

Merton Priory
as a
Centre of Learning,
1117–1538

KATHARINE RACHEL HAWKS,
MA (HONS) MPhil (CANTAB.)

SUPERVISED BY JANET BURTON AND
HARRIETT WEBSTER

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines aspects of Merton's history connected to the learning of its canons, with two underlying themes: a) the nature of learning within the priory, and b) the contribution of the canons of the priory to wider scholarship and learning during the Middle Ages. Chapter 1 contextualises Merton within the more general Augustinian movement, discussing the historiography of the Augustinians and of mediæval learning and scholarship, and gives an overview of the sources used in the thesis. Chapter 2 sets out the spiritual context of Augustinian priories in general and Merton Priory in particular, investigating liturgy and daily activities within the monastery, and using two foundational texts, the lives of Gilbert the Sheriff and Guy of Merton. Chapter 3 explores the library, both the physical location and the collection of books and manuscripts within the monastery. It includes a discussion of each of the extant books and manuscripts. Chapter 4 moves on to those who read, and wrote or copied, these books. The focus of this chapter is basic education: how literate canons needed to be and how they were taught; what Merton's educational responsibilities were towards the secular church and how it fulfilled them. Chapter 5 looks at Merton's relationship with the schools/ universities, and singles out for discussion several individual scholars amongst the canons of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The final chapter moves to the fifteenth century, focussing on individual priors shaped the monastery and its learning. This chapter ends with the ending of the priory itself, examining the scholarship of its canons up to and beyond the Dissolution of the Monasteries. This thesis shows the continuity of learning at Merton during its lifespan, and contributes to our understanding of both the Augustinians as an order and the learning and education of regular clergy.

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The lone scholar sitting in a dusty library or grim garret producing an individual work of brilliance is a fantasy, and the opposite of this thesis. Many people have contributed to this work: *pace* Bede, ‘if you find anything useful in it, ascribe it to [them]; if there is anything superfluous, pity my frailty’. The process of writing a thesis teaches you how much you do *not* know; fortunately there are always those who *do* know, and who are patient and generous enough to share their knowledge. My supervisors, Janet Burton and Harriett Webster, are *rara aves*: fine scholars and fine teachers. Merton is blessed with an outstanding local historian, Peter Hopkins (I am only just catching up with a fraction of his knowledge about the priory and its surroundings): he made available not just his time and eagle eyes, but his copies of various resources. Other Mertonians to thank include Dave Saxby, resident archaeologist, Dave Haunton (another editor with eagle eyes) and Keith Penny, for Latin superior to mine. Tessa Webber, of Cambridge, and Andrew Dunning, of Oxford, answered a lot of novice’s questions about manuscripts. Tessa also put me in touch with Rose McCandless, whom Dame Serendipity recently helped write a MPhil thesis on Merton’s Bible. Thanks, for their help and hospitality, to the archivists of Eton College, Ampleforth Abbey and Hatfield House, to Clark Drieshen and other librarians at Cambridge University Library, the British Library and the Bodleian. Various historians have provided help and references — Allan Barton, Robin Darwall-Smith, Helen Deeming, Seb Falk, Harold Hans, Diarmaid MacCulloch, Lesley Milner. Thanks to Thomas Hobro for his useful Minecraft-related question ‘where was the library at Merton?’ Jackie Cassell has been unfailingly generous and supportive in all sorts of ways. Other friends have discussed (and read) sections of the thesis, given me space and time, and provided both encouragement and valuable distraction — Toby, Harriet, Andrew, Phoebe, Elsa, Ruth, Alex, Zhiyu, Browns, Hobrones, Steedlis, Sutches, Kobayashi-Westerhoffs, Tinklers and many others; thanks also to Sally-Ann and the team at the Landmark Trust. My mother, Jennie, put up with me living at home for three years. She is still speaking to me, a credit to her maternal forgiveness and a reminder of the patience she had taking two small children around monasteries and castles, where my adventures in mediæval history began. It was while writing the exhibition boards for Merton’s Chapter House Museum with my father, John, that the seed for this thesis was planted, and from him I inherited my interest in Merton Priory: a chip off the old block, or something similar.

Cambridge, 2024

ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AJ</i>	<i>Archaeological Journal</i>
<i>Barnwell Observances</i>	<i>The Observances in use at the Augustinian Priory of S. Giles and S. Andrew at Barnwell, Cambridgeshire</i> , ed. and trans. J. W. Clark
<i>Bridlington Dialogue</i>	<i>Bridlington Dialogue: an Exposition of the Rule of St Augustine for the Life of the Cler</i> , trans. a religious of CSMV
<i>BRUC</i>	A. B. Emden, <i>Biographical Dictionary of the University of Cambridge</i>
<i>BRUO</i>	A. B. Emden, <i>Biographical Dictionary of the University of Oxford</i>
<i>BSRC</i>	<i>The Regular Canons in the Medieval British Isles</i> , ed. J. Burton and K. Stöber
<i>CHBB</i>	<i>The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain</i>
<i>CHLBI</i>	<i>The Cambridge History of Libraries in Britain and Ireland, Volume 1: to 1640</i> , ed. E. Leedham Green and M. T. J. Webber
<i>CHMMLW</i>	<i>The Cambridge History of Medieval Monasticism in the Latin West</i> , ed. A. I. Beach & I. Cochelin
<i>Cleo</i>	GB-Lbl, Cotton MS Cleopatra C VII (Cartulary of Merton Priory)
<i>CBMLC</i>	Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues
<i>CEPR</i>	<i>Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers Relating to Great Britain and Ireland</i> , ed. W. H. Bliss & J. A. Twemlow
<i>De confessione</i>	Dom A. Wilmart, 'Un opuscule sur la confession composé par Guy de Southwick vers la fin du XII ^e siècle', <i>Recherches de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale</i> , 7
<i>DMLBS</i>	<i>Dictionary of Mediaval Latin from British Sources</i>
<i>DNB</i>	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i>

Dugdale	William Dugdale, <i>Monasticon Anglicanum</i>
Edington	<i>The Register of William Edington, Bishop of Winchester 1346–1366</i> , ed. S. F. Hockey (2 vols)
EEA	<i>English Episcopal Acta</i>
EHR	<i>English Historical Review</i>
FEA	<i>Fasti Ecclesie Anglicana</i> , ed. D. E. Greenway, J. M. Horn, et al.
Gilbert I–IV	<i>A Priory Founded: Sheriff Gilbert at Merton</i> , trans. P. Hopkins and K. Penny (https://mertonhistoricalsociety.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/A-Priory-Founded-preview.pdf)
Life of Guy	<i>The Life of Guy of Merton</i> , ed. and trans. K. Hawks and K. Penny (https://mertonhistoricalsociety.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Guy-preview.pdf)
Heales	A. Heales, <i>The Records of Merton Priory</i>
History of Oxford	<i>The History of the University of Oxford</i> , ed. J. I. Catto and T. A. R. Evans (vols 1 & 2)
JCD	J. C. Dickinson, <i>The Origins of the Austin Canons and their Introduction into England</i>
JoS	<i>The Letters of John of Salisbury</i> , ed. W. J. Millor, H. E. Butler and C. N. L. Brooke (2 vols)
Edington	<i>The Register of William Edington, Bishop of Winchester 1346–1366</i> , ed. S. F. Hockey (Winchester, 1986)
L&P	<i>Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII</i> , ed. J. S. Brewer, J. Gairdner et al.
Miller & Saxby	P. Miller and D. Saxby, <i>The Augustinian Priory of St Mary Merton, Surrey</i>
ODNB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> (https://www.oxforddnb.com/)
PL	<i>Patrologia Latina</i> , ed. J. P. Migne

<i>Pontissara</i>	<i>Registrum Johannis de Pontissara Episcopi Wyntoniensis</i> , ed. C. Deedes (2 vols)
<i>Registrum Anglie</i>	<i>Registrum Anglie de libris doctorum et auctorum veterum</i> , ed. R. H. and M. A. Rouse
Salter, <i>Chapters</i>	<i>Chapters of the Augustinian Canons</i> , ed. H. E. Salter
<i>Sandale & Asserio</i>	<i>The Registers of John de Sandale and Rigaud de Asserio, Bishops of Winchester A.D. 1316–1323</i> , ed. F. J. Baigent
<i>Stratford</i>	<i>The Register of John de Stratford, Bishop of Winchester, 1323–1333</i> , ed. R. M. Haines
<i>TRHS</i>	Transactions of the Royal Historical Society
<i>VCH</i>	Victoria County History
Webber & Watson	<i>The Libraries of the Augustinian Canons</i> , ed. M. T. J. Webber and A. G. Watson
<i>Woodlock</i>	<i>Registrum Henrici Woodlock: Diocesis Wintoniensis A.D. 1305–1316</i> , ed. A. W. Goodman (2 vols)
<i>Wykeham</i>	<i>Wykeham's Register</i> , ed. T. F. Kirby

LIBRARY SIGLA

As there is no standard form of library sigla, I have chosen to follow the RISM sigla system. This is for music manuscripts; archives containing no music therefore do not have a RISM siglum, so I have used RISM principles to assign one.

F-DOU	Bibliothèque municipale, Douai
GB-AM	Ampleforth Abbey and College Library
GB-Ccc	Corpus Christi College, Cambridge
GB-Cu	Cambridge University Library
GB-Gu	Glasgow University Library
GB-Hha	Hatfield House Archives
GB-Lbl	British Library, London
Gb-Lca	College of Arms, London
GB-Llp	Lambeth Palace Library, London
GB-Lna	The National Archives, Kew
GB-Lsa	Society of Antiquaries of London
GB-Mch	Chetham's Library, Manchester
GB-Ob	Bodleian Library, Oxford
GB-Obac	Balliol College, Oxford
GB-Ojc	St John's College, Oxford
GB-SHRs	Shrewsbury School Library
GB-WCr	Hampshire Archives
GB-WO	Worcester Cathedral
GB-WRec	Eton College Library

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A note on translations

Where English translations from Latin are published (in print or online), I have used the English translations. Where I have translated a Latin text, I give the English in the main body of the text and the Latin in the footnotes, except for longer passages where the Latin is either already published or is in Appendix 4.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Merton Priory, the subject of this thesis, was one of the major shapers of the Augustinian Order in the British Isles. It was founded in 1114 by Gilbert, sheriff of Surrey, Huntingdonshire and Cambridgeshire, on his lands in Merton. Quickly relocated to a more suitable place nearby (on Stane Street), it celebrated its formal foundation in 1117. Merton was one of a number of Augustinian houses to be founded during this period: the twelfth century saw a rapid expansion of the Augustinians in Britain, in which Merton played a significant role. Merton's Use and observances were followed by several other houses, and, in addition, it sent canons to establish or rule other foundations. Later in the century, two archbishops of Canterbury 'took on the habit of a canon of Merton'.¹ Merton was used for royal and ecclesiastical hospitality as well as for administrative, financial and diplomatic missions, and was considered a royal foundation, although it actually was not. Henry III maintained royal lodgings at the priory, and (consequently) the first act in the *Statutes of the Realm* is the Statute of Merton, signed at the priory in 1236. At its dissolution in 1538, Merton was the second wealthiest Augustinian house in the land. (Ironically, the land-measuring systems of one of its final canons might have helped dissolve and divide monasteries throughout the kingdom.) Despite all this, apart from a comprehensive archaeological report published in 2007, there are no major historical studies of the house or its contribution to mediæval society.²

The subject matter for a study of Merton Priory is an *embarras de richesse*. Its relationship with prelates, nobles and the king throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries would be an interesting investigation. In the light of the approach taken by Andrew Abram and Nick Nichols, an exploration of Merton's relationship with its parishes would be fruitful.³ Continuing from Janette

¹ T. M. Morris, 'The Augustinian use of Oseney Abbey: a study of the Oseney Ordinal, Processional and Tonale (Bodleian Library MS Rawlinson c.939)' (unpublished DPhil thesis, Oxford, 1999), p. 127; L. Green, *Daughter Houses of Merton Priory*, Merton Historical Society Booklets (London, 2002); JCD, p. 254; Heales, p. 48.

² Miller & Saxby. Lionel Green's *A Priory Revealed: Using Materials Relating to Merton Priory* (London, 2005) holds some valuable information, but it covers only some aspects of the priory, is not an in-depth history, and is not always reliable. Its publisher, Merton Historical Society, has also published various booklets on the priory, including *Daughter Houses*, and books and articles on local landholding.

³ A. Abram, 'The Augustinian canons in the diocese of Coventry and Lichfield and their benefactors, 1115–1320' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Wales Trinity Saint David, 2007); *idem*, *Norton Priory: an Augustinian Community and its Benefactors* (Lampeter, 2007); N. Nichols, 'The Augustinian canons in the diocese of Worcester and their relation to

Henderson's work on Merton's granges, a study of its activities as landowner would be a worthwhile, if slightly daunting, undertaking.⁴ Harold Hans is deciphering Merton's two surviving cartularies for his PhD at the Sorbonne, which will contribute both to the priory's chronology and its prosopography. My research, however, focuses on learning and scholarship at Merton Priory.

The questions that this thesis addresses are, in brief: what was the nature of learning within the priory? What contributions did the canons of Merton priory make to wider contemporary scholarship and learning? How typical was it as an Augustinian establishment? The first question encompasses the levels and purposes of learning, and this lies under discussions (in chapters 3–6) about the texts from Merton and the canons who used them. The second question brings two further questions: did canons move from being learners to teachers and disseminators of scholarship within and without the priory, and what was Merton's role in education in schools and parishes? Discussion will focus on Merton's canons as scholars, students and teachers, and their networks with other scholars and teachers. The final question focuses on how far learning at Merton was rooted in the requirements of Augustinianism and underpinned by their spirituality. This is the subject of Chapter 2, and Chapter 3 considers the Augustinian content of Merton's manuscripts. Answering these questions is not always easy, for the evidence for Merton as a centre for learning is patchy, and there is nothing like the richness of materials that there is, for example, for Benedictine St Albans or Augustinian Leicester.⁵

The contents of Merton's library form a key part of this study, although only thirty-one books and manuscripts survive. Some of these volumes contain multiple texts, and these give hints of the sorts of volumes, now lost, that could have been in the library. A further 226 Merton titles are listed in the *Registrum Anglie*. This was an ambitious project of the Oxford Franciscans in the early fourteenth century to catalogue monastic libraries, and it gives us a picture of library collections at that date: Merton's was one of the largest collections recorded.

the secular and ecclesiastical powers in late medieval England' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Wales Trinity Saint David, 2009). See also *idem*, 'The Augustinian canons and their parish churches: a key to their identity' and A. Abram, 'Augustinian canons and the survival of cult centres in medieval England', in *BSRC*, pp. 79–96, 213–32.

⁴ J. Henderson, *In Search of Merton Priory's Granges* (London, 2014).

⁵ J. G. Clark, *A Monastic Renaissance at St. Albans: Thomas Walsingham and his Circle, c.1350–1440* (Oxford, 2004); Webber & Watson, pp. 104–400.

However, the picture is more like a sketch: the compilers were interested in theological texts and so they did not include legal, scientific, classical or poetic texts. Even within theology, certain authors (such as Peter Abelard) were omitted. In addition, different volunteers could be more or less assiduous in compiling their individual lists: if certain patristic texts were listed in one monastery but not another, this may not mean that they were not there, but just that they failed to be recorded.⁶ The *Registrum Anglie* is a snap-shot of monastic libraries: it provides no information about the accession date of any volume, and it cannot tell us about the subsequent history of any volume. Some Augustinian houses, in common with those of other orders, produced booklists which are still extant: unfortunately, no booklist for Merton survives. These existing booklists are, however, useful sources for comparison and, in one instance, for information about Merton's own collection: explicit evidence for the existence Merton's custumal, which does not survive, comes from an entry in Lanthony Secunda's booklist from the mid-fourteenth century.⁷

Merton's two cartularies, GB-Lbl Cotton MS Cleopatra C VII and GB-Ob MS Laud Misc. 723, give information about land-holding and occasionally buildings, convent life and even seals, but neither, with a couple of exceptions, mentions anything about the convent's books or libraries.⁸ Similarly, bishops' registers contain information about brethren and about visitations, but not much about learning or materials for learning. Some of the evidence about Merton as a centre for learning is oblique, deriving from inferences from bishops' registers and other external sources, such as letters of, for example, John of Salisbury or Adam Marsh. The books and manuscripts that belonged to Merton are herein discussed largely in relation to Merton itself, with some comparisons from elsewhere. By providing a 'vertical' study of one establishment, this thesis makes a contribution

⁶ *Registrum Anglie*, pp. lvi–xcvii.

⁷ Webber & Watson, A16.447; K. Bennett, 'The Book Collections of Llanthony Priory from Foundation until Dissolution (c.1100–1538)' (PhD, Kent, 2006), pp. 23 (fn. 4), 152. Leicester Abbey's booklist is the fullest, and perhaps a good place to start for a comparative approach: M. T. J. Webber and M. Gullick, 'Summary catalogue of surviving books from Leicester Abbey', in *Leicester Abbey: Medieval History, Archaeology and Manuscript Studies*, ed. J. Storey et al. (Leicester, 2006), pp. 173–92; M. T. J. Webber, 'The books of Leicester Abbey', in *ibid.*, pp. 127–46; M. T. J. Webber, 'Latin devotional texts and the books of the Augustinian canons of Thurgarton Priory and Leicester Abbey in the late Middle Ages', in *Books and Collectors 1200–1700: Essays Presented to A. G. Watson*, ed. J. P. Carley and C. Tite (London, 1996), pp. 27–41.

⁸ See below, pp. 130, 211.

to future research looking ‘horizontally’ at certain texts, compilations and collections, comparing particular texts or collections across a number of libraries. This would itself shed further light on the nature of learning in Augustinian houses in general, and at Merton in particular.

This thesis focuses on one institution over a long period, and this raises a further question, of change over time. Although there was much continuity, Merton in the twelfth century was different from Merton in the fifteenth. This thesis is divided roughly into two chronological halves, chapters 3–5 focusing on the period c.1117–c.1350 (the end date is approximate and arbitrary) and Chapter 6 concentrating on the developments of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, including the introduction of printing and the ‘new learning’.

By studying a single institution, we can see the different functions and levels of learning within it, and their interaction with each other, and also the variety of learners, regular and secular. Ian Wei observed that

many outstanding studies of medieval thought... have not been primarily concerned with the contexts in which thinking took place... There are also excellent institutional histories of schools, monasteries and universities, but they have tended not to dwell on the scholarly work that took place in them.⁹

This largely holds true for studies of the Augustinians in the British Isles. Some foundational work has been accomplished: the *Corpus o British Medieval Library Catalogues* series includes Teresa Webber and Andrew Watson’s edition of Augustinian library lists and Richard and Mary Rouse’s edition of the *Registrum Anglie*.¹⁰ The Bodleian’s project (*MLGB3*) to digitise Neil Ker’s *Medieval Libraries o Great Britain* is continuing, despite concerns over cyber-security. On top of this, Nicholas Orme and James Clark have researched and reviewed Augustinian schooling and learning; Colman Ó Clabaigh has looked at material for teaching novices in Ireland and Mark Dilworth has exposed the Augustinians’ role in the intellectual foundations of the Scottish Reformation.¹¹ Nevertheless, there are still relatively few studies of individual monasteries’ libraries or learning and

⁹ I. P. Wei, *Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris: Theologians and the University, c.1100–1330* (Cambridge, 2012), p. 1.

¹⁰ The Libraries of the Augustinian Canons, ed. M. T. J. Webber and A. G. Watson, CBMLC, VI (London, 1998); *Registrum Anglie de Libris Doctorum et Auctorum Veterum*, ed. R. H. and M. A. Rouse, trans. R. A. B. Mynors, CBMLC, II (London, 1991).

scholarship. David Postles produced a useful essay on the learning of the canons of Oseney. Kirsty Bennett's doctoral thesis on Llanthony is an in-depth study of its library and the learning of some of its canons. Andrew Dunning has been exploring the textual traditions of St Frideswide's and Cirencester, including the journeys of texts between Cirencester and Malmesbury, and he has put various editions of texts on-line, making them easily accessible and searchable. His research supports Anne Lawrence-Mathers' hypothesis, from her examination of northern Augustinian houses, that the Augustinians provided the 'academic wing' of monasticism, certainly during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.¹² However, other studies on individual or collections of Augustinian monasteries skim over learning. Ludo Milis' article on the catalogue of the abbey of Arrouaise is nearly sixty years old and a transcription rather than an analysis. Jaqueline Harmon wrote about a possible scriptorium at Barnwell, but not about learning more generally; Garrett Ratcliff's survey of Scottish foundations discusses Augustinian scholarship, but only in relation to foundation narratives. Alison Fizzard's book on Plympton makes no significant mention of intellectual activities at all.¹³

11 N. Orme, 'The Augustinian canons and education', *BSRC*, pp. 213–232; J. G. Clark, 'The Augustinians, history, and literature in late medieval England', *BSRC*, pp. 403–16; C. N. Ó Clabaigh, 'Community, commemoration and confraternity: the chapter office and chapter books in Irish Augustinian Foundation', in *Households o God: The Regular Canons and Canonesses o St Augustine and Prémontré in Medieval Ireland*, ed. M. Browne and C. N. Ó Clabaigh (Dublin, 2019); M. Dilworth, 'Canons regular and the Reformation', in *The Renaissance in Scotland: Studies in Literature, Religion, History, and Culture Offered to John Durkhan*, ed. A. A. MacDonald, M. Lynch, and I. B. Cowan, Brill's Studies in Intellectual History, 54 (Leiden, 1994), pp. 164–82.

12 D. Postles, *Osney Abbey Studies* (Leicester, 2008), pp. 15–24; Bennett, 'Llanthony Priory'; A. N. J. Dunning, 'Alexander Neckam's Manuscripts and the Augustinian Canons of Oxford and Cirencester' (unpublished PhD thesis, Toronto, 2016); *idem*, 'St Frideswide's Priory as a Centre of Learning in Early Oxford', *Medieval Studies*, 80 (2018), 253–96; *idem*, 'Treasures of Jesus College from Cirencester', *Jesus College Libraries*, 2016 <<https://jesuslibraries.wordpress.com/2017/02/22/treasures-of-jesus-college-from-cirencester/>>; *idem*, 'The Correspondence of Walter of Mileto at Cirencester Abbey', Library of Digital Latin Texts (2019) <<https://andrewdunning.ca/the-correspondence-of-walter-of-mileto-at-cirencester-abbey>>; A. Lawrence-Mathers, 'The Augustinians canons in Northumbria: region, tradition, and textuality in a colonizing order', in *BSRC*, pp. 59–78.

13 L. Milis, 'The library and the manuscripts of the Abbey of Arrouaise', *Scriptorium*, 19 (1965), 228–35; J. Harmon, 'Some Aspects of the History of Barnwell Priory 1092–1300' (PhD, UEA, 2016); G. Ratcliff, 'Scottish Augustinians: A Study of the Regular Canonical Movement in the Kingdom of Scotland, c.1120–1215' (unpublished PhD thesis, Edinburgh, 2012); A. D. Fizzard, *Plympton Priory: A House o Augustinian Canons in South-Western England in the Late Middle Ages* (Leiden, 2008).

Echoing Ian Wei's conclusion that 'the relationship between ways of thinking and contexts' ought to be considered,¹⁴ this thesis focuses on learning at the priory, but it will include some institutional history of Merton, which is lacking in current scholarship. The institution provides the context for learning: leadership, networking, and the economic base which affected the provision of materials. Even the esoteric Merton canon who was pondering implicit propositions had to fulfil communal and spiritual duties.¹⁵ Before investigating the research questions in depth, a number of fundamental issues need to be fleshed out, chiefly what we mean by 'learning', what we mean by 'Augustinian' and what the relationship was of the Augustinian to learning.

THE PURPOSE AND EXTENT OF LEARNING

'Learning' is a broad term that can refer to the advanced thought and argument of masters of the schools as well as to the fundamental learning provided by teachers of grammar and by parish priests or needed by the regular clergy for the daily office. Learning can be understood to encompass different purposes and arenas: the communal, the practical, the individual and the abstract. For a religion based on the written word, literacy was an important part of learning, and all clerics, whether regular or secular, needed a certain degree of literacy to fulfil their vows and offices, although this varied depending on the status of the cleric. The pen trials by fifteenth-century Merton canons in a copy of the *Purgatorio Sancti Patricii* show some of the purposes of literacy within the monastery, comprising quotations from psalms and prayers, popular quodlibets, a copy of a grant of land, and a canon's profession.¹⁶

Early monastic rules, such as those of Augustine (354–430) or Benedict (c.480–c.587), made provision for *lectio divina*, scriptural reading and meditation. This required a command of letters, the Bible and commentaries. Monasteries were responsible for schooling not just their own novices but non-monastic pupils, and the regular clergy also had responsibility for guiding the laity in their faith. Regular clergy therefore needed to know enough to teach as well as to learn. As monasteries became formalised and expanded, so monks also needed the education to run an intricate institution. During the Middle Ages, both monastic worship and

¹⁴ Wei, *Intellectual Culture*, p. 1.

¹⁵ GB-Lbl Royal MS 9 E XII.

¹⁶ GB-OB Bodl. MS 555, fols ii^r–v^v, 114^r–118^v.

administration became more complicated, continuing or increasing the need for regular clergy to be educated. With the rise of what became the universities, the centre of gravity for scholarship spread from the cloister to secular school, but there was a symbiotic relationship between them, with monasteries providing both texts and students, such as the two science books discussed in Chapter 3, and the canons who owned them, discussed in Chapter 6.¹⁷

Church authorities had long been concerned about the literacy, education and probity of both the secular and the regular clergy. Examinations for the priesthood emerged in the Frankish kingdoms during the ninth century; bishops throughout western Christendom wrote directives about the nature of clerical education, and clerical education was an aim of the Gregorian reforms.¹⁸ As will be discussed in more detail below, canons were regular clergy but they were also associated with the priesthood, and education had significance for them. Like monks, canons needed different levels of literacy for different functions.¹⁹ On a personal level, a canon's aim was to contemplate God, and this necessitated study. For Hugh of St Victor, learning (*doctrina*, *lectio divina*) was the first step in the ascent to true contemplation. Study, wrote Hugh, unlocks understanding, and Hugh believed in understanding as much as possible about as many things as possible.²⁰ The *Bridlington Dialogue* ended its chapter on virtues and vices with a reminder that wisdom (*sapientia*) and knowledge (*scientia*) were of 'great value for the adornment of God's temple.'²¹ The relationship of learning to spirituality is the subject of Chapter 2.

According to the Augustinian *Regula Secunda*, canons were expected to read between Sext and None, returning their books at None.²² Like other regulars, they were to read both silently and aloud, and to meditate on texts and their meanings. Guy, one of the early canons of Merton, 'gave himself totally to reading

¹⁷ J. G. Clark, 'Monks and the universities, c.1200–1500', in *CHMMLW*, pp. 1074–6; C. Guyon, 'La formation intellectuelle des chanoines réguliers', in *Les Chanoines Réguliers: Émergence et Expansion, XI^e–XIII^e Siècles*, ed. M. Parisse (Saint-Étienne, 2009), pp. 296–317.

¹⁸ S. Hamilton, 'Educating the local clergy, c.900–c.1150', *Studies in Church History*, 55 (2019), 83–113.

¹⁹ For an extensive discussion of the literacy of monks, see J. G. Clark, *A Monastic Renaissance at St. Albans: Thomas Walsingham and his Circle, c.1350–1440* (Oxford, 2004), especially chapter 4.

²⁰ *The Didascalicon of Hugh of St Victor: A Medieval Guide to the Arts*, trans. J. Taylor (New York, 1961), p. 132.

²¹ *Bridlington Dialogue*, p. 65.

²² JCD, p. 173.

and meditation'.²³ A text from another Augustinian priory, the *Bridlington Dialogue*, gives us a flavour of this meditative approach, written, as it is, in a circumlocutory style — a style intended to provoke re-reading and reflection. Canons were also expected to teach each other, and they therefore required enough literacy to be able to read out and expound on readings. In the *Bridlington Dialogue*, it was written that:

Reading, however, affords no small edification to the listeners... Whoever would discharge the office of reader properly and duly must be instructed in the teaching and in the books and eminently endued with the knowledge of meanings and of words; so that he may... bring out the correct shades of meaning; so that his voice will now convey the statement of a fact, now express sorrow, now rebuke, now exhortation... This, however, must be learnt from the grammarians...²⁴

From this passage it is clear that some brethren, at least, were to be sufficiently learned in both the language and the ideas of the texts they were reading out that those ideas could be conveyed almost without language. The Bridlington master talks about extra-textual communication, conveying meaning with the tone of voice: this was important to make sure that all listeners understood the tenor of the readings, even if they did not understand every word.²⁵ The same principle applied to sermons, whether preached to regular, secular or lay audiences. The success of Bernard of Clairvaux as a preacher was, on the one hand, his charismatic ability to convey the tenor and emotion of his argument to the masses, while on the other being able to deliver sermons full of theological niceties to religious *cognoscenti*.

The implications of the Bridlington master and evidence that we have from sermons suggest that a listener did not necessarily have to understand all the words in order to understand enough of the text to be able to respond in a meaningful way, but the speaker had to understand all of the text in order to stimulate that response. The speaker would also have to judge his audience, whether he were preaching to a mixed audience or whether he were the refectory reader, and this included choosing a text as well as acting it out. The thirteenth-century author of the *Barnwell Observances*, an important source for understanding Augustinian life,

²³ *Life of Guy*, para. 3, p. 17.

²⁴ *Bridlington Dialogue*, p. 108a.

²⁵ *Bridlington Dialogue*, pp. 108–9.

wrote that the reader was to find ‘a suitable place to begin (taking care that the first sentence is not too long)’ in order to engage the audience from the start.²⁶ The ability to find a suitable starting place implies a certain standard of literacy. Since texts were largely written in Latin, a reader or speaker had to have good enough Latin to be able to communicate a text, both to brethren who themselves might be familiar with the text, and to the laity who might not. The Latin training that canons received is discussed in Chapter 4. Some of Merton’s texts are written in a way that suggests they were to be read out: two examples are Prior William’s book (GB-Lbl Royal MS 4 B XIV), a collection of sermons and related materials from the late twelfth century, which has relatively few contractions and has rubricated headings and decorated initials demarcating sections, and the *Life o Guy* (GB-Lbl Royal MS 8 E IX), which also has few contractions and is written in a clear fifteenth-century bookhand.

Sermons were an essential part of educating both clergy and laity. The purpose, nature and delivery of sermons are explored further in Chapter 4; at this point, however, it is important to signal that sermons are to be taken into account as a genre through which it is possible to explore and assess the pedagogical activities of Augustinians. This evidence reflects Ian Wei’s observation that ‘the sense of pastoral mission... underpinned much of [theologians’] apparently abstract work’:²⁷ materials that were not themselves sermons might also have been composed or compiled to aid preaching.

In the twelfth century sermons played a central role in life at Merton. As well as Prior William’s book, discussed in Chapter 3, Merton possessed a fourteenth-century collection of sermons by Robert Grosseteste, discussed in Chapter 5. This is a high-end, professionally produced copy, suggesting that it was designed (although not exclusively used) for reading out. The presence amongst Merton’s books of a copy of Philip the Chancellor’s sermons, given to Merton in 1528, suggests that the canons remained engaged with sermon literature into the sixteenth century. Although it is not clear whether the audience was inside the priory or further afield, that the donor was a secular clergyman suggests that the collection had a teacherly function. Some centuries earlier, Guy of Merton was known for his sermons, which he delivered to his brethren and probably also, as

²⁶ *Barnwell Observances*, p. 157.

²⁷ Wei, *Intellectual Culture*, p. 1.

prior of Taunton, to his flock: we are told, for example, that he was ‘always seeking to gain souls’, and giving sermons was one way of achieving this.²⁸

The language that a sermon was written in was not necessarily that in which it was delivered; even if it was, a sermon’s theatricality, discussed below, could override its language. This leaves the historian with a complicated picture in which sorting out the intended audience can be difficult.²⁹ A sermon written in Latin could have been delivered to mixed or lay audiences in Latin, as was Alexander Nequam’s encouragement of the burghers of Oxford to restore St Frideswide’s.³⁰ Honorius Augustodunensis, an erstwhile student of St Anselm, instructed preachers that ‘in all sermons you should first say the verse in Latin, then explain it in the vernacular language’.³¹ This is perhaps what Abbot Samson of Bury did. His sources would have been Latin, but his biographer Jocelyn of Drakelow wrote that he ‘was wont to preach to the people in English, but in the dialect of Norfolk, where he was born and bred; and so he caused a pulpit to be set up in the church for the ease of the hearers, and for the ornament of the church.’³² Samson also gave his listeners a bit of extra-textual help, being, wrote Jocelyn, ‘intent more on the substance and method of what was to be said than on the style of words’.³³

The sermons and sermon materials in Merton’s possession are in Latin, but whether their audiences were confined to its canons is open to question. Chapter 3 suggests that Prior William’s book might have been intended for the canons’ daily chapter. A number of works and authors found in Merton’s manuscripts, for example Prosper, Bede, Gregory, and Jerome, and Hugh of St Victor’s *De institutione novitiorum* (which included the instruction ‘docere verbo et exemplo’), are also found in a Chapter book belonging to Holy Trinity, Dublin.³⁴ These works were suitable for an audience of the learning necessary for a canon. Other material,

²⁸ Grosseteste’s works are GB-Lbl Royal MS 6 E v; Philip the Chancellor, GB-Lbl MS Add.45568; *Life o Guy*, para.4, pp. 16–7 and para. 12, pp. 24–5.

²⁹ For a discussion of the classification, intentions and reception of sermons, see B. M. Kienzle, ‘Introduction’, and ‘The twelfth-century monastic sermon’ in *The Sermon*, ed. eadem (Turnhout, 2000), pp. 143–174 and pp. 287–298.

³⁰ Dunning, ‘Alexander Neckam’, p. 21. See also G. Constable, ‘The language of preaching in the twelfth century’, in *Culture and Spirituality in Medieval Europe* (Aldershot, 1996), pp. 131–52.

³¹ *Speculum ecclesiæ*, quoted in C. M. Waters, *Translating Clergie*, p. 28.

³² *The Chronicle o Jocelin o Brakelond: A Picture o Monastic Life in the Days o Abbot Samson*, by Jocelin de Brakelond, ed. E. Clarke (London, 1903), p. 62.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Clabaigh, ‘Community, commemoration and confraternity’, pp. 242–48.

for example tracts on the vices and virtues, could have been suitable for lay sermons.³⁵

The Augustinians, in common with many Benedictine communities, had a concern for pastoral care and the moral instruction of others.³⁶ Samson's pulpit illustrates the parochial nature of his nave that we also find at Augustinian Kirkham Priory,³⁷ but it also shows the multi-lingual nature of sermons. The hearer's fluency in language was not nearly as important as the speaker's because, in Giles Constable's observation, 'as in opera, the sound of the words was as important as their meaning'.³⁸ Important too were the body language and vocal tone of the speaker, just as, in opera, acting and musical expression are the vehicles for conveying the libretto's meaning. Beverly Kienzle described a sermon's delivery as a 'preaching event': while somewhat neologistic, this phrase does communicate neatly the necessary existence of extra-textual communication that the textual survivals themselves cannot demonstrate.³⁹ Guy of Merton was an expressive and emotional individual, with a propensity for tears and other physical reactions, we might imagine that his sermons were not dry as dust, but were delivered in the almost theatrical manner described in the *Bridlington Dialogue*.

Vernacular sermons grew in number in the latter half of the period, for which the Augustinians must take some credit. Helen Spencer, in her survey of English preaching, noted that the Augustinians 'numbered some notable vernacular [sermon] writers among their order'.⁴⁰ In addition, when Bishop Alnwick visited Bicester Priory in 1445, the sermon was delivered in English in the parish, rather than the priory, church.⁴¹ The Augustinian General Chapters appointed canons to preach an English sermon as well as a Latin one. The English sermon at the Oseney General Chapter in 1443 was delivered in the churchyard of St Frideswide's to around two hundred people including the university chancellor, doctors, teachers and scholars. John de Kingston delivered the English sermon at

35 W. Campbell, *The Landscape of Pastoral Care in 13th-Century England*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, Fourth Series (Cambridge, 2017), p. 100

36 J. van Engen, 'The "Crisis of Cenobitism" reconsidered: Benedictine monasticism in the years 1050–1150', *Speculum*, 61 (1986), p. 301; Campbell, *Pastoral Care*, pp. 80–86.

37 Below, p. 28.

38 Constable, 'The language of preaching', p. 151.

39 Kienzle, *The Sermon*, p. 169.

40 H. L. Spencer, *English Preaching in the Later Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1993), pp. 61–2.

41 G. R. Owst, *Preaching in Medieval England: An Introduction to Sermon Manuscripts of the Period c. 1350–1450* (Cambridge, 1926), p. 150.

the following General Chapter three years later in the sizeable parish church of All Saints, Northampton.⁴²

Those who gave sermons had to have a good knowledge and understanding of their subject matter, not least because the audience might differ from occasion to occasion. Composing a sermon took a certain amount of private study, and study was central to the Augustinians. A good standard of literacy was a prerequisite for such study, but literacy was needed for other duties and functions within the monastery as well.

Types of Literacy, Learning and Learner

That not all regulars even within the same monastery had the same standard of literacy is illustrated by Richard Sharpe's detailed study of book use at Thorney Abbey, a Benedictine house from which fourteenth-century lending records survive. In theory, at least, books were a one-year loan, to be returned the following Lent. Some monks were scholarly types who were 'undaunted by large and difficult books'; these monks presumably served as readers in church and refectory. But one monk was slowly chewing through a schoolboy's guide to the Bible, and another spent three years with the Lord's Prayer.⁴³ We have no lending lists for Merton, but several canons left their names on volumes, discussed in chapters 3 and 6.

Literacy was a pre-requisite for entry to a monastery. In 1288, the Augustinian priory of Dunstable rejected a postulant for insufficient learning.⁴⁴ In the fifteenth century, the Benedictine priory of Worcester rejected one novice-candidate because he was insufficiently learned.⁴⁵ Although, as the master in the *Bridlington Dialogue* pointed out (*pace* St Paul), 'not all the members have the same function', and therefore different levels and types of learning needed to be allowed, literacy was essential for daily prayers and services, and for personal contemplation. That Guy of Merton's *vita* was copied out in the fifteenth century

⁴² Salter, *Chapters*, pp. 85, 108–9.

⁴³ R. Sharpe, 'Monastic reading at Thorney Abbey, 1323–1347', *Traditio*, 60 (2005), p. 265.

⁴⁴ J. R. H. Moorman, *Church Life in England in the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1955); H. R. Luard, *Annales Monastici* (London, 1864), III; p. 342.

⁴⁵ J. Greatrex, 'The English cathedral priories and the pursuit of learning in the later Middle Ages', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 45 (1994), p. 399. See also her *The English Benedictine Cathedral Priories: Rule and Practice, c.1270–c.1420* (Oxford, 2012), p. 51, and 'The scope of learning within the cloisters of the English cathedral priories in the later Middle Ages', in *Medieval Monastic Education*, ed. G. Ferzoco and C. Muessig (London, 2000), p. 43.

suggests that he was still a role model for canons, including his practice (noted above) of studying the written word for conversation and contemplation.

However, as Anne Yardley put it, ‘reading in the medieval period was much more an oral/aural experience than a visual one and relied on the individual’s development of great stores of memorized material.’⁴⁶ She listed David Bell’s four grades of monastic literacy:

1. the ability to read a Latin text without understanding it
2. the ability to read and understand a common liturgical text
3. the ability to read and understand uncommon or non-liturgical texts
4. the ability to compose texts yourself.⁴⁷

To this, Yardley added four further grades of literacy — musical literacy:

1. the ability to sing the basic Psalm tones, litanies, and antiphons of the Divine office with accurate relative pitch and from memory.
2. the ability to remember the repertoire, including intoning chants, choosing the appropriate chant for the occasion, and consulting liturgical manuscripts.
3. the ability to read notated music, to explain the system of hexachords and mutation, to teach music, and to compose chants.
4. the ability to compose and/or to sing polyphony.⁴⁸

The author of the *Barnwell Observances* wrote that, in selecting novices, ‘inquiry should be made, before they are received, as to their... voice and power of singing, capacity for writing, or for executing any mechanical art’.⁴⁹ Textual and musical literacy were as important as each other, but all too often the latter tends to be the preserve of musicologists and outside the purview of the general historian. Donald Logan, for example, asked, regarding Bishop Simon de Montacute of Worcester’s attitude to the learning of ordinands, ‘why the insistence here, as indeed elsewhere,

⁴⁶ A. B. Yardley, ‘The musical education of young [*sic*] girls in medieval English nunneries’, in *Young Choristers, 650–1700*, ed. S. Boynton and E. N. Rice (Woodbridge, 2008), p. 49.

⁴⁷ Yardley, ‘English nunneries’, p. 49; D. N. Bell, *What Nuns Read: Books and Libraries in Medieval English Nunneries*, Cistercian Studies Series, 158 (Kalamazoo, 1995), p. 60.

⁴⁸ Yardley, ‘English nunneries’, p. 51. Although complex polyphony was a product of the fourteenth century, the term can include the *organum* of the eleventh century onwards.

⁴⁹ *Bridlington Dialogue*, p. 35; *Barnwell Observances*, p. 121.

on singing ability?’ He answered his own question, partially, by referring to ‘the frequency of sung Masses’, but parish clerics had to sing more than just the Mass: *all* services, Office or Mass, were sung, and singing was a fundamental part of literacy.⁵⁰ This was even more the case for the regular clergy, whose Office was often longer and who spent more time in church and prayer. The musical literacy of Merton’s canons is not documented, although some chants are mentioned in relation to specific services, and in 1519 Wolsey forbade the Augustinians as a whole from singing polyphony.⁵¹

While Bell’s four grades use a narrow description of ‘literacy’, meaning knowledge of the written word or verbal form, Yardley uses it more broadly to encompass not just music but also memory. This broader approach to literacy is important in considering learning within an institution such as Merton. The ability to compose texts or music implies an understanding of principles of composition, and that itself implies a bank of memorised knowledge. This is the basis of *ars dictaminis*, and it is also behind the composition of monophony and polyphony. The 1256 Augustinian General Chapter expected its novices to be able to recite by heart Psalms, hymns, antiphons and tropes, and to be able to refer to the gradual in a book, clearly showing the symbiosis of oral and written cultures.⁵² Singing itself could help the memorization of words, and recent neuroscientific research on the complex neural pathways involved in verbal and musical memory has shown that people who ordinarily had lost the ability to remember words could sing them quite easily.⁵³ Plainsong could reinforce learning the Psalms and other liturgical elements. It is a shame that no service books survive from Merton, but the frequency of quotations from the Psalms in both the *Life o Guy* and *Gilbert*, texts that will be discussed in chapters 2 and 3, and their appearance even in the pen trials of the *Purgatorio S. Patricii* (GB-Ob MS Bodl. 555), shows how ingrained they were on the canons’ memories.

Learning was both written and oral. For both Bell and Yardley, the higher grades of literacy suggest active learning — not just ingesting, but *digesting*

⁵⁰ D. Logan, *University Education o the Parochial Clergy in Medieval England: the Lincoln Diocese, c.1300–c.1350* (Toronto, 2014), p. 20.

⁵¹ *Gilbert*, p. 15, para. 6; Heales, pp. 304, 311, 325–6, D. Wilkins, ed., *Concilia Magnae Britanniae* (London, 1737), III, p. 686.

⁵² Salter, *Chapters*, p. 33.

⁵³ O. Sacks, ‘Speech and song: aphasia and music therapy’, in *Musicophilia* (New York, 2008), pp. 232–5.

information, which involved learning visually or orally and transforming that learning into memory. This is the sort of learning that the founding canon Guy of Merton exhibited in his cloister conversations and his sermons, and, indeed, in his affective attitude to prayer; it is also the sort of learning that his biographer Rainald showed in composing the *Life o Guy*: his numerous quotations throughout follow their spirit rather than being accurate to the letter.⁵⁴

Only the first two grades of textual and musical literacy were necessary and sufficient for all canons. For historians, however, the last two of Bell's categories, the reading and writing of texts, are of more interest. That perhaps reflects our own bias: as a subject, history is largely text-based, and those texts give us the history of ideas. A classic account is David Knowles' section on the 'intellectual activities of the black monks', in which he passes over basic education to concentrate on higher learning.⁵⁵ It is unsurprising that higher learners should be interested in higher learning, but although there are many similarities between the mediæval monastery and the modern university, their ends are different: the purpose of monastic learning, as we will explore in Chapter 2, was to reach God, not to study for its own sake — indeed, the belief in God meant that learning for learning's sake was ultimately impossible. Nevertheless, higher learning was important for all orders, and from 1325 the Augustinian General Chapter required houses to send canons not just to school but to the schools. However, many houses seem to have taken this very much as an added extra: in 1443, even though there were fines for not sending students, nearly thirty Augustinian houses had sent no students to either Oxford or Cambridge for several years.⁵⁶ Merton was, as will be discussed in Chapter 5, never fined, suggesting that it kept its obligation to send students to the schools.

The Augustinians were the last large monastic order to build a college at Oxford, and had no college at Cambridge at all, and the lack of formal Augustinian educational institutions at Oxford and Cambridge has contributed assessments of Augustinian canons being categorised as Richard Southern's sparrows — ubiquitous, but 'neither very rich, nor very learned, nor very religious, nor very influential'.⁵⁷ More recently, studies have helped to uncover the Augustinians'

⁵⁴ E.g. *Guy*, p.22, para. 9.

⁵⁵ D. Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England* (2nd edn, Cambridge, 1963), pp. 487–527.

⁵⁶ Salter, *Chapters*, pp. 13, 99–100. See also N. Orme, 'The Augustinian canons and education', in *BSRC*, p. 221, and below, Chapter 5.

⁵⁷ R. W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages* (London, 1970), p. 248.

presence at Oxford, for example, work by David Postles on Osney Abbey and Andrew Dunning on St Frideswide's Priory.⁵⁸ However, there is next to nothing about Cambridge, and neither is there an Augustinian equivalent to Thomas Sullivan's volume on Benedictine monks at Paris.⁵⁹ Merton canons were present at Oxford throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and at Cambridge at certain points during that period: this thesis examines Merton's relationship with Oxford and Cambridge, helping to supplement the paucity of scholarship on the Augustinians and higher education.

Whilst Augustinian scholars have been overshadowed by the Benedictines and friars, the order did produce a number of good and active ones. Southern's colleague R. W. Hunt observed that, in the twelfth century, 'a large proportion of the writers whom we have mentioned are Augustinian canons', although he could not account for it.⁶⁰ The English Augustinians throughout the Middle Ages produced a number of influential authors, including Robert of Bridlington and William of Newburgh in the twelfth century, Peter of Cornwall, Alexander Nequam and Richard de Morins crossing into the thirteenth, Walter Hilton in the fourteenth and John Mirk and John Walton into the fifteenth, and Merton's own Thomas Paynell in the sixteenth.⁶¹ Paynell's career is discussed in Chapter 6, alongside several of his colleagues.

Although, so far as the evidence suggests, Augustinian houses sent relatively few canons to the universities, all houses were expected appoint masters to instruct students within the precinct.⁶² Augustinian provision of schools outside the monastery, like other concerns of the Augustinian Order, varied from house to house throughout the Middle Ages. In some cases, where a secular establishment became an Augustinian priory, the canons took over a previous responsibility for

⁵⁸ D. Postles, *Osney Abbey Studies*; Dunning, 'St Frideswide's Priory', 253–96.

⁵⁹ T. Sullivan, *Benedictine Monks at the University of Paris, A.D. 1229–1500: A Biographical Register* (Leiden; New York, 1995).

⁶⁰ R. W. Hunt, 'English learning in the late twelfth century', in *Essays in Medieval History, Selected from the Transactions of the Royal Historical Society on the Occasion of its Centenary*, ed. R. W. Southern (London, 1968), p. 120 (originally in *TRHS*, 19 (1936), p. 34). Cf., however, Dunning, 'Alexander Neckam', and Postles, *Osney Abbey Studies*, pp. 15–25.

⁶¹ Clark, 'Augustinians, history and literature', *passim*; Lawrence-Mathers, 'The Augustinian canons in Northumbria', pp. 65–78; J. P. H. Clark, 'Hilton, Walter (c.1343–1396), religious writer', D. Gray, 'Walton, John (fl.1410), translator and Augustinian canon', *ODNB*; below, Chapter 6. See also T. Webber's suggestion that the canons of Leicester helped circulate the works of Richard Rolle: 'Devotional texts', p. 31.

⁶² See, for example, Benedict's tenth constitution, Salter, *Chapters*, p. 229.

schools. This was the case at Newnham (Bedfordshire), Twyneham (Hampshire) and Carlisle Cathedral, although it seems not to have been the case at St Andrews Cathedral, where ‘the cathedral school remained outside the purview of the cathedral priory’.⁶³ Many new foundations also took charge of schools within their areas. Nicholas Orme found at least seventeen in England (although he missed out Carlisle and, indeed, Merton), and Garrett Ratcliff listed Holyrood in Scotland. There are no examples from Wales, but this may be because the Augustinians in Wales have been little researched, and their role in schools even less so.⁶⁴ Orme noted the difficulties in identifying the provision of schools, and that there may be many more for which we have no evidence. James Clark also observed the problem of evidence, noting that ‘while seculars made conspicuous, even self-conscious, acts of educational patronage, the regulars’ interest in and support for secular schooling, as an extension of their general charitable outlay, was seldom made explicit in accounts of their expenditure.’⁶⁵ Evidence of Merton’s provision of education within its walls and externally is slight, occasional and incomplete, but there is some evidence nonetheless of Merton’s provision of education, as will be discussed in Chapter 4.

In supplying schools and schoolmasters, the Augustinians were not unique: the Benedictines had been providing schooling for generations. However, education was fundamental to the canons regular, both as part of charity and as part of the Augustinians’ own approach to spirituality. A major centre for learning was the abbey of St Victor, where lectures took place in small groups in the cloister.⁶⁶ Catherine Guyon argued that new categories of subjects suggested by Hugh, Richard and Geoffrey of St Victor contributed to an innovative method of education, one based on the idea that everything was the study of God.⁶⁷ The picture of the cloister as school is seen in other Augustinian houses, and is hinted at

63 Orme, ‘Augustinian canons and education’, pp. 215–6; J. Wilson, ‘Medieval education at Carlisle’, *The Scottish Historical Review*, 11 (1913), 39–53 (p. 41); quotation from Ratcliff, ‘Scottish Augustinians’, p. 95. See also M. Heale, ‘Augustinian life and leadership in late medieval England’, in *BSRC*, p. 271.

64 K. Stöber, ‘The regular canons in Wales’, in *BSRC*, pp. 97–113; see also K. Stöber and D. Austin, ‘Culdees to canons: the Augustinian houses of North Wales’, in J. Burton and K. Stöber, eds, *Monastic Wales: New Approaches*, pp. 39–54.

65 J. G. Clark, ‘Monasteries and secular education in late medieval England’, in *Monasteries and Society in Medieval Britain. Proceedings of the 1994 Harlaxton Symposium* (Stamford, 1999), p. 147.

66 Guyon, ‘La formation intellectuelle’, p. 308.

67 *Ibid.*, p. 314.

in paragraph 3 of the *Life o Guy*. The Augustinian attitude to learning can be seen, as Andrew Dunning showed, in Alexander Neckam's writings, which have a 'slow-paced', reflective quality following the Augustinian-Victorine meditative approach: far from being written *either* for the schools *or* for the cloister, they were written, Dunning argued, for the school *and* the cloister.⁶⁸

Management, Administration, Diplomacy and the Episcopate

Merton was a substantial landowner and patron and, on the old Roman road from London to the south coast, it was a busy hostel. These all necessitated a range of literate skills, including legal and accounting literacy, which might be termed 'applied learning'. Managerial and administrative roles were undertaken by both canons and secular clerics, and this meant that Merton had to provide adequate training not just for its own canons but for other clergy, too. As both a landowner and a host, Merton would have had an active chancery, witnessed by two surviving cartularies.⁶⁹ A pillar of monasticism was hospitality, and there was much demand for this at Merton, on Stane Street (the old Roman road from London to Chichester). Providing hospitality on a large scale required the application of training in procurement and accounting. The complexity of a monastery's administration can be seen by the permission for the cellarer and sub-cellarer to be excused from the Office at Barnwell because their work was so time-consuming.⁷⁰ In 1387, the bishop of Winchester prohibited one Merton canon holding more than one office at a time, perhaps in part to prevent too much absence at services.⁷¹

Merton's estate management must have been of some sophistication to ensure that the priory gathered in its crops, materials, rents and dues from its properties across a dozen counties. John Gisborne's copy of Walter of Henley (GB-Ob MS Digby 147) illustrates the need for an obedientiary to understand agriculture. Landowning was rarely uncontroversial, and as well as having written records of rights and possessions, monasteries needed men who could defend them.

⁶⁸ Dunning, 'Alexander Neckam', pp. 8–11, 33–46. For Mary and Martha, see B. Thompson, 'The academic and active vocations' in *The Church and Learning in Later Medieval Society: Essays in Honour o R.B. Dobson. Proceedings o the 1999 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. C. Barron and J. Stratford (Donington, 2002), 1–24, and G. Constable, 'The interpretation of Mary and Martha' in *Three Studies in Medieval Religious and Social Thought* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 1–141.

⁶⁹ GB-Lbl Cotton MS Cleo VII; GB-Ob Laud MS Misc. 723.

⁷⁰ *Barnwell*, pp. 92–5. Cf. the bishop of Winchester's 1387 criticisms of Merton canons: Heales, pp. 266, 269.

⁷¹ Heales, p. 272.

Some of Merton's canons fulfilled legal roles, but the house also employed clerks such as John of Tynemouth and Walter of Merton (whom we shall meet in Chapter 5) to act as factors and judicial representatives.⁷² Walter's expertise at amassing his own collection of lands may suggest not just natural ability but a good education in land management at Merton. The employment of secular clerics suggests a more nuanced relationship between regulars and seculars and not the 'war' that, for example, Hugh Thomas has asserted, and which we shall discuss in Chapter 4.⁷³ In addition to its productive land, Merton had the patronage of around 50 parishes, and this required not just appointing suitable clergy to staff the churches, but collecting rents and dues from those clergy, and ensuring that the churches, rectories, vicarages and other associated buildings were in a state of satisfactory repair.⁷⁴

In common with other monasteries, Merton itself acted as factor for the king, collecting taxes and providing legal and diplomatic agents. The prelate's skills as land economist could occasionally be put to royal use: in 1439, for example, the prior was commissioned to survey Benstede Park.⁷⁵ The Augustinians' legal expertise in France and Italy has been noted by Catherine Guyon and in England by Jane Sayers, and Merton's lawyers are a subject for Chapter 5.⁷⁶ Merton's canons were also employed as chaplains and ambassadorial agents. Brethren, and particularly heads, of religious houses of all orders were used as diplomats, although this role declined somewhat from the fourteenth century.⁷⁷ In the 1530s, canon Thomas Paynell, as we shall see in Chapter 6, was sent on diplomatic missions by Henry VIII, presumably because of his skills as a translator.⁷⁸ Three centuries earlier, a Merton canon accompanied Ralph du Plessis on a mission to

⁷² For example, Heales, pp. 93, 232, *EEA*, XXI, no. 58A, p. 54.

⁷³ H. M. Thomas, *The Secular Clergy in England, 1066–1216* (Oxford, 2014).

⁷⁴ See, for example, Heales, pp. 252–3.

⁷⁵ *Calender o Patent Rolls, 18 Henry VI, Part I, 1436–41*, ed. H. C. Maxell Lyte *et al.* (London: HMSO, 1907), p. 347.

⁷⁶ Guyon, 'La formation intellectuelle', p. 313; J. E. Sayers, *Papal Judges Delegate in the Province o Canterbury, 1198–1254: A Study in Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction and Administration* (Oxford, 1971), pp. 120–1. For Merton as collector of royal subsidies, see Heales, pp. 64, 228.

⁷⁷ Heale, *The Abbots and Priors o Late Medieval and Reformation England* (Oxford, 2016), pp. 203–6.

⁷⁸ Chapter 6, p. 315.

Normandy.⁷⁹ The Augustinians were not unique here, but there is much more work to be done on the Augustinians as royal and episcopal agents.

Martin Heale noted that the numbers of monastic prelates declined as diplomats in the later Middle Ages, but they increased as suffragan bishops. He argued that this increase, from the later fifteenth century onwards, was perhaps a result of the monastic orders' growing engagement with the universities, as most of them were graduates. It is interesting, therefore, that nearly half the sixteenth-century suffragan bishoprics drawn from the monastic prelacy were Augustinian.⁸⁰ Merton itself may not have supplied a suffragan, but various bishops appointed a number of its canons as priors of other houses across the whole period. These included Guy of Merton (Taunton and Bodmin, early 1120s), Henry de Mareis (Carlisle, 1214–17), John de Yaxley (Reigate, 1395–7), Thomas Weston (Selborne, 1378–1410) and Thomas Wandsworth (Bodmin, 1534–9).⁸¹

THE NATURE OF AUGUSTINIANISM

In discussing the various types of learning and learner, some aspects of the Augustinians have presented themselves: teachers and evangelisers on the one hand, and contemplatives on the other. In order to pursue the question of the relationship between the Augustinians and learning in general, and the canons of Merton in particular, it is necessary to explore further what the Augustinians were, as it is not always clear in current historiography.

As John Dickinson observed, the Augustinians emerged during the reforms of the eleventh century, and it is not until 1127 that we have the first definite reference to the Augustinian 'order'. Even after that, references tend to be to 'regular canons' rather than 'Augustinians'.⁸² The independent communities of

⁷⁹ Heales, pp. 60, xxvi, no. XXXVI. Ralph might have been related to John du Plessis, who married Margaret, daughter of Margaret d'Oilly. *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury (Canonized by Pope Alexander III, A.D. 1173)*, ed. J. C. Robertson and J. B. Sheppard (London, 1875), II, p. 418; III, p. 23. H. M. Colvin gives some examples of Premonstratensian agents: *The White Canons in England* (Oxford, 1951), pp. 289–90.

⁸⁰ Heale, *Abbots and Priors*, pp. 198–203 (quotation from p. 203).

⁸¹ *Life of Guy*, pp. 4–5; *FEA 1066–1300*, II, p. 21; *VCH: Hampshire*, II, p. 180; *Surrey*, II, p. 107, and I, p. 351.

⁸² JCD, pp. 154–5; Harmon, 'Barnwell Priory', p. 104. See also Butterill, 'Foundations of Augustinian priories', pp. 1–22 and *passim* and S. Savaldó, 'The Augustinian reform, the Panormia Glosses, and reading the Bible in the medieval Latin liturgy of Jerusalem', *Revue d'études augustiniennes et patristiques*, 62 (2016), 27–55. For a discussion of the piecemeal emergence of reformed monasticism generally, see S. Vanderputten, 'Monastic reform from the tenth to the early twelfth century', in *CHMMLW*, pp. 599–617.

regular canons, with different interests and duties, gradually identified themselves with the Rule of St Augustine (RSA), but they still kept their independence (with the exception of the orders of Arrouaise and St Victor).⁸³ This independence raises the question of how representative any house, such as Merton, might be of the Augustinians as a whole. In time, monastic orders became more formal; however, in the twelfth century even the ‘order’ of a centralised collection of monasteries with an identity of self, the Cistercian, was not as defined as has been thought.⁸⁴ By the thirteenth century the Augustinians were referring to themselves as an order, but as late as the fourteenth century at least one bishop found the Augustinians’ lack of ‘order’ to be a source of annoyance: ‘what blemish among canons regular’, complained Archbishop Melton, ‘was more shameful than the fact that they each kept strictly to different rites in the same order?’⁸⁵ A further complication is that the Rule of St Augustine was also followed by the Premonstratensian canons and, from the thirteenth century, the Dominican and Augustinian friars: whereas this thesis will refer to the Arrouasians and Victorines, it does not examine either the white canons or the black friars. However, some similarities with these friars must be noted. Like the canons, they often had roots in hermitages, and they started out as independent organisations or groups, united some time after their foundation(s).

The nature of the Augustinian canon was perhaps partly formed in the Carolingian church. Here, a *canonicus* seems to have been a secular clergyman on an official list (or ‘canon’), under the authority of the bishop, whose chief duties were prayer, rather than parish ministry: at the heart of the Carolingian *Instituto Canonicorum* was the Divine Office, to be celebrated daily in cathedrals and churches just as it was in monasteries, whence the Divine Office originated.⁸⁶ This

83 JCD, pp. 26–58; J. Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders in Britain 1000–1300* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 44–7.

84 See, for example, C. H. Berman, *The Cistercian Evolution: The Invention of a Religious Order in Twelfth-Century Europe* (Philadelphia, Pa., 2000). For the Cistercian identity, see C. Waddell, *Narrative and Legislative Texts from Early Cîteaux* (s.l., 1999); ‘The *Narratio de Fundatione* of Fountains Abbey’, in *Memorials of Fountains Abbey*, ed. J. R. Walbran (Surtees Society, 1863), I, 1–29; R. Atkyns, *The Ancient and Present State of Gloucestershire* (1712; repr. Gloucester, 1974), 502–14.

85 Salter, *Chapters*, p. 2; quotation from A. Parsons, ‘The Use of Guisborough: The Liturgy and Chant of the Augustinian Canons of the York Province in the Later Middle Ages’ (unpublished PhD thesis, Exeter, 2004), p. 212. S. W. Holland noted the difficulty of generalising about individual Augustinian houses’ practices, ‘An Edition of the *Admonitio Ad Claustrales* from Worcester Cathedral Manuscript Q.51’ (unpublished PhD thesis, Durham, 1988), pp. xxix–xlvi.

86 E. Kurdziel, ‘What is a *canonicus*? The Carolingians and the rethinking of ecclesiastical *ordines*’, in *Monastic Communities and the Canonical Clergy in the Carolingian World (780–840): Categorizing the Church*, ed. R. Kramer, E. Kurdziel, and G. Ward, *Medieval Monastic Studies* (Turnhout, 2022), VIII, esp. pp. 162–70; S. Scholz, ‘The organization of the clergy and the

commitment to prayer and service to the altar seems to have been passed down to the Augustinians, and will be discussed further in Chapter 2. Some of these canons lived communally; others did not. In England, this seems also to have been also the case, and, as we shall see, we find examples of secular canonries at Taunton, Bodmin and Twynham, all of which were to have connexions with Merton in the twelfth century. The Gregorian reforms of the eleventh century gave new impetus to the regular life, and these resulted in the re-regulation of many communal canonries and their transformation into quasi-monasteries.⁸⁷ These ‘new’ canons were the canons regular; they adopted the Rule of St Augustine rather than the *IC*, and so became ‘Augustinians’.⁸⁸ Their objective was to live according to the *vita apostolica*, a communal life of prayer and poverty.⁸⁹ Implicit in that life, however, was learning and teaching the word of God, something that characterised the work and life not only of the Apostles, but also Augustine. For Augustine, studying was a *sine qua non*. In *De doctrina Christiana*, he exhorted that the one ‘who is taught by another pass on what he received without pride and without envy’. In *De disciplina Christiana* (a copy of which Merton had), he wrote that discipline could not be achieved without studying the teachings of Christ.⁹⁰ The *vita apostolica* allowed for a range of interpretations, and it is perhaps ‘variety’ that best characterises the Augustinians, since other attempts at generalisation about them tend to be inadequate.⁹¹ The Augustinians did, however, have a discernible approach to spirituality, based on personal reflection and study, communal prayer, service to the altar, and their approach to education was rooted in this.

The Augustinians emerged at a time when education was being promoted by the papacy as part of a programme of reforms. While not a new sentiment, Gregory VII’s declaration that ‘all bishops should have the literary arts taught in

canonici in the sixth century’, in *ibid.*, pp. 49–58; J. Harper, *The Forms and Orders of Western Liturgy from the Tenth to the Eighteenth Century: a Historical Introduction and Guide for Students and Musicians* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 73–4.

87 JCD, pp. 26–58.

88 JCD, pp. 255–79. Garrett Ratcliff gives a good summary, ‘Scottish Augustinians’, pp. 1–6. Cf. *Libellus de Diversis Ordinibus et Professionibus qui sunt in Ecclesia*, ed. G. Constable and B. S. Smith (revised edn, Oxford, 2003), pp. 52–3. Cf. also Hugh of St Victor’s *Explanation of the Rule of St Augustine*, trans. A. Smith (London and Edinburgh, 1911), p. 1.

89 JCD, p. 8; Acts, 2:44–5, 4:32–5; Luke 10:1–12.

90 Augustine, preface to *De doctrina Christiana*, IV: *PL*, XXXIV.17; *De disciplina Christiana*: *PL*, XL.669–78.

91 See K. Legg, ‘An Edition of the Coucher Book and Charters of Bolton Priory (Yorkshire)’ (unpublished PhD thesis, Sheffield, 2002); J. Burton and K. Stöber, ‘Introduction’, *BSRC*, pp. 1–8.

their churches' showed that education was intended to be central to reform.⁹² These reformist ideals gave impetus to the Augustinians' policy of including study as an essential part of their life, along with an emphasis on personal reflection. The importance that they attached to study together with devotion to the altar, a sense of ministry and ideals of poverty (and, after the Gregorian manner, chastity), made the Augustinians attractive to bishops looking to improve and organise worship in their dioceses in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The regular canons were committed, educated and disciplined, and were ideal for disseminating religious reforms. Of the early English Augustinian houses (first half of the twelfth century), bishops founded, or were heavily involved in the founding of, a third.⁹³ Bishops Giffard, Warelwast and Hilary sent canons from Merton to reform Taunton, Plympton, Bodmin and Twyneham (Christchurch); the archbishop of Canterbury sent Merton canons to St Gregory's, Canterbury.⁹⁴ These were all re-foundations of existing secular canonries, and were part of episcopal improvements in probity and practices amongst diocesan clergy. Giffard and Warelwast put Guy of Merton in charge of Taunton and Bodmin: as a former master of schools, Guy had abundant learning as well as an impeccable moral character.⁹⁵ Merton's influence was not limited to England: when Algar, Guy of Merton's successor as prior of Bodmin, became bishop of Coutances in 1132, he appointed Theodoric, a Merton canon, to the abbacy of St-Lô.⁹⁶

As well as staffing monasteries, Augustinian priories were involved in staffing parishes. This is significant because it raises the question of whether particular types of learning were necessary for those undertaking parochial service, which will be discussed further in Chapter 4. The twelfth-century *Libellus de diversis ordinibus*, a book written by an Augustinian canon comparing different monastic orders, lists parish duties as one of the functions of canons regular. The author stated that the canon's task is 'to teach the people, take tithes, collect

⁹² *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio...*, ed. P. Labbe, G. Mansi et al. (Florentiæ; Venetiis; Parisiis, 1759), XX, p. 509; G. Post, *The Papacy and the Rise of the Universities*, ed. W. J. Courtenay, Education and Society in the Middle Ages and Renaissance (Leiden & Boston, 2017), LIV, p. 7.

⁹³ The rest were founded by the king and queen (or their chaplains), their sheriffs and courtiers.

⁹⁴ Green, *Daughter Houses*; S. Sweetinburgh, 'Anglo-Saxon saints and a Norman archbishop: "imaginative memory" and institutional identity at St Gregory's Priory, Canterbury', in *BSRC*, pp. 19–40. A later archbishop of Canterbury sent Merton canons to Dover Priory, but this turned out to be temporary.

⁹⁵ *Life of Guy*, paragraphs 7–13.

⁹⁶ Green, *Daughter Houses*, p. 22.

offerings in church, remonstrate with delinquents, reconcile the corrected and penitent to the church, and observe other duties also laid down in the old law.’⁹⁷ The Benedictine Constitutions of 1339 made provision for sending canons to benefices.⁹⁸ Adrian Empey argued that the Augustinian emphasis on *caritas* fitted the canons for *cura animarum*. He found that the introduction of new orders went hand-in-hand with the shaping or re-shaping of parochial structures: the first Anglo-Norman Augustinian priories in Ireland ‘almost invariably doubled as the parish church’.⁹⁹ The first Anglo-Norman bishop of Meath, Simon de Rochfort (d.1224), founded a Victorine abbey at Newtown, Trim, at the turn of the thirteenth century, and it may be that this provided him many of the *magistri* with whom he surrounded himself, demonstrating his attitude to learning amongst his churchmen. Such was the trust in the Irish Augustinians that the abbey of St Thomas, Dublin, was allowed ‘a blank *pro-forma* letter of presentation for a vicar by the canons to the relevant diocesan bishop.’¹⁰⁰

However, the relationship of the canons to parishes is nuanced. The north Welsh evidence seems to suggest quite the opposite to the Irish: its few Augustinian houses were at the more eremitical end, taking over Culdee foundations; the clas (parish church) functions of the early north Welsh monasteries were apparently left to the secular clergy.¹⁰¹ In England, there is evidence of canons’ direct parochial involvement throughout the later Middle Ages. The pope granted liberties and authority to England’s first Augustinian priory, St Botolph’s, Colchester, in recognition of its duties in preaching, baptizing and hearing confession.¹⁰² Guy of Merton was appointed prior of Taunton in order to reform its canons, but while there, he seems to have undertaken some parish duties.¹⁰³ Merton celebrated the

⁹⁷ Constable and Smith, *Libellus*, pp. 52–3.

⁹⁸ Salter, *Chapters*, pp. 240–43.

⁹⁹ A. Empey, ‘The role of the regular canons of St Augustine in the formation of the parochial network in Ireland’, in Browne and Clabaigh, *Households o God*, pp. 128, 133–4 and *passim*. See also C. N. Ó Clabaigh, ‘Monasticism, colonization and ethnic tension in late medieval Ireland’, in *CHMMLW*, pp. 906–7.

¹⁰⁰ M. T. Flanagan, ‘Victorine canons in medieval Ireland’, in Browne and Clabaigh, *Households o God*, p. 52.

¹⁰¹ K. Stöber and D. Austin, ‘Culdees to canons: the Augustinian houses of north Wales’, in *Monastic Wales: New Approaches*, ed. J. Burton and K. Stöber (Cardiff, 2013), pp. 41–6. For regional differences on mainland Europe, see G. Constable, *The Reformation o the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 233–5.

¹⁰² Constable and Smith, *Libellus*, p. 73; J. Burton, ‘The regular canons and diocesan reform in northern England’, *BSRC*, 41–58; *Dugdale*, VI, pp. 106–7 (cf. JCD, p. 101, fn. 2).

¹⁰³ *Life o Guy*, paragraphs 8–10.

consecration of the parish church in Kingston (Surrey) in 1167, and it provided for baptisms there.¹⁰⁴ A marginal note of ‘de consecratione ecclesie’ in a thirteenth-century volume of *questiones* from Merton’s library suggests a continuing interest in its parishes.¹⁰⁵

The canons’ role in parishes across the period reflected two trends: the formalisation of the Augustinians into a monastic order and the formalisation of the parochial structure. The canons helped shape the latter: bishops encouraged the parochial patronage of the Augustinians in the twelfth century, partly because the canons were themselves under episcopal control, unlike lay patrons. This was in keeping with the Gregorian reforms, which sought to decrease the amount of lay influence in the Church as a whole. The relationship with parishes is shown partly from the fact that spiritualia, income derived from the duties or patronage of a church, made up a significant proportion of the income of Augustinian monasteries nationally, as Nick Nichols has demonstrated.¹⁰⁶ Deriving income from parishes does not necessarily imply an active role in parish ministry, but it does show an interest, at the very least. Bishops worked hard to provide their diocese with a sufficient number of sufficiently educated priests; the early Augustinians’ emphasis on education and reformed spirituality fulfilled the bishops’ criteria for teachers and ministers, and the canons provided individuals as parish clergy. In addition, what Andrew Reeves called their ‘explicitly missionary role’ meant that the canons had a wider impact on the priesthood through patronage and through the provision of education and of educational materials.¹⁰⁷

The Augustinians’ acquisition of parishes in the twelfth century was part of a programme of parish reform. From the thirteenth century onwards, their direct parochial mission seems to have declined, and by the end of the thirteenth century in England, as well as in Ireland and Brittany, where canons had attended parishes themselves, they now tended to appoint vicars and to take a more remote, patronal role.¹⁰⁸ This was in part because parochial structures and the implementation of

¹⁰⁴ GB-Ccc MS 059, fol. 164^v; Heales, p. 144–5, 258.

¹⁰⁵ GB-Lbl Royal MS 9 E XII, 42^r.

¹⁰⁶ N. Nichols, ‘For prosperity or penury: a comparison of large and small English Augustinian houses and their lay patrons in late-medieval England’, *The Catholic Historical Review*, 98 (2012), pp. 1–17; *idem*, ‘The Augustinian canons and their parish churches’, pp. 313–38. See also Empey, ‘Regular canons’, p. 132.

¹⁰⁷ A. Reeves, *Religious Education in Thirteenth-Century England* (Leiden, 2015), p. 83.

¹⁰⁸ Reeves, *Religious Education*, pp. 58, 86. See also J. H. Denton, ‘The competence of the parish clergy in thirteenth-century England’, in *The Church and Learning in Later Medieval Society*:

pastoral care by secular parish and diocesan clergy had grown and been reinforced.¹⁰⁹ It was also in part because Augustinian houses were becoming more formally similar to other monasteries. The rise of the friars meant that the need for Augustinian canons to evangelise beyond their precinct walls was diminished; it may be that because the canons were more restrained by their precinct walls, the friars of the thirteenth century had the room to take up the *vita apostolica* in new and freer ways.¹¹⁰ Nevertheless, the canons remained involved with the parochial church and they continued to make contributions to parish life throughout the period, not least in their writings.

Throughout the period, the Augustinians composed, compiled and translated a number of pastoral materials. From the earlier half of the period these include the *Ormulum*, works by Alexander Nequam and the confessional treatise written by Guy, prior of Southwick and former canon of Merton (discussed in Chapter 5). In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Augustinian canons were responsible for cycles of sermons and handbooks aimed at the parish clergy: John Mirk (Lilleshall Abbey) was the author of both the popular *Festial* and a Middle-English manual for parish priests; Walter Hilton (Thurgarton) wrote the *Scale of Perfection* and *Mixed Life*; John Walton (Oseney) translated Boethius into Middle English, and an anonymous Augustinian compiled the *Northern Homily Cycle*.¹¹¹ To these Ralph Hanna and Niamh Pattwell have added more.¹¹² Pattwell concentrated on the anonymous *Sacerdos parochialis*, a manual for parish priests

Essays in Honour of R. B. Dobson. Proceedings of the 1999 Harlaxton Symposium, ed. C. M. Barron and J. Stratford (Donington, 2002), pp. 273–85; Empey, ‘Regular canons’, p. 134; Chédeville, ‘Les Chanoines Augustins’, para. 16.

109 W. Campbell, *The Landscape of Pastoral Care in 13th-Century England*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, Fourth Series (Cambridge, 2017), pp. 29–36.

110 Chédeville, ‘Les Chanoines Augustins’, para. 16.

111 S. Powell, ed., *John Mirk’s Festial: Edited from British Library MS Cotton Claudius A.II*, 2 vols (Oxford, 2009); G. Kristensson, *John Mirk’s Instructions for Parish Priests, Edited from MS Cotton Claudius A II and Six Other Manuscripts with Introduction, Notes and Glossary*, Lund Studies in English (Lund, 1974), XLIX; *Manuale Sacerdotis* (ed. J. M. Girsch, unpublished PhD thesis, University of Toronto, 1990); H. L. Spencer, *English Preaching in the Later Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1993), p. 62; R. Ellis, ‘The Northern Homily Cycle’, *Medium Ævum*, 88 (2019), 23–51; S. Powell, ‘Mirk, John (fl. c. 1382–c. 1414), Augustinian author’, *ODNB*; J. Clark, ‘Hilton, Walter (c. 1343–1396), religious writer’, *ODNB*; D. Gray, ‘Walton, John (fl. 1410), translator and Augustinian canon’, *ODNB*.

112 R. Hanna, ‘Augustinian canons and Middle English literature’, in *The English Medieval Book: Studies in Memory of Jeremy Griffiths*, ed. A. S. G. Edwards et al. (London, 2000), pp. 27–42; N. Pattwell, ‘Canons and catechisms: the Austin canons of south-east England and *Sacerdos parochialis*’, in *After Arundel: Religious Writing in Fifteenth-Century England*, ed. V. Gillespie and K. Ghosh (Turnhout, 2011), pp. 381–93.

which contained guidance on the commandments, sins, sacraments and prayers, and which survives in nine manuscripts connected to the south-east of England and/or to the Augustinians. It may be that a copy belonged to Merton. A twelfth-century collection of homiletic materials was compiled by the third prior of Merton, and the canons continued to collect sermons, sentences and other suitable materials throughout Merton's lifetime; one volume of sermons was given to Merton in the sixteenth century by a secular clergyman, showing a continued link between Merton's canons and the parochial clergy.¹¹³

The Augustinians of the twelfth century who served the parish altar were not unique among regulars. In the early twelfth century, the Cluniac priory of Lewes staffed nearby parish churches with monks, although it became less common and less accepted for monks to serve parishes as the century went on.¹¹⁴ There were hurdles for the Augustinians in parochial service, too. As Terrie Colk has pointed out for East Anglia, as has André Chédeville for Brittany, some houses were too small to send a canon to a parish, a problem exacerbated by the 1179 Lateran Council, which forbade regulars leaving monasteries on their own; the problem could also be exacerbated if, in addition, one canon at least had to be a priest.¹¹⁵ The lack of parochial participation at Plympton Priory led Alison Fizzard to conclude that, if the priory were typical, 'it would be unwise to assume that the participation of the Augustinian canons in the cure of souls was commonplace.'¹¹⁶ Having said that, there are examples of canons acting as priests in parishes throughout the period. Merton canons served at Patricbourne and Flore in the fourteenth century;

¹¹³ Below, p.271.

¹¹⁴ G. Mayhew, *The Monks of Saint Pancras: Lewes Priory, England's Premier Cluniac Monastery and its Dependencies 1076–1537* (Lewes, 2014), p. 137; G. Constable, *Monastic Tithes: from their Origins to the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, 1964); *idem*, *The Reformation of the Twelfth Century*, p. 231. See also P. Montaubin, 'Les chanoines réguliers et le service pastoral', in *Les Chanoines Réguliers: Émergence et Expansion, XI^e–XIII^e Siècles*, ed. M. Parisse (Saint-Étienne, 2009), p. 156.

¹¹⁵ Heales, pp. 186, 191; Campbell, *Pastoral Care*, p. 82, also pp. 87–9; J. R. H. Moorman, 'The medieval parsonage and its occupants', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 28 (1944), p. 144; B. R. Kemp, 'Monastic possession of parish churches in England in the twelfth century', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 31 (1980), pp. 145–6; D. Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England* (Cambridge, 1948), II, pp. 289, 293; T. Colk, 'Twelfth-century East-Anglian canons: a monastic life?', in *Medieval East Anglia*, ed. C. Harper-Bill (Woodbridge, 2005), p. 213; A. Chédeville, 'Les chanoines Augustins en Bretagne au XII^e siècle: des proto-mendiants?', in *Religion et Mentalités au Moyen Âge*, ed. S. Cassagnes-Brouquet *et al.*, para. 16, <<https://books.openedition.org/pur/19799?lang=en#ftn26>>. See also D. Postles, 'The Austin canons in English towns, c.1100–1350', *Historical Research*, 159 (1993), p. 3; J. Barrow, *The Clergy in the Medieval World* (Cambridge, 2015), p. 112.

¹¹⁶ A. D. Fizzard, *Plympton Priory: A House of Augustinian Canons in South-Western England in the Late Middle Ages* (Leiden, 2008), p. 246.

in 1406, William Hay was allowed to have a benefice despite his prior's wishes, and in the 1470s, several canons obtained papal dispensation to receive benefices.¹¹⁷ They might have served their benefices in person, as William Hay did earlier in the century, but dispensation also allowed them to appoint a vicar, and so the evidence is not unambiguous.¹¹⁸

In addition, as both Marjorie Chibnall and William Campbell pointed out, serving the altar and caring for souls were two different things: saying a mass in a chapel or parish church did not necessitate any contact with a parishioner. The presence of a canon at a parish church or chapel cannot necessarily be assumed as evidence for ministering to the people of the parish. In the early fourteenth century Merton sent two canons to its church at Patricbourne (Kent), but whether they had *cura animarum* or merely served the altar is not recorded.¹¹⁹ The separation of the monastic world of contemplation and the parochial world of ministry was a concern for some bishops, who even forbade canons to serve at churches.¹²⁰

Sometimes a priory itself could serve as a parish church, or have a chapel-by-the-gate with a parochial function. It is doubtful that Gilbert and his canons, as has been suggested, built the parish church of St Mary, Merton, but lay burials from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries have been discovered at the priory, suggesting some sort of parochial relationship between the canons and the laity.¹²¹ Janet Burton's evidence from fifteenth-century Kirkham Priory shows that the mixture of different concerns of the canons continued throughout the Middle Ages. They had at least partial cure of souls: they had a chapel at the priory gate, staffed by a chaplain (who may or may not have been a canon), who distributed the weekly Holy Loaf (the lay version of Eucharistic bread and wine); in addition, the local laity used the nave of the priory church as a parish church. The parishioners of Kirkham seem to have known that this parochial element was a minor part of the

¹¹⁷ Heales, pp. 186, 191, 211, 228, 247; *Wykeham*, II, p. 526; *Calendar o Papal Registers Relating to Great Britain and Ireland* (London: HMSO, 1904), VI, pp. 74, 77–8, F. D. Logan, *Runaway Religious in Medieval England, c.1240–1540* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 58; *Calendar o Papal Registers Relating To Great Britain and Ireland: Volume 13, 1471–1484*, ed. J A Twemlow (London: HMSO, 1955): John More, 1471, p. 287; John Warde, 1472, p. 325; Clement Heth alias Toullesworth, 1476, p. 557; William Fawkeswell, 1480, p. 730.

¹¹⁸ Fizzard, *Plympton Priory*, p. 215.

¹¹⁹ M. Chibnall, 'Monks and pastoral work: a problem in Anglo-Norman History', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 18 (1967), 165–172; Campbell, *Pastoral Care*, p. 86; *Cleo*, no. 339, fol. cxlvj^r; Heales, p. 134.

¹²⁰ Campbell, *Pastoral Care*, p. 89.

¹²¹ Green, *A Priory Revealed*, p. 8.

canons' vocation and that their chief duty was to celebrate the *opus Dei*: one of the parishioners said that the chapel was built so that the canons would not be disturbed by the noisy laity in the nave.¹²²

It is clear that Gilbert intended his priory church at Merton for the canons' offices, the *opus Dei* — his concern was not parochial, but monastic.¹²³ This supports Yannick Veyrenche's argument that the first quarter of the twelfth century saw the appearance of a new type of canonical community: a move away from the tradition of secular canons of the past towards a more monastic and ascetic one.¹²⁴ But even the distinction of the *opus Dei* and *cura animarum* was not clear-cut. Although the care of souls is usually defined by activities such as baptism, sermons and confession, souls could also be cared for by prayer, and this might go on at some remove from the (lay) souls who were its recipients: by fulfilling the *opus Dei*, canons (and monks) could also fulfil, to an extent, *cura animarum*.

Although there were tensions and trends which affected the Augustinians' involvement with parishes, canons did act as parish clergy throughout the period. Merton supplied parish clergy in the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries: in one case, a canon was given papal dispensation to hold a benefice, whether in person or by appointing a secular vicar, regardless of the permission of his prior.¹²⁵ In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the canons of St Frideswide's (Oxford) served its appropriated churches, and in the sixteenth century, the canons of Plympton and Alnwick each sent one of their brethren to minister to parishes.¹²⁶ In 1351, Ralph, bishop of Winchester, wrote to the vicar of St Mary Magdalene, Taunton, asking him not to allow the parishioners of West Monkton into his church despite their wish to avoid the services of their own priest, a canon of

¹²² J. Burton, 'Priory and parish: Kirkham and its parishioners 1496–7', in *Monasteries and Society in Medieval Britain. Proceedings of the 1994 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. B. Thompson (Stamford, 1999), pp. 335–8.

¹²³ *Gilbert I*, paras. 11–13, pp. 17–8 and introduction, pp. 6–8. On the question of parish churches, see R. Springer, 'Local Religious Life in England, c.1160–1210' (unpublished DPhil thesis, Oxford, 2017), *passim*.

¹²⁴ Y. Veyrenche, *Chanoines Réguliers et Sociétés Méridionales: l'Abbaye de Saint-Ru et ses Prieurés dans le Sud-Est de la France (XI^e–XIV^e siècle)* (2018), p. 39.

¹²⁵ Heales, pp. 186, 191; *Wykeham*, II, p. 363 (a canon of Christchurch appears as a parish rector in the same grant); *Calendar of Papal Registers Relating To Great Britain and Ireland, Volume VI: 1404–1415*, ed. W H Bliss and J A Twemlow (London, 1904), pp. 74, 77–8.

¹²⁶ R. B. Dobson, 'The religious orders', in *Late Medieval Oxford*, ed. J. Catto and T. A. R. Evans, *The History of the University of Oxford* (Oxford, 1992), II, p. 543; J. G. Clark, *The Dissolution of the Monasteries: A New History* (New Haven and London, 2021), p. 87.

Taunton.¹²⁷ A visitation of Bilsington (founded from Merton) in 1372 found that the only priest was the prior, and he, rather than praying for the king in his own priory, served the altar in the appropriated parish church.¹²⁸ Peter Heath found 144 licences for secular benefices granted to Augustinian canons in the later fifteenth century; however, he found more granted to Benedictines, and this again must caution us in seeing too much of a difference among orders.¹²⁹ Merton's relationship with its parishes, and the learning this entailed, is the subject of Chapter 4.

Because the Augustinians followed the monastic tradition, they relied on income from spiritual and temporal property to keep up a whole conventual complex. As their institutions became more firmly rooted, so they became more part of the traditional cenobitic framework. This, in part, explains the need to appropriate churches. Church appropriations have tended to be viewed negatively by historians, a view echoing certain mediæval authors such as Walter Map. Janet Burton has demonstrated the need for a more nuanced approach, one that sees appropriations in a neutral or even positive way, rather than merely a 'land-grab'.¹³⁰ Although the nature of Merton's appropriations is not the subject of this thesis, we will look at appropriations where they are relevant to Merton's role as educator and parish 'manager'. It seems, however, that Merton's appropriated churches were treated little differently from its non-appropriated ones in terms of clerical appointments: canons served at Patricbourne, for example, before it was appropriated; the priory also appointed secular clergy to serve Flore and Kingston, two appropriated churches.¹³¹

The Augustinians' role in managing parishes, staffing them either directly or indirectly, was a significant attraction to both episcopal and lay patrons, being fundamental to the twelfth- and thirteenth-century reform of the church. The higher clergy were also keen to improve the educational standards of both regular

¹²⁷ *VCH Somerset*, II, p. 143.

¹²⁸ *VCH Surrey*, II, pp. 156–7 (although *cura animarum* was not specifically mentioned).

¹²⁹ P. Heath, *The English Parish Clergy on the Eve of the Reformation* (London and Toronto, 1969), p. 175. See also H. L. Spencer, *English Preaching in the Later Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1993), p. 61, who suggested that the later fourteenth century saw an increase in the involvement of the Benedictines in parishes.

¹³⁰ For an example, see Heales, p. 146; see also J. Burton, 'A tale of two (or more) abbeys: the Welsh Cistercian abbeys of Valle Crucis and Strata Florida and their appropriated churches', *Studia Celtica* 55 (2021), 29–52.

¹³¹ Heales, pp. 186, 191, 211, 228, 247.

and secular clergy, and this seems to have been another reason for the early patronage of the Augustinians. Lawrence-Mathers suggested that ‘the Augustinians provided the academic wing of the “new monasticism” in Northumbria’.¹³² She found evidence of the Augustinians not only building up their own libraries, but helping the Cistercians and Gilbertines build theirs up, too, and using the library at Durham Cathedral for sources.¹³³ Reinvestigating the books and educational programmes of the Augustinians can help us to discover more ambition and purpose in their foundation. Although even the largest Augustinian libraries were not as big as the wealthiest Benedictines (reflecting their relative financial modesty as a whole), many nonetheless had impressive libraries: both Merton and Leicester’s libraries were comparable to some of the larger Benedictine monasteries.¹³⁴ The Augustinians’ libraries can be seen to have grown out of their key purposes, to serve as centres for pastoral care and teaching, for contemplation and prayer and for hospitality.

The focus of the Augustinians might have changed over time (for example, in their relationship with parishes discussed above), but their learning seems to have continued into the late Middle Ages. The General Prologue to Geoffrey Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* contains the suggestion that during the fourteenth century the Augustinians continued to be associated with traditional monastic values. His wayward Benedictine monk seems to scorn the life of the Augustinians with their strict devotion to learning and to labour:

What sholde he studie, and make hymselfen wood,
Upon a book in cloystre alwey to poure,
Or swynken with his handes and laboure,
As Austyn bit? How shal the world be served?
Lat Austyn have his swynk to him reserved!¹³⁵

The fourteenth century was a volatile one for monastic orders, and this had an impact on Augustinian houses no less than others, and could have had a negative impact on learning. Christian Knudsen and Donald Logan have shown that

¹³² Lawrence-Mathers, ‘The Augustinians canons in Northumbria’, p. 67.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 67–77.

¹³⁴ Webber & Watson, pp. 104–400.

¹³⁵ *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. L. D. Benson and F. N. Robinson (3rd edn, Boston, Ma., 1987), p. 26.

monastic morality dipped during the century.¹³⁶ The visitations of Merton in 1314 and 1387 echo this, both castigating the canons for their laxity.¹³⁷ This is in contrast to the visitation of 1509, which praised the sobriety and wise counsel of the canons while lamenting the errantry of their prior.¹³⁸ Knudsen found that regular clergy seem to have been more continent again in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, commenting that this was ironic, ‘considering the charges made against the monasteries by early modern supporters of the Dissolution’.¹³⁹ James Clark argued that the later fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries saw a renewal of monastic vigour and learning, with, for example, the Benedictines becoming increasingly interested in their own Rule, and both the Benedictines and Augustinians becoming more aware of their institutional histories.¹⁴⁰ The evidence of intellectual activity at Merton in the ‘long’ fifteenth century goes some way to refute the idea, *pace* Southern and Hunt, that Augustinian learning stopped in 1250.¹⁴¹ This evidence will be presented in Chapters 3 and 6, but we will mention briefly here the Oxford-educated priors Kingston and Gisborne, the Erasmian bibliophiles John Ramsey and Thomas Paynell, and the best-selling land economist, Richard Benese.¹⁴² Another of the final canons, alongside these three, was John Page, a priest and ‘scholar’ at Oxford.¹⁴³ No charges or accusations of immorality or incontinence were brought against any of the canons at the dissolution of Merton, and all of the final canons were priests, showing dedication at least to their spiritual duties, as well as suggesting an ease of transition into secular life.

While learning was not defined by ordination to the major orders, the education of the priesthood was a continual concern of bishops. That ‘canons...

¹³⁶ C. D. Knudsen, ‘Naughty Nuns and Promiscuous Monks: Monastic Sexual Misconduct in Late Medieval England’ (unpublished PhD thesis, Toronto, 2012), pp. 16–31; F. D. Logan, *Runaway Religious in Medieval England, c.1240–1540* (Cambridge, 1996).

¹³⁷ Heales, pp. 212–4, 265–275.

¹³⁸ Heales, pp. 318–321.

¹³⁹ Knudsen, ‘Naughty Nuns’, p. 129.

¹⁴⁰ Clark, *The Dissolution of the Monasteries*; ‘Humanism and reform’, pp. 82–6; ‘Augustinians, history and literature’, pp. 410–12.

¹⁴¹ Hunt, ‘English learning’, p. 34; D. A. Callus, ‘The study of the Bible in the Middle Ages’, *Blackfriars*, 22 (1941), p. 672.

¹⁴² R. Sharpe, *A Handlist of the Latin Writers of Great Britain and Ireland before 1540* (Turnhout, 2001); R. Hanna, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Western Medieval Manuscripts of St. John’s College, Oxford* (Oxford, 2002).

¹⁴³ Heales, p. 349; *LEOP*, XIII part I, no.963, p. 352.

were priests by definition' is still an idea current in academic and popular spheres.¹⁴⁴ While this would clearly mark the Augustinians out as an order, it is in fact a misconception. The early Augustinian houses were possibly communities of priests, but this was soon not the case. There was an expectation that canons would take major orders, which themselves had gained in significance during the eleventh century, but it cannot be assumed that all of these became priests.¹⁴⁵ At Oseney in 1225, of 50 brethren, 34 (68%) were priests and the other 16 were in lesser orders.¹⁴⁶ It is possible that those in lesser orders were working towards the priesthood, but this needs further study. No quantitative studies exist of monastic ordinations, but from my own preliminary investigation of the (published) registers of the bishops of Winchester and Exeter from the first quarter of the fourteenth century, it appears that the Augustinians did indeed have the largest number (99) of ordained priests. Surprisingly, the Cistercians ran them close at 79, the Benedictines lagging behind at 46.¹⁴⁷ Of nearly 50 brethren that we know about from Merton during those 25 years, eight seem to have stayed as subdeacons, seven became deacons and ten were priests. Again, however, we run into a problem of evidence: some canons acquired letters dimissory, and could, therefore, have been ordained by other bishops. The lack of published editions of most bishops' registers renders a survey of this kind difficult. However, the author of the twelfth-century *Libellus de diversis ordinibus*, himself a canon, wrote that, 'like the Levites', canons did not 'receive holy orders equally', implying that all canons (like monks) were expected to take orders, but not all graduated to the highest order.¹⁴⁸ It may be that the number of priests increased both at Merton and the order more generally during the fifteenth century: of the 25 canons named in the 1492 bishop's visitation of Merton, all but two were priests, and at Merton's surrender in 1538, all the canons were priests.¹⁴⁹ As an aside to this debate, it might be noted the relatively low numbers of female convents in the Augustinian and Premonstratensian orders (9%) compared

¹⁴⁴ U. Vones-Liebenstein, 'Similarities and differences between monks and regular canons in the twelfth century', in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Monasticism in the Latin West*, ed. A. I. Beach and I. Cochelin (Cambridge, 2020), pp. 766–82, p. 779. More sensible is Giles Constable's general term 'ordained': *Reformation of the Twelfth Century*, p. 229.

¹⁴⁵ Barrow, *Clergy*, pp. 47–52.

¹⁴⁶ H. E. Salter, *The Cartulary of Oseney Abbey*, III (Oxford, 1929), p. 79, no. 1254.

¹⁴⁷ Woodlock, 2 vols; Sandale & Asserio; F. C. Hingeston-Randolph, ed., *The Register of Walter de Stapeldon, Bishop of Exeter (A.D. 1307–1326)* (London, 1892).

¹⁴⁸ Constable and Smith, *Libellus*, pp. 54–5.

¹⁴⁹ Heales, p. 309; *LSP*, XIII part I, no. 963, p. 352.

with the Benedictines (34%) and Cistercians (24%): women could not be ordained, could not officiate during services, nor could they hear confession.¹⁵⁰

The high number of Augustinian clergy in major orders, priests or not, may suggest a high level of literacy and education. Julia Barrow noted that by the eleventh century the subdiaconate had become regarded as a major order, and she argued that it ‘marked the end of formal education (higher study not included.)... a sort of coming-of-age ceremony’ at about 20 or 21.¹⁵¹ The increasing significance of the major orders, starting with the subdiaconate, also illustrates clerics’ role in serving the altar, whereas monks were perhaps more focused on meditation through the Divine Office and reflection on the Rule of St Benedict.¹⁵² There must have been a difference between orders, for patrons were careful in choosing a specific order for their foundations, and many patronised more than one order. Walter Espec, for example, retired to his Cistercian foundation of Rievaulx, but his successors tended to patronise his earlier, Augustinian, foundation of Kirkham.¹⁵³ The difference between orders was more than financial. It has been held that the Augustinians attracted ‘modest’ patrons because of their ‘modest’ needs:¹⁵⁴ Augustinian houses had no minimum number and therefore could be small. The idea that Augustinian houses were a ‘budget’ option for new men is still current.¹⁵⁵ However, most Augustinian houses established during the reign of Henry I were founded by bishops, the king himself (or the queen) or by landowners closely connected to him, notably his sheriffs. As Lawrence-Mathers pointed out in the same volume as St John’s article, Robert de Brus, Walter de Gant and Walter Espec could hardly be described as modest patrons.¹⁵⁶ Merton’s own founder, Gilbert, was

¹⁵⁰ D. Knowles and R. N. Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses: England and Wales* (London, 1971), pp. 52–8, 112–5, 137–45, 184–5, 253–5, 272, 278, 283; F. J. Griffiths, ‘The mass in monastic practice: nuns and ordained monks, c.400–1200’, in *CHMMLW*, pp. 732–8.

¹⁵¹ Barrow, *Clergy*, pp. 47–8.

¹⁵² Constable and Smith, *Libellus*, pp. 50–87; J. A. Franklin, ‘Augustinian and other canons’ churches in Romanesque Europe: the significance of the aisleless cruciform plan’, in *Architecture and Interpretation: Essays for Eric Fernie*, ed. J. A. Franklin, T. A. Heslop, and C. Stevenson (Woodbridge, 2012), p. 87; JCD, pp. 200, 215.

¹⁵³ Burton, *Kirkham Priory*, pp. 22–3.

¹⁵⁴ R. W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages* (London, 1970), p. 248.

¹⁵⁵ See, for example, Graham St John’s comment that ‘the comparatively inexpensive nature of founding a house of Augustinian canons allowed these men to establish their personalized priories’: ‘The significance of devotion to the Augustinian canons by members of the nobility and gentry in the fourteenth century’, in *BSRC*, p. 342; Southern, *Western Society*, pp. 245–7; C. Butterill, ‘Foundations of Augustinian Priors in England during the Reign of Henry I, 1100–1135’ (unpublished PhD thesis, Birkbeck, 1999), p. 238; Reeves, *Religious Education*, p. 82.

¹⁵⁶ Lawrence-Mathers, ‘The Augustinians canons in Northumbria’, pp. 60–6.

a new man, but as sheriff of three counties, he was a member of the wealthy elite, and he worked together in its foundation with the queen herself.¹⁵⁷ In Brittany, all but one priory was founded by the greater aristocracy.¹⁵⁸ Nor were founders of (later) smaller priories, such as Bilsington or Chetwode, lacking in funds, although having said that, in 1372, as noted above, Bilsington's sole canon was its prior and in 1446, visitors reported to the General Chapter that several houses were quite collapsed, with only one or two canons in.¹⁵⁹ The supposed modesty of Augustinian foundations was linked by Richard Southern to a modesty of learning; if size and wealth are to be associated with learning and scholarship, it must be noted that five Augustinian houses, including Merton, were amongst the top thirty assessed by the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, and two of those, Cirencester and Leicester, were themselves centres of learning.¹⁶⁰ The differences between orders must, therefore, have lain elsewhere.

It may be helpful to see the differences between canons and monks not so much in nature but rather in degree. Caroline Bynum Walker's now classic thesis that 'canonical authors see canons as teachers and learners, whereas monastic authors see monks only as learners', and that 'what distinguishes regular canons from monks is the canon's sense of a responsibility to edify his fellow men both by what he says and what he does', is broadly true, although it needs some qualification.¹⁶¹

Texts by monks and canons were read by canons and monks alike; some monks edified others and some canons reflected by themselves. However, texts by canons do emphasise teaching. In his theological miscellany from the 1170s, Prior William of Merton included a quotation from Hildebert of Lavardin (himself a secular cleric) that knowledge grows as it is given out, but disappears if one hoards it avariciously.¹⁶² The list of canons' tasks in the *Libellus de diversis ordinibus*

¹⁵⁷ C. Butterill, 'Foundations of Augustinian Priors in England during the Reign of Henry I, 1100–1135' (unpublished PhD thesis, Birkbeck, 1999), p. 111 ff.

¹⁵⁸ Chédeville, 'Les Chanoines Augustins', para. 5.

¹⁵⁹ *VCH Surrey*, II, pp. 156–7; W. Strange, 'Chetwode: church, hermitage and priory, 1200–1600', *Records of Bucks*, 62 (2002), p. 213. See also Empey, 'Regular canons', p. 132. Cf. J. Herbert, 'The transformation of hermitages into Augustinian priories in twelfth-century England', *Studies in Church History*, 22 (Cambridge, 1985), p. 144; Salter, *Chapters*, p. 113.

¹⁶⁰ <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/eabbb1e62b941c1bf1474a83b5ce8a1>

¹⁶¹ C. Walker Bynum, 'The spirituality of regular canons in the twelfth century', in *Jesus as Mother* (Berkeley, 1982), p. 36; review by R. M. Thomson, *Speculum*, 56 (1981), 598–601, and C. N. L. and R. Brooke, *Churches and Churchmen in Medieval Europe* (London, 1999), pp. 213–232.

quoted above begins with ‘to teach the people’.¹⁶³ Bynum argued that whereas monks saw preaching and the *vita activa* as a necessary burden, ‘canons approached it with delight.’ Alexander Nequam seems to have done so, writing, ‘therefore let the teacher teach by deed and word; from the honeycomb of his mouth let sweet words come forth...’¹⁶⁴ Alexander of Ashby (Northamptonshire), agreed, saying, ‘the example of a good deed should precede words of wisdom’.¹⁶⁵

Terrie Colk argued that Augustinian practices were ‘firmly based on familiar Benedictine observances’, ‘falling somewhere between those of traditional and reformed Benedictine houses’;¹⁶⁶ after the Bible, the main source for the Gregorian *regula canonicorum* was not Chrodegang’s canonical rule but Benedict’s monastic rule. The canons had more leeway, allowing them to take on a variety of roles and live in different sizes of community. Furthermore, their idea of community might have been slightly different. Bynum wrote that, for example, silence for the monk was ‘a good in itself or as a preparation for discourse with God’, but for the canon was ‘preparation for fruitful discourse between men’.¹⁶⁷ Her thesis, that canons would teach by word and example (*‘verbo et exemplo’*), suggests a more outward-facing order. The Augustinians’ role in managing parishes and producing educational materials for parish clergy reflects this outward-facing character.

CONCLUSIONS

Augustinian learning was shaped by the need for serving the altar and *cura animarum* within the monastery and on occasion outside it. As this thesis will demonstrate in the following chapters, homiletic and confessional texts were an important component of Merton’s library, like those of other Augustinian houses. Evidence will be deployed to argue that Merton’s canons had a close relationship with its parishes, usually staffing them indirectly but sometimes directly. Twelfth- and thirteenth-century bishops used the Augustinians to help reform regular foundations and to strengthen parish structures. Although the Augustinian canons

¹⁶² Gb-Lbl Royal MS 4 B XIV, fol.43^v: ‘nobilis possessio scientia que distributa &c.’ The origin of the dictum is unknown. *PL*, CLXXI.141. See also Guyon, ‘La formation intellectuelle’), p. 299.

¹⁶³ Constable and Smith, *Libellus*, pp. 52–3.

¹⁶⁴ *Corrogationes Noui Promethei* 109–112, quoted in Dunning, ‘Alexander Neckam’, p. 29.

¹⁶⁵ From *De artificio modo predicandi*, translated and quoted by R. Springer, ‘Prelacy, pastoral care and the instruction of subordinates in late twelfth-century England’, *Studies in Church History*, 55 (2019), p. 124; Ratcliff, ‘Scottish Augustinians’, p. 16.

¹⁶⁶ Colk, ‘East Anglian canons’, p. 216.

¹⁶⁷ Bynum, ‘Spirituality’, pp. 51–5, 44, 47; Leclercq, ‘Influence’, pp. 199–223.

were eclipsed as evangelists by the friars during the thirteenth century, they nonetheless retained something of their outward-facing character; this helped the last canons of Merton, themselves all priests, to fit into a new secular life following Merton's suppression in 1538. This thesis also brings to light evidence to demonstrate that, as clergy of a large monastic house, Merton's canons had various roles for which at least a rudimentary education was necessary, from internal duties of prayer, study and teaching to external ones of monastic and secular business. Merton was indeed a large Augustinian house: the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, for example, listed its wealth as second only to Cirencester. On the evidence of their library holdings, their canons seem to have had similar interests.¹⁶⁸ Cirencester's leading intellectual was Alexander Neckam. Alexander's biography has been revised, and it now seems that he became a canon far sooner than previously thought. As noted above, his approach to learning and teaching was quintessentially Augustinian, being (in Dunning's words) 'influenced by the scholastic approach to meditation espoused by the Victorines'.¹⁶⁹ His career showed the marriage of the active and contemplative life that we will explore more in the following chapter. Alexander became a canon of St Frideswide's in the 1190s and taught at Oxford, moving, in 1197, to Cirencester Abbey — but not to retire from the world, for there he appeared as a papal judge-delegate, and he continued to write and preach, even after he was made abbot in 1213. Alexander chose two houses that were known for their intellectual activities: this suggests that certain monasteries had certain reputations, and that, as well as choosing a general order, an adult might also choose a particular monastery.

As we will see in Chapter 5, this seems to have been the case with Richard of Salisbury. He had a close relationship with his brother Robert, archdeacon of Totnes. Robert was a generous benefactor of (Augustinian) Plympton Priory, to which he retired.¹⁷⁰ Richard, however, chose to become a canon at Merton rather than Plympton. That Merton was a notable intellectual centre at the time (as will be argued in Chapters 3 and 5) may have been the deciding factor for Richard.¹⁷¹ As we will see in Chapter 6, right at the end of Merton's life, it is notable that several of its canons shared the Erasmian mentality found at, for example, St Mary's College,

¹⁶⁸ *Registrum*, pp. 252–4, 288.

¹⁶⁹ Dunning, 'Alexander Neckam', p. 9.

¹⁷⁰ F. Barlow, 'John of Salisbury and his brothers', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 46 (1995), 95–109; Fizzard, *Plympton Priory*, p. 51.

¹⁷¹ Heales, p. 21; *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury...*, ed. J. C. Robertson and J. B. Sheppard (London, 1877), III, p. 14.

Oxford. An order of independent houses with huge variations in size and wealth, the typicality of any Augustinian monastery will be limited. Nevertheless, certainly among the larger monasteries, the Augustinians do seem to have shared a leaning towards both education in its more general sense and towards personal study at a higher level. Founded on the principal of the *vita Apostolica*, the Augustinian Order had a broad identity, but it does seem to have been predisposed towards learning; we will discuss reasons for this predisposition in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 2: AUGUSTINIAN SPIRITUALITY AND LEARNING

Merton was a house of regular canons which followed the Rule of St Augustine and, as we saw in Chapter 1, was one of the first generation of such houses established in England. The broad questions addressed in this chapter are how far and in what ways learning and scholarship at Merton were conditioned by being an Augustinian house. Life and learning at Merton were shaped by the Rule of St Augustine and by the customs of the priory, which included the liturgy. Augustinian spirituality was defined by Augustinian writers with which Merton was familiar, such as Hugh of St Victor, and by other writers who wrote about the Augustinians and tried to define them (Peter of Celle), and we will explore their views on learning and spirituality. After these general considerations the chapter will discuss ways in which Augustinian learning was defined by the liturgy (the Office and the Mass), the importance of meditation and confession, and finally of preaching and conversation.

The aim of every regular clergyman was to know God. This was to be achieved by prayer, meditation and reflection, but also action. These would themselves be aided by communal activities such as church services, communal readings and sermons, and even the giving of hospitality, but they could also be increased by personal study. Different groups of religious emphasised different aspects of the spiritual journey, but their approach was broadly similar and there were no firm lines between orders. We saw in Chapter 1 the transmission of texts between the Augustinians and other orders, and Augustinian authors such as Hugh of St Victor were universally read. The focus of this chapter is to establish what might have been distinctive about Augustinian spirituality and how this might have informed intellectual activity at all levels, both amongst Augustinians in general and at Merton in particular.

In the 1170s, Richard of Salisbury, canon of Merton, asked the Benedictine abbot Peter of Celle for advice, which came in the form of a short treatise, *De disciplina claustrali*. In it, Peter observed the liminal place of the cloister, which lay, he wrote, ‘on the border of angelic purity and earthly contamination’.¹ The Augustinian canon Alexander Nequam also wrote about the liminality of the monastery:

¹ Peter of Celle: *Selected Works: Sermons, the School of the Cloister, on Affliction and Reading, on Conscience*, ed. and trans. H. Feiss (Kalamazoo, 1987), pp. 79–80.

