

**The autograph hand of John Lydgate and a manuscript from Bury St  
Edmunds Abbey**<sup>1</sup>

The prolific English poet John Lydgate (c. 1371-1449) has been known as the 'monk of Bury' since the early fifteenth century.<sup>2</sup> Both his popularity and perceptions of his literary merit have fluctuated wildly since a zenith as the famous laureate of Henry V, Henry VI and Duke Humphrey, but readers have been constant in their association of Lydgate with the Benedictine abbey from which the epithet derives. However, there has been remarkably little examination of the details of Lydgate's existence at Bury: the critical emphasis has been on Lydgate's contact with Lancastrian society rather than on his quotidian life as a monk. 'To trace in detail the connection between the Bury library and the characteristic configuration of Lydgate's thought and work, to see how his mind was formed and influenced by the books with which he was in such familiar contact' remains an unfulfilled desire.<sup>3</sup> In particular, given the range of Lydgate's literary and intellectual allusions, it is surprising that there has been no full attempt to compare what we know of Bury's sizeable late medieval library, catalogued in the late fourteenth century by Henry Kirkstede, with Lydgate's poetic output.<sup>4</sup> Likewise, few critics have attempted to trace connections between Lydgate's poetry and the intellectual and cultural atmosphere of a grand Benedictine Abbey in the late medieval period.<sup>5</sup> This article, a study of one manuscript from Bury which Lydgate certainly handled and which is typical of the type of book he would have encountered in great numbers in the monastic library, endeavours to reassert the importance to his poetry of the environment in which Lydgate spent most of his life.

The manuscript, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud misc. 233, has long been associated with Lydgate on the strength of a short text on fol. 125v, 'sciant presentes et Futuri quod ego Johannes Lydgate'. Henry Coxe's 1858 catalogue of the Laudian manuscripts gave a limited description of the volume's contents and identified its provenance as 'quondam Johannis

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Lydgate'.<sup>6</sup> Derek Pearsall subsequently included the manuscript in his *Bio-bibliography* of the poet, repeating Coxe's limited account of the contents and concluding that Lydgate used the book while he was at Oxford, having been attracted by the florilegium at the end of the manuscript.<sup>7</sup> Most recently, John Bowers has unconvincingly described the text on fol. 125v as 'an autograph signature, grandly phrased, in one of [Lydgate's] student books which indicated his own drive for future name recognition'.<sup>8</sup> Despite these references to the inscription in Laud misc. 233, the manuscript remains little known.

Much remains uncertain about the purpose and significance of the text on fol. 125v and, more generally, about the reasons for Lydgate's interest in Laud misc. 233. While Coxe and Emden considered the inscription to be a sign of ownership, Pearsall has suggested that Lydgate's inscription was merely 'a mark that the book was in his possession'.<sup>9</sup> Bowers improbably sees the text as Lydgate's self-conscious attempt to sculpt his authorial identity. Scholarship is also undecided about where Lydgate saw the manuscript and what he took from it. Pearsall is apparently responsible for the view that Lydgate took the manuscript with him to Oxford, where he studied, probably at Gloucester College, at least from 1406 to 1407. While there is ample precedent for monks bringing books with them to Oxford, there is no firm evidence that the manuscript left Bury, and it is doubtful whether its contents would have been useful in the university environment.<sup>10</sup>

This article confirms the attribution of the text on fol. 125v to Lydgate and establishes that he was also responsible for a series of other short pentrials on the flyleaves of Laud misc. 233. It provides the first full and accurate assessment of the character and contents of the manuscript, before exploring how Lydgate's evident knowledge of this manuscript should affect the ongoing critical reappraisal of his oeuvre. While the manuscript provides direct evidence of Lydgate's familiarity with several works of Isidore, twelfth-century sermons and a short florilegium of quotations from the works of Horace, none of these texts seems to have served as a direct

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source for Lydgate's poetry. The manuscript's significance therefore lies, paradoxically, in its status as representative evidence for the unquantifiable and largely unrecoverable indirect influences on Lydgate's formation as a poet. Laud misc. 233 is typical of the many conservative, somewhat outmoded, slightly haphazard volumes to be found in the Bury library in the late fourteenth century. It therefore serves to remind us that Lydgate was intellectually a Benedictine: the monk of Bury.

#### THE HAND OF JOHN LYDGATE

The hand discussed in this article wrote a series of short pen trials and theological tags on the flyleaves of MS Laud misc. 233:<sup>11</sup>

- A. Fol. ir [pl. 1]:
  - 1. 'aue maria gratia plena dominus'
  - 2. 'nouerint uniuersi per presentes et Futuri'
  
- B. Fol. 123v [pl. 2]:
  - 1. 'omnibus est notum quod'
  
- C. Fol. 125v [pl. 3]:
  - 1. 'Willelmus permissione diuina'
  - 2. 'Sciant presentes et Futuri quod ego Johannes Lydgate'
  
- D. End pastedown [pl. 4]:
  - 1. 'domine preuenisti'
  - 2. 'Esto nobis domine turris for[titudinis] et fuit homo missus a deo cuius nomen erat Iohannes' [Ps 60:4, John 1:6]

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3. 'Et ueniat super nos misericordia tua domine' [Ps 118:41]
4. 'aue maria gratia plena dominus tecum benedictum [*sic*']

The annotator of Laud misc. 233 is identifiable as John Lydgate on the strength of annotation C2 ('Sciant presentes et Futuri quod ego Johannes Lydgate'). 'Sciant presentes et Futuri' was a common opening formula in writs, and was widely used at Bury in the fourteenth century, and it may be that the text of annotation C2 derives from an actual writ in the name John Lydgate which does not now survive.<sup>12</sup> If so, it is possible that a scribe began to copy the writ because he was interested in whatever was at stake in its (missing) dispositive clauses. However, the way in which annotation D2 playfully toys with the name 'Iohannes' suggests that the annotator's primary interest was in the name 'Johannes Lydgate' rather than whatever legal force the writ held.<sup>13</sup> Broadly speaking, there are then three possible identifications of this scribe preoccupied with the name 'Johannes Lydgate': Lydgate the poet, another John Lydgate, or a third person with an interest in Lydgate, perhaps an admirer. The script of the annotations strongly suggests that the scribe was Lydgate the poet.

The hand of these short texts is an informal Anglicana but its duct shows some influence from Secretary: **a** generally has two compartments but does not extend above the level of the minims (though note Secretary **a** in 'sciant', fol.125v); **f** and long **s** descend below the line of writing; and **r** is long-tailed. The lobes of letters like **d** and **p** are generally broken and some curves have horns (e. g. 'ego', fol. 125v). The taper of some descenders is exaggerated (e. g. 'presentes', fol. 125v). However, the characteristic Secretary forms of **g**, **r** and final **s** do not occur. These features point to a date towards the end of the fourteenth century or at the very beginning of the fifteenth century. It is the kind of hand a man born around 1370, like Lydgate, might be expected to write.<sup>14</sup>

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The dating of the hand to the late fourteenth century vitiates the suggestion that annotation C2 could have been written by an admirer of Lydgate, whose reputation as a "laureate" poet did not develop until some way into the fifteenth century. There are, moreover, a combination of factors which make it unlikely that the scribe of the text could be another man named John Lydgate. It is certain that MS Laud misc. 233 belonged to Bury in the third quarter of the fourteenth century, when Henry Kirkstede supplied a table of contents and pressmark on the front pastedown. There is no independent evidence for the existence of a second John Lydgate in Bury around 1400, suggesting that the simplest identification of the 'Johannes Lydgate' mentioned is the famous poet.

The content of the added texts is compatible with the attribution of the hand to Lydgate.

Though prayers like the *Ave Maria* were favourite pen trials for many scribes, the two texts on the end pastedown which refer to John the Baptist are more unusual. These texts, which explore John the Baptist's role as *precursor Domini* ('forerunner of the Lord') are uncharacteristic of pen trials and may therefore have been written by someone with a particular devotion to the Baptist or perhaps by someone who shared the name John. A number of the texts, moreover, contain legal formulas: 'nouerint uniuersi per presentes et Futuri' [A2], 'Willelmus permissione diuina' [C1] and, of course, 'Sciant presentes et Futuri quod Johannes Lydgate' [D2].

'Omnibus est notum quod' [B1], which is perhaps the opening of a jaunty scribal ditty found in Latin and Middle English and meaning 'it is known to everyone that I like a drink', may also have its origin in a legal formula, 'notum sit omnibus'.<sup>15</sup> Lydgate's supposed involvement in translating the abbey's privileges into Middle English verse for abbot William Curteys would provide a direct context for his familiarity and interest with charter formulas, but such reasoning is perhaps unnecessary since legal formulae and documents were endemic in late medieval life and feature frequently in Middle English literature.<sup>16</sup> Alongside this word play on the name 'Iohannes' and the reproduction of various legal formulae, we find the orthodox Marian piety of A1 and D4.

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Palaeographical and textual evidence therefore combine to demonstrate that the hand that wrote 'sciant presentes et futuri quod ego Johannes Lydgate' [D2] on the flyleaf of MS Laud misc. 233 was indeed John Lydgate. The content of the additions on the other flyleaves provides a unique window onto Lydgate's quotidian concerns. We now turn to an assessment of the manuscript and its contents.

## THE MANUSCRIPT

MS Laud misc. 233 is a composite Latin manuscript from the second half of the twelfth century. The manuscript might be characterised as a pastoral and encyclopedic miscellany, probably compiled for a priest, but equally useful to a monk. It consists of four parts which have been together since the thirteenth century when the manuscript was bound.<sup>17</sup> As a whole the manuscript is a rather haphazard volume containing, beside a complete copy of Isidore's *Synonyma* and a large collection of twelfth-century sermons, several quires from seemingly abandoned projects.

