

Nicholas Love as an Ecclesiastical Reformer

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Abstract

Nicholas Love was the prior of the Carthusian house of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Mount Grace from its incorporation into the Order at the General Chapter of 1410 until shortly before his death, which occurred between 15 March and 28 July, 1423. He is most commonly known to present-day scholarship as the author of *The Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ* and because of the licensing of the *Mirror* by Archbishop Thomas Arundel in accordance with the stipulations of the Lambeth Constitutions of 1409, as an agent in the archbishop's campaign against the followers of John Wyclif, and against Wycliffite translation of the scriptures into the vernacular. It would be better, however, to see him as an actor in his own right, a promoter, like his continental European Carthusian confrères, of the reform of the western Church in the fifteenth century.

Keywords

Nicholas Love – Wyclif – Lollards – Carthusians – Late Medieval Reform

The purpose of this study is to discuss the English Carthusian author Nicholas Love not simply in the context of the early fifteenth-century reaction to Wycliffism, but in the context of both ecclesiastical and dynastic politics in England and of an eventually unsuccessful attempt at monastic reform in England. Early in his career, Love successfully negotiated the transfer of his house—the Charterhouse of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, situated on the edge of the Yorkshire moors in the North of England—from its founding allegiance to the household of the recently-deposed King Richard II to the Lancastrian regime of King Henry IV and the patronage of Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury, the new king's Chancellor. Ten years later, Love persuaded the

king's son, Henry V, to call an extraordinary convocation of the Benedictine order in England to undertake a reform of their many excesses and abuses, and he played a leading role in presenting the king's demands for reform to that convocation. Unfortunately, the Benedictines demurred and the king died before any substantial reforms could be carried out. It is the argument of this study that Love is better understood as a Carthusian prior who attempted to play a role in the reform of the Christian monasticism and the Christian Church in general—a role parallel to that played by his continental European confrères discussed in the other papers in this volume—and not simply (as he usually is) as an anti-Wycliffite polemicist.

Nicholas Love was prior of Mount Grace from its incorporation into the Order at the General Chapter of 1410 until shortly before his death, which occurred between 15 March and 28 July, 1423.¹ He is most commonly known to present-day scholarship as the author of *The Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*, an expanded English version of the pseudo-Bonaventuran *Meditationes Vitae Christi*, and because of the licensing of the *Mirror* by Archbishop Thomas Arundel in accordance with the stipulations of the Lambeth Constitutions of 1409, as an agent in the archbishop's campaign against the followers of John Wyclif, and against Wycliffite translation of the scriptures into the vernacular. It would be better, however, to see him as an actor in his own right, a promoter, like his continental European Carthusian *confrères* James of Grutrode, Dionysius the Carthusian, Nicholas Kempf, and Henry of Coesfeld, of the reform of the western Church in the fifteenth century.

1 Mount Grace: A Failing Ricardian Foundation

Mount Grace Charterhouse was founded in 1398 by Thomas Holland, duke of Surrey, one of four Carthusian houses founded by members of the court of King

1 Love's *obit* in the *carta* of the General Chapter of May, 1424, records him as "prior quondam domus Montis Gratiae." See *Nicholas Love: The Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ: A Full Critical Edition, based on Cambridge University Library Additional MSS 6578 and 6686, with Introduction, Notes and Glossary*, ed. Michael G. Sargent (Exeter, 2005), intro 23–intro 30. The argument of the present discussion overlaps with that of Sargent, "Bishops, Patrons, Mystics and Manuscripts: Walter Hilton, Nicholas Love and the Arundel and Holland Connections," in *Middle English Texts in Transition: A Festschrift dedicated to Toshiyuki Takamiya on his 70th birthday*, ed. Simon Horobin and Linne R. Mooney (York, 2014), 159–176, and "Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*," in *The Wycliffite Bible: Origin, History and Interpretation*, ed. Elizabeth Solopova (at press).

Richard II. King Richard, who had acceded to the English throne in 1377 at the age of ten on the death of his grandfather, King Edward III, faced constant interference from the generation of magnates who would have been his father's chief counsellors had he—Edward, the Black Prince—lived to become king. Whether Richard would have become the weak and ineffectual “skipping king” portrayed by Shakespeare without this interference cannot now be told; but resistance to him led to the attainder of his closest friends and advisors for treason by a group of “Lords Appellant” before the “Merciless Parliament” of 1388, and their forced execution. In 1397, a group of Richard's supporters, including his half-brother John Holland, earl of Huntington, and Thomas Holland, earl of Kent, the son of the king's other half-brother (also named Thomas) in turn accused the “Lord Appellant” of treason before parliament, and enforced the king's retribution upon them. Of the Lords Appellant, Thomas of Woodstock, duke of Gloucester (the king's youngest uncle), died in custody; Richard Fitzalan, earl of Arundel, was executed; and Thomas Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, was stripped of his honors. At the request of the king, lord Arundel's brother Thomas, who had been elected Archbishop of Canterbury in 1396, was nominally translated by the Roman pope, Boniface IX, to the see of St Andrews in Scotland, which neither the king nor the pope had in his gift: Scotland was not under English control at the time, and during the Schism the church in Scotland recognized Benedict XIII, the pope in Avignon. Of the king's supporters, John Holland was raised to the title of duke of Exeter, and the younger Thomas Holland to the title of duke of Surrey. Two of the former “Lords Appellant” had by this time changed sides to join the king's party: Thomas Mowbray, duke of Norfolk, and Henry Bolingbroke, earl of Derby (the eldest son of John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, the king's uncle), were later to quarrel in the king's presence, and were exiled.

Endowed by the king with the lands and titles of his former enemies, the younger Thomas Holland was granted licence to found Mount Grace on 18 February, 1397/98. He was also appointed the king's lieutenant in Ireland, and in the spring of 1399 he preceded King Richard and his uncle John Holland on a military expedition to Ireland. That same summer, Bolingbroke, whom Richard had required to sue personally for the Lancastrian honors that would, in less troubled times, have devolved upon him automatically upon his father's death, invaded England, gathering supporters as he crossed from Ravensburgh in Yorkshire to Chester. There the Hollands, as emissaries of the king (who had returned to Britain hurriedly, leaving the bulk of his army behind in Ireland), met with Bolingbroke's representatives, including Archbishop Arundel, to negotiate the surrender of the king in August, 1399, which would lead to his deposition and eventual death.

The Hollands were stripped of their dukedoms but allowed to live—and, as it happens, to conspire. Together with John Montagu, earl of Salisbury, they intended to assassinate Bolingbroke, now crowned King Henry IV, at a New Year's tourney at Windsor and to return King Richard to the throne. Their plot was discovered to King Henry; they fled, were captured and executed. Thomas Holland was buried in Cirencester abbey; his head was mounted on London Bridge. It was not until 11 July, 1412, that his widow was able to have his reunited body reinterred at Mount Grace. With the death of Thomas Holland, the Carthusian house that he had founded under the patronage of King Richard was reduced to subsistence on an annual dole from King Henry. Over the next ten years, it was served by a sequence of three rectors.