The life of the cloistered is in between the life of scholars and the life of the triumphant. I slept therefore ‘in the middle of lots’, that is in the middle of fates. For one fate of grace is the honour of the life of scholars; the final fate is the delicious joy of the life of the triumphant; in the middle is the tranquillity of the cloistered.²

The cloister was a place and liminal space to observe and reflect on both heaven and earth. For Alexander, learning and scholarship were part of a spiritual journey; they facilitated reflection, meditation and ‘tranquillity’. Reading, but also conversing, an act of both teaching and learning, was essential to the Augustinian way of life. Guy of Merton

always turned away from involving his soul with worldly cares, for he gave himself totally to reading and meditation, avoiding not only foolish or scurrilous speech but also idle words when conversing with the brothers.³

Richard of St Victor shared these sentiments, declaring that

he who studies the word of God is not idle, nor is he who works outside more worthy than he who puts his mind through study to know the divine; indeed, knowledge itself is the greatest work, and Mary is preferred to Martha.⁴

Peter of Celle advised Richard of Salisbury to

let the inhabitant of the cloister, without misgiving, contract a marriage with all teaching... when our dweller in the cloister spends his time with these [scripture and the *trivium* and *quadrivium* subjects], he is not just

² Alexander Nequam, *Super Cantica* 2.16, quoted in A. N. J. Dunning, ‘St Frideswide’s Priory as a centre of learning in early Oxford’, *Medieval Studies*, 80 (2018) (available at <https://andrewdunning.ca/st-frideswides-priory-learning-early-oxford>)

³ *Life of Guy*, para. 3.

⁴ *Bridlington Dialogue*, p. 107. M. Colker, ‘Richard of St Victor and the Anonymous of Bridlington’, *Traditio*, 18 (1962), 181–227, p. 216: ‘non est ociosus qui uerbo Dei tantum studet nec pluris est qui extra operatur quam qui studium cognoscende diuinitatis excercet; ipsa eciam sapiencia maximum opus est, et Maria Marthe prefertur’. Although Richard ascribes this to Augustine, Colker notes that it is not from Augustine, fn. 125.

passing time; intent on them he puts to flight the idle, empty and superfluous fancies of his heart.’⁵

These passages suggest that knowledge and its pursuit were of the greatest importance for the Augustinian, and they contradict Ursula Vones-Liebenstein’s view that ‘the monks looked to Benjamin and Rachel, Mary and John, for their contemplative way of life, and the regular canons to Aaron and Leah, to Martha and Peter for their active way of life’.⁶ The difference between monk and canon was not as simple as contemplation versus action. There were differences, however. According to Peter of Celle, Augustine and Benedict,

two brooks streaming from these sources, have enclosed canons regular and monks in the cloister, like stags and roe deer in an enclosure, or, so to speak, in a park... One was a bishop and canon, the other an abbot and monk. Both were saints; both were teachers and distinguished leaders of the Lord’s flock. In some matters our claustral discipline and yours coincide; on other points they differ. Some things pertain to the substance of religious life, others are accidentals.⁷

Peter left specific coincidences and differences vague. However, from his metaphor, it seems that although both orders were enclosed, the Augustinians had a wider range of territory and were more individualistic than the ‘roe deer’ of the Benedictines. Given that this treatise was written by a Benedictine for an Augustinian, we may conclude that the differences between the orders were small. Perhaps instructive is a sentence which follows the passage above, that ‘it is left to the judgment of the person in charge to intensify or relax such things, provided peace and unity are preserved’: the difference among individual houses (or even individuals within houses) might have been greater than that between orders.

The purpose of the present chapter is to establish whether there was a general Augustinian attitude to learning as part of spirituality, and whether learning was fundamental to an Augustinian canon’s fulfilment of his vocation. The chapter focuses on various aspects of the canons’ daily practice (the liturgy,

⁵ Feiss, *Peter o Celle*, pp. 79–80.

⁶ U. Vones-Liebenstein, ‘Similarities and differences between monks and regular canons in the twelfth century’, in *CHMMLW*, p. 779.

⁷ Feiss, *Peter o Celle*, pp. 69, 72. For the Latin text, see *Pierre de Celle: L’Ecole du Cloître*, ed. G. de Martel (Paris, 1977), p. 118 ff.

preaching and meditation) using evidence from Merton, and, for comparison or amplification, other Augustinian houses. It explores questions of how much time could be allotted to private study in relation to communal worship, and how the liturgy, preaching and meditation were practised at Merton. Further, it investigates canons' engagement with the liturgy, its meaning and understanding, and with texts of all sorts for the preparation for preaching and meditation. We start by examining the shape of the liturgy, moving on to a discussion of the Mass, whose evolution coincided with the rise of the Augustinians, and then the related subject of confession. Finally, we will explore engagement with preaching and meditation.

THE LITURGY

The canon's day was shaped, like the monk's, around eight offices, based on the Psalms, and at least two masses. A rough form of the day was laid out in the *Regula secunda* (part of the Rule of St Augustine), although the contents, rituals and lengths of the Office and Mass varied from place to place; these variations in observances are 'Uses'.⁸ There was scope for flexibility in the composition of services (as there was in the Rule of St Benedict), and therefore in the length of time spent in church. Establishing how much time was devoted to church services gives some estimate of the time available for study. In 1950 John Dickinson assumed that 'probably to take the habit almost invariably meant severely restricted opportunities for intellectual pursuits'; this was the case at Benedictine Glastonbury Abbey, whose sixteenth-century monks complained that 'the Offices are so tedious there is no time for study'.⁹ However, the first investigation into the Augustinians' Uses was not until the late 1990s, and Dickinson's conclusion was therefore based on untested evidence.¹⁰ The following two sections will try to give an idea about the length and the nature of the Augustinian liturgy, and therefore the time that the

8 JCD, p. 273; he discusses the history of the *Regula secunda*, pp. 255–72. For the liturgy and its variant uses, see J. Harper, *Forms and Orders of Western Liturgy from the Tenth to the Eighteenth Century: A Historical Introduction and Guide for Students and Musicians* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 201–34, and A. Parsons, 'The Use of Guisborough: the Liturgy and Chant of the Augustinian Canons of the York Province in the Later Middle Ages' (unpublished PhD thesis, Exeter, 2004), pp. 8–9.

9 JCD, p. 192; J. G. Clark, 'The self-image of the scholar-monk in late medieval England', in *Self-representation of Medieval Religious Communities: the British Isles in Context*, ed. A. Müller and K. Stöber (Berlin, 2009), p. 245.

10 T. M. Morris, 'The Augustinian Use of Oseney Abbey: A Study of the Oseney Ordinal, Processional and Tonale (Bodleian Library MS Rawlinson c.939)' (unpublished DPhil., Oxford, 1999).

canons had in which to study. The first section looks at the Office, the backbone of the monastic day, and the second concentrates on the Mass, whose evolution coincided with the rise of the Augustinians.

The Office

Despite their common ancestry, the monastic Office tended to be longer than the secular (i.e. that of cathedrals and churches), and there were other variations, too, both within the services themselves and in the kalendar. During the Middle Ages, both monastic and secular Uses became longer and more involved: Sally Roper and John Harper noted that whereas St Benedict had envisaged around four hours a day being spent in communal worship (with four for private study and six for manual labour), by the twelfth century, communal worship had become, in some orders, at least twice as long, with the Office and Mass taking up to twelve hours on greater feast days.¹¹ Monastic Uses varied according to order and over time. The Cluniacs were well-known for their elaborate and rich ceremonies, a complexity which the Cistercians eschewed.¹² From the twelfth century onwards, the veneration of Mary had added several services (by the late fourteenth century, the Augustinians were celebrating the Little Office before Matins, for example),¹³ and even for the Cistercians, the accretion of saints, the adoption of new feasts, and the development both of polyphony and of monophonic tropes (florid interpolations of Mass movements) all added to the elongation of secular and regular services: this had implications for study.¹⁴

Merton's observances themselves do not survive, and we cannot make firm judgements about its nature or length. The explanation of 'the observances of the Order, or the selection of the constitution appointed in that monastery' promised in *Gilbert I* is tantalisingly vague: Robert de Bethune, bishop of Hereford, had 'ranged through many churches of this Order in regions overseas, and he had

¹¹ S. E. Roper, *Medieval English Benedictine Liturgy: Studies in the Formation, Structure, and Content of the Monastic Votive Office, c.950–1540* (London and New York, 1993), p. 5; Harper, *Forms and Orders*, p. 74.

¹² J. Kerr, 'Cistercian Liturgy', p. 3. The Cistercian Use was still longer than the secular: C. Waddell, ed., *The Primitive Cistercian Breviary: (Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, MS. Lat. Oct. 402)* (Fribourg, 2007).

¹³ Salter, *Chapters*, pp. 77–8. For the Little Office, and other Marian liturgy, see Harper, *Forms and Orders of Western Liturgy*, pp. 133–4.

¹⁴ Harper, *Forms and Orders*, pp. 125, 157–8; R. W. Pfaff, *The Liturgy in Medieval England: A History* (Cambridge, 2009), pp. 436–44. In 1404, the Augustinian General Chapter added the Feast of St John of Bridlington to the kalendar: Salter, *Chapters*, pp. 80–1.

painstakingly looked into the regulations of the eminent ones, but not one of them had customs that met with his approval as much as did those of our house.’¹⁵ What ‘those of our house’ were is not specified.

Until recently, it was assumed that the Augustinians followed their local diocesan Use, meaning that their Office would be the shorter secular one, rather than a longer monastic one.¹⁶ The studies of Timothy Morris, Anna Parsons and David Chadd have shown that there were various distinctive Augustinian Uses, some which covered groups of houses. An early and widespread Use was based on that of St Ruf (Letbert’s ordinal). Chadd suggested that Merton Priory disseminated the St Ruf ordinal to other Anglo-Norman Augustinian houses: most of the houses that employed this Use had direct links to Merton.¹⁷ The transmission of observances based on St Ruf indicates a network of Augustinian houses, with Merton at its centre. Whilst the passage from *Gilbert I* asserts the moral superiority of Merton over the major continental Augustinian houses, it does not exclude the Use of St Ruf being the basis for Merton’s customaries, and it also hints at an early relationship between Merton and French monasteries.

The Augustinian Uses we know about seem indeed largely to have followed the shorter secular form, but some incorporated parts of monastic Uses: Guisborough, part of a different customary group from Merton, took its liturgy from both the monastic Use of Durham and the secular Use of York.¹⁸ The *Bridlington Dialogue* also indicates a secular Use, and by the late thirteenth century Barnwell was following the Sarum Use.¹⁹ Although the form and length of the liturgy depended on individual houses, the Augustinian Use does seem to have been shorter than other monastic Uses, and this could allow relatively more time for study. The relationship between time and quality of scholarship was not direct,

¹⁵ *Gilbert I*, p. 18, para. 14.

¹⁶ Harper, *Forms and Orders*, p. 29; Morris, ‘Use of Oseney’; Parsons, ‘Use of Guisborough’.

¹⁷ The St Ruf Use was employed at: St Osyth and Barnwell (founded, like Merton, from Huntingdon), Launceston and Bodmin (Cornwall), Cirencester (Gloucestershire), Holyrood (Edinburgh), St-Lô (Normandy) — all founded from Merton (L. Green, *Daughter Houses of Merton Priory*, *Merton Historical Society Booklets* (London, 2002) and *Gilbert I*, pp. 31–2, para. 33). Llanthony also had a copy and was also founded from Merton. The unknown East Anglian house could be Buckenham, which followed ‘the institution or rules of Merton’ (JCD, p.159). For a more in-depth account, see Parsons, ‘Use of Guisborough’, p. 49 and Morris, ‘Use of Oseney’, pp. 127–35; he describes Chadd’s unpublished work.

¹⁸ Parsons, ‘Use of Guisborough’, pp. 105–9.

¹⁹ *Bridlington Dialogue*, pp. 95–100; Morris, ‘Use of Oseney’, p. 25; Parsons, ‘Use of Guisborough’, p. 49.

however: the abbey of St Victor went through the entire Octateuch (the first eight books of the Old Testament) during its Lenten services and mealtimes, whereas Barnwell had only Genesis; it was St Victor rather than Barnwell that turned out twelfth- and thirteenth-century scholars, despite its apparently heavier liturgical requirements.²⁰

The liturgy practised at Merton was based on that of St Ruf, and influenced that of several houses, implying a connexion between Merton and other Augustinian monasteries. It may have been shorter than Benedictine Uses, allowing more time for activities outside the church, including study. The Office formed the framework of daily service, but it is clear from, for example, the Oseney ordinal that the Mass was an important component of the Augustinians' spiritual practice, and it is to this that we now turn.

The Mass

The Mass started as a communal Eucharist, but by the eleventh century, it had been formalised and 'privatised' from being an act of communal participation to one of communal spectating while a priest or a group of priests (and deacons) celebrated it.²¹ This was both effect and cause of the rise of the cleric as a class from the sixth century onwards, for the Mass (rather than the Office) needed ordained priests and deacons for its celebration. The evolution of penance and purgatory during the eleventh and twelfth centuries saw an increased appetite for intercessory rites centred on the Mass, and this evolution coincided with, and might have helped to cause, the evolution of the Augustinians themselves.²² Hugh of St Victor wrote that 'we are bound to be holy because... we are dedicated to the service of God, and consecrated to live before the altar of Christ, and to assist at the divine mysteries.'²³ The *Libellus de diversis ordinibus* emphasised the priestly aspect of the canons, likening them to the Levites or Gershonites of the Old Testament.²⁴ While it is misguided to suggest that all

²⁰ M. T. J. Webber, 'Reading in the refectory: monastic practice in England c.1000–c.1300' (presented at the Annual John Coffin Memorial Palaeography Lecture, University of London, 2010), p. 25.

²¹ J. Harper, *The Forms and Orders of Western Liturgy from the Tenth to the Eighteenth Century: a Historical Introduction and Guide for Students and Musicians* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 109–14; B. Haggh, 'Foundations or institutions? On bringing the Middle Ages into the history of medieval music', *Acta Musicologica*, 68 (1996), 87–128.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 89. See also J. le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory*, trans. A. Goldhammer (Aldershot, 1990).

²³ *Explanation of the Rule of St. Augustine by Hugh of St. Victor*, trans. A. Smith (London and Edinburgh, 1911), p. 46.

²⁴ *Libellus de Diversis Ordinibus et Professionibus qui sunt in Ecclesia*, ed. and trans. G. Constable and B. S. Smith (revised edn, Oxford, 2003) pp. 53, 69.

Augustinians were priests, the order did have a high number of priests and deacons, and this attests to the importance of the Mass for the order.

Ursula Vones-Liebenstein concluded that, while ‘the life of the monks was based on a monastic theology of contemplation... the theology of the regular canons was based on the sacrament of the altar’.²⁵ The Cistercians, who were, like the Augustinians, products of the eleventh-century reform movements, trimmed down their liturgy to only one conventual mass per day, with a second on Sundays or feast days.²⁶ The Augustinians also pared down the liturgy, but retained a focus on sacerdotal duties and the Mass. The *Barnwell Observances* devoted several pages to a discussion of the Mass, and called attention to the role of the prelate not only as father of the monastery, but as priest, too, expounding his duties both in the Office and at Mass.²⁷ The *vita* of Guy of Merton and St Waltheof (as an Augustinian) describe them weeping profusely at the Mass, whereas the Cistercian Ælred of Rievaulx is not mentioned as celebrating Mass at all.²⁸ The differences between monk and canon can be overstated, for the Cluniacs were famed for their elaborate liturgy of both Office and Mass, and St Waltheof left the Augustinians to become a Cistercian;²⁹ however, the Augustinians do seem to have accorded some significance to the Mass and the priesthood that performed it. The author of *Gilbert I* takes care to mention that ‘at different times several bishops celebrated those divine mysteries in the presence of the community of brothers, who, standing there, rejoiced in their solemn blessings.’³⁰ The passage in the *Life o Guy* describing that canon’s lachrymose reaction to Mass also suggests that he was made a priest in order to celebrate it:

25 Vones-Liebenstein, ‘Similarities and differences’, p. 780; J. Barrow, *The Clergy in the Medieval World* (Cambridge, 2015), pp. 42–52, 73ff; G. Constable, *The Reformation o the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 200, 227, 230, 232; G. Mayhew, *The Monks o Saint Pancras: Lewes Priory, England’s Premier Cluniac Monastery and its Dependencies 1076–1537* (Lewes, 2014), p.137; JCD, p. 16ff; Harper, *Forms and Orders*, pp. 1–21. See also F. J. Griffiths, ‘The Mass in monastic practice: nuns and ordained monks, c.400–1200’, in *CHMMLW*, pp. 731–2.

26 J. Kerr, ‘Cistercian Liturgy’, p. 3

<https://www.dhi.ac.uk/blogs/cistercians/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2018/05/Cistercian_liturgy-1.pdf>.

27 *Barnwell Observances*, pp. 36–43, 106–12. The *Bridlington Dialogue* discusses the Office in some detail: pp. 95–109.

28 *Life o Guy*, para. 6; *The Life o Ailred o Rievaulx*, ed. and trans. F. M. Powicke (London, 1950), p. 15ff.

29 ‘*Vita S. Waldevi auctore Jocelino monacho de Furnesio*,’ *Acta Sanctorum Augusti I*, ed. J. Carnandet et al. (Paris, 1863), p. 264 col. E.

30 *Gilbert I*, para. 13.

The lord Robert, father of the monastery, discerning that this man was gradually directing himself towards the perfect accomplishment of all virtues, hastened to raise him to holy orders, and advanced him from clerk to the office of deacon... Afterwards, he reluctantly accepted the step up to the priesthood, and he followed this sacred office so devotedly that, as he confessed humbly to a friend within the house a while later, he only twice celebrated Mass without tears.³¹

Celebrating the Mass had implications for learning: quite apart from learning how to deliver sermons or homilies, there was the time taken by the service, time that could otherwise, perhaps, be spent in private study. By the time that the Augustinians emerged, the (Benedictine) monastic daily liturgy included the High and Morrow Mass and, a recent addition, the Lady Mass.³² Regular clergy (supplemented, as time passed, by secular clergy) would also celebrate the Mass of the Dead for deceased members, patrons and donors. A night of visions in 1125 prompted John, bishop of Rochester, to come to Merton 'with his assistant clergy and celebrated most gloriously and sufficiently the full pontifical mass' for Gilbert the Sheriff's funeral.³³ Over time, masses for the dead increased in importance and number. The *Barnwell Observances* stipulated that in the case of deceased canons, canon-priests should celebrate thirty masses; ordinary canons were to recite the Psalter ten times; *conversi* were to say the Paternoster and Ave Maria a thousand times each. In addition, the prelate himself could occasionally be called on to perform a Mass for deceased brethren;³⁴ finally, a brother was to be appointed to say the thirty consecutive masses 'tricennali Sancti Gregorii'.³⁵ At Augustinian St Frideswide's, Ela Longspee willed various daily and monthly masses to be performed for her, including a daily requiem mass, and thirty other masses, ten recitations of the entire Psalter, 1500 Paternosters and 1500 Ave Marias.³⁶ These examples show the active engagement of the Augustinian canons in commemoration, requiring some level of training in literacy and memory. The deaths, chiefly of priors, recorded in the kalendar of MS Laud Misc. 723 may give a clue about some commemorative masses held at Merton;

³¹ *Life of Guy*, para. 6.

³² Harper, *Forms and Orders*, pp. 133–6.

³³ *Gilbert III*, para. 4.

³⁴ *Barnwell Observances*, pp. 217–221. Cf. the Oseney prayers for Worcester mentioned in Chapter 1, p. 7.

³⁵ R. Pfaff, 'The English devotion of St. Gregory's Trental', *Speculum*, 49 (1974), 75–90.

³⁶ E. Amt, 'Ela Longespee's roll of benefits: piety and reciprocity in the thirteenth century', *Traditio*, 64 (2009), pp. 9–10.

the six side chapels in the transepts of the priory church provided the opportunity for such commemorative masses.³⁷

The number of masses increased for all monasteries as they acquired more benefactors over time and as liturgical feasts were added to the kalendar. The increase in commemorative masses during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries gave rise to the chantry with its own staff of chaplains with the sole duty of praying for souls.³⁸ The centrality of commemorative masses to the Augustinians can be seen in the benefactions to Leeds Priory (Kent); it may also be one reason for a 'house of chaplains' at Merton in the later thirteenth century.³⁹ The author of GB-WO Q.51, an Augustinian canon from Worcestershire, wrote that a canon studying in the cloister should 'wait for the signal for the hour of Vespers; then at once let him stop working and quickly go into the choir ready for Vigils of the dead.'⁴⁰ This passage is interesting on the one hand for showing the importance of the Mass for the Dead, but on the other for presuming that when not in church, a canon was studying or working.

In addition to commemorative masses were daily masses. These were the Morrow Mass, the High Mass, and — increasingly by the thirteenth century — the Ladymass. Even a tiny priory such as Tandridge (Surrey) had to observe all of these, together with masses for benefactors.⁴¹ The reverence for the Ladymass can be heard in the pieces assembled by the canons of St Andrews in the manuscript known as 'W₁'.⁴² Merton followed general monastic fashion in the fourteenth century by extending the chancel with a large Lady Chapel, in which the Ladymass would have been celebrated.⁴³ The Bridlington and Barnwell texts both give clear evidence that the Marian devotion was central to the Augustinians, and it can be seen in the daily recitation of the Ladymass.⁴⁴ Attendance at Ladymass was advisory and not obligatory: the Barnwell observer wrote that 'all who can conveniently come

³⁷ GB-Ob MS Laud Misc. 723, fols 1^r–3^v; Miller & Saxby, pp. 35–8.

³⁸ H. M. Colvin, 'The origin of chantries', *Journal of Medieval History*, 26 (2000), 163–73; D. Crouch, 'The origin of chantries: some further Anglo-Norman evidence', *Journal of Medieval History*, 27 (2001), 159–80; Heales, p. 223.

³⁹ *VCH Kent*, II, pp. 162–165; Heales, p. 168.

⁴⁰ S. W. Holland, 'An Edition of the *Admonitio Ad Claustrales* from Worcester Cathedral Manuscript Q.51' (unpublished PhD thesis, Durham, 1988), p. 6.

⁴¹ *Woodlock*, I, p. 510.

⁴² Harper, *Forms and Orders*, pp. 135–6; Red Byrd, *A Scottish Ladymass: Sacred Music from Medieval St Andrews* (CD: Hyperion, 2005).

⁴³ Miller & Saxby, pp. 68–71.

⁴⁴ *Barnwell Observances*, pp. 102–3; Harper, *Forms and Orders*, pp. 133–6.

should attend this Mass', and continued, 'nor ought they to shirk it for the sake of reading, or writing, or singing private masses, unless they have obtained leave to do so', suggesting that some canons did, in fact, miss this service. This passage implies further that when not in church, canons were at their books. The number of mass celebrations meant that canons could be on a rota. At Southwick, a canon who celebrated High Mass one week, celebrated Morrow Mass the next, then Ladymass, then a benefactors' Mass, then a Mass for the Dead.⁴⁵

The Southwick rota and *Barnwell Observances* suggest a flexibility of life within the Augustinian cloister which contrasts with the Cistercians, who still might miss a service on occasion, but whose monks were required to recite the Office even while they laboured in the fields.⁴⁶ Flexibility had its limits, however: in 1387, the bishop of Winchester castigated Merton's canons for skipping services. He reminded the prior that all the canonical hours were to be kept, as well as the Ladymass, the daily and other masses, and that chantries for founders and benefactors were also to be performed.⁴⁷ Despite a focus on the sacrament of the altar, the Augustinians did not sacrifice contemplation and study.

Some of the Merton canons' study was of texts about the sacraments, including the Mass, and this indicates that their scholarship and spirituality were closely entwined. Whilst the Augustinians of the twelfth century did not have a monopoly on sacramental theology and the practice of the Mass, they did make significant contributions. Theologians such as Ivo of Chartres (an Augustinian canon) and Peter Lombard (influenced by the Victorine school) crystallized the sacraments into seven sacred signs, and the sacraments' place in a person's educated spiritual enlightenment was made central by Hugh of St Victor.⁴⁸ Merton had in its library copies of Hugh of St Victor's *De sacramentis*, Ivo of Chartres' *Sermons de sacramentis ecclesie* and the *De officio et vestibus sacerdotum et ecclesie vasorum*, attributed to Ivo.⁴⁹ The incorporation of the Mass into a framework for meditation, so that the Mass was at once active and contemplative, was perhaps a product of Augustinian thought as described by Andrew Dunning and discussed

⁴⁵ Woodlock, I, p. 512. Slackers were put on a diet of bread and water.

⁴⁶ *Barnwell Observances*, p. 107; Kerr, 'Cistercian Liturgy', pp. 5–6.

⁴⁷ GB-Ob MS Laud Misc. 723 fols 24^r–27^v; Heales, pp. 266–270.

⁴⁸ B. T. Coolman, 'The Christo-Pneumatic-Ecclesial character of twelfth-century sacramental theology', in *The Oxford Handbook of Sacramental Theology*, ed. H. Boersma and M. Levering (Oxford, 2015), pp. 202–3.

⁴⁹ *Registrum*, pp. 253–4.

in Chapter 1.⁵⁰ The meditative approach to the Mass can also be seen in the development of the Sequence during the twelfth century, which was led by the canons of St Victor. In the Mass, the Sequence succeeded the Gradual and Alleluia as a build-up to the Gospel. Margot Fassler argued that during the twelfth century the Augustinians moved the Sequence ‘from being a translation of angelic sounds into mortal language to being a proclamation of knowledge about Paradise’, and from being a soloistic piece to being a communally-sung one.⁵¹ In addition, the particular sequence *Laudes crucis* shows an interest in the sacraments and in the priestly office which, Fassler continued, is absent from earlier sequences, and a reflection of the ‘renewed study of Augustine’.⁵²

Fassler’s thesis was that the Augustinian canons, chiefly those of St Victor, were responsible for reinventing and expanding the Sequence, a liturgical song suited to sacramental and sacerdotal reflections and expositions. She argued, furthermore, that the Sequence followed Augustine’s own thoughts on praise through singing, referring to Augustine’s ‘extensive’ writings on a chant. The Sequence combined the ‘Alleluia commentary’ with the Ambrosian hymn, of which Augustine was particularly fond. The Sequence also allowed for an Augustine-style poetic exegesis. Fassler argued that the Augustinians were responsible for bringing Augustine into the Sequence.⁵³ Although new-style sequences were not unique to the Augustinians, the Augustinians embraced them wholeheartedly, as Timothy Morris has demonstrated.⁵⁴

A couple of further points could be made in support of Fassler’s argument. One particular sequence, *Laudes crucis*, coincided with the ideas expressed by the author of the *Libellus de diversis ordinis* that we met in Chapter 1, and the emphasis on communal singing could reflect the Augustinian ideal of recreating the *vita apostolica* — living as a community of priests. In addition, the texts of some of

⁵⁰ See above, pp. 17, 37.

⁵¹ M. E. Fassler, *Gothic Song: Victorine sequences and Augustinian Reform in Twelfth-Century Paris*, (2nd edn, Notre Dame, Indiana, 2011), especially chapters 2–4.

⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 66–70.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 133–4. Cf, however, caveats on Fassler’s thesis in N. van Deusen, ‘Review: *Gothic Song: Victorine Sequences and Augustinian Reform in Twelfth-Century Paris* by Margot Fassler’, *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 120 (1995), p. 151.

⁵⁴ Morris, ‘Use of Oseney’, pp. 43, 117 fn. 47. A fourteenth-century manuscript of the *Sacerdos parochialis* and *Scale of Perfection* may be linked to the priory of St Osyth’s by its inclusion of a sequence to the saint: N. Pattwell, ‘Canons and catechisms: the Austin canons of south-east England and *Sacerdos parochialis*’, in *After Arundel: Religious Writing in Fifteenth-Century England*, ed. V. Gillespie and K. Ghosh (Turnhout, 2011), p. 386.

these sequences are similar in mood and character to the *Bridlington Dialogue*, itself taken from St Victor, the focus of Fassler's book. The development of the Sequence shows an Augustinian interest in meditation and the *vita apostolica*, and it can be seen as part of the regular canons' interest in the Mass as a whole.

The Mass was, therefore, a contemplative act. Guy of Merton's contemplative celebration of the Mass left him 'such a different man that you cannot doubt that he was completely moved by the spirit of God.'⁵⁵ Guy had perhaps achieved the state of contemplation that Hugh of St Victor had described in his *Didascalicon* as the goal of the cloistered regular — 'a foretaste, even in this life, of what the future reward of good work is.'⁵⁶ In order to reach this level of contemplation, one first had to undergo 'study or instruction': Guy had been a 'director of schools' and therefore already had the necessary intellectual background.

Leaping forward to the last generation of canons at Merton, their reading material included a volume of the minor works of Denis the Carthusian, with a section on the sacrament of the altar and an exposition on the Mass.⁵⁷ The emphasis on and growth of the Mass in the liturgy reflected the 'sacramentalisation' of theology and practice, both cause and effect of clericalisation resulting from the papal reforms of the eleventh century onwards.⁵⁸ Although, as discussed in Chapter 1, the Augustinians were not all priests, they were expected to be in major orders. Close examination of the ordination records of bishops of Winchester from across the period indicates that the Merton canons were encouraged to work towards the priesthood. In addition, the canons regular helped the episcopate to train parish priests by preaching and providing treatises and manuals on the sacraments and the creed: this will be discussed further in

⁵⁵ *Life of Guy*, para. 6, pp. 18–9.

⁵⁶ *The Didascalicon of Hugh of St Victor: a Medieval Guide to the Arts*, trans. J. Taylor (New York, 1961), book V, chapter IX, p. 132; *Hugonis de Sancto Victore Didascalicon de Studio Legendi: a Critical Text*, ed. C. H. Buttner, (Washington, D.C., 1939), p. 109. See also P. J. Healy, 'Mysticism of the School of Saint Victor', *Church History*, 1 (1932), 211–21.

⁵⁷ Dionysius Carthusiensis, *Opera Minora, Tomus Primus* (Cologne, 1532), pp. 191–228.

⁵⁸ See, for example, B. T. Coolman, 'The Christo-Pneumatic-Ecclesial character of twelfth-century sacramental theology', in *The Oxford Handbook of Sacramental Theology*, ed. H. Boersma and M. Levering (Oxford, 2015), pp. 201–17; P. L. Reynolds, *How Marriage Became one of the Sacraments: The Sacramental Theology of Marriage from its Medieval Origins to the Council of Trent* (Cambridge, 2016); C. Monagle, *Orthodoxy and Controversy in Twelfth-Century Religious Discourse: Peter Lombard's 'Sentences' and the Development of Theology* (Turnhout, 2013)

Chapters 3, 4 and 5. The need for the laity to understand and recite the Articles of Faith was laid out by the Fourth Lateran Council; during the thirteenth century the Mass, which was a performance of the creed, spread as a daily ritual from the regular clergy to the parish church.⁵⁹ This built on the prohibition of the Third Lateran Council (1179) forbidding clerics to charge for performing the sacraments, and thereby giving all classes of lay people access to them.

It was necessary for canons regular to be able to understand and communicate the Articles of Faith and the sacraments in order first to fulfil their own vows and secondly to aid with the practice of the Mass and the education of the secular clergy and laity. Alongside the Mass, a sacrament which preoccupied the Augustinians was confession. This, too, had been addressed in the Fourth Lateran Council, although its rules were a reflection of confessional thought and practice as it had developed throughout the twelfth century, rather than the start of something new. Much of the thinking apparent in Lateran IV about confession can be seen in the treatise written by Guy of Southwick at the turn of the century. This will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5, but Guy's ideas drew on legal, scholastic and Augustinian thought from the previous hundred years, which encompassed ideas about internal reflection, meditation and intention.

MEDITATION AND CONFESSION

The Augustinian liturgy was not the most demanding of time among regular liturgies. A reason for this might be the emphasis on other duties such as study and personal meditation. Although the time spent in services was not inconsiderable, and it increased throughout the period, there seems to have been some flexibility in the relationship between service time and study time. The author of the *Barnwell Observances* was clear that, at service time, no canon 'should remain in the Cloister without leave', but this implies that leave was given and suggests some latitude in daily duties.⁶⁰ John Dickinson wrote that

we have no reason to believe that the liturgical regime of Merton was more elaborate than that elsewhere, yet already in the twelfth century one of its members felt drawn to record the obstacles which its

⁵⁹ P. Heath, *The English Parish Clergy on the Eve of the Reformation* (Toronto, 1969), p. 5.

⁶⁰ *Barnwell Observances*, p. 95.

observance imposed on those who required that ample leisure which study demands...⁶¹

Dickinson's footnote referred to 'Hunt, *op. cit.*', but in neither of the works by Hunt that Dickinson cited in his book is there any reference to this canon.⁶² The only relevant complaint that I have found is from Rainald, the author of the *Life of Guy*. This starts with an apology that Rainald has not had much time for its composition as 'other business' intervened; he concludes by saying that he was thinking about his letter rather than the canonical hours on which he should have been focussing. No doubt there was truth in this, but similar apologies can be found in, for example, the works of Peter of Celle and Guy of Southwick: this is a literary device.⁶³ Furthermore, Rainald writes that he was composing his letter during church, a reminder that a canon's focus might not have been wholly on what he was chanting or listening to a sermon. At Cirencester, because he was abbot, Alexander Nequam did not need his own leave to study, but he did find time in his prelacy both to write and to teach.⁶⁴

There could be some latitude in study time, but canons were also encouraged to improve the shining hour. The bishop of Winchester reminded the canons of Southwick that when they were free from divine office, 'they should always be in the cloister, occupying themselves with the Scriptures and other spiritual exercises', and the *Barnwell Observances* wrote that priests not actively preparing for private masses should 'take their books and go into the cloister, and there read, or sing in an undertone.'⁶⁵

Meditation was a key part of Augustinian practice: in the early sixteenth century, the bishop of Winchester commanded Merton's prior William Salyng not only to attend the morning offices thrice weekly and Mass and Vespers every Sunday and feast day, but to participate in meditations in the cloister three times a week.⁶⁶ Hugh of St Victor wrote that 'meditation provides counsel', and the Augustinian author of GB-WO Q.51 instructed his novices to 'strive all the time to fix your minds

⁶¹ JCD, p. 192.

⁶² The two works he used by Hunt are 'English learning' and a (scathing) review of J. W. Thompson's *The Medieval Library in Medium Aevum*, 10 (1941), pp. 107–13.

⁶³ *Life of Guy*, paras. 1, 18; *De confessione*, p. 340; *Letters of Peter of Celle*, pp. 33–4.

⁶⁴ A. N. J. Dunning, 'Alexander Neckam's Manuscripts and the Augustinian Canons of Oxford and Cirencester' (unpublished PhD thesis, Toronto, 2016), pp. 28–30.

⁶⁵ *Woodlock*, I, p. 512; *Barnwell*, p. 107.

⁶⁶ Heales, pp. 321, CII.

on higher things'.⁶⁷ Fixing the mind on higher things required the groundwork of study. In 1387, the bishop of Winchester wrote to the prior and convent of Merton that canons should be well-read in scripture in order to aid contemplation.⁶⁸

Guy of Merton's meditation focused on biblical and patristic texts: he 'considered the readings from the Fathers at certain times in the cloister not a desertion from customs but instruction in them'.⁶⁹ It was important to 'know thyself',⁷⁰ and this would help foster a humble approach to learning. Self-knowledge was central to Edmund of Abingdon's *Speculum ecclesie*, written at Merton and relying heavily on Victorine writings that he might have read whilst there.⁷¹ Humility was a concern of the author of GB-WO Q.51, who counselled his readers to pay attention to even the smallest of things, quoting Ecclesiasticus 19:1, and to keep conversations free from all vanity.⁷² In this, he was in accord with Guy, who

did not disdain to learn about even the minutest customs of the monastery, but was diligent in searching out and observing them as if they were issued from the mouth of God. And seeing that, as it is written, 'he who despises small things shall gradually fall' so, on the contrary, by taking care over the smallest instructions, he rose to be supreme in all virtues.⁷³

The twelfth century was a significant period in the development of thought about the virtues, which was given further impetus the following century by the rediscovery of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*.⁷⁴ For Hugh of St Victor, virtue was a 'habit of mind which naturally accords with reason'.⁷⁵ Facing Hugh and other

⁶⁷ Hugh of St Victor, *Didascalicon*, trans. J. Taylor (New York, 1961), p. 132; Holland, 'Admonitio ad Claustrales', pp. 10–14. The theme of love and fear recalls Peter of Celle.

⁶⁸ Heales, p. 272.

⁶⁹ *Life of Guy*, para. 4.

⁷⁰ Hugh of St Victor, *Didascalicon*, p. 46; Holland, 'Admonitio ad Claustrales', p. 12.

⁷¹ H. P. Forshaw, 'St Edmund's "Speculum": a classic of Victorine spirituality', *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Âge*, 39 (1972), pp. 11–13.

⁷² Holland, 'Admonitio ad Claustrales', pp. 13–4.

⁷³ *Life of Guy*, para. 3, with a quotation from Ecclesiasticus 19:1.

⁷⁴ C. J. Nederman, 'Nature, ethics and the doctrine of "habitus": Aristotelian moral psychology in the twelfth century', *Traditio*, 45 (1989), 87–110 (pp. 87–9).

⁷⁵ C. H. Buttimer, 'Hugonis de Sancto Victore *Didascalicon de Studio Legendi*: a critical text' (1939), p. 130; I. van 't Spijker, 'Hugh of Saint Victor's Virtue: ambivalence and gratuity', in *Virtue and Ethics in the Twelfth Century*, ed. R. G. Newhauser and I. P. Bejczy, Brill's Studies in Intellectual History (Leiden, 2005), CXXX, 75–94 (p. 77). Alcuin also viewed virtue as a habit of the mind: R. Stone, 'Translation of Alcuin's *De Virtutibus et Vitiis Liber* (Book about the Virtues and Vices)', *The Heroic Age: A Journal of Early Medieval Northwestern Europe*, 16 (2015), para. 35.

theologians was the problem of how to marry classical concepts of virtue with Christian ones. Hugh acknowledged the virtues of classical philosophers, but argued that virtue could not be whole without *caritas*, grace and closeness to God.⁷⁶ This was in essence the view of other twelfth-century theologian-philosophers, although they differed in specifics. István Bejczy saw a development throughout the twelfth century in ideas of virtue(s), wherein natural virtues (that is, virtues not dictated by Christian morality) were given more significance.⁷⁷ Thinkers such as Peter Abelard, Alan of Lille, Simon of Tournai and Peter the Chanter, all represented in Merton's library, allowed the idea that grace could be present in the natural virtues, and therefore non-Christians could be, to a certain extent, virtuous: to be wholly virtuous, intentions and actions needed the love for, and grace of, God.

The canons of Merton had some preoccupation with ideas of virtue. The dependence of virtue on grace had its roots in Augustine, whose works constituted a large proportion of Merton's library (at least 75 volumes). Of the older texts on virtue, the canons possessed Alcuin's *De virtutibus et vitiis* (or, as noted by the Oxford Franciscans, *Wydoni comiti*) and Julian Pomerius' *De vita contemplativa* (part of GB-Lbl Royal MS 5 F XVI). The library had a number of Hugh of St Victor's texts dealing with virtue, including *De institutione novitiorum*, *De archa Noe*, and *De conflictu viciorum et virtutum*. None of these was particularly rare or novel, but two manuscripts in particular show a particular interest in the developing ideas of virtue, GB-Lbl Royal MSS 9 E XII and 11 A V. The former contained a number of *quaestiones* of Simon of Tournai and Alan of Lille's *De uirtutibus et de uiciis et de donis spiritus sancti* (illustrated with trees of virtues and vices) and his *Quoniam homines a uera sue rationis*; the latter had part of Abelard's *Dialogus inter Christianum et philosophum*, the earliest surviving manuscript of this work in the British Isles. The manuscripts date from around the same time as each other, and their ideas share an Aristotelian view of virtue (or vice) as a *habitus*, the product not of nature or divinity but of use or practice.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ Spijker, 'Hugh of Saint Victor's Virtue', *passim*. I have left *caritas* in the Latin because its sense is not quite conveyed by the English 'charity'.

⁷⁷ I. P. Bejczy, 'The Problem of Natural Virtue', in *Virtue and Ethics in the Twelfth Century*, ed. R. G. Newhauser and I. P. Bejczy (Leiden, 2005), CXXX, 131–54.

⁷⁸ Nederman, 'Nature, ethics and... *habitus*', *passim*; M. L. Colish, "Habit" revisited: a reply to Cary Nederman', *Traditio*, 48 (1993), 77–92.

Hugh of St Victor himself showed (perhaps unconscious) Aristotelian leanings in his idea of the ‘three wills of man’ in his *De archa Noe*. On the one hand, the carnal will wishes for ‘concupiscence and unhesitating obedience to the desires of the flesh’; on the other, the spiritual longs to ‘dispense with bodily necessity’. There is a third: the natural, an Aristotelian middle way which ‘neither gives itself to the shameful deeds of the vices, nor does it submit to the trials of the virtues.’ But in order to maintain equilibrium in the natural state, we have to practise it, acquiring virtue by blood, sweat and tears: again, we have the idea of *habitus*. For Hugh, extinguishing pride, vices and passions would free us for meditation and scriptural edification, aiding us in our ascent to the Ark.⁷⁹ The idea of attaining this middle way is illustrated in the *Life o Guy*: Guy of Merton ‘persecuted his flesh as if it were a dreadful enemy’, such that Prior Robert had to stop his excesses here, and he made sure to give Guy some physical responsibilities to help him to the ‘perfect accomplishment of all virtues’.⁸⁰ Here is a canon, himself a former scholar, practising (with guidance) how to temper his excesses in order to achieve tranquillity. He needed, however, more practice, for as soon as he was prior of Taunton, he ‘mortified his body... the more as he had no one above himself... who could rein in this horse of God when it ran beyond moderation.’⁸¹

Hugh of St Victor and other Augustinian thinkers agreed that learning and meditation were stages on a journey to reach divine contemplation and the love of God, and that the *usus* of intentions and actions needed practice in order to become *habitus*. Hugh of Fouilloy had such a similar concept to Hugh of St Victor about the way to virtue that his *De claustro animae* was quickly thought to be by Hugh of St Victor.⁸² Alexander Nequam emphasised the graduality of attaining knowledge and (therefore) virtue, and — ever the practical teacher — he attached Hugh’s steps to specific biblical books: Proverbs will teach us to disregard the self; Ecclesiastes will lead to disregard for worldly vanities; the Song of Songs will lead to

79 *Hugh o Saint-Victor: Selected Spiritual Writings*, trans. a religious of C.S.M.V. (London, 1962), pp. 70–2.

80 *Life o Guy*, paras 5–7.

81 *Life o Guy*, para. 9.

82 C. Whitehead, ‘Making a cloister of the soul in medieval religious treatises’, *Medium Aevum*, 67 (1998), p. 5. The Oxford Franciscans listed copies of *De claustro* under Hugh (and Richard) of St Victor: *Registrum Anglie*, pp. 234–9.

pure joy.⁸³ The author of the *Life of Guy* referred to the Song of Songs, although ‘ecstatic’ might be better than ‘joyous’ to describe Guy:

While he was thought to be resting upon the bedclothes on his bed, he was in fact tossing and turning with only straw below, as it says in the Song of Songs, ‘going about and seeking whom my soul loves.’ And, sighing for his love, ‘every night he washed his bed and watered his couch with tears. He was especially accustomed to keep watch in holy vigils from after Matins until daybreak.’⁸⁴

This passage is deployed to highlight the exceptionality of Guy’s behaviour. Here, Guy showed a contempt for the flesh perhaps more typical of the Cistercians, and his custom of praying from Matins through to daybreak also was a practice of the Cistercians.⁸⁵ The Augustinians tended to have a more moderate approach, from a nap between Matins and Lauds to the quest to find ‘the image of God in the soul, behind the sins and failings’.⁸⁶ Guy’s spirituality, therefore, was couched in exceptional terms.

This passage is one of several episodes of affective piety. Similarly, passages in the *vita* of Gilbert also describe emotions, from the weeping and wailing at Gilbert’s death to the tears of Walchelin at Gilbert’s message of salvation and his sensory perception of the sweet odour left by Gilbert’s apparition.⁸⁷ Since faith was at the core of Christianity, emotion was an important partner to reason. Although in Abelard’s *Dialogus* the rational quest for virtue is discussed as a meritorious achievement, it is ultimately limited because salvific virtue needs *caritas*. Abelard argued that intention trumped action, and that without *caritas*, actions were morally neutral.⁸⁸ Guy’s charitable actions in Taunton were led by his *caritas* towards his fellow humans but particularly towards God: ‘this man of God sought,

83 *Hugh of Saint-Victor: Selected Spiritual Writings*, pp. 85-6; Dunning, ‘Alexander Neckam’, pp. 38-9. Cf. Ælred, who meditated, like Hugh (pp. 76-80), on the ephemeral nature of the world and how it showed the underlying changelessness of God: *Walter Daniel, The Life of Ailred of Rievaulx*, trans. F. M. Powicke (London, 1950), pp. 18-19. Merton’s library had several commentaries on Ecclesiastes and the Song of Songs.

84 *Life of Guy*, para. 5.

85 Kerr, ‘Cistercian liturgy’, p. 5.

86 Forshaw, ‘St Edmund’s “Speculum”’, p. 11.

87 *Gilbert III*, para. 2, p. 35; *IV*, p. 41.

88 I. P. Bejczy, ‘Deeds without value: exploring a weak spot in Abelard’s ethics’, *Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie Médiévales*, 70 (2003), 1-21.

in fact, to please God alone'.⁸⁹ Guy's actions were led by his godly intentions, making him a truly virtuous man. *Caritas* is an emotional relationship between beings, and it is Guy's emotional response to his religious life that makes him manifestly virtuous:

he was so overcome by sorrow that he could scarcely speak, and so vehemently upset with himself that he pulled out his hair and dashed his head against a wall, demonstrating from this vehemence of sorrow how truly he was turning to God.⁹⁰

The emotional side of religion was represented too in mysticism, to be found in various texts in Merton's library, from the writings of Hugh of St Victor or Bernard of Clairvaux to those of Denis the Carthusian in the fifteenth century.

Caritas was central to the thought of the Augustinians, and indeed to the thought of Augustine himself. In this, they were not unique: for example, the manual of the other great reformist order of the period, the Cistercians, was the *Carta caritatis*.⁹¹ *Caritas* had several aspects. One was love of God; another was compassion for one's fellow beings. Guy's compassion was exemplary: he clothed the poor, but made sure that this did not impoverish the canons in his care; his compassionate prayers cured his prior of a grave illness.⁹² Prior Robert himself was described as being compassionate in *Gilbert I*, and Gilbert's own compassion not only made him generous to the poor but inspired him to found Merton Priory.⁹³ Like many founders of Augustinian (or Cistercian) houses, Gilbert dedicated his priory to Mary, the representative of sympathetic love, whose compassion ensured her place as intercessor with both Father and Son.⁹⁴ Mary's own compassion for Christ was a prism through which to contemplate Christ's suffering and sacrifice; her humanity was a conduit to feel compassion for him.⁹⁵

⁸⁹ *Life of Guy*, para. 10.

⁹⁰ *Life of Guy*, para. 2.

⁹¹ B. T. Coolman, 'Hugh of St. Victor on "Jesus Wept": compassion as ideal *humanitas*', *Theological Studies*, 69 (2008), 528–56.

⁹² *Life of Guy*, paras 8–11.

⁹³ *Gilbert I*, para. 34, p. 32 and *passim*.

⁹⁴ A. Binns, *Dedications of Monastic Houses in England and Wales, 1066–1216* (Woodbridge, 1989). For Mary, see M. Rubin, *Mother of God: a History of the Virgin Mary* (London, 2010); R. W. Southern, *The Making of the Middle Ages* (London, 1959), pp. 240–1; R. Fulton, *From Judgment to Passion: Devotion to Christ and the Virgin Mary, 800–1200* (New York, 2002), p. 199.

⁹⁵ This is discussed by Fulton in *From Judgment to Passion*, especially pp. 195–214.

Compassion could take the physical form of weeping.⁹⁶ Guy, being compassionate, was prone to weeping — at Mass, at night, at his death. Indeed, ‘the abundance of his tears’ signified his sanctity and the virtue of his intention.⁹⁷ ‘The blessed Magdalene from compassion’, wrote Guy of Southwick, ‘stood at the sepulchre, weeping at the sepulchre for her lord’.⁹⁸ As well as indicators of compassion, tears could be windows of the soul. For Ælred of Rievaulx, tears were ‘the signs of perfect prayers, the embassies between God and man: they show the whole feeling of the heart and declare the will of God to the soul.’⁹⁹ Tears showed that one was truly faithful, and not merely paying lip-service. Tears were also a sign of remorse. Tears were therefore an invaluable aid to confession.

Merton’s canons kept abreast of developments in confessional thinking. The act of confession was influenced by a number of factors. The post-Gregorian church was keen to increase lay confession, formalised at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, which announced that all persons of both sexes should make confession at least once a year. This was made possible by the strengthening of the legal-administrative body of the upper Church, the gradual formalisation of the parochial church system and changes in confessional practice, led by the regular clergy.¹⁰⁰ A second factor was the development of purgatory as an idea, and a third was a continuing discussion about intention and reflection. These strands can all be seen in the treatise on confession written by one of Merton’s canons (discussed in Chapter 5), but also in the *vita* of both Gilbert and Guy. Confession as a topic also appears in several Merton manuscripts spanning the whole period: the thirteenth-century compilation of Parisian thinkers; the fourteenth-century compendium of

⁹⁶ Coolman, ‘Jesus Wept’, pp. 537–8; *De confessione*, lines 85–9, p. 342.

⁹⁷ *Life o Guy*, para. 17.

⁹⁸ *De confessione*, lines 94–5, p. 342.

⁹⁹ Powicke, *Ælred*, p. 20.

¹⁰⁰ B. Poschmann, *Penance and the Anointing o the Sick*, trans. F. Courtney (Freiburg, 1964); S. R. Kramer, *Sin, Interiority, and Sel hood in the Twelfth-Century West* (Toronto, 2015); A. Murray, ‘Confession before 1215’, *TRHS*, 3 (1993), 51–81; N. Vincent, ‘Some pardoners’ tales: the earliest English indulgences’, *TRHS*, 12 (2002), 23–58; M. de Jong, *The Penitential State: Authority and Atonement in the Age o Louis the Pious, 814–840* (Cambridge, 2009); R. Meens, *Penance in Medieval Europe, 600–1200* (Cambridge, 2014); W. Campbell, *The Landscape o Pastoral Care in 13th-Century England* (Cambridge, 2017), pp. 147–67; R. Springer, ‘Confession in England and the Fourth Lateran Council’, in *Thirteenth Century England XVII: Proceedings o the Cambridge Conference, 2017*, ed. A. Spencer and C. Watkins (Woodbridge, 2021), pp. 163–80. Both strands are discussed by Joseph Goering in ‘The internal forum and the literature of penance and confession’, in *The History o Medieval Canon Law in the Classical Period, 1140–1234: From Gratian to the Decretals o Pope Gregory IX*, ed. W. Hartmann and K. Pennington (Washington, DC, 2008), pp. 379–428; Haggh, ‘Foundations or institutions?’, pp. 87–128.

works by Robert Grosseteste; the fourteenth-century volume containing Henry of Sawtry's *Purgatorio S. Patricii*. In the early sixteenth century John Ramsey bought a copy of the *Memoriale Presbiterorum*, and confession was one of many topics discussed by Denis the Carthusian in another volume that he purchased.¹⁰¹

The texts concerning Sheriff Gilbert show some of the ideas underpinning confession. On his death bed, Gilbert was wracked with guilt for his wrongdoings, but his confession (as written in *Gilbert III*) was uttering the words 'He is our Saviour': the profession of faith by the laity would become, almost a century later, the crux of the Fourth Lateran Council.¹⁰² His epitaph (*Gilbert II*) also noted that 'he praised the Lord as he was about to die', but also that his life had been exemplary, supporting David Crouch's assertion that the deathbed confessions of Henry I's servants were not so much to emphasise their venality, but to demonstrate the importance of confession.¹⁰³ Although there could be no penitential tariff because this was a deathbed confession, Gervase, the author of *Gilbert III*, seems anyway to have been more interested in, to use Rebecca Springer's words, 'interior contrition and intention over subsequent penitential action'.¹⁰⁴ Gilbert's penitence was shown in his tears, demonstrating the relationship between interior intention and exterior emotion.

Gilbert's confession was heard by 'canons and monks', according to *Gilbert I*, or 'monks and clerks in holy orders', according to *Gilbert III*, who included the priors of (Augustinian) St Mary's, Huntingdon and (Benedictine) St Neots. They helped him remember his sins, for which he wept 'most abundantly' (*Gilbert III*). The nature of Gilbert's confession was private and sacerdotal, and suggests that the Augustinians were at the front of religious trends. Although Rob Meens has warned against seeing too great and too distinct a difference between confession before and after the twelfth century, and although this was in a regular setting,

¹⁰¹ Royal MSS 9 E XII, 6 E V; Bodl. 555; MS Selden Supra 39; Omega".1.32; D. Turner, 'Why did Denys the Carthusian write *Sermones ad Saeculares?*', in *Medieval Monastic Preaching*, ed. C. Muessig (Leiden, 1998), XC, p. 32.

¹⁰² *Gilbert I*, para. 30, p. 30; *Gilbert III*, para. 7, p. 39; John Arnold, 'Firmiter credimus: the renewal of lay belief in thirteenth-century Europe', paper given at the 2022 Thirteenth Century Conference.

¹⁰³ D. Crouch, 'The troubled deathbeds of Henry I's servants: death, confession and secular conduct in the twelfth century', *Albion*, 34 (2002), 24–36, esp. pp. 31–2.

¹⁰⁴ Springer, 'Confession', pp. 176–7.

where frequent confessions were more normal, nevertheless the confession of a layman couched in these terms at this time is noteworthy.¹⁰⁵

For all the hyperbolic descriptions of Gilbert's manifold sins and copious weeping, his life could not have been too immoral, for, according to the fourth account in the collection (the vision of Walchelin), he was spared 'the infernal flames', but was stuck temporarily (if somewhat painfully) in a state of transition. This account probably dates from the 1140s or 1150s, and, although it does not mention purgatory by name, it is clear that this is where Gilbert found himself. Carl Watkins argued that the development of purgatory was 'championed' by the new religious orders, Augustinians, Cistercians and Carthusians.¹⁰⁶ He used four stories from either end of the twelfth century to demonstrate the change in thought in the second half of the century. If our vision of Walchelin dates from the middle of the century, it therefore provides more evidence of the gradual development of the concept of purgatory, as well as the Augustinians' involvement in that development.¹⁰⁷

The concerns in the *Gilbert* texts of the Merton canons with the developing ideas of confession and purgatory show the contemporaneity of their thinking: confession seems to have been important to the twelfth- and early thirteenth-century canons. It may be significant, given the Augustinians' role in the development of confession and the provision of confessors, that Thomas Becket's confessor was Robert, a canon of Merton.¹⁰⁸ Confession to the prelate of a monastery was customary, and so Guy of Merton made his confession before Prior Robert; but Guy's exceptional qualities prompted Robert to 'prefer' him to priestly duties, and he soon found himself hearing the confessions of his fellow canons, which he did 'moderately, with compassion and pity'.¹⁰⁹ Later in the century, Guy of Southwick, *quondam* canon of Merton, wrote that you should confess to one person, preferably your own appointed confessor. This was because your confession should be total, and an opportunity for you to face up to your

¹⁰⁵ *Gilbert I*, para. 31; *Gilbert III*, para. 6; Meens, *Penance in Medieval Europe*, p. 215. See also Campbell, *Pastoral Care*, pp. 147–67.

¹⁰⁶ C. S. Watkins, 'Sin, penance and purgatory in the Anglo-Norman realm: the evidence of visions and ghost stories', *Past & Present*, 175 (2002), 3–33, esp. p. 28.

¹⁰⁷ *Gilbert I–IV*, p. 41; M. L. Colker, 'Latin texts concerning Gilbert, founder of Merton Priory', *Studia Monastica*, 12 (1970), p. 246.

¹⁰⁸ Robertson and Sheppard, *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket*, III, p. 147.

¹⁰⁹ *Life of Guy*, para. 11; R. Springer, 'Prelacy, pastoral care and the instruction of subordinates in late twelfth-century England', *Studies in Church History*, 55 (2019), p. 119.

enormity as a whole, but also because your confessor was responsible for your soul and should therefore know your history.¹¹⁰ This was written for a bishop and may reflect the growth of lay confession and the role of the professional parish priest. Confession to the same person might not, Guy acknowledged, always be possible: if an appointed confessor were not available, one could choose the best alternative — another priest, that is, and not ‘angels, or apostles, or other saints, or before an altar and relics’. (Alexander Nequam also suggested telling more than one confessor, perhaps, as Springer suggested, because, being an Augustinian, he knew that canons could augment parish priests in providing confessions.)¹¹¹ Confessing to a person who knew you — who in some way had a dialogue with your soul — was important because that person would know your intention, and intention was increasingly the crux of confession. Merton’s literature on intention and virtue tied in with the canons’ interest, practical and theoretical, in confession.

Guy of Southwick wrote that confession should be the entire and unadulterated truth, and that one must do penance by ‘private thoughts’ as well as words and deeds.¹¹² He also wrote that it should be made when necessary (as soon after sinning as possible): this reflects his own background as a regular canon, but it is an interesting contribution to the historiography of the changing nature of confession during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.¹¹³ Guy’s tripartite division of confession, ‘contrition in one’s heart, confession by one’s mouth and satisfaction by one’s deeds’, follows Augustine’s tripartite division of sin — predisposition, intention, action — and is similar to the Bridlington Dialogue’s approach to sin and confession.¹¹⁴ The *Life of Guy* and *Gilbert* texts have not hitherto been used to study twelfth-century confession, but they suggest that Merton’s canons were not just following ecclesiastical trends but helping to establish them.

PREACHING AND CONVERSING

Hugh of St Victor opened his advice to novices by quoting Psalm 118: ‘et disciplinam et scientiam doce me’ (‘teach me discipline and knowledge’): as noted

¹¹⁰ *De confessione*, lines 314–322, p. 348; Springer, ‘Confession’, pp. 168–9; Goering, ‘Internal forum’, p. 383.

¹¹¹ *De confessione*, lines 338–9, p. 348; Springer, ‘Confession’, pp. 171–2.

¹¹² *De confessione*, p. 344, lines 164–5.

¹¹³ See above, fn. 93.

¹¹⁴ *De confessione*, lines 73–4, p. 342; also lines 190–1, p. 345; *Bridlington Dialogue*, p. 61. See also Augustine, *De Trinitate*, XII.12.

in the introductory chapter, Caroline Walker Bynum argued that the distinctive characteristic of the canons regular was that they taught as well as learnt.¹¹⁵ Indeed, Alexander Nequam fused the two, writing ‘disco docendo’ (‘I learn by teaching’), and the *Consuetudines Springirsbach* ordered: ‘therefore let them first learn from the scriptures, and afterwards teach, lest, if they be not disciples of Truth, they become ignorant teachers of error.’¹¹⁶ The brethren of Merton benefitted from Guy of Merton’s devout conversation, and Merton’s lay founder, Gilbert, also enjoyed the canons’ conversation.¹¹⁷ The Latin word used in both instances is colloquium, which suggests a reciprocal discourse and an amount of active learning. Guy also gave sermons to his brethren, ‘in grace seasoned with salt’.¹¹⁸ In the early sixteenth century, Prior William Salyng was instructed (and reminded) by his bishop to ensure his brethren were regularly given the ‘food of sacred doctrine’, and that he, as doctor of divinity, gave them this personally twice a year, as well as providing others to preach on a further four occasions. He was also enjoined by the bishop to ensure three copies were kept within the priory of not just the customs of the house but a book of sermons.¹¹⁹ As we will see in the next chapter, it may be that the collection of theological works that an earlier Prior William compiled (GB-Lbl Royal MS 4 B XIV) was for Chapter sermons; Merton’s volume of Robert Grosseteste (Royal MS 6 E V) was a collection largely of his sermons. The sermon was an important part of the proceedings of the Augustinian General Chapter, and both Salyng and a predecessor, John de Kingston, delivered sermons to it. Sermons are discussed in more detail in Chapter 4, but literature suitable for sermons forms a large part of Merton’s extant library.

CONCLUSIONS

The Augustinians saw learning as fundamental to divine understanding, and therefore a basis for their duties as canons. Theirs was a meditative order, and their daily cycles made provision for study. Since studying was part of the way to divine

¹¹⁵ *In Hoc Libro Contenta Opera Hugonis de Sancto Victore*, ed. H. Estienne (Paris: Petro Porta, 1506), p. 2.

¹¹⁶ *Consuetudines Canoniorum Regularium, Springirsbacenses-Rodenses*, ed. S. Weinfurter, Corpus Christianorum. Continuatio Mediaevalis 48 (Turnholt, 1978), pp. 61–2; Nequam, *Corrogationes Noui Promethei*, quoted in Dunning, ‘Alexander Neckam’, p. 30, fn. 122..

¹¹⁷ *Life o Guy*, para. 12; *Gilbert III*, para. 2, p. 35.

¹¹⁸ *Life o Guy*, para. 4.

¹¹⁹ Heales, pp. 316, 318, xcix no. CXLVII, and c, no. CXLIX.

contemplation, personal study might, at the discretion of the prior, be pursued on occasion instead of communal service. Merton was established as a centre of worship, focused on serving the altar, but this thesis demonstrates that meditation and learning played an important part in the canons' lives. Canons from Merton were sent to found or reform other Augustinian houses and to minister to the laity, but these were always secondary to the aim of meditation and prayer. The advent of the friars and the development of parochial structures in the thirteenth century did not change the purpose of Augustinians such as the canons of Merton, but perhaps lessened the need for external evangelising, and this might have encouraged them to settle into a more cloistered, monastic life.¹²⁰ The growing complexity of divine service during the later Middle Ages meant that all regular orders, including the Cistercians, spent more time in church, but for the Augustinians, this was not because of a shift in purpose.

In order to practise prayer and meditation, an degree of learning was necessary — not merely literacy enough to read biblical and other texts, but constant study to widen and deepen the understanding of scriptural and theological texts. The *colloquium* was an important part of a canon's daily activity: informal discourse about texts and ideas which turned the passive learning of reading into active thinking. The books bought by the last generation of canons (a copy of Bernard's *Epistles*; the minor works of Denis the Carthusian) suggest that religious *colloquium* still filled Merton's cloister in the early sixteenth century.

Merton's spirituality seems to fit into the more general picture of the Augustinians. Its primary concern was to serve the altar, a distinguishing feature of the Augustinians according to, for example, the *Libellus de diversis ordinibus*. Its canons seem throughout its lifetime to have pursued individual studies in order to practise meditation and contemplation, and they showed an interest in confessional theology and in sermons, both of which had implications outside the cloister as well as within it. This chapter has sought to locate the canons' learning in their spirituality, arguing that learning was a core part of that spirituality. The next chapter will explore the individual volumes that the canons collected, compiled and read.

¹²⁰ C. Butterill, 'Foundations of Augustinian Priories in England during the Reign of Henry I, 1100–1135' (unpublished PhD thesis, Birkbeck, 1999), p. 236; R. W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages* (London, 1970), pp. 240–50.

CHAPTER 3: THE LIBRARY OF MERTON PRIORY, c.1117–c.1400

Investigating mediæval monastic libraries has the potential to provide evidence that is fundamental for questions concerning the nature of learning and intellectual pursuits, as well as when, where and how the religious read, studied and meditated. Too often such exploration is hampered by a lack of evidence. In the case of Merton, this is acute: demolition of the priory has obliterated all clues to its size and location(s) within the precinct, and the dispersal and destruction of its contents has been severe. In her introduction to mediæval Augustinian libraries, Teresa Webber used Merton to illustrate ‘the scale of the loss’ of those libraries:

the priory of Merton, one of the largest and most influential Augustinian houses in England, is one of the houses best represented in the *Registrum* (over 230 titles are reported from Merton, a number exceeded by only six other houses, among them Bury St Edmunds and Christ Church, Canterbury), yet our only other witness to what must have been a substantial library is just 29 manuscripts and printed books.¹

Those 29 books, to which we will add the two cartularies and the Merton Annals, do give us at least a picture of the canons’ reading. In addition, the list from the *Registrum* can be compared with those from other houses to investigate, for example, typicality. There is no doubt that Merton had a large and important library, but the lack of physical evidence for Merton presents a difficult challenge. Nevertheless, questions about Merton’s library and its contents need to be addressed and the approach to this problem that has been adopted here is to draw on analogies using evidence from other monastic houses in order to build up a tentative picture of Merton’s library and its forms and functions.

This chapter will first examine and assess evidence for the development and evolution of the library as a physical space. In the first half of our period, libraries consisted of cupboards and chests in various parts of the monastery. From the fourteenth century, however, the library is a room housing books. We

¹ Webber & Watson, p. xxvii.

will look at evidence for the storage of books and manuscripts from other monasteries to develop a hypothesis of the locations of Merton's book collection before it might have had a library room, and what this might say about the function of these different places and how the books were used, and by whom. We will then look at book production and evidence for scribal activity within Merton Priory. Book production here includes both the copying of volumes from scratch and the compilation of existing volumes. Evidence for the acquisition and disposal of texts will be discussed before moving to the main section of this chapter, an exploration of Merton's extant volumes – contents, production, transmission and use – to draw conclusions about the levels and nature of learning and scholarship within the priory. The nature and use of these volumes has a bearing on the following chapters, which are about the men who used them. Merton's extant volumes fall into three subject areas, theology,² history and law, and they are grouped and discussed as such in this section.

THE PHYSICAL LIBRARY: ACCESS, USE AND ACQUISITION

Location and Access

While the largest recorded and reconstructed libraries belonged to Benedictine monasteries, there is nonetheless evidence for substantial collections in Augustinian houses. This evidence comprises extant volumes and library catalogues, where they survive. The fifteenth-century catalogue of the priory of St Mary de Pratis, Leicester, lists over 940 volumes, and a catalogue from Lanthony Secunda records 508 volumes. Leicester was omitted by the Oxford friars, and they noted only 12 volumes at Lanthony Secunda in the *Registrum Anglie*.³ Over 160 volumes survive from Lanthony Secunda, but only 18 survive from Leicester's library.⁴ For Merton, 30 volumes survive and 230 titles are recorded in the *Registrum Anglie*. There is no catalogue of Merton's collection.⁵ The figures from these different strands of evidence show the difficulties in estimating the size of a foundation's library. Given Merton's wealth and status,

² For the etymology of this term, see C. J. Mews, 'Monastic theologies, c.1050–1200', in *CHMMLW*, p. 697.

³ Webber & Watson, pp. 34–103 (Llanthony), 104–399 (Leicester).

⁴ *Registrum Anglie*, pp. 272 (Leicester), 293 (Llanthony, whose report seems to have been partially lost).

⁵ *Registrum Anglie*, pp. lxxiii, 252–4.

its book collection is likely to have been more of the size of Leicester's than Lanthony's.

Where the contents of the book collection were located can be posited only on the basis of cognate evidence, for no part of Merton's claustral complex survives above the ground. Although from the thirteenth century onwards, specific rooms housing libraries were to be found in some monasteries, monastic book collections were generally kept in aumbries (*al-* or *armaria*), some of which were built into walls, or free-standing presses (bookcases) throughout the monastery.⁶ Following the practice at St Victor, the Barnwell observer exhorted the precentor-librarian to make sure that these aumbries were lined with wood to prevent damp, and that books inside were regularly checked for parasites and damp.⁷ Merton's surviving books are generally in good condition, with little evidence of insect damage or damp, but these are the surviving volumes, and we must be careful of extrapolating too much from them.

The sorts of locations in which Merton's books might have been kept can be suggested by what is known about other monasteries. Book presses could be free-standing, and therefore located at different places within the monastery, or they could be built into walls. A book press, according to the *Barnwell Observances*, 'should be divided vertically as well as horizontally by sundry shelves on which the books may be ranged so as to be separated from one another; for fear they be packed so close as to injure each other or delay those who want them'.⁸ At St Andrews Priory, four aumbries were built into the east side of the cloister; no wood linings survive, but they might have had some additional protection from damp by being adjacent to the east range.⁹ Booklists from Leicester (Augustinian), Meaux (Cistercian) and Titchfield (Premonstratensian) give not only the titles but the locations of books, locations which included the church itself, the infirmary, dorter, and the cloisters.¹⁰ One location for a claustral aumbry was by the processional arch

6 M. T. J. Webber, 'The libraries of religious houses', in *The European Book in the Twelfth Century*, ed. E. Kwakkel and R. Thomson (Cambridge, 2018), pp. 104–5; E. Schlottheuber and J. T. McQuillen, 'Books and Libraries within Monasteries', in *CHMMLW*, pp. 975–97.

7 R. Sharpe, 'The medieval librarian', in *CHLBI*, p. 224; *Barnwell Observances*, pp. 64–5; *Liber ordinis S. Victoris Parisiensis*, ed. L. Jocqué and L. Milis (Turnhout, 1984), pp. 78–86.

8 *Barnwell Observances*, p. 65.

9 R. Gameson, 'The medieval library (to c.1450)', in *CHLBI*, p. 18.

10 D. N. Bell, 'The Books of Meaux Abbey', *Analecta Cisterciensia*, 40 (1984), 25–83; E. A. Bond, ed., *Chronica monasterii de Melsa* (Rolls Series, London, 1866), I, pp. lxxix–lxxx; D. N. Bell, *The Libraries of the Cistercians, Gilbertines and Premonstratensians*, CBMLC, (London, 1992), III, pp. 34–82; M. T. J. Webber, 'The Books of Leicester Abbey', in

leading from the cloister to the church. This location was convenient for picking up liturgical and processional books and was at the same time a place of ceremonial significance. This evidence reflects the importance of books to a religion based on the word. A large, triple-shelved aumbry survives at Premonstratensian Dryburgh Abbey in the cloister abutting the processional arch into the church. Likewise, Arrouasian Lilleshall Abbey has an ornate bipartite aumbry in its cloister by the processional arch. At both abbeys, the processional arch went from the cloister into the nave at the west corner of the south transept. At Merton, however, there seems to have been an empty yard between the north wall of the cloister and the church, and there are no signs of a passage traversing it. If this were the — highly unusual — case, the entrance from the cloister to the church would have been through a slype (3f on Figure 3.1). At (Cistercian) Rievaulx, which had a similar claustral layout to Merton, there was a library between the south transept and chapter house, next to a vestry. Lilleshall had a slype between its sacristy and chapter house, and this may have been used for books; if so, it suggests that such book rooms were not just, as David Bell argued, a Cistercian feature.¹¹

In light of this evidence, we now turn to Merton. One possible location for books was the slype, 3f. This was the way to the south burial area and probably the chaplains' house, and, if it held any books, they may have been in recessed aumbries rather than protruding book chests. Another possible location for books is the slype south of the chapter house (building 3c), leading to the infirmary, which would itself have had book chests and/ or recessed aumbries. The room to its south was perhaps a warming room or parlour; this might have given 3c some protection against damp.¹² David Saxby has suggested that there were carrels in the cloister for reading and writing; if so, we can feel justified in placing some aumbries or free-standing presses there.¹³ It is likely that the south transept (possibly the sacristy) had a book press; the chapter house almost

Leicester Abbey: Medieval History, Archaeology and Manuscript Studies, ed. J. Storey *et al.* (Leicester, 2006), pp. 127–46; Webber & Watson, pp. 104–399. See also J. G. Clark, *A Monastic Renaissance at St. Albans: Thomas Walsingham and his Circle, c.1350–1440* (Oxford, 2004), pp. 85–6.

¹¹ Bell, *Libraries*, pp. 22–5, where he notes similar plans at Kirkstall, Roche, Buildwas, Strata Florida, Tintern, Dryburgh and Cleve; he also notes Benedictine Christ Church Canterbury used its slype similarly. Gameson discusses the Augustinian houses of Llanthony and Lilleshall, p. 23; I. Ferris, *Haughmond Abbey, Lilleshall Abbey and Moreton Corbet Castle* (English Heritage Guidebook, 2000), p. 17.

¹² Miller & Saxby, pp. 36, 45; Webber, 'The libraries of religious houses', pp. 106–9.

¹³ Personal correspondence.

certainly had one, for certain texts were to be read out at Chapter: in 1387, William Wykeham ruled that at Merton the constitutions of Ottobuono were to be ‘fully recited twice a year in Chapter’.¹⁴ It is not improbable that the guesthouse and royal lodgings also had a book press.¹⁵ Winchester Cathedral had a book room on the first floor, and Richard Gameson noted that certain precious books could be kept in the treasury itself, which could also be located on the first floor.¹⁶ Merton could have had a book room on the first floor of the east range by or during the fifteenth century.

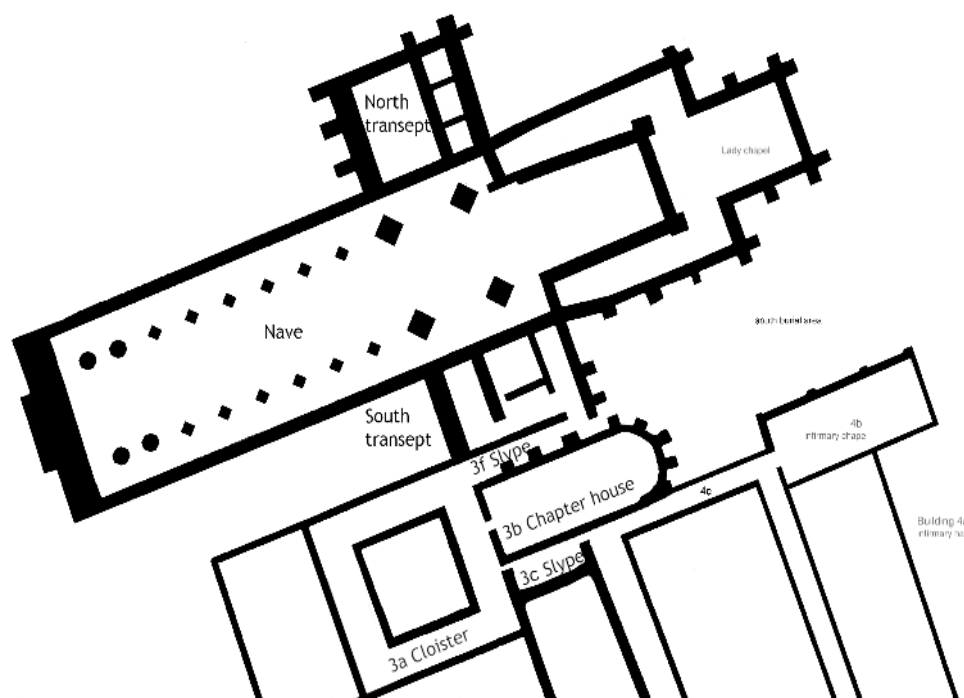


Figure 3.1: Merton Priory church and cloister (fourteenth century),
based on Miller & Saxby

The refectory at Fountains had a small aumbry to keep the texts to be read out at dinner. At Merton, we are not entirely sure where the refectory was — probably in the south range of the cloister, but not necessarily: it has been suggested that the refectory was a separate hall, perhaps the aisled hall to the south-east of the claustral complex (although this building could equally have been a misericord or a guest hall). Wherever the refectory was, it might well have

¹⁴ Heales, p. 268.

¹⁵ David Saxby (personal correspondence) thinks that the sacristy was in the east range just south of the chapter house. R. Gameson, ‘The medieval library (to c.1450)’, in *CHLBI*, p. 16. Heales, p. 268.

¹⁶ Gameson, ‘The medieval library’, p. 17. My thanks to Lesley Milner for her guidance on the location of the sacristy and treasury.

had an aumbry or a free-standing press.¹⁷ There is also evidence from other monasteries that certain documents and books were kept by the prelate.¹⁸ At Merton, we do not even know for sure where the prior's quarters were, let alone whether they had a bookcase; however, the survival of several works once in the possession of individual priors suggests that there was some sort of book store.

Books could be grouped or classified for storage in various ways: by author, size, status, type, function. It is a plausible argument that such groupings formed a link between physical location and content, and show the interaction between reader and text: how different users might employ different books for different functions or different levels of study.¹⁹ The books in Dryburgh and Lilleshall's aumbries were probably communal service books, for use in processions and services, but not to be borrowed. At Leicester in the fifteenth century, liturgical books were located at various parts of the conventual church — the high altar, canons' stalls, pulpitum and organ.²⁰ It is significant that the precentor was the librarian: he was also in charge of liturgical matters, and this succinctly demonstrates the centrality of books to divine service. Cloister books served a different purpose; they were meant chiefly for private reading (*lectio divina*), and were probably kept nearby for easy access. It is probable that Merton had, like Benedictine Abingdon, an *almaria puerorum, iuvenum*, with books specifically for its novices and pupils.²¹

Library collections seem to have been important to the Augustinians: James Clark noted the comparatively large number of library catalogues, and argued that 'whole shelf-sequences of books' was an Augustinian feature.²² At Bridlington, biblical glosses were shelved together, with a classmark 'D';

¹⁷ For Fountains, see Gameson, 'The medieval library', p. 16; M. T. J. Webber, 'Reading in the refectory: monastic practice in England c.1000–c.1300' (presented at the Annual John Coffin Memorial Palaeography Lecture, University of London, 2010), p. 14. The location of Merton's refectory has been suggested by David Saxby (personal correspondence).

¹⁸ See, for example, John Ramsey, below; Bermondsey's catalogue gives one book as 'liber Philippi supprioris': *English Benedictine Libraries: the Shorter Catalogues*, ed. R. Sharpe *et al.*, CBMLC (London, 1996), IV, p. 28.

¹⁹ M. T. J. Webber, 'Monastic space and the use of books in the Anglo-Norman period', in *Anglo-Norman Studies XXXVI: Proceedings of the Battle Conference 2013*, ed. D. Bates (Woodbridge, 2013), pp. 221–40.

²⁰ Webber & Watson, p. 106.

²¹ For the latter group, see Chapter 4. See also N. Orme, 'Schools and schoolmasters (to c.1550)', in *CHLBI*, pp. 422–3.

²² A. Lawrence-Mathers, 'The Augustinians canons in Northumbria: region, tradition, and textuality in a Colonizing Order', in *BSRC*, p.68; J. G. Clark, 'The Augustinians, history, and literature in late medieval England', in *BSRC*, p. 405.

histories were shelved elsewhere, with a classmark 'J'. Sadly, neither catalogue nor any clue as to geographical book organisation at Merton survives. Two volumes (GB-Lbl Royal MS 9 E VI and GB-Llp H890.B6-7) have their titles written on the fore-edge, suggesting that they were kept horizontally in a book-press, fore-edge outwards, for easy and frequent access.

As mentioned above, an important innovation can be observed beginning in the fourteenth century: specific chambers were constructed or designated as *libraria* in which to store an institution's reference collection. *Libraria* developed in the secular environment, notably Oxford colleges, and were adopted by monasteries in the fifteenth century.²³ Libraries were usually first-floor rooms and so we cannot expect to find traces of any such room at Merton, but the programmes of repair that took place during the fifteenth century might have included creating space for such a library room.²⁴

Use

This section analyses the evidence of how, for what purpose, and where the books that constituted the Merton library were used, and draws out those features that point to communal or individual use. The subject-matter of a volume would often reflect its use. An antiphoner would have been used for services; biblical volumes, on the other hand, could have been used in services or could have been for individual study or, as in the case of Merton's Bible discussed below, as a source for sermon materials. Further clues about how, and where, volumes were used may be gleaned from annotations: accents over words may suggest the text was read out loud in, for example, the refectory;²⁵ marginal notes can imply private study (and active learning), and we will see several examples of this below. Such private study was important for all orders, but, as discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, the Augustinians were amongst those orders which allocated the most time to studying. In Benedictine houses, books were to be borrowed in Lent, and to be returned the next Lent. Augustinian rules regarding books were rather more vague, but they encouraged frequent reading, and they imply that books had to be readily accessible. The *Regula tertia* said

²³ D. N. Bell, 'The libraries of religious houses in the late middle ages', in *CHLBI*, p. 147; P. J. Lucas, 'Borrowing and reference: access to libraries in the late middle ages', *CHLBI*, pp. 244-5; Webber, 'Libraries of religious houses', pp. 115-6.

²⁴ Miller & Saxby, pp. 105-6.

²⁵ Webber, 'Reading in the refectory', pp. 3-4.

that ‘books are to be sought at a certain hour on a certain day; whoever asks for them outside that hour, let him not receive one.’²⁶ The writer of the Bridlington Dialogue debated this, however, arguing that ‘hour’ could be a literary singular and actually meant ‘hours’; furthermore, if anyone did want a book outside hours, it was a matter for the prelate’s discretion.²⁷ Hugh of St Victor’s explanation of this rule made clear that ‘the frequent use of books is recommended... The servant of God ought to read much.’²⁸ During a service at Barnwell, no-one should sit in the cloister ‘or write, or read a book... without leave’, but leave could be given, again at the prelate’s discretion, and there were other times when brethren should specifically ‘take their books and go into the cloister, and there read’.²⁹ At the house of GB-WO MS Q.51, the period between Sext and None was for reading, with the instruction that books were to be returned to the bookcase at None.³⁰ We have no rules for Merton, and our conclusions have to be drawn mainly from the books themselves. The *Life of Guy* gives some clues: Rainald of Merton wrote the text ‘between the canonical hours’.³¹ It seems likely that John of Salisbury worked at Merton with Guy of Southwick to collect material about Thomas Becket; a few years later, Edmund of Abingdon stayed at Merton and, since he wrote his *Speculum ecclesie* there, presumably took advantage of its library, which would suggest some freedom of access.³²

As will be discussed in more detail below, some of Merton’s texts, such as Prior William’s miscellany, were probably intended to be read out, at Chapter or in the refectory; others, such as the heavily annotated thirteenth-century Bible, were for private study. The Barnwell author wrote that

books which are to be kept at hand for daily use, whether for singing or reading, ought to be in some common place, to which all the brethren can have easy access for inspection, and selection of anything which seems to them suitable. The books, therefore, ought

²⁶ ‘Codices certa hora singulis diebus petantur; extra horam qui petierit, non accipiat’: JCD, p. 278.

²⁷ Webber & Watson, p. xxiv; *Bridlington Dialogue*, p. 162.

²⁸ *Explanation of the Rule of St Augustine*, trans A. Smith (London and Edinburgh, 1911), p. 84.

²⁹ *Barnwell Observances*, pp. 107, 95, 63–5.

³⁰ S. W. Holland, ‘An Edition of the *Admonitio ad Claustrales* from Worcester Cathedral Manuscript Q.51’ (unpublished PhD thesis, Durham, 1988), p. 64.

³¹ *Life of Guy*, para. 18.

³² See Chapter 5, pp. 245–9; 254–7.

not to be carried away into chambers, or into corners outside the Cloister or the Church.³³

The clear indication from this is that a number of brethren did indeed carry books away into chambers for their own private reading: this instruction might have been a reaction, and intended to tighten procedures. At Lanthony Secunda, a canon took Gratian to the dormitory for some light bedtime reading.³⁴ Some of the surviving volumes from Merton have signatures: 'Richard Windoir' signed the Cambridge Bible, and 'Arnold' signed the *Life of Guy*. John Ramsey's inscription is to be found in several volumes: the prior had his own collection comprising books acquired by him, but also from the priory library.³⁵ A prelate's collection could be sizeable, and indicate his own intellectual status,³⁶ but it may also suggest a wider, shared intellectual culture within the monastery.

The Barnwell author noted that 'brethren must be careful never to write anything that they wish to keep to themselves as their own property; but, by favour of the Prelate, they may keep for their own use a book that they have written, though they must not take it outside without consent of the Prelate.'³⁷ Rainald's *Life of Guy* was apparently written for one Radulfus, but a copy remained at Merton to serve as a manual for behaviour, and it was still there in the fifteenth century, when it was copied and, at some point, bound with a volume by Alexander Nequam.³⁸

The value that Barnwell placed on its books can be seen in its exhortation for the librarian to display the books at Chapter every Lent, so that the brethren might pray for the souls of those who wrote and produced them. This was not unique to Barnwell: there seem to have been similar practices at Cirencester and, indeed, at the Benedictine abbey of Peterborough.³⁹ We have no such evidence for Merton, but we do have evidence from this period of men donating books, and who might have qualified for such prayers: David of

³³ *Barnwell Observances*, pp. 4–5.

³⁴ Llanthony nos. 237–8; Webber & Watson, p. 65.

³⁵ Athanasius, *Opera*, Ampleforth Abbey, C.v.23a; see also Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani*, GB-Ob 4° Z.33 Th. and *Penitentie*, GB-Ob MS Seld. Supra 39.

³⁶ Schlotheuber and McQuillen, 'Books and libraries', p. 983.

³⁷ *Barnwell Observances*, pp. 64–5.

³⁸ GB-Lbl Royal MS E IX.

³⁹ Webber & Watson, p. xxv; *CHLBI*, pp. 110–1.

London gave Merton a book of *quaestiones* on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard (GB-Lbl Royal MS 9 E XII), which we will examine below, and Thomas of Tynemouth left his law books to the community, once his protégé had finished with them, as will be discussed in Chapter 5. There is further evidence of donations by secular clerics to Merton from the sixteenth century (including one who wished to be prayed for), and this will be examined in Chapter 6.

Acquisition

Several volumes give us glimpses of the canons' own book collecting at various levels of study. Some were likely to have been for communal use; others might have been part of a private collection of a canon (so far as that was allowed) or prelate. Collections might have changed over time to reflect the interests of one or more canons or developments in university curricula. The rest of the manuscripts in the volume containing David of London's *quaestiones* seem to have been acquired by one canon (or more), as will be discussed below. Nearly a third of the extant books are connected to the last prior, John Ramsey, who noted the price of books that he bought. Prelates often had their own collections, which included the history of their institution, liturgical texts for their private chapel, digests of canons about monastic life and discipline and legal texts.⁴⁰ Other canons, however, also seem to have had their own books: the monastic prohibition on personal belongings did not, it seems, extend to books. Regulars could not escape developments in the outside world, and as education at university became normal, if still rare, so individual scholars acquired books. Prior John de Kingston gave his student volume (GB-Ob MS Ashmole 1522) to John de Gisborne, who eventually himself succeeded Kingston as prior. Whether this volume belonged to the priory library or stayed as part of the prior's own collection is not known, and in practice might not have mattered, since he lent it to a canon. An agreement from a couple of centuries earlier suggests that the dividing line between personal and institutional book-ownership was not impermeable. Thomas of Tynemouth left his law books to

⁴⁰ J. G. Clark, 'An abbot and his books in late medieval and pre-Reformation England', in *The Prelate in England and Europe 1300–58*, ed. M. Heale (York, 2014), pp. 108–9; Heale, *Abbots*, p. 87. See also GB-Lbl Royal MS 11 B V.

John of Tynemouth while he needed them, to be given to the priory library if and when he did not.⁴¹

Thomas of Tynemouth's law books might have been a substantial corpus: they certainly numbered more than the *Decreta* and *Decretales* mentioned in the grant.⁴² New texts could be added to a library gradually, but the collection could be substantially altered by a generous benefaction, such as happened to Llanthony's collection in the fourteenth century with a bequest of 56 volumes.⁴³ James Clark has argued that two of the defining features of late-mediaeval Augustinian libraries were gifts from people outwith the monastery and acquisitions or collections of individual canons — in contrast to the institutional acquisition of the Benedictines, although there is also evidence of individual book collecting among the Benedictines: Barbara Harvey recorded an example of a fifteenth-century Westminster chamberlain purchasing books from a priest and a Westminster monk for a novice.⁴⁴

As a general trend, individual book-owning in monastic settings became more common as the Middle Ages progressed. By the fifteenth century it was not uncommon for not just prelates but ordinary regular religious to have their own books. At Merton, John Sandwich bought a printed edition of Bernard's *Epistole* in 1519 from his fellow canon Thomas Thwyng.⁴⁵ Thomas Paynell, discussed in detail in Chapter 6, started his sizeable collection of books while at Merton; he bequeathed these to an Oxford college, an institution not unlike a monastery such as Merton.

Books could be given to the library, but they could also be lent, both within the cloisters and to certain people without. Books were not to leave the convent without the prior's permission, and borrowers were supposed to pledge something of adequate value, but it is likely that certain borrowers kept books

⁴¹ B. F. Harvey, *Living and Dying in England, 1100–1540: the Monastic Experience* (Oxford, 1995), p. 67; Chapter 5, pp. 191–2. Also D. Knowles, 'William More, Prior of Worcester', in *Saints and Scholars* (Cambridge, 1962), p. 164. For the relationship between personal and conventual book-owning in the sixteenth century, see J. G. Clark, 'The regular clergy', in *A Companion to the Early Printed Book in Britain*, ed. V. Gillespie and S. Powell (Woodbridge, 2014), pp. 189, 205 and *passim*; Bell, 'Monastic Libraries', pp. 233–4.

⁴² See below, p. 215.

⁴³ Webber & Watson, pp. 94–102.

⁴⁴ Clark, 'Augustinians, history, and literature', pp. 406–9; B. F. Harvey, 'A novice's life at Westminster Abbey in the century before the Dissolution', in *The Religious Orders in Pre-Reformation England*, ed. J. G. Clark (Woodbridge, 2002), p. 67.

⁴⁵ GB-SHRs A.x.15.

for some time or forever. The erasure of the *ex libris* mark in the *Flores Historiarum* (GB-WRec MS 123) could suggest that it left Merton Priory before 1538, and that perhaps it was not supposed to have.⁴⁶ Books did leave Augustinian houses, the flow of intellectual traffic between Cirencester and (Benedictine) Malmesbury being a good example.⁴⁷ Some of the titles that Southwick Priory library shared with Merton were perhaps copied from Merton when its canon Guy became prior of Southwick. His *florilegium*, discussed in Chapter 5, was compiled at Merton, but the surviving copy is from Southwick; the same collection seems to have been copied by Alan of Tewkesbury for Canterbury, and so the *florilegium* provides one example of the travels of texts associated with Merton.⁴⁸

In general, borrowing and lending increased towards and during the thirteenth century, greatly encouraged by church authorities: Stephen Langton wrote that ‘not to lend books is a type of homicide’.⁴⁹ The number of *ex libris* inscriptions therefore also increased, and the idea of a reference collection began to gain currency. With one notable exception, the *quaestiones*, GB-Lbl Royal MS 9 E XII, discussed below, Merton’s *ex libris* marks on pre-fourteenth-century manuscripts are no earlier than the fourteenth century, which may suggest an increase in lending and borrowing at Merton. It is a compelling hypothesis that an increase in borrowing gave rise to the change in storage practices for books, that is, the development during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries of the *librarium* or *libraria*, a particular room housing a monastery’s reference collection.

Richard Sharpe suggested that the size of monastery did not necessarily correspond to the size of its library (i.e. book collection): some monasteries, such as Benedictine Thorney, seem to have had other priorities.⁵⁰ That Merton had such a large library, similar to that of the (even larger) Augustinian house of

⁴⁶ Eton College Library catalogue, <https://catalogue.etoncollege.com/B50079>

⁴⁷ A. N. J. Dunning, *The correspondence of Walter of Mileto at Cirencester Abbey*, Library of Digital Latin Texts (2019). See also Lawrence-Mathers, ‘Augustinian canons in Northumbria’, p. 74.

⁴⁸ Chapter 5, pp. 247–8.

⁴⁹ Webber, ‘Libraries of religious houses’, p. 116.

⁵⁰ J. Greatrex, ‘The English cathedral priories and the pursuit of learning in the later Middle Ages’, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 45 (1994), pp. 399–400, 405, 411; see also her ‘Prosopographical perspectives, or What Can Be Done with Five Thousand Monastic Biographies?’, *Medieval Prosopography*, 20 (1999), p. 137; Sharpe, ‘Thorney’, p. 270.

Cirencester, suggests that its canons had scholarly interests, which carried on throughout the monastery's lifespan, as attested by the acquisitions of printed books in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Teresa Webber noted that some monasteries had intense periods of acquisition, whereas others were more sustained in their collecting.⁵¹ Merton seems to have been one of the latter, and its extant collection is evidence that scholarship was flourishing until it was ripped untimely from the priory cloisters. It also shows how the shape and character of libraries were in part determined by the donations and acquisitions of individuals, both benefactors and canons; there is little evidence of a programme of acquisition, apart from essential texts.⁵²

Libraries were dynamic: books were donated or acquired, and books were retired. Books were physical objects that wore out, or that, like architecture, could be deemed out-of-date and in need of renewal.⁵³ Certain volumes — patristic and scriptural texts, for example — would have stayed throughout. Thus, Meaux Abbey's fifteenth-century catalogue showed a predominantly twelfth- or thirteenth-century collection: this was probably neither parsimony nor David Bell's suggestion of 'deliberate Cistercian policy', but an avoidance of unnecessary expense in replacing or reduplicating texts.⁵⁴ Retired books could be used as fly-leaves for other manuscripts (see, for examples, GB-Lbl Royal MS 5 F XVI, GB-Ob Bodl. 555 and the Merton Annals, GB-Ccc MS 059). Books that were felt to be passé could be relegated to a particular room: at Durham, old-fashioned books were kept in the Spendement.⁵⁵ However, a book's age was not necessarily a relevant factor. Prior William's book (GB-Lbl Royal MS 4 B XIV), still in pristine condition, almost certainly remained in Merton's library until the Dissolution; the thirteenth-century volume of Philip the Chancellor was given to the priory only in 1528.

A final point about Merton's collection of books as a whole takes us to the heart of a monastery's duty of pastoral care. As patron to around 50 parishes, it behoved Merton not only to provide rectors and vicars (a subject for

⁵¹ M. T. J. Webber, 'Monastic and cathedral book collections in the late eleventh and twelfth centuries', in *CHLBI*, p. 112.

⁵² Webber, 'Libraries of religious houses', p. 103.

⁵³ Sharpe, 'The medieval librarian', pp. 237–8; K. Bennett, 'The Book Collections of Llanthony Priory from Foundation until Dissolution (c.1100–1538)' (unpublished PhD thesis, Kent, 2006), pp. 161–2; Bell, *The Libraries of the Cistercians*, p. xxvi.

⁵⁴ D. N. Bell, 'Monastic Libraries: 1400–1557', in *CHBB*, III, p. 241.

⁵⁵ Bell, 'Monastic Libraries', p. 234.

Chapter 4), but to provide — or cause to be provided — service books, too. Fol. 28^r of Merton's fourteenth-century cartulary (GB-Ob MS Laud Misc. 723) notes that its church of St James Tregony was, being stone, in good repair, and that it had a missal, antiphoner and *legenda* from the time of its being in the possession of St Marie du Val (Normandy).⁵⁶ Described as 'nullius valoris', presumably these were either out-of-date or had fallen to pieces. Timothy Morris gave the example of a twelfth-century Augustinian missal acquired by the parish of Hanley Castle, Worcestershire (whose advowson belonged to Benedictine Little Malvern), which was updated to include a large *sanctorale* and a new kalendar in the fourteenth century.⁵⁷ It is not known whether the Thomas Corser who signed it was the priest who acquired it, but the onus for providing service books could fall on priests. When Merton appropriated Barton church (Cambridgeshire) in 1267 and Flore (Northamptonshire) twenty years later, it fell to the vicars to provide the service books and ornaments. However, the responsibility for book-provision was not uniform even across appropriated churches, with Merton itself having to provide service books for Kingston in 1303.⁵⁸ Merton's library in some sense, therefore, extended beyond its walls.

MANUSCRIPT PRODUCTION AND THE USE OF BOOKS

Book production at monasteries declined in the twelfth to fourteenth centuries as other centres grew, although this growth was very gradual and monasteries, such as Cirencester, continued to manufacture books throughout the period.⁵⁹ Styli and oyster shell palettes excavated at Merton could suggest the presence of writing tablets and possibly some sort of manuscript production within the claustral complex, although paints were not used exclusively on manuscripts. Another aid to reflecting on and familiarising oneself with scriptural stories was

⁵⁶ S. Marie du Val swapped Tregony for Merton's holdings in Cahan, Normandy: L. Green, 'The Pommeroy beneficence', *Merton Historical Society Bulletin*, 140 (December, 2001), 10–11.

⁵⁷ T. M. Morris, 'The Augustinian Use of Oseney Abbey: a study of the Oseney ordinal, processional and tonale (Bodleian Library MS Rawlinson c.939)' (unpublished DPhil thesis, Oxford, 1999), p. 122. See also W. Campbell, *The Landscape of Pastoral Care in 13th-Century England* (Cambridge, 2017) p. 120.

⁵⁸ Heales, pp. 147, 184, 190.

⁵⁹ C. de Hamel, 'The roles of books', in CHBB, II, pp. 7, 17; A. N. J. Dunning, 'The correspondence of Walter of Mileto at Cirencester Abbey', *Library of Digital Latin Texts* (2019); *idem*, 'Treasures of Jesus College from Cirencester', *Jesus College Libraries*, 2016 <<https://jesuslibraries.wordpress.com/2017/02/22/treasures-of-jesus-college-from-cirencester/>>.

the wall painting, and these palettes could have been used for decorating walls with images.⁶⁰

There is no trace of any transactions with professional scribes, but Merton, like other monasteries, could have employed professional scribes at times as well as using its own canons.⁶¹ As a busy administrative centre, Merton needed scribes on a regular basis for its own business and perhaps also for the business of royal and episcopal visitors. However, an active chancery does not necessarily imply an active scriptorium. It may be possible with further palæographical study to identify some of the hands that worked on the two cartularies with those of religious or other manuscripts; this is beyond the bounds of this thesis.

The manuscripts which survive from Merton Priory shed little light on the existence of a priory scriptorium, although, as Rodney Thomson noted, scriptoria could be informal and personal, and therefore temporary.⁶² Six extant manuscripts were wholly or partly produced at Merton and a couple more may have been.⁶³ They show writing activity throughout the period, from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries. While they show a continuity of learning at Merton, the sample is too small on which to base any firm conclusions about the presence of a monastic scriptorium.⁶⁴ The other surviving manuscripts were produced elsewhere, representing a collecting policy that supplemented actual production. More detailed codicological study of individual manuscripts (gatherings, prickings, parchment) may help locate the provenance of both the extant manuscripts and those not currently included in Merton's extant corpus, but that is beyond the scope of this thesis. Merton's manuscripts, both those copied at Merton and those imported, follow the patterns of collecting and production described by Thomson *et al.*⁶⁵ These include the relatively pristine condition of the twelfth-century books as opposed to the well-thumbed thirteenth-century ones, the dynamism of the library in terms of acquisition and perhaps loss in the

⁶⁰ Miller & Saxby, p. 223.

⁶¹ R. M. Thomson, 'Monastic and cathedral book production', in CHBB, II, pp. 140–41; M. B. Parkes, 'Handwriting in English books', CHBB, II, p. III.

⁶² Thomson, 'Monastic and cathedral book production', p. 141.

⁶³ GB-Lbl Cotton MS Cleo C VII, Royal MS 4 B XIV, Royal MS 8 E IX, GB-Lca MS Arundel 28, GB-Ob Laud Misc. MS 723-Ccc MS 059, GB; GB-Cu Ee.6.26, GB-Wrec MS 123.

⁶⁴ Bell, 'Monastic libraries', p. 235.

⁶⁵ CHBB, II, *passim*.

latter half of the period (the later-fourteenth and fifteenth centuries), and the individual interests of canons.

THE EXTANT COLLECTION, C.1117–C.1350

We will now move on to an examination of the surviving manuscripts from the first half of Merton's life. Those from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries will form part of Chapter 6. Neil Ker identified 29 books and manuscripts from Merton's library; to this can be added the Merton Annals (GB-Ccc MS 059) and its two cartularies (GB-Lbl Cotton Cleopatra C VII, fols 60–204 and GB-Ob MS Laud Misc. 723). We can assign the writing of both cartularies to Merton canons from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries, and the Annals to one or more canons at the turn of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Other manuscripts written at Merton are the miscellany of Prior William (GB-Lbl Royal MS 4 B XIV) from the late twelfth century, the copy of the *Life of Guy* which became the last section of GB-Lbl Royal MS 8 E IX and the copy of the *Gilbert* texts (GB-Lca MS Arundel 28). The provenance of other manuscripts identified with Merton is either less firmly identifiable or more definitely assigned to another place of origin.

The extant collection and the volumes from the list in the *Registrum Anglie* show that Merton's library was typical of other monastic libraries in the subject-matter of its books. The priory's historical collection followed certain trends — in the thirteenth century, annals, a history derived from Geoffrey of Monmouth and another from Matthew Paris; in the fifteenth, new copies of Merton's own foundation texts, about its patron, Sheriff Gilbert, and one of its first brethren, Guy the Italian. Over half the books (61%) recorded in the *Registrum Anglie* were patristic, which is what we might expect from the interests of not just the canons but the Oxford friars, who gave precedence to them in their recording.⁶⁶ Of the rest, 10% were Victorine texts, and other authors included Bernard of Clairvaux, Anselm of Canterbury, Isidore of Seville and Bede. It is not known how the Oxford friars dealt with compilations of different texts, and therefore there may or may not be a correlation between extant text and the description in the *Registrum Anglie*. Many of these texts were to be found commonly elsewhere, but there are a couple of rarer works which imply that

⁶⁶ *Registrum Anglie*, p. lxxx.

Merton was a centre of learning — two collections of theological works and an early example of a Paris-type Bible, both from the thirteenth century.⁶⁷ Conspicuously lacking is any hint of a service book, but this is probably explained by both the condition of service books used daily and by the sixteenth-century religious reforms that saw the destruction of monasteries and their worship.

The remainder of this chapter will focus on the relationship between the texts and their readers. Some of these texts have not been analysed; those that have been examined before bear re-examination and viewing from different angles. For example, where one text from a miscellany has been studied, it can be helpful to look at the miscellany as a whole. Works have been collected by genre, and topics such as provenance, purpose and level of learning and scholarship are discussed for each volume. Catalogue details for each text are in Appendix 4.

Religious Works

Merton's collection included wide range of religious materials for a range of purposes. Some were theological or philosophical, probably for personal study, such as Abelard's *Dialogus* (Royal MS 11 A V) or the *Tractatus implicitarum* of MS Royal 9 E XII. There were Biblical and exegetical texts, including the Bible itself (GB-Cu Ee.6.26) and Book IV of Peter Lombard's *Sentences*. (Royal MS 9 E VI). There were also collections of sermons and other pastoral literature (although some sermons could count as exegetical material as well). This variety of texts supported the canons' personal studies, and also their preaching and pastoral care.

PRIOR WILLIAM'S BOOK (GB-LBL ROYAL MS 4 B XIV)

With many of the extant manuscripts, it is easier to date their composition rather than acquisition, for which we have to rely on often later *ex libris* marks. However, one volume was in Merton's library from its composition, a theological miscellany compiled by its third prior, William (GB-Lbl Royal MS 4 B XIV). William was prior of Merton from 1167 until his death in 1177. Apart from that, little is known about him, although he did inspire the praise of John of Salisbury, as we will see in Chapter 5.⁶⁸ The attribution to the prior is at the

⁶⁷ GB-Lbl Royal MS 9 E XII; GB-Cu Ee.6.26, explored below.

⁶⁸ See Chapter 5, pp. 206–7.

top of fol. 1^r, with the inscription, in a late-twelfth-century hand, ‘Excerpta domini Willelmi prioris Meritone cuius anima requiescat in sinu Abrahe.’⁶⁹ The inclusion of Hildebert of Lavardin’s letters (fols 43^v–53^r) about the importance of sharing knowledge and having the courage to follow one’s vows indicates William’s own concerns as prior.

There has hitherto been no in-depth examination of Prior William’s book, and Warner and Gilson’s catalogue entry, although still invaluable, needs updating.⁷⁰ The manuscript is a collection of sermons and extracts from a number of authors from Augustine and Prosper of Aquitaine to the more contemporary Hugh of St Victor, Honorius Augustodunensis, Hildebert of Lavardin and Bernard of Clairvaux. It is a large book, about a foot high and eight inches wide; the parchment thick and of good quality. This suggests that it was a communal book to be displayed. It is written in one hand up to fol. 83^r, and thereafter by a second hand. Fol. 2^v has a list of contents, in a twelfth- or thirteenth-century hand, which indicates that it was a work for reference. A fifteenth-century hand summarised some of the contents (fol. 2^r), suggesting that the book was in the library (perhaps being catalogued), if not in use, during the later Middle Ages.

The manuscript was composed as one volume: there are consecutive quire numbers, with catchwords, throughout: these numbers match those on the left-hand margins in the sermon on the ten plagues (fols 19^v–20^r). The text is neat and largely clean: there are corrections, *nota* symbols and reference-point headings in the margins, but no notes or glosses. It is lightly abbreviated, and the end words of many lines have been hyphenated for ease of understanding. Both of these may suggest that it was intended to be read out loud. Whole excerpts, or sections of them, are all of a length suitable for readings, and could reflect the prior’s duty to give sermons to his brethren, for example at Chapter.⁷¹ The table of contents (fol. 2^v) and the clear demarcation of sections suggest that

69 ‘Excerpts by the lord William, prior of Merton, may whose soul rest in the bosom of Abraham.’

70 G. F. Warner and J. P. Gilson, *Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Old Royal and King’s Collections*, II (London, 1921), pp. 86–7.

71 For the description of one such Chapter House volume, see C. N. Ó. Clabaigh, ‘Formed by word and example: the training of novices in fourteenth-century Dublin’, in *Monastic Life in the Medieval British Isles: Essays in Honour of Janet Burton*, ed. K. Stöber et al. (Cardiff, 2018), pp. 41–52.

it was a work of frequent reference.⁷² This could indicate a dual function as a text for individual study and communal or shared study.

The material of William's book comprises reflections on biblical texts and excerpts from both early and contemporary authors about aspects of religious life: extracts from Hugh of St Victor's exegesis, and previously unidentified excerpts from the questions Heloise asked Abelard, the *Problemata Heloise*.⁷³ The *Problemata* excerpts provide a puzzle. There are three known manuscripts of the *Problemata*: two are in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, MSS lat. 14511 (s.xvⁱⁿ) and 2816 (s.xvii); the third, reportedly from the Collège de Navarre, is now lost.⁷⁴ No known copy exists from an English collection, making Merton's unusual, if not unique. William's book contains eight out of 42 problems and solutions (nos 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12). These are, in addition, heavily contracted, often also using different words or constructions. Below is an extract from Problem 3 (fol. 59^r): on the left is William's text, in the middle is the standard edition, and on the right is the text under discussion, Matthew 17:54.⁷⁵

Legitur etiam quod	Legimus quoque in hoc die	
centurio et turba que	passionis quod centurio, et	<i>centurio autem et qui</i>
erat ad spectaculum	qui cum eo erant	<i>cum eo erant</i>
passionis christi cum	custodientes Dominum	<i>custodientes Iesum uiso</i>
expirasset; uidentes	crucifixum, cum expirasset,	<i>terraemotu et his quae</i>
uelum templi scissum.	et uiderent uelum templi	<i>fiebant timuerunt ualde</i>
et terremotum et talia;	scissum, et terræmotura, et	<i>dicentes uere Dei Filius</i>
dicebant percucientes	monumenta aperta,	<i>erat iste</i>
pectora sua. Uere filius	dixerunt: Uere Filius Dei	
dei erat iste...	erat iste...	

Here neither text quotes with literal accuracy from the Bible, as quotations came probably from memory and had the differences that arise as the result of

⁷² C. de Hamel, 'The European medieval book', in *The Book: A Global History*, ed. F. J. F. Suarez and H. R. Woudhuysen (Oxford, 2013), p. 64.

⁷³ Fols 32^v–42^v; 56^v–58^r; 59^r–61^v; 64^v–66^v.

⁷⁴ J. Barrow, C. Burnett and D. Luscombe 'A checklist of the manuscripts containing the writings of Peter Abelard and Heloise and other works closely associated with Abelard and his school', *Revue d'Histoire des Textes*, 14–15 (1984–1985), p. 251.

⁷⁵ This can be found in *PL*, CLXXVIII.680–1, or *Petri Abalardi opera*, ed. V. Cousin (Paris, 1849) I, pp. 237–294 (https://la.wikisource.org/wiki/Problemata_Heloissae).

organic processing. William often contracted his biblical quotations more than the *Problemata*, sometimes just writing ‘et cetera’: he presumed that his reader and/ or audience would know the references. William’s book was clearly written for his priory. The notes accompanying the Merton Bible were also heavily abbreviated, and this also suggests a familiarity of the canons with biblical materials. William’s own text differs from the *Problemata* in certain ways — synonyms and different tenses or voices of verbs, for example. William’s text is a witness to the *Problemata*, but it needs further study to ascertain its exact relationship to the *Problemata*. This could be a very liberal copy, a copy of another, earlier, version, or notes from hearing it. William’s copy of the *Problemata* joins two other texts by Abelard (in Royal MS II A V), discussed below.

