The Education and Literary Interests of the English Lay Nobility, c.1150 - c.1450

Thesis submitted for the D.Phil. degree in Trinity Term, 1983

Elizabeth Gue, Somerville College, Oxford

## ABSTRACT

Until comparatively recently it was widely believed that the English medieval lay nobility was illiterate and apt to look upon literary pursuits as a degrading occupation. This view has now been effectively challenged, but no single long study of the subject exists, due primarily to the nature of the sources, which are scattered and difficult to use.

Chapter I shows that there were many educational treatises, works on chivalry, and courtesy books circulating in Western Europe during the middle ages.

Chapter II examines educational provisions within the royal household, a centre of education not only for the royal family, but also for other noble children. These arrangements were paralleled in the noble household - almost certainly the main place of education (Chapter III). Here education was shared between tutors in the child's own household and in other households, bishops, and resident schoolmasters.

Chapter IV shows that noble education within the monasteries was uncommon after 1200. Recorded instances of nobles at school, at Oxford or Cambridge, or at the Inns of Court are rare, but by the fifteenth century educational opportunities were widening.

The study of noble book-ownership and literary taste (Chapter V) reveals that many noble wills contained references to books and that noble women were considered worthy recipients. Although the composition of noble libraries changed, saints' lives and romances remained popular throughout, and the classical revival had made only a limited impact by c.1450.

The original works and translations by noblemen represent a considerable achievement and nobles were also active as literary patrons (Chapter VI).

Noble families or individuals, whose special interest in education, books, or the patronage of scholars deserves particular attention, are discussed in Chapter VII.

While some nobles had no interest in literary pursuits, others were more sophisticated and brought educated minds to the political affairs of their day.

# The Education and Literary Interests of the English Lay Nobility, c.1150-c.1450

Thesis submitted for the D.Phil degree, in Trinity Term 1983

Elizabeth Gue, Somerville College

## ABSTRACT

Until comparatively recently it was a widely held opinion that the lay nobility in England in the middle ages was not only illiterate, but apt to look upon literary pursuits as a degrading occupation which befitted only the lesser born. The idea that education and literary interests played a minor role in the lives of the nobility of medieval England has found favour with twentieth-century historians and not merely with those whose main interest lies in the Tudor, rather than the medieval period. Although V.H. Galbraith and J.W. Thompson questioned this view as long ago as the 1930s, it was only in the 1960s, with the work of H.G. Richardson and G.O. Sayles, and more particularly that of K.B. McFarlane (in a lecture published posthumously in 1973), that the myth of noble illiteracy was effectively challenged. Despite subsequent work, there has been no single long study of the education and literary interests of the nobility. This is due primarily to the nature of the sources which are scattered, often scanty, and difficult to use.

There is, however, no shortage of sources setting out what the education of a nobleman theoretically should have been like. Chapter I shows that many educational treatises, circulating in western Europe during the middle ages and particularly during the thirteenth century, were relevant in one way or another to the upbringing of noble children. Admittedly these works, whether educational treatises per se, mirrors of princes, or general works on political ethics, were more concerned with moral instruction than with the practical details of education, and their message was directed primarily at rulers, to whom, indeed, they were often dedicated. For a more practical approach we have to turn to other sources - to books of chivalry which circulated chiefly in the

fifteenth century, often as translations of earlier works, and more particularly to books of courtesy, which appeared in the mid-thirteenth century and became immensely popular in the fifteenth century. The latter seem to lie at the heart of a nobleman's education and consisted of rules of conduct written for those noblemen's or gentlemen's children (particularly boys) who were sent away from their own homes to learn manners in the house of some distinguished person.

The message of these treatises and tracts on noble children's education is clear; what is more difficult to establish is how far practice related to theory and how practice changed over the three-hundred-year period. The royal household is clearly relevant to this study: the court and household of the kings of England were, throughout the period, important centres of education not only for the royal family, but also for other noble children (chapter II). In the fifteenth century, the Black Book of the Household and the Liber Regie Capelle set out the broad scheme of education within the royal household and the Chapel Royal, and details come from the vast amount of wardrobe material which survives from the reign of Edward I, and to a lesser extent from Edward II's and Edward III's reign. But even with this relative wealth of sources, the references to education are few and far between. If a tutor or governess is named, very rarely are any details given. The subjects taught are in the main only hinted at: training in weapons, Latin grammar, music, dancing and playing chess and other board games. It is possible, however, to construct some idea of the organisation of the education and upbringing of a child within the royal household. It is clear that the initial care was undertaken by the berceresse and nurse who, apart from such figures as Alice of Leygrave, nurse of Edward of Carnarvon, were more often than not shadowy figures, and not of noble rank. From the evidence of the accounts it seems likely that there was always somebody senior to the nurse who had ultimate responsibility for a royal child but that that person (or another magister or magistra) played no direct part in the child's education until the age of six or seven. The magister of an infant prince was probably not the teacher who gave him lessons (most likely the

responsibility of a clerk) but usually a knight of experience and seniority who was responsible for his safety and general direction in exercises and accomplishments. It is clear that the magistri or magistre were the most important figures in the education of the royal children, not only did they often have considerable experience in royal service, but they were usually of some social standing, both at court and in the shire, and were highly regarded and rewarded.

Arrangements within the royal household give an insight into educational provisions within the noble household, which was almost certainly the main place of education throughout the period (chapter III). The source material is, however, much more scanty than for the royal household: relatively few noble household accounts survive before the end of the fourteenth century. There are private archives large enough to provide some of the answers, but the references to children which they contain are rare and may conceal more information than they reveal. From accounts, wills, and literary references, we can gain much information about those charged with the education of noble children, but very little about what was actually taught. It seems clear that a young noble heir would spend most of his time at home with his tutor, occasionally staying in the royal household or even in a bishop's household. As evidence from the De la Pole family in the early fifteenth century reveals, it was more usual for the younger sons and daughters to be sent away to other households of the secular and ecclesiastical nobility or even, by the fifteenth century, to the house of a schoolmaster. The pattern of noble education was therefore mixed: shared between tutors in other households and the child's own household, bishops, resident schoolmasters and schoolmasters in schools. But there appears to have been little change or development in education within the household between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries.

The education of the aristocracy was not confined to secular and ecclesiastical households. Throughout the period some education was available outside (chapter IV). Before the thirteenth century, the chronicles show that monasteries

provided the setting for the upbringing of a few noblemen, even when they were intended for a secular career. After 1200 the practice appears to have been uncommon among the nobility although visitation records show that in the fifteenth century, sons of the gentry might join the abbot's retinue and stay in his private lodging. The lack of evidence for noble education at the monasteries after 1200 is due, no doubt, to the declining reputation of the monasteries and to the development of other educational opportunities. Although there is a great deal of evidence of noble interest in, and patronage of, schools, the records of nobles at school is sparse. The picture is similar at Oxford and Cambridge: there are few recorded instances before 1400 of nobles who later pursued a secular career receiving their training at the universities. It is probable that here the records are misleading, and that many more nobles than are documented in fact spent time at Oxford and Cambridge. By the fifteenth century there were also possibilities for the nobility at the Inns of Court, but, despite Fortescue's praise of this environment as a finishing school, there is certainly little evidence of their presence there. Even so, by the fifteenth century it is clear that educational opportunities were widening.

The 'vestiges of education' to use McFarlane's phrase, such as ownership of books, authorship, and patronage of scholars and writers, are often more easy to discern than the process of education itself. The study of royal and noble book-ownership and literary taste (Chapter V) presents particular problems relating to the sources. It has to be stressed once again that the evidence before the mid-fourteenth century is extremely limited. After that date, when the growth of registration ensured their survival in larger numbers, wills form by far the richest source of references to books, with additional information coming from inventories, chronicles and accounts, and library catalogues (miscellaneous references are particularly important for the pre-1350 period). Not only is the evidence heavily weighted towards the later middle ages, but it is also difficult to interpret. There are many instances where a will mentions

no books, but in which the testator is known from other sources to have owned books. A second problem is that there is almost no means of knowing whether a nobleman actually read the books he owned. Many of the books named in wills were obviously treasured as heirlooms for their illumination and their fine bindings, and it would be dangerous to assume that their possessors were necessarily great readers. The growth of lay literacy is extremely difficult to gauge: the 'literate layman' is best known by the books which he left in his will - yet his will is unlikely to survive before 1350. It is with these problems in mind that the subject is approached. Of the noble wills examined over one-third contained references to books and showed that noble women, in particular, were regarded as worthy recipients. Considered as a whole, there was a great variety of works in noble libraries throughout the period, ranging from bibles and service books to popular romances and didactic works. But there were also some changes: the proliferation in the number of service books owned in the late fourteenth century would appear to reflect the increasing importance of personal religion and the private chapel, and, of course, related developments such as the foundation of chantries. Romances were overwhelmingly popular at all times, and the most common form of secular literature to be found in the noble household. Historical books were fairly popular, particularly with men, but there was a marked absence of law books and works on husbandry and estate management, possibly because these were considered too mundane to be mentioned in wills.

Although the popularity of romances and saints' lives was constant throughout, there were other changes in the fifteenth century, notably in the interest in classical history and translations of Aristotelian texts. On the whole, however, the classical revival had made only a limited impact on noble libraries by 1450. In terms of changing tastes, the effect of the language change from French to English (which can be discerned in the composition of noble collections) was relatively unimportant. In the fifteenth century the nobility was reading much the same kind of material as it was in the twelfth century but in another language.

In the middle ages, literatus probably had more than one meaning and could include the ability to write as well as read (Chapter VI). The ability of the aristocracy to write is difficult to assess as references are scarce. On this subject and that of literary patronage (where the evidence is plentiful) it has to be admitted that most of the information comes from secondary sources. On the other hand, the study of the nobility as writers, authors and as literary patrons may well be related to trends in education and has not been the subject of a single long study. From the reign of Edward III we have the earliest evidence that the king could write and the survival of Simon de Montfort's will, written by his eldest son, Henry, shows that there were literate noblemen who could write as well as read well before the fourteenth century. From the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries there survive for the first time a number of compositions from the pens of the lay nobility. The absence of similar works before that date is difficult to explain except in terms of the lack of surviving evidence. The devotional treatise of Henry Grosmont, duke of Lancaster, in the mid-fourteenth century represents a remarkable literary work. Not every nobleman was an author but the examples of their literary works do represent a considerable achievement.

Attention has been drawn by Professor Mathew and more recently by Professor Scattergood to aspects of court culture and literary patronage in the later middle ages. This should not obscure the fact that nobles had been active as patrons certainly since the twelfth century. Motives for literary patronage were diverse, combining family glorification with prestige, fashion, taste and genuine enjoyment of literature. When the court was literary, in the twelfth century and the late fourteenth century, aristocratic patronage is also much in evidence. The late fourteenth century can also be seen as a time when more general intellectual developments, such as the growth of lay literacy, interest in spiritual literature and increasing opportunities at school and university, exercised a common influence on both the court and the nobility.

During the course of the study, there were some noble families or individuals who seemed to deserve particular attention because of their special interest in education, books or the patronage of scholars. One such example was the family of Simon de Montfort, the members of which were both bookish and extraordinarily well-educated. A second example is provided by Walter Bibbesworth, an Essex country gentleman, who wrote a treatise on learning French for the Munchensy family in the mid-thirteenth century and whose probable patron, Henry Lacy, earl of Lincoln, was himself interested in education at Oxford. Thirdly, we find in Guy Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, one of the most notable lay bibliophiles before Duke Humphrey. Finally, Elizabeth de Burgh, lady of Clare, stands out as a fourteenth-century patroness of a Cambridge college, as well as an important sponsor of scholars at school and of apprentices at the King's Bench.

In conclusion, it must not be thought that the nobility was, in McFarlane's words, 'crammed in childhood and unhealthily studious' in their adult lives. There were always those who preferred such pursuits as gaming, hunting, and military accomplishments to the pleasures of a literary education. But it is hoped that this study indicates that some of the nobles at least were more sophisticated. Some, such as Guy Beauchamp, Simon Burley, Thomas of Woodstock and Duke Humphrey were book collectors, some, such as Henry Lacy, Mary, countess of Pembroke, and Elizabeth de Burgh, were patrons of education, and some, such as William, duke of Suffolk and Henry, duke of Lancaster, were authors. Without question many of these men were heavily involved in the political affairs of their day and they brought to their work minds which had been educated.

# THE EDUCATION AND LITERARY INTERESTS OF THE ENGLISH LAY NOBILITY, c.1150-c.1450

---

Elizabeth J. Gue

Thesis submitted for the D.Phil degree in Trinity Term, 1983

BODLEIAN LIBRARY OXFORD
DEPOSITED
THESIS
6/1/84

Acknowledgements

During the research for this thesis I have incurred many debts. I am grateful to Lord Iveagh for permitting me to consult his archives at Elveden Hall, Suffolk and to Dr G.L. Harriss for allowing me access to the notes and transcripts of the late K.B. McFarlane at Magdalen College.

For their advice on particular points I am indebted to Dr John Baker, Miss Barbara Harvey, Professor Dominica Legge, Dr Nigel Saul and Dr Joan Wardrop. For his encouragement and enthusiasm for the subject throughout my research, I shall always be indebted to Dr John Blair.

My greatest debt is owed to my supervisor, Dr John Maddicott, from whose criticisms, insight, and encouragement, I have gained more than I am ever likely to be able to repay.

The final word of thanks should go to my parents without whose help and support this thesis would never have been completed.

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements i

Abbreviations iv

INTRODUCTION 1

I. EDUCATIONAL LITERATURE IN ENGLAND, C.1150-c.1475 7

1. Educational treatises 7
2. Books of chivalry 21
3. Practical works and courtesy literature 29

II. EDUCATION IN THE ENGLISH ROYAL HOUSEHOLD, c.1150-c.1450 40

1. Those responsible for the education of the king's children 41
2. The pattern and subjects of education 56
3. Noble youths in the royal household 58

Appendix: Nurses, governesses and tutors of the royal children 69

III. EDUCATION IN THE ENGLISH NOBLE HOUSEHOLD 75

1. The places of education 83
2. The stages of education 88
3. The subjects of education 94

IV. EDUCATION OUTSIDE THE HOUSEHOLD 103

1. The nobility and monastic education 103
2. The nobility and schools 120
3. The nobility and the universities 125
4. The nobility and legal training 140
5. Educational opportunities abroad 145

V. NOBLE BOOK-OWNERSHIP AND LITERARY TASTE 148

1. The sources 148
2. The categories of books 152
3. The language of the books 188
4. Prestige books and family heirlooms 192
5. Reading tastes 199
6. The royal library 208

VI. WRITING, AUTHORSHIP AND LITERARY PATRONAGE 216

1. Writing 216
2. Noble authors 218
3. Literary patronage 222

VII. SPECIAL STUDIES 237

1. The Montfort family 237
2. Walter Bibbesworth, the Munchensy family and Henry Lacy, earl of Lincoln 244
3. Guy Beauchamp, earl of Warwick and his gift of books to Bordesley Abbey 253
4. A fourteenth-century patroness: Elizabeth de Burgh, lady of Clare 258

CONCLUSIONS 265

Bibliography 270

## Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| Amer.Hist.Rev. | American Historical Review |
| B.R.U.C. | A.B. Emden, A Biographical Register of the University of Cambridge to 1500 (Cambridge, 1963) |
| B.R.U.O. | A.B. Emden, A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to 1500, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1957-9) |
| Brit.Lib. | British Library, London |
| B.J.R.L. | Bulletin of the John Rylands Library |
| Cal.Close Rolls | Calendar of the Close Rolls |
| Cal.Fine Rolls | Calendar of the Fine Rolls |
| Cal.Lib. Rolls | Calendar of the Liberate Rolls |
| Cal.Pat. Rolls | Calendar of the Patent Rolls |
| Cant. and York Soc. | Canterbury and York Society |
| The Complete Peerage | G.E. Cockayne (ed.), The Complete Peerage, revised by Vicary Gibbs, H.A. Doubleday and Lord Howard de Walden, 12 vols. in 13 (London, 1910-57) |
| E.E.T.S. | Early English Text Society |
| Econ.Hist.Rev. | Economic History Review |
| Eng.Hist.Rev. | English Historical Review |
| Ep.Acad. | Epistolae Academicae Oxon., ed. H. Anstey, i (Oxford Historical Society, xxxv, 1898) |
| Mun.Acad. | Munimenta Academica Oxon., ed. H. Anstey (Rolls Series, 1868) |
| Nobility | K.B. McFarlane, The Nobility of Later Medieval England (Oxford, 1973) |
| Oxford Hist.Soc. | Oxford Historical Society |
| Proc.Brit.Acad. | Proceedings of the British Academy |
| P.R.O. | Public Record Office, London |
| P.M.L.A. | Publications of the Modern Language Association of America |
| Reg. | Register |

| | |
|---|---|
| Schools | N. Orme, English Schools in the Middle Ages (London, 1973) |
| Test.Ebor. | Testamenta Eboracensia, 4 vols. (Surtees Society, 1836-65) |
| Test.Vet. | Testamenta Vetusta, ed. N.H. Nicolas, i (London, 1826) |
| Trans.Roy.Hist.Soc. | Transactions of the Royal Historical Society |
| V.C.H. | The Victoria History of the Counties of England |

# INTRODUCTION

Writing in 1190, Walter Map observed that 'the nobles of our land are either too scornful or too lazy to apply their children to letters'.[1] His view anticipated the comments of early sixteenth-century writers who claimed that the well-born were ignorant, they were indifferent to learning, and they preferred to stay that way. John Skelton wrote:

> 'Noblemen born
> to learn they have scorn
> but hunt and blow a horn
> leap over lakes and dikes
> set nothing by politics ....'[2]

It was in almost identical terms but with more emphasis that an unnamed gentleman stated his views on learning to the humanist diplomat Richard Pace: 'It becomes the sons of gentlemen to blow the horn nicely, to hunt skilfully, and elegantly, to carry and train a hawk.' He added that the study of letters was for rustics: that it was stupid and that all learned men were beggars.[3]

The idea that education and literary interests played a minor role in the lives of the nobility of medieval England has found favour with twentieth-century historians and not merely with those scholars whose main interest lies in the Tudor, rather than the medieval, period. It was a medievalist who wrote that the ruling class consisted in general of men 'of arrested intellectual development, who looked to those below them in the social scale for the intelligence necessary to order and govern society'.[4] T.F. Tout assumed that the miles literatus was a rare phenomenon in England even as late as the mid-thirteenth century and that the distinction between the person of the king and his office

---

1. Walter Map, De Nugis Curialium, ed. M.R. James (London, 1923), I, 10: 'generosi partium nostrarum aut dedignantur aut pigri sunt applicare litteris liberos suos'.

2. John Skelton, Poetical Works, ed. A. Dyce (London, 1843), i, 334.

3. From R. Pace, De Fructu (Basel, 1517), translated in Manners and Meals in Olden Time, ed. F.J. Furnivall (E.E.T.S., 1867), pp.xii-xiv.

4. V.H. Galbraith, 'A new life of Richard II', History, new ser., xxvi (1942), 227.

was one 'too deep for the conservative baronage' in the early fourteenth century.[1] Comments such as those of Galbraith and Tout, both writing in the tradition of administrative history, form part of a marked anti-noble historiographical bias.

The notion that the nobility concentrated on a military training and had little intellectual capacity is commonly expressed. H.J.R. Murray, writing about the nobility playing chess, comments:

> 'We are at a loss to discover a reason for the general popularity of the game among a class which was distinguished by physical, rather than intellectual prowess.'[2]

The views of many twentieth-century historians on the subject may perhaps be summarised by James Bowen:

> 'The warrior knight became the aristocratic ideal and his training in military accomplishment had little concern with literacy'.[3]

In fact, it is strange that the myth of noble illiteracy has survived despite the challenge of studies published as long ago as the 1930s.[4] V.H. Galbraith, considering the education of princes and great nobles, concluded that a significant level of lay literacy arose only when the vernacular pushed Latin aside. Yet, only a few years later, J.W. Thompson could write that the 'English nobility of the high Middle ages were more familiar with Latin than is commonly assumed'.[5]

But the real change in attitude towards the education of the medieval English nobility came in the 1960s with a chapter by H.G. Richardson and G.O. Sayles in their Governance of Medieval England (1963), in which they

---

1. T.F. Tout, The Place of Edward II in English History (2nd edn., Manchester, 1936), p.130.

2. H.J.R. Murray, A History of Chess (Oxford, 1913), p.437.

3. J. Bowen, A History of Western Education, ii (London, 1975), p.26. See also J.H. Hexter, 'The education of the aristocracy in the Renaissance', in his Reappraisals in History (London, 1961), pp.46-9, and R.S. Hoyt, Europe in the Middle Ages (2nd edn., New York, 1966), p.303.

4. For example, V.H. Galbraith, 'The literacy of Medieval English Kings', Proc. Brit. Acad., xxi (1935); J.W. Thompson, The Literacy of the Laity in the Middle Ages (Berkeley, 1939).

5. Thompson, op.cit., p.180.

asserted that 'No one would suggest that a layman in public employment.. was to be presumed illiterate',[1] either in the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries, and then went on to provide many examples from the twelfth century of educated laymen in public administration.

Even more important for the study of the subject of noble education was a paper by K.B. McFarlane, given in July 1963, and published posthumously ten years later.[2] McFarlane led the way in pointing out that the ruling class was not a collection of figureheads without responsibility or ability. Firstly, he argued, a nobleman had the responsibility for the management of a great estate and if the estate was left to be run, without supervision, by the lord's ministers, it would soon be run in their interests rather than his. Secondly, he saw that the aristocracy was an aristocracy of service and that acceptable service to the king was the cause of promotion within it. To these arguments he added the evidence of nobles as book owners, writers and patrons of learning, to show that the education and literary interests of the noble class was a complicated and important subject.

Since McFarlane wrote, other studies have appeared. Dr N.I. Orme's book on English medieval schools appeared alongside but independently of McFarlane's posthumous book on the English nobility. Although he was mainly concerned with nobles as patrons of education, his introductory chapter discussed the extent of literacy among nobles, kings and princes. His main conclusion was that by the later middle ages, there were three main elements in the life and education of the English nobility: 'exercise of arms, social accomplishments and the ability to read'. He saw the reign of Richard II as the first time when it is possible to 'discern a whole literary circle' of noblemen and gentlemen centred on the court.[3] Six years later, Dr M.T. Clanchy's study, while concentrating

---

1. H.G. Richardson and G.O. Sayles, The Governance of Medieval England (Edinburgh, 1963), p.269.

2. K.B. McFarlane, The Nobility of Later Medieval England (Oxford, 1973), pp.228-47.

3. N.I. Orme, English Schools in the Middle Ages (London, 1973). These ideas are developed in his essay 'The education of the courtier', in English Court Culture in the Later Middle Ages, ed. V.J. Scattergood and J.W. Sherborne (London, 1983), pp.63-85, which appeared as this thesis was being typed. His main conclusion is that there was no lack of education in the later middle ages, but a lack of consciousness about it.

mainly on medieval record-keeping and administration, also drew attention to literary aspects such as book collecting and the formation of a royal library.[1] Dr M.B. Parkes, in his illustrations of literacy among the laity, stressed that it is among the Anglo-Norman nobility 'that we find the first indications of a more extensive, cultivated literacy'.[2] This view has been endorsed by Professor R.V. Turner, who sought to show that medieval administrators were not always accompanied by clergymen to read to them and write their letters. Moreover, he argued, the growth of a literate laity is not to be associated exclusively with the rise of towns and tradesmen, rather than with the nobles and knights of the countryside.[3]

Despite this recent work, there has been no single long study of the education and literary interests of the nobility.[4] This is due primarily to the nature of the sources which are scattered and difficult to use. There is no problem in finding out what the education of a nobleman theoretically should have been like, as there are numerous educational treatises and tracts, not to mention romances, which provide a clear picture. What is more difficult to establish is how much difference there was between theory and practice and how practice changed over the three-hundred-year period between 1150 and 1450. Some of the private archives of noble families are sufficiently large, one would think, to give some of the answers. However, most of the accounts that survive have little to say about the education of the young lords and ladies of the family because they are mainly devoted to other items of expenditure (estate records and manorial accounts are far more common than household and wardrobe

---

1. M.T. Clanchy, From Memory to Written Record: England 1066-1307 (London, 1979).
2. M. Parkes, 'The literacy of the laity', in The Medieval World, ed. D. Daiches and A. Thorlby (London, 1973), p.556.
3. R.V. Turner, 'The miles literatus in twelfth and thirteenth century England: How rare a phenomenon?', Amer. Hist. Rev., lxxxiii (1978), 928-45.
4. The nobility is usually defined as those peers who received a personal summons to Parliament. However, it was not until the later middle ages that a clearly stratified nobility arose and therefore in this study there is some justification, at least for the earlier period, for the use of 'gentry' evidence, where available.

accounts). Itemised bills for the subsidiary households of noble children or the wardrobe accounts of their parents or guardians which may have had more details are among the records least commonly preserved. Throughout the period, noble household accounts are rare, especially before the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

It is a different matter in the case of the royal household, which is relevant to the study of noble education for two main reasons. Firstly, its practices were probably paralleled by those of noble households and, secondly, many nobles were themselves educated there, either as wards of the king or as friends of the king's children. A vast amount of wardrobe material survives for the royal household, particularly for the reign of Edward I and to a lesser extent for Edward II's and Edward III's reign. But in the material that does survive, the references to education are few and far between. Even if a tutor or governess is named, very rarely are any details given, especially about what was taught. However, from such scattered sources deriving from both royal and noble archives, and from material such as monastic chronicles and visitation records, it is possible to see at different times over the period the education of a nobleman taking place in the royal household, in his own household, in another nobleman's household, or in monasteries, schools, and universities, or abroad. The discussion of a nobleman's education gives a basis from which to turn to the literary aspects of the subject, the ability of noblemen to read and write, and in particular the evidence for their ownership of books. The main sources here are wills, which are again difficult to use. To begin with, there are very few surviving wills before 1380. Often, not all the books owned will be listed in a will, often it is difficult to determine what they were, and in most cases, we can have no idea whether the books were read or simply possessed.

Faced with these problems, one might well doubt the wisdom of continuing with the study. But the importance of doing so should be clear. Even as recently as 1969, N. Denholm-Young wrote that 'in the fourteenth century, the

miles literatus is ceasing to be a rarity'.[1] But what evidence is there to suggest that he was ever a rarity? There are examples which provide early evidence for the existence of an educated noble class in England. In the twelfth century, two great nobles who had remarkable reputations for learning were Waleran of Meulan, earl of Worcester, and his twin brother, Robert, earl of Leicester.[2] Brian fitz Count demonstrated his learning in Latin by writing a tract in support of Matilda's cause against Stephen and a letter denouncing those who had broken their oath and abandoned her.[3] William de Mandeville has recently been described as a great 'patron of the arts',[4] while the Waverley Annalist comments on the learning of Richard Marshal about 1230, describing him as 'artibus liberalibus insigniter eruditus'.[5]

It is not the intention of this study to suggest, using McFarlane's words, that the late medieval nobility was 'crammed in childhood' and 'unhealthily studious in later life'. What it hopes to do is to examine in more detail the vestiges of education, examples of noble book owners, literary and educational patronage, to piece together the evidence for literary and other forms of education, and to detect changes in a nobleman's education over the three-hundred-year period, 1150 to 1450.

---

1. N. Denholm-Young, The Country Gentry in the Fourteenth Century (Oxford, 1969), p.2.

2. Turner, op.cit., 936.

3. H.W.C. Davis, 'Henry of Blois and Brian fitz Count', Eng. Hist. Rev., xxv (1910), 298-9.

4. B. English, The Lords of Holderness (Oxford, 1979), p.30.

5. Annales Monastici, ii, ed. H.R. Luard (Rolls Series, 1865), p.313.

# CHAPTER I

## EDUCATIONAL LITERATURE IN ENGLAND, c.1150-c.1475

Many educational treatises circulating in Western Europe during the middle ages are relevant in one way or another to the upbringing of noble children. It must, however, be clear from the outset that the subject of the present study is only rarely their direct concern. Generally, they are more concerned with moral instruction than with the practical details of education, and their message is directed primarily at rulers, to whom, indeed, they are often dedicated. Following the influence of Aristotle, they argue that the education of princes must be shaped carefully with a view to their great duties as future rulers of nations. On this education will depend the responsible and lawful exercise of their supreme power, and only thus can the happiness and welfare of their nations be obtained. Notwithstanding this main concern, there can be little doubt that the treatises were intended for much wider use among the nobility, and they throw a good deal of light on contemporary attitudes to the education of noble children.[1]

Educational treatises in this strict sense were not the only form of literature which might be used to guide a nobleman's upbringing. Many treatises written during the long decadence of chivalry, which define it and enunciate its principles in a didactic form, provide a second class of works.[2] Thirdly, and most important of all, there were educational books of a more practical nature for use in baronial households, in particular the courtesy books.

### 1. Educational treatises

With all their basic similarity of outlook, the first group of works present a good deal of variety. There are the educational treatises per se,

---

1. On this subject see L.K. Born, 'The perfect prince: a study in thirteenth and fourteenth century ideals', Speculum, iii (1928), 470-504.

2. See A.T.P. Byles, 'Medieval Courtesy books and the prose romances of chivalry', in Chivalry, ed. E. Prestage (London, 1928), p.186.

concerned with the nobility as a whole, such as the De Eruditione Filiorum Nobilium of Vincent de Beauvais (1247-9), the Eruditio Regum et Principum of Gilbert de Tournai (1259), and the De Eruditione Principum of Guillaume Peyraut (1265). In contrast, there are more general works on political ethics such as the twelfth-century Policraticus of John of Salisbury or even general works such as Fortescue's De Laudibus Legum Anglie (c.1470), which treat education as part of a much wider scheme of things.

Even among those treatises which deal entirely with upbringing and education there are further distinctions to be made. One treatise was apparently compiled by Aristotle for his pupil Alexander the Great,[1] a forerunner of the De Regimine Principum of Thomas Aquinas and works such as the De Regimine Principum of Aegidius Romanus, the Treatise of Walter de Milemete, the De Speculo Regis of Edward III's reign and the Tractatus de Regimine addressed to Henry VI. Such treatises are primarily mirrors of princes, addressed to kings rather than nobles and forming a very ancient genre.[2]

Some of the works are not treatises as such but have interesting reflections on education and were called into being by a particular need or for a particular event. The De Recuperatione Terrae Sanctae of Pierre Dubois, for example, composed 1305-7, is not really an 'educational treatise' but a crusading tract, with ideas on education, written after the fall of Acre and particularly concerned to see the crusade used as a means for the aggrandisement of the French monarchy.

(a) Chronology and ownership

If we examine the dates of origin of these educational treatises a very definite pattern emerges. The thirteenth century saw the composition of by

---

1. R.F. Green, Poets and Princepleasers: Literature and the English Court in the late Middle Ages (Toronto, 1980), p.140.

2. J.M. Wallace-Hadrill, Early Germanic Kingship (Oxford, 1971), pp.135ff.

far the greatest number.[1] This may reflect the more systematic organisation of government in state and church, but it is perhaps even more likely to be a reflection of a growing knowledge of classical texts which dealt with education (for example, Aristotle) and the growing influence of university-trained clerics. Not only were the educational treatises prolific in the thirteenth century but during that time dedications to the French royal family predominate. In the twelfth century, Giraldus Cambrensis had led the way by dedicating his De Principis Instructione to posterity in general and in particular to Louis VII of France 'because he has been imbued with liberal studies since early childhood and is outstanding in his liberal attitudes'.[2] Vincent de Beauvais's treatise on noble education was written for Margaret, wife of Louis IX, while Gilbert de Tournai dedicated his to Louis himself. The De Regimine Principum of Aegidius Romanus was written at the request of Philip the Fair and the Liber de Informatione Principum was probably composed for his sons. It seems most likely that the Speculum Dominarum was intended for Joan, the wife of Philip the Fair.[3] It is difficult to explain why so many treatises should have been dedicated to the French royal family in the thirteenth century and why there was such an absence of mirrors of princes in thirteenth-century England. Possibly the torrent of advice from sententious clerics which was clearly bestowed on the Capetian kings indicated that they had a closer relationship with their churchmen than did the English kings,

---

1. These thirteenth-century treatises include: the De Principis Instructione of Giraldus Cambrensis (1217), the De Eruditione Filiorum Nobilium of Vincent de Beauvais (1247-9), the Eruditio Regum et Principum of Gilbert of Tournai (1259), the De Eruditione Principum of Guillaume Peyraut (1265), the De Regimine Principum of Aegidius Romanus (c.1287), and two anonymous works, the Liber de Informatione Principum (written between 1297 and 1314), and the Speculum Dominarum of c.1300.

2. Giraldi Cambrensis Opera Omnia, ed. G.F. Warner, viii (Rolls Series, 1891), p.7.

3. See L. Delisle, 'Anonyme, auteur du liber de informatione principum', Histoire Littéraire de la France, xxxi (1893), 35-47.

and that during the thirteenth century the moral education of the prince was thought more important in France than in England. Nevertheless, these treatises for the French royal household did circulate in England, even if somewhat later. We have evidence to suggest that Alice, duchess of Suffolk, for example, had a copy of Vincent de Beauvais amongst her collection of books in 1466.[1]

By contrast to the thirteenth century, the fourteenth was less prolific in educational treatises, but after 1300 more works were dedicated to the English royal family. The De Recuperatione Terrae Sanctae of Pierre Dubois appeared in 1305-7 and the treatise of Walter de Milemete, addressed to the future Edward III, was composed in 1326. There was a very popular translation of Lorens d'Orleans, Somme le Roi (written in 1279) which appeared as the Book of Vices and Virtues in the fourteenth century, but this was not strictly an educational treatise. In the fifteenth century once again, several works appear: in 1406-7, Henry Scogan composed his Morale Balade, and Hoccleve dedicated his own treatise in English verse, The Regiment of Princes to Henry, prince of Wales, in 1411-12. Christine de Pisan produced Le Livre des Trois Virtues in 1412. The later part of the fifteenth century saw the appearance of several more tracts, including Fortescue's De Laudibus and the treatise of an early humanist writer, Mapheo Vegius, the De Educatione Liberorum.

As the duchess of Suffolk's ownership of Vincent de Beauvais's De Eruditione shows, there is also some evidence for noble ownership of these educational treatises, and dedications to members of the nobility may also indicate noble possession. Simon de Montfort owned a copy of De vitiis et virtutibus, possibly an early version of the Book of Vices and Virtues that was to become so popular in the fourteenth century.[2] This book was also owned by Eleanor Bohun, duchess of Gloucester, in 1399 and by Sir John Fastolf

---

1. Historical MSS Commission, 8th report, i, pt III (1909), 629.
2. C. Bémont, Simon de Montfort (Oxford, 1930), p.41.

in 1450.[1] The 'livre de gouvernement de Roys et du prynces' belonging to Simon Burley was presumably a copy of the De Regimine Principum of Aegidius Romanus.[2] This work was clearly popular among Englishmen in the late fourteenth century. The will of the knight, William Thorpe, in 1391, mentions a copy of Aegidius's De Regimine which he bequeathed to his chaplain Henry Hamond.[3] Thomas Plantagenet, duke of Gloucester, owned a copy of this work and Eleanor Bohun left a copy to her son, Humphrey, in 1399.[4] About 1465, Sir William Hopton of Swillington possessed a text of Hoccleve's Regiment of Princes, as did the Pastons, which was bound up with a prose chronicle of England and the new and fashionable romance of King Ponthus and the Fair Sidone.[5]

(b) The subject matter of the educational treatises

Although works such as John of Salisbury's Policraticus[6] and Giraldus Cambrensis's De Principis Instructione[7] do touch on the education of a prince, they are conventional in nature and do not merit as much attention as the thirteenth-century treatise of Vincent de Beauvais. It has, admittedly, been said of this work 'unfortunately the title of his treatise, Concerning the instruction of noble children, is more interesting than its contents'.[8] This

---

1. Testamenta Vetusta, ed. N.H. Nicolas, i (London, 1826), pp.146-9; H.S. Bennett, The Pastons and their England (Cambridge, 1951), pp.110-11.

2. Scattergood prints the list of Burley's books in The Library, xxiii (1968), 237. See also M.V. Clarke, Fourteenth Century Studies (Oxford, 1937), pp.120-1. On Burley's ownership of the De Regimine, see R.H. Jones, The Royal Policy of Richard II (Oxford, 1968), pp.144, 161.

3. Calendar of wills proved and enrolled in the Court of Husting, ed. R. Sharpe, ii (London, 1890), p.326.

4. Viscount Dillon, 'Inventory of the goods and chattels belonging to Thomas, duke of Gloucester', Archaeological Journal, liv (1897), 287-308; Test. Vet., pp.146-9.

5. King Ponthus and the Fair Sidone, ed. F.J. Mather, P.M.L.A., xii (1897), xxv-xxvi.

6. The Statesman's Book of John of Salisbury, ed. and trans. J. Dickinson (New York, 1927), pp.27-8.

7. Giraldi Cambrensis, p.5.

8. M.W. Labarge, Saint Louis: the life of Louis IX of France (London, 1968), p.212.

is somewhat unfair: not only did Vincent's interest extend beyond the field of theoretical education to practical advice on how to feed the child and how to choose his nurse, but he also had a considerable influence on near contemporaries such as Guillaume Peyraut and Aegidius Romanus and on later writers such as Christine de Pisan.[1]

(i) Vincent de Beauvais: De Eruditione Filiorum Nobilium

Vincent de Beauvais was born between 1184 and 1194, during the first years of the reign of Philip Augustus. About 1220 he was in Paris, studying under the Dominicans. He never became a pedagogue and did not actually teach or take any active part in positive education near the royal court at Royaumont.[2] Practical application of his advice was confided to a scholar, Simon, who was in charge of the education of the children of St Louis. The work was intended to serve the educational needs of Louis (1244-60), and probably of his sister Isabelle (1247-71), since there are chapters on the education of noble girls. In the preface, Vincent maintains that to instruct or to teach is to free the learner from ignorance. Education should start from childhood because that is the most tender and impressionable period of life (cap.1). For the child, the first important step is the choice of a good master: one who has an acute mind, leads a pure life, and has humility in knowledge, simple eloquence and skill in teaching (cap.2):

> 'Oportet ut sit eruditus, mansuetus ac rigidus...non negligens, nec arrogans. Eruditus, inquam, quia prius oportet, ut discat, quam doceat...Mansuetus autem, ut, cum necesse est, discipulorum elacionem pati sciat ... rigidus eciam, ut...vindictam erroris imponat,...'[3]
> cap.3

---

1. See A. Steiner, 'Guillaume Perrault and Vincent de Beauvais', Speculum, viii (1933), 51-8; De Eruditione Filiorum Nobilium, ed. A. Steiner (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1938), p.xii; A.L. Gabriel, 'The educational ideas of Christine de Pisan', Journal of the History of Ideas, xvi (1955), 16.
2. A.L. Gabriel, The Educational Ideas of Vincent de Beauvais (Texts and Studies in the History of Medieval Education, iv, 1956), p.22.
3. De eruditione, p.16.

With regard to the subjection of the pupil to the master (cap.7), there are four steps in the ascent to perfection. The beginner must listen; the advanced must study; the older must apply their doctrine to their lives; and the perfect should teach. The impediments to teaching come from the seven vices and the three prerequisites for learning are maturity, keen ability and retentive memory, combined in a good student (cap.5).[1] Vincent de Beauvais makes it clear that the subjection of the disciples to the master or teacher should consist in three things: attention in listening, docility in understanding, and benevolence in retaining.[2] Not only is it advantageous at times for a boy to have companions who are better than he as regards morals and knowledge, whom he will imitate, but also companions less advanced whom he shall strive to precede more and more.

The last nine chapters (caps.42-51) of the De Eruditione are devoted to the education of girls. Vincent's educational theory on this subject relies almost entirely upon St Jerome's letters and he quotes at length from St Cyprian's De Habitu Virginum.[3] The advice is on the whole traditional. In the chapter on the custody of girls (cap.42) Vincent advises parents to keep a close watch over their daughters. He insists that girls of noble parents should be instructed in letters and good morals. If interested in reading and writing, they will escape the harmful thoughts, the pleasure and the vanities of the flesh. This advice was repeated by Guillaume Peyraut in the De Eruditione Principum:

> 'Quod valde utile est filias nobilium, dum sunt in custodia, litteris imbui, et semper aliquo opere occupari ...'[4]

Girls are to have a good deal of supervised reading, especially of Holy Scripture, and in case this becomes tiresome, they are to vary it with periods

---

1. Ibid., p.24.
2. Ibid., caps. 8-10.
3. Gabriel, The Educational Ideas of Vincent de Beauvais, p.38.
4. Cited ibid., p.38 n.3.

of prayer and the womanly arts of sewing, weaving etc. Besides letters, Vincent insists that girls be taught good morals and manners, especially in chastity and modesty, humility and silence and maturity of habits. In order to preserve chastity, girls must know what things to avoid, namely too much food, drink, sleep, and too many baths and ornaments. Vincent's recommendations are in keeping with other short codes of instruction which survive from the thirteenth century. For instance, Robert of Blois, in his Chastoiement des Dames, exhorts women not to talk too much, to be courteous and modest before gentlemen.[1] According to Vincent de Beauvais, a girl should be prepared to love and teach her sons, daughters and servants according to the law of God and therefore should allow nothing offensive to faith and morals to remain in the house.

In general the treatise does show that both noble boys and noble girls were expected to read, although writing was considered more of an art. Admittedly, except for the arrangement of the material, Vincent cannot claim any originality. He himself stated his intention of compiling an anthology of appropriate passages from sacred and profane writers for the edification of children and their tutors. It has to be acknowledged that a great deal of the treatise is very platitudinous and one wonders how much notice would have been taken of his work in practical terms. On the other hand, his influence on other writers emphasises his importance among the thirteenth-century authors of educational treatises.

(ii) Gilbert of Tournai, Guillaume Peyraut and Aegidius Romanus

Like Vincent de Beauvais, these writers were all clerics and Guillaume Peyraut certainly was also a Dominican.[2] Gilbert de Tournai was, if anything, an even more conventional writer than Vincent.[3] Drawing heavily on his work,

---

1. Ibid., p.40.

2. A. Murray, Reason and Society in the Middle Ages (Oxford, 1978), pp.242, 274-5.

3. For the text, Le Traité Eruditio Regum et Principum de Gilbert de Tournai, ed. A. de Poorter (Les Philosophes Belges, ix, 1914).

Gilbert argues that the education and the study of learned letters must be carefully planned so that the ruler would possess the following qualities: 'Reverentia Dei, diligentia sui, disciplina debita potentatum et officialium, affectus et protectio subitorum'.[1]

The ethical manual of Guillaume Peyraut, written about 1240, was very widely read and cited Boethius when it contended that the uneducated were wretched in this life. Guillaume's educational treatise, De Eruditione Principum, was written about 1265. He was greatly influenced by Vincent de Beauvais and in fact borrowed almost his entire treatise on noble education. Like Vincent, he makes the fairly obvious remark that youth is the time for study.[2] When the tutor is selected he should be a person who is careful of his manners (v.11) and who leads an honourable life (v.9). He follows Vincent de Beauvais in devoting considerable space to the care of the prince's daughters, who are to receive all the training essential for a 'perfect lady' (v.49). This is partly to be achieved through the use of learned letters, but at all events the young ladies must be kept busy at something (v.50). This is somewhat reminiscent of the picture given by Einhard of Charlemagne's court:

> 'He (Charlemagne) made his daughters learn to spin and weave wool, use the distaff and spindle and acquire every womanly accomplishment, rather than fritter away their time in sheer idleness ...'[3]

Unfortunately it is almost impossible to know whether or not the educational treatises of Gilbert and Guillaume circulated in England. Guillaume was certainly an influential Dominican whose ethical works were widely known on the Continent.

There can be no doubt, however, that the work of Aegidius Romanus was widely known in England. A pupil of Thomas Aquinas at Paris, he was the author of the treatise De Regimine Principum, which again shows the influence

---

1. Ibid., p.x.

2. Born, 'The perfect prince', 485-7.

3. Einhard: The Life of Charlemagne, ed. and trans. L. Thorpe (Penguin Classics, 1969), p.74.

of Vincent of Beauvais. It is an indication of its importance and popularity that the De Regimine was translated by Henry de Gauchi, a canon of St Martin's at Liège, before the end of the thirteenth century and that at least fifteen manuscripts survive of the French version, three of which are in the British Library.[1] In his minute analysis of the duties of the prince, Aegidius also devotes twenty chapters in the second half of the second book to the education of the royal children. But there is a difference; whereas Vincent totally disregarded the importance of physical education, Aegidius, as an early precursor of the humanist educators, realised its value, although he did not deem it proper for princes. Otherwise the De Regimine presents the same line of reasoning as the De Eruditione: the prince should be affectionate towards his children but should devote his especial attention to their welfare. The early training of children is necessary because of the turbulence of youth.

Two anonymous tracts at the close of the thirteenth century, the Liber de Informatione Principum and the Speculum Dominarum, add nothing to the ideas set out in the De Eruditione of Vincent de Beauvais. The Liber urges the children of Philip the Fair to follow a life of good manners and morals.[2] The Speculum, while intended for the use of all women, and in particular, Joan of Navarre, also has something to say on the training and qualities of the prince. It stresses that the study of letters is important in the virtuous Christian life.[3]

In the thirteenth century, therefore, we move from the rather static works of Giraldus Cambrensis and John of Salisbury to the more explicit educational programmes of Vincent de Beauvais and his followers which discuss the value of the tutor and companions in education and the importance of reading.

---

1. S.P. Molenaeur, Li livres du gouvernement des rois (New York, 1899), p.xxvi.

2. L. Delisle, 'Anonyme, auteur du liber de informatione principum', 37.

3. Delisle, 'Durand de Champagne, franciscain', Histoire Littéraire de la France, xxx (1888), 311-12.

(iii) Fourteenth- and fifteenth-century educational treatises

Although not strictly speaking an educational treatise on the lines of Vincent de Beauvais's work, the De Recuperatione Terrae Sanctae of Pierre Dubois (c.1255-c.1321), presents new and important ideas on education.[1] Dubois deals mainly with advanced training but also touches on elementary aspects. A particularly prominent feature of his programme is the study of languages, especially those of Christian peoples, so that there may be a freer interrelation between nations and in consequence a better understanding. In particular, a study of the Arabic languages is to be encouraged.[2] Even more important from the point of view of a nobleman's education, Dubois emphasises, in his programme for elementary education, that boys of four, five, six years and more are to be taught together in one place: 'instruantur in uno loco ad hoc bene disposito' (cap.71).[3] In fact, he discusses not only the education of boys, but also that of girls, advocating instruction in medicine and surgery.[4]

Most of these ideas are apparently on education in general, yet Dubois really has in mind the upper classes and at times, only the sons and daughters of the rulers. His discussion of the school as a place to learn and the importance he places on languages introduce new elements to the existing works on education.

The treatise of Walter de Milemete, written by a king's clerk in 1326, is more conventional in its approach than Dubois's treatise, but it too places emphasis on languages.[5] In discussing the progress of the king's instruction, Walter de Milemete writes that the ruler should know how to read and speak

---

1. De Recuperatione Terrae Sanctae...par Pierre Dubois, ed. E. Langlois (Paris, 1891).

2. Ibid., p.47.

3. Ibid., p.58.

4. Ibid., p.51.

5. Cal.Pat.Rolls 1327-30, p.250. See also The Treatise of Walter de Milemete ed. M.R. James (Roxburghe Club, 1913), p.xi.

French and Latin. Among other things it is very useful to possess a knowledge of the art of writing so that the king can avoid entrusting his counsels to a scribe.

Apart from the treatises of Dubois and Milemete, the fourteenth century was virtually devoid of such works. In the fifteenth century, however, there was once more a resurgence of educational tracts and treatises. In 1406-7, Henry Scogan wrote a Morale Balade for the children of Henry IV. As the 'fader' or tutor of the young princes, he sent this letter to them out of fervent regard for their welfare, in order to be a warning to them (l.35). He regrets that sudden age has come upon him (l.10) and writes to impart to them the lesson which the approach of old age suggests:

> 'Wherfore I pray you lordes specially
> Your youth in verte shapeth to dispende' ll.39-40.[1]

The Balade is no more than a conventional exhortation to a life of virtue and adds nothing to the educational programmes set out in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. A more important work was Hoccleve's Regiment of Princes[2] but this has often been assumed to be a mere translation of the work of Aegidius Romanus.[3] In fact, in the opening lines of the Regiment proper, Hoccleve refers to three well-known medieval treatises which he says he will use as source material: the Secreta Secretorum, the De Regimine of Aegidius Romanus, and Jacobus de Cessoli's Liber de Ludo Scacchorum. It is interesting that Hoccleve makes more use of the work of Jacobus than of either of the other two works[4] and his borrowings are the only occurrence of the Ludus in

---

1. See Chaucerian and Other Pieces, ed. W.W. Skeat (Oxford, 1897), pp.xli-ii, 237.

2. Hoccleve's Works: The Regement of Princes, ed. F.J. Furnivall (E.E.T.S., lxxii, 1897).

3. A.H. Gilbert, 'Notes on the influence of the Secreta Secretorum', Speculum, iii (1928), 94, n.1.

4. J. Mitchell, Thomas Hoccleve (Urbana, 1968), p.24.

English before Caxton published his translation in 1475.[1] On the whole, it has to be admitted that Hoccleve's treatise adds no new ideas to those of the earlier writers on education.

It is not clear how well-known the early fifteenth-century treatise of Christine de Pisan, Le Livre des Trois Virtues, was in England. She continued in the medieval tradition by outlining the most necessary qualities of a good government. Religious teaching should be the foundation of any further education[2] and the mother should teach the first elements of religion, the Our Father, Hail Mary and the Creed.[3] Discussing the education of the young girl, Christine clearly draws on Vincent de Beauvais, but she adds ideas of her own. She does not advocate the same type of learning for the two sexes. The girl's education should be less varied than that of her brother. Christine emphasised the importance of practical sciences, useful for the administration of the lands, revenues and the castles of the young lady's husband who, because of duty in war, is often absent from the home. Latin is not recommended, though mathematics is of primary importance. The womanly arts of sewing, knitting, embroidery and weaving are encouraged for all types of women.[4]

An emphasis on specialised education is something which is peculiar to two tracts, the Tractatus de Regimine Principum addressed to Henry VI, and the De Laudibus Legum Anglie.[5] The praise which the writer of the Tractatus bestows upon the English universities and their students may have been a decisive factor in bringing about the educational foundations at Eton and Cambridge for which Henry VI is remembered.

---

1. Ibid., p.27.

2. Gabriel, 'The educational ideas of Christine de Pisan', 11.

3. The role of the mother in a noble child's early education is discussed by M.M. McLaughlin in 'Survivors and Surrogates: Children and parents from the ninth to the thirteenth century', in History of Childhood, ed. L. de Mause (New York, 1974), p.125.

4. Gabriel, 'The educational ideas of Christine de Pisan', 12.

5. Four English Political Tracts of the Later Middle Ages, ed. J-P Genet (Camden Society, 4th ser., xviii, 1977), esp. p.42; De Laudibus Legum Anglie, ed. S.B. Chrimes (Cambridge, 1942).

Although the writings of Sir John Fortescue on English government are well known, his theory of education has received little attention. The treatise De Laudibus was written 1468-70 for the instruction of Prince Edward after Fortescue had been charged by Henry VI and Queen Margaret with the education of the Lancastrian heir. Fortescue's ideas on the education of rulers may well have been affected by renaissance writers. He used Poggio's translation of De principis historiis, he wrote the first treatise on government to be composed in the English language, and his theory of government reflects the renaissance doctrine of the prince. He was, however, influenced mainly by contemporary practice and medieval theory.[1] An English ruler, as Fortescue thought, should study the liberal arts, religion and English law. Nobles and princes should be trained, as was the custom in the fifteenth century and earlier, at the courts of the great princes:

> 'I praise highly the magnificence and grandeur of the king's household, for within it is the supreme academy for the nobles of the realm ...'[2]

Nobles, he adds, should send their sons to the Inns of Court. Here many young nobles learned singing and all kinds of music, dancing and such other accomplishments and diversion . They also studied the laws of England, not to make the law their profession, but to form their manners and to preserve them from the contagion of vice .[3] In his advocacy of the use of the English language in the education of English rulers, Fortescue was well in advance of his age. In the sixteenth century Vives and Mulcaster were to point out the importance of the inclusion of the English language in schemes of English final education.[4]

There are clearly great problems in drawing conclusions about the education of the nobility from this sort of literature, since we do not know how widely

---

1. See C.F. Arrowood, 'Sir John Fortescue on the education of rulers', Speculum, x (1935), 404-10.

2. De Laudibus, p.110: 'Quare non infime domus regie opulenciam magnitudinemque collaudo, dum in ea gignasium supremum sit nobilitatis regni..'

3. Ibid., p.118.

4. On this subject see J. Simon, Education and Society in Tudor England (Cambridge, 1966), pp.113-14.

the books circulated or who read them. Many of the treatises deal with fairly conventional material and their influence is difficult to assess in practical terms. On the other hand, many of the educational tracts are illuminating for the different ideas they express on education. The twelfth-century works, solely on the duty of the prince, are replaced in the thirteenth century by treatises setting out an educational programme, involving a careful choice of tutor and strict attention to learning and to reading. The early fifteenth-century treatises do not develop the ideas of the thirteenth-century writers, although Christine de Pisan discusses the education of women in more detail than any writer since Vincent de Beauvais and Guillaume Peyraut. Finally, the mid-fifteenth-century treatises show the influence of humanist ideas and the importance of more specialised forms of education. The fifteenth-century treatises certainly prepare the way for the great educational treatises of the sixteenth century, such as The Governor of Sir Thomas Elyot and the Scolemaster of Roger Ascham.

## 2. Books of Chivalry

An English nobleman's education consisted of more than a training in letters. More important in some respects was the training in feats of arms and chivalry. Familiar with the romances of chivalry from his childhood, the young knight would probably yearn to emulate his favourite heroes. A number of romances appeared in various dialects of English during the late fourteenth century and the early fifteenth century. These are important because they kept chivalric idealism alive in an English setting when chivalry was in decline. Some Englishmen no doubt read the French manuscripts, but they must have been relatively few, despite a continued ability to use the language. It would appear that after the end of the Hundred Years War, the English upper classes would have had little access indeed to the main current of chivalric literature without the efforts of Malory and Caxton.[1] The writers of the medieval English

---

1. A.B. Ferguson, The Indian Summer of English Chivalry (North Carolina, 1960), pp.9-10.

chivalric romances, such as Floris and Blaunchflour and the Lyfe of Ipomydon, on occasion took trouble to include book learning as part of the training in polite accomplishments to which their heroes were subjected.[1] By far the greatest emphasis seems, however, to have been placed on the courtly or military accomplishments - carving, hunting, dancing, and, above all, fighting.

(a) Chronology and ownership

Unlike the educational treatises which proliferated in the thirteenth century, the main chivalric works may be discussed in a fifteenth-century context. It was then that many people wrote such works, or translated or edited for publication earlier works on the education and conduct proper to a knight and on the closely related subjects of warfare and heraldry. The English nobility of the fifteenth century did not establish a chivalric literature of its own but it would seem that Malory shared with Caxton a desire, through translation, to make the tradition of chivalry serve a didactic purpose.

Admittedly some works appear before the fifteenth century. One of the earliest tracts on chivalry is the well-known little poem of the thirteenth century, L'Ordène de Chevalerie. The Libre del Ordre de Cavallíra was the work of Ramon Lull, born c.1235. It is difficult, however, to determine how popular this work was in England in the thirteenth century, and it may have only gained general popularity in the late fifteenth century after Caxton's translation.[2] Lull's treatise is perhaps the most important work on chivalry in the period, but from the late fourteenth century, the number of works on the science of arms and on chivalry increase in number. On the one hand there were works actually written in the period. For instance, Honore Bonet wrote his Arbre des Batailles which was translated by Gilbert Hay in the fifteenth century. The De Studio Militari of Nicholas Upton appeared before 1446 and William Worcester wrote his Boke of Noblesse about 1475. On the other hand,

---

1. Ibid., p.183. On this subject in general see M.P. Cosman, The Education of the Hero in Arthurian Romance (Chapel Hill, 1966).

2. The Book of the Ordre of Chyvalry, ed. A.T.P. Byles (E.E.T.S., 1926).

many of the works which appeared were translations of earlier treatises on chivalry. For instance, an early translation of Vegetius appeared in 1408 and this was followed by another version, Knyghthode and Bataile, in 1458. The late fifteenth century saw another series of translations: the Declamation of Noblesse by John Tiptoft in 1460,[1] the Epistle of Othea to Hector translated by Stephen Scrope and Caxton's translation of the Fayttes of Armes and of Chyvalrye in 1489.

It is clear that the great age of chivalric literature was the fifteenth century. Why this is so remains uncertain. But it may be that the long period of decadence of chivalry encouraged many treatises to be written on the subject. The chivalric literature may be like the crusading literature of the fourteenth century: the fewer the actual crusades, the more the literature encouraging men to go on them.

We have far less information about the dedications and ownership of books of chivalry than we do about the educational treatises. Presumably this is because books of chivalry were not often written for members of the royal family. The Tractatus de armis was written, however, at the request of Queen Anne of Bohemia and the fifteenth century Boke of Noblesse was addressed to Edward IV. Translations of such works for the nobility were common. In 1408, the translator, writing at lord Thomas Berkeley's bidding, completed the first 'turning' of Vegetius for the pleasure of old knights and the instruction of younger warriors. Nine manuscripts from the fifteenth century bear witness to the popularity of this translation. Exactly half a century later, in 1458, an anonymous translator prepared for John, viscount Beaumont, the second English Vegetius, under the title, Knyghthode and Bataile.[2] The Declamation of Noblesse was actually translated by a nobleman, John Tiptoft, and the translation of the Epistle of Othea was done for Sir John Fastolf. Hawes dedicated

---

1. This text appears in R.J. Mitchell, John Tiptoft (London, 1938).

2. H.N. MacCracken, 'Vegetius in English', in Kittredge Anniversary Essays (Boston, 1918), pp.389-94.

his Pastime of Pleasure to Henry VII. When we turn to specific instances of ownership we find that in 1446, Alesia, countess of Salisbury, was bequeathed a French book 'Gyron le Curtasse'.[1] Sir John Fastolf owned a book described as 'Veges de l'arte Chevalrie', clearly a fifteenth-century version of Vegetius.[2] The Pastons had a copy of the Epistle of Othea to Hector and L'Arbre de Bataille and many other 'books of chivalry'.[3]

(b) The subject matter of the books of chivalry

(i) Ramon Lull

The famous treatise Libre del Ordre de Cavallíra was written by Ramon Lull, born at Palma in Majorca about 1235. It was quickly translated into French and the number of extant manuscripts testifies to its popularity. In 1456, it was translated, with many additions by Sir Gibert Hay, who was also responsible for the translation of another popular work on medieval warfare and chivalry, the Arbre des Batailles, written about 1382, by Honore Bonet.[4] Caxton's edition of Lull's work appeared in 1489 and he stresses, even more than Lull, the aristocratic conception of chivalry. He insists that chivalry is the preserve of a privileged class:[5]

> 'This book is not requisite to every comyn man to have, but to noble gentylmen, that by their vertu entende to come and entre into the noble ordre of chyvalry'

The most significant feature of Lull's treatise is that, instead of the practical education in the noble household, he advocated the foundation of schools in which the knight, like the clerk, could be taught the principles of his order by means of books:

---

1. Testamenta Eboracensia, ii (Surtees Society, xxx, 1855), p.123.
2. Bennett, The Pastons and their England, pp.110-11.
3. Ibid., pp.260-1.
4. Byles, 'Medieval Courtesy books', 190-1.
5. The Book of the Ordre of Chyvalry, p.xxxix.

> 'hit is nedeful that ther be holden to hym (the knight) a scole of the ordre of knyghthode and that the scyence were wreton in bookes and that the arte were showed and redde in suche maner as other scyences ben redde ...'[1]

As a result, Lull has been accused of expressing the idea that skill in arms could be learned from books. This does not seem justified. He did not want to abolish the period of training, he merely wished to add to it some formal study in books. Clearly practical experience was essential:[2]

> 'Knights ought to take coursers to juste and to go to tornoyes to holde open table, to hunte at hertes, at bores and other wyld bestes ...'[3]

Not only was the knight to exercise himself in arms, but he was to 'speke nobly and curtoisly'[4] and his nobility would ultimately derive not from externals but from the virtue which comes from within.[5]

Lull's treatise was perhaps the central work on chivalry in the period, from which many other texts may have been derived. One such text may be the poem L'Ordre de Chevalries, edited by Meyer in 1886, of which three English manuscripts survive. The Cambridge manuscript used for the edition was written about 1300, and although the poem was composed in France, it seems to have enjoyed popularity in England.[6]

From the late fourteenth century, the number of works on the science of arms and on chivalry increase in number. To Iohannes de Bado Aureo has been given the credit for writing the first Latin treatise on the science of arms in this country. His treatise was made at the command of Anne of Bohemia and

---

1. Ibid., p.22.
2. See S. Painter, French Chivalry (Baltimore, 1940), p.81.
3. The Book of the Ordre of Chyvalry, p.31.
4. Ibid., p.113.
5. Ibid., p.114.
6. P. Meyer, 'Manuscrits Français de Cambridge', Romania, xv (1886), 346. See also Meyer in Romania, xxxvi (1907), 529, for another version of the poem.

and was completed shortly after 1394, the year of the queen's death.[1] It is significant that the queen's command for a book on heraldry was given soon after the Scrope and Grosvenor case had been finally settled.[2] During the case much prominence had been given to the question of the right to wear particular coats of arms and presumably the subject of heraldry was a very topical one.

(ii) Vegetius

The spread of most classical works began in the Carolingian renaissance and the De Re Militari of Flavius Vegetius was no exception. Some noble families clearly kept their copies of Vegetius through until the eleventh and twelfth centuries.[3] In 1147 Geoffrey Plantagenet is said to have consulted Vegetius while he was besieging Chateau Gaillard and a special translation was presented to Edward I prior to his accession.[4] Not only was Vegetius popular, but he was taken up and incorporated into other popular works such as the political manuals of Alfonso X of Castile and Aegidius Romanus. Throughout the fifteenth century in England, Vegetius's work enjoyed great popularity. It was translated as early as 1408 and the late middle English poetical version, extant in three manuscripts, was probably composed in 1458. It presents a picture, derived from Vegetius, of the state of the Imperial army in the Western provinces at the end of the fourth century A.D.[5] Another early fifteenth century work on chivalry was the De Studio Militari of Nicholas Upton, translated by John Blount, c.1500. It was certainly written before 1446 as

---

1. Tractatus de Armis of Iohannes de Bado Aureo, ed. E.J. Jones (Cardiff, 1932), p.1.

2. Ibid., p.4.

3. A. Murray, Reason and Society, p.129.

4. R.F. Green, Poets and Princepleasers, p.145; L. Thorpe, 'Mastre Richard; A thirteenth century translation of the De Re Militari of Vegetius', Scriptorium, vi (1952), 39-50.

5. Knyghthode and Bataile, ed. R. Dyboski and Z.M. Arend (E.E.T.S., 1936).

it was dedicated to Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, who died in that year.[1] Most of the early chapters of the De Studio are devoted to obscure and lengthy legal discussion and to history of the Geoffrey of Monmouth character, presumably reflecting the tastes of Upton's audience. It is difficult to see how this sort of treatise could have had much practical application.

But turning to the later part of the fifteenth century, we can see that chivalric literature was still flourishing. The Boke of Noblesse, addressed to King Edward IV on his invasion of France in 1475 and written by William Worcester, is remarkable in its advocation of ancient chivalric images. It sets forth 'How lordis sonnes and noble men of birthe, for the defense of ther lande, shulde exercise hem in armes and lernyng'.[2] Henry, duke of Lancaster, he wrote, had had sent to him from princes and lords of strange regions, their children, young knights 'to be doctrined, lerned and brought up in his noble court, in scole of arms and for to see noblesse, curtesie and worship'. This practice, according to the writer, was of late falling by the wayside and should be maintained.

It was almost a decade later that Caxton translated his Fayttes of Armes[3] from Le Livre des faits d'armes et de chevaleries of Christine de Pisan. The fifteen surviving manuscripts (one, a present to Margaret of Anjou from John Talbot, first earl of Shrewsbury)[4] testify to the popularity of the work. The greater part of the treatise is a compilation from the works of Vegetius, Frontinus, Valerius Maximus and Honore Bonet, and it belongs to a period when the pure ideals of chivalry had given place to ceremonial observances and extravagant displays:

---

1. The Essential Portions of Nicholas Upton's De Studio Militari, ed. F.P. Barnard (Oxford, 1931).

2. The Boke of Noblesse, ed. J.G. Nichols (Roxburghe Club, 1860), p.76.

3. The Book of Fayttes of Armes and of Chyvalrye, ed. A.T.P. Byles (E.E.T.S., 1937).

4. Brit. Lib., MS. Royal 15 E vi.

> 'The auncient noble men made not theyre children to be norisshed in the kyngis and prynces courtes for to lerne pryde, lechery, nor to were wanton clothing.'[1]

Like Lull, she advocated a strict education for youths who aspired to knighthood. Of the ancient noblemen she writes:

> '..when theyre children were com to xiiii yere of age they made hem to be taught in al suche thynge that longueth to knyghthed and in faites of werre. And is to write that there were in certayn places propre scoles where they were induced. And taught to were harneys and handlyng of staves and deffensyng and the fayt and the wayes of the same ...'[2]

The Pastime of Pleasure of Stephen Hawes, dedicated to Henry VII, is a rather different work in that it is an educational treatise for a knight under the cover of an allegorical romance.[3] It contains little that is original on the subject of chivalry. The most significant feature is the blending of a course of training in the Seven Arts with the winning of a fair lady of higher degree than the suitor. In connection with this theme, Hawes discusses the role of music in the life of a chivalrous knight. It is interesting to have this subject actually considered in a treatise since evidence leads us to believe that certain noble families, notably the family of Henry Bolingbroke, had musical leanings.[4] It would be surprising if this were not so, since music was an essential part of the services of the church and if we may trust the romances, it was indispensable at feasts and at times of public rejoicing.

The chivalric treatises of the fifteenth century present a fairly unified picture mainly because they were, in general, translations of earlier works advocating exercise in arms, the knightly virtues and schools to formalise the training for knighthood. The habit of fifteenth-century Englishmen of leaning

---

1. The Book of Fayttes of Armes, p.29.
2. Ibid., p.29.
3. The Pastime of Pleasure, ed. W. Mead (E.E.T.S., 1928).
4. See, for instance, J.L. Kirby, Henry IV of England (London, 1970), p.254 and cap.III, p.98.

upon the writings of others makes it much harder than it would otherwise have been to evaluate the thought of either the writer, his patron, or his reader at large. If, as it seems, the volume of chivalric literature increased in the fifteenth century, it could be due as much to the rise in the total number of people capable of buying the books and reading them as to an increased interest in the subject.

### 3. Practical works and courtesy literature

There can be no doubt that practical handbooks for use in a baronial household and courtesy literature form the most important group of books from the point of view of a nobleman's education. The two groups differ greatly, but they are considered together here because the advice they give is, in each case, more practically-based than that of the chivalric treatises and the educational works.

#### (a) Bartholomaeus Anglicus and the Rules of St Robert

Two practical works, the De Proprietatibus Rerum of Bartholomaeus Anglicus and the Rules of Robert Grosseteste, appeared c.1230, before the first texts of the courtesy tracts are in evidence. How popular Bartholomaeus's work was in the early middle ages is difficult to say but certainly by the late fourteenth century and the early fifteenth century the De Proprietatibus Rerum was appearing in noble booklists, for example among Thomas of Woodstock's books in 1397.[1] At almost the same time, John Trevisa made his translation into English of Bartholomaeus's treatise for the Berkeley family at Berkeley castle.[2] The treatise is also to be found in Sir John Fastolf's library in the mid-fifteenth century,[3] and presumably its translation into English had by then guaranteed its wide circulation.

---

1. Dillon, 'Inventory of the goods and chattels belonging to Thomas, duke of Gloucester', Archaeological Journal, liv (1897), 287-308.

2. R.F. Green, Poets and Princepleasers, p.154.

3. Bennett, op.cit., pp.110-11.

The work has been described as the 'most widely disseminated encyclopaedia' of its day.[1] Its author was born in England of Norman parentage and studied at the university of Paris in the 1230s. His main source for his work was the Locus Medicius by the Salernitan physician, Constantine the African (d.1087), whose translation from Arabic represented the major means of transmission of Greek, Arabic and Jewish scholarship to the West.[2] Bartholomaeus is above all interesting from our point of view for what he says of the early care of the child. The duties of the nurse are fully discussed and it becomes clear that these include not only the physical care of the child, but also the display of affection which is now considered the mother's preserve. Bartholomaeus is also interesting for his comments on the different stages of a child's development. The first stage, infancia, lasts seven years and consists of an initial seven months when the child has no teeth and then 'childehood that bredith teeth strecchith and durith seven yere'.[3] Afterwards comes the second period called puericia which lasts from the age of seven to fourteen. Thereafter comes the age that is called adholoscencia or the age of 'a younge stripelinge' which lasts to the end of the twenty-first year. It is in the second period that the child:

> '....is abil to fonde chastisinge and love and thanne
> he is iput and sette to lore undir tutours...'[4]

Bartholomaeus insists that the father must treat his child with harshness and severity. He should teach him with scoldings and beatings, put him under wardens and tutors and above all show 'no glad cheer lest the child wax proud'.[5]

---

1. M. Goodich, 'Bartholomaeus Anglicus on Child Rearing', History of Childhood Quarterly, iii (1975), 75.

2. G.E. SeBoyar, 'Bartholomaeus Anglicus and His Encyclopaedia', Journal of English and Germanic Philology, xix (1920), 182-4.