2 The Transfer of Mount Grace from Ricardan to Lancastrian Affinity

The *carta* of the Carthusian General Chapter of 1410, however, records the formal incorporation of the plantation at Mount Grace into the order, and the promotion of Nicholas Love, formerly the fourth rector, to the priorate.² In the *carta* of 1411, among the perfunctory notices of the English houses of the order,³ the obedienciary of Mount Grace is still described as “rector”; but in the *carta* of 1412, he is named as “prior.” Also in the *carta* of 1411, the names of King Henry IV and the duke of Lancaster (i.e. the king's son Henry, Prince of Wales, later King Henry V) first occur among those for whom trentals for living benefactors of the order are to be said; the *carta* of 1412 lists the names of the king and the duke of Lancaster, as well as those of the king's brother Thomas Beaufort, who had been made duke of Exeter in succession to John Holland, and of Thomas Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury.⁴ The name of the

2 Archives of the Grande Chartreuse, MS 1 Cart. 22, 1410, “Nècrologe de Villeneuve”: “Rectori domus Montis Gratia non fit misericordia [i.e. he was not granted the mercy of leaving office], et ad laudem omnipotentis Dei et gloriosae Virginis Mariae, omni via, modo et iure quibus melius possumus et debemus eandem domum ordini nostro sancto Dei in nomine incorporamus, eamque appellari volumus domum Assumptionis B. Mariae in Monte Gratiae. Perficimusque in priorem dictae domus D. Nicolaum Louf, ante Rectorem.” See *Nicholas Love: Mirror*, ed. Sargent (see above, n. 1), intro 30, n. 16.

3 Since it was not leap-year, the English Visitors were not required to attend the chapter.

4 Technically, they were accorded *tricennaria*: a round of not thirty, but three hundred masses in every house of the order. See Carolus LeCouteulx, ed., *Annales Ordinis Cartusiensis ab anno 1084 ad annum 1429*, 8 vols. (Montreux, 1890), 7: 364 (1415); *The Chartae of the Carthusian General Chapter*, ed. Michael G. Sargent and James Hogg [Analecta Cartusiana 100] (Salzburg,

duke of Exeter occurs regularly thereafter among the benefactors of the order; and on the deaths of Arundel and Beaufort, in 1415 and 1426 respectively, they are recorded as great and constant benefactors of the order and of numerous Carthusian houses. In 1417, Mount Grace was granted the right to the future burial of the duke of Exeter: Beaufort was, in fact, interred in the family tomb at Bury St Edmunds, but a visceral tomb to the side of the tomb of Thomas Holland in the choir of Mount Grace is probably his.⁵ The Carthusian order, and Mount Grace Charterhouse specifically, had thus become beneficiaries of the Lancastrian affinity.

3 The Political Aspect of the Publication of Nicholas Love's *Mirror*

The change from Ricardian to Lancastrian affinity is presumably related to two events recorded in 1410. The first of these is a grant of confraternity made to Archbishop Arundel by the prior and community of Mount Grace, dated to that year. The second is the "Memorandum of Approbation," dated "around the year 1410," that is attached to nearly one-half of the surviving manuscripts of *The Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*, Nicholas Love's English version of the pseudo-Bonaventuran *Meditationes vitae Christi*. The grant of confraternity in Mount Grace was first noted by E. Margaret Thompson;⁶ this information was incorrectly repeated by Jonathan Hughes, who described the archbishop as having joined the "lay fraternity of Mount Grace" in 1409.⁷ The grant of confraternity, which is recorded in the archbishop's register under the date of 15 January, 1509/10,⁸ states that in recognition of the great benefits that the archbishop had conferred and would in the future confer upon Mount Grace, in order to increase the spiritual benefit that he would derive before God for his devotion to the order, they named him as a participant in all masses, prayers, hours, psalms and vigils, fasts and abstinences, alms, disciplines and other

1982–1988), fasc. 7, pp. 4, 17 (1411); 22 (1412); 89 (1417); fasc. 10, p. 13 (1418); 22 (1419); 41 (1420); 60 (1422); 71 (1423); 88 (1425); 97 (1426); 103 (1427).

5 See Glyn Coppack and Jackie Hall, "The Church of Mount Grace Priory: Its Development and Origins," in *Studies in Carthusian Monasticism in the Late Middle Ages*, ed. Julian M. Luxford (Turnhout, 2008), 299–322; Glyn Coppack and Mick Aston, *Christ's Poor Men: The Carthusians in Britain* (Stroud, Gloucestershire, 2002), 66.

6 E. Margaret Thompson, *The Carthusian Order in England* (London, 1930), 339.

7 Jonathan Hughes, *Pastors and Visionaries: Religion and Secular Life in Late Medieval Yorkshire* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 1988), 122, 231.

8 See below, Appendix, document 1.

exercises ever to be performed in the house, supplemented by an anniversary to be celebrated on the day of his death in perpetuity, according to the practice for the founder of any house in the order.⁹ The ‘Memorandum of Approbation,’ which accompanies the text of Love’s *Mirror* in half of the complete surviving manuscripts,¹⁰ records that, “about the year 1410, the original copy of this book” was presented by Nicholas Love to Archbishop Arundel in London “for inspection and due examination” before it was freely communicated.¹¹ The archbishop returned the book several days later, personally commending it (*proprie vocis oraculo*), and decreeing, on his metropolitan authority, that it be published “for the edification of the faithful and the confutation of heretics or lollards.”

In her article “Lollardy: The English Heresy?,”¹² Anne Hudson pointed out that the reference in the ‘Memorandum’ to “inspection and due examination before [the *Mirror*] was freely communicated” probably referred to the strictures of the Lambeth Constitutions of 1409 forbidding the transmission of any new English translation of sacred scripture, in any form, from the time of John Wyclif onward, without inspection and permission of the diocesan. As Hudson noted, the constitutions, which had originally been enacted in convocation in Oxford in 1407, included two entirely traditional regulations on the licencing of preachers; a regulation against the criticism of clerical vices before an audience consisting primarily of the laity, and vice-versa; one forbidding any preaching that cast doubt on the sacraments of the Church; three regulating the teaching

9 It would be difficult to find a clearer expression of the operation of the *habitus* of the spiritual economy of late medieval religious foundation. See Joel T. Rosenthal, *The Purchase of Paradise: The Social Function of Aristocratic Benevolence, 1307–1485* (Toronto, 1972). I derive the conceptualization of the practice described here as a form of exchange of cultural capital as described by Pierre Bourdieu from Nancy Bradley Warren, *Spiritual Economies: Female Monasticism in Later Medieval England* (Philadelphia, 2001); see Pierre Bourdieu, “The Economy of Symbolic Goods” (especially the appendix, “The Laughter of Bishops”) in his *Practical Reason: On the Theory of Action* (Stanford, 1998), 92–123.

10 The ‘Memorandum’ precedes the text of the *Mirror* ten out of twenty surviving manuscripts of the α textual tradition, seven omit it, and three are acephalous. The ‘Memorandum’ follows the text in ten out of twenty-nine surviving manuscripts of the β and γ textual traditions, thirteen omit it, and nine are atelous. See *Nicholas Love: Mirror*, ed. Sargent see above, n. ii), intro 147–150.