William also gathered extracts from Bernard of Clairvaux’s *Liber de laude novae militiae ad milites templi*, in which Bernard, praising the new order of the Knights Templar, describes places of the Holy Land in allegorical and metaphorical terms. These particular extracts could act as a virtual pilgrimage and a reminder of the vocation of a *miles Christi*, as well as a reflection on personal morality: they were carefully chosen. Bernard is also represented in some miscellaneous sentences (20^v–21^v), which also include *dicta* from Augustine.

Augustine’s own writings (22^r–23^v, 24^{r-v} and 66^v–75^v) are from his anti-Pelagian texts, which sought to keep ascetics from disregarding grace and slipping into Pelagianism, and from his *De vera religione* and *De beata vita*, two philosophical treatises on living a religious life. Although these texts tend towards a practical end (guidance on the religious life), their theological-philosophical nature needs a trained and intelligent audience or readership. Taken together with other volumes that we will encounter below, this collection suggests that Merton’s was a cerebral community, but with an interest in active ministry.⁷⁶

Fols 83^r–159^r are a ‘collectiones fragmentorum de mensa mathei evangeliste’, crumbs for (as the colophon stipulates) the digestion of the sons of the Church.⁷⁷ Warner and Gilson described these ‘crumbs’ as ‘a commentary on

⁷⁶ My thanks to Andrew Harvey for discussions about Augustine.

⁷⁷ ‘Hec ut potui collegi fragmenta de pane beatissimi evangeliste Mathei; accedite, prandete, amici, sancte matris ecclesie filii’. See Warner and Gilson, *Catalogue of Western Manuscripts*, I, p. 87.

S. Matthew, presumably by William of Merton himself⁷⁸; closer inspection shows that not only did William take material from the Gospel itself but he also used the *Glossa ordinaria*: many passages are taken from both. William's skilful interweaving of gloss and original prose is similar to his treatment of the *Problemata*.⁷⁸ Below is the beginning of William's *collectiones*; I have underlined concordances with the *Prothemata in Mattheum* from the *Glossa*.⁷⁹

Omnium evangelistarum communis intentio est unam commendare personam ueri dei et hominis jesu christi. Simulque nos instruere per ea que gessit in hominem ut deposita imagine ueteris hominis de cetero portemus imaginem celestis. Unde et evangelium id est bona annuntiatio vocatur eorum narratio que nobis promittit conglorificationem si non recusemus compassionem. Quatuor sancti evangeliste; qui sancti quasi quatuor animalia quadrigam domini quatuor rotarum trahentia in qua vehitur dominus per quatuor climata mundi. Vel ideo quatuor quia genus humanum quadrifida morte corruptum; per predicationem evangelii erat vivificandum.

William's familiarity with the *Glossa ordinaria* is striking. The *Glossa* was created in the early part of the twelfth century at the schools of Laon. From there it went, by about 1130, to Paris, via the abbey of St Victor. In Paris it was copied and disseminated elsewhere.⁸⁰ Constance Bouchard argued that the Cistercians were 'instrumental' in transmitting copies of the *Glossa*, and that

the earliest glossed Gospels in England were found in the glossed copy of the four evangels which Thomas Becket brought back in 1170 from his exile at the Cistercian house of Pontigny, where an analysis of the manuscript clearly shows it to have been produced... a manuscript which then became the basis of glossed Gospel production in England.⁸¹

⁷⁸ An analogous approach can be found in Radulphus Ardens' *Speculum universale* Radulphus Ardens: *The Questions on the Sacraments: Speculum Universale* 8.31-92, ed. and trans. C. P. Evans, *Medieval Law and Theology*, 3 (Toronto, 2010), pp. 18-9.

⁷⁹ https://gloss-e.irht.cnrs.fr/php/editions_chapitre.php?id=liber&numLivre=55&chapitre=55_Prol.2

⁸⁰ A. Andrée, 'Gilbertus Universalis: *Glossa Ordinaria in Lamentationes Ieremie Prophete Prothemata et Liber I*: A Critical Edition with an Introduction and a Translation' (unpublished PhD thesis, Stockholm, 2005), pp. 18-28.

Thomas Becket, having been schooled at Merton, could have introduced a *Glossa* to the priory. But Bouchard overstates her case. For one thing, a contributor to the *Glossa* was Gilbert the Universal, who became bishop of London in 1128: it is unthinkable that he, having worked on the compilation of the *Glossa*, did not help disseminate the *Glossa* in England. Furthermore, given the role of the canons of St Victor in ‘polishing’ the *Glossa*, it is likely that the Augustinians played a part in its dissemination.⁸² Merton had territorial connexions to northern France (it held land in Normandy), but it seems also to have had links with Parisian and northern French schools: northern French exegesis would therefore have been able to find its own way to Merton before 1170. Wherever or however William became acquainted with the *Glossa*, his own commentary is not a gloss, but continuous prose — a long homily. Its straightforward style again hints that it might have been for reading out, although this would not have precluded it as a text for personal study for canons of various stages of learning.

William’s compilation shows both wide and deep reading of various religious and theological texts, and a thoughtfulness about the education and edification of his canons. The excerpts assume a knowledge of biblical and patristic texts, but they are suitable for various levels of audience, supporting the idea that this was part of the communal learning of the priory, and perhaps to be read out at Chapter. Hildebert’s letter encouraging the sharing of knowledge might have been aimed at the more learned of William’s canons; his appreciation and understanding of Augustine or of William’s own exegesis might have been deeper than the less experienced canons, but they would also have benefitted from it and, for example, Heloise’s *Problemata*. It is not known from what William culled the excerpts contained in MS 4 B XIV, whether they were volumes in Merton’s library or borrowed from elsewhere. Some of the titles are listed in the *Registrum Anglie*, but most are not. As noted above, the compilers of the *Registrum* were by no means comprehensive in what they chose to record,⁸³ and there is a span of over 150 years between William’s book

81 C. B. Bouchard, ‘The Cistercians and the “Glossa Ordinaria”’, *The Catholic Historical Review*, 86 (2000), pp. 190–1.

82 Andrée, ‘Glossa Ordinaria’, pp. 24–26; 40–45. Cirencester’s copy of a glossed Psalter (GB-Ob MS. Laud Lat. 17) is from this period: E. Solopova, *Latin Liturgical Psalters in the Bodleian Library: A Select Catalogue* (Oxford, 2013), pp. 39–43.

83 *Registrum*, p. lxiii.

and the *Registrum*, but the presence of even these few works in their list could suggest that Merton's library contained more volumes from which William culled his excerpts. It is also likely that some volumes were lent by other houses, but we lack the evidence of inter-monastic lending that there is, for example, at Cirencester.⁸⁴ Most of these texts were in the abbey of St Victor: taken with Royal MS II A V, this may be evidence of connexions with St Victor, but that is, at present, entirely speculative.⁸⁵ In any case, it is clear that William was well read, and the number of twelfth-century authors included in his collection show an up-to-date interest in theology and pastoral care. He therefore fits into a list of intellectual Augustinian priors from his generation, who included Robert of Bridlington, Clement of Llanthony, Robert of Cricklade, Master Wigod of Oseney, Maurice of Kirkham and John of Hexham.⁸⁶ This book also suggests that William, as head of the priory, was keen to disseminate his learning to his canons to improve their understanding of theological matters and their canonical vocation. It may be that this collection was also aimed beyond the priory walls, as something on which his canons could themselves base homilies or sermons.

BASIL, *EXAMERON*, *ET AL.* (GB-LBL ROYAL MS 5 F XVI)

A second theological miscellany from the end of the twelfth century is GB-Lbl Royal MS 5 F XVI, although the evidence of its ownership by Merton comes only from a sixteenth-century *ex libris* inscription (fol. 1). This manuscript comprises a sermon and the *Hexameron* by St Basil, works by Augustine and Pseudo-Augustine, and Prosper's *De vita contemplativa*. The parts of the volume are in different hands, but, from its layout, the volume as a whole seems to have been produced in one place. It is not of the presentation quality of, for example, William's book, having a variable quality of parchment with uneven colouration, holes and follicles. It was written in sections, demonstrated by the

84 For some near-contemporary cross-fertilization, see A. N. J. Dunning, 'The Correspondence of Walter of Mileto at Cirencester Abbey', *Library of Digital Latin Texts* (2019) <<https://andrewdunning.ca/the-correspondence-of-walter-of-mileto-at-cirencester-abbey>>.

85 *Le Catalogue de la Bibliothèque de l'Abbaye de Saint-Victor de Paris de Claude de Grandrue, 1514*, ed. G. Ouy et al. (Paris, 1983).

86 R. Sharpe, *Handlist*, p. 789; Bennett, 'Llanthony', pp. 67–9; A. N. J. Dunning, 'St Frideswide's Priory as a centre of learning in early Oxford', *Medieval Studies*, 80 (2018), 253–96; H. E. Salter, 'Historical revisions: XLIX. — The medieval University of Oxford', *History*, New Series 14 (1929), p. 58; Lawrence-Mathers, 'Augustinians canons in Northumbria', pp. 69–71.

variation in the size of letter and text, and even folio, but the similarity of capitals links the sections together (for example, fols 83^v and 99^r). The production of different sections by several scribes led to a binding muddle: the beginning of the *Hexameron* was written in column b on fol. 98^v, continued on what is now 2^v, but stopped at the end of that folio. After that false start, the *Hexameron* begins properly on fol. 9^r. (This is not the only binding to have mixed up the page order: cf. GB-Lbl Royal MS 11 A V, below.) The end fly-leaves are from an eleventh-century service book. This may suggest that the manuscript was not bound at Merton, or that Merton had acquired the service book either as a book or as scrap parchment.

The *Hexameron* was composed by Basil for his congregation, and one commentator has described it as ‘simple wisdom for simple folk’.⁸⁷ This was material for preaching, suitable for all levels of learner, both within a monastery and without. It was an influential text during the Middle Ages, and many more copies must have existed than the surprisingly few recorded in or surviving from the monasteries of England and Wales. Grosseteste borrowed (and probably failed to return) one from Bury St Edmunds.⁸⁸ The *Registrum Anglie* records copies only at Merton and Reading; *MLGB3* has only Merton; Webber and Watson have only Leicester.⁸⁹ Royal MS 5 F XVI may or may not be the *Hexameron* listed in the *Registrum*: the cataloguer could have described a different copy, for although the *Hexameron* and the two articles preceding and following it (Basil’s sermons and Augustine’s *Contra epistolam Parmeniani*) are listed in the *Registrum Anglie*, the final two articles (Pseudo-Augustine’s *Responsiones ad consulta Orosii* and Prosper’s *De vita contemplativa*) are absent.⁹⁰ It is possible that Merton had more than one copy of certain works, especially if certain copies were ‘select extracts’ only.⁹¹ The articles by Augustine *et al.* suggest an audience or readership within the priory, rather than further afield.

87 Lim, R., ‘The politics of interpretation in Basil of Caesarea’s ‘Hexameron’’, *Vigiliae Christianae*, 44 (1990), p. 362.

88 B. Smalley, ‘A collection of Paris lectures of the later twelfth century in the MS. Pembroke College, Cambridge 7’, *The Cambridge Historical Journal*, 6.1 (1938), p. 105.

89 *Registrum*, p. 135; *MLGB3*; Webber & Watson, p. 497.

90 *Registrum*, pp. 252–3.

91 This is Smalley’s phrase: ‘A collection of Paris lectures’, p. 105. Leicester had more than one copy of several texts: Webber & Watson, p. 303 and pp. 120–399 *passim*.

The text is fairly clean, but there are signs of readership. There are at least four different hands in the margins: a thirteenth-century one, writing ‘nota’ with an ‘o’ on the diagonal of the ‘N’, another writing with a pencil (for example, fol. 19^r.) A fifteenth-century hand has written on fols 71^r, 74^v and 79^v. A further hand left marginal squiggles (for example, 102^r). This manuscript was apparently at Merton until the sixteenth century, for the *ex libris* (fol. 1^v) is in a sixteenth-century hand. The physical appearance of the manuscript suggests its active use over a long period. This evidence suggests that the concerns of the later canons, about pastoral care, were broadly the same as previous generations, which accords with evidence from, for example, the Merton Bible, discussed below.

BERNARDUS SILVESTRIS *ET AL.* (GB-LBL ROYAL MS 15 A XXXII)

GB-Lbl Royal MS 15 A XXXII is a collection of theological works from the thirteenth century. The *ex libris* (fol. 2^r) is in the same fourteenth-century hand as that of Royal MS 11 A V, and it is possible that some of the doodles were by the same hand as those in GB-Ob Digby 147, discussed in Chapter 6. It also has marginalia in at least two fifteenth-century hands (for example, fols 74^r, and 75^r), one of whom found it noteworthy that, according to Solinus, ‘elephans fugit murie’ (‘the elephant flees from the mouse’, fol. 88^v). The manuscript is much more cohesive miscellany than Royal MS 11 A V and seems to have been conceived as a single volume. The hands are different, changing at the end of fol. 52^v, but the text is in a single column throughout, with marginal headings acting as place-markers. The manuscripts whose production we can attribute to Merton all tend towards a double-column layout, suggesting that this volume was acquired from elsewhere.

As a whole, this collection of texts in one volume reflects the growth throughout the twelfth century of interest in nature as a way to knowledge of the self and of God, as discussed in Chapter 2. All three of the works which make up this volume (Bernardus Silvestris’ *Cosmographia*, Hildebert of Lavardin’s *Liber de querimonia* and Solinus’ *De mirabilis mundi*) influenced or were influenced by Boethius. Merton had a copy of Boethius’ *De consolacione*, perhaps housed near or with this collection.⁹² Bernardus Silvestris’ *Cosmographia*, or *De mundi*

⁹² *Registrum*, p. 253; B. K. Balint, ‘A consolation for “Moderni”: Hildebert’s “Liber de Querimonia”’, *Carmina Philosophiae*, 13 (2004), 1–21.

universitate, was a prosimetric allegory on nature and the order of the universe probably written in the 1140s. Winthrop Wetherbee called it ‘a remarkable distillation of the work of the twelfth-century Platonists’, and Mark Kauntze gave it as an example, along with Alan of Lille, of the twelfth-century ‘imitation’ of classical scholarship and texts, where the authors drank in Antiquity and formulated something at once old and new.⁹³ The *Cosmographia* was bipartite: the first part, the *Megacosmus*, dealt with the ordering of universal chaos; the second, the *Microcosmus*, with the nature of the human.⁹⁴

The *Liber de querimonia* was not the only opus of Hildebert of Lavardin in Merton’s library: his letters were excerpted in Prior William’s miscellany (discussed above). *De querimonia* is a prosimetric dialogue between body and soul, based on, but departing from Boethius (in much the same way as Bernardus departed from his classical models) in its exploration of emotion, intention, and confession and penitence.⁹⁵ *De querimonia* sits alongside the miscellanies which included works by Simon of Tournai, Alan of Lille and Peter Abelard, and its approach lies under the confessional thinking of canons such as Guy of Southwick.

The *Cosmographia* was also bound together with *De querimonia* at Cistercian Rievaulx, but it was found at Llanthony and the Premonstratensian house of Titchfield. Not many records of the *Cosmographia* survive in monastic catalogues, and many of those that do were solely the *Megacosmus*. The only other Augustinian house with a record of having *De querimonia* was Leicester, although it occurs in several of the larger Benedictine libraries. The texts in these cases are found in miscellanies together with sermons, sentences and histories.⁹⁶

93 W. Wetherbee, ‘Alan of Lille, “De planctu Naturae”: The Fall of Nature and the Survival of Poetry’, *The Journal of Medieval Latin*, 21 (2011), p. 228; M. Kauntze, *Authority and Imitation: A Study of the Cosmographia of Bernardus Silvestris*, Mittellateinische Studien und Texte, 47 (Leiden, 2014), pp. 134; 172–4. See also *Bernardus Silvestris: Cosmographia*, ed. P. Dronke (Leiden, 1978).

94 Wei, *Intellectual Culture*, p. 41.

95 Balint, ‘A consolation for “Moderni”’, pp. 7–14; *PL*, 171.989–1004.

96 Webber & Watson, pp. 78, 88, 230; *The Friars’ Libraries*, ed. K. W. Humphreys, CBMLC (London, 1990), I, p. 254; *The Libraries of the Cistercians, Gilbertines and Premonstratensians*, ed. D. N. Bell, CBMLC (London, 1992), III, pp. 108–9, 190, 287; *St Augustine’s Abbey, Canterbury*, ed. B. C. Barker-Benfield, CBMLC (London, 2008), XIII.3, p. 2102; *Syon Abbey with the Libraries of the Carthusians*, ed. V. Gillespie and A. I. Doyle, CBMLC (London, 2001), IX, p. 713; *Peterborough Abbey*, ed. K. Friis-Jensen and J. M. W. Willoughby, CBMLC (London, 2001), VIII, p. 197.

Merton's collection, although more focused, was therefore similar to those of larger monastic libraries.

ABELARD ET AL. (GB-LBL ROYAL MS 11 A V)

This is a portable (7½" x 6") compilation of unbound booklets in various hands and various layouts, and succinctly described by Blanche Boyer and Richard McKeon as 'in part anonymous and in general incomplete'.⁹⁷ The contents are a miscellany of theological excerpts old and new: Jerome and Isidore, on the one hand; Bernard of Clairvaux and Peter Abelard on the other. From the *ex libris* inscription, this was in Merton's library by the fourteenth century, although the manuscript is from around 1200 and might therefore have been an earlier acquisition or series of acquisitions. It bears Thomas Wolsey's monogram from the sixteenth century, and we may infer its existence at Merton until then.⁹⁸

The components of this manuscript are booklets or quires produced and/ or circulated separately and bound together shortly after their acquisition, although as the volume has been rebound (and trimmed), exact details of its first binding are missing. Compilations of booklets newly acquired or already in circulation were common in monastic libraries, and they make up a sizeable proportion of Merton's surviving manuscript volumes. This volume has been well used: the parchment, fairly thin, is grubby and flexible. Several folios are stained. There are many annotations: underlinings and manicules, for example at passages about man's relationship with God (fols 13^v, 20^v 24^v, 25^r, 80^v, 81^r). The marginal notations are in pencil (e.g. fols 13^r, 28^v) and resemble the work of an annotator of the volume of Simon of Tournai (GB-Lbl Royal MS 9 E XII, fol. 149^v). The different hands (at least five) and layouts (single and double columns) suggest their separate circulation before collation. The last three folios (i.e. the second halves of the first three sheets) are cut out. This evidence suggests that the copyist ran out of time in copying the *Dialogus*, and the text attributed to Bernard was inserted to complete the quire, perhaps at the book's binding. The copyist of this might have collected the other sections, which perhaps were then bound when collector and collection reached Merton, and these texts may be a

⁹⁷ Peter Abelard, *Sic et Non: A Critical Edition*, ed. B. B. Boyer and R. P. McKeon (Chicago, 1977), p. 46.

⁹⁸ J. P. Carley, ed., *The Libraries of King Henry VIII*, CBMLC (London, 2000), VII, p. 190, no. H2.1080; Warner and Gilson, *Catalogue*, I, p. 337.

witness to personal learning and study. The texts are highly abbreviated, which may be further evidence of this.

The first booklet (of three quires) comprises various sentences, ascribed by Dom. Lottin to the ‘school of Laon’, but by subsequent scholarship to a

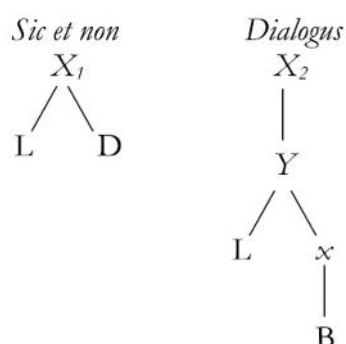


Figure 3.2: Stemma of *Sic et non* and the *Dialogus*, based on Boyer & McKeon and Thomas. L is the Merton Abelard; D is the Douai *Sic et non*; B, the Balliol *Dialogus*. Letters in italics are putative MSS.

more general tradition.⁹⁹ Some of these are sentences on the sacraments, including Alexander I’s canon and John of Avranches’ exposition on the Mass (fols 29^r–30^v), and this booklet was one of several volumes on the sacraments at Merton: others included sermons on them by Hugh of St Victor and Ivo of Chartres.¹⁰⁰ The scribe of this booklet included manicules and dog’s heads, on fols 13^v, 20^r, 23^r, 24^v, 25^r; the dog face on 23^r crosses the bifolium, which indicates that it preceded the binding. This suggests that the scribe was a student of the *sententia* as well as a copyist, and this copy of these sentences may support Philip Reynolds’ idea that these were transmitted orally as part of

‘pedagogical performance’.¹⁰¹

Reynolds observed that monks (particularly the Cistercians) collected and compiled sentential literature ‘long after the more powerful technique of *quaestiones* had superseded *sententiae* in the urban schools’.¹⁰² He argued that this might have resulted from a conservatism within the cloister. However, Merton’s collection included both *sententiae* and *quaestiones*, the two categories being, in this case, stitched into the same book. Furthermore, Abelard’s works were texts

99 O. Lottin, ‘Aux origines de l’école théologique d’Anselme de Laon’, *Recherches de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale*, 10 (1938), 101–22; *idem*, ‘Nouveaux fragments théologiques de l’école d’Anselme de Laon: Quelques manuscrits anglais’, *Recherches de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale*, 11 (1939), 242–59; F. P. Bliemetzrieder, *Anselms von Laon systematische Sentenzen* (Münster, 1919), pp. 47–105; P. L. Reynolds, *How Marriage Became one of the Sacraments: The Sacramental Theology of Marriage from its Medieval Origins to the Council of Trent* (Cambridge, 2016), p. 302.

100 *Registrum*, pp. 253–4. John of Avranches: PL, CXLVII.202 Alexander’s canon on the Mass is to be found in chapter 81 of Ivo of Chartres’ *Decretum*, although this is not recorded in the *Registrum* for Merton.

101 Reynolds, *Marriage*, p. 302.

102 *Ibid.*, p. 295.

more associated with the schools than the cloister; Merton's copy of two of his works indicate an interaction of Merton with the schools.

An original and controversial thinker, Abelard's influence was mainly through his students; according to surviving evidence, his works were not transmitted in any appreciable quantity: Abelard's writings were a specialist interest.¹⁰³ Abelard's writings in Royal MS A V are excerpts from the *Sic et non* (comprising 57 out of a possible 158 questions) and the *Dialogus inter Philosophum Iudaeum et Christianum*. The rubrics at the top of both are from the same period as the copy, which suggests that the volume was bound shortly after the acquisition of the various quires. During this process, the first two quires of *Sic et non* were swapped, so that the title precedes what should be the second section but is here the first.¹⁰⁴ Boyer and McKeon noted this copy's similarity to another manuscript of *Sic et non*, F-DOU MS 357 ('D' in fig. 2), which belonged to the Benedictine abbey of Anchin (Flanders), and suggested a common parent, the differences showing 'revision in progress'. Royal MS II A V ('L' in fig. 2) was the later version, with some 'newly formulated' questions, and revisions or developments of others.¹⁰⁵ Most of the questions are rubricated, but only eight have the capitals that the scribe left space for: the manuscript was unfinished when it left its place of production.

Sic et non is absent from English monastic library catalogues, although it was noted in the *Registrum* at the Scottish abbeys of Dunfermline and Kelso (misattributed to Peter of Poitiers).¹⁰⁶ The only other surviving manuscript of it in England is GB-Cu K.k.3.24 (s.xii). This is part of another miscellany of theological texts, largely Jerome and Augustine, probably from the Canterbury area, although the institution is unknown.¹⁰⁷ David Luscombe noted William of

¹⁰³ D. Luscombe, *The School of Peter Abelard: The Influence of Abelard's Thought in the Early Scholastic Period*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought: New Series (Cambridge, 1969), pp. 98, 308–12; Y. Iwakuma, 'Influence', in *The Cambridge Companion to Abelard*, ed. J. E. Brower and K. Guilfooy, Cambridge Companions to Philosophy (Cambridge, 2004), pp. 305–35 <<https://doi.org/10.1017/CCOL0521772478.011>> His works are largely absent from the catalogues in CBMLC, and from *MLGB3*.

¹⁰⁴ Boyer and McKeon, *Sic et Non*, pp. 46–9.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 47–9. Cf. Luscombe's comments on the 'editorial nightmare' of *Sic et non: School of Abelard*, p. 96.

¹⁰⁶ *Registrum*, pp. lxxiv, 305, 308.

¹⁰⁷ Boyer and McKeon, *Sic et Non*, pp. 68–72; *A Catalogue of the Manuscripts Preserved in the Library of the University of Cambridge, Edited for the Syndics of the University Press* (repr., Hildesheim, 1980), III, pp. 631–3; Luscombe, *School of Abelard*, p. 91; J. Barrow, D. Luscombe, and C.-S.-F. Burnett, 'A checklist of the manuscripts containing the writings of

St Thierry's comment to Bernard that *Sic et non*, a monstrous work, 'hate[s] the light' (John 3:20) and is 'not sought after' — but copies, as Luscombe wrote, were 'circulating in a mysterious way';¹⁰⁸ there must have been more copies of it than are apparent now, but how rare or common it was is unknown.

The *Dialogus inter Philosophum* is also lacking from monastic catalogues, and Royal MS 11 A V is the earliest extant copy in Britain.¹⁰⁹ This *Dialogus* is incomplete, but it was so when the book was compiled in the thirteenth century. The place of production is unknown; as noted above, the place of compilation was probably Merton. Eligius Buytaert wrote that the person (presumably a Merton canon) who wrote the title (*Pars disputationis inter christianum et philosophum quam composuit Petrus Abailardus*) was 'a knowledgeable reader or librarian', and that is borne out by the collection as a whole.¹¹⁰

The other early copy of the *Dialogus* in England is at Balliol College (GB-Obac MS 29; 'B' in fig. 2). This is a later (fourteenth-century) manuscript containing a number of Abelard's works (but not *Sic et non*). Constant Mews postulated that it was copied from one (or more) manuscript in a Benedictine abbey in north-eastern France — the area of Anchin. Giovanni Orlandi noted its coincidence with Merton's *Sic et non* text, and suggested a northern French ancestor for both works.¹¹¹ The abbot of Anchin from c.1131 to 1165 was Goswin, who set out to collect texts by leading contemporary thinkers.¹¹² As a student he had come head-to-head with his teacher, Peter Abelard, and Abelard's works would, therefore, have interested him. Goswin's circumstances may suggest a Parisian origin for the parent manuscript(s); if so, there may also be a Paris connexion with Merton, or at least its own copies of *Sic et non* and the

Peter Abelard and Heloise and other works closely associated with Abelard and his school', *Revue d'Histoire des Textes* (1986), 183–302 (p. 195).

108 D. Luscombe, *School of Abelard*, p. 63; *PL*, clxxxii.532.

109 *Petrus Abaelardus: Dialogus inter Philosophum, Iudaeum et Christianum*, ed. R. Thomas (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 1970), pp. 20–21; *Peter Abelard: Collationes*, ed. and trans. J. Marenbon and G. Orlandi (Oxford, 2001), pp. xcii–xcv; J. A. Allen, 'On the dating of Abailard's *Dialogus*: a reply to Mews', *Vivarium*, 36 (1998), 135–51.

110 E. M. Buytaert, 'Abelard's Collationes', *Antonianum*, 44 (1969), 18–39 (p. 20).

111 C. J. Mews, 'Introduction', in *Petri Abaelardi Opera Theologica*, ed. E. M. Buytaert, Corpus Christianorum. Continuatio Mediaevalis 13 (Turnholt, 1969), III, pp. 255–6; Marenbon and Orlandi, *Collationes*, p. xcvi.

112 Mews, 'Introduction', p. 255; Barrow *et al.*, 'Checklist', p. 197.

Dialogus. Outside the Paraclete, the abbey of St Victor was the major repository for Abelard's works, and Merton's copy may show links with St Victor.¹¹³

With its mixture of exegetical, theological and moral excerpts, this miscellany, like the one discussed next, shows an intellectual approach to the practical end of personal study and communal teaching.¹¹⁴

QUÆSTIONES: SIMON OF TOURNAI ET AL. (GB-LBL ROYAL MS 9 E XII)

Another collection of theological, and philosophical, texts is a volume that was not produced, or wholly produced, at Merton, but was in its library by the early thirteenth century. The anathema on fols 1^r and 10^v of GB-Lbl Royal MS 9 E XII reads:

Hunc librum dedit magister David Londoniensis ecclesie beate Marie de Meritona, quem qui abstulerit uel quocumque modo alienaverit uel pignori subposuerit uel extra septa ecclesie commodauerit uel titulum istum deleuerit uel mutauerit, anathema sit.¹¹⁵

The only obvious, or even apparent, 'master David of London' of the period was the graduate of Paris and Bologna, canon of St Paul's and clerk to the bishop of London. David (d.1189) acted for Gilbert Foliot, bishop of London (1163–87), during the Becket dispute, and gained a reputation for his diplomacy at the papal curia. At some point in the 1170s, he seems to have fallen out with Gilbert Foliot and become attached instead to the household of Roger, bishop of Worcester (1163–79). A cordial letter from Bartholomew, bishop of Exeter (1161–84), congratulating him on helping the Augustinian house at Guisborough (Yorkshire), suggested to Zachary Brooke that David had good relations with the Becket party.¹¹⁶ He carried on scholarly activities throughout his politico-ecclesiastical career.¹¹⁷ There is no evidence (other than this manuscript) for a

¹¹³ Luscombe, *School of Abelard*, pp. 65–6.

¹¹⁴ I. P. Wei, *Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris: Theologians and the University, c.1100–1330* (Cambridge, 2012), p. 35.

¹¹⁵ 'This book Master David of London gave to the Church of the Blessed Mary of Merton; whoever steals it or in some other way causes it to disappear or pawns it or lends it outside the convent walls or deletes or defaces its title, let him be cursed'.

¹¹⁶ Z. N. Brooke, 'The register of Master David of London and the part he played in the Becket crisis', in *Essays in History presented to Reginald Lane Poole*, ed. H. W. C. Davis (Oxford, 1927), p. 244.

¹¹⁷ M. G. Cheney, *Roger, Bishop of Worcester 1164–1179* (Oxford, 1980), p. 207 and fn. 54; C. N. L. Brooke, 'David of London', *ODNB*.

relationship with Merton Priory, but given David's scholarly leanings, his proximity in London and his acquaintance with the circles of Bishops Roger and Bartholomew, and a northern Augustinian house, a friendship with Merton Priory was not unlikely.

There is, however, a problem: the manuscript appears to be too late for David, for, although the subject matter is from the second half of the twelfth century, the palaeographical evidence suggests that the various parts of this composite manuscript were written around 1200. It is, however, possible that the first section (fols 1^r–10^v), and perhaps some other parts, is slightly earlier.¹¹⁸ This first section, enveloped by the anathema, contains a set of *quaestiones* on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard (d.1160). The rest of the volume contains other theological (and logical) *quaestiones*, complementing this first section. The first section could, therefore, have existed separately, being the gift of Master David and subsequently bound with the rest, and that it was only to this section to which the 'liber' in the *ex libris* referred. In this case, the rest would have been collected by the canons themselves. However, it is also possible that the whole volume was the 'liber' referred to in the *ex libris*. The different hands at work throughout the volume, and the different layouts of several articles, may suggest a compilation after writing and therefore support the former idea; this would find further support in the analogy of the Bible that we will discuss next, compiled at around the time. Like the Bible, this book would be a good subject for a detailed palaeographical and codicological analysis.

The volume comprises a number of *quaestiones* and treatises. The latter cover theology, ethics and logic, and include works by Simon of Tournai (c.1130–1201) Alan of Lille (c.1128–1202/3) and William de Montibus (d.1213).¹¹⁹ Both Alan and Simon of Tournai taught at Paris, Simon himself using Alan's works. They both, in Franco Giusberti's words, 'constitute one of the most

¹¹⁸ See also F. Giusberti, 'A treatise on implicit propositions from around the turn of the twelfth century: an edition with some introductory notes', *Cahiers de l'Institut du Moyen-Âge Grec et Latin*, 21 (1977), p. 46. My thanks to Clarck Drieshen and Tessa Webber.

¹¹⁹ G. R. Evans, *Alan o Lille: The Frontiers o Theology in the Later Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 4, 6; O. Lottin, 'Alain de Lille, une des sources des « Disputationes » de Simon de Tournai', *Recherches de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale*, 17 (1950), 175–86; C. P. Evans, *Simon o Tournai: On the Incarnation o Christ* (Toronto, 2017), pp. 2–8; J. W. Goering, 'William de Montibus', *ODNB*; see also *idem*, *William de Montibus (c.1140–1213): The Schools and the Literature o Pastoral Care, Studies and Texts*, 108 (Toronto, 1992) and A. N. J. Dunning, *Notes from the School o William de Montibus* (Toronto, 2016).

interesting attempts in the late twelfth century to construct a theological epistemology'.¹²⁰ Some of the ideas contained in this manuscript, notably Alan of Lille's *De uirtutibus et de uiciis et de donis spiritus sancti* (fols 158^r–160^v, illustrated in this manuscript with trees of virtues and vices) and his *Quoniam homines a uera sue rationis* (fols 161^r–210^v), share an Aristotelian view of ethics with Abelard's *Dialogus*, excerpts of which are in Royal MS II A V.¹²¹ Alan was a student of Abelard alongside another Aristotelian scholar, John of Salisbury, who will be discussed in Chapter 5.

William de Montibus (or de Monte) was one of the foremost English theologians and the greatest Lincoln intellectual before Robert Grosseteste. A student of, *inter alia*, Peter Comestor, he himself established a school, first in Paris and then back in Lincoln.¹²² Lambertus de Rijk suggested that the notes (*nota quod...*) that make up fols 231^r–246^v 'may well form part of a school course taught in the surroundings of master William de Monte, who is the presumable author of the *Fallacie* and the tract *De locis*'.¹²³

On fols 98^r–99^r is a *Tractatus implicitarum*. Giusberti wrote that this is

the only — to my knowledge — surviving copy of an annotated exemplar which probably was nothing more than a sort of 'paper', this *Tractatus* owes its publication in the first place to the learned theologian who included it in his personal collection of texts, probably chosen and gathered at the end of his university days.¹²⁴

The *Tractatus* is a self-contained quire, in a unique hand, with an arabesque initial quite unlike any in the rest of the volume. It is a work of terminist logic, related somehow to the *Ars Meliduna*, and foreshadowing the work of William of Sherwood.¹²⁵

¹²⁰ Giusberti, 'Implicit propositions', pp. 47–8.

¹²¹ C. J. Nederman, 'Nature, ethics and the doctrine of "Habitus": Aristotelian moral psychology in the twelfth century', *Traditio*, 45 (1989), 87–110. For a less black-and-white argument, see M. L. Colish, "'Habitus" revisited: a reply to Cary Nederman', *Traditio*, 48 (1993), 77–92.

¹²² L. M. de Rijk, *Logica Modernorum* (Assen, 1967), II, part 1, pp. 36; part 2, pp. 679–702. The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/william-sherwood/>) claims the *Fallacie* for William of Sherwood, but his dates are too late for the palæographical evidence.

¹²³ De Rijk, *Logica Modernorum*, p. 36.

¹²⁴ Giusberti, 'Implicit propositions', p. 48.

The inclusion of Alan of Lille's *De virtutibus et de viciis* fits into a more general concern with virtues and vices during this period. The twelfth century saw a development of sacramental thinking which categorised and formalised sacraments, and a concern to marry a theoretical exploration of virtues and vices with a more practical, pastoral focus, evinced by the Fourth Lateran Council (1215).¹²⁶ This included confession, which seems to have been a preoccupation for some of the Merton canons. We will explore the treatise on confession by Guy of Southwick in Chapter 5; we might note here, however, the inclusion in this volume of a section (fols 75^r–78^r) on penance, tying Alan of Lille's discussion on vices to the sacrament as practised by priests.

The volume was designed, or possibly modified, for study in a variety of ways. It has lists of contents (e.g. fol. 46^{r-v}), marginal numbers or headings (e.g. 'solutio'), some of which are perpendicular to the text, and initialled or rubricated section headings. Fols 47^r–62^v (*quaestiones* on penance) have been given section numbers. A number of pencil notes, including an enormous 'nota' on fol. 72^r and 'de consecratione ecclesie' on 42^r, and the patina suggest that the volume was well-studied. Giusberti commented that 'whoever decided to put together what is now for us Royal 9 E XII must have been a theologian of discernment, with a definite preference for what scholars have called the "gilbertine school."¹²⁷ The works in the manuscript are more scholastic than monastic; they have clear Parisian connexions, and all the component parts may be from Paris. Part of the volume, at least, was given to Merton by someone connected with the schools in general and, probably, Paris in particular. It may be that the entire volume was a gift, but we must entertain the possibility that parts of the volume were actively collected by one or more canons, who compiled the volume at Merton. This would suggest one or a number of canons studying at a high level, possibly in Paris or elsewhere in northern France. Royal

¹²⁵ See Giusberti, 'Implicit propositions', *passim*, and pp. 107–15; K. Jacobi, 'Logic (ii): the later twelfth century', in *A History of Twelfth-Century Western Philosophy*, ed. P. Dronke (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 241–2.

¹²⁶ B. T. Coolman, 'The Christo-Pneumatic-Ecclesial character of twelfth-century Sacramental theology', in *The Oxford Handbook of Sacramental Theology*, ed. H. Boersma and M. Levering (Oxford, 2015), pp. 202–3; A. Diem, 'Virtues and vices in pastoral care', *Franciscan Studies*, 62 (2004), p. 195. See also *Radulphus Ardens: The Questions on the Sacraments: Speculum Universale 8.31-92*, ed. and trans. C. P. Evans, *Medieval Law and Theology*, 3 (Toronto, 2010).

¹²⁷ Giusberti, 'Implicit propositions', pp. 46–7.

9 E XII is not the only compilation of texts associated with Paris. We have already discussed the collection of Royal II A V, with two Abelardian texts (and indeed Royal 4 B XIV, with another Abelardian text): a further manuscript with connexions to Paris is a Bible, now in Cambridge University Library.

THE MERTON BIBLE (GB-CU EE.6.26)

Merton's Bible is a portable (8" x 5½" x 4") and, as demonstrated below, searchable volume, and is part of the biblical experiments of the late twelfth and early thirteenth century that gave rise to the Late Mediæval or 'Paris' Bible. Biblical studies of the twelfth century were underpinned by the *Glossa ordinaria*, which itself became an epiphyte to the Bible.¹²⁸ Prior William wove some of the *Glossa* into his miscellany, showing that there was an interest in exegesis at Merton. The Merton Bible is another example of the canons' interest in contemporary biblical trends.

The Bible of the twelfth century was generally a sum of parts — the Gospels, the Pentateuch, etc.¹²⁹ Pandects, bibles that were bound as one, were rare and massive.¹³⁰ The addition of a gloss meant that the Bible's constituents could become sizeable volumes in themselves, militating against a single book. However, the Bible as a whole was increasingly needed as a study volume, because of the rise of the universities and the friars; the Augustinians are likely themselves to have contributed to the Bible as a study volume, but their contribution is, like in other areas, opaque.¹³¹ During the thirteenth century, the layout of the Bible changed to make for a more portable pandect, unglossed but with wide margins for readers' notes.¹³² This new sort of Bible has been termed

¹²⁸ L. Smith, *The Glossa Ordinaria: The Making of a Medieval Bible Commentary*, Commentaria, III (Leiden, 2009), p. 1.

¹²⁹ For a full list, see S. Boynton and D. J. Reilly, 'Orientation of the reader', in *The Practice of the Bible in the Middle Ages: Production, Reception, & Performance in Western Christianity*, ed. eadem (New York; Chichester, 2011).

¹³⁰ L. Yawn, 'Italian giant Bibles', in Boynton and Reilly, *Practice of the Bible*, pp. 126–56.

¹³¹ E. Poley, *A Material History of the Bible, England 1200–1553* (Oxford, 2020), pp. 28–29; R. Marsden, 'Introduction', in Matter and Marsden, *The New Cambridge History of the Bible*, pp. 1–16; L. Light, 'The thirteenth century and the Paris Bible', in *ibid.*, pp. 380–91; H. A. G. Houghton, *The Latin New Testament: A Guide to its Early History, Texts, and Manuscripts* (Oxford, 2016), pp. 100–108; H. Feiss, 'Pastoral Ministry: Preaching and Confession', *A Companion to the Abbey of Saint Victor in Paris*, ed. H. Feiss and J. Mousseau, pp. 147–83; B. Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1952), pp. 83–195.

¹³² Poley, *Material History*, pp. 13, 17.

the ‘Paris Bible’, because of its origins, although scholars now prefer the more general ‘Late Mediæval Bible’, or *LMB*.¹³³

The *LMB* could be carried around by the scholar and used for research, but it could also have a peripatetic use for preaching sermons. For both of these ends, as well as being portable, it had to be searchable. This necessitated setting the order of biblical books, and giving them both prologues and chapter numbers, a development associated with Stephen Langton. Also often included as another reference aid was the *Interpretatio hebraicorum nominum*, based on Jerome, which provided etymological summaries of names.¹³⁴ The first third of the thirteenth century saw considerable experimentation in biblical formatting, the *LMB* reaching a stable form in about 1230. Pre-1230 bibles may have older chapter divisions, and may or may not include the *Interpretatio hebraicorum nominum*.¹³⁵ The Merton Bible is a proto-*LMB*, being of a portable size, and having the *Interpretatio hebraicorum nominum*, chapter headings and some of the prologues associated with the *LMB*, but still retaining some features of traditional pandect bibles.¹³⁶

The Bible was at Merton sometime in the fourteenth or fifteenth century, as is clear from its *ex libris* on fol. 144^v; this does not mean that it was originally produced there. Rose McCandless argued that it was produced in a religious house, comparing it with the Oxford Greyfriars’ Ketyll Bible and noting Chiara Ruzzier’s observations about its typicality as monastic book, with its non-standard layout and its use of different parchment (both calf and sheep skin).¹³⁷ A list of Canticles is included at the end of the Psalter, and this led Eyal Poleg to link this volume with the mendicant orders, as all identifiable bibles with such Canticles belonged to the friars.¹³⁸ Although, because of the problem of the survival of evidence, this cannot be conclusively linked to the friars, it does suggest a use of the Bible for the Office, and supports the association of this book with a religious house. The hand that wrote the list of Canticles also wrote the kalendar (145^{r-v}).

¹³³ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

¹³⁵ Light, ‘The thirteenth century and the Paris Bible’, pp. 381–7.

¹³⁶ R. M. McCandless, ‘An Analysis of Cambridge University Library Ee.6.26 and its Implications for the Production and Use of Thirteenth-Century Bibles’ (unpublished MPhil thesis, Cambridge, 2022). I am grateful to Rose McCandless for all her help.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 44–7.

¹³⁸ Poleg, *Material History*, pp. 34–5; McCandless, ‘Ee.6.26’, pp. 62–3.

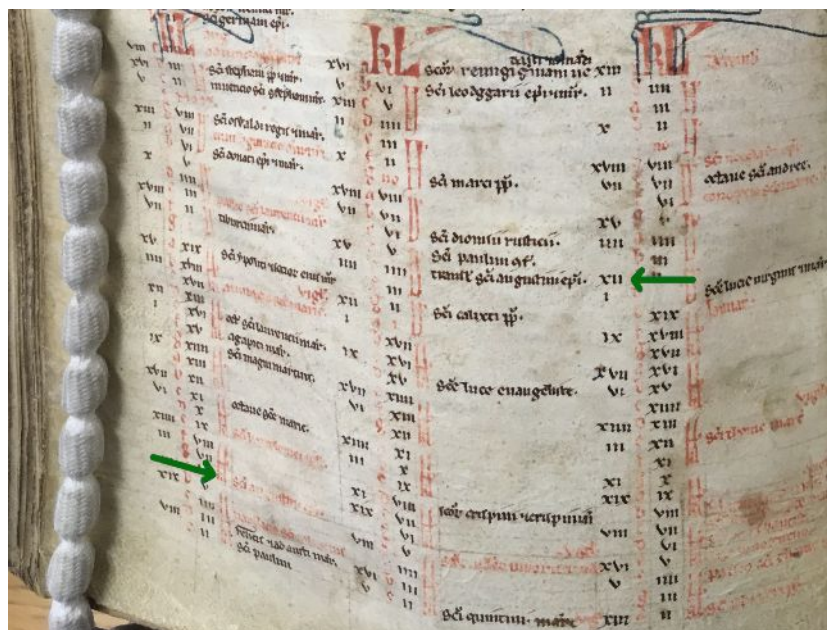


Figure 3.3: GB-Cu Ee.6.26, fol. 145^r
(feasts of St Augustine indicated by green arrows)

The kalendar may give a further clue to its house of origin. This fills in a blank folio at the beginning of the Psalms (figure 3.3). In the kalendar are two feasts of St Augustine: his main feast day is a red-letter day, and his translation a black-letter day. This suggests an Augustinian origin.¹³⁹ McCandless noted that the kalendar largely follows the Sarum rite, and that the inclusion of certain saints such as Erkenwald, Botolph and Mildred probably locates it to the south of England, but she stopped short of identifying it with an order. The inclusion of Erkenwald may also suggest that it was part of an independent (i.e. regular rather than secular) Use: Richard Pfaff wrote that Erkenwald ‘is resolutely avoided in the Sarum tradition’.¹⁴⁰ The kalendar certainly fits the pattern of a semi-secular Use described in the last chapter, and would therefore be consonant with an Augustinian origin. There is nothing that locates it any more precisely, and the absence of St Swithun is noteworthy, if this is a kalendar from the diocese of Winchester; however, Morris found a similarly surprising omission in the Oseney kalendar, and so this is not conclusive.¹⁴¹

¹³⁹ See Morris, ‘Use of Oseney’, pp. 33–4. Also cf. the kalendar of Southwark Priory (GB-Lbl Cotton MS Faustina A VIII, fols 44^v–49^r), which also gives Augustine a red-letter day.

¹⁴⁰ McCandless, ‘Ee.6.26’, p. 61; R. W. Pfaff, *The Liturgy in Medieval England: A History* (Cambridge, 2009), p. 491.

¹⁴¹ Morris, ‘Use of Oseney’, p. 34.

McCandless' research suggests that this must have been a religious house of some size: she identified over thirty hands at work on the manuscript across a number of campaigns. It is reasonable to conclude, therefore, that the house of production was a large Augustinian monastery in south-east England. Given the size of Merton Priory, its northern-French connexions and its interest in current theological trends, Merton Priory is a good candidate for the producer of this Bible. If it was compiled there, it would suggest Merton as a centre of theological learning in the first half of the thirteenth century.

The Merton Bible can be divided into thirteen units of production, which were collected, although not necessarily bound, together at some point. Eleven of the thirteen units were rubricated together and are heavily annotated (these McCandless called 'UniCirc A'); the remaining two units (one of which was the Psalms) also lack the annotations of the others.¹⁴² The latter two seem to have been added once the decision had been made to compile a pandect: in order to complete the Bible, a hasty scribe added Esther and Tobias to a neater Hebrews, choosing this because there were the most blank leaves available of any quire. The other parts were in circulation for a while before a decision was made to compile a pandect Bible.¹⁴³

McCandless argued that the *distinctiones* and marginalia throughout UniCirc A were evidence of the Bible's use for composing sermons. This is a reasonable conclusion, and is further borne out by the use of cross-references to other books of the Bible in marginalia, and the topics covered in the *distinctiones*, which included the sacraments (fol. 408^v), the viaticum (fol. 25^v), seven vices and virtues (fol. 6^r) and aspects of the flesh (fol. 428^r: 'caro N' having been marked in the margin by I Corinthians 15:50). On 439^r, 1 Timothy 5, about widows, one of the two main annotators has written a concordance of widows in the Old and New Testaments. McCandless did not, however, examine the marginalia in detail, and closer examination leads to some further points. There seem to be two main annotators, who both wrote notes, *distinctiones* and sentences. Many of the notes were written in lead point first and then written over in ink. This shows a process of marking up and more formally notating marginalia and *distinctiones*. This may imply use by more than one reader: the two hands may be different, although I am inclined to think not, and in some cases, at least,

¹⁴² McCandless, 'Ee.6.26', pp. 55-7.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

they are the same; moreover, careful over-writing suggests that the notes were not an aid to a reader's memory, but were to be used by subsequent readers, providing further evidence of material for sermons. Some other notes and *distinctiones* have been written, and left, in lead, either by one of the main annotators (e.g. fol. 141^v) or by what is perhaps another hand (fol. 30^v). One hand was responsible for over-writing hand, and he also wrote most of the marginalia, including several exegetical sentences and *distinctiones*. This canon worked alongside another, who also wrote notes, *distinctiones* and sentences (for example, fols 1^r and 4^r).

The Merton Bible continued to be used throughout the century and into the next. A late-thirteenth or fourteenth-century hand copied an extract from Higden's *Polychronicon* about the translation of the Bible (fol. 463^v).¹⁴⁴ This hand may also be responsible for some mnemonic lines on Genesis (fol. 4^r) and, above the relevant passage in John, a quotation of John 12:25 and Augustine's comment on it from his *Tractatus in Joannem* (fol. 413^r). Another hand wrote a sentence about penance (fol. 6^r). There are fifteenth-century doodles of a woman's head and body, a boar's head and a still.¹⁴⁵ A fifteenth-century hand has written at the bottom of a page of Ezechiel (fol. 313^r) 'Hunc tua Penelope tibi mittit Ulisse', the first line of Ovid's poem in the *Heroides*. James Clark wrote that the *Heroides* was 'comparatively rare'; it was in a collection of works by Ovid in thirteenth-century Waltham Abbey, and in the fifteenth-century, Prior William Charyte bought Leicester Abbey a copy.¹⁴⁶ Another marginale is a tag: 'this is Rycharde Whindoire the'. This signature has been associated with Richard Windsor, a canon who was ordained priest in 1518 and became precentor of Merton in 1530.¹⁴⁷ Windsor was a signatory to the transaction of GB-SHRs A.x.15 (below). If this is Windsor's tag, it may be that he took the Bible with him in 1538. There are also two names on fol. 364^v. These are smudged and difficult to read, but the second name could possibly be John Salyng, a contemporary of Richard Windsor.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

¹⁴⁵ Fols 217^v, 224^v, 240^r. The still may echo a recipe for aqua vitae at the end of GB-Ob MS Digby 147.

¹⁴⁶ J. G. Clark, 'Humanism and reform in pre-Reformation English monasteries', *TRHS*, 19 (2009); Webber & Watson, pp. 72. 303 no. 1035 and 398, no. 1943; p. 441, no. 119.

¹⁴⁷ Heales, pp. 324, 331.

The juxtaposition of liturgical and sermon-writing purposes shows the importance of sermons in divine service and hints at the pastoral role of the users. This Bible was the product of the theological fashion of the early thirteenth century, and, as such, demonstrates an awareness at Merton of theological developments. Its use thereafter suggests the continued interest of the canons in homilies and sermons during the later Middle Ages. The marginalia establish this as a Bible for study, perhaps for personal study but also as a basis for sermons. Its portability is suggestive: this book could easily have been transported outside the priory walls, to parish churches and elsewhere, and it may indicate the canons' role in wider pastoral education.

PETER LOMBARD, *SENTENCES*, BOOK IV (GB-LBL ROYAL MS 9 E VI)

The final of the religious manuscripts is Book IV of Peter Lombard's *Sentences* (GB-Lbl Royal MS 9 E VI), produced at the end of the thirteenth century. During the fifteenth century, this volume was revised, with new headings and section numbers and a table of contents: these will be discussed further in Chapter 6. The attribution to Merton comes from David Casley's 1734 catalogue of the King's Library (1734), but no ex libris survives; the Oxford friars did not include Lombard in their catalogues, so the *Registrum* gives no extra help.¹⁴⁸ Examination of the manuscript reveals a spacious lay-out: it is in double columns with wide margins, and the lines number only 30 per column: a contemporary copy of the *Sentences* from Westminster has, by contrast, 52 lines in a similar text area, and one from the Gilbertine priory of St Edmund in Cambridge has 38 lines in a considerably smaller area.¹⁴⁹ This indicates that the volume was a high-end copy. The text in the Merton *Sentences* is in a textura quadrata hand, with rubricated headings and spaces left for capitals that were never added beyond the first page. The beginning of the book is a floriated capital S spanning seven lines, with 'amaratinus enim' abutting it.

The treatment of the *Sentences* is similar to that of the Merton Bible, and shows that it was a text used for study, aided by the volume's wide margins. The thirteenth-century annotations are mainly in one hand. This hand numbered the *distinctiones* (verses), wrote out a table of contents (fol. 2^{r-v}) with page and

¹⁴⁸ D. Casley, *Catalogue of the Manuscripts of the King's Library* (London, 1734), p. 173; Warner & Gilson, I, p. 295; *Registrum*, p. lxxiv.

¹⁴⁹ GB-Lbl Royal MS 10 A VII.

distinctio numbers, and numbered every five lines to concord with his table. On the verso to the table of contents, he drew a diagram of family relationships (fol. 1^v), suggesting a practical interest in pastoral matters, such as canon law on consanguinity. The same hand also wrote extensive notes between the lines and in the margins, sometimes referring to books of the Bible or to other volumes of Lombard's *Sentences* (e.g. fol. 49^r, 113^v), showing a command of those texts. Some of his notes included his own sets of *distinctiones*, for example on fol. 28^v, dividing topics into *mysterium*, *sacrificium*, *sacramentum*, subdividing the last of these into *baptisma*, *eukaristia* and *confirmatio*; or on fol. 5^r, dividing the sacraments into *visibile* and *formaliter*. Like the practice shown in the Merton Bible, many of these notes, like the numbers, were made in first pencil and then inked over more neatly (for example, fols 6^r, 28^r, 82^v, 110^r).

In addition to the extensive annotations by this hand, there are two other hands of the same period (e.g. fols 23^r, 64^r), and several different types of manicule — a more refined style on fol. 30^v (perhaps responsible for the grimacing head on 31^r), another perhaps later (fol. 58^r) and a much cruder fifteenth-century one, which goes with some *nota bene* and crosses on fol. 48^v. These marginal notes indicate study by a number of readers. The *distinctiones* and cross-references could suggest that this, like the Merton Bible, formed the basis for sermons or teaching. A further inquiry into the annotations could look at this manuscript in parallel with, for example, the Gilbertine copy, whose annotations are rather different. A later hand added, on fol. 1^r, paragraphs from a glossed copy of the decretals of Gregory IX. All these hands and annotations show that this was a well-used reference book.

The *Sentences* concerned the sacraments, a subject which proved as important to the canons of the fifteenth century as it was to those of the thirteenth, and its continued relevance ensured that it was in Merton's library until the Dissolution, and that it was re-formatted in the fifteenth century to take account of updates in the layout of reference works.

Historical works

Monastic libraries contained a range of historical works: saints' lives, foundation stories, chronicles and annals, and cartularies, which were simultaneously working documents and statements about an institution's history and identity.

Merton's extant historical works fit all but the first of these categories, and span almost the whole period, demonstrating both the continuity of interest in history and the differences of emphasis at certain points in time.

THE LIVES OF GILBERT THE SHERIFF AND GUY OF MERTON
(GB-LCA ARUNDEL 28 AND GB-LBL ROYAL MS 8 E IX)

One category of texts that we might expect a monastery to have early on in its existence is the foundation history. Merton had two: a collection of accounts of the founder, Sheriff Gilbert, and a *vita* of one of the founding canons, Guy. Both were composed in the twelfth century, around the time of the priorate of Robert II (1150–67).¹⁵⁰ However, both survive only in later manuscripts, from the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (GB-Lca Arundel 28 and GB-Lbl Royal MS 8 E IX). We will discuss the fifteenth-century manuscripts in Chapter 6, and Guy as an individual in Chapter 5; here, we concentrate on their twelfth-century composition and argue that they were crucial to the formation of an Augustinian identity at Merton.

The component texts of *Gilbert* are i) a description of Sheriff Gilbert and his foundation of Merton; ii) an epitaph on Gilbert; iii) a letter from a canon, Gervase, about Gilbert's death; and iv) the vision of another canon, Walchelin, about Gilbert.¹⁵¹ It is likely that at least two of the four texts were collated early on: *Gilbert I* refers to *Gilbert III*, advising that 'he who desires to know more about the death of our founder and his deeds should certainly refer to the letter of Master Gervase' (para. 30). The four texts are of a similar date. *Gilbert I* says that it had been proof-read by Prior Robert II, which would date it to between 1150 and 1167; a comment about peace flourishing in England (a reference to the turbulence of Stephen's reign) would suggest a *terminus ante quem non* of 1154.¹⁵² *Gilbert II* was written down sometime after Gilbert's death in 1125; the vision in *Gilbert IV* was seen fourteen years after Gilbert's death (1139), and written thereafter. *Gilbert III* is a letter from one canon, Gervase, to another, Theodoric. The latter became abbot of St Lô (Normandy) in the 1130s, brought to revitalise the abbey by Algar, bishop of Coutances, who himself had been the canon of Bodmin agitating for Guy's appointment there. Since the

¹⁵⁰ *Gilbert*, pp. 3–4; *Life of Guy*, pp. 8–9.

¹⁵¹ *Gilbert I–IV*.

¹⁵² *Gilbert I–IV*, pp. 3–4.

Gilbert text suggests that Theodoric was in a monastery other than Merton, we may presume that he was abbot by the time of writing.¹⁵³ It seems reasonable to suppose that *Gilbert II* and *III* were written in the 1130s; *Gilbert IV* in the 1140s or 1150s, and *Gilbert I* in the 1150s or 1160s. It may be that *Gilbert I* was the catalyst for the compilation of the texts, and that Prior Robert II was at least partially responsible for it. He was also partly responsible for the writing of the *Life o Guy*, which relied partly on his memories when he was ‘sub-prior Robert’.¹⁵⁴ Robert was a friend of John of Salisbury, and we may infer that he was a man of letters.¹⁵⁵ If he were a driving force behind these *vitæ*, this suggests a conscious effort both to chronicle Merton’s history and to shape its reputation and culture.

In composing and compiling stories about its founders, Merton was following twelfth-century trends and an established practice of monasteries producing histories of their foundation or of significant figures during the first decades of their existence.¹⁵⁶ Foundation histories could establish the legitimacy of an institution, spiritually and territorially, and they can reveal the spiritual direction or priorities of the institution. Each foundation history is as unique as its institution, but just as houses that were part of a particular monastic order shared features with other monasteries of that order, so too could their histories. The foundation stories of Fountains and Forde abbeys, for instance, follow a Cistercian epic tradition.¹⁵⁷ Walter Daniel’s biography of Ælred of Rievaulx emphasises his asceticism as a true soldier of Christ, and describes the founding monks in similarly martial terms.¹⁵⁸ The Cistercian histories of the twelfth

¹⁵³ *Gilbert III*, para. 1, p. 35.

¹⁵⁴ *Life o Guy*, para. 6, p. 19.

¹⁵⁵ See below, p. 184.

¹⁵⁶ See, for example, B. Smalley, *Historians in the Middle Ages* (London, 1974), pp. 86–93; E. Freeman, *Narratives o a New Order: Cistercian Historical Writing in England, 1150–1220*, *Medieval Church Studies*, 2 (Turnhout, 2002); J. Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders in Britain 1000–1300* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 194–200.

¹⁵⁷ J. Burton, *The Monastic Order in Yorkshire, 1069–1215* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 98–124 and *eadem*, ‘Past models and contemporary concerns: the foundation and growth of the Cistercian Order’, *Studies in Church History*, 44 (2008), 27–45; S. Heath, *The Story of Ford Abbey from the Earliest Times to the Present Day* (London, 1911), pp. 25–27.

¹⁵⁸ Walter Daniel, *The Life o Ailred o Rievaulx*, ed. and trans. F. M. Powicke (London, 1950), pp. 11–12 and *passim*.

century have a certain flavour, with an emphasis on spiritual journey, hardship, poverty and purity.¹⁵⁹

Discerning an Augustinian flavour might be more difficult: as discussed in the first chapter, Augustinian houses were varied, and we should, therefore, expect their foundation histories to be so. By comparing Merton's foundation histories with those of other Augustinian monasteries, we can draw inferences about the typicality of Merton as an Augustinian foundation. Other Augustinian foundation histories with which Merton's may profitably be compared derive from St Bartholomew's, London, Llanthony Prima, and St Frideswide's. The foundation story of St Bartholomew's Priory narrates Rahere's conversion and the healing miracles following the establishment of his hospital-cum-priory. The history of Llanthony Priory resembles in many ways the Cistercian epic (a journey and a landscape), but tells of one man's inspiration to become a hermit, whose hermitage would gradually be transformed into a monastery. The writings of two priors of St Frideswide's are not histories of the institution, but descriptions of the life and miracles of St Frideswide, whose relics were to turn the priory into a place of pilgrimage. And yet all three do display what could be called 'Augustinian features'. The historian of St Bartholomew's could not resist exegetical commentary, nor could Prior Philip, in his *Miracles o St Frideswide*, resist learned references. Llanthony's historian described the choice of the Augustinian Order because of the need to communicate in various ways with the outside world (unlike the Cistercians, who, he wrote, kept themselves to themselves).¹⁶⁰

Merton's two foundation histories (about Guy and Gilbert) share features with these histories. The author of the *Life o Guy* describes Guy of Merton's ordination as deacon and priest, and his pastoral duties to the parish

¹⁵⁹ Cf. J. Burton, ed. and trans., *The Foundation History o the Abbeys o Byland and Jervaulx*, Borthwick Texts and Studies (York, 2006), xxxv; J. G. Clark, 'Cistercian histories in late medieval England, and beyond', in *Monastic Life in the Medieval British Isles: Essays in Honour o Janet Burton*, ed. K. Stöber, J. Kerr, and E. Jamroziak (Cardiff, 2018), pp. 3–4.

¹⁶⁰ *The Book o the Foundation o the Church o St. Bartholomew, London: Rendered into Modern English from the Original Latin Version Preserved in the British Museum, Numbered Vespasian B. IX for use in the 'Records o St. Bartholomew's Priory' by E. A. Webb.*, trans. H. H. King, W. Barnard, and E. A. Webb (Oxford, 1923), pp. 9–11; A. N. J. Dunning, 'St Frideswide's Priory as a Centre of Learning in Early Oxford', *Medieval Studies*, 80 (2018), 270–3; G. Roberts, *Some Account o Llanthony Priory, Monmouthshire* (London, 1847), pp. 49–53; *The History o Llanthony Priory*, ed. and trans. R. Bartlett, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford, 2022), pp. 26–9.

of Taunton. Merton's close working relationship with the episcopate is strongly implied, and Gilbert's founding of Merton was done with the express permission of the king and the encouragement of the bishop of Winchester and the queen, Edith-Matilda. Rahere similarly elicited royal permission and episcopal support for St Bartholomew's; Hugh de Lacy conferred with Archbishop Anselm about the conversion of the hermitage at Llanthony into a monastery, and received support, like Gilbert, from Edith-Matilda.¹⁶¹ Guy was said to have been a 'director of schools'; the second prior of Llanthony was Robert de Bethune, 'master of arts, and a frequent preacher of the Word of God, and learned in the points of religion.'¹⁶² In addition, the *Vision of Walchelin* (Gilbert IV) shares features with Peter of Cornwall's *Vision of Ailsi*. Peter was prior of another Augustinian house, Holy Trinity, Aldgate (1197–1221); one, if not two, of Peter's uncles was a canon of Merton.¹⁶³

While Gilbert's foundation at Merton was not described explicitly as a centre of learning in the texts about its foundation, nevertheless from the *Life of Guy*, in particular, there is a suggestion of learning within Merton: Guy, an erudite man, was frequently engaged in 'conversing with' other canons, and reading patristic texts in the cloisters was standard practice. His deathbed was attended by two *magistri*, Algar of Bodmin and Geoffrey of Plympton; their presence perhaps implies respect for learning in these priories as well.¹⁶⁴

The text of the *Life of Guy* is itself a typical piece of *ars dictaminis*, full of rhetorical phrases and near-quotations (from memory), suggesting that the author himself was inclined towards learning.¹⁶⁵ Guy is characterised in quintessentially Augustinian terms, and the Rule of St Augustine suffuses this *vita*. Guy kept to the times of prayer; the words he spoke were from his heart. He fasted frequently, and as prior of Taunton preferred to give his food to the poor than have it himself. He loved his brethren and obeyed his superior; as a superior himself, he was (to quote the *Regula tertia*) an 'exemplar of good

¹⁶¹ Gilbert I, paras 1–5; King *et al.*, *Foundation of... St Bartholomew*, pp. 11–12; Roberts, *Llanthony Priory*, pp. 53–4; Bartlett, *Llanthony Priory*, pp. 26–7.

¹⁶² *Life of Guy*, para. 2; Roberts, *Llanthony*, p. 55.

¹⁶³ P. Hull and R. Sharpe, 'Peter of Cornwall and Launceston', *Cornish Studies*, 13 (1985), 5–54; R. Easting and R. Sharpe, 'Peter of Cornwall: the Visions of Ailsi and his sons', *Mediaevistik*, 1 (1988), 207–62; C. S. Watkins, 'Sin, penance and purgatory in the Anglo-Norman Realm: the evidence of visions and ghost stories', *Past & Present*, 175 (2002), 3–33.

¹⁶⁴ *Life of Guy*, paras 2–3, 8.

¹⁶⁵ See introduction to *Life of Guy* for a more detailed description.

deeds', arresting the restless, consoling the faint-hearted, supporting the weak, and showing patience towards all. He distributed things to the poor but not to the detriment of his brethren ('quid prodest dispergere dando pauperibus et pauperem fieri?').¹⁶⁶ The author of *Gilbert I* made reference to Augustine throughout his text, which also had allusions to Virgil as well as the Bible.¹⁶⁷ These *vita* were written by educated men, and they could be revisited by the community to encourage ideas of community and identity: the figures of Guy and Gilbert were models for behaviour.¹⁶⁸

MERTON PRIORY CARTULARIES (GB-LBL COTTON MS CLEO. C VII AND GB-OB MS LAUD MISC. 723)

The canons' interest in history continued throughout the thirteenth century. As noted above, one of the reasons for foundation histories was to legitimize an institution and its lands and properties, for ownership and rights might be constantly challenged. As record-keeping grew, so monasteries developed cartularies recording grants and other items useful for proving legitimacy, but historians have more recently drawn attention to their function as repositories of memory and identity, and the cartulary was where historical memory could feed into current identities and concerns.¹⁶⁹ Although a few monastic cartularies date from the twelfth century, it was the thirteenth century which witnessed the normalisation of the cartulary, at the same time as stone precinct walls were put around monastic boundaries.¹⁷⁰ Cartularies as collections of records can also be understood in terms of the development of reference works more generally, with numbering and indexing to aid navigation, such as we have seen in, for example, the

¹⁶⁶ *Life o' Guy*, *passim*; JCD, pp. 273–9.

¹⁶⁷ *Gilbert I*, para. 15, p. 19. Cf. Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos; De vita et moribus clericorum* (sermon CCCLVI).

¹⁶⁸ For personal histories as moral exempla, see T. O'Donnell, 'Monastic history and memory', in *Medieval Historical Writing: Britain and Ireland, 500–1500*, ed. J. Jahner, E. Steiner, and E. M. Tyler (Cambridge, 2019), pp. 41–44.

¹⁶⁹ *The Cartulary o' Byland Abbey*, ed. J. Burton, Surtees Society CCVIII (Woodbridge, 2004), pp. xlv–xlvii; K. Dutton, 'The cartulary of the Cistercian abbey of Kirkstead, Lincolnshire: the landscape realities and documentary defences of an abbey site in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries', *Journal o' Medieval Monastic Studies*, 12 (2023), 77–122.

¹⁷⁰ The link between cartularies and precinct walls was made by Katy Dutton during her talk on 'The evolution of a Cistercian monastic boundary: the 'Close' at Kirkstead, Lincolnshire, 1139–1299', Leeds IMC 2022; for cartularies, see M. T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record* (2nd edn, Oxford, 1994), p. 102; G. R. C. Davies, C. Breay, J. Harrison, and D. M. Smith, *Medieval Cartularies o' Great Britain and Ireland*, (revised edn, London, 2010), p. xv.

Merton Bible and Prior William's book.¹⁷¹ The compilation of Merton's cartulary (GB-Lbl Cotton MS Cleopatra C VII, fols 60–204) started relatively early, in the late twelfth century, and continued until the mid-fourteenth. An additional fourteenth-century cartulary is GB-Ob MS Laud Misc. 723, which is bound together with an early-thirteenth-century calendar. The *Cleo* cartulary was later bound with other texts, none of which has any relevance to Merton. The first 51 folios of Laud Misc. 723 were missing by the time it was bound with the older calendar.¹⁷² Its first page, fol. 52^r (24^r, in modern numbering), is the start of Bishop Wykeham's visitation of Merton in 1387; the rest of the cartulary records land holding and transactions, presentations of clergymen, and the prior's reply to the bishop's visitation. Close examination of the manuscripts of both *Cleo* and Laud Misc. 723 have similar fifteenth-century folio numbering, comprising Hindu-Arabic and Roman numerals alongside each other. Together with the copying of the foundation texts discussed above, these manuscripts could suggest a renewed interest in Merton's historical documents, and therefore identity, in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries.¹⁷³ Both cartularies were foliated with Roman and Arabic numerals, showing their use as reference materials.¹⁷⁴

These cartularies provide evidence of an active chancery, as one would expect from a large monastery with a substantial number of temporalities and spiritualities. There are several hands in the cartulary, and an even greater number against the Easter tables. Some of these hands are similar to those in *Cleo*. The variety of hands in both *Cleo* and Laud Misc. 723 could make a fruitful palæographical study with the other Merton manuscripts, but this is beyond the scope of this thesis.¹⁷⁵

The calendar is a table calculating Easter Sundays from the year 1216 to 2811, with, to the right of the Easter calculations, a list of local and national events in a variety of hands. The Easter tables pre-date the cartulary by about a

¹⁷¹ M. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record* (2nd edition, Oxford, 1993), pp. 177–84.

¹⁷² Heales used this foliation.

¹⁷³ Cf. St Albans: Clark, *Monastic Renaissance*, pp. 156–7.

¹⁷⁴ B. Mak, *How the Page Matters* (Toronto, 2011), p. 43; R. H. Rouse and M. A. Rouse, *Authentic Witnesses: Approaches to Medieval Texts and Manuscripts* (Notre Dame, Indiana, 1991), pp. 242–4.

¹⁷⁵ It is hoped that Harold Hans will shed some light here in his forthcoming PhD thesis.

century, and their divisions are those which were becoming old-fashioned in the thirteenth century, *viz.*¹⁷⁶

Sexagesimus		Quintus/ Sextus		Ciclus		Decennovenalis			
[leap year/ bissextiles	Anni d[omi]ni]	Indict[ionis]	Epact	Conc[urrent]	Cicl[us] lu[nae]	t[er]mi[nus] pa[sce]	Dies pasce	luna	[dominica l letter]

The last event described is in 1441; this concerns the fall of Eleanor Cobham (wife of Humphrey, duke of Gloucester), and demonstrates the continued use of this manuscript for over two centuries. Fol. 1^r (1216–1253) contains the deaths and successions of priors, archbishops and popes; fol. 1^v, from 1254 onwards, includes more national events. Edmund of Abingdon features twice on fol. 1^r, once, as ‘magister’, on his death, and secondly on his translation, in red; the death of Richard Wych is also noted. These entries suggest Merton’s closeness to Edmund of Abingdon, which we will revisit in Chapter 5. The busiest period of entries is between 1264 and 1307; it should be noted that sometime during this particular period, Merton took delivery of its *Flores Historiarum* and copied out its Annals (see below).¹⁷⁷ Another busy period for entries overlaps with the years covered by the rest of Laud Misc. 723 (the later fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries), and this could suggest that these disparate volumes were bound together sometime then. This latter period of activity coincides with the production of *Gilbert* and the *Life o Guy*, and supports James Clark’s thesis about a revival of monastic interest in institutional history.¹⁷⁸

The calendar bears witness to the practical religious functions of the monastery, the calculation of Easter not only fixing the date of the most important feast of the year, but of other days whose dates depended on Easter. The list of obits bespeaks the canons’ memorial role, but the events on the list shows their interest in contemporary affairs and history. The list of obits at Augustinian Holy Trinity, Dublin, was contained in a Chapter book. By

¹⁷⁶ S. Falk, *The Light Ages*, pp. 66–76; *idem*, ‘How to read a medieval astronomical calendar’, *sebfalk.com* (and thanks for his helpful correspondence); C. P. E. Nothaft, *Scandalous Error: Calendar Reform and Calendrical Astronomy in Medieval Europe* (Oxford, 2018), chapter 2.

¹⁷⁷ As a point of note, on fol. 1^v, for 1278, the ‘generalis captio Judeorum pro tonsura monete’ is noted, and the expulsion of the Jews for 1290; cf. the caricature of the Jew on fol. 118^v of Eton 123.

¹⁷⁸ Clark, ‘Augustinians, history and literature’, p. 410 and *passim*.

analogy, this part of Laud Misc. 723 could have been kept in the chapter house.¹⁷⁹ It may be that it was still kept in the chapter house even when it was bound with the cartulary. The evidence examined here demonstrates the multiple uses of cartularies, as legal and administrative documents but also as institutional histories.

THE MERTON ANNALS (GB-CCC MS 059)

Two manuscripts that definitely attest to the canons' interest in history are the Annals of Merton (GB-Ccc MS 059, fols 158^v–180^r) and the *Flores Historiarum* (GB-WRec MS 123). GB-Ccc MS 059 (hereafter MS 59) is a compendium of historical works, including the popular histories by Martin of Troppau (d.1278). The manuscript is complicated, with additions in different hands from different places, and it seems that the manuscript left Merton's library some time in the fourteenth century and migrated to Kent. Although Neil Ker rejected the manuscript from Merton's collection, close reading reveals internal evidence in the Annals themselves that the manuscript was originally produced for or at Merton (for example, notices of the deaths of Gilbert, Prior Robert II and his sub-prior Theobald).¹⁸⁰ There is also a later (s.xv–xvi) inscription, on fol. 3^r, noting that 'hic liber scriptus ut apparet in cenobio martyn'. By this time, however, the volume had left Merton.

The list of contents on fol. 3^r covers fols 4^r–225^v and spans the later thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. M. R. James and M. A. Tyson dated the Annals themselves to the first half of the fourteenth century, but Martin Brett argued for the later thirteenth century. Examination of the manuscript leads me to agree with his dating for the sections covered by the first list of contents.¹⁸¹ Various scribes worked on the volume, and there is a variation in the number of lines among quires, but all these folios are ruled in double columns

¹⁷⁹ C. N. Ó Clabaigh, 'Community, commemoration and confraternity: the chapter office and chapter books in Irish Augustinian foundations', in *Households o' God: the Regular Canons and Canonesses o' St Augustine and Prémontré in Medieval Ireland*, ed. M. Browne and C. N. Ó Clabaigh (Dublin, 2019), pp. 247–48.

¹⁸⁰ N. R. Ker, *Medieval Libraries o' Great Britain: a List o' Surviving Books* (2nd edn, London, 1964), p. 131; GB-Ccc MS 059, fols 162^{rb}, 164^{va}, 165^{ra}.

¹⁸¹ M. R. James, *A Descriptive Catalogue o' the Manuscripts in the Library o' Corpus Christi College, Cambridge* (London, 1912) I, p. 119; M. Tyson, 'The Annals of Southwark and Merton', *Surrey Archaeological Collections*, 35 (1926), p. 35; M. Brett, 'The Annals of Bermondsey, Southwark and Merton', in *Church and City, 1000–1500: Essays in Honour of Christopher Brooke*, ed. D. Abulafia, M. Franklin and M. Rubin (Cambridge, 1992), p. 281.

with similar margins. This evidence argues that the volume was a single project, although apparently spread over different scribal campaigns.¹⁸² Fols 226^r–230^r are of the same style and material (and even manicules), and should be appended to the sections listed in the contents. The last of these sections is the Statute of Carlisle (1307), which may indicate that the manuscript did not leave Merton before 1307.

Although a late-sixteenth or seventeenth-century hand on fol. 158^v ascribes the chronicle to Thomas Wykes ('Aliud chronicon universus a superior cuius autor est Thomas Wicke sive uuiccius Oxonii canonici de osneye'), the same hand on fol. 162^r notes that 'in the county of Surrey the monastery of Merton was founded at this time; the canons of which place wrote this chronicle'.¹⁸³ As Tyson noted, the 'superior' of the first inscription could refer to the previous section.¹⁸⁴ The marginal note on fol. 162^r shows that even after the Dissolution this manuscript's Merton origins were known, despite the manuscript almost certainly having left Merton some considerable time previously. The evidence for the manuscript's migration is a number of later insertions and additions, unlike in style and all pertaining to Kent: although Merton had spiritualia and temporalia in Kent, it would have had little interest in the Cinque Ports or in recording the story of Thomas de la Hale of Dover (fols 180, 139^v). The visitation of the Premonstratensian abbey of Bayham by the abbot of Langdon (fols 237^v–241^r), and the annotation, to 1183 (fol. 166^r) adding the foundation of Langdon, suggest that the volume migrated there.¹⁸⁵ If so, from the evidence of the handwriting, it must have left Merton and arrived at Langdon during the first half of the fourteenth century. Langdon is near Dover, and its canons might therefore have had an interest in both the Cinque Ports and a local saint. Two items are unrelated to anything Augustinian or Premonstratensian: a summons (fols 255^r–256^v) to a Benedictine provincial

¹⁸² Antonia Gransden quoted the Winton chronicler: 'the book is added to every year and... composed by various people': *Historical Writing in England* (London, 1974), I, p. 320.

¹⁸³ 'in comitatu Surre Meritone coenobium hoc tempore fundatum • cuius loci canonici scrips[erun]t hoc chronicon'.

¹⁸⁴ Tyson, 'Annals', p. 36, notes T. D. Hardy's suggestion that the Wykes note was meant for the previous section, and gives it some credit; H. R. Luard, ed., *Annales Monastici*, IV (Rolls Series, London, 1869); N. Denholm-Young, 'Thomas de Wykes and his Chronicle,' *EHR*, 61 (1946), 157–179.

¹⁸⁵ <https://parker.stanford.edu/parker/catalog/xj416cto118>; M. R. James, *Descriptive Catalogue*, I, pp. 120–22. Tyson, 'Annals', p. 35.

chapter and a letter to the Cistercians from the archbishop of Canterbury concerning tithes (fols 258^v–259^r). A post-Reformation sixteenth-century reader wrote on fol. 1^r ‘Yf ther be any nayme of the bysschope of Rome or ells any other matter apertayning to his usurpide powre in this bowke contayned I doe vtterly renounce them’. It was presumably he who erased instances of *papa* and Thomas Becket throughout the volume, and in so doing helped to ensure the manuscript’s survival, just as defacing saints on a choir screen could remove the need to take the whole screen away.¹⁸⁶

The Merton Annals (fols 158^v–180^r) run from 1066 to 1242. Martin Brett postulated that they were copied from a lost source which he called the London Annals. This hypothetical text is taken to be the source for the Southwark and Bermondsey Annals, and the *Liber de antiquis legibus*, and for the annals of Winchester, Hyde and Waverley.¹⁸⁷ Absent from this list is another Augustinian priory, Holy Trinity, Aldgate. However, we can draw attention to two entries in the Merton Annals that concern Holy Trinity, and, given the historical inclinations of at least one of its priors, Peter of Cornwall, we can argue for a lost annal for Holy Trinity.¹⁸⁸ The London Annals were a source for Matthew Paris, whose *Flores Historiarum* includes the appointment of Merton’s first prior, absent from the Annals, and the succession of a prior of Southwark, absent from the Southwark Annals. (The close relationship between Southwark and Merton can be seen in the Southwark Annals, where a later hand inserted the succession of the Merton priors Henry de Basing and Robert de Hegham,

¹⁸⁶ The scribe did not perhaps have the zealous industry that M. A. Tyson gave him, for he missed many other instances: Tyson, ‘Annals’, p. 36; for examples of erasures, see MS 59, fols 159^r, 168^v, 172^v, 173^v, 176^r, 177^v. See also J. G. Clark, *The Dissolution of the Monasteries: A New History* (London and New Haven, 2021), p. 217.

¹⁸⁷ M. Brett, ‘Annals’, 279–310. See also Tyson, ‘Annals’, 24–57; I. Stone, ‘Connections and collaborations between centres of historical writing in thirteenth-century London and Southwark’, *Medieval Studies*, 79 (2017), 205–47. The Southwark Annals are contained in GB-Lbl Cotton Faustina A VIII and Bodleian Rawl. MS 177; the Bermondsey Annals, GB-Lbl Harley MS 231; the *Liber de antiquis*, London Metropolitan Archives, COL/CS/01/001/001, discussed and transcribed in I. W. Stone, ‘The Book of Arnold Fitz Thedmar’ (unpublished PhD thesis, King’s College, London, 2016).

¹⁸⁸ *VCH London*, I, pp. 465–7; R. Sharpe, ‘Peter of Cornwall’, *ONBD*; Brett, ‘Annals’, pp. 294–5; MS 59, fols 161^rb, 162^a; H. R. Luard, ed., *Flores Historiarum* (Rolls Series, London, 1890), II, p. 40; *idem*, ed., *Matthei Parisiensis Chronica Majora* (Rolls Series, London, 1872), II, p. 158; J. Schofield and R. Lea, *Holy Trinity Priory, Aldgate: An Archaeological Reconstruction and History* (London, 2005), pp. 13–4. Merton had another connexion with Holy Trinity — the foundation of Llanthony: Roberts, *Llanthony Priory*, p. 53; Bartlett, *Llanthony Priory*, pp. 28–9.

although they are absent from the Merton Annals).¹⁸⁹ The London alderman Arnold fitz Thedmar used the Southwark Annals for his own *Liber de antiquis legibus*; he also used Ralph of Diss's *Opuscula*.¹⁹⁰ Ralph (dean of St Paul's) himself perhaps used the London Annals for his histories, for several passages in the Merton Annals are shared with Ralph's writings.¹⁹¹

Several events in the Merton Annals are entered more than once, which Brett argued implies the use of more than one source concurrently.¹⁹² The death of William Rufus is noted twice, on fol. 161^v — the first in detail, the second in terse summary; his brother's death is also noted twice (fol. 162^v). The death of Henry the Young King has four mentions (fol. 166^r). These particular entries have two different date styles — 'anno Domini' or 'anno Incarnacionis Domini'.¹⁹³ The usual year date is the former, but the latter occurs at places throughout.¹⁹⁴ This may show 'active copying', that is, the act of choosing information, rather than merely copying it all out. Active copying includes choices about layout. Merton's copyist(s) chose to follow a traditional, two-column, narrative format for both Martin of Troppau and the various British annals. This is in contrast to both Martin's original format and to that of Southwark's annals. The Southwark copyist used a more tabular layout, sometimes with four or even six columns and a truncated text. (Bermondsey's layout was different again — a single column narrative format.)

Close comparison of the Merton and Southwark manuscripts is fruitful in ways additional to that of the Annals themselves. As well as approaches to layout and content, the other contents of these volumes may give us further clues about manuscript transmission and about intellectual sensibilities of the local Augustinians. Both manuscripts have records pertaining to the history of the Church — lists of synods, popes, archbishops and schismatics. They share the account of the Britons, Saxons, Danes and Normans, Southwark to the reign of King John, Merton to 1242. This history was ultimately from Geoffrey of Monmouth, but was more immediately the concise version in Ralph of Diss'

¹⁸⁹ Brett, 'Annals', pp. 290–1; Tyson, 'Annals', p. 42.

¹⁹⁰ Stone, 'Connections', p. 207.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 205–23; *idem*, 'The Book of Arnold Fitz Thedmar', p. 84.

¹⁹² Brett, 'Annals', p. 282.

¹⁹³ Brett noted a further dating oddity, with the appearance of the date of Easter for a particular year, from 1068 to 1093: 'Annals', pp. 283–4.

¹⁹⁴ MS 59, fols 158^v (incipit has both forms), 160^b, 162^v, 163^v, 169^{ra}.

Opuscula.¹⁹⁵ Ralph died in 1202, and these manuscripts are therefore continuations. Their variants are the same, which suggests a common source. The layout is different, however, Southwark again exploring a more tabular format.¹⁹⁶ Also shared are extracts from Bede — *de situ, commendatio, mirabilibus britannie*.¹⁹⁷

Both the Southwark and Merton volumes are bound with later miscellaneous matter, more or less historical. Southwark's historical works are prefaced by a thirteenth-century copy of a penitential. The manuscript remained in Southwark until its dissolution, and therefore has later additions, including terriers, papal and archiepiscopal directives, and an up-to-date list of priors. MS 59's historical or current affairs include various statutes, such as Magna Carta, the Charter of the Forest, and (appropriately) the Statute of Merton.¹⁹⁸ As perhaps originally conceived, however, both show a conscious interest in British and ecclesiastical history. Southwark's historian was more experimental with layout. Merton's historian wanted the fashionable histories (Martin of Troppau on a general level, and the Annals of London on a local, for example). Merton's historian was also interested in oriental or world history, as witnessed by Prester John, Alexander (fols 28^r–42^v), Methodius (141^r–146^v) and Honorius (4^r–27^v).

Three items in MS 59 are much more local, but not, on the face of it, to Merton. These concern Exeter and Cornwall: Æthelred's grant of privilege to the bishop of Cornwall in 994; Cnut's confirmation of privileges to St Mary's, Exeter; Edward the Confessor's merging of the sees of Cornwall and Exeter in 1050 (fols 226^r–228^v). At first sight, these are perhaps strange inclusions. Merton had helped establish the priories at Bodmin and Taunton, but those links were by then historic. Merton did have links with the region in terms of its holdings of spiritualia and temporalia in several parishes in the diocese of Exeter, but it had more parishes in other areas not represented by sections in MS 59. However, we can offer a more compelling explanation for these inclusions. In

¹⁹⁵ W. Stubbs, *Radulphi de Diceto Decani Lundoniensis Opera Historica: The Historical Works of Master Ralph de Diceto, Dean of London*, Rolls Series (London, 1876), pp. 222–239; Cotton MS Faustina VIII, fols 70^r–81^v.

¹⁹⁶ MS 59, fols 149^v–157^v; Cotton MS Faustina VIII, fols 71^r–80^r.

¹⁹⁷ MS 59, fols 147^r–149^v; Cotton MS Faustina VIII, fols 106^v–109^v.

¹⁹⁸ MS 59, fols 182^r–188^r; 217^v–219^r. The first folio of the Bermondsey Annals (GB-Lbl MS Harl. 231) is 'Sententia lata super Transgressoribus Carte de Libertatibus Anglie, et Carte de Foresta', although this is in a fifteenth-century script.

1267, Merton swapped with the abbey of St Marie du Val its lands in Normandy for the latter's lands in Devon and Cornwall. One of the places Merton gained was Tregony, the site of a cell of St Marie du Val.¹⁹⁹ In 1292, the new prior of Merton was Nicholas Tregony. His possible connexion with the *Flores Historiarum* will be discussed below, but it may be that MS 59 was also inspired by him. How and why, during the fourteenth century, the volume came to leave Merton is a mystery.

In the vein of the detailed study of the *Liber de antiquis legibus*, a much wider project remains to be done on the London group of chronicles, looking at similarities and differences and establishing a proper chronology for the chronicles, as well as producing critical editions.

THE *FLORES HISTORIARUM* (GB-WREC MS 123)

As well as the chronicles contained in MS 59, Merton possessed the theological chronicles of Eusebius, Isidore and Hugh of St Victor, and it was joined at Merton in the late thirteenth century by the *Flores Historiarum* (GB-Wrec MS 123 [hereafter Eton 123]).²⁰⁰ This manuscript came from Westminster, and was based on another, now in Chetham's Library (GB-Mch MS 6712 [hereafter Chetham 6712]).²⁰¹ The stories of both these manuscripts demonstrate monastic production, acquisition, lending and borrowing. They have received an amount of attention, particularly Chetham 6712, but more information about the manuscript can be gleaned by approaching Eton 123 from the perspective of Merton Priory.²⁰²

Eton 123 was based on Chetham 6712. Henry Luard thought that both manuscripts were the progenitors of all other redactions. Richard Vaughan followed suit, suggesting that they were copied from a common source by

¹⁹⁹ Green, 'Pommeroy beneficence', pp. 10–11.

²⁰⁰ *Registrum Anglie*, pp. 253–4; J. Harrison, 'Hugh of Saint-Victor's Chronicle in the British Isles', in *Schrift, Schreiber, Schenker: Studien zur Abtei Sankt Viktor in Paris und den Viktorinern*, ed. R. Berndt (Berlin, 2005), 263–92. *Flores Historiarum*, ed. H. R. Luard, *Chronicles & Memorials of Great Britain*, 3 vols (London: HMSO, 1890).

²⁰¹ Illustrations from Chetham 6712 can be seen on this blog: <https://library.chethams.com/collections/101-treasures-of-chethams/flores-historiarum>. For detailed descriptions of both MSS, see Ker, *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries* (Oxford, 1983), III, pp. 348–50 and II, pp. 740–1.

²⁰² K. R. Hawks, 'Interflores, or Merton's meandering manuscripts', *The Journal of Medieval Monastic Studies*, 12 (2023), 179–98, N. Greasley, 'Revisiting the compilation of Matthew Paris's *Chronica majora*: new textual and manuscript evidence', *Journal of Medieval History*, 47 (2021), p. 233.

Matthew Paris, which he called *ChE*. He suggested a complicated stemmatic family tree, with several putative manuscripts (figure 3.4).²⁰³ Judith Collard revised this suggesting a simpler genesis (figure 3.5).²⁰⁴

Collard's stemma has the advantage of only one putative manuscript: the rest are existing known sources. While Vaughan suggested a common parent for Chetham 6712 and Eton 123, Collard suggested that Chetham 6712 *was* the parent of Eton 123. Vaughan's principal reason for positing a common parent was the discrepancies or differences between Chetham 6712 and Eton 123; Collard answered that by pointing out that copies do not have to be slavish.²⁰⁵

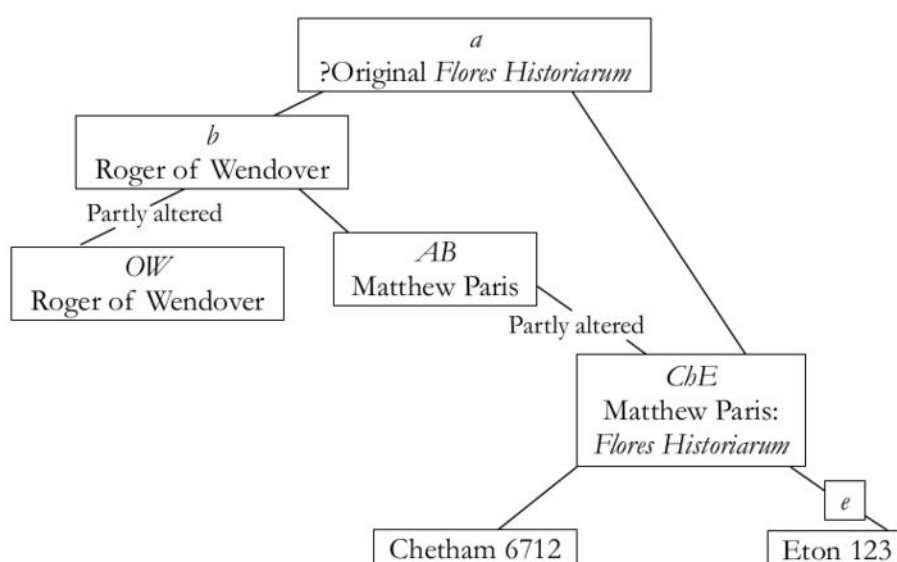


Figure 3.4: The parentage of Eton 123 (Vaughan, *Matthew Paris*, p. 97)

²⁰³ Luard, *Flores Historiarum*, I, pp. xii–xvii; R. Vaughan, *Matthew Paris* (Cambridge, 1958), pp. 93–5.

²⁰⁴ J. Collard, ‘“Flores Historiarum” manuscripts the illumination of a late thirteenth-century chronicle’, *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, 71 (2008), pp. 441–66.

²⁰⁵ Collard, ‘Flores’, p. 453.

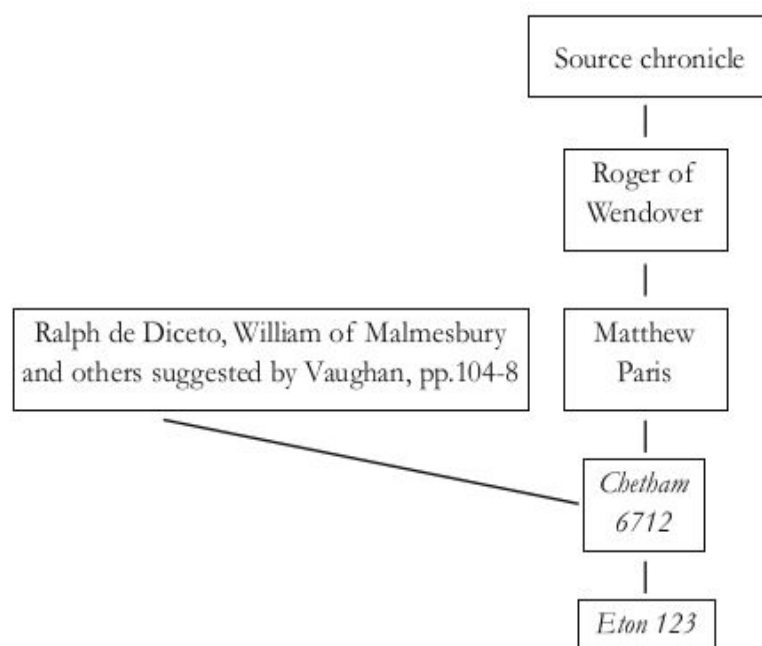


Figure 3.5: The parentage of Eton 123
(Collard, 'Flores Historiarum', p. 443)

Collard's principal reason for doubting the existence of *ChE* was that it 'does not account for the variation in hands in the Chetham manuscript that would suggest the active process of compilation.'²⁰⁶ This discussion that follows is based on Collard's thesis, taking Chetham 6712 to be the parent of Eton 123.

Chetham 6712 was originally written and illustrated at St Albans Abbey, partly by Matthew Paris himself. It seems to have been commissioned for or by Westminster Abbey, where it eventually ended up.²⁰⁷ Work on it apparently stopped around 1250, and some time thereafter it left St Albans Abbey, but it did not go directly to Westminster. Instead, it accompanied a monk of Pershore Abbey with a name local to St Albans (one William Flamstede), who continued the manuscript.²⁰⁸ Whether William was lent Chetham 6712 or whether he

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 443.

²⁰⁷ Vaughan, pp. 40–1, 104–9; D. A. Carpenter, 'The Pershore "Flores Historiarum": an unrecognised chronicle from the period of reform and rebellion in England, 1258–65', *EHR*, 127 (2012), p. 1344, fn. 8. Collard, 'Flores,' p. 441; A. Gransden, *Historical Writing in England* (London, 1974), 1, pp. 396–401; 439–456. She was dismissive of Eton 123, 'remarking that the so-called "Merton" *Flores Historiarum* is a re-write of the Westminster *Flores* and has little value as a historical source' (p. 439).

²⁰⁸ Carpenter, 'Flores', pp. 1343–1366.

managed to smuggle it out is not known, but we may presume that the ownership of such a chronicle carried some prestige. This itself suggests both the contemporary reputation of St Albans and the desire for works of history.

After the death of Flamstede's abbot, Eleurius, a land dispute between Westminster and Pershore resulted in a formal agreement between the two abbeys, and David Carpenter concluded that part of the agreement was a return of the errant manuscript to its proper home.²⁰⁹ If Eton 123 was a copy of Chetham 6712, work on it must have been started at Westminster sometime after this point. As Westminster had its own copy of the *Flores*, Eton 123 is likely to have been commissioned by another party.

Luard recognised Chetham 6712's Westminster connexions, but he argued that Eton 123 was written at Merton.²¹⁰ His reasons for a Merton provenance were 1) the *ex libris*, 2) the names of priors in the margins at various dates, 3) the reference to 'Eodem anno incepta est nova capella beate Virginis apud Mertone' in 1262, and 4) the inclusion of a letter from Edward I to Merton concerning his claim to the Scottish throne (which was omitted from Luard's own edition).²¹¹ But, as Richard Vaughan pointed out, all these are marginalia (except Edward I's letter) and they suggest nothing more than that Merton owned the manuscript sometime before 1306 (when the manuscript breaks off). Antonia Gransden instead proposed Westminster as its place of manufacture.²¹² She argued that its style was similar to that of the *Commendatio Lamentabilis* on the death of Edward I by a John of London, whom she identified as the Westminster monk, John Bever, and concluded that 'there is, therefore, the possibility that John of London... wrote the "Merton" *Flores*'.²¹³ Her argument

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 1359–61.

²¹⁰ Luard, *Flores*, I, p. xiii.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. xv, lii; III, pp. 250, 302. The 'nova capella' could be a chapel within the church, the infirmary chapel or the chapel by the gate.

²¹² Vaughan, *Matthew Paris*, p. 101; Gransden, *Historical Writing*, I, p. 456. Both the Chetham and Eton manuscripts could therefore be called 'Westminster' manuscripts, and since one of the redactions, Luard's I.6, Westminster MS 24., can also be referred to as 'Westminster', I shall refer to them by their catalogue numbers to avoid any ambiguity. Trevor Russell Smith's nomenclature of 'Westminster' and 'Merton' is therefore unhelpful: 'Further manuscripts of Matthew Paris' *Flores Historiarum* and continuations', *Notes & Queries* (March, 2020), pp. 6–7. Vaughan, more sensibly, called them 'Ch' and 'E'. See also Collard, 'Flores', p. 457 and A. Gransden, 'The continuations of the *Flores Historiarum* from 1265 to 1327', in *Legends, Tradition and History in Medieval England* (London, 1992), pp. 249–50.

²¹³ Gransden, *Legends*, p. 253.

is somewhat thin: the passages she quotes contain the same plangently melodramatic imagery, but this is not uncommon in the biblical-rhetorical style of the period, and it is not similar enough to suppose the same author. John Bever's name appears at the bottom of GB-Lbl Harley MS 641, which belonged to St Augustine's Abbey, Canterbury, acquired by Abbot Thomas (1283–1309); this may suggest a connexion with Eton 123, or it may not.²¹⁴ Gransden also proposed that Eton 123 was written to celebrate Edward II's coronation, a claim that will be discussed below.

Eton 123 was written in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries and is the product of several scribes. Fols 1–240^v have a uniformity of style that suggests either one scribe or more than one of the same team. These pages include all nine coronation pictures and the two historiated or decorated initials. From the second column of fol. 240^v (1291) to fol. 247^r (1294), there are, as Ker noted, changes of ink and possibly of scribe, and at least twelve occasions in which the manuscript had been added to in this section.²¹⁵ I think that there is a possible change of hand on fol. 242^{rb} (1291) and a further change of hand at fol. 247^v (1295). The rulings change at fol. 243^r and again from fol. 243^v. Another hand took over at fol. 247^v, continuing until fol. 250^v, when yet another hand took over. This hand seems to have been the final one, although it is possible that there was a different hand at 251^v. The pen, or hand, changes again at fol. 252^v (1297) and fols 253^v–255^v; thereafter, one hand carries on until the end. This final hand is possibly the hand of fol. 253^{r–v} and fols 242^{rb}–243^{ra}.²¹⁶ Towards the end, the illuminated capitals are left blank, perhaps suggesting a hasty finish or a lack of finish.

Adelaide Bennett identified five flourishers who embellished the manuscript's initials, two working from the beginning to fol. 242^v, a third on fols 242^v–243^v (1291–93), the fourth, fols 245^r–249^v (1294–6), and the fifth from fol. 252^r to fol. 255^r (1299–1302).²¹⁷ A scribal change at fol. 240^v or fol. 242^r may be

²¹⁴ For a discussion of the 'Cronica de editione domini Johannis dicti Bevere, monachi Westmonasterii', see Luard, *Flores*, I, pp. xxxi–iii.

²¹⁵ A. Bennett, 'A late thirteenth-century Psalter-Hours from London', *England in the Thirteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1984 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. W. M. Ormrod, p. 21, fn. 2; N. R. Ker, *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries*, II (London, 1977), pp. 740–1. See also the *Eton College catalogue*.

²¹⁶ Bennett, 'Psalter-Hours', p. 21, fn. 2; N. R. Ker, *Medieval Manuscripts*, pp. 740–1; *Eton College catalogue*.

²¹⁷ Bennett, 'Psalter-Hours', p. 22, fn. 2 ctd.

consonant with a change of monastery, but this is far from conclusive (as, indeed, is the evidence for changes of hands, a difficult art). The change in scribe at fol. 242^{rb} is for the letter 'Priori et conventui de Mertone' from Edward I mentioned, but missed out, by Luard. However, this is not evidence that the manuscript was at Merton by then, for it would have been easy enough for a monk of Westminster to have seen this letter. Ker observed two notes concerning Merton which 'escaped notice' (one in the text space on fol. 243^r; the other one in red ink, s.xiv on fol. 251^v), but, again, these could have been added later.²¹⁸ There is one further illustration worth noting: a marginale, rather than an illumination, of a Jew being devoured by a dragon (fol. 248^v), accompanying the story of the treachery of Thomas Turbeville.

As well as different scribes or copying sessions, there are differing levels of concordance with Chetham 6712. Luard wrote that the Eton 123 entries up to 1245 concur with Chetham 6712. From 1245 to the baronial revolt of 1265 the material seems not to be derived from Chetham 6712, but from 1265 to 1293 it again converges with Chetham 6712; after 1293 it becomes more detailed, with perhaps the addition of another source.²¹⁹ The latter section falls into the change of hand(s); although not an exact fit, it is near enough to suggest that there was a break somewhere between fol. 240 and fol. 248. This could imply a change of location, although it must be noted that none of the final hands matches the hand that wrote the Merton priors' dates. Eton 123 was not composed in a single period, but was a product of several scribal campaigns.²²⁰

Similarly, the illustrations in Eton 123 were a product of more than one painter. Adelaide Bennett identified four illustrators: one produced the first decorated initial; another the Nativity scene (fol. 27^r); the third, kings William I, William II and Henry I; and the fourth, the kings from Stephen to Edward I.²²¹ She argued that the Nativity painter was the 'Psalm Painter' of the Mostyn Psalter-Hours, and that the painter of the initial was that of the Clare-Vescy Psalter. These two artists would locate the manuscript to the London-

²¹⁸ Ker, *Medieval Manuscripts*, pp. 740–1.

²¹⁹ Collard, 'Flores', p. 453.

²²⁰ Bennett, 'Psalter-Hours', p. 22; Collard, 'Flores', p. 456.

²²¹ Bennett, 'Psalter-Hours', pp. 21–2, fn. 2. Albert Hollaender called them, somewhat unfairly, 'monotonous': 'The pictorial work in the "Flores Historiarum" of the so-called Matthew of Westminster (MS. Chetham 6712)', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 28 (1944), p. 366.

Westminster area. She argued further that these artists could be associated with the workshop of William of Devon, who had a workshop in Oxford, whose growing university made it a centre for the book trade. This workshop seems to have dissipated in the 1280s, some of its members settling in the London area.²²² Instead of Gransden's monk-scribes, therefore, the illustrations, at least, were provided by a number of secular illuminators; this recalls R. K. Lancaster's warning not to seek a 'Westminster school' based at the abbey, as there is no positive evidence that Westminster had an active scriptorium at this time.²²³ Nonetheless, it may be that Westminster monks were responsible for writing both the continuation of Chetham 6712 and Eton 123, farming out the illustrations to professional illuminators who worked close by, or even within the monastery itself. As is shown elsewhere in this thesis, regulars and seculars often worked closely together. The one illustration in Chetham 6712 that seems to have been done at Westminster itself (Edward I) is not very good, and is nothing like the illustrations in Eton 123: this, combined with the dissimilarity of coronation scenes, may give more weight to the hypothesis of an external workshop for Eton 123's illustrations.²²⁴

On stylistic grounds, Eton 123 can be placed in the late thirteenth century, being finished in the early fourteenth century. Gransden argued one date for it, around 1307, suggesting that it was made for the coronation of Edward II (and possibly copied from yet another putative manuscript). To support this, she cited the royalist tone, similar to the *Commendatio Lamentabilis*, and the illustrations of coronations. Gransden proposed that the continuation of Chetham 6712 and the manuscript of Eton 123 'were perhaps... official histories, written in response to royal command', and stated that 'the

²²² Bennett, p. 22; N. Ramsey, 'Artists, craftsmen and design in England, 1200–1400', in *The Age of Chivalry*, ed. J. Alexander and P. Binski (London, 1987), pp. 50–1; N. Morgan, *Early Gothic Manuscripts: 1190–1250. A Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles*, II (London, 1982), p. 22–3, and nos. 140–8. The Mostyn Psalter-Hours is now GB-Lbl, Add. MS 89250; related manuscripts are the Pontifical of Westminster Abbey (GB-Ob, MS Rawl.C.425), the Clare-Vescy Psalter (Morgan Library, MS.M.100), Bracton (GB-Ob, MS Rawl.C.160) and Fitzwilliam MS 47.

²²³ R. K. Lancaster, 'Henry III, Westminster Abbey and the Court School of Illumination', in *Seven Studies in Medieval English History and Other Essays*, ed. R. H. Bowers (Jackson, Mississippi, 1983), 85–95.

²²⁴ For the Chetham illustrations, see A. Hollaender, 'The pictorial work in the "Flores Historiarum" of the so-called Matthew of Westminster (MS. Chetham 6712)', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 28 (1944), pp. 361–81.

production of such a work for Edward II, perhaps at his request, is not intrinsically improbable'.²²⁵ Continuing this argument, Chetham 6712 and Eton 123 served as exemplars, the fair 'royal' copy having subsequently disappeared. However, Gransden somewhat contradicted herself by pointing out that 'official histories were rare in medieval England'.²²⁶ Whereas it is possible that Edward II commissioned a book, to be kept by Westminster Abbey, to celebrate his coronation, it is more likely that he did not. It is again possible that the monks of Westminster produced one official history, but it is unlikely that they produced two. The tight turn-around time (between 7 July 1307 and 24 February 1308) for the production of such a manuscript militates against Gransden's argument, but even more so does the evidence of different scribal campaigns. The continuation of Chetham 6712 is different from Eton 123 and they cannot be talked about as if they were one manuscript, planned and executed in one or two campaigns. Finally, the assumption of the existence of yet another imaginary source manuscript and of an imaginary fair copy offers more candidates for a trim with Occam's razor.

The other piece of evidence Gransden used for her Edward II theory was the coronation illustrations, particularly that of Edward I. Gransden made much of Edward's dove-topped sceptre, suggesting that the artist took it from Edward's burial, for such a sceptre was buried with him.²²⁷ She noted that most of the sceptres depicted were fleury, and that a dove was unusual in contemporary illustrations. There is (as she could not but note) another sceptre topped by a bird in the series, the martlet of King John. The martlet had no feet and was associated with its bearer having no land, and was, therefore, the ideal bird for John Lackland.²²⁸ It was also, by the thirteenth century, traditionally associated with another king, Edward the Confessor, owing to his years in exile. St Edward is depicted with a martlet-sceptre in Chetham 6712 (fol. 115^v), on a twelfth-century forged seal, and in the Painted Chamber.²²⁹ Edward I's sceptre-bird could be a dove, but it could be a martlet, and if so, it would have two sets

²²⁵ Gransden, *Historical Writing*, I, p. 459; *Legends*, pp. 259, 261.

²²⁶ Gransden, *Legends*, p. 262.

²²⁷ Gransden, *Legends*, pp. 258–60; J. Ayloffe, 'An Account of the Body of King Edward the First, as it appeared on opening his Tomb in the Year 1774', *Archaeologia*, 3 (1775), 376–413.

²²⁸ R. Dennys, *The Heraldic Imagination* (London, 1975), pp. 182–3.

²²⁹ P. Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets: Kingship and the Representation of Power, 1200–1400* (New Haven, 1995), pp. 121 (fig. 166), 85 (fig. 123), 127 (fig. 173).

of precedents in the *Flores* manuscripts, and it could have been borne in honour of Edward's namesake. In any case, as both Bennett and Collard argued, there is no reason to date the illustration to after Edward's death based on this sceptral evidence.²³⁰ Gransden's coronation hypothesis is unlikely; more convincing is Collard's argument for an earlier date of (main) composition, the 1290s, as the physical evidence both of this manuscript and of some next-generation *Flores* suggests.

