

**‘At the Sygne of the Cardynalles Hat’: The Book Trade and the
Market for Books in Yorkshire, c. 1450-1550**

Stacey Gee

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**York University
Centre for Medieval Studies**

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Abstract

This case study of the production and use of books in Yorkshire in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries has two main aims. The first aim is to investigate the relationship between book production and book ownership in Yorkshire during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Unlike the methodology of this thesis, previous studies have usually studied the book trade and the market for books separately. By focusing on both book production and use, this study shows that it is not usually possible to argue from the evidence of one to the other. In order to comprehend both book trade networks and the reading public they served, it is necessary to investigate them together.

The second aim of this thesis is to investigate how the book trade was affected by socio-economic and religious changes, in particular, the early years of the Reformation and the new technology of print. Using the evidence of the franchise register of York and guild ordinances and other sources, I show that speculative book production in York became more important after the advent of print. As a result of the self-protecting activities of the London booksellers and printers, however, by the mid-sixteenth century the York book trade was predominantly a service industry. Some previous studies have argued that major changes also took place in levels of literacy and methods of reading during this period. Yet the evidence of Yorkshire wills and inventories indicates that the early religious reforms and the advent of print did not affect the ownership of books to any significant extent. A straight-forward contrast between manuscript culture and print culture is therefore too simplistic and we must consider the variety of ways in which books were acquired and used.

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Abbreviations

BIHR	York, Borthwick Institute of Historical Research
DNB	Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee (eds.), <i>Dictionary of National Biography</i> (London, 1885-)
EETS	Early English Text Society
MED	Hans Kurath, Sherman McAllister Kuhn and Robert E. Lewis, <i>Middle English Dictionary</i> (Ann Arbor, 1956-)
PCC	Prerogative Court of Canterbury
PRO	London, Public Record Office
STC	Alfred William Pollard and Gilbert Richard Redgrave, <i>A Short-title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland and Ireland and of English Books Printed Abroad</i> , 2nd edn, 2 vols (London, 1986-91)
YCA	York, City Archives
YML	York, Minster Library
YASRS	Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series

Introduction

There has been a tendency for studies of manuscript books to be undertaken separately from those on early printing, and for discussions of the book trade to focus on biographical information rather than the market for books.¹ This thesis will explore the relationship between the production of and the demand for books in Yorkshire during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. An inception date of around 1450 has been chosen in order to investigate the characteristics of the manuscript trade in books before Caxton set up the first English press in 1476 and before books printed on the Continent were first imported into England.² Those most prominent in the production of manuscript books were the scribes, illuminators, parchment makers and bookbinders. The manuscript trade was mainly bespoke, but there are also indications of a speculative sale of books, for example, second-hand texts. The nature of the book trade in Yorkshire, as I shall show, was changed by the advent of print. Although the beginnings of a speculative trade can be seen during the manuscript era, this type of trade dominated the printed book market. The trade in printed books was mainly in the hands of the printers, stationers and bookbinders who had trading links with London and the Continent, particularly northern France and the Low Countries.

The terminus of this thesis is the mid-sixteenth century. The year 1557, during which the London Stationers' Company was incorporated, has often been used as the end or inception point of studies of book production as it is said to signal the end of

¹See, for example, E. Gordon Duff, *A Century of the English Book Trade* (London, 1948); John B. Friedman, *Northern English Books, Owners and Makers in the Later Middle Ages* (New York, 1995); this will be discussed more fully on pp. 13-14.

²N.F. Blake, *Caxton: England's First Publisher* (London, 1976), pp. 33-4; Lotte Hellings, *Caxton in Focus: The Beginning of Printing in England* (London, 1982), p. 54.

provincial printing.³ However, as I shall discuss, the York printing trade had already ceased before 1557; the last printed book known to have been produced in York during the sixteenth century is dated 1532. This study finishes in the mid-sixteenth century so that it can include an investigation of the characteristics of the trade after printing in York had ended. Between 1530 and 1550, the Yorkshire book trade was essentially a service industry which relied primarily on the importation of printed books from London and abroad.

