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A Study of the Manuscript Contexts of Benedict Burgh's Middle English *Distichs of Cato*

Fraser James Dallachy



*Cato dictating to Burgh, who translates for an audience of schoolchildren
(Aberystwyth, NLW MS. Peniarth 481D, fol. 1r. By permission of Llyfrgell
Genedlaethol Cymru / National Library of Wales)*

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Abstract

This thesis aims to establish an impression of the readership and reception of Benedict Burgh's Middle English *Distichs of Cato*. The intended outcome of this research is to demonstrate the layer(s) of society in which the text was read and the ways in which it was presented by scribes and marked by its readers. Presentation and annotation are viewed as the best way of identifying the esteem and attention paid to the *Distichs* and thus of evaluating its cultural importance. These research goals are therefore achieved through examination of the *Distichs'* manuscript contexts.

The first chapter delineates the text's background as a translation of a late Classical Latin original, heavily used in primary education throughout Europe both for its practical advice and its suitability for teaching basic Latin grammar. The chapter discusses the authorship of the Latin *Disticha Catonis*, the translator of the Middle English version under investigation, and the medieval theories of translation and authorial 'authority' which impact on the nature of Burgh's translation efforts.

The second and third chapters focus on specific manuscripts, collating and discussing information on their contents, the circumstances of their production, and the likely audience for which they were produced. In chapter two, British Library MSS. Harley 7333 and Harley 2251 are examined in light of their relationship to the miscellanies of fifteenth-century secretarial clerk, John Shirley. Through examination of the likely audience of Shirley's manuscripts and the nature of other volumes copied from them, it is argued that manuscripts such as the two Harley volumes are likely to have been owned by members of the gentry and/or the literate 'middle class' of clerks and merchants.

Chapter three focusses on Glasgow, University Library MS. Hunter 259 and Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Eng. poet. e.15, both of which are in the hand of the Carthusian monk Stephen Dodesham. Dodesham was resident at the Charterhouse of Sheen, which had strong connections to neighbouring Bridgettine nunnery, Syon Abbey. This chapter considers the possibility that these manuscripts were made for Syon nuns but, through comparison with other comparable *Distichs* volumes, also suggests that their audience may have lain more in the network of pious lay patrons surrounding Sheen and Syon. The members of this patronage milieu were predominately from the gentry, and thus overlapped with the audience of the Harley volumes.

Chapter four considers patterns of presentation and use of the manuscripts across the group to support the gentry/middle-class audience established in chapters two and three, and to draw a general picture of the *Distichs'* reception by this audience. This includes establishing that both male and female readership was common, and that the dissemination of the text may have been aided by close association with the poetry of John Lydgate. Selection/excerption of stanzas for copying, annotation of particular stanzas, and evidence of wear on the manuscripts are presented as evidence that medieval readers did engage with the text, and continued to value it as previous centuries had valued the Latin source text.

A concluding chapter summarises the main points of the argument, and offers directions for future research.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

When scanning the syllabuses from all parts of the modern West that are reproduced in educational histories, one is struck by the way in which generations of schoolchildren everywhere have been set to labour over the same authors, the same works.

(Waquet 2001: 33)

As the beginning texts in both of the standard readers used throughout the later Middle Ages, the *Distichs of Cato* and the *Eclogue of Theodulus* gave the students the basic building blocks for composition exercises that probably accompanied the readings. Thus, they are the most important texts for understanding how medieval writers were taught to think of the composition process.

(Woods & Copeland 1999: 381)

Of all authors and works studied throughout history by generations of schoolchildren, one antique text recurs with startling regularity: the *Disticha Catonis*. This second- or third-century AD text was pervasive throughout medieval Europe, but has been largely overlooked due to a dismissal of the – according to modern tastes – bland, staid devotional or didactic literature which in reality provided the bestsellers of the fifteenth century. The *Disticha* has achieved an almost covert infiltration of all medieval thought and literature; camouflaged in its dull coat of moralisation it can sometimes be glimpsed in the works of more acknowledged literary greats, such as Chaucer:

‘Suffre thy wyves tonge, as Catoun bit;
She shal comande, and thou shalt suffren it,
And yet she wole obeye of curteisye.’

‘The Merchant’s Tale’, *Canterbury Tales* IV, 1377-1379¹

¹ Referring to distich III. 23

Or Langland:

'Ac catoun construiþ it [nay] & canonistris boþe:

Sompnia ne cures.'

*Piers Plowman, A-text, VIII, 134*²

The omnipresence of the *Disticha Catonis* throughout history is striking.³ Not only is it enormously influential in the Middle Ages, but for centuries afterwards as well, both in the Old World where it is quoted (or, more specifically, misquoted) in the prologue of *Don Quixote* (Cervantes 1998: 18), but also transmitted to America where an English translation was published by Benjamin Franklin in 1735 (*ESTC W3727*; see also Reinhold 1975: 33-35). It was a cornerstone of primary education, and reference to it a sign of the speaker's erudition. However, in the last two centuries, its 'unimpeachable but hackneyed morality of the copy-book headline', in the words of one editor (Duff & Duff 1934: 585), has driven it into obscurity. It does not compare favourably with more famous medieval literature such as (in English) the works of Chaucer, Gower, Langland and the romances such as *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*.

Despite its modern obscurity, the *Disticha* is an important part of the historical context from which these authors emerged, and the examples given above are chosen from many which might be furnished from Chaucer and Langland.⁴ Exposure to the text at a young age had left an indelible mark on the minds of those who would go on to become the greatest writers of their age.

Such high literary achievement may be the most visible mark of its influence, but the *Disticha* was also the impetus for the creation of many more didactic pieces which attempted to replicate its impact. For every manuscript

² Referring to distich II. 31

³ In discussing the influence of the *Disticha*, Richard Hazelton lists Peter Abelard, John of Salisbury, Peter Cantor, Peter Riga and Vincent of Beauvais amongst those who quote 'Cato', before stating that 'it would be pointless to cite the references to Cato that appear after the twelfth century; they are to be found literally everywhere' (1957: 159 n. 5; cf. also Chase's introduction to his translation of the *Disticha*, 1922: 1-11).

⁴ Chaucer's use of Cato is examined in depth by Hazelton 1960. Langland cites Cato nine times in the 'B' text of *Piers Plowman*: VI. 314-315, VII. 73, VII. 155-156, X. 194-196, X. 343, XI. 404, XII. 21-22, XVIII. 162, XIX. 296 (line numbering as in Robertson & Shepherd 2006).

containing the *Canterbury Tales*, there are hundreds which offer behavioural advice lightly gilded with morality. These are the kith and kin of the *Disticha*, inheriting its traits and taking the didactic tradition into new and sometimes very different forms, but inescapably linked to this ancient ancestor.

Considering this long-standing and far-reaching influence, the lack of attention which has been given to the *Disticha* is somewhat surprising. This thesis aims to go some small way towards rectifying the present situation by examining one important Middle English translation, and attempting to identify who its readers were, not only by name but also in terms of their socio-cultural contexts and connections, i.e. to identify their place in fifteenth-century society. That this version garnered a sizeable audience is evidenced by the thirty-five manuscripts which are currently known to contain part or all of the text. This is a substantial number, not far below the survival of manuscript versions of Gower's and Langland's vernacular poems. This translation was also amongst the first English texts to be printed in England by William Caxton. The rejection of Burgh's *Distichs* from the loose canon of medieval English literature which has emerged in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries may be valid on the basis of its – to modern tastes – simplistic style and outdated substance, but to ignore it as an influential cultural monument is difficult to defend.

The attempt made by this thesis to identify the audience (or audiences) who were reading the manuscript copies of the *Distichs* is aimed at locating the place of the text in the broader history of the book, and at placing it within networks of dissemination and use: to place it within what might be termed a 'cultural map'. Thirty-five manuscript copies can yield a vast amount of information, and so a balance needs to be struck between detail and an overall picture. As it is the importance of the text in manuscript culture as a whole that is particularly interesting, the latter path will, to a large extent, be followed, although not at the complete expense of the former.

1.1 Research Context – The *Disticha Catonis* and Burgh’s *Distichs of Cato*

Before moving to a detailed examination of the Middle English text, it is essential to place the *Disticha Catonis* in context as a text that was read, copied, disseminated and revered for well over a thousand years.⁵

This section presents information about the reasons for the popularity of the *Disticha Catonis*, primarily as a tool for the grammatical and moral education of the young. It discusses first the state of our knowledge of the origin of the Latin *Disticha*, and its importance (or lack of such) in the classical world, before passing on to the Middle Ages. This is a more fertile ground for investigation of the *Disticha*, which here becomes enormously important. This importance will be discussed, alongside its potential sources, such as the popularity of similar ‘improving’ literature with classical and medieval audiences and the perceived relationship of Cato to Biblical Wisdom writing. The effects of this popularity, particularly in medieval education, will be investigated, as well as the traces it had left in other works of medieval literature.

Following discussion of the *Disticha*, consideration will be given to Benedict Burgh and his translation. The life of Burgh is sparsely documented, but the clerk and secular priest comes into better focus through the work that he produced, and particularly his connection to the fifteenth century’s pre-eminent poet, John Lydgate. This overview of Burgh will be followed by an overview of the nature of his own *Distichs*, particularly the nature of his translation, which is distinctly different from previous vernacular versions of the Latin source text and thus may be taken to imply something of the poet’s intentions for its use that can then be measured against the reality of their reception as represented in the manuscripts under study.

⁵ On a terminological point, this thesis will use the term *Disticha Catonis* or *Disticha* to refer to the Latin work and/or its various vernacular translations; Benedict Burgh’s translation specifically is referred to as the *Distichs of Cato* or the *Distichs*; individual maxims in their two-line Latin form are referred to as distichs without initial capitalisation. Although *Disticha* and *Distichs* are both plural forms, they are taken as the title of a collection, and thus treated as singular. A ‘distich’ or a group of ‘distichs’ are treated as standard ‘count nouns’ so that singular and plural forms are given as appropriate.

1.2 The *Disticha Catonis*

In the Latin the *Disticha Catonis* are a collection of two-hexameter-line maxims – in general the first line containing a nugget of advice to be employed in life, with the second line offering a platitudinous justification for the point just made.⁶ The following section from the second of the four books is representative of the nature of the work:

**Linque metum leti; nam stultum est tempore in omni
Dum mortem metuas amittere gaudia vitae.**

[II. 3. Cease fearing death: 'tis folly day by day,
For fear of death, to cast life's joys away.]

**Iratus de re incerta contendere noli:
Impedit ira animum, ne possis cernere verum.**

[II. 4. Temper in fighting rival claims eschew:
Temper bars minds from seeing what is true.]

**Fac sumptum propere, cum res desiderat ipsa;
Dandum etenim est aliquid, dum tempus postulat aut res.**

[II. 5. Make haste to spend when so the case desires;
For something must be given, as need requires.]

**Quod nimium est fugito, parvo gaudere memento:
Tuta mage est puppis modico quae flumine fertur.**

[II. 6. Pleased with small store, take care to avoid the extreme:
Safer the craft that sails a moderate stream.]

(Latin and English taken from Duff & Duff 1934: 604-605)

Fundamentally, the *Disticha* is a rulebook of what might be termed 'practical ethics'. The brief nature of each 'rule', a lack of complicated language and the persistent didactic tone of the text indicate that it may have been perceived from its creation as an educational tool, particularly in 'a homely neutral kind of morality, which was doubtless framed for didactic purposes' (Schwabe 1892:

⁶ The standard edition of the Latin is presented in Boas 1952. The more practical Loeb edition is to be found in Duff & Duff 1934.

312). It was then used as such from as early as the late antique period (Marrou 1956: 270). A series of one-line commands (sometimes referred to as either 'monostichs' or *sententiae*) is followed by four books of two-line verse couplets as demonstrated by those above. The overall work has the feeling of a storehouse of wisdom on the best way to conduct life in order to become successful and influential. A child raised on the *Distichs* learns, amongst other things, not to bear grudges from past arguments (II. 15), not to spread gossip (I. 12), and not to trust a wife's poor opinion of a slave (I. 8). Although they have regularly been mistaken for the basis of a moral code, there is little morality evident in the *Distichs*. Self-interest is the key motivation for anyone reading the text, which frequently makes it clear that following its advice is intended to have beneficial effects for the reader, and makes no attempt to conceive a general idea of 'good' behaviour that is not based on the benefit to the practitioner rather than those surrounding them. In the words of Chase (1922: 11) 'what the author seeks most to inculcate is prudence, caution, self-possession, shrewd adaptation to circumstances, courage, moderation and self-control'.

The original Latin text is anonymous and defies accurate dating. Citation of distichs in Roman inscriptions suggest that it is likely to have been composed in the third century AD, and perhaps earlier (Duff & Duff, 1934: 585-6). The mystery of the text's origins is compounded by the inscriptional evidence, which may indicate that some of the maxims did not originate with 'Cato', but were adopted and adapted from folk proverbs and rhymes. It is therefore possible that they existed simply as a collection of sayings for some time before they were regularised to their two-line length. Such an origin has been proposed as the reason for the existence of the monostichs, which may consist in material which the author collected, chose not to work into distich form, but was reluctant to discard. Alternatively, the monostichs may be the remnants of another collection of wise advice, attached to the *Disticha Catonis* at some point in history due to their similar content and it has been suggested that their content reflects a later, more Christian, ethos (Schwabe 1892: 312). If the monostichs and the distichs were indeed originally separate works, this would accord neatly with the medieval tradition of treating them as such: the *Parvus Cato* and *Cato Major*, although regularly copied together, were considered separate sections of the

work. The model was regularly applied to other 'major' and 'minor' educational compositions, such as those of the grammarian Donatus (Orme 2006: 28).

The introduction to the Latin text in J. Duff and A. Duff's edition of the text sums up the confusion surrounding the monostichs:

About these opinion is sharply divided. It has been, on the one hand, argued that some of them may be the oldest part of the sayings, that some may even go back to Cato the Censor himself, and some at least were expanded later into *disticha*; on the other hand, it has been argued that these *breves sententiae* may have constituted a summary introduction based, as excerpts, upon a once much fuller collection of verse sayings.

(Duff & Duff, 1934: 587)

Many scenarios are therefore possible, and could lead to much debate with unfortunately sparse evidence on which a final judgement might be made.

Following the monostichs, the distichs proper are arranged into four books of uneven length. The variation in the length of each book (the books contain forty, thirty-one, twenty-four, and forty-nine distichs respectively) once again suggests that a process of rearrangement and potential loss has occurred between their composition and the earliest surviving manuscripts. The monostich *sententiae* are frequently considered to be part of the first book, and consist of a litany of to-the-point commands such as 'respect your elders' and 'don't gamble'. The monostichs and the second book are, additionally, accompanied by prefaces emphasising the importance of close attention to and careful study of the verse:

Cum animadverterem quam plurimos graviter in via morum errare, succurrendum opinioni eorum et consulendum famae existimavi, maxime ut gloriose viverent et honorem contingerent. nunc te, fili karissime, docebo quo pacto morem animi tui componas. igitur praecepta mea ita legito, ut intellegas. legere enim et non intellegere negligere est.

[As I noticed the very great number of those who go seriously astray in the path of conduct, I decided that I should come to the aid of their belief and take thought for their reputation, so that they might live with the utmost glory and attain honour. Now I will teach you, dearest son, how to fashion a system for your mind. Therefore, so read my precepts as to understand; for to read and not to understand is to give them the go-by.]
(Pseudo-Cato, Prologue (ed. and transl. by Duff & Duff, 1934: 592-3))

Scattered occasionally throughout the Latin are references to a child who is, supposedly, the addressee of the treatise. Although these references are likely to be a literary affectation adding to the teaching-manual style which the original author has adopted, it is entirely possible that the work was originally written by a father intending that it be an educational book for his son. The practice of dedicating didactic works to a child has been prevalent throughout literary history (Orme 1999: 225), evident in classical times in the work of authors such as Cicero (in, for example, his work *De officiis – On Duties*), and in the Middle Ages in works such as Chaucer's *Treatise on the Astrolabe*, which he addresses to 'Lyte Lowys my sone' (*Astrolabe*, prologue, in Benson, 1987: 662), and stands as his attempt to 'translate' a scientific treatise into a form that a young child should be able to read and understand. Whatever the reason for these invocations of an unidentified child in the *Disticha*, this feature of the text has been the source of the extended title sometimes given to the work: *Catonis Disticha de Moribus ad Filium* (*Cato's Distichs Concerning Customs, Addressed to his Son*).

This, however, is only one of many names which have been given to the *Disticha* in Latin and Middle English. Other titles under which the same (or, at least, largely similar) work can be found include: *Liber Catonis*; *Parvus Cato/Magnus Cato*; *The Cato Book*; and the *Dicts of Cato*. This fluidity of naming practice is an echo of the fluidity the text has always had. With no careful arrangement of the maxims or any real links between them, an editor is free to excise, re-order or re-word the lessons without leaving noticeable gaps, as there is no flow of an argument or logical development of ideas to disrupt. Indeed, it would be surprising if no such manipulation has occurred to alter the collection from its earliest incarnation to the almost-standard form which existed in the

Middle Ages, especially as the maxims were adopted by Christianity as an exercise book, partly for the practice of basic Latin grammar. The extensive use of the *Disticha* for such means apparently created a cultural respect for the collection which was eventually manifested in glosses such as those composed (or, perhaps more accurately, compiled) by Desiderius Erasmus in the early sixteenth century. These glosses have been examined by Richard Hazelton (1957) in the light of attempts by successive users and editors of the collection to 'Christianise' the work, allegorising its simplistic commands until they appear to be underpinned by an acceptable morality which can ultimately be related to Biblical passages.

This multi-functional nature, as life-lesson and grammar tutorial in one, is what allowed the *Disticha* to achieve an extensive impact in the Middle Ages. The terse expression of its lessons made unpacking and explication seem a natural activity, which inspired the work of the medieval glossators who took the opportunity to link the ancient injunctions more closely to Biblical instruction. It is probably thanks to such activity that the work did not lose its appeal along with other texts traditionally associated with the grammar schools, and which thus made it an appealing text to Benedict Burgh to translate in the mid-fifteenth century.

1.3 Authorship

Although it had been traditional for centuries to attribute the *Disticha* to the Roman statesman Cato the Elder, to do so is almost certainly erroneous. The text does appear to date to the classical period of Roman history, or at least the end of this period. Whether the name of Cato has been associated with the work for as long as it has existed, or is a later addition, is unknown, but it is attested in many of the earliest known manuscripts (Boas 1952: lxxv-lxxvii). The first definite use of the name in connection to the *Disticha* occurred in 375 AD (Chase 1922: 1). It is also impossible to rule out that the name Cato was attached to the work as a pseudonym by its real author, rather than being a later attempt to provide attribution for an otherwise anonymous work (Duff & Duff 1934: 586).

There are two well-known Catos in the history of Republican Rome. The *Disticha Catonis* was attributed to Cato the Elder, sometimes known as Cato the Censor, the great-grandfather of the younger Cato Uticensis. The Elder Cato was born in the third century BC, and lived until the middle of the second century, thus coinciding with a period of great change in Roman history. Previously insular, the Roman state's horizons were expanded by increasing contact with Greece and war with Carthage. As Rome's influence grew, its governing classes were simultaneously exposed to the pressures of maintaining order in sometimes distant lands, and an increasing familiarity with foreign cultures. Roman historians such as Sallust and Tacitus, viewed this oppressive workload and exposure to less ascetic cultures as providing temptations to the Roman aristocracy to slide into luxury; in this, the Greek way of life was thought by many to have had a particularly detrimental impact.

Cato the Elder appeared as an antidote to this perceived decline into luxury and indolence, and rose to power on the back of his strict old-fashioned values. Famously living an ascetic life and favouring the 'pure' rewards of hard work over the tainted glory of public popularity, he attracted a following from among those citizens who believed that Rome was losing its way. His style of speech in the law courts and the Senate was famous for being perfectly honed to carry its intended meaning precisely with a minimum of words. His style was praised by Cicero, who reports having had access to around one hundred and fifty of Cato's speeches in written form. Cicero's admiration for Cato led him to write a treatise (*De Senectute - On Old Age*) in which the latter was the main speaker. His acerbic wit and finely tuned sarcasm were, alongside his succinctness, his trademarks in speech. Livy, however, also praises him for his all-round ability:

There was such force of character and such a wealth of natural endowments in this man that it was evident that he would have made his own fortune, whatever the station in which he had been born. He possessed every skill for conducting either private or public business ... His versatile genius was so equally ready for anything that you would say

that whatever he was engaged on was the one thing for which he was born.

(Livy, 1976: 430)

In the position of censor in 184 BC Cato was famously strict, yet this severity was a point on which he had campaigned, and his competent yet harsh nature must have struck a chord with the Roman electorate. His position allowed him to expel members of the Senate, and take charge of the enforcement of land boundaries, and these were powers he duly used. Plutarch gives some indication of the reverence inspired by his rigorous rule when reproducing the inscription at the base of the statue of Cato which stood in the Temple of Health in Rome:

When the Roman constitution was in a state of collapse and decline he became censor and set it straight again by effective guidance, sound training, and sensible instruction.

(Plutarch, 1999: 26)

Very little of Cato's writing has survived to the present day. Of the speeches which Cicero mentions, only fragments are extant, and these are all from within other texts by writers who have quoted Catonian excerpts for purposes such as examining his style, or his use of interesting or archaic words. The only complete work by Cato to have survived to the present day is his work on farming, *De Agricultura*. The references to Catonian works in ancient texts can be confusing, and there has been much speculation about the body of work he produced. It has been suggested that the large-lettered historical text written for his son was only one part of a body of educational work covering other subjects such as medicine and oratory. If this were indeed the case, Cato would be able to lay claim not only to the title of first major Latin writer, but also the first to write an encyclopaedic work in Latin. Astin (1978: 183) suggests that:

The most likely interpretation of the evidence [for an educational encyclopaedia] is that Cato addressed to his son a collection, probably in

only one book, of precepts, exhortations and observations, many of them pithily expressed and with a marked influence on practical affairs.

If Cato the Elder did produce such a work, it is possible that this collection of precepts was the basis for the attachment of his name to the *Disticha*.

It is, perhaps, disappointing that the *Disticha* cannot be attributed to Cato. The *De Agricultura* is a work full of interesting details about the lives of contemporary farm owners, covering such disparate subjects as the best way to build a farmstead (Cato, 1934: 27-39) and suggested recipes for the produce obtained from such farming (Cato, 1934: 81-89). What the *De Agricultura* gives us little evidence of, however, is the intense adherence to asceticism and custom with which Cato is associated. The reader of the *Disticha* may construct the impression of a very strict author, devoted to living life by the rules he lays down. Without much ability to test the veracity of Cato's claim to authorship of the *Disticha*, it is not surprising that the attribution to the ancient statesman was sustained. Cato was, after all, famously moralistic, dedicated to setting a good example to others, and known to have written educational material for his son. To accept the *Disticha* as Catonian would not have required a great suspension of disbelief.

Unfortunately, it is unlikely that the *Disticha* is actually the work of anyone by the name of Cato. The descriptions of Cato the Elder's life and works by such writers as Cicero are likely to have been responsible for a later attempt to put a name to a famous and influential work. The sanctity of the *auctores* in later medieval society would then ensure that Cato's authorship was not seriously questioned for a long time (Cobban 1999: 150).

1.3.1 'Dionysius' Cato

However, the *Disticha*'s attribution to Cato the Elder was not entirely without challenge in the Middle Ages. John of Salisbury in his twelfth-century work, *Polycraticus*, openly attributed the wisdom of the *Disticha* to 'aut Cato aut alius (nam auctor incertus est)' – 'either Cato or another (for the authorship is

uncertain)' (*Polycraticus* VII.IX 655a; ed. Webb 1909: II, 125). In the fifteenth century, scholars attempting to clarify the situation seemingly complicated it instead. The *gens* name 'Dionysius' was attached to the *Disticha* author by Joseph Scaliger, although the renowned classical scholar failed to make clear where he had come across this information. Many editions of the *Disticha* from this point on, down to the nineteenth century, therefore name its author as Dionysius Cato. Nineteenth-century research, however, eventually established that Scaliger is likely to have misread a volume in which Priscian's translation of Dionysius' *Periegesis* was present alongside the Latin *Disticha*, causing him to conflate the separate names 'Dionysius' and 'Cato' (Schwabe 1892: 312). Despite this realisation, it has occasionally proved convenient for scholarship to continue to use the name 'Dionysius' to distinguish the pseudo-Cato of the *Disticha* from either of the Classical figures of the same name.

1.4 Use of the *Disticha* in the Middle Ages

The *Disticha Catonis* was read extensively throughout Europe, and as with any other piece in this position, it was translated on several occasions into the vernaculars of the countries in which it was used. These translations very often were provided as accompaniment to the Latin rather than in manuscripts separate from it. It seems evident that they were usually present to provide a 'crib' which would allow the children trying to learn Latin to compare their understanding of the Latin text with the version in their own tongue.

One text in particular demonstrates the crib-style use of vernacular translation, and indeed does so in two languages. The *Disticha* as it appears in Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Eng. misc. C. 291 presents each distich first in Latin, then in the Anglo-Norman that was still prestigious amongst the nobility, and finally in the English tongue spoken by the majority of the country's population (Horrall 1981). In each of the two translations, the vernacular rendition is roughly equal in length to the Latin source text, and the presentation in the manuscript lays out each in couplets so that the appearance of the translations parallels that of the original:

I.20 *Exiguum munus cum det tibi pauper amicus*
Accipito placide plene laudare memento

Quant vn petit doune / Tei est mis en baudon / De ton poure amie
Le resceiuez bonement / Auxi plenerement / Le loez ieo vous pri

If þi pore frende / Gif þe *with* loueli hend / A litel onys or tuys
Tak it also dere / *With* thank in al manere / Als it were more of pris

(MS. Bodl. Eng. misc. C. 291, fol. 3r; as edited by Horrall 1981: 30)

However, Horrall (1981: 26) notes that the Middle English version was not designed in couplets, but apparently in stanzas of six short lines (line breaks represented above by '/' marks). Despite this, the *mise en page* of the text clearly indicates the close parallelism that was desired when the manuscript was produced, which suggests that the commissioner wished the translations to act as support for the understanding of the Latin.

Another Anglo-Norman version of the text has been edited by Tony Hunt, and is similarly curt. Like the Middle English version edited by Horrall, it has been composed in six short lines which could, if desired, be rearranged into two long lines:

I.26 Ki ami se faint par dit,
Nun pas par quer parfit,
Ne est pas ami enters;
E tu le facez ensement,
Çoe est le art de enginement
Ke giler boul gilers.

(London, British Library MS. Harley 4657, fol. 90ra as edited by Hunt 1994: 19)

This parallelism between the Latin and the vernacular translations suggests that the intention of many of these translations was to stay close to the style and length of the original, something which would have been useful to a child using them as aids to the understanding of the Latin text, or even by adults whose memory of the language required some prompting.

Enumeration of the many translations would be a small project in its own right. Chase (1922: 10; based on Schwabe 1892: 312-313) identifies translations

of the text in the following 'dialects and vernaculars of feudal France, of Holland, the Engadine, Italy, Bohemia, Poland, Hungary, Roumania, Denmark, Sweden, Iceland, Ireland and Wales' along with Greek, Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman. This list almost certainly does not include every version of the *Disticha* to appear in the European vernaculars, but it does give some indication of just how widespread the practice of translating the text was.

1.4.1 Use of the *Disticha* in Education

The four main levels of school from the period of the Norman Conquest until the Reformation in the sixteenth century were the song school, the grammar school, the business school and the school of higher education, or university. The *Disticha Catonis* was of the most use to the elementary grammar course, in which it was often used as the first Latin reading text a student would encounter following their introduction to the core Christian prayers which would be contained in books known as 'primers'. To evaluate Burgh's text requires some understanding of the reception of the Latin *Disticha* in this context, and thus necessitates a brief overview of the grammar course in particular, mainly in the grammar schools of England, and the methods by which schoolmasters would have taught their subject, the texts they would have used, and the way in which the maxims of pseudo-Cato fitted into those courses.

1.4.1.1 Grammar schools.

Young children would not be immediately introduced to grammar, and texts such as the *Disticha* when they first attended school. 'Reading' was, instead, the first skill to be inculcated, in which children were taught to recognise and pronounce written language using the Psalter or Books of Hours. Reading taught only the ability to pronounce letters and syllables, with no intention that the children should comprehend what they were reading, as demonstrated in the *Prioress' Tale* of the *Canterbury Tales*, in which a child learns the *Alma redemptoris mater*

off by heart, but does not understand its meaning. A slightly older boy from whom he seeks help has only marginally more experience, and can only report what he has heard of the poem's subject, remarking that he doesn't know its meaning, as he has not yet learned grammar:

'I kan namoore expoude in this mateere.

I lerne song; I kan but smal grammeere.'

(*Prioress' Tale* VII 535-536; in Benson 1987: 210)

The ability of this child to sing in Latin suggests that he has also been educated in a 'song school', where the ability to pronounce Latin would be put to use in training boys for the church choir. As with reading 'schools' many song schools were held in church buildings, but some existed as specific institutions with dedicated buildings (Orme 2006: 63-64).

However, the creation of cathedral and church schools was motivated by the requirement of the Church to train priests who could do more than simply pronounce or sing Latin. These schools offered mostly primary grammar education; priests had to be linguistically trained so that they were able to read the Bible and important Christian writings, and the secular clergy needed to be able to compose their own sermons based on this reading. Grammar was the stage of education where students were truly made familiar with the Latin language, learning to understand its structure and use so that they were able to read, comprehend and write it themselves. The grammar schools provided perhaps the most important aspect of medieval education, Latin which was not only the language of religion, but also of administration and scholarship, and thus an ability to use the Latin language correctly was vitally important for anyone who wanted to gain a firm footing in any of these fields of life. All subsequent teaching was based on the foundation given in the grammar schools and the demand for grammar teaching went beyond the levels at which the Church would teach it solely for the purpose of maintaining their ranks of literate priests. A growing number of independent teachers could, therefore, support themselves either through employment within a large household,

endowed schools, or through the creation of their own secular schools supported by payment from the children for their lessons (Orme 2006: 165).

The teaching of grammar did not, however, become thoroughly detached from the Church and its buildings. Many of the important grammar schools were still held in Church property, such as those at the secular cathedrals, although from the twelfth century on many were open to the public, catering for those who wished to learn but did not necessarily intend to follow an ecclesiastical life. The teaching in these public schools could be provided by secular clergy, clerks, or other members of the laity who had sufficient education themselves to be able to perform the role of teacher. Grammar schools taught both the linguistic basis of the language and an appreciation of Latin literature. However, the exact texts that were used for teaching changed throughout the course of the Middle Ages.

1.4.1.2 Texts Employed in Grammar Teaching

In early medieval schools, the texts that were being used to teach grammatical information were works by famous grammarians which had been in existence for centuries. The two most important authors were Donatus and Priscian, each of whose works could be separated into a basic, elementary course in grammar, and a more advanced study of the language. Donatus' works were the *Ars Minor*, and the *Ars Major*, the latter also known as the *Ars Grammatica*. Another text by Donatus, laying out mistakes of form to be avoided when composing in the language, was known as the *Barbarism*, and together the works ensured their author his place as the authority on grammar in the English school and university courses until the fourteenth century. His name, often in the form *Donet*, was regularly used as a byword for such basic Latin courses. Priscian was also well respected as a grammarian, his eighteen-book work split into two, with the first sixteen books taught as *Priscian Minor* and the last two, containing more advanced material, as *Priscian Major*. The works of both Priscian and Donatus were themselves written in Latin, and competition from vernacular grammars was almost non-existent until the fourteenth century. A treatise on grammar written in English by Ælfric of Eynsham survived from the pre-Conquest era, and

continued to be used in some schools alongside Priscian and Donatus, but could not equal their authoritative status.

The grammar course in early medieval England aimed not only to teach the language itself, but to provide children with an insight into some of the literature that had been written in Latin since classical times, and expose them to some of the wisdom that was thought to reside therein. Once children had learned basic reading, one of the first texts they would have come into contact with would have been the *Disticha Catonis*. The *Disticha* was often to be found as part of a compilation known as the *Sex Auctores* – six Latin works grouped together in a fairly standard order as a school book for the grammar schools (Orme 2006: 98-100). The *Disticha Catonis* was, traditionally, the first text in this grouping which immediately demonstrates its prestigious place amongst these works. Thanks to its structure and relative simplicity, the *Disticha* was excellently suited to this type of teaching. Flexibility was one of its most important properties; in this respect it had some benefits over a full, continuous text. Teachers could have picked and chosen from among the brief sentences – which are most often two words, and no longer than five words – and the couplets, setting them as exercises for copying, translation, or even grammatical commentary. Thanks to the discrete units of meaning enclosed in each distich, a teacher could tailor their exercises to the differing levels of competence of their pupils, whilst still presenting them with a chunk of text which was perceived to contain a worthwhile sentiment in its own right.

The other texts to be found in the *Sex Auctores* were also classical works, with the exception of the *Eclogues* of Theodulus, which was a tenth-century composition. Nothing is known about the writer of the *Eclogues* and the name, as with 'Cato', is almost certainly apochryphal. The *Eclogues* is a distinctly Christian work relating a friendly debate between a Greek shepherd named Pseustis (or 'Falsehood') and a maiden of the line of David named Alithea (or 'Truth'). Pseustis and Alithea proceed to take turns relating examples of religious fable.⁷ Pseustis, however, draws his examples from pagan mythology whilst Alithea counters his stories with parallel Biblical tales – Pseustis' tale of Hercules'

⁷ A translation of the *Eclogues* can be found in Pepin (1999: 28-40)

destruction through the machinations of Deianira, for example, is matched with Samson's comparable loss of strength at the hands of Delilah. Pseustis eventually concedes that Alithea has won the contest, as the invalidation of paganism by Christianity is played out in microcosm. Alongside the *Distichs* and the *Eclogues*, there were to be found works by Avianus, Maximian, Claudian and Statius, none of which was to survive for long on the grammar curriculum.

There is strong evidence for the widespread use of these texts in the medieval grammar schools. Monastic library catalogues often contain volumes which combine the *Disticha* with these works, or comparable material. They, and commentaries on them, are also prevalent in the lists of books which schoolteachers either owned or provided as recommended reading for their pupils (e.g. Lapidge 2006: 54; 1985: 51-52). The rise of humanism at the end of the thirteenth/beginning of the fourteenth century led to a re-evaluation of many of the texts included in these primary readers (which were often known as 'Cato books'), and in continental Europe the shift from these *Sex Auctores* to a new compilation of *Auctores Octo* was particularly evident. However, the *Disticha* survived, retained its prestige, and even expanded its cultural reach through translation into the various European vernaculars. Its strong continued presence, often separate from the other books in the *Sex Auctores* and *Auctores Octo*, is evidenced by its frequent appearance in grammar school books (Bonaventure 1961: 7-8). Burgh's own choice of the *Disticha* as the text he would translate may well have been influenced by this tremendous popularity amongst teachers in medieval Europe.

1.4.1.3 Use of the *Disticha* as 'Sententiae'

The usefulness of the *Disticha* at this level of education has already been indicated; however some explication is perhaps worthwhile. Its usefulness was a function both of the simplicity of their grammatical structure and, paradoxically, the fact that the Latin can be compact, obscure and difficult to comprehend fully. Because of these properties, the Latin could be set as simple copying and translation exercises; the restricted, two-line format of the distichs made them perfect for such copy-book practice. Once students had translated these

sentences as accurately as they could, it would be possible to unpack and explore the meaning of a distich, providing further tutoring not only in Latin semantics, but in matters of 'proper' behaviour in everyday life.

That the distichs were used as chunks for copying and translating (known as *sententiae* in the terminology of medieval pedagogy) is evident from their appearance in school exercise books (e.g. Orme 2006: 151, citing BL MS. Harley 1587). There is, unfortunately, no direct evidence of their explication in schools. Although the *Disticha* had accumulated glosses by Erasmus of Rotterdam and, later, Remigius of Auxerre, there seem to be no extant exercise books with commentary on the material. It would be unlikely, however, that there was no analysis performed in a school-room setting; the *Distichs* would not have remained such essential reading for its structure alone. The core of utility provided by this practical advice ensured the continued success of this text.

1.4.2 'Auctores' and their Place in Education.

In the medieval educational system, Cato's *Disticha* held a degree of *auctoritas*, or authority, the vital component of a writer's fame that was based on their widely-accepted expert status. Each academic discipline had its hallowed *auctor* or *auctores*.

The translation of the *auctores* was important in a society that relied so heavily on the naming of one or two main sources for the knowledge of an individual subject. The concept of an *auctor* in the Middle Ages carried much more weight than the modern term 'author'. An *auctor* was a writer who possessed *auctoritas*, a kind of authority that was unquestionable to the medieval reader, sanctioned by the age and perceived wisdom of their works. Bearing full responsibility for what he had written, he is to be believed, can be trusted to tell the truth, and is worthy of being imitated. The *auctor* must have intrinsic worth and authenticity, and such qualities were often recognised in work that bore a relation to Christian doctrine. The sacred pages of the Bible themselves provided the supreme example of *auctoritas*, but they occupied the highest level on a scale of authority (Smalley 1952: xi; Minnis 1984: 115-117).

It was virtually inconceivable that new theories or new works could be composed about subject matter which had been sufficiently explored by the ancients centuries ago. These *auctores* had written treatises which contained all the knowledge that was necessary on each of their subjects – for example, Aristotle had written about logic and political philosophy (amongst other topics), Macer had written about the uses of plants in treating illness, and, likewise, a respected *auctor* existed for all the important subjects of medieval knowledge. Cato sat in these ranks as the *auctor* providing an essential grounding in matters of good behaviour and sensible living. In the words of A.J. Minnis (1984: 14) ‘no matter what the subject, the scholar did not compete (he did not even pretend to do so) either with his *auctores* or with the great works which they had left’. The greatest *auctores* below the Scriptural *auctores* were the Patristic writers who based their wisdom on the *auctoritas* of the Bible, and much effort was invested in the interpretation of their writings. Medieval education was engaged almost wholly in the expounding of these ancient texts, exploring them in the greatest depth possible so that students would have a complete understanding of the subjects on which an *auctor* had written.

1.4.2.1 Hierarchy of ‘Auctoritas’

The medieval fascination with order and hierarchies predictably found an expression in the ranking of *auctores* and the *auctoritas* (authority) their works were considered to possess. The highest rank of *auctor*, with equally highly respected *auctoritas*, was the Scriptural or Patristic writer. These *auctores* had been divinely inspired in the production of their writings, and could be regarded as supremely trustworthy. The second rank of *auctores* included the Old Testament writers, who were to be respected, but could not be considered to have quite the same level of divine inspiration as those coming after the time of Christ. Below these, in turn, were the ancient writers, such as Aristotle, who were very wise in non-spiritual matters, but must be regarded as having derived all that they had written from their own intellect, rather than through any form of divine inspiration or revelation. As A.J. Minnis writes (1984: 115), ‘pagan and Old Testament *auctores* were similar in the extent of their limitations.’ Old

Testament *auctores* differed, however, in that they may have received genuine flashes of divine inspiration which the pagan writers did not. If the *Disticha* had been realised for what it most probably was – a pagan work written after the time of Christ – it is highly unlikely it would have been so well regarded. An author such as Cato writing before the birth of Christ could, to an extent, be forgiven for his polytheistic views; he had not actively rejected the redemption offered by the coming of Jesus, and so could be ranked alongside other pre-Christian authors.

Cato's *auctoritas* was further strengthened by an affinity with Biblical Wisdom literature, particularly the book of Proverbs (Hazelton 1957: 163-164), and he was compared to Solomon by writers such as Walter Map (*De Nugis Curialium* 1924: 287).

Some doubts had been raised regarding the authorship of the Wisdom Books, and medieval scholars and theologians were prepared to accept that they may not have been the work of Solomon. This doubt did not, however, lead to the revocation of their *auctoritas*, although it did diminish slightly the level of that *auctoritas*. Their author could still be considered to possess the higher levels of human understanding which were attributed to Aristotle and others. Whether the Wisdom Books were the work of Solomon or not, they still demanded respect as an expression of human philosophy. The state of the hierarchy in these instances is laid out succinctly by Minnis (1984: 115), using Aristotle as a figure for comparison beside Solomon, though the same could equally be said of Cato:

When the *auctoritas* of Solomon consisted in inspirations, Aristotle had to defer to him. But when Solomon's *auctoritas* consisted in human reasonings, he was supposed to be operating on the same wavelength as Aristotle, whose *auctoritas* consisted solely in rationalisation.

The tradition of providing commentary and glosses on Biblical texts and other important writings helped to equalise the authority of Solomon and Cato to some degree. During the Middle Ages it became more acceptable to gloss Biblical works with references to non-Scriptural, non-Patristic sources. When annotating the Wisdom Books, it became common for the glossators to make reference to

other works such as the *Disticha Catonis* when they could be used to reinforce the ideas of the Biblical text. Beryl Smalley (1951: 103) has commented that ‘the masters who lectured on Proverbs and Ecclesiastes [in the first three quarters of the thirteenth century] ... showed an increasing interest in natural science, philosophy and politics.’ This trend increased as time went on – later in the same century Nicholas Gorran was to use pagan writers such as Avicenna, Aristotle, and some pseudo-Aristotelian works in his Biblical commentaries; then, in the fourteenth century, Robert Holcot would similarly make reference to Aristotle and discuss political questions in his famous work on the Wisdom Books (Smalley, 1951: 114-120). This use of non-Christian writers for supporting material was all the more acceptable given the precarious situation held by the Sapiential works in their attribution to Solomon. As a result of this use of the *Disticha* as a source from which to draw comparable material, the work of ‘Cato’ increased its hold on the level of *auctoritas* that was associated with these books.

The process of equalisation between Cato and Solomon was also aided by the acceptance that the latter may not in fact have been the author of all of the Wisdom books. This had the effect of lowering slightly the status of Solomon’s *auctoritas*, bringing it to a level at which it was comparable with Cato, thus strengthening the link between the two.

Conversely, lowering Solomon’s status in this way could have pulled up the *auctoritas* of the *Disticha*, leaving the two texts to meet in an unprecedented position somewhere between the conventional (if never explicitly formalised) levels of the hierarchy. The result was that both these authors had slightly more *auctoritas* than a pagan work, but slightly less than those of the more reliable Old Testament *auctores*. If a reason is sought for Benedict Burgh’s selection of the *Disticha Catonis* as a translation project, there can be few better than the level of respect and reverence the text engendered.

1.5 Other Books of Courtesy and Wisdom

The genre of ‘didactic’ literature was a vast one in medieval literature. It consisted of a spectrum of material both factual and allegorical, ranging from manuals of social instruction to religious and secular morality fables. The sub-

division of this genre can be deeply problematic, as so many of the texts which it contains sprawl across any neat boundary lines which might be instituted. Within this loose 'didactic literature' genre there is, however, a recognisable sub-genre of 'behavioural' literature. This behavioural sub-genre advises on how readers should act either in their general life, or in particular circumstances, such as in specific social contexts. Those of general application could be considered 'wisdom' texts, whilst those concerned with specific circumstances are perhaps better labelled as 'conduct' literature. Recognition of wisdom and conduct categories allows some useful analysis, although it is always to be borne in mind that boundary lines can be indistinct, and thus such classifications are, at best, provisional. The difference between 'wisdom' and 'conduct' is one of location, in that a conduct book will generally delimit a social situation or set of circumstances in which the recommended behaviour applies, whereas a wisdom book provides philosophical and/or moral advice valuable in a variety of circumstances throughout readers' lifetimes.

The *Disticha Catonis* in its varying forms is almost the core text of the behavioural genre. The assignment of the *Disticha* into either the wisdom or conduct sub-genres is particularly difficult; in form it is fairly distinctively the former, offering advice on a wide variety of situations which are not restricted to a particular setting, but in medieval manuscript culture, it appears to have become very much associated with conduct literature (Nicholls 1985: 65). It has certainly been a model text for subsequent work in both sub-genres. The impact of the Biblical Wisdom books on such texts should also not be overlooked, but is also perhaps liable to be given too much weight by previous scholarship; the influence of the Catonian collection may well have been greater on medieval (especially Latin) proverbs than that of Solomon (Taylor 1992: 25).

Chaucer's 'Tale of Melibee' in the *Canterbury Tales* can also be seen as being in the Wisdom literature mould, although its collection of maxims and quotations is rather more focussed on addressing a particular context. Proverbial wisdom from a variety of ancient and reputable sources is applied to a narrative situation, as Melibee balances the pros and cons of retaliation against those who have brutally attacked his daughter. Much of the material is delivered by Melibee himself as well as his wife, who counsels temperance in line with the virtue,

Prudence, which is her namesake. These arguments are later supplemented by a host of characters who weigh in on the deliberations, providing the mouthpieces for other philosophers and moral gurus of bygone ages. The work as a whole resembles the rhetorical practices of the schools, which encouraged pupils to engage in dialectic supported by authoritative quotation (Orme 2006: 149). Appropriately, this style of marshalling oratorical points and organising them into fluent arguments is a technique which dates to the classical era in which many of the cited authorities were active and applying themselves to similar exercises.

More directly conduct-related texts can be found in poems such as Bishop Robert Grosseteste's *Stans Puer ad Mensam*, a Middle English translation of which was made by Lydgate, and appears frequently alongside Burgh's *Distichs* in the manuscripts. The 'Stans Puer...' is almost prototypical of the conduct text; it locates its advice in a specific setting, that of the aristocratic dinner table, at which a young boy is expected to serve his master. It expounds rules of behaviour to be applied generally when attending one's 'betters', during the serving of the food and drink, and tells the boy how to eat politely himself.

The setting for these imagined scenes is that of the young boy apprenticed to a nobleman. The boy himself would be from a prosperous background, and would have been found his servant position through his parents' network of social and business connections. In return for his labour, the boy could expect to receive support from his patron in establishing his own contacts in future, and more extensive apprenticeships in trade or court life. From the parents' point of view, this was an excellent way of inuring the child to the customs and social practices to which he would have to adhere throughout life. At the same time, there remained an onus on the patron to provide some education for the child (who would typically begin to receive the patron's support between the ages of seven and ten years old); manuscripts containing such material as the *Stans Puer...* could provide suitable reading for this purpose, imparting to the child the double utility of literacy and instruction on his duties.

It is an interesting facet of the *Disticha's* history that its mercenary and self-seeking approach to behaviour was eroded by the glossing tradition which accompanied it, and was thus overlooked by many medieval readers. The

elaboration of the advice, and the attempt to classify individual distichs according to Christian virtues was common (Hazelton 1957: 165). This led to a concomitant belief that the text was primarily concerned with morality, and did not offer the practical guide to everyday life that it had once done. In turn, this appears to have encouraged the inclusion of other material alongside it which did fill this gap (Nicholls 1985: 65). These were such works as the *Facetus: cum nihil utilius*, or the *Stans Puer ad Mensam* already discussed. Many of these texts, however, remained in Latin rather than accompanying the *Disticha* in its leap to the vernacular languages.

One text, apparently composed in English rather than translated, which attempts to bridge the gap between wisdom and conduct is Lydgate's 'Dietary', although it bears a much greater affinity with the latter. Its purpose is again to impart knowledge on a specific subject, nominally the health of the body. It also touches, however, on the well-being of the soul, with occasional interest in morality. These topics are far from thoroughly covered, and the main concern is with wholesome food and drink, as well as the habits which are conducive to good health. The tradition of 'regiments' or 'mirrors' for nobility can also be seen as a part of this category. These proliferated in the later medieval period, and usually combined practical and ethical advice. Their ostensive intention was to provide members of the nobility with a rounded view of the ways of life and thought that their position entailed. This included behavioural codes of conduct to be employed in the presence of other nobles, but also frequently more genuinely ethical material than any that is contained in the *Disticha*, encouraging those in power to think of the needs of their dependents, and to act with compassion for the benefit of the latter rather than purely as a means to retaining their own position.

The 'behavioural' genre was, therefore, a flourishing and varied one. The *Disticha*, along with the Sapiential Books of the Bible, was the oldest and most highly respected text to tackle such topics and provide this type of guidance to its readers. It is accompanied, however, by a variety of similar texts throughout its history, although these tend to be more ephemeral. The centrality of the text to its genre cannot be overstated, and its continued use whilst other similar works

rose and fell around it helps to justify giving it more attention, and to understand the reasons that Burgh chose it and found such a large audience for it.

1.6 Benedict Burgh

Knowledge of the life of Benedict Burgh is largely limited to records of the ecclesiastical offices he held. These 'suggest a modest rise through the church hierarchy' (Gray 2004), beginning in 1434 as the rector of Rendcomb in Gloucestershire, and culminating in his appointment as chaplain to the king in 1470. Throughout his life he stood as chaplain or prebendary of various churches, mostly in Essex and East Anglia.

If William Caxton's prefatory note to his own translation of the *Disticha* can be trusted, in addition to these offices, Burgh was also involved in the education of Henry, Lord Bourchier's son. Bourchier, in his position of first Earl of Essex, appears to have commissioned the *Distichs of Cato* from Burgh as part of these tutoring duties (Caxton 1483: fol. 3r). Unfortunately it is unclear whether Burgh actually had any further influence on the education of the young Lord Bourchier beyond the composition of the *Distichs*. He was, however, financially supported as rector of Hedingham-Sible in Essex by Bourchier from 1450 onwards (Newcourt 1708-10: 323), which may have been for his service in educating his son, although this may be the form Bourchier's patronage took following Burgh's composition of the *Distichs* for him.

Although it might be unsatisfying as evidence for Burgh's employment, his involvement with Bourchier does provide a timeframe for his production of the *Distichs*. It is not known when Bourchier's son was born, but his marriage in 1467 is recorded (Cokayne *et al.* 1926: 137-138; traced by Doyle 1997: 104). The age of the young Bourchier at this point is still unknown, as is the age he is likely to have been when his father commissioned the translation, which could have been at any stage of the boy's youth; Henry could have commissioned it very early in his son's life either if he expected the process to be a lengthy one, or if he was really more keen to acquire the prestige of being a literary patron than he was interested in the educational value of the work. Alternatively, he may have specified a more mature tone for the work if he intended it to be a gift to the boy

in his adolescence. However, a translation of the *Disticha* would probably have seemed more and more inappropriate the closer the young Bouchier got to marriageable age – which would probably be his late teens or early twenties. A *terminus ante quem* can therefore be placed roughly around 1460, and it is most likely that the work was composed in the decade prior to this. This dating coincides neatly with the bestowal of Bouchier's gift on Burgh from 1450, which might suggest that this is the year in which the translation effort began.

An intriguing extra facet to Burgh's life is his involvement with the pre-eminent poet of his day, John Lydgate. No documentary record of their friendship exists, but two pieces of verse appear to tie them together. The first is a poetic letter of introduction attributed to Burgh in which he seeks to introduce himself to the older monk (Steele 1894: xxxi-xxxii). Its praise of the Monk of Bury and his learning may be viewed as reaching sycophantic excess, but the feeling may be genuine, given that Burgh's other works appear so closely modelled on Lydgate's style; the *Distichs* adopts both the rhyme royal stanza which the latter used with such frequency, as well as the type of moralistic and didactic subject matter to which he was so regularly drawn.

In this 'Praise of Lydgate' poem, Burgh gives the location of its composition as 'th'abbey of Bylegh' which is now Beeleigh in Essex. The monastery belonged to the Premonstratensians. None of Burgh's posts appear to connect him to this order, which would suggest that he was a visitor there at the time. He was, however, the vicar of the nearby All Saints' in Maldon,⁸ and so it may be assumed that this piece was written during or around the period of this appointment in 1440. If this were the first time Burgh made contact with Lydgate, it would have been roughly a decade before the former began his composition of the *Distichs*. It may, then, be suggested that Lydgate would have had some influence over Burgh's development as a poet in the period immediately before he set to work on this translation.

⁸ It is interesting, although not particularly instructive, to note that the Wikipedia article on Beeleigh recounts a thoroughly dubious legend about an underground passage which is said to link the latter to All Saints' Church. I have found no academic source which might support this, and especially nothing to suggest that the intrepid if incurious archaeologists (and their rather more adventurous dog) mentioned in the article actually did locate such a passage. If nothing else, the apparent folk myth may be an indication that the two places were linked in the popular imagination (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beeleigh_Abbey Last accessed: 22/4/12).

This decade was, however, also the final decade of Lydgate's life. The poet's death in 1449 or 1450 probably indicates that he was not directly involved in looking over the *Distichs* and giving Burgh advice on them. There is rather more evidence that Burgh was involved with Lydgate's final work, a translation of the *Secreta Secretorum* which has been edited under the title *Secrees of old Philisoffres* (Steele 1894). Lydgate appears to have completed roughly half of the work. At line 1492, Burgh continues the translation, beginning with a few stanzas in praise of his mentor which effectively build a eulogy into the already lengthy piece. Exactly how much of the composition is by Burgh rather than re-worked from Lydgate's drafts or notes is difficult to judge, especially as some sections of the manuscript which Steele edited appear to be lifted from Lydgate's 'Doctrine for Pestilence' and 'Dietary' (cf. lines 1268-1274 and 1275-1295 respectively). The inclusion of these sections from earlier poems may be the work of a later scribe, but they may equally be an indication that Burgh edited the whole poem and liked the stanzas enough to consider them worth re-using.

Whatever the extent of Burgh's involvement in the completion of the *Secrees*, there is no particular reason to doubt the manuscript rubric which names him in this role. Burgh's poetic letter only survives in BL Harley 2251, which suggests it was not widely disseminated, and even this copy is only ascribed to 'Maister Benet', which means its ascription to Burgh is not entirely beyond doubt. It is therefore unlikely that the rubric in the *Secrees* was based on knowledge of this obscure poem, and so the scribe who originally inserted Burgh's name in the *Secrees* would have little reason to fabricate the information. That Benedict Burgh was in a position to complete the poem is good evidence that his introductory 'letter' was successful, and that he did become acquainted with Lydgate. That Bouchier's patronage coincides almost exactly with Lydgate's passing may also mean that this funding was initially recompense for Burgh finishing the *Secrees*, and that it was only after the completion of the latter that the *Distichs* was composed. This possibility is strengthened by the fact that the Bouchier family had also extended patronage to Lydgate (Schirmer 1961: 155). Bouchier's son is likely to have been too young in 1450 for the *Distichs* to have been of much use to him, and so an initial commission to complete the

Secrees would seem reasonable. However, there is currently no known evidence that would substantiate this hypothesis.

What seems clear is that Burgh was, like Lydgate, on an ecclesiastical path, although whilst the latter remained largely within the confines of the Benedictine order, Burgh occupied a variety of secular clerical roles which would have afforded him less time for poetic composition. Nonetheless, he appears to have made contact with the elder monk, and the two perhaps discussed poetic endeavours. The result was the composition by Burgh of a poem and a half in close imitation of Lydgate's verbose and moralistic verse. In imitating this style, Burgh presumably hoped that his works would be viewed as on a par with his mentor.

1.6.1 The Nature of Burgh's *Distichs* Translation

Burgh's translation of the *Disticha* fits well into the over-arching patterns of translation as it was practised in the Middle Ages. The re-working of older texts was a standard practice, partly attributable to the veneration for older, established work (as manifested in the belief in *auctoritas*), and partly an aversion to the composition of entirely new material. The latter trend cannot be definitively stated as the result of any particular factors, but was almost certainly influenced in large part by the Church's attempts to resist the tide of reformation which was most clearly represented in England by the Wycliffite 'Lollard' movement (Watson 1995: 832-834).

Wyclif's famous efforts to translate the Bible into English became symbolic of the movement, and as a result attempts to compose religious material in the vernacular were viewed with suspicion. Many authors avoided charges of heresy by engaging in translation of well-established material and some, like Nicholas Love, even submitted their work to the ecclesiastical authorities to ensure their acceptability.

The paranoia surrounding Lollardy could not completely impede the creation of English texts because the market for such reading matter was rapidly expanding. Knowledge of French had been in sharp decline since the Hundred Years' War had put such an insurmountable political divide between England

and France, and Latin was increasingly the preserve of the Church as government adopted English for many of its functions. Additionally, merchants were accruing more wealth than they had done previously, some of which they spent on books. Not having the necessary education in Latin and French, however, to read these languages, new audiences sought vernacular texts and the supply of these texts by authors and translators rose to meet that demand.

Medieval translation practices were predicated on a different understanding of the term than is generally accepted in the present day. The process often involved comparison of different texts and sources to allow the creation of a text that was more a compound of these originals than a close rendering of any single one. The term 'compiler' was sometimes employed for a practitioner of this activity, and is perhaps more accurate for the majority of such writers.

Benedict Burgh, however, does not appear to have been involved in such compilation and instead chose to adhere closely to the content and meaning of his Latin source. If nothing else, the limited space available in each stanza would not afford Burgh much chance to introduce such extra material. However, a comparison of his *Distichs* with other versions of the *Disticha* as well as the glosses on the text would be fascinating for the potential that it might reveal other material to which the poet did refer in his work.

The absence of material assimilated from other sources does not, however, result in a translation that is especially recognisable as a rendering of the Latin source. This has been demonstrated above (section 1.4) in the consideration of different Middle English and French translations of the *Disticha*. Burgh's version is considerably more expansive than either of these and, for the stanza considered below, takes sixty words to express what the more succinct Middle English version accomplishes in twenty-eight (although even this is double the word count of the Latin – something which would be difficult to avoid in the transition from a highly inflected language to one which is generally more prolix).

**Qui simulat verbis . nec corde est fidus amicus
Tu quoque fac simile . sic ars deluditur arte**

And yf thou fynde thy sone of doubilnesse
 The false dissimulour . yf thow aspye
 With peynted worde . and herte ful of falsenesse
 Thou maist no better . blere his eye
 Than to serue him . with his ovne trecherye
 For wordes faire . and frendlynes no parte
 Yeue thou the same . and ars begiled is wiþ arte

GUL MS Hunter 259, fol. 5v

If ony in spekyng
 And with hert nothyng
 Feyngnez him thi frende to be
 Treget him ageyn
 De same wordes in veyn
 Als he hase don to þe
Bodl. MS. Eng. misc. C. 291, fol. 3r
(ed. Horrall 1981)

Ki ami se faint par dit,
 Nun pas par quer parfit,
 Ne est pas ami enters;
 E tu le facez ensement,
 Çoe est le art de enginement
 Ke giler boul gilers.
BL MS. Harley 4657, fol. 90ra
(ed. Hunt 1994)

Burgh's intentions for his poetry can perhaps be vicariously glimpsed through his apparent veneration of John Lydgate, already discussed above (section 1.6). Lydgate's poetry circulated around the court, as is indicated by his patronage by important Lancastrian magnates such as Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick. The literature of the fifteenth century is notoriously bland and moralistic when compared to that of the previous century. However, Lydgate, as the 'most important figure in the literary landscape of England during the first half of the fifteenth century' (Pearsall 1997: 9), was the closest his age had to another Chaucer. It could, therefore, be considered that Burgh's sights were set quite high in attempting to imitate the Monk of Bury. Assuming that this was indeed his intention, his effort in the *Distichs* might be expected to aim higher than the production of a utilitarian school text; instead he would have wanted it to be read by the same serious-minded men and women of the nobility who were commissioning and presumably reading Lydgate's works.

The style of the *Distichs* does indeed appear to bear out this hypothesis. The rhyme royal format of verse, loosely associated with the court and respected since its use by Chaucer in the preceding century, is in itself a sign that the poet wishes to reach a higher register. Although much of the text is simplistic in style, there is no obvious attempt to remain accessible to children. Polysyllabic words

of French and Latin origin are scattered throughout the text, and subtle Biblical allusion is employed to support, tacitly, the validity of the advice. The latter is notable for its unobtrusive nature.

Passages such as the translation of distich II.1 are representative of a tendency to amplify the points at which the *Distichs* echoes Biblical teaching, but without specific reference to scripture. In this case, the *Disticha's* encouragement to treat others well, 'ignotis eciam' (*even strangers*), is skewed towards the famous 'Good Samaritan' parable (St. Luke 10:25-37) by a greater focus on the stranger:

There is no wight þat ferther may reporte
Of thy gode dedes than the straunger may
Make him gode chere and shewe him thy disporte

Although this is roughly aligned with the sentiment of the Latin, the prominence of 'the stranger' is unwarranted by the original, which appears to have in mind all the persons of the reader's acquaintance, rather than specifically those with whom he or she is not particularly familiar. On only one occasion does Burgh make direct reference to the Testaments, either New or Old, and that is in the reference to Deuteronomy in his translation of distich II.31. It is possible that Burgh deliberately wished to 'Christianise' his text but without anachronistic reference to books which would not have been in existence when pseudo-Cato was imagined to have written his work.

Therefore, even if he were not a particularly proficient poet, Burgh appears to have been exerting some effort and consideration to produce a work that would have a wider appeal than the schoolroom. It will be argued in later chapters of this thesis that he was indeed successful in achieving this goal.

1.7 Terminology – Miscellanies, Anthologies, and Commonplace Books

Before embarking on discussion of the manuscript contexts of the *Distichs*, it is important briefly to discuss the terminology that is frequently used for these collections of material. The majority of the manuscripts in which the *Distichs* is to

be found contain multiple texts. The grouping of such materials within a single volume may be the outcome of a variety of scenarios – as a result of the plan of a commissioner or scribe, through the agency of a later owner who has altered the composition of their books, or through largely unplanned and extemporaneous addition of texts.

The terms ‘miscellany’, ‘anthology’, and ‘commonplace book’ have been frequently applied to these volumes by medieval codicologists, but with varying degrees of specificity. It is often the case that some kind of distinction is drawn between the anthology and the miscellany, the former applied when the volume appears to have been compiled with a particular organising principle in mind, the latter reserved for what appear to be more arbitrary collections of texts. However, it is not unusual for ‘miscellany’ to be used as a catch-all term for any manuscript compounded of different texts, whether at random or not. A ‘commonplace book’ provides greater difficulties for the fact that it is a term most appear to believe well-defined, whilst the actual definitions are vaguely expressed and often idiosyncratic.

This thesis will not attempt to present another layer of discussion and interpretation on this matter, but will instead adhere to the classificatory system introduced by Pearsall (2005), which offers relatively clear-cut and easily identifiable ‘types’ for these manuscripts. Pearsall considers all of these volumes to be ‘miscellanies’, and occasionally employs other terms for more specific divisions:

- ‘Type 1’: the ‘anthology’, a manuscript which has a distinct unifying theme or organisational principle. This should not be obscure or discernible only through highly subjective reasoning.
- ‘Type 2’: a miscellany in which sections or groupings of texts have such a theme, but this does not extend to the entire volume. It is possible for different sections within the same miscellany to include different themes.
- ‘Type 3’: a miscellany which does not contain any distinct theme – instead texts have been included because they have appealed to a particular compiler, whether that be a commissioner, scribe, or

later owner. These manuscripts may have been composed through combination of other volumes or parts of previous volumes.

- ‘Type 4’: the ‘commonplace book’. These share the individual interests of ‘type 3’, but contain material which is likely only to have been of use to its owner, such as records of accounts, family trees, or lists of birthdays.

These four types seem to cover all compound manuscripts adequately and in a way which minimises the temptation to recognise arcane and dubious principles of organisation. If it needs refinement, it is possibly with regards to the distinction between compilations which survive in their initial state of being, and those which have been composed through dismantling and recombination of parent volumes. In the meantime, these can be satisfactorily included in ‘type 3’ as they are evidence of the interests of an individual. It is also a moot point (in the sense of ‘requiring discussion’) whether more random collections are possible – volumes which have been compiled simply to avoid booklets remaining unbound and therefore open to damage, or where a bookseller has combined scraps of other manuscripts which have been broken down in the act of removing more important or desirable texts. These may contribute to a potential ‘type 5’, but actual examples are more difficult to identify than hypothetical situations are to concoct, and there are none in the present study which might be claimed to belong to this hypothetical group.

1.8 Aims and Methodology

1.8.1 Aims of this Thesis

The original author of the *Disticha Catonis* appears to have composed his text with the intention that his readers would learn how to conduct themselves in social situations in a manner which would encourage the favour of others, and thus boost their own standing. Over time, however, the weight of use and interpretation transmuted this collection of self-centred advice into something much more worthy. Its simplistic structure ensured that it remained

predominately within an educational context, in which it could be used first and foremost for the teaching of Latin grammar, with the beneficial side product of educating children in its own behavioural subject matter.

Benedict Burgh, in producing his version of the text, does not appear to have desired to maintain the school-text simplicity of his source material. Instead he has attempted to imitate the style of his respected contemporary, John Lydgate, perhaps intending it to be read by the same mature audience who were reading Lydgate's work, as opposed to a readership composed primarily of school children in the preliminary stages of their education.

The rest of this thesis will therefore attempt to establish some impression of the audience which Burgh's text in fact reached, and the manner in which these readers viewed the text they owned. The survival of the work in thirty five known manuscripts is evidence of its popularity, but it remains to be established with which social groups it was popular and why. Study of Burgh's *Distichs* sheds light on the reception and adaptation of a significant cultural monument as it was caught in the rising tide of literary production in the vernacular; a text with both a practical application to everyday life, and the weight of authority behind it. The predominate aim of this thesis is, therefore, to establish an idea of the audience who were interested in acquiring its brand of historically-sanctioned wisdom. A provisional picture will be established of the social groups in which the *Distichs* was read, the network of connections which allowed the poem to spread through these groups, and an idea of the value these readers placed on the text and the uses to which they put it as evidenced in the physical traces such use has left on its manuscript copies. By extension, however, the audience and reception of the *Distichs* could be seen as indicative of wider patterns of reception for literature purveying similar moral or behavioural guidance, a genre whose impact on medieval society and its literary production has been generally under-appreciated.

1.8.2 Methodology

In order to begin the study of Burgh's Middle English *Distichs*, it is important to collect a significant amount of data on the manuscript contexts in which it is

currently to be found. To this end, each of the manuscripts has been examined either in person wherever possible or, where this has proved impractical, on microfilm.⁹ Existing manuscript catalogues have also been employed as a primary source for information gathering. This has resulted in the creation of detailed datasheets for each of the manuscripts focussing on their contents and the meta-textual markings which have accreted on the pages through centuries of ownership and reading. These datasheets can be found in the appendices to the thesis.

The data-gathering section of the research has been greatly influenced by the recent *Imagining History* and *Geographies of Orthodoxy* projects, which pioneered the cultural mapping technique with relation to the Prose *Brut* and the Pseudo-Bonaventuran 'Lives of Christ' respectively.¹⁰ These projects have built extensive databases of information regarding the manuscripts of their texts, and constitute inspiring work for future research in book history and the reception of medieval texts. An examination of the *Distichs* in this light is importantly not a retread of this work as the texts are of sufficiently different genre to make their separate study worthwhile. At the same time, the diverse audience for the *Brut* appears to be echoed in that of the *Distichs*, and the potential overlap in these audiences is of real significance to the understanding of the readership and reception of different pieces of medieval 'non-fiction' texts. The information gathered in this thesis, then, will take the model of research pioneered by *Imagining History* and *Geographies of Orthodoxy* and apply it to a different genre of writing, thus providing what will, it is hoped, be a fascinating contrast to the *Brut* and Lives of Christ. It is also hoped that the information gathered regarding

⁹ The one unfortunate exception to this has been Rome, English College MS. A.347, which it was neither possible to visit nor study as a microfilm copy. On a more positive note, it is exciting to be able to say that two of the *Distichs* manuscripts have recently been made available in their entirety online. Aberystwyth, NLW MS. Peniarth 481D can be viewed at <http://www.llgc.org.uk/index.php?id=4432> (last accessed 19/04/12); Manchester, Chetham's MS. 8009 can be accessed through the link on the library's website <http://www.chethams.org.uk/news.html#ChethamsTreasuresDigitised> (last accessed 19/04/12), although slightly regrettably the images are returned in the form of search results from the John Rylands Library site, and thus are listed out of order with no apparent way of rectifying this.

¹⁰ The *Imagining History Project's* homepage can be found at <http://www.qub.ac.uk/imagining-history/wordpress/index.php> (last accessed 26/04/12), from where the 'wiki' database containing the research results can also be reached. *Geographies of Orthodoxy* can be found at <http://www.qub.ac.uk/geographies-of-orthodoxy/> (last accessed 14/12/12).

the *Distichs* might similarly be disseminated electronically, allowing future researchers easy access to this resource.

Following the collection of these data, case studies of small groups from the overall pool were chosen in order to begin to build a picture of the creation and reception of the manuscripts of the *Distichs*. For this purpose manuscripts were sought which had specific links with others in the *Distichs* group, and particularly those which had already received a significant amount of academic attention. Four main volumes were chosen as a result, in two groups of two, these being (1) London, British Library MSS. Harley 2251 and Harley 7333, and (2) Glasgow, University Library MS. Hunter 259 and Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Eng. poet e. 15.

The Harley manuscripts are related through their derivation from the miscellanies compiled by the fifteenth-century bureaucrat and antiquary John Shirley. The Glasgow and Oxford manuscripts are related in their common production by the hand of Stephen Dodesham, an enclosed Carthusian monk of Sheen Charterhouse in an area that is now part of the Greater London area. Not only do these two groups allow for the assessment of previously published research, they provide windows into what appear to be two main cultures involved in the reception of *Distichs* manuscripts: one based on the fringes of the medieval courtly culture, and one around the houses of recently established religious orders.

The evidence for these two groups is gathered and examined to help formulate an impression of the members of society who would own manuscripts, and the interests and preoccupations which might lead them to acquire a text of this type. Where appropriate, other manuscripts are drawn into the discussion, both from the overall *Distichs* group, and from volumes in some way associated with these subgroups. Two chapters are devoted to the examination of these ownership communities, one for the Harley manuscripts, and one for the Dodesham manuscripts.

Following this survey, these case studies are related to a larger picture of the circulation and readership of the remaining *Distichs* manuscripts. As a result of this examination it is argued that the main audience of the text was the 'upper middle' class of medieval society: the literate laity who aspired to inclusion in the

culture of the court, leading them to follow 'fashionable' literature, particularly vernacular translations of respected Latin and French texts. For such a readership the *Disticha Catonis* held a special appeal due to its strong association with learning and the cultivation of morality.

It is hoped that the information gathered for the manuscript catalogue appendices will form the basis of a useful database with which to research similar or connected works. Many of the more minor texts included in 'miscellany' manuscripts with the *Distichs* are likely to have been similarly overlooked in academic research, and I would hope that this study might bring further into the light other works which might deserve more attention, particularly for the history of moral and ethical education. As an influential text in the Middle Ages, the original *Disticha Catonis* has certainly been strangely neglected and deserves more attention than it has received up to this point. Benedict Burgh's translation of this text is a fascinating one for linguistic, literary and educational reasons. By 'culturally mapping' the *Distichs* in the way described, this thesis will attempt to provide a clearer outline of why this text should be considered more than just a simplistic school book.

Chapter 2 – The *Distichs* and the Gentry: BL MSS. Harley 2251 and 7333

2.1 Introduction

MSS. Harley 7333 and Harley 2251 are distinctive amongst copies of the *Distichs of Cato*. Whilst most witnesses exist in miscellany volumes, few are of the scale of these two manuscripts. Harley 7333 is noteworthy not only for its folio-count, but also for the size of its pages, which at 455 x 320 mm are the largest of all the volumes considered in this study. These physically striking volumes, however, also offer an almost unparalleled window into the secular milieu within which the *Distichs* circulated. This is due to their derivation from miscellany volumes compiled by the fifteenth-century clerk and antiquarian John Shirley, about whom enough is known that a greater picture of the circulation of the *Distichs* can be composed.

Shirley is of interest for more than the rare opportunity to attach a name to a scribe or the compiler of source texts for *Distichs* manuscripts; he was deeply embedded in the network of literary patronage, commission and consumption formed by and around the medieval aristocracy (Connolly 1998: 14-23). In addition, he used this position to collect and further disseminate texts, many of which he had annotated himself. Although he appears not to have copied any of the *Distichs* manuscripts, and thus his readers are not necessarily those of Burgh's work, the collocation of the text with Shirleian material is an indication that they circulated in a very similar ambit.

Thus, through John Shirley we can get an important glimpse of the world in which some of the manuscripts of the poem are likely to have been written and read. This makes Harley 7333 and 2251 very important to this study. This chapter will initially concern itself with a closer examination of these two Harley manuscripts, and will then turn to examine the importance of John Shirley and his work for constructing a picture of potential readership networks. From the evidence of these volumes, it would appear that a large part of these networks consisted of clerks, noblemen, and others on the outskirts of court culture.

2.2 General Features of MSS. Harley 2251 and Harley 7333

The appearance of the two Harley manuscripts begins to give an indication of their potential ownership. Both contain a significant quantity of high-quality parchment, which on its own would have incurred considerable expense for their commissioners.¹¹ To this expense must be added the scribes' wages; the volumes – one of which contains the complete surviving *Canterbury Tales* amongst several other works – would have required many man-hours of labour. The decoration of the volumes is not extensive, however, and neither has been given illuminated capitals or been enhanced by the application of gold-leaf. Minor schemes of decoration are, however, present in each. Large, elaborated initials are present to begin each text in both manuscripts and, when the scribes have considered it appropriate, to begin sub-sections of texts as well. These initials are usually either two or three lines in height, in blue, and surrounded by red-pen details, which regularly extend into the margins where they flow up and down the edge of the written space to fill some of the blank parchment that would otherwise be left there. Again, this marginal decoration is a feature of both Harley 7333 and 2251, and the striking similarity they share is a function of the frequent use of these methods in beautifying fifteenth-century volumes of this type. Similarly ubiquitous in contemporary manuscripts are the alternating red and blue paraph marks which indicate the beginnings of stanzas within a poem, although in BL Harley 2251 red is the more common colour for these, which suggests a slightly simpler, and perhaps slightly cheaper production.

These decorative letters and paraph markings do not mark the Harley manuscripts out as unique amongst fifteenth-century productions. BL Harley 7333 is unusual in having large decorative Roman-numeral foliation which appears to have been inserted after it left the scriptorium, but may be a sign of a change in approach during its production; paraph marks have been added above the top line of each column of the text in this codex, apparently for the provision of running headings which have never been inserted. On a few pages, headings

¹¹ Analysis of the costs of production of medieval books remain somewhat piecemeal. Some idea of the expenses incurred might be gained from Christianson 1987, Overty 2008, Schramm 1933 and Bell 1936.

have been added in a hand contemporary with that of the main text (cf. 'þe prologe' on fol. 38r), although it is not clear whether these irregular insertions are the work of scribes involved in its production or have been added later. The paraph marks themselves are not in consistent locations in the top margin, and there are several folios on which only one is given rather than the usual two (cf. fols. 25v, 27v, 28v, 29r).

The Roman numerals inserted alongside these are large, sometimes elaborate, and often idiosyncratic in the arrangement of their elements (cf. 'iij^{xx}. v .' on fol. 33r). When both a heading and a foliation numeral are present alongside the same paraph, the heading appears first (cf. 'Tale. lxx viij' on fol. 40r) which strongly suggests that the numerals were added later. The circumstances in which this has taken place are unclear, although the neatness of the letters suggests a practised scribe. It cannot be ruled out, however, that these were inserted by the monks of Leicester Abbey during the manuscript's time in this location, rather than by scriptorium scribes or professional clerks.

Alongside the red pen around the capitals, both manuscripts have rubricated elements for much of their contents. This can be seen, for example, in the headings which separate the different *Canterbury Tales* in Harley 7333, which begin on fol. 37r. In Harley 2251, rubrication is most often employed in the marginal notations which act as finding aids in some of the more extensive texts, such as the *Fall of Princes*, beginning fol. 81r. These notations were presumably carried out following the copying of the main body text of each manuscript, and would have led to more expense in the form of scribal employment.

These manuscripts would, therefore, have put their commissioners to significant expense, although falling short of the extravagance that might be afforded by higher members of the nobility. Considered in isolation from other forms of evidence, these physical features of the Harley manuscripts suggest ownership by relatively wealthy readers, but not those with the vast reservoirs of wealth that would have allowed illustration and illumination. These manuscripts, despite an element of ostentation, could be considered as predominately practical, as their owners appear to have been most concerned with the texts they contained rather than the visual spectacle they would provide

when placed on a shelf. The medieval audience that might be able to afford such productions would be those in the lower ranks of the nobility, or at the wealthier end of the relatively new 'middle class', such as successful merchants, the retainers of nobility – particularly those involved in clerky duties who would have the ability and inclination to read and own books – and wealthier members of the Church hierarchy.

That the *Distichs* did also find a place in highly valuable, sometimes lavishly illustrated volumes is demonstrated by its presence in Aberystwyth, NLW MS. Peniarth 481D and British Library MS. Royal 18.D.II. Nonetheless, these are not typical settings for the poem. The Harley manuscripts are not entirely typical either, but are at the upper end of a range of similarly practical yet often extensive miscellany codices. Several of these also bear signs of being used (and, in the case of the 'Findern Manuscript', produced) in the households of merchants and clerks – in other words, the fifteenth-century's 'middle class' – or of the lower nobility. Harley 2251 and 7333 are worth some extensive consideration both because of this representative nature, and because a useful amount of information on their origins and ownership exists.

2.3 British Library, MS. Harley 7333

2.3.1 Incomplete Nature of Harley 7333

The presentation of BL Harley 7333 contains some important clues to its earliest history. The incomplete nature of the manuscript's running page-headers has already been considered. There are other indications that Harley 7333 was not properly finished at the time it left the scriptorium. One of these concerns the glossing of the *Canterbury Tales*; marginal notes, apparently composed by John Shirley, have been copied for a large section of Chaucer's work, but end abruptly during the 'Reeve's Tale' (fol. 58v). It is possible that this is the result of a lack in the exemplar from which it was being copied, and it may even be the case that Shirley himself never completed his annotation of the text. The headings of the individual tales may support a change of exemplar. Early headings display

Shirley's distinctive spelling system and tendency to verbosity, as exemplified on fol. 41v:

'Loo here eondiþe þe prologe of þe knightes
tale and ffolowyng þe knyght be gynnithe
to telle his tale'

A similar heading marks the end of the 'Man of Law's Prologue' and the beginning of his tale (fol. 60v). However the end of his tale is marked by a simple 'Here Endithe the man of lawes tale' (fol. 65v), and the headings continue in this style for the remainder of the text. The change of spelling from Shirley's 'eondiþe' (also present in the other early headings) to 'Endithe' is a particularly strong indication that a different exemplar was being employed (Connolly 1998: 170).

This makes it difficult to tell whether or not this section can be considered incomplete. If the scribes had lost access to Shirley's marginal glosses, there would be no reason to believe they ever intended to insert more. A number of scribal mistakes and omissions prior to the apparent change of exemplar (fols. 60v, 61v, 62r) may suggest that the scribe was in a rush to finish with his exemplar so that it could be returned to its lender. These mistakes are out of character with the generally neat and careful presentation of the rest of the text.

More clear-cut evidence that the manuscript was never fully completed is to be found in Burgh's *Distichs*. Burgh's poem was to be supplied with pseudo-Cato's original Latin in rubric at the head of each English stanza; the scheme was begun but ceases on fol. 27v, one stanza into the page. For this text, a lack of exemplar is not a reasonable explanation for the missing material – the *Disticha* in its Latin original was ubiquitous, and there were certainly copies present in the library of St. Mary de Pratis (as discussed below, section 2.3.2.3.1). Thus, the lack of rubrication argues that the process of copying the volume was interrupted.

The unused page headers, along with the missing rubrication in the *Distichs*, appear to be conclusive evidence that the original commission was never fully realised, even if the dubious status of the *Canterbury Tales*' gloss is discarded. The commissioner may have run out of funds for the volume's

completion, or his/her requirement for it been terminated, perhaps by death in this politically volatile period. The latter scenario would open the way for the then unwanted volume to be donated to a recipient who might otherwise not be able to afford it. This might help to explain the discrepancy between its likely location of production, and place of ownership, to be discussed in the next section.

2.3.2 Provenance and Circumstances of Production

As indicated in the introduction, the two Harley manuscripts considered in this chapter are closely related, in that their copyists used as their exemplars manuscripts written by John Shirley. However, there is no evidence that the scribes of the two volumes shared exemplar manuscripts. A reasonable amount of information can be recovered from both of the manuscripts. For BL Harley 2251 an impression of the circumstances of its production in a metropolitan scriptorium can be reconstructed, as well as a good impression of its early ownership. Unfortunately, however, there is little evidence for its ownership following the fifteenth century. Almost the opposite is true for BL Harley 7333, which provides extensive evidence of its early ownership at Leicester Abbey although only limited details exist that might point towards its circumstances of production. The information that is available for both manuscripts is extremely interesting, and worth taking some time to consider.

2.3.2.1 Evidence from Ownership Marks

BL MS. Harley 7333 contains a plethora of names which shed much light on its early history. These names were investigated quite thoroughly by Manly & Rickert for their catalogue of manuscripts containing the *Canterbury Tales* (1940: i, 207-18; 'Manly & Rickert' will hereafter be given in citations as 'M&R'). The discussion here is heavily indebted to their extensive information, to which little can be added. Most of the names are, directly or indirectly, linked to the abbey of St. Mary de Pratis (Pré) at Leicester, otherwise known simply as Leicester Abbey. The abbey was a monastery of the Augustinian (Austin) Canons, and one of the

largest in the country belonging to that order. The names which Manly & Rickert link directly to the abbey are 'Stoughton' (fol. 41r), 'Doctor Peni' (fol. 150r), 'charly' (fol. 119v), 'Jon Grene' (fol. 168v) and 'R de Bosco knight' (fol. 199r). Of these, 'Stoughton', 'Peni' and 'Grene' are believed to have been canons, 'de Bosco' a reference to the abbey's founding benefactor, and 'charly' a reference to the nearby Augustinian priory of Charley (M&R 1940; i, 214-15).

The name Stoughton is of particular importance in this instance as it is represented multiple times, although only once in writing; six times (on fols. 32v, 45v, 189r, 190r, and twice on 192r) it appears as a rebus comprising a stock (the trunk of a tree with three dismembered branches) placed in a tun (an ale barrel), and four times (fol. 189r and three times on fol. 190r) as a coat of arms drawn with varying levels of care. Manly & Rickert identify the latter as an early form of the Stockton coat of arms, and give the appropriate blazon for the Stoughton of Ash arms:

“arg. a saltire gu. with 4 door staples sa., and a small floron on the saltire”
(cited M&R 1940: i, 214 from BL MS. Add. 5520, fol. 212r)

The exact significance of the presence of these markings is unknown, however. The Leicestershire town of Stoughton was the location of the abbey's main grange, essential in provisioning the monastery. Manly & Rickert identify the presence at Leicester of an abbey cellarer by the name William Stoughton who is likely to have taken his surname from his home town, as was traditional for monks in the fifteenth century. The cellarer would have been closely tied to the grange (responsible as he was for supervising the abbey's provisions), and so the manuscript could be related to William Stoughton, the grange or – perhaps most likely – both.

Convincing evidence that William Stoughton is personally connected to MS. Harley 7333 is to be found in connection with the name of 'Doctor Peni' on fol. 150r. Manly & Rickert identify Oxford-educated canon John Peny, who became prior of the abbey in 1493, then abbot in 1496, but had been present at St. Mary de Pratis since 1480 at the latest. The same man was later to become Bishop of Bangor in 1504, and then of Carlisle in 1508 (1940; i, 214). The

connection of Peny to William Stoughton is established through an endeavour they shared: 'In 1485, the day after Bosworth Field, Stoughton and Peny went together to Henry VII at Leicester to ask leave to elect a new abbot' (M&R 1940: i, 215; citing *Leicestershire and Rutland Notes and Queries* 3, pp. 249-250). This statement establishes that the two would have been familiar with one another, and increases the probability that they would both have had contact with the same book.

These associations are strong enough that a relationship to St. Mary de Pratis seems indisputable. The other Leicestershire names offer less helpful information. Of canon John Grene, only his presence at St. Mary de Pratis is known. 'R de Bosco knight' may or may not be original abbey benefactor Richard le Bossu (Thompson 1949: 2) but is almost certainly a member of this family – whichever Bossu is intended, any specific connection to MS. Harley 7333 is now untraceable.

In establishing the later history of the manuscript, names written within its pages have allowed largely reliable reconstruction of its movements following its period at Leicester Abbey, although fine detail remains elusive. The name 'Geoffrey Ithell' on fol. 133r may be taken to be that of the son of Peter Ithell who 'was appointed to make an ecclesiastical survey of Leicestershire, preliminary to the Dissolution [...] He was in a position to have acquired the MS.' (M&R 1940: i, 217). The unspoken assumption seems reasonable that, in surveying institutions about to be destroyed, Ithell availed himself of the opportunity to acquire books which attracted his interest. Such a remarkable item as Harley 7333 is likely to have been eye-catching in the library of the monastery. A flurry of names accompanies the volume's transmission from the Ithell family to the Fuller family, apparently via the Smythes (M&R 1940: i, 217). The exact path is not clear, and Geoffrey Ithell himself appears responsible for writing the name 'Robert Smyth' on fol. 43r. In a complex series of inter-relations, Manly & Rickert note that an Ithell (Margaret) married a Smyth (John); a Smythe (Harry, presumably related to John Smyth) married a Skipwith (Anne); and a Skipwith (Henry) married a Fuller (Margaret). Margaret Fuller was the sister of Bostock Fuller, and the names of six of his children (Jane, Ruth, Frances, Edward, Elizabeth and Richard) are recorded on fol. 12v. Jane is listed as 'Jane Dier',

owing to her 1608 marriage to Edward Dyer. The move from Ithell to Fuller ownership also involved a geographical relocation, from Tugby in Leicestershire to Tandridge in Surrey (M&R 1940: i, 217).

From here on, sale catalogues rather than manuscript annotations are the source of most information, although links may well be missing from the chain. The next owner who can be identified is Sir Norton Knatchbull, from whom it is bought by John Somers, 1st Baron Somers, in 1698. On Somers' death in 1716, this manuscript apparently passed into the possession of his brother in law, Sir Joseph Jekyll. The codex finally becomes part of the Harleian collection when Edward Harley purchases it in 1738, apparently following the death of Sir Joseph, but before the sale of his other printed books and manuscripts (M&R 1940: 218; Wright 1972: 309).

For the purposes of this thesis, information on the early ownership of the manuscript is of greatest interest to establish the early reception of the *Distichs*. However, the evidence linking this manuscript to Leicester Abbey may be misleading in the attempt to identify the ownership for which the book was intended.

2.3.2.2 Linguistic Evidence

The best way to attempt to identify the location of production is through the linguistic mapping provided by the *Linguistic Atlas of Late Mediaeval English* (McIntosh *et al.* 1986; hereafter *LALME*). Evidence presented in the *Atlas* casts doubt on a Leicester provenance; on the basis of three samples of text, it localises Harley 7333 to North Hampshire (although it is always necessary to repeat the caveat that the information gleaned from the *Atlas* provides an indication of the dialect with which a scribe seems to be most comfortable, which is not the same as pinpointing the location of the manuscript's production). One of these samples is taken from the *Canterbury Tales* and two from the *Gesta Romanorum*. Both samples from the latter text are composed of two different scribal stints which were felt to be close enough in dialect as to be comparable (v. Table 1 below). It is important to note, however, that the *Atlas* treats the five hands as if they are separate, whereas Manly & Rickert and Linne Mooney both identify the hand of

the *Canterbury Tales* section (LP 9510) as being the same as that of part of the second *Gesta Romanorum* section (LP 5600). It is also worth noting that one of these hands (Mooney's scribe 'F') may potentially belong to John Peny, as it begins on the same folio (150r) which bears his name and states that he 'writ this booke'.

All the dialectal evidence therefore points to the manuscript being composed rather further south in the country than Leicester; the collocation in North Hampshire of four separate scribal dialects is too persuasive to allow copying at St. Mary de Pratis to be a serious possibility. Whilst it cannot be discounted that scribes from Hampshire had relocated to Leicester, it must be considered an exceptionally low probability that four did so and then collaborated on the same manuscript. This is not to dispute, however, the evidence that Harley 7333 was present at Leicester Abbey for what may have been a considerable period of time.

A complication is introduced by the apparent involvement of John Peny in scribal work, as seems to be indicated by the note that 'Doctor Peni wirt this booke' on fol. 150r. As established above, John Peny was prior at the Abbey, and in contact with William Stoughton. The manuscript section in which this note appears is complex, including as it does two scribal hands (E and F) which occur nowhere else in the volume. Nonetheless, this is the quire in which the *Gesta Romanorum* begins, and thus is highly unlikely to have been a later addition. That it was produced alongside the rest of the manuscript is reaffirmed by the fact that hand F is one of those which has been assigned to North Hampshire by *LALME*. If Peny was involved in the production of this book, he must either have been copying almost *ad litteratim* from a North Hampshire source, or possibly have originated from that part of the country himself. However, given that the note of his authorship has been added to the manuscript later (by a Tudor secretary hand), there is as much (or greater) likelihood that the attribution is a mistake.

One possibility which might salvage the insisted involvement of 'Doctor Peni' is that, whilst the manuscript was composed in Hampshire, a damaged or incomplete section could have been replaced by a quire copied at Leicester with the input of Peny. This would explain the absence of hands E and F elsewhere in

Harley 7333, although it would not justify the Hampshire dialect of hand F, who would presumably also have been present in Leicester. It could be speculated that the F scribe was copying from a damaged quire which he was intending to replace, and that to preserve the integrity of the reconstructed text he engaged in *ad litteratim* reproduction despite likely minor discomfort with the Hampshire dialect. This must, regrettably, be only speculation and no conclusive evidence is likely to ever be forthcoming. The section copied by scribe E is too short and too varied (containing as it does Lydgate's 'Kings of England' and 'Maister Benets Christmas Game' before beginning the *Gesta Romanorum* on fol. 150r) for any conclusive dialect analysis to be conducted upon it.

LALME Linguistic Profile	Text	Sample Section	Scribal Stints	Scribal hands as identified by LRM
9510	<i>Canterbury Tales</i>	fols. 94-97	fols. 94-97	D
5590	<i>Gesta Romanorum</i>	fols. 150-156 & 197-203	fols. 150-156	F
			fols. 197-203	G
5600	<i>Gesta Romanorum</i>	fols. 157-196	fols. 157-164	B
			fols. 165-196	D

Table 1 Sections of MS. BL Harley 7333 analysed for *Linguistic Atlas of Late Medieval English* including scribal hands as designated by Linne R. Mooney (2003: 198)

2.3.2.3 Monastic Reading Habits and BL Harley 7333

Although the evidence of annotations on BL Harley 7333 provides almost indisputable proof that it was present at Leicester, the dialect evidence of a connection with Hampshire casts some doubt over whether it was produced for the monks of Leicester Abbey. An intended monastic audience at the time of production is made more unlikely by a consideration of the reading material typically available in monasteries and specifically that in Leicester Abbey.

Material such as that which is found in Harley 7333 was not of much interest to monastic institutions. Firstly a distinction has to be drawn between the orders of canons and friars; the latter are much more likely to have been in

possession of up-to-date reading material, engaged as they were in the arguments against heresy. Monastic ('canon') reading was of a much more conservative stamp, with monastery library collections largely composed of tried and trusted texts by long-established *auctores*, mostly in Latin, and few later than the first half of the fourteenth century (Bell 2006: 140).

The *Disticha Catonis* certainly was a popular inclusion in medieval monastic libraries. The *Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues* lists forty-six entries for the *Disticha*, for which the language is usually not specified but may probably be assumed to be Latin unless otherwise stated.¹² Not all of the volumes of the *Corpus* have as yet been published, but within those which can be checked, there is no indication that any of these (predominately religious) libraries owned copies of Burgh's translation. Indeed, most of the *Disticha* copies are part of miscellany manuscripts which contain other material frequently used in the initial stages of a grammatical education. This testifies both to the outstanding popularity of Cato as a tool in religious education, and to the lack of interest of religious institutions in an English vernacular translation (although several of the copies are glossed, and two of those held by the brethren of the Bridgettine Syon Abbey are listed specifically as glossed in 'anglico' – Gillespie 2001: **SS1.4q** and **SS2.28a**).

Neither religious devotion nor theological excursus plays a significant role in the Harley 7333 miscellany; members of religious communities did also read material that was not in a purely 'textbook' format, but the Harley manuscript contains none of the heavily allegorical texts which were often of interest to them. The types of material which were of use to these communities can be seen through an examination of volumes of the *Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues*, which reveals that the literary romance and brief didactic poetry of this miscellany almost never appear. This is as true of the Augustinians of Leicester Abbey as other denominations.

¹² An 'Identification List' for the *Corpus* can be acquired online at www.history.ox.ac.uk/sharpe/index.htm [last accessed 1/5/12]. Within this, the *Disticha Catonis* entries can be found at p. 230.

2.3.2.4 The Library of Leicester Abbey

Fortunately, it is not necessary to extrapolate from the collections of other monasteries for knowledge of the library of St. Mary de Pratis – a thorough cataloguing of the institution’s holdings exists for the time at which Harley 7333 was most probably present at the abbey. At the end of the fifteenth century, William Charyte (1422-c.1502), prior of the abbey, initiated the cataloguing of the monastery library, with the result that its collection is now one of the best recorded of any medieval religious institution.¹³ The exact date of the cataloguing effort is uncertain, but it appears to have been between 1477 and 1494 (Webber & Watson 1998: 107). Although the catalogue is incomplete and, on occasion, inconsistent, it provides evidence that Leicester Abbey was in possession of roughly 1100 books by the late fifteenth century (Webber 2006: 127). Given the approximate dating of Harley 7333 to the late fifteenth century, it should have been in existence at the point at which the catalogue was created, and thus, if it were present at St. Mary de Pratis at this time it would, presumably, have been included. No volume, however, appears to match the Harley miscellany. Manly & Rickert (1940: i, 216) hypothesise that constituent sections were present in the abbey’s library when the catalogue was written, and list items described as ‘Cronicle abbreviatum per Thomam de Ripley’, ‘Cato’, and ‘Cronica’ as potential descriptions of sections that were later to be bound together in this volume.¹⁴ Whilst possible, this suggestion seems implausible; given the large and distinctive size of the finished manuscript, it is most likely that the contents were produced with the prior intention of inclusion in the codex, rather than copied as discrete entities which were only later combined.

The *Disticha Catonis* does appear three times in Charyte’s catalogue (Webber & Watson nos. **A20.303ag**, **A20.979a**, and **A20.1000a**), but none of

¹³ An edition of Charyte’s catalogue is presented in Webber & Watson 1998; previous to this by James 1935-7 (part 1) & 1939-41 (part 2).

¹⁴ ‘Cronicle abbreviatum per Thomam de Ripley’ is Webber & Watson’s **A20. 643**; ‘Cato’ is **A20. 979**, which appears to be the Latin source text acting as the principle text in a schoolbook miscellany which also includes Theodolus, Avianus and John of Garland; it is unclear which entry Manly & Rickert cite as ‘Cronica’ – perhaps **A20. 650**: ‘Cronica de successione regum’ in the belief it might be either Lydgate’s ‘Pedigree of English Kings’ or ‘Verses on the Kings of England’. That Charyte would not identify either text as being the work of the famous Lydgate is, however, unlikely.

these citations can refer to the copy of Burgh's translation now found in Harley 7333. All three appear in volumes whose contents appear to be almost exclusively in Latin, and the latter two are included in schoolbook compilations alongside Theodolus and Avianus. These authors are members of the *Sex Auctores* group, discussed in Chapter 1 above (section 1.4.1.2), which regularly accompanied the *Disticha* in its use as a school-book. There is no possibility that any of these three copies of the *Disticha* represent the copy which was later included in the Harley volume, although they do signify, on Leicester Abbey's behalf, an interest in the Latin original that is exceeded in library catalogues only by the Premonstratensians of Titchfield (Bell 1992: 180-253).

Charyte has frequently catalogued the contents of miscellany manuscripts separately, with cross-references to the larger volume in which they are to be found. It is not unknown for him, however, to provide a cross-reference for a parent volume which does not appear to be catalogued (cf. Webber & Watson 1998, entry **A20. 973**; Webber 1997: 38 n. 32). This does not appear to be the case for the entries noted by Manly & Rickert. From this evidence it appears that the manuscript either was not present at St Mary de Pratis at the time of the cataloguing project or, alternately, was not considered for inclusion when the data were gathered. As the abbey did not undergo dissolution until 1538 (Knowles & Hadcock 1971: 141), thirty-six years after the death of Charyte, there is plenty of time for Harley 7333 to have been acquired following the compilation of the catalogue. On the other hand, if the word 'charly' on fol. 119v does refer to Charley Priory, this would suggest the manuscript would have to be in the possession of the Augustinians before 1465, when Charley was dissolved and the monks relocated to Ulverscroft on account of the 'mismanagement' of the former (Knowles & Hadcock 1971: 153). This correlates with Manly & Rickert's assessment that the work was 'Begun c.1450-60' (1940: i, 209). There is a slim possibility that the manuscript could have been owned at Charley and then passed to St. Mary de Pratis at the point of dissolution. However, as Burgh is likely to have produced the work in the mid- to late-1450s, this is quite a tight window of time in which the text had to be disseminated far enough for it to be copied in the south of England, then dispatched north. This is, of course, far from impossible, but the book's relocation to the relatively obscure Charley Priory

causes even more explanatory problems than translation to Leicester. That said, if it were passed from Charley to St. Mary de Pratis at the dissolution of the former, this would still allow Stoughton and Peny to have access to it in the 1480s when they are known to have been acquainted.

It must be considered whether the manuscript could have been present in the library, but for some reason not catalogued. Textual factors, however, again make this unlikely. Despite the apparent scale of its book collection (there are over 940 books listed in Charyte's catalogue, with another 228 'in libraria' and 21 'in scriptoria' – Ker 1964: 113), literary writing is rarely if ever represented. The catalogue of manuscripts edited by Webber & Watson includes few items by Lydgate and Gower; Chaucer is represented by his *Treatise on the Astrolabe* alone; Langland does not appear at all. The absence of literary works is, however, in keeping with the normal expected reading habits of a religious community. Fifteen now-extant manuscripts can be reliably traced to the abbey's library, and these display materials which align with other monastic collections of the time (cf. Bell 2006: 138-9): for example, a commentary on the Pentateuch (Cambridge, Queens' College, MS. 2), writings of Saint Augustine (Cambridge, Trinity College, MS. 315), and a 'Chronicon' (British Library MS. Cotton Tib. C.vii).

It may be the case that more up-to-date vernacular texts were also stocked in the monastery, but not included in the catalogue because they were not perceived as relevant to the educational reading of the religious. The likelihood of such material being held in addition to the catalogued religious books would be increased if, as Manly & Rickert believed, the abbey had a large and active scriptorium. This suggestion is based on the enormous volumes which were produced under Charyte's governance: not only the library catalogue, but the *Rentale novum generale* and the *Repertorium chartarum abbacie de Leycestrie* (now respectively Oxford, Bodleian MS. Laud. misc. 623 and British Library MS. Cotton Vitellius F.xvii). When combined with the regular production of secular as well as religious manuscripts in other houses of the Austin Canons, the extensive work involved in production of the *Rentale* and *Repertorium* at St. Mary de Pratis functioned for Manly & Rickert as conclusive proof that Leicester was a sensible provenance for Harley 7333 (1940: 216). However, Webber and Watson (1998: 105) caution that '[t]oo few manuscripts survive from Leicester to determine the

extent to which there was an active scriptorium at the abbey that produced more than just liturgical and administrative records.' It is also quite unlikely that Charyte's catalogue would be discriminatory in its recording of the books present 'in scriptoria'. His catalogue is, in most respects, thorough, and the inclusion of works by Chaucer, Gower and Lydgate, meagre as they are, would tend to indicate that Charyte would include the texts of Harley 7333 as well unless he had particular reason not to.

Its absence from Charyte's catalogue and poor fit with monastic reading material make it very unlikely that Harley 7333 was commissioned by Leicester Abbey. However, as it evidently was present in the abbey, it may be suggested that it was not held by the institution itself, but rather was the personal property of one of the monks; such ownership of books was not prohibited, and monastic libraries owed the expansion of their collections in large part to the donation of books by members of their order (Knowles 1955: 339-340). Cultivation of outside interests was allowed, and Charyte's catalogue suggests that he was himself interested in astronomy, although in his case he does appear to have considered his books as part of the library, rather than retaining them personally.

Repeated reference to 'Stockton' in Harley 7333 suggests that abbey cellarer William Stoughton was the most likely owner of the book. It is unfortunate that little record seems to remain of his life, other than his responsibility for the lands of Stoughton Grange (Nichols 1971 [1815]: I, 2, App. p. 95). That an Austin Canon was able to afford a relatively lavish volume such as this requires some explanation, but none is forthcoming. It is not impossible that it was a gift from a benefactor, quite possibly a member of the Bossu family, and that this is related to the appearance of the Bossu name on fol. 199r. The appearance of the manuscript certainly implies that it was being prepared for a relatively wealthy patron. A lack of extensive decoration, however, such as illumination or the inclusion of coats of arms, seems to imply that the commissioner was not aristocratic or that, if they were, they were prepared to put only a limited budget to the production of the manuscript. The acephalous nature of the prose *Brut* may mean that more decoration was present at the beginning of the volume, but that it is now lost (the Roman numeral foliation

now begins at 'XXV', suggesting three quires of eight folios are missing). If this were the case, however, there is no evidence in the rest of the text of an intention to continue a scheme of decoration or illumination.

As previously discussed, the incomplete rubrication in the *Distichs* and the inconsistent use of the paraph column-heading marks together suggest the volume is not only now missing sections, but was never completed. This in turn implies that the original commissioner no longer needed it, which may be the reason that it ended up in the hands of monks who would normally not be able to afford it or be likely to commission it even if they could. If, as will be argued later, the exemplar for this manuscript might have been the property of another Augustinian house, it is highly plausible that a suddenly-patronless volume would be transferred to a different monastery of the same order; its contents would not justify its retention by the house in which it had originated, especially if they were already the owners of its exemplar. St. Mary de Pratis, likewise, would probably have had no particular reason to add it to the monastery's book collection, leaving it available to be claimed by William Stoughton out of personal interest. Following his death, Stoughton could have bequeathed (or simply abandoned) Harley 7333 back to Leicester Abbey, where it remained until the predations of Peter Ithell in the 1530s. The multiple annotations on the manuscript are relatively strong evidence that Stoughton did read and use it rather than leaving it to languish in his cell.

2.3.2.5 Harley 7333 – Scriptorium Production

That Harley 7333 has been a collaborative effort involving at least six main scribes strongly suggests that it was produced in a scriptorium, although it is possible that the *Brut* section was produced elsewhere (Mooney 2003: 193). If this were the case, it is possible that the size and layout of the *Brut* determined these features of the rest of the miscellany. A gap in the foliation of the manuscript between fols. 24r and 25r suggests that the sections of the *Brut* which are now missing were present when the rest of the volume was created. Incidentally, the *Distichs of Cato* is the first text to be added in the new section, which potentially betokens its importance to the copyists or commissioner.

Other information about this scriptorium is lacking – so far the scribal hands at work have not been identified in any other manuscripts, and any notations relating to people or places have been added after its production, and mostly apparently in Leicester.

That the court of Henry VI spent a large amount of time in the midlands, and that parliament was convened several times in Leicester (Wolffe 1981: 361-371) provides an alternative explanation. It may be that Harley 7333 was produced in Leicester by scribes in the court retinue who originated from Hampshire, and then left in the possession of the abbey. However, not only is it unlikely that clerks in the court would have felt the need to turn their hand to extra manuscript production, but they would have had to bring manuscripts with them, copied them, and then, presumably, returned to London with them leaving the copies behind. Much more likely is that the manuscript was copied further south, but was brought to the abbey through connections with larger Augustinian houses there (Connolly 1998: 175). There is no way of knowing whether this scenario is accurate, and if it is, whether the miscellany was actually produced by the Augustinians, or acquired by them at a later stage. It is also possible that an exemplar manuscript from one of these more southerly houses found its way to Leicester through channels connected with the Augustinian order, and that sections of it were copied there (perhaps hurriedly, with few if unsystematic changes made to the wording) before being returned.

2.4 British Library, MS. Harley 2251

2.4.1 Scribal Production: The ‘Hammond Scribe’

Despite the paucity of information on its production, it is interesting to compare Harley 7333 with Harley 2251. The latter is also, almost certainly, the result of scriptorium production. Instead of the collaborative effort that went into producing BL Harley 7333, Harley 2251 is the work of a single scribe. On its own, this would afford little idea of the circumstances in which the volume was produced. However, the hand of this scribe has been recognised in a number of other manuscripts. That the scribes were working in concert, and thus were

probably employed in the same scriptorium, is indicated in these other volumes by changes of hand within a text, sometimes in the middle of a leaf (e.g. Cambridge, Trinity College MS. R.3.21, fol. 49v).

Early work on the Harley 2251 scribe and his oeuvre was largely performed by Eleanor Hammond (Hammond 1905; 1925; 1929); as a result he has been termed 'the Hammond scribe', and continues to be so in the absence of conclusive evidence regarding his identity. His hand has, to date, been identified in fourteen other manuscripts, most of which consist of literary material (Mooney 1996: 403; Matheson 2006: 77 n.4). Hammond initially identified the scribal hand as shared by six manuscripts (1925: 130). It is '[o]f a mixed type, with elements from both the older "court" and newer "secretary" scripts' (Doyle 1959: 429), and is replete with distinctive features, which include extended ascenders on the letters *s* and *f*, a sharp backwards slope to the descender of the letter *p*, and the use of '-ie-' spellings in words such as 'bien' and 'chiere' where '-ē-' is more common in Middle English (Hammond 1905: 1). A long list of such features is possible, although Hammond and Doyle also note that the hand varies considerably, sometimes within a single stint (Hammond 1929: 27; Doyle 1959: 430). This variation led Hammond initially to believe that Harley 2251 was in two hands (stints divided into fols. 1-143 and 144-293), an opinion she later emended, and the manuscript is now considered as being exclusively in the hand of the Hammond scribe (Hammond 1929: 27; Mooney 1996: 403).

Amongst the texts included in the Hammond scribe's manuscripts are multiple productions of highly influential poems, such as Hoccleve's *Regiment of Princes* (in British Library MSS. Arundel 59 and Harley 372) and Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* (in British Library MS. Royal 17 D.xv, and London, Royal College of Physicians MS. 13, as well as the 'Prioress' Tale' in MS. Harley 2251). Chaucer's minor works also frequently appear as do those of Lydgate. The repeated production of literary texts (indeed, of the most fashionable literary material of the day) has been taken as evidence that he was involved in commercial book production, rather than being a clerk who turned his hand to literary material when requested (Mooney 1996: 405). In line with these works, the output of the Hammond scribe uncovered thus far has been predominately literary, and mostly in the English language – although other non-vernacular codices, such as

the French and Latin British Library MS. Add. 29901 (Matheson 2006: 77 n. 4), may remain to be found. That some of his productions involve the copying of literature in French, which was still a significant (if waning) vernacular of the courtly circle, suggests that some of the customers of the scriptorium in which he worked were from the nobility. Some of the scribe's time was also invested in producing documentary material, however (most notably Cambridge, Trinity College MS. O.3.11), and Mooney advises that other similar material may yet have been overlooked by medieval literature scholars inclined to focus their attention on literary codices (1996: 403).

Whether or not the scribe's output was predominately literary, his workplace does appear to have been the scriptorium, where he would handle either whole-book commissions (such as Harley 2251), or work collaboratively with a group of scribes each concentrating on their own section of a manuscript. The latter is especially evident from his collaboration on the production of what is now Cambridge, Trinity College MS. R.3.21. Although this manuscript is composed of separately foliated booklets, it is the work of only two scribes; the main scribe of the work is traditionally referred to as 'Scribe A', whilst one of the booklets (comprising fols. 33-50 of the manuscript as it is currently composed) includes work by the Hammond scribe. The separate foliation of the booklets implies that they were produced speculatively, and then sold individually, leading to wear on the outer pages of the booklets. If the Hammond scribe's work were to appear separately, with no link to the hand of the other booklets, it might have been possible that he was at work in a different location, but the collaboration between the two scribes on a single booklet (the change in hands occurs four lines into fol. 49v) strongly suggests they were employed together in the same workshop (Mooney 2001: 241-43). The increase in demand for manuscripts in the late fifteenth century was met by increased activity on the part of stationers (see Overy 2008: 12), who might use several scribes to produce a single manuscript, and this is presumably the environment in which the Hammond scribe was working.

Other productions of Scribe A are to be found in Cambridge, Trinity College MS. R.3.19, although there is no evidence that the other booklets in the volume were composed by scribes working in the same scriptorium (Mooney

2001: 252). The volume appears to be composed of exemplars which were used in the publishing industry by Caxton and his successor de Worde before being bought up by the antiquarian John Stow, and may have served the same purpose for a manuscript scriptorium before this (Mooney 2001: 263-66). Interestingly, there is also some evidence that BL Harley 2251 was used as an exemplar either in a scriptorium or a printer's workshop presumably following its initial ownership by the clerk John de Vale (to be discussed below, section 2.4.2). This evidence takes the form of marking up throughout the first seventy-eight folios of Harley 2251. The regular spacing of the numbers inserted in the manuscript makes it clear that it was being counted out in units of seventy lines, a number suitable for two sides of a folio, whether handwritten or mechanically printed. The number forms, particularly evident in those for '4' and '5', belong to the late fifteenth or early sixteenth centuries. If the manuscript was transferred from de Vale's ownership to that of a stationer and later a printer, this could explain both its lack of other ownership evidence, and the route by which it came into Stow's ownership.

2.4.2 John Multon, John de Vale, and their Links to the Hammond Scribe

Repeated attempts have been made to identify the Hammond scribe with the stationer John Multon. The basis for the argument is that the scribe's work in the medical and scientific miscellany Cambridge, Trinity College MS. R.14.52 is signed 'Quod Multon' on fols. 215r, 217r, 219r and 222r, and this identification has often been accepted with little or no expression of doubt (e.g. Sutton & Visser-Fuchs 1995: 109; Lerer 1993: 265 n. 52; Christianson 1989: 101, 107 n. 43). However, the conflation of the Hammond scribe with Multon is not universally accepted, especially as the latter's name appears nowhere else in the scribe's output. Linne Mooney (1996: 204-205) proposes that the scribe was using a translation or copy made by Multon, rather than that he is declaring himself to *be* Multon. Doyle (1983: 177 n. 42) asserts a link between MS. R.14.52 and Multon, citing his will as evidence, but is also sceptical of the notion that they are the same man. Records indicate that a Robert Multon, either John's brother

or nephew, was in charge of his own stationer's business on London's Paternoster Row c. 1473-1495 (Sutton & Visser-Fuchs 1995: 108; Christianson 1985: 51; 1990: 136). It may thus be supposed that Multon was in charge of the endeavour, whilst the Hammond scribe was clearly very active in the actual production of texts (Hammond 1929: 28-29). The two are not entirely incompatible, and Multon may have been a very hands-on businessman producing copies of texts himself, but more convincing is that the Hammond scribe was in the employ of Multon.¹⁵

Nonetheless, Multon is at least tangentially connected to the history of this manuscript, in that he was acquainted with the Cook family, who employed the bureaucrat John Vale whose ownership mark appears in Harley 2251. This mark appears on fol. 170r and takes the form of a striking red and blue monogram, consisting of a large 'Q' between the letters 'I' and 'd' (possibly 'j'). Inside the body of the 'Q' are the letters 'VAL'. Although Manly & Rickert were unable to decipher the meaning of the mark, they suggested that it was contemporary with the rubrication of the manuscript, owing to the similarity in inks used (1940: i, 244). The monogram has since been linked to John Vale (in later life known as John de Vale), who appears to have been in the service of the London draper Sir Thomas Cook (e.g. Sutton & Visser-Fuchs 1995: 108). A.I. Doyle remains hesitant, however; in discussing its appearance in Worcester Cathedral Library MS F.172 he is prepared to acknowledge most of the letters previously identified in the symbol, but chooses not to comment on their interpretation (Doyle 1959: 431). Doyle doubts the existence of a letter 'E' inside the monogram, which Manly & Rickert believed to be there. If this letter were present, it would make the ascription to Vale more reliable. However, the pen-strokes in question appear partially behind the letter 'L' in the Harley monogram, and do seem to be part of the pen-flourish decoration. It would indeed take a stretch of the imagination to assert these to be an extra letter.

Although this mark can, therefore, not be conclusively identified as that of Vale, a robust chain of evidence allows reasonable certainty that it was indeed his. Aside from the Harley and Worcester manuscripts, the mark appears in

¹⁵ For the current state of knowledge of the structure of stationers' businesses see Connolly & Mooney (2008), *passim*, and references there cited.

