recepit. Hic Arnulfus uero magnus
 cognomento uetulus genuit Baldui-
 num iuuenem de Athela filia Heri-
 berti Uirmandorum comitis. . . .

¹⁶ Ed. Oswald Holder-Egger, MGH SS 13 (Hannover, 1881), 607-634.

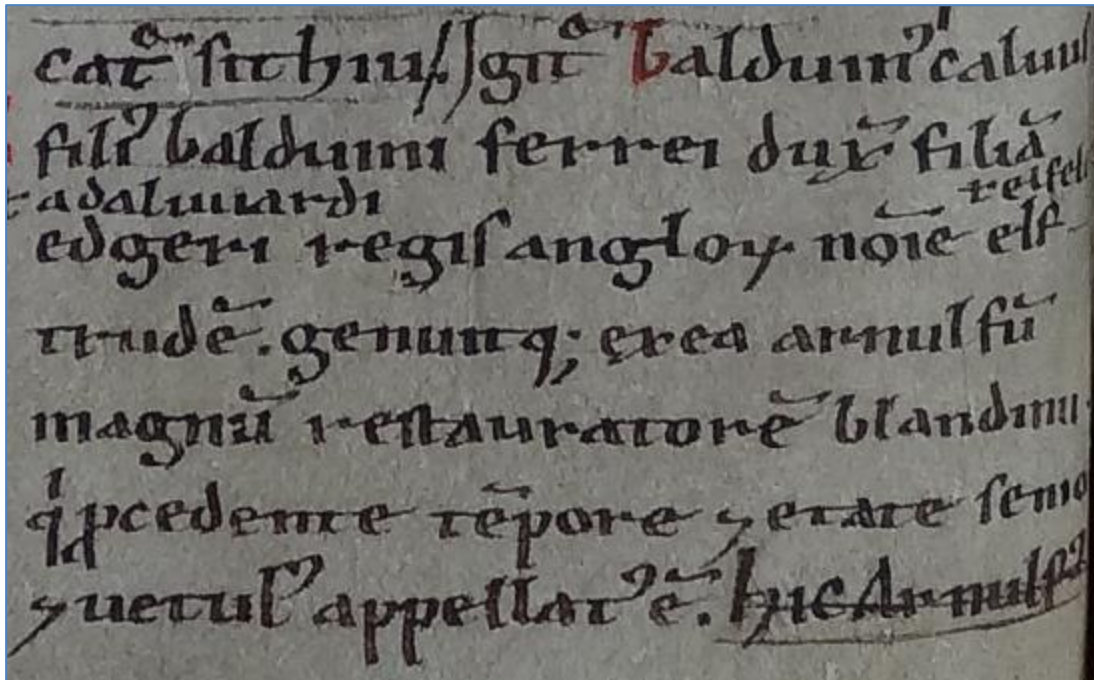


Figure 3 *Genealogia Flandrensium comitum*, Saint-Omer, BASO, ms. 746-1, f. 64v2. Photo: © BASO.

. . . Then, ~~however~~, Baldwin the Bald,
the son of Baldwin Iron Arm, ~~married the daughter~~
+Adalward +Elfet
of Edgar, king of the English, named Elf-
trude, and with her engendered Arnulf
the Great, the restorer of ~~the Abbey of~~ Mount Blandin,
who, because he came first and because of his age,
is called Senior and “the Old.” ~~This Arnulf~~
[65r1] When, however, Baldwin had died ~~h~~ and
been buried in Ghent, ~~his sons~~
divided the march [county] between them and Arnulf, who was
the first born, received Flanders, while Adalof, truly,
[received] the city of Boulogne and the region of Thér-
ouanne ~~along with the Abbey of Saint-Bertin~~. When he had died and
been entombed at Saint-Bertin, Arnulf, ~~his brother~~, recovered ~~the abbey along with the~~
~~rest of~~
~~his county~~. This Arnulf, ~~truly, the Great~~,
nicknamed “the Old,” engendered Bald-
win the Young with Athela, the daughter of Her-
bert, count of the Vermandois. . . .

