

The disciplined life of a monastery, not to mention the religious commitment of its residents to prayer and to study of the Scriptures, made it a natural venue for the production and preservation of manuscripts. But that is not to say that in the early Middle Ages monasteries were full of books. A monastery's entire holdings might be counted in the tens of codices. A library consisting of hundreds of volumes would be a great one indeed. We can imagine that it was a significant event whenever a new manuscript was added, perhaps by being copied from a book borrowed from another monastery. A codex could also be acquired in trade for a book duplicated from one of a monastery's own books, or as a gift or bequest. ]