Trinity College, Cambridge, MS. R.14.52; all three of these manuscripts were copied by the 'Hammond scribe'. This scribe had some connection with the affairs of Sir Thomas Cook, Vale's employer, as can be shown by the documents related to Cook which he copied into Cambridge, Trinity College MS. O.3.11. These include a document relating to London Bridge in the time of Cook's mayoralty, and writs issued to Cook in his position as alderman of Broad Street (Sutton & Visser-Fuchs 1995: 108 n. 154). This set of connections leads Sutton & Visser-Fuchs to posit a two-way relationship – the scribe may have produced material for Cook and those associated with him, and in return received documents to serve as exemplars for his own use, or perhaps for the stationery business run by his likely employer, Multon. If Trinity MS. O.3.11 were only intended to be used in-house in Multon's scriptorium, this would also explain the declining quality of the handwriting later in the document, presumably as the scribe rushed to finish the copy before the originals had to be returned (Sutton & Visser-Fuchs 1995: 108).

Trinity College MS. R.14.52 has been used as a source for identification of the scribe's dialect, using the same methods as were employed for the *Linguistic Atlas of Late Mediaeval English*. This analysis has reinforced the conviction that the scribe was active in London, but reveals that he was an immigrant to that area rather than being based there all his life. His spellings appear to show elements of a dialect-area to the northeast of London – most likely north Essex or southwest Suffolk – with Kent as a possible alternative (Matheson 2006). These influences are manifested in the aforementioned '-ie-' spellings, as well as other features, such as the appearance of 'fire' as either 'fuyre' or 'fuyr' (Matheson 2006: 82-88).

The localisation of the Hammond scribe's dialect to the general area of north Essex/southwest Suffolk also resonates with Vale's ownership of Harley 2251, since Vale himself hailed from Bury St. Edmunds in mid-Suffolk, and the Cook family originated in and held several properties in the area, most importantly at Lavenham in south Suffolk (Matheson 2006: 87-88, 92-93). This raises the possibility that the Hammond scribe was long acquainted with the Cook family, and may have moved to London from the locale of one of their properties. The connection may have afforded him sufficient favour with the

former family to be able to acquire exemplar documents for Multon from the household of the younger Thomas, with the production of Trinity College MS. O.3.11 a result of this relationship.

This connection between the Hammond scribe and Sir Thomas Cook, then, serves as some justification for identifying the 'I d Val' of the monogram with a figure in Cook's acquaintance. Cook was a London draper, and John Vale was himself brought up by a family involved in the cloth trade (his father appears to have been a dyer). Having found his way into the service of Thomas Cook, he became 'an indispensable general clerk, accountant, administrator and day-to-day legal advisor' to his employer (Sutton & Visser-Fuchs 1995: 105). Cook was to become Mayor of London for 1462-1463, and thus an influential citizen. Mooney (2003: 190) draws a comparison between the positions of John Vale and John Shirley, both secretarial gofers to their employers; a comparison which helps to establish these educated clerks as important consumers of – and even middle-men in – the rising vernacular book trade.

The 'Q' of the monogram raises what must be an important question – could this stand for 'quod', the traditional Latin tag prefixing the name of either the scribe or author of a text? Vale is not the author of the poems beside which his mark appears, but this leaves open the possibility that it instead identifies him as the scribe of these items. Given that the monogram appears in three manuscripts written by the Hammond scribe, it could be argued that the scribe and Vale are one and the same. This appears not to have been the case, however, as a manuscript believed to be in Vale's hand does survive (British Library MS. Add. 48031A), and thus eliminates the possibility. The meaning of the 'Q' thus remains unknown.

It is important to recognise the possibility that the monogram has not yet been successfully deciphered, and is indeed a mark in some way related to the Hammond scribe rather than de Vale. There is a slim possibility that, as with some of the other volumes in the Hammond scribe's hand, this large, sparingly decorated collection was copied with the intention of being itself used as an exemplar in a scriptorium. This may well have been the case for the similar British Library MS. Add. 34360 (Mooney 2003: 197), and it is feasible that a source book for Lydgate material would be useful if his poetry were in vogue,

and the strains of having to locate and borrow exemplars of his poems was proving frustrating. If this were true, the monogram would be much more likely to be the mark of the Hammond scribe or his scriptorium, rather than de Vale. Such a theory might seem to be supported by the marking of Harley 2251 for further copying. The 'QVAL' could stand for 'qualiter', which would bear a similar meaning to 'quod', leaving 'I J' or 'I d' as the Hammond scribe's initials, thus removing de Vale entirely from the equation.

Although this suggestion would alter the argument of this section, it would not substantially affect its outcome. John de Vale would have to be rejected as an owner, leaving the volume an exemplar in the production of further codices by the Hammond scribe's home scriptorium. However, it is known that some of the scribe's productions – such as Trinity College R.3.21, which was owned by London mercer, Roger Thorney (Mooney 1996: 404) – were the possessions of people in a similar social position.

2.5 The Contents of the Manuscripts and their Implications for Readership

Thus far, the evidence from the manuscripts presents a slightly confused narrative, but one which in general terms is fairly clear. Both are almost certainly the product of scriptorium-based production, rather than the efforts of a scribe working on their own (despite the fact that Harley 2251 is in a single hand). This, in turn, suggests that they were both produced for commercial purposes rather than to be retained by the institution in which they had been produced. That this intention was realised for Harley 2251 is almost certainly proven by the presence of John de Vale's ownership monogram. Harley 7333's unfinished state and its almost immediate transference to Leicester Abbey, however, suggests that the requirements of its original commissioner were, in some way, negated. The physical characteristics of both manuscripts imply that both de Vale and the commissioner of Harley 7333 had a significant financial capacity, but the simplicity of the decoration in each argues that this was not great enough that they might be prepared to pay for illustration or illumination. It is, therefore, conceivable – if difficult to prove – that Harley 7333 was also created for a member of the middle class. Members of the secular Church often originated

from the wealthy sectors of society, and so a clergyman might have been as able to afford the volume as a merchant or clerk. The textual contents of the manuscript have already been noted as indicative of a secular rather than religious audience, however, and it is important to consider these contents in greater detail in an attempt to get a better idea of the potential intended readership of this codex, and thus of the readership of the *Distichs*.

Both Harley manuscripts are lengthy volumes composed of many pieces of (mostly) verse; indeed, Harley 2251 contains the largest number of distinct texts of any of the miscellanies of the *Distichs* group. Although their compendious nature means that they embrace a variety of texts, examination of their contents shows that these are weighted towards the type of material which would be expected to circulate amongst the noble and middle – that is mercantile and clerkly – classes of medieval society (here the temporal term ‘clerkly’ is intended to be in opposition to ‘clerical’, due to the increasing distinction between the priestly and bureaucratic ‘clerici’ as the fifteenth century progressed). The texts present in both Harley miscellanies reinforce the impression that these volumes were created for use in secular life, rather than that of dedicated religious service. However, the differences between the two indicate that the intended audiences of these two manuscripts had fractionally different interests at heart when selecting their contents.

2.5.1 BL Harley 2251 – Religious and Didactic Material

The poetry of BL Harley 2251 is eclectic, but with a distinctive character. It is by turns pious, moral, didactic, and occasionally entertaining, but the over-riding impression given by the miscellany is one of sober-minded contemplation, with material covering the daily physical and spiritual experiences of life. Frivolity is not absent, but is minimal in the collection. Whilst the components of the manuscript give the impression of having been put together almost at random, at least one section may have an underlying structure. This has been discussed by Maura Nolan (2008: 76-7), who sees Lydgate’s ‘Treatise for Lauandres’ as part of a group of texts focussing on Marian devotion, thus allowing the possibility that medieval readers appreciated a metaphorical layer to this bundle of texts,

specifically one in which bodily cleanliness was equated with spiritual health. Nolan has a quite complex reading of this group of poems which must be acknowledged, although not necessarily accepted. It is difficult to discern similar thematic groupings in the rest of the manuscript.

Religion is certainly a primary concern, and Lydgate is often the author of choice, as is the case for hymn translations such as *Gaude virgo mater christi* (NIMEV 464) or *Regina celi letare* (NIMEV 2570). This is not, however, to the complete exclusion of other authors, such as the now unknown composers of the six-stanza 'Prayer to the Virgin Mary' (NIMEV 183) or the nine-stanza 'Song of Christ to the Virgin Mary' (NIMEV 3225). Notable here is the Marian focus of much of this verse, although other spiritual figures are also present, such as in the 'Legend of Wulfryk the Priest' (NIMEV 1590) and 'Legend of the Monk of Paris' (NIMEV 2810). Nonetheless, figures other than Mary are few and far between, and assuming de Vale to have been the owner, he appears to have participated in the fifteenth-century enthusiasm for the Virgin, who is the main topic of some thirteen of the poems copied here, including several prayers in which she is directly addressed.

Given this concentration of Marian items, it is necessary to consider whether the manuscript may have been composed with a female audience in mind. This impression is reinforced by the block of Marian devotional material identified by Nolan, as well as the sole inclusion from the *Canterbury Tales*, the 'Prioress' Tale'; the Prioress tells a tale which centres on Marian devotion, in this case a child miraculously singing the 'Ave Maria' after death until his body is located in the well in which it has been dumped by his attackers.

The evidence does not, however, seem strong enough here to allow an assertion that the manuscript was originally intended for female readership. De Vale is too close a contemporary to the volume's production to allow much time for it to have had another owner prior to falling into his possession. He could have requested some of the material on the grounds that he expected women in his household to make use of it. However, the Virgin had a strong male as well as female following in fifteenth-century England, and so there is no reason to conclude that this had to be a compilation for a woman. Most of the other poems present in this volume are equally unisex in their potential readership, although

the 'Antifeminist Lyric' (*NIMEV 1944*) might seem specifically to militate against a female audience, as might the selections from the *Fall of Princes* which appear to have been chosen specifically for their misogynistic sentiment, even if these have been provided with tongue-in-cheek marginal abuse by John Shirley (Edwards 1972).

Beside Harley 2251's religious material, more worldly affairs are also frequently tackled through Lydgate's verse. These include his 'On the mutability of man's nature' (*NIMEV 3503*) and 'Rammeshorn' (*NIMEV 199*), accompanied by semi-satirical pieces on the nature of the world and its inhabitants, such as 'Horns Away' (*NIMEV 2625*), the 'Pain and Sorrow of Evil Marriage' (*NIMEV 919*), and 'Bycorne and Chychevache' (*NIMEV 2541*). These are only some of many examples of what might perhaps be considered Lydgate's 'observational' poetry, where a topic appears to have occurred to him in the course of daily life, rather than having derived from a definable genre such as religion, historical romance, or behavioural advice. These poems are still, broadly speaking, moral and didactic in tone. However, many deliver their advice indirectly, rather than commanding readers to follow certain precepts, as is the case for the wisdom literature similar to the *Distichs*. A small selection of this type of material is also to be found in the Harley volume. Accompanying the *Distichs* are the ubiquitous *Stans Puer ad Mensam* in its translation by Lydgate (*NIMEV 2233*) and, another frequent companion to Burgh's poem, Lydgate's 'Dietary' (*NIMEV 824*). Perhaps of most interest in this genre is the presence of the joint effort of these authors: the *Secrees of Old Philisoffres* as begun by the monk of Bury, and completed by his disciple, Burgh (*NIMEV 935*).

The presence of this last text is particularly interesting because it confirms that the Hammond scribe, when copying this volume, had access to a repository of texts which included Burgh's two major works as well as an extensive collection of Lydgate poetry. The latter features heavily in the volume; indeed fifty-two out of the eighty-seven pieces in the miscellany are by Lydgate, making him the author of some two thirds of its content. The collocation of the *Distichs* and the *Secrees* is much less common than might be expected; aside from Harley 2251, only New York, Pierpont Morgan MS. M-775 includes both pieces. In neither manuscript do they appear consecutively, implying that Burgh's

contribution to both was not recognised or, if it was, was considered unimportant. An interest in authorship does appear to be prevalent in Harley 2251, considering the concentration on Lydgate. This apparent selection of texts on the basis of authorship is a feature which appears to be shared by these two Harley manuscripts, although this is manifested in two different ways; Harley 2251 through its focus on Lydgate, whilst Harley 7333 casts its net more widely to draw in its variety of authors with courtly connections.

2.5.2 BL Harley 7333 and Courtly Literature

The texts of Harley 7333 are also multifarious, including history (the *Brut*), literary poetry (several works by Chaucer), and religious (saints' lives and Christ's passion as told by Lydgate) amongst other less easily-classifiable material. As a result, there is neither a thematic consistency, nor a particular concentration along genre lines within the collection, and thus it is difficult to suggest a unifying thread of thought for the volume. However, both the authorship of the texts and their close association with the literature of the court offer a more convincing window into their selection than their subject matter. Almost all of the works present here are by known authors, and most were not only read at court, but had close links with its occupants and customs; Chaucer's varied employment in court posts is well documented, Hoccleve worked for the Privy Seal (Burrow 2004), Lydgate was favoured by the nobility as something akin to a poet laureate (Pearsall 1970: 160 ff.), and although Gower's employment in civil or legal work is conjectured rather than certain, he dedicated his work to, and was read by, royalty (Wetherbee 1999: 609).

Moreover, the texts can potentially be viewed as being stratified in the manuscript by author rather than by theme, with the same author often appearing two or three times in a row (cf. Table 2). Chaucer's work appears firstly in the lengthy *Canterbury Tales* (fols. 37r-118v), then in a grouping of medium-length poems (fols. 129v-134r), and finally in a collection of short pieces collected on a single page (fol. 147v). There are bands also of Lydgate (fols. 31r-36r & 136r-147r). It should be noted that the 'Complaint of a Prisoner against Fortune' has been dubiously ascribed to Lydgate (Hammond 1909: 483),

and that Burgh's *Distichs* may have been routinely confused for a Lydgate composition. For the smaller items to which an author cannot be definitively attached, there is the possibility that their location is determined partly by their theme – for instance, the proverbs of 'Impingham' sit easily amidst the extracts from Gower, which are of a similar, highly didactic nature; meanwhile the balades of 'Halsham' could easily be considered part of the Chaucer block which precedes them, or to belong with the Lydgate poem which follows them, especially as Lydgate appears to have later adopted and expanded these stanzas himself (South 1935: 364).

Folio	Author	Text Title
f. 1r		Prose <i>Brut</i>
f. 25r	Benedict Burgh	<i>Distichs of Cato</i>
f. 30v		Complaint of a Prisoner against Fortune
f. 31r	John Lydgate	Pedigree of English Kings
f. 33r	John Lydgate	<i>Guy of Warwick</i>
f. 36r	Richard Sellyng	The Old Man's Counsel
f. 36v	Charles d'Orleans	Mon Cuer Chante
f. 37r	Geoffrey Chaucer	<i>The Canterbury Tales</i>
f. 120r	John Gower	<i>Confessio Amantis</i> (extracts)
f. 120v	"Impingham"	Proverbs
f. 122r	John Gower	<i>Confessio Amantis</i> (extracts)
f. 129v	Geoffrey Chaucer	<i>Parliament of Fowls</i>
f. 132v	Geoffrey Chaucer	<i>Complaint of Mars</i>
f. 134r	Geoffrey Chaucer	<i>Anelida and Arcite</i>
f. 135r		Complaint against Hope
f. 136r	Geoffrey Chaucer (?)	Complaint d'Amours
f. 136r	John Lydgate	<i>Life of St. Edmund and St. Fremund</i>
f. 147r	John Lydgate	<i>Christ's Passion</i>
f. 147v	Geoffrey Chaucer	Lak of Stedfastnesse
f. 147v	Geoffrey Chaucer	Gentilesse
f. 147v	Geoffrey Chaucer	Truth
f. 147v	Geoffrey Chaucer	Complaint to his Purse
f. 148r	John Halsham	'Two balades'
f. 149r	John Lydgate	Verses on the Kings of England (to Henry VI)
f. 149v	Benedict Burgh (?)	'A Christmase Game'
f. 150r		<i>Gesta Romanorum</i>
f. 204r	Thomas Hoccleve	<i>De Regimine Principum</i>

Table 2 Simplified contents of MS. BL Harley 7333 with highlighting to show texts by same authors

In terms of the ordering of the lesser-known items of the volume, it is interesting that the 'Complaint of a Prisoner against Fortune' should immediately follow the *Distichs*. This is because the 'Complaint' contains two quotations from the *Disticha Catonis* (in Latin), each of which finish a stanza of the poem. These are, at line 42, part of distich I.38:

Maxima etenim morum semper paciencia virtus

and, at line 49, part of distich II.14:

Esto forti Animo cum sis dampnatus inique

The proximity of the poem containing these quotations to a version of the *Disticha* from which they are taken is difficult to see as coincidence. There is no evidence that the scribe believed the *Distichs* and 'Prisoner' to be by the same poet, although it cannot be ruled out that he thought them both to be Lydgate poems or – less plausibly – Burgh poems; most likely is that they were considered appropriate for juxtaposition because of the reference from one to the other. This reinforces the point that the *Disticha* were well-enough known that a scribe (or commissioning patron, or bookseller) would recognise extracts from them in quotation.

2.5.3 Factors Motivating Choice of Text

The extent to which selection of the other texts can be said to have been motivated specifically by an awareness of authorship could be debated. Harley 7333 could have been compiled of material which was popular in the milieu from which it emerged, rather than as a result of identification of the specific authors of its material. In relation to Harley 2251, it is possible that de Vale – assuming he did commission the manuscript rather than receiving it second-hand or as a gift – requested the genre of the contents but did not specify the exact material he wished collected. The Hammond scribe, in his apparent reliance on the manuscripts of John Shirley, could then have compiled a miscellany mainly of

Lydgatiana simply because this was the material that was most readily available to him. This hypothesis accounts for the third of the manuscript which does *not* consist of Lydgate texts, those which fitted the scribe's brief, but were drawn from other manuscripts available to him. Alternatively, de Vale's Bury origins may well have led him to request a compilation of Lydgate texts.

The disparate interests of Harley 2251 encompass almost all the factors which would be of importance in the life of a middle-class secretarial clerk such as de Vale: religion, morality, social advancement, general knowledge, and a little entertainment. This leaves very few aspects of life completely untouched – perhaps the most obvious omission is any particularly personal information that would be useful in the running of a household, which would in any case be the preserve of a commonplace book. This lack is supplied by another of de Vale's manuscripts, which is indeed a commonplace book, British Library MS. Add. 48031A (v. Kekewich *et al.* 1995). This manuscript also includes a concentration of material in another genre which might appear to be missing in Harley 2251: politics.

2.5.3.1 Political Affiliations

Some of the material in the Harley volume could be considered politically centred, and there are several which are specifically related to the Lancastrian regime, such as the poem to Henry VI on his coronation (*NIMEV 2211*), the 'Letter to Gloucester' seeking financial support (*NIMEV 2825*) and the 'balade on a New Year's gift of an eagle to Henry VI' (*NIMEV 3604*). There is no real evidence of Lancastrian partisanship, however, as Lydgate's poem on the Kings of England (*NIMEV 3632*) includes a stanza continuing it from its original end point (with Henry VI) to Edward IV. That the final page (fol. 4r) of this poem has been left blank may suggest that the scribe imagined it being further updated if necessary! Given the relative stability of Edward IV's reign, this may be a sign that the scribe envisioned the manuscript being in long-term use, unless it was copied either during Henry VI's brief reinstatement to the throne (his 'readoption') or after the battle of Bosworth when a further continuation might seem eminently desirable. The concentration on Lydgate's Lancastrian verse

almost certainly results not from de Vale's political allegiance, but from a combination of the poet's activity for the court and the derivation of Harley 2251 from the manuscripts of John Shirley, who appears to have been drawn particularly to Lydgate's topical and historical poems.

It would be difficult to say the same of Harley 7333, whose Lancastrian allegiance is evident on other levels than subject matter alone. Here the texts chosen suggest a commissioner intimately familiar with the English nobility. Not every text can be identified as harbouring political meaning, and so the volume cannot necessarily be said to have been consciously intended to display its owner's affiliation. At the same time, the texts selected are an indication of the writing to which the commissioner had been exposed and found desirable enough that he or she might instigate their copying. Amongst these are several which owe their existence to members of the aristocracy under Henrician rule: Lydgate's *Guy of Warwick* is stated as having been commissioned by Margaret Beauchamp, daughter of the Earl of Warwick (fol. 33r); and the same poet's *Life of Sts. Edmund and Fremund* was composed at the request of Bishop William Curteys to commemorate the visit of Henry VI to Bury St. Edmunds in 1422/3 (Pearsall 1970: 281). In addition, the *Pedigree of English Kings*, also by Lydgate, is a translation of Laurence Calot's French original instigated by Richard Beauchamp as propaganda for Henry VI's claim to the thrones of England and France. More loosely connected to this affinity is Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, whose original dedicatee, Richard II, was replaced in a revised version with Henry IV as Gower followed the changing political winds. This event was, almost certainly, too far in the past to have substantially affected the choice to include excerpts here, and the fact that only small sections of the *Confessio* are employed suggests that the stories these excerpts tell are more important than historical support of Henry VI's grandfather.

A more interesting and convincing example of close connections to court culture is to be found in the presence of poetry composed by Charles d'Orléans. Charles of Valois, Duke of Orléans, was at the head of the Armagnac faction as well as nephew to Charles VI (and hence in line of succession to the French throne). Having been captured following the Battle of Agincourt, he was too politically-important a prisoner for the English to release, and much debate and

wrangling followed over his potential ransom. Whilst this negotiation was being conducted, Charles was shuttled around between the houses and castles of noblemen and seems to have enjoyed a relatively luxurious form of captivity. In this time, he wrote poetry extensively, and formed friendships with at least one of his captors, particularly William de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk. De la Pole acted as his jailor for the final four years of Charles' twenty-five year imprisonment, and has been credited with inspiring him in his prolific poetic output (e.g. by MacCracken 1911: 145).

Charles d'Orléans therefore occupied a unique position in the society of the time. Whilst technically a prisoner of war, he was apparently treated with respect by the English nobility who were his warders. He remained within the consciousness of the political leaders of the country as the pros and cons of his captivity were vociferously discussed by such figures as Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, who was adamantly opposed to his release. The result was that he became an adjunct to courtly culture; a figure equal in fame to Chaucer or Gower for his circumstances, although probably not for his poetry. That the commissioner of Harley 7333 presumably requested poetry by d'Orléans suggests that they were aware of his writing as a result of his interaction with English court culture.

This apparent familiarity with court culture and literature joins the evidence of surviving library catalogues in reinforcing the probability that Harley 7333 was not commissioned by a religious patron. Members of the clergy were present in the courts of the aristocracy and the king, but a link between these circles and Leicester Abbey is, so far, lacking. It appears that one of the abbots, Richard Rothley, was favoured by Henry V in the first decades of the fifteenth century (Thompson 1930: 60), but this would be too distant in time for a link to remain to the court of the period in which the manuscript was produced.

2.5.4 The *Distichs* as a Part of Court Culture?

The presence of the *Distichs* in either volume is interesting. Its position alongside courtly material in Harley 7333 raises the interesting possibility that it was an adjunct to this milieu. The present-day tendency to dismiss the *Distichs* as dull

and uninteresting means that this is a surprising proposition, but it is in fact far from impossible, especially when it is noted that sections of Burgh's poems were inscribed on the walls of the Percy family's castle at Wressell in Yorkshire, as attested in BL MS. Royal 18.D.II (fols. 207r-209r).¹⁶ Burgh's poem feels more at home in the moralising material of BL Harley 2251, but it is still significant that it should have found a place here amongst material which is predominately by important poets of the time, in particular Lydgate and Chaucer. The respect given to the text is also, perhaps, shown by de Vale's choice of the first page of the *Distichs* as the location for his monogram, despite the fact that this was not the first folio of the manuscript, nor did it contain significantly more blank space for the insertion of the mark than other pages. It is also not the first folio of the quire the text begins in, so that even if it was inserted before the quires were bound together, the page was deliberately chosen.

These manuscripts seem to bear indications of an audience which was neither at the bottom nor the top end of the literate sections of society, but rather occupied a middle ground that would come to be filled with what is now conceptualised as the 'middle class', but which at the time in practice, consisted in merchants, clerks, and secular clergy, up to the level of minor nobility. The positioning of the *Distichs* in this readership can be strengthened by the consideration of the connection of both these manuscripts to John Shirley, who gives the impression of being at the centre of these circles.

2.6 Manuscripts with Connections to the Harley MSS.: The 'Hammond Group'

Thanks to a shared derivation from manuscripts associated with John Shirley, there are a number of codices which can be closely linked with BL MSS. Harley 2251 and Harley 7333. These further manuscripts will be considered shortly, but it is also worth discussing other volumes which scholarship of the last century – and particularly that of Eleanor Hammond – has noted as being related to BL

¹⁶ Copying poetry onto walls was not as unusual in the Middle Ages as it seems in the present day. For a fascinating discussion of such 'graffiti' verses, see Fleming (2001: 46-51), where BL Royal 18.D.II is mentioned on p. 48, although the *Distichs* are ignored.

Harley 2251. Such potential connections have been identified on the basis of shared contents, and some of the groups of shared texts include the *Distichs*. This recognition of their potential inter-relation allows these other manuscripts to be brought into the same sub-group as the two Harley volumes, providing further information on the interests of the noble/merchant class individuals who appear to have owned them. This extra information does not take the form merely of other texts which appealed to this audience, but of the type of grouping of text which they favoured.

British Library MS. Add. 34360 will be discussed in detail when considering the manuscripts of John Shirley, but cannot be overlooked entirely for the current argument. It shares a significant number of texts with BL Harley 2251, and the two are believed to have been produced using the same Shirleian miscellanies as exemplars for a large component of their content (Connolly 1998: 178-180). Some of the texts shared by the Harley 2251 and Additional 34360 miscellanies are rarely found elsewhere, and interesting patterns emerge from a tallying of the other manuscripts in which they do appear (numbers in bold and titles below refer to entries in the *NIMEV*):

1. Four only appear in these two manuscripts (i.e. Harley 2251 and Add. 34360): **183** Prayer to the Virgin Mary; **1682** a prayer beginning 'Iesu Crist kepe oure lyppes from pollucioun'; **3206** *Epitaphium Ducis Glowcestrie*; and **4228** On mutability
2. **860** Complaint of a Prisoner against Fortune – appears only in these manuscripts and in BL Harley 7333.
3. **2572** paraphrase of Psalm 102 by Lydgate – appears only in these manuscripts and in Shirley's Cambridge, Trinity College MS. R.3.20.
4. **3538** Four lines beginning 'þer ys none so wyse man but he may wisdame leere' – appears only in these manuscripts and Shirley's Oxford Bodleian MS. Ashmole 59.
5. **3761** *The Craft of Lovers* – appears only in these manuscripts and Shirley-derived Cambridge, Trinity College MS. R.3.19
6. **2688** Lydgate's *Gloriosa dicta sunt* – appears in these two manuscripts, in Shirley's Trinity R.3.20, in BL Add. 29729 (John

Stow's 16th C. copy of Trinity R.3.20/Harley 2251) and in BL MS. Harley 2255.

7. **3673** Lydgate's translation of *Stella Celi extirpauit* – appears in these two manuscripts and in Cambridge, Jesus College MS. 56 (a *Distichs* manuscript), in Shirley-derived Cambridge Trinity College MS. R.3.21, in Harley 2255, and in Manchester, Chetham's Library MS. 6709.
8. **4245** Lydgate's *Verbum caro factum est* – appears in these two manuscripts, and in Shirley's Ashmole 59 and Trinity R.3.20, *Distichs* manuscript Jesus College 56, Harley 2255, and Oxford Bodleian MS. Laud. misc. 683.

From this list, distinct clusters of manuscripts appear: those compiled by Shirley, those derived from Shirley volumes, and those which may be connected on the basis of shared contents. The first, Shirleian, group has already been noted as an important source for the texts of the Hammond scribe's productions, as well as for at least one other scribe with whom he can be reliably identified as working, and will be discussed in more detail in the following section. The inclusion of BL Harley 7333 in this group is particularly intriguing for the possibility that its scribe may have worked from one of the same exemplars as the Hammond scribe. On the other hand, John Stow's copy of Shirleian texts is an oddity on the fringes of the second group; it is not of interest at this point, although it potentially impacts on the theory that Shirley and the Hammond scribe's manuscripts were preserved and transmitted through the publishing trade, as has been suggested above (section 2.4).

The third group is, however, particularly illuminating. The manuscripts which are neither by Shirley nor clearly based on Shirleian exemplars consist in the following: BL Harley 2255; Cambridge, Jesus College 56; Manchester, Chetham's Library 6709; and Oxford, Bodleian Laud. misc. 683. This list is remarkable for its cross-over with a group of manuscripts identified by Eleanor Hammond as potentially related to Harley 2251 (1905: 23-25). Hammond's cataloguing of the items present in the Harley codex led her to observe that 'It is a conspicuous fact in these lists that certain MSS. [...] appear and reappear as possessed of texts of some of these poems' (Hammond 1905: 23). Thus, on the

basis of shared texts, she identified the following manuscripts as being of particular interest:

Cambridge, University Library MS. Hh.4.12

Cambridge, Jesus College MS. 56

Oxford, Bodleian MS. Laud. misc. 683

BL MS. Lansdowne 699

BL MS. Harley 2255

This group includes three of the codices identified above as sharing rare texts with the Harley and Additional manuscripts, namely Jesus College 56, Bodl. Laud. misc. 683, and BL Harley 2255. It is also noteworthy that CUL Hh.4.12 and Jesus College 56 are amongst those which contain copies of Burgh's *Distichs*.

Hammond's observations were, however, based on frequency of repeated texts, rather than rarity of those texts in other codices. Her article identifies seventeen items from Harley 2251 as a basis for comparison with the volumes listed above, with the result that a grouping of shared texts can be clearly shown. It is thus possible to approach the question of related manuscripts from two different angles and achieve the same result, which strengthens the likelihood that Harley 2251 is genuinely related to these other manuscripts.

Hammond pays particular attention to the Lydgate miscellany, BL Harley 2255, for which she lists twelve items shared with Harley 2251 (1905: 23-24). This discovery is of real significance for the investigation of the origins and audience of the miscellanies, as Harley 2255 bears the arms of the abbey of Bury St. Edmunds, Lydgate's home for much of his life. The arms displayed in the manuscript appeared to have been altered to incorporate elements from those of William Curteys, bishop of the abbey, and despite some reservations this had long been interpreted as a sign that the volume was a Lydgate anthology composed for Curteys (Hammond 1905: 24; Pearsall 1970: 77; 1997: 82). Recent investigation has, however, cast more doubt on this view, and suggested the manuscript was not produced until the 1460s, postdating the death of Curteys (Reimer & Farvolden 2005). This conclusion fortunately does not invalidate the connection, through the arms, with the abbey.

It is not clear whether the anthology was itself copied at Bury St. Edmunds, although this would be a reasonable surmise; the hand of part of the

manuscript is thought to be that of the 'Edmund-Fremund scribe', who was responsible for copying other, sometimes lavishly illustrated, manuscripts of Lydgate's work, and was probably himself based in Bury (Scott 1982: 343 n. 33; 362). The close connection of the Hammond scribe to the Cook household, along with the dialect evidence from TCC R.14.52, suggests that the scribe may well have hailed from the vicinity of Bury St. Edmunds. This increases the likelihood that the scribe at some point had access either to Harley 2255, or the exemplar texts from which it was copied. He could have made his own copies of these texts for use in commercial book production, either before or while he was employed in Multon's stationery business.

It is also possible, however, that rare items are shared between these two manuscripts for other reasons. If BL Harley 2255 was indeed produced at Bury St. Edmunds, then it is unsurprising that its scribes would have had access to Lydgate's poetry which has not been preserved elsewhere. As home to the poet, it would be expected that the Abbey would have in its possession one of the largest concentrations of Lydgate's poetry in the country. Perhaps the second largest collection may have been held in the collection of Shirley, especially if he did indeed have a personal connection to the poet. It may, therefore, be coincidence that the contents of BL MSS. Harley 2255 and Harley 2251 overlap so extensively drawing, as they probably do, on two of the greatest Lydgate repositories, rather than on each other. It is also entirely possible, however, that Shirley borrowed manuscripts from Bury St. Edmunds to form the exemplars for his miscellanies, and that these same manuscripts were later used as the exemplars for Harley 2255.

Hammond also draws a strong comparison between Harley 2255 and Cambridge, Jesus College MS. 56, which she identifies as sharing twenty-three items (1905: 25). Like Harley 2255, Jesus College 56 is a collection of Lydgate poetry. Although the *Distichs* is included in the manuscript, that this is the only text not by Lydgate strongly suggests that it was mistakenly included in the scribe's belief that all the poems were by the same author. Both Harley 2255 and Jesus College 56 were produced in the second half of the fifteenth century, and although a lack of internal evidence makes more accurate dating difficult, the style of decoration in Harley 2255 suggests that it may have been copied in the

1460s (Reimer & Farvolden 2005: 245); there is no evidence to allow precise dating of Jesus College 56. The repeated appearance of certain texts has suggested to some the possibility that a ‘canon’ of Lydgate’s works was beginning to develop in the couple of decades following the poet’s death, perhaps largely circulating as small booklets which collected together particular items of his work (Brusendorff 1925: 207 n.7). If this were the case, some of these may appear regularly in other volumes (e.g. Cambridge, University Library MS. Hh.IV.12) owing to their presence in these miniature ‘collected works’. This would make the connection between Hammond’s group of manuscripts largely illusory. However, no strong evidence has yet been discovered for any extensive, regular grouping of Lydgate’s minor poetry. The closest that is forthcoming thusfar is the extensive repetition of texts between Harley 2255 and Jesus College 56. Lydgate’s constant output of poetic material must have made it difficult to compose any sort of complete canon for him, and it seems unlikely that such an endeavour was attempted (and possibly not even conceived of) within the poet’s lifetime.

The *NIMEV* now allows a more reliable assessment of the patterns than was possible when Hammond made her observations. The following table shows the number of texts shared between manuscripts (it should be noted that, as the *NIMEV* is used as a source, only items of poetry are included here):

	Harley 2251	CUL Hh.4.12	Jesus 56	Laud 683	Lansd. 699	Harley 2255
Harley 2251		9	9	9	9	14
CUL Hh.4.12	9		7	3	5	7
Jesus 56	9	7		14	4	23
Laud 683	9	3	14		6	14
Lansd. 699	9	5	4	6		5
Harley 2255	14	7	23	14	5	
Total Number of Poems in MS	86	19	28	33	19	45

Table 3 Numbers of Texts Shared by MSS. Identified by Hammond 1905

From this information, some significant correlations can be discerned. Most striking, perhaps, is that BL Harley 2255 does indeed share twenty-three of its forty-five poems with Jesus College 56. It also shares a sizeable number with BL Harley 2251. The vast number of pieces present in Harley 2251 make it slightly

more difficult to discern important overlaps, but it can be seen that, as proportions of the other manuscripts, Harley 2251 contains approximately half of the texts of both CUL Hh.4.12 and Lansdowne 699, and approximately a third of the texts which are present in each of Jesus College 56, Laud misc. 683, and Harley 2255.

Whilst this table does suggest a relationship between these manuscripts, it is also important to consider which texts are shared. Forty-five items appear twice or more in this group, although none of them is found in all six volumes. The texts which appear multiple times are almost exclusively Lydgatian items; the two exceptions are Chaucer's 'Balade of Fortune' and Burgh's *Parvus Cato*, which have both been copied into two manuscripts. Two poems appear five times across the group: Lydgate's translation of the *Stans Puer ad Mensam* and his 'Horns Away'. This reflects in miniature the success of these poems, which are still extant in several copies (twenty-four for the *Stans Puer*, nine for 'Horns Away'), and seem to have reflected the contemporary cultural preoccupation with manners, morality, and – in the case of 'Horns Away' – a perennial flustering of the old by the fashions of their juniors.

Drawing conclusions about the relationships of the texts in this group is still tricky, however, for exactly this reason; not only these two, but most of the texts which appear in several of the miscellanies of this group, also survive in large numbers. This may be a function of Lydgate's influence as a poet, or it may indicate that there was a central core to his poetry, which perhaps circulated (or, indeed, originated in) the London stationers' shops. A number of texts form a nucleus of important works, whilst others hover around this group, at times paid more or less attention, according to the vicissitudes of the reading public's interest. This means that the possibility cannot be discounted that the overlap is coincidental given that most of the volumes include large numbers of Lydgate poems.

2.6.1 Readers' Interests/Use of the *Distichs* in Hammond Group MSS.

It is, fortunately, not necessary for the present purposes to define more precisely the relationship of these manuscripts to one another; more important is to

establish that the poems found in the Harley miscellanies circulated together, and thus shared a similar audience. The manuscripts involved, and especially those of the *Distichs*, are similar enough in character to the Harley volumes as to allow some further insight into the interests of the section of society which used these books. As implied, the manuscripts are largely accumulations of Lydgate's poetry, and particularly his medium length works, with the *Fabula duorum mercatorum* and the *Testament* serving as the longest poems preserved in the group, each appearing several times.¹⁷ There is, generally, a balance between Lydgate's religious verse and his more worldly didactic work, although in some of these manuscripts the scales are tipped in favour of spiritual writing. This is the case for Bodl. Laud misc. 683, in which eighteen out of twenty-six Lydgate poems have religious subject matter, and Jesus College 56, which contains twenty-seven Lydgate pieces, fifteen of which are religious. Even if such volumes are considered to be predominately devotional, however, they still contain a significant amount of secular material. This would accord with Lydgate's apparent appeal to pious laypeople as much as, and perhaps more than, members of the Church.

CUL Hh.4.12, which also contains a copy of Burgh's *Distichs*, provides an additional point of interest for the fact that it is composed of small booklets, which appear to have been produced speculatively and later bound together. Its collection of material is very similar to the overall feel of Harley 2251, containing some religious verse (e.g. Lydgate's 'Legend of St. Austin at Compton', *NIMEV 1875*), and medium-length poems of Chaucer and Lydgate (e.g. the *Parliament of Fowls*, *NIMEV 3412*, and the *Churl and the Bird*, *NIMEV 2784*). The presence of these is presumably accounted for by practical considerations, in that too many short poems would need to be collected together to make a booklet of reasonable size for sale. This gives a volume that appears to be pitched almost, but not quite, at the level of entertainment; there is still a considerable level of sobriety to the

¹⁷ The *Fabula duorum mercatorum* (*NIMEV 1481*) is present in BL Harley 2251, CUL Hh.4.12, BL Harley 2255, and BL Lansdowne 699. It also appears in *Distichs* manuscript Bodl. Rawl. poet. 32, Shirley-related BL Add. 34360, and Leiden UL, Vossius Germ. Gall. Q. 9. The *Testament* (*NIMEV 2464*) is present in fifteen manuscripts including, from the present grouping, Bodl. Laud misc. 683; Cambridge, Jesus College 56; BL Harley 2251; and BL Harley 2255. It is also present in the *Distichs* manuscripts BL Royal 18.D.II and BL Add. 34193 along with Stow's BL Add. 29729. In addition, it is found in Shirley-related TCC R.3.19 and also in Leiden UL, Vossius Germ. Gall. Q. 9.

proceedings. This feeling is further reinforced by the positioning of the *Distichs* as the first item when the booklets have been bound.

The other *Distichs* manuscript in this group is Cambridge, Jesus College 56. As previously established, this is a Lydgate anthology; the single divergence from this author-centred approach is Burgh's text. The manuscript comprises a representative sample of the poet's work, although with the aforementioned favouring of religious items over the more secular, moralistic verse. This includes glosses on and translation of hymns, such as an 'Exposition of the Pater Noster' (*NIMEV 448*) and his translation of *Stella celi extirpavit* (*NIMEV 3673*), and a number of prayers to saints, such as St. Leonard (*NIMEV 2812*) and St. Ursula and the 11,000 virgins (*NIMEV 4243*).

The physical state of some of the pages of Jesus College 56 may offer some insight into the interests of the users of this particular volume beyond their liking for Lydgate's verse. The book has received moderate use, as is evidenced by dirt on some of the pages, and there is a possibility that the annotations of a previous user have been erased at some point in its history. If the state of the pages can be taken to indicate which sections have received most use, the *Distichs* appears to have been favoured above the Lydgate items; its initial page is very dirty, and the writing smudged, as are some of the pages in the middle of the text. In particular distich IV.27 on fols. 90v-91r, advocating the benefits of 'prudence', has been badly rubbed. In addition, the bottom of fol. 82 has been cut out for unknown reasons. The last few pages are also very dirty to the point of near illegibility, but this is almost certainly a result of the volume lying unbound for a time, which would not account for the wear on earlier folios. Earlier texts in the volume have also been paid some attention, as is suggested by marginal 'nota' marks, but none to the point of damage as in the *Distichs*.

CUL Hh.4.12 has been the subject of yet heavier use, and bears annotation in at least two different hands, although one of these employs a Tudor secretary script, and so is not contemporaneous with its original ownership. The volume appears to have been purchased (and presumably its binding arranged) by 'John Peter y^e menstrell' who signs his name on fol. 44v, and who can possibly be identified with a musician in the service of Henry VIII (Boffey 1996: 78-79). Peter has made thorough use of his book, if he is indeed responsible for much of

the annotation, which includes letter practice (e.g. fols. 7v-9r), attempts to copy sections of the text from the book (e.g. fols. 16r-17r), and potentially efforts to compose his own verse (e.g. fol. 34v). As in Jesus College 56, the *Distichs* have received the heaviest use in this manuscript; some of the most heavily annotated pages are in these quires, and fols. 5 and 6 have had their top portions precisely excised to remove the Latin distichs which are then copied in the bottom margins to make up the loss.

2.6.2 Social Position of Owners of Hammond Group Manuscripts

For these two volumes, John Peter would fit into the loose conglomeration of courtiers of moderate income who have thus far been suggested as the likely audience of the 'secular' sub-group of the *Distichs* manuscripts currently under discussion. That this 'menstrall' is of more restricted means than John de Vale is clear from the smaller size of his book, and its compilation from booklets which may have been bought over time and bound later, rather than composition as a single bespoke miscellany.

The audience of Jesus College 56 is more difficult to determine. Annotation of the volume is sparse and generic. The preponderance of religious verse focussed on female figures may suggest it was originally intended for female readers, possibly even nuns. Reservations must again be raised about assuming that Marian material was only of interest to women, but on this occasion the Virgin Mary is not the only female saint to be venerated, which increases the possibility of a female reader. However, the only names present in the ownership markings on the volume are names of men.

Given the preponderance of religious verse, it is possible that Jesus College 56 is an example of the interface between the secular world for which the majority of the volumes in the Shirley-related group were produced, and the cloistered religious world of the nunnery. On occasion, manuscripts for both audiences will have been produced from the same exemplars. In this case, it is possible that both manuscripts for court patrons and those for a female monastic audience are descended from exemplars that were held in Bury St. Edmunds, perhaps those which were used to compose the Lydgate 'collected works' in BL

Harley 2255. Alternatively, Jesus College 56 may have been produced for a secular audience and, indeed, one that was not specifically female. The most that can be said with confidence about this Lydgate anthology is that its annotation appears to be too neat to allow for the possibility that it was in the hands of children for any extended period of time, if at all.

If Jesus College 56 does provide a cross-over point between the books of the secular world and those of religious institutions, it is not problematic for the overall argument that the manuscripts in this group were read by a courtly audience – or even one that is just sub-courtly, as John Peter might be considered. Lydgate's works would most naturally accumulate in his home abbey, the Benedictine Bury St. Edmunds, which would thus be the interface point between the reception of his works within and without the cloister. That BL Harley 2251 is close to this interface is already suggested by its shared contents with the Abbey's BL Harley 2255. The similarly religious preoccupations of Jesus College 56 serve to strengthen this impression. However, BL Harley 2251 was almost certainly used in the secular world, as was CUL Hh.4.12, and only one of the related manuscripts which contains the *Distichs* (i.e. Jesus College 56) can be considered to cross the boundary into the religiously-centred group, and only dubiously so at that.

2.7 Manuscripts Related to the Harley MSS.: The 'Mooney Group'

Eleanor Hammond's group is not the only collection of manuscripts to have been identified as potentially of relevance to Harley 2251. Linne Mooney discusses a group of manuscripts 'whose contents have been compared with those of the Shirley volumes: BL MS Egerton 1995, by William Gregory, skinner, of London [...]; Bodleian MS Fairfax 16 [...]; Cambridge, Jesus College MS 56 [...]; Lambeth Palace Library MS 306 [...]; and Leiden, University Library MS Vossius Germ. Gall. Q.9' (2003: 184-185). On the basis of textual investigation of Lydgate's 'Kings of England', however, she identifies other manuscripts which are textually much closer to those of the Harley manuscripts under consideration in the present discussion. (Mooney *et al.* 2001). This 'Mooney group' of manuscripts will be considered in the discussion of Shirley and the audience of his manuscripts. The

manuscripts listed but which have been sifted into other branches of the family tree are still worth consideration, however, as they do have comparable contents and thus provide information on the usage of manuscripts similar to those in which the *Distichs* appears.

Of these, Oxford, Bodleian MS. Fairfax 16 is of particular interest for the choice of texts it contains. Many of these texts are shared with manuscripts in the *Distichs* group. The greatest cross-over is with Cambridge, Magdalene College MS. Pepys 2006, which shares thirteen poems with the Fairfax volume¹⁸. Almost as important are Harley 7333 (eleven shared texts¹⁹), the Findern manuscript (ten shared texts²⁰) and Harley 2251 (eight shared texts²¹). Another eight *Distichs* manuscripts share either one or two texts with Fairfax 16, which is not significant enough to suggest strong links. Four texts are shared by three or all four of this group (i.e. Fairfax 16, Pepys 2006, Findern, Harley 2251 and Harley 7333). These shared texts are Chaucer's *Parliament of Fowls* (*NIMEV 3412*), Lydgate's 'Tied with a Line' (*NIMEV 3436*), Chaucer's *Complaint of Venus* (*NIMEV 3542*), Chaucer's *Anelida and Arcite* (*NIMEV 3670*) and Chaucer's *Complaint to his Purse* (*NIMEV 3787*). That four out of these five poems are by Chaucer reinforces the point that a central concern of these manuscripts is literary verse, especially that of the most revered poet of the age.

Of this group of five manuscripts – Fairfax 16, Findern, Harley 2251, Harley 7333 and Pepys 2006 – the fifteenth-century ownership of three is known with a reasonable degree of certainty. That of Harley 2251 has already been extensively discussed (section 2.4.2). Due to the presence of a coat of arms on fol. 14v, Oxford, Bodleian Fairfax 16 can be traced to the Stanley family of Hooton in Cheshire, and was probably initially owned by John Stanley (Norton-Smith 1979: xiii). Stanley's life is traceable through official documentation and little else, but this is enough to establish that he held both military positions and served for fifteen years as the Usher of the Chamber in the royal household (Wedgwood 1936: 799). The manuscript bears a full-page, full-colour illustration on fol. 14v, at the bottom of which the Stanley of Hooton crest is positioned, suggesting that

¹⁸ These are *NIMEV* Nos. **100, 239, 809, 851, 913, 991, 1507, 3412, 3542, 3661, 3670, 3747, 3787**

¹⁹ *NIMEV* Nos. **370, 809, 913, 1388, 3190, 3412, 3436, 3504, 3632, 3670, 3787**

²⁰ *NIMEV* Nos. **100, 666, 1086, 2756, 3361, 3412, 3436, 3542, 3670, 3787**

²¹ *NIMEV* Nos. **239, 2218, 3436, 3542, 3632, 3661, 3787, 4230**

its owner could afford a certain degree of luxury. Composed of separate booklets, Fairfax 16 lies in a production grey-area somewhere between speculative copying and bespoke commissioning. Its subject matter, as described by Norton-Smith, 'derives from the world of "courtly experience" and concerns itself with sophisticated morality and the trials and tribulations of *fin amors*' (1979: vii). This places the manuscript firmly in the same category as BL Harley 7333, and close to BL Harley 2251 in its concentration on 'sophisticated morality', and confirms consciously literary poetry as of interest to members of the 'landed gentry' (Norton-Smith 1979: vii).

The Findern manuscript hails from a similar background, although it is believed to have been partly compiled by members of the Findern family over an extended period of time rather than composed as a single unit (Beadle & Owen 1977: vii-viii). The Finderns were not the scribes of all the texts in the volume, but may rather have added small poems to an original core written by professional scribes and by members of other families, one of whom may have owned the volume prior to its acquisition by the Finderns (Harris 1981). The editors of a facsimile edition of the Findern manuscript assert that it is 'immediately conspicuous as an anthology of secular and "courtly" verse' (Beadle & Owen: xii), although they also note the opinion of J.E. Stevens (1961: 224) that it is a vicarious attempt by those outside the court circle to enjoy the literature of the higher nobility. Recent discussion of the manuscript has focussed on the possibility that several of the hands are those of female members of the Findern family, and that they both composed their own verse as well as copying pre-existing verse of particular interest to women (Grisé 2010: 585). This intersects in an interesting way with compilations such as Cambridge, Jesus College MS. 56, and the possibility that a portion of the 'middle-class' *Distichs* manuscripts were mainly used by women will be considered further in chapter four (section 4.4.3).

The Mooney Group of manuscripts, which includes MSS. Harley 7333 and Harley 2251 with their largely shared contents and very similar backgrounds, suggests that a significant number of the manuscripts of Burgh's poem were in circulation amongst the lower nobility and the upper middle classes of the fifteenth century. From the texts to be found in these manuscripts it appears that these readers were generally pious and interested in material which fed a desire

to meditate on quotidian concerns both in this world and beyond it. The audience appears to be by no means limited to the men of the household, although the evidence of annotation yields male names far more frequently than female names. The cross-gender appeal of many of these literary texts also obscures an accurate impression of the size of the female component. Serious-minded Lydgate poetry shaded into the less oppressive literature of Chaucer, alongside the poems which inspired him and those which were in turn inspired by him. The audience of these books were, therefore, not determined to invest all of their time in work and none in play.

2.8 John Shirley

The figure of John Shirley has, until now, been allowed to occupy a position on the fringes of the discussion. However, his name has been raised in connection with many of the manuscripts which have been either mentioned in passing or considered in detail. As a hub of manuscript production and textual dissemination, Shirley offers an excellent opportunity both to bring the members of this reader network into sharper focus, and to uncover some of the circumstances in which the *Distichs* and its associated literature were transmitted throughout the social circles delineated in discussion of the Hammond and Mooney groups of manuscripts in the preceding sections.

John Shirley (c. 1366–1456) seems to have spent the majority of his life as a clerk in the service of the Earls of Warwick, particularly to Richard Beauchamp, who held the title of thirteenth earl of Warwick from 1403 to his death in 1439. Shirley's relationship with Beauchamp is firmly established, with documents surviving as early as 1403 to support the connection (Griffiths 2004), and there is a firm possibility that prior to this date he was in the employ of Beauchamp's father, Thomas (Connolly 1998: 14-23). Surviving records indicate that he was mainly employed in a secretarial role, writing letters and performing errands for Warwick, including overseeing more than one financial transaction and briefly taking a role as customs official at the port of London (Ross 1956: 14; Doyle 1961: 94-95).

The precise nature of Shirley's work for Beauchamp is obscure; details of his day-to-day activity are largely lacking outside a scattering of official documentation. Nonetheless, he appears to have been in a position of trust and perhaps close acquaintance with the Earl. Not only was he entrusted with financial matters, but his position as a secretary to Beauchamp at a time when it was unusual for private noblemen to employ such a figure, makes it all the more likely that Shirley's access and list of contacts were unique in his age (Ross 1956: 14). He would likely have been familiar with the literary world which surrounded the retinue of the king and the quasi-courts of England's prominent noblemen, and this familiarity may have sparked his evident love for literary material.

In these interests, Shirley had the perfect patron in the form of Beauchamp. The Earl was a prominent supporter of John Lydgate, commissioning several pieces from him including the 'Title and Pedigree of Henry VI', present in BL MS. Harley 7333. Beauchamp's daughter, Margaret, shared in this activity, commissioning Lydgate's 'Guy of Warwick', also to be found in Harley 7333, as a thinly-veiled propaganda piece for the family, whilst Beauchamp's wife, Elizabeth, appears to have been a motivational force behind John Walton's efforts to translate Boethius (Boffey 1995: 45 n. 32; an extract is present in BL MS. Harley 2251), and his father, Thomas, had in his time been the employer of the soldier-turned-poet William Paris (Gerould 1914). It has often been assumed that Shirley knew Lydgate personally (e.g. by Pearsall 1970: 74-75), and the repeated contact between Warwick and Lydgate makes this likely; whether Beauchamp met the poet-monk personally, or dealt with him through intermediaries, Shirley's secretarial role made it likely that he would have attended or represented the Earl on some of these occasions, and would have met Lydgate, even if he did not become 'closely acquainted with the monk, at once his publisher and literary agent' as Pearsall describes (1970: 75).

Whether or not there was a close bond between the secretary and the poet, Shirley certainly acted as if there were when he tagged his copies of Lydgate's poems with 'gossipy' rubrics giving information such as where the pieces had been composed and at whose request. Shirley's position and contacts must have allowed him access to a variety of texts, not those of Lydgate alone,

and he used the opportunity to compose manuscript collections of material he found interesting. Three of these, copied in Shirley's own hand, survive to the present day, although one of them has been dismantled in the course of its history so that it now exists in three parts.²² Each of these shows a distinct interest in the more literary output of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, collecting as they do works by Chaucer, Lydgate and Gower amongst others.

That the two Harley manuscripts are connected to volumes produced by John Shirley can be asserted definitively, although the nature of the connections is not of the same clarity. A third, British Library MS. Add. 29729, is a more distant cousin. It was produced in the sixteenth century for (and partially by) the historian John Stow, and can shed some valuable light on later perception and use of the materials gathered by Shirley. The relationship of Harley MSS. 7333 and 2251 to John Shirley has been examined to some depth by previous scholarship, particularly the work of Eleanor Hammond, Margaret Connolly, and Linne Mooney, and the following discussion draws heavily on their publications, and especially on Connolly (1998).

2.8.1 The Derivation of Harley MSS. 2251 and 7333 from Shirley's Miscellanies

2.8.1.1 BL Harley 2251

It is, firstly, important to establish the evidence for the connection of BL MSS. Harley 7333 and 2251 to Shirley, before considering the importance of this to an understanding of the social context in which they were produced and used. In the case of Harley 2251, the manuscript's contents provide the primary means of establishing a relationship to Shirley. Harley 2251 shares a large number of its texts with another miscellany, British Library Additional 34360, also known to have been produced from Shirleian sources. Eleanor Hammond (1905: 2-3) first highlighted the twenty-four items shared by Harley 2251 and Add. 34360. The

²² Shirley's two whole manuscripts are British Library Additional 16165, and Oxford, Bodleian Ashmole 59. The third survives as Sion College Arc.L.40.2/E.44, British Library Harley 78 (fols. 80r-83v) and Cambridge, Trinity College R.3.20. For further details see Connolly (1998: 69-77)

Additional manuscript is a less expansive miscellany volume (containing twenty-nine pieces of English verse, as opposed to Harley 2251's eighty-six), although it also focusses mostly on the work of Lydgate. The *New Index of Middle English Verse* revises the number of shared texts down slightly to twenty-three items; the *NIMEV* considers the verse that Hammond (1905: 2) calls 'The Question of Halsam' to be the opening stanza of Lydgate's 'On the mutability of man's nature' and thus combines the two.²³ Of these twenty-three items, the first eleven in Harley 2251 are present in exactly the same order in Add. 34360, forming items thirteen to twenty-three of the latter codex (by Hammond's numbering). Lydgate is the author of all the shared texts, excepting three for which no definitive authorship is known.²⁴ The close relationship of Harley 2251 and Add. 34360 is reinforced by the study of Lydgate's 'Verses on the Kings of England' by Mooney *et al.* (2001), which establishes the copies of that poem in these volumes as 'very close textually' (Mooney 2003: 185).

Sections of both these volumes can be shown, almost beyond doubt, to have been copied from Shirley miscellanies which still survive. BL Add. 34360 not only shares a block of texts with Cambridge, Trinity College MS. R.3.20, but also copies the rubric for Lydgate's 'Benedic anima mea'; reproduces the layout of a group of four French poems; and replicates Shirley's decision in the Trinity volume to run together Chaucer's 'Complaint to Pity' and 'Complaint to his Lady' along with their rubric. None of these extra-textual features are reproduced for Harley 2251. Nonetheless, Harley 2251 shares nineteen texts with Trinity R.3.20 of which, fourteen are copied as a block, and fourteen with another Shirley miscellany, Oxford, Bodleian MS. Ashmole 59. Of these texts, four are shared by both the Trinity and Ashmole miscellanies. The repeated appearance of these texts (even if, as Connolly notes, not all are necessarily copied from Shirleian

²³ The individual verse as it appears in BL Add. 34360 is *NIMEV* 3504; in combination with Lydgate's poem, it is *NIMEV* 3503. The stanzas pose several difficulties with regard especially to attribution and the mystery of their original format, and these are addressed by South (1935).

²⁴ The items shared between Harley 2251 and Add. 34360 are: **183** Prayer to the Virgin Mary, **824** Lydgate's 'Dietary', **1294** Lydgate's *Consulo quisquis eris*, **1682** Prayer beginning "Iesu Crist kepe oure lypes from pollucioun", **2218** Lydgate's Prayer for King Henry VI and his Quene and people, **2625** Lydgate's 'Horns Away', **2825** Lydgate's Letter to Gloucester, **3206** Epitaph to Duke of Gloucester, **3632** Lydgate's 'Verses on the Kings of England', **3673** Lydgate's translation of *Stella Celi extirpavit*, **4245** Lydgate's *Verbum caro factum est*. Once again this suggests a focus on religious and political material.

exemplars) is strong evidence that the scribe was employing the Trinity and Ashmole manuscripts as source-texts. The evidence is almost irrefutable when combined with the reproduction of Shirleian features by the same scribe in BL Add. 34360.

For Harley 2251, the scribe appears to have had access to more than one of Shirley's miscellanies, as the text, rubrication and layout of Chaucer's 'Fortune' shows a strong resemblance to that in Shirley's last miscellany, Bodley Ashmole 59 (Connolly 1998: 179-80). It is not, however, the case that all the poems which appear in both Trinity R.3.20 and Harley 2251 have been copied from the former into the latter. Chaucer's 'Gentillesse' stands as a good example of this, as there appears to be no textual relation between the Trinity and Harley copies (Pace & David 1982: 70 n. 4). Aside from 'Fortune', another thirteen texts are shared between Harley 2251 and Shirley's Ashmole 59. Again, however, it is important to note that this does not mean that they have been directly copied from Ashmole 59.

Given the large number of texts present in Harley 2251 not to be found in Shirley's Trinity R.3.20 or its two now-separated components, the original Trinity volume cannot have been the sole exemplar for the texts in the Harley and Additional miscellanies. Despite the close connections between these three volumes, only three poems are present in all three of the manuscripts, and only one of these (*NIMEV 4245* – Lydgate's *Verbum caro factum est*) is part of the group shared by the Harley and Additional manuscripts. This suggests the existence of at least one more exemplar manuscript containing these items, probably including *Verbum caro factum est*, which could have been copied as part of a block from this missing volume, rather than from the Trinity miscellany. It is likely that at least one of the missing manuscripts was also composed by Shirley; traces of his influence are present in the Harley and Additional manuscripts for which no extant source can be found, the most notable of which is the presence of Shirleian notes on a series of excerpts from Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*. The compiler (who may or may not have been Shirley himself) who was responsible for excerpting these pieces from the much larger original has chosen sections of the text which are specifically critical of women. Here, Shirley's annotations to these excerpts rail against the apparent misogyny of Lydgate

(although in what seems to be a tongue-in-cheek manner; again implying that Shirley treated Lydgate as more of a friend than a passing or business-only acquaintance). That the comments were originally provided by Shirley is suggested by his idiosyncratic spelling of certain words, and the presence of a 'Nota per Shirley' annotation (Brusendorff 1924: 461-62). These items, whose exemplar is still unknown, along with the other output of the same scribe, imply access to a large body of exemplar material. It is unlikely, therefore, that the material in Harley 2251 which is not derived from the Trinity manuscript could all have been copied from a single missing volume. Indeed, there is little evidence that many of the other items in Harley 2251 are from Shirleian sources.

2.8.1.2 BL Harley 7333

It is, unfortunately, not possible to identify the source texts of Harley 7333 in a similar way: these texts either are not still extant, or have yet to be recognised as related to the output of Shirley. However, their debt to the Shirley is clear thanks to their use of his extended rubric headings. These 'long gossiping headings, like a publisher's blurb' (Pearsall 1970: 74) are a prominent feature of Shirley's manuscripts, and thus their presence in manuscripts which have not been directly compiled by him are a firm indicator that his influence has been felt.

MS. Harley 7333 is a member of this group of manuscripts which are not copied by Shirley himself, but do display these distinctive features in some of their texts. Several poems include Shirley's wordy rubrics, and an example might be taken from Lydgate's version of the legend of 'Guy of Warwick':

'Here nowe begynneþe an abstracte oute of þe Cronicles in Latyn made by Gyrarde Cornubyence þe worþy Croniculer of Westsexse, & translated in to Englishe be Lydgate daun Iohan at the requeste of Margarite Countas of Shrowesbury Ladye Talbot fournyual and Lisle of the lyf of þat moste worþy knyght Guy of Warwike, of whos bloode shee is lyneally descendid'

(BL Harley 7333 fol. 33r, quoted by MacCracken 1934: 516)

This rubric displays Shirley's characteristic desire to record the creator of the piece, their source text, and their commissioner. The motivation behind – or, at the least, relevance of – the commission is highlighted by the extra piece of biographical information which links Margaret to the legendary Guy. The statement of this information in itself has repercussions for investigation of the potential interest of the manuscript to its user, as discussed above (section 2.5.3.1); for the present discussion, however, it is important to note that the Harley 7333 rubric offers clear evidence of referral to a Shirley manuscript. In this case, the exemplar manuscript is not one of the surviving volumes in Shirley's own hand, and so the existence of other similar collections may be inferred.

Shirley's distinctive spelling system is another means by which texts copied from his manuscripts might be identified. Margaret Connolly (1998: 170) summarises these as follows:

His preference for forms such as “nexst” and “filowyng”, his use of the spelling “eo” in words such as “beon”, “eorlle”, “neode”, and “weoping”, and his periodic doubling of consonants in words such as “englisshē”, “frensshe” and “affter”, are idiosyncrasies which are easy to trace.

Examples of this spelling system are to be found in the *Canterbury Tales* and are noted by Manly & Rickert: ‘the eo for long close e not only in [Old English] eo words but in others; the ey for long i; the e- [past participle] prefix; and the very frequent scribal –e’ (1940: i, 211). The use of the ‘eo’ spelling in the headings between tales, displayed in the word ‘eondipe’, has been noted above. Although it is difficult to establish the number of generations between this manuscript and one copied personally by Shirley, the preservation of these spellings strongly suggests that the chain of copying has been short, and perhaps that some of Harley 7333's poems have been copied directly from a Shirleian exemplar, owing to the likelihood that such spellings would be rapidly filtered out by scribes who are much more likely to substitute their own spelling system

in place of that of their exemplar (Benskin & Laing 1981: 89-90; McIntosh 1963: 8-9).

The question of intermediate stages between Shirley texts and the manuscripts which are derived from them haunts investigation of all those in the latter group. Although Mooney's investigation of Lydgate's 'Verses on the Kings of England' established that none was copied directly from Shirley's surviving copy in MS. Ashmole 59 (Mooney *et al.* 2001), Shirley is known to have copied a single text more than once, such as Lydgate's 'Beware of Doublesse' (in British Library MS. Additional 16165 and Oxford, Bodleian MS. Ashmole 59) and Chaucer's 'Gentillesse' (in Cambridge, Trinity College R.3.20 and Bodl. Ashmole 59) to name only two.²⁵ This leaves open the possibility that they could have been made from a Shirleian copy of the poem in a now lost manuscript. Ashmole 59 may not have provided an appealing source from which to copy texts – it is the last book known to have been compiled by Shirley, and bears evident signs of his senescence, such as less controlled handwriting and significantly corrupt texts, which may be a sign that Shirley relied on his memory to produce some of the items (Boffey & Thompson 1989: 284). Thus, if another copy of the desired poem were available, it is unsurprising that the scribe chose to employ it instead. It is entirely possible that an earlier miscellany by Shirley provided this alternate source.

Linne Mooney (2003: 190-194) discusses thoroughly the portions of Harley 7333 that show influence from Shirley sources: in fact a substantial percentage of the manuscript. Following Manly & Rickert's recognition of seven distinct sections to the manuscript, Mooney identifies Shirleian influence in three of these sections: part two (fols. 25r-32v), part three (fols. 33r-119v), and part five (fols. 134r-148r). The evidence is provided in large part by Shirleian headings, including one for the *Canterbury Tales* (fol. 37r), Lydgate's *Lives of Saints Edmund and Fremund*, and the only extant copies of the same poet's 'Title and Pedigree of Henry VI' (*NIMEV 3808*) and 'A Roundel for the Coronation of Henry VI' (*NIMEV 2804*). The *Canterbury Tales* also includes a gloss apparently written by Shirley, running as far as 'The Reeve's Tale', but breaking off

²⁵ A full list is provided by Connolly 1998: 154

thereafter. Although the headings do not explicitly name Shirley as their author, Mooney sees his involvement as near certain, commenting particularly on the 'appropriateness of Shirley's copying a poem [the 'Title and Pedigree'] commissioned by and praising his employer, Richard Beauchamp' (2003: 191) and affirming that the scribes involved in the production of Harley 7333 are very likely 'to have had access to many manuscripts, including either several Shirley manuscripts or Shirley-derived manuscripts now lost' (Mooney 2003: 193).

2.8.1.3 The Exemplar for the *Distichs* in the Harley MSS.

When two important *Distichs* manuscripts can be traced back to miscellanies by John Shirley, it must be considered whether there is a possibility that the scribes who worked on the Harley volumes could have found Burgh's text within a Shirleian miscellany itself. The possibility is certainly raised by Mooney, who notes that, in Harley 7333, the *Distichs* finish in the same quire which contains the 'Complaint of a Prisoner against Fortune' (also appearing in Harley 2251) the 'Title and Pedigree', and the 'Roundel on the Coronation of Henry VI', the last two of which, as noted above, have Shirleian headings (2003: 191). The simplest possible solution – that all of these texts were included in a single miscellany produced by Shirley – can likely be ruled out on the grounds of chronology: Burgh is unlikely to have begun his poem before his employment by the Bouchier family in the 1450s, and it is questionable whether he would have completed the work and managed to get it into general circulation before Shirley's death in 1456, especially if he worked first on completing the *Secrees of old Philisoffres*. These matters aside, neither Harley copy of the *Distichs* is accompanied by a rubric heading, nor do they display any of Shirley's characteristic spelling features which significantly reduces the likelihood that they were copied from sources produced by Beauchamp's secretary.

Two possibilities, therefore, remain. Either the scribes who produced Harley 7333 had access to more than one other manuscript (one containing the *Distichs* and, perhaps, the 'Complaint of a Prisoner'; the other by Shirley and containing the poems on Henry VI), or they used a single manuscript which combined the *Distichs* with Shirleian quires (or copies of Shirleian quires). Either

of these conclusions is possible, although the latter is more likely on the grounds that it would require fewer discrete manuscript volumes to be transmitted between the scribes of these two Harley codices.

There must also be some doubt over whether the *Distichs* in Harley 2251 and Harley 7333 were produced from the same exemplar. Several differences exist between the two copies: Harley 7333 has two fewer stanzas in the prologue to book II than are present in Harley 2251; Harley 7333 is also missing all the Middle English envoys to the books; the confused ordering of the last few stanzas present in Harley 2251 is not replicated in 7333; perhaps most intriguingly, Harley 2251 appears to have a non-standard stanza for distich I.20 which is not shared by 7333. It is certainly next to impossible that one of the Harley manuscripts has been copied from the other – the scribe of Harley 7333 would have needed to disentangle the final stanzas of book II from the first few of book III if he were using Harley 2251 as a source, as well as replace its version of distich I.20; the Hammond scribe in producing Harley 2251 would not have been able to acquire the envoy stanzas from Harley 7333 if this text were his source.

That one Harley manuscript was not copied from the other does not rule out the possibility that both were copied from a distinct third manuscript, although the jumbled stanzas in the Hammond scribe's copy suggest different exemplars were used. Most of book II is copied in its standard order, but is then interrupted after II.29 by a small block from book III, comprising III.2-III.5, before returning to complete book II. This pattern would be consistent with a folio being out of place in his exemplar. That this is not duplicated in Harley 7333 implies that a different exemplar was used by its scribe, although it is possible that this scribe could have noticed and rectified the mistake before copying began. The non-standard I.20 stanza, however, is another argument against the manuscripts being produced from the same exemplar. This stanza does not appear to be present in any of the other extant copies of the *Distichs* – a problem without any obvious solution.

Whether or not the scribes of the Harley volumes found the *Distichs* co-inhabiting a codex with their Shirleian exemplars, the fact remains that its appearance in these two manuscripts means that it was either present in the same repository as Shirleian manuscripts, or that multiple copies were

circulating in the same milieu as Shirley's texts. It also means that book patrons who were interested in Shirley's materials were also interested in Burgh's *Distichs*. Thus a picture of the milieu in which Shirley's manuscripts circulated can be considered, with reasonable certainty, also to be a picture of that in which the *Distichs* circulated.

2.8.2 The Readership of Shirleian Miscellanies

The audience for whom John Shirley produced his miscellanies has, as yet, not been definitively identified. However, enough information exists to allow some idea of his readership to be formed. This must be recovered through analysis of several sources, mainly the verse prefaces he added to his own miscellanies and the reliable ownership information we have for other manuscripts in the group related to or descended from Shirleian volumes. This evidence, albeit sparse, allows us with reasonable certainty to identify the audience of these manuscripts with the circles of literary patronage in which Shirley regularly moved both throughout his working life and later during his retirement.

Primary evidence is to be found in the surviving 'calendar' (contents list) and 'bookplate' (ownership) poems for Shirley miscellanies. The 'bookplate' stanza and one of these calendars are present in volumes which have been produced by Shirley (the 'bookplate' in Trinity R.3.20 and Bodleian MS. Ashmole 59, and the calendar in BL Add. 16165), whereas the second calendar is extant only as a copy made by John Stow (or his amanuensis) for BL Add. 29729. This second calendar appears to describe the contents of the original volume of which Trinity R.3.20 is a section, and given that Stow's manuscript appears to include it as an afterthought to the main body of Add. 29729, it is likely that it had become detached from the Trinity manuscript prior to the copying of Stow's anthology of *Lydgatiana* (Connolly 1998: 108). Unfortunately neither of these brief poems is explicit in its address, but their presence in miscellanies created by Shirley indicates that these volumes were loaned out; the calendars enjoin their readers to take pleasure in the prose and poetry, to correct any mistakes they might find, and (perhaps most importantly) to return them 'Hoome to Shirley' (BL Add. 16165, fol. iii^v, transcribed by Connolly 1998: 208). It has been noted by Connolly

(1998: 193) that, significantly, the 'bookplates' are not to be found in books which Shirley owned (that is, those which contain his ownership inscription) but which were not of his own making. This absence from books which Shirley merely owned rather than copied may suggest that Shirley fully intended to loan out his personally produced miscellanies more regularly than those which he had purchased.

The bookplate stanza, which is the same in both volumes in which it appears, addresses the reader directly, but offers no suggestion of whom it expects that reader to be. The calendar in BL Add. 16165 goes only a slight step further in asserting that Shirley gathered his material:

'þat boþe þe gret and þe comune
May þer on looke and eke hit reede'

(fol. iir, transcribed by Connolly 1998: 206)

This vague and context-dependent statement has not provided much aid in specifying the audience in question, and there is an ongoing dispute as to the identity of Shirley's readers. It may be the case that Shirley had a passion for literature and desired to share the object of that passion with others. He might, as a result, have distributed these volumes within his circle of friends and acquaintances. Given his professional role as a nobleman's mediator, this circle would have embraced 'boþe þe gret and þe comune'. This is the type of scenario which Green (1980: 132) appears to favour, believing that the antiquarian instinct within Shirley moved him to study, annotate, and help preserve potentially ephemeral texts for the future – the last to be achieved through dissemination with the attendant possibility that enjoyment would lead to copying. The circulation of his manuscripts amongst friends seems to be suggested by the Shirleian heading copied with the text of the prose *Brut* in Harvard MS. 530, which makes reference to 'my gracyous lordes and feyre laydes my maystres and specyalli freendes and gode felawes' (fol. 180v; transcribed by Connolly 1998: 173). It is an interesting point that Shirley expects both men and women to read these books, adding to the evidence of the Findern manuscript

and Jesus College 56 that the circles of readership were not necessarily male-centric.

One step up from this personal, sociable activity is the suggestion that Shirley was running something more akin to a 'circulating library'. This is essentially the same as the previous book-lending proposition but with the added possibility that lending was done within a business-framework. Charging for the borrowing of books seems unlikely, especially given the sentiment of the Add. 29729 'calendar' poem:

'I aske of you no other dett
bot wher defaute is or ye blame
yt it nenpayr ye auctours name
as for fayllinge of ye scripture
of ye meter or ortografyure
wouch saue it to correcte
elles of ye defaute am I suspecte'

(fol. 178v, transcribed by Connolly 1998: 210)

It would seem unlikely that Shirley would claim to 'aske of you no other dett' if he were charging the reader for the privilege of borrowing his manuscript. There is also no real suggestion that such 'rental' schemes were prevalent or, indeed, present at all elsewhere in medieval book culture. The rental of books for copying is mentioned by neither Christianson (1999) nor Overty (2008) as a possibility in their studies of the costs of book production.

The hypotheses that Shirley's activities lay along a business line have predominately been developed from the knowledge that, in later life, he rented four shops in 'Dokelayne Side' from the Augustinians of London's St. Bartholomew's Hospital, in whose precincts he resided. His use of these units is, however, unknown; it cannot be ruled out that he sublet some or all of them rather than retained them all for his own purposes. Even if he did utilise all these units himself, this need not necessarily have been for a commercial enterprise. Some commentators have accepted without apparent concern that Shirley was running a scriptorium out of these premises (e.g. Pearsall 1970: 73-4). However,

other than his lease on the buildings, evidence for such a business is lacking. Although Shirley's miscellanies were clearly used as source texts by scribes, the dating of many of them suggests they were probably made following Shirley's death. There do not seem to be enough manuscripts bearing marks of derivation from Shirley to suggest an industry on the size that would occupy four shops; it has been pointed out that the successful fifteenth-century English printer William Caxton needed only one shop for his enterprise, and that the difference in the process of printing and scribal copying was not likely to be enough to justify Shirley's hypothetical business occupying four times this space (Green 1980).

The balance of probability appears to lie with the view of Shirley as a literature lover lending material to friends, rather than running a large scribal powerhouse. Involvement in business cannot be ruled out; it may have been the case that Shirley *did* use at least one of the shops and sublet the others. If so, this may explain the fact that several of his manuscripts appear to have stayed together as a group to serve as sources for later scribes such as those of Harley 2251 and 7333. However, if Shirley were lending his material to friends, these friends would most likely hail from the same courtly and administrative layers of society within which he had himself moved; in other words they would be clerks and members of the minor nobility whom they served. The verses which were posted in the miscellanies certainly have a ring of familiarity, and the deference they appear to show to their readers is likely to be partly due to the humility trope so prevalent in medieval literature and partly because Shirley conceived of the volumes as being borrowed by individuals on rungs above him in the social ladder, with whom he had become acquainted as Beauchamp's secretary. Margaret Connolly suspects that the noble household – perhaps that of Beauchamp himself – provided the context in which Shirley's Add. 16165 was used (1998: 47), and this would be consistent with a familiar yet deferential tone of address.

That Shirley expected his friends and family to share an interest in his books can be seen in gifts of manuscripts which he apparently gave to them. Such volumes are identified by Shirley's inscription of the names of the recipients, although the presence of his own ownership mark in most suggests that they

were given second-hand from his collection rather than purchased for their new owners (Connolly 1998: 112-4). These gifts give us further insight into the circle of readers surrounding Shirley, although it must be considered firstly that they would not necessarily be given to the same people who borrowed miscellany books from him, and secondly that the contents of these volumes are not the same as those of the miscellanies, and so may have attracted a different readership. Of these 'gifts', one (now Tokyo, MS. Takamiya 16) was given to Richard Halsham, who was also in the service of Richard Beauchamp (Doyle 1961: 94 n. 7); and another (now British Library MS. Royal 20.B.xv) to the cleric Richard Caudrey, a close friend of Shirley from the 1430s. A third (now San Marino, Huntington Library MS. Ellesmere 26.A.13) was given to Shirley's brother-in-law, Avery Cornburgh. This last volume poses some complications, as it also bears a gift-inscription to Shirley's second wife, Margaret Lynne, and her sister Beatrice on fol. v^v. However, Connolly suggests that these initial leaves were originally part of a different volume, and have later been bound in with Cornburgh's manuscript. This transmission could easily have been achieved given that Cornburgh was later to marry Beatrice (Connolly 1998: 105).

The recipients of Shirley's gifts are, unsurprisingly, close acquaintances, and thus also members of the courtly milieu which has been suggested as a likely audience for his miscellany manuscripts: Halsham was part of Beauchamp's retinue; Caudrey a close friend of Shirley; Margaret Lynne and Beatrice close family members; and Cornburgh, described in 1461 as a 'yeoman of the crown' (Calendar of Close Rolls: 495), was a member of the courtly set. It is essential, however, to note that the group to whom Shirley might present such gifts is almost certainly more limited than those who might be expected to borrow reading material from him.

2.8.3 The Use of Shirley's Manuscripts Following his Lifetime

That the Harley manuscripts appear to have been produced following Shirley's death makes it necessary to consider what might have become of his manuscript miscellanies at this point. Unfortunately, there is no direct evidence that would

allow their trajectory following Shirley's death to be discerned conclusively. Shirley's will (printed by Connolly 1998: 204-205) leaves all his possessions to his 'dere and gode wiff and executrice Margret Shirley she to geue gouerne ordeign and dispose as her best likith'. No mention is made specifically of his books which might indicate that they were otherwise disposed of, and no record exists to suggest what Margaret Shirley might have decided to do with them. It is, indeed, possible that she had predeceased her husband, although this is unlikely given that she was younger than him (Connolly 1998: 64). Assuming that Margaret survived to come into possession of the books, several possibilities may be raised. It is possible that she sold them off, allowing them to be acquired by other stationers. This could be the route by which they became available to the Hammond scribe and the other scribes of Multon's business (see above, section 2.4.2). It is equally possible, however, that she retained them herself, or distributed them amongst family and friends. If this is the case, firm evidence for this later ownership is lacking from the books.

Another possibility is that the books did not end up in the hands of a single person, but rather of an institution – in particular the Augustinian canons of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, in whose precincts Shirley spent his final years, was buried, and from whom he rented his shops. If he did run a business from these shops, it is possible that Margaret would have allowed the Augustinians to keep whatever provisions remained in them, including the books. On the other hand, she could have gifted them to St. Bartholomew's, perhaps even bequeathing them at her own death. That Shirley was well acquainted with the canons is implied by his decision to name amongst his executors 'Sir John Wakeryng maister of the forsaid hospitall of Seynt Bartilmew Sir John Cok prest and his broþer there professid' (Connolly 1998: 205).

A bequest to St. Bartholomew's Hospital might explain how the Augustinians of Leicester came to acquire Harley 7333. Manly & Rickert (1940: i, 216) note that a close contact with London 'would be expected in a great religious house', especially as Leicester was the site of some Parliament and Council meetings in the reign of Henry VI. If Hampshire scribes borrowed one or more Shirley manuscripts from the St. Bartholomew's Augustinians, only to have the commission fall through, it is conceivable that it would have been donated to

the Hospital when those manuscripts were returned. A manuscript which largely duplicated material already in the canons' possession could then have been passed on to a monk in another house, leading to its transfer to Leicester and to Stoughton.

Unfortunately, as with the fate of Shirley's books, this hypothetical history for Harley 7333 can only remain supposition. All that is clear in the current state of knowledge is that several of Shirley's manuscripts, including some no longer extant, were still available to be used as exemplars for scribes and scriptoria following his death.

That several of the Shirley-derived manuscripts later fell into the hands of John Stow is an interesting additional piece to the puzzle. Stow acquired or borrowed large numbers of manuscripts in pursuit of his antiquarian interests in early English literature and the history of London – although his hand appears in a large number of manuscripts, it is not necessarily the case that all of these were part of his personal collection (Hudson 1984: 55). Although not his only means of acquisition, Stow's collection was considerably boosted through purchases from the workshops of defunct printers (Mooney 2001: 264-266). Again, there is no direct evidence that this was the route by which BL Harley 2251 entered Stow's collection. Mooney (2003: 197) offers the belief that this manuscript, along with BL Add. 34360 and the Shirleian exemplars for these miscellanies 'remained in circulation in this same circle of London scribes, stationers, printers, and antiquarians with mercantile connections' until they were acquired by Stow. It has already been noted (section 2.4) that BL Harley 2251 bears numbered marks in its initial folios which suggest that it was used in the production of further books, and would thus support the theory that between de Vale and Stow it did indeed play a part in the London book trade. Mooney hypothesises (2003: 197) that this was indeed the case for BL Harley 2251 and Add. 34360, and that manuscripts sharing contents with these two volumes may have been produced from them. This suggested group contains several of the manuscripts already considered: Cambridge, Trinity College MSS. R.3.19 and R.3.21, Lambeth Palace MS. 306, Bodleian MS. Fairfax 16, and BL MSS. Egerton 1995 and Harley 2255.

The potential that Shirley-derived manuscripts were used in printers' workshops causes some problems for analysis of the audience of these books, as they were being used as exemplars for further texts rather than read in their own right. However, whether Shirley's own miscellanies and Harley 2251 were held in such workshops, not all the manuscripts which appear to derive from Shirleian exemplars were. Connolly (1998: 181) suggests, on the basis of its contents, that Oxford Bodleian MS. Rawlinson C.86 may be copied from Shirleian exemplars. This volume bears the names of mercantile owners which strengthens the likelihood that the books copied from Shirley's manuscripts were consumed by the same wealthy members of the middle-class as have been hypothesised as borrowers of the miscellanies during Shirley's lifetime.

2.9 Conclusion

Although all but one of the *Distichs* manuscripts are miscellanies, a certain subset can be identified as being particularly inclined towards a taste for Middle English vernacular literature. In large part the audience's interest in such literature is met through the provision of large quantities of Lydgate's expansive verse, as he discusses any and all subjects which might possibly occur to him, be they historical, romantic, religious, political, satirical, or less classifiable. However, Lydgate's important peers and predecessors are also recognised, particularly Chaucer.

The two important points to be derived from this discussion are: firstly that these manuscripts most often served the predilections of secular owners; secondly that these owners are to be located with greatest frequency in the lower ranks of the nobility, and the upper ranks of the emergent middle class. The latter category includes all ranks and occupations from secretarial clerk to royal minstrel. It is, perhaps, the case that all of these persons are on the fringes of court society, and that the mixed interest in literature and self-consciously 'improving' material could be interpreted as an attempt to mimic and thereby integrate with the higher echelons of society which most of the manuscript owners seem to have served and which, perhaps, they aspired to join.

BL MSS. Harley 2251 and 7333 are in some ways very different to each other, and in others very similar. On the one hand, the appearance and contents of Harley 7333 show an attempt to achieve ostentation on a budget (although its incomplete nature signals that this aim was in some way frustrated); on the other, Harley 2251 is more determined to achieve utility than a surface display of high literary taste. Yet both are preoccupied with topics of history and behaviour.

This thematic relationship is partly linked to a shared lineage. Their descent from the miscellany manuscripts of John Shirley confirms the courtly and sub-courtly milieu for which they were almost certainly produced. As a clerkly lover of literature, Shirley is the perfect conduit to convey these texts both to his personal coterie, and later to the rapidly-expanding audience who sought such respected vernacular literature. His compilations did not contain the *Distichs*, but provided the perfect medium in which it could propagate, allowing it to spread quickly through this layer of society.

As secular as this subset of manuscripts appears to be, it is threaded with religious texts that the pious lay-man or -woman would be able to use to deepen their interaction with their personal faith. In a couple of these manuscripts the characteristics which allow clear identification of lay and clerical volumes becomes blurred. The next chapter will consider instances in which the *Distichs* appears to be located in miscellanies which have a decidedly religious flavour.

Chapter 3 – Manuscripts Produced in a Religious House: Glasgow, University Library MS. Hunter 259 and Oxford, Bodleian MS. Eng. poet. e. 15

3.1 Introduction

The original *Disticha Catonis* thrived in the Middle Ages largely due to its use in the elementary Latin education provided by the Church. This chapter seeks evidence of continuity with this religious tradition in the manuscripts of Burgh's Middle English *Distichs*. The *Distichs* is accompanied in its manuscripts by a substantial quantity of religious writing, both in verse and in prose. However, the growing lay interest in texts of spiritual guidance accounts for much of this material. Nonetheless, there are some manuscripts in the group which appear to have been the property of religious institutions. The level of interest in the text by religious members of society is highly significant for this study, as evidence that the text was only lightly used by members of the religious community would suggest a break from the tradition of the *Disticha*, and a new audience for Burgh's version of pseudo-Cato's work.

This chapter identifies two manuscripts which can be said with some certainty to have originated in such a religious milieu, as both were produced by Stephen Dodesham, a Carthusian monk of Sheen Charterhouse near London. Different scenarios for the use of the manuscripts must be considered, but they are most likely to have been owned by the Bridgettine sisters of the neighbouring Syon Abbey. Just as John Shirley offered a window into the reception of Burgh's poem in courtly circles, Stephen Dodesham's life and work can be appropriated as a means of gaining insight on the use of the text by the male and female religious of medieval England.

These manuscripts demonstrate that Burgh's version did not become entirely detached from the religious milieu which its source had so successfully occupied. This religious use, however, can be seen as the product of quite specific circumstances, and very little other evidence exists of the *Distichs'* use in the cloister or amongst the secular laity. This paucity of interest in the *Distichs*

amongst the religious of England suggests that the religious audience which did exist for the text did not use Burgh's translation in the same way or to the same extent as they had used the original *Disticha Catonis*, and thus reinforces the impression given by the previous chapter that the main audience for Burgh's *Distichs* was drawn from the courtly and sub-courtly circles of society.

3.2 Stephen Dodesham's *Distichs* Manuscripts

The two *Distichs* manuscripts copied by Stephen Dodesham are similar in their style and execution. The text is laid out in single columns, ruled in brown pencil, in a large neat bastard anglicana hand. Both are copied on parchment of moderate quality. Oxford, Bodleian MS. Eng. poet. e.15 is of an approximately average quarto size (180 x 130 mm), whilst Glasgow, University Library MS. Hunter 259 is slightly larger (260 x 185 mm). Both manuscripts are decorated with large two-line high initials at the beginning of new books, for which the black lettering is surrounded by red-pen swirls which then extend into the margins to provide a frame for the left-hand side of the text that is approximately two-thirds the height of the writing space. Initial letters of each line of the Latin distichs, and of the first line of each English stanza are given in a more elaborate script and in alternating blue and red ink throughout the text. The Latin of the original *Disticha* is not given in rubric, although it is in a slightly larger, more angular anglicana hand. Other than these features, there is no decoration provided for the manuscripts, so that they appear to have been carefully produced but without a requirement for luxury.

In Glasgow, University Library MS. Hunter 259 the *Distichs* is the first of only two poems, the second being the *Dietary* of John Lydgate without the addition of the *Doctrine for Pestilence* stanzas which sometimes preface this text. In Oxford, Bodleian MS. Eng. poet. e. 15 the *Distichs* is the only text present, although two folios of poor quality parchment covered in scribbled Latin sentences have been attached to the beginning of the volume as it now stands.

This apparently solitary nature is, however, misleading. Another codex also in the collection of Glasgow University Library (MS. Hunter 258) can be identified as a second component in what has previously been a larger

miscellany. This miscellany appears to have been broken down into smaller units. The quire signatures of MSS. Hunter 259 and 258 indicate that 259 would originally have stood at the beginning of its volume, whilst 258 may have stood at the end. The signatures also indicate that there are seven quires missing between the two sections, meaning that almost half of the manuscript is unaccounted for, and possibly more if the volume continued beyond the portion that now comprises Hunter 258. A consideration of the features of the surviving parts, however, allows some speculation of what might be expected to occupy this missing section.

3.2.1 Nature of Hunter 258/259 and Expectations for the Missing Section

The contents of the Glasgow manuscripts may seem scant evidence on which to speculate about the nature of the original volume, but in fact they provide a reasonable indication of the compiler's intentions. The quire signatures (running from '+j' on quire i, fol. 1r to 'cij' on quire iv, fol. 26r) show that the *Distichs* was the first text of the volume, which suggests that its advice was of paramount importance. That it is immediately followed by Lydgate's *Dietary* is evidence that the delivery of basic moral and behavioural advice was a concern of the codex overall. Both of these poems are inclusive in their implied audience, as opposed to texts such as the *Stans Puer ad Mensam* or any of the 'mirrors for princes' which advise on the behaviour appropriate, respectively, for boys serving in a noble household, and for the aristocracy up to the level of royalty. These all-encompassing texts were read more widely outside the aristocracy, however, as is evidenced by the proliferation of the *Secreta Secretorum* in its various forms despite being ostensibly a treatise on kingship notionally delivered to Alexander the Great by Aristotle (Williams 2003: 1-2). However, they appear to assume a specifically male audience, composed largely of gentry. In contrast, the *Distichs* and *Dietary* make few assumptions of their audience and the advice of both ranges widely to cover topics of relevance in everyday life and normal social interaction. Apart from being socially inclusive in this way, neither of these texts is particularly demanding of their readers in intellectual terms – there is no

particular sophistication to the argument, and indeed both provide their advice in isolated chunks without any overt indication of thematic development or complexity.

The *Benjamin Minor*, found in the section of the volume that is now MS. Hunter 258, is a slightly more demanding text. Its original title, *The Twelve Patriarchs* (*De duodecim patriarchis*) was subsumed in the Middle Ages by a desire to contrast it with another, more complex text, *The Mystical Ark* (*De arca mystica*, later known as the *Benjamin Major*), fitting the medieval penchant for identifying ‘minor’ and ‘major’ works of an author. It allegorises the virtues and vices as traditionally identified in Christian exegesis, utilising characters from the Biblical Genesis narrative to do so, whereas the *Benjamin Major* is a detailed study of different modes of ‘contemplation’. The *Benjamin Minor* present in the Glasgow manuscript is a translation of a Latin work by Richard of St. Victor, a Scottish mystic in the tradition of the Victorine school of Paris. This Middle English version is that of an author who is likely to have translated a number of other works in the same mystical tradition, such as *The Cloud of Unknowing* and *The Book of Privy Counselling* (Hodgson 1944: lxxvii-lxxix; an edition of the Middle English *Benjamin Minor* is presented in Hodgson 1955: 11-46). Richard of St. Victor was also the composer of exegesis on books of the Bible, and *De Trinitate*, which is his best known work. The *Benjamin Minor* is relatively uncomplicated when compared to these, the *Benjamin Major*, and the works of his important predecessor, Hugh of St. Victor. It is much more suitable than any of these for use as an introductory text to mystical theology, especially in this version, which greatly simplifies the Latin original and makes sure that ‘in almost every chapter its details have been greatly reduced’ (Hodgson 1955: xlv). Nonetheless, the importance of Richard of St. Victor should not be underestimated, given that ‘throughout the later Middle Ages Richard was judged to be a leading (perhaps the foremost) authority among the Latins in the “mystical theology” invented by the Areopagite’ (Emery 2003: 591). Even if simplistic, the *Benjamin Minor* and its author would have been highly respected amongst the mystically-minded Bridgettines and Carthusians.

The nature of these texts, then, provides a sound impression of what might be expected from the missing middle section. Not out of place would be

other pieces of guidance or perhaps entry-level theology. If, as will be argued later, this were used in a monastery or nunnery, some explication of the institution's rule would be suitable. This is, perhaps, the most specific targeting of the contents conceivable, however. Just as likely would be a work of less restricted interest, such as hagiography, or didactic poetry or prose with a religious element – such as Lydgate's *Dialogue between a Horse, Goose and Sheep* – in which the difference between secular and spiritual matters is a subtle one. Alternatively, the section could have included one of the other texts often found with the *Benjamin Minor*, and probably by the same translator, whose works often appear to have been grouped together (Hodgson 1944: lxxvii n. ||).

This characterisation allows some scope for variation in the missing section, but three essential criteria may be assumed: the missing text (or texts) are likely to be didactic, of relatively unsophisticated content, and in Middle English. A religious element seems likely given the presence of the *Benjamin Minor*, but is not essential considering the largely temporal contents of the *Distichs* and *Dietary*.

The missing section is also likely to have been in the hand of Stephen Dodesham, as Hunter MSS. 258 and 259 are otherwise entirely by this scribe. The possibility cannot be ruled out that the scribe of the missing section of the manuscript was another Carthusian also working in Sheen. This is, however, unlikely; the Carthusian lifestyle enforced almost complete isolation and limited speech to an hour a day for all monks other than those who had to deal with the outside world to ensure the maintenance of the community. Such a lifestyle would not encourage collaboration, and almost all of the manuscripts which can be confidently asserted as written by Dodesham are in his hand. Exceptions to this include some (mostly marginal) notations in Karlsruhe, Badische Landesbibliothek MS. Sankt Georgen 12, and Dodesham's appearance amongst ten or more different hands in Cambridge, University Library MS. Add. 3042 (Doyle 1997: 98, 106).

The possibility of the presence of another scribe's work would increase if the manuscript were pieced together from separate booklets, in which case some of Dodesham's work could have been combined with that of another scribe at some later point in its life. That this was not the case is argued by the quire

marks in the Glasgow manuscripts, apparently contemporary with its production, which appear to be in a consistent hand in the first and last quarters of the original volume. The miscellany is, thus, likely to have been planned as a whole and, given the strictures of Carthusian life and Dodesham's regular solo work in both secular and religious phases of his life, was probably entirely executed by Dodesham.

Attempts to locate the missing section of the codex have as yet proved unsuccessful; it is not amongst the writing that has, thus far, been identified as Dodesham's. A.I. Doyle (1997: 103 n. 39) has observed that a section of Oxford, Bodleian MS. Bodley 549 conforms to the approximate dimensions of the Glasgow manuscripts, but stops short of asserting that it constitutes the missing section. This reserve would seem to be justified through inspection of the manuscript. The missing section of the Glasgow codex might be anticipated to conform to the extant sections in three basic parameters: it should be on parchment, it should be in Middle English, and it should contain sub-university-level didactic texts. In all of these factors, the Bodleian manuscript is wanting: it is written on paper, all of the texts are in Latin, and the texts are of complex theological material, such as the *Tractatus de origine et veritate perfecte religionis ad defendendum ordinem Cartusiensem*, which would have put it several steps above the level of understanding which seems to be expected by the rest of the miscellany both in terms of content and the linguistic skills required. In addition, the quiring of Dodesham's section of the Oxford manuscript contains quire marks which do not conform to those in the Glasgow codex. This latter point is of dubious import, as these could have been added at a later point, when the original volume had already been broken up, and this section was bound into a different miscellany; at this point the original quire marks could have been erased or even trimmed off. The former three points, however, stand, and would seem to militate against this possibility.

Despite the apparently blind alley provided by MS. Bodley 549, it remains probable that the missing quires are extant. Both sections of the manuscript incorporate pastedowns on their inside front covers which bear the signature of Thomas Martin, the eighteenth-century antiquarian who owned these manuscripts before their possession by William Hunter (Young & Aitken 1908:

209-211). Martin was born and lived in Suffolk, and so his geographical locality matches neatly with the creators and owners of MSS. Harley 7333, Harley 2251 and their relations, as discussed in the previous chapter. There is a strong possibility that Martin was responsible for breaking the original manuscript down into constituent booklets which he then rebound, most likely to speed sale of at least some of the constituent sections by conforming to the growing sense that a book constituted a single text rather than an apparently mixed collection (Ker 1983: 20-21). This action was probably on the basis that he wanted to make as much money from each volume as possible to pay the debts he had incurred by the 1760s (Stoker 2004).

Martin sold these manuscripts to T. Payne, from whom Hunter then acquired them. Presumably Martin had already sold the other section before Payne bought those which now reside at Glasgow, as there is no sign of it in Payne's sale catalogue (Doyle 1997: 103 n. 39). If so, however, the section was in existence towards the end of the eighteenth century, and most likely made its way into the library of a private individual. That the missing middle has not yet been found may mean that it has simply not yet been recognised, but the greater likelihood is that it is still in a private collection waiting to be recognised as a Dodesham production.

3.3 Stephen Dodesham

Dodesham appears to have been involved in the commercial book trade in his early career, before becoming a professed member of the Carthusian Order. During this stage of his life, he continued producing scribal copies from his quarters at the Charterhouses of Witham and, later, Sheen. His output includes large quantities of religiously-focussed manuscripts, but his work cannot be entirely pigeonholed as wholly religious in focus, since his output also includes Chaucer's scientific treatise on the astrolabe, and secular works such as three copies of Lydgate's *Siege of Thebes*.

Dodesham is responsible for two copies of Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*. Love's *Mirror* is a suitable example of the greatest part of Dodesham's extant productions, which are predominately religious verse,

most of which is in the vernacular although some is in Latin. The great interest in religious literature amongst the laity means it need not be assumed that all of these religious pieces were produced during his life in the cloister. On the other hand, the Carthusian dedication to preaching through the written word would suggest that this is likely to be the over-riding influence on his later work. Perhaps most interesting for the current study is that Dodesham's two copies of the *Distichs* were probably produced later in his life. This may mean that he was influential in the text's dissemination to a religious audience.

3.3.1 Methods of Identifying Dodesham's Scribal Hand

Dodesham can be identified through the evidence of three manuscripts attributed to him, one of which he has signed himself. The other two have been labelled as his by what are probably later hands.²⁶ The attributions are, however, accurate, and the main hand of both manuscripts is distinctively recognisable as belonging to Dodesham. To date, twenty manuscripts have been identified as in his hand with some certainty. The possibility that a conflation of more than one similar hand has occurred has been raised by previous scholars and deemed unlikely (Ayto & Barratt 1984: xxx, citing personal correspondence with A.I. Doyle).

Although the letter-forms of the hand are distinctive in their own right, they are not as noteworthy as the marks of punctuation which are to be found regularly throughout Dodesham's work (for full details, see Doyle 1997: 113-14). These may often be distinguished at a glance. The *punctus* mark is one such tell-tale symbol; it is sometimes given a slight tail, and frequently extended by a stroke rising from left to right, or entirely replaced by this latter 'slash'-style mark. The *punctus* is often to be found marking the line-caesura in poetry, and appears with great regularity in the Hunter 259 copy of the *Distichs*. The *punctus elevatus* is usually given with a similar but smaller, tick-like stroke forming its upper section. The symbols which stand out most, however, are those which the

²⁶ The manuscript signed by Dodesham is Oxford, Trinity College MS. 46. Those attributed to him by others are the 'former Cockerell/Duschnes Manuscript' (pseudo-Augustine's *Sermones morales ad fratres in heremo*, stolen from Philip C. Duschnes of New York and still unaccounted for), and Glasgow University Library MS. Hunterian 77 (T.3.15).

scribe uses to fill up blank spaces at the ends of lines, or to signal section breaks. The former usually consists of an extended hyphen, only employed however as a space-filler, not as a mark that a word has been interrupted by the line break – when the latter does occur, Dodesham’s mark is a double hyphen, similar to an ‘=’ symbol. Sometimes, especially for longer gaps, the space-filling hyphen may take the form of a more elaborately bumped or spiked line. The symbol used to mark the end of an important section is formed like the ‘-us’ suspension mark employed in Latin texts: a 9-shaped mark hovering slightly above the line (see Parkes 1993: 43). Most often, a more flourished form of this mark appears, with an incomplete top loop, and a clockwise curl at the lower end.

There are some features of the letter-forms which also aid in identification of Dodesham’s hand. These include ‘kidney-shaped’ word-final ‘s’, ‘spiky’ ‘N’ and ‘R’, and angular single-compartment ‘a’ forms. Whilst Dodesham’s distinctive punctuation style is the easiest way by which his work can be recognised, his letter-forms may be useful in approximating the stage in his career at which a manuscript was produced. A.I. Doyle (1997: 99) has noted the scribe’s changing preferences for certain forms over time, including an increasing fondness for short rather than long forms of the letter ‘r’, and for kidney-shaped ‘s’ rather than 8-shaped ‘s’. Identification of these traits has been utilised by Simon Horobin (2009: 121) to give an approximate dating of Oxford, Bodleian MS. Bodley 619. If this same test is applied to Hunter 259, it would appear undoubtedly to be a later work; the long ‘r’ form almost never appears in the text, and the kidney-shaped final ‘s’ is much more prevalent than its 8-shaped counterpart. The same is true of the Oxford MS. Bodl. Eng. poet. e. 15. Although Horobin’s reservations concerning the accuracy of dating the text through examination of these letter-forms must be noted, the results resonate with Doyle’s observation that Dodesham’s hand is relatively large in the Hunter manuscript, as an increasing letter-size has previously been noted as a trait of Dodesham’s writing in later life (Doyle 1997: 103).

3.3.2 Secular and Religious Phases of Dodesham's Life

Despite these changes in hand size and letter preference, it can be challenging to divide accurately the surviving Dodesham manuscripts into those which were produced in the secular and the enclosed periods of his life. There is, crucially, no firm date to be applied to his initial entrance to a monastery. Doyle (1997: 114) has speculated that Dodesham's scribal training may have taken place amongst the royal chancery scribes with whom his hand bears some resemblances. When he would have undergone such training is also uncertain; manuscripts produced in the 1450s or 60s, such as the four-volume copy of Nicholas de Lyra's *Sanctilogium Salvatoris* (Cambridge, University Library MSS. Dd. 7-10) display a level of professionalism which leads Doyle to suggest that Dodesham was already thoroughly experienced by this point, and thus his scribal career may have begun in the second or third decades of the fifteenth century (Doyle 1997: 99-101). His repeated production of Lydgate's *Siege of Thebes* is likely evidence of professional, commercial employment prior to involvement with the Carthusians, as this literary romance would not have been in demand in the devout and ascetic Carthusian order (Doyle 1997: 101). This supposition is largely confirmed by its absence in the surviving records of the charterhouses (Gillespie 2001: 609 ff.).

The three manuscripts of *The Siege of Thebes* all appear to be earlier than the more specifically religious productions, and it has been posited that they are most likely to have been produced in the 1430s (Edwards 1991: 187, 195 n. 37). An interesting feature of these texts is that they each appear to have been copied from different exemplars (Edwards 1991: 187-88). This use of different copy-texts for repeated production of the *Siege* would suggest that Dodesham, unlike the Hammond scribe responsible for BL MS. Harley 2251, did not work in a scriptorium which held its own stock of books, but would rather be required to borrow his source texts each time a copy was requested (Edwards 1991: 188-89). The possibility that Dodesham was employed by a scriptorium which held multiple copies of the one text cannot be ruled out, but the expense of acquiring one copy of a text, let alone three, makes this improbable. Beyond these points, the exact nature of Dodesham's employment at this stage of his life is difficult to

reconstruct. No records exist (or, at least, have been found to date) which would allow a basic biographical framework to be constructed; such a framework must be reconstructed through the examination of the works actually produced by the scribe.

Aside from the *Siege of Thebes*, only a few items can with confidence be ascribed to a secular period of the scribe's life. Evidence such as the apparently professional metropolitan decoration of his four volume copy of Nicholas de Lyra's Biblical commentary (Cambridge, University Library MSS. Dd.7-10) has been used to place it in a secular, and 'possibly peripatetic' phase of the scribe's life (Doyle 1997: 101). Although most of the other texts in Dodesham manuscripts are religiously focussed, this does not mean that they must have been produced for consumption by the religious. Like the *Siege of Thebes*, Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Life of Christ* was also copied multiple times by Dodesham; three copies survive in his hand. The *Mirror* may provide a link between the secular and religious portions of the scribe's career. It seems to have circulated widely both within the monastic cloister and in the outside world, endorsed by Archbishop Arundel as an anti-heretical text.

Michael Sargent's research on the *Mirror* has led him to group the surviving manuscripts into three recensions, which he labels alpha, beta and gamma respectively (Sargent 2004: xxxv). Two of Dodesham's copies (Glasgow University MS. Hunterian T.3.15 and Oxford, Bodleian MS. Rawlinson A.387B) can be located in the alpha group, which Sargent has hypothesised contains manuscripts produced for religious circulation, and are probably revised by Love himself to more fully accommodate Archbishop Arundel's anti-Lollard 'Lambeth Constitutions' (Sargent 1997: 192; 2004: xxiii). The third copy, however (Cambridge, Trinity College MS. B.15.16), is part of the gamma group. This grouping does not bear the signs of revision and is hypothesised as being a 'pre-publication' version of the text. Thus the Trinity College *Mirror* may have been produced by Dodesham before his Carthusian profession. In addition to Sargent's textual grouping, Edwards has noted that the quality of the Trinity College manuscript's decoration suggests it was produced in the same metropolitan milieu as Dodesham's earlier, secular *Siege of Thebes* manuscripts (Edwards 1991: 189).

The Carthusian Order's records offer little help in placing the date of his profession more accurately. His name first appears in documents in the 1460s, where Dodesham sets a precedent for being something of a trouble-maker. Whilst at Witham, he wrote to the principal monastery of his order, the Grand Chartreuse, only for his letter to be deemed garbled, wordy and disrespectful; whether he ever received a more comprehensive answer is not recorded (Doyle 1997: 96-97). In 1471, he is recorded as being at Sheen Monastery, again courting controversy by complaining about the prior of Witham. This may well be a continuation of the earlier conflagration, and potentially even the cause for his relocation (Thompson 1930: 306). As a result of this squabble, he is placed under a requirement for perpetual silence, with imprisonment threatened should he disobey. It seems Dodesham accepted the reprimand, as he is still in holy orders at the point of his death, which occurred in 1481 or 1482 (Doyle 1997: 96-97). As the *Distichs* was most likely not composed until the 1460s at the earliest, the same period at which Dodesham is recorded as being part of the Carthusian Order, his production of the Glasgow and Oxford manuscripts almost certainly postdates his profession.

Once a part of the Order, Dodesham appears to have produced a considerable amount of work for the Carthusians. Particularly relevant to this religious calling are such manuscripts as Oxford Bodley 549 (considered above, section 3.2.1, but dismissed as the potential missing part of the Glasgow Hunter volume) which outlines the life lived by professed Carthusians (Ayto & Barratt 1984: xxxi). Also copied during this time appear to be miscellanies for devotional purposes. These include Oxford, Trinity College MS. 46, which consists of a Carthusian liturgical calendar followed by a Psalter and other short religious pieces; and Cambridge, University Library MS. Kk.6.41, which contains a variety of Latin spiritual texts such as the *Speculum peccatoris* and a section from St. Bridget's Revelations. Despite the Bridgettine and Carthusian material in the latter volume, it appears to have been in secular ownership, amongst the books of John Nanfan, the MP for Worcestershire and, from 1445-1446, Chamberlain of the Exchequer (Doyle 1997: 109 n. 51, citing Wedgwood & Holt 1936: 621-623). There is other evidence to suggest that Dodesham produced work for Syon before becoming a professed Carthusian. This includes the two-volume

Sanctilogium Salvatoris which appears in Thomas Betson's catalogue of the brethren's library as **SS1.734** and **735** (Gillespie 2001; **734** survives as Karlsruhe, Badische Landesbibliothek MS. Sankt Georgen 12, **735** is lost), apparently commissioned by Margaret, Duchess of Clarence. Another manuscript, Cambridge, Trinity College B.14.54, contains palimpsest material which indicates that the scribe was working for Syon before overwriting this commission with a set of basic devotional pieces likely to have been intended for a lay owner (Doyle 1997: 106).

Of interest in relation to the previous chapter, is that there appears to have been some kind of connection between Sheen and the Augustinian order. In theory, the Bridgettines of Syon used a modified version of the Rule of St. Augustine, but the order appears to have operated independently of Augustinian input (Jones & Walsham 2010: 3). However, a manuscript copied by Dodesham, now Cambridge, University Library MS. Add. 3042, is possibly a production for an Augustinian nunnery. The item in question is a typically religious text in keeping with much of the rest of Dodesham's work and the reading material of the nunneries, consisting in an adaptation of St. Bonaventure's *De Triplica Via* (Barratt 1997: 312; Doyle 1997: 106-7). There is, therefore, a slight possibility that the *Distichs* text present in BL Harley 7333 is related to those of the Carthusians if the Harley volume is indeed derived from exemplars held by the Augustinians (see above, section 2.8.3). Max Förster (1905: 301) considered Harley 7333 and Hunter 259 to have been copied from different (non-extant) exemplars, but that these exemplars were, in turn, copied from the same hypothetical manuscript, which he labelled γ (gamma). All the stanzas of the main text are present in the Harley volume and Dodesham's copies, and all in the same order. The lack of envoy stanzas in the Harley volume would suggest that – in the unlikely case that one of these manuscripts acted as an exemplar for the others – it is more probably that the Harley volume would have been copied from a Dodesham manuscript and these verses omitted, than that Dodesham borrowed Harley 7333 from the Augustinians and a second copy from elsewhere as a source of the envoys. It is not possible to speculate much further on this point without detailed textual analysis of the poems, but if the Austin Canons of St. Bartholomew's were indeed the holders of the Shirleian manuscripts on

which Harley 7333 was based, it is conceivable that either Dodesham borrowed his original of the *Distichs* from the Augustinians, or *vice versa*, that the latter received their copy from the Carthusians.

3.3.3 Dodesham's Dialect

The dialect of Stephen Dodesham has previously been studied by Brendan Biggs for the purposes of tracing dialects of the exemplars to extant copies of the Middle English *Imitatio Christi*. Dodesham's dialect had previously been localised in the *Linguistic Atlas of Late Mediaeval English* in samples from two different manuscripts which the editors of the *Atlas* had not realised to be the product of the same scribe. These are Linguistic Profile **6730**, drawn from Dublin, Trinity College MS. 678; and Linguistic Profile **6440**, drawn from London, British Library MS. Add. 11305. Two slightly divergent localisations resulted, one in southern Buckinghamshire, one in southern Middlesex. Biggs hypothesises that this approximately twenty-mile discrepancy might be remedied by moving the Buckingham localisation to a position 'further east in southern Middlesex or Northern Surrey'. This suggestion is based on a relative paucity of distinctively Buckinghamshire spellings in Dublin, Trinity College 678 when measured against BL Add. 11305's distinctively non-Buckinghamshire forms (Biggs 1995: 86-87).

Biggs' own research allowed a localisation to an area which includes 'the extreme south of Middlesex, southern Buckinghamshire, the extreme east of Berkshire, and northern Surrey' which, he also notes, includes the area in southern Buckinghamshire to which Dodesham's hand was localised for one of the *LALME* linguistic profiles (Biggs 1995: 87). Biggs uses thirteen of Dodesham's manuscripts to provide this localisation, and although MS. Hunter 259 is not one of these, the *Benjamin Minor* of MS. Hunter 258 is.

This localisation fits with the previous assessment that Dodesham was raised in the south of England close to London, and that he continued to work here, with much of his scribal career quite possibly located in the metropolis itself (barring his temporary relocation to Witham in Somerset – see above, section 3.3.2).

3.4 Likely Use of Dodesham's *Distichs* Manuscripts

Unlike the Harley MSS. 7333 and 2251, there is very little evidence from other texts in Dodesham's *Distichs* volumes from which to build a clear picture of the interests of the person or community which used them. It is apparent that they were interested in vernacular didactic texts, but this was true of many people and groups in the Middle Ages. For this reason it is especially unfortunate that the original volume which now exists as the two Glasgow University Hunter manuscripts has been dismembered in this way. In this case, hypotheses about the potential use of the manuscripts must be built around the knowledge that they were produced by Dodesham, and a consideration of the end-users for whom he was likely to have created manuscripts during his time at Sheen charterhouse.

What is evident from the extant Glasgow sections is that the reader was interested in, or expected to be interested in, both practical and spiritual matters. The inclusion of Lydgate's *Dietary* is especially indicative of a practical slant. The *Disticha Catonis*, despite appearing uncomplicated to modern eyes, was heavily allegorised by medieval readers, resulting in the multiple glosses for the Latin text (Hazelton 1957). Therefore, whilst it might give the appearance of practical wisdom, the text had a wealth of associations in medieval culture which cannot be discarded when considering a scribe's choice to include it in a volume, even in Burgh's simplistic un-glossed translation.