The first part (fols. 1-12) of the manuscript consists of two quires containing the complete text of Isidore's *Synonyma* [item 1].<sup>18</sup> Comprised of two books and structured as a dialogue between Man and Reason, the *Synonyma* was 'a classical manual of spiritual training of monks in the West'.<sup>19</sup> In Book I, Reason convinces Man, overwhelmed with grief for the fallen state of the world and with guilt for his sins, that his sorrow can be spiritually productive and encourages him to be contrite, eventually granting him forgiveness. Book II is a monologue by Reason which provides advice on how to pursue a virtuous life and avoid temptation. The *Synonyma* circulated extensively in twelfth-century Europe, and retained their popularity in the later Middle Ages. The *Synonyma* were a major source for the first poem of Hoccleve's *Series*, where Reason's advice to the 'wooful' and 'heuy' man greatly 'esid' the narrator's heart.<sup>20</sup> In addition, an

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anonymous Middle English translation of an abridgement of Book II, generally known as *The Counsels of Saint Isidore*, is extant in at least seventeen manuscripts.<sup>21</sup>

The first few pages of the text have a heavy smattering of basic semantic and grammatical glosses, giving the reader assistance with the basic work of construing the text. However, two texts added in the lower margins of one opening shortly after the booklet's production suggest that the manuscript was also handled by more advanced readers with pastoral concerns [items (a), (b)]. These, apparently extracts from Comestor's commentary on 1Cor. 12.1-9, Paul's description of the nature of charity, were probably excerpted from the Gloss. The traditional rubrication of the second book of the *Synonyma* which subdivides the text according to its subject ('De fornicatione', 'De castitate', 'De oratione', 'De ieiunio' etc) would also have helped facilitate a moralising reading of this sort. Such a reading would have been particularly appropriate for a priest involved in the *cura pastoralis* or a Benedictine monk engaged in personal contemplation. Henry Kirkstede, the fourteenth-century Bury librarian, classified MS Laud misc. 233 under the pressmark 'Y. 7', that is, as a volume of Isidore, and it is therefore probable that it was as a volume of Isidore that Lydgate first sought out the book. A short excerpt from Isidore's *Etymologiae* follows the *Synonyma* [item 2]. This excerpt concerns family relationships, giving the correct Latin terms to describe a family which encompasses two generations of cousins.

The bulk of MS Laud misc. 233, part 2, is a collection of homilies, many of which are by Geoffrey Babion du Loroux, archbishop of Bordeaux (d. 1158). Other items in this section of the manuscript support an association with the intellectual milieu of the northern French cathedral schools. The original core of this section of the manuscript is booklet 3, containing 78 homilies. Booklet 2, comprising four leaves of uncertain construction, contains a table of contents for these 78 homilies [item 5]. Its three other leaves contain two further, unidentified, homilies in near contemporary hands: the first on Mat. 24.40 ('then two shall be in the field: one shall be taken, and one shall be left') [item 4(i)], the second, preceded by a note on fasting, on

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Luke 2.8 ('and there were in the same country shepherds watching') [item 4(ii)]. Blank spaces on these leaves were used for a variety of short theological notes, mostly concerning God's creation of man. At least one of these excerpts [item 5(c)] seems to have originated in the School of Anselm of Laon, under whose name Babion's commentary on Matthew's Gospel originally circulated.<sup>22</sup> Booklet 1 appears to be a supplement to the original core of 78 sermons by Babion. It contains six further sermons by the archbishop, three occasional pieces for Christmas, Epiphany, Easter and three general sermons on 3Reg. 17.8-24 (Elias and the widow of Sarephtha), Jer. 50.14 ('prepare yourselves against Babylon') and Ps. 4.3, 8 ('O ye sons of men, how long will you be dull of heart? why do you love vanity, and seek after lying?'). Neither Booklet 2 nor Booklet 3 was ever rubricated.

The table of contents for the original core of 78 sermons is headed 'haec sunt quae in hoc uolumine continetur .lxxviii. sermones catholicorum' [item 5] and Kirkstede adopted this title in his later table of contents on the front pastedown. As promised, the table on fol. 23rv enumerates 78 sermons, giving their incipits and generally suggesting either an occasion or an audience for their use, but occasionally both or neither. These suggestions are informative, for they envision the collection being used on feast days from the *temporale* and *sanctorale*, at unique occasions like the dedications of churches, and to address lay people, priests, those living a regular life and various types of enclosed individuals. They make it clear that the collection was originally intended for a bishop (who would have presided at the dedication of a church), and suggest that the manuscript was perhaps not originally written for a monastery like Bury. However, the secure Benedictine provenance of this manuscript shows that it was nonetheless owned by monks and that the individual sermons were perhaps not used as they were initially intended.

The majority of the 78 sermons were composed by Geoffrey Babion, a cathedral schoolmaster, monk and later archbishop. The table of contents in Laud misc. 233 does not identify the author

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of the collection, as was commonly the case with English manuscripts of Babion's sermons. Surviving manuscripts and booklists make it clear that Babion's sermons circulated widely in England. The evidence of the booklists is particularly helpful, and makes it clear that the sermons were owned in many different types of regular communities, by Benedictine (Peterborough, St Albans, St Benet Hulme) and Cistercian monks (Flaxley, Meaux, Rievaulx, Woburn) and Augustinian (Bridlington, Lanthony, Leicester) and Premonstratensians Canons (Bradshole, Tichfield, Welbeck).<sup>23</sup> The only obvious absence here is any of the orders of friars, for whom it is unlikely that these sermons held any appeal. Unfortunately, a cursory examination of several surviving twelfth-century insular manuscripts does not suggest it will be possible to say anything definite about the exemplars and textual traditions which lie behind the sermons in Laud misc. 233.

The predominantly pastoral tone of the sermons suggests most were written while Babion was archbishop of Bordeaux between 1136 and 1158.<sup>24</sup> Earlier, between 1103 and 1106, he was schoolmaster at Angers, after which it seems he retired and lived as a hermit for the next thirty years. Babion was elected archbishop with the support of Bernard of Clairvaux, and the eighty archiepiscopal acts which survive from these years show his consistent support of his patron, as well as Pope Innocent II and Louis VII of France and many Cistercian and Augustinian communities.

The appeal of Babion's homilies is not hard to explain. One obituary characterised him as *verbi Dei seminator egregius*, 'an outstanding preacher of the word of God'.<sup>25</sup> This is particularly evident in his straightforward, unadorned Latin, typical of the *sermo humilis* style. His homilies insistently restate the aims of the Gregorian Reform of the second half of the eleventh century. He advocates the reform of the clergy, requiring material poverty from all who live the regular life, but defends the rights of the church and its customs, as well as papal authority. He encourages fraternal unanimity among the new orders of monks and canons. His pastoral sermons

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emphasise the importance of personal introspection, reinforced by penance, pilgrimage and good works and insist both lay and religious should strive to imitate Christ. They are sermons which would have been useful to anyone preaching about core Christian values during the Middle Ages.

Two further items follow the collection of 78 *sermones catholicorum*. These are a hortatory letter addressed by Hildebert of Lavardin to an unidentified female recluse [item 7] and a letter of Gregory the Great concerning the falsity of the relics of St Paul in Constantinople [item 8].

These are followed by a substantial penitential [item 9], originally untitled, which begins with a detailed account of the penance owed by anyone who kills her husband or his wife, enumerates the appropriate tariffs for other kinds of killing, various types of perjury, sexual sins, forms of witchcraft and superstition, and then ends, apparently incomplete, with thorough instructions of how to perform the penance due for the sins of murder, sacrilege, perjury, fornication, adultery, burning churches, cursing one's mother or father and idolatory.<sup>26</sup> This penitential would have been obsolescent in the second half of the twelfth century, when the detailed prescription of penances was falling out of fashion.<sup>27</sup> Though late medieval *summae de poenitentia* encouraged their users to turn to Gratian for details of tariffs, and Gratian was ultimately indebted to the same early canons which underlie this and other early medieval penitentials, it is difficult to imagine any late medieval monk finding any direct use for the penitential in Laud misc. 233, even if he were involved in the cure of souls.

The theological excerpts which were added in blank spaces in part 2 focus on two central themes of Christian thought: the eucharist and creation. The first three excerpts address the practicalities of administering eucharist to a pregnant woman, the issue of the real presence in the eucharist and the meaning of communion in two kinds. The remaining excerpts on fol. 20bv treat the creation, showing a pronounced anti-feminist bias. God created only man after his image so that through 'the one [he] might maintain the authority of the one prince against the devil' (*ut unus in uno auctoritatem unius principii conseruaret ad confusionem diaboli*), but he also imparted biological

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gender. Just as the church took its origin from Christ asleep in death, so Adam's wife was born from his side, and like Christ rules the church which is subservient to him, so man rules the woman and has the sign of authority. A woman is man's glory and his underling (*subserua*). Man is associated with rationality; woman with sensuality. Only those parts of woman which appear in man are in the image of God. These theological notes reflect a more intellectual milieu than the sermons; they pose and answer theological conundra rather than preach straightforward Christian truth.

The remainder of MS Laud misc. 233 is a haphazard collection of quires discarded from other books. Part 3 seems to be a quire which was rejected during the production of a full copy of Isidore's *Etymologiae*, since the text begins without a rubric and breaks off at the end of the quire, and since there is a catchword on the final leaf. The text of Book XI begins on the verso of the third leaf of the quire (fol. 114v), suggesting that the copy of the *Etymologiae* was to be produced by several scribes collaborating. The blank space at the beginning of the quire was soon used for a series of notes on theological and moral topics, like those in Part 2.