3. On the Properties of Things: John Trevisa's Translation of Bartholomaeus Anglicus, De proprietatibus rerum, ed. M.C. Seymour (Oxford, 1975), p.291.

4. Ibid., p.300.

5. On this point see M. Goodich, 'Bartholomaeus Anglicus on Child rearing'.

Bartholomaeus's work is the supreme example of a treatise on the very early care of children. At about the same time, another practical work of instruction appeared: the Rules of Robert Grosseteste, written for the benefit of the countess of Lincoln.[1] Only a small part of the text (Rules 1-7 and 24-8) is concerned with the administration and farming of the estate. The larger part of the work deals with the supervision of a baronial household. There is an interesting passage where the bishop advises the countess, should a dispute arise 'to study your rolls concerning that manor and answer them accordingly and so have justice maintained'.[2] The Rules of Robert Grosseteste show that educational works were not concerned solely with the instruction of the young members of a noble family.

(b) Courtesy literature

(i) Chronology and popularity

Unlike the educational treatises which proliferated in the thirteenth century and the chivalric treatises which were most popular in the fifteenth century, courtesy literature spans the whole period. There are several manuscripts of one of the earliest courtesy tracts, Urbain le Courtois, of 1250-1300. But it is in the fourteenth century that more courtesy books appear. Geoffrey de la Tour Landry wrote his book for his daughters in 1371-2. It was translated in the reign of Henry VI and Caxton printed it in 1484. The earliest surviving manuscript of The Good Wife Taught Her Daughter dates from 1350 and the anonymous How the Wyse Man Taught Hys Sone dates from about the same time. The fifteenth century saw a great number of courtesy books: two anonymous Books of Curtasye appeared before John Russell's Boke of Nurture in the mid-fifteenth century. Tracts such as Stans Puer ad Mensam, Urbanitatis and the Babees Book (1475) were written towards the end of the century. Peter Idley's Instructions to His Son was written at about this time.

---

1. D. Oschinsky, 'Medieval Treatises on Estate Management', Econ. Hist. Rev., viii (1956), 296-309.

2. Walter of Henley, ed. D. Oschinsky (Oxford, 1971), p.388.

The lack of courtesy books before the mid-thirteenth century and their great popularity in the fifteenth century is difficult to explain. One reason for this may lie in the pattern of education itself: the education of noble boys in other noble households was becoming more common throughout the period, particularly in the fifteenth century, causing an expansion in the literature on the subject. Other reasons may lie with the nature of society and the court themselves. The proliferation of courtesy books suggests a society which was becoming more stratified at the top.[1] The word 'gentleman' or 'generosus' had acquired a specialised meaning since the beginning of the fifteenth century.[2] The preoccupation with stratification within society can be seen in a greater consciousness of the need to distinguish between ranks at a time when general prosperity was eroding the outward distinctions between the classes (something seen, for instance, in the sumptuary legislation of 1363).[3] The large number of books of nurture and courtesy from the reign of Richard II may well also reflect the guidance required for those whose business it was to conduct formal occasions. The Babees Book describes the intricate procedure of seating people at table, from the Pope who 'hath no peer' down to the 'gentleman well-nurtured and of good manners' - there was a place for everybody.[4] The courtesy books may also be the result of a more elaborate, magnificent and highly-organised court, as under Edward IV, and of foreign influences such as the ideas imported, especially during Edward IV's reign, from the Burgundian court.[5]

---

1. K.B. McFarlane, The Nobility of Later Medieval England (Oxford, 1973), p.122.

2. G.R. Sitwell, 'The English Gentleman', The Ancestor, i (1902), 58-103.

3. McFarlane, op.cit., p.122.

4. See The Babees Book, ed. F.J. Furnivall (E.E.T.S., xxxii, 1867), pp. 186-94.

5. On Burgundian influence see G. Kipling, The Triumph of Honour: Burgundian Origins of the Elizabethan Renaissance (Leiden, 1977).

At any rate the popularity which these courtesy books enjoyed in England is attested by the large number of manuscript texts written both in Anglo-Norman and English, which are extant in British libraries. Their popularity increased steadily after the invention of printing, and there is a reference to them in As You Like It, V.iv.95... 'as you have books of good manners'. In these works, with the exception of Urbain le Courtois, the advice is never presented in the form of true parental instruction. This is not surprising. Medieval courtesy books were rules of conduct written for those nobleman's or gentleman's children (particularly boys) who were sent away from their own homes to learn manners in the house of some distinguished person. An important place among these rules was given to those which taught young people how to behave at table. Once again, the romances had their part to play in presenting these rules of courtesy. In Tryamore, we learn that:

> 'The child was taught great nurterye
> A master had him under his care
> And taught him curtesie ...'[1]

The romance of Blonde of Oxford also demonstrates the application of the rules of courtesy.[2] Jehan of Dammartin is taken into the service of the Earl of Oxford as esquire. He waits at table on knights, esquires, valets, boys and messengers. After table, the ladies keep him to talk French with them.

(ii) Urbain le Courtois

Whatever their general popularity, it is certainly true that it was during the second half of the thirteenth century that we see the emergence of courtesy books intended for instructing noble boys. They were mostly written for youths, giving details of a page's service, mingled with moral precepts of a more general nature. As H.R. Parsons has commented:

---

1. Cited by Furnivall in Manners and Meals in Olden Time (E.E.T.S., 1867), p.v.

2. The Romance of Blonde of Oxford and Jehan of Dammartin, ed. M. de Lincy (Camden Society, old ser., lxxii, 1858).

> 'The little Norman pages were instructed in no fantastic chivalry such as bound the heroes of the romances, but in doctrine calculated to assure their success in this world, without endangering their chances in the next.'[1]

The five Anglo-Norman treatises studied by Parsons in 1929 were found in eight manuscripts, five of which are in the Bodleian Library, Oxford (the earliest dating from between 1250 and 1300), two in the library of Trinity College Cambridge (one dating from the early fourteenth century and one c.1415) and one in the Cambridge University library (fourteenth century).[2] Four of the works exist only in a single version; the fifth, commonly referred to as Urbain le Courtois, is known to exist in eight manuscripts.

The general stock of moral ideas in these courtesy books seems to have been drawn largely from those very popular sayings which the Middle ages attributed to the third-century Dionysius Cato, and called the Disticha Catonis. Certain phrases of the Urbain strongly recall lines in the French versions of Cato.

The contrast between the tone and content of the earlier and later versions of Urbain le Courtois is marked enough to show a change of ideas. For instance, one fifteenth-century text advocates the social importance of speaking French well since 'that tongue is beloved of gentlefolk' (ll.18-20). Such a recommendation would be a commonplace towards the close of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth centuries, when French was still firmly established as the language of the court and good society, and some of the early versions do not have this passage. By the fifteenth century it was different. English had supplanted French in every sphere except that of law. The famous passage from Trevisa's commentary on Higden's Polycronicon, describing the substitution of English for French in school teaching, refers to 1385, 'Even the nobility have now ceased to teach their children French' (cap.lix). It is

---

1. H.R. Parsons, 'Anglo-Norman books of courtesy and nurture', P.M.L.A., xliv (1929), 383.

2. The Cambridge university library text is fully described by P. Meyer in Romania, xv, 284.

therefore not surprising to find that the scribe of the Trinity College Cambridge MS. B.14.40 (c.1415) included the passage on the speaking of French.

The early versions of Urbain begin as if they were addressing a very little boy, and the precepts are simple and reminiscent of the Ten Commandments. For instance, the boy is encouraged to love and serve God, and to go to church (25), to honour his father and mother (31), and to slander no one (105). These maxims are interspersed with advice as to a page's behaviour at table and where he is to stand etc. If he goes to school, the boy must respect his master (ll.95-8). The poet of the earlier version also looks to the future, warning the boy against taverns and evil company (117-20).

Turning to the later versions of the Urbain, we find that the page is no longer a little boy, but a perfect knight in the making. There are the same precepts on loving and serving God, but the practical table details are gone. The young man has now to turn his attention to the needs of talking soberly, of getting to know the right people and of completing his education by going about everywhere:

> 'Aletz partout entre la gent,
> Si orrez de plusours afaitment
> Kar jammes, jeo vous affye
> Ne serrez altrement nurrie ...' (ll.149-152)

Moreover he must love horses and arms and know how to choose them (l.157). When he becomes lord of the manor, he will have the right to give in marriage the wards and widowed ladies under his protection, to allow benefices to favoured clerks and to reward his squire with escheats and lands accruing to him through lack of heirs (ll.175-80).

The poems Edward[1] and Bon enfant[2] add little to the picture of manners given by the Urbain. Edward has more of a clerical flavour, stressing complete subservience to God. But it does point out that all sorts of games, especially chess and backgammon, are essential to the well nurtured (ll.229-32).

---

1. MS. Bodley 425, f.107, printed Parsons, op.cit., 420-8.
2. MS. Bodley 425, f.112, printed Parsons, op.cit., 428-30.

The Apprise de Nurture and the Petit Traitise,[1] both only known in a single fifteenth-century manuscript, are rather different types of poem from the Urbain and the Edward. The change in the title to Apprise de Nurture is significant, since we are no longer considering knightly courtesy, but ordinary good behaviour to be observed by any well brought up person. These treatises deal almost entirely with table manners. The subject of the advice is obviously still very young; the Petit Traitise tells the small boy to sit beside the other children while he is one of them (l.169), not to hurt his companions at play (l.179). The Apprise is intended for someone older, for although it is full of elementary rules for table manners, it has a passage on behaviour with women (175-8).

These were not the only courtesy books, but we have to wait until the fifteenth century until we find their middle English equivalents. Not surprisingly, the fifteenth-century courtesy books are most like the Apprise and the Petit Traitise which are of that date, but at the same time we find a few passages resembling the Urbain. The courtesy books are on the whole concerned with practical nurture for anyone with aspirations to breeding, rather than with knightly courtesy, which was intended only for the chosen few whose birth made them worthy of such instruction.

Since courtesy books aimed at directing social intercourse between the sexes, it is natural to find the same precepts in treatises composed for the ladies as in those written for the knights. In 1371-2, Geoffrey de la Tour Landry in the Livre written for his daughters said:

> 'Courtoisie est le premier chemin et l'entrée de toute amistie et amour mondraine...et pour tant est belle chose d'estre courtoise..se vos monstré vostre courtoisie,aux petits et aux petites.' (cap.x)

Geoffrey's design was to write a treatise on the domestic education of women and he compiled a similar book (which does not survive) for the use of his

---

1. MS. Bodley 9, f.61v-67r; MS. Bodley 9, f.81v-85v.

sons.[1] The treatise for women was very popular. Nearly a dozen copies of the original text are known to exist in manuscript form. The Livre was translated into English in the reign of Henry VI but how well it was known in England before then is difficult to say. The Good Wife Taught Her Daughter is, in fact, the earliest extant instruction written for a lay woman in English literature, the earliest surviving manuscript dating from c.1350.[2] The treatise itself follows a fairly conventional pattern. The instruction deals mainly with churchgoing, almsgiving, behaviour towards a suitor, and later, the husband, moderation in general and particularly with regard to drink. Above all, the lady of the household was to be vigilant over the servant's work and the education of children. How the Wyse Man Taught Hys Sone exists in six texts and describes how a man teaches his fifteen-year old son his language and manners in order to fit him to be his heir (11.9-16).[3] A fifteenth-century treatise, Peter Idley's Instructions to His Son, was composed about 1445-50 by a country squire, later to be connected with the royal court. It is preserved in eight manuscripts, seven of which date from the fifteenth century, which suggests that the work was fairly popular in its own day.[4] The treatise is notable, for Peter recommends to his son the study of law as a road to livelihood, yet he also implies that his son will inherit land and goods (I.132).

Peter Idley's Instructions was only one of a number of manuals of manners and courtesy which were common in the fifteenth century in England.[5] The Boke of Nurture was written by John Russell, who describes himself at the beginning and end of his Treatise as usher and marshal to Humphrey of Gloucester, delighting in his work in his youth, leaving it only when compelled by old age

---

1. The Book of the Knight of La Tour Landry, ed. T. Wright (E.E.T.S., 1868), p.xii.

2. The Good Wife Taught Her Daughter, ed. T.F. Mustanoja (Helsinki, 1948).

3. How the Wyse Man Taught Hys Sone, ed. R. Fischer (Erlangen, 1889).

4. Peter Idley's Instructions to His Son, ed. C.D'Evelyn (Boston, 1935).

5. Many of these have been edited: The Boke of Curtasye, ed. J.O. Halliwell (Percy Society, iv, 1841); Manners and Meals in Olden Time; A Fifteenth Century Courtesy Book, ed. R.W. Chambers (E.E.T.S., 1914).

and then anxious to train up worthy successors. The treatise Urbanitatis (c.1460) is interesting because of the mention of the booke of urbanitie in Edward IV's household book.[1] In this book we are told of the demeanour of the youth, how mannerly he should eat and drink:

> 'In halle, in chambur, ore where thou gou,
> Nurtur and good maners makith man' (11.33-4)

The Babees Book or the 'lytyl reporte' of how young people should behave, follows a similar pattern. The advice is the same 'swete children, have alwey your delyte in curtesye and in verrey gentylnesse ..'

The courtesy books are undoubtedly the most important form of educational literature for reflecting the true character of a nobleman's education and are far more significant in this respect than the works of Dubois or the mirrors of princes. We know from the household book of Edward IV[2] that there was a general training in social accomplishments and courtesy, and the Chronicle of Lanercost gives an account of a thirteenth-century example of the practical application of the rules of courtesy. It happened that Richard de Clare, earl of Gloucester, was dining with Robert Grosseteste. At table, the earl was seated at the right hand of his host, who ordered the attendants to serve him everything first. The servants placed a large fish before the bishop and a small one before the earl. Grosseteste apparently said to the steward, 'Take that fish away from me or give one of equal size to the earl'. The servants then claimed that they could not find another so large. 'Then', said the bishop, 'set aside the whole of this for alms and give me a smaller one like the rest'. The proceedings so much surprised the earl of Gloucester that he asked the bishop how he, a man of humble birth, had acquired so much courtesy:

> '...vellem libenter edoceri unde tanta curialitas
> posset oriri ...'[3]

---

1. A.R. Myers, The Household of Edward IV (Manchester, 1959), p.127.
2. Ibid., pp.126-7.
3. Chronicon de Lanercost, ed. J. Stevenson (Edinburgh, 1839), p.44.

There was no shortage of educational literature for noblemen and their children in the period 1150 to 1475. The educational treatises of the thirteenth century were followed by manuals of courtesy and works of chivalry in the late fourteenth century and throughout the fifteenth century. While it seems that the courtesy literature really lies at the heart of a nobleman's education, there is considerable evidence of dedications to noblemen and of noble ownership of the more conventional educational works, such as the De Regimine of Aegidius Romanus. More significantly, we shall be seeing that the ideas put forward in these works were not merely abstract theory: the royal and noble household accounts of the period and the chronicles confirm that, in the main, educational literature reflected the pattern of education in noble households in England between the thirteenth and the fifteenth centuries.

# CHAPTER II

## EDUCATION IN THE ENGLISH ROYAL HOUSEHOLD, c.1150-c.1450

It has been suggested that the study of education in the royal household in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries is a difficult and unrewarding pursuit. Dr N.I. Orme, writing of the period after 1200, has commented that 'for the next two centuries, little can be gathered about royal education'.[1] Admittedly, the evidence is sparse. It is only under Edward I that material on the upbringing of the king's children begins to proliferate, thanks largely to the increasing volume of the wardrobe records, and even these records tail off towards the end of the fourteenth century. Clearly, therefore, it is the reigns of the three Edwards that will give the most detailed picture of education in the royal household, but we should also consider the indications that there was some form of education there over a longer period. From the evidence, we can begin to trace a pattern of education and what was taught. We can look closely at the evidence about tutors, magistri and magistre in the royal household, and also consider the education there of children from other households.

Education is a very broad term and could (and did, in the middle ages) imply a training in feats of arms and in manners as well as in letters. The precise degree of education of the early English kings can never be more than a matter of personal opinion, the more so since, King Alfred apart, they have left few or no written records.[2] But even if we consider 'education' in the more restricted sense of an ability to read and write, and equate it with literacy, three general points emerge. Firstly, from the twelfth century

---

1. N.I. Orme, English Schools in the Middle Ages (London, 1973), p.22.

2. V.H. Galbraith, 'The Literacy of the Medieval English Kings', Proc. Brit. Acad., xxi (1935), 201-38.

almost all kings were literate.[1] Secondly, from the early thirteenth century we can also say something about the general education of kings and princes and their reading tastes. Finally, from the early fourteenth century comes the first evidence that the king could write. This is the famous 'Pater Sancte' letter which Edward III, then under the domination of Queen Isabella and Roger Mortimer, sent to Pope John XXII in 1330, to say that the king's own personal requests for grants of benefices to his subjects would be addressed 'Pater Sancte' in the king's own hand.[2] Richard II began the regular practice of attesting documents with his signature or 'sign manual' instead of merely using a seal.[3]

Admittedly, the evidence for the literary training in the education of princes becomes much stronger with the rise to power of the house of Lancaster in 1399.[4] Nevertheless, these few points about the literacy of the English kings from the Conquest to 1400 do show that a training in letters always had a part in the wider scheme of education in the royal household.

1. Those responsible for the education of the king's children

The men and women responsible for the education of the royal children (see also Appendix to this chapter) must have exercised great influence, especially as the royal parents and their children, and in particular the young children, were often separated for long periods. Admittedly, the existing accounts from Edward I's wardrobe show that most of the children were

---

1. See C.W. David, Robert Curthose (Harvard, 1920), p.6. For Henry II's early education see The Historical Works of Gervase of Canterbury, ed. W. Stubbs, i (Rolls Series, 1879), p.125.

2. C. Johnson and H. Jenkinson, English Court Hand (Oxford, 1915), i, 174-5; ii, plate xxiib.

3. Orme, Schools, p.24.

4. Ibid., p.25.

with their parents for at least parts of the year. It appears fair to conclude, again from the evidence of wardrobe material, that the queen spent as much time as possible with her offspring, and that generally speaking, the elder children were considered able to withstand the strain of constant travel. In fact, Edward's three elder daughters, Eleanor, Joan and Margaret, were with the king and queen almost constantly until Joan and Margaret were married. But the younger children spent their days at Langley, Woodstock, or at another of the royal manors, and joined the king and queen only on special occasions, such as family weddings or public ceremonies.[1]

Although separated from his children for parts of the year, Edward I reveals, in some letters which survive from the early fourteenth century, a concern for his offspring. On 6 May 1305 Edward wrote to his sons, Thomas and Edmund, then respectively five and four years old, before visiting them at Kempton Park to indulge in hunting. He wrote that he had been very pleased to hear from them that they had recovered from their illness, that he was now in good health as well, and that Thomas and Edmund were to prepare for his arrival and make things just as easy for him at Kempton as their brother, Edward of Carnarvon, had done at Kings Langley. Although Edward seems to have expected from his children rather more than their age warranted, he was genuinely interested in their well-being.[2] This was shown again when, after another member had been added to the royal family by the birth of Eleanor on 4 May 1306, Edward wrote on 21 September to Margery de Haustede,[3] expressing surprise that he had received no news from her of his children, and asking about their progress and how they played and behaved. He was particularly concerned that Margery should carefully watch his baby daughter and tell him what she thought of her.[4]

---

1. The Court and Household of Eleanor of Castile in 1290, ed. J.C. Parsons (Toronto, 1977), pp.9-10.
2. P. Chaplais, 'Some private letters of Edward I', Eng. Hist. Rev., lxxvii (1962), 84-5.
3. Margery was probably the wife of Robert de Haustede, see The Complete Peerage, vi, p.402; C. Moor, Knights of Edward I, ii (Harleian Society, lxxxi, 1929), pp.203-4.
4. P. Chaplais, 'Some private letters of Edward I', 86.

(a) The nurses and cradle-rockers

It is clear, however, that the royal parents could not be involved with their children all the time, and the evidence of royal accounts shows that throughout the early years of the infant the services of the nurse and of the berceresse or rocker were extremely important. Sir Harris Nicolas quotes from the 'Array of Her Majesty's Infants' in Henry VII's time, an order that a child shall be 'hadde into the nursery where it shall be nourished with a lady gouvernour to the nursery nurse with four chamberers as rockers'.[1] An indenture for materials delivered for the use of Queen Margaret, second wife of Edward I, in the chamber of Thomas of Brotherton 'desus et desous le primer iour de sa nesance' (i.e. 1 June 1300) mentions the presence of the berceresse and shows that her services were required from the moment of the royal child's birth.[2]

As early as the mid-twelfth century we can see that the nurse had an important role. Richard the Lionheart was handed over to a wet nurse named Hodierna and he seems to have remembered her with affection. More than thirty years later, when he became king, he granted her a generous pension. She became a wealthy and, in her own part of the world, a famous woman - perhaps the only wet nurse in history to have a place named after her, the Wiltshire parish of Knoyle Hodierne.[3]

From the late twelfth century, there are many isolated references to nurses. We hear of Matilda de Nerlawe 'formerly' nurse to King John.[4] It seems clear that Edward I's nurse, Alice de Luton, was greatly esteemed,[5]

---

1. Privy Purse Expenses of Elizabeth of York, ed. N.H. Nicolas (London, 1830), p.219.

2. P.R.O., E 101/357/20.

3. J.B. Gillingham, Richard the Lionheart (London, 1978), p.32.

4. P.R.O., SC 1/62/3.

5. P.R.O., E 101/349/19 (expenses of Queen's chamber 1252-3). J.R. Studd, A Catalogue of the Acts of the Lord Edward 1254-72 (Unpublished Leeds Ph.D. thesis, 1971), p.338, nos.292, 600.

accompanying the queen to Gascony in 1254 and as late as 1278 receiving timber as a mark of the king's gratitude.[1] His sister Margaret had a nurse named Isabella de Valle who was apparently still associated with her charge when at the age of eleven she married and became queen of Scotland.[2] There is also an interesting reference to 'Typhania nutrex et magistra' of Isabella, queen of Edward II, in the list of burials in the London Friars Minors.[3] Later, in the 1330s, we know that Philippa of Hainault entrusted the immediate care of her son, Edward, to Matilda de Plympton, the baby's cradle rocker and Joan of Oxenford, his nurse.[4]

But it is in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries that a general pattern emerges for this first stage of royal upbringing, largely due to the proliferation of the wardrobe material under Edward I. For instance, in 1273 in the household of Henry, son of Edward I, we know that a general superintendence was exercised by the knight, Sir Geoffrey de Picheforde who was constable of Windsor and custos puerorum regis in eodem castro existencium.[5] There were three nurses within the household, Amicia, Cecilia and Mabel and each of these ladies had a robe worth 30s8d, second only in value to that provided for Sir Geoffrey himself. Amicia de Derneforde, possibly of Durnford, Wiltshire, served as nurse for Henry. As 'nurse of Henry the king's

---

1. Cal.Pat.Rolls, 1247-58, p.376; Cal.Close Rolls, 1272-9, p.468.

2. P.R.O., E 101/349/8.

3. Brit. Lib., MS. Harl.544, f.52 (In choir ambulatory, S.side) 'sub lapide insculpta imagine mulierum iacet domina Typhania nutrex et magistra nobil' domine Isabelle regine Anglie'. I am grateful to Dr W.J. Blair for this reference.

4. B.C. Hardy, Philippa of Hainault and Her Times (London, 1910), p.66.

5. See H. Johnstone, 'The wardrobe and household of Henry, son of Edward I', B.J.R.L., vii (1922-3), 387. This article prints P.R.O., E 101/350/18.

son, lately deceased', she received on 7 February 1275, a grant of land worth £10 yearly and this grant was renewed in 1288.[1] Cecilia de Cleware, of Clewer in Berkshire, was the nurse of the king's daughter, Eleanor, and she later went on to do further service as nurse to another daughter of Edward I, Margaret.[2]

Perhaps the most interesting person from our point of view was Alicia de La Grave, the berceresse shared by Henry, Eleanor and John of Brittany. It is probable that this was Alice, wife of Reginald of Leygrave, described in letters close of 1313 as the king's nurse 'who suckled him in his youth'.[3] On Midsummer Day 1289, when Edward, now five years old was at Havering, 4d was paid 'cuidam garcioni eunti in nuncio ad dominam Aliciam nutricem filii regis' at Iselamsted, now Chenies, Bucks.[4] It is clear that Alice remained a member of Edward's household till he married and that she was later in the service of the queen.[5] She went abroad with Queen Isabella in 1313 and 1314[6] and favours were showered on her and her relatives. For instance, her husband Reginald was exempted from being placed on juries, assizes, and recognizances as long as his wife remained in royal service,[7] and in 1309, Francis of Scotland, Alice's son-in-law, received similar exemption.[8] Alice herself was

---

1. Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1272-81, p.79; Cal.Close Rolls, 1279-88, p.520.
2. Cal.Close Rolls, 1272-9, p.296.
3. Cal.Close Rolls, 1307-13, p.581.
4. P.R.O., C 47/3/22, m.1.
5. She is described as a 'domicella camere regine' in a wardrobe book of 1311-12, Bodleian Library, MS. Tanner 197, f.54v.
6. P.R.O., E 101/375/9. Isabella's household book records a payment for Alice de la Legrave in France, f.21r. See also Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1307-13, p.581, and Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1313-17, p.86.
7. Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1281-92, p.228.
8. Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1307-13, p.180.

given in 1310 the marriage and custody of the lands of the heir of Alice, daughter of William de Gouiz, during his minority,[1] and in 1311, she was given the custody of the manor of Horsington, Somerset, late of William Russell.[2]

Wardrobe accounts of the early fourteenth century reveal a similar pattern in the early upbringing of Thomas of Brotherton and Edmund of Woodstock. Like Henry, they had their own berceresse and nurses. For instance, Thomas of Brotherton had a berceresse named Erembourge until he was at least five or six years old.[3] The berceresse of Edmund of Woodstock was named Perrette de Poissy and she remained in his service until 1305-6.[4] Just as they had separate 'rockers' so Thomas of Brotherton and Edmund of Woodstock had their own nurses. Mabel de Raundes and Beatrice de Feribrigg are both named as nurses of Thomas of Brotherton,[5] while Edmund of Woodstock had nurses called Margaret and Anastasia la Chaumberlayne.[6]

These nurses and rockers were clearly not women of social standing and, except in a very few instances, such as that of Alice of Leygrave, they were shadowy figures about whom we know very little. However, the accounts show that within the royal household, the nurses and rockers had considerable importance, and in the rolls of liveries they frequently appear alongside

---

1. Ibid., p.264.

2. Ibid., p.341. The grant was renewed, see ibid., p.510, Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1313-17, p.517, and Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1317-21, p.251.

3. She is first named in a roll of liveries for December 1302 and June 1303, P.R.O., E 101/363/12, and last appears in a wardrobe book, 1305-6, for the household of Thomas and Edmund, P.R.O., E 101/368/12, f.4v.

4. She is named in Brit.Lib., Add.MS.37656, f.4v, and in the wardrobe book mentioned above, P.R.O., E 101/368/12, f.8r.

5. There are numerous references to Mabel de Raundes. She is mentioned as early as November 1302, P.R.O., E 101/360/28, m.7, and as late as 1306, P.R.O., E 101/368/12, ff.2v, 8r. Beatrice de Feribrigg appears as Thomas's former nurse in Society of Antiquaries MS.120 (Wardrobe Book, 10 Edward II), f.48r.

6. Anastasia is specifically named in a wardrobe book of 1306, P.R.O., E 101/369/11, f.101r.

the governess of the household.[1] Mabel de Raundes, for instance, on occasions received the same allowance of clothes as Edeline de Vemise, the governess,[2] and often had special allowances.[3] She also received payments for carrying out her duties which included the provision of clothes for the royal children.[4] Nor were these the only payments she received. On 26 October 1305 Mabel received a present of £4 from the queen 'in recompensacionem laboris quem apposuit circa custodiam eiusdem domini sui', and on the same day, Perrette de Poissy was also rewarded, although as berceresse she received only half the amount that the nurse had been given.[5]

It is clear that the nurses and rockers had no effective part in the education of the royal princes and princesses, but they did play an important part in their early upbringing. They were not of noble rank but they might later on enter the queen's household and they could remain in high favour long after retirement from active service, as Alice of Leygrave's career shows.

(b) <u>The tutors, magistri and magistre</u>

It has usually been suggested that the royal prince was taken away from his nurse at about the age of seven and committed to the care of an experienced 'tutor'.[6] From the evidence of the accounts it seems more likely that there was always somebody senior to the nurse who had ultimate responsibility for

---

1. For instance in the rolls of liveries of December 1302 and June 1303 (P.R.O., E 101/363/12), December 1303 (P.R.O., E 101/365/15), December 1304 (P.R.O., E 101/367/2).

2. P.R.O., E 101/363/12.

3. She had a new robe for the Feast of Pentecost 1305 (Brit.Lib., Add.MS. 37656, f.6r), and a cash present from the king to dye material in 1302. (P.R.O., E 101/360/28, m.7).

4. Roll of classified expenses 1303-4, P.R.O., E 101/366/15, m.2; P.R.O. E 101/368/12, f.2v.

5. Brit.Lib., Add.MS. 37656, f.4v.

6. Bartholomaeus Anglicus suggested that it was in the second period or <u>puericia</u>, from the age of seven to the age of fourteen, that the child was 'sette to lore undir tutours'. See <u>On the Properties of Things: John Trevisa's translation of Bartholomaeus Anglicus, De proprietatibus Rerum</u>, ed. M.C. Seymour (Oxford, 1975), p.300.

a royal child; but that that person (or some other master and/or mistress) played no direct part in the child's education until the age of seven.

The nature of this tutor has to be examined carefully. The magister of an infant magnate or prince was not the teacher who gave him lessons, but the person of quality and standing responsible for his safety and general direction. In a sense, this tutor was the counterpart of the knights chosen to accompany youths in north-western France in the twelfth century. In this case, the task of the experienced knight was to counsel the young man, to restrain him, to perfect his education, and to direct him towards the most profitable tournaments.[1] In England, if the magister taught the prince at all, it was mainly exercises and accomplishments. Accordingly, the post normally went to a knight of seniority and position and not to a clerk.[2]

Before the late thirteenth century we have very little information about the activities of clerks and tutors in the royal household. Robert Curthose, the eldest son of William the Conqueror, was entrusted at an early age to the care of tutors or counsellors whose names have survived in the charters of the day. Most important of these were Hilger 'pedagogus Roberti filii comitis', 'Raherius consiliarius infantis', and 'Tetboldus grammaticus'.[3] Henry I provided a 'tutor et paedogogus' for his family in the person of Otwel, a son of Earl Hugh of Chester, a Norman baron, who would hardly be suspected of any leaning towards letters. If Otwel were in orders, Orderic Vitalis, who tells us that he perished in the White Ship, does not say so.[4]

Philip de Aubeney was largely responsible for the training of the young Henry III, and he later became Henry's master. Doubtless, he taught him how

---

1. See G. Duby, 'Les "jeunes" dans la société aristocratique dans la France du Nord-Ouest au xiie siècle', Hommes et Structures du moyen âge (Paris, 1973), p.215.

2. See T.F. Tout, Chapters in the Administrative History of Medieval England, iii (Manchester, 1928), p.331.

3. Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum, ed. H.W.C. Davis, i (Oxford, 1913), no.2.

4. H.G. Richardson and G.O. Sayles, The Governance of Medieval England (Edinburgh, 1963), p.272.

to ride and bear himself as a knight, while the other parts of Henry's education were undertaken by a tutor, Peter des Roches, bishop of Winchester.[1] More details are available about the general education of Henry's brother, Richard of Cornwall. In 1221, Peter de Mauley in a letter to Hubert de Burgh, justiciar, recommended Sir Roger D'Acastre, described as magister of the king's brother.[2] In fact, Richard had been taken when he was six, just below the usual age for children to be sent out to other households, to Corfe Castle, to be educated by Sir Roger, under the overall charge of Peter de Mauley.[3] We can also associate Edward I's education, before the age of seven, with particular tutors: Hugh Giffard, who died in 1246 and was then described as 'filiorum domini regis pedagogus', and Bernard of Savoy, believed to be the illegitimate son of Count Thomas I.[4]

It is really only in the late thirteenth century that we begin to get a little more information. An undated fragment listing the debts of the 'puerorum domini Regis', that is to say, of John and Henry, sons of Edward I, mentions Adam the Chaplain, rector of Bradeham, who had charge of the two boys.[5] It may be that Adam was their tutor or instructor in the strict sense of the word, although admittedly John was only five then and Henry four. Such a figure certainly existed in the household of Thomas of Brotherton and Edmund of Woodstock and he probably gave the two princes their very early lessons when they were about three or four years old. Rolls of liveries of December 1303 and 1304 mention magister John de Claxton.[6] During the period 1303-5,

---

1. F.M. Powicke, Henry III and the Lord Edward, i (Oxford, 1947), p.9.

2. Royal Letters of the Reign of Henry III, ed. W.W. Shirley, i (Rolls Series, 1862), pp.179-80.

3. N. Denholm-Young, Richard of Cornwall (Oxford, 1947), p.3.

4. Matthaei Parisienis Chronica Maiora, ed. H.R. Luard, iv (Rolls Series, 1877), p.553. Rôles Gascons, ed. C. Bémont, supplement au tome premier, 1254-55 (Paris, 1896), p.xcv.

5. P.R.O., C 47/3/32, nos.6 and 7. This must date before 1271 since John died on 1 August of that year.

6. P.R.O., E 101/365/15, E 101/367/2.

he was referred to continually as magister and clericus of the two boys[1] and was still associated with their household as late as 1312.[2] Of his background we know very little, except that he was a magister by 1303, probably of Cambridge, and was admitted as rector of Forncett, Norfolk, in 1316. He was later a canon of Chichester in 1318. A.B. Emden unhesitatingly describes him as the 'tutor' of the lords Thomas and Edmund and the evidence seems to bear out this conclusion.[3]

The education of the king's children was partly the work of clerks, men such as John Paynel, the royal clerk who served as Edward III's tutor and was later promoted to be chamberlain of Chester.[4] Sometimes such men had themselves had the best education available, either at Oxford or at Cambridge. Henry of Avranches, magister at Oxford by 1214 and probable tutor to King John's sons, Henry and Richard, is our earliest example of a university-trained tutor, and his pupil Henry III thought well enough of him to maintain him in his service as versificator until 1262.[5] His career was paralleled by that of Henry Scogan in the late fourteenth century. Scogan, again educated at Oxford,[6] served Richard II and was associated with Chaucer. He later became tutor to the sons of Henry IV to whom he addressed 'A morale balade' of conventional exhortation to virtuous living; he died in 1407 or 1408.[7]

---

1. P.R.O., E 101/582/6,7,8.

2. Bodleian Library, MS. Tanner 197, f.45r.

3. A.B. Emden, A Biographical Register of the University of Cambridge (Oxford, 1963), p.137 (hereafter B.R.U.C.). See also T.H. Aston, R. Evans and G. Duncan, 'The medieval alumni of the university of Cambridge', Past and Present, lxxxvi (1980), 45.

4. Cal. Close Rolls, 1327-30, p.573.

5. A.B. Emden, A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford, i (Oxford, 1957), pp.80-1 (hereafter B.R.U.O.); J.C. Russell, 'Master Henry of Avranches as an international poet', Speculum, iii (1928), 34-63.

6. B.R.U.O., pp.1655-6.

7. For further details of Henry Scogan see Chaucer Life Records, ed. M.M. Crow and C.C. Olson (Oxford, 1966), p.500, and G.L. Kittredge 'Henry Scogan', Harvard Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature, i (1892), 113-16. See also cap.I, p.18.

The evidence for magistri and magistre in the wider sense is far more abundant. Professor Hilda Johnstone regarded the magister or magistra as a normal part of the households of children of rank. From the last quarter of the thirteenth century to the mid-fourteenth century, there are many examples of such tutors and governesses within the royal household. The best documented are Guy Ferre, the magister of Edward of Carnarvon; Edeline de Vemise, the governess of Thomas of Brotherton and Edmund of Woodstock; Isabella de la Mote, governess of Isabella and Joan, the daughters of Edward III; and Elizabeth of St Omer, the governess of the Black Prince. When examining their role in education in its broadest sense in the royal household, it is important to consider these tutors and governesses in the light of their length of service, their social standing and position within the household, and the rewards they were offered by the royal family.

It is difficult to be precise about their length of service, but the evidence suggests that the relationship between the tutor and governess and the royal child could be long lasting. For instance, Edward I's second daughter, Joan of Acre, had been raised in Ponthieu by her grandmother until 1278, and during that time, when the child was about six years old, Edeline Popiot became her magistrissa. Edeline had entered Queen Eleanor's service with her husband by the summer of 1280 and remained as governess right up to the time of Joan's marriage in 1290. In an account of the king's money gifts it is stated that she had served Joan for thirteen years and she was awarded a gift of one hundred marks.[1] Joan's brother, Edward of Carnarvon, had Guy Ferre for a tutor perhaps as early as 1293, when Edward was nine years old, and certainly by 1295, for the whole of the period until Guy's death in 1303, when a mass was said in his pupil's presence at Durham.[2]

---

1. P.R.O., E 101/352/21, m.3. See also The Court and Household of Eleanor... in 1290, p.39; M.A.E. Green, Lives of the Princesses of England, ii (London, 1849), p.322.

2. P.R.O., E 101/363/18, f.2v.

Tutors and governesses, unlike the nurses, were of some social standing. An account of 3-20 November 1299 records a gift of one mark to Roger, chamberlain of Guy Ferre, and describes Ferre as magister of the king's son.[1] There were two men of the name of Guy Ferre who were attached to Edward's household, probably an uncle and a nephew, and it seems likely that it was the elder Guy Ferre who was tutor to the prince. His experience stretched back to Henry III's reign,[2] in whose service he was knighted in 1270.[3] He was subsequently associated with the service of Edmund of Lancaster and the dowager Eleanor of Provence. He accompanied Edmund to Palestine in 1271,[4] appeared as the queen mother's steward in 1275[5] and acted as one of her executors. Guy Ferre had not only social position and experience but also wealth in the form of estates in Sussex and Norfolk.[6] He had considerable standing within Edward's household. In 1295 Guy was recorded as 'staying continually in the company of Edward, the king's son, by the king's special order'.[7] In 1300-1, Guy's was the fourth name among those four domini who headed a list of the members of the prince's household: the first was that of the prince himself.[8] Thus, as Professor Johnstone concluded, 'Edward had had the companionship and watchful care of a man who by contemporary standards was of just the right type to form the tastes and manners of his charge.'[9]

---

1. P.R.O., E 101/355/17.
2. M. Prestwich, War, Politics and Finance under Edward I (London, 1972), p.44.
3. Cal.Lib. Rolls, vi, no.1278.
4. Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1266-72, p.512.
5. Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1272-81, p.125.
6. Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1272-81, p.355. See also C. Moor, The Knights of Edward I, ii (Harleian Society, lxxxi, 1929), p.12.
7. Cal.Close Rolls, 1288-96, p.502.
8. P.R.O., E 101/360/17.
9. H. Johnstone, Edward of Carnarvon (Manchester, 1946), p.17.

It seems that other children of Edward I were in the care of persons of similar social standing. Edeline Popiot has already been mentioned as the governess of Joan. Of Edeline we learn that in 1280 she was called a damsel of the queen.[1] Her husband, Philippe Popiot was knighted by King Edward at Gard in Ponthieu on 10 August 1289 and in 1290 he was a knight in the queen's household. In spite of this honour, the Popiots did not remain in England after their responsibilities were brought to an end in 1290 following Joan's marriage and the queen's death. Nothing appears to be known of them after that date.

It seems to have been the custom for the governess of the royal children to be married to a household knight. There is little information about the social position of Edeline de Vemise, the governess of Thomas and Edmund, but we know that she was married to a knight called Stephen de Vemise. This becomes clear when, on 30 April 1306, a payment of £5 7s 8d was made to cover the expenses of the lady Edeline, magistra, when she remained behind ill at Windsor after Thomas and Edmund had moved on to Winchester. She had as her companion her husband, 'dominus Stephanus de Vemise'.[2] In the livery list, recorded in the same wardrobe book, Stephen is listed among the milites;[3] and he appears among the household knights in 1304-5, receiving a payment of five marks.[4]

It is clear that governesses continued to be women of some standing throughout the fourteenth century. In 1332 cloth was given to Elizabeth 'de Sancto Adomaro', presumably 'of St Omer', described as magistra et custos to Edward of Chester and his sister, the lady Isabella. In the same wardrobe book of Queen Philippa, there were further allowances of cloth and furs to

---

1. Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1272-81, p.390.
2. P.R.O., E 101/368/12, f.3v.
3. Ibid., f.8r.
4. Roll of classified expenses in the household of Edmund and Thomas, 1304-5, P.R.O., E 101/367/3, m.3.

Elizabeth and she was described as magistra et custos once more.[1] By 1334, she was named mistress of the king's children and was later rewarded for her services. As early as 1336, she and her husband, William of St Omer, were receiving a yearly grant of £25 for their lives 'for their gratuitous service to the king in staying constantly with his son, Edward, earl of Chester and his daughters'.[2] Grants of rent were to follow[3] and as late as 1355, allowances were made for Elizabeth's livery.[4] Elizabeth was evidently highly regarded, and was also a person of some consequence through her husband's social position, both in his own district and at court. As early as March 1330, William of St Omer was serving as one of the knights of the shire for Norfolk,[5] receiving payment for attending parliament, and we know that he was assessed in 1346 at one man of arms in the county of Norfolk and at two hobelers in the county of Wiltshire.[6] His position in the shire was enhanced by his standing at court, where he was the steward of the household of Edward of Chester in 1335.[7]

But perhaps the most well to do of the royal governesses of this period was Isabella de la Mote, a French lady of rank and governess of the daughters of Edward III. In 1340 Isabella appears as the governess, and Alexandra de la Mote, presumably her daughter or niece, is mentioned as a lady in waiting upon Joan, daughter of the king.[8] In fact, when Joan was still an infant, her nurture and early training had been entrusted to Mary, the widowed countess

---

1. Brit.Lib., MS. Cotton Galba, E III. Account of the great wardrobe of Queen Philippa, ff. 183r, 190r.
2. Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1334-8, p.247.
3. Cal.Close Rolls, 1337-9, p.455; Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1334-8, p.559; Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1340-3, pp.519, 565.
4. Register of Edward the Black Prince, iv (London, 1933), p.169.
5. Cal.Close Rolls, 1330-3, p.137.
6. Cal.Fine Rolls, 1337-47, p.510.
7. Cal.Close Rolls, 1333-7, p.523.
8. P.R.O., E 101/389/9, mm.3,4.

of Pembroke, and Mary employed the lady Isabella as sub-gouvernante over her royal ward.[1] Isabella had been in the service of the countess of Pembroke certainly as early as 1331, when she appears with her, staying abroad on the king's service.[2] Isabella evidently possessed some property in Suffolk. The confiscation of all lands belonging to the French when war broke out between the two countries reduced her to the necessity of accepting the post as governess, and she filled it so much to the satisfaction of the king that he commanded her lands to be restored to her on 24 July 1337.[3]

Although it is possible to learn something of the social status of the governess or tutor, it is more difficult to ascertain their precise function and position within the royal household. From the evidence we have about Edeline de Vemise and Isabella de la Mote, it is clear that the magistre were more concerned with education in the general sense of well-being rather than with formal instruction. There were frequent links between the governess and the royal household, seen, for example, when in September 1340 Isabella de la Mote wrote to the queen about the state of her charges, Joan and Isabella.[4] Her duties included the provision of clothing for the children, the supervision of their health and the payment of alms and oblations on their behalf. Edeline de Vemise is found paying for smocks and blankets for Thomas and Edmund in February 1302,[5] summoning a doctor, Robert de Reynham, to examine Edmund in September 1303,[6] and paying fifteen shillings to the Friars of Reading earlier in the same year.[7]

---

1. Lives of the Princesses, iii, p.230.
2. Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1330-4, p.210.
3. Cal.Close Rolls, 1337-9, p.94.
4. P.R.O., E 101/389/11, m.1.
5. P.R.O., E 101/360/28, m.3 (account of William de Werminstre, treasurer of the king's sons, Thomas and Edmund).
6. P.R.O., E 101/363/14, m.2.
7. P.R.O., E 101/363/14, m.1.

As for her position within the household, it is evident that a governess such as Edeline de Vemise was highly regarded. She was generously provided with furs for her clothes,[1] and when she was ill in March and April 1306 her expenses were taken care of and provisions were bought to aid her recovery.[2] At the same time she was sufficiently important to have her own ladies in waiting, for the livery roll of 1305-6 mentions a domicella of the lady Edeline.[3]

It is evident therefore that considerable importance should be attached to the magistri and magistre in the royal household. While the evidence does not reveal their function as being strictly that of instruction, they were clearly responsible for the general welfare of the royal children. They were held in high regard and often served for long periods. Some of them had high social positions, either through long royal service, as with Guy Ferre, or by reason of land owned, as with Isabella de la Mote, or through marriage, as with Elizabeth of St Omer.

## 2. The pattern and subjects of education

As has been noted, the education of princes was the theme of a number of treatises which circulated in Western Europe during the middle ages.[4] The main purpose of these works was moral and political. They sought to propagate ideas of virtue, justice and statecraft, and to give warning, from historical examples, of the fate of tyrants. English princes were probably brought up in this tradition: it is suggestive that Sir Simon Burley, the tutor of Richard II, possessed a French book 'of the government of kings and princes', presumably a copy of the work of Aegidius Romanus.[5]

---

1. P.R.O., E 101/363/12; P.R.O., E 101/365/15.
2. P.R.O., E 101/368/12, f.3v.
3. P.R.O., E 101/368/12, f.8r; Brit.Lib., Add.MS. 37656, f.6r.
4. See Cap.1, pp.7-21.
5. V. Scattergood, 'Two Medieval Booklists', The Library, xxiii (1968), 237. He prints the list of Simon Burley's books found in P.R.O., E 154/1/19.

Unfortunately, a fully developed system of education in the royal household cannot be seen clearly until the middle of the fifteenth century, when such works as the Liber Regie Capelle (c.1449) and the Black Book of the Household (1467-77) appeared. In general, the court provided an education in two areas: noriture, the art of genteel behaviour, and lettrure, basic literary accomplishment.[1] Can we say what was being taught to the royal children at an earlier stage than the fifteenth century?

The English prince must have learnt specialised techniques such as riding and feats of arms, to say nothing of such social accomplishments as harping and dancing. We know, for instance, that in the second half of the twelfth century, John spent some time in the private household of his brother Henry, who was eleven years his senior, where he may have learned the rudiments of the sports of hunting and military combat, as befitted one of his status.[2] Almost a century later, Matthew Paris describes a general tournament in 1256 at Blithe 'at which the king's eldest son, Edward, attended in linen clothing and light armour', to be instructed in the 'laws of chivalry'.[3]

Reading was certainly not always a part of the curriculum, but that it may have been by the early fourteenth century is suggested by the purchase of a primer for Edward of Carnarvon.[4] There can be no doubt as to the literacy of his successor, Edward III, for we know that he studied letters in his youth under John Paynel, a royal clerk.[5] It is also clear that reading formed part of Richard II's training. The composition of a Latin book to solace the king suggests that Richard's reading abilities were not confined to French.[6]

---

1. R.F. Green made this distinction in Poets and Princepleasers: Literature and the English Court in the Late Middle Ages (Toronto, 1980), p.73.
2. W.L. Warren, King John (London, 1961), p.26.
3. Chronica Maiora, ed. H.R. Luard, v (Rolls Series, 1880), p.557.
4. Liber Quotidianus Contrarotulatoris Garderobae Anno Regni Regis Edwardi Primi 28, ed. J. Topham (London, 1787), p.55.
5. Cal.Close Rolls, 1327-30, p.573; for book purchase see F. Devon Issues of the Exchequer (London, 1837), p.144.
6. This is MS. Bodley 581. See Summary Catalogue of Western MSS in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, ed. F. Madan and H.H.E. Craster, ii, part I (1922), no.2191. See cap.V, p.213.

For the fifteenth century the evidence is even more plentiful. The character of the training undergone by Edward IV and his brothers may be inferred from regulations laid down by Edward himself in 1474 for the education of his own son, Edward, prince of Wales. Each day, after hearing matins and mass, and taking his breakfast, the boy was to spend his morning 'occupied in such virtuous learning as his age shall now suffice to receive'. His midday meal was accompanied by the reading aloud to him of 'such noble stories as behoveth a Prince to understand'.[1] Just as provision was made for the education of the young henchmen in 'sundry languages', so Edward and his brothers received a grounding in Latin; and there is abundant evidence that they could both speak and write in French as well as in English.[2] Probably Edward also received some instruction in such practical matters as estate management and the law as it related to land. In his Boke of Noblesse, revised for presentation to Edward IV in 1475, the antiquary William Worcester spoke of the frequency with which men of noble or gentle birth 'learn the practice of law or custom of land'.[3]

3. Noble youths in the royal household

Education in the royal household was not simply a matter of the relationship between the clerk and the royal prince or between the magister and the magistra and the royal children. Evidence from north-western France shows that from the eleventh century the young nobles might be incorporated into groups of friends. This company was sometimes formed on the day following the ceremony of knighting by grouping together all those young warriors who had received the 'sacrament' of knighthood on the same day and then keeping them together. Often the company grouped the 'youth' of vassal families around the

---

1. See C. Ross, Edward IV (London, 1974), p.8.
2. Whilst still earl of March, Edward owned at least one Latin manuscript volume, containing medical treatises and a version of an Aristotelian work, now Brit. Lib., MS. Royal 12 E XV. Several royal warrants of the reign contain his own autograph additions. See C. Ross, ibid., p.8.
3. The Boke of Noblesse, ed. J.G. Nichols (Roxburghe Club, 1860), p.77.

lord's newly knighted son. Orderic Vitalis shows Robert Curthose, accompanied by the sons of his father's vassals, sons who were Robert's own age and who up to this time had been fed and armed by his father.[1]

In the English royal household companions were also provided for the royal children from among the king's wards. Generally these were noble youths who were brought up at court under magistri of their own. There are many instances of children at the royal court by the end of the thirteenth century, but clearly it was important as a place for education before this date. At Henry I's court youths such as Henry's natural son, Robert of Gloucester, and his nephew, Stephen of Blois, as well as the sons of the aristocracy came to learn Latin letters.[2] The courts of Henry I and Henry II included schoolmasters, who gave instruction, not only to the king's children, but also to other noble youths sent to court for their upbringing.[3] In King John's time, the sons of one baron, Richard de Umfraville, who were sent as hostages to the royal court, were accompanied by their tutor.[4] The Flores Historiarum shows that two young nobles, Richard de Burgh and Edmund Lacy, earl of Lincoln, were being brought up in Henry III's household in the 1240s.[5] A reference from Rishanger's chronicle to the lord Edward, in Henry III's reign, grieving over the body of Henry de Montfort at Evesham in 1265 because 'ipse, secum nutritum, a puero familiariter dilexerat', seems to suggest that Henry was brought up for at least part of the time at the royal court, to be the playmate and companion of his young cousin, Prince Edward.[6] North of the border, the practice of sending boys to the royal court is illustrated by the story

---

1. Duby, op.cit., p.215.
2. M.D. Legge, 'L'influence littéraire de la cour d'Henri Beauclerc', in F. Dethier, ed., Mélanges offerts à Rita Lejeune, i (Gembloux, 1969), 679-87; R.H.C. Davis, King Stephen (London, 1967), p.4.
3. W. Stubbs, 'Learning and literature at the court of Henry II', in Lectures on the Study of Medieval and Modern History (Oxford, 1900), 163.
4. R.V. Turner, 'The Miles Literatus in twelfth and thirteenth century England. How rare a phenomenon?', Amer. Hist. Rev., lxxxiii (1978), 938.
5. Flores Historiarum, ii, ed. H.R. Luard (Rolls Series, 1890), p.339.
6. Willelmi Rishanger Chronica, ed. H.T. Riley (Rolls Series, 1865), p.37.

of Aelred of Rievaulx. Intended for a secular career, Aelred had served in his boyhood at the Scottish court of King David and had become the closest friend and companion of Henry, the king's son.[1]

Detailed records once again begin in the late thirteenth century. They show that in the household of Henry, son of Edward I, in 1273-4, the royal children had the companionship of various young wards of the crown, Nicholas de Bath, John de Weston, later steward of the household of Edward's younger sons Thomas and Edmund, Roger de Sancto Andrea, Richard Cyffrewast, William de Staunton, and Robert Walerand.[2] It is possible to get an idea of the age and background of these children. Roger de Sancto Andrea was said to be aged fifteen in 1274-5 and as William de Staunton is known to have gone to Wales on the king's service with Robert de Ros in July 1277, he was most probably about the same age.[3] Richard Cyffrewast, son of Richard Cyffrewast of Clewer, was not of marriageable age in 1273-4.[4] Robert Walerand, the heir and nephew of his namesake, was reported by the jurors at the inquisition post mortem in 1273 to be sixteen, seventeen or eighteen years of age. Half-witted, like others in his family, he was still in the king's household in 1291.[5]

The maintenance of these noble youths, with the keep of their horses and their servants, figured largely in the domestic records. All these wards and Prince Henry himself, received vadia ranging from $4\frac{1}{2}$d to 9d a day. As Tout wrote about the wards in the household of Edward of Carnarvon in 1301, 'the noblest of them took their wages and their allowance in place of dinner in hall, just like the humblest messengers, coquini and grooms.'[6]

---

1. The Life of Aelred of Rievaulx, ed. F.M. Powicke (Oxford, 1950), pp.2-3.
2. P.R.O., E 101/350/18. See also Johnstone, 'The wardrobe and household of Henry, son of Edward I', 390.
3. Cal. Genealogicum, i. 220; Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1272-81, p.220.
4. Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1272-81, p.83.
5. See references Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1272-81, pp.86, 304; Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1281-92, p.4; Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1281-92, p.413.
6. T.F. Tout, Chapters in the Administrative History of Medieval England, ii (Manchester, 1920), p.172.

The household of Edward of Carnarvon provides a well-documented example of noble children being educated in the royal household. The roll of liveries to the 131 members of the household of Edward, prince of Wales, in 1300[1] lists ten pueri in custodia together with their unnamed magistri.

Gilbertus de Clare
Magister suus
Robertus de Scales
Magister suus
Johannes de Leyburn
Magister suus
Johannes filius Waryn
Magister suus
Philippus de Courtenay
Magister suus
Petrus de Gaveston
Robertus de Clavering
Magister suus
Thomas Botecourt
Magister suus
Robertus filius Waryn
Magister suus
Willelmus de Munchenesey
Magister suus

It is interesting that the only youth to appear without a magister was Piers Gaveston. He was probably the oldest of the pueri and was already receiving wages as a squire of the king's household during the Flanders campaign of 1297.[2] The importance of these pueri who came to be educated and to serve as companions to the prince may be seen by the part they played in the military activities of the royal household. An indenture survives relating to men-at-arms of the prince's household who were to be ready by the quinzaine of St John 'par la ou le seigneur sera'.[3] The document is undated but it most likely refers to the Scottish campaign of 1301 and thus relates to the same year as the roll of liveries just described. It mentions Gilbert de Clare, William de Munchensi, Robert de Scales and Piers Gaveston, who figure among the pueri in custodia and who were all to appear with two men-at-arms each. The roll of liveries may also be compared with the account in the king's

---

1. P.R.O., E 101/360/17.
2. Wardrobe book, 1296-7. Brit.Lib., Add.MS. 7965, f.76r.
3. P.R.O., E 101/370/29.

wardrobe book for the same year of wages paid to those serving in the king's army.[1] From the group of royal wards resident with Edward came Gilbert de Clare, Robert de Scales, Robert de Clavering, William de Munchensi and Piers Gaveston. It would be fair to say, therefore, that the main role of these noble youths who were educated in the royal household was as companions at arms. Gilbert de Clare received a horse as a gift from the prince 'pro guerra socie' in 1307[2] and we also have records of other gifts to the pueri. In 1303 military equipment was bought for Piers Gaveston,[3] while in 1301 a horse had been restored to Robert de Scales.[4] In 1306, John the son of Waryn appears in a roll of liveries of samite, cloth of gold, etc., from the king's great wardrobe, among those about to be knighted with Edward in that year, so that it is clear that his military association with the prince had continued.[5] Nor was he the only one, for Gilbert de Clare, Piers Gaveston, Robert de Scales and Philip de Courtenay were also knighted with Edward in 1306.[6]

There are many references to the Gilbert de Clare who heads the list of pueri in custodia. He was the prince's cousin, son of Thomas de Clare who had become a ward of the Crown when his father died in 1287. Although Gilbert would not reach the age of twenty-one until 1302, he was given early livery of his lands in 1299, a mark of royal favour,[7] and in September 1300, he was

---

1. Brit.Lib., Add.MS. 7966A, ff.100-102v.
2. Brit.Lib., Add.MS. 22923, f.9v.
3. P.R.O., E 101/363/18, f.20v.
4. Brit.Lib., Add.MS. 7966A, f.72r.
5. P.R.O., C 47/3/30.
6. E. Ashmole, The Institution, Laws and Ceremonies of the Most Noble Order of the Garter (London, 1672), pp.38-9.
7. Cal.Close Rolls, 1296-1302, pp.272, 366.

granted special protection because he was 'staying in England with Edward, the king's son'.[1]

He has sometimes been confused with his namesake and cousin, the last Clare earl of Gloucester, a child of nine in 1300, who was friendly with Edward. He remained in his mother's charge till September 1301, when he was transferred to the household of Queen Margaret where he was educated.[2] In 1303-4, when a payment of £8 19s was made to provide gowns and furs for him,[3] he was still described as 'existenti in custodia regis in comitiva Regine'.

The youths mentioned in the household of Henry, son of Edward I, and in the household of Edward of Carnarvon are the largest groups of pueri in custodia it has been possible to trace. There were, however, other isolated examples of such youths in the royal household in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. In May 1290 Hugh de Mortimer of Richard's Castle is described as 'infans existens in custodia regis'.[4] At about the same time, we know that the children of Joanna Wake, one of Queen Eleanor's ladies, were being brought up at Langley. The queen enabled their mother to visit them and in April 1290 paid the expenses of Joanna Wake's servants who were going to Langley to care for Joanna's children:[5]

> 'Eodem die (4 April) Roberto de Stotevile valletto Johanne Wak' ad expensas suas et Margarete de Stotevile domicelle predicte Johanne euntibus apud Langelee ad custodiendum pueros Johannis Wak' et pro expensis 1 alterius valletti euntis cum eisdem ibidem vis viiid.'

Members of the Wake family were associated with the royal household over a long period. In part of an account of the household of 1284-5, there is a reference, on 17 May 1285, to wages of sixty shillings paid to Peter de Wake,

---

1. Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1292-1301, p.535.
2. Ibid., p.606.
3. Brit.Lib., Add.MS. 8835, f.20r.
4. P.R.O., C 47/4/5.
5. The Court and Household of Queen Eleanor, p.97.

his brother, and their magister.[1] Over a quarter of a century later in November 1313, a Thomas Wake and his brother John are recorded 'in custodia regis' with two fellow associates, each of the four receiving £4 a year from the king.[2] Their association with the royal household clearly continued, because in 1315-16 a roll of liveries mentions Thomas and John de Wake and their two magistri who were all provided with robes at Easter and at Pentecost.[3] Thomas de Wake is probably to be identified with Thomas, lord Wake, who was born in 1297 or 1298. He was a ward first of his mother, then of Piers Gaveston, to whom his marriage was given, and then of Queen Isabella. He certainly had a younger brother, John, who was still living in June 1320, but who died before him.[4]

(a) The Henchmen

All these companions who were educated and supported within the royal household may perhaps be identified with the later 'henchmen' (although they are not specifically named as such) who are mentioned in the register of the Black Prince in 1351 and described in the Black Book of the Household.[5] Some of the earliest references to henchmen appear in livery rolls of 1360-1[6] and 1363-4,[7] and they are also to be found in a wardrobe book of 1369.[8] From the

---

1. P.R.O., C 47/4/2, f.13r.

2. P.R.O., E 101/375/8, f.5v.

3. P.R.O., E 101/376/22, m.1.

4. The Complete Peerage, xii, part ii, p.302. For references to Thomas, lord Wake, in Isabella's household, see The Household Book of Queen Isabella of England, ed. Blackley (Alberta, 1971), p.130.

5. The Register of Edward the Black Prince, iv (London, 1933), p.10.

6. P.R.O., E 101/393/15, mm.12, 13, 14.

7. P.R.O., E 101/394/16, m.13.

8. P.R.O., E 101/396/11, f.18r.

fourteenth century, henxmen formed part of the regular household or suite of English kings and queens. These persons may well be noble boys sent to serve as king's or lord's henchmen to complete their education, which was primarily concerned with norriture.[1] The Black Book informs us that the king's henchmen or pages of honour, numbering six or more as the king might please, were tutored by the master of the henchmen, a squire of the household, who schooled them in deportment, riding and feats of arms and also guided them in a literary education. The master of the henchman was:

> '..to show the scoolez of urbanitie and nourture of Inglond, to lern them to ride clenly and surely, to drawe them also to justes to lerne hem were theyre harneys; to have all curtesy in wordez, dedes, and degrees, dilygently to kepe them in rules of goynges and sittinges, after they be of honour. Moreover, to teche them sondry langages and othyr lernynges vertuous, to herpyng, to pype, sing, daunce and with other honest and temperate behaving and pacience..'[2]

Both the henchmen and the children of the chapel received instruction from a grammar master who might or might not be a priest although he was often from the Chapel Royal. His services were also available, as the Liber Regie Capelle informs us, to the poor clerks of the king's almonry and to other men and children of the court who wished to learn from him:

> 'Est etiam unus magister grammatice ad docendum pueros nobiles nutritos in curia Regis et pueros capelle cum senuerint, scienciam grammatice, sic quod ad capellam in toto pertinent quadragenta...'[3]

We know that, two years after he came to the throne, Henry IV engaged to pay a chaplain £5 a year for teaching grammar to the boys of the Chapel Royal.[4] In general, however, the names of the official schoolmasters of the henchmen, as they were generally called, do not seem to be extant before the 1520s. The earliest name we know is that of a certain Francis Philip, who probably held

---

1. See Green, Poets and Princepleasers, p.82.
2. A.R. Myers, The Household of Edward IV (Manchester, 1959), pp.126-7.
3. Liber Regie Capelle, ed. W. Ullmann (Henry Bradshaw Society, xcii, 1961), p.57.
4. J.H. Wylie, History of England under Henry IV, ii (London, 1894), p.487.

the post by 1521.[1] Many henchmen may have already been literate before they went to court to finish their education. This was certainly true of Thomas Howard, later the second duke of Norfolk, who was 'in hys yong age, after he had been a sufficient season at the gramer schole, hencheman to Kyng Edward the iiii'.[2]

(b) The children of the Chapel Royal

Not all the children in the royal household were immediately connected with the prince himself or with the 'secular branches of the educational system within the familia regis'.[3] There was also another group of children, consisting of the children of the Chapel Royal and the prince's chapel, who received a different sort of instruction at court.

We gather that the children of the chapel learned plainsong and polyphony from a song schoolmaster, who was also charged with teaching them good manners. One such song schoolmaster was John Plummer, a king's clerk, who was formally appointed the teacher and governor of the chapel children in February 1445.[4]

As far as can be determined, the function of the English Chapel Royal initially was wholly ecclesiastical and liturgical. In the early years of the fourteenth century, an attempt was made to extend the scope of the functions of the chapel 'by developing them externally in an academic direction'.[5] The result, the foundation of the Society of King's Scholars in 1317, established nothing less than a branch of the Chapel Royal set in the University of Cambridge. It is therefore possible to think of the Cambridge foundation as offering an extension of the education available in the royal household. In

---

1. Orme, Schools, p.218.
2. J. Weever, Antient Funeral Monuments (London, 1631), p.834.
3. Green, op.cit., p.86.
4. See C. Johnson, 'John Plummer', Antiquaries Journal, i (1921), 52-3.
5. A.C. Cobban, The King's Hall (Cambridge, 1969), p.19.

the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, several kings had made a practice of maintaining individual clerks at Oxford and Cambridge.[1] Without exception, the first detachment of king's scholars was composed of children from the royal household, that is to say, children from the Chapel Royal. Throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, a varying percentage of scholars was drawn directly from this source or from the court circle. Evidence for the ties that existed between the Chapel Royal and the English universities is to be found in the Black Book of the Household of Edward IV. In the section concerning the children of the chapel, it is stated that if upon reaching the age of eighteen, a youth cannot be given immediate advance within the chapel or elsewhere within the court, then, providing that he consents, he is to be sent:

> '....to a college of Oxenford or Cambridge, of the kinge's fundacion, there to be in finding and study sufficiauntly tyll the king otherwise list to avaunce him...'[2]

On the strength of this passage, it would seem that the lines initiated by the king's scholars in the first part of the fourteenth century, had later widened out to become only part of a more comprehensive household policy involving all royal colleges at either of the two universities.

The records of the second part of the fourteenth century show that constant interest was maintained in the king's scholars at Cambridge. For instance in 1360-1, magister Thomas Powys received an allowance for gowns for thirty-two scholars of the King's Hall, Cambridge, including one doctor, six bachelors and twenty-five scholars. In the same roll of liveries, John, son of John Gateneys, was provided with a robe as a scholar of the King's Hall.[3] In December 1363, Henry Bolket received similar preferment when he entered the King's Hall and the same livery roll mentions gifts to Robert Barulbe, Nicholas

---

1. See especially, F. Pegues, 'Royal Support of Students in the Thirteenth Century', Speculum, xxxi (1956), 454-62.

2. The Household of Edward IV, p.137.

3. P.R.O., E 101/393/15, mm.9, 12.

Roos and Simon de Multon.[1] Nicholas Roos was later promoted to be 'custos aule domini Regis', certainly by November 1370, and he received an allowance for gowns for seven bachelors and twenty-three scholars. In the same roll, Thomas Scarlet was allowed a robe on his entrance to the King's Hall.[2]

It is difficult to build up a precise picture of what education in the royal household was like. If we are looking for evidence about formal instruction and subjects taught, then we will be disappointed. In this sense it is, without doubt, true that 'little can be gathered about royal education'. On the other hand, from the evidence of the king's ability to read and write after 1200, it is clear that some form of education must have taken place. The educational treatises and the household book of the fifteenth century provide a general framework within which quite a substantial amount of information may be gathered. It is evident, firstly, that the initial upbringing of a royal child was undertaken by his nurse. At some stage, probably at the age of six or seven, the child received instruction from a clerk in the household and general guidance from his magister or magistra. From the evidence we may conclude that these magistri and magistre were the most important figures in education in the royal household. Not only were they usually of some social standing and highly regarded and rewarded, but they often had considerable experience in royal service as well. We may also conclude that the influence of education within the royal household was not confined to the royal children alone. They were often joined by other noble youths, wards of the crown, who might later maintain their association with the prince through military service. Finally, it is possible to discern different types of education within the royal household: the henchmen under their own master; and the children in the Chapel Royal, where education was extended from the early fourteenth century to include instruction of a more academic nature at Cambridge.

---

1. P.R.O., E 101/394/16, mm.13, 15.

2. P.R.O., E 101/396/20, m.8.

## APPENDIX: NURSES, GOVERNESSES AND TUTORS OF THE ROYAL CHILDREN

The following is a list of references in manuscript, in the calendared public records and in the chief secondary sources to berceresses, nurses, magistri and magistre associated with the royal children from the end of the twelfth century to the mid-fourteenth century.

### I. King John and Henry III

(i) Matilda de Nerlawe, formerly nurse to King John.

P.R.O., SC 1/62/3 (Ancient Correspondence).

(ii) Henry of Avranches, tutor to Henry and Richard.

A.B. Emden, A biographical register of the university of Oxford, i (Oxford, 1957), pp.80-1.

J.C. Russell, 'Master Henry of Avranches as an international poet', Speculum, iii (1928), 34-63.

(iii) Roger D'Acastre, tutor to Richard of Cornwall.

SC1/4/77 (1221), letter printed in Royal letters of the reign of Henry III, ed. W.W. Shirley, i (Rolls Series, 1862), pp.179-80.

Rot.Litt.Claus, i, p.481 (1221), Rot.Litt.Claus, i, p.576B (1223).

### II. Children of Henry III

(i) Alice de Luton, nurse of Edward, and of Isabella and Margaret.

P.R.O., E 101/349/18 (36 and 37 Henry III, 1251-3).

P.R.O., E 101/349/19 (36 and 37 Henry III, 1251-3).

It seems almost certain that this Alice is Alice de Luton, mentioned in the Close and Patent Rolls as formerly the nurse of the Lord Edward. Cal.Pat. Rolls ,1247-58, p.376 (1254); Cal.Close Rolls, 1256-9, pp.2-3 (1256); Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1258-66, p.382 (Feb., 1262); Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1258-66, p.220 (July, 1262); Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1266-72, p.530 (1271); Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1272-81, p.418; Cal.Close Rolls, 1264-8, p.499; Cal.Close Rolls, 1272-9, p.468.

(ii) Isabella de Valle, nurse of Margaret of Scotland, daughter of Henry III.

P.R.O., E 101/349/8 (37 Henry III, 1252-3).