Lydgate's *Dietary*, on the other hand, was not subject to the same level of analysis and allegorical interpretation (if, indeed, it were at all). Its advice is, therefore, more likely to have been appreciated at face value, although this cannot be taken entirely for granted, given the possibility that even Lydgate's poems on washing clothes may have been interpreted as part of a scheme of devotional texts (Nolan 2008 – see above, section 2.5.1). The third text in the Glasgow manuscripts, the *Benjamin Minor*, is certainly part of a more complex theological philosophy. This was a significant text for the Carthusians, who favoured the Victorine school of thought, along with the texts of the mystics, such as Richard Rolle. The *Benjamin Minor*'s relative lack of complexity would mean

that it could be considered as an introductory text to Victorine theology, which allows it to sit comfortably alongside the *Distichs* as another entrance-level text which could be given potentially either to children or to new entrants to the monastic cloister (Doyle 1997: 104). The inclusion of this text may be an indication that the miscellany was intended to remain in a religious library following its production.

Taken together, these factors indicate that there is a significant likelihood that the manuscripts were designed to be retained in a religious setting. If so, there are three main possibilities which would be associated with production at Sheen: use by the Carthusians themselves, use by the Bridgettine nuns of Syon, or use by the brethren of Syon. Each of these will be considered further as possibilities, as well as the possibility that Dodesham's *Distichs* manuscripts may have been produced for a member of the laity.

3.4.1 Potential Use by the Carthusians

The Carthusian Order was strict and the rule by which the monks lived severely limited the interaction of the monks with the outside world. There were only a few members of a charterhouse who were permitted to have regular contact with secular society; the rest of the monks were expected to live in isolation, but to engage in an educational and preaching mission through production of books rather than spoken sermonising (Sargent 1976: 225-226). This meant that the Carthusians were involved in the extensive copying of theological texts for both religious and secular recipients, and there is substantial surviving evidence of their composition and copying of material (Sargent 1976). Over and above this, many of the monks were also engaged in the composition of new texts, as was the case with Nicholas Love, the Carthusian author of the *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*, of which Dodesham made at least three copies. Considering this intense focus on textual production and dissemination, it is worth considering whether Dodesham's manuscripts could have been made with the intention that they remain within the Carthusian Order, and even within Sheen itself.

The Carthusians themselves are not a particularly likely audience for this text. Very little evidence exists for the contents of the Order's libraries, but that which does suggests strongly that these collections shared the preoccupation of the other monastic orders with exegetical or devotional material, and that the majority of texts held in the libraries would have been in Latin rather than the vernacular (cf. the documents printed by Gillespie 2001: 611-652). The *Disticha Catonis* would have been an essential part of any monastic library, given its popularity in quotation even with writers on spiritual matters. As established in the previous chapter (section 2.3.2.3), this is borne out by other volumes in the *Corpus of Medieval Library Catalogues* series. These references prove that, rather than Burgh's translation, favoured instead is the Latin text on its own or, on occasion, accompanied by a gloss which may also be in Latin or in a vernacular language. For monastic readers wishing direct access to the wisdom of Cato as a respected *auctor*, the compact and forceful Latin source text would almost certainly have been preferred to Burgh's markedly less practical versified vernacular adaptation.

A conceivable use of Burgh's version would be in the non-Latinate education of novices to the order, as suggested for the Glasgow volume by Doyle (1997: 104). Although the Order's intake does not seem to have regularly included young children, those who were admitted at any age without the ability to read and write were taught to do so (Sargent 1976: 226, citing Guigo I *Consuetudines* xxviii, 2-4). Whilst it may safely be assumed that most of the boys or men admitted to the Order would already have been put through the rudiments of grammatical training, some would no doubt have to be taught effectively from scratch, and on this occasion Burgh's text may have been useful. However, the requirement for the Carthusians to read and write extensively would suggest that literacy would be acquired firstly in Latin, in order that the monks could read Patristic works or other Latinate theology. This would, in turn, suggest that the *Disticha Catonis*, if used in the education of the novitiate, would still be approached in its original version, rather than a translation. The monks would still acquire literacy in English, but via their Latin education, as was standard practice in medieval religious institutions.

A final possibility is that the text might have been consulted by members of Sheen who were producing vernacular spiritual works for the benefit of the Syon sisters. Again, however, a Latin version would almost certainly have served just as well for this purpose; the Carthusian monks would have been capable of reading the Latin of the source text, and the conservative mindset of medieval monasticism would probably incline them towards making reference directly to the *auctoritas*-bearing original than a Middle English version. Additionally, Burgh's wordy translation would not lend itself to concise and pithy quotation, as might be desired by monastic writers.

It may be the case that at least one copy was held at Sheen which served as the exemplar for Dodesham's productions. Considering the recent composition of the *Distichs* at the time Dodesham copied it – which may have been in the second half of the 1470s if Dodesham's hand in the manuscripts does indeed indicate old age – he would almost certainly have acquired the exemplar for the Glasgow and Oxford copies himself, rather than have found one already in the Carthusian library. Exactly where this exemplar could have come from is impossible to tell; it could have been passed on through contact with other religious institutions, or it could have been provided by a secular patron, perhaps requesting that it be copied and made available to one of the religious orders of the Sheen/Syon nexus. The existence of two copies in Dodesham's hand means that it is impossible to rule out that Dodesham made one manuscript (potentially Oxford, Bodl. poet. e. 15 and particularly if, indeed, it has always stood alone in a volume) to retain as an exemplar in the Carthusian library, and one (the Glasgow volume, accompanied by other texts) to be passed on to another ultimate consumer. The identical ordering of the stanzas in both and inclusion of envoy passages does suggest that they were either copied from the same exemplar or one from the other.

Although Sheen Charterhouse therefore cannot be conclusively ruled out as a potential location for the ownership of these manuscripts, for it to own both would seem extraneous. If one were indeed the exemplar from which the other was copied, the Glasgow volume stands out as the more likely of the two to have been made for another recipient, as its collection of texts would be largely redundant in a monastery whose inhabitants would have the skills to read the

Latin originals. In addition, the solitary appearance of the text in the Oxford manuscript may indicate that it was intentionally made as an exemplar from which other copies could be made.

3.4.2 Potential Use by Syon Brethren

The other male religious group involved in the Sheen-Syon axis must also be considered, if only to allow summary dismissal. The Bridgettine nunnery at Syon also housed a number of male religious, intended principally to deliver sermons to and care spiritually for the nuns. A detailed register of books owned by the Syon brethren survives, produced by a deacon of the order, Thomas Betson. As Betson joined the Bridgettines in 1481 and remained there until his death in 1516, the *registrum* can be dated to within this thirty-five year window. The record of Dodesham's death in 1482 allows reasonable certainty that both his copies of Burgh's *Distichs* were in existence when Betson undertook his cataloguing. Neither of them, however, appears to have formed part of the Syon brethren's library. The register, however, shows signs of updating and erasure which indicate that attempts were made, perhaps not entirely successfully, to keep it up to date, and it is not impossible that reference to Dodesham's book(s) has been removed (Gillespie 2001: l-li). The register may also not include books which were owned individually by the monks. Given that a large contingent of the Syon brethren were former academics or grammar masters, it is conceivable that some would have brought copies of the *Disticha Catonis* with them. However, grammar masters are much more likely to have owned Latin copies of the text which they would have used in the teaching of their subject. Even if they did own vernacular versions, it is exceedingly unlikely that these would have been provided to the grammar masters by Dodesham, who would have little reason to be acquainted with them prior to their entry to the order.

The *registrum* does contain two mentions of the *Disticha Catonis*, both with vernacular glossing (items **SS1.4q** and **SS2.28a** in Gillespie's edition; a third copy, not included in the volume's 'Index of Authors' is to be found at **SS2.2d**, on which occasion the Latin text has been accompanied by a Latin gloss – interestingly, Grosseteste's *Stans Puer ad Mensam* is also present in this

manuscript). Of these, the first was donated to the library by John Bracebridge, a former grammar master, and reflects his grammatical interests; the second is a clear variation on the typical school grammar collection, the *Sex Auctores*. Only one piece apparently by Lydgate is present in the Syon brethren's catalogue – a printed version of the *Dietary* which forms part of a larger volume (it is item **d** in **SS1.106**) composed mainly of advice on the preservation of health. The possibility cannot be dismissed that this item is in some way related to the copy of the same text in MS. Hunter 259. Its lone and potentially dubious appearance, given that its identification must be deduced from the authorially-inexplicit listing 'Dietarium rithmizatum in Anglicis' (Gillespie 2001: 39) serves to reinforce the apparent lack of interest of the male monastic houses in Lydgate's work.

As a result, the likelihood that the Hunter volume was intended for the Syon brethren must be considered minimal. The evidence of Betson's library catalogue is, even if incomplete, enough to reject with some certainty the possibility that either of Dodesham's volumes was owned here.

3.4.3 Potential Use by Sisters of Syon

Unlike the Syon brethren, relatively little is known of the sisters' library. Extrapolation from the reading of other female monastic orders suggests that a vernacular copy of the *Disticha* would be entirely in keeping with the material held by a community such as Syon. In a survey of the material known to be possessed by English nunneries, David Bell notes that around half of institutions held vernacular, non-liturgical material. Moreover, in these institutions, that material accounted for more than two thirds of the books owned (Bell 2007: 123). Nuns appear to have had access to a much larger collection of vernacular texts than did their male contemporaries. Evidence for the reading material of the Bridgettines does exist in the form of surviving books and records of gifts or bequests. A good number of surviving manuscripts can be traced back to ownership by the sisters of Syon, strengthening the belief that they must have been in possession of a reasonably large library (de Hamel 1991; Hutchison 1995).

The works these reveal were mostly intended to help guide the nuns in the ways of the order and, beyond this, advance their spiritual education. The former was achieved through works such as the *Myroure of oure Ladye*, whose internal evidence suggests it was composed by one of the Syon brethren (Hutchison 1995: 208-209). More general spiritual guidance could be afforded by any number of texts, such as Walter Hilton's *Scale of Perfection* or the *Tree and XII Frutes of the Holy Goost*, with Syon-owned copies of each surviving.²⁷ There is also some indication that they would have read Latin and French works, which may have included some patristic writing, or at least a digest of such material.

In general, the works in nunnery libraries were both more varied and more up-to-date than those of the monks, and they were much more likely to include texts composed in or translated into the vernacular. Whilst even well-read orders such as the Benedictines might still be focussed on centuries-old authoritative writing and Biblical exegesis, nuns were more likely to be reading the work of John Lydgate or John Gower. Such texts would have produced wholesome reading material, and it would be of little consequence that they would not allow the sisters to take part in complex theological debate. Further education was always possible, and guidance in this could, in theory, be sought from the annexed brethren if desired.

The nuns' possession of books by Hilton, and likely exposure to Patristic writing, is clear evidence of an ability to read high-level material. It is, however, unlikely that all the Bridgettine sisters would have the same level of literacy. As women were not routinely educated in grammar to the same extent as boys were in the fifteenth century, Syon itself provided for the education of the incoming religious, in theory through the ministrations of the brethren, and with the clauses built into the rule which allowed the nuns as much reading material as they wished for the advancement of their spiritual health (Hogg 1978: 49-50). For those of less advanced literacy, basic reading texts such as Burgh's *Distichs* would have been exceedingly useful. The Latin original had provided something of a base-line text for traditional grammatical education for centuries, and thus a

²⁷ The former, bequeathed to Syon by the anchoress Margery Pensax, is London, British Library MS. Harley 2387; the latter, an early sixteenth-century printed text owned by ninth prioress Margaret Windsor, is Cambridge, Trinity College MS. C.7.12 (Hutchison 1995: 213; 216).

vernacular version of it would make a perfect element in a first reader for novices who were required to be able to read, but not necessarily to read the Latin language of the original.

Given that a moderate to high level of familiarity with religious thought was practicable in the abbey, there is no reason that the relatively uncomplicated *Benjamin Minor* should not be amongst the reading of the Bridgettines. As with the *Distichs*, this text would be especially suited to use by newer, perhaps young members of the order. It would serve as an introduction to the mystical authors, such as Richard Rolle and Walter Hilton, whose work was important to the Bridgettines and to the Carthusians.

The link between Syon and the latter provides perhaps the strongest reason for believing at least one of Dodesham's manuscripts to have been destined for the library of the Bridgettine sisters. Although the Syon brethren were intended to be responsible for the spiritual guidance of the nuns, they were also required to preach to the laity, and this duty appears eventually to have monopolised their time (Gillespie 2001: xxxiv-xxxv). Co-created by Henry V as part of a proposed three-part programme of religious foundations, the Bridgettine and Carthusian institutions eventually achieved physical closeness when, in the second half of the fifteenth century, Syon was moved to a new location at Isleworth, immediately across the Thames from Sheen. Ties between the two were strong, and the Carthusians helped supply the guidance that was to a large extent wanting from the Syon brethren.

Perhaps the best-known case of involvement between Syon and Sheen is the part played by the Carthusian James Grenehalgh in the education of Joanna Sewell as a novice in the Bridgettine sisterhood. Grenehalgh's instruction to Sewell in textual criticism is evident in the annotation of manuscripts which were passed between the two, including among the most notable a copy of Richard Rolle's *Incendium Amoris* (now Cambridge, Emmanuel College MS. 35). If this instance serves as an example of Sheen's role in education, there are also other examples to be found of its part in supplying the Bridgettines with texts. One of these is supplied by William Darker, who was commissioned by abbess Elizabeth Gibbs to copy texts for the nuns, including one of Thomas à Kempis' *Imitation of Christ* which is now Glasgow, University Library MS. T.6.18. Amongst

the other texts for which Darker has been identified as the copyist is one of St. Bridget's rule, now Cambridge, University Library MS. Ff.6.33 (Hutchison 1995: 211).

The examples of Grenehalgh and Darker demonstrate that it is entirely possible that Dodesham's manuscripts were produced for the Bridgettines. The possibility is reinforced by at least two of Dodesham's other productions – the copy of St. Bonaventure's *De Triplica Via* mentioned above, now CUL MS. Add. 3042; and the copy of Aelred of Rievaulx's treatise on the Bridgettine rule (Doyle 1997: 103). Both of these give indications of being produced for nunneries, the first for an Augustinian house, the second most likely for the Syon sisters. Dodesham's activity in producing books for use by female religious is therefore relatively assured.

The case is still not beyond doubt, however. There is no definitive trace on the manuscripts that would prove their use at Syon. The evidence of Amy Thompson's signature on MS. Hunter 259 confirms that it has, at some point in its history, been read and presumably owned by a woman, but not that this was the case at the time of its production. Indeed, Thompson's hand appears to belong to the eighteenth century, and so perhaps belongs to the person from whom Thomas Martin acquired the volume(s). The lack of annotation means that all that can be said with some certainty is that the manuscripts are unlikely to have been in the hands of young children, and if they were, those children had sufficient respect for the manuscript that they did not use its pages for doodles or writing practice as appears to have been the case with other *Distichs* manuscripts.

Perhaps paradoxically, the lack of annotation in the manuscripts may be support for the theory of their Syon ownership. This is significant because the rule governing life at Syon specified that the nuns were not to mark their books, and it appears that this injunction was enforced (Erler 1985: 295). This cannot be considered definitive proof that the Glasgow *Distichs* was used in this setting (after all, many different societal groups are capable of *not* writing on their books, and there are several manuscript copies of the *Distichs* which bear no signs of annotation, including some which were clearly not used in religious

institutions), but it is at least consistent with what we know would be expected of the Syon nuns.

The Oxford Dodesham manuscript is not in exactly the same condition. It is still largely clean, but has been marked throughout with 'nota' signs directing attention to particular passages. These use at least two distinct systems, and are therefore unlikely to have been the result of a single owner's use. These markings may not have been made by the initial owner of the manuscript, but introduced later in its history. The *nota* markings are of a standard type which are difficult to date. In addition, very little can be said definitively about its early history, with only nineteenth-century owners now identifiable: in 1843 William Greenwell acquired it from Alexander Woodford as a gift; twenty years later it was purchased by James Raine (in York in 1862), and subsequently by the Bodleian Library in 1897. The *nota* symbols appear to precede any of these owners, although by what span of time is uncertain. The markings are, however, neat and unobtrusive, and annotation in other volumes – including ownership notes by nuns and the system of markings left by Grenehalgh in his communication with Joanna Sewell – indicate that the Syon rule which restricted abuse of manuscripts was not so strict that it would be enforced with respect to such carefully and thoughtfully inserted additions.

If the use of these manuscripts in a Syon setting is accepted, it is still difficult to identify the exact circumstances in which they may have been used, as so little is known about the ownership and use of books amongst the Syon Bridgettines. Multiple copies of the work imply personal ownership, as there would presumably be little need for the institution's library to contain more than one version of the *Distichs*. That said, the great respect accorded to the text alongside the practical and spiritual utility it was believed to embody, means that it might have been in enough demand for multiple copies to be justified. However, the very same popularity may mean that individual nuns would request their own copies of the work. As a relatively exclusive institution favoured by the aristocracy, Syon was favoured by many wealthy patrons, and counted minor nobility amongst its members, such as Anne de la Pole, a granddaughter of the Duke of Suffolk and favourite of King Henry VI, William de la Pole. This indicates that the modest expense which might be required for a

simple unadorned copy of the *Distichs* would not necessarily be beyond the means of the nuns. It is known that the Bridgettines were expected to enter the convent with their own books, and thus personal ownership of books appears to have been encouraged rather than prohibited (Bainbridge 2010: 84-85). On the other hand, a volume of the size and mixed contents of the original Glasgow miscellany might be expected to be a library volume, whilst the smaller Oxford manuscript has a higher chance of being a personal possession. This, however, assumes that the Oxford volume was not originally part of a larger miscellany which, like the Glasgow manuscript, has been broken down later in its history. The quire signatures indicate that, if it were originally part of a larger codex, it was the first text in that book, and thus offer no help in identifying other potential contents. None of the other manuscripts known to have been produced by Dodesham is of a size and style which would suggest that they are sections of a larger volume which began with what is now Bodl. Eng. poet. e.15. However, if any of the *nota* marks is contemporary with the initial use of the manuscript, this would indicate that the Oxford volume was almost certainly in private ownership, whilst the unannotated nature of the Glasgow manuscript may increase the possibility that it was part of a communal collection.

Amongst the religious orders, the Bridgettine nuns certainly have the strongest claim to owning manuscripts of the kind which the Glasgow volume appears to have been in its original, complete state. However, given the lack of indisputable evidence for religious ownership, the possibility that the book belonged to a member of the laity must still be considered.

3.4.4 Potential Secular Use of Sheen Books

Despite the strict nature of the Carthusian rule, transmission of their manuscripts to the outside world was not unknown. The Syon brethren were even more involved with the wealthy secular patrons who helped to support the monasteries. It is known that at least one of the Syon brethren, Symon Wynter, performed confessional duties for a benefactor of the monastery, Margaret, Duchess of Clarence. Scarcity of records prohibits any assertion that relationships of this kind occurred regularly, but they remain a possible conduit

for texts produced within the monasteries to spread outside the walls. Wynter appears to have himself been responsible for textual transition from cloister to court when he produced his life of St Jerome for Margaret, inscribing it with the suggestion that she allow it to be read and copied by others of her circle (Doyle 1989: 116).

Wynter's hagiography is a special case in that its author was a monk of the monastery, who then used his patron as an entry-point to a network of readers through whom he could reach a wider audience. Tentative corroboration is provided by another patron of Syon: John, Lord Scrope of Masham, appears to have been the recipient of a text circulating particularly amongst the Carthusians. This was a compilation based on the *Speculum Devotorum*. The paucity of copies of this text implies that it remained largely within the order, which in turn suggests that Scrope acquired his manuscript through his association with Syon. This may also have been the case with the largely Carthusian-disseminated *Speculum Spiritualium* owned by a rector of London who also had links to Syon and Sheen; it is worth noting in connection that this text existed in four copies in the library of the Syon brethren (Doyle 1989: 114). Such efforts to produce material for circulation outside the order is also in evidence in the case of John Dygon, Fifth Recluse of Sheen, who produced and donated books which he had provided with apparatus – including indices, headings and details of authorship – intended to make them as useful as possible (see Hanna 2005: 127-128). Margaret Beaufort, mother of Henry VII, also received a gift of books from a monk of Sheen in 1507 (Underwood 1987: 48).

These instances prove that works from Syon and Sheen were capable of transmission to the secular laity. It is only a small stretch to suggest that a patron of one of these institutions might have requested a copy of the *Distichs*, especially if it were known in the court and sub-courtly circles suggested by such manuscripts as BL Royal 18.D.II and New York, Pierpont Morgan M-775. Beyond this suggestion, however, must be guesswork. If the Hammond scribe were drawing on a repository of Shirleian manuscripts lodged with the Austin canons of St. Bartholomew's Hospital as previously suggested, Dodesham could have sourced his copy of the *Distichs* from that order as well. His reasons for producing two copies are entirely obscured by time. Perhaps both were

requested. Equally likely is that Dodesham intended to hold on to the Oxford copy in case of future need, and that this is reflected in its more compact and less neat presentation when compared to the Glasgow copy – meaning that it could easily have been a personal copy. A third possibility is that both were intended for the Syon nuns, since the *Distichs* may have been in heavy enough use to warrant the production of a second copy. The last option, however, seems militated against by the good state of both manuscripts, suggesting only light use.

Whatever the use of the Oxford manuscript (which seems unfortunately irrecoverable now), the original Hunterian codex was almost certainly not for Dodesham's personal use, given the apparent size of the collection and the basic nature of its contents. Education was almost certainly its destination, although it is unclear whether the education in question would have been that of children, or adults such as the nuns of Syon who were lacking a grammar-school background. There is also a significant possibility that it was produced for an outside patron, although if this were the case they have left no mark of their ownership, which would be unusual if its destination had been a household where it might have been consulted by children. The greatest likelihood is that the volume was probably produced by Dodesham for the Bridgettines of neighbouring Syon, and that this order's profound interest in books is responsible for its preservation in a relatively undamaged state until its division at the hands, probably, of Thomas Martin.

3.4.5 Summary – Carthusian Production of Educational Texts

It is, therefore, not particularly surprising to find some copies of the *Distichs* emanating from a religious context. The monastic orders held a large responsibility for the spread of vernacular materials, despite the fact that so few were actively used by the institutions in question. The monasteries produced authors both of historical records and of spiritual guidance, and the spread of these texts was very intimately connected with the religious communities from which they originated. This does not mean that most of these texts were restricted to the particular order of the author in question; Benedictine texts did not spread only amongst the Benedictines, nor Augustinian ones only amongst

the Augustinians. Certain types of texts (history in particular) appear to have been more restricted in their spread, possibly as a result of their more localised interest. Nonetheless, manuscript evidence suggests that many texts spread from order to order, copied by the monks, rather than purchased from outside, commercial sources.

Doyle's summary of the spread of these texts via the religious orders is succinct and effective:

Although some of the English manuscripts of the *Speculum Spiritualium* and *Donatus Devocionis*, like many of Hilton's or Higden's, must be by non-religious copyists, the recurrence of particular religious provenance or associations argues that recourse for exemplars was made via such links and that texts were transmitted from house to house, not always within the same order, as well as to interested non-religious owners, who not infrequently bestowed their acquisitions in time on their source or on like-minded institutions. (Doyle 1989: 114)

This suggestion may be adopted as a partial explanation for the spread of the *Distichs*, which – in the shape of Dodesham's manuscripts – shows evidence of dissemination through the channels associated with religious houses, as well as through those of the capital's commercial book trade as was implied by the Harley manuscripts of the previous chapter. Indeed, these two routes appear to be intimately linked, as it seems likely that the scribes who produced copies for the book trade may have acquired their source texts from monastic houses. The fact that very few can be definitively placed within either milieu is problematic for the argument, but circumstantial evidence based on their contents and the few locations in which they can be reliably placed imply that these conclusions are valid.

Nuns exist at a crucial intersection between two enormously important categories of medieval book consumers – the religious audience and the female audience. It is important to consider how much the *Distichs* manuscripts were circulating among lay women as well as among women religious, and this will be addressed in the next chapter.

3.5 Personal Devotional Use – Another Potentially Bridgettine MS.

The Dodesham manuscripts are not the only ones in the *Distichs* group which might be linked to a Carthusian or Bridgettine monastic milieu. Another of the manuscripts which may have been used in a similar setting is BL MS. Harley 172. This small, unassuming volume is a clear candidate for personal religious ownership, and may even have been copied by its owner.

There is no decoration in this volume at all, and all the texts appear to have been copied by a single fifteenth-century hand which aims at clarity rather than any type of impressive appearance. The volume is composed mainly of paper, but with inner and outer bifolia of each quire on parchment. The parchment is of a moderate quality, which has stiffened and shrunk over time and still bears clear signs of hair follicles in the skin (e.g. fol. 85r). The first two folios have been cut at some point in its history and mended neatly but without subtlety using thick string stitching. The contents of the manuscript are almost entirely focussed on religious subjects, with a few items of wisdom literature. The majority of the texts are in English, although a later hand has added two religious texts in Latin.

Of the vernacular Middle English items, perhaps the most interesting for the present purposes is the 'Tretyse of a Solytarye & a Recluse Woman' (fol. 5v) which is attributable to Saint Bridget. The other interesting section of the manuscript is the final quire, which has been left largely blank, apparently for the insertion of further texts if required by its owner. The main text hand of the rest of the manuscript has, however, copied some devotional texts into this quire, beginning on the final folio and working backwards. The three texts included, the *Pater Noster*, *Ave Maria* and *Credo*, are the minimum that would be expected to be in the possession of a nun of the Bridgettine order. Alternatively, these would not be out of place in the possession of a pious layperson. The other texts in the manuscript, however, which include a 'Form of the Confession of Sins' and '14 Artycles of the Feythe in Holy Chyrche', suggest a dedicated religious audience.

The small, cheap appearance of the manuscript is such that the manuscript was almost certainly for practical use. This impression is given by

the small size of the pages (160 x 110 mm), the simple style of the hand which has an appearance closer to practical handwriting than a careful scribal bookhand, and the plain nature of the text, which is in plain black ink with no rubrication or decoration. The owner appears not to have been interested in the appearance of the volume, but rather concerned with possessing a copy of the texts within, which suggests that these were of special significance to him or her, and may have been used frequently, although carefully, given that the current poor state of the manuscript is probably attributable to age rather than careless use.

The *Distichs* contains some interesting features which reinforce these suppositions. The owner's concern with practicality appears to be reflected in the absence of the Latin distichs. Although the Latin is often incomplete or abbreviated in other manuscripts of Burgh's translation, this manuscript provides one of very few instances in which it is altogether absent. There are at least two possibilities which might account for the absence of the Latin: the owner may have been incapable of reading the Latin, or may have decided that its presence was redundant when the text was present in the vernacular. If the latter is true, this lack of interest in the Latin could in turn indicate either that the owner knew that a copy of the Latin *Disticha* could be accessed if required, or that it was felt the English poem was more important and there was no need to preserve the original distichs alongside the English version. Either of these possibilities is most likely to have led to a desire to save copying time and/or space within the manuscript by the inclusion of the vernacular translation alone. That the Latin was discarded or ignored is a fascinating indication that Burgh's poem was considered – at least by this owner – to have been worth possessing on its own. It therefore held a value as something other than a convenient translation of the Latin for those who required a 'crib', and was so valued that it was deemed worth occupying twenty folios of a ninety-folio manuscript which was apparently constructed to contain only texts which were of particular importance or interest to its owner.

The second point which is reflected by this particular copy of the *Distichs* is the religious nature of its context. Each book of the poem has been separated by the copying of the inscription 'Soli deo honor et gloria': 'Honour and glory to

God alone'. This repeated inscription led the nineteenth-century cataloguer of the Harley manuscripts to assume that each book of the *Distichs* was, in fact, a separate poem, the parts of which he variously ascribed to John Lydgate and Thomas Hoccleve (Wanley *et al.* 1808-1812). These inscriptions appear, however, to be the means by which a pious owner has dealt with the necessity to signal the division between books without the use of headings or large decorative letters. Their pious message is at the same time, perhaps, a reminder that the concern for worldly action and appearance within the poem should not lead the reader to disregard the concerns of spiritual as well as temporal good behaviour.

With regard to the 'Tretyse of a Solytarye & a Recluse Woman', the inclusion of a very brief item with a connection to the Bridgettine order is not conclusive proof that Harley 172 was owned by a member of this order. However, taken alongside the heavily pious nature of the other texts and the book-dividing inscriptions of the *Distichs* it is certainly suggestive of a religious owner. As noted, the volume has been treated with a certain amount of care. Added inscriptions and letter practice appear to be later additions rather than contemporary with the volume's production and ownership. The texts which have been added to the section of the manuscript initially left blank also indicate that the manuscript remained in cloistered ownership – these consist of short Latin texts on the subjects of Saint Antony of Padua; indulgences; and prayers to the Virgin Mary. If these were added in the sixteenth century, the combination of their subject matter and the language in which they were copied would suggest a religious owner, especially with the dwindling status of Latin in the world outside the Church. Such an owner might require something akin to a commonplace books such as this, containing the most important texts to which they wished to refer regularly, and including the prayers they would use on a daily basis.

Dodesham's manuscripts give the impression of being produced with a largely practical view of their use. They are still intended to be attractive items, even if they are for personal use. As with the Harley volumes considered in the previous chapter, the contents of the text are given more weighting than their presentation. The relative brevity of their contents could be accounted for if they

were intended use by individual nuns, who would have had little need for expansive volumes of secular verse as represented by the Harley volumes. This personal pragmatism used in the production of Dodesham's volumes still appears extravagant, however, when contrasted with the incredibly intimate concerns which have shaped the creation of BL Harley 172.

This manuscript, then, accords well with the appearance that the *Distichs* found an audience within the cloister, and possibly specifically amongst the Bridgettines, where it might have been considered a useful text to include amongst those given to the literate nuns. The level of erudition of the other texts in this volume is similar, and they include more items by Lydgate. This is consistent with a picture of the Bridgettines being given material that would be beyond the reading ability of those who only had the most basic levels of training in literacy, but that was not at the heights of theological sophistication that might be read by the male monks or, beyond their level, the friars. Although this does not preclude the likelihood that some of the nuns would have been reading material at this level, they could have acquired it through the libraries of the abbeys, rather than include complex theological works in a small, personal item such as this.

Manuscripts such as Dodesham's and BL Harley 172 which can be assigned with relative certainty to religious owners are few. In the case of Dodesham's manuscripts, it is knowledge of the life of their scribe which is the primary evidence for these conclusions, rather than any evidence that can be gathered from the physical artefacts or their contents. It is possible that there are other manuscripts in the *Distichs* group which were specifically used by religious owners, but these are more difficult to identify, especially because many of the lay reading community were also interested in spiritual and devotional reading. There is no clear dividing line between the texts which might be included in the manuscripts of pious laymen or members of the secular clergy. That said, there are still a few manuscripts whose contents might indicate that a religious ownership is possible, and these will be discussed in the next section.

3.6 Other Potentially Religious Manuscripts

The vast majority of the religious material in the *Distichs* group is in the vernacular, and could be considered 'non-technical' – that is, it consists of material which translates common prayers, gives brief moral lessons, or relates Biblical stories or the lives of saints. This type of material, a vast amount of which was created by John Lydgate, appears to have fed the pious impulses of a lay audience rather than provided subjects of careful reading and contemplation in monasteries. This is not to rule out the possibility, however, that the novitiate of such institutions might be the intended audience for some of these volumes, as appears to be the case for the Glasgow manuscript. However, even this volume has the Victorine *Benjamin Minor* to stand as an indication of its likely monastic use.

It is interesting to note that the few other manuscripts which do include some more involved theological texts show the same interest in mystical experience as the Carthusians and Bridgettines would have done. The most obvious of these in BL MS. Add. 34193, which combines wisdom literature with its main concern of visionary mysticism. The former is represented not only by the *Distichs*, but also by Anthony Woodville, Earl Rivers' translation of the 'Liber de Moralibus Philosophorum'. The miscellany's focus on mysticism runs through the majority of the remaining texts. An important feature of the compilation are accounts of visions, such as that of Edmund Leversegge of Frome, a translation of Guillaume de Deguilleville's *Pélerinage de la Vie Humaine*, and William Stanton's account of St. Patrick's Purgatory. In addition, there is a copy of Pope Celestine V's rule for hermits which underlay the Celestine offshoot of the Benedictine monks. The Celestines shared the Carthusians' fascination with mystical theology (although the Syon brethren, it seems, did not (Gillespie 1999: 262)), and there is a possibility that the presence of this text implies a connection with one or the other of these orders. That impression is reinforced by the presence of a letter concerning family governance attributed to the founder of the Carthusians, Bernard of Chartres. This last text is also present in another *Distichs* manuscript, Oxford, Bodleian MS. Rawlinson C. 48, which mainly contains work by Lydgate. In the Oxford volume, the letter appears to have been added later; it is the first

text, written on parchment (now badly shrunken) in a volume which is otherwise composed almost entirely on paper, which appears to suggest that its owner was primarily interested in didactic literature, but had an interest in the Carthusian order which led him or her to append this text later when it came into their possession.

Also including some material that might imply a connection with the Carthusian order is BL MS. Harley 116. This volume is composed mostly of the religiously-themed work aimed at a secular audience so prevalent elsewhere in the *Distichs* manuscript grouping, and as is usual, a large number of the texts are by Lydgate. Interspersed with these, however, are a couple of texts which imply a more complex relationship with the religious orders. Most notable amongst these is a set of 'Verses on the Foundation of a Carthusian house' (fols. 140v-141v). Also included are several pieces which imply an interest in contemporary politics and recent history, such as an elegy for Ralph, Lord Cromwell (fols. 152v-153v), and a 'Chronicle from Rollo to Edward IV' (fols. 142r-146v). Such an interest might, as with the Harley volumes of the previous chapter, imply an owner involved in or on the fringes of courtly society. Their interest in the foundation of a Carthusian house may be an indication that they were part of a family who patronised such an institution, or were employed by a family who did.

A final manuscript which shows a distinctive collection of religious material is Dublin, Trinity College MS. 519. Whilst the *Distichs* is the first item, it is the only vernacular text contained in the miscellany. The Latin contents of the rest of the volume are, with a few exceptions such as the Guido of Cologne's *Historia Belli Trojani*, religiously focussed, and once again show some interest in the visionary tracts of the mystics, such as the *Visio Tundali Hiberni*, written by an Irish Benedictine at the request of an Abbess of the Cistercian house of St. James in Regensburg (Foster 2004: 179). Given the inclusion of the 'De Conscientia' of Bernard of Clairvaux, a founding member of the Cistercians, the presence of this text might imply that, as with BL Harley 116, this book is also connected to that order.

Overall, the preceding discussion offers suggestive and interesting indications which are nevertheless frustratingly elusive in the final analysis: all

of the manuscripts which go beyond the vernacular devotion of the pious laity are loosely connected to new, and famously strict, religious orders. The connection of these manuscripts to such orders may fit well with the already established courtly audience. Many of these orders were founded partly in reaction to the perceived degradation in standards of the established monastic houses (Jones & Walsham 2010: 10-13). As an attempt to reform the standards of the enclosed religious, the Carthusians, Bridgettines and Cistercians became a *cause célèbre*, attracting enthusiastic support from the nobility. Each of the three orders was famously promised a house by Henry IV, apparently in an attempt to alleviate the guilt attendant on his usurpation of Richard II's throne, although only two-thirds of the 'King's Great Work' were realised in Sheen and Syon. This was not the passing whim of a shame- and disease-riddled king; Henry V carried the plans through, and the aristocracy poured their support into these institutions. Thus the houses at Isleworth and Sheen, despite – perhaps indeed, because of – their reputation for asceticism and intense devotion, drew the passionate support of the courtly set, who hastened to act as their patrons and, in the case of Syon, to visit in person the institutions in the hope of benefiting from its indulgences. This latter trend was one on which the monks capitalised, as seems to be indicated by a pseudo-sermon surviving in manuscript form which examines these indulgences in detail (Swanson 2007: 336-345, citing BL MS. Harley 2321 fols. 15r-62r). Here, at this intersection between the lower aristocracy and the fashionably devout religious orders, the *Distichs* appears to have found fertile ground.

This suggests that the noble/gentle audience proposed in the preceding chapter for 'secular' *Distichs* manuscripts was not, in fact, diametrically opposed to the likely religious audience of Dodesham's manuscripts. One further manuscript in the *Distichs* group appears to provide further evidence for this courtly-religious nexus which apparently connects the secular and monastic manuscripts. Although not itself containing distinctly monastic texts, Lambeth 3597's contents can be linked to another manuscript which does, and both can be linked to the lower-level aristocracy who appear to have been at the core of the *Distichs'* audience.

3.7 Lambeth 3597: Devout Laywoman's Reading with a Connection to Syon?

As discussed above (section 3.4.4), both the Carthusian brethren of Sheen and the Syon brethren were involved in copying and writing material for the secular community. The two monasteries were heavily patronised by members of the aristocracy, and these benefactors were often granted confraternity to become, notionally, non-enclosed members of the orders. Such patrons for Sheen included the Lancastrian royalty following the conception of Syon Abbey in Henry IV's reign, and its actual creation in that of Henry V. Margaret Beaufort also favoured both orders and was rewarded with permission to enter even the cloistered areas of Sheen by 1504 (Underwood 1987: 48). Beaufort, indeed, is representative of the support the Bridgettines received from wealthy female nobles. In patronage of the Bridgettines of Syon, Margaret was following the precedent of her grandmother, which demonstrates the longstanding nature of such arrangements (Jones & Underwood 1992: 180).

The monastery thus attracted patronage from the upper middle classes and lower nobility, and many of the nuns were themselves originally members of these ranks, which Bainbridge identifies as 'powerful families of royal courtiers, gentry, lawyers and merchants' rather than the high aristocracy (2010: 84). This social milieu provides an interesting point of contact with the secular owners of the *Distichs*. The dissemination of the text both in the lay world and in the enclosed world of the monasteries occurred largely through those from the same social milieu. It is, therefore, interesting to consider the possibility that the poem found a point of harbour inside the walls of Sheen and Syon, and survived there to be circulated occasionally to readers or copyists from outside the monastery when its inclusion was desired in a manuscript being constructed for a patron.

London, Lambeth Palace MS. 3597 provides no means of definitively identifying the original owner for whom it was composed. Nonetheless, the manuscript was given some attention by Edward Wilson (1977) when it was still owned by the Throckmorton family at Coughton Court (by whom it was sold to Lambeth Palace in 1991; the MS. is Lot 205 in the Christie's Sale Catalogue for 20th December 1972). Wilson tentatively concluded that the volume had probably been in the Throckmorton family since its creation, and that it is likely

to have been produced for Margaret Throckmorton in the late fifteenth century. The earliest name which is inscribed on the manuscript is 'Elyzbeth' on fol. 95r, which Wilson suggests is Margaret's daughter-in-law Elizabeth Throckmorton, née Baynham, who married her son Robert (Wilson 1977: 298). He notes, however, that Margaret also had a daughter named Elizabeth, who was the last abbess of Denny Abbey in Cambridgeshire in its period as a house of the Poor Clares, and that this Elizabeth was the owner of a copy of William Nassyngton's *Speculum Vitae* (now Oxford MS. Bodl. Hatton 18) which implies the literacy that would make her a candidate for ownership of the Lambeth volume (Wilson 1977: 298 n. 5).

Mary Erler (2002: 145) believes 'Elyzbeth' to be Abbess Elizabeth Throckmorton, and firmly associates the manuscript with Denny Abbey, on the basis that the Hatton manuscript bears the name 'Thoma Gylberd' and the Lambeth manuscript the name 'Robt Gilberd'. The former establishes 'Thoma' as an inmate of the same monastery as Elizabeth, and witnesses Throckmorton's ownership of the manuscript, whilst the latter is lacking other contextualising information. This could be explained by friendship between the Throckmorton and Gilberd families, however, which would undermine the argument that the manuscript was the property of Denny. Nonetheless, although the following argument subscribes to Wilson's view that Lambeth 3597 was a secular manuscript originating from Sheen or Syon, its potential ownership by Abbess Throckmorton must be borne in mind.

Wilson identifies the Lambeth manuscript as potentially related to another of the volumes in the British Library's Harleian collection, BL Harley MS. 4012. This manuscript shares eight items with Lambeth 3597, including four which appear in the same sequence. These four are items of religious prose: 'Fowre thinges ben nedefull vnto every cristen man and woman to rewle herself by', 'The Mirroure of sunners', 'þe wordes that oure saveoure ihesu cryst spake to his blessed spouse and holy virgyn seynt molte', and 'A tretése of mekenesse withoute which no man may come to any vertu or love of god' (Wilson 1977: 296-287). The only deviation from the grouping of these texts in the two manuscripts is that the Lambeth miscelleany contains an extra item which falls

between the second and third on the preceding list, a 'treytise of thre arows that schuln be schette at domus day vnto them that there schall be dampned'.

Both manuscripts are composed almost exclusively of religious texts which would be suitable for lay readership – that is, non-technical vernacular spiritual texts as opposed to the detailed Latin theology of monastic collections. Amongst these texts in Harley 4012 is, on fols. 110r-113r, 'the pardon Of the monastery of Shene whiche is Syon'. A fifteenth-century owner of the Harley volume is known to have been Dame Anne Wingfield, whose ownership inscription appears on fol. 253r, and is still legible under ultraviolet light (Wilson 1977: 301). Although the Bridgettine cult, which included the indulgences which could be obtained from 1446 onwards, was well-known in fifteenth-century England, Wingfield is known to have a particular connection with the order owing to the inclusion in her will of a monetary bequest to 'the hous of Syon, where I am a suster' (Raine 1869: 151; cited Wilson 1977: 302). This implies that Wingfield, who was Lady Scrope through her marriage to John, Lord Scrope of Bolton, was amongst the wealthy patronesses of the monastery who had been admitted to its confraternity. If the volume was created specifically for Dame Anne, then there is a reasonable chance that its production was carried out in one of the religious institutions which she patronised, and thus possibly by the Syon brethren or the Sheen Carthusians.

To pinpoint the place of likely production is difficult. Wilson, however, has also noted that Margaret Throckmorton, the likely owner of the Lambeth manuscript, shares the religious devotion of Anne Wingfield. Again, the exact details of the houses which Throckmorton chose to patronise are lost, but a letter does survive which suggests that she was granted confraternity in one, permission for which came 'from beyond the se' (Coughton muniments, Box 61, folder 1; cited Pantin 1976: 403 n. 3). The requirement for confirmation to be received outwith the country leads Pantin to suggest specifically the Carthusians, who would have sought support from their main house at Chartres on such an occasion (1976: 403). There is, in addition, a possible connection between the Throckmorton and Wingfield families, as seen through the marriage of Jane Wingfield to Jerome Gilbert in Colchester, Essex in the late 1550s. Gilbert was a lawyer, although his father, William, was a weaver from Suffolk in the service of

King Henry VIII (Pumfrey 2004). The geographical areas are sufficiently close that this could be the same Gilbert family whose names appear in MS. Lambeth 3597 and Abbess Throckmorton's Oxford MS. Bodl. Hatton 18. This suggests the tight-knit nature of the social circles in which these families moved.

The connection of the two manuscripts and the potential involvement of their owners in the Sheen/Syon monastic complex is highly suggestive that these manuscripts may be a product of one (or both) of those institutions, perhaps copied from the same exemplars. Even if they were not obtained from these specific institutions, they do appear to be a product of this type of background. The presence of the *Distichs* in Lambeth 3597 suggests that the source of the Lambeth volume and Wingfield's Harley 4012 also possessed a copy of Burgh's work. Its presence in Sheen is already certain thanks to the copies produced by Dodesham, and thus the Carthusian charterhouse would be a reasonable place to expect the copying to have been conducted.

However, this conclusion must remain tentative on two grounds. Firstly, Wilson located the dialect of Harley 4012 to, approximately, Norfolk. Whilst this is not an extravagant distance from Sheen, it reduces slightly the possibility that the scribe had found his way to that house. Secondly, the Lambeth manuscript has been produced in two main hands, with another two adding only minor items to pages which were presumably left blank during its original copying. The first main hand is responsible for the majority of the manuscript, whilst the second main hand has copied the *Distichs* alone. My own observation leads me to believe that the scribal hand changes again towards the end of the *Distichs*, during distich I.39 on fol. 93v, continuing to the foot of fol. 94v. Burgh's poem is the final item in the miscellany and, although the quire signatures indicate that this booklet was a part of the volume as originally produced, it may have initially been left blank to allow for the addition of later texts if desired. If the scribe were utilising pages ruled by the producers of the rest of the volume, this would account for the copying of Burgh's text in double columns without line division, giving it the appearance of prose. Alternatively, this layout could have been adopted simply to maintain a consistency of layout with the previous texts. The *Distichs* is incomplete, and the final folio of the manuscript contains a single

stanza in the tradition of the 'dullness' trope frequently found appended to fifteenth-century poetry.

This state of the *Distichs* in the Lambeth manuscript indicates that it was not a part of the plan for the miscellany as it was conceived in the scriptorium. The abrupt end to the text may indicate that the scribe(s) either lost access to the exemplar, or realised that the text was longer than could be accommodated by the remaining pages of the manuscript. There are, in addition, flaws in the copying of the *Distichs*. That several of the stanzas are in an idiosyncratic order implies either that the source from which it was copied was equally flawed, or that they were not attentively copied by the scribe the scribe.

Whether or not the later addition of the *Distichs* to MS. Lambeth 3597 undermines the possibility that its exemplar was held in a monastic repository is unclear. Its production does not appear to have been as professional or attentive as the majority of the rest of the manuscript, which is very neatly laid out, and provided with rubrication and even minor illumination in gold leaf of the first folio's recto. The *Distichs*, by contrast, has space left for decorative initials which has never been utilised. The less professional appearance of the *Distichs* may seem to be damning proof that it was an addition made outside the scriptorium, but it is possible that the other quires of the manuscript were sent for rubrication and decoration whilst the *Distichs* was being copied, and that time or convenience was never found to complete the work in this quire. However, owing to the differences in hand and decoration, it remains much more likely that Burgh's text was a later addition, utilising columns which had been ruled at the time of the manuscript's compilation but left empty in case just such a text should be found to fill them later.

This conclusion throws the present argument into some confusion, although fortunately the problem is not irresolvable. It remains true that the manuscripts are likely to be connected to the monastic milieu in which Dodesham produced his Glasgow and Oxford copies of the *Distichs*. They may, indeed, have been produced in the same Carthusian scriptorium in which Dodesham worked. The *Distichs* was, therefore, part of the surroundings in which the physical volumes originated. That they were not added by the original scribe of the Lambeth volume indicates that they probably did not occur to him

or her for inclusion in the miscellany. However, they do seem to have been desired by the owner of the manuscript. The hand in which the text is copied appears to be slightly later, but is still recognisable as either a late-fifteenth or early-sixteenth-century hand. This means that the manuscript would still have been in the possession either of Margaret Throckmorton or Elizabeth Throckmorton at the time of its addition. One or the other of these women may have requested that it be added to the book, potentially by scribes associated with their household.

That the Throckmortons were members of the same type of social circle which appears to have wanted to read the *Distichs* in the Harley manuscripts discussed in the previous chapter is significant. Whether or not the copy of the text in the Lambeth miscellany was derived from a religious source, it is still a sign that the lower nobility / upper middle-class patrons who owned these manuscripts and who even made up a large section of the population of the enclosed of Syon Abbey, were interested in the text. Even if the monastery were not the source of the Lambeth *Distichs'* exemplar, it is still part of the network of readers and copiers in which the text was circulating.

3.8 Conclusion

The manuscripts copied by Stephen Dodesham provide an indication that the *Distichs* had penetrated the walls of the medieval monasteries. Although this was already implied by the Augustinian ownership of BL Harley 7333, discussed in the previous chapter, some dubiety about the production of that manuscript for this milieu was expressed. Dodesham's production of multiple copies during his time at Sheen Charterhouse, however, is a more convincing sign that the text was used in at least some of these circles.

The nunneries of medieval England were more appreciative of moralising works in the vernacular than were the monasteries of the male orders. The *Distichs* is not out of keeping with the type of material that was known to circulate amongst the Bridgettines of Syon Abbey. This institution had an unusually strong connection with the Carthusians, and so benefited from the

educational prerogatives of that order, as well as those of the brethren of their own monastery.

Other manuscripts imply that the *Distichs* was often found alongside the type of religious text which were present in these manuscripts, especially the minor devotional ones which discussed subjects such as a layperson's relationship with the Church and their spiritual responsibilities. Hagiography is also a popular genre included in these manuscripts. However, it can be exceedingly difficult to identify those manuscripts which might be used by a specifically religious audience, rather than those which were designed for the consumption of a lay pious secular readership.

The fame of the Bridgettines had led to a large community of secular patrons surrounding the monastery and providing it both with financial support, and with the daughters who would help to keep the order populated, even if it never reached the full complement of nuns which were specified in the original rule of St. Bridget. This circle of patronage overlaps significantly with the moderately wealthy groups who appear to have owned many of the more worldly manuscripts of Burgh's work, and this may be highly significant in the dissemination of the poem.

Manuscripts whose copy of the *Distichs* can, without doubt, be asserted as based on monastic exemplars are lacking. However, Lambeth 3597 exists as an indication that the audience who were commissioning (or perhaps receiving as gifts) manuscripts from the monasteries were also interested in the Middle English Cato. The textual ties between the cloister and the outside world are exceptionally strong, as can be seen by the regular composition or copying of texts by the monks for their unenclosed patrons. The Syon brethren were also extensively engaged in preaching to the world beyond the monastery, and so would have had an up-to-date knowledge of the books which were circulating in that milieu. These conditions provided the ideal opportunity for the *Distichs* (and many other texts like it) to be communicated between these communities, and it is entirely likely that the *Distichs* travelled both into and out of the cloister on several occasions.

Nonetheless, the religious enclosed do not appear to have been the main audience for Burgh's *Distichs*, certainly not to the same extent that they

appreciated the Latin *Disticha* on which it was based. This is probably because the new form of the work was too close to the more literary, self-consciously embellished verse which was finding an ever-increasing readership amongst the growing literate classes of the fifteenth century. It was, in short, not utilitarian enough for a religious audience who preferred to consume books for their content rather than their attempts to imitate the stylish poetry of Chaucer. This was the case even for the authors who emerged from the monasteries themselves, such as the Benedictine Lydgate whose work was still largely absent from the catalogues of religious institutions.

Lydgate's work was, of course, widespread in the secular world, and so must be discounted as a reliable indicator of strong religious devotion even amongst this group. The texts which show more involved or discriminating religious taste all contain some indication of ties to the new austere orders typified by Sheen and Syon. The manuscripts in question may have belonged to members of these orders, but their largely vernacular contents suggest that they may equally have been the property of the nobility who were attracted to these institutions. Instead of dividing the core of the *Distichs'* audience in two, this may instead unify it, as the text cross-fertilised the manuscripts of the nobility and the religious institutions they patronised.

The next chapter will attempt to use these two poles as starting points from which to map more generally the use of the *Distichs* in its manuscript incarnations, considering the strength of enthusiasm for the text in both settings, and the weighting they should both be given in attempts to describe the scale and shape of the dissemination of the poem.

Chapter 4 – Analysis of Overall Patterns of Use and Reception from Manuscript Evidence

4.1 Introduction

The overall aim of this thesis is to discern patterns of ownership and reception of Burgh's *Distichs* in its manuscript circulation. The majority of the themes which are to be explored in this chapter's 'cultural mapping' of the text have already been identified in the preceding case studies but are yet to be turned into a coherent picture which considers the full complement of extant manuscripts. This chapter attempts to outline this larger picture on the basis of the information presented in the case studies, alongside the data gathered for the catalogue of *Distichs* manuscripts provided in the appendices to this thesis.

For the majority of these manuscripts, this study can do little more than offer a glimpse into the historical and social circumstances in which they can be located. Each could provide a fascinating study in its own right, and a great deal more research could be done on this group. However, the current study must necessarily be restricted to providing overarching patterns supported by evidence from individual manuscripts. Such investigation of the *Distichs* is more than justified by the widespread use of the *Disticha* in its various incarnations and of Burgh's translation in particular.

Burgh's version occupies a fascinating position in the history of literacy in England. Not only is it riding the swell of enthusiasm for the reworking of ancient works into the newly-prestigious vernacular, nor only also involved in the democratization of literacy, it is, in addition, caught on the brink of the print revolution. That William Caxton put Burgh's text to early and repeated use in his printing efforts is a sign that the work had a significant impact beyond its manuscript copies. The study of the manuscript *Distichs* is, thus, in need of supplementation by consideration of its printed offspring, in addition to the social, political and religious factors which would have shaped its use. This chapter will touch on the likely audience of the printed version, although again with the knowledge that a much fuller investigation of the evidence would undoubtedly yield further exciting results. Its main focus, however, must remain

on the hand-produced copies of the poem, drawing together the gentry/mercantile and religious sub-groups investigated in the preceding chapters and populating the space around them with an idea of the issues which motivated these manuscript consumers to request and read volumes in which Burgh's *Distichs of Cato* played a role.

4.2 The Manuscripts

Despite the possibilities presented by the meta-textual data gathered from these manuscripts, the bulk of the information presented by manuscripts is textual, and thus the most reliable information for audience and use must be drawn from the poems, prose and miscellaneous items present in the codices. Therefore, a large part of this chapter will be devoted to analysis and discussion of the choices made by scribes, commissioners and/or book owners when choosing the texts to stand alongside the *Distichs* in their miscellanies. Other codicological information, such as the marks, annotation and other signs of use left by users on their books, is also crucial to this study, but must frequently be interpreted somewhat speculatively. To this end, quires can be examined for indications that they were not originally bound together, or that they have experienced heavy use or, conversely, periods of neglect. This has been done for the manuscripts comprising the *Distichs* group, and the results are valuable.

However, such evidence provides detached puzzle-pieces of a volume's complex history, and it has to be admitted that to accept firm links between these pieces is frequently (informed) guesswork. Just who bound, divided, or rearranged booklets and quires is often impossible to recover, as is the identity of those who left their own traces on the volumes whether or not they have chosen to provide posterity with their names. This is especially true for a study limited in time and resources as this must inevitably be.

Nonetheless, the benefits of analysing, even in a shallow but wide-ranging way, a group of manuscripts in this manner include the ability to discern larger patterns of use and annotation. In an individual manuscript, these patterns may not provide solid grounds for speculation, but when compared and contrasted

with other codices, the significance of reoccurring features can be discerned. Some of these points will be considered first, before analysis of the natures, themes and affiliations of the texts are discussed in full.

4.2.1 Presentation

The presentation of the *Distichs* manuscripts is highly varied. Their dimensions can be those of a modern-day paperback (e.g. BL Harley 172: pages 160 x 110 mm) or of a large display volume which might seem impractical for reading (e.g. BL Harley 7333: pages 455 x 320 mm). The layout and decoration of the texts within these volumes is equally diverse, and can be unpretentious and practical (e.g. Oxford, Bodleian MS. Eng. poet. e. 15 and, again, BL Harley 172) or beautifully illuminated with large-scale illustrations (e.g. Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales MS. Peniarth 481D and BL Royal 18.D.II). This range provides an initial indicator that ownership of manuscripts of the *Distichs* extended across multiple layers of society, from those who were able to afford lavish books, to those who made copies potentially for their own private use as inexpensively as possible.

As might reasonably be expected, the vast majority of the manuscripts do not stand at the extremes of presentation, but occupy an intermediate range of dimensions typical of folio volumes and are accompanied by limited decoration. The most standard set of dimensions is approximately 280 x 200 mm, and the most regular presentation style involves neat black Bastard Anglicana lettering, rubricated in a more formal Anglicana hand, decorated with large (two- or three-line) initial letters marking the beginning of texts or major subdivisions of text, with more minor subdivisions indicated by red or blue initials and/or paraph marks. If any more elaborate decoration is present, this usually consists of red pen-line swirls and zig-zags, surrounding the important initials and spreading from them up and down the margins of the text. This type of presentation is usually consistently deployed throughout each manuscript, with individual texts varying in minor ways depending on the predilections of their scribe or scriptorium. However, this type of presentation is also standard across the

majority of Middle English manuscripts, which are in general rarely large, lavish productions.

The presence of decoration in these manuscripts, however limited, implies that some aesthetic pleasure is to be derived from them. It is possible to contrast these with purely practical collections, such as those for use in the schools of dictamen or other institutions which train or employ secretaries, notaries, or other varieties of bureaucrat. One such collection is present among the *Distichs* volumes: BL Royal 17.B.XLVII. Although its contents are now bound as a single volume, their fragmented origins are witnessed by the disparity in quire signature style alongside the presence of several different hands. This compound nature allows it to function more as representative of its genre than as a single production. Decoration in this book is notably absent, and it lacks even rubrication. Texts are distinguished from one another through the provision of small gaps, in which a heading may be provided, often in Latin. The practicality of the writing extends to the word-level, with frequently-used words and letter groups abbreviated using the system of abbreviation and suspension diacritics common to the period, reflecting the ways in which these would be laid out in the documents for which they served as exemplars. This straightforward presentation contrasts subtly with that of the standard version of the *Distichs*, which is not as unswervingly spartan.

The dictamen collection's own excerpt of Burgh's work is small: a single stanza which accompanies Lydgate's *Dietary*, the two together perhaps functioning as a touchstone of good conduct and proper behaviour. BL Royal 17.B.XLVII exists purely to be used by secretaries and notaries, and decoration is extraneous to this purpose. This sense of practicality is, to an extent, shared by many of the other manuscripts in the group, most notably BL Harley 172, which is compact, neatly written, and bearing very little decoration. However, the majority include the type of decorative scheme detailed above. This subtly alters the appeal of the texts to which it is applied; instead of being of value purely for their information content, they are given an additional aesthetic dimension by the presence of their enlarged, coloured initials and pen-line curlicues.

A few of the manuscripts of the *Distichs* are at the other end of the scale of decoration, and can be readily recognised as productions for wealthy patrons.

The main candidates for this category are BL MS. Royal 18.D.II, Aberystwyth, NLW MS. Peniarth 481D, and New York, Pierpont Morgan MS. M-775. Each of these contains high-quality illustration for at least one of the texts it contains. Royal 18.D.II most notably contains Lydgate's *Troy Book*, decorated with miniatures which are usually between an eighth and a sixth of the area of the folio (e.g. fols. 31v, 75r, 88r), although they can occupy up to a quarter of the folio (fols. 7r, 96r). The 'Wars of Alexander' in Peniarth 481D are similarly accompanied by lavish illustrations, although these are fewer in number but larger in scale. The *Distichs* in this manuscript are the only surviving ones to be themselves given large illustrations which initially depict the poet taking recitation from Cato (fol. 1r), and then in conversation with a nobleman (as suggested by his rich dress with fleurs-de-lis decoration; fols. 2r, 8v, 14v, 19r) presumably in a visual metaphor for the transmission of Cato's wisdom. Despite the interest in seeing Burgh's text thus accompanied, perhaps the most interesting feature of this illuminative strategy is the inclusion in the borders of a white Yorkist rose on fol. 29v. This decoration strengthens the hypothesis that the volume was produced for a member of the nobility; not only would this manuscript have been outside the economic reach of other members of society, but the rose stands distinctly as the symbol of the dynastic struggle for the English throne which threads through this period of history. It is unlikely that anyone other than a family directly involved in the conflict (or, potentially, one of their closest retainers) would desire this potentially dangerous piece of illustration. Unfortunately, the details surrounding this manuscript are sparse; there are no heraldic symbols in the decorative scheme, no names inscribed or scribbled on the pages, and no documentary record of previous ownership before its ownership by the Wynne family of Peniarth, with whose collection it was eventually acquired by the National Library of Wales.

Another of the manuscripts bearing some illumination is BL MS. Add. 34193, almost half of which is dedicated to a translation of Guillaume de Deguileville's *Pilgrimage of the Soul*. The power of this poem is enhanced through the presence of illumination inspired by the text, including graphic depictions of Christ's Passion, and of the torments that await the unrepentant in hell. In this case, the pictures are not highly detailed, as is the case in BL Royal 18.D.II.

However, they are clearly still the work of a talented artist. Some of the images have smudged quite badly as a result of time and use, which is almost certainly a fault with the materials used in illustration which, in this case appear to have been coloured pencil or crayon rather than ink.

The appearance of manuscripts such as BL Add. 34193 and BL Royal 18 D. II demonstrate that not all of these miscellanies are plain, unadorned creations, and that some have been produced for what must have been very wealthy patrons. This is reflected further by their contents, which tend towards political or historical material of apparent relevance to their owners, suggesting that they are, in part, symbols of a family's wealth, lineage, affiliations and allegiances. The inclusion of the *Distichs* in such manuscripts is an indication of the prestige the text was still felt to have; although usually not illustrated itself, a text with any less perceived worth would not have been incorporated in volumes which constitute displays of ideology as much as (or more so than) cherished reading material. The sumptuous illustrations which appear between books in the Peniarth manuscript are an indication that it was not impossible for this text to be treated with some of the respect usually reserved for more high-profile works.

BL Harley 7333, as discussed in the close analysis of this manuscript and its relations, is distinguished from the other *Distichs* manuscripts not by an elaborate complement of illustrations, but by its scale. Its size is not a definite guarantee that it was composed for a wealthy patron, but is a reasonable indication of such a commission. The impression of moderate rather than unlimited expenditure is reinforced by the lack of a decorative scheme which goes beyond rubrication. Decorative initials have been included for most of the texts, and a system of running headers is implied by the paraphs standing above each column, although most of these remain unused. In cataloguing this item, Manly & Rickert (i, 209) suggested that it had been continued over a space of several years, and this is consistent with the impression that it has never actually been 'completed'. However, analysis of the scribal hands suggests that it was produced in a shorter period of time, and that the changing hands are the result of alternating stints in a scriptorium, rather than different members of a household or monastery adding to the collection over a period of years. As a

result, its completion must have been planned – even if not achieved – rather than being left open-ended, and so its current state must be taken as close to those plans.

The relatively uniform, modestly-decorated appearance of most of the manuscripts in the *Distichs* group makes presentation a difficult criterion from which to deduce an audience. Despite the lack of decoration, these volumes cannot be considered to be ‘cheap’ productions, as even modest manuscripts would be expensive for the time, effort, and materials required to produce them. The possibilities for audience are largely consistent with those which have already been discussed in the case studies: private ownership by the moderately wealthy, and religious institutions who would be required to pay only for materials as the labour would be provided by their monks. The former in particular is too general a categorisation, and needs to be refined somewhat.

The volumes in which the *Distichs* appear would largely be affordable for merchants and others in the expanding middle class. At this level of society there was an increasing demand for such literature, and especially in the vernacular, as those who were literate and relatively solvent aspired to increase the breadth of their knowledge. Despite their increasing wealth, this group would rarely be able to afford the levels of decoration enjoyed by the nobility. Those of whom we are aware in the *Distichs* group appear not to have been particularly concerned with the appearance of their volumes, but rather with expanding their collection as much as possible, as de Vale did with the extensive material in BL Harley 2251. These readers were more interested in the textual content of the books than their appearance, as is supported by their willingness to use the margins for notes on everything from history to the management of the household. Modest decoration, particularly rubrication, is almost a standard element of books in this period, and so most middle-class buyers might be expected to own books meeting a minimum amount of illustration without having to pay more than is reasonable.

This fashion for illustration does not mean, however, that noblemen would refuse to own manuscripts such as the simply decorated ones which comprise the majority of those containing the *Distichs*. Although perhaps owning a few display manuscripts, most of the libraries of these men and women would

have been composed of modest books. These volumes may regularly be expected, however, to be made to slightly higher standards than those owned by the middle class. This might taken the form of slightly more elaborate presentation, larger pages, or higher quality materials. A good example of such a volume from the *Distichs* group is Thomas Chaundler's manuscript of Boethius, BL Harley 43, which displays all of these features. As a leading clergyman and eventual chancellor of Oxford university, Chaundler would not be lacking in funds.

4.2.2 Presentation of the *Distichs* within Manuscripts.

The *Distichs* themselves are particularly well-suited to visually arresting page layouts. The apparent compulsion to copy the original Latin alongside Burgh's Middle English is almost wholly responsible for the varying presentation of the poem in its manuscripts. The scribes are thus provided with the opportunity to rubricate the Latin source text if they or their patrons so desire, and to choose whether it is inserted into the main body of the text, or reserved for the margins. In addition, some scribes or rubricators have chosen to truncate the Latin, especially in the list of monostichs which comprise the *Parvus Cato* and the lengthy prologue to the second book. The awkward division of the text into the *Parvus Cato* and 'Cato Major' sections means that the prologue to the entire work, with its accompanying list of abrupt commands, is treated almost as if it is a separate poem, and may not be included with the main body of the *Distichs*. Whilst thirty-four manuscripts can be identified as containing the 'Cato Major' either as a whole or in excerpts, only two thirds of these also contain the *Parvus Cato*. On only one occasion, however, does the monostich collection survive on its own (in Oxford, Bodleian MS. Rawl. D. 328). Together, these facts suggest that it was given little weight when compared with the 'Cato Major', which could be thought of as the '*Distichs* proper'. It is perhaps this lesser status which particularly encourages the diminution of the *Parvus Cato*'s Latin components, a strategy also adopted by William Caxton for his printed editions.

The arrangement for which most copyists have settled is the alternation of Latin and English. In the *Parvus Cato* each of Burgh's stanzas typically

corresponds to several lines of the source text, before the 'Cato Major' settles into the pattern of one rhyme royal stanza per distich. The scribes have most often chosen to provide a consistent page layout throughout the entire text, and have thus abbreviated the *Parvus Cato's* Latin to two lines for every stanza of English, frequently cramming as many of the monostichs into each line as is allowed by space and appearance. The rest of the Latin text is usually discarded; only on rare occasions (such as in BL Harley 116) is it present in its entirety. The truncated versions are, therefore, visually consistent with the 'Cato Major', for which each source distich is copied immediately before its vernacular translation.

4.2.3 Evidence for Audience from Manuscript Markings

The presentation of the *Distichs* manuscripts, then, gives some insight into the societal groups for whom they were produced, or at least the level of expenditure such groups were prepared to devote to these books. The impression of moderate wealth which can be gained from looking at the physical objects alone is supported by the ownership information where it exists. In the first chapter, John de Vale was identified as the owner of the particularly extensive BL Harley 2251, and a group of related manuscripts identified which can be traced back to the miscellany compilations of John Shirley. De Vale and Shirley occupied similar rungs of medieval society, performing clerkly duties for their employers. However, for de Vale this employer was a wealthy merchant, whereas Shirley was in the pay of an important member of the nobility. These two stations appear to be representative of the milieu in which the *Distichs* was owned: the courtly circle comprising the lesser aristocracy, and the wealthier members of the gentry and middle class, classes which consisted mostly of clerks and merchants. As with de Vale and Shirley, both of these groups employed a number of literate men to fulfil clerkly duties, providing potentially inter-linked sub-tiers to the groups.

4.2.3.1 Owners Known by Name

John de Vale's is not the only name which can be reliably attached to a contemporary owner of one of the *Distichs* manuscripts. Although a plethora of names attend the manuscripts, a large number of these must be considered not to have been the original owners or recipients of the volumes, almost all of which were produced in the second half (and most, indeed, probably in the final quarter) of the fifteenth century. Amongst the names which can be reliably associated with some of these books, however, are those of the Findern family who owned – and are likely to have been responsible for copying large parts of – Cambridge, University Library MS. Ff.1.6; and Thomas Chaundler, a chancellor of Oxford University known for his interest in humanist Latin and owner of Boethius-centred BL MS. Harley 43. In addition to these, a section of Cambridge, Magdalene College MS. Pepys 2006 is believed to have been owned by the Kyriell family of Kent, and CUL MS. Hh.IV.12 is likely to have been the property of court musician John Peter.

4.2.3.2 Social Positions of these Owners

The link between these owners and court culture is clear. The Findern family of Derbyshire are not known to have played any significant part in the country's history, but are nonetheless of the land-owning class which would have occupied the fringes of the court circle. The Kyriells have achieved some lasting if unfortunate fame for the part of Sir Thomas Kyriell in the aftermath of the Second Battle of St. Albans in 1461; as a member of the Yorkist faction still protesting that his grievances were with Henry VI's corrupt advisers rather than the king himself, Sir Thomas, accompanied by Lord Bonville, succeeded in protecting Henry from their less magnanimous allies, only to be summarily executed the next day on the orders of Margaret of Anjou and her seven-year-old son Edward (Curry 2004).

John Peter, if he is indeed the minstrel identified by Boffey (1996: 78-79), sits somewhere alongside de Vale and Shirley as an adjunct to the activities of the prominent aristocracy. Some of the writing in CUL Hh.4.12 (e.g. fols. 34r-v)

may indicate that Peter composed his own material, sections of which he scribbled on his book, and he appears to have been given a minor diplomatic errand by Henry VIII in 1518 to the Duke of Ferrara. This implies that he was, in some small way, involved in court life, and would have been familiar with the literature which circulated within that milieu.

Thomas Chaundler is a slightly more awkward fit for this argument. His manuscript is, however, one of the more dubious of the group in that it contains only a single four-folio quire of the *Distichs* which may have been bound in with the rest of the contents – a copy of John Walton’s translation of Boethius’ *Consolation of Philosophy* – at a later point in time. Even if the two sections, which are in different hands, were originally part of separate volumes, the existence of Chaundler’s decorative ownership inscription at the start of the volume probably implies that he was in possession of both when they were bound together. Chaundler can, therefore, not be discarded. Establishing a courtly connection is not problematic; as a significant member of the clergy and a high-ranking academic, Chaundler would have been a part of the gentry class, and is known to have had ties with the ruling bodies of the country. More questionable is the interest Chaundler, an exponent of Latin literature, might have had in an inelegant and rambling translation of a text he would no doubt have been familiar with in the original.

It is interesting to note that a ‘Tho. Candeler’ held the same position as rector of Sandon in Essex as did Burgh, three years after the latter had vacated the post (1447-1453, v. Newcourt 1708-10: 517). If this were the same man – which is not impossible given that Chaundler was studying at Oxford during the period of this appointment (Catto 2004) – it is possible he knew Burgh personally, and that this might explain his interest. It is also possible that the quire which was bound in with Chaundler’s Boethius manuscript came into his possession through this link. Such a connection would separate Chaundler from the other owners of *Distichs* manuscripts, as personal knowledge of or acquaintance with the poet would provide a different type of motivation for ownership of the poem than would be held by someone who was interested in its content or social cachet.

To the names of Findern, Kyriell, Peter and Chaundler, may be added a couple of owners about whom little other than their general position is known. These are Rowland Ramston, owner of Cambridge, Trinity College MS. O.2.53, and Walter Pollard, owner (and scribe) of Oxford, Bodleian MS. Rawlinson D.328. Of Ramston and Pollard very little is known, although both have sons who have left a greater mark on the historical record. Rowland Ramston was a 'gentleman of Chingford, Essex' (Alsop 1983: 162) in the sixteenth century. His son, Robert (born 1525) was a yeoman of the queen's chamber. Walter Pollard of Plymouth is known to be part of a family of merchants, although he was also, through his wife, related to the lawyers Sir Lewis Pollard and Richard Pollard (Baker 2004). His son, Sir John Pollard, was born in the first years of the sixteenth century, and became a judge and Speaker of the House of Commons. Ramston and Pollard further demonstrate the *Distichs'* presence in the books of the gentry class, including the largely mercantile Pollard family.

Together, these owners give some indication of the text's widespread dissemination through the different layers of the gentry and those who worked for them. John Peter is evidence that membership of the latter group in this case is not limited to bureaucratic clerks alone. All layers of this educated intermediate group between the nobility and the peasantry are represented here, including minor landowners, clergy, merchants, and even court entertainer.

4.2.3.3 Nobility as Owners – The Percies and Sir John Astley

Although ownership of the *Distichs* volumes is predominately by the lesser members of the court and those on the outskirts of the country's main nobility, volumes such as BL Royal 18.D.II offer clear proof that the text received some favour from those in the higher ranks as well. Indeed, the form of the text found in this manuscript is unique amongst witnesses to the *Distichs'* reception in that its exemplar was not another paper or parchment book, but apparently stanzas of the poem inscribed on the wall of a castle held by the Percy family.

The Percies formed a powerful noble dynasty, deeply embroiled in the turbulent politics of the fifteenth century most famously in the figure of Henry 'Hotspur' Percy. That the family was interested in Burgh's text is an important

mark of aristocratic favour. This interest must have been strong when it is considered that the same stanzas were copied both on to the walls of their castle, as well as into the present manuscript volume. The *Distichs* is not, however, the only text to have received such treatment, and the manuscript also contains similar copies of inscriptions from other Percy castles, including sections of a Middle English translation of the *Secreta Secretorum* (but not Burgh and Lydgate's) and sections of proverbial texts. The manuscript itself is, as has been implied, far from a mediocre affair. It is highly decorated, and the lavish nature of the illustration makes it clear that the texts which were copied within its covers were of some significance to their owners.

The nature of the manuscript makes it difficult to say in exactly what way the texts within might have been valued, however. The volume appears to have had only light use, and the presence of extensive illumination could be as much for show as for the pleasure of someone who was genuinely reading the text. Some of the other texts present in the collection effectively acts as records, including the verse 'Chronicle' of the family made by William Peiris (fols. 185r-195r). These could have been pieces which the Percies wanted to *possess*, rather than ones which they wished to actively read.

Another of the manuscripts known to have belonged to a noble family is that which is currently New York, Pierpont Morgan Library MS. M-775. The arms which appear repeatedly in the manuscripts have been identified as those of Sir John Astley, a nobleman who became a Knight of the Garter in 1461, and was otherwise famous for his achievements in tournaments, some of which are depicted in the manuscript (e.g. on fols. 275v and 277v; Arthur 1900: 31-32). The core of the manuscript appears to have been produced for Astley, and remained in the Astley family until it was sold to the Pierpont Morgan library in 1931 (Lester 1985: 98). Astley appears to have acquired a portion of manuscript largely on military matters, and then to have had other pieces added to it, including accounts of his own feats (Lester 1985: 101). Although the *Distichs* are not part of this earliest section, their presence amongst the bespoke additions of Astley is in itself evidence that it was of interest to him, to the extent that it was included in a volume which bore material in which the knight clearly had a strong personal investment.

BL Royal 18.D.II and Pierpont-Morgan M-775 may be combined with NLW MS. Peniarth 481D as indication that the *Distichs* circulated amongst the aristocracy as well as the gentry. It is safe to assume that Henry Bouchier, the apparent commissioner of the translation work, also had a copy. The number of manuscripts is small compared to those of less wealthy owners, but the implication is clear that the text had some currency amongst this social group, perhaps inspired by the fact that it had come into being at the behest of a member of their ranks.

4.3 Textual Contexts of Burgh's *Distichs*

Some idea of the groups of owners has thus been established. Next it is necessary to investigate the reasons it might have appealed to these audiences. One of the primary means by which the interests of the *Distichs'* readership might be assessed is via the other texts which those readers chose to be part of miscellany compilations alongside it. The expensive nature of books in the Middle Ages meant that owners could usually afford very few. Thus, contents were normally carefully chosen, and can be revealing of the preoccupations of their commissioners or compilers.

It is instructive, first, to consider the texts which occur with greatest frequency with the *Distichs*. The data gathered in the appendices can be used to establish the frequency of repeated textual appearances, and the texts which most often occur alongside the *Distichs*. Table 4 lists all the texts which appear more than twice in the *Distichs* manuscript group. From this table it can be seen that the list is dominated by John Lydgate, the fifteenth century's most famous and prolific poet, and predominately his religious or didactic material. Geoffrey Chaucer, Lydgate's predecessor and 'master', is present in the listing with six texts. It is important to note that of the manuscripts containing the *Canterbury Tales*, only BL Harley 7333 contains more than two of the individual tales. BL Harley 2251 contains the *Prioress' Tale*, whilst San Marino, Huntington MS. HM 144 contains only the *Tale of Melibee* and the *Monk's Tale*. The only prose text to be found in this list is the *Brut*, although its various recensions mean that there is considerable variation in these copies.

<i>NIMEV</i>	Text	Author	No. of MSS.
824	Dietary	Lydgate	9
2233	Stans Puer ad Mensam	Lydgate	7
576	Seven Wise Counsels	Lydgate	5
2464	Testament	Lydgate	5
3436	Tyed with a Line	Lydgate (?)	5
3632	Verses on the Kings of England	Lydgate	5
653	A wikked tong wol always deme amis	Lydgate	4
658	Horse, Goose and Sheep	Lydgate	4
2574	Life of Our Lady	Lydgate	4
3412	Parlement of Foules	Chaucer	4
3787	Complaynt to His Purse	Chaucer	4
3845	Complaint of Christ	Lydgate	4
3928	The Siege of Thebes	Lydgate	4
4230	Factors that cause a man to lose reason	Unknown	4
199	Rammeshorne	Lydgate	3
919	The Pain and Sorrow of Evil Marriage	Lydgate	3
1168	Extract from Fall of Princes	Lydgate	3
1294	Consulo quisque eris	Lydgate	3
1481	Fabula duorum mercatorum	Lydgate	3
1865	Midsomer Rose	Lydgate	3
2394	Fifteen Os of Christ	Lydgate	3
2625	Horns Away	Lydgate	3
2784	The Chorle and the Birde	Lydgate	3
3503	On the mutability of man's nature	Lydgate	3
3542	Complaint of Venus	Chaucer	3
3670	Anelida and Arcite	Chaucer	3
4019	The Canterbury Tales	Chaucer	3
n/a	Prose Brut	Unknown	3

Table 4 Texts Occurring with Greatest Frequency in *Distichs* MSS.

These repeated texts will be discussed in the sections below. Although Lydgate's didactic material is the most prevalent in this list, investigation of genre sub-groups will be ranked on the most prevalent types of material, with discussion afterwards of the importance of the patterns which might be gleaned from the repeated appearance of the individual pieces listed in this table.

The vast majority of the texts in the *Distichs* manuscripts are of a simple religious nature lacking the complexities of contemporary theological thought, and most of these thus appear to be aimed at a lay audience. The next most prevalent are texts in a slightly more literary tradition, although we might not today consider these to be 'literature'. Works of Chaucer are the archetype of this genre, but the majority of the material found in these manuscripts is by Lydgate, whose claim to literary greatness is based more on prevalence than originality or eloquence. Beyond these two central groupings, the remaining contents are

impressively diverse. History, shading into politics in subtle (and perhaps intentionally vague) ways is a relatively major component of the *Distichs* manuscript group. Behavioural literature, covering very similar ground to 'Cato', is also popular. This section will consider the patterns in these texts in more detail.

4.3.1 Attempts to Classify Manuscripts Based on Contents

Before considering individual texts in different genres, it is helpful to gain an overall impression of any generic patterns into which the manuscripts might fall. The miscellaneous nature of these manuscripts can make it difficult to attach a single label to most of the volumes. Nonetheless, it proves instructive to offer some loose categorisation based on the prevailing nature of the contents of each. The following list groups the manuscripts according to the general tendencies which appear to have been of most importance in their compilation. Where there is some division of contents (as is usually the case), classification is made by the number of folios devoted to the genres rather than number of texts. There is, however, a small group – here labelled 'Erudition in Mixed Terms' – which is too difficult to categorise even in this way. Further detail on each manuscript, is to be found in the manuscript cataloguing entries in the appendices.

Understanding and Practice of Christian Faith

CUL Ff.4.9 – predominately exposition of Lord's Prayer
BL Arundel 168 – concentration of female hagiography
BL Harley 172 – firmly pious collection
BL Harley 4733 – largely retelling of Biblical events
BL Add. 34193 – mystical visions
GUL Hunter 258/9 – virtues and sins
TCD 519 – religious essays and epistles
HEH HM 144 – retelling of Biblical events
Rome, English College A.347 – Lydgate's 'Life of Our Lady'
Lambeth 3597 – spiritual guidance

Entertainment through Literary Texts

CUL Ff.1.6 ('Findern') – romances and love lyrics
Pepys 2006 – courtly literature, mainly Chaucer
BL Harley 7333 – courtly literature, some history
Chetham's 8009 – romances, also includes female hagiography
DUL Cosin V.ii.14 – Siege of Thebes and some religious texts
NLW Peniarth 481 – 'Wars of Alexander'

Erudition with Regard to History

- CUL Ee.IV.31 – concentration of chronicle material
- BL Harley 271 – history of international relations
- BL Royal 18.D.II – history and society as related to Percy family

Improvement with Regard to Social Behaviour

- Bodl. Rawl. poet. 32 – concentration of proverbial advice literature
- Bodl. Rawl. poet. 35 – *Distichs* and *Dietary* alone
- Bodl. Eng. poet. e. 15 – *Distichs* alone
- PML M-775 – noble/martial guidance
- Göttingen UL 8 Cod. philol. 163 n – *Distichs* alone

Contemplation of Worldly Circumstances

- CUL Hh.4.12 – largely temporal, some romance and religion
- BL Harley 43 – temporal philosophy (Boethius)

Education on Specific Subjects

- BL Royal 17.B.xlvii – ‘Dictamen’ collection
- Bodl. Rawl. D.328 – Latin grammar textbook

Collocation of Information Valuable in Business or Personal Life

- TCC O.2.53 – commonplace book of Essex forester

Author-centric Anthologies

- Jesus College 56 – Lydgate anthology, though mainly religious
- BL Add. 29729 – mostly Lydgate anthology, 17th century
- BL Add. 38179 – texts considered for Chaucer’s ‘complete works’,
18th century

Erudition in Mixed Terms (Social, Historical, Religious and Cultural)

- Bodl. Rawl. C.48
- BL Harley 116
- BL Harley 2251

Although it is important not to place too much weighting on this division, it allows at a cursory glance the recognition that the greatest weighting is towards religious texts (ten out of thirty-five manuscripts), with a secondary weighting towards literary entertainment (six manuscripts) and a tertiary level of importance given to behavioural advice (five manuscripts), the last being the approximate genre to which the *Distichs* might be assigned.

These numbers in themselves suggest something of the audience and its tastes. Volumes centred on non-fiction are distinctly prevalent, and specifically the understanding and correct practice of their religion is of paramount importance to them. Social behaviour and wise advice from trusted sources is, however, also of some significance. Other genres of factual content tend to be less concentrated in the miscellanies, although this should not be allowed to mask the fact that they are distributed throughout volumes whose primary focus is elsewhere.

The powerful place of entertainment here is also important, and an interesting sector for overlap with the *Distichs*. Burgh's intention to create a translation that to some extent went beyond simplistic translation is evident through his use of the prestigious rhyme royal stanza and the extent to which he expands what have even in previous vernacular translations been treated as pithy maxims. Its inclusion alongside so many pieces of courtly literature suggests that if these were indeed the poet's intentions, they were not in vain. Even if this recognition was occasioned by the mistaken attribution of their authorship to Lydgate or even Chaucer (as may be suggested by the three manuscripts which give the impression of being author-centric anthologies), they were evidently still considered capable of being juxtaposed with romance and related styles.

As has been suggested in the preceding case study chapters, much of the literary material is particularly associated with the intersection of courtly circles with the expanding middle class, in an area of society which might best be termed the 'gentry': those persons who are educated and relatively wealthy, but largely without holding significant hereditary rights to lands or titles. It has been claimed that the main audience for romance literature was from this social stratum rather than the noble circles which they regularly portray (Chism 2009: 64-65), although the lavish illustration of the 'Wars of Alexander' in NLW MS. Peniarth 481 and the 'Siege of Thebes' in BL Royal 18.D.II as well as the clear Percy ownership of the latter volume are reminders that this cannot be an unbending rule.

Having identified the most important groupings of material, the following sections will consider in more detail the texts which occur in these generic groupings, further dividing them into sub-genres where appropriate. Each section will also consider the impact of the material on the construction of an image of the audiences that might be ascribed to the *Distichs*, and ways in which our understanding of the fifteenth-century reception of the text is affected by each.

4.3.2 Lay Religious Texts

Although there are very few individual religious texts which appear multiple times in the manuscripts, this is still the best represented type of material. Two thirds of the *Distichs* manuscripts contain some material with distinctive religious themes. Even in those which do not, Christianity is a strong underlying force and reference to God, Christ, or the Virgin Mary are almost always present even when specifically Biblical or Patristic texts are not – indeed, ‘Christianised’ stanzas of the *Disticha* mean that any manuscript containing Burgh’s work automatically has some spiritually themed content.

Three religious poems appear three times or more in the *Distichs* manuscript group. All of these are by John Lydgate and display the tendency of this type of material to focus on the veneration of Christ and the Virgin Mary – fundamental aspects of Christianity of interest to the everyday pious lay reader. The texts in question here are the *Life of Our Lady*, a ‘Complaint of Christ’, and a translation of the *Fifteen Oos of Christ*. There is no attempt in these poems to engage with the more complex theological issues which would have occupied much monastic reading.

The medieval cult of the Virgin Mary is well represented in these manuscripts, not just by Lydgate’s *Life of Our Lady*. Amongst other texts to appear more than once in the group are a hymn ‘to the Virgin’ (*NIMEV 2791*: Bodl. Rawl. C.48; Jesus College 56), a ‘Valentine to Our Lady’ (*NIMEV 3065*: BL Harley 2251; BL Add. 29729) and ‘A Lamentation of Our Lady Maria’ (*NIMEV 4099*: Jesus College 56; BL Harley 2251). The repeated appearance of these particular poems may well be a function of a complex inter-relationship between the manuscripts in which they appear, which has been considered in some detail in the first chapter. However, these are not the only manuscripts to contain Marian material. BL Arundel 168 contains an ‘ABC Hymn to the Virgin Mary’ (*NIMEV 607*); Chetham’s MS. 8009 contains the *Assumption of Our Lady* and a ‘Lamentation of the Virgin’ (*NIMEV 2165* and *2619* respectively); and CUL Ff.1.6 (the ‘Findern’ manuscript) contains a hymn to the Virgin (*NIMEV 2202*).

Despite the spread of religious material across most of the manuscripts, poems about or directed to the Virgin Mary appear to be concentrated in a few

manuscripts, including BL Harley 2251 and Bodl. Rawl. C. 48. Even then, however, the concentrations are not enough to be able to suggest that the manuscripts were constructed with Mary as a central theme; for example, the Rawlinson manuscript contains only four items out of seventeen which could be considered specifically Marian. Nonetheless, there is a clear tendency of some of these to favour the Virgin when selecting religious texts which is not shared by all the manuscripts in the group.

Alongside Mary, saints are popular topics of poetry for the manuscript compilers. Saint Margaret is the subject of hagiography in BL Add. 29729 and Durham Cosin V.ii.14 (*NIMEV 439*); the Durham manuscript also contains a life of Saint Alexis (*NIMEV 3156*); Saint Katherine, Saint Dorothy and Saint Christina are individually considered in BL Arundel 168 (*NIMEV 6, 2447 and 2877* respectively); Saint Augustine of Canterbury in CUL Hh.4.12 (*NIMEV 1875*); St. Anne in Chetham's 8009 (*NIMEV 2392*); and Saints Edmund and Fremund in BL Harley 7333 (*NIMEV 3440*). Prayers to or praise of various saints is also to be found in a couple of the manuscripts: St. Anne (*NIMEV 1152*) in BL Harley 2251; Saint Leonard (*NIMEV 2812*), St. Ursula and 11,000 Virgins (*NIMEV 4243*), and Sts. Katherine, Margaret and Mary Magdalene combined (*NIMEV 1814*) in Cambridge, Jesus College 56. The latter manuscript also contains the inclusive 'Prayers to Ten Saints' (*NIMEV 529*).

Notable in these selections is a predominance of female saints. Particular concentrations of female hagiography are to be found in Chetham's 8009 and Cambridge, Jesus College 56. The selection of male saints (Alexis, Augustine of Canterbury, Leonard, and Edmund and Fremund) is roughly balanced by the female (Margaret, Katherine, Dorothy, Christina, Anne, and Ursula), but there are fractionally more individual texts devoted to the latter. This slight imbalance is, however, occasioned by the Chetham's and Jesus College manuscripts; if these contained only one item of hagiography each, the distribution of male and female saints would be roughly even.

Consideration of Jesus' Passion and hymns to Him are the most numerous religious pieces in these volumes, and these serve to remind the reader of the central events, themes and images which underpin their faith. The pieces which feature Mary naturally often link her with her son, and may consider her

suffering as she watches the Crucifixion as is the case in the ‘The stori of the blyssyd passion of Crist Iesu and the grete soruis of his blissid modyr Marie’ in Huntington MS. HM 144 (fols. 21r-47r).

It is noteworthy that the vast majority of the religious texts are presented in the vernacular. This is not always the case, and some manuscripts, such as Dublin, Trinity College MS. 519, are almost completely presented in Latin. The latter volume, however, is unique. The only other manuscript in which Latin content outweighs the vernacular is Oxford, Bodleian MS. Rawl. D. 328, which is predominately a grammatical textbook and contains only minimal material which does not act as a teaching or reference aid for students of that language. The lack of Latin in the religious texts, as noted in both of the preceding chapters, is a strong indication that very few of these manuscripts were intended for the professed religious. The simple nature of the material strongly indicates that the expected audience for these manuscripts was the educated laity, who wished to express their piety through ownership and consumption of works such as these, but who preferred to approach the material in their mother tongue, rather than go to the extra effort of translation.

As discussed in the preceding chapter (section 3.6), texts related to the mystical tradition are also included in several of the manuscripts. These, as the *Pilgrimage of the Soul* in BL Add. 34193, or the *Visio Hiberno Tundali* in Dublin, Trinity College MS. 519, often recount visions. Others do not contain specifically mystical elements, but are connected to religious orders such as the Bridgettines or the Carthusians which favoured this branch of theology.

The prevalence of these texts demonstrates how important religion was to the readers of the *Distichs*. Its collocation with such texts in these manuscripts also perhaps implies that the ‘Christianised’ nature of the *Disticha Catonis*’ reception in the Middle Ages attached also to the Burgh’s translation despite the relative lack of religious sentiment in the poem. However, it could also be a function of the association of didactic material with religious guidance, and such texts are also present in abundance.

Although an insight into the spiritual side of their reader’s interests, it is questionable whether the presence of such general Christian material can give any clearer idea of the composition of the *Distichs*’ audience. The Church was

such an all-embracing power in the Middle Ages that it touched the lives of every person in the country, and it is not surprising that readers should wish to own religious works, whatever their position in society. The interest of the gentry in this material is apparent in the contents of the Findern manuscript. With regard to a mercantile audience, it has been noted by Thrupp (1948: 162-163) that evidence from merchants' bequests indicates that this group had a strong interest in religious works, and favoured these over most other types of writing (although with the exception of history). These bequests include material which is familiar from the listing in the present section, including as it does hagiography, a 'Speculum ecclesie', and two copies of the *Polychronicon* (Thrupp 1948: 162-163).

If general religious texts do not help in narrowing the audience, however, some of the mystical texts do. As discussed in chapter three (section 3.6), the presence of such texts may often indicate a relationship to the ascetic monastic orders, such as the Carthusians and Cistercians. These orders were particularly favoured by the gentry and minor nobility and, as a result, there is a strong possibility that those manuscripts containing mystically-themed literature were, when not owned by clergy, owned by members of the circles which were inclined to patronage of such orders.

4.3.3 Fashionable Court Literature

4.3.3.1 Didactic Literature

Didactic literature is perhaps the most difficult of all the genres to classify, as it is so varied. It encompasses a great variety of sober, moralistic material, within which it can be difficult to quantify exactly what it is that each text is teaching its audience. Frequently the lessons appear to be about life and the world in general – as is the case with Lydgate's all-inclusive 'Pageant of Knowledge' – or specific aspects of human behaviour – as is the case in the same poet's critique of women's fashion in 'Horns Away'. John Lydgate is the purveyor of the most

widely-copied examples of this genre, including all but one of the items to appear three or more times in the *Distichs* manuscripts.²⁸

In editing Lydgate's minor works for the Early English Text Society, Henry MacCracken chose to sub-divide these poems and apply more specific terms to some of the pieces which might more usually be considered didactic. It is necessary to consider whether these are appropriate here, as so many of the texts which appear multiple times fall within these categories. The texts in question are:

Nine MSS.:

Dietary (NIMEV 824)

Seven MSS.:

Stans Puer ad Mensam (NIMEV 2233)

Five MSS.:

Seven Wise Counsels (NIMEV 576)

Tied with a Line (NIMEV 3436)

Four MSS.:

'A Wicked Tongue will Always Deem Amisss' (NIMEV 653)

'Horse, Goose and Sheep' (NIMEV 658)

'Factors that Cause a Man to Lose Reason' (NIMEV 4230 – not by Lydgate)

Three MSS.:

'Ram's Horn' (NIMEV 199)

'The Pain and Sorrow of Evil Marriage' (NIMEV 919)

Consulo Quisque Eris (NIMEV 1294)

'Midsummer Rose' (NIMEV 1865)

'Horns Away' (NIMEV 2625)

'The Churl and the Bird' (NIMEV 2784)

'On the Mutability of Man's Nature' (NIMEV 3503)

Of these, MacCracken considers 'The Pain and Sorrow of Evil Marriage' and 'Ram's Horn' to be 'Satirical Poems'; 'The Churl and the Bird' and 'Horse, Goose and Sheep' to be 'Narrative Poems'; 'Horns Away' to be an 'Occasional Poem'; the *Dietary*, 'Seven Wise Counsels'/'On the Mutability of Man's Nature' (as parts of 'A Pageant of Knowledge') and *Stans Puer ad Mensam* to be 'Didactic Poems'; and *Consulo Quisque Eris*, 'Midsummer Rose', 'Tied with a Line' and 'A Wicked Tongue

²⁸ The exception is 'Factors that Cause a Man to Lose Reason' (NIMEV 4230).

will Always Deem Amiss' as 'Little Homilies with Proverbial Refrains'. MacCracken's reasons for these divisions are usually clear, with the exception of 'Horns Away' as an 'Occasional Poem', the logic for which must exist but is left unexplained. Nonetheless, these attempts at classification are somewhat artificial, and all the poems included are either straight-faced or tongue-in-cheek attempts to convey wisdom to the reader, even if it is not the high-calibre Wisdom of Solomon or Cato.

The prominence of Lydgate's *Dietary* in the *Distichs* manuscripts – it appears in slightly fewer than a third of the latter – is testament to the close match between their subject matters. The same poet's translation of the *Stans Puer ad Mensam* (usually considered to be by Robert of Grosseteste in its Latin original) is almost as popular. Both the *Dietary* and the *Stans Puer* make unsurprising bedfellows for the *Distichs*. They are both explicitly didactic, offering their wisdom in the form of direct commandment rather than satire or allegory, and so are the closest in style to Burgh's translation, although they possibly share more in common with the Latin *Disticha* than the translator's Middle English. That the *Dietary* has a slight edge may reflect its more inclusive tone, both in that it does not address itself specifically to one group of people (the *Stans Puer* is specifically aimed at serving-boys) and in its greater variety of subject matter. The frequent inclusion of the *Stans Puer* however is a hint that the *Disticha Catonis* retained some association with the education of children.

Part of the interest in the 'Dietary' lies in its intended audience, which appears to be atypical of such works. There is no indication that the author is addressing a child – there are even sections which can be used to refute this as a possibility, touching as they do on subjects such as sexual relationships and the management of a household. The implied audience of medieval didactic writing is rarely the mature individual – instruction is generally required for the child (perhaps through private study, or small-group tuition), or the household as a whole (who frequently heard such reading as a group, particularly around meal times). That the 'Dietary' singles out a mature, individual reader has been taken as a sign of the increasing tendency towards private reading (Sponsler 2001: 8-9). The grouping of the 'Dietary' with the *Distichs* is, therefore, potentially of

considerable interest, supporting as it does the possibility that Burgh's work made the transition from children's book to adult literature itself.

Of consequent importance is the implied male audience for the 'Dietary', as evidenced by the prohibitions on relationships with 'women aged fleshly' (l. 29 in MacCracken 1934: 703) and clear belief that its reader is head of a household. It would be significant, therefore, if the manuscripts in which the 'Dietary' survives, appeared to be directed towards a male readership. The contents of the manuscripts are, indeed, consistent with this hypothesis. Of nine miscellanies which contain both the 'Dietary' and the *Distichs*, only two (Oxford, Bodleian MS. Rawlinson C. 48 and British Library MS. Arundel 168) have much material that appears to fit the medieval conception of reading material appropriate to women: predominately hagiography of female saints, and poems and hymns to the Virgin Mary. Of these two manuscripts, Bodl. Rawl. C. 48 is a mixed bag, whose Maryological content is slim, and appropriate to a general anthology for the religiously-minded; BL Arundel 168 is very definitely aimed towards the female reader, but then only contains an extract of the 'Dietary' instead of the full poem. This implies that Burgh's *Distichs* was not seen as a text restricted to a particular target gender, appearing with equal status (if not with equal frequency) in anthologies which would have been read by women and by men.

4.3.3.2 Romance/'Literary' Literature

Several of the texts which appear in three or more of the manuscripts can be loosely classified as 'literary' pieces, and some classification efforts may include some of the 'didactic' pieces by Lydgate in this conglomeration. Here, 'literary' work is taken to include, but not be limited to, what is more traditionally considered 'romance'. With some reservation, I would like to include in the 'literary' category anything that appears to have been composed more with entertainment in mind than education. This category would then encompass such works as dream visions, debate poems, and shorter pieces of poetry which do not appear to have the motive of instructing their reader in a particular point of morality or good living.

With the possibility of great variety, romance literature has been referred to as 'the carnival magician of genres' (Chism 2009: 57), and so in itself must necessarily be an exceptionally loose category before these extra works are added to it. Many attempts have been made to set defining limits on such texts, and to review these would require an excessive amount of space here. Therefore, for the present purposes, some general (relatively uncontroversial) properties may be established:

1. A narrative structure: a central storyline, even if this is used as a framework on which to hang 'wisdom' content.
2. Central characters/circumstances which are not Biblical: these are frequently courtly instead, and often feature 'historical' circumstances which usually tacitly reflect the world of their author rather than accurate representations of their notional settings.
3. Are of a reasonable length: this is the hardest property to define, but few poems which attempt to break a basic didactic or religious mould are only a few stanzas long.
4. Feature love as a central theme: this is not a prerequisite, but romance is a typical element.

Although romance texts are not especially prevalent in the *Distichs* manuscripts, their presence is still felt amongst the most frequently included texts. Lydgate's *Siege of Thebes* is the best represented, appearing in four of the manuscripts (Bodl. Rawl. C. 48, BL Royal 18.D.II, BL Add. 29729, and Durham UL, Cosin V.ii.14). This ersatz *Canterbury Tale* is, then, just slightly more prevalent in this group of manuscripts than Chaucer's own great story-group, which is found in whole or in excerpts in three of the *Distichs* manuscripts. Chaucer's oeuvre is also represented amongst the most frequently occurring texts by the romance *Anelida and Arcite*, and three other potential 'literary' works: the 'Complaint of Venus', the *Parliament of Fowls*, and his 'Complaint to his Purse'. The last of these may not seem appropriate for collocation with romances and dream visions, but its intention to entertain would still allow it to be placed in a broadly-defined literary genre.

Other romances are in evidence, but very few and often clustered in the same manuscripts. *Sir Degrevant* (NIMEV 1953), *Troilus and Criseyde* (NIMEV 3327), and a fragment of 'Alexander-Cassamus' (NIMEV 586.5) are to be found in the Findern manuscript; 'Guy of Warwick' (NIMEV 875) is amongst the texts in BL Harley 7333; *Sir Torrent of Portyngale* (NIMEV 983), *Sir Beves of Hamtoun* (NIMEV 1993) and a version of *Ipomedon* (NIMEV 2635) are in Manchester, Chetham's MS. 8009, *Titus and Vespasian* (NIMEV 1881) in BL Harley 4733, while Lydgate's other great romance, the *Troy Book* (NIMEV 2516) is found in BL Royal 18.D.II. Prose romance is, meanwhile, represented by the beautifully illustrated *Wars of Alexander* in NLW Peniarth 481D.

It is interesting that, as with the religious poetry venerating the saints or the Virgin Mary, these texts are inclined to be copied in groups. Indeed, Chetham's 8009 has a group of both female hagiography and romance, a situation which seems unlikely to be coincidental.

Others of the group which might be considered 'literary' in this context are those which might seem to modern tastes to do this label a disservice, including some by Lydgate, such as his own debate poem, 'The Debate of the Horse, Goose and Sheep' (NIMEV 658), his *Complaint of the Black Knight* (NIMEV 1507), or his only major prose work, the *Serpent of Division* (MS. Pepys 2006). The latter is found alongside another prose romance, a translation of the *Historia Trium Regum*, usually known in Middle English as the 'Three Kings of Cologne', which is also to be found in BL Add. 38179 where it may be amongst the texts which Thomas Ainsworth considering claiming as Chaucer's in his updating of John Urry's 'collected works' of the poet. The Latin original of the 'Three Kings' is also represented in the *Distichs* manuscripts – the only Latin romance in this manuscript collection – in Dublin, Trinity College MS. 519.

The presence of these texts implies an appetite amongst readers of the *Distichs* to go beyond the sober factual, didactic, moralising or religious literature which comprises so much of the contents of the *Distichs* manuscript group. This may have a knock-on effect on our understanding of the view of Burgh's text taken by this audience. Its inclusion with romance literature may indicate that this translation, in straying from the succinct staccato structure of the Latin maxims and many previous translations, had been received into company of

more entertaining, more self-consciously literary texts. As suggested in the first chapter (section 1.6.1), this may have been Burgh's intention when he aligned himself with Lydgate and chose the rhyme royal stanza as his medium for the poem. If the *Distichs'* frequent collocation with Chaucerian texts may be used as a yardstick for this type of audience reception then Burgh appears to have succeeded in this goal. The presence of the romance literature listed here reinforces that conclusion.

If a narrowing of the audience is sought for the manuscripts which contain these texts, it would align with previous identification of the gentry and minor nobility as readers. It has been argued that the audience for romance is not to be sought amongst the courtiers whose milieu it so frequently depicts (Chism 2009: 64-65). Again, the Findern manuscript acts as support for this claim, with the family standing on the fringes of this culture.

4.3.3.3 The Anthologising of Poets' 'Collected Works'

In connection to the inclusion of literary material in the *Distichs* manuscripts, the inclusion of more than one manuscript anthologising a poet's works is worth mention, largely because it impacts on the reception of Burgh if contemporary readers may actually have believed his work to be that of a more famous author. Such single-author anthologies were uncommon in the medieval period, but not unheard of; perhaps the most famous anthology is Thomas Hoccleve's personal attempt to produce his own 'collected works'. Nonetheless, attempts at anthologising specific poets – especially those such as Chaucer and Lydgate who were regarded with some degree of awe – did take place, and a couple of the volumes in the *Distichs* group stand as testament to this (particularly London, British Library MSS. Add. 29729 and Add. 38179). Importantly, a manuscript will be considered an anthology where its scribe appears to have attempted an author-specific collection, regardless of whether or not they have succeeded.

Anthologising medieval authors has always been a difficult procedure due to the propensity for poems to be dispatched into the world without attribution. As a result, frequent mis-identification of the author was as much a hazard to contemporary anthologists as to those in the present day. Burgh's reverence for

Lydgate, as manifested in his poetic 'letter' of introduction, led him to produce verse very closely modelled on that of the elder poet. In his completion of the *Secrees of old Philisoffres* a close style-match would have been deliberate in order to avoid a jarring difference between the two sections. For the *Distichs*, a Lydgatian style may have been less deliberate, although the limited space available in each stanza would somewhat restrict the prolixity that is associated with Lydgate. However, Lydgate had proved that he could handle similar material in a similarly compact way in his *Dietary* and translation of Grosseteste's *Stans Puer ad Mensam*.

Alongside the similarity of style and substance between these poems and the *Distichs*, it is possible that Burgh's likely friendship with Lydgate led to their work being distributed through the same channels, including perhaps through the Benedictines of Bury St. Edmunds. This is especially likely following Burgh's work on the *Secrees*, which would probably have required contact with Bury Abbey for access to the completed section and any notes Lydgate had left. The inclusion of the *Distichs* in Cambridge, Jesus College MS. 56 – which, other than the *Distichs*, contains only Lydgate items – appear to be an indication that close contemporaries did confuse the two poets. The potential relationship of Jesus College 56 to the Bury-produced BL Harley 2255 suggests that they may be related, and thus that this confusion is, indeed, in some way related to exemplars held in or near Bury St. Edmunds.

It is difficult to tell whether this confusion is possible in other manuscripts of the *Distichs*. In some codices (Bodl. Rawl. C.48; BL Harley 271; BL Harley 4733), Burgh is named as the poet, but in many he is not. That many of the volumes in which is not named are heavy with Lydgate items cannot be considered conclusive proof. Proof of the conflation of authors would best be sought through clear contemporary ascriptions of the poem to Lydgate, however none of these occur. The next best evidence would be the inclusion of Burgh's work in other Lydgate anthologies. However no other examples exist within the *Distichs* group. The aforementioned lack of interest in producing such anthologies also makes examples of Lydgate-centric volumes rare and difficult to locate, meaning it is difficult to judge how many such anthologies existed which did *not* consider the *Distichs* for inclusion. It is worth noting, however, that the

only other manuscript which does clearly conflate Burgh with Lydgate is Urry and Ainsworth's eighteenth-century collection of texts compiled in the collection for publication of Chaucer's works.

Confusion with Lydgate would not significantly alter the present understanding of the composition of Burgh's audience. However, it would affect the reception of the work. There is a strong possibility that in some instances, the poem has been copied as a result of this type of mistaken identity. However, the lack of evidence for fifteenth-century conflation of the poets must be taken to suggest that this did not regularly happen. In addition, Caxton was able to name Burgh as the poet of this translation in the preface to his own 1484 translation, which might also be taken to suggest that his authorship of the piece was known to some extent.

If Burgh was not confused with Lydgate, he would not have been able to benefit in this way from the latter's fame. This would imply that the text gained widespread dissemination on its own merits, and thus that fifteenth-century audiences appreciated its contents.

4.3.4 Mixed Miscellanies Displaying Individual Interests

Although some manuscripts are dominated by particular themes or genres, the largest number of miscellanies in the *Distichs* group do not have a single unifying focus. Most are mixed creations, displaying the unique interests of individual commissioners, or at least the scribes or booksellers those individuals trusted to compose a volume for them. Every major branch of medieval learning is represented to some extent in the *Distichs* manuscripts, from astronomy (Cambridge, University Library MS. Ee.IV.31) to gardening (British Library MS. Harley 116). This displays just how wide-ranging the interests of the literate circles of society could be, and belies the impression given of them by the general focus of these volumes on bland moralising material. The other types of material which do occur regularly must therefore be considered with some degree of separation from the main genres of text.

4.3.4.1 History and Current Affairs

Historical texts are a significant presence in several of the manuscripts. Perhaps the most important of the medieval historical texts is the *Prose Brut*, telling the history of the country from its legendary foundation by Brutus, a Trojan fleeing the destruction of his home in a parallel to the classical legend of Aeneas. Several versions of this text exist, variations created usually where different continuators have chosen to add their own accounts of events to an earlier core (Matheson 1998). The four copies found amongst the *Distichs* manuscripts are from separate recensions. Matheson (1998: 6-8) groups copies of the *Brut* into four categories: The 'Common Version', the 'Extended Version', the 'Abbreviated Version', and the 'Peculiar Texts and Versions'. The last, as its name suggests, is a mixed group with some significant internal variation. The *Brut* in CUL Ee.IV.31 (Matheson's 77) is of the Common Version, and should end in 1430, although it is now imperfect. The copy in MSS. Harley 7333 (155) and the Findern manuscript (188) are Peculiar Versions, extending to 1419 and 1436 respectively. That in Bodl. Rawl. poet. 32 is more complex, and is composed of three sections: an Extended Version (115), a Peculiar Version (160), and a Common Version (90), ending in 1461 at Henry VI's accession.

Other chronicles are also present, but these are individual texts which are not repeated across manuscripts. CUL MS. Ee.IV.31 shows some of the most concentrated interest in chronicle traditions, including as it does two in prose and one in verse. The first of these (fols. 25r-49r) concentrates on the rulers of the Roman empire up to the point where this becomes synonymous with Christendom; emperors and popes are recorded and given some bibliographical detail up until Pope John XXI in 1276. Next comes the verse chronicle by Robert of Gloucester (*NIMEV 727*), which, like the *Brut*, takes the figure of Brutus as its starting point. This text survives in sixteen manuscripts, but this is its only appearance in one of the *Distichs* group. The final prose chronicle section is an excerpt from the *Brut*, beginning with the reign of Edward I, the point at which Robert of Gloucester's verse breaks off. The vast majority of the chronicles, as demonstrated by the three pieces in CUL Ee.IV.31, are particularly interested in rulers, which would form a common point of reference for most of the people

under their reign. A slight divergence from this standard can be found in the chronicle of BL Royal 18.D.II which, like many of the other contents of this volume, concerns itself specifically with the Percy family, and traces their descent rather than that of the country's royalty.

BL MS. Harley 116 contains one of the less common prose chronicles, although it is also known to exist in British Library MS. Harley 326. Instead of the Trojan Brutus, it begins with the Scandinavian-born Norman king, Rollo, the founder of the line that would provide the Dukes of Normandy. This chronicle continues to the reign of Edward IV. It is a regular feature of all the chronicles that they end or have been continued up to the rule of either Henry VI or Edward IV. A few go further, and at least one is continued up to Henry VIII, but most end in the 1460s. This is, perhaps, attributable to the introduction of print, which made the updating of manuscript copies redundant, although the political turmoil of the years between Henry VI and Henry VII may have contributed to a reluctance to add material which may soon become politically inconvenient.

These issues of political partisanship would seem to impact on one of the texts which appears repeatedly throughout the *Distichs* manuscripts. Lydgate's 'Verses on the Kings of England', briefly listing the rulers of the country from William the Conqueror up to Henry VI along with the locations of their tombs, is found in five of the manuscripts in the *Distichs* group. These manuscripts are Bodl. Rawl. C. 48; Cambridge, Jesus College 56; BL Harley 2251; BL Harley 7333; and BL Royal 18.D.II. The distribution of the copies is largely across the interlinked manuscripts which continue to feature in these accounts of shared texts. Its appearance in BL Royal 18.D.II, the Percy family manuscript, is perhaps an indication of the high degree of consciousness that manuscript bears of the political landscape surrounding the family.

These instances of large-scale or lengthy chronicles are accompanied by a number of shorter pieces, many of which are in verse, with reference to important political figures of the present and the recent past. Many of these figures, such as Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester (the subject of a cluster of texts in BL Harley 2251, including on his 'approaching marriage' (*NIMEV 3718*) and an epitaph for him (*NIMEV 3206*)) or Ralph, Lord Cromwell (an elegy for whom,

NIMEV 2411, appears in BL Harley 116), were enormously politically influential at the time of the manuscripts' production.

The potential for texts such as these to display a degree of political partisanship will be considered later. Their presence in the *Distichs* manuscript group suggests that the readers of these volumes were frequently interested in the current political situation and the events of history which had precipitated it. This interest in factual material (or notionally factual, as much earlier history consisted in rather dubious legend) resonates with the practicality of the texts such as the *Distichs* itself which discuss and advise on the mode of life appropriate in the world described by the historical and political material.

It is difficult to use the presence of this material to narrow the conception of the audience for these volumes. Matheson (1998: 8-16) has made clear the widespread audience for the *Brut*, whose extant manuscripts suggest its presence in all circles of medieval society. However, Thrupp (1948: 163) has pointed out the interest of the merchant class in historical material, suggesting that '[b]ecause of their strong sense of political and legal continuity, merchants had in this one direction been able to play an important intellectual role in the community'. Thus, several of the extant historical texts may have been composed by merchants (see e.g. Thomson 1938: xlvi, lxvii). This is also exemplified in the chronicle of British Library MS. Egerton 1995, a manuscript previously suggested (section 2.7) as related to BL Harley 7333. Although the traditional attribution of this text to William Gregory, a skinner of London, has recently been challenged its creation by a member of mercantile society still seems certain (McLaren 2002: 29-33). The presence of such chronicle material in some *Distichs* manuscripts may then be further indication that merchants were amongst the audience for the text, and for this reason make likely owners of Cambridge, University Library MS. Ee.4.31, and perhaps San Marino, Huntington Library MS. HM 144.

4.3.4.2 Books of Conduct and Social Status

Although there are a number of romances and other literary pieces as considered earlier, the majority of the material to be found in these manuscripts is non-

fictional. Just as 'literary' is a cover-all term with the potential to obscure the variety to be found within the category, the term 'didactic' must be considered to risk over-simplifying the genre.

