

*BRIQUET RELOADED. Short description**

For a longer description of the project, see [\[Briquet reloaded long.pdf\]](#)

The project *Briquet Reloaded* applies a simple idea to a complex problem.

Everybody working in the field of Medieval and Renaissance paper knows and uses the repertory *Les filigranes* by Charles-Moïse Briquet, first published in 1907. It remains an essential working tool; at the same time, it belongs to another age and another technology. Its principal drawbacks in a modern age are two: first, Briquet's tracings, as printed in the repertory, are not sufficiently accurate to make an identification certain; second, knowingly and quite deliberately, he took no account of the fact that paper is made at the vat with a pair of twin moulds and therefore that watermarks are also twins.

In our project we go back to Briquet's sources, the archive, manuscript, and occasional printed documents he traced a century and more ago. His primary references, i.e. the first one in each entry, always tell us where the document is to be found and in many cases they are easy to recover today. Once the watermark has been found, the twin is also identified. They are measured, described, and photographed (from the mould side).

We also add the missing link, or Briquet's original tracing kept in the archive of his papers in the Bibliothèque de Genève. The tracings sometimes provide valuable information about the printed version, or show that in transferring the images onto the lithographic plates details were altered, sometimes misleadingly.

Scrutiny of the original documents also led to a change in method on our part. Everywhere he went, Briquet worked with celerity, making each tracing in a matter of minutes, and he mostly noted the first date to happen to hand. Our approach is more leisurely and the document is looked at in its entirety, in order to establish its structure, the authenticity of the dates, and the value of the testimony of the watermarks. As the "runs and remnants" rule, formulated by another great watermark scholar, Allan Stevenson, expounds, a significant run of paper is reliable for datation purposes; small quantities, or even single sheets, cannot be considered trustworthy, since they may be older residues being used up at a later stage. Our description therefore furnishes an analysis of all the paper in the manuscript.

This experiment presents a sample of entries from the three libraries and archives, two French and one Italian, where we have so far worked: the Archives départementales et métropolitaines de Lyon, the Archives municipales de Lyon, and the Biblioteca civica "Vincenzo Joppi" in Udine. In *Les filigranes* these three sources furnish respectively 87, 109, and 131 primary references, so our sample is part of much more extensive corpus, which we plan to make available in due course. The chosen entries are the following:

Lyon, Archives départementales et métropolitaines

Briquet 2627 [10.G.27 = St. Jean G.5]

Briquet 9796 [12 G 26 = St. Just 11]

Briquet 13158 [10 G 114 = St. Jean G 41]

Briquet 13167 [15 G 32 = St. Nizier G 2856]

Briquet 15686 [12 G 19 = St. Just 6]

Lyon, Archives municipales

Briquet 4124 [CC 158]
Briquet 4297=7029 [BB 1]
Briquet 6356 [BB 1]
Briquet 9359 [CC 146]
Briquet 14944 [CC 3]

\ **Udine, Biblioteca civica “Vincenzo Joppi”, Archivio comunale antico**

Briquet 78 [Annales 3]
Briquet 611 [Annales 32]
Briquet 5959 [Annales 32]
Briquet 7464 [Annales 32]
Briquet 16035 [Annales 3]

The entries for Lyon are written in French; those for Udine in English. We apologise for this fact, but in this experimental phase we prefer to stay in our respective comfort zones. Bilingual, or polyglot, versions are, however, part and parcel of any future, long-term project.

How to structure the entries required long thought. The essential problem is that Briquet often took multiple tracings from the same document. Much of the information we provide is therefore shared to sometimes widely dispersed separate entries and we had to find a way round this without indulging in useless repetition. At the same time it is important to allow users to access directly the most important information, relating to the recognition of the watermarks traced by Briquet and its twin. The description is therefore divided into two parts: the first is common to all the watermarks taken from the same document; the second is unique to that Briquet number. The order is as follows:

Part 1. Shared description.

A brief historical description of the original document, its contents, and structure, including the use Briquet made of it.

A codicological synthesis of the original, including the essential distribution of the watermarks. The watermarks furnishing Briquet’s primary references, his unpublished tracings and, where relevant, his secondary references, are identified.

Part 2. Unique description of Briquet’s primary references.

A table showing the distribution of the watermarks in the gathering or gatherings of the source document. Watermarks are distinguished as *left* (L) or *right* (R) according to their original position in the mould, in other words as if we were looking at the sheet from the felt side; if we look at the sheet from the mould side, the positions are reversed. When both watermarks are placed in the same half of the mould, as frequently happened up to the second half of the Fifteenth century, the letters are doubled, so L and LL, R and RR. When the descriptive tables are written in French, the terms are *gauche* (G) and *droit* (D).

A commentary illustrates the distinction between the watermarks, identifies the twin traced by Briquet, including the leaf he chose (if this is clearly evident in the original), and eventual other features of interest. Briquet’s tracing is also described and its contents analysed.

Links are provided both to photographic reproductions of the twin watermarks and to the tracing.

**This trial run is placed on the Bernstein Memory of Paper site in order to collect observations, suggestions, and criticism of any and whatever sort. For fuller information, please see the long description.*

All communications should be sent to Ilaria Pastrolin at the Ecole Nationale des Chartes, Paris. E-mail: ilariapastrolin@gmail.com.

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