Nonetheless, the quire was preserved, presumably because it was considered the text might be useful. It is difficult to overstate the importance of Isidore's *Etymologiae* in the late Middle Ages.<sup>28</sup> He is cited repeatedly by Boccaccio, Petrarch and Dante, who placed him among the enlightened minds in the circle of the sun in the *Paradiso*. Gower called him the 'perfect cleric' in the *Mirour de l'Omme*, while Chaucer's Parson cites the *Etymologiae* twice. The text in this rejected quire includes Isidore's systematic analysis of the human body, incorporating both its intangible elements like the mind and soul and its anatomical parts, and his treatment of the six ages of man, as well as the first few lines of his chapter on portents.

The additions at the beginning of the quire cover a broad range of doctrinal, theological and moral issues, including the creation of mankind and original sin and the birth of Christ, faith and

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the sacraments. *Distinctiones* are often used in the development of the analysis. The section closes with a long series of brief, unidentified, definitions of the mental powers and virtues, of terms like *ars*, *scientia*, *studium*, *ingenium*, *contemplatio* and *fortitudo*. We learn here, for instance, that knowledge (*scientia*) is reasoning (*ratio*) which straightforwardly makes clear what is or what ought to be.<sup>29</sup> An excerpt from Augustine's *De trinitate* concerning the nature of human understanding was an early addition to the lower margin of fol. 113v. These additions blend the theological concerns of the excerpts added to Part 2 with the encyclopediac mentality of Isidore's *Etymologiae*, suggesting once more that MS. Laud misc. 233 was conceived by someone with pedagogical as well as pastoral contexts.

Part 4, containing the beginning of Gerland's *Computus*, is another rejected quire supplemented with further material, in this case a verse florilegium. Gerland's *Computus* enjoyed a considerable circulation between the eleventh and the thirteenth centuries. Gerland has been confused with a later Gerland of Besançon and John of Garland, and the details of his career are very uncertain. According to one theory, Gerland was born around 1015, studied at Liège and became *magister scholarum* at Besançon in 1084.<sup>30</sup> The notion that he wrote the *Computus* in England does not seem to be supportable. Gerland's work is consciously based on Bede's *De temporum ratione* and its popularity can be attributed to its convenience as a handbook, rather than its controversial attempt to redate the incarnation.<sup>31</sup>

The quire bound into MS Laud misc. 233 comprises a table for finding on what day a month begins, the moon on the kalends of a month and the date of Easter, and an explanation of the origins of bisextiles and concurrents (fols. 121v-122v). Given the extreme foreshortening of Gerland's text, it seems likely this too is a rejected quire. On the other hand, the information conveyed would be sufficient to perform several of the computistical calculations a priest might need to perform in his parish. A monastery like Bury would have required a more extensive textbook.

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Below these chapters from the *Computus* are four brief sentences of pastoralia, giving the seven virtues which enable one to reach heaven, the three things which ensure man behaves well, the three sins which cannot be forgiven and the three types of souls which God created. The most substantial addition to this Part was however a verse florilegium, which draws on Book I of Horace's *Epistles*. It mines several epistles extensively. It also makes minor use of Book II of the *Epistles*, as well as Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and Virgil's *Georgics*. It was usual for Horace and Ovid to outweigh Virgil heavily in medieval florilegia.<sup>32</sup>

The florilegium appears to be in two hands. The first was responsible for fol. 121ra; the second for the other entries. It would appear that the second scribe had access to a full copy of the *Epistles* and used this to supplement the excerpts originally copied by the first scribe. His invariable habit of copying whole lines, even when this created a grammatically meaningless fragment at the beginning or end of the line, also suggests he was using a full copy of the *Epistles*. The florilegium makes extensive use of several of the letters, particularly I. ii, I. x, I. xvi and I. xvii. The *Epistles* featured on the twelfth-century school curriculum, and were variously described as repositories of virtue and wisdom.<sup>33</sup> Indeed the letters which feature most prominently in this florilegium are those concerned with virtue and wisdom; I. xvi, addressed to the unidentified Quinctius, is a commentary on the second stoic paradox, that the possession of virtue is sufficient to happiness. The two letters to Lollius Maximus (I. ii and I. xviii), the first of which may lie behind Chaucer's insistence that Lollius was one of his sources for *Troilus and Criseyde*, focus on moral philosophy and the way to behave towards one's superiors.<sup>34</sup> The excerpts appear to have been selected as pithy expressions of common wisdom, and as exempla. These uses support the general conception of the manuscript as a preacher's book, compiled by someone with interests in preaching, theological questions and pedagogy.

In his *Ars Praedicandi*, Alan of Lille (d. 1203) described preaching as 'public instruction in morals and faith which is based on reasons and authority'.<sup>35</sup> It is clear that the texts assembled in Laud

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misc. 233 could have been used to perform this duty in the twelfth century. Though it was to some degree contrary to canon law for monks to preach publically, English monks had always been actively involved in preaching to the laity.<sup>36</sup> While it is uncertain whether the individual booklets that comprise Laud misc. 233 were written for monks or the secular clergy, it is clear that the composite volume was in Bury's collection by Kirkstede's time and, to judge from Lydgate's additions, being used somehow. The contents of the volume would have been decidedly outdated by the fourteenth century. Lydgate's annotations on the flyleaves of Laud misc. 233 nonetheless show that he handled this manuscript at this time. They cannot however show whether he read any of the texts it contains. Though there is no evidence that any of these texts became a direct source of his poetry, it is possible to draw some limited inferences about how he came to handle the manuscript.

#### LYDGATE'S POSSIBLE USE OF THE MANUSCRIPT

The foregoing section has demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt that Lydgate handled and annotated Laud misc. 233, probably at Bury. Though there is as yet no evidence that any item in the manuscript was a direct source for Lydgate's poetry, this section argues that this does not make the manuscript insignificant. Like any author, Lydgate read widely, and it is inconceivable that everything he read directly informed his writing. While the study of Lydgate's direct sources like Guido delle Colonne's *Historia destructionis Troiae* must inevitably inform a critical judgement of his poetry, a knowledge of Lydgate's other reading is also invaluable. It is here that the importance of Laud misc. 233 lies, as an example of a type of manuscript found in great profusion at Bury, a grand old Benedictine foundation with a library in many ways outdated by the late fourteenth century. Laud misc. 233 illustrates the way in which a late medieval monk like Lydgate would have accessed the work of early medieval Christian encyclopedists like Isidore, twelfth-century preachers like Geoffrey Babion, and excerpts from the Latin poets in a single manuscript.

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As a result of Kirkstede's labours, the Bury library must have been unusually well organised during Lydgate's time. Consequently, it is probable that Lydgate initially encountered Laud misc. 233 under Kirkstede's fourteenth-century shelfmark, 'Y. 7', which placed the book under 'Ysidorus' in the Bury library.<sup>37</sup> Whether he accessed the book through his own initiative or as part of the Lenten assignment of books prescribed in the Rule of St Benedict is unknowable, though since the *Synonyma* was often used for private meditation, the latter scenario is a distinct possibility.<sup>38</sup>

There is however no trace of Lydgate's use of Isidore's *Synonyma* in his poetry, which shows a greater debt to the *Etymologiae* than to the *Synonyma*.<sup>39</sup> Lydgate's use of the *Etymologiae* is most evident in the *Troy Book* (I. 875, I. 3340, II. 5866, II. 2412, II. 5626-30) and *Fall of Princes* (II. 2453). These allusions are frequently additions to Lydgate's sources and likely demonstrate his direct knowledge of Isidore's *Etymologiae*.<sup>40</sup> Lydgate also consulted this text in composing the *Serpent of Division*.<sup>41</sup> However, the range of Lydgate's allusions indicates that he must have had access to a much more complete text than the quire which constitutes part 3 of Laud misc. 233.<sup>42</sup> The monastic library at Bury nonetheless provides the most plausible source for Lydgate's knowledge of Isidore and other post-patristic texts.

The manuscript's florilegium, with its many quotations from Horace and isolated *sententiae* from Virgil and Ovid, is of obvious interest to scholars of Lydgate's use of classical sources. Pearsall suspected that Lydgate was much more interested in this catena of quotations than in the other contents of Laud misc. 233, suggesting that 'it is from this sort of compilation that Lydgate derived his knowledge of writers like Virgil and Horace'.<sup>43</sup> However, since the florilegium comprises merely two single sides at the end of this substantial and miscellaneous manuscript, unadvertised in either its shelfmark or table of contents, neither Lydgate nor any other monk could have expected to find it there. Pearsall is however correct in suggesting that Lydgate is likely to have used florilegia like the one in Laud misc. 233.

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Lydgate's contemporaries believed he enjoyed an extensive knowledge of the classics. Benedict Burgh, Lydgate's most obsequious admirer, included Virgil, Ovid and Horace in his list of authors that Lydgate used:<sup>44</sup>

The noble poete Virgil the Mantuan,  
Omere the Greke and Torqwat sovereyne;  
Naso also, that sith this worlde firste began  
The marvelist transformynge all best can devyne;  
Terence ye mery and plesant theatryne;  
Porcyus; Lucan; Marcyan; and Orace;  
Stace; Iuvenall; and the lauriate Bocase:  
All thes hathe seyne youre innate sapience.

This passage shows the influence of Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* (V.1792), but Burgh's relationship with Lydgate – completing Lydgate's *Secrees of Old Philisoffres* after his death – suggests his testimony about the extent of Lydgate's reading should be respected. However, whether Lydgate encountered these authors via florilegia or via complete texts (or indeed whether he had read them at all) remains uncertain. While specific parallels between the florilegium in Laud misc. 233 and Lydgate's poetry remain elusive, the florilegium is indicative of the way in which late-fourteenth-century poets generally encountered classical texts.