III. Children of Edward I

(a) Nurses, tutors etc. associated with John (d.1271), Henry (1271-4), and Alphonso (1273-84)

(i) Adam the Chaplain, custodian of Henry and John.

P.R.O., C 47/3/32, 6 and 7 (Chancery Miscellanea, c.1271).

(ii) Amicia de Derneforde, nurse of Henry.

E 101/350/18 (1274).

Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1272-81, p.79 (1275).

Cal.Close Rolls, 1279-88, p.520 (1288).

(iii) Alice of Leygrave, nurse of Henry (see also under Edward of Carnarvon).

E 101/350/16 (1273).

E 101/350/18 (1274) where she is mentioned as berceresse.

(iv) Felice, nurse of Alphonso.

SC 1/25/94 (Ancient Correspondence).

(b) Nurses and governesses of Eleanor (b.1264), Joan and Margaret.

(i) Cecily de Cleware, nurse of Eleanor and Margaret.

E 101/350/18 (1274).

Cal.Close Rolls, 1272-9, p.296. (1276).

(ii) Edeline Popiot, governess of Joan.

E 101/352/21 (1289).

The Court and Household of Eleanor of Castile in 1290, ed. J.C. Parsons (Toronto, 1977), p.39; M.A.E. Green, Lives of the Princesses of England, ii (London, 1849), p.322.

(c) Nurses and magistri of Edward of Carnarvon (b.1284).

(i) Eleanor de Molton, nurse.

Liber Quotidianus, p.163 (1299).

(ii) Mary Maunsel, nurse.

P.R.O., SC 6, 1170/12, m.5.

Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1307-1313, p.448.

(iii) Alice of Leygrave, nurse of Edward of Carnarvon.

C 47/3/22 (1290).

E 101/375/9 (1314, in Queen Isabella's service).

Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1307-13, p.581; Cal.Close Rolls, 1307-13, pp.581-2; Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1313-17, p.86.

H. Johnstone, Edward of Carnarvon (Manchester, 1946), p.9.

(iv) Guy Ferre, magister of Edward of Carnarvon.

E 101/355/17 (1299); E 101/360/17 (1300); E 101/370/29 (1301); E 101/363/18 (1302-3).

Brit.Lib., Add.MS. 35294 (c.1289); Add.MS. 7966A (1301).

H. Johnstone, Edward of Carnarvon, pp.14-17.

C. Moor, Knights of Edward I, ii (Harleian Society, 1929), pp.12-13.

Cal.Charter Rolls, 1257-1300, p.410.

Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1272-81, p.125.

Cal.Close Rolls, 1288-96, p.289.

(d) Berceresses, nurses, governesses and tutors of Thomas of Brotherton (b.1300) and Edmund of Woodstock (b.1301).

(i) Erembourge, berceresse of Thomas of Brotherton.

E 101/357/20 (1300); E 101/363/12 (1302-3); E 101/363/14 (1303); E 101/365/15 (1303); E 101/367/2 (1304); E 101/368/12 (1305-6); Brit.Lib., Add.MS. 37656 (1305).

(ii) Perrette de Poissy, berceresse of Edmund of Woodstock.

E 101/363/12 (1302-3); E 101/363/14 (1303); E 101/365/15 (1303); E 101/367/2 (1304); E 101/368/12 (1305-6); Brit.Lib., Add.MS. 37656 (1305).

(iii) Mabel de Raundes, nurse of Thomas of Brotherton.

Liber Quotidianus, p.169. (1300); E 101/360/28 (1301-3); E 101/363/12 (1302 and 1303); E 101/363/14 (1303); E 101/365/15 (1303); E 101/366/15 (1303-4); E 101/367/2 (1304); E 101/368/12 (1305-6); Brit.Lib., Add. MS. 37656 (1305).

(iv) Anastasia la Chaumberlayne, nurse of Edmund of Woodstock.

Brit.Lib., Add.MS. 7966A (1301); P.R.O., E 101/360/28 (1301-3); E 101/369/11 (1306).

(v) Margaret, nurse of Thomas and Edmund.

E 101/363/12 (1302-3); E 101/363/14 (1303); E 101/365/15 (1303); E 101/367/2 (1304).

(vi) Matilda, nurse of Thomas.

E 101/363/14 (1303); E 101/365/15 (1303); E 101/367/2 (1304).

(vii) Alice Dogeman, custos of Thomas and Edmund.

Brit.Lib., Add.MS. 32050 (1310-11).

(viii) Edeline de Vemise, governess of Thomas and Edmund.

E 101/360/28 (1301-3); E 101/363/12 (1302-3); E 101/363/14 (1303); E 101/365/15 (1303); E 101/366/15 (1303-4); E 101/367/2 (1304); E 101/367/3 (1304-5); E 101/368/12 (1305-6); E 101/369/11 (1306).

Brit.Lib., Add.MS. 7966A (1301); Add.MS. 37656 (1305).

(ix) John de Claxton, tutor of Thomas and Edmund.

E 101/363/14 (1303); E 101/365/15 (1303); E 101/367/2 (1304); E 101/582/6-8 (1303-5); E 101/361/6 no.8 (one of file of documents 11 October 1301 to 1 November 1305 referring to John de Claxton.)

See also Emden, B.R.U.C., p.137. T. Aston, R. Evans and G. Duncan, 'The medieval alumni of the university of Cambridge', Past and Present, lxxxvi (1980), 45.

(e) Berceresses and nurses of Eleanor (b.1306), daughter of Edward I.

(i) Margery de Haustede, custos of Eleanor.

P. Chaplais, 'Some private letters of Edward I', Eng. Hist. Rev., lxxvii (1962), 86.

(ii) Alice de Northampton, nurse.

E 101/368/12 (1306).

(iii) Iboce, berceresse.

E 101/368/12 (1306).

(iv) Isabella, berceresse.

E 101/368/12 (1306).

IV. The children of Edward II.

(i) Emeline, described as custodian of Edward of Chester.

E 101/376/20 (1316).

(ii) John Paynel, tutor of Edward, later Edward III.

Cal.Close Rolls, 1327-30, p.573. Paynel is described as having superintended Edward's instruction in letters.

V. The children of Edward III

(i) Elizabeth de Sancto Adomar (St. Omer), governess of the Black Prince.

Brit.Lib., MS. Cotton Galba, EIII (1332).

Cal.Close Rolls, 1330-3, p.137 (1330); Cal.Close Rolls, 1333-7, p.523 (1335); Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1334-8, pp.247, 559 (1336 and 1337); Cal.Close Rolls, 1337-9, p.455 (1338); Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1340-3, pp.519, 565 (1342). See also Lives of the Princesses, iii, p.166. T.F. Tout, Chapters in the Administrative History of Medieval England, v (Manchester, 1930), p.320.

(ii) Margery de Mounteny, governess of Lionel and John.

E 101/389/9 (1341-2).

(iii) Matilda de Plumsted, berceresse of Lionel (Duke of Clarence).

E 101/389/9 (1341-2).

(iv) Katherine de Audegavo, nurse of Lionel.

E 101/389/9 (1341-2).

(v) Margery de Tilstop, berceresse of John (later John of Gaunt).

E 101/389/9 (1341-2).

(vi) Roger la Warde, custos of Thomas (later of Woodstock).

E 101/396/2 (1356).

(vii) Isabella de la Mote, governess of Isabella and Joan.

E 101/389/9 (1341-2); E 101/389/10 and 11 (1341-2); E 101/389/6 (1340).

Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1330-4, pp.105, 210; Cal.Close Rolls, 1337-9, p.94.

# CHAPTER III

## EDUCATION IN THE ENGLISH NOBLE HOUSEHOLD

Throughout the middle ages, the royal household was an important centre of education, not only for the royal children, but also for the children of noble families. It is clear, however, that there were many noble children who did not go to the royal court to be educated, and so the provision of education within the individual noble households was of great significance. But what of the education the nobles received there from nurses and governesses, not to mention tutors and school-masters?

The noble household accounts which might solve these problems are relatively few before the end of the fourteenth century. There are in existence private archives large enough to provide some of the answers, but the references to children which they contain, often in accounts, are rare and may conceal more than they reveal. For instance, the accounts of Thomas, duke of Clarence, beginning in 1418, dispose of the younger Beauforts by the payment of a lump sum: £173 6s 8d per annum is paid to the duchess 'pro expensis domini comitis Somersete et domini Thome fratris sui'.[1]

The information provided by wills, which on occasion can be valuable, is of little significance until the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when wills survive in greater numbers. Nevertheless, on the meagre evidence which we do have, it seems reasonable to argue that throughout the middle ages the most common place for a nobleman to be educated was in the household, either his own, a bishop's or another nobleman's, and that much may be learnt from accounts, wills and literary references about the nurses, governesses and tutors in these households and about the extent of their teaching.

The documentary evidence that has survived is insufficient to obtain a complete picture of education in the noble household throughout the period

---

1. Westminster Abbey Muniments, 12163, f.13v.

1100 to 1500. The examples of three particular families will show the strengths and limitations of the evidence. We can gain much information about those charged with the education of noble children, but very little about what was actually taught. We may then see if the system suggested in these sources is found in other households and at an earlier date; and we can see what may be gleaned about the range of a nobleman's education.

## The Bohun Family

The only information which we possess about education within the Bohun household in the early fourteenth century comes from the will of Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford and Essex, drawn up on 11 August 1319. Its interest lies in the provisions which the earl made for those in his employ. In particular, he left substantial bequests to two governesses and a tutor in his household, showing the regard in which they were held. At the period of the will, two of the earl's daughters were living, Margaret and Eleanor.[1] Their governesses were remembered in the will, Philippa Wake, 'mestresse Alianore ma fille', receiving £20 and 'Katerine de Boklaunde, mestresse Margarete ma fille', receiving £10.[2] In the same will £20 was left to a certain 'Huard de Soyrou', presumably a Fleming, who was the tutor of Humphrey, the earl's second son, born about 1309, and therefore about ten years old at the time of the will. It is possible that Hereford's connection with this Flemish tutor came from his wife's first marriage to John, count of Holland. On the other hand, the tutor may have been appointed after Humphrey de Bohun's mission to Flanders in the king's service in 1318, to treat of peace with the Count of Flanders and the Count of Hainault, Holland and Zeeland.[3]

---

1. It is difficult to be precise about their ages. Margaret was the eldest surviving daughter of Humphrey and Elizabeth (their marriage took place in November 1302, The Complete Peerage, vi, p.469), who later married in 1325 Hugh Courtenay, earl of Devon (The Complete Peerage, iv, p.324). Eleanor was a little younger and in 1327 married James Butler, earl of Ormond (The Complete Peerage, x, p.118).

2. H.T. Turner, 'The will of Humphrey de Bohun', Archaeological Journal, ii (1846), 347.

3. Cal.Close Rolls, 1318-23, p.36.

Evidently Humphrey de Bohun valued those charged with his children's education, as he rewarded them richly. He himself may have had some concern for learning: that one of his sons was called 'Aeneas' suggests an interest in the classics.[1]

## The Lancastrian Household

Unlike the Bohun household, there are many records surviving for the Lancastrian household, in particular a full series of Duchy of Lancaster wardrobe and household accounts for the 1390s. But as early as the 1370s, we have references to tutors and governesses in the household of John of Gaunt. Henry, Gaunt's eldest son, spent his earliest years with his two sisters, Philippa and Elizabeth.[2] Then, in December 1374, when he was eight, he was given a governor of his own, Thomas Burton, a retainer of John of Gaunt, and a servant of Henry's maternal grandfather, Duke Henry.[3] Burton had clearly been held in some regard for many years, since as early as 1352 he had received a life grant of twenty marks of rent from the manor of Gimmingham in Norfolk from Duke Henry.[4] When Henry Bolingbroke was ten, in 1376, William Montendre is named as his magister, responsible for his general welfare, and Hugh Herle was his chaplain, and perhaps, in the strictest sense, his tutor.[5]

At about the same time, the accounts of Gaunt's receiver-general show Katherine Swynford as 'magistrissa' to Phillipa and Elizabeth, his daughters by his first wife, Blanche of Lancaster.[6] Surviving accounts of his household in 1381 and 1383 reveal Katherine Swynford as 'la maistresse' also to nine-year old Katherine, his daughter by his second wife Constance of Castile.[7] The

---

1. The Complete Peerage, vi, p.469.
2. John of Gaunt's Register, 1372-76, ed. S. Armitage-Smith (Camden Society, 1911), i, p.127 (no.299).
3. Ibid., p.251 (no.679).
4. Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1350-4, p.298.
5. P.R.O., DL 28/3/1, mm.5, 8; SC 1/56/104 mentions a William Montendre as 'dominus' in 1382 and may refer to Henry's old tutor.
6. P.R.O., DL 28/3/1, m.5.
7. Lewes: East Sussex Record Office: Glynde MS. 3469/1-4, 20.

daughter of Sir Paon Roelt, a Hainaulter in Queen Philippa's entourage, Katherine had for a long time been a familiar figure at the English court. She was attached in her youth to the household of Blanche of Lancaster and continued to hold this position after her marriage to Sir Hugh Swynford in 1368. In 1382, ten years after Sir Hugh's death in Aquitaine, Katherine, now the mother of four children by Gaunt, John, Henry, Thomas and Joan Beaufort, retired from the Lancastrian household to estates in Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire given to her by the Duke of Lancaster.[1] There are no references in the accounts to the tutors and governesses of Katherine Swynford's own children by Gaunt even though they are mentioned several times, but it is quite possible that Katherine would have acted as governess to her own children.[2]

Henry Bolingbroke may have recalled his own childhood when he made plans for the education of his own children. By his first wife, Mary Bohun, whom he had married in 1380 or 1381, Henry had four sons and two daughters: first, Henry (born about 1387), prince of Wales, who became Henry V; secondly, Thomas, duke of Clarence; thirdly, John, made duke of Bedford in 1414, and fourthly, Humphrey, made duke of Gloucester in 1414. His daughters were first Blanche (born 1392) and secondly Philippa (born 1393 or 1394).

These children seem to have been educated privately in their own homes or in those of their father's relations, friends and servants. A series of Duchy of Lancaster wardrobe and household accounts for the period 1387 to 1398 gives us detailed information concerning the nurses, governesses and tutors responsible for the children's education.[3] The accounts tell us a considerable amount about the nurses in the household and show that although some of the children 'shared' nurses, on the whole they had their own nurses, a practice common in

---

1. S. Armitage-Smith, John of Gaunt (London, 1904), pp.390-1.
2. Glynde MS. 3469/6-9, 11-14.
3. P.R.O., DL 28/1/2-10; DL 28/3/1-4; DL 28/4/1.

royal and noble households.[1] Agnes and Juliana Rokster are names repeatedly associated with the young John and Humphrey and may possibly have served as their cradle rockers or berceresse.[2] In 1388 it appears that the midwife, Joanna Waring, who attended Mary Bohun at the birth of her second son, Thomas, was also the nurse of the young Henry.[3] She was granted an annuity of forty shillings in 1391[4] and was still in the household in 1396.[5] The other sons also had their own special nurses. Humphrey's nurse, Margaret, appears in an account of 1393-4,[6] while Joanna Donnesinore, granted an annuity of forty shillings, is described as the nurse of Thomas and John in 1392.[7] The daughters were also well provided with nurses. Blanche had two: one, who received a gift of cloth in 1392[8] and was named Matilda in an account of 1395-6, served also as Philippa's nurse;[9] the other, Isabella Stanes, received a gift of £10 in August 1394.[10]

Apart from the evidence about nurses, we know that Mary Hervy served as the governess of the young children. On 10 December 1393, she is termed the 'magistrissa iuvenum dominorum'[11] and in another document of the same year as 'maistresse a nos enfantz'.[12] We also have details of the tutors of young Humphrey, Thomas Epston or Epirston, described in 1397 as the 'informator' of his seven year old pupil,[13] and Thomas Rothwell at Easter 1399 when a salary

---

1. M.W. Labarge, A Baronial Household in the Thirteenth Century (London, 1965), p.47.
2. P.R.O., DL 28/1/4, f.20r, DL 28/1/6, f.13r.
3. P.R.O., DL 28/1/2, ff.17r, 24v.
4. P.R.O., DL 28/3/3, m.4.
5. P.R.O., DL 28/1/5, ff.31r, 32v.
6. P.R.O., DL 28/3/4, f.20v.
7. P.R.O., DL 28/3/3, m.4.
8. P.R.O., DL 28/1/3, f.8r.
9. P.R.O., DL 28/1/5, ff.26r, 31r, 32v.
10. P.R.O., DL 28/3/4, f.33v.
11. P.R.O., DL 28/1/4, f.2r.
12. P.R.O., DL 41/10/43/10.
13. P.R.O., DL 28/1/9, f.20v.

of 13s4d was granted to 'Thome Rothewell informanti predictum Humfridum'.[1] This rate of pay does not suggest a high position in the household hierarchy.

The children were not always receiving their education in their father's household. The younger children, Humphrey, Blanche and Philippa were often at Eaton Tregose in Herefordshire with their father's chamberlain, Sir Hugh Waterton, who had been responsible for Bolingbroke's own upbringing twenty years earlier.[2] In 1397 there are several references to John in the household of Margaret Marshal, duchess of Norfolk,[3] and in June of that year, Henry is described as 'existenti in domo domini ducis Lancastriae' so he was clearly spending time with his grandfather, John of Gaunt.[4]

It is all the more interesting that these records survive, as the household of Henry Bolingbroke in the 1390s is likely to have been typical of many noble households; there was, of course, no question at that time that Henry's children were receiving the special treatment reserved for the heirs to the throne.

The De la Pole Family

We have almost as much information about the strikingly different provisions for the De la Pole family in the early fifteenth century. The evidence for this family begins with a receiver-general's account roll of 1408-9, which tells us something of the education of Michael and William, the sons of Michael, second earl of Suffolk.[5] There are payments to two nurses, Marie Bokkyng and Elizabeth Bolton,[6] still in the household, but also, and more interestingly, there are references to the tutors of the young heir. In 1408-9, Michael, the

---

1. P.R.O., DL 28/4/1, f.13v.
2. P.R.O., DL 28/3/1, m.5.
3. P.R.O., DL 28/1/9, f.15r (August 1397), DL 28/1/6, ff.7v, 8r and 26v (Christmas 1397).
4. P.R.O., DL 28/1/9, f.14v.
5. Elveden Hall, Suffolk, Iveagh Collection: Cornwallis MSS., Box 9, no.4.
6. Ibid., m.3.

heir to the earldom, who was then aged fourteen or fifteen, had two tutors, John Appliyerd and Peter Ardesley. Appliyerd received payment for two years' service at 13s4d a year[1] (a rate which once again does not suggest a high position in the household hierarchy), while Ardesley accompanied Michael when he travelled to join the household of Thomas Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, for a month's stay in August 1409.[2] The visit is as likely to have been for education as for recreation, and Arundel's aristocratic family background may have especially commended his household to the earl. In the same year, William, Michael's brother, aged thirteen at this time,[3] was sent to Exeter to stay in the household of another aristocratic bishop, Edmund Stafford.[4] In the education of these two boys, both prelates and private tutors thus had a part to play.

The later evidence for the education of the De la Pole family has already been discussed by McFarlane. He based his comments on a household account, beginning in 1416, of the dowager duchess of Suffolk, which survives in the British Library.[5] At the time of the 1408-9 account, it seems most likely that William, the second son, was intended for a career in the church. But the death of the earl in September 1415, followed by that of Michael at Agincourt in October 1415, gave the earldom to William. In 1416 when the new earl had already left home, the dowager duchess's household consisted of two younger sons, Thomas and Alexander, a daughter Philippa and two grand-daughters, Elizabeth and Isabel. By this time, Thomas de la Pole was clearly intended for the church. Although only about ten years of age, he was apparently studying at Oxford under the patronage of Richard Clifford, bishop of London, resident at Burnell's Inn with his 'magister' and 'tutor' Robert Rowebury who received 20d

---

1. Ibid., m.3.
2. Ibid., m.4.
3. The Complete Peerage, xii, pt.i, p.443.
4. Iveagh Collection: Cornwallis MSS, Box 9, no.4, m.3.
5. Brit.Lib., Egerton Roll 8776. See K.B. McFarlane, The Nobility of Later Medieval England (Oxford, 1973), pp.244-5.

for his pains in September 1416.[1] The tutor is presumably to be identified with a magister of seniority, Robert Rowbery, who had received his master's degree at Oxford by 1392[2] and had served as a junior proctor of the university in 1392-3.[3] For some time a canon of St Paul's, he had died by February 1425.[4]

There is no suggestion that Alexander had intended to become a clerk: he was killed as a knight at Jargeau in 1429. In 1416 he was also studying, not in his own home, but with a schoolmaster, William Bury, at Ipswich. We know that this schoolmaster was married, since his wife received payment 'pro suo bono laboro facto circa dominum Alexandrum'.[5] During this period, Alexander returned to his grandmother at Wingfield on 13 July for his holidays.[6] Soon after, on 20 September, accompanied by several young attendants, he left home once more 'ad scolatizandum' at Cambridge.[7]

It does not appear to have been the practice to keep the young girls in the household for their education. Philippa and her maid stayed with the Benedictine prioress at Bungay throughout the year 1416, with occasional visits to Wingfield. Unfortunately, we have no record of how she spent her time. Of the grandchildren, Isabel, aged between one and two, was boarded out for a payment of 20s 6d with a nurse, Joanna Baker of Fressingfield. Her sister Elizabeth, aged five, began the year in the charge of Christine Fastolf, a nun at Bungay, but on 10 May 1417 she was moved to the house of the Poor Clares at Bruisyard. She must have begun her education there, although not yet six years old, since we know that her grandmother gave 6s8d to 'uni Fratri ibidem vocato le President pro labore suo circa erudicionem dicte Elizabeth'.[8]

---

1. Brit. Lib., Egerton Roll 8776, m.5. A.B. Emden, A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to A.D. 1500 (Oxford, 1957), pp.564-5.
2. B.R.U.O., pp.1597-8.
3. Snappe's Formulary, ed. H.E. Salter (Oxford Historical Society, lxxx, 1924), pp.9, 331.
4. Register of Henry Chichele, ii, ed. E.F. Jacob and H. Johnson (London, 1937), pp.305, 434.
5. Brit. Lib., Egerton Roll 8776, m.5.
6. Ibid., m.5.
7. Ibid., m.5.
8. Ibid., m.5.

From this information we have about the educational provisions for these three families, the Bohuns, the Lancastrians and the De la Poles, we can draw two main conclusions. Firstly, these sources show the variety of households in which a nobleman might be educated, and secondly, they reveal that from the early fourteenth century to the early fifteenth century there was a similar educational progression within each household. In the early stages the nurse clearly had an important role, although the real responsibility for the education of the young nobles lay with the governesses and tutors. The instance of Alexander de la Pole also shows that a nobleman's education could be charged to a schoolmaster. We must now consider to what extent these conclusions are borne out by other evidence.

1. The places of education

(a) The father's household

A nobleman might be educated in a variety of households, sometimes the royal household (as we have seen in the previous chapter) but perhaps more often in that of his own father.

Isabella de Forz, dowager countess of Aumale and, in her own right, countess of Devon and lady of Wight, was left a widow in 1260. She lived until 1293 only to see her five children predecease her before they reached the age of twenty.[1] She clearly made provision for at least one of her sons to be educated while he was young. In 1267 we hear of Stephen studying at Oxford from Christmas to Easter.[2] But even before this he apparently had tutors at home,[3] and in 1271 was again at school in Hedon, near Hull in Yorkshire.[4]

The practice of receiving education at home clearly went on into the fifteenth century. By his will of 22 February 1413, William lord Roos, of Belvoir

---

1. K.B. McFarlane, 'Had Edward I a "policy" towards the earls?', History, l (1965), 145-59.
2. N. Denholm-Young, 'The Yorkshire Estates of Isabella de Fortibus', Yorkshire Archaeological and Topographical Journal, xxxi (1932-4), 392.
3. P.R.O., SC 6/949/3.
4. P.R.O., SC 6/1078/12.

Castle, Leicestershire, left £400 to appoint ten chantry priests for eight years, one of whom was to be responsible for the education and upbringing of his three younger sons, Thomas, seven years old in 1413, Robert and Richard. He wished that:

> 'pueri mei per unum illorum capellanorum in gramatica magis doctum et scientem sint eruditi et docti in disciplina et gramatica, prout eos oportet et decet ..'[1]

At this stage, the youngest child, Richard was too small to benefit from the chantry chaplain's instructions and he almost certainly remained for some years in the care of his mother, who had not remarried. It was probably soon after his seventh birthday that he returned to Belvoir to benefit by the chantry priest's tuition in company with his next two brothers, Thomas and Robert.[2]

(b) Ecclesiastical households

Throughout the period 1100 to 1500 it was fairly common for noble boys, whether or not intended for an ecclesiastical career, to be reared in the household of a bishop or an ecclesiastic; the practice revealed in the De la Pole accounts for the early fifteenth century was not a new one. The twelfth-century account given by Henry of Huntingdon of the household at Lincoln, where he himself was brought up, is invaluable for the picture it paints of Robert Bloet's entourage and in revealing that bishops, like other magnates, were being entrusted with the education of noble youths, 'adolescentes nobilissimi', including, in this case, Robert of Gloucester, Henry I's illegitimate son.[3] Roger of Hoveden's chronicle includes a letter of Hugh de Nunant, bishop of Coventry, written in 1191, which criticises William Longchamp, bishop of Ely, for his arrogance and luxury, saying that 'huic omnes filii nobilium serviebant

---

1. Register of Henry Chichele, ii, pp.23-4. See also J. Nichols, History and Antiquities of Leicestershire, II, pt.II (London, 1795), p.37.
2. E. Seaton, Sir Richard Roos (London, 1961), pp.57-8.
3. Henrici Archidiaconi Huntendunensis Historia Anglorum, ed. T. Arnold (Rolls Series, 1870), p.299. See also M. Brett, The English Church under Henry I (Oxford, 1975), pp.174-5.

vultu demisso'.[1] The practice of using a bishop's household for educational purposes extended into the thirteenth century. Adam Marsh's letters show that in 1252, Henry and Amaury, the sons of Simon de Montfort, were put under the care of Robert Grosseteste, bishop of Lincoln, for tuition. Henry at this time was ten years of age and is described as being of tender years but old enough to be taught the rudiments of literature and to be trained in 'morum disciplina'.[2] That the bishop made a practice of receiving noble sons in his household is clear from verses on his life which state that: 'Ingenuos pueros secum vir sanctos alebat'.[3]

There are several well-known examples of late-fifteenth and early-sixteenth century ecclesiastical households where noble sons were educated: Robert Whiting, the last abbot of Glastonbury, and Cardinal Morton (among whose pages was Sir Thomas More) both received noble boys and there was 'a mess of the young lords' at Wolsey's table, among them the eldest son of the earl of Northumberland.[4]

(c) Other noble households

In the fifteenth century, there was also an increasing tendency to send at least the younger children away to other secular households, a practice criticised by an Italian observer in Henry VII's reign:

> 'The want of affection in the English is strongly manifested towards their children; for having kept them at home till they arrive at the age of seven or nine years at the utmost, they put them out, both males and females, to hard service in the houses of other people, binding them generally for another seven or nine years ...'[5]

Sir John Fastolf seems to have been sent away in this fashion. He is said to have been page to Thomas Mowbray, duke of Norfolk, before the duke's banishment

---

1. Chronica Rogeri Hoveden, ed. W. Stubbs, iii (Rolls Series, 1870), p.142.
2. Monumenta Franciscana, ed. J.S. Brewer, i (Rolls Series, 1858), p.110; see also cap.VII, p.241.
3. R.W. Hunt, 'Verses on the life of Robert Grosseteste', Medievalia et Humanistica, new series, i (1970), 241-51.
4. See F.W. Cornish, Chivalry (London, 1901), p.61.
5. A Relation of the Island of England, ed. C.A. Sneyd (Camden Society, xxxvii, 1847), pp.24-5.

in 1398. This is quite likely as his mother's second husband was John Farwell, esquire in the household of Mowbray's grandmother, Margaret, countess of Norfolk.[1]

The household accounts of Elizabeth Berkeley, countess of Warwick, 1420-1, reveal the presence of two youths of gentle blood, wards of Earl Richard, Ralph Bracebridge and Robert Arderne, whose fathers had served under him in France.[2] The account also refers to a certain Thomas, brother of the lady countess, who was probably a young bastard son of Thomas, lord Berkeley, and was with the household for the greater part of the year.[3] It is likely that these young nobles were serving in the household in the way that the Italian visitor suggested. Occasionally, it is actually specified in a will that a child shall be cared for in another well-to-do household. For instance, in pursuance of the will of Thomas Stonor (1432), Richard Drayton and his wife, Alice, signed a bond to provide for his daughter, Isabella Stonor, until the end of her thirteenth year 'in victu, et vestitu ac doctrina'.[4]

(d) The schoolmaster's household

There are clearly some instances where a noble child was educated in the household of a local schoolmaster. We have already come across the example of Alexander de la Pole, studying at Ipswich in 1416. Some fragmentary accounts of a very much earlier date suggest that the practice was not new. In 1271, Stephen, son of Isabella de Forz, was at school in Hedon in Yorkshire and the schoolmaster was paid 40s 'pro expensis Stephani filii Comitis'.[5] In 1325, William Roach of Roche Castle in Pembrokeshire was paying John 'le Scolmaister',

---

1. K.B. McFarlane, 'The investment of Sir John Fastolf's profits of war', Trans.Roy.Hist.Soc., vii, 5th ser. (1957), 104.
2. C.D. Ross, 'The household accounts of Elizabeth Berkeley, countess of Warwick, 1420-1', Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeol. Society, lxx (1951), 81-105.
3. Ibid., p.94.
4. The Stonor Letters and Papers 1290-1483, ed. C.L. Kingsford,i(Camden Society, 3rd ser., xxix, 1919), p.50.
5. P.R.O., SC 6/1078/12. 'Solutis magistro scolar' de Hedon pro expensis Stephani filii Comitis 40s'. See also p. 83.

of Haverfordwest, 10s a quarter 'pro salario suo'.[1] In an account of the household of John de Multon of Multon Hall, Lincs., of 1344, there are references to payments of 2s and 4s8d for the maintenance of John's brothers, William and Thomas at school.[2] In the fifteenth century, an epitaph, formerly on the tomb of Thomas, the second Howard duke of Norfolk (born 1443), at Framlingham, reveals that 'in hys yong age' he served as henchman to Edward IV, after he had been 'a sufficient season at the gramer schole'.[3] It appears that it was during the fifteenth century, that the practice of sending noble boys away to school became more common. There survives in Bodleian MS. Rawlinson D295, a paper book of three leaves, written late in the fifteenth century. It contains an address, known as Castrianus, which is probably linked by a common Latin original with the Babees Book and is given for the benefit of certain boys who were at school at Eton and were called 'our commensals, the sons of nobles'. They lived in lodgings, hospicia, which are looked after by dames, matres familia or matronae, and they dined together in the same room as the authorities of the school. It is one of these authorities who wrote the poem: he is concerned with the conduct of the boys as well as with their teaching and he is very much interested in table manners.[4]

The evidence therefore supplies us with a considerable amount of information about the variety of households in which a nobleman was educated. The lack of continuous source material makes it difficult to draw firm conclusions, but it appears that until at least the fifteenth century it was common for the heir to be educated in his own household, with a tutor, or in the household of an important ecclesiastic, as we saw with Michael de la Pole in the early fifteenth century. On the other hand, it was equally common, throughout the period, for younger sons to be sent away from home, often to the household of a bishop or,

---

1. Longleat Mun. 3444, cited by McFarlane, Nobility, p.246.
2. Magdalen College Oxford, Multon Hall Deeds 160, m.1.
3. J. Weever, Antient Funeral Monuments (London, 1631), p.834; see also cap.II, p.66, cap.IV, p.120.
4. M.R. James, 'Castrianus: An address to the Eton commensals of the fifteenth century', Etoniana, xxxix (1925), 609-14. I am very grateful to Dr J.R. Maddicott for this reference.

increasingly in the fifteenth century, to another secular noble household or even to the household of a schoolmaster.

## 2. The stages of education

The second conclusion to be drawn from the evidence of our three families is that, in each case, there was a similar educational progression from the early care of nurses to the care of tutors, governesses and schoolmasters. The evidence also suggests that the education of the magnates' children must have mirrored the education of the royal heirs. How far is this educational progression borne out by other evidence?

### (a) Fosterage

The custom of sending a very young noble child away from home was well established by the middle ages. In England it seems to have been unusual for royal princes to be 'fostered out' with other noblemen, but the practice of placing one's children in the care of foster parents was a normal feature of Irish society.[1] Sometimes children were fostered for love, but usually a fosterage fee was paid, varying, according to an early text, from three sets for the son of a freeman of lower rank to thirty sets for the son of a king. Noble boys were taught riding, swimming, the use of the sling and the playing of board games, and the girls learned sewing and embroidery. The time of fosterage ended for boys at seventeen and for girls at fourteen, when they returned home. But the ties of fosterage remained close. In Wales, the practice of fosterage was similarly common and is referred to in the laws several times. Normally, a nobleman sent his son to fosterage with a taeog or serf and, under the law, the foster son shared the inheritance of the serf like one of his own sons. It may have been this practice which inspired Stephen Langton's sermons on the serf, to whom, he says, lords sometimes entrusted the rearing of their sons:

---

1. M. Dillon and N.K. Chadwick, The Celtic Realms (London, Cardinal, 1973), p.133.

> 'Nobiles enim cum nascitur eis filiis tradunt
> eum alendam alicui de ruralibus suis ...'[1]

It certainly prompted Gerald of Wales to comment on the twelfth-century Welsh custom of putting out princes' sons to aristocratic foster fathers and the dangers it brought:

> 'Accessit etaliud incommodum grave, quod principes
> filios suos generosis de terra sua viris diversis
> diversos alendos tradunt ...'[2]

But there were some advantages. It is believed that some Welsh princes were fostered with poets. For instance, Hywel ab Owain Gwynedd, son of the great prince Owain Gwynedd (1137-70), and a known poet, Peryf ap Cedifor, were fostered together and they may have been taught by the same man. Hywel wrote some of the earliest Welsh lyric love poetry.[3]

(b) The early care of the child: nurses and mothers

Although fosterage did not play a significant role in the English nobleman's education, the role of the nurse in the early care of the child was extremely important. Almost immediately after birth, noble children were handed over to the care of a nurse whose duties included not only the physical care of the child, but also the display of affection, now considered the preserve of the mother. These duties, as described by Bartholomaeus Anglicus, writing in the mid-thirteenth century, were very extensive. The nurse was ordained to nourish and feed the child, to give it suck, to kiss it if it fell, and comfort it if it wept and to wash it when it was dirty. She was also to dose the child with medicine when necessary and even to chew the toothless child's meat so that he could swallow it.

Even more important from the point of view of education, the nurse was also to teach the child to speak by sounding out the words for him:

---

1. P.B. Roberts, Studies in the Sermons of Stephen Langton (Toronto, 1968), p.113.
2. Giraldi Cambrensis Opera, ed. J.F. Dimock, vi (Rolls Series, 1868), pp. 211-12.
3. Oxford Book of Welsh Verse in English (Oxford, 1977), p.23.

> 'And for he can nought speke the norse whilispith
> and (semi) souneth the words, to teche the more
> esiliche the child that can not speke.' Book VI, cap.9.[1]

It seems that in the middle ages it was not the custom to send the infant out to a nurse, after the fashion of later centuries, but rather to bring the wet nurse into the household to the child. Guibert of Nogent, born c.1064 in Clermont-en-Beauvaisis in northern France into a noble family of local importance, refers in his memoirs to 'hired' nurses in his mother's household.[2] The accounts of Elizabeth de Burgh, wife of Lionel, duke of Clarence, for the years 1356-9 make no reference to governesses or tutors, but they do show that a nurse, Agatha, received a present of cloth for her service to Elizabeth's daughter Philippa.[3]

The nurse often served in the household when the children were quite grown up. For instance, the nurses of Michael de la Pole are mentioned when he was fourteen or fifteen years of age, and the nurse and mistress of the children of Henry Bolingbroke, particularly Mary Hervy, are associated with the household for many years. Mary Hervy is also a good example of a nurse remembered with great affection by the family she served. Among many money grants to her, she received in June 1408 a life grant of forty pounds from the issues of the counties of Oxford and Berkshire 'for her good service to the king and his son the prince and his other infants'.[4] She also received in August 1412 a grant of lands in Bidfield, Gloucestershire, and a life grant of a tun of Gascon wine in July 1417.[5] Mary Hervy was not the only nurse to have inspired this affection, and nurses were often mentioned in wills. John Bolingbroke remembered his son's nurse in his own will of 1351, leaving her

---

1. Bartholomaeus Anglicus: On the Properties of Things, ed. M.C. Seymour (Oxford, 1975), p.304. See also cap.I, pp.29-30.
2. Self and Society in Medieval France: the Memoirs of Abbot Guibert of Nogent, ed. J.F. Benton (Harper Torchbooks, 1970), p.96.
3. Brit.Lib., Add. MS.18632, f.101r. See also E.A. Bond, 'Chaucer as Page in the household of the Countess of Ulster', in Life Records of Chaucer, iii (Chaucer Society, 1886), 97.
4. Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1405-8, p.452.
5. Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1408-13, p.387; Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1416-22, p.123.

6s8d.[1] Lady Margery, widow of Sir William Aldburgh, remembered her husband's nurse in her own will of 1391. Her husband had died young and she left to Mary, his nurse, who had long outlived him 'unam togam de blodio, fururatam cum gris'.[2] The will of Isabella de Wyleby, daughter of Sir Hugh de Annesley, of 31 October 1415, leaves a gift to the entire nursery at Raby in which were brought up the twenty-one children of the first earl of Westmoreland:

> 'Item mulieribus domus nutricii unum rotulum deflameolo de coton, inter eas distribuendum ...'[3]

It also appears that at least one nurse was sufficiently well-to-do, or well-loved, to have her own brass. In Swithland, in Leicestershire, there is a brass of a woman (which Mill Stephenson dates to 1455) with the inscription:

> 'Hoc in conclave iacet Agnes Scot camerata
> Antrix devota dominae Ferrers vocitata
> Quisquis eris qui transieris queso, funde precata,
> Sum quod eris, fueramque quod es; pro me, precor, ora'.[4]

It would seem likely that antrix is an error for nutrix and that this brass commemorates the nurse of Lady Ferrers.[5]

By the early thirteenth century, the nurse thus had a prominent role in the household. It has been argued that the English medieval magnates had surprisingly little to do with their children.[6] We certainly do not get much evidence from accounts of the father taking a particular interest in his child's education. Bartholomaeus Anglicus in fact gives the impression that the relationship between father and son is a remote one. He insisted that the father must treat his child with harshness and severity, teach him with scoldings and beatings, put him under wardens and tutors and above all show 'no glad cheer

---

1. Testamenta Eboracensia, i (1836), p.67.
2. Ibid., p.151.
3. Ibid., p.383.
4. Bodleian MS. Rubbings P/R 277, 278. R. Emmerson ascribes the brass to London Series D and dates it to the late 1450s or early 1460s, Journal of the British Archaeological Association, cxxxi (1978), 75.
5. This brass is illustrated in J. Nichols, The History and Antiquities of Leicestershire (London, 1804), opp. p.1077 (the word appears to read nutrix on this figure).
6. Labarge, A Baronial Household in the Thirteenth Century, p.45.

lest the child wax proud'.[1] But it is possible to discern an active concern for the education of their children as a prominent feature of the maternal portraits in our sources.

M.M. McLaughlin has suggested that noble mothers were capable of instructing their children in simple Latin.[2] By the twelfth century the indications are that the level of literacy was probably higher among women of the nobility than it was among their husbands and brothers, unless these latter were monks and clerics.[3] Queen Margaret of Scotland was famous for having taught her children herself.[4] St Anselm was also first instructed by his mother, to whose conversation he always, as a small boy, so Eadmer tells us, 'lent a ready ear'.[5] Illiterate, but practically gifted, Guibert of Nogent's mother was evidently assiduous in her concern for the physical and spiritual welfare of her son, providing him, as he says, with nurses in his infancy, dressing him in fine clothes and, when she had leisure from her household cares, teaching him how and for what to pray.[6]

(c) The tutors and governesses

As we have seen in the royal household, the early years of a noble child were spent with his nurse and possibly with his mother, but at the age of six or seven, it was usual for the child to pass out of the care of women into the hands of a magister or tutor. As with the magistri in the royal household, the magister of an infant magnate was not necessarily the teacher who gave him lessons, but the person responsible for his safety and general direction.

---

1. Medieval Lore from Bartholomaeus Anglicus, ed. R. Steele (London, 1924), p.58.
2. M.M. McLaughlin, 'Survivors and Surrogates : Children and Parents from the ninth to the thirteenth centuries', in the History of Childhood, ed. Lloyd de Mause (New York, 1974), p.125.
3. On this subject see E. Auerbach, Literary Language and its Public (trans. R. Manheim, London, 1965), pp.289-91, who emphasises the role of Anglo-Norman noble women as patrons of literature.
4. McLaughlin, op.cit., p.125.
5. The Life of St Anselm, ed. R.W. Southern (Oxford, 1962), p.4.
6. Guibert, Memoirs, p.107.

Accordingly, the post could go either to a knight of seniority or to a clerk.[1] We cannot be precise about the child's age when the magister normally took over or about the length of the magister's service within the noble household. It was when Guibert of Nogent was four or five years old that his mother procured the services of a teacher who became his private tutor for at least six years, living in the household and giving his full attention to his pupil.[2] Henry Bolingbroke received his governor Thomas Burton in December 1374 at the age of eight and two years later we hear of Henry's magister William Montendre. But magistri are also associated with older children. For instance, in August 1401, at the age of fourteen, Prince Henry described Sir Hugh le Despenser, who had been king's envoy to Aquitaine,[3] as 'nostre maistre' when the prince's receiver-general was ordered to pay him £100 for services over the past year,[4] and on another occasion the prince described him as 'tresbon et discret meistre governour'.[5] Similarly, Michael de la Pole had a magister, Peter Ardesley, at the age of fourteen or fifteen. Young girls of noble birth were sometimes in the care of a mistress of the household, even late in their teens. For instance, Philippa of Lancaster was nineteen in 1379 when Katherine Swynford was the mistress both of Philippa and her sister, Elizabeth.[6]

We can reasonably conclude that, in general, noble children did not pass to the magister or magistra until the age of six or seven, but that they might remain under their care until the age of about fifteen, an age which the literary sources show marked the end of the period of education. For instance, we are told in the romance of Merlin that Antor brings up Arthur until he is fifteen years of age.[7] Tristrem is placed in the care of a trusty steward who

---

1. See T.F. Tout, Chapters in the Administrative History of Medieval England, iii (Manchester, 1928), p.331.
2. Guibert, Memoirs, pp.45-50.
3. M.G. Vale, English Gascony (Oxford, 1970), p.31.
4. P.R.O., E 28/9.
5. Anglo-Norman Letters and Petitions, ed. M.D. Legge (Anglo-Norman Text Society, no.3), p.312.
6. T.F. Tout, Chapters, v (Manchester, 1930), p.319. See above pp.77-8.
7. Merlin, ed. H.B. Wheatley and W.E. Mead (E.E.T.S., 1865-99), p.97.

passes him off as his own son and educates him for fifteen years.[1] In the romance of Melusine, Pressyne is shown bringing up her daughters until they reached the age of fifteen.[2]

(d) Schoolmasters

As we have seen, by the fifteenth century, it was becoming more common for noble sons to be educated not only in their own households but also in the households of schoolmasters or even at school. We also have an instance of a schoolmaster, as distinct from a magister or governess, associated with a well-to-do family in the household. There was a schoolmaster connected with the Luttrell family at Dunster in the early fifteenth century. No school as such is mentioned at Dunster in the middle ages, but in 1424[3] an account roll of the Luttrell family mentions a certain John Scolemaystre staying as a guest in the household for ten weeks.[4] It seems likely that his services were used for the children within the household.

* * *

When we look at the stages of education we can see that 'fosterage', as a Celtic custom, remains outside the tradition of an English noble's education. However, the other fragmentary evidence we have about nurses, governesses, tutors and schoolmasters suggests that the progression was much the same in most noble households.

3. The subjects of education

Turning from the age of the pupils and the length of the tutors' service, we come to the most difficult subject: what were the noble children taught? Here the sources nearly always fail us, for even if they mention tutors and governesses by name, they rarely indicate what they taught their young charges.

---

1. Sir Tristrem, ed. G.P. McNeill (Scottish Text Society, 1886), p.9.
2. Melusine, ed. A.K. Donald (E.E.T.S., 1895), pp.12-13.
3. For the surname 'schoolmaster' see N.I. Orme, Education in the West of England 1066-1548 (Exeter, 1976), p.97.
4. Taunton: Somerset Record Office, Luttrell MSS. DD/L, Box P 37/10, m.2. See also Orme in ibid., pp.99-100.

The usual view of noble education is that it stressed skill in arms and courtesy learned in the household, and that bookish learning was looked on with indifference, if not contempt.

This view is not totally supported by the literary evidence of the romances. The hero of Floris and Blaunchflour, a thirteenth-century romance, learned, as a child, to read Latin and write on parchment.[1] The education of Tristan stresses the intellectual development of the hero through reading, writing, languages and law.[2] In the fifteenth century romance of the Lyfe of Ipomydon the young hero is taught 'upon the Book/ Both to sing and read'.

Nevertheless, the romances give the general impression that in a nobleman's education, the greatest emphasis was on the courtly or military accomplishments. In Helyas the Knight of the Swanne, for instance, the three sons of the Duchess of Boulogne were educated in their adolescence as follows:

> 'They began to practyse them in shotinge with they bow and arbelestre, to playe with the swerde and buckele, to runne, to just, and to playe with a poll axe and to wraistle. And began to bere harneys, to ronne horses and to approve them as desyringe to be good and faythful knights'.[3]

In the fifteenth-century romance of Ponthus and the Fair Sidone, Herland, the master of Ponthus, taught him all manner 'of disporte, hawkyng, huntyng, playing at the chesse, daunsyng and synghyng' (cap.5).[4] Yet again, in the Sege off Melayne, Richard, duke of Normandy, mortally wounded, entrusted his son to Roland's care with this advice:

> 'Bid hym hawks and houndes forgoo
> And to dedes of armes him doo ...' 11.307-8.[5]

---

1. Floris and Blaunchflour, ed. G. Mcknight (E.E.T.S., 1901), p.71.
2. M.P. Cosman, The Education of the Hero in Arthurian Romance (Chapel Hill, 1966), pp.5-6.
3. W.J. Thoms, Early English Prose Romances (London, 1858), p.782.
4. King Ponthus and the Fair Sidone, ed. F.J. Mather, in P.M.L.A., xii (1897), p.11.
5. The Sege off Melayne, ed. S.J. Herrtage (E.E.T.S., 1880), 11.307-8.

How far is this literary evidence borne out by the more conventional historical evidence? Under the care of the nurses, before they reached six or seven years of age, noble infants certainly had very little formal education. They had their own toys, although these were seldom expensive enough to find their way into accounts or inventories. There is a record in the accounts for the household of Henry, Edward I's son, of a 'small cart bought for the lord's use as a plaything, 7d', and the account is detailed enough to show that the cart was soon broken.[1] Indeed, for most boys, part of their education was devoted to a training in arms and weapons until such time as they could serve in the army at the age of fifteen.

Perhaps the most perfect example of this 'military' education is that given in the Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal in France in the late twelfth century. Here it is recorded that John Marshal decided to send William to his cousin William, lord of Tancarville and hereditary chamberlain of Normandy. Being himself a well-known knight and a frequenter of tourney, he was well equipped to supervise the military education of his young kinsman and to give him a good start on his chivalric career. When he was about thirteen years old, William started for Tancarville, attended by a valet or companion of gentle birth.[2] For eight years William served as a squire to the chamberlain of Tancarville and his principal duty was to learn the trade of arms. The effective use of the weapons of a knight - the spear, sword and shield - was a skill which a squire was forced to master if he wished to excel in his chosen profession.[3]

In England there is no such account of the knightly training which must have been common among the nobility. It is hinted at, however, in an account of the earl of Stafford for 1393-4: under the heading expensis puerorum, there is a payment of 6s 10d on 6 July at London 'pro ii gladiis emptis pro dictis

---

1. H. Johnstone, 'The wardrobe and household of Henry, son of Edward I', B.J.R.L., vii (1922-3), 400.
2. Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal, ed. P. Meyer (Paris, 1891-1901), 11.750-9.
3. S. Painter, William Marshal (Baltimore, 1933), pp.16-17.

(filiis domini Hugonis nuper comitis Stafford) Edmundo et Hugoni'.[1] Edmund at this time would have been about fifteen. There are no other known references from English sources to children's swords in the medieval period, and it is probable that children's swords were comparatively rare until the sixteenth century when swords were first regularly worn for ornament.[2] Presumably, the purchase of swords helped to initiate Stafford's two sons in their military training, which probably followed that prescribed for Edward IV's household, where the master of the king's henchman was to 'lern them to ride clenly and surely, to drawe them also to justes, to lerne hem were theyre harneys'.[3] We know also, from the same household ordinances, that the master was, in addition, to 'teche them sondry langages and othyr lernynges vertuous, to herpyng, to pype, sing, daunce, and with other honest and temperate behaving and pacience', and therefore that a literary education was of some importance.

From the accounts of John, duke of Lancaster, we know that the chaplain, Hugh Herle, initiated Henry Bolingbroke in both a literary and a military education, purchasing a missal for his use and two horses when he was ten years of age. The household accounts of Bolingbroke's own family, when his children were growing up, mention some of their schoolbooks and enable us to gain some idea of what they were studying and even their rate of progress. In February 1396, when the young Henry was eight and a half, there is a payment of 4s 'pro vii libris gramatticis in uno volumine continentis', showing that he had an early grounding in Latin grammar.[4] Exactly a year later, the third son, John, aged seven and a half, received a book for which Herman Goldsmith provided

---

1. Stafford: Staffordshire Record Office, D 641/1/2/5, m.2.
2. There are one or two continental parallels: there is an account of a fourteenth-century child's sword in Chartres cathedral published by F.H. Cripps-Day, Fragmenta Armamentaria, v (1941), pp.121ff. A sword in Toledo cathedral dating from the early fourteenth century was probably made for a child. See C. Blair, 'Medieval Swords and Spurs in Toledo Cathedral', Journal of the Arms and Armour Society, iii (1959-61), 41-52. I am very grateful to Mr C. Blair for this information.
3. A.R. Myers, The Household of Edward IV (Manchester, 1959), pp.126-7.
4. P.R.O., DL 28/1/5, f.33r.

two gilded clasps for a payment of 8½d.[1] At the same time, his sisters, Blanche aged nearly five and Philippa, not yet three, received their first spelling books 'Et pro duobus libris de a.b.c. pro iuvenibus dominabus erudiendis emptis, xxd'.[2] We can presume that Humphrey's tutors taught him grammar and we also know that on 19 November 1413, John Wodehouse was given an annuity of ten marks payable on the Duchy of Lancaster for teaching grammar to the king's sons, Thomas and John.[3]

But this exceptional family did not only learn grammar: there was a lighter side to education. In 1398 there is a payment of 8d to Adam Garston for strings bought 'pro cithera iuveni domini Henrici'.[4] The accounts of 1396-7 record a payment of 20d to a minstrel 'ludenti cum equo suo in presenciam iuvenum dominorum apud Tutbury' and of 6d paid to 'cuidam ministrallo vocatur Wylkyn Makyn facienti ministralciam suam in presenciam dictorum iuvenum dominorum'.[5]

For no other noble household do we have this amount of detail about what was taught. Often there is simply a provision in a will that someone is to be taught, with no indication of what. We know that according to the will of Sir Thomas Stonor in 1432, Isabel, his daughter, is to receive 'doctrina' in the household of Richard Drayton. Eleanor, wife of Sir John Pontington, left money to Walter Grymston, her son-in-law, 'pro pueris suis ad scolas sustentandis vi l. argenti solvendis infra iii annos a dato obitus mei'.[6] A similar bequest

---

1. P.R.O., DL 28/1/6, f.35v. This may be the Latin primer or Donet to which McFarlane refers, Nobility, p.244, and for which I have been unable to trace his reference (DL 28/4/1). A Donet is mentioned in DL 28/1/6, f.42r.
2. P.R.O., DL 28/1/6, f.36r.
3. P.R.O., DL 42/15, f.5v. See also R. Somerville, History of the Duchy of Lancaster, i (London, 1953), p.389.
4. P.R.O., DL 28/1/6, f.36r.
5. P.R.O., DL 28/1/9, f.2v.
6. Testamenta Eboracensia, ii (1855), p.212.

is found in the will of Matilda, lady of Dalden, 'Item do et lego Adae filio Thome Gudegrome totam firmam quam Thomas mihi dedit ad inveniendum dictum Adam ad scolas'.[1] No detail is given about what was to be taught, but it seems fair to suggest that a grounding in Latin was common to most noble children. This was specified in the will of Sir William Roos in 1412-13, when he gave instructions for the education of his three children in grammar. Whether Amaury, Simon de Montfort's fourth son, learned any mathematics we do not know, but he was taught by Master Nicholas, one of the best mathematicians of his day, who was mentioned with approval in 1267 by Roger Bacon himself.[2]

There is abundant evidence that a knowledge of chess and tables (or draughts) formed a considerable part of the education of a nobleman's children. Romances provide evidence that the learning of chess was part of education. As Sir Tristrem travelled 'His tables, his ches he bare'.[3] Geoffrey of Monmouth in his account of the festivities at the coronation of Arthur says that 'others spent the remainder of the day in other diversions such as ... playing at dice and the like'. According to Bevis of Hampton, the children were accustomed to play chess among other games.[4] Presumably noble girls played chess beside their brothers, as in Guy of Warwick, when Mordagowre proposes to Guy that he should visit the emperor's daughter in order to play chess with her:

> 'Into the chaumber go we baye,
> Among the maidnes for to playe,
> At tables to playe and at ches'. (11.3175-7)[5]

Even in the sixteenth century, Sir Thomas Elyot included chess in the subjects of a liberal education in his treatise, The Governor:

> 'The chess, of all games wherein is no bodily exercise, is most to be commended; for therein is right subtle engine, whereby the wit is made more sharp and remembrance quickened'.[6]

---

1. Wills and Inventories, i (Surtees Society, 1835), p.65.
2. Roger Bacon: Opus Tertium, ed. J.S. Brewer (Rolls Series, 1859), p.35. See also Roger Bacon Essays, ed. A.G. Little (Oxford, 1914), p.159.
3. Sir Tristrem, p.35, l.1227.
4. Bevis of Hampton, ed. F. Kölbing (E.E.T.S., 1885-94), p.185, l.3960.
5. Guy of Warwick, ed. J. Zupita (E.E.T.S., extra ser. xlii, 1883), p.184.
6. The Book Named the Governor, ed. S.E. Lehmberg (Everyman Library, 1962), Book I, xxvi, p.91.

But there is also historical evidence to back up this advice and the literary references. According to the Flores Historiarum, a St Albans work of c.1265, Henry I allowed his brother Robert, duke of Normandy, to play chess during the earlier part of his imprisonment, 1106-34, 'liceret etiam ei ad scaccos et aleas ludere'.[1] There are several inventories which show sets of tables. The Liber Quotidianus of 28 Edward I records 'una familia pro scaccario de jaspide et cristallo in uno coffro. Una familia de ebore pro ludendo ad scaccarium'.[2] In the inventory of Roger Mortimer's goods in 1322 at Wigmore castle there is an ivory chess set, kept in a chest: 'una familia de ebore pro scaccario'.[3] In 1397 Hugh le Despenser had in his possession 'treis peirs meines de cristall et tables de ivoir'.[4] Finally, Margaret Paston, in a letter of 24 December 1459, wrote to her husband about the playing of chess in a noble household:

> 'Please it to you to wete that I sent your eldest sunne to my lady Morlee to have knolage wat sports were husyd in her hows in Kyrstemesse next following aftyr the decysse of my lord, her husband; and she seyd that the wer non dysgysyngs ner harpyng, nor lutyng, ner syngyn, ner non lowde dysports, but pleying at the tabyllys and schesse and cards. Sweche dysports sche gave her folkys leve to play and non odyr'.[5]

* * *

No one would wish to suggest, using McFarlane's words, that the late medieval nobility was 'wholly made up of cultivated and accomplished intellectuals'.[6] But it is inconceivable that these men did not receive some sort of instruction and it is almost certain that the main place of education throughout the period was the noble household. A young noble heir would spend most of his time there with his tutor, occasionally staying in the royal household or

---

1. Flores Historiarum, ed. H.R. Luard, ii (Rolls Series, 1890), p.39.
2. H.J.R. Murray, A History of Chess (Oxford, 1913), p.449.
3. P.R.O., E 154/1/11b. This is printed in L.B. Larking, 'Inventory of the effects of Roger de Mortimer', Archaeological Journal, xv (1858), 362.
4. Rotuli Parliamentorum (21 Richard II), p.363.
5. Paston Letters and Papers of the Fifteenth Century, ed. N. Davis, i (Oxford, 1971), p.257.
6. Nobility, p.246.

even in a bishop's household. It was more common for younger sons and daughters to be sent away to other households of the secular and ecclesiastical nobility or even by the fifteenth century, to the house of a schoolmaster. By that time too, the eldest son might well find himself in another secular household for his education. Until the age of seven, the child's mother and his nurse were prominent in his upbringing, but from that age until fifteen or so, the magistri, and magistre or perhaps a schoolmaster took over. The subjects taught are in the main only hinted at: training in weapons, Latin grammar, music, dancing and playing chess and other board games.

However, one point which needs emphasis is that there appears to have been little obvious change and development in education within the household between the twelfth and the fifteenth centuries (although the nature of the sources clearly changes). There was obviously a very mixed pattern of noble education, shared between tutors in other households and the child's own household, bishops, resident schoolmasters, and schoolmasters in schools. Clearly, a variety of factors determined the parents' choice of education for their children. In the instruction of Simon de Montfort's sons, presumably what counted most was Montfort's close friendship with Grosseteste and (possibly) the reputation of Grosseteste's household as a place of education and learning. In other families the proximity of a school or an episcopal or religious household may have been important; members of the De la Pole family were boarded out with nuns or schoolmasters in the local area. It is possible that from the thirteenth century onwards, the universities (particularly Oxford) made available a greater number of learned men to act as tutors and schoolmasters and thus widened educational opportunities.

Some instructions from an Oxford graduate to a member of the Throckmorton family in the early fifteenth century make it clear that the recipient was well-educated and could read Latin, as he obviously had no bible clerk to read at meals:

> 'Let the book be brought to the table as readily as the bread.
> And lest the tongue speak vain or hurtful things let there be reading, now by one, now by another, and by your children as soon as they can read; and think of the wicked Dives, tormented in Hell in his tongue more than in any other members. Let the family be silent at table, and always, as far as is possible, expound something in the vernacular which may edify your wife and others'.[1]

This kind of evidence suggests that the rare instances of references to grammar masters and tutors in household accounts were not, in fact, isolated examples. The men who were interested in books and literature were often very actively engaged in the political life of their time. The nobility did not bring untrained and unsophisticated minds to their political service and their training took place principally in their own households.

---

1. W.A. Pantin, 'Instructions for a devout and literate layman', in Medieval Learning and Literature: Essays Presented to R.W. Hunt', ed. J.J. Alexander and M.T. Gibson (Oxford, 1976),

# CHAPTER IV

## EDUCATION OUTSIDE THE HOUSEHOLD

There is no doubt that the most usual place for an English nobleman to be educated was in his own household. But there were educational opportunities for noblemen outside the household in monasteries, schools, universities, at the Inns of Court or abroad, which were more or less popular at different times. The monasteries and nunneries received a few noble children for education, especially during the period before 1200. After that the instances are rare, although it was common for gentry families to send their sons to board in abbots' households in the fifteenth century. There is little evidence that noblemen sent their sons to secular schools during the period, although there were strong links between the nobility and the schools through noble foundations and patronage of scholars. A few noblemen were educated at the universities and there was an interest in founding colleges both at Oxford and at Cambridge. Finally, and once again the evidence is sparse, there were some noblemen who took the opportunity to 'finish off' their education, either at the Inns of Court or by travelling abroad.

### 1. The nobility and monastic education

In the centuries before the Dissolution it was a fairly general custom among the English monks and nuns to receive children for education. There are five topics to be considered here: firstly, the close association between the nobility and the monasteries and nunneries. Secondly, the monastic attitude towards the education of seculars and the evidence for noble children receiving education in monasteries between the eleventh and the fifteenth centuries. Thirdly, the extent to which noble girls and young boys were receiving education in nunneries. Fourthly, the reasons for the education of these noble children at monasteries. Finally, both the form of education given to these noble children and the general importance of these monasteries and nunneries as educational establishments need to be considered.

It is evident that from the earliest times there were close and varying connections between the royal and noble households and the cloister. Kings occasionally became monks: in the seventh century, for example, Sigbert, king of the East Angles, retired to a monastery and in the ninth, Ethelwulf, son of Egbert, became a monk at Winchester.[1] In the thirteenth century, royal women had a special 'refuge' at Amesbury in Wiltshire.[2] Here the second Eleanor of Brittany and Edward I's mother, Eleanor, became nuns,[3] and in 1285, Mary, Edward's daughter, is described as taking the veil there 'cum xiii puellis filiabus nobilium'.[4] Noble women as well as royal ladies sought refuge in convents. Adam Marsh, writing to Robert Grosseteste, requested that Lady Eva de Tracy, a considerable landowner, should be able to take up her abode in the nunnery of Godstow.[5] In 1283, the bishop of Winchester, John de Pontissara, directed the abbess and convent of Wherwell to receive into their community Joan, daughter of Sir Adam le Despencer, at the instance of Lady Margaret de Clare.[6] There is no specific evidence to show that any of these people entered the monasteries or convents to be educated. But the fact that such links existed suggests that noble families might think of sending their children to monastic houses for this purpose.

Before considering the evidence for this, it is worthwhile examining briefly the attitude towards secular education in the monasteries. There can be no doubt that monastic education was primarily directed towards the instruction of the boys and youths of the cloister who were destined to

---

1. Baedae Opera Historica, ed. C. Plummer (Oxford, 1896), p.162; Liber Monasterii de Hyda, ed. E. Edwards (Rolls Series, 1866), p.21.
2. S. Wood, English Monasteries and their Patrons in the XIIIth Century (Oxford, 1955), p.122.
3. Annales Monastici, iii (Dunstable), ed. H.R. Luard (Rolls Series, 1866), pp.326, 366; ibid. iv (Oseney), ed. Luard (Rolls Series, 1869), p.307.
4. Ibid., iv (Worcester), ed. Luard (Rolls Series, 1869), p.491.
5. Monumenta Franciscana, ed. J.S. Brewer, i (Rolls Series, 1858), pp.98-9.
6. Registrum Johannis de Pontissara, i, ed. C. Deedes (Canterbury and York Society, 1915), p.252.

become monks. One of the decrees of Benedict of Aniane had stated that only those who were to become monks should receive instruction in the monastery and it was part of his policy to isolate the abbey from the world.[1] St Jerome's words 'Monachus non docentis sed plangentis habet officium' suggest the same idea. But even on the Continent, these provisions were, as Dom David Knowles put it, 'rendered inoperative by the real need and urgent demands of the times'. At the beginning of the eleventh century, William of Dijon had organised a system at Fécamp whereby education and even free lodging were given to all who came, both those who intended to be clerics and others. Ralph Glaber describes this system in his Vita Willelmi:[2]

> '(Ut) gratis largiretur cunctis doctrinae beneficium ad coenobia sibi confluentibus, nullusque qui ad haec vellet accedere prohiberetur in quin potius tam servis quam liberis, divitibus cum egenis uniforme charitatis inpenderetur documentum ...'

In England there is no trace of a 'systematised lay or clerical education' in the monasteries.[3] There are, however, a few indications that boys were occasionally accepted for education and brought up within the monastery with no intention of remaining there as monks. It seems likely that this was a kind of private tuition which was reserved for the sons of distinguished neighbours and benefactors.

Admittedly recorded instances of nobles at monasteries throughout the middle ages are few. There are a number of cases from the eleventh and twelfth centuries which probably reflect not only the dearth of educational opportunities outside the monasteries, but also the high regard in which the monasteries were then held. It was a tradition of chivalry to send a boy to some other court and a great abbot's house was a court. The chronicle of St Alban's Abbey describes how Abbot John, who died in 1260, received noble children into his care: 'Unde multi nobiles e regno suos liberos, educandi gratia, suae

---

1. See D. Knowles, The Monastic Order in England (Cambridge, 1963), p.488.
2. Cited ibid., p.490.
3. Ibid., p.491.

custodiae commendabant.'[1] This suggests that the education of nobles in monasteries may have been much more common than the few chance references indicate.

Most of the examples of noble boys educated in monasteries come from the eleventh and early twelfth centuries and this may also be an indication of a general change within the monastic world. Towards the middle of the twelfth century, the offering of children as oblates ceased. When the monks were no longer the only teachers and educated class, it was inevitable that monasteries should concentrate less on their children and that boys educated outside the cloister should wish to become monks. In addition, the early Cistercians, by allowing no one to join their order under the age of seventeen, were bound to influence the other orders, and within a short time, the idea arose, expressed in a decree after 1215, that infant oblation was undesirable and in fact unlawful.[2] It is likely that the disappearance of the system of oblate children would have had the effect of diminishing the number of secular boys educated in the cloister.

With these general thoughts in mind, we can turn to the actual instances, often related in the chronicles, of noble children educated in monasteries. We will see that the noble sons were received mainly into Benedictine houses, although one or two found their way to the houses of the Cistercians and the Augustinian Canons.

(a) Noble boys in monasteries

As early as the reign of Cnut, we hear of the king sending the son of a foreign noble to receive his education at St Albans:

> 'At rex (Cnut) misit illum ad sanctum Albanun ut si in tutela Abbatis commorans respiraret. Quod Abbas acceptans eum ad regis petitionem et delicate educavit et instrui civiliter praecepit ...'[3]

---

1. Gesta Abbatum Monasterii Sancti Albani, i, ed. H.T. Riley (Rolls Series, 1867), p.397.
2. D. Knowles, The Monastic Order, p.421.
3. Gesta Abbatum, i, p.91.

Admittedly the source here, the Gesta Abbatum, is very late, although it may embody an early tradition.

There is also evidence that Ely received noble children in the eleventh century. The story appears in the twelfth-century chronicle of Ely abbey that Aethelred and Emma gave Edward as a child to the monastery so that he could be educated as a monk. The Liber Eliensis tells how the young prince 'cum pueros in claustro illic diu allitus est, psalmos et ymnos Dominicos cum illis didicit'.[1] Certainly English princes did often receive some of their education from an abbot or bishop; King Edgar had studied as a youth under St Aethelwold at Abingdon and he sent his son, Edward the Martyr, to bishop Sideman of Crediton.[2] But there are difficulties in the case of Edward the Confessor: it was unusual to be put to letters at so early an age and the choice of Ely, rather than a West Saxon monastery, is strange.[3] Thurstan, who was nobly born, and who became abbot of Ely in 1066, had been in the monastery from his infancy. But by 1150, the whole system of oblate children at Ely, as elsewhere, let alone the practice of educating secular boys, seems to have vanished and we have no further record of noble sons there.[4]

With some other monasteries, however, there is slightly more evidence for continuity at least until the end of the twelfth century. At Abingdon we hear of Robert, earl of Leicester and justiciar, who had received his education there at the end of the eleventh century: 'cum adhuc puer esset, et apud Abbendonam nutriretur regis Willelmi tempore'.[5] Noble connections with the monastery continued into the late twelfth century. In the 1170s, Queen Eleanor of

---

1. Liber Eliensis, ed. E.O. Blake (Camden Society, 3rd series, xcii, 1962), p.160.
2. E. John, 'The king and the monks in the tenth century reformation', Orbis Britanniae (Leicester, 1966), pp.159-60.
3. F. Barlow, Edward the Confessor (London, 1970), pp.32-3.
4. S. Evans, 'Ely Almonry Boys and Choristers in the later middle ages', in Studies Presented to Sir Hilary Jenkinson (Oxford, 1957), 153-63.
5. Chronicon Monasterii de Abingdon, ed. J. Stevenson, ii (Rolls Series, 1858), p.229.

