In 1753, the British Museum acquired the summer half of a generously illustrated early fifteenth-century French breviary as part of the Harley collection (illus. 1-7). Although written for the use of Rome, the better part of the manuscript, now Harley 2897 in the British Library, was probably made in Paris in the second decade of the century. The coats of arms beneath the Ascension (f. 188v.) demonstrate that Harley 2897 was once owned by John the Fearless, duke of Burgundy from 1404 to 1419; his wife, Margaret of Bavaria; or both. In 1898, Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild bequeathed the winter half of the breviary to the British Museum; today it is Additional manuscript 35311 in the British Library (illus. 8).3

In 1930, both halves of the London Breviary were included in the sixth and last volume of the British Museum’s Schools of Illumination series.4 That volume’s anonymous author was apparently the first to recognize that the text of the Sanctorale breaks off in midline at f. 388v. in Additional 35311 and recommences on f. 279r. of Harley 2897.5 Given this, it would appear that the

2 F. 188v. of Harley 2897 is illustrated in ibid. on p. 399.
3 For Additional 35311, see most recently ibid., p. 396, no. 114 (with summary bibliography), and C. de Hamel, The Rothschilds and their collections of illuminated manuscripts (London 2005), pp. 15, 17, Pl. 7a.
4 Schools of illumination. Reproductions from manuscripts in the British Museum. Part 6: French, mid-14th to 16th centuries (London 1930), pp. 7-8, Pl. 6.
5 The break comes between two gatherings of eight: f. 388 is the last folio in gathering 50 (ff. 381-8) of Additional 35311 and f. 279 is the first folio in gathering 37 (ff. 279-86) of Harley 2897.