Despite Burgh's claim, Lydgate does not, to our knowledge, ever quote Horace or his works. The one possible exception is Lydgate's citation of Lollius as an authority in the *Troy Book* (Prol.309), where it is probable that he is labouring under the common medieval confusion that the Lollius addressed in *Ep. i. 2* was a historian of the Trojan War, probably following *Troilus and Criseyde*.<sup>45</sup> It is perhaps telling that Horace is absent from the list of authorities at the start of Book IV of the *Fall of Princes* and its Envoy to Humphrey.

The florilegium concludes with a few brief *sententiae* from Ovid and Virgil. There can be no question, however, that Lydgate knew much more of Ovid than the few lines quoted in Laud misc. 233.<sup>46</sup> Atwood provides a list of Ovidian references in the *Troy Book*, none of which is

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contained in this florilegium.<sup>47</sup> The same is true of Mortimer's list of Ovidian references in the *Fall of Princes*.<sup>48</sup> It is clear that Lydgate had access to a version of the *Metamorphoses* far more complete than the few quotations inventoried in this florilegium. The extent of Lydgate's knowledge of Virgil is more uncertain. Although Atwood shows that when Lydgate claims to use the *Aeneid* in the *Troy Book*, he is almost always borrowing from Chaucer, Lydgate may have derived some additional knowledge of Virgil's poetry from florilegia.<sup>49</sup> Laud misc. 233 contains two extracts from the *Georgics* (the second of which appears with some frequency in similar selections).<sup>50</sup> Lydgate certainly knew of the existence of the *Georgics*, briefly referring to it (although not by title) in his description of Virgil in the *Fall of Princes* (IV. 85-7), and the florilegium in Laud misc. 233 now provides *prima facie* evidence for Lydgate's knowledge of at least a few scraps of the poem.

Even if Lydgate did not use Horace's works or indeed this florilegium directly in his poetry, his access to Laud misc. 233 is nonetheless indicative of the way in which access to a monastic library could have given him greater familiarity with certain classical authors than other canonical English poets had enjoyed. Ricardian poetry in general shows only a very limited knowledge of Horace. Gower believed he knew three *sententiae* from Horace's works, but in fact the only one of these gobbets which is actually from Horace is a garbled paraphrase of *Ep.* i.2.58, found in *Le Mirour de l'Omme*.<sup>51</sup> He also twice alludes to the notion that the common people suffer for their rulers' errors by quoting *Odes* iii.3.26-8, but, given his failure to attribute the quotation to Horace, Gower probably did not know the source.<sup>52</sup> The evidence for Chaucer's knowledge of Horace is even more slender. Unlike Gower, Chaucer never refers to Horace by name. While *The Manciple's Tale* contains two possible allusions to the *Epistolae* (I.x.24; I.xviii.71, both lines found in our florilegium), it is likely that both go back to the *Roman de la Rose* rather than the *Epistolae* themselves.<sup>53</sup> To judge from Chaucer and Gower, then, Horace's works were little known in the

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second half of the fourteenth century, and Lydgate's access to them, via the florilegium and similar books in the monastic library, is exceptional.

Chaucer's and Gower's ignorance of Horace can perhaps be attributed to the thirteenth-century preference for a school curriculum focussed on Christian poetry that dealt with 'worship, wisdom, morality and behaviour', which culminated in the proscription of Ovid's *Ars amatoria* in the fourteenth century.<sup>54</sup> Classical Latin poetry did not formally reemerge on the Oxford curriculum until 1431, apparently under humanist influence, and it took even longer to reestablish itself at the school level.<sup>55</sup> This said, there is evidence that there remained some enthusiasm for Horace, especially among Benedictines. Abbot Thomas of St Albans (1349-1396) quoted *Ep.* I.iv.14 to himself on his sickbed.<sup>56</sup> A donor purchased a very scruffy copy of Horace for the boys of Merton College in 1347-8.<sup>57</sup> An anonymous preacher (perhaps a monk) began a sermon for the fourth Sunday in Lent by vowing to take his pericope from the bible rather than from Ovid or Horace, something he had evidently done before.<sup>58</sup> Thomas Walsingham (c. 1340-c. 1422) quotes Horace several times, in one instance repeating *Ep.* I.ii.69-70 when describing the duplicity of John of Gaunt.<sup>59</sup>

James G. Clark has recently argued that 'a new brand of classicism did emerge in England at the turn of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, based on a new, wider knowledge of classical authors and texts, and committed perhaps above all to promoting a deeper understanding of classical grammar, metre and rhetoric'.<sup>60</sup> He suggests these new intellectual interests, an early example of the mindset we now call humanism, were fostered at Oxford in the late fourteenth century, where monks, who were forbidden by statute from incepting in the arts faculty, came under the influence of peripheral masters teaching *dictamen*. Part of the impetus, however, as Clark has shown, came from re-exploring the substantial holdings of old copies of classical texts and florilegia in monastic libraries.<sup>61</sup>

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Lydgate was studying in Oxford during the key period in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. Duke Humfrey's patronage of his work has prompted scholars to begin considering his connections with continental humanism and we should perhaps see Lydgate's possible access to Laud misc. 233 and similar manuscripts in connection with these intellectual currents.<sup>62</sup> This is not to suggest that Lydgate used the Horace florilegium as a direct source for any of his poetry (though Burgh's words suggest that close study of Lydgate's oeuvre may locate unidentified debts to Horace), but to use it as evidence of how the intellectual milieu and resources available at Bury and among Benedictine monks in Oxford contributed to Lydgate's development as a poet. For while Lydgate perhaps never drew directly on the florilegium in Laud misc. 233, it is typical of the kind of classical material he would have found in the monastic library, classical material unavailable to the previous generation of English poets and enjoying a renaissance in Benedictine circles around 1400.

While Lydgate's possible use of the florilegium has occasioned limited critical comment, his acquaintance with Babion's twelfth-century sermons has not. Old, conservative sermons were preserved in great numbers in the library of Bury, and Laud misc. 233 can be taken as representative of one type of book that would have shaped Lydgate's intellectual development during his novitiate and beyond. In particular, Lydgate's access to Babion's sermons supports recent findings about the likely origins of the backward-looking theology of his controversialist anti-Lollard poetry, principally 'A Defence of Holy Church'.<sup>63</sup> Likewise, Bury's considerable holdings of medieval sermon collections like Laud misc. 233, indicative of the monks' preoccupation with preaching *ad populum*, are reflected in the deep familiarity Lydgate's poetry displays with everyday pastoral work.<sup>64</sup>

Babion's sermons predate the development of the scholastic sermon, which began to be codified in *artes praedicandi* from the end of the twelfth century. Since Babion's sermons do not start by dividing a short scriptural phrase by means of distinctions, but systematically expound the gospel

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reading verse by verse, they are what late medieval preaching theorists called 'ancient' sermons.<sup>65</sup> Such sermons were considered to be particularly suitable for preaching *ad populum*, and were enjoying new attention in the second half of the fourteenth century as appropriate sources for vernacular sermons, both among Lollards (who, following Wyclif, regarded distinctions with suspicion) and among orthodox preachers looking for a safe, conservative alternative to the structural and rhetorical excesses inculcated by the *artes praedicandi*.<sup>66</sup> For example, in the fifteenth century, a late-twelfth-century sermon collection, the *Filius matris*, attributed to William de Montibus, became the source for a near-complete cycle of Sunday sermons on the Gospel readings prescribed by the Sarum Use.<sup>67</sup> This is the background against which Lydgate may have encountered the sermons of Babion and others.

The monks of Bury kept a keen eye on Wycliffite preaching in Oxford, copying a notarial *reportatio* of Nicholas Hereford's heretical 1382 Ascension Day sermon and papal bulls defending the right of friars to preach into a massive hagiographical collection which they had begun compiling in 1377.<sup>68</sup> Wycliffite theology provided a serious challenge to monastic endowments, and to the legitimacy of preaching by any group other than the secular clergy, that is, preaching not just by friars, but also by monks. While by the fourteenth century it was normal, at least in the major monastic cathedrals, for monks to employ friars as lectors and preachers, the reforming constitutions of Pope Benedict XII, issued in 1336, included provisions designed to retrain monks to preach.<sup>69</sup> There is indeed some evidence for the monks of Bury preaching. The customary required a sermon *ad populum* in front of the great altar on Maundy Thursday, and the monks may have preached on other occasions.<sup>70</sup> Benedictine monks who, like Lydgate, attended Oxford ostensibly did so only to learn how to preach.<sup>71</sup> Had Lydgate preached, and had he followed the advice of an earlier abbot of Bury, Sampson of Totington (1182-1211), to ruminate on the sermons of others (*ruminare alienos sermones*), Laud misc. 233 would have been suitable source of material.<sup>72</sup>

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In their insistent restatement of basic religious and theological truths, Babion's sermons would have been especially appealing to late-fourteenth-century monks troubled by Lollardy and other strains of unorthodoxy. Babion's *sermo* 41 [art. 6(i)], which sits at the head of the collection of sermons in Laud misc. 233, with its overarching emphasis on unity – of God, of the trinity, of the church and of the natural world – and on the obedience thus due to authorities both secular and religious, offers a type of religious discourse very unlike the cynical anti-clericalism and anti-fraternalism so prominent in contemporary vernacular literature such as *The Canterbury Tales* and *Piers Plowman*.<sup>73</sup> Babion's sermon takes as its pericope Paul's words to the Romans, 'Let every soul be subject to higher powers: for there is no power but from God: and those that are, are ordained of God. Therefore he that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God' (Rom. 13.1-2). After an elaborate catalogue of biblical rebels including Core, Dathan, Abiron, Cain, Esau and Judas, Babion finishes the sermon with a reading of the allusion to Lucifer's fateful boast in Isa. 14.13 ('I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God, I will sit in the mountain of the covenant, in the sides of the north'), explaining that it refers to those who disturb God's priests: the stars of God are the bishop, the mountain the Testament. Babion's overarching message is that priests are an elite caste, and, when individual Christians are insubordinate to their authority, the spiritual welfare of the whole church is threatened. It is a sermon which bears a general similarity to Lydgate's 'Defence of Holy Church', which implicitly likens Lollard attempts to 'dispraven her [*sic*. Holy Church], and hir ornamentes' [line 127] to the actions of the Babylonians who under Nabuchadnossor destroyed the Temple in Jerusalem.