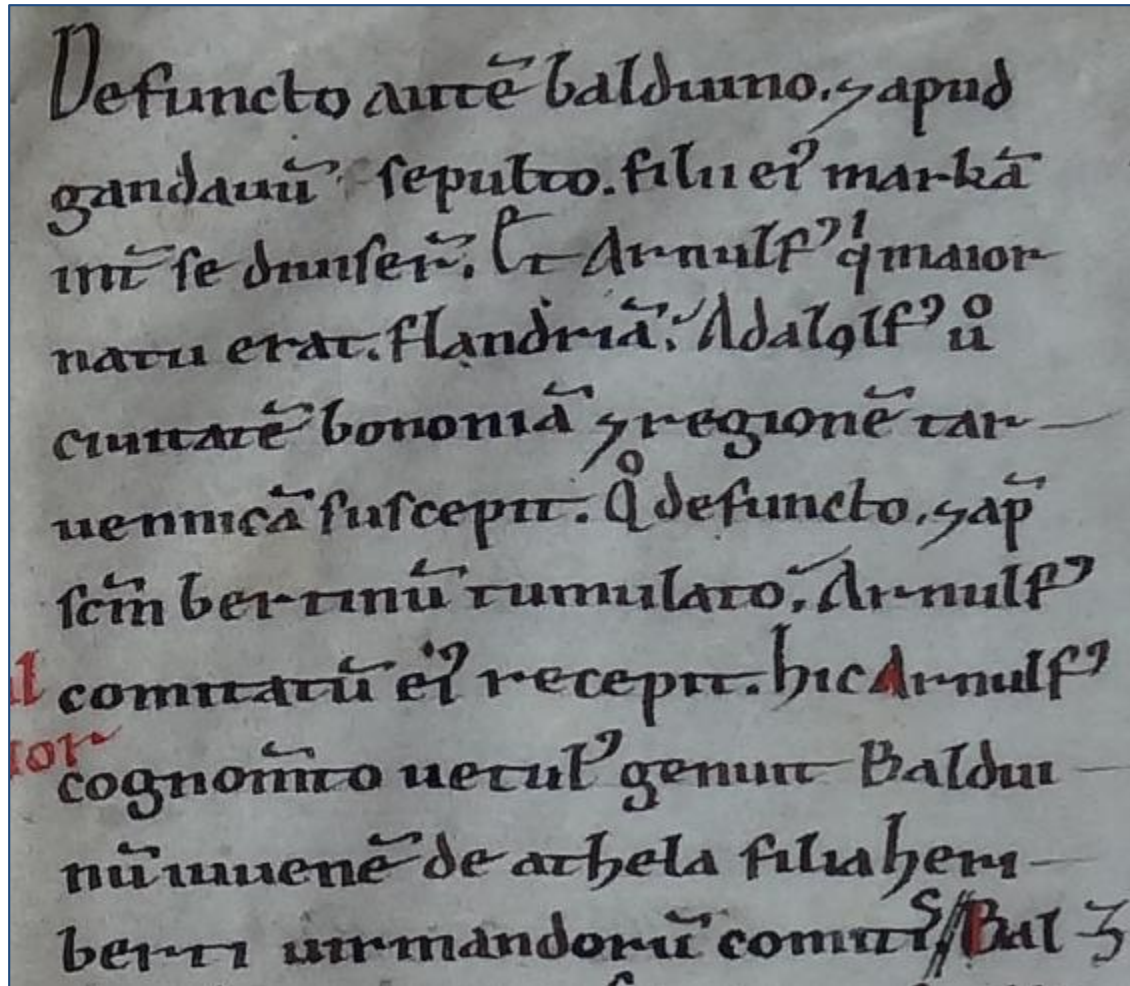


Figure 4 *Genealogia Flandrensium comitum*, Saint-Omer, BASO, ms. 746-1, f. 65r1. Photo: © BASO.

This passage shows how the compiler stitched passages from two works together with his additions in order to create a coherent and more comprehensive whole. He added several bits of information, giving us alternate names for Edgar and Elfrude, telling us why Arnold I was called Arnold Senior and Arnold the Old, and where Baldwin the Bald and Adalof were buried. He, likewise, added words and clauses to mark the progress of his narrative and the sequence of generations: “then,” “when, however, Baldwin had died and been buried in Ghent,” “when he had died and been entombed at Saint-Bertin.” And he qualified names to make sure the reader or listener does not get lost in the thickets of Baldwins and Arnolds: “the son of Baldwin Iron

Arm,” “who is called Senior and ‘the Old,’” “nicknamed ‘the Old.’” In this last instance, moreover, he substituted “nicknamed ‘the Old’” for Lambert’s “the Great” in order to refer back to the new information he had provided about Arnulf’s nicknames, weaving it more integrally into his text.

The compiler’s transformation of the first clauses of the passage he took over from Lambert also shows this concern for what one might term the passage’s narrative quality and ease of reading or listening. Lambert’s text reads: “Balduinus autem Calvus, ducta filia Edgeri regis Anglorum, nomine Efltrudem, genuit Arnulfum magnum” (However, Baldwin the Bald, having married the daughter of Edgar, king of the English, named Elftrude, engendered Arnulf the Great). This is typically compact twelfth-century Latin prose combining a participle clause (*having married*) with a main clause (*engendered*). The compiler of the *Genealogy* transformed the participle of the first clause into a conjugated verb when he took it over, transforming the complex sentence into a compound one: “Igitur Balduinus caluus, filius Balduini Ferrei, duxit filiam Edgeri, regis Anglorum, nomine Elftrudem, genuitque ex ea Arnulfum magnum” (Then Baldwin the Bald, the son of Baldwin Iron Arm, married the daughter of Edgar, king of the English, named Elftrude, and with her engendered Arnulf the Great). One may find this less elegant than the original, but it does seem to me clearer and easier to follow, especially for a listener. It perhaps also shows a slightly greater sensitivity for Elftrude, whose help Baldwin needs to engender Arnulf (“with her”), rather than simply doing so himself as he does in Lambert’s text, although this change might also be intended to assure the audience that Arnulf was legitimate (since his marrying Elftrude and engendering Arnulf are linked chronologically but not causally in Lambert’s text).

Two other alterations confirm the idea that that the *Genealogy* was written at Saint-

Bertin. First, in what appears to be a small snub to Saint-Peter's Abbey in Ghent – Saint-Bertin's rival as the necropolis of the counts of Flanders – the compiler cut “the Abbey of” from Lambert's text, referring to it simply as “Mount Blandin.” Second and more tellingly, he eliminated two references to the counts' possession of the Abbey of Saint-Bertin in the passages he took over from Folcuin: “~~his sons divided the march [county] between them and Arnulf, who was the first born, received Flanders, while Adalof, truly, [received] the city of Boulogne and the region of Théroutanne along with the Abbey of Saint Bertin.~~ When he had died and been entombed at Saint-Bertin, ~~Arnulf, his brother, recovered the abbey along with the rest of his county.~~” These deletions from Folcuin's text seem intended to eliminate any suggestion that the abbey was under secular control, an issue that had become important between the second half of the tenth century, when Folcuin wrote, and the late twelfth century when the *Genealogy* was composed.

The compiler's overall transformation of his two sources is striking. The passage he took over from Lambert's *Genealogy* reads:

However, Baldwin the Bald, having married the daughter of Edgar, king of the English, named Elfrude, engendered Arnulf the Great, the restorer of the Abbey of Mount Blandin. Arnulf the Great, truly, engendered Baldwin the Young through Athela, the daughter of Herbert, count of the Vermandois.