11 See below, Appendix, document 2.

12 Ann Hudson, “Lollardy: The English Heresy?,” *Studies in Church History*, 18 (1982), 261–283; repr. in Ann Hudson, *Lollards and Their Books* (London, 1985), 141–163. The constitutions will be discussed in greater detail below. Note that the word “Lollard” in the context of late-fourteenth- and fifteenth-century England is usually used as equivalent to “Wycliffite.”

of theology within the university and in other instructional settings; one requiring licensing of chaplains celebrating Mass within the Canterbury province; and one stipulating the right of the metropolitan to examine the orthodoxy of every student at Oxford once a month (an obvious attack on the independence of the university from metropolitan interference); as well as the by-now far better-known strictures on the composition and circulation of scriptural material in English.

The textual evidence for the original intention and the process of composition of Nicholas Love's *Mirror* is complex. In his proem, Love addressed himself primarily to "lewde men and women and hem þat ben of symple vnderston-dyng ... þe whiche as childryn hauen nede to be fedde with mylke of lyzte doctryne and not with sadde mete of grete clargye and of hye contemplacion,"¹³ but Latin comments on the progress of his text throughout, and an apparatus of notes on his sources, point to clerical readers as well.¹⁴ The most important changes he makes, however, are a series of additions defending the sacraments of the Church against Lollard criticism: a treatment of auricular confession added into the chapter on the conversion of Mary Magdalen, an Augustinian allegory of penance in the chapter on the raising of Lazarus, and a defense of the real presence of the body and blood of Christ added to the chapter on the Last Supper, "in confusion of alle fals lollardes, and in confort of alle trewe loueres and wirchiperes of þis holi sacrament", and ending, in manuscripts of the later recension of the text, with a paragraph stating Love's intention to add more on the same topic at the end of the work.¹⁵ The evidence of the manuscripts of the earlier recension of the *Mirror* is that what followed then was the passion section of a translation of the *Meditatio de passione Domini* that also exists separately—a translation that has its own, unexpanded version of the meditation on the Last Supper. In all surviving manuscripts, however, the text next contains Love's version of the passion meditation, ending, like the *Meditationes vite Christi*, with a meditation on the descent of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost and a conclusion describing this feast as the appropriate end of the liturgical year. Thereupon follows a transitional paragraph on the feast of Corpus Christi, "þe end and þe conclusion of alle opere festes," leading into "sumwhat more to confort of hem þat truly byleuen, and to confusion of alle fals lollardes and her-

13 *Nicholas Love: Mirror*, ed. Sargent (see above, n. 1), 10.

14 Sargent, "Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ* and the Politics of Vernacular Translation in Late Medieval England," in *Lost in Translation?* [The Medieval Translator/Traduire au Moyen Age 12], ed. Denis Renevey and Christiania Whitehead (Turnhout, 2009), 205–221.

15 *Nicholas Love: Mirror*, ed. Sargent (see above, n. 1), 152–154.

itykes,"¹⁶ and the "Treatise on the Sacrament," the defense of the doctrine of the real presence that had been promised before, which is written in the form of a university sermon.

Noting the coincidence of Nicholas Love's anti-Wycliffite stance in the *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ* with Archbishop Arundel's anti-Wycliffite program, as seen in the Lambeth Constitutions particularly, Jonathan Hughes fantasized a scenario according to which Love and Arundel met while the latter was archbishop of York (1388–1397), or perhaps in 1408 or 1411 (dates for which no reason is given), and Love wrote the *Mirror* to order for the Archbishop.¹⁷ Nicholas Watson combined the argument of Anne Hudson's articles on "Lollardy: The English Heresy?" and "The Debate on Bible Translation, Oxford 1401"¹⁸ with Hughes' observations on Love and Arundel in his highly influential article "Censorship and Cultural Change in Late-Medieval England: Vernacular Theology, the Oxford Translation Debate, and Arundel's Constitutions of 1409."¹⁹ As Watson remarks:

Love's *Mirror*, which was the first work to take advantage of the protection offered by the Constitutions, seems to embody their ideology so well that it is tempting to speculate (with Jonathan Hughes) that it was written in part to order.

4 Nicholas Love: Censorship and Cultural Change

This is the Nicholas Love that scholarship has known for the past twenty years: the Carthusian agent of Archbishop Arundel's "draconian" attempts to limit lay spirituality to the "milk for babes" of affective meditation, to slow, through the creation of an "atmosphere of anxiety," the inevitable rise of a liberating vernacular theology that had begun at least as early as Archbishop Pecham's Constitutions of 1281. To think of Love's *Mirror* this way, however, is to see him and his time in terms of a progressivist historicism that, in the words of Steven Kruger and Glenn Burger, "insists on straight chronologies that privilege

16 *Nicholas Love: Mirror*, ed. Sargent (see above, n. 1), 220–221.

17 Hughes, *Pastors and Visionaries* (see above, n. 7), 106, 230–236, 244.

18 Hudson, "The Debate on Bible Translation, Oxford 1401," *English Historical Review*, 90 (1975), 1–18; repr. in *Lollards and Their Books*, 67–84.

19 Watson, "Censorship and Cultural Change," *Speculum*, 70 (1995), 822–864. The following citation comes from 852–853.

a value-based movement of supersession and progress.”²⁰ It evaluates the past in terms of its not being the present, or the more distant past as being the seed, but not yet the flower, of the less distant past—it sees the fifteenth century as not yet having achieved the sixteenth. In those terms, Nicholas Love can only be the opposite of a reformer: since historical progress led past him, he cannot have been progressive.

The dominant narrative of the spirituality of fifteenth century English current among literary scholars, of a liberalising and liberating vernacular theology countered by an eventually unsuccessful Latinate ecclesiastical repression, has become so widespread that it has begun to subvert the very evidence on which it is based. Lotte Hellinga, for example, has recently claimed, on the basis of the argument of “Censorship and Cultural Change,” that the manuscript circulation of works such as Nicholas Love’s *Mirror* was restricted by the ecclesiastical authorities, in their attempt to control vernacular translations of scriptural material.²¹ The *Mirror* has thus ceased to be a work that “[took] advantage of the protection” of the Lambeth Constitutions, a work that was possibly written to order for Arundel’s programme, and become a work the circulation of which was restricted by Arundel’s programme until it was finally freed by the medium of print. The narrative has grown so grand that it has begun to eat its own tail. Such is the persuasive force of grand narratives. In fact, the manuscript circulation of the *Mirror* was not restricted, but promoted, by Archbishop Arundel. And Nicholas Love, in translating the *Meditationes vitae Christi* for a vernacular audience for whom this text and its spirituality were not yet available (while defending the sacramental Church against Wycliffite attacks), would have seen himself as an agent of ecclesiastical reform, rather than of repression.

20 *Queering the Middle Ages*, ed. Glenn Burger and Steven F. Kruger (Minneapolis, 2001), xii. See Sargent, “Censorship or Cultural Change: Reformation and Renaissance in the Spirituality of Late Medieval England,” in *After Arundel: Religious Writing in Fifteenth-Century England*, ed. Vincent Gillespie and Kantik Ghosh (Turnhout, 2011), 55–72. Note that the purpose of this article was not to deny the possibility of writing historical narrative or analysis, but to raise a postmodern objection to the tendency of grand narratives of historical progress and supersession to treat themselves as the only possible form of historical narrative, and to suggest a number of alternative local narratives.

