1. Introduction

On February 10, 1480 Geraert Leeu completed in Gouda the second edition of the first volume of the *Passionael*, a Middle Dutch prose translation of the *Legenda aurea* or *Golden Legend*.\(^1\) This collection of "brief" saints' lives had been composed between 1252 and 1260 by the Italian Dominican friar Jacobus de Voragine.\(^2\) The first edition of the *Passionael* had also been printed by Geraert Leeu in 1478 (cf. Goudriaan 1997, 73-88). The second edition is not just a reprint, however; compared to the first edition, the second was extended, as is duly mentioned in the imprint:\(^3\)

Het is te weten dat achterin dit boeck staen drye legenden die in die tafel niet gheteykent en sijn, te weten als van Sinte Nicasius, van coninck Kaerl die Grote ende van Sinte Willem.

[Please note that at the end of this book three legends have been included which are not to be found in the table of contents, to wit St. Nicasius,\(^4\) of

\(^1\) The *Legenda aurea* was translated into Middle Dutch twice. Cf. Williams-Krapp 1986, 53-187. Leeu printed the translation known as the Southern Dutch one.

\(^2\) For Jacobus de Voragine and the *Legenda aurea* see Fleith 1991 and Reames 1985.

\(^3\) The critical text of the *Legende van Karel de Grote* [Legend of Charlemagne] was based on the copy of the *Passionael* at Leiden, Universiteitsbibliotheek, 1496 B 13. It has modern pen-foliation: 266ra,16-270ra,32. This copy was bound together with the *Somerstuc* (Gouda: Gheraert Leeu, 1 april 1480). The *Somerstuc*, too, was expended - compared with the first Leeu-edition - by the addition of five "new" legends. See Jongen 1994. — In the critical edition the abbreviations were expanded and the u/v/w and i/j spellings were normalized in accordance with modern usage. Punctuation, capitalisation and paragraphing are also according to modern usage, ignoring the original punctuation and also ignoring the rubrication of the Leiden copy. Words are written as one also according to modern usage.

\(^4\) The legend relates the martyrdom of Nicasius of Reims and his sister Eutropia:
And, after the "official" text, these three legends are indeed to be found, of which that of Charlemagne has been given the following "title":

Opten acht ende twintichsten dach in januario: *Legende vanden groten Karolo, coninck van Vrancrijck ende oec keyser van Roemen, den heylighen confesssor.*

[On the twenty-eighth of January: the legend of Charlemagne, king of France and emperor of Rome, the holy confessor.]

The life of Charlemagne runs to some fifteen columns. Although there is a lot that could be said about the content, it is rather remarkable that Leeu did not include this legend of Charlemagne until the second edition of the *Passionael*, in a sort of appendix. The fact that Charlemagne was venerated as a saint in (the eastern part of) the Netherlands is probably the reason why he decided to include this legend after all.

2. Charlemagne's canonization

In 1165 a number of VIPs had gathered in Aix-la-Chapelle on the occasion of the festival in honor of the nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ. The German emperor Frederick I, called Barbarossa (1152-1190), was there, as was the pope, or rather the anti-pope, Pascalis III (1164-1168). Also present was Henry II Plantagenet, king of England they were slaughtered most cruelly by the Huns; their feast is December 14th.

5 This legend relates the life and the posthumous miracles of one William of Poitou, a knight who was converted by Bernard of Clairvaux after a life of dissipation; his feast is February 10th.

6 The *Legende van Karel de Grote* was added on to the end of the *Winterstuc* of Leeu's second edition (published February 10, 1480): bbira,16-bbvra,32.


8 For these data see the charter issued by Emperor Frederick on January 8, 1166 (*Acta Sanctorum. Januarius II, 5-4-506, especially the first paragraph*) and Rauschen 1890, 129-137.