While the two separate passages he took over from Folcuin's *Deeds* read:

His sons, truly, divided the march between them and Arnulf, who was the first born, received Flanders, while Adalof, truly, [received] the city of Boulogne and the region of Théroutanne along with the Abbey of Saint-Bertin.

After his grievous death, Arnulf, his brother, recovered the abbey along with the rest of his county.

The new passage in the *Genealogy* reads:

Then Baldwin the Bald, the son of Baldwin Iron Arm, married the daughter of Edgar, king of the English, named Elfrude, and with her engendered Arnulf the Great, the

restorer of Mount Blandin, who, because he came first and because of his age, is called Senior and “the Old.” When, however, Baldwin had died and been buried in Ghent, his sons divided the march between them and Arnulf, who was the first born, received Flanders, while Adalof, truly, [received] the city of Boulogne and the region of Thérouanne. When he had died and been entombed at Saint-Bertin, Arnulf recovered his county. This Arnulf, nicknamed “the Old,” engendered Baldwin the Young through Athela, the daughter of Herbert, count of the Vermandois.

The compilation is less telegraphic, more informative and easier to follow, to my mind at least. It is in fact a new text and a better – more comprehensive, more readable or listenable, more fluid – historical account than its sources although its originality is of a kind that is hard for us to recognize today given the great importance we attach to original expressions rather than compilation.¹⁷

The most interesting elements of this passage, however, are the two words – “Hic Arnulfus” (This Arnulf) – that the author crossed out at the very bottom of f. 64v2 and the “f” he scratched out in the second line of f. 65r1 (see **Figures 3-4**). On a first reading, one tends to assume that the compiler must have skipped, inadvertently or deliberately, one or more lines of the text he was copying, then either realized his error or changed his mind and decided to include the text he had left out, crossed out “Hic Arnulfus,” and copied the text he had omitted. This hypothesis seems at first confirmed by the fact that we find “Hic Arnulfus” repeated in line 8 of f. 65r1. At first reading, that is, one tends to imagine that the author initially omitted everything from the top of f. 65r1 (“Defuncto ...”) to the point where “Hic Arnulfus” reappears in line 8 (“... recepit”), then either corrected his error or changed his mind about including these lines.

This does not, however, seem to be what happened. When passages are inadvertently omitted, it is usually because the copyist’s eye has skipped from one word in the text he is

¹⁷ A historian’s task was widely considered at the time to be twofold involving, first, the selection of passages from earlier works for citation, and then their combination into a new whole. See Bernard Guenée, “L’historien et la compilation au XIIIe siècle,” *Journal des savants* 1 (1985), 119-135.

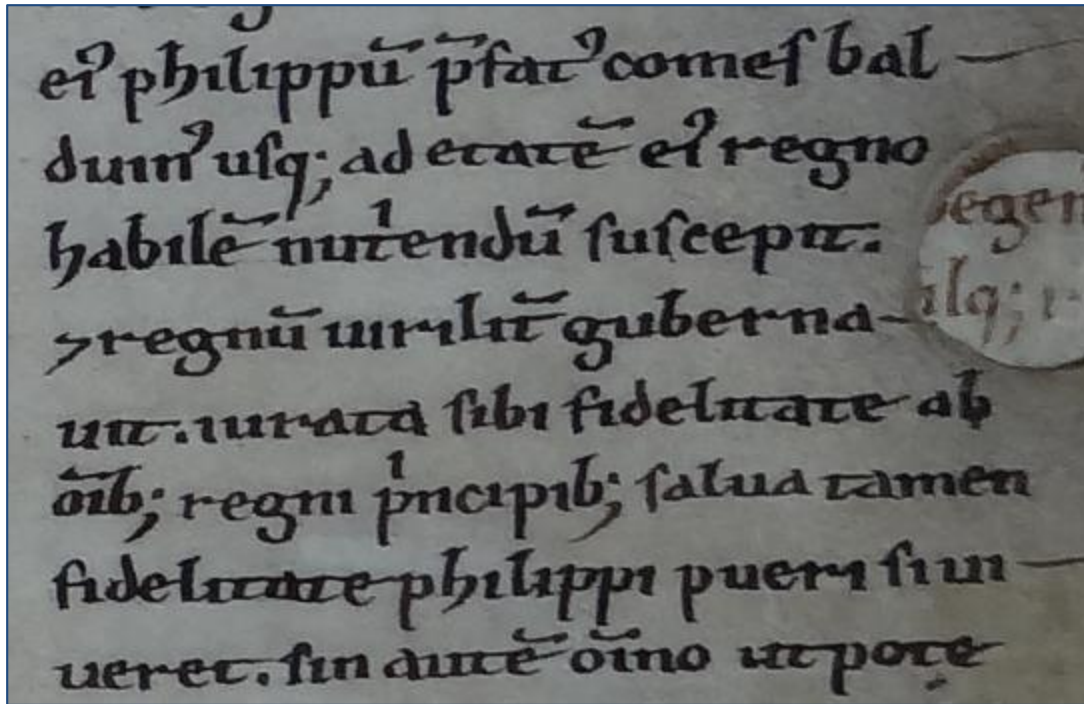


Figure 5 *Genealogia Flandrensium comitum*, Saint-Omer, BASO, ms. 746-1, f. 65r2. Photo: © BASO.

copying to a similar word later in the text. In lines 19-27 of f. 65r2, (**Figure 5**) for example, the compiler wrote that after King Henry I of France died in 1060, “filium eius Philippum prefatus comes Balduinus usque ad etatem eius regno habilem nutriendum suscepit, et regnum uiriliter gubernauit, iurata sibi fidelitate ab omnibus regni principibus, salua tamen fidelitate Philippi pueri, si uiueret” (the aforementioned Count Baldwin [V of Flanders, who had married Henry’s sister] raised his [Henry’s] son Philip [I of France] until he was old enough to rule, and he [Baldwin] governed the realm manfully, after all the leading men of the realm had sworn fidelity to him, saving, however, the fidelity they owed to the boy Philip, if he should live). While a later scribe (see, e.g., Paris, BnF, Baluze 42) was copying this passage, his eye skipped from the first “fidelitate” to the second and he omitted “ab omnibus . . . fidelitate” so that his text reads: “the aforementioned Count Baldwin raised his son Philip until he was old enough to rule, and he

governed the realm manfully, after all the leading men of the realm had sworn fidelity to the boy Philip, if he should live.” In the passage at the top of f. 65r1 of *S* (**Figure 4**), however, we find no such repetition of words that would have led the compiler’s eye to skip over an inter-suing passage.