While Babion's sermons are in no sense a source of Lydgate's 'Defence of Holy Church', they also filter a concern with the damaging consequences of challenging priestly authority through biblical typology. The late-fourteenth-century rehabilitation of the 'ancient sermon' and the availability of such sermons in great numbers at Bury, materially evident in the case of Laud misc. 233, cannot be ignored when reading Lydgate's religious verse. Other recent work has

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traced Lydgate's rejection of contemporary pastoralia in favour of older material. For instance, Andrew Cole has argued that in his 'Procession of Corpus Christi', Lydgate looks back to earlier patristic and scholastic accounts of the eucharist, while Shannon Gayk has also posited the influence of earlier models of piety on Lydgate's religious verse.<sup>74</sup> The Bury library provides the most likely source of Lydgate's knowledge of this older material.

While it is impossible to show that Lydgate read or studied Laud misc. 233 and that doing so materially influenced his writing, several items in the manuscript – Isidore's *Synonyma*, the Horace florilegium and the sermons – draw our attention to aspects of late medieval monastic culture which may have exercised considerable indirect influence on Lydgate's intellectual development and ongoing literary programme. At Bury, arguably, he would have encountered contemplative, ruminative reading as part of the Lenten *lectio*, a nascent reawakening of interest in the classics that would come to be called humanism, and a library with substantial holdings of preaching material from the twelfth century and earlier, material that the Wycliffite movement had made newly relevant. In this light, the modern critical neglect of Lydgate's monastic vocation is undeniably regrettable.

#### A MONK OF BURY

Though none of the texts in Laud misc. 233 are direct sources for his poetry, Lydgate's handling of the manuscript serves as evidence of his embeddedness in the intellectual milieu of the late medieval Benedictine monastery at Bury St Edmunds, where he became an acolyte in March 1389 and, proceeding smoothly through the ecclesiastical grades, a priest in April 1397. While Lydgate may have spent brief periods of time away from Bury fulfilling commissions in Windsor, Ewelme, London and elsewhere, there is nothing to suggest that his excursions in society were anything but occasional and brief, in accordance with one of the articles in Henry V's Benedictine reforms of 1421 demanding 'the curtailment of visits in society'.<sup>75</sup> Though it is

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difficult to say when Lydgate accessed Laud misc. 233, it can be added to the documentary evidence for his presence at Bury at various points throughout his life.

While it has been a sensible hypothesis for many years that Lydgate made extensive use of the library at Bury St Edmunds, Laud misc. 233 has never been cited in support of this argument because of Pearsall's questionable conjecture that Lydgate used it in Oxford. Some of Lydgate's most popular, longest poems are translations of Latin and French texts, which must have required continuous access to books; and even his shortest texts are replete with intertextual allusions. It is likely, given his renowned bibliophilia, that Duke Humphrey provided Lydgate with a copy of Laurent de Premierfait's *Des cas des nobles hommes et femmes* in order that he could produce the *Fall of Princes*. However, this is an exception: the actual books Lydgate used for his other substantial translations (the *Troy Book*, *Siege of Thebes*, *Life of Our Lady* and *Pilgrimage of the Life of Man* in particular) are less clear.<sup>76</sup> Lydgate's demonstrable use of Laud misc. 233 at Bury suggests the necessity of further investigating Lydgate's indebtedness to the abbey's extensive book collection.

While Lydgate's willingness to deploy his poetic talents to support the abbey and its public interests has been increasingly acknowledged as evidence of his commitment to the Benedictine cause, his penitentials in Laud misc. 233 provide a rare glimpse of his private piety. Lydgate fulfilled various local commissions, including the *Legend of St Austin at Compton*, the *Miracles of St Edmund* and perhaps the 'Kalendare', but most substantially the *Lives of SS Edmund and Fremund*, which Fiona Somerset argues to be an effort to defend the privileges and rights of the abbey.<sup>77</sup> The personal registers of William Curteys (who may have owned British Library MS Harley 2255, a Lydgate compilation) contain Middle English translations of Bury's royal charters of privilege, generally presumed to have been produced by Lydgate.<sup>78</sup> While these occasional commissions indicate Lydgate's willingness to direct his literary talents to the causes that preoccupied his contemporary monks, Lydgate's use of Laud misc. 233 gives a glimpse of his more quotidian life

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in the monastery, consulting a volume from the monastic library, and, in his penitentials, leaving a trace of personal devotion, however hackneyed, to the Virgin Mary and John the Baptist.

Although Lydgate spent substantial periods of his life in the religious communities of Bury St Edmunds and Hatfield Broad Oak, he is usually considered first a poet, second a propagandist and only third a monk. The consensus holds that Lydgate was more interested in fulfilling secular commissions for the upper echelons of Lancastrian society than in following the Benedictine ideal. Schirmer writes that Lydgate was 'by inclination [...] better suited to a secular than to an ecclesiastical career'; Pearsall suggests that 'he enjoyed the comforts and privileges that fame and money procured'; Cannon calls him 'worldly in both habit of mind and writing practice'.<sup>79</sup> Green even speculates that Lydgate was appointed as prior of Hatfield Broad Oak specifically 'to allow him a certain freedom of movement away from the restrictions of the mother house'.<sup>80</sup> The verdict that Lydgate never 'achieved any eminence as a professional scholar, nor any depth of learning in theology' has thus largely prevailed.<sup>81</sup>

Laud misc. 233 offers a timely reminder that Lydgate was a monk, and shared monastic pieties, however mundane and banal such pieties may seem to us now. The manuscript is also a documentary prompt that Lydgate's world did not divide into secular and religious as easily as some criticism has assumed.<sup>82</sup> Until now, Somerset has been a solitary voice claiming Lydgate as 'a poet whose "religious" and "secular" oeuvres cry out for cross-comparison'.<sup>83</sup> The manuscript epitomises the importance of an eclectic and inclusive approach to Lydgate's poetry: the 'religious' and 'secular' parts should be read in parallel and modern critical distinctions between them subjected to scrutiny.

In Laud misc. 233, Lydgate encountered secular and religious literature in the same context. At some point, a precentor or librarian at Bury took the decision to bind the various booklets with their various contents – secular, religious, classical, medieval – into one volume. Taken as

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representative, this manuscript suggests Lydgate did not consult either religious or secular sources in isolation. In the case of Laud misc. 233, Lydgate could not himself encounter Horace or Isidore without seeing it in the context of Babion. He retained the 'monk of Bury' epithet even when writing largely secular or pagan texts; the religious milieu in which he wrote provided an indelible colouring in the eyes of his earliest readers.<sup>84</sup> It is thus inappropriate to apply any division of secular and religious to Lydgate's oeuvre itself – the predominantly secular poems should be read alongside and in the context of the predominantly religious.

Lydgate's proven use of MS Laud misc. 233, a manuscript of certain Bury provenance, forcibly reminds us that Lydgate's original and formative intellectual milieu was the Benedictine abbey of Bury St Edmunds. Although Lydgate was probably first drawn to the manuscript as a copy of Isidore's works, the other contents of the manuscript would also have been relevant to him. Even if Lydgate's acquaintance with Laud misc. 233 was only passing – and his likely use of it should not be exaggerated – the manuscript is typical of the other books that he would have found in the Bury library, and which shaped the intellectual development of Lydgate and his fellow monks. Its florilegium of classical verse, its short miscellaneous collections of theological and encyclopaedic trivia and, above all, its twelfth-century sermons provide new perspectives on Lydgate's substantial oeuvre, vindicating Cannon's judgment that Lydgate was at times 'a quintessentially monastic versifier [...] whose independence from any clear patronage, suggest[s] the most deliberate piety'.<sup>85</sup> Lydgate's use of Laud misc. 233 reminds us that Lydgate's political and poetic life cannot be separated from his vocation as a faithful monk of Bury St Edmunds.<sup>86</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The secure identification of the autograph hand of John Lydgate provides the means to recognise other manuscripts that Lydgate used. In addition, the accompanying formal description MS Laud misc. 233, published online, provides scholars of Lydgate with a list of material that

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Lydgate certainly knew, and which may have influenced his poetry. Lydgate's use of this manuscript forces us to remember he was indeed a monk of Bury, who must have shared many of the preoccupations of his fellow monks, evident in their extensive, conservative library.

The identification of Lydgate's confirmed autograph opens a path to its identification in other manuscripts, thereby refining and developing our understanding of Lydgate's intellectual development, use of sources and personal involvement in the dissemination of his works.