The *Distichs* may be viewed themselves as belonging to a sub-section of didactic literature. A large portion of the work of Lydgate and his contemporaries and imitators is allegorical and indirect; it may meditate on a single point or a small group of closely related points. These could be exemplified, respectively, by 'Horns Away' (*NIMEV* 2625), with its consideration of a particular fashion among courtly women to shape their hair into 'horns'; and 'The Debate of the Horse, Goose and Sheep' (*NIMEV* 658) with its consideration of the diverse ways in which the animals concerned have proven their utility to mankind. This type of material is, therefore, usually essay-like in its approach to its subject. The *Distichs* and its kin are slightly different.

Instead of putting forward a point of view on a subject, the *Distichs* offers what is presented as tried and tested fact. This kind of instruction-manual style, shared by the *Dietary* and *Stans Puer ad Mensam*, is to be found in several other texts on a number of subjects, much like present-day 'how-to' books. The subject matter of these texts is quite widely scattered, with perhaps the most unique being the treatises on gardening translated by Nicholas Bollard that are present in BL Harley 116. Thoroughly different, but equally factual and instructional in nature are recipes for medicines, present in several manuscripts: Cambridge, Trinity College MS. O.2.53; New York, PML MS. M-775; San Marino, Huntington MS. HM 144; BL MS. Royal 17.B.xlvii; and BL MS. Harley 116.

The advice literature in these manuscripts, however, is most usually behavioural in nature. Aside from the *Distichs*, and the Lydgate poems already discussed, there are several which take the forms of 'advice to princes'. A popular medieval genre, it should not be assumed that the audience for these texts was in any way restricted to the royalty to whom it was nominally directed. The standard of these was the *Secreta Secretorum*, which professed to be a letter from Aristotle to his pupil, Alexander the Great. Such advice for rulers proliferated in England in an age when the behaviour of the monarchy – most notably Richard II and Henry VI – had been particularly contested, and would find its ultimate expression in Henry VII's usurpation of Richard III's throne.

Thomas Hoccleve's version of the format, composed for Henry V (the king perhaps least in need of such advice), is present in a couple of the manuscripts, namely BL Harley 7333 and BL Harley 116. The 'Regement of Princes' of Thomas Hoccleve is another text worth consideration in its connection to the political scene at the time. Although this may be seen as a wisdom text concerned with the correct behaviour of a ruler, it resonates very particularly with the country's situation following the usurpation, humbly suggesting the mode of behaviour to be adopted by its royal patron, Henry, Prince of Wales, later to become Henry V.

The interest of the *Distichs* audience in this type of material is undeniable, and manifests itself most clearly in the inclusion of the *Dietary* in nine manuscripts with Burgh's text, and Lydgate's translation of *Stans Puer ad Mensam* in seven. These are the texts which stand out as collocating most frequently with the *Distichs*. This suggests that a large number of the manuscript owners had a desire for texts in this genre, and so the demand for the *Distichs* must be partly driven by a real desire for its contents rather than solely for the prestige associated with its ancient wisdom. Lydgate and Burgh's translation of the *Secreta Secretorum* appears twice in the *Distichs* manuscripts (BL Harley 2251 and PML M775) as does Hoccleve's *Regement* (BL Harley 116 and BL Harley 7333) which indicates, although there is no overlap between the two, that this type of literature was one that was sought by the owners of Burgh's *Distichs*.

The exact audience which might be expected to desire these texts is less straightforward than might be imagined. The traditional use of many of the courtesy and conduct books such as the *Stans Puer ad Mensam* and the *Disticha Catonis* in its other forms in the social training of children may suggest that children were amongst those who might read these books or be read to from them. That the volumes themselves, however, do not often bear marks of such use will be discussed below (section 4.4.4.7). This, along with the more mature nature of the advice given by the *Dietary* seems to suggest a largely adult audience, and this may be drawn from the classes who were inclined to have been exposed to conduct material when they were themselves children. 'Mirrors for princes' texts were enormously popular among the noble classes although, as Derek Pearsall notes, this is less likely to be through a desire to be guided in statecraft than 'because it was important that they should represent themselves

as receptive to wise counsel' (1994: 386) – a concern that may well have impacted upon the popularity of the *Distichs* within this social class as well. The lack of many lavish volumes likely to have been owned by noblemen is again a barrier to this conclusion. More likely is that the audience may be imagined as including members of the gentry class seeking admittance to noble society through acquisition of the material they associated with this milieu, especially the type of material that provides guidance in how to behave like a nobleman.

4.3.4.3 The Trinity College Commonplace Book

Perhaps surprisingly rare amongst the *Distichs* manuscripts is the type of volume traditionally known as the 'commonplace book'. A text which is so episodic in its advice might seem particularly liable to excerption, which would make the copying of individual distichs or small chunks of the overall text seem likely if not inevitable in the notebooks which literate men and women used to record helpful information and wise or witty quotations. It is possible that, despite the thoroughness of the *New Index of Middle English Verse* and its predecessor, many more such excerpts from the *Distichs* do exist in volumes such as these, but have not as yet been recognised.

The only volume amongst the current listing of manuscripts to take the form of a commonplace book is Cambridge, Trinity College MS. O.2.53. This may have been in the primary ownership of Rowland Ramston of Chingford in Essex (Alsop 1983: 162-163), and then utilised (including for the practice of signature practice on fol. 59v) by his son Robert. However, many of the fifteenth-century texts mention Kent, and so there has almost certainly been an owner preceding Ramston.

Many of the texts are such as would be useful to a particular individual in the practice of their own unique affairs, such as an exemplar for apprenticeship indenture agreements (fol. 30r) or the recipes for medicines which are scattered throughout the volume. The texts also include indications of Ramston's own personal interests in history and current affairs, including a record of the birth of Edward IV's son (fol. 29v) and the christening of Henry VIII's son, Prince Arthur (fol. 49r). Religious devotion is also evident, including another text connected to

the Carthusians, i.e. lines written 'super diuersa postia cellarum in claustro domus Cartusien' (fol. 25r; 'above various thresholds of cells in the cloister of a Carthusian house').

The nature of the book suggests that its contents were compiled over a long period of time. Some of the texts appear to have been the initial contents of booklets, with blank spaces left at the ends. It appears that its owner intended from its inception that the book be added to, as the alphabetical collection of proverbs which occupies fols. 2 to 20 are provided with generous amounts of extra space so that more can be appended. These apparently original texts are in a fifteenth-century hand and may have been professionally produced, bought individually from a bookseller and later combined. However, it is just as likely that these were copied by the original owner of the volume as exemplars came to him or her, and that space was deliberately left for the addition of other texts.

Much of the additional material appears to be in a Tudor hand, and is thus probably Ramston's. Who copied the other pieces is impossible to tell, as none of the signatures on the volume is definitely contemporary with the main fifteenth-century text hand. There is a significant quantity of Latin in the book, and the inclusion of forms for indentures and other legal documents suggests a clerkly owner even before the added layer of Tudor texts. Rowland Ramston was loosely connected with the court, having been appointed as the forester for the area in Essex known as Chingford Walk, whilst his son Robert's connection is a little more firm in his role as a yeoman of the Queen's chamber (Alsop 1983: 162-3).

The existence of a section of the *Distichs* in this manuscript demonstrates a particularly pragmatic use of the text, in that only the section which is of most interest to the specific owner has been selected for inclusion. This special utility or interest is something that is reflected in other texts in the collection. The time available with the manuscript for the present study was limited, but further investigation and palaeographical analysis might better separate the strata of use by the three or so different owners, allowing some clearer idea of what the particular interests of each were. At present, it can be stated that the original fifteenth-century core of the manuscript (which appears to extend up to item 'ix' - 'Hec in Ciuitate Gevennarum in Ecclesia predicatorum super picturam Iudicij' - in the contents given in the manuscript catalogue entry, based on M.R. James'

1902 catalogue) has a largely proverbial focus, yet is not the section in which the *Distichs* excerpt appears. Four lines from distich IV.19 are given in what is presumably the hand of one of the Ramstons on fol. 60r. The Ramstons have been responsible for adding most of the material of a legal or religious nature, and this material was presumably heavily used by its owners.

4.3.5 Lack of Specifically Educational Texts / *Auctores Octo*

Almost as significant as the texts which are present are those which are not. There is a notable absence of any other material in either English or Latin which would be considered appropriate for use as school texts. The only exception to this is the grammatical volume Oxford, Bodleian MS. Rawl. D.328, whose contents could have been used by a student learning Latin. There is no sign of other texts from the *Sex Auctores* or *Auctores Octo* collections. There is also no clear indication that any of the texts which are found in the *Distichs* manuscripts were used as school texts, although some (such as the *Stans Puer ad Mensam*) might be suitable for this kind of use.

A lack of school texts cannot be entirely taken to indicate that Burgh's version was never read by or to children. Indeed, the evidence of pen trials, letter practice, and doodling on several of the manuscripts suggests that many have, at some point in their history, been used by children. That the association with schools is not entirely lost is also suggested by an illustration in NLW MS. Peniarth 481D which shows Cato dictating to Burgh, who in turn is translating his words so that a class of school children sitting around him might copy them down (fol. 1r – Burgh is not named in the manuscript, and the image must thus be considered to be an artist's imagining of the translator of the *Distichs*). However, the choice of texts to stand around the *Distichs* strongly suggests that these volumes were not made specifically with children in mind. The closest the manuscript group comes to a grouping of educational texts might be Glasgow MSS. Hunter 259 and 258, which as discussed in the previous chapter (section 3.4.1), could have been used for the education of young novices in a monastery or nunnery.

Such a dearth of primary education texts, however, probably means that the owners of most of these manuscripts were adults. There may here be a subtle distinction between owners and audience, however, as the books may have been intended for use in a household. If this were the case, it is possible that texts such as the *Distichs* and the *Stans Puer ad Mensam* were intended to be read by or to the children of the house, whilst the other material was the preserve of the adults. It is also possible that the other didactic material was to be read by parents with the intention that they then appropriate its ideas if not the text itself in the lessons they teach their own children (Bailey 2007: 37).

Whether children formed a significant portion of the initial audience for the *Distichs* is, therefore, unclear. It appears that in its reception it was treated as a text that was suitable either for an adult owner, or for a household in general, rather than in the schoolroom. This marks its audience out as distinctly different to that of its Latin source.

4.3.6 Summary of Contents Analysis

This study of the texts which surround the *Distichs* in its manuscripts allows a picture of audience which aligns roughly with that established above from the ownership evidence. Religious material is scattered across all levels of society, although that which is related specifically to religious orders such as the Carthusians may indicate owners in the gentry or lower nobility. An audience of gentry is again indicated by the presence of romance literature and conduct literature which allows a vicarious glimpse into the world of the nobility and some idea of how to behave in order to be accepted by that world. These members of the literate upper-middle class are most strongly suggested by the material. The increasingly wealthy and educated merchant class may also be safely included as a section of the audience, as their interests in both religion, history, and the effects of history on current affairs are well represented in these manuscripts.

In terms of the reception of the *Distichs*, the other texts present in these manuscripts tend to suggest that it was considered to be a sober, didactic poem worthy of inclusion with other improving material of a religious and moral

nature – the latter best represented by the abundant Lydgate material in the *Distichs* miscellanies. Its reputation as a practical and useful text is also visible in its accompaniment by factual material such as histories and, occasionally, the type of material which would be expected in commonplace books, such as medical recipes, copies of documents, and other short reference texts. However, the inclusion of romance and the literature of Chaucer is a suggestion that the serious-minded content of the poem did not inhibit some readers from treating it almost as literature, worthy of inclusion alongside the works of the great versifiers of the Middle Ages.

4.4. Issues Emerging from Analysis of the Manuscripts

Based on the observations of the manuscripts both as physical objects and as collections of certain texts, certain interesting points can be drawn out for further examination. These issues offer further insight into and support of the patterns of readership and reception which have been discussed thus far. The added nuance which they allow also helps to enhance the vividness of the cultural picture emerging around the use of the *Distichs*. This section will therefore analyse a few of the most important of these points in order to further the creation of this picture.

4.4.1 Linguistic Politics

Although many of this group of manuscripts contain some Latin texts, only three (Trinity College 519, Bodl. Rawl. D. 348, and BL Royal 17.B.xlvii) employ Latin above the Middle English vernacular as the main language of their contents. Striking in its almost complete absence is French, which had once been central to the affairs of the nobility, commerce and literature. This linguistic distribution reflects the relative importance of Latin, English and French in England in the second half of the fifteenth century. Texts which exist in an English translation are usually copied in this vernacular form, rather than in their Latin version. The romance *Historia Trium Regum* in TCD MS. 519 is the only notable exception to this rule. Many of the Latin texts are either legal or religious in nature, which is

consistent with the continued use of the language in these two spheres of activity.

The linguistic politics surrounding the *Distichs* is especially interesting, however, given that the widespread use of the Latin original would have made this source text considerably more famous than any vernacular translation. There is an evident desire to maintain the prestige of the source text when producing copies of Burgh's version is, displayed in the choice of most scribes to continue to copy the Latin distichs between the Middle English stanzas which translate them. This practice had been employed for previous vernacular versions of the *Disticha* (cf. Hunt 1994; Horrall 1981). Out of the manuscripts of Burgh's *Distichs*, only BL MS. Harley 172 is lacking the Latin completely, and this appears to be a result of the book's attempt to be compact and practical.

In the set of manuscripts containing Burgh's *Distichs*, the layout of the Latin and English can vary in the *Parvus Cato* section of the text, and some manuscripts opt to copy some or all of the Latin text in the margin next to the English translation, as if a gloss to the English (e.g. for the *Parvus Cato* in CUL Ee.IV.31, BL Harley 7333 and Magdalene College Pepys 2006; and for the 'Cato Major' in BL Harley 43, BL Harley 271 and BL Harley 2251). Most, however, choose to alternate between the two languages, the Latin preceding its Middle English translation stanza by stanza. This pattern is always observed for the books of the 'Cato Major'. In most cases the traditional medieval hierarchy of scripts is observed, and the Latin is presented in more formal, angular letters. In turn, these are often given in red ink, allowing them to stand out immediately from the black-ink vernacular.

Although BL Harley 172 is the only copy in which the Latin has been purposefully omitted, on several occasions it has never been completed, as is the case in BL Harley 7333 and BL Add. 34193. These two manuscripts offer different potential reasons for such incompleteness. As the Latin is frequently copied separately to the Middle English in red rather than black pen, in most cases the English would have been copied initially with gaps left for the later insertion of the Latin distichs. The reason for the lack of completion of this work in BL Harley 7333 is unknown although, as was speculated in chapter two

(section 2.3.1), it seems likely that the lack results from a shortage of time, money, or need.

In BL Add. 34193 the reasoning of the scribe is more apparent. The copying has been conducted by a later hand than that of the rest of the manuscript, and the English and rubricated Latin appear to be in the same Tudor secretary script. However, the copying has been slightly haphazard. Although the English is largely accurate, there are a couple of unique deviations from the normal order of the stanzas, which suggests careless copying rather than accurate copying of a similarly structured exemplar. These include the repetition of distich I.34, the omission of II.30, II.31, the prologue to book III, and III.1, and the reversal of IV. 9 and IV.10. The copying of the Latin is then slightly confounded by these mistakes, and compounded with others. The repeated I.34 is accompanied by the Latin of I.33, and the omission of the stanzas at the end of book II and beginning of book III are not noticed, leading the scribe to copy Latin for English verses which are not present. In addition to this, the uneven number of lines in the prologue to book II has led the scribe to copy the final prologue line paired with the first line of distich II.1. Following this, the second line of II.1 is copied with the first line of II.2, the second line of II.2 with the first of II.3, and so on until the scribe appears to notice his mistake on fol. 218r and abandons the copying of the Latin. The amount of correction needed would be extensive by this point, and a choice seems to have been made not to attempt this presumably either because it would be too untidy or too time consuming.

4.4.1.1 Significance of Incomplete Latin

That scribes were prepared to leave the Latin incomplete on occasion suggests that this element of the text was viewed as desirable rather than essential. The rationale supporting some of these decisions may have been based on the widespread nature of the *Disticha* and the assumption that, should the Latin be required, a copy of the source text could easily be acquired later. Alternatively, or perhaps additionally, it could be the case that the Latin was effectively present as decoration for an audience who would in reality only read the Middle English stanzas.

If the latter is true, then this allows some interesting hypotheses regarding the use of the *Distichs*. The social cachet of knowing 'Cato' is reflected throughout medieval literature, including the Miller's famous pronouncement on unfortunate carpenter John that 'he knew nat Catoun for his wit was rude' (*Canterbury Tales* i (A) 327). A growing number of readers in the fifteenth century would, however, have little or no access to the linguistic training required to comprehend the original. Favouring of the English content suggests that readers were concerned with understanding the poem, whilst the presence of the Latin in almost all manuscripts indicates that there was also still a desire to be at least notionally familiar with the source text. This may stem partly from the authority (*auctoritas*) which pseudo-Cato wielded. Although to modern eyes the essence of the Latin appears somewhat diffused in Burgh's loquacious translation, it shared in enough of the original's impact to be this widely copied and its copying without the complete accompanying rubrication to be regarded as sufficient.

4.4.2 Political Significance

The political preoccupations of fifteenth-century England are dominated by the Lancastrian usurpation, and the slow but inexorable drift towards the series of dynastic skirmishes which are now collectively known as the 'Wars of the Roses'. Given that the nobility were the most able both to commission written works and initiate copying of the manuscripts which contained them, their interests are frequently represented even if sometimes at an almost subconscious level. The division in the loyalties of the magnates during this period of history can be reflected in the manuscripts they own. This may be through the kings or noblemen they choose to celebrate or dismiss, but can also be found in the patterns of text they choose to include and occasionally the decoration or annotation of their manuscripts.

The legitimation of the rule of Henry IV and his successors had been a concern of the monarchy since the turn of the fifteenth century. Although this was largely stabilised under the very successful Henry V, the accession to the throne of Henry VI whilst still a minor (and one dogged by rumours of ill health

and lapses into mental illness) left the lineage open to renewed dispute, a situation little ameliorated by the power struggles between and within the brothers of Henry V and the Beaufort family. Henry VI was to be crowned king of France as well as England; a situation which was enormously controversial in the former country. This situation was the one for which the court was most in need of propaganda, and it regularly turned to Lydgate to produce writing which would fill this purpose.

The monk of Bury, then, provided not only historical poetry aiming to solidify the king's claim to the twin throne of England and France, but also much occasional verse, either commissioned to be recited in public, or with the apparent aim of being presented to a royal or noble patron such as Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester.

Although Burgh's *Distichs* itself does not appear to display any particular political allegiance, some of the manuscripts in which it is found may be considered to favour either the Lancastrian or Yorkist sides of the power struggles.

4.4.2.1 Commissions by Nobility/Lancastrian Propaganda

The involvement of the aristocracy in literary circles was a significant feature of the medieval artistic landscape. Poets might be rewarded for their productions in monetary terms or through the favour and protection of the noble circles for whom they worked. In return, the nobility acquired the prestige of being patrons of the arts, and the potential of a lasting attachment of their names to the poets and their works.

Many of the works of John Lydgate were produced as a result of noble commissions, including several of those in the *Distichs* manuscripts. Some of these commissioned works have already been identified in chapter two (section 2.5.3.1) due to the inclusion of several of these poems in BL MSS. Harley 2251 and Harley 7333. The commission of his *Lives of Sts. Edmund and Fremund* by Bishop Curteys for presentation to Henry VI and that of his translation of *Guy of Warwick* by Richard Beauchamp's daughter, Margaret, are notable instances of patronage either by or on behalf of the court. Lydgate is, however, also the

composer of texts with a much more evident connection to royalty. Many of these were composed during the early years of Henry VI's reign, and more than one directly concerns the king's coronations – each of the Harley manuscripts contains one of these Lydgate poems: 'To Henry VI on his Coronation' (*NIMEV 2211*) is present in BL Harley 2251; whilst a 'roundel on the Coronation of Henry VI' (*NIMEV 2804*) is present in BL Harley 7333. John Stow's BL Add. 29729 also includes the former, copied either from this manuscript or the Trinity volume which served as an exemplar for both. Harley 7333 also contains Lydgate's 'On the English Title of Henry VI to the Crown of France' (*NIMEV 3808*). BL Harley 2251, in the meantime, also contains a 'balade on a New Year's gift of an eagle to Henry VI' (*NIMEV 3604*) and a 'Prayer for King Henry VI and his Queen and people' (*NIMEV 2218*).

These royal Lydgate poems are not found only in the Harley manuscripts, however. New York, Pierpont Morgan MS. M-775 contains a group of 'Sotelties' for Henry VI's coronation banquet, again by Lydgate (*NIMEV 1929*), and another poem 'On the Coronation of Henry VI' (*NIMEV 1224*), although this final item does not appear to be Lydgate's work. A final example of poetry focussed on the king is to be found in Rome, English College MS. A.347, which contains a poem on 'Henry VI's entry into London' (*NIMEV 3799*).

The king himself is not the only member of the Lancastrian regime to be celebrated in the *Distichs* manuscripts, and Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester is the subject of two poems in BL Harley 2251, one on his 'Approaching Marriage' (*NIMEV 3718* – also copied into BL Add. 29729), and an epitaph for the same man (*NIMEV 3206*). CUL Hh.4.12 includes a 'Lament of the Duchess of Gloucester' (*NIMEV 3720*), taking up the cause of Jacqueline of Hainault, whose marriage to Gloucester was formally annulled and followed closely by his marriage to Eleanor Cobham, his much-maligned mistress. The poem on Gloucester's marriage, possibly commissioned by the Duke himself, has been a locus for argumentation over Lydgate's involvement in Lancastrian propaganda, considering its fulsome excitement regarding a match that was beset with political difficulty (Straker 2006: 107-17; Strohm 1998: 192-3). Whether Lydgate was prepared to criticise his patrons gently (as Straker argues) or was simply a lackey producing what was demanded of him, the number of his poems

produced either about the Lancastrian lineage or for its members suggests that the 'monk of Bury' would have been closely associated with the court. As a result, to own Lydgate's poetry was almost certainly to be seen as on the side of Henry V and, later, Henry VI.

Whether any of these manuscripts can be considered to be consciously politically partisan is a debatable point, considering that when the poems were written the country was not as politically polarised as it would later become. John Lydgate himself lived much of his adult life in a land dominated by the Lancastrian regime and died in 1449 or 1450, roughly a decade before Yorkist success in claiming the throne. At the point of Lydgate's death, William de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, would have been under severe criticism which eventually led to his abduction and murder in May of 1450 by those opposed to his influence over the king, especially for his perceived part in both the death of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, and the loss of Maine and Anjou during negotiations for Henry's marriage. However, the authority of the king was literally sacrosanct, and at this point the quarrels of the magnates were still predominately centred on the excessive power felt to be held and abused by Henry's advisers, Suffolk among them. Although doubts over Henry's rule were expressed, and found some expression during Jack Cade's 1450 rebellion, for the majority of Lydgate's active life there would have been little need to produce works intended to reinforce the king's claim to the English throne (the same cannot be said of his claim to the French throne, and Lydgate's translation of Laurence Calot's 'pedigree' of Henry certainly can be classed as propaganda). Most of Lydgate's poems are likely to have been commissioned to celebrate particular events, and in this may have served as propaganda, but were probably not intended to play an active part in what would become an international debate over the legality of Henry VI's rule.

Because of this material, Lydgate is sometimes considered to have been a 'people's poet', producing material that was intended for general consumption rather than specifically by the nobility. However, Claire Sponsler (2008: 19) has argued that even the apparently public mummings composed by Lydgate (and copied by Stow into BL Add. 29729) are probably intended for small coterie audiences. The fact that they survive in BL Add. 29729 alone suggests that they were not widely copied, in turn that they did not leave this gentry or mercantile

milieu, and thus that (with the exception of the *Triumphal Entry*) Lydgate's audience was never truly composed of the general public (Sponsler 2008: 26-27). When contrasted with other poets of his time, such as Chaucer and Gower who are more inclined to promote an inclusive ethos in their work, Lydgate can generally be viewed as establishmentarian, even when he is apparently writing in a more public role (Sponsler 2008: 13-15).

Lydgate's work is not the only material in the manuscripts whose inclusion might be thought to bear evidence of partisanship. Hoccleve's *Regement of Princes* also appears twice in the *Distichs* manuscripts (BL Harley 116 and BL Harley 7333). This is a more telling presence for the general interests of their readers, as Hoccleve's productions are earlier than Lydgate's, and fall into the period when Henry IV was still concerned with justifying his claim on the throne. The *Regement* was directly intended for the future Henry V, who had been gaining in power and experience as he supported his ailing father in the administration of his kingdom. In addition it is shot through with themes of great concern to the Lancastrian regime, especially that of legitimacy (Strohm 1999: 644-5). Hoccleve was himself aware of his status as a 'Lancastrian' writer (at least towards the end of his life; see Thompson 2001:85) and appears to have had good reason to adhere closely to the regime. Burrow (2001: 79) argues that Hoccleve, like other courtiers, needed to maintain his visibility in the court or risk being forgotten about, hence his deference to patrons. This accounts, perhaps, for his own partisan writings: they were a way of protecting his position.

4.4.2.2 Arguments for Partisanship of Manuscripts

Manuscripts which contain the works of Hoccleve may therefore be seen as more clearly partisan on the Lancastrian side, especially if their commissioners were aware of the historical setting in which the poem was written, which they are likely to have been, as the poem itself makes no attempt to hide this aspect of its creation. Lydgate poems, however, remain a more difficult matter to judge. Despite his likely detachment from dispute at the time the poems were written,

most of the manuscripts of the *Distichs* group were copied in the period of the 'wars', and may well be expected to display particular political leanings.

Although Lydgate died before the disputes between York and Lancaster reached their full realisation, John Shirley's long life carried him into the beginnings of this period of strife. When it is considered that the manuscripts in which the *Distichs* are to be found were almost certainly copied following Shirley's passing, the opportunity for Lydgate's Lancastrian texts to serve as propaganda for the regime is much stronger, whether or not they were intended as such at the point of their composition. In the 1470s and 1480s, the ownership of a volume favouring the Monk of Bury's royal poetry could be thought to stand as a symbol of allegiance to Henry and opposition to the success of the Yorkist party. The number of texts in Harley 7333 and Harley 2251 which have some connection to the Lancastrian faction cannot be easily dismissed.

However, it should also be considered, especially concerning these Harley manuscripts and their related volumes, that textual availability could have played some part in the apparent favour shown to Lancaster or York. The use of Shirley's miscellanies as exemplars is a significant point, considering that he appears to have collected Lydgate's items of all kinds but with a particular focus on the historical and political items to which he could attach names, dates and other details. It is difficult to assert that Shirley's habits were formed on the grounds of anything other than personal interest. The availability of these items to the scribes engaged in copying Harley 7333 and Harley 2251 may have dictated to a large extent the texts they chose to include.

Despite these reservations, the inclusion of so much Lydgate material in the *Distichs* manuscripts as a group seems a strong indication of the audience for whom they were largely made. It might be expected that the nobility would have responded to the inbuilt Lancastrian leanings of Lydgate's poetry, and have adopted them as literature of that regime.

Equally, the appearance of Lancastrian material may be misleading. Even (perhaps especially) when it names a member of the Lancastrian faction, the inclusion of such poetry is potentially as a result of the interest in history and the recent political past shown by the commissioners of several of the manuscripts. A desire to be familiar with the history does not indicate that the owners always

sympathised with the material their books contained. Whether or not this was the case, the *Distichs* does not appear to have been affected by an association with the red rose; had it done so Caxton is unlikely to have been able to print and sell as many copies as he apparently did during the reign of Edward IV.

4.4.3 Female Readership

An interesting aspect of some of the manuscripts in the *Distichs* group is an apparent targeting of their contents towards women. This has been touched upon in chapter three (section 3.4.5), although it requires further consideration here. If Stephen Dodesham did indeed produce Glasgow, University Library MSS. Hunter 259/258 and/or Oxford, Bodleian MS. Eng. poet. e. 15 for the use of Syon it is likely that he did so for the nuns rather than the brethren of the abbey. It is possible, as discussed (section 3.5), that BL MS. Harley 172 was also intended for the use of a nun.

However, female use of the manuscripts is not to be considered restricted to monasteries such as Syon. Also previously discussed is the Findern manuscript (Cambridge, University Library MS. Ff.1.6). This manuscript, an 'informal product of a well-to-do country house' (Beadle & Owen 1977: viii), has largely been composed by professional scribes, but with a variety of additions by less practised hands. It has been hypothesised that several of these additions may have been copied into the volume by female neighbours of the Findern family (Robbins 1954: 628) or members of other families residing in the area who could, potentially, have owned the volume prior to its ownership by the Findern household (Harris 1983: 307). If so, it is possible that the women who copied these items may also have composed them. Most of the items in question have been described as 'courtly love lyrics' (the regular designation used for them by the *NIMEV*), but Sarah McNamer (1991: 298-302) has argued for recognition of them as heartfelt expressions of emotion rather than standard entries in the frequently disingenuous courtly love genre.

Another manuscript bearing the distinct possibility of a female audience is Manchester, Chetham's Library MS. 8009. The contents of this volume are very similar to those of others in the group containing Burgh's *Distichs*; a balance is

struck between texts of religious devotion and literary entertainment, with the additional inclusion of some didactic material. The miscellany appears, overall, to be unremarkable, but the particular combination of texts is of some interest as they appear to have been chosen with female readers in mind. The nature of the manuscript's contents has been discussed in detail by Rhiannon Purdie (1998). The four hagiographical items are all concerned with female saints: St. Dorothy, St. Katherine, St. Anne, and the Virgin Mary; the two devotional poems take women as their narrators (one of whom is Mary herself); and three romances contain particularly notable female characters. The *Distichs* is given only brief attention, at which point it is classified simply as educational material which might be used in the education of young children. Purdie soundly reasons that the sole focus on female piety, combined with the feminine slant of the romances included, and the important role played by women in the upbringing of young children, makes it probable that this manuscript is one of the rare miscellanies which gives the impression of being produced almost exclusively with an audience of women in mind. This appears to be borne out by the scant ownership evidence, consisting of the name 'elysabet' in what appears to be a hand contemporary with the production of the manuscript (Purdie 1998: 139-48).

On similar grounds, BL Arundel 168 might be singled out as potentially produced for a female reader (Edwards 2003: 135-136). It contains material of a similar nature to Chetham's MS. 8009, although does not share the romance poetry of the latter. The majority of its contents consist in religious verse, including lives of Sts. Dorothy, Christina, Katherine, and the Virgin Mary, a hymn to the Virgin, a prayer to St. Dorothy, and Latin verses on the 'virtue' of the same saint. The only other material in the manuscript is composed of wisdom and courtesy literature; alongside the *Distichs* are to be found three Lydgate texts in this genre: his *Dietary*, part of the *Pageant of Knowledge*, and *Seven Wise Counsels*. Unfortunately there is no inscriptional evidence on the manuscript which might give a more definite identification of its readership, but that it was intended for the use of a woman seems almost beyond question.

These three manuscripts thus provide strong evidence that the *Distichs* was read by women as well as men during the fifteenth century. The location for

this use may well be, as in the case of the Finderns, a household setting. The collocation of female-centric religious texts and conduct material in BL Arundel 168 undiluted by any other genre of material is clear indication that the *Distichs* and texts like it were considered suitable for women to read. There is a strong possibility that the *Distichs* and other conduct material would have been considered suitable for a female audience because women were expected to impart such instruction to children, as mothers in the Middle Ages appear to have been expected to hold responsibility for teaching their children conduct and manners (Bailey 2007: 42; Heywood 2001: 98-102).

The identification of conduct material as a genre which might be viewed as suitable reading for women opens up the possibility that other manuscripts in the *Distichs* group may have been used in similar circumstances within the household. None of the other manuscripts contains material which appears to indicate a female readership quite as strongly as Chetham's 8009 and BL Arundel 168, but it must be considered possible that other volumes with a variety of material (including de Vale's BL Harley 2251) may have been in use by women in the houses which owned them as much as the male owners who are more likely to write their names on the pages.

4.4.4 Use of the *Distichs*

The previous sections have discussed general features of the manuscripts and their contents, both in terms of the specific texts which they contain and important meta-textual issues which have arisen from these. The rest of this chapter will now turn to focus on the *Distichs* themselves and the information which might be gleaned from these manuscript copies to aid in the construction of a picture of their audience, reception and use.

4.4.4.1 Excerption of Individual Stanzas

The *Distichs* is a text suitable for excerption and the copying of particular stanzas which appealed to a reader for their sentiment or utility. Nonetheless, the manuscript copies are generally complete and consistent in the ordering of their

contents. Many of the texts have minor inconsistencies, with stanzas omitted or placed out of order, and each of the manuscript catalogue entries given in the appendices provides a list of the stanzas which are present in the manuscripts, and the order in which these appear.

Three of the volumes (Cambridge, Trinity College MS. O.2.53, BL MS. Royal 17.B.xlvii, and BL MS. Add. 29729) contain a single excerpted stanza, whilst the Percy-family volume BL MS. Royal 18.D.II contains its own selection of distichs based on those which had been copied on to the walls of one of the family's Yorkshire castles. These allow some impression of the stanzas of Burgh's work which attracted particular interest from readers. The circumstances in which these excerpts were made are unclear, and it is unknown whether the copyist would have owned a copy of the full text, borrowed one and only copied the sections that most appealed to them, or have found the stanza in isolation in the exemplar from which they copied it.

Both TCC O.2.53 and BL Royal 17.B.xlvii contain the same stanza, that which corresponds to distich IV.19. This advocates the benefits of education, arguing that they cannot be undone by the unpredictable events of Fortune, and may indeed prove useful in a variety of situations:

Enforce thi wittes somewhat for to lere;
Acqueynte the withe connyng. For that is sure,
Iff fortune chaunge and than pouert appeer,
Who that hathe konnyng, is likly to recure.
Konnyng and crafte remayne and endure;
And bi them a man may him-silfe releve,
Whan fortune hathe caste hym in to myscheeffe.

(ed. Förster 1906: 28)

The sentiment of this stanza is particularly suitable in the context of the collection of documentation which comprises BL Royal 17.B.xlvii. The owner of this manual of bonds, deeds and letters would have experienced an extensive education to reach this clerkly position, and even may have acquired the volume whilst this education was ongoing. Lydgate's *Dietary* stands as the first text in the

volume, and gives some general advice for a sound manner of living, and then is immediately followed by Burgh's stanza, which might be intended as a motivational tool, reminding the clerk that their hard work is worthwhile.

The contexts of this excerpt's appearance in TCC O.2.53 is distinctly similar, as it also contains a large number of legal documents and reference items. Although there are not enough shared items between the two volumes to suggest that one was used in the production of the other, or that they shared a source, also present in both the Royal dictamen book and the Trinity College commonplace book is Sir John Fortescue's 'Who so will be ware in purchasing' (NIMEV 4148). It is possible, therefore, that both Fortescue's text and this particular stanza of Burgh's work were circulating in collections of factual, document-centric material. The copy of the *Distichs* stanza in the Trinity College commonplace book appears much later in the volume than the Royal copy, perhaps indicating that it was one of the texts that caught Ramston's eye in the course of his life, rather than a verse that would regularly have appeared in such collections. However, the similarity of this 'pep-talk' style stanza in two largely documentary manuscripts is testimony to its particular appeal to clerkly readers who may have seen in it a justification of the effort they had expended in their studies.

The single stanza present in BL Add. 29729 creates an entirely different impression. As one of several misogynistic stanzas in the *Distichs*, this piece warns against being emotionally manipulated by a woman's tears:

Some wommen weepyne of pur femynyte,
Whan othir wise thei kan nat her entente
Accheve; but yit beware of nyce pite
Thi manly resoun, that it be nat blent.
For suche wepyng thyne hert auhte nat relente.
Some wommen of kynde be euer-moor weepyng
And vndir that kan thei bother prikke and styng.

(ed. Förster 1905: 322)

This is copied into the final folios of BL Add. 29729 by John Stow himself, rather than the amanuensis who appears to have been responsible for much of this volume. Although BL Harley 2251 is almost certain to have been an exemplar for this manuscript (as discussed in chapter one), the *Distichs* was not one of the texts which Stow chose either to copy or have copied. This is likely to have been because Stow realised that Lydgate was not responsible for its composition, and quite possibly because he already possessed a copy of it in other manuscripts that he owned (for example, Huntington Library MS. HM 144). It is also possible that the quires which are now missing from the manuscript were already lost by the time Stow acquired it – if, indeed, they were ever copied – in which case he is unlikely to have wanted a copy of an incomplete text. If this were the case, Stow could not have copied this stanza from the Harley manuscript, as it occurs in the section of the poem now missing from the codex.

Stow's reasons for copying this section do, however, appear to be related to the contents of the Harley manuscript, in that it complements and echoes the antifeminist sentiments expressed in the compilation of excerpts from Lydgate's *Fall of Princes* which was present in that volume, and copied from it – complete with John Shirley's gentle mockery of Lydgate's apparently curmudgeonly grumbling (Edwards 1972). The *Fall of Princes* excerpts occur close to the end of the Additional manuscript, and may have been fresh in Stow's mind when he chose to insert Burgh's distich-translation (Mortimer 2005: 238-239). If so, this was presumably done because Stow felt it resonated with the tone and content of the *Fall* excerpts, and not because he was particularly struck by its message.

4.4.4.2 Selection of Specific Stanzas for Copying

The excerption of several stanzas is not particularly common in the manuscript witnesses of Burgh's *Distichs*. However, it can be seen in two of the volumes. More common than the excerption of particular stanzas is omission of stanzas. It is important for the understanding of the reception of the text to discuss the occasions on which distichs appear to have been chosen one-by-one by the scribe.

Such selection occurs in the Findern manuscript, whose likely female audience has already been firmly established. It is unclear how much of the manuscript's contents were copied with the intention that they be read by female members of the Findern family. The verses which appear in the manuscript display clear signs of selection, to an extent which is not found in any of the other *Distichs* manuscripts. This would seem to indicate that the selection was either made by the compositor of this volume, or perhaps of the immediate exemplar for it. However, it is impossible to tell whether the selections were made with the Findern women in mind.

Forty stanzas are present in total. The selection includes twelve stanzas from the first book, followed by twelve from the second, then three from the fourth, five from the first again, and finally eight from the third. Within these units, the stanzas are copied in an apparently random order, although there is a tendency to copy two which would have been next to each other in the full poem, sometimes in reverse order. Although the abrupt start to the text – lacking any heading or prologue – may indicate that it began in a quire or on a folio that has now been lost, the haphazard order in which they have been arranged makes it difficult to be sure. All the books are represented, however, and books one and two especially so, which provides no reason to believe that there is any section missing.

No consistent theme is evident in the excerpts, although there may have been some attempt to group together similarly themed verses. This could be true of the first three stanzas, which advise respectively: I.32 – Don't cast aside old friends whom you trust; I.23 – Don't go out of your way to help someone who won't appreciate it; I.11 – Be good to other people so that they will be good to you. All three of these take as their subject matter treatment of other people, and specifically on what occasions to act benevolently towards them (even if the arguments seem mercenary in the present day). Later in this first block, two stanzas are grouped together (those for I.14 and I.27) which advise wariness both of kind and flattering words.

It would be difficult to suggest that the scribe who chose these stanzas had a particular over-arching theme in mind when doing so. It would be equally misleading to attempt to find a pattern in the advice that has been omitted,

considering this accounts for around three quarters of the whole text which necessarily includes many different themes. All that can be said with some certainty is that these have been individually chosen, and probably carefully arranged to allow related pieces of advice to stand together.

The other manuscript which shows deliberate selection of stanzas is BL Royal 18.D.II. For this volume, however, it must always be borne in mind that the choice of stanzas was not made specifically for the readers of the manuscript, but rather was copied from the walls of the Percies' Wressel Castle. The decorative use to which they were put has limited the number of stanzas that can be accommodated, although there are still twenty-three of the Middle English stanzas present. The Latin has not been copied, and it is impossible to tell if it was also present on the walls; it seems likely that a need to save space would have dissuaded the decorator of the walls from including the Latin alongside the English, however.

As is the case in the Findern manuscript, stanzas for inclusion have clearly been deliberately chosen. Again, however, there is no clear link between all of the stanzas, whose advice ranges from avoidance of rumour (distich I. 12) to persevering in hardship (distich II. 14). There is, however, at least one occasion on which stanzas with similar themes appear to have been grouped together. Distichs II. 5, II. 6 and I. 39 form the clearest grouping. These three maxims all advocate moderation – in spending, in living, and in behaviour respectively. Also perhaps deliberately placed side-by-side are distichs II. 24 and II. 2. The first of these insists that the reader should always be alert to the potential future result of present circumstances. The second, perhaps almost paradoxically, prohibits pursuing an understanding of divine Providence. The thought behind this collocation may be that an awareness of potential problems is important, but that the reasons for potential future misfortune should not be questioned.

Such a theme of the wariness of fortune's vicissitudes may conceivably be discerned throughout the selection. Other stanzas which might fit this theme include advice to be merciful to an unequal opponent in case he, in future, has the upper hand (II. 10), not to dwell on failure (II. 23), and most clearly of all in a reminder of the unpredictability of fortune (I. 18) – the last an echo of the 'Fortune's wheel' metaphor so prevalent in medieval culture.

It is not difficult to see why the Percy family might find it apposite to decorate their walls with encouragement to endure good fortune and bad with equanimity. Their part in the 'Wars of the Roses' was an important one, which cost them the lives of several family members. Nonetheless, this thematic pattern may be illusory; much of the *Disticha Catonis* is centred on the theme of fortune and the importance of meeting it in a calm and measured manner. In addition, the distichs selected are only from the first and second books: once again, whoever made the selection of the stanzas appears not to have had the patience or desire to read more than half of the collection.

Together, the manuscripts of the Findern and Percy families reinforce a feeling that each reader found material in the collection which appealed to him or her personally. There is, however, an unusual situation evident in these manuscripts: the material is revered well enough to be sifted and copied selectively, yet with an apparently increasing apathy the further through the *Distichs* the reader has to go. It is difficult to tell without a wider study of the reception of the Latin *Disticha* whether this focus on the first half of the text is an indication that Burgh's version was wearying for medieval readers, or whether it suggests that distichs at the beginning of the text were generally better known in medieval culture. However, this apparent waning of interest is a pattern which will be seen again in the annotation of the text (sections 4.4.4.5-6 below).

4.4.4.3 Omission of Stanzas during Copying

Deliberate omission of stanzas is surprisingly rare in the manuscript witnesses of the *Distichs*. On most occasions where stanzas are missing, this appears to be through a lack in the source manuscript. This is almost certainly true of BL MS. Harley 116, which is missing stanzas IV. 24-34; as stanzas IV. 23 and IV. 35 are found together on the same folio (fol. 121v), this cannot be the result of pages lost from BL Harley 116. It is possible that the scribe deliberately chose to omit this section, but the lack of any other obvious editorial intervention in the rest of the text makes a faulty exemplar a much more convincing explanation. Interestingly, distichs IV. 24-29 are also missing in MS. Chetham's 8009, although

this appears to be the result of loss of a page from this manuscript rather than a gap in its exemplar.

Problems with exemplars may also be responsible for the omission of single stanzas in Oxford, Bodleian Rawlinson poet. 32 and BL Arundel 168. In the Arundel manuscript, the lack of the English stanza IV. 8 has not deterred the scribe from copying the Latin distich, which is then followed immediately by the Latin for IV. 9. In the Oxford manuscript no such evidence for circumstances exists which might suggest the reason for the lack of stanza I. 30. This distich warns against hypocrisy, and it is unclear why a scribe might want to deliberately omit it, as it seems uncontroversial. There is, therefore, a strong possibility that the stanza was accidentally skipped either by the scribe of the Oxford manuscript, or by the scribe of his exemplar.

The main body of the *Distichs* is, therefore, usually intact. What are often omitted, however, are the envoy stanzas to the individual books. Four manuscripts in the group are missing all of the envoy stanzas. These are MSS. BL Harley 271, BL Harley 4733, BL Harley 7333, and Göttingen UL 8 Cod. philol. 163n. Harley MSS. 271 and 4733 appear to be related: although they do not appear to be in the same scribal hand, as well as lacking envoys, they also both specifically name Benedict Burgh as the author of the *Distichs*, and contain similar Maltese-cross-like marks to mark errata which have later been corrected. Whether one was copied from the other or both were copied from the same exemplar cannot be established in the time available for the present research, although Förster (1905: 301) favoured the latter explanation.

Missing envoy stanzas may reflect a pragmatic desire to save space or the time of the scribe. Alternatively, they may simply have been viewed as unimportant as they did not have a direct analogue in the Latin source text. A third possibility is that these were not written by Burgh at all, and that most of the surviving manuscripts bear witness to the addition of these verses by an interceding poet. The envoy stanzas are not in the rhyme royal verse of the main distichs, and instead have eight lines per stanza. This difference in form may seem to support the hypothesis of a second poet's involvement. However, their appearance in the vast majority of the manuscript copies as well as in Caxton's printed editions is probably an indication that the envoys were a part of Burgh's

text. These four manuscripts are most likely, therefore, to be the products of deliberate decisions to omit the stanzas on the part of their scribes or the scribes of their exemplars, rather than evidence of a separate recension without envoys.

In only two manuscripts do individual distichs stanzas appear to have been deliberately discarded in copying. The most obvious trimming of the *Distichs* has taken place in Cambridge, Jesus College 56. In this manuscript forty-seven of the stanzas are missing, as well as one of the stanzas of the prologue to book II, and two of the envoy stanzas to the same book. The stanzas have been removed roughly evenly across the four books (nine from book I, eleven from book II, ten from book III, seventeen from book IV). Although more have been removed from book IV than the others, this book, at forty-nine stanzas, is also the longest in the complete work, and so the percentage removed from it is roughly the same as that for books I, II, and III.

It is impossible to tell whether the editing of the text represented in the Jesus College manuscript was carried out by the scribe of that volume, or by the scribe of his exemplar. There appears to have been no truncation of other texts in the manuscript, and so the scribe may have found a copy of the *Distichs* which had already been abbreviated in this way. With almost a third of the text thus discarded, it is difficult to establish particular sentiments of which the copyist disapproved. It seems likely that he or she held no active dislike for the distichs omitted, but rather wanted to abridge the work and simply omitted stanzas which did not stand out as especially significant.

The most interesting omissions of all the *Distichs* manuscripts are to be found in San Marino, Huntington Library MS. HM 144. On this occasion four stanzas are missing: I. 28, II. 6, IV. 42, and IV. 44. These advise the reader, respectively: to teach children to be self-sufficient; to keep to a middle course in life rather than being miserly or extravagant; to conduct duties with thought for others even if the job is irksome; and to treat slaves or servants with respect, remembering that they are still men. It appears significant that four individual distichs are thus missing rather than individual stanzas or larger blocks. It is unlikely that the scribe accidentally skipped all four, and their absence cannot be the result of missing pages from an exemplar. It is possible to speculate that these were, instead, omitted because they were not of relevance to the reader. If

this were the case it is possible to imagine an owner who is childless, without a duty-filled job, and without servants. Distich II. 6 could, conceivably, have been omitted because it repeats a sentiment expressed more than once in the *Distichs*, including by the stanza which immediately precedes it. The final stanza here, IV. 44, may have been discarded as anachronistic given that slavery was not common in medieval England. Whatever the actual situation which led to the removal of these stanzas, the Huntington manuscript stands as the only volume in the group for which individual *Distichs* stanzas were selectively *removed* presumably as a result of their content. This selective removal implies a much more personal response to the text than the space-saving abridgement of the text in Cambridge, Jesus College 56.

The evidence presented in this section demonstrates how unusual it was for distichs to be removed by a copyist. The manuscripts discussed in sections 4.4.4.1 and 4.4.4.2 show that excerption of particularly appreciated distichs was not uncommon; however, selective *omission* of stanzas appears not to have been widely practised. This might seem unusual given the ease with which unappealing stanzas could have been dispatched without harming the flow of the poem. When the *Distichs* was copied, therefore, it was generally treated with enough respect to be copied whole, without the scribe picking and choosing the sections of which he or she approved.

4.4.4.4 Incomplete Copies

It is not unusual for the *Distichs* to exist in incomplete copies, although it is very rarely that this appears to have been intentional. On several occasions (e.g. Bodl. Rawl. poet. 35; Magdalene College, Pepys 2006; BL Harley 2251; Lambeth 3597) the beginning or end of the text is missing, but this almost always appears to have been the result of loss of a quire or several quires, as is the case in the Kyriells' MS. Pepys 2006, de Vale's BL MS. Harley 2251, and Chaundler's BL MS. Harley 43. Only in London, Lambeth Palace MS. 3597 does the scribe appear to have deliberately stopped copying the text, and this (as previously discussed, section 3.7) may have been because he or she realised that several mistakes had been made in the process.

The structure of the *Distichs*, however, makes it unsurprising that such losses should occur and the text still be considered valuable. The loss of the end of the text would in no way devalue the surviving material. Indeed, it appears that complete texts of the parent Latin were also rare, accounting for roughly one in three copies (Bonaventure 1961: 9).

The incomplete nature of several copies of the *Distichs* can, therefore, not be said to impact much on our understanding of its reception. If anything, the large number of near-complete copies is an indication that Burgh's translation was seen worth copying in full, rather than using as a source from which to select particular books or stanzas.

4.4.4.5 Annotation of *Distichs*

The copies of the *Distichs* have not attracted annotation in the same way that other texts in the same manuscripts have. Historical pieces, in particular, are regularly marked with the names of people or places mentioned in the text, presumably as finding aids should the reader wish to refer to those sections again. An example of this style of notation can be seen in the copy of the prose *Brut* present in Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Rawl. poet. 32. This annotator appears to have been particularly interested in the foundations of various cities, noting first (fol. 61v) 'de edificacione ciuitatis london', and later 'heboraci' (i.e. York; fol. 63v), 'colchestre' (fol. 75r) and 'dongcastre' (fol. 80v). Other Latin notes are present throughout the *Brut*, many unfortunately largely illegible due to later trimming of the manuscript. The hand appears to be of the late fifteenth century, and thus roughly contemporary with the copy of the *Distichs*, although Lister Matheson has noted that the *Brut* in this manuscript was composed separately and probably earlier than other sections of the volume (1998: 196-7). The *Distichs* itself, however, has not attracted the attention of the reader.

As well as being applied to other historical texts in the manuscripts (another example might be found in BL Harley 7333, again on the prose *Brut*, and CUL MS. Ee.4.31 contains notes which imply its reader was particularly interested in its account of Arthur and Merlin), such notes often accompany historical romances, as is the case in Durham, University Library MS. Cosin

V.ii.14, where Lydgate's *Siege of Thebes* is regularly annotated in a way apparently designed to help its owner find passages which stood out to them. These include 'The bodyes borned' (fol. 33v), 'Melleager' (fol. 34v) and 'palemonis' (fol. 35r) in a sixteenth-century hand as well as several Latin notes in what appears to be a fifteenth-century hand (e.g. 'digressio ad ethioclem' on fol. 36v; 'bellicosa preparatio' on fol. 37r; others on fols. 37v, 38r, 38v, 40v, 41v). These annotations span the history of the manuscripts, although Tudor scripts are particularly prevalent, and there are very few which appear to have been made later than the eighteenth century.

In only one manuscript has the *Distichs* received significant annotation that goes beyond nota markings. This takes the form of brief sentences in the margins of Huntington MS. HM 144 which summarise the main point of the stanza in question. This annotation often labels distichs with the values which they were believed to inculcate, and may be related to the traditions of glossing the *Disticha* (Hazelton 1957). It has not been possible in the present study to trace which, if any, of the *Disticha* glosses might be involved, and it is also possible that these have been added by the scribe or a reader based on their own reading of the material, rather than copied from a gloss. The latter seems the strongest possibility as the labelling of the stanzas is sporadic, suggesting a reader annotating the parts of the poem which appealed to him or her, rather than a selective copying from a gloss. There is no obvious pattern to the virtues which are selected, reinforcing the impression that they reflect a personal response to the text rather than a premeditated plan of annotation.

Other manuscripts in the *Distichs* group show similar annotation on a much smaller scale, with only one stanza picked out on each occasion. In Oxford Bodleian MS. Rawlinson poet. 32, distich III. 4 is labelled 'An honest person'; in BL MS. Harley 116, distich III. 8 is accompanied by 'lady fortune' in the margin; and in Göttingen UL 8 Cod. philol. 163n distich I. 25 is annotated with 'a promyse'. All of these notations appear to be in the hand of a later reader rather than that of the scribe.

The lack of more annotation of this kind may indicate that readers rarely needed to find a specific stanza for reference or quotation. Other evidence (such as that discussed in the next section) makes clear that Burgh's text was read and

appreciated by the owners of these manuscripts. However, it does not appear that these readers found the need to label it in a way that would facilitate easy access to memorable passages. This, in turn, may suggest that they did not find much that was especially memorable in Burgh's translation.

4.4.4.6 'Nota' Markings

In contrast to the vanishingly small incidence of written notes in the *Distichs*, the text is frequently annotated with 'nota' marks in the margins to draw attention to important passages, and this has been carried out on seven of the surviving manuscripts: Bodl. Rawl. C. 4; Bodl. Rawl. poet. 35; Bodl. Eng. poet. e. 15; CUL Ff.IV.9; BL Harley 4733; BL Harley 7333; and Durham, University Library Cosin V.ii.14. It is possible that such marks may have been present on other of the manuscripts which have been 'cleaned' later, but if so it is not obvious. The uniform nature of these markings and the lack of any further information provided with them obscures the particular interest the reader had in the stanzas so marked. In addition, the marking often appears almost indiscriminate, as is the case with Bod. Rawl. poet. 35 and Bodl. poet. e. 15. In both of these the heaviest annotation is in book II, and in the former (Rawlinson) manuscript almost half (thirteen out of the thirty) of the distichs in book II are accompanied by notae. The third book is similarly appreciated, with nineteen out of twenty-four stanzas marked. In Bodl. poet. e. 15, one of the two Dodesham manuscripts, annotation is even more extensive, and the reader has marked individual lines in nineteen of the thirty stanzas, as well as in the envoy and one of the prologue stanzas. However, this annotator appears to have later lost interest in the text; he or she marks up six of the stanzas of book III, and then stops altogether.

CUL Ff.4.9 may give some clue to the process which has led to the proliferation of notae in the Rawlinson manuscript. In the Cambridge manuscript almost every distich is given a nota mark. However, this appears to have been the product of confusion on the part either of the scribe or a later owner. The 'notae' in this volume consist of the letters 'no' followed by a suspension mark above the line, which is drawn similarly to a single-compartment 'a' with a long tail on its top stroke. Almost every distich has been marked with the suspension

symbol, but only in the first two books are these preceded by the letters 'no'. This suggests that what appears as a 'ta' suspension is, in fact, a decorative scheme intended to mark the beginning of each stanza. It is therefore possible that a later reader assumed these were incomplete notae, and began completing them before recognising their misunderstanding and halting abruptly. It is also entirely possible that the scribe of the Rawlinson manuscript also believed they were copying a scheme of annotation, before realising their mistake in the midst of book III, at which point they became more selective in the stanzas they marked for the remainder of the volume.

This scenario cannot have been replicated for Dodesham's Bodl. Eng. poet. e. 15, for which individual lines are marked with a variety of strokes, corresponding approximately to the following modern punctuation symbols: - / \ These are, however, written in what may be much more recent pencil, and it is exceptionally difficult to tell what dating might be placed on them. It does, however, indicate that considerable attention has been paid, albeit fleetingly given the limited amount of the poem marked in this way – to the text at some point in its history. Moreover, when this was done, it appears to have been the sentiment of particular lines which was appreciated, rather than the tendency in the other manuscripts to mark whole stanzas. The meaning of the different marks (which could be considered the same mark used in various orientations) is difficult to decipher, and could represent different levels of importance to the annotator.

It is somewhat disappointing to note that there is no outstanding pattern to the selection of distichs which are marked out for attention in the *Distichs* manuscripts, although several have received the appreciation of multiple readers. The first two books have been most heavily annotated in the manuscripts, and it is notable that when stanzas are chosen for excerption these are predominately from this first half of the 'Cato Major'. Of those chosen for inclusion in the Findern manuscript, twenty nine out of forty come from books I or II, whilst all of the twenty three stanzas copied on to the walls of Wressell castle, and from there into BL Royal 18.D.II are from these books. This is despite the fact that the third and fourth books contain more than half of the distichs.

The reasons for such favouring of early distichs are unclear. It is tempting to ascribe this pattern to the nature of the text; despite Burgh's best efforts, it is still a difficult poem to read because of the complete disjunction between one verse and the next and the dry, imperious tone of the advice. It also bears repeated injunctions to its reader to consider carefully each stanza in order that their full import might be properly understood. It is entirely possible that even a reader inured to the didacticism of medieval literature would find dwelling on the first sixty distichs to be sufficient, and then choose to skim the rest for anything that particularly stood out.

4.4.4.7 Doodling and Letter-Practice

The *Distichs* manuscripts have been subject to much less considered additions in the form of scribbling and writing practice. This has not been the case with all volumes, and there are many which bear very little intervention from later readers. When present in the manuscripts, these practices are rarely confined to the *Distichs* alone, and usually appear wherever there is enough free space for the reader to make their own mark.

Very few manuscripts contain any sort of systematic writing practice, such as the copying of complete alphabets, as are present in, for example, the Findern manuscript (fols. 59v, 150v, 159v, 160r). Instead, individual letters are often practised, or even whole words. When words are written in the margins, these are often copied from the text on the page, and frequently from the first or last line on the page (e.g. in Bodl. Rawl. poet. 32, fol. 202r; CUL Ee.IV.31, fol. 10r; CUL Hh.IV.12, fol. 16v-17r). In most cases this is probably because the writer is attempting to copy the script in which the text hand has written, and so chooses a word close to an area of blank space to allow easy reference back and forth between the exemplar and his or her own copy. Because these usually attempt to replicate the manuscript scribe's hand, it is exceedingly difficult to suggest a date for much of this writing practice.

In some of these manuscripts, most notably CUL Hh.IV.12 fols. 16v-17r, words or whole lines are copied from the *Distichs*. Hh.IV.12 is one of the manuscripts which has been heavily marked by its readers, and may have been

in the hands of children. The use of the *Distichs* as a source of writing to practise may indicate that children were still being set to pore over, copy, and memorise the text. However, that the lines copied in Hh.IV.12 are from the Latin rather than Middle English portion of the poem may be further evidence that whilst Burgh's text was *read*, it was the Latin which was *learned*.

Occasionally a reader has picked a word of central relevance to one of the stanzas present on the page, whether this be the *Distichs* or another text. Such a practice can be seen in BL Harley 4733, fols. 48r-v, where a reader has copied important words from *Titus and Vespasian*. On the occasions where doodling and scribbling are most in evidence, this suggests the possibility that the manuscripts were in the hands of children. This may appear to counteract previous intimations that the *Distichs* had escaped the schoolroom for the libraries of noblemen. However, BL MS. Harley 43 and others which are known to have been owned by noblemen or gentry and yet also bear doodling, would seem to offer evidence that the manuscripts did not remain entirely in adult hands. Instead they suggest that the fifteenth-century audience of the *Distichs* was not one specifically of school children and their teachers, although those manuscripts which were owned by a private individual may have been used by children in their household. Instead, these doodles suggest that the trend away from school usage was later reversed, and that in later life these manuscripts found themselves used in the same contexts in which the Latin *Disticha* thrived.

4.4.4.8 Physical Removal of Distichs

A particularly interesting example of usage of the manuscripts is again to be found in CUL Hh.IV.12, the book belonging to the minstrel, John Peter. In this volume, two folios have had their tops carefully excised to remove the Latin distich. In order to supply this lack, the missing Latin has been copied into the blank space at the foot of the page. This suggests that Peter, or a later user of the manuscript, wished specifically to put these professionally-copied Latin distichs to some other use. Unfortunately, what this might be is unknown; they may have been pasted into another book, or perhaps given to someone to whom they

seemed apt, or even kept on the person of whoever removed them as easily portable reminders of Catonian wisdom.

The distichs to have been removed in this way are I.25 and I.28 (on fols. 5r and 5v respectively) and I.31 and I.34 (on fols. 6r and 6v). It is difficult to tell which of the pairs was desired on each occasion. Distich I.25 advises the reader not to boast of their good deeds, I.28 to teach children to be self-sufficient, I.31 not to seek things which are not deserved, and I.34 not to resort to might when gentle tactics may be just as successful. There is a possible connection between I.25 and I.34, in that both advise successful or powerful people not to become proud or ruthless, and it is possible to imagine occasions on which a court poet, especially one acquainted with Henry VIII, might choose to put such sentiments to use. However, it is not possible to do anything other than speculate as to the exact intentions of John Peter or his successor in removing them.

Whatever the case, the removal of individually selected distichs offers an interesting insight into the reception of the text: despite the widespread appeal of Burgh's *Distichs*, its popularity appears to be still for its explication of its Latin source. When the *Disticha* are quoted, it is either in the original words, as in the 'Complaint Against Fortune' of BL Harley 7333, or in a translated paraphrase of the original, as is the case in Chaucer's 'Tale of Melibee'. Likewise, the owner of CUL Hh.IV.12 has chosen to remove the Latin on its own rather than the Middle English translation. If Burgh's version were considered especially important, presumably his corresponding stanzas would also have been removed. However, this is not the case. Although there is a slim possibility that the Middle English stanzas were considered either too precious to remove, or that too much space would be required to copy them and thus allow removal without loss, the evidence of CUL Hh.IV.12 strongly suggests that it was the Latin original which carried the greatest prestige and thus might be removed and put to work elsewhere. This favouring of the Latin in Peter's manuscript, in turn, reinforces the impression that Burgh's text found such a large audience through its association with the Latin text rather than through the merit of its own poetic achievement.

4.4.5 Summary – Reception of the *Distichs* as Indicated by the Manuscript Copies

The overall picture which emerges from this account of the manuscript copies of the *Distichs* is one of selection and use, both on the part of scribes and readers. Although the text is usually copied in its entirety, manuscripts such as BL Royal 18.D.II and the Findern manuscript show that this was not always the case, and that some scribes deemed it appropriate to copy selections of the material, rather than the entire text. At its extreme end, this scribal selection has resulted in the choice of individual stanzas for reproduction. When this is the case these, perhaps unsurprisingly, reinforce material found elsewhere in the volumes into which they are copied: the value of education in a dictamen book and a commonplace book (BL MS. Royal 17.B.xlvii and Cambridge, Trinity College MS. O.2.53 respectively); and the untrustworthiness of wives in a codex containing similar excerpts from another long work (BL MS. Add. 29729).

Whilst such scribal selection is thus relatively common, even more prevalent is the selection of material for attention by later readers. This usually takes the form of marginal symbols which attract the reader's attention to particular stanzas. Such marking rarely seems to be particularly discriminatory, and indicates that many of the stanzas were found valuable by readers, each with his or her own particular predilections.

This lack of selectivity in readers resonates with the near arbitrary choices of the scribe of the Findern *Distichs*. It can be considered, therefore, that there was no particular pattern to the sentiments which appealed to medieval readers, and the majority of the text was still considered valuable. The one limitation on the appreciation of the text may have been that imposed by the reader's patience, as manuscript markings demonstrate that interest was strongest in the first and second books, and tailed off thereafter.

These markings still indicate that the text was not owned solely for its prestige and a display of cultural and educational superiority. That individual stanzas of the *Disticha* could still strike a chord with readers is implied by the decision of the owner of Cambridge, University Library MS. Hh.IV.12 to excise carefully individual distichs. Other types of damage, such as the rubbed pages in

Cambridge, Jesus College MS. 56 may also be taken as indications of use, rather than a tendency to leave the manuscripts on a shelf unopened.

Scribbling and writing practice also testify to such use, and may be the marks of children. If this is indeed the case, the *Distichs* maintained some continuity of reception with its Latin school-text predecessor, with children still being set to work learning and perhaps copying its precepts.

4.5 William Caxton's Printed *Distichs*

William Caxton printed three editions of the *Disticha* as translated by Benedict Burgh. A quarto edition and its reprint are among the first books Caxton published in England (c.1476/77), and he followed these by a folio edition in 1483. Some time later than this (when exactly is unknown, though it appears to be after the 23rd December 1483) Caxton issued his own translation, rather more expansive even than Burgh's, taken from a French source (*ESTC* S106569). William Caxton's involvement is, in itself, noteworthy. As a highly successful merchant and diplomat commanding a large measure of respect, his choice of material to print carries weight. Caxton's success was reliant on an ability to judge his market shrewdly; when he picked Burgh's text as one of his earliest quartos, he must have believed that enough of an audience existed with an appetite for the material.

Caxton himself may have added to the respectability of the texts he printed; he was a well-established merchant and diplomat for at least a decade before he started printing in England. He had risen to become 'governor of the English nation' in the Low Countries, a post giving him responsibility for representing the interests of English mercers as well as the occasional need to speak for his country in more directly political matters. N.F. Blake (2004) notes that the assignation of this position to Caxton in the 1460s 'reveals not only his wealth, skill as negotiator, and familiarity with affairs in the Low Countries, but also the confidence his fellow merchants had in him'.

Lotte Hellinga's work to establish the beginnings of Caxton's printing career in Westminster shows the privileged position which the *Distichs* obtained in this business plan; she establishes Burgh's work as one of five quartos in the

earliest group of those printed on his return to England (Hellings 1982: 67-68). Of the other quartos, three were by perennial fifteenth-century favourite, John Lydgate. It is very interesting to note that of the Lydgate works printed concurrently with the first edition of Burgh, the *Stans Puer ad Mensam* (in Lydgate's translation) again accompanies the pseudo-Cato as it did in manuscript form. This Lydgateian homage to Cato and the courtesy books does not seem to have found the same demand, however, as it is not one of the quartos to be quickly reprinted. Within a year, Caxton would have issued a second printing of Burgh's *Distichs*, as well as of *The Ballad of the Horse, Sheep and Goose* and *The Churl and the Bird*, the latter two both by Lydgate and both amongst the texts which most regularly co-occur with the *Distichs* in its manuscript form: four times in the case of *Horse, Sheep and Goose*, three times for *The Churl and the Bird*.

Prior to Caxton's venture into printing, no one had produced printed material in the English language. Blake (2004) suggests that a pre-requisite for high sales would have been a noted and fashionable translator and that, in lieu of such a writer, Caxton chose instead to seek the patronage of a notable person who would give the seal of approval to Caxton's own translations. This he found initially in the form of Lady Margaret of Burgundy, to whom he insists indebtedness in the prologue of his first English publication, the *History of Troy*. Indeed, having laid aside the translation, he famously claims to have been commanded by her:

'straytli to contynue and make an ende of the resydue than not translated.
Whos dredefull comandement Y durste in no wyse disobey because Y am a
servant unto her sayde grace and resseive of her yerly fee.'

(quoted by Blake 1973: 98)

That patronage may, at some times, have been given unknowingly by the noble in question is similarly intriguing. On some occasions, Caxton appears to have simply dedicated a book to a particular powerful individual, in the hope that the mention of his or her name would have been enough to boost sales. This appears to have been the case for the first edition of the *Game of Chess*, which is dedicated

to George Duke of Clarence, brother of Edward IV and Margaret, Duchess of Burgundy. The prologue implies that Caxton wishes Clarence's good favour, without actually having any acquaintance with him. It was purely the rank and importance held by the patron which caused Caxton to insert his name here, allowing Blake to comment that:

'Caxton had chosen an English nobleman to act as dedicatee and patron of his edition without that person's knowledge or even his acquaintance. He was quite prepared to exploit other people's positions for his own commercial ends.'

(Blake 1991: 12)

There was no need for such endorsement, however, by the time he printed Burgh's work; his own name was now well enough known to carry prestige in its own right.

Despite this respect, not all of Caxton's printing ventures were as successful as the *Distichs* and minor Lydgate works. There is, for example, no evidence that Caxton's own translation of the *Disticha*, based on a French source, went beyond a first edition, though published apparently simultaneously with the third edition of the Burgh translation. Perhaps by this point (1483) the Catonian bubble had burst, and the publisher had to move on to new ground. It is important to note the possibility that the number of printed copies of Caxton's translation was simply much larger than that of the first two Burgh printings, and thus a lack of a second edition should not necessarily be construed as a sign of waning interest in the publishing market. It is also notable, however, that Wynkyn de Worde, on taking over his former master's press, apparently chose not to reprint either version of the *Disticha*, which suggests that changing tastes or market saturation the more likely circumstances.

Caxton's printing of Burgh's work is of interest to the current study for two main reasons. Firstly, for what it implies about the strong and steady demand for the text in the late fifteenth century, and secondly for further indications of the audience with which it might be associated. The printer's specific audience is difficult to pin down, but his links to noble patrons such as Margaret of Burgundy

and, later, Margaret Beaufort strongly suggest that the courtly circle were as much a part of the audience for the printed *Distichs* as they were for the manuscript copies.

4.6 Chapter Summary – Constructing a Narrative for the Use and Reception of the *Distichs of Cato*

From the evidence that has been gathered in this chapter it is now possible to build some impression of the overall usage of Benedict Burgh's *Distichs of Cato*.

The success of the Middle English *Distichs* is based very firmly on the ubiquitous use of the Latin *Disticha Catonis* as a school text. This was closely associated with education and erudition, to the extent that knowledge of Cato was almost synonymous with education itself. Cato was regarded as an ancient authority, and his 'wisdom' was second only to Solomon. Burgh's text takes advantage of this by continuing to incorporate the Latin with his English translation. This connection continued to be important in the minds of Burgh's readers, as evidenced by the presence of the Latin in almost all of the copies which are now extant, including the versions printed by William Caxton.

Burgh, however, had aspirations for his text beyond being further fodder for classroom grammatical teaching. Although Caxton tells us that Burgh was himself an elementary teacher when he composed his translation, his intentions were clearly more literary. The budding poet had made contact with his highly experienced contemporary, John Lydgate, and with his guidance (and possibly using some of his work, such as the *Dietary* or *Stans Puer ad Mensam*, as a model) aimed to enter into the circle of courtly poets to which Lydgate was central at this point.

To this end, Burgh did more with his text than translate it simply as a crib for the Latin. He utilised one of Lydgate's favourite stanza forms, the rhyme royal which was a stock component of fifteenth-century courtly literature following Chaucer's utilisation of the format for his *Troilus and Criseyde*. Burgh significantly expanded on the *Disticha* text, improving on the readability of the Latin original; this expansion together with the rhyme royal stanza form allowed the new poem to bear comparison to poetry of a similar stamp which Lydgate

had produced. To complete the transition from school text to literary text, Burgh had also acquired the patronage, in some form, of his employer, Lord Bouchier of Essex. Bouchier may well have been aware that vernacular literature was growing in popularity, and that it was common practice amongst other more important noblemen, such as Richard Beauchamp, to commission this type of text. This gave the new *Distichs* all the elements of other fashionable courtly texts, and when it was finished its dissemination may have benefited both from Lydgate's distribution networks and Bouchier's contacts with other members of the minor nobility.

That this mode of dissemination is likely is suggested by the *Distichs'* frequent co-habitation in manuscript miscellanies with Lydgate's works. The text had some impact in the higher echelons of the nobility, as witnessed by a couple of highly decorated manuscripts, and the use of certain stanzas on the walls of Wressell castle. However, it never reached significantly above the level at which it appears to have begun; that is, the fringes of courtly culture inhabited by Burgh's patron, Bouchier, and other minor nobility such as the Kyriell and Findern families. Some continued circulation in this type of milieu was probably assured by a combination of the fashionable nature of vernacular translations and a desire to be acquainted or reacquainted with the wise words of Cato which medieval culture so highly revered. For these owners, it was largely associated with other courtly literature, especially romances (represented in the Findern manuscript) and the work of Chaucer (as displayed by the Kyriells' manuscript, which later found its way into the possession of Samuel Pepys).

Whilst circulating in this milieu, the text appears to be associated, to a certain extent, with the reading material of women. Again, the Findern manuscript and MS. Chetham's 8009 provide windows into this use. Female readers of the minor gentry combined the text with other morally improving literature, as well as romances and the hagiography and hymn translations which were staple reading for the pious laity. These circles, with their fascination for the literature of a court which was just slightly beyond their social reach, also imitated the fashion amongst this courtly group for providing patronage to new ascetic monastic orders, in particular the Carthusians, Bridgettines and Celestines. It is most likely through these patrons that the *Distichs* found its way

into houses of these orders, although it is also plausible that it travelled through the networks provided by the more traditional monastic orders, perhaps from the Benedictine monks of Lydgate's home abbey of Bury St. Edmund's through the Augustinians with whom the Carthusians appear to have had contact and for whom they provided materials.

The Carthusian and Bridgettine monks in particular held dissemination of education as a particularly important commitment, and it is likely that the text spread further from within the cloister, through their copying of texts for other monastic houses (both of their own and other related orders) and for the lay patrons who formed such a tight circle around them. Many of the *Distichs* manuscripts which contain works of mystical authors or more documentary items related to the Carthusians or Celestines are likely to have come into existence via this network, although there is a very strong chance that these were the possessions of patrons, rather than the monks or nuns themselves. The text almost certainly did circulate amongst nuns particularly, and the Bridgettine sisters are the most likely audience for the copies produced by the Carthusian, Stephen Dodesham. However, the text did not match the interests of most monastic readers, and was not inducted into the collections of the houses' libraries.

Whilst these religious groups were helping to disseminate the *Distichs*, the text had found a comfortable niche on the fringes of courtly culture where it was already most prominent. Instead of travelling 'up' into the aristocracy, the text was favoured by clerks and other adjuncts to the court. These included the retainers of nobility, such as John Shirley (even if he himself did not possess a copy). It is likely that the social circles of these clerkly owners overlapped with those in mercantile employment, such as John de Vale, the secretary to draper Thomas Cook, and Walter Pollard of Plymouth, owner of MS. Bodl. Rawl. D.328. This layer of society was of a generation whose literacy was predominantly in the vernacular, rather than Latin or French (although Pollard's grammar-compendium manuscript marks him as an exception to this rule), and they would have appreciated the access to Catonian learning that Burgh's Middle English translation offered them, which would otherwise have been mainly the preserve of the court and clerics who had been trained in the language of the source text.

In this milieu the *Distichs* thrived. The vast majority of the poem's extant manuscripts are likely to have been owned by the 'middle class', across the spectrum from clerks heavily involved in court affairs, to merchants, via the retainers of nobility, and even court entertainers such as John Peter. The translation fed the desire of these groups to expand their reading, whilst at the same time providing access to knowledge of proven enduring use. It was composed at the right time and in the right circumstances to secure a firm position in the enthusiasm for translation of respected Latin or French texts into the vernacular that was boosted by new feelings of national identity. The revival of humanism as an intellectual activity over the past century had almost certainly affected this interest in ancient texts, and to be part of that revival may have motivated many of the commissions of the *Distichs*. Humanism would thus have helped to ensure a ready audience for a supposedly classical text translated to reach a new readership.

The appeal of the text was strong enough that some owners of pre-existing manuscripts saw fit to add the text to their books, and in the case of at least one (BL Add. 34193) this may have been done personally in their own hand. The translation was also well enough known or appreciated that it was excerpted for use on the walls of a castle (BL Royal 18.D.II), for apparently motivational ends in dictamen books (BL Royal 17 B.XLVII), and in the commonplace book of the Ramston family of Essex (TCC O.2.53).

In the 1470s, the *Distichs* came to the attention of William Caxton, probably through his own connections with the circles of merchants, clerks, and minor nobility who seem to have been the target audience for his books. It is not impossible that Burgh himself made personal contact with Caxton, but it is much more likely that the printer heard of his work through communication with patrons such as Margaret Beaufort, who were tied into the worlds of the court and the new mystically-influenced monastic orders in which the text was circulating. Recognising its value and aiming to repeat that success in a print run, Caxton chose the *Distichs* as one of his first small incunables along with Lydgate's popular works such as the *Horse, Goose and Sheep*. To try and secure its popularity, he bundled it up with a few of these similar texts, and presented a copy to the royal family.

Caxton was not to be disappointed. The text sold well enough that it reached a third print run, and the printer clearly thought that further profit could be made on the *Disticha*. Acquiring a French original which padded out the translation of the Latin maxims with exempla stories, Caxton produced his own version of the *Disticha Catonis*. Perhaps he had already flooded the market, or he may have misjudged what it was that his audience wanted in a version of the *Distichs*, but it appears that Caxton's translation was never successful enough to be reprinted. It could not match the market penetration of Burgh's version.

To assess the exact impact of the printed *Distichs* on the circulation of the manuscript copies would require much further investigation. It may be responsible for the fairly tight time-window in which the vast majority of these copies appear to have been made, as hand-copying of the text became redundant. Nonetheless, readers continued to appreciate the text, and evidence of wear and annotation on the manuscripts suggests that they were used beyond the period in which they were produced.

The readership of Burgh's *Distichs* was thus different from that of the Latin composed by the pseudonymous 'Cato'. However, in the final decades of the fifteenth century it gained a powerful following amongst the gentry, and can be said to have had an impact on society which goes beyond the expectations of those who read it in the present day.

Conclusion

This thesis has attempted to compose a picture of the fifteenth-century readership and use of Benedict Burgh's Middle English translation of the *Disticha Catonis* through a study of the manuscript contexts in which it survives.

The manuscripts may be divided into those which appear to emanate from a religious background, and those which are the product of a more temporal milieu. Investigation of these reveals that, where owners either can be identified, or their position in society reconstructed, they fit within a broadly definable grouping. This group may be considered to consist predominately of the 'gentry' and 'middle class': categories which includes a wide variety of individuals whose main characteristics are their moderate wealth, strong education, and position in what might be considered 'service industries'. That is to say, bureaucrats, merchants, secular priests, and entertainers.

This stratum of society exists in the gap between the aristocracy and the peasantry, and was rapidly expanding throughout the later Middle Ages as wealth became less concentrated in the nobility, and more people as a result gained access to education. Such men and women were still largely in the service of the court, however, and occupied a liminal position on the fringes of this culture. That the *Distichs* continued to circulate in this group throughout the final decades of the fifteenth century and perhaps the initial decades of the sixteenth century is reinforced by the knowledge that it appears in the manuscript offspring of miscellanies composed by the Earl of Warwick's secretary, John Shirley, who appears to have compiled volumes to circulate amongst the gentry.

Religious readers appear to comprise a smaller section of the audience for the *Distichs*. Vernacular didactic works with impact largely on the secular world were of little interest to the monastic enclosed. This lack of monastic interest did not, however, preclude the *Distichs'* ownership by the Carthusian Order at Sheen, and the likely use of the text by the nuns of the neighbouring Bridgettine community of Syon. A number of texts with connections to the Carthusians, Bridgettines, and other like-minded orders indicate that Burgh's poem spread in part through the copying of manuscript material by monks, although such material was almost certainly made for patrons of the abbey from the gentry

class. Thus, the religious orders helped to perpetuate the spread of the poem through the sub-courtly group in which it had already found root.

Important sub-groups of readers can also be identified, including members of the nobility who commissioned its copying in sometimes lavish manuscripts. A more important sub-group, however, appears to have emerged in the household. Here the poem may have found a female readership, perhaps serving as a source of wisdom for mothers and fathers seeking to inculcate good behaviour in their children.

The other texts in the *Distichs* manuscripts help to define further the interests of these readers, and to establish the type of material they judged to be appropriate for inclusion with Burgh's text. Much of this material is religious and much didactic. There is a strong impression, therefore, that the poem formed a part of the core group of texts against which readers measured their knowledge of the secular and spiritual world, and their place within it. However, there is also an element of entertainment amongst the contents of these manuscripts, implying that the *Distichs* had been partially received into the realms of literature rather than remain solely within an educational niche.

This study also sheds some light on the audiences of the other texts which are included in manuscript miscellanies alongside the *Distichs*. The large volume of religious texts present in these manuscripts must necessarily also have been read by the predominately secular audience. Their simple nature caters to a readership which is not versed in the complex theological debate pursued by the friars and, to a lesser extent, the canons; instead ordinary people appear to have been reading these texts perhaps in a desire to widen their own religious understanding and to keep them engaged in Christianity on a personal level. Lay readership of these religious texts fits the pattern proposed by Duffy (2005) and others, arguing against the formerly prevailing view that Catholicism was stagnating and becoming detached from the lives of the community-members who were its principal worshippers. Other medieval texts have provided similar evidence; Susan Powell has, for example, argued that John Mirk's *Festial* was disseminated in a secular as well as a religious recension, aimed at 'a prosperous and educated audience' (1981: 32), and thus offers more evidence that laypeople took part in their religion through reading such works. This unflagging interest

in religion appears to be further reinforced by the presence of extensive religious writing in *Distichs* manuscripts which were owned by the gentry, nobility, clerks and merchants – an audience which might be directly equated with that suggested by Powell for the *Festial*.

In addition, these readers were highly engaged in their reading. Annotation and other forms of marking in the manuscripts suggest that the *Distichs* was used in a practical and ‘hands-on’ manner by many of those who owned copies of it. They read it, highlighted the most important passages, and returned to them, sometimes to the extent of the manuscript’s degradation through wear or casual marking of the pages. This evidence of use seems to indicate a somewhat pragmatic application. Scribes largely copied the material faithfully, but when appropriate selected, excerpted and put to use passages which appeared to them to be worth such attention.

Benedict Burgh’s *Distichs of Cato* was, therefore, a significant text in fifteenth-century culture, despite its lack of appeal to modern readers. It found a readership across all sections of literate society, although its use was concentrated in a sub-aristocratic gentry milieu. Here it held a position amongst works detailing the most important aspects of life, read and appreciated by an increasingly influential sector of society.

Directions for Further Research

The present study has been limited particularly by available time with manuscripts and by space for discussion of the various points arising from close examination of these volumes. Particularly interesting would be the more thorough recognition of the scribal stints into which manuscripts might be divided. If this could be achieved, a clearer picture would emerge both of the circumstances in which the manuscripts were produced (in scriptoria or by individuals) and perhaps of the layers of accretion which have allowed large miscellany volumes to build up from smaller booklets.

Closely related to scribal analysis would be an attempt to localise the dialects of the manuscripts through analysis of their linguistic features. Pilot analyses were attempted on three of the *Distichs* copies (those in MSS. GUL

Hunter 259, BL Harley 7333, and Lambeth 3597) but proved inconclusive due to a lack of distinctly localisable tokens. Examination of other texts in miscellany volumes may improve the situation, and the information thus gained help to inform the picture of the geographical dissemination of the *Distichs*.

Understanding of the *Distichs'* history could be significantly enhanced by a similar study of Caxton's printed editions. As the printed copies were almost certainly being produced almost concurrently with the manuscript versions, the present study is necessarily only half (or less) of the story of the *Distichs*. The interaction between consumption of the text in manuscript and printed form would shed fascinating light on the changing literary market. In the present day it is intriguing to watch the effect on consumption of books which are released simultaneously in paper and ebook format. The *Distichs* can be thought of as having been similarly released in two formats – manuscript and print – almost concurrently. As a work which appealed to all layers of literate society, it is perfect for an examination of the ways the printing revolution affected the fortunes of an individual text.

Also under-evaluated is the importance of the *Disticha* to the cultural history of what is now Britain and, indeed, Europe. It and other conduct books codify social behaviour, and these rule books can be compared diachronically to demonstrate the maxims which appear, disappear and remain steadfast throughout the Middle Ages. The *Disticha* and translations such as that of Burgh can be studied in their own right to demonstrate how its advice is altered (either subtly or blatantly) to suit changing societal conditions and values. These conduct books can therefore be used to create a quantifiable measure of a culture's change in values and, even, its view of what is considered 'moral'. It is, indeed, surprising that this has not already been investigated to any great extent.

Finally, the information gathered on the *Distichs* could be expanded and integrated with similar information gathered by the *Imagining History* and *Geographies of Orthodoxy* projects to provide further evidence for the communities of readers active in the Middle Ages, and the areas in which their interests and reading practices overlapped. Thus material already gathered can be used to build a bigger picture of the medieval reading public.

The research for this thesis has allowed glimpses into the many facets of medieval society and reading culture on which the *Distichs of Cato* touches, and there are many exciting avenues which could be further pursued, and much that could be done to expand further what is here a preliminary and restricted attempt at culturally mapping a fascinating text.

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List of Manuscripts containing Burgh's *Distichs of Cato*

Detailed information on the *Distichs* as it appears in these manuscripts can be found in the appendices.

Aberystwyth

National Library of Wales, Peniarth 481D

Cambridge

Jesus College, 56

Magdalene College, Pepys 2006

Trinity College, O.2.53

University Library, Ee. IV. 31

University Library, Ff. I. 6

University Library, Ff. IV. 9

University Library, Hh. IV. 12

Dublin

Trinity College, 519

Durham

University Library, Cosin V.II.14

Glasgow

University Library, Hunter 259

Göttingen

University Library, 8 Cod. philol. 163n

London

British Library, Arundel 168

British Library, Harley 43

British Library, Harley 116

British Library, Harley 172

British Library, Harley 271

British Library, Harley 2251

British Library, Harley 4733

British Library, Harley 7333

British Library, Royal 17 B.XLVII

British Library, Royal 18 D.II

British Library, Additional 29729

British Library, Additional 34193

British Library, Additional 38179

Lambeth Palace Library, 3597

Manchester

Chetham's Library, 8009

New York, NY

Pierpont Morgan Library, M.775

Oxford

Bodleian Library, English poetical e.15

Bodleian Library, Rawlinson C.48

Bodleian Library, Rawlinson poetical 32

Bodleian Library, Rawlinson poetical 35

Bodleian Library, Rawlinson D.328 [*Cato Minor* only]

Rome

English College, A.347

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Notes for Appendices

Manuscript Catalogues

The cataloguing of manuscripts containing the *Distichs of Cato* has, wherever possible, been supported by examination of the volumes themselves. The bulk of the material in these entries is collated from the main catalogue(s) for each collection, the *New Index of Middle English Verse*, the *Index of Middle English Prose*, and personal observation. Information from these sources is so pervasive and commingled that they are usually only explicitly referenced where there is direct quotation or a degree of dubiety in the information. Information from sources other than catalogues and/or personal observation is cited at relevant points in the each entry.

The manuscripts are numbered in the order given by the *New Index of Middle English Verse* under its entry for 'Cato Major' (entry **3955**). It is for this reason that '29' is missing, as this entry was deleted when the original *Index* was updated. As Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Rawlinson D.328 contains only the *Parvus Cato*, its entry is designated 'P1'.

Only five manuscripts have not been consulted *in situ* due to geographical/financial limitations. Four of these have, instead, been examined on microfilm: New York, NY, Pierpont Morgan Library MS. M-775; San Marino, CA, Henry E. Huntington Library MS. HM 144; Göttingen, University Library 8 Cod. MS. philol. 163n; and Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales MS. Peniarth 481D. The fifth manuscript, Rome, Venerable English College MS. A.347, has thus far proven inaccessible by either means. These entries are, therefore, slightly more limited or tentative in the information provided.

Where modern pencil foliation is present in a manuscript, this has been adhered to in notes, even where there are flaws or inconsistencies in the notation, such as a missed or repeated number, or foliation of flyleaves as if part of the main manuscript.

Sections of quoted text for which the reading is dubious are given in curly brackets: { }. These have also been employed where text has been trimmed, and the missing letters supplied. Where such interpretation is particularly difficult, the text supplied is marked with a question mark. Square brackets, [], are used to supply a letter which has not been inserted by the scribe, often where decorative initials were intended. When contractions have been expanded the supplied letters are given in italics (N.B. Because of time pressures it has not always been possible to check the beginning lines as provided in catalogues, and thus where they have silently expanded contractions, these frequently stand as recorded in the catalogue source).

It has been preferred to keep the 'r' (recto) and 'v' (verso) notations in the main text line rather than raise them above the line in superscript form. Exceptions to this are made for reference to flyleaves, which are labelled in lower-case Roman numerals. On these occasions superscript helps to avoid confusion (e.g. 'v^v' instead of 'vv').

Titles of verse pieces and author attribution follow the *New Index of Middle English Verse*. Where possible, the first line of text has been taken from a manuscript catalogue rather than the *Index*. Where an entry in a 'contents' list

matches a *New Index of Middle English Verse* entry, the entry is underlined. Although 'Anonymous' is a slightly imprecise term for unknown authorship, it has been used in place of any more cumbersome alternative.

Description of the *Distichs* as present in the manuscripts has employed as reference points Boas (1952) for the Latin and Förster (1905; 1906) for the Middle English. Förster adopts Boas' numbering of the distichs, and it is worth noting in advance that the ordering of the stanzas as they appear in Burgh manuscripts is extremely consistent with the ordering established by Boas for the Latin text. Two exceptions are the persistent placement of III. 1 between the first and second stanzas of the 'preface' to book III, and that of IV. 30 between IV. 35 and IV. 36. Envoy stanzas are marked with the Roman numeral stanza numbering employed by Förster. The envoy to the *Parvus Cato* is stanza VII, that to book I stanzas XLVIII and XLIX, that to book II stanzas LXXXVII, LXXXVIII and LXXXIX, and that to book III stanzas CXVI, CXVII and CXVIII. Although book IV has not been assigned an envoy by Förster, several manuscripts employ stanzas CXVII and CXVIII for this purpose. It seems likely that this was Burgh's intention rather than that he left book IV without an envoy (assuming Burgh to be the author of the envoys).

Where stanzas of the *Distichs* have been annotated by their owners with 'nota' markings, this has been denoted by stars next to the stanza number in question. Where more than one system of notae is evident, multiple stars have been used, with a slash (/) used to separate different systems.

Notes of interesting or important points for each MS. are given towards the end of the datasheets. These, in general, are ordered so that notes about the volume as a physical object are given first, notes about the *Distichs* within the volume next, and notes about the use/reception of the volume (or specific texts within it) are given last.

Where possible, 'annotations by later users' include an approximate dating. Due to time constraints, where there is a lot of annotation in a volume not every item has been noted, but rather the general trend/subject matter of the annotations. In these cases, it has been preferred to copy items which include particular names, dates, or places.

Spreadsheet of MS. Verse Contents

This data is gathered from the *New Index of Middle English Verse* and the information is entirely attributable to this volume. No other source (including personal observation) has been used. As presented here, the poems are sorted by *NIMEV* number, but sorting the data by 'MS.' or by 'Author' also produces interesting results. Texts which appear three times or more in the *Distichs* manuscript group are highlighted using coloured title boxes.

Abbreviations Employed

LALME: *A Linguistic Atlas of Late Mediaeval English* (Mcintosh *et al.* 1986)

M&R: *The Text of the Canterbury Tales* (Manly & Rickert 1940)

NIMEV: *A New Index of Middle English Verse* (Boffey & Edwards 2005)

1. Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Rawlinson C.48 (SC 11914)

1. Binding:
 - a. Note on side of box: '15th-century binding, overlaid with parchment'.
2. Material:
 - a. Quires i and xiv poor quality/now shrunken parchment. Other quires are paper with parchment inner and outer leaves.
3. Number of folios:
 - a. i + 136 + i
 - b. Pencil foliation accidentally counts fols. 98 and 99 as the same. To avoid confusion, all notes here adhere to this foliation without adjustment.
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. **fol. 1r** Bernardi Sylvestri [Carnotensis]; *Epistola ad Reimundum*. Beg. 'dominum castri Sancti Ambrosii, de modo et forma rei familiaris utiliter gubernandae'. *Prose (Latin)*
 - b. **fol. 5r** John Lydgate; *The Siege of Thebes* [NIMEV 3928] Beg. 'When Phebus passed was the ram'. *Verse*
 - c. **fol. 78v** John Lydgate, Verses on the Kings of England (to Henry VI); [NIMEV 3632] Beg. 'This myghti William Duk of Normandie' *Verse*
 - d. **fol. 80r** John Lydgate; to the Virgin [NIMEV 2791] Beg. 'Queen of hevine, of helle eek emperesse'. *Verse*
 - e. **fol. 83r** Anonymous; *Versus leonini de senectute*. Beg. 'Cum juvenis crevi, ludens nunquam requievi'. *Verse (Latin)*
 - f. **fol. 84r** Benedict Burgh; 'Cato Major' [NIMEV 854] Beg. 'For why that God is inwardli the witte'. *Verse*
 - g. **fol. 111v** John Lydgate; 'Fifteen Os of Christ' [NIMEV 2394] Beg. 'O blissid Lord, my Lord, O Jesu Crist'. *Verse*
 - h. **fol. 117r** John Lydgate; 'Horse, Goose and Sheep' [NIMEV 658] Beg. 'Contraverseis, pleis and discordis'. *Verse*
 - i. **fol. 128v** John Lydgate; 'A Doctryne for Pestilence' + 'Dietary' [NIMEV 411, 824] Beg. 'Who wil be hool and keep hym fro sekenesse'. [Dietary: 'For helth of body couer for colde thyn hede']. *Verse*
 - j. **fol. 130r** John Lydgate; *Stans Puer ad Mensam* [NIMEV 2233] Beg. 'My deer child, first thisilf enable'. *Verse*
 - k. **fol. 131v** John Lydgate; 'Ballade on an Ale Seller' [NIMEV 2809] Beg. 'Remembering on the grete unstabilnesse'. *Verse*
 - l. **fol. 132r** John Lydgate; *Ballade per antiphrasim* [NIMEV 3823] Beg. 'Ynow your hood is but oo contenance'. *Verse*
 - m. **fol. 132v** John Lydgate; *Stella celi extirpauit* [NIMEV 2398] Beg. 'O blessid queen above the sterriid heuene'. *Verse*
 - n. **fol. 133r** John Lydgate, prayer to the Virgin Mary [NIMEV 2565] Beg. 'O swettest bawme of grettest excellence'. *Verse*
 - o. **fol. 134v** Anonymous; *Prayer by the Holy Name* [NIMEV 1703] Beg. 'Thesu for thy holy name / And for thy bytter Passioun'. *Verse*

- p. **fol. 135r** Anonymous; Hymn to the Virgin Mary [*NIMEV 3074*] *Beg.* 'Salve, with all obaysance to God in humblesse'. *Latin and English*; on a fly-leaf, in another hand. *Verse*
 - q. **fol. 136r** Anonymous; English medical receipts.
5. Collation:
 - a. i⁴, ii¹³, iii¹², iv¹² (wants 9, 10, 11 – these have been replaced by 4 paper folia with the missing text supplied by a Tudor hand), v-vii¹², viii⁶ (wants 5), ix⁶, x-xii¹², xiii⁸, xiv⁴ (wants 2 and 3 – cut out).
 6. Size of page:
 - a. 210 x 140 mm.
 7. Size of written space:
 - a. 140 x 80 mm.
 8. Layout:
 - a. Single columns.
 9. Frame:
 - a. Ruled lines, no remaining evidence of frames.
 10. Decoration:
 - a. fol. 1v: coat of arms – lion statant with seven wavy lines below. Long-haired head on top, wearing beret-style cap with a small cross on top.
 - b. fol. 2r: Four-line decorative initial in black pen and pencil, with pencil drawing of flowers in top margin.
 - c. fol. 5r: Highly elaborate 'U' (as first part of UUhan Phe-bus...) in pen with pencil leaves in complex curls around it. On top of the 'U' is a crown with 'magister' written below the circlet.
 11. Pagination:
 - a. Modern foliation in pencil.
 12. Catchwords:
 - a. Present on quires ii (fol. 17v), iii (29v), iv (42v), v (54v), vi (66v), vii (78v), ix (89v), xi (114v), xii (126v). All followed up.
 13. Signatures:
 - a. None visible.
 14. Table of contents:
 - a. 18th C. table of contents, on paper, now pasted down on inside front cover. Lists the 'Epistola', 'Lidgates Destruction of Thebes', a 'Brief Chronicle from the Conqueror to Harry the 6th' and then 'divers other Poems'.
 15. Secundo folio:
 - a. *pauperum homicium*

16. Indications of scribe/date:

- a. Wanley (1894): 15th C.
- b. Mooney *et al.* (2001: 280): late 15th C. or early 16th C.

17. Indication of owners:

- a. fol. 82: 'Iste liber pertinet ad me Gulielmum Robins, 1554.' N.B. What the cataloguer interprets as 'me' appears to be 'mr^o', and so is probably 'magistro'.
- b. fol. 134v: In messy 16th C. pen: 'huius libe (*sic*) stafford'

18. Annotations by later users:

- a. fols. 1r-4v: Nota marks (often simple x marks) in margins throughout *Epistola ad Reimundum*.
- b. fol. 6r: Altered lines in a Tudor secretary hand.
- c. fols. 15r ff. Similar extensive alteration of text.
- d. fol. 6v: '+' next to 'Danne John' in the text – interest in Lydgate? N.B. This symbol is very like that in Bodl. MS. Rawl. poet. 35 – could be marks of a much more recent owner.
- e. fol. 45v: Letter practice in top left corner, 'f's.
- f. fol. 84v: Clarification of words in distichs I. 4 and I. 5.
- g. fol. 89v: Letter practice, 'B'.
- h. fol. 90r: Dirty smudges, may indicate erasure.
- i. fol. 97r: Possible ownership signature, now erased.
- j. fol. 108r: Brown pencil scribbles, erased or faded.
- k. fol. 119v: Pen-trails.
- l. fol. 125r: Nota mark next to stanza of 'Horse, Goose and Sheep' beginning 'Synne first at pes whiche causethe most richesse / And richesse is the original of pride' – moral interest? Mark does not appear to be the same as any in *Distichs*.
- m. fol. 129r: Nota mark in *Dietary* next to stanza beginning 'Be clenly clad aftir thin estate'. Same system as that on fol. 125r.
- n. fol. 130v: Nota mark in *Stans Puer ad Mensam*, same as *Distichs* system ***. As there, in top corner, could apply to any/all of page.
- o. fol. 131v: In the margin of 'Ballade on an Ale-Seller': "Hic nota de illis que vendunt cervisiam in Cantuar."
- p. fol. 133: Top outer corner of folio torn out, taking large section of two stanzas with it.
- q. fol. 133v: Letter practice, 15th C. 'b', in pen and Tudor 'h' in pencil.
- r. fol. 134v: Pen-trials.

19. Distichs present:

- a. I. 1, 2, 3*, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11*, 12*, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22*, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34*, 35*, 36*, 37, 38*, 39, 40, XLVIII, XLIX
- b. II. P1-2, P3-4, P4-5, P6-7, P8-9, P10, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 27, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20*, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 12, LXXXVII, LXXXVIII, LXXXIX

- c. III. P1-2, 1, P3-4, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6**, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17***, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, CXVI, CXVII, CXVIII
- d. IV. P1-2, 1, 2, 3, 4***, 5, 6, 7***, 8, 9, 10***, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29***, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 30, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46***, 47, 48, 49

20. Notes

- a. Notes on *Distichs*:
 - i. Latin and English both in black, in same script, alternating, with blank line left at each transition from one language to the other.
 - ii. I. 35 has three nota marks against it – one at the Latin, one at the first line of English, and one at the sixth English line.
 - iii. II. 27 appears in place of II. 12, and II. 12 is delayed to the end of book II.
 - iv. The nota system *** always appears in the top left of a folio and so may refer to any/all stanzas on the page.
 - v. Explicit on fol. 111v names 'Magistrum Benedictum' as the author.
- b. This appears to be a collection of Lydgate material with a few additions from other authors. It is possible the original compiler made the same mistake as Macray, believing Burgh's work to be Lydgate's. Generally of a moral and improving tone, though not always didactic. Slightly puzzling combination of topics. Same production methods and very similar hand throughout, with the exception of the first and last quires. Pages are quite dirty, and there is quite a lot of annotation, especially in the *Siege of Thebes*, suggesting that the MS. was heavily used. The *Distichs* not only has various nota marks, but has quite dirty pages with some scribbling, which suggests that it was read repeatedly, possibly by children (although there is no definite evidence of this). The book gives the impression of being someone's personal possession rather than shared amongst an institution or household, given the specific annotation of the *Siege* (which seems mainly concerned with making minor corrections to lines – e.g. fol. 13r: 'And whan he sawh opportune space' has been lined through and '& whan þ^t he had found {illegible} space' inserted by Tudor hand in margin). These notes are in at least three hands, from Tudor to 18th C. They are very reminiscent of the hands leaving similarly copious notes in the history sections of CUL MS. Ee.IV.31.

21. Bibliography

- a. Macray (1878: 14-15): Catalogue entry.

2. Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Rawlinson poet. 32 (SC 14526)

1. Binding:
 - a. Appears medieval, board covered with parchment.
2. Material:
 - a. Mixture of paper and parchment quires.
 - b. Parchment quires: i, vi, vii, xvii (vi-vii *Fabula duorum mercatorum*, xvii *Process of Philosophers*)
3. Number of folios:
 - a. ii + 205 +i
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. **fol. 1v** Anonymous; Moral counsels [*NIMEV 461.8*] *Beg.* 'Be clenly clad'. *Verse*
 - b. **fol. 1v** Anonymous; Abuses of the age [*NIMEV 1820*] *Beg.* 'King conseilles / Bishop loreles'. *Verse*
 - c. **fol. 1v** Geoffrey Chaucer(?); 'Prophecy' [*NIMEV 3943*] *Beg.* 'Whenne feithe fayles in prestys sawes'. *Verse*
 - d. **fol. 3r** Benedict Burgh; 'Cato Major' [*NIMEV 854*] Imperfect. *Beg.* 'Si Deus est animus ... For why that God is inwardly the wite'. *Verse*
 - e. **fol. 30r** John Lydgate; *Stans Puer ad Mensam* [*NIMEV 2233*] *Beg.* 'Mi dere child first thi sylue enabill'. *Verse*
 - f. **fol. 31v** John Lydgate; complaint of Christ [*NIMEV 3845*] *Beg.* 'Upon a crosse naylid I was for the'. *Verse*
 - g. **fol. 32v** Anonymous; 'Erthe upon Erthe' (B version) [*NIMEV 3985*] *Beg.* 'Whanne lyfe is most louyd'. *Verse*
 - h. **fol. 35v** Anonymous; Virtues of the mass [*NIMEV 3573*] *Beg.* 'XXX vertewis schal haue he'. *Verse*
 - i. **fol. 38r** John Lydgate; *Fabula duorum mercatorum* [*NIMEV 1481*] Imperfect. *Beg.* 'In Egypt whilom as I reede and fynde'. *Verse*
 - j. **fol. 54r** Anonymous; Couplet [*NIMEV 1829.5*] 'Know well ore þou knyht to fast / Fore often rape rewythe at last'. *Verse*
 - k. **fol. 54v** Anonymous; 'Prouerbis of Wysdom' [*NIMEV 3502*] *Beg.* 'The wyse man sayd to his sonnes'. *Verse*
 - i. **fol. 54v** [*NIMEV 4034.6*] 'When þe game ys best / yt ys tyme to rest' (Couplet in 3502)
 - ii. **fol. 54v** 'A foles bolte / Ys sone yshote' [*NIMEV 34.8*] (Couplet in 3502)
 - iii. **fol. 55r** [*NIMEV 2000.5*] 'Love god and flee synne' (Two couplets in 3502)
 - l. **fol. 55r** Anonymous; Couplet [*NIMEV 3990*] 'When man hath what wyll is / Than shewyth he what he is'. *Verse*
 - m. **fol. 55r** Anonymous; Couplet [*NIMEV 4095*] 'Who of plente wyll take no hede'. *Verse*
 - n. **fol. 55r** Anonymous; Ten Commandments [*NIMEV 176*] *Beg.* 'All false goddis thou shalt forsak'. *Verse*

- o. **fol. 55r** Anonymous; Four couplets [*NIMEV 1400*] 'I wold lene but I ne dar'. *Verse*
- p. **fol. 55r** Anonymous; Ten quatrains [*NIMEV 1416*] 'Iff y lye bacbyte or stele / Iff y curse scorne or swere'. *Verse*
- q. **fol. 55r** Anonymous; Number rhymes; couplet [*NIMEV 1817*] 'Kepe well x & flee from sewyn / sspende well v & cum to hevyn'. *Verse*
- r. **fol. 55v** Anonymous; Kings of England from Brutus to Edward IV *Beg.* 'Here folowyth the tabyll of all the kyngs that euer raignid yn Englonde'. *Prose*
- s. **fol. 57r** Anonymous; prose *Brut* from Brutus to Edward IV's accession, A.D. 1461 [*Matheson 115, 160, 90*] *Beg.* 'Sum tyme in the noble lande of Surrey': with a break at A.D. 1066. *Prose*
- t. **fol. 169v** Anonymous; Fifteen Os of Christ [*NIMEV 2469*] *Beg.* 'Oo Ihesu Crist of euerlastyng swetnes'. *Verse*
- u. **fol. 172v** Anonymous; Couplet [*NIMEV 77*] 'A man without mercy mercy shall mysse'. *Verse*
- v. **fol. 173r** Anonymous; *The Libel of English Policy* The 'B' Text [*NIMEV 3491*] *Beg.* 'The trewe Prosses of Englysch Polecie'. *Verse*
- w. **fol. 193v** Blank
- x. **fol. 194r** Anonymous; 'A processe of philosophers,' *Beg.* 'Sedechias was the fryst phylyzophere'. *Prose*
- y. **fol. 204v** Anonymous; notes on 'the Age of the World,' and the dimensions of St. Paul's Cathedral at London. *Prose*
- z. **fol. 205r** Anonymous; Mnemonic verses [*NIMEV 3572*] *Beg.* 'XXXII teth that beþe full kene'. *Verse*

5. Collation:

- a. i², ii-iii⁸, iv¹² (wants 7), v-vii⁸, ix²⁰ (wants 1), x-xi²⁰, xii⁴ (wants a leaf), xiii²⁰ (19, 20 cut out), xiv²⁰ (1, 19, 20 cut out), xv²⁰ (19, 20 cut out), xvi²⁶ (wants 23), xvii¹²
- b. IH: 'tentative, from microfilm: 2 flyleaves; i-ii⁸; iii¹² (wants 1); iv-vi⁸; vii²⁰ (wants 1); viii²⁰; ix²³ (prob. 24 wants 1); x-xii¹⁸; xiii⁴; xiv²¹ (prob. 22 wants 1); xv¹²'

6. Size of page:

- a. 280 x 200 mm.

7. Size of written space:

- a. Varies between constituent sections.
- b. 175 x 115 mm in *Distichs*, 220 x 140 mm for most of *Brut*.

8. Layout:

- a. Varies between constituent sections – predominately single columns.
- b. Imagining History:
 - i. Single columns: fols. 2r-53v, 55v-204r; double columns: fols. 54r-55r
 - ii. Lines: **fols. 3r-37v**: approx. 27; **fols. 38r-53v**: 28; **fols. 54r-55r**: 42; **fols. 55v-56v**: 39; **fols. 57r-168r**: 33-35; **fols. 169v-172v**: 31-32; **fols. 173r-193r**: 30-33; **fols. 194r-204r**: 37-39.

9. Frame:

- a. IH: **fols. 3r-37v**: frames, prob. in ink; **fols. 38r-53v**: frames, poss. in lead; **fols. 54r-56v**: frames and columns, poss. in lead; **fols. 57r-168r**: frames, poss. in lead; **fols. 169v-172v, 194r-204r**: no ruling visible; **fols. 173r-193r**: frames, poss. in lead.

10. Decoration:

- a. Large decorative letters at the beginnings of texts or sections of texts.

11. Pagination:

- a. IH: 'Foliation: modern ink, top right corner; fols. 57-150 have also C15 foliation, running j- iijjxx xiiij.'

12. Catchwords:

- a. Present on fols. 10v, 18v, 29v, 37v, 53v, 72v, and 92v.
- b. Only 'sai you platly' on fol. 53v does not match following recto.

13. Signatures:

- a. IH: 'quires i-vi signed on leading edges a-f j-iiij (quire c is j-vj)'

14. Table of contents:

- a. On fol. 2r is a contents list, close to contemporary with MS. production, which has some items in red:
 - "Graunte Caton" (red)
 - "Stans puer ad mensam" (black)
 - "A prayer of the crosse" (red)
 - "when lyff is moste loved" (black)
 - "The XXX virtues of the masse" (red)
 - "The marchaunt of Baldok" (black)
 - "The proverbis of wisdome" (red)
 - "The olde corneclis and the newe" (black – a 17th/18th C hand has added "Brute" at the side)
 - "The .xv. oois" (black)
 - "The prologe of þ^e kepyng of the see" (black)
 - "A processe of philosophers" (black)
 - "The Age of the worlde" (black)

15. Secundo folio:

- a. Constans et leuis

16. Indications of scribe/date:

- a. Late 15th C., some parts of *Brut* must have been copied after Caxton printed *Chronicle of England* in 1480 (Matheson 1998: 276).
- b. IH: 8 or 9 scribes - **A**: fols. 3r-37v; **B**: fols. 38r-53v; **C**: fols. 55v-115v; **D**: fols. 116r-150v; **E**: fols. 151r-168r; **F**: fols. 169v-172v; **G**: fols. 173r-193r; **H**: fols. 194r-204r. **Note by RP**: it is possible that there is another changeover in the *Brut* not recorded by JO'R; there appears to

be a change of hand between fols. 68r and 68v, the second scribe continuing up to fol. 115.

- c. IH:
 - i. **A:** C15 Secretary with some Anglicana features: single-compartment 'a' and 'g', looped-ascender 'd', 'r'-shaped and '2'-shaped 'r', Secretary 'v' and 'w';
 - ii. **B:** C15 Secretary with Anglicana features: single-compartment 'a' and 'g', both looped-ascender and single-ascender 'd', both long 'r' and 'r'-shaped 'r', Anglicana 'v' and 'w';
 - iii. **C:** C15 Secretary with increasing use of Anglicana features as the text progresses: single-compartment 'a', both single and double-compartment 'g', both single and looped-ascender 'd', Secretary 'v' and 'w';
 - iv. **D:** C15 Anglicana: double-compartment 'a' and 'g', looped-ascender 'd', both long and '2'-shaped 'r', Anglicana 'w' and 'v'
 - v. **E:** C15 secretary: single-compartment 'a' and 'g', single-ascender 'd', Secretary 'v' and 'w'
 - vi. **F:** C15 Secretary: single-compartment 'a' and 'g', both looped and single-ascender 'd', Secretary 'v' and 'w'
 - vii. **G:** C15 Anglicana: double-compartment 'a', looped-ascender 'd', single-compartment 'g', both long and '2'-shaped 'r', Anglicana 'v' and 'w'
 - viii. **H:** C15 Secretary with Anglicana forms: C15 Secretary: single-compartment 'a' and 'g', looped and single-ascender 'd', long, '2' and 'r'-shaped 'r', Secretary and Anglicana 'v' and 'w'.
- d. fol. 29v: *Distichs* signed at end 'G.E.' and 'J.Th.'
- e. fol. 204r: 'Process of Philosophers' signed 'R T' (possibly the 'Rychard Turnowre' of the next fol.)

17. Indication of owners:

- a. On fol. 205 'Rychard Turnowre' (about A.D. 1500?).
- b. A note by E.U[mfreville], 25 Mar. 1750, about the book is on fol. i.

18. Annotations by later users:

- a. fol. 2v: Letter practice (mainly 'a's), no full words.
- b. IH: 'Running titles added to items 1-5 [fols. 3r-37v] by E. Umfreville in C18'.
- c. IH: 'front flyleaf (ir): pasted letter by 'J M & E. U.[mfreville]', dated 25 March 1750, concerning the contents of the book, expressing particular interest in the *Libel of English Policy*, and stating: 'the MS Acct of geneva is at yr service – but I never imagin'd geneva was so antient as the acct given of it.'; modern pressmark.'
- d. fol. 30r: letter practice of 'f' next to quire signature (which is not 'f' but 'd')
- e. fol. 41: Pen scribble, now smudged into illegibility.
- f. fol. 49r: Beginning of a title in a neater 15th/16th C. hand - 'Whi that'.
- g. fol. 53v: Words in bottom right corner, now erased.
- h. fol. 61v: 'de edificacione ciuitatis london'.
- i. fol. 63v: 'de edificacione ciuitatis heboraci'.

- j. fol. 65r: Another note on the *Brut*.
- k. fol. 67v: Another note – ‘de corona anglie & de priuilegia ecclesie’.
- l. fol. 75r: Another note – ‘de edificacione colchestre’.
- m. fol. 77r: Another note, illegible.
- n. fol. 77v: Another.
- o. fol. 80v: Another noting the foundation of ‘dongcastre’.
- p. fol. 89v: In another hand (possibly scribal) ‘Nota propheciam merlin ad arthurum’.
- q. fol. 116r: Another note in main note hand, illegible.
- r. More notes throughout this text, still in Latin, most with the edges trimmed off.
- s. fol. 169v: ‘certain praiers called the 15 oos’ in Tudor secretary hand, probably the same one as earlier.
- t. fol. 202r: Messy writing practice attempt to copy ‘Some asked’ from final line of text on this page.