More tellingly, moreover, the passage that begins with “Hic Arnulfus” in line 8 of f. 65r1 was taken over from Lambert’s *Genealogy*, whereas most of the passage at the top of f. 65r1 comes from Folcuin’s *Deeds*, with two brief additions by the compiler to introduce them. It thus appears that the compiler first intended simply to copy a passage from Lambert’s text, adding new information here and there, and to write:

Igitur Balduinus caluus, filius Balduini Ferrei, duxit filiam Edgeri, regis Anglorum, nomine Elftrudem, genuitque ex ea Arnulfum magnum, restauratorem Blandini, qui procedente tempore et etate senior et uetulus appellatus est. Hic Arnulfus cognomento uetulus genuit Balduinum iuuenem de Athela filia Heriberti Uirmandorum comitis.

Then, Baldwin the Bald, the son of Baldwin Iron Arm, married the daughter of Edgar, king of the English, named Elftrude, and with her engendered Arnulf the Great, the restorer of Mount Blandin, who, because he came first and because of his age, is called Senior and “the Old.” This Arnulf, nicknamed “the Old,” engendered Baldwin the Young through Athela, the daughter of Herbert, count of the Vermandois.

After he had written “Hic Arnulfus” at the bottom of f. 64v2, however, he evidently remembered something he had read in Folcuin’s *Deeds* about Arnulf and his brother Adalof that, from a chronological point of view, belonged between these two sentences devoted to Arnulf. He thus crossed out the beginning of the second sentence and inserted the two passages from Folcuin with brief introductions:

Defuncto autem Balduino et apud Gandauum sepulto, filii eius markam inter se diuiserunt et Arnulfus, qui maior natu erat, Flandriam, Adalolfus uero ciuitatem Bononiam et regionem Taruennicam suscepit. Quo defuncto et apud Sanctum Bertinum tumulto, Arnulfus comitatum eius recepit.

When, however, Baldwin had died and been buried in Ghent, his sons divided the march [county] between them and Arnulf, who was the first born, received Flanders, while Adalof, truly, [received] the city of Boulogne and the region of Théroutanne. When he had died and been entombed at Saint-Bertin, Arnulf, recovered his county.

He then returned to the passage from Lambert.

The crossing out of “Hic Arnulfus” at the bottom of f. 64v2 thus tells us something about the compiler’s methods. Most composition at the time took place on wax tablets because it was easy to make revisions to texts written on wax. It was only when the text was in its final form that it was copied onto parchment.¹⁸ The compiler of the *Genealogy* may have composed some or most of his work on wax before copying it onto parchment, but his crossing out of “Hic Arnulfus” and insertion of two passages from Folcuin’s *Deeds* show us that he also sometimes revised his text as he was copying it on parchment, as he did here.

This insertion also shows us that he had read Folcuin’s *Deeds* – indeed it would have been surprising if a historically-minded monk of Saint-Bertin’s had not done so – and remembered what he had read clearly enough to recall two brief passages pertaining to what he was copying from Lambert. It seems, moreover, that he had ready access to a copy of Folcuin’s *Deeds* and could find the passage he was looking for quickly. It is, I suppose, possible that he had memorized the *Deeds*, but this seems unlikely even though the trained medieval memory was capable of feats that seem marvelous to us. It seems more likely that he remembered the mentions of Arnulf in the *Deeds* well enough to want to insert them into his chronicle, but that he had to look them up in order to copy them accurately. This is the only time he cites Folcuin, but he does cite both the continuation of Folcuin’s work by Simon of Saint-Bertin and the

¹⁸ For a brief overview of the usual stages of composition of a work in the twelfth century, see Rider, *God’s Scribe*, 31-34.

subsequent continuation of Simon's work by another monk several times later in the *Genealogy*. It thus seems possible that he had a copy of Folcuin's *Deeds* with its continuations on or near his writing desk; a copy was at least nearby and easily available to him in the library of Saint-Bertin.

The two passages he cited from Folcuin are, moreover, fairly widely separated in the *Deeds* (by 24 lines of the *Monumenta* edition: MGH SS 13, 627, l. 11-34) and he reduced the second one from nine words to four. This suggests that he knew Folcuin's work well – he was aware that it contained these two mentions of Arnulf and Adalof even though the second was fairly distant from the first and was only nine words long – and that he was scrupulous in reproducing his sources although in a way that might seem odd to us. Given that he reduces the second citation from nine words to four, it would have been easy for him simply to paraphrase it and indeed a modern author or student might simply change the verb (from “recovered” to “took over” or “inherited”) in order to avoid plagiarism or too much citation, on which we frown. The compiler was always careful, however, to use as many and as much of his source's words as possible even when he was cutting and pasting and even when the final result contains as many of his own words as those of his source. We see this same type of fidelity in the first sentence of this passage where the compiler transformed Lambert's “ducta filia Edgeri” (having married the daughter of Edgar) into “duxit filiam Edgeri” (he married the daughter of Edgar) but kept both the verb *ducere* and the noun *filia*, even though he had to change their endings to fit into his new sentence, when he could easily have substituted a form like *uxorem acceperere* (to receive as wife), which he used elsewhere. He may have picked and chosen carefully what to cite and freely dropped words from the middle of a citation or added words to it, but he tried scrupulously to retain as much as possible of the words he did cite.

