Gilles Filleau des Billettes composed an extensive account of the process for the "Description des Arts et Métiers" of the French Royal Academy of Science c. 1700 (edited in Kindel, 2013). In his description he suggests the practice was created by someone (name unknown) c. 1650, and specifically mentions that books for particular churches were written in this way, as opposed to printed books used more generally by the whole church ("C'est celui par lequel on écrit les plus beaux livres d'églises particulières qui n'ont pas besoin d'être autant répandus.")

"A Reconstruction of Stencilling Based on the Description by Gilles Filleau des Billettes", with two appendices by Fred Smeijers, Typography Papers 9 (December, 2013).