Aquitaine sent a child whom she had found abandoned in the highway to be brought up at Abingdon Abbey where we are told that he studied letters.[1]

At Ramsey Abbey too the children of the nobility appear over a long period. As early as the eleventh century, there is evidence of noble youths at the abbey. The chronicle recounts the story of four boys of noble birth, Aethelric, Aednoth, Oswald, and Aethelstan who were being educated by the monks of Ramsey in the eleventh century. They lived under monastic discipline in the charge of the masters and 'lest they should be exhausted by the rigour of the Rule', they were allowed to play at specified times outside the cloisters. One day in play, they rang the church bell so hard that it cracked. Frightened by the thought of punishment, they hastened to confess to the abbot, who, moved by their entreaties, pardoned their offence, for which, when they were older, they amply atoned by gifts to the house.[2] We do not hear any more of Aethelstan in the chronicle, but Aethelric and Aednoth lived to occupy successively the bishopric of Dorchester,[3] while Oswald, a nephew of St Oswald, after a life spent in study, ended his days within the monastery.[4] It seems that this pre-Conquest abbey school catered for those who meant to follow an ecclesiastical career, though not necessarily a monastic one, a view supported by the chronicler's reference to the arrangements by which Lefsy, the deacon, placed in the monastic school his son, Morcar, 'disciplinis divinis... informandum'.[5] Nevertheless, in the twelfth century, Ramsey Abbey gave education to other boys who either did not become monks or were never intended to do so. In 1149 for instance, Geoffrey of Quarrington gave his son Ralph to be brought up for seven years at Ramsey.[6] As late as 1355 we hear in the accounts of Richard Shenyngdon,

---

1. Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, ed. J.C. Robertson, i (Rolls Series, 1875), p.213.
2. Chronicon Abbatiae Rameseiensis, ed. W.D. Macray (Rolls Series, 1886), pp.112-14. See also A. Gransden, 'Childhood and Youth in Medieval England', Nottingham Medieval Studies, xvi (1972), 3-4, and V.C.H. Hunts, ii (London, 1932), p.114.
3. Chron. Abb. Ram., pp.120, 148.
4. Ibid., pp.159-60.
5. Ibid., p.153.
6. Ibid., pp.268-9.

abbot of Ramsey, of a 'magister scolarum', although here he is not specifically associated with noble children.[1]

There are more recorded instances of noble education at the abbeys at Abingdon and Ramsey than anywhere else. The rest of the evidence consists of isolated examples. At about the same time as Ralph of Quarrington was receiving his education at Ramsey, Giraldus Cambrensis, the famous historian and ecclesiastic, went to school in the abbey of St Peter at Gloucester under Master Hamo, whom he described as a 'most learned man'.[2] It is interesting that his own subsequent career was not that of a monk, but of a secular clerk.

In about 1120, Gilbert de Gant, earl of Lincoln, was baptised and subsequently brought up at the Augustinian house of St Mary's, Bridlington, in Yorkshire. There is a notification by Gilbert, c.1150-6, that by reason of his affection for the church of St Mary, he was selecting it as the place of his burial and would go there if he took the habit, for it was there that he had first seen the light and had been nourished from early childhood.[3]

After these instances in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the references to noble children in monasteries become even fewer. It was in the late thirteenth century that James de Berkeley, the fourth son of Thomas, lord Berkeley, received his education at the Cistercian house of St Mary's Kingswood (he gained his Oxford M.A. by 1302 and was a Doctor of Theology by 1318).[4] We are told that James 'was bred a scoller under the Abbot of Kingswood, 5 myles from Berkeley Castle; from whence hee went to the university of Oxford'.[5] It may be that in the fourteenth century and thereafter it was mainly the younger sons of the nobility, intended for the church, who were sent to monasteries, as in the Berkeley case.

---

1. Brit. Lib., Add.MS. 34484, f.5r.
2. Giraldi Cambrensis Opera, ed. Brewer, iv (Rolls Series, 1873), p.107; A.B. Emden, A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford (Oxford, 1957), p.117.
3. Early Yorkshire Charters, ii, ed. W. Farrer (Edinburgh, 1915), no.1138.
4. B.R.U.O., p.174.
5. J. Smyth, Lives of the Berkeleys, ed. J. Maclean (Gloucester, 1883), pp.215-18.

In general, most of the references from the thirteenth century onwards are to children of lesser rank, the sons of the patrons or of the neighbouring gentry, who as private boarders received a gentle upbringing in the abbot's household. It is possible that they had access to the schoolmaster of the almonry boys. In 1266-8, John Blaby, a landowner in the North Riding of Yorkshire, was permitted to send his two sons to the priory of the Augustinian Canons at Guisborough to study under the master who taught the poor boys there.[1]

The practice of giving a monastic education to noble boys not intended for the monastic life was thus not continuous throughout the middle ages. It appears to have become distinctly uncommon by the fifteenth century, when most of those educated in the monasteries were the children of the lowest ranks of gentle society and when the houses which they attended were often poor and obscure. There is no shortage of such examples - an aspect of the gradual secularisation of the monastic life during the fifteenth century. The boys were usually closely associated with the head of the house and may have been boarded as pages in his household.[2] Certainly at the Augustinian house at Bicester in 1445 gentlemen's sons were both boarded and educated 'Filii duorum generosorum.... aluntur et informantur..'.[3] At the Premonstratensian house at Torre in 1478 the children are described as being assigned to the abbot's house.[4] Alnwick's visitation to Thornholm Priory in 1440 revealed that 'the prior receives gentlemen's sons at his board and takes nothing from them, notwithstanding that the priory is laden with debt and other heavy burdens'.[5] There was a similar story at Westacre in the diocese of Norwich in 1493, where the sons of the gentry were so numerous that the prior did not see how he could feed them:

---

1. C.R. Cheney, 'Letters of William Wickwane, Chancellor of York, 1266-8', Eng.Hist.Rev., xlvii (1932), 629, 633.
2. D. Knowles, The Religious Orders in England, ii (Cambridge, 1957), p.297.
3. Visitations of Religious Houses in the Diocese of Lincoln, ii, ed. A. Hamilton Thompson (Cant. and York Soc., 1919), p.35.
4. Collectanea Anglo-Premonstratensia, ed. F.A. Gasquet, iii (Camden Society, third ser., xii, 1906), p.143.
5. Lincoln Visitations, iii, ed. A. Thompson (Cant. and York Soc., 1927), p. 365.

> 'Multi sunt pueri generosi in domo de quibus non percipit prior quomodo pro eorum mensa solvitur ...'[1]

In the Lewes priory account roll for 1480, payments are recorded for clothes for 'pueri in custodia' who may either have belonged to the almonry school or have been boys to whom the prior was guardian.[2] Certainly, to take a sixteenth-century example, in 1536, the commissioners found instances of gentlemen's sons as wards of the abbot. At Lilleshall, for instance, there is a record of '4 gentylmens sones and their scolemaster'. These were private wards of the abbot, who paid for their board and education, which clearly was not carried out by the abbot, but by a master, a private tutor, hired for the purpose.[3]

The evidence shows that monasteries did receive noble children for education in the middle ages, but there are a larger number of examples from the eleventh and twelfth centuries than from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. This is due, partly, to the random nature of the evidence. Fifteenth-century instances of sons of gentry families could be explained in terms of the proliferation of visitation records after the end of the fourteenth century. But monastic chronicles exist throughout the period and are virtually silent on noble education in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The lack of examples in these centuries may be explained, at least for the gentry families, by the development of other forms of education. The beginning of the secular schools in the twelfth century makes it unlikely that many secular boys received instruction in the monasteries. In addition, the later development of the Inns of Courts as a sort of 'finishing school' for knights and nobles in the fifteenth century may have reduced still further the numbers looking to the monasteries for an education.

---

1. Visitations of the Diocese of Norwich, ed. A. Jessopp (Camden Society, new series, xliii, 1888), p.50.
2. V.C.H. Sussex, ii (London, 1907), p.412.
3. See A.F. Leach, 'The monasteries and the education of girls', Journal of Education, xxxii (1910), 668.

It appears that the education of noble children in monasteries was relatively uncommon after 1200 and became distinctly uncommon by the fifteenth century. The apparent desertion of the monasteries by the nobles may well reflect not only a rise in the popularity of education within the household and elsewhere but also a general decline in the prestige and standing of monasticism in the later middle ages. As Dom David Knowles has written, by 1300,

> '..The black monks were still, indeed, an integral and influential part of society, but they were no longer its soul, and society itself was less simple in its composition and less direct in its religious outlook'.[1]

(b) The nunneries

It has been said that 'if the male monasteries were essentially aristocratic institutions, the female monasteries were even more so'.[2] It is interesting to consider whether the education of noble girls within the nunnery was a more common phenomenon than the education of noble boys within the monastery. It used to be assumed that the nunneries were almost solely responsible for the education of girls in the middle ages and it was not until 1910 and later in 1913 that this view was seriously challenged.[3]

On the evidence of account rolls and visitation records it appears that it was a fairly general custom among the English nuns in the 250 years before the Dissolution to receive children for education.[4] In the period 1282-1537 there is evidence that forty-nine convents, situated in twenty-one counties, had children in residence at one time or other. Most such examples occur in those dioceses where the episcopal registers are most complete, as for example in York and Lincoln. But often only one or two children are mentioned and usually the evidence relates only to a single year out of the 250 years.

---

1. Knowles, The Religious Orders in England, ii, p.318.
2. Leach, 'The monasteries and the education of girls', 669.
3. Ibid., 667-9; G. Coulton, Monastic Schools in the Middle Ages (Medieval Studies, 1913).
4. For what follows see E. Power, Medieval English Nunneries (Cambridge, 1922), pp.262-3.

Although the custom of receiving children for education in nunneries was widespread, not all nunneries did receive children and those which did seldom had large schools. Admittedly, at St Mary's Winchester in 1536 there were as many as twenty-six children.[1] But the accounts of the Prioress of St Helen's Bishopsgate in London in 1298 record only two children and there were only two at Littlemore in Oxfordshire in 1445.[2]

The practice was never approved and was always subject to restriction by the ecclesiastical authorities. The greater number of references to school-children which survive are references to restriction. The author of the Ancren Riwle had warned his three anchoresses 'an anchoress must not become a schoolmistress nor turn her anchoress-house into a school for children'.[3] The attitude of the authorities was that the children threatened the devotion and discipline of the cloister, whether by making a disturbance in the quire during divine service as at Elstow in 1442, or by lying in the dorter with the nuns as at Heynings in 1342.[4]

The custom seems to have survived largely because of its financial advantages to the nunnery. This meant that education at a nunnery was a privilege from which the poor were almost necessarily excluded. Those girls who received a convent education were therefore drawn exclusively from the nobility and the well-to-do gentry, people of birth and wealth.

There is some literary evidence to support the view that girls of gentle birth might receive their education at a convent. From the poem Philip Sparrow, written in the early sixteenth century by John Skelton, it appears that the girl, Jane, who is shown as intoning the lament over a tame bird, lived and boarded 'Among the Nunes Black' at Carrow Abbey in Norfolk.[5] Judging

---

1. W. Dugdale, Monasticon Anglicanum (London, 1817-30), iii, p.457.
2. Power, Medieval English Nunneries, pp.576, 578.
3. Cited ibid., p.271.
4. Ibid., pp.569, 575.
5. The Complete Poems of Skelton, ed. P. Henderson (2nd edn., London and Toronto, 1948), p.60; see also L. Eckenstein, Woman under Monasticism (Cambridge, 1896), p.378.

from a passage from Chaucer's Reeve's Tale, the privilege of being called 'madame' was apparently kept by those who had been educated in a nunnery and returned to the world. The reeve tells about the miller's wife who was 'Y-comen of noble kyn' and who 'was y-fostred in a nonnerye'. On account of her kindred and the 'nortelrye' that she had learned in the nunnery 'ther dorste no wight clepen hir but "dame" ..'[1] In the romance of Merlin we learn that Morgeins was sent 'to skole in an house of religion and she lerned so moche of an arte that is clepyd astronomye, wher-in she wrought many times...'.[2]

Literature mirrored the impression created by records from the nunneries and particularly the Benedictine houses. Dugdale writes that Dartford priory 'was a nunnery to which the best and noblest families of the country sent their relatives, both for education and as nuns',[3] and that Carrow 'was a school or place of education for the young ladies of the chief families of the diocese of Norwich, who boarded with and were educated by the nuns'.[4] On the whole, however, specific references to noble girls being educated in nunneries are very few and far between.

There are references to noble girls at nunneries as early as the twelfth century although most of the evidence is much later. In the late twelfth century the earl of Warwick was clearly paying for his daughter Gundrada and niece Isabel to receive their education at Pinley priory in Warwickshire. In Richard I's reign the priory received a grant from the earl of rents in Claverdon and Walton Mauduit, Warwickshire, for the nurture of these two girls.[5] In the thirteenth century there is an instance of an archbishop taking an interest in the education of a girl of gentle birth. In August 1279 Archbishop

---

1. The Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, ed. W. Skeat, iv (Oxford, 1894), p.115.
2. Merlin, ed. H.B. Wheatley and W.E. Mead (E.E.T.S., 1865-99), p.292.
3. Monasticon, vi, p.537.
4. Ibid., iv, p.69.
5. Brit. Lib., Cott.Ch.xi.16; see also V.C.H. Warwicks, ii (London, 1908), p.82.

Peckham wrote to the convent of Hedingham Castle ordering them to admit Agnes, the daughter of Sir Roger de Beauchamp, in whom Queen Eleanor had an interest.[1]

The rest of the examples are considerably later. The Gracedieu accounts of 1413-18 contain references to nineteen boarders, nearly all of whom bear the names of the local gentry and one of whom was the daughter of Lord Beaumont.[2] At Littlemore in Oxfordshire in 1445 the daughter of John FitzAleyn, the steward of the house, and the daughter of Ingelram Warland were in residence,[3] while the accounts of Sopwell in Hertfordshire in 1446 mention the daughter of Lady Anne Norbery.[4] According to a list of boarders at Carrow, compiled by Norris from account rolls now lost, the two daughters of Sir Roger Wellisham, a niece of William Bateman, bishop of Norwich, the daughter of Sir Robert de Wachesam and daughters of the Fastolf, Clere, Baret, Blicking, Shelton and Ferrer families received their education there.[5] The twenty-six 'chyldren of lordys, knyghttes and gentylmen' listed at St Mary's Winchester in 1536 may be indicative of earlier trends in education at the abbey.[6] It is interesting that of these twenty-six, only one, Bridget Plantagenet 'dowghter unto the lord vycounte Lysley' was the daughter of a lord, and only three (apparently) were the daughters of knights. Nevertheless, this was evidently a fashionable convent in which young ladies at the time received their education from the nuns. By the time of the Dissolution, Polesworth in Warwickshire had established a reputation as a centre for 'gentylmens childern and studiounts', where they could 'be right vertuously brought upp'.[7]

---

1. Registrum Epistolarum fratris Johannis Peckham, ed. C.T. Martin, i (Rolls Series, 1882), pp.56-7.
2. P.R.O., SC 6/1257/10, printed by Power in Medieval English Nunneries, pp.574-5.
3. Linc. Visit. ii, pp.217-18.
4. V.C.H. Herts, iv (London, 1914), p.425, n.41.
5. W. Rye, Carrow Abbey (Norwich, 1889), pp.48-52.
6. Monasticon, iii, p.457.
7. Ibid., ii, p.363.

It is not perhaps widely known that nunneries could also act as schools for boys. Usually these boys were very young since it was not considered proper for them to stay with the nuns above the age of nine or ten. There are once more literary references to this practice: 'Abstinence the abbesse myn a.b.c. me taughte', says Piers Plowman.[1] In the Quest of the Holy Grail, a group of nuns approach Lancelot, shepherding Galahad before them, the eldest saying:

> 'Sir, I bring you this boy whom we have raised and who is all our joy, our comfort and our hope, that you may make a knight of him ...'[2]

In 1433, Katherine de la Pole, the noble abbess of Barking, petitioned Henry VI for a sum of money due to her for the maintenance of Edward and Jasper Tudor, sons of Catherine, the queen dowager, by Owen Tudor.[3] It seems that the boys were receiving their education at this abbey. Arrangements for Edward and Jasper may have been similar to those for Gregory Cromwell at Little Marlow in Buckinghamshire for whom we have evidence in the sixteenth century. Margaret Vernon, the prioress, a friend of Cromwell, was entrusted by him with the care of his son Gregory. The prioress did no teaching herself, for Gregory had with him a tutor, Mr Copland, who gave him and his schoolfellow Nicholas Sadler their Latin lesson each morning.[4]

The random nature of the evidence suggests that a few noble girls and boys, therefore, did receive education at convents and monasteries. Monastic education may have been much more common than the fragmentary evidence suggests. But why was there any interest in educating them there? From the point of view of the monastic institutions, it has been noted that the reception of noble school children was essentially a financial expedient.[5] As Coulton points

---

1. Power, Medieval English Nunneries, p.263.
2. The Quest of the Holy Grail, ed. P. Matarasso (Penguin Classics, 1969), p.32.
3. Rymer, Foedera, x, p.828.
4. M.A.E. Green, Letters of Royal and Illustrious Ladies, ii (London, 1846), pp.57-60.
5. See above, p.113.

out, this may account for the fact that there is little evidence of girl pupils for some of the richer and more important nunneries, for instance, Shaftesbury, Amesbury, Syon, Studley and Lacock.[1] But there are nunnery accounts which do record the fees paid by school children. Education was included with board and the usual rate for board for children from about 1380 seems to have been 6d a week, though at Cornworthy the charge was 10d a week in 1470 and at Littlemore in 1445 a mere 4d a week. The warden's accounts of 1446 of Sopwell in Hertfordshire, reveal a payment of 22/6d by Lady Anne Norbery for the commons of her daughter who was a boarder there.[2]

From the point of view of the noble families, the education of their children at a nunnery or monastery might result from a patron's interest in the monastic house. Rather than exerting 'defined rights' over the house, a patron would occasionally ask for a place;[3] as in 1294, Margaret, grand-daughter of Alice de Luton, Edward I's nurse, had letters from the king asking Romsey Abbey to admit her there.[4] In a nunnery, the nieces or daughters of the patron might take up residence. For instance, the two grand-daughters of Countess Ela of Salisbury entered her foundation of Lacock.[5]

It is possible that patrons and benefactors would naturally regard the nunnery or monastery which they had endowed as a place at which their children could be educated. Gilbert de Gant was probably educated at St Mary's Bridlington because he was the son and heir of Walter de Gant who had founded the house in about 1114.[6] James de Berkeley's education at Kingswood, five miles from Berkeley castle, may be seen in the same light. The Cistercian abbey had

---

1. Coulton, Monastic Schools in the Middle Ages, p.26.
2. Power, Medieval English Nunneries, pp.269, 578, 573.
3. Wood, English Monasteries and their Patrons, p.112.
4. Cal.Close Rolls, 1288-96, p.382.
5. Monasticon, vi, p.501 (ii).
6. V.C.H. Yorks, iii (London, 1913), p.199. The Complete Peerage, vii, p.672.

been founded by his ancestor, William de Berkeley, in 1139, following the wishes of Roger II of Berkeley. The close connection between the family and Kingswood was maintained through grants to the abbey from the Berkeleys[1] and is of course illustrated by James's education there. Geographical proximity also does much to explain these connections. If there was a monastery or nunnery in the next village, that might be the obvious place to send your children.

The association of a patron with a particular monastery might explain why some noble families sought a convent education for their children. Can this also be explained in terms of the education offered by the monks and nuns? We hear of Wulfstan studying letters in the eleventh century at Evesham and of Queen Eleanor's boy having a literary education at Ramsey in the late twelfth century. In the sixteenth century, Gregory Cromwell was receiving Latin lessons at Little Marlow, but these were from his tutor rather than from the nuns. In fact, as Leach has commented, 'No evidence whatever has been produced of what was taught in nunneries. That..something must have been taught, if only to keep the children employed is highly probable'.[2] All that can be done is to suggest what might have been taught from what is known of the education of the nuns themselves, in itself extremely limited. It seems certain that the children must have been taught to read. About 1460, the nuns of Godstow were said to be 'for the more party in Englyssh books well y-lernyd',[3] and it is also likely that the children were taught the Credo, the Ave and the Pater Noster in Latin by rote. It is more doubtful whether an education in letters meant that girls were taught to write as well as to read and certainly some medieval opinion was against the idea.[4] Some letters written by Elizabeth Shelley,

---

1. V. Perkins, 'Documents relating to the monastery of St Mary's Kingswood', Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, xxii (1899), 179.
2. See Journal of Education (1910), 841.
3. The English Register of Godstow Nunnery, ed. A. Clark, i (E.E.T.S., cxxix, 1905), p.25.
4. See the examples given in A.A. Hentsch, De la Littérature didactique du moyen âge s'addressant spécialement aux femmes (Cahors, 1903), pp.84, 106-7, 133.

abbess of St Mary's Winchester, shortly before the Dissolution, show her buying matins books for Lady Bridget Plantagenet who was in her care.[1]

Apart from the 'book-learning', noble girls at nunneries were probably taught to sew and spin. Jane Scroupe, of Skelton's poem Philip Sparrow , describes how at Carrow she sewed the image of the dead bird on to her sampler:[2]

> 'I took my sampler once
> Of purpose, for the nonce,
> To sew with stitches of silk
> My sparrow white as milk.'

Unlike Ralph de Quarrington who spent seven years at Ramsey and James de Berkeley who was at Kingswood for five years, it seems that noble girls were often sent to nunneries for relatively short periods and that the education which they received there was necessarily very limited.

In conclusion, it appears reasonable to suggest that it was a general custom for monasteries and nunneries to receive children for education in the middle ages, although there are a larger number of examples from the eleventh and twelfth centuries than from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. In the nunneries, the practice was never encouraged by the ecclesiastical authorities and it was largely a financial expedient. For this reason it is not surprising that it was noble children in the earlier middle ages and the children of the gentry in the later period who received this education. Links between the patron and the monastic house also made this practice more common. But monasteries and nunneries did not educate more than a small proportion even of children of the upper classes. Moreover, the education received, so far as book-learning as distinct from nurture is concerned, was extremely limited. It seems more realistic to think that, in general, noble children went to monasteries and nunneries for their elementary schooling rather than, as Miss Power puts it, for 'the acquirement of worldly accomplishments'.

---

1. Letters of Royal and Illustrious Ladies, ii, p.215.
2. The Complete Poems of Skelton, p.66.

## 2. The nobility and schools

From as early as the twelfth century the major source of education in England was provided by professional schoolmasters, who might be clerics or laymen, teaching full time in the cities and towns. During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the schools received a measure of public recognition and became subject to a system of supervision.[1]

How far can we associate the education of noblemen with this picture of the rising secular schools? There are very few instances of nobles actually at school during the period. At Stevenage, the account of the bailiff in 1312 records payment for the board of 'William son of Sir Richard le Rous, being in the school at Stevenage from St Mark's to Michaelmas Day, 22 weeks and 3 days, 18s8d, that is to say, 10d a week'.[2] In the fifteenth century the instances become more common, but, as we have seen with the De la Pole family,[3] it was more usual for the schoolmaster to be associated with a noble household than for the noble child to go to the local school. An exception appears to be Thomas Howard, later the second duke of Norfolk, who, we are expressly told, spent four years at a grammar school before serving as a henchman in Edward IV's household.[4]

Although very few noblemen went to school, the nobility did retain close links with schools throughout the middle ages in a variety of ways.

### (a) Royal and noble patronage of scholars

The earliest piece of evidence of a school at Northampton is an entry in the Pipe Roll for 1176, which shows the king paying for the board and education of a boy, John, in the train of the queen of Spain, while she was staying in England as his guest:

---

1. N.I. Orme, 'The medieval schools of Worcestershire', Trans. of the Worcestershire Archaeological Society, third series, vi (1978), 43.
2. V.C.H. Herts., ii (London, 1908), p.69.
3. See above, pp.82, 86-7.
4. J. Weever, Antient Funeral Monuments (London, 1631), p.834. See cap.II, p.66 and cap.III, p.87.

'Et in liberatione Iohannis clerici A. Regine
Hyspanie qui moratur in scolis apud Norhanton'
vis de iiibus septimanis per breve regis'.[1]

The sum of two shillings a week appears to indicate that the young clerk of the queen of Spain was a youth of high rank, for when in 1276 Archbishop Giffard of York sent three boys to school at Beverley, two shillings a week was the sum paid for all three, or only 8d a week each. This was the tariff per head for the commons of the scholars of Winchester another century later.[2]

Henry II was not the only patron of scholars. Some significant money grants were made by Henry III to students, both at school and at university.[3] Charity seems to have played an important part in Henry's support of students. In 1255, the king decided to send Rawlinus, son of Master Stephen of Portsmouth, to school and issued two writs to the keepers of his wardrobe to equip Rawlinus for that purpose. The first was to provide him with a robe of russet and lamb fur, a tabard of russet, stockings and shoes; the second to provide him with a bed, blankets and sheets.[4]

Records of noble patronage of scholars are few and far between. In 1310 there is a reference in the account rolls of the manor of Beddingham (Sussex), which was then held by Sir William de Etchingham,[5] to scholars being supported at the school at Lewes. The entry shows the two pupils, John Lucas and William Longe, receiving 11s6d from Sir William for the winter term 'euntes ad scolas apud Lewes'.[6] Not only did Sir William provide 3s6d for their clothing and footwear, but he also arranged for pocket money to be paid to the boys via Henry, the schoolmaster. It is quite possible that Etchingham was educating

---

1. Pipe Roll 22 Henry II (Pipe Roll Society, xxv, 1904), p.47.
2. These figures are cited in V.C.H. Northants., ii (London, 1906), p.234.
3. F. Pegues, 'Royal Support of Students in the Thirteenth Century', Speculum, xxxi (1956), 458-9.
4. Cal.Close Rolls, 1254-56, pp.46, 47.
5. See C. Moor, Knights of Edward I, i (Harleian Society, lxxx, 1929), p.299.
6. Lewes: East Sussex Record Office, Glynde 996, account roll of Beddingham, 3-4 Edward II. I am very grateful to Dr Nigel Saul for this reference.

these pupils so that they could enter his service, as in later manorial account rolls relating to Beddingham, there are references to 'Willelmo clerico', possibly William Longe, who appears to be an estate official.

A parallel seems to be the household of Elizabeth de Burgh, lady of Clare, which called for skilled clerks to administer it, while her many estates involved her in constant litigation needing the services of lawyers. Some of these, therefore, she provided herself from among the junior members of her establishment whom she had trained for that purpose.[1] We know that several 'clericuli' studied law as apprentices at the King's Bench in London and drew their commons from the household.[2] Other members of the household received their patronage nearer home. The son of Hugh le Charens, a member of the household, was reported as being a person of some promise and so his school fees at Clare were ordered to be paid by the receiver there. From the Feast of St Gregory (12 March) to Michaelmas 1340, a payment of 5d a week was made and hence 12s1d was paid towards this boy's education by the Lady of Clare over the twenty-nine week period.[3]

Other instances of noble support of boys at school are both less detailed and less interesting but they show that the practice continued. For example, in 1372 the will of William de Ferrers, lord of Groby, includes a bequest of 20s to John and Richard, clerks in his household, to go to school.[4] Elizabeth, wife of Humphrey Stafford, remembered two of her chapel clerks in her will in 1413 and once again provided 20s for them to go to school for two years.[5]

(b) The appointment of schoolmasters

In most places the right to appoint or license schoolmasters lay in private hands and it belonged to a wide variety of people. Sometimes it was

---

1. C.A. Musgrave, Household Administration in the Fourteenth Century with special reference to the household of Elizabeth de Burgh, lady of Clare (unpublished M.A. thesis, London, 1923), p.14. See also cap.VII, pp.260-1.
2. P.R.O., E 101/91/24, m.2; E 101/91/27, m.4.
3. P.R.O., E 101/459/24.
4. Lambeth Palace Library: Reg. Whittlesey, f.125r.
5. Lambeth Palace Library: Reg. Arundel, ii, f.174r.

claimed by the lord of the manor or borough where the school was held. Baldwin, earl of Devon, who died in 1262, possessed the township of Plympton 'with the advowson of the schools'.[1] John of Gaunt and Henry IV in 1372 and 1400 respectively appointed schoolmasters at Higham Ferrers because it was a borough belonging to their duchy of Lancaster.[2]

(c) Noble foundations

The lay nobility and great magnates are also prominent as founders of schools, their wealth and wide connections leading them to add the patronage of education to their other pious and other charitable activities. The foundations appear to begin in the fourteenth century (although one cannot be certain this is not due to changes in the sources). A number of factors could account for this: it was a time of notable lay piety and, as we have seen, monasticism was becoming less popular as a focus for giving than in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.[3] The nobility and upper gentry probably viewed the schools as the means whereby people would gain the ability to read in order to meet the demands of a more personal religion.

Some of these schools began life as chantries and therefore are a by-product of the original endowment. In 1347, for instance, Sir Bartholomew Burghersh endowed a chantry in the chapel of St Katherine, Lincoln Cathedral, for five priests to pray by the tombs of his father and brother. Finding that the generous endowment produced a surplus of £10 beyond what was required to support the priests, the dean and chapter decided in 1349 to add six boys to the foundation. They were to be aged eight or so when admitted, knowing some elementary grammar and able to sing. They got board, lodging and clothing and were to receive their education at the city grammar school.[4]

---

1. Cal. of Inquisitions Post Mortem, i (London, 1904), p.174.
2. N.I. Orme, English Schools in the Middle Ages (London, 1973), pp.146-8.
3. See above, pp.111-12.
4. V.C.H. Lincs., ii (London, 1906), pp.427-9.

Another collegiate foundation which appears to have included a grammar school was that of Cobham in Kent, which was established by John, lord Cobham, in 1362, for a master, and five chaplains, the clerks and choristers being added later. Whether one of the chaplains was originally intended to teach grammar is not certain, but in 1383, work was carried out on 'the college and schoolhouse of Cobham'.[1]

Sometimes the master in a noble foundation was intended merely for the benefit of the clerks and choristers of the foundation. This seems to have been the position at Fotheringay in Northamptonshire, where Edward, duke of York, erected in 1411 a large college for a master, twelve chaplains, eight clerks and thirteen choristers. The statutes, dating from about 1415, order one of the chaplains to instruct in grammar and one of the clerks to train the choristers in song.[2] In other places, the grammar master was also available to teach boys from outside, as at Tong in Shropshire where a college was founded in 1410 by Isabel, the widow of Sir Fulk Pembridge. Once more the teaching of grammar was entrusted to one of the chaplains, but here he instructed not only the members of the college, but other poor youths of the place or from neighbouring villages.[3]

One of the earliest and most important foundations by a member of the nobility was the school at Wotton-under-Edge, founded by Lady Katherine Berkeley in June 1384, less than two years after Winchester. The school had, in fact, some resemblance to Winchester itself. The foundation supported a schoolmaster and only two poor scholars, receiving free board, lodging and education. The offer of free education to all comers was a novel departure from Winchester, but an example to be widely followed in times to come.[4]

---

1. Orme, op.cit., pp.186-7.
2. A. Hamilton Thompson, 'The statutes of the collegiate church of Fotheringay', Archaeological Journal, 2nd ser., xxv (1918), 272.
3. Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1408-13, p.280.
4. V.C.H. Gloucs., ii (London, 1907), pp.396-8. See also E.S. Lindley, Wotton Under Edge (London, 1962), p.227.

There were some fifteenth-century followers of the example set by Lady Katherine Berkeley. Walter, lord Hungerford, treasurer of England and steward of the king's household, who died in 1449, began the building of an almshouse and grammar school in his lordship of Heytesbury in Wiltshire and bequeathed lands for their support though the bequest was not carried out until 1472.[1] William de la Pole, duke of Suffolk, also deserves to be remembered as one who assisted the king in founding Eton and who erected a grammar school and almshouse on his own account at Ewelme in Oxfordshire in the fifteenth century.[2]

Clearly then, although we have little indication that noblemen actually sent their sons or daughters to the local school, there were close connections between the nobility and the schools. Not only did nobles support individual scholars and appoint schoolmasters, but they also founded a number of schools during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The establishment of such schools as Eton and Winchester show that the impetus to found schools was widespread through the upper ranks of lay and clerical society.

3. The nobility and the universities

The overwhelming majority of medieval secular students at both Oxford and Cambridge came from fairly humble backgrounds and it was only in the later middle ages that there was a trickle of scholars of more elevated status. J.T. Rosenthal has commented that 'very few representatives of the families we can call noble during this period had any academic contact with the two English universities'.[3] Dr N.I. Orme has stated that 'there are even instances of noble boys being sent to pursue their studies in the universities', implying

---

1. See R.C. Hoare, The History of Wiltshire: Hundred of Heytesbury (London, 1824), p.102.
2. Orme, op.cit., p.202.
3. J. Rosenthal, 'The universities and the medieval English nobility', History of Education Quarterly, ix (1969), 432. For a similar picture on the continent, see J. Verger 'Noblesse et savoir: étudiants nobles aux universités d'Avignon, Cahors, Montpellier et Toulouse (fin du XIVe siècle)', in La Noblesse au Moyen Age, ed. P. Contamine (Paris, 1976), 289-313, which shows that only 5.1 per cent of the students were nobles.

that it was the exception rather than the rule.[1] It has been suggested that between 1307 and 1485, a total of eighty-eight members of noble families attended Oxford and Cambridge. But only six of these eighty-eight were laymen and even two of these had originally planned an ecclesiastical career.[2] Yet to some extent these figures must merely reflect deficiencies in the record; as representatives of what must surely have been a much wider group, the handful of royal and noble youths who are positively known to have received some form of university training deserves attention. It is also worth examining the university background of noble tutors, and royal and noble patronage of scholars at university, before considering the better-documented subject of the foundation of colleges by the nobility.

(a) University connections of the royal family

Two medieval kings may have received some education at Oxford.[3] There is no record of any member of the royal family at Cambridge in the middle ages. The first king thought to have been associated with Oxford is Edward I, when he was heir to the throne. John Rous, admittedly a later writer, states that in 1268, while studying in Oxford 'minori aetate', Edward rode to his father at Woodstock to carry news of a university riot.[4] An official source confirms that Edward, then aged twenty-eight (and therefore not a minor as Rous states), was in Oxford at the time: 'illustrique viro Domino Eddewardo...tempore sceleris patrati Oxoniae existenti'.[5] But as early as January 1255, he had a chamber prepared for him at Beaumont Palace;[6] if he did indeed receive any formal education in the university (and it is interesting to speculate on the possible influence on him of leading Oxford legists), this seems a much more likely date for it than the late 1260s.

---

1. Orme, op.cit., p.35.
2. Rosenthal, op.cit., 418.
3. B.R.U.O., pp.627, 909-10.
4. John Rous, Historia Regum Angliae, ed. T. Hearne (1716), p.201.
5. Munimenta Academica Oxon., ed. H. Anstey, i (Rolls Series, 1868), pp.36-7; Cal.Close Rolls, 1264-8, pp.470, 553-4; Cal.Close Rolls, 1268-72, pp.14-15.
6. Cal.Lib. Rolls, iv, p.193. See also H. Colvin, ed., The History of the King's Works, ii (London, 1963), 987.

The other English king whose education has been associated with Oxford is Henry V. It is once again John Rous who records that Henry studied at Queen's College, Oxford, under the tutelage of his uncle, Henry Beaufort, then chancellor of the university.[1] Beaufort had rooms in Queen's in 1391, and it seems possible that the visits of various notables, including John of Gaunt, in 1392-3 were connected with preparations for his residence there.[2] If Rous is to be trusted, Henry must have lived in the college during 1398, when he would have been ten years old. There is no reason to think that Henry received formal education in Oxford; but his contact with the university, if indeed it did occur, can only have stimulated scholarly interests in this member of 'the most bookish group of royal princes'.[3] Henry's life was cut short before he could equal the attainments of his brothers, Duke John and Duke Humphrey, but there is good evidence that he had a strong interest in books and a considerable library.[4] More important, it seems that Henry may have intended to apply the spoils of the alien priories to founding a college in Oxford Castle for the study of theology and arts.[5] This may account for the bequest of 110 books which the University claimed under Henry's will.[6] It certainly seems possible that this later interest in Oxford and in books may be traced back to childhood contacts.

(b) The lay nobility at university

There are very few recorded instances of the nobility at Oxford and Cambridge; they come chiefly from the late fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries. Only two examples come from Cambridge, the first being Alexander

---

1. Historia Regum Angliae, p.207.
2. B.R.U.O., pp.909-10; J. Magrath, The Queen's College, i (Oxford, 1921), pp.117-18.
3. K.B. McFarlane, Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights (Oxford, 1972), p.116.
4. See below, p.214.
5. B.R.U.O., pp.909-10.
6. F. Palgrave, The Antient Kalendars and Inventories of the Treasury of the Exchequer, II (London, 1836), p.97; Epistolae Academicae Oxon, ed. H. Anstey, i (Oxford Hist. Soc., xxxv, 1898), p.151.

de Bruce.[1] Born in 1278, the fourth son of Robert de Bruce and brother of Robert king of Scots, he studied at Cambridge from 1295 until about 1302, receiving his Master's Degree in 1301 or 1302, when his brother gave an inception feast on his behalf. A second, much later, example is that of Henry Huntingdon, eldest son of John, earl of Huntingdon. He was a commoner at King's Hall, Cambridge, from 3 June 1439 to 1442 with a suite of four servants.[2] He went on to pursue a secular career, was knighted on 15 May 1439, and succeeded to the earldom of Huntingdon and dukedom of Exeter in August 1447.[3]

The evidence for Oxford is, as usual, more plentiful, but even so only nine examples have been found of noblemen at Oxford during the period 1250 to 1500 who later pursued a secular career (see table).

| NAME | DATE AT OXFORD |
|---|---|
| Stephen, son of Isabella de Forz | 1266-67 |
| Beauchamp, William | 1358-61 |
| La Warre, Thomas | Lic. in Arts 1381; M.A.1392. |
| Isles, Donald of the, 2nd lord of the Isles and 9th earl of Ross | 1378-84 |
| Holland, Lord Richard | 1394-5 |
| Hungerford, Robert, later lord Hungerford | Resident in University College for 3 terms in 1437 |
| Tiptoft, John, son of John, lord Tiptoft | Had rooms in University College 1440-1, 1441-2, 1442-3 for 3 terms, 1443-4 for 1 term. |
| Grey, Thomas, son of Thomas, 1st marquess of Dorset | 1490s |
| Markenfield, Ninian, son of Sir Thomas Markenfield | 1497 |

---

1. B.R.U.C., pp.99-100.
2. Ibid., p.321.
3. The Complete Peerage, v, pp.212-15.

Stephen, son of Isabella de Forz, countess of Devon and Lady of the Isle of Wight, is referred to in ministers' accounts as 'Stephanus filius comitis', but not mentioned in other sources. He is heard of at Oxford between Christmas 1266 and Easter 1267 where his expenses were 4s 3d. Before this he had had tutors at home and in 1271 was again at school in Hedon, Yorkshire.[1]

The fourth son of Thomas, earl of Warwick, William Beauchamp, was fifteen when he went up to Oxford in 1358 and he was still there in 1361. It was probably during this year that he gave up the intention of pursuing a clerical career. He later served with John of Gaunt on the Black Prince's Castilian campaign and was summoned to parliament in July 1392 as lord Bergavenny. Disappointingly his will of April 1408 fails to reflect his early university education, for it contains no references to books or to educational patronage.[2]

Thomas La Warre, son of Roger, lord La Warre, was almost the same age as William Beauchamp, being born about 1342. He was not a licentiate in arts until 1381 and received his Master's degree in 1392. It is perhaps wrong to include him among 'lay nobles' at Oxford since he did pursue a clerical career and was obviously intended for one from the first. Nonetheless, he succeeded to the La Warre barony in 1398 on his brother's death and was summoned to successive parliaments from 1399 to 1421.[3] Almost a contemporary of Thomas La Warre, Richard, lord Holland, son of Thomas earl of Kent, was resident in Canterbury College, 1394-5, and gave a great feast on the occasion of his bachelor's degree in February 1395.[4]

In the latter part of the fourteenth century, it was not only English

---

1. P.R.O., SC 6/1118/17; N. Denholm-Young, 'The Yorkshire Estates of Isabella de Fortibus', Yorkshire Archaeological and Topographical Journal, xxxi (1932-4), 392; see also cap.3, p.83.
2. Testamenta Vetusta, ed. N.H. Nicolas, i (London, 1826), pp.171-2.
3. B.R.U.O., p.1111.
4. B.R.U.O., p.951.

nobles who came to Oxford. The association with the University of Donald of the Isles, who was granted safe conduct for six years to study at Oxford in August 1378,[1] shows that the Scottish nobility also had links with Oxford. This Donald may have been the son of John, 1st lord of the Isles, who succeeded to the lordship of the Isles in 1387. D.E.R. Watt has suggested that Donald was an illegitimate son of the lord of the Isles,[2] but in either case, we have a student at Oxford from a noble background.

All the other instances come from well into the fifteenth century. Robert Hungerford was born about 1428, the son and heir of Robert, lord Hungerford. He resided in University College for three terms in 1437-8, at the age of ten, with his tutor, master John Chedworth.[3] He went on to a military career and was appointed to several commissions between February and June 1460. John Tiptoft (later earl of Worcester) likewise had an association with University College in the mid-fifteenth century. Born in 1427, he was the son of John, lord Tiptoft and his second wife Joyce. He had rooms in University College from 1441-3 and spent the time with his tutor, John Hurley.[4]

Finally, two late examples are worth mentioning in so far as they provide a link between the university education of the medieval nobility and the 'great invasion of the universities by the aristocracy after the Reformation'.[5] In a letter dated 20 October 1494, the University expressed to the first Marquess of Dorset its gratification at being entrusted with the education of his sons, including the future second Marquess, Thomas Grey.[6] When the sons first came to the university in 1495, they were entertained with wine and 'ly waffyrs'.[7]

---

1. Rotuli Scotiae, ii, 11a.
2. D. Watt, A Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Graduates to A.D. 1410 (Oxford, 1977), p.285.
3. University College Bursars' Accounts (cited Emden, B.R.U.O., p.985).
4. R.J. Mitchell, John Tiptoft 1427-70 (London, 1938), pp.13-14.
5. Orme, Schools, p.36.
6. Ep.Acad., ii, p.620.
7. Medieval Archives of the University of Oxford, ed. H.E. Salter (Oxford Hist. Soc., lxxiii, 1919), ii, p.353.

Secondly, in April 1497, Sir Thomas Markenfield left £55 for the completion of the education of his son Ninian, born about 1482, 'to his exhibycion and fynding 2 yeres at Oxford and 3 yeres at London in oon in of Courte'.[1] His bequest stands at the start of a trend which was to gain momentum in the sixteenth century.

Such instances are uncommon before the Reformation, and the whole recorded sample of medieval noblemen at the universities is so small that not much can be based on it. The nature of the education received by such men must often have been informal or sporadic and it is scarcely likely that such activities would often have found permanent record. The minute proportion of cases known to us at least shows that throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, there was nothing unusual in a nobleman of any rank passing a spell of his education at Oxford or Cambridge. To this extent, they provide another indication of the growing interest of the upper classes in literary studies.

(c) Noble tutors at the universities

There was a less direct way in which the education of the royal family and that of the nobility was connected with Oxford and Cambridge. Both universities were a training ground for tutors to the royal family and the nobility. As we have seen, there are several examples of royal tutors educated at Oxford or Cambridge - Henry of Avranches, John de Claxton and Henry Scogan.[2]

In addition, there are thirteenth-century examples of tutors to noblemen at Oxford. For instance, William of Avignon, acting as tutor of Guy de Auvergne while he was staying at Oxford in 1226, received a grant of twenty marks for this purpose by Henry III on 13 February 1226.[3] Henry likewise gave support to Master Vicentius of Tours, the tutor of Aymer de Valence,

---

1. Testamenta Eboracensia, iv (Surtees Society, liii, 1869), p.125.
2. See cap.II, pp.49-50.
3. B.R.U.O., p.80; Rot.Litt.Claus, ii, 98, 103.

during his residence at Oxford in 1247 and 1249: he was granted an annuity of 40 marks by the king until he was provided with a benefice on 10 May 1247.[1] In the early fourteenth century, Richard Aston had licence to study at both Oxford and Cambridge c.1310, in order to act as tutor to Thomas de Segrave, son of Sir John de Segrave.[2]

The other examples come later in the fourteenth century and in the fifteenth century. John Giles became a fellow of New College, Oxford, in 1386, and Merton College records show that he was tutor at Oxford to Richard Holland, son of Thomas Holland, earl of Kent, in 1395.[3] John Hurley has already been mentioned as tutor to John Tiptoft, earl of Worcester, when he resided in University College in the 1440s. In his will of 1470, Hurley bequeathed £10 for the maintenance of two poor scholars at Oxford or Cambridge for two years and for two priests or scholars specifically at Oxford.[4]

The practice of employing university men as tutors for noble and royal sons continued throughout the fifteenth century. Two tutors to Henry VII, Edward Haseley and Andrew Scot,[5] and the tutor in classical literature to Prince Arthur, John Rede,[6] studied at Oxford. These examples show that there was nothing new about Roger Ascham's or Sir John Cheke's association with Cambridge in the sixteenth century: there was a long tradition throughout the middle ages of tutors to the royal and noble families coming from Oxford and Cambridge.

---

1. B.R.U.O., p.1889; Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1232-47, p.503; Cal.Lib. Rolls, iii, pp.121, 151; H.S. Snellgrove, The Lusignans in England 1247-58 (Albuquerque, 1950).
2. B.R.U.O., p.68; B.R.U.C., pp.20-1. See also T.H. Aston, G.D. Duncan, T.A.R. Evans, 'The Medieval Alumni of Cambridge', Past and Present, lxxxvi (1980), 45-6.
3. Merton College Records 4495, cited B.R.U.O., p.769.
4. See above, p.130; B.R.U.O., p.988.
5. Ibid., pp.883-4, 1656.
6. Ibid., pp.1555-6.

(d) Royal and noble patronage of scholars

Both kings and nobles were also associated with the universities in ways unconnected with their own education; for example, through their patronage of scholars. Our earliest evidence here comes from Richard I's reign, when the king was supporting Nicholas de Hungria at Oxford in 1193[1] and Robert de Vermeilles in 1198.[2] Nicholas subsequently became a clerk of Henry de Vere. But it was not until Henry III's time that the practice became common,[3] due no doubt to the particular interests of the king himself, intellectual, religious and charitable. Henry's generosity towards the poor, and the systematic almsgiving organised through his household reflect similar interests.[4] His reign provides thirty-four out of the fifty-six known cases of scholars supported at Oxford by the royal family between 1189 and 1485.

There were sometimes special reasons for the king's patronage. His foreign diplomacy and political needs probably explain the Oxford scholarship which he gave in 1226 to Guy, brother of the count of the Auvergne,[5] for he had made a treaty with the count in the previous year. Similarly, his gifts to Ponce de Pons in 1231 (while he was at Oxford) owed something to Ponce's membership of a powerful Saintonge family, whose support Henry had made use of during his struggles with the French Crown in the 1220s, and to the positions of Ponce's father as seneschal of Poitou and Gascony in 1217.[6] Other scholars were supported because they were the king's relatives. Peter of Aubusson, probably the illegitimate son of Hugh X, count of La Marche and Henry's cousin,[7]

---

1. B.R.U.O., p.985; Pipe Roll 5 Richard I (Pipe Roll Society, new series, iii), p.122; 6 Richard I, p.88; 7 Richard I, p.142; 8 Richard I, p.70 bis.
2. Pipe Roll 10 Richard I, p.190; B.R.U.O., p.1946.
3. F. Pegues, 'Royal Support of Students in the Thirteenth Century', Speculum, xxxi (1956), 454-62.
4. H. Johnstone, 'Poor relief in the royal households of thirteenth century England', Speculum, iv (1929), 149-67.
5. Rot.Litt.Claus, ii, 98, 112.
6. Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1216-25, pp.54, 85, 107, 152. For the gift see Cal.Close Rolls, 1227-31, p.473.
7. F.R. Lewis, 'Peter of Aubusson', Eng.Hist.Rev., lv (1940), 419-23.

was maintained by Henry at Oxford between 1247 and 1259, receiving £20 a year until he was old enough to hold benefices, together with occasional gifts of wine and fuel.[1] Clearly some gifts went to royal servants but these were never payments of money, only gifts of venison, wine or timber for fuel. The sons of royal nurses such as Alice de Luton[2] and Sybil Giffard[3] went to Oxford supported by gifts from Henry III.

Henry's queen, Eleanor, was evidently sufficiently interested in education to support two scholars, Reginald de Irewyn and Raymond Bernard, at Oxford in the early 1250s.[4] At least nine examples of support are known from Edward I's reign[5] and a few from Edward II's time.[6] However, it is clear that the number of scholars receiving royal maintenance fell rapidly after Henry III's reign.

This trend becomes more marked during the course of the fourteenth century. There is only one known instance of royal support at Oxford in Edward III's reign (William Savage was maintained at the university in 1334)[7] and one instance at Cambridge. This last is a rather interesting example, however: Edward gave some books to King's Hall in 1368 especially for the use of Walter Herford,[8]

---

1. B.R.U.O., p.74.
2. Cal.Close Rolls, 1256-9, pp.2-3; B.R.U.O., p.1181.
3. Cal.Close Rolls, 1247-51, p.459; B.R.U.O., pp.761-3.
4. P.R.O., E 101/349/8.
5. Nicholas de Cugehou in 1275 (B.R.U.O., p.527). Francesco Accorso in 1276 (B.R.U.O., pp.9-10; H.C. Maxwell Lyte, A History of the University of Oxford (London, 1886), pp.88-9). Hugh ap Ithell, a Welsh clerk at Oxford in 1284 (P.R.O., C 47/4/2, f.28v; there are further payments to Hugh in P.R.O., E 101/351/15, m.4). Arnaud and Bertrand de la Fyte (Maxwell Lyte, op.cit., pp.92-3; B.R.U.O., p.1084). Walter Burden in 1297 (B.R.U.O., p.307). Alfonso of Spain and Nicholas Marnham were also patronised by Edward (B.R.U.O., pp.1736, 1224). Eleanor, his queen, patronised her nephew James of Spain (B.R.U.O., pp.1736-7) and Philip de Lyministre (Manners and Household Expenses of England in the Thirteenth and Fifteenth Centuries, ed. B. Botfield (Roxburghe Club, 1841), p.126). Thomas de Duns and Richard de Nottingham studied at Oxford at the charge of Edward of Carnarvon in 1302-3 (B.R.U.O., pp.610, 1379) and likewise John de Hoo in 1304-5 (B.R.U.O., pp.957-8).
6. John de Twykeham in 1314-15 (P.R.O., E 101/376/7); Guillaume du Pre was supported by Isabella at Oxford in 1358-9 (B.R.U.O., p.611) and William de Walcote at Cambridge in 1350 (B.R.U.C., p.610).
7. B.R.U.O., p.1647.
8. B.R.U.C., p.299.

and an indenture witnesses the receipt by the warden of King's Hall of a corpus of Civil Law from the king. When Herford left the college, the books were to be passed on to poor students of the house.

Finally, there are some isolated instances of support. The Black Prince granted wine and oaks for fuel to Richard Leomynstre in 1357-8 and Robert II of Scotland awarded John Barbour a gift of £10 sometime before 1395.[1] Likewise John Coryngham was granted a pipe of wine on 24 June 1409 for his inception feast.[2]

Patronage of scholars was not the exclusive preserve of the royal family. The lay nobility also played its part, but to a much lesser extent. There is no evidence before the end of the thirteenth century when John de Hoo was supported by Edmund, earl of Cornwall, at Merton College from 1296 to 1299.[3] Hugh Despenser[4] and Lady Montacute[5] both acted as patrons in the first quarter of the fourteenth century. Lord Henry le Scrope agreed to support a monk from St Mary's York at Oxford for three years in 1356.[6] The scholars they supported are shadowy figures and there is no evidence to link them subsequently with their patrons, although it seems most probable that they did enter their service.

Elizabeth de Burgh, lady of Clare is the only example of a member of the noble classes supporting more than one scholar at university. Thomas Dounebriggs and John de Tewkesbury were both at Oxford in 1331-3.[7] The lady of Clare's patronage also extended to a Cambridge scholar, Walter de Bykerton, who received a half mark in 1357, probably for preaching.[8]

---

1. B.R.U.O., pp.1132, 105-6.
2. Ibid., p.494.
3. Ibid., pp.957-8.
4. Ibid., p.617.
5. Ibid., p.1934.
6. Northumberland County Record Office, ZSW 4/31. I am very grateful to Mr R.M. Gard for this reference.
7. B.R.U.O., pp.588, 1857.
8. B.R.U.C., p.114.

Only occasionally did the noble patron specify any particular form of study; Adam Usk studied canon and civil law at Oxford in the 1380s under the patronage and instructions of Edward Mortimer, earl of March.[1] After studying at Cambridge, John Somerset became master of the grammar school at Bury St Edmunds in 1418 through the influence of his patron at Cambridge, Thomas Beaufort, duke of Exeter.[2] Lady Margaret Chocke's bequest to John Langley in 1483 included the provision that he was to receive six marks a year for four years to train for the priesthood in Cambridge.[3]

It would be reasonable to conclude that while royal support of scholars was at its peak in the thirteenth century, their patronage by the nobility was a fourteenth century phenomenon and even then it seems to have been a rare occurrence.

But if the lay nobility was not conspicuous for its support of scholars, it had more of a part to play in the foundation of colleges and in benefactions to the university. The patronage of the universities by the nobility found expression in money grants and donations of books and in the foundation of colleges.

The loan chests at Oxford were each started with sums of money given or bequeathed to the university. The loans went to university members according to their degree and lasted for a year and a month.[4] Robert Grosseteste founded the first chest on 11 March 1240 with the sum of one hundred marks.[5] His example was not followed for fifty years, but from 1293 to 1321, ten more chests were founded and, of these, three were noble benefactions, the Queen's Chest, the Warwick Chest[6] and the Lincoln Chest. The foundation of the Lincoln Chest

---

1. B.R.U.O., p.1937.
2. B.R.U.C., p.540.
3. Ibid., p.1097.
4. Register of Congregation 1448-63, ed. W. Pantin and Mitchell (Oxford Hist. Soc., new series, xxii, 1972), Appendix III.
5. Mun.Acad., i, pp.8-9.
6. Ibid., p.64.

about 1306 is particularly interesting. Lincoln's early regard for the universities had been shown by his bequests, in a will drafted in the 1280s, of £100 to the 'poures escolers de Oxon' and other monies to the poor clerks of Cambridge, to be paid at the discretion of his executors.[1] He may have had greater ambitions. Wood writes of an Oxford college founded by Lincoln, but he probably mistakes the earl's intention for his act.[2] Although the earl received the king's licence to grant various advowsons to thirteen scholars in a house which he was to build at Oxford, nothing appears to have come of this.[3] Only the Lincoln Chest and the mass which the university said for him every year on 17 December remained after his death to commemorate his beneficence.[4]

The loan chests at Cambridge, with the exception of the short-lived Queen's Chest beginning in 1294, seem to have been a later phenomenon. The Exeter Chest was founded in 1442 with £100 paid by the executors of Thomas Beaufort, duke of Exeter, who died in 1427. King's College Chest followed a year later with £200 given by Henry VI, founder of the college.[5]

Sometimes the grants took the form of books. The gift of law books by Edward III for Walter Herford has been discussed above.[6] Presents of books or money were sent to the university of Oxford by Henry IV, by his four sons, Henry, Thomas, John and Humphrey, and by Edmund Mortimer, the youthful earl of March.[7] The gift of books by the duke of Gloucester himself, in 1439, overshadows any other donation to the university and needs no further elaboration

---

1. Nottingham, Nottinghamshire County Record Office: Foljambe MSS, Lincs (iii, 4).
2. A. Wood, The History and Antiquities of the Colleges and Halls in the University of Oxford (Oxford, 1786), p.650.
3. Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1301-7, p.455.
4. Mun.Acad., i, p.cl. See also cap.VII, pp.252-3.
5. G. Pollard, 'Medieval Loan Chests at Cambridge', Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, xvii (1939-40), 124, 126.
6. See above, pp.134-5.
7. Mun.Acad., p.266; W.D. Macray, Annals of the Bodleian Library (Oxford, 1890), p.5.

here.[1] In the following year twenty-seven books were sent by Henry VI to All Souls. Besides disclosing the existence of a royal 'library' then kept in the Exchequer, the list shows the anxiety of the king to enrich the book collection of the newly-founded college. Of the twenty-seven items, four belong to civil law, five to canon law, seventeen to theology and one to philosophy.[2]

(e) Royal and noble foundations

Fourteenth-century Cambridge possessed two colleges, Clare and Pembroke, founded by noble women and one, the King's Hall, founded by the king himself.

On 7 July 1317 Edward issued a writ to the sheriff of Cambridge ordering him to pay, from the revenues of his bailiwick, sums necessary for the maintenance of John de Baggeshote, clerk, and twelve children of the Chapel Royal whom the king had sent to be educated in the schools at Cambridge. This is the earliest extant evidence for the existence of the society of the King's scholars at Cambridge, at this stage drawn entirely from the Chapel Royal.[3] It is difficult to determine whether the king's connection with the King's Hall was merely 'formal' or whether he had a genuine interest in education.

Mary, countess of Pembroke, had a more direct association with Pembroke College, originally named the Hall of Valence Marie. The idea of its foundation apparently occurred to the countess about 1346, possibly as a result of her friendship with the countess of Clare. The countess acquired the first messuage of the college site in September 1346, obtaining property in Tilney and Burwell during the next few months. The college muniments not only witness the care with which she provided the college with land, but also indicate the authority which she maintained over it.[4] In a contemporary list of muniments,

---

1. Ep.Acad., pp.177-84, where the books are listed.
2. R. Weiss, 'Henry VI and the library of All Souls' College', Eng.Hist.Rev., lvii (1942), 102-5.
3. See A.C. Cobban, The King's Hall Cambridge (Cambridge, 1969) and cap.II, p.66.
4. H. Jenkinson, 'Mary de Sancto Paulo, foundress of Pembroke College, Cambridge', Archaeologia, lxvi (1914-15), 423.

it is mentioned that one or two were retained for a considerable time en la garde madame. It also appears that some of the college authorities must have gone on occasion to confer with her in London. Confirming this is a remarkable passage in the statutes by which quia cuius est condere eius est eciam interpretari, she reserves to herself during the whole of her life the right of ejecting any fellow. In her will, she bequeathed 'a les escolers de ma sale de Cantebrig en aide de lur bosoignes cent marz'.[1]

The close friendship between the countess of Pembroke and Elizabeth, lady of Clare was characterised by many meetings and dinners together between 1327 and 1350. It may have been discussions between them which led to the lady of Clare drawing up a code of statutes in 1359 for her foundation of Clare College. Her beneficence is further shown in her will in which she bequeathed books to the college.[2]

At Oxford there were two foundations by the nobility - Balliol and Gloucester - and they were made earlier than those at Cambridge. Lady Devorguilla de Balliol was educated in England at the court of her grandfather, David, earl of Huntingdon. On 1 August 1284, Devorguilla, for the sum of eighty marks, purchased from Thomas de Ew and John de Ew, his father, three tenements on sites in Horsemonger Street. On 7 January 1285, a jury of Oxford gave the verdict that it would not be to the disadvantage of the king if Devorguilla granted this property to the scholars of Balliol, but the king's licence was only obtained ten months later.[3] Devorguilla died in 1289, leaving by her will a legacy of £100 to the Principal and scholars. But despite the fact that the Principal himself was one of the executors, considerable difficulty was experienced in bringing the Balliol family to discharge the obligation and it was only from her grandson, Edward Balliol, that satisfaction was at length obtained.[4]

---

1. Ibid., 433.
2. Test. Vet., p.59.
3. For the relevant deeds see The Oxford Deeds of Balliol College, ed. H.E. Salter (Oxford Hist. Soc., lxiv, 1913), pp.1-14.
4. H.W.C. Davis, A History of Balliol College (Oxford, 1963), pp.15-16.

At almost the same time as Devorguilla's first grant to Balliol, Sir John Giffard founded in 1283, for the sake of his soul and that of his wife's, a cell for thirteen monks of St Peter's Gloucester at Oxford.[1]

The strength of the links between the English nobility and the universities of Oxford and Cambridge in the period 1200 to 1450 must not be exaggerated. The evidence for royal and noble education at the universities is extremely slight even though many nobles may have received an informal education there which has escaped the records. There were a considerable number of tutors to the royal and noble households at either Oxford or Cambridge throughout the middle ages. Again, although there was a great deal of patronage of scholars by royalty, particularly marked in the reign of Henry III, the evidence for noble families is disappointingly small. On the other hand, there was a considerable number of benefactions, whether in money, books or in the foundation of colleges. If this period does not provide evidence for a strong association between the nobility and the universities, it at least shows that many of the characteristics of the association between the two in the sixteenth century had roots in the previous three centuries.

4. The nobility and legal training

One of the most important developments in English life in the Elizabethan age was the use of the Inns of Court as finishing schools for the gentry.[2] This was no innovation as they had fulfilled this function during the fifteenth century. The oldest records that have been preserved are the Black Books of Lincoln's Inn beginning in 1422.[3] Even for the fifteenth century, we are forced to turn more to what was said and thought about the Inns of Court rather than to actual examples of what took place there.

Sir John Fortescue's treatise, De Laudibus Legum Anglie, setting out his views on education, was written between 1468 and 1470, for the instruction of

---

1. For the foundation charter see Snappes Formulary, ed. H.E. Salter (Oxford Hist.Soc., lxxx, 1924), pp.361-2.
2. See J.E. Neale, Essays in Elizabethan History (London, 1958), p.209.
3. D.P. Barton, C. Benham and F. Watt, The Story of our Inns of Court (London, 1924), p.7.

Prince Edward, after he had been charged by Henry VI and Queen Margaret with the education of the Lancastrian heir.[1] Although Fortescue admits that noble families still customarily farmed their sons out with other families of their own class and maintains that the king's household is 'the superior academy for nobles of the realm',[2] he tells us, also, that the Inns of Court were patronised chiefly by the aristocracy and that the study of law is especially fitting for a gentleman.[3] It seems certain that when Fortescue speaks of 'nobilium filii' he means also sons of the gentry. The Inns of Court also provided a general education in the aristocratic graces:

> 'Ibi cantare ipsi addiscunt, similiter et se exercent in omni genere armonie. Ibi eciam tripudiare ac iocos singulos nobilibus convenientes exercere...'[4]

Consequently, knights, barons and other magnates placed their sons there, although they did not desire them to be trained in the science of the laws, nor to live by its practice. This crucial passage from Fortescue therefore shows the Inns essentially as 'finishing schools', although it is difficult to be sure quite what that meant: presumably a base in London, courtly pursuits, perhaps even a little culture.

William Worcester, writing in 1475, emphasised the harm that was caused by too great a concentration on law. Many men of noble birth, he complained, 'learn the practice of law or custom of land or of civil matter', wasting their time ruling the commons rather than cultivating traditional skills.[5] William Worcester does not refer specifically to the Inns of Court, but presumably he included legal training at the Inns in his censure. But, as G.A. Holmes has commented, 'even more than Worcester knew, the future lay with those who had been to the Inns of Court, were learned in the law and could turn such skill to

---

1. C.F. Arrowood, 'Sir John Fortescue on the education of rulers', Speculum, x (1935), 404.
2. De Laudibus Legum Anglie, ed. S.B. Chrimes (Cambridge, 1942), cap.lxv, p.110.
3. See A.B. Ferguson, The Indian Summer of English Chivalry (North Carolina, 1960), pp.196-7.
4. De Laudibus, cap.xlix, p.118.
5. The Boke of Noblesse, ed. J.G. Nichols (Roxburghe Club, 1860), p.77.

their own estates or the service of the king'.[1] This situation is reflected in The Book named the Governor of Sir Thomas Elyot (1530), where it is written that if children were 'retained in the right study of very philosophy until they passed the age of twenty-one years, and set to the laws of their realm.... undoubtedly they should become one of so excellent wisdom that throughout all the world should be found in no common weal more noble counsellors....'.[2]

The writers of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries therefore emphasise the importance of legal training and indicate the rise of the Inns of Court. But what of practice? Here the evidence is meagre. Fortescue shows that residence at the Inns was expensive, especially if a servant was kept, as was usual, and most men could not afford the outlay of some £13 6s 8d a year. He writes that 'it comes about that there is scarcely a man learned in the laws to be found in the realm who is not....sprung of noble lineage'.[3] Clearly Fortescue's statement about noble lineage must be nonsense, simply intended to glorify his own profession. There are, after all, many examples of men 'learned in the law' who came from humble backgrounds.

The earliest examples of notable men at the Inns of Court come not from the noble classes, but from the gentry. The first discoverable mention of the Temple as an abode of lawyers occurs in Chaucer's 'Prologue to the Canterbury Tales' of c.1387. Geoffrey Chaucer himself dwelt for a while in these courts and was a student of the Inner Temple. He refers to the training at the Inns of men, worthy to be stewards of 'any lord that is in England'.[4] The Paston family appears to have had considerable connections with the Inns of Court. William Paston (b.1378), the son of a Norfolk yeoman, attended the Inns of Court, and rose to become a judge, and his heir and fourth son were trained in the law.

---

1. G.A. Holmes, The Later Middle Ages (London, 1962), p.164.
2. The Book Named the Governor, ed. S. Lehmberg (Everyman Library, 1962), I, p.52.
3. This is discussed by J. Simon in Education and Society in Tudor England (Cambridge, 1966), p.13.
4. See G. Home and C. Headlam, Inns of Court (London, 1909), p.37.

John Paston (b.1421) seems to have been at Trinity Hall and later at Peterhouse. Since we find him at the Inner Temple, certainly by 1443,[1] and a few years after this, it is not unreasonable to suspect that the justice had sent him to Trinity Hall to commence his study of law.[2] Agnes Paston advised her son to remember his father's shrewd advice:

> 'I advise you to think once (every) day of your father's counsel to learn the law, for he said many times that whosoever should dwell at Paston, should need to know (how to) defend himself ...'[3]

William's fourth son, Edmund, was also at the Inns, for a letter of Agnes Paston in February 1445 is addressed to 'Edmund Paston of Clyffordis Inne in London'.[4] Succeeding generations of Pastons are also to be found at the Inns. For instance, Edmund Paston II, child of John Paston I and Margaret, is first mentioned in a letter by Richard Calle of November 1461, recommending Margaret Paston to send Edmund to Cambridge. He actually went to Staple Inn but was back in Norwich before the end of 1471.[5]

Men connected with the court had sometimes had a training at the Inns of Court. Hoccleve, poet and clerk of the Privy Seal under Henry IV, is said to have studied the law at Chestre's Inn, also called Strand Inn, a house of Chancery, belonging to the Middle Temple, which stood near the church of St Mary le Strand.[6] Of eminent and noble men, Lincoln's Inn boasts a far greater number among its members than any other law society. Sir John Fortescue, lord chief justice of the King's Bench in the reign of Henry VI, appears among the early names. Sir Arthur Plantagenet, the natural son of Edward IV was admitted to this society in 1487 and Sir Thomas Lovell occurs in the lists of readers at the end of Edward IV's reign.[7] After less than two years at Oxford, Thomas

---

1. The Paston Letters, ed. N. Davis (Oxford, 1971), no.126.
2. H.S. Bennett, The Pastons and Their England (Cambridge, 1951), p.105.
3. Cited ibid., p.105.
4. Paston Letters, no.4., p.27.
5. Ibid., no.394.
6. W. Herbert, Antiquities of the Inns of Court and Chancery (London, 1804), p.284.
7. Ibid., pp.318-19.

More was 'for the study of the law of the realm put to an Inn of Chancery called New Inn, where for his time he very well prospered and from thence was admitted to Lincoln's Inn [just after his 18th birthday] with very small allowance, continuing there his study until he was made and accounted a worthy barrister'.[1] Other members of the gentry followed a similar pattern. In 1497, Sir Thomas Markenfield, a knight of Yorkshire, bequeathed £15 to Ninian, his son and heir, 'to his exhibycion and fynding two yeres at Oxford and three yeres in oon in of Courte'.[2]

Among these isolated instances, most of which come from the late fifteenth century, there is only one, Sir Arthur Plantagenet, who could strictly be described as a nobleman; all the others come from the gentry class. However, the Inns of Court were not the only source of education in law. It is probable that more laymen of high birth than had previously been thought were attending university, or at least spending time in Oxford or Cambridge. Certainly several of those mentioned above from the gentry class who went to the Inns had previously spent two years at Oxford. At Oxford, there were opportunities for a grounding in law and also for a general 'business training'. Admittedly, there appear to be no more than three references to the ars dictaminis and the dictatores in the surviving medieval statutes of the university, one before 1350, another before 1380, and a third in 1432.[3] It is only rarely that the writings of the dictatores come down to us in the original form in which they were used at the university. They exist in later copies, altered and expanded, which found their way to monasteries, or were used by clerks in the service of secular lords, or sometimes, perhaps, in the fifteenth century, by lawyers. A well-known Oxford teacher is Thomas Sampson, born c.1327, who, like his

---

1. From Roper's Life, cited by R.W. Chambers in Thomas More (London, 1935, first paperback edn., 1976), p.66.
2. Testamenta Eboracensia, iv, p.125; B.R.U.O., ii, p.1222. See above, p.131.
3. See Statuta Antiqua Universitatis Oxon., ed. S. Gibson (Oxford, 1931), pp.20, 169, 240.

thirteenth-century predecessors, taught in French the arts of letter writing and conveyancing and gave elementary instruction in legal procedure.[1]

There is no evidence to link the nobility specifically with the Inns of Court before the end of the fifteenth century and early sixteenth century, or with any form of legal training. There are examples from the gentry of those who resided at the Inns and who also received a general grounding in law at Oxford. It is probable that many more laymen than has been thought spent time at Oxford and may have received a general training in law and business. Unless we are to believe that landowners left all the business of running their estates in the middle ages to their stewards and bailiffs, we must assume that they had some knowledge of the law, however slight, and if Worcester and Fortescue are to be believed, law was becoming a prime concern of the noble classes before the sixteenth century.

5. Educational opportunities abroad

We possess virtually no information about the educational activities of the lay nobility abroad in the middle ages. A series of verses edited and ascribed to the thirteenth century by T. Wright[2] and incorrectly referenced to Bodleian MS Digby 4 suggests that the English barons sent their children to be educated in the French universities. To this practice the writer imputes the introduction of foreign vices into England:

> Filii nobilium, dum sunt juniores,
> Mittuntur in Franciam fieri doctores;
> Quos prece vel pretio domant corruptores,
> Sic praetaxatos referunt artaxata mores.
>
> Mores habent barbarus, Latinus et Graecus,
> Si sacerdos ut plebs est caecum ducit caecus;
> Se mores effeminant et equa fit equus,
> Expectes ab homine usque ad pecus.
>
> Et quia non metuunt animae discrimen,
> Principes in habitum verterunt hoc crimen,
> Virum viro turpiter jungit novus hymen,
> Exagitata procul non intrat foemina limen.