21 Lotte Hellinga, *William Caxton and Early Printing in England* (London, 2010). See particularly her account of the “sea change” in the 1490s that enabled the printing of the literature of “contemplation and private devotion”—like Love’s *Mirror* and Walter Hilton’s *Scale of Perfection*—on which the “Lollards had put much emphasis,” 156–162.

5 Nicholas Love and King Henry V's Attempt to Reform the English Benedictines

Another evidence of the role that Nicholas Love took upon himself as an ecclesiastical reformer is to be found in the record of the extraordinary chapter of the Benedictines called by King Henry V in May of 1421 for the reformation of the discipline of the Black Monks in England.

On Palm Sunday (16 March) 1421, while on a grand tour of the cities and major pilgrimage sites of England following the coronation of Queen Catherine, the king wrote from Leicester to the abbot of Bury St Edmunds "to desire, exorte and preye yow þat yee ordeine þat a general chapitre ... as gret and good multitude as is possible goodly to be had [...] at oure abbeye of Westm[inster] on Monday the v day of May."²² The reason for the convocation, according to the continuation of the chronicle of Crowland Abbey in Lincolnshire,²³ was that the prior of Mount Grace charterhouse, formerly a Benedictine monk,²⁴ had leveled a great and serious accusation before the king concerning a number of excesses and abuses rampant among the Black Monks. A mistake in the count of priors of Mount Grace has resulted in the identification of the prior who complained to the king as one Robert Layton, a "phantom prior," as D.M. Smith calls him; we now know that the former Benedictine monk, now prior of Mount Grace, who complained to the king of the laxity of the English Benedictines was Nicholas Love, who remained in office as prior until 1423, the year of his

²² *Documents Illustrating the Activities of the General and Provincial Chapters of the English Black Monks, 1215–1540*, 3 vols. [Camden 3rd series 47], ed. W.A. Pantin (London, 1933), 2: 104, item 161. I have taken Pantin's editorial reconstructions and expansions as authoritative. The following discussion of the chapter of 1421, except for those parts referred specifically to other sources, derives from Pantin's discussion and edition of the materials, 2: 98–134, items 161–170. The chapter is also discussed in David Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, 1955), 2: 182–184, and Christopher Allmand, *Henry V* (New Haven, 1992), 277–279. The attempt at reform of the English Benedictines should be read against the background of the great monastic reform movements of the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, centered on Santa Giustina in Padua, and on Petershausen, Melk, and Bursfeld. See *The Religious Orders in Pre-Reformation England*, ed. James G. Clark (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 2002); "The Later Middle Ages," in James G. Clark, *The Benedictines in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 2011), 255–315.

²³ See below, Appendix, document 3.

²⁴ So the Crowland continuator; according to the *Chronica Maiora* of Thomas Walsingham of St Albans, the complaint was made by certain "falsi fratres." See *The Chronica Maiora of Thomas Walsingham*, vol. 1, ed. John Taylor, Wendy R. Childs, and Leslie Watkiss (Oxford, 2003), xx.

death.²⁵ For Love to have approached the king directly with his complaints about the laxity of the discipline of the Black Monks is remarkable among the Carthusians of England: I do not know of anything like it. On the other hand, a number of Carthusians from Netherlands- and German-speaking areas, including James of Gruitrode, Dionysius the Carthusian, Nicholas Kempf, and Henry of Coesfeld, are known to have followed an outward-directed vocation of public reformation of the Church.²⁶ It is interesting to note that Love would almost certainly have known Henry of Coesfeld, who had been appointed as Visitor with extraordinary powers to the English province of the Carthusian order for the years 1406–1410.²⁷

The Benedictine abbot of Bury responded to the king's letter, referring him to the presidents of the most recent provincial chapter, the abbot of Winchcombe and the prior of Worcester, and pointing out that because the next chapter would not meet for two years, the initiative for calling an extraordinary chapter, by common law and religion, lay on these two. On 25 March the king wrote to the presidents, ordering them strictly:

þat ye do come to gedre [that you cause to assemble MS], not only the fadres, bote also tho þat beon clerkes, ant oþere that beon notable per-
sones, yn every hous of the same ordre, yn as gret nombre as is goodly
possible to assemble.

Some 360 monks, doctors and other clerks assembled at Westminster, their leaders meeting with the king in the Chapter House on 7 May while Parliament, which had convened on 2 May, met in the Painted Chamber. The king attended at least the opening of the chapter personally, accompanied by Edmund Lacy,

25 Smith, "The Phantom Prior of Mount Grace," *Monastic Research Bulletin* 12 (2006), 46–49; D.M. Smith, ed., *The Heads of Religious Houses: England and Wales, 1377–1540*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, 2008), 3: 362.

26 See particularly the second and third footnotes of Tom Gaens's article in this volume, to which I would also add Dennis D. Martin, *Fifteenth-Century Carthusian Reform: The World of Nicholas Kempf* (Leiden, 1992).

27 See Carolus Le Couteulx, *Annales Ordinis Cartusiensis* (see above, n. 4), 7: 179–182 (citation from 280), quoting the *carta* of the General Chapter: "Provinciam Angliæ [...] visitabit Prior Domus Hollandiæ cum socio Priore vel Monacho quem duxerit eligendum, quem etiam toties quoties fuerit opportunum poterit mutare [...]. Committimusque ei super eandem provinciam Angliæ nostram plenariam potestatem: qua etiam autoritate possit alios visitatores ordinare, qui eandem Provinciam visitent pro hac vice in casu quo per seipsum eam visitare non posset."

bishop of Exeter and former Master of University College, the king's secretary (probably William Alnwyck), and Nicholas Love, the prior of Mount Grace. Lacy delivered a sermon in Latin before the congregation, in which he "specified many excesses and abuses" among the order. The king, according to Thomas Walsingham, then begged the monks to reform, noting that he, the descendent of the founders and patrons of their houses, depended on the efficacy of their prayers.²⁸

The primary work of the convocation was done by a committee made up of the king's three representatives and six representatives of the order, whose names in the documents read like a roll-call of ecclesiastical and academic honors:²⁹ John Fordham, doctor of theology, prior of the cathedral church of Worcester; John Whethamstede, doctor of theology, abbot of St Albans, Thomas Spofford, scholar in the same faculty, prior of St Mary's in York,³⁰ Richard Upton, bachelor in theology, prior of Crowland, John Wessyngton, scholar in the same faculty, prior of Durham, and Thomas Elmham, also a scholar in the same faculty, prior of Lenton. It should also be noted that Fordham had represented the order at the Council of Constance, and that Spofford, while attending the Council as a representative of the king, had served as one of the presidents of the Benedictine provincial reform chapter at Petershausen. A larger committee of twenty-four other monks was added during the process of negotiations.

6 The Bill of Complaints

The king's representatives stated the complaints against the laxity of the discipline of the English Benedictines (chosen, it is said, from among their many excesses and enormities) in thirteen articles, with suggested punishments for

28 This must have been a particularly poignant argument, as the king was about to return to France in arms to avenge the death of his brother, Thomas, duke of Clarence, who had been Henry's heir to the thrones of both England and France. There is an echo here of the practical piety of the king's foundation of the Carthusian house of Sheen and the Brigittine Syon Abbey (as well as the abortive foundation of a house of Celestines, whose French recruits refused to pray for the king's success in battle) immediately before the campaign that was to lead to Henry's great victory at Agincourt.