Unfortunately, our preliminary findings in this area are exclusively negative. While it has been suggested that Lydgate used annotations from Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 356 (Neckham's *Marian Commentary on the Song of Songs*) in composing the *Life of Our Lady* and the compendium of texts about St Edmund in MS Bodley 240 in producing the *Lives of SS Edmund and Fremund*, neither of these manuscripts contains Lydgate's hand. Likewise, Tracy has argued that Lydgate read the Life of St Alban in a Bury copy of the *Legenda aurea*, now British Library, MS Harley 630, fols. 154v-68v, when writing his *Lives of SS Alban and Amphibal*, but this manuscript again contains no trace of Lydgate's hand.<sup>87</sup> If Lydgate did use these books, he did not annotate them. Nor does either of the surviving Bury manuscripts of Guido delle Colonne's *Historia destructionis Troiae*, source for the *Troy Book*, contain Lydgate's hand.<sup>88</sup> It has also been suggested that Lydgate supervised the production of early copies of his works, such as London, British Library, MS Harley 2278, a presentation copy of the *Lives of SS Edmund and Fremund* given to Henry VI, or MS Harley 1766, the abridged *Fall of Princes* copied by the Edmund-Fremund scribe, but Lydgate's hand appears in neither manuscript, suggesting that his involvement was at most indirect.<sup>89</sup>

Through a combination of the fourteenth-century efforts of Kirkstede and the twentieth-century efforts of M.R. James and others, it is possible to recreate the library of the abbey of Bury St Edmunds with unusual exactness. Around 270 books of the 3000 books survive, offering an untapped source of evidence for Lydgate's intellectual development. Given Lydgate's frequent

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allusion to literary sources in his poetry, which must ultimately depend on a detailed acquaintance with a considerable range of texts, it is not improbable that others of these books may contain Lydgate's hand. It is to be hoped that further examples of this hand will in due course come to light.

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<sup>1</sup> The authors would like to thank Ralph Hanna for reading a draft of this article, and the anonymous *Speculum* reviewers for their comments. All biblical quotations are taken from the Douay-Rheims version.

<sup>2</sup> The narrator of *The Seige of Thebes* describes himself as 'Lydgate / Monk of Bery': John Lydgate, *The Seige of Thebes*, eds. Axel Erdmann and Eilert Ekwall, EETS e. s. 108, 125 (London, 1911-1930), lines 92-3.

<sup>3</sup> Derek Pearsall, *John Lydgate* (London, 1970), p. 34.

<sup>4</sup> On Kirkstede's catalogue, see Richard Sharpe, 'Reconstructing the medieval library of Bury St Edmunds Abbey: the lost catalogue of Henry of Kirkstead', in *Bury St Edmunds: Medieval Art, Architecture, Archaeology and Economy*, British Archaeological Association Conference Transactions 20 (Leeds, 1998), ed. Antonia Gransden, pp. 204-18.

<sup>5</sup> The best effort remains Pearsall, *John Lydgate*, pp. 22-48, but see also Nigel Mortimer, *John Lydgate's Fall of Princes: Narrative Tragedy in its Literary and Political Contexts* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 130-151. For recent work on late medieval monastic culture, see James G. Clark, ed., *The Culture of Medieval English Monasticism* (Woodbridge, 2007). On East Anglian religious culture in particular, see Gail McMurray Gibson, *The Theater of Devotion: East Anglian Drama and Society in the Late Middle Ages* (Chicago, 1989).

<sup>6</sup> H. O. Coxe, *Catalogi codicum manuscriptorum Bibliothecae Bodleianae partis secundae fasciculus primus* (Oxford, 1858), cols. 197-8. Coxe is followed by A.B. Emden, *A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to A.D. 1500*, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1957-9), pp. 1185-6.

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<sup>7</sup> Derek Pearsall, *John Lydgate (1371-1449): A Bio-bibliography*, ELS Monograph Series 71 (Victoria, 1997), p. 16. Also Pearsall, *John Lydgate*, p. 36.

<sup>8</sup> John M. Bowers, *Chaucer and Langland: The Antagonistic Tradition* (Notre Dame, 2007), p. 102.

<sup>9</sup> Pearsall, *Bio-bibliography*, p. 16.

<sup>10</sup> In the fifteenth century, John Wickham, a monk of Bury, had a twelfth-century copy of Anselm's works (now Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 135) assigned to him (see M.B. Parkes, 'The Provision of Books', in *The History of the University of Oxford*, 2, ed. J.I. Catto and Ralph Evans, pp. 407-83, at p. 450.). That the practice was more frequent is evident from two letters from Abbot William Curteys (1429-1446) complaining that monks had borrowed books from Bury: Thomas Arnold, ed., *Memorials of St Edmund's Abbey*, Rolls Series 96, 3 vols. (London, 1890-6), 3:278-9; M.R. James, *On the Abbey of St Edmund at Bury*, Cambridge Antiquarian Society, Octavo Publications 28 (Cambridge (Eng.), 1895), 109-111. There is also ample evidence that Durham monks used books from the cathedral library in their studies at Oxford: A. J. Piper, 'The libraries of the monks of Durham', in *Medieval Scribes, Manuscripts, & Libraries: Essays Presented to N. R. Ker* eds. M. B. Parkes and Andrew G. Watson (London, 1978), pp. 213-49 at pp. 244-7.

It was evidently normal for individual monks to take books into their own possession since Henry V objected to the practice his 1421 articles for reform of the Benedictines: W. A. Pantin, ed., *Documents Illustrating the Activities of the General and Provincial Chapters of the English Black Monks, 1215-1540*, Camden Society 3<sup>rd</sup> Series 45, 47, 54 (London, 1931-7), no. 166 (2: 109-115), at 114/9-11 (*nullusque monachus retineat in sua custodia [...] libros sine brevi et scriptura indentata*).

<sup>11</sup> Abbreviations have been silently expanded.

<sup>12</sup> The Curteys Register includes innumerable examples of the formula, dating from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries: see, for example, London, British Library, MS Additional 14848, fols. 96rv, 96v, 97r etc. That the formula is so commonplace vitiates Bowers' suggestion about the significance of the annotation.

Thirty surviving documents associated with Lydgate's career are printed by Pearsall, *Bio-Bibliography*. In only one of these, Lydgate's petition touching the invalidity of letters patent granted to him, dated 1441, does Lydgate appear as the issuing authority in the superscription.

<sup>13</sup> As we argue below, it is likely that the combination of the generic legal formula and Lydgate's name perhaps rests on no more than this interest in legal diction, given the hand's reproduction of other legal formula on the flyleaves of the manuscript.

<sup>14</sup> It would seem that a medieval scribe's writing generally retained its initial character throughout his career. Dan Michael of Northgate, who was perhaps ordained as a priest in 1296, retains a late-thirteenth-century style of writing in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 464 (datable 1301x1318 according to Wilbur R. Knorr, 'Two Medieval Monks and Their Astronomy Books', *Bodleian Library Record* 14 (1993), 269-84; cf. Andrew G. Watson, *Catalogue of Dated and Datable Manuscripts c. 435-1600 in Oxford Libraries*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1984), no. 90) and London, British Library, MS Arundel 57, fols. 13-96 (dated 1340). On his career, see A. B. Emden, *Donors of Books to S. Augustine's Abbey Canterbury* (Oxford, 1968), p. 14. John Dygon, recluse of Sheen, copied a series of books datable from their paper between 1410 and 1450, his script showing 'remarkable consistency': see Ralph Hanna, 'John Dygon, Fifth Recluse of Sheen: His Career, Books and Acquaintance', in *Imagining the Book* eds. Stephen Kelly and John J. Thompson, *Medieval Texts and Cultures of Northern Europe* 7 (Turnhout, 2005), pp. 127-41 esp. p. 134. Stephen Dodesham copied books over a thirty-five year period (from before 1439 to 1474/5), changing only minor features of his hand: see A. I. Doyle, 'Stephen Dodesham of Witham and Sheen', in

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*Of the Making of Books: Medieval Manuscripts, Their Scribes and Readers: Essays Presented to M. B. Parkes* eds. P. R. Robinson and Rivkah Zim (Aldershot, 1997), pp. 94-115. On the other hand, Carter Revard has traced changes in the way the scribe of London, British Library, MS Harley 2253, active between 1314 and 1349, formed and finished particular letters in his 'Scribe and Provenance', in *Studies in the Harley Manuscript: The Scribes, Contents and Social Contexts of British Library MS Harley 2253* ed. Susanna Fein (Kalamazoo, 2000), pp. 21-109. It is important to note that these examples concern the scribes' handling of one particular script: many scribes were competent in more than one script.

<sup>15</sup> 'Omnibus est notum quod multum diligo potum': Bénédictins de Bouveret, *Colophons de Manuscrits Occidentaux des Origines au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, 6 vols. (Fribourg, 1965-82), 6, no. 22715 (from Cambridge, St John's College, MS 248). A Middle English version appears in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Douce 323, fol. 140r: 'Now of þis litel book y haue makyd an ende / Goddis blessing mote he haue þat drinke wil me sende', now printed Ralph Hanna, 'Unnoticed Middle English Verse in Princeton University Library Manuscripts', *Princeton University Library Chronicle* 70 (2008), 136 n. 12.

<sup>16</sup> See, for example, Fals's 'feffement' concerning Mede in *Piers Plowman* [B 2.72ff], and, more generally, Emily Steiner, *Documentary Culture and the Making of Medieval English Literature* (Cambridge (Eng.), 2003).

<sup>17</sup> For a description of the binding, see the full manuscript description published online.

<sup>18</sup> The item numbers refer to the manuscript description included in the appendix published online.

<sup>19</sup> Claudia Di Sciacca, *Finding the Right Words: Isidore's Synonyma in Anglo-Saxon England* (Toronto, 2008), p. 34.

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<sup>20</sup> 'Series: I. My Compleinte', lines 309-17 ed. Roger Ellis, *Thomas Hoccleve: My Compleinte' and Other Poems* (Exeter, 2001), 115-30. On Hoccleve's use of the *Synonyma*, see further A. G. Rigg, 'Hoccleve's *Complaint* and Isidore of Seville', *Speculum* 45 (1970), 564-74; J. A. Burrow, 'Hoccleve's *Complaint* and Isidore of Seville Again', *Speculum* 73 (1998), 424-8.