Collard linked the seeding of *Flores* manuscripts in the 1290s to Edward I's campaign to increase his royal authority. This campaign included depositing British royal regalia at Westminster Abbey, and, across the road in Westminster Palace, commissioning a series of murals depicting kingship, intended to show Edward as a lawful, law-abiding king of good counsel and not a tyrant.²³¹ Gransden noted Edward I's interest in history, which included commissioning John of Caen's *Processus Scotiae*.²³² The two manuscripts associated with Westminster and Merton (Chetham 6712 and Eton 123) both have a theme of royal coronations which would seem to fit this Edwardian style. Coronations emphasise legitimacy and authority — both vital characteristics to back up claims to rule an expanded territory. However, Chetham 6712's kings date back to Henry III's reign, and the illustrations were all drawn at St Albans, except for the crude illustration of Edward's own coronation, executed at Westminster.²³³ Chetham 6712 would appear, therefore, to be Henrician rather than Edwardian. Collard drew attention to the close relationship between Henry III and Westminster, and suggested that Chetham 6712 could have been 'intended as an official Westminster chronicle that, through the abbey's position as coronation church, would give prominence to the deeds of the king', using as an analogy the abbey of S. Denis and the *Grandes Chroniques de France*.²³⁴ Chris Given-Wilson went further, arguing that 'the various continuations of the *Flores*

²³⁰ Bennett, 'Psalter-Hours', p. 22, fn. 2; Collard, pp. 454–6; Gransden, *Historical Writing*, I, pp. 457, 473.

²³¹ Collard, 'Flores', pp. 464–6; P. Binski, 'The Painted Chamber at Westminster, the fall of tyrants and the English literary model of governance', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 74 (2011), pp. 121–54, especially pp. 151–2. See also Binski, *The Painted Chamber at Westminster* (London, 1986), p. 39.

²³² Gransden, *Legends*, p. 264.

²³³ Collard, 'Flores', p. 446; A. Hollaender, 'The pictorial work in the "Flores Historiarum" of the so-called Matthew of Westminster (MS Chetham 6712)', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 28 (1944), p. 377 and plate vi.

²³⁴ Collard, 'Flores', p. 452. Gransden also suggested it as a response to S. Denis: *Legends*, p. 264.

Historiarum compiled at Westminster Abbey between 1265 and 1327 show many signs of having been written at the behest of the government'.²³⁵

Given-Wilson's interpretation has a couple of problems. The first is his twentieth-century assumption that a chronicle would have been produced 'at the behest of the government'. Whilst Henry might have had a personal interest in such a chronicle, whether it was commissioned by the king himself is perhaps not the right question to ask: celebrating the king, especially in monasteries associated with him, was part of the discourse of the community of the realm.²³⁶ Both Richard Croxley (1246–58) and Richard Ware (1258–83) were involved in royal government and in Henry's alterations to Westminster Abbey, and either could have been responsible for commissioning this sort of chronicle; given the date of Chetham 6712, Croxley would seem to be the more credible patron. Collard suggested that the abbey as a whole could have had an interest in commissioning such a work as part of the cult of St Edward.²³⁷

The second problem with Given-Wilson's statement comes from the dissemination of this chronicle: if the Westminster manuscript were government propaganda, this would imply some government involvement in other copies, but there is no evidence of this. Moreover, whilst the acquisition of a copy of the *Flores* was probably in part a statement of commitment to the body politic (rather than a 'propagandist' royal history commissioned by whichever Edward), it was an expression of the interest more generally in history, and perhaps also a status symbol. History provided important moral lessons and examples, and history books were thus an important part of a monastic library. As Björn Weiler has argued, history books were also a point of communication between a monastery and its guests, who might be current or future patrons.²³⁸ In addition, by acquiring a copy of the *Flores*, Merton could have shown that it was on a par with the Benedictine powerhouses of St Albans and Westminster.

²³⁵ C. Given-Wilson, 'Official and semi-official history in the later Middle Ages', *The Medieval Chronicle*, 5 (2008), 1–16 (p. 12).

²³⁶ J. Lake, 'Authorial Intention in Medieval Historiography', *History Compass*, 12 (2014), 344–60 (pp. 352–53).

²³⁷ Collard, 'Flores', p. 441. Croxley's ambitions can be seen in his seal, upon which he poses as a bishop, rather than an abbot.

²³⁸ B. Weiler, 'Historical writing in medieval Britain: the case of Matthew Paris', in Jahner *et al.*, *Medieval Historical Writing*, pp. 319–38.

It is possible that Eton 123 was produced on a speculative basis: given the number of early copies of both Chetham 6712 and Eton 123, speculative copying would not have been a bad investment of materials and time. It is also possible that it was commissioned by Merton: Merton was another monastery with royal connexions, and this would celebrate its royal connexions and history; it also had connexions with Westminster Abbey, which held its neighbouring manor of Morden. Merton by this time had a couple of historical texts already; this would have made a fine addition.²³⁹ Collard noted that some other copies of the *Flores* bear such notable similarities to *both* Eton 123 and Chetham 6712 that the copyists must have had access to both sources.²⁴⁰ This might mean that one or more copy was made while both manuscripts were at Westminster, but not necessarily: the prior of Merton's house was only a short ferry ride across the Thames, and we know from Arnulf fitz Thedmar that such books were readily lent and borrowed.²⁴¹ All other *Flores* manuscripts are copies either of Chetham 6712 or Eton 123, or else of one of the second generation manuscripts.²⁴² As an afterthought, it may be noted that Southwark had a copy; it also shared with Merton (and Bermondsey) copies of the *Annals of London*.

There were several reasons, therefore, why Merton should have wanted a copy of the *Flores*; a re-examination of internal evidence may suggest when Eton 123 was acquired by the priory. Information on priors that give evidence of Merton's possession are mainly foot- or marginal notes with a cross marking the place in the text. The final priors' entry (fol. 243^r) manages to squeeze in between the death of Pope Nicholas (1292) and the Anglo-Norman sea battle of 1293. This entry marks the death of Gilbert de Asshe and the succession of Nicholas Tregony in 1292. The prior entries are all in the same hand, and this would indicate a *terminus ante quem non* of 1292. Neither the priorates of Edmund Herriard (1296–1305) nor Geoffrey Alconbury (1305–7) are marked. This suggests two possibilities. The first is that the *Flores* disappeared from Merton after 1296: however, the later fourteenth- or early fifteenth-century hand that wrote 'Merton' in the margins by the story of Hubert de Burgh (fols 204^{r-v})

²³⁹ See comments on GB-Llp ee 118 and GB-Ccc MS 059.

²⁴⁰ Collard, 'Flores', pp. 456–7.

²⁴¹ I. Stone, 'Connections and collaborations between centres of historical writing in thirteenth-century London and Southwark', *Medieval Studies*, 79 (2017), 205–47.

²⁴² Luard, *Flores*, I, pp. xvii–xxxiv; T. Russell-Smith, 'Further manuscripts of Matthew Paris' "Flores Historiarum" and continuations', *Notes & Queries*, 67.1 (2020), 6–7.

perhaps gives evidence against this, implying that the manuscript was still at Merton then. The second possibility is that the *Flores* was a particular project of Nicholas Tregony, who died in 1296, and who is the last prior to appear in the entries. Following his demise, there was a decline of interest in the *Flores*, the first sign of which was a lack of entries about new priors, and the second, the chronicle's termination in 1307. It has already been suggested above that Tregony might have been responsible for the collection of histories in MS 59.

Nicholas Tregony was sub-prior before becoming prior, and as prior, he attended the parliament of 1295.²⁴³ He was apparently from Tregony, Cornwall, whose benefice Merton had acquired from the Norman monastery of St Marie du Val (see above). If he were around forty (a typical minimum age for a prior), he might have been of the right age to have become a novice at Merton just at the time that it acquired Tregony. We know nothing more about him except for one single reference: at Pentecost in 1293 he was a guest of Prince Edward.²⁴⁴ On this occasion Edward was at Mortlake, and so the prior of Merton might have been invited as one of the local landowners, but it could point to Nicholas' being politically involved or aware beyond the basic dignity of his office. If Nicholas were responsible for bringing the *Flores* to Merton, this is perhaps also evidence of an active interest in royal networks and politics. This may also account for the increase in detail which Luard observed in the entries from 1293, including, for example, the death of Gilbert de Clare, who had been a benefactor of Merton.²⁴⁵ It may be that Nicholas Tregony had it continued and added to by various of his canons, who carried this on after his death (1296) until 1307. It may be significant that 1307, as well as being the death of Edward I, was the death of Prior Geoffrey Alconbury and the succession of William Brokesbourne, but more would have to be known about the inclinations of either man to be sure. If Tregony had been responsible for the Annals and the *Flores*, this would show the significance of individual priors to the library

²⁴³ Heales, pp. 178–80. The site of a cell of St Mary du Val (Normandy), Tregony was one of several benefices swapped with St Mary in 1266 for Merton's cell at Cahaigues (Normandy): L. Green, 'The Pommeroy Beneficence', *Merton Historical Society Bulletin*, 14 (December, 2001), pp. 10–11.

²⁴⁴ F. Devon, ed., 'Household Roll of Lord Edward the King's Son', *Issues of the Exchequer*, (London 1837), p. 109; quoted in A. Beam, 'Edward Balliol: a re-evaluation of his early career, c.1282–1332', in *England and Scotland in the Fourteenth Century: New Perspectives*, ed. A. King and M. A. Penman (Woodbridge, 2007), p. 75.

²⁴⁵ Luard, *Flores*, III, pp. 280, 283. Compare pp. 94–5; Heales, p. 150.

collection and to the intellectual direction of the monastery. If Tregony were responsible for Eton 123, then we would assume its presence at Merton by or around 1292, and it may be that the changes in hand suggested above is consonant with that.

The use of Eton 123 for moral education can be seen in a couple of marginalia. The doodle of the dragon devouring a Jew, mentioned above, perhaps likens the betrayal of a king to the betrayal of Christ. An early fourteenth-century hand wrote in large letters 'De penis purgatorii' above the vision of Drichthelm, amplifying the rubricated heading, 'De mortuo resuscitate et penis purgatorii'.²⁴⁶ The moral message of this, that austerity in this life will mitigate austerity in the next and lead to eternal sweetness, is similar to that of the vision of Walchelin that formed part of the texts about Merton's founder Gilbert the Sheriff.²⁴⁷ A sixteenth-century hand annotated a passage on the re-foundation of Waltham Priory (176^v) with 'et erectæ sunt Sodom et Gomor.' However, this may be a Reformation reaction and not internecine monastic criticism, for the manuscript might well have been out of Merton's library by then: Neil Ker argued that it had been removed from the library sometime before the Dissolution, as 'a deliberate effort has been made to conceal the evidence that it belonged there.'²⁴⁸

More general historical interest is shown in the kings' names written in the margins of fols 140^r–143^r, 146^r–156^r, and 166^r–180^r, and the bishops of Winchester (fols 201^r, 221^v, 227^v). A couple of marginalia point to Merton's own place in the history of the nation. We noted above the fourteenth- or fifteenth-century hand that wrote 'Merton' by the story of Hubert de Burgh's escape to sanctuary (fols 204^{r-v}); another drew a manicule (fol. 238^v) pointing to the death of Walter of Merton with the note 'fundator de M[er]tonhall'. Björn Weiler discussed Matthew Paris' chronicles in the context of his abbey's historical identity; these marginalia imply a similar attitude.²⁴⁹ Another marginal entry from the fifteenth century is worthy of note: 'non ffredericus amicus Wyclif'

²⁴⁶ Luard, *Flores*, I, p. 350.

²⁴⁷ *Gilbert IV* (p. 41).

²⁴⁸ Ker, *Medieval Manuscripts*, p. 741.

²⁴⁹ Weiler, 'Historical writing', pp. 328–28.

next to the Emperor Frederick (fol. 211^r, for the year 1239), showing an awareness of the religious controversy of his own time.²⁵⁰

One of the later hands (e.g. on fol. 86^r) has been identified as Thomas Gascoigne (1404–1458).²⁵¹ Where Gascoigne consulted the manuscript is unknown: he could have visited Merton, or the manuscript could have been removed to Oxford. Merton had close links to Oxford University, and could have lent its *Flores* to an Oxford scholar, who never returned it.

Law

The prior of a large and influential house such as Merton needed to consult both canon and common law for a number of reasons. Merton was a major landowner, and legal rights to possessions were a constant source of dispute. As patron to a large number of parishes, the priory was bound by the regulations of canon law. Furthermore, several of Merton's priors were judges delegate, and Chapter 5 explores evidence for Merton as a legal centre of expertise in the early thirteenth century. This evidence suggests the existence of a number of law books at Merton, and, in addition, one Andrew bought or borrowed a *nouum digestum* from Merton for twenty shillings in 1288.²⁵² However, only one legal manuscript survives from this period: a collection of canon law tracts and other miscellany from the fourteenth century.

CANON LAW TRACTS ETC. (GB-LBL ROYAL MS 11 B V)

This is a compilation of papal decretals and archiepiscopal acts, along with, *inter alia*, documents relating particularly to Merton. The manuscript is a compilation of different booklets spanning the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, and it was bound for Prior William Brokesbourne (1307–1334), probably being kept in his own personal library. Brokesbourne's prelacy was long but not unproblematic, with financial difficulties and concerns about the prior's authority.²⁵³ The latter can be seen in a letter from Berengar, bishop

²⁵⁰ Cf. J. Catto, 'Theology after Wycliffism', in *The History of the University of Oxford: Late Medieval Oxford*, ed. R. Evans and J. Catto (Oxford, 1993), II, p.267.

²⁵¹ Luard, *Flores*, I, p. xlv; Vaughan, *Matthew Paris*, pp. 92–102; W. A. Pronger, 'Thomas Gascoigne', *EHR*, 53 (1938), 606–26 and 54 (1939), 20–37. Matthew Parker was a later owner-annotator: T. Graham, 'Matthew Parker's manuscripts: an Elizabethan library and its use', in *CHLBI*, p. 335.

²⁵² See below, pp. 211; *Cleo*, fol. cxcvi^v. I am indebted to Harold Hans for this reference.

²⁵³ R. M. Haines, 'Adam Orleton and the Diocese of Winchester', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 23 (1972), p. 25; *VCH Surrey*, II, p. 99; *Woodlock*, II, pp. 751–4; Heales, pp. 212–4.

of Tusculum, on fol. 205, regarding misdemeanours of canons. Preceding that, on 204^r–205^v, is the case of John le Botiler, rejected as a prospective canon on account of his ‘deformity’.²⁵⁴ A paragraph on fol. 13^r prohibits the prior from changing any house rules without the consent of the majority of the chapter, again suggesting that the situation at Merton was not smooth.

The texts included in this collection relate to different aspects of the prior and priory and demonstrate the need to keep up to date with canon law. Decretals from Boniface VIII’s *Liber sextus* (*Cum ex eo* and *Super cathedram, Si episcopus cui*), as well as Gregory X *Licet canon*, suggest the concern of the prior with parochial church matters as both a patron and appropriator of churches. *Cum ex eo* concerned the education of, and *Licet canon* the absence or presence of, parish clergy (discussed in Chapter 4); *Si episcopus cui* related to episcopal provision of competent clergy. Parish priests were to remain a concern of Merton’s priors, as witnessed by John Lacy in the early sixteenth century, and discussed in Chapter 6. Otto’s constitutions (fols 185^v–185^v) also concern parishes, and this section ends with an added article on the consecration of a church. Laurence of Somercote’s treatise on episcopal elections (fols 194^r–203^v) would have been of interest to the prior of a major house, and one whose abbot was nominally a bishop. Several items concern the role of the friars in parishes: their presence was a worry for the secular clergy, but was also of concern for religious patrons of churches, such as Merton.²⁵⁵ The abbot of St Albans, for example, used his jurisdictional powers under *Super cathedram* to deny a friar the licence to preach, having found him to be ‘an idiot’.²⁵⁶

Brokesbourne’s collection of thirteenth-century decretals (fols 14^r–193^v) was laid out rather like a gloss, and produced, and probably circulated, as one unit. The Summercote treatise, copied by various scribes, was again possibly already in circulation when it was added. It ends at the top of the second

²⁵⁴ This recalls the Barnwell Observances’ advice about selecting novices from the fit and healthy: *Barnwell Observances*, pp. 120–1. The Cartulary records a generous annual pension of 60s, which presumably ceased when, in 1319, the priory presented him to the church of St Peter, Bedford (one of its wealthier benefices): Heales, p. 216; *Cleo*, nos 462, fol. clxxxiiij^v; 480, fol. clxxxvij^r.

²⁵⁵ J. L. Copeland, ‘The relations between the secular clergy and the mendicant friars in England during the century after the issue of the Bull *Super Cathedram* (1300)’ (MA thesis, London: Royal Holloway, 1938); R. Swanson, ‘The “mendicant problem” in the later Middle Ages’, *Studies in Church History, Subsidia*, 11 (1999), 217–238.

²⁵⁶ *Gesta Abbatum Monasterii Sancti Albani*, ed. H. T. Riley, 3rd edn (London, 1867), II, pp. 214–5; Clark, *Monastic Renaissance*, p. 154.

column, and the Botiler case was added to complete the page. The volume has marginal notes in fourteenth and fifteenth-century hands, and a fifteenth-century hand the margins of fol. 188^v (Stephen Langton's 1222 provincial council), with a manicule and note that what went for monks went also for canons.²⁵⁷ Langton's council appears in William Lyndwood's *Provinciale*, a printed edition of which was bought by Prior John Lacy (1520–30).

In gathering together a legal collection, Prior William Brokesbourne drew on booklets that already existed in his priory, suggesting some knowledge or study of canon law. The other evidence for such study comes from the cartulary, whose entries concerning law books we noted in the introduction to this section. This illustrates the problem of the survival of evidence regarding Merton's collection of books: there must have been more law books than we have evidence for. There is no evidence at all for civil law books; this may be another instance of the problem of survival or a reflection of the ambivalence about regulars studying civil law.²⁵⁸ Brokesbourne's book was a sufficiently significant law book to have been acquired for the royal collection by 1543.²⁵⁹

CONCLUSIONS

Merton had one of the largest Augustinian libraries of this period. Its collection reflected texts and topics found in other Augustinian houses, for example, the comparably sized one at Leicester. From even the very incomplete evidence we have, it appears that not only did Merton have a quantitatively impressive library by the fourteenth century, it also had a qualitatively impressive one. Although there are no physical remains of any buildings at Merton that might be identifiable as a library, book store or scriptorium, in the absence of physical evidence, we can draw on analogies with other houses, both Augustinian and those of other orders, to suggest where books were stored and how they were accessed and used. Further clues lie in the content of books and whether they

²⁵⁷ D. Wilkins, ed., *Concilia Magnæ Britanniae* (London, 1737), I, p. 585; M. Powicke and C. Cheney, *Councils & Synods*, II, pp. 237–59.

²⁵⁸ P. D. Clarke, 'Canon and civil law', in *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval English Law and Literature*, ed. C. Barrington and S. Sobecki, Cambridge Companions to Literature (Cambridge, 2019), p. 36. For canons ignoring this, see Guyon, 'La formation intellectuelle', in *Les Chanoines Réguliers: Émergence et Expansion, XI^e–XIII^e Siècles*, ed. M. Parisse (Saint-Étienne, 2009), p. 314.

²⁵⁹ J. Carley, *Henry VIII*, Westminster, H2.874, p. 166.

were used for individual study or devotion, communal worship or communal reading, and this probably affected where they were stored and used.

This chapter has presented full descriptions and analysis of the surviving manuscripts from Merton. This sample, however, represents only a fraction of the whole library in its heyday, as witnessed, for example, by the *Registrum Anglie*. Nevertheless, a sample of the collection can reveal much about the intellectual and scholarly life of the priory. The exploration of these works has pushed the discussion beyond existing scholarship and through rigorous examination or re-examination of the physical aspects of the manuscripts has re-evaluated their use and significance.

In terms of book acquisition, evidence has been presented about the canons' book collecting policies to fulfil the needs of study at all levels, from the basic to theological maturity. Many of the religious texts emphasise the sacraments, which was a result in part of the more general theological discourse of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, but this also aligns with the canons as servers of the altar, both priests and deacons or sub-deacons, and with the parochial interests of Merton both as an Augustinian house and the patron of a sizeable number of parish churches. As patron and corporate rector, Merton had a responsibility for providing books and educational materials for its vicars and chaplains, a topic for discussion in Chapter 4. The number of texts suitable as sources for sermons, as well as the marginal notes indicating a preaching purpose, suggest that the canons of Merton gave sermons both within the priory and further afield. If so, this would fit into a broader context of Augustinian preaching, evinced by Alexander Nequam, Alexander of Ashby and others. This chapter has suggested that Prior William (1167–77) can take his place alongside these two among the significant English Augustinian priors of the second half of the twelfth century, and that the books produced in his priorate and those of his immediate successors establish Merton as a community of learning.

Christopher de Hamel observed that, from 1100 to 1400, books were donated to monasteries either by regular or secular clergy, but not by the laity, and this seems to have been the case at Merton.²⁶⁰ The earliest extant gift from a secular clergyman to Merton Priory was David of London's *Sententia* of Peter

²⁶⁰ De Hamel, 'Books and society', in CHBB, II, pp. 8–9. For regular-secular relations, see also H. M. Thomas, *The Secular Clergy in England, 1066–1216* (Oxford, 2014), pp. 246–265.

Lombard. We will see in Chapter 6 that donations from secular clergy continued into the sixteenth century, with John Ramsey's volume of historical writings (GB-Lsa MS 47) and Merton Priory's copy of Henry of Huntingdon was perhaps acquired from a Kentish vicar.²⁶¹ Merton also lent books: the *Flores Historiarum* was used in the fifteenth century by Thomas Gascoigne, and might already have been in Oxford by the time he looked at it; in 1288, a law digest was borrowed by a secular cleric.²⁶² This again fits into the more general pattern of regular book lending. In his will, Walter de Merton returned a missal to Oseney and a glossed Pauline *Epistles* to the Newcastle Dominicans, and a fourteenth-century vicar of Cherington borrowed five books from Lanthony Secunda.²⁶³

The extant volumes show learning of various forms and at various levels. Sermons delivered to canons could encompass all levels, from the novice to the scholar. The detailed knowledge of biblical and other religious texts demonstrated by marginalia shows active learning, with a lively interest at Merton in up-to-date theological developments, largely imported from northern France. In the case of Royal MS 11 A V the physical make-up of the manuscript — a compilation of booklets — hints at individual use before binding, and suggests personal learning by individual canons at a high level. The collations of and annotations in the Merton Bible suggest collaboration between canons to present a book fit for the requirements of thirteenth-century biblical study. Tables of contents, headings and subheadings and folio numbers show a developing concern for ease of reference. In Prior William's book, the table of contents was contemporary with the manuscript itself; in other texts, tables of contents were added retrospectively, which also shows a continuity of use.

The survival of law books, or the lack of it, is a reminder of how unrepresentative this collection might be. The reference in the cartulary (Cotton MS Cleo C VII) to a collection of law books of the canon Thomas of Tynemouth, discussed in Chapter 5, is tantalising, but unenlightening. The priory's historical works demonstrate the canons' interests in community identity and moral guidance, and, in these, Merton's historical collection is similar to those of other monasteries. The two *vite* imply a variety of use, oral and reading, both as instructional works for canons on the nature of their calling,

²⁶¹ Below, p. 272.

²⁶² Above, p. 129.

²⁶³ Webber & Watson, p. 35. See also N. Orme, 'Schools and Schoolmasters (to c.1550)', p. 425.

and for institutional memory. In common with other monasteries at the time, Merton was careful to keep a cartulary, which had immediate practical functions, but also fostered community identity and commemoration. The Merton Annals and *Flores Historiarum* are evidence of co-operation between monasteries in the production, acquisition and borrowing of books, and imply that Merton was part of a local network of monasteries which included Augustinian Southwark and Benedictine Westminster. The *Flores*, in particular, indicates that the prior of Merton was keen to be seen alongside the abbots of Westminster and St Albans as a patron and political figure of some weight. Both the Annals and the *Flores* may also show the significance of the prior's own interests: Merton's chronicle activities fell away after the priorate of Nicholas Tregony.

Merton's evidence shows that manuscripts could be acquired by individuals, but that they would become part of the priory's communal collection. The components of Royal MS 11 A V were perhaps the collection of an individual canon, but they were soon being read by his colleagues. The law books of a canon who will be discussed in Chapter 5, Thomas of Tynemouth, were to be used by a particular individual while he needed them, and then to go into the priory's communal library. David of London, a secular cleric, donated his volume of *quaestiones* to Merton — illustrating also the interconnection between secular and regular clergy — which was then collated with other relevant volumes, perhaps acquired in France.

In the fourteenth century, the Benedictine abbot Richard of Bury complained in his *Philobiblon* (1342) that:

no materials at all are furnished us to commend the canons regular for their care or study of us, who though they bear their name of honour from their twofold rule, yet have neglected the notable clause of Augustine's rule, in which we are commended to his clergy in these words: Let books be asked for each day at a given hour... Scarcely anyone observes this devout rule of study after saying the prayers of the Church...²⁶⁴

²⁶⁴ E. C. Thomas, trans., *The Love of Books: the Philobiblon of Richard de Bury* (London, 1903), pp. 36–37; E. Evans, 'St. Mary's College in Oxford for Austin Canons', *Oxfordshire Archaeological Society*, 75 (1931), p. 367.

Benedictine libraries suffered from both stagnation and a loss of volumes in the early fourteenth century, and this may have been the case for the Augustinians.²⁶⁵ The comment by Chaucer's monk, quoted in Chapter 1, suggests a more positive view of the Augustinians' attitude to study, however. At Merton, books in the library collection were given *ex libris* marks during the fourteenth century, if they did not have them before. This indicates a continuing interest in the library, and shows, along with marginalia from the time, the continuity of use of earlier books. The *Ex libris* marks also reflect patterns in monastic borrowing and lending as a whole: one of the reasons for a loss of volumes might have been the failure of others to return borrowed books. Fifteenth- and sixteenth-century annotations suggest that these volumes remained at Merton, with a couple of exceptions, until the sixteenth century. The surviving manuscripts and from the list in the *Registrum Anglie* show a library comparable certainly to the other large Augustinian libraries (notably Leicester and Cirencester) and also to some of the larger Benedictine libraries, and they support the argument that Merton was a centre of learning.

²⁶⁵ C. de Hamel, 'Books and Society', in CHBB, II, p. 18; Clark, *Monastic Renaissance*, p. 89.

CHAPTER 4: ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

This chapter discusses Merton's provision of elementary education, that is the basic subjects that every cleric, and some lay people, had to learn. Elementary education during the Middle Ages could range from the informal, at, for example, a parent's feet,¹ to a formal school. Even in the latter case, a *scola* (school) could refer to a master and his pupils or a collection of a number of masters and pupils or students. The plural, *scolæ*, could describe such a collection or it could describe the increasingly formal and universal higher education bodies found, for example, at Paris or Oxford. Some thought is required, therefore, in translating *scolæ* as either 'schools' or, referring to what became universities, 'the schools', depending on the context. 'The schools', that is, higher education bodies, will be the subject of Chapter 5. Elementary schools might be described variously, and there is some evidence in some places that there were two grades of school, a 'primary', teaching letters and song, and a 'grammar' for a more advanced study of the *primitive sciencie*, or *trivium* of grammar, logic and rhetoric.²

The Third Lateran Council decreed in 1179 that monasteries should provide free education for poor scholars.³ This reiterated, for example, Gregory VII's intentions for the education of the church, noted in Chapter 1.⁴ Educating the Church was a long-term and difficult project, and preoccupied the episcopacy throughout the period. Education was expensive. If elementary education, the *trivium* of grammar, logic and rhetoric, was to be free to poor scholars, nevertheless masters would have to be paid for somehow. University courses, undertaken by both secular and regular clergy, were expensive, and were available to comparatively few men, of whom even fewer graduated with full degrees. School fees relied on money from institutions — the monasteries — or from benefices, many of which were owned by monasteries. One of the educational functions of a monastery was, therefore, to be a funding body. A monastery might also run a school or number of schools and staff them with

¹ N. Orme, *Medieval Schools from Roman Britain to Renaissance England* (New Haven & London, 2006), pp. 55–7.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 66–7.

³ H. J. Schroeder, ed., *Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils: Text, Translation and Commentary* (St Louis, 1937), canon XVIII, p. 229.

⁴ Above, p. 22.

masters, who might or might not be members of the monastery. Within the cloister, education had to be provided for new recruits to a monastery, in order for them to be practising members of the community, and for canons to progress through the major orders. This education included study on a personal level throughout the career of an individual for his or her spiritual edification. As Joan Greatrex pointed out, a monastery was ‘a school where the monk passed his days in learning to serve God and his brethren’.⁵

Merton was a large and busy monastery: as well as its canons, it housed and patronised a number of secular clergymen and it was the patron of numerous parishes, for whose clergy it was responsible. As the priory was one of over twenty canons, it was required by the Augustinian General Chapter to send canons to university. Merton therefore had to provide education for novices and professed canons, and secular clerks. In addition, Merton, like other monastic houses, was responsible for the education of children, both within the monastery and in the wider community. Within the monastery, children could be taught either informally, in the prelate’s household or elsewhere in the precinct, or more formally with a schoolmaster or in a school based in the almonry.⁶ Merton’s responsibility for spiritual education would also have extended to its numerous servants: they were not expected to fulfil any religious obligation, but they still needed to know the rudiments of the faith.⁷ Outside the monastic precincts, a monastery would provide elementary education through grammar schools and masters, and this seems to have been the case with Merton.⁸ This chapter will discuss each group of learners in turn, beginning with those who received their education within the cloister.

5 Greatrex, ‘The scope of learning’, p. 41. See also C. Guyon, ‘La formation intellectuelle des chanoines réguliers’, in *Les Chanoines Réguliers: Émergence et Expansion, XI^e–XIII^e Siècles*, ed. M. Parisse (Saint-Étienne, 2009), p. 301.

6 R. Bowers, ‘The Almonry Schools of the English Monasteries, c.1265–1540’, in *Monasteries and Society in Medieval Britain. Proceedings of the 1994 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. by B. Thompson (Stamford, 1999), p. 179.

7 A. Reeves, *Religious Education in Thirteenth-Century England* (Leiden, 2015), pp. 40–1.

8 N. Orme, ‘Augustinian canons and education’, in *BSRC*, pp. 214–9; *idem*, *Medieval Schools*, pp. 199–200; J. N. Miner, ‘Schools and literacy in later medieval England’, *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 11 (1962), p. 17–20.

SCHOOLING IN THE CLOISTER: NOVICES, CANONS AND MINORS

The Augustinians were from the start an ‘educated’ order. They were, as established in Chapters 1 and 2, an order dedicated to serving the altar and providing spiritual education and guidance. Their early foundations were collections of adults, either evolving from hermitages or secular canonries or being founded by ecclesiastical or lay patrons to further religious reform and reinvigoration in dioceses throughout the country. By their nature the canons were autodidacts for whom the pursuit of private study and meditation was an important part of their identity, as discussed in Chapters 1 and 2. New recruits, therefore, had not only to learn the customs of the house but to be equipped to pursue their own studies. This section examines evidence from Merton for the learning and teaching of novices and then for the canons’ own continuing education and development.

Novices

In a charter from around 1180, it was agreed that William, the nephew of Philip, the priory’s chamberlain, was to serve for four years in lay habit and then to join fully as a novice at Merton if he so wished, being admitted as a *conversus*.⁹ Since there is no mention in either of Merton’s cartularies of any Cistercian-style lay brother, *conversus* here presumably has the more general meaning of convert.¹⁰ William’s age was not recorded, but as the nephew of an obedientiary, he was probably a boy or an adolescent. Since his presence at Merton needed a charter, it may be inferred that the early canons of Merton, accustomed to adult converts, had no formal training programme for underage postulants. This was not atypical: Catherine Guyon noted the tendency at this time for the canons regular to raise the age of postulants and to favour adults with a little learning.¹¹ At St Victor, the minimum age was supposed to be 18. The 1220 General Chapter ruled that no-one was to be accepted under the age of twenty, but in the fifteenth-century instructions for conducting visitations, the minimum age

9 Heales, p. 29; *Cleo*, fol. lxxxvii^r: ‘Quod ipse Willelmus erit nobiscum his iiii primis annis in laicali habitu et seruit sicut ei precipietur quemadmodum servire debet ille; qui seipsem dedit ad seruicium ecclesie nostre. Finitis autem illis iiii annis dabimus ei habitum religionis quatenus hinc conuersi nostri si illum recipere uoluerit et si noluerit differemus quousque illum recipere uoluerit.’

10 There is one other mention of a *conversus* in a terrier of c.1242 (fol. cxxvi^r) — one Nicholas — what this means is unclear.

11 Guyon, ‘La formation intellectuelle’, p. 302.

was stated as 18.¹² The insistence on adult entry reflects both the reformed nature of the order and the clerical or eremitical nature of the early houses. It also reflects the expectation of the canons to be in major orders: the minimum age for a subdeacon, the lowest rank, was 18.¹³ This is broadly in line with other orders: the Cistercians insisted on adult entry, and Benedictine novices at Westminster ranged between 18 and 20 years of age during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.¹⁴ Merton's instructions that Philip's nephew William was to stay in lay habit for his four years may give suggest that he was a teenager, graduating to his novitiate when he reached adulthood.

The archaeological excavations at Merton found only about 30% of total estimated burials in the precinct, but amongst those, no bodies of children or adolescents from before 1300 were found in the southern burial areas, which seem to have been exclusively or largely for canons.¹⁵ This suggests that Merton's young men were healthy, or that they were buried elsewhere, or that there were very few under-20s at Merton Priory in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, an adult novitiate as well as profession being the norm. This may have changed over the later period: two adolescents and six young adults were buried in the chapter house and southern burial areas in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

The novitiate at an Augustinian house was a year long, and novices were therefore required to be adults with some degree of literacy already. In thirteenth-century Barnwell Priory, the novice had a year's probation, at the end of which he could either profess or 'take off his regular habit, and go away in his secular habit'.¹⁶ Whereas during the later Middle Ages, the Benedictine novice's training programme became more formal and elaborate, and, in some (but not all) monasteries, longer, the Augustinian novice's term seems to have remained at a year.¹⁷ The brevity of the novice's term necessitated some basic literacy as a

¹² Salter, *Chapters*, pp. 23, 212.

¹³ P. H. Cullum, 'Boy/ man into clerk/ priest: the making of the late medieval clergy', in *Rites o Passage: Cultures o Transition in the Fourteenth Century*, ed. N. F. McDonald and W. M. Ormrod (York, 2004), pp. 51–65.

¹⁴ B. F. Harvey, *Living and Dying in England, 1100–1540: the Monastic Experience* (Oxford, 1995), pp. 118–22.

¹⁵ Miller & Saxby, p. 149.

¹⁶ *Barnwell*, pp. 132–3.

¹⁷ Harvey, *Living and Dying*, pp. 118–22; J. G. Clark, 'Monastic education in late medieval England', in Barron and Stratford, *The Church and Learning*, p. 27; *idem*, *St Albans*, p. 51. Salter, *Chapters*, p. 212.

pre-requisite to joining a convent, as evinced by both the *Barnwell Observances* and the Augustinian instructions for conducting a visitation.¹⁸

The apparent lack of youngsters in twelfth-century Merton contrasts with the last generations of canons, and may suggest a change over time in the nature of recruitment. In 1520, witnesses to the good character of the prior-elect gave their ages and length of time at Merton. Subtracting the latter from the former suggests that Andrew Paynell joined Merton at eighteen, John Marshall joined at sixteen, John London at thirteen and John Sandwich at only eight.¹⁹ Four other canons were in minor orders, and it may be that they were novices, ready to progress to the major orders on their profession.²⁰ Andrew Paynell himself could have joined as a novice, but Johns Marshall, London and Sandwich would have needed schooling at Merton before joining the novitiate. The association of novices with young men in the later half of the period can be inferred from the Augustinian General Chapter. In 1434, it ruled that, following the Benedictine Constitutions, a suitable teacher was to be provided to instruct the 'iuventus nostri ordinis' in the primitive sciences, especially grammar, in order to prevent 'ociosa & inordinata ac plurimum dissoluta': here 'iuventus' seems to refer to novices.²¹

Benedict XII's constitutions of 1339 ordered all Augustinian houses to appoint a master to teach the primary curriculum (grammar, logic and philosophy). The master could be a canon or a secular clerk, who was to receive a salary of £20 livres Tournois, plus daily victualling and clothing allowances, if he were an external master, and £10 livres Tournois, for expenses, if he were a canon.²² In 1440, Bishop William Alnwick of Lincoln noted that, amongst their other failings, the canons of Leicester kept no master 'to teach the novices and younger canons in grammar'.²³ There is no record at Merton of the engagement of any master of the type set out by Benedict's constitutions, which could be a problem of the survival of evidence, but it could also suggest that any teaching of youths was carried out by a member of the convent. The provision of

¹⁸ *Barnwell*, pp.120–21; Salter, *Chapters*, p. 212.

¹⁹ Heales, pp. 327–28.

²⁰ Heales, p. 325.

²¹ Salter, *Chapters*, p. 83.

²² Salter, *Chapters*, pp. 229–30.

²³ 'non habetur instructor nouiciorum et iuniorum canonicorum in grammatica': *Visitations o Religious Houses in the Diocese o Lincoln*, ed. A. Hamilton Thompson (Horncastle, 1914), pp. 207–8.

teaching at Merton could have ebbed and flowed over time. In 1387, William of Wykeham's visitation left him unimpressed by the learning and teaching of Merton's canons, although this might have been a more standard comment, for in 1518, Cardinal Wolsey made similar comments to the Order about canons' deficiency in Latin, stipulating that, in order to raise standards, only Latin and French were to be spoken.²⁴ Wykeham wrote that canons ought to be 'proficient in reading and knowledge of Holy Scripture', and that

some of the Canons and Confraters of the priory are deficient in knowledge, and in reading do not understand what they read or sing, whereby the sense is often adulterated and perverted, and the meaning is not understood, and mistakes are made; we order you, Lord Prior, that whenever novices and others are insufficiently instructed, some suitable master be deputed to instruct them in singing and in other branches of knowledge, diligently, according to the instituted rules, and thus the density of ignorance being overcome they may efficiently read and understand and the more clearly contemplate the mysteries of Scripture.²⁵

Wykeham's injunctions stress that if it can be demonstrated that the level of learning of Merton's novices is inadequate, a master should be appointed to instruct them in a number of areas: singing (for the Office), reading, understanding, and contemplation. This covers all areas: performance of the liturgy, direct instruction, and contemplation or private study. Indeed, Merton's books yield evidence that can be interpreted of their use by novices. The pen-trials on Merton's copy of the *Purgatorio S. Patricii* (GB-Ob Bodl. 555) may indicate that this was a novice text for such private reading; similarly, the *speculum religiosorum* and *dicta* in Royal MS 8 E IX. This *speculum* is not identifiable with any known text and may derive from Merton itself. The pen-trials in the *Purgatorio* show practice in writing, which would be needed for copying legal documents such as grants but also for copying books (a hand on 115^r is very similar that of the *Life o Guy*). In addition, many of them are couplets and sayings from compendia found in grammar schools, and other notes are excerpts from the Psalms and the Office: these suggest a curriculum

²⁴ D. Wilkins, ed., *Concilia Magnae Britanniae* (London, 1737), III, p. 686.

²⁵ Heales, pp. 267–8, 272.

suitable for novices.²⁶ It was suggested in Chapter 3 that the *distinctiones*, sentences and concordances found in the Merton Bible were suitable material for sermons. They could also have been useful study for novices, and the fifteenth-century drawings of a boar's head (fol. 224^v), a woman (fol. 217^v), a still (fol. 240^r) and a treehouse (fol. 327^v) may suggest a youthful reader.

Merton may well have followed the practice at Barnwell, where novices were taught the prayers, Office and Mass of the house, and were given 'a book with the triple prayer, the Litany, and the lessons of the Blessed Virgin, which he ought to repeat by heart'.²⁷ They attended Chapter, after which the novice-master was to repeat the previous day's lessons before continuing with that day's learning. The only explicit reference to a novice-master at Merton was John Byrd in 1502.²⁸ Byrd was an experienced senior canon: given his first tonsure by 1457, he was circator in 1485.²⁹ As well as being novice-master, he was *refectorarius*, which could suggest that the number of novices was not large and the instruction of only a small number of novices was a fairly informal task to share around the canons and/ or the secular chaplains and clerks associated with the priory. He was, however, a canon of long standing and therefore fit for teaching novices all the customs of the monastery.

The customs of a house included kinæsthetic learning: the novice had to learn not only what to say and sing, but how to move as well.³⁰ Lack of mobility might have been the reason that John le Botiler was not accepted as a canon of Merton in 1315, on account of his 'debilitatem et deformitatem', and certainly, the *Barnwell Observances* stress the need for novices to be fully fit.³¹ The *vita* of Guy of Merton, who joined the priory as a mature adult, illustrates his piety and humility with the fact that 'he did not disdain to learn about even the minutest customs of the monastery, but was diligent in searching out and observing them as if they were issued from the mouth of God.'³² Guy was renowned in the priory for his *conversatio*, 'moral conduct or behaviour, or even simply way of

26 GB-Ob Bodl.555, fols iii–vi, 114–8; below, pp. 243–4; P. Bright, ed. and trans., *The Anglo-Norman Gesta Romanorum* (Oxford, 2019), pp. xvii–xx.

27 *Barnwell*, pp. 126–7.

28 Heales, p. 311 (Fox, *Register*, I, fol. 17).

29 Waynflete, *Register*, I, fol. M^v (letter dimissory); Heales, p. 303.

30 *Barnwell*, pp. 124–31.

31 Heales, p. 216; GB-Lbl Royal MS II B V, fols 204^v–205^r; *Barnwell*, pp. 120–1, 124–5.

32 *Life of Guy*, para. 3.

life', and, having learnt the priory's customs, was therefore a model for other canons.³³

The *Life o Guy* was, together with that of Gilbert the founder, copied out in the fifteenth century. This might have been because of a renewed sense of history, and a reflection of the study by fifteenth-century Benedictines of histories and commentaries on their houses; without supporting evidence, this is not conclusive, but the timing is suggestive.³⁴ Bishop William of Wykeham did, however, instruct the Merton canons to recite the constitutions of the cardinal-legate Ottobuono in chapter twice a year in order to make sure that the novices knew the rules.³⁵ One of Merton's last canons, Thomas Paynell (d.c.1564), possessed a printed copy of two commentaries on the Rule of St Augustine, probably from the priory library, which also contained Hugh of St Victor's *Explanatio in regulam beati Augustini*. Lanthony Secunda's copies of Hugh of St Victor's *De institutione novitiorum* and Hugh of Fouilly's *De claustro anime* were bound with the Rule of St Augustine.³⁶

Evidence for the nature of the education of novices at Merton can be found in a number of texts which can be shown to have been in the priory's library, including Hugh of St Victor's *Didascalicon* and Bernard of Clairvaux's *De praecepto et dispensatione* and *De XII gradibus humilitatis*. Merton also possessed Hugh of St Victor's *De quinque septenis* and *De archa Noe*.³⁷ Hugh of St Victor's *De archa Noe* was a textbook on how to approach learning, with three grades (*historia, allegoria, moralia*) and plenty of visual and architectural imagery to promote memorisation.³⁸ Hugh of Fouilloy's work also offered an architectural structure for memory — the cloister of the mind. Hugh of St

33 G. Constable, *The Reformation o the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 15.

34 *Life o Guy*, p. 9; J. G. Clark, 'The Augustinians, history, and literature in late medieval England', in *BSRC*, p. 410; 'Humanism and reform', pp. 84–86.

35 Heales, p. 268; GB-Ob MS Laud Misc. 723, fol. 24^v. Ottobuono's Constitutions: *A Collection o all the Ecclesiastical Laws and Canons o the Church o England*, ed. J. H. Parker, II (Oxford, 1850), pp. 211–49. Benedict's Constitutions: Salter, *Chapters*, pp. 215–67.

36 Appendix 5; Webber & Watson, A16 p. 58, p. 62, no. 180, nos 219 and 220, p. 85, no. 412, and p. 94, no. 499; M. T. J. Webber, 'The libraries of religious houses', in *The European Book in the Twelfth Century*, ed. E. Kwakkel and R. Thomson, *Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature* (Cambridge, 2018), p. 110. For Benedictine uses of these texts, see Clark, *St Albans*, p. 52.

37 *De institutione novitiorum* appears as *De clericali disciplina*. H. Feiss, *On Love: A Selection o Works o Hugh, Adam, Achard, Richard, and Godfrey o St. Victor* (New York, 2012), p. 375.

38 M. Carruthers, *The Book o Memory* (2nd edn, Cambridge, 2008), pp. 53–5, 112, 202–3.

Victor's *De quinque septenis* is likewise structured for memory, this time using numbers — five groups of seven, and dividing knowledge into numbers lies under his great method for learning, the *Didascalicon*.³⁹ The *distinctiones* in such manuscripts at the Merton Bible are evidence of committing knowledge to memory, splitting up ideas and instances into memorable numeric helpings.⁴⁰

Music also had to be memorised. No liturgical books survive from Merton, but descriptions of ceremonies at the priory include processional hymns, which, by their very nature, needed to be sung from memory. It took three years to master the Psalms fully. Newer music could be composed with memorisation in mind, either by using a structure based on modal rhythms, patterns of notes based on metrical feet, which divided the music up into memorable sections, or by using, like *ars dictaminis*, principles of composition were already committed to memory, such as in the manuscript W₁ at Augustinian St Andrews.⁴¹ Non-musical texts could be learned in musical ways. Helen Deeming and Frieda van der Heijden suggested that 'boys learning Latin may have been encouraged to sing the songs to help them understand the rules of classical poetic composition.'⁴² Verses could be set to music, but the very combination of rhyme with metre is itself musical, and therefore more memorable than prose. Lynn Thorndike explored a huge number of verses in his classic article 'Unde Versus',⁴³ and we find evidence of a number of these at Merton Priory. John de Kingston's mathematics book (GB-Ob Ashmole 1522) contains Alexander de Villa Dei's *Carmen de arte Algorismi* and *Massa compoti* and John de Sacrabosco's *Tractatus de Spera* — texts for students which contained verses to aid memory. GB-OB MS Digby 147 has a treatise on metre

39 A. N. J. Dunning, 'Hugh of Saint Victor's *De quinque septenis* (On the Five Sevens) and its versification in Samuel Presbiter's *De oratione dominica* (On the Lord's Prayer)', *Scholarly Editing: the Annual of the Association for Documentary Editing*, 37 (2016). (Compare this with, for example, the diagrams of virtues and vices in GB-Lbl Royal MS 9 E XII.) Carruthers, *Memory*, pp. 50, 100–1, 265–73.

40 Carruthers, *Memory*, p. 158.

41 A. M. Busse Berger, 'Mnemotechnics and Notre Dame polyphony', *The Journal of Musicology*, 14 (1996), 263–298; J. J. Stutter, 'The musical, notational and codicological evidence of W₁ for an oral transmission of Notre Dame polyphony to Scotland' (unpublished MMus. thesis, Glasgow, 2020), p. 59. For the oral and kinetic tuition of music (including the Guidonian hand), see Yardley, 'English nunneries', p. 58; M. Carruthers, *Memory: The Engine of Thought* <<https://youtu.be/SgviBMLP-Y8>> (lecture, Israel Institute for Advanced Studies, 2014), at 55:10–55:43. See also Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, p. 179; Reeves, *Religious Education*, pp. 170–2; S. Falk, *The Light Ages* (London, 2021), p. 77.

42 H. L. Deeming and F. van der Heijden, *Medieval Polyphony and Song* (Cambridge, 2023).

43 L. Thorndike, 'Unde Versus', *Traditio*, 11 (1955), 163–93.

(fols 28^v–30^v). The fly-leaves of GB-Ob. MS Bodl. 555 show the effectiveness of memorisation techniques.

As discussed in Chapter 3, the twelfth and thirteenth centuries saw the rise of the subject index, concordances and alphabetisation, as witnessed by the experiments of Merton's canons to transform the Bible into a personal and portable volume.⁴⁴ At Merton Priory literacy went hand-in-hand with memory. At St Frideswide's, the thirteenth-century canon Angier clearly expected his readers to be familiar with consulting texts. He wrote in his introduction to his *Dialogues* that if 'you do not have leisure to read or hear it all the way through... choose whichever you wish and then seek it in the book. Then when you have thoroughly read and understood the chosen chapter... choose and examine another chapter'.⁴⁵

References in Merton's manuscripts to collections of *dicta*, rhymes and sentences, religious, moral and classical, suggest a curriculum similar to other monasteries, both Augustinian and Benedictine.⁴⁶ Various of Merton's books would have been suitable material for novices, and the marginalia in, for example, a popular penitential text and a 'mirror' text may suggest a programme of personal study. Whether there was any change over time in the novice's curriculum is difficult to say. For the Augustinians, the priesthood was an important part of the exercise of spirituality from the twelfth century. Both personal reflection and spiritual conversation were characteristic of Augustinian education, as attested to by the texts that survive from Merton. University education was important for the canons of Merton, and this must have had a trickle-down effect. The inclusion of a quotation from Ovid's *Heroides* in the Merton Bible amongst the fifteenth-century marginalia implies the presence of classical texts, which may be linked to university learning.⁴⁷ The booklist of Thomas Paynell (d.1563) comprised a number of printed books on grammar and logic as well as classical texts, but it is unknown whether these were inherited

44 P. B. Roberts, 'The *Ars Praedicandi* and the medieval sermon', in *Preacher, Sermon and Audience in the Middle Ages*, ed. C. Muessig (Leiden, 2002), pp. 55–6. See Chapter 3, p. 110.

45 Quoted in J. Wogan-Browne, 'Time to read: the case of Angier of St Frideswide', in *Texts and Traditions: Essays in Honour of Bella Millett*, ed. C. Gunn and C. Innes-Parker (York, 2009), pp. 62–77, p. 69.

46 Cf. Clark, *St Albans*, pp. 54, 143. For books suitable for novices at Leicester, see Webber & Watson, pp. 254–315.

47 See above, p. 101.

from Merton or collected after its dissolution.⁴⁸ As will be seen in Chapter 6, Merton's canons did embrace the new technology of printed books, but most of the manuscripts that survive from its library came from the twelfth or thirteenth centuries, which suggests a continuity of educational interests.

Canons

Once a novice had completed his year's training he made profession such as that surviving in a Merton manuscript discussed below.⁴⁹ Most canons would have then have proceeded to further training for progressing through the orders: acolyte, deacon, priest. The evidence we have, derived from bishops' ordination lists, suggests that this progression took three years at most. Several canons went from being acolyte to priest in only a couple of years. This suggests not only that these men were around or at least in their mid-twenties as acolytes (twenty-four being the minimum age for a priest), but that they had attained a certain level of education in a short amount of time.⁵⁰ John Romeney, for example, became a subdeacon in 1398, and a priest in 1401; he became prior in 1413.⁵¹ If the average age for becoming prior were around forty, Romeney would have taken major orders in his mid-twenties, becoming priest a couple of years later, by the age of thirty. John Lacy, at his election as prior in 1520, was described by Andrew Panell as about forty, and having become a canon in 1511, although this was probably the date he became sub-prior, having joined the priory sometime during 1502 (after March) or 1503.⁵²

Once professed, a canon's education comprised the learning he would have needed to progress through the clerical orders, and this would have gone alongside his spiritual development gained through reading and contemplation. Church authorities were keen that not only should clerical candidates be basically literate, but that they should continue to learn throughout their lives

⁴⁸ See Appendix 5.

⁴⁹ See pp. 244–5.

⁵⁰ V. Davis, 'Medieval longevity: the experience of members of religious orders in late medieval England', *Medieval Prosopography*, 19 (1998), pp. 112–3. For the age of clergy, see also F. D. Logan, *University Education of the Parochial Clergy in Medieval England: the Lincoln Diocese, c.1300–c.1350* (Toronto, 2014), p. 14. For examples, see *Woodlock*, II, pp. 776, 797–8, 811–3, 820, 848–9; *Sandale & Asserio*, pp. 166, 169, 176, 178, 196, 348–9, 351; T. F. Kirby, ed., *Wykeham's Register* (London and Winchester, 1896), pp. 479, 524, 526.

⁵¹ Heales, pp. 290, 294, 298; *Wykeham*, II, pp. 479, 524. Heales gives a death date for Romeney of 1432, from GB-Ob MS Laud Misc. 732, arguing that Dugdale's 1422 was an error; Laud Misc. 723 gives Thomas Shirfield's priorate as 1432–9, fol. 3^v.

⁵² Heales, pp. 327–28.

and careers. This did not mean that all clergy should attend university and obtain a degree or undertake some other form of higher learning, but that there should be a focus on self-reflection and an understanding about the scriptural and practical elements of their faith. This continuing education could be both vertical (transmitted from those above to those below) or horizontal (among peers), or a mixture of both.

The General Chapter of 1334 required the appointment of specific lecturers to school the canons in an appointed place at an appointed time, suggesting a recognition of the need to provide continuing education for canons.⁵³ Student-canons returning from university were expected to teach the rest of their community. Benedict XII's constitutions decreed that young canons should be sent to university rather than older canons as they were better fitted for remembering things, implying that they were to bring home and share their knowledge.⁵⁴ Two centuries later, in 1519, Cardinal Wolsey made this even more explicit in a set of ordinances, instructing canons to be sent to Oxford, or elsewhere, with a student pension, in order that they might return and communicate their learning to their brethren.⁵⁵ Alexander Nequam had written that to teach is to learn (*disco docendo*): teaching was an important part of a canon's own reflection, too. Sending a student to university was a first step in the dissemination of knowledge among religious whose duty it was to strive to understand God.

Aside from books, the formal exposition of knowledge was hierarchical or vertical, from master to student. The 1234 General Chapter required prelates to give, or arrange to be given, a sermon every quarter to the Chapter 'quatinus sic quieti & litterature studium detur et amplius ocietas evitetur' ('so that meditation and the study of literature may be given, and further idleness avoided').⁵⁶ Prior William Salyng (1502–20) was instructed by his bishop to preach at least twice a year personally to his Chapter in 1509.⁵⁷ Canons' education did not just proceed from their prelates. As intimated by Alexander Nequam, and, as any educator knows, teaching is the best way of learning, the value of both 'reverse-vertical' learning, that is, from student to teacher, and of

⁵³ Salter, *Chapters*, p. 17.

⁵⁴ Salter, *Chapters*, pp. 230–40.

⁵⁵ D. Wilkins, ed., *Concilia Magnae Britanniae* (London, 1737), III, p. 688.

⁵⁶ Salter, *Chapters*, p. 23.

⁵⁷ Heales, p. 318.

peer-to-peer ('horizontal') learning are important companions to an hierarchical approach. There is some early evidence for canons at Merton teaching other brethren. According to his *vita*, Guy of Merton came to Merton to escape the bustle of the schools of which he had been a famous director. However, he could not kick the teaching habit: 'following the Apostle, his sermons were always in grace seasoned with salt', and other brethren would hang on his words.⁵⁸ One might imagine a similar situation at Bodmin, where Guy was briefly prior of an intellectual group of canons gathered together by Algar.⁵⁹ Prior William's theological miscellany, which, as argued in the previous chapter, was compiled to be read out, and perhaps a reading would have provided that day's *conversatio* among the canons. The fourteenth-century Bible (GB-Cu Ee.6.26) shows multiple readers who contributed to communal and personal understanding through annotations; its very compilation might have been a collaborative effort by a number of canons, one or more of whom had brought the latest ideas in biblical format from Paris.

Student-canons returning from university combined vertical and horizontal learning. They brought back knowledge with them; they also brought back books, such as Richard Calne did at Llanthony Priory.⁶⁰ John de Kingston's science book (Ashmole 1522) was subsequently borrowed by John Gisborne; whether de Kingston bought it at Oxford, or whether he borrowed himself from Merton is unknown, but by Gisborne's time it was in the community's book chest. Books were compiled, catalogued and annotated to aid learning: Merton's copy of Peter Lombard's *Sentences* has the name written on the outside edge of the book so that it could be easily identified on a book shelf; the Bible and the *Sentences* have *distinctiones*, section headings and concordances to aid memorisation and navigation, and the miscellanies of Abelard, Simon of Tournai, Alan of Lille *et al.* show signs of being collected together for personal study. Books could also be borrowed from and lent to both other monasteries and secular clergy, as shown in Chapters 3 and 6.⁶¹ Certain texts or volumes could be the result of active collaborations. Guy of Southwick worked with John of Salisbury to collate materials about Thomas

⁵⁸ *Life o' Guy*, paras. 2 and 4, pp. 14–17.

⁵⁹ *Life o' Guy*, para. 13, pp. 24–27.

⁶⁰ Bennet, 'Llanthony', pp. 181–200.

⁶¹ For examples, see pp. 93–4, 113, 116, 271.

Becket, which will be discussed in the next chapter. Cirencester's Walter of Mileto worked with Roger Noreys, a monk of Canterbury, to establish an edition of Alexander Nequam's works.⁶² The St Andrews manuscript W₁ has generally been thought to be a copy of the Notre Dame *Magnus liber organi*, borrowed from Paris, but more recently it has been argued that this was the result of oral, rather than written, transmission.⁶³ It was suggested in Chapter 3 that some of the texts in the Abelard miscellany might have been written down from oral lectures.⁶⁴

Incomers to a monastery could bring new ideas, intellectual and practical. Tjamke Snijders used troped plainsong to illustrate how a novice's innovation might change communal practices, and this is further shown by the Barnwell observer, who wrote that 'a new or unfamiliar tune should not be started without the consent of the brethren.'⁶⁵ Horizontal learning had practical implications for a monastery: an oral culture is simultaneously adaptable to improvisation and change, and incapable of changing much quickly — you cannot change overnight what people have learned over years. Horizontal learning could also be potentially destabilizing in a vertical world: the Cistercians' proscription of learning for lay brethren was to help ensure the vertical structures of the Order: lay brethren were to stay lay brethren.⁶⁶

Learning at a monastery such as Merton was, therefore, a symbiosis of the written and the oral. The reliance on memory and the ability to recall texts could also contribute to horizontal learning, as the memorisation of a text is

⁶² <https://andrewdunning.ca/the-correspondence-of-walter-of-mileto-at-cirencester-abbey>

⁶³ M. Everist, 'From Paris to St. Andrews: the origins of W₁', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 43 (1990), 1–42; Red Byrd, *A Scottish Ladymass: Sacred Music from Medieval St Andrews* (CD, Hyperion, 2005); M. H. Brown and K. Stevenson, "Ancient Magnificence": St Andrews in the Middle Ages: an introduction', in *Medieval St Andrews: Church, Cult, City*, ed. M. H. Brown and K. Stevenson (Woodbridge, 2017), pp. 7–9; J. J. Stutter, 'The Musical, Notational and Codicological Evidence of W₁ for an Oral Transmission of Notre Dame Polyphony to Scotland' (unpublished MMus thesis, Glasgow, 2020), pp. 2–9.

⁶⁴ Above, pp. 90–1.

⁶⁵ T. Snijders, 'Communal learning and communal identities in medieval studies: consensus, conflict, and the community of practice', in *Horizontal Learning in the High Middle Ages*, ed. M. Long, T. Snijders, and S. Vanderputten (Amsterdam, 2019), p. 42; *Barnwell Observances*, p. 81. Cf. also Hugh of St Victor, *Explanation of the Rule of St Augustine*, trans. A. Smith (London and Edinburgh, 1911), p. 30, where he advocates consensual and gradual change.

⁶⁶ *Summa carte caritatis*, cap. XXII, in *Narrative and Legislative Texts from Early Cîteaux*, ed. C. Waddell (s.l., 1999), p. 190.

akin to the learning of a language, with a vocabulary that can be shared by anyone who has also memorised that text. The concordance-style notes of the Merton Bible are an aid to memorisation but also an aid to thinking about the Bible, perhaps in conversations with other canons. Inexact or paraphrased quotations suggest a dynamic approach to literature: for example, the *Life of Guy*'s phrase 'non solum stultiloquia uel scurrilia sedetiam ociosa verba deuittans' refers to, but does not quote exactly, Matthew 12:36; it also broadly recalls Chapter 6 of the Rule of St Benedict (on silence).⁶⁷ Similarly, as will be discussed in the next chapter, Guy of Southwick's phraseology was deliberately chosen to resound in the ears of his learned friends: as such, his *De confessione* is an example of horizontal learning. The emphasis on Guy of Merton's interaction with his brethren echoes Mary Carruthers' argument that reading and memorisation were 'highly active'.⁶⁸ Learning was also essentially reflective, and both memorisation and conversation aided reflection. Dynamic learning and memorisation can be found in the layout and annotations of various of Merton's books. The Merton Bible's compilation history suggests an active interest in book format. Many of the volumes have *distinctiones*, side headings and manicules: the Merton Annals (GB-Ccc MS 059) has at least two different generations of manicules, for example on fols 161^r (pointing to the foundation of the Cistercians) and 162^v (pointing to the Thames drying up in 1114). The layout on fol. 98^v of GB-Lbl Royal MS 9 E XII suggests an aide-memoire (about dialectic argument), as do the decorative tables of virtues and vices on fols 160^v and 166^r.

Canons and associated secular clerics needed some legal literacy to assert and defend rights of ownership. While Merton employed secular clerics as factors and proctors, it also sent its own canons as proctors to watch and defend the priory's interests. In the early fourteenth century, canon John de Swavesey appeared a couple of times for the priory, first to manage careful tax avoidance, and secondly over rights to the church of Cuddington.⁶⁹ Canon William de Eyton appeared as proctor before the sub-prior of Southwark in 1311 when Merton sued Walter, rector of Long Ditton, for arrears. William also appeared

⁶⁷ *Life of Guy*, para. 3, pp. 15–17 ('avoiding not only foolish or scurrilous speech but also idle words').

⁶⁸ Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, p. 230.

⁶⁹ Heales, pp. 182–3 (where he transcribes the name as Swavesham), 201 (where he transcribes it as Wavesey); *Cleo*, fols clxx and clxxviii^v.

as proctor before a provincial council in 1312.⁷⁰ In a dispute with his tenants in the 1340s, the prior of Merton, together with brother William de Kent, not only broke into their houses but forcibly removed their muniments and charters.⁷¹ While this incident reflects badly on the prior and his convent, it does show their appreciation of the importance of literacy. Whilst There is no evidence that William Brokesbourne, prior of Merton 1307–34, attended the schools, he had some sort of knowledge of the law, as attested to by his compilation of canon law tracts (GB-Lbl Royal MS 11 B V). By the later Middle Ages, prelates of religious houses were themselves landowners and heads of households apart from the convent; they needed an understanding of law and finances regardless of a university degree.

James Clark argued that because of a lack of a central Augustinian institution such as an Oxford college, ‘the provincial convents tended to follow their own patterns of teaching and learning.’⁷² These patterns were long-established: Catherine Guyon found ‘a curious passage’ in Hugh of St Victor’s *De vanitate mundi*, describing a schoolroom with students of all ages learning the liberal arts, and she wrote that in addition to *lectiones*, both *disputationes* and *quaestiones* were to be found in the cloister.⁷³ The conversations recorded between Guy of Merton and his fellow canons, and between Edmund of Abingdon and the canons (discussed in Chapter 5), suggests that there was a continuing interest in learning amongst the canons of Merton.

Minors within the Priory

From assessment of the evidence from Merton and its books for the education of those who passed through the noviciate to take their vows as canons, and who would (unless promoted elsewhere) have remained there for life, we must now turn to elementary education in another manifestation, the education of minors within the priory who were not, or not necessarily, intended for the religious life. At Merton and indeed elsewhere the evidence does not allow for a full profile of the social origin, age or number of boys educated within the

⁷⁰ Heales, pp. 206 (where he calls William ‘Walter’), 210; *Cleo*, fol. clxix.

⁷¹ *VCH Surrey*, II, p. 99; IV, pp. 65–6; GB-Lna SC 8/6/3007; GB-Lna CP 40/355 m.172. For the general violence of the times, see R. M. Haines, ‘Adam Orleton and the Diocese of Winchester’, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 23 (1972), 1–30.

⁷² Clark, ‘Augustinians, history, and literature’, p. 409.

⁷³ Guyon, ‘La formation intellectuelle’, pp. 310–1.

cloister. We have only snapshots, and in this Merton is typical of most establishments.

We have no information about the number of boys at Merton when John Sandwich entered the Priory at the age of eight in 1493. His uncle (in a loose sense, for his exact relationship is unknown) William Sandwich was sub-prior, which may explain John's presence. Boys from worthy families might join the prior's household or be accommodated elsewhere in a monastery: there are plenty of references in the later Middle Ages to sons of the gentry ('especially in the houses of canons', wrote David Knowles) being lodged at monasteries for some sort of schooling. At Augustinian Westacre (Norfolk), there were so many boys that the prior wondered how he could provide all their dinners.⁷⁴ John might, therefore, have been part of the prior's household. Alternatively, he might have attended the almonry school.

Almonry schools, attached to the monastic precinct, were supposed to provide charitable education for poorer boys who were earmarked for a clerical or monastic career.⁷⁵ In practice, their schoolboys were not exclusively from poor backgrounds: in 1280, the Augustinian priory of Guisborough was told by Archbishop Wickwane that 'we prohibit absolutely burdensome schools of rich, powerful and lazy scholars, unless our chancellor of York accept them to be fruitful and useful for the monastery', and in 1347, Bishop Bateman of Norwich stopped the senior obedientiaries packing the almonry school with members of their kin, ruling that they must provide for such boys out of their own households: although these boys could attend the almonry school, free schooling, funded by alms, must be for boys from poor families.⁷⁶

It was suggested above that the evidence of William, nephew of Philip the Chamberlain, might suggest a lack of children at Merton in the twelfth century, although Thomas Becket was educated for a time at Merton. The nature of Thomas' schooling is not known: Merton might at that time have had some sort of grammar school like the one at St Albans Abbey that Alexander

⁷⁴ D. Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, II (Cambridge, 1948), p. 297; see also Bowers, 'Almonry schools', p. 179; E. Power, *Medieval English Nunneries c.1275 to 1535* (Cambridge, 1922), pp. 267–71.

⁷⁵ Bowers, 'Almonry schools', pp. 181–2.

⁷⁶ Bowers, 'Almonry schools', pp. 187–8, 196, 198–9; *Cartularium prioratus de Gyseburne, ebor. dioeceseos, ordinis S. Augustini, fundati A. D. MCXIX*, II, ed. W. Brown, Surtees Society 89 (Durham, 1889), p. 360. Bowers seems to have missed this reference, although he made the same point himself on p. 194.

Nequam attended in the 1160s, or the school at Dunstable that he taught at later as a graduate of Paris.⁷⁷ Thomas could equally have been a boy in the prior's household.⁷⁸ Since Thomas' father Gilbert was a wealthy London merchant, Merton may well have exacted a fee for Thomas' schooling, and it has been suggested that Thomas' time at Merton ended when Gilbert Becket's finances suffered from a fire that ruined his warehouses and even damaged Holy Trinity, Aldgate.⁷⁹ One of Thomas' contemporaries, Nicholas Breakspear, was *not* a pupil at Merton, although he became an Augustinian: R. L. Poole's evidence for Nicholas' alleged pupillage at Merton was based on a misreading of a letter of John of Salisbury to Nicholas as Pope Adrian IV.⁸⁰

An entry in the Merton cartulary from around the turn of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries is a description of the sacristan's allowances, which included two servants (and their own allowances) and a boy. The boy was to have ten loaves of *panibus puerorum* and 'such allowances as the boys have'.⁸¹ This suggests a number of boys whose presence was constant enough to have a specific loaf named after them. Heales assumed from this that these were choir-boys, but this was not necessarily the case, as there is little evidence of distinct cathedral-style song schools in monasteries.⁸² The sacristan's boy may have been one of the altar-servers whose numbers grew with the developments of the Mass during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, including the increase in the numbers of private masses. Altar boys were normally taken from almonry schools, and this may suggest an almonry school at Merton: at Norwich in the thirteenth century, the almonry schoolboys were given daily bread as part of

⁷⁷ J. Goering, 'Alexander Neckham', *ODNB*.

⁷⁸ The only reference is an anecdote told by William FitzStephen: *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury (canonized by Pope Alexander III, A.D. 1173)*, ed. J. C. Robinson and J. B. Sheppard (London, 1877), III, p. 14. See also J. A. Guy, *Thomas Becket: Warrior, Priest, Rebel, Victim: a 900-Year-Old Story Retold* (London, 2012), p. 11, fn. 5.

⁷⁹ F. Barlow, *Thomas Becket* (London, 1986), p. 15. It may be pointed out that Gilbert's local Augustinian priory was Holy Trinity, Aldgate. Holy Trinity was itself not an intellectual desert, and might have had a school.

⁸⁰ R. L. Poole, *Studies in Chronology and History* (Oxford, 1934), p. 293; *JoS*, I, pp. 87–8. This is discussed in R. A. J. Waddingham, *Breakspear: The English Pope* (Cheltenham, 2022), pp. 21–3. See also J. G. Clark, 'Monasteries and secular education', in *Monasteries and Society in the British Isles in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. J. Burton and K. Stöber (Woodbridge, 2008), p. 148.

⁸¹ Heales, p. 33 and appendix XXII. My thanks to Tessa Webber for dating the hand.

⁸² Cf. M. Bateson, 'The Huntingdon song school and the school of St Gregory's Canterbury', *EHR*, 18 (1903), pp. 712–3.

their alms.⁸³ This entry, therefore, suggests the presence at Merton at around 1200 of an almonry school, predating by some decades the earliest Augustinian ones found by Nicholas Orme, at Guisborough (1266 x 80) and Barnwell (1296).⁸⁴

The *Barnwell Observances* outlined the almonry school:

[almonry boys] should often be set to argue against each other by the Almoner, or some person connected with his office, and be kept under the rod, that they may learn better; and on feast days, when they do not go to school, he should strictly command them to read and sing in church, to commit to memory the Mattins of Blessed Mary, to learn to write on parchment, and to repeat by heart their letters, and their lines to explain the different meanings of words, instead of running about in the streets, or fighting, or disputing.⁸⁵

John Sandwich, mentioned above, might have been an almonry boy, although a place in the prior's household might have been more natural, given his uncle's position. Wherever John was schooled at Merton, he would probably have arrived knowing his alphabet. At Merton, he would have learnt the *Ave Maria*, Augustine's *dicta*, the Beatitudes, Commandments, Corinthians 13, and parts of the Psalter, to be ready to master, as a novice, parts of the liturgy (starting with the Office of the Dead and the Psalter). John would have learned grammar with the aid of Donatus, and might (following Alexander Nequam's advice) have moved on to Theodolus and Virgil, and possibly Ovid's *Ars amatoria*, depending on the latitude of his master.⁸⁶ John would probably also have been taught to sing, although Merton does not appear in Roger Bowers' list of monastic houses with singing boys.⁸⁷ Hoeppner Moran remarked on the

83 Bowers, 'Almonry schools', p. 184.

84 Orme, 'Augustinian canons and education', p. 227. See also Bowers, 'Almonry schools', pp. 181, and, for later examples, 187, 189–92. For the duties of Barnwell's sacrist: *Barnwell Observances*, pp. 68–79.

85 *Barnwell Observances*, pp. 174–5.

86 Moran, *Schooling*, pp. 40–46; *Alexandri Neckam Sacerdos ad altare*, ed. C. J. McDonough, (Turnhout, 2010), p. 189. See also S. Reynolds, *Medieval Reading: Grammar, Rhetoric, and the Classical Text* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 7; Clark, 'Monastic education', pp. 27–33 and *Monastic Renaissance*, pp. 54–7. For a curriculum for boys, see also S. B. Meech, 'John Drury and his English writings', *Speculum*, 9 (1934), 76–83.

87 Bowers, 'Almonry schools', pp. 221–2; Orme, 'Augustinian canons and education', pp. 227–8.

separation between the teaching of singing and of other literacy, but all clerics needed to be able to sing, and, as many of the canons of Merton were in higher orders, we might presume that they had reached at least the third textual and second musical level of literacy, described in Chapter I.⁸⁸

At around the time that John Sandwich was old enough to enter his novitiate, John London joined Merton as a thirteen-year-old. He presumably had had some primary schooling at home or nearby by the time he joined, although he could have been an external, and probably fee-paying, almonry pupil himself, if such pupils existed.

In 1339, Pope Benedict ruled that Augustinian houses should, if they could, teach grammar, logic, and philosophy, but should be careful to teach seculars separately from the canons themselves within the monastic precinct.⁸⁹ Whether this applied to children as well as postulants and older clerics is not clear, but an almonry school could avoid this by being, as at Benedictine Durham or Augustinian Leicester, outside the monastery gates. Such an arrangement would have allowed local, non-resident boys to attend lessons, too. At Newnham and Thornton, there was no external almonry school, and boys were taught either in a class on their own or alongside novices.⁹⁰ Similarly, at fifteenth-century Kirkham Priory, the school was in the priory church nave, where one pupil, at least, used to allay his boredom by aiming stones at the font.⁹¹

The evidence for the schooling of minors at Merton is sparse, but what there is shows similar concerns and provisions at Merton to other (larger) Augustinian houses. The early date of the almonry school indicates that the Augustinians' formal involvement in education stretches further back than has hitherto been thought, but for the nature of this school, we need to look to

88 J. A. Hoepfner Moran, *The Growth of English Schooling, 1340–1548: Learning, Literacy, and Laicization in Pre-Reformation York Diocese* (Princeton, N. J., 1985), pp. 21–24, 54; N. Orme, *English Schools in the Middle Ages* (London, 1973), p. 78.

89 Salter, *Chapters*, p. 229.

90 N. Orme, 'Schools and Schoolmasters (to c. 1550)', in *CHLBI*, p. 422; J. N. Miner, 'Schools and literacy in later medieval England', *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 11 (1962), p. 19. For Benedictine attitudes, see J. Barrow, *The Clergy in the Medieval World* (Cambridge, 2015), pp. 182–92 and Miner, 'Schools', p. 17.

91 J. Burton, *Kirkham Priory from Foundation to Dissolution*, Borthwick Papers, 86 (York, 1995), p. 25; *eadem*, 'Priory and parish: Kirkham and its parishioners 1496–7', in *Monasteries and Society in Medieval Britain. Proceedings of the 1994 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. B. Thompson (Stamford, 1999), p. 334.

analogies elsewhere. The almonry school was one of several schools of which Merton was in charge, and it is to these other schools that we shall now turn.

SCHOOLING OUTSIDE THE CLOISTER: SECULAR CLERGY & LAITY

One of the early functions of the Augustinians was to run local schools.⁹² As bishops expected parish clergy to provide religious education for minors, and as the Augustinians were parish patrons and rectors, their educational duties did not diminish during the period covered in this thesis.⁹³ The Augustinians, too, were involved in the education of parish clergy, some of whom might have attended such local schools, but all of whom were expected to attain a degree of literacy and competence. Merton's role in the education of secular and lay students is the subject for the rest of this chapter.

Minors Outside the Priory (Parishes)

Walter of Merton provided a grammar school alongside his Oxford college for secular clerics. This was chiefly for juniors, but he encouraged senior college students to go to the grammar master 'without blushing' ('absque rubore regressum') if they needed to improve their Latin. In addition to his grammar school, Walter provided for up to thirteen smaller boys who 'becoming orphans or otherwise through their parents' poverty want maintenance while they are receiving primary instruction in the rudiments' at his house of scholars in Malden, progressing on to Oxford as appropriate, at the age of thirteen.⁹⁴ Walter's educational establishments were modelled on Merton Priory, where Walter himself had been educated.⁹⁵ The school for small boys was a type of almonry school, and it may be, although there is no record, that Walter himself had benefitted from an almonry school education at Merton; it is possible, too, that he attended a grammar school run by Merton.

There is evidence of Merton's involvement in a school (or schools) at Kingston, a town that lay five miles from Merton and whose church was appropriated to the priory. In 1364, the bishop of Winchester wrote to the prior of Christ Church, Canterbury, to send on the luggage of Hugh de Kingston.

⁹² Orme, 'Augustinian canons and education', pp. 214–6.

⁹³ Reeves, *Religious Education*, p. 41.

⁹⁴ A. F. Leach, ed., *Educational Charters and Documents 598 to 1909* (Cambridge, 1911), pp. 182–7.

⁹⁵ Walter's career is discussed below, pp. 197–205.

The Christ Church almoner had been deliberately (and understandably) tardy in dispatching the luggage: Hugh had recently been appointed master of Christ Church's almonry school, but he had suddenly resigned his post on being appointed schoolmaster in Kingston, his home town. The bishop's letter gives evidence that Kingston had several schools, all under the charge of one master. Hugh might have been attracted by the prospect of the post because it was in his home town, but it was also likely to have represented a promotion. The identity of the Kingston schoolmaster's patron is unclear. The patron might have been the town, although it was not, as has been claimed, the corporation of Kingston-upon-Thames, which did not exist until 1441.⁹⁶ A. F. Leach, who found it 'vexatious that we have no more light on the place where the Kingston school was and how it was maintained', proposed 'the town, the bailiffs and commonalty, or... perhaps the Trinity Gild'.⁹⁷ However, since various grammar schools were in the care of Augustinian houses, another possible patron could have been Merton Priory; because Leach had a negative view of the role of monasteries in mediæval education, he not only refused to consider Merton as a patron, but did not hesitate to depict Merton as a parasite.⁹⁸

Education in Kingston had been established for at least a century by the time Hugh took up his post, for in 1272 one Gilbert de Suthewell was described as 'rector of schools', a job description that indicates more than one school.⁹⁹ In 1377, after yet another dispute between Merton Priory and the vicar of Kingston about rents and dues, a lengthy agreement was reached, which contained the instruction that 'it shall be lawful for the vicar that now is and his successors to... keep, or license others to keep, a school for boys, to teach reading, writing,

96 J. G. Clark, 'Monasteries and secular education in late medieval England', in *Monasteries and Society* (Woodbridge, 2008), ed. J. Burton and K. Stöber, p. 157. The letter is in *Litterae Cantuarienses. The Letter Books of the Monastery of Christ Church, Canterbury*, ed. J. B. Sheppard, II (1887), pp. 465–6, and translated in *VCH Surrey*, II, pp. 155–6. See also A. F. Leach, *The Schools of Medieval England* (London, 1916), p. 218. For the schools in the sixteenth century, see A. Heales, 'The history of the free chapel of St Mary Magdalene, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey, and the foundation of the free grammar school of Queen Elizabeth, in the town of Kingston-upon-Thames, as extracted from early records', *Surrey Archaeological Collections*, 8 (1883), pp. 312–3.

97 *VCH Surrey*, II, p. 156.

98 Orme, *English Schools*, pp. 64–79, 168, 224–25, 234; *idem*, 'Augustinian canons and education', pp. 213–19, 220, 226–27; *idem*, *Medieval Schools*, pp. 5–9; Bateson, 'Huntingdon song school', pp. 712–3; *VCH Surrey*, II, p. 157.

99 N. Saul, 'The Lovekyns and the Lovekyn Chapel at Kingston-upon-Thames', *Surrey Archaeological Collections*, 96 (2011), p. 101. Saul gave no reference for this.

plain song, and Latin, up to and including the grammar of Donatus.’¹⁰⁰ Leach wrote that

this does not mean that the vicar might himself keep... a Grammar School. On the contrary, it shows that there was an authorised Grammar School on the domain of which the vicar wished, but was not allowed, to trespass. He was to confine his efforts to elementary instruction’.¹⁰¹

This grant re-drew a previous one from 1352.¹⁰² No school is mentioned, but this does not mean that there was no school. Leach may be correct that it was an elementary, pre-grammar school, for others existed elsewhere, and that there was a ‘senior’ grammar school as well, perhaps run by the town.¹⁰³

Leach’s speculation about the Kingston school continued with an idea that ‘it was in fact maintained on the same spot in the same building, and by the same endowments as it is now, being the chantry chapel of St. Mary Magdalen...’.¹⁰⁴ However, there is no evidence that this chapel, endowed by the Lovekyn family and known as the Lovekyn Chapel, housed a school, and it was, in any case, founded several decades after the first reference to schools in Kingston.¹⁰⁵ The Lovekyn Chapel was a chantry under the vicar of Kingston’s jurisdiction. The Lovekyn household seems to have had a close relationship with Kingston’s church, at one point providing lodgings for the vicar of Kingston, perhaps because the existing vicarage, built by Merton, was run down.¹⁰⁶ The 1352 agreement gave the vicar the offerings of ‘the chapel of St Mary Magdalen, recently constructed’.¹⁰⁷ It is possible that the Chapel was a school venue (rather like the nave of Kirkham, noted above): the venue of a school, being a room for a collection of pupils and a master, could have been an

¹⁰⁰ T. F. Kirby, ed., *Wykeham’s Register*, II (London and Winchester, 1896), p. 287 (fol. 163v). This case might not have been evidence of Merton’s overzealousness: the vicarage was wealthy, and the delineation of the vicar’s rights and responsibilities, including educational, seems to have been a result of vicar Richard Bokenhulle’s grasping nature.

¹⁰¹ *VCH Surrey*, II, p. 158.

¹⁰² *Edington*, I, pp. 134–5, no. 896.

¹⁰³ Orme, *Medieval Schools*, pp. 66–7.

¹⁰⁴ *VCH Surrey*, II, p. 156.

¹⁰⁵ Saul, ‘Lovekyns’, p. 101; see also Orme, *Medieval Schools*, p. 55.

¹⁰⁶ *Edington*, I, p. 134, no. 896; Saul, ‘Lovekyns’, pp. 100–2.; For Merton’s links with the Lovekyns, see also *Pontissara*, I, p. 118.

¹⁰⁷ *Edington*, I, p. 134, no. 896.

ad hoc arrangement and therefore not necessarily in the same building all the time. The Bishop Edington's letter to Canterbury also suggests that pupils for the Kingston school were from a wider catchment area than just the borough itself, implying that some boarding would have been necessary, similar to the school in Leicester provided by Leicester Abbey.¹⁰⁸

To some extent or other, Merton Priory and its vicar were involved with education in the town, and this involvement concerned not just the townsfolk but the bishop, who oversaw the settlement between Merton and its vicar in 1377. One of the vicar's other duties was to appoint (and keep) holy-water bearers, poor clerical students who would assist in services and take holy water to parishioners in return for a modest stipend and enough free time to study: this was a good way for bishops to ensure at least some of their clerics were educated.¹⁰⁹ Stipends for these clerks often came from monastic houses, especially in appropriated parishes (such as Kingston).

The schools licence, the holy-water bearers, and the fact that Hugh of Kingston was previously appointed to Christ Church, Canterbury, all show the constant traffic between seculars and regulars and how entwined the secular and regular branches were. Secular clerks were employed by regular establishments to teach both regular and secular pupils; regular establishments subsidised and oversaw the education of secular clerks. Local families paid for their sons' education in monasteries and relatives of canons (or monks, or nuns) were also sent to school there. Priors patronised local grammar schools. Merton would have been no exception either in having boys in its almonry, cutting their clerical teeth as altar-servers, or in appointing schoolmasters in its larger urban parishes.

Secular Clergy

One aim of monastic and cathedral schools was to equip the body of clergy with the tools of literacy. Secular clergymen were needed in various areas of life: in parishes and in ecclesiastical, royal and noble courts and households.

¹⁰⁸ Orme, 'Augustinian canons', p. 216; *idem*, *Medieval Schools from Roman Britain to Renaissance England* (New Haven & London, 2006), pp. 199–200; Thompson, *Alnwick*, pp. 207–8: 'non habetur instructor in grammatica nec in monasterio nec in villa Leycestrie, vbi abbas tenetur exhibere talem instructorem, videlicet in villa, tam pro instruccione clericorum de elemoniarum quam aliorum de patria'. By then, there were only half a dozen boys (presumably almonry boys) instead of over a dozen. See also Miner, 'Schools', p. 19.

¹⁰⁹ Kirby, *Wykeham's Register*, II, p. 76, fn. 1; F. A. Gasquet, *Parish Life in Mediaeval England* (London, 1907), p. 75; Orme, *Medieval Schools*, pp. 205–8.

Throughout Merton's lifetime, there was ever more expectation of education amongst the clergy for various reasons, and the discussion below will investigate Merton's role as a patron and trainer of the secular clergy.

PARISH CLERGY

As noted in Chapters 1 and 2, some of Merton's canons themselves were sent to parishes. Guy of Merton was sent, with four other canons, to reform Taunton, and parochial duties seem to have been part of his role: this was at the behest of the bishop of Winchester in order to reform the clergy there.¹¹⁰ Merton's direct parochial activities were not confined to the twelfth century, but continued throughout the Middle Ages. Merton was the patron of over fifty parishes, and it, like other monasteries, acted as what Virginia Davies termed a 'clearing house', 'checking on the character and financial resources of the ordinand before passing him on to the bishop'.¹¹¹

The education of the parish clergy was of great concern to bishops, as illustrated by Archbishop Pecham's warnings about the terrible dangers of the ignorance of priests, or, as the Augustinian John Mirk put it in his translation, 'whenne þe blynde ledeth þe blynde' and secondly by Robert Grosseteste's apology to John Romeyn, subdeacon of York, that he could not appoint Romeyn's nephew to a benefice because he was all but illiterate.¹¹² Jo Ann Hoeppner Moran argued that 'it is common sense to suppose one of the first results of an increase in the availability of elementary education, and especially of a reading education, would be an increase in clergy, particularly at the parish level.'¹¹³ However, this is the wrong way around: an increase in clergy would necessitate the increase in elementary education. The demand for clerical education grew during the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries because of the development and formalisation of the clergy, the parochial network, and legal and governmental systems.

¹¹⁰ Gilbert I, p. 16, para 9.

¹¹¹ V. Davis, 'Preparation for service in the late medieval English Church', in *Concepts and Patterns of Service in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. A. Curry and E. Matthew (Woodbridge, 2000), p. 40.

¹¹² D. Wilkins, ed., *Concilia Magnae Britanniae* (London, 1737), II, p. 54; E. Peacock, ed., *Instructions for Parish Priests by John Myrc* (London, 1868), p. 2; H. R. Luard, ed., *Roberti Grosseteste Episcopi Quondam Lincolnensis Epistolæ*, (London, 1861); P. M. Hoskin, *Robert Grosseteste and the 13th-Century Diocese of Lincoln: An English Bishop's Pastoral Vision* (Leiden, 2019), pp. 12, 165. See also N. Orme, *English Schools*, pp. 14–20.

¹¹³ Moran, *Schooling*, p. 123.

In Chapters 2 and 3, we explored the sacramental theology developing throughout the twelfth century, and the concomitant formalisation of the major orders of clergy (subdeacon, deacon and priest). It was important for clergy to have at least a little learning in order to administer the sacraments adequately and to educate the laity in the Articles of Faith.¹¹⁴ Indeed, the presentation (including by Merton) of a number of subdeacons and deacons to benefices suggests that it was more important for a cleric to have a little learning than to be an ordained priest in order to take up a benefice (as Moran's evidence shows, although she fails to draw this conclusion).¹¹⁵ This is corroborated by Julia Barrow's evidence from contemporary biographers, who from the eleventh and twelfth centuries onwards concentrated more on where their subjects were educated rather than when they were ordained, and by Nicholas Orme's observation that several bishops instituted some parish clergy on condition that they completed adequate studies (more on which will be discussed below).¹¹⁶

Ideally, a clergyman applying for a benefice would have been in major orders and have had a good education. In practice, graduates were rare. Alison Fizzard noted 38 *magistri* presented by Plympton Priory between 1257 and 1369, although as she did not give the total number of presentees, this figure has no context.¹¹⁷ Many of the bishops' registers for Merton's parishes lie unedited, and a thorough survey of Merton's presentees in the same period is beyond the scope of this thesis; however, an analysis of a sample of published registers gives a baseline figure of around 3% of clergymen as *magistri*, with a third of the presentees being in major orders and 21% being priests. Merton's presentees to Ashcombe in 1310 and Hardmead in 1329 were *magistri*, but only acolytes.¹¹⁸

If ready-made graduate priests were few and far between, there were opportunities for further study and 'continuing spiritual development' in order to help the clergy understand Christian morality and teach it to the laity.

¹¹⁴ Barrow, *Clergy*, pp. 42–3, 185–6, 319; Thomas, *Clergy*, pp. 329–31; M. T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066–1307* (2nd edn, Oxford, 1994), pp. 240–6. Clanchy points out that clerical celibacy might account for a spread in education, as education could not (at least legitimately) be passed from father to son, p. 244.

¹¹⁵ Moran, *Schooling*, pp. 131–2.

¹¹⁶ Barrow, *Clergy*, pp. 65–6; Orme, *English Schools*, pp. 14–19.

¹¹⁷ Fizzard, *Plympton*, p. 185.

¹¹⁸ Heales, pp. 202, 228; *The Register of Walter de Stapeldon, Bishop of Exeter (A.D. 1307–1326)*, ed. F. C. Hingeston-Randolph (London, 1892), p. 185. For the development of the education of clergy, see Reeves, *Religious Education*.

Indeed, as discussed in Chapter 1, a reason for the rise of the Augustinians in the twelfth century was to improve the literacy of the parish clergy. A monastery such as Merton might have specific educational relationships with particular clergy, but, in general, the very existence of its large collection of books could aid the learning of the secular clergy as well as its own brethren. William Campbell argued that ‘simply maintaining the library contributed indirectly to pastoral care’,¹¹⁹ and there are a number of examples of book transmission between regular and secular worlds across the period which suggest that secular clergy had access to Merton’s library. Campbell noted Alexander of Ashby’s contribution to sermon literature and also asserted that the Augustinians helped develop the Primer (a devotional book comprising the seven penitential Psalms, Litany, Vigils of the Dead, and Hours of the Virgin), spreading it to the secular clergy, from whom it spread to the laity.¹²⁰ Joseph Goering discussed the importance of the canons regular in providing ‘penitential and confessional expertise’: his research suggested that Oseney might have had a similar role to St Victor in training priests for confession.¹²¹ We will discuss further Guy of Southwick’s work on confession in the next chapter, where we will also discuss in detail the circumstances of a university exhibition granted in the 1220s by Merton to a secular student; for now, we should observe that Merton had both the apparatus and the will to support a secular clerk as a student, which may imply, first, an active involvement with the schools and secondly an interest in clerical education.

In canon law and other official documents, the educational requirements of parish clergy were vague, and judgment about a candidate’s competence was left to the discretion of a bishop and his archdeacons.¹²² However, during the thirteenth century, education of parish priests had what Joseph Goering called a

¹¹⁹ W. Campbell, *The Landscape of Pastoral Care in 13th-Century England* (Cambridge, 2017), p. 91.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.* This claim is based on the Primer’s nineteenth-century editor and may need revision: E. Bishop, ed., *The Prymer, or Lay Folks’ Prayer Book* (London, 1897), pp. xxxi–xxxiv.

¹²¹ J. Goering, ‘The internal forum and the literature of penance and confession’, in *The History of Medieval Canon Law in the Classical Period, 1140–1234: From Gratian to the Decretals of Pope Gregory IX*, ed. W. Hartmann and K. Pennington (Washington, DC, 2008), p. 408.

¹²² F. D. Logan, *University Education of the Parochial Clergy in Medieval England: The Lincoln Diocese, c.1300–c.1350* (Toronto, 2014), pp. 7–13. William Campbell gives a good summary of education and the parish clergy: *Pastoral Care*, pp. 46–59.

‘radical transformation’ and bishops could be firm judges.¹²³ The education of parish clergy seems to have been a particular interest for Hugh of Wells, and his registers contain several more candidates whose learning he found questionable. In most instances of want of learning, Hugh exhorted the candidate to study for a period, and then to be re-examined; since none of these candidates appears again in the register, we might presume that they passed the second time. By the fourteenth century, parish clergymen were interviewed by other clerics, secular or regular, on their presentation: in 1346, Thomas de Heyton, presented to Ewell by Chertsey Abbey, faced a panel of local vicars and rectors, including Merton’s rector of Long Ditton.¹²⁴ Merton’s presentees could be interviewed by prebendaries, the bishop’s official, or even priors of neighbouring Augustinian houses. Merton also had responsibility for visiting parishes, to which it sent a canon and a secular clergyman.¹²⁵

In most cases, clerics were not graduates by the time they were presented to a living. This gave bishops a dilemma: an educated clergyman or a resident one. If a rector was not present in his parish, it hardly made a difference how educated he was. Absenteeism was a chronic problem for the Church, as shown by reiterations in, for example, *Quia nonnulli* of 1179, canon 27 of the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), and Gregory X’s *Licet canon* of 1274. Absentee rectors were not necessarily a problem, because they could appoint vicars. Some of Merton’s vicarages, such as that of its appropriated church at Kingston, could be generous, and could attract suitable candidates. However, vicars were often poorly paid, and consequently they were also often less qualified, as Bishop Grosseteste pointed out.¹²⁶ Daniel Frankforter found that of the institutions of Richard Gravesend (bishop of Lincoln, 1258–79), only 21% of rectors were priests, compared to 85% of vicars.¹²⁷

Merton’s diocesan bishop, Adam Orleton of Winchester (1333–45), cracked down on absentee rectors, but he also ‘turned a fairly favourable eye on

¹²³ J. Goering, ‘The thirteenth-century English parish’, in *Educating People of Faith: Exploring the History of Jewish and Christian Communities*, ed. J. van Engen (Michigan, 2004), p. 209.

¹²⁴ *Edington*, I, pp. 14, 20, 28.

¹²⁵ Merton Priory cartulary, GB-Ob MS Laud Misc. 723, fols 34^v, 43^r.

¹²⁶ R. A. R. Hartridge, *A History of Vicarages in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1930), pp. 30–35; Campbell, *Pastoral Care*, pp. 3, 40–42; Hoskin, *Robert Grosseteste*, pp. 44–5.

¹²⁷ A. D. Frankforter, ‘The Reformation and the Register: episcopal administration of parishes in late medieval England’, *The Catholic Historical Review*, 63 (1977), p. 208.

those who wished to leave their rectories for reasons of study and tended to grant... rather longer periods for the purpose.'¹²⁸ To ensure education, bishops granted licences to study; to ensure residency, bishops often included a locum-clause. One of Merton's presentees was awarded 'a suitable companion chaplain until he be competent', a competency could have been age-related as well as educational.¹²⁹ In 1301, Hugh de Kingston, vicar of Flore, was given custody of the rectory of East Clandon (one of Chertsey Abbey's benefices) and its incumbent Roger Lovekyn. Funds were to be reserved for Roger's schooling. Roger was ordained subdeacon in 1305, deacon in 1307 and priest in 1308. If Roger had been ordained priest as soon as he was old enough (24), he would have been given the benefice of Clandon at the age of 17, and this perhaps warranted someone to look after him, as well as taking care of his rectory while he was absent at the schools.¹³⁰ The Lovekyns, as noted above, were prominent residents of Kingston; there was probably a direct connexion between Hugh and the Lovekyns, and both Flore and Kingston were parishes of Merton. This case also implies the co-operation of the Augustinians and Benedictines in ensuring clerical education.

Licences to study were given to rectors because a vicar could be appointed as a locum. If a potential incumbent were serious about studying, he might have himself appointed to a rectory, just as a candidate for royal, episcopal or aristocratic service would. It would seem from Grosseteste's words, and from a very small selection in the diocese of Winchester, that rectors were probably often fast-track, and vicarages were for those who would actually provide *cura animarum*.¹³¹ Whether a rector's study was the better to fit him for tending his flock or to train him for other functions perhaps depended on individual bishops and individual clergymen, but those who were allowed licences to study were a minority, and it does indeed seem that higher education was not

¹²⁸ R. M. Haines, 'Adam Orleton and the diocese of Winchester', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 23 (1972), pp. 27–8.

¹²⁹ *Rotuli Hugonis*, III, pp. 80–1, 216, III, pp. 49, 82, 282–3, 284; one locum chaplain was named as Hugh of Rochester (III, p. 37). For Merton's candidate, II, p. 84: 'Et notandum quod idem Simon habebit ibi capellandum idoneum socium donec per se sufficiat'. This is similar to Richard Gravesend's order to Reginald de Otteley to have a companion to teach him letters: Logan, *University Education*, p. 16.

¹³⁰ *Pontissara*, p. 118. Roger seems to have been less than careful financially, being sued later for debt: *Woodlock*, II, pp. 990, 997, 1003, 1006, 1009.

¹³¹ Campbell, *Pastoral Care*, p. 1.

primarily in order to fit the parish clergy.¹³² It is difficult to tell whether the clergy of Merton's parishes who received licences to study mainly stayed in those parishes, owing to the paucity of records, but certainly not all did: for example, Richard de Bynteworth, presented to Shirfield as an acolyte in 1310, was on a fast track to greater preferment.¹³³

Vicars tended not to be *magistri*, although they could often be priests; conversely, few of those educated at the schools settled down to parish life.¹³⁴ This meant that the education of the parish clergy as a whole relied on sources other than universities.¹³⁵ Manuals for autodidactic clerics on confession were an established genre. Sermons and other instructions were collected in the twelfth century, and, following the Fourth Lateran Council, confessional literature and more general handbooks for secular clergy increased.¹³⁶ The interest in education in relation to cure of souls was a reason for the generation of the friars and was generated by them, and it is no surprise that a manual written specifically to avoid the ignorance of priests was by a friar with an interest in parish clergy, John Pecham, archbishop of Canterbury. However, the Augustinians also contributed to pastoral literature, and it is in this context that Guy of Southwick's *De confessione* should be seen, as discussed in Chapter 5.¹³⁷ Merton's canons continued an interest in sermons, collecting a volume of Robert Grosseteste's sermons in the early fifteenth century, and giving public sermons to the Augustinian General Chapter. Edmund of Abingdon's sojourn at Merton, in which he wrote the *Speculum religiosorum* will be discussed in Chapter 5; it is further evidence of Merton's interest in pastoral literature. The

¹³² Denton, 'Competence', pp. 280–1; Reeves, *Religious Education*, p. 36. See also J. Dunbabin, 'Careers and vocations', pp. 565–605.

¹³³ *Woodlock*, I, p. 498, II, p. 734. Bynteworth became bishop of London.

¹³⁴ See V. Davis, 'The contribution of university-educated secular clerics to the pastoral life of the English Church', in Barron and Stratford, *The Church and Learning*, pp. 255–272.

¹³⁵ A point made by Denton, 'Competence', p. 285. See also Campbell, *Pastoral Care*, pp. 53–5; Reeves, *Religious Education*, pp. 60–1.

¹³⁶ Campbell, *Pastoral Care*, pp. 14–21; L. E. Boyle, 'The inter-conciliar period 1179–1215 and the beginnings of pastoral manuals', in *Miscellanea Rolando Bandinelli, Papa Alessandro III*, ed. F. Liotta (Siena, 1986), 45–56; A. W. Taubman, 'Clergy and Commoners: Interactions between Medieval Clergy and Laity in a Regional Context' (unpublished DPhil thesis, York, 2009), pp. 44–94; Reeves, *Religious Education*, *passim*; C. Rider, 'Lay religion and pastoral care in thirteenth-century England: the evidence of a group of short confession manuals', *Journal of Medieval History*, 36 (2010), 327–40.

¹³⁷ Below, pp. 216–23.

tract on virtues and vices found in GB-Lbl Royal MS 9 E XII could also be an example of the concern that Merton's canons had for pastoral care.¹³⁸

Several of Merton's parochial presentees were given leave to study by their bishop. Merton presented William de la Quarr to its living of Sherfield in June 1320; he was but an acolyte when the bishop granted him a year's licence to study, becoming a subdeacon the following February, 1321. The bishop renewed his licence the next February (1322), this time for two years. William was granted a further year's study in 1324, 1325, 1326 and 1327. He became priest in 1327/8. In 1330, he obtained another three years' leave to study.¹³⁹ A benefice acted as a student grant; many of the clerics who applied for licences to study were below the level of priest, and their studies could be part of their clerical promotion, as seems to have been the case with William de la Quarr. This was explicit in the case of John de Berton, presented by Nicholas de Berton to the rectory of Farley Chamberlayne in 1318, who applied for a licence to study 'ad ordinem sacerdotalem promoveri' ('to be promoted to the order of priest').¹⁴⁰

The authority to grant licences to study was twofold: first, from Alexander III's 1180 papal decretal *Relatum est nobis*, and secondly from the much more recent constitution *Cum ex eo* of Boniface VIII (1298). *Cum ex eo* allowed clergy to absent themselves from their parishes during their studies. This was in contrast to Gregory X's *Licet canon* (1274), which sought to ensure the residency of clergy in their parishes. As noted in Chapter 3, Prior William Brokesbourne of Merton (1307–1334) had both *Licet canon* and *Cum ex eo* in his volume of canonical articles.¹⁴¹ Donald Logan argued that:

to call both [*Relatum est nobis* and *Cum ex eo*] licences, as is frequently done, is to conflate and perhaps confuse two very distinct permissions granted to the beneficed parochial clergy for study in fourteenth-century England. They were given to two different groups of clerics: licences [from *Relatum est nobis*] to priests holding parochial benefices and dispensations [from *Cum ex eo*] to non-priests holding such benefices.¹⁴²

¹³⁸ A. Diem, 'Virtues and Vices in Pastoral Care', *Franciscan Studies*, 62 (2004), p. 195.

¹³⁹ Sandale & Asserio, pp. 388, 429–30, 471, 480; Stratford, I, pp. 147, 281, 303, 315, 331, II, p. 475.

¹⁴⁰ Sandale & Asserio, pp. 148, 202; *VCH Hampshire*, IV, p. 444.

¹⁴¹ GB-Lbl MS 11 B V, fols 209^r, 211^v.

¹⁴² Logan, *University Education*, p. 22. Logan also notes Honorius III's *Super specula* (1219), reinforcing the need for leave to study. See also L. E. Boyle, 'The constitution "Cum ex eo" of

This distinction may well hold true for the Lincoln bishops of his study, but investigation into the Winchester bishops indicates that they were a little less precise. William de la Quarr was given a dispensation to study, following Boniface's constitution, in 1320, but a *licencia studendi* in 1321, although this was also according to Boniface's constitution, and both were grants by the same bishop, Rigaud de Asserio. As a priest, William had study leave 'under the common form', a phrase used in the dispensations *Cum ex eo*.¹⁴³ Bishop John of Pontoise (1282–1304) started his grants with *licencia concessa*, whether he mentioned Boniface or not, and regardless of the length of leave of absence. Four such concessions from 1304–5 are obviously *Cum ex eo* dispensations, although only one mentions the constitution explicitly. Three rectors were acolytes, and were given the full seven years in which to study, with a view to taking up the diaconate and priesthood thereafter. The fourth was already a *magister* and was only given three years; the previous year he had been granted a licence to study for a year. His clerical order was not stated.¹⁴⁴ John's successors do not appear to have handed out licences or dispensations according to Logan's distinction. Henry Woodlock gave sub-priests *licenciae studendi*; he gave Thomas Norreys a *licencia studendi* for a year in 1308, but a dispensation for two years in February 1309.¹⁴⁵ John Stratford gave a *dispensacio Cum ex eo* to the subdeacon William de la Quarr for a year, but in the next entry a *licencia studendi* to Master Walter de London 'under the form written above'.¹⁴⁶ William Edington gave dispensation to clergy with or without an obligation to proceed to a higher order; he gave at least one *licencia studendi* to a clerk below the order of priest. Another *licencia studendi* to mention, for general interest rather than in connexion with Merton, is that given to William de Farley, rector of Hursley, for the full seven years' study — and the same to his clerk.¹⁴⁷ Dispensations and licences both carried with them a leave of absence. It may be true, as Logan asserted, that *Relatum est nobis* was used for priests and *Cum ex*

Boniface VIII: education of parochial clergy', *Medieval Studies*, 24 (1962), 263–302.

¹⁴³ Sandale & Asserio, pp. 388 and 471; Stratford, I, p. 147.

¹⁴⁴ Pontissara, I, pp. 106, 146–7, 165–6: Otho de Chimiet, William fitz Reginald, Walter de Coleshull and magister John de Brigham.

¹⁴⁵ Woodlock, I, pp. 335, 500, 570.

¹⁴⁶ Stratford, I, pp. 281–2.

¹⁴⁷ Edington, I, pp. 130, 169, 170, 185, 230. Cf. p. 151. William had already swapped his first living for another (1348), which he then resigned, presumably for a third benefice, and was also a canon-prebendary of Salisbury. He died in 1362.

eo for non-priests, but since both were described as *licenciæ studendi*, calling both ‘licences to study’ is perfectly permissible. William Farley was a canon of Salisbury, and perhaps therefore one of Bishop Wyvil’s administrators, which brings us back to a reason for presenting clergy to livings: providing stipends for ministers.

William de la Quarr (perhaps a relation of Robert, canon of Merton) was presented by Merton to the living of Sherfield (Hampshire) as an unlettered acolyte. By 1327 he is described as *magister*, and in 1330 he received his letters dimissory for the priesthood. In 1330 also he received permission to absent himself from his parish for another three years’ study; he renewed this two years later in July 1332.¹⁴⁸ But his career after this point is unknown — he has not come to light in any royal or ecclesiastical documents (neither does he appear in *BRUO*); he also disappears from the bishop of Winchester’s register. William’s case shows the difficulties of drawing conclusions about the careers of parish clergy, but the list (so far) of clergy presented to livings by Merton bears witness to a wide range of clergy and clerical careers. Some of Merton’s presentees were royal or ecclesiastical servants, lettered lawyers or theologians. Others, the majority, were apparently nothing more than parish clergy. Those who attended the schools or university might find themselves in either camp. It is difficult to come to conclusions about the family backgrounds of the clergy — most had toponymics, which tells us where they came from, but not their economic status, a problem noted by Jeffrey Denton.¹⁴⁹ Here, several of Merton’s presentees may help, but we must be careful of generalising from the particular.

If Merton presented few *magistri* and priests, it also presented few unsuitable candidates. One such was Gervase, whose presentation to the chapel of Whipsnade was refused by Hugh of Wells, bishop of Lincoln (d.1235) ‘on account of his insufficient learning’. Hugh gave him a year in which to study literature and practise singing; after this, he would be instituted if found adequate.¹⁵⁰ Insufficiency of learning is a theme throughout Bishop Hugh of Lincoln’s registers and those of his successors and their colleagues in other dioceses, but a quantitative study is needed to assess in general the numbers of

¹⁴⁸ *Stratford*, I, pp. 147, 230; Heales, p. 234.

¹⁴⁹ Denton, ‘Competence’, p. 283: he asked whether they were noble, gentle or, as A. Harding, *England in the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 89, suggested, ‘indistinguishable from the peasants they served’.

¹⁵⁰ *Rotuli Hugonis de Welles 1219–35*, ed. F. N. Davis and W. P. W. Phillimore (s.l., 1912), I, p. 80.

insufficiently learned clergy. It might be hoped that a monastery would be less inclined to present an unsuitable candidate: for lay patrons, benefices provided useful occupations for younger sons and other dependents. Monasteries did present unsuitable candidates, but whether they were fewer or greater in number than those presented by the laity is unknown. Just as various monastic houses, including Merton, presented insufficiently learned candidates, so too could they present a candidate whose credentials they had not properly checked. During an episcopal enquiry, William Peener, presented by Southwark Priory, was found unworthy of his benefice of Reigate. Southwark's prior 'rejected the claim that he had knowingly presented someone unworthy'. It was not in a priory's interests to present a questionable candidate, since, as in this case, they would lose the presentation temporarily to the bishop, but nevertheless this candidate was presented without due care and attention.¹⁵¹ William's unworthiness was not specified (he admitted 'definite reasons' which were not recorded), but his learning does not seem to have been questioned.

Merton presented an unsuitable candidate to the church of Long Ditton in 1279. The right of presentation to Long Ditton was at that time a matter of dispute between the prior of Merton and the prior of Bishopsgate Hospital; Merton proved its right to the advowson and promptly presented a candidate whom the bishop rejected as *inhabilis*. Whether this implied a lack of learning is not clear, but the bishop did appoint a *magister*, Hugh Tripacy. The bishop, however, consequently found himself a target of Bishopsgate's litigation. Alfred Heales suggested that 'the presentation of an unsuitable person might have been intentional, with the object of leaving the further litigation to be contested by the Bishop.'¹⁵² If so, it was a neat move, and the case does remind us of the potential complexity in appointing parish clergy — a complexity that included various external pressures.

Another presentation by Merton was a result of the priory's compassion. John le Botiler, disqualified (as we saw in Chapter 3) from being a canon because of his 'debilitatem et deformitatem', was instead given an annual pension of 60s., and, in 1319, appointed to the benefice of St Peter, Bedford.¹⁵³ Nothing is known beyond his unspecified disability about his suitability for his office, but

¹⁵¹ *Edington*, I, pp. 11–12.

¹⁵² Heales, p. 153 and fn. 2; *Winchester Register (Pontissara)*, I, pp. 12–13.