29 In fact, the *Crowland Chronicle* notes at the end of the business that the king was overjoyed that there were so many, so well-educated monks in his kingdom.

30 Spofford was appointed bishop of Rochester on 7 April, 1421, and translated to Hereford on 17 November.

infraction.³¹ The first deals with priors: that they are not to have separate residences, but are to dwell in their monasteries, to care for their congregations and take part in the divine office there. Second, that their horses and servants should not have sumptuous equipage, and that the great among them should not presume to ride with more than twenty horses. Third, that all priors should make a full annual accounting of the property of their monasteries in chapter within a month after the feast of St Michael (29 September, the customary beginning of the fiscal year), stating amounts owing, amounts owed, and the causes, to be recorded in written form. Fourth, that no property of any monastery worth more than forty shillings should be given, alienated or sold without consideration and consent of the convent. Fifth, that there should be uniformity of habit, particularly with regard to shape and form, especially of capes, cowls, and tippetts (some of which, it is noted, are so long as to drag on the ground), with suggested appropriate measurements; and that monks are not to wear worsted underclothes, which are more appropriate to soldiers than to monks. Sixth, that if a major feast (that is, a principle or a double feast, or one with twelve liturgical readings) occurs during bloodletting, the monks concerned should be present for the divine office at least for matins, conventual mass and vespers. Seventh, because fish is not always and everywhere available as a substitute for flesh, and for that reason many choose to escape the monastic practice of fast and abstinence by eating elsewhere, that it should be required that at least half of the convent should eat in refectory, and that they should be satisfied with the cheese, fish, omelettes, and custards that should be provided there. Eighth, that all but the old, the truly sick, and those who have not yet reached twenty years of age should observe the regular monastic fast and abstinence from the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross (14 September) until Lent. Ninth, because cash payment in lieu of food, clothing, and other necessities is a particularly detestable danger to religious, which had been addressed by Pope Benedict XII in *Ne victualia ministrentur in pecuniis*, abbots and priors should be especially careful to provide for their communities in kind, not cash, by means of a single official delegated to dispense such items. Also that when members of the community visit family or friends (once a year at most, with permission of the abbot), they should be accompanied by a responsible secular person to provide for their expenses and to render an account of expenses and receipts upon their return; also, that no monk is to retain any gold or silver vessels or jewellery in their possession without a written receipt (*sine brevi et scriptura indentata*) to remain in the hands of the abbot, or give or receive

31 Documents, ed. Pantin (see above, n. 22), 2: 109–115, item 166.

such goods without special permission; and that damaged habits should be repaired or replaced by the official designated for that purpose. Tenth, that no monk should have a private cell or room in which to entertain women (even their own mothers or sisters), nor any place but the common hospice (and that only with permission); and that no monk should sleep elsewhere but in the common dormitory. Eleventh, because chastity is, according to Paul and Augustine, the hardest of virtues to maintain, no religious should have general permission to enter or leave the towns or cities where their monasteries are situated to eat, drink, or converse, and that specific permission should be strictly regulated. Twelfth, that the order should submit its statutes and customs to papal authority, to be reduced to a single uniform practice. Thirteenth, that monks sleep fully clothed, as required by the Benedictine rule, and not in their underclothes, as some think sufficient. An extra article found only in some copies of this list provides that all money in the possession of individual monks be accounted for to his superiors, and that no superior should receive money for anything but the common good of the monastery.³² As David Knowles has pointed out:

The articles [...] contained nothing novel or of unreasonable severity; they dealt with familiar topics [...] The most noteworthy points were the explicit prohibition of the abbot's separate establishment, the earnest attempt to abolish the practice, now become common, of allotting private rooms to distinguished monks, and the straightforward attack on the *peculium*, with the proposal that the issue of all clothing and personal supplies should be the task of a single trusted official. The articles were, indeed, a carefully devised and practical attack on recognized abuses.³³

In fact, the reforms suggested were in line, as Pantin and Knowles acknowledge, with those undertaken by the Benedictine reform movements connected with the houses of Santa Giustina di Padova, Petershausen, Melk, Bursfeld, and elsewhere.

³² *Documents*, ed. Pantin (see above, n. 22), 2: 116, item 167.

³³ Knowles, *Religious Orders* (see above, n. 22), 2: 184. See also Joan Greatrex, "After Knowles: Recent Perspectives in Monastic History," in *The Religious Orders in Pre-Reformation England*, ed. James G. Clark [Studies in the history of medieval religion 18] (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 2002), 35–47; cf. there 42–43.

7 The First Response of the Benedictine Convocation

The representatives of the order responded to these articles with a series of rebuttals and modifications, provided with references to canon law and theology, which occur in two variant versions.³⁴ To the objection to priors' separate living accommodations, they objected that there was nothing in rule or custom to forbid the practice. The second article was satisfactory, although a clarification of its wording was required. The third article was satisfactory, with the exception that the accounting required was not possible within the space of a single month. The fourth article was satisfactory, with the exception that it should read, "with the consent of the *sanior pars* of the convent." The response to the fifth article is that since monks vary in size, uniform measurements of the capes, cowls, and tippetts of their habits were impossible; the prohibition of worsted underclothes is rejected. The sixth article is satisfactory, but restricted to principal and double feasts only, as the order has too many feasts of twelve readings. The seventh article is reserved to the judgement of the abbot, with citations of the Rule, St Bernard, Thomas Aquinas, John of Beverley, and Durandus. The eighth article is satisfactory, but only as restricted to meals in refectory. The ninth article draws several objections demonstrating first, that monks have always had the right to possess whatever their abbot has given them, and that this is in conformity with canon law and theological authority (again citing Aquinas and John of Beverley); second, that a single official dispensing clothing and other necessities would be liable to favoritism; third, that a monk might need to visit his parents more than once in a year; but that one sentence of the article, that forbidding the possession of gold or silver vessels or jewellery, is satisfactory. The prohibition of private cells and rooms in the tenth article is repudiated because it is necessary for doctors, scholars and officials to have appropriate working space; the second part of the article, that monks are not to bring women into the monastery, is satisfactory; the third part, requiring that the monks sleep in the common dormitory, is satisfactory, except for prelates, their chaplains, doctors, sacristans, custodians of reliquaries, and the sick. The eleventh article is unacceptable in its present form, which appears to forbid superiors from allowing monks to enter or leave towns or villages to eat, drink, or converse; rather, license to do so should only be for good reason. The twelfth and thirteenth articles are repudiated entirely.

34 *Documents*, ed. Pantin (see above, n. 22), 2: 116–121, item 168, and 121–124, item 169. As Pantin suggests, the two responses may represent two different working committees, or two stages in the composition of the same document. Item 168 gives fuller supporting references.