19. Distichs Present:

- a. I. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, XLVIII, XLIX
- b. II. P1-2, P3-4, P4-5, P6-7, P8-9, P10, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 27, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 12, LXXXVII, LXXXVIII, LXXXIX
- c. III. P1-2, 1, P3-4, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, CXVI, CXVII, CXVIII, extra four lines (see notes)
- d. IV. P1-2, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 30, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49

20. Notes

- a. IH believes this to be a MS. composed of booklets: ‘items 1-5, fols. 3-37 [*Cato* – ‘xxx virtues of the mass’]; item 6, fols. 38-53 [*Fabula duorum mercatorum*]; items 7-9, fols. 54-168 [*Proverbs of Wisdom* – *Brut*]; item 10, fols. 169-172 [‘The xv Oois’]; item 11, fols. 173-193 [*Libel of English Policy*]; item 12, fols. 194-205 [‘Process of Philosophers’]. The original section in which the *Distichs* was located appears to have been specifically didactic/concerned with morality and religion.’
- b. Matheson (1998) splits the *Brut* in to three sections:
 - 1. fols. 57r-115v: EV-1419, Group B (Item 115)
 - 2. fols. 116r-151r: PV-1422, Group A (Item 160)
 - 3. fols. 151r-168r: CV-1461 (Item 90)
 The last of these is copied from Caxton’s 1480 *The Chronicles of England*, probably written by Caxton himself, and so means that this volume cannot have been compiled in to its present state before this printing.
- c. Half of fol. 3 is missing (the first folio of the *Distichs*), although the outside edge of this scrap is still pricked for ruling.
- d. Notes on *Distichs*:

- i. fols. 5 and 6 appear to have switched order presumably as a mistake in transcription.
 - ii. l.30 is missing.
 - iii. ll. 12 is delayed to end of book II and then (accidentally?) given red underlining with the rest of the envoy to this book.
 - iv. Latin on fol. 13r only is in black with red underlining. fol. 13v returns to normal.
 - v. 'An honest person' is written by the rubricator next to the Latin for distich III.4 at fol. 17v.
 - vi. Extra four lines on book III envoy:
 - 'In Rome vij. wise maistris ther were
 - whiche the Emperour is sonne dide lere
 - Oon of them was Caton y wisse
 - By whom many a child y lerid is'
 - vii. Spaces left for large decorated initials at the beginnings of each book, never completed.
 - viii. Note at end of *Distichs*: 'Explicit hic Cato, dictis (?) castigamina nato. | Isto Cato orator vnus vij prudencium Rome | Cato et Plato et *cetera*. | Detur pro penna scriptori pulcra pii' It is signed 'G.E.' by the scribe, and 'J. p.' by the rubricator (though that thorn might be a wynn).
- e. From Matheson (1998: 196-197): 'The *Brut* text is written in a number of hands, who were clearly supervised carefully in the production of the composite text. Medieval foliation by one of the scribes in the top right corner of the rectos of the leaves shows that the *Brut* text was originally written as a separate text and that it was originally conceived of as a whole to the end of the continuation to 1422. [NP] The beginning of the EV text occurs on medieval fol. "j" (modern fol. 57). The last medieval folio, numbered "iiij^{xx} xiiij" (modern fol. 150), contains on its verso text from near the end of the 1422 continuation, which is finished by a new hand on fol. 151. The new hand then proceeds with a CV-1461 continuation that was probably not part of the original plan.'
- f. The whole MS. gives the impression of being a deliberate composition, although there are definitely smaller booklets within it, and the dirtiness of the second section of the *Brut* indicates that at least some of them stayed separate for part of their lifetime. The MS. has, overall, been well cared-for, and there is very little evidence of scribbling on it. The note-taker active throughout the *Brut* did not have an especially neat hand, but isn't particularly messy either. A fairly practical volume, with some minor decoration of some of the texts so that they look attractive but not excessively elaborate. Very difficult to tell anything about the original owner, although if the Tudor note hand is theirs, they were apparently interested in history, and particularly the foundations of towns and nations.

21. Bibliography:

- a. 'Imagining History' http://www.qub.ac.uk/imagining-history/resources/wiki/index.php/Bodleian_Library_MS.%2C_Rawlin

son Poet. 32 [last accessed 6th July 2012]: Cataloguing of MS. as part of project examining prose *Brut*.

- b. Madan (1895: Vol. III): Catalogue entry.
- c. Matheson (1985: 595-596): Identifies the *Brut* in this MS. as probably copied from a Caxton printing.
- d. Matheson (1998: 162-163; 195-197; 275-276): Description of *Brut* excerpts as present in this MS.

3. Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Rawlinson poet. 35 (SC 14529)

1. Binding:
 - a. 18th/19th C.? Red marbled effect. Falling apart now.
2. Material:
 - a. Paper
3. Number of folios:
 - a. iv + 18 + iii
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. **fol. 1r** Benedict Burgh; 'Cato Major' [*NIMEV 854*] Imperfect. *Beg.* 'With mere estate'. *Verse*
 - b. **fol. 17v** John Lydgate; 'Dietary' [*NIMEV 824*] *Beg.* '[F]or helth of body covoure from colde thi hede'. *Verse*
5. Collation:
 - a. i-ii⁸, iii² (state of last quire is uncertain – at least one folio has been cut out, front and back flyleaves do not appear to be same paper stock and are presumably later.)
6. Size of page:
 - a. 280 x 200 mm.
7. Size of written space:
 - a. 200 x 140 mm.
8. Layout:
 - a. One column per page, 30 lines per page.
9. Frame:
 - a. Ruled in brown pencil, both frame and lines.
10. Decoration:
 - a. Spaces have been left for decorative initials at the beginning of new books of the *Distichs*, but never used.
11. Pagination:
 - a. Later foliation added, possibly 19th C. – ink for these has soaked into paper leaving it badly blotted.
12. Catchwords:
 - a. Present on quire i (fol. 8v), followed up on next recto.
13. Signatures:
 - a. Quire i (fols. 1r-4r): bj-iiij (in red pen like rubricated Latin); quire ii (fols. 9r-12r): cj-iiij (in pencil).

14. Table of contents:
- a. Not present.
15. Secundo folio:
- a. Be ware of envie
16. Indications of scribe/date:
- a. Madan dates to late 15th C.
17. Indication of owners:
- a. fol. 1r: two possible names, difficult to read. Appear to begin with 'j' – 'Juvanson'?
18. Annotations by later users:
- a. There are at least three, quite probably four systems of nota marks present in the *Distichs*.
 - b. Lydgate's *Dietary* appears to have some lines marked as important too, although the marks are not the same and some may in fact be letter practice! The lines marked are:
 - i. And if so be that lechesse do the faile
 - ii. Meke in trouth glad in pouerte
 - iii. To euery tale take thou no credence
 - iv. Hate in hert wordes that ben double
 - v. Be clenly clad like thine astate
 - vi. ffirst at morowe and touard bed at eue
 - vii. Suffre no surfete in thi house be ny₃ht
 - viii. After mete make nat to longe slepe
 - ix. Dyne nat a morowe a for thi appetite
 - x. Thus in two thinges stondeth al þe welthe
 - c. fol 1r: Some 16th/17th C. mathematics in margin (i.e. quick multiplications of 13 x 13 and 14 x 14).
 - d. fol. 1r: A few words in an Elizabethan secretary hand, illegible apart from what may be 'servabit odorenis'. This appears to follow some English, and may be a translation of it. Also, 'Alas' upside-down in same hand.
19. Distichs present:
- a. II. 6, 7*, 8*, 9*, 10*, 11**, 27, 13*, 14***, 15*/**, 16*, 17*, 18*/***, 19, 20*, 21*, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26*/***, 27, 28*, 29, 30, 31, 12, LXXXVII, LXXXVIII, LXXXIX
 - b. III. P1-2, 1, P3-4, 2*/***, 3*, 4*, 5, 6*, 7*, 8*, 9*, 10*, 11*, 12, 13, 14*, 15, 16*, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21*, 22, 23, 24, CXVI, CXVII, CXVIII
 - c. IV. P1-2, 1, 2*, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9**, 10, 11, 12**, 13, 14, 15, 16*, 17*, 18, 19*, 20, 21*, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34*/**, 35*, 30, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49

20. Notes:

- a. Smith (1966) identifies this as part of a much larger MS., which was split into smaller sections for sale by Thomas Rawlinson in the early 18th C. The other sections are now:
 - i. Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Rawlinson poet. 168 (*Hoccleve's Regiment of Princes*)
 - ii. Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Rawlinson D. 82 (*Lydgate's Siege of Thebes, Siege of Troy*, and an extract from Gower's *Confessio Amantis*)
 - iii. Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Douce 324 (romance of Gawain and Galeron)
 - iv. Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Rawlinson poet. 168
 - v. Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Rawlinson D. 99 (*Mandeville's Travels*)
 - vi. Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Rawlinson poet. 143 (*Dame Juliana Berners, Book of Hunting*)
 - vii. Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Rawlinson D. 913 ('a treatise for the instruction of parishioners')
- b. Notes on *Distichs*:
 - i. Latin in red, Middle English in black, alternating.
 - ii. Again Madan labels the *Distichs* as being by Lydgate.
 - iii. II. 27 appears twice, the first time replacing II. 12 which is delayed until the end of book II.
- c. Both texts have blank space at their conclusions (fols. 17r; 18v) – no attempt to copy smaller texts to fill this space, no addition of lines or other scribbles of any kind other than on first page.

21. Bibliography:

- a. Madan (1895, Vol. III): Catalogue entry.
- b. Seymour (1974: 279-280): Description of another section of the original MS. volume.
- c. Smith (1966): Reconstruction of original MS. volume.

4. Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Eng. poet. e. 15 (SC 32401)

1. Binding:
 - a. Light brown leather binding, 18th/19th C.? Gilt ruled decoration.
2. Material:
 - a. Parchment; first two fols. of poorer quality.
3. Number of folios:
 - a. i + 34 + ii
 - b. Modern pencil foliation counts modern paper flyleaves. For ease of reference, this foliation has been used in the rest of this entry when referring to folios in the volume.
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. fol. 3r: Anonymous; 16th cent. Latin proverbs. *Beg.* 'Dum moritur diues hoc currunt ei vnde quesiuus / Dum moritur pauper vix vnus ad esse videtur'. *Verse (Latin)*
 - b. **fol. 5r** Benedict Burgh; *Parvus Cato [NIMEV 3955]* *Beg.* 'When I aduerte in my remembraunce'. *Verse*
 - c. **fol. 6v** Benedict Burgh; 'Cato Major' *[NIMEV 854]* *Beg.* 'For thi that God is inwardly the Wyt'. *Verse*
5. Collation:
 - a. i², ii-v⁸
6. Size of page:
 - a. 180 x 130 mm.
7. Size of written space:
 - a. 135 x 80 mm.
8. Layout:
 - a. Single columns.
9. Frame:
 - a. Pricked, then ruled in faded brown pencil, double lines for top and bottom margins, single lines left and right.
10. Decoration:
 - a. fols. 5r and 6v: Illuminated capitals (for beginning of *Parvus Cato*, then beginning of 'Cato Major').
11. Pagination:
 - a. Modern, 19th C. (?) pagination. Includes front and back flyleaves in pagination.

12. Catchwords:

- a. Present on quires ii (fol. 10v), iii (18v) and iii (26v). All followed up on next recto.

13. Signatures:

- a. quire ii (fols. 7r-8r): a iij; aiiij
- b. quire iii (fols. 14r-16r): [faded]; [faded]; biiij
- c. quire iv (fols. 21r-24r): cj; {cij – trimmed}; ciiij; ciiiij
- d. quire v (fols. 29r-31r): d{trimmed}; d ij; d iij

14. Table of contents:

- a. Not present.

15. Secundo folio:

- a. benefacito . maledicus ne esto

16. Indications of scribe/date:

- a. Mooney (2011: 207): Stephen Dodesham's bastard anglicana. Includes clear Dodesham traits such as hyphens to show where a word has been split across two lines, and swirls to fill space at the ends of lines.

17. Indication of owners:

- a. Madan & Craster (1924): 'The gift of Alexander Woodford to "W^m Greenwall, 1843": "[James] Raine, York, Jan. 1862." Bought in Nov. 1897.'

18. Annotations by later users:

- a. fol. 7v, boxed at top of page (later trimmed so top half of especially earlier letters are missing): '{G}audeo xⁱ salutis fur (tur?) rationem habeas'

19. Distichs present:

- a. Complete *Parvus Cato* with full Latin and English
- b. I. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25*, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36*, 37*, 38, 39*, 40
- c. II. P1-2*, P3-4, P4-5, P6-7, P8-9, P10, 1, 2, 3*, 4*, 5, 6*, 7*, 8*, 9, 10*, 11*, 12*, 13, 14*, 15*, 16*, 17, 18*, 19*, 20, 21*, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26*, 27, 28*, 29*, 30*, 31*, XLVIII, XLIX, LXXXVII, LXXXVIII, LXXXIX
- d. III. P1-2, 1, P 3-4, 2*, 3*, 4*, 5*, 6*, 7*, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24
- e. IV. P1-2, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 30, 36, 37, 38**, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, CXVI, CXVII, CXVIII

20. Notes

- a. Madan & Craster (1924): 'This MS. is not recorded in Max Förster's edition, Herrig's *Archiv f. neu. Sprachen*, cxv, p. 299.'
- b. The Latin maxims are in a different hand and on stiffer, poorer quality parchment.

- c. The last few pages (fols. 31 – end) are stained, and from fol. 33 on, are missing their outer bottom corners. How this came about is not clear, and the volume is, in general, in good condition, though fol. 36v is quite dirty, which may mean it was unbound for a while. There is no real indication that this was ever intended to be part of a larger volume – it appears self-contained apart from the bifolium added to the beginning.
- d. Notes on *Distichs*:
 - i. Latin of II. P10 and II.1 combined, so that the two English stanzas are also run together
 - ii. Envoy to book I (in Caxton) after book II. Book II envoy broken down in to four-line chunks with alternating red/blue paraph marks at the beginning of each chunk (fols. 21r-v)
 - iii. The Latin lines of III.2 have been put in the wrong order (fol. 22r) and Dodesham has corrected this by putting a ‘b’ next to the top line and an ‘a’ next to the bottom.
 - iv. Preface to book IV given with four lines of Latin for one stanza of English.
 - v. Nota marks throughout. These pencil marks are, however, quite similar to those in Rawl. poet. 35 and so may be a later owner.

21. Bibliography

- a. Madan & Craster (1924): Catalogue entry.

5. Cambridge, University Library MS. Ee. IV. 31 (1048)

1. Binding:
 - a. Modern – 18th/19th C.?
2. Material:
 - a. Paper and (mainly) parchment.
 - b. Parchment usually inner and outer bifolia of each quire. Folios are arranged so that there is an outer parchment leaf, two paper leaves, an inner parchment bifolium, two paper leaves, then an outer parchment leaf.
 - c. Parchment in final text is of a noticeably lower quality than other booklets.
3. Number of folios:
 - a. 272
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. **fol. 1r** Anonymous; 'The Boke of Astronomy' (catalogue title). Imperfect at beginning. *Beg.* 'Here begynneth the boke of astroni[...] made of the wysyst filosoferys'. *Prose.*
 - b. **fol. 3r** Anonymous; *The Book of Destynary* or *Destynary of the Twelve Signs by their Course*. *Beg.* 'Now it is to declare and to determine of the xij signes and of her kynden'. *Prose*
 - c. **fol. 7r** Benedict Burgh; *Parvus Cato* [*NIMEV 3955*] *Beg.* '[W]henne I aduertice in my remembraunce / And see how fele folke erryn greuously'. *Verse*
 - d. **fol. 7v** Benedict Burgh; 'Cato Major' [*NIMEV 854*] *Beg.* 'For thi that god is inwardli the witte'. *Verse*
 - e. **fol. 25r** Anonymous; Translation of Martinus Polonus *Chronicon pontificum et imperatorum* (up to John XXI - i.e. to 1276). *Beg.* 'Jhu Crist was i-bore in the two and fourty yeer of Octouyan, that was the first emperour of Rome' *Prose.*
 - f. **fol. 53r** Robert of Gloucester, *Chronicle* [*NIMEV 727*] *Beg.* 'Ingland is ryght good, I wene hyt ys lond best / In one ende hyt ys ysette of the worlde all in the west'. *Verse*
 - g. **fol. 203r** Anonymous; prose *Brut* [*Matheson 77*] commencing with Edward I and breaking off at the accession of Henry VI. (1422). *Beg.* 'How after Kyng Henre regnyd hys sone Edward the worthiest knight of alle the worlde and of Kyng Alisaundyr of Scotland.' *Prose*
 - i. **fol. 207r** 'What wenes kynge Edward with his longe shankes' Lines in the *Brut* on Edward I (usually written as prose). [*NIMEV 3918.5*]
 - ii. **fol. 207v** 'These scaterande scottes / hold I for sottes' Song of victory over the Scots in 1296 [*NIMEV 3558.5*] (included within Prose *Brut*).
 - iii. **fol. 215r** 'Maydenes of Engelande sare may ye morne' Song said to have been sung by the Scots after the defeat of the

English at Bannockburn [*NIMEV 2039.3*] (included within
Prose Brut).

5. Collation:
 - a. Adapted from modern back pastedown: i⁶, ii¹⁰, iii⁸, iv¹⁰, v¹⁰ (wants 4), vi⁸, vii-xxiv⁸, xxv⁶ (wants 5, 6), xxvi-xxxiv⁸, xxxv² '(38, 201, 202, and all after 276 lost, in addition to a number of unspecified leaves after 274 and 275'
6. Size of page:
 - a. 280 x 190 mm.
7. Size of written space:
 - a. Varies. Approx. 230 x 140 mm.
8. Layout:
 - a. Single columns throughout.
9. Frame:
 - a. Pricked and ruled, though this has generally either been trimmed or faded.
10. Decoration:
 - a. Generally only in rubricator's red. Sections have large initial letters, some decorative red borders between sections of text. *Distichs* has not been rubricated at all, though space has been left for two-line initial letters which have never been provided.
 - b. fol. 134v: Decorative red stalk extending down the page from the 'S' at 'Seynt Edmonde'.
 - c. fol. 203r ff. (i.e. throughout *Prose Brut*): Red paraph marks and decorative curls at foot of page. Space has been left for large initials at beginnings of sections, but these have not been inserted. On fol. 208v a couple are inexpertly provided in black pen.
11. Pagination:
 - a. Modern pencil foliation in bottom right corner, slightly older pencil foliation in top right corner.
12. Catchwords:
 - a. Present on quires ii (fol. 16v), iv (fols. 26v, 27r, 27v, 28v, 32v), v (fols. 35r, 35v, 36v, 39r, 39v, 40r, 42r, 43v), vi (fols. 44r, 44v). All followed up.
 - b. These occur close together apparently to help make sure the parchment folios are correctly arranged with the paper folios.
13. Signatures:
 - a. Present on:
 - i. quire iii: (fol. 17r): 'b 1'; (fol. 21r): '+'

- ii. quire iv: (fol. 25r): '{c} 1' ('3' also written); (fol. 28r): '4'; (fol. 30r): '+'
- iii. quire v: (fol. 35r): 'b 1'; (fol. 40r): '+'
- iv. quire vi: (fol. 45r): 'c 1' ('5' also written below this)

14. Table of contents:

- a. Not present.

15. Secundo folio:

- a. planattys he schall

16. Indications of scribe/date:

- a. All texts in late 15th C. hand, last text possibly slightly later, though use of materials (i.e. alternation between paper and parchment) follows same pattern as others.

17. Indication of owners:

- a. Hardwicke *et al.* (1857): 'Among other traces of ownership are the following: "Will: Cliffe, his booke," "Hughe Cooke;" cf. also fol. 5[1]a'.
- b. fol. 1r: Name, possibly 'Clarke', though very difficult to read.
- c. fol. 3r: 'Will. Cliffe | his booke'
- d. fol. 4r: William Cliffe's signature again, but badly faded.
- e. fol. 7r: leaf torn, begins 'Rog. Jo [...]'
- f. fol. 13v: another difficult to read Tudor signature – '{?}' that Jhon boulders'; possibly another at the foot of the page 'J Reser'.
- g. fol. 50v: Large letters 'H' and 'C', with 'Hugh' and 'Cooke' written within them.
- h. fol. 51r: 'Hughe Cooke is the true owner of this booke Record of good man Nobodys and others' Someone has added in a slightly different hand 'a nebulo' between the 'is' and 'the' in the first line, and 'nebulo' again in front of the word 'Nobodys' in the last line. Perhaps children playfully mocking each other, though it's hard to tell if they're exactly contemporary.
- i. fol. 157r: Walter Eyre (see 'Annotations')

18. Annotations by later users:

- a. There is an enormous amount of annotation and scribbling throughout this MS. in a variety of hands covering a long period of time. It would be too time consuming to note all of them. There seem to be many which are finding aids, marking in the margins the major points in the text. Those marks which aren't marginal notes are mainly letter practice, and this is generally restricted to one (or possibly two) 16th C. hands. It was presumably owned by a private individual whose children also used it, although it is not impossible that the scribbles are in the same hand as some of the notes.
- b. fol. 1r: Pen trials in the bottom margin.
- c. fol. 10r: Pen trials and letter practice, including copying the word 'putato' in a different, spiky 15th C. hand.
- d. fol. 10v: More writing, now smudged.

- e. fol. 12r: Writing practice, symbols for 'and'.
- f. fol. 13v: 'wall' written – not clear why.
- g. fol. 19v: Letter practice (Tudor/Elizabethan).
- h. fol. 23v: Letter practice.
- i. fol. 24v: Blank page covered in scribbles, mostly letter practice in a couple of 15th/16th C. hands. Only full words are 'This is my hand and this is {pi}n'.
- j. fol. 25v: First of several notes on contents of text: 'Cornelius .B. of Rome interrers the bones of Peter and Paul in Rome'. Elizabethan hand.
- k. fol. 26r: More notes, including 'Claudius Cesars feeble memory'. There are many more notes throughout this text in at least three hands, ranging from late 15th C. to early 17th.
- l. fol. 29r: Some writing, later erased.
- m. fol. 30v: Letter practice.
- n. fol. 51r: Much scribbling on this page, but a small neat Tudor secretary hand has entered some figures in the top right corner; lots of letter practice of letters 's', 'y' and 'g', written so that each gradually morphs into the next. This and the intricate doodle on the previous page (fol. 50v) indicate that children have had the chance to scribble on this MS.
- o. fol. 52r: Very neat 18th C. hand: 'This is found to be the Work, which by M^r Selden is ascribed to **Robert of Gloucester**, who wrote about the time of king **Edward the first**. See Lists of Honor pag. 498. edit. 1672.'
- p. fol. 67r: Pen scribbles – mainly vertical lines, with a couple of loops that could be letters.
- q. fol. 78r: Slightly later Tudor/Elizabethan hand 'Christ crucified in the Emperour Claudius days But false'.
- r. fol. 79r: Writing practice – 'Jhs'.
- s. fol. 87r: Writing practice.
- t. fol. 94r ff.: Late 17th/early 18th C. hand makes notes on Arthurian 'history'. The earlier Tudor hand has not annotated this section.
- u. fol. 98r: Note in a third, late 15th/early 16th C. hand, largely erased.
- v. fol. 102v: Tudor-hand notes begin again. Suggests lack of interest in section concerning Merlin.
- w. fol. 105v: Note in 3rd hand again 'Arthur made kinge at 15 yers.' Possibly interested in those who became kings at a young age?
- x. fol. 107r: Elizabethan hand: 'Be yt knowe vnto all men'. This is next to a section recounting a speech made before a battle (apparently between king Arthur and the Saxons), insisting that it is a glorious and pious thing to die in battle. Annotation of the text seems to stop at this point.
- y. fol. 116r: More scribbles, this time in the form of a rectangle with lines and squiggles inside.
- z. fol. 120r: More letter practice of 'y' and 'r'.
- aa. fol. 120v ff.: All hands (except 18th C. hand) begin annotating again, though this later tails off again.
- bb. fol. 144r: fleur de lis and manicule next to passage about Edward's death – Tudor hand notes 'Saint edwa{rd} slayn'.
- cc. fol. 148r: 'Edmunde ironside kinge of england'.

- dd. The manicules become a feature of the notes from here onwards, of both the 15th C. and Tudor hands (which may be slightly different scripts employed by the same annotator).
- ee. fol. 156v: 'Nota bene' (15th C.) next to passage about the holiness of Saint Edward.
- ff. fol. 157r: Receipt, 'Be yt knowen vnto all men by thes present that I Water Eyre of Gromarss in the county of oxon the somme of iij^l iiij^s vij^d quod Water {signature illegible}'
- gg. fol. 173v: 'Nota bene' next to a passage about William Rufus hearing of his father's death.
- hh. fol. 178r: Pen trials.
- ii. fol. 179v: 'Nota' next to passage about the conquering of a Saracen army at Antioch.
- jj. fol. 180r: Later Tudor 'nota bene' with three-leafed clover mark (points instead of leaves) next to complaint that after the siege of Antioch, the Christians indulged in 'synne of lecherye'.
- kk. fol. 272v: 'remember thy maker' at bottom of page in Elizabethan hand.

19. Distichs present:

- a. All of *Parvus Cato* present (Latin and English) except envoy stanza.
- b. I. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40
- c. II. P 1-2, P 3, P 4-5, P 6-7, P 8-9, P 10, 1 (2nd Latin line missing), 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31
- d. III. P 1-2, 1, P 3-4, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24
- e. IV. P 1-2, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 30, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49

20. Notes

- a. On first modern flyleaf: 'The text of Robert of Gloucester in this volume is the same as that in the Trinity College MS R.4.26 [Henry Bradshaw]'
- b. Matheson (1998: 137) believes the *Brut* and Robert of Gloucester's chronicle were originally at the beginning of a volume (though he doesn't say whether he believes this was a separate volume, or if the present texts were originally bound in a different order), with the current fol. 51 as the first page.
- c. The MS. may have been composed of separate booklets – each text seems to have its quires labelled separately, and fols. 50r-51v are blank at the end of a booklet after the text finishes. The first and last folios of texts are fairly dirty (e.g. fol. 52) suggesting they may have been unbound for a while.
- d. Notes on *Distichs*:
 - i. *Distichs* written all in black ink. Space has been left for large initials, but these have not been inserted. The Latin is given

between the stanzas of English, apart from that for the monostichs, which is given in a continuous list down the right-hand margin of fols. 7r and 7v. Hardwick *et al.* assume the translator to have been Lydgate.

- ii. None of the envoy stanzas are present.
- e. Kennedy (1989: 2619) notes that 'Robert of Gloucester's' *Chronicle's* 'prevailing interest is in lay rather than ecclesiastical matters [...] none of the twelve manuscripts known to the editor, Wright, originated in monastic libraries'. Goes on to argue that this does not mean the author was a layman.
- f. Matheson (1998: 137) classifies the *Brut* here as 'The Common Version to 1430'.

21. Bibliography:

- a. Connolly (2009: 115-117): *Index of Middle English Prose* cataloguing.
- b. Hardwick *et al.* (1857): Catalogue entry.
- c. Kennedy (1989: 2617-2621): Discussion of metrical chronicle of Robert of Gloucester.
- d. Matheson (1998: 137): Discussion of prose *Brut* as contained in this MS.

**6. Cambridge, University Library MS. Ff. 1. 6. (1139)
The 'Findern' Manuscript**

1. Binding:
 - a. Modern; back pastedown gives date as 1977.
2. Material:
 - a. Paper
3. Number of folios:
 - a. 159
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - i. **fol. 3r** John Gower; *Confessio Amantis* (extracts) [*NIMEV 2662*] *Beg.* 'Off armenye y rede þus'. *Verse*
 - ii. **fol. 15r** Geoffrey Chaucer; 'The Complaynt unto Pite' [*NIMEV 2756*] *Beg.* '[P]itee that I haue sogthe so yore ago'. *Verse*
 - iii. **fol. 17r** Anonymous; 'A Lover's Plaint' (B&O title) [*NIMEV 402*] *Beg.* 'As ofte as syghes ben in herte trewe'. *Verse*
 - iv. **fol. 19r** Anonymous; 'A Complaint for Lack of Sight' (B&O title) [*NIMEV 828*] *Beg.* 'For lac of sight grete cause I haue to pleyne'. *Verse*
 - v. **fol. 20r** Anonymous; 'A Lover's Plaint' (B&O title) [*NIMEV 1331*] *Beg.* 'I may woll sygh for greuouys my payne'. *Verse*
 - vi. **fol. 20v** Anonymous; 'Without Variance' (B&O title) [*NIMEV 4059*] *Beg.* 'Where y haue chosyn stedefast woll y be'. *Verse*
 - vii. **fol. 22r** John Clanvowe; *The Book of Cupid, or The Cuckoo and the Nightingale* [*NIMEV 3361*] *Beg.* 'The god of loue A benedicite'. *Verse*
 - viii. **fol. 28v** Anonymous; 'The Lover Wishes His Lady Recovery' (B&O title) [*NIMEV 383*] *Beg.* 'As in yow resstyth my loy and comfort'. *Verse*
 - ix. **fol. 29r** Geoffrey Chaucer; *Parlement of Foules* [*NIMEV 3412*] *Beg.* 'The lyfe so schorte the craft so long to lerne'. *Verse*
 - x. **fol. 45r** John Gower; *Confessio Amantis* (extract) [*NIMEV 2662*] *Beg.* 'A king whilom was {y}ong and wys'. *Verse*
 - xi. **fol. 51r** Anonymous; *The Parliament of Love* [*NIMEV 2383*] *Beg.* 'What so euyr I syng or sey'. *Verse*
 - xii. **fol. 53v** Anonymous; 'The Rule of Fortune' (B&O title) [*NIMEV 3948*] *Beg.* 'When Fortune list yewe here assent'. *Verse*
 - xiii. **fol. 53v** Anonymous; A common gnomie tag (B&O description) [*NIMEV 2742*] *Beg.* 'Pees maketh plente'. *Verse*
 - xiv. **fol. 56r** Anonymous; *Women's poem on love* [*NIMEV 3917*] *Beg.* 'What so men seyn / Love is no peyn'. *Verse*
 - xv. **fol. 56v** Anonymous; 'The Seven Deadly Sins' (B&O title) [*NIMEV 373*] *Beg.* 'As I walkyd apon a day / To take the eyre of fylde and flouer'. *Verse*

- xvi. **fol. 59r** Geoffrey Chaucer, 'Complaynt to his Purse' [*NIMEV 3787*] *Beg.* 'To yow my purs and to non othir wyght'. *Verse*
- xvii. **fol. 61r** Geoffrey Chaucer, *Anelida and Arcite* (complaint of Aneldia extract) [*NIMEV 3670*] *Beg.* '[S]o thirlyd with þe poynt of Remembraunce'. *Verse*
- xviii. **fol. 64r** Geoffrey Chaucer, *Legend of Good Women* ('Thisbe' only) [*NIMEV 100*] *Beg.* 'At babilone whilom fil it þus'. *Verse*
- xix. **fol. 68r** Geoffrey Chaucer, 'Complaint of Venus' [*NIMEV 3542*] *Beg.* 'There nys so high comfort to my plesaunce'. *Verse*
- xx. **fol. 69v** Anonymous; 'A Love Song' (B&O title) [*NIMEV 2279*] *Beg.* 'My woo full hert thus clad in payn'. *Verse*
- xxi. **fol. 71r** Thomas Hoccleve, *Letter of Cupid* [*NIMEV 666*] Imperfect. *Beg.* 'Cupido vnto whos commaundement'. *Verse*
- xxii. **fol. 81r** John Gower; *Confessio Amantis* (extract) [*NIMEV 2662*] *Beg.* 'I rede þat þou do right so'. *Verse*
- xxiii. **fol. 96r** Anonymous; *Sir Degrevant* [*NIMEV 1953*] *Beg.* 'Lord gode in trynite / Yeff home hevene for to se'. *Verse*
1. **fol. 109v** Blessing on good hosts [*NIMEV 908.4*] 'Gyff hem heuen forto see'
- xxiv. **fol. 110r** Anonymous; prose *Brut* (excerpt) [*Matheson 188*] *Beg.* 'Brute com after þe making of þe world into þys londe of Albyoun'. *Prose*
- xxv. **fol. 117r** Sir Richard Roos, *La Belle Dame sans Mercy*, translated from Alain Chartier [*NIMEV 1086*] *Beg.* 'Halfe in a dreame not fully well awaked'. *Verse*
- xxvi. **fol. 135r** Anonymous; Love poem [*NIMEV 3878*] *Beg.* 'Welcome be ye my souereine'. *Verse*
- xxvii. **fol. 136v** Anonymous; Amorous carol [*NIMEV 3179*] *Beg.* 'Some tyme y loued as ye may see'. *Verse*
- xxviii. **fol. 137r** Anonymous; 'Desire to Serve His Mistress' (B&O title) [*NIMEV 3125*] *Beg.* 'Sith fortune hath me set thus in this wyse'. *Verse*
- xxix. **fol. 137v** Anonymous; Pledge of loyalty to mistress [*NIMEV 2381*] *Beg.* 'Now wold I fayne sum myrthis make'. *Verse*
- xxx. **fol. 137v** Anonymous; 'A Lover's Distress' [*NIMEV 139*] *Beg.* 'Alas alas and alas why / hath fortune done so cruwelly'. *Verse*
- xxxi. **fol. 138v** Anonymous; 'The Vicissitudes of Love' (B&O title) [*NIMEV 159*] *Beg.* 'Alas what planet was y born vndir'. *Verse*
- xxxii. **fol. 138v** Anonymous; 'A Lover's Plaint' (B&O title) [*NIMEV 657*] *Beg.* 'Continvaunce / Of remembraunce / withowte endyng'. *Verse*
- xxxiii. **fol. 139r** Anonymous; Complaint against Fortune [*NIMEV 2269*] *Beg.* 'My self walkyng all Allone / fful of thoght of ioy desperat'. *Verse*
- xxxiv. **fol. 139v** Anonymous; Humorous carol [*NIMEV 3180*] *Beg.* 'Som tyme y loid so do y yut'. *Verse*
- xxxv. **fol. 143v-144** Anonymous; 'A Love Song' (B&O title) [*NIMEV 853*] *Beg.* 'ffor to preuente / And after repente / hyt wer ffoly'. *Verse*

- xxxvi. **fol. 144v** Anonymous; 'The Rancour of this Wicked World' (B&O title) [*NIMEV 1489*] *Beg.* 'In fful grett hevenesse myn hert ys pwyght'. *Verse*
- xxxvii. **fol. 146r** Anonymous; Hymn to the Virgin Mary [*NIMEV 2202*] *Beg.* 'Most glorius quene Reyning yn hevене'. *Verse*
- xxxviii. **fol. 146v** Anonymous; Prayer to Christ [*NIMEV 2401*] *Beg.* 'O Cryste Jhesu mekely I pray to the'. *Verse*
- xxxix. **fol. 147r** John Lydgate; 'A wikked tong wol alway deme amis' [*NIMEV 653*] *Beg.* 'Considre wel wiht euey circumstance'. *Verse*
- xl. **fol. 150** Geoffrey Chaucer; *Troilus and Criseyde* (selection: III, 302-33) [*NIMEV 3327*] *Beg.* 'Ther is nomore dredfull pestelens'. *Verse*
- xli. **fol. 151r** John Lydgate?; 'Tyed with a line' (first stanza) [*NIMEV 3436*] *Beg.* 'The more I go the further I am behynde'. *Verse*
- xl. **fol. 151r** John Lydgate; Seven Wise Counsels (part of 'A Pageant of Knowledge') [*NIMEV 576*] *Beg.* 'Bi sapience tempre thy courage'. *Verse*
- xl. **fol. 152v** John Lydgate; 'A Complaint, for Lack of Mercy' (B&O title) [*NIMEV 1017*] *Beg.* 'Grettere mater of dol an heynesse'. *Verse*
- xl. **fol. 153r** Anonymous; 'Love's Sorrow' (B&O title) [*NIMEV 3613*] *Beg.* 'This ys no lyf alas þat y do lede'. *Verse*
- xl. **fol. 153r** Anonymous; 'A Complaint against His Mistress' (B&O title) [*NIMEV 2277.8*] *Beg.* 'My whofull herte plunged yn heynesse'. *Verse*
- xl. **fol. 153v** Anonymous; 'Desire to Serve' (B&O title) [*NIMEV 734*] *Beg.* 'Euer yn one with my dew attendaunce'. *Verse*
- xl. **fol. 153v** Anonymous; 'A Petition to His Mistress' (B&O title) [*NIMEV 4272.5*] *Beg.* 'Yit wulde I nat the causer faryd a-mysse'. *Verse*
- xl. **fol. 154r** Anonymous; 'A Balade' [*NIMEV 3849*] *Beg.* 'Veryly / And truly'. *Verse*
- xl. **fol. 154v** Anonymous; 'A Lover's Plaint' [*NIMEV 380*] *Beg.* 'As in my remembrauns non but ye Alone'. *Verse*
- l. **fol. 155r** John Lydgate; 'The Pain and Sorrow of Evil Marriage' [*NIMEV 919*] Imperfect. *Beg.* 'Take hede and lern lytull chyld and see'. *Verse*
- li. **fol. 156v** Anonymous; Prayer for England [*NIMEV 2317*] *Beg.* '[N]ow god þat syttyst An hygh in trone'. *Verse*
- lii. **fol. 159v** Anonymous; Complaint against Fortune [*NIMEV 2568*] *Beg.* 'O þou fortune why art þou so inconstaunt'. *Verse*
- liii. **fol. 162v** Anonymous; Four humours [*NIMEV 2624*] *Beg.* 'Of yefftis large in loue hayth gret delite'. *Verse*
- liv. **fol. 164r** John Lydgate; 'A tretise for lauandres' [*NIMEV 4254*] *Beg.* 'Yee maistresses myne and clenly chamberys'. *Verse*
- lv. **fol. 166r** 'Alexander-Cassamus' fragment, translation from the *Voeux du Paon* [*NIMEV *586.5*] *Beg.* 'Cassamus roos afre this talkynge'. *Verse*

- lvi. **fol. 178r** Anonymous; Complaint against Fortune [*NIMEV 12*]
Beg. 'A mercy fortune haue pitee on me'. *Verse*
- lvii. **fol. 181r** Benedict Burgh, 'Cato Major' [*NIMEV 854*] Imperfect.
Beg. 'Chaunge not thi ffreende that thou knowest of oolde'.
Verse

5. Collation:

- a. Adapted from Beadle & Owen (1977: ix):
 - i. i¹⁰, ii¹⁶ (wants 1-4; + iii⁸ (wants 1) inserted after 10) [or alternatively ii²⁰ (wants 1-4; + iii⁴ inserted after 6)], iv¹⁰ (wants 9, 10), v¹⁶ (wants 10, 11, 16), vi¹² (+ vii⁴ inserted after 3), viii⁸, ix¹² (12 cancelled), x¹⁶ (wants 15, 16), xi⁴ (wants 1), xii¹⁰, xiii⁸ (8 cancelled), xiv⁶ (wants 4-6), xv¹⁰ (+ xvi⁸ inserted after 7, and xvii⁴ (wants 4) inserted after 9), xviii¹⁴ (wants 14), xix⁸ (wants 6-8).

6. Size of page:

- a. 210 x 150 mm.

7. Size of written space:

- a. Varies. Approx. 180 x 110 mm.

8. Layout:

- a. Mostly single columns. Only *Sir Degrevant* in double columns.

9. Frame:

- a. No remaining evidence of pricking and ruling.

10. Decoration:

- a. Almost none. Elaboration of the ascenders of the top line of text throughout volume.
- b. fol. 22r: Space left for decorative capital which has not been inserted.

11. Pagination:

- a. Modern pencil foliation. One set of foliation numbers has been scored through and replaced with another.

12. Catchwords:

- a. Not present.

13. Signatures:

- a. Modern pencil quire signatures. These accord with the letters used in the collation formula of Beadle & Owen (1977: ix).

14. Table of contents:

- a. Not present.

15. Secundo folio:

- a. For so þes

16. Indications of scribe/date:

- a. Hardwick *et al.* (1857) dismissively refers to MS. as 'carelessly written in various hands of the **xv**th century'.
- b. On item v. 'After the colophon "Parliamentum Avium" is added "Quod W. Caluerley," [fol. 42v] indicating the name of the scribe.'
- c. On items viii. and ix. 'Trace of the scribe: "Quod Lewestoun." [fols. 58v, 59r]'
- d. fol. 67v (*Legend of Good Women*): 'Nomen scriptoris Nicholaus plenus amoris.'
- e. Beadle & Owen (1978: xvi n. 19) suggest Calverley, Leweston and Nicholas may be servants who acted as scribes/amanuenses for their employers.
- f. Casson (1949: xii) estimates that the section of the MS. containing the *Brut* and *Sir Degrevant* was written 'in or immediately after 1446, and could not have been written after 1461 when [Henry VI's] reign ended'.
- g. Harris (1981: 331-333) gives a full account of the forty hands which appear to have been active in the production of this MS. It seems extraneous to reproduce this complete listing here.
- h. *LALME* (i, 67) states that language of 'Hands A, B and C' is 'basically of Derbys., but with varying degrees of mixture'.

17. Indication of owners:

- a. fol. 10v: 'Sharesmith'
- b. fol. 19r: 'Sharesmyth'; 'Sharesmyth Willelmus' (Harris 1981: 306, recognising that these are in mirror-writing)
- c. fol. 20v: 'Margery hungerford w^t owte variance' (late 15th C.). Harris (1981: 305) suggests she is a relation of the Hungerfords of Nottingham.
- d. fol. 59v: 'A rekenyng be twne John wylsun & mester fynderne. Item first tyme that I went into lester shyre w^t Richard lathbery I spent iij s for my selfe & my {erased} hors Item iij d anoder tyme wen I went to mester Richard w^t for'
- e. fol. 65v: 'ffrancIs Cruker'. Harris (1981: 306) believes this may be a relation of John Crewker, an executor of Thomas Findern's will (Thomas d. 1525).
- f. fol. 109v: 'Elisabet koton' 'Elisabet frauncys'. Unclear whether these are the names of owners, scribes, or something else. Both appear to be in the same hand, which does not appear to be the text hand. Harris (1981: 303) notes that the Frauncis family was related to the Findern family by marriage. Both families were from south Derbyshire. In addition, 'Koton' may have belonged to the 'Cotton family of nearby Hamstall Ridware in Staffordshire'.
- g. fol. 118r: 'Anne Schyrley' (late 15th C.). Harris (1981: 305) suggests Anne is a member of the Shirley family holding estates in Warwickshire, Leicestershire and Derbyshire.
- h. Harris (1981: 307): Owned by Sir Thomas Knyvett (c. 1539-1618).

- i. Harris (1981: 307): 'Ff.1.6 was acquired from the Knyvett library by John Moore, Bishop of Ely and came to Cambridge University Library in 1715 when George I purchased Moore's collection and presented it to the University.'

18. Annotations by later users:

- a. fol. 26r: 'G{ror in pesse?}'
- b. fol. 28r: 'Salve. stella. maris. mater. firma. dei. vite'. More Latin written vertically: 'In ffelix {nomine?} est vno cum non {Rare?} plus est'
- c. fol. 29r: Letter practice.
- d. fol. 41v: Writing practice '{ny?}ter' in large letters.
- e. fol. 59v: Letter practice: an alphabet and, below, some large letters.
- f. fol. 63v: Some writing, now smudged so that only the word 'ryght' is legible.
- g. fol. 66r: Pen trials.
- h. fol. 70r: A list of clothes at 'Fyndyrne' (16th C. hand).
- i. fol. 70v: 'Item iij bottellys'; an account of meats, including several entries for 'befe', but also 'half a calf' and 'half a shepe'.
- j. fol. 80v: Scribbled writing :Ryght tru{ere?} and wylbelofod'.
- k. fol. 82r: Vertical writing at edge of page. Almost illegible, may be in French or Latin (first word may be 'Ergo').
- l. fol. 82v: 'henre be the grace of god kyng of yngland and of'.
- m. fol. 89r: Scribbled writing, illegible.
- n. fol. 95v: Writing practice. 'ryght worshipfull', 'and this', another longer, difficult to read – first word may be 'Frances'.
- o. fol. 138r: Letter and writing practice.
- p. fol. 139r: A drawing of a barrel, and below it two fish either side of a scroll reading 'A god when'. Hammond (1908: 344) suggests this stands for 'Lewestoun' (luce-tun). Harris (1981: 322 n. 32) is sceptical, noting that the text in which it appears is not in the same hand as that by the scribe 'Lewestoun', and that 'A god when' is more likely to refer to the name 'Godwin'.
- q. fol. 139v: Lines which may be part of a musical stave. Some writing now worn and illegible.
- r. fol. 143r: More musical notation.
- s. fol. 149v: Writing practice: 'when', 'whenfor', 'w', 'h'.
- t. fol. 150v: Letter practice – an alphabet.
- u. fol. 158v: A face doodled at the foot of the page.
- v. fol. 159v: Letter practice – the beginning of an alphabet.
- w. fol. 160r: Another alphabet.
- x. fol. 165v: A couple of practice letters, now faded.

19. Distichs present:

- a. I. 32, I. 23, 11, 10, 6, 13, 14, 27, 31, 30, 35, 33, II. P 6-7, 1, 2, 4, 24, 23, 25, 26, 22, 21, 28, 30, IV. 47, 43, 45, I. 15, 18, 20, 24, 25, III. 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 10, 11, 13

20. Notes

- a. More than one set of foliation is present in this MS. This entry (following Beadle & Owen (1977) and the *NIMEV*) adheres to the more recent attempt at foliation which takes account of leaves which are now missing. For several short texts which the *NIMEV* titles only 'Courtly love lyric', the titles given by Beadle & Owen (1977) are used instead, and marked 'B&O' in the contents listing.
- b. Matheson (1998: 318) mentions that MSS Bodl. Digby 196 and Folger Shakespeare Library V.a.198 (1232.3) are both related to Findern.
- c. Harris (1981: 317): 'rather than separate production and collection, close analysis of the make-up of Ff.1.6 suggests piecemeal preparation and intermittent copying of the manuscript; it suggests a process of accretion over a considerable period, extensions being made to the volume or, more properly, the loose collection of gatherings, when necessary.'
- d. Notes on *Distichs*:
 - i. The selection of *Distichs* is strange and seemingly haphazard. The scribe has leapt around the text, perhaps searching around the stanza that s/he is copying to find other related or otherwise appealing stanzas. Although the stanzas are separated on the page, there is no sign of any of the Latin. The text begins and ends abruptly, and it is difficult to tell if there was ever any more present. There is a good chance, given the small decorative curls at the foot of the last page (which is also the last page of the entire manuscript) that the end of the text has not been lost, although it is much more difficult to tell if the beginning is present too.
- e. Matheson (1998: 320) classifies the *Brut* in this MS. as 'The Peculiar Version to 1436: Group B (PV-1436:B)'.
 - f. Harris (1981: 307): 'Giving detailed consideration to the evidence for the origins of Ff.1.6 deprives the accepted interpretation of some of its specificity, suggesting that it is as accurate, if not more accurate, to call the manuscript the 'Cotton', 'Frauncis' or 'Shirley Anthology'. However, such detailed consideration places in dispute neither the social 'milieu' nor the geographical area in which the manuscript was produced; the opposite is the case – it apparently confirms the origins of Ff.1.6 in a country house just to the south of Derby.'
 - g. Harris (1981: 318): 'The constant shifting of the personnel involved in making entries in the manuscript, the limited association of many of the copyists with the collection, the informality of the whole, all seem to imply that Ff.1.6 was used in the manner of an album, a loose-leaf album, by the south Derbyshire family (whether that family was that of Cotton, Frauncis, Shirley or Findern) in which it had its origins, and by their friends and associates.'

21. Bibliography

- a. Beadle & Owen (1977): Facsimile edition of MS.
- b. Boffey & Thompson (1989)
- c. Casson (1949): Edits *Romance of Sir Degrevant* from this MS.

- d. Connolly (2009: 125-126): *Index of Middle English Prose* cataloguing.
- e. Hardwick *et al.* (1857): Catalogue entry.
- f. Harris (1983): In-depth discussion of the scribes and composition of the MS. Questions its origin with the Findern family, but confirms the milieu of production as similar.
- g. Keiser (1980): Information on another MS. (Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Rawlinson A.393) apparently owned by George Findern, probably in the mid-16th C.
- h. Matheson (1998: 320) Description of MS. in relation to its copy of the prose *Brut*.
- i. Robbins (1954): Discussion of MS. as an anthology of secular lyrics.

7. Cambridge, University Library MS. Ff. IV. 9. (1252)

1. Binding:
 - a. Modern – 18th/19th C.?
2. Material:
 - a. Paper
 - b. The quires containing the *Speculum Vitae* are on different paper stock to the rest of the poems. The *SV* (the majority of the volume) is on paper with an anchor-shaped watermark, whilst the rest has a deer's-head watermark (perhaps a goat?)
3. Number of folios:
 - a. ii + 106 + ii
 - b. Flyleaves are probably modern, from the rebinding of the MS.
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. **fol. 1r** William of Nassyngton; *Speculum Vite* [NIMEV 245] *Beg.* 'Almighty god in trinite / In wham anely es persouns thre'. *Verse*
 - b. **fol. 85r** Henry Scogan, 'Moral Balade' [NIMEV 2264] *Begins and ends imperfectly. Beg.* 'I complayne me sore when I remember me / The sodeyn age that vppon me is falle / More I complayne my myspeute juvente / The wichee is impossible ayein to kale'. *Verse*
 - c. **fol. 86r** John Lydgate; *Stans Puer ad Mensam* [NIMEV 2233] *Beg.* 'My dere child first thi selue enable'. *Verse*
 - d. **fol. 87v** Benedict Burgh, *Parvus Cato* [NIMEV 3955] *Beg.* 'When I aduerte in my remebraunce'. *Verse*
 - e. **fol. 88v** Benedict Burgh, 'Cato Major' [NIMEV 854] *Beg.* 'For why that God is inwardli the witte'. *Verse*
5. Collation:
 - a. Adapted from that written on the first of two paper flyleaves at back of MS.: i-iv¹² v¹² (wants 4, 5) vi¹² (wants 7) vii¹² (wants 12) viii¹⁰ ix¹² x (one leaf only). '103 ff (52, 53, 67, 84, and all after 107 lost). Folios 37-83 and 107 originally misbound after 106 and 83 respectively: vide the directions on 36^b and 106^b'
6. Size of page:
 - a. 290 x 210 mm.
7. Size of written space:
 - a. Double columns: 240 x 80 mm each.
 - b. Single column: 220 x 150 mm.
8. Layout:
 - a. First 83 leaves with double columns of 50 lines each, remaining leaves with single columns of approx. 35 lines each.

9. Frame:
 - a. Outer frame scored in drypoint. No sign that writing lines were drawn.
10. Decoration:
 - a. All items in red and black
 - b. The *Pater Noster* (in Latin) is given irregularly, line-by-line, at the top of some pages – this is apparently supposed to be where the appropriate lines are being dealt with in the *Speculum Vitae*.
 - c. fol. 1r: Large red and black initial, 6 lines, leaf patterns inside and around edges.
 - d. There are 'nota' marks in the *Speculum Vitae* which appear to have been added by the rubricator rather than a later hand. The rubricator has also added in the margins abbreviated forms of the names of the Church Fathers when they are cited in the text.
 - e. Scogan, Lydgate and Burgh all in black ink alone, in a different hand to the *Speculum Vitae*, and with much more elaborate initial letters as their only form of decoration.
11. Pagination:
 - a. Modern foliation in pencil. Counts folios which are now missing. Slightly older pen foliation in bottom right corner
12. Catchwords:
 - a. Present on quires i (fol. 12v), ii (24v), iii (36v), iv (48v), v (60v) and vi (72v). All followed up on next recto.
 - b. On fol. 36v: 'Let he hath' – although this is followed up, the pages were at one point out of order, which has prompted an 18th C. hand to write 'continued below' here.
13. Signatures:
 - a. No original signatures present. A modern hand has added letters to the first folios of each quire.
14. Table of contents:
 - a. Not present.
15. Secundo folio:
 - a. Therefore it thenkyth
16. Indications of scribe/date:
 - a. In two different hands. Probably latter part of 15th C. according to catalogue.
 - b. *LALME*: LP 527 (fols. 1r-12r). Leics.
17. Indication of owners:
 - a. fol. 18r: 'Thomas ryght'
18. Annotations by later users:
 - a. fol. 19v: 'the last' in Tudor hand – reason unclear.

- b. fol. 22v: A date? 'the 9 day xx desember'.
- c. fol. 74v: In scratchy late Tudor pen: 'Jhesus saluator', 'Domyvnvs Deus'.
- d. fol. 107v: Pen trials, writing and drawing. Many stars made of triangles overlaid on one another; four faces, a couple of which are wearing something resembling pith helmets, and one wearing an elaborate collar of stacked hoops; writing difficult to make out, 'Ryght trusty and moost in remembrance after all Dew recomendacyon had I recomend me to you trustyng in Jhesu I now w^t all your'; above this is (less legibly) 'Jhesus mary Lady help me'. Both are in Tudor hands; there is also some letter practice above these.

19. Distichs present:

- a. All of *Parvus Cato* present, including complete Latin and envoy.
- b. I. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, XLVIII, XLIX
- c. II. P 1-2 (Latin for P3-4 present, English missing), P 4-5, P 6-7, P 8-9, P 10, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, III. 2, 3, 4, 5, II. 30, 31, LXXXVII, LXXXVIII, LXXXIX
- d. III. P 1-2, 1, P 3-4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, CXVI
- e. IV. P 1-2, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 30, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, CXVII, CXVIII.

20. Notes:

- a. First folio is quite dirty, suggesting MS. lay unbound for some time.
- b. fol. 35: watermark in the shape of an anchor is visible.
- c. Notes on *Distichs*
 - i. No rubrication. The Latin is complete, and is presented alternating with the English. For the first two books almost every stanza has been given a nota mark. Apparently these have been drawn initially with the 'ta' suspension, and the 'no' filled in later, and this latter service has not been done for all of them. I suspect the scribe was copying from one of the manuscripts which used a mark similar to the 'ta' suspension (a single-enclosed 'a' shape with a long tail extending out to the right of the top stroke) to mark the beginning of new stanzas, and initially mistook these for notae.
- d. Either a religious or pious lay audience would be possible for this MS. The reader's main interest was clearly in the *Speculum Vitae*, and as it is in English it is unlikely to have been the property of a monastery, although there is a possibility that nuns formed the intended audience.

21. Bibliography:

- a. Hardwick *et al.* (1857): Catalogue entry.

8. Cambridge, University Library MS. Hh. IV. 12 (1668)

1. Binding:
 - a. Modern; the date 'July, 1958' is given on the pastedown inside the front cover.
2. Material:
 - a. Mainly paper
 - b. Boffey (1996: 77): 'All [quires] are composed of mixed parchment and paper, with parchment serving strengthening purposes as the outermost and innermost leaves of each gathering.'
3. Number of folios:
 - a. 99
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. **fol. 1r** Benedict Burgh; 'Cato Major' [*NIMEV 854*] *Beg.* 'For why that God is inwardli the witte'. *Verse*
 - b. **fol. 28v** Benedict Burgh; *Parvus Cato* [*NIMEV 3955*] *Beg.* 'When I aduertise in my remembraunce'. *Verse*
 - c. **fol. 30v** John Lydgate, *Stans Puer ad Mensam* [*NIMEV 2233*] *Beg.* 'My deere son first thysel enable / With all thyn hert to vertuose discipline'. *Verse*
 - d. **fol. 31r** Four lines ascribed to Reginald Pecock [*NIMEV 4181*] *Beg.:* 'Witt hath wunder that reson ne tell can' [copied into top of page]. *Verse*
 - e. **fol. 37r** John Lydgate; 'Legend of St. Austin at Compton' [*NIMEV 1875*] *Beg.* 'Like as bybyll makyth mencyon'. *Verse*
 - f. **fol. 43v** Geoffrey Chaucer, *Etas Prima (The Former Age)* [*NIMEV 28*] *Beg.* 'A blisful lyfe a peseable and a swete'. *Verse*
 - g. **fol. 44v** Complaint of Christ [*NIMEV 1463*] *Beg.* 'In a valey of þis restles mynde'. *Verse*
 - h. **fol. 47v** Anonymous; No title [*NIMEV 2630*] *Beg.* 'Of honest myrthe let by thy dalyance'. *Verse*
 - i. **fol. 49r** John Lydgate; 'Horse, Goose and Sheep' [*NIMEV 658*] *Beg.:* 'Contrauersies, plays and discordys / Atwene personys wer it too or thre'. *Verse*
 - j. **fol. 61r** John Lydgate; *Fabula duorum mercatorum* [*NIMEV 1481*] *Beg.* 'In Egipt whilom as I rede and fynde / Ther dwellyd a marchande of high and gret estate'. *Verse*
 - k. **fol. 77v** John Lydgate; 'The Chorle and the Birde' [*NIMEV 2784*] *Beg.* 'Problemys liknes and signes / Whiche proued ben fructuose of sentence'. *Verse*
 - l. **fol. 85r** John Lydgate; *Consulo quisque eris* [*NIMEV 1294*] *Beg.* 'I counsell what so euer thou be'. *Verse*
 - m. **fol. 87r** John Lydgate; 'Horns Away' [*NIMEV 2625*] *Beg.* 'Of god and kind procedyth all beaulte'. *Verse*

- n. **fol. 88r** John Lydgate; complaint of Christ [NIMEV 3845] *Beg.* 'Vpon a crosse naylyd I was for the'. *Verse*
 - o. **fol. 89r** John Lydgate; 'Midsomer Rose' [NIMEV 1865] *Beg.* 'lat no man bost of cunnyng ne verteu'. *Verse*
 - p. **fol. 91r** John Lydgate; On the mutability of man's nature (part of 'A Pageant of Knowledge') [NIMEV 3503] *Beg.* 'The world so wyde, the ayer so remoueeable'. *Verse*
 - q. **fol. 92r** Anonymous; Lament of the Duchess of Gloucester [NIMEV 3720] *Beg.* 'Thorow owt a pales as I can passe'. *Verse*
 - r. **fol. 94r** Anonymous; The Difficulty of choosing a profession in religion [NIMEV 655] *Beg.* 'Consideryng effectually the gret diuersite'. *Verse*
 - s. **fol. 97r** Geoffrey Chaucer; Parlement of Foules [NIMEV 3412] Imperfect. *Beg.* 'The lyfe so short, the craft so long to lerne'. *Verse*
5. Collation:
- a. Adapted from pastedown inside back cover: i-ii¹² iii¹² (wants 9, 11, 12) iv¹² (wants 2) v-viii¹² ix¹² (wants 7-12), '98ff. (33, 35, 36, 38, and all after 102 lost)'
 - b. Boffey (1996: 77 n. 33) gives exactly the same collation (minus the final notes).
6. Size of page:
- a. 210 x 140 mm.
7. Size of written space:
- a. Varies. Approx. 150 x 100 mm.
8. Layout:
- a. Single columns, about 30 lines on each page.
9. Frame:
- a. Drypoint scoring still evident on some pages for outer frame. Minimal traces of writing lines.
10. Decoration:
- a. fol. 8r: Large blue initial at beginning of *Distichs* book II, surrounded by red pen decoration extending along top and down left-hand side of page
 - b. fol. 20r: Same as for book II at beginning of book IV.
 - c. fol. 28v: beginning of *Parvus Cato* given large letter 'C', onto which is clinging a large hairy creature (possibly a monkey), its head bent back and a spray of flowers emerging from its mouth. This is drawn in black pen, as the letter itself is red, the only deviation from the MS.' scheme of blue initials surrounded by red pen lines illustration.
 - d. Similar decoration for other texts; red and blue paraphs used in most texts which are split in to stanzas.
 - e. fol. 61r: beside letter 'T' a picture of a face with a sharply pointed nose and a long tongue.

11. Pagination:

- a. Modern foliation in pencil. Counts folios which are now missing.

12. Catchwords:

- a. Present on quires i (fol. 12v), ii (24v) and vi (72v). All followed up on next recto.

13. Signatures:

- a. Present on:
 - i. quire ii (fol. 14r-18r): b.2ⁱⁱⁱ ; b.3ⁱⁱⁱ ; b.4ⁱⁱⁱ ; b.5ⁱⁱⁱ ; b.6ⁱⁱⁱ
 - ii. quire iv (fol. 39r): {too faded to read – Boffey (1996: 77) believes it to be 'biiij'}
 - iii. quire v (fol. 49r-53r): d.jⁱⁱⁱ ; {d. 2ⁱⁱⁱ} ; d. 3ⁱⁱⁱ ; d.4ⁱⁱⁱ ; d.5ⁱⁱⁱ
 - iv. quire vi (fol. 61r-66r): .a.jⁱⁱⁱ. ; .a.ijⁱⁱⁱ. ; .a.iiijⁱⁱⁱ. ; .a.iiiijⁱⁱⁱ. ; .a.vⁱⁱⁱ. ; .a.vjⁱⁱⁱ.
 - v. quire vii (fol. 73r-78r): .b.jⁱⁱⁱ. ; .b.ijⁱⁱⁱ. ; .b.iiijⁱⁱⁱ. ; .b.iiiijⁱⁱⁱ. ; .b.vjⁱⁱⁱ. ; {fol. 78r trimmed and badly faded}
- b. Boffey (1996: 77) suggests the 'd' quire was part of a volume which originally contained the Lydgate quires signed 'a' and 'b' (which now follow it) possibly the one with seven short poems. This seems unlikely considering the difference in the style of the marks – the 'd' quires have Arabic rather than Roman numerals, and no punctus before the letter. These may actually be something to do with speculative production of multiple copies in booklet form – there are far too many 'b' quires for them all to have been planned as part of the same MS.

14. Table of contents:

- a. Not present.

15. Secundo folio:

- a. Constans et leuis

16. Indications of scribe/date:

- a. Hardwick *et al.* (1858): 'handwriting of the xvth century'.
- b. Boffey (1996: 77) identifies two scribes. 'A' has written most of the MS., and 'B' has completed some sections of it: 'The main scribe, A, copied ff. 1-28 (*Cato Major*), and B supplied 28v-33v (*Parvus Cato* and *Stans puer ad mensam*); A copied ff. 37-44 (*The Legend of St. Austin at Compton* and *The Former Age*), and B supplied 44v-47 (*Quia amore langueo*). The remainder of the items were copied by A.' Boffey also states that 'B' names himself as 'Stok.t.', though neglects a page reference for this, and I didn't notice it.

17. Indication of owners:

- a. Hardwick *et al.* (1858): 'The following marks of ownership occur on a blank leaf (fol. 44b): "This boke howthe John Peter ye menstrell," and lower down, in the same handwriting, "In the name of God, Amen, the

xxii year of y^e rayne of Kyng Harre y^e eight wyttnesit that"... On the next page: "John Yarrade," "Wylliam Bryan."

- b. fol. 6r: Largely illegible – 'John {...}'
- c. fol. 19v: Boffey (1996: 79 n. 36) identifies 'be your hond thomas reuenyng'.
- d. fol. 29r: 'wyllam'
- e. fol. 43r: 'John potter'
- f. fol. 47v: (This is what the catalogue calls 'fol. 44b' – the pencil foliation includes the missing folios as well, where as the cataloguer has not. This entry adheres to the manuscript foliation): 'John Clerke'
- g. fol. 48r: Along with those noted in catalogue – 'ryth well belouyd mirstrys helsabett' (might not be ownership).
- h. fol. 71r: 'John lester' (twice – very small and only just legible)
- i. Boffey (1996: 78-79) suspects that 'John Clerke' and 'John peter ye menstrell' are 'connected' (though stops short of explicitly asserting them to be the same person). She identifies the latter as perhaps being 'the king's musician of this name who makes a brief appearance in the records in 1518, charged to carry a letter from Henry VIII to Alfonso d'Este, duke of Ferrara, and to return with the present of a lute for the king.'

18. Annotations by later users:

- a. A large number present throughout the volume.
- b. fol. 1v: 'And {illegible} gracia'.
- c. fol. 2r: 'This in {two words illegible} the xx day of aprill the {illegible} of {illegible} by the year {illegible}'.
- d. fol. 3r: Latin written at the foot of the page, now badly faded. Doesn't appear to be from the *Disticha* – late 15th/early 16th C. Continues on fol. 3v.
- e. fol. 4r: 'Cum dubia et' copied from first line of Latin distich on this page.
- f. fol. 5r: Missing Latin inserted at foot of page to replace excised section of this folio (see notes).
- g. fol. 6v: Missing Latin inserted at foot of page to replace excised section of this folio (see notes).
- h. fols. 7v-8r: Letter practice – part of alphabet written along bottom of page.
- i. fol. 9r: Letter practice.
- j. fol. 11r: Latin written sideways, two lines, difficult to read, both lines begin with 'hoc', second line is probably 'hoc uinaculum'. Not copied from the *Distichs*.
- k. fol. 12r: Writing practice, late Tudor/early Elizabethan hand, copies out three lines of English for distich II. 17 from fol. 11v.
- l. fol. 12v: Tudor scribble, illegible.
- m. fol. 14v: 'Reken what kings hathe be brave to be w{illegible} {illegible} as ye may se and red'; below this, attempt to copy script of 'Explicit pars'.
- n. fol. 15r: Letter practice.

- o. fol. 16r: Badly blotted 15th C. writing in boxes, copying words from *Distichs* – ‘bessinesse’, ‘among’, ‘among’, ‘and a knak’, ‘and a knak’, ‘a knak’, ‘a knak’.
- p. fols. 16v-17r: Several attempts to copy sections of distichs: ‘Quod tibi sors dederit’ (III. 8), ‘Rebus et in censu’ and ‘nether crosse nor pile’ (III. 11), ‘Uxorem’, ‘for she wyll cast yt oft on thy berd’, ‘For she wyll cast yt full oft on thy berde’ (III. 12).
- q. fol. 17v: Copy of first line of distich III. 14.
- r. fol. 18r: ‘whan that I lant then I was {femde(?)} but nowe y aske y am on kynd by {me (?)} Jhon clerke of blomsbery dwellyng {illegible}’; also badly faded and now illegible pencil writing at foot of page. Boffey (1996: 78) copies this annotation too: ‘When that I lent then I was a frende / but nowe y aske y am vn kynde’ and ‘ihon clerke of blomsbery dwellyng ner by’.
- s. fol. 19v: Two attempts to copy sections of distich IV. 2 in different 15th/16th C. hands.
- t. fol. 23r: Two lines of Latin, not apparently from the *Distichs*. Hard to read. At foot of page, copies of lines from IV. 20 (‘Be styll in silence Seruo hominum mores’) and IV. 19 (first four lines).
- u. fol. 24r: Another two lines of difficult Latin. All I can get reliably is ‘prestat lumen {illegible} sub pede {illegible}’; also some English, beginning ‘It ys’ then becoming illegible.
- v. fol. 25r: Scrawled Latin. Not part of *Distichs*; repeated at foot of page – these are both the same, and are the same as that on fol. 24r, although they are not all the same length. May begin: ‘Sepe dat vna dues quod...’
- w. fol. 25v: Letter practice of ‘y’s.
- x. fol. 28r: Latin in Elizabethan hand: ‘Vti uti per uia sagitau apud...’ and a translation in to English below ‘As I wente by the waye I shotte as a sparowe for lacke of my {...}’
- y. fol. 29v: Attempt to copy ‘Libros’.
- z. fol. 30r: Copy of first two lines of envoy to *Parvus Cato*.
- aa. fol. 31v: A couple of drawings of faces at the foot of the page – may be based around letter practice (the first perhaps of the letter ‘T’).
- bb. Boffey (1996: 79 n. 36) spots: “this boke was made in ye yer of owr lord / A god 1504 (?) as for the kyng name of this lond / I cannot say for here where...” on fol. 32v.
- cc. fol. 34r: Lots of writing, almost illegible. Some appears to be the same or similar lines repeated several times. 15th C. hand.
- dd. fol. 34v: More 15th C. writing. Top set difficult to make out, bottom slightly easier, but spelling seems very idiosyncratic: ‘Paterna benediccionem peto | I praye father gyuef me yower blyssyn | Opto tibi naclem prossperem pater | god gyvef yow good nyght father | god’; other scribbles on page, much larger letters, now quite faded.
- ee. fol. 45r: ‘qui a more lango’ – the refrain of the poem is ‘Quia amore languet’; an attempt to copy the first few lines of this page in black pen in the margin – some letters have been misread.
- ff. fols. 46v-47r: A lot of writing all the way down the page in faded black pen. It is apparently repetitive, but very difficult to read, and almost looks like the letters have been drawn backwards (perhaps the ink has

soaked in to this page from a separate sheet at one point placed on top of it?). There is a possibility this is a list of expenses – the definite repeating part of each entry could be ‘shs’ (perhaps ‘ehs’). There is no evidence of numbers, however.

- i. Boffey (1996: 78) appears to be referring to these when she describes ‘several attempts at verses beginning; “Of honest myrthe let be thy dalyaunce / swere no othes nor rebode dallyaunce / the best morsall thi selfe let be thy dalleance...”’. I can’t see this in these lines, however.
- gg. fols. 48r: More copying of parts of the same Latin: ‘Paterna benedicionem peto | opto tibi noctem prosperem pater’, and again in a different hand ‘Pliterna benedicionem Peto | optotibi m’ – apparently this person is copying and unable to read the letters distinctly.
- hh. fol. 57r: Attempt to copy first two lines of page in top margin.
- ii. fol. 59v: ‘horse shyppe or geysse | why shuld the fayll att debate’ – doesn’t appear to be from poem.
- jj. fol. 60v: Faded pen ‘Explicit liber qd. John’.
- kk. fol. 66r: Faded attempt to copy top two lines of poem.
- ll. fol. 84v: part of alphabet in faded pen, then in another darker pen.
- mm. Boffey (1996: 78): ‘alas alas a made y whas a changyt / ys my chaunce let alle thyng passe.’ (fol. 96v)

19. Distichs present:

- a. I. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, XLVIII, XLIX.
- b. II. P1-2, P3-4, P4-5, P6-7, P8-9, P10, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 27, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 12, LXXXVII, LXXXVIII, LXXXIX
- c. III. P1-2, 1, P3-4, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, CXVI, CXVII, CXVIII
- d. IV. P 1-2, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 (first four words only), 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 30, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49
- e. Complete *Parvus Cato* with all Latin and envoy

20. Notes:

- a. The hand and style of decoration are so similar throughout the book that it is very likely the different sections were produced in the same scriptorium. This is a good candidate for a book that was sold in smaller booklets which were purchased individually and bound together as the reader desired.
 - i. The first three quires form one unit – *Distichs* and the *Stans Puer ad Mensam*; second unit: *Legend of St Austin*, *Etas Prima* and *Complaint of Christ*, followed by three blank folios; third unit: *Horse, Goose and Sheep*; fourth unit: *Fabula Duorum Mercatorum* and *Churl and the Bird*; fifth unit: seven short Lydgate texts; sixth unit: Chaucer’s *Parliament of Fowls*,

although the end has been lost. Catchwords are only present where a text is longer than a single quire, which is another good sign of its compound nature.

- ii. Also varying with booklets is the pen used for the decoration – *Fabula Duorum Mercatorum* and *Parliament of Fowls* both have black pen rather than blue for their large initials.
- b. The damaged state of the first and last folia (and indeed those near to them) indicates that this was not bound in to a hard cover initially. However, from the relative cleanliness of the inner pages, it does not appear that the booklets spent much time separate, and they may, perhaps, have been bound in a single cover-less volume.
- c. Notes on *Distichs*:
 - i. Latin and English alternating. No rubrication present, although red and blue paraph marks are used at the beginning of each stanza, and red pen has been used in initial letters of the Latin lines along with the first line of each English stanza. The Latin and English are in slightly different scripts, with minims in the Latin much more straight and the lettering decidedly more careful.
 - ii. fols. 5 and 6 have had their tops cut off. This may be specifically to remove the Latin. The Latin for the missing sections of fol. 5r/v has been copied at the foot of fol. 5r, that for fol. 6r/v at the foot of fol. 6v. The affected distichs are I. 25, 28, 31 and 34]
- d. Boffey (1996: 77-78): ‘We are left, therefore, with an “improving” Lydgate-associated anthology in one booklet, *Cato* and *Stans puer* (Benedict Burgh, the *Cato* translator, was an admirer of Lydgate’s); an anthology of Lydgate’s shorter poems in a further booklet that lacks at least one gathering; a small Chaucer and Lydgate anthology in a stray gathering marked *b*; and some currently unattached gatherings whose contents – Chaucer and Lydgate, again – could in different ways be seen to correspond to the focus of any of the other sections. The various parts seem almost deliberately conceived to constitute a puzzle for the would-be anthologist.’
 - i. Personal note: it may be unreasonable to look for the coherence of an anthology here, as this was almost certainly a selection of pre-produced booklets. The most that can be said is that the person performing the selection does, indeed, seem to have been particularly attracted to Lydgate. They are still, however, interested in moral works by other authors.
- e. Boffey (1996: 78): ‘[as with BL MS. Harley 116], the evidence of later annotation indicates that the different parts of this manuscript were, from a relatively early date on, at least kept together, even if not necessarily in the present order.’
- f. This has almost certainly been used by a child, and the *Distichs* is by far the most heavily used of the texts, although mainly for practice in writing, as there are a lot of stanzas copied out (along with some apparently miscellaneous material that has been copied for a similar reason, using the space around the *Distichs*). There is no real doodling or drawing, just a lot of writing.

21. Bibliography:

- a. Boffey (1996: 76-80): Discussion of MS. as miscellany containing short poems.
- b. Hardwick *et al.* (1858 Vol. III): Catalogue entry.

9. Cambridge, Jesus College MS. 56 (Q.G.8)

1. Binding:
 - a. Modern, 19th C.
2. Material:
 - a. Parchment
3. Number of folios:
 - a. ii + 92 + ii – parchment flyleaves
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. **fol. 1r** John Lydgate; *‘Testament’* [*NIMEV 2464*] *Beg.* ‘O how holsom and glad is þe memorye’. *Verse*
 - b. **fol. 19v** John Lydgate; *‘A lamentacioun of our lady Maria’* [*NIMEV 4099*] *Beg.* ‘Who shall yeue vnto myn hede a well’. *Verse*
 - c. **fol. 22v** John Lydgate; *Consulo quisque eris* [*NIMEV 1294*] *Beg.* ‘I councaill what so euere þou be’. *Verse*
 - d. **fol. 25r** John Lydgate; *‘Midsomer Rose’* [*NIMEV 1865*] *Beg.* ‘Let no man bost of connyng nor vertue’. *Verse*
 - e. **fol. 27v** John Lydgate; *‘Horns Away’* [*NIMEV 2625*] *Beg.* ‘Off god and kynde procedith al beaute’. *Verse*
 - f. **fol. 29r** John Lydgate; *‘Looke in thy meroure and deme noon other wight’* [*NIMEV 3798*] *Beg.* ‘Towarde the eende of frosty Januarie’. *Verse*
 - g. **fol. 33r** John Lydgate; *On the mutability of man’s nature* [*NIMEV 3503*] *Beg.* ‘The worlde so wide the eyre so remevable’. *Verse*
 - h. **fol. 36r** John Lydgate; *‘Song of Vertu’* [*NIMEV 401*] *Beg.* ‘As of hony men gadre out swetnes’. *Verse*
 - i. **fol. 37v** John Lydgate; *‘A Praise of Peace’* [*NIMEV 2156*] *Beg.* ‘Mercye and truth met on a high mountayn’. *Verse*
 - j. **fol. 41r** John Lydgate; *Misericordias Domini in Eternum Cantabo* [*NIMEV 178*] *Beg.* ‘All goostly songes and ympnes þat be sange’. *Verse*
 - k. **fol. 44r** John Lydgate; *‘A Doctryne for Pestilence’* [*NIMEV 4112*] *Beg.* ‘Who will be hole and kepe hym fro sekenes’. *Verse*
 - l. **fol. 44v** John Lydgate; *‘Dietary’* [*NIMEV 824*] *Beg.* ‘For helth of body couer for colde thyn hede’. *Verse*
 - m. **fol. 46r** John Lydgate; *Verses on the Kings of England (to Henry VI)* [*NIMEV 3632*] *Beg.* ‘This myghty Willam duke of Normandye’. *Verse*
 - n. **fol. 47v** John Lydgate; *Exposition of the Pater Noster* [*NIMEV 448*] *Beg.* ‘A twine drede and tremblyng reverence’. *Verse*
 - o. **fol. 53r** John Lydgate; *Fifteen Joys and Sorrows of Our Lady* [*NIMEV 447*] *Beg.* ‘Atween mydnyght and the fressh morwe gray’. *Verse*
 - p. **fol. 58r** John Lydgate; *De Profundis* [*NIMEV 1130*] *Beg.* ‘Hauyng a conseyte in my symple wite’. *Verse*
 - q. **fol. 60v** John Lydgate; *Letabundus* [*NIMEV 1019*] *Beg.* ‘Grounde take in vertue by patriarkes oldes’. *Verse*

- r. **fol. 65v** John Lydgate; 'Fifteen Os of Christ' [*NIMEV 2394*] *Beg.* 'Blissid lorde my lorde O Ihesu crist'. *Verse*
- s. **fol. 70v** John Lydgate; complaint of Christ [*NIMEV 3845*] *Beg.* 'Upon a cros nailed I was for the'. *Verse*
- t. **fol. 71v** John Lydgate; to the Virgin [*NIMEV 2791*] *Beg.* 'O quene of heuen of hell eeke emperes'. *Verse*
- u. **fol. 72v** John Lydgate; *Verbum caro factum est* [*NIMEV 4245*] *Beg.* 'Ye deuout peple which kepe on obseruance'. *Verse*
- v. **fol. 73r** John Lydgate; translation of *Stella Celi extirpauit* [*NIMEV 3673*] *Beg.* 'Thou heuenly quene of grace oure lood sterre'. *Verse*
- w. **fol. 74r** John Lydgate; 'Prayers to Ten Saints' [*NIMEV 529*] *Beg.* 'Blessed denys of Athenis chief sonne'. *Verse*
- x. **fol. 75v** John Lydgate; prayer to St. Leonard [*NIMEV 2812*] *Beg.* 'Rest and refuge to folke disconsolate'. *Verse*
- y. **fol. 76r** John Lydgate; prayer to SS Katherine Margaret & Mary Magdalene [*NIMEV 1814*] *Beg.* 'Katerina with glorious Margarete'. *Verse*
- z. **fol. 76v** John Lydgate; prayer to St. Ursula and 11,000 Virgins [*NIMEV 4243*] *Beg.* 'Ye briton martirs famous in perfitnes'. *Verse*
- aa. **fol. 77r** John Lydgate; *Stans Puer ad Mensam* [*NIMEV 2233*] *Beg.* 'My dere childe first þi self enable'. *Verse*
- bb. **fol. 78v** Benedict Burgh; 'Cato Major' [*NIMEV 854*] *Beg.* 'For why þat god is inwardly þe witt'. *Verse*

5. Collation:

- a. i-xvi⁶, xvii⁴ (wants 3, 4)

6. Size of page:

- a. 220 x 160 mm.

7. Size of written space:

- a. 160 x 115 mm.

8. Layout:

- a. Single columns throughout.

9. Frame:

- a. Pricked and ruled to standard size throughout MS. in black pencil. All lines ruled.

10. Decoration:

- a. All items provided with red initials at the beginnings of each stanza, many (presumably important) words are underlined throughout. Space has been left in some instances for large decorative initials, but these have never been inserted.
- b. Some texts are accompanied by Latin in margins. These are:
 - i. Exposition of the Pater Noster
 - ii. *De Profundis*
 - iii. *Letabundus*

- iv. 'Fifteen Os of Christ'
- v. complaint of Christ
- vi. 'Prayers to Ten Saints'

11. Pagination:

- a. Modern foliation in pencil.

12. Catchwords:

- a. Not present.

13. Signatures:

- a. Present on:

- i. quire i (fols. 1r-4r): a; a.. ; .a.. ; x (modern pencil?)
- ii. quire ii (fols. 7r-10r): B. ; B.. ; B... ; (modern) x
- iii. quire iii (fols. 13r-15r): C. ; C.. ; C...
- iv. quire iv (fols. 19r-21r): D. ; D.. ; D...
- v. quire v (fols. 25r-27r): E i; E ij; E iij
- vi. quire vi (fols. 31r-33r): f i; f ij; f iij
- vii. quire vii (fols. 37r-39r): G i; G ij; G iij
- viii. quire viii (fols. 43r-45r): h i; h ij; h iij
- ix. quire ix (fols. 49r-51r): j i; j ij; j iij
- x. quire x (fols. 55r-57r): k i; k ij; k iij
- xi. quire xi (fols. 61r-63r): l i; l ij; l iij
- xii. quire xii (fols. 67r-69r): m j; m ij; m iij
- xiii. quire xiii (fols. 73r-75r): n j; n ij; n iij
- xiv. quire xiv (fols. 79r-81r): O j; O ij; O iij
- xv. quire xv (fols. 85r-87r): p i; p ij; p iij
- xvi. quire xvi (fol. 91r): Q i

14. Table of contents:

- a. Not present.

15. Secundo folio:

- a. This is the name p^t

16. Indications of scribe/date:

- a. 15th C. bastard anglicana hand.

17. Indication of owners:

- a. fol. 8v: 'Roger'- there are also another couple of instances of the name around the same stanza of the *Testament* here, which begins 'Riche in veer men gretly them delite'.
- b. fol. 35r: 'In the name and of the father and of the sone and of the Holye Ghost A men so be it *quod* me Robert White' in late 16th C. hand.
- c. 'Presented by Mr Man'

18. Annotations by later users:

- a. fol. 1r: 17th C. inscription recording the donation of the item to Jesus College by William Man, Jan. 21st 1688: 'Liber coll Jesu. Ex dono M^r

Man Coll Socij Jan. 21. 1688'. At the top of the page are library call numbers. Scrubbed out appear to be 'M-H-26', replaced by 'N-ƒ-8', the 'N' then scored out and replaced with a 'Q'. The same call number, 'Q- ƒ-8', has been written again.

- b. fol. 2r: Pencil scribbles in margin.
- c. fol. 28r: More pencil scribbles.
- d. fol. 30r: Possibility that the MS. has been cleaned – there appears to have been some pencil writing in the margin that has been rubbed out.
- e. fol. 30v: Nota marks next to stanzas of 'loke in thy mirroure' – this continues for the rest of the poem. Stanzas marked begin: 'Thus by a marrie symylitude', 'Some man of herte disposid is to pride' and 'Thingis contrarie be not accordyng'... There are almost more stanzas that are marked than are not.
- f. fol. 44v: Nota mark next to stanza of 'Doctrine for Pestilence' beginning 'And yf so be leches do the fayle'.
- g. fol. 45r: More notae at every stanza.
- h. fol. 45v: More nota marks next to sections of *Dietary*: 'Suffre no surfettis in þi hous at nyght', and 'Aftir mete bewarre make no longe slepe'.
- i. fol. 67r: some writing (possibly a word, possibly letter practice) in top margin, now faded.
- j. fol. 76v: pencil copying of the word 'vnfadid' below the bottom line of text. Has been done twice. Now faded.
- k. fol. 79v: The word 'domine' is written sideways in the top left corner, not apparently in imitation of anything else on this page.
- l. fol. 91r: Some pencil scribbling again.
- m. fol. 92v: Some writing. First line under the Explicit copies the first line of distich IV. 49. The others may also be copies of specific distichs, but are now badly faded.

19. Distichs present:

- a. I. 1, 2, 3, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, XLVIII, XLIX
- b. II. P1-2, P3, P6-7, P8-9, P10, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 18, 21, 22, 24, 26, 29, 31, 12, LXXXVII
- c. III. P1-2, P3-4, 3, 7, 9, 10, 13, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, CXVI, CXVII, CXVIII
- d. IV. P1-2, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 13, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 34, 36, 39, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 48, 49

20. Notes:

- a. The volume appears to have been produced as a single whole, given the standard nature of the appearance of the texts. The *Distichs* has not been appended later, and so was presumably felt to be relevant to the others, which suggests the scribe believed them to be by Lydgate as well.
- b. Boffey (1996: 72 & 72 n. 17) notes that Harley 2255 (a Lydgate collected-works apparently produced at his home abbey, Bury St

Edmunds) shares a grouping of texts with Jesus College 56 – *Consulo Quisquis Eris, Midsomer Rose, Horns Away, and Look in the merour.*

c. Notes on *Distichs*:

- i. The layout of these is generally similar to the rest of the items in this MS. The Latin alternates with the English, both are in black – the Latin is in the same script as the English, and is indented slightly in a manner that makes it look like space has been left for a large initial. This is, however, not the case, and all the first letters of the Latin are in the same style as the rest of the writing. The first initial of each stanza of English has been given in red, however, and there is space to provide larger initials at the beginning of each book which have never been filled in. As with the other texts in this MS. there are a lot of words underlined in red, presumably to help with emphasis.
- ii. The pattern of selection is interesting. The distichs have not been re-ordered, some have simply been omitted. Given that this does not seem to have been a feature of the other texts in the MS., it is probable that the scribe was copying an exemplar faithfully.
- iii. The *Distichs* is by far the dirtiest of the texts in this MS., although some of this may be due to the apparent loss of the back cover at some point in its life, as the final page is very dirty. This cannot explain all of it, however, as the wear on the pages starts at the beginning of the text.
 1. The bottom of fol. 82 has been torn off.
 2. fols. 90v-91r are particularly dirty for some reason.
Distich IV. 27 is badly smudged and rubbed.
- d. It is difficult to tell what type of context this is likely to have been used in. It has the feel of a personal book, although the wear on the pages of the *Distichs* suggests that it has either been frequently read (more frequently than other texts in the MS.) or at least used heavily on a couple of occasions. There is very little indication of scribbling or doodling on it however, and the writing on the final folio is quite neat, suggesting that an adult rather than a child is responsible for its current condition. A concentration of religious verse makes it possible this was the property either of a nun or secular priest, but it seems just as likely it could have belonged to a pious layman.

21. Bibliography:

- a. James (1895: 87-90): Catalogue entry.

10. Cambridge, Magdalene College, MS. Pepys 2006

1. Binding:
 - a. Early modern, probably bound by Pepys in 17th C.
2. Material:
 - a. Paper
 - b. McKitterick & Beadle (1992): Watermarks mostly in the gutters and therefore not fully visible, including two *tête de bœuf* (approximately resembling Briquet nos 15043 and 15204), a *croix* (cf. Briquet nos 5590 and 5706), a five-pronged ascender, a forked ascender, and an arrow-headed ascender (for page references see Edwards, p. xxiii).
3. Number of folios:
 - a. i + 291 + ii
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. **p. 1** John Lydgate; *Complaint of the Black Knight* [NIMEV 1507] Beg. '[I]n may quhen flora the fresche lusty quene...' . Verse
 - b. **p. 17** John Lydgate; *The Temple of Glas* [NIMEV 851] Beg. '[F]or thought constrent and grewous heuynes'. Verse
 - c. **p. 53** Geoffrey Chaucer; *Legend of Good Women* [NIMEV 100] Beg. 'A Thowsand tymes <l> have herd telle'. Verse
 - d. **p. 88** Geoffrey Chaucer; ABC hymn to the Virgin [NIMEV 239] Beg. 'almyghty and almerciable quene'. Verse
 - e. **p. 91** Geoffrey Chaucer; *House of Fame* [NIMEV 991] imperfect. Beg. '[G]od turne vs euary drem to gode'. Verse
 - f. **pp. 115** Geoffrey Chaucer; 'Complaint of Mars' [NIMEV 913] Beg. '[G]ladeth the fowlis of this morow grey'. Verse
 - g. **p. 122** Geoffrey Chaucer; 'Complaint of Venus' [NIMEV 3542] Beg. 'Ther nys so hye confort to my plesaunce'. Verse
 - h. **p. 124** Geoffrey Chaucer; 'Balade of Fortune' [NIMEV 3661] Beg. 'This wreched worldes transmutacion'. Verse
 - i. **p. 127** Geoffrey Chaucer; *Parlement of Foules* [NIMEV 3412] Beg. '[T]he lif so short the craft so long to lurne'. Verse
 - j. **p. 143** Anonymous; Middle English translation of *The Three Kings of Cologne*, prose. Beg. '[S]yth of these thre worschypfull kynges alle þe world' IPMEP no. 290. Prose
 - k. **p. 190**. Originally blank
 - l. **p. 191** John Lydgate; *The Serpent of Division*, prose. Beg. '[W]hilom as olde bokes maken mencion whenn the noble'. Prose
 - i. **p. 208** John Lydgate, 4 rhyming lines in *Serpent of Division* [NIMEV 4186.5]
 - ii. **p. 209** John Lydgate, Envoy to *Serpent of Division* [NIMEV 3625] Beg. 'This litill prose declareth in figure'.
 - m. **p. 210**. Originally blank.
 - n. **p. 211** Benedict Burgh; *Parvus Cato* [NIMEV 3955] Beg. '[W]han I aduertise my remembraunce'. Verse

- o. **p. 213** Benedict Burgh; 'Cato Major' [*NIMEV 854*] Imperfect. *Beg.* '[F]Or why that God is inwardli the witte'. *Verse*
- p. p. 225. Geoffrey Chaucer; *Melibee*, from the *Canterbury Tales*. *Beg.* 'A yong man called Melibeus myghty and ryche'. *Verse*
- q. p. 276. Geoffrey Chaucer; the Prologue to the *Parson's Tale*, from the *Canterbury Tales*. *Beg.* 'By that the Maunciple hadde his tale alle ended'. *Prose*
- r. p. 279. Geoffrey Chaucer; the *Parson's Tale*, from the *Canterbury Tales*. *Beg.* 'Owre swete Lorde god of heuen that noo man'. *Prose*
- s. p. 377. Geoffrey Chaucer; the *Retraction*, from the *Canterbury Tales*. *Beg.* 'Now pray I to þem all that herkenen this litell'. *Prose*
- t. **p. 378** Geoffrey Chaucer; 'Complaint of Mars' [*NIMEV 913*] *Beg.* 'Gladeth ye foules at the Morowen gray'. The text in this copy is in a disordered state, and consists of the following: p. 378 lines 1-28; p. 379 lines 57-84; and p. 380 lines 29-56. *Verse*
- u. **p. 381** Geoffrey Chaucer; 'Complaint of Venus' [*NIMEV 3542*] Imperfect. *Beg.* 'Thus be euer in Drede and suffrynge'. This copy begins at line 45. *Verse*
- v. **p. 382** Geoffrey Chaucer; *Anelida and Arcite* [*NIMEV 3670*] Imperfect. *Beg.* 'So thirleth wyth the Point of Remembraunce', This copy consists of two fragments, lines 211-289 and 299-311. *Verse*
- w. **p. 385** Geoffrey Chaucer, 'Balade of Fortune' [*NIMEV 3661*] imperfect, last two lines, 78-79, only: 'Prayeth his best frend of his noblesse / That to som better estat he may atteyn'. *Verse*
- x. **p. 385** Geoffrey Chaucer, *Lenvoy de Chaucer à Scogan* [*NIMEV 3747*] *Beg.* 'To Broken ben the Statutz hye in heuen'. *Verse*
- y. **p. 386** Geoffrey Chaucer, ABC hymn to the Virgin [*NIMEV 239*] *Beg.* 'Almighty and all mercyable quene', expl. 'Of mercy put þat in his remembrance'. *Verse*
- z. **p. 388** Geoffrey Chaucer, 'Complaynt to his Purse' [*NIMEV 3787*] *Beg.* 'To yow my purs and to non oþer wight'. *Verse*
- aa. **p. 389** Geoffrey Chaucer, 'Truth' or 'Balade de bon conseyl' [*NIMEV 809*] *Beg.* 'Fle fro the pres and dwelle with sothfastnesse'. *Verse*
- bb. **p. 390** Geoffrey Chaucer?, 'Merciles Beaute' [*NIMEV 4282*] *Beg.* 'Yowr two yen woll sle me sodenly'. *Verse*
- cc. **p. 392** 'A Collation of these MSS Fragments of Chaucer N^o. 1074.B. wth his Printed Works N^o. 1281'. Edwards 1985: 'A collation, in a seventeenth-century hand, doubtless made by Pepys' amanuensis, listing the contents and lacunae of the manuscript.'

5. Collation:

- a. Volume apparently composed of two original MSS. bound together: pp. 1-224 and 225-391. These may themselves have been composed of pre-existing booklets. The binding is tight and collation is difficult.:
 - i. McKitterick (1992) suggests: I⁴ (pp. 1-8), II⁸ (pp. 9-24), III⁶ 9pp. 25-36), IV⁸ (pp. 37-52), V¹⁶ (pp. 53-84), VI¹⁴ (pp. 85-112), VII¹⁶ (wants 16; the remaining stub is pasted to 15) (pp. 113-142), VIII²⁴ (pp. 143-190), IX⁶ (pp. 191-202), X⁶ (4 and 5 pasted together) (pp. 203-212), XI⁶ (pp. 213-224), XII⁸ (pp. 225-240),

XIII¹⁶ (pp. 241-272), XIV⁴ (pp. 273-280), XV⁸ (pp. 281-296), XVI⁸ (pp. 297-312), XVII⁴ (pp. 313-320), XVIII⁸ (pp. 321-336), XIX⁴ (pp. 337-344), XX¹² (pp. 345-358), XXI⁴ (pp. 369-376), XXII⁸ (pp. 377-392, but pp. 377-378 and 391-392 consist of two leaves pasted together).

- ii. Edwards (1985: xxiii-xxiv) suggests: I⁸ (pp. 1-16), II¹⁴ (pp. 17-44), III⁸ (pp. 45-60), IV⁸ (wants two after 5, one of which, pp. 71-2, has been supplied by a later hand) (pp. 61-74), V⁸ (pp. 75-90), VI¹² (pp. 91-112), VII⁸ (pp. 113-122), VIII¹⁰ (pp. 123-142), IX⁸-XI⁸ (pp. 143-190), XII¹² (pp. 191-210, + one additional leaf pasted to p. 190 and another to p. 210), XIII⁸ (pp. 211-224), an undetermined number of leaves lost containing the end of Burgh's *Cato*, XIV⁸ (pp. 225-240), XV⁸ (pp. 241-256), XVI⁸ (pp. 257-272), XVII⁸ (pp. 273-288), XVIII⁸ (pp. 289-304), XIX⁸ (pp. 305-320), XX⁸ (pp. 321-336), XXI⁸ (pp. 337-352), XXII⁸ (pp. 353-368), XXIII⁸ (5 and 6 pasted together as pp. 377-378, 8 wanting) (pp. 369-380), XXIV⁸ (wants 3, 4) (pp. 381-392).

6. Size of page:

- a. 265 x 180 mm.

7. Size of written space:

- a. Varies with scribe and text.
 - i. pp. 1-224, 210 x 145 mm, with pp. 91-114 in double columns.
 - ii. pp. 225-345, 210 x 120 mm.
 - iii. pp. 346-377, 205 x 135 mm.
 - iv. pp. 378-391, 230 x 110 mm.

8. Layout:

- a. Single columns, 22-42 lines.

9. Frame:

- a. Varied ruling in dry point and plummet

10. Decoration:

- a. Space has been left for large decorated initials in first of two manuscript section, but these have never been inserted. In second section rubrication has been employed for headings and explicits. Ascenders in the top lines of pages are often decoratively extended and touched with yellow and/or red. The first letter of the first line in each page is elaborate in appearance. Large decorative initials present on p. 276, and less decorative red initials for the beginnings of texts and subsections from p. 347 to end.

11. Pagination:

- a. 17th C. pen pagination, probably Pepys' amanuensis, as responsible for the table of contents etc. on pp. 392-394.

12. Catchwords:

- a. Present on pp. 44 and 112, both followed up on next recto.

13. Signatures:

- a. None visible.

14. Table of contents:

- a. pp. 392-394. Extensive listing, covering all items in the volume as it presently stands, written probably by Pepys' amanuensis.

15. Secundo folio:

- a. The watter was so holsum

16. Indications of scribe/date:

- a. McKitterick & Beadle (1992) give date as 's.XV^{med} and s.XV²'.
- b. Hammond (1904): Scribe A, pp. 1-44; Scribe B, pp. 45-142, except for pp. 71-72; Scribe C, pp. 143-224; Scribe D, pp. 225-346; Scribe E, pp. 346-377; Scribe F, pp. 378-391, and observed that yet another hand (now designated G) contributed pp. 71-72.
- c. M.R. James believed Hammond's B and C were the same hand, and McKitterick & Edwards suggest Hammond's E and F (pp. 346-391) are by the same scribe. McKitterick & Beadle give revised scribal stints: Scribe A, pp. 1-44; Scribe B, pp. 45-70, 73-224; Scribe D, pp. 225-346; Scribe E, pp. 346-391; Scribe G, pp. 71-72.
 - i. McKitterick & Beadle (1992): 'Scribe A wrote a small mixed hand, predominantly secretary, but with some anglicana forms, such as the 'reverse' 'e', eight-shaped 'g', and long 'r'. The letter 'y' is used to represent both 'y' and thorn, but yogh does not appear. This scribe writes 'quh-' in words now spelt with initial 'wh-', and commonly substitutes 'w' for consonantal 'v', features characteristic of Scottish orthography at this date. Scribe B's hand is a conventional secretary, with thorn written in a form distinct from 'y', and no yogh. Scribe D: practised bastard secretary of legal aspect, with distinct separation of the minims, and few ligatures; yogh appears not to be used, and thorn is employed only very infrequently. Scribe E: anglicana, with bastard anglicana headings, including an elaborate 'w'; thorn appears in the form distinct from 'y', but yogh is not used. Scribe G: anglicana formata. Dr. A.I. Doyle suggests that the handwriting of scribes A and B (i.e. in the first earlier manuscript) is characteristic of the mid-fifteenth century, and that of D and E (in the second earlier manuscript) of s.XV².'
- d. Edwards (1985: xxii-xxiii) suggests the first part of the MS. is from the second half of the 15th century, and the second half is 'very late fifteenth century'.

17. Indication of owners:

- a. Between pp. 377 and 378 (two paper folios glued together): 'Johannes kiriell:'

- i. McKitterick & Beadle (1992): 'The Kiriell family of Kent were variously connected with Edmund Beaufort, Earl of Somerset, and the Stourton, Cobham and Chicheley families; see E. Seaton, *Sir Richard Roos* (London, 1961), pp. 106-108.'
 - ii. Edwards (1985) argues that Sir John Kyriell was the original owner of the manuscript, and that he was part of a circle of noble/gentry families (the Stourtons, Cobhams and Chicheleys) who were also book owners and thus 'provide a context for John Kyriell's acquisition of Pepys'.
- b. p. 391. 'Iste liber constat Willelmo Fetypace mercerij londoniensis', and 'Iste liber Constat Thome W' (both late 15th C.)
 - i. McKitterick & Beadle (1992): 'William Fetypace, merchant of London, whose ownership mark appears on p. 391, has been speculatively identified as the son of John Fetplace, a London draper, who d. 1464 (see Manly and Rickert as cited under *Bibliography*, below; his will in PRO Prob. 11/5 is further commented upon by Edwards, p. xxix). William came of age in 1473, and later married the widow of a Robert Horne, possibly the man of this name whose signature appears in BL, Harley 4912, *Troilus and Criseyde*. (Edwards, p. xxix, says that 'Pepys' may have acquired **2006** through this marriage, but means 'Fetypace'.)'
 - ii. Although Manly & Rickert (1940: I. 409) identify William Fetypace with the son of draper John Fetplace, Edwards (1985: xxix) suggests this is conclusion should be taken tentatively.

18. Annotations by later users:

- a. p. 1 'The complaynt of þ^e blak knyght' at top of page. Probably in the hand of John Stow.
- b. p. 13: nota mark on *Complaint of Black Knight* next to stanza beginning 'but yef so be that y shal die algate / And that I shal no noþer mercy haue'.
- c. p. 17: Stow again: 'Temple of glas'
- d. p. 23: nota in *Temple of Glass* next to the line 'Passyth the sterres me doth her stremis dawne'
- e. p. 25: different ('+' style) nota next to 'And w^t thi stremys canst euey thyng discorne'
- f. p. 27: first style of nota next to 'And trusteth this for conclusion'
- g. p. 34: Stow: 'Compleynt of the {sunne ?}'
- h. p. 35: another nota 'And sith that hope hath yef me hardnesse'
- i. p. 53: Stow 'Legende of Good Womun'
- j. p. 91: Stow: 'The booke of ffame'
- k. p. 137: some Latin, upside down, trimmed, 'o facere carmen tota hac die vero tentari'
- l. p. 190. McKitterick & Beadle (1992): 'A blank sheet has been pasted over the original verso of p. 189, on which were written, in a hand of s.XV/XVI, what appear to be several drafts of a composition in English verse. One of the draft stanzas appears to read, in part: 'Sofferanns oftyn tymys doys ease / And yff a man wyll be of euyn / Let hym do

nothyng þ^t may [ʔhym] dysese / But all <way *interlined*> kepe hym from dysdayne / euer more to ys ffrend for to be playne' In another draft the second line is substituted by: 'but lytyll to mechyl and yf he wyll be...' The above readings, which are approximate, were obtained by holding the page up to the light.'

- m. p. 196: A 'nota bene' mark
- n. p. 210. McKitterick & Beadle (1992): 'A similar situation to that on p. 190 obtains. On the back of p. 209, since pasted over with a blank sheet, are what appear to be drafts of a piece of verse consisting of six lines rhyming alternately, but they are not sufficiently visible to be transcribed. The hand is the same as that of the preceding item, and the verses are of a moralizing character.'
- o. p. 305: 'Sequitur de septe' – copies part of latin heading on this page
- p. p. 322: 'bere' copied from text and another few words too difficult to read, though Edwards (1985: xxvii) identifies one as 'hungre' copied from the same line of text.
- q. p. 350 some attempts to copy the final line of the page in the margin below: 'he like hym þ^t hand'. Also some writing in the inner margin, too tightly bound to read, but begins 'the'. Both are in Tudor secretary hand.
- r. pp. 377-378. McKitterick & Beadle (1992): 'The page constituting the verso of p. 377 has been pasted to that forming the recto of p. 378. The former appears to be blank, but the latter has at the head 'Johannes kiriel:' in ornamental script, preceded by a red capitulum mark, the inking of which shows through clearly on p. 378. Below, about three-quarters of the way down the page is 'LIBER T' in large black letters, the hand later than that of the first inscription. It should be noted that the scribe's procedure in beginning item 18, *The Complaint of Mars*, on a verso (p. 378) would be somewhat unusual if the preceding recto were blank. It is therefore possible that John Kiriel's name was already on the recto when the scribe of item 18 came to write, a possibility reinforced by the presence of the red capitulum mark preceding the name, which appears similar to the rubrication in the surrounding pages. It may well be that John Kiriel was in some way connected with the production of this part of the manuscript.'
- s. p. 379: pencil scribble, in the form of a looped line.
- t. p. 385: an 18th C. note – 'ye same w.th ye 2 last Lines of ye Lenvoye de Fortune page 126.'

19. Distichs present:

- a. *Parvus Cato* with all Latin, and envoy
- b. I. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, XLVIII, XLIX
- c. II. P1-2, P4-5, P3-4

20. Notes:

- a. McKitterick & Beadle (1992) suggest the two sections were bound together after they became part of Pepys' collection, but note that they

share texts which may 'have derived a number of their shared texts from sources also used by Caxton in issuing the *editiones principes* of several of Chaucer's minor poems (though note the qualifications of Edwards, pp. xviii-xix).'

- b. Edwards (1985: xxviii) suggests that Pepys 2006, although not made up in booklets, and probably not copied from an exemplar made from booklets, shows through the 'variegated contents of the first part [...] the collocations of booklet exemplars at some stage prior to the transcription of the exemplar of Pepys itself.'
- c. Notes on *Distichs*:
 - i. *Parvus Cato* given separated in to stanzas, with the Latin provided in a larger rubricated script in a separate column to the right of main text. *Magnus Cato* all in black, Latin and English alternating, with a change of script to signify the Latin, but of the same size as the English. Spaces have been left for large decorative initials at the beginning of each Latin couplet, and there are prompting letters in the inner gutter, but no attempt has been made to insert these later. A similar space has been left for the 'W' of the 'Whan' in the *Parvus Cato*, but in no other location in this text.
 - ii. The scribe has noticed the accidental transposition of II. P3 and P4-5, and put an 'A' next to the former and a 'B' at the latter.
 - iii. The first section of the MS. (as a whole) breaks off halfway through stanza two of the prologue to the second *Distichs* book, although whoever separated them has cut out the remaining lines from the next page and pasted them in to the bottom margin.
- d. The 'first' manuscript is beautifully neat and tidy, although the second part is a little more stained and soiled. Pepys (or whoever sold the MS. to him) has clearly had it bound very neatly and trimmed so that the pages are perfectly aligned. There is a small amount of dirt on the pages, but nothing to suggest that it has been abused. It could easily have been rarely read, although there are at least three different nota systems at work here.
- e. McKitterick & Beadle (1992): '**2006** is the only known manuscript where the prose material in the Canterbury Tales has all been excerpted together [...] The foregoing explicit is the only evidence that the manuscript might also have included *Sir Thopas*.'
- f. Edwards (1985: xvii): '[the two constituent manuscripts of Pepys 2006] suggest the broadening of the audience for Chaucer's works, since they seem clearly aimed at an audience very different from the courtly, sophisticated ones generally postulated for such Chaucer anthologies as Fairfax 16 or Tanner 346, one content with less elaborate and hence less expensive manuscripts.'
- g. McKitterick & Beadle (1992): 'At an unknown date probably between Pepys' death and the arrival of his library at Magdalene, Thomas Ainsworth (d. 1719) transcribed large parts of **2006**, possibly for use in connection with John Urry's edition of Chaucer. Urry himself annotated the transcriptions (now BL, Additional 38179 [*Distichs* is

one of the texts involved]), but no reference was made to them in the edition'. Gives references to Alderson & Henderson (1970: 94, 97-99) and Edwards (1985: xxxi).

21. Bibliography

- a. Amy (1922): Discussion of MSS. containing 'Legend of Good Women'
- b. Boffey (1985: 12-13, 15n, 36n, 43, 73, 125): Discussion in relation to courtly love lyric contents.
- c. Brussendorf (1925: 192-198): Description of MS. in relation to Chaucer contents.
- d. Erler (2004): Discussion of this MS. in the context of ownership of Chaucer's works.
- e. Hammond (1904): Discussion of MS. in relation to Chaucer contents.
- f. Manly & Rickert (1940: i, 406-409): Description of MS. as part of study of *Canterbury Tales* MSS.
- g. McKitterick & Beadle (1992): Catalogue entry.

11. London, British Library MS. Arundel 168

1. Binding:
 - a. 1960s British Museum binding (date of '-3 OCT 1960' is stamped inside back cover).
2. Material:
 - a. Paper and parchment.
 - b. Quires ii, iii, v, and vii have central parchment bifolium, the rest of the MS. is on paper.
3. Number of folios:
 - a. ii + 85 + iii (fols. i, ii, and back ii, iii are modern paper, back i has been added in 19th C.)
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. From British Library online manuscript catalogue
 - i. **fol. 1r** Anonymous; *ABC hymn to the Virgin Mary* [*NIMEV 607*] *Beg.* 'Criste God me spede now in my lityll tretyse, / And gyfe me grace so for to lerne'. *Verse*
 - ii. **fol. 2r** William Paris; *life of St. Christina* [*NIMEV 2877*] *Beg.* 'Seynte Cristyne was a maide bryglite / As clerkis in bokes hathe rede and seene'. *Verse*
 - iii. **fol. 5r** Anonymous; *Life of St. Dorothy* [*NIMEV 2447*] *Beg.* 'O glorius virgyne, O martire Dorothe, / Whos fadire was called Dorotheus'. *Verse*
 - iv. **fol. 6v** Anonymous; *Versus de virtute imaginis S. Dorotheae contra ignem, fures, etc.* *Beg.* 'In quacumque domo non fuit vel ymago' *Verse (Latin)*
 - v. **fol. 7r** Anonymous; *Oratio brevis ad S. Dorotheam.* *Beg.* 'Sancta dorothea virgo & martir o castate'. *Verse (Latin)*
 - vi. **fol. 7r** Benedict Burgh, *Parvus Cato* [*NIMEV 3955*] *Beg.* 'When y me aduertise in my remembraunce'. *Verse*
 - vii. **fol. 7v** Benedict Burgh, 'Cato Major' [*NIMEV 854*] *Beg.* 'For þat god is inwardly þe witte'. *Verse*
 - viii. **fol. 14r** John Lydgate; *Seven Wise Counsels (Extract from 3651 'A Pageant of Knowledge')* [*NIMEV 576*] *Beg.* 'By sapience tempere thi corage / of hasty ire dawnt thi passions'. *Verse*
 - ix. **fol. 14v** John Lydgate; 'Dietary' (extract) [*NIMEV 824*] *Verse*
 - x. **fol. 15r** John Capgrave; *Life of St. Katherine* [*NIMEV 6*] *Beg.* 'A ihesu criste crowne of maydenes alle'. *Verse*
 - xi. **fol. 65v** Anonymous; *A short prayer to St. Kataryne.* *Beg.* '[O] kateryne of kynges blode virgyne & noble martir'. *Prose.*
 - xii. **fol. 66r** John Lydgate; *Life of Our Lady* [*NIMEV 2574*] Imperfect at beginning. Fifty-nine stanzas are wanting at the beginning, and the scribe has ended abruptly, omitting about 300 stanzas at the end. *Verse*

5. Collation:
 - a. Tentative, as modern binding is tight. Possibly eight quires, separated by paper stubs during rebinding: i⁵, ii¹², iii²⁰, iv¹⁰, v¹⁴, vi⁸, vii¹², viii⁴.
6. Size of page:
 - a. 355 x 255 mm.
7. Size of written space:
 - a. 315 x 195 mm.
8. Layout:
 - a. Double columns throughout.
9. Frame:
 - a. Frame for two columns ruled in brown plummet throughout.
10. Decoration:
 - a. Large letter 'C' on fol. 1r, two-lines height; contains picture of a man's face. fol. 1ra also contains other large letters in red, only one-line high, plus both red and blue paraph marks.
 - b. fol. 1rb onwards spaces are left for similar decorated letters which have never been inserted.
 - c. fol. 14r has large-lettered explicit for Cato, and similar large letters for each of the headings on this page.
11. Pagination:
 - a. 18th C. (?) foliation in pen, replaced by modern foliation in pencil where corners of pages have been lost, until fol. 26. Fols. 27 ff. appear to be foliated in modern pencil.
12. Catchwords:
 - a. Not present.
13. Signatures:
 - a. Not present.
14. Table of contents:
 - a. Not present.
15. Secundo folio:
 - a. [S]eynte cristyne
16. Indications of scribe/date:
 - a. Catalogue: 15th C.
 - b. *LALME* (i, 105) lists MS. as 'in one hand, but variable language'; assigns the language of fols. 2r-6v to Lincs., and the hand of fols. 15 ff. to Ely or SW Norfolk.

17. Indication of owners:

- a. Not present.

18. Annotations by later users:

- a. fol. 5v and 6r: Later (19th C?) hand has added a missing line that has been cropped off in re-binding.
- b. fol. 16r: Marginal notes in a (mostly illegible) 16th C. (?) hand. One appears to read 'borne at | Lunne in | Norfk' 'Lunne' has been corrected to 'Lynn' by a later hand, which has also added 'bale : fo :s8z' underneath. The former note definitely refers to the text, the referent of the latter is, however, unclear. Further down the page the word 'bachiler' has been underlined and 'Bachele[r]' added in the margin, probably in the same hand as the 'Lunne' note above. In the left margin is a very scribbly 'parson of saint | pancrass in lon | don'. This also refers to someone mentioned in the text.
- c. fol. 17r: The number '140' scribbled by the same annotator as above, next to this number where it appears in the text.
- d. fol. 19r: 'babilon' written in margin by same hand as above.
- e. fol. 30v: 'lib 3⁹' written in left margin.
- f. fol. 42r: Illegible words in top margin. This page is very dirty, and the previous membrane page (fol. 41v) repaired after significant damage, as if the book had perhaps been left open at these pages. Fol. 41 is also the only membrane page in this quire.
- g. fol. 47r: 19th C. (?) hand has added 'My will, my minde fro that purchase' between lines. It had originally been inserted by the scribe in the margin, but the edge has been lost in trimming/rebinding.
- h. fol. 48r: 'nö ben' written in left margin.
- i. fol. 53r: 'lib v^{ta}' added in margin, probably by original scribe.
- j. fol. 75v: Short note in margin '[... {T?}]hat while y leue' Two attempts to copy secretary 'A's underneath.
- k. fol. 76r: Some scribbles in outer margin, scraped out and indeed now cropped. Fairly illegible – possibly 'Thy{...}lys{...}'
- l. fol. 83r: Inner margin: 'ajust'? Outer margin 'Enydo{s}' (cropped), apparently in original scribal hand.