¹⁵³ Heales, p. 216; *Cleo*, no. 462, fol. clxxxiiiij^v; GB-Lbl Royal MS 11 B V, fols 204^v–205^r.

as this was a rectory, he could have found a vicar to conduct the services and care of souls. The case of John le Botiler shows reasons for presenting a candidate to a benefice other than fulfilling parish duties. Having a portfolio of presentations, a monastery was a useful resource for pope, bishops and kings. There were two reasons for appointing clergy to benefices: ministry to God (cure of souls) and ministry to king or Church.¹⁵⁴ Ecclesiastical and royal administrators were not paid as such: being clerks (until the very end of this period), their employers relied on their having livings. The more senior the administrator, the more livings he might need. This conflicted with church ideals about pluralism, but it was unavoidable and those church ideals had to yield to pragmatism. The pluralism of John Mansel, for example, was as infamous in the thirteenth century as Thomas Wolsey's was in the sixteenth.¹⁵⁵

In 1253, Prior Gilbert of Merton and Master William de Turri, canon of London and papal subdeacon, were ordered by the pope to find Richard Anibald a benefice. Richard, a scholar, was the great-nephew of the cardinal of S. Angelo and had been presented by the pope via a canon of York to the living of Staindrop. However, Staindrop was already one of Walter of Merton's many parishes. Fortunately, Merton Priory was spared from providing Richard a living, as he joined the Dominicans.¹⁵⁶ Another papal collation, in 1249, was of Nicholas de Celano, son of Boetius, clerk of the papal camera. Merton was to find him one of their benefices in the diocese of Winchester.¹⁵⁷ Whether Merton did, and whether Nicholas was absent or resident, is not recorded.

Bishops' interest in monastic patronage of parishes was not confined to ensuring educational standards: monastic benefices could be useful sources of patronage for them, as well. In 1238 Peter of Sawston was presented by Merton to Ryarsh (Kent) at the behest of Benedict of Sawston, bishop of Rochester; and Hugh des Roches, nephew of Peter des Roches, bishop of Winchester, was

¹⁵⁴ B. Thompson, 'The academic and active vocations in the medieval church: Archbishop John Pecham', in Barron and Stratford, *The Church and Learning*, pp. 1–2; G. Constable, 'The interpretation of Mary and Martha' in *Three Studies in Medieval Religious and Social Thought* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 1–141.

¹⁵⁵ *The Chronicle of Melrose*, ed. A. O. and M. O. Anderson (London, 1936), p. 214; J. Stevenson, *The Church Historians of England: Pre-Reformation Period* (London, 1853), IV, p. 235.

¹⁵⁶ *CEPR*, I, p. 301.

¹⁵⁷ *CEPR*, III, p. 258. See also the case of Urricus, nephew of Cardinal Otto, presented in 1239 to King's Cliffe by proxy: *Rotuli Roberti Grosseteste, Episcopi Lincolniensis, A.D. 1235–1253*, ed. F. N. Davis (London, 1913), vol. IV, p. 179.

presented to Long Ditton sometime before 1223. Both these men were, as *magistri*, at least qualified intellectually; Peter does not seem to have had a career elsewhere, and might therefore have fulfilled his pastoral duties.¹⁵⁸ Peter des Roches was probably responsible for the appointment before 1233 of John Blund as rector of Barton (Cambridgeshire). He was another *magister*, and as the author of the *Tractatus de anima*, Blund fulfilled the intellectual requirements for administering care of souls; but as a busy royal clerk and as rector simultaneously of Horsley (Derbyshire) it is doubtful that his Barton parishioners saw much of him.¹⁵⁹ Presumably a request from the bishop of Norwich was behind his chaplain Geoffrey being given both Matlaske and Plumstead by Merton in the 1170s. In the 1180s, Master Gilbert de Plesseto, a fast-track royal and ecclesiastical servant, was given St Mary's, Guildford, by Merton, and in the 1190s Philip de Lucy was presented to Cuddington.¹⁶⁰ Philip was a close relative of Godfrey, bishop of Winchester, and another royal and ecclesiastical servant. Both these men were useful people to have in one's orbit, and their appointments could have been good political moves by Merton Priory. All these men were of sufficient education, but the purpose of their learning was not to provide pastoral care in parishes but to provide bureaucratic expertise for the episcopacy.

Around 1330, Merton was to find livings for Robert and John de Kynebelle at both the pope and the king's request.¹⁶¹ The pair were both *magistri*, and therefore educationally qualified, but it seems that here Merton avoided its obligation, for Robert was given the benefice of Great Horwood (which belonged to Newton Longueville Priory) and John was ordained priest *ad titulum* of Missenden Abbey.¹⁶² In 1349, Thomas Bradwardine, chancellor and dean of St Paul's, was given papal charge to find a benefice for William, son of Richard de Wynewyk, 'poor priest of Lincoln', a duty which he passed on to the priors of Merton and Southwark, although whether they did is not

¹⁵⁸ Heales, p.101; Cart. no. 287, fol. cxxx^r; *EEA*, II (Winchester), pp. 171–3.

¹⁵⁹ C. H. Lawrence, *John Blund*, *ODNB*; *VCH Cambs*, vol.V, p. 171; *CEPR*, vol.I, p. 135; *BRUO* I, p. 206; *FEA 1066–1300*, vol. II, p. 6.

¹⁶⁰ *EEA*, II, pp. 198–200. The de Plesseto link with Merton continued later on, when Ralph de Plesseto was sent with a canon of Merton as an ambassador for King John (Heales, p. 60).

¹⁶¹ Heales, pp. 31, 39, 63; *FEA 1066–1300*, I, pp. 12–14; *CEPR*, II, pp. 277, 365.

¹⁶² M. Haren, *Sin and Society in Fourteenth-Century England: A Study of the Memoriale Presbiterorum* (Oxford, 2000), p. 197; *VCH Bucks*, III, p. 35; *Register of Stratford*, II, p. 525.

recorded.¹⁶³ In addition to finding potential benefices, monasteries could be called on to provide corrodies for secular clerks. In the 1170s or 1180s, Bishop Richard of Winchester persuaded Merton to pay Master John Conn' eleven marks per annum from its church at Norton. John was a deserving candidate, we are told, because he was 'distinguished for his holy grace, and recommended by his literary knowledge, honest life, and care and industry.'¹⁶⁴ In this reference, his literary knowledge seems to have been as important as his morals.

Before leaving the parish clergy, two further case studies illustrate Merton's connexions with secular clerics, parishes patronage and education. These are two families, the Chaddesleys and the Brokesbournes, who produced priors of Merton and secular clerics given patronage by Merton. Geoffrey de Chaddesley was prior of Merton from 1361 to 1368. He was a canon of Merton by December 1333, when he was ordained subdeacon by Bishop John de Stratford.¹⁶⁵ Stratford, an Oxford civil lawyer, was from Stratford-upon-Avon. On his appointment to Winchester in 1323, Stratford brought with him a number of men from his home diocese, Worcester, including another law graduate, Master Richard de Chaddesley, doctor of canon law. He became Bishop Stratford's diocesan chancellor and vicar-general, and he held prebends of Hereford, Salisbury and Winchester cathedrals and was rector of Kempsey, near Worcester.¹⁶⁶

Geoffrey's relationship to Richard is not explicit, but if Geoffrey was subdeacon in 1333, he was presumably of a younger generation, and therefore probably the ubiquitous 'nephew'. It is likely to have been Richard who introduced Geoffrey to Merton, for Merton had no links with Chaddesley (Worcs) and no other Chaddesleys appear in Merton's cartulary. Richard was also probably responsible for Stratford's ordination of Roger de Chaddesley as acolyte in April 1332 — Roger was described as being of the diocese of

¹⁶³ *Edington*, I, p. 59. Richard de Wynwyck was later made priest of Nether Wallop, presented by the treasurer of York, a John of Wynwyck, which presumably explains William's papal provision: *Edington*, I, p. 162.

¹⁶⁴ Heales, p. 26; *Cleo* no.122, fol. xcvi.

¹⁶⁵ *Stratford*, II, p. 531, no.1517.

¹⁶⁶ R. M. Haines, 'Winchester Diocese under John Stratford, 1323–1333', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 62 (2013), pp. 281, 284; *FEA 1300–1541*, III (Salisbury), p. 51; *CEPR*, II (London, 1895), p. 372. Richard was an executor of Bishop Walter Maidstone of Worcester, 1317: *The Register of the Diocese of Worcester during the Vacancy of the See, usually called 'Registrum Sede Vacante'*, ed. J. W. Willis Bund, (Worcestershire Historical Society; Oxford, 1895), p. 187.

Worcester, and is likely to have been a relative.¹⁶⁷ Geoffrey came from a well-to-do Worcestershire family with Oxford connexions and leanings towards the law. Of Geoffrey's own training and education there is no trace, but he seems to have had some competence at priory business, for he was one of Merton's 'concanons', representing the priory before the bishop's official in the election of John Lytlington to the priorate in 1339.¹⁶⁸

Yet another Chaddesley of the following generation had connexions with Merton and Oxford. Richard de Chaddesley appears in the Winchester register for 1350, when he was ordained subdeacon by Bishop Edington of Winchester, despite being the rector of Curry Rivel in the diocese of Bath and Wells. He was given licence 'to study in the university of Oxford for two years at the prayer of the Prince of Wales' the following year. This Richard was probably the 'Richard *dictus* Clerc of Chaddesley' who was made acolyte in 1349 (a year between being ordained acolyte and subdeacon was normal). If so, this Richard started out as rector of Merton's parish of St Mary's, Guildford, suggesting a family relationship with Geoffrey.¹⁶⁹ The reference to the Prince of Wales is also significant, for Merton continued its close acquaintance with the royal court during the period.¹⁷⁰ Thirty years later, and nearly twenty years after Geoffrey's death, several Merton canons were sent in 1385 to gain confirmation of lands in the parish of Kimpton (Hertfordshire) from a court whose judges numbered amongst others a John Chaddesley. This deputation included Michael Kimpton, Walter Michenhall and Master Reginald Chaddesley.¹⁷¹ We have no information about the date of Reginald's admission to Merton, nor about his study at the schools, but he may have been the same generation as Richard, and followed Geoffrey to Merton.

The significance of the sustained connection between the Chaddesley clan and the priory lies in the ways in which the senior members of a family

¹⁶⁷ *Stratford*, I, p. 518.

¹⁶⁸ Heales, p. 242.

¹⁶⁹ *The Register of Ralph of Shrewsbury, Bishop of Bath and Wells, 1329–1363*, ed. T. S. Holmes, (London, 1896), p. 673; *Edington*, II, p. 145, no. 781; p. 152, no. 798. Curry Rivel was the place to which Roy Haines retired, showing serendipitous parallels between the mediæval and modern (*Wikipedia*).

¹⁷⁰ For example, in 1356, Geoffrey supplied 52 oaks to the king for the round table at Windsor. J. Munby, R. Barber and R. Brown, *Edward III's Round Table at Windsor: The House of the Round Table and the Windsor Festival of 1344*, Arthurian Studies (Woodbridge, 2007), lxviii, p. 236. Richard was in the earl of Salisbury's household.

¹⁷¹ GB·Ob MS Laud Misc. 723, fol. 31^v.

looked out for the junior, in which several generations of a family were admitted into the cloisters at a house such as Merton, and in the fluidity between secular and regular careers. Geoffrey entered Merton because of his family connexion to a senior diocesan official; Reginald entered because of Geoffrey. Richard (II) received his first rectory through his family connexion to a senior canon of Merton. Kin and friendship networks were the most important factor in clerical or monastic careers, and members of one group could join both secular and regular sides of the Church without any hint of the 'conflict' seen, for example, by Hugh Thomas. At least two members of the family studied at Oxford; if the two who became canons of Merton did not, they at least came from a family who valued higher education.

The second example is from a few years earlier. Walter de Brokesbourne was made rector of Headley during the priorate of William de Brokesbourne.¹⁷² We came across William in Chapter 3 as the possessor of a collection of legal and constitutional excerpts useful for an active prior. Broxbourne itself is near Merton's parish of Stanstead Abbots, but the de Brokesbournes were an Essex gentry family.¹⁷³ Both William and Walter came, therefore, from a well-to-do family which produced royal servants and county administrators. Like the Chaddesleys, these were men who, as canons and as secular clerics, needed education to fulfil their various roles; education which could be provided directly or indirectly by Merton. Our third example (earlier still) is a clergyman about whom more will be said in Chapter 5, Walter of Merton. He came from a well-to-do Hampshire/ Surrey family, and was to the Herriards, one of whom, Edmund, was prior of Merton from 1296 until he resigned in the midst of a dispute in 1305. Another Herriard, Alexander, became prior of Winchester in 1328.¹⁷⁴ Both men were suitably educated for becoming prelates.

The Chaddesleys, Brokesbournes and Herriards are examples of gentry families which sent their scions to serve the Church as both regulars and seculars, or to serve a noble or royal household.¹⁷⁵ That secular clergy were from

¹⁷² Heales, p. 214.

¹⁷³ <https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1386-1421/member/brokesbourne-edmund-1340-13967>

¹⁷⁴ Heales, pp. 180, 192–6; Haines, 'Winchester', p. 286. Herriard is just south of Basingstoke.

¹⁷⁵ Another Richard de Chaddesley was treasurer to the earl of Salisbury in the 1360s: G. A. Holmes, *Estates of the Higher Nobility in Fourteenth Century England*, (Cambridge, 1957), p. 66.

not just similar backgrounds to regular clergy but were from the very same families illustrates the fluid relationships among clergy of all sorts. The families from which these clergy came were interested in learning: some would be sent to study at the schools, while others received their education from the institutions they joined. While some individuals would attain doctoral status, like Richard de Chaddesley, others, like Geoffrey, would help make up the more moderately learned backbone of administrative society in court, county and church.

OTHER SECULAR CLERGY

Merton Priory needed a body of secular clergy to assist it in administration and law, and in celebrating an increasing number of masses. It therefore had an interest in the education of secular clergy apart from those in its parishes. Some clerics, at least, were resident at the priory. In 1286, the clerk Dionysius of Thurrock was given a canon's allowance and 'a site between the sacristy and the house of the chaplains'. At 4 x 4 ½ perches (about 120 square feet), his plot was easily large enough on which to build a house, where presumably he lived until his death in 1317. The nature of his role at the priory is unclear, but Dionysius was a *magister*, and this, together with his corrody, suggests some senior position.¹⁷⁶ Various clerks were employed within the priory as chaplains. The entry regarding Dionysius of Thurrock implies that several of these shared a house (probably somewhere off the south-east end of the church, if the sacristy was in the south transept).¹⁷⁷ Merton had a number of side altars, and it received a number of bequests for obits; its house of chaplains could reflect the growth in chantry priests during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.¹⁷⁸

Merton also employed many attorneys and factors to look after its considerable properties and to represent the priory in court, and these too required training and recompense.¹⁷⁹ The exact roles of 'nostris secularibus Edmunde Ludlow, Johanne Newenham, Johanne Totyng, Roberto Palfeman'

¹⁷⁶ Heales, p. 168. For chaplains living in a priory precinct: *Barnwell Observances*, pp. 174–6.

¹⁷⁷ For a plan of the priory, see Miller & Saxby, pp. 114–5. I am grateful to Lesley Milner for her guidance on the location of the sacristy and treasury.

¹⁷⁸ Heales, pp. 49–50, 118, 120. Heales wrote that Peter Chaceporc left 600 marks for the building of a chantry, assuming it to be at Merton, but his source, Matthew Paris, said that Peter left money to found a new Augustinian house with the canons of Merton, and Peter's heir Hugh and Henry III founded Ravenstone Priory: Heales, p. 130; *Chronica Majora*, ed. H. Luard, VII (London, 1872), p. 484; *VCH Bucks*, III, p. 382; H.M. Colvin, 'The origin of chantries', *Journal of Medieval History*, 26 (2000), 163–73; D. Crouch, 'The origin of chantries: some further Anglo-Norman evidence', *Journal of Medieval History*, 27 (2001), 159–80.

are unstated, but they were witnesses to a pension agreement in the 1380s.¹⁸⁰ Robert of Cirencester, while waiting for a suitable benefice, acted as attorney for the priory; the annuity to Master Andrew de Wynton in the same year as Robert's corrody (1242) might have been compensation for Merton's appropriation of his rectory of Ryarsh, but the priory apparently did not wish to lose a capable cleric, whom it used as proctor in, for example, 1257.¹⁸¹ William de Cuteron, who acted as attorney for the priory in Rome in 1311, was also receiving an annuity. The 'Philip, clerk' who received a corrody in the 1230s was probably Master Philip Hamme, who acted as attorney for the priory; we can presume for him a training in canon or common law.¹⁸² Corrodies imply the habitation of these individuals at the priory, but there are plenty of payments in the form of (non-resident) annuities as well — the next entry to Philip the clerk's corrody in the cartulary is an annuity to a William of Somerford, without mention of any bed or board. Some of these corrodies or annuities were to clerks (like Robert) awaiting presentation to a benefice — reiterating Davies' 'clearing house' description — and several others were to *magistri* (like Philip) who looked after Merton's interests.¹⁸³

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has demonstrated ways in which Merton Priory provided both elementary education and opportunities for education for a variety of learners in a variety of ways. Although the details of its programme for novices are obscure, based on the evidence that survives from Merton and by comparison with other Augustinian houses, it seems to have included an amount of private study, and, towards the end of the period, to have responded to the growing interest in humanism, by using texts by, amongst others, Ovid (discussed

179 Jean Dunbabin argued that 'by the middle of the fourteenth century monasteries were rather less important employers than they had been earlier': 'Careers and vocations', in *The Early Oxford Schools*, ed. J. Catto (Oxford, 1984), p. 579. For the legal training of a monastery's secular clergy, see Clark, *Monastic Renaissance*, p. 74.

180 GB-Ob MS Laud Misc. 723, fol. 31^r.

181 There is no record of Robert's being appointed to a benefice. Heales, pp. 110, 128, 132.

182 Heales, pp. 86, 88, 94, 207. Hamme, or Ham, was a manor in Kingston-upon-Thames: H. E. Malden, ed., *VCH Surrey*, III, (London, 1911), pp. 480, 512.

183 Examples, from Heales, include Master Alexander Faucun (c.1218), p. 76; Marcius of London (1230s), p. 94; Robert of Canterbury, Emeric of Montenegro, and William of Stafford (1241), p. 106; Robert of Cirencester (1242), p. 110; Master Richard Wodelok (1309), p. 201; Master John de Cateslee, keeper of spiritualities (1322), p. 225; Master John de Clipston (1329), p. 228.

further in Chapter 6). Throughout the period, novices had access to works by Victorine authors, whose theology and spiritual approach was at the core of what it meant to be Augustinian. Private study was an increasing trend among Benedictines of the period; it was part of the Augustinian educational approach, perhaps from the beginning.¹⁸⁴ Novices and young or new canons were expected to move up the ranks of the clergy, a transition which itself required continuing education. We should probably not take as definitive William of Wykeham's complaint that the Merton canons were 'deficient in knowledge'; overall it would seem that Merton functioned adequately as an educator, and it must be remembered that monasteries were not educational establishments in themselves, but that education was a means to a spiritual end.¹⁸⁵ Wykeham's exhortation to find 'a suitable master' was a reiteration of an earlier instruction by Pope Benedict XII, and Merton was expected to keep up the standards befitting an Augustinian house.¹⁸⁶ Merton produced scholars throughout its existence, and some education in its cloisters must, therefore, be inferred. This education was both 'vertical', passed on by prelates or novice-masters and authoritative books, and 'horizontal', passed from canon to canon, and seen in the compilation and annotation of books.

There is evidence that some teaching of minors took place in the twelfth century, and the indication of the existence of an almonry school in the early thirteenth century suggests Merton's commitment to its duties to provide education for poor scholars. References to this school thereafter are lacking, but this does not mean that the school ceased to exist. Merton was also in charge of at least one school in its parishes, and in this it was typical of Augustinian houses, as well as monasteries of other orders.

As a parish patron, Merton was expected to provide its churches with suitable ministers. These were increasingly expected to be literate, in order that they might administer the sacraments and preach to and teach the laity. How much of a priority was ensuring a well-educated corps of parish clergy is hard to judge: Merton's clergy ranged from university graduates to the occasional candidate rejected for lack of learning. Although quantitative analysis of

¹⁸⁴ Clark, 'Monastic education', pp. 27–33, 38, 40; *idem*, *Monastic Renaissance*, chapters 2 and 4.

¹⁸⁵ Heales, p. 273; GB-Ob MS Laud Misc. 723, fols 24^r–27^v; 45^v; Greatrex, 'Pursuit of learning', p. 411.

¹⁸⁶ D. Wilkins, ed., *Concilia Magnae Britanniae* (London, 1737), III, p. 688.

bishops' registers is outside the scope of this thesis, a survey of a small sample of them suggests that the qualities of candidates presented by monasteries were no different from those presented by non-monastic patrons, and that their subsequent careers followed similar patterns, too. In part, this was because there were more reasons for presenting a candidate than solely his learning, and monasteries such as Merton had obligations to more than just their bishops. Criticisms of the illiteracy of the clergy were from those who were highly literate; the actual duties of the parish clergy — visiting the sick, doling out alms, even hearing confession — did not require advanced literacy: residency and *fama* (good moral reputation) were also important qualities in parish clergy. Merton's presentees seem on the whole to have been present and correct: the number of complaints about Merton as a parish manager during the whole period is small, which may mean that it was normally fairly engaged and efficient.¹⁸⁷ The degree to which Merton and other monasteries took an active interest in their presentees and parishes is a matter for further research, but this discussion has laid some groundwork.¹⁸⁸

As well as providing elementary schooling and appointing suitable clergy, Merton would have contributed to the education of the clergy through sermons and through its library. These points have not been highlighted in this chapter, but they can be drawn in and added to the hinterland of clerical appointments and give a broader view of Merton's educational and pastoral provisions. Books were lent, borrowed and donated by and to secular clergymen, and Merton hosted plenty of secular clergy who might have used the monastic library. The confessional treatise of one former Merton canon (discussed in Chapter 5) shows his own commitment to parochial education; this may be indicative of a more general attitude amongst Merton's canons.

If Merton, like other monasteries, was a 'clearing house' for parish clergy, so too was it a bank of employment for other clerics. This chapter has argued for a revised approach to relationships between secular and regular clergy: far from seeing a fundamental difference or disagreement between secular and monastic spheres, as Hugh Thomas has done, we should take a more nuanced

¹⁸⁷ Denton, 'Competence', p. 278; Logan, *University Education*, pp. 1, 7–10, 12–13.

¹⁸⁸ J. H. Denton, 'The competence of the parish clergy in thirteenth-century England', *The Church and Learning in Later Medieval Society: Essays in Honour of R. B. Dobson*, ed. C. M. Barron and J. Stratford (Donington, 2002), pp. 280–1.

approach.¹⁸⁹ As Merton's history demonstrates, regular and secular were members of the same ecosystem whose interactions were dynamic, rather than being members of two fixedly adversarial tribes. The priory was responsible for the education and employment of many secular clergy, and relationships would not always be harmonious; there may be patterns to be drawn, but there are also personalities to consider.

The thirteenth century saw the continued growth of the legal profession and of the private mass, both of which required a large number of clerks. Merton adds to the body of evidence about almonry boys serving monastic altars, and to the employment of holy water-carriers in parishes. Merton required a number of clerics with legal education to assist in its administration of lands and people. The careers and education of two of these clerics will be discussed in the following chapter, but the current chapter has shown examples of different sorts of relationships with secular clergy, and shown also Merton's indirect role in their education by providing benefices and employment that allowed them to take up their studies.

¹⁸⁹ See H. Thomas, *The Secular Clergy in England, 1066–1216* (Oxford, 2014), pp. 343–64.

CHAPTER 5: HIGHER EDUCATION

In Chapter 4 we explored Merton's provision of 'elementary' education, both so that its own canons could receive the learning necessary for them to fulfil their profession, and for non-monastic students, including the secular clergy. For some of these secular students, Merton gave the wherewithal for further study by providing benefices for university candidates. University study is generally classed as 'higher' education, the subject of this chapter. Higher education was not limited to the universities, however: scholarship was also nurtured within the cloister, and this chapter will also look at the scholarship of Merton's canons.

Merton's engagement with the universities was simultaneously personal and institutional. It was personal in the sense that it was about Merton sending canons out of the cloister, sometimes for a considerable length of time. They were still canons of Merton, but they moved to an environment that might be unfamiliar and challenging. Some would have taken to it more than others, but for those who took full advantage of university education it brought both further knowledge and understanding and contacts and the opportunity to develop friendships and networks. In due course these men would return to the cloister to enrich the culture of learning within it. This chapter therefore brings together for the first time the evidence for the presence of Merton's canons at the universities. Merton's engagement was also institutional, and this chapter explores ways in which, as one priory and as a member of the wider Augustinian order, Merton provided material support for study at Oxford. This is set against a discussion of the financial implications of keeping a canon in the schools. Consideration of the Augustinian context prompts the question of why the canons failed to establish their own college before the mid fifteenth century. This chapter makes a fresh contribution to argument that the role of the Augustinians in general and Merton in particular has been underestimated.

The role of any monastic house of order in engaging with higher education at the universities should not, however, be limited to members of those institutions. A religious house might sponsor secular clerks for study, and this aspect of monastic life needs to be considered alongside the engagement of monastic personnel themselves. The chapter accordingly moves on to analyse

the careers of two clerics, John of Tynemouth and Walter of Merton, who in the thirteenth century were supported through the schools by the priory and whose family backgrounds give an important insight into the social and spiritual networks formed by Merton. It builds on the discussion in the previous chapter and argues that we should not see too sharp a distinction between secular and regular clergy.

THE SCHOOL OF THE CLOISTER

Chapter 3 explored some of the materials available to the twelfth- and thirteenth-century canons for reflection and scholarship. The library of an institution gives some evidence of its culture of learning, and this can be built upon with an examination of known individuals, both in terms of what they read, or wrote, but also with whom they associated: before the establishment of universities, scholarship was based on more personal and informal networks and relationships. Sources for the early canons include their own scholarship, correspondence and accounts of their lives, and these form the basis for this discussion.

Guy (d.1124), Prior Robert II (d.1167) and Prior William (d.1177)

The author of the *Life o Guy* introduces his subject as ‘a certain Italian, who had achieved no little fame for his direction of schools, Guy by name’.¹ Colker thought that this Guy might be the ‘Guido Langobardus’ mentioned in a French chronicle alongside Lanfranc, Manegold of Lautenbach and Bruno of Rheims.² If so, this would suggest that Guy was a high-powered intellectual. However, there is no evidence to corroborate Colker’s suggestion; indeed, since Guy would have been a generation younger than Manegold and Bruno, and two generations younger than Lanfranc, this could be unlikely to refer to him.³ Nevertheless, Guy had been a scholar before giving up the world for the cloister of Merton — a cloister which was not yet finished, since Guy must have joined shortly after the foundation (1114) or re-foundation (1117). The nature of Guy’s scholarship is not alluded to in the *Life o Guy*, whose author makes more of

¹ *Life o Guy*, para. 2.

² M. Colker, ‘The Life of Guy of Merton by Rainald of Merton’, *Medieval Studies*, 31 (1969), p. 250.

³ *Life o Guy*, p. 5.

the emotional nature of Guy's faith, but he noted that Guy regularly gave sermons to the other canons and studied the Church Fathers, suggesting a continuity of Guy's earlier experience at the schools, and perhaps also implying Merton as a place of learning.⁴ The author of the *Life o Guy*, Rainald, was a himself a canon of some learning, with a fluent command of the Bible and some Classical literature.

Guy's sub-prior, Robert, became the second prior of Merton in 1150. John of Salisbury held Robert in high esteem, although we know little about him. Robert was one of the founder-cansons. Like the first prior, also Robert, Robert seems to have been a capable prior and committed to religious reform, giving testament, for example, to Guy of Merton's piety.⁵ According to John's letters, Robert had enough influence for John to ask him to write to the king, and was enough of a diplomat to tread the fine rope between king and Church. In one letter to Robert, John mentioned his hope for the intercession of three men, the bishop of London (Gilbert Foliot), the archdeacon of Poitiers (Richard of Ilchester) and the justiciar Richard de Lucy. These three were key figures in the Becket dispute, but they all had, or were to have, connexions with Merton: Richard de Lucy was the grandfather of Philip, who would hold Long Ditton of Merton; Richard of Ilchester became Merton's diocesan, and Gilbert's clerk David might have given Merton a copy of theological *quaestiones*.⁶

Some time in 1167, John of Salisbury wrote to Robert's successor as prior of Merton, William, that:

I was delighted to hear of your promotion, and to see my lord and friend succeeded by the man whom I put second to no one in your whole church for God's honour and the community's profit. God alone, who gave me the power to love, knows the affection I have for your church, and my conscience bears such witness for me as it may. I am confident that by God's grace you will succeed to the charity of the man to whose office you have succeeded, and that I shall have the place in your affection I used to have in his. It is my real opinion

⁴ *Life o Guy*, para. 4.

⁵ *Life o Guy*, para.4. For a discussion about the first two Prior Roberts, see K. R. Hawks, 'Too many Tews: just who was the first prior of Merton?', *Merton Historical Society Bulletin*, 214 (June, 2020), pp. 10–14.

⁶ *JoS* II, no. 151, p. 51; Chapter 3, above.

that he reckoned me among his few dearest friends, and that I was higher in his favour than the many who were before me in desert.⁷

This seems more than polite rhetoric, and implies that Robert II was both virtuous and learned enough to have attracted John's friendship, and that William was a worthy successor to Robert as a learned prelate.⁸ William's theological excerpts discussed in Chapter 3 (Royal MS 4 B XIV) covered a range of texts, some commonplace (such as Augustine's Pelagian texts, useful for inspiring orthodox practices); others were rarer, such as the version of the *Problemata Heloise*. The texts he chose imply some sort of connexion to Paris and northern France. Most of the texts, as noted in Chapter 3, were in the library of the abbey of St Victor, and the Gloss spread quickly from Laon and Paris.⁹ The copies of Abelard in Royal 11 A V may be too late for William's prelate, but they suggest a continuing interest in recent (Parisian) theology. The handling of texts in both William's homily based on the Gloss and of the *Problemata* demonstrate a depth of familiarity with both sources, and imply that William was an active and intelligent theologian. The 'Parisian' texts of Merton in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries suggest that some of its canons were students at the schools or at St Victor, including, perhaps, William himself.

There is one question mark against William's reputation, and that is a letter from Peter of Celle to Richard of Salisbury concerning a question of discipline, which, it seems, Richard found wanting in William, and it is now to Richard, who joined Merton under William's direction, to whom we shall now turn.

Richard of Salisbury (c.1120–after 1180)

Richard of Salisbury, whom we met in Chapter 2, became a canon of Merton by May 1172.¹⁰ Richard was described by Frank Barlow as 'the baby of the family... unable until almost the end to escape from the shadows cast by his elder

⁷ JoS II, no. 265, pp. 536–9. Brooke comments on the hyperbolic 'whole church', p. 537, fn.1.

⁸ Guyon gives examples of prelates rejected by the bishop because of the insufficiency of their learning: 'La formation intellectuelle ces chanoines réguliers', in *Les Chanoines Réguliers: Émergence et Expansion, XI^e–XIII^e Siècles*, ed. M. Parisse (Saint-Étienne, 2009), p. 303.

⁹ See above, Chapter 3 and Appendix 1.

¹⁰ *The Letters of Peter of Celle*, ed. and trans. J. Haseldine (Oxford, 2001) Haseldine, *Peter of Celle*, p. 659, fn.1.

brothers... everyone's pet, loved perhaps because of his weaknesses'.¹¹ Even his weaknesses are rather shadowy. He was apparently in trouble in Exeter around 1163, which may have been why his brother John took him to France. Following John's negotiations with the king over his employer, Thomas Becket, the brothers returned to England, and Richard was living with his half-brother Robert fitzGille in Exeter in 1165. John wrote to Robert to reassure him 'that our little brother is not "suffering as a murderer or a blasphemer or a seeker after other men's goods"'.¹² (John here was using a quotation, which Brooke *et al.* found 'obscure', from Gregory the Great's *Moralia in Job*, and is, therefore, not an elucidation of Richard's own sins.) The following year, Richard was again in trouble: his goods were confiscated for some misdemeanour, and John was trying to find him some money; Robert also helped Richard out.¹³ John maintained Richard's innocence, with apparent justification, and later that year, Richard went to him in France. John wrote to Bartholomew of Exeter about Richard's arrival, thanking him for his 'kindness and generosity', and remarking that Richard 'has put me under a deeper obligation to you and made me more devoted to you, even beyond the very great devotion which I already had.'¹⁴ The brothers would reside in France until 1170.

Writing to Becket, John excused his decision to take his brother, saying that 'I told you how Earl Reginald had reproached the bishop of Exeter on my brother's account [and] you accepted my view', and he promised to live frugally so as not burden Becket with unnecessary costs.¹⁵ Richard might have been the Richard listed as present at Becket's conference near Gisors in 1167.¹⁶ In November 1170, the brothers returned again to England. They went to Exeter to visit their mother, who died shortly after their visit. Richard also went to see his friend Bartholomew, bishop of Exeter, apparently in some distress at the political situation. John remarked that he himself 'was not yet allowed to visit',

¹¹ Barlow, 'John of Salisbury and his brothers', p. 108.

¹² *JoS* II, no. 146, pp. 40–3; *Moralia in Job*, 3:XXI:
http://www.monumenta.ch/latein/text.php?table=Gregorius_Magnus&rumpf=Gregorius%20Magnus,%20Moralia%20in%20Job,%2003,%20%20%2021&level=4&domain=&lang=1&id=&hilite_id=&satz=&string=&links=1&inframe=1&hide_apparatus=1.

¹³ *JoS* II, no. 146, pp. 140–3.

¹⁴ *JoS* II, no. 174, pp. 138–9.

¹⁵ Duggan, *Correspondence of Becket*, vol. I, pp. 74–5, letter no. 24 and fn. 30.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. I, pp. 664–5, letter no. 144 and fn. 4.

perhaps because of a quarrel with Bartholomew a couple of years previously: John wrote to Baldwin of Totnes that Bartholomew was ‘no friend to the archbishop nor to any of his friends’.¹⁷ Soon afterwards, Peter of Celle wrote to both brothers to express his joy at finding out they had survived Becket’s murder — John in Canterbury; Richard presumably still in Exeter. At this point, Richard decided to embrace the regular life.

The trouble that Richard found himself in might have been political or financial rather than moral. His correspondence with Abbot Peter of Celle implies a man with great and genuine moral concerns — concerns even about the apparently morally-upright Prior William, as noted above. Richard was a man of intelligence, not unlike his elder brothers Robert and John. Robert was a canon of Exeter who became archdeacon of Totnes around the time that Richard joined Merton. He was a physician and had a collection of books, which he bequeathed to the Augustinian priory of Plympton, to which he retired.¹⁸ His younger brother was John of Salisbury, one of the great intellectuals of his generation.¹⁹ Richard perhaps acted as a legal advocate on behalf of John in the 1150s, suggesting a man of some intellectual capability.²⁰ He accompanied his brother John on various occasions to Celle, where he made a deep and lasting impression on Peter of Celle, who, in Barlow’s words, ‘thought him a most virtuous and religious man... his “evangelical friend”’.²¹ A small light upon Richard’s reading material supports Peter’s view of him: on returning to England from Celle in 1157, John wrote to Peter asking for his volume of Boethius’ *De Trinitate* to be sent back, as he had left it behind (having lent it to a monk) and Richard wanted it.²²

Peter of Celle’s surviving letters to Richard are full of affection and admiration for his religious virtue. These letters are from the early 1170s, both before and after Richard became a canon of Merton. In one, Peter thanks

¹⁷ *JoS* II, no. 304, p. 723; no. 241, p. 463.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 99–100; Fizzard, *Plympton*, p. 51.

¹⁹ For summaries, see C. N. L. Brooke, ‘John of Salisbury and his world’, in *The World of John o Salisbury*, ed. M. Wilks (Oxford, 1994), pp. 1–20; C. Grellard and F. Lachaud, ‘Introduction’, in *A Companion to John o Salisbury* (Leiden, 2015), pp. 1–19. See also D. Luscombe, ‘John of Salisbury in recent scholarship’ in Wilks, *World o John o Salisbury*, pp. 21–37.

²⁰ *The Letters o Peter o Celle*, ed. and trans. J. Haseldine (Oxford, 2001), p. 317, fn.7.

²¹ Barlow, ‘John of Salisbury and his brothers’, p. 108.

²² Barlow, ‘John of Salisbury and his brothers’, p. 97; *JoS* I, no. 34, pp. 61–2. (Richard would later have found a copy of *De Trinitate* at Merton Priory.)

Richard for his words, comparing them to medicine; in return, he sends Richard ‘some medicinal spices [apparently real, rather than metaphorical], for what they are worth. If only I could order them, in the name of Jesus, to effect health and well-being.’²³ In the two following letters, it is clear that Richard has been worrying about discipline — his own and that of his superiors. Peter writes ‘you ask whether guilt that seems to affect the *economus* or provost runs through from a single and sure origin in him to the individual members of a community and involve the consciences of individuals’, and comforts him by saying, with apt biblical quotations, that

it does not seem to me that it falls on the heads of individuals if something is badly administered by the prior, and that it is enough for the religious not to know whence comes that which they eat or that which they put on... he should receive in all simplicity whatever his hand may find in his bed or in the refectory and give thanks to God, but if anyone should say, “This is a thing sacrificed to idols,” that is acquired by rapine or usury or whatever other evil means, he should abstain.²⁴

Peter wrote to Richard another letter in which he said:

I sum up claustral discipline briefly and succinctly in the single speech which Pharaoh used to Joseph: “I”, he said, “am Pharaoh; without thy commandment no man shall move hand or foot in the land of Egypt.” The holiest and most equal discipline in the cloister is that nothing be done, nothing be said, nothing be had, except with the abbot’s permission, so that the eye should neither go beyond the limits ordained, nor the hand be moved to unlawful things, nor the foot run to things forbidden. The body of the religious, made firm by these sinews, stands unmoving; we have a foundation without which there is no firm religious life.’²⁵

²³ Haseldine, *Peter o Celle*, p. 639. Brian McGuire noted Peter’s passion in his letters to Richard, possibly heightened by feeling abandoned by John when he became bishop of Chartres: *Friendship & Community: The Monastic Experience, 350–1250*, Cistercian Studies Series, 95 (Kalamazoo, 1988), p. 276.

²⁴ Haseldine, *Peter o Celle*, p. 673.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 645.

Obedience to one's superior recurs in Peter's subsequent treatise to Richard — indeed, Hugh Feiss emphasised this in his introduction to *The School o the Cloister*.²⁶ This might support Richard's misgivings about the priory's acquisition or use of something, and there is an implication that the prior had turned a blind eye. Certainly, Peter and Richard debated the nature and responsibility of the head of a religious house. Later in the treatise Peter wrote more from a prelate's point of view, perhaps hinting that Richard's fears were subjective and possibly unfounded:

the task of arranging the battle line belongs to prelates. They must know the capabilities of all with an instinct born of loving, paternal affection, and not as a pretense for haughty domination. They must place each in his proper place.

Richard's prior at this time was William, whom we met above, and who does not seem to have been errant or neglectful.²⁷ Discipline for Peter was reflexive, and he exhorts the reader 'to suffer evils but not to commit them', and that if a fault should be found with a 'powerful person or a prelate', one should proceed with caution and respect (as Noah's sons showed to their father). Claustal discipline itself is more general: 'to weep for one's sins, and the sins of others, to be subject to one's superior, to obey in all matters, to be on one's guard against ambushes, to plot against no-one, to fulfil the first and second commandments of the law regarding love of God and neighbour, to preserve innocence and sanctity, to obey God always'.²⁸

How much *The School o the Cloister* reflects Richard's own views can only be speculation. In his letters, Peter implied that the two men thought along the same lines, and both seemed to defer to the other's knowledge and understanding. *The School* is a meditative text in Peter's somewhat circumlocutory style; it is not hugely original, but instead reflects thinkers such

²⁶ Feiss, *Peter o Celle*, p. 14: 'the whole of claustral discipline can be summed up in a word: "that nothing be done, said, possessed, without the abbot's permission"').

²⁷ H. Feiss, ed. and trans., *Peter o Celle: Selected Works* (Kalamazoo, 1987), p. 130. For monastics as soldiers of Christ, see K. A. Smith, *War and the Making o Medieval Monastic Culture* (Woodbridge, 2011).

²⁸ Feiss, *Peter o Celle*, pp. 68, 75–6, 82. One of Peter's own monks, Hervey, showed scant regard for claustral discipline, disappearing from Saint-Rémy. Peter asked Richard, should Hervey turn up at Merton, to recover his horses: Haseldine, *Peter o Celle*, p. 673.

as Hugh of St Victor, Hugh of Fouillooy and Bernard of Clairvaux.²⁹ For Peter, learning was to be tempered with spirituality; obedience with charity. Confession was crucial, and should be approached through intention, thought and action, a tripartite division common in literature of the time (*q.v.* Guy of Southwick's 'contrition of heart, a confession of mouth, a satisfaction of works').³⁰ Peter also separates 'sins of sense' from 'sins of reason' — the former being more forgivable than the latter. Peter's view of confession is similar to Hugh of St Victor or Alexander Nequam's: an act of obedience (confessing to one's prior) and a road to betterment: through confession, one can step from the least worthy person — the guilty (confessing from coercion) — to the servant (confessing from fear), to the son (confessing from love). Although Richard's views on confession cannot be extrapolated from this, many of Hugh's works were in Merton's library (and Richard's brother had John studied with Robert of Melun, himself a student of Hugh), alongside some of Abelard's works.³¹ Richard was also acquainted personally with Baldwin of Forde, his brother Robert's predecessor as archdeacon of Totnes, and Bishop Bartholomew of Exeter, who had been a colleague of John of Salisbury in Theobald of Bec's household, and whom Richard visited following the death of his mother. Both Baldwin and Bartholomew wrote extensively on religious subjects, including the eucharist and confession, two things that concerned Peter of Celle in *The School*.³²

Frank Barlow thought Richard to be 'fragile'. He appears to have been more introverted than his brother, and perhaps it was his introspection that

²⁹ Hugh Feiss wrote that he was 'not the disciplined master of his thoughts and rhetoric', nor 'a logical writer, and does not seem in fact to have esteemed logic very highly': *Peter of Celle*, p. 18. For a discussion of Peter's thoughts and writings, see, for example, D. Murphy, 'The Church in the Medieval Imagination, 1100-1170' (unpublished PhD thesis, Sheffield, 2018), particularly pp. 140-155.

³⁰ Feiss, *Peter of Celle*, pp. 80, 104-8; *De confessione*, p. 342. For discussions about confession in the twelfth century, see S. R. Kramer, *Sin, Interiority, and Selfhood in the Twelfth-Century West* (Toronto, 2015) and R. Meens, *Penance in Medieval Europe, 600-1200* (Cambridge, 2014). This treatment of confession reflects the general practice of tripartite, or perhaps trinitarian, division of subject matter; *q.v.* also Hugh of St Victor, *Didascalicon*, ed. J. Taylor (New York, 1961), pp. 49-56.

³¹ M. L. Rampolla, 'Robert de Melun', *ODNB*; see also discussions in Chapters 2 and 3.

³² D. Runciman, 'Pastoral care according to the bishops of England and Wales (c.1170-1228)' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Cambridge, 2017), pp. 121-3, 149-50. Baldwin (p. 125) wrote that transubstantiation goes beyond reason, highlighting the necessity of faith as well as thought — another theme of Peter's. Richard's brother Robert wrote a *Penitential* at Plympton Priory: Webber & Watson, A20 p. 113, and A21 no. 3, p. 400.

prevented him from establishing a career or writing theological works himself; his intellect, hinted at by his brother and by Peter of Celle, seems to have been considerable. Richard's reflective disposition made the cloister a natural place for him, but why he chose to become a canon of Merton in particular is not explicit. He was close friends with Peter of Celle, and stayed at Peter's abbey, but he did not become a Benedictine there or anywhere else. His brother Robert had by the 1170s links with Plympton Priory. This was local to him in Exeter, and as archdeacon of Totnes, Robert was a benefactor throughout the 1170s, retiring there sometime in the 1180s.³³ Richard, despite his Exeter connexions, did not join Plympton. We have no direct evidence that Richard visited Merton, although, as will be discussed below, we know that his brother John did. Richard's links with Merton are therefore to be inferred from John's. Richard might have been attracted to Merton by its intellectual milieu and reputation, and by the presence there of learned canons such as William or Guy of Southwick, whose own intellectual career has been not been extensively studied.

Guy of Southwick (d.c.1217)

Little is documented of Guy's life before he became prior of Southwick in the 1180s. André Wilmart thought that he might have attended the schools. There is no date of his appointment as prior of Southwick, nor of his death (or resignation): his last appearance in the cartulary of Southwick is 1210, so he probably died around then.³⁴ He was an active prior — a judge-delegate in both the dioceses of Winchester and Chichester, and an energetic promoter of his priory. In 1185 Guy wrote to Pope Urban III to complain about archdeacons extorting money from Southwick for 'chrism and other sacraments of the church' in Southwick's churches.³⁵ He applied for indulgences to help pay for new buildings, altars and bells, and also to alleviate the canons' poverty, for despite being the premier priory in the area, it was, he wrote, by no means wealthy: Hubert Walter, archbishop of Canterbury granted an indulgence of 15 days' penance for anyone coming to the priory church on any Marian feast,

³³ Barlow, 'John of Salisbury and his brothers', pp. 99, 105.

³⁴ *Opusculum*, pp. 339, 341; K. Hanna, ed., *The Cartularies of Southwick Priory* (Winchester, 1988), vol. I, no. I.92, p. 53; vol. II, no. III.961, p. 395; vol. I, pp. xvi, lxiv. See also *EEA*, VIII, pp. 130–138.

³⁵ J. E. Sayers, *Papal Judges Delegate in the Province of Canterbury, 1198–1254: A Study in Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction and Administration* (Oxford, 1971), p. 121.

‘mindful of the fact that the canons of St Mary’s of Southwick are poor and destitute.’ Guy and his canons also fostered cordial relations with Eleanor of Aquitaine and her son John, who granted the priory various lands. Southwick Priory may not have been especially wealthy, but it was, under Guy’s priorate, prestigious.

There are ten extant manuscripts which might be associated with Guy’s priorate, implying that Guy had a programme of acquisition; some of these, at least, might have been copied from texts borrowed from Merton.³⁶ These included collections of sermons, homilies and epistles by Bernard of Clairvaux, Gregory the Great, Ivo of Chartres (together in a manuscript with questions on canon law), John Cassian, Anselm and Pseudo-Anselm (Ralph D’Escures) and St Augustine.³⁷ Most of these texts were also Merton’s library, although this shows no more than that they were standard texts. However, works by Arnulf of Lisieux, John of Salisbury, and Peter of Celle have more tangeable links to Merton.

Southwick’s volume of Gregory’s *Epistles* (GB-Ojc MS 63) dates from the time of Guy’s priorate and was apparently copied in a hurry, devilled out to a number of scribes: Ralph Hanna described it as a ‘disorganized communal job, not apparently well supervised’.³⁸ This haste in copying is also evident in GB-Ojc MS 126, a collection of five booklets all dating from around the same time (Guy’s priorate), but bound together subsequently. The booklets were, like MS 63, written by a number of hands (‘copied by a committee’, in Hanna’s words).³⁹ These two manuscripts, MSS 63 and 126, suggest that time for copying was limited because they were borrowed from another library. MS 126 contains letters and a sermon of Ivo of Chartres (together with some questions on canon law), and Jerome’s *Interpretatio hebraicorum nominum*.⁴⁰ Merton had copies of Ivo’s letters and sermons and Jerome’s *Interpretatio hebraicorum* was included in

³⁶ GB-Ojc MSS 62, 63, 126, 153, 158, 163, 183, 185; GB-Ob MS Bodl. 719; GB-Lbl Cotton MS Vitellius A XV.

³⁷ Hanna, *St John’s*, pp. 224–7.

³⁸ Hanna, *St John’s*, p. 84.

³⁹ Hanna, *St John’s*, p. 175.

⁴⁰ Hanna, *St John’s*, pp. 175–7. Arnulf of Lisieux, letters fols 1–69 Arnulf of Lisieux, sermons fols 71–8; John of Salisbury, *Florilegium*, fol.79; Haseldine, *Peter o Celle*, p. xliii; Ivo of Chartres, *Libellus de Convenientia Veteris* fol.145; Jerome, *de Interpretatione Hebraica*. For Ivo of Chartres, see L. K. Barker, ‘Ivo of Chartres and the Anglo-Norman Cultural Tradition’, in *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 13 (Woodbridge, 1990), p. 21. *Registrum*, p. 253.

the Merton Bible, itself compiled not too long after Guy left Merton.⁴¹ These, like Gregory's *Epistles*, were not uncommon monastic texts; however, the rest of the volume is more specific, comprising letters letters and sermons of Arnulf of Lisieux, John of Salisbury and Peter of Celle.

The volume of Peter of Celle is the largest single surviving collection of his letters.⁴² Peter of Celle was, as discussed above, a close friend of John and Richard of Salisbury, Peter writing his *School o the Cloister* for Richard as a canon of Merton. These letters are connected with the letters of Arnulf of Lisieux and John of Salisbury both by John of Salisbury himself and by Merton Priory. In the early 1170s Guy of Southwick edited a *florilegium* of John's letters, and it is this that he copied, or had copied, for Southwick.⁴³ Guy wrote in his introduction to the Southwick copy:

Incipit compendiosa defloratio ex libro
epistolarum magistri Iohannis
Saresberiensis, qui postmodum fuit
episcopus Carnotensis, super causa beati
Thome martyris a Guidone priore
Suwicense diligenter exerpta. Que
studiose dictare uolentibus tum pro
modo scribendi, tum pro sententiarum
elegantia, tum pro causa prescripti
martyris declaranda non erit inutilis.
Predictus autem liber epistolarum a
prescripto magistro Iohanne post prefati
martyris passionem in unum corpus
diligenter et breuiter est collectus et in
iiijor uolumina luculenter ac studiose
diuisus. Porro in eiusdem libri collectione
et diuisione ac emendatione iam dictus
prior, tunc canonicus Mereton,
memorato magistro Iohanni comes
indiuiduus ac familiaris adhesit.

Here begins a select anthology of the
letters of Master John of Salisbury,
erstwhile bishop of Chartres,
concerning the blessed martyr
Thomas, diligently excerpted by Guy,
prior of Southwick. For those wishing
to study it, this will not be unhelpful
in being a model for writing, or for
elegant ideas, or in showing the
reasons for his martyrdom. This book
of letters was at Master John's request,
after the martyrdom, diligently and
briefly collected into one volume, and
thoroughly and with great
scholarship divided into four parts.
This book, collected and divided and
edited by the aforesaid prior, then a
canon of Merton, will sculpt the
memory of Master John, inseparable
companion and familiar.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Chapter 3, p. 93; *Registrum*, p. 253.

⁴² Haseldine, *Peter o Celle*, pp. xxxix–xliii, discusses the misappropriation of these letters, warped from one 'G.' to Gualterius (Walter) of Dervy, whose name became firmly attached to them, but who is a red herring.

⁴³ Hanna, *St John's*, pp. 175–6.

⁴⁴ Printed in *The Letters o Arnul o Lisieux*, ed. F. Barlow (London, 1939), p. lxxxv fn.2.

The phrase ‘comes indiuiduus ac familiaris’ suggests the closeness of Guy’s friendship with John of Salisbury. ‘Familiaris’ could mean close friend, but it could imply the membership of a household or particular, intimate, circle, such as that of Becket or that of Merton; Becket himself had had a long association with Merton. This incipit implies not only Guy’s fondness for John but John’s appreciation for Guy’s editorial talents.

Guy’s *florilegium* is similar to Alan of Tewkesbury’s five-book collection of ‘Becketalia’, compiled sometime after 1174. Although Guy’s copy of the *florilegium* is from around 1200, both Christopher Brooke and Anne Duggan thought that the collection made by Guy and John, to which Guy referred in his preface, was the source material for Alan of Tewkesbury’s expanded edition.⁴⁵ Guy’s copy of his own edition therefore postdates Alan of Tewkesbury’s. It differs from Alan’s text in a couple of places, and this could suggest that Guy’s source copy was not from Canterbury; it is possible that the *florilegium* compiled at Merton stayed at Merton.

The other letter collections in MS 126 also suggest a Merton origin. Guy quoted from Peter of Celle in his own writings, as we shall see below, and Julian Haseldine suggested that John of Salisbury and Guy collated the Peter of Celle letters at Merton at the same time as editing the *florilegium*.⁴⁶ A fellow canon of Guy at this time was John’s brother Richard, the recipient of some of Peter’s letters, although Richard’s contribution to editing these collections is undocumented. The collection of the letters and sermons of Arnulf of Lisieux might also have been compiled by Guy at Merton. Frank Barlow suggested that Guy ‘probably found a 2nd Edition copy at Merton’, citing as evidence for this hypothesis the couple of letters ‘touching the bishop of London. These would be more readily obtained at Merton than at Southwick’.⁴⁷ Barlow also suggested that Guy acquired most of these letters, dating from 1175 to c.1181 and catalogued by Barlow as F1, from Richard of Ilchester, who became bishop of Winchester in 1173. As both Merton and Southwick were in Richard’s diocese, it is difficult to tell whether Guy received the letters while at Merton or afterwards, as prior of Southwick. However, if Barlow was correct, then it seems likely that

45 JoS II, p. lviii; A. Duggan, *Thomas Becket: a Textual History of his Letters* (Oxford, 1980), pp. 85–7. See also Haseldine, *Peter of Celle*, p. xlii.

46 Haseldine, *Peter of Celle*, p. xliii, 34–5. See also Barlow, ‘John of Salisbury and his brothers’, pp. 99–105.

47 Barlow, *The Letters of Arnulf of Lisieux*, p. 36, no. 26; xxii; lxxxv.

Guy was still a canon of Merton at this point. Guy might in any case have had more time for editing as a canon than as a prior. It may well be that Richard of Ilchester was behind Guy's promotion to the Southwick prelacy.⁴⁸

Guy's own work, a treatise on confession, shows not only Guy's interests as a canon, but his intimacy with the circle of John of Salisbury. The *De confessione* (GB-Ojc MS 163) was published as an *opusculum* by Dom. André Wilmart in 1935, but has since received little analysis.⁴⁹ David Runciman discussed it in his recent thesis on bishops, and concluded that 'Guy's *opusculum* was not designed to instruct priests how to take confession, but to explain the sacrament to William de Vere.'⁵⁰ This is a most unsatisfactory conclusion: in fact, quite the opposite conclusion needs to be drawn. In the first place, it was for instructing priests. Secondly, William (d.1198) was an Augustinian himself, and confession was part of the Augustinians' practice. Thirdly, Runciman missed a number of references in the dedicatory introduction showing that not only did Guy know William rather well, but also that William was himself a learned man amongst learned friends, who would have been in no need of such instruction. Indeed, Hereford by and during William's time in office was itself a centre of learning: one of William's protégés was the young Robert Grosseteste, and Daniel of Morley was probably still studying there under or alongside Roger of Hereford.⁵¹

The *De confessione* needs to be seen in the context of a number of manuals of instruction for clergy made during the later twelfth century, and should also be seen a contribution to an area (confession and penitence) that in

⁴⁸ Richard, bishop of Winchester was a witness to Merton's grant (at the king's behest) of a corrody to the papal legate Hugh Pierleoni: Heales, p. 33; N. Vincent, 'Henry II and the Papacy' in Duggan and Clarke, pp. 257–99. For Richard's dealings with Guy, see *EEA*, VIII, pp. 130–138.

⁴⁹ Dom. A. Wilmart, 'Un opusculum sur la confession composé par Guy de Southwick vers la fin du XII^e siècle', *Recherches de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale*, 7 (1935), pp. 337–352. It is mentioned by H. MacKinnon, 'Theological thought at the end of the twelfth century', *Historical Reflections/ Réflexions Historiques*, 6 (1979), 335–41; R. Springer, 'Confession in England and the Fourth Lateran Council', in *Thirteenth Century England XVII: Proceedings of the Cambridge Conference, 2017*, ed. A. Spencer and C. Watkins (Woodbridge, 2021), pp. 163–80.

⁵⁰ D. Runciman, 'Pastoral care', p. 152.

⁵¹ N. Orme, 'The cathedral school before the Reformation', in *Hereford Cathedral: A History*, ed. J. E. Tiller and G. E. Aylmer (London, 2000), pp. 565–78; R. W. Southern, 'Robert Grosseteste', *ODNB*; J. C. Russell, 'Hereford and Arabic science in England about 1175–1200', *Isis*, 18 (1932), 14–25.

the late twelfth century was still evolving.⁵² A notable concern amongst these was confession and penance, resulting from developments throughout the century in ideas about purgatory, in the role of the priest as binder and looser, and in the organisation of the church right down to parochial level.⁵³ Hugh MacKinnon wrote that Guy's *opusculum* followed the lead of Peter the Chanter, whose *Verbum abbreviatum*, a copy of which was in Merton's library, had an 'emphasis upon the practical and pastoral aspects of the sacrament of penance as distinct from the academic and theoretical or speculative.'⁵⁴ MacKinnon noted the bipartite structure of the *De confessione*, theory and practice; he might also have remarked on the length of Guy's treatise, which is much shorter than its source material, and suitable for a practical instruction manual. Guy's questions about confession — *quis, quid, cui, quibus, quare, quomodo*, and *quando* (who, what, why, to whom, where, how often and when) — were a 'scheme of circumstances', to adopt Woods and Copeland's phrase (although they omit Guy from their review), that would become standard in later thirteenth-century confessional texts.⁵⁵

Rebecca Springer saw an echo of Guy's stipulation to confess only to one priest in the twenty-first canon of the Fourth Lateran Council, in contrast to some of his contemporaries.⁵⁶ Both the purpose of the *De confessione* as a practical manual and Guy's exhortation to confess to one priest does reflect contemporary concerns with professionalising the clergy and with the good structure of a diocese. Guy continues his passage about confession to one priest

52 MacKinnon, 'Theological thought'. See also T. Webber, 'Monastic and cathedral book collections', pp. 114-5; W. Campbell, *The Landscape of Pastoral Care in 13th-Century England* (Cambridge, 2017), pp. 25-36; C. Rider, 'Lay religion and pastoral care in thirteenth century England: the evidence of a group of short confession manuals', *JMH* 36 (2010), 327-40; C. M. Waters, *Translating Clergie: Status, Education, and Salvation in Thirteenth-Century Vernacular Texts* (Philadelphia, 2015); Runciman, 'Pastoral care'; R. Springer, 'Local Religious Life in England, c.1160-1210' (unpublished DPhil thesis, Oxford, 2017). For evolving theology, see C. S. Watkins, 'Sin, penance and purgatory in the Anglo-Norman realm: the evidence of visions and ghost stories', *Past & Present*, 175 (2002), 3-33; N. Vincent, 'Some pardoners' tales: the earliest English indulgences', *TRHS*, 12 (2002), 23-58; A. Murray, 'Confession before 1215', (1993), *TRHS*, 3 (1993), 51-81; R. Meens, *Penance in Medieval Europe, 600-1200* (Cambridge, 2014); L. E. Boyle, 'The Inter-conciliar Period 1179-1215 and the beginnings of pastoral manuals', in *Miscellanea Rolando Bandinelli, Papa Alessandro III*, ed. F. Liotta (Siena, 1986), 45-56;

53 MacKinnon, 'Theological thought', p. 337; Springer, 'Confession in England', pp. 167-9.

54 MacKinnon, 'Theological thought', p. 339.

55 M. Woods and R. Copeland, 'Classroom and confession', in *The Cambridge History of Medieval English Literature*, ed. D. Wallace (Cambridge, 1999), p. 393.

56 Springer, 'Confession in England', p. 169.

by writing that, although a bishop can ordain priests, he does not have jurisdiction over priests from another diocese: clearly, Guy was aware and supportive of diocesan reforms.⁵⁷ The insistence on one priest also reflects Guy's main source for the nature of confession, the Pseudo-Augustinian *De vera et falsa penitencia*, which deals with this topic in its fifteenth chapter.⁵⁸

De vera et falsa penitencia was composed around 1100, probably in Italy, and by the mid-twelfth century Augustine's name had become attached to it. It was a popular text: over a hundred copies from Italy, France and England survive; Guy of Southwick's use of it is evidence of at least another, now lost, copy, and the *Registrum* recorded a copy at Waltham Abbey, William de Vere's house.⁵⁹ *De vera et falsa penitencia* was a source also for Peter Lombard, who, along with Peter Abelard, argued that contritional intention was the locus of forgiveness.⁶⁰ This was in contrast to the view expounded, amongst others, by Gratian, that forgiveness was dependant on confession to and absolution by a priest. Guy emphasises the necessity for a priest, but he also insists that individual sins should be confessed 'from the heart', and encourages daily meditative confession, implying a 'contritionist' influence.⁶¹ His concern with confession is echoed some of the texts at Merton priory, where Guy was trained, and they are evidence that Guy's Merton colleagues had similar concerns. Merton's *Verbum abbreviatum*, mentioned above, only survives in the *Registrum* list, and its date of acquisition is unknown, but extracts from Abelard's *Dialogus*, which explores ideas of interiority, and works by Alan of Lille, Simon of Tournai and others, discussing the sacraments, were Merton's library at around the time Guy (as prior of Southwick) was writing his *De confessione*. Merton's copy of Book IV of Peter Lombard's *Sentences* (also discussing sacraments) dates from this time.

⁵⁷ *De confessione*, p. 348, lines 323–6.

⁵⁸ *PL*, LX, 1125–6.

⁵⁹ J. Burden, 'Searching for Pseudo-Augustine: on the origins of the *De vera et falsa penitentia*', *Proceedings of the Fifteenth International Congress of Medieval Canon Law, Paris 2016*, ed. F. Demoulin-Auzary, N. Laurent-Bonne, F. Roumy, *Monumenta Iuris Canonici Series C: Subsidia*, 16 (Vatican, 2022), pp. 79–88. *Registrum*, p.255. Leicester Abbey had two copies: Webber & Watson, pp. 155, 173.

⁶⁰ L. Briola, 'A case study of scholasticism: Peter Abelard and Peter Lombard on penance', *Journal of Moral Theology*, 5 (2016), pp. 66–8.

⁶¹ *Opusculum*, pp. 348, 352; P. King, 'Abelard's intentionalist ethics', *The Modern Schoolman*, 72 (1995), pp. 213–31; S. R. Kramer, "'We Speak to God with Our Thoughts': Abelard and the Implications of Private Communication with God", *Church History*, 69 (2000), 18–40.

The contemporary involvement of the Augustinians more generally in the area of confession was observed by Springer, who referred to works by Alexander Nequam and Alexander of Ashby in addition to Guy. She also connected the burials that St Frideswide's Priory provided for 'the transient poor' with the sort of circumstance in which Guy exhorted people 'to seek refuge with whichever priest may be available': these paupers were vagrant, and lacked a parish priest to whom they could confess, and the Augustinians of St Frideswide's played an active role in end-of-life ministry for them.⁶² The presence of lay people's skeletons in Merton's graveyard from this period may suggest a similar role for Merton's canons, implying an active interest in *cura animarum*.⁶³

The dedication to William de Vere also indicates that Merton's interests might have transcended the boundaries of its precinct. A number of thirteenth-century bishops produced both synodal statutes and treatises on confession (and other sacraments) with which they increasingly expected their clergy to be familiar.⁶⁴ Guy's treatise, written for the bishop of Hereford, together with Bartholomew of Exeter's treatise, were early examples of this sort of pastoral literature and suggest that at least one of Merton's canons was involved in the education of the parochial priesthood. It was suggested in Chapter 3 that the Merton Bible was used for preaching, and this may be additional evidence of the canons' parochial activities, given the increasing need to provide frequent sermons for the laity.

Guy's treatise, therefore, shows the interests of one particular scholar, but implies the interests of the community which produced him. The introduction to the *De confessione* shows his links to an intellectual circle that originated in the household of Theobald of Bec (a household described by Martin Brett as 'perhaps the most brilliant ever assembled by a medieval archbishop of Canterbury'),⁶⁵ which included Thomas Becket, John of Salisbury, Bartholomew of Exeter, and the treatise's dedicatee William de Vere

⁶² *Opusculum*, Article 3, p. 349; Springer, 'Confession in England', p. 170.

⁶³ Miller & Saxby, pp. 25–6.

⁶⁴ Reeves, *Religious Education*, p. 39–46.

⁶⁵ M. Brett, review of *Archbishops Ralph d'Escures, William of Corbeil and Theobald of Bec: Heirs of Anselm and Ancestors of Becket* by Jean Truax, *Speculum*, 88 (2013), 850–90, at pp. 860–1. For Theobald and his household, see A. Saltman, *Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury* (London, 1956). There is no record of Guy in the household. For literary allusions, see G. Constable, *Letters and Letter-Collections*, Typologie des Sources du Moyen Âge Occidental, 17 (Turnhout, 1976).

(d.1198). Having been in the household of Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury, William became around 1162, following the death of his mother, an Augustinian canon at St Osyth's.⁶⁶ In 1177 he stepped back into the limelight when Henry II sent him to help re-found Waltham Abbey as an Augustinian house as part of Henry's penance for his alleged part in Becket's death. In the 1180s, he was one of Henry's itinerant justices, and in 1186, he was made bishop of Hereford.⁶⁷ As bishop, William encouraged cultural activities of various sorts, and members of his own household included Gerald of Wales and Robert Grosseteste.⁶⁸ William was, therefore, a progressive religious intellectual with Augustinian leanings. This alone should rebut Runciman's assertion that William needed educating on basic sacramental matters.

Close textual analysis of the prologue to *De confessione* reveals both the nature of the relationship of Guy and William, and the intellectual circles in which they moved. Guy wrote that he and William talked at length about the sacrament of confession when they were both in London. William was in London several times between 1188 and 1194, and their discussions might have taken place around then.⁶⁹ Guy's reference to 'consuete dulcedinis uestre' ('your usual delightful habit') may suggest that Guy's acquaintance with William was more than this once, although this could be merely a rhetorical formula. Guy introduces himself as 'least of the priests of Christ' ('sacerdotum Christi minimus'). This is a more unusual phrase than it may seem, but one place it appears is John of Salisbury's letter to the prior and monks of Christ Church, Canterbury, c.1174.⁷⁰ It appears later in a letter of the late 1190s to the bishop of Glasgow from John of Canterbury, archbishop of Lyons, another former householder of Theobald and close associate of Becket.⁷¹ In the following sentences, Guy quotes from Proverbs, and from John's letters to Ralph of

⁶⁶ J. Barrow, 'William de Vere,' *ODNB*.

⁶⁷ *Eadem*, 'A twelfth-century bishop and literary patron,' *Viator*, 18 (1987), 175–189.

⁶⁸ Barrow, 'A twelfth-century bishop', p. 182; P. M. Hoskin, *Robert Grosseteste and the 13th-century Diocese of Lincoln: an English Bishop's Pastoral Vision* (Leiden, 2019), p. 8.

⁶⁹ J. Barrow, *EEA*, VII, p. 316.

⁷⁰ *JoS* II, no. 323, pp. 794–5. The fn. says this is from Montpellier MS, *Miracula S. Thomae o William o Canterbury*; it is not in the Alan of Tewkesbury collection.

⁷¹ "Venerabili domino et consacerdoti G. Dei gratia Glas. episcopo, I. primae Lugdunensis Ecclesiae quondam archiepiscopus, nunc autem sacerdotum Christi minimus, salutem in vero salutari", *PL*, CIX.879. John of Canterbury was archbishop of Lyons 1182–93; the bishop of Glasgow was Jocelin, bishop 1174–99; this letter is from 1193–99. J. Dunbabin, 'John of Canterbury', *ODNB*.

Lisieux, Adam of Evesham, his own brother Richard, and Peter of Celle.⁷² A sentence that Runciman thought was ‘a tactful way to avoid saying explicitly that the bishop needed help to understand the sacrament’ was quite the opposite: a subtle way of pointing out his erudition: ‘the silence of contemplation or studies and the distraction of the mind with the occupations of the world, both varied and continuous, do not easily go together’ was an allusion to Peter of Celle’s letter to Theobald of Paris.⁷³ This actually amplifies Runciman’s thesis that bishops, as well as being able administrators and politicians, could be leaders in theology and pastoral care, although it does not support his assertion that ‘writers... acknowledged that their services were required because of their patrons’ worldly occupations, as did Guy prior of Southwick’.⁷⁴ (Runciman seems not to have considered the worldly occupations that priors themselves had.) Guy also quotes Peter, himself quoting from Isaiah, possibly by way of Gregory the Great: ‘My cloak is short, both generally on account of my short body, and by the sharpness of my mind; because of this, it cannot cover both, nor it cannot serve both.’⁷⁵ It is possible that this also was an oblique reference to the miraculous appearance, reported in the *Life o Guy*, of a longer cloak to replace the too-short one for wrapping up Guy of Merton’s corpse.⁷⁶ The following paragraph is taken almost verbatim from Peter’s letter, but it opens with a phrase used by John of Salisbury in two letters and in the *Policraticus* — ‘ledoriis aut scommatibus’ (‘abuses and mockeries’).⁷⁷ They themselves are from Macrobius’ *Saturnalia*, extensively quoted by John; there is

72 Prov. 24:12; *JoS* I, no. 110, p. 176; II, no. 164, pp. 84–87; no. 199, pp. 286–9.

73 Runciman, ‘Pastoral care’, p. 153. Guy’s sentence reads ‘non facile concurrere quietem contemplationis aut studii et distensionem mentis per occupationes seculi et uarias et continuas’. Peter’s is ‘Nouit prudentia uestra non concurrere quietem contemplationis aut studii et distensionem mentis per occupationes seculi’: Haseldine, *Peter o Celle*, no. 13, pp. 34–5.

74 Runciman, ‘Pastoral care,’ pp. 9, 153 and his introduction (pp. 9–43).

75 ‘Coangustatum est enim pallium meum, et fere secundum corporis breuitatem, angustiatum et mentis acumen, ac per hoc utrumque operire, immo utrumque operari non ualet’: cf. Haseldine, *Peter o Celle*, no. 13: ‘Coangustatum est pallium; utrumque operire [Isaiah 28:20] immo utrumque operari, non ualet.’ Gregory, Homily no. 25, ‘a tunic reaching to the ankles is a good work reaching completion’: D. Hurst (trans.), *Gregory the Great: Forty Gospel Homilies* (Kalamazoo, 1990), p. 188 (q.v. fn.41). Both Merton and Southwick had copies of Gregory’s Homilies: *Registrum*, p. 253. John of Salisbury counted himself short of stature, or ‘parvus’: C. C. J. Webb, *John o Salisbury* (1932), p. 1; *JoS* II, no. 212, pp. 342–3; C. N. L. Brooke, ‘John of Salisbury and his world’, *Studies in Church History*, subsidia 3 (1994), p. 1, fn.1.

76 *Life o Guy*, para.15.

77 ‘Solet autem plerumque quorundam curiositas ledoriis aut scommatibus simpliciores tractatus inurere’.

a further reference to John/ Macrobius in Guy's sentence likening collecting writings to a bee collecting pollen.⁷⁸ The introduction to Guy's *De confessione* therefore shows an intimacy with William de Vere and a thorough knowledge of at least some of John of Salisbury's correspondence. In Article 6 of *De confessione*, Guy writes, 'when blessed Thomas was wont to say, and some religious add from the depth of devotion: "I have sinned thus, and thus my fault, my most grievous fault"'.⁷⁹ Wilmart read this as an otherwise unknown quotation of Thomas Becket; if so, this is another link between Guy and Becket, and this time William too.

The *De confessione* is bound in MS 163 with Bartholomew of Exeter's *Penitential*. This may not be coincidence just of subject matter: Bartholomew had been in Theobald's household, and was a friend of John of Salisbury.⁸⁰ Guy could have known Bartholomew, as a guest at Merton and as a member of John of Salisbury's circle; it is just possible, although there is no evidence, that Guy himself was in the household of Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury (1139–61), or his successor Thomas (1162–1170).

John of Salisbury's connexion with Merton went back to his time as one of Theobald's clerks. In the 1150s, John wrote to Adrian IV in support of the canons' claim on Eppingham church, which Bishop Henry of Winchester had given to a layman, and at Upton, where there was another lay encroachment of the canons' rights.⁸¹ John ends his letter by reminding Adrian of their conversation about the shining qualities of the Merton canons (quoted in Chapter 1): his experience of the Merton canons was apparently not new. By the

⁷⁸ *JoS* II, no. 227 to Becket, pp. 396–7 ('ut loedoris et scomata, id est, patentes morsus et figuratos taceam'); *JoS* II, no. 246 to Ralph of Arundel, pp. 490–5 ('in se poeticum scomatice poterat... huiusmodi euangelicam loedoriam'); John of Salisbury, *Policraticus de Nugis Curialium et Vestigijs Philosophorum* (Lyons, 1513), VII, chap. 25 (beginning 'Inde laedoriarum et sommatum etiam adversus viros summa potestate predictos exercitium licentiosum magisque licitum est'); Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, ed. and trans. R. A. Kaster (Loeb Classical Library, Harvard, 2011), VII, pp. 155–163. Wilmart, p. 340. 'Tanquam flores ex locis uariis collectos in unum fauam mellis instar apicula compilare': cf. *Policraticus* VII.10; Macrobius *Saturnalia* I.v., trans. R. Kaster (Loeb, 2011), pp. 4–5, quoting Seneca to Lucilius, *Letter* LXXXIV. See also R. Pepin, 'John of Salisbury as a writer', *Companion to John o Salisbury*, p. 164.

⁷⁹ *Opusculum*, p. 351.

⁸⁰ Barlow, *Thomas Becket*, p. 31; J. Barrau, 'John of Salisbury as Ecclesiastical Administrator', in *A Companion to John o Salisbury*, ed. C. Grellard and F. Lachaud (Leiden, 2015), p. 106; letters from John to Bartholomew include *JoS* II, no. 150, pp. 48–9, no. 168, pp. 100–117, no. 171, pp. 122–7; no. 174, pp. 138–53.

⁸¹ *JoS* I, pp. 87–8.

time John was a member of Thomas Becket's household, John's friendship with Merton was, therefore, an old one, but it was not as old as Thomas'. As a boy, Thomas had been a pupil at Merton, and when he became archbishop, he took on the habit of a Merton canon — not so much a sign of piety, perhaps, as in order to boost his credibility as a serious churchman rather than the most secular of clerks. This is what the *Thómas Saga* intimates: 'he desired to show unto God and man the change of his right hand. He keepeth before his mind how his forefathers of Canterbury... had been chosen from a house of regulars'.⁸² Thomas kept up a good relationship with Merton: William FitzStephen tells us that through Thomas, Henry II 'received the church of Merton, where dwell those deserving of God, into his favour and household'.⁸³ There was a building campaign at Merton around this time, and it is likely that Thomas was a useful ally in getting the king's goodwill (and donations), as well as perhaps being a patron himself. Thomas also took as his chaplain Robert, one of its canons.⁸⁴

In 1163/4, John of Salisbury was sent into exile by Henry II, with Thomas following in close suit. John trod a careful path between his temporal and spiritual masters, disagreeing with some of Thomas' excesses and mindful also of his own return to England and resumption of some sort of career. Among the influential ecclesiastics that he wrote to for support (for himself and Becket) were Richard of Ilchester, then archdeacon of Poitiers, Bartholomew of Exeter, and both Robert and his successor William, priors of Merton.⁸⁵ This suggests the importance of Merton Priory not just to John himself but as a political entity. John's ambivalence for his archbishop ended in 1166; from this point on, John was the archbishop's man, and he was instrumental in

82 E. Magnússon, ed. & trans., *Thómas Saga Erkebyskups* (London, 1875), pp. 84–5.

83 *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury (Canonized by Pope Alexander III, A.D. 1173)*, ed. J. C. Robertson and J. B. Sheppard (London, 1875), III, p. 23: 'item cancellarii consilio dominus rex canonicalem ecclesiam Meritonaie, ubi morantes Deum merentur, in gratiam et familiaritatem recepit';

84 Robertson and Sheppard, *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket*, II, p. 418; Heales, p. 25; Miller & Saxby, pp. 14–5, 32–3; A. Duggan, *The Correspondence of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1162–1170* (Oxford, 2000), vol. I, pp. 488–9, fn. 5.

85 A. Duggan, 'John of Salisbury and Thomas Becket', in *The World of John of Salisbury*, ed. M. Wilks (Oxford, 1994), pp. 428–31. *JoS* II, nos 151 (pp. 50–1), 156 (pp. 62–3), 265 (pp. 536–9), 266 (p. 539).

constructing the reputation of Becket which would lead to Thomas' canonisation.⁸⁶ John's *florilegium* was part of this construction.

Thomas Becket's relationship with Merton seems to have been a close and continuing one, perhaps reflected in an entry in the Merton Annals. The descriptions in the related annals of Southwark and Bermondsey concerning Becket's murder note its impiety ('et eodem anno idem Sanctus Thomas archiepiscopus impie occiditur in ecclesia sua Cantuarie'), but Merton's entry alone notes his martyrdom ('hoc anno martirizatus est sanctus Thomas Cantuarie archiepiscopus in ecclesia Cantuarie').⁸⁷ Thomas' chaplain and confessor Robert, a priest and an eye-witness to the murder, was from Merton.⁸⁸ It would be reasonable to suggest Thomas' acquaintance with Merton's prior Robert and his successor William, and we could posit that Thomas also knew Guy. Guy was responsible for a chapel to St Thomas in Portsmouth sometime between 1185 and 1188, the consecration for which he secured an indulgence from Richard of Ilchester, bishop of Winchester.⁸⁹ Guy's friend William de Vere also granted an indulgence for a chapel to St Thomas at Henry II's re-founded Waltham Abbey. William had worked with Becket, and it has been suggested that one reason for retiring to St Osyth's Priory was to avoid having to choose between Thomas and Henry.⁹⁰

The Merton of the late twelfth century was a house connected to the circles of Thomas Becket, the abbey of St Victor and several English bishops. The volumes produced by Prior William and Guy of Southwick demonstrate a high intellectual level, and their activity suggests Merton as a centre of learning.

THE SCHOOLS AND THE MERTON CLOISTER, C.1200–C.1340.

Popes and bishops encouraged both their secular and regular clergy not just to be sufficiently literate but to study at the universities, and during the course of the twelfth to fifteenth centuries all the major orders established a firm presence

⁸⁶ Duggan, 'John of Salisbury', pp. 431–8.

⁸⁷ GB-CCC MS 059, fol. 164^v. The Southwark and Bermondsey annals are quoted in I. Stone, 'Connections and collaborations between centres of historical writing in thirteenth-century London and Southwark', *Mediaeval Studies*, 79 (2017), p. 216, fn.48.

⁸⁸ Robertson and Sheppard *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket*, vol.III, p147, and Duggan as for fn.38.

⁸⁹ Hanna, 'Southwick', p. 54. It is now Portsmouth Cathedral.

⁹⁰ Barrow, 'Literary Patron', pp. 177; 179.

at Oxford, Cambridge and Paris, with their own halls and colleges. Indeed, the Augustinians' tardiness in building its college of St Mary's at Oxford was a source of embarrassment to the order and, latterly, irritation to the archbishop of York, Cardinal Wolsey.⁹¹ The impetus to build a college followed the general trend of the major orders in establishing colleges.⁹² That the Augustinians were so late in establishing a university college can be interpreted in ways that are contradictory. On the one hand, this apparent reluctance could be seen as evidence that the order did not feel that they needed a college for themselves. On the other hand, a more positive interpretation could be that the Augustinians were confident that they already had an adequate system to educate their students which had been in place from the earlier half of the period when such provision for education was less formal than a university degree course. Evidence from Merton, discussed in this chapter, is taken together with that from other Augustinian houses to shed a fuller light on the involvement of Merton in particular and the Augustinians in general in university life.

Merton Priory had connexions with centres of learning from the earliest times. Chapter 3 explored Merton's possible links with the abbey of St Victor in the twelfth century. St Victor was set up by William of Champeaux, a scholar who had previously established one of the many schools that would evolve into the university of Paris, and it has been argued that the abbey itself played a role in the formation of the university of Paris.⁹³ Merton's links with the universities continued throughout the period, and it is telling that Merton was never fined for failing to send students to university.⁹⁴ It is important to understand that university study brought with it commitments both for the monastery and the individual canon. Sending a student to university was expensive, which is why

91 H. Mayr-Harting, 'The foundation of Peterhouse, Cambridge (1284), and the Rule of Saint Benedict', *EHR*, 103 (1988), p. 320; J. H. Denton, 'The competence of the parish clergy in thirteenth-century England', in *The Church and Learning in Later Medieval Society: Essays in Honour of R. B. Dobson*, ed. C. M. Barron and J. Stratford (Donington, 2002), p. 285. See below, pp. 255–6.

92 S. Forde, 'The educational organization of the Augustinian canons in England and Wales, and their university life at Oxford, 1325–1448', *History of Universities*, 13 (1994), p. 37.

93 I. P. Wei, *Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris: Theologians and the University, c.1100–1330* (Cambridge, 2012), p. 85.

94 Salter, *Chapters*, pp. xxxvi–xxxvii; 101–2; 230–243.

Augustinian houses with under twenty canons were exempted from this.⁹⁵ Even for a house of Merton's size and wealth, students were a considerable investment, and it may be that some of the appropriations granted to Merton were to help support students.⁹⁶ Although in theory a student should have studied the *trivium* arts at his own house and graduate to the schools only for higher study, in practice a student might be sent early on in his career to study the arts at Oxford, which would entail four years' reading for a B.A. and at least a further three for a M.A, teaching for a fourth year as part of this.⁹⁷ He would then proceed to the higher faculties: theology, canon and civil law, medicine, or music.⁹⁸ For religious houses whose purpose was to celebrate the Divine Office and pray for people's souls, university study might seem to be superfluous — especially if the order were 'neither very rich, nor very learned'.⁹⁹ A lack of regular university students, monk or canon, is not as extraordinary as their presence in the first place. Benedict XII's constitutions of 1339 made it clear that although university study was to be encouraged, regulars' attendance at university depended on the will of their prelate, and some prelates did not always see their students' desire for university education as positive: the Augustinian prior of Canons Ashby asked his bishop in 1442 to 'bridle the heady importunity of the young canons who crave to study at Oxford'.¹⁰⁰ The

95 Salter, *Chapters*, pp. 99–100, 230–2; Heales, pp. 186, 191; W. Campbell, *The Landscape of Pastoral Care in 13th-Century England*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, Fourth Series (Cambridge, 2017), p. 82, also pp. 87–9; J. R. H. Moorman, 'The medieval parsonage and its occupants', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 28 (1944), p. 144; D. Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England* (Cambridge, 1948), II, pp. 289, 293; T. Colk, 'Twelfth-century East-Anglian canons: a monastic life?', in *Medieval East Anglia*, ed. C. Harper-Bill (Woodbridge, 2005), p. 213. See also D. Postles, 'The Austin canons in English towns, c.1100–1350', *Historical Research*, 159 (1993), p. 3; A. Reeves, *Religious Education in Thirteenth-Century England* (Leiden, 2015), p. 83.

96 For examples, Heales, pp. 74, 146, 201–2, 263–4; J. G. Clark, *A Monastic Renaissance at St. Albans: Thomas Walsingham and his Circle, c.1350–1440* (Oxford, 2004), pp. 70–1.

97 Forde, 'Augustinian canons', p. 44.

98 T. H. Aston, 'Oxford's Medieval Alumni', *Past & Present*, 74 (1977), p. 8; J. A. Weisheipl, 'Curriculum of the Faculty of Arts at Oxford in the early fourteenth century', *Medieval Studies*, 26 (1964), p. 163. For the expense to an Augustinian priory of higher education, see N. Orme, 'The Augustinian canons and education', *BSRC*, p. 222. The university term is laid out in the Benedictine Constitutions: Salter, *Chapters*, pp. 230–43.

99 R. W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages* (London, 1970), p. 248. See also D. Knowles, 'English monastic life in the later Middle Ages', *History*, new series, 39 (1954), 26–38, and Orme, 'Augustinian canons', p. 220.

100 M. Heale, *Monasticism in Late Medieval England, c.1300–1535* (Manchester, 2009), pp. 146–9; *Records of Visitations held by William Alnwick, Bishop of Lincoln, 1436–1449*, ed. A. H. Thompson (Horncastle, 1918), II, p. 44, quoted by Evans, 'St. Mary's College in

prior's concerns were probably more about his canons' ambitions and his priory's funds rather than their learning *per se*: the Augustinians felt university education to be important enough for their canons that the General Chapter, as noted above, made a rule of sending students to university.¹⁰¹ In spite of fears for the morals of their young, the regular clergy maintained a presence at the schools throughout the period.

The Augustinians' contribution to the formation of the universities in England has been largely overlooked. In the list of abbreviations of the first volume of the *History of Oxford University*, the Benedictines are represented by 'OSB' (Order of St Benedict), but there is no 'OSA' (Order of St Augustine). Figures derived from Emden's Oxford volumes record that whereas the Benedictines had 681 students across the later Middle Ages, the Augustinians had only 128, fewer even than the 178 Cistercians.¹⁰² The late foundation of an Augustinian college — the mid-fifteenth century (compared with two of the Benedictines' colleges of the late thirteenth) — could be taken as evidence of the lack of Augustinians at Oxford. Indeed, it took the force of Wolsey to propel them into constructing an adequate college, and in 1518, one Augustinian bewailed his order's lack of a place in university processions, unlike the Benedictines and Cistercians.¹⁰³ Richard Southern, in his opening chapter of the history of the university, mentioned Oseney and St Frideswide's as landlords, but did not credit them with any scholarly contribution to the embryonic university, other than putting up Robert Pullen in the 1130s and receiving Alexander Nequam after he left school-teaching. M. B. Hackett observed the priories' consternation at rents being halved in the post-dispersal settlement, but otherwise hardly mentioned the Augustinians. M. W. Sheehan stated that 'the Augustinian canons, who were already settled in Oxford at St Frideswide's and near by in Oseney when the friars arrived, held back from university life.'¹⁰⁴

Oxford for Austin Canons', *Oxfordshire Archaeological Society*, LXXV (1931), p. 387.

¹⁰¹ J. Greatrex, 'Monk students from Norwich Cathedral Priory at Oxford and Cambridge, c.1300 to 1530', *EHR*, 106 (1991), pp. 563–72. The 1363 Benedictine constitutions ruled that at least one in 20 monks should be sent to university: Heale, *Monasticism*, pp. 146–9.

¹⁰² Aston, 'Oxford's medieval alumni', p. 17; *BRUO*, *passim*.

¹⁰³ R. B. Dobson, 'The religious orders', in *The History of the University of Oxford*, ed. J. I. Catto and R. Evans (Oxford, 1992), II, p. 555.

¹⁰⁴ R. W. Southern, 'From Schools to University'; M. B. Hackett, 'The University as a corporate body'; M. W. Sheehan, 'The religious orders 1220–1370', in *The Early Oxford Schools*, in *The History of the University of Oxford*, ed. J. Catto, 3 vols (Oxford, 1984), I, pp. 4–8, 22–27, 29, 48, 194.

Sheehan referred to David Postles' chapter on learning at Oseney; however, Postles did not say this: indeed, from his examinations, a slightly different picture emerges, of an abbey with close links to the nascent university.¹⁰⁵ Both John Dickinson and, more recently, Barrie Dobson cautioned that 'it would be... mistaken to underestimate their [St Frideswide's and Oseney's] influence upon the history of the university', and the later failure of, for example, St Frideswide's to supply any Oxford scholar despite its proximity should not cloud our judgement of the earlier period.¹⁰⁶ John Barron, although he did 'not seek to challenge this general impression' that the Augustinians had little direct involvement with the university, nonetheless felt that 'there may be more to say' about 'the Augustinian contribution to the organisation and intellectual life of the University'.¹⁰⁷ An article four years earlier by Simon Forde made a preliminary investigation into the Augustinians' organisation and activities at Oxford, showing that there was indeed more to say about Augustinian students and masters.¹⁰⁸ The following discussion will re-examine the available evidence, and argue that the Augustinians' contribution to Oxford University was larger than has hitherto been acknowledged (with the exception of Forde) and that Merton Priory had an interest in the early university.

During the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, Merton's canons kept themselves apprised of intellectual developments at Paris, witnessed by the Merton Bible and certain other texts. The nascent university in Oxford had close links with Paris, attracting scholars from there. One of the early masters at Oxford was Robert Pullen. Educated at Laon or Paris, Pullen taught in Exeter before coming to Oxford in 1133.¹⁰⁹ Although Pullen was not an Augustinian canon, he did reside at Oseney Abbey during his time at Oxford. Oseney, like St Frideswide's, was just by Oxford and was duty bound to provide hospitality, but both Oseney and St Frideswide's had an interest in scholarship. As Postles

¹⁰⁵ D. Postles, *Oseney Abbey Studies* (Leicester, 2008), pp. 15–24. See also *idem*, 'Austin canons in English towns, c.1100–1350', *Historical Research*, 159 (1993), pp. 9–11.

¹⁰⁶ JCD, p. 188; Dobson, 'The religious orders', pp. 542–4. See also G. Harriss, *Shaping the Nation: England 1360–1461*, The New Oxford History of England (Oxford, 2005), p. 349.

¹⁰⁷ J. Barron, 'The Augustinian canons and the University of Oxford: The lost college of St George', in *The Church and Learning in Later Medieval Society: Essays in Honour of R. B. Dobson. Proceedings of the 1999 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. C. M. Barron and J. Stratford (Woodbridge, 2000), p. 229.

¹⁰⁸ S. Forde, 'Augustinian canons in England and Wales, and their university life at Oxford, 1325–1448', *History of Universities*, 13 (1994), 22–60.

¹⁰⁹ D. Luscombe, 'Robert Pullen', *ODNB* (2004).

noted, Oseney ‘had its own complement of *magistri*’ and manuscripts and individuals ‘suggest that Oseney might have belonged to a wider intellectual circle at this time.’¹¹⁰ That Pullen should have elected to reside here might, therefore, have been more than mere convenience. Oseney was founded by the d’Oilly family, who provided the constables of Oxford Castle. Benefactions to Oseney came from families associated with the d’Oillys, including the de Tews of Duns Tew, a village north of Oxford. The de Tew family gave Merton Priory either its first or second prior (they were both called Robert, so it is difficult to say for sure), and Merton and Oseney were therefore linked, if perhaps indirectly, from early in their mutual existence.¹¹¹ In order to fit Merton into the more general context of Augustinian Oxford, it is necessary to re-examine Oseney and St Frideswide’s as well, and any relationship that Merton had with them.

The d’Oilly family were constables of Oxford Castle, and so it should not be surprising that they gave the castle chapel to the care of their foundation at Oseney. For H. E. Salter, St George’s was a proto-school, and Oseney was a pike which devoured it, but David Postles argued that there is neither evidence to see St George’s as a proto-school, nor reason to suppose that Oseney’s take-over did not continue or improve its scholarly life: a similar ‘Austinisation’ of St Frideswide’s seems to have established it as a place of learning.¹¹² There is evidence of Oseney being a centre for learning. Joseph Goering argued that the role of Oseney’s prior as diocesan penitentiary in the early thirteenth century suggests the priory’s role in training confessors; these trainee confessors would have been the students of Oxford.¹¹³ When the masters and students of Oxford returned to the town following the disturbances of 1209, both Oseney and St Frideswide’s were given charge of a fund of 52 shillings for poor scholars. While Postles is surely right that this was a matter of convenience (they were the nearest religious houses, and religious houses were administrative centres and

¹¹⁰ Postles, *Oseney*, p. 18.

¹¹¹ K. R. Hawks, ‘Too many Tews: just who was the first prior of Merton?’, *Merton Historical Society Bulletin* (June, 2020), 10–14.

¹¹² Postles, *Oseney*, p. 15. For a detailed history of St George’s, see Barron, ‘Lost college of St George’.

¹¹³ J. Goering, ‘The internal forum and the literature of penance and confession’, in *The History of Medieval Canon Law: History of Medieval Canon Law in the Classical Period, 1140–1234: From Gratian to the Decretals of Pope Gregory IX*, ed. W. Hartmann and K. Pennington (Washington, DC, 2008), p. 408.

treasuries),¹¹⁴ it nonetheless is more evidence of a working relationship between the Augustinian houses and the university, a relationship kept up by Grosseteste's 1240 edict that a canon of St Frideswide's was to be the keeper of the common chest, which contained the 52 shillings, monies from benefactions and student loans.¹¹⁵ Osney allowed secular clerics to use its library and refectory, an example of the regulars' encouragement of secular study: we will discuss Merton's sponsorship of a secular cleric below.¹¹⁶

If Osney was a centre of learning, so too was St Frideswide's. The priory boasted *magistri* as its first two priors: Gwymund (c.1122–c.1139), who, according to William of Malmesbury, turned the priory's canons from looseness to learning, and then Robert of Cricklade (c.1138–c.1178). Robert was a schoolmaster who became a canon of Cirencester, moving to become prior of St Frideswide's. His career foreshadows that of Alexander Neckam, who left school-teaching at Dunstable to become a canon of St Frideswide's (c.1190) before being appointed prior of Cirencester.¹¹⁷ For Southern, Alexander was a noteworthy teacher, but because Southern followed R. W. Hunt's chronology of Alexander, he put Alexander's career as an Oxford teacher and scholar before, and separate from, that as a canon at St Frideswide's. However, Andrew Dunning has revised this, showing that Alexander was a canon while teaching at Oxford, therefore being in the schools and the cloister simultaneously.¹¹⁸ By that time, Robert of Cricklade's most influential book, *The Marriage of the Patriarch Jacob*, was to be found in both monastic and secular libraries, and showed Robert's ability 'as an Augustinian, to bridge the monastic and secular.'¹¹⁹ Later, Abbot Adam de Berners (1249–54) was, according to one contemporary account, 'an outstanding preacher, whose lectures University scholars would at times attend.'¹²⁰ Although there is little evidence about

¹¹⁴ Postles, *Osney*, p. 16.

¹¹⁵ Hackett, 'University as corporate body', p. 89; *VCH Oxford*, vol. III, p. 5.

¹¹⁶ Postles, *Osney Abbey*, pp. 19–20.

¹¹⁷ A. N. J. Dunning, 'St Frideswide's Priory as a centre of learning in early Oxford', *Mediaeval Studies*, 80 (2018), 253–96: <https://andrewdunning.ca/st-frideswides-priory-learning-early-oxford>

¹¹⁸ R. W. Hunt, *The Schools and the Cloister: The Life and Writings of Alexander Neckam, 1157–1217*, ed. M. Gibson (Oxford, 1984), pp. 1–10; A. N. J. Dunning, 'Alexander Neckam's Manuscripts and the Augustinian canons of Oxford and Cirencester' (unpublished PhD thesis, Toronto, 2016), pp. 9–20.

¹¹⁹ Dunning, 'St Frideswide's', p. 262.

Merton's relationship with St Frideswide's, it may be significant that Merton had an altar dedicated to St Frideswide, an unusual choice.¹²¹

In the twelfth century, when the schools were no more than collections of students following particular masters, the Augustinian canons were important either in providing those masters (Robert of Cricklade and Alexander Nequam, but possibly more) or in housing them (Robert Pullen, for one). As the schools became more formal, the local Augustinian houses remained important. They were landlords: Oseney, for example, constructed and maintained school buildings throughout the period; St Frideswide's' property included Broadgates Hall. They also provided a sort of bureaucracy, handling money and books.¹²² It can be argued that the very presence of Oseney and St Frideswide's as landlords and centres of learning that meant that the Augustinians needed no college until colleges were fashionable, as they became in the fifteenth century: indeed, even in the fifteenth century, it may be that Augustinian students continued to lodge at these monasteries, for only a small number of resident members stayed at the college of St Mary's.¹²³ By 1356, there were enough Augustinian students to warrant the appointment by the General Chapter of a *prior studentium*, and by 1371 they were holding chapter meetings of their own at both St Frideswide's (Oxford) and Barnwell (Cambridge).¹²⁴ In 1365, the Augustinian General Chapter declared that houses were to be fined for not sending students, that common funds should be available for students, and that a halfpenny in the pound should be levied for communal lodgings ('certa hospicia pro communi uita').¹²⁵ 1356 is somewhat earlier than Barrie Dobson's 'closing years of the fourteenth century' for the Augustinians gaining significant student numbers, and shows once more the lack of evidence that has dogged the order regarding education, but also that a reconsideration of existing evidence

¹²⁰ 'predicator egregius, cuius predicationi solebant scholares Uniuersitatis aliquoties interesse': H. E. Salter, 'The Annals of the Abbots of Oseney', *EHR* 33 (1918), pp. 498–500. J. Barron, 'The Augustinian canons and the University of Oxford: the lost college of St George', in *The Church and Learning in Later Medieval Society: Essays in Honour of R. B. Dobson. Proceedings of the 1999 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. C. M. Barron and J. Stratford (Woodbridge, 2000), p. 241.

¹²¹ Miller & Saxby, p. 98.

¹²² *VCH Oxford*, III, pp. 288–290; J. Catto, 'Citizens, scholars and masters' in *idem*, ed., *The Early Oxford Schools*, *The History of the University of Oxford*, I (Oxford, 1984), p. 187.

¹²³ Aston, 'Alumni', p. 19; Orme, 'Augustinian canons', pp. 219–21.

¹²⁴ Salter, *Chapters*, p. 67; Orme, 'Augustinian canons', pp. 221–2.

¹²⁵ Salter, *Chapters*, pp. xxvi–xxvii, 62, 67.

can help our understanding of the chronology of Augustinian growth.¹²⁶ One thing which may also be worthy of note is that the congregation of the regents of Arts was called the black congregation (*congregatio nigra*), which met at St Mildred's church on what is now Turl Street: it was so called because of their black habits. Oseney was the major landlord in the parish of St Mildred's. It may be entirely fanciful to suggest that the black of the Augustinians' habits rubbed off on those of the Arts faculty, but it is a fancy at least worth entertaining.¹²⁷

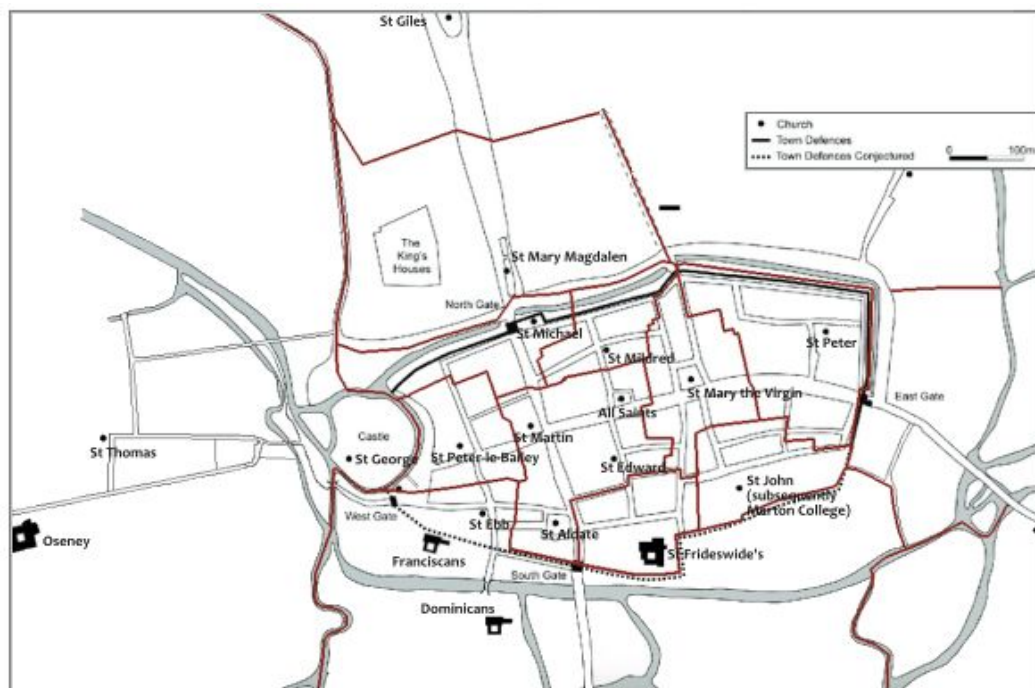


Figure 5.1: Oxford c.1250

For Oseney and St Frideswide's to own student properties in Oxford is not surprising, given their proximity. Merton Priory was geographically much further away, but it nonetheless held property in Oxford, reflecting the increase in activity there. The Oseney rentals have two entries from 1317 and 1324 showing that Merton Priory rented the 'domus Wigerii', or Wyger's Hall, from Oseney. This, also known as Peter Hall, was near St Mildred's.¹²⁸ Merton

¹²⁶ Dobson, 'Religious orders', p. 554; Forde, 'Augustinian canons', *passim*.

¹²⁷ Hackett, 'University as corporate body', p. 63; Salter, *Cartulary of Oseney Abbey*, vol.I (Oxford, 1929), pp. 108–64. St Mildred's was on the corner of Turl Street and Brasenose Lane; it was pulled down to make way for buildings of Lincoln College.

¹²⁸ Salter, *Oseney Abbey*, vol.III, no. 10, p. 147; no. 12, p. 161. For its location, see map in Catto, *Early Schools*, p. xxxvii (no. 20) Also renting two domus were the monks of Eynsham and the nuns of Studley. The Wyger family of Broadwoodwidge, Devon, were actively involved in the church: John Wyger was canon of Crediton and treasurer in the 1250s; John

quitclaimed this hall in 1443, and it soon became part of Exeter College; by this year, work on St Mary's College was underway, and Merton's student canons perhaps needed no extra housing.¹²⁹ In the 1317 entry, 'domus Wygerii' was rented also 'per mag. I Twunige'.¹³⁰ Wyger's Hall seems to have been an academic hall. It was standard practice for such halls to be under the care of a principal, and it is probable that Mr J[ohn] Twyning had this role; it seems to have been common for Augustinian halls to have been under the care of a secular cleric, and there is therefore no evidence that Twyning himself was either a canon or a member of Merton Priory.¹³¹ It is hard to think why Merton would have rented a hall from Oseney except to house its students. Merton also held land on the 'magna rue', which it let to Mauger the Vintner in the late twelfth century.¹³² The neighbouring parcel of land, which Mauger also rented, was owned by Oseney. On his (rented) land, Mauger built a hall. Oseney retained part of its land there, on which it built the Golden Cross Inn.¹³³ A later piece of evidence connects Merton to Mauger's Hall, an acquittance by Merton Priory to New College for 16s. 6d. rent of 'Mowreshall' from a late fourteenth-century copy of Robert Grosseteste's works (GB-Lbl Royal MS 6 E v). In this acquittance, Mauger's Hall is described as an *aula*, and, as suggested above, the role of landlord should not be dismissed entirely as a financial one. Michael Franks suggested that Walter of Merton might have lodged there as a student: this is possible, but entirely speculative.¹³⁴

Wyger, knight, patronised several churches, gave lands to, for example, Exeter cathedral and witnessed various other gifts to Devon churches. In this light, it is interesting that Wygers Hall became part of Exeter College: *The Registers of Walter Bronescombe and Peter Quivil, Bishops of Exeter*, ed. F. C. Hingeston-Randolph (s.l., 1889), pp. 128, 285.

¹²⁹ Salter, *Chapters*, pp. 88–9, 115–7; Blair, 'Frewin Hall', p. 65; T. M. Morris, 'The Augustinian Use of Oseney Abbey: a study of the Oseney Ordinal, Processional and Tonale (Bodleian Library MS Rawlinson c.939)' (unpublished DPhil thesis, Oxford, 1999), p. 21.

¹³⁰ Salter, *Oseney Abbey*, vol. III, p. 136.

¹³¹ Salter, *Oseney Abbey*, vol. I, pp. 130–1. J. Catto, 'Citizens, scholars and masters', in *Early Oxford Schools*, pp. 174–177; Forde, 'Augustinian canons', pp. 34–6.

¹³² Heales, p. 41; Cart. no. 52. fol. lxxxiij'. This, on Northgate (now Cornmarket) Street and the High Street, is now the Golden Cross Shopping Centre.

¹³³ W. A. Pantin and E. C. Rouse, 'The Golden Cross, Oxford', *Oxoniensia*, 20 (1955), pp. 46–48; H. E. Salter, *Medieval Oxford* (Oxford, 1936), p. 82; *idem.*, *Survey of Oxford*, vol. I, ed. W. A. Pantin (Oxford, 1959), pp. 10–11; D. M. Stenton, *English Society in the Early Middle Ages, 1066–13* (Harmondsworth, 1951), p. 192; *VCH Oxfordshire*, vol. IV, pp. 425–441. I am indebted to Peter Hopkins for these references.

¹³⁴ Cf. Postles, *Oseney*, p. 16. BL, Royal 6 E v, fol. 252'. M. Franks, *The Clerk of Basingstoke: a Life of Walter of Merton* (Oxford, 2003), p. 32.

As a large Augustinian house, Merton was required by the General Chapter to send students to the schools, and it was never fined for failing to do so: as John Blair noted, since the fines were considerably less than the upkeep of a student, there was little disincentive not to send a student.¹³⁵ There is positive evidence of Merton's canons in Oxford. In 1485, John Richmond and William Salyng were unable to participate in the election of the prior because they were up at Oxford.¹³⁶ This election was caused by the death of John de Kingston, himself an Oxford graduate; his successor, John Gisborne, was also an Oxford graduate, and inherited de Kingston's mathematics book as well as his office.¹³⁷ Salyng himself eventually became prior, although how much his heart was in it is questionable: in 1509, he was admonished by the bishop of Winchester, who criticised his absence 'under the pretext of study at Oxford, and other frivolous causes and excuses', and enjoined him not to pursue further studies at Oxford — indeed, not to set foot in Oxford again.¹³⁸

As at Oxford, the Augustinians at Cambridge have been ignored. In his *History o Cambridge University*, Damian Leader wrote that neither the grammarians 'nor the canons of Barnwell, formed an incipient university. The University of Cambridge began *ex nihilo* with a handful of masters who arrived down the Huntingdon Road, crossed the bridge, and settled in rented lodgings in the neighbourhood of Great St Mary's Church.' The only mentions Leader gives to the Augustinians is the presence of canons from Butley and Westacre at Gonville Hall in the sixteenth century, and the canons running the Hospital of St John, 'some of whom over three centuries might have belonged to the university'.¹³⁹ Cambridge was not an obvious location for a settlement of scholars, for the town had no schools, unlike Northampton, Exeter and Lincoln. Leader suggested that Cambridge was chosen because it was the place of origin of certain scholars, but Patrick Zutshi, while not discounting this completely, thought that this was unlikely.¹⁴⁰ James Brundage argued that scholars were attracted by Cambridge's busy ecclesiastical court life: Cambridge

¹³⁵ Orme, 'Augustinian canons', p. 221; Salter, *Chapters*, pp. 13, 17; Blair, 'Frewin Hall', p. 67.

¹³⁶ Heales, p. 304; *BRUO*, vol.III, p. 1635; *BRUC*, p. 504.

¹³⁷ *BRUO*, vol.II, pp. 771, 1075. Emden (p. 1075) also gives a William Kingston, who was a scholar at Merton College in 1313–16. The toponym may suggest a connexion with Merton, but this is speculative.

¹³⁸ Heales, p. 318 and Appendix no. CXLIX.

¹³⁹ D. R. Leader, *A History o the University o Cambridge. Volume 1: the University to 1546* (Cambridge, 1988), p. 50.

was the site of both the diocese of Ely's consistory court and its archdeacon's court.¹⁴¹ Of the features Cambridge shared with Oxford, ecclesiastical courts were one, and it therefore seems almost certain that this was of fundamental importance to the establishment of both universities. But another shared feature was having a major Augustinian priory close by.

Brundage wrote that Barnwell's canons 'were notably litigious and provided canonists with numerous opportunities to exercise their skills': students looking for practice at law, and masters looking for more employment, found a constant patron in Barnwell Priory.¹⁴² The canons could need secular clerical advocates, for they themselves were forbidden by the Second Lateran Council (1139) from studying or practising civil (or common) law, although how much effect that had in practice is questionable.¹⁴³ Barnwell had continuing need for law students and professionals, and possibly contributed to their learning; it also had a functioning scriptorium, and it seems likely that it was a centre for book production in the thirteenth century.¹⁴⁴ Barnwell Priory had a close enough relationship with the university that in the late thirteenth century the University chancellor tried to claim jurisdiction over the priory — unfortunately for the chancellor, the prior of Barnwell was a professor of civil law (with degrees from both Oxford and Cambridge), and his claim was quickly rebuffed.¹⁴⁵ Bishop William Kilkenny of Ely left Barnwell 200 marks in 1256 to

¹⁴⁰ P. N. R. Zutshi, 'The dispersal of scholars from Oxford and the beginnings of a university at Cambridge: a study of the sources', *EHR*, 127, pp. 1053–54.