<sup>21</sup> P. S. Jolliffe, *A Check-List of Middle English Prose Writings of Spiritual Guidance* (Toronto, 1974), I. 22, O. 27.

<sup>22</sup> *PL* 162, cols. 1228–1500. On the attribution, see A. Wilmart, 'Un commentaire des Psaumes restitué à Anselme de Laon', *Recherches de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale* 8 (1936), 337n45.

<sup>23</sup> For the Benedictines, see Karsten Friis-Jensen and James M. W. Willoughby, eds., *Peterborough Abbey*, *Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues* 8 (London, 2001), BP21.53; Richard H. Rouse and Mary A. Rouse, eds., *Registrum Anglie de Libris Doctorum et Auctorem Veterum*, *Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues* 2 (London, 1991), R66.2; Richard H. Rouse and Mary A. Rouse, eds., *Henry of Kirkestede, catalogus de libris authenticis et apocrifis*, *Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues* 11 (London, 2004), K107.2. For the Cistercians, see David N. Bell, ed., *The Libraries of the Cistercians, Gilbertines and Premonstratensians*, *Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues* 3 (London, 1992), Z7.53; Z14.156a etc; Z19.81c etc; Rouse and Rouse, *Henry of Kirkestede*, K107.2. For the Augustinians, T. Webber and A. G. Watson, eds., *The Libraries of the Augustinian Canons*, *Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues* 6 (London, 1998), A16.\*224; A20.620<sup>x</sup>=792 etc; for the Premonstratensians, Bell, *Libraries of the Cistercians*, P2.772a; P6.26e; P9.†74.

<sup>24</sup> On Babion, see Jean-Hervé Foulon, 'Geoffroy Babion, Écolâtre D'Angers († 1158), L'exemple D'une Collection De Sermons', in *Le Médiéviste Devant Ses Sources: Questions Et Méthodes*, eds. Claude Carozzi and Huguette Taviani-Carozzi (Aix-en-Provence, 2004), pp. 65-96. For the

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corpus of his sermons, see Jean-Paul Bonnes, 'Un des grands prédicateurs du XIIe siècle: Geoffroy du Loroux dit Geoffroy Babion', *Revue Bénédictine* 56 (1945-6), 174-215; J. B. Schneyer, *Repertorium der Lateinischen Sermones des Mittelalters*, 11 vols. (Münster, 1973-90), 2:150-9.

<sup>25</sup> Robert of Torigny, *PL* 160, col. 484.

<sup>26</sup> We have not been able to identify this penitential with any published text. On the genre, see Cyrille Vogel, *Les «Libri Paenitentiales»*, *Typologie Des Sources Du Moyen Âge Occidental* 27 (Turnhout, 1978).

<sup>27</sup> See Pierre J. Payer, *Sex and the New Medieval Literature of Confession, 1150-1300* (Toronto, 2009), pp. 12-44.

<sup>28</sup> For this and what follows, see Stephen A. Barney et al., trans., *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville* (Cambridge (Eng.), 2006), pp. 24-6.

<sup>29</sup> 'Scientia est ratio que ostendit breuiter quid sit aut quid esse oporteat', MS Laud misc. 233, fol. 114ra/31-2.

<sup>30</sup> For this and what follows, see L. M. de Rijk, ed., *Garlandus Compotista: Dialectica* (Assen, 1959), esp. pp. xxii-xxvi.

<sup>31</sup> A. Cordoliani, 'Le Comput de Gerland de Besançon', *Revue du Moyen Âge Latin* 2 (1946), 309-14.

<sup>32</sup> B. L. Ullmann, 'Virgil in Certain Mediaeval Florilegia', *Studi medievali*, n. s. 5 (1932), 59-60. On florilegia generally, see Richard Rouse, 'Florilegia', *Viator* 10 (1979), 131-60. There is an attempt to codify and catalogue florilegia in B.M. Olsen, 'Les classiques latins dans les florilèges

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médiévaux antérieurs au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle', *Revue d'histoire des textes* 9 (1979), 47-121, and 10 (1980), 115-64.

<sup>33</sup> See Karsten Friis-Jensen, 'The Reception of Horace in the Middle Ages', in *The Cambridge Companion to Horace* ed. Stephen Harrison (Cambridge (Eng.), 2007), pp. 291-304 at pp. 291, 302. For English schools, the importance of Horace is most evident from the French glosses edited by Tony Hunt, *Teaching and Learning Latin in Thirteenth-Century England*, 3 vols. (Cambridge (Eng.), 1991), 1:63-4. See also Nicholas Orme, *Medieval Schools: From Roman Britain to Renaissance England* (New Haven, 2006), p. 97.

<sup>34</sup> See Robert A. Pratt, 'A Note on Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*', *Modern Language Notes* 65 (1950), 183-7.

<sup>35</sup> PL 210, col. 111C, trans. Carolyn Muessig, 'What is Medieval Monastic Preaching? An Introduction', in *Medieval Monastic Preaching* ed. Carolyn Muessig, Brill's Studies in Intellectual History 90 (Leiden, 1998), pp. 3-16 at p. 4.

<sup>36</sup> See Muessig, 'What is Medieval Monastic Preaching?'.

<sup>37</sup> Sharpe, 'Reconstructing the Medieval Library', p. 216. The books appear to have been kept in *armaria* in the cloister until the early fifteenth century, when William Curteys built his library: Antonia Gransden, 'Some Manuscripts in Cambridge from Bury St Edmunds Abbey: Exhibition Catalogue', in *Bury St Edmunds: Medieval Art, Architecture, Archaeology and Economy*, British Archaeological Association Conference Transactions 20 (Leeds, 1998), ed. Antonia Gransden, pp. 228-85 at p. 240.

<sup>38</sup> 'During this time of Lent each one [of the monks] is to receive a book from the library, and is to read the whole of it straight through. These books are to be distributed at the beginning of

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Lent: Timothy Fry, ed. and trans., *RB 1980: The Rule of St Benedict in Latin and English with Notes* (Collegeville (Minn.), 1981), 48.15-16.

<sup>39</sup> On Lydgate's use of the *Etymologiae* in diverse texts, see Maura Nolan, *John Lydgate and the Making of Public Culture* (Cambridge (Eng.), 2005), p. 158, p. 190 et passim.

<sup>40</sup> On the *Troy Book* and Isidore, see E. Bagby Atwood, 'Some Minor Sources of Lydgate's *Troy Book*', *Studies in Philology* 35 (1938), 34.

<sup>41</sup> Mortimer, *Lydgate's Fall of Princes*, p. 87 et passim.

<sup>42</sup> There was at least one full copy available in Bury: Durham, University Library, MS Cosin V.III.2.

<sup>43</sup> Pearsall, *John Lydgate*, p. 36.

<sup>44</sup> Eleanor Prescott Hammond, *English Verse between Chaucer and Surrey* (New York, 1927, rept. 1969), pp. 188-90 (lines 15-22). Capitalisation and punctuation modernised.

<sup>45</sup> We are grateful to Maura Nolan for this insight.

<sup>46</sup> See especially Maura Nolan, "'Now wo, now gladnesse': Ovidianism in the *Fall of Princes*", *English Literary History* 71 (2004), pp. 531-58.

<sup>47</sup> Atwood, 'Minor Sources', pp. 27-33.

<sup>48</sup> Mortimer, *Lydgate's Fall of Princes*, p. 41 n. 72.

<sup>49</sup> Atwood, 'Minor Sources', pp. 35-42.

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<sup>50</sup> See Christopher Baswell, *Virgil in Medieval England: Figuring the Aeneid from the Twelfth Century to Chaucer*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature 24 (Cambridge (Eng.), 1995), p. 5 and p. 315 n. 10 for evidence that the *Georgics* was better known in the Middle Ages through florilegia than through complete manuscripts. See further Ullmann, 'Virgil in Certain Mediaeval Florilegia', p. 62.

<sup>51</sup> Lines 3799-3804 ('comme dist Orace en sa leçon'). The other two gobbets are actually Ovid, *Ponti* iv. 3. 35 (cited at *Mirour* lines 10948-50 and *Confessio amantis* vi.1513-4) and Juvenal, *Satires* viii. 269 (cited at *Mirour* lines 23370-23376 and *Confessio amantis* vii.3581-5). References to Gower's works are to G. C. Macaulay, ed., *The Complete Works of John Gower*, 4 vols. (Oxford, 1899-1902). We would like to thank Aditi Nafde for her help with Gower's use of Horace.

<sup>52</sup> *Vox clamantis* vi.497; *Confessio amantis* vii.3929-32 with marginalium.

<sup>53</sup> *MaT IX* (H) 161, 255; the relevant lines are paraphrased in *Roman de la Rose* 10427-30, 16545. In addition, passages from Horace's *Odes* may ultimately underlie *Troilus and Criseyde* ii.22, 1041. References to Chaucer's works are to *The Riverside Chaucer*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition ed. Larry D. Benson (Oxford, 1988).

<sup>54</sup> Orme, *Medieval Schools*, p. 101. For the proscription of the *Ars amatoria*, see *Statuta antiqua universitatis Oxoniensis* ed. Strickland Gibson (Oxford, 1931), p. 173.

<sup>55</sup> *Statuta* ed. Gibson, pp. 233-6, discussed J. M. Fletcher, 'Developments in the Faculty of Arts: 1370-1520', in *The History of the University of Oxford*, 2, ed. J.I. Catto and Ralph Evans, pp. 315-45, at pp. 323-4.

<sup>56</sup> H. T. Riley, ed., *Gesta abbatum monasterii Sancti Albani*, Rolls Series 28, 3 vols. (London, 1867), 3:421.

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<sup>57</sup> A. F. Leach, ed., *Educational Charters and Documents 598-1909* (Cambridge (Eng.), 1911), pp. 300-1.