19. Distichs present:

- a. All of *Parvus Cato* including envoy
- b. I. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, XLVIII, XLIX
- c. II. P1-2, P4-5, P6-7, P8-9, P10, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, LXXXVII, LXXXVIII, LXXXIX
- d. III. P1-2, 1, P3-4, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, CXVI, CXVII, CXVIII
- e. IV. P1-2, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 39, 34, 35, 30, 36, 37, 38, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49

20. Notes:

- a. Notes on *Distichs*:
 - i. First line of Latin for III. 13 is missing – a gap has been left for it.
 - ii. IV. 8 is missing, although the Latin for IV. 8 is given with the English for IV. 9.
 - iii. IV. 30 is delayed; IV. 39 appears early.
- b. This manuscript is beautifully neatly written, and generally neatly laid out, but is otherwise unostentatious. Spaces have been left for some decorative initials, but these appear never to have been filled in. There is no real evidence of heavy wear, though there is some degradation of the material probably through time. Some small notes and a couple of small doodles mean that it was probably paid occasional attention (possibly by John Stow, although the handwriting seems too neat to be his), but that it was generally left on a shelf.

21. Bibliography:

- a. Forshall (1834: 46): Catalogue entry.
- b. Long (2006: 48-53): Discussion of MS. as a collection of saints' lives.

12. London, British Library MS. Harley 43

1. Binding:
 - a. Modern British Museum binding in red leather with darker red corners and spine piece. Harley coat of arms inscribed in gold on front and back.
2. Material:
 - a. Paper and parchment (heavily repaired).
 - b. Paper predominates, parchment employed often as both inner and outer bifolia (quires iii, iv, vi), or just inner (quires v, vii) or outer (quire viii). Other parchment leaves have been added (all of quire i; the final folio of quire v).
3. Number of folios:
 - a. i + 93 + ii
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. **fol. 3r** Benedict Burgh; 'Cato Major' [*NIMEV 854*] Imperfect. *Beg.* 'But yf thou kepe þin . thy name þou sleyst'. *Verse*
 - b. **fol. 4r** John Walton; translation of Boethius *Consolation of Philosophy* (begins imperfectly) [*NIMEV 1597*] *Beg.* 'Allas I wrech that whylom was in welþ^e' Accompanied by Latin text in the margin, possibly in the hand of Thomas Chaundler. *Verse*
 - c. **fol. 87r** Anonymous; *The Beginning of a Sermon upon these words in Act. XVI.* And God Opened here Hart, that she beleved. (catalogue title). *Beg.* 'Quod homo proponit, lydia apud philippos | Sens autem disponit'. *Prose*
 - d. **fol. 89r** Anonymous; A Treatyse betweene Enformacione & Musyke *Beg.* 'Prologue. | The knowlege of god . parfythe comparysone | the devyle knowthe all evyle thyng consentyd or done'. *Prose*
 - e. **fol. 92r** 'William Kichbell'; 'Enformation will teach a doctor his game' (catalogue title) Apparently imperfect at end. *Beg.* 'Enformacone wyll teche a doctor hys game'. *Prose*
 - f. **fol. 92r** Anonymous; 'A balade of trouthe' [*NIMEV 3912.22*] *Beg.* 'What more poyson than ys venome / What more spytefull than ys trowthe'. *Verse*
5. Collation:
 - a. i² (possibly single pages); ii¹ (the single paper folio containing section of the *Distichs*); iii¹²; iv¹⁸; v¹⁴⁺¹; vi¹⁶; vii¹²; viii⁶; foliation of last 10 pages impossible to determine because of rebinding.
6. Size of page:
 - a. 275 x 220 mm.
7. Size of written space:
 - a. Varies. Usually approx. 205 x 160 mm.

- b. fols. 87r ff.: 240 x 180 mm.
8. Layout:
- a. Single column of main text throughout. Both *Distichs* and *Consolation of Philosophy* accompanied by a narrow column of Latin in the outer margins of pages.
 - b. The last few entries, written in a larger, later hand, are only in one column, filling most of the page.
9. Frame:
- a. No evidence of pricking; possibly cut off or lost.
 - b. Text boxes ruled in brown plummet for Boethius only. No other ruling evident but may have faded.
10. Decoration:
- a. Thomas Chawndeler's ownership inscription on f. 1v is in large uncial script.
 - b. Capital letters in red and blue present for subsections throughout Boethius.
 - c. First letter in each book of Boethius is given as a large blue, four-line capital with red pen swirl decoration surrounding it, spreading up and down the margin.
11. Pagination:
- a. Modern (19th C.) foliation in pencil, ignores first membrane flyleaf.
12. Catchwords:
- a. Present on quires v (fol. 48v) and vi (64v), both followed up.
13. Signatures:
- a. Only present on membrane, presumably to help locate these sheets when they were being bound in to the rest of the MS. fol. 9r '+vj'; fol. 16r 'aj'; fol. 29r 'a*'; fol. 56r 'cviiij'; fol. 70r '{e} uiij;
14. Table of contents:
- a. Not present.
15. Secundo folio:
- a. Allas I
16. Indications of scribe/date:
- a. *Distichs* are in a different hand to Boethius, hybrid secretary, 15th C.
 - b. Boethius in second hand, hybrid anglicana, 15th C.
 - c. Musical discourse / William Kichbell's song / Balade of Trouthe in a third hand, Elizabethan secretary, 16th C. Probably that of either Robert or William Kirchbell.
17. Indication of owners:
- a. fol. 1v: 'X. LIBER. THOME. CHAWNDELER'

- b. fol. 2r: 'Elizabeth' is written twice, along with 'Charles' several times.
- c. fol. 3r: 'Richard Conruard', 'Richard Wender'.
- d. fol. 4r: At head of page 'Thomas Chaundelere vniuersitates oxoniensis et ecclesie wellensis Cancellarius'.
- e. fol. 76v: 'Be me John Johnson of London', scribbly Elizabethan hand with distinctive 'h's.
- f. fol. 87r: 'This is Roborte | Kirhbelles' (Kirkbelles?). Elizabethan secretary, 16th C. May refer to authorship rather than ownership.
- g. fol. 91r: 'William Kichbell'.
- h. fol. 91v: 'John Windo{w}er' in tiny writing.
- i. From Wright 1972:
 - i. Bunge (John) – Owned in 15th C.
 - ii. Chaundler (Thomas) (1418?-1490), Chancellor of Oxford Univ., 1457-1461, 1472-1479, and Chancellor of Wells Cath., 1452.
 - iii. D'Ewes (Sir Simonds) (1602-1650), 1st Bart. 1641, of Stow Hall, Stowlangtoft nr. Bury St. Edmunds, co. Suff.; antiquary; St John's Coll., Cambridge, 1618; Middle Temple 1620; M.P. 1640. Friend of Sir Robert Cotton, etc.
 - iv. Johnson (John), of London. ? Owned 43 in late 16th C.
 - v. Richbell (Robert and William). ? Owned 43 in late 16th C.

18. Annotations by later users:

- a. Various scribbling throughout book, including word and letter practice, and pen trials. Major examples are noted here.
- b. fol. 2r. 'Your singular orator' is written several times, not always complete, in a 16th C. hand; a list of what might be four names is written out, but hard to read, could be 'Pichard, Gouruard, Pitsard, Mender'; pen trials.
- c. fol. 2v: More writing, including an alphabet (15th C.?), and 'Knowen {bril} vnto all manner of menn {Lowyom}'?
- d. fol. 3v: 'Jhesvs Maria'
- e. fol. 4r: 'Boethius de Consolatione anglie et | latine, versu'.
- f. fol. 4v: Pen/writing practice, copying 'liber' in two different 16th C. hands, but apparently mistaking it for 'hiber'.
- g. fol. 8v: Letter practice.
- h. fol. 9v – 10r: Pen trials.
- i. fol. 24r: '1588 yn the yeare of our Lord Jesus Chryst the soone of god' in Elizabethan secretary hand.
- j. fol. 24v – 26r: Pen trials and decorative squiggles.
- k. fol. 32v: (More modern) note – 'folio wanting'.
- l. fol. 40v: Writing practice, copying top line of text: 'That euery man'.
- m. fol. 44r: Letter practice.
- n. fol. 45r: Practice of elaborate pen decoration.
- o. fol. 46v – 47r: Letter practice and, on fol. 47r, 'London', 'Lambent' and 'your singular dolte'.
- p. fol. 48r: Pen trials.
- q. fol. 49r: Individual words, including 'London' and 'Lambent', and '1591' written beside one line.
- r. fol. 53v: Date '1634' in neat Elizabethan numbers.

- s. fol. 83v: Letter and pen practice, some of which has been erased later.
- t. fol. 87r: Latin 'Et {st}ose factores es non Auditores {illegible}'.
- u. fol. 87v: Practice of writing and decorative penwork, including some decorative bands and a '[H]umblie com~ | plaininge and moste pitifullie | complayninge Vnto youre most | excelent maiestie youre highnes | plasant'.
- v. fol. 88: Heavily damaged, much doodling around central text.
- w. fol. 91v: Similar practice, in the form of copying sententiae: '[A] wise man will receiue {ma} | swing but A foole will sooner be | smitten in the face with euelle' and 'Beware also dissemlinge | men for thay will sone betraye there | fayth full frendes with flateringe wordes'.

19. Distichs present:

- a. Latin in margins.
- b. l. 13 (beginning missing), 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21

20. Notes:

- a. James (1916: 57) believes the Latin added to the Boethius translation is in Chaundler's hand up to fol. 29v.
- b. This MS. seems to have been used for private study, possibly by Thomas Chaundler whose name appears several times. It seems to have been adopted later by the Kirchbell family and potentially passed from one generation to the next. What has happened to the rest of the *Distichs* is unclear – it's possible this is just a flyleaf inserted from an older paper MS. The outside edges of the MS. are in poor condition, whereas the inside is a little marked but generally in reasonable condition.
- c. The extensive doodling suggests that this may at some point have been given to a child (or a very inattentive and easily bored adult). Perhaps most likely, given the nature of the additions is that it was someone training in scribal work, and the lines on fol. 87v indicate that this was as a government clerk: 'umblie com- | plaininge and moste pitifullie | complayninge vnto youre most | excelent maiestie youre highnes | plasant'.

21. Bibliography:

- a. Catto (2004): *DNB* entry for Thomas Chaundler, owner of the MS.
- b. James (1916: 57): Some brief notes on the MS. as an appendix to discussion of other MSS. connected to Chaundler.
- c. Wanley *et al.* (1808-1812): Catalogue entry.
- d. Wright (1972): Lists known owners of MS.

13. London, British Library MS. Harley 116

1. Binding:
 - a. British Library binding (1961) with Harley arms and motto gilt-tooled at centre of covers.
2. Material:
 - a. Parchment, frequently repaired by pre-modern restoration work throughout.
3. Number of folios:
 - a. ii + 171
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. **fol. 1r** Thomas Hoccleve; *Regiment of Princes* [*NIMEV 2229*] Imperfect. *Beg.* 'Mvsyng opon þe restles bysyness,' followed by rubric (fol. 97r) 'Verba compilatoris ad librum', *Beg.* 'O litil boke who yas the hardinesse'. *Verse*
 - b. **fol. 97v** Anonymous; The 'Short Charter of Christ' [*NIMEV 4184*] *Beg.* 'Wetys ye now all þat bene / here'. *Verse*
 - c. **fol. 98r** Benedict Burgh; *Parvus Cato* [*NIMEV 3955*] *Beg.* 'Whan I aduerttise in my remembraunce'. *Verse*
 - d. **fol. 99r** Benedict Burgh; 'Cato Major' [*NIMEV 854*] *Beg.* 'For thy that god 3af inwardly the witte'. *Verse*
 - e. **fol. 124r** John Lydgate; Seven Wise Counsels (Extract from *NIMEV 3651*) [*NIMEV 576*] *Beg.* 'By sapience tempere thy corage'. *Verse*
 - f. **fol. 125r** Anonymous; Factors that cause a man to lose reason [*NIMEV 4230*] *Beg.* 'Worship women wyne and vnweldy age'. *Verse*
 - g. **fol. 125v** Anonymous; A note on sanctuary, including a prophecy for the year 1461; circa 1460; *Beg.* 'The making of the sanctuarie to chastis theves extorcurers / with all other mysdoers'. *Prose*
 - h. **fol. 127r** John Lydgate; religious lyric [*NIMEV 951*] *Beg.* 'Deus in nomine tuo saluus me fac in virtute tua / Gode in thy name thou make me safe and sounde'. *Verse*
 - i. **fol. 128r** Anonymous; Acrostic warning of death [*NIMEV 2136*] *Beg.* 'Maist thou now be glade with all thi fresshe aray'. *Verse*
 - j. **fol. 129r** John Lydgate; 'Dance of Macabre' [*NIMEV 2591*] *Beg.* 'O ye folkes that bene harde harted as a stone'. *Verse*
 - k. **fol. 140v** Anonymous; Verses on the foundation of a Carthusian house; 15th cent. Imperfect. *Beg.* 'Salve frater mi. Salue tibi. Quis locus iste'. *Verse (Latin)*
 - l. **fol. 142r** Anonymous; Chronicle from Rollo to Edward IV *Beg.* 'This brief tretys compiled for to bringe people oute of | doute' *Prose*
 - m. **fol. 146v** John Lydgate; 'The Chorle and the Birde' [*NIMEV 2784*] *Beg.* 'Problemys of olde liknese and figures'. *Verse*
 - n. **fol. 152v** Anonymous; Elegy on Ralph, Lord Cromwell, c. 1450 [*NIMEV 2411*] *Beg.* 'O deth hough better ys the mynde of the'. *Verse*

- o. **fol. 154r** Nicholas Bollard; translation of Gottfried von Franken(?); Godfridus Super Palladium. *Imperfect. Beg.* 'The maner of setting of trees is manyfold and so common'. *Prose*
- p. **fol. 162r** Nicholas Bollard; The Book of Planting and Grafting; *Beg.* 'This tretice is departed in iij partes. The firste parte is of gendering the trees'. *Prose*
- q. **fol. 166r** John Lydgate; 'Dietary' [*NIMEV 824*] *Imperfect. Beg.* (stanza 13) 'Iff it be so that leches do the fayle'. *Verse*
- r. **fol. 167v** Anonymous; Medical recipes against toothache, nose bleeding, insomnia, urinary problems, and fever; 16th cent. *Beg.* 'Take powder of pepper and seethe it in white wine and sup thereof as hot as ye may'. *Prose*
- s. **fol. 170v** Anonymous; Warning against lending money [*NIMEV 1297*] *Beg.* 'I had my good and my frend / I lent my good to my frend'. *Verse*
- t. **fol. 170v** Anonymous; The Wise Man [*NIMEV 1139*] *Beg.* 'He is wys þat kan be war or him be wo'. *Verse*
- u. **fol. 170v** Anonymous; Four couplets [*NIMEV 1400*] *Beg.* 'I wold lene but I ne dar'. *Verse*
- v. **fol. 170v** Anonymous; Proverbs [*NIMEV 3088*] *Beg.* 'Sette ans saue yf thow wyll have'. *Verse*
- w. **fol. 170v** Anonymous; Epitaphs of Guidonis of Warwyke, John Lidgate and a lady; 16th cent. *Verse (Latin)*

5. Collation:

- a. Adapted from BL online catalogue: i², ii-iv⁸, v⁸⁻¹ (lacking first leaf), vi-xii⁸, xiii¹⁰, xiv-xvi⁸, xvii⁴⁺¹ (fifth leaf added), xviii⁸, xix⁸⁻¹ (Lacking eighth leaf), xx⁸, xxi⁴, xxii⁸, xxiii⁸⁻² (lacking sixth and eighth leaves), xxiv⁴

6. Size of page:

- a. 280 x 185 mm.

7. Size of written space:

- a. 185 x 120 mm.

8. Layout:

- a. Single columns, mostly of 31 lines.

9. Frame:

- a. Pricked and ruled in ink (fols. 1r-126v) or plummet (fols. 127r-166r).

10. Decoration:

- a. Large initials (3-4 lines) in blue, with pen-work decoration in red extending into the margin (fols. 1r, 36r, 38v, 44r, 53v, 59r, 61v, 64v, 69v, 71v, 73v, 79v, 84v, 86v, 89v, 97r, 127r, 129r, 129v)
- b. Text initials (3-line) in red (fol. 97v) or blue (fol. 146v).
- c. Initials of stanzas (fols. 127-128) in alternate blue and red.

11. Pagination:

- a. Modern foliation in pencil – fols. 1*-2*, 1-171.

12. Catchwords:

- a. Present and followed up on all but last three gatherings (fols. 154-171).

13. Signatures:

- a. quire ii (fols. 3r-6r): aj-aiiij
- b. quire iii (fols. 11r-14r): bj-biiij
- c. quire iv (fols. 19r-22r): cj-ciiij
- d. quire v (fols. 27r-30r): dij-diiij
- e. quire vi (fols. 34r-37r): ej-eiiij
- f. quire vii (fols. 42r-45r): fj-fiiij
- g. quire viii (fols. 50r-53r): gj-giiij
- h. quire ix (fols. 58r-61r): hj-hiiij
- i. quire x (fols. 66r-70r): ij-iiiiij
- j. quire xi (fols. 74r-77r): kj-kiiij
- k. quire xii (fols. 82r-85r): lj-liiij
- l. quire xiii (fols. 90r-93r): mj-miiij
- m. quire xiv: f. 101r: {illegible}; f. 106r: {illegible}
- n. quire xv (fols. 108r-111r): pj-piiij
- o. quire xvi (fols. 116r-118r): qj-qiiij
- p. quire xvii (fols. 124r-127r): rj-riiij
- q. quire xviii (fols. 129r-132r): sj-siiij
- r. quire xix (fols. 137r-140r): tj-tiii{j}
- s. quire xx (fols. 144r-146r): vj-vij
- t. Quiring is therefore consistent until the Nicholas Bollard texts, indicating that this is the first of the section that has been added later.

14. Table of contents:

- a. fol. i^v
 - i. 'Contenta huius libri'
 1. In *primum* Ocliff de regimine *principes*
 2. Item magna Carta Saluatoris
 3. Item liber minoris Catonis & maioris | *translatus* a latino in anglum *per* magistrum Benet Borugh
 4. Item modus faciendi sanctuarium *cum* latrones
 5. Item psalmus deus in *nomine* tuo *translatus* in Angliam
 6. Item tripudium macabry de morte
 7. Item *tractatus* *quid* de regibus Anglie
 8. Item *tractatus* de Ave et Carlabundo
 9. Item *quid* *tractatus* Godfridi {*extracus*} a palladio
 10. Item *tractatus* fundacionis domus Cartusientium [this is in a later hand]
 11. Item diatorium *factum* *per* dominum Johanum lidgate' [also in later hand]
 - b. Boffey (1996: 74) uses the existence of this contents list along with the quire signatures as evidence that 'the parts of this manuscript

were together, in the order in which they now occur, from an early date.'

15. Secundo folio:

- a. Allas thought

16. Indications of scribe/date:

- a. BL Catalogue: 'seven English hands: - a) ff. 1-125v, 142-152, two English cursive hands; - b) ff. 125v-126v, 127-140v, 140v-141v, 152v-153v and possibly 166-166v, four English Secretary hands; - c) ff. 154-165v, a more cursive English Secretary hand.'
- b. BL Catalogue notes that the date must be after 1461, as Edward IV is given as king – cites Seymour (1974: 265-66) and Radulescu (2003).
- c. Boffey (1996: 73): 'Its main text, with which it opens, is Hoccleve's *Regiment of Princes*, copied throughout in one hand, which goes on to supply Benedict Burgh's translations of *The Distichs of Cato* and some short items of verse and prose.' In total, Boffey mentions four main hands. She splits the MS. in to five components; this first one, two containing a selection of Lydgate material ('apparently both worked on by a further pair of scribes' – 1996: 73), the arboriculture texts (one further scribe), and the *Dietary* (returns to one of the Lydgate scribes, the same who copied *Dance Macabre* and the *Elegy* of Lord Cromwell). There are, presumably, other hands present in the additions after the *Dietary*.
- d. Seymour (1974: 266): 'after 1461. Possibly inmates of a religious house, perhaps Carthusian and connected in some way with Ralph, Lord Cromwell (d. 4 January 1454) [N.B. the *DNB* believes Cromwell died on 4th January 1456]. His family seat was at Tattershall, Lincolnshire, where he founded the college and was buried. Hand I [of *Regiment of Princes*] (ff. 1-126v) *cursiva formata*: headless *a*, open *e*, open-tailed *g*, ascenders of *b*, *h*, *l* looped and of *d* oblique (occasionally looped), short *r*, kidney-shaped final *s*. Hand II (ff. 127-140v) *cursiva libraria*: headless *a*, open *e*, closed-tailed *g*, ascenders of *b*, *h*, *l* looped and of *d* oblique (occasionally looped), short and long *r*, ascenders of *v*, *w* oblique. Hands III-IV (ff. 142v-153v) two (possibly three) other *cursiva formata* hands. Hand V (ff. 154-165v) cursive hand: headless *a*, closed *e*, open-tailed *g*, ascenders of *b*, *d*, *h*, *l* looped and of *v*, *w* oblique, long *r*.'
- e. Boffey (1996: 75): 'possibly worked on simultaneously by a number of associated scribes'.

17. Indication of owners:

- a. fol. ii^r: 'Iste liber constat John Kymbell' (now scored out)
- b. fol. 1r: Radulescu (2003: 403 n. 7): 'Surgon Correl owe thys boke'. This could in fact say 'Cornell'.
- c. fol. 1v: Radulescu (2003: 403 n. 8): 'receyvyd of John Kymbell the ixth daye of Auguste in the xx^t yere of the reigne of kyng henry the vijth by the hande of John harrison xxxiiij s iiiij d'. N.B. Radulescu misread a

couple of these letters, including the price, which I've silently amended here.

- d. fol. 1v: Transcribed by Boffey (1996: 74 n. 24): 'Md þt I haue payd thomasse gese yn hyse barne þe same / day þt he & his wyfe mad hit clene þt wasse evyn vponne / þe tewysdaye nex before relyke sondaye sor a closse / vnto seynt petiir þe apostyll day nex folowyng / al hys owte fasse only – viiid before honde'.
- e. fol. 2r: Radulescu (2003: 403 n. 6): 'Iste liber constat Willelmo Bygar teste Roberto Holte Scriptum fuit a die *sancte Michaelis* archi y[q?]uid futuro / Anno Regim Regis Henrici Octavi quartodecimo'. Boffey (1996: 74 n. 24) believes 'Bygar' to be 'Gygar', whilst Seymour (1974: 266) reads it as 'Sygar'. Boffey's full transcription is as follows: 'Iste liber constat Willelmo Gygar teste Roberto holte / scriptum fuit a die *sancte michaelis archangeli primo futuro / anno regum regis henrici octau i quartodecimo*'.
- f. fol. 170r: Boffey (1996: 74 n. 24) transcribes: 'md þt thomas bygnyll must haue of me / ij schrytes a dowbelette redy made & a jaket / a payr of hose or xiiijd ij peyr schoys & / a gowne clothe & vijs yn mony'
- g. fol. 170r: 'Robertus C' (i.e. Sir Robert Cotton).
- h. fol. 170v: 'Constat Jhon Kymbell of Indwell'.
- i. Radulescu (2003: 404): owned (after Cotton) by Sir Simonds D'Ewes, then purchased by Henry Wanley for Robert Harley.
- j. Seymour (1974: 266): 'if this miscellany was compiled in a religious house [...] it passed into secular hands long before the Dissolution. In the early 16th c. it was owned by 'Surgon Torell' [...] by John Kymbell of Ludwell, 9 August 1505; and by William Sygar, 29 September 1522. Subsequently owned by Sir Simonds D'Ewes (d. 1650), whose library passed in 1705 to the Harleian collection, where its press-marks were 35.A.117 and 116 8/vi B.'
- k. From Wright (1972):
 - i. Bygar (Willelmus). Owned 116 on 29th September 1522, witnessed by Robert Holte.
 - ii. Corell (-), 'Surgon'. Owned 116 in 16th C.
 - iii. D'Ewes (Sir Simonds) (1602-1650), 1st Bart. 1641, of Stow Hall, Stowlangtoft nr. Bury St. Edmunds, co. Suff.; antiquary; St John's Coll., Cambridge, 1618; Middle Temple 1620; M.P. 1640. Friend of Sir Robert Cotton, etc.
 - iv. Kymbell (John), 'of Indwell'. Owned 116 in 16th C.

18. Annotations by later users:

- a. fol. i^r: Some notes, difficult to read: 'he shid in yeue wyth {illegible} preten', '{illegible} lyndor prince of Wales'.
- b. fol. 1v: Elizabethan note repeating a line of text: 'this warldes stormes wash my mynd'.
- c. fol. 2v – 3r: more notes, including 'nota' marks and 'A mu^e staff' notes. There are many more notes throughout this text (the *Regiment of Princes*), including notes, the supply of missing words, and glossing of words.

- d. fol. 8r: Next to 'Vnder a nold pore habit regneth ofte / Grete vertu' is the note 'note a wise saying' in a very neat 16th C. hand.
- e. fol. 19v: Letter practice.
- f. fol. 39r: Large geometrical shapes, possibly (but not all) based on letters.
- g. fol. 73r: Decorative doodles in the margins – may be contemporaneous with production of MS.
- h. fol. 77v: Three-dotted clover nota, leaves not drawn in full.
- i. fol. 107r: Pencil scrawls in margin.
- j. fol. 109v: Doodles.
- k. fol. 117r: Doodle of a man with a letter 'R' beside him.
- l. fol. 140v: Three-dot clover notae.
- m. fol. 144r: The names of Edward III's daughter-in-law and grandson, along with a nota mark next to the paragraph about Roger, Earl of March.
- n. fol. 145v: Nota next to the paragraph on the descent of Richard, Duke of York – clear interest in the lineage of those involved in the Wars of the Roses, with particular interest in the Yorkist claim.
- o. fol. 148v: Notes next to the 'Churl and the Bird' – 'the churles speache to the bird' is written next to the churl's threats of violence and, next to the following paragraph 'the bird'. Presumably a favourite part. In the hand of the owner who wrote the note about having the book 'washed' (fol. 1v).
- p. fol. 150r: Letter practice.
- q. There are no notes in the 16th C. hand following 'Godfridus Super Palladium', although it is possible that the other Bollard text that follows was written for this owner, as it is also in a 16th C. hand.
- r. fol. 171r: A possible list of names, now illegible.

19. Distichs present:

- a. Latin present. Alternates with English. Not truncated or rubricated.
- b. Complete *Parvus Cato* with envoy.
- c. I. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, XLVIII, XLIX
- d. II. P1-2, P3-4, P4-5, P6-7, P8-9, P10, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, LXXXVII, LXXXVIII, LXXXIX
- e. III. P1-2, 1, P3-4, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, CXVI, CXVII, CXVIII
- f. IV. P1-2, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 35, 30, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49

20. Notes:

- a. Boffey (1996: 76): Suggests that this was copied from another Lydgate anthology, as the scribe has (mistakenly?) copied a line promising that *Rammeshorne* will also be included. Offers hypotheses for the non-appearance of the item itself, but nothing solid.

- b. Seymour (1974: 265-266) suggests Harley 116 was composed in a religious house, perhaps one with a connection to Ralph, Lord Cromwell. Radulescu (2003: 402-403) disputes this point. Boffey (1996: 74-75) pays it minimal heed and instead suggests that the mortality lyric is addressed more to an imagined female reader.
- c. fols. 154-167r. (i.e. the Nicholas Bollard texts on gardening and the *Dietary*) appear to be in a completely different hand to any of the rest of the MS. The layout is also very different – much longer lines – and the red quire signatures present throughout the rest of the volume are also missing. The hand changes drastically again at fol. 167v (the medical recipes). The general appearance of these later sections suggests that, in its later life, a blank quire was attached to the end of the MS. with room to append extra material when/if desired. There is still a large amount of unused space. The extra material seems to be largely medical in nature, and the hand does appear to be later than the main body of the MS. It is certainly less controlled and professional in appearance and so is more likely to be that of an owner than a paid scribe.
- d. Boffey (1996: 74) notes that the sections of the MS. were ‘tailored to fit’ the whole, as the *Distichs* and the *Churl and the Bird* sections conclude with unusual gatherings of four leaves.
- e. Notes on the *Distichs*:
 - i. The Latin is generally separated from the English in the *Distichs* by a red border running out of the end of the first line, down the right hand side, then along the bottom of the second line. This has not been consistently done, some distichs are missed (especially if the first and second lines are on separate pages) and there is a section (fols. 114v-116r) in which only one distich (III. 13) is given its red border.
 - ii. There is no evidence of annotation of the *Distichs*, although someone has tried to clarify one or two difficult-to-read words. There is a slightly messy pencil doodle on fol. 117r that may be intended to be a man, but is difficult to interpret. It may have begun with letter practice that was then expanded in to a picture, as there appears to be an elaborated letter ‘B’ or ‘R’ beside it. Such doodling might suggest protracted use by a child, who did this to alleviate some of their boredom.
 - iii. Note ‘lady fortune’ next to III. 8
 - iv. IV. 35 appears very early; IV. 24-34 are missing. This is not because pages have been lost from this MS., as the previous and following distich are on the same page (fol. 121v), so it must be a lack in the source MS.
- f. Boffey (1996: 75): ‘the manuscript certainly has the air of a generally planned compendium of useful and improving material [...] Of particular interest to the current discussion is the manuscript’s construction from a group of units of which most in themselves form small anthologies or miscellanies of different kinds.’
 - i. Discusses *Dietary* section as being ‘accretive’, with recipes added by later users.

- ii. Arboriculture texts stated to have circulated regularly together.
- iii. *Regiment* and *Cato* sections noted as being large texts with space filled by other short items. *Cato* accompanied by Lydgate's 'Seven Wise Counsels' and 'Factors that cause a man to lose reason' – both moral items – to fill up space in booklet.
- g. Radulescu (2003: 402): 'In view of the contents of this manuscript, it is clear that its owners' interests lay with the issues of royal inheritance, descent, and the governance of the realm, which were widespread concerns among an increasing audience, including country and urban gentry.'
- h. Radulescu (2003: 404) sees evidence that the 'Chronicle' was not heavily used, as it contains 'obvious mistakes and lack of words'.
- i. Boffey suggests tentative themes of death and current affairs for the Lydgate sections. There is a messy manicule on fol. 129v, pointing to a verse of Lydgate's 'Danse Macabre' headed in rubric 'Dethe to the pope'. The exact importance of this is unclear. The rubric is not an imperative, but rather a description of who is speaking to whom at this point. Nonetheless, it is possible that an overzealous Reformer (or someone hunting for heretical material) could have hastily interpreted this heading before reading the text. It is more likely that the passage is being picked out for special attention, probably by the same reader who doodled on the *Distichs*, given that the pen appears to be the same.
- j. This MS. is generally unostentatious. It has received some use, as evidenced by the corrections and occasions where difficult handwriting has been clarified in the margins. There is some doodling in it, but relatively little. The hands support the impression given by the contents list that texts were added later, and those at the very end fairly haphazardly.
- k. Boffey (1996: 74): 'the manuscript would appear from the outset, or from very near the outset, to have been used as a single entity [...] Notes from the beginning and end of the volume also suggest that it was handled as a complete unit in the very early sixteenth century' – these are the notes relating to John Kymbell (fol. iv and fol. 170v).

21. Bibliography:

- a. Boffey (1996): Discussion of MS. as miscellany containing pieces of short verse.
- b. British Library online catalogue:
<http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/manuscripts/HITS0001.ASP?VPath=html/74589.htm&Search=116&Highlight=F> [last accessed: 5th July 2012]; Includes detailed information gathered by project on medieval medical manuscripts.
- c. Radulescu (2003): Discussion of the MS. in relation to the 'Chronicle from Rollo to Edward'.
- d. Seymour (1974: 265-66): Description of MS. as part of a study of *Regiment of Princes MSS*.
- e. Wanley *et al.* (1808-1812): Catalogue entry.
- f. Wright (1972): Lists known owners of MS.

14. London, British Library, MS. Harley 172

1. Binding:
 - a. 20th C. British Museum binding.
2. Material:
 - a. Parchment (inner and outer bifolia) and paper.
 - b. Some of the vellum is of poor quality – it is rarely the same size as the paper sheets, and fol. 85 particularly is not well scraped.
3. Number of folios:
 - a. ii + 93 +ii
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. From the online version of printed catalogue.
 - i. **fol. 1r** John Lydgate; *Fall of Princes (extracts)* [*NIMEV 1168*] *Beg.* 'Al thow so be in every manyer Age'. *Verse*
 - ii. **fol. 3v** Anonymous; A Tretyse of a Solytarye & a Recluse Woman (*sc. S. Brigitt*) concerning the Number of the Wounds of our Saviour Jesus Christ (catalogue title) *Beg.* '[Here] beginnythe a tretyse of a solytarye and a recluse woman she covetyng to knowe the noumbre of the wondys of oure lord Jhesu cryste'. *Prose*
 - iii. **fol. 5v** Anonymous; *Fifteen Meditations upon Jesus Christ, all beginning with the Word Jesu* (catalogue title). *Beg.* 'Jhesu that arte euerlastyng swetnes & verraye blysse of mannys soule'. *Prose*
 - iv. **fol. 11r** Anonymous; *Form of Confession of Sins* (catalogue title) *Beg.* '[C]onfiteor deo celi et beate marie beato benedicto et omnibus sanctis eius et vobis – *et cetera* [I] knowlege me gilty vn to god and to oure lady seynt marye'. *Prose (Latin and English)*
 - v. **fol. 18r** Anonymous; *Articles of Faith* (catalogue title) *Beg.* 'Here be the xiiij Artycles of the Feythe in Holy Chyrche; of the which vij longethe unto the Godhede, and vij unto the Manhede.' *Prose*
 - vi. **fol. 19v-20r** blank
 - vii. **fol. 20v** A short scribbled note, a four line Latin stanza, and a line of Greek, the last one (or two, possibly) attributed underneath to 'Symonds D'ewes'.
 - viii. **fol. 21r** Peter Idley; *Instructions to his Son* [*NIMEV 1540*] *Beg.* 'In the begynnyng of this litell werke'. *Verse*
 - ix. **fol. 52r** Benedict Burgh; 'Cato Major' [*NIMEV 854*] *Beg.* '[F]or whi þ^t god ys Inwardly the Wytt'. *Verse*
 - x. **fol. 71v** John Lydgate; 'Rammeshorne' [*NIMEV 199*] *Beg.* 'Alle Ryghtwysnes now dothe procede'. *Verse*

- xi. **fol. 73r** Thomas Hoccleve; 'Lerne to Die' [*NIMEV 3121*] *Beg.* 'Sythen al Men naturally desire / To koune & knowe, O Eterne Sapience'. *Verse*
- xii. **fol. 88v** Anonymous; De S'co Antonio Padue, Ordinis Fratrum Minorum (catalogue title). *Beg.* 'Si queris miraculam mors error calamitas' *Prose (Latin)*
- xiii. **fol. 89r** Anonymous; *De Indulgentiarum annis ab Alexandro Papa VI concessis* (catalogue title) *Beg.* 'Alexander sexta socessit decem milia annorum pro mortalibus'. *Prose (Latin)*
- xiv. **fol. 90v** Anonymous; *The Golden Mean (couplet)* [*NIMEV 512.5*] 'Better ytt ys smalle howsolde too holde / Then to lye in pryson wyth fetters of golde'. *Verse*
- xv. **fol. 92r** Anonymous; *Salutationes sive Ejaculationes ad B.V. Mariam.* (catalogue title) *Beg.* [erased, just legible: 'papa secundus'] 'pro testamento spirituali. Dedit omnibus legentibus.' *Prose (Latin)*
- xvi. **fol. 92v** *Pater Noster; Ave Maria; et Credo. Verse (Latin)*

5. Collation:

- a. i-vii¹², viii⁸

6. Size of page:

- a. 160 x 110 mm.

7. Size of written space:

- a. Varies slightly, in *Distichs* 125 x 80mm.

8. Layout:

- a. Single columns.

9. Frame:

- a. Pricked and ruled in brown pen throughout

10. Decoration:

- a. None. Spaces left for single-line rubricated initials which have not been inserted.

11. Pagination:

- a. Modern foliation in pencil.

12. Catchwords:

- a. Present on quires iii (fol. 36v) and iv (48v), both followed up.

13. Signatures:

- a. quire i (fols. 2r-6r): aij-avj
- b. quire ii (fols. 13r-17r): bj-bvj
- c. quire iii (fol. 25r): vj
- d. quire iv (fols. 37r-42r): cj-cvj
- e. quire v (fols. 49r-54r): dj-dvj

- f. quire vi (fols. 61r-66r): ej-evj
- g. quire vii (fols. 73r-78r): fj-fvj
- h. quire viii (fols. 85r-89r): oo-ooooo{o}

14. Table of contents:

- a. Not present.

15. Secundo folio:

- a. {I}n rehersall or reporte

16. Indications of scribe/date:

- a. Late 15th C.

17. Indication of owners:

- a. From Wright (1972);
 - i. D'Ewes (Sir Simonds) (1602-1650), 1st Bart. 1641, of Stow Hall, Stowlangtoft nr. Bury St. Edmunds, co. Suff.; antiquary; St John's Coll., Cambridge, 1618; Middle Temple 1620; M.P. 1640. Friend of Sir Robert Cotton, etc.
 - ii. Savile (Henry)('Long Harry')(1568-1617), of Banke, W.R., co. York; Merton Coll., Oxford 1588; B.A. 1592; M.A. 1595; licensed to practise medicine 1601; scholar.

18. Annotations by later users:

- a. fol. 36v: Some writing in margins, later erased.
- b. fol. 38r: Attempts to copy the first line once, and the final word a couple of times.
- c. Notes on *Distichs*:
 - i. 'Nota' and picture-corner-style bracket at K's line 614 in *Distichs*
 - ii. fol. 65v: 'man' has been glossed 'wyt' in the *Distichs* – evidence that the *Distichs* was actually read in this MS.
- d. fol. 72v: Pen practice on otherwise mostly blank folio.
- e. fols. 90v, 91v: Pen practice, erased.

19. Distichs present:

- a. I. 1 (missing final 3 lines), 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, XLVIII, XLIX
- b. II. P1-2, P3-4, P4-5, P6-7, P8-9, P10, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 27, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 12, LXXXVII, LXXXVIII, LXXXIX
- c. III. P1-2, 1, P3-4, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, CXVI, CXVII, CXVIII
- d. IV. P 1-2, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 30, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49

20. Notes:

- a. First two folios have been broken and mended with stitching.
- b. fols. 88v-91v originally left blank, possibly to be filled later.
- c. Notes on *Distichs*:
 - i. There is no Latin present in the *Distichs*. This is possibly to save space in such a small book.
 - ii. Someone has labelled the *Distichs* as by 'John Lydgate' (fol. 52r - probably not the scribe), but it has later been crossed out. Someone (and this time it could be Stow) has scribbled 'T. Hoclive' at the top of fol. 62r believing this to be a separate poem.
 - iii. The English and Latin for 'so you may beguile art with art' has been written at the bottom of fol. 55r by a later (Elizabethan secretary) hand – presumably because this was one of the most often-quoted lines of the *Disticha*. At the end of each book is the line 'Soli deo honor et gloria', which suggests that there is still a fairly strong religious feeling attached to the text.
 - iv. The first two lines of I. 12 are reversed; II. 27 appears very early; II. 12 appears very late; a line of III. 13 has been omitted, added at the end of the stanza, and marked in the margin; IV. 30 is delayed.
 - v. An alternate version of line 601 (in Kuriyagawa's reckoning) is given – in the main text is 'But yf a man the kyrnell wolle vnknytte'; at the foot of the page is given 'But yf þ^t ye the kyrnel wol vnknyt'. Not sure why – alternative reading for a female user?
- d. 'Soli deo...' appears throughout the book, and there is a quire left at the end which has been ruled but not filled. It has later had short pieces added haphazardly, and some (the Pater Noster, Creed, Ave Maria etc. – fols. 88v-92v) apparently written from the last page forward. This suggests that the whole book was a small personal collection of meaningful texts. Lack of annotation suggests that it was not used as a schoolbook, and the neatness of the writing suggests an adult reader. Its contents make it possible that it was produced by a monk or nun for his/her own use.

21. Bibliography:

- a. Wanley *et al.* (1808-1812): Catalogue entry.
- b. Wright (1972): Lists known owners of MS.

15. London, British Library, MS. Harley 271

1. Binding:
 - a. Modern British Museum with Harley coat of arms on front and back cover.
2. Material:
 - a. Paper with parchment flyleaves
3. Number of folios:
 - a. i + 44 + i
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. From online version of printed catalogue:
 - i. **fol. 1r** Anonymous; *The Libel of English Policy* [NIMEV 3491] *Beg.* 'The trewe Prosses of Englysch Polecie'. *Verse*
 - ii. **fol. 26r** Benedict Burgh; *Parvus Cato* [NIMEV 3955] *Beg.* 'When I aduertise in my remembraunce'. *Verse*
 - iii. **fol. 26v** Benedict Burgh; 'Cato Major' [NIMEV 854] *Beg.* 'For why that God is inwardli the witte'. *Verse*
5. Collation:
 - a. Impracticable; pages have been rebound individually.
6. Size of page:
 - a. 220 x 150 mm.
7. Size of written space:
 - a. 160 x 100 mm (approx.; some slight variation).
8. Layout:
 - a. Single columns.
9. Frame:
 - a. Not present.
10. Decoration:
 - a. fol. 25v: Maltese cross surrounded by concentric circles and, outermost, a square – N.B. This Maltese cross symbol is also employed by the rubricator of related MS. BL Harley 4733, where it is used to mark copying errors.
 - b. Little marks, similar to letter 'a', preceding the first line of each translated distich. The stanzas are copied without line breaks between them, and these appear to be intended to mark out the beginnings of new stanzas.
11. Pagination:
 - a. Modern foliation in pencil.

12. Catchwords:
- a. Not present.
13. Signatures:
- a. Not present.
14. Table of contents:
- a. Not present.
15. Secundo folio:
- a. be lord of the see
16. Indications of scribe/date:
- a. None present.
17. Indication of owners:
- a. From Wright (1972):
 - i. D'Ewes (Sir Simonds) (1602-1650), 1st Bart. 1641, of Stow Hall, Stowlangtoft nr. Bury St. Edmunds, co. Suff.; antiquary; St John's Coll., Cambridge, 1618; Middle Temple 1620; M.P. 1640. Friend of Sir Robert Cotton, etc.
 - ii. Savile (Henry) ('Long Harry') (1568-1617), of Banke, W.R., co. York; Merton Coll., Oxford 1588; B.A. 1592; M.A. 1595; licensed to practise medicine 1601; scholar.
18. Annotations by later users:
- a. Occasional sub-headings added in 'Libel of English Policy' by a Tudor/Elizabethan secretary hand.
 - b. fol. 13r: Star.
 - c. fol. 13v: Spiral curl.
 - d. fol. 14v: Star.
 - e. fol. 15r: Spiral – these last four items may be nota marks. They seem to be on pages particularly about the enmity of 'Hollanders' and 'Flemynges'.
19. Distichs present:
- a. All of *Parvus Cato* except envoy stanza.
 - b. I. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, [pages missing] 38, 39, 40,
 - c. II. P1-2, P3-4, P4-5, P6-7, P8-9, P10, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31
 - d. III. P 1-2, 1, P 3-4, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24
 - e. IV. P 1-2, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 30, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49

20. Personal notes:

- a. The flyleaves have been cut from larger pages, resulting in loss of much of the text. The pages are from a Latin missal, copied in a Carolingian minuscule hand. It is discussed in detail in Orchard (1994)
- b. Notes on *Distichs*:
 - i. Latin present in the margins, that of the *Parvus Cato* heavily truncated
 - ii. Envoys missing, IV. 30 out of place
 - iii. Ends crediting: 'Explicit liber catonys *compositus* per *Magistrum Benedyctum Boruhum vicarius de Maldoun in essex*'
- c. Missing *Distichs* envoies, Burgh's authorship declaration, and the presence of 'Maltese-cross' markings are clear indications that this volume is related in its production to BL MS. Harley 4733.

21. Bibliography:

- a. Orchard (1994): Discussion of Latin missal folios used as flyleaves.
- b. Wanley *et al.* (1808-1812): Catalogue entry.
- c. Wright (1972): Lists known owners of MS.

16. London, British Library, MS. Harley 2251

1. Binding:
 - a. 19th cent. British Museum binding with Harley arms and motto gilt-tooled at centre of covers.
2. Material:
 - a. Paper.
 - b. Paper has been gilt-edged, though this is now mostly faded/lost – this has clearly been done later in the life of the MS., as it shows some signs of having been trimmed following the annotation of 'Jo: Br:' (fol. 76v).
 - c. M&R: 'Watermarks'
 - i. Armoiries Deux Pals, Briquet 2064 (1464), ff. 1-238.
 - ii. Tête de Boeuf, not identified in Briquet, ff. 239 and 274-93.
 - iii. Ciseaux, Briquet 3700 (1469), ff. 240-73.'
3. Number of folios:
 - a. 293 plus a blank leaf following fol. 170.
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. **fol. 1r** Anonymous; Prayer [*NIMEV 1682*] *Beg.* 'O Jhu Crist kepe our lyppes from pollucione'. *Verse*
 - b. **fol. 1v** Anonymous; Prayer to the Virgin Mary [*NIMEV 183*] *Beg.* 'Al hayle Mary ful of grace'. *Verse*
 - c. **fol. 2v** John Lydgate; Verses on the Kings of England (to Henry VI) (this copy extended to Edward IV) [*NIMEV 3632*] *Beg.* 'This mighti William Duke of Normandy'. *Verse*
 - d. **fol. 4v** John Lydgate; 'Dietary' [*NIMEV 824*] *Beg.* 'For helthe of body couer for colde thyn hede'. *Verse*
 - e. **fol. 6r** John Lydgate; Letter to Gloucester [*NIMEV 2825*] *Beg.* 'Right myghty prince and be it youre wille'. *Verse*
 - f. **fol. 7r** Anonymous; *Epitaphium eiusdam Ducis Glowcestrie* [*NIMEV 3206*] *Beg.* 'Souerayne immortal everlastynge gode'. *Verse*
 - g. **fol. 9r** John Lydgate; *Verbum caro factum est* [*NIMEV 4245*] *Beg.* 'Ye devoute peple whiche kepe one obseruaunce'. *Verse*
 - h. **fol. 9v** John Lydgate; translation of *Stella Celi extirpauit* [*NIMEV 3673*] *Beg.* 'Thow heuenly quene of grace, oure lodesterre'. *Verse*
 - i. **fol. 10v** John Lydgate; Prayer for King Henry VI and his Queen and people [*NIMEV 2218*] *Beg.* 'Most souerayne lorde o blesful criste Jhesu'. *Verse*
 - j. **fol. 11v** John Lydgate; *Consulo quisque eris* [*NIMEV 1294*] *Beg.* 'I counceile whatsoeuer thow be'. *Verse*
 - k. **fol. 13v** John Lydgate; 'Horns Away' [*NIMEV 2625*] *Beg.* 'Off gode and kynde proceedith al beaute'. *Verse*
 - l. **fol. 14r** John Lydgate; 'Jack Hare' [*NIMEV 36*] *Beg.* 'A frowarde knave plainly to discryve'. *Verse*
 - m. **fol. 15r** John Lydgate; 'Midsomer Rose' [*NIMEV 1865*] *Beg.* 'Late no man boste of konnyng nor vertu'. *Verse*

- n. **fol. 17r** Anonymous; Prayer to the Virgin [*NIMEV 2816*] Beg. 'Rex Salomon summus of sapience'. *Verse*
- o. **fol. 18r** Anonymous; Song of Christ to the Virgin Mary [*NIMEV 3225*] Beg. 'Surge mea sponsa so swete in sighte'. *Verse*
- p. **fol. 19r** John Lydgate; 'Rammeshorne' [*NIMEV 199*] Imperfect at start. Beg. 'Ipocrise chaunged hath his weede'. *Verse*
- q. **fol. 19v** John Lydgate; 'every thing drawebe to his semblable' [*NIMEV 3800*] Beg. 'Trete euery man like as he is disposede'. *Verse*
- r. **fol. 22v** John Lydgate; On the mutability of man's nature [*NIMEV 3503*] Beg. 'The world so wyde the ayre so removable'. *Verse*
- s. **fol. 25r** John Lydgate; 'Rime without Accord' [*NIMEV 223*] Beg. 'All thyng in kynde desirith thyng ilike'. *Verse*
- t. **fol. 26v** John Lydgate; verses against haste [*NIMEV 186*] Beg. 'The hasty man failithe neuer woo'. *Verse*
- u. **fol. 27v** John Lydgate; 'A song of lust Mesure' [*NIMEV 584*] Beg. 'By witte of man al thyng that is conceyvide'. *Verse*
- v. **fol. 29r** Anonymous; 'How unable Mans understanding is to comprehend the Works of Divine Providence' (catalogue title) [*NIMEV 2503*] Beg. 'O man thou marreste in thy mynde'. *Verse*
- w. **fol. 30v** John Lydgate; *Ave Iesse Virgula* [*NIMEV 1037*] Beg. 'Haile, blissede lady the modir of criste Jhesu'. *Verse*
- x. **fol. 33r** Anonymous; Invitation of the Virgin to man [*NIMEV 2803*] Beg. 'Regina celi qwene of the sowth'. *Verse*
- y. **fol. 34v** John Lydgate; *Ave regina celorum* [*NIMEV 1056*] Beg. 'Haile luminary and benynge lanterne'. *Verse*
- z. **fol. 35v** John Lydgate; *Regina celi letare* [*NIMEV 2570*] Beg. 'O thow joieful lighte eternal ye shyne'. *Verse*
- aa. **fol. 36v** Anonymous; Birds' matins [*NIMEV 357*] Beg. 'As I me lenyed vnto a joyful place'. *Verse*
- bb. **fol. 37v** Anonymous; 'Tyed with a line' [*NIMEV 3436*] Beg. 'The more I go the further I am behynde'. *Verse*
- cc. **fol. 40r** John Lydgate; moral poem, with refrain [*NIMEV 3655*] Beg. 'This world is ful of stabilnesse'. *Verse*
- dd. **fol. 40r** John Lydgate; 'Testament' (excerpt) [*NIMEV 2464*] Beg. 'Beholde o man lift vp thy eye ande se'. *Verse*
- ee. **fol. 42r** Anonymous; On mutability [*NIMEV 4228*] Beg. 'Worldly worship is joye transitorye'. *Verse*
- ff. **fol. 43v** John Lydgate; 'A lamentacioun of our lady Maria' [*NIMEV 4099*] Beg. 'Who shal gyve vnto my hede a welle of bitter teeris my sorw to compleyne'. *Verse*
- gg. **fol. 45r** Geoffrey Chaucer; 'Balade of Fortune' [*NIMEV 3661*] Beg. 'This wrecchid worldis transmutacioune'. *Verse*
- hh. **fol. 46r** Geoffrey Chaucer; 'Complaint of Venus' (Envoy only) [*NIMEV 3542*] Beg. 'Princis receywith this complaynt in gree'. *Verse*
- ii. **fol. 46v** John Lydgate; 'Amor et Pecunia' [*NIMEV 698*] Beg. 'Eche man folwithe his own fantasye'. *Verse*
- jj. **fol. 48v** Geoffrey Chaucer; 'Gentillesse' [*NIMEV 3348*] Beg. 'The first stoke was fader of gentilnes'. *Verse*

- kk. **fol. 49r** Geoffrey Chaucer; *ABC hymn to the Virgin* [*NIMEV 239*] *Beg.* 'Al myghti and al merciabe qwene'. *Verse*
- ll. **fol. 52r** Anonymous; *The Craft of Lovers* [*NIMEV 3761*] *Beg.* 'To moralise a symilitude who liste these balletts fewe'. *Verse*
- mm. **fol. 55r** John Lydgate; *Fabula duorum mercatorum* [*NIMEV 1481*] *Beg.* 'In Egipt whilom as I rede and fynde'. *Verse*
- nn. **fol. 70v** John Lydgate; 'Legend of Dan Joos' [*NIMEV 2579*] *Beg.* 'O welle of swetnes replete in euery veyne'. *Verse*
- oo. **fol. 72v** Geoffrey Chaucer; *The Canterbury Tales* (the Prioress' Prologue and Tale only) [*NIMEV 4019*] *Beg.* 'O lorde oure lorde thyn name how mervelous'. *Verse*
- pp. **fol. 76v** John Lydgate; praise of St. Anne [*NIMEV 1152*] *Beg.* 'He that intendithe in his herte to seke'. *Verse*
- qq. **fol. 76v** Anonymous; *On removing spots* [*NIMEV 2668*] *Inc.* 'Vinum lacte lava oleum liquore fabarum / Encaustum vino: caetera mundat aqua'. *Verse*
- rr. **fol. 77r** Anonymous; Legend of the Monk of Paris [*NIMEV 2810*] *Beg.* 'Remembryd by scriptures we fynde and rede'. *Verse*
- ss. **fol. 77v** Anonymous; Legend of Wulfryk the priest [*NIMEV 1590*] *Beg.* 'In Wiltshire ofe ynglonde two pristes þere were'. *Verse*
- tt. **fol. 78r** John Lydgate; address by Jesus to the Virgin Mary [*NIMEV 2238*] *Beg.* 'My fader above beholdynge thy mekenesse'. *Verse*
- uu. **fol. 78v** Anonymous; *On the vanity of worldly labour* [*NIMEV 1936*] *Beg.* 'Longe will be water in a welle to keche'. *Verse*
- vv. **fol. 78v** John Lydgate; *On the mutability of man's nature* (excerpt) [*NIMEV 3503*] *Beg.* 'The sangwyne man of bloode hath hardynes'. *Verse*
- ww. **fol. 79r** Anonymous; *Four humours* [*NIMEV 2624*] *Beg.* 'Off yiftes large in love hathe grete delite'. *Verse*
- xx. **fol. 79v** Anonymous; *Lines for a mumming* [*NIMEV 3376*] *Beg.* 'The highe astripotent auctor of alle'. *Verse*
- yy. **fol. 80v** Anonymous; 'An observation, in one stanza, upon wise, stronge false & meke men' (catalogue title) [*NIMEV 3538*] *Beg.* 'There is non so wise a man'. *Verse*
- zz. **fol. 81r** John Lydgate; *Fall of Princes* (excerpts) [*NIMEV 1168*] *Beg.* 'Sodeyne departynge from this felicyte'. *Verse*. Listing of excerpts as established by Wanley *et al.* (1808) given below:
- i. The Tragedye of Adam
 - ii. An Exemplayre for Princes to love Vertu, & to leve Pryde; in the Tragedye of Nemprothe
 - iii. The Tragedye of Jocasta and Ethiocles
 - iv. The Tragedye of Duke Theseus & Päröthëus
 - v. The Tragedye of Hercules
 - vi. The Tragedye of Priame
 - vii. The Tragedye of Polixene
 - viii. The Tragedye of Kinge Roboam
 - ix. The Tragedye of Kynge Saul
 - x. Lenvoy ofe the Story of Lucesse and false Tarquine
 - xi. The Tragedy of Jeroboam

- xii. Lenvoy of Dydo Quene of Cartage
- xiii. A Poem concerning Vice & Vertu; that is, for vertuous Laboure,
& against Slouthe & Negligence
- xiv. Lenvye vpone the falle of Kinge Amazies Tragedye
- xv. Lenvoye vpon the Kinge Astriages
- xvi. Lenvoye ofe Cresus the Kynge of Lüyde vpone his Tragedye
- xvii. Lenvoye upone the Tragedye of Cyrus Kynge ofe ale Asye
- xviii. Lenvoye vpon þe Tragedye of Amylius (l. Amulus) & Minutor (l.
Numitor) brethren of Albanye
- xix. A Lenvoy made of the Tragedyes of Princes for þe Synne of
Lechery
- xx. Lenvoye vpone the Princes thate ben lecherous: or the
Tragedye of Melchiades
- xxi. The Tragedye of Perses
- xxii. Lenvoy vpon þe Disposicioune of Poetis
- xxiii. The Tragedye of þe Desolacone of Rome
- xxiv. A Tragedye; hov Slawghter of Princes causithe Subuersioun
- xxv. The Tragedye ofe Duke Havyoune, a Cartaginian
- xxvi. A Tragedye to shoue whate folwithe ofe Stryves and
Daungiers, in Kynrede
- xxvii. The Tragedye of Marchus Manlüs
- xxviii. The Tragedye of Denys (Dionysius) whiche euer delited in
Mordre and Robberye
- xxix. The Tragedye ofe Calistenes (Callisthenes)
- xxx. The Tragedye ofe Kynge Darye
- xxxi. The Tragedye of Duke Emenydes
- xxxii. The Tragedye of Agathades (Agathocles)
- xxxiii. The Tragedye ofe Lysymachus, and of Arsynoe
- xxxiv. The Tragedye ofe Duke Brennyus
- xxxv. The Tragedye of Ptholome, oþerwise callide Philopater
- xxxvi. The Tragedye ofe Anthiochus
- xxxvii. The Tragedye of the 3 Scipiouns of Rome
- xxxviii. The Tragedye of Havybal (l. Hannibal)
- xxxix. An Example of Ingratitude
 - xl. The Tragedy of Jugurta
 - xli. The Tragedy ofe Mytrides (leg. Mithridates)
 - xlii. The Tragedye of Nero
 - xliiii. The Tragedy (or tragical Story) of Jason & Medea
 - xliv. The Poem or Tragedy of King Arthur
 - xlv. The Tragedy of Andronichus
 - xlvi. The Tragedy of Philpot
 - xlvii. Of Candalus the Kynge of Lyde disceyved be his Wyfe
 - xlviii. Of Midas the riche King ofe Frigie, this being tacked to the
former Story
 - xlix. Of Balthazar the grete Kynge of Babiloyne
 - l. Of the Qwene Althea doughter of Thestyus Kynge ofe
Calcidoyne
 - li. A Poem, containing divers moral Observations drawn from the
preceding Story

- lii. Ofe myghti Sampson
- liii. A Ditty in praise of Poverty
- aaa. **fol. 146r** John Lydgate; 'Song of Vertu' [*NIMEV 401*] *Beg.* 'As out of hony men gete ofte swetnes'. *Verse*
- bbb. **fol. 148r** John Lydgate; *Stans Puer ad Mensam* [*NIMEV 2233*] Begins imperfectly. *Beg.* 'Be symple of chere caste nate thyn ye aside'. *Verse*
- ccc. **fol. 149v** Anonymous; Antifeminist lyric [*NIMEV 1944*] *Beg.* 'Loke wele aboute ye that lovers be'. *Verse*
- ddd. **fol. 150r** John Lydgate; 'The Pain and Sorrow of Evil Marriage' [*NIMEV 919*] Begins imperfectly. *Beg.* 'After this story tellith also'. *Verse*
- eee. **fol. 150v** Anonymous; Factors that cause a man to lose reason [*NIMEV 4230*] *Beg.* 'Worship wymmen wyne and vnweldy age'. *Verse*
- fff. **fol. 151r** John Lydgate; 'A wikked tong wol alway deme amis' [*NIMEV 653*] *Beg.* 'Considre wele withe euery circumstaunce'. *Verse*
- ggg. **fol. 152v** John Walton; standard extract from translation of Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* [*NIMEV 2820*] *Beg.* 'Right as pouerte causith sobrenes'. *Verse*
- hhh. **fol. 153r** Anonymous; Abuses of the age [*NIMEV 906*] *Beg.* 'Yifte is made domes man'. *Verse*
- iii. **fol. 153v** Henry Scogan; 'Moral Balade' [*NIMEV 2264*] *Beg.* 'My noble sones and eke my lordis dere'. *Verse*
- jjj. **fol. 156v** Anonymous; *Liber prouerbium* or *Summum sapientie* [*NIMEV 3487*] *Beg.* 'The tyme approchede ofe necessite'. *Verse*
- kkk. **fol. 168r** John Lydgate; Seven Wise Counsels [*NIMEV 576*] *Beg.* 'By sapience tempre thy corage'. *Verse*
- lll. **fol. 169r** Benedict Burgh; *Parvus Cato* [*NIMEV 3955*] *Beg.* 'Whanne I aduerte to my remembraunce'. *Verse*
- mmm. **fol. 170r** Benedict Burgh; 'Cato Major' [*NIMEV 854*] *Beg.* 'For thate god is inwardly the wite'. *Verse*
- nnn. **fol. 179r** John Lydgate; Interpretations and Virtues of the Mass [*NIMEV 4246*] *Beg.* 'Ye thate bethe ofe goode deuocyoune'. *Verse*
- ooo. **fol. 188v** John Lydgate and Benedict Burgh; translation of *Secreta Secretorum* or *Secrees of old Philisoffres* [*NIMEV 935*] *Beg.* 'God almyghti save and conferme oure kyng'. *Verse*
- ppp. **fol. 224v** John Lydgate; procession of Corpus Christi [*NIMEV 3606*] *Beg.* 'This highe feste for to magnifye'. *Verse*
- qqq. **fol. 228r** John Lydgate; 'Of the Sodein Fal of Princes in oure Dayes' [*NIMEV 500*] Imperfect. *Beg.* 'Beholde this grete prynce Edward the Secunde'. *Verse*
- rrr. **fol. 229r** John Lydgate; 'A Sayenge of the Nyghtyngale' [*NIMEV 1498*] *Beg.* 'In June when Titan was in Crabbes hede'. *Verse*
- sss. **fol. 234v** John Lydgate; *Gaude virgo mater christi* [*NIMEV 464*] *Beg.* 'Be gladde mayde moder of Jhesu'. *Verse*
- ttt. **fol. 235v** John Lydgate; hymn *Criste qui lux es et dies* [*NIMEV 614*] *Beg.* 'Criste that arte bothe day and lighte'. *Verse*
- uuu. **fol. 236r** John Lydgate; paraphrase of Psalm 102 [*NIMEV 2572*] *Beg.* 'O thowe my soule gyfe lawde vnto the lorde'. *Verse*

- vvv. **fol. 239r** John Lydgate; *Gloriosa Dicta sunt de Te* [NIMEV 2688] Beg. 'In holy hilles whiche bien of grete renoune'. Verse
- www. **fol. 242v** John Lydgate; 'Valentine to Our Lady' [NIMEV 3065] Beg. 'Seynte Valentyne ofe custom yeere by yeere'. Verse
- xxx. **fol. 244v** John Lydgate; 'Bycorne and Chichevache' [NIMEV 2541] Beg. 'O prudente folkes takithe heede'. Verse
- yyy. **fol. 246v** John Lydgate; 'Thoroughfare of Woe' [NIMEV 1872] Beg. 'Lyfte vp the ieen ofe your aduertence'. Verse
- zzz. **fol. 249r** John Lydgate; balade on a New Year's gift of an eagle to Henry VI, 1428 [NIMEV 3604] Beg. 'This hardy fowle this bridde victorious'. Verse
- aaaa. **fol. 250v** John Lydgate; 'a balade sayde by a gentilwomman' [NIMEV 154] Beg. 'Allas I woful creature'. Verse
- bbbb. **fol. 251v** John Lydgate; To King Henry VI on his Coronation [NIMEV 2211] Beg. 'Most noble prince of cristen princes alle'. Verse
- cccc. **fol. 253v** John Lydgate; the Duke of Gloucester's approaching marriage [NIMEV 3718] Beg. 'Thurghe gladde aspectis of the gode Cupide'. Verse
- dddd. **fol. 257r** John Lydgate; Aesop's Fables [NIMEV 4178] Beg. 'Wysdom is more of pris than golde in coffres'. Verse
- eeee. **fol. 271r** Geoffrey Chaucer; 'Complaynt to his Purse' [NIMEV 3787] Beg. 'To yow my purse and to non other wighte'. Verse
- ffff. **fol. 271r** Anonymous; Complaint of a Prisoner against Fortune [NIMEV 860] Beg. 'Allas fortune alas what have I gilte / In prison thus to lye here desolate'. Verse
- gggg. **fol. 274v** John Lydgate; *The Order of Fools* [NIMEV 3444] Beg. 'The order of foles ful yore ago bigonne'. Verse
- hhhh. **fol. 277** John Lydgate; 'Horse, Goose and Sheep' [NIMEV 658] Beg. 'Contrauersies plees and al discorde'. Verse
- iiii. **fol. 287v** Anonymous; *The Court of Sapience* [NIMEV 3406] Imperfect at beginning and end. Beg. 'All busy swymmynge in the stormy floode'. Verse

5. Collation:

- a. BL catalogue: i²⁰⁻¹ (nineteenth missing), ii-vii²⁰, viii²⁰⁻¹ seventeenth missing or cancelled), ix-xii²⁰, xiii²², xiv¹⁶⁻² (first missing, sixteenth excised), xv²⁰, one gathering of 20 leaves missing between ix and x.

6. Size of page:

- a. 295 x 210 mm.

7. Size of written space:

- a. 220 x 105 mm.

8. Layout:

- a. Single columns.

9. Frame

- a. Ruled in hard point.

10. Decoration:

- a. Large initials (2-4 lines) in blue with red penwork surroundings extending into the margins.
- b. Paraph marks in red.

11. Pagination:

- a. M&R (1940: i, 241): 'Foliation double: original (15 C arabic numerals) in yellowish-brown ink to 322, which by reason of some losses and a few skips is reduced to 293 in modern foliation. Q 1 has foliation at top and bottom, and Q 2 has a confused numbering also at the bottom (1-14, 25, 8-12).'

12. Catchwords:

- a. Present of quires i (fol. 19v), iii (59v), iv (80v), v (99v), vi (119v), vii (139v), viii (158v), ix (178v), x (198v), xi (218v), xiii (260v).
- b. All are followed up, except fols. 178v (the point at which the *Distichs* breaks off and is followed by an inserted blank folio) and 260v (Aesop's Fables – apparently never finished by scribe, as John Stow has supplied enough missing stanzas to fill the rest of this folio, but apparently no more).

13. Signatures:

- a. Present on:
 - i. quire v (fol. 80r): cj
 - ii. quire xi (fols. 199r-208r): k{j}, k ij, k iij, k i{v}, kv, k vj, k vi{j}, k viij, k i{x}, k x
 - iii. quire xiii (fol. 246r): + v{iiij?}
 - iv. quire xiv (fols. 261r-270r): {Aij}, {Aiiij}, {Aiiij}, Av, Avj, Avij, Aviiij, Aix, Ax, Axi
 - v. quire xv (fols. 274r-283r): Bj, Bij, Biiij, Biiij, Bv, Bvj, Bv{ij}, Bv{iiij}, Bix, B{x}

14. Table of contents:

- a. Not present.

15. Secundo folio:

- a. Seynt Anne thy moder

16. Indications of scribe/date:

- a. Mooney *et al.* (2001: 279): Probably copied during the reign of Edward IV, so 1461-83.
- b. M&R (1940: i, 242)
 - i. 'Two cursive professional hands: 1) the first, ff. 1-143, appears also in part of B.M. Add. 34360 and Trinity College Cambridge R. 3. 2. (ff. 34-79); 2) the second, ff. 144-end, probably appears also in parts of Py [Royal Collge of Physicians 13] and Ry¹ [BL Royal 17 D. XV] (cf. Hammond, *MP*, XXVII, 27-31).'

- ii. 'There are practically no signs of supervision and very few corrections.'
- c. Scribe now regularly referred to as the 'Hammond scribe'.
- d. fol. 87v: Manly & Rickert (1940: i, 243) assert that 'among the rubricated flourishes are unmistakable tiny letters, "Q[?]uod Do an [De an?]"'; in the space is a stroke which may be meant for an *l* – the name is possibly Dolan.' The pen decoration does include small circles and strokes which could perhaps be taken as letters, but to call these 'unmistakeable' seems a stretch.

17. Indication of owners:

- a. fol. 9r: 'Nycolas Skyner'. Identified by Mooney (1996: 404) as a merchant of London.
- b. fol. 26v: '{James?} Adams'.
- c. fol. 76v: 'Jo: Bra:'. Has marked texts of interest throughout. Signs again, 'J. B.', on fol. 155v.
- d. fol. 170r: John de Vale's monogram? (see Mooney 2003: 190; Sutton & Visser-Fuchs 1995: 109-110).
- e. fol. 198v: 'Jhon' written twice, 15th C. writing.
- f. Owned in 16th cent by John Stow[e] (1524/1525-1605), historian? Appears to have writing in his hand on fols. 229r, 257r, 193v.
- g. Bought by Humphrey Wanley for Robert Harley (1661-1724), 1st earl of Oxford and Mortimer, politician, from Richard Jones (d. 1722), bookseller in Little Britain.
- h. Passed on to Harley's son, Edward (1689-1741), 2nd earl of Oxford and Mortimer, book collector and patron of the arts. Bequeathed with Edward's library to his widow, Henrietta, née Cavendish Holles (1694-1755), during her lifetime and thereafter to their daughter, Margaret Cavendish Bentinck (1715-1785), duchess of Portland. Sold in 1753 to the nation, later housed in the British Library from 1973.
- i. From Wright (1972):
 - i. Jones (Richard) (d. 1722), bookseller in Little Britain.
 - ii. Srow(e) (John) (1525 ?-1605), chronicler and antiquary.

18. Annotations by later users:

- a. Many notes by 'Jo: Bra:' usually to 'Reade this agayne' or 'Reade this agayne & agayne'. The wording varies, but the import is roughly the same. His notes may be found on the following folios: 4v, 19v, 22v, 25r, 26v, 27v, 37v, 39r, 46v, 78v, 81r, 83v, 89v, 92v, 105r, 107r, 109r, 111r, 114r, 134v, 143r, 146v, 148r, 151r, 155v, 168r, 169r, 170r, 203r, 213v, 246v, 257v. More unusual notes in this hand are listed separately below and tagged with 'J.B.'
- b. There are notes in what appears to be the hand of John Stow on fols. 229r, 257r, and 293v. On fol. 260v he adds five lines to a text (Lydgate's translation of seven of Aesop's Fables) left incomplete by the Hammond scribe. A gap in the text at this point suggests the next quire was either lost or never completed.
- c. fol. 1r: Shelf-marks.
- d. fol. 14v: Illegible word.

- e. fol. 36r: 'Remember lady's hou sinne cause|es your professing {&?} hye wykhinesse' (J.B.)
- f. fol. 38r: 'though I go loose / I tiede am wythe a lyne' (missing line supplied by J.B.)
- g. fol. 63v: '3 Negatives used in our Language even by this Author' 18th C. hand.
- h. fol. 74r: 'Thus hath this widdow her chield little baught' (missing line supplied by J.B.)
- i. fol. 78v: A note now faded or erased.
- j. fol. 100r: 'Elizabety dei gracia angl' (16th C. hand – appears incomplete).
- k. fol. 106v: Illegible writing in very uncontrolled hand.
- l. fol. 124r: 'This is only part of the Lenvoy of the Trag. of Arthur' (19th C. hand).
- m. fol. 127v: Pen trials.
- n. fol. 149v: 'Do not Reade thys / but hyde your eye' (J.B.)
- o. fol. 156v: 'Reade ouer in godis name' (J.B.)
- p. fol. 170v: Letter practice, possibly names, almost illegible. May say 'Adam Andre' and, underneath, 'Andreas'. In the margin 'a b b'.
- q. fol. 180r: 'Judica' in bottom right corner. May have been copied from marginal rubric, or included as guidance for the rubricator.
- r. fol. 186v: 'Sancty{s?} Sanctorum' and 'J {B?}' (J.B.)
- s. fol. 188r: 'Of meat and drinke receiud at the table' (J.B. – copying first line of facing fol. 187v).
- t. fol. 205r: 'of his due observance that longith to a kyng' (late 15th /early 16th C. hand). This hand has made several of this style of 'finding-aid' note. All concern either the behaviour of kings or matters of physical health. Others can be found on fols. 205v, 206v, 212r, 214r and 214v.
- u. fol. 205v: A note at the bottom of the page has been erased.
- v. fol. 207r: Attempts to copy the 'k' of the quire signature.
- w. fol. 210r: Missing lines supplied by a 17th C. hand.
- x. fol. 212v: 'Remember this' (J.B., next to advice on controlling the humours. A couple of lines of text have also been underlined)
- y. fol. 214r: 'Remember this' (J.B.)
- z. fol. 245v: Pen trials/scribbles.

19. Distichs present:

- a. All of *Parvus Cato* including envoy. Latin given in margins, heavily truncated.
- b. I. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, alternative I.20???, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, XLVIII, XLIX
- c. II. P1-2, P5-6, P7-8, P10, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, III.2, 3, 4, 5, II.30, 31, (section not from *Distichs*), III. P1-2, 1

20. Notes:

- a. The 'Hammond scribe' possibly used Trinity College MS. R.3.20 and/or Oxford, Bodleian MS. Ashmole 59 as exemplars, both being miscellanies composed by John Shirley (see Mooney 2003: 186). The complexities of the overlap here, and the Hammond scribe's work elsewhere, leads Hammond (1929: 28-29) to suggest that he was a professional employed in a scriptorium.
- b. Manly & Rickert (1940: i, 243) observe that space is left for the inclusion of more items: 'cf. f. 273b (a page); ff. 10, 36 (nearly a page); ff. 4, 5b, 13, 28b, 34, 35, 39b, 80b, 149, 150b, 153, 168b, 169b, 228b (half a page or more), and many smaller spaces; on f. 80b a short poem has been added later by the same scribe.'
- c. Notes on *Distichs*:
 - i. *Parvus Cato* all in black pen, red paraphs at beginnings of stanzas, Latin given in margins (also in black and begun with red paraphs) and underlined in red. This pattern continues in to 'Cato Major'. No signs of any annotation.
 - ii. fol. 177v: Pencil note (now badly faded) notes that the two stanzas here which do not belong to the *Distichs* are repeated from the poem which is found on 158v (according to the 15th C. page numbering. This is now fol. 153v), i.e. Henry Scogan's 'Moral Balade'.
 - iii. *Distichs* ends at an out-of-order section. The next folio of the MS. is blank, but there is a catch-word at the foot of the final *Distichs* page which implies the next stanza should have been III. P3-4. The following folio is blank, and appears to have been added much later. At the base of final folio of *Distichs* is the (modern) pencil note 'ff. 184-203 wanting'.
- d. Overall this MS. is in very good condition, and does not appear to have had much in the way of scribbling or annotation unless this has almost all been carefully removed later. It is generally not dirty, either,
- e. Numbers appear in the margin approximately every seventy lines up until fol. 78v. Manly & Rickert (1940: i, 243) believe these are to allow the scribe to calculate his payment, but such marking of a book intended for sale seems unlikely. More likely is that these are to aid in the production of another MS. (or perhaps printed book) using this as an exemplar.

21. Bibliography:

- a. Connolly, Margaret (1998): Discussion of MS. in relation to its Shirleian exemplars.
- b. Hammond, Eleanor (1929): Discussion of the 'Hammond Scribe'.
- c. Manly, John & Edith Rickert (1940: i, 241-244): Cataloguing of this MS. amongst those of the *Canterbury Tales*.
- d. Mooney, Linne R. (1996): Discussion of 'Hammond Scribe' and his manuscript productions.
- e. Mooney, Linne (2003): Discusses this MS. in relation to others produced using Shirley miscellanies as exemplars.

- f. Nolan (2008: 71-87): Discussion of a block of apparently devotional texts in this MS.
- g. Wanley *et al.* (1808-1812): Catalogue entry.

17. London, British Library, MS. Harley 4733

1. Binding:
 - a. Modern British Museum binding in brown leather with darker brown corners and spine piece. Harley coat of arms inscribed in gold on front and back.
2. Material:
 - a. Paper and parchment – predominately paper quires with parchment inner and outer bifolia (quires ii, iii, iv, v, vi, vii, viii, ix, x, xi). For quire xii only the outer bifolium is of parchment.
 - b. Both paper and parchment are of intermediate quality. Parchment particularly appears poorer quality.
3. Number of folios:
 - a. iii + 128 + iii (Back flyleaf is re-used from an earlier (beautifully neat) French text written in a very neat semi-quadrata).
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. **fol. 3r** Benedict Burgh; *Parvus Cato* [*NIMEV 3955*] *Beg.* 'When I aduertise in my remembraunce'. *Verse*
 - b. **fol. 4r** Benedict Burgh; 'Cato Major' [*NIMEV 854*] *Beg.* 'For why that God is inwardli the witte'. *Verse*
 - c. **fol. 30r** Anonymous; *Proverbs of old philosophers* [*NIMEV 3501*] *Beg.* 'David. | The wyse man in hys boke hat thys seying'. *Verse*
 - d. **fol. 40v** Anonymous; *Titus and Vespasian or The Destruction of Jerusalem* [*NIMEV 1881*] *Beg.* 'Llsteneth alle þat ben alyve'. *Verse*
 - e. **fol. 128r** Anonymous; Fragment of Anglo-Norman *Brut. Beg.* 'anno dum . i x v . fuit lucius rex britonum'. *Prose (Anglo-Norman)*
5. Collation:
 - a. i⁴⁻¹; ii¹²; iii¹²⁺¹ (one paper leaf has been added to second half of quire, possibly the one marked with a red maltese cross in the corner); iv¹²; v¹²; vi¹⁰; vii¹²; viii¹²; ix¹²; x¹²; xi¹²; xii⁶; one parchment flyleaf reused from older MS.
6. Size of page:
 - a. 210 x 130 mm (paper consistent size, parchment varies between this and 200 x 130 mm).
7. Size of written space:
 - a. 150 x 95 mm.
8. Layout:
 - a. Single columns.

9. Frame:

- a. Pricked and ruled in variously black ink and brown plummet. Black ink is clearest up to fol. 38v, from there on plummet is predominately used, and lines have faded more thoroughly.

10. Decoration:

- a. Minimal decoration. Mainly black ink with some text highlighted by being in red.
- b. Cato has blue capitals beginning each Middle English stanza of the *Parvus Cato* and the start of the first book of the 'Cato Major', decorated with red-pen around and inside them. The first capital 'C' takes up three lines; the others take up two lines, but only the first book's capital has been drawn in, with spaces left for the others. All the Latin is in red.
- c. The moral sentences begin with the source's name centred in red, and a red (one-line-high) capital letter at each one. In addition, some of the sentences begin with bullet points.
- d. The 'Suffering of Christ' begins with a large red letter (three lines tall), and this is the final piece of decoration.

11. Pagination:

- a. Modern foliation in pencil, counts most flyleaves, but ignores first parchment flyleaf.

12. Catchwords:

- a. Present on fols. 49v, 59v, 71v, 83v, 107v. All followed up.
- b. Catchwords for quires v (fol. 49v), vi (fol. 59v) and vii (fol. 71v) are enclosed in scroll-style decorations, for quire viii (fol. 83v), catchword is underlined, and for quire x (fol. 107v) no decoration is present.

13. Signatures:

- a. Present on:
 - i. quire iii (fols. 16r-21r): bi, bij, biiij, biiij, bv, bvj
 - ii. quire iv (fols. 29r-34r): cj, {cij}, ciiij, ciiij, {cv}, cvj
 - iii. quire v (fols. 42r-46r): aij, aiiij, aiiij, av, avj
 - iv. quire vi (fols. 53r-57r): +j, +ij, +iiij, +iiij, +v
 - v. quire vii (fols. 63r-66r): aj, aij, aiiij, aiiij, av, avi
 - vi. quire viii (fols. 75r-79r): bj, bij, biiij, biiij, bv
 - vii. quire ix (fols. 88r-92r): cij, ciiij, ciiij, cv, cvi
 - viii. quire x (fols. 99r-104r): j, ij, iij, iij, v, vi
 - ix. quire xi (fols. 111r-116r): i, ij, iij, iij, v, vj
- b. This pattern is puzzling. The MS. appears to have been copied by the same hand in the same style (although the initial tilde-style bullet points beginning each line disappear at the start of quire 6 (marked with +), and there is no clear division of texts into booklets.

14. Table of contents:

- a. Not present.

15. Secundo folio:

- a. Pley at

16. Indications of scribe/date:

- a. 15th C.
- b. *LALME*: LP **7600** ('Hand A', fols. 3-19, 52-81, 125 to end. Includes *Distichs*): Worcs.; LP **4681** ('Hand B', fols. 40v-51v): Warwicks.

17. Indication of owners:

- a. fol. 1r 'This is John bland h{...}' (19th C. copperplate); 'John bland me | tenet'; upside down in 15th C. hand: 'John pygyn shall in {...} | In {*rest illegible*}'; all following in the same 15th C. hand: 'Thys ys'; 'Thys'; 'Thys {ys} Jhon py{gym}'; 'Jh{o}n pygyn'; 'Jhon pygyn'. It is just about possible that 'Pygyn' is an (affectionate?) abbreviation of 'Penyngton' (cf. fol. 2v). These inscriptions do not appear to be in the same hand. Perhaps 'Jhon Pygyn' is Penyngton's son, and Pygyn a nickname based on his surname?
- b. fol. 1v: 'Johnne lyduell'
- c. fol. 2r: several copies of the name 'Jhon Pygyn' (15th C.)
- d. fol. 2v 'Master Johnne Penyngton | schole maister of Wurcesture | ys possessor of thy[s] booke'
- e. fol. 3r: 'lib. John Legat. . (1)' (16th C.)
- f. fol. 62r: 'Brampllon'
- g. fol. 124v: 'John Russel' (15th/16th C.)
- h. fol. 127r Thomas {S}arregys; 'boke wryttun?'; 'Jhon sarrege {*illegible*}'; 'Liber Ioannis Blandi', 'Thys ys Jhon pygyn'
- i. fol. 128v: 'John Bland'; 'John Russel'
- j. From Wright (1972):
 - i. Bland (John). Owned 4733 in 16th C.
 - ii. Penyngton (John), 'Master ... schole master of Wurcestur'. Owned 4733 in 15th C.
 - iii. Pygyn (Jhon). Name scribbled, in 16th or 17th C., in 4733.
 - iv. Russell (Jhon). Name scribbled, in 16th/17th C. in 4733.

18. Annotations by later users:

- a. Much scribbling on fols. iv, 1r, 1v, 2r and 2v.
- b. fol. iv: 'A jhon'(?);
- c. fol. 1r, top: 'Sine mea penna' (?); '135 : A 14 | 4733'; 15th C. secretary? 'Thys ys J{...} | ~{pygamuse} | ka?'; some illegible textura rotunda minims at the bottom, possibly upside-down.
- d. fol. 1v: more handwriting practice, in a variety of 15th and 16th C. scripts; 'Jhon Russell | {ymms} may well'; 'John & Rychard play at the ball'; some Latin appears next, in the form of a distich, but is not part of the *Disticha Catonis*: 'bonum vinum cum sapore {bi}bis abba{s} priore | com{...}us cum p{urour} sepe sol{e puroue} sepe'; the rest of this writing is illegible.
- e. fol. 2r: The beginning of the *Disticha* is copied in a neat if scratchy 15th C. bastard secretary 'Cum animaduerterem quam plurimos homines in via | morum grauter errare optimum eorum fore me existimare'; and,

below, 'Itaque deo supplica parentes ama Ad consilium ne | accedas
antequam voceris Mundus esto . saluta libenter . | maiori {f}ide .
Magistrum metue . Rem tuam custodi .'.

- f. fol. 2v: Scribbled writing, now largely illegible; some has been deliberately erased.
- g. fol. 6r 'Rumours' has been glossed above with 'Tydyngis' in a later, untidy secretary hand.
- h. fol. 11v: Writing in inner margin, now difficult to read because of tight binding.
- i. fols. 25r-v: Blank.
- j. fol. 28r: Some scribbles, mostly erased. Distich IV. 33 has 'What yow dow' written beside it, later erased. Other writing on this page is illegible.
- k. fol. 32v: A tick beside 'Seraphyn. | Shew not thyn hert outwardlych / to thy seruant for why lyghtlych / To day he is with the to morow he flytt / That by fore wyst but one þene mony shuld wyt'.
- l. fol. 34v: Writing practice, copying 'Syarak' rubric.
- m. fol. 36v: Two attempts to copy the 'Saulus' rubric.
- n. fol. 39v: A long-s shaped mark next to two lines of a 'Constantinus' passage: 'he hath onlich a souereyne loos / he that cone euyll ys holdene wyse *and* worth'.
- o. fol. 40r: 'John' is written next to 'Augustinus' passage: 'Now prayth all with deuocyone / For hym þat made thys lessone / That he through our^e orysons / May com to saluacione / And god that made all thynges / 3eve vs all good endyng'.
- p. fols. 40v-41r: Illegible scribbles at the start of *Titus and Vespasian*. The main note on fol. 41r is in Jhon Pygyn's writing, and reads something like 'sy nly don'.
- q. fol. 42r: 16th C. secretary-hand notes in Latin, probably by two different hands: 'Nichodemus', 'Sapiencia huius mundi | Stulticia {illegible}', 'Reddite quod scribit | Sesaris sesari | Et qui sicut dei | deo'.
- r. fol. 44v: More attempts to write 'Jhon' with other illegible words underneath – they may have been rubbed out.
- s. fol. 48r: Some words copied (with changed spelling, and Tudor 'e's) from text into margin: 'senturie', 'longens' and 'Adame'. Some more on verso, mainly names copied to right of text, not all legible: 'se Resurrectio' 'Aqeus : fynes . & | {estaddas}', 'Seynt myghell | Carrianis & Eleu - | chins', 'Nichodemus'.
- t. fol. 49r: Attempts to copy the elaborate long 's' with two small 's's built into its stem in 'Jhesus' of first line.
- u. fol. 53r: 'domus mea domus | oracionis vocabitur' Notes, both in Latin and English, usually Biblical references, continue throughout this text.
- v. f. 62r: 'Brampllon'? written in faded pen in the margin. Possible ownership mark. After this point there is almost no annotation.
- w. fol. 115r: 'Ruben', 'Cibaria'
- x. fols. 121v-122r: Some notes, all illegible and probably deliberately erased.

- y. fol. 126r: 'Thys Indenture made the ijnd day off february | in {illegible} vj yere of oure soferunt lorde King Edward | By the grace king off England france and {illegible}'
- z. fol. 127r: 'kinge off England | Frace and defendar'
- aa. fol. 127v: Many more scribbles and writing practices, most illegible. Includes ownership inscriptions given above and 'Indigum per dominy nostrum Jesum Crystum'.

19. Distichs present:

- a. Latin present, not truncated, interspersed with English, rubricated. Some distichs marked with clover-shaped nota – marked in this listing with a star.
- b. Complete *Parvus Cato*, except envoy stanza
- c. I. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16*, 17, 18, 19, 20*, 21*, 22*, 23, 24, 25, 26*, 27, 28, 29, 30**, 31, 32, 33*, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40
- d. II. P1-2, P3-4, P4-5, P6-7, P8-9, P 10, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31
- e. III. P1-2, 1, P3-4, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24
- f. IV. P1-2, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 22, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 30, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49

20. Notes:

- a. Notes on *Distichs*:
 - i. The *Distichs* are given a far neater and more complex layout than the rest of the text, but as with other MSS. the decoration has not been finished.
 - ii. None of Burgh's verse envoys are present, suggesting these were not valued in a teaching context.
 - iii. Prologue to book IV has an extra two lines of Latin: 'Hoc precepta tibi semper relegenda memento / Inuenies aliquid quod te vitare magistro'
 - iv. IV. 22 is delayed (to fol. 26r), and this coincides with a page (fol. 25r) which has been left blank. There is a cross-shaped mark (fol. 25v) used to denote an error earlier where the Latin of IV. 9 and IV. 10 has been mixed up and the correct distich inserted in the margin (fol. 22v). More error marks on fol. 26r show that the rubricator has not caught on to this in time, and the wrong Latin has been added to IV. 26 and 27. This has then been rubbed out and replaced in black pen; IV. 30 is delayed.
 - v. The lack of envoys and the note of authorship makes it clear that this is related to BL Harley 271.
 - vi. On fol. 29v Burgh is specifically named as the author of the *Distichs*: 'Explicit liber catonis compositus per magistrum Benedictum Burghem | Vicarium de Maldon et cetera'
- b. General notes on MS.: small, portable book which appears to have passed through the hands of several children (a surprising number of

whom are named John), many of them have left their mark on it. This indicates a primary use as a teaching tool, although whether this use occurred during its ownership by schoolteacher John Penyngton is impossible to conclude. The general poor quality of the paper and the membrane suggests that the volume was intended for utility rather than impressive appearance.

21. Bibliography:

- a. Damian-Grint (1993): Discussion of the Anglo-Norman *Brut* fragment found in this MS.
- b. Wanley *et al.* (1808-1812): Catalogue entry.
- c. Wright (1972): Lists known owners of MS.

18. London, British Library, MS. Harley 7333

1. Binding:
 - a. Modern (18th C.) binding with Harley coat of arms inscribed in gold on front and back.
2. Material:
 - a. Parchment
3. Number of folios:
 - a. iii + 211 + iii
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. **fol. 1r** Anonymous; prose *Brut* [*Matheson 155*] Imperfect at beginning and end. *Beg.* 'him prevelyche vnto Southhamptoun'. *Prose*
 - i. **fol. 9v** Song of victory over the Scots in 1296, part of ME prose *Brut* [*NIMEV 3558.5*]
 - ii. **fol. 9v** Lines on Edward I, in ME prose *Brut* [*NIMEV 3918.5*]
 - iii. **fol. 12r** Song said to have been sung by the Scots after the defeat of the English at Bannockburn, part of ME prose *Brut* [*NIMEV 2039.3*]
 - iv. **fol. 18r** Anti-English squib as part of ME prose *Brut* [*NIMEV 1934*]
 - b. **fol. 25r** Benedict Burgh; *Parvus Cato* [*NIMEV 3955*] *Beg.* 'When I aduertise in my remembraunce'. *Verse*
 - c. **fol. 25r** Benedict Burgh; 'Cato Major' [*NIMEV 854*] *Beg.* 'ffor thi that god is inwardly the witte'. *Verse*
 - d. **fol. 30v** Anonymous; Complaint of a Prisoner against Fortune [*NIMEV 860*] *Beg.* 'Fortune alas alas what haue I gylt'. *Verse*
 - e. **fol. 31r** John Lydgate; On the English title of Henry VI to the Crown of France [*NIMEV 3808*] *Beg.* 'Trouble hertis to sette in quyete'. *Verse*
 - f. **fol. 32v** John Lydgate; roundel on the Coronation of Henry VI [*NIMEV 2804*] *Beg.* 'Reioice ye Reames of england & of ffrauce'. *Verse*
 - g. **fol. 33r** John Lydgate; *Guy of Warwick* [*NIMEV 875*] *Beg.* 'Frome Cristes birthe complete nyne .C. yeere'. *Verse*
 - h. **fol. 36r** Richard Sellyng; 'Evidens to be ware and gode covnsayle' (MS. title) [*NIMEV 4074*] *Beg.* 'Whilist .I. hade youþe I wist nouȝt what it was'. *Verse*
 - i. **fol. 36v** Charles d'Orléans; 'Mon cuer chante' *French*. *Beg.* 'Mon cuer chaunte Joyeuxsement'. *Verse (French)*
 - j. **fol. 37r** Geoffrey Chaucer; *The Canterbury Tales* [*NIMEV 4019*] Imperfect. *Beg.* 'Whanne þ^t Aperyll w^t his shoures swete'. *Verse*
 - k. **fol. 118v-119v** Blank
 - l. **fol. 120r** John Gower; *Confessio Amantis*, 1st recension (extracts) [*NIMEV 2662*] *Beg.* 'Ther was a riall noble kyng' Extract is V. 5551-6052. *Verse*
 - m. **fol. 121v** 'Impingham'; proverbs [*NIMEV 2290*] *Beg.* 'Next þe derke nyght þe gray morow' (M&R (1940: i, 215) note that most of these are

actually lines from Chaucer, and suggest that they may have been compiled by Benedict Burgh, who then signed them with his job title as prebend of Empingham). *Verse*

- n. **fol. 122r** John Gower; *Confessio Amantis* extracts continued: II. 587-1608, I. 3067-3426, II. 291-372, V. 2031-2498. *Verse*
- o. **fol. 129v** Geoffrey Chaucer; *Parlement of Foules* [NIMEV 3412] Imperfect. *Beg.* 'The lyff so schort the crafte so longe to lerne'. *Verse*
- p. **fol. 132v** Anonymous; *Verba translatoris* stanza at end of *Parliament of Fowls* [NIMEV 2128] *Beg.* 'Maister gefferey chauncers þ^t now lith graue'. *Verse*
- q. **fol. 132v** Geoffrey Chaucer; 'Complaint of Mars' [NIMEV 913] Imperfect. *Beg.* 'Gladith yee floures ouer this morow grey'. *Verse*
- r. **fol. 133vb** Blank
- s. **fol. 134r** Geoffrey Chaucer; *Anelida and Arcite, A text* [NIMEV 3670] Imperfect. *Beg.* 'þow fiers god of armes mars the rede'. *Verse*
- t. **fol. 135r** Anonymous; 'The complaynte ageyne Hope' [NIMEV 370] *Beg.* 'As that I me stode in studeyng loo a loone'. *Verse*
- u. **fol. 136r** Geoffrey Chaucer (?); 'Complaynt Damours' [NIMEV 1388] *Beg.* 'I which þ^t am þe sorowfullest man'. *Verse*
- v. **fol. 136r** John Lydgate; *Life of St. Edmund and St. Fremund* [NIMEV 3440] Imperfect. *Beg.* 'þe noble story to put in remembraunce'. *Verse*
- w. **fol. 147r** John Lydgate; 'Complaint þat Crist maketh of his Passioun' [NIMEV 2081] *Beg.* 'Man to Reforme þyne exile and þi losse'. *Verse*
- x. **fol. 147v** Geoffrey Chaucer; 'Lak of Stedfastnesse' [NIMEV 3190] *Beg.* 'Svme tyme this worlde was so stedfaste & stable'. *Verse*
- y. **fol. 147v** Geoffrey Chaucer; 'Gentillesse' [NIMEV 3348] *Beg.* 'þe ffirste fadir & fynder of gentilnesse'. *Verse*
- z. **fol. 147v** Geoffrey Chaucer; 'Truth' or 'Balade de bon conseyl' [NIMEV 3190] *Beg.* 'Fle ffrom þe pes and dwell w^t sothefastnesse'. *Verse*
- aa. **fol. 148r** Geoffrey Chaucer; 'Complaynt to his Purse' [NIMEV 3787] *Beg.* 'TO yowe my purs se & to noon oþer wyght'. *Verse*
- bb. **fol. 148r** John Lydgate; On the mutability of man's nature (opening stanza appearing as part of 'Balade of Halsham') [NIMEV 3504] *Beg.* 'The worlde so wyde þe ayer so remuable'. *Verse*
- cc. **fol. 148r** Anonymous; 'Tyed with a line' [NIMEV 3436] *Beg.* 'þe more I go þe ferþer I am behynde' (appears as second stanza of 'Ballad of Halsham'). *Verse*
- dd. **fol. 148r** Anonymous; 'A dialoge bitwene man and Dethe'. *Beg.* 'Quis es tu quem vident hic stare in figura'. *Verse (Latin)*
- ee. **fol. 148r** Anonymous; 'þanswer of deþe agayne vn to man'. *Beg.* 'Ego sum quem metuit omnis creatura'. *Verse (Latin)*
- ff. **fol. 148v** Extract from the *Pilgrimage of the Soul* (according to Seymour 1974: 270) *Prose*.
- gg. **fol. 148v** Anonymous; 'Versus Memoriales'. *Beg.* 'Sunt tria que vere faciunt me sepe dolore'. *Verse (Latin)*
- hh. **fol. 149r** John Lydgate; 'Verses on the Kings of England (to Henry VI)' [NIMEV 3632] *Beg.* This myghty william duke of Normandy'. *Verse*

- ii. **fol. 149v** 'Maister Benet' (Benedict Burgh?); 'A Christemasse game' [*NIMEV 2749*] *Beg.* 'Petir petir prynde of aposteles all'. *Verse*
- jj. **fol. 150rb** *Gesta Romanorum* in English prose. *Prose*
 - i. **fol. 180v** Anonymous; couplet in the *Gesta Romanorum* [*NIMEV 2238.5*]
 - ii. **fol. 200v** Anonymous; three couplets in the *Gesta Romanorum* [*NIMEV 3711*]
- kk. **fol. 203v** Blank
- ll. **fol. 204r** Thomas Hoccleve; *Regiment of Princes* [*NIMEV 2229*] Imperfect. *Beg.* 'Mvsing vp on the restlees besinesse'. *Verse*

5. Collation:

- a. i⁸; ii⁸; iii⁸; {iv⁸}; {v⁸}; vi⁸; vii⁸; viii⁸; ix⁸; x⁸; xi⁸; xii⁸; xiii⁸; xiv⁸; xv⁸⁻¹ (folio cancelled between fols. 118 and 119); xvi⁸; xvii⁸⁻² (last two folios torn out); xviii⁸; xix⁸; xx⁸⁻¹ (folio missing could be from this or previous quire, not sure); xxi⁸; xxii⁸; xxiii⁸; xxiv⁸; xxv⁸; xxvi⁸⁻¹ (last folio cancelled); xxvii⁸
- b. M&R (1940: i, 208) collation: 'Eights, with original CW and several sets of signatures.
 - i. 'Book I. Qq: 1⁰-3⁰ (lost; f.1 is original xxv); 4⁸-6⁸; 7⁰ (f. 25 is original lvij). CW in Qq 4-6; on ff. 1, 3, traces of original sig. d; on f. 12, e; on ff. 17-19, f j – iij. Ff. 1-24.
 - ii. 'Book II. Q 1⁸. No CW; f. viii is partly blank, Ff. 25-32.
 - iii. 'Book III. Qq: 1⁸-5⁸; 6⁰ (old folios cv-cxij lost); 7⁸-11⁸; 12⁷ (vii cut out). CW regular except on f. 119, which is blank. On f. 42 is a red sig. h; on ff. 66-68, f ij – f iij in brown. The f sigs. would be correct if the Brut were separate and the MS began with Cato; the red h, if the Cato were omitted, the Brut included, and the series began with a cross. Traces of several sets of sigs. remain: on f. 75 (a 3); between ff. 81 and 114 occasional traces of red and brown numbers. Ff. 33-119.
 - iv. 'Book IV. Qq: 1⁸-2⁶ (vii, viii=ff.clxxv, clxxvj cut out after f. 133; 2nd col. of f. 133 blank). Traces of brown sigs. on ff. 128, 131. Ff. 120-33.
 - v. 'Book V. Qq: 1⁸-2⁷ (vi cut out). CW on f. 141. Sigs.: cross iij-iiij on ff. 136, 137; a j – a iij on ff. 142-45. Ff. 134-48.
 - vi. 'Book VI. Qq: 1⁸-6⁸; 7⁷ (viii=f. ij^cxlviij cut out). CW regular to f. 198b; then at foot of each col. to f. 203a (except on f. 201b and 202ab, where they appear only once). No sigs. in Q 1; uncertain in Q 2; a new system begins in Q 3: ff. 173-76 = CD 1-4; ff. 181-84 = CE 1-4; on ff. 189-92, 1-4 only; f. 198 = E [ij], f. 199 = E iij. In Q 6, ff. 189-96 (old foliation ij^cxxxij-ij^cxxxix) the two middle sheets, ff. 191-94, are in reversed order, as is shown by the text and by the old foliation. Ff. 149-208.
 - vii. 'Book VII. Q 1⁸. CW on f. 211, after blank space for two stanzas; no sigs. Ff. 204-11.
 - viii. 'The loss of Q 6 in Book III involved E 2119-2418 and D 1-1376. The scribe stopped at I 253 (foot of 118a) although the five pages left in his quire (f. vii probably cut out later) would take

about 250 lines more, and another quire could easily have been added.'

6. Size of page:
 - a. 455 x 320 mm (trimmed).
7. Size of written space:
 - a. 335 x 225 mm.
8. Layout:
 - a. Double columns, 335 x 105 mm each.
9. Frame:
 - a. No sign of pricking (may have been trimmed off). Both columns ruled in black plummet which has faded to brown.
10. Decoration:
 - a. Large blue letters (two-lines high) begin each text and sections within text, surrounded by simple red pen decoration.
 - b. Paraph marks frequently used to mark new sections of text.
 - c. *Disticha* are present in Latin in red at the appropriate place in the body of the text, marked beforehand by a blue double long 's'. The English stanzas are each preceded by a blue paraph mark. After distich II. 23, Latin rubrication has ceased and never been completed.
11. Pagination:
 - a. Modern (19th C.?) foliation in pencil.
 - b. Large red Roman numerals appear to have been added close to the time of production.
12. Catchwords:
 - a. Present on quires i (fol. 8v), ii (16v), iii (24v), v (40v), vi (48v), vii (56v), viii (64v), ix (72v), x (80v), xi (88v), xii (96v), xiii (104v), xiv (112v), xvi (127v), xviii (141v), xx (156v), xxi (164v), xxii (172v), xxiii (180v), xxiv (188v), xxv (196v), xxviii (211v).
 - b. All of these are followed up with the exceptions of those on fols. 24v (the imperfect end of the *Brut*), 72v (a missing section of the *Canterbury Tales*), and 211v (the imperfect end of the *Regiment of Princes*)
 - c. fol. 58v is within a quire, and thus it is not clear why there is a catchword present here.
13. Signatures:
 - a. Present on:
 - i. quire iii (fols. 17r-19r): f, fij, fiiij;
 - ii. quire ix (fols. 65r-68r): f, fij, fiiij, fiiij;
 - iii. quire x (fol. 75r): 3;
 - iv. quire xi (fols. 81r-84r): 1, {2}, {3}, 4;
 - v. quire xii (fols. 89r-92r): 1, 2, 3, 4;

- vi. quire xiv (fol. 108r): 4;
- vii. quire xv (fols. 113r-116r): 1, 2, 3, 4;
- viii. quire xix (fols. 142r-145r): j, aij, a{ij}, aiii;
- ix. quire xxiii (fols. 173r-176r): D 1, D 2, D 3, D 4;
- x. quire xxiv (fols. 181r-184r): C E 1, C E 2, {C E} 3, C E 4;
- xi. quire xxv (fols. 189r-192r): 1, 2, 4, 3 (*sic*)

14. Table of contents:

- a. Not present.

15. Secundo folio:

- a. And aftir

16. Indications of scribe/date:

- a. fol. 150r: Diagonally at foot of page: 'doctor peni wirt this booke', 16th C. hand.
- b. Mooney (2003: 198) detects eight scribal hands in this MS.
- c. Manly & Rickert (1940: i, 209) detect up to nine scribal hands across the seven 'books':
 - i. 'Begun c. 1450-60, and continued for many years.'
 - ii. 'Six to nine or more hands:
 1. A large, square hand, which wrote more than half the text: ff. 1-24; 65b-72b; 74-148; 165-196b.
 2. A small, neat cursive hand: ff. 25-32 (31, col. 2, and 32 may be No. 4).
 3. A more graceful, flourished, small hand, using a finer pen: ff. 33-56; 57b (beginning line 21) – 65a.
 4. A small, slanting, rather flourished hand (nearest to that of William Charyte; see below): f. 134a; perhaps ff. 31b-32, 57a and b (lines 1-20); and 73.
 5. A small, clear, firm hand, of the same general type as No. 2: ff. 149-56. On f. 150a is a note (early 16 C), "Doctor Peni writ this booke."
 6. A hand not very different from No. 5 but smaller and more flourished: ff. 157-64.
 7. A small, cramped hand, of the same general style as Nos. 5 and 6 but less attractive, and so variable that it may be the work of several persons: ff. 197-204.
 8. An ugly hand somewhat resembling No. 2: ff. 204-5 (except the last 19 lines).
 9. Similar to No. 1, but perhaps not the same: ff. 205 (last 19 lines) – 211.
 - iii. M&R (1940: i, 211): 'Scribes Nos. 3, 4, and 1 wrote the CT [*Canterbury Tales*]. No. 3 (ff. 33-65a, except for part on 57ab by No. 4) shows certain features found in Shirley MSS, notably the eo for long close e not only in OE eo words but in others; the ey for long i; the e- pp. prefix; and the very frequent scribal -e. Unless the scribe was of the Shirley type, these forms may have been inherited (rare instances of the eo and the e- prefix occur

in the section done by No. 4). Certain other forms seem to show West Midland, and still others Northern, influence. Some of the dialect features might be those of the Leicestershire locality indicated under Provenance. Scribe No. 4 wrote so little (f. 57 a and b through line 20; f. 73) that few good test words appear; cf. above. No. 1 (f. 65b to end, except f. 73) has some of the West Midland forms characterizing No. 3, and a few Northern ones, but not the Shirley forms.'

- d. *LALME*: LP **9510** (fols. 94-97): Hants.; LP **5590** (fols. 150-156 and 197-203): Hants.; LP **5600** (fols. 157-164 and 165-196): Hants.

17. Indication of owners:

- a. fol. 12v: Names of Fuller family, see 'Annotations' section below.
- b. fol. 93r 'James Ric{guy?}'.
- c. fol. 119v 'Charly'.
- d. fol. 133r: Possible name, almost illegible - 'Balfridu{...} Agel'.
- e. fol. 168v: Upside-down and diagonally, 'Jon grene'.
- f. fol. 199r Possible ownership signatures at bottom of page, now illegible. M&R (1940: i, 215) claim this is 'R de Bosco knight'.
- g. From Wright (1972):
 - i. Jekyll (Sir Joseph) (1663-1738), Master of the Rolls 1717-1738; brother-in-law to Lord Somers.
 - ii. Somers (John) (1651-1716), 1st Baron Somers 1697. His library passed to his brother-in-law, Sir Joseph Jekyll (d. 1738).

18. Annotations by later users:

- a. fol. 2r: 'Oxford BH | Dec. 1738'
- b. fol. 12v: 'Roma tibi subito | motibus ibit amor| And the Lord | [s]aid unto mosses' | [...]eare am of | Richard Fuller | {J}ane Dier | {R}uth Fuller | {F}rances Fuller | {E}lizabeth Fuller | [...]E's | {E}dward Fuller' in late 16th C./17th C. hand.
- c. fol. 32v: A barrel with what appears to be a small leafless tree growing from it, and a jumping fish next to it. This has been identified as a rebus for 'stock-tun' (i.e. Stockton/Stoughton) by M&R (1940: i, 214).
- d. fol. 37r: Some writing-practice-style scribbles, 'Thynge', 'This'.
- e. fol. 38v: In same hand as fol. 12v: 'In summer time In summer | Frances | In summer time'; some other words scribbled in same hand but illegible.
- f. fol. 41r: 'Stoughton' written next to line in *Canterbury Tales*: 'Ye gon to Cavntirbury god yow spede'.
- g. fol. 45v: The Stockton rebus.
- h. fol. 58v: 'Mon {coeur} est vostre du tout' - the 'coeur' is represented by a drawing of a heart.
- i. fol. 59r: (M&R 1940: i, 213): 'On f. 59 is an expense account (early 16 C.) at London and Lambeth, including a supper and a dinner for "pretye".'
- j. fol. 60r: Elizabethan secretary hand scribbling between columns, difficult to read. Begins 'In trowbill and misere the Lord will stere {...}'

- k. fol. 61v: Same scribbly Elizabethan writing, somewhat more legible: 'In trowbill and missere the lorde will {st}ere me well | the maieste of Jacobes god will {de} {fostride} me from yll'.
- l. fol. 119v: 'Charly'; letter practice.
- m. fol. 189r: Stockton rebus – a barrel with what seems to be tree growing from it, this time with three fish jumping around it, drawn in much greater detail in black pen; next to 'Moralitee' heading is a simple shield with a Pi-like symbols in each quarter. This has been identified by M&R (1940: i, 214):
 - i. 'This is an early form of the Stockton arms: "arg. a saltire gu. with 4 door staples sa., and a small floron on the saltire", Stockton of Ash (cf. B.M. MS Add. 5520, f. 212). The Stocktons of Kent quartered a modification of the arms in Ha³ [the present MS.] (Berry, *Kent Gen.*, p. 108).'
- n. fol. 190r: Outlines of the same crest.
- o. fol. 191r: Note in pencil: 'This folio is out of place & sho. follow the next'.
- p. fol. 200r: 'edward Mor{...} ys a knaue {...}'; other notes in 16th C. hand, made close to illegible through trimming of folios.
- q. fol. 204r: Animal heads in margins, one probably a dog, the other possibly a monkey. Beside the latter is written 'B h bothe'.

19. Distichs present:

- a. All of *Parvus Cato* including envoy, Latin given in margins, but heavily truncated.
- b. I. 1, 2, 3*, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11*, 12**, 13**, 14, 15, 16**, 17, 18, 19, 20*/**, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28*, 29, 30**, 31, 32**, 33, 34, 35**, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40,
- c. II. P1-2, P3-4, P4-5, P6-7, P8-9, P10, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7**, 8, 9, 10**, 11, 12, 13, 14**(**?), 15, 16*, 17*, 18, 19, 20, 21**, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26*, 27, 28, 29**, 30, 31
- d. III. P1-2, 1, P3-4, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6*, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22+, 23, 24
- e. IV. P1-2, 1, 2**, 3+, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18**, 19**, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25**, 26, 27, 28, 29**, 31, 32, 33, 34*, 35, 30, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41*, 42*, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49

20. Notes:

- a. Manly & Rickert (1940: i, 207) describe the volume as 'A "library" of secular literature, in 7 "books"'.
 - b. Mooney (2003: 185): Verses on English kings by Lydgate textually close to those in MS Egerton 1995.
 - c. Mooney (2003: 191-192); Connolly (1998: 175): Lydgate's *Guy of Warwick* textually almost identical to that in Harvard University, Houghton Library MS. English 530, which was also influenced by John Shirley.
 - d. Mooney (2003: 190-193): Shirley-influenced sections are II, III and V (in M&R division; these are, respectively, fols. 25r-32v, 33r-119v, and 134r-148r).

- e. Mooney (2003: 192 n. 24): Shares several poems with Bodleian MS. Fairfax 16.
- f. Seymour (1974: 257) accepts without comment the attribution of the MS. to the 'Augustinian canons of a house at Leicester'.
- g. Matheson (1998: 269) classifies the *Brut* here as 'The Peculiar Version to 1419, ending "in rule and governance": Group D (PV-1419[r&g]:D)'.
 - h. Notes on *Distichs*:
 - i. The *Distichs* is written in black pen, but with rubrication for the Latin. The insertion of the Latin has not been completed, and ceases on fol. 27v. The *Parvus Cato* has the Latin in the margin, but truncated. There are alternating red and blue paraph markings – blue at the beginning of the Latin, red at the beginning of the Middle English stanzas. Judging by the catchwords, the end of the text prior to the *Distichs* has been lost.
 - ii. The Latin for the *Parvus Cato* has been heavily truncated, and what is present is inserted in rubric in the margins.
 - iii. The envoys to each book have been omitted.
 - iv. There seem to be two main systems of notae – one in which only the 'a' (system *) is given in superscript, one in which 'ta' (system **) is superscript. A third system appears on one occasion with a fancy loop over the 'no', but this may be a variant of system **. A fourth system, marked with a '+' appears in book III. Distich IV.2 is marked 'nota bene'.
- i. Texts may have been edited as they were copied to remove material which questioned the authority of the Church. M&R (1940: i, 212) 'As in the case of Ha² [Harley 1758], there is in Ha³ [Harley 7333] cooperative editing; in Ha³ it was done by a group of ecclesiastics one of whose aims was the removal of objectionable features. This appears strikingly in the cutting off of PdT [Pardoner's Tale] with the pious exclamation in 918 and so avoiding the vulgar quarrel in which the Pardoner shows to great disadvantage; and in the omission of ShT [Shipman's Tale] (and link attaching it to PrT [Prioress' Tale]) in which a monk disgraces his vocation. It appears clearly in the characterization of the Miller's wife in ReT [Reeve's Tale]: she is represented as not a parson's but a swanherd's daughter and as brought up, not in a nunnery, but in a dairy, and even more interestingly in the alteration of A 3982-84:
 - 1. For holy chirches good moot been despended
 - 2. " wel egoten " " " " "
 - 3. On holy chirches blood that is descended
 - 4. In worthi ----- " wher it is "
- j. The MS. has received a fair amount of damage and dirt, and some of the parchment pages are yellowed. The state of the first and last folios suggests that it was unbound for some time. Nonetheless, the original parchment is very fine and must be of a high quality. Its size makes it impractical for reading, suggesting an original commission as a display volume. It has, however, been read, as seems to be evidenced by the various notations and illustrations present. The incomplete Latin

rubrication for the *Distichs* and the haphazard nature of the Roman numeral foliation (provided in spaces which seem to be intended for running text headings) indicate that the volume was never completed, and it cannot be ruled out that some of the sections which appear to be missing were never, in fact, present.