¹⁴¹ J. A. Brundage, 'The Cambridge faculty of canon law and the ecclesiastical courts of Ely', in *Medieval Cambridge: Essays on the Pre-Reformation University*, ed. P. N. R. Zutshi, pp. 21, 24.

¹⁴² Brundage, 'Cambridge faculty', p. 22.

¹⁴³ Canon IX, <https://www.papalencyclicals.net/councils/ecum10.htm>; C. Rolker, 'Monastic Canon Law in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries', in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Monasticism in the Latin West*, ed. A. Beach and I. Cochelin (Cambridge, 2020), p. 621.

¹⁴⁴ Harmon, 'Barnwell,' pp. 102–8; L. Dennison and N. Rogers, 'A medieval best-seller: some examples of decorated copies of Higden's "Polychronicon"', in *The Church and Learning in Later Medieval Society*, ed. Barron and Stratford, p. 87.

¹⁴⁵ *Liber Memorandorum Ecclesie de Bernewelle*, ed. J. W. Clark and F. W. Maitland (Cambridge, 1907), pp. 184–5. Jacqueline Harmon notes that very little has been done on the relationship of the priory to the university, 'Some aspects of the history of Barnwell Priory 1092–1300' (unpublished PhD thesis, UEA, 2016), p. 4. Simon de Ascelles, prior of Barnwell, took his M.A. in Oxford before 1255 and his D.C.L. in Cambridge before 1266. He became a canon of Barnwell in 1257; he could have taken his D.C.L. as a canon. He kept the temporalities *in sede vacante* for both Durham (1261) and York (1266); he worked for the bishop of Ely in 1267: *BRUC*, p. 17. See also Clark, *Liber Memorandorum*, p. 73. He was presumably a relative of William and Philip de Ascelles, sheriffs of Warwick and Leicester: C. A. F. Meekings, *Studies in Thirteenth-Century Justice and Administration* (London, 1981), pp. 179–80, 183; John Curtis,

provide two chaplains to say mass for his soul — chaplains who were to be ‘students of theology in the University of Cambridge’.¹⁴⁶ These chaplains could have been canons or they could have been secular clerks appointed and supported by Barnwell, acting as Kilkenny’s factor — in, perhaps, a similar way to Merton’s guardianship of Walter of Merton’s early House of Scholars. The affinity of Kilkenny with Barnwell is interesting, for Kilkenny had been part of Nicholas Farnham’s household and Walter of Merton had been Kilkenny’s clerk.¹⁴⁷ Although there is no evidence for a direct relationship between Kilkenny and Merton Priory, nor at this point for one between Merton Priory and Cambridge, the bishops of Rochester and Ely had an interest both in educational establishments and in Augustinian priories.

By 1443, there was a definite Augustinian presence at Cambridge, and the General Chapter held in 1506 was described as being at ‘Barnwell iuxta almam Universitatem Cantabrigie’.¹⁴⁸ While ‘alma’ was generally applied by then to both Cambridge and Oxford, the mention of Cambridge University here may suggest some sort of continuing link between the Augustinians and the university. The 1506 chapter was presided over by Prior William Salyng of Merton, who received his doctorate in divinity from Cambridge that same year. Salyng, like de Ascelles before him, held theology degrees from both Oxford and Cambridge. Evidence for Merton students at Cambridge is, however, even more scanty than at Oxford. Merton did have some territorial connexions with the benefice of Barton, a couple of miles south of the city, and a tenement in Cambridge itself (in the parish of Great St Mary’s), but those do not connect Merton with the university itself.¹⁴⁹ The link between the universities and the ecclesiastical courts may also provide another link with Merton, which had, in the early thirteenth century, a documented interest in the law. This interest manifested itself both in the provision of canons as judges-delegate and in

A Topographical History of the County of Leicester (London, 1831), p. xxi.

¹⁴⁶ Clark, *Liber Memorandum*, p. 94.

¹⁴⁷ R. C. Stacey, ‘Kilkenny, William of (d. 1256)’, *ODNB*. The Kilkenny family also had connexions with Augustinian Plympton: A. Fizzard, *Plympton Priory: A House of Augustinian Canons in South-Western England in the Late Middle Ages* (Leiden, 2008), pp. 186, 191.

¹⁴⁸ J. G. Clark, ‘The Augustinians, history, and literature in late medieval England’, *BSRC*, p. 9; Salter, *Chapters*, pp. 99–100, 122; Heales, p. 315.

¹⁴⁹ Heales, pp. 40, 58, and no. LXVI, p. xlii. Merton also had close links with Godmanchester and Alconbury.

schooling secular clerics in law and administration. The careers of two such clerics are the subjects of our next discussion.

Merton Priory: Patron and Friend

Chapter 4 examined Merton's role in providing basic education for secular clergymen, and discussed its parochial patronage which enabled clergymen to pursue university education. Within its precinct, Merton Priory employed a number of secular clerics as factors and attorneys, as well as clergy with liturgical functions, and it therefore had responsibility for their vocational education, and we will explore the educational careers of two of its attorneys, John of Tynemouth and Walter of Merton. Merton Priory was a busy provider of hospitality, too, and with guests came ideas and discourse. One of these guests was Edmund of Abingdon, an Oxford master who became archbishop of Canterbury, and he is our third case study. That he chose to stay at Merton during the closure of Oxford University suggests that Merton had a reputation for providing a conducive atmosphere for scholarship.

JOHN OF TYNEMOUTH (fl.1228)

John of Tynemouth has received little attention, but his life and career is worth investigating because it demonstrates intellectual networks with other Augustinian houses and with Oxford. In 1228, Merton granted John of Tynemouth the wherewithal for a full sixteen-year studentship. It is worth quoting in full not only because it is unusual, but because it contains several points to be explored.

Greetings in the Lord to all who see these letters or hear, Giles, Prior of Merton in the chapter house. Be it known that all of us by unanimous consent and the will of the whole chapter, filled with charity, and at the petition of Master Thomas de Tinemwe, have granted and given to John de Tinemwe, clerk, for sixteen complete years, two marks per annum for studying in the schools in England, paid at the term from the feast of St. Michael 10s., at the Nativity 10s., and at Easter half a mark. In Eastertime and autumn, or other times if the said John reside in the our house of Merton within the sixteen years, we will receive him and give him an allowance as one of our own, and provide him with requisite clothing. If it happen within the

said term that the said John wish to go abroad for study, we will give him an exhibition of three marks for a whole year. The¹⁵⁰ legal books, *Decreta* and *Decretales*, of Master Thomas of Tinemwe, with all his legal texts, after the said Master Thomas of Tinemwe no longer wishes to use them, shall be given to the said John for all his life; provided that he swear an oath that he will not let them pass from him, and will keep them faithfully for his own use. And should it come to pass that he wish to go from us or depart, he shall restore these books in their entirety to the house of Merton, and, as the chapter of Merton sees fit, they shall be handed over under the same conditions to some good poor scholar who is diligent in his learning; and as long as they last, the said books are to be kept in this way on the same conditions.¹⁵¹

The designation of ‘clerico’ suggests that John of Tynemouth was a secular cleric. He appears as witness to a couple of deeds in the Merton cartulary during the 1230s, suggesting some sort of residency at Merton as the grant implies, even if only between university terms.¹⁵² John represented the prior of Merton in *Rochester v. Archbishop of Canterbury* (1235–6). This case was about the election of Richard of Wenden to the see of Rochester; having gone to a papal appeal, the pope appointed the abbot of Walden, the prior of Merton (Henry de Basing) and the archdeacon of Northampton to hear the case. The prior of Merton sub-delegated John of Tynemouth (who appeared alongside the archdeacon’s sub-delegate).¹⁵³ John here is described as *magister*, suggesting that he had already had several years studying the law. It is likely that John acted as an attorney for the priory on more than this occasion, but no evidence has yet come to light.

The relationship of John to Thomas of Tynemouth was clearly close. It was unlikely to have been the father-son one that Gareth Morgan assumed; Roger Highfield’s suggestion of uncle is more probable.¹⁵⁴ The grant to John of

¹⁵⁰ ‘Uestro’.

¹⁵¹ Cleo fol. cxxxij” (no. 294); Heales, pp. 90 and 117–8 (translated twice; the prior given as Eustace: see below); transcript of the Latin text, Appendix no. LVII, p. xxxiv.

¹⁵² *Cartulary* no. 251 and no. 266. My thanks to Peter Hopkins for pointing these out.

¹⁵³ *EEA*, vol. XXI (Norwich), no. 58A, p. 54; Sayers, *Papal Judges Delegate*, p. 17.

¹⁵⁴ G. Morgan, ‘Textbooks in 1228’, *The Journal of Library History*, 14 (1979), 56–7; J. R. L. Highfield, ed., *The Early Rolls of Merton College, Oxford: With an Appendix of Thirteenth-Century Oxford Charters* (Oxford, 1964), p. 9.

Tynemouth was from Merton Priory, but presumably with money given by Thomas on his entry to the Priory, in a similar arrangement as William Kilkenny's with Barnwell. Thomas himself remains somewhat in the shadows. The *Gesta Abbatum Sancti Albani* (*Deeds of the Abbots of St Albans*) reported that in 1235,

the prior of Dunstable Richard de Mores, Thomas de Thinemue, canon of Merton (important masters, who at Bologna and elsewhere had been the heads of schools in Roman and canon law for those who had already completed a course in logic) had helped settle the election of the successor to Abbot William.¹⁵⁵

Thomas and Richard were needed here because only experienced senior canonists could find a way through the new regulations about papal confirmation.¹⁵⁶ Thomas was a canon of Merton and a cleric of long standing (as he would have been to become a senior lecturer). That he worked alongside Richard de Morins (or Mores) is significant: not only was de Morins himself a canonist of great repute, but before becoming prior of Dunstable, he was a canon of Merton.

There is a third 'Tynemouth' from the time who might shed light on these two, another John. John (I) of Tynemouth (d.1221) was a papal judge-delegate, canon of Lincoln, archdeacon of Oxford, opponent of Gerald of Wales, and an Oxford *magister* who in the 1190s was a member of Archbishop Hubert Walter's household.¹⁵⁷ Charles Lewis suggested that perhaps John I of Tynemouth had been lecturing at Oxford with Richard de Morins and Simon of Southwell when, in 1198, they were poached by Hubert Walter, needing some top legal advice. Hubert persuaded John I of Tynemouth and Simon of Southwell to leave Oxford and join his household; he quite possibly invited

¹⁵⁵ H. T. Riley, ed., *Gesta Abbatum Monasterii Sancti Albani*, 3rd edn (Cambridge, 2012), I, p. 307; D. Preest, trans., and J. G. Clark, ed., *Deeds of the Abbots of St Albans* (Woodbridge, 2019), p. 436; W. S. Gibson, *History of the Monastery Founded at Tynemouth, in the Diocese of Durham*, vol. II (1846), p. clxxi; S. Kuttner and E. Rathbone, 'Anglo-Norman canonists of the twelfth century: an introductory study', *Traditio*, 7 (1949), pp. 329–39. Tinemwe and Tinemue are variants on 'Tynemouth': See e.g., Matthew Paris' map, <http://www.bl.uk/learning/timeline/item99771.html>. The way the map is laid out suggests the level of communication between the North and the South.

¹⁵⁶ *VCH Hertfordshire*, IV, p. 34, fn. 189.

¹⁵⁷ W. Knorr, 'John of Tynemouth', *ODNB* (2004).

Richard de Morins too.¹⁵⁸ The only source for the date of John I of Tynemouth's death is Richard de Morins' *Annals of Dunstable*, suggesting a personal connexion between the two men.¹⁵⁹ Richard de Morins studied at Paris and Bologna, teaching law at the latter till the late 1190s.¹⁶⁰ He was back in England in 1198, possibly lecturing at Oxford as one of the most respected canonists in England, and the author of several law books, including the well-known *Apparatus*. It is not known exactly when he became a canon of Merton, but as such he was appointed prior of Dunstable in 1202, and he seems to have kept up a relationship with Merton, recording in his *Annals* (for 1222) the election of Giles de Bourne to Merton and the tower of Merton falling as a result of bad storms.¹⁶¹ Richard seems to have worked for Hubert Walter during the time that he was at Merton, and was therefore a colleague of John I of Tynemouth. Hubert Walter himself had some sort of relationship with Merton: he had taken on the habit of a Merton canon on his appointment as archbishop, in order to show his inheritance from Thomas Becket.¹⁶²

Unlike John I and Richard, Thomas of Tynemouth does not appear to have been a member of Hubert's household, and he remains obscure. It is likely that Richard and Thomas knew each other before joining Merton Priory; that they were both attracted to Merton suggests that Merton had a reputation for

¹⁵⁸ C. E. Lewis, "Canonists and law clerks in the household of Archbishop Hubert Walter," *Colloquia Germanica*, 4 (1970), pp. 192–201; cf. C. Cheney, 'The making of the Dunstable Annals, A.D. 33 to 1242', in *Medieval Texts and Studies* (Oxford, 1973), p. 221, fn.1.

¹⁵⁹ R. Sharpe, *A Handlist of the Latin writers of Great Britain and Ireland before 1540* (Turnhout, 2001), p. 332.

¹⁶⁰ *VCH Bedford*, vol. 1 (London, 1904), p. 3; C. E. Lewis, "Ricardus Anglicus: a 'familiaris' of Archbishop Hubert Walter", *Institute of Medieval Canon Law: Bulletin in Tradition*, 22 (1966), pp. 469–71; <http://www.dunstableparish.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/richard-de-morins.pdf>. For the legal career of one of his students, and an insight into monastic litigation, see A. Boureau, 'How law came to the monks: The use of law in English society at the beginning of the thirteenth century', *Past & Present*, 167 (2000), pp. 29–74.

¹⁶¹ J. C. Russell, *Dictionary of Writers of Thirteenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 1936), p. 112, associates Richard with Ricardus Anglicus, canonist; deacon when appointed prior, becoming priest shortly afterwards (1202). Richard also composed at least the first half of the *Dunstable Annals*: D. Preest, trans., and H. R. Webster, ed., *The Annals of Dunstable Priory* (Woodbridge, 2018), p. xvii; Russell, *Dictionary*, pp. 112–3. The *Annals*, p. 46, record the election of Giles de Bourne to Merton (they also record that of Richard of Barking to Westminster). In the same year (1222), it records the tower of Merton falling as a result of bad storms; Dunstable's towers also collapsed. For Morins' economic activities, see D. Postles, 'The Austin canons in English towns, c. 1100–1350', *Historical Research*, 159 (1993), pp. 13–14.

¹⁶² Heales, p. 48. Christopher Cheney notes Hubert's canonical leanings: *From Becket to Langton* (Manchester, 1956), pp. 38–9.

learning, and perhaps, specifically, legal learning. The additional presence of John I of Tynemouth in the Oxford-Hubert Walter nexus suggests at the very least a particular legal circle. If Thomas and John II were related, it is likely that John I was also part of the family. Another charter from the Merton cartulary pertains to Thomas: the appointment of Richard de Bandon as chaplain for life in order to celebrate Thomas' annual obit. This charter comes among several from the 1250s and 1260s, but dating it is problematic. The charter refers to the prior by the letter 'E'. This could be Eustace (prior 1249–54),¹⁶³ but it could be 'Egidius', or Giles (prior 1222–31). John de Tynemouth's exhibition was also granted by prior 'E', and, since internal evidence gives this the date of 1228, this has to be Giles. Both grants taken together could be a dying man getting things in order. Yet according to the St Albans author, Thomas was still alive in 1235. Furthermore, the Bandon grant could have been given sometime after Thomas' death. Richard de Morins died in 1242, and we might suppose him and Thomas to be around the same age. Given this, and that Thomas was alive after 1235, the 'E' therefore probably is Eustace, and Heales' date of c.1249 for the charter seems reasonable.

There is a further John of Tynemouth to consider from this time: the author of the Archimedian *De curvis superficiebus*, which was one of Robert Grosseteste's reading books of the early 1230s. Wilbur Knorr identified this John with the mathematician 'John of London' whom Roger Bacon mentioned in his *Opus Tertium*, and with the 'master John Bandoun', mentioned by Bacon in his *Communia Mathematica*. George Molland and Richard Sharpe argued against this, Molland demonstrating that John of London was neither John of Tynemouth nor John Bandoun, and casting doubt on John of Tynemouth's authorship at all.¹⁶⁴ However, if a John of Tynemouth were the author of *De curvis*, it is possible that he was Merton's John of Tynemouth. We do not know the age of John, but even if he were a young student, his youth would not

¹⁶³ Heales, p. 118; *Cartulary* no. 303, fol. cxxxiv; succeeding entry is Eustace; Miller & Saxby, p. 130.

¹⁶⁴ Wilbur R. Knorr, 'John of Tynemouth *alias* John of London: an emerging portrait of a singular medieval mathematician,' *The British Journal for the History of Science*, 23, no. 3 (1990), 293–330; George Molland, 'Roger Bacon's knowledge of mathematics', in Jeremiah Hackett, ed., *Roger Bacon and the Sciences: Commemorative Essays* (Leiden, 1996), pp. 158–9; Sharpe, *Handlist*, p. 333; Knorr, 'John of Tynemouth *alias* John of London', p. 296; idem, 'John of Tynemouth', *ODNB* (2004); H. M. Thomas, *The Secular Clergy in England, 1066–1216* (Oxford, 2014), p. 281.

necessarily preclude writing such a treatise.¹⁶⁵ If the mathematician John of Tynemouth was not John of London, he could have been ‘master John Bandoun’. The chaplain appointed for Thomas of Tynemouth’s annual obit was one Richard de Bandon; he was granted a corrody which his brother Eudo would inherit should Richard predecease him. Bandon sounds as if it should be a common place-name, but Eilert Ekwall only lists one: Bandon Hill in Surrey. Bandon Hill is what remains of the manor of Bandon, and Merton Priory held lands there.¹⁶⁶ It is possible that John of Tynemouth was John Bandon, relation of Richard and Eudo; this would make Thomas the uncle of them all, which could suggest that he was keen to provide for his nephews with a scholarship and a stipend. There is not enough evidence, however, to associate Merton’s John of Tynemouth with either the geometer John of Tynemouth or the mathematician John Bandoun.

Returning to more definite ground, John II of Tynemouth’s clerical status allowed him to study at the schools, but whether it bound him in any further way to Merton after the term of his studentship is unclear, and he disappears from the cartulary after the 1230s. There is no evidence regarding where he studied, and the grant allows for continental study as well as in England. The law books, the *Decreta* and *Decretales*, and other unspecified books, were by the terms of the grant to be given to Merton’s library on John’s leaving Merton. This was so that they could be given to the next ‘good poor scholar who is diligent in his learning’. This anticipates the Benedictine Constitutions of 1339, which stipulated that a monastery’s books were to be made available for students, and that students were to return books once their term had ended.¹⁶⁷ The Tynemouth grant suggests that Merton kept other books to lend to students, and this contributes to its status as a centre for learning. The fact that Merton was entrusted with the administration of John’s studentship implies that it was accustomed to sponsoring university students, and the grant to John of Tynemouth demonstrates Merton’s commitment to university education for associated secular clerics as well as its own canons.

¹⁶⁵ P. Guthrie Tait ‘James Clerk Maxwell: obituary’, *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Edinburgh*, 10(1878–80), pp. 331–2.

¹⁶⁶ Heales, p. 118; E. Ekwall, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names* (3rd edn., Oxford, 1951), p. 23; *VCH Surrey*, IV, p. 168.

¹⁶⁷ Salter, *Chapters*, p. 236; Forde, ‘Augustinian canons’, p. 40.

Merton Priory seems to have had a good reputation for law in the late-twelfth and thirteenth centuries. As well as Thomas of Tynemouth and Richard de Morins, Merton provided several priors as judges-delegate. Robert III (1178–86), Richard (1190–8) and Walter (1198–1218), heard cases involving the bishop of Exeter, the monks of Bury St Edmunds, and the bishop of Rochester and his own monks.¹⁶⁸ Thomas de Willst (1218–22) judged *Bishop and City of London v. Westminster Abbey*, alongside the archbishop of Canterbury and the bishops of Winchester and Salisbury.¹⁶⁹ Giles de Bourne (1222–31), prior at the time of the Tynemouth grant, heard *Abbey of Bec v. Archdeacon of Berkshire* (1224) and several suits involving Lewes Priory; and he witnessed Eustace of Faulconberg's decision in *St Bartholomew's, Colchester v. Holy Trinity, Aldgate* (1224). He himself was in charge of presenting Merton's case against Waltham Abbey regarding tithes due to Stanstead Abbots.¹⁷⁰ He was succeeded by Henry de Basing, for whom John of Tynemouth acted in *Rochester v. Archbishop of Canterbury*. The priors of Merton were among those making up the high proportion of Augustinian judges-delegate who contributed to Jane Sayers' conclusion that 'the Augustinians were also a learned order, especially it seems in the law.'¹⁷¹ John of Tynemouth, as a Merton clerk, seems to have followed in something of a legal tradition at the priory, and the evidence present above amplifies Roger Highfield's assertion that there was at Merton a 'tradition of continuing interest in legal studies'.¹⁷²

WALTER OF MERTON (1205–77)

The grant to John of Tynemouth is unique in the cartulary, but the suggestion of other poor legal scholars in the grant shows Merton's involvement with the study of law, and with the sponsorship of secular students as well as canon students.¹⁷³ A contemporary of John of Tynemouth at Merton was one Walter, who was almost certainly the Walter who witnessed a charter for the priory

¹⁶⁸ *EEA*, XII (Exeter), no. 186, p. 168–9; *EEA*, XXXI (Ely), no. 103, p. 138–9; *EEA*, XVIII (Salisbury), no. 232, p. 192. This last one, in 1207, was judged with Amicius, the archdeacon of Surrey who retired to Merton: Heales, p. 71.

¹⁶⁹ Sayers, *Papal Judges Delegate*, p. 298.

¹⁷⁰ Sayers, *Papal Judges Delegate*, pp. 122, 193, 331; L. F. Salzman, *The Cartulary of the Priory of St Pancras of Lewes*, Sussex Record Society (Lewes, 1932) vol. I, pp. 128–9; *EEA*, XIX (Salisbury), no. 264, p. 229, no. 393, p. 378–9.

¹⁷¹ Sayers, *Papal Judges Delegate*, p. 120.

¹⁷² Highfield, *Merton Rolls*, p. 9.

¹⁷³ Cf. Clark, *St Albans*, p. 74.

alongside John of Tynemouth in 1232 X 1237.¹⁷⁴ Walter's legal education is not documented, but his relationship with Merton Priory was so deep that he changed his appellation from 'of Basingstoke' to 'of Merton'. In the 1230s Walter worked as an attorney for Giles de Bourne and Henry de Basing. In return, in 1233 Merton Priory gave Walter the living of Cuddington (Surrey). The previous vicar of Cuddington had been, like Walter, from Basingstoke: this was Philip de Lucy, kinsman of the bishop of Winchester and 'a pluralist and a busy man in church and state', who also held the living of Basing.¹⁷⁵ Merton Priory had various connexions with Basing and Basingstoke: it held the advowson of Sherfield, near Basing, and had land at Upton, near Basingstoke. Prior Henry de Basing's family clearly originated there, although if he was related to the merchant Adam de Basing, the family had been settled in London for a couple of generations. Walter was acquainted with the de Basings of London, for he kept some of his belongings at the London house of Adam's son Thomas. A Cristina Basing gave Walter half a virgate of land sometime before 1236; Geoffrey de Basing witnessed Walter's settlement of land on his sister Agnes in 1239; Walter left money to Matilda de Basing in his will. In addition, a Richard Herriard was a cousin of Walter: Edmund Herriard would become prior of Merton in 1296.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁴ Heales, p. 96; Highfield, *Merton Rolls*, p. 9.

¹⁷⁵ C. A. F. Meekings and P. Shearman, *Fitznells Cartulary: A Calendar of Bodleian Library MS Rawlinson B430*, Surrey Record Society Publications (Guildford, 1963), XXVI, p. li. He styled himself 'rector' of Cuddington, although Merton referred to it as a vicarage, p. li. The rector, or possibly vicar, was one Master Robert, uncle of Gilbert of Ewell. For Philip de Lucy's career, see *EEA*, II (Winchester), pp. 198–200. Hugh Thomas discusses service to monasteries as a career, *Secular Clergy*, p. 101.

¹⁷⁶ K. Staniland, 'Adam of Basing', *ODNB* (2004); Highfield, *Merton Rolls*, pp. 9, 32, 81; Meekings and Shearman, *Fitznells*, p. lxii. Adam de Basing, alderman of London, witnessed a charter for Merton in 1260 (Heales, p. 137). A much earlier de Basing, Geoffrey, witnessed a charter in 1177 X 1186 (Heales, p. 29). Adam de Basing was from a line of prominent London citizens; some of his younger kin were heavily involved with the Franciscans, including another Henry de Basing. G. Williams, *Medieval London: from Commune to Capital* (London, 1970), pp. 323–4. Highfield, *Merton Rolls*, p. 6. Richard Herriard, a royal minister and justice in the reigns of Richard I and John, was somehow connected to Walter of Merton's father; Edmund Herriard became prior in 1296, resigning in 1305; G. H. Martin, 'Walter of Merton', *ODNB* (2004); Heales, pp. 180, 193–5; M. Franks, *The Clerk of Basingstoke: A Life of Walter of Merton* (Oxford, 2003), pp. 22–3, who also notes a John of Basing[stoke], scholar of Greek, educated probably at Oxford, Paris and Athens, becoming archdeacon of Leicester by 1235. Walter's household included John de Basing: *ibid.*, pp. 67–8. I have chosen to standardise the spelling as 'Basing', but it is often 'Basinges' or 'Basings'.

The close territorial and familial links between Walter and Merton might explain his presence there, but the legal education and expertise that Merton offered at that time might have been a particular attraction Walter. There is no evidence that Walter studied at Merton Priory, or that Merton sent him to Oxford to study, but both are possibilities. The idea that Walter studied at Oxford is largely due to his choice of Oxford as the place to send his nephews to study, although his choice could also be just that Oxford was the closest university to his Surrey and Hampshire lands. In addition, Walter had a relationship with Oseney Abbey, witnessed by his eulogy in the chronicle of Thomas Wykes, canon of Oseney, and the instructions in Walter's will to return books that he had borrowed from Oseney.¹⁷⁷ However, Walter's relationship with Oseney could have been a result his patronage of Merton College, rather than from his own days as a student.¹⁷⁸ Finally, there is a letter from Adam Marsh to his fellow friar Adam de Bechesovers recommending Walter, who was going to receive his subdiaconate from Robert Grosseteste.¹⁷⁹ Grosseteste was the bishop of Lincoln, in whose diocese Oxford was, and not the bishop of Winchester, in whose diocese Merton was, and Roger Highfield concluded that this indicates Walter's presence at Oxford.¹⁸⁰ Highfield pointed out that the letter must be from 1235 at the earliest, and probably 1238 at the latest. Walter would therefore have held Cuddington while in minor orders. This was not unknown: most presentations were of men in major orders, but on occasion acolytes and even tonsured clerks were presented.¹⁸¹ In general, this could well have had something to do with the age of candidates, the minimum age for a priest being 24, but Walter was well over the age for being a subdeacon or

¹⁷⁷ Highfield, *Merton Rolls*, pp. 80, 83.

¹⁷⁸ Franks, *Clerk*, pp. 23, 34; H. R. Luard, *Annales Monastici*, vol.IV (London, 1864), p. 275.

¹⁷⁹ J. S. Brewer, ed., *Monumenta Franciscana* (London, 1858), I, p. 405, letter 241; Highfield, *Merton Rolls*, pp. 9–10. Adam de Bechesovers was a Franciscan friar and physician, possibly from Barksore, Kent. He was possibly the author of commentaries on three Aristotelian treatises (*De Anima*, *Libri Physicorum* and *De Causis*). C. H. Lawrence (ed. and trans.), *The Letters of Adam Marsh*, vol.II (Oxford, 2010), pp. 420–423, 530–31, 558–59; Russell, *Writers*, pp. 1–2). Brewer, cxxvi/ 319, cxxxi/ 388, cxxxiv/ 404, mentioned with Fr. Richard de Waltham — and he, p. 395, is mentioned with Fr. William de Basings, as a disciple of Adam Marsh. Basings was one of the clan which very probably included Henry, prior of Merton 1231–8. I am grateful to Michael Robson for further references to Bechesovers.

¹⁸⁰ Highfield, *Merton Rolls*, pp. 9–10. Merton did hold the advowsons of a clutch of parishes in the diocese of Lincoln, and bishops of one diocese could ordain clerics of another.

¹⁸¹ For examples, see *Edington*, I, pp. 19–20, 27, 29; *Woodlock*, II, pp. 844, 862; *Sandale & Asserio*, p. 430; Heales, pp. 211, 214, 225.

deacon by the time he was given Cuddington.¹⁸² His being in minor orders does not in any way suggest unsuitability or insincerity: from his will it is clear that he cared about his parishioners, for he left money for the poor of Cuddington, implying that he took his parochial duties seriously.¹⁸³ Walter was later also to become a pluralist, holding several Durham livings at once, but again, this need not denigrate his capability and suitability as a clergyman with cure of souls, or his ability to find suitable vicars to fill his absence. Merton gave Walter the parish of Cuddington because he was an able administrator; that he was merely an acolyte was not a problem. More problematic, however, is the timing: if Walter were a student in c.1235, he would have been rather a mature one. He could have been attached to Oxford for some other reason — teaching or administrating; there is, yet again, no evidence to draw upon.¹⁸⁴ He could have received the benefice in order to sustain him as a student, a practice we encountered in Chapter 4.

By this time, Walter had changed his appellation from Walter of Basingstoke to Walter of Merton, and Cuddington seems to have been his *caput*. In 1239, his sister Agnes married a local landowner, Gilbert of Ewell; their son William was to be one of Walter's original scholars.¹⁸⁵ Walter seems to have become attached to chancery by the late 1230s under Ralph Nevill, who witnessed one of Walter's charters and sold him some of his land around Ewell. Another witness to Walter's deeds was the chancery clerk Silvester de Everdon, who later became bishop of Carlisle (see below).¹⁸⁶ A further acquaintance was Nicholas Farnham, whom Walter accompanied to Durham on Nicholas' accession to the bishopric in 1241.

¹⁸² V. Davis, 'Medieval longevity: the experience of members of religious orders in late medieval England', *Medieval Prosopography*, 19 (1998), pp. 111–24; J. Barrow, *The Clergy in the Medieval World* (Cambridge, 2015), pp. 39–42. For clerics not becoming priests, see L. Kjaer, 'Magnates, rituals and royal assemblies: Bogo de Clare and Parliament, Easter 1285', in *The Reign of Edward I*, ed. A. King and A. Spencer (Woodbridge, 2020), pp. 69–70.

¹⁸³ Highfield, *Merton Rolls*, p. 80. Walter also left money to the poor of several other of his parishes, and to one Philip of Cuddington (*ibid.*, p. 81).

¹⁸⁴ This is working on the assumption that Walter was born between 1200 and 1210. Franks suggests that Walter was a student earlier; this would make sense chronologically, but it is entirely speculative: *Clerk*, p. 25.

¹⁸⁵ Meeking and Shearman, *Fitznells*, p.lxx. Was Gilbert the Gilbert who was fined 10s. in 1242 for trespass? Heales, p. 111.

¹⁸⁶ Meeking and Shearman, *Fitznells*, p.lx.

Nicholas was a noted scholar and physician, and friend of Robert Grosseteste; his name would suggest that he was from Surrey. Nicholas may well have known Walter through the Surrey-Hampshire clerical gentry network, but there was, in addition, a strong Merton connexion: Nicholas was rector of Long Ditton, one of Merton's parishes, about five miles distant from Cuddington.¹⁸⁷ Nicholas took quite a few Surrey and Hampshire men north with him (as well as William Kilkenny, discussed above).¹⁸⁸ Nicholas' chaplain Martin of St Cross probably also came from Hampshire, and almost certainly had a connexion to Merton Priory, as he left it in his will a green chasuble.¹⁸⁹ Walter's charter of foundation for Merton College stipulates that his scholars are to pray for the soul of Nicholas Farnham, demonstrating Walter's regard for Nicholas.¹⁹⁰ This regard might also be seen in Walter's seal, which Roger Highfield noted was similar to Nicholas Farnham's.¹⁹¹ If these two episcopal seals are linked to each other, then they are both also almost certainly linked to the second seal of Merton Priory, which took receipt of it on 13 December 1241, and which Harvey and McGuinness have described this as 'an outstanding example of the fine and detailed two-sided seals made for some monasteries'.¹⁹² Nicholas was enthroned

¹⁸⁷ Heales, appendix no. LXVI; Meeking and Shearman, *Fitznells*, p. lxxviii, with thanks to Peter Hopkins for this reference.

¹⁸⁸ Highfield, *Early Rolls*, pp. 16–18; Hoskins, *EEA*, XXIX (Durham), pp. xxxvi–xlii. These men included were John Reigate, John of Romsey, William Merrow, Roger of Winchester, Martin of St Cross and Richard Farnham (who worked on Durham's east end). Walter's own associate, Thomas Windsor, followed him up and down the country, and was given the living at Malden.

¹⁸⁹ *EEA*, XXIX, p. 98.

¹⁹⁰ Highfield, *Early Rolls*, p. 15.

¹⁹¹ Highfield, *Early Rolls*, pl. 1. T. A. Heslop wrote that Nicholas Farnham's two successors at Durham, Walter Kirkham (1249–60) and Robert Stichill (1261–74) 'follow very closely indeed' the seal of Nicholas Farnham: *Age o Chivalry: Art in Plantagenet England, 1200–1400*, ed. J. Alexander and P. Binski (London, 1987), no. 278, p. 317. Edmund of Abingdon was another to have foiled recesses on his seal; he also had a Merton connexion. The Farnham/ Merton seal does seem to be a type: see P. Dalton, *The Archiepiscopal and Deputed Seals o York, 1114–1500* (York, 1992), pp. 31–3. Walter Kirkham's seal was also based on Nicholas Farnham's: R. Surtees, *The History and Antiquities o the County Palatine o Durham: Compiled from Original Records Preserved in Public Repositories and Private Collections*, ed. H. M. Wood (Sunderland, 1908), I, part I, plates 1 and 2.

¹⁹² P. D. A. Harvey and A. McGuinness, *A Guide to British Medieval Seals* (London, 1996), p. 104. They contradict themselves on p. 101, saying that 'many monastic seals of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were pointed ovals'. For a description, see T. A. Heslop in *Age o Chivalry*, no. 283, pp. 318–9; the BVM holds, however, not a 'mirror', but a *virga*.

at Durham in September 1241; in October he was back down in London, returning some time later, perhaps after he had seen Merton's fine new seal.¹⁹³

Nicholas Farnham was one of several scholar-bishops associated with Merton Priory during the thirteenth century. He studied at Oxford before going to Paris to teach theology. There he was acquainted with Simon of Tournai (whose *Quæstiones* formed part of Merton's library) and with William of Durham. William of Durham was Regent Master in theology; when he returned to the north-east of England (having refused the archbishopric of Rouen in 1236), he devoted his time to scholarship. William seems to have been inspired by secular collegiate foundations in Paris, and left money in 1249 to Oxford for the foundation of a secular college.¹⁹⁴ This would become University College, but it was only founded in 1280, by which time the university had frittered away half of William's legacy on bad loans and reduced his foundation to a third of its projected size. During his life in the north-east, William again came into personal contact with Nicholas, bishop of Durham, but also with Nicholas' clerk Walter, who was rector of Sedgefield, from where William himself came.¹⁹⁵ Alexander Murray suggested that Walter got the idea of a secular college from William of Durham.¹⁹⁶

Walter founded his own college in Oxford in 1274. It was quite different from William of Durham's, and owes its shape more to Merton Priory than William's vision of a Parisian-style college.¹⁹⁷ Robin Darwall-Smith noted that Walter's college 'differed from most Parisian colleges in making its members responsible for administering its sources of revenue', and Roger Highfield noted that the Merton College offices of 'hostelry, infirmary, and granary seem to reflect the monastic world of Merton Priory'.¹⁹⁸ Jeremy Catto observed that Walter called the warden *custos*, and suggested that this was borrowed from the *custos* familiar to him from Merton's granges.¹⁹⁹ The founding statutes rule that

¹⁹³ Hoskins, *EEA*, XXIX, p. 251.

¹⁹⁴ R. Darwall-Smith, *Early Records of University College, Oxford* (Oxford, 2015), pp. 9, xiii; *idem*, *A History of University College, Oxford* (Oxford, 2008), pp. 1–17.

¹⁹⁵ Darwall-Smith, *Early Records*, pp. 5–7.

¹⁹⁶ A. Murray, *University College Record* (2000), XII.4; Franks, *Clerk*, p. 56.

¹⁹⁷ This is perhaps emphasised by John Pecham's admonitions to the college after Walter of Merton's death: J. Sabapathy, *Officers and Accountability in Medieval England, 1170–1300* (Oxford, 2014), pp. 188–9.

¹⁹⁸ Darwall-Smith, *History of University College*, p. 16.

¹⁹⁹ Catto, *Early Oxford Schools*, p. 20.

scholars were to be funded by lands and benefices; there were to be several resident priests to celebrate at the altar of Christ; terminally-ill students were to be sent to Walter's hospital at Basingstoke, in effect the college infirmary; all members of the college were to observe the Hours and to wear a uniform; meals were to be eaten in silence, while an edifying reading was narrated.²⁰⁰ In Walter's will, his landed bequests were largely to his college, which he called 'the House of Scholars of Merton'. Walter's house was never in Merton, but in Malden, a few miles away: the name was in homage to Merton Priory, either directly or indirectly, Walter having named himself, quite deliberately, after Merton Priory. Walter instructed his scholars to pray for the priory; he also dedicated his college to St Mary, the standard dedicatee of Augustinian houses, including Merton.²⁰¹

Before Walter formalised his establishment at Oxford, he had founded, in 1264, a college of priests in Malden (Surrey) to administer the maintenance of scholars. Before that, in 1262, he had entrusted Merton Priory with the administration, until his manors were sacked by the followers of Simon de Montfort. That Walter first gave oversight of his scholars to Merton Priory can be put together with the grant to John of Tynemouth, and perhaps with the later the evidence for the renting of Wygers Hall with a warden: these cases suggest that Merton was accustomed to managing the education of secular scholars at university level — Roger Highfield wrote that 'Merton priory must have had excellent arrangements for administering funds to keep young men at Oxford and presumably also for supervising them once there.'²⁰²

As an epilogue to this study of early Oxford colleges, the third college founded at this time also had links to the bishop of Durham, although this was by now Nicholas' successor Walter of Kirkham. Balliol College took in poor scholars, and, like Merton College, its statutes make clear the chantry function of the college; however, its structure (or lack of it) is in marked contrast to Walter's quasi-monastic one.²⁰³ Although Balliol College was chiefly created by

²⁰⁰ *Merton Muniments*, ed. P. S. Allen and H. W. Garrod (Oxford, 1928), p. 22; E. F. Percival, *The Foundation Statutes of Merton College*, Oxford, A.D. 1270 (London, 1847), pp. 14–21.

²⁰¹ Meekings and Shearman, *Fitznells*, pp. lxxii, lxxv; Highfield, *Early Rolls*, pp. 79–89; Martin and Highfield, *Merton*, pp. 11–14.

²⁰² Highfield, *Merton Rolls*, p. 21; see also p. 65.

²⁰³ H. E. Salter, ed., *The Oxford Deeds of Balliol College* (Oxford, 1913), pp. 277–80; R. H. C. Davis and R. W. Hunt, *A History of Balliol College* (Oxford, 1963), pp. 9–15.

Dervorguilla of Galloway, the idea for it came from Walter of Kirkham.²⁰⁴ Kirkham had cut his teeth in the household of Hubert de Burgh, removing himself to the royal wardrobe on de Burgh's spectacular fall and flight to the sanctuary of Merton Priory.²⁰⁵ As bishop of Durham, Kirkham tried to secure and bolster his predecessor's retirement pension, showing that he had some personal regard for Nicholas. Kirkham cannot but have known Walter of Merton, and may, along with other royal servants, have stayed at Merton Priory.²⁰⁶ Like Walter of Merton, Walter of Kirkham might have been aware of Merton Priory as an established and successful centre for learning.

In the late 1280s, the monks of Durham Priory decided to found their own college in Oxford. It might be suggested that their foundation was indirectly a result of an Augustinian priory.²⁰⁷ This is certainly the case with the first college at Cambridge. Peterhouse was founded by Hugh of Balsham, bishop of Ely, in 1284. The bishop of Ely based the statutes of the college of his brother bishop Walter of Merton in Oxford. Henry Mayr-Harting challenged the extent to which Hugh of Balsham copied Walter of Merton's statutes, arguing that Balsham's college, more theologically inclined than the legally-minded Walter's, also drew on the Rule of St Benedict: while Merton College was delicately seasoned with Augustinian monasticism, Peterhouse's monasticism was the full flavour.²⁰⁸ Yet, by pointing out the differences between the statutes of the two colleges, Mayr-Harting also demonstrated the monasticism of Merton College's statutes. Reinforcing this is an incidental piece of evidence from the patent rolls: in 1294, when the king gave protection to prelates of various orders, the warden of Merton College was included among the Augustinians.²⁰⁹ Merton College, and therefore subsequent Oxford and Cambridge colleges — and perhaps the universities themselves — owed much to the Augustinian canons of Merton Priory.

²⁰⁴ A. Beam, 'John Balliol, the Bishops of Durham, and Balliol College, 1255–1260', *Northern History*, 42 (2005), 239–56; J. Jones, *Balliol College: A History* (2nd edn., Oxford, 1997), p. 2. J. Stevenson, ed., *Chronicon de Lanercost M.CC.I.–MCCCXLVI* (Edinburgh, 1839), p. 69.

²⁰⁵ A. J. Piper, 'Walter of Kirkham', *ODNB*.

²⁰⁶ D. A. Carpenter and J. Kantner, 'King Henry III and Windsor Castle', in *St George's Chapel, Windsor. History and Heritage*, ed. N. E. Saul and T. W. Tatton-Brown (Wimborne, 2010), pp. 29–30.

²⁰⁷ Darwall-Smith, *History of University College*, p. 16.

²⁰⁸ Mayr-Harting, 'Peterhouse', *EHR*, 103 (1988), pp. 321–22, 328–9.

²⁰⁹ *Calendar of the Patent Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office: Edward I, A.D. 1272–1307*, (London: HMSO, 1893), III, p. 90.

EDMUND OF ABINGDON

According to the letter of postulation written by Prior Robert, Edmund spent just over a year at Merton, generally agreed to have been from 1213 to 1214.²¹⁰ Edmund had returned from studying and teaching in Paris, but he was unable to take up his position as *theologie publicus rector* at Oxford because of the university had been temporarily dissolved.²¹¹ Although remaining a secular clergyman, Edmund was drawn to the regular life, withdrawing at various points in his career to the peace of the cloister of Merton, Abingdon and Reading.²¹² Prior Robert wrote that at Merton Edmund lived as if he were one of the brethren, explaining that his conduct went beyond that of a secular cleric and emphasising Edmund's austere and profound piety. Interestingly, whereas in his deposition for the canonisation of Edmund, the abbot of Reading mentioned Edmund's sermonising, Prior Robert wrote of Edmund's inspiring the canons with his conversation.²¹³ This suggests an intellectual and spiritual relationship that worked both ways, that Edmund learned as well as taught. If so, this suggests that Merton's canons made some contribution to Edmund's chief work, the *Speculum Religiosorum*, or *Speculum Ecclesie*.²¹⁴

The *Speculum* is a handbook for regulars, like the brethren of Merton among whom he had lived, on how to live a godly, righteous and sober life. In this way, it is in the tradition of the *Bridlington Dialogue* and Worcester Q.51 discussed in Chapter 2, and it certainly fits in well to the large jigsaw of pastoral texts whose production started in the twelfth century but increased in the thirteenth.²¹⁵ Edmund used both the writings of Gregory the Great, who was a

²¹⁰ Robert de Hefham (r.1238–49), probably brother of Richard, archdeacon of Essex: *FEA* 1066–1300, vol. 1, p. 13. C. H. Lawrence, *St Edmund o Abingdon: A Study of Hagiography and History* (Oxford, 1960), p. 297.

²¹¹ Lawrence, *Edmund o Abingdon*, pp. 117–120.

²¹² *Idem*, 'Edmund of Abingdon', *ODNB*.

²¹³ Russell continued: 'However, this may be merely an accident'; however, he used it to agree with the date of 1213–14: 'Notes on the biography of St. Edmund of Abingdon', *The Harvard Theological Review*, 54 (1961), p. 148. The description of Edmund recalls that of Guy in the *Life o Guy*, although much of this is because it is fairly standard saintly stuff. Guy, too, was noted for his *conversatio*. *Life o Guy*, para.5.

²¹⁴ For a discussion of the two variants and a critical edition of both, see H. P. Forshaw, *Edmund o Abingdon: Speculum Religiosorum and Speculum Ecclesie* (London, 1973).

²¹⁵ For examples of which, see (*inter alia*) C. M. Waters, *Translating Clergie: Status, Education, and Salvation in Thirteenth-Century Vernacular Texts* (Philadelphia, 2015); also Goering and Mantello, "Meditaciones".

source for the Victorine writers, and the Victorines themselves.²¹⁶ Edmund's thesis is that to love is to live, that for a fulfilled religious life, one must love God and love one's fellows. His emphasis on love suggests why he was held in such regard and affection by those who knew him, and why there was a quick and concerted effort to have Edmund canonised.

Love is a major theme in the Victorine texts, and this led Helen Forshaw to argue that the *Speculum* was written for a religious community, although probably not the sisters of the Anglo-Norman version. Instead, she felt 'inclined to believe that he wrote the *Speculum* originally for a Cistercian community.'²¹⁷ Her conclusion was based on the continuing amicity between Edmund and his Cistercian-convert students, especially Stephen Lexington. However, it has been suggested by several scholars that Edmund wrote the *Speculum* at Merton Priory, and therefore his primary audience was surely its Augustinian canons, rather than Cistercian monks.²¹⁸ The Augustinians appreciated the work, one, apparently a canon of Leicester, translating it as the *Prick o Love* in the fourteenth century.²¹⁹ Certainly, almost all the texts that Helen Forshaw identified as Edmund's models are in the *Registrum Anglie* list of Merton's library books. The *Speculum* may have been written for the canons of Merton, or it may have been written as a result of the numerous conversations with them noted by Prior Robert. Although no copy of it is known to have been in Merton's library, Lanthony Secunda had a copy (as well as a copy of the *Quadrilogus de vita et moribus S. Edmundi*,) indicating that Edmund's treatise was of interest to the Augustinians.²²⁰ Another, fifteenth-century, copy was at Holy Trinity, Aldgate, one of Merton's Augustinian neighbours.

The *Speculum* was intended as a text for learning and teaching, and it was therefore suitable reading matter for a novice. The connexion of Merton with the *Speculum* may also show a continued interest of its canons in pastoral

²¹⁶ Forshaw, 'St Edmund's "*Speculum*"', 7–40. Gregory was a source for Alexander Neckam, too: Dunning, 'Alexander Neckam', *passim*.

²¹⁷ H. P. Forshaw, 'New Light on the *Speculum Ecclesie* of St Edmund Of Abingdon', *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Age*, 38 (1971), p. 32.

²¹⁸ C. Gunn, 'Edmund of Abingdon's Mirror of Holy Church', <<http://categunn.com/?p=176>>; Lawrence, 'Edmund of Abingdon'.

²¹⁹ R. Hanna, 'Augustinian canons and Middle English literature', in *The English Medieval Book: Studies in Memory of Jeremy Griffiths*, ed. A. S. G. Edwards et al. (London, 2000), p. 35.

²²⁰ K. Bennett, 'The Book Collections of Llanthony Priory from Foundation until Dissolution (c.1100–1538)' (unpublished PhD thesis, Kent, 2006), pp. 23, 134, 152; Lawrence, *St Edmund o Abingdon*, p. 9.

care beyond the cloister precinct. A few years earlier, its former canon Guy of Southwick had written a manual on confession intended for parish clergy: the *Speculum* was another work suitable for secular, including parish, clergy as well as the regulars for whom it was written. Despite being, in Hugh Lawrence's opinion, 'not a very original work', it was a popular text throughout the later Middle Ages, in its original Latin and in Anglo-Norman and English translations.²²¹ It could be compared to the late fourteenth-century *Festial*, itself composed by an Augustinian, although by a secular cleric, the *Speculum* nonetheless shows the influence of the canons regular.

CONCLUSIONS

Merton had a close relationship with England's universities in the thirteenth century, and we saw in Chapter 3 evidence to suggest a relationship of Merton with the university of Paris starting in the twelfth century. Canon Richard de Morins taught at Bologna, and Thomas of Tynemouth also had a university career. Evidence analysed in this chapter has demonstrated that Merton had an enduring relationship with Oxford University and sent enough scholars to warrant keeping a hall of residence for them. Merton itself was at times a quasi-college, attracting visiting scholars and producing its own, although, like a college, most of its teachers and students have left no trace. That several notable scholars of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were drawn to Merton Priory argues that its canons enjoyed a high reputation for scholarship.

The exploration of the known careers of various canons, which is the subject of this chapter, along with the analysis of their books, the subject of Chapter 3, yield a compelling picture of the culture of scholarship at the priory during the period. Several of Merton's manuscripts coincide with the period c.1160—c.1240, which produced or attracted some notable scholars. The texts by

²²¹ Lawrence, 'Edmund of Abingdon'; Forshaw, 'St Edmund's "*Speculum*": a classic of Victorine spirituality', p. 8. See also J. W. Goering and F. A. C. Mantello, 'The "Meditaciones" of Robert Grosseteste', *The Journal of Theological Studies*, 36 (1985), 118–28 (p. 119); L. E. Boyle, 'The Inter-Conciliar period 1179–1215 and the beginnings of pastoral manuals', in *Miscellanea Rolando Bandinelli, Papa Alessandro III*, ed. F. Liotta (Siena, 1986), 45–56; A. Diem, 'Virtues and vices in pastoral care', *Franciscan Studies*, 62 (2004), 193–223; P. B. Roberts, 'The *Ars Praedicandi* and the medieval sermon', in *Preacher, Sermon and Audience in the Middle Ages*, ed. C. Muessig (Leiden, 2002), 41–62; A. Reeves, *Religious Education in Thirteenth-Century England* (Leiden, 2015), pp. 57–88; Woods and Copeland, 'Classroom and confession', p. 395.

Abelard, Alan of Lille and Simon of Tournai fit into the Parisian intellectual circles of the Salisbury brothers and succeeding generations of students. Prior William, the compiler of a theological miscellany, hosted John of Salisbury, who edited a collection of letters with one of his canons. The innovative Merton Bible was compiled around the time that Edmund of Abingdon spent at Merton. Merton was home to various senior ecclesiastical lawyers, including Richard de Morins and Thomas of Tynemouth, as well as the priors chosen as judges-delegate.

The evidence argues that Merton's reputation for learning and spirituality continued into the thirteenth century: a number of canons became priors of other Augustinian houses, and these include Richard de Morins (Dunstable) and Guy of Southwick. Guy's treatise, along with the manuscripts in Merton's library discussed in Chapter 3, demonstrate the canons' continuing interest in pastoral matters, both within their cloister and in parishes. From the careers of John of Tynemouth and Walter of Merton, it seems that Merton was responsible not just for the education of its canons but for that of associated secular clerics, too. Simon Forde wrote that some Augustinian houses found it difficult to provide elementary education *in situ*; if its education could extend to seculars as well, thirteenth-century Merton was clearly not one of them.²²²

Forde asked four questions in his article about the Augustinians at Oxford, viz. where Augustinian students lived, how freely they associated with non-Augustinians, what the nature was of the provision of books, and what subjects they learned. The evidence from Merton gives substance to Forde's answers.²²³ Merton's students lived in, amongst other places, halls provided by Merton, one of which was presided over by a secular clergyman. Merton's management of John of Tynemouth's learning shows a close relationship between the canons and secular clerics, and we may conclude that Merton's canons associated quite freely with secular clergymen, both at Merton and at the schools. Merton's grant of a university studentship to a secular cleric might have been unusual, but educational relationships of regular institutions with secular clerks were not. Merton provided books or the wherewithal to purchase them, and its canons studied, in addition to the arts, both law and theology. In addition, Merton worked with both Oseney and St Frideswide's in Oxford to

²²² Forde, 'Augustinian canons', p. 24.

²²³ *Ibid*, p. 33.

ensure adequate provision of higher education for its canons. Merton gave the bishop of Rochester the blueprint for a college which itself became a blueprint for colleges in both Oxford and Cambridge.

Apart from Oxford and Cambridge, Merton Priory had links to other centres of learning and scholarship. As noted in Chapter 2, Merton had links to Robert de Bethune, bishop of Hereford 1130–48, and canon of Llanthony; it also had links to the second Augustinian bishop of Hereford of that century, William de Vere. Hereford was a centre of learning which, like Merton, trained clergy for their vocation but which was also home to a number of scholars. Hereford at this time boasted theologians and scientists; Merton had theologians and canon lawyers.

It has been possible to show that Merton's interactions with the episcopate during the period took a number of forms. Merton, as a patron of a sizeable number of parishes, could be the answer to a bishop's desire to furnish his clerks with benefices. It is clear that Merton's canons worked with bishops to ensure an adequate standard of education amongst parish clergy, and Merton's canons could also provide study space and intellectual stimulation for secular clerics of various degrees, whom Ralph Hanna might call 'Augustinian groupies'.²²⁴

This chapter has argued that during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and into the fourteenth, Merton nurtured the study of subjects of higher education, theology, philosophy, and law, both for its own canons and for associated secular clerics. The priory provided senior ecclesiastical lawyers and its administration of education led to the form of collegiate life that became dominant in both Oxford and Cambridge. The next chapter will discuss Merton's relationship with those universities in the following two-and-a-half centuries, and Merton's continuing contribution to law, theology and education.

²²⁴ Hanna, 'Augustinian canons and Middle English literature', p. 33.

CHAPTER 6: RENAISSANCE? MERTON IN THE FIFTEENTH AND SIXTEENTH CENTURIES

This chapter examines the priory's late mediæval book collection and the careers and interests of the graduate priors and canons, setting them against the intellectual developments of the period. Questions about the nature of learning at the priory during this later period, continuity and change, and the relationship of the priory to external learning and scholarship all lie under this discussion. The chapter is partly prosopographical, examining the priors and canons both as individuals and as a group to analyse questions about learning and scholarship. The high status and intellectual achievements of number of priors during this period suggests the maintenance of a level of education within the priory, and this is reinforced by the ongoing collection of books and the careers of some of its canons. Some of these careers show a continuing relationship with the universities; the evidence for this is fuller because we can associate books with particular canons and to university study.

On the whole, Merton's library from the 'long' fifteenth century survives a little better than that from the earlier period — in contrast to its buildings, where earlier stone was re-used as later foundations, leaving more trace than the structures built on top. A third of the volumes is made up of printed books. Of the Brigittine abbey of Syon Vincent Gillespie wrote that 'it is striking to see a large monastic library... making a major shift from manuscripts to printed books in the years after 1471'.¹ Merton seems to have had a similar shift. Given James Clark's research on the humanist appetite for scholarship in regular communities, perhaps this is, in fact, not so striking, but a development we should expect.² Indeed, it is only striking if we accept a *post-hoc* Reformation narrative of monastic stasis or decline. However, Kirsty Bennett noted the lack of printed books purchased by Llanthony Priory, and it would be helpful to have surveys of other Augustinian houses to try to determine patterns of acquisition.³

¹ V. Gillespie, introduction to *A Companion to the Early Printed Book in Britain, 1476–1558*, ed. V. Gillespie and S. Powell (Cambridge, 2014), p. 5.

² J. G. Clark, 'Humanism and reform in pre-Reformation English monasteries', *TRHS*, 19 (2009), 57–93.

³ K. Bennett, 'The Book Collections of Llanthony Priory from Foundation until Dissolution (c.1100–1538)' (unpublished PhD thesis, Kent, 2006), p. 211.

Instead of a historiography of terminal monastic entropy starting with the rise of the friars and ending in inevitable dissolution, more recent research has suggested a dip in standards during the troubled fourteenth century, but a resurgence during the fifteenth.⁴ James Clark noted a greater pressure on Benedictine communities during this period from an increase in divine services and earthly administration and a decrease in recruitment and adult profession.⁵ Although the evidence for Merton, such as it is, suggests that adult recruitment was not so much of a problem, the fourteenth century saw several inadequate priors, and periods of poverty and disobedience both before and after the Black Death. Towards the end of the century, the prior even excused himself from the General Chapter because the dormitory and several other buildings had fallen down.⁶ Nevertheless, Merton's reputation was such that it provided two canons as priors of other houses: Thomas de Westone, was appointed prior of Selborne in 1378, and John Yaxley was appointed prior of Reigate in 1395.⁷

Merton's situation seems to have improved over the next hundred years: of the nine priors who spanned the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, at least six were Oxford graduates (three of them were professors of theology), and the bishop's visitations of the period went without remark until that of William Salyng.⁸ Merton's intellectual priors seem to have been a rarity in the Augustinian Order: Martin Heale noted that, apart from Merton and Cirencester, the priors of Augustinian houses followed no 'pattern of regular graduate appointments to the headship'.⁹ Indeed, Heale observed that, more

4 C. D. Knudsen, 'Naughty Nuns and Promiscuous Monks: Monastic Sexual Misconduct in Late Medieval England' (unpublished PhD thesis, Toronto, 2012); F. D. Logan, *Runaway Religious in Medieval England, c.1240–1540* (Cambridge, 1996); R. L. Rowell, 'The Archaeology of Late Monastic Hospitality' (unpublished DPhil thesis, York, 2000), pp. 39–100; N. S. Rushton, 'Monastic charitable provision in Tudor England: quantifying and qualifying poor relief in the early sixteenth century', *Continuity and Change*, 16 (2001), 9–44; see also J. G. Clark, *The Dissolution of the Monasteries: A New History* (New Haven and London, 2021), pp. 1–20.

5 J. G. Clark, *A Monastic Renaissance at St. Albans: Thomas Walsingham and his Circle, c.1350–1440* (Oxford, 2004), p. 42; also p. 125.

6 R. M. Haines, 'Adam Orleton and the Diocese of Winchester', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 23 (1972), p. 25; Heales, pp. 192–6, 202, 212–4, 218, 232–3, 266–75; Salter, *Chapters*, p. 176.

7 *Wykeham*, I, pp. 93, 195.

8 *BRUO* II, pp. 771, 1069, 1075, 1635; *BRUC*, p. 504; *BRUO 1501–1540*, p. 473; John Fines, 'John Ramsey', *ODNB*. For William Salyng, see below, pp. 254–58.

9 M. Heale, *The Abbots and Priors of Late Medieval and Reformation England* (Oxford, 2016), p. 50, fn. 168.

generally, ‘the abbots and priors of late medieval England were not individually or collectively remarkable for their intellectual achievements’; that even those who were hardly reached the height of some of their predecessors; and that their scholarly focus was on the spiritual and temporal wellbeing of their monastery.¹⁰ Bishop Fox of Winchester might have disagreed regarding William Salyng, whose frequent absences at Oxford suggest that he valued his academic life more than his prelacy.

Other Augustinian houses do indeed show some signs of active learning during this later period. Cirencester’s fifteenth-century chained library suggests a certain level of scholarship which perhaps had its roots much further back, in the priorate of Alexander Nequam.¹¹ Nequam was still current reading: the Merton canons acquired (or produced) a new copy of his *De laudes diuinae sapientiae* in the fifteenth century (GB-Lbl Royal MS 8 E IX). One of the monasteries behind the foundation of St Mary’s College was Oseney Abbey, another Augustinian house with long connexions with the university of Oxford. David Postles argued that the prelacy at Oseney of Thomas Hooknorton (1430–52) saw the ‘greatest affinity with the schools and enjoyed an intellectual interest not equalled since the late twelfth century’.¹² Leicester Abbey’s extensive booklists date from the fifteenth century and show an interest in making its collection user-friendly, which implies the existence of users.¹³ It would be unwise to generalise from these four particulars (Merton, Cirencester, Oseney and Leicester), but at the least we can assert that certain Augustinian houses were centres of learning throughout the later Middle Ages, and that one of these was Merton.

Merton’s graduate priors left their imprint on the library collection as we know it. A list of the book collection of one of the last canons suggests that he, at least, also amassed a sizeable personal library, although how many volumes belonged to the communal library before its dissolution is unsure.¹⁴ These collections seem to support James Clark’s argument that (in contrast to the Benedictines) Augustinian book collections in the late Middle Ages were

¹⁰ Heale, *Abbots and Priors*, pp. 90–1.

¹¹ A. N. J. Dunning, ‘Alexander Neckam’s Manuscripts and the Augustinian Canons of Oxford and Cirencester’ (unpublished PhD thesis, Toronto, 2016), p. 130.

¹² D. Postles, *Oseney Abbey Studies* (Leicester, 2008), p. 19.

¹³ Webber & Watson, pp. 105–9.

¹⁴ For this booklist, see Appendix 5.

‘personal compilations or indeed compositions which reflect the work, interest, and personal patterns of reading of individual and small integrated groups of canons.’¹⁵ This is perhaps a reflection on the individual emphasis on learning present at the emergence of the Augustinian canons in the late eleventh and twelfth centuries; some of the manuscripts that we discussed in Chapter 3 could equally be described as personal collections or compositions. The individual nature of these later collections can also be seen at Llanthony, whose fifteenth-century book collection was almost entirely due to canon Richard Calne (fl.1413–21).¹⁶

Clark observed that ‘donations of secular clerks and even laymen’ made a significant contribution to Augustinian collections, and we shall see some examples of this at Merton. A third idea that Clark put forward was that the book collections of late-mediæval Augustinian canons were pedagogical; this is something we shall explore below, bearing in mind that we must not necessarily assume a pedagogical role for the canons of Merton.¹⁷ It is important, therefore, to consider how the learning of individuals reflected their administrative roles within the priory, the order, the wider Church, and their political activities. As well as evidence from Merton’s books and manuscripts, this chapter draws on comparisons from other Augustinian houses, as well as episcopal records and royal letter and papers. We will also inquire into the history of Merton’s books after the destruction of their home, to see whether this sheds any more light on the careers of the canons who used them.

THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

This section is divided into the priorates of Michael Kympton (1403–13) and of John de Kingston and John Gisborne, who, combined, ruled the priory for over half the century. Much of the focus is on the priors themselves, partly because of the nature of evidence, but partly because the quality of an organisation’s leader affects its whole community. Whilst it would be too much to argue that because a prior had intellectual tendencies, so did his canons; however, a prior could

15 J. G. Clark, ‘The Augustinians, history, and literature in late medieval England’, in *BSRC*, p. 406, and p. 408.

16 K. Bennett, ‘The Book Collections of Llanthony Priory from Foundation until Dissolution (c.1100–1538)’ (unpublished PhD thesis, Kent, 2006), p. 181.

17 Clark, ‘Augustinians, history, and literature’, pp. 408–14.

certainly encourage learning amongst his canons, as we will see with John de Kingston. There is, however, frustratingly little evidence about the career and intellectual activity of both Kympton and Kingston: the reputation of the latter as a theologian has to be inferred from a brief report in the minutes of the General Chapter; the reputation of the former from an even briefer mention, in the list of a committee of theologians.

The Priorate of Michael Kympton (1403–13)

In January 1399 Richard II wrote to twenty-nine clerics calling for their ‘counsel and advice touching certain matters relating to the nefarious and lamentable schism now reigning in the church’.¹⁸ These clerics included three bishops and various secular and regular theologians and canon lawyers, and they were to formulate their advice with members of Oxford university. Of the regulars, the Benedictines and Augustinians outnumbered other orders, at four each. Among the four Augustinians on the committee was Michael Kympton, canon of Merton.¹⁹ Kympton’s presence on this committee suggests that he was a man of some reputation for learning.

The Oxford committee’s reply to the king was similar to the university’s counsel three years earlier. Then, it had argued that a general council was the only solution to the problem of rival popes. In 1399, the advice was that, although the free resignation of the popes was a possible way forward, a surer one would be a that general council be called, or even — a novel approach, originating from a group of French clerics — a council of clergy. Either council should be the final arbiter, if neither pope would resign. In the event, the king did not act upon their counsel, but the committee provides us with a list of some of the top theologians and canons lawyers of the time.

A much better-known Augustinian colleague of Kympton on the committee was Philip Repyngdon, abbot of Leicester.²⁰ Although there is no

¹⁸ *Calendar o Close Rolls, Richard II: Volume 6, 1396–1399*, ed. A. E. Stamp (London, 1927), pp. 367–370; M. Harvey, ‘The letters of the university of Oxford on withdrawal of obedience from Pope Boniface IX’, *Church History*, 11 (1975), 187–198.

¹⁹ Kympton presumably came from Kimpton (Hertfordshire), where Merton held land and church patronage. A Robert Kimpton was witness to a land agreement with Merton in 1385, and this perhaps suggests a local family of some means. GB-Ob MS Laud Misc. 723, fols 3^r, 31^v, 89^r.

²⁰ S. Wenzel, *Latin Sermon Collections from Later Medieval England: Orthodox Preaching in the Age o Wyclif*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature (Cambridge, 2005), pp. 50–3.

concrete evidence that the two men knew each other, certain circumstances, including their membership of the Oxford committee, suggest an acquaintance. Looking at his career may help bring Kympton a little out of the shadows.

Both Kympton and Repyngdon were ordained on 26 May 1369, albeit in different dioceses.²¹ Repyngdon was elected prior of Leicester in 1393. Kympton was still just a canon of Merton (perhaps an obedientiary, but there is no record), but he was of enough standing to be appointed visitor of the Augustinians in 1395 in place of the prior of Southwark.²² A year after Kympton became prior of Merton (1403), Repyngdon was appointed bishop of Lincoln. Repyngdon had studied at Oxford in the 1380s; Kympton too had been a student of Oxford, where he was made 'sacre pagine professor' in 1396. Given their identical ordination dates, the two men must have been of a similar age and could have studied together. As a student, Repyngdon found Wyclif's ideas attractive, although he followed a more orthodox line after a disagreement with the church authorities.²³ He was an intellectual, moderate reformer, and we might therefore expect him to have favoured conciliarism as a solution to the papal schism. That Kympton was also among those recommending a general council may suggest a similar mode of thought to Repyngdon.

There may be a further link between the two men. At some point during Michael Kympton's life as a canon, Merton took possession of a sumptuous copy of the works of Grosseteste (GB-Lbl MS Royal 6 E v).²⁴ On the fly-leaf (fol. 252^v) is the draft acquittance by the prior and convent of Merton to the Warden and Fellows of New College, Oxford, for 16s. 6d. rent for 'Mowreshall' that we met in Chapter 5. New College was given Mauger's Hall by William of Wykeham in 1389, which is thus the *terminus ante quem non* for this note.²⁵

²¹ *BRUO*, II, p.1069; S. Forde, 'Repyndon [Repington, Repingdon], Philip (c. 1345–1424), bishop of Lincoln', *ODNB*; *idem.*, 'The educational organization of the Augustinian canons in England and Wales, and their university life at Oxford, 1325–1448', *History of Universities*, 13 (1994), p.48. Forde lists other Augustinian scholars from Oxford on pp. 37–46.

²² GB-Ob MS Laud Misc. 723 (Merton cartulary), fol. 89^v; Salter, *Chapters*, p. xxix.

²³ Wenzel, *Latin Sermon Collections*, p.50.

²⁴ G. F. Warner and J. P. Gilson, *Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the old Royal and King's Collections. Volume I: Royal MSS. 1 A. 1 to 11 E. XI* (London, 1921), pp. 155–7; Carley, Henry VIII, Westminster H2.1239, p. 208; S. H. Thomson, *The Writings of Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln 1235–1253* (London, 1940), pp. 11–12; 214–32.

²⁵ W. A. Pantin and E. C. Rouse, 'The Golden Cross, Oxford', *Oxoniensia*, 20 (1955), p. 48. Mauger's Hall might have been where Kympton lodged as a student; Repyngdon, meanwhile, was at Broadgates Hall: D. Maclean, *A History of Pembroke College, Oxford*,

James Clark wrote that the monks of St Albans would take books with them when they were outside the abbey: in one manuscript, the cellarer, for example, scribbled notes from his trip to London.²⁶ The Grosseteste manuscript is large, beautiful and heavy: it is an unlikely travelling companion. This note is, therefore, more likely to have been written on receipt of the manuscript, which suggests that the manuscript was acquired in Oxford. We cannot be sure that it was Kympton who acquired it for Merton, but he was a student and master there. Robert Grosseteste was on the university reading list, and indeed Philip Repyngdon drew inspiration for some of his own sermons from Grosseteste, whose footsteps he followed both as chancellor of Oxford and bishop of Lincoln.²⁷

Harrison Thomson grouped this manuscript together with a similar fourteenth-century collection, GB-Lbl Royal MS 7 E II. This originated at Lincoln (it was given, a century later, to Brasenose College by William Smyth, bishop of Lincoln).²⁸ Thomson included in this group another manuscript, York Cath. XVI A 6, copied by a scribe called Schaw in the late fifteenth century. Schaw worked for Thomas Rotherham, who was bishop of Lincoln from 1472 before becoming archbishop of York in 1480, and this again suggests a Lincoln origin.²⁹ Before his promotion to the see of Lincoln, Philip Repyngdon had been abbot of Leicester, and as such he undertook repairs and renewals at the abbey, probably including the library: he might have been responsible for the similar collection of Grosseteste that appears in the Leicester Abbey booklists.³⁰ If so, in addition to the link between Lincoln and Oxford, there is one between the Grosseteste manuscripts and Repyngdon.

Anciently Broadgates Hall in which are incorporated Short Historical Notices of the More Eminent Members of this House, Oxford Historical Society Publications, 33 (Oxford, 1897), pp. 67–8.

²⁶ Clark, *Monastic Renaissance*, p. 130.

²⁷ S. Forde, 'Theological sources cited by two canons of Repton: Philip Repyngdon and John Eyton', *Studies in Church History Subsidia*, 5 (1987), p. 422. J. M. Fletcher, 'Developments in the Faculty of Arts', in *History of Oxford*, II, p. 344.

²⁸ Thomson, *Grosseteste*, p. 161, also noted its similarity to GB-Lbl Royal MS 7 F II, which belonged to Westminster Abbey, Merton's neighbour in Morden and supplier of its *Flores Historiarum*. Warner and Gilson, *Catalogue of Western Manuscripts*, I, p. 195.

²⁹ F. A. C. Mantello, 'Letter CXXXI ascribed to Robert Grosseteste: a new edition of the text', *Franciscan Studies*, 39 (1979), pp. 170–1.

³⁰ Webber & Watson, pp. 226–8 (nos 582–4), 231 (nos 611, 612), 268 (no. 858); M. T. J. Webber, 'The books of Leicester Abbey', in *Leicester Abbey: Medieval History, Archaeology and Manuscript Studies*, ed. J. Storey et al. (Leicester, 2006), pp. 140–1.

Although the Brasenose Grosseteste (Royal MS 7 E II) differs from the Merton Grosseteste (Royal MS 6 E V) in hands and in grandeur, there are likenesses between the two volumes. For example, the gothic hand which inscribed the titles of Royal MS 7 E II (fig. 6.1) is similar to that heading the table of contents on fol. 1 of Royal MS 6 E V (whose initial was never completed). These similarities may suggest a common place of origin. Although the evidence is circumstantial, these manuscripts may be evidence of a hitherto unnoticed acquaintance between Philip Repyngdon and Michael Kympton; it is even possible that Royal MS 6 E V was a gift from Repyngdon to Kympton. If the two men were acquainted, this may suggest that Kympton shared Repyngdon's reformist views, as well as his love of Grosseteste.

The Grosseteste volume (Royal MS 6 E V) is one of Merton most splendid books, with decorated borders and illuminated capitals, including a portrait of Grosseteste himself. There are two tables of contents, and evidence of two scribes (although Thomson argued for one).³¹ The interesting cadels at the top of several folios (e.g. 43^v, 44^r, 90^r, 114^r) were done before the manuscript was illuminated, for they appear underneath the bordering on, for example, fol. 136^r.

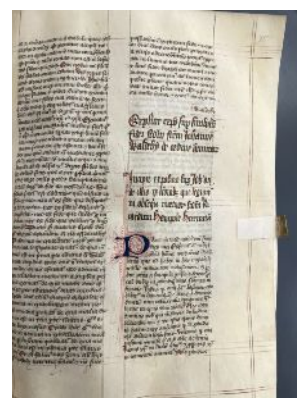


Figure 6.1: GB-Lbl Royal MS 7 E II, fol. 75^r.

The volume contains a collection of Grosseteste's *dicta* and sermons, his *Hexameron* and several scientific works. One of the texts was the bishop's criticism of the failure to appoint suitable parish clergy and (particularly levelled at monastic houses) to give them adequate stipends to enable them to minister to souls. Its presence may suggest that Merton, and the other houses who had relatives of this manuscript, had some concerns about its parochial responsibilities, which we discussed in Chapter 4.³²

Despite being a show book, it was used for private study. Several hands have written marginal notes, including adding column numbers and section headings; there are manicules on a number of folios and other marginalia

³¹ Thomson, *Grosseteste*, p. 11.

³² J. W. Goering, 'Robert Grosseteste at the Papal Curia', in *A Distinct Voice: Medieval Studies in Honor of Leonard E. Boyle, O.P.*, ed. J. Brown and W. P. Stoneman (Notre Dame, Indiana, 1997), pp. 253–76; W. Campbell, *The Landscape of Pastoral Care in 13th-Century England*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, Fourth Series (Cambridge, 2017), p. 1.

including, on fol. 152^r, a diagram of a circle with a chord at the top, bisected and, on fol. 240^v, concentric circles of zodiacal dates. There is even an ink splodge on fol. 73^v. Not all additions were appreciated: a creature who adorned the foot of fol. 75^v was erased. A doodle of a male head nose-to-nose with a female head, and a dog below them (fol. 235^r), is so similar in style to the woman's head on fol. 48^v (and possibly the dog on fol. 74^r) of GB-Lbl Royal MS 15 A XXXII that they are almost certainly the same (Merton) hand. Some time after it was not only written but annotated, Royal 6 E V was trimmed and strips of parchment were pasted on as page-markers. Coincidentally, Royal 7 E II also has these strips (fig. 6.1): the practice was not uncommon, and it illustrates the need for navigation aids in reference works, and suggests active learning.

Another volume which was in Merton's library during Kympton's life was GB-Ob MS Bodl. 555, a fourteenth-century copy of Henry of Sawtry's *Tractatus de purgatorio S. Patricii*, bound together with several other texts. These include the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus and Apocalypse of Paul, Ælred's *De vita eremitica ad sororem*, and the Pseudo-Bernardine *Planctus beatae Mariae Virginis* and *Meditationes piissimae*.³³ The final work in this set was a brief (and, it claimed, useful) treatise on confession. This volume contained suitable study materials for novices, but equally for personal study by the professed: a copy of the *Meditationes piissimae* was in a miscellany in the *libraria* of Leicester Abbey, where it could be used for study.³⁴ It is also possible that this volume was used for teaching outside the priory.

MS Bodl. 555 was intended as one book: each text leads continuously from its predecessor, with neatly-cut markers in the parchment to denote the beginning of a new text, for ease of reference. Apart from marginal doodles at the foot of fols 45^v–46^r, the text is clean — in contrast to its fly-leaves. These are pages from a thirteenth-century copy of the registers of Innocent III, which were turned 90°. The wide margins of the fly-leaves became a magnet for pen trials, scribbles and doodles. One scribble, a couplet written several times in

³³ Z. Izydorczyk, *Manuscripts of the Evangelium Nicodemi: A Census*, Subsidia Mediaevalia, 21 (Toronto, 1993); T. Silverstein, *Visio Sancti Pauli: The History of the Apocalypse in Latin, Together with Nine Texts* (London, 1935); A. W. Astell et al., *Three Pseudo-Bernardine Works*, Cistercian Studies Series, 273 (2018); H. Barré, 'Le Planctus Mariae attribué à Saint Bernard', *Revue d'Ascétique et de Mystique*, 28 (1952), 253–6.

³⁴ Webber & Watson, pp. 162–3, no. 244. The pairing of the Gospel of Nicodemus and the *Planctus beatae Mariae Virginis* was also to be found during this period at Leicester Abbey: Webber & Watson, p. 141, no. 148.

different hands, dispels any doubt about the manuscript's provenance, and suggests a certain intellectual humour:

A merito non inmerito meritona vocatur
Nam locus a merito meritorius esse probatur³⁵

Pen trials on fol. iv^r show that this book was owned by Hugo Samon, who was given it by John Heyford. Hugo Samon was made canon in 1400.³⁶ The will of one John Foxton left a bequest to John Heyford, canon of Merton in 1390.³⁷ However, the number of hands contributing to the fly-leaf scribbles suggest that the book was very much in communal ownership, rather than being in the hands of individual canons for any length of time. The volume was still at Merton in 1451 according to another scribble (the draught of a rental deed), probably written by a Robert Dewer, who wrote 'O jesu esto michi iesus Robert Dewer ipsi hec' (a popular prayer) on the same folio.³⁸ Of the various hands on these leaves, one in particular was responsible for a number of verses and phrases popular during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries: this, together with the number of hands, may suggest that it became a book for novices.³⁹

Above the verses on fol. 114^v is a petition of admission to an Augustinian house (presumably Merton):

Vobis domine Reuerende nec non confratribus vestris venerabilibus
supplico tam humiliter quam deuotere quatenus me licet indignum
secundum regulam sancti Augustini viuere et mori cupientem in

35 'By merit not unmerited Merton's so called; For the place by merit merits reward'.

36 GB-Ob MS Laud Misc. 723, fol. 3^r.

37 Heales, p. 276; *Calendar o Wills Proved and Enrolled in the Court o Husting, London: Part 2, 1358-1688*, ed. R. R. Sharpe (London, 1890), pp. 278-289.

38 'O Jesu, be my Jesus, Robert Dewer himself.' Fol. v^v, dated 1 December, 30 Henry VI [the VI is inferred].

39 For such verses, see, for example, T. Wright, 'On an early manuscript in the Muniment Room in the Guildhall, Leicester', *Collectanea Archæologia*, 2.1, p. 57 (1863); the *Codex Herzogenburgensis* 103, Bibliothèque Nationale de France MS Latin 3464, f.171^v; GB-Lbl Lansdowne MS 762, fol. 99^r; Antwerp, Stadsarchief, Vierschaar 1233 (S. H. Goddard, 'Probationes pennae: some sixteenth-century doodles on the theme of folly attributed to the Antwerp humanist Pieter Gillis and his colleagues', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 41 (1988), p. 263); GB-Lbl Harley MS 6041; Alford, J. A., 'Some unidentified quotations in "Piers Plowman"', *Modern Philology*, 72 (1975), p. 393; Nicolas de Bergame, *Dialogus creaturarum, moralisatus, jucundus, fabulis plenus* (Gouda, 1481); Thomas Paynell translated the *Regimen Sanitatis*, one of the excerpts.

vestram sanctam congregacionem admittere dignemini /caritatis\
intuitu.⁴⁰

Such oaths of profession adorn the fly-leaves and paste-downs of several Benedictine manuscripts; this profession oath could be a further suggestion that the book was studied by novices.⁴¹ The 'Johannes' at the top of fol. v^r has the same playful flourishes as John Gisborne's signature on fol. 206^r of Digby 147, discussed below, and may identify one of the hands as Gisborne's. The scripts of the pen trials are both cursive and book hands: they may be evidence of activity in chancery and scriptorium, but they certainly show the dynamism of book-ownership, including the re-use of out-of-date manuscripts. From the pen trials, it seems that MS Bodl. 555 was in use throughout the fifteenth century, a length of use which may also indicate its role as a novice text.

Two texts which might have been read out to novices during this period were the histories of Gilbert the Sheriff and Guy of Merton. GB-Lca Arundel 28, four works on the life of the founder of Merton, Gilbert the Sheriff (fig. 6.2) was perhaps copied in the last decade of the fourteenth century, suggested by a 1391 rental (fol. 19^v) for the manor of Molesey (Surrey). The manuscript is in one (chancery)

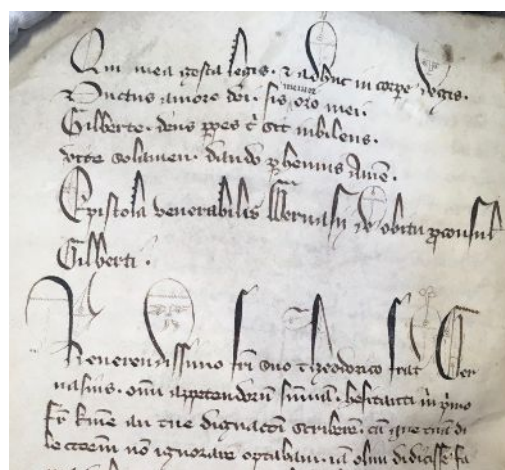


Figure 6.2: GB-Lca, Arundel 28, fol. 14^v

hand, and the Molesey rental is in the same hand. It is possible that the Merton scribe was inspired by the Grosseteste manuscript (Royal MS 6 E v), as the decorated cadels are similar. If so, that could suggest that the acquisition of the latter manuscript was c.1390. A palæographical comparison of Arundel 28 with the cartulary from around the same time, GB-Ob MS Laud Misc. 723, could be fruitful.

⁴⁰ 'I beseech you, reverend lord, and no less your worshipful confraters, humbly and devoutly, that you, from charity, admit me, although I live unworthily, who desire to live and die according to the rule of St. Augustine, into your holy congregation.'

⁴¹ J. G. Clark, *St Albans*, p. 53; 'Monastic education in late medieval England', in *The Church and Learning in Later Medieval Society: Essays in Honour of R. B. Dobson. Proceedings of the 1999 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. C. M. Barron and J. Stratford (Donington, 2002), p. 32.

This foundation history book was joined in the early fifteenth century, possibly during Kympton's priorate, by a new copy of the life of the founder-canon Guy of Merton (GB-Lbl Royal MS 8 E IX, fols. 91^r–98^r). The *Life o Guy* is a quire of eight leaves, ruled with a margin of about 1½ inches (40mm) and either 25 or 26 lines per side. The writing is sharp and clear and easy to read with few abbreviations, and this, together with the faint markings above the words, could suggest that this text was read out, perhaps in the refectory or at Chapter.⁴² James Clark identified a renewed interest amongst regular clergy, including the Augustinians, in history during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and argued that this interest saw the copying (and in the case of St Bartholomew's Priory, the translation) of foundation stories.⁴³ He suggested further that these documents might have fallen into obscurity, and the Merton ones 'were discoveries of texts perhaps not read in their own community since the twelfth century.'⁴⁴ The fifteenth century did see a growth in antiquarianism, and it is surely right to locate these texts in this environment of historical interest. We cannot necessarily infer that 'the anonymous compilers... had uncovered texts for which there was no continuous manuscript tradition', as no information about a manuscript tradition does not mean no manuscript tradition. It is possible that a previous copy was becoming worn through constant use; this may have been the original or an interim copy, destroyed, in the same way as service books, because it was no longer useful.⁴⁵ It is also possible that this was one of several copies which did not survive the library's demise. The *Life o Guy* and *Gilbert* were copied by different scribes on different occasions; their coincidence in date may be chance. However, the comparison with the St Bartholomew's text, a twelfth-century composition actively made up-to-date with a vernacular translation, and the coincidence in dates of both the *Gilbert* and the *Life o Guy* manuscripts does support the idea of a renewed interest in institutional history among the Augustinians.

42 M. T. J. Webber, 'Reading in the refectory: monastic practice in England c.1000–c.1300' (presented at the Annual John Coffin Memorial Palaeography Lecture, University of London, 2010), pp. 7, 8, 18.

43 E. A. Webb, *The Records o St. Bartholomew's Priory and o the Church and Parish o St. Bartholomew the Great, West Smithfield* (Oxford, 1921), pp. 385–427; King *et al.*, *Book of the Foundation of... St. Bartholomew*.

44 Clark, 'Augustinians, history, and literature', in *BSRC*, p. 410.

45 N. Bell, 'Music', in *CHBB*, II, p. 466.

The *Life o Guy* was bound sometime during the fifteenth century not with *Gilbert*, but with two unrelated texts: Alexander Neckam's *De laudibus divine sapientie* (fols 1^r–89^r), in a fifteenth-century book hand, and a *Speculum ecclesie* (fols 89^v–90^v), in a more cursive fifteenth-century hand ('scribbled notes', as Warner and Gilson described it). The copy of *De laudibus*, a versified version of Alexander's *De naturis rerum*, is the one that Thomas Wright used for his edition. He noted 'a few slight errors and imperfections' in this 'otherwise tolerably good text'. Andrew Dunning was less forgiving of it: this copy is 'late and structures the work incorrectly', resulting 'in a skewed view of these works'.⁴⁶ This was the only copy of *De laudibus* that Wright had come across, but the work survives in at least six other locations, and five other copies are known.⁴⁷ Of the several marginal hands in the Merton text, a distinctive one has highlighted, with marginal headings 'Laude Albanie Britannie seu Anglie' by a passage on the natural resources of England, and 'Troia noua Londini seu Londone', and also 'de Hibernia' (fols 60^r, 61^v, 63^r). This would seem to suggest a canon's interest in national and local history (although, as he also noted 'Origo tonitrium', on fol. 25^r, his interest may have been wider.) Another hand corrected a word (fol. 83^r) and added marginal headings to sections.⁴⁸

At the bottom of fol. 89^r is a paragraph on envy. This comprises several sayings about envy, the sort of moral *dicta* that schoolrooms were full of and that pepper the flyleaves of MS Bodl. 555, discussed above. Overleaf (fol. 89^v) is a *Speculum ecclesie*, retrospectively filling up the rest of the quire. This is apparently in the same hand as the paragraph on envy. The *Speculum* is a tract on the Trinity, comparing it to both burning coals and to memory, intelligence and will, to explain the interrelation of Father, Son and Holy Ghost. It is not a known *speculum*; it could, like the passage on envy, be a copy or compilation of common exemplars or texts of the time, or it could be a novel composition for novices. The final section of the book, on fol. 99^r, is a (barely legible) quatrain, starting 'fons femina fellis' ('woman is the fount of bile'). This

⁴⁶ Alexander Neckam: *De Naturis Rerum, Libri Duo: with the Poem o the Same Author, De Laudibus Divinae Sapientiae*, ed. T. Wright (Cambridge, 2012), p. lvii; Dunning, 'Alexander Neckam', p. 3.

⁴⁷ A. N. J. Dunning, 'Alexander Neckam's Manuscripts and the Augustinian Canons of Oxford and Cirencester' (unpublished PhD thesis, Toronto, 2016), pp. 165–6; A. G. Rigg, *A History o Anglo-Latin Literature, 1066–1422* (Cambridge, 1992), p. 119.

⁴⁸ Dunning, 'Cirencester', p. 3.

is related to the more misogynist verses on the flyleaves of MS Bodl.555 (e.g. fol. 116^v), and is found in other contemporary manuscripts.⁴⁹ Fol. 99^r also has an *ex libris* of Merton Priory and, underneath, the signature of one Arnold, whose surname has been erased. He may be Arnold Binchester, one of the brethren who elected William Salyng prior in 1502.⁵⁰

Like MS Bodl. 555, Royal MS 8 E IX shows inter-generational use during the fifteenth century. Another example of this is a copy of book IV of Peter Lombard's *Sentences* (GB-Lbl Royal MS 9 E VI). This is a thirteenth-century volume, and as such it has been discussed in Chapter 3. It was rebound at some point in the fifteenth-century, with a new table of contents (incomplete, fols 3–4), folio headings and *Distinctiones* numbers in a rather beautiful hand that tends to the humanistic. The book might also have been trimmed at this point. There is writing on the outer long edge, suggesting (as noted in Chapter 3) how the book was stored in the library collection. It is difficult to read what the writing says, and also difficult to work out whether the writing belongs to the thirteenth century or the fifteenth (fig. 6.3).

We do not know whether this was already in Merton's possession or if it entered the library then. Lombard was still the 'standard systematic textbook' at Oxford, and it was, as can be seen from the marginalia, much used in the cloister: several folios have the large annotations of a fifteenth-century reader (e.g. 44^r, 48^v), and the neater ones of another, including a talking head (58^v, 59^r).⁵¹ Among the book bequest of Thomas Paynell to St John's College, Oxford, was a 1512 printed copy of Scotus' commentary on the *Sentences*, a work typical for university theologians. John Ramsey purchased a copy of Gerardus Odonis' commentary on Lombard's *Sentences*, (GB-Gu Eg.6.a.9). Both volumes suggest the continuing study of the *Sentences* at Merton.⁵²



Figure 6.3: GB-Lbl Royal MS 9 E VI

49 For example, GB-Otc MS 7 (R. Gameson, *The Medieval Manuscripts of Trinity College, Oxford: a Descriptive Catalogue* (Oxford, 2018), p. 112); GB-OB MS Rawl. C. 22 (H. Walther, 'Lateinische Verskünstelungen des Mittelalters', *Zeitschrift für Deutsches Altertum und Deutsche Literatur*, 91 (1962), p. 340.

50 Heales, p. 311.

51 Catto, 'Theology after Wycliffism', *History of Oxford*, II, pp. 267–9.

52 Cf. Clark, *Monastic Renaissance*, p. 67. Paynell's list also contains Barbazza's edition of the Clementine constitutions.

Kympton's immediate successor as prior was John Romeney (1413–32). Romeney was made deacon 1398, being priested three years later alongside Thomas Shirfeld, who succeeded him as prior (1432–39).⁵³ They were either less distinguished or left few marks on Merton's history. In October 1442, Henry VI granted the custody of the priory and its temporalia to the sub-prior and convent, following the custom of his predecessors, while a new prior was being elected. A witness to this was William Lyndwood, whose *Provinciale* would find its way into Merton's library sixty years later. The interregnum lasted until December, when at last the temporalia were restored, to John de Kingston.⁵⁴

The Priorates of John de Kingston (1442–85) and John Gisborne (1485–1502)

John de Kingston was an Oxford D.Th. by the time he was elected prior, and it would seem that his scholarship was well-known: at the Oseney General Chapter of 1443, he was described as *sacre theologie professor*, and appointed to give the English sermon at the following General Chapter.⁵⁵ This he accomplished, *multum eleganter*, before a large audience in the parish church of All Saints, Northampton, and from the tone of the description, Kingston seems to have been of some reputation amongst a collection of canons clearly impressed by learned men: the Latin sermon was to be given by another professor of theology, William Wyskare, a *prior studentium* who became the prior of Mottisfont and the suffragan bishop of Sidon.⁵⁶ Kingston's protégé and successor, John Gisborne, also looked up to him, noting in his student mathematics book:

This book, of the church of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Merton by London in the diocese of Winchester, was given to Dom. John Gysborn, canon of the same place and scholar of Oxford by master

⁵³ Romeney was made subdeacon in 1397 (*Wykeham*, I, p. 342), deacon in 1398 (*Wykeham*, I, p. 344, II, p. 479) and priest in 1401 (*Wykeham*, II, p. 524); Shirfeld an acolyte in 1396 and sub-deacon in 1397 (*Wykeham* I, pp. 339, 340).

⁵⁴ Heales, pp. 299–300; D. M. Smith, ed., *The Heads o Religious Houses: England and Wales, 1377–1540*, Heads of Religious Houses, III (Cambridge, 2008), p. 479.

⁵⁵ *BRUO* II, p. 1075; Salter, *Chapters*, pp. 85, 104.

⁵⁶ Salter, *Chapters*, pp. 104, 108; M. Heale, *The Abbots and Priors o Late Medieval and Reformation England* (Oxford, 2016), p. 198.

John Kyngeston, prior of the aforesaid Merton, professor of theology,
AD 1456.⁵⁷

John de Kingston was one of a number of ‘de Kingstons’ associated with Merton — unsurprisingly, given Merton’s proximity to and connexions with this thriving town. He therefore fits a pattern of recruits from places connected with the priory, generally parishes of which Merton had patronage, such as Tregony and Kimpton. A reference to John Lamvayll in 1456 suggests an alternative, family surname, dropped at profession in favour of a toponym following standard monastic practice.⁵⁸ His student career might have been similar to Richard Calne, canon of Lanthony, at Oxford around the same time. Calne set off to Oxford with at least one priory book, and purchased nine more during his student career, all texts relevant to the Oxford curriculum, and all of which became part of Lanthony’s library.⁵⁹

Kingston’s priorate was remarkably lengthy. In 1471 he was granted a bishop’s licence for a confessor, perhaps suggesting some frailty by then, although he continued as prior for a further thirteen-and-a-half years.⁶⁰ Despite his long prelacy, there is frustratingly little information about Kingston, and the only manuscript we can definitely assign to him is GB-OB MS Ashmole 1522.

MS Ashmole 1522 is a collection of scientific texts suitable for a university student, many of the texts appearing on the existing Arts Faculty book lists.⁶¹ There were practical aids to computing Easter, and working out the position of the sun. Articles 1 and 20, verses by Alexander de Villa Dei, were specifically written for the memorisation of rules and principles, and laid out for such.⁶² Two articles (10 and 11) were manuals for using the astrolabe, the first being the hugely popular book by Pseudo-Masha’allah.⁶³ There were two tracts by the renowned Johannes de Sacrobosco, and Pierre Peregrine de Maricourt’s best-

57 ‘Liber ecclesie beate Marie de Merton iuxta London dioc’ in Wynton traditus domino Iohanni Gysborn’ canonico eiusdem loci et scolari oxon. per magistrum Iohannem Kyngeston’ priorem de Merton predicta in sacra theologia professorem anno domini millesimo cccc^{mo} quinquagesimo sexto.’ GB-Ob MS Ashmole 1522, fol. 202^v.

58 D. M. Smith, *Supplement to the Heads of Religious Houses: England and Wales, Supplement* (Cluj-Napoca, Romania, 2019), p. 207; J. Greatrex, *The English Benedictine Cathedral Priories: Rule and Practice, c.1270–c.1420* (Oxford, 2012), p. 42.

59 Bennett, ‘Llanthony Priory’, pp. 181–3. See also Forde, ‘Augustinian canons’, pp. 38–42.

60 Heales, p. 303.

61 J. A. Weisheipl, ‘Curriculum of the Faculty of Arts at Oxford in the early fourteenth century’, *Medieval Studies*, 26 (1964), 143–85.

62 S. Falk, *The Light Ages* (London, 2020), p. 69; Carruthers, *Memory*, pp. 163, 168.

selling *Letter on the Magnet*.⁶⁴ The Arab-Islamic tradition naturally formed the backbone of the science contained in this collection, and was represented both indirectly in these sections and directly, in, for example, articles 6, 12, 13 and 16. Finally, of use to the student, there was an index.

By the time that Kingston owned it, this volume was about 100 years old. Pächt and Alexander suggested the manuscript was English but possibly with French sections.⁶⁵ It was probably bought, if not produced, in Oxford; the kalendar (fol. 13) has Augustine's feast day in black, rather than red, suggesting a non-Augustinian source. Following recorded practice, Kingston might have bought Ashmole 1522 himself (with priory money) from an Oxford dealer: Richard Calne's book acquisition for Llanthony has been noted; several canons of Leicester also contributed student books to their priory's library.⁶⁶ Equally, the book might already have been at Merton, ready to be borrowed by another promising student.

At least seven marginal hands from the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries appear throughout the volume, and attest to its continued good use. For example, one hand noted the placement of digits and made calculations of latitude, including that of London and Oxford; another was responsible for manicules and accompanying side headings.⁶⁷ The history of this book after Gisborne's student career until it was acquired by Elias Ashmole in the seventeenth century is unclear, but there is no reason to doubt that it stayed in Merton's library until the Dissolution.

That John de Kingston passed Ashmole 1522 on to Gisborne shows some encouragement of scholarship within his priory. Kingston eventually also passed on to Gisborne the prelacy of Merton.⁶⁸ Gisborne studied at Oxford in the

63 R. B. Thomson, *Pseudo-Masha'allah: On the Astrolabe: A Critical Edition of the Latin Text with English Translation*, version 1.5 (Toronto, 2019), p. 29 and *passim*.

64 O. Pedersen, 'In quest of Sacrobosco', *Journal for the History of Astronomy*, 16 (1985), pp. 175–220; Falk, *The Light Ages*, pp. 213–4.

65 M. B. Parkes, 'The provision of books', *History of Oxford*, II, pp. 413–20; O. Pächt and J. J. G. Alexander, *Illuminated Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library Oxford* (Oxford, 1973), III, no. 596.

66 M. T. J. Webber, 'The books of Leicester Abbey', in *Leicester Abbey: Medieval History, Archaeology and Manuscript Studies*, ed. J. Storey *et al.* (Leicester, 2006), pp. 139–40; Forde, 'Augustinian canons', pp. 42–3.

67 Fols 17^r, 96^r; 33^r, 335^r, 44^v, 117^v.

68 Gisborne's name may come from Gisborough (Yorks) or Gisburn (Lancashire), but it may be more local: in 1394 a Peter Gysborne was brought to Wykeham's court for stealing, *Wykeham*, II, p. 453.

1450s, graduating as a bachelor of civil law, and at the election of his successor in 1502, he was described as *magister*.⁶⁹ Gisborne possessed, in addition to Ashmole 1522, another volume, GB-Ob MS Digby 147. This is slightly more miscellaneous, being a well-thumbed compendium of scientific, literary and moral texts. Like Ashmole 1522, Gisborne acquired this second-hand, for the volume predates Gisborne's ownership of it by at least half a century. Gisborne's signature appears on both fol. 1^v and fol. 206^r. Also in his hand are 'Mertonia', pen trials of his name and two Latin sentences, 'Felix qui poterit rerum cognoscere causas' (Virgil, *Georgics* II:490) and 'Felix quem faciunt aliena pericula cautum'.⁷⁰

The volume is a composite in a couple of hands, although largely of one style (with blue and red initials and rubricated capital letters of sentences), suggesting that most of it was produced in order to make one volume. The treatise on husbandry by Walter of Henley was added as an afterthought, although Watson and Hunt identified the hand as the main one in the rest of the volume.⁷¹ The other folios largely seem to be in the same hand, with the exception of the treatise on metre (fols 40^r–44^r) and a recipe for aqua vitae (fols 205^{ra–v}), the latter filling in some blank pages left at the end of the final quire. The former is in a different hand from the rest, although as it starts on the eighth folio of a quire of twelve, it may be part of the same campaign. The Walter of Henley section is a quire of eight folios, in contrast to the other texts, which are quires of twelve; it also has its own *ex libris* on fol. 2^r. This suggests that the compiler seems wrote Walter of Henley separately and combined it with the rest of the volume afterwards, inserting the title into the already-written table of contents. Although the volume could have an Oxford provenance, the *ex libris* at the top of fol. 9^r is in a remarkably similar hand: this might have been produced at Merton, and Gisborne could have borrowed it from the priory's library.

69 *BRUO* II, p. 771; Heales, p. 331; Register Fox, I, fol. 17^r. He is missing from Des Atkinson's list of student-lawyers: '*Ecclesia Reformata* — John Morton's Contemporaries and the Re-Making of the English Church' (unpublished PhD thesis, Exeter, 2021), pp. 309–30.

70 There is also an eight-line inscription, but this is not legible either by the naked eye or by UV owing to a reagent.

71 'Notes on Macray's descriptions', in W. D. Macray, *Digby Manuscripts*, ed. R. W. Hunt and A. G. Watson (Oxford, 1999), p. 67. See also Pächt and Alexander, *Illuminated Manuscripts in the Bodleian*, III, pp. 64–5. The on-line catalogue is at https://medieval.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/catalog/manuscript_4263. For Gisborne, see Chapter 6.

The decorated capitals of Digby 147 seem to have been executed at the same time as the text. Although certain letters, such as 'Q' on fol. 6, were painted over the text, the 'I' on the same page and, more particularly, the 'Q' on fol. 97^v suggest that the capital could have preceded the text. The male and female heads on the catchwords (e.g. fols 32^v, 79^v) are perhaps also from then. There are illustrations of geometric shapes and of stills that are later marginalia, rather than original illustrations (fols 32^v, 104^v–105^v). The rather accomplished doodles, for example on 48^r or 51^v, bear some resemblance to those of Ashmole 1522 and Royal MS 15 A XXXII, and the manicules, possibly by the same hand, on fols 73^v and 74^r are very like those on fols 29^v and 116^v of Ashmole 1522. The hand on fol. 30^r (a treatise on alchemy) may be Gisborne's own, and possibly also the numerous annotations to Alan de Lille's *De planctu naturæ* on 152^{r-v}, headed by a summary of the work, that 'Omnis qui facit peccatum separabitur a deo' ('everyone who sins shall be separated from God').⁷² The annotations on Walter of Henley, about when to weed corn and how to identify an infected sheep (fols 4^r, 7^r), are in a later hand (sixteenth-century) in English. The same hand wrote 'marke this place' against Richard of Bury's complaint (underlined) that 'Occupant etenim loca nostra nunc canes, nunc aves, nunc bestia bipedalis, cujus cohabitatio' ('for our places are seized now by dogs, now by hawks, now by that biped beast').⁷³ The hand on fol. 93^r is a different one again.

The wider range of subject matter, for example Walter of Henley, ensured that the volume was also relevant for an intellectual obedientiary. Indeed, Gisborne's role as cellarer might have given him reason to keep a volume on husbandry, and the later annotator apparently used the volume as practical guidance. Both Ashmole 1522 and Digby 147 are attractive books, well laid-out and copied, with sumptuous illustrations. These are not mere student notebooks: they contrast strongly with, for example, a similar miscellany but a much more work-a-day manuscript, GB-Cu Ii.I.13.⁷⁴ Merton could afford high-end manuscripts.

⁷² For the Augustinians' interest in alchemy, see R. Hanna, 'Augustinian canons and Middle English literature', in *The English Medieval Book: Studies in Memory of Jeremy Griffiths*, ed. A. S. G. Edwards et al. (London, 2000), p. 33.

⁷³ Fol. 13^r. E. C. Thomas, trans., *The Love of Books: The Philobiblon of Richard de Bury* (London, 1903), p. 28.

⁷⁴ *A Catalogue of the Manuscripts Preserved in the Library of the University of Cambridge, edited for the Syndics of the University Press*, repr. (Hildesheim, 1980), III, pp. 321–7.

THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

The Priorates of William Salyng (1502–20) and John Lacy (1520–30)

Two Oxford students at the time of Gisborne's succession to the priorate were John Richmond and William Salyng. Salyng has had something of a bad press, John Blair remarking that he was 'an unsatisfactory character who incurred episcopal anger for laziness and immorality'.⁷⁵ Evangeline Evans was more forgiving, observing that 'he was evidently a scholar who had reluctantly become an administrator, whose interests were still in Oxford rather than in his Priory'.⁷⁶ Salyng's reputation needs revision.

Two Salyngs were canons at Merton in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries: William (d.1520) and John (d. by 1543). They seem to have been part of a family of London citizens, originally from Essex.⁷⁷ In 1519, canon William was executor to his brother Thomas, who had been a London citizen and woodmonger. Thomas willed to be buried in the church of Merton Priory, at the altar of St Frideswide, where William himself was to be buried. That Merton had a chapel to St Frideswide is suggestive of links to Oxford, a link that William wished to preserve even in death.⁷⁸ In 1528, Richard Salyng of Littlebury and Rowenho (Essex) died, leaving these properties to his son and heir, Augustine (d.1546). It is unknown what relation either William or John were to Richard, but that he called his son 'Augustine' may imply some relationship between these individuals and the priory.⁷⁹

A student by 1485, William became professor of theology at Oxford in 1503, taking his doctorate there in 1504 and at Cambridge in 1506.⁸⁰ By this time, he was prior of Merton (1502). He was *prior studentium* at Oxford by 1509, for Bishop Fox of Winchester forbade Salyng to take any more time away from Merton in favour of his Oxford duties without his express permission, as well as pulling him up short on the company he kept on the occasions that he was back

⁷⁵ J. Blair, 'Frewin Hall, Oxford: a Norman mansion and a monastic college', *Oxoniensia*, 43 (1978), p. 67.

⁷⁶ E. Evans, 'St. Mary's College in Oxford for Austin Canons', *Oxfordshire Archaeological Society*, 75 (1931), p. 387.

⁷⁷ J. H. Harvey, *Henry Yevele c.1320 to 1400: the Life of an English Architect* (London, 1944), p. 21; A. K. McHardy, *The Church in London, 1375–1392* (London, 1977), p. 70; P. J. Hopkins, 'Merton's medieval rebels', *Merton Historical Society Bulletin*, 192 (December, 2014), p. 12.

⁷⁸ Miller & Saxby, p. 98; D. M. Smith, *The Heads of Religious Houses, Supplement*, p. 207.

⁷⁹ *VCH Essex*, IV, pp. 214–215.

⁸⁰ Heales, pp. 304, 315; *BRUC*, p. 504.

at Merton.⁸¹ As *prior studentium*, Salyng's interests included the nascent College of St Mary's. Although, as discussed above, the Benedictines had had colleges in Oxford for over a century, the Augustinians and Cistercians were slow to establish ones, despite impetus given by Benedict XII in the mid-thirteenth century.⁸² However, by the early fifteenth century, the Augustinian General Chapter had decided to found a college, perhaps because external pressure for regulars to have colleges was now too great to ignore.⁸³ In 1435, Thomas and Elizabeth Holden gave Frewin Hall (New Inn Hall Street) to the Augustinians for this purpose.⁸⁴ In 1506 Salyng presided over the Augustinian General Chapter that decreed that each monastery should pay two pence to the pound, or another amount at the visitor's discretion, for the building of St Mary's College. The project manager of the works was William Salyng, in his capacity as *prior studentium*. However, in 1509, the General Chapter forbade his receiving any more levies until he had produced the accounts. Blair wrote that 'this extreme action may indicate a noticeable lack of activity on the site.'⁸⁵ Salyng was apparently not the most efficient manager: at Merton he was castigated by both the bishop and, previously, by the bishop's visitor Dr John Dowman, for being not only too absent but, when present, too lenient.⁸⁶ Financial ineptitude might not, therefore, come as a surprise. However, Salyng's long-term commitment to St Mary's should not be doubted. In April 1517, for example, Salyng obtained a mortmain licence to merge two parishes in order to fund the studentship of a canon and a secular scholar at St Mary's College.⁸⁷

For some reason, there do not appear to have been General Chapters either in 1512 or 1515, and by the 1518 chapter the college had not been finished, nor were the finances much more transparent than they had been in 1509, although Salyng did hand over the accounts and said that he would readily answer for them.⁸⁸ This was a fractious chapter, with the prior of Southwark at

81 Salter, *Chapters*, p. 128; Heales, p. 318.

82 R. B. Dobson, 'The religious orders 1370–1540', in *History of Oxford*, II, p. 539.

83 Forde, 'Augustinian canons', p. 37.

84 Dobson, 'The religious orders', p. 554; Blair, 'Frewin Hall', p. 65.

85 Salter, *Chapters*, p. 128; Blair, 'Frewin Hall', p. 67.

86 Heales, pp. 316–21.

87 Heales, p. 322; *LESP*, II, no. 3151, p. 1017. This entry is a little confusing, for it talks of 'the college of St. Mary, of Richmond...founded by Henry VII', and Blair suggested that there had been an attempt to re-found the college under royal patronage in the early 1500s: Blair, 'Frewin Hall', p. 67.

88 Salter, *Chapters*, pp. 134–5, 137–8.

one point wringing his hands and weeping that they were all in danger of bending the Rule. The prelates lamented that their order was seeing a collapse in ‘regularibus observanciis quam temporalibus possessionibus’.⁸⁹ Cardinal Wolsey urged the Augustinians to avoid ruin and moral danger by completing the college with haste: this was not a general complaint about the poor state of learning among the Augustinians, but an answer to a specific problem. Consequently, the chapter decided to ‘commit all the building and statutes of our college at Oxford to his [Wolsey’s] full organisation’.⁹⁰ It may be that Salyng was a useless project manager, or that he was not business-like enough to extract money from the houses that owed it: if they were in a general financial strait, raising funds could have been difficult, and it might have been hoped that Wolsey’s aid would extend to financial contributions. With Wolsey’s impetus, the college building works were driven on, and only four months after the chapter, the priors of Elsing Spital and Tonbridge had collected together substantial building monies, including those from William Salyng. Records for the finished college are lacking, but John Blair’s work on the archaeology of Frewin Hall may be added to by excavations at Brasenose College.⁹¹

Back at Merton, Salyng was twice castigated by episcopal authorities for failure to fulfil his prior’s duties adequately. The first set of injunctions (1504), from Bishop Fox’s commissary, commanded his residency, his accounts and better discipline, and also that he did not separate himself from the rest of the convent so much.⁹² The second, from about five years later, was more detailed. His financial management was challenged, although this was a normal criticism in episcopal visitations. As well as the usual generic exhortations not to sell or alienate property, Salyng was instructed to keep an up-to-date inventory, displayed in the chapter house every autumn, and to leave his treasury keys with the sub-prior if he left the precinct. He was to keep three copies of books of sermons, customs and constitutions, in the possession of the prior, sub-prior and master of the order. Having accessible copies of the customary would have been fairly standard, and William of Wykeham had chastised a predecessor of

89 Salter, *Chapters*, p. 133.

90 Salter, *Chapters*, p. 141. Cf. G. W. Bernard, *The Late Medieval English Church: Vitality and Vulnerability Before the Break with Rome* (Yale, 2012), p. 191.