The “f” that is scratched out in line 2 of f. 65r1 (**Figure 4**) is also revealing. As we have

seen, the first eight lines of this column appear to have been added spontaneously and directly onto the parchment, without a preparatory draft on wax. The first six words of the addition, moreover – “Defuncto autem Balduino et apud Gandauum sepulto” (When, however, Baldwin had died and been buried in Ghent) – are the compiler’s and are not in his source. He was composing as he was writing here and these words are a first draft written directly onto the parchment. The “f” that is scratched out between *Gandauum* and *sepulto* appears to belong to the beginning of the word after *sepulto*, “filii” (sons), with which the citation from Folcuin begins. This suggests that the compiler started to write: “Defuncto autem Balduino et apud Gandauum filii” (When, however, Baldwin had died and in Ghent, the sons) then realized, after writing the first letter of “filii,” that he had left out “sepulto” (been buried). He thus scratched out the “f,” wrote “sepulto,” and then wrote “filii,” starting the citation from Folcuin. In order to get a better idea of what the compiler did, we might represent this in English as follows even though it is not an accurate translation of the Latin text: “When, however, Baldwin had died and been buried, ~~in~~ in Ghent, the ...” This suggests that the compiler wrote “Hic Arnulfus” at the bottom of f. 64v2, remembered suddenly the two short passages in which Folcuin mentions Arnulf and Adalof, went and looked them up in a copy of the *Deeds*, came back to his writing desk (with the copy of the *Deeds*?), composed an introductory clause to the citation – “When, however, Baldwin had died and been buried in Ghent” – in his mind, wrote it down, but failed to write the last word of the clause he had thought up (was he excited about having remembered the two passages from Folcuin? was he in a hurry because he would have to stop writing for the day soon or because he wanted to get back to his planned text before he forgot where he was going with it?), wrote the first letter of the citation from Folcuin, realized he had forgotten to write the last word of his introductory clause, scratched out the first letter of the citation, wrote the last word of the

introductory clause, and then continued with the citation. What is so remarkable about this to me, again, is that omitting to write down a word of a clause I have composed in my mind because I am in haste to get on with my work is something I have done many times. Writing spontaneously on parchment at this point, the compiler of the *Genealogy* seems to have been working in ways, and making mistakes, that are familiar to me.

F. 67r offers three further interesting examples of the compiler's concerns and methods.

(Figure 6) Nine lines from the bottom of f. 67r1, one reads (Figure 7):

... Comes ui extrahitur
et gaudentibus cunctis suis cum
honore redditur.

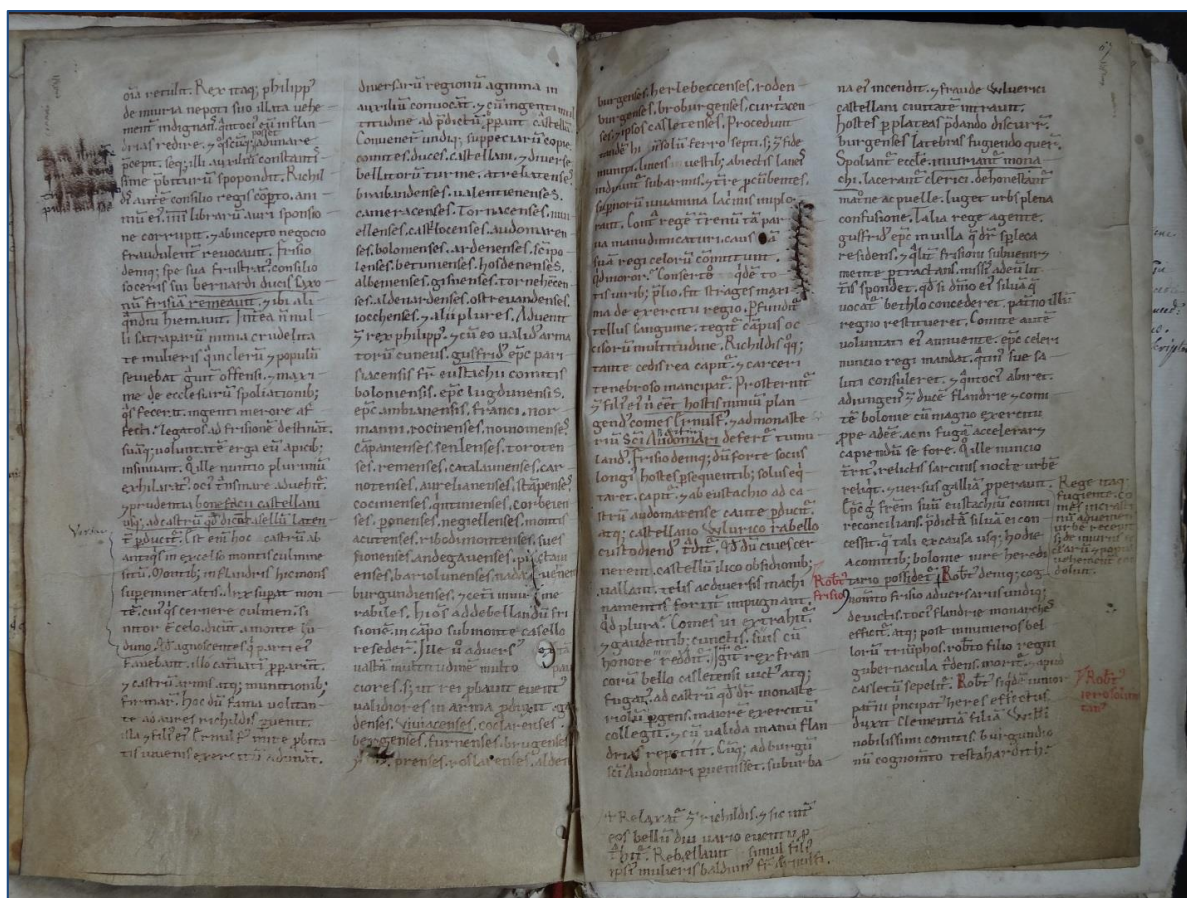


Figure 6 *Genealogia Flandrensiu comitum*, Saint-Omer, BASO, ms. 746-1, f. 66v-67. Photo: © BASO.