---

1. On this subject, see H.G. Richardson, 'An Oxford Teacher of the Fifteenth Century', B.J.R.L., xxiii (1939), 436-57.
2. Anecdota Literaria, ed. T. Wright (London, 1844), pp.38-9.

Unde est prae ceteris quod cuncti mirantur,
Quod vix hii qui largi sunt vel nunquam ditantur,
Sed cum divitiae largis sociantur,
Non bene conveniunt nec in una sede morantur

Esto fur vel proditor Verres sive Graccus,
Deus reputaberis ut Thebarum Bacchus;
Esto Cato moribus, scientia Flaccus,
Duceris a populo velut ictus ab Hercule Caccus.

We have very few examples to show that noblemen were travelling abroad. We know that in the twelfth century, Gervase of Tilbury, who was born about 1152, went to Italy and studied at Bologna, where he became a master and taught canon law. His companion in the schools was his kinsman, Philip, the son of Earl Patrick of Salisbury. Although Gervase himself was undoubtedly in minor orders, there is nothing to suggest that Philip was in any sense an ecclesiastic.[1]

In the thirteenth century, Amaury de Montfort, son of the earl of Leicester, travelled abroad with his tutor, Master Nicholas. As a boy, Amaury had attracted the notice of a family friend, Odo Rigaud, the archbishop of Rouen, who had made him a canon and given him a prebend in his cathedral. It looks as though Amaury may have travelled with Master Nicholas, and in the late 1260s he went to the University of Padua where he studied for at least three years.[2]

**********

Although the most usual place for a nobleman to be educated was, without doubt, in his father's household, there were educational opportunities outside throughout the period 1100 to 1500. Before the thirteenth century, a few noblemen were brought up in monasteries, even when they were intended for a secular career. After 1200 the practice appears to have been distinctly uncommon, a result both of the declining reputation of the monasteries and of more educational opportunities. During the twelfth century one could almost speak

---

1. H.G. Richardson, 'Gervase of Tilbury', History, xlvi (1961), 105-6, 107.
2. F.M. Powicke, 'Guy de Montfort', Trans.Roy.Hist.Soc., 4th ser., xviii (1935), 3.

of the 'rise of the schools' in the towns and countryside; once again the evidence of noble attendance is sparse, there being more instances of a local schoolmaster within the household or of a noble child attending the house of a local schoolmaster. But there is plenty of evidence of noble interest in, and patronage of, schools, particularly from the fourteenth century when literacy was bound up with the needs of a more personal religion. At Oxford and Cambridge the picture is similar - much evidence of royal patronage and some of noble support of scholars in addition to the noble foundation of colleges. But again there are few recorded instances of nobles who later pursued a secular career receiving their training at the universities. It is probable that the records here are misleading and that many more nobles than are documented in fact spent time at Oxford or Cambridge (the Tewkesbury Annalist does imply, after all, that there were magnates' sons at Oxford in the 1230s)[1] without being formally attached to a college.

It may have been during these times in the university towns that noblemen acquired a knowledge of law from Oxford teachers in business subjects. There is certainly little evidence of the nobility's presence at the Inns of Court (although plenty for the gentry), even in the fifteenth century, despite Fortescue's praise of the environment as a finishing school. Finally, there are a very few indications that the lay nobility were linked with travel abroad and, as in later centuries, in some cases this may have formed the last stage of education.

---

1. The 'Annales de Theokesberia' refers to 'plures filii magnatorum' who were present after the attack on the legate's servants at Oseney in the 1230s. Annales Monastici, ed. H.R. Luard, i (Rolls Series, 1864), p.107.

# CHAPTER V

## NOBLE BOOK-OWNERSHIP AND LITERARY TASTE

How interested were the English nobles in books during the medieval period? The class was not wholly made up of cultivated and accomplished intellectuals, and no doubt some, in K.B. McFarlane's words, 'preferred hunting to translating Cicero - or gaming'.[1] But not all were unsophisticated and some, at least, owned books. Many of the books named in wills were valued as heirlooms for their illumination and fine bindings. It would be dangerous to assume that their possessors were all enthusiastic readers, but, equally, some clearly had literary interests.

### 1. The sources

The sources used in trying to establish which books were owned by the nobility must be carefully examined. Firstly, it should be stressed that the evidence before the mid-fourteenth century is very limited. Of the instances of books owned by nobles throughout the period, sixty per cent come from wills, ten per cent from inventories, chronicles and accounts, and about thirty per cent from chance references and library catalogues (the miscellaneous references being particularly important for the period before 1350).

#### (a) Wills

It is clear that wills form by far the richest source of references to books, particularly from 1375 when the growth of registration ensured their survival in larger numbers. From noble wills examined in printed and manuscript sources, in the British Library, Public Record Office and Lambeth Palace Library, the proliferation of wills, particularly after 1375, is apparent, as the following table shows:

---

1. K.B. McFarlane, The Nobility of Later Medieval England (Oxford, 1973), pp.246-7.

| Dates | No. of noble wills | No. of wills mentioning books |
|---|---|---|
| 1200-1250 | 2 | 1 |
| 1251-1300 | 6 | 1 |
| 1301-1350 | 13 | 6 |
| 1351-1375 | 43 | 14 |
| 1376-1400 | 62 | 22 |
| 1401-1425 | 77 | 20 |
| 1426-1450 | 54 | 19 |
| Totals | 257 | 83 |

In 1920 Margaret Deanesley wrote that her study of medieval testamentary evidence revealed the 'extreme booklessness of the population as a whole, the rarity of vernacular books as opposed to Latin, and the preponderance among vernacular books of works of piety and devotion over secular books such as romances and chronicles'.[1] These conclusions are interesting but their importance must not be exaggerated. Of just under three hundred noble wills, and this figure includes some post-1450 wills, ninety-four or about one-third had references to books of one kind or another. Of the fifty-five wills of English earls, sixteen contained references to books. In a sample of one hundred wills of the upper gentry, there are sixteen instances of books directly mentioned.

These figures in themselves suggest that quite a large number of nobles numbered books among their possessions.[2] The dangers of using wills as evidence is shown by the fact that there are several instances in which a will mentions no books, but in which the testator is known from other sources to have owned books. A striking case in point is the Beauchamp family (earls of Warwick) in the late thirteenth century and early fourteenth century. One would conclude from the Beauchamp wills that the family was virtually bookless,[3] yet Guy

---

1. M. Deanesley, 'Vernacular books in England in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries', Modern Language Review, xv (1920), 349.
2. This conclusion is also reached by J.T. Rosenthal whose article, 'Aristocratic cultural patronage and book bequests 1350-1500', B.J.R.L., lxiv (1982), 522-48 appeared after this chapter had been completed.
3. McFarlane, Nobility, pp.187, n.4., 235.

Beauchamp's donation to Bordesley Abbey in Worcestershire in 1305 shows that he possessed a library of forty-three volumes[1] (it is admittedly not inconceivable, though highly unlikely, that he acquired all these books in his own lifetime). Guy Beauchamp's will[2] (which mentions only chapel books) and the earlier Beauchamp wills are the outstanding examples of negative evidence which may mislead, but there are at least eight other cases of wills which mention no books but whose makers are known to have owned them.[3]

Books were not always thought to be worth bequeathing, especially after about 1450, when their value seems to decline.[4] Nor are they always mentioned by name as they often had been before 1400. They may also have been disposed of before death, as in the Beauchamp case. Even if there is a reference to books in a will it may often be only to 'all my books' or to a 'chest full of books' - an indication of a nobleman's literacy but not of his taste in reading.[5]

(b) Inventories

There are inventories (often those of men whose goods have been confiscated) mentioning books from the early fourteenth century, such as that of Roger Mortimer's goods at Wigmore Castle, drawn up in 1322.[6] However, most inventories date from the 1380s (Simon Burley)[7] and 1390s (Thomas of Woodstock).[8] They

---

1. M. Blaess, 'L'abbaye de Bordesley et les livres de Guy de Beauchamp', Romania, lxxviii (1957), 511-18.
2. Testamenta Vetusta, i, ed. N.H. Nicolas (London, 1826), pp.53-4.
3. Other examples include Simon de Montfort, Humphrey de Bohun (1372), John Beaufort, earl of Somerset (c.1409), Thomas de Montacute, earl of Salisbury (1426), William de la Pole, earl of Suffolk (1448), John Holland, duke of Exeter (1447), the Paston family, and Sir John Fastolf.
4. M.G. Vale, Piety, Charity and Literacy among the Yorkshire Gentry 1370-1480 (Borthwick Paper no.50, 1976), p.29.
5. On the pitfalls of using wills, see Rosenthal, 'Aristocratic cultural patronage', 535.
6. P.R.O., E 154/1/11b. See also A. Way, 'Inventory of the effects of Roger de Mortimer at Wigmore Castle', Archaeological Journal, xv (1858), 354-62.
7. V. Scattergood, 'Two medieval booklists', The Library, xxiii (1968), 237.
8. Viscount Dillon, 'Inventory of the goods and chattels belonging to Thomas, duke of Gloucester', Archaeological Journal, liv (1897), 298-303.

originated in a political world which was more violent and unstable than that of the thirteenth century and in which nobles' goods were likely to be confiscated more frequently. They were perhaps also the product of the workings of a more meticulous and better organised Exchequer. Inventories themselves have their pitfalls in providing evidence of noble literary taste. Although those of such men as Thomas of Woodstock in 1397 or Leo lord Welles in 1430[1] provide very extensive pictures of the contents of a nobleman's household, including his library, we know that on occasion the evidence from inventories may not be complete. The inventory of Sir Simon Burley's books in 1388 reveals a collection of twenty-one volumes, nine of them French romances.[2] But Burley may well have possessed other books for we know that his servant had confessed to keeping a volume called Livre des Songes de Panyell and that this did not appear in the list.[3]

There are difficulties therefore in using the sources even to attempt to establish which books were owned by the nobility. A second and obvious problem is that there is almost no means of knowing whether a nobleman actually read the books he owned. Virtually half the number of books owned by noblemen and women were either bibles or liturgical works and these are less important than bequests of secular books as a 'yardstick for literacy'.[4] A sample of surviving books which were at one time owned by members of the medieval nobility once again shows the preponderance of bibles, missals, psalters, Books of Hours, etc., these forming half the total.[5] But the list of surviving books probably over-represents liturgical works. Many of the psalters are clearly grand and expensive products, often illuminated and created for family celebrations and thus more likely to survive.

---

1. Lincolnshire Record Office: Ancaster Deposit X/A/1. I am grateful to Dr G.L. Harriss for allowing me access to McFarlane's transcript of this inventory.
2. Scattergood, 'Two medieval booklists', 237.
3. M.V. Clarke, Fourteenth Century Studies (Oxford, 1937), pp.120-1.
4. Vale, Piety, Charity and Literacy, p.30.
5. See Table H, pp.194-6.

These, then, are some of the limitations of a survey of this kind. But there are still some important questions to be asked, however incomplete an answer we may obtain. Firstly, what was the relative popularity of different categories of books in the libraries of nobles and of the families of the upper gentry, and were particular categories more popular with men or with women? Secondly, is it possible to say anything about the language of the books? Can we detect, for instance, the emergence of English works and did the French romances remain as popular in the fifteenth century? Thirdly, what was the importance attached to the books - were they treated as heirlooms and did noblemen commission 'prestige' books? Fourthly, did reading tastes change over the period 1250 to 1450? Finally, there is a special category of books to be considered, the royal 'library' and its development over the period.

## 2. The categories of books

Before examining the different types of books it may once again be worth stating that large numbers of noble wills and indeed inventories contain no references to books at all, and of those which do, most refer to small collections of less than three books.[1] When we consider the relative popularity of books among men and women, we should remember that women's wills form about one-third of the total noble wills, but of those a high proportion (almost fifty per cent) contain references to books. Another factor is therefore the distortion produced by the nature of the surviving evidence, which suggests that far more books were owned by men. The distortion may be partially rectified by looking at the donees in wills which show that a very high proportion of books were given to women. Even here the problems do not end, for a woman's life expectancy was greater than that of a man's, and probably it was less likely that a wife would leave books in her will to her husband than it was that a nobleman would leave them to his wife. On the other hand, women, particularly noble women, often married again after the death of their first husbands.[2]

---

1. See Rosenthal, 'Aristocratic cultural patronage', 537.
2. On dowagers, see McFarlane, Nobility, p.65.

From Table A the distortion produced by the greater number of surviving wills for men than for women is clear: seventy-three per cent of the total number of books were owned by men. From Table B, which deals with the admittedly much smaller number of instances of books where we know of a noble donee, we can see that noble women figure prominently and were clearly considered worthy recipients of books.

TABLE A

DISTRIBUTION OF BOOKS - ACCORDING TO OWNERS

| Book Category | No. owned | Percentage of no. owned | No. owned by men | No. owned by women |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bibles, service books | 280 | 45.09 | 185 | 95 |
| Saints' lives, martyrologies | 49 | 7.90 | 32 | 17 |
| Other religious works | 81 | 13.04 | 61 | 20 |
| Histories, chronicles | 44 | 7.09 | 41 | 3 |
| Lawbooks | 10 | 1.61 | 9 | 1 |
| Mirrors of princes, courtesy books | 28 | 4.51 | 23 | 5 |
| Romances, courtly love poems | 79 | 12.72 | 64 | 15 |
| Books of instruction | 13 | 2.09 | 8 | 5 |
| Chaucer | 4 | 0.64 | 3 | 1 |
| Miscellaneous | 33 | 5.31 | 26 | 7 |
| Totals | 621 | 100.00 | 452 | 169 |

Source: For tables A-H, the information comes from noble wills in print and in manuscript, inventories in print and in manuscript and miscellaneous evidence (chiefly from library catalogues and chronicles).

TABLE B

DISTRIBUTION OF BOOKS - ACCORDING TO DONEES

| Book Category | No. Bequeathed | No. given to noble men | No. given to noble women |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bibles, service books | 76 | 39 | 37 |
| Saints' lives, martyrologies | 12 | 2 | 10 |
| Other religious works | 17 | 3 | 14 |
| Histories, chronicles | 6 | 4 | 2 |
| Books of manners courtesy literature | 3 | 3 | 0 |
| Romances | 11 | 3 | 8 |
| Chaucer | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Miscellaneous | 4 | 1 | 3 |
| Totals | 130 | 55 | 75 |

The tables also reveal the relative importance of different categories of books in the noble library. It is clear that the bibles and service books are by far the largest category, forming forty-five per cent of the total number of books owned, with other religious works forming the second largest category, just over thirteen per cent of the total. It is also evident that books of romances and courtly love were very popular (nearly thirteen per cent) and to a lesser extent, saints' lives (nearly eight per cent) and histories and chronicles (just over seven per cent). Books of instruction and law books are very small categories, representing only about two per cent and one and a half per cent of the total respectively.

(a) Bibles and service books

This is the largest category of books, representing nearly half the total owned. It is not surprising that throughout the period from the thirteenth to the late fifteenth century, missals, portiforia (portable breviaries containing the Divine Office for each day), psalters, and, of course, bibles, were much in

demand among the noble classes. It is interesting to consider whether the rise of the literate layman (if it occurred) parallels the associated development - the apparent growth of lay piety and personal religion. It is difficult to gauge the growth of lay literacy. The 'literate layman' is best known by the books which he left in his will - yet his will is unlikely to survive before 1350; and Hubert de Burgh's obvious interest in reading his psalter shows at least one devout and literate layman at a much earlier date - in the 1230s.[1]

It is noticeable that the number of missals, portiforia and bibles owned or bequeathed increases sharply in the second half of the fourteenth century and tails off again in the fifteenth century. The lack of instances before 1350 might be due to the paucity of wills, but the tailing off in the fifteenth century when records were increasingly kept may suggest that there was a significance about the fourteenth-century proliferation. The greater number of service books may suggest a growth in the importance of private chapels during the fourteenth century.[2] The chapel was the centre of most noblemen's devotions, as it had been for many centuries, and, like other aspects of the fourteenth-century noble household, it was becoming more elaborate. Separate chapels for husbands and wives are often mentioned in wills after 1350: Catherine, countess of Warwick, was in a position to bequeath a cross made for her own altar when she died in 1369.[3] The size of some of these chapels and the number of chaplains is indicated by wills such as that of Thomas of Woodstock in 1397, which lists nearly forty missals, antiphoners, psalters and other mass books.[4]

Not only did service books proliferate, but there was an increasing tendency to diversification among surviving books of devotion and some evidence to indicate that new liturgical feasts may have been first celebrated in private chapels. A missal belonging to Sir William Beauchamp, lord Bergavenny, is the

---

1. Cal.Close Rolls, 1231-4, p.161. I am indebted to Dr J.R. Maddicott for this reference. See below, pp.198-9.

2. J. Catto, 'Religion and the English nobility in the later fourteenth century', in History and Imagination: Essays in Honour of H.R. Trevor Roper, ed. H. Lloyd Jones, V. Pearl and B. Worden (London, 1980), p.46.

3. Test. Vet., p.78.

4. Dillon, 'Inventory of.. Thomas, duke of Gloucester', 298-9.

first English liturgical book to contain, before 1388, the mass known as the mass of the Holy Name, which was widely observed in the fifteenth century.[1] The liturgical chanting of the psalter gradually became in the late fourteenth century a more intimate expression of religious sentiment in the Cult of the Virgin and prayers for particular saints and occasions - a process revealed in the scope of the liturgical manuscripts of the Bohun family.[2]

In the fourteenth century as well, the concern with death and prayers for the dead found expression in the foundation of chantries. J.T. Rosenthal has shown that even allowing for incomplete evidence in the early fourteenth century, there were still more creations and endowments made between 1327 and 1347 than in any other period.[3] Not only that, but eighty-five noble families during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (virtually all the higher nobility) founded chantries in which the priest would be endowed to pray for their souls for ever.[4] Clearly, chantries would again demand priests and consequently mass books.

It is evident from the instructions in wills that the nobility absorbed the orthodox views of the church, and were well-versed in the liturgy, to the point of having opinions and preferences about services, festivals and prayers. The earl of Warwick in 1435 specified different prayers for each day.[5] Thomas, earl of Salisbury, left very detailed instructions in his will of 1428 displaying a close knowledge of the liturgy.[6] Evidently, then, some nobles had a deep interest in the service books that they owned.

A knowledge of the liturgy was paralleled by an interest in the bible, judging from the large number of bibles we find in baronial households, particularly in the late fourteenth century. The first mention of a French bible

---

1. R.W. Pfaff, New Liturgical Feasts in Late Medieval England (Oxford, 1970), pp.65-6.
2. J. Catto, op.cit., p.49.
3. J.T. Rosenthal, The Purchase of Paradise (London, 1972), p.33.
4. Ibid., pp.34-5.
5. Test.Vet., pp.231-2.
6. Ibid., pp.215-16.

in noble hands is that of one lent to Thomas, earl of Lancaster, at York in 1322 and confiscated by the king's officers after his death.[1] From 1347,[2] if not before, the earls of Surrey owned a French bible handed down from generation to generation, and Eleanor of Gloucester bequeathed one to her daughter Isabel in 1399.[3] In the fifteenth century Elizabeth le Despenser[4] and Walter Hungerford are recorded as having bibles in Latin and French.[5] These examples all indicate that noblemen and their ladies were reading the bible long before it went into English and that its ownership may indicate a real desire to learn about religion from the Scriptures rather than a general literary trend towards the vernacular. Nevertheless, the incidence of English bibles does increase at the end of the fourteenth century. Archbishop Thomas Arundel is reported to have noted in his sermon at Anne of Bohemia's funeral in 1394 how happy Richard's queen was to have the four Gospels in English 'with the docturis (glosses) upon them'.[6] In 1397 Gloucester was clearly reading his bible in English[7] and one of Duke Humphrey's books was a Wycliffe bible.[8]

The interest in personal religion, the importance of private chapels, the foundation of chantries and interest in the liturgy and the bible will explain why service books were in demand in the mid to late fourteenth century. It is not surprising that these books should often have survived, for many were prestige volumes, finely bound and illuminated, the treasured possession of a noble family.[9] For instance, the Tybotot Missal was probably made about 1277 for the

---

1. R.L. Atkinson, 'A French bible in England about the year 1322', Eng.Hist. Rev., xxxviii (1923), 248-9.
2. Testamenta Eboracensia, i (Surtees Society, 1836), p.43.
3. Lambeth Palace Library, Reg. Arundel, i, f.163.
4. Lambeth Palace Library, Reg. Arundel, ii, ff.108v, 109r.
5. Lambeth Palace Library, Reg. Stafford, ff.117r, 117v.
6. M. Aston, Thomas Arundel (Oxford, 1967), p.327.
7. Dillon, 'Inventory of ... Thomas, duke of Gloucester', 300.
8. K.H. Vickers, Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester (London, 1907), pp.426-38.
9. See below, pp.193-6.

marriage of Hawise Tybotot to John Fitz Robert, lord Clavering.[1] At the later end of the period, the Fitzwilliam Missal, a similarly fine manuscript, was written about 1470 for Richard and Elizabeth Fitzwilliam.[2]

Psalters were a common possession and there are some well-known examples. Before 1308 Sir William Howard of East Winch near King's Lynn, Norfolk, had a psalter executed for his wife Alice.[3] The Bardolf-Vaux Psalter was probably prepared for the marriage uniting Sir William Bardolf with a member of the Vaux family between 1310 and 1320.[4] Perhaps one of the better-known examples is the Luttrell Psalter of c.1340, made for Sir Geoffrey Luttrell and now in the British Library.[5] Later in the fourteenth century several fine illuminated service books were commissioned by one family - the Bohuns. The Psalter now owned by Exeter College, Oxford, was executed for Humphrey de Bohun and may well be the one which Humphrey's second daughter Eleanor, duchess of Gloucester, bequeathed to her son Humphrey in 1399.[6] Eleanor herself had a psalter made for her about 1385 in London.[7] In addition there were two psalters executed for Mary de Bohun, one certainly commissioned by her father. In general we can see that a large number of psalters and primers were given to women, which is interesting in view of the greater survival rate of men's wills (see table C).

---

1. The Complete Peerage, xii, pt ii, p.93. Catalogue of MSS. in the Library of J. Pierpont Morgan, pp.13-15.
2. M.R. James, A Descriptive Catalogue of the MSS. in the Fitzwilliam Museum (Cambridge, 1895), pp.87-8.
3. E. Millar, English Illuminated MSS. in the XIVth and XVth Centuries (Paris, 1928), plate 7.
4. D.D. Egbert, The Tickhill Psalter (New York, 1940), p.101.
5. Millar, op.cit., plates 55-59.
6. Test.Vet., i, p.148; Millar, op.cit., p.26.
7. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, Adv.MS. 18.6.5.

TABLE C

DISTRIBUTION OF BIBLES AND SERVICE BOOKS - ACCORDING TO DONEES

| Type | No. mentioned in wills | No. bequeathed to men | No. bequeathed to women |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bibles | 14 | 10 | 4 |
| Portiforia | 10 | 8 | 2 |
| Psalters | 18 | 6 | 12 |
| Missals | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Primers | 17 | 4 | 13 |
| Totals | 67 | 35 | 32 |

(b) Saints' lives and religious works

As Table A indicates, saints' lives and other religious works formed a significant part of the nobleman's library (comprising altogether about twenty per cent of the total owned). The women were more often the donees than the men.

(i) Saints' lives

Saints' lives were very popular throughout the period, from the Book of St Thomas and St Edward lent by Matthew Paris to Isabella, countess of Arundel, widow of Hugh de Albini,[1] to the life of Katherine of Siena which Cecily, duchess of York, left to her grand-daughter Bridget in 1495.[2] The fact that the very substantial collection of them, known as The Golden Legend, was made in the late thirteenth century and copied (and printed) with growing enthusiasm towards the late fifteenth century is a reliable indication of the sustained nature of this interest.[3] There are at least seven instances of the Legenda Aurea appearing in noble collections (the first being the copy bequeathed by

---

1. R. Vaughan, Matthew Paris (Cambridge, 1958), pp.13, 170.
2. D. Gardiner, English Girlhood at School: A Study of Women's Education through Twelve Centuries (Oxford, 1929), p.111.
3. A. Murray, Reason and Society in the Middle Ages (Oxford, 1978), p.9; R.F. Seybolt, 'Fifteenth-century editions of the Legenda Aurea', Speculum, xxi (1946), 327-8.

TABLE D

SAINTS' LIVES OWNED BY NOBLEMEN AND NOBLE WOMEN

| Title | No. owned | Dates found | No. owned by men | No. owned by women |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Books of saints' lives | 13 | 1360-1480 | 8 | 5 |
| Legenda Aurea | 7 | 1327-1490s | 3 | 4 |
| Martyrologies of the Blessed Virgin | 3 | 1356-1411 | 1 | 2 |
| Miracles of the Virgin | 2 | 1397, 1449 | 2 | |
| Life of St Matilda | 2 | 1438, 1495 | 1 | 1 |
| Life of St Thomas | 2 | 1397, late 15th century | 2 | |
| Lives of St Thomas and St Edward | 1 | mid 13th century | 1 | |
| Life of St John Baptist | 1 | 1360 | | 1 |
| Life of St Agnes | 1 | 1305 | 1 | |
| Life of St Alban | 1 | 1458 | 1 | |
| Life of St Katharine | 1 | 1495 | | 1 |
| Life of St Christopher | 1 | late 15th century | 1 | |
| Life of St Paul | 1 | 1305 | 1 | |
| Life of Edward the Confessor | 1 | 1305 | 1 | |
| Life of St Nicholas | 1 | 1305 | 1 | |
| Life of St Eustace | 1 | 1305 | 1 | |
| Life of St Eufrosina | 1 | 1305 | 1 | |
| Life of St Juliana | 1 | 1305 | 1 | |
| Life of St Guthlac | 1 | 1305 | 1 | |
| Life of St Radegund | 1 | 1305 | 1 | |
| Totals | 43 | | 29 | 14 |

Humphrey de Bohun in 1322)[1] and thirteen references to books of saints' lives which may well conceal the presence of more Legenda Aurea. Apart from Guy of Warwick's collection of nine saints' lives, there does not appear to be many noble collectors of such works - they were owned in single copies (see table D)- although, of course, a collection of such lives might easily take its title from the first item. The continuing popularity of saints' lives suggests the conservativeness of taste in religious reading.

(ii) Other religious works

Clearly the interest in religious works did not stop at saints' lives, despite their popularity. The fourteenth-century nobility were interested in religious works written by the ancient fathers of the church. The Historia Scholastica of Peter Comestor, including a paraphrase of the Acts of the Apostles, from which many other works such as the Cursor Mundi derived, was given by Edmund of Almaine, earl of Cornwall, to Ashridge in 1300.[2] Elizabeth, countess of Salisbury, apparently owned a copy of the Historia Scholastica in French, finely illuminated, which had been taken from King John of France at the battle of Poitiers.[3] Burley's books in 1388 included '1 grant livre de la bible ove les histories escolastre' which may have been Guyart de Moulin's translation of Comestor's Biblia Scholastica.[4] Thomas of Woodstock's library in 1397 included St Augustine's Divinity of the Trinity and a Prologue of St Isidore's Etymologies presumably written by Isidore of Seville in the seventh century. Thomas also owned a copy of the Pastorals of St Gregory,[5] as did Eleanor de Bohun in 1399.[6] This was probably the Regula Pastoralis, 'Pastoral Care', on the office and duties of a bishop which came to be used throughout

---

1. T.H. Turner, 'The will of Humphrey de Bohun', Archaeological Journal, ii (1846), 339-49.
2. N. Ker, Medieval Libraries of Great Britain (Royal Historical Society, 1964), p.227.
3. Gardiner, English Girlhood at School, p.112.
4. Clarke, Fourteenth Century Studies, p.121.
5. Dillon, 'Inventory of ... Thomas, duke of Gloucester', 302.
6. Lambeth Palace Library, Reg. Arundel, i, f.163.

Christendom and was translated into English by Alfred with the help of four scholars.[1] Duke Humphrey's library included two sets of translations of the works of St Athanasius, who wrote commentaries on the Scriptures, notably the Psalms.[2]

Some works were particularly popular at different periods. Interest in the translation of the Apocalypse was a thirteenth-century phenomenon. The book lent itself to illustration and was popular among laymen, as it was treated almost as a romance dealing with an episode in the life of St John. At first only the very rich could afford the illuminated edition, but cheaper versions appeared in the fourteenth century.[3] Guy Beauchamp owned a copy in 1305[4] and an Apocalypse was prepared for the marriage of Sir Robert Welles to Maud Clare in 1315.[5] A fine illuminated copy belonging to Juliana de Leybourn, countess of Huntingdon, in 1367[6] was later given to St Augustine's Canterbury and still survives at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.[7] Another copy was owned, among other illuminated books, by Joan, lady Cobham in 1370,[8] and it formed part of Thomas of Woodstock's collection in 1397.[9]

This was not the only book to take on a new lease of life with the opening of the thirteenth century. No less than five fresh Anglo-Norman versions of St Patrick's Purgatory appeared during the thirteenth century (the most important of which was Beroul's), although surprisingly it is not until 1470 that we get a direct reference to it in a noble library - that of John Tiptoft, earl of Worcester.[10]

---

1. A.C. Baugh and K. Malone, Literary History of England, I: The Middle Ages (London, 1967), p.97.
2. See Vickers, Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, pp.426-38.
3. M.D. Legge, Anglo-Norman Literature and its Background (Oxford, 1963), p.237.
4. Blaess, 'Les livres de Guy de Beauchamp', 513.
5. Egbert, The Tickhill Psalter, pp.96-7.
6. A.B. Emden, Donors of Books to St Augustine's Abbey, Canterbury (Oxford Bibliographical Society, 1968, occ. pbns., no.4), p.20.
7. M.R. James, The Ancient Libraries of Canterbury and Dover (Cambridge, 1903), nos. 20, 224.
8. Lambeth Palace Library, Reg. Whittlesey, f.114v.
9. Dillon, 'Inventory of ... Thomas, Duke of Gloucester', 301.
10. Legge, Anglo-Norman Literature, pp.239-40.

It is in the fourteenth century that we get more instances of devotional works - a reflection, no doubt, of the greater amount of surviving evidence, but also of the fact that saints' lives and such religious works were the staple diet of the fourteenth-century reader.[1] Joan of Cobham, the owner of the Apocalypse already mentioned, also included among her library the Manuel des Peches, a devotional work and aid to confession which survives in twenty-four manuscripts, thus attesting its popularity. The author of the poem is uncertain, though it was perhaps William de Waddington, writing about 1260.[2] Robert of Brunne made a translation in English in 1303[3] and a literal translation of 1350 was used by Peter Idley for Instructions to His Son.[4]

A work of similar scope and possibly adapted from the Manuel[5] in the late thirteenth century was the Lumiere as Lais of Peter of Peckham.[6] It was to be found in two noble libraries - an early copy belonging to Guy Beauchamp and another to Thomas of Woodstock.

Although in the early period before the Conquest straightforward translation of the bible (except the Psalter) was not encouraged, no exception was taken to poems narrating some of the episodes of Christ's life, particularly his condemnation and death. It was probably one of these which appears as Enfance Notre Seigneur in the 1305 list of the earl of Warwick's books.[7] In the same category was the Passion of Our Lord, a long narrative poem (706 lines) which recalls the secular romance. In a short prologue the poet says that his tale is not of Charlemagne but of Christ's Passion.[8] The first mention of this

---

1. B. Cottle, The Triumph of English, 1350-1400 (London, 1969), p.149.
2. W.A. Pantin, The English Church in the Fourteenth Century (Cambridge, 1955), p.224.
3. Robert of Brunne's Handlyng Synne (1303) and Its French Original, ed. F.J. Furnivall (E.E.T.S., cxix, cxxii, 1901 and 1903).
4. Legge, Anglo-Norman Literature, p.214.
5. See Baugh and Malone, Literary History of England, p.140.
6. M.D. Legge, 'Pierre de Peckham and his lumiere as lais', Modern Language Review, xxiv (1929), 37-47.
7. Blaess, op.cit., 513.
8. Baugh and Malone, Literary History of England, p.123.

work in a noble will comes in 1438 when Eleanor, daughter of Robert de Roos, gave it to her great nephew.[1] In 1468 an inventory of Elizabeth Sywardby, daughter of Sir Henry Vavasour of Haselwood, revealed two copies of the work.[2]

Some works were not only popular in the fourteenth century (having been written or revitalised in the thirteenth century) but were actually written then. The Prick of Conscience was one such work which appeared in the first half of the century, its manuscripts existing in far greater abundance than any other middle English work.[3] The taste for this book was most widespread among the upper gentry and nobility especially in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries.[4] In a prologue and seven parts, it tells of the wretched nature of man, the unstableness of the world, and of death, which is inevitable, thus leading to the last four parts which treat of Purgatory, Doomsday, the pains of Hell and the joys of Heaven.

In so doing it perhaps anticipated some of the introspective views put forward in the later fourteenth century. In 1354 a devotional work was written by one of the most successful captains of the early campaigns of the French war. Henry, duke of Lancaster's Livre de Seyntz Medicines provides a glimpse at the inner thoughts of an otherwise conventional nobleman. It is a penitential work with an examination of conscience and an allegorical recitation of spiritual remedies.[5] Henry of Lancaster's work showed that the nobleman's admiration for the contemplative life need not have been only passive: as a mystical writer

---

1. Test.Ebor., ii (1855), p.65.
2. Test.Ebor., iii (1865), p.163.
3. Cottle, The Triumph of English, p.149.
4. Copies were owned by William de Thorpe, justice (1391, Calendar of Wills Proved and Enrolled in the Court of Husting , ed. R. Sharpe, ii (London, 1890), pp.326-7), Thomas Roos of Ingmanthorp (1399, Test.Ebor., i, p.252), Henry le Scrope (1415), Edward Cheyne (1415).
5. It is edited by E.J.F. Arnould, Le Livre de Seyntz Medicines (Oxford, Anglo-Norman Texts, 1940). See Arnould, Etude sur le livre des saintes medicines de duc Henri de Lancastre (Paris, 1948), lxxx-lxxxvii, and K. Fowler, The King's Lieutenant (London, 1969), 193-6. See also cap.VI, p.218.

envisaged,[1] secular affairs could and should be coloured by private religious experience. Lancaster's book circulated in a restricted circle of the nobility - Lady Margaret Ferrers is known to have bequeathed her copy to John Botiller in 1375[2] and Maria de Roos, daughter of Henry Percy, had a 'librum Gallicum de Duce Lancastriae' which she left to Isabel Percy.[3] One of the two surviving manuscripts was given by Thomas, the baron of Carew, to Humphrey, duke of Gloucester.[4]

It may be that other members of the nobility harboured similar introspective thoughts. The point is reinforced by the relation between the nobility and the Lollard preachers from Oxford in the 1380s and 1390s. K.B. McFarlane has shown that a distinct group of noblemen and courtiers, mostly knights of Richard II's chamber, extended protection to these preachers.[5] Both Thomas of Woodstock in 1397 and Sir Lewis Clifford in 1404[6] had the 'book of tribulation', which may have been a Lollard tract, and other Lollard works found their way into noble libraries. Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, had an English version of the Scriptures known as Wycliffe's Bible, which still survives.[7] Exemplifying Wycliffe's purpose to bring religious instruction to the poor is an anonymous treatise of the late fourteenth century called Pore Caitiff (the term caitiff - frequently found in Lollard wills[8] - originally meant captive and later a wretched person). Found in a large number of manuscripts, it discusses, in addition to the Paternoster and Creed, patience, temptation and other subjects

---

1. See W. Hilton, Epistle on Mixed Life, ed. G.G. Perry, English Prose Treatises of Richard Rolle de Hampole (E.E.T.S., 1866), pp.19-42.
2. Lambeth Palace Library, Reg. Sudbury, f.81r.
3. Test.Ebor., i, p.202.
4. McFarlane, Nobility, p.242, n.5.
5. K.B. McFarlane, Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights (Oxford, 1972), p.148.
6. For Lewis Clifford's will see W. Dugdale, The Baronage of England, i (London, 1675), pp.341-2.
7. Vickers, Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, pp.426-38.
8. Sir Brian Stapleton in 1394 spoke of his soul as well as his body as 'caitiff', Test.Ebor., i (1836), p.198.

for poor men's spiritual profit.[1] This work appears in the English will of Lady Perrin Clanvow in April 1422 when she bequeathed to Elizabeth 'a booke of Englyssch cleped pore caytife'.[2] Lady Perrin married Sir Thomas Clanvow, a substantial landowner in Radnor and Hereford, in the 1390s. Sir Thomas, almost certainly either the son or nephew of Sir John Clanvow had therefore strong ties with the Lollard knights and Lollard doctrines and it is not surprising that his wife, mixing in such circles, owned such a work.[3]

The fourteenth century was also a great age of mysticism. Whether it was a reaction against the intellectual rigours of scholasticism or a part of the general religious awakening, it reflects the mystic's dissatisfaction with the ordinary form of worship. English mysticism finds its first formal expression in the writings of Richard Rolle, hermit of Hampole. His best known work, the Latin Incendium Amoris, written in middle life, was owned by Henry le Scrope in 1415.[4] Rolle seems to have acquired disciples and he became the spiritual adviser to certain holy women. For them he wrote his three English epistles on the love of God and its attainment through contemplation - Ego Dormio, Commandment of the Love of God and the Form of Living.[5] It is perhaps appropriate that Lady Joan de Bretagne found the first of these, Ego Dormio, a fitting bequest to her god-daughter Joan Willoughby in 1402.[6]

Writing somewhat later in the fourteenth century, Walter Hilton, an Augustinian canon of Thurgarton (Notts.), who died in 1396, produced the Scale

---

1. M.T. Brady, 'The Pore Caitiff: An introductory study', Traditio, x (1954), 529-48.
2. The Fifty Earliest English Wills in the Court of Probate, 1387-1439, ed. F.J. Furnivall (E.E.T.S., lxxviii, 1882), pp.49-51.
3. McFarlane, Lancastrian Kings, Appendix B, 'Sir John Clanvow', pp.230-2.
4. C.L. Kingsford, 'Two forfeitures in the year of Agincourt', Archaeologia, lxx (1918-20), 82.
5. See Baugh and Malone, Literary History of England, pp.227-8.
6. Lambeth Palace Library, Reg. Arundel, i, f.196r.

of Perfection and a number of shorter works. The Scale of Perfection was very popular and it is to be found among the bequests of Eleanor de Roos in July 1438.[1]

Nowhere is the fifteenth century more obviously the successor of the fourteenth than in its religious works. Many of these works could be thought of as products of the earlier period - a fact reflected in the composition of noble libraries. At the beginning of the century two of the three parts of the trilogy on pilgrimage by William de Deguilleville, written in the second quarter of the fourteenth century,[2] were translated into English: Lydgate made a verse translation of the Pilgrimage of the Life of Man in 1426-1430 which appeared in at least three noble households - Thomas de Montacute's in 1426,[3] Leo, lord Welles (1430)[4] and Alice, duchess of Suffolk's in 1466.[5] An English prose version of the second part known as the Grace Dieu or the Pilgrimage of the Soul was made in 1413 and has survived in at least eight manuscripts.[6] Sir John le Scrope bequeathed a copy of the French version in 1405 to his daughter Elizabeth,[7] while Sir Thomas Chaworth gave his cousin Richard Willoughby an English book called Grace de Dieu in 1458.[8]

On the fringes of the mystical tradition is Nicholas Love's Mirrour of the Blessed Lyf of Jesu Christ (c.1410), a free translation of parts of the Meditationes Vitae Christi, doubtfully attributed to St Bonaventura. Twenty-three manuscripts attest its popularity, besides the fact that it was printed

---

1. Test.Ebor., ii, p.65.
2. Le Pèlerinage de la Vie Humaine (1330-31, revised 1355), Le Pèlerinage de l'Ame (between 1330 and 1358) and Le Pèlerinage de Jhesucrist (1358).
3. Catalogue of Romances in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum, ed. H.L.D. Ward (London, 1893), ii, p.571. See cap.VI, p.233.
4. Lincolnshire Record Office: Ancaster Deposit X/A/1.
5. Historical Manuscripts Commission 8th report, i, pt iii (1909), 629.
6. Cat. of Romances ... in the British Museum, ii, pp.580-5.
7. Test.Ebor., i, p.339.
8. Test.Ebor., ii, p.227.

by Caxton, Pynson, and Wynkyn de Worde (twice).[1] It was owned in 1409 by William, lord Willoughby,[2] and in c.1465 a copy was executed for Edward, baron Grey of Ruthin and his wife.[3]

The Orologium Sapientiae was another mystical work written by Henry Suso and translated by an unknown chaplain for an unknown 'moste worcshipful lady'.[4] It was owned by Sir Thomas Chaworth in English in 1458.[5] Also popular in the fifteenth century was the Confessio Amantis of John Gower who died in 1408. The interest in this work is attested by more than forty extant manuscripts and one, at least, was in noble possession: Joan, countess of Westmoreland and daughter of John of Gaunt, owned in 1431 'unum librum de Anglicis vocatum Gower'.[6]

The continuing popularity in the fifteenth century of books of homilies (which of course included saints' lives)[7] is shown by Henry le Scrope's impressive collection in 1415:[8] he had books of homilies of St George, St Remy (bishop of Rheims c.460), Bede and a book of revelations of St Bridget. This latter work was naturally inspired by the establishment of the Bridgettine order in England in 1415.[9]

The evidence shows that throughout the period, devotional and religious works were often owned by or given to women. Perhaps they were considered more suitable for women's taste From the fourteenth century there was great variety in the devotional works owned. Noble owners displayed an interest in the mystic

---

1. Baugh and Malone, Literary History of England, p.289.
2. N. Ker, Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries, ii (Oxford, 1977), p.925.
3. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, Ad.MS.18.17.
4. The Orologium Sapientiae is edited by K. Horstmann, Anglia, x (1888), 323-89.
5. Test.Ebor., ii, p.228.
6. Test.Ebor., ii, p.14.
7. Baugh and Malone, Literary History of England, p.101.
8. Kingsford, 'Two forfeitures in the year of Agincourt', 82-3.
9. J. Catto, 'Religion and the English nobility in the late fourteenth century', p.43.

writers such as Richard Rolle and Nicholas Love as well as in Lollard tracts such as Pore Caitiff. Henry of Lancaster's devotional tract was an indication of the introspective frame of mind. But, perhaps, above all, the noble libraries reflect the interest in saints' lives throughout the period and possibly, therefore, the inherent conservatism of noble reading tastes.

(c) French and English romances

Apart from the bibles and service books, saints' lives and religious works, the romances formed by far the largest part of the nobleman's library (thirteen per cent) and the most popular form of secular literature throughout the period. Over four times as many romances were owned by men as by women, but on examining the donees it is clear that more romances were bequeathed to women than to men.

Middle English romances, over one hundred in number, were comprehensive in their range and offered great variety to the nobles who read them. There were several basic categories: many were connected with the Arthurian-Grail cycle. Some such as Sir Otuel, Roland and Vernagu and Sir Firumbras are set in the Carolingian period; others, such as Havelok, Horn, Guy of Warwick and Bevis of Hampton attempt an imaginative recreation of the treacherous and politically unstable world of Viking England in the tenth century.[1] A fourth variety exemplified by Alexander and The Siege of Troy drew upon the literature of classical antiquity to depict a still more distant past.

The period of development (1240-1400) of the Middle English romances was considerably later than their French counterparts,[2] the earliest being Floris and Blaunchflour composed in 1240.[3] Most of the romances come down to us filtered through the medium of French romance. For instance Lai le Freine was written before 1196 by Marie de France. In the early years of the fourteenth

---

1. R.W. Southern, 'England's first entry into Europe', in Medieval Humanism (Oxford, 1970), p.154; D. Pearsall, 'The development of the Middle English Romance', Medieval Studies, xxvii (1965), 97; R.M. Wilson, The Lost Literature of Medieval England (London, 1952), pp.16-19, 123-30.
2. D. Mehl, The Middle English Romances of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries (London, 1968), p.2.
3. D. Pearsall, op.cit., 91.

century it was closely translated and condensed in the Middle English version.[1] Three specific allusions to a French source and at least ten references to an original geste indicate that the Middle English romance of Richard Coeur de Lion was preceded by an Anglo-Norman version.[2]

The popularity of the romances may to some extent be gauged from the number of surviving manuscripts even though the number of extant French and Middle English manuscripts only approximately suggests those once known. The Launcelot-Grail cycle enjoyed considerable popularity with forty manuscripts of the Quest extant, ranging in date from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries.[3] The popularity of the Prose Launcelot in the middle ages is attested by the number of surviving manuscripts, about one hundred in all, although many are incomplete.[4]

The number of surviving manuscripts of other romances is far less. It is interesting that those romances with the largest number of manuscripts extant also have several surviving early manuscripts. The romance of Robert of Sicily seems to have enjoyed special favour in England. Three of the nine manuscripts which contain the Middle English poem date from the last half of the fourteenth century[5] (and it is probable that the original poem was not composed much before 1370). Four manuscripts attest the popularity of Amis and Amiloun, the earliest dating from 1330.[6] That the story of the King of Tars was popular in England is suggested by three fourteenth-century manuscripts.[7] Richard Coeur de Lion, Bevis of Hampton and Guy of Warwick all stand out as English romances which survive in several early manuscripts.

Since the manuscript survival can only give a very approximate guide to taste in romances, the evidence of wills and inventories is clearly of importance

---

1. Lai le Freine, ed. Wattie, Smith College Studies in Modern Languages, x (1929), viii.
2. L. Hibbard, Medieval Romance in England (New York, 1960), p.147.
3. The Quest of the Holy Grail, ed. P. Matarasso (Penguin, 1969), p.27.
4. Ibid., pp.27-8.
5. King Robert of Sicily, ed. L.H. Hornstein, P.M.L.A., lxxviii (1963), 453; L. Hibbard, op.cit., p.60.
6. Hibbard, op.cit., p.65.
7. Ibid., p.45.

(table E). Even here the evidence can be misleading. It is certain that Geoffrey of Monmouth's history was widely known and popular, but it is not mentioned in wills and inventories eo nomine. Some very obvious points emerge: legends connected with the Arthurian and Grail cycle appear to have been the most popular with the aristocracy between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries - a fact which reflects the manuscript evidence. Six copies of Launcelot[1] can be identified in noble households and two Mort d'Arthurs.[2] There are four specific references to copies of Merlin or Merlin's prophecies[3] as well as single references to Launcelot du Lac[4] and to Perlesvaus.[5] The famous legends of Tristan and of Troilus were also clearly of importance, for there are at least three known noble copies of Troilus[6] and five of Tristan.[7] The Troy Legend also apparently commanded some interest; four copies of the Troy Book[8] and two Sieges of Troy[9] are known to us as well as one Hector of Troy.[10] Romances about famous sieges were generally popular: for instance the Romance of Thebes (three copies),[11] the Siege of Jerusalem (one),[12] and the Siege of Melayne (one).[13]

---

1. Guy Beauchamp (1305), William Beauchamp of Elmley (1268), Elizabeth, lady la Zouche (1380), Isabella, duchess of York (1392), Thomas of Woodstock (1397), and Isabella Eure (1438).
2. Copies of Mort D'Arthur were owned by Guy Beauchamp (1305) and the Paston family in the late fifteenth century.
3. Books of Merlin or Merlin's prophecies were among the possessions of Simon Burley (1388), Margaret Courtenay, countess of Devon (1391), Thomas of Woodstock (1397) and Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland (c.1460).
4. Mary de Bohun owned a copy of this work (1380-8).
5. Brian FitzAlan (late thirteenth century).
6. Lady Eleanor Marshall (1458), Sir Thomas Charleton (1465), the Pastons.
7. Elizabeth, lady la Zouche (1380), Margaret Courtenay, countess of Devon (1391), Sir John le Scrope (1405), Matilda, lady of Dalden (1420), Thomas Courtenay, duke of Exeter (1427).
8. Guy Beauchamp (1305), Thomas of Gloucester (1397), Sir Thomas Chaworth (1458), William Herbert, earl of Pembroke (c.1460).
9. Thomas of Woodstock (1397), Walter Hungerford (1449).
10. Thomas of Woodstock (1397).
11. William de la Pole (c.1430), Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland (c.1460), the Pastons (late fifteenth century).
12. Lady Joan de Bretaigne (1402).
13. Thomas of Woodstock (1397).

TABLE E

OWNERSHIP AND POPULARITY OF COURTLY ROMANCES

| Title | No. of copies owned | Dates | Owned by men | Owned by women | Given to men | Given to women |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Launcelot | 6 | 1268-1438 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| Tristan | 5 | 1380-1427 | 2 | 3 | | 3 |
| Romance of King Arthur | 5 | 1388-1450 | 3 | 2 | | |
| Alexander | 4 | 1305-1397 | 4 | | | 1 |
| Troy Book | 4 | 1305-1458 | 4 | | | |
| Roman de la Rose | 4 | 1397-1450 | 4 | | | |
| Romance of Thebes | 3 | 1430-late 15th cent. | 3 | | | |
| Romance of Seven Sages | 3 | 1397-late 15th cent. | 2 | 1 | | 1 |
| Guy of Warwick | 3 | 1442-late 15th cent. | 2 | 1 | | |
| Troilus | 3 | 1458-late 15th cent. | 2 | 1 | | |
| Tancred | 2 | 1397 | 2 | | | |
| Romance - Doon de Nanteuil | 2 | 1305 | 2 | | | |
| Bevis of Hampton | 2 | 1388, 1397 | 2 | | | |
| Mort D'Arthur | 2 | 1305, late 15th cent. | 2 | | | |
| Siege of Troy | 2 | 1397, 1449 | 2 | | | 1 |
| Totals | 50 | | 39 | 11 | 1 | 7 |

Noble libraries also contained single copies of the following romances (the date at which they are found is given in brackets):

Perlesvaus (late 13th cent.), Amadas and Ydoine (1305), Romance de William de Orenges (1305), Doon de Mayence (1305), Girard de Vienne (1305), Aimeri de Narbonne (1305), Firumbras (1305), Launcelot du Lac (1380-8), Romance of William Bastard (1388), Romance de Meiser (1388), Hector of Troy (1397), Merlin (1397), Siege of Melayne (1397), Fulk FitzWaryn (1397), Godfrey de Bouillon (1397), Romance de Barlam and Josaphaz (1397), Chevalere Assigne (1399), Siege of Jerusalem (1402), Ponthus and the Fair Sidone (1465), Four Sons of Aymon (1466), Richard Coeur de Lion (late 15th cent.), Sir Gawain and the Green Knight (late 15th cent.)

Clearly fashion and taste played its part in deciding which romances were to be found in noble libraries at particular times. The Arthurian cycle was much in demand at all times. The French romances of Tancred (two copies),[1] Fulk FitzWaryn (one),[2] Godfrey de Bouillon (one),[3] and Aimeri de Narbonne (one)[4] are all mentioned during the fourteenth century in the collections of Thomas of Woodstock and Guy Beauchamp, earl of Warwick. Ponthus and the Fair Sidone was evidently a new and fashionable romance of the fifteenth century[5] - the Digby manuscript being written for Sir William Hopton of Swillington, treasurer to Edward IV, about 1465.

(i) Ancestral romances

Sometimes it is clear that noble households had a special interest in a particular story or character and these romances have been termed the 'ancestral romances'. In M.D. Legge's words, in England and Scotland 'the peculiar pattern of society after the Conquest seems to have led to the invention of a type of romance which is of origine lignagère'.[6] Emerging in the twelfth century it continued to be popular well into the fourteenth century. The ancestral romance may have had several purposes: firstly it linked Anglo-Norman families with the English past and it gave new families an illustrious history. Bevis of Hampton, flattering to the newly-created earl of Sussex, was composed for William de Albini some time between 1154 and 1176. The story of Guy of Warwick was pure fabrication, perhaps by a canon of Oseney, some time between 1232 and 1242, to flatter Thomas, earl of Warwick, heir through his mother of the d'Oilli family, constables of Oxford and patrons of the Abbey.[7] Not only was it expedient for the canons of Oseney to please their new patron, but the earl of Warwick was

---

1. Thomas of Woodstock owned two copies in French in 1397.
2. Thomas of Woodstock (1397).
3. Thomas of Woodstock (1397).
4. Guy Beauchamp (1305).
5. King Ponthus and the Fair Sidone, ed. F.J. Mather, P.M.L.A., xii (1897), xxv-vi.
6. Legge, Anglo-Norman Literature, p.139. See also cap.VI, pp.229-30.
7. Legge, Anglo-Norman Literature, p.162.

already in possession of lands which had belonged to the d'Oillis, and a romance dealing with the past glories of the family would be most welcome. It was no coincidence that William Beauchamp named his heir who was born in 1271 or 1272 after Guy of Warwick.[1]

While Guy of Warwick and Bevis were the most popular ancestral romances, there were others based on semi-mythical characters, usually for a special family occasion such as a wedding. The earliest, Guillaume d'Angleterre, was probably written for the Titmarsh family (a branch of the Lovels connected with Bury St Edmunds). The main character of this romance has nothing to do with any historical King William - the story is a retelling of the legend of Apollonius of Tyre; it is likely that a version of this story attached to an English king was already in existence and that the author gave it a local setting to suit his own purpose.[2] It seems likely that an anonymous author was responsible for Waldef, a romance connected with the Bigod family and written in the 1190s during the life of the third earl.[3] The romance of Fergus was probably written for Alan of Galloway, perhaps to commemorate his marriage with Margaret, daughter of Earl David and niece of William the Lion, in 1209.[4] As we have seen, the French romance of Fulk FitzWaryn was popular in the fourteenth century and it too can be claimed as a family or ancestral romance. The original poem which recounted the adventures of Fulk III dates from between 1256 and 1264. In its present form, the romance was probably rewritten before 1314 for Fulk FitzWarin V.[5]

---

1. F. Greville, Warwick Castle and its Earls (London, 1903), pp.35-7; The Beauchamp Chartulary and Charters 1100-1268, ed. E. Mason (Pipe Roll Society, new ser., xliii, 1980), p.xxiv.
2. Legge, Anglo-Norman Literature, p.142.
3. Ibid., p.146.
4. Ibid., p.161.
5. Brit.Lib., Royal MS. 12Cxii dates from 1322; Legge, op.cit., p.171.

We know that some of these ancestral romances had appeal outside the family concerned. It seems almost certain that the baptismal name of Bogo de Clare, younger son of Richard de Clare, earl of Gloucester, was 'Beves'.[1] This name must be an echo of the romance of Bevis of Hampton and shows how a man's reading and literary background could influence his outlook and habits of thinking. Bevis of Hampton was owned by Sir Simon Burley in 1388[2] and it appears in a list of Thomas of Woodstock's goods in 1397.[3] Guy of Warwick was so popular that it appeared in a translation by Lydgate in the fifteenth century and was owned by Margaret, countess of Shrewsbury[4] and by the Pastons in the later fifteenth century.[5] Such was the popularity of the tale at that time that the early printers, who almost without exception were content to follow the taste of their public, hastened to print it among the first of the old English romances.[6]

(ii) Reasons for popularity

Why were the French and English romances so appealing to their owners among the nobility? Firstly and obviously they provided very good stories and great variety. Some romances, such as the Laud Troy Book, Bevis of Hampton, and the Wars of Alexander were written to be read aloud at large gatherings. Others were made for a small, select audience, consisting largely of ladies (hence, perhaps, the popularity of bequests to women), and they might be read aloud, either by the author or by a clerk employed for the purpose or by one of the

---

1. 'Annales de Theokesberia' in Annales Monastici, i, ed. H.R. Luard (Rolls Series, 1864), p.136; Robert of Gloucester, ii, ed. W.A. Wright (Rolls Series, 1887), p.730. I am indebted to Dr J.R. Maddicott for these references.
2. Scattergood, 'Two medieval booklists', 237.
3. Dillon, 'Inventory of ... Thomas, duke of Gloucester', 301.
4. Brit.Lib., Harleian MS. 7333; Catalogue of Romances ... in the British Museum, ed. H.L.D. Ward (London, 1883), i, p.494.
5. H.S. Bennett, The Pastons and their England (Cambridge, 1951), p.261.
6. R.S. Crane, 'The vogue of Guy of Warwick from the close of the middle ages to the romantic revival', P.M.L.A., xxx (1915), 128.

ladies (although private reading would also be common). So, at the coronation feast with which Havelok ends, one of the diversions described is 'Romanz-reding on the book'.

Not only were romances popular in a variety of settings, but they presented the ideals which noble society admired. Two virtues above all were held in all the romances to mark the good knight and bring him honour - prowess and loyalty.[1] But some romances gave particular ideals prominence: in Amis and Amiloun friendship is set forth as a knightly virtue. The Christian ideal is mainly associated with the Charlemagne cycle and romances such as Sir Firumbras and Otuel and Roland.[2] Some romances were even more strikingly didactic: Sir Ysumbras is in most manuscripts grouped with legends and devotional literature, which is fitting, as its own theme is that of Christian humility. Early fourteenth-century romances such as the King of Tars[3] and Le Bone Florence[4] combined strong religious colouring with much traditional romance material, in so doing forming the bridge to the saints' legends and containing much typically hagiographic matter.

Professor Holt has suggested that the romances did not have a purely 'fictional' value. The nobles in the reign of King John would have had a common background in the imaginary world of Arthur's court and the Grail, of Tristan and Alexander, of Charlemagne and Roland. In his words '.. This was a world of chivalry - a world in which there were general rules of conduct which one might equate with law'. Above all the world of romances was one in which

---

1. G. Mathew, 'Ideals of knighthood in late fourteenth century England', in Studies in Medieval History presented to F.M. Powicke, ed. R.W. Hunt, W.A. Pantin and R.W. Southern (Oxford, 1948), p.358. See also E. Kennedy, 'Social and political ideas in the French Prose Lancelot', Medium Aevum, xxvi (1957), 90-106.
2. Sir Firumbras finally consents to become a Christian after his defeat. In Otuel and Roland, Charles prays for Otuel's conversion.
3. For the fourteenth-century manuscript tradition see Hibbard, Medieval Romance in England, p.45.
4. Ibid., p.15.

kingship was personal and in which kings and their great men had acknowledged obligations towards each other. It could well be that reading the romances helped to form men's views of their own political world.[1]

Throughout the middle ages, the romances, whether ancestral romances or pure fictional stories, dominated the secular literature found in noble libraries. The Arthurian cycle was clearly the most popular among the aristocracy, judging from references to noble owners and the number of surviving manuscripts. The great variety of stories, the ideals put forward and, perhaps, the parallels with contemporary political life contributed to the success of this particular type of literature.

(d) Histories and chronicles

Quite a large proportion of the nobleman's library appears to have consisted of histories and chronicles. Of the forty-five works of this sort identified in noble possession, all but three were owned by aristocratic men (see Table F). Interestingly, although we can only identify six individual donees, four of these were men and two women. The sample is far too small to make firm conclusions but the tendency appears to be that histories were generally more popular with men.

The most popular chronicle was the Brut chronicle, a history which is in part myth and in a sense an 'ancestral romance' for the whole nation. The Brut may well conceal the presence of Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia Regum, which is not mentioned in wills and inventories eo nomine. Seven copies of various Brut chronicles are recorded between 1305 and 1465 in the possession of such men as Guy Beauchamp, earl of Warwick (1305),[2] Sir Simon Burley (1388),[3] Robert

---

1. J.C. Holt, The Northerners (Oxford, 1961), p.253.
2. M. Blaess, 'Les livres de Guy de Beauchamp', 513.
3. Scattergood, 'Two medieval booklists', 237.

TABLE F

OWNERSHIP OF HISTORIES AND CHRONICLES

| Title | No. owned | Dates | Owned by men | Owned by women |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Brut | 7 | 1305-1465 | 7 | |
| Chronicles of England (in French) | 4 | 1397-1490s | 4 | |
| Chronicles of Popes | 4 | 1397 | 4 | |
| Chronicles of France (in French) | 3 | 1392-1450 | 2 | 1 |
| Polycronicon | 4 | 1391, 1458 | 4 | |
| Books of prophecies | 3 | 1388-1480 | 2 | 1 |
| Travels of Sir John Mandeville | 3 | 1397-1432 | 3 | |
| Chronicle of Nicholas Trivet | 2 | 1397 | 2 | |
| Flores Historiarum | 2 | 1397 | 2 | |
| Song of William the Marshal | 2 | 1305, 1397 | 2 | |
| Titus Frulovisi: Life of Henry V | 2 | 15th cent. | 2 | |
| Livy's History of Rome | 2 | 1397, 1450 | 2 | |
| Gaimar: Estoire des Engles | 1 | c.1150 | | 1 |
| Le Livre de Reis de Brittanie | 1 | 1414 | 1 | |
| Bede: Historia Ecclesiastica | 1 | 1415 | 1 | |
| Scalacronica | 1 | 1477 | 1 | |
| Matthew Paris: Historia Anglorum | 1 | 15th cent. | 1 | |
| History of William Longspée | 1 | 1305 | 1 | |
| Caesar | 1 | 1450 | 1 | |
| Totals | 45 | | 42 | 3 |

de Roos (1392),[1] Sir Thomas Ughtred (1398),[2] Leo, lord Welles (1430),[3] Sir John Fastolf (1450)[4] and Sir William Hopton (1465).[5]

Apart from the Brut chronicle, which contained some myth, there were histories which could be more accurately described as romantic biographies in French in circulation in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Guy Beauchamp evidently owned a copy of the History of William Longespée in 1305 and also a version of the Song of William the Marshal, as did Thomas of Woodstock in 1397.[6]

When we turn to chronicles of the more conventional kind we see that they were not common in the libraries of the nobility until the late fourteenth century (although once again this may be due to the lack of records before 1350). Admittedly Lady Constance FitzGilbert was said to have a copy of Gaimar's translation of the Estoire des Engles in the mid-twelfth century.[7] In the late fourteenth century Thomas of Woodstock was clearly partial to chronicles: in addition to a chronicle of England in French, he had a copy of Nicholas Trivet's Chronicle to 1307, which was written after 1320, possibly for Edward II.[8] He also possessed two copies of the Flores Historiarum and the Travels of Sir John Mandeville, presumably in French, as that version was circulating in England from about 1360.[9] Ownership of chronicle histories continued in the fifteenth

---

1. Test.Ebor., i, pp.179-80.
2. Ibid., p.243.
3. Lincolnshire Record Office, Ancaster Deposit X/A/1.
4. H.S. Bennett, The Pastons and their England, p.111.
5. King Ponthus and the Fair Sidone, xxv-xxvi.
6. Blaess, op.cit., 513; Dillon, 'Inventory of ... Thomas, duke of Gloucester', 301.
7. Gardiner, English Girlhood at School, p.57.
8. See R.J. Dean in Studies in Philology, lxv (1948), 541-64.
9. The Travels of Sir John Mandeville, ed. G. Warner (Roxburghe Club, 1889), pp. x-xi; A. Steiner, 'The date of composition of Mandeville's travels', Speculum, ix (1934), 144-7. We know of two other copies, one in the possession of Thomas Roos of Ingmanthorp (1399, Test.Ebor., i, p.252), and one owned by George Darrell of Sessay (1432, Test.Ebor., ii, p.28).

century: the duke of York had a French 'Livre de Reis de Brittanie' in 1414,[1] Sir Thomas Chaworth possessed Ranulph Higden's Polycronicon, apparently both in the Latin version and in the English translation in 1458.[2] Strangely no version of Matthew Paris's history appears under that name until Duke Humphrey's version of the Historia Anglorum in the fifteenth century.[3] He also had a life of Henry V dedicated to him by an Italian humanist, Tito Livio Frulovisi of Ferrara.[4] A copy of the Scalacronica of Sir Thomas Gray was owned by Gerald, eighth earl of Kildare, in about 1477.[5]

Nor were the nobility solely interested in contemporary or near contemporary English history. The inventory of the goods of Sir Nicholas de la Beche in c.1340 contained two works which are most probably lives of two popes.[6] Thomas of Woodstock also had two copies in Latin and in French of the Chronicles of the Popes in 1397.[7] Henry lord Scrope's list in 1415 included a copy of Bede's Historia Ecclesiastica.[8]

The history of the classical world also appears in book lists from the late fourteenth century. Again it was Thomas of Woodstock who had a chronicle of Titus Livius, presumably a copy of Livy's History of Rome; this also appeared in Duke Humphrey's library in the early fifteenth century and in Sir John Fastolf's in 1450 (which included also 'The Book of Julius Caesar', presumably a copy of Caesar's Gallic War or the Civil War).[9]

---

1. Register of Henry Chichele, ed. E.F. Jacob and H. Johnson (London, 1937), ii, p.38.
2. Test.Ebor., ii, pp.226, 228.
3. Vickers, Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, pp.426-38.
4. R. Hunt and A.C. de la Mare, Duke Humfrey and English Humanism (Oxford, 1970), pp.1, 3.
5. M.R. James, Catalogue of Manuscripts in the Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, I (Cambridge, 1912), pp.133-4.
6. P.R.O., E 154/1/17.
7. Dillon, 'Inventory of ... Thomas, duke of Gloucester', 300.
8. Kingsford, 'Two forfeitures in the year of Agincourt', 99.
9. Bennett, The Pastons and their England, p.111.

It is interesting to speculate on what noblemen would have learned from these histories, which were relatively common in their libraries. In the light of the nobles' historical reading matter, their knowledge of the past and their political appeals to precedent become more comprehensible. Henry III's cult of Edward the Confessor may be linked to the popularity of that saint's life. The Modus Tenendi Parliamentum was able to use historical references back as far as the pre-Conquest period. The reign of Edward II alone shows that the nobility were steeped in their history.[1] Thomas of Lancaster in the early fourteenth century undoubtedly saw links between himself and Simon de Montfort. The author of the Vita Edwardi Secundi drew parallels between Montfort's attempts to restrain Henry III and the earl's effort to restrain Edward II in 1313.[2] During the same period Edward II made a reference to the Mise of Amiens,[3] while the tract on the office of the steward used examples such as Earl Godwin of Wessex and Hubert de Burgh in order to show the fate of evil counsellors.[4]

The various kinds of chronicles and histories, some largely myth and resembling ancestral romances, and the obvious references to history made by members of the nobility suggest that such works formed a considerable part of their libraries.

(e) Law books

This category is not, on the whole, well represented in the libraries of the nobility (forming only 1.5 per cent of the total owned). Admittedly several families are known to have possessed statute books: Thomas of Woodstock, earl of Gloucester, in 1397; and gentry families such as the Peytons in 1349, the Darrells of Sessay in 1432, and the Pastons in the late fifteenth century. The earl of Gloucester also had a book of civil law as did Lady Joan de Bretaigne (1402). There are occasional references to books of canon law or to a

---

1. For a discussion of this point see J.R. Maddicott, Thomas of Lancaster (Oxford, 1970), p.321.
2. Vita Edwardi Secundi, ed. N. Denholm-Young (London, 1957), pp.18, 44.
3. Chronicles of the Reigns of Edward I and Edward II, i, ed. W. Stubbs (Rolls Series, 1882), p.213.
4. L.V. Harcourt, His Grace the Steward and Trial of Peers (London, 1907), pp.166-7.

book of law called Natura Brevium in the fifteenth century, but these come mainly from the gentry families. There is very little to suggest the business interests of the nobility - books of law and treatises on estate management are few and far between. It may be that these works were considered too mundane to be mentioned in wills or perhaps they were more likely to survive, if at all, without marks of ownership. D. Oschinsky's discussion of the circulation of treatises on estate management has shown that many monasteries owned copies, and given the general similarity of estate management practices among the ecclesiastical and lay nobility, it would be surprising if lay magnates did not also have copies.[1]

(f) Educational works

About five per cent of a nobleman's books might be educational works, and on the whole it was the men who received educational works as bequests.[2] Within this broad spectrum of books, it was the mirrors of princes that were the most popular. These had had a long history even by the late middle ages: they start with an Aquitanian group, and in particular the Via Regia addressed to Louis the Pious between 811 and 814 by the abbot Smaragdus.[3] The general popularity of the tradition in England is indicated by the survival of forty-five manuscripts of Hoccleve's Regiment of Princes, and by the fact that no less than eight independent prose translations of the Secretum Secretorum (which claimed to be the counsel with which Aristotle had equipped the conqueror) survive from the fifteenth century, as well as verse renderings by Lydgate and Burgh and a Scottish version by Sir Gilbert Haye. It is significant that several of these translations are known to have been made for royal and noble patrons: Lydgate's and Burgh's for Henry VI, James Yonge's for the

---

1. D. Oschinsky, 'Medieval treatises on estate management', Econ.Hist.Rev., viii (1956), 296-309.
2. For ownership see cap.I, pp.10-11, 23-4.
3. J.M. Wallace-Hadrill, Early Germanic Kingship in England and on the Continent (Oxford, 1971), p.135ff.