8 Abbot John Whethamstede's Final Response, and the Eventual Outcome

The final response of the congregation to the king's complaints—a prolix academic document—was written by John Whethamstede, the young English humanist abbot of St Alban's.³⁵ In answer to the first article, Whethamstede proposed that no abbot should be absent for more than three months continuously, without appropriate excuse. Second, with regard to disparity in habit, the subject of the fifth article, and sumptuous equipage, the subject of the second: habits should be “consimiles et conformes”; double-worsted and half-worsted underclothes are forbidden; and prelates when riding are to limit themselves to a household of twenty, except in certain express cases. Third, in response to the third article, abbots are to present a full financial accounting at least once a year to five or six brothers chosen with the consent of the chapter. Fourth, in response to the sixth article, if a principle feast or a double feast occurs during bloodletting, the monks concerned should be present for the divine office at least for matins, conventual mass and vespers. Fifth, in response to the eighth article, that the monastic practice of fasting and abstinence be properly observed, none but the aged and the very young should be exempt from eating in the common refectory without permission, except for Sundays, principal and double feasts, and feasts with twelve readings, and the season from Christmas to the octave of Epiphany. Sixth, in response to the challenge to *peculium* in the ninth article, Whethamstede proposes the prudent expense and accounting for all monetary donations received or spent by individual monks to their abbots, according to custom. And seventh, in response to the challenges to chastity alluded to in the tenth and eleventh articles, Whethamstede proposes great vigilance in avoiding the company of women and prudence in conversation with them.

According to the Crowland continuator, the Benedictine representatives to the Westminster chapter bound themselves to the observation of Whethamstede's counter-proposal for the reformation of the order in England—a proposal that left most issues in the discretion of the individual abbot in any case. As Pantin observes:³⁶

Walsingham adds that these final articles were to be approved in the next provincial chapter, and confirmed by the Pope. As to the latter,

³⁵ *Documents*, ed. Pantin (see above, n. 22), 2: 125–126, item 170.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 100.

there seems no clear evidence: but, although the articles do not appear in the acts of 1423, they may have been confirmed then, as there is a possible reference to them in the acts of 1426. Moreover, most of them were embodied in the code of statutes made in 1444, so that the meeting had some permanent results, even if they may have fallen short of the King's expectations.

The king left for his final campaign in France in June, and died without returning to England on 31 August, 1422. The English Benedictines thus escaped the full force of the reforming discipline to which the Carthusian prior Nicholas Love had incited King Henry v.

The crown had already begun to disendow alien priories during the war with France, and the suppression of monasteries was to continue until the Reformation:³⁷ 42 priories dissolved in 1414, others in 1415, 1442, and 1447. A convocation similar to that of 1421 was envisaged, but not carried out, by Henry v's son Henry vi; he also took Chester Abbey into royal custody in 1437 "for reason of its misrule." In 1489–1490, the Tudor King Henry vii commissioned John Morton, Cardinal Archbishop of Canterbury, to conduct a visitation of the English Benedictine monasteries. The monastic reaction to all of this was to fight harder to retain the papal privileges and exemptions of the great houses, while smaller and notably corrupt houses continued to be dissolved. The attempt to reform the Black Monks in England was renewed under King Henry viii by Cardinal Archbishop Wolsey in 1520. By the time of the suppression of the monasteries in the latter 1530s, it no longer mattered.

9 Nicholas Love, Crowland Abbey, and the *Meditationes Vitae Christi*

If the continuator of the Crowland chronicle is correct, then Nicholas Love, the prior of Mount Grace Charterhouse who urged the duty of reforming of the Benedictine Order on the king, and who represented the king in negotiations over those reforms, was himself a former Benedictine monk. This assertion has no little claim on our credence, given that the prior of Crowland was one of the six participants in these negotiations on the side of the order, and may be presumed to be the source of the information. That Nicholas Love was a former Benedictine monk is further supported by the survival of a manuscript

37 Details cited in this paragraph derive from James G. Clark, *The Benedictines in the Middle Ages* (see above, n. 22) (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 2011), 275, 307–309, 323.

of the *Meditationes vitae Christi* (the work that Love translated as *The Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*) recently described by Felicity Maxwell:³⁸ Ripon Cathedral Library MS 6, the colophon of which states that it was written in Frieston, Lincolnshire (a conventual cell of Crowland) around the feast of the Annunciation, 1399 (altered to 1400), but which bears an *ex libris* at the foot of its first page, “Liber Montis Gracie.” A note by Henry Wilson,³⁹ dated 22 November, 1882, which is kept with the Ripon Cathedral manuscript, states that this is the copy of the *Meditationes* from which Love translated the *Mirror*. A collation of the Ripon Cathedral manuscript with the *Mirror* and the other surviving manuscripts of the *Meditationes* of English provenance would demonstrate whether it is indeed this manuscript that stands behind Nicholas Love’s version.

Another English manuscript of the *Meditationes* that is interesting in this regard is Lincoln Cathedral Chapter Library MS 228, on the first folio of which is recorded an indulgence of forty days to anyone who reads any chapter of this book devoutly, granted by Thomas Spofford, bishop of Hereford, William Booth, archbishop of York and others, at the instance of Christopher Braystones, monk of St Mary’s, York. Below this, in another hand, the suffragans of London and York are subscribed; on the verso, in yet another hand, is a biographical notice on Braystones, describing him as a monk of Beauvale Charterhouse, formerly a Benedictine of St Mary’s, York, and chaplain to Bishop Spofford, and recording that he gave this book to Beauvale.⁴⁰ It is tempting to see parallels in the sponsorship of this work and its vernacular translation by

38 Felicity Maxwell, *An Investigation of the Ripon Cathedral Manuscript of the Meditationes Vitae Christi* (M.A. diss., University of Leeds, 2008); see also D.J. Falls, “Reading Prior to Translating: A Possible Latin Exemplar for Nicholas Love’s *Myrrour of the Blessed Lyf of Jesu Christ*,” *Notes & Queries*, n.s. 57 (2010), 313–315.

39 According to A.I. Doyle, Wilson, an Assistant Keeper in the Department of Manuscripts of the British Museum, read a paper on the *Mirror* and the *Meditationes* at a meeting of the recently-founded Library Association on 4 May, 1883. See Doyle, “The Study of Love’s *Mirror*, Retrospect and Prospect,” in *Nicholas Love at Waseda: Proceedings of the International Conference, 20–22 July, 1995*, ed. Shoichi Oguro, Richard Beadle, and Michael G. Sargent (Cambridge, 1997), 163–174 (citing 165).

40 An identical note, in the same hands, occurs on a bifolium preceding the text of Richard Rolle’s *Incendium amoris* in Cambridge University Library MS Mm.v.37—although the condition of the indulgence would make it more appropriate to a copy of the *Meditationes vitae Christi*. See Sargent, “The Transmission by the English Carthusians of some Late Medieval Spiritual Writings,” *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 27 (1976), 225–240. This *ex libris* is often, but probably mistakenly, cited as evidence of Spofford’s sponsorship of the circulation of the *Incendium*.

two English Benedictines-turned-Carthusians at the beginning of the fifteenth century. It is also interesting to note that Spofford, who was one of the Benedictine representatives to the recalcitrant English Benedictine convocation of 1421, yet had been one of the presidents of the Petershausen convocation of 1417, should have been interested in this copy of the *Meditationes*.