- i. Lack of completion of Latin in *Distichs* allows for some hypotheses regarding the linguistic politics of the time. If the reason for the incomplete nature of the manuscript is a lack of either time or money to complete the project, then this must have been considered a reasonable cut-back, which implies in turn either that the *Distichs* were not that important at all, or that the Latin was considered less important than the English.

21. Bibliography:

- a. Connolly (1998): Discussion of MS. amongst those copied from exemplars related to John Shirley.
- b. Manly & Rickert (1940: i, 207-218): Cataloguing of the MS. amongst others containing *The Canterbury Tales*
- c. Matheson (1998: 269): Discussion of prose *Brut* within this MS.
- d. Mooney, Linne (2003): Discussion of MSS. descended from those of John Shirley.
- e. Seymour (1974: 270-271): Cataloguing of the MS. amongst those of the *Regiment of Princes*.
- f. Wanley *et al.* (1808-1812): Catalogue entry.
- g. Wright (1972): Lists known owners of MS.

19. London, British Library, MS. Royal 17 B.XLVII

1. Binding:
 - a. Modern British Museum binding with crest of George II on front and back covers.
2. Material:
 - a. Paper with parchment flyleaves.
3. Number of folios:
 - a. ii + 174
4. Contents from a catalogue (copied, though abridged, from Warner & Gilson 1921):
 - a. **fol. 2r** John Lydgate; 'Dietary' [*NIMEV 824*] *Beg.* 'For helth of body keuere from cold thy hede, / Ete no raw mete, take gode heede therto'
 - b. **fol. 3v** Benedict Burgh; 'Cato Major' [*NIMEV 854*] Extract (distich IV. 19 only), headed 'Prudence' *Beg.* 'Enforce thy witte somewhat for to lese, / Aquaynte the with konnyng for þat is ay sure'
 - c. **fol. 3v** Recipes, in Latin verse, *Inc.* 'Vinum lacte laua, oleum licore faborum', and English prose, for taking out stains
 - d. **fol. 3v** Anonymous; One 6-line tail-rhyme st. [*NIMEV 3893*] *Beg.* 'Wele were him þat wiste / To whom he might trust'
 - e. **fol. 3v** A corresponding Latin distich *Inc.* 'Felix qui sciret in quo confidere quiret'
 - f. **fol. 5r** Forms of grant and notes on tenures and other legal matters, chiefly relating to London, many being decisions given 'per m[aiorem]'.
 - i. **fol. 5r** Definition of a 'daywerk' of land.
 - ii. **fol. 6r** Rules relating to apprenticeship in London.
 - iii. **fol. 6v** Extracts from Letterbook K and another London record called *Albus Liber*.
 - iv. **fol. 7r** Rule about sealing wills.
 - v. **fol. 11r** Form of prohibition in a suit by Rich. Halle, Doctor of Canon Law, rector of S. Michael, Cornhill, and Tho. Russell and Walter Hersy, church wardens, against John Brown, of the parish of S. Botolph without Aldersgate.
 - vi. **fol. 11v** Extracts from the provincial canon law of Canterbury concerning wills.
 - vii. **fol. 15v** 'En tantz des maners homme ne fra sa ley': rules relating to purgation, with Latin mnemonic verses.
 - viii. **fol. 15v** Rules for computing scutage, followed by measures of length.
 - g. **fol. 20r ff.** Forms of bonds or obligations, chiefly relating to London, and many dated between 27 and 34 Hen. VI [1449-1456]. In Latin, French and English in several hands. Among them are:

- i. **fol. 20r** Customs bond of Rob. Ouerton and Will. Pykeryng, citizens and mercers, to John Powtrell and Will. Beaufitz, collectors 30 Apr., *s.a.*
- ii. **fol. 21r** Bill for 200 l. by John [Sutton *al.* Dudley], Baron Dudley, Treasurer of the Household, and John Wode, Under treasurer, to Rich. Bird, Serjeant of the Catery; 18 Apr. 32 Hen. VI [1454], English.
- iii. **fol. 23v** Three bonds relating to brewhouses called 'le goze on þe hoop', 'le corbet', and 'le pecok on the hoop' in the parish of S. Botolph without Aldersgate; n.d.
- iv. **fol. 24r** Bond of Rob. Halle, Reginald and Arnold to serve Thomas Crafford for 3 months as archers.
- v. **fol. 26r** Bonds relating to ships called 'le Mary. Knyght' and 'le Mighell de Fobbyng'; n.d.
- vi. **fol. 28v** Bond of a parish-clerk.
- vii. **fol. 29r** Bond of a renter-warden of the Mercer's Company.
- viii. **fol. 32r** Bond of Tho. Payn and Hen. Crisp, executors of Rob. Cotton, clothworker, concerning a debt due by Rich. Leylond, esq.; n.d.
- ix. **fol. 33r** Bond for arbitration by Will. Norman and Tho. Lee, Rob. Hale and Nich. Westloker, between A. and B. Rich' Witles about repair 'unius plumbi vocati le Waterlede in fornace positi' in a brewhouse called 'le Sterre and le Cheker' in the parish of S. Martin, Outwich; n.d.
- x. **fol. 35r** Bond for conveyance of the manors of Woughton, co. Bucks, and Ashdon-hall, co. Essex, from John Nowers and Johanna his wife to Rich. Nowers; n.d.
- xi. **fol. 37r** Bond (to be left with John Chichelaye, chamberlain of London) for arbitration by Nich. Wifolde and John Derby, aldermen.
- xii. **fol. 38r** Bond for arbitration by Rich. Caudray, clerk, Will. Venour, Warden of the Fleet Prison, and John Wodehous, with [Humphrey Stafford] Duke of Buckingham as umpire ('impar'), between the Prioress and convent of – and John Shirley; n.d.
- h. **fol. 42r** 'Modus dictandi breuis et vtilis datus a Sampsonē', or, in another hand, 'Forura (*sic*, for forma?) dictaminis': a short tract with examples, many in the name of Thomas Sampson, the author (cf. Harley MS. 4993, f. 9, another formulary by the same, in which he styles himself a scholar of the University of Oxford). Some of the forms are dated in 1396. Beg. 'Domini et amici precarissimi, quia meum salutare'; ends 'et illud perficere recusarem, etc.' Colophon, 'Hic finem feci, commoda plura ieci'.
- i. **fol. 48r** Anonymous; 'Rule for using the prime and Sunday letter' (catalogue title) [*NIMEV 3609.6*] Beg. "This is a rewlr to knowe without labour / Whan the mone chaungeth and in what houre"
- j. **fol. 48r** Latin mnemonic verses, showing the 'dies communes de returnis breuium'
- k. **fol. 48r ff.** Model state letters and others, in Latin except where otherwise stated

- i. **fol. 48r** Henry VI to the magistrates of Lübeck about a robbery of salt from a ship.
- ii. **fol. 49v** The Mayor and aldermen of London to Pope Nicholas concerning the rate for contributions to parish churches.
- iii. **fol. 51v** The same to the same, on the same subject, though detailing additional subsequent events.
- iv. **fol. 52v** Grant of Henry [VI] to A. B. de Basyngstoke of exemption from the offices of bailiff, escheator, constable, chamberlain, burgess in parliament, &c; n.d.
- v. **fol. 53r** Grant by the same of the like and other privileges to John Carpenter, junior, late Secretary [or Common Clerk] of the city of London
- vi. **fol. 54r** Part of a letter sent from the King by the hands of Ludovicus Johannes (probably Louis Johan, Master of the Mint under Henry V, Warden of the Stannaries till 1442) with a Garter for a foreign sovereign; n.d.
- vii. **fol. 55r** Alice, Lady Lovell of wife of William Lovell, 7th Baron], to Giles Colebronde, collector of her rents at King's Sutton, co. Northt., to pay money to Robert B. of London, goldsmith; Westminster, 13 Apr. 32 [Hen. VI, 1454]. Engl.
- viii. **fol. 55r** The same to the same, in favour of [the same?] Robert Botiller; n.d. Engl.
- ix. **fol. 55v** Henry VI to the Chancellor of the County Palatine of Lancaster for patents to be sealed to Will. Bradford, Tho. Beaumont, and Will. Ambros to adjourn the sessions at Lancaster from Wedn. aft. S. Laurence to a day in Lent following; Westminster, 5 Aug. 33 Hen. VI [1455] Engl.
- x. **fol. 55v** Petition to the King from T., 'appeched of treson bicause of rekles wordes'; n.d.
- l. **fol. 56r** Forms of letters for a poor scholar, to ask assistance from relatives and others.
- m. **fol. 59r** Sir John Fortescue(?); couplets in some MSS. of 'Twelve points for purchasers of land to look to' [*NIMEV 4148*] *Beg.* 'Who wille be warre in purchasing, / Considre the poyntes here folowyng'
- n. **fol. 59v** Computation of proceeds of a fifteenth and tenth from laymen throughout England and a tenth from clergy of each province ... followed by a corrupt form of the usual mythical statistics of numbers of parishes, etc., in England.
- o. **fol. 59v** Note on the legal terms Assise de point assise, Assise large, Assise de droit dez damages, and Assise hors de point assise; also on the distinction of Housbote and Haibote. French.
- p. **fols. 60r ff.** Forms of presentation, certificate of banns, testimonials, etc. Including:
 - i. **fol. 60r** Presentation by Alianora, late wife of Sir Henry de S. Amando, of Thomas Legh, capellanus, to the rectory of Lodyngton [Lodington, co. Leic. or co. Northt. ?], dioc. Lincoln, vacant by death or resignation of John Clerk; 20 Oct. 1451.

- ii. **fol. 60r** Presentation by Will. Tailboys, esq., of Simon Flegard, capellanus, to the rectory, of F., dioc. Lincoln [? Faldingworth, co. Linc.]; n.d. [1450-1451].
- iii. **fol. 60v** Grant by Tho. Huggreford, Nich. Rody and Will. Berkeswell, feoffees of Richard [Neville], Earl of Warwick, to Ralph Molans, esq., of the first presentation to B., co. Rutland; n.d.
- iv. **fol. 60v** Grant by Edmund [Kirton], Abbot of Westminster, to A. B. of the first presentation to S. Matthew's, Friday Street, London, with reservation of a pension of 20s.; [1440-1462].
- v. **fol. 61r** Presentation by Rich. Granger, rector of S. Pancras [Soper Lane], London, John Boston and three others, parishioners, to Thomas Bekington, Dean of Arches, of J.C. to the chantry in the church founded by John de Causton; [1430-1440]
- vi. **fol. 61v** Testimonial from A., Prior of the Austin Priory of 'Bosgris' (*sic*), dioc. Canterbury, to B., a canon of the same order, to receive a cure of souls; 10 Mar. *s.a.*
- vii. **fol. 62r** Presentation by feoffees of the Duchy of Lancaster, of T., capellanus, to the wardenship of a chantry in the church of Kirkeby iuxta Bolyngbroke [East Kirby, co. Linc.], dioc. Lincoln; [1414-1438]
- viii. **fols. 62v ff.** Forms of fiat for great and privy seals
 - 1. **fol. 62v** By John Stafford, clerk of the Treasury [afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury], for grant to John Cornewail, knt., of the custody of the manor of Eyno [Aynho], co. Northt., during the minority of John, son and heir of John [FitzAlan, *al.*] Arundel, late Lord Arundel and Maltravers (d. 1421); n.d.
 - 2. **fol. 63r** By John M., knt., Richard [Neville], Earl of Warwick, and Will. Oldehall, a follower of Thomas [Beaufort], Duke of Exeter, respectively, for protections (under privy seal) for persons accompanying them abroad; n.d.
- ix. **fol. 63v** 'Titulum (*sic*) domus religiosorum ad ordines recipiendum': testimonial from William, prior, and the convent of Botley [Butley], dioc. Norwich, to Thomas Grace, clerk; 14 July, 1456.
- q. **fols. 64r ff.** Indentures and acquittances, including:
 - i. **fol. 64r** Lease by the rector and churchwardens of S. Alpage within Cripplegate, with consent of the Bishop of London and of the Dean of S. Martin's le Grand, to John Reede of a small piece of land adjoining the church-tower to build a house; 14 Aug. 28 [Hen. VI, 1450].
 - ii. **fol. 65r** Lease by church-wardens of S. Mary Magdalene, Milk St., to Will. Cantelowe of three new houses in Milk St. till a debt of 30*l.* 3*s.* 4*d.* is paid from the proceeds; [1441-1459].
 - iii. **fol. 68r** Lease by Henry [Holland], Duke of Exeter, to John Chancery of the manor of Ardington, co. Berks.; [1446-1461]

- iv. **fol. 71r** Acquittance by John Wilkes, rector, and Rob. Graft and Will. Stilez, churchwardens, of S. Mildred, Bread St., to A. and B. for rent of a house in Sevehode lane, par. of S. Laurence, Jewry; morrow of Easter, 32 Hen. VI [22 Apr. 1454]
- v. **fol. 71v** Acquittance by John Petresfeld and Thomas Lion, wardens of the fraternity of Corpus Christi in the chapel of S. Mary in Conynghope lane [Conyhope Lane in S. Mildred, Poultry], to the Prioress and convent of S. Helen within Bishopsgate for 6*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*; n.d.
- vi. **fol. 72r** General quitclaim by Peter Lee, of Halton, co. Southt. to Peter Cowdray; 1 Oct. 30 Hen. VI [1451]
- vii. **fol. 72r** Acquittance by John Arundell, clerk, to Sir Roger Chambrereleyne, knt., for 20*s.*; n.d.
- viii. **fol. 72r** Acquittance by John Welle, Prior of Hertford, to W.L., farmer of the manor and rectory of Peryngtone [Pirton], co. Hertf.; morrow of Annunciation, 29 [Hen. VI, 26 Mar. 1451]
- ix. **fol. 72v** Acquittance by Henry Trencherd, esq., janitor of the castle of D. (*sic* for Carisbrooke), I. of Wight, to Richard, Duke of York, for 6*l.* 1*s.* 8*d.*; n.d.
- x. **fol. 73r** Acquittance by Sir John Astley, knt., to John [Mowbray], Duke of Norfolk, for 20*s.*; n.d.
- xi. **fol. 73r** Acquittance by Elizabeth, Prioress of Sopwell [co. Hertf.], to the wardens of the Grocers' Company for an annuity of 13*s.* 4*d.* due to Johanna Welles, a nun of the house; [1436-1480]
- xii. **fol. 73v** Acquittance by William Hallum, esq., to Johanna, late wife of John Olyver, of Charing, co. Midd., daughter and heir of Will. Brokherst; morrow of Pentecost, 30 [Hen. VI, 29 May, 1452]
- xiii. **fol. 73v** Acquittance by R[obert Nyk] to the Prior and convent of N., Thomas Porteaelyn, esq., and Robert Bale, scrivener, of London, executors of Johanna, widow of Richard Person, for annuities of 40*s.* and 21*s.* to the said Robert and Alicia [his wife]; [after 1451]
- xiv. **fol. 74r** Acquittance by R. Hallum and R. Middeldmore, mercers, to Alice [de la Pole], Duchess of Suffolk [Chaucer's granddaughter], and W. Rassh de C. for 25*l.*; n.d.
- xv. **fol. 75r** Quitclaim by the Prior and convent of S. Mary within Cripplegate to John Warender, merchant, of a rent for 300 years in the parish of All Hallows, Grasschurch; Christmas Day, 1452
- xvi. **fol. 75r** Quitclaim by Robert Quynaton, executor of Sir John Drayton, knt., to Will. Alnewyk [Alnwick], Bishop of Lincoln (1436-1449), John Ingram and master John Trotter, parson of Ohecote [Edgcott], co. Northt., and other co-feoffees, of the manor of Edgcott; n.d.
- r. **fols. 76r ff.** Powers of attorney, &c., in Latin and English. Among the names occurring are:

- i. **fol. 76r, 77r** Peter Lee of Heryerd [Herriard], co. Southt., gent., and Thomas Lee his brother.
- ii. **fol. 76r** Laurence Myn, of Basingstoke, co. Southt., merchant.
- iii. **fol. 76v** Henry Constle, son and heir of Thomas Constle, late of Weston, co. Southt., lord of part of the manor of 'Utby', co. Surrey.
- iv. **fol. 78r-v** Sir William Norman, knt., J.P. for co. Kent, 1450.
- v. **fol. 79r-v** John Wallyngbury, *al.* Waleys, Prior of the hospital of S. Mary without Bishopsgate, and Thomas Man, steward of the same hospital, 29 Aug. and 3 Sept. 1450.
- vi. **fol. 81v** Thomas Elys, clothworker, of London.
- vii. **fol. 84v** Richard, Duke of York, Earl of March and Ulster, Lord of Meath and Connaught, Lieut.-Gen. of France and Normandy [1436-1437 or 1440-1447].
- viii. **fol. 86v** Richard Bene, fuller, of London.
- s. **fol. 88v** Medical recipes in a late 15th cent. hand in English.
- t. **fol. 89v** Licenses to debtors to go abroad free from arrest for specified terms. Latin, English, and French.
- u. **fol. 92r** Assignments of apprenticeship, in Latin.
- v. **fol. 93v** Manumissions by (a) John Tyrell, esq., lord of Cromer, co. Norf., to James Marable, his 'nativus'; n.d.; (b) James (*sic* ? for John, 1443-47), Duke of Exeter, to John Trigge, of Preston, co. Lanc.; n.d. With another form, without names.
- w. **fol. 95v** Wills and codicils, including (a) Nuncupative will of Robert Lathum, of Astbury, co. Chester; 5 June, 1452; (b) Codicil to the will of Elias Davy, mercer, of London; 21 Nov. 1455.
- x. **fol. 98r** 'Littere testimoniales', in Latin and French.
 - i. At the end of this section (fol. 100v) are added in a later hand two forms of grant of first presentation, one in the name of Edward [IV] to John [Sutton], Lord Dudley, of the provostship of Kyrkby [Kirkby Overblow, co. York]; 6 Jan. 10 [Edw. IV, 1471].
- y. **fol. 101r ff.** Miscellaneous deeds among which are:
 - i. **fol. 101r** Beneficial lease by Nich. Wyfold, alderman, Rich. Lee, and Will. Taillour to Will. Bowes, servant of the said Nicholas and of Margaret his wife, of a tenement in the par. of S. Bennet, Sherehog; n.d.
 - ii. **fol. 101v** Pledge by John Shefeld, of London, to Will. Cardmaker of a silver cup; 16 May, 25 Hen. VI [1447].
 - iii. **fol. 102r** Grant by Reginald West, Lord [de] La Warr, Tho. Bailly, and Will Fereby to Tho. Keys, servant of Lord de la Warr, of an annuity of 13s. 4d. from the manor of Luteys [Easton Lucies in Berwick St. John], co. Wilts.; n.d.
 - iv. **fol. 102r** Grant by Richard, Duke of York, &c., to Tho. Dinkan, clerk, of an annuity of 10*l.* n.d.
 - v. **fol. 102v** Appointment by John Codeworth, master or warden of the hospital of Holy Trinity, Pontefract, co. York, of Sir Tho. Tudenham, knt., as steward of the hospital's manors in co. Norf.; [1419-1447].

- vi. **fol. 104r** Livery of dower by Tho. atte Welle, bailiff of the Duchy of Lancaster in the Honour of the Eagle in the Rape of Pevensey [co. Sussex], to John Threpland and Johanna his wife; 30 May, 25 Hen. VI [1447].
- vii. **fol. 104v** Lease by John Rotham, gent., and Mary his wife, and others to Will. Groonde, mercer, of London, of a tenement in the churchyard of S. Mary le Bow, and other tenements, for 13 years; n.d.
- viii. **fol. 106v** Assignment by A. and F. his wife to G. of a lease of a tenement in the par. of S. Peter, Westcheap, from B. [? Sir Will. Estfeld], knt., mercer, refounder of Bokerell's chantry in S. Mary, Aldermanbury; n.d.
- ix. **fol. 107v** Lease by Elena Halle, late wife of John Halle, mercer, of London, to Will. Denton, mercer, of a tenement in the par. of S. Mary, Aldermanbury, in occupation of John Olyver, surgeon; n.d.
- x. **fol. 109r** Agreement concerning the construction and maintenance of a gutter for rainwater on a tenement of John Grove in the Barbican, in the par. of S. Giles without Cripplegate; n.d.
- xi. **fol. 110r** Appointment by John [Tiptoft], Earl of Worcester, of Humphrey Smart as steward of his manors in cos. Glouc. and Heref.; [1443-1470]
- xii. **fol. 111v** Grant by Will. de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, to Sir Robert Corbet, knt., of an annuity of 20 marks from the manors of Stratford near Bergholt [Stratford St. Mary], co. Suff., and Langham, co. Essex; Westhorp, 13 Apr. 28 Hen. VI [1450].
French.
- xiii. **fol. 113r** Anonymous; Two cross-rhymed quatrains [NIMEV 2490] Beg. 'O Lorde of hevyn and kyng of might'
- xiv. **fol. 113v** Grant by John [Mowbray], Duke of Norfolk, &c., to his uncle Edw. Neville, Lord Bergavenny, of the custody, &c., of the park of Haylee [? Highley in Balcombe], co. Suss.; 20 Mar. 31 Hen. VI [1453]
- xv. **fol. 115v** Assignment by Matthew Danson, of Westminster, and Agnes his wife, to Will. Mayhewe, fishmonger, of a 40 years' lease of a tenement and stone quay near Brokenwharf in the par. of S. Mary Somerset, London, dated 22 Mar. 20 Hen. VI [1442]; n.d.
- xvi. **fol. 117v** Confirmations by the Bishop of London and by two Deans of St. Paul's of leases by prebendaries. The names and dates given are inconsistent.
- xvii. **fol. 118v** Sale by Will. Pykeryng and others, executors of the will of Will. Millereth [*al.* Melreth], of reversions in Milkstreet and Ladlane, lands in the par. of S. Mary, Aldermary, and a shop in Westcheap; [after 1446]
- xviii. **fol. 120r** Grant by Sir Tho. Findern, knt., to John Cornyssh of a rent of 5*l.* from the manor of East Mersey, co. Essex, to pay off a debt of 50*l.*; n.d.

- z. **fol. 121r ff.** Conditional feoffments and other deeds. Among them are:
- i. **fol. 121v** Grant in remainder by John Smyth, of Hendon [co. Midd.], to John Crowton and others of certain rooms in a tenement called Jakelyns in Hendon; n.d.
 - ii. **fol. 122v** Grant by William le Zouche, 'dominus le Zouche et Saymour' [5th Baron La Zouche and iure uxoris Baron Saint Maur], to Tho. Bernard of lands &c., in Oundle, co. Northt.; n.d.
 - iii. **fol. 123r** Grant by Margaret de Bello Monte, Prioress, and the convent of Dartford, co. Kent, to John Benet and Agnes, his wife, of lands in the manor of Norton Bavent, co. Wilts.; 9 Aug. 30 Hen. VI [1452].
 - iv. **fol. 125v** Covenant by John Marton, Master, and the scholars, or the senior fellow and fellows, of the 'Magna Aula Uniuersitatis' in Oxford [University College], to observe in perpetuity an agreement with Alice Belasys for two masses weekly for the said Alice, her father and mother, and Alice her grandmother; 11 Feb. 31 Hen. VI [1453].
 - v. **fol. 126r** Feoffment by Rich. Collyng, clerk, and John Fray to Alice, late the wife of John Coventre, mercer, of London, of lands, &c., in the par. of S. Mary le Bow; n.d.
 - vi. **fol. 126v** Grant by William Wymbull, Abbot of [Stratford Langthorne], to Will. Possemore, of a room and food, cloth and fuel allowance for life; n.d.
 - vii. **fol. 128r** Exchange by the Abbot and convent of Stratford Langthorne, co. Essex, with Thomas Bernewell and Will. Hulyng, under a licence from the King dated 6 Nov. 24 Hen. VI [1445], of a messuage called Erles and lands in Havering, co. Essex, held of the King for 2s. or a sparrow-hawk, for a messuage and lands, &c., in West Ham, co. Essex; [circ. 1445]
 - viii. **fol. 129r** Feoffment by John Norman, Rob. Cristendome, John Stonton and others to Nich. Bolthorpe and Elizabeth his wife of lands in Bengeo [co. Hertf.] and elsewhere enfeoffed to them by the said Nicholas and John Godstone; n.d.
 - ix. **fol. 131v** Grant by Richard C. to J.W., son of his daughter Johanna, of a rent of 26s. 8d. from a tenement or inn called 'le Cardinales hat' in Grasschurch street; n.d.
 - x. **fol. 132v** Contract for delivery of several gross of 'purses for wommen called' respectively 'xviii peny ware', 'xxx peny ware', and 'thre shelyng ware', and two dozen others 'broudered, called fyve schelyng ware'; n.d. *Engl.*
 - xi. **fol. 133r** Transference by Harry ----, 'foistour' [*al.* 'foystour' or fuster, saddle-tree-maker], of London, to John Cornysse, saddler, of Martin Symond, his apprentice, until Easter 1456; n.d. *Engl.*
 - xii. **fol. 133v** Sale by Rich. Crulle, bowyer, of London, to Elis Davy, mercer, of lands called Delles in Croydon, co. Surrey; n.d. *Engl.*
 - xiii. **fol. 134v** Covenant between John Stokton and Will. Geffrey, of Holloway, and Johane his wife 'vppon a surende after custume of a maner'; n.d. *Engl.*

- xiv. **fol. 135r** Covenant for payment of a debt by Aylisaundre Orable, mercer, of London, to Isabell, executrix of her late husband John Yonge, of Chipping Norton, co. Oxon.; n.d. *Engl.*
- xv. **fol. 135v** Bill of sale by Beatrice Burghbroke to Will. Taylour, grocer, of London, of two parcel-gift silver basons with arms in the bottoms; n.d. *Engl.*
- xvi. **fol. 136r** Contract for delivery by John Heydon, dyer, of London, to Will. Elmet, dyer, of 30 stone weekly of 'goode and sufficient rede corke for dyers to make crymseins'; n.d.
- xvii. **fol. 136v** Contract for delivery by Will. White, of Coventry, mercer, to John Chacomer, mercer, of London, of various grades of leather; n.d.
- xviii. **fol. 139r** Agreement between maister Edmond B[urgh], parson of Tendring, co. Essex, and Sir Geoffrey Highfield, of London, priest, concerning the benefice; n.d.
- aa. **fol. 140v** Medical recipes in English and Latin, chiefly for the eyes. Interspersed are a few more letter-forms, including (fol. 141r) an undated petition to the King from William Hull, of Gloucester, yeoman, a prisoner in Newgate, for pardon.
- bb. **fol. 143r** A few more recipes in another hand, in Latin, followed by an unfinished list in English of 'Rotes commestable', which *beg.* 'Carretrotes growing in gardyns arne rede'.
 - i. On blank leave are scribbled another form of grant of annuity (fol. 144v) and a fragment of a will (fol. 146v) including bequests of sheep to the parishes of Wynslad [Winslade], Mapulderwell [Mapledurwell], Upton [Upton Grey], Tanworth [Tunworth], Weston [Weston Patrick], Heryard [Herriard], and Elsefeld [Ellisfield, all in co. Sotht.].
- cc. **fol. 147r** 'Magna Carta' (Edward I's confirmation): the Latin text with a legal commentary in English, both incomplete, ending with cap. viii, 'sine assensu dmoini sui si de illo tenuerit'. Commentary *beg.* 'Bifore þe making of this statuet, þat is to seic þe greet chartour'.
- dd. **fol. 158r** Form of deed, in Latin: Covenant by John B., master, and C. and T., wardens, and the gild or fraternity of Holy Trinity in the church of S. Botolph [without Aldersgate?], with John Joye and Will. M., executors of J. L., to keep for 20 years the said J. L.'s anniversary on 12 Aug.
- ee. **fol. 160v** *Anonymous; Satirical carol [NIMEV 113]* *Beg.* 'Aboue all thing thow arte a kyng'.
- ff. **fol. 163v ff.** Forms of entry upon court-roll of the manor of Iseldon Berners [in Islington, co. Midd.]:
 - i. **fol. 163v** Admission of Will. Clouer and John Hudgrey, upon surrender out of court by Johanna, daughter of the late Will. Brokhurst; Mond. aft. Inv. of Holy Cross, 30 Hen., VI [8 May, 1452].
 - ii. **fol. 163v** Admission of Margery, widow of the said William Brokhurst, with remainder to the said Johanna; Thursd. bef. Pentecost, 22 Hen. VI [6 June, 1443].

- iii. **fol. 164r** Surrender by the said Will. Clouer and John Hudgrey and readmission subject to an annuity to Will. Halum and the said Margery, now his wife; date as in (1).
- gg. **fols. 165v ff.** Letters, in English:
 - i. **fol. 165v** Richard, Duke of York, to Dame Elizabeth Wodehille [?widow of Thomas Wodhull, of Odell, co. Bedf., styled Baron of Wodhull or Wahull, who d. 1421] in favour of the suit of Sir Hugh John; n.d.
 - ii. **fol. 165v** Richard [Neville], Earl of Warwick, to John Nanfan, 'occupior of þe issues and profites' of his islands of Jersey and Guernsey, for payments to John Cornyssh; 11-, 28 Hen. VI [1449-50].
 - iii. **fol. 166r** The same to Dame Elizabeth Wodehille, to the same effect as (1), Sir Hugh John being described as having been made knight at Jerusalem, afterwards knight marshal of France and of England; n.d.
- hh. **fols. 168r ff.** Wills:
 - i. **fol. 168r** Copy of part of the will (dealing with movables only) of John Carpenter, junior. The first leaf is torn.
 - ii. **fol. 169v** Will (dealing with lands and tenements) of T. Pernell, girdler, of London, providing for augmentation of the chantry of Holy Trinity and S. Katharine in the church of S. Mary le Bow, &c., and bequeathing lands, &c., to that use to Will. Gerveis, rector, John Nortborn and P., churchwardens' 10 Dec. 1429.
 - iii. **fol. 170v** Notarial copy of will (dealing with lands and tenements) of Sir R[obert] K[nolles], knight and citizen; 31 Oct. 1389.
 - iv. **fol. 172r** Probate in the consistory court at St. Paul's of a codicil, dated – Dec. 1451, of John Osyne, leatherseller, bequeathing lands and tenements in Colman Street to the Leathersellers' Company; 2 Jan. 1454/5.

5. Collation:

- a. Binding is very tight, making thorough examination impractical. The notes on collation given in Warner & Gilson (1921) are given below (with emendations to bring these into line with the contents as given here).
 - i. For items a. – f.: seven leaves uncertain and one gathering of 14.
 - ii. For items g. – l.: i²¹, ii⁴, iii¹³.
 - iii. For items m. – p.: five leaves, gatherings uncertain.
 - iv. For item q.: one gathering of 12 leaves
 - v. For items r. – w.: one gathering of 24 leaves.
 - vi. For item y.: one gathering of 24 leaves.
 - vii. For items z. – aa.: one gathering of 24 leaves.
 - viii. For item bb: a mutilated gathering, originally of ten or more leaves.
 - ix. Items cc. – hh.: One mutilated gathering originally of 36 leaves, and ten leaves uncertain.

- b. This yields the following tentative collation formula: i⁷, ii¹⁴, iii²¹, iv⁴, v¹³, vi⁵, vii¹², viii²⁴, ix³, x²⁴, xi²⁴, xii¹⁰⁻⁶, xiii³⁶⁻¹⁰, xiv¹⁰
6. Size of page:
 - a. 210 x 140 mm.
 7. Size of written space:
 - a. Varies, approx. 160 x 115 mm.
 8. Layout:
 - a. Single columns, with breaks between items but few headings.
 9. Frame:
 - a. Not present.
 10. Decoration:
 - a. Some pen decoration, especially of initial letters; ascenders of top lines and descenders of bottom lines frequently extended and sometimes elaborated.
 - b. fol. 166v: A faded pen drawing of a religious figure, possibly one of the Church Fathers – he is bearded, with a halo around his head, wearing a robe, and holding a *globus cruciger* in one hand, whilst the other hand is raised in benediction.
 11. Pagination:
 - a. Old foliation of 33, 34 on fols. 1r, 2r; 35-45 on fols. 10r ff.
 - b. Old foliation 3-14 on fols. 24r-35r.
 - c. Old foliation 46, 47 on fols. 62r, 63r.
 - d. Old foliation 17-28 on fols. 64r-75r.
 - e. Old foliation 1, 2 on fols. 78r, 79r.
 12. Catchwords:
 - a. Not present.
 13. Signatures:
 - a. Not present.
 14. Table of contents:
 - a. Not present.
 15. Secundo folio:
 - a. of alle
 16. Indications of scribe/date:
 - a. Catalogue dates MS. to c. 1452-1456, presumably on the basis of the dates of the contents.
 - b. This was clearly produced under Lancastrian rule (specifically that of Henry VI), although the documents for which it provides exemplars presumably remained valid following Edward IV's usurpation.

17. Indication of owners:

- a. fol. i^r: 'William Challner est possessor huius libri' (16th C.)
- b. fol. 1^r: 'Iste liber constat magister (sic) Leye.' (15th C.)
- c. fol. 1^r: 'Ste liber constat Thomam (sic) Cheke' (16th C.)
- d. fol. 19^v 'Iste liber pertinet ad Iohannem Chowne'.

18. Annotations by later users:

- a. fol. 156^r: Part of a private letter to 'unkyl Spursto'.
- b. fol. 159^v: Farm accounts.

19. Distichs present:

- a. IV. 19

20. Notes:

- a. The foliation indicates that this collection was compiled from smaller volumes. The scribal hand is largely consistent throughout, although a cursory examination is not enough to tell whether this is because it is all the work of an individual, or a group of scribes trained to a school/scriptorium standard.
- b. Notes on *Distichs*:
 - i. Only a single distich is present, without Latin, and given the heading 'Prudence'.
- c. This manuscript appears to have been used as a dictamen exemplar book, appropriate to use by a legal or government clerk practising in London. The 'Dietary' and excerpt from the *Distichs* appear to function as general advice to the owner of the volume before the documents begin.
- d. There are a large number of names occurring in the contents of the volume, mostly nobility, gentry and merchants, as might be expected given the nature of the contents. Among these names are John Shirley (fol. 38^r), Sir John Astley (owner of PML MS. M-775 – fol. 73^r) and Sir Thomas Findern (of the Findern family who owned CUL MS. Ff.1.6 – fol. 120^r). Although there is no suggestion that any of these individuals are directly connected to the manuscript or its owner, their presence is a reminder of the interconnectedness of members of the gentry and nobility, and thus of the ease with which the *Distichs* may have spread within these groups.

21. Bibliography:

- a. Warner & Gilson (1921: 234-238): Catalogue entry.

20. London, British Library, MS. Royal 18 D. II

1. Binding:
 - a. Modern. George II's coat of arms on front cover. Leather with gilt detailing.
2. Material:
 - a. Parchment.
3. Number of folios:
 - a. i + 212
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. **fol. 1v** John Lydgate; *'Testament' (excerpt: parts 2-5) [NIMEV 2464]* *Beg: 'The yeres passed of my tender youthe'. Verse*
 - b. **fol. 6r** John Lydgate; *Troy Book [NIMEV 2516]* *Beg. 'O mighty Mars, that with thy sterne light / In armes hast the powere and the might'. Verse*
 - c. **fols. 146v-147r**: blank
 - d. **fol. 147v** John Lydgate; *The Siege of Thebes [NIMEV 3928]* *Beg. 'Whan bright Phebus passyd was þe ram / Mid of Aprile and in the bulle came'. Verse*
 - e. **fol. 163r** William Cornyssh (Or John Skelton?); *'a Treatise bitwene Trowth and enformacion' (MS. title) Beg. 'The knowledge of god passith comparison, / The devil knowith all il thinge consented or done'. Prose*
 - f. **fol. 165r** John Skelton; *Elegy for Henry Percy, 4th Earl of Northumberland. Beg: 'I wayle, I wepe, I sobbe, I sigh ful sore / The deadly fate, the dolefulle destenny'. Verse*
 - g. **fol. 167r** Anonymous; *The Assembly of Gods [NIMEV 4005]* *Beg. 'Whan Phebus in the crabbe had nere his cours ronne / And towarde the Icon his iourney gan take. . Verse*
 - h. **fol. 181r** John Lydgate; *Verses on the Kings of England (to Henry VI) [NIMEV 3632]* *Beg. 'The first William, mighty duke of Normandy, / As aunciente croniculis makithe mencyon.' N.B. This copy has been revised and continued to Henry VIII. Verse*
 - i. **fol. 184r** Anonymous; *Blazons of the arms of various Christian kings, real and legendary. Beg. 'The cite of Iherusalem berithe syluer a crose potance bytwene iiii crosselettis golde'. Prose*
 - j. **fol. 186r** William Peeris; *Chronicle of the Percy family. Beg: 'Cronykillis and annuall bookis of kinges / Of auncient lordes and estates riall.' N.B. Peeris describes himself here as 'clerke and preste secretary to the right nobill Erle Henry the vth Erle of Northumbrelande'. Verse*
 - k. Proverbial or moral verse inscriptions, &c., on the walls of Leconfield and Wressel castles, two Yorkshire seats of the Percy family. *Verse*
 - i. **fol. 195v** Anonymous *'The prouerbis of the garette over the bayne at Kekingfelde' (MS. title) Beg: 'The sermountynge*

pleasure who can expresse.' 'Kekingfelde' refers to the Percies' Leconfield Castle in Yorkshire.

- ii. **fol. 198r** Anonymous 'The prouerbis in the garet at the new lodge in the parke of Lekingfelde' (MS. title) *Beg.* 'When the philosophers Putagoras and Tuball'
- iii. **fol. 200v** blank
- iv. **fol. 201r** Anonymous; 'The prouerbis in the rooffe of the huest chawmbre in the gardinge at Kekingfelde' (MS. title) *Beg.* 'Esperaunce en dyeu. Truste in hym, he is moste trewe'.
- v. **fol. 202r** Anonymous; 'The prouerbis in the rouf of my lorde Percy closett at Lekyngfelde' (MS. title) *Beg.* 'He that made this hous for contemplacion'.
- vi. **fol. 204v** Anonymous; 'The prouerbes in the roufe of my lordis library at Lekyngfelde' (MS. title) *Beg.* 'Drede god and fie from syn'.
- vii. **fol. 205v** Anonymous; 'The counsel of Aristotell whiche he gauē to Alexander kinge of Macedony in the side of the garet of the gardynge in Lekyngfelde' (MS. title) *Beg.* 'Apply to the best gyftis geuen to the'. N.B. Title suggests this is an extract from a translation of the *Secreta Secretorum*.
- viii. **fol. 207r** Benedict Burgh; 'Cato Major' (extracts) [*NIMEV 854*] *Beg.* 'When it is tyme of coste and greate expens'. N.B. The title given in the MS. is 'The prouerbes in the sydis of the innere chamber aboue of the house in the garding at Wresill'. 'Wresill' refers to the Percies' Wressel Castle in Yorkshire.
- ix. **fol. 209r** Anonymous; 'The counsel of Aristotill whiche he gayfe to Alexandre kynge of Massydony, which ar writyn in the syde of the vtter chamber aboue of the house in the gardynge at Wresyll' (MS. title) *Beg.* 'Pvnyshe moderatly and dyscretly correcte'.
- x. **fol. 210r** Anonymous; 'The proverbis in the side of thutter chamber aboue of the hous in the gardyng at Wresyll' (MS. title) *Beg.* 'Remorde thyne ey inwordly'.
- l. **fols. 212r-v** blank

5. Collation:

- a. Current binding too tight to allow inspection. Tentative collation can be constructed from catalogue description, with the caveat that 'quire xxi' is composed of multiple quires whose composition cannot be properly established:
 - i. i⁵, ii⁸, iii⁸, iv⁸, v⁸, vi⁸, vii⁸, viii⁸, ix⁸⁻¹, x⁸, xi⁶, xii⁸, xiii⁸⁻¹, xiv⁸, xv⁸, xvi⁶⁻², xvii⁸, xviii⁶⁻¹, xix⁸, xx⁸, xxi²⁵⁻⁹, xxii⁴, xxiii⁸, xxiv⁷, xxv⁸, xxvi⁷, xxvii⁹, xxviii⁸

6. Size of page:

- a. 395 x 280 mm.

7. Size of written space:

- a. 260 x 155 mm.

8. Layout:

- a. Double columns for *Troy Book* and *Sieges of Thebes*, all other texts single columns.

9. Frame:

- a. Pricking no longer evident, presumably trimmed.
- b. Text boxes and lines ruled brown plummet.

10. Decoration:

- a. Catchwords are contained in decorative scroll drawings on fols. 21v, 37v and 45v. The catchwords on fol. 174v are contained in a scroll which is impaled on the horn of a unicorn's head.
- b. Lydgate's *Testament* has illuminated initial letters (twelve lines tall) with animal drawings inside (including a unicorn on fol. 3v), in black pen coloured with gold.
- c. The *Troy Book* and *Siege of Thebes* are illustrated throughout with miniatures. These are detailed in Warner & Gilson (1921: 310), who note that some were produced at the time the text was copied (in the second half of the 15th C.), whilst others were 'filled in by an artist of the Flemish school' in the early 16th C.
 - i. These miniatures are present on fols. 6r, 30v, 66v, 74r, 75r, 82v, 87r, 93r, 95r, 108v, 128r, 148r, 151r, 153v, 154v, 156r, 157v, 158v, 159r, 160r, 160v, 161r, and 161v. Details of their subject-matter is given in Warner & Gilson (1921: 310).
- d. fol. 87v: Elaborate decorated initials; a fish is depicted in the pen-work filling the header space at the top of the page.
- e. fols. 93v-99v: First letter of each column large and decorative. Black ink with interiors coloured yellowish gold.
- f. fol. 133v: Large decorative ascenders on letters of first line fill page header space. Small letters built into ascenders spell something like 'subegm'.
- g. fol. 162r: The coat of arms of Henry Percy, 4th Earl of Northumberland. Blazon provided by Warner & Gilson (1921: 310): 'Quarterly. 1st and 4th *or*, a lion rampant *azure*, for Percy, 2nd and 3rd *gules*, three luces haurient *arg.*, for Lucy) between initials H.P. surrounded by the Garter, with badges a crescent and a shackle-bolt'. The motto 'honi soit qui mal y pense' is written in gold leaf around it.
- h. fol. 163r: Less extravagant decoration. Different, now badly faded, ink. Decorative ascenders on top lines of stanzas. Rubrication of headings and Latin phrases in text, as well as marginal headings on fol. 163v.
- i. fol. 165r: Large decorative initials with complex penwork to begin stanzas, and for many of the ascenders on the top lines of stanzas as well as the title. Red and yellow pen again used for decoration around these. Initials are usually around six lines high.
- j. fol. 200r: Warner & Gilson (1921: 309-310): 'Picture in colours representing Christ, holding the sun, in the centre of a red and white [Tudor] rose emitting fire and drops of liquid, with verses "Ex paterno trono radii splendoris / Ex matre candor virginii decoris / Ex patre

flos rubii coloris / Ex vtroque redemption nostri amoris”, and lower down on the page a scroll surmounted by an eye and underneath it drops falling on the letters COR. On the scroll are verses: “I receyue noo lighte but of thy bearmes (*sic*) bright, / The leight beneuolent causith cor to relent, / For remembrynge thy goodenes contenuall, which remanith perpetuall, / Cor cannot but of dutie he muste distill; Yet he saith dutie cannot recompence a cordinge too his goode will.” (Further explicated by Dickens 1982: 41-46).

11. Pagination:

- a. Modern pagination present in pencil, ignores membrane flyleaf.

12. Catchwords:

- a. Present on quires ii (fol. 13v), iii (21v), v (37v), vi (45v), vii (53v), viii (61v), ix (69v), x (77v), xi (83v), xii (90v), xiii (97v), xiv (105v), xv (113v), xvi (117v), xvii (125v), xix (137v), xx (141v), xxi (151v), xxiii (174v). All followed up.

13. Signatures:

- a. None present

14. Table of contents:

- a. Present, in Elizabethan secretary hand (fol. 1r):
- b. “These treatises ar Comprised in this volume viz
 - i. Jhon Lydgates testament
 - ii. The Siege of Troy & Thebes translated out of Boccass by the same Lyd.
 - iii. A merrie Concept of his declaring how he adioyned the Siege of Thebes to Canterburie Tales
 - iv. *William* Vornish alias Nishweet his treatiss betwene truth and enformation. And his Parable betwene information & Musique. At the tyme of his being in the fleet. a^o {illegible} Henrici 7^{ti} 29th
 - v. Skeltons Elegies vpon the Death of the Earle of Northumberland
 - vi. The Discord betwixt Reason and Sensualytie written by Jhon. Lydgate
 - vii. The Names Natures and Places of buriall of all the kings of England from *William* Conquerour to k. Henry : 8th
 - viii. The Armes of all the Christian kings blazoned
 - ix. The Discente of the Lo. Percies compiled by *William* Peres Secretary to Henry 5th Earle of Northumb.
 - x. Proverbs in the Lodgings at Lekinfeild
 - xi. The Councill of Aristotle to Alexander
 - xii. Proverbs in the Lodgings at Wresill
 - xiii. The Counsell of Aristotle to Alexandre in the same pla{ce}
 - xiv. [signed] Lumley.’

15. Secundo folio:

- a. Whiche while

16. Indications of scribe/date:

- a. Warner & Gilson (1921: 310): The *Troy Book* and *Siege of Thebes* form the original core of the manuscript (1450s or 1460s – see ‘Ownership’ section below). The volume was unfinished, and spaces were left for miniature illustrations. These were eventually inserted in the 16th C., possibly at the same time as the addition of the other texts under the ownership of Henry Algernon Percy, 5th Earl of Northumberland (c. 1516-1523).

17. Indication of owners:

- a. fol. 1v: ‘Virtutis Laus actio | Arundel’
- b. fol. 2r ‘kateryne {coqqueruil?’ Warner & Gilson (1921: 310) read this as ‘Kateryne Eggcomb (? d. 1553, widow of Sir Piers Edgecombe).’ It is difficult to see how ‘Eggcomb’ might be derived from these letters.
- c. Sir William Herbert and his wife, Anne Devereux, are depicted in the miniature on fol. 6r, along with their coats of arms (Warner & Gilson 1921: 310).
- d. Warner & Gilson (1921: 310): ‘[*Troy Book* and *Siege of Thebes*] were doubtless written and illuminated originally [...] for Sir William Herbert, afterwards (1468) Earl of Pembroke, and Anne Devereux his wife (whom he married *circ.* 1455), as a gift either to Henry VI before Herbert’s definite adoption of the Yorkist cause (not later than 1457) or to Edward IV after his accession. As he is not represented with the Garter the work was probably executed before 1462. Hence the date is either *circ.* 1455-1456 or 1461-1462. The work, however, was unfinished and probably remained in the possession of the Herberts until the marriage of their daughter Maud (*circ.* 1476) to Henry Percy, 4th Earl of Northumberland, whose arms [...] are illuminated [on fol. 162r].
- e. Warner & Gilson (1921: 310): ‘The Lady Anne Percy, daughter of the 4th and sister of the 5th Earl of Northumberland, married in 1511 William Fitzalan, Earl of Arundel, and the MS. belonged to their son Henry, Earl of Arundel, whose name and motto ‘Virtutis laus actio’ are on ff. i b, 212 b, and to his son-in-law [John, Lord] Lumley (*autogr.* inscription, f. 1)’ The ‘autograph inscription’ is the table of contents copied above.

18. Annotations by later users:

- a. fols. 62v-63r: Ink spilled, lettering slightly smudged as a result.
- b. fol. 72v ff.: A Tudor hand has added directions to the reader for navigating a mis-ordered section. These instructions are:
 - i. fol. 72 v: ‘Torne to the 125. Leffe.’
 - ii. fol. 74v: ‘Tourne beward to the 127. leff’
 - iii. fol. 77v: ‘Tourne to the 129. leff forward’
 - iv. fol. 119v: ‘Torne back to the 71 leffe’
 - v. fol. 123v: ‘Torne to the 75. leff backward’
- c. fol. 120v: Clover mark with ‘nota’ beside it, but never completed.

- d. fol. 124v: 'p nota' at base of second column, but no written note present.
- e. fol. 156v: 'nota' next to section headed 'how Amphymorax the bysshop shewed and prophesyed a grete misfortune toward the grekis'.
- f. fol. 173r: Notes in late 16th/early 17th C. hand: 'vices knigtes', 'vertus knigte', 'vertus imbassetors to fre Wyll'.
- g. fol. 173v: The same hand 'Vices imbassetors to fre Wyll'.
- h. fol. 177v: 16th C. hand next to stanza beginning 'ffirst where Colus to Pluto was brought / By his owne necligence taken prysonere' is the word 'Exposition'.
- i. fol. 190r: In William Peeris' chronicle of the Percies: 'Adeliza relicta re{b} is H: primi aut sponsa aut amica Guilelmo de Albinetor. Gerb: Dorob:' 18th C. hand.
- j. fol. 191r: 'Nickolaus de regibus Anglia' 16th C.? Same 18th C. hand as previous note?
- k. fol. 194r: Two nota marks next to same stanza (a pretzel shape next to fourth line below, and a box with a cross in it next to line six). Stanza says:
 - Elizabethhe dyede a virgyn in her tender age.
 - Lady Elynoure of sad and vertuus corage.
 - Dispowsed was right honorably.
 - To the Duke of buckyngham of noble lynage.
 - Anne the yonger syster a right prudent lady.
 - To Willyam lorde Matervers and so consequently.
 - Sone & heire to the Erle of Arundell of noble memory.
- l. fol. 198r: A 17th C. hand has glossed the 'prouerbis in the garet at the new lodge in the parke of Lekingfelde' with 'playnnes wthout curiosity', 'truth', 'moderation', 'unpartialnes', 'curiosity', and 'doublenes', but has not continued on to other folios.
- m. fol. 200v: 'Tam Marti quam Mercurio' 16th C. hand.
- n. fol. 212r: 'L aenirus'? 'ut numinus ita animus', both probably 16th C.
- o. fol. 212v: Several notes in different hands. Difficult to date. 'VIRTVTIS LAVS ACTIO', 'humilitu', 'Murus {aenius} sana Conscientia', 'ARVNDEL Virtutis Laus actio', 'Veritas liberauit'.

19. Distichs present:

- a. II.17, II.20, II.21, I.4, I.7, I.10, I.12, I.16, I.31, II.1, II.10, II.14, II.24, II.2, II.5, II.6, I.39, I.21, II. 18, I.18, II.23, I.13, I.14

20. Notes:

- a. Mooney (2011: 211) states that the later sections of this MS. were produced for the Percy family by one of the scribes in their employ. His hand is found on fols. 1v-5r, 165r-211v as well as in MS. Bodl. Selden B.10, fols. 200r-209v. The latter is datable to 1520. The *Distichs* are in the section copied by the Percy scribe, rather than the original section commissioned by Herbert.
- b. Lydgate's *Kings of England* is continued to Henry VIII.
- c. Notes on *Distichs*:

- i. fol. 207r: Full heading of *Distichs* excerpts: ‘The prouerbes in the sydis of the Innere chamber abo{ue} of the house in the garding at Wresill.’
- ii. fol. 207v: distich I. 16 has an extra two lines: ‘And in youthe to goode vertues yf thou resorte. / In thy age they shall helpe the amd greatly comfort.’
- iii. fol. 208v: distich II. 18 has an extra two lines: ‘But when thow shalt dyssymyll all way see. / Thy faynyng be voyde of all dishoneste.’
- iv. fol. 209r: *Distichs* extracts have an envoy stanza I haven’t yet found in edition. It is a little too clumsy and repetitive to be Burgh. Perhaps it was by Peeris if he regularly versified for the Percies?

What menythe all this why muse ye in *your* mynde.
 Regarde not the ryme but the reasone marke wele.
 Marke all thyng well And frute shall ye fynde.
 And yf ye wolde the swetnes haue of the kyrnell.
 Be content to byte vpon the harde shell.
 Vnder the whiche ye may fynde in *your* aduertens.
 A swete carnell of wysdam and of goode sentens.
- d. Clearly a lavish production, as befits its noble commissioners especially as the core was, judging by the miniature on fol. 6r which shows Herbert and his wife kneeling before a king, intended to be presented to royalty. It has generally been well looked-after, and there is very little writing on it, apart from some attempts to direct readers around the sections of the *Troy Book* which have been placed out of order. There is now some water damage to the edges of many of the pages.

21. Bibliography:

- a. Cooper (1972): Discussion of the musical proverbs copied into MS. from the walls of Leckonfield Castle.
- b. Dickens (1982: 41-46): Discussion of the emblem on fol. 200r.
- c. James (1986: 83-90): Discussion of the 5th Earl’s literary tastes as evidenced by this MS.
- d. Warner & Gilson (1921: 308-310): Catalogue entry.

21. London, British Library, MS. Add. 29729

1. Binding:
 - a. Modern British Museum binding.
2. Material:
 - a. Paper.
3. Number of folios:
 - a. i + 288 + iii
 - b. All flyleaves have been added in 19th C. re-binding.
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. **fol. 2r** Anonymous; 'A pece of y^e battayll of the psalms' (MS. title) *Beg.* 'That every man in his degree.' [*NIMEV 3269?*]. *Verse*
 - b. **fol. 3r** Anonymous; The difficulty of choosing a profession in religion [*NIMEV 655*] *Beg.* 'Considring effectually y^e great diversitie'. *Verse*
 - c. **fol. 4v** John Lydgate; 'How the plage was sesyd in rome' [*NIMEV 3168*] *Beg.* 'So noble medesyne, ne so sovereyne'. *Verse*
 - d. **fol. 6r** Benedict Burgh; praise of Lydgate [*NIMEV 2284*] *Beg.* 'Nat dremyd I in y^e mownt of Pernaso'. *Verse*
 - e. **fol. 6v** John Gower; 'Balade moral of gode counseyle' [*NIMEV 2737*] *Beg.* 'Passe forthe pilgryme, and bridle well thy beaste'. *Verse*
 - f. **fol. 7r** Anonymous; Didactic lyric [*NIMEV 2523*] *Beg.* 'O mortall man masyd with pompe and pride'. *Verse*
 - g. **fol. 8r** John Skelton(?); On the death of Edward IV [*NIMEV 2192*] *Beg.* 'Miseremini mei, y^e that be my fryndys'. *Verse*
 - h. **fol. 9v** John Lydgate; on the Image of Our Lady [*NIMEV 490*] *Beg.* 'Beholde and se, this gloriows figure'. *Verse*
 - i. **fol. 10r** John Lydgate; 'Rammeshorne' [*NIMEV 199*] *Beg.* 'Al rightwisnes doth now proceed'. *Verse*
 - j. **fol. 11r** John Lydgate; 'Fifteen Os of Christ' [*NIMEV 2394*] *Beg.* 'O blessed lord, my lord, O Crist Ihesu'. *Verse*
 - k. **fol. 16r** Anonymous; The properties of wine [*NIMEV 4175*] *Beg.* 'Wyne of nature hath properties Nine'. *Verse*
 - l. **fol. 17r** John Lydgate; The Siege of Thebes [*NIMEV 3928*] *Beg.* 'Whan brigte phebus passed was þe ram'. *Verse*
 - m. **fol. 84r** John Lydgate; To King Henry VI on his Coronation [*NIMEV 2211*] *Beg.* 'Most noble prince of cristen prences alle'. *Verse*
 - n. **fol. 87r** Anonymous; The Court of Sapience [*NIMEV 3406*] *Beg.* 'The laborious and the most mervelus werkes'. *Verse*
 - o. **fol. 122r** John Lydgate; Life of Our Lady (Magnificat only) [*NIMEV 2574*] *Beg.* 'Miche lawde and prays my sowle magnifieth'. *Verse*
 - p. **fol. 123r** John Lydgate; 'A song of lust Measure' [*NIMEV 584*] *Beg.* 'By wytte of man: a thing that is contrived'. *Verse*
 - q. **fol. 124v** John Lydgate; 'Amor et Pecunia' [*NIMEV 698*] *Beg.* 'Eche man folowith his owne fantasie'. *Verse*

- r. **fol. 126r** Robert Peet(?); Testament of one about to die' [*NIMEV 1488*] *Beg.* 'Terram terra tegat, demon peccata resumat, mundus res habeat, spiritus altus petat'. *Verse*
- s. **fol. 126v** John Lydgate; paraphrase of the Eight Verses of St. Bernard [*NIMEV 2553*] *Beg.* 'O sothfast sonne of al brightnesse'. *Verse*
- t. **fol. 127v** John Lydgate; 'That now is hay þat sumtyme was grasse' [*NIMEV 3531*] *Beg.* 'Ther is full lytell sikernes'. *Verse*
- u. **fol. 129v** John Lydgate; 'On the Image of Pity' [*NIMEV 2588*] *Beg.* 'O wretched sinner what so ever thow be'. *Verse*
- v. **fol. 130r** John Lydgate(?) / R. Stokys(?); proverbs [*NIMEV 3083*] *Beg.* 'See myche, say lytell and lerne to soffar in tyme'. *Verse*
- w. **fol. 130v** John Lydgate(?); hymn on the Five Joys [*NIMEV 1046*] *Beg.* 'Heyl glorious virgyne ground of all owr grace'. *Verse*
- x. **fol. 131r** John Lydgate; complaint of Christ [*NIMEV 3845*] *Beg.* 'Upon the crosse nailed I was for the'. *Verse*
- y. **fol. 131v** Anonymous; 'Tyed with a line' [*NIMEV 3436*] *Beg.* 'The more I goo the ferther I am behynde'. *Verse*
- z. **fol. 132r** John Lydgate; four things that make a man a fool [*NIMEV 3521*] *Beg.* 'þer beon four thinges causing gret folye'. *Verse*
- aa. **fol. 132v** Anonymous; 'Balade de bone counseyle' [*NIMEV 1419*] *Beg.* 'If it befalle that god the lyst visyte'. *Verse*
- bb. **fol. 132v** John Lydgate; Mumming for the Mercers of London [*NIMEV 2210*] *Beg.* 'Moste mighty Lord, Jubyter the gret'. *Verse*
- cc. **fol. 134r** John Lydgate; Mumming for the Goldsmiths of London [*NIMEV 3301*] *Beg.* 'That worthy david whiche that sloughe golie'. *Verse*
- dd. **fol. 135v** John Lydgate; Mumming at Eltham, [*NIMEV 458*] *Beg.* 'Bachus which is god of the glade vyne'. *Verse*
- ee. **fol. 136v** John Lydgate; Mumming at Hertford [*NIMEV 2213*] *Beg.* 'Most noble prynce with support of your grace'. *Verse*
- ff. **fol. 140r** John Lydgate; Mumming at London [*NIMEV 1928*] *Beg.* 'Loo here this lady that ye may see'. *Verse*
- gg. **fol. 144r** John Lydgate; Mumming at Windsor [*NIMEV 2212*] *Beg.* 'Mooste noble prynce, of cristen prynces all'. *Verse*
- hh. **fol. 145v** John Lydgate; balade on a New Year's goft of an eagle to Henry VI, 1428 [*NIMEV 3604*] *Beg.* 'This hardy foole [fowl], this bryd victorious'. *Verse*
- ii. **fol. 146v** John Lydgate; *Gloriosa Dicta sunt de Te* [*NIMEV 2688*] *Beg.* 'On holly hylles whyehe beoth of gret renoun'. *Verse*
- jj. **fol. 149v** John Lydgate; 'A wikked tong wol alway deme amis'. [*NIMEV 653*] *Beg.* 'Consider well with euery circumstaunce'. *Verse*
- kk. **fol. 151v** John Lydgate; 'Thoroughfare of Woe' [*NIMEV 1872*] *Beg.* 'Lyffte up the eyeghen of your aduertence'. *Verse*
- ll. **fol. 154r** John Lydgate; moral poem, with refrain [*NIMEV 3655*] *Beg.* 'This world is full of stabellnes'. *Verse*
- mm. **fol. 155r** John Lydgate; 'Valentine to Our Lady' [*NIMEV 3065*] *Beg.* 'Saynt valentyne of customs yeare by yeare'. *Verse*
- nn. **fol. 157r** John Lydgate; courtly love lyric [*NIMEV 869*] *Beg.* 'Freshe lusty beaute joined with gentyllnesse'. *Verse*

- oo. **fol. 157v** John Lydgate; the Duke of Gloucester's approaching marriage [*NIMEV 3718*] *Beg.* 'Thorough glad aspectis of y^e god cupyde'. *Verse*
- pp. **fol. 160r** John Lydgate; 'a balade sayde by a gentilwomman' [*NIMEV 154*] *Beg.* 'Allas I wofull creature'. *Verse*
- qq. **fol. 161r** John Lydgate; 'A Sayenge of the Nyghtyngale' [*NIMEV 1498*] *Beg.* 'In Juygne whan tytan was in y^e crabes lied'. *Verse*
- rr. **fol. 166r** John Lydgate; procession of Corpus Christi [*NIMEV 3606*] *Beg.* 'This hye feste now for to magnefy'. *Verse*
- ss. **fol. 169r** John Lydgate; 'Of the Sodein Fal of Princes in oure Dayes' [*NIMEV 500*] *Beg.* 'Beholde thys greate prynce Edward y^e seconde'. *Verse*
- tt. **fol. 169v** John Lydgate; *Fall of Princes* (excerpt) [*NIMEV 1168*] *Beg.* 'This tragedye gyueth a gret varynge'. *Verse*
- uu. **fol. 170v** John Lydgate, *Life of St. Margaret* [*NIMEV 439*] *Beg.* 'At y^e reverence of saynt margret'. *Verse*
- vv. **fol. 177v** John Shirley; 'Kalundare' [*NIMEV 2598*] *Beg.* 'O y^e my lordes whan y^e beholde'. *Verse*
- ww. **fol. 179v** John Lydgate 'Testament' (part I only) [*NIMEV 2464*] *Beg.* 'O howe holsum and glad is the memorie'. *Verse*
- xx. **fol. 184r** John Lydgate(?); *Reson and Sensuallyte* [*NIMEV 3746*] Imperfect. *Beg.* 'To all folkys vertouse'. *Verse*
- yy. **fol. 287r** John Lydgate; 'Fifteen Os of Christ' [*NIMEV 2394*] Imperfect at beginning. *Beg.* 'Jhesu called Alpha and Oo'. *Verse*
- zz. **fol. 288v** John Walton; extract from translation of Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* [*NIMEV 2820*] *Beg.* 'As poverte causith sobernes'. *Verse*
- aaa. **fol. 288v** Benedict Burgh; 'Cato Major' (extract) [*NIMEV 854*] *Beg.* 'Sum wemen wepyn of peure feminite' N.B. This is distich III. 20. *Verse*
- bbb. On the last page is the note: "This boke perteynythe to John Stowe and was by hym wryten in y^e yere of owr lord MDLXIII."

5. Collation:
 - a. Too tightly bound to allow examination.
6. Size of page:
 - a. 270 x 190 mm (trimmed).
7. Size of written space:
 - a. Varies depending on text. Approx. 220 x 130 mm.
8. Layout:
 - a. Single columns.
9. Frame:
 - a. Some texts ruled in brown pencil.

10. Decoration:
 - a. Some large decorative capitals, some decoratively elaborated ascenders and descenders, but no illustration.
11. Pagination:
 - a. Pencil foliation – 19th/20th C.
12. Catchwords:
 - a. Not present.
13. Signatures:
 - a. Not present.
14. Table of contents:
 - a. fol. 1r: ‘Danne Lidigate monke of Burye | his Work’ (hand contemporary with MS. A slightly later hand has added ‘written by Stow’, but this does not appear to be Stow’s hand.
 - i. The latter hand has added below ‘And | A translation of Virgils Aneyd, dedicated to prince | Arthur sonne to kinge Henry the seventh’.
 - ii. Another hand, possibly Stow’s, has copied Lydgate’s Latin epitaph below this.
15. Secundo folio:
 - a. When I had
16. Indications of scribe/date:
 - a. fols. 11r, 17r, 123r, 132r, 179r, 179v include tags that identify John Stow as the copyist. Nonetheless, these appear to have been added later, and the texts are in hands that, although similar, do show some differences. Stow’s hand is usually easy to discern – it is scratchy with often very thin lines, ascenders that usually slope sharply to the right, a yogh-shaped ‘r’, and a distinctive capital ‘T’ with a crooked body. In addition, Stow seems to favour very dark black ink. It is possible he has a neater, more rounded hand that he uses when writing less hastily, but it seems much more likely that a scribe/amanuensis has conducted most of the graft of actually copying the texts.
 - b. At least one text has been begun by Stow but completed by someone else. The hand changes subtly but completely between fol. 184v (which is definitely Stow’s hand) and fol. 185r (whose scribe has imitated the size and general style of Stow’s section, but with some sharply contrasting letter forms; for instance, Stow’s distinctive e-inside-a-C-style letter ‘k’ is lacking, an ‘8’-shaped ‘e’ is used which contrasts with Stow’s, ‘r’ appears instead of Stow’s yogh-shaped letter, and a ‘C’-like capital ‘T’ instead of Stow’s broken-backed ‘T’. All of these habits of Stow appear on the previous page, and the distinction is clear. Stow’s hand returns on fol. 190r, then disappears again on fol. 190v.

- c. The catalogue notes that the MS. is 'chiefly in the handwriting of John Stowe', which reinforces the impression that a scribe/amanuensis has also been involved.
- d. Note on last page: 'This boke perteynythe to John Stowe and was by hym wryten in y^e yere of owr lord MDLVIII.'

17. Indication of owners:

- a. Notes throughout indicate that this was owned by John Stow, and made (partially by Stow himself) for his own purposes.
- b. Note on first flyleaf: 'Purchased at Mag^{er} Puttick's 15 July 1874'.
- c. Edwards (1970: 89 n. 2): 'After being compiled by Stow, Add. 29729 was acquired by the Isham family of Lamport Hall, Northamptonshire, and subsequently bought by the British Museum in 1874.'

18. Annotations by later users:

- a. fol. 2r: A note that has later been erased. It is very difficult to read, but is clearly in an Elizabethan hand.
- b. fol. 6v: Stow has reiterated in the margin that Burgh wrote his poem to Lydgate at 'bilegh abbey'.
- c. fol. 8r: The Epitaph for Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, has originally been attributed to 'Johnne Lidgate monke of burie', but a later hand has blacked this out and written 'Skelton' instead. Stow has made a couple of textual emendations, then marked the first stanza with an 'X'. Stow's corrections appear a couple more times in this poem.
- d. fol. 132v: A later hand has added the note 'William Estfeld meresar mayre anno domini 1430 also þ^e second tyme mayre anno 1438.' Not Stow's writing. Stow has himself annotated this text heavily with explanations of its allusions, for example on fol. 133r: 'bacus is clyped god of wyne, thagus is a ryver of whiche þ^e gravelles & þ^e sands bene as of gold'.
- e. fol. 288v: The short excerpt from Boethius is in the other Stow-like hand, but the stanza from the *Distichs* is definitely in Stow's hand.

19. Distichs present:

- a. III. 20

20. Notes:

- a. The explicits throughout the volume indicate that it was copied from various books borrowed from acquaintances. A large section has almost certainly been copied from Cambridge, Trinity College MS. R.3.20 (Connolly 1998: 95-96).
- b. It seems unlikely this was all copied by Stow – the hand changes too much. His hand is definitely that of some entries, and notes throughout are almost certainly his too. Parts of these comments have been lost when the pages have been trimmed. Perhaps the changes of hand are because Stow only had the Trinity volume for a short time and needed help in copying it quickly?
- c. Edwards (1970: 90): 'Mastar Blomfelds boke' may refer to Miles Blomefield (1525-74?), a 'Cambridge antiquary and alchemist'.

Edwards may be confusing Miles with William Blomfield (cf. Schuler 2004; Principe 2004).

- d. Notes on *Distichs*:
 - i. The stanza from the *Distichs* is scrawled on the very last page, and is definitely in Stow's handwriting. The reason for its presence is unclear – it must have stood out to Stow for some reason, and he jotted it down, possibly with little care as to which manuscript it was on. Alternatively, it may be intended to complement the antifeminist extracts from Lydgate's *Fall of Princes* translation. The last few pages of this MS. are scrappy and damaged, any ruling (and it isn't always present) has been hastily done so that the lines aren't uniformly separated, and in the last few pages the writing slides closer to the outer edge of the page as it goes on.

21. Bibliography:

- a. Bond (1877: 696-701): Catalogue entry.
- b. Connolly (1998): Discussion of MS. in relation to its John Shirley exemplars.
- c. Mooney (2003): Discussion of MS. as one of those copied from exemplars related to miscellanies by John Shirley.
- d. Sieper (1901: xiii-xviii): Description of MS. in EETS edition of *Reson and Sensuallyte*.

22. London, British Library, MS. Add. 34193

1. Binding:
 - a. Modern British Library binding – quires have been bound in to paper holders to avoid trimming pages.
2. Material:
 - a. Paper and parchment.
3. Number of folios:
 - a. 228
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. From: British Library Online Manuscripts Catalogue
 - i. **fol. 2r** Copies of two charters concerning the privileges of the Dean and Chapter of St. Peter's, York. *Latin*. The first begins (fol. 2r) "Ricardus Dei gracia Rex Anglie"; but it is witnessed by "Johanne Duce Bedford Custode Anglie" [1415-1422, under Henry V.], and Richard II. is styled in the body of it "nuper Rex." The second charter (fol. 3v) is by King Edward [IV.?].
 - ii. **fol. 5r** Anonymous; Middle English translation of Guillaume de Deguileville's *Pèlerinage de l'âme*. *Beg.* 'Als .i. lay on Saynte Laurence nyghte slepeynge in my bedde'. *Prose*, but with verse sections:
 1. **fol. 11v** Complaint of the Soul in ME translation of *Pèlerinage de l'âme* [NIMEV 540]
 2. **fol. 19v** 'The epistle of grace sent to the sick man' in ME translation of *Pèlerinage de l'âme* [NIMEV 1296]
 3. **fol. 28r** 'Charter of Pardon' in ME translation of *Pèlerinage de l'âme* [NIMEV 1719]
 4. **fol. 31r** *Cantus peregrinorum* in ME translation of *Pèlerinage de l'âme* [NIMEV 1247]
 5. **fol. 31v** 'The Aungelles Songe' in ME translation of *Pèlerinage de l'âme* [NIMEV 263]
 6. Beginning of the Life of St. James the Gre
 7. **fol. 32r** 'The Aungelles Songe within heuene' in ME translation of *Pèlerinage de l'âme* [NIMEV 233]
 8. **fol. 32v** Angels' second song within Heaven in ME translation of *Pèlerinage de l'âme* [NIMEV 1246]
 9. **fol. 63v** Thomas Hoccleve; 'The Lamentation of the grene tre of the losyng of hire appil' in ME translation of *Pèlerinage de l'âme* [NIMEV 2428]
 10. **fol. 90v** Song of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary in ME translation of *Pèlerinage de l'âme* [NIMEV 1245]
 11. **fol. 91r** Angels' Song in ME translation of *Pèlerinage de l'âme* [NIMEV 1243]
 12. **fol. 93r** Angels' Song on Epiphany in ME translation of *Pèlerinage de l'âme* [NIMEV 1242]

13. **fol. 93v** Angels' song on Easter Day in ME translation of *Pèlerinage de l'âme* [NIMEV 1249]
14. **fol. 94r** Song of Graces of All Saints in ME translation of *Pèlerinage de l'âme* [NIMEV 1244]
15. **fol. 95r** Song of Angels and All Saints at Pentecost in ME translation of *Pèlerinage de l'âme* [NIMEV 1248]
- iii. **fol. 99r** Anonymous; Life of St. James the Greater, as given in the *Legenda Aurea*. Imperfect at beginning. *Beg.* '[J]acobus {apls ?} filius zebedei. post ascencionem {winun ?} dum pro miram et samariam perdicaret'. *Prose (Latin)*.
- iv. **fol. 99r** William of Stanton; Vision seen in St. Patrick's Purgatory. Split in to three sections. Other sections appear at fols. 106r-106v and 119v-125v. *Beg.* 'In the name of Gode Amen I Wylliam of Stranton borne in the bysschoppryke of Dorhum in ynglonde'. *Prose*
- v. **fol. 101r** Anonymous; Narratio de Spiritu Guidonis. *Beg.* '[H]oc anno in ciuitate alesti animone .ix. miliaribus distans obijt cuius quidam'. *Prose (Latin)*
- vi. **fol. 106r** William of Stanton; Vision seen in St. Patrick's Purgatory (continued) *Beg.* 'þen was greuely aferde of evyll sprettis and I answeyrd and sayde forsothe so I was'.
- vii. **fols. 107r ff.** Hymns in *Latin*, with *English* versions in seven-line stanzas. English versions are itemised from NIMEV.
1. **fol. 107r** Anonymous; Translation of hymn [NIMEV 2433] *Beg.* 'O first fownder and hevenly creature'
 2. **fol. 107v** Anonymous; Hymn [NIMEV 1000] *Beg.* 'Goddys sone passyng frome place supernall'
 3. **fol. 108r** Anonymous; Translation of hymn [NIMEV 487] *Beg.* 'Beholde a voyce of pleasant armony'
 4. **fol. 108v** Anonymous; Translation of hymn [NIMEV 642] *Beg.* 'Come now gud lord now come owr sayvour'
 5. **fol. 109v** Anonymous; Translation of hymn [NIMEV 3077] *Beg.* 'Saver of world lord and mantenowr'
 6. **fol. 110r** Anonymous; Translation of hymn [NIMEV 625] *Beg.* 'Criste that wold all men reydeme and bye'
 7. **fol. 111r** Anonymous; Translation of hymn [NIMEV 881] *Beg.* 'ffrome thens þat phebus with hys bemys bryght'
 8. **fol. 111v** Anonymous; Translation of hymn [NIMEV 3668] *Beg.* 'Thow cruell herode thow mortall enemye'
 9. **fol. 112v** Anonymous; Hymn [NIMEV 996] *Beg.* 'Goddis son and lord omnipotent'
 10. **fol. 113r** Anonymous; Translation of hymn [NIMEV 2495] *Beg.* 'O lord þat art maker and creature'
 11. **fol. 113v** Anonymous; Translation of hymn [NIMEV 1868] *Beg.* 'Lat vs awise thys dey primordiall'
 12. **fol. 115r** Anonymous; Translation of hymn [NIMEV 732] *Beg.* 'Eterne maker of all oo god one live'

13. **fol. 115v** Anonymous; Translation of hymn [*NIMEV 2362*] *Beg.* 'Now the deys sterre in hys hevylynly spere'
 14. **fol. 116r** Anonymous; Translation of hymn [*NIMEV 2327*] *Beg.* 'Now holy gost ovr verry Counfortowre'
 15. **fol. 116v** Anonymous; Translation of hymn [*NIMEV 2387*] *Beg.* 'O best maker of lyght and of creatowre'
 16. **fol. 116v** Anonymous; Translation of hymn [*NIMEV 2664*] *Beg.* 'Off thynges all O myghty mayntoure'
 17. **fol. 116v** Anonymous; Translation of hymn [*NIMEV 3679*] *Beg.* 'Thow myghty lord O Ruler and regnant'
 18. **fol. 117r** Anonymous; Translation of hymn [*NIMEV 2728*] *Beg.* 'Owr wery lymes refreshyd now with rest'
 19. **fol. 117v** Anonymous; Hymn [*NIMEV 999*] *Beg.* 'Goddys son oo shynyng bryght splendowre'
 20. **fol. 118v** Anonymous; Translation of hymn [*NIMEV 2499*] *Beg.* 'O maker of heyvyn immensurable'
 21. **fol. 119r** Anonymous; Translation of hymn [*NIMEV 2403*] *Beg.* 'O criste þat art þe parfyt partnere'
 22. **fol. 119v** Anonymous; Translation of hymn *Ales diei nuncius lucem* [*NIMEV 3359*] *Beg.* 'The gladsom Byrd þe deys mesanger'
- viii. **fol. 119v** William of Stanton; Vision seen in St. Patrick's Purgatory (continued) *Beg.* 'And other *with* gaye chappelettis on þer heddys of golde and perlle *and* other precyvse stones'.
- ix. **fol. 126r** Edmund Leuersegge; Narration of a vision seen by author when supposed to be dead of the plague, at Frome in Somerset, in May, 1465. *Beg.* 'In the name of our lorde ihesu criste þe sone of god þe sone also of þe pure and clene *virgine*'.
Prose
- x. **fol. 131r** Anonymous; 'Reule of heremytes made and compiled of the blessed pope Celestine þe V.' *Beg.* 'It behovys hermytes to dyspice and forsake the worlde'. *Prose*
- xi. **fol. 137r** Anthony Wydeville, Earl Rivers; translation of 'Liber de moralibus philosophorum'. *Beg.* 'Sedechias was the first philosophre by whome as it whas the wille of god lawe was reseyued and wisdom understonden'. *Prose*
- xii. **fol. 202r** Bernard of Chartres; 'Epistola beati Barnardi ad Raimundum nepotem suum militem de modo et cura rei familiaris regendi se ad familiam suam'. *Beg.* 'Gracioso et felici militi. Reuerendo domino. Castri ambrosij'. *Prose (Latin)*
- xiii. **fol. 202v** Report of the Synod held at Westminster, 9 Sept. 1125. *Beg.* 'Anno ab incarnatione domini nostri ihesu christi m . c . xxv pontificatus'. *Prose (Latin)*
- xiv. **fol. 203v** Anonymous; Letter purporting to be from "Baltizar by the grace of Mahounde ... Sowdayn of Surry, Emp[er]our of Babulon," etc., to the kynge of engelond and fraunce, and Edward hys Sone," offering the latter his daughter in marriage (catalogue's title) *Beg.* 'I Baltizar by the grace of Mahounde kynge of kynggis lorde of lordis sowdayn of surry'. *Prose*

- xv. **fol. 204r** Benedict Burgh; 'Cato Major' [*NIMEV 854*] Beg. 'For that god is inwardely the wytte'. Verse
- xvi. **fol. 223v** John Lydgate; 'Testament' [*NIMEV 2464*] Imperfect. Beg. 'Howe holsum and glade is the memory'. Verse

5. Collation:

- a. i⁴, ii⁶, iii⁸, iv⁸, v⁸, vi⁸, vii⁸, viii⁸, ix⁸, x⁸, xi⁸, xii⁸, xiii⁶, xiv⁴, xv⁶, xvi⁸, xvii⁸, xviii⁴⁻¹, xix⁴, xx⁶, xxi⁴, xxii², xxiii⁸, xxiv⁸, xxv⁸, xxvi⁸, xxvii⁸⁻¹, xxviii⁸, xxix⁸, xxx⁸⁻¹, xxxi⁸⁻¹, xxxii⁸⁻¹, xxxiii¹⁰

6. Size of page:

- a. 290 x 190 mm.

7. Size of written space:

- a. Very various. For *Pilgrimage of the Soule* 200 x 60 mm columns separated by 20mm gutter; for *Distichs* roughly 190 x 110 mm.

8. Layout:

- a. Mixture of single columns and double columns.

9. Frame:

- a. Some pricking and ruling evident, most has been trimmed.

10. Decoration:

- a. Regular miniature illustrations to accompany the *Pilgrimage of the Soul*, many now smudged.
- b. fol. 137r: penwork decoration in margins.

11. Pagination:

- a. Modern foliation in pencil.

12. Catchwords:

- a. Present on quires: xiv (fol. 100v), xv (fol. 106v), xviii (fol. 125v), xxii (fol. 142v), xxv (fol. 166v), xxvi (fol. 173v), xxvii (fol. 181v), xxviii (fol. 189v), xxix (fol. 197v), xxxii (fol. 218v), xxxiii (fol. 228v)
- b. Followed up on all, except quires xiv, xv, xviii, xxxiii

13. Signatures:

- a. Present on:
- b. quire iv (fol. 19r): c
- c. quire v (fol. 27r): d
- d. quire xiv (fols. 97r-98r): 1, 2
- e. quire xxvi (fols. 167r-170r): 1 3, ii 3, 3 3, 4 3
- f. quire xxvii (fols. 175r-178r): j4, ij4, iij4, iiij4
- g. quire xxviii (fols. 182r-185r): i 2, i{j 2}, iij 2, iiij 2
- h. quire xxix (fols. 190r-193r): 5, ij 5, {iij} 5, iiij 5
- i. quire xxx (fol. 199r): ij

14. Table of contents:

- a. Added in a later hand, 16th C. (fol. 1v):
 - i. 'The Pilgrimage of the Soule' Compiled & wrote by William de Stannton in the year of our Lorde 1416
 - ii. Annexed to w^{ch} is the serious address of Edmund Leversegge of the town of Frome in the Shire of Somerset 1465. See page 243.
 - iii. Than Begynnes the Chaptores of the Reule and of the Sevyng of Heremytys – page 253
 - iv. [in a different, but roughly contemporary hand:] N.B. The Pilgrimage of the Soule is one of the first printed books by Caxton.
 - v. [in another, less tidy, Elizabethan hand:] {On} p. 265 begins the book "of the moral seynges of the philosophers" (being the same as Caxton dictes & sayings) & ends on fol. 394'

15. Secundo folio:

- a. veniant in

16. Indications of scribe/date:

- a. Up to fol. 130v: 15th C.; thereafter probably early 16th C.
- b. *LALME* (i, 101):
 - i. 'Hand A' (fols. 5r-98r): E Leics.
 - ii. 'Hand B' (fols. 99r-100v, 106r line 15 to 106v, 119v line 28 to 125v foot): Notts.
 - iii. 'Hand C': (fols. 107r-119v): Leics.
 - iv. 'Hand D' (fols. 126r-130v, LP **68**): Leics.
 - v. 'Hand E' (fols. 131r-136v): Leics.
 - vi. 'Hand F' (fol. 137r), 'Hand G' (fols. 137v-201r and 204r-228v), and 'Hand H' (fol. 203v): N Midland

17. Indication of owners:

- a. Scott (1894: 226): 'Book-plate of Rev. John Fuller Russell; and formerly belonging to Richard Hebor'.
- b. fol. 6r: 'Shipman'.
- c. fol. 98v: 'Geo. Corquerell'.
- d. fol. 169v: 'Charles Henchman'.
- e. fol. 228v: 'George Goodman'.
- f. Scott (1894: 226) dates signatures c. – e. to the 17th or 18th Cs.

18. Annotations by later users:

- a. fol. 2v Doodled word, possibly a name – 'Goodins'(?).
- b. fol. 4v: Extensive doodling and practice of numbers and letters. The same name as on fol. 2v appears to have been written and then scratched out. It may be preceded by a 'William', but the heavy black pencil covering it makes it difficult to read. Most of these are Elizabethan at the earliest, and the date '16{2}4' has been written at one point.
- c. fol. 5r: Marginal notes and other writing. The contraction of 'per' has been written with its expansion in the margin, as well as another word

that may have been difficult to read, and the letters 'Ms' are at the bottom of the page.

- d. fols. 8v–9r: Pencil scribbles and, on the latter, an attempt to copy one of the faces in the miniature illustration.
- e. fol. 11r: Letter practice – 'J', Tudor or Elizabethan hand.
- f. fol. 17r: Some scribbled writing, illegible, but with a couple of recognisable Elizabethan letter forms. It's possible illustrated pages like these have attracted particular attention.
- g. fol. 29r: More pencil scribbling (not writing – loops similar to pen trials, reminiscent of children's scribbling) between the columns of text. Again this is an illustrated page.
- h. fol. 38r: Scribbling. Another illustrated page. This time, however, a whole passage has been scribbled out, though it is now visible again. It describes purgatory, and the defacing may have been an attempt by a Protestant reader to remove this, though whether the pencil has faded or been rubbed away later is unclear. The rubric at the end of this passage reads 'Here prayer comforþe Saules þat ben in þe fire of purgatorye'.
- i. fol. 43v: Wavy lines and letter practice.
- j. fol. 50r: Scribbling – large boxes drawn.
- k. fol. 53r: Possible ownership mark, apparently later erased.
- l. fol. 67v: Next to a passage talking about the avoidance of future punishment by attending well to school education, several notes all the way down the left margin: 'Behold what is here', 'This here sure this is so', 'Indeed it is *the* same', 'I am sure it is so', 'I was told it by many,' 'Good people said so' and, underneath in a different hand, 'in t^e same thing'.
- m. fol. 69v: Some Tudor writing, later scored out and so now largely illegible.
- n. fol. 74r: Scribbling.
- o. fol. 81v: Doodles – a small black devil, and a decorative swirl later smudged.
- p. fol. 82r: More doodles – three joined dandelion-clock-style circles, and two horses, apparently by different hands.
- q. fol. 83v: A scrawled attempt to copy the concentric circles of the Aristotelian model of the heavens depicted on this page.
- r. fol. 98v: Possible erased ownership mark? Almost illegible, may say 'Geo. Corqeres boke'? At the top of a blank column: '{&} should the Find things that are {short} in this Booke'.
- s. fols. 100v–101r: Scribbling. On latter, some words: 'Samuel', 'Malus est primum virg{uitum}'.
- t. fol. 126 is the first paper leaf in this manuscript. The end of the text before is lost. There are some stars next to some lines on fol. 126r, although why is not clear. One is at the name Edmund Leversegge, another at the year: 'M. C.C.C.lx.v'.
- u. fol. 138v: Notae next to points about good behaviour, e.g 'And he seith a man shulde not Juge a man to his mouth'.
- v. fol. 141r: More notae, next to sections about not being abusive. Similar notes are present occasionally throughout this text.

- w. fol. 153v: More doodles, in the same Elizabethan child's hand as earlier.
- x. fol. 169v: Writing practice: 'Charles' and 'Charles henchman is name and with my pen I writ' (*sic*).
- y. fol. 202r: Attempt to copy first line of incipit. Neat manicules pointing to a section that has been omitted during copying and added at the bottom of the page.
- z. fol. 202v: An almost illegible note on something to do with age (of the text? This is Bernard of Chartres letter to 'Raimundum'), with the date 1644. Next to it is a later sum, ending with the conclusion '644 years – yet I much query whither its half so old'.
- aa. fol. 203v: Face drawn in lee of the large decorative capital 'I' that begins the text.
- bb. fol. 204r: First four lines of Latin in *Parvus Cato* are copied again with contractions expanded by an Elizabethan secretary hand. It is unclear whether this is as a form of writing practice or to re-write the Latin more clearly.
- cc. fol. 228v: 'George Goodman' – this must be the complete name that is less legible in earlier notes.

19. Distichs present:

- a. Latin present, alternating with English, rubricated, not truncated, stops on f. 218r.
- b. I. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 30, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, XLVIII, XLIX
- c. II. P 1-2, P4-5, P 6-7, P 8-9, P10, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29
- d. III. 2, 3, 4, 5, II. 30, 31, LXXXVII, III. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 (last four lines missing), 22 (last three lines missing), 23, 24, envoy
- e. IV. P1-2, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 (last 5 lines, then first 2 lines), 10, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 30, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, CXVII, CXVIII

20. Notes:

- a. The MS. appears to have been composed of smaller booklets which have been bound together later. The hand is very different between them, and some folios show considerable damage. Some quires contain signatures and some do not. All quires contain material of varying quality, and later ones (from 'Liber de moralibus philosophorum' on) appear to use whatever is available, even when it is the wrong size or damaged.
- b. Notes on *Distichs*:
 - i. An earlier owner has inserted a note to point out a mistake in the transcription of some of the *Distichs*' lines – The Latin for I. 9 and I. 10 have been conflated, and so the Latin does not match the English I. 9, 10, 11, 12 on fol. 206r. At I. 13 the

rubricator notices the mistake and leaves the Latin blank, and continues again from the next stanza. Later on, there are sections of both the English and the Latin missing, suggesting that the scribe and the rubricator were swapping quires backwards and forwards and, for some reason, neither completed their work. Eventually, the English is completed, but the Latin stops, leaving gaps where it should have been filled in. The last quire of the manuscript is badly smudged, as if someone had rubbed away at parts of the writing with their fingers.

- ii. I. 30 is delayed; I. 34 appears twice (fols. 208v and 209r); English for II. P3-4 is omitted, though Latin is given; II. 23 and II. 24 are reversed (eyeslip caught in time?); Latin for II. 25 and 26 conflated (eyeskip); II. 30 – first stanza of envoy are delayed; III. P and 1 are missing; IV. 9 and IV. 10 are reversed; IV. 30 is delayed.
- iii. A mistake at II. P 10 (fol. 210v) means the Latin of the following distichs is confused – the rubricator has copied P 10, then the first line of II. 1. From then on he copies a second line followed by a first line, including through the missing English stanzas of II. 30 and 31, III. P and III. 1.
- iv. The Latin in this MS. is also full of mistakes.

21. Bibliography:

- a. Scott (1894: 225-226): Catalogue entry.

23. London, British Library, MS. Add. 38179

1. Binding:
 - a. Modern British Museum binding: 'J. URRY | AND | T. THOMAS. | CHAUCER | COLLECTIONS. | VOL. II. || PRESENTED | BY | SIR W. | M'CORMICK || BRIT. MUS. | ADDITIONAL | MS. | 38,179.'
2. Material:
 - a. Paper.
3. Number of folios:
 - a. 61 + i (+ 50 blank sheets presumably added in re-binding).
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. **fol. 1r** Table of contents
 - b. **fol. 2r** John Lydgate; *The Temple of Glass* [NIMEV 851] Imperfect. Beg. 'For thouȝt constreint and greuouſ heuines'. Verse
 - c. **fol. 19v** Geoffrey Chaucer; Retraction to *Canterbury Tales* [NIMEV 4019]. Prose
 - d. **fol. 20r** Benedict Burgh; *Parvus Cato* [NIMEV 3955] Beg. 'When I aduertise in my remembraunce'. Verse
 - e. **fol. 21r** Benedict Burgh; 'Cato Major' [NIMEV 854] Imperfect. Beg. 'For why that God is inwardli the witte'. Verse
 - f. **fol. 27r** Anonymous; *The Three Kings of Cologne*. Beg. 'Syth of these three worshypfull kyngs'. Prose
 - g. **fol. 51r** Geoffrey Chaucer(?); 'Merciles Beaute' [NIMEV 4282] Beg. 'Your two yën wille sle me sodenly'. Verse
 - h. **fol. 51v** John Lydgate; *Serpent of Division* (extract dealing with Ceasar and Pompey) Beg. 'Whilom as olde bokes maken mention'. Prose
 - i. **fol. 60v** John Lydgate; Envoy to *Serpent of Division* [NIMEV 3625] Beg. 'This litill prose declareth in figure'
 - i. **fol. 61r** Amanuensis of Samuel Pepys; 'A collation of the manuscript fragments of Chaucer n^o 1074 [i.e. Pepys MS. 2006] with his printed works n^o 1281'
5. Collation:
 - a. Re-binding has arranged all sheets individually. It is thus impossible to tell if they were always single sheets or if they are from quires which have been cut down.
6. Size of page:
 - a. 280 x 210 mm.
7. Size of written space:
 - a. Aside from 20 mm left-hand margin, all space on page is utilised.

8. Layout:
 - a. Single columns for poetry, complete page filled for prose, 'collation of fragments' presented as table on fol. 61r-v.
9. Frame:
 - a. Not present.
10. Decoration:
 - a. One large pen-decoration capital at *Distichs* II. P. 1, otherwise none.
11. Pagination:
 - a. Contemporary pagination; begins afresh with each new text.
 - b. Modern (19th C.?) foliation in pencil.
12. Catchwords:
 - a. Not present.
13. Signatures:
 - a. Not present.
14. Table of contents:
 - a. In 19th C. (?) hand:
 1. The Temple of Glass.
 2. Chaucer's Recantation.
 3. Some Fragm^{ts} of Cato translated.
 4. Legend of the 3. Kings of Coleigne.
 5. Mercilesse Beautee.
 6. The War between Caesar & Pompey.
 7. A Collation of the MSS. Fragm^{ts} of Chaucer.'
15. Secundo folio:
 - a. Upon the Wallis
16. Indications of scribe/date:
 - a. 18th C.
 - b. Gilson (1925: 87), referring to BL MSS. Add. 38178-38181: 'Collections for the edition of Chaucer's works begun by John Urry (d. 1715), continued by his assistant Thomas Ainsworth (d. 1719), finally revised and completed by Timothy Thomas, and published in 1721.'
 - c. "Transcripts by Ainsworth, annotated here and there by Urry [...] "out of S. Pepys Esq. Mss of Chaucers fragments"" [i.e. Cambridge, Magdalene College, MS. Pepys 2006].
17. Indication of owners:
 - a. Plaque inside British Museum binding front cover: 'From the Library of the Earl of Ashburnham. Appendix No. CXXVIII. May 1897'

18. Annotations by later users:

- a. Mistakes have been corrected in marginal annotations. Otherwise no notes.
- b. fol. 51v: Note by Urry: 'I doubt if this is Chaucers'.

19. Distichs present:

- a. All of *Parvus Cato* including envoy
- b. I. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, XLVIII, XLIX
- c. II. P.1-2, P4-5, P3-4

20. Notes:

- a. There is a considerable amount of blank paper at the end (325 x 220 mm) which may have been (and probably was) added during re-binding rather than being contemporary.
- b. In what appears to be a single consistent hand, apart from added notes (which appear to be in more than one hand themselves, and not all Urry's – some may have been made by the scribe, and some appear much more recent, probably 19th, perhaps even early 20th C.
- c. Notes on *Distichs*:
 - i. Latin is present for all sections of *Distichs* copied. For *Parvus Cato* this appears in the margins with large brackets relating it to the corresponding Middle English; for *Cato Major* the Latin is given in the traditional alternating pattern.
 - ii. As noted in 'scribes' section above, this copy has been taken directly from Pepys 2006, which also stops at the same point in the *Distichs*. Perhaps Urry/Ainsworth were well enough aware that this was not Chaucer's that they saw no need to locate and transcribe the rest. It's hard to tell how difficult it would have been for them to find the rest of they had wished to.

21. Bibliography:

- a. Alderson (1984): Discusses Urry as an editor of Chaucer.
- b. Gilson (1925: 87-89): (Brief) catalogue entry.

24. Manchester, Chetham's Library MS. 8009 (A.6.31)

1. Binding:
 - a. Modern (20th C.) – marbled board with leather spine and corner pieces.
2. Material:
 - a. Paper.
3. Number of folios:
 - a. v + 372 + v
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. **fol. 1r** Anonymous; *The Life of St. Dorothy*. *Beg.* 'The right glorious virgyn seint dorothea came downe of the noble blode of the sanatours of rome' *Prose.*
 - b. **fol. 4r** Anonymous; *The Assumption of Our Lady* (earliest version) [*NIMEV 2165*] *Beg.* 'A merye tale tell I may'. *Verse*
 - c. **fol. 19r** Anonymous; *Life of St. Anne* [*NIMEV 2392*] *Beg.* 'O blessed Ihesu that arte full of myght'. *Verse*
 - d. **fol. 30r** Anonymous; 'The lyf of seynt katerin and how she was maried to oure lord' *Beg.* 'Here begynneth the liffe of seynt katryne that ys a ryght glorious virgyn ande marter'. *Prose*
 - e. **fol. 47v** blank
 - f. **fol. 49r** Benedict Burgh; *Parvus Cato* [*NIMEV 3955*] *Beg.* 'Whan I aduertice in my Remembraunce'. *Verse*
 - g. **fol. 49v** Benedict Burgh; 'Cato Major' [*NIMEV 854*] *Beg.* '[F]or thi that god is inwardly the wytte'. *Verse*
 - h. **fol. 76r** Anonymous; *Sir Torrent of Portyngale* [*NIMEV 983*] *Beg.* 'God that ys worthy and Bold'. *Verse*
 - i. **fol. 119v** Anonymous; *Lamentation of the Virgin* [*NIMEV 2619*] *Beg.* 'Of all women that euer were born'. *Verse*
 - j. **fol. 121r** Anonymous; *Prayer to the Virgin in the Speculum Christiani (Octaua Tabula)* [*NIMEV 2119*] *Beg.* 'Mary moder well thou be'. *Verse*
 - k. **fol. 122r** Anonymous; *Sir Beues of Hamtoun* [*NIMEV 1993*] *Beg.* 'Lystenythe lordinges yf ye will dwell'. *Verse*
 - l. **fol. 191r** Anonymous; *Ipomedon A* [*NIMEV 2635*] *Beg.* 'Off love were lykyng of to lere'. *Verse*
 - m. **fol. 336r** John Russell; 'Boke of Kervyng & Nortur' [*NIMEV 1514*] *Beg.* 'In nomine patris god kep me et filii for Cherite'. *Verse*
 - n. **fol. 357r** Anonymous; An account of the meeting of Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, and the Emperor Frederick III at Trier in October/November 1473. *Beg.* 'My lady of comynes the best and the derrest of my spirituelle doughters' *Prose.*
 - o. **fol. 367v** Anonymous; Extract from a London chronicle, 1189-1216, used as a quire filler. *Beg.* 'The namys of wardeyns and balyffys in the tym of kyng rycharde the frest' *Prose.*
 - p. **fol. 369r-v** blank

- q. **fol. 370r** Anonymous; On a tyrannical husband [NIMEV 1751] Beg. 'Thesu that arte lentyll ffor' loye of they dam'. Verse
- r. **fol. 372v** blank

5. Collation:

- a. i (two leaves - fols. 1, 2) ii¹⁶ (wants 16, blank, after fol. 17), iii-iv¹², v⁶, vi⁸, vii (eleven leaves - fols. 56-66), viii (nine leaves - fols. 67-75), ix¹⁶, x¹⁴, xi¹⁶, xii¹⁴ (wants 4 after fol. 124), xiii-xix¹⁴, xx¹⁴ (wants 6 after fol. 237), xxi¹², xxii¹⁴, xxiii¹², xxiv-xxvi¹⁴, xxvii¹⁰, xxviii²⁰, xxix (thirteen leaves - fols. 356-68), xxx (four leaves - fols. 369-72)

6. Size of page:

- a. 262 x 190 mm.

7. Size of written space:

- a. c. 190 mm high.

8. Layout:

- a. Single columns, 30-3 lines.

9. Frame:

- a. Ruled in brown plummet.

10. Decoration:

- a. Texts begin with large decorated initials with smaller decorated initials for subsections. These are usually not highly decorated, and some are incomplete. Significant variations are noted below.
- b. fol. 1r: Life of St. Dorothy begins with 6-line-high initial in black pen only.
- c. fol. 18r, 19v: Large decorative red initial surrounded and filled with black pen decoration.
- d. fol. 30r: Life of St. Catherine. 5-line-high initial, blue and red with pen decoration in a different red around the letter and extending in to the margin, fol. 33v, fol. 40v: 3-line-high initial in red in minor section.
- e. fol. 48r: Space left for 2-line-high initials in *Parvus Cato*, but it hasn't been inserted.
- f. fol. 90v: Space left for 5-line-high decorative initial in *Sir Torrent of Portyngale*, never inserted.
- g. fol. 122r: At beginning of Beues of Hamtoun: 5-line-high initial, blue surrounded by red pen decoration.
- h. fol. 191r: Six-line-high red ink initial with face in centre.
- i. fol. 219r: In *Ipomadon*, 23-line high red letter 'I'.
- j. fol. 286v: In *Ipomadon*, 13-line-high red letter 'I'.
- k. fol. 370r: 'On a tyrannical husband' has space left for a 4-line-high initial which has never been filled in.

11. Pagination:

- a. Modern foliation in pencil.
- b. Older (17th C.?) foliation in pen in top right corner.

12. Catchwords:

- a. Present on quires iv (fol. 41v), vii (66v), x (105v), xii (134v), xiii (148v), xiv (162v), xv (176v), xvii (204v), xviii (218v), xix (232v), xx (245v), xxi (257v), xxii (271v), xxiii (283v), xxiv (297v), xxv (311v), xxvi (325v), xxvii (355v). All followed up.

13. Signatures:

- a. In quires 17-27 the leaves in the first half of each quire are numbered continuously from 'I' to 'LXXIII'
- b. quire xx (fols. 234r-238r): xxiiij d; {xxiiij d}; xxv {d}; xxvj {d}; xxvij {d}
- c. quire xxi (fols. 246r-251r): xxix g; xxx g; xxxj g; xxxij g; xxxiiij g; xxxiiij g
- d. quire xxii (fols. 258r-262r): xxxv h; xx{xvj h}; xxx{vij h}; {xxxviiij h}; xxxix h
- e. quire xxiii (fols. 273r-277r): xliij g; xliiiij g; xlv g; xlvj g; xlvij g
- f. quire xxiv (fols. 284r-290r): xlviiij h; xlix h; l h; lj h; lij h; liij h; liiiij h
- g. quire xxv (fols. 298r-304r): lv j; lvj j; lvij j; lviiij j; lix j; lx j; lxj j
- h. quire xxvi (fols. 312r-318r): lxij k; lxiiij k; lxiiiij k; lxv k; lxvj k; lxvij k; lxv{iiij k}
- i. quire xxvii (fols. 326r-330r): lxix l; lxx l; lxxj l; lxxij l; lxxiiij l
- j. quire xxviii (fols. 336r-345r): v; v a j; v a ij; v a iij; v a iiij; v a v; v a vj; v a vij; v a viij; v a ix

14. Table of contents:

- a. Not present.

15. Secundo folio:

- a. with thy wychecraft

16. Indications of scribe/date:

- a. 15th C.
- b. Ker (1983) detects nine hands:
 - i. '(quire 1: hand 1). ff. 1-2v'
 - ii. '(quire 2: hand 2 (on f. 3rv) and hand 3). ff. 3-17v'
 - iii. '(quire 3: hand 4). ff. 18-29v'
 - iv. '(quires 4, 5: hand 5). ff. 30-47'
 - v. '(quires 6-8: hand 6). ff. 48-75'
 - vi. 'Arts. 6-8 are on quires 9-11 in hand 7 (to f. 93v) and hand 5'
 - vii. '(quires 12-16: hand 5). ff. 122-190v'
 - viii. '(quires 17-27: hand 5). ff. 191-335'
 - ix. '(quire 28: hand 5). ff. 336-355v'
 - x. 'Arts. 12, 13 are on quire 29, art. 12 in hand 5, and art. 13 in hand 8.'
 - xi. '(quire 30: hand 9) ff. 370-2'
- c. Sanchez-Marti (2003: 15) detects one further hand.

17. Indication of owners:

- a. fol. 334v: 'Elysabet'.

18. Annotations by later users:

- a. fol. 1r: What may have been an ownership inscription, now mostly trimmed off. The last word is 'bookis'.
- b. fol. 22v: 'Itm ffurst ffor a M^{ll} of faggot {4?}d'.
- c. fol. 141r: Writing practice at foot of page: 'father in my m' and two further abortive attempts at 'father'.
- d. fol. 178r: 'father in' scribbled at foot of page.
- e. fol. 192r: Attempt to copy 'Ipomadon' running title.
- f. fol. 209r: Elizabethan scribble, very difficult to read.
- g. fol. 252r: Faded pencil scribbling, now illegible.
- h. fol. 336r: 'viiij{?}' in top margin.
- i. fol. 351r: 'countenaunce' added where it has been cut off in trimming (17th C.?).
- j. fol. 358v: 'R 3' in top margin.
- k. fol. 366r: Attempt to copy 'After' from first line in top margin, and 'And' at foot of page.
- l. fol. 367r: '{I J?}' at top of otherwise blank page.

19. Distichs present:

- a. Complete *Parvus Cato*, including Latin and envoy.
- b. I. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, III. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, I. 40, XLVIII, XLIX
- c. II. P1-2, P3-4, P4-5, P6-7, P8-9, P10, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, LXXXVII, LXXXVIII, LXXXIX
- d. III. P1-2, 1, P3-4, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 22, 23, 24, CXVI, CXVII, CXVIII
- e. IV. P1-2, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 30, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49

20. Notes:

- a. Notes on *Distichs*:
 - i. Latin is complete, and given in red, whilst the English is black
 - ii. At end of *Distichs*, note of scribes? 'Explicit liber Catonis quod scripci da michi quod merui quod N (?) Vna p valde d tantum d me Quod non p ire ad l nisi S me.'
 - iii. Spaces have been left before each Middle English stanza for a rubricator to insert the Latin. The spaces preceding envoy stanzas have been left blank as there is no corresponding Latin to insert. This accounts for Purdie's belief that the Latin is incomplete.
 - iv. Distichs III. 16-21 appear early, as do IV. 18-23. Distichs IV. 24-29 are missing. As these mis-orderings correspond with particular folios (three stanzas to each side of the folio), it is likely that this is due to a miscalculation when laying out the text to be included on each page.

- b. The beginning of the MS. is badly water-damaged, especially in the top half, and this has caused much of the ink to run and smudge. Otherwise the volume has been well cared-for, and there is evidence that torn pages been carefully repaired. There is very little annotation to the volume, and no evidence that any annotation has been erased. There are, however, inky smudges on some folios which suggest it has been read.

21. Bibliography:

- a. Ker (1981: 361-364): Catalogue entry.
- b. Lester (1985: 86-91): *Index of Middle English Prose* cataloguing
- c. Purdie (1998): Argument for female readership of this MS.
- d. Sanchez-Marti (2003): Discusses possible scribal collaboration in production of MS.

25. Durham, University Library MS. Cosin V.II.14

1. Binding:
 - a. Boards covered in leather, with metal clasps. Probably 19th C.
2. Material:
 - a. Parchment.
3. Number of folios:
 - a. [1] + 3 (stiff bifolium, ff. i and iii, enclosing f. ii, s. xvii paper) + 111 + 2 (stiff bifolium) + [1]
 - b. iii + 111 + iii
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. fol. iii^v: Brief note about Lydgate in Latin.
 - b. **fol. 1r** John Lydgate; *The Siege of Thebes* [NIMEV 3928] Imperfect at beginning. *Beg.* 'Froward and fel. lasting euer in on'. *Verse*
 - c. **fol. 69r** Benedict Burgh; *Parvus Cato* [NIMEV 3955] *Beg.* 'Cvm animaduerterem quam plurimos homines ... Whan I aduertise in my remembraunce'. *Verse*
 - d. **fol. 70r** Benedict Burgh; 'Cato Major' [NIMEV 854] *Beg.* 'Si deus est animus nobis ut carmina dicunt ... For thy that god is inwardly the witte'. *Verse*
 - e. **fol. 92r** Anonymous; two lines on 'three joys and three sorrows': 'Sunt tria gaudia. pax. sapientia. copia rerum. / Sunt tria tristia. lis. & inopia. fraus mulierum.'. *Verse (Latin)*
 - f. **fol. 92r** Anonymous; *Life of St. Alexis* [NIMEV 3156] *Beg.* 'L[for S]itteth stille with outen stryf. And I wille tellen yow of the lyf. of an holy man'. *Verse*
 - g. **fol. 97v** John Lydgate; *Life of St. Margaret* [NIMEV 439] *Beg.* 'At the Reuerence of seynt Margarete. / My purpos is hir lyfe to compile'. *Verse*
 - h. **fol. 106r** Anonymous; 'the lyfe of Marye Magdaleyn' (MS. title) – translated from Jean de Vignay's French version of Jacobus de Voraigne's *Legenda Aurea*. Imperfect. *Beg.* 'Mary Magdaleyn was surnamed of Magdalon the Castell and she was born of the kynred that were descended of ryal kynne'. *Prose*
5. Collation:
 - a. i⁸, ii⁸, iii⁸, iv⁸, v⁸, vi⁸, vii⁸, viii⁸, ix⁸, x⁸, xi⁸, xii⁸, xiii⁸, xiv⁸⁻¹ (final leaf missing)
6. Size of page:
 - a. 295 x 185 mm.
7. Size of written space:
 - a. 195 x 200 mm.

8. Layout:
 - a. Ruled in ink, with top and last two lines full width of leaf. 32 lines.
9. Frame:
 - a. Prick marks in outside margins of quires 1-12, made with knife-point through quire, apparently from last verso.
10. Decoration:
 - a. Latin of *Distichs* given as rubrication. Alternate blue and red paraphs in the *Siege of Thebes* and saints' lives.
 - b. Running titles, in rubric, for *Siege of Thebes*. Begin with blue paraphs.
 - c. Decorative initials (as listed by catalogue):
 - i. In *Parvus Cato* f. 69, 1- line, in blue.
 - ii. To lesser divisions of *Siege of Thebes*, to 'Cato Major' and Life of St. Margaret prologue, 2-line, in blue, with red infilling and flourishing.
 - iii. To *Siege of Thebes* part III, Life of St. Alexis. 'story', and Life of Mary Magdalene, 3-line, as (ii).
 - iv. To *Siege of Thebes* part II and *Parvus Cato*, 4-line, in blue and red, with red infilling and flourishing, on f. 69 later (?) embellished with ink.
11. Pagination:
 - a. Modern pencil foliation.
12. Catchwords:
 - a. Present on all but last quire, where final page is missing. All followed up.
 - b. fols. 8v, 16v, 24v, 32v, 40v, 48v, 56v, 64v, 72v, 80v, 88v, 96v, 104v
13. Signatures:
 - a. Quire i (fols. 1r-4r): b j; b ij; b iij; biiij
 - b. quire ii (fols. 9r-12r): c j; c {ij}; c iij; ciii{j}
 - c. quire iii (fols. 17r-20r): d j; d ij; d iij; d iiij
 - d. quire iv (fols. 25r-28r): e j; e ij; e iij; e iiij
 - e. quire v (fols. 33r-36r): f j; f ij; f iij; f iiij
 - f. quire vi (fols. 41r-44r): g j; g ij; g iij; g iiij
 - g. quire vii (fols. 49r-52r): h j; h ij; h iij; h iiij
 - h. quire viii (fols. 57r-60r): j j; j {ij}; j iij; j {iiij}
 - i. quire ix (fols. 65r-68r): k j; k {ij}; k iij; k {iiij}
 - j. quire x (fols. 73r-76r): l {j}; l i{j}; l iij; l iiij
 - k. quire xi (fols. 81r-84r): m j; m ij; m iij; m iii{j}
 - l. quire xii (fols. 89r-92r): N j; N ij; N iij; N iiij
 - m. quire xiii (fols. 97r-100r): O j; O ij; O iij; O iiij
 - n. quire xiv (fols. 105r-108r): P {j}; P ij; P iij; P iiij
14. Table of contents:
 - a. fol. iii^r: 'In this volume are contained these books of Lidgate
The destruction of Thebes

Cato in verse
The life of S. Alexis
The life of S^t Margaret
The life of M. Magdalene in prose.'

- b. There is a small + before the line of 'The life of S^t Margaret' which indicates a note at the side: 'in Stow's life'. There is also a bracket next to the lives of Sts. Alexis and Margaret with the note 'in verse'. All writing appears to be 16th C.

15. Secundo folio:

- a. And Edippus

16. Indications of scribe/date:

- a. 15th C.

17. Indication of owners:

- a. fol. ii^v: 'Geo. Davenport. | 1664'.
b. fol. 59r: 'John' and 'Thomas'.
c. fol. 65v: 'George Baldoke'.
d. fol. 69r: 'ffor Thomas P{as}ten | was {illegible}'.
e. fol. 78r: 'Thomas Payton' appears again in a longer, difficult to read, inscription.
f. fol. 96v: 'Rycard massy'.

18. Annotations by later users:

- a. fol. 1r: Several pieces of writing. 'Liber Bibliothecae Episcopalis Dunelm.' (17th C.); 'Distruccion of thebs' (16th C.); faded 15th C. notes, now difficult to read 'hic pator {mos ?}'; '8 ys a xees sawe. the wyche shalbe great hurt to this Realme of England at ever {vye ?}' (16th C.); some practice of large Tudor letters at bottom of page.
b. fol. 4r: Letter practice at top of page.
c. fol. 5r: Letter practice, with a name written upside down, but difficult to read: 'Jamisoun'?
d. fol. 6v: 17th C. nota mark which flows in to the first letter of a marginal note which appears to say 'Gwestus at the wedding'.
e. fol. 7: The top of this folio has been cut out and pasted back in. There has been a marginal note on fol. 7r that has probably been deliberately erased.
f. fol. 8r: 'James {elived of A ?} Canterberie {frant ?} wth master {Kaikoran ?}'; 'Jhesus fore thy holye name' (both 16th C.)
g. fol. 10r: 'Description of the morning' in margin (17th C.)
h. fols. 11r, 12r, 27r, 28r, 30r, 30v, 31r, 41r, 41v, 44v, 46v, 47r, 51v, 53r, 57v, 59r, 60v, 61v, 62r, 64v, 68r, 74v, 95r: marginal annotations later erased.
i. fols. 16r, 19v, 22r, 23r, 25v, 26r, 27r, 27v, 29v: 30r, 31v, 32r, 33r, 33v, 36r, 37r, 38r, 38v, 39v, 40r, 48r, 51r, 52r, 63v, 64r, 64v, 65r, 65v, 66r, 67v, 99v, 100r, 100v, 101r, 101v, 102v, 103r, 103v, 104r: clover nota marks.