91 Blair, ‘Frewin Hall’, p. 90; Dobson, ‘The religious orders’, p. 555; Evans, ‘St Mary’s’, pp. 374–89; <https://oxfordarchaeology.com/our-projects/frewin-hall-oxford>.

92 Heales, pp. 315–7.

William for not ensuring that the constitutions of Ottobuono were read out; there is no indication what the book of sermons was.⁹³ Salyng was to appoint suitable chaplains and confessors, and seek assent from the brethren regarding the appointment and dismissal of obedientiaries. He should also not try to stop 'good' priests visiting brethren in the sub-prior's rooms (which, *inter alia*, shows the interaction between secular and regular clergy). Salyng was further reprimanded for his absence (at Oxford) and for, when present, consorting with both various women and certain unsuitable men, including a canon of the Augustinian hospital of St Mary-without-Bishopsgate and Roger Thorney.⁹⁴

It is interesting that it was Bishop Richard Fox who reprimanded Salyng so. Fox himself was a patron of learning — an Erasmian who himself founded an Oxford college.⁹⁵ The identity of the canon of Bishopsgate is unknown. Roger Thorney (d. 1515) was a wealthy London mercer, who supplied touchstone and marble for Henry VII's tomb and left money and property to Jesus College, Cambridge. He was also an active literary patron, and commissioned a copy of Higden's *Polychronicon* from Wynkyn de Worde.⁹⁶ In 1514, Salyng was among the witnesses of Thorney's gift to Jesus College; others included John More and his son Thomas, who had been a student at Canterbury College while Salyng himself was studying at Oxford.⁹⁷ Thomas More was a friend of Erasmus, who in 1499 had been invited to England by William Mountjoy. During his stay, Erasmus visited Oxford where he was hosted by St Mary's College. Erasmus would write in praise of the learning and acquaintances of the prior of St Mary's, Richard Charnock, and it was Charnock who introduced Erasmus to John Colet, over dinner at St Mary's.⁹⁸ It is possible that William Salyng was in Oxford and met Erasmus during his stay; certainly,

93 Heales, pp. 268, pp. 318, C; see also Clark, *Monastic Renaissance*, p. 55.

94 Heales, pp. 318–9, C–CI; *L&P*, I, no. 775, p. 107; J. Boffey, 'Early printers and English lyrics: sources, selection, and presentation of texts', *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 85.1 (1991), p. 20.

95 C. S. L. Davies, 'Fox [Foxy], Richard (1447/8–1528), administrator, bishop of Winchester, and founder of Corpus Christi College, Oxford', *ODNB*.

96 G. Bone, 'Extant manuscripts printed by W. de Worde with notes on the owner, Roger Thorney', *The Library*, 12 (1931–2), 284–302.

97 S. Baker House, 'More, Sir Thomas [St Thomas More] (1478–1535), lord chancellor, humanist, and martyr', *ODNB*.

98 Dobson, 'The religious orders', p. 555; *Opus Epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterdami*, ed. H. M. Allen and P. S. Allen (Oxford, 1906), I, pp. 243, 249, 265, 267, 268; H. J. Savage, 'The first visit of Erasmus to England', *PMLA*, 37, (1922), 94–112; P. I. Kaufman, 'John Colet and Erasmus' "Enchiridion"', *Church History*, 46 (1977), 296–312.

Salyng had some acquaintance with Erasmus: eighteen years later, in 1517, Salyng sent horses to Erasmus' friends John Sixtin and Andreas Ammonius so that they could enjoy a trip out into the countryside.⁹⁹ Canon Thomas Paynell had a 1510 edition of Erasmus' letters, although whether this had been Merton's copy is unknown.

As well as being president of the General Chapter in 1506, William Salyng was visitor for all Augustinian houses in the diocese of Winchester, and in 1518 he was appointed to give the next General Chapter's English sermon (although he died before it was called).¹⁰⁰ Since prelates had to be good examples to their brethren, a higher standard of behaviour was expected than normal, and perhaps we should take this into account when reading the episcopal injunctions.¹⁰¹ There is no record of his being fined or punished in any way for financial irregularity, and no record, either, of any further reproof from his bishop. Far from being lazy and immoral, William Salyng was a scholar of some standing who moved in Erasmian circles and was committed to promoting canons' study at Oxford. He maintained a good reputation amongst his fellow Augustinians, and his company was intellectual, if not quite to his bishop's taste.

William Salyng's sub-prior was John Lacy, and Lacy succeeded Salyng as prior in 1520. Lacy had been part of Merton's community from, at the latest, 1500; his family may have had longer connexions with the priory, for a James de Lacy was *capellanus* holding lands in Surrey of the priory c.1392.¹⁰² Lacy was a graduate in both canon and civil law: as the scribe for the 1518 General Chapter, alongside Hugh Witwycke (the *prior studentium* at Oxford), Lacy was described as 'in utroque iure bachalarius canonicus de Merton'.¹⁰³ Lacy does not appear in *BRUO*, and no further details of his university career have come to light.

99 Heales, p. 323; H. M. Allen, P. S. Allen and H. W. Garrod, eds, *Epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterdami*, III, pp. 47–8. Andreas Ammonius (1476–1517) was secretary to Lord Mountjoy (patron of Erasmus). As will be seen below, Thomas Paynell was also acquainted with Lord Mountjoy. S. Baker House, 'Erasmus circle in England (act. 1499–1521', *ODNB*. For John Sixtin, see T. N. Brushfield, 'John Sixtinus, archpriest of Haccombe', *Report and Transactions of the Devonshire Association*, 34 (1902), 276–288.

100 Salter, *Chapters*, pp. 122, 132, 142–3; Heales, p. 317.

101 Heale discusses the prelate as exemplar: *Abbots and Priors*, pp. 92–3.

102 Heales, pp. 279, 328; GB-Ob MS Laud Misc. 723, fols 42^r, 65^r.

103 Salter, *Chapters*, p. 132; Heales, p. 326.

A grounding in law was very useful for an obedientary of a monastery with a large portfolio of landholdings, as well as one active in the affairs of its order and its diocese. Several of Merton's printed books were legal texts and several of its canons were law graduates. As a major landowner, Merton found itself frequently defending its titles, but there were other areas which required a competence at law. In his study of a legal compendium belonging to Windesheim, Wouter Druwé found texts relating to the validity of religious vows, to prioral elections and depositions, transfers of canons from one community to another, relations with bishops and the secular clergy, and on matrimonial, contract and penal law.¹⁰⁴ This variety can be seen at Merton. Prior Robert de Windsor (1368–1403) sat on an assize of disseisin for the king in 1399; in 1373 he was a judge for the bishop of Winchester, and in 1387 he had received a canon of Newark into his custody on account of his 'scandalous excesses'.¹⁰⁵ Thomas Shirfeld (1432–9) had to defend the priory over a matter of drainage in Kingston in 1437 (Merton lost and was fined). Under John Lacy (1520–30), a man was convicted of poaching salmon from Merton's property at Kew, only for the king to pardon him in 1525.¹⁰⁶ In 1406, Michael Kympton attempted to stop canon William Hay becoming a parish priest, the latter having obtained a papal dispensation.¹⁰⁷ During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, there was one prioral resignation and nine elections, and Merton's priors were frequently used as visitors to other Augustinian houses.

It is in this context that we may place two law volumes associated with Prior John Lacy, a book of Lyndwood's *Provinciale* and Ayton's *Constituciones*, and Henry Bohic's *Super quinque libros decretalium*. The copy of *Henricus Bouhic super quinque libros decretalium* (GB-Ojc c.3.5), a commentary on the decretals of Gregory IX by Henri Bohic (c.1300–57), was given to Merton by Edmund Howard, as the inscription on the title page says:

¹⁰⁴ W. Druwé, 'Learned law in late medieval Netherlandish practice: *consilia* for the congregation of Windesheim (ca.1415–1500)', *Tijdschrift voor Rechtsgeschiedenis*, 89 (2021), 1–35.

¹⁰⁵ Heales, p. 291; *Wykeham*, II, pp. 35–6; I, 165–6 (this did not work: he was sent to Selbourne the following year: *Wykeham*, II, p. (419).

¹⁰⁶ Heales, pp. 298, 329.

¹⁰⁷ *Wykeham*, II, p. 526; *Calendar o Papal Registers Relating to Great Britain and Ireland* (London: HMSO, 1904), VI, pp. 74, 77–8, F. D. Logan, *Runaway Religious in Medieval England, c.1240–1540* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 58.

This book was given to the church of the Blessed Mary of Merton, Winchester diocese... The first part, that is, the first two books, were the gift of the noble knight Lord Edmund Howard, son and brother of the illustrious dukes of Norfolk, who acquired from spoils from Morley, city of Flanders Brittany, devastated by the same in time of the war of the kings of England and France, the invincible Henry VIII and Francis, captive of Charles, Holy Roman Emperor in the year of Our Lord MDXXV in the seventeenth year of the reign of the said illustrious Henry VIII, king of England and France, Defender of the Faith, and lord of the kingdom of Ireland, by John Lacy, being prior.¹⁰⁸

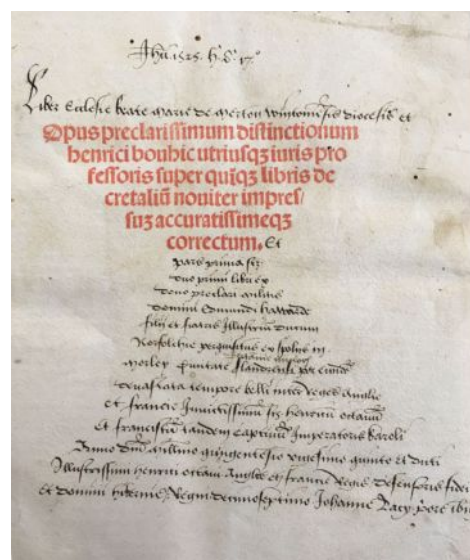


Figure 6.4: Henricus Bouhic title page

This is all written in a rather stylish way to mirror the printed title. Above this is 'Ihesu 1525 H°8°17°'. The book has a French binding, and on the front pastedown is 'Cest liuer apertient'. Thomas Howard, duke of Norfolk, sacked Morlaix in 1522; this book was apparently among the spoils from this campaign, being given to Merton Priory in 1525 (the year that Francis I was captured by Charles V's men).¹⁰⁹ Edmund Howard's connexion with either Merton or its prior, John Lacy, is not known. Later, in the 1530s, Howard would marry Margaret Mundy, daughter of Sir John Mundy. The Mundy family did have a connexion with the priory, for Thomas Mundy was a junior canon in 1502 and kitchener at John Ramsey's election in 1530.¹¹⁰ However, the gift of this book predates the Mundy marriage, and Thomas Mundy's own relationship with Margaret is also unknown. Whatever the relationship of the donor with Merton, Bohic's *Decretales* had been a source for William Lyndwood and the volume was a useful addition to a canon law collection.

The copy of William Lyndwood's *Provinciale* that Lacy bought for, or borrowed from Merton, was bound with John Ayton's commentaries on the

¹⁰⁸ For the Latin, see Appendix 4, no. v.

¹⁰⁹ M. A. R. Graves, 'Thomas Howard, third duke of Norfolk (1473–1554)', *ODNB*.

¹¹⁰ As Thomas Wandsworth: Heales, p. 331.

Constitutiones Othoni et Othoboni (Paris, 1505). In the *Provinciale* table of contents Lacy carefully wrote page numbers next to each article, showing his use of it as a reference book. Also in what appears to be his hand is a note about the irreplaceability of priests, and about confession (fol. 173^v). Soon after its composition, Lyndwood became a textbook and, because of its careful mix of canon and civil law, it remained so even after the Reformation.¹¹¹

Lacy wrote in the margin of fol. 173^v, ‘frater admissus non potest aliis ministerium suum committere nec reputatur proprius sacerdos sed loco proprii sacerdotis ut ibi non’ (‘a licensed brother is not able to entrust his ministry to others nor is he considered a priest *proprius* except in place of a priest *proprius* if he is not there’). This is in response to a question about who has care of souls over parishioners. The Fourth Lateran Council ruled that the laity should confess to ‘their own priest’ [*proprius sacerdos*]. *Proprius sacerdos* was generally understood as the parish priest, but its vagueness allowed others, such as the friars, to hear confession.¹¹² Whom to confess to was a concern for Guy of Southwick around the time of the Fourth Lateran Council, as we saw in Chapter 5. Guy was of the opinion that you should confess to your parish priest, since he knew you and therefore knew if you were trying to conceal any sin. But, he said, if a parish priest was not available, another priest would suffice. The friars made much of this ambiguity, and Pope Boniface III responded with *Super cathedram* (1300), requiring friars to obtain episcopal permission to hear confession. The friars were an apparent cause of concern for Merton’s canons: the priory’s collection of canon law tracts (GB-Lbl Royal MS 11 B V) included both *Super cathedram*, and Robert Winchelsey’s reply to Thomas Jorz about such jurisdiction. However, what applied to the friars in parishes applied equally to the canons regular, whose preaching and confessional practices have been discussed at various points in this thesis. Lacy’s marginal note suggests that the canons of Merton still had personal and practical involvement in parishes, and Lacy was obliged to establish the nature and limits of that involvement.

¹¹¹ R. Helmholz, ‘University education and English ecclesiastical lawyers 1400–1650’, *Ecclesiastical Law Journal*, 13.2 (2011), 132–45; B. E. Ferme, ‘William Lyndwood and the *Provinciale*: canon law in an undivided Western Church’, *Ecclesiastical Law Journal*, 4 (1997), 615–28; V. A. Peterson, ‘The development of the canon law since 1500 A.D.’, *Church History*, 9 (1940), pp. 243–4.

¹¹² W. H. Campbell, ‘*Plesaunt was his absolucioun?* Friars and light penances in English history and literature’, *Open Library of Humanities* 11 (2025), <https://doi.org/10.16995/olh.16931>

This comment might have pertained particularly to appropriated churches, of which the priory was the rector. In 1529, Lacy was part of the Convocation which sought to ensure that monasteries ‘provide that proprietors, rectors and vicars shall preach frequently, or at least ensure that it is done in their churches’.¹¹³ That notwithstanding, Lacy leased out two rectories in 1527 and 1528, presumably needing ready cash.¹¹⁴

The Priorate of John Ramsey, 1530–38

Among those who elected John Lacy as prior on William Salyng’s death in 1520 was John Ramsey; he, as sub-prior, succeeded Lacy in January 1530.¹¹⁵ The career and book collection of John Ramsey illustrates a lot of the ideas and issues of and about late mediæval canons. A starting point is his *ODNB* entry:

It is not surprising that Ramsey should have adapted easily to monastic dissolution and protestant reformation, for he had clearly come to hold advanced literary and religious opinions. Among the eight books which survive from his library is Erasmus’s *Enchiridion*, and while he was still prior of Merton, in 1537 his fellow canon Thomas Paynell dedicated to him ‘Comparison of a vyrgin and a martyr’, the translation of another of Erasmus’s works which Ramsey had commissioned.¹¹⁶

The author, John Fines, assumes here that Ramsey was a humanist; humanism was the engine of progress and reform; therefore Ramsey was a reformer. This is picked up by James Clark:

The distinctly reformist drift of Abbot [*sic*] John Ramsey of Merton drew the attention of Thomas Paynell who honoured the Augustinian on the eve of the Dissolution with the dedication of his translation of Erasmus, *The comparison o a vyrgin and a martyr*.¹¹⁷

¹¹³ ‘The Canons of the Convocation of 1529’, in *The Anglican Canons, 1529–1947*, ed. G. Bray (Woodbridge, 1998), p. 5; *Records o Convocation VII: Canterbury, 1509–1603*, ed. *idem*. (Woodbridge, 2023).

¹¹⁴ Heales, pp. 329–30. Merton got away lightly with the forced loan of 1522: its share was £133 6s. 4d., considerably further down the table than it was to be in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus: L&P*, III, no. 2438, p. 1047.

¹¹⁵ Heales, p. 324.

¹¹⁶ John Fines, ‘John Bowle, alias Ramsey’, *ODNB*.

¹¹⁷ Clark, ‘The regular clergy’, p. 199.

In some cases, prelates did have a ‘reformist drift’ which contributed to the speedy dissolution of their monasteries. Ramsey studied at St Mary’s College, Oxford. This college also produced Robert Ferrar (who studied alongside Merton’s John Page), who was installed by Cromwell as prior of Nostell (Yorkshire): Ferrar was a reformer who wanted to turn the priory into a college, but ended up turning it over to the king’s men.¹¹⁸ In St Andrews, the sub-prior, John Winram, joined the Protestant reformation after a decade of his own reforms.¹¹⁹ But despite Ramsey’s Erasmian tastes, we cannot assume that he looked forward to the destruction of his monastic house and life. The two works by Erasmus mentioned here are a handbook (the *Enchiridion*) on how to be a good Christian, and a traditional piece of devotional literature (the *Comparison*) encouraging the nuns of Cologne in their choice of monasticism:

It is a great thyng, to despise and set nought by the glorye and ryches of this worlde, but it is farre greater to mortifie and slee the fleshe with the concupiscencis thereof. And the churche knoweth to whome she is bounde.¹²⁰

Canon Thomas Paynell, whose career is discussed below, also translated Erasmus’ *De contemptu mundi*, a guide for living a proper monastic life and for avoiding the sins of the many contemporary monks failing to live up to monastic ideals and Christian spirituality.¹²¹ This was not, however, an attack on monasticism *per se*, although in both the *Enchiridion* and *De contemptu mundi* Erasmus does observe that one could be monastic outside a monastery, as his own career demonstrated.¹²² Erasmus was against the worldly value of the

¹¹⁸ G. Williams, ‘Robert Ferrar’, *ODNB*; Evans, ‘St Mary’s’, pp. 382–3, who notes that ‘it was commonly supposed that Cromwell had arranged this in order to secure a willing surrender of the monastery, but Ferrar himself would not believe that he was merely Cromwell’s tool’. *LEP*, XIII.2, nos. 285, 953, pp. 115, 395. Ferrar’s friend William Barlow, the reforming bishop, was an ex-canon of St Osyth, and the role of Augustinian canons in radical reform cannot be denied: G. Williams, ‘William Barlow’, *ODNB*.

¹¹⁹ L. J. Dunbar, ‘Winram [Wynram], John (c.1492–1582), prior of St Serf and ecclesiastical reformer’, *ODNB*.

¹²⁰ Thomas Paynell (trans.), *The Comparison of a Vyrigin and a Martyr* by Desiderius Erasmus, *Early English Books Online Text Creation Partnership* (2011), p. 17 <http://name.umdl.umich.edu/Ao4486.0001.001>.

¹²¹ T. Paynell, trans., *De contemptu mundi* (London, 1533).

¹²² *The Collected Works of Erasmus: Spiritualia, Enchiridion, De contemptu mundi, De vidua Christiana*, ed. J. W. O’Malley (Toronto, 1988), I, pp. 174–5.

Church, but not against the Church's values: for him the Church's complex, artificial, material edifice obscured the immaterial faith of true Christianity, secular or regular.¹²³

A third book by Erasmus might also have been in either Ramsey's collection or that of Merton. In 1526, Erasmus published an edition of Irenæus, perhaps hoping, as he wrote in his foreword, 'to bring the world into concord again through the spirit of the Gospel.'¹²⁴ A copy of this was given by a Henry Whyt, LLD, to 'Jo London custodis collegij ... Marie ... Oxon'. Since John Ramsey was *prior studentium* in the late 1520s, this would seem to be him, although we should note the presence alongside Ramsey at Merton of a John London.¹²⁵ Erasmus wanted a quiet internal reformation of the Church, without schism. An intellectual for whom scholarship was the apogee of existence, he abhorred the unthinking acceptance of mores and rituals, the complacency which saw fit to live by the letter but not the spirit of the law. Erasmus followed Augustine in his reflection and self-reflection, and he never renounced his vows as Augustinian canon.¹²⁶ Having a collection of works by Erasmus would not necessarily have fitted a man to a life of Protestantism, nor even to a renunciation of monasticism. Therefore, John Fines' inference about Ramsey's protestant reformist leanings is more than we can presume to know.

Ramsey probably encountered Erasmus' ideas a student of St Mary's College, Oxford, where he supplicated for his B.A. in 1514. In 1522 he supplicated for, and received, a B.Th. (or S.T.B.), and in 1528 he was *prior studentium* at St Mary's. As sub-prior of Merton, Ramsey was acting prelate for the election of the next prior in 1530 — who, in the event, was to be Ramsey himself. This election was given to Edward Foxe to preside over. He was provost of King's College, and co-author, with Thomas Cranmer, of the *Collectanea satis copiosa* which would provide Henry VIII with legal justification for divorcing

¹²³ Erasmus, *De Contemptu Mundi*, trans. Thomas Paynell (Londini: in aedibus Thomae Bertheleti, 1533); Erasmus, *A Book Called in Latin Enchiridion Militis Christiani...* (London, 1905), pp. 121, 216–7; *The Erasmus Reader*, ed. E. Rummel (Toronto, 2003), pp. 51–64; also, his letter to Thomas Wolsey about Luther: *The Epistles of Erasmus from his Earliest Letters to his Fifty-First Year*, ed. F. M. Nichols, III (London, 1918), Epistle 563B, pp. 378–387.

¹²⁴ *Opus eruditissimum Diui Irenaei Episcopi...*, Sig. a2^a, quoted in R. Peters, 'Erasmus and the Fathers: their practical value', *Church History*, 36 (1967), p. 259.

¹²⁵ Erasmus, ed., *Opus eruditissimum Diui Irenaei Episcopi Lugdunensis* (Basel, 1526), St John's College, Oxford, D.3.29; Heales, p. 328.

¹²⁶ R. L. DeMolen, 'Erasmus' commitment to the canons regular of St. Augustine', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 26 (1973), p. 437.

Katherine of Aragon.¹²⁷ Before we read anything too reformist into this, it was not uncommon for a house's bishop to appoint its prelate, but the bishop of Winchester at this time was Thomas Wolsey and he was in the middle of a dramatic fall; Foxe took his place.

John Ramsey had an *alias* of Bowle, which led to Dugdale's mistake of adding an extra prior. 'Bowle' was presumably his family name, 'Ramsey' perhaps suggesting his place of origin. In 1516, Prior William Salyng had granted the presentation to the rectory at Kingston to John and Richard Bowle 'citizens of London', together with Jasper Horsey.¹²⁸ This suggests an existing relationship between Merton Priory and Ramsey's family, who, like Salyng's, were London merchants. Prior Ramsey, together with three others, was commanded to be at Oxford at the beginning of Hilary term 1536 so that Richard Rich could 'proceed in the assurance of the King's exchanges with them'. What those exchanges were is not known, but one of the other three was the master of Corpus Christi, an Oxford humanist who had moved in Erasmus' English circle, like Ramsey's predecessor William Salyng.¹²⁹ This shows a network of Augustinians with Erasmian-humanist interests.

The other texts associated with John Ramsey show three strands of religious thought: scholasticism, humanism and mysticism. Calling them 'strands' makes them sound rather too exclusive or discrete, for all three involved a return to early Christian sources and practices. Interests in scholasticism and humanism were not mutually exclusive, and Charles Nauert's claim that 'the split between the two traditions was very fundamental indeed' is hardly credible.¹³⁰ A number of disciplines, indeed, relied on both scholastic and humanist approaches, of philosophy and philology.¹³¹ Furthermore, late-

¹²⁷ Heales, pp. 330–3; John Guy, *Tudor England*, pp. 128–9.

¹²⁸ Heales, p. 322. Jasper Horsey was a servant of the Marquis of Exeter, until the latter's trial, in which Horsey turned king's evidence: P. Webb, 'John and Jasper Horsey: two Tudor opportunists', *Proceedings of the Dorset Natural History Society*, part I, 99 (1977) and part II, 100 (1978), <https://horseiana.blogspot.com/2014>. Horsey was nephew to William Horsey, chancellor to the bishop of London and, like Thomas Driffeld, involved with the Hunne case: G. K. McBride, 'Once again, the case of Richard Hunne', *Albion*, 1 (1969), 19–29.

¹²⁹ *L&P*, X, no. 151, pp. 56–57; SP 1/101 fol. 112; J. Woolfson, 'John Claymond (1467/8–1536)', *ODNB*.

¹³⁰ Nauert, 'Clash', p. 11.

¹³¹ J. Franklin, 'Science by conceptual analysis: the genius of the late scholastics', *Studia Neoaristotelica*, 9 (2012), pp. 5, 10–12, 15–16; C. P. Rodgers, 'Humanism, history and the common law', *The Journal of Legal History*, 6 (1985), 129–156; C. Vasoli, 'The contribution of humanism to the birth of modern science, *Renaissance and Reformation/ Renaissance et*

mediæval intellectual dynamism in the monastery or the university was not limited to humanists.¹³² Roberto Weiss wrote that in England, the differences between scholasticism and humanism were irrelevant, for ‘whereas in Italy the cult of the antique had completely transformed cultural values, in England we find neo-classicism absorbed into the sphere of scholasticism and used for the furtherance of scholastic ends’; ‘pure humanists’, he continued, ‘did not exist in England’.¹³³

The twelfth-century Victorines felt that studying a wide gamut of subjects was necessary to contemplating God, and this attitude found resonance in the *De scriptoribus ecclesiasticis* by the Benedictine Abbot Johann Trithemius of Sponheim, published in 1494. Trithemius’ extensive list ranged from scholastic theologians to more secular humanists, and covered the seven liberal arts.¹³⁴ In a more modest way, the reading material of John Ramsey and his brethren followed this broad approach: mysticism, humanism and scholasticism cohabited comfortably. As well as works by the humanist Erasmus, Ramsey acquired volumes by the scholastic Brulefer and by the more mystical Denis the Carthusian. As noted above, Ramsey and Paynell also showed an interest in ‘practical theology’ in confession and sermon literature.

One of Erasmus’ works discussed above was Merton’s copy of the *Enchiridion* (GB-Ob 4° Z.33 Th). This has Ramsey’s name above ‘Liber beate marie merton’ (although all words but this have been crossed out). There is another hand at the top of the first page; this is a later owner (‘pret. 2 s. 1612’), and a browner ink. On p. 9, in the epistolary preface, Ramsey has added ‘i. indulgentias’ to the marginal heading ‘Condonationes’. It may be Ramsey who

Réforme, New Series, 3 (1979), p. 5; Q. Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought* (Cambridge, 1978), pp. 23–65; M. Camerota and M. Helbing, ‘Galileo and Pisan Aristotelianism: Galileo’s “De Motu Antiquiora” and the *Quæstiones de Motu Elementorum* of the Pisan professors’, *Early Science and Medicine*, 5 (2000), 319–365; E. Cochrane, ‘Science and humanism in the Italian Renaissance’, *The American Historical Review*, 81 (1976), p. 1044; see also G. Leff, ‘The fourteenth century and the decline of scholasticism’, *Past & Present*, 9 (1956), p. 30; M. J. F. M. Hoenen, ‘At the crossroads of scholasticism and northern humanism’, in *Northern Humanism in European Context, 1469–1625: From the ‘Adwert Academy’ to Ubbo Emmius*, ed. F. Akkerman, A. J. Vanderjagt, and A. van der Laan (Leiden, 1999), pp. 145–48.

¹³² Cf. J. G. Clark, ‘Humanism and reform in pre-reformation English monasteries’, *TRHS*, 19 (2009), p. 74. C. Lundberg, ‘Apostolic Theology and Humanism at the University of Paris, 1490–1540’ (unpublished PhD thesis, 2021), pp. 8–11.

¹³³ Weiss, *Humanism in England*, pp. 179, 183.

¹³⁴ C. Lundberg, ‘Apostolic Theology’, p. 10; Johannes Trithemius, *Liber de Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis* (Basel: Johann Amerbach, 1494).

underlined passages on the relative merits of Augustine and Jerome (p. 56) and on early monasticism (p. 17).¹³⁵ There are two sorts of linings in this text: some are accompanied by notes in what looks like the 1612 hand. The underlinings down the margins of pp. 17 and 56 are in a darker ink, and may well indicate Ramsey's pen, although there are no accompanying notes to confirm it as his writing. The annotations we can ascribe to Ramsey show an active engagement with this text, and Ramsey was keen enough on Erasmus' writings not only to purchase this for his community but to commission the translation of another work from one of his canons, Thomas Paynell.

Alongside works of a fellow Augustinian, Ramsey possessed the works of two Franciscans, Gerardus Odonis (c.1285–1348) and Stephan Brulefer (d.1496). Gerardus Odonis was one of a number of fourteenth-century commentators on Aristotle's *Ethics*, and his commentary was still widely read in the sixteenth century.¹³⁶ The volume here (GB-Gu Eg.6.a.9) was his commentary on Lombard's *Sentences*. Several pages of the book have annotations, in various different hands, including what looks like Ramsey's.¹³⁷ The copy has John Ramsey's signature: 'Joannes Ramsey ~~canonicus~~ de m[er]ton prope londin[i]u[m] hunc librum possidet ...'; like the penitential, this seems to have been a student purchase. If it came from Oxford, it returned there after the Dissolution, coming into the possession of William Arnold, Emanuel Maxey and Hugo Newbury.¹³⁸ They were all students at Christ Church, Oxford in the 1570s, and all became parish clergymen.

The second Franciscan work in Ramsey's collection was a 1507 edition of Stephan Brulefer's commentaries on St Bonaventure (GB-Llp H890.B6–7). Again, this might have been a student purchase, for the ex libris is 'Liber Joannis Ramsey canonici de Merton prope Londinum', the binding shows an Oxford provenance and the date of publication coincides with Ramsey's Oxford career.

¹³⁵ Clark, *Dissolution*, pp. 64 and 194.

¹³⁶ G. Wieland, 'The reception and interpretation of Aristotle's *Ethics*', in *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy: From the Rediscovery of Aristotle to the Disintegration of Scholasticism, 1100–1600*, ed. A. Kenny and others (Cambridge, 1982), 655–72; C. Porter, 'Gerald Odonis' commentary on the *Ethics*: a discussion of the manuscripts and general survey', *Vivarium*, 47 (2009), 241–94.

¹³⁷ <https://www.flickr.com/photos/uofglibrary/4171275807/in/photostream/>;
<https://eleanor.lib.gla.ac.uk/record=b2664868>

¹³⁸ On the final page 'Guilielmi Arnoldi liber teste Max eo pretium v s', and on the title page, 'Hugonis Nuberiej liber praetiu[m] v s Gulielmo Arnoldo teste'.

Stefan Brulefer was simultaneously a Scotist and a Bonaventuran. Although his influence can be traced through to Zwingli and even Luther, Brulefer was a scholar rather than a reformer; neither was he a ‘humanist’ in the sense of preferring Classical authors to scholastic ones.¹³⁹ Amongst Ramsey’s various annotations were marginal notes on Scotist ideas of being and on Augustine’s definition of memory, intelligence and will.

The volume of Denis the Carthusian’s minor works was a later purchase, bought by Ramsey as prior for his community:

This book was bought for the church of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Merton by London 8th January AD MDXXVII [*sic*], in the 28th year of the reign of the most serene lord king Henry VIII, by John Ramsey, 33rd prior of the same, for 6s. 8d.¹⁴⁰

Denis (1402–71) was an ideal regular, reportedly subsisting on three hours’ sleep, but eight hours’ prayer. Denis followed in the twelfth- and thirteenth-century traditions of contemplative spirituality, and he was both a Thomist and a disciple of the writings of Pseudo-Dionysius.¹⁴¹ Denis followed the Pseudo-Dionysian ‘triple way’, which would become central to the *devotio moderna*. This separated the spiritual journey into *purgatio*, *illuminatio*, and *perfectio*. For an Augustinian, this perhaps was not so far away from the five-fold path of Hugh of St Victor, although his path (discussed in Chapter 2) included an intellectual as well as spiritual approach. Denis’ *Opera* was a popular choice amongst regulars: Canterbury Cathedral Priory made sure it was on their students’ booklist and the prior of Charterhouse ordered ten copies.¹⁴²

¹³⁹ C. P. Kärkkäinen, ‘Philosophy among and in the wake of the reformers: Luther, Melanchthon, Zwingli’, in *Routledge Companion to Sixteenth Century Philosophy*, ed. H. Lagerlund and B. Hill (New York, 2016), p. 192; U. Zahnd, ‘Easy-going scholars lecturing *secundum alium*? Notes on some French Franciscan *Sentences* commentaries of the fifteenth century’, in *Mediaeval Commentaries on the Sentences of Peter Lombard*, ed. P. W. Rosemann (Leiden, 2015), III, pp. 299–310.

¹⁴⁰ ‘Liber ecclesie beate marie de Meritona Londinum prope Emptus viii^o die Ianuarii Anno domini m quingentesimo xxvii^o Anno regni Serenissimi domini Regis Henrici viii vigesimo octavo per Iohannem Ramseium priorem ibidem xxxij precium vi s. viii d.’ Ramsey was the 31st, not the 33rd, prior.

¹⁴¹ T. O’Reilly, ‘Introduction’, *The Spiritual Writings of Denis the Carthusian*, trans. Í. M. Ní Riain (Dublin, 2005), pp. ix–xiv. For the influence of Pseudo-Dionysius on Jacques Lefèvre d’Étaples, see Lundberg, ‘Apostolic Theology’, pp. 18–30.

¹⁴² Clark, ‘The regular clergy’, pp. 183, 190.

The text is, other than Ramsey's inscription, pristine. The year 1527 is a mistake, for the book was not published until 1532: adding an I makes it 1537, the 28th year of Henry's reign: it must have been one of the final such purchases, and that may explain the lack of annotations. The date of this purchase is evidence, while not being on the same scale as the abbot of St Albans' vestments, of the unexpected nature of the Dissolution, and of the moderate Catholic reforming tendencies of the canons of Merton.¹⁴³ The later history of the book gives no light on the later career of Ramsey. It was given to St John's College library by one of its fellows, Arthur Aubrey (c.1557–1607), but it is unclear how he acquired it.¹⁴⁴ The second and companion volume of Denis' works in St John's Library was given by a different donor (Henry Cole, dean of St Paul's) and may only have joined the first volume at St John's: it does not seem to have belonged to Ramsey or Merton.

As noted above, theologians from the several traditions returned to the writings of the early Church. It is no surprise to find patristic volumes among Merton's printed books. The volume of Athanasius' works which we met above was bought for five shillings by John Ramsey some time before he became prior in 1530 (again, perhaps while a student).¹⁴⁵ He left various marginal annotations, for example on fol. ii.i (the commentary on Romans). This volume was subsequently taken, perhaps around 1538, by John Salyng. The book's post-Dissolution history is murky. At some point the book travelled to the Continent (probably Hildersheim), where it became one of a number of texts that would eventually return to England with the monks of Ampleforth Abbey.¹⁴⁶

Ramsey's copies of practical theological works included a fourteenth-century penitential, the *Memoriale Presbiterorum* (GB-Ob MS Selden Supra 39). This was not a common text, although there was at least one copy in Oxford, which could suggest, alongside the *ex libris* (fol. 68^v) 'Johannes Ramsey Canonicus de Merton' that Ramsey acquired it as a student.¹⁴⁷ Probably written

¹⁴³ Clark, *Dissolution*, p. 369.

¹⁴⁴ A. Hegarty, *A biographical register of St. John's College, Oxford, 1555–1660* (Woodbridge, 2011), p. 6.

¹⁴⁵ The front page bears John Ramsey's inscription (crossed out): 'Johannes Ramsey Canonicus de Merton prope Londinum hunc possidet', 'precium v s'.

¹⁴⁶ Anselm Cramer, Ampleforth Abbey Archives (personal correspondence).

¹⁴⁷ M. Haren, *Sin and Society in Fourteenth-Century England: A Study of the Memoriale Presbiterorum* (Oxford, 2000), p. 3. For penitentials of the period more generally, see K. A.

by an archdeacon of Lincoln, this is at once a practical book and an attempt at clerical reform.¹⁴⁸ Because this treatise deals with regular clergy as well as secular, no conclusions can be drawn about the involvement of Merton's canons with confessions of either seculars or lay people, but it is one more addition to a corpus of confessional texts at or originating from Merton; this might have included the late-fifteenth-century copies of the *Summa de casibus conscientiae* by both Bartholomew of San Concordio (Pisanello) and Astesanus of Asti, that were on Thomas Paynell's booklist. Ramsey could not resist a small theological point on a phrase he quoted from John: 'Qui est ex deo verba dei audit... Pro cuius declaratione Notandum quod pro verbum possint duo significavi'.¹⁴⁹ The volume is clean, apart from an ink (?) spill at the top of the volume throughout, with no added marginalia. Ramsey's interest in confession can perhaps also be seen from his marginal note in the volume of the *Enchiridion*, described above.

As well as penitentials, Merton's canons collected homiletic materials during Ramsey's time at the priory. The 1485 edition of John Bromyard's *Summa Predicantium* and the 1515 one of Gabriel Barletta's homilies in Paynell's booklist might have belonged to the community. In 1528, Ramsey received into the priory library a collection of Philip the Chancellor's sermons (GB-Lbl Add. MS 45568). This is a thirteenth-century manuscript, of a portable size. It could have been an aid for a prior who had to give sermons within and without the monastery, although its tiny, abbreviated text is not ideal for reading out.¹⁵⁰ Ramsey wrote three headings in the margin of fol. 68^r, concerning the body of Christ; opposite, on fol. 67^v, in a different sixteenth-century hand, is an exhortation to cultivate faith and shun the devil. The volume was donated to Merton by the 'egregius vir magister' Robert Ashcombe.¹⁵¹ Ashcombe came from Somerset (although his surname is a toponym of one of Merton's Devon parishes). In 1473, at 14, he went to Winchester College and from there to New College, Oxford. He was collated as a prebendary in Hereford in 1479, and later

Murchison, *Manuals for Penitents in Medieval England: From Ancrene Wisse to the Parson's Tale* (Woodbridge, 2021), pp. 144–9.

¹⁴⁸ Haren, *Sin and Society*, pp. 10, 1.

¹⁴⁹ 'He who is of God hears the words of God... [John 8:47] For the purpose of the declaration, it should be noted that for 'word' two things may signify'.

¹⁵⁰ Heale, *Abbots and Priors*, pp. 87–8; A. Brecht, 'MS Ege.4: A Preacher's Companion' (unpublished MA thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 2021), pp. 71–3.

¹⁵¹ GB-Lbl, Add. MS 45568. For the full donation inscription, by John Ramsey, see Appendix I.

also held prebends in Chichester and Bath and Wells (1508). He died in 1528, requesting burial in New College and leaving to it and Winchester College money for their chapels.¹⁵² Ashcombe himself was given the book by Mr Thomas Driffield, whom he may have known from Winchester and/or New College. Thomas Driffield (or Dryffield) was also the owner of GB-Lbl Harley 3111 and Canterbury Cathedral MS B.I. He had been a fellow of New College, Oxford, and both Winchester and Eton, and was rector of St Mary Matfelon (London) from 1504 until his death in 1513.¹⁵³ Whether Robert Ashcombe was a religious conservative we do not know, but Thomas Driffield certainly was: he was the original plaintiff in the infamous Hunne case.¹⁵⁴ The nature of Robert Ashcombe's relationship with Merton and its prior are unknown; perhaps there were literary circles of ecclesiastics with Oxford connexions in and around the London area. Martin Heale noted the practice of prelates actively seeking book donations, and this might have been the case with this volume of Philip the Chancellor.¹⁵⁵

This manuscript is one example of a volume being donated by a secular cleric. A number of books and manuscripts were donated by secular clerks (or even lay-folk) to Leicester Abbey,¹⁵⁶ and it is clear from the inscriptions in several more of Merton's books that they spent time in the hands of secular clerics as well as regular canons. These covered a variety of subjects, from theology, as we have seen, to history, to law. In 1534, a copy of Antonio Corsetti's *Repertorium*, a student-friendly version of Panormitanus' *Commentaries*, was 'gyven to merton abbay [*sic*]' in 1534 by a 'T. D.', with the petition 'pra ffor the gyffer'. The identity of T. D. is unknown: the 1530s were too late for this 'T. D.' to have been the Thomas Driffield (d.1513) who had given the volume of Philip the

¹⁵² *BRUO* I, p. 55; *FEA 1300–1541*, II, p. 29; VII, p. 33; VIII, p. 28. For Merton's parishes, see Appendix 2.

¹⁵³ *BRUO* I, p. 597; G. L. Hennessy, *Novum Repertorium Ecclesiasticum Parochial Londinense, or, London Diocesan Clergy Succession from the Earliest Time to the Year 1898* (London, 1898), p. 457; GB-Lbl Harley MS 3111.

¹⁵⁴ S. F. C. Milsom, 'Richard Hunne's "Præmunire"', *EHR*, 76 (1961), pp. 80–82; G. K. McBride, 'Once again, the case of Richard Hunne', *Albion*, 1 (1969), 19–29; *BRUO* I, p. 597. For Corsetti, see O. Condorelli, 'Panormitanus: commentaries on the Decretals', in *The Formation and Transmission of Western Legal Culture: 150 Books that Made the Law in the Age of Printing*, ed. S. Dauchy et al. (Cham, 2016), pp. 49–52.

¹⁵⁵ M. Heale, *The Abbots and Priors of Late Medieval and Reformation England* (Oxford, 2016), p. 86.

¹⁵⁶ Clark, 'Augustinians, history, and literature', *BSRC*, p. 409.

Chancellor to Robert Ashcombe that Ashcombe left to Merton in 1528. Antonio Corsetto was a Bolognese jurist and law teacher who, alongside several others, published commentaries for law students, and would have fitted well with the volumes of Lyndwood and Ayton.

In the mid-fifteenth century, Thomas Gascoigne had used Merton's copy of the *Flores Historiarum*, perhaps at Oxford: its *ex libris* inscription was erased possibly around that time, suggesting that it became the property of another library. Another history book, Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum* (GB-Llp MS ee 118) was 'Liber Wykes: donatus per executores suos ecclesie beate Marie de Merton in com. Surr.' The handwriting is sixteenth-century, and the 'Wykes' was probably Robert Wykes, rector of Wimbledon 1508–22.¹⁵⁷ A graduate of New College, Wykes had been Junior Proctor of Oxford University.¹⁵⁸ It is possible that Wykes owned it (buying it, perhaps, from Oxford) and left it to Merton; it is also possible that he could have borrowed it from Merton, his executors giving it back: there is evidence from elsewhere of religious houses lending secular clerics, and even laypeople, books.¹⁵⁹

The manuscript itself, from the later twelfth century and written in a clear book hand, is a member of a group of ten, all from the 1148 version of Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum*.¹⁶⁰ Its provenance is unknown. Some of the initials bear a resemblance to those in Prior William's book, but these are generic and more informative about the date of composition rather than the place. Marginal notes referring to monasteries and monks may suggest a regular origin, and marginal notes about Chad may suggest Lichfield origin, although these notes are all in secretary hand and not earlier than the fifteenth century. Antonia Gransden noted that, of the twenty-five mediæval copies of Henry of Huntingdon, most come from Augustinian houses; this may be a question of survival, but at the very least it indicates an interest amongst the Augustinians in historical writing.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁷ GB-Llp, MS 118: see catalogue entry; *BRUO* III, p. 2114.

¹⁵⁸ Lambeth online catalogue; *BRUO* III, p. 2114.

¹⁵⁹ Webber & Watson, p. 5; Chapter 5, fn.iii.

¹⁶⁰ D. E. Greenway, 'Henry of Huntingdon and the manuscripts of his *Historia Anglorum*', in *Anglo-Norman Studies IX: Proceedings of the Battle Conference (1986)*, ed. R. A. Brown (Woodbridge, 1987), p. 117.

¹⁶¹ Gransden, *Historical Writing*, I, p. 195.

A manuscript copy of an historical miscellany (GB-Lsa MS 47) bears John Ramsey's signature on fol. 213^v. The appearance of the book suggests a workshop production, and the binding is a Canterbury one. The presence of St Rumwold in the lives of saints (fols 37^r–76^v) also suggests a Kentish origin.¹⁶² Ker noted a similarity of content to GB-Ob MS Bodl. 648, whose original owner, in the 1460s, was a monk of Canterbury.¹⁶³ The name 'Robert Wyse' appears on fols iii and 1^r of Lsa MS 47. Robert Wyse was chaplain at Smallhythe, Kent, around 1514 and vicar of Rolvenden in 1522.¹⁶⁴ Whether he was the previous or successive owner is unclear, but Ramsey was the owner before 1532 as the *ex libris* refers to him as 'canonicus'. John Ramsey had some Kentish connexions. His brother John [*sic*] Bowle was in the household of Archbishop Warham, and in August 1532, Ramsey wrote to Thomas Cromwell asking his help in securing for his brother the collectorship of Wingham, which had been granted to him as surveyor to the late archbishop of Canterbury (Warham).¹⁶⁵ In 1495, Merton presented Mr Macelinus Ramsey, M.A., to its vicarage of Patricbourne, and from 1545 until his death in September 1551 John Ramsey himself held the Kentish benefice of Woodchurch.¹⁶⁶ Lsa MS 47 is a compendium of religious and historical works, lists, prophecies and verses, not dissimilar to other compilations of the time.¹⁶⁷ Among the various notes, possibly pen trials, on fols 212–4, are miscellaneous prayers, a passage from the Brut and an unidentified chronicle, as well as Ramsey's *ex libris*. The various hands are different from Ramsey's signature, although this does not absolutely exclude his being one of the hands.

These four volumes show the dynamic relationship between seculars and regulars in the world of learning and scholarship, and they support Clark's observation about donations from secular clergy noted above. If we see books transferred from secular to regular, we also see books transferred between regulars. This was not confined to the Augustinians: Barbara Harvey found a

¹⁶² Ker, *MMBL*, I, p. 302; J. F. Overy, 'The cost of doing scribal business: prices of manuscript books in England, 1300–1483', *Book History*, 11 (2008), p. 12.

¹⁶³ <http://mlgb3.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/mlgb/book/1314/>

¹⁶⁴ A. H. Taylor, 'The clergy of St. John the Baptist, Smallhythe', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 55 (1942), p. 27. There is a possibility that Wyse and Wykes are two spellings of one name.

¹⁶⁵ *Dugdale*, VI, p. 246; *L&P*, V, no. 1257, p. 546 (27 August, 1532); Heales, p. 335; SP 1/70 fol. 219.

¹⁶⁶ C. Harper-Bill, ed., *The Register of John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury 1486–1500*, LXXV (Woodbridge: Canterbury and York Society, 1997), no. 620, p. 156; Fines, 'John Ramsey'.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. M. Heale, 'Augustinian life and leadership in late medieval England', *BSRC*, pp. 282–5.

monk selling a book to a novice, for example.¹⁶⁸ If the Augustinians' collections were more individual, we might expect a number of examples of canon-to-canon book transmission. This relies on the survival of evidence, but we have one book, at least, from this period that demonstrates it. A 1494 edition of the letters of Bernard of Clairvaux (GB-SHRs A.x.15, Inc. 31) has the following *ex libris*:

Dominus Iohannes Saundwyche canonicus et professus [...] marie
de merton emebat istum librum de Thoma twhyng' in die sancte
Iuliane v[irginis] et martiris Anno regni regis henrici viii' decimo
testante Ricardo Wynsopp' [?] et Jo' codygto[n].

John Sandwich had been at Merton since childhood, and was kitchener in 1520 at John Lacy's election. Thomas Thwyng was named as priest then.¹⁶⁹ The transaction was valuable enough to warrant witnesses, of whom Richard Windsor is perhaps the canon who signed Merton's late medieval Bible (GB-Cu E.6.26). Both he and John Codynghon were signatories of the surrender in 1538. Merton had a copy of Bernard's epistles in the fourteenth century. That Thwyng purchased a printed copy could suggest several things, that an older copy had disappeared, or that more than one copy was required, but most probably it suggests, *pace* Gillespie, a desire for new, printed books.¹⁷⁰

RICHARD BENESE, CANON OF MERTON (d.1548)

The last two scholars for discussion survived the closure of the priory in 1538 with a great degree of success. It might be argued that the peaceability and promptness of the surrender in April 1538 of Merton Priory by its fifteen canons could be taken as evidence of their proto-Protestant leanings, especially as, in May, the canons were given pensions, and several settled into parishes or continued their service to Henry VIII's government. Furthermore, one of the canons, Richard Benese, was in charge of dismantling the priory, whose stones and other building materials were taken to its former parish of Cuddington, the church of which was also destroyed, for Henry VIII's new palace of Nonsuch.¹⁷¹ However, we cannot make the assumption that Merton's canons were proto-

¹⁶⁸ B. Harvey, 'A novice's life at Westminster Abbey in the century before the Dissolution', *The Religious Orders in Pre-Reformation England*, ed. J. G. Clark (Woodbridge, 2002), p. 67.

¹⁶⁹ Heales, pp. 324, 328.

¹⁷⁰ GB-SHRs A.x.15.

Protestants and that their complicity in the destruction of Merton Priory was ideological. For sure, Merton Priory had welcomed the ideas and writings of Erasmus, but its canons seem to have been moderate reformers and pragmatists rather than radical proto-Protestants. We have looked at the career and scholarly tastes of John Ramsey, and will investigate those of Thomas Paynell below, but it should be remembered that, in the first place, these men were all still canons in 1538.

Richard Benese's role in dissolving his priory was partly a result of his popular 1537 publication, the *Maner o Measuryng o all Maner o Lande* — or at least of his ability to write it.¹⁷² Benese studied law at Oxford as a secular cleric, becoming a canon at Merton in the late 1510s or 1520s; by 1530 he was succentor.¹⁷³ In 1535, Benese was chaplain to the king; it therefore follows that he, at least, knew the direction of the wind so far as the monasteries were concerned. The irony of Richard's literary subject cannot have passed him by, but it provided work for him following Merton's dissolution. Until his death in January 1547, Richard Benese was in charge of the king's works at Hampton Court and Nonsuch, and as a result was given various rectories, including Beddington (Surrey), All Hallows, Honey Lane (London) and Merton's former benefice of Long Ditton (Surrey).¹⁷⁴ He drew up his will in November 1543, and it was proved 20 October 1548. He willed his 'soul to God my Redeemer (only) bequest of 13/4 to a priest to say trental of masses forme', and his body to be buried in Long Ditton churchyard.¹⁷⁵

Geoffrey Eatough noted the coincidence of Benese succeeding Thomas Gerrard at All Hallows: Gerrard had been martyred along with Robert Barnes for his evangelical views.¹⁷⁶ As Gerrard's successor had an apparent keenness to help dismantle the fabric of monastic institutions including his own, we might

¹⁷¹ The copy of the surrender is GB-Lna, E 322/152. The signatures are illustrated in Heales, opposite p. 349.

¹⁷² The first edition was *This Boke Sheweth the Maner o Measuryng o All Maner o Lande, as Well o Woodlande, as o Lande in the Felde, and Comptyng the True Nombre o Acres of The-same. Newlye Inuented and Compyled by Syr Rycharde Benese*. Southwarke: In Saynt Thomas Hospitall, by Me James Nicolson, 1537. The preface was written by Thomas Paynell. There were many subsequent editions, from the 1560s to the 1650s.

¹⁷³ J. Hughes, 'Richard Benese', *ODNB*; Heales, p. 331; A. Wood, *Athenae Oxoniensis*, II, p. 49.

¹⁷⁴ *L&P*, XV, no. 1027.19, p. 507; XVI, no. 220.6, p. 96. He was also prebend of Farndon: *FEA 1541-1857*, IX, p. 66.

¹⁷⁵ Baskerville, 'Dispossessed', p. 22.

¹⁷⁶ G. Eatough, 'Thomas Paynell', *ODNB*.

build up a case for Richard Benese's own evangelical views. But before we get carried away, this must be measured alongside his choice as an adult to become an Augustinian canon, his active role at Merton Priory — not only succentor, but presumably as an estate manager, too — and his desire to be buried in a parish whose connexions with Merton Priory stretched back three hundred years. And even the All Hallows coincidence should be tempered with the fact that Gerrard was appointed by the (radical) Grocers' Company, whereas Benese was Henry VIII's presentee.¹⁷⁷ Benese's installation here was not because of his reformist views, but quite the opposite: he was a safe pair of hands, and this is typical of the Crown appointing trusted men to troubled places. Richard himself had been appointed the previous year (1539) as rector of Pyworthy, Devon, in place of John Collyns, attainted for his part in the supposed Exeter conspiracy;¹⁷⁸ in December 1542, he took over the rectory of Long Leadenham from James Mallett, attainted for treason and hanged in Chelmsford.¹⁷⁹ Benese was a loyal servant to the king throughout. Jonathan Hughes' comment in his *ODNB* article that 'it is perhaps significant that in the preface to Benese's treatise on measuring, Cain is described as the first exponent of geometry', while irresistible, is unkind.¹⁸⁰

Richard Benese was close to Thomas Paynell, who wrote the preface to the *Maner o Measuryng o all Maner o Lande*. Their friendship was not dissolved along with the priory but continued even beyond Richard's death, for Thomas succeeded Richard as rector of All Hallows, Honey Lane.

¹⁷⁷ Eatough, 'Thomas Paynell'; S. Brigden, *London and the Reformation* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 113–114, 209, 346. The obit and chaplain at All Hallows were allowed to fall into abeyance during Benese's rectory, although he did not have sole jurisdiction over parochial church matters, and how often he was at Honey Lane is questionable. (Brigden, *London*, p. 387). The obit was presumably the one bequeathed by Isabell Rothewood of London, who also left money in her will of 1528 to the teaching of scholars in Kingston. There seems, therefore, to have been some connexion between Kingston (a parish of Merton's) and Honey Lane: A. Heales, 'The history of the Free Chapel of St Mary Magdalene, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey...as extracted from early records', *Surrey Archaeological Collections*, 8 (1883), pp. 312–3.

¹⁷⁸ *LESP*, XIV.1, no. 403.4, p. 157.

¹⁷⁹ M. Bowker, 'The Henrician Reformation and the parish clergy', in *The English Reformation Revised*, ed. C. Haigh (Oxford, 1987), p. 76; *LESP*, XVII, no. 1251.26, p. 689.

¹⁸⁰ Hughes, 'Richard Benese', *ODNB*.

THOMAS PAYNELL, CANON OF MERTON (d.c.1564)

Thomas Paynell had been one of the four acolytes present at the chapter that elected John Ramsey as prior in 1530.¹⁸¹ A couple of other Paynells appear in Merton's records: John, in the early fourteenth century, and, more recently, Andrew, who joined during John de Kingston's priorate and was precentor and third prior under John Lacy.¹⁸² It is likely that Thomas was from the same family, and was presumably therefore a close relative of Andrew. Sorting out the confusing half-evidence for Thomas Paynell's biography is a task that has occupied several historians, and it needs some untangling before setting out additions to it in this discussion. A. F. Pollard produced the first modern biography. Although this started badly ('an Austin friar, educated at Merton Abbey, Surrey, where he became a canon'), Pollard made a decent attempt to sort out the several Thomas Paynells in order to distinguish the translator. For Paynell's student career, he relied on Anthony Wood's description, which, as the earliest biography of Paynell, is worth quoting in full:

THOMAS PAYNELL, or Pagnell, descended from an ancient family of his name living in Lincolnshire, was from his youth always exercised in virtue and good letters. While he was in his juvenile years he was made a canon regular of Merton priory in Surrey, the monastics of which place having had interest in the college of St Mary the Virgin situated in the parish of St Michael and St Peter in the Baylie, (built purposely for the training up of young can. reg. in philosophical or theological learning, or both) he was sent thither, where improving himself much in divine learning, returned to his monastery, and a little before the dissolution of that and others, became prior of a certain monastery of canon regulars near to London as Baleus saith, tho' the name of the place he tells us not. But being soon after ejected, when his monastery was to be employ'd for a laical use, had a pension allowed him during his life : whereupon retiring to London, and sometimes to Oxon, had the more leisure to write and translate books...¹⁸³

¹⁸¹ Heales, pp. 331, 348–9.

¹⁸² For John, see Heales, pp. 232–3; 248–9 and *Reg. Sandale* pp. 166, 176; for Andrew, see Heales, pp. 309, 311, 324–8. Andrew described himself as 58 in 1520. Heales also notes 100 marks owed to a William Paynell in 1315; p. 216.

The monastery referred to by Bale is almost certainly Merton, but, as H. E. Salter intimated, there are problems with Wood's account. John Bale did write that Paynell was 'canonicorum regularium cuiusdam monasterij olim prior prope Londinum', but at no point was any Thomas Paynell prior of any monastery near London.¹⁸⁴ Wood gives no reference for 'Thomas' study at Oxford. Both John Ramsey and Richard Benese were students at St Mary's, but there is no evidence that Thomas was. One of the books that he bequeathed to St John's College, the edition of John Bromyard's *Summa predicantium*, has the inscription 'Ex dono Magistri Thomae Paynell, (Collegii Sancti Bernardi alumni)'.¹⁸⁵ St Bernard's College — whose chapel became that of St John's — was Cistercian. However, on the one hand, this inscription is much later, and could be a mistake, and on the other, Augustinians did not exclusively attend St Mary's: John Page was resident at Canterbury College, and it could even be that Paynell did lodge at St Bernard's, even as a non-Cistercian.

Geoffrey Eatough was cautious in ascribing Thomas an Oxford career, qualifying his sentence with 'Wood says that...'¹⁸⁶ Salter was convinced that Thomas studied at Paris rather than Oxford, as 'one of his note-books records some lectures on mathematics which he heard at the Sorbonne in 1507, and in another place he gives a list of the seventeen *regna* from which the *natio Anglie* at the University of Paris was drawn.'¹⁸⁷ One of the books donated by a Thomas Paynell to St John's College, Oxford, is a note-book containing legal, logical and arithmetic texts, which Ralph Hanna has connected to the Sorbonne.¹⁸⁸ More work could be done comparing the handwriting of this book with that of Paynell's commonplace book at Hatfield House, but one thing shared by both is a variety of handwriting, suggesting an interest in calligraphy and writing styles

¹⁸³ A. Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses: An exact history of all the writers and bishops who have had their education in the University of Oxford. To which are added the fasti, or annals of the said University*, ed. P. Bliss (London, 1813), II, p. 338. For a list of Paynell's works and collections, see *BRUO A.D. 1501–1540*, pp. 438, 728–30.

¹⁸⁴ John Bale, *Index Britanniae Scriptorum quos ex Variis Bibliothecis non Parvo Labore Collegit Ioannes Baleus, cum Aliis: John Bale's Index of British and Other Writers*, ed. R. L. Poole and M. Bateson (Oxford, 1902), p. 449.

¹⁸⁵ GB-Ojc MS HB4/fols 2.5.3: 'Ex dono Magistri Thomae Paynell (Collegii Sancti Bernardi alumni)'.

¹⁸⁶ G. Eatough, 'Thomas Paynell', *ODNB*.

¹⁸⁷ H. E. Salter, 'Thomas Paynell', *Times Literary Supplement*, 1931, p. 116.

¹⁸⁸ R. Hanna, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Western Medieval Manuscripts of St. John's College, Oxford* (Oxford, 2002), p. 109. See also <https://www.sjc.ox.ac.uk/discover/library/book-month-2022/october-2022/>

(which may account for the alphabet and the notes on learning to write that are a puzzling inclusion to GB-Ojc MS 80). There is no reason that Paynell cannot have studied at both Paris and Oxford.

Salter's comments about Paynell were a response to several inaccuracies in Pollard's *DNB* entry. Pollard replied with a list of possible Thomases, all of which show the difficulties of untangling Merton's canon. His first Thomas was the son of Geoffrey Paynell of Fishtoft (Lincs) who studied at Gray's Inn and became bailiff of Boston. This Thomas could have been our Thomas' cousin and legatee, but his dates mean that he was not Merton's Thomas himself. Pollard's next Thomas was not a Paynell at all, but a Parnell, and we can be sure that our Thomas Paynell was not Thomas Parnell, the pupil of Robert Barnes and son of John Parnell, a London Draper and evangelical.¹⁸⁹ A third Thomas Paynell accompanied the diplomat Christopher Mont to the Diet of Frankfurt in 1539, and was also perhaps the man 'from whom George Constantine learnt his gossip about the Anne of Cleves marriage and may be the clerk who had charge of some of Queen Catherine Howard's "stuff"'.¹⁹⁰ Finally, a Thomas Paynell was the rector of Cottingham who left books to St John's College, Oxford. Partly because of the inscription in the Bromyard volume mentioned above, St John's College library itself is cautious about identifying this donor, stating that his identity 'is not entirely clear'.¹⁹¹ It will be shown in the following discussion that the third and fourth Thomases are likely to have been one and the same, and he was a canon of Merton.

Thomas Paynell, canon of Merton, was the prolific translator of works such as Erasmus' *Comparison o a Vyrgin and a Martyr*, discussed above. During the early 1550s, he kept a commonplace book (entitled by him *Discourses & Sentences*), largely comprising moral, religious and classical verses and phrases.¹⁹² A couple of pages of this concern his family, and should help us locate Thomas among his relations — except, as yet, they do not. It gives evidence for a relationship with the Paynells of Higham Ferrers, Bozeat and Fishtoft, and for

¹⁸⁹ L. Branch, *Faith and Fraternity: London Livery Companies and The Reformation 1510–1603* (Leiden, 2017), pp. 194–5; Eatough thought they could be the same, but no Paynell's variant spellings are ever 'Parnell'.

¹⁹⁰ A. F. Pollard, 'Thomas Paynell', *Times Literary Supplement*, 1931, p. 154; *L&P*, XIV.1, p. 141 and 17, p. 147. Pollard's *DNB* entry calls Paynell an Austin friar.

¹⁹¹ <https://www.sjc.ox.ac.uk/discover/news/commemorating-first-major-bequest-st-johns-library/>

¹⁹² GB-Hha Salisbury MSS, Cecil papers, 5.332.

relationships by marriage with the Olney family and the Throckmortons (fols 5^v, 48^r).¹⁹³ Another clue to Thomas' identity comes from a copy of 'The epitaph of my vere frend and Kynseman mystrys florence Robertson on fol. 67^v, but I have been unable to identify Florence.¹⁹⁴ Unravelling the Paynell family tree will have to occupy a genealogist of some tenacity. This notwithstanding, it should be noted that Bozeat is halfway between Newport Pagnell, named after the Paynells (although this line of the family was by now extinct), and Hardmead, one of Merton's parishes. Thomas Paynell's family association with Merton could follow that of others: proximity to Merton's lands.

At the dissolution of his monastery, Paynell received a £10 pension, more than the standard canon — indeed £2 more than either the sub-prior or Richard Benese. Benese, as we have seen, was a king's servant; a £10 pension suggests that Thomas Paynell was, too. Merton Priory had links with Cromwell; Paynell himself had personal links with at least one of Cromwell's ministers (see below). As Paynell was also from a reasonably active gentry family, it would not be unreasonable to send him on a diplomatic mission to a German Diet.¹⁹⁵ Indeed, as will be argued below, Paynell's book collection strongly suggests that he did accompany Mont. We can also be fairly sure in giving Paynell the rectory of All Hallows, Honey Lane (London), not least because he directly succeeded (in 1545) his friend and erstwhile fellow canon, Richard Benese.¹⁹⁶ The Thomas Paynell who was rector of All Hallows, Honey Lane, was also the rector of Cottingham (Yorkshire). In his will, Paynell left money to the poor of both Cottingham and Honey Lane; the Cottingham bequest was to be administered

¹⁹³ *The Visitations of Suffolk made by Hervey, Clarenceux, 1561, Cooke, Clarenceux, 1577, and Raven, Richmond Herald, 1612, with Notes and an Appendix of Additional Suffolk Pedigrees*, ed. W. C. Metcalfe (Exeter, 1882), p. 208.

¹⁹⁴ A Florence Robertson was married to Nicholas, member of Boston's guild of Corpus Christi (as were several Paynells) and Merchant of the Staple of Calais, c.1530, but she appears not to be related. P. Thompson, *The History and Antiquities of Boston* (Boston, 1856), p. 751; A. F. Sutton, 'London Mercers from Suffolk c.1200–1570: benefactors, pirates and merchant adventurers', part II, *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology*, 42 (2010), 162–84.

¹⁹⁵ <https://thehistoryofparliament.wordpress.com/2019/03/14/mp-of-the-month-geoffrey-paynell-accusations-of-incest-and-the-fall-of-the-house-of-paynell/>

¹⁹⁶ Pollard, *DNB*, identified him also with the Thomas Pannel who resigned the living of St Dionys Backchurch, Lime Street, in 1552 (although Pollard says 1549–50): J. Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials Relating Chiefly to Religion* (Oxford, 1822), II.2, p. 261. Pollard wrote that Paynell had resigned All Hallows by the end of 1560, but Baskerville presumed that he was rector until his death: Baskerville, 'Dispossessed', p. 22. H. B. Walters gives him as rector, 1545–61: *London Churches at the Reformation* (London, 1939), p. 105.

by a local man, Humfrey Haward, while the Honey Lane bequest was left to his sister and executrix Agnes and her husband Henry Suckley.¹⁹⁷

Suckley was a Merchant Taylor, and was warden of the company in 1527. He was sheriff of London in 1541 alongside Rowland Hill, during the mayoralty of Michael Dormer.¹⁹⁸ In the 1540s, Dormer financed Collyer's School; in the 1550s, Hill endowed a school in Market Drayton, and was involved in the London hospitals. Thomas Paynell bequeathed money to Christ's Hospital, set up in 1552 at the inspiration of Nicholas Ridley but under the auspices of another Lord Mayor, Richard Dobbles. One of Henry Suckley's colleagues who himself was warden of the Merchant Taylors in 1530 was Thomas White, founder (with his company) of the Merchant Taylors School, but more relevantly to us, founder of St John's College, Oxford in 1555 (re-using parts of St Bernard's).¹⁹⁹ Moving as he did in Merchant Taylor circles, and amongst charitable educationally-minded City merchants, it is not unlikely that Thomas Paynell should have known Thomas White well enough to want to 'bequeath all my bookes which ar in my chamber at London to the right worshipfull Sr Thomas White his colledge newly erected at Oxforth.'²⁰⁰ Had Paynell been an alumnus of St Bernard's, he might have had an extra incentive. The collection of books donated by Paynell to St John's included a few that are definitely attributable to Merton Priory, again suggesting that this Thomas was the Merton canon.

One of Thomas' other friends was Anthony Bellasis: in a letter from to Bellasis in 1539, Henry Malet passed on Paynell's regards.²⁰¹ Bellasis was not, as Salter claimed, a Merton canon, but a priest and chancery lawyer; he was a close associate of Thomas Cromwell, although diplomatic enough to avoid tarnishing his own career with Cromwell's fall. Anthony was one of the beneficiaries of the Dissolution, acquiring the former Augustinian priory of Newburgh, and he was

¹⁹⁷ *North Country Wills, 1383 to 1558*, ed. J. W. Clay, (Durham, 1908), II, pp. 24–5. Cottingham had been the site of the Augustinian Haltemprice Priory.

¹⁹⁸ *John Stow: A Survey of London, Written in the Year 1598*, ed. W. J. Thoms (London, 1876), p. 195; C. M. Clode, *The Early History of the Guild of Merchant Taylors of the Fraternity of St. John the Baptist, London; with Notices of the Lives of Some of its Eminent Members* (London, 1888), pp. 76, 149.

¹⁹⁹ A. Shepard, 'Sir Thomas White', *ODNB*.

²⁰⁰ Clay, *North Country Wills*, II, p. 24.

²⁰¹ *L & P*, XIV.1, no. 1272, p. 561.

involved in the closure of Merton.²⁰² Despite his closeness to Cromwell, Bellasis' career was traditionally conventional: he was a pluralist whose benefices funded his legal career, and he remained unmarried. Like Nicholas Wotton (one of his legatees), he was a moderate reformer whose interest in the Church was bureaucratic rather than doctrinal.²⁰³ Paynell also associated himself with Thomas More and the Throckmortons, to whom he was somehow related.

The family background and connexions of Paynell, together with his bequest to St John's and the books that he himself translated help form a picture of Thomas, both biographically and in character. His collection was eclectic: canon law, patristic, traditional and practical theology, and a variety of classical and humanist texts: this echoed the interests of his prior, John Ramsey. Some *ex dono* inscriptions call Thomas 'master', suggesting a higher university education; others are from Thomas 'et amicorum'. This phrase was also used by John Salyng in a couple inscriptions on the volume of Athanasius' works now at Ampleforth (GB-AM C.V.23a). The inscription at the top of the first page has been trimmed, and led Ker to record a 'S. [?] Jaynus et amicorum', but this is an error: it reads 'John Salyng et Amicorum'. Christian Coppens argued that 'et amicorum', popular between 1400 and 1600, is a humanist topos, based on the Aristotelian idea of *πολιτικὴ φιλία* (civil or communal friendship) or the Ciceronian one of *amicitia*: it marked one's place in a learned community.²⁰⁴ It is possible that, for these ex-cans, the learned community was their former Augustinian community: there seems to have been a bond among some of the members, at least, some of whom kept up with each other after the Dissolution. However, this can only be a very tentative suggestion. Putting aside such speculation, the phrase 'et amicorum' does more firmly suggest that these two men, Paynell and Salyng, were self-conscious humanists.

Paynell's bequest to St John's was substantial, of over one hundred printed books covering law, theology, grammar, classics and history. Many of

²⁰² Salter, 'Thomas Paynell', C. S. Knighton, 'Anthony Bellasis', *ODNB*; *L&P* XIII.1, no. 785, pp. 291–301.

²⁰³ Barbara Ficara's assessment of Nicholas Wotton could equally apply to Bellasis: 'Canterbury's first Dean', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 18 (1987), 343–46.

²⁰⁴ C. Coppens, 'Et Amicorum: not just for friends', in *Syntagmatia: Essays on Neo-Latin Literature in Honour of Monique Mund-Dopchie and Gilbert Tournoy*, ed. D. Sacré and J. Papy (Leeuven, 2009), XXVI, pp. 10–13. See also W. H. Sherman, *Used Books: Marking Readers in Renaissance England* (Philadelphia, 2008), p. 18; H. D. Hobson, "'Et Amicorum'", *The Library*, 5th series, 4 (1949), 87–99.

these were printed before Merton's dissolution, and might have belonged to the priory. Except for the three books in Paynell's collection which have Merton's *ex libris* marks (Corsetti, Bohic and Lyndwood), we cannot with certainty assign any of his books to Merton; however, Paynell's collection, although much larger than the rather meagre number of Merton survivals, has the same mix of subjects.

Around a third of Paynell's books were legal texts. These, with the exception of a couple of undated volumes, were all published before 1538, and therefore could have belonged to Merton Priory. Paynell himself seems to have studied law, and these, largely canon law, texts would have been suitable student materials. Paynell's post-1538 books tend to be theological works, perhaps showing his personal preference. If some of his books belonged to Merton, it had a substantial law library of both traditional and more modern (largely Italian) works.²⁰⁵

Apart from law, the biggest subject covered by Paynell's collection, as one might expect, is religion. Paynell's religious texts varied from 'practical' theology to more cerebral theology. The former included texts on or about preaching and confession, including a copy of John Bromyard's *Summa predicantium* (a printed edition of 1485).²⁰⁶ The patristic texts in his book collection were all published before Merton was dissolved, and therefore could have belonged to the community as a whole. We saw that John Salyng took a copy of Athanasius: Paynell had a two-volume set of Ambrose's works and volumes of Chrysostom and Cyprian.²⁰⁷ The pre-Dissolution volumes also included commentaries on the Rule of St Augustine by Hugh of St Victor and Humbert of Romans, and Scotus' commentary on Peter Lombard's *Sentences*.

The theological works printed in the 1530s and beyond were in general more recent works. As well as John Mair's commentaries on the Gospels were several works by Erasmus, and several others by Erasmus' arch-critic Edward Lee.²⁰⁸ The controversies in contemporary religion were not restricted to

²⁰⁵ For example, Antonio Corsetti's *Repertorium utriusque iuris Siculi in abbatem*: L. Sighinolfi, 'La condotta del canonista Antonio Corsetto da Bologna a Padova (1487)', *Studi e memorie per la storia dell'Università di Bologna*, VII (1922), 139–51.

²⁰⁶ GB-Ob MS Selden Supra 39; GB-Ojc HB4/Folios.2.5.3.

²⁰⁷ Ambrose: GB-Ojc D.3.22.

²⁰⁸ R. Coogan, 'The Pharisee against the Hellenist: Edward Lee versus Erasmus', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 39 (1986), 476–506.

Erasmus versus Lee: Paynell possessed refutations of Luther and reformist thought by Johann Eck, Johann Hoffmeister, Albert Pighi, Josse Clicthove and Ruard Tapper.²⁰⁹ Paynell had seen the German controversy for himself, having accompanied Christopher Mont to the Diet of Frankfurt.

Paynell's translations, as well as his acquisitions, show a lively mind with a wide range of intellectual interests. He translated several works on health, both bodily and spiritual: *The Regimen Sanitatis* (1528); Ulrich von Hutten's treatise on syphilis, *De morbo Gallico* (1533); *A Muche Profitable Treatise Against the Pestilence* (1534); *A Compendious and a Moche Fruytefull Treatyse o Well Livynge* (1545), a translation of an anthology by St Bernard; and *The Piththy and most Notable Sayings o al Scripture* (1550). He prefaced, as noted above, Richard Benese's treatise on land measurement, and translated Juan Luis Vives' *The Office and Duetie o an Husband* (1553). This was originally written for Princess Mary, for whom he also translated Cuthbert Tunstall's Latin prayers. (Tunstall's *In laudem matrimonii*, printed in 1519 to celebrate the betrothal of Mary Tudor to the Dauphin, was on Paynell's booklist.) For her sister and successor, Elizabeth I, he translated Nicolas Hannapes' *Liber de exemplis sacre scripturae* as *The Ensamples o Vertue and Vice, Gathered Oute of Holye Scripture*. Before that, Paynell had translated Agapetus' advice to the emperor Justinian (*The Preceptes Teachyng a Prynce or a Noble Estate his Duetie*) and addressed it to William Blount, Lord Mountjoy. Mountjoy's secretary, Ammonius, was the intended borrower of Merton's horses in 1517, and some long-standing acquaintance between Merton Priory and Lord Mountjoy can be presumed. Mountjoy was a fellow humanist, and a patron of Erasmus.

Paynell translated several works by Erasmus, and he possessed a copy of Erasmus' letters and his *De preparatione ad mortem*. Adding to these humanist credentials, Paynell's booklist contained the 1506 Badius edition of Lucan's *Pharsalia* and a 1510 copy of Plautus. He also had Valla's *Elegantiae linguae Latinae* (1520), Perotti's *Cornucopia* (1510) and Hermannus Torrentinus' commentary on the *Grammar* of Alexander de Villa Dei (1510). These could all date from his time as a canon, and, taken together with the known Merton volumes, may suggest something of the (humanist) intellectual environment of

²⁰⁹ D. Bagchi, 'Catholic theologians of the reformation period before Trent', in *The Cambridge Companion to Reformation Theology*, ed. D. Bagchi and D. C. Steinmetz, Cambridge Companions to Religion (Cambridge, 2004), pp. 220–32.

the priory, an environment connected to Oxford. Some of Paynell's collection dates from after the Dissolution, including a number of texts concerning the reform movement in the German lands — von Hutten's *De schismate extinguendo* (1520) and several volumes written on or for the colloquies at Cologne in the 1530s and Worms and Regensburg in 1540 and 1541.²¹⁰ The appearance of these volumes in the collection supports the identification of Paynell as the man who accompanied Christopher Mont to Frankfurt.

These reformation texts do not, however, suggest that Paynell was a Protestant himself: his acquisition of sermons by Johannes Hoffmeister and Johann Eck point to Catholic orthodoxy. Similarly, it cannot necessarily be argued, as Geoffrey Eatough did, that Paynell had an interest in 'the rights of the common man' just because he translated Justinian and Erasmus' *De contemptu* and *Complaint o Peace*. Eatough himself wrote that this contrasted with the 'more authoritarian message' in his translation of the *Conspiracie o Catiline*. Paynell's *Conspiracie o Catiline* was a translation of Costanzo Felice Durante's *De coniuratione Catilinae* (1519), a re-telling of Sallust that put Cicero back into the story.²¹¹ The *Conspiracie* was a warning against the dangers of rebellion; Felice even praised harsh measures used in putting the rebellion down, such as torture and execution.²¹² The rebellion here was against a republic; Paynell argued that rebellion is even worse against a divinely-appointed king, but he also used the language of the commonwealth current in political thought and discourse.²¹³ Paynell's translation was first published in 1541 by the London printer Thomas Berthelet (who also published his *De contemptu*).²¹⁴ In 1536, Berthelet had published *A Lamentation in whiche is shewed what Ruyne and destruction cometh o seditious rebellyon* and *A Remedy for Sedition*, both by

²¹⁰ A. N. S. Lane, *The Regensburg Article 5 on Justification: Inconsistent Patchwork or Substance o True Doctrine?* (Oxford, 2019), pp. 10–30.

²¹¹ Eatough, 'Thomas Paynell'; P. J. Osmond and R. W. Ulery, 'Constantius Felicius Durantinus and the Renaissance origins of anti-Sallustian criticism', *International Journal o the Classical Tradition*, 1 (1995), 29–56.

²¹² *Ibid.*, p. 32.

²¹³ For the idea of king and commonwealth, see, for example, John Fortescue, *The Governance of England*, ed. S. Lockwood (Cambridge, 1997), p. 85–7; J. H. Burns, 'Fortescue and the political theory of Dominium', *The Historical Journal*, 28 (1985), 777–797.

²¹⁴ J. Ames, W. Herbert and T. F. Dibdin, "Thomas Berthelet," in *Typographical Antiquities: or, The History o Printing in England, Scotland, and Ireland* (London, 1816; reprint, Cambridge, 2015), III, pp. 271–354.

Thomas Cromwell's polemicist Richard Morison.²¹⁵ Morison railed against the rebels of Lincolnshire and the North, arguing that their actions undermined the body politic — a body politic in which the commonwealth benefitted from the king as the body's head: sedition and rebellion were society's auto-decapitation. J. M. McGovern labelled Morison's two treatises the invention of the 'English anti-sedition oration, a thoroughly Ciceronian genre'; it is a shame that he omitted Paynell's *Conspiracie* as a further example of this.²¹⁶ Thomas Paynell, 'his moste humble seruaunte and chaplaine', dedicated his translation to:

the most mightie, moste excellente, our moste gracious soueraigne
lorde Henry the eight, the very Kynge of England, Ireland, and of
Fraunce, the true defender of christes faithe, and in earthe supreme
heade immediately vnder Christe of the churche of England...

Paynell's preface makes clear that Henry VIII would rule in the interests of the commonwealth, even if that meant acting in a way that punished certain members of that commonwealth:

wee haue seene some in oure dayes, so slyppe from god, that they
attempted greate thynges agaynste your hyghe maiestye, which by
his iuste iudgemente and wyll, receiued condigne punyshemente...

Furthermore, obedience to the sovereign ruler should supersede everything else:

When I consider how we are bounde by the lawe of god, to be
faithful and obedient vnto our gouernour, which is so many waies
careful for oure welthes, surelye I thynke that all that we can do, to
ayde and helpe hym, bothe with bodye, counsayle, goodes and
prayer, is but our dutie... Therefore let al men lerne by this exauple
of Catiline what the ende of them is, that rise against theyr rulers
and euermore hatefully abhorre to here speke of this cursed
monster, this deadelye poyson in a common weale, Rebellion: but

²¹⁵ C. R. Baskervill, 'Sir Richard Morison as the author of two anonymous tracts on sedition', *The Library*, s4-XVII (1936), 83–87.

²¹⁶ J. McGovern, 'Communication and Counterinsurgency under the Tudors, from the Lincolnshire Rebellion to the Northern Rising' (unpublished PhD thesis, York, 2019), p. 9. Thomas Paynell's views on the maintenance of peace and harmony echoed those of another Thomas (Aquinas): Q. Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought* (Cambridge, 1978), p. 56.

wyth all wytte, industrie, power, cunnyng, ryches, wyshe for, labour for, loue, fauour, and maynteyne Obedience: whereof I wolde write moche more, ne were it, that I speke to your highnesse, which hath gyuen vnto vs so manyfolde occasyons to be moost feythfullye beloued, and moste entierlye obeyed. For whose magnificente mayestie, we are mooste derelye bounde, dayly on oure knees to praye god to preserue, ouer vs to reyne as many yeres as Nestor lyued. Amen.²¹⁷

The 1557 reprint of this was dedicated to Lord Montague, ‘who hathe at all tymes, and against all the rabblement of heretyke sustained... the catholyke faith’. Paynell’s preface suggests a reason why Merton should have capitulated so early to its own destruction: the canons of Merton valued obedience to the king and commonwealth more than obedience to their order and way of life. In his ODNB article, Eatough remarked on Paynell’s ‘ability to straddle the religious divide’: on the one hand, he translated a Psalm commentary by Martin Luther; on the other, he contributed to an edition of the works of Thomas More.²¹⁸ The harsh dichotomy of this ‘religious divide’ is, however, retrospective: Luther himself did not want to achieve religious division, and Paynell’s interest in his works is not evidence of proto-Protestantism. The other dichotomy that Eatough found in the ‘egalitarianism’ of Justinian or Erasmus and the ‘authoritarianism’ of Catiline is actually a unified view, similar to that espoused in the next century by Thomas Hobbes, of a ruler ruling for the peace and good of his (or her) people, and for the people ruling themselves with godliness.

Thomas Paynell was a scholar first and foremost. Conservative in religion, he accepted religious reform because it was the king’s will. A humanist whose religious views were Augustinian-Erasmian, Paynell willed a traditional Catholic burial, and John Bale wrote about him that he could have been ‘useful to his neighbours, had monkish superstition had not obstructed him’.²¹⁹ His

²¹⁷ <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebo/Aoo616.0001.001/1:2?rgn=div1;view=fulltext>.

²¹⁸ GB-Hha Salisbury MSS, Cecil papers, 5.332, fol. 17^r; *The Workes o Sir Thomas More Knyght, Sometime Lorde Chauncellour o England, Wrytten by Him in the Englysh Tonge* (London: John Cawod, John Waly, and Richard Tottell, 1557). See also J. K. McConica, *English Humanists and Reformation Politics under Henry VIII and Edward VI* (Oxford, 1965), p. 139.

²¹⁹ J. Bale, *Scriptorum Illustrium Majoris Brytanniae quam nunc Angliam et Scotiam vocant, Catalogus* (Basle, 1557), p. 754: ‘ad proximorum utilitatem, si monachalis superstitione non obstitisset, natus erat’.

scholarship, although humanist, was not radical: he devoted himself to Latin studies and translations, and his area of interests covered several disciplines.²²⁰ Indeed, he fits into the picture painted by some historians of the divergence in sixteenth-century England of scholarly humanism from the religious reforms. David Rundle wrote that ‘the vitality of Latin [did not] die with the Reformation, though equally, it perhaps came to be perceived in certain circles as conservative... an unEnglish activity.’²²¹ This seems to have been the case for John Foxe, who abandoned his humanist Latin studies to write the best-selling *Book of Martyrs*, which itself could be categorised as a humanist work.²²² Thomas Paynell translated many continental works into English, but he (unlike Foxe) stayed on the side of conservatism: he remained committed both to Latin and to Catholicism. Committed also to the authority of the Crown, it was this commitment that carried him — and his fellow canons — into the Reformation, rather than any personal predisposition towards the new theology and liturgy.²²³ Paynell was a capable translator and royal servant, and he seems to have been both genial and charitable in his personal life, giving generously to at least two educational foundations. At Merton, he was part of an ‘integrated group of canons’ whose intellectual approaches and interests aligned, and whose association with each other was not halted by the dismemberment of their house.

The books in Merton’s library under John Ramsey included works to aid pastoral practice, such as the penitential that he purchased (GB-OB MS Selden Supra 39) and the copy of the sermons of Philip the Chancellor that he was given, or Paynell’s copy of Bromyard’s *Summa predicantium*. They also included more cerebral works, which can be divided into scholastic, humanist and mystic texts. The volume of Philip the Chancellor could also be included as an academic scholastic text; humanism was represented by Erasmus. Thomas

²²⁰ A conclusion McConica had come to: *ibid.*, pp. 139–40.

²²¹ D. Rundle, ‘Humanism before the Tudors’, in *Reassessing Tudor Humanism* ed. J. Woolfson (Basingstoke, 2002), p. 36; see in the same volume A. Stewart, ‘The trouble with English humanism’, 78–98.

²²² J. N. King, ‘John Foxe and Tudor Humanism’, in Woolfson, ed., *Reassessing Tudor Humanism*, 174–85.

²²³ This is not to say that regulars were not exponents of the ‘new’ religion: a number of both Augustinian canons and Benedictine monks were radical reformers: G. Williams, ‘William Barlow’ and ‘Robert Ferrar’, *ODNB*; G. Baskerville, ‘Married clergy and pensioned religious in Norwich Diocese, 1555’, *EHR*, 48 (1933), pp. 208–9.

Paynell's booklist contained a volume of John Mair's Gospel commentaries and also works by Erasmus. Ramsay purchased the minor works of Denis the Carthusian, who influenced the spiritualism of the *devotio moderna*.²²⁴

These three strands reflected the theological trends of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Jeremy Catto wrote that, following the ructions of Wyclif and the fourteenth century (and perhaps also the prolonged papal schism), Oxford retreated into an 'established body of wisdom...[rather] than originality of mind'.²²⁵ The masters encouraged historical studies and textual criticism over traditional (scholastic) philosophical speculation. An example was Thomas Gascoigne, who followed an historical approach in both theology, returning to Jerome, and in history itself: we discussed his use of Merton's *Flores Historiarum* in Chapter 3.²²⁶ Teaching at Oxford became more heterodox, as masters lectured on their own particular interests, and Oxford theologians had lost the momentum for exploring spirituality to Cambridge and to the Carthusians.²²⁷ The Carthusians influenced the Augustinians of the Netherlands, who contributed to spiritual momentum with the *devotio moderna* movement, pushing against scholastic theology and for a return to the early Church.²²⁸ Ralph Hanna argued for viewing the Augustinians in England alongside the 'posh and powerful' Carthusians as 'instructors in practical contemplation' during this period, and John Ramsey's copy of Denis indicates their shared interests.²²⁹ The surviving volumes of Merton's library and the booklist of Thomas Paynell reflect the canons' pursuit of these several approaches to religious thought and practice, and Merton's canons should not be categorised separately as either scholastic or humanist or mystic.

A comparison to Merton at this time could be the Augustinian priory of St Andrews. At the same time that William Salyng was acting as midwife for St Mary's College, Prior James Hepburn of St Andrews founded St Leonard's

²²⁴ GB-Lbl MS Add. 45568; GB-Ob 4° Z.33 Th.; GB-Ojc Phi.1.32.

²²⁵ J. I. Catto, 'Wyclif and Wycliffism at Oxford 1356–1430', in *History of Oxford*, II, p. 261.

²²⁶ J. I. Catto, 'Theology after Wycliffism', in *History of Oxford*, II, p. 265; above, pp. 113–27.

²²⁷ Catto, 'Theology after Wycliffism', pp. 264–80.

²²⁸ M. van Dijk, J. van Aelst and T. Gaens, 'Introduction: faithful to the Cross in a moving world: late medieval Carthusians as devotional reformers', *Church History and Religious Culture*, 96 (2016) p. 9.

²²⁹ R. Hanna, 'Augustinian canons and Middle English literature', in *The English Medieval Book: Studies in Memory of Jeremy Griffiths*, ed. A. S. G. Edwards et al. (London, 2000), p. 27.

College (1512). Influenced by the *devotio moderna* and the reformer Jan Standonck, St Leonard's was a 'college of poor clerks', whose chief purpose was to recruit and train canons. For Mark Dilworth, St Leonard's 'was a sign of Augustinian vitality and desire for reform'.²³⁰ During the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, St Andrews was part of a wider movement of renewal and reform both within the Scottish Augustinian Order and in the Scottish Church as a whole. New buildings were erected at Cambuskenneth; new music was composed by Robert Carver (Scone) and David Peebles (St Andrews).²³¹ The prior of Cambuskenneth also sent novices to learn at St Victor. In 1530, Robert Richardson, a canon of Cambuskenneth, wrote a commentary on the Rule of St Augustine. This may be evidence of the Augustinians' contribution to what James Clark, in relation to the Benedictines, called a 'restoration of pure monastic observance': on Thomas Paynell's booklist was a 1513 double bill of Humbert of Romans and Hugh of St Victor's commentaries on the Rule of St Augustine. How typical these were requires further investigation, but taken together with the fifteenth-century Augustinians' sense of history, discussed above, it would seem that the same currents that carried the Benedictines along were sweeping up the Augustinians, too. If we can add some of Thomas Paynell's book collection to the late-medieval library of Merton, its canons would appear to be a learned community with an appetite for new editions. While this would run counter to James Clark's finding 'virtually no physical trace of print' at Merton, it would support his observations about the 'flowering of learning in monastic England' as a whole.²³²

Dissolution and Dispersal

THE DISPERSAL OF THE CANONS

Merton seems to have had an active interest in learning in the first part of the sixteenth century, right up until its suppression. Its last three priors were all

²³⁰ M. Dilworth, 'Canons regular and the Reformation', in *The Renaissance in Scotland: Studies in Literature, Religion, History, and Culture Offered to John Durkhan*, ed. A. A. MacDonald, M. Lynch and I. B. Cowan (Leiden, 1994), p. 165.

²³¹ Dilworth, 'Canons regular', pp. 169–71. See also S. M. Holmes, *Sacred Signs in Reformation Scotland: Interpreting Worship, 1488–1590* (Oxford, 2015).

²³² J. G. Clark, 'The regular clergy', in *A Companion to the Early Printed Book in Britain*, ed. V. Gillespie and S. Powell (Woodbridge, 2014), p. 177. For the European trade in printed books, see E. Armstrong, 'English purchases of printed books from the Continent 1465–1526', *EHR*, 94 (1979), 268–290.

Oxford graduates, and several other canons studied at Oxford and/ or possibly at Paris. The canons who surrendered the priory were all priests, including John Page who was then a student at Oxford. 'Priest' does not necessarily mean that they were all men of learning: in 1548, Henry VIII's chantry commissioners described the former sub-prior, John Debenham, as being 'indyfferently well lerned'.²³³ What that indifference entailed is not known, and it is nonetheless a qualifier for 'well lerned': he had enough learning to be a priest, at least.²³⁴ The book collections of the sixteenth-century canons show an interest in the canon law and a taste for moderately reformist theology, implying that the canons were committed Augustinians. One canon, Richard Benese, joined from being a secular cleric: his was a very conscious choice. The apparent lack of trouble with which the canons relinquished their house and took up secular clerical posts does not necessarily represent them as anti-monastic reformers, but as realists who perhaps, from court connexions, knew the direction in which events were travelling. Their surrender is comparable to that, two decades later, of the canons of St Andrews. Only half of joined the new Kirk: the other half slipped quietly into vicarages after the dissolution of their monastery, having avoided active reform, but having also failed to stand up for the old religion, although some carried on celebrating the Catholic liturgy.²³⁵

We noted above that Robert Ferrar of Nostell had plans to turn the priory into a college; the Cistercian abbot of Rewley, Nicholas Austen, had similar hopes of turning his abbey into a college so that it be preserved: it was not.²³⁶ Given the canons' intellectual interests, Merton could have been a good candidate for being a college, but the king had his sights on its building fabric for his new palace of Nonsuch. Just as Cromwell dissolved and purchased Lewes for his own use, so Henry VIII dissolved Merton during his purchase of Cuddington for Nonsuch Palace. It became a building quarry for Nonsuch perhaps even a week before its surrender, on 16 April; work started on Nonsuch a week later. Richard Benese was appointed surveyor of the King's Works around this time and therefore had the task of dismantling his own monastery.²³⁷

²³³ T. Craib, 'Surrey chantries', *Surrey Archaeological Collections*, 25 (1912) p. 31.

²³⁴ *LEP*, XIII.1, no. 963, p. 352.

²³⁵ Dilworth, 'Canons regular', pp. 171–182.

²³⁶ Williams, 'Robert Ferrar'; Heale, *Abbots and Priors*, p. 313.

²³⁷ Dent, *Nonsuch*, pp. 37–38, 43; Clark, *Dissolution*, p. 419.

Merton's canons moved in Cromwell's circle, and therefore might have had some forewarning about the king's intentions. Paynell and Benese would actively work in the king's service, and another canon, Thomas Wandsworth, was appointed prior of Bodmin by Cromwell himself.²³⁸ Wandsworth (kitchener at the time of Lacy's election) seems to have been childhood friends with Cromwell, both growing up not far from Merton. However, despite this friendship, Wandsworth appears to have been a religious conservative, loath to see his monastery closed. He managed to keep Bodmin afloat until the relatively late date of 1539, and afterwards remained committed to the regular life, in 1547 even being arrested for smuggling a Carthusian out of the country.²³⁹

Although Merton Priory was dissolved, the bonds between some of the canons, and between the canons and their former place, were not.²⁴⁰ Thomas Paynell and Richard Benese worked together in the king's service, but Paynell also succeeded Benese at All Hallows, Honey Lane, suggesting that they had a continuing close relationship. In 1548 John Debenham retired to Merton's former parish of Taplow after the dissolution of the chantries; three years later, his erstwhile brother, George Albyn, became its rector.²⁴¹ As well as his pension of 200 marks, John Ramsey was allowed to continue residing in the Prior's House in Trinity Lane, London.²⁴² John Salyng continued to hold land in Merton and John Codyngton stayed on in Merton as curate until his death sometime before 1558.²⁴³ None of them seems to have taken up a post at Oxford, unlike the Augustinian prior of Plympton, who retired to Exeter College.²⁴⁴

²³⁸ D. M. Smith, ed., *The Heads of Religious Houses*, III (Cambridge, 2008), p. 383.

²³⁹ Salter, *Chapters*, p. 136; N. Orme, *VCH Cornwall*, II, p. 217; Heales, p. 311; for familiarity, see *LESP* X, no. 981, p. 409; *LESP*, XII.1, nos. 194 and 1111, pp. 82–3, 518; *VCH Cornwall*, II, p. 153; D. MacCulloch, *Thomas Cromwell* (London, 2018), p. 20; Baskerville, *English Monks*, pp. 198–200.

²⁴⁰ This happened elsewhere: see, for example, J. Burton, *Kirkham Priory from Foundation to Dissolution*, Borthwick Papers, 86 (York, 1995), p. 27.

²⁴¹ G. Baskerville, 'Dispossessed religious in Surrey', *Surrey Archaeological Collections*, xlvii (1941), pp. 21; GB-Lna E 101 76/26; Heales, 'Free Chapel', p. 311; *VCH Bucks*, III, pp. 240–245. The previous rector of Taplow, Simon Symonds, had been appointed (by Merton) in 1537: G. Lipscomb, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Buckingham* (London, 1831), III, p. 298.

²⁴² See Appendix 2. John Bowle, priest, of London signed an agreement in 1542 about a messuage on Trinity Lane: London Metropolitan Archives, CLC/522/ADDMS0648

²⁴³ GB-Lna LR2/190 f.153; G. Baskerville, 'Married clergy and pensioned religious in Norwich diocese, 1555' [parts I and II], *EHR*, 48 (1933), pp. 61, 219; P. J. Hopkins, 'John Mantell, vicar of Morden, curate of Merton, but not canon of Merton Priory!', *Merton Historical Society Bulletin*, 198 (June 2016), 14–5.

²⁴⁴ A. D. Fizzard, *Plympton Priory: A House of Augustinian Canons in South-Western England in the Late Middle Ages* (Leiden, 2008), p. 245.

This is perhaps surprising, given Paynell's bequest to St John's and Ramsey's Oxford roots.

Merton's canons seem to have been Erasmian humanists rather than proto-Protestants, committed to a regular life but not unwilling to adapt to a secular one. No charges or accusations of immorality or incontinence were brought against any of the canons at the dissolution of Merton. The lack of novices at its suppression could suggest a deliberate or accidental lack of recruitment, but it could just be that novices were not included in any of the records. Connected with the court administration and physically not far from its headquarters, Merton's canons were perhaps pragmatists who saw the direction of events in advance and knew that there was nothing to be gained and everything to be lost by objecting to the king's will. Furthermore, as we have seen, at least one canon (Thomas Paynell) believed that the king's will should be obeyed unhesitatingly, and philosophical commitment to royal authority should not be ignored or played down as a reason for the surrender of their monasteries by regular clergy.

THE DISPERSAL OF THE LIBRARY

Much of the building fabric of Merton Priory ended up at Nonsuch Palace; much less is known, however, about the fate of Merton's library. Some volumes left the library before 1530 — the *Flores Historiarum*, for example, could have escaped in the fifteenth century. Merton's volumes of Peter Abelard and Robert Grosseteste carry a 'TC' monogram, likely to be that of Thomas, Cardinal Wolsey, who took books, and, indeed, whole libraries, from monasteries.²⁴⁵ A number of volumes were taken into the king's library around 1530, two from Wolsey's collection, and five directly from Merton.²⁴⁶ At this time, Henry VIII was sending agents to acquire books from Lincolnshire monasteries that would be useful to his Great Matter. Merton's seven books fit the relevant subject areas (a couple of titles

²⁴⁵ J. P. Carley, 'Monastic collections and their dispersal', in CHBB, IV, p. 340; *idem*, ed., *The Libraries of King Henry VIII*, CBMLC (London, 2000), VII, pp. xxxi–ii; *idem*, 'Marks in books and the libraries of Henry VIII', *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 91 (1997), p. 597.

²⁴⁶ Carley said 'some eight' in 'The dispersal of the monastic libraries and the salvaging of the spoils', in *CHLBI*, p. 290, but gave only seven in *Henry VIII* (p. 320). They are: GB-Lbl Royal MSS 4 B XIV (William's book); 5 F XVI (Basil etc); 6 E V (Grosseteste); 9 E XII (*Quæstiones*); 11 A V (Abelard); 11 B V (canon law tracts); 15 A XXXII (Bernardus Silvestris). See also Appendix 4.

overlap), and could well have been culled for this purpose.²⁴⁷ At this time, too, Henry was buying books from various abbeys — Ramsey, Gloucester, Reading — to stock his palaces. From about 1530, he employed John Leland to look into and effect possible acquisitions.²⁴⁸ A few years later, John Leland bewailed the young German scholars being sent to acquire volumes from newly-dissolved English monasteries; one such volume could have been Ramsey's copy of Athanasius, which probably ended up in Hildersheim. The names of its interim owners are inscribed, but, so far, they remain only names.²⁴⁹ Other volumes might have had similar journeys: the continued digitisation of catalogues and manuscripts may help locate them.²⁵⁰

The canons seem to have followed the practice elsewhere of removing certain books to their own personal collections. From his study of Yorkshire houses, James Carley found that many regulars took books with them; these tended to be printed books, but were sometimes manuscripts, too.²⁵¹ Thomas Paynell's bequest to St John's College, Oxford comprised, as we have seen, several volumes definitely from Merton's library, with more volumes likely to have been.²⁵² (Paynell's bequest, perhaps strangely, included none of his own works.) John Salyng took the volume of Athanasius acquired by John Ramsey; whether John Ramsey himself took any of these volumes is unknown: we have no information on how the volume of Philip the Chancellor reached the British Library, nor on the journey of the historical miscellany from Ramsey's hands to the Society of Antiquaries.

Nine manuscripts were part of the royal collection by the seventeenth century, two having joined the collection in the 1540s (GB-Lbl Royal MSS 11 B V and 15 A XXXII). Royal MS 8 E IX was part of the acquisition of the library John, Lord Lumley (c.1533–1609); GB-Lpl MS ee 118 seems to have been part of his

²⁴⁷ J. R. Liddell, "Leland's" lists of manuscripts in Lincolnshire monasteries', *EHR*, 54 (1939), 88–95. Thanks to James Carley for his helpful correspondence here.

²⁴⁸ Carley, *King Henry*, pp. xxxv–vii; 'Marks in books', pp. 590–3.

²⁴⁹ C. E. Wright, 'The dispersal of the monastic libraries and the beginnings of Anglo-Saxon studies: Matthew Parker and his circle: a preliminary study', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society*, 1 (1951), 208–237. My thanks to Anselm Cramer OSB, archivist of Ampleforth, for his generous help.

²⁵⁰ For the dispersal of books at Leicester, see Webber, 'The books of Leicester Abbey', pp. 145–6.

²⁵¹ Carley, 'The dispersal of the monastic libraries', p. 287.

²⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 290.

collection, although by the mid-seventeenth century it was at Cambridge.²⁵³ The five manuscripts now in the Bodleian came from different donors. Elias Ashmole's interest in astrology, alchemy and antiquarianism would have attracted him to Ashmole 1522, and Selden Supra 9 was purchased from the collection of another antiquary, John Selden. Bishop William Cotton (d.1621), collected and donated Bodl. 555 in 1605. Digby 147 was given by Sir Kenelm Digby, but was part of the collection of Thomas Allen (c.1542–1632). Allen moved from Trinity College, Oxford to Gloucester Hall, 'a place to which', according to Anthony Wood, 'lovers of the Catholic religion retired for their quiet'.²⁵⁴ Gloucester Hall was purchased in 1560 by Sir Thomas White, who appended it to his foundation of St John's.²⁵⁵ It is not surprising that Digby 147 should have attracted Allen, a mathematician, but the St John's connexion is interesting. William Laud, collector of MS Laud Misc. 723, had been an undergraduate at St John's.

CONCLUSIONS

Our exploration of Merton in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries has shown an interest in scholarship: a continuing relationship with the universities, especially Oxford, and a collection of new, printed books to augment the existing collection of manuscripts. The collections do seem to have been focused around either the prior or (to use Clark's phrase again) 'small integrated groups of canons', although this does not seem to have been a new development. The donations by secular clerics show, as we saw in Chapter 4, a flowing relationship between secular and regular, and may suggest Merton as a centre where secular clerks could study and learn, supporting William Campbell's claim, noted in Chapter 4, that even by keeping a library, the canons could aid the learning of secular clerks.²⁵⁶

²⁵³ M. R. James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Lambeth Palace: The Medieval Manuscripts* (London, 1930), p. 193.

²⁵⁴ A. Wood, *The History and Antiquities of the Colleges and Halls in the University of Oxford by Antony Wood, M.A.*, (Oxford, 1796) II, p. 165, and quoted in M. Foster, 'Thomas Allen (1540–1632), Gloucester Hall and the survival of Catholicism in post-Reformation Oxford', *Oxoniensia*, 46 (1981), p. 104. See also A. J. Turner, 'Thomas Allen', *ODNB*.

²⁵⁵ *VCH Oxford*, III, pp. 298–9.

²⁵⁶ Above, p. 161.

The canons were interested in a wide range of subjects. Some of these were practical and pedagogical (sermon or student collections, for example), but some were for private study and meditation. In Merton's library were some high-end manuscripts — the student text-book Ashmole 1522 and the collection of works by Grosseteste. With the advent of print, Merton's canons started to collect printed books, both of older works and of more recent ones, and this seems to support Gillespie's observations, although it may also reflect the survival of such volumes because of subsequent, post-Reformation, collecting choices. The later canons were receptive to humanism and, following this and also their Augustinianism, moderate religious reform. Their tastes also encompassed scholastic theology and mysticism. Thomas Paynell's book collection included a number of law books; he seems to have studied law as a university student. Other students of law were Richard Benese and John Lacy, and, before them, John Gisborne.

Two-thirds of Merton's priors during this period were university graduates, as were nearly a third of the canons who signed the surrender in 1538. Albeit from negative evidence, Merton consistently supplied canons to the universities, and it was a significant player in the founding of St Mary's College. Its priors and canons were of some standing within the Augustinian Order as presidents, scribes, visitors and preachers of the General Chapter. Michael Kympton was part of a committee of learned theologians who advised the king; Richard Benese and Thomas Paynell were, in the following century, royal clerks, employed for their expertise in different fields. All these imply a level of learning and a reputation that went beyond the Augustinian order.

Merton's connexions with royal government resulted in several volumes from the library being taken for the king's library well before the king set his sights on the priory's building fabric; although Henry's dissolution and dismantling of Merton Priory meant the loss of most of its library, it is ironic that he should also have been the cause of some of the library's survival. For some of Merton's last canons, learning continued beyond the lifespan of Merton's cloister, aided by books that they took from its library. Some of these books became part of the original library of St John's College, Oxford, making it the second college, after Merton College, to have been inspired as a centre of learning by Merton Priory.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS

This thesis has aimed to draw together aspects of the history of the Augustinian priory of Merton to argue that it was a significant and important centre of learning and scholarship in the tradition of Augustinian monasticism in medieval England and northern Europe. The thesis argues that Merton was significant because it had a presence in this context — it was a well-known and well recognized centre — and that it was important because of its contributions to learning and pastoral care. Merton, however, presents challenges for the researcher because the direct evidence is partial. But despite the problems posed by the nature of the evidence, Merton's presence in English and European contexts compels us not to ignore it: it is referred to in medieval records, and individuals of note are associated with Merton, and it has left evidence however partial of a substantial and important scholarly culture. To research Merton Priory, it has been necessary to assess carefully and critically the evidence that does survive, to be prepared to draw inferences, and to use analogies with other similar houses in order to try to construct a picture of Merton.

One of the major points of reference for the argument of the thesis is Merton's library; indeed, it is pivotal to how the thesis constructs the picture of Merton as a centre of learning and scholarship. To this end, the thesis has examined both the collection as a whole and individual volumes. From this evidence, it is clear, first, that the library collection was similar to those of other major Augustinian houses such as Leicester, Waltham and Llanthony. Like Leicester, Merton had, in Teresa Webber's words, a 'heavy preponderance of works of Augustine', and also a 'striking' number of sermons, penitentials and pastoral manuals, showing great 'emphasis upon the practical application of biblical study, theology and canon law'.¹ These works naturally belong to an order born from the reforms of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Merton's texts, as discussed in Chapter 3, help to suggest a profile of Merton's culture of learning and scholarship and pastoral care. They show an interest in a return to the Patristic church, in personal study and self-examination and 'interiority', that is, ideas of agency, intention and *habitus*. The works of Augustine themselves required a certain degree of learning: as Erasmus wrote,

¹ M. T. J. Webber, 'The books of Leicester Abbey', in *Leicester Abbey: Medieval History, Archaeology and Manuscript Studies*, ed. J. Storey et al. (Leicester, 2006), p. 131.

Augustine had his own way of saying things, lively, and weaving many things into long sentences, which requires a reader who is at once experienced, sharp, attentive and of good memory, and with the patience for tedious toil: there are not many of those.²

Erasmus also pointed out Augustine's importance as a pastoral leader, and this accords with the practical outlook of many texts found in such Augustinian houses as Merton. These included texts suitable for preaching and confession, and were collected and read by Merton's canons throughout its existence, as shown in Chapters 3 and 6. Whether the intended audiences went beyond the cloister precinct is not known, although collaborations with bishops such as William de Vere and Edmund of Abingdon are suggestive, and the location of the General Chapter's sermons, like the one given by Merton's John de Kingston, in public spaces also imply a wider audience than just canons. The texts in Merton's collection suitable for sermons, some of them heavily used across generations of canons, indeed suggest active engagement with theological and religious learning and teaching. The preservation of the twelfth-century Prior William's book in Merton's library until the Dissolution indicates a continuity in approach to theology. Moreover, as argued in Chapter 6, Michael Kympton's acquisition in the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century of Grosseteste's sermons shows a continuing interest in predicatorial material, a feature that is also demonstrated in the early sixteenth century by John Ramsey's acquisition of Philip the Chancellor's sermons. Religious *conversatio* was an important part of spiritual life at Merton in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and these materials would have been useful for this less formal discourse as well as more formal sermons. Merton's religious interests remained constant throughout the period: while new works, such as Denis the Carthusian, joined old ones, there was a focus in the sixteenth century on both the meditative and the practical, just as there was in the thirteenth.