10 Archbishop Arundel's Constitutions and the Publication of Nicholas Love's *Mirror*: A Reassessment

It seems, then, that Nicholas Love was originally a Benedictine monk of Crowland abbey, in the territory of the Holland family in southern Lincolnshire, who may have retired to Crowland's dependent cell as Freiston (even deeper in Holland territory), was appointed fourth rector of the new Holland foundation at Mount Grace in Yorkshire, and named prior there in 1410, where he died, having recently laid down his office, in the spring or summer of 1423. Despite his retirement from the world, like other Carthusian ecclesiastical reformers of the fifteenth century, Love did return to it at two strategic points: once to present his *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ* to Archbishop Arundel at Lambeth around the year 1410 (this may also be when he presented Arundel with the letter granting him confraternity in Mount Grace), and in 1421, when he incited King Henry V to call a convocation to reform the English Benedictines. Seeing his involvement in ecclesiastical reform in this light, one may wonder if those who have seen the publication of Love's *Mirror* as a product of the archbishop's anti-Lollard policies may be looking at things in reverse: could Nicholas Love have been the primary agent here—presenting his book directly to the Archbishop of Canterbury when the terms of the Lambeth Constitutions would have been met by his submitting it to the Archbishop of York or his suffragan? In fact, one might even ask whether Nicholas Love may have had a role in Archbishop Arundel's decision to promulgate the Oxford Constitutions of 1407 on the national level in 1409. This can only be offered as a conjecture; but it should be pointed out that the widely-accepted view that Nicholas Love wrote *The Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ* at the behest of Archbishop Arundel is equally only a conjecture.

Arundel's Constitutions were published by David Wilkins from three manuscripts, one of which, Cambridge University Library MS Gg.vi.21 (*olim* Ely MS 235), dates them to a provincial council held in Oxford in 1407;⁴¹ the text

41 See *Concilia Magnae Britanniae et Hiberniae*, 4 vols. ed. David Wilkins (London, 1737), 1:

of the constitutions in this manuscript is virtually identical to that later promulgated at the Lambeth convocation of 14 January, 1408/09. The constitutions are prefaced by a long and detailed statement of their purpose: the extirpation of heresy in the present day. The first four constitutions concern themselves primarily with preaching. The first of these begins with a statement of the normal requirement that anyone, secular or regular,⁴² who would preach in or out of any church, in Latin or the vernacular, is to present himself to the diocesan for due examination of his morals and his knowledge, and he is to show his diocesan license to the curate in any place that he intends to preach.⁴³ If he has been banned from preaching previously, he is not to preach until he has confessed and been reinstated to his former status. Parish priests and vicars who are not otherwise licensed are to preach only the basics of the faith expressly detailed in Archbishop John Pecham's constitution, *Ignorancia sacerdotum*. Further, no one is to presume to extort any fee for, or set any hindrance in the way of, the examination of any candidate for preaching, or for providing his license. The second constitution requires that any cleric or parish community that admits anyone to preach in churches, cemeteries, or elsewhere, assure themselves of that person's license to preach. The third constitution provides for the appropriateness of moral criticism to its audience: the vices of the clergy should be criticised only in preaching to the clergy and the vices of the laity in preaching to the laity.⁴⁴ The fourth states that no such preacher is to teach, preach, or observe anything about the eucharist, matrimony, confession, or any other sacrament, other than what the Church teaches, nor cast in doubt anything that the Church has decided, nor knowingly speak anything scandalous about them either publicly or privately, nor preach any form of heresy.

The next five constitutions deal with schools and universities. The fifth constitution forbids any teacher of the arts or grammar to discuss the Christian

314–319. The terms of the constitutions are discussed in Hudson, "Lollardy: the English Heresy?" (see above, n. 12) but it is worthwhile to review them here.

42 The words "aut regularis" are lacking in the Ely manuscript.

43 Regulations of this type had usually been used in the past to control the preaching activities of the mendicants.

44 Unfortunately, this is often inappropriately simplified to say that the clergy are not to be criticised before a lay audience. The purpose of the constitution is not to protect clerical vice from criticism as such, but to insure that preachers do not spend their time criticising the faults of people other than their audiences—which should also mean that one should not preach before a cathedral chapter about the dishonesty of merchants or the pride of the nobility.

faith, the eucharist or other sacraments of the Church, or any other theological material, in instruction below the level of the theologate, nor scriptural or textual exposition, as once was done (*prout antiquitus fieri consuevit*), nor to permit his students to dispute concerning the Christian faith or the sacraments, in public or private. The sixth constitution provides for university texts, forbidding the adoption of anything written by John Wyclif, or since his time, unless it is first approved by Oxford and Cambridge universities, or at least a committee of twelve scholars chosen by the universities under the direction of the archbishop or his successors. When such texts are approved, they are to be turned over to the university stationers to be copied out accurately for a just price, and the originals are to be stored safely in a chest in the university.⁴⁵ The seventh constitution famously forbids any translation of the text of scripture on one's own authority into English or any other language, in any form (*per viam libri, libelli, aut tractatus*) or the reading of any translation made since the time of John Wyclif, in part or whole, publicly or privately, until the translation be approved by the diocesan or, if need be, by provincial council. The eighth constitution forbids anyone of any academic grade or status to assert or propose anything against the Christian faith or good morals beyond what is necessary in teaching in his faculty, whether in the schools or without, disputing or conversing, with or without attestation that this is purely for the sake of debate.⁴⁶ The ninth constitution notes more specifically that no one is to dispute publicly or privately about the judgements of the Church, as in decrees and decretals, provincial constitutions, or synods, except expressly in order to understand them better, nor is anyone to cast such judgements in doubt or to teach contrary to them—particularly as regards the adoration of the cross, images, the veneration of the saints, pilgrimages, or relics.

The tenth constitution is administrative: it provides that no chaplain is to be allowed to celebrate mass in the province of Canterbury unless he has the appropriate credentials from his order or his diocesan. The eleventh constitution requires that the chief official of every Oxford college or hall (*gardianus, praepositus, sive custos collegii, aut principalis aulae*) examine every scholar monthly for his good morals and his orthodoxy.⁴⁷ The twelfth constitution pro-

45 The latter part of this constitution is similar to those regarding the provision of texts to students by university stationers in continental Europe (e.g. at the University of Paris).

46 So I read the text, "disputando aut communicando, protestatione praemissa vel non praemissa."

47 As Hudson notes, "Lollardy: the English Heresy?" (see above, n. 12), 147: "this was the final defeat in Oxford's longstanding dispute over the right of the metropolitan to interfere in the university's affairs."

vides for the penalties for infringing against the constitutions; the thirteenth details the procedures for dealing with such cases.

Although Archbishop Arundel's constitutions are usually read as evidence of an anti-Wycliffite policy on the national scale, we should also note their provincial—even local—aspect.⁴⁸ They originated in a provincial council held in Oxford, and although the whole document has an anti-Wycliffite intent and most of the constitutions have an anti-Wycliffite cast (not inappropriate for Oxford), they also demonstrate normal episcopal concerns and a not-unfamiliar attempt by the hierarchy (and Arundel specifically) to insert itself into university concerns: the licensing of preachers within the Canterbury province, the provision of textbooks, the examination of the faith and morals of students in the colleges and halls. There is nothing in the constitutions in their original form that demands their national promulgation as “The Lambeth Constitutions.” But the constitutions were promulgated at Lambeth in January, 1409; and three months later, on 13 April, Archbishop Arundel committed them to Richard Clifford, bishop of London, for publication.⁴⁹ One wonders what moved the archbishop to this particular course of action. Is it possible that Nicholas Love, a man who, for the sake of the reform of the Church, would consider it appropriate to go directly to the king with his complaint about the laxity of the English Benedictines, might equally be a man who would consider it appropriate to encourage the Archbishop of Canterbury to extend the anti-Wycliffite policies of the Oxford Constitutions of 1407 on the national level in the Lambeth Constitutions of 1409?