TABLE G

OWNERSHIP OF MIRRORS OF PRINCES, BOOKS OF CHIVALRY AND COURTESY BOOKS

| Mirrors of princes | No. owned | Date | No. owned by men | No. owned by women |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Books of vices and virtues | 7 | 13th cent.-1450 | 4 | 3 |
| Aegidius Romanus: De Regimine | 5 | 1388-1465 | 4 | 1 |
| Hoccleve: Regiment of Princes | 2 | 1465, late 15th cent. | 2 | |
| Moral Institutions of a Prince | 1 | 1466 | | 1 |
| **Chivalry books** | | | | |
| Book of Knighthood and Chivalry | 3 | 1397, 1450 | 3 | |
| Vegetius | 1 | 1450 | 1 | |
| L'Arbre de Bataille | 1 | 1450 | 1 | |
| **Courtesy books** | | | | |
| Un Aprise des Enfants | 1 | 1305 | 1 | |
| Gyron le Curtasse | 1 | 1446 | | 1 |
| Courtesy book in French | 1 | 1450 | 1 | |
| Totals | 23 | | 17 | 6 |

earl of Ormond, Sir Gilbert Haye's for the earl of Orkney and Caithness. John Trevisa also translated the De Regimine for his master, Thomas IV, lord of Berkeley.[1]

Copies of Aegidius Romanus's treatise were owned by Simon Burley (1388),[2] William de Thorpe (1391),[3] Thomas of Woodstock (1397),[4] Eleanor de Bohun (1399)[5] and Sir Thomas Charleton (1465).[6] Hoccleve's Regiment was owned by the Pastons in the late fifteenth century[7] and by Sir William Hopton in 1465.[8] It seems most likely that the Moral Institutions of a Prince, owned by Alice, duchess of Suffolk, was in fact a copy of Vincent de Beauvais's De Eruditione Filiorum Nobilium.[9]

Alongside these mirrors of princes were found, in the late fourteenth century and the fifteenth century, books of chivalry and works on heraldry, such as Thomas of Woodstock's Book of Knighthood and the Vegetius owned by Sir John Fastolf in 1450 (table G).[10]

The courtesy books as such do not survive in great numbers: Guy Beauchamp had an Aprise des enfants in 1305[11] and Sir John Fastolf had a courtesy book in French in the mid-fifteenth century, possibly the Gyron le Curtasse owned by Matilda, countess of Cambridge, in 1446.[12]

---

1. On the tradition of the Secreta Secretorum, see R.F. Green, Poets and Princepleasers: Literature and the English Court in the Late Middle Ages (Toronto, 1980), pp.140-1.
2. Scattergood, 'Two medieval booklists', 237.
3. Calendar of Wills Proved and Enrolled in the Court of Husting ii, pp. 326-7.
4. Dillon, 'Inventory of ... Thomas, duke of Gloucester', 302.
5. Test.Vet., i, p.148.
6. Westminster Abbey Muniments, 6630, m.4.
7. Bennett, The Pastons and their England, p.261.
8. King Ponthus, xxv-vi.
9. Historical MSS. Commission, 8th report, i, pt iii (1909), 629. See cap.I, p.10.
10. Bennett, op.cit., pp.110-11.
11. Blaess, 'Les livres de Guy de Beauchamp', 514, 517.
12. Test.Ebor., ii, p.123.

(g) Practical works

There are very few references to practical works in noblemen's libraries, perhaps because they were considered to be too mundane, like lawbooks, to be mentioned in wills. The Rules of Robert Grosseteste on husbandry were presented to the countess of Lincoln c.1240.[1] A work which we know enjoyed wide popularity was the De Proprietatibus Rerum of Bartholomaeus Anglicus, translated by John Trevisa for Thomas, lord Berkeley in 1398.[2] Thomas of Woodstock had a French or Latin version in his library in 1397, whereas Sir John Fastolf clearly possessed the translation in 1450.

There were also practical works on physics and surgery which formed part of Guy Beauchamp's extensive library in 1305 and also part of Thomas of Woodstock's in 1397. In 1391 Margaret, countess of Devon, left a book of medicines in her will.[3]

There were also books of instruction connected with words; Philippa and Blanche, daughters of Henry of Derby, later Henry IV, had their A.B.C.s in 1398. Simon Burley seems to have possessed a dictionary of foreign words, 'un livre de papier ove diverses paroles de diverses langages'.[4] In 1413 Elizabeth, wife of Humphrey Stafford, left to a lady friend a book called 'wirdlygger', presumably some form of dictionary.[5] Even Leo, lord Welles, had his collection of English proverbs in 1430.[6]

(h) Miscellaneous works

The variety of books in noblemen's libraries was enormous. In addition to the broad categories already discussed there were isolated philosophical works to be found in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century noble libraries: Simon Burley

---

1. Oschinsky, 'Medieval treatises on estate management', 305.
2. Baugh and Malone, Literary History of England, p.268. See cap.I, p.29.
3. From K.B. McFarlane's transcript of PCC Rous 17, McFarlane papers, III/22, p.404.
4. Scattergood 'Two medieval booklists', 237.
5. Lambeth Palace Library, Reg. Arundel, ii, f.173v.
6. Lincolnshire Record Office, Ancaster Deposit X/A/1.

had a book of philosophy,[1] the philosophical works of Cicero and the Disputation between Hope and Despair could be found in the Pastons' library, and Lady Elizabeth Berkeley had a copy of the English translation of Boethius's Consolation of Philosophy.[2] Sir John Fastolf had several such works, including the Problemate Aristotelis.[3] Alice, Duchess of Suffolk, included a French book of the tales of the philosophers among her books in 1466.[4]

There were in addition encyclopaedic volumes such as Li Tresors of Brunetto Latini, an Italian book written in French for a French-speaking upper class in 1268. The book attracted a wide readership, as at least seventy-three manuscripts survive, while some fifteen lost manuscripts have been identified.[5] One section of this work treats of the virtues which should be possessed by the podesta and clearly there was an insistence on the value of the mind - characteristic of the thirteenth century.[6] The first mention of this work in noble libraries, as far as is known, came in Guy Beauchamp's collection in 1305,[7] and it also appears in Thomas of Woodstock's library at the close of the fourteenth century.[8]

Another encyclopaedia found in French prose in noble libraries of the fourteenth century was that attributed to the pretender Sidrak (a descendent of the biblical Japhet), who had received from God the gift of all knowledge. Sidrak had in turn instructed a king named Boctus who questioned him on a number of subjects. The answers were compiled to form a book which Boctus

---

1. Scattergood, op.cit., 237.
2. M.R. James, A Descriptive Catalogue of the McClean Collection of MSS in the Fitzwilliam Museum (Cambridge, 1912), pp.354-5.
3. Bennett, The Pastons and their England, p.111.
4. Historical MSS Commission, 8th report, i, pt III (1909), 629.
5. Li livres dou Tresour, ed. F.J. Carmody (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1948), pp.lv-vii.
6. Murray, Reason and Society in the Middle Ages, pp.123-4.
7. Blaess, 'Les livres de Guy de Beauchamp', 512, 518.
8. Dillon, 'Inventory of ... Thomas, duke of Gloucester', 300.

called 'The Fount of all knowledge'. It was composed about 1243 and soon had an international reputation.[1] The earliest reference in an English noble library is in 1322 among the books belonging to Humphrey de Bohun.[2] There were also copies belonging to Simon Burley (1388) and Robert de Roos (1392).[3] The popularity of the Fontaine de toutes sciences is attested by the verse translation in over 12,000 lines by Hugh of Campedene named Sidrac and Boctus.[4]

There was a further category of works, connected with prophecy, which seem to have been particularly popular from the later fourteenth century. Simon Burley possessed '1 livre de les propheties de Merlyn' in 1388.[5] Margaret Courtenay had a book of Merlin's prophecies in 1391,[6] as did Henry Percy in c.1460.[7]

(j) Chaucer

It is perhaps surprising that the works of Chaucer should not be found more often in noble book lists. The first reference known to me of ownership of the Canterbury Tales is the volume belonging to the Yorkshire gentleman, Sir Thomas Cumberworth, who bequeathed it to his daughter in 1450.[8] A copy was also owned by Lady Elizabeth Bruyn in 1471.[9] The Paston family appear to have possessed a copy of the Legend of Good Women and the Parliament of Birds.[10] Chaucer does not seem to have been considered essential reading among the aristocracy or members of the knightly class who are known to have possessed books. It has recently been suggested that although the poetry of Chaucer (and

---

1. E. Renon and G. Paris, 'La fontaine de toute sciences: du philosophie Sidrach', in Histoire Littéraire de la France, xxxi (1893), 285-318.
2. Turner, 'The will of Humphrey de Bohun', 339-49.
3. Scattergood, op.cit., 237; Test.Ebor., i, p.179.
4. K. Bulbring, 'Sydrac in England', Festschrift für Wendelin Foerster (Halle, 1902), pp.443-78.
5. Scattergood, loc.cit.
6. McFarlane papers, III/22, p.404.
7. Catalogue of Romances ... in the British Museum, i, p.320. See also R. Taylor, The Political Prophecy in England (New York, 1911), pp.83-6.
8. Lincoln Diocesan Documents, ed. A. Clark (E.E.T.S., 1914), pp.48-9.
9. H.W. King, 'Excerpts from ancient wills', Transactions of the Essex Archaeological Society, new series, ii (1879-83), 57.
10. Bennett, The Pastons and their England, p.261.

Gower) was written on occasion with an aristocratic courtly audience in mind, the most likely readers were the officials and administrators who were attached to the government and court.[1]

The most superficial survey shows that religious books and bibles formed the largest section of a nobleman's library, while saints' lives and romances formed a significant sector. Chronicles, histories and instructive books were also relatively popular. But there is little law and certainly estate management is under-represented.

3. The language of the books

It is possible to detect changes in the language of the books owned by noble families, which of course paralleled changes in society. In 1978 A.C. Baugh and T. Cable wrote 'What the language would have been like if William the Conqueror had not succeeded in making good his claim to the English throne can only be a matter of conjecture'.[2] In any case it is evident that after 1066 the members of the new ruling class were sufficiently numerous to continue to use their own Norman language, and in fact for two centuries after the Conquest French remained the language of ordinary conversation among the upper classes in England. The language of the masses of course was English although soon, through intermarriage and association with the Normans, many people of English extraction must have found it to their advantage to learn the new language.[3] Perhaps the most important factor in the continued use of French by the English upper class until the beginning of the thirteenth century was the close connection that existed all these years between England and the Continent.

---

1. See V.J. Scattergood, 'Literary culture at the court of Richard II' in English Court Culture in the Later Middle Ages, ed. V.J. Scattergood and J.W. Sherborne (London, 1983), pp.36-8.
2. A.C. Baugh and T. Cable, A History of the English Language (London, 1978), p.107.
3. F. Stenton, 'English families and the Norman Conquest', Trans.Roy.Hist. Soc., fourth ser., xxvi (1944), 1-12.

This pattern was of course reflected in the literature. A considerable body of French literature was produced in England from the beginning of the twelfth century, addressed to patrons and geared towards their special tastes and interests.

Shortly after 1200 conditions changed; England lost an important section of her possessions abroad. The thirteenth century was a period of shifting emphasis upon the two languages spoken in England. Professor Rothwell has argued that English was the vernacular of the aristocracy as early as 1200.[1] Certainly evidence suggests that by the mid-century some noble children spoke English as their mother tongue and had to be taught French through the medium of manuals equipped with English glosses.[2] Of course, French continued to be used by the upper classes in parliament, the law courts and in public negotiations. By 1258, the Provisions of Oxford were in Latin, French and English - Latin being naturally the language of record. At the close of the thirteenth century and in the course of the fourteenth century we see clear indications that the French language was losing its hold in England. A fourteenth-century statute of Oxford required students to construe and translate in both English and French 'lest the French language be entirely disused'.[3] Treatises on teaching French proliferated and even the ability to write French was becoming less general among people of position.[4] In 1400, George Dunbar, earl of March, in writing to the king in English says:

> 'And, noble prince, marvel ye not that I write my letters in English, for that is more clear to my understanding than Latin or French ...'[5]

---

1. W. Rothwell, 'The role of French in thirteenth-century England', B.J.R.L., lviii (1975-6), 445-66.
2. Walter Bibbesworth's treatise, for instance, is edited by Annie Owen, Le Traité de Walter de Bibbesworth sur la Langue Française (Paris, 1929). On date, see A. Baugh, 'The date of Walter of Bibbesworth's Traité' in Festschrift für Walther Fischer (Heidelburg, 1959), pp.21-33. See cap.VII, pp.247-50.
3. Munimenta Academica, ed. H. Anstey, ii (Rolls Series, 1868), p.438.
4. See K. Lambley, The Teaching and Cultivation of the French Language in England (Manchester, 1920).
5. Royal and Historical Letters during the Reign of Henry IV, ed. F.C. Hingeston, i (Rolls Series, 1860), pp.23-5.

It is not surprising that the literature written in England during the middle ages reflects reasonably accurately the changing fortunes of English. Obviously while French was the language best understood by the aristocracy, the books they read or listened to were in French. Only one English romance exists before 1250, Floris and Blaunchflour, but from this time translations and adaptations from the French begin to be made, and in the course of the fourteenth century their number becomes very large.[1]

How far are these trends reflected in what we know of noble libraries of the period? It is clear that throughout the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the French romances were very popular among the aristocracy. In 1268, William Beauchamp left his daughter, Joan, 'a book of Launcelot'[2] while we know that the French Perlesvaus, a grail romance (Bodleian MS Hatton 82) was owned by Brian FitzAlan in the late thirteenth century.[3] It is striking that all forty-three 'romances' given to Bordesley Abbey by Guy Beauchamp were in French. Even towards the end of the fourteenth century, it is a French Tristan and Launcelot that Elizabeth, lady la Zouche, owned in 1380.[4] In the next long booklist that we possess, we see that Simon Burley's books consisted primarily of French works such as the romance 'du Roy Arthur' and the 'Livret de bruyt'.[5] In 1392, Lady Elizabeth de Stapleton was the owner of 'unum librum de gallico qui vocatur Sydrak'.[6]

But in 1388 Simon Burley certainly had 'un livre de englys del forster et del sengler', possibly an English romance. In July 1395 Alice, lady West, bequeathed to her daughter-in-law Joan 'alle the bokes that I have of latyn, englisch and frensch'.[7] Thomas of Woodstock's library consisted of over eighty

---

1. Mehl, The Middle English Romances of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries, pp.2-6.
2. Test.Vet., i, p.51.
3. M. Prestwich, War, Politics and Finance in the Reign of Edward I (London, 1972), p.243.
4. Gardiner, English Girlhood at School, p.112.
5. M.V. Clarke, Fourteenth Century Studies, pp.120-1.
6. Test.Ebor., i, pp.179-80.
7. Earliest English Wills (E.E.T.S., 1882), pp.4-10.

volumes of which forty-eight were certainly in French, twenty-five in Latin and only three in English, a bible in two large volumes, and two separate books of the Gospels.[1] But it must surely be the case that the nobility had been conversing in English long before this, otherwise there would have been no need for manuals such as Walter de Bibbesworth's treatise in the mid-thirteenth century for teaching French. It may be that the issue is confused by wills written in French which translate into French the titles of books which were actually in English.

There is no doubt, however, that the French romances continued to be popular into the fifteenth century. Sir John le Scrope left to his daughter Joan a book 'in French called Tristrem' in 1405.[2] Thomas Beaufort, earl of Dorset, bequeathed to his sister, Joan, countess of Westmoreland, another French Tristan in 1427.[3] Matilda, countess of Cambridge, bequeathed 'duos libros Gallicos vocatos Gyron le Curtasse' to Alesia, countess of Salisbury in 1446.[4] Sir John Fastolf's library in 1450 still reflected interests in French literature as it contained a Liber de Roy Arthur, Cronicles d'Angletere and Lez Propretez des Choses (presumably the French translation of Bartholomaeus Anglicus).[5] In September 1466, Alice, duchess of Suffolk, had a collection of books brought to Ewelme, in Oxfordshire, from Wingfield in Suffolk, including several French works - 'le citee des Dames' and the book of the Shepherd's Calendar.[6] Finally in 1480, Anne Neville, duchess of Buckingham, had in her library a book of French called Lucum and the Epistles in French.[7]

---

1. Dillon, 'Inventory of ... Thomas, duke of Gloucester', 300, 301. For Thomas's Wycliffe bible see A.I. Doyle, 'English books in and out of court from Edward III to Henry VII', in English Court Culture in the Later Middle Ages, p.168.
2. Test.Ebor., i, p.339.
3. The Register of Henry Chichele, ii, p.358.
4. Test.Ebor., ii, p.123.
5. Bennett, The Pastons and their England, p.111.
6. Historical MSS. Commission, 8th report, i, pt III (1909), 629.
7. Test.Vet., i, p.357.

Can the emergence of English be detected at all? After the will of Alice West in 1395, there are constant references in wills to books in English. Devotional works such as the Prick of Conscience appear in Henry le Scrope's will in 1415. Pore Caytife is one of the books bequeathed by Lady Perrin Clanvow in April 1422.[1] The Middle English versions of the French romances also enjoyed popularity; Lady Eleanor Marshall received a copy of an English book called 'Trolias' in 1458.[2] In 1458 Sir Thomas Chaworth of Nottinghamshire had a copy of Lydgate's translation of the prose Historia Trojana,[3] and a few years later Sir Walter Hopton of Swillington, treasurer to Edward IV, had a volume containing the fifteenth-century English romance of Ponthus and the Fair Sidone.[4] In addition there are mentions of Gower (Joan, countess of Westmoreland, 1431),[5] of the Canterbury Tales (Sir Thomas Cumberworth, 1450),[6] and of Piers Plowman (Sir Thomas Charleton, 1465).[7]

It is once again difficult to draw conclusions from a relatively small sample, especially with the lack of wills before 1380 at a time when English was becoming more and more common, but we can say that from the late fourteenth century, while French and Latin books still formed the greater part of the noble libraries, English works were becoming increasingly popular.

## 4. Prestige books and family heirlooms

The importance of books to a noble family is difficult to assess. There is some evidence of presentation bibles, produced in a costly manner, that have survived to this day. There are some indications that books were valued and handed down as heirlooms within noble families. There are also various pieces of chance evidence which show that noble men read their books and prized them.

---

1. Earliest English Wills, pp.49-51.
2. Test.Ebor., ii, p.218.
3. Catalogue of Romances ... in the British Museum, i, p.75.
4. See Mather in P.M.L.A., xii (1897), xxv-xxvi.
5. Test.Ebor., ii, p.14.
6. Lincoln Diocesan Documents, pp.48-9.
7. Westminster Abbey Muniments 6630, m.4. For the circulation of Piers Plowman, see J.A. Burrow, 'The audience of Piers Plowman', Anglia, lxxv (1957), 373-84.

(a) Surviving books

Many of the books owned by the nobility which have survived were illuminated, and therefore expensive. There are very few surviving instances of book prices recorded in England before the end of the thirteenth century. H.E. Bell has produced evidence which shows that large service books were costly to produce - a sum of fourteen pounds was paid to the scribe of Abbot Litlington's missal produced at Westminster in 1383 or 1384.[1] The illuminating prices varied: in 1374 the cathedral church of Norwich paid £22 9s 0d for illuminating a gradual and consuetudinary, but in 1393 Richard de Stynton of York was paid two pounds for illuminating two graduals. Suffice to say that large family psalters and religious works, such as were likely to survive, could be expensively produced.

Many prestigious volumes, especially made for their noble owners, are extant and can be easily traced. We know of the whereabouts of some of Duke Humphrey's books and, as Table H shows, lesser figures among the aristocracy have also left some rich items.[2] It is easy to pick out the popularity of the psalters and books of hours as presentation gifts which were finely bound and illuminated and therefore more likely to survive. Some secular works also survive: the Roman de la Rose of Sir Richard Stury is particularly interesting as it was given by him to Thomas Woodstock before 1397.[3] In the fifteenth century there were several romances which have survived in fine volumes - the Romance of Thebes, belonging to William de la Pole, duke of Suffolk (c.1430),[4] the Troy Book of William, first earl of Pembroke (c.1460),[5] and the Romance of Thebes belonging to Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland.[6]

---

1. H.E. Bell, 'The price of books in medieval England', The Library, xvii (1936-7), 312-32.
2. For Duke Humphrey's books see below, p.205. For further discussion of surviving books see Rosenthal, 'Aristocratic cultural patronage', 530-1.
3. Catalogue of Romances, i, p.874.
4. Brit.Lib. MS. Arundel 119. Catalogue of Romances, i, p.87.
5. Brit.Lib. Royal MS. 18 D ii. Catalogue of Romances, i, p.81.
6. Catalogue of Romances, i, p.90.

TABLE H

SOME SURVIVING MANUSCRIPTS OF NOBLE PROVENANCE

| Owner | Date | Title and present location |
|---|---|---|
| Brian FitzAlan | late 13th cent. | Perlesvaus (Bodleian Library, MS. Hatton 82) |
| Hawise Tybotot | c.1277 | Missal (Pierpont Morgan Library) |
| Edmund Almaine, earl of Cornwall | c.1300 | Petrus Comestor's Historia Scolastica (Brit.Lib. Royal MS. 3Dvi) |
| Sir Richard Grey | 1300-1308 | Grey-Fitzpayn Hours (Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum MS. 242) |
| Sir William Bardolf | c.1310-20 | Bardolf-Vaux Psalter (Lambeth Palace Library, MS. 233) |
| Sir William Howard | 1308 | Psalter (Brit.Lib., Arundel MS. 83) |
| Sir Robert Welles | c.1315 | Apocalypse (Brit.Lib., Royal MS. 15.D.II) |
| Lady Hawise de Boys | c.1328 | Book of Hours (Pierpont Morgan Library) |
| Robert, baron de Lisle | 1339 | Psalter (Brit.Lib., Arundel MS. 83) |
| Sir Geoffrey Luttrell | 1340 | Psalter (Brit.Lib., Add.MS. 42130) |
| Elizabeth, countess of Salisbury | c.1356 | Bible Historiale (Brit.Lib., Royal MS. 19 Dii) |
| Julian de Leybourn | 1367 | Apocalypse (Corpus Christi College, Cambridge) |
| John of Gaunt | c.1370 | Psalter (private library of Mr T.H. Riches, Shenley, Herts.) |
| Humphrey de Bohun | 1361-73 | Bridlington prophecies (Brit.Lib., Royal MS. 8Cxvii) |
| | c.1370 | Bohun Psalter (Exeter College, Oxford, MS. 47) |
| | | Psalter (Vienna National Library, MS. 1826) |
| Mary de Bohun | c.1370-80 | Hours (Copenhagen Royal Library, Thott 547) |
| | | Psalter (Bodleian, MS. Auct. D.4.4) |
| | | Launcelot du Lac (Brit.Lib., Royal MS. 20 Div) |
| | | Psalter (Brit.Lib., MS. Egerton 3277) |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Eleanor de Bohun | c.1385 | Psalter (Edinburgh, National Library, Adv. MS. 18.6.5) |
| Thomas of Woodstock | late 14th cent. | Roman de la Rose (Brit.Lib., Royal MS. 19B xiii) |
| | | English bible (Brit.Lib., MSS. Egerton 617, 618) |
| | | Alexander (Bodleian, MS. Bodley 264) |
| Richard Beauchamp, earl of Warwick | early 15th cent. | Polycronicon in English (Brit. Lib., Add.MS. 24194) |
| Thomas, lord Berkeley | early 15th cent. | Vegetius (Brit.Lib., Royal MS. 18A xii) |
| | | De Regimine Principum (Bodleian, MS. Digby 233) |
| John, lord Lovel | 1408 | Lectionary (Brit.Lib., Harleian MS. 7026) |
| William, lord Willoughby | 1409 | Nicholas Love's 'Mirror' (Glasgow Univ. Lib.) |
| John Beaufort, earl of Somerset | 1409 | Hours and Psalter (Brit.Lib., Royal MS. 2A xviii) |
| Lady Elizabeth Berkeley | 1410 | Boethius: Consolation of Philosophy (Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge) |
| Thomas Beaufort, earl of Dorset | c.1420 | Book of ordinances of the Admiralty (Brit.Lib., Cott. MS. Vespasian B xxii) |
| John, duke of Bedford | 1420-2 | Hours and Psalter (Brit.Lib., Add.MS. 42131) |
| | 1423 | Hours (Brit.Lib., Add.MS. 18850) |
| | | Breviary (Paris, Bib.Nat., Latin 17294) |
| | c.1435 | Le Pèlerinage de l'Ame (Bodleian, MS. Douce 305) |
| Thomas de Montacute, earl of Salisbury | 1426 | Pilgrimage of the Life of Man (Brit.Lib., Cotton MS. Vitellius C xiii) |
| William de la Pole | 1430 | Romance of Thebes (Brit.Lib., MS. Arundel 119) |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Henry Beauchamp, duke of Warwick | 1430-40 | Book of Hours and Psalter (Dyson Perrins Collection, MS. 18) |
| Richard, duke of York | 1445 | Claudianus 'De Consulatu Stiliconis', in English (Brit. Lib., Add.MS. 11814) |
| Walter, lord Hungerford | before 1449 | Miracles of the Virgin (Brit. Lib., Royal MS. 20 B xiv) |
| William, earl of Pembroke | c.1460 | Troy Book (Brit.Lib., Royal MS. 18 D ii) |
| Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland | c.1460 | Romance of Thebes (Brit.Lib., Royal MS. 18 D ii) |
| | | Prophecies of Merlin (Brit. Lib., Cotton MS. Vespasian E vii) |
| Edward, baron Grey | c.1465 | Mirror of the Life of Christ (Edinburgh, National Library, Adv. 18.1.7) |
| Margaret, countess of Shrewsbury | c.1468 | Guy of Warwick (Brit.Lib., Harleian MS. 7333) |
| Richard and Elizabeth Fitzwilliam | c.1470 | Missal (Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge) |
| John Tiptoft, earl of Worcester | c.1470 | St Patrick's Purgatory (Brit. Lib., Harleian MS. 103) |

(b) Family heirlooms

Another indication of the importance of books is the extent to which they were handed down within families - in other words were treated as family heirlooms.[1] The instances are difficult to trace with any certainty but it seems likely that the book of Launcelot to be found in William de Beauchamp's collection in 1268 was handed down to Guy and later passed on to the abbey at Bordesley in 1305.

In 1347, Sir John de Warenne, earl of Surrey, bequeathed to his son William de Warenne 'ma bible que j'ai fait faire en Fraunceys'.[2] By 1375, Richard, his nephew had a bible 'en deux volumes...en francais', which he bequeathed to his heirs.[3] In 1394 Richard's son, Richard Fitzalan, had a bible in two volumes[4] which passed to his son, also Richard, and was in his possession in 1401.[5] If the information is correct it would appear that this bible can be traced through at least three generations.

It is also likely, to take another late fourteenth-century example, that the so-called Bohun Psalter, at Exeter College, which was executed for Humphrey de Bohun in 1370 was the 'psauter bien et richement enlumines' which Humphrey's daughter Eleanor, duchess of Gloucester, bequeathed to her son Humphrey as an heirloom in 1399.[6]

Finally, it is possible to see connections between the 'psalterium de gallico' which Robert de Roos, a knight, gave to Eleanor his daughter in 1392,[7] and the psalter which Eleanor in turn left to her nephew Robert Roos in 1438.[8]

---

1. Rosenthal discusses this point in 'Aristocratic cultural patronage', 540-1.
2. Test.Ebor., i, p.43.
3. Lambeth Palace Library, Reg. Sudbury, f.93v.
4. Test.Vet., i, p.133.
5. Lambeth Palace Library, Reg. Arundel, i, f.186r.
6. Lambeth Palace Library, Reg. Arundel, i, f.163.
7. Test.Ebor., i, p.179.
8. Test.Ebor., ii, p.65.

It is clear that, with the exception of the Launcelot, these 'heirlooms' were all religious works, likely to be finely bound, illuminated and hence prized. These particular examples do not give us much indication of how noblemen regarded their books in general.

There is literary and historical evidence to suggest, however, that the possession of books, reading, or at least listening to a chaplain while he read, were of some importance to noble families. The Laud Troy Book makes it plain that romances were often sung at 'grete festes' (l.24). The first ten lines of the Wars of Alexander give the impression that the usual setting for reading romances was after dinner when all noblemen wanted to hear a story. At the coronation feast with which Havelok ends, one of the diversions listed is 'Romanz-reding on the Bok', and here it is clear enough that the poet mentions it as an example of 'high-life' with which to impress an unsophisticated audience. An even clearer picture is given in Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde when Pandarus enters Criseyde's house:

> 'And found two other ladys sete and she
> Withe a paved parlour and they thee
> Herden a mayden reden hem the geste
> Of the siege of Thebes, while hem leste'.
>
> Troilus, ii, 80-4.

Occasionally there are individual nobles in the stories who occupied themselves reading romances. In Sir Tristrem, for instance, we are told that Ysonde, a great beauty, was also extremely wise and took delight in listening to music or reading a romance. In the romance of Eger and Grime, we are presented with the picture of a noble knight, Sir Eger, who rises from his sick bed and sits at his window reading romances for several days.

Here, almost certainly, literature mirrored life. Constance FitzGilbert owned a manuscript of a poem on the life of Henry I which she read in her room.[1] In the 1230s we hear of Hubert de Burgh who was deprived of his psalter, so that,

---

1. E. Auerbach, Literary Language and its Public in the Late Latin Antiquity and the Middle Ages (trans. R. Manheim, London, 1965).

it is recorded, he no longer had the pleasure of reading it.[1] Sir John Depeden of Healaugh was evidently a devout knight, for he mentions in his will of August 1402 a missal 'which I use every day in my chapel'.[2] In Spain, we hear of Peter IV of Aragon recommending knights to read romances at table or 'when unable to sleep'.[3] Perhaps the clearest example of the love of a nobleman for his books comes from Guy Beauchamp who, as we have noted, gave his library to an abbey in 1305. In the donation, he records that the books have consoled him and that he and his heirs are to retain borrowing rights. The books are not to be 'venduz, ne donez, prestez, ne engagez ne en nul autre manere estre aleynez'.[4]

## 5. Reading tastes

Although the evidence is scanty, it seems inescapable that some noblemen read their books. Is it possible to indicate any changes in reading tastes over the period? To do this, it seems necessary to examine over the whole period the libraries of those noblemen who owned a fair number of books: the libraries of Guy Beauchamp (1305), Nicholas de la Beche (c.1340), Sir Simon Burley (1388), Thomas of Woodstock (1397), Henry le Scrope (1415), Sir John Fastolf (1450), and of course Duke Humphrey of Gloucester.

### (a) Guy Beauchamp's books, 1305

In this library of forty-three books, all the works are described as 'romances' or works in French.[5] They divide, broadly speaking, into five groups: religious works, epic legends, courtly love romances, didactic works and historical works. The religious works form the greater part of the library, comprising nineteen books. The epic legends (nine) and courtly romances (seven)

---

1. Cal.Close Rolls, 1231-4, p.161.
2. Test.Ebor., i, p.295: 'quo utor cotidie in capella mea'.
3. J.R. Hale, J.R.L. Highfield and B. Smalley, Europe in the Later Middle Ages (London, 1965), p.126.
4. M. Blaess, 'Les livres de Guy de Beauchamp', 514.
5. On this point see M.T. Clanchy, From Memory to Written Record: England 1066-1307 (London, 1979), pp.60-1. For a further discussion of Guy Beauchamp's books see cap.VII, pp.253-8.

form the next largest group of sixteen and there are five didactic works and three historical books.

The epic legends are varied in character but the courtly romances are not very well represented in the list. In particular, there is very little of the Arthurian cycle besides the Roman de Joseph d'Arimathie - no Merlin, for example, and only the first 'livre' of Launcelot. There is no Quest of the Holy Grail although Troy legends and a romance of Alexander complete the list.

The didactic works include a courtesy book, an Aprise des Enfants and a Tresor of Brunetto Latini, according to M. Blaess one of the first instances of this book in England. The three history works are the Brut, the Romance des Mareschais, presumably l'Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal,[1] and the Romance of William de Longespée.

(b) The De la Beche Inventory, c.1340[2]

The inventory is written in an early to mid fourteenth-century hand, and since the De la Beche arms occur frequently, the possessions were clearly the property of a wealthy member of this family. Sir Nicholas de la Beche certainly seems the most likely person and his brief disgrace and imprisonment in 1340 appear the obvious occasion on which the inventory was made.[3] He was a substantial landowner and trusted by Edward III, holding several offices, including Governor of the Tower.[4] It is even stated that 'he superintended the education of Edward the Black Prince and went to Castile to arrange for the marriage of Joan, the king's daughter'.[5]

---

1. See cap.III, p.96.
2. P.R.O., E 154/1/17. I am indebted to Mr Anthony Gross for drawing my attention to the existence of this manuscript and to Dr W.J. Blair for his assistance with its transcription and identification.
3. N. Fryde, 'Edward III's removal of his ministers and judges 1340-1', Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, xlviii (1975), 149-61; idem 'A medieval robber baron: Sir John Moleyns', Medieval Legal Records Edited in Memory of C.A.F. Meekings (Oxford, 1978).
4. W. Hewett, The History and Antiquities of the Hundred of Compton (Reading, 1844), pp.88-92 and V.C.H. Berks, iv (London, 1924), pp.4-5.
5. V.C.H. Berks, iv, pp.4-5 (although the source cited, J. Nichols, Bibliotheca Topographica Britannia, iv, only gives evidence for the second part of this statement).

The inventory gives a remarkably complete picture of a wealthy and cultured fourteenth-century gentleman. Particularly interesting from our point of view are the books listed in the inventory.

The following is a transcript of the sections dealing with the books:

> Item j messal covert de noir. Item j graiel covert de la peel dun sele. Item j aunciene portehors. Item j antifoner veil. Item j troper... Item j portehors covert de rouge. Item j primer covert de noir ove rouge tissux. Item j psalter covert de lynge tielle....
>
> Un livre de romance covert de noir ove rouge tissux. Item j livre de romanq q[i] comence 'Q[e] dieux ad done science'. Item j romance q[i] comence 'Apres ceo q[e] Alisaundre'. Item j romance q[i] comence 'Innocent lapostoil'. Item j autre q[i] comence 'Seigneurs seittz en pes'. Item j autre q[i] comence 'Amourci est bele comencement'. Item j livre dart eschesse. Item j livre q[i] comence 'A son travaillant seigneur'. Item j autre q[i] comence 'Si poer ho[min]e savoir coment'. Item j autre q[i] comence 'De Rome tient Urban la mestrie'. Item j autre q[i] comence 'Les aunciennes hestories dient'. Item j primer covert de purpre velvet'.

There were twenty books, including eight chapel books, in Sir Nicholas de la Beche's library. There were the usual primers, psalters and missals, presumably in Latin.[1] But he also possessed other works all of which are Anglo-Norman or Anglo-Norman copies of books.[2] They are all unbound and therefore may be incomplete. There is evidently at least one courtly romance of Alexander, although this is almost certainly incomplete as no text would begin 'Apres ceo qe Alisaundre'.[3] Many of the books appear to be religious - 'Amourci est bele comencement' could be either a secular romance or a religious work. There seem to be two histories or lives of the Popes, the lives of Innocent and of Urban - otherwise unknown - and also a general historical work 'Les aunciennes hestories dient'. One of the books is an instructive book on chess 'un livre d'art de schesse' and certainly several treatises on chess in Anglo-Norman existed.[4]

---

1. Guy Beauchamp certainly also had chapel books, as he left them to his wife Alice. Test.Vet., i, pp.53-4.
2. I am very grateful to Professor M.D. Legge for her help in identifying some of the works listed.
3. Line 636 of the Anglo-Norman Alexander, ed. B. Foster (Anglo-Norman Text Society, 1976) begins 'A ceo qe Alisaundre'.
4. J. Vising, Anglo-Norman Language and Literature (Oxford, 1923), p.73.

Nicholas de la Beche's library, therefore, though smaller than Beauchamp's, had considerable variety - there were books in Latin as well as in Anglo-Norman and religious works predominate in the mid-fourteenth century as they did in 1305.

(c) Sir Simon Burley's library, 1388

The striking point about the list of Sir Simon Burley's books in 1388 is the number of works in French. Courtly romances were evidently very popular - the romance of William Bastard, the romance of King Arthur, the prophecies of Merlin, and romances described as 'de Maugis' and 'de Meiser'. There were also religious works such as a French bible, two books of the Ten Commandments, and a book beginning 'miserere mei deus', and histories are represented by a Brut chronicle and a book of 'lives'. There were books of philosophy and instruction such as Sydrak, a copy of the De Regimine of Aegidius Romanus, a book of philosophy and a travel book. In addition there was a book in English called 'de englys del Forster et del sengler', which some think may be an unknown middle English romance, and one in Latin 'covere de noir'.

There are fewer religious works in this list of twenty-one books than in the previous two book lists - admittedly, Burley's chapel books and devotional works may be listed elsewhere. A quarter of the books mentioned are romances and the interesting thing is the appearance in the list of an English work, as well as a Latin one, which may well be a middle English romance.

(d) Thomas of Woodstock's books, 1397

The inventory of goods seized from Thomas of Woodstock's castle at Pleshey, Essex, in 1397 is of extreme interest.[1] The list includes a large library with chapel books and eighty-four volumes of 'livres de diverses rymaunces et Estories', besides 'divers old French quires without title' and 'divers pamphlets and rolls in a coffer'.

---

1. Dillon, 'Inventory of ... Thomas, duke of Gloucester', 298-303.

The list of books for the chapel includes bibles, massbooks, portiforia, antiphoners, graduals, legends and psalters, together with two pontificals, martiloge and a manual. Some of these were clearly 'prestige' books as they are described as 'bien escripts' or 'bien esluminez'. Two of the psalters are described as 'del escriptur de Fraunce'.

There were only three works in English in the library - all religious: a bible in two large volumes bound in red leather, a book of the gospels similarly bound and a new book of the gospels glossed in English.

The majority of the books were written in French or Latin. There are a number of historical and other romances in French, including the Romance of the Rose, Hector of Troy, Merlin, Bevis of Hampton, Tancred, the Romance of Launcelot and of Alexander, Godfrey of Boulogne and the Battle of Troy. There were also French books which treated of the Miracle of Our Lady, the Passion of divers Saints and the life of St Thomas of Canterbury.

There were a number of Latin works, mainly religious in nature, such as the chronicle of the Popes, Rationale Divinorum, Pastoralis Gregorii, Prologus Sancti Ysodori. There were also Latin law books - two large books of civil law, two books of decretals - and a Latin copy of Aegidius's De Regimine. The duke also had the popular work by Bartholomaeus Anglicus, De proprietatibus rerum.

Once again this is a varied library which contained a particularly wide selection of the French romances. It is the first time that law books have featured in a collection. The presence of the three English books could also be said to indicate gradual infiltration of English works into a nobleman's library.

(e) Henry le Scrope's library, 1415

The will refers to thirty-seven books and books of the chapel.[1] As usual there are several missals, portiforia, and psalters. Other religious works

---

1. Kingsford, 'Two forfeitures in the year of Agincourt', 71-100.

figure prominently in the list and these are in Latin, French and also English. The illuminated apocalypse is in Latin and French. Scrope owned several books of homilies in Latin - of St George, St Remy, and of Bede - and also a book of the Revelations of St Bridget. There were the French religious books as well: the lives of the Saints, and a French book 'incipit Car tout ori soli que home fait de bouche'. The English works include the Prick of Conscience and a primer with matins of the Virgin.

The striking fact about the list of Henry le Scrope's books is that it includes works only of a religious nature. Whether this was a reflection of the concentration on devotional and religious literature of the time we cannot be sure, but Henry le Scrope's will provides a marked contrast with the varied nature of Thomas of Woodstock's library.

(f) The library of Sir John Fastolf, 1450[1]

Fastolf's library once more presents us with a wide variety of books - romances, chapel books and religious and didactic works, mainly in French. There was a romance of King Arthur and a Romance de la Rose. Sir John Fastolf appears to have been fond of chronicles and histories, as he possessed: a book of Julius Caesar, a chronicle of Titus Livius, Cronicles d'Angleterre, Liber de Cronycles de Grant Bretagne in ryme, the Chronicle of France, Brute in ryme. This is by far the largest number of chronicles we have encountered in a nobleman's booklist and the classical authors suggest the 'humanist' interests of Fastolf. Religious works were represented by a copy of the Meditations of St Bernard, but it is noticeable that there are far fewer books of this sort than there had been in previous noble libraries. Fastolf also possessed a copy of the work by Piero Crescentiis on husbandry, dating from the later part of the thirteenth century, very popular and translated subsequently into several languages. The library included several books of instruction and chivalry, such as the French version of Bartholomaeus Anglicus, the book of Vices and Virtues, a French book of Etiquette and a copy of Vegetius.

---

1. Bennett, The Pastons and their England, p.111.

(g) The books of Humphrey, duke of Gloucester

The literary interests and library of Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, are perhaps almost too well-known to be discussed here; but a survey of the reading tastes of the nobility up to 1450 would scarcely be complete without reference to this great fifteenth-century bibliophile. It is almost certain that Duke Humphrey's library extended to over five hundred volumes. He made his first gift of 129 books to the University of Oxford in November 1439[1] and followed this by further gifts of sixteen works in 1442 and 134 in 1444. The duke had intended to leave the rest of his books to Oxford on his death, but his intentions were thwarted: his property was seized and granted to King's College, Cambridge.[2]

From his surviving books[3] we can gain a good idea of his literary tastes and see that he was indeed a stimulus for an active interest in humanistic studies in England. His books included a great number of classical texts or translations of classical texts. For instance, the Letters of the Younger Pliny was written in humanistic script in c.1440 by Piercandido Decembrio and presumably sent over from Italy.[4] Piercandido also prepared for him a translation of Plato's Republic[5] in 1438 and in 1440 he was presented with an early fifteenth-century copy of Cicero's Letters by the bishop of Bayeux.[6] He also had translations of Ptolemy's Cosmography, which had been prepared for him in Milan,[7] and further copies of Timaeus, Meno, and works of Aristotle's translated by Bruni. The extent of these classical texts makes Duke Humphrey's library exceptional in relation to any of the libraries mentioned above.

---

1. Epistolae Academicae Oxon., ed. H. Anstey, i (Oxford Hist. Soc., xxxv, 1898), no.141, pp.177-83.
2. R. Hunt and A.C. de la Mare, Duke Humfrey and English Humanism in the Fifteenth Century: Catalogue of an Exhibition held in the Bodleian Library (Oxford, 1970), p.1.
3. Vickers, Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, pp.426-38.
4. Catalogue no.12.
5. Catalogue no.10.
6. Catalogue no.3.
7. Catalogue no.13B, pp.7-8.

There were, of course, also versions of non-classical texts: he possessed works by Boccaccio, Petrarch and Dante. Religious works were not entirely neglected and he possessed translations of the works of St Athanasius and a commentary on the Book of Genesis. Duke Humphrey's interest in contemporary as well as classical history is perhaps the second most obvious factor revealed in his library. Tito Livio Frulovisi of Ferrara probably spent most of the time that he was in England composing his Life of Henry V at the duke's request.[1] The historical works also included Matthew Paris's Historia Anglorum[2] and a chronicle of the kings of France up until the death of St Louis in 1270.[3] Treatises on government were also popular: there is an Oxford manuscript of the De Regimine of Aegidius Romanus[4] and in the Cambridge University library is a French translation of the work owned by the duke.

It can be suggested that, from the evidence of the surviving manuscripts, although theological and religious works featured in Duke Humphrey's library, they formed a small proportion in relation to the works of history, both classical and contemporary, and translations of the classics. The humanist influence is very strong.

It is difficult to draw many conclusions about the changes in reading tastes of the nobility because of the disproportionate survival of sources from the second half of the period. But the large number of books belonging to these seven nobles in a period spanning 1305 to 1450, together with the other evidence of ownership, gives us some indications.

In general there was a great variety of works in all noble libraries ranging from bibles and service books to popular romances and didactic works

---

1. Catalogue nos.4, 5.
2. Brit.Lib., Royal MS. 14C vii.
3. Brit.Lib., Royal MS. 15G vi.
4. Bodleian Library, MS. Hatton 15.

(the only exception appears to be Henry le Scrope's collection which was entirely religious in character).

There was a proliferation in the number of service books owned in the late fourteenth century, which would appear to reflect the increasing importance of personal religion and the private chapel and, of course, associated developments such as the foundations of chantries. Religious works contained in noble libraries reflect, on the one hand, the conservatism of the English baronage: saints' lives continued to be popular throughout the period and were some of the first works to go in to print, thus emphasising their popularity among a fifteenth-century audience. On the other hand, several nobles had religious works associated with the mystical writers (Rolle's Fire of Love) and the Lollards (Pore Caitiff, the English Bible, and the book of tribulation), which suggest less conservative and more adventurous religious sensibilities.

It is clear that the romances were overwhelmingly popular at all times and the most common form of secular literature to be found in a noble household. The transition from French to English marked only a change in language and not a change in taste, but there were changes in the form of the romance. The earlier romance appeared in verse; those in prose generally late, such as the prose Alexander (1430-40) and King Ponthus. There were changes of subject matter too: most of the romances, and certainly the most popular, written in English before 1300 were concerned with English subjects (such as King Horn and Havelok the Dane) and only after 1300 do we find the stories of the Charlemagne and Arthurian cycles or of classical legend being adapted for a public now enjoying romances in English rather than in French. The only exceptions were Floris and Blaunchflour of the first half of the thirteenth century and Arthur and Merlin and King Alisaunder which may have been written shortly before 1300. The later romances reflect social mores and ideals similar to those of the earlier ones and there is no marked change in emphasis.

A further characteristic of the noble libraries of the period is the fair popularity of historical works, particularly with noble men, while law books

and books on husbandry and estate management were relatively uncommon. It is likely that the nobility, like the ecclesiastical landlords, owned such works and it seems most probable that the apparent gap came because they were considered too mundane to be recorded in inventories or noble wills.

Although the popularity of romances and saints' lives was constant throughout, there were changes in the fifteenth century - notably in the interest in classical history and translations of Aristotelian texts and works of other classical writers, as witnessed in the library of John Fastolf and more particularly that of Duke Humphrey. On the whole, however, the impact of the classical revival (as reflected in noble reading tastes) by c.1450 was extremely limited. Even allowing for the growth of the vernacular, the world of literary taste was still surely an Anglo-French one (as it had been since the twelfth century), with similar reading interests on both sides of the Channel, and not an Italianate/humanist one.

## 6. The royal library

It is extremely likely that the tastes of the nobility were mirrored in the royal library. One of the richest sources for the cultural history of France and Burgundy in the middle ages is supplied by the survival of a number of detailed inventories of royal libraries.[1] In England, however, the evidence is extremely scanty; Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, was probably the only son of an English king whose library was comparable with those of the great French bibliophiles. The earliest inventory of a royal library to have come down to us, for instance, is dated 1534-5 and what little we can learn about the literary tastes of medieval English kings has to be gathered from a few scattered references in royal accounts to the purchasing or re-covering of books.[2]

---

1. J.W. Thompson, The Medieval Library (Chicago, 1939), pp.417-24.

2. The commissioning of illuminated manuscripts by English kings and queens is not discussed here. It has been examined in detail by J.J.G. Alexander, 'Painting and manuscript illumination for royal patrons in the later middle ages', in English Court Culture in the Later Middle Ages, pp.141-62.

To use the word 'library' is in a sense misleading: it implies a building or at least a room given over to books. But kings had a number of residences and much of their time was spent in travelling from one to another; the books that constituted a king's library might be scattered among several places or might follow him about as part of his baggage; Edward IV's Liber Niger mentions a 'carte' in which among other things 'are caryed suche boks as pleseth the kinge to studye in'.[1] The first king known to have possessed a formal library, Henry VII, was also apparently the first to have employed a full-time librarian, Quentin Poelet.[2]

The king's books were certainly less well regulated for a longer period than those of either an average Benedictine house or of the friars. Neither Henry I nor Henry II can be shown to have owned and used books - probably once again a failing of the sources, as Henry I was acknowledged as 'literatus' and Henry II was perhaps the most educated king of his time. John is the first king who can be shown to have possessed and used books. We learn of John's books through an entry in the Pipe Rolls in 1203 recording the cost of supplying 'chests and carts to take the king's books overseas',[3] which suggests that John had a library as large as that of any monastic house. About the contents of this library and where it was kept, there is only meagre information. In 1205 the king had a romance of the history of England sent him at Windsor by some of his stewards.[4] In 1208 'our book called Plinius' was sent him from Reading Abbey where it had been held for safe keeping.[5] A few days earlier, the king acknowledged the receipt from the abbey of Reading of six volumes of the bible, including all the Old Testament, Hugh of St Victor on the sacraments, the Sentences of Peter the Lombard, Augustine's City of God, and the book 'Ad Marum

---

1. A.R. Myers, The Household of Edward IV (Manchester, 1959), p.118.
2. Green, Poets and Princepleasers: Literature and the English Court in the Late Middle Ages, p.96.
3. Pipe Roll 5 John (Pipe Roll Society, new ser., xvi, 1938), p.139.
4. Rot.Lit.Claus, i, p.29.
5. Ibid., p.108.

of Candidus Arianus'. The last reference is particularly interesting as most educated laymen of the time would read histories and romances, but King John is the first English king known to have been interested in the theological works of the modern schoolmen of the twelfth century.[1]

In contrast and perhaps surprisingly the only books possessed by Henry III were liturgical texts and a few romances. Henry had missals, breviaries, graduals and psalters made for his and his queen's numerous chapels up and down England.[2] Queen Eleanor also used in 1250 a great book in French in which 'are contained the deeds of Antioch of the kings'[3] which was kept by the Knight's Templar probably as part of the royal wardrobe. It may be that this volume was the same as Henry's great book of romance which was decorated with clasps and nails of silver in 1237.[4] It is difficult to see these books as anything other than treasured objects worthy to be kept by the Templars. Henry III was clearly a patron of artists and craftsmen and although we have no evidence that he was a bibliophile, an interest in literary affairs and books would seem to fit in with those other characteristics: at any rate there is once again a lack of evidence to form a conclusion on this point.

There is no evidence that his son, Edward I, collected together a formal library. On the other hand, the evidence from chance references suggests that he had quite an extensive collection of different types of books. He possessed, for instance, a prose Tristan or Palamede[5] and it appears that a special translation of Vegetius's De Re Militari was presented to him sometime prior to his

---

1. Ibid.; see also F.M. Powicke, Stephen Langton (Oxford, 1928), p.99.
2. Cal.Lib. Rolls, 1240-5, p.29 (Hereford); Cal.Lib. Rolls, 1251-60, p.11 (Nottingham); Cal.Lib. Rolls, 1226-40, p.419 (Winchester); Cal.Close Rolls, 1247-51, p.162 (Windsor).
3. Cal.Close Rolls, 1247-51, p.283.
4. Cal.Lib. Rolls, 1226-40, p.288.
5. R. Loomis, 'Edward I, Arthurian enthusiast', Speculum, xxviii (1953), 115. See also E.G. Gardner, The Arthurian Legend in Italian Literature (London and New York, 1930), pp.46f.

accession.[1] In the wardrobe and household accounts there are a few references to books: a bible was bought for William of Hothum in 1276[2] and a portable breviary for the queen's chapel in 1278.[3] Chapel books, saints' lives and bestiaries may be found among the king's possessions in 1307.[4] There were also a few books to be found in Bishop Stapledon's survey of documents (including those in Edward I's reign) in 1320.[5]

In one chest, a few texts were deposited along with some seals: a book called De Regimine Principum bound in red leather, a little book of the Rules of the Knights Templar, a quire of the life of St Patrick, another quire in an unknown language (Welsh) and a book of the chronicles of Roderick, archbishop of Toledo. This group certainly has the air of miscellaneous gifts and acquisitions rather than of a planned library or of a personal collection.

However, some steps were taken to equip Edward I's children with books. A psalter was commissioned for Alfonso (presumably to mark the occasion of his planned marriage) in 1284, the year of his death.[6] In 1298-9 his brother Edward was given a gift of a book of romance in French which belonged to Eleanor of Provence.[7] The following year, before his sixteenth birthday, a primer was bought for him from William the Bookbinder of London at a cost of £2.[8] In 1301, 32s 4d was paid for a 'de gestis regum Anglie' for him, possibly a copy

---

1. L. Thorpe, 'Mastre Richard; a thirteenth-century translation of the De Re Militari of Vegetius', Scriptorium, vi (1952), 39-50.
2. P.R.O., E 101/350/24. See also J.C. Russell, Dictionary of Writers of Thirteenth Century England (London, 1936), pp.191-2.
3. Brit.Lib., Add.MS. 36762, m.3.
4. P.R.O., E 101/371/17; P.R.O., E 101/370/3.
5. Antient Kalendars and Inventories of the Treasury of the Exchequer, ed. F. Palgrave, i (London, 1836), p.106.
6. A.G. Watson, Catalogue of Dated and Datable Manuscripts c.700-1600 in the Department of Manuscripts, The British Library (British Library, 1979), I, no.296.
7. Brit.Lib., Add.MS. 24509, f.61.
8. Liber Quotidianus ... 28 Ed.I, ed. J. Topham (London, 1787), p.55.

of Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia Regum Brittanie.[1] Finally, in 1302, William the Bookbinder received another order, this time for a 'certain book concerning the life of the blessed Edward in French'.[2]

Did he read these books? It is impossible to say, though it is worth mentioning that Edward did apparently borrow (and he failed to return) copies of the Miracles of St Thomas and the Life of St Thomas and St Anselm from the library of Christ Church, Canterbury.[3]

Unlike her husband, Isabella does appear to have cultivated a real interest in books (possibly encouraged by her association in Paris with Richard de Bury) and to have a small collection of her own. In 1327 John of Fleet handed to Isabella seven great books,[4] all in French, one illuminated, and for the most part romances or romantic histories. Isabella had the Roman du Renard, the story of Percival and a book containing stories of hermits and other matters. Except for the Percival, none of the titles correspond with any of the eight books of romance which were found in Isabella's possession at the time of her death. Four of these, including a King Arthur, were delivered to Isabella's daughter Joan, queen of Scotland. The other four, together with some liturgical books, were handed over to the king at Westminster and some of these are recognisable among French books later found in the possession of Richard II.[5]

Isabella's practice of keeping certain volumes - a bible in French, an Apocalypse in French and a psalter - in a special coffer in her closet (perhaps indicating their particular importance to her) was followed by her son Edward III. In 1335 the royal exchequer bought a book of romance for his use for one hundred marks and it was particularly noted that the volume lay in the king's own chamber. His taste in books was once again revealed in 1365, when he acquired a bible and a breviary, a Juvenal and three books of romances.[6]

---

1. Brit.Lib., Add.MS. 7966 A, f.31r.
2. P.R.O., E 101/363/18, f.12.
3. M.R. James, The Ancient Libraries of Canterbury and Dover (Cambridge, 1903), pp.xlv-vi, 148.
4. H. Johnstone, 'Isabella the she-wolf of France', History, xxi (1936), 215.
5. E. Rickert, 'King Richard II's books', The Library, xiii (1932), 144-7.
6. F. Devon, Issues of the Exchequer (London, 1837), pp.144, 187.

Until recently it was argued that Edward III's interest in books was almost certainly outshone by that of his grandson Richard II. There is a good deal of evidence to support this view. Froissart indicated the king's literacy in 1395 when he gave Richard a richly bound and illuminated manuscript. The king, Froissart says, 'dipped into the book in several places and read for he spoke and read French very well'.[1] Richard's library was extensive. In 1380, when he was thirteen, a bible in French, the Romance of the Rose and romances of Percival and Gawain in one volume were purchased for him at a cost of £28.[2] Many of his books are mentioned in a Memoranda Roll list compiled in 1384-5[3] and four volumes from Richard's collection are still extant.[4] The survival of the Libellus Geomancie containing three Latin tracts - on the duties of kings, on dreams and on astrology and divination - specially commissioned in 1391 'for the solace of king Richard', makes it highly likely that Richard II was also able to read Latin.[5] Richard certainly owned these books but most volumes were inherited and some may have been pawned in 1384-5 to raise cash for chamber expenses.[6] But even if Richard was not the assiduous book collector of tradition, there can be no doubt that a good deal of literature was circulating around his court and that his own collection was representative of other aristocratic libraries.

The evidence for royal interest in books becomes more plentiful with the rise to power of the Lancastrian house in 1399. Henry IV's love of reading is shown by the study built for him at Eltham Palace, soon after his accession, complete with two desks 'to keep the king's books in', and when he visited Bardney Abbey in 1406 we hear that he spent an afternoon in the monk's library,

---

1. Froissart Chroniques, ed. K. de Lettenhove (1867-77), xv, 167.
2. F. Devon, op.cit., p.213.
3. E. Rickert, loc.cit.
4. G. Mathew, The Court of Richard II (London, 1968), pp.40-1.
5. Bodleian Library, MS. Bodley 581. See Scattergood, 'Literary culture at the court of Richard II', pp.41-2.
6. R.F. Green, 'King Richard II's books revisited', The Library, xxxi (1976), 235-9; Scattergood has recently argued that Richard was not an enthusiastic collector of books, in English Court Culture, pp.32-4.

reading there from several books.[1] His eldest son showed an even greater concern for books: twelve books on hunting were copied for his use in 1421.[2] At his death in 1422, the king had failed to return two chronicles of the crusades which he had borrowed from his aunt, the countess of Westmoreland, and a complete set of the works of Gregory the Great which had belonged to Archbishop Arundel.[3] A list of 110 volumes in Henry's possession at his death has been preserved. This includes a great deal of law, patristic works, some histories and some logic.[4]

His younger brothers also shared his love of books; John of Bedford commissioned several illuminated works of devotion and service books[5] and he acquired the entire royal library of the Valois - consisting of some 843 volumes.[6] The well-known activities of Humphrey, duke of Gloucester as a book collector have already been discussed above.[7]

According to Professor Ross (and despite the efforts of Henry VI to enrich the library of the newly-founded All Souls in Oxford)[8] it was Edward IV who was 'the first English sovereign to accumulate a substantial and permanent royal library',[9] his interest being stimulated by his exile in Bruges. Soon after he returned to England he commissioned a series of illuminated manuscripts from

---

1. Johannis Lelandi Collectanea, ed. T. Hearne (London, 1715), vi, 300-1; H.M. Colvin, ed. The History of the King's Works (London, 1963), ii, pp.935-6.
2. See Master of Game, ed. W.A. and F. Baillie-Grohman (London, 1904).
3. T. Rymer, Foedera, x, 317.
4. K.B. McFarlane, Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights, Appendix C, pp.234-8.
5. E.F. Bosanquet, 'The personal prayerbook of John of Lancaster, Duke of Bedford', The Library, xiii (1932-3), 148-54.
6. E. Carleton Williams, My Lord of Bedford (London, 1963), pp.249-52.
7. See above, p.205.
8. R. Weiss, 'Henry VI and the library of All Souls College', Eng.Hist.Rev., lvii (1942), 102-5.
9. C. Ross, Edward IV (London, 1974), p.264.

Flemish artists and scribes working mainly in Bruges. The royal collection at Richmond, which reflected an interest in histories and historical romance, rather than in contemporary Italian humanism, was large enough to be shown to the French ambassador soon after the death of Edward IV.[1]

To gain an accurate picture of book-ownership and literary tastes among the nobility in England in the middle ages is virtually impossible because of the nature of the sources and their scarcity before 1350. There is a consequent disproportionate emphasis on the second half of the period. Yet chance references to the interest and taste in books of noblemen and women, such as Constance FitzGilbert and Hubert de Burgh, and of a king, such as John, show that the literate layman was a thirteenth- and even a twelfth-century phenomenon, and not necessarily related to developments in the fourteenth century.

Admittedly, two-thirds of the noble wills examined did not mention books and, although this is not necessarily a reliable indication of the extent of the literacy of the aristocracy, it does suggest that one should not overestimate the literary interests of the nobility as a whole. There is, however, a great deal to be said on the other side. Many noblemen and women had varied collections, and some families evidently prized their books sufficiently to hand them down from generation to generation. Their collections, while open to the new trends in religious thought as expressed by, for example, the Lollards, generally reveal the religious conservatism of their owners, in the large numbers of saints' lives owned throughout the period. In taste and fashion the nobility also showed a conservative tendency, so that it is hardly surprising that, except in the libraries of Duke Humphrey and John Fastolf, there was very little evidence of the classical revival by c.1450. The royal books clearly mirrored those in the aristocratic collections and while the royal 'library' is not really an entity at the end of the period, by the fifteenth century, a collection had developed which was the forerunner of the more formalised library in the sixteenth century.

---

1. Ibid., pp.265-7.

# CHAPTER VI

## WRITING, AUTHORSHIP AND LITERARY PATRONAGE

In the middle ages, literatus probably had more than one meaning. Even today, literate may mean able to read or able to read and write. K.B. McFarlane has written:

> 'A governing class could at a pinch manage by being literate in the first of these senses; second-degree literacy, given the secretarial help its members could command, might well have been thought by them superogatory'.[1]

The interest of the nobility in reading and in book collecting has already been shown from a variety of sources. The ability of the aristocracy to write is more difficult to assess as references are scarce. On this subject and that of literary patronage (where the evidence is plentiful) it has to be admitted that most of the information comes from secondary sources. On the other hand, there has been no single study of the nobility as writers, authors and as literary patrons and these subjects may well be related to trends in education.

### 1. Writing

From the reign of Edward III we have the earliest evidence that the king could write in the famous Pater Sancte letter of 1330 addressed to Pope John XXII.[2] Edward's abilities are confirmed by a reference in a formulary (1352-62) to a letter from Edward III to Pope Innocent VI 'de notre propre main escrit'.[3] Richard II began a regular practice of attesting documents with his signature or sign manual instead of merely using a seal.[4] Henry IV[5] and Henry V were able to write both French and English and possibly even Latin. Do we have any evidence that the magnates could write?

---

1. K.B. McFarlane, The Nobility of Later Medieval England (Oxford, 1973), p.238.
2. On this subject, see V.H. Galbraith, 'The literacy of the English medieval kings', Proc.Brit.Acad., xxi (1935), 201-38.
3. Brit.Lib., Add.MS. 24062, f.154r.
4. P. Chaplais, English Royal Documents 1199-1461 (London, 1971), p.71.
5. J.L. Kirby, Henry IV of England (London, 1970), pp.161, 203, 223, 254.

We must assume that letters, memoranda and other documents were the work of professional scribes unless there is definite evidence to the contrary. There were occasions when nobles proved their ability to write - if only one word. Such a one was Charles of Salerno, who, in November 1288, immediately after his release by King Alfonso of Aragon, promised that Edward I should be repaid the money he had provided to secure Charles's freedom. Three documents were sealed with the impression of Charles's ring and the prince wrote with his own hand the word 'Credatis'.[1]

Sometimes lengthier pieces such as wills might be penned by a noble. The original has survived of Simon de Montfort's will, written by his eldest son Henry on 1 January 1259.[2] Other wills have survived in registered copies which were actually written by the testators themselves. William, duke of Suffolk, composed a short will on the eve of the Parliament that impeached him in January 1450.[3] Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland, wrote a long and complicated will in 1485.[4] McFarlane concluded that 'lesser men may have had greater professional competence or audacity' and he has listed five wills composed by members of the upper gentry between 1375 and 1453.[5] But it must be remembered that, in any case, copies of wills in episcopal registers are relatively scarce before the last quarter of the fourteenth century.

When a secretary was not to be trusted or was unavailable, force of circumstances might compel a magnate to write his own letters. When the earl of Kent confessed to treasonable correspondence in 1330, he implicated William of Dereham 'clerk of his letters', but also admitted that one letter had been written by the hand of his wife, the Countess Margaret.[6] In 1374, John, lord

---

1. Foedera I, ii, 694-7; F.M. Powicke, The Thirteenth Century (Oxford, 1962), p.283, n.1.
2. Facsimile facing p.278 of C. Bémont, Simon de Montfort (trans. E.F. Jacob, Oxford, 1930).
3. North Country Wills (Surtees Society, cxvi, 1908), pp.50-1.
4. Testamenta Eboracensia, iii (Surtees Society, 1865), pp.304-10.
5. See McFarlane, Nobility, p.240.
6. Adae Murimuth Continuatio Chronicarum, ed. E.M. Thompson (Rolls Series, 1889), p.255.

Bourchier, was captured in Brittany without his secretary. Needing to inform his wife and arrange his ransom, he wrote two letters home himself. They are preserved among a miscellaneous deposit of Bourchier papers at Longleat and show that he had no difficulty in expressing himself lucidly and in a good script.[1] In 1394 or 1395, Richard, earl of Arundel, in a letter which survives in a copy, asked his brother the Archbishop of York 'to take great care of a letter written by my hand which I send you by the bearer of these'.[2] In the crisis before the battle of Barnet in 1471 the earl of Warwick is known to have written in his own hand to Sir Henry Vernon of Haddon calling on his support, just as Sir Henry was about to desert him.[3]

If examples of noble handwriting (with the exception of signatures) are rare, it was because, in McFarlane's words 'like the busy men of today the busy men of the fourteenth century preferred to dictate'.[4] The example of Simon de Montfort's will shows that there were literate noblemen who could write as well as read well before the fourteenth century.

## 2. Noble authors

From the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries there survive for the first time a number of works from the pens of the lay nobility. The absence of similar works before that date is difficult to explain except in terms of the lack of surviving evidence.

The first and most remarkable literary achievement of all came with the Livre de Seyntz Medicines, a devotional treatise which Henry of Grosmont, duke of Lancaster, wrote between two of his many campaigns in France in 1354.[5] Not since Ealdorman Ethelweard's chronicle, written in the tenth century, had any comparable work been composed by a lay nobleman.

---

1. Longleat Muniments 396 and 400, cited in McFarlane, Nobility, pp.45, 241.
2. Anglo-Norman Letters and Petitions, ed. M.D. Legge (Anglo-Norman Text Society, no.3, 1941), pp.76-8.
3. K.B. McFarlane, 'The Wars of the Roses', Proc.Brit.Acad., 1 (1964), 111.
4. Nobility, p.241.
5. See cap.V, pp.164-5.

The Livre, possibly written as a task set him by his confessor,[1] is not remarkable on literary grounds, but it is remarkable in coming from a man in his position and in showing a lively imagination. The book is allegorical and the author, after examining his conscience, reveals to the Divine Physician and his assistant the Douce Dame, the wounds of his soul (pride, envy, wrath, covetousness, gluttony, lechery and sloth) and then suggests and prays for the remedies appropriate to each cause of infection. The chief source which Henry used was the folklore of the middle ages. He was conversant with the practical medical remedies used by the people rather than the knowledgeable treatises of the doctors of the time. In matters of belief and devotion it reveals that the didactic works and sermons of the period had left their imprint on him. But for the most part Henry relied on a richer and more personal source - his own varied experiences and his own observations. Towards the end of the book, Henry of Lancaster offers three excuses for its defects - that he was not qualified for such a work, that being English he had little knowledge of French and, most interesting of all, that he was a poor writer, having learnt late and by himself[2] (implying that most men in his position would have learnt early and with teachers).

A year or two later Sir Thomas Gray of Heaton, an English knight of Northumberland, wrote of how he took advantage of a spell of captivity at Edinburgh by reading a number of verse and prose chronicles written in Latin, French, and English, and began composing the Scalachronica, an ambitious chronicle in five books and perhaps the first historical work by an English layman since Saxon times.[3]

After these works in the mid-fourteenth century, there were others by the nobility towards the end of the century. It may be that the 'literary'

---

1. K. Fowler, The King's Lieutenant: Henry of Grosmont, First Duke of Lancaster (London, 1969), pp.193-6.
2. Ed. E.J. Arnould (Anglo-Norman Text Society, no.2, Oxford, 1940); Arnould, Etude sur le livre des saintes medicines du duc henri de Lancastre (Paris, 1948); J. Barnie, War in Medieval Society (London, 1974), p.62.
3. Barnie, op.cit., p.92; B. Smalley, English Friars and Antiquity in the Early XIVth Century (Oxford, 1960), p.13.

nature of the court of Richard II and the interest in royal and aristocratic patronage encouraged noblemen to write. The number of noble authors may also reflect general educational and intellectual developments: the increase in schooling, greater interest in spiritual literature, the growth of lay literacy, were all factors exercising a common influence on both court and aristocracy. Thomas of Woodstock, duke of Gloucester, wrote a short treatise in French on the order of battle, the Ordenaunce and Fourme of Fighting within listes, a work which may be related to his position as Constable of England.[1] John Montagu, the third earl of Salisbury, Richard II's Lollard friend, has left no writing or poetry, but there is too much evidence of the estimation in which his 'ballads, songs, rondels and lays'[2] were held for his achievement to be entirely discarded. The fact that Christine de Pisan sent her son to live in Montagu's household is indeed high praise, for she had many patrons among the French nobility who would have taken him.[3]

Another member of the Lollard circle of knights, Sir John Clanvow (d.1391), was also 'literary' in inclination and a close friend of Chaucer. Almost certainly the author of the love poem The Cuckoo and the Nightingale (or Book of Cupid), he also wrote the Two Ways. This is a devotional tract, strictly biblical in character and full of quotations from the Scriptures, which is outspoken in contempt for the knightly ideal and for men who made profit out of war. In this respect, Sir John Clanvow was like Henry of Lancaster, examining his own conscience, and his tract, written on the eve of his last voyage over the Mediterranean on which he died, may be seen as a kind of confession.[4]

---

1. J. Catto, 'Religion and the English nobility in the later fourteenth century', in History and Imagination: Essays in honour of H.R. Trevor-Roper, ed. H. Lloyd Jones, V. Pearl and B. Worden (London, 1980), p.45.
2. J. Webb, 'Translation of a French metrical history of the deposition of King Richard II', Archaeologia, xx (1824), 72, 320.
3. K.B. McFarlane, Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights (Oxford, 1972), p.182.
4. See The Works of Sir John Clanvowe, ed. V.J. Scattergood (Cambridge, 1975); Scattergood, 'The authorship of the Boke of Cupide', Anglia, lxxxii (1964), 137-49; McFarlane, Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights, pp.200-6.