- j. fol. 16v: Marginal notes in Latin (16th C.): ‘{illegible} mulie|ris’, ‘Cupidinis arcus’.
- k. fol. 18r: Marginal notation, poorly erased.
- l. fol. 20v: ‘{derrtatis ?} laus’ (16th C.).
- m. fol. 29r: Marginal notations in Latin: ‘veritas’, ‘Exemplum veritatis a Tideo’.
- n. fol. 33r: Letter practice (late 15th C./early 16th C.); ‘Nota’ (16th C.?); scribbles at foot of page.
- o. fol. 33v: ‘The bodyes borned’ in margin (16th C.).
- p. fol. 34v: ‘protho: of arkady the {m|joris ?}’; ‘Melleager’ (16th C.).
- q. fol. 35r: ‘palemonis’ (16th C.).
- r. fol. 36v: 16th C. ‘Nota’; marginal notes in Latin, one very difficult to read, the other ‘digressio ad ethioclem’.
- s. fol. 37r: ‘bellicosa preparatio’.
- t. fols. 37v, 38r, 38v, 40v, 41v: More Latin notes.
- u. fol. 39v: ‘When yt is to t^h {p}orpo{rh ?} Contrary’.
- v. fol. 40r: Attempt to copy ‘pars’ rubricated heading in black ink.
- w. fol. 40v: The ffedry of youthe’.
- x. fol. 41r: ‘Thys Indenture made the first day of octobre’ (16th C.).
- y. fol. 42v: An alphabet scratched at the top of page, letter practice at bottom of page.
- z. fols. 42v, 43v, 44v, 45r, 47v, 48r, 49v, 50r, 50v, 51v, 52v, 54r, 60r, 60v, 61r, 62v, 65v, 67r: More English notes.
- aa. fol. 43v: ‘To read Bochas’ (16th C.).
- bb. fol. 49v: Doodles/pen trials at the bottom of page.
- cc. fol. 58r: Attempts to copy the ‘pars’ of the rubrication heading.
- dd. fol. 60r: Attempts to copy words from the first line of the text.
- ee. fol. 63r: ‘jhs’ scribbled sideways in large letters.
- ff. fol. 66v: Intricate doodle with spiked coils surrounding a checker-board centre.
- gg. fol. 67r: ‘Romum’ (?).
- hh. fol. 68v: Attempt to copy the explicit of the text, but misreads ‘fynal’ as ‘small’ and ‘tounne’ as ‘captayn’ (late 16th C.).
- ii. fol. 69r: Lots of writing on first fol. of *Distichs*, now badly faded, but includes the name ‘Thomas P{as}ten’ and possibly ‘John’ below that
- jj. fol. 70r: Writing, now faded, including letter practice.
- kk. fol. 71r: ‘nota bene’ next to Distich I. 7; attempts to copy Latin of I. 10, abandoned and partially erased.
- ll. fols. 72r, 73r, 74v, 82r, 85v, 86r, 87r, 91v: Scribbles/letter practice on *Distichs*.
- mm. fol. 73r: Pen line has been drawn down the outer edge of the *Distichs* and along the bottom.
- nn. fol. 73v: 17th C. hand has added ‘many’ as a gloss for ‘fele’ at distich I. 28.
- oo. fol. 79r: Latin of distich I. 1 copied in slightly messy pen along bottom of page.
- pp. fol. 81r: Another note in Thomas Payton’s hand, illegible.
- qq. fol. 82v: Written sideways in outer margin ‘The seruant that knowyth | may sters wyth’ (breaks off and repeats the ‘may’) (15th/16th C.).

- rr. fol. 83r: 'Per me Ricardus maflly | In dei nomine Amen' The same has been begun above. It must be writing practice rather than a scribal signature (16th C.).
- ss. fol. 90v: Large decorative 'I' drawn in margin.
- tt. fol. 96v: Drawings of feet, mainly, but one drawing of the feet, heart and hands of Christ pierced by nails. Probably by Richard Massy, who has signed this page.

19. Distichs present:

- a. All of *Parvus Cato*, including envoy, both Latin and English
- b. I. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7*, 8, 9, 10, 11*, 12*, 13*, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30*, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, XLVIII, XLIX (but breaking off after the line 'The vertous foure that shuld a man forthe conveye')
- c. II. P1-2, P3-4, P4-5, P6-7, P8-9, P10, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23*, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29**, 30, 31**, LXXXVII
- d. III. P1-2, 1**, P3-4*, 2, 3, 4, 5**, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, CXVI
- e. IV. P1-2, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7*/**, 8**, 9, 10*, 11, 12**, 13, 14**, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20*, 21**, 22, 23*/**, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33**, 34, 35, 30, 36, 37**, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47*, 48, 49, CXVII

20. Notes:

- a. Notes on Distichs:
 - i. Distichs given in red (Latin) and black (English), the two alternating. The first few pages have been heavily used and are worn and include lots of writing and scribbles which seem to have faded with time. This copy has almost certainly been used by children given the large uncontrolled nature of a lot of the writing on the pages, even if it is not now legible
 - ii. Several distichs have unusual notae next to them that appear to say 'prouerbe'
 - iii. fol. 74r: there is a + next to the line 'Thus shalt thou best the name of chynchery fleme' (distich I. 29) and the word 'chynchery' has been underlined. This happens again at the word 'surquydry' in distich II. 12; at 'fauel' in III. 4
 - iv. fol. 79v: distich II. 20 marked with clover nota rather than normal 'proverb' nota. Further clover notae are considered to be system **
 - v. The scribe seems to have cut short all the envoys, perhaps because he doesn't consider them important. On the other hand, this seems to be the text that is closest to the original Latin ordering of all the distichs, so it may actually be an early one, and the envoys were lengthened later!
- b. Most of the manuscript is slightly worn and stained, and gives the impression of having been used heavily, an idea reinforced by the notes throughout it in at least two (and probably more) different hands.

- c. Scribbles and alphabets suggest that this was probably in the hands of a child at some stage in its early history.

21. Bibliography:

- a. Cartlidge (2007: 68-69): Very brief description of MS. in exhibition catalogue.
- b. Connolly (1998: 189 n. 71)

**26. Glasgow, University Library MS. Hunter 259 (U.4.17)
With GUL MS. Hunter 258 (U.4.16)**

1. Binding:
 - a. Young & Aitken (1908: 210):
 - i. (MS. 259:) 'Millboards, covered brown spattered calf, tooled and titled like U. 4. 16, title: MS. ON | MORALITY, another (vertical) title (gilt) on crimson morocco shield has been recently put on the back: CATO.'
 - ii. (MS. 258:) 'Millboards, covered brown spattered calf, blind and gilt (lines) tooled, an oblong crimson morocco panel inlaid in the centre of the front board with title (gilt): MS. ST. VICTO | STVDY . OF | WISDOME, title (ink) on a modern buff paper slip: STVD^M SAPIENTIAE.'
2. Material:
 - a. Parchment.
3. Number of folios:
 - a. (MS. 259:) 26, probably originally 32 fols.
 - b. (MS. 258:) 12, originally 16 fols.
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. MS. 259:
 - i. **fol. 1r** Benedict Burgh; *Parvus Cato* [*NIMEV 3955*] *Beg.* 'Whan I aduerte in my remebraunce'. *Verse*
 - ii. **fol. 2r** Benedict Burgh; 'Cato Major' [*NIMEV 854*] *Beg.* 'Forthy that god is inwardly þe witte'. *Verse*
 - iii. **fol. 25v** John Lydgate; 'Dietary' [*NIMEV 824*] *Beg.* 'For helthe of body couere for colde þyn hede'. *Verse*
 - b. MS. 258:
 - i. **fol. 1r** Anonymous; Translation of *Benjamin Minor* by Richard of St. Victor. *Beg.* 'A gret and a worshipful clerke whom men callen Richarde of seint victory'. *Prose*
5. Collation:
 - a. (MS. 259:) i-iii⁸, iv⁸⁻⁶
 - b. (MS. 258:) i-ii⁸
 - c. Young & Aitken (1908: 211):
 - i. 'Two paper fly-leaves (i²), i, 1. attached || 1⁸-3⁸, 4²⁽⁸⁾. || Two paper fly-leaves (ii²), ii, 2. attached. The fourth quire signed cj, cij, probably consisted of 8 folios originally. U. 4. 16 [MS. Hunter 258], which once formed part of one volume (of which this was the beginning), is paged in the same hand 167-190. The six missing quires would be paged thus: +=pp. 1-16; a=pp. 17-32; b=pp. 33-48; c=pp. 49-64; [d=pp. 65-80; e=pp. 81-96; f=pp. 97-112; g=pp. 113-128; h=pp. 129-144; i=pp. 145-160;] k=pp. 161-176; l=pp. 177-192. If U. 4. 16 was thus the last work

it contained, the original volume must have consisted of 12 quires of eights.'

6. Size of page:
 - a. 260 x 185 mm.
7. Size of written space:
 - a. 185 x 115 mm.
8. Layout:
 - a. Single columns, approx. 31 lines.
9. Frame:
 - a. Framed and ruled in brown plummet.
10. Decoration:
 - a. Blue and red decorative initials, alternating blue and red initials for subsections of texts. Alternating red and blue paraphs.
11. Pagination:
 - a. Pen pagination in 17th C. hand (MS. 259 = pp. 1-52, MS. 258 = pp. 167-190).
12. Catchwords:
 - a. (MS. 259:) Present on fols. 16v, 24v.
13. Signatures:
 - a. (MS. 259:)
 - i. quire i (fols. 1r-4r): '+j', '+ij', '+iij', '+iiij'
 - ii. quire ii (fols. 10r-12r): 'a ij', 'a iij', 'a iiij'
 - iii. quire iii (fols. 17r-20r): 'b j', 'b ij', 'b iij', 'b iiij'
 - iv. quire iv (fols. 25r-26r): 'c j', 'c ij'
 - b. (MS. 258:) k, j
14. Table of contents:
 - a. Not present.
15. Secundo folio:
 - a. (MS. 259:) Loke thy
 - b. (MS. 258:) and bringith furthe
16. Indications of scribe/date:
 - a. Young & Aitken (1908: 210): Late 15th C.
17. Indication of owners:
 - a. fol. iv: 'Tho: Martin'. (underneath this): '100'.
 - b. fol. ii^r: In the left hand top corner, c; in the right hand top corner, in pencil: 10-6.

- c. fol. ii v: William Hunter has written 'Cato's Latin verses with a Paraphrase in English verse'.
- d. fol. 8v: 'Amy Hodgson' (17th C.)

18. Annotations by later users:

- a. Manicule.

19. Distichs present

- a. All of *Parvus Cato*, including complete Latin and envoy
- b. I. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40
- c. II. P1-2, P3-4, P4-5, P6-7, P8-9, P10 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, XLVIII, XLIX, LXXXVII, LXXXVIII, LXXXIX
- d. III. P1-2, 1, P3-4, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24,
- e. IV. P1-4, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 30, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, CXVI, CXVII, CXVIII

20. Notes:

- a. Notes on *Distichs*:
 - i. Envoy to book III appears at the end of book IV.
- b. MS. has been very well cared for, and shows very little evidence of wear. It has been divided for sale by Thomas Martin, a seventeenth-century antiquarian who may well have dismembered the volume and sold it in this way to raise money to pay his debts (see Stoker 2004; Doyle 1997: 103-104).

21. Bibliography:

- a. Doyle (1997: 103-104): Discussion of the MS. in relation to its scribe, Stephen Dodesham.
- b. Young & Aitken (1908: 209-211): Catalogue entry.

27. Dublin, Trinity College MS. 519

1. Binding:
 - a. Modern, 1988, with a note pasted inside the back cover detailing the restoration work conducted.
2. Material:
 - a. Parchment.
3. Number of folios:
 - a. i + 221 + i – front and back flyleaves from an older musical manuscript.
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. **fol. 2r** Benedict Burgh; 'Cato Major' [*NIMEV 854*] *Beg.* 'ffor thy þ^t god gafe inwardly the wyt'. *Verse*
 - b. **fol. 12r** John of Hildesheim; Gesta Trium Magorum. Imperfect at beginning. *Beg.* 'extunc quidam mons nomine Vaus'. *Prose (Latin)*
 - c. **fol. 38v** Albertanus Brixiensis; De Doctrina Dicendi et Tacendi. *Beg.* 'Quoniam in dicendo multi errant nec est aliquis'. *Prose (Latin)*
 - d. **fol. 43v** Edmundus Rich; Speculum Ecclesiae. *Beg.* 'Verbum hoc apostoli precipue competit religiosis'. *Prose (Latin)*
 - e. **fol. 52v** Pseudo-Bernardus; De Interiori Domo *Beg.* 'Domus hec in qua habitamus ex omni parte'. *Prose (Latin)*
 - f. **fol. 63r** Robertus Lincolniensis; De Confessione. *Beg.* 'Perambulauit Iudas quinque ciuitates'. *Prose (Latin)*
 - g. **fol. 66v** Iohannes Deueroze; Consolation to a friend for the loss of his children. *Beg.* 'In omnibus debemus placere deo et tenemur testante Iob in uita sua'. *Prose (Latin)*
 - h. **fol. 68v** Marcus Ratisbonensis; Visio Tnugdali. *Beg.* 'Ybernia est insula in occidentali oceano posita ab austro'. *Prose (Latin)*
 - i. **fol. 79r** Iohannes De Grandisono; Vita et Passio S. Thome Cantuariensis. *Beg.* 'Benedictionibus diuine dulcedinis preuentus, insignis martir'. *Prose (Latin)*
 - j. **fol. 95r** Anonymous; Visio S. Pauli. *Beg.* 'Dies dominicus dies electus est, in quo gaudent angeli'. *Prose (Latin)*
 - k. **fol. 96v** Anonymous; About the afterlife *Beg.* 'Hec qui transitis subscripta uidere uelitis'. *Prose (Latin)*
 - l. **fol. 98v** Pseudo-Melito; De Transitu et Assumptione *Beg.* 'Sanctus Melito de assumptione gloriose dei genitricis, qui a beato Iohanne apostolo audiuit, in libro quem de ecclesia edidit'. *Prose (Latin)*
 - m. **fol. 101v** Anonymous; About the ministry of Jesus and his marriage to the Chruch. Imperfect. *Beg.* 'Aurum pro intellectu'. *Prose (Latin)*
 - n. **fol. 102r** Guido de Columnis; Historia Destructionis Troiae. *Beg.* 'Licet cotidie uetera recentibus obuient, nonnulla tamen iam dudum uetera'. *Prose (Latin)*

- o. **fol. 221v** Anonymous; Latin verses. *Beg.* 'Sus dolet ex moritur fauet ad et ardua tendit / Con mala molitur re quiescit in est dare uitam'. *Verse (Latin)*
5. Collation:
- a. i⁶, ii⁸ (lacks 5-8), iii⁴ (lacks 3), iv⁴ (lacks 1-2), v⁸, vi⁸, vii⁸, viii⁸, ix⁸ (lacks 3-4), x⁸, xi⁸, xii⁸, xiii⁸, xiv⁸, xv⁸ (lacks 8), xvi⁸⁺¹, xvii⁸, xviii⁸, xix⁸, xx⁸ (lacks 6-7), xxi⁸, xxii⁸, xxiii⁸ (lacks 1, 3), xxiv¹⁰ (lacks 10), xxv⁸, xxvi⁸, xxvii⁸, xxviii⁸, xxix⁸, xxx⁸, xxii²
6. Size of page:
- a. 300 x 195 mm.
7. Size of written space:
- a. fols. 2r-101v: 225 x 135mm.
 - b. fols. 102r-221v: 210 x 125mm.
8. Layout:
- a. Double columns throughout.
9. Frame:
- a. Ruled in brown or black plummet.
10. Decoration:
- a. Large blue letters begin text, various heights, surrounded by red pen-line drawings. Use of red and blue ink for paraphs throughout to begin new sections of texts.
11. Pagination:
- a. Modern foliation in pencil.
12. Catchwords:
- a. Present on quires iv (fol. 16v), v (fol. 24v), vi (fol. 30v), viii (fol. 46v), xi (fol. 70v), xvi (fol. 110v), xvii (fol. 118v), xviii (fol. 126v), xix (fol. 134v), xx (fol. 140v), xxi (fol. 148v), xxii (fol. 156v), xxiii (fol. 162v), xxv (fol. 179v), xxvii (fol. 195v), xxviii (fol. 203v), xxix (fol. 211v), xxx (fol. 219v). All followed up.
13. Signatures:
- a. quire xvi (fol. 110r): vi
14. Table of contents:
- a. Present in 15th C. hand at top of fol. i^v. In columns, tops trimmed off so some items may be missing.
 Maior Cato in metr{is}
 De vita trium regum de colonie
 Doctrina dicendi & tacendi
 {illegible line}

Bernardus de conscientia
 Vita beati Thome martiris
 De virginitate beate Marie
 Visio *sancti pauli* de panis inferni
 De penis *purgatorie inferni serui Ieronimus*
 De reualacione beate Marie & *assumpcone {sic}*
 De sautacione beate Marie
 Iason de aures velli{*last letter(s) illegible*}

15. Secundo folio:

- a. charge not

16. Indications of scribe/date:

- a. 15th C.

17. Indication of owners:

- a. fol. 150r: 'John Slad' (Elizabethan hand).

18. Annotations by later users:

- a. fol. 47r: 'nota bene' marks in margin.
- b. fol. 48r: Next to a passage headed 'De quatuor Virtutibus cardinalibus' is 'Nota hic lectionem | prudencie scire bonum | A malo discernere'.
- c. A variety of nota marks are present throughout, and most may be scribal. Apart from that on fol. 48r, others which appear to have been left by users include: fol. 59r, fol. 60v (next to 'humilitas supplebit pure confessionis'), fol. 71r (next to 'Ve michi quare creauitur me deus vt talia paterer'), fol. 88r (next to '*pergens ergo archiepiscopus cum suis*'), fol. 90r (next to '*post peracta solempnia in conuiuis se iocundum exhibens carnibus vt ceteri licet foret feria sexta vescebatur*'), fol. 109r (next to '*Aut deus nature patitur aut machina mundi dissoluitur*').
- d. fol. 65v: 'non *rectis oculis*' copied from text in to margin in slightly different, but contemporary, hand.
- e. fol. 87r: 'In the name'. Doesn't seem linked to text.
- f. fols. 109v and 110r: Two '*nota contra mulieres*'.
- g. fol. 150r: Several small pieces of writing, one erased one that says something like 'sermen of theyam' {?}.
- h. fol. 221v: 'Sans dieu rien' 17th/18th C. hand.
- i. back flyleaf, r, several scattered Latin lines: '*Sis velox ad audiendum / tardus ad loquendum & tardus ad iram*', '*Sapientia vere vincit malitiam*', others illegible.

19. Distichs present:

- a. I.1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, XLVIII, XLIX
- b. II. P1-2, P3-4, P4-5, P6-7, P8-9, 1, P10, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, LXXXVII, LXXXVIII, LXXXIX

- c. III.P1-2, 1, P3-4, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, CXVI, CXVII, CXVIII
- d. IV. P1-4, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46,

20. Notes:

- a. Colker (1991: 1012): Edmundus Rich's 'Speculum Eccelsiae' is copied from BL Harl. 5441.
- b. Notes on *Distichs*:
 - i. Latin as well as Middle English, both in black ink. Books have initial letters in blue (four lines high) surrounded by red pen decoration. Initial letters of each Latin line have yellow highlighting. Initial letters of each English line have vertical red stroke (as do many of the Latin lines). Anglicana / Bastard Anglicana hand, 15th C.
 - ii. The mistake in the ordering of II.P10 and II.1 has been noticed and letters 'A' and 'B' inserted in margins to clarify the order.
 - iii. III.7 is missing its final English line; IV.15 is missing the second English line.
 - iv. *Distichs* missing last few stanzas, and almost certainly had envoy. Probably means a folio is lost, although it's hard to tell.
- c. Manuscript is generally in good condition. Impressive in size but unostentatious, almost all in Latin, and almost all with a religious bent which suggests a clerical owner. The second section containing the *Siege of Troy* is clearly older, and is slightly less neatly laid out, and in slightly poorer condition. The condition is only of the parchment, however, and there are almost no scribbles/doodles in the manuscript. The contents list on the first flyleaf suggests the whole thing has been bound together from the 15th C onwards, though it is hard to tell if the first line of this is naming another text before the *Distichs* that is now lost, or simply identifying itself as a list of contents.

21. Bibliography:

- a. Abbott (1900): Catalogue entry.
- b. Colker (1991: 1011-1016): New catalogue entry.

28. Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales MS. Peniarth 481D

1. Binding:
 - a. Herbert [n.d.]: 'Bound in wooden boards covered with crimson velvet, with brass bosses and corner pieces. On the covers are two pins and fastenings for thongs, but the thongs are missing. Initials MC impressed four times on each cover (four of the impressions indistinct)'.
2. Material:
 - a. Parchment.
3. Number of folios:
 - a. ii + 167
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. **fol. 1r** Benedict Burgh; *Parvus Cato* [*NIMEV 3955*] *Beg.* 'Whan I aduertise in my remembraunce'. *Verse*
 - b. **fol. 2v** Benedict Burgh; 'Cato Major' [*NIMEV 854*] *Beg.* 'For thy that god is inwardly þe wytte'. *Verse*
 - c. **fol. 30r** Anonymous; The Wars of Alexander – 'historia Alexandri magni Regis Macedonie' *Beg.* 'Sapientissimi egipcii scientes ciuitate'. *Prose (Latin)*
 - d. **fol. 98v** blank
 - e. **fol. 99r** List of chapters for next item. Imperfect at beginning. *Beg.* 'In xij^o capitulo quomodo quiliberet trium regum'. *Verse*
 - f. **fol. 101r** John of Hildesheim; *The Three Kings of Cologne* ('Historia sanctorum trium regum'). *Beg.* 'Cvm post egressionem filorum israelorum de egipto omnem ibidem terram sibi subiugassent' *Prose (Latin)*
5. Collation:
 - a. Tentative, from microfilm:
 - i. i-iii⁸, iv¹²⁺¹, v-xi⁸, xii⁴⁺¹, xiii⁶ (wants 1), xiv-xviii⁸, xix⁸⁺¹, xx⁸⁻¹, xxi⁶
6. Size of page:
 - a. 295 x 210 mm.
7. Size of written space:
 - a. 170 x 110 mm.
8. Layout:
 - a. Single columns.
9. Frame:
 - a. Frame and lines ruled in brown plummet.

10. Decoration:

- a. Illustrations (Ross 1988: 51): *Distichs and Wars of Alexander* 'illustrated in Flanders or by a Flemish artist working in England [...] some of the pictures show undoubted influence of the illustrations of the *Old French Prose Alexander*, and in some cases the illustrator has devised new pictures to suit the peculiar interpolations of the text.'
- b. fol. 1r: Illustration filling top third of written space. Shows Cato reading aloud, Burgh interpreting for him, and a class of children seated around apparently following the work in their own copies of the book.
- c. fol. 2r: Burgh, with a monastery behind him, delivering his translation to a lavishly dressed man (his gown is decorated with fleurs de lis, suggesting nobility), behind whom is a wattle and daub house with a thatched roof.
- d. fol. 5v: Small items of decoration in page footer, one extended from the arm of the 'W' in the last line. This kind of minor decoration is found throughout the text.
- e. fol. 8v: The same nobleman is shown with a courtier (possibly Burgh again) showing him how to plough land. The exact significance of this image is unclear. Possibly a metaphorical demonstration of leading a regular life?
- f. fol. 14v: The nobleman and another man (again, possibly Burgh, possibly Cato) stand inside a room with archways showing the countryside beyond them. Not clear what is happening here.]
- g. fol. 27v: Full page miniature in two segments showing King Nectanebus on his throne surrounded by courtiers and, below, casting a spell on Artaxerxes' fleet of ships. In the bottom margin as part of the decorative scheme is a Yorkist white rose, shown face on and in profile.
- h. fols. 28r, 34r, 34v, 37v, 44r, 51v, 56v, 59r, 60v, 61r, 61v, 64r, 66v, 67r, 68v, 70r, 72v, 73v, 82r, 83r, 84v, 90r, 92r, 94v, 95v: Miniatures in Wars of Alexander.
- i. fols. 99r ff.: Initials of sub-sections of 'Historia Trium Regum' have vine and flower decoration which extends into the margins.
- j. fols. 127r ff. Ascenders of top line of text often have letters in them. These frequently include multiple 'S's and what is probably 'disce'.

11. Pagination:

- a. Modern pencil foliation.

12. Catchwords:

- a. Present on quires i (fol. 8v), ii (16v), iii (24v), iv (37v), v (45v), vi (53v), vii (61v), viii (69v), ix (77v), x (85v), xi (93v), xii (97v), xiii (103v), xix (152v), xx (159v). All followed up.

13. Signatures:

- a. Not present.

14. Table of contents:

- a. On rear cover of MS., parchment tag:
 - i. 'Catons versis in Inglishe & the stories of Alexander & of þe iij kingis of Colon in latinge writyn on perchment & illuminede'.

15. Secundo folio:

- a. And that

16. Indications of scribe/date:

- a. Late 15th C.
- b. Herbert [n.d.]: *Distichs and Wars of Alexander* in 'an English hand, late XV cent.; [*Three Kings of Cologne*] in a German hand of about the middle of the xv cent.'

17. Indication of owners:

- a. Herbert [n.d.]: 'Bookplate (armorial) of Watkin Williams, Esq., of Penbedw, co. Denbigh (son of Richard Williams of Penbedw and his 3rd wife, Annabella, d. and h. of Charles Lloyd of Drenewydd, co. Salop; M.P. for Flint 1777-1806, d. 1808).'
- b. Herbert [n.d.]: 'Sir John Cutts, of Childerley, co. Camb.; knt. 1571, M.P. for co. Camb. 1584, 1586, 1601, d. 1615. A letter of his, dated 22 Sept. 1593, is in Brit. Mus. MS. Lansd. 75, f. 116.'
- c. Herbert [n.d.]: 'The person to whom [Cutts] gave the book is probably the writer of the inscription 'chi semina virtu Reacoglia Fama q^d Thmas Gaudy' (Who sows virtue reaps fame, quoth Thomas Gaudy) at the top of f. 1. The Gawdy family was well known and widely spread in cos. Norf. and Suff. in the 16th and 17th centt., and many of its members bore the name Thomas. We may probably identify this one with Thomas Gawdy of Snitterton, co. Norf., and undated letter (*circ.* 1600) of whose is in Brit. Mus. MS. Eg. 2722, f. 67.'

18. Annotations by later users:

- a. fol. iiv: 'None /are\ happy till y^e End / Procede therefore as yo^u begin / Accept this Book of thy trew frende / So to thy father I haue bin | Jhon Cutts'.
 - i. This appears to be in a (very neat, despite the mistakes) 17th C. hand.
- b. fol. 1r: Inscription in top margin: 'chi semina virtu Reacoglia Fama q^d Thomas Gaudy'.
- c. fol. 85v: A small drawing of a man's face as an elaboration of the descender of a 'g' in the last line. May have been added at time of production.

19. Distichs Present:

- a. All of *Parvus Cato*, both Latin and English, including envoy. No truncation of Latin.
- b. I. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, XLVIII, XLIX

- c. II. P1-2, P3, P4-5, P6-7, P8-9, P10, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, LXXXVII, LXXXVIII, LXXXIX
- d. III. P1-2, 1, P3-4, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, CXVI, CXVII, CXVIII
- e. IV. P1-2, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 30, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49

20. Notes:

- a. Notes on *Distichs*:
 - i. *Distichs* is the first item in the MS. and decorated in a way that makes its importance clear. The Latin and English alternate, the Latin is given in rubrication, the English in black pen. Each stanza is given a decorative initial letter which has originally been in gold, on alternating red and blue backgrounds. The gold on the blue backgrounds has faded considerably. When the *Magnus Cato* begins, each line of the Latin and the first line of the English in each stanza is given this kind of decorative initial.
- b. fol. 9r (first fol. of second quire) is smudged, suggesting it lay unbound for a while.
- c. Apart from the neat ownership inscriptions there has been no noticeable annotation or marking of this volume whatsoever. This may suggest that it was barely read, or that as an illuminated volume, it was at least treated with care when it was.

21. Bibliography:

- a. Davies (1941-2): Brief description of the *Distichs* as present in this MS.
- b. Davies (1943): Catalogue entry.
- c. Herbert [n.d.]: Notes on the MS. by 'M. Herbert of the British Museum', appended to its microfilm copy. Apparently unpublished.
- d. Pritchard (1990): Information of the 'Wars of Alexander' in this MS.

30. San Marino, CA., Huntington Library MS. HM 144

1. Binding:
 - a. Dutschke (1989: 202): 'Bound, s. XVI, ledger-style, sewn with twisted straps of parchment through each quire and through the limp parchment cover, and knotted on to heavy stamped leather on the outside of the spine; long extensions of front and back covers serve as fore edge flaps.'
2. Material:
 - a. Paper
3. Number of folios:
 - a. iv + 152
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. From Dutschke (1989):
 - i. **fol. 1r** William Lychefelde; 'Complaint of God' [*NIMEV 2714*] *Beg.* 'O My graciouse god prynce of pite / Off whom all grace and goodnesse begann'. *Verse*
 - ii. **fols. 10r-v** blank
 - iii. **fol. 11r** John Lydgate; *Life of Our Lady* (extract: II. 1-504) [*NIMEV 2574*] *Beg.* Who is bounde & feteryd in presonne / Thynkyth longe aftyr delyueraunce'. *Verse*
 - iv. **fol. 20v** blank
 - v. **fol. 21r** Anonymous; 'Relation of the Passion, as narrated by the Virgin' (catalogue title) *Beg.* 'Owre swete lady Seint Mary goddis modyr of heuene aftyr þe vpstyeng of her swete sonne Crist Ihesu vppon þe Mounte of Synay'. *Prose.*
 - vi. **fols. 43v-44v** blank
 - vii. **fol. 45r** Anonymous; 'The Gospel of Nicodemus' *Beg.* 'On þe morwe aftyr þat Crist Iesus was buryed The princis & þe Bishoppis þe Prestes and þe Maistyr of þe lawe come to Pilate & sayde'. *Prose.*
 - viii. **fol. 47r** John Trevisa; Translation of Higden's *Polychronicon* (excerpt) *Beg.* 'The good man & þe noble prynce þat pryuely was Cristis disciple for drede of þe wickyd Iewis I shal telle yow of a lytyl boke þat he made of Cristis passioun'. *Prose.*
 - ix. **fol. 54v** John Trevisa; Translation of Higden's *Polychronicon* (excerpt) *Beg.* 'Off the byrthe of Pilate and of his lyuynge men redyth many wondrys For a kynge of Tyrus gate a sonne on one callyd Pila a mylwardes doughter þat hete Atus'. *Prose.*
 - x. **fol. 56v** John Trevisa; Translation of Higden's *Polychronicon* (excerpt) *Beg.* 'Here take hede as saynt Ierom saith þat Anna and Emerea were twey sustres'. *Prose.*
 - xi. **fol. 57r** John Trevisa; Translation of Higden's *Polychronicon* (excerpt) *Beg.* 'Off hem it is wretton in a Stori though the Auctor

therof be vnknowen. A man was in Ierusalem þat heete Ruben as Ierom saith'. *Prose*.

- xii. **fol. 58r** John Trevisa; Translation of Higden's *Polychronicon* (excerpt) *Beg.* 'The yere after þe election of Mathias & aftyr the descendyng of þe holy goste'. *Prose*.
- xiii. **fol. 59v** John Trevisa; Translation of Higden's *Polychronicon* (excerpt) *Beg.* 'Also þat yere Iohan began to preche & baptise and baptised Crist þe vi day of laneuere'. *Prose*
- xiv. **fol. 61v** John Trevisa; Translation of Higden's *Polychronicon* (excerpt) *Beg.* 'Whanne Crist Iesus was born was shewyd many prophesies & tokenys of grace & gladnes'. *Prose*
- xv. **fol. 64v-66v** blank
- xvi. **fol. 67r** Anonymous; 'The Stasyons of Ierusalem' [*NIMEV 986*] *Beg.* 'God þat made bothe heuen & helle / To the lorde I make my mone'. *Verse*
- xvii. **fol. 77v-79r** Anonymous; verses, inserted. *Beg.* 'Magnificat anima mea dominum, Miche laude & perce my soule magnifieth / The eternall lorde bothe one two & thre'
- xviii. **fol. 81r** Geoffrey Chaucer; *The Canterbury Tales* (Tale of Melibee) *Beg.* 'A 3oung man callyd Melibeus myghty & ryche bigat vpon his wyf þat callyd was Prudens a doughter whiche þat callyd was Sophie'. *Prose*
- xix. **fol. 100r** Geoffrey Chaucer; *The Canterbury Tales* (Monk's Tale) [*NIMEV 4019*] *Beg.* 'I wil biwaile in maner of tregede / The harme of hem þat stod in heigh degre'. *Verse*
- xx. **fol. 112r-113v** blank
- xxi. **fol. 114r** Benedict Burgh; *Parvus Cato* [*NIMEV 3955*] *Beg.* 'Whan I aduerte to my remembraunce / And see how fele folks erren greuously'. *Verse*
- xxii. **fol. 114v** Benedict Burgh; 'Cato Major' [*NIMEV 854*] *Beg.* 'For thy that god is inwardly the wyt / Of man and geuyth hym vndirstandyng'. *Verse*
- xxiii. **fol. 135v** John Lydgate; 'The Chorle and the Bird' [*NIMEV 2784*] *Beg.* 'Problemys of olde likenesses and figures'. *Verse*
- xxiv. **fol. 141v** John Lydgate; 'Horse, Goose and Sheep' [*NIMEV 658*] *Beg.* 'Off this notable ryalle hye scripture'. *Verse*
- xxv. **fol. 145r** Anonymous; Proverbial verses [*NIMEV 1629*] *Beg.* 'Hit is ful harde to knowe ony estate'. *Verse*
- xxvi. **fol. 145v** John Lydgate; *On the mutability of man's nature* (excerpt) [*NIMEV 3504*] *Beg.* 'The worlde so wyde the ayre so remeuable'. *Verse*
- xxvii. **fol. 145v** Anonymous; 'Tyed with a line' [*NIMEV 3436*] *Beg.* 'The further I goo the more behynde'. *Verse*
- xxviii. **fol. 145v** John Lydgate; *The Court of Sapience* (extract) [*NIMEV 4215*] *Beg.* 'Wo worthe debate þat neuer may haue pease / Wo worthe penaunce þat askith no pyte'. *Verse*
- xxix. **fol. 146r-v** blank

- xxx. **fol. 147r** Explicit to previous item: 'prayour & good lyuyngē may withdrawe alle bad predestinacion & bothe Man and Woman may stonde in the state of grace. Amen'. *Verse*
- xxxi. **fol. 147v** Anonymous; Tables of sunrise and sunset *Beg.* 'Marche The Sonne arisith iii quartirs of an houre before vii & goth to rest iii quartirs of an houre aftyr v the iii^{the} day of Marche vppon E'. *Prose.*
- xxxii. **fol. 149r** John Trevisa; Translation of Higden's *Polychronicon* (extract) *Beg.* 'Beda libro primo Seith þat this ylond lyeth vnder þe northe hede of þe worlde'. *Prose.*
- xxxiii. **fols. 149v-151r** blank
- xxxiv. **fol. 151v** 'Thys ys þe medysyn þat þe kynges grace vsythe every day for the raynyng seknys' (16th C. secretary hand).
- xxxv. **fols. 152r-v** blank.

5. Collation:

- a. i¹⁰, ii¹² (wants 11, 12), iii¹⁶, iv⁸, v¹⁶, vi⁶, vii¹⁴, viii¹⁶, ix¹⁸ (wants 4), x¹⁰, xi¹², xii¹² (wants 10), xiii¹⁰ (wants 5, 7, 8, 10)

6. Size of page:

- a. 290 x 200 mm.

7. Size of written space:

- a. Varies. Approx. 190 x 140 mm.

8. Layout:

- a. Single columns. Verse 28-32, prose 32-35 lines.

9. Frame:

- a. None visible on microfilm.
- b. Dutschke (1989: 202): 'frame ruled in drypoint'

10. Decoration:

- a. Dutschke (1989: 202): 'Plain 3- to 1-line red initials; spaces reserved on ff. 120v, 125v, 129 (Books 2-4 of *Magnus Cato*); paragraph marks, deletions and underlining in red. Running headlines in ink of the text across the opening.'

11. Pagination:

- a. Modern foliation in pencil.

12. Catchwords:

- a. Present on quires iii (fol. 36v), viii (96v), x (123v). All followed up.

13. Signatures:

- a. Added by a later (19th C.?) hand in bottom right corner of pages. Designates quires 'a' to 'n' (omitting 'j') and notes excised folios.
- b. Originals on:
 - i. quire ii (fols. 14r-16r): 'iii{j}', 'v', 'vj'

- ii. quire iii (fols. 22r-28r): 'ij', 'iij', 'iiij', 'v', 'vj', 'vij', 'viiij'
- iii. quire iv (fols. 37r-39r): 'a j', 'a ij', 'a iij'
- iv. quire v (fols. 45r-52r): 'b j', 'b ij', 'b iij', 'b iiij', 'b v', 'b vj', 'b vij', 'b viij'
- v. quire vi (fols. 61r-63r): 'j', 'ij', 'iij'
- vi. quire vii (fols. 67r-73r): 'j', 'ij', {iij}, 'iiij', 'v', 'vj', 'vij'
- vii. quire viii (fols. 82r-88r): 'ij', {iij}, 'iiij', 'v', {vj}, 'v{ij}', 'viiij'
- viii. quire x (fols. 116r-117r): 'b ij', 'b ii{j}'
- ix. quire xi (fols. 124r-129r): 'c j', 'c {ij}', {c iij}, 'c iiij', 'c {v}', 'c v{j}'
- x. quire xii (fols. 136r-141r): 'd {j}', {d ij, diij, diiij}, 'd {v}', 'd v{j}'

14. Table of contents:

- a. Not present.

15. Secundo folio:

- a. Man I haue

16. Indications of scribe/date:

- a. Catalogue gives date as 15th/16th C.
- b. Single hand throughout, except two of the Trevisa excerpts, numbers ix and xiv in 'Contents'.
- c. Dutschke (1989: 202): 'Written in a large, clumsy hybrida script, by the same person who copied Oxford, Trinity College MS 29'.

17. Indication of owners:

- a. fol. ii^r: John thyll [second word erased]. John tyilly owth for ii bowsylles of wy[cropped] the pres xxiiii d.'; 'Iste confessor domyni. Iste lyber pertene the nicolaus serll'; 'Th. Sayer me tenet 7 decembris 1617'
- b. fol. iv^v: 'Th. Sayer'
- c. Dutschke (1989: 203): 'on the inside of the front and back covers, "John Skynner" and "John Skynner of farnham." Manly and Rickert identify a wealthy family named Skinner in the records of Surrey, one of whom held a tenement in Farnham; a John Tyilly is known to have had connections in Peckham where one John Skinner is also known; the musters for Farnham in 1569 list a Nicholas Serle.'
- d. Dutschke (1989: 203): 'Manly and Rickert suggest that the note on f. 81 may be in the hand of William Thynne (d. 1546), who prepared editions of Chaucer's works in 1532 and 1542. The notes on ff. 1 and 9v appear to be written by John Stow (1525?-1605) who brought out a revised version of Thynne's edition of Chaucer in 1561.'
- e. Dutschke (1989: 203): Belonged to a member of the Savile family; sold (Feb. 1861) to Ellis; sold by Ellis (1861) to Henry Huth; sold (July 1917) by Alfred H. Huth to Bernard Quaritch; acquired by Huntington before 1925.
- f. Dutschke (1989: 203): 'An early, possibly the first owner (the copyist himself?) had access to a manuscript which had belonged to the Augustinian monastery in Bisham Montague, Berkshire, and which was used for reinforcement in the binding.'

18. Annotations by later users:

- a. fol. iv: letter practice
- b. fol. 1r: A later (16th C.) hand has added: 'made by William lichfield doctor of divinitie, parson of all hallows in Thamis Strete who deceased .1447.'
- c. fol. 9v: A similar, longer note on the authorship of the poem. Below a messier, later hand has written 'Stows Autograph'. Dutschke (1989: 197) gives this in full: 'here endithe the complaynte of god to man, and was made by master william lichfield doctar of divinitie, and was parson of alhallows the more in thamis strete in london, he died in anno 1447 the 14 of octobar and made in his tyme 3083 sermons as apered by his owne hand writinge and were found when he was deade.'
- d. fol. 68v ff.: Numbers scribbled '121', (70r) '217', (70v) '243', (71v) '304', (72r) '337', (72v) '366', (73r) '397', (74r) '461', (75r) '525', (75v) '557', (76v) '619', (77r) '650', (77v) '682', (78v) '745', (79r) '777', (79v) '809', (80r) '841'. These may be counting lines. The number forms are difficult to date.
- e. fol. 81r: 'Chawsers talle of melebe' (16th C.)

19. Distichs present:

- a. All of ME for *Parvus Cato* including envoy. Latin truncated to one line per English stanza.
- b. I. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, XLVIII, XLVIX
- c. II. P1-2, P4-5, P6-7, P8-9, P10, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31, 29, LXXXVII, LXXXVIII, LXXXIX
- d. III. P1-2, 1, 6, 2, 3, 4, 5, P3-4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 23, 21, 22, 24, CXVI
- e. IV. P1-2, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 43, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, CXVII, CXVIII

20. Notes:

- a. Dutschke (1989: 202) suggests that the MS. may be composed from up to eight smaller booklets, perhaps:
 - i. quire i ('Compleynte betwene God and Man')
 - ii. quire ii (Lydgate's *Life of Our Lady*)
 - iii. quires iii and iv ('Passion of Crist Ihesu' 'up to the story of Joseph of Arimathea')
 - iv. quires iv-vi (*sic*) (Remainder of 'Passion of Crist Ihesu' and all excerpts from Trevisa's translation of the *Polychronicon*)
 - v. quire vii ('Pilgrimage and the wayes of Ierusalem')
 - vi. quires viii-ix (Chaucer's *Melibee* and *Monk's Tale*)
 - vii. quires x-xi (Burgh's *Distichs*)
 - viii. quire xii (Lydgate items and other small miscellaneous pieces).

- b. Alternatively, Dutschke suggests (on the evidence of watermarks) that there are only three real subdivisions:
 - i. quire i ('Compleynte betwene God and Man')
 - ii. quires ii-vii ('the "religious" material')
 - iii. quires viii-xii ('the "secular" material in the rest of the book').
- c. Dutschke (1989: 203): Caxton editions may have been used for several texts, including probably Lydgate's *Horse, Sheep and Goose* and *The Churl and the Bird*; Trevisa's translation of the *Polychronicon*; and probably the *Distichs*.
- d. Notes on *Distichs*:
 - i. I. 28 is missing
 - ii. II. 6 is missing
 - iii. II. 14 and 15 are inverted
 - iv. III. 23 has been moved to follow II. 20, presumably because both are on the subject of women.
 - v. IV. 42 and 44 are missing
 - vi. The *Distichs* is so close to the Caxton text in terms both of wording and ordering of stanzas that it has almost certainly been copied from a printed book.
 - vii. In the 'Cato Major' stanzas are frequently provided with a brief summary of their subject matter in the margin.

21. Bibliography:

- a. Bühler (1940): Discussion of Lydgate's 'Horse, Goose and Sheep' in the context of this MS.
- b. Dutschke (1989: 197-202): Detailed catalogue entry.
- c. Hanna (1984: 17-20): *Index of Middle English Prose* cataloguing.
- d. Lauritis *et al.* (1961: 42-43): Description of MS. in edition of Lydgate's *Life of Our Lady*.
- e. Manly & Rickert (1940: i, 288-294): Description of MS. in examination of *Canterbury Tales* MSS.

31. New York, Pierpont Morgan Library MS. M-775

1. Binding:
 - a. Brown calf gold-tooled on both covers for Edward VI, when Prince of Wales, with the motto 'Ich. Dien.' above and below the central compartment, that part which contained his coat-of-arms and the letters E.P. is now cut out.
2. Material:
 - a. Parchment.
3. Number of folios:
 - a. iii + 320 + i
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. **From 'Corsair': Pierpoint Morgan Library online catalogue.**
 - i. **fol. 3r** Anonymous; 'A bilment for the Justus of the Pees' *Beg.* 'A helme well stuffyd w^t a crest of hys de viis' (fol. 3-4v). *Prose*
 - ii. **fol. 5r** Memoriale – a table for calculating daily and yearly expenses. *Beg.* 'Ianuarius habet dies .xxxj. Febryarius .xxviiij'
 - iii. **fol. 12r** The Assize of Bread and Ale, and tables of Weights and Measures. *Beg.* 'It is to wite that on peny rounde and w^touten tonsure owe to weye xxxij whete cornes in the middes of the ere'. *Prose*
 - iv. **fol. 14r** Anonymous; On the Coronation of Henry VI [NIMEV 1224] *Beg.* 'Holde vp oure yonge kynge *ave benigna*'. *Verse*
 - v. **fol. 15r** John Lydgate; 'Sotelties' at the Coronation Banquet of Henry VI [NIMEV 1929] *Beg.* 'Lo here two kynges righte perfit *and* right good' (cf. also fol. 24r). *Verse*
 - vi. **fol. 16r** Anonymous; 'The Coronation of the Kings and Queens of England' (Catalogue title) *Beg.* Firste the prince that is newe to be crownid the day before his coronacioun'. *Prose*
 - vii. **fol. 24r** John Lydgate; 'Sotelties' at the Coronation Banquet of Henry VI (continued) [NIMEV 1929] *Beg.* 'O blessing lady cristes modre dere' (cf. also fol. 15r). *Verse*
 - viii. **fol. 25r** English translation of Vegetius, *De re militari*, completed for Thomas Lord Berkeley. *Beg.* 'In olde tyme yt was the maner and the custume that sotylnes and studies'. *Prose*
 - ix. **fol. 121v** Anonymous; Three lines [NIMEV 1009.5] 'Grace of oure offendynge / Space to oure amendynge / And his face to see at oure endynge'. *Verse*
 - x. **fol. 121v** Anonymous; Benediction [NIMEV 3757] *Beg.* 'To him and to us alle God graunte'. *Verse*
 - xi. **fol. 124v** (122v) Anonymous; 'How a man schall be armyd at his ese when he schal fighte on foote' (MS. title) *Beg.* 'He schal haue noo schirte vp on him but a dowbelet of ffustean'. *Prose*

- xii. **fol. 124r** Thomas, Duke of Gloucester; Letter to Richard II on Tournaments *Beg.* 'To his ryȝt excellent and right myghty lege lorde Richarde'. *Prose*
- xiii. **fol. 131r** Anonymous; Sailing directions (catalogue title) *Beg.* 'Berwik lieth southe and northe. of golde stones. the ylonde and berwik hauen.' (fol. 131-138v). *Prose*
- xiv. **fol. 139r** John Lydgate and Benedict Burgh; translation of *Secreta Secretorum* or *Secrees of old Philisoffres* [NIMEV 935] Imperfect at beginning. *Beg.* 'Thorow all Grece namyd lorde and sire'. *Verse*
- xv. **fol. 195v** (196v) Anonymous; 'How Knyghtis of the bath shulde be made' (MS. title) *Beg.* 'First the kyngre oure souereyne lorde writith oute lettris vn to certeyne squyers' (fol. 195v-198). *Prose*
- xvi. **fol. 199r** (200r) Anonymous; 'To make agua composyta' (MS. title) *Beg.* 'Take a handfull of Rosmary' (added in a slightly later hand). *Prose*
- xvii. **fol. 199v (200v)** blank
- xviii. **fol. 200r** (201r) Anonymous; 'Last page or prologue of a poem in English' (catalogue) *Beg.* 'I that to yowre service wolde were able'. *Prose*
- xix. **fol. 200v** Dedicatory prologue to Stephen Scrope's version of Christine de Pisan's *Epitre d'Othéa* (addressed to Humphrey, Duke of Buckingham or to Sir John Fastolf) [NIMEV 2766] Imperfect at beginning. *Beg.* 'Othea of prudence namyd goddesse' Christine de Pisan, Pistill of Othea to Hector; translated into English verse, with a gloss in prose
- xx. **fol. 275r** Anonymous; Recipe for a powder (catalogue title) *Beg.* 'Drinck this powdir wen ye woll & ye be dysessud'
- xxi. **fol. 276r** Anonymous; 'The Challenges of Pierre de Masse and Philip Boyle and the results of their combats with Sir John Astley in 1438 and 1441-1442, followed by the oath of a herald on appointment' (catalogue) *Beg.* 'In the worschip & in the name of god & of oure blessid lady virgyn'. *Prose*
- xxii. **fol. 283r** Anonymous; 'Calendar in Latin, thunder prognostications, astrological tables and diagrams' (catalogue) (fol. 283-291). *Prose*
- xxiii. **fol. 293r** Benedict Burgh; *Parvus Cato* [NIMEV 3955] *Beg.* 'When I aduertise in my remembraunce'. *Verse*
- xxiv. **fol. 294r** Benedict Burgh; 'Cato Major' [NIMEV 854] *Beg.* 'For why that God is inwardli the witte'. *Verse*
- xxv. **fol. 320r** John Lydagte; stanza from *Fall of Princes* circulating separately (II, 4432-8) [NIMEV 674] *Beg.* 'Deceyt deceyuyth and shal be disceyued'. *Verse*
- xxvi. **fol. 320r** Anonymous; Factors that cause a man to lose reason [NIMEV 4230] *Beg.* 'Worship wymmen wyne and vnweldy age'. *Verse*
- xxvii. **fol. 320v** Anonymous; Medical recipes

5. Collation:
 - a. Impossible to determine from microfilm. From presence of catchwords, almost all quires appear to contain eight folios. Some, especially in Vegetius, may contain sixteen.
6. Size of page:
 - a. 250 x 150 mm.
7. Size of written space:
 - a. 185 x 105 mm.
8. Layout:
 - a. Generally 28 lines to a page in single column.
9. Frame:
 - a. None evident on microfilm.
10. Decoration:
 - a. 'Corsair': Certain sections illustrate jousts, foot-combats and other feats of arms of Sir John Astley (cf. fols. 275v, 277v etc.).
 - b. 'Corsair': 4 full-page and 5 smaller miniatures, 1 astrological table, 1 Zodiac Man, with inscriptions, 1 circular astrological diagram. Artist: Wingfield Master.
 - c. fol. v^v: Full-page illustration of a jousting match with ladies looking on.
 - d. fol. 25r, 26r: Initial folios of Vegetius given highly decorative floral initials and borders. fol. 25r includes the arms of Sir John Astley at the foot of the page.
 - e. fol. 130v: Full-page illustration of sailing ships.
 - f. fol. 131r: A picture of a shield with roses in two of its quarters.
 - g. fol. 138v: An almost full-page picture of a sailing ship next to the coast.
 - h. fol. 200r: A minitature of an angel handing a piece of paper to a group of four men.
 - i. fol. 202v: Miniature in Epistle of Othea.
 - j. fol. 274r: Astley's arms surmounted by a helmet with what appears to be a harpy on top of it.
 - k. fol. 275v: Full-page picture of a tournament, sketched but not coloured.
 - l. fol. 277v: Another full-page picture of knights fighting in armour, similarly drawn in pencil.
11. Pagination:
 - a. Modern pagination in pencil. Sizes of numbers varies, and some are too small and faint to be visible on film.
12. Catchwords:
 - a. Present on fols: 40v, 48v, 56v, 72v, 80v, 96v, 104v, 112v, 120v, 145v, 162v, 170v, 186v, 194v, 204v, 212v, 228v, 236v, 244v, 252v, 260v, 268v, 300v, 308v, 316v.

13. Signatures:
- a. None visible on film.
14. Table of contents:
- a. Not present.
15. Secundo folio:
16. Indications of scribe/date:
- a. 15th C.
17. Indication of owners:
- a. Catalogue lists as written and illuminated for Sir John Astley, K.G. (died 1486) whose arms are found throughout. Little is known of Sir John Astley apart from the fact that he was famous in the 15th century for feats of arms at tournaments and jousts. He was elected a Knight of the Garter in 1461; Victualer for Edward IVth's castle of Alnwick, 1463. Present at the funeral of Edward IV in 1483. Died between Michaelmas and 8 Nov. 1486. Buried at Patshull. MS. later passed to Edward VI of England, when Prince of Wales, as is evidenced by the present binding.
 - b. The manuscript passed from Astley heirs to Edward VI, when Prince of Wales, possibly through Sir Henry de Grey, Marquess of Dorset (great-grandson of Joan, Baroness Astley, first cousin and heiress of Sir John Astley) who was prominent at the court of Edward VI, and to whom he was closely related by marriage, his wife Frances, daughter and heiress of Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, being the niece of Henry VIII. It returned to the Astley family, possibly by presentation of Queen Elizabeth to Sir John Astley (first cousin, once removed, to Elizabeth through his Mother, an aunt of Anne Boleyn) or by James I to Sir John Astley of the next generation, who was Master of Ceremonies at his court.
 - c. De Ricci (1961: 1502): Final Astley owner was A.E.D. Astley, twenty-first Lord Hastings, who sold it on 20th July 1931 to antiquarian bookseller Bernard Quaritch.
 - d. On the front pastedown is the crest of 'Jacob Astley Armig^r of Melton Constable'.
 - e. fol. v^r: 'Thom^{as} fytzhugh' (three times), 'Bryan Tunstall', 'Thomas Tunstall'.
18. Annotations by later users:
- a. fol. i^r: Several lines of French, largely illegible on microfilm. The clearest reads 'Les vraies amities sont Immortals'.
 - b. Manicules appear throughout the *Secrees of old Philisoffres* pointing to particular stanzas.
 - c. fol. 283v ff. Several dates on the calendar on these pages are marked.
19. Distichs present:
- a. All of *Parvus Cato* including envoy, Latin complete.

- b. I. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, XLVIII, XLIX
- c. II. P1-2, P3-4, P4-5, P6-7, P8-9, P10, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, LXXXVII, LXXXVIII, LXXXIX
- d. III. P1-2, 1, P3-4, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, CXVI, CXVII, CXVIII
- e. IV. P1-2, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 30, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49

20. Notes:

- a. The front pastedown is a leaf from an older, very large, musical MS.

21. Bibliography:

- a. Arthur (1900): Description of the MS. focussing on its illustrations, but also editing chivalric texts.
- b. Corsair (Pierpont Morgan Library's online catalogue): Contains detailed information including scans of librarians' notes on MS. <http://corsair.themorgan.org/cgi-bin/Pwebrecon.cgi?BBID=158842> [last accessed: 5th July 2012].
- c. De Ricci (1961: 1501-1502): Catalogue entry. Less detailed than 'Corsair' online information.
- d. Lester (1985): Thorough cataloguing of the manuscript, discussing it in relationship to John Paston's BL MS. Lansdowne 285.

32. Göttingen, UL 8 Cod. MS. philol. 163 n

1. Binding:
 - a. Not shown on microfilm.
2. Material:
 - a. Paper and parchment (outer and inner bifolia are parchment).
3. Number of folios:
 - a. 32
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. **fol. 1v** Benedict Burgh; *Parvus Cato* [*NIMEV 3955*] *Beg.* [W]hene I aduertice yn my remembraunce'. *Verse*
 - b. **fol. 2v** Benedict Burgh; 'Cato Major' [*NIMEV 854*] *Beg.* 'ffor thi þ^t god is ynwardly the witte'. *Verse*
 - c. **fol. 30r** Anonymous; 'De Latronibus Disma et Iesma' (catalogue title) *Beg.* 'Pro latronibus meritis pendent tria corpora ramis'. *Prose (Latin)*
 - d. **fol. 30v** Letter from Pope Leo to King Charles of France *Beg.* 'Seynt Leon the pope of Rome Wrote this letter and sende hyt to kyng Charles the gode kyng of Frawnce'. *Prose*
 - e. **fol. 31v** Anonymous; Listing of the sheep-farmers of Eastbury, Berkshire. *Beg.* 'Eastbury. Ad memorandum de communiariis ibidem apud Thornhull. Thomas Blagyrone habebit ibidem LX oues'
 - f. **fol. 32r** Anonymous; Genealogical table of the Fetyplace family *Beg.* 'Harriot Feteplace toke to wyfe Costaunce'
 - g. **fol. 32v** Anonymous; 'Versus et sententiae' (catalogue title) *Beg.* 'Ventus mortali benefac vt gratia detur'. *Verse (Latin)*
5. Collation:
 - a. Impossible to discern from microfilm.
6. Size of page:
 - a. 200 x 150 mm.
7. Size of written space:
 - a. 180 x 130 mm.
8. Layout:
 - a. Single columns.
9. Frame:
 - a. None visible on microfilm. No neat boundaries to text suggests there may never have been any.

10. Decoration:
 - a. No decoration, other than some stave-like boxing which links together each double-line Latin distich, and the seven lines of each Middle English stanza.
11. Pagination:
 - a. Older pagination labels ff. '44' to '74', and accidentally uses '62' twice.
 - b. More modern pagination labels ff. '1' to '32'
12. Catchwords:
 - a. Not present.
13. Signatures:
 - a. Not visible.
14. Table of contents:
 - a. Not present.
15. Secundo folio:
 - a. Fader and
16. Indications of scribe/date:
 - a. Early 16th C? Secretary hand with a few Tudor influences?
17. Indication of owners:
 - a. Not present.
18. Annotations by later users:
 - a. None present, other than a few scribbles on the first page and some numbers which look like library catalogue numbers.
19. Distichs present:
 - a. All of *Parvus Cato* except the envoy. Although the Latin is generally presented prior to its English translation, the final section of Latin (beginning 'Troco lude') is given at the end of the ME.
 - b. I. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21*, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27*, 28, 29*, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40
 - c. II. P1-2, P3-4, P4-5, P6-7, P8-9, P10, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26**, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31
 - d. III. P1-2, 1, P3-4, 2, 3, 4*, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11*, 12*/***, 13*, 14*, 15*, 16*, 17*, 18*, 19*, 20*, 21*, 22*, 23*, 24*
 - e. IV. P1-2, 1*, 2*, 3*, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8*, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25**, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 30, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49
20. Notes:
 - a. From microfilm the MS. looks only slightly tatty. It is not particularly neatly written – it's hard to tell if there was a frame for the writing originally, but some pages are certainly rather squint especially

nearing the bottom of the page. The look of the MS. is fairly practical, with no real decoration. Decorative initials have never been inserted in the space left for them. The hand is not careful, and varies in size throughout. Although it is possible there is more than one hand at work, it seems more likely that this variation is due to a lack of line ruling. That it is only part of a larger MS is evident from the previous foliation.

b. Notes on *Distichs*:

- i. Next to I. 25 is 'a promyse'.
- ii. None of the envoys are present.
- iii. There are at least three systems of 'nota' mark, the first being the most prevalent. For the first, an 'n' with a loop above it is used. The second type takes a 'no^{ta}' form, and the third is a single occurrence of the words 'nota bene'. The first type accompanies a large number of the distichs of book III (III. 11 – IV. 3), and it is possible that the scribe is misinterpreting a mark in his exemplar similar to the 'a'-style mark which usually picks out the beginning of a new stanza. If this is the case, it is noticed later, and reverts mostly to the 'a'-style bullet-point.

21. Bibliography:

- a. Fischer (1968: 8-9): Catalogue entry for this MS. Sparse in detail.

33. Rome, English College MS. A. 347 (Formerly 1306)

1. Binding:
 - a. Boards covered with parchment.
2. Material:
 - a. Paper.
3. Number of folios:
 - a. 159
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. **fol. 1r** John Lydgate; *Life of Our Lady* [NIMEV 2574] Imperfect at beginning. *Beg.* 'And with that worde thurgh grace of goddes myght'. *Verse*
 - b. **fol. 66r** John Lydgate; Henry VI's entry into London, 1432 [NIMEV 3799] *Beg.* 'Toward the ende of wyndy ffebruary'. *Verse*
 - c. **fol. 74v** John Lydgate; Seven Wise Counsels [NIMEV 576] *Beg.* 'By sapience temper thy courage'. *Verse*
 - d. **fol. 75r** Anonymous; Factors that cause a man to lose reason [NIMEV 4230] *Beg.* 'Worship women wyn and vnweldy age'. *Verse*
 - e. **fol. 75v** Anonymous; Antifeminist lyric [NIMEV 1944] *Beg.* 'Lok wel aboute ye that louers bee'. *Verse*
 - f. **fol. 76r** John Lydgate; 'A wikked tong wol alway deme amis' [NIMEV 653] *Beg.* 'Considre wele with eury circumstance'. *Verse*
 - g. **fol. 78r** Anonymous; Song of 'Galaunt' (acrostic of the Deadly Sins) [NIMEV 1874] *Beg.* 'Right as smale flodes encrese to watres feele'. *Verse*
 - h. **fol. 80v** John Lydgate; 'The Pain and Sorrow of Evil Marriage' [NIMEV 919] *Beg.* 'Take hede and lerne thou litel childe and see'. *Verse*
 - i. **fol. 82v** Anonymous; On the Duke of Burgundy [NIMEV 3682] *Beg.* 'O thou Phelippe fonder of new falshede'. *Verse*
 - j. **fol. 84r** Anonymous; *The Siege of Calais* [NIMEV 1497] *Beg.* 'In Iuyll whan the sonne shone shene'. *Verse*
 - k. **fol. 86v** John Lydgate; 'Dietary' [NIMEV 824] *Beg.* 'ffor helthe of body coure fro colde thy hede'. *Verse*
 - l. **fol. 88r** Benedict Burgh; *Parvus Cato* [NIMEV 3955] *Beg.* 'Whan I aduertisse in my remembrance'. *Verse*
 - m. **fol. 89r** Benedict Burgh; 'Cato Major' [NIMEV 854] *Beg.* 'For thy that god is inwardly the witte'. *Verse*
 - n. **fol. 110v** blank
 - o. **fol. 111v** John Lydgate; 'Dance of Macabre' [NIMEV 2591] *Beg.* 'O ye folkes harde herted as a ston'. *Verse*
 - p. **fol. 121v** blank
 - q. **fol. 122r** Anonymous; *The Master of Game*. *Beg.* 'To the honour and Reuerence of you my Right Worshipful lorde henry' *Prose.*
 - i. **fol. 159r** Anonymous; Envoy to *Master of Game* [NIMEV 3910.5] *Beg.* 'What man that wille of huntynge leere'

5. Collation:
 - a. Unknown.
6. Size of page:
 - a. 260 x 190 mm.
7. Size of written space:
 - a. Unknown.
8. Layout:
 - a. Approx. 35 lines per page.
9. Frame:
 - a. Unknown.
10. Decoration:
 - a. Capitals and headings in red and blue ink
11. Pagination:
 - a. No pagination/foiliation.
12. Catchwords:
 - a. Unknown.
13. Signatures:
 - a. Unknown.
14. Table of contents:
 - a. Unknown.
15. Secundo folio:
 - a. Unknown.
16. Indications of scribe/date:
 - a. Klinefelter (1953): 1436-1456 (via watermarks).
 - b. Robbins (1955: 132 n. 3): hand appears to be later – only possible to date to ‘2nd half’ of 15th C.
 - c. fol. 159r: ‘J. Preston’ – the name of a scribe? (Lauritis *et al.* 1961: 50).
17. Indication of owners:
 - a. Sir Edward Carne (Mary Tudor’s ambassador to Pope Paul IV during 1555-1558) ‘associated with the volume in some manner’.
 - b. Robbins (1955: 135): ‘The Rome MS. is the kind of manuscript which must have been fairly common in upper-class families’.
 - c. Robbins (1955: 135): Rejects Klinefelter’s assertion that Sir Edward Carne is referred to by name, but suggests that his son, Thomas Carne, is referred to on fol. 121v.
 - d. fol. 26r: ‘Jacobus’.

- e. fol. 121v: 'This is Richard Turbyll is boke'; 'Jenkyn Curhytt' (Robbins)/'Jankyn Turbyll' (Lauritis *et al.*).
- f. fol. 159r: 'henry pezevy'.
- g. fol. 160r: 'This is Rychard turbyll | is booke'.
- h. fol. 160v: 'Roger bronson' (twice).

18. Annotations by later users:

- a. Robbins (1955: 132): 'various pen trials and scribbles'.
- b. Lauritis *et al.* (1961: 50): 'There are many scribblings in a 16th century hand throughout the book, mostly those of an inferior writer trying his pen over various letters, repeating parts of the text, adding lists of figures, etc.'
- c. Robbins (1955: 135): fol. 121v: 'This is Richard Turbyll is boke | Recorde of Sir Thomas carne and | Mary more of the hospitale in Rome | wrytin the first day of marche'.
- d. Robbins (1955: 135): fol. 160r: 'This is Rychard turbyll | is booke record of | wyllam baker and mary | more in Rome'.
- e. Lauritis *et al.* (1961: 50): fol. 160v: Pen trials.

19. Distichs present:

- a. Unknown.

20. Notes:

- a. It was not possible to view this MS. either in person or via microfilm. The information recorded is based on the items in the Bibliography section, primarily Robbins (1955), supplemented by the *New Index of Middle English Verse*.
- b. Klinefelter (1952: 4): Many of the texts present are suggested as being close to those in other MSS., including several *Distichs* MSS. These are provisional observations which seem unlikely to hold much weight.
- c. Robbins (1955: 134) gives a brief summary of the contents of the *Distichs*:
 - i. 'in four parts: I, [f. 90r], 40 stanzas rime royal plus two eight-line stanzas; II, f. 95r, 37 stanzas rime royal plus three eight-line stanzas; III, f. 100r, twenty-six stanzas rime royal plus three eight-line stanzas; IV, f. 104r, fifty stanzas rime royal. Ends f. 110r. Interlinear Latin rubrics between English stanzas.'
- d. Robbins (1955: 135-136): Richard Turbyll was a resident of the English College in the second half of the 16th C. His two annotations in the MS. seem to record visits of Thomas Carne (High Sheriff under Elizabeth I) and Mary More to Rome (fol. 121v) and Mary More and Willian Baker (fol. 160r).

21. Bibliography:

- a. Klinefelter (1953): Description of MS.
- b. Lauritis *et al.* (1961: 49-50): Brief description of MS., largely based on Klinefelter (1953).
- c. Robbins (1955: 132-136): Description of MS. as part of discussion of 'On the Duke of Burgundy'

**34. London, Lambeth Palace MS. 3597
(bought from Coughton Court in 1991)**

1. Binding:
 - a. Wilson (1977: 296): 18th-century half calf with marbled paper sides.
2. Material:
 - a. Parchment.
3. Number of folios:
 - a. i + 94 (foliation counts flyleaf).
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. **fol. 1v** Anonymous; Latin maxim. *Beg.* 'Prudencia dixit homini vbi fuisti vbi es vbi eris et vbi velles esse hoc est in celo.'
 - b. **fol. 1v** St. Augustine; extract from *Sermo clxix* (cap. xi, *Patrologia Latina*, XXXVIII, col.923). *Beg.* 'Qui fecit te sine te non potest iustificare te sine te'. *Prose (Latin)*
 - c. **fol. 1v** Anonymous; 'The advice of Prudence to a sinful man' (*IMEP* title) *Beg.* 'Prudence seith to a man þat is <in> al þe delites of þe world þe devyl and þe flessch and puttyth al his felicite in þo wrecchydnes of synnes'. *Prose*
 - d. **fol. 1v** Latin maxims:
 - i. Maxime enim morum semper est paciencia virtus
 - ii. Virtutem primam puto compassere linguam
 - iii. Audacia in re humana plurimum valet
 - iv. Mira caritas erit his temporibus [...] [next six words undeciphered]
 - v. Donare [?] vendere atque hodie [...] [next word undeciphered]
 - e. **fol. 2r** Anonymous; 'Fowre thinges ben nedefull vnto every cristen man and woman to rewle hemself by' (*IMEP* title) *Beg.* 'The first is that he must here the worde of god and his lawe the secunde he must vnderstande the worde of god'. *Prose*
 - f. **fol. 2v** Anonymous; *The Mirror of Sinners Beg.* 'For that we ben in the way of this fayling liffe and oure dayes passen as a schadowe'. *Prose*
 - g. **fol. 4v** Anonymous; *Three Arrows of Doomsday. Beg.* 'Whoso wole have in mynde the dredefull day of doome so that he may be moved with drede to flee from synne'. *Prose*
 - h. **fol. 6v** Anonymous; translation of excerpts from St Mechtild's *Liber Specialis Gratiae. Beg.* 'In all thi werkes kepe these iij thinges in thi mynde'. *Prose*
 - i. **fol. 6v** Anonymous; *Twelve Degrees of Meekness. Beg.* 'Seynt gregori the doctour seyþ that withouten mekenes it is vnlefull to trust foryevenesse of thy synnes'. *Prose*
 - j. **fol. 9r** Anonymous; Tract viii from the *Pore Caitif. Beg.* 'Almyghty god seyth by holy ioob that alle mennes lyeff vpon eerth is fyghtyng that is ayenst goostely enemyes and synne'. *Prose*

- k. **fol. 11v** Anonymous; Tract vii from the *Pore Caitif*. *Beg.* 'Every man that cleymeth his herytage eyther axeth gret pardon or elles he kepith besyly'. *Prose*
 - l. **fol. 13v** Anonymous; *The Mirror of St Edmund* or *The Mirror of Holy Church*, intercalated with *The Clensyng of Mannes Soule*. *Beg.* 'O brethern se ye your callyng these wordes of þe apostle seynt poule'. *Prose*
 - m. **fol. 24r** Anonymous; *The Clensyng of Mannes Soule*, intercalated with *The Mirror of St Edmund*. *Beg.* 'In the name of oure lorde ihesu crist which name is swete and delectable'. *Prose*
 - n. **fol. 79r** Anonymous; An exemplum about a man saved from being killed by the dead for whom he had prayed. *Beg.* 'Ther was some tyme in parise a man þat vsid with gret devocion to sey euery day in a chirchyard de profundis for al cristen soules'. *Prose*
 - o. **fol. 79v** Anonymous; 'a crysten mannes byleve declaryd by holy wrytte and doctours' (MS. title) *Beg.* 'Credo in deum patrem omnipotentem creatorem celi et terre that is to sey i trow in god evyr wyth trew byleve'. *Prose*
 - i. **fol. 85v** Anonymous; Appeal of Christ from the Cross [*NIMEV 3827*] *Beg.* 'Vnkinde man take heed of me'
 - p. **fol. 89v** Benedict Burgh; *Parvus Cato* [*NIMEV 3955*] *Beg.* '[C]Um anima aduerterem quam plurimos homines'. *Verse*
 - q. **fol. 89v** Benedict Burgh; 'Cato Major' [*NIMEV 854*] *Beg.* 'For why that God is inwardli the witte'. *Verse*
5. Collation:
 - a. i¹, ii⁸, iii⁸, iv⁸, v⁸, vi⁸, vii⁸, viii⁶, ix⁸, x⁸, xi⁸, xii⁸, xiii⁸
 6. Size of page:
 - a. 270 x 190 mm.
 7. Size of written space:
 - a. 180 x 60 mm columns (x2).
 8. Layout:
 - a. Double columns from fol. 2v onwards.
 9. Frame:
 - a. Pricked and ruled in double columns. Most of the pricking has been trimmed off, but some can still be seen. Columns and lines drawn in black pencil.
 10. Decoration:
 - a. fol. 2r: Illuminated initial, and drawings of ivy and flowers (some illuminated) covering top, left and bottom margins.
 - b. Rubrication for headings; large blue initial for new section; red and blue paraph marks.

11. Pagination:
 - a. Modern foliation in pencil.

12. Catchwords:
 - a. Present in quires iv (fol. 25v), v (fol. 33v), vi (fol. 41v), vii (fol. 49v), viii (fol. 55v), x (fol. 71v), xi (fol. 79v), xii (fol. 87v). All followed up.

13. Signatures:
 - a. Some present, but perhaps mostly trimmed off.
 - i. quire ii (fol. 4r): '+{g}'
 - ii. quire viii (fol. 50r-52r): f 1; f 2; f iiij f 3
 - iii. quire xii (fol. 80r-83r): k 1; k 2; k 3; k 4
 - iv. quire xiii (fol. 88r-91r): l j; l 2 (?); l iiij; l iiiij

14. Table of contents:
 - a. None present, although a late 16th/early 17th C. hand has written on fol. 95v 'A Catalogue of the chapters of this book' – a promise never fulfilled.

15. Secundo folio:
 - a. hens vnderstondeth

16. Indications of scribe/date:
 - a. *IMEP* gives date as s. xv, third quarter (for main hand)
 - b. There are four different hands evident in the MS. The majority is in the main hand except:
 - i. Wilson's item 12 (the *Distichs*) is in a second hand.
 - ii. Items (a)-(c) and 10 are in a third hand.
 - iii. Item (d) is in a fourth hand.

17. Indication of owners:
 - a. fol. 2r: 'Rob. Throckmorton' in Elizabethan black pen, with, underneath 'Bar.'
 - b. fol. 6v: Faded Elizabethan pen: 'Roger Stigas' (?).
 - c. fol. 95r: 'Roger Stggas' (? – Elizabethan hand); 'Rob Gilberd' (? – 16th C. hand); 'Elyzbeth' (15th C. hand).
 - d. Owned by the Throckmorton family at Coughton Court, Warwickshire, from an unknown time. Thence acquired by Lambeth Palace Library in 1991.
 - e. Wilson (1977: 298): May have been owned by Dame Margaret Throckmorton after her marriage (c. 1446) to Sir Thomas Throckmorton. It may, thereafter, have been owned by Elizabeth Baynham, who married Sir Robert Throckmorton, the heir of Margaret and Thomas.

18. Annotations by later users:
 - a. fol. 2r: Scribbles – 'Jesus', 'John' etc.
 - b. fol. 5r: A missing line has been inserted by a contemporary hand.
 - c. fol. 6v: Writing practice – numbers '3 3 2 3^{oo}' and the swirl for 'the'.

- d. fol. 9r: Missing word, 'togedir' inserted.
- e. fol. 10r: Another missing line supplied.
- f. fol. 16: 'Nota' mark next to text about the way the work of God can be seen in the natural world (non-scribal).
- g. fol. 23v: 'Nota' mark next to 'Of þ^e.vij. doweris eyther worchippes of þ^e body *and* of .vij. doweris of the soule *and* of the peynes of helle.' (scribal?).
- h. fol. 25v: 'Nota' mark next to passage on 'mynde', 'resoun' and 'wille' (non-scribal).
- i. fol. 26r: 'Nota' marks next to passage which begins 'What is synne that defouleth mannes soule and maketh it corrupte and whiche be the synnes by general diffinicoun of the whyche sprengeth all other foule synnes' These marks may be by two different hands (one possibly scribal).
- j. fol. 28r: 'Nota' mark next to section about venial sins (non-scribal).
- k. fol. 34v: 'Nota bene' mark next to passage about forgiveness of sins (non-scribal).
- l. fol. 35r: Fairly modern pencil note 'Is. I again'; 'nota' next to text on contrition (non-scribal).
- m. fol. 37v: 'Nota' mark next to passage on confession (scribal?).
- n. fol. 40v: 'Nota' mark next to passage on confession (scribal?).
- o. fol. 43v: Missing lines inserted.
- p. fol. 44r: 'usque huc' in Elizabethan secretary hand with decorative curls to ascenders and descenders.
- q. fol. 46v: 'Nota' mark in red next to 'Of the natiuite of our lord ihesu cryst and of his takyng at matyn tyme' (suspension mark over the 'n' of 'matyn'; why is unclear). Some of these notae may have been added by scribe/rubricator.
- r. fol. 47v: Nota bene mark at the bottom of second column where a new text has started 'Of the incarnacioun *and* of the crucifyeng of cryst at the vijth hour eyther at mydday'. Non-scribal system.
- s. fol. 71r: Some damage – may have been an attempt to erase a pencil doodle.
- t. fol. 79r: A brief passage has been added by a contemporary hand in what may have been empty space at the bottom of the second column: 'Ther was some tyme in parise a man þ^t vsid w^t gret devocoun to sey euery day' and so on (listed as item 'xiv' in contents listing above).
- u. fols. 89v – end. *Distichs* has been heavily annotated in a fairly recent hand, possibly of 19th C. It numbers the stanzas and notes those which are in a different order to Caxton's printing (f. 91r has '18 = C20', '19 = C21', '20 = C18'). The word/question 'French'/'French?' appears next to several stanzas.
- v. fol. 95r: Handwriting practice, copying first two lines of humility/dullness stanza in two different styles of (15th C.) handwriting.

19. Distichs present:

- a. All Latin and English of *Parvus Cato*, although in an unusual order: Förster's stanzas: I, II, V, III, IV, VI, VII.

- b. I. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 31, 26, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, XLVIII, XLIX
- c. II. P1-2, P3-4, P4-5, P6-7, P8-9, P10 (missing Latin), 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 (missing last three lines – stops at foot of page)

20. Notes:

- a. Wilson (1977): MS. shares eight items with Harley 4012, a MS that has connections with Syon and Sheen.
- b. Notes on the *Distichs*:
 - i. The *Distichs* are in a distinctly different, later, hand from the rest of the MS. The quire signatures indicate that this quire has not been altered from the original, but possibly left largely blank, which has perhaps offered the opportunity to a later owner to add the *Distichs*. The hand changes on fol. 93v during distich I. 39. The next hand never completes the text, which stops at the foot of fol. 94v, and doesn't continue on fol. 95r, where there is, instead, a short 'dullness' stanza, and the rest of the page is blank.
 - ii. *Distichs* have been copied as if prose, probably because the columns as ruled would not allow sufficiently long lines for poetry. There is punctuation present, but it does not correspond with the ends of lines or the centre of metrical lines as Dodesham's does. There is no rubrication of the Latin, which is given in the same ink and script as the Middle English. Gaps have been left for coloured initials, but these have never been inserted, and the small guide-letters for the illustrator often seem to be missing, which perhaps suggests that the source manuscript had similar gaps.
- c. There seem to be two hands at work leaving notae. One of these may be the scribe, as one of the nota in one of the styles is in the rubricator's red pen. I've made notes of which ones appear to be scribal (S) and non-scribal (NS) when making notes on annotation.
- d. The modern pencil notes may be very modern – index cards covered in notes are slipped in to the MS. at the end, and appear to have been made well within the last century, possibly by whoever owned the MS. prior to its acquisition by Lambeth in 1991. This note-taker appears to have been particularly interested in the *Distichs*, which he believed (almost certainly erroneously) to be in Burgh's own hand (the hand is probably too late to be Burgh's, and it would be odd for him to compose his verse in these short prose-style lines).
- e. Overall impression: this must have been made for someone relatively wealthy, probably a member of the lesser nobility, as it is beautifully decorated and rubricated but does not go so far as illustration. It has been used by at least one attentive contemporary owner, as the additions are not neat enough to have been made in the scriptorium (some scriptorium corrections have been made, but these are the scoring out of mistakes using rubricator's red pen). Some evidence of scribbling, but not very much. It has probably been generally carefully

used, perhaps by someone with a particular interest in religious matters, judging by the contents and notae.

21. Bibliography:

- a. Pickering & O'Mara (1999: 67-70): *Index of Middle English Prose* cataloguing.
- b. Wilson (1977): Description of the MS., comparing it with possibly related BL MS. Harley 4012.

35. Cambridge, Trinity College MS. O.2.53 (1157)

1. Binding:
 - a. Early modern, exact date unknown.
2. Material:
 - a. Paper.
3. Number of folios:
 - a. 74 fols.
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. N.B. This is an exceptionally complex MS. with many small unique items. The following is copied with little alteration from the cataloguing of M.R. James (1902). More detail on a number of the prose items is available in Mooney (1995: 104-109).
 - i. **fol. 1r** Miscellaneous verses
 1. Aue color vini clari / Dulcis potus non amari / Tua nos inebriari (digneris potencia) (five stanzas)
 2. Preterit una dies nescitur origo secundi / An labor an requies sic transit gloria mundi.
 3. Nullus in hoc meason dicat quicquam nisi reason / Nam iudex vendra qui cunctis premia rendra.
 4. Nomina sanctorum sunt hec tibi vigiliarum. (4 lines)
 - ii. **fol. 1v** Receipts (3) in English
 - iii. **fol. 2r** Incipit inuentum quod fert prouerbia centum (fol. 2)
Beg: 'Ars est arbor amarissima.'
 - iv. **fol. 20v** Late receipts.
 - v. **fol. 21r** 'Hic inc. parabolae sancti Odonis de Ceritonia ad honorem et laudem ipsius qui est alpha et O.' Imperfect. *Beg:* 'Quoniam ut dicit Gregorius'
 - vi. **fol. 23v** 'Hit was an holy man and that besought god to send hym grace hym to teche suche vertues for to vse that might best to lyfe & to soule. And he was answered thus' *Beg:* '1. Zeve thyne hert to me & a peny to the pore etc.'
 - vii. **fol. 24r** Sir John Fortescue(?); couplets in some MSS. of 'Twelve points for purchasers of land to look to' [NIMEV 4148] *Beg.* 'Who so woll be wise in as (!) purchasing / Considre the poyntes that be folowyng'
 - viii. **fol. 24v** Anonymous; Fragment of a love song [NIMEV 2261.2]
Beg. 'My loue she mornt ffor me for me / My loue she mornes for me'
 - ix. **fol. 24v** 'Hec in Ciuitate Gevennarum in Ecclesia predicatorum super picturam Iudicij' *Beg:* 'Iudicabis iudices Iudex generalis / His nichil proderit dignitas papalis.' (12 lines) Added in a later hand: 'God safe Kyng Hare whare hefer he go or ryde sent gorge be hys forman hovre blyssyd lady be hys gyde. / God and hovre blyssyd lady safe and kepe Rowland and Mare.'

- x. **fol. 25r** 'Omnes isti versus scribuntur super Diuersa hostia cellarum in Claustro domus Cartusien: London' *Beg*: 'Bis duo sunt que mestificant me nocte dieque / En moriar sed ubi vel quomodo nescio quando.' There are 25 sets (mostly couplets) in alphabetical order.
- xi. **fol. 26b** erased accounts.
- xii. **fol. 27r** *Anonymous; Against corruption [NIMEV 4255]* *Beg*. 'This prowde Galantes thriftless'
- xiii. **fol. 27r** 'An Answere to the ^{ye} same by the Galantes' [i.e. the imagined speakers of the previous item]. *Beg*: 'Ye pop holy pristis full of presumcion' (14 lines) Ends: 'All other to amend and bryng pese to this land.
 - 1. **fol. 27v** Legitur de S. Edmundo Cantuar. Archiep. *Beg*: 'Super quoddam nobile'.
 - 2. **fol. 27v** Instances of S. Edmund's charity.
 - 3. **fol. 28r** Articuli versus Henr. standissh patrem minorem ac sacre theologie doctorem per Clerum Angl. (Four articles remain: half the leaf is cut off.)
 - 4. **fol. 28v** Two distichs on the word *stratilates*
 - 5. **fol. 29r** A statement beginning in the form of an indenture, that Robart Wryght swore falsely against his master Robart Geyton: other names occur
 - 6. **fol. 29v** Birth of Prince Edward son of Edward IV. 2 Dec. 1470 [This appears largely contemporary with the original contents of the MS., although it does seem to have been added after initial copying]
 - 7. **fol. 29v** Four lines, *Beg*: 'There is no man so mighty but som man may him dere.'
 - 8. **fol. 29v** Remedy for burns.
 - 9. **fol. 30r** Form of indenture for apprentice [The date given is the 20th year of Edward IV's reign. However, this indenture is in a later hand to the original items in the MS.] – John Gare of St Mary Cray, Walter Ryse of Wymelton (Kent) etc. are mentioned. [John Gare is a cordwainer; Ryse's father, John, is a fuller]
 - 10. **fol. 30v** Obligacio. Bromeley, Kent
 - 11. **fol. 31r** Condicio
 - 12. **fol. 31r** Relaxatio feoffatorum et alium feoffatum. *Beg*: Robert Sybbyng: Orpington in Kent.'
 - 13. **fol. 31v** Another formula: John Abell of Lesnes
 - 14. **fol. 31v** Receipt [i.e. recipe/medicine] for sick oxen (?).
 - 15. **fol. 32r** Carta cum littera attornatoria (Orpington)
 - 16. **fol. 32v** Go (Ho?) thou man remember thys that on the hangyth daly thys desseyss that here folowyth – A list of diseases, ending: 'than es (?) deth & prochythe the nere and nere remember man what hoffer thy hed hangyth here.'
 - 17. **fol. 33r** [De Jure Regis Anglie in Scocia] Vt repertum est in Cronicis Mariani Scotti. Willⁱ de Malmesbury etc. [On

- fol. 35v English begins. The English does not seem to be a translation of the Latin that precedes it. Instead it is a brief genealogy of Edward the third's offspring, attempting to prove that to 'Edmund the right and title of the seid corone and lordship by lawes and custume bylonged' (fol. 36v)]
18. **fol. 36v** Births of Rob. Ramston etc., 11 Dec. 17 Hen. 8
[Most of this list of births is almost illegible. Three appear to have been scored out, though I'm not sure why – perhaps this indicates deaths.]
 19. **fol. 37r** De Ponte Glouc. – Qualiter pons Glouc. sumpserit inicium sic scribit vera narracio (A.d. 1119)
 20. **fol. 38v** De Homagio regum Scocie regibus Anglie
 21. **fol. 39v** Littera Soldani de Surrey ad Reg. Henricum VI
[In English – only heading in Latin]
 22. **fol. 40r** Responcio Regis Angli
 23. **fol. 40v** Nota de Rapina *Beg.* Benedictus octauus nacione tusculanus.
 24. **fol. 41r** Anonymous; Political prophecy [*NIMEV 734.8*]
Beg. 'When (6) is the best cast of the dyse / and (1) berith up (6) then ynglond ys paradise.
 25. **fol. 41v** Dispensation by Cardinal Wolsey concerning Lent (lined through)
 26. **fol. 42r** Compotus iste diuiditur in sex partes
 27. **fol. 42r** Receipts
 28. **fol. 43r** De Guerra Baronum *Beg.* 'Tempore Edwardi Regis de Carnarvon a. d. MCCCX]o'. The last event is the outlawry of the Despencers (1320).
 29. **fol. 44v** Receipts
 30. **fol. 45r** 'Thies be som of the verseys about the Tumble of kyng. Ric. the secunde which lieth at Westm. beside seynt Edwardes shrine' *Beg.* 'Prudens et mundus Ricardus iure secundus.' (6 lines)
 31. **fol. 45r** 'Thies verses to be wreten on a tabyll hangynge at the Tumble of Symon Langham sumtyme Abbot of Westm.' *Beg.* 'Simon de langham sub petris hiis tumulatus'. (9 lines).
 32. **fol. 45v** A letter: 'Ryght truste and well beloued ffather and mother I hertely recomende me vnto you praying you to send me your dayly blessing. Father the cause of my wrytyng vnto you at thys tyme is praying you to send me your dayly blessing & for to send me sum bokes For to lern of in the skole For I leke bokes to contenew my lernyng at thys tyme & I haue them not shortely I shall Forget moche lerne.'
 33. **fol. 45v** Verses on tithes (12)
 34. **fol. 46r** Births of Ramstons (temp. Hen. VIII.) [This is presumably an indication that the Ramston family were the owners of this book. This time several names are

- legible – ‘roburd’ in the 17th year of Henry VIII’s reign; John in the 18th year; ‘thomas’ in the 21st year; ‘avdere’ (?) on 29th April in the 22nd year; ‘elissebeth’ in the 23rd year; the final names are illegible]
35. **fol. 46v** Receipts.
 36. **fol. 48r** ‘The Fest at the Mariage of E. W. and M. F. the sonday next after dominica in albis’. (The bill of fare for two courses).
 37. **fol. 48v** Note of a capture of French ships (4 Hen. VII.)
 38. **fol. 49r** Account of the christening of Prince Arthur (son of Henry VII.)
 39. **fol. 53r** ‘This devoute prayer made the quenes grace Elizabeth late the wife of oure souereyne the kyng, kyng Herry the vijth at Wodestok the xxviith day of Nouember the xvith yere of our seid souereigne lord and the yere of oure lord god MD.’ *Beg.* ‘Ihesu welcome my maker.’
 40. **fol. 54r** Munde vale tibi re fugiebas dum sequerer te (4 lines)
 41. **fol. 54r** Receipts [for killing rats]
 42. **fol. 55r** Come ouer the borne besse (begun on 55v and erased) ‘The borne is the word blynde / And besse ys man kynde / So praty can noon fynde. [These lines have ‘as she’ attached to them by a bracket] She dauncyth she lepyth / And Crist stondyth & clepith. [These lines have ‘Come ouer’ attached to them by a bracket.] (12 stanzas)
 43. **fol. 57r** When all ys don and all ys sayd / God must be known seruyd and obeide (f. 57)
 44. **fol. 58v** Receipts
 45. **fol. 60r** Deferencia *Beg.* ‘Silua tenet leporem sapientia lingua leporem’ (10 lines)
 46. **fol. 60r** Benedict Burgh; ‘Cato Major’ (extract) [*NIMEV 854*] *Beg.* ‘Enforce thy wyttes for to lere’ N.B. This is a four-line extract from distich IV. 19
 47. **fol. 60r** The ‘style’ of Cardinal Wolsey.
 48. **fol. 60v** Extract from Bernard ad Eugenium. From a Homiliary.
 49. **fol. 61r** Si tu tempteris vel demonis arte moveris (5 lines). [Most of this leaf cut off, and one or more gone after it.]
 50. **fol. 62r** Receipts: fragments of leaves. Intermingled with verses, note of payment (32 Hen. VIII.) etc.
 51. **fol. 65r** Petri Carmeliani scribe Angli Carmen Responsum. *Beg.* ‘Conueniunt gallos crebris conuentibus angli / Et pacem iusta condicione petunt.’ (22 lines)
 52. **fol. 65v** Gaguinus orator gallus contra anglos (11 lines).
 53. **fol. 65v** Ad Regem Anglie (14 lines)
 54. **fol. 65v** Egidius Angl. contra prefatum gallum (11 lines)
 55. **fol. 65v** Rex anglie ad gallum (5 lines).

56. **fol. 66r** To St. Katherine *Beg.* 'Ad loca stellata duc nos katerina beata' (6 lines).
57. **fol. 66r** How darest thou swere or be so bold also (7 lines)
58. **fol. 66v** Veni creator spiritus. Septem etates
59. **fol. 66v** On baldness. *Beg.* 'Hi iiii^{or} magni fuerant in vertice calui / Julius et paulus heleseus et ipse Johannes.' (5 lines)
60. **fol. 67r** Farewell this world I take my leve for euer / I am arrested to apere at goddes face (3 ½ stanzas)
61. **fol. 67v** De S. Katerina. *Beg.:* 'Disputando vicit virgo quinquaginta Rectores. (8 lines)
62. **fol. 67v** Hymn. Eterne Rex altissime.
63. **fol. 68r** Part of a long prayer in English, beginning abruptly: 'Sodenly for ther defaute & spared me & forborn me.'
64. **fol. 69r** Anonymous; Religious lyric [*NIMEV 2507*] *Beg.* 'O man unkynde / Haue thow yn mynde'
65. **fol. 69v** Anonymous; 'The ABC of Aristotle' [*NIMEV 3793*] *Beg.* 'To auenturous to amorous ne anger the not to moche'
66. **fol. 70r** The ills wrought by woman (from Chrysostom)
67. **fol. 70r** Seven English lines on the Passion. *Beg.* 'Thow gracious lord graunt me memory.'
68. **fol. 70v** Prayer. 'Saluator mundi saluum me fac' *Beg.* 'O nuda humanitas etc.' (4 lines)
69. **fol. 70v** Note of indulgence.
70. **fol. 71r** 'To set a harpe. factus per J. Stowell'
71. **fol. 71v** Notes of Records (Oxford & London)
72. **fol. 72r** Two sets of verses (4 each) called *Vulgus Beg.* 'Etas ridetur. mulier pulsatur amore.'
73. **fol. 72r** Anonymous; Abuses of the age [*NIMEV 906*] *Beg.* 'Gifte hys made domesman / gyle is mad chapman'
74. **fol. 72r** Other verses, e.g.: 'dum dolor est pragma [plee] mea dragma [peny] fit inde malagma [plaster] / sit tibi sintagma multum valet inde caragma [print of ye peny]'
75. **fol. 72r** Anonymous; Signs of death [*NIMEV 4034.77*] *Beg.* 'When thyn heed shaketh. Memento'
76. **fol. 72v** Verses and notes of leap-year, quarter days, etc.
77. **fol. 72v** Note of Records of Edward I.
78. **fol. 73r** Verses, e.g. 'Sunt tria que vere faciunt me sepe dolore.' (8 lines)
79. **fol. 73r** Non homo leteris tibi copia si fluat eris. (4 lines)
80. **fol. 73r** Anonymous; Prayer [*NIMEV 1730*] *Beg.* 'Ihesu mercy & graunt mercy'
81. **fol. 73v** What helpith it man to be unstable (7 lines)
82. **fol. 73v** Si tibi pulcra domus et splendida mensa, quid inde. (5 lines)
83. **fol. 73v** Quondam res habui necnon et amicum. (6 lines)

84. **fol. 73v** Dum mea bursa sonat populus me laude coronat. (5 lines)
85. **fol. 74r** [The *R.* half of fol. 74 is torn off.] 'Clara dies pauli bona tempora...' (4 lines)
86. **fol. 74r** 'Lex iuris moritur fraus regnat'. (3 lines)
87. **fol. 74r** Anonymous; On death [NIMEV 4129] *Beg.* 'Whoso hym by thowght'
88. **fol. 74r** 'Howe harde it is to flytte...' (4 lines)
89. **fol. 74r** 'With wrong or noy yet ...'
90. **fol. 74r** 'Or fortune hath geven ye a...' [This *may* be the beginning of distich I.28].
91. **fol. 74r** 'Yet trust in god to be relev...' (8 lines)
92. **fol. 74v** The ends of 3 sets of verses, the last English [NIMEV 1585.8 below] (10 lines), the others Latin (11 lines in all).
93. **fol. 74v** Anonymous; fragment attacking extreme fashions in dress (beginnings of lines missing) [NIMEV 1585.8] *Beg.* '{...} in torne clothis'

5. Collation:

- a. i²², ii²⁰, iii⁴, iv⁸, v⁴, vi¹⁶ (some folios missing in last quire but almost impossible to tell which ones).

6. Size of page:

- a. 200 x 145 mm.

7. Size of written space:

- a. 160 x 115 mm.

8. Layout:

- a. Single columns throughout.

9. Frame:

- a. Outer frame ruled in brown pencil, almost completely faded. No evidence of ruling of lines.

10. Decoration:

- a. None present. One use of rubrication, otherwise plain text.

11. Pagination:

- a. Modern foliation in pencil.

12. Catchwords:

- a. Not present.

13. Signatures:

- a. Not present.

14. Table of contents:
 - a. Not present.
15. Secundo folio:
 - a. Incipit inventum
16. Indications of scribe/date:
 - a. Various dates present – see list of contents. This is generally a late 15th/early 16th C. manuscript, but has been heavily used over a number of years.
17. Indication of owners:
 - a. fol. 42r: Possibly ‘Tho. Mar’?
 - b. fol. 45r: Next to item 31 is written ‘Thomas cauendyssh’, but this may be related to the text rather than an indication of a reader.
 - c. fol. 48r: ‘John Crystrom’.
 - d. fol. 59v: Scribbles and name practice – apparently ‘Robart ramstovy’.
 - e. fol. 70v: ‘Anthony Rampstory’.
 - f. Rowland Rampston/Ramston owns this volume in the early 16th C. See Alsop (1983).
18. Annotations by later users:
 - a. fol. 25r: Some letter practice – marks for ‘and’.
 - b. fol. 26v: A list of expenses/accounts, later scored out.
 - c. fol. 41v: Aside from the obvious fact that the text on this page has been scored out, there has been some letter practice (a a b c c b d) at the top of the page.
19. Distichs present:
 - a. IV. 19; I. 28(?)
20. Notes:
 - a. The bottom of fol. 28 has been removed, but fairly neatly. This appears to interrupt a text on fol. 28r, but there may have been blank space on the verso.
 - b. The repeated mention of Kent in the exempla documents strongly suggests that this is where the manuscript was used, at least in Tudor times (the later items appear to have been added by the same hand in Henry VIII’s reign).
 - c. In several places sections of text have been scored out , including fol. 56v.
 - d. Some folios (e.g. 59, 60, 61) are scored or have large sections cut out of them.
 - e. Most of the texts in this MS. are in Latin, and there are a large number of items which are documentary (e.g. serve as examples for legal documents). It appears that this is a commonplace book which has been used for the collection of a wide variety of texts, including quite a few medicinal recipes, as well as important historical information about the royal family and the country. There is a Yorkist bent to the

texts, but since the majority has been written under Tudor monarchy, this is not an especially factional manuscript. The collection appears to have grown haphazardly, and given the recurrence of earlier scripts later in the manuscript, it is possible that several booklets have later been bound together. Empty space has been left around texts, and much of it has been filled in later. Later use has been rough, and pages have been cut out presumably mostly for scrap paper. This has been carelessly done, as a couple of sheets are cut through around the excisions.

- f. The list of proverbs beginning on fol. 2v is in alphabetical order, with gaps left apparently deliberately so that more could be added later.
- g. M.R. James treats entries from fol. 27r onwards differently to the rest, probably because these appear to be additions to an original, perhaps professionally produced, core.

21. Bibliography:

- a. Alsop (1983): Discusses a guide to land purchase in this MS. – identifies the owner, Rowland Rampston, and provides a citation for his will.
- b. Boffey & Thompson (1989: 279-315 n. 78): Association with Romston family in Essex.
- c. James (1902): Catalogue entry.
- d. Mooney (1995: 104-109): *Index of Middle English Prose* cataloguing.

P1. Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Rawlinson D. 328

1. Binding:
 - a. Modern (19th C?). Leather.
2. Material:
 - a. First quire parchment, otherwise paper.
3. Number of folios:
 - a. ii + 194 + ii
4. Contents from a catalogue:
 - a. N.B. This is a very complex MS. with many small texts. Itemising all of them would have been impractical, and thus the following listing is a slightly modified version of that given in Macray (1893), supplemented by the *New Index of Middle English Verse*.
 - i. **fol. 1r** Pseudo-Cato; *Disticha Catonis*. Latin.
 - ii. **fol. 7r ff.** 'Multa et varia grammaticalia et miscellanea, prosa et carmine, Latine et Anglice; manu Walteri Pollard, de Plymouth, tempore Henr. VI et Edw. IV raptim et saepe ignoranter exscripta. Inter multa alia, haec:-'
 1. **fol. 8r** Exercise in parsing on the sentence "The Church is a place which Cristen menne ben muche holdun to luff."
 2. **fol. 16v** "Nomina cognacionis;" *Lat.-Angl.*
 3. **fol. 10r** De conjugatione verborum; ad calc., "Explicit Sum, es, fui."
 4. **fol. 22r** Synonyma de vocibus animalium; *Lat.-Angl.*
 5. **fol. 23r** "Enigmata." *Inc.* "Bene dica mus currit in campo."
 6. **fol. 52r** Poema "Poenitas cito," ex verbis init. ita intitulatum.
 7. **fol. 57r** "Liber doctrinalis;" carmen grammaticale, cum commento. *Inc.* "In quantum potero de nomine quolibet in quo."
 8. **fol. 68r** Pseudo-Cato; *Disticha Catonis*. Imperfect.
 9. **fol. 74v** Obligatio Johannis Mone pro solutione 20^s Nicholao Housecote; 3 Sept. 1476.
 10. **fol. 75r** "Partes panis" et carnis; *Lat.-Angl.*
 11. **fol. 76r** Regulae et versus grammaticales; *Angl.-Lat. Inc.* "Formula grammaticis hec compilata novellis / Principium facile congruitatis habet."
 12. **fol. 105r** Preceptum quod "venire faciatis" Joh. Crokker, de Lyneam, com. Devon, et alios quosdam de Bucffastlye ad inveniendum securitatem de pace gerenda.
 13. **fol. 107r** De orthographia.
 14. **fol. 125v** Breve de terra in Plymmouth in manum Regis capienda, contra Joh. Bayly; 12 Jan. 1479.

15. **fol. 130r** Form of confession of pride.
16. **fol. 137v** "Rentale Johannis Pollard," pater Walteri, "apud Exeter." The rental of property at Plymouth and elsewhere follows on fol. 138v.
17. **fol. 138v** "Hic incipiunt proverbia;" *Lat.-Angl. Inc.:* "Bonum principium facit bonum finem."
18. **fol. 140r** Anonymous; Couplet [*NIMEV 37.5*] 'A gode begynnyng / Makyth a gode endyng'
19. **fol. 140r** Anonymous; Couplet [*NIMEV 1173*] *Beg.* 'He that will not when he may / When he will he shall haue nay'
20. **fol. 140v** Anonymous; Proverb [*NIMEV 3292.5*] *Beg.* 'That the hert þynkyt / the mowte spekyt'
21. **fol. 140v** Anonymous; Couplet [*NIMEV 4176.5*] 'Wynter etythe / what somer getithe'
22. **fol. 141r** Anonymous; Couplet [*NIMEV 1142.5*] *Beg.* 'He may lightli swim / that is hold wp by þe chin'
23. **fol. 141r** Anonymous; Couplet [*NIMEV 1793.9*] 'Ion Ion pyke on a bone / Tomorrow þu schall pyke none'
24. **fol. 141v** Anonymous; Couplet [*NIMEV 465.5*] 'Be hit beter be hit werse / folo hym þat berit þe pursse'
25. **fol. 141v** Anonymous; Couplet [*NIMEV 1634.5*] 'Hyt is mery in hall / when berdys waggyth all'
26. **fol. 141v** Anonymous; Couplet [*NIMEV 4034.6*] 'When þe game ys best / yt ys tyme to rest'
27. **fol. 141v** Anonymous; Couplet [*NIMEV 4079.6*] 'While the gresse growith / the hors stervith'
28. **fol. 142r** Anonymous; Couplet [*NIMEV 34.8*] 'A foles bolte / Ys sone yshote'
29. **fol. 142r** Anonymous; Couplet [*NIMEV 1137.5*] *Beg.* 'He ys wyse and wel ytaʒth / þat beryth a horne & blow hym noʒth'
30. **fol. 142v** Anonymous; Proverbial couplet [*NIMEV 3318.8*] *Beg.* 'The catte wolle fyssh etc'
31. **fol. 142v** Anonymous; Proverbial saying ascribed to John Ball, 1381 [*NIMEV 3922*] *Beg.* 'Whan adam delffid & eve span'
32. **fol. 142v** Anonymous; Two couplets [*NIMEV 4049.2*] *Beg.* 'When tho herd hat Rome'
33. **fol. 142v** Anonymous; Couplet [*NIMEV 4079.3*] *Beg.* 'While the fote warmith'
34. **fol. 143r** Anonymous; Precepts in -ly [*NIMEV 3087*] *Beg.* 'Serve þi God trwly'
35. **fol. 143v** Anonymous; Couplet [*NIMEV 644.5*] *Beg.* 'Come wynde come reyne / come he neuer agayne'
36. **fol. 143v** Anonymous; Couplet [*NIMEV 3372.5*] 'The hare wente þe markyth scharlyt forto syll / The grehoun stode hym before mony for to tell'

37. **fol. 144r** Anonymous; Couplet [*NIMEV 1162.7*] *Beg.* 'He þat mokytt / schall noȝt be owyn mokytt'
38. **fol. 144r** Anonymous; Two couplets [*NIMEV 1354*] *Beg.* 'I saw iij hedles playen at a ball'
39. **fol. 144r** Anonymous; Couplet [*NIMEV 3892.5*] 'Well were hym þat wyste / to wam he myst tryst'
40. Monita de moribus; carmine. f. 153 Inc.: "Est nichil utilius humane credo saluti / Quam morum novisse modos et moribus uti."
41. **fol. 159r** John Lydgate; *Stans Puer ad Mensam* [*NIMEV 2233*] *Beg.* 'My chyld fyrste thysylfe abyll'
42. "Incipiunt Enigmata." f. 167 Inc.: "In rolla ralla mihi da gamus opada palla."
43. **fol. 161r** Benedict Burgh; *Parvus Cato* [*NIMEV 3955*] *Beg.* 'When I aduertise in my remembraunce'
44. **fol. 168r** Anonymous; Warning against learning money [*NIMEV 1297*] *Beg.* 'I had syluer And my frend'
45. **fol. 168v** Anonymous; Two couplets [*NIMEV 271.5*] *Beg.* 'Allway to say sothe thu shalt neuer com fore the'
46. **fol. 171r** "A litel boke of doctrine for jonge gentilmen." A list of terms of number used for all kinds of animals and men, with terms belonging to carvers.
47. **fol. 174v** Anonymous; Dialogue between the Devil and a maid [*NIMEV 4169*] *Beg.* 'Wol ȝe here a wonder thyng / Betwyxt a mayd and the foule fende.'
48. **fol. 175r** Religious couplets. *Beg.* "Jhesu for thy myld myȝth / As thu art kynge and knyght."
49. **fol. 183r** Sailing directions for going to Berwick.
50. **fol. 184r** Versus grammaticales, secundum literas alphabeti, A-F. *Inc.* "Augustus, ti, to, Sesar vel mensis habeto."
51. **fol. 190v** Notes by Walter Pollard of various goods received from persons at Exeter.
52. **fol. 192r** Charms "pro phebribus" (*sic*), "to stanche blode," &c. *Engl.-Lat.*

5. Collation:

- a. The binding is too tight and fragile to obtain a reliable count, and there are no catchwords or quire signatures. All but the first quire were copied by Walter Pollard, in paper booklets which have later been bound together. It is difficult to tell if blank pages coincide with ends of booklets, but it appears this is not always the case, so presumably he left space to perhaps insert other texts or notes.

6. Size of page:

- a. Quire 1: 190 x 120 mm.
- b. Following quires: 215 x 140 mm.

7. Size of written space:
 - a. Quire 1: 140 x 85 mm.
 - b. Following quires: varies – texts don't necessarily adhere to the ruling, which is 165 x 105 mm. Writing often occupies almost all space on page.

8. Layout:
 - a. Single columns for all texts with the exception of lists.

9. Frame:
 - a. Quire 1: Ruled in pencil, no evidence of pricking, and slightly curved lines suggest either that the parchment has become contorted with age, or that the ruling was not precise in the first place.
 - b. Following quires: ruled in brown pencil, although this has mostly faded.

10. Decoration:
 - a. None present other than features of the layout of certain texts.
 - b. In first quire (*Disticha*), three-line red initials for new books, and initial letters of each line include a red vertical stroke.

11. Pagination:
 - a. Modern foliation in pencil.

12. Catchwords:
 - a. Not present.

13. Signatures:
 - a. Not present.

14. Table of contents:
 - a. 18th C.(?) A dated note above the contents list is from 10th July 1722.
 - i. 'Syllabus Contentorum
 1. Catonis *Disticha de Moribus. Vetus exemplar in membranis*
 2. A great number of things (of a miscellaneous nature) all written on Paper by Walter Pollard of Plymouth. Most of these things are Grammatical, & the Author seems to have been John Leland the Grammarian, whose Scholar perhaps Pollard was. In it are also Rules of Morality for Children. And towards the end is a litle booke of doctrine for ionge gentil men.'

15. Secundo folio:
 - a. Quire 1: *Accipito placide*
 - b. Quire 2: {T}he church is a place

16. Indications of scribe/date:

- a. Primarily copied by Walter Pollard. His name appears very frequently. At end of *Distichs* (fol. 162r) is: 'Qui liber scripsit Walterus Pollard benedixit' then (in another hand?) below: 'Walterus Polard non est but a dullard / Y saye that Pollard ys none {too faded to read} / Qod scripsi scripi quod nolo negari et hoc vobis dubus seeh {h = li ?}'.
- b. fol. 123r: 'Quod Pollarde'.
- c. *LALME*: LP **5060** 'Written in various hands, all belonging to the Plymouth area': Devon.

17. Indication of owners:

- a. Walter Pollard's name appears throughout.
- b. fol. 7v: 'Iste liber constat Walterus Pollarde off Plymmoth'.
- c. fol. 67r: 'Walterus Pollard'; below this, 'hec in dentura facta nit{er ?} Johen dabenys et William pe{nn ?}enys {vincon nistia rid vincon con e ???}'.
- d. fol. 74v: 'Walterus Pollard'.
- e. fol. 175r: 'Waltervs Pollard' and 'Pollarde'.
- f. fol. 179r: 'Iste liber constat Walter Pollard'.
- g. Macray (1893:165): 'Anno 1445 liber Walt. Pollard de Plymouth. "Tho. Hearne, Julii 10, 1722, ex dono amicissimi eruditissimique viri Richardi Dyer, A.M., Collegii Orielensis socii."'.

18. Annotations by later users:

- a. fols. 193v-194v: Much scribbled writing practice and some lines which appear to record certain events.
 - i. fol. 23r: Interlinear notes added.
 - ii. fol. 24v: Translation of some Latin words.
 - iii. fol. 39v: Interlinear notes.
 - iv. fols. 83v-84r: Extensive interlinear writing.
 - v. fol. 182v: Interlinear notes.
 - vi. fol. 193v: 'Beyt ynne remembrans tha I Water Pollard off Plymmoth hath I onne {/ouer ?} to Johannes Wylllyam Berry off chemle'.
 - vii. fol. 193v: 'Ry3th trusty and well be lovyd cosyn I grette you well | mervellyng moche that I see nott yov at Exceter at this tyme'.
 - viii. fol. 194r: Receipts/trade agreements, now very faded and difficult to decipher. The most legible appears to read 'Item also yff y by a packe off clothe prise off vj{li ?} that I sell {hym ?} for vij and a halff to an {alyant ?}'.
 - ix. fol. 194v: Long receipt/record in Latin: 'Petrus Carswyll & Margaret vxor eius {quernertur ?} de Wyllielmo Cob & Elinora vxore eius in pli{... illegible}. Other names: 'G. Veale'.

19. Distichs present:

- a. Complete *Parvus Cato*, with all Latin, Middle English, and envoy.

20. Notes:

- a. Notes on Distichs:
 - i. A Latin copy of the complete *Disticha Catonis* has been bound in to what is otherwise a paper MS. These form fols. 1-6. The parchment is quite dirty and apparently not of a very high quality. The writing is a very neat bastard Anglicana hand.
- b. fol. 181 appears to have been mostly cut out, with the bottom third of the page remaining. On the verso side is some writing practice, which includes the first three lines of the *Parvus Cato* in Burgh's English translation. Late 15th/ early 16th C.
- c. fol. 139 is one of several where two pages of the quire still have not been separated. Only fol. 139r has any writing on it, the rest of this double-folio is blank.
- d. It is difficult to ascertain what has been written by Pollard as part of the original core (if there was one) to the MS., what has been added by him later, and what has been written by others. All texts in the main body of the MS. are in black ink, although the opacity varies. All texts are in late 15th/early 16th C. hands, and it is possible (if unlikely) that Pollard is actually responsible for all of them other than the small parchment section containing the Latin *Disticha* at the beginning.
- e. Pollard is probably the father of the MP John Pollard (cf. Baker 2004).
- f. Macray (1893: 167):
 - i. 'Hujus codicis mentionem facit Tho. Hearne in praef. sua ad Camdeni Vitam Reg. Eliz., p. cxxvi. ubi (ut etiam in nota volumini praemissa) conjicit nonnulla e Johannis Lelandi, senioris, grammatici, operibus exscripta fuisse. Super art. xx. *A litel boke, &c.*, refert etiam ad *Grammat. Anglo-Sax. Hiccesii*, p. 154.'
 - ii. 'In inferiore margine folii 179 haec inscripta sunt: "Sciunt presentes et futuri quod iste liber ad diem confeccionis presencium fuit in custodia Waltero (*sic*) Pollard, qui ipsum habuit ex dono et concessione Thomae Ismay clerici. Hiis testibus, Richardo Coke, Willelmo Payge, Johanne Reland, et aliis. Dat. apud Plymouth anno regni regis Henrici sexti xxiii." (1444-5).'

21. Bibliography:

- a. Baker (2004): *DNB* entry for Sir John Pollard, the son of owner Walter Pollard of Plymouth.
- b. Macray (1893: 165-167): Catalogue entry.