This sentence is part of a long passage about the usurpation of Flanders by Count Robert I in 1071, almost all of which appears to have been written by the compiler.¹⁹ Three lines are drawn above *suis* in the manuscript and likewise between *honore* and *redditur* in the next line and three other lines appear to have been scratched out above the *r* of *redditur*. Almost all of

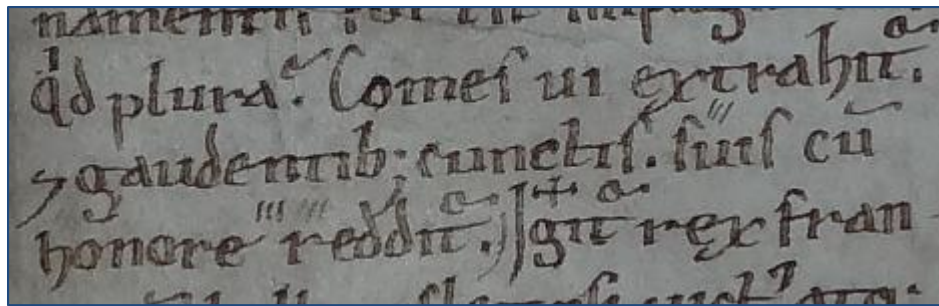


Figure 7 *Genealogia Flandrensiū comitū*, Saint-Omer, BASO, ms. 746-1, f. 67r1. Photo: © BASO.

the other early copies of the *Genealogy* read “cum honore suis redditur” rather than “suis cum honore redditur,” so most of the early copyists seem to have understood these marks to be a correction by the compiler who wished to move *suis* from before *cum* to after *honore* (and who seems at first to have written the three lines above the *r* of *redditur* then decided that this was not clear, scratched them out and rewritten them between *honore* and *redditur*). The reason for this change appears to be the ambiguity of *suis* in the sentence as it was written originally. In the original form, that is, one could understand *suis* as modifying *cunctis*, in which case the sentence would mean: “The count was rescued by force and, to the great joy of all his people, returned with honor,” or one could understand *suis* as the indirect object of *redditur*, in which case the sentence would mean: “The count was rescued by force and, to the great joy of everyone, returned with honor to his people.” The correction shows that the latter meaning is the one

¹⁹ On this long passage, see Rider “Vice, Tyranny, Violence, and the Usurpation of Flanders,” 55-70.

intended by the compiler and it also shows us that he reread his work and tried to imagine how his audience would understand it. Realizing that the placement of *suis* made its meaning ambiguous for his audience, he changed its place.

Just after this correction, we find a cross written above the first word of the next sentence (see **Figure 7**) and then again in the margin below this column, followed by the sentences (**Figure 8**):

+ Relaxatur etiam Richildis et sic inter
eos bellum diu uario euentu pro-
trahitur. Rebellaui ⁊ simul filius
ipsius mulieris Balduinus frater Ernulfi,
[quem comes deuicit atque fugauit]²⁰

Richilde was likewise freed and so the war between them dragged out for a long time with varying fortunes. This woman's son, Baldwin, the brother of Ernulf, also rebelled, [whom the count defeated and put to flight].

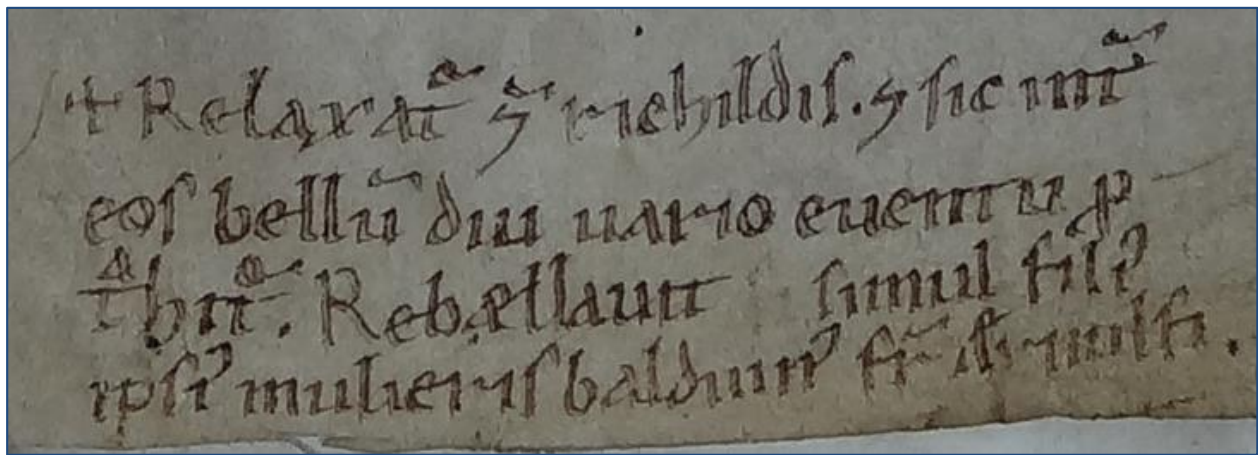


Figure 8 *Genealogia Flandrensiū comitū*, Saint-Omer, BASO, ms. 746-1, f. 67r1. Photo: © BASO.

The two crosses appear to mean that the compiler wished to insert the sentences in the bottom

²⁰ The final words of the second sentence, “quem comes deuicit atque fugauit,” appear to have been cut off when the parchment was trimmed at some point, but they are found in all the early copies and if one enlarges the image of the manuscript page and looks carefully, one can see the tops of a few of the letters at the very bottom.

margin into the text between *redditur* and *igitur*, and this is what all the early copyists understood and did.