In the fifteenth century it seems that most of the nobility's literary efforts were directed towards translations; not only were nobles employing translators such as John Trevisa, but they were translating themselves. In c.1406, Edward, second duke of York, translated a popular French hunting manual (Gaston, count of Foix's Livre de la Chasse) and added some chapters of his own to produce The Master of Game.[1] Sir Richard Roos's translation of Alain Chartier's La Belle Dame Sans Merci in c.1429 has survived in six manuscripts, which indicates relative popularity.[2] Sir John Fastolf employed Sir Stephen Scrope to translate from French the Dicts and Sayings of the Philosophers and Scrope was also responsible for the translation of Christine de Pisan's Boke of Knyghthode.[3] John Tiptoft, earl of Worcester, has attracted attention from literary scholars because four extant translations have been attributed to him. Caxton attested that Tiptoft translated the Laelius of Cicero and the De Honestate of Accursius. His testimony need not be doubted, as his references to the earl are those of one who knew him personally and admired him a great deal. In addition, the Cato Major and translation of passages from Caesar's Gallic War have been attributed to Tiptoft. The very fact that Caxton fails to mention them is puzzling and suggests that Tiptoft was probably not the translator.[4]

The number of translations during the period raises interesting questions about the role of the nobility in making them. They surely show that French was no longer so generally understood as before. The translation by Tiptoft from the Latin reflects perhaps a growing, though as yet limited, interest in the classics.

---

1. The Master of Game, ed. W.A. and F. Baillie-Grohman (London, 1904).
2. H.S. Bennett, Chaucer and the Fifteenth Century (Oxford, 1947), p.297.
3. Ibid., p.297.
4. H.B. Lathrop, 'The translations of John Tiptoft', Modern Language Notes, xli (1926), 496-501.

Although translations were very popular in noble circles in the first half of the fifteenth century, there were also some original works, such as those which may have grown from the friendship between Charles of Orleans and William de la Pole, duke of Suffolk. For four years between 1432 and 1436 Orleans lived with Suffolk at Wallingford Castle and elsewhere. These years witnessed the production of Orleans's Poème de la Prison and his Départie d'Amours and it seems reasonable to conclude that Suffolk may well have encouraged these poetic efforts. Suffolk in turn wrote, and the lady to whom he addressed some of his poetry in 1430 was probably Alice Chaucer, granddaughter of Geoffrey, whom he married immediately after his return from France the following year. The Praise of the Flower was a poem which may have been written to please Margaret of Anjou, whom Suffolk brought to Henry VI in 1445.[1]

Seeing that the total number of lay magnates in the later middle ages (defined as those who received a personal summons to Parliament) rarely exceeded sixty, these examples of literary works represent a considerable achievement on the part of the nobility.

## 3. Literary patronage

> 'a talented youth would be educated by his natural protector, the great man of his birth place and later on, fostered and encouraged by him in literary production...'[2]

The medieval writer was not a professional but an occasional author. He gave his literary work only as a part of his time and did not depend upon it for a living. Such a writer did not address his work to the 'public' but to a very definite and restricted circle. He addressed himself to his patron's family, friends and neighbours.

---

1. H. MacCracken, 'An English friend of Charles of Orleans', P.M.L.A., xxvi (1911), 142-80. The friendship is discussed more recently in N. Wilkins, 'Music and poetry at court: England and France in the later middle ages', in English Court Culture in the Later Middle Ages, ed. V.J. Scattergood and J.W. Sherborne (London, 1983), 197-9.
2. S. Moore, 'General aspects of literary patronage in the middle ages', The Library, third ser., iv (1913), 382.

Attention has been drawn to the nobility as patrons of the literary revival of the late fourteenth century,[1] but this should not obscure the fact that the nobles had been active as patrons certainly since the twelfth century.

(a) Patronage at the royal court

It has been argued that women led a more sedentary life and had more time for literature. It is therefore not surprising to find that queens were the chief patrons of early Anglo-Norman writers.[2] Henry I's court seems to have been a focus for writers and his two queens certainly acted as patrons. William of Malmesbury writes of Queen Maud in disparaging terms. The marriage to Henry was one of convenience. After the birth of three children, the Queen settled at Westminster where she lived in great state, patronising poets and musicians, especially foreigners, to the great disgust of native writers.[3] It seems that a certain Benedeit wrote a Voyage of St Brendan first in Latin and then translated it at Maud's request,[4] perhaps for the benefit of the ladies of her household.[5] Adeliza of Louvain, Henry I's second wife, was interested in the vernacular literary movement of her period and took under her patronage Philippe de Thaon, who dedicated his Bestiare to her.[6]

Despite the interest shown by these early twelfth-century queens, it seems that the advent of a new sovereign, Henry II, marked a change in the amount of literary activity. If Henry had left to us any record of his chamber or wardrobe, we should be likely to discover there some traces of the intellectual side of the curia. Peter of Blois wrote of his love of learning '... with the king of England, it is school every day, constant conversation with the best scholars

---

1. G. Mathew, The Court of Richard II (London, 1968), esp. pp.107-13.
2. M.D. Legge, Anglo-Norman Literature and its Background (Oxford, 1963), p.7.
3. William of Malmesbury, Gesta Regum, ii, ed. W. Stubbs (Rolls Series, 1889), p.494.
4. R.L.G. Ritchie, 'The date of the voyage of St Brendan', Medium Aevum, xix (1950), 64-6.
5. M.D. Legge, 'Letre in old French', Modern Language Review, lvi (1961), 333-4.
6. Legge, Anglo-Norman Literature, p.22; J.W. Thompson, The Literacy of the Laity in the Middle Ages (Berkeley, 1939), p.171.

and discussion of intellectual problems'.[1] There is little direct evidence of his patronage of literary works, but Osbert de Clare actually hailed him in 1153-4 as Maecenas.[2] Dedications are not necessarily evidence for literary patronage, but Henry II received a surprisingly large number if he had no interest in the encouragement of literature. Henry had received several dedications even before his accession: Adelard of Bath's On the Astrolabe was addressed to Henry as 'regis nepos' c.1142-6, and William of Conches De Honesto et Utili was also addressed to the young Henry. Aelred of Rievaulx dedicated a Genealogia Regum to Henry as duke in 1153-4.[3] Dedications were no less forthcoming after 1154. In Normandy, Wace, then living in Caen, was working on his poem, based on Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia. It was finished in 1155 and presented, according to his translator Layamon, to Queen Eleanor.[4] Walter Map is said to have written several romances of the Round Table, one of which, the Percival, is reported to have been dedicated to Henry II, and two others, the Mort d'Arthur and the Launcelot du Lac, written at his request.[5] Marie de France, at about the same time, wrote 'pour amour de cunte Willaume' and the 'Flours de chevalrie'. Willaume was probably William Longspée, earl of Salisbury, natural son of Henry II. Perhaps the success of the Fables caused Henry II to request the lais which she dedicated to him.[6]

The list of works dedicated to the king is significant, both for its length and its subjects. Science, vernacular poetry, much recent history, both in Latin and French, and two distinctive works on the administration of justice and finance - the whole represents perhaps the tendencies of the king's

---

1. Cited by W.L. Warren, Henry II (London, 1973), p.208.
2. Poema ad Regem Henricum Secundum (Caxton Society, v), p.209ff.
3. See C.H. Haskins, 'Henry II as a patron of literature', in Essays in Medieval History Presented to T.F. Tout, ed. A.G. Little and F.M. Powicke (Manchester, 1925), 71-7.
4. Legge, Anglo-Norman Literature, p.45.
5. K.J. Holzknecht, Literary Patronage in the Middle Ages (New York, 1923), p.92.
6. Ibid., pp.92-3.

mind. It is noticeable that there was little royal patronage towards the end of the reign of Henry II, which may well be symptomatic of the difficult political times.

His queen Eleanor was, according to tradition, no less a patroness. It is through her, if through anyone, that troubadour poetry penetrated to England. Although there is no actual evidence, it is very probable that she invited trouvères and troubadours to her court. Bernart de Ventadorn may have crossed the channel. In one poem he says:

> 'The vers has been composed fully so that not a word is wanting, beyond the Norman land and the deep wild sea; and though I am far from my lady, she attracts me like a magnet the fair one whom may God protect. If the English king and the Norman duke will, I shall see her before the winter surprise us ...'[1]

Her son Richard was more French than English and, besides being a troubadour himself, is known to have kept in touch with his half-sister Marie de Champagne and to have been a munificent patron of troubadours, as were his brothers Henry and Geoffrey; but Richard spent less than six months of his reign on English soil and we do not know if he was followed to England by any of his protegés.[2]

Although it is clear that John used and owned books, there is no evidence, as far as is known, of literary patronage. His son Henry III is described as a man of 'a refined mind and cultivated tastes, liberal and magnificent' who 'took interest in the work of Matthew Paris and enjoyed his society'. In March 1257, Paris was with Henry at St Albans, where the king imparted to him some historical information, including a list of the canonised kings of England (which Matthew placed in his chronicle) and the names of 250 English baronies. Paris certainly knew Henry III well but there is no direct evidence of patronage.[3]

---

1. H.M. Chaytor, The Troubadours (Cambridge, 1912), pp.47-8.
2. Holzknecht, Literary Patronage, p.48; Anglo-Norman Literature, pp.332-3.
3. R. Vaughan, Matthew Paris (Cambridge, 1958), pp.4, 13.

Henry III is understood, however, to have been the first English king to employ a versificator regis (Henry of Avranches), to whom he paid a regular stipend and who received a life grant of two tuns of the king's wine.[1]

Under Edward I and Edward II the evidence is again scanty: it is claimed that while Edward was on crusade in 1270, Eleanor, fully supporting her husband's military ambitions, had a translation made for him of the Roman manual by Vegetius on the art of war.[2] Guido della Collonna is said by Boston of Bury to have written his De Bello Trojana at Edward's command.[3] A poet who was patronised at the royal court was John of Hoveden or of Howden. A clerk in the service of Edward I and of his mother, Eleanor of Provence, he was rewarded by ecclesaistical preferments, amongst others the prebend from which he got his name. For Queen Eleanor, Hoveden wrote a poem in Anglo-Norman called Rossignos.[4] It may be that the queen had asked for a vernacular version of a poem that was already well known and that this poem, written in the spring of 1274, was the outcome.[5]

Edward III was certainly presented with manuscripts by Walter de Milemete, but there is no strong evidence for patronage.[6] His queen, however, extended hospitality to the poet Froissart, and this owed as much to his talent for writing verse as to their common background in Hainault.[7]

With Richard II's reign it is easy to see the king 'presiding at the centre of a literary court culture based on the English language and having as

---

1. Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1247-58, p.555. See cap.II, p.50.
2. M. Prestwich, The Three Edwards (London, 1980), p.7.
3. Holzknecht, Literary Patronage, p.222.
4. L.W. Stone, 'Jean de Howden, poète anglo-Normand du xiiie siècle', Romania, lxix (1946-7), 496-519; see also Legge, Anglo-Norman Literature, pp.233-4.
5. Poems of John of Hoveden, ed. F.J.E. Raby (Surtees Society, cliv, 1939), p.xvii.
6. J.J.G. Alexander, 'Painting and manuscript illumination for royal patrons in the later middle ages', in English Court Culture in the Later Middle Ages, pp.141-2.
7. B.C. Hardy, Philippa of Hainault (London, 1910), p.264.

its most famous representatives John Gower and Geoffrey Chaucer.'[1] The evidence for the encouragement of literary patronage is certainly plentiful. The nature of the court was changing. By the 1390s the court was clearly much larger and had acquired elaborate ceremonial which had been lacking under Edward III. The presence of great numbers of court ladies (a characteristic of Richard II's household) led to the need for lyrics, for elaborate court dancing and for sophisticated narrative poems.[2] Besides the changes in the court, Richard showed a genuine enjoyment of literature. We know that he encouraged Gower to write (although the Confessio Amantis was recast for Henry of Lancaster, earl of Derby),[3] that he was pleased when Froissart presented him with a beautiful book, and that almost certainly Chaucer enjoyed his patronage. Payments were made to him in 1393, and in February 1394 Richard arranged that he should be paid £10 every six months. In later years he was protected from suits of debt, received a royal grant for an annual hogshead of wine and other gifts in 1398. It is probable that the royal gifts of 1394 and 1398 have some relation to particular poems, and it is not impossible that they were connected with the gradual development of the Canterbury Tales. The Legend of Good Women was apparently written for Richard's queen, Anne.[4]

This attractive picture has recently been attacked by Professor Scattergood, who argues that it is impossible to assess Richard's literary preferences and that Gower was never beholden to the king.[5] Nevertheless it is clear that a number of literary figures were attracted to Richard's court, that many literary works, whether in Latin, French or English, were circulating there, and that there was consequently a favourable climate for the spread of literature.

---

1. V.J. Scattergood, 'Literary culture at the court of Richard II', in English Court Culture in the Later Middle Ages, p.30.
2. Mathew, Court of Richard II, pp.28-31.
3. J.H. Fisher, John Gower (London, 1965), pp.341-2 (indicates that, in autumn of 1393, Gower was in Bolingbroke's service).
4. Mathew, Court of Richard II, p.64; R.F. Green, Poets and Princepleasers: Literature and the English Court in the Late Middle Ages (Toronto, 1980), p.68.
5. Scattergood, op.cit., esp. pp.31-4.

With the Lancastrians, the evidence for literary patronage at court becomes more abundant. The future Henry IV employed the minor poet Henry Scogan as tutor to his four children, and he continued the annuities paid to Geoffrey Chaucer by Richard II until Chaucer's death in 1400. For the last eight years of his life, John Gower was closely associated with Henry's court; he was styled the king's squire, dedicated French, English and Latin poems to Henry, and called himself his oratour.[1] Thomas Hoccleve also counted Henry IV among his patrons and dedicated his Regiment to Henry V when Prince of Wales.

In the fifteenth century, therefore, one is left with the impression of a lettered court. It does appear that the twelfth century was a high period for literary patronage at court, patronage which did not flourish again in quite the same way until the end of the fourteenth century.

(b) Literary patronage in noble households

The significance of the magnates' households for the development of literature is frequently ignored: they provided not only a society in need of writers and entertainment but also the patronage to reward the entertainer. As we have seen, throughout the middle ages the noble household was the most likely place of education of the noble children, and would consequently be frequented by clerks and literary men. The literary patronage which it provided may have been influenced by the ethos of the court: a 'literary' court may have favoured the spread of aristocratic patronage. This seems to have been so in the first half of the twelfth century (while lack of patronage in the later years of Henry II's reign forced writers to find noble patrons outside the court circle) and also during Richard II's reign.

In the early twelfth century there was an important patroness of vernacular poetry who forms a striking parallel to the queens who supported writers. The Estoire des Engles was written by Geoffrey Gaimar about 1140 for Constance

---

1. Mathew, Court of Richard II, p.81.

FitzGilbert of Lincolnshire. This work contains an interesting account of how Gaimar, with the help of his patroness, procured the manuscript sources (Anglo-Saxon, French and Latin) on which his work is based. Constance, so Gaimar informs us, had one manuscript, namely the poem by an unknown poet called David on the life of Henry I, copied for one mark of silver and 'often reads it in her room'.[1]

At about the same period, Robert of Gloucester was the patron and apparently the close friend of William of Malmesbury who dedicated to Robert his Gesta Regum and Historia Novella, the latter having been composed at the earl's express request. Robert also appears to have extended his patronage to Geoffrey of Monmouth for the Historia Regum Brittanie.[2]

It may be noted that there was little royal patronage towards the end of the reign of Henry II, and it is perhaps symptomatic of difficult political times that an important author like Hue de Roteland wrote for a magnate, almost unknown to history, on the Welsh border. Born in Rhuddlan, Hue lived at Credenhill, near Hereford. He wrote two romances, Ipomedon, in which there is a reference to the siege of Rouen in 1174, and its sequel, Protheselaus, for Gilbert Fitz-Baderon, Lord of Monmouth 1176-7 to 1190-1. Hue alleges that he translated Protheselaus from a Latin book belonging to Gilbert Fitz-Baderon, who had many books in his castle, both Latin and French.[3]

(i) Ancestral romances

The twelfth and thirteenth centuries had also seen the rise of the fashion for possessing a household romance associated with a dynastic founder. The ancestral romance in England replaced the family chronicle in France.[4] Guillaume d'Angleterre was associated with one of the Lovel families, probably

---

1. E. Auerbach, Literary Language and its Public (London, 1965), p.290.
2. Thompson, Literacy of the Laity, pp.171-2.
3. Legge, Anglo-Norman Literature, pp.85-6.
4. See cap.V, pp.173-5.

the Titmarsh Lovels connected with Bury St Edmunds.[1] Waldef began as a household romance of the Bigods, while Bevis of Hampton was composed for William de Albini at Arundel sometime between 1154 and 1176.[2] Fergus was written for Alan of Galloway probably to commemorate his marriage with Margaret, daughter of Earl David and niece of William the Lion, in 1209.[3] The story of Guy of Warwick seems to be pure fabrication, perhaps by a canon of Oseney to flatter Thomas, earl of Warwick, sometime between 1232 and 1242.[4] The tradition continued into the fourteenth century, since Fulk FitzWaryn was written for Fulk FitzWarin V before 1314 and William of Palerne appeared as a household romance of the Bohuns.

Some romances merged with family histories and could be primarily factual, like the Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal commissioned by the Marshal's eldest son soon after William's death in 1219. Its author, who came from the Cotentin, gained much of his information from the Marshal's squire, John of Early, who was an eye-witness of the later events and had heard about the rest from the Marshal's own lips. In a work such as this, ideals of knighthood and of chivalry had a crucial significance. In Professor Mathew's words 'it is probable that for the majority of the ruling class, they formed a standard of values at times consciously followed, at times consciously sinned against, but always pre-supposed'.[5] They received a classic expression under Henry III in the Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal. William is shown to be vaillant et proz. He is sage, accomplished (he could sing and dance in full armour) and he shows 'pitie'. His largesse is primarily the generosity of a leader in war to his

---

1. Legge, Anglo-Norman Literature, pp.141-2.
2. Ibid., p.159.
3. Ibid., p.161.
4. Ibid., p.162.
5. Court of Richard II, p.114. See also his 'Ideals of knighthood in late fourteenth-century England', in Studies in Medieval History Presented to F.M. Powicke, ed. R.W. Hunt, W.A. Pantin and R.W. Southern (Oxford, 1948), esp. pp.358-61. See cap.III, p.96.

men.[1] Above all, he is shown as loyal (leial) to his pledged word and to the lords from whom he holds his lands and he is loyal to God.

Not all the works promoted by nobles in the fourteenth century were ancestral romances. In 1310, Ralph de Bohun wrote Le Petit Bruit at the request of Henry Lacy, earl of Lincoln, a work 'abridged anew' from the great Brut. Efforts to trace Ralph de Bohun have been unsuccessful, but it is thought that he may be a member of the noble de Bohun family, earls of Hereford and Essex, who must often have been associated with Henry Lacy, earl of Lincoln.[2]

It is in the late fourteenth century, too, that we hear of noble families patronising translators. John Trevisa, after a career at Oxford, eventually became vicar of Berkeley (Gloucestershire) and chaplain at the Castle, with a canonry of the collegiate church of Westbury-on-Trym later. Patronised by the Berkeley family, he made translation his life work and gave the English their biggest encyclopaedia and history; it was in the course of 1387 that he translated the Polycronicon of Ranulph Higden, monk of Chester, who had died in 1364.[3]

The tradition of nobles patronising translators continued into the fifteenth century; the Governaunce of Princes was translated by James Yonge in 1422 as the result of a command of James de Botiller, earl of Ormond.[4]

But probably the writers best known to posterity were all patronised by members of the nobility in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

(ii) Chaucer

In 1929, T.F. Tout wrote that he was

> 'convinced that the excellent education which Geoffrey (Chaucer) undoubtedly received was the education which the household of a king, or one of the greater magnates, could give to its junior members...'[5]

---

1. Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal, ed. P. Meyer (Paris, 1891), l.18708ff.
2. Legge, Anglo-Norman Literature, pp.280-3. See cap.VII, p.252.
3. B. Cottle, The Triumph of English 1350-1400 (London, 1969), p.18.
4. Holzknecht, Literary Patronage, p.94 n.
5. T.F. Tout, 'Literature and learning: the English civil service in the fourteenth century', Speculum, iv (1929), 382.

The life of Chaucer is well-documented because of his court employment. On the death of Edward III in 1377 Chaucer was already established at court and had been rewarded with an annuity of twenty marks, a pitcher of wine, a controllership in the customs and two wardships. It has already been noted that the basis of Chaucer's life in the 1390s was the continuing patronage of Richard II.[1] But in the interim period he was not neglected by the magnates.

During the minority he was linked with the household of John of Gaunt; he possessed an annuity of thirty marks from the duke, twenty for his own services and ten for the services of his wife, Philippa, as bed-chamber woman to the duchess. He was increasingly used, probably as a secretary, in diplomatic work and was patronised by Sir Thomas Percy, later to be earl of Worcester, in Flanders in 1377, by the earl of Huntingdon in Paris (January 1378) and by Sir Edward Berkeley in Milan (late in 1378).

Soon after 1382 it seems that he became associated with the new English court circle and to have found a new patron in Robert de Vere, earl of Oxford. In the 1390s not only was he supported by Richard II and Henry IV, but he also received the patronage of the countess of March.[2]

(iii) Hoccleve

Thomas Hoccleve spent most of his life as a clerk in the Privy Seal Office.[3] After the 'revolution' of 1399, he received some patronage from Henry IV and from the countess of Westmoreland, but he never established himself as John Lydgate did in court circles. His annuity was paid for the last time on 11 February 1426 and it seems likely that he died soon after. Hoccleve always stayed low in the court hierarchy.[4] He wrote of his pleasure in being held 'a verray gentilman' in the Westminster shops and in being called 'master' by the London watermen.[5]

---

1. See above, p.227.
2. Court of Richard II, pp.62-3.
3. See his autobiographical poem La Male Regle, ed. F.J. Furnivall (E.E.T.S., extra series, lxi, 1892).
4. V.J. Scattergood, Politics and Poetry in the Fifteenth Century (London, 1971), pp.15-16.
5. Male Regle, l.51.

(iv) Lydgate

Hoccleve's contemporary, John Lydgate (c.1370-1449) was in orders from the time he became a novice at the Benedictine Abbey of Bury St Edmunds at the age of fifteen. He became a true court poet and until 1441 he received frequent gifts and court pensions.[1] In his life of Our Lady and in his Troy Boke he stated that he had submitted his poems to Chaucer's correction and had relied on his advice. It was perhaps then that he found his first patroness, the young countess of Stafford. For two generations he was to make poetry for the Stafford circle and was to become the favourite court poet of the Lancastrians. In turn the Beauchamps, the Bourchiers, the countess of Shrewsbury, of Suffolk and of March, were among his patrons. On the commission of Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, Lydgate wrote his Fall of Princes. For Richard Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, he wrote a defence of Henry VI's title to the crown of France. The third great translation of Lydgate's, the Pilgrimage of the Life of Man was begun in 1426 and finished two or three years later for Thomas Montacute, earl of Salisbury. Lydgate was clearly a favourite among the court ladies: for Anne, countess of Stafford, he wrote an Invocation and perhaps a Life of St Anne.[2] His Life of St Margaret was written at the command of the countess of March, later countess of Huntingdon.[3] For Alice, countess of Suffolk, daughter of Thomas Chaucer, Lydgate wrote his Interpretation or Virtues of the Man. He translated from the French the Fifteen Ooes of Our Lady for Isabella, countess of Warwick and wife of Richard Beauchamp, and between 1442 and 1468 he composed his translation of Guy of Warwick for the eldest daughter of Richard and Isabella.[4]

Clearly it became common for a court writer to be patronised by many families of the nobility and for literary circles to develop around the court.

---

1. Scattergood, op.cit., p.16.
2. Minor Poems of John Lydgate, ed. H. MacCracken, i (E.E.T.S., extra series, cvii, 1911), p.130.
3. Ibid., i, p.176.
4. Holzknecht, Literary Patronage, pp.100-1.

How far did such circles develop outside the court? In the majority of cases, the provincial writer worked for a single patron and his 'public' consisted of his patrons' intimates. But it occasionally happened that, in a prosperous and unified country district, a number of patrons closely connected by ties of acquaintance and interest were patronising literature at about the same time. In this connection, there has been considerable interest in East Anglia in the mid-fifteenth century.[1] Professor Moore has shown that Sir Miles and Lady Catherine Stapleton were patrons of John Metham, a minor literary figure who wrote treatises on subjects such as palmistry.[2] Lady Isabel Bourchier, countess of Eu, commissioned Lydgate's friend and fellow poet, Benedict Burgh to translate Cato's Distichs into English verse.[3] She also commissioned Osbern Bokenham, who was writing in south-west Suffolk, to write a life of St Mary Magdalen. What is especially interesting is that it was through the knowledge of work Bokenham had done for others that his new patroness asked him to write this new life.[4]

Certainly this patronage by members of the nobility and upper gentry was a general stimulus to literature, although the writers concerned were only of minor importance as authors.

The importance of noble patronage should not be exaggerated. It is clear that not all works written at the request of the nobles or king were rewarded. Giraldus Cambrensis complained that his labours went unrewarded.[5] Wace began, at the request of Henry II, a history of the Normans, called the Roman de Rou, which after some interruption he put aside in 1170 because he had lost favour with his lord, and he was later to refer to the 'parsimonious' king.[6] On the

---

1. See S. Moore, 'Patrons of letters in Norfolk and Suffolk c.1450'. P.M.L.A., xxvii (1912), 188-204; and P.M.L.A., xxviii (1913), 79-105.
2. For his works see Political, Religious and Love Poems, ed. F.J. Furnivall (E.E.T.S., 1903), p.308.
3. S. Moore in P.M.L.A., xxviii (1913), 89.
4. Holzknecht, Literary Patronage, pp.103-4.
5. Giraldi Cambrensis Opera Omnia, ed. J.F. Dimock, vi (Rolls Series, 1868), Praefatio Prima.
6. Holzknecht, Literary Patronage, pp.111-12.

other hand, the presence of literary men in noble households was clearly by no means a phenomenon restricted to the later middle ages. But most known authors who were attached to earlier courts differed in two important respects from their fourteenth- and fifteenth-century counterparts: they were, almost without exception, connected with the church and their literary language was Latin. Few medieval monarchs could have boasted of households of greater literary merit than that of Henry II's; Walter Map, Peter of Blois, Roger of Hoveden, Giraldus Cambrensis and Wace. All were ecclesiastics of some importance.

By comparison with such men, the household authors of the late middle ages were not only frequently secular, but also of far less importance in the world. Even Wace, who only held a canonry, was a considerably more important figure than Hoccleve or even Chaucer.

Although the status of the authors may have changed, the types of works requested by the royal and noble patrons remained strikingly the same. Epics of marvellous tales and histories, either new or in translation, form perhaps the greater number of works produced to order, with books on chivalry and general conduct, saints' legends and devotional pieces finding a less important place.

Motives for literary patronage combined family glorification with prestige, fashion and taste and genuine enjoyment of literature. It does seem that at times when the court was literary, in the twelfth century and in the late fourteenth century, aristocratic patronage also thrived. But it is also possible to see the later period as a time when more general intellectual developments, such as the growth of lay literacy, interest in spiritual literature, and increasing educational opportunities at school and university exercised a common influence on both the court and the aristocracy. The patronage of writers such as Jean Froissart at Queen Philippa's court emphasises the importance of foreign influence and what Mathew termed the 'international court culture' - Froissart also found patrons in the lesser princely households of Europe, the duke of Brabant at Coudenberg, the count of Foix at Orthez and the count at Blois. It appears that with the rewards given to Chaucer, Usk, Lydgate and Hoccleve, patronage

was becoming more insular in the later middle ages. One would expect this from the increasing interest in vernacular literature, even though the culture of the court was still overwhelmingly Latin and French.

In the twelfth century and the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries we can certainly look to the royal household as a centre of literary activity. What is also clear is that there were other centres of patronage in the noble households, such as at Berkeley Castle, in the great households of East Anglia, and even along the Welsh border where noble families were taking an interest in literary men.

# CHAPTER VII

## SPECIAL STUDIES

There are some noble families or individuals who deserve particular attention because of their special interest in education, books, or the patronage of scholars. One such family was that of Simon de Montfort, the members of which were both bookish and extraordinarily well-educated. A second example is provided by Walter Bibbesworth, an Essex country gentleman who wrote a treatise on learning French for the Munchensy family, and whose probable patron, Henry Lacy, earl of Lincoln, was himself interested in education at Oxford. Thirdly, we find in Guy Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, one of the most notable lay bibliophiles before Duke Humphrey. Finally, Elizabeth de Burgh, lady of Clare, stands out as a fourteenth-century patroness of a Cambridge college, as well as an important sponsor of scholars at school and of apprentices at the King's Bench.

### 1. The Montfort family

Simon IV of Montfort l'Amaury (b.c.1170, d.1218), the leader of the Albigensian Crusade, was a member of a well-to-do family which controlled a group of castles in the region between the Ile de France and Normandy and had marriage alliances in both Norman and Capetian areas.[1] Through his mother, Amice, elder daughter of Robert, third earl of Leicester, Simon also claimed the earldom of Leicester.[2] King John recognised Simon's right in 1206, but took possession of the earldom in the following year, during the war with France. The claim passed on Simon's death to his son, Amaury, who renounced it early in 1229 in favour of a younger brother, Simon, born c.1208, in return for the patrimony in France.[3]

---

1. For the family background see W.L. Wakefield, Heresy, Crusade and Inquisition (London, 1974), p.103.
2. The Complete Peerage, vii, p.538.
3. Ibid., pp.541-2.

Although the period of Simon's and Amaury's youth remains obscure, we know that the Montforts were unusually 'insistent on book learning'.[1] We have a great deal of evidence about what K.B. McFarlane called the 'vestiges of education', the traces left by it in the adult lives of Simon (c.1208-1265), and of Simon's children, Henry (1238-65), Simon (1240-71), Guy (c.1243-c.1288), Amaury (c.1245-c.1292), and Eleanor (1252-1282). It is these 'vestiges of education', such as book-ownership and evidence for writing, which will be considered first, before examining the evidence for the education of members of the family.

Simon de Montfort, earl of Leicester, seems to have had a genuine interest in spiritual and intellectual affairs and to have shared the scholarly tastes and the friendship of clerics. For example, John of Basingstoke, one of the best Greek scholars of his generation in England, and Grosseteste's successor as archdeacon of Leicester, was a good friend of the earl of Leicester, who was greatly distressed by his death.[2]

Simon was undoubtedly a close personal friend of Robert Grosseteste, who possibly acted as his spiritual guide and to whom he entrusted the education of his two sons. It is more difficult to assess how far they shared the same outlook on political and ecclesiastical affairs. Simon supported, in a way that was unusual for a lay magnate, some aspects of Grosseteste's programme for the reform of the church.[3]

It was through Robert Grosseteste that Simon got to know Adam Marsh, one of the key figures in the Franciscan school at Oxford and a major intellectual influence in thirteenth-century Oxford.[4] Marsh's letters show him as a man devoted to the interests of the Montfort household and as the spiritual counsellor of the countess and Simon. For instance, at the time of Simon's trial

---

1. M.W. Labarge, Simon de Montfort (London, 1962), p.22.
2. Chronica Maiora, ed. H.R. Luard, v (Rolls Series, 1880), pp.284-7.
3. W.A. Pantin, 'Grosseteste's relations with the Papacy and the Crown', in Robert Grosseteste: Scholar and Bishop, ed. D.A. Callus (Oxford, 1955), pp.205-6.
4. D.L. Douie, 'Adam de Marisco: An English Franciscan', Durham University Journal, xxxii (1940), 81.

in 1252 he advised Montfort to strive after resignation and patience and to devote his spare time to the study of the Scriptures and the writings of the fathers, especially St Gregory's Moralia or lectures on Job. As this suggests, the letters also reveal the intellectual interests of Simon de Montfort.[1] He evidently discussed with Adam Marsh the philosophical ideas of Robert Grosseteste, and apparently showed enthusiasm for Grosseteste's 'most salutary project for liberating souls'.[2]

The books owned or read by Simon seem to confirm this intellectual outlook. In one letter to Grosseteste, Adam Marsh makes a puzzling reference to a book that he was returning to Grosseteste on kingship and tyranny which had been loaned to Earl Simon and was sealed with his seal. It has been suggested that this vanished treatise had provided the theoretical basis for the later baronial government. Unfortunately it now seems certain that this memorandum was nothing more than one part of a long and closely reasoned case put before Pope Innocent IV at Lyons in 1250 by the bishop.[3] A book on morals certainly did feature among Simon's books. One of the Dominican moral treatises, De vitiis et virtutibus, mentioned as being one of the works of the Dominican, Guillaume Peyraut (who died in 1275), was to be found in the earl's library. MS Clairembault 1188, in the Bibliothèque Nationale, records that in 1270 the prior of the Dominican convent at Montargis received from Amaury de Montfort 'une summe de vices et de vertuz qui fu a mon seigneur lou conte de Leycestre, son pere'.[4] The convent was entrusted with the care of the book and was to return it to Amaury whenever he wanted it.

It may, perhaps, be misleading to talk in terms of Simon's 'library', but there is no doubt that the earl and his children had an interest in books.

---

1. The letters of Adam Marsh are printed in Monumenta Franciscana, ed. J. Brewer, i (Rolls Series, 1858).
2. Labarge, op.cit., p.76. Monumenta Franciscana, i, pp.111, 225, 264, 271.
3. Monumenta Franciscana, i, p.110; Labarge, op.cit., p.75.
4. C. Bémont, Simon de Montfort (Oxford, 1930), p.41, n.2.

Twenty dozen sheets of fine vellum were purchased, presumably on the initiative of the countess, for a pocket breviary to be made for the young Eleanor in 1265, when she was twelve or thirteen, and fourteen shillings were paid for the writing of it, which was executed at Oxford.[1]

There is no other known evidence for the reading tastes of the family, but we have some evidence of writing. We know that Eleanor, Simon's daughter, carried on a correspondence with her cousin the Lord Edward, as there is a payment of 6d in 1265 'pro litteris domisellae A. de Monteforti deferendis domino Edewardo, in crastino'.[2] It is questionable whether she acted as her own amanuensis, for the letters of hers from a later period, which are still in existence, are evidently written by a clerk.[3] That one member of the family could write is certain, for we know that Henry de Montfort wrote his own father's will:

> 'E je, Henris, fiuz au devant dit Simon, ai escrites ces lettres de ma main ...'[4]

Always studious, his brother, the cleric Amaury, also has a reputation as a writer.[5] Imprisoned and held at Corfe Castle in Dorset from Christmas 1275, he had composed a couple of treatises on theology by the following August, even though he claimed that the only book he had to study was the bible.[6] The autograph of these theological treatises survives as part of a codex from Cerne Abbas, now in the Bodleian Library.

---

1. Manners and Household Expenses of England, ed. B. Botfield (Roxburghe Club, 1841), pp.9, 24.
2. Ibid., p.18.
3. M.A.E. Green, Letters of Royal and Illustrious Ladies (London, 1846), ii, pp.54-5.
4. Bémont, Simon de Montfort, p.278; H. Suggett, 'The use of French in the later middle ages', Trans.Roy.Hist.Soc., xxviii (1946), discusses this point.
5. For his clerical career, see below p.242.
6. L.E. Boyle, 'E cathena et carcere: The imprisonment of Amaury de Montfort 1276', in Medieval Learning and Literature: Essays Presented to R.W. Hunt, ed. J.J. Alexander and M.T. Gibson (Oxford, 1976), p.385.

The links with intellectuals, the interest in books and the evidence of writing are what might be termed the 'vestiges' of education. But what of the education of the Montfort family? Where and how did it take place and what had been taught? About Simon de Montfort's education, we know very little. His correspondence with scholars and learned men suggests that he understood Latin, as also does Marsh's advice to him to read St Gregory's works. According to the Lanercost chronicle, on his arrival in England Simon could not speak English: 'cum in Angliam anglicanae linguae inscius prima pube venisset'.[1] Bémont asks the question, did he learn it later? His wife Eleanor, the third daughter of King John, had been brought up by the widowed Cecily de Sanford, her governess and instructress in manners (magistra et morum informatrix), according to Matthew Paris and 'a very learned and courteous lady'.[2] With such a notable teacher it would perhaps be surprising if Eleanor had not developed an interest in learning.

Simon and Eleanor certainly encouraged the education of their children. Two of their sons, Henry and Amaury, were educated in the household of Bishop Grosseteste, probably the most learned man in England at that time. That Grosseteste was accustomed to receiving noble sons for education is apparent from some verses on his life, in which he is described as teaching them Greek and Latin:

> 'Ingenuos pueros secum vir sanctus alebat
> Quos informabat moribus ipse sacris.
> Litterulis Grecis hos imbuit atque Latinis
> Hic iocus, hec requies quando vocabat erat.'
> ll.95-99.[3]

The chronicle of William Rishanger describes, in a passage on Simon's character and piety, how:

> 'Beato Roberto dicto "Grossum Caput" Lincolniensis
> Episcopi adhaerere satagebat, eisque suos parvulos
> tradidit nutriendos...'[4]

---

1. Chronicon de Lanercost, ed. J. Stevenson (Edinburgh, 1839), p.77.
2. Chronica Maiora, v, p.235.
3. R.W. Hunt, 'Verses on the life of Grosseteste', Medievalia et Humanistica, i (1970), 248. See cap.III, p.85.
4. Willelmi Rishanger Chronica, ed. H.T. Riley (Rolls Series, 1865), p.36.

Adam Marsh's letter to Grosseteste makes it clear that Henry was entrusted to Grosseteste's care when Simon was in Gascony in 1248, and that when 'aetas est ei tenerior', Henry was to be instructed 'in doctrina litterarum et morum disciplina'.[1] There is a later reference to Henry in the bishop's care 'cum H. primogenito suo, acceptissimo vestrae sanctitatis alumno...'.[2] Henry also appears to have been a companion of the Lord Edward in childhood: Rishanger's chronicle describes Edward grieving over the body of Henry de Montfort at Evesham in 1265, a poignant moment, according to the account, as Henry and Edward had been baptised and brought up together from childhood:[3]

> 'Interfuit autem (Edwardus) personaliter exequis Henrici de Monteforti, quem pater eius Rex de sacro fonte levavit, et ipse, secum nutritum, a puero familiariter dilexerat. Cuius etiam funeri dicitur lacrymos impendisse'.

The association had continued when Edward and Henry were young men, as Henry and his younger brother Simon were knighted together by the Lord Edward on 13 October 1260.[4] Amaury, Simon de Montfort's fourth son, also entrusted to Grosseteste's care, was taught by Master Nicholas, one of the best mathematicians of his day, who was mentioned with approval even by Roger Bacon in 1267.[5] Amaury, who cannot have been more than twenty in 1265, became a very well educated man. As a boy, he had attracted the notice of a family friend, Odo Rigaud, the archbishop of Rouen, who had made him a canon and given him a prebend in his cathedral. It looks as if Amaury may have travelled with Master Nicholas, and in the late 1260s he went to the university of Padua, where he studied for at least three years. It seems likely that he was responsible for the collection of archives relating to the Montfort family.[6]

---

1. Monumenta Franciscana, i, p.110.
2. Ibid., p.129. See also p.163.
3. Willelmi Rishanger Chronica, p.37.
4. Dictionary of National Biography, xiii, p.743.
5. Roger Bacon Opus Tertium, ed. J.S. Brewer (Rolls Series, 1859), p.35. See also Roger Bacon: Essays, ed. A.G. Little (Oxford, 1914), p.159.
6. F.M. Powicke, 'Guy de Montfort', Trans.Roy.Hist.Soc., fourth ser., xviii (1935), 3.

We know little about the education of Simon's daughter, Eleanor. She certainly had a nurse, even at the age of twelve or thirteen, for in 1265, a nurse called the lady Alice was sent to the countess from court.[1] Eleanor was not the only person in the Montfort household to have a nurse. It appears to have been the usual practice for each child in an important household to have his own nurse. In the accounts of the countess of Leicester in 1265, there is a mention of the nurse of William de Braose. William's place in the household remains in doubt. Probably he was a relation of the famous marcher family to which Earl Simon's great-aunt, Countess Loretta of Leicester, belonged, and may have been a hostage for his father or uncle, as a William de Braose, holding lands in Dorset and Kent, was a vigorous loyalist.[2] The references to William de Braose in the Montfort household form a parallel to the groups of pueri in the households of Henry, son of Edward I, and of Edward of Carnarvon.[3]

Simon de Montfort was clearly a man of more than usual devoutness whose friendship with Adam Marsh and Robert Grosseteste linked him with some of the most formative influences in the thirteenth-century church. His books suggest similar spiritual interests and reflect the close connection (as in the later middle ages) between lay learning and spirituality. The connections between the households of Grosseteste, Montfort and the Lord Edward suggest the close knit nature of the political and religious world, and the education of Montfort's children in Grosseteste's household shows the sort of affiliation between barons and bishops which was evident between 1258 and 1265. There are too many instances of book-ownership and tutors connected with the Montfort family for these references to be termed 'isolated examples'. From the evidence, we may be justified in concluding that the Montforts had a real interest in books, that

---

1. Manners and Household Expenses, p.18.
2. M.W. Labarge, A Baronial Household in the Thirteenth Century (London, 1965), p.47.
3. See cap.II, pp.60-3.

at least two members of the family could write, that the interests of Simon and his son, Amaury, at least were intellectual in character, and that the family as a whole was unusually well-educated for the thirteenth century.

## 2. Walter Bibbesworth, the Munchensy family and Henry Lacy, earl of Lincoln

Walter de Bibbesworth is a unique example of a thirteenth-century country gentleman who had both literary inclinations and some talent as a teacher. His Treatise, written for Dionysia de Munchensy, his devotional poetry and his Dialogue with Henry Lacy, earl of Lincoln, point not only to his piety, but also to a concern for learning and to cultural ties with his superiors which (so far as we can tell) were far from conventional for men of his class. At the same time they throw some light on the tastes and interests of Henry de Lacy himself, whom we know from other evidence to have had some care for education.

Walter's background differed little from that of other shire gentry. His family took its name from Bibbesworth,[1] in the Hertfordshire parish of Kimpston, some five miles north-west of Welwyn, and it was in that county and in neighbouring Essex that its main holdings lay. Hugh de Bibbesworth, probably Walter's father, held the manor of South House in Great Waltham, Essex, and Waltham may have been Walter's chief residence, since he was buried in the church of Little Dunmow, six miles away.[2] A grant of free warren which he received in 1277 'in all his demesne lands of his manors of Bibbesworth co. Hertford and of Saling, Latton and Waltham, co. Essex', confirms his position as a moderately prosperous landowner in the two counties.[3] The Hundred Roll entry (1273-4) shows that he was assessed at three shillings in the hundred of Hinckford in Essex and that he held the assize of bread and ale, a franchise enjoyed by many lords.[3]

---

1. W.A. Wright, Notes and Queries, fourth ser., viii (1871), 64.
2. R. Clutterbuck, History and Antiquities of the County of Hertfordshire, iii (1827), p.67.
3. Cal.Charter Rolls, ii, p.202.

In local society he apparently had a leading place. Born circa 1219, he acted as attorney for the earl of Hereford in 1234-5,[1] and was clearly a knight by 1249, when he witnessed a charter as 'Walter de Bibbesworth, miles'.[2] He may have had tenurial connections with Henry de Pynkenye, from whom his son held a knight's fee at Bibbesworth under Edward I,[3] and with Sir Robert de Guisnes, whose charter he himself witnessed in 1248.[4]

But the best proof of his high standing in his patria is provided by his election as one of the two knights chosen to represent Essex at the famous Westminster assembly of 1254, when for the first time shire knights were summoned to discuss a financial grant to the Crown. That he could not attend because at the time he was holding the joint custody of the royal forest in Essex is another mark of his status.[5]

Walter de Bibbesworth therefore emerges as a man of some importance in local affairs, particularly in Essex. Can we say more about his links with the upper classes? It is mentioned that he was one of John de Vescy's household knights[7] and he may also have been a retainer of Henry Lacy, earl of Lincoln, whose charters he sometimes witnessed.[8] In a poem of six twelve-line stanzas, addressed to Lacy, Bibbesworth raises with the earl the subject of a crusade on which both had agreed to go. In 1270 Lacy was twenty-one and Bibbesworth was presumably in his early fifties and the dialogue is as though between equals.[9]

---

1. Rot.Hundredorum, i, p.158.
2. Curia Regis Rolls, xv, no.1323.
3. See A.C. Baugh, 'The date of Walter of Bibbesworth's Traité', in Festschrift für Walther Fischer (Heidelburg, 1959), p.28.
4. Cal.Close Rolls, 1296-1302, pp.504-5.
5. Brit.Lib., Harleian Ch. 50 G.39, abstracted in Christopher Hatton's Book of Seals, ed. L.C. Loyd and D.M. Stenton (Oxford, 1950), No.135.
6. Cal.Close Rolls, 1253-54, p.42.
7. C. Moor, Knights of Edward I, i (Harleian Society, lxxx, 1929), p.92.
8. As for instance in 1282, when he witnessed an acknowledgement of a grant by Henry Lacy to Roger de Mowbray, Cal.Close Rolls, 1279-88, p.191.
9. See below, pp.250-1.

The latest reference we have to Walter de Bibbesworth comes on 30 January 1304 when the sheriff of Essex and Hertford was ordered to distrain 'for a knight's fee and all the lands etc. in Bibbesworth, co. Hertford'.[1] If Bibbesworth was born about 1219, he must have been in his eighties in 1304. But it has now been shown that Walter had a son of the same name who is mentioned in a charter of 1249.[2] It is not unreasonable to suppose that the later occurrences of the name Walter Bibbesworth in the records (beginning, A.C. Baugh postulates, with that of 1280) refer to the elder Walter's son.

The evidence produced by Baugh establishes that there were two Walter Bibbesworths and he cites independent evidence to show that it is with the elder Walter that we should associate the Treatise addressed to Dionysia de Munchensy.[3] As well as the works for which he is better known, the Treatise and the Dialogue with Henry Lacy, Bibbesworth also wrote some poetry. P. Meyer has printed some extracts from a former Phillips manuscript[4] and has suggested that the Chastel de leal amour, a series of questions and responses, was presented by Bibbesworth to Denise de Mounthermer or possibly to the same Dionysia for whom he wrote the Treatise.

Among the songs he composed, there is one in honour of the Virgin Mary. The content of these verses does not merit much attention; 'les dytees moun sir Gautier de Bybeswurthe' are uninspiring at best and their primary interest lies in the light which they throw on their author rather than in their own worth. It is, however, remarkable to find an Essex country gentleman composing verses of any sort in the thirteenth century and suggests that the connection between literacy and lay piety was not necessarily a development of the fourteenth century.

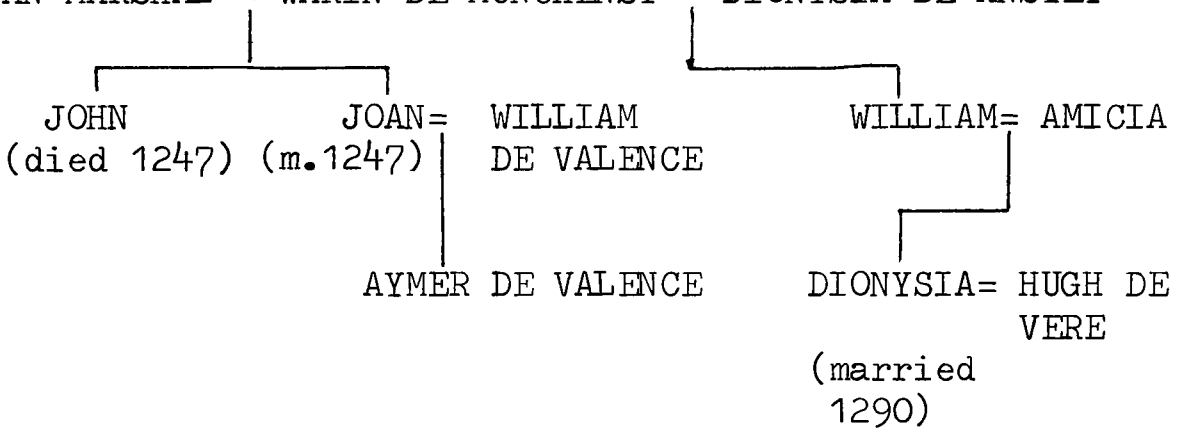
---

1. Cal.Close Rolls, 1302-7, p.197.
2. Baugh, 'The date of Walter of Bibbesworth's Traité', p.28.
3. See below, pp.247-9.
4. P. Meyer, 'Notices et extraits du MS 8336 de la bibliothèque de Sir Thomas Phillips à Cheltenham', Romania, xiii (1884), 497-541.

(a) The Treatise of Walter Bibbesworth

On the other hand, the Treatise, composed with the object of teaching the French language, is a work of considerable note.[1] The English gloss which accompanies it is an indication that English was the language which the noble children knew; had French been their mother tongue, the manual need never have been written. It is therefore clear that the date of the Treatise is very important and this can only be determined in relation to the history of the Munchensy family for whom it was written.[2]

The most important creator of the wealth of the Munchensy family was Warin de Munchensy, whose death is recorded by Matthew Paris in 1255:[3] 'Erat insuper thesauro non minimo instauratus, unde testamentum suum ad ducenta milia marcarum et amplius dicitur'. The king entrusted the guardianship of Warin's heir, William, to William de Valence, his brother, who had married Joan, Warin's daughter, to become his son-in-law. The family tree below shows the relationship:




It has long been supposed that the manual was written for the instruction of the younger Dionysia, or even at her request.[4] The treatise was certainly written for the children of a Dionysia and since the younger Dionysia had none,

---

1. There are fourteen MSS. extant, listed in J. Koch, 'Der anglonormannische traktat der Walter von Bibbesworth in seiner bedentung für die Anglistik', Anglia, lviii (1934), 30-77, esp., 43-5.
2. For what follows, see Baugh, 'The date of Walter of Bibbesworth's Traité', pp.28-33.
3. Chronica Maiora, ed. H.R. Luard, v (Rolls Series, 1880), p.504.
4. K. Lambley, The Teaching and Cultivation of the French Language in England (Manchester, 1920); Le Traité de Walter of Bibbesworth, ed. A. Owen (Paris, 1929), pp.23-5; J.C. Russell, Dictionary of Writers of Thirteenth Century England (London, 1936), pp.175-6; Chronicle of Pierre de Langtoft, i, ed. T. Wright (Rolls Series, 1866), p.xxviii.

we will concentrate on the elder. The elder Dionysia was born before 1215, and by 1271 she is described as 'old and feeble'.[1] Towards the close of her life, she founded a convent at Waterbeach in 1294, bringing the sisters from 'beyond the seas'.[2] At the time of her death in 1304, she was about ninety and may have been older.

In his prefatory letter, Walter refers to children in the plural 'les Enfaunz' and he occasionally addresses them in the text, always again in the plural: 'Beauz duz enfanz' (215), 'Pur enformer vos enfaunz' (324). In the last lines he refers (1133) to 'seigneurs', which would be incorrect if girls alone are meant. Presumably then, the Treatise was intended for Dionysia's own son, William, and Warin's two children, John and Joan, by his first marriage to Joan Marshal (see family tree). The younger Dionysia, William's daughter, was born in 1276. She married Hugh de Vere in 1290 and was of full age in July 1297.[3] There was a difference of more than forty years between her age and the ages of the enfaunz of the Lady Dionysia. Therefore, as Baugh has argued, we must fix our attention on William, the Lady Dionysia's son, and on John and Joan, her step-children.

We know that, at the time of his father's death, William was a minor, for on 20 July 1255, the king promised his half-brother, William de Valence, the wardship of the 'lands late of Warin de Muntchense, if it fall to the king by reason of the minority of the heir'.[4] William de Munchensy could not therefore have been born before July 1234. But on 20 October 1256, only a year after his father's death, he did homage to the king and received seisin of all his lands.[5] We know that his parents were not married before 13 January 1235, for

---

1. Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1266-72, p.514.
2. Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1292-1301, p.63.
3. Cal.Close Rolls, 1296-1302, p.47.
4. Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1247-58, p.419.
5. Cal.Close Rolls, 1254-56, p.369.

on that day Dionysia, 'que fuit uxor Walteri de Langeton', made a fine with the king for 200 marks, that she might marry whom she pleased. She paid half the amount at the time and found Warin de Munchensy as security for the payment of the other half the following Easter. It is safe, therefore, to date William de Munchensy's birth in October 1235, probably shortly before 20 October.

On 13 August 1247, Joan married William de Valence, the king's half brother.[1] Matthew Paris informs us that at the time of the marriage William de Valence was still very young and not yet a knight. The enfaunz whom Walter addresses may have included William de Valence as well. It is possible that the immediate occasion which prompted Lady Dionysia's request for the Treatise was the marriage of Joan to William de Valence. This evidence links the manual with the elder Walter de Bibbesworth and dates it to the decade 1240-50 and almost certainly not later than 1250.

This lengthy discussion of the date of the work is important when we consider the French language in England during these centuries. Bibbesworth's Treatise was written fifty years earlier than had been thought until recently. As time went on, there was a conscious effort to retain the use of the French language in England. Higden, writing about the middle of the fourteenth century, tells us that English was then neglected because children were compelled to 'construe their lessons in Frenssh' and because 'uplandishmen will counterfete and likene themself to gentilmen and are besy to speke frensshe for to be more sette by'.[2] At Oxford the grammar masters were enjoined to teach the boys to construe in English and French 'so that the latter language be not forgotten'.[3] Bibbesworth's Treatise was soon imitated. An anonymous writer of a tract at the beginning of the fourteenth century found it necessary to make the interlinear English gloss much fuller than Bibbesworth had done, thus indicating that French had become more of a foreign language in the interval between the two works.[4]

---

1. Chronica Maiora, iv (Rolls Series, 1877), p.628.
2. Cited by Lambley, op.cit., p.15; see also B.M.H. Strang, A History of English (London, 1970), p.219.
3. Munimenta Academica, ii, ed. H. Anstey (Rolls Series, 1868), p.438.
4. Lambley, op.cit., p.16.

So much for the date and significance of Bibbesworth's Treatise; we must now turn to its subject matter. A. Owen believes that Walter Bibbesworth prepared an edition of the manual for Dionysia, and a second one for the public.[1] She draws attention to the fact that the lessons in the 'public' edition were clearer than those in the edition addressed to Dionysia - possibly reflecting corrections made when the work was revised. Essentially, however, the subject matter remained the same. Bibbesworth begins with the new born child, tells how it should be nursed and fed, and then proceeds to describe the parts of the body (1-182). In this, as in other parts of the Treatise, the author tries to show the learner the distinction between words which are similar in sound but have different meanings, and between those words of nearly similar meaning.[2] The description of the body itself is followed by a list of the different items of clothing (183-94). The author then returns to the way a child should be brought up and what its diet should be (195-214). The scholar is introduced to various activities to increase his vocabulary and Bibbesworth describes the building of a house and scenes in domestic life. The Treatise closes with the description of a great feast and this gives the author the opportunity to use some elaborate vocabulary.

(b) The Dialogue with Henry Lacy

Walter Bibbesworth's Treatise is the work for which he is best known, but he also wrote the Dialogue, on the subject of the Crusade, with Henry Lacy, earl of Lincoln. Lacy, who was born probably in the latter part of 1249 and succeeded his father in 1257, had by the close of his life established himself at the forefront of the nobility through age and wealth and through his political experience.[3]

---

1. Owen, op.cit., pp.32-4.
2. See A Volume of Vocabularies, ed. T. Wright (Newport, 1857), p.xii.
3. J.R.S. Phillips, Aymer de Valence (Oxford, 1972), p.19.

At the time of the Crusade in 1270, Henry Lacy had taken the Cross, but, according to the poem,[1] he says 'ja ne mi quer departir' (l.6), because of his love for a lady. It is known that Walter Bibbesworth did take part in this expedition,[2] and he makes an effort to persuade Lacy to go. He likens love to a

> 'chevrefoil
> Qe en destreignaunt fait setchir
> Le plus bel arbre de un haut broil.' (ll.14-16)

Bibbesworth says that the tree may be cured if the honey suckle is cut down close to the ground. The branches will then blossom and the wood become healthy once more. In the same way, the earl of Lincoln should follow his advice in this matter and cut out his love for a lady. T. Wright and J. Halliwell date the poem to c.1300.[3] This date cannot be correct if Baugh is right in believing that Walter Bibbesworth died about 1280. It would seem logical to suggest that the poem was written close to the event and therefore not long after 1270. On the other hand, this assumes that the poem was written by the elder Walter Bibbesworth, the author of the Treatise. It is not inconceivable, though unlikely, that the poem was written by Walter, son of the elder Walter Bibbesworth. J.C. Russell drew attention to an attestation of a document of Henry Lacy's by Walter Bybbesworth on 1 October 1302.[4] Henry Lacy was himself a witness to a grant concerning Bibbesworth on 4 August 1301.[5] There is not a great deal of evidence to go on, but it is not impossible that Henry Lacy was patron to the younger Walter, and certainly there was some connection between them. On the whole, however, it seems logical to date the poem nearer to 1270 and to regard this, along with the Treatise and the poems, as one of the elder Walter's compositions.

---

1. Bodleian Library, MS. Fairfax 24, fos.19-20. The text is printed in Reliquae Antiquae, i, ed. T. Wright and J. Halliwell (London, 1841), pp.134-6.
2. See above, p.245. See also B. Beebe, 'The English baronage and the Crusade of 1270', Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, xlviii (1975), 138.
3. Reliquae Antiquae, i, p.134.
4. Russell, Dictionary of Writers, pp.175-6.
5. Cal.Close Rolls, 1296-1302, p.504.

(c) Henry Lacy as patron of literature and learning

Henry Lacy's connection with Walter Bibbesworth is especially interesting in the light of Lincoln's position as a patron of literature and of learning. M.D. Legge has discussed Henry Lacy's role as the sponsor of the author of 'Le Petit Bruit'[1] which survives only in a seventeenth-century copy and appears to be independent of the other Bruts known to us. The introduction states that it was written by 'Rauf de Boun', who, at the 'requeste Monseignur Henry de Lacy, count de Nichole, cente chose ad novelment abbregge hors du Grant Bruit'. M.D. Legge suggests that although attempts to establish Rauf's identity have failed, he may well have been one of the Bohun family, who were earls of Hereford and Essex, and served as constables of England.[2]

Henry Lacy not only had links with writers such as Walter de Bibbesworth and Ralph de Bohun, he also appears to have been interested in education in Oxford. Wood mentions a college founded by Henry Lacy about 1306 at Oxford.[3] According to the Patent Rolls on 22 July 1306, licence was given after an inquisition ad quod damnum for the alienation in mortmain by Henry de Lacy to thirteen scholars, dwelling in a house in Oxford to be built by the earl, of the advowson of the churches of Waddington, Thoresby and Halton-on-Trent, in Lincolnshire, and Buckby, in Northamptonshire, which he held in chief.[4] We have no record of this college. It seems clear that Henry Lacy did become a benefactor, however, as the university calendar includes the notice of a mass to be said for Henry on 17 December each year.[5] An early will of the earl of Lincoln's in 1286 mentions a payment of £100 to the 'poures escolers de Oxon' and another payment, at the discretion of the executors, to the poor clerks of

---

1. M.D. Legge, Anglo-Norman Literature and its Background (Oxford, 1963), pp.280-1.
2. Ibid., p.283; see also, M.D. Legge, 'The Brut abridged', Medium Aevum, xvi (1947), 32-3.
3. A. Wood, The History and Antiquities of the Colleges and Halls in the University of Oxford (Oxford, 1786), p.650.
4. Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1301-1307, p.455.
5. Munimenta Academica, i, ed. H. Anstey (Rolls Series, 1868), p.cl.

Cambridge.[1] It seems most likely that he was the founder of the Lincoln Chest, one of a number of loan chests at Oxford, although the size and date of Lacy's grant are unknown.

It is still impossible to determine exactly what the link was between Walter Bibbesworth and Henry Lacy, although the Dialogue clearly suggests some form of relationship between them. Bibbesworth's career shows us something of the links between author and patron and suggests that literary composition was not the prerogative only of clerks and a professional literary 'class'. Henry Lacy's career indicates that he was one of the earliest nobles to show interest in the universities.

### 3. Guy Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, and his gift of books to Bordesley Abbey

K.B. McFarlane drew attention to Guy Beauchamp, earl of Warwick's claim to be called bene literatus.[2] Even T.F. Tout, who had a low opinion of the intelligence of the English nobility as a whole at this time, claimed for Warwick a considerable knowledge, gained from a supposedly good education. He wrote 'This aspect of Guy of Warwick, combined with his treachery, reminds us of the cultivated aristocratic ruffians of the Renascence'.[3]

The interest in Earl Guy is well founded. Firstly, it is clear from the chronicles that he was regarded as a wise and literate man. Secondly, we have the record of his loan of books to Bordesley Abbey in Worcestershire.[4] This record is more significant for our purposes than Beauchamp's will, which contains a reference only to chapel books.

Guy Beauchamp was born about 1273. He was knighted in 1296[5] and was one of the younger earls at the accession of Edward II in 1307, being then about thirty-four (Lincoln was fifty-six, Richmond forty-one, while Hereford was thirty-one,

---

1. Nottingham: Nottinghamshire County Record Office, Foljambe MSS., Lincs. (iii,4).
2. K.B. McFarlane, The Nobility of Later Medieval England (Oxford, 1973), pp.234-5.
3. T.F. Tout, The Place of the Reign of Edward II in English History (2nd edn., Manchester, 1936), p.16.
4. See above, cap.V, pp.199-200.
5. Annales Monastici, ed. H.R. Luard, iv (Rolls Series, 1869), p.526.

and Lancaster about twenty-nine).[1] By 1308, the chroniclers mention that Warwick was among those magnates in opposition to the king and he was one of the Ordainers in 1310.[2] It is in relation to the Ordinances that the author of the Vita Edwardi Secundi, in his lament on Warwick's death in 1315, praises Warwick's intelligence. He says that it was 'consilio eius (et) ingenii ordinationes prodierunt', and adds 'in prudentia et consilio non habuit similem'.[3] The other chroniclers confirm this view. Guisborough describes him as 'providus' and 'discretus', and later as 'strenuissimus', adding that all England mourned his death.[4] The lively exchange between Gaveston and Warwick is, likely as not, apocryphal, but it may suggest something about the sharpness of the earl of Warwick.[5] The Lanercost Chronicle records how Gaveston called Warwick the 'Black Dog of Arden', and again, Beauchamp is described in this situation as a man of wisdom and integrity.[6]

At any rate, in 1311, according to Trokelowe, Henry Lacy, earl of Lincoln, on his deathbed, commended the advice and wisdom of the earl of Warwick to Thomas of Lancaster. He enjoins Lancaster to adhere to his advice 'indubitanter' and says that (Warwick) 'prae caeteris paribus suis sano consilio et maturitate pollet'.[7] This episode is, again, probably apocryphal, but it is surely significant that Trokelowe thought that the dying earl might have spoken these words.

It is the London chronicler who specifically refers to Warwick as bene literatus.[8] In his lament for Warwick's death in 1315, the chronicler describes

---

1. J.R. Maddicott, Thomas of Lancaster (Oxford, 1970), pp.67-8.
2. Annales Londonienses in Chronicles of the Reigns of Edward I and Edward II, ed. W. Stubbs (Rolls Series, 1882), i, p.172.
3. Vita Edwardi Secundi, ed. N. Denholm-Young (London, 1957), pp.62-4.
4. Chronicle of Walter of Guisborough, ed. H. Rothwell (Camden Society, third ser., lxxxix, 1957), pp.365, 397.
5. Flores Historiarum, ed. H.R. Luard (Rolls Series, 1890), iii, p.152.
6. Chronicle of Lanercost, ed. and trans. H. Maxwell (Glasgow, 1913), p.194.
7. Johannis de Trokelowe et Henrici de Blaneforde Chronica et Annales, ed. H.T. Riley (Rolls Series, 1866), p.73.
8. Annales Londonienses, p.236.

him as 'homo discretus et bene literatus, per quem totum regnum Angliae sapientia praefulgebat'. After these commendations Guy Beauchamp's will comes as a disappointment. The only books it mentions are 'les livres del nostre chapele'.[1] Other Beauchamp wills also contain only one or two references to books although significantly the will in 1268 of William de Beauchamp, Guy's grandfather, does mention a 'book of Lancelot' bequeathed to his daughter Joan, which may correspond to the book in Guy's possession.[2] What did the London chronicler mean, therefore, when he described Beauchamp as bene literatus? Fourteenth-century bishops like Robert Stretton, John Buckingham and William Wickham were considered illiterate because they had no university degree. Although Warwick had not attended the schools, it is more than likely that he had been well-grounded in Latin grammar.[3] A clear indication that 'literatus' implies Latinity comes in 1300 when Magna Carta was to be read in Westminster Hall, 'prius litteraliter, deinde patria lingua'.[4]

We have an excellent additional source for gaining an impression of Beauchamp's literary tastes. A seventeenth-century copy of Beauchamp's donation of books to the Cistercian Abbey of Bordesley in Worcestershire survives.[5] H.H. Todd mistook the date of the bequest for the 34th year of Edward III's reign, that is to say, 1360. M. Blaess has shown that the donation is to be dated to 1305 and was made, therefore, by the Guy Beauchamp we have been discussing, who died in 1315.[6] That Beauchamp should have made some form of

---

1. The will can be found in Bodleian MS. Dugdale 12, pp.478-9. There is an abstract in Testamenta Vetusta, ed. N.H. Nicolas, i (London, 1826), pp.53-4.
2. Test.Vet., i, p.51.
3. McFarlane, Nobility, p.235.
4. Willelmi Rishanger Chronica et Annales, ed. H.T. Riley (Rolls Series, 1865), p.405.
5. Lambeth Palace Library, MS. Lambeth 577, fo.18b; the text is printed by M. Blaess in 'L'abbaye de Bordesley et les livres de Guy de Beauchamp', Romania, lxxviii (1957), 512-14. H.H. Todd, in Illustrations of Chaucer and Gower (London, 1810), pp.161-2, prints only the list of books and this was recopied with inaccuracies by E. Edwards, Memoirs of Libraries (Newport, 1885), i, p.210.
6. Blaess, op.cit., 512.

bequest to Bordesley is not surprising. The Cistercian Abbey of Bordesley was founded in 1136 or 1138 and the Beauchamp family had always been closely associated with it. A certain 'Willielmus de Bellocampo' had been one of the witnesses of the foundation charter and his descendants had been liberal in their gifts.[1] Guy himself had bestowed upon the monks of Bordesley the advowson of the church of Wickwar, near Stroud, in Gloucestershire, and he and his heirs were granted the right of presenting two monks to the convent who were to sing mass daily in the church for the health of his soul.[2]

The books given to Bordesley can roughly be divided into five categories:

| | |
|---|---|
| Works of a religious nature | 19 |
| Epic legends | 9 |
| Courtly romances | 7 |
| Books of instruction | 5 |
| Historical works | 3 |

It is clear that the 'religious works' form the greatest part of the earl's library. Among them appear a psalter, a book of Genesis, a book of the Passion, and an Apocalypse. There is also a copy of the Meditations of St Bernard on the Virgin and the Passion and a copy of the Childhood of Christ. Above all, the lives of the saints are well represented; the Lives of the Fathers included the life of St Paul, St Peter, St Edward the Confessor,[3] St Eustace and St Nicholas. In addition there were lives of St Julian and St Guthlac. As M. Blaess points out, we do not know of a French life of St Guthlac, only of a Latin version.[4] Beauchamp also possessed two copies of the Venjance Nostre Seigneur, which combined the qualities of a religious work with those of a chanson de geste. We cannot be certain whether the 'volum Romaunce de Aygnes' was a romance version of the Life of St Agnes or a chanson de geste concerning Agnes, mistress of Hugh Capet.

---

1. Ibid., 511.
2. W. Dugdale, The Baronage of England (London, 1675), i, p.230.
3. Presumably the thirteenth-century life edited by H.R. Luard in Lives of Edward the Confessor (Rolls Series, 1858).
4. Blaess, op.cit., 516.

The second category of books, the epic legends, forms a less significant part of the library - but it is nonetheless a varied selection of books. It includes Doon de Nanteuil[1] (there were possibly two copies), Doon de Mayence, Girard de Vienne, Aimeri de Narbonne, Guy de Nanteuil, Fierabras. The 'Volum del Romaunce (de) Eaumond et de Agoland' has been identified as a copy of the Chanson D'Aspremont. The 'Romaunce de Willame de Orenges e de Tebaud de Arable', is such a vague title that it may refer to several chansons in the Guillaume d'Orange cycle. The Arthurian cycle is not well represented in the earl's library. We find the 'Roman de Joseph d'Arimathie', but there is no Merlin and only the first book of Launcelot. There is a copy of 'La Mort de Roi Artu' and of Amadas et Ydoine, written 1190-1220,[2] or possibly earlier. The Roman de Troie and the legend of Alexandre, complete the list of epics and romances.

Guy Beauchamp's tastes were not confined to religious works or courtly romances. He had some books on instruction, although admittedly this group is rather limited. It comprises a book on medicine, one on surgery, a book 'de la Enseignement Aristotle', and an 'Aprise des Enfants'. It is difficult to be precise about this last work. It was probably a general manual on manners, but it may have had a more specific purpose like Bibbesworth's Treatise on the French language.[3] The first book in the list, Tresor, has been identified as 'livres dou Tresor de Brunetto Latini'; this is one of the first mentions of this book in England.[4]

In the historical category, there is the Brut, the Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal and 'le Romaunce de Willame de Loungespe',[5] from which the earl might have learnt lessons on chivalry.