48 For a discussion of Arundel's constitutions and other actions in the context of his relationship to the university, see Jeremy Catto, “Wyclif and Wycliffism at Oxford 1356–1430,” in *The History of the University of Oxford*, 8 vols., ed. Jeremy Catto and T.A.R. Evans (Oxford, 2004), 2: 175–261, there 239–254.

49 *Concilia*, ed. Wilkins (see above, n. 41), 1: 320.

Appendix: Documents

1 *The Letter of Confraternity: Lambeth Palace Library, Arundel Register, vol. 2, fol. 121*⁵⁰

Reuerendissimo in Christo patri ac domino, Domino Thome Arundell tocius Anglie primato &c. Sui humiles oratores Prior & conuentus Domus Montis Gracie Ordinis Cartusiensis gratiam in presenti et gloriam in futuro. Meretur vestre deuocionis affectus ac pie intencionis feruor quem ad nostram ordinem & specialiter ad ipsam domum nostram concepistis magis ac magis apud Deum continuis iuuari precibus & attolli suffragijs pietatis vt quo largius ac copiosius super vos diuina gracia choruscavit, eo bonitas vestra proficiat apud Deum. Et ut huiusmodi deuocionis obsequia auctore domino vobis sint fructuosiora, vos omnium missarum, orationum, horarum, psalmodiarum & vigiliarum, ieiuniorum, abstinenctiarum, elemosinarum, disciplinarum, ceterorumque exercitiorum que Deo auctore in domo nostra fiunt & imposterum fient, quantum cum Deo possumus, participem facimus & consortem in vita vestra pariter & in morte. Et ulterius attendentes magnifica beneficia, que nobis & domui nostre specialiter contulistis & conferetis vt sperimus vberius in futurum vnanimi assensu pro nobis & successoribus nostris concedimus vobis post obitum vestrum quem Dominus sua gracia efficiat gloriosum, anniuersarium depositionis vestre diem singulis annis iuxta morem ordinis nostri pro fundatoribus & amicis carissimis consuetum nobiscum in domo nostro imperpetuum celebrandum. Datum in domo nostra Montis Gracie predicta xv die mensis Januarij anno domini Millesimo cccc^{mo} nono cum appositione sigilli nostri conuentus in testimonium premissorum.

2 *The 'Memorandum of Approbation': Cambridge University Library Ms Additional 6578, fol. 2*^{v51}

Memorandum quod circa annum domini Millesimum quadringentesimum decimum, originalis copia huius libri, scilicet Speculi vite Christi in Anglicis presentabatur Londoniis per compilatorem eiusdem .N. Reuerendissimo in Christo patri & domino, Domino Thome Arundell, Cantuarie Archiepiscopo, ad inspiciendum & debite examinandum antequam fuerat libere communicata. Qui post inspectionem eiusdem per dies aliquot retradens ipsum librum memorato eiusdem auctori proprie vocis oraculo ipsum in singulis commendauit & approbavit, necnon & auctoritate sua metropolitana, vt pote

50 See *Nicholas Love: Mirror*, ed. Sargent, intro 29, n. 13.

51 See *Nicholas Love: Mirror*, ed. Sargent, 7.

catholicum, publice communicandum fore decreuit & mandauit, ad fidelium edificacionem, & hereticorum siue lollardorum confutationem. Amen.

3 *The Continuation of the Annals of Crowland Abbey: Rerum Anglicarum Scriptores Veteres, 3 vols. [ed. William Fullman and Thomas Gale] (Oxford, 1684–1691), 1: 513–515*

Anno vero sequente [1421], qui erat annus Domini millesimus quadringentesimus vicesimus primus, & annus Regni Regis Henrici quinti octavus, exiit edictum ejusdem serenissimi Principis ad omnes Abbates & Priores ordinis Sancti Benedicti nigrorum Monachorum in Anglia, quatenus omni dilatione postposita, apud Westm. coram eo personaliter comparerent. Gravis quidem & enormis ad aures Regis delata est querela per quendam, ut fuerunt, de Monte gratiæ Priorem ordinis Cartusiensis, in religione dicti ordinis sancti Benedicti prius professum, de diversis abusionibus & excessibus quæ in præfata religione regnare videbantur. Unde Rex graviter torquebatur animo & adversus prædictum ordinem non mediocriter movebatur. Facta est igitur congregatio solennis omnium Abbatum, Priorum, necnon Magistrorum, Doctorum, Inceptorum, Baccalaureorum, & aliorum nobilium virorum dicti ordinis nigrorum Monachorum in Anglia, in domo Capitulari Westmonasterii, septimo die mensis Maii; In qua siquidem congregatione Illustrissimus Rex prædictus personaliter affuit: & Episcopus Exoniensis pro parte Regis coram dicta congregatione plures excessus connumerans & abusus, solenniter proposuit in Latinis. Finita vero propositione, idem Serenissimus Princeps tres ex sua parte in hac materia deputatos specialiter assignavit; præfatum scilicet Exoniensem Episcopum, suum etiam Secretarium, & Priorem de Monte gratiæ prænominatum: Qui cum sex personis de congregatione antedicta ex parte Ordinis, elegendis super reformatione defectuum prædictorum summatim in certos articulos redactorum mutuo conferrent & tractarent. Nomina vero personarum ex parte Ordinis electarum hic in serie subscribantur; Prior videlicet Ecclesie Cathedralis Wigorniae præsidens, in Theologia Doctor; Abbas Sancti Albani, Doctor in eadem facultate; Abbas Eboraci, scholaris in eadem; Richardus Abbas Crowlandiæ prælibatus, in dicta facultate Baccalareus; Prior Dunelmiæ, in eadem scholaris; et Prior de Lenton, similiter scholaris in eadem. Quibus sex personis postmodo viginti quatuor alii de Abbatibus & Prioribus, Doctoribus & aliis graduatis, per congregationem antedictam fuerant associati; quibus omnibus simul junctis potestas plena comissa est super prætaxatis articulis tractandi, discernendi, statuendi, & confirmandi: ac omnia & singula peragendi, quæ tale & tam arduum negotium exigit & requirit. Qui licet per varias comitivas ad hoc seorsum deputatas, modificationes plurimas super præmissis articulis hic inde communicando conceperint & conscripserint; una tamen præ omnibus omnium con-

sensu per Abbatem sancti Albani modificatio & responsio finalis summarie est conclusa. Ad cujus observationem temporibus post futuris Patres ibidem existentes per sua promissa de Domino Regi unanimiter astrinxerunt. Porro ex tunc indignationis Regiæ quievit commotio, admirantis plurimum, imo vehementer congaudentis, se in suo Regno tam numerosam literatorum & graduatorum multitudinem dicti ordinis habuisse. Deinde à Regia benevolentia gratanter licenciati, alacres ad sua singuli redierunt.