Most of the first additional sentence, the part I have printed *in green*, is a citation from Sigebert of Gembloux's *Chronicon*.²¹ Since this is the first of four citations from the *Chronicon* or one of its continuations in the *Genealogy* and the other three are clumped together and included directly in the text of a later passage, it seems likely that the compiler remembered or discovered this sentence while he was writing the later passage in which the three other citations occur and decided he wanted to include it in his compilation. He thus wrote it in the bottom margin of the column with the earlier passage with crosses to indicate where it should be inserted and added a few words to it to make it fit in with the rest of his text. He then added another sentence of his own invention concerning Ernulf's brother Baldwin. We once again see him working spontaneously here since the "fi" scratched out between *rebellauit* and *simul* show that he started to write "rebellauit filius" (the son rebelled) then scratched out *fi* and added *simul* (also/at the same time as) before continuing with *filius*. The addition of *also* is a small point but it is again indicative, it seems to me, of the compiler's desire to make his text as clear as possible for his audience by situating events with respect to one another.

We find another addition to be inserted in the text – which all later copyists did insert at this point in the text – in the lower right hand margin of f. 67r2. **(Figure 9)** In the passage before this insertion, the compiler has explained, in his own words, how, after his defeat by Count Robert I at the battle of Cassel, the king of France withdrew to Saint-Omer, which had supported Robert, burned the suburb around the town and entered the town, where his men despoiled its churches, injured monks, tormented clergy, and disgraced both married women and girls. He

²¹ Sigebert of Gembloux, *Chronica*, ed. Georg Pertz, MGH SS 8 (Hannover, 1844), s. a. 1072, 362.

then goes on to tell us how, in exchange for a gift of land from Robert, the bishop of Paris got the king to flee the city by night by telling him that Robert and the count of Boulogne were nearby with a huge army and on the verge of capturing him. Originally at this point, the compiler went on to discuss other matters, but when he reread his work, he seems to have felt that he needed to round off the story of the king's destructive sojourn in Saint-Omer in some way and wrote in the margin: "Rege itaque fugiente, comes in crastinum adueniens urbem recepit, sed de iniuriis ecclesiarum et populi uehementer condoluit" (So as the king was fleeing [back to France], the count arrived the next morning and recovered the city, but grieved deeply over the injuries done to the churches and people). There is, of course, no way that the compiler could have known what Robert felt almost a century earlier. The second part of the sentence provides no

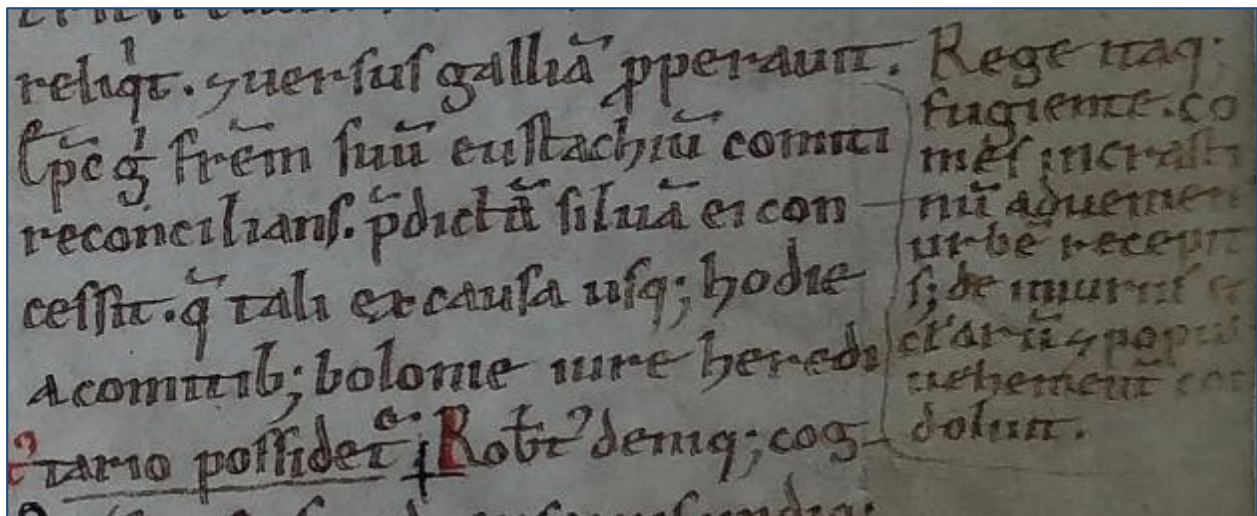


Figure 9 *Genealogia Flandrensium comitum*, Saint-Omer, BASO, ms. 746-1, f. 67r2. Photo: © BASO.

“historical” information, but it does show that the count of Flanders was concerned for his people – in this case the people of Saint-Omer where the compiler lived – and commiserated with them.

The sentence both rounds off the long story of the battle of Cassel and its aftermath and provides

insight into what the compiler thought should be the ideal relation between a count and the inhabitants of Flanders. It provides insight, that is, into the history of ideas in the twelfth century rather than the history of events in the eleventh century. The sentence has what one might broadly call a rhetorical function rather than a historical one and again shows us the compiler's concern for the effect his compilation will have on its audiences.