There were continuities in the sorts of texts that Merton's canons read, but there were also waxings and wanings. The interest in history apparent in the later thirteenth century seems to have waned over the next century, before picking up again around 1400. This may reflect monastic trends: as discussed in

² H. M. and P. S. Allen *et al.*, eds, *Opus Epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterdami*, viii (Oxford, 1906), no. 2157, p. 155.

Chapters 3 and 5, the Merton Annals and *Flores Historiarum* were shared with, and acquired from, other monasteries; the re-copying of the founders' stories in the fifteenth century may fit into a wider monastic pattern of institutional renaissance seen in both the Benedictine and the Cistercian orders, as well as the increasing interest in history, classicism and antiquarianism more generally.³ This antiquarian interest in history can be seen in John Ramsey's acquisition around the end of the century of a popular sort of historical miscellany (GB-Lsa MS 47). The fifteenth century also saw the collection of university science works. As noted in Chapters 3 and 6, two marginalia indicate the presence of classical texts, although these might hint at classical works could equally be picked up from editions of *dicta* and rhymes.⁴ The sixteenth-century canon Thomas Paynell, a man with humanist-classical tastes who felt deeply the relevance of (classical) history for his own times, had in his collection copies of Plautus and Servius' commentary on Virgil, both from before 1538, and could, therefore, have been from Merton's library.⁵

Evidence shows that during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Merton's canons were amassing a collection of printed books. For the purpose of evidence, those few that survive may be augmented by some of the volumes listed in Thomas Paynell's collection, as suggested in Chapter 6. This collection shows that Merton's canons were not a withdrawn community of regulars contemplating the books that they already had in their library, but an active group of canons buying new books. The books that survive from Merton are more than four times the number that survive from Llanthony: whilst it is difficult to draw firm conclusions from the evidence of survival, this does suggest that Merton's printed book collection was substantial.⁶

The texts in Merton's collection formed an important part of a canon's education from his joining the house as a novice, through his profession as a canon, to his promotion as an obedientiary or even prelate of Merton or elsewhere. Merton's canons needed sacerdotal training in order to fulfil their

3 J. G. Clark, 'The Augustinians, history, and literature in late medieval England', in *BSRC*, pp. 403–16.

4 Above, pp. 103, 246.

5 Appendix 5. Llanthony had plays of Plautus, Waltham a copy of Servius: Webber & Watson, p. 76, no. 326a and p. 437, no. 80.

6 K. Bennett, 'The Book Collections of Llanthony Priory from Foundation until Dissolution (c.1100–1538)' (unpublished PhD., Kent, 2006), p. 214.

duties within the monastery, and this thesis has explored the nature and training of novices and canons, and to the particular needs of those canons who went on to take orders. As well as preaching, a canon's duties included performing the Mass and the Office, but also hearing confession. Merton's library therefore needed practical liturgical books and more reflective texts, such as discourses on vices and virtues (found in the Simon of Tournai miscellany) or Peter Lombard's *Sentences*. The popularity of the texts in MS Bodl. 555 with late-fourteenth or early-fifteenth-century canons, perhaps novices, shows the importance of confession and penitence. Generations of Merton's canons were occupied with thought about the Mass, from Guy of Merton in the 1120s, through to Ramsey's reading of Denis the Carthusian on the Mass in the early sixteenth century. The novice's curriculum at Merton is unknown, although marginalia suggest a diet of *dicta* and texts that were not dissimilar to novices elsewhere.⁷ Because there is so little evidence on the novitiate, it is difficult to draw conclusions about whether it changed over time. However, prompt promotion through clerical orders suggests that canons, novices or professed, undertook continuing study.

This thesis has considered evidence from Merton about how novices and canons studied, both in a communal setting and personally. Evidence for personal study can be found in the surviving texts. Webber remarked on the collections of devotional texts at Thurgarton and Leicester, putting them alongside the writings of canons such as Mirk, but also a collection of devotional texts at Southwark.⁸ Many of the texts in miscellanies at Merton could also be included here. The Abelard miscellany was perhaps a personal compilation, as well as for personal reflection. The dense marginalia on the Merton Bible, and indeed its pandect edition, indicates that this was to be used by canons for their own study. These experiments with biblical formatting and the acquisition of Abelardian texts also indicate an interest in innovation and awareness of theological trends. The re-numbering of Peter Lombard's *Sentences* in the fifteenth century suggests a continuing interest in the personal study of core texts. Personal study brought texts into the communal library, and

⁷ Webber, 'Books', p. 131; Clark, *Walsingham*, pp. 54–60.

⁸ M. T. J. Webber, 'Latin devotional texts and the books of the Augustinian canons of Thurgarton Priory and Leicester Abbey in the late Middle Ages', in *Books and Collectors 1200–1700: Essays Presented to A. G. Watson*, ed. J. P. Carley and C. Tite (London, 1996), p. 35.

the line dividing an individual collection and the communal one was not hard. The Abelard miscellany might be one example of a personal text joining the communal library, and, alongside it, some of the texts in the Simon of Tournai miscellany. The university text books that Kingston and Guisborne used were brought into Merton's collection either by them or by another student canon, and the books taken by individual canons following the break-up of Merton's library in the sixteenth century show their interests in keeping a personal collection.

The canons undertook personal study, but there is good evidence to show that they were part of a community of students and scholars. The Merton Bible was a collaborative project to produce a study volume for the community. Priors ensured that the communal library was kept adequately stocked, from Prior William's collecting sermon materials in the twelfth century to John Ramsey's purchase of printed books for the priory library in the sixteenth. In the sixteenth century, too, the canons, or ex-canons, who inscribed their books with their names 'et amicorum' were marking themselves out not just as humanists but as part of a community of humanists. Thomas Paynell left his extensive individual collection (including some of Merton's library books) to a college community (St John's), again suggesting that the canons saw their individual learning within a communal context. The *conversatio* described in the *Life of Guy* also implies a community of scholars, and may be an illustration of Caroline Bynum Walker's 'canons as teachers and learners', discussed in Chapter 1. The transmission of history books between monasteries (Westminster in the case of the *Flores Historiarum* and Southwark, Bermondsey and perhaps others in the case of the Merton Annals) show a wider monastic community of learning; however, the community of teachers and learners included not just canons and monks but also secular clergy. Some of these gave Merton books, such as David of London in the late twelfth century or Robert Ashcombe in the early sixteenth. Others, such as John of Tynemouth (between university terms) and Edmund of Abingdon, stayed at Merton to study and write, or, in the case of John of Salisbury, to produce a collaborative edition together with a canon. Merton's reputation as a centre of learning attracted such men as Richard of Salisbury and Richard de Morins to its cloisters.

The career of Richard de Morins is one indication of the importance of law at Merton. It was in Merton's own interests to make sure that some of its canons and secular clerics were trained in the law: obedientiaries might need a knowledge of both canon and property law; canons and clerks were sent to court hearings on behalf of the priory, and priors were used from time to time as judges-delegate: they might even themselves delegate these duties to a clerk. As the patron of a large number of parishes, Merton was involved with matters of the employment and behaviour of parish clergy, and a knowledge of canon law was useful. Merton's concern with the law was witnessed by several volumes, both manuscript and printed, and by the practice of some of its priors and canons as judges delegate and other legal representatives, discussed in Chapters 3, 5 and 6. It was suggested in Chapter 5 that Merton at the time of Richard de Morins and Thomas of Tynemouth was a law hub, and Merton's interest in the law continued: two of its later priors, John Gisborne and John Lacy, were Oxford law graduates.

The main focus of Chapter 5 (but also important to Chapter 6) is Merton's engagement with higher study at university. This is particularly evident in relation to Oxford but the thesis has demonstrated that its earliest links were with Paris. Merton's connexions with universities grew with the universities themselves. The collections of texts from around 1200 suggest links with Paris. During the thirteenth century, Merton formed a lasting relationship with Oxford, to which it regularly sent scholars. The evidence of Merton in Oxford helps to show that the Augustinians were not just landlords but were actively involved in the university from its earliest years. Merton helps answer Simon Forde's questions, discussed in Chapter 5, about Augustinian student life, viz. where they lived, what they learned, how they were equipped with learning materials and who they learned from. At least some of Merton's students were lodged in halls governed by a secular master. The priory supplied suitable books, which were returned to the priory library ready for the subsequent students. Canons of Merton tended to graduate, like most Augustinians, in theology or law.⁹ Those graduates, however, are only the students we know of: assumptions about Merton's continued student presence

⁹ N. Orme, 'The Augustinian canons and education', in *BSRC*, p. 224; S. Forde, 'The educational organization of the Augustinian canons in England and Wales, and their university life at Oxford, 1325–1448', *History of Universities*, 13 (1994), pp. 22–3.

at Oxford has to be inferred partly from the negative evidence of not appearing in the lists of houses failing to send students to Oxford or Cambridge — but even these lists are incomplete. Although Augustinian houses were supposed to send their students to university with grants, no grant for a Merton student exists. The one university grant that does survive, in the cartulary, is for a secular clergyman, as detailed in Chapter 5. This may suggest that grants to canons were routine, and that only the exceptional circumstance of a secular exhibition warranted an entry in the cartulary. Further evidence of Merton's involvement with Oxford during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries comes from its role, through Prior William Salyng, of overseeing the construction of St Mary's College, and its provision of John Ramsey as the college's *prior studentium* in the 1520s. The Augustinians have suffered from a lack of evidence of students at the universities; Merton's evidence casts a little light, but the area is still full of shadows.

Merton Priory's close relationship with Oxford, and, to a lesser extent, Cambridge, may support Simon Forde's observation that, from the fourteenth century, 'higher education at universities had become far more important to the newly-unified Augustinian General Chapter than the elementary studies conducted in individual houses of the Order.'¹⁰ However, for most canons, as other regular clergy, the end of learning was not to become a theologian or legal scholar of wide repute, but to carry out the daily duties of the cloister, and the lack of General Chapter rulings about elementary education may mean that it was largely satisfactory in equipping canons for their life within the cloister.¹¹ The request of the prior of Canons Ashby in 1442 that his bishop 'bridle the heady importunity of the young canons who crave to study at Oxford' echoes that of Richard Kidderminster, the fifteenth-century Benedictine abbot of Winchcombe, that 'the monks of our time... think there is no place of learning besides the universities'.¹² Having said that, as Forde also noted, there is a great difference between a sizeable priory such as Merton and a small one such as

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

¹¹ J. Greatrex, 'The English cathedral priories and the pursuit of learning in the later Middle Ages', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 45 (1994), p. 411.

¹² *Records of Visitations Held by William Alnwick, Bishop of Lincoln, 1436-1449*, ed. A. H. Thompson (Horncastle, 1918) I, p. 44; M. Heale, *Monasticism in Late Medieval England, c.1300-1535* (Manchester, 2009), pp. 150-1; 146-9.

Tandridge, twenty miles down the road.¹³ Small priories might have sent students to the universities to study the basic trivium subjects; they might even, although there is no evidence, have sent them to other Augustinian houses. On the other hand, the continuing concern of the General Chapter with university study does show the Augustinians' educational ambitions, which followed standards set by the papacy. These standards relied on a 'trickle-down' of knowledge from graduates to other regular clergy, or, indeed, from graduates to secular clergy, as this thesis has suggested.

The establishment of St Mary's College in the mid fifteenth century shows the General Chapter's need to keep up with educational trends. Whether the impetus for the college came from the Augustinians themselves or from outside forces, a college was a mark of identity for the Augustinians as an order; shortly afterwards, the Augustinians of St Andrews founded a college for Scottish canons regular, suggesting similar motives or ideas. It could be argued that the reputation of Merton as a centre of learning amongst the Augustinians explains the choice of the prior of Merton to lead its project management in the early sixteenth century.

During this later period, Merton continued its commitment to higher education, keeping an unbroken relationship with the universities, particularly Oxford. This relationship is reflected in its post-Reformation history: at least a fifth of Merton's surviving volumes were in Oxford libraries within a century of Merton's closure, and a Merton canon was responsible for a substantial part of the early library of St John's College. This canon, Thomas Paynell, is one of the few of Merton's canons to make a name outside the cloister. But although Merton did not produce a scholar of national or international repute, it did nurture learning within its cloisters throughout its life, and contributed to learning more widely.

In addition to manuscripts and texts of an undoubted Augustinian character there were books relating to the canonical vocation and of practical use for canons and clergy who acted in various ways in a spiritual or parochial role. Certain canons are recorded as confessors: Robert of Merton was confessor to Thomas Becket; Guy of Southwick, former canon of Merton, wrote a confessional manual for training priests.¹⁴ There are occasional records of

¹³ Forde, 'Augustinian canons', p. 22.

¹⁴ Webber, 'Books', pp. 140–1.

canons from both houses becoming prelates of other Augustinian establishments and also becoming parish clergy; to these we may add what must have been a substantial number of unrecorded individuals.¹⁵ Practical texts could also have been useful to a parish patron, which had an obligation to ensure the suitability, moral and intellectual, of its appointees; the texts could also have been reference works for visiting clergymen, themselves encouraged to keep up some sort of continuing spiritual development. Leicester had enough duplicate texts to warrant a method of cataloguing that included the first words of the second folio; the duplications could have been accident of donation or acquisition, or they could have been deliberate if those texts were frequently used or borrowed.¹⁶ Several of Merton's books were donated by secular clergy.

Merton on the whole showed competence in fulfilling its duties as a parish manager. Its candidates for parish rectors and vicars seem generally to have had satisfactory level of learning: there were unsuitable candidates, but they seem to have been rare. Merton's concern for parochial ministry can be seen in Guy of Southwick's treatise for clergymen, discussed in Chapter 5, but perhaps also in the *distinctiones* of the Merton Bible, suggesting active preaching (discussed in Chapter 3). These reinforce the picture drawn by Andrew Reeves, Rebecca Springer and William Campbell of the Augustinians' pastoral activities of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. As discussed in Chapter 1, these activities may have declined after the thirteenth century; however, John Dickinson argued that parish work became more common for the Augustinians from the fourteenth century onwards.¹⁷ Alison Fizzard noted that appointments to benefices at this time were even greater amongst the Benedictines than the Augustinians, suggesting that 'other factors and motivations were at play'.¹⁸ Dickinson felt that sending a canon to a parish was 'probably more for financial reasons than anything else', an attitude that can be seen in the historiography of appropriations.¹⁹ However, John Lacy's annotations to William Lyndwood's

¹⁵ G. H. Martin, ed., *Knighton's Chronicle, 1337–1396* (Oxford, 1995), pp. 200–1; above, pp. 20, 27.

¹⁶ Webber, 'Books', p. 133.

¹⁷ J. C. Dickinson, *An Ecclesiastical History of England: The Later Middle Ages from the Norman Conquest to the Eve of the Reformation* (London, 1979), pp. 287–8.

¹⁸ A. D. Fizzard, *Plympton Priory: A House of Augustinian Canons in South-Western England in the Late Middle Ages* (Leiden, 2008), p. 217.

¹⁹ Dickinson, *Later Middle Ages*, p. 287; above, p. 30.

Provinciale (discussed in Chapter 6) hint at a real concern for parish ministry, beyond one of financial exploitation.

Merton employed secular clerks of various sorts within the monastery. Some, perhaps living in the ‘house of chaplains’ described in Chapters 2 and 4, had spiritual functions. Others were used as legal representatives and factors. Although court cases illustrate friction or conflict between regular and secular, or regular and temporal, worlds, this thesis has challenged the idea, argued by Hugh Thomas, that regulars and seculars were at war with each other. Instead, the relationship between seculars and regulars should be viewed with more nuance, as parts of an ecclesiastical ecosystem, in general co-existing beneficially, but with occasions of neglect or competition. It was vital for a monastery to have a healthy relationship with all sorts of secular clergymen: the nominal prior of Augustinian establishments was the bishop, and secular clerics were needed to help a monastery fulfil its spiritual duties, within the monastery and within its parishes, as well as to guard and administer its property. As shown in Chapter 5, regulars and seculars also worked together on more intellectual projects.

Evidence discussed in Chapter 5 demonstrates clearly that Merton enabled various secular clergymen in various ways to study at a higher level. The grant awarded to John of Tynemouth in the 1220s might have been unusual — certainly, it is the only one to have survived — but the licences-to-study given to clergymen in Merton’s benefices show that Merton, as other monasteries, supported university study amongst its associated clergy. Again, this was in accordance with papal and episcopal standards. There are indications that Merton provided other assistance to the education of secular clerics. Its library might have been used by secular clerics other than Edmund of Abingdon. Several books were gifts from secular clergymen: this could suggest the existence of borrowing by seculars of Merton’s volumes. The preface to Guy of Southwick’s treatise on confession shows a dialogue about such education between canon and bishop, and the sermon activity of Merton’s canons could have extended to secular clerical audiences, in a similar way to the sermons and treatises of Augustinian authors such as Hilton or Mirk. Merton also provided and oversaw elementary schools. Chapter 4 argues that although the evidence is slight, it can be suggested that Merton gives an early example of such a school at an Augustinian house. Merton oversaw a school in Kingston; whether it had

schools in other parishes (such as Guildford or Godmanchester) is unrecorded, but it is a possibility. The educational foundations established by Walter of Merton were inspired by Merton Priory, and suggest that Merton had an efficient and effective system of education.

The time span covered by this research is a long one and we must ask how far teaching and scholarship in all their manifestations might have been subject to change. Merton was, like other houses of canons regular, a product of the reforms of the eleventh and twelfth centuries that embraced the *vita apostolica* and values of the early Church. Merton in the twelfth century was one of the pioneer houses used to colonise others. This suggests that Merton had early on a reputation for learning and spiritual leadership: it should therefore be seen together with St Frideswide's, whose reputation as a centre of learning was being established during the same period, and with the northern houses which Anne Lawrence-Mathers called the 'academic wing' of monasticism, as noted in Chapter 1. Guy of Merton provides an example of a 'pioneer' canon: a learned man of profound spirituality, he was sent to reform two other canonries. Guy as a man of learning was not unique at Merton: as noted in Chapter 5, his *vita* was composed by another highly literate canon.

In the twelfth century, therefore, Merton's canons provided an educated, professional ministry, as required by the reforming papacy and episcopacy. During the thirteenth century, the canons regular became a more formal monastic order. How much this altered the Merton canons' pastoral, and therefore educational, interests is hard to say: they were parish patrons throughout the period, but there are occasions when Merton sent its canons to parishes. Whilst not all Augustinians were priests, as discussed in Chapter 1, they could be called a 'priestly order' if that is understood to refer to their commitment to serving the altar and administering the sacraments, for which they were expected to be ordained in major orders: the development throughout the twelfth century of sacramental theology continued to give significance to priests, deacons and subdeacons. Although we have few records of the clerical status of Augustinians in the twelfth century, from the thirteenth century onwards, most canons of Merton for whom there are records were in major orders. More of them were probably priests than is apparent from the surviving evidence; certainly all fifteen of the canons who surrendered the priory

in 1538 were priests. It may be that, like the Benedictines, in time the number of priests increased in the Augustinian order, but it may equally be that, being a reformed order in the first place, the Augustinians had more priests from the start, and that the education and training of canons was, throughout, aimed at promotion to the priesthood.

The Augustinians' interest in the moral and spiritual guidance of the laity continued throughout the later Middle Ages, and was responsible for a concurrent receptiveness to reforming ideas that had produced popular manuals for priests in the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, and the flirtation of Philip Repyngdon of Leicester with Wycliffism. As a close friend and colleague of Repyngdon, and it may be that Michael Kympton held some reformist views, but tantalisingly little evidence about him survives: we do not even have the views that he put forward in the committee that recommended a conciliar approach to the problem of papal schism. Whilst, in the sixteenth century, there were some outspoken reformers amongst the canons regular — the prior of St Osyth's (Essex) was punished for heresy in 1505, and one of its canons was the reforming bishop William Barlow²⁰ — John Ramsey, like most of his canons (and the canons of St Andrews), was on the moderate end of reform and it can be inferred that they broadly followed the ideas expounded by Erasmus for reform through high educational and moral standards amongst the clergy, ideas that Ramsey might have gained from his time at St Mary's College.

This thesis has explored books and learning at one Augustinian priory. It has established a fuller picture of the books in Merton's collection than previous scholarship has allowed, but a palaeographical and codicological study as part of a broader project on the Augustinians or on monasteries of a particular area would bring further enlightenment. Similarly, this thesis has uncovered some scholarly networks, but there is room for further studies of relationships between Augustinian houses, or between the canons regular and other sections of clerical, and lay, society. Evidence discussed in this thesis does, however, suggest that Merton was typical of a larger Augustinian house, and comparable to the greater Benedictine monasteries, in its library collection, its scholarly interests and its relationship with other centres of learning. Merton had a lasting

²⁰ *VCH Essex*, II, p. 160; G. Williams, 'William Barlow', *ODNB*. Cf also Robert Ferrar of Nostell: G. Williams, 'Robert Ferrar', *ODNB*; E. Evans, 'St Mary's', pp. 382–3; *L&P*, XIII.2, nos.285, 953, pp. 115, 395.

relationship with the universities, particularly Oxford, and, although it produced no scholars of international renown, it did produce scholars of some note, such as Guy of Southwick, Thomas of Tynemouth, Michael Kympton, John de Kingston and Thomas Paynell. That Merton attracted scholars such as Richard de Morins, John of Salisbury and Edmund of Abingdon argues for a reputation for learning, and this also accounts for Merton being at the forefront of the development of St Mary's College. This study of Merton shows that the Augustinians' intellectual interests did not, as R. W. Hunt thought, 'disappear again in the course of the thirteenth century',²¹ but continued for as long as did the Augustinian Order itself within England.

²¹ R. W. Hunt, 'English learning in the late twelfth century', in *Essays in Medieval History, Selected from the Transactions of the Royal Historical Society on the Occasion of its Centenary*, ed. R. W. Southern (London, 1968), p. 120.

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APPENDIX I: PRIORS OF MERTON

Robert I [Bayle?] (c.1115–50)
 Robert II [de Tew?] (1150–67)
 William (1167–77)
 Stephen (1177–8)
 Robert III (1178–1186)
 Richard (1190–8)
 Walter (1198–1218)
 Thomas de Wllst (1218–22)
 Giles de Bourne (1222, resigned 1231)
 Henry de Basing (1231–8)
 Robert de Hegham (1238–49)
 Eustachius (1249–52)
 Gilbert de Asshe (1252–92)
 Nicholas Tregony (1292–6)
 Edmund de Herriard (1296, resigned 1305)
 Geoffrey de Alconbury (1305–7)
 William de Brokesbourne (1307–1334)
 Thomas de Kent (1334)
 John de Lytlyngton (1339, deposed 1345)
 William de Freston (1345–61)
 Geoffrey de Chaddesley (1361–8)
 Robert de Wyndesore (1368–1403)
 Michael Kympton (1403–13)
 John Romeney (1413–32)
 Thomas Shirfeld (1432, resigned 1439)
 William Kent (1439–1442)
 John de Kingston (1442–1485)
 John de Gisborne (1485–1502)
 William Salyng (1502–20)
 John Lacy (1520–30)
 John Ramsey (1530–8)

APPENDIX 2: THE PARISHES OF MERTON PRIORY

Alconbury
Ashcombe
Banstead
Barton
Bedford, St Peter de Merton

Berry Pomeroy
Bishop's Sutton
Bridge
Banstead
Carshalton
Clapham
Clyst St George
Cuddington
Duns Tew
East Meon
East Molesey
Eaton Bray
Effingham
Ewhurst
Exeter, St James
Flore
Godmanchester
Greatworth
Guildford, St Mary's
Guildford, Holy
Trinity
Hardmead
Hartley Wespall
Headley
Hitcham
Hunsdon
Kimpton
King's Cliffe
Kingston-upon-Thames
Long Ditton
Lower Hardres

Malden (Old)
Matlaske
Mautby
Merton
Mitcham
Milton Bryan
Midsomer Norton
Patricbourne
Plumstead
Ropley
Ryarsh
Sheen
Sherfield on Loddon
Stanstead Abbots
Somerford Keynes

Somerton
Taplow
Tarrant Keynes
Tolworth
Tregony
Twinstead
Upton
Whipsnade
Yelling

Associated houses
Merton Priory
Bodmin Priory
Dover Priory
Taunton Priory

Key:

Maroon markers = parish .

Black with white cross = associated monastery .



Christchurch Priory
Saint-Lô
Cirencester Abbey
Bilsington Priory
Ravenstone Priory
Old Buckenham Priory
Plympton Priory
St Gregory's Priory
Holyrood Abbey

Available in more detail at:

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/o/edit?mid=igFwEE4tk77ypWHrNOeNno6YwJwWqWloy&usp=sharing>

APPENDIX 3: SEALS



Above, l-r: Merton Priory, seal and counterseal; Nicholas Farnham, seal



Above, l-r: Richard Wyche, seal and counterseal; Walter of Merton, seal



Above, l-r: Peter d'Aigueblanche, seal and counterseal; Richard Croxley, seal.

APPENDIX 4: DETAILS OF MANUSCRIPTS AND PRINTED BOOKS BELONGING TO MERTON PRIORY AND/OR ITS CANONS

This appendix is a list of books and manuscripts known to have belonged to Merton. As this thesis is not palaeographical or codicological in its focus, the descriptions are taken from existing catalogues, occasionally corrected or supplemented. The descriptions are therefore not full, nor are they consistent.

A) MANUSCRIPTS

London

BRITISH LIBRARY

Cotton MS Cleopatra C VII: Merton Priory cartulary, etc.

Date: s.xii-s.xv

Size: 8 ¼" x 6 ¾"

Collation & Foliation: 22I. 1¹⁰⁻¹ (ff. 1-9), 2¹²⁺¹ (ff. 10-22), 3⁸ (ff. 23-30), 4⁸⁺² (ff. 31-40), v¹⁰ (ff. 41-50), 6⁸ (ff. 51-57), 7² (ff. 58-59), 8-19⁸ (ff. 60-155), 20¹⁶ (ff. 156-171), 21-6⁶ (ff. 172-183), 23⁶ (ff. 184-188), 24⁸ (ff. 189-195), 25⁸ (ff. 196-203), 26¹²⁻² (ff. 204-11), 27⁸ (ff. 212-219), 28² (ff. 220-221).

Provenance: Merton Priory

Bibliography: British Library online catalogue

A post-Dissolution collection of miscellaneous documents, some pertaining to Kent. Folios 60-204 comprise Merton's cartulary, written in various hands from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries. There are two pasted cyrographs (fols 80, 170).

1. 1^r Misc. collection, inc. *Quia Emptor*, explanations of gavelkind and other old English terms, counties, Imperial electors, statutes.
2. 36^r Misc. collection pertaining to the Cinque Ports.
3. 60^r Cartulary of Merton Priory.
4. 205^r William of Newburgh, *Vita de Sancto Albano*
5. 212^r Bull of Pope Julius II (1503-1513) to Henry VII on the expedition against the Turks ('Littere tue serenitas'), 1507, and (215^v) Henry's reply.
6. 221^r-59^r Register of Christ Church Canterbury

Royal MS 4 B XIV: Theological Miscellany (Prior Williams' book)

Date: s.xii^{ex}

Size: 11¾" x 7⅞"

Collation & Foliation: 159⁸. Quires are numbered in the bottom centre.

Provenance: 'Excerpta domini Willelmi prioris Meritone cuius anima requiescat in sinu Abrahe' (fol. 1, late-twelfth-century hand). (Exce[r]pt[i]on[e]s de Ecclesiaste et Ecclesiastico liber sapie[n]tie Sermones q[ui]dam et su[per] m[a]th[eu]m); in royal collection by 1666.

Bibliography: G. F. Warner and J. P. Gilson, *Catalogue of western manuscripts in the old Royal and King's collections*, I (London, 1921), pp.86–7 ; J. P. Carley, *The libraries of King Henry VIII*, Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues, VII (London, 2000), Westminster H2.1082, p. 191.

This contents list follows the contemporary list on fol. 2^v. Warner & Gilson's numbers are in square brackets.

Hic sunt hec volumine continentus •

1. *Pauca de ecclesiaste transcripta • De ecclesiastico quedam excerpta •* 3^r, Honorius Augustodensis (?), *Excerptum super Ecclesiasten*, beg. 'Celeth Hebraice'. 5^v 'Super Ecclesiasticum', beg. 'Qui timet Dominum'. [2]
2. *De libro sapientia aliqua •* 15^r, Homily on Wisdom, beg. 'Diligite iusticiam'. [3]
3. *Sermo. cum fortis armatus etc. •* 19^r, Sermon on Luke XI.21, beg. 'Cum fortis...'. [4]
4. *Sermo de x plagis egypti •* 19^v, Sermon on the plagues of Egypt, beg. 'Legitur in Exodo, fratres, quod Pharaone'. Ends 'res in quam nostras interiores et in archa conscientie repositas amen.' [5]
5. *Quidam flosculi qui sic incipiuntur Duo sunt altaria etc. •* 20^v, *Dicta*, incl. from Augustine, Bernard *et al.* [6]
6. *De augustine de beata vita •* 22^r Augustine, *De beata uita*, beg. 'Is Deum habet qui facit quod Deus uult' (*PL*, XXXII.970–971). [7]
7. 23^v *Sermo de spiritu sancto qui sic incip. Si non abiero etc. •* Part of a miscellany, beg. 22^v ('Elemosina ist dei aqua'). [8]
8. *De libro augustine qui intitulus de uera religione •* 24^r Augustine, *De uera religione*, beg. 'Fantasmata sunt de specie corporis' (*PL*, XXXIV.130). [9]
9. *Quedam excerpta de ierarchia •* 24^v, Dionysius the Areopagite, *Hierarchia*, extracts with comments; beg. 'Ierarchia, sacer principatus'. [10]
10. *De epigrammatibus prosperi •* 31^v, Prosper of Aquitaine, *Epigrammata*, beg. 'Non nostre hoc opis est' (*PL*, LI.498): extracts, followed by other theological extracts. [11]
11. *Item de libro super ecclesiasten •* 32^v, Hugh of St Victor, *Super Ecclesiasten*, beg. 'Tres sunt anime rationalis uisiones'. [12]

12. *De aratore exceptio* • 43^r, Arator, *De actibus Apostolorum*, beg. 'Non cessant elementa suo seruire tonanti' (*PL*, LXVIII.81). [13]
13. *De epistolis hyldeberti* • 43^v, Excerpts from the letters of Hildebert de Lavardin, (*PL*, CLXXI.141), beg. 'Salutem, &c. In me mihi'. [14]
14. 53^v [omitted from index] Extract from Prudentius, *Psychomachia*, beg. 'Ipsa sibi est hostis vesania' (*PL*, LX.36). [15]
15. *De libro sedulis* • 53^v, Sedulis, *Carmen Paschale*, beg. 'Labruscam placidis quid adhuc preponitis uuis' (from , *PL*, XIX.553). [16]
16. *De dictis sanctorum pauca* • Miscellany, incl., 53^v–54^r, Hugh of St Victor, *Super Lamentation Jeremie*. L. G. McGuinness, 'A Study and Edition of Hugh of St Victor's Commentary on *Lamentations*' (University College, London, 1997, pp. 299–300) [17]
17. *Sermo in die pentecoste qui sic incipit. Siquis diligit me* • 54^v–55^v, Unidentified sermon. [17]
18. *Descriptio locorum circa ierusalem* • 55^v, Bernard of Clairvaux, *Liber de laude novae militiae ad milit templi*, beg. 'In Bethleem primo panis uiuus' (*PL*, CLXXXII.929–39. [17]
19. *Quedam question et sententie* • 59^r. Cf. Heloise and Abelard, *Problemata Heloise*, beg. 'Quid est quod aliquibus qui quasi dubitantes querebant'. [18] (*PL*, CLXXVIII.677–730)
20. *Tractatus de voluntatibus christi secundum quod deus et secundum quod homo* • 62^r, Hugh of St Victor, *De quatuor voluntatibus in Christo libellus*, beg. 'Queritur de uoluntate' (*PL*, CLXXVI.842). [18]
21. *Tractatus verum potestas dei maior sit quia uoluntas* • 64^r, Hugh of St Victor, *De potestate et voluntate dei*, beg. 'Si potestas dei' (*PL*, CLXXVI.839) [18]
22. *Sermo qui sic incipite Quod natum ex carne caro* • 64^v, Hugh of St Victor, *De unione corporis et spiritus* (*PL*, CLXXVII.285) [18]
23. *Breue capitula de deus est ubique* • 66^v, Unidentified, beg. 'Si deus ubique est' [18]
24. *De augustine ad paulum et eutropium* • 66^v Augustine, *Ad espiscopos Paulum et Eutropium*, beg. 'Vitari potest peccatum' (*PL*, XLIV.291). [19]
25. *De augustine ad timasium et jacobum de gratia* • 69^v, Augustine, *De natura et gratia ad Timasium et Jacobum*, beg. 'Nullus, inquit' (*PL*, XLIV.247). [20]
26. *De epistola augustine ad valentinum in monachum* • 70^v, Augustine, *Epistola ad Valentinum*, beg. 'Attendamus quid per Salomonem moneat' (*PL*, XXXIII.971). [21]
27. *De augustine de correptione et gratia ad eundem* • 71^r, Augustine, *De gratia et libero arbitrio ad Valentinum*, beg. 'Commemoro uos non humano eloquio,' (*PL*, XLIV.881). [22]
28. *Augustinus de predestinatione sanctorum ad prosperum et hylarium.* • 74^v, Augustine, *De predestinatione sanctorum ad Prosperum et Hilarium*, beg. 'Ipsum credere nichil aliud est' (*PL*, XLIV.959). [23]

29. *Augustinus de bono perseuerantie* • 75^v, Augustine, *De dono perseuerantie*, beg. 'Asserimus donum Dei' (*PL*, XLV.993). [24]
30. *Bernardus abbas de gratia* • 77^r, Bernard of Clairvaux, *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, beg. 'Gratia Dei sum id quod sum' (*PL*, CLXXXII.1001). [25]
31. *Exception florum* • 81^r, Miscellaneous sentences, beg. 'Due sunt domus Dei'; (*PL*, 'Liber sententiarum', CLXXXIV.1135). [26]
32. *De super mattheum evangelistum* • 83^r, William of Merton, 'Collectiones fragmentorum de mensa Mathei evangeliste', beg. 'Omnium evangelistarum communis intentio est'. Colophon (fol.159), 'Hec ut potui collegi fragmenta de pane beatissimi evangeliste Mathei; accedite, prandete, amici, sancte matris ecclesie filii'. Homily on Matthew, based on *Glossa ordinaria*. [27]

Royal MS 5 F XVI: Basil, *Exameron*, etc.

Date: s.xii^{ex}

Size: 10 1/4" 6 7/8"

Collation & Foliation: 146⁸

Provenance: fol. 1, 'liber cenobii de Merton' (16th century); in royal collection by 1666.

Bibliography: Warner & Gilson, I, p. 126 Carley, *Henry VIII*, H2.1095, p.192.

1. 1^r 'Sermo beati Basilii episcopi de eo quod scriptum est, Attende tibi ne fortis fiat in corde tuo sermo occultus iniquitas' (rubric from Deut. 15:9). Incomplete.
2. 1^v Contents: 'In hoc uolumine co[n]tinent[ur] h[aec]. Exameron Basili[u]s. Sermo ei[s]dem de eo q[uo]d sc[ri]ptu[m] [est], Attende tibi ne fortis fiat in corde tuo sermo occult[us] iniq[ui]tas. Aug[ustinus] cont[ra] e[pisto]lam parmeniani. Aug[ustinus] Questionu[m] ab orosu[m]. Liber prosp[er]i de co[n]te[m]platiua uita.' In later hand (s.xii–xiii). fol.2 is part of article 4; this sermon returns at fol.3^r (*Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, ed. M. Geerard, 2nd edn, vol. II (Turnhout, 1974), no. 2847).
3. 9^r 'Exameron Basilii Cesariensis episcopi', in Eustathius' Latin translation, in nine books (see BL catalogue for full description). Preceded by Eustathius' letter to his sister Syncletica, beg. 'Religiosus simulque studiosus'. (*PL*, LIII.867; (*CPG* 2835).
4. 63^r St Augustine, *Retractation* and 'Contra epistolam Parmeniani', in three books (*PL*, XLIII.33; *CPL*, 331).
5. 88^r Pseudo-Augustine, 'Questiones ab Orosio propositae et a beato Augustino expositae de fide catholica et libro Geneseos' (*Responsiones ad consulta Orosii*). (*CPL*, 373a.) Fol.98^v, the start of Eustathius' prefatory letter to his translation of Basil's *Hexameron*, which should have followed in article 2.

6. 99^r Prosper (Julianus Pomerius) *De vita contemplativa*, in three books, with a tables of contents. The last folio, incomplete, ends 'Explicit liber Prosperi de contemplatiua uita'. (*Claves Patrum Latinorum*, ed. E. Dekkers, 3rd edn. (Turnhout, 1995).
7. 146^r flyleaf with neumes, eleventh century.

Royal MS 6 E v: Robert Grosseteste, works

Date: s.xiv

Size: 10 ¼" x 6 7/8"

Collation & Foliation: 252¹². MS is numbered contemporaneously per column, but folio references here follow the BL's later pencil numbers. Catchwords (xi 10, xix 8). Double columns.

Provenance: fol. 1 'Liber ecclesie sancte Marie de Merton'; 'TC' monogram (s.xvi); fol. 252^v; in royal collection by 1666.

Illuminations: fols 6 (portrait of Grosseteste), 70, 136, 185, 228.

Bibliography: Warner & Gilson, I, pp. 155–7; Carley, *Henry VIII*, Westminster H2.1239, p. 208; S. H. Thomson, *The Writings of Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln 1235–1253* (London, 1940), pp. 11–12; 214–32; E. Brown, *Appendix ad Fasciculus Rerum Expetendarum ab Orthuino Gratio* (London, 1690).

For similar collections of Grosseteste, cf. BL Royal 7 F II and Royal MS 5 C III.

- o. 1^r *Ex libris*; two tables of contents, ending 'Explicit tabula sup[er] dicta lincolniens[is]', and '[E]xplicit tabula brevis de dictis lincoln'.
1. 6^r *Dicta*, beg. 'Amor multipliciter uidetur dici'. 69^v blank.
2. 70^r Sermones, beg. 'Pauper et inops laudabunt'. Fol. 76 has marginal note, top right, 'Sermo in annunc' S[anc]te Marie'.
3. 109^r Excerpts: 'Quid proprie est aureola'; 'Lincolniensis supra epistolam Iohannis Damasceni de Trisagio in fine sic ait, Sentencia Grecorum'.
4. 109^r Sermon, 'Ad viros ecclesiasticos'.
5. 112^v On confession, 'Quomodo examinandus est penitens cum venerit ad confessionem'.
6. 119^v Seven *dicta* or sermons, beg. 'Ex rerum iniciatarum et mutabilium'.
7. 126^r Memorial delivered by Grosseteste to Innocent IV against papal abuses.
8. 128^r Letter of to the Archdeacon of Canterbury and magister Innocentius, papal scriptor, protesting against a letter of provision from Innocent IV
9. 128^v 'Parabola domini Roberti Groseste Lincoln' Epi': remonstrances to the Archbishop of Canterbury and Roman Curia.
10. 132^r Two paragraphs which probably should form part of art. 7 (cf. Royal MSS 7 E. II and 7 F. II. Article 11, in another band, perhaps a later insertion.
11. 132^r 'Notabilia excerpta de epistolis domini Roberti Grostet episcopi Lincolniensis'.

12. 184^v 'Exameron secundum Lincolniensem' (with other commentaries).
13. 185^r 'De cessacione legalium'. Cf. Royal MS 7 F II, art. 12; 5 C III, art. 12.
14. 211^r 'De oculo morali secundum Lincolniensem', also claimed for Pecham. 227^v blank.
15. 228^r 'Mandata Lincolniensis': treatise on the commandments. 239^v blank.
16. 240^r 'Tractatus Lincolniensis de impressione aeri'. Cf. Royal MS 12 E XXV, art. 26.
17. 241^r 'Tractatus Lincolniensis de yride et speculo'.
18. 241^v 'De statu causarum'.
19. 242^v 'De luce' [*De inchoatione formarum*].
20. 243^v 'De colore, eiusdem.'
21. 243^v 'De generacionibus impressionum humidarum.'
22. 244^r 'Quod motus simpliciter sit a forma vt efficiente' [*De motu corporali et luce*].
23. 244^r 'De disposicione motoris et moti in motu circulari' [*De motu supercelestialium*].
24. 245^r 'De sex differentiis, Lincolniensis' [*De differentiis localibus*].
25. 245^v 'Quod deus est forma prima omnium' [*De unica forma omnium*].
26. 246^r 'De intelligenciis.'
27. 247^r 'De veritate'.
28. 248^v 'De veritate futurorum contingencium': *De veritate propositionis*, and 'Si deus scit Antichristum esse'.
29. 249^r 'De ordine emanandi causatorum a deo', beg. 'Multum coangustat mentes'.
30. 249^v *Sphaera Compendium*, 'De figura machine mundane secundum Lincolniensem'.
31. 252^v draft acquittance by the Prior and convent of St Mary's, Merton, to the Warden and Fellows of New College, Oxford, for 16s. 6d. rent of Mowreshall, Oxford.

Royal MS 8 E IX: Alexander Nequam, *De laudibus*, etc.

Date: s.xv

Size: 8³/₄" x 5³/₄"

Collation & Foliation: ii + 99. Catchwords v 36, 48, 60, 72, 84

Provenance: Merton, *ex libris*; fol. 1, Patrick Mortimer, John, Lord Lumley. Fol. 2^v Humphrey Lloyd; in royal collection by 1666 (?).

Bibliography: Warner & Gilson, I, p. 254 see individual articles.

1. 1-89^r Alexander Nequam, *Laud diuinae sapientiae*. T. Wright, *A. Neckham de Naturis Rerum* (Rolls Series, London, 1863), p. 357. A. N. J. Dunning, 'Alexander Neckam's Manuscripts and the Augustinian Canons of Oxford and Cirencester' (unpublished PhD. thesis, Toronto, 2016).

2. a) 89^r Part of art.1, crossed out. At the bottom of the page, a paragraph, beg. 'Invidia est eg[ri]tudo'. b) 89^v-90^v 'Speculum ecclesie', beg. 'De beatissima trinitate quomodo in vnitate'. Sections on memory, intelligence, will, the creation, the orders of angels.
3. 91^r-98^r 'Epistola de vita venerabilis Guidonis Meritonensis ecclesie canonici'. K. Hawks and K. Penny, *The Life of Guy of Merton* (London, Merton Historical Society, 2020).
4. 99^r A quatrain beg. 'Femina fons fellis' (not the same as Harley MS 3776, fol.116^v). Ex libris ('liber ecclesie sancte Marie de m[er]ton') and other marks, including 'Arnold'.

Royal MS 9 E VI: Peter Lombard, Sentences, Book IV

Date: s.xiii^{ex}

Size: 12 ¼" x 8 ¾"

Collation & Foliation: 113 ff.

Provenance: according to D. Casley, *Catalogue of the Manuscripts of the King's Library* (1734), p. 173, the MS. belonged to Merton Priory, but note of ownership is now wanting. In royal collection by 1666.

Bibliography: Warner & Gilson, I, p. 295.

1. 1^r paragraph from glossed decretals of Gregory IX. 1^v Diagram of family relationships.
2. 3-4^v Two tables of contents (13th and 15th-century hands).
3. 5^r Peter Lombard, Liber IV of the *Sententiae*, preceded by two tables of capitula.

Royal MS 9 E XII: *Question* of Simon of Tournai, etc.

Date: s.xiiiⁱⁿ

Size: 12 ¼" x 8 ¼" (trimmed at some point)

Collation & Foliation: 256: 1¹⁰, 2-4⁸, 5, 6⁴, 7-9⁸, 10⁴, 11⁷, 12, 13⁸, 14¹⁰, 15-19⁸, 20, 21¹⁰, 22-6⁸, 27⁴, 28⁵, 29⁸, 30³, 31⁴, 32, 33⁸, 34⁴, 35⁶. Double columns.

Provenance: Merton Priory *ex libris*

Bibliography: Warner & Gilson, I, p. 296; Carley, *Henry VIII*, Westminster H2.1150, p.199.

Notes: in many different hands per production unit, but all textualis semi-quadrata.

1. 1^r *Ex libris*: 'Hunc librum dedit magister David Londoniensis ecclesie beate Marie de Meritona, quem qui abstulerit uel quocumque modo alienaverit vel pignori subposuerit uel extra septa ecclesie commodauerit uel titulum istum deleuerit uel mutauerit, anathema sit.' 2^r Seventeen paragraphs of *question* on Peter Lombard's (d.1160) *Sententiae*. Non-standard order Fol.5 (para. xi), in pencil: 'istud primo loco scribatur hic incipe'. (Warner & Gilson took this to be instructions to the scribe, but it could be instructions to the reader) Beg., 'Apparuit dominus Salomoni'. 10^v *Ex libris* repeated in the same hand. Below: 'In hoc

- volumine continentur Institutiones in sacram paginam Simonis Tornacensis. Et Questiones Theologice. Et Summa Magistri Alani Poriensi super Boethius de Trinitate. Et Quaedam Alia.’
2. 11^r Simon of Tornai’s ‘Institutiones in sacram paginam’, *question* on Peter Lombard’s *Sententiae* of Petrus Lombardus. Cf. [Merton Coll. MS 132](#). Rubricated headings and marginalia. Catchwords at fols 11^v, 13^v, 15^v, 26^v (end of quire), 27^v.
 3. 46^r *Question* (ci), incipit ‘Duo quesita sunt: primum utrum idem premium’. Cf. [Balliol MS 65](#) ([partially digitised](#)). Preceded by a table in a different hand.
 4. 75^r *Question* (incomplete) on penance. Incipit ‘Quantum salutare sacramentum est penitencia necessaria quidem’. Breaks off ‘qui uero habet seruilem timorem’.
 5. 78^v *Question* or *quodlibeta*, beg. ‘Sicut hoc nomen pater significat paternitatem’.
 6. 82^r *Quodlibeta*, beg. ‘Queritur an sit regulare parem affectum sequi par meritum’. O. Lottin, ‘Alain de Lille, une des sources des “Disputationes de Simon de Tournai”’, *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale*, 17 (1950), 175–186.
 7. 98^r ‘Tractatus implicitarum’: F. Giusberti, ‘A treatise on implicit propositions from around the turn of the twelfth century: an edition with some introductory notes’, *Cahiers de l’Institut du Moyen-Âge Grec et Latin*, 21 (1977), 45–115.
 8. 100^r Treatise of systematic theology, beg. ‘Augustinus in libro de doctrina Christiana breuiter theologie materiam assignans’; end ‘angeli homines prelati’.
 9. 158^r ‘De uirtutibus et de uiciis et de donis spiritus sancti’, beg. ‘Theologie due sunt species, una rationalis’; end ‘diuersus erit statu’; trees of virtues and vices. Alan of Lille. A. M. Landgraf, *Introduction a l’Histoire de la Littérature Théologique de la Scolastique Naissante* (Montreal and Paris, 1973), p. 121.
 10. 161^r Treatise, beg. ‘Quoniam homines a uera sue rationis’, in three books: (i) ‘De creatore’, beg. ‘Theologia in duas distinguitur’; (ii) ‘De creature creatione’; (iii) ‘De creature recreatione’. ?Alan of Lille, *Summa*, ‘Quoniam homines’ Book I. See Marie-Therese D’Alverny, *Alain de Lille: Text inédits*.
 11. 211^r Tract on the Nicene Creed. Beg. ‘Omnis sciencie integritas in duobus consistit’; end ‘propriam interpretacionem’.
 12. 213^r *Summa S. Hieronymi de essentia et invisibilitate et immensitate Dei* or *De membris Domini*. Beg. ‘Omnipotens dominus pater et filius’; end ‘innocenciam poetulat’. (Some paragraphs not in printed text, e.g. ‘Quia uero deus manet intra omnia’.)

13. 216^r 'Summa magistri Alani Poriensi (*sic*) super Boetium de Trinitate' [Alan of Lille, *Regulae de sacra theologia* (PL, CCX.621)]. Beg. 'Omnis scientia suis nititur regulis'; end 'iterari posse'.
14. 227^r Tract on logic: 'Fallacie magistri Willelmi', beg. 'Fallacia apud logicos dicitur deceptio'. Ends 'Similiter et e conuerso'. William de Montibus: L. M. De Rijk, *Logica modernorum* (Assen 1962–7) 2/2., pp. 679–702; R. Sharpe, *A Handlist of the Latin writers of Great Britain and Ireland before 1540* (Turnhout, 2001), p.794. 230^v is blank.
15. 231^r *Quæstiones*, beg. 'Nota quod uerba ista uite'; ends 'in fidelitate.' See De Rijk, above.
16. 247^r *Quæstiones*, beg. 'Filius dei unicus est uerbo'; end 'utimur secundum quod deus'.
17. 251^r *Quæstion* , beg. 'Uti est id quod in usum'; end 'indignus sacerdotio'.

Royal MS II A V: Peter Abelard, etc.

Date: s. xii–xiii

Size: 7½ x 6"

Collation & Foliation: ff.i + 116 [ff. 113–5 cut]: 1–7⁸, 8⁴, 9⁸, 10⁴, 11–12⁸, 13¹⁰, 14⁸, 15¹⁰.

Provenance: Ex libris: Sancte Marie Merton, fol.1^r (top); TC monogram, fol.1^r (bottom); in royal collection by 1666.

Bibliography: Warner & Gilson, p. 337 Carley, *Henry VIII*, H2.1080, p.190; Peter Abelard, *Sic et Non: A Critical Edition*, ed. B. B. Boyer and R. P. McKeon (Chicago, 1977)

Notes: Several hands; variations in size of written space; single and double columns.

1. 1^r Sentences, ending imperfectly on 32^v. See F. P. Bliemetzrieder, *Anselms von Laon systematische Sentenzen* (Münster, 1919), pp. 47–105; D. O. Lottin, 'Aux origines de l'école théologique d'Anselme de Laon', *Recherch de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale*, 10 (1938), 101–22; *idem*, 'Nouveaux fragments théologiques de l'école d'Anselme de Laon: Quelques manuscrits anglais', *Recherch de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale*, 11 (1939), 242–59; John of Avranches, PL, CXLVII.202; P. L. Reynolds, *How Marriage Became One of the Sacraments: The Sacramental Theology of Marriage from its Medieval Origins to the Council of Trent* (Cambridge, 2016), pp. 289–458.
2. 33^r Isidore, *Expositio in Genesin et Exodum* (PL, LXXXIII.207), with and table of chapters. Blank space, fol. 48, suggests two quires written independently/ simultaneously. Incomplete, ending 'meis panibus' (cap. xlviii). Capitals filled in up to fol. 36^r.
3. 69^r St Jerome, *dicta* beg. 'Studio legendi quasi cotidiano'. Different size of written area and different hand to previous section.
4. 73^r 'Pars libri Petri Abælardi qui liber uocatur Sic et Non Sic'. Capitals filled in to 76^v Area of text and hand are different again. Peter Abelard,

Sic et Non: A Critical Edition, ed. B. B. Boyer and R. P. McKeon (Chicago, 1977). [quires 11–13]

5. 99^r 'Pars disputationis inter Christianum et philosophum quam composuit Petrus Abælardus'. Single columns. [quires 14–15]
6. 110^r 'Bernardus abbas de Clareuallis': Warner & Gilson counted 14 extracts, largely on religious life, some of which 'do not seem discoverable among S. Bernard's works'. Beg. 'Voluntarie sacrificabo tibi'. 110^r is in double columns; single columns thereafter.

Royal MS 11 B V: Constitutions, Canon Law Tracts, etc.

Date: s.xiii–xiv

Size: 10 ½" x 7"

Collation & Foliation: i + 212 i–xviii², xviii⁸

Provenance: ex libris 'Liber eccl[esi]e be[ati] Mar[ie] M[eri]ton' (fly-leaf; 14th-century); in royal collection by 1543.

Illuminations: Article 5 has five illuminated frameborder initials

Bibliography: Warner & Gilson, p. 346; Carley, *Henry VIII*, Westminster, H2.874, p. 166.

1. 2^r Robert Winchelsey's constitutions of the Court of Arches, 1295. Wilkins, *Concilia*, II, p. 204. D. R. Logan, *The Medieval Court of Arch* (Woodbridge, 2005), pp. 4–20.
2. 9^r Reply of Thomas de Jorz, to Robert Winchelsey, 8 November 1297, regarding abuses of friars. *Reg. Winchelsea*, p. 187; J. L. Copeland, 'The relations between the secular clergy and the mendicant friars in England during the century after the issue of the Bull *Super Cathedram* (1300)' (MA thesis, London: Royal Holloway (1938), esp. p. 28. R. Swanson, 'The "mendicant problem" in the later Middle Ages', *Studi in Church History, Subsidia*, II (1999), 217–238.
3. 10^r Early fourteenth-century charter hand; continuation of article 2. Four decretals of Boniface VIII; initial B missing, but space provided:
 - i. 'Etsi de statu', to prelates and barons of France prohibiting lay appointments of clergy (25 July, 1297). Potthast, *Regesta*, 24549.
 - ii. 'Super cathedram' (1300). Potthast, *Regesta*, 24913. See article 2.
 - iii. 'Clericis laicos', against subsidies from religious (24 February, 1296). *Liber Sextus*, lib. iii, tit. xxxiii, cap. 3; Potthast, *Regesta*, 24291.
 - iv. 'Quorundam oculos', on elections in religious orders (here 1296, cf cf. Potthast: 29 March 1297). Potthast, *Regesta*, 24491.
 - v. f.13^r 'Inhibemus ne cuique liceat Religionem Domum vestre secundum regulam beati Augustini constitutam vel iura vestra seu r[ati]onabiles institutiones a partibus vestris scripto commendatas sine maioris a sanioris partis capituli consilio et assensu corumpere vel mutare iniungere vel aliquid superaddere quod religioni sive salutis vestre vel salubribus. primum videatur institutionibus obviare'

4. 14^r Decretals, or *novellae constitution* of Innocent IV, with gloss (non-standard? Or by [Peter de Sampson?](#)), beg. 'Cum in multis per generalem: Nam omnes expressi in litteris'.
5. 24^v–25^v Table of (red) titles for 26^r Geoffrey de Trano's commentary on the *Quinque libri decretalium*. Decorated initials 26^r (book I), 74^v (II), 106^r (III), 149^r (IV)
6. 182^v Constitutions of the legate Otho, 1237, with article at end on the dedication of a church, beg. 'In primis depingantur xxiiii. Cruces... absentibus infligenda'.
7. 186^r–189^r Stephen Langton's Provincial Council of Oxford, 1222 (Cf. 9 B. II, art. 3). Wilkins, I, p. 585; Powicke and Cheney, *Councils & Synods*, vol.II, 237–59.
8. 189^r Second General Council of Lyons, 1274. See Mansi, *Concilia*, 24, col.81–102. f.192^r has marginal writings in fourteenth-century charter hand.
9. 194^r Laurence of Somercote's treatise on episcopal elections, c.1254. (C. H. Lawrence, 'Laurence of Somercotes', *ODNB*.) There appear to be several hands in this section.
10. 204^r a) Article by Prior William [de Broxbourne] and the convent (with various obedientaries as witnesses: T. de Eyton, J. de Farleigh, J. de Swavesey, R de London) about refusal to take on John de Sarum owing to his 'debilitas et deformitas', 29 No^v 1315. b) Charter giving to the same John, 'dictus le Botiler', an annuity of 60s. Cf. Cotton MS Cleo C VII, fol. 163^v
11. 205^{r-v} Copy of a letter of Berengarius Fredoli, Bishop of Frascati, Papal Penitentiary, to the Prior of Merton on questions of discipline, Avignon, 5 Dec. 1315.
12. 206^r Decretal of Innocent IV, 'Non solum in fauorem conuersi' (Potthast, 11416), and notes regarding noviciates.
13. 207^r–208^v Six decretals of Innocent III and Alexander III, the last breaking off mid-word.
14. 209^r Two canons of Gregory X 'Licet canon' and 'Nemo deinceps' (Liber Sextus, lib. i, tit. vi, capp. 14, 15; [texts here](#)). Final paragraph, Boniface VIII, 'Quia per ambitiosam', (Liber Sextus, lib.ip. tit. iii, cap. 15.) Above, in another hand, 'Bonifacius VIII'.
15. 209^v Case upon the canon 'In Genesi', in Decretals of Gregory IX (lib. i, tit. vi, cap. 55).
16. 210^r Decretal of Boniface VIII, 'Clericis laicos' (cf. article 3.iii).
17. 210^v Two decretals: a) Gregory IX, 'Si quorundam et infra Firmiter' (lib. iiii tit. xxiii, cap. 2); b) Alexander III, 'Fraternitatem tuam'. Lib. iiii tit. xxiv, cap. 2..
18. 210^v, bottom. Case upon the canon 'Tertio loco' (lib. ii, tit. xix cap. 5), with some other notes. 211^r is ruled, but blank.

19. 211^v–212^r Six decretals of Boniface VIII (Liber Sextus, lib. ip tit. vi, capp. 34, 35, 26; lib. v, tit. iv, capp. 3; lib. iii, tit. iv, cap. 37). i) ‘Cum ex eo’, ii) ‘Porro si’, iii) ‘Si electione ex eo’, iv) ‘Prelatis et clericis’, v) ‘Qui mandat aliquem’, vi) ‘Si Episcopus cui’.

Royal MS 15 A XXXII: Bernadus Silvestris, etc.

Date: s.xiii

Size: 9" x 6 ½"

Collation & Foliation: 121⁸ ff (last 4 blank).

Provenance: Merton Priory ‘Liber ecclesie sancte Marie de Merton’ (fol. 2^r); in royal collection by 1542.

Bibliography: Warner & Gilson, p. 152; Carley, *HVIII*, Westminster H2.329, p. 81.

1. 2^r ‘Incipit argumentum primi libri Bernardi Siluestris philosophi egregii et eximii poete et eloquentissimi uiri ad magistrum Theodericum’ [*Megacosmus* and *Microcosmus*]. *Bernardus Silvestris: Cosmographia*, ed. P. Dronke (Leiden, 1978)
2. 43^r ‘Dialogus Hildeberti Cenomanensis episcopi’ [Hildebert of Lavardin’s *Liber de querimonia*]. *PL*, clxxi.989. Notes in Patrick Young’s hand, beg. ‘Incendio domus mea corruerat’.
3. f.53^r ‘Solinus de mirabilibus mundi’. Cf. Royal MS 15 A. XXII, art. 1. *C. Iulii Solini collectanea rerum memorabilium*, ed. T. Mommsen (Berlin, 1895)

Add. 45568. Philip the Chancellor

Date: s.xiii

Size: c.8" x 6"

Collation & Foliation: ff. xi + 74. 1–4¹⁰, 5⁴, 6¹², 7¹⁰ (10 cancelled), 7¹⁰ (lacks 5, 6), 9¹; catchwords at ff. 20b, 30b, 40b, 73b. Mediæval foliation, 178–247, 250–253, 265.

Provenance: *Ex libris* Merton Priory (John Ramsey); Robert Ashcombe; Thomas Dryffield. Inscriptions, pasted now on same fly-leaf, but numbered x and xi, read:

Liber ecclesie beate Marie de Merton prope Londinum ordinis Canonic[orum]
diui Augustini Winton’ dioc’ ex donatione Egregii viri
Magistri Aishecimi Anno domini M° quingentesi[m]o vicesi[m]o octauo.
Joannes Ramsey eiusdem loci Canonicus’

Partially cut, but pasted below,

‘Liber Domini Roberti Aishecimi, ex donatione
Magistri Thome Driffilde Cuius animam
misereatur deus Amen’.

Bibliography: BL online catalogue

The folio numbers suggest the original thirteenth-century volume was larger. This volume breaks off at ‘Ecce duplex unitas. Et ia[cob]’ (Sermon no.308). Fols 69–70 and 73–74 are missing. The misattribution to Johannes de Abbeville in

the sixteenth century is understandable, for the sermon collections of both Philip and John were popular – see F. Stegmüller, *Repertorium Biblicum Medii Aevii*, vol. IV, no. 6952 for a list of surviving manuscripts. Ariel Brecht noted the practical intention of this volume, and suggested a table of contents, now lacking ('MS Ege.4: A Preacher's Companion' (MA thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 2021), p.72).

COLLEGE OF ARMS

MS Arundel 28: Histories of the Founder of Merton

Date: s.xiv^{ex}

Size: 8" x 6"

Collation & Foliation: I-2¹². Bound with three other, unrelated, volumes (MS 25: a life of St Cuthbert, s.xiv; MS 29: a miscellany of recipes and chronicles, etc, s.xiv-xv; MS 46: *Discorso della nobilita di Firenze*, s.xvi/xvii).

Provenance: fol.1, 'William Howard'. Given in 1678 by Henry Howard, 6th Duke of Norfolk.

Bibliography: *A Priory Founded: Sheriff Gilbert at Merton*, ed. P. Hopkins and K. Penny (London, 2019); M. L. Colker, 'Latin Texts Concerning Gilbert, Founder of Merton Priory', *Studia Monastica*, 12 (1970); [College of Arms online catalogue](#).

1. 1^r An account of Gilbert the Sheriff's life and foundation of Merton.
2. 14^r An epitaph of Gilbert.
3. 14^v A letter from the venerable Gervase about the death of the sheriff Gilbert'.
4. 18^v The vision of Walchelin, a canon of Merton, about the deceased Gilbert.
5. 19^v A fragmentary rental from 1391 concerning the manor of Molesey, Surrey.

LAMBETH PALACE LIBRARY

MS ee 118: Henry of Huntingdon

Date: s.xii

Size: 12" x 8½" (c.304 x 210mm); MS slightly trimmed.

Collation & Foliation: a⁴ (3 canc.) 1⁸-26⁸ (wants 7, 8) b⁶. Double columns of 28 lines. Catchwords at quire ends and elsewhere.

Provenance: Fol.i^v, Liber Wyk[es]: donatus per executores suos ecclesie beate marie de Merton in com': surr Fol.1^r 'John Myster (?Mylner) dyd...'; Lumley (cf. Royal 8 E IX). One of six MSS. borrowed from Lambeth by Sir Symonds d'Ewes and returned to Cambridge by his executors in 1658.

Bibliography: M. R. James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Lambeth Palace: The Medieval Manuscripts* (London, 1930); D. E.

Greenway, *Henry of Huntingdon: Historia Anglorum (The History of the English People)* (Oxford, 1996).

1. 1^r Henry of Huntingdon, Chronicle, beg. 'Incipit prologus historie anglorum contexte ab henrico archidiacono'. 12 *libri*, at 2^r, 3^r, 20^r, 34^r, 35^r, 57^r, 71^v, 87^r, 94^r, 114^v, 131^v, 143^v, 163^v, 188^r, 191^v.
2. 192^r Verses (see James, p.195).
3. 194^r 'Decreta Willelmi regis qui angliam conquisiuit.' (See F. Liebermann, *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen* (Halle a. S., 1903), vol.I, p.486.)
4. 205^r Genealogy of the dukes of Normandy.
5. Misc. historical and legal texts.
6. flyleaf, in donor's hand(?), two receipts, one in English, one in Latin.

SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES

MS 47: Historical miscellany

Date: s.xv

Size: c.6"x4"

Collation and Foliation: (Ker, vol.I) ff. vii + 214. Written space c.130 x 95mm.

Catchwords, v, 12, 24, 32, 36, 44, 52, 60, 68, 78, 87, 89, 90, 91, 98, 104, 112, 121, 153, 163, 171, 179, 188.

Provenance: Kent; fol. iii^r 'Robertus Wyse'; fol. 1^r 'Liber Roberti Wyse'; fol. 213^v 'Joannes Ramsey canonicus de merton' propre london' possidet hunc librum'.

Bibliography: Ker, *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries*, vol. I, pp. 301–2; [LSA online catalogue](#); G. D. Hobson, *English Bindings before 1500* (Cambridge 1929).

Contents based on Ker, *MMBL*, I, pp. 301–2:

1. 1^r Prophecies of [pseudo-]Methodius. Cf. BL Royal MS 8 F VIII.
2. 7^r 'On the Oil of Mercy and the Wood of the Cross'. Cf. BL Royal MS 8 D IV (Pershore Abbey); Royal 6 E VI (Spalding Priory); Royal 8 E XVII; Cotton MS Vesp. D XIII; Harley MS 495; Harley MS 2851; Arundel MS.326; Sloane MS. 289.
3. 131^v 'Liber Isodori de obitu Patriarcarum' — not Isidore's *De ortu et obitu patrum*, but biblical history from Adam to the Resurrection. Catchwords 24^v, 36^v.
4. 37^r Lives of SS Peter, John the Evangelist, Silvester, Rumwold, Katherine and Margaret. Catchword, 76^v.
5. 77^r Chronologies of a) popes to the death of Benedict XII (d.1342) and b) archbishops of Canterbury to William Courtney (d.1396). Cf. OB Bodl. 648. The gold leaf initials on 78^v are unique. Quire numbers on recto fols; catchwords at 88^v, 98^v 102^r–104^v blank.

6. 105^r History from Adam to Emperor Henry VI: 'Incipit chronographia tripartita beati Morpleti constantinopolitani episcopi ab adam vsque ad imperatorem fredericum'. Fol. 114 is a strip insert, and 118^v–121^v blank.
7. 122^r Histories: a) 'Incipit descriptio Orbisterrarum'. Cf. Bodl. 648. b) 126^r 'Parum est orbem totum delucidasse'. c) 129^r 'Brutus itaque filius siluii'. d) 136^r 'De tribus germanie'. e) English history to the Battle of Shrewsbury, 1403. fols 187^v–188^v blank.
8. 189–201^v Lists of English counties with bishoprics, religious houses, hospitals and castles of England, also Scotland and Wales; *Summa villarum*. Cf. Bodl. 648.
9. 202^r List of consecrated kings, chronology and resting places of English kings, from Arthur to Edward I. Cf. Bodl. 648.
10. 204^r Founders of 36 pre-Conquest cathedrals and religious houses. Cf. Bodl. 648.
11. 206^r Prose and verse prophecies: a) Gildas; b) Bede (H. Walther, *Lateinische Sprichwörter* (5 vols, 1963–7), no. 17635); c) John of Bridlington (Walther, *ibid.*, no. 19034); d) Galfridus Eglyne (J. Bale, *Index Britanniae Scriptorum*, ed. R. L. Poole & M. Bateson (Oxford, 1902), 95–6); e) John of Bridlington (T. Wright, *Political poems and songs* (Rolls Series), vol. I, p. 203); f) 'Magister Donakaman dicit.' (15 lines); g) 'Magister Iohannes de Muris hec dicit'. Cf. Bodl. 623.
12. 207^v–209^v 56 sets of couplets and other verses; first ten on death.
13. 209^v 14 lines on the seven ages of man.
14. 209^v 6 lines on the judgment of Solomon, beginning 'Falsa mulier' (cf. Bodl. 555).
15. 209^v 22 French, and one English, proverbs (with Latin versions). (cf. *Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs* (2nd ed., 1948), p. 620).
16. 211^r Miscellaneous notes, including arithmetic, daily and yearly wages, Henry II, rain on St Swithin's day; eight-line prayer, 'Thesu lord that madest me' (C. Brown, H. R. Robbins, *Index of Middle English Verse* (1943), no. 1727); earthquake of 1449. The book's hands cease at 212^r. A small (late) 15th-century hand writes of the coronation of Henry II, and other hands occur thereafter.
17. 214 (pastedown). Itinerary from Walsingham, Norfolk, to Broomfield, Essex (s.xv/xvi).

Oxford

BODLEIAN LIBRARY

MS Ashmole 1522: Mathematical Miscellany

Date: s.xivⁱⁿ

Size: 10" x 7¹/₄"

Collation & Foliation: 203⁸ ff.

Provenance: ‘Liber ecclesie beate Marie de Merton’ juxta London’ in dioc’ Wynton’ traditus domino Johanni Gysborne canonico ejusdem loci et scolari Oxon. per magistrum Johannem Kyngestone Priorem de Merton’ predicta in sacra theologia professorem, anno Domini Millesimo CCCC^{mo} quinquagesimo sexto.’

Bibliography: [Bodleian online catalogue](#); [some digitised pages](#).

1. 3^r Alexander de Villa Dei, *Carmen de arte Algorismi*. N. Ambrosetti, ‘Algorithmic in the 12th Century: the *Carmen de Algorismo* by Alexander de Villa Dei’, in *History and Philosophy of Computing* (Cham, 2016), 71–86.
2. 8^v ‘Hic est terminus pasche qui nunquam in bisexto preterit...’ cf. art. 20.
3. 9^r Peter of Dacia, *Calendarium ecclesiasticum et astronomicum*; with the *computus Gerlandi*. A. Lohr, *Der Computus Gerlandi: Edition, Übersetzung und Erläuterungen*. (Stuttgart, 2013).
4. 17^r Johannes de Sacrobosco, *Arithmetica practica*, ‘Omnia que a prima rerum origine processerunt ratione numerorum’. J. A. Weisheipl, ‘Curriculum of the Faculty of Arts at Oxford in the early fourteenth century’, *Medieval Studies*, 26 (1964), p. 170.
5. 25^r Johannes de Sacrobosco, *Tractatus de Spera*. Weisheipl, ‘Curriculum’, p. 172.
6. 40^v Algorismus, *De minuciis philosophicis*. (Treatise on fractions.)
7. 43^r Johannes de Sacrobosco, *De anni ratione*, beg. ‘Compotus est scientia considerans tempora’. Weisheipl, ‘Curriculum’, pp. 172–3; O. Pedersen, ‘In Quest of Sacrobosco’, *Journal of the History of Astronomy*, 16 (1985), 175–220.
8. 70^v ‘Incipit tractatus Quadrantis Veteris secundum magistrum Johannem in Monte Pess’, beg. ‘Geometrie due sunt partes’. L. Thorndike, ‘Who Wrote Quadrans Vetus?’, *Isis*, 37 (1947), 150–53. Weisheipl, ‘Curriculum’, p. 171. Cf. Digby 147, article 6.
9. 78^v Tables for solar calculation: ‘Tabula Solis in anno bisextili ad inveniendum locum ejus in orbe’; ‘ad annum 3^m post bissextum’. Cf. Weisheipl, ‘Curriculum’, p. 173.
10. 80^r ‘Prohemium in Astrolabium Messehalach’. R. B. Thomson, *Pseudo-Masha'allah: On the Astrolabe: A Critical Edition of the Latin Text with English Translation*, 1.5 (Toronto, 2019)
<<https://shareok.org/handle/11244/14221.2>>
11. 95^r ‘Incipit Practica Astrolabii, sive rememoracio parcium astrolabii.’
12. 102^r Walter Brytte, *Theorica Planetarum*. O. Pedersen, ‘The Origins of the “Theorica Planetarum”’, *Journal of the History of Astronomy*, 12 (1981), 113–23.
13. 110^r Thebit ben Chorat [Thabit ibn Qurra], *De motu octave spere; Expostione Almagesti; De ymaginatione spere; De quantitibus stellarum*. Weisheipl, ‘Curriculum’, p. 172. Cf. BL Arundel 268.

14. 122^r Profacio Hebreo [Prophatius Judæus], *Tractatus Quadrantis Novi*. R. I. Harper, 'Prophatius Judæus and the medieval astronomical tables', *Isis*, 62 (1971), 61–68.
15. 132^r *Tractatus de Spera Solida* (1303). L. Thorndike, 'Notes upon some medieval Latin astronomical, astrological and mathematical manuscripts at the Vatican: Part I', *Isis*, 47 (1956), p. 393. Cf. BL Arundel 268.
16. 148^r John Pecham, *Perspectiva* [Optics]. Weisheipl, 'Curriculum', p.171; *John Pecham and the Science of Optics: Perspectiva Communis*, ed. D. C. Lindberg (Madison, 1970).
17. 176^r 'De tabula Turketi que dicitur orizon...' [Franco de Polonia, *Modus construendi torquetum*]. Cf. [Erfurt, Wissenschaftliche Allgemeinbibliothek, Ampl. Quart. 386](#) (which shares many other articles).
18. 178^r *Tractatus Chilindri quod horologium dicitur viatorum*. L. Thorndike, 'Of the Cylinder Called the Horologe of Travelers', *Isis*, 13 (1929), 51–52.
19. 181^r. Petrus Peregrine de Maricourt, *De magnete*. S. Falk, *The Light Ag* (London, 2020) pp.212-3; *Petrus Peregrinus de Maricourt: Opera*, ed. L. Sturlese and R. B. Thomson (Pisa, 1995). Cf. Digby 147, article 14.
20. 187^r Alexander de Villa Dei, *Massa compoti*. S. Falk, *The Light Ag* (London, 2020), p. 69.
21. 198^r Tables for computing Easter.
22. 199^v Index.

Digby 147: Walter of Henley, etc.

Date: s.xiv^{ex}/s.xvⁱⁿ

Size: 9 ½ 6 ½

Collation & Foliation: 206 ff.

Provenance: Merton Priory/ John Gisborne (s.xv); Thomas Allen (s.xvi); Kenelm Digby (s.xvii).

Bibliography: [Bodleian online catalogue](#); W. D. Macray, *Bodleian Library Quarto Catalogue IX: Digby Manuscripts*, repr. with addenda by R. W. Hunt and A. G. Watson (Oxford, 1999).

- o. 1.^v Table of contents; John Gisborne's signature (cf 206^r different letter-shapes for both r and s); underneath, 'Anno Domini MCCCCLXXXII, xi kal. Julii, videlicet xxxi die mensis Maii fuit terrmotus quasi universalis per Angliam et per alia regna.' (This is the Dover Straits earthquake.) "Liber ecclesie Sancte Marie de Mertone" (fol. 1^v, erased).
1. 2^r Latin version of the Husbandry of Walter of Henley (fl.1280). "Liber ecclesie beate Marie de Merton iuxta london' in diocesi Wynton'" (fol. 2^r, at top, legible by u.v. light). This section was added: see Hunt & Watson, *Macray*, pp. 66–7.
2. 9^r Richard of Bury (d.1345), *Philobiblon*.
3. 28^v 'Proprietates metrorum Ympnarii': treatises on metre, beg. 'Metrorum periciam in scrinio pectoris recondere cupientes.'

4. 30^r ‘Summa aurea’, Alchemical treatise and recipes, beg. ‘Alkemia est sciencia docens transformare omnia genera metallorum’. Cf. BL Sloane MS 1754, article 71; V. Derrien and T. Hunt, ‘L’alchimie Anglo-Normande’, *Romania*, 127 (2009), 370–415.
5. 33^r–34^v Treatise on colours, *speciatim*, beg. ‘de coloribus’. D. V. Thompson, ‘Trial index to some unpublished sources for the history of mediæval craftsmanship’, *Speculum*, 10 (1935), 410–431.
6. 35^r Treatise on practical geometry, beg. ‘Geometrie due sunt partes principales, theorica et practica’. L. Thorndike, ‘Who Wrote *Quadrans Vetus*?’, *Isis*, 37 (1947), 150–53. Cf. Ashmole 1522, article 8.
7. 40^r ‘Utilis et compendiosus tractatus de metris’, beg. ‘Quoniam pes naturaliter prior est metro, de pedibus breviter perstringamus.’
8. 45^r ‘Vita secundi philosophi in silencio philosophantis’, beg. ‘Secundus fuit philosophus qui philosophizatus est omni tempore silencium conservans.’ Cf. J. K. Orelli, *Opuscula Graecorum*, (Leipzig, 1819), I, p. 208.
9. 47^r Ps.-Seneca [Martin of Braga], beg. ‘Omne peccatum actio est’.
10. 48^v Seneca, *De remediis fortuitorum*, beg. ‘Licet cunctorum poetarum carmina.’
11. 51^r Ps.-Seneca [Martin of Braga], *De formula vite honeste*, ‘sive de 4 virtutibus cardinalibus’.
12. 53^v John Malvern (d. ?1422), *De remediis spiritualibus et corporalibus contra pestilentiam*. [ONDB](#)
13. 57^r Treatises on arithmetic, beg. ‘Dicitur Arsmetrice de ars, artis, et metros’.
14. 63^r Petrus Peregrinus de Maricourt (fl. 1269), *Epistola de magnete*. S. Falk, *The Light Ag* (London, 2020) pp. 212–3; *Petrus Peregrinus de Maricourt: Opera*, ed. L. Sturlese and R. B. Thomson (Pisa, 1995). Cf. Ashmole 1522, article 19.
15. 68^r ‘Ars cognoscendi in quo signo sit luna’, beg. ‘Cum medicus secundum auctores duobus utitur instrumentis.’
16. 69^r ‘De complexione 12 signorum et super que membra habent aspectum’, beg. ‘Quoniam unumquodque signum proprium habet aspectum.’
17. 69^v Robert Grosseteste, *Tractatus de spera*. S. Harrison Thomson, *The Writings of Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln 1235–1253* (London, 1940), pp. 115–6.
18. 76^v Treatise on the sphere, beg. ‘Tractatum de spera quatuor capitulis distinguemus.’ J. de Sacrobosco: cf. Ashmole 1522, article 5.
19. 86^v Treatise on algorithms, beg. ‘Sunt autem quedam in numerandi questionibus subtilia.’ cf. GB-Cu, Ii.1.13: [Ptolomæus Arabus et Latinus](#).
20. 89^r Campanus of Novara, *De quadratura circuli*. Falk, *Light Ag*, p. 266; F. S. Benjamin and G. J. Toomer, *Campanus of Novara and medieval planetary theory* (Madison, 1971); Weisheipl, ‘Curriculum’, p. 172.

21. 92^r Simon Bredon (d.1372), Commentary on Boethius' *Arithmetica*. C. H. Talbot, 'Simon Bredon (c.1300–1372): Physician, Mathematician and Astronomer', *The British Journal for the History of Science*, 1 (1962), 19–30; Weisheipl, 'Curriculum', p. 172.
22. 104^r Petrus Hispanus, *Aqua mirabilis*. J. F. P. Meirinhos, 'Petrus Hispanus' Attributed Works: Searching for New Interpretations', *Enrahonar: Quaderns de Filosofia* (suppl. volume): 355–363 (2018)
23. 106^r 'Tractatus septem herbarum septem planetis', attrib. Cyranus of Persia. Cf. BL Sloane MS 338.
24. 107^r. 'Secreta fratris Alberti de Colonia' (Albertus Magnus). P. Kibre, 'Alchemical Writings Ascribed to Albertus Magnus', *Speculum*, 17 (1942), 499–518.
25. 113^v Treatise on the zodiac, beg. 'Si fiat questio vel nativitate'. Cf. [Boston, Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine, MS 20](#).
26. 117^v Al-kindī, *Saturnus in ariete sub radiis*. Cf. [Ashmole 345](#) and [Digby 114](#).
27. 119^r 'Tractatus de 7 planetis et de 12 signis', beg. 'Gloriosus et sublimis Deus.' Cf. [Digby 228](#).
28. 124^v *De luna*. Cum cursum lune scire volueris.
29. 125^r William Merle (d.1347), *De prognosticatione aeris*
30. 138^v Verses from Marbod, *De figuris*, beg. 'Qui cupis et queris, puer, ut bene versiferis'. Hunt and Watson, p. 67.
31. 140^r Henry de Mondeville (d.1320), *De anatomia humani corporis*
32. 151^r Verse on the Annunciation ('Angelus ad Virginem')
33. 152^r Alanus de Insulis (d.1202/3), *De planctu naturae*
34. 193^r Walter Map (d.1209), *Epistola Valerii ad Rufinum ne ducat uxorem*; commentary by John Ridewall (Hunt and Watson, p. 67).
35. 205^r Recipe for aqua vitæ [hypocras], entitled. 'This is the makynge de aqua vite perfectissima', beg. 'This bene the vertuse that this water hath.'
36. 205^c; erased and treated with reagent, only partly legible by UV light: 'SIGNUM seu <...> Willelmi <...>.
37. 206^r John Gisborne's signature together with 'Mertonia' and two Latin sentences, 'Felix qui poterit rerum cognoscere causas' (Virgil, *Georgics* II:490) and 'Felix quem faciunt aliena pericula cautum'. An eight-line inscription, not legible either by the naked eye or by UV owing to a reagent, followed by John Gisborne's pen trials of his name.

Bodl. 555: Henry of Sawtry, *Purgatorio S. Patricii*, etc.

Date: s.xiv/xv

Size: 9⁷/₈ x 6³/₄ in. [leaves 6 ¹/₄ x 8 ³/₄]

Collation & Foliation: vi + 120 ff.

Provenance: English, 14th century; Merton Priory; given to Bodleian by William Cotton, 1605

Bibliography: [Bodleian online catalogue](#)

1. ii^r–v^v fly-leaves: earlier (s.xiii) registers of Innocent III; pen-trials, verses, scribbles and doodles (s.xv)
2. 1^r Henry of Sawtry, *Tractatus de purgatorio S. Patricii*
3. 27^r Ps.-Bernard of Clairvaux, *Meditation piissimae*, PL 184, 485A-508B
4. 63^v *Euangelium Nicodemi* (part):
5. 91^r Ps.-Bernard of Clairvaux, *Planctus beatae Mariae Virginis de Passione Christi Mariae*, beg. 'Quis dabit capiti meo'. .
6. 101^v 'Four short religious pieces' (*Summary Catalogue*), including excerpts from chapter XLVII of Ælred's *De vita eremitica ad sororem* ('Ad Dei vero dilectionem') and from the *Visio Pauli* ('Dies dominicus dies est electus, in quo gaudent angeli et archangeli maior diebus ceter').
7. 109^r 'Tractatus brevis: penitentibus tamen utilis. de modo Confessionis, ac etiam inquisitionibus faciendis de peccatis', beg. 'Confiteor deo & beate Marie'.
8. 114^v–118^v fly-leaves: earlier (s.xiii) registers of Innocent III; pen-trials, verses, scribbles and doodles (s.xv)

Laud Misc. 723: Merton Priory Kalendar & Cartulary

Date: s.xiii, s.xiv–v

Size: c.11" X 8"

Collation & Foliation: MS numbered in Roman and Arabic numerals from 25–110 (used by Heales).

Provenance: Merton Priory; back flyleaves, deed assigning annuities to William Turner, 1627

Bibliography: [Bodleian online catalogue](#)

1. 1^r Table calculating Easter etc. from 1216 until 3191, fols 1–23, although 3ff. (2812–3039) missing. Marginal notices of obits etc. to 1441; last reference to London bridge, 'turrus cum porta quae stabat ad finem ejusdem pontis prope Suthwerk.'
2. 24^r [52/lii] Cartulary of Merton Priory. Deeds to 1399. Includes injunctions of Bishop William Wykeham, 27 Sept. 1387, beg. 'suscepti regiminis; cura pastoralis officii nos inducit.' In the margin, noted 'non fuerunt acceptate hic injuncctiones sequentes sed remisse domino episcopo humiliter sub forma.'

MS Selden Supra 39: Penitential

Date: s.xiv

Size: 7³/₄" X 5¹/₄"

Collation & Foliation: 70 ff.

Provenance: John Ramsey's signature is on fol.68^v (cf. SAL 47).

Illuminations: fols 4^r, 68^r Gilded capitals, blue and ochre backgrounds; foliate decoration.

Bibliography: [Bodleian online catalogue](#); M. Haren, *Sin and Society in Fourteenth-Century England: A Study of the Memoriale Presbiterorum* (Oxford, 2000).

Notes: Incipit, 'Pro quibus culpis et penitencijs'. 45 cases to be heard by a bishop.

1. 2^r–3^v, part of 16th-century lease to Thomas Alen from Master and Warden of a company.
2. 4^r–9^r, 45 cases to be heard by a bishop.
3. 9^r–10^r, 8 cases to be heard by the pope.
4. 10^r–68^r, various penances for various crimes and misdemeanours.
5. 68^v 'Joannes Ramsey canonicus de Merton hunc librum possidet'. And 'Qui est ex deo verba dei audit Joannis octavo (John 8:47). Pro cuius declaratione Notandum quod per verbum possunt duo significavi. Joannes Ramsey.'
6. 69 blank.

Cambridge

Corpus Christi College, MS 059: *Annals of Merton, etc.*

Date: s.xiii–xiv

Size: 325 x 225mm

Collation & Foliation: ff. 253 + 3. a² b¹, 1¹² 2¹² 3¹⁰ (+1) 4⁶ (wants 4, 5) 5–8¹² (wants 1) 9⁸ (+1) 10–16¹² (wants 12) 17⁸, 18⁸ (wants 8) 19¹² 20¹² 21⁶ (wants 6) 22⁸ | 23³ (paper) 24⁸ (+1 after 7, and 2 after 8) 25⁸ 26² 27⁴ (wants 4).

Provenance: 'hic liber scriptus ut apparet in cenobio martyn' (fol.3), s.xvi.

Bibliography: M. R. James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge* (London, 1912) vol. 1, pp.119–25; M. Tyson, 'The Annals of Southwark and Merton', *Surrey Archaeological Collections*, 35 (1926), 24–57; M. Brett, 'The Annals of Bermondsey, Southwark and Merton', in *Church and City, 1000–1500: Essays in Honour of Christopher Brooke*, ed. D. Abulafia, M. Franklin and M. Rubin (Cambridge, 1992), 279–310. Fully digitised, with bibliography:

<https://parkerstanford.edu/parker/catalog/canvas-16efb64e3c437ef4a96fcd0006cc1879>

- i. 1^r–2^v Fly-leaves, from a service-book containing lessons from Kings I. 1^r, 16th-century hand, 'Yf ther be any nayme of the bysschope of Rome or ells any other matter apertayning to his usurpide powre in this bowke contayned I doe vtterly renownce them.'
- ii. 3^r in two columns, original list of contents: 'Subscripta continentur sub hoc volumine.' At the foot of the page: two miracles of the Virgin. At the top of the page, in 16th-century hand, 'hic liber scriptus ut apparet in cenobio martyn'.
- iii. 3^v later table of contents: 'Hec sunt contenta istius libri que secuntur'.

1. 4^r Honorius Augustodunensis, *Imago mundi* (books 1–2).
2. 28^r Prester John, *Epistola Manuelli Comneno imperatori Graecorum*.
3. 31^v Epistola Alexandri ad Aristotelem [de situ Indie].
4. 43^r Martin of Troppau OP, *Chronica pontificum*.
5. 80^r ‘De stationibus rome’. Ecclesiastical lists.
6. 85^v Catalogue of Roman pontiffs from St Peter to Nicholas III.
7. 88^r On schismatics in the Roman Church.
8. 89^v Catalogue of Archbishops of Canterbury from St Augustine to Simon Meopham.
9. 90^r Catalogue of Roman pontiffs and emperors to Innocent III.
10. 97^r List of Synods.
11. 99^r Martin of Troppau, *Chronica imperatorum*.
12. 141^r Pseudo-Methodius, *De initio et fine saeculi*.
13. 147^r Bede, *De situ, commendatio et mirabilibus Britanniae*.
14. 149^v Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Cronica maioris Britannie*.
15. 158^v Merton Annals. (Change of hand f. 170^r).
16. 180^v Services owed by the Barons of the cinque ports to the crown.
17. 180^v Wardens of Dover Castle.
18. 182^r Magna carta (confirmation of 1225).
19. 186^v Carta de forestis (confirmation of 1225).
20. 188^v 1253 decree of the church for the peace of the realm and the liberty of the church.
21. 189^v Letter of Innocent IV to bishops re. Magna Carta and Carta de forestis.
22. 192^r Bull of Innocent IV to the province of Canterbury re. archiepiscopal procurations.
23. 192^v Bull of Innocent IV re. appeals to Rome.
24. 193^v Charter of liberties granted to the county of Surrey by Edward I.
25. 193^v The Law of Oléron (The judgments of the sea).
26. 195^r Evidence of liberty and immunity of church of St Martin, Dover
27. 197^r The Statute of Marlborough.
28. 200^v The Statute of Westminster I.
29. 211^v The Statute of Gloucester.
30. 216^v The Statute ‘de religionis’.
31. 217^v The Statute of Merton.
32. 219^v The Statute of Westminster II.
33. 226^r Æthelred to Ealdred, bishop of Cornwall, grant of privileges, 994.
34. 227^r Cnut to St Mary’s Exeter, confirmation of privileges, 1019.
35. 227^v Edward transfers see to Exeter, 1050. (229^r blank)
36. 229^v Petitions at the Carlisle parliament, 1307.
37. 230^r The Statute of Carlisle.
38. 232^r Bull of Pope John against the errors of master John de Senliac.
39. 232^v Genealogical tables demonstrating right of English king to France.

40. 232^v Writ or Assize of iuris utrum.
41. 233^r Verses 'on the times'.
42. 234^r Letter of the barons to Clement VI (1244).
43. 236^v Richard II's abdication and Henry IV's election.
44. 237^v Proceedings of the visitation of Bayham abbey.
45. 241^r Proceedings of the papal nuncio against King John.
46. 242^r Charter of King John ceding England to the pope as a vassal.
47. 243^r Innocent III's confirmation of John's charter concerning ecclesiastical elections.
48. 243^v Statute of Edward III.
49. 245^r Bull on the residence of priests (incomplete).
50. 245^v Tract on priestly office.
51. 255^r Summons to a provincial chapter, 1337.
52. 256^v Decree of the Holy Roman Emperor concerning papal confirmation.
53. 257^v Constitutions of Clarendon, 1164.
54. 258^v Letter of the Archbishop of Canterbury to the Cistercians concerning tithes.
55. 259^r King Edgar's instructions to bishops and abbots.

University Library Ee.6.26: Bible

Date: s.xiii

Size: 200 x 140 mm

Collation & Foliation: i + 460 + i: 1-14¹², 15⁶, 16¹⁰ (wants 1, 16), 17¹², 18¹⁰, 19⁶, 20-1¹⁰, 22¹², 23-4⁸, 25¹⁰, 26-27¹², 28-31¹⁰, 32¹⁶, 33⁴, 34¹⁰, 35⁸ (wants 8), 36-38¹², 39-42¹⁰, 43¹⁰ (wants 9), 44⁶

Provenance: Ex libris 'liber ecclesie b[ea]te marie de m[er]ton', 144^v

Bibliography: R. McCandless, 'An Analysis of Cambridge University Library Ee.6.26 and its Implications for the Production and Use of Thirteenth-Century Bibles' (MPhil. thesis, Cambridge, 2022); [Sarum Rite: Companion to the Kalendar](#)

1. 1^v Bible
2. 145^r Kalendar
3. 146^r Bible
4. 458^r Interpretation of Hebrew Names (incomplete)
5. 463^v Ranulf Higden, *Polychronicon*, lib. III, cap. XXXII (exerpt)

Eton

ETON COLLEGE

MS 123: Flores historiarum

Date: s.xiii-xiv

Size: written space 202 x 142-150mm

Collation & Foliation: 1¹² + 1 leaf after 12 2-4¹² 5 three (ff. 50-2) 6¹² (misbound in the order 56-8, 53-5, 62-64, 59-61) 7-13¹², 14¹⁰ wants 10, blank, after f. 157 15¹⁰

16–22¹² 23¹⁰ 24 four (ff. 262–265). Late-mediaeval foliation in Hindu-Arabic numerals, fols 1–110^r, cont. to fol. 265^r in 16th-century hand.

Provenance: *ex libris* fol.1 excised; priors of Merton *passim*.

Bibliography: N. Ker, *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries* (Oxford, 1969), vol. II; A. Bennett, 'A Late Thirteenth-Century Psalter-Hours from London', in *England in the Thirteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1984 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. W. M. Ormrod (Nottingham, 1985), pp. 15–31; D. A. Carpenter, 'The Pershore "Flores Historiarum": An Unrecognised Chronicle from the Period of Reform and Rebellion in England, 1258–65', *EHR*, 127 (2012), 1343–66; J. Collard, "'Flores Historiarum' Manuscripts the Illumination of a Late Thirteenth-Century Chronicle', *Zeitschrift Für Kunstgeschichte*, 71 (2008), 441–66; [Eton College online catalogue](#); *Flor Historiarum*, ed. H. R. Luard, *Chronicles & Memorials of Great Britain*, 3 vols (London: HMSO, 1890).

Hands: (Ker) 1) 1^r–240^v 2) 240^v–242^vb. 3) 242^vb.–243^ra. 4) 247^r 5) fol. 250^v 5) 251^v 6) 252^v 7) 253^{r-v} 8) 253^v 9) 255^v (possibly hand 6).

Illustrations: Decorated/historiated capitals, fols 1^r, 27^r Initials (Bennett) embellished in five hands: 1) fols 1–242^r; 2) fols 242^v–243^v 3) fols 245^r–249^v 4) fols 252^r–255^r Coronation portraits:

1. William I, fol. 158^r, 69 x 67mm. Looking dexter, seated on a throne with eagles, William holds a fleur-de-lisé sceptre, and holds his left hand up. A bishop with a hole in his right glove (and a cross staff in his left) blesses him, dexter, and another, sinister A deacon hold his cross staff. The field, red.
2. William Rufus, fol. 162^r, 70 x 66mm. Facing left, a fleur-de-lys sceptre in both hands, the base resting on his left knee. His throne has two hounds' heads (perhaps a reference to his downfall). A bishop with a hole in his right glove, and a cross staff in his left hand, blesses him, dexter Another blesses him, sinister, with a deacon holding his cross staff. The field, red.
3. Henry I, fol. 165^v, 64 x 65mm. On a gold field, Henry sits on an architectural throne (not unlike that on his fourth seal), holding a fleur-de-lys sceptre of a different style, and pointing to it with his left hand. Two bishops with cross staffs stand either side of him. Since the cross staff is archiepiscopal, these two could be taken as Canterbury and York: since neither was present at Henry's coronation, this may be the illustrator's sense of humour.
4. Stephen, fol. 170^r, 60 x 64mm. He is full-faced, a cross sceptre in his right hand, his left pointing sinister His throne has two Janus-faces (perhaps referring to the time of year of his coronation). Two bishops bless him; they have cross staffs. One is probably William of Corbeuil. Neither bishop looks at all happy, and Stephen himself looks rather grim.

5. Henry II, fol. 173^r, 72 x 66mm. There is a little ambiguity here, as immediately below the illustration is (in red) 'Fredericus creatus est in Imperatorem.' Henry's throne has very similar lions' head to Edward's, although these are fiercer, nipping at the bishops' copes. Two bishops crown him; the dexter holds a cross staff, and is presumably Theobald. The sinister bishop may be holding a chrismatory in his right hand. Henry holds both his hands up, as if in prayer. The field is blue.
6. Richard, fol. 180^r, 82 x 65 mm. Richard sits on a throne with a woman's head (dexter) and man's head (sinister). He is blessed by a bishop, dexter, touching a cross staff held by a deacon; this is Baldwin of Canterbury. The sinister bishop appears to be anointing Richard (Chetham 6712's sinister bishop is pouring holy oil on to Richard's head). Richard holds a fleur-de-lys sceptre in his right hand, his left held nonchalantly at his waist. The field is blue.
7. John, fol. 184^r, 71 x 62 mm. On a red field, John is seated on an architectural throne of the Henry I type, and similar to that on his seal. He is crowned by two bishops, bearing cross staffs; the dexter presumably Hubert Walter. John's sceptre has a bird on it, and he points to his sceptre with his left hand.
8. Henry III, fol. 194^r, 75 x 63mm. Full-faced, seated on a throne with two lions' heads guardant, he holds in his left hand a white glove, his right hand cupping his chest. A bishop, front sinister, blesses him; he bears a cross staff, and he is clean-shaven, so presumably Langton (cf. Matthew Paris' illustration of Langton). A bearded bishop blesses, or perhaps presents, him dexter (Pandulf). A bishop stands behind Langton. Two deacons help officiate, carrying cross staffs, the dexter carrying also a thurible. The field is red.
9. Edward I, fol. 237^r, 85 x 70 mm. On a blue field, full-faced, seated on a throne with two lions' heads, he holds a bird-topped sceptre with his right hand. Two bishops bless him, dexter; sinister, two bishops hold chrismatories. Edward holds his left hand up. Like Stephen, black shoes with red hose. A deacon hovers in the wings, dexter, holding a cross staff (outlined). See Bennett, p. 22.

The manuscript ends imperfectly in 1306, with the words: 'Circa festum Cathedre S. petri venit quidam Cardis'; we may assume a continuation to 1307. There are notes by Thomas Gascoigne (d.1458) on ff. 85, 86 and 96^v against passages in the text mentioning St Ermenburga, St Ebba, and Bede. There are also early 16th-century marginalia by a writer taken by Luard to be Matthew Parker, at work in London in 1562 on the basis of a reference to the flooding of the Thames in that year on fol. 182 (AD 1195).

B) PRINTED BOOKS

Ampleforth

AMPLEFORTH ABBEY

C.v.23a: Athanasius, *Opera* (Paris, 1519)

Provenance: (title page) ‘Iohannes Ramsay Canonicus de Merton prope Londinum hunc possidet’; ‘precium v^s’; (title page and first page of part II) ‘John Salyng et Amicorum’. In the seventeenth, or possibly eighteenth, century, the volume was owned by Michael Paul and Robert Harris: their identity is, as yet, unknown.

Bibliography: [MLGB3](#)

Glasgow

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Eg.6.a.9: G. Odonis (Venice: Simon de Luere, 1500)

Provenance: ‘Joannes Ramsey [canonicus (erasure)] de m[er]ton prope londin[i]u[m] hunc librum possidet ...’

Notes: Oxford binding (Gibson Roll 1) — see [digital image of cover](#)

Bibliography: [Glasgow online catalogue](#); [Glasgow incunabula project](#)

London

LAMBETH PALACE LIBRARY

H890.B6–7: Stephanus Brulefer (1507: J. de Pfortzheim, Basel)

Provenance: *Ex libris* ‘Liber Joannis Ramsey canonici de Merton prope Londinum’; also, in later hand, ‘Johannes Foxus’.

Notes: Oxford binding (Gibson Roll 1), with flyleaves from earlier MS, turned 90°. Leather on wooden boards, tooled and clasped — see [ditigal image of cover](#)

Bibliography: S. Gibson, *Early Oxford Bindings* (Oxford, 1903); Lambeth Palace online catalogue

Oxford

BODLEIAN LIBRARY

4° Z.33 Th: Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (1519)

Provenance: (title page) ‘Liber beate marie merton’ possessor Ramsey’

Notes: Panel binding with SS John the Baptist and Barbara on the front and back.

Bibliography: [Oxford Solo Catalogue](#)

ST JOHN'S COLLEGE

Phi.I.32: Dionysius Carthusiensis, *Opera minora*, vol. I (Cologne, 1532)

Provenance: (end page) 'Liber ecclesie beate marie de Meritona Londinum prope Emptus viii^o die Ianuarii Anno domini m quingentesimo xxvii^o Anno regni Serenissimi domini Regis Henrici viii vigesimo octavo per Iohannem Ramseium priorem ibidem xxx^m. precium vi s. viii d.'

Bibliography: [Oxford Solo Catalogue](#)

Cpbd.c.3: Henricus Bouhic *super quinque libros decretalium* (Lyon, 1498)

Provenance: (title page) 'Liber ecclesie beate marie de merton Wintoniensis diocesis... Iohanne Lacy priore ibidem'

Notes: *ex dono* Edmund Howard (spoils of war)

Bibliography: [Oxford Solo Catalogue](#)

K.3.9 (pr. bk.): W. Lyndwood, *Provinciale*; J. de Aton *in constitucion Othoni et Othoboni* (1505)

Provenance: (title page) 'Liber Iohannis Lacy'

Bibliography: [Oxford Solo Catalogue](#)

U.2.16: *Repertorium utriusque iuris Antonii Corseti Siculi in abbatem* (Lyon: Nic. de Benedictis, 1505)

Provenance: (title page) 'anno 1534 gyven to merton abbay pra ffor the gyffer T.D.'

Bibliography: [Oxford Solo Catalogue](#)

Shrewsbury

SHREWSBURY SCHOOL

A.x.15 (Inc. 31): Bernardus, *Epistole* (1494)

Provenance: *Ex libris* 'Dominus Iohannes Saundwyche canonicus et professus [...] marie de merton emebat istum librum de Thoma twhyng' in die sancte Iuliane v[irginis] et martiris Anno regni regis henrici viii' decimo testante Ricardo Wynsopp et Jo' codygto[n].

Bibliography: [MLGB3](#)

APPENDIX 5: THOMAS PAYNELL'S BEQUEST TO ST JOHN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD

This list is from the seventeenth-century St John's benefactor's book (MS K.18).
Current shelf marks are given in square brackets.

ANNO MDLV

Ex dono M^{ri} Thomæ Paynell

- Les Postilles & exposi sur les Epistres et Dominicales 1492 [Cpbd.b.2.upper shelf.7]
 Ioannis Maior Harmonia euangelica Ascens: 1531
 Cassiodorus in Psalm: Paris 1519 [H.3.19]
 Franciscus Titlemannus in Psal: Ant' 1531 [H.3.17(2)]
 Sedulius Scotus in Epist: Pauli Basil: 1528 [F.3.28]
 Henrici de Gandauo Quodlibeticæ quest: Paris 1518
 Summa prædicantium Ioannis de Bromyard 1485 [HB4/Folios.2.5.3]
 Operum Chrysostomi Tom. 5 Lat. Basil: 1530
 Cypriani opera Basil: 1530
 Ambrosij opera 2^{obus} vol: Basil: 1516 [D.3.22]
 Decretales Gregorij.
 Panormitanus in Dectretales Gregorii eiusdem Consilia vol: 6 Lugdu: 1524
 Geminian in 6 Decretal: Tridini 1524
 Henricus Bouhic in j^{ma} & 2^{da} Decretal. Lyon 1476 [1498: Cpbd.c.3.lower shelf.4]
 Nicolaus Siculus super j^{ma} part lib: 2 Decretal: Venet: 1487
 Baldus in j^{ma} Decretal: Mediola 1476 [HB4/Folios.4.3.2]
 Ockami opus 90 dierum Lugdu: 1495
 Antonius Corsetus in Abbatem ibidem [Lugdu] 1565 [sic] 1505 [U.2.16]
 Summa de Casibus per fratrem Astesanus Nurember: 1482
 Lindwood Constitut: Prouincial: cum Othon & othobon: Paris 1505 [K.3.9]
 Summa Magistrutia seu Pisannella Nurember: 1478 [HB4/Folios.4.3.1]
 Scrutinium Tripartitum Augustini Papiensis Florent 1500 [R.scam.2.17]
 Bartolus super corpus juris volum 7
 Eiusdem consilia cum Quæst' volum 2
 Joannes de Platea super tribus libris cod.
 Baldus super codice volum 4 Taurini 1488
 Paulus de Castro super F: & cod: volum 4 Lugdun 1521 [W.subt.20]
 Jacobi Petri de Ferrarijs Practica nova
 Practica Judicialis speculatoris
 Alexander ab Imola in Digest & Cod: 4 volum Lugdun: 1520 [W.subt.26–8]
 Eiusdem Consilia 4 volum Ibidem [Lugdun.] 1520
 Budæus in Digest & de asse Paris 1524 [X.3.26(1)]
 Claudij Cantiunculæ Topic legalia & Ioannis le Cirier de primogenitura. 1520
 [X.4.11(2)]
 Nicasius de Voerda in Institut' Colon: 1493 [R.scam.2.18]
 Viglius Zuichemus in jo Tit' Institut & 1536

- Vlrichus Zasius in Tit' Instit' de actionibus 1536 [X.3.23]
 Angeli Politiani opera Paris 1519
 Lucanus cum Comment' Suplitij ~ ~ Verulani & Ascensii Ascens: 1500
 Scotus in 4^{ta} Sententiarum 4^{to} Paris 1512
 Euerardus de locis legalibus Louan 1512 [X.4.26(1)]
 Elucidarius poeticus & Corbelini a logica Paris 1536
 Druthmarus in Mathæum Hagansæ 1530
 Haymo in Esaiam Colon: 1531 [HB4/1.d.4.7]
 Idem in Minores Prophetas & Cantica ibidem [Colon] 1531
 Idem in Epistolas Pauli ibidem 1528
 Testamentum nouum gallice. Antu: 1525
 Angelomus & Willeram[us] in Cantica. Col: 1531 [M.scam.2. upper shelf.16 (1&2)]
 Anselmi opuscula & pastorale Gregorij & Dialog: Brin: 1496
 Canones concilij Coloniensis A^o 1536 Vene: 1543
 Ioan: Hofmiesterj assertio sacrificij mogunt: 1545 [K.4.28]
 Eiusdem loci communes Ingolstadt 1549
 Eiusdem homiliæ Antwerp: 1550
 Alberti Pighij Controuersiæ Paris 1542 [HB4/1.a.1.8]
 Ioan: de Dauantria fidei Catapulta contra Rothmanum Colon 1533
 [HB4/6.a.5.21]
 Antididagma Coloniensium Louan 1544
 Petri Pontani Confessionale Paris 1516 [E.4.31]
 Eius Isagoge ad Grammaticam ibidem [Paris] 1516 [HB4/6.a.3.29(2)]
 Ioan: Riuius de Religione Basil 1545
 Epistola editæ per Vlrichum Huttenum 1520 [E.4.40(1)]
 Bapt[istæ] Mantuani Parthenice. Paris
 Erasmus de præparatione ad mortem &c Basil 1534
 Ion Parceuali compendium diuini ~ ~ amoris et psalmi per alios metrici &
 Polydorus Virgilius de prodigijs Paris. 1530
 Edwardi Leej opera Paris ~~~~~ [N.4.35]
 Theophilactus ex interpretatione Porsennæ in Epistolas Pauli Colo: 1528
 Eckij homiliarum tomus ius 2us & 4tus 3bus Volumin: Paris 1540 [HB4/1.c.5.14]
 Royardi Homiliæ 3bus volum. Antwe 1543 [HB4/1.c.4.4(1,2)]
 Gabrielis Barelett Homiliæ: Rotho: 1515
 Iodoci Clichtouei Homiliæ 3bus volumin: Colon: 1541
 Petri ad Boues Homiliæ Lugdun. 1520 [HB4/1.c.4.1]
 Humberti liber eruditionis religiosorum Paris 1512
 Idem in Regulam Augustini & Hugo de sancto victorem ibidem 1513
 Dinus in regulas Juris.
 Leges Longobardorum &c 1512 [U.4.17]
 Bartholom: Socinus in regulas Juris ~ Paris 1514 [U.4.21]
 Pragmatica Sanctio cum Commentario Paris 1514 [U.4.25]
 Antonii de Petrutia super librum I Tr: de iure iurando: Lugd: 1511 [U.4.20(1)]
 Petrie Rauennatis Alphabetum aureum. 1511 [U.4.27]

Bartholom. Cepollæ & aliorum Cautelæ 1511 [U.4.13]
 Vocabularius Jurist[ici]: Paris 1514 [U.4.22]
 Arbor diuidui & indiuiduj per Boscoletum Tholos: 1519 [V.4.27]
 Institutiones cum comment: Paris 1512 [Theta.subt.lower shelf.6]
 Ioan: Brunelli Tractatus de potestate legati cum alijs Paris 1519 [E.4.32(1)]
 Notæ quædam in Leges MS 4^{or} volum:
 Summa Angelica Lugd: 1516 [HB4/1a.3.7]
 Ioan: Andreæ Mercuriales Lugd 1510 [W.2.21]
 Andreas Tiraguellus de legibus ~~~~~ Connubialibus Paris 1524 [U.4.10]
 Gulielmi Duran[d]i Speculum iudiciale 3^{bus} volum: Paris
 Tractatus Jure consultorum Paris 1510
 Singularia Jure consultorum Paris 1510
 Hortus vocabulorum Paris 1510
 Sulpitij grammatica 1535 [HB4/6.a.4.24]
 Hermannii Torrentinij Com: grammatic cum alijs 1510 [HB4/6.a.3.11]
 * Laurentij Vallæ elegantia cum alijs Paris 1520
 Catelliani Cottæ memoralia Ticini 1511 [V.4.9]
 Ludus Senecæ cum alijs Basil 1519 [P.scam.1.lower shelf.25(1)]
 Nicolaj Leonici Dialogi & Longosij opera. Venet' 1524
 * Casus Bernardi super Decretales.
 * Nonius Marcellus de lingua latina Paris.
 * Seruius & alij in Virgilium 2obus volu: Paris 1512
 Idem Ibidem
 Plautus cum Comment P Parmæ 1510 [Theta.1.19]
 * Erasmi epistolæ Basil 1510 [HB4/6.a.3.1]
 Aulus Gellius Paris 1519
 * Perotti Cornucopia Paris 1510
 * Nicolai Cusani opuscula
 Antonini pars Historialis 3^{bus} volum:
 Petrus de Aquila in Sententias
 Ruardi Tapper controu: 3 volum Antuer' 1555 [N.3.15]