---

1. P. Meyer, 'La chanson de Doon de Nanteuil', Romania, xiii (1884), 1-24.
2. M.D. Legge, Anglo-Norman Literature and its Background (Oxford, 1963), p.109.
3. A.C. Baugh, 'The date of Walter of Bibbesworth's Traité', in Festschrift für Walther Fischer (Heidelburg, 1959), pp.21-33.
4. Edwards, Memoirs of Libraries, i, p.210.
5. The bastard son of Henry II, who became earl of Salisbury and died in 1226.

Perhaps the most interesting feature of the text of the donation is the fact that, at the end, Beauchamp mentions that the books have given him solace. The books are not to be 'venduz, ne donez, prestez, ne engagez ne en nul autre manere estre aleynez'. Warwick also made a provision for him and his heirs to have the right to borrow the books, which suggests beyond doubt that the books were read.

The library gives some indication, therefore, of the literary tastes of an educated nobleman at the beginning of the fourteenth century. We can see that there was an apparent absence of books in English and Latin and a preponderance of religious books. The earl of Warwick seems, in particular, to have enjoyed collecting saints' lives, a category of book also popular with the well-born circle for whom Matthew Paris wrote similar works.[1]

It would be valuable if we could show that Beauchamp's contemporaries had similar tastes. We know that Thomas of Lancaster borrowed a French bible from a clerk in York. On promising its return, shortly before Lancaster's execution, he told the clerk that he would find the volume in his treasury 'among his other books'.[2]

Guy Beauchamp's library is the largest collection of books belonging to a magnate that we know of before the age of Duke Humphrey. With this evidence and the repeated inferences of the chroniclers, we can with justification say that Earl Guy was bene literatus.

## 4. A fourteenth-century patroness: Elizabeth de Burgh, lady of Clare

Elizabeth de Burgh, lady of Clare, the foundress of Clare College, Cambridge, was the third daughter of Gilbert de Clare, ninth earl of Clare, and Princess Joan, the daughter of Edward I. She was born about 1292 and was stated to be aged around twenty in her brother's Inquisition post mortem, September 1314.

---

1. See R. Vaughan, Matthew Paris (Cambridge, 1958), p.13.
2. R.L. Atkinson, 'A French bible in England about the year 1322', Eng.Hist. Rev., xxxviii (1923), 248-9.

Her position as a patroness of scholars and as foundress of a college at Cambridge, can be understood more clearly in the context of her family background. After her three marriages (to John de Burgh, Theobald Verdun, and Roger Damory), Elizabeth found herself widowed for a third time in her late twenties, and she then settled down to a long and peaceful widowhood until her death in 1360.[1] The death of her brother, Gilbert de Clare, earl of Gloucester, who fell at Bannockburn, leaving no issue,[2] had placed the whole of the family estates, which were of a princely character, at the disposal of Elizabeth and her two older sisters.[3] Elizabeth de Clare and Roger Damory took the bulk of the honour of Clare in East Anglia, including the castle and manor of Clare and the pleas of the honour court, as well as Cranborne and other Dorset manors and boroughs. To these lands was added the unified lordship of Usk in 1320, when Gilbert de Clare's widow, Maud, died.[4] Although this inheritance gave the lady of Clare the means to endow a college at Cambridge, there can be no doubt that she had a genuine interest in education and that she 'maintained a high character for piety and love of learning'.[5] This is evident not only from her famous foundation of Clare Hall, but also from her patronage of scholars at school, at the King's Bench, and at the universities. Her friendship with another patroness of learning, Mary, countess of Pembroke, and her ownership of a considerable library also point to her personal interest in learning.

We may begin with her patronage of individual scholars. The size and complexity of the household of Elizabeth de Burgh called for skilled clerks to

---

1. M. Altschul, A Baronial Family in Medieval England: the Clares 1217-1314 (Baltimore, 1965), p.41; see also McFarlane on dowagers in Nobility, p.65.
2. See the account in, for example, the Vita Edwardi Secundi, pp.52-3.
3. Johannis de Trokelowe et Henrici de Blaneforde Chronica et Annales, p.86. The Complete Peerage, iii, p.245.
4. M. Altschul, A Baronial Family, p.170.
5. Dictionary of National Biography, iv, p.376.

administer it, while her many estates involved her in constant litigation needing the services of lawyers. Some of these, therefore, she provided herself from among the junior members of her establishment whom she had trained for that purpose.[1] These little clerks (clericuli) went to Cambridge or Oxford where a master was paid to teach them. They were taken there by a responsible member of the household and when the holidays came, they were carefully brought back to spend them with their benefactress. Some of these 'little clerks', named as Peter de Creswall, William Oxewyk, John Chekes, and Hugh de Colingham, studied law as apprentices at the King's Bench in London and drew their commons from the household. Their expenses were £3 15s 2½d in 1330-1.[2] Other members of the household received their patronage nearer home. The son of Hugh le Charens, a member of the household, was reported as being a person of some promise and so his school fees at Clare were ordered to be paid by the receiver there. From the Feast of St Gregory (12 March) to Michaelmas (1340-1), a payment of 5d a week was made and hence 12s 1d was paid towards this boy's education by the lady of Clare over the twenty-nine week period.[3]

Elizabeth de Burgh was conspicuous as a patroness, not only of scholars at home and in London, but also of men at Oxford and Cambridge. She is the only example of a member of the noble classes supporting more than one scholar at Oxford and Cambridge before 1500. Thomas Dounebriggs and John de Tewkesbury were supported by Elizabeth de Burgh at Oxford in 1331-2. Their master received a salary of 20s which brought their expenses up to £17 8s 2½d.[4] This was a considerable sum when it is considered that Eleanor of Provence, Henry III's queen, a patroness of some importance, paid Reginald de Irewyn less than £5 for maintenance between 8 September 1252 and 17 June 1253.[5] In 1314-15, the commons

---

1. Clare A. Musgrave, Household Administration in the Fourteenth Century with Special Reference to the Household of Elizabeth de Burgh, lady of Clare (unpublished M.A. thesis, London, 1923), p.14.
2. P.R.O. E 101/91/24, m.2; E 101/91/27, m.4.
3. P.R.O. E 101/459/24 for the year 1340-1.
4. P.R.O. E 101/91/27, m.4. See also A.B. Emden, A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford (Oxford, 1957), pp.588, 1857. See cap.IV, p.135.
5. B.R.U.O., p.1005. See cap.IV, p.134.

of John de Twykeham, a poor clerk at Oxford were charged at the rate of 40s 4d to the household expenses of Prince Edward.[1] The lady of Clare also appears to have been a patron to a friar at Cambridge, Walter de Bykerton. He was the sixty-seventh master at the Cambridge convent c.1347 and received 6s 8d in June and in August 1351 from Elizabeth de Burgh, probably for preaching.[2] Miss Clare Musgrave's thesis suggests that these clerks were absorbed back into the household of the lady of Clare. She provides no evidence for this but it is extremely likely that these educated men found a place in her household.

Elizabeth de Burgh's patronage of learning extended beyond support given to individual scholars. Her fame as a benefactress largely stems from her foundation of the college at Cambridge. Here her role has perhaps been exaggerated. The work of the lady of Clare was an additional endowment of a small college, known as 'University Hall' which the university itself had founded by royal licence for fifteen scholars in 1326.[3] The first mention of her name in connection with it occurs in March 1336, when she received permission to alienate in mortmain to the masters and scholars of the Hall of the University of Cambridge, the advowson of the church of Litlington in Cambridgeshire.[4] There is also a reference to this in the Exchequer accounts:[5] 'in expensis Magistri Ricardi de Pleseys et Domini Roberti de Stalyinton euntium de Angleseye usque Canterbrig' pro negotio domine tangenti appropriacionem Ecclesie de Lithyngton'. It used to be thought that Elizabeth de Burgh came to the assistance of the moribund University Hall at the instigation of Richard de Badew. It is now considered more likely that it was Walter de Thaxted, the master of the hall,

---

1. P.R.O. E 101/376/7.
2. J.R.H. Moorman, The Grey Friars in Cambridge (Cambridge, 1952), pp.159-60. See also p.145 and A.B. Emden, A Biographical Register of the University of Cambridge (Cambridge, 1963), p.114.
3. Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1324-7, p.244. See also H. Rashdall, The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages (Oxford, 1936), iii, p.303; C.H. Cooper, Annals of Cambridge (Cambridge, 1842), i, p.92.
4. Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1334-8, p.237.
5. P.R.O. E 101/92/11, m.12.

who appealed to her for help. It may be significant that the charter of Elizabeth de Burgh, dated 8 April 1336, does not mention Master Richard de Badew.[1]

Three years later, with Queen Philippa, the Lady Elizabeth granted oaks from her park at Hundon in Suffolk to repair the houses of the scholars whom the king maintained at Cambridge,[2] and by 1346 her name was definitely given to the new foundation which was henceforth known as 'Clare Hall'.[3] In the same year, the advowson of Gransden Church was given to Clare Hall and two other parish churches, at Debsworth and Wransby in Lincolnshire, were also appropriated.[4] The lady of Clare's endowments in fact provided her new foundation with an income of about £60 per annum. This was a very reasonable sum when it is remembered that Edward III set aside about £103 per annum for the maintenance of the warden and thirty-two scholars of his new King's Hall, founded on 7 October 1337.[5] Elizabeth de Burgh received permission to build and found a chapel for the master and fifteen scholars of the Hall. But in 1364, probably as a result of the fire which had destroyed the buildings in 1362, there was no place in the house itself where mass could be celebrated, although most of the clerks were in priest's orders.[6]

So much for the material endowments - in 1359, lady de Clare formally gave Clare Hall a body of statutes which were dated from her residence at Bardfield in Essex. The statutes are noteworthy in as much as they indicate a desire to restrict the benefits of her endowment in the main to the encouragement of education for its own sake and not to provide means to equip the recipients for a professional career in law and medicine. The main features of these statutes

---

1. A.C. Chibnall, Richard de Badew and the University of Cambridge 1315-40 (Cambridge, 1963), pp.38-9.
2. 10 May 1339, Cal.Close Rolls, 1339-41, pp.82-3.
3. Cal.Pat. Rolls, 1345-8, pp.135-6.
4. Cal.Papal Registers: Papal Letters, iii, 1342-62, p.253.
5. Chibnall, Richard de Badew, p.41.
6. Cal.Papal Registers, 1362-1402, p.361.

were that the college was always to be governed by a Master who was to be chosen by the Fellows. Of the twenty fellows, six were to be in priest's orders at the time of their admission, while the rest were to be students of the Arts or students of civil or canon law. There were also always to be ten poor scholars 'Docile, proper and respectable', and these youths were to be chosen from the parishes where the Masters and Fellows were Rectors. Their education was to consist in cantu, grammatica et dialectica.[1] Every Michaelmas, these poor scholars were entitled to receive clothing and necessaries to the value of half a mark and they could remain in residence until the completion of their twentieth year, when, unless elected to fellowships, they were to withdraw from the foundation.[2]

The statutes were drawn up in 1359, a year before the lady of Clare's death on 4 November 1360. Her will, dated at Clare on 25 September 1358 and proved 3 December 1360, testifies to her continuing interest in the college through her endowment of books and money. It also reflects her personal reading tastes. She left £40 to the college, various vestments and ornaments and her books:[3]

> Deux bons antiphoners chescun ove un grayel en mesme le volum
> 1 bone legende
> 1 bone messale bien note.
> 1 autre messal covert de blank quir.
> 1 bone Bible covert de noir quir.
> 1 hugucion (Hugutio or Hugh de Vercellis, Bishop of Terrara, an important writer on the Decretals).
> 1 legende Sanctorum.
> 1 poire de decretals.
> 1 livre des questions.
> XXX11 quaiers d'un livre appelle, de causa Dei contra Pelagianos.

It can be seen that according to the evidence of her will, Elizabeth's library contained no lighter reading than the 'legend of the saints'. She had a good bible and a missal 'well noted', graduals, antiphonaries, works on canon law and a treatise 'De causa Dei contra Pelagianos' (one of the works of St Augustine).

---

1. Wardale, Clare College (London, 1899), pp.6-10; see also Clare College 1326-1926, ed. M.D. Forbes, i (Cambridge, 1928).
2. J.B. Mullinger, The University of Cambridge from the Earliest Times to the Royal Injunctions (Cambridge, 1873), pp.251-2.
3. Elizabeth de Burgh's will is printed in Nichols, Royal Wills (London, 1780) and the section of it relevant to Clare Hall is on pp.30-1.

Elizabeth de Burgh's will also provides evidence of her friendship with Mary of Saint Paul, countess of Pembroke, who was ten years her junior. This friendship may have been instrumental in stimulating the lady of Clare's interest in education, particularly as both women founded colleges at Cambridge. Elizabeth bequeathed a ring to her in her will.[1] She had a continuing association with Mary, stopping or dining with her a number of times between 1327 and 1350.[2] At about the same time as Mary was founding her college, she went as far as Usk to stay with the lady of Clare in September and October 1348.[3] We have only one side of the evidence; had the countess of Pembroke's accounts survived, we might have known more of this friendship. We find on one occasion (October 1327) Elizabeth on her way to Anstey and the two women seem to have exchanged gifts from time to time.[4] The friendship may suggest the possible influence that Elizabeth and Mary had on each other in their interests in education. Elizabeth de Burgh's association with Clare Hall began ten years before the foundation of Pembroke College. On the other hand, the statutes for Clare Hall were drawn up thirteen years after those for Pembroke College and they may have been influenced by them.[5]

Undoubtedly it was the nature of Elizabeth de Burgh's inheritance which enabled her to patronise scholars and found a college at Cambridge. But her friendship with another patroness of learning, her own collection of books, and the fact that she patronised more scholars than anyone else among the noble classes in the period before 1500, indicate that she had a genuine interest in education. She did 'maintain a high character for...love of learning' and is to be reckoned as one of the most influential patronesses in the fourteenth century.

---

1. Nichols, Royal Wills, p.37.
2. H. Jenkinson, 'Mary de Sancto Paulo, foundress of Pembroke College, Cambridge', Archaeologia, lxvi (1914-15), 428.
3. P.R.O. E 101/93/2.
4. e.g. Robes for Christmas (P.R.O. E 101/91/24, m.2). Various mentions of gifts and of messengers sent to Fotheringay occur in P.R.O. E 101/92/7, 9, and 27 and 94/1, mm.3, 5.
5. For details of these, see Jenkinson, op.cit., 423.

## CONCLUSIONS

When we find that as recently as 1975, James Bowen, writing of the medieval period, in his History of Western Education,[1] expresses the view that 'the nobility had little concern with academic learning in any form', we realise that the concept of an uneducated medieval aristocracy in this country dies hard. The idea derives primarily from the nature of the sources, which in many instances, are fragmentary, scattered and difficult to use. Because of the marked increase in the extent of the source material, it is clearly much easier to write about the period after 1300 than it is about the period before that date.

But does all this really support the view that the medieval nobility were, in fact, uneducated? It is significant that in those few cases where extensive family records over the whole period have survived they reveal patterns of education, similar to one another, while the fragmentary evidence from other sources appears to fit into those patterns. These records, together with the evidence that we have for book-ownership and educational patronage, can leave little doubt that throughout the period 1150 to 1450 many nobles placed great value on education and made careful plans for the upbringing of their children. Some noblemen, like Simon de Montfort in the thirteenth century or the De la Pole family in the fifteenth, made arrangements for their children to be educated in the household of an important ecclesiastic. Others, like Humphrey de Bohun or Henry Bolingbroke in the fourteenth century, employed magistri and magistre within the household or sent their children out to other noble families. The association of the Berkeley family with the Cistercian house of St Mary, Kingswood, led to the education of one of the Berkeley sons at the abbey and subsequently at Oxford. The indications are that there was a variety of educational opportunities which were exploited by the nobility throughout the period.

---

1. J. Bowen, A History of Western Education, ii (London, 1975), p.25.

The importance that nobles attached to education is suggested not only by the variety of educational arrangements they made, but also by the relatively large sums of money which they were prepared to spend on it. Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford, for instance, made bequests of £10 and £20 to his children's *magistri*. Tutors or governesses held in high esteem, like Mary Hervy in Bolingbroke's household, often received life grants. In addition, there were noble men and women who became patrons of educational causes, and supported, for example, colleges and schools. In some cases, there is no doubt that this patronage was an example of charitable giving rather than of an interest in education *per se*. On the other hand, the fact that patronesses such as Mary, countess of Pembroke, and Elizabeth, lady of Clare, left money and specific books to their colleges at Cambridge and retained an interest in the election of fellows, suggests an interest in education for its own sake.

Why should nobles have been concerned about education? They may have seen it as a *moral* necessity. There is no shortage of literature theorising on the ideal education of a nobleman, and there are many treatises, such as the *De Eruditione Filiorum* of Vincent de Beauvais, emphasising the moral value of education. Courtesy books were written for well-born youths, and gave details of a page's service, mingled with more general moral precepts.

But education must have had its practical uses as well, even though this is often difficult to detect from the evidence. Unfortunately, the kind of books which would throw light on this aspect - treatises on estate management or law books - rarely appear in noble inventories or wills, presumably because they were not considered worthy of mention there. Clearly, the nobility needed the administrative expertise for which literacy would have been a prerequisite, in order to run their vast estates. It would be absurd to believe that a magnate took no personal interest in the management of his own land: if he had left it without supervision to be run by his ministers he would soon have found that it would be run in their interests rather than his own. The practical value of education may also be indicated by the extent to which capable kings

placed reliance on the services of leading magnates. A good many nobles were required to do much more than just listen and assent - they formed part of the royal administration itself.

There is evidence to show that education was seen by the aristocracy as a means of acquiring knowledge for its own sake, or as a source of consolation or of entertainment. The large number of historical works and political treatises bequeathed to noble sons suggests that a knowledge of history and politics was thought to be desirable, and this could only be acquired through education. There can be no doubt that the ability to read gave noblemen life-long rewards. Hubert de Burgh in the 1230s was said to have been deprived of the 'pleasure' of reading his psalter, while the earl of Warwick was able to comment in 1305 on the consolation he had derived from his library of over forty books.

Just as it can be seen that the nobility had a real concern for education, so it is possible to detect the changes in the pattern and place of education that took place over the period 1150 to 1450. The royal and noble households were the most important places of education for noble sons and daughters over the whole period, with the magistri and magistre as the most significant figures in their training. In the period before 1200 a nobleman might have been educated in the monasteries, but after that date the practice appears to have become much less common, due no doubt to the declining reputation of the monasteries and the development of other educational opportunities. By the fifteenth century there are more recorded instances of noblemen at universities and schools, and even a few examples at the Inns of Court, suggesting that by then the educational opportunities for the nobility were widening.

It will be seen that the relative importance of moral, or practical, or consolatory considerations as factors which might influence the nobleman's pursuit of education is extremely difficult to assess. It is equally difficult to see what effect education had on the adult private lives of the aristocracy, even though the 'vestiges' of education are often more easily detected than is the process of instruction itself. This study has shown that, from the wills

and inventories examined, over one-third of the nobility owned books and that noble women, in particular, were considered worthy recipients. Does the content of noble libraries suggest anything about the history of aristocratic literary taste over the period 1150 to 1450? It could be argued that, although religious works predominated, noble taste throughout the period was extremely varied, with collections containing books ranging from bibles to popular romances, didactic works and histories. But there were some changes: a proliferation in the number of service books owned in the late fourteenth century reflected, no doubt, the increasing importance of personal religion and the private chapel, and related developments, such as the foundation of chantries; and in the fifteenth century, there was an interest in classical history and the translations of Aristotelian texts. On the whole, however, the classical revival had made little impact by 1450 and noble book collections reflect, if anything, the conservatism of noble reading habits: saints' lives and romances remained popular throughout. The effect of the language change from French to English was relatively unimportant. In the fifteenth century the nobility was reading much the same kind of material as it was in the twelfth century but in another language. Towards the end of the period, romances and saints' lives were among the first works to go into print, and in this way the printing press became the vehicle for the downward transmission of noble taste and culture.

Some of the influences which determined the composition of noble libraries may have been those that also encouraged noblemen to write or to become patrons of literature. The devotional treatise of Henry Grosmont, duke of Lancaster, in the mid-fourteenth century was the most remarkable literary work produced during the period by a member of the aristocracy. Not every nobleman was writing devotional poetry, but the examples of works penned by the aristocracy do represent a considerable achievement.

Motives for literary patronage were diverse, combining family glorification with prestige, fashion, taste, and genuine enjoyment of literature. When, in the twelfth century and the late fourteenth century the court was literary,

aristocratic patronage also thrived. The late fourteenth century can also be seen as a time when more general intellectual developments, such as the growth of lay literacy, interest in spiritual literature, and the increasing opportunities at school and university exercised a common influence on both the court and the nobility.

There were always nobles who preferred such pursuits as gaming, hunting and military accomplishments to the delights of a literary education. But there were also noblemen who became well-known for their learning: some, as Guy Beauchamp, Thomas of Woodstock and Duke Humphrey, became book collectors, and some, such as Henry Lacy, earl of Lincoln, were patrons of education. Without question these men were heavily involved in the public affairs of their day and they brought to their work minds that had been educated.

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

The main manuscripts outside the Public Record Office have been briefly described, and where no description has been given, it may be assumed that the manuscript consists of a collection of deeds, letters or miscellaneous material.

## A. MANUSCRIPT SOURCES

### (i) Public Record Office, London


Chancery

C 47 (Chancery Miscellanea)
C 146 (Ancient Deeds)

Duchy of Lancaster

DL 28 (Accounts Various)
DL 29 (Ministers' Accounts)
DL 41 (Miscellanea)
DL 42 (Miscellaneous Books)

Exchequer

E 36 (Exchequer Books)
E 101 (King's Remembrancer, Accounts Various)
E 154 (Inventories of Goods and Chattels)
E 163 (Miscellanea)
E 404 (Warrants for Issue)

Special Collections

SC 1 Ancient Correspondence
SC 6 Ministers' Accounts


### (ii) Bodleian Library, Oxford


MS. Bodley 9
MS. Bodley 39
MS. Bodley 425
MS. Dugdale 12
MS. Dugdale 14
MS. Fairfax 24
MS. Lat.Liturg. d.41
MS. Tanner 197 (Wardrobe Book 1311-12)
MS. Rubbings P/R 277, 278

(iii) British Library

Add. MS. 35294 (Wardrobe expenses 1289-91)
Add. MS. 7965 (Wardrobe Book 1296-7)
Add. MS. 7966A ( " " 1300-1)
Add. MS. 8835 ( " " 1303-4)
Add. MS. 37656 ( " " 1305)
Add. MS. 22923 ( " " 1306-7)
Add. MS. 35 093 ( " " 1307-8)
Add. MS. 32050 ( " " 1310-11)
Add. MS. 18632 (Household accounts of Elizabeth, countess of Ulster, 1356-9)
Add. MS. 34484 (Accounts of receipts and expenses of Richard, Abbot of Ramsey, 1355-6)
Add. MS. 24062 (Hoccleve's formulary)

Cotton MSS:
Galba E.III (Queen's wardrobe book, 1332)
Galba E.XIV (Dowager Queen Isabella's Household Book, 1358)
Cotton. Ch. xi.16

Egerton Roll 8776 (Household accounts of dowager duchess of Suffolk, 1416)
Stowe Ch. 622 (Will of Sir Fulk de Penebrugge, 1325)

(iv) East Sussex Record Office, Lewes

Glynde MS. 3469 (Household accounts of John of Gaunt 1381-94)

(v) Elveden Hall, Elveden, Suffolk

Iveagh Collection: Cornwallis MS., Box 9, no.4

(vi) Lambeth Palace Library, London

The Register of Simon Islip
The Register of William Whittlesey
The Register of Simon Sudbury
The Register of William Courtenay
The Registers of Thomas Arundel
The Register of John Stafford
The Register of John Kemp

(vii) Magdalen College, Oxford

Multon Hall Deeds 160

(viii) Nottinghamshire County Record Office, Nottingham

Foljambe MS. Lincs. (iii, 4) (An early will (1286) of Henry Lacy, earl of Lincoln)

(ix) Society of Antiquaries Library, London

MS. 119 (Wardrobe Book, 1299)

MS. 120 (Wardrobe Book, 1316-17)

MS. 121 (Wardrobe Book, 1317-18)

(x) Somerset Record Office, Taunton

Luttrell MS., Box 37, no.10 (Household accounts of the Luttrells of Dunster, 1424)

(xi) Staffordshire Record Office, Stafford

D. 641/1/2/5

(xii) Westminster Abbey Muniments

No. 6625 Inventory of Sir Thomas de Charleton (1465)

No. 6630 Inventory of Sir Thomas de Charleton (1465)

No. 6643 Inventory of John Holland, duke of Exeter (1447)

No. 12163 Household Book of Thomas, duke of Clarence (1418-21)

B. PRINTED SOURCES

(i) PRIMARY SOURCES

Adae Murimuth Continuatio Chronicarum, ed. E.M. Thompson (Rolls Series, 1889)

Anecdota Literaria, ed. T. Wright (London, 1844)

Anglo-Norman Alexander, ed. B. Foster (Anglo-Norman Text Society, 1976)

Anglo-Norman Letters and Petitions, ed. M.D. Legge (Anglo-Norman Text Society, no.3, 1941)

Annales Monastici, ed. H.R. Luard, 4 vols (Rolls Series, 1864-9)

Antient Kalendars and Inventories of the Treasury of the Exchequer, ed. F. Palgrave, 3 vols (London, 1836)

The Beauchamp Chartulary & Charters 1100-1268, ed. E. Mason (Pipe Roll Society, new ser., xliii, 1980)

Bevis of Hampton, ed. F. Kölbing (E.E.T.S., 1885-94)

The Boke of Curtasye, ed. J.O. Halliwell (Percy Society, iv, 1841)

The Boke of Noblesse, ed. J.G. Nichols (Roxburghe Club, 1860)

The Book Named the Governor, ed. S.E. Lehmberg (Everyman Library, 1962)

The Book of Fayttes of Armes and of Chyvalrye, ed. A.T.P. Byles (E.E.T.S., 1937)

The Book of the Knight of La Tour-Landry, ed. T. Wright (E.E.T.S., 1868)

The Book of the Ordre of Chyvalry, ed. A.T.P. Byles (E.E.T.S., 1926)

The Book of Vices and Virtues, ed. W.N. Francis (E.E.T.S., 1942)

Calendar of Close Rolls

Calendar of Fine Rolls

Calendar of Patent Rolls

Calendar of Wills Proved and Enrolled in the Court of Husting , ed. R.R. Sharpe, 2 vols (London, 1889-90)

Chaucerian and Other Pieces, ed. W.W. Skeat (Oxford, 1897)

Chronica Rogeri de Hoveden, ed. W. Stubbs, iii (Rolls Series, 1870)

Chronicle of Pierre de Langtoft, ed. T. Wright, i (Rolls Series, 1866)

Chronicle of Walter of Guisborough, ed. H. Rothwell (Camden Society, third ser., lxxxix, 1957)

Chronicles of the Reigns of Edward I and Edward II, ed. W. Stubbs, 2 vols. (Rolls Series, 1882)

Chronicon Abbatiae Rameseiensis, ed. W.D. Macray (Rolls Series, 1886)

Chronicon de Lanercost, ed. J. Stevenson (Edinburgh, 1839)

Chronicon Monasterii de Abingdon, ed. J. Stevenson, ii (Rolls Series, 1858)

Collectanea Anglo-Premonstratensia, ed. F.A. Gasquet, iii (Camden Society, third ser., xii, 1906)

A Collection of All the Wills Now Known to be Extant of the Kings and Queens of England, ed. J. Nichols (London, 1780)

The Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, ed. W. Skeat, iv (Oxford, 1894)

The Court and Household of Eleanor of Castile in 1290, ed. J.C. Parsons (Toronto, 1977)

De Laudibus Legum Anglie, ed. S.B. Chrimes (Cambridge, 1942)

De Recuperatione Terrae Sanctae ... par Pierre Dubois, ed. E. Langlois (Paris, 1891)

De Speculo Regis Edwardi III, ed. J. Moisant (Paris, 1891)

Dugdale, W., Monasticon Anglicanum, ed. J. Caley, H. Ellis and B. Bandinel, 6 vols. in 8 (London, 1817-30)

Early Yorkshire Charters, ed. W. Farrer, ii (Edinburgh, 1915)

Einhard: The Life of Charlemagne, ed. and trans. L. Thorpe (Penguin Classics, 1969)

The English Register of Godstow Nunnery, ed. A. Clark, i (E.E.T.S., cxxix, 1905)

Epistle of Othea to Hector, ed. G.F. Warner (London, 1904)

Epistolae Academicae Oxon., ed. H. Anstey, 2 vols (Oxford Historical Society, xxxv, 1898)

The Essential Portions of Nicholas Upton's De Studio Militari, ed. F.P. Barnard (Oxford, 1931)

A Fifteenth-Century Courtesy Book, ed. R.W. Chambers (E.E.T.S., 1914)

The Fifty Earliest English Wills in the Court of Probate, 1387-1439, ed. F.J. Furnivall (E.E.T.S., lxxviii, 1882)

Flores Historiarum, ed. H.R. Luard, 3 vols (Rolls Series, 1890)

Floris and Blaunchflour, ed. G. McKnight (E.E.T.S., 1901)

Four English Political Tracts of the Later Middle Ages, ed. J-P. Genet (Camden Society, fourth ser., xviii, 1977)

Froissart Chroniques, ed. K. de Lettenhove (Brussels, 1867-77)

Gesta Abbatum Monasterii Sancti Albani, ed. H.T. Riley, i-iii (Rolls Series, 1867-9)

Giraldi Cambrensis Opera Omnia, ed. J. Brewer, iv (Rolls Series, 1873), ed. J.F. Dimock, vi (Rolls Series, 1868), ed. G.F. Warner, viii (Rolls Series, 1891)

The Good Wife Taught Her Daughter, ed. T.F. Mustanoja (Helsinki, 1948)

Guy of Warwick, ed. J. Zupita (E.E.T.S., extra ser., xlii, 1883)

Henrici Archidiaconi Huntendunensis Historia Anglorum, ed. T. Arnold (Rolls Series, 1870)

L'Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal, ed. P. Meyer, 3 vols (Paris, 1891-1901)

Historical MSS. Commission 8th report, i, pt III (1909)

The Historical Works of Gervase of Canterbury, ed. W. Stubbs, i (Rolls Series, 1879)

Hoccleve's Works: The Minor Poems, ed. F.J. Furnivall (E.E.T.S., extra ser., lxi, 1892)

Hoccleve's Works: The Regement of Princes, ed. F.J. Furnivall (E.E.T.S., lxxii, 1897)

The Household Book of Queen Isabella of England, ed. F.D. Blackley (Alberta, 1971)

How The Wyse Man Taught Hys Sone, ed. R. Fischer (Erlangen, 1889)

Johannis de Trokelowe et Henrici de Blaneforde Chronica et Annales, ed. H.T. Riley (Rolls Series, 1866)

Johannis Lelandi Collectanea, ed. T. Hearne (London, 1715)

John of Gaunt's Register 1372-76, ed. S. Armitage-Smith, i (Camden Society, third ser., xxi, 1911)

John Skelton, Poetical Works, ed. A. Dyce (London, 1843)

King Ponthus and the Fair Sidone, ed. F.J. Mather, P.M.L.A., xii (1897)

King Robert of Sicily, ed. L.H. Hornstein, P.M.L.A., lxxviii (1963)

Knyghthode and Bataile, ed. R. Dyboski and Z.M. Arend (E.E.T.S., 1936)

Letters of Royal and Illustrious Ladies, ed. M.A.E. Green, ii (London, 1846)

Liber Eliensis, ed. E.O. Blake (Camden Society, third ser., xcii, 1962)

Liber Monasterii de Hyde, ed. E. Edwards (Rolls Series, 1866)

Liber Quotidianus Contrarotulatoris Garderobae Anno Regni Regis Edwardi Primi 28, ed. J. Topham (London, 1787)

Liber Regie Capelle, ed. W. Ullmann (Henry Bradshaw Society, xcii, 1961)

The Life of Aelred of Rievaulx, ed. F.M. Powicke (Oxford, 1950)

The Life of St Anselm, ed. R.W. Southern (Oxford, 1962)

Lincoln Diocesan Documents, 1450-1544, ed. A. Clark (E.E.T.S., 1914)

Le Livre de Seyntz Medicines, ed. E.J. Arnould (Anglo-Norman Text Society, ii, 1940)

Li Livres dou Tresour, ed. F.J. Carmody (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1948)

Li Livres du Gouvernement des Rois, ed. S.P. Molenaeur (New York, 1899)

Manners and Household Expenses of England in the Thirteenth and Fifteenth Centuries, ed. B. Botfield (Roxburghe Club, 1841)

Manners and Meals in Olden Time, ed. F.J. Furnivall (E.E.T.S., xxxii, 1867)

The Master of Game, ed. W.A. and F. Baillie-Grohman (London, 1904)

Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, ed. J.C. Robertson, 7 vols (Rolls Series, 1875-85)

Matthaei Parisiensis Chronica Maiora, ed. H.R. Luard, iv and v (Rolls Series, 1877, 1880)

Medieval Archives of the University of Oxford, ed. H.E. Salter (Oxford Historical Society, lxxiii, 1919)

Medieval Lore from Bartholomaeus Anglicus, ed. R. Steele (London, 1924)

Melusine, ed. A.K. Donald (E.E.T.S., 1895)

Merlin, ed. H.B. Wheatley and W.E. Mead (E.E.T.S., 1865-99)

The Minor Poems of John Lydgate, ed. H.M. MacCracken, i (E.E.T.S., extra ser., cvii, 1911)

Monumenta Franciscana, ed. J.S. Brewer, i (Rolls Series, 1858)

Munimenta Academica, ed. H. Anstey, 2 vols (Rolls Series, 1868)

North Country Wills, 1383-1558, ed. J.W. Clay (Surtees Society, cxvi, 1908)

On the Properties of Things: John Trevisa's translation of Bartholomaeus Anglicus: De Proprietatibus Rerum, ed. M.C. Seymour (Oxford, 1975)

The Oxford Deeds of Balliol College, ed. H.E. Salter (Oxford Historical Society, lxiv, 1913)

The Pastime of Pleasure, ed. W.E. Mead (E.E.T.S., 1928)

The Paston Letters and Papers of the Fifteenth Century, ed. N. Davis, 2 vols (Oxford, 1971)

Peter Idley's Instructions to His Son, ed. C. D'Evelyn (Boston, 1935)

Pipe Roll 22 Henry II (Pipe Roll Society, xxv, 1904)

Poems of John of Hoveden, ed. F.J.E. Raby (Surtees Society, cliv, 1939)

Privy Purse Expenses of Elizabeth of York, ed. N.H. Nicolas (London, 1830)

The Quest of the Holy Grail, ed. P. Matarasso (Penguin Classics, 1969)

Records of the Wardrobe and Household 1285-6, ed. B.F. and C.R. Byerly (London, 1977)

Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum, ed. H.W.C. Davis, i (Oxford, 1913)

The Register of Congregation 1448-63, ed. W. Pantin and Mitchell (Oxford Historical Society, new ser., xxii, 1972)

The Register of Edward, the Black Prince, i-iv (London, 1930-3)

The Register of Henry Chichele, ed. E.F. Jacob and H.C. Johnson, ii (London, 1937)

The Register of John de Pontissara, bishop of Winchester, ed. C. Deedes, 2 vols (Canterbury and York Society, 1915 and 1924)

Registrum Epistolarum fratris Johannis Peckham, ed. C.T. Martin, i (Rolls Series, 1882)

A Relation of the Island of England, ed. C.A. Sneyd (Camden Society, xxxvii, 1847)

Reliquae Antiquae, ed. T. Wright and J. Halliwell, i (London, 1841)

Robert of Brunne, Handlyng Synne (1303) and its French Original, ed. F.J. Furnivall (E.E.T.S., cxix, cxxii, 1901 and 1903)

Robert of Gloucester, ed. W.A. Wright, ii (Rolls Series, 1887)

Roger Bacon: Opus Tertium, ed. J.S. Brewer (Rolls Series, 1859)

Rôles Gascons, ed. C. Bémont, supplement au tome premier 1254-55 (Paris, 1896)

The Romance of Blonde of Oxford and Jehan of Dammartin, ed. M. de Lincy (Camden Society, old ser., lxxii, 1858)

Royal and Historical Letters during the Reign of Henry IV, ed. F.C. Hingeston, i (Rolls Series, 1860)

Royal Letters of the Reign of Henry III, ed. W.W. Shirley, i (Rolls Series, 1862)

The Sege Off Melayne, ed. S.J. Herrtage (E.E.T.S., 1880)

Self and Society in Medieval France: the Memoirs of Abbot Guibert of Nogent, ed. J.F. Benton (Harper Torchbooks, 1970)

The Shorter Latin Poems of Master Henry of Avranches, ed. J.C. Russell (Massachusetts, 1935)

Sir Tristrem, ed. G.P. McNeill (Scottish Text Society, 1886)

Snappe's Formulary, ed. H.E. Salter (Oxford Historical Society, lxxx, 1924)

The Statesman's Book of John of Salisbury, ed. and trans. J. Dickinson (New York, 1927)

Statuta Antiqua Universitatis Oxon., ed. S. Gibson (Oxford, 1931)

The Stonor Letters and Papers 1290-1483, ed. C.L. Kingsford, i (Camden Society, third ser., xxix, 1919)

Testamenta Eboracensia, 4 vols (Surtees Society, 1836-65)

Testamenta Vetusta, ed. N.H. Nicolas, i (London, 1826)

Three Prose Versions of the Secreta Secretorum, ed. R. Steele (E.E.T.S., 1898)

Tractatus de Armis of Iohannes de Bado Aureo, ed. E.J. Jones (Cardiff, 1932)

Le Traité Eruditio Regum et Principum de Gilbert de Tournai, ed. A. de Poorter (Les Philosophes Belges, ix, 1914)

Le Traité de Walter de Bibbesworth sur la langue française, ed. A. Owen (Paris, 1929)

The Travels of Sir John Mandeville, ed. G. Warner (Roxburghe Club, 1889)

The Treatise of Walter de Milemete, ed. M.R. James (Roxburghe Club, 1913)

Vincent of Beauvais: De Eruditione Filiorum Nobilium, ed. A. Steiner (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1938)

Visitation of the Diocese of Norwich, ed. A. Jessopp (Camden Society, new ser., xliii, 1888)

Visitations of Religious Houses in the Diocese of Lincoln, ed. A. Hamilton Thompson, ii and iii (Canterbury and York Society, 1919 and 1927)

Vita Edwardi Secundi, ed. N. Denholm-Young (London, 1957)

A Volume of Vocabularies, ed. T. Wright (Newport, 1857)

Walter Map, De Nugis Curialium, ed. M.R. James (London, 1923)

Walter of Henley, ed. D. Oschinsky (Oxford, 1971)

Willelmi Malmesbiriensis de Gestis Regum, ed. W. Stubbs, ii (Rolls Series, 1889)

Willelmi Rishanger Chronica, ed. H.T. Riley (Rolls Series, 1865)

Wills and Inventories, i (Surtees Society, 1835)

The Works of Sir John Clanvowe, ed. V.J. Scattergood (Cambridge, 1975)

(ii) SECONDARY SOURCES

Alexander, J.J.G., 'Painting and manuscript illumination for royal patrons in the later middle ages', in English Court Culture in the Later Middle Ages, ed. V.J. Scattergood and J.W. Sherborne (London, 1983)

Altschul, M., A Baronial Family in Medieval England: The Clares 1217-1314 (Baltimore, 1965)

Ariès, P., Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life (London, 1973)

Armitage-Smith, S., John of Gaunt (London, 1904)

Arnould, E.J., Étude sur le livre des saintes médicines du duc Henri de Lancastre (Paris, 1948)

'Henry of Lancaster and his "Livre des seintes medicines"', B.J.R.L., xxi (1937)

Arrowood, C.F., 'Sir John Fortescue on the education of rulers', Speculum, x (1935)

Ashmole, E., The Institutions, Laws and Ceremonies of the Most Noble Order of the Garter (London, 1672)

Aston, T.H., Duncan, G.D., and Evans, T.A.R., 'The medieval alumni of Cambridge', Past and Present, lxxxvi (1980)

Atkinson, R.L., 'A French bible in England about the year 1322', Eng.Hist.Rev., xxxviii (1923)

Auerbach, E., Literary Language and its Public in Late Latin Antiquity and in the Middle Ages, trans. R. Manheim (London, 1965)

Barlow, F., Edward the Confessor (London, 1970)

Barnie, J., War in Medieval Society (London, 1974)

Barton, D.P., Benham, C., and Watt, F., The Story of our Inns of Court (London, 1924)

Baugh, A.C., 'The date of Walter of Bibbesworth's Traité, in Festschrift für Walther Fischer (Heidelburg, 1959)

Baugh, A.C. and Cable, T., A History of the English Language (London, 1978)

Baugh, A.C. and Malone, K., A Literary History of England: The Middle Ages (London, 1967)

Beebe, B., 'The English baronage and the Crusade of 1270', Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, xlviii (1975)

Bell, H.E., 'The price of books in medieval England', The Library, xvii (1936-7)

Bémont, C., Simon de Montfort (Oxford, 1930)

Bennett, H.S., Chaucer and the Fifteenth Century (Oxford, 1947)

The Pastons and their England (Cambridge, 1951)

Blaess, M., 'L'Abbaye de Bordesley et les livres de Guy de Beauchamp', Romania, lxxviii (1957)

Blair, C., 'Medieval swords and spurs in Toledo Cathedral', Journal of the Arms and Armour Society, iii (1959-61)

Bond, E.A., 'Chaucer as page in the household of the countess of Ulster', in Life Records of Chaucer, iii (The Chaucer Society, 1886)

Born, L.K., 'The perfect prince: a study in thirteenth and fourteenth century ideals', Speculum, iii (1928)

Bosanquet, E.F., 'The personal prayerbook of John of Lancaster, duke of Bedford', The Library, fourth ser., xiii (1932-33)

Bowen, J., A History of Western Education, ii (London, 1975)

Boyle, L.E., 'E cathena et carcere: The imprisonment of Amaury de Montfort 1276', in Medieval Learning and Literature: Essays Presented to R.W. Hunt, ed. J.J. Alexander and M.T. Gibson (Oxford, 1976)

Brady, M.T., 'The Pore Caitif: An introductory study', Traditio, x (1954)

Brett, M., The English Church under Henry I (Oxford, 1975)

Bulbring, K., 'Sydrac in England', Festschrift für Wendelin Foerster (Halle, 1902)

Burrow, J.A., 'The audience of Piers Plowman', Anglia, lxxv (1957)

Burton, J.E., The Yorkshire Nunneries in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries (Borthwick Papers, no.56, 1979)

Byles, A.T.P., 'Medieval courtesy books and the prose romances of chivalry', in Chivalry, ed. E. Prestage (London, 1928)

Catto, J., 'Religion and the English nobility in the later-fourteenth century', in History and Imagination: Essays in Honour of H.R. Trevor-Roper, ed. H. Lloyd-Jones, V. Pearl, and B. Worden (London, 1980)

Chambers, R.W., Thomas More (London, first paperback edn, 1976)

Chaplais, P., English Royal Documents 1199-1461 (Oxford, 1971)

'Some private letters of Edward I', Eng.Hist.Rev., lxxvii (1962)

Chaytor, H.J., The Troubadours (Cambridge, 1912)

Cheney, C.R., 'Letters of William Wickwane, Chancellor of York, 1266-8', Eng.Hist.Rev., xlvii (1932)

'Richard de Bury, borrower of books', Speculum, xlviii (1973)

Chibnall, A.C., Richard de Badew and the University of Cambridge 1315-40 (Cambridge, 1963)

Clanchy, M.T., From Memory to Written Record: England 1066-1307 (London, 1979)

Clarke, M.V., Fourteenth Century Studies (Oxford, 1937)

Cobban, A.C., The King's Hall Cambridge (Cambridge, 1969)

Cockayne, G.E. (ed.), The Complete Peerage, revised by Vicary Gibbs, H.A. Doubleday, and Lord Howard de Walden, 12 vols in 13 (London, 1910-57)

Colvin, H. (ed.), The History of the King's Works, ii (London, 1963)

Cooper, C.H., Annals of Cambridge, i (Cambridge, 1842)

Cornish, F.W., Chivalry (London, 1901)

Cosman, M.P., The Education of the Hero in Arthurian Romance (Chapel Hill, 1966)

Cottle, B., The Triumph of English 1350-1400 (London, 1969)

Coulton, G.G., Monastic Schools in the Middle Ages (Medieval Studies, no.10, 1913)

Crane, R.S., 'The vogue of Guy of Warwick from the close of the Middle Ages to the Romantic Revival', P.M.L.A., xxx (1915)

Crow, M.M. and Olson, C.C. (eds.), Chaucer Life Records (Oxford, 1966)

David, C.W., Robert Curthose (Harvard, 1920)

Davis, H.W.C., 'Henry of Blois and Brian fitz Count', Eng.Hist.Rev., xxv (1910)

A History of Balliol College (Oxford, 1963)

Davis, R.H.C., King Stephen (London, 1967)

Deanesley, M., The Lollard Bible (Cambridge, 1920)

'Vernacular books in England in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries', Modern Language Review, xv (1920)

Delisle, L., 'Anonyme, auteur du liber de informatione principum', Histoire Littéraire de la France, xxxi (1893)

'Durand de Champagne, franciscain', Histoire Littéraire de la France, xxx (1888)

Denholm-Young, N., The Country Gentry in the Fourteenth Century (Oxford, 1969)

Richard of Cornwall (Oxford, 1947)

'The Yorkshire estates of Isabella de Fortibus', Yorkshire Archaeological and Topographical Journal, xxxi (1932-4)

Devon, F., Issues of the Exchequer (London, 1837)

Dillon, Viscount, 'Inventory of the goods and chattels belonging to Thomas, duke of Gloucester and seized in his castle at Pleshey co. Essex, 21 Richard II', Archaeological Journal, liv (1897)

Dillon, M. and Chadwick, N., The Celtic Realms (London, Cardinal, 1973)

Douie, D.L., 'Adam de Marisco', Durham University Journal, xxxii (1940)

Doyle, A.I., 'English books in and out of court from Edward III to Henry VII', in English Court Culture in the Later Middle Ages, ed. V.J. Scattergood and J.W. Sherborne (London, 1983)

Duby, G., 'Les "jeunes" dans le société aristocratique dans la France du Nord-Ouest au xiie siècle', Hommes et structures du moyen âge (Paris, 1973)

Dugdale, W., The Baronage of England, 2 vols (London, 1675)

Eckenstein, L., Woman under Monasticism (Cambridge, 1896)

Edwards, E., Memoirs of Libraries (Newport, 1885)

Egbert, D.D., The Tickhill Psalter and Related Manuscripts (New York, 1940)

Emden, A.B., A Biographical Register of the University of Cambridge before 1500 (Oxford, 1963)

A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford, 3 vols (Oxford, 1957)

Donors of Books to St Augustine's Abbey, Canterbury (Oxford Bibliographical Society, occ. pbns., no.4, 1968)

English, B., The Lords of Holderness (Oxford, 1979)

Evans, S., 'Ely almonry boys and choristers in the later middle ages', in Studies Presented to Sir Hilary Jenkinson (Oxford, 1957)

Ferguson, A.B., The Indian Summer of English Chivalry (North Carolina, 1960)

Fisher, J.H., John Gower (London, 1965)

Flower, J.W., 'Notices on the family of Cobham of Sterborough Castle, Lingfield, Surrey', Surrey Archaeological Collections, ii (1864)

Fowler, K., The King's Lieutenant: Henry of Grosmont, First Duke of Lancaster 1310-61 (London, 1969)

Fryde, N., 'Edward III's removal of his ministers and judges 1340-1', Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, xlviii (1975)

'A medieval robber baron: Sir John Moleyns', Medieval Legal Records Edited in Memory of C.A.F. Meekings (Oxford, 1978)

Gabriel, A.L., 'The educational ideas of Christine de Pisan', Journal of the History of Ideas, xvi (1955)

The Educational Ideas of Vincent of Beauvais (Texts and Studies in the History of Medieval Education, iv, 1956)

Galbraith, V.H., 'The literacy of medieval English kings', Proceedings of the British Academy, xxi (1935)

'A new life of Richard II', History, new ser., xxvi (1942)

Gardiner, D., English Girlhood At School: A Study of Women's Education through Twelve Centuries (Oxford, 1929)

Gardner, E.G., The Arthurian Legend in Italian Literature (London and New York, 1930)

Gilbert, A.H., 'Notes on the influence of the Secreta Secretorum', Speculum, iii (1928)

Gillingham, J.B., Richard the Lionheart (London, 1978)

Goodich, M., 'Bartholomaeus Anglicus on child-rearing', History of Childhood Quarterly, iii (1975)

Gransden, A., 'Childhood and youth in medieval England', Nottingham Medieval Studies, xvi (1972)

Green, M.A.E., Lives of the Princesses of England, ii and iii (London, 1849)

Green, R.F., 'King Richard II's books revisited', The Library, xxxi (1976)

Poets and Princepleasers: Literature and the English Court in the Late Middle Ages (Toronto, 1980)

Greville, F., Warwick Castle and its Earls (London, 1903)

Gunner, W.H., 'The will of Sir John de Foxle of Apuldrefield, Kent', Archaeological Journal, xv (1858)

Hale, J.R., Highfield, J.R.L., and Smalley, B., Europe in the Later Middle Ages (London, 1965)

Hardy, B.C., Philippa of Hainault and Her Times (London, 1910)

Haskins, C.H., 'Adelard of Bath and Henry Plantagenet', Eng.Hist.Rev., xxviii (1913)

'Henry II as a patron of literature', in Essays in Medieval History Presented to T.F. Tout, ed. A.G. Little and F.M. Powicke (Manchester, 1925)

Headlam, C. and Home, G., Inns of Court (London, 1909)

Hentsch, A.A., De la littérature didactique du moyen âge s'adressant spécialement aux femmes (Cahors, 1903)

Herbert, J.A., Catalogue of Romances in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum, iii (London, 1910)

Herbert, W., Antiquities of the Inns of Court and Chancery (London, 1804)

Hexter, J.H., 'The education of the aristocracy in the Renaissance', in Reappraisals in History (London, 1961)

Hibbard, L., Medieval Romance in England (New York, 1960)

Hoare, R.C., The History of Wiltshire: Hundred of Heytesbury (London, 1824)

Holmes, G.A., The Later Middle Ages (London, 1962)

Holt, J.C., The Northerners (Oxford, 1961)

Holzknecht, K.J., Literary Patronage in the Middle Ages (New York, 1923)

Hoyt, R.S., Europe in the Middle Ages (2nd edn., New York, 1966)

Hunt, R.W., 'Verses on the life of Robert Grosseteste', Medievalia et Humanistica, new ser., i (1970)

Hunt, R.W. and de la Mare, A.C. (eds.), Duke Humfrey and English Humanism in The Fifteenth Century: Catalogue of an Exhibition held in the Bodleian Library, Oxford (Oxford, 1970)

Jacob, E.F., 'Founders and foundations in the later middle ages', Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, xxxv (1962)

James, M.R., The Ancient Libraries of Canterbury and Dover (Cambridge, 1903)

The Bohun Manuscripts (Roxburghe Club, 1936)

'Castrianus: An address to the Eton Commensals of the fifteenth century', Etoniana, xxxix (1925)

Catalogue of Manuscripts in the Library of Corpus Christi College Cambridge (Cambridge, 1912)

A Descriptive Catalogue of the MSS. in the Fitzwilliam Museum (Cambridge, 1895)

A Descriptive Catalogue of the McClean Collection of MSS. in the Fitzwilliam Museum (Cambridge, 1912)

Jenkinson, H., 'Marie de Sancto Paulo, foundress of Pembroke College, Cambridge', Archaeologia, lxvi (1914-15)

John, E., 'The king and the monks in the tenth century reformation', in Orbis Britanniae (Leicester, 1966)

Johnson, C., 'John Plummer, master of the children', The Antiquaries Journal, i (1921)

Johnson, C. and Jenkinson, H., English Court Hand (Oxford, 1915)

Johnstone, H., Edward of Carnarvon (Manchester, 1946)

'Isabella the she-wolf of France', History, xxi (1936)

'Poor relief in the royal households of thirteenth-century England', Speculum, iv (1929)

'The wardrobe and household of Henry, son of Edward I', B.J.R.L., vii (1922-3)

'The wardrobe and household accounts of the sons of Edward I', Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, ii (1924)

Jones, E.J., Medieval Heraldry: Tractatus de armis of Iohannes de Bado Aureo (Cardiff, 1932)

Jones, M., 'Education in Brittany during the later middle ages', Nottingham Medieval Studies, xxii (1978)

Jones, R.H., The Royal Policy of Richard II (Oxford, 1968)

Kennedy, E., 'Social and political ideas in the French prose Lancelot', Medium Aevum, xxvi (1957)

Ker, N., Medieval Libraries of Great Britain (London, 1964)

Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries, 2 vols (Oxford, 1963-77)

King, H., 'Excerpts from ancient wills', Transactions of the Essex Archaeological Society, new ser., ii (1879-83)

Kingsford, C.L., 'Two forfeitures in the year of Agincourt', Archaeologia, lxx (1918-20)

Kipling, G., The Triumph of Honour: Burgundian Origins of the Elizabethan Renaissance (Leiden, 1977)

Kirby, J.L., Henry IV of England (London, 1970)

Kittredge, G.L., 'Henry Scogan', Harvard Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature, i (1892)

'Lewis Chaucer or Lewis Clifford', Modern Philology, xiv (1916-17)

Knowles, D., The Monastic Order in England (2nd edn., Cambridge, 1963)

The Religious Orders in England, i (Cambridge, 1948); ii (Cambridge, 1957)

Knowles, D., Brooke, C.N.L. and London, V., The Heads of Religious Houses in England and Wales 940-1216 (Cambridge, 1972)

Koch, J., 'Der anglonormannische traktat der Walter von Bibbesworth in seiner bedentung für die Anglistik, Anglia, lviii (1934)

Labarge, M.W., A Baronial Household in The Thirteenth Century (London, 1965)

Saint Louis: The Life of Louis IX of France (London, 1968)

Simon de Montfort (London, 1962)

Lambley, K., The Teaching and Cultivation of the French Language in England during Tudor and Stuart Times (Manchester, 1920)

Larking, L.B., 'Inventory of the effects of Roger de Mortimer at Wigmore Castle, Herefordshire 1322', Archaeological Journal, xv (1858)

'Inventory of Juliana de Leyborne, countess of Huntingdon', Archaeologia Cantiana, i (1858)

Lathrop, H.B., 'The translations of John Tiptoft', Modern Language Notes, xli (1926)

Leach, A.F., Early Education in Worcester (Worcestershire Historical Society, 1913)

Educational Charters and Documents (Cambridge, 1911)

'The monasteries and the education of girls', Journal of Education, xxxii (1910)

The Schools of Medieval England (London, 1915)

Legge, M.D., 'Anglo-Norman as a spoken language', Proceedings of the Battle Conference 1977, ed. R. Allen Brown (Bury St Edmunds, 1980)

Anglo-Norman Literature and its Background (Oxford, 1963)

'The Brut abridged', Medium Aevum, xvi (1947)

'Influence littéraire de la cour d'Henri Beauclerc', in Mélanges offerts à Rita Lejeune, ed. F. Dethier (Gembloux, 1969)

'Letre in old French', Modern Language Review, lvi (1961)

'Pierre de Peckham and his lumiere as lais', Modern Language Review, xxiv (1929)

Lewis, F.R., 'Peter of Aubusson', Eng.Hist.Rev., lv (1940)

Lindley, E.S., Wotton Under Edge (London, 1962)

Little, A.G. (ed.), Roger Bacon: Essays (Oxford, 1914)

Loomis, R.S., 'Edward I, Arthurian enthusiast', Speculum, xxviii (1953)

Lyte, H.C. Maxwell, A History of the University of Oxford (London, 1886)

Lytle, G.F., 'Patronage patterns and Oxford colleges c.1300-c.1530', in The University in Society, i, ed. L. Stone (Princeton, 1975)

MacCracken, H.N., 'An English friend of Charles of Orleans', P.M.L.A., xxvi (1911)

'Vegetius in English', in Kittredge Anniversary Essays (Boston, 1918)

Macray, W., Annals of the Bodleian Library (Oxford, 1890)

Madan, F. and Craster, H.H.E. (eds.), Summary Catalogue of Western MSS. in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, ii, pt I (Oxford, 1922)

Maddicott, J.R.L., Thomas of Lancaster (Oxford, 1970)

Magrath, J., The Queen's College, i (Oxford, 1921)

Mathew, G., The Court of Richard II (London, 1968)

'Ideals of knighthood in late fourteenth-century England', in Studies in Medieval History Presented to F.M. Powicke, ed. R.W. Hunt, W.A. Pantin and R.W. Southern (Oxford, 1948)

McConica, J., 'The social relations of Tudor Oxford', Trans.Roy.Hist.Soc., fifth ser., xxvii (1977)

McFarlane, K.B., 'Had Edward I a "policy" towards the earls?', History, l (1965)

'The investment of Sir John Fastolf's profits of war', Trans. Roy.Hist.Soc., fifth ser., vii (1957)

Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights (Oxford, 1972)

The Nobility of Later Medieval England (Oxford, 1973)

'The Wars of the Roses', Proc.Brit.Acad., 1 (1964)

McLaughlin, M.M., 'Survivors and surrogates: Children and parents from the ninth to the thirteenth centuries', in The History of Childhood, ed. Lloyd de Mause (New York, 1974)

Mehl, D., The Middle English Romances of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries (London, 1968)

Meyer, P., 'Manuscrits français de Cambridge', Romania, xv (1886)

'Notices et extraits du MS 8336 de la bibliothèque de Sir Thomas Phillips à Cheltenham', Romania, xiii (1884)

Millar, E., English Illuminated MSS in the XIVth and XVth Centuries (Paris and Brussels, 1928)

Mitchell, J., Thomas Hoccleve (Urbana, 1968)

Mitchell, R.J., John Tiptoft 1427-70 (London, 1938)

Moor, C., Knights of Edward I, ii (Harleian Society, lxxxi, 1929)

Moore, S., 'General aspects of literary patronage in the middle ages', The Library, third ser., iv (1913)

'Patrons of letters in Norfolk and Suffolk c.1450', P.M.L.A., xxvii (1912), and xxviii (1913)

Moorman, J.R.H., The Grey Friars in Cambridge 1225-1538 (Cambridge, 1952)

Mullinger, J.B., The University of Cambridge from the Earliest Times to the Royal Injunctions of 1535 (Cambridge, 1873)

Murray, A., Reason and Society in the Middle Ages (Oxford, 1978)

Murray, H.J.R., A History of Chess (Oxford, 1913)

Musgrave, C.A., Household Administration in the Fourteenth Century with special reference to the Household of Elizabeth de Burgh, Lady of Clare (Unpublished London M.A. Thesis, 1923)

Myers, A.R., The Household of Edward IV (Manchester, 1959)

Nichols, J., History and Antiquities of Leicestershire, II, pt ii (London, 1795)

Nichols, J.G., 'Notes in illustration of the wills of Joan, Lady Cobham, and Eleanor, Lady Arundel', Surrey Archaeological Collections, iii (1864)

Orme, N., 'The education of the courtier', in English Court Culture in the Later Middle Ages, ed. V.J. Scattergood and J.W. Sherborne (London, 1983)

Education in the West of England 1066-1548 (University of Exeter, 1976)

English Schools in the Middle Ages (London, 1973)

'The medieval schools of Worcestershire', Trans. of Worc. Archaeological Society, third ser., vi (1978)

Oschinsky, D., 'Medieval treatises on estate management', Econ.Hist.Rev., viii (1956)

Painter, S., French Chivalry (Baltimore, 1940)

William Marshal (Baltimore, 1933)

Pantin, W., The English Church in the Fourteenth Century (Cambridge, 1955)

'Grosseteste's relations with the Papacy and the Crown', in Robert Grosseteste: Scholar and bishop, ed. D.A. Callus (Oxford, 1955)

'Instructions for a devout and literate layman', in Medieval Learning and Literature: Essays Presented to R.W. Hunt, ed. J.J. Alexander and M.T. Gibson (Oxford, 1976)

Parkes, M., 'The literacy of the laity', in The Medieval World, ed. D. Daiches and A. Thorlby (London, 1973)

Parsons, H.R., 'Anglo-Norman books of courtesy and nurture', P.M.L.A., xliv (1929)

Pearsall, D., 'The development of Middle English romance ', Medieval Studies, xxvii (1965)

Pegues, F., 'Royal support of students in the thirteenth century', Speculum, xxxi (1956)

Perkins, V.R., 'Documents relating to the Cistercian monastery of St Mary, Kingswood', Trans. of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, xxii (1899)

Pfaff, R.W., New Liturgical Feasts in Late Medieval England (Oxford, 1970)

Pollard, G., 'Medieval loan chests at Cambridge', Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, xvii (1939-40)

Power, E., Medieval English Nunneries (Cambridge, 1922)

Powicke, F.M., 'Guy de Montfort 1265-71', Trans.Roy.Hist.Soc., fourth ser., xviii (1935)

King Henry III and the Lord Edward (Oxford, 1947)

'Pierre Dubois: A medieval radical', Historical Essays by Members of Owens College, Manchester, ed. T.F. Tout and J. Tait (London, 1902)

Stephen Langton (Oxford, 1928)

The Thirteenth Century (Oxford, 1962)

Prestwich, M., The Three Edwards (London, 1980)

War, Politics and Finance Under Edward I (London, 1972)

Renon, E. and Paris, G., 'La fontaine de toutes sciences du philosophe Sidrach', Histoire Littéraire de la France, xxxi (1893).

Richardson, H.G., 'Business training in medieval Oxford', American Historical Review, xlvi (1940-1)

'Gervase of Tilbury', History, xlvi (1961)

'An Oxford teacher of the fifteenth century', B.J.R.L., xxiii (1939)

Richardson, H.G. and Sayles, G.O., The Governance of Medieval England (Edinburgh, 1963)

Rickert, E., 'King Richard II's books', The Library, xiii (1932-3)

'Thou Vache', Modern Philology, xi (1913-14)

Ritchie, R.L.G., 'The date of the voyage of St Brendan', Medium Aevum, xix (1950)

Roberts, P.B., Stephanus de Lingua-Tonante: Studies in the Sermons of Stephen Langton (Toronto, 1968)

Rosenthal, J.T., 'Aristocratic cultural patronage and book bequests 1350-1500', B.J.R.L., lxiv (1982)

Nobles and the Noble Life 1295-1500 (London, 1976)

The Purchase of Paradise: Gift Giving and the Aristocracy 1307-1485 (London, 1972)

'The universities and the medieval English nobility', History of Education Quarterly, ix (1969)

Ross, C., Edward IV (London, 1974)

'The household accounts of Elizabeth Berkeley, countess of Warwick 1420-1', Trans. Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, lxx (1951)

Rothwell, W., 'The role of French in thirteenth-century England', B.J.R.L., lviii (1975-6)

'The teaching of French in medieval England', Modern Language Review, lxiii (1968)

Russell, J.C., Dictionary of Writers of Thirteenth-Century England (London, 1936)

'Master Henry of Avranches as an international poet', Speculum, iii (1928)

Rye, W., Carrow Abbey (Norwich, 1889)

Scattergood, V., Politics and Poetry in the Fifteenth Century (London, 1971)

'Two medieval booklists', The Library, xxiii (1968)

'Literary culture at the court of Richard II', in English Court Culture in the Later Middle Ages, ed. V.J. Scattergood and J.W. Sherborne (London, 1983)

Seaton, E., Sir Richard Roos (London, 1961)

SeBoyar, G.E., 'Bartholomaeus Anglicus and his Encyclopaedia', Journal of English and Germanic Philology, xix (1920)

Seybolt, R.F., 'Fifteenth-century editions of the Legenda Aurea', Speculum, xxi (1946)

Simon, J., Education and Society in Tudor England (Cambridge, 1966)

Sitwell, G.R., 'The English Gentleman', The Ancestor, i (1902)

Smalley, B., English Friars and Antiquity in the Early Fourteenth Century (Oxford, 1960)

Smyth, J., The Lives of the Berkeleys, ed. J. Maclean, 2 vols (Gloucester, 1883-4)

Snellgrove, H.S., The Lusignans in England 1247-58 (Albuquerque, 1950)

Somerville, R., History of the Duchy of Lancaster, i (London, 1953)

Southern, R.W., 'England's first entry into Europe', in Medieval Humanism (Oxford, 1970)

Steiner, A., 'The date of composition of Mandeville's travels', Speculum, ix (1934)

'Guillaume Perrault and Vincent of Beauvais', Speculum, viii (1933)

Stone, L.W., 'Jean de Howden, poète Anglo-Normand du xiii$^{e}$ siècle', Romania, lxix (1946-7)

Strang, B.M.H., History of English (London, 1970)

Stubbs, W., 'Learning and literature at the court of Henry II', in Lectures on the Study of Medieval and Modern History (Oxford, 1900)

Studd, J.R., A Catalogue of the Acts of the Lord Edward 1254-72 (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Leeds, 1971)

Suggett, H., 'The use of French in the later middle ages', in Essays in Medieval History, ed. R.W. Southern (London, 1968), reprinted from Trans.Roy.Hist.Soc., xxviii (1946).

Taylor, R., The Political Prophecy in England (New York, 1911)

Thompson, A. Hamilton, 'The statutes of the collegiate church of Fotheringay', Archaeological Journal, second ser., xxv (1918)

Thompson, J.W., The Literacy of the Laity in the Middle Ages (California, 1939)

The Medieval Library (Chicago, 1939)

Thoms, W.J., Early English Prose Romances (London, 1858)

Thorpe, L., 'Mastre Richard; a thirteenth-century translation of the De Re Militari of Vegetius', Scriptorium, vi (1952)

Todd, H., Illustrations of Chaucer and Gower (London, 1810)

Tout, T.F., The Place of the Reign of Edward II in English History (2nd edn., Manchester, 1936).

Chapters in the Administrative History of Medieval England, vol. iii (Manchester, 1928); vol. v (Manchester, 1930)

'Literature and learning: the English civil service in the fourteenth century', Speculum, iv (1929)

Turner, R.V., 'The miles literatus of twelfth and thirteenth century England. How rare a phenomenon?', American Historical Review, lxxxiii (1978)

Turner, T.H., 'The will of Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford and Essex, with extracts from the inventory of his effects 1319-22', Archaeological Journal, ii (1846)

Vale, M.G.A., English Gascony (Oxford, 1970)

Piety, Charity and Literacy among the Yorkshire Gentry 1370-1480 (Borthwick Paper no.50, 1976)

Vaughan, R., Matthew Paris (Cambridge, 1958)

Verger, J., 'Noblesse et savoir: étudiants nobles aux universités d'Avignon, Cahors, Montpellier et Toulouse (fin du xiv$^{e}$ siècle)', in La noblesse au moyen âge xi-xv siècles, ed. P. Contamine (Paris, 1976)

Vickers, K.H., Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester (London, 1907)

Victoria County History of Berkshire, iv (London, 1924)

Victoria County History of Gloucestershire, ii (London, 1907)

Victoria County History of Hertfordshire, ii (London, 1908), iv (London, 1914)

Victoria County History of Huntingdonshire, ii (London, 1932)

Victoria County History of Lincolnshire, ii (London, 1906)

Victoria County History of Northamptonshire, ii (London, 1906)

Victoria County History of Sussex, ii (London, 1907)

Victoria County History of Yorkshire, iii (London, 1913)

Vising, J., Anglo-Norman Language and Literature (London, 1923)

Wakefield, W.L., Heresy, Crusade and Inquisition (London, 1974)

Wallace-Hadrill, J.M., Early Germanic Kingship (Oxford, 1971)

Ward, H.L.D., Catalogue of Romances in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum, vols i and ii (London, 1883-93)

Wardale, J.R., Clare College (London, 1899)

Warner, G.F. and Gilson, J.P., Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Old Royal and King's Collections, 2 vols (London, 1921)

Warren, W.L., King John (London, 1961)

Watson, A.G., Catalogue of Dated and Datable Manuscripts c.700-1600 in the Department of Manuscripts (British Library, 1979)

Watt, D.E.R., A Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Graduates to A.D. 1410 (Oxford, 1977)

Way, A., 'Inventory of the effects of Roger de Mortimer at Wigmore Castle', Archaeological Journal, xv (1858)

Weever, J., Antient Funeral Monuments (London, 1631)

Weiss, R., 'Henry VI and the library of All Souls' College', Eng.Hist.Rev., lvii (1942)

Humanism in England in the Fifteenth Century (Oxford, 1957)

Wilkins, N., 'Music and poetry at court: England and France in the late middle ages', in English Court Culture in the Later Middle Ages (London, 1983)

Williams, E.C., My Lord of Bedford 1389-1435 (London, 1963)

Wilson, R.M., The Lost Literature of Medieval England (London, 1952)

Wood, A., The History and Antiquities of the Colleges and Halls in the University of Oxford (Oxford, 1786)

Wood, S.M., English Monasteries and their Patrons in the XIIIth Century (Oxford, 1955)

Wright, W.A., 'Walter de Bibbesworth', Notes and Queries, fourth ser., viii (1871)

Wylie, J.H., History of England under Henry IV, 4 vols (London, 1884-98)