<sup>58</sup> 'I rede in haly wryte, I sey noght þat I red in Ouidie, noyþer in Oras. Vor þe last tyme þt I was her ich was blamyd of som men ... because þat I began me sermon wyt a poysy': D. M. Grisdale, *Three Middle English Sermons from the Worcester Chapter Manuscript F. 10* (Leeds, 1939), pp. 22-50 at p. 22. For further discussion of the manuscript, see Siegfried Wenzel, *Latin Sermon Collections from Later Medieval England: orthodox preaching in the age of Wyclif* (Cambridge (Eng.), 2005), pp. 151-8, 607-25.

<sup>59</sup> *Chronicon Angliae* ed. E. M. Thompson. Rolls Series 64 (London, 1874), p. 118.

<sup>60</sup> James G. Clark, *A Monastic Renaissance at St Albans: Thomas Walsingham and his Circle* (Oxford, 2004), p. 210.

<sup>61</sup> Clark, *Monastic Renaissance*, p. 213.

<sup>62</sup> In particular, see Daniel Wakelin, *Humanism, Reading, and English Literature 1430-1530* (Oxford, 2007), pp. 23-61.

<sup>63</sup> Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge (Eng.), 1991), p. 100.

<sup>64</sup> On monks and pastoral work, see Giles Constable, 'Monasteries, Rural Churches and the *Cura animarum* in the Early Middle Ages', in *Settimane di studio del Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo XXVIII: Christianizzazione ed organizzazione ecclesiastica delle campagne nell'alto medioevo: espansione e resistenze (Spoleto, 10-16 aprile 1980)* (Spoleto, 1982), pp. 349-89. On preaching specifically, see Margaret Jennings, 'Monks and the *Artes praedicandi* in the time of Ranulph Higden', *Revue*

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*Bénédictine* 86 (1976), 119-28; P. J. Horner, 'Benedictines and Preaching in Fifteenth-Century England', *Revue Bénédictine* 99 (1989), 313-32; P. J. Horner, 'The King Taught Us the Lesson: Benedictine Support for Henry V's Suppression of the Lollards', *Medieval Studies* 52 (1990), 190-220; and Siegfried Wenzel, *Monastic Preaching in the Age of Chaucer* (Kalamazoo, 1993).

<sup>65</sup> For the distinction between 'ancient' and 'modern' sermons, see H. L. Spencer, *English Preaching in the Late Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1993), p. 231.

<sup>66</sup> Thomas Waleys, *De modo et forma praedicandi* ed. Thomas-Marie Charland, *Artes praedicandi : contribution à l'histoire de la rhétorique au moyen âge* (Paris, 1936), pp. 327-403 at p. 357; Spencer, *English Preaching*, pp. 228-68.

<sup>67</sup> Helen Spencer, 'A Fifteenth-Century Translation of a Late Twelfth-Century Sermon Collection', *Review of English Studies* n. s. 28 (1977), 257-67.

<sup>68</sup> Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Bodley 240, pp. 848b-850b: discussed Spencer, *English Preaching*, p. 167.

<sup>69</sup> Wenzel, *Latin Sermon Collections*, p. 279.

<sup>70</sup> James, *On the Abbey*, p. 185.

<sup>71</sup> The Constitutions of the Provincial Chapter of the English Black Monks, perhaps datable 1363, stated that the only justification for monks attending university was to learn to preach (*non ob aliam causam nisi ut ... addiscant aliis rite proponere verbum Dei*): Pantin, *Documents*, no. 157 (2:63-82 at 76/2).

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<sup>72</sup> H. E. Butler, ed., *The Chronicle of Jocelin of Brakelond Concerning the Acts of Samson, Abbot of the Monastery of St. Edmund* (London, 1949), p. 128: the phrase is discussed by D. W. Robertson, Jr., 'The Frequency of Preaching in Thirteenth-Century England', *Speculum* 24 (1949), 376-7.

<sup>73</sup> While surviving late medieval orthodox sermon collections are less anti-clerical and anti-fraternal than these two vernacular works, criticism of priests was frequent in Wycliffite sermons, hence its proscription in Arundel's 1409 Constitutions: see Nicholas Watson, 'Censorship and Cultural Change in Late-Medieval England: Vernacular Theology, the Oxford Translation Debate, and Arundel's Constitutions of 1409', *Speculum* 70 (1995), 822-64 at p. 827.

<sup>74</sup> Andrew Cole, *Literature and heresy in the age of Chaucer* (Cambridge (Eng.), 2008), pp. 131-52; Shannon Gayk, '“Among psalms to fynde a cleer sentence”: John Lydgate, Eleanor Hull, and the Art of Vernacular Exegesis', *New Medieval Literatures* 10 (2008), 165-192. See also Shannon Gayk, 'Images of Pity: The Regulatory Aesthetics of John Lydgate's Religious Poetry', *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 28 (2006), 175-203.

<sup>75</sup> Besides Lydgate's time in Oxford in 1406-7 and a possible period in Paris in 1426, there is no firm evidence to suggest that Lydgate did not spend the majority of his adult life in the monasteries of Bury St Edmunds and Hatfield Broad Oak, where he was prior from 1423 until 1429-30. On Henry V's reforms, see David Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, 3 vols. (Cambridge (Eng.), 1948-59), 2: 184.

<sup>76</sup> The slim possibility that Lydgate's copy of Guido delle Colonne's *Historia destructionis troiae* (source of the *Troy Book*) survives is discussed in the conclusion to this article.

<sup>77</sup> See Karl Horstmann, ed. *Altenglische Legenden: neue Folge* (Paderbon, 1881), 440-5. The shorter religious poems cited in this article are all ed. Henry Noble MacCracken, *Minor Poems of John Lydgate*, EETS, e.s. 107, and o.s. 192 (Oxford, 1911-34). Fiona Somerset, "Hard is with seyntis

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for to mak affray": Lydgate the "Poet-Propagandist" as Hagiographer', *John Lydgate: Poetry, Culture, and Lancastrian England*, ed. Larry Scanlon and James Simpson (Notre Dame, 2006), pp. 258-78. On *St Austin* and *Edmund*, see Katie Lowe, "The Poetry of Privilege: Lydgate's *Cartae Versificatae*", *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, 50 (2006), pp. 163-4. On the 'Kalendare', see Schirmer, *John Lydgate*, p. 175, and Pearsall, *John Lydgate*, p. 257.

<sup>78</sup> Arnold, *Memorials* 3:215 (ed. 3:215-37); MacCracken, *Minor Poems*, p. xiii; Pearsall, *John Lydgate*, pp. 25-6; R. M. Thomson, *The Archives of the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds*, Suffolk Records Society, 21, (Woodbridge, 1980), pp. 35 and 137. The *Cartae* are also discussed by Alfred Hiatt, *The Making of Medieval Forgeries: False Documents in Fifteenth-Century England*, The British Library Studies in Medieval Culture (London, 2004), pp. 59-61. That Curteys probably owned the substantial Lydgate collection, British Library MS Harley 2255, shows some approval of Lydgate's activities by his abbot: Lowe, 'Cartae Versificatae', p. 163.

<sup>79</sup> Walter F. Schirmer, *John Lydgate: A Study in the Culture of the XVth Century*, trans. Ann E. Keep (London, 1961), p. 8. Pearsall, *Bio-bibliography*, p. 17. Christopher Cannon, 'Monastic productions', in *The Cambridge History of Medieval English Literature*, ed. David Wallace (Cambridge (Eng.), 1999), pp. 316-48, at p. 342.

<sup>80</sup> Richard Firth Green, *Poets and Princepleasers: Literature and the English Court in the late Middle Ages*, (Toronto, 1980), p. 190. Also Schirmer, *John Lydgate*, p. 92.

<sup>81</sup> Pearsall, *Bio-bibliography*, p. 16.

<sup>82</sup> The most telling of these is perhaps MacCracken's division of his two volume edition of Lydgate's *Minor Poems* into 'Religious' (Vol. I) and 'Secular' (Vol. II).

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<sup>83</sup> Fiona Somerset, ' "Hard is with seyntis for to mak affray": Lydgate the "Poet-Propagandist" as Hagiographer', in *John Lydgate: Poetry, Culture, and Lancastrian England*, ed. by Larry Scanlon and James Simpson (Notre Dame, 2006), pp. 258-78 (p. 258).

<sup>84</sup> Lydgate's epithet constitutes more substantial evidence of his provenance than those of some other fifteenth-century writers. Richard Rolle was known as the 'hermit of Hampole', but the only firm evidence of his link to Hampole is his probable death there. Biographical evidence of Lydgate's presence in Bury, to which Laud misc. 233 is a valuable addition, is more secure.

<sup>85</sup> Cannon, 'Monastic Productions', p. 342.

<sup>86</sup> On Lydgate's apparent regret of some of his secular productions and activities, see W. H. E. Sweet, 'Lydgate's Retraction and "his resorte to his religyoun"' in *After Arundel: Religious Writing in Fifteenth-Century England* ed. by Vincent Gillespie and Kantik Ghosh (Turnhout, 2011), pp. 343-360.

<sup>87</sup> Larissa Tracy, 'British Library MS Harley 630: Saint Albans and Lydgate', *Journal of the Early Book Society* 3 (2000), pp. 36-58, at pp. 41-3.

<sup>88</sup> Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Holkham misc. 37 and London, British Library, MS Harley 51. We thus confirm the findings of Pearsall and Antonia Gransden recorded in Pearsall, *Bio-bibliography*, p. 67.

<sup>89</sup> Kathleen Scott, 'Lydgate's *Lives of SS Edmund and Fremund*: A Newly Discovered Manuscript in Arundel Castle', *Viator* 13 (1982), pp. 335-66.