Many, perhaps most, modern editions of medieval historical sources were prepared in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by scholars who were interested in them for what they could tell us about the political, economic, social, artistic, intellectual or legal life and institutions of the time, about real events outside the texts. These scholars were not, as a rule, interested in how medieval historians conceived of historical writing and practiced it since they believed that modern, scientific history – which recounts what “really happened” – had been invented in the nineteenth century. A common attitude of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century historians seemed to be that there was no real historical writing in the Middle Ages, although modern historians could, through the disciplined application of modern critical methods, mine medieval texts for facts with which to construct their true histories. The information medieval writers provided was valuable, but it had to be extracted carefully from the texts in which it was embedded and which did not correspond to modern conceptions of historical writing. This attitude is clear in the *Monumenta*'s practice, for example, of leaving out passages in later texts that were taken over from earlier ones, or printing them in small print while printing original passages in larger print. The editors of the *Monumenta* were concerned with the information these texts provided rather than their composition and the effects they were intended to have on their audiences. They were seen as literary works that contained some historical information rather than historical works, and their form and composition were thus generally considered

unimportant.

We owe an immense debt to late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century editors and historians, but it seems increasingly clear that their “scientific” history was a historical aberration. Over the last fifty years we have become more inclined and better able to appreciate the literary and rhetorical qualities of medieval historical literature and the rare authors’ manuscripts that we have from the High Middle Ages, like that of the *Genealogy*, can help us deepen our appreciation of these works. The compiler of the *Genealogy* worked with different and for the most part more limited tools than those available to me, and this required him, for example, to cross or scratch out passages rather than simply deleting them or to add words or passages above the line or in the margins rather than simply inserting them, but I find the similarities between the ways he worked and I work striking. The written sources with which he worked, moreover, are largely the same as the ones available to me. It seems to me also that the impulses underlying his work are not so different from those of modern historians and that his final product is not so different from a modern one. On the whole, that is, I am impressed by the enormous similarity between his work and mine, between him and me.

There are, of course, also important differences, which become clearer and whose value I am better able to appreciate once I have understood the underlying similarities. Perhaps the most striking difference for an educated modern reader lies in the compiler’s attitude towards citation, which is typical of his time. His text is full of unacknowledged citations and if a contemporary undergraduate were to hand in something like the *Genealogy* he or she would fail the course and risk being expelled from school; and even if he or she did acknowledge his or her sources, he or she would probably receive a poor grade for too much simple citation. Twelfth-century authors knew what citation was and did sometimes acknowledge a source they were citing. In his

biography of Count Charles the Good, for example, which was written forty years earlier than the *Genealogy* and only ten miles away from Saint-Omer, Walter of Théroutanne tells us that many of the deeds of Count Robert II of Flanders while on Crusade are related in “illa quę *De gestis Francorum Iherusalem pro Christo expugnantium* scripta est . . . historia. Ex qua ad laudem eius hoc solum hic satis est commemorari, quod ob inuincibilem animi constantiam ab ipsis quoque Arabibus ac Turcis Georgii filius scribitur appellatus” (the history that is written about *The Deeds of the French who Besieged Jerusalem for Christ*. It is enough to relate here in his praise one thing from that history: it is written that even the Arabs and Turks called him the son of Saint George on account of the invincible constancy of his spirit). The work Walter cited is still known by the name he gives it and the citation is easily identifiable.²² The compiler’s decision not to cite his sources or even to set them off in some way so that they are recognizable as citations is thus not due to an inability to understand the concept of citation.

We are not faced here with ignorance or a desire to deceive, but with a different understanding of what it means to write history. Modern historians writing a history of the counts of Flanders would probably consult the same sources as the compiler of the *Genealogy* (at least for the period up until he wrote), but we would then expect them to paraphrase these sources and recompose the information they provide in their own words and tell us what “really” happened or the “real” significance of these events, although we would also expect them to indicate their sources in notes and a bibliography. When they do cite a source, we would expect them to set it off clearly and to indicate the work from which it was taken. The underlying concern for modern historians seems to be, in the first instance, verifiability and to be borrowed from a scientific model: the work of historians is “true” if it can be reproduced, so to speak, by other historians by

²² Walter of Théroutanne, *Vita Karoli comitis Flandrię* [4], 19-24; Bartolfus de Nangeio (?), *Gesta francorum Iherusalem expugnantium*, in *Recueil des historiens des Croisades, Historiens occidentaux*, 3 (Paris, 1866), 543^E.

looking up their sources.

A twelfth-century historian like the compiler of the *Genealogy* was more concerned with the readability or listenability of his work than its verifiability, and an apparatus of citation, notes and bibliography would have interfered with the audience's enjoyment of the text. The compiler guaranteed, at least implicitly, the accuracy of the citations in his work and his audiences seems by and large to have been willing to take him at his word without feeling that they needed the possibility of checking up on him. One could, of course, take advantage of this trust to deceive, but this seems to have been sufficiently exceptional for this system to work. As we have seen, the compiler of the *Genealogy* reproduces the passages he cites scrupulously even though he does not acknowledge them, and does not hesitate to tailor them to the work he is writing and to weave his own words into them. The sources he does cite are monastic (Folcuin, Sigebert) or clerical (Lambert) and come for the most part from institutions he knew well (the church of Saint-Omer, the abbey of Saint-Bertin). A major part of his task was to choose trustworthy sources and to cite them scrupulously. Trustworthiness rather than verifiability seems to have been the guarantee of this historiography and this enabled a historian like the compiler of the *Genealogy* to focus on the rhetorical qualities of his work.

Manuscripts are witnesses, first and foremost, to their own elaboration. They are also witnesses to the elaboration of an original literary work, usually lost, of which they offer a copy and, in ways that are usually hard to appreciate, to the reception of that work in the place and time in which the copy was made. They are also – tertiarily – witnesses to other, non-codicological, non-literary events, but in ways that are even harder to appreciate. In the case of an author's manuscript, the elaboration of the manuscript and the literary work coincide and give us rare and privileged insight into its author's methods and preoccupations. In the case of the

author's manuscript of the Bertinian *Genealogia Flandrensium comitum*, I am struck by the author's concern for the trustworthiness, comprehensiveness, and readability or listenability of his work and by the similarity between the way he worked and I work. He had a different concept of historiography, but one that I rather like.

And he wrote quite legibly, for which I am truly grateful. 🐉