In contrast with the changing nature of the book trade between c. 1450 and c. 1550, the patterns of book ownership and reading remained fairly constant. Both before and after the advent of print, as I shall argue, the manuscript trade catered primarily for a clerical, aristocratic and, to a lesser extent, mercantile readership. Moreover, the evidence of book ownership gives an impression of continuity, even conservatism, despite the religious changes that were occurring during this period. Although the termination of this study in the mid-sixteenth century means that the changes under Edward VI, Mary and Elizabeth will not be discussed, I analyse the significance for the book trade of the printing of the English Bible, the dissolution of the monasteries and the publication of the new prayer-books. By comparing book production and book ownership, I aim to show that these two aspects of the book trade are, in some respects, separate, and that we cannot argue from the evidence of one to the other.

³E. Gordon Duff, *The English Provincial Printers, Stationers and Bookbinders to 1557* (Cambridge, 1912); Duff, *Century*; H.S. Bennett, *English Books and Readers 1475 to 1557*, 2nd edn (Cambridge, 1969); H.S. Bennett, *English Books and Readers 1558 to 1603* (Cambridge, 1965); see also Lotte Hellinga and J.B. Trapp (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain, 1400-1557* (Cambridge, forthcoming).

1. Recent Scholarship

i. Technology

The impact of print on European society became a hotly-debated topic in the 1970s. A wide variety of changes were attributed to the invention of the printing press, many of which have since been modified. The most comprehensive survey of the improvements in the dissemination, standardisation and preservation of texts, the advances in scientific knowledge and the spread of Reformation thought and humanism is the two-volume work of Elizabeth Eisenstein.⁴ The role of the printed book as a force for change had already been advocated by Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin, and H.D.L. Vervliet.⁵ The claims made by Eisenstein and others for the revolutionary impact of print have been criticised for exaggerating the contrast between manuscript culture and print culture.⁶ These criticisms are similar to those made of studies which describe the changes brought about by a transition from orality to literacy. The consequences of the acquisition of literacy were first expounded by Jack Goody and Ian Watt. They argued that members of literate societies had superior logical and scientific mentalities and had more highly developed bureaucratic systems than those who were non-literate.⁷ These ideas were developed by Walter J. Ong, who has also described fundamental changes caused by the ability to read and write on thought and on social

⁴Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* (Cambridge, 1979).

⁵Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin, *The Coming of the Book: The Impact of Printing 1450-1800* (London, 1976); H.D.L. Vervliet, 'Gutenberg or Diderot? Printing as a factor in World History', *Quaerendo* 8 (1978-9): 3-28.

⁶Michael Hunter, 'The Impact of Print', *The Book Collector* 28 (1979): 335-52; Anthony T. Grafton, 'The Importance of Being Printed', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 11 (1980-1): 265-86.

⁷Jack Goody and Ian Watt, 'The Consequences of Literacy' in Jack Goody (ed.), *Literacy in Traditional Societies* (Cambridge, 1968), pp. 27-68; Jack Goody, *The Domestication of the Savage Mind* (Cambridge, 1977).

and economic structures.⁸ These theories are now generally dismissed in favour of an ‘ideological’ rather than ‘autonomous’ model, in which literacy is seen more as a tool which can be used in different ways by different societies.⁹ It is argued that the changes described by Goody are not a product of the nature of writing itself, but instead depend on the manner in which writing is used.¹⁰ These revisionist studies have helped to dispel the evolutionist fallacy that literacy is ‘better’ than orality and that societies will strive towards it. The study of the effects of printing by Eisenstein can also be charged with ‘technological determinism’. Eisenstein’s discussion of the ways in which print stimulated the development of logical and scientific thought is similar to Goody in approach.

Many of the effects which have been attributed to the advent of print, in particular the role of the printing press in advancing scientific and logical thought, are beyond the scope of this thesis. However, this study will put to the test some of the theories concerning the impact of printing on the organisation of the book trade and methods of reading. It has been argued, for example, that the transition from manuscript to print was a change from the bespoke production of books, in which books were produced to order, to the speculative supply of texts which enabled the diffusion of a greater number of texts to a wider audience.¹¹ The press is also said to have changed the nature of reading. It is held that, during the Middle Ages, books were scarce and expensive. Medieval readers therefore only had small libraries, which they read repeatedly. The

⁸Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (London and New York, 1982).

⁹Brian V. Street, *Literacy in Theory and Practice* (Cambridge, 1984); William V. Harris, *Ancient Literacy* (Cambridge, Mass. and London, 1989), p. 41; John Halverson, ‘Goody and the Implosion of the Literacy Thesis’, *Man* 27 (1992): 301-17.

¹⁰An example of the ideological model is M.T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066-1307* (Oxford, 1979).

