

Anonymous

Escu d'ennuy semé de plours a 3

Edition and comments by
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<http://chansonniers.pwch.dk/CH/CH279.html>

This edition is extracted from the online project *The Copenhagen Chansonnier and the Loire Valley' chansonniers*, which consists of linked html-files and a great number of single PDF editions. It can be accessed at <http://chansonniers.pwch.dk/>.

Each html-file about a song contains lists of sources, and edition and translation of the poetic texts, discussion of the main sources and comments on text and music. Separate files hold lists of contents and descriptions of the sources. Other files contain papers and notes on related topics. The online edition offers many cross references and links to online facsimile editions. These links had to be simplified in the present edition.

Each version of a song is regarded as a valid performance by a scribe/musician, and therefore they are published separately. In most cases there will be no attempts to imagine the intentions of the composer or to reconstruct exactly what the composer had written when the music left his pen. Rather the aim is to interpret the written music in largely the same way as 15th century performers may have read it. Many details, which in one source are different from other sources, must be accepted by the editor as valid elements in a performance of the actual source. Sources marked by an asterisk * are included in the edition.

Sigla

The related 'Loire Valley' chansonniers

Copenhagen	Copenhagen, The Royal Library, MS Thott 291 8° http://www.kb.dk/permalink/2006/manus/702/dan/0+recto/
Dijon	Dijon, Bibliothèque Municipale, Ms. 517 http://patrimoine.bm-dijon.fr/pleade/img-viewer/MS00517/viewer.html
Laborde	Washington D.C., Library of Congress, MS M2.1 L25 Case (Laborde Chansonnier) https://www.loc.gov/resource/ihas.200152631.0/?sp=1
Leuven	Leuven, Alamire Foundation, Manuscript without shelf number (Leuven Chansonnier) http://depot.lias.be/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE9381778
Nivelle	Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, Rés. Vmc. ms. 57 (Chansonnier Nivelle de la Chaussée) http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b55007270r/f1.image
Wolfenbüttel	Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Codex Guelf. 287 Extravag. http://diglib.hab.de/wdb.php?dir=mss/287-extrav

Text sources

Paris 1719	Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, ms. f.fr. 1719
Jardin 1501	<i>Le Jardin de plaisance et fleur de rethorique</i> , Paris, [Antoine Verard, 1501]

Escu d'ennuy semé de plours 3v · Anonymous

Appearance in the group of related chansonniers:

*Leuven ff. 51v-52 »Escu d'ennuy seme de plours« 3v

Text: Rondeau quatrain, full text in Leuven, also found in Paris 1719, f. 92v, and Jardin 1501, f. 118, no. 53. After Leuven:

Escu d'ennuy semé de plours
bordé de saible et de feblesse,
ung cuer palé de grant tristesse,
telz armes porte je amours.

A shield of misery decorated with tears
bordered by darkness and frailty,
a heart bemoaning great sadness,
such a badge of love do I carry.

Timbre de piteuses clamours,
couronné d'amere aspresse,

A crest of piteous wails
crowned by cruel asperity,

*escu d'ennuy semé de plours
borde de saible et de feblesse*

a shield of misery decorated with tears
bordered by darkness and frailty

ordonnez, las, m'avez tousjours,
ma tresbelle dame et maistresse,
criez harou ou quel destresse
au langoureux plain de dolours.

have you, alas, forever assigned me,
my beautiful lady and mistress,
condemned me to this desperation
in the woeful clarity of suffering.

*Escu d'ennuy semé de plours
bordé de saible et de feblesse,
ung cuer pale de grant tristesse,
telz armes porte je amours.*

A shield of misery decorated with tears
bordered by darkness and frailty,
a heart bemoaning great sadness,
such a badge of love do I carry.

Evaluation of the sources:

The unique rondeau was entered into the Leuven chansonnier by its main scribe without any errors in the text and music, except that the scribe misread the mensuration sign, which appears in the upper voice only, as *tempus perfectum*. Obviously, it must be *tempus imperfectum*. A strange phenomenon probably originates from the exemplar: the last two cadences are both in *fauxbourdon* style with the contratenor placed between the upper voice and the tenor (bb. 20-21 and 25-27). The standard cadence ornamentation usually appears in the upper voice leading to the song's finalis, but here the ornamental figure is sung by the contratenor, which has the leading tone for the fifth of the final chord. This reversal is most likely due to a copying error, which had appeared also in the exemplar. The poem also were included in two later poetic collections, MS Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, ms. f.fr. 1719 and the printed *Le Jardin de plaisance et fleur de rethorique*, Paris [Verard, 1501]. Here it appears with variants in the tierce.