¹¹Vervliet, ‘Gutenberg or Diderot?’, p. 18; Febvre and Martin, *Coming of the Book*, p. 252.

provision of a greater number of cheaper texts by the printing presses, however, enabled readers to accumulate large libraries of a greater variety of books. Reading was therefore, it has been suggested, no longer confined to a few select texts and became 'extensive' rather than 'intensive'.¹² As we shall see from the case-study of Yorkshire, however, these theories are too general and sweeping. Not only is there evidence, as I have already said, of the speculative sale of books before the advent of print but, furthermore, the size of private libraries does not seem to have increased a great deal in the sixteenth century.

ii. Reformation

The view that print freed the laity from the 'shackles' of illiteracy has often been related to the religious reforms of the sixteenth century. Protestantism, it has been argued, provided the motive for literacy in the shape of the vernacular Bible and print supplied the means, as thousands of cheap printed books poured from the presses. Protestantism is often seen as 'the religion of the book'.¹³ It is asserted that the promotion of the English Bible during the Reformation encouraged the laity to learn to read in order to gain first-hand access to the Scriptures.¹⁴ No longer were laymen and women forced to rely on the interpretations of the Scriptures expounded to them by the clergy. Imogen Luxton, for example, contrasts the Protestant emphasis on direct access to the Scriptures for all, with the 'religious ignorance' of the laity in the pre-

¹²Eisenstein, *Printing Press*, 1: 72.

¹³R.A. Houston, 'Literacy' in Hans J. Hillerbrand (ed.), *The Oxford Encyclopaedia of the Reformation* (New York and Oxford, 1996), 2: 429-34; Lawrence Stone, 'Literacy and Education in England, 1640-1900', *Past and Present* 42 (1969): 76; Christopher Haigh, *Reformation and Resistance in Tudor Lancashire* (Cambridge, 1975), p. 114: 'Protestantism was a Bible-reading religion in a way that Catholicism had never been.'

¹⁴See, for example, Bennett, *English Books and Readers 1475 to 1557*, p. 26.

Reformation period.¹⁵ Through a study of book ownership, particularly Bibles, and the increasing interest in education taken by the laity, Luxton defines the change in provincial culture in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as a shift in emphasis from the images and ritual of the late Middle Ages, to the printed word.¹⁶ The same conclusions have been drawn by François Furet and Jacques Ozouf, who describe the Middle Ages as a time of restricted literacy because the laity were only allowed access to the Bible through the interpretations and preaching of the clergy.¹⁷ It is argued that the Reformation and print did not effect a sudden and complete change, but they did initiate ‘a period in our history during which the whole of society made its entry into written culture.’¹⁸

These studies which advocate the revolutionary impact of print and the Reformation on literacy and reading have received criticism from scholars who view the Reformation according to different models. The historiography of the Reformation is complicated and has been outlined in a number of studies.¹⁹ The theory that the emphasis on Bible-reading stimulated an improvement in lay literacy owes much to an interpretation of the Reformation which narrates the development from ‘medieval’ Catholicism to ‘modern’ Protestantism. The foundational study of this kind was *The*

¹⁵Imogen Luxton, ‘The Reformation and Popular Culture’, in Felicity Heal and Rosemary O’Day (eds.), *Church and Society in England: Henry VIII to James I* (London, 1977), p. 68.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 77.

¹⁷François Furet and Jacques Ozouf, *Reading and Writing: Literacy in France from Calvin to Jules Ferry* (Cambridge, 1982), pp. 305-8.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 308.

¹⁹See for example, Rosemary O’Day, *The Debate on the English Reformation* (London and New York, 1986); Christopher Haigh, ‘The Recent Historiography of the English Reformation’, in Christopher Haigh (ed.), *The English Reformation Revised* (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 19-33; Peter Marshall, ‘Introduction’, in Peter Marshall (ed.), *The Impact of the English Reformation 1500-1640* (London and New York, 1997), pp. 1-11; Patrick Collinson, ‘The English Reformation, 1545-1995’, in Michael Bentley (ed.), *Companion to Historiography* (London and New York, 1997), pp. 336-60.

English Reformation by A.G. Dickens, which focused on the appeal of Protestantism to the laity.²⁰ Dickens argued that the Reformation was a movement ‘from below’.²¹ The arguments of Dickens are supported by the work of Claire Cross, who interprets the Reformation as