The song is the fourth in a series of unique songs consisting of two virelais simples, two rondeaux and a bergerette, which fills out the eighth fascicle in Leuven (ff. 45-54).

Comments on text and music:

This rondeau quatrain is a male love complaint in rich *rimes léonines*, which uses heraldic terminology as images of the lover's sufferings. The poem may be a bit repetitive, but the pictures and meaning flow smoothly, especially through the couplets and the tierce. The Dorian music uses low voices with the upper voice ranging between *a* and *a'* – its restricted range may still be performed by boys – and tenor and contratenor in nearly the same low ranges (*A-d'* and *G-c'*), and they often cross each other.

The greatest interest is concentrated in the melody of the upper voice, which is well-formed with a clear presentation of the words and quite long melismas that emphasize important words such as "tristesse / destresse" in bars 17-20. The lower voices most accompany without imitation before the last line, where all three voices participate in a unison/octave imitation, which leads directly to the final D cadence.

The point where the couplets repeat the first half of the refrain's music is hardly marked. Only fermatas in the superius and the tenor indicate the point, no cadential movement or standard figuration. When the refrain is performed in full, there is no audible incision. The second and third lines come to function as a whole, where the cadences to F and to C in bars 15 and 18 gain more weight and lead to the important melisma on "tristesse / destresse". This artifice serves to strengthen the melodic unity. The two last cadences in the song, to A in bars 20-21 and the final to D are both in *fauxbourdon* style with the curious old-fashioned decoration of the double leading notes in the contratenor.

This song could very well be composed by the same musician who might have authored the others in the series in the eight fascicle of Leuven. It displays, for example, the same mixture of old and new, with its double leading note cadences, as we can find in the rondeau that comes just before it in Leuven, »Par Mallebouche la cruelle«. ¹ However, "Escu d'ennuy" shows a surer grip on the compositional technique and especially in the shaping of a melody. It might have been incorporated into the series because it had served as an inspiration for "Par Mallebouche"; the two songs share the same limited range of the upper voice, "Escu d'ennuy" sounding just a fourth lower.

Parts of this text are included in my publication *The unica of the Leuven chansonnier – a portfolio of songs by an ambitious young musician*, August 2024. ²

1 Cf. <http://chansonniers.pwch.dk/CH/CH278.html>.

2 See further at http://www.pwch.dk/Publications/PWCH_Leuven.pdf.

Leuven no. 33

Escu d'ennuy semé de plours (unique)

Leuven, Alamire Foundation, Manuscript without shelf number, ff. 51^v-52

[Superius] Mensura = d

1) d

1.4. Es - cu d'en - nuy se - mé de
 3. or - don - nez, las, m'a - vez tous -

Tenor

1.4. Es - cu d'en-nuy se - mé de
 3. or - don - nez, las, m'a - vez tous -

Contraténor

1.4. Es - cu d'en - nuy se - mé de
 3. or - don - nez, las, m'a - vez tous -

7

plours bor - dé de sai - ble et et
 jours, ma tres - bel - le da - me et

plours bor - dé de sai - ble et de
 jours, ma tres - bel - le da - me et

plours bor - dé de sai - ble et de fe -
 jours, ma tres - bel - le da - me et mais -

12

de fe - bles - se, ung cuer pa - lé de grant tris -
 mais - tres - se, cri - ez ha - rou ou quel des -

fe - bles - se, ung cuer pa - lé de
 mais - tres - se, cri - ez ha - rou ou

bles - se, ung cuer pa - lé de
 tres - se, cri - ez ha - rou ou

17

tes
 tres

grant tris des - tes
 quel des tres

grant tris des - tes
 quel des tres

1) Superius, the mensuration sign indicates *tempus perfectum*, obviously an error.

21

se, telz ar - mes por - te je a - mours.
se au lan - go - reux plain de do - lours.

se, telz ar - mes por - te je a - mours.
se au lan - go - reux plain de do - lours.

se, telz ar - mes por - te je a - mours.
se au lan - go - reux plain de do - lours.

2a. Tim - bre de pi - - - teu - ses cla -
2b. es - cu d'en - nuy se - mé de

2a. Tim - bre de pi - - - teu - ses cla -
2b. es - cu d'en - nuy se - mé de

2a. Tim - bre de pi - teu - ses cla -
2b. es - cu d'en - nuy se - mé de

7

mours, cou - ron - né d'a - me - - re as - pres - se,
plours bor - dé de sai - - - ble et de fe - bles - se

mours, cou - ron - né d'a - me - - re as - pres - se,
plours bor - dé de saible_et de fe - bles - se

mours, cou - ron - né d'a - me - re as - pres - se,
plours bor - dé de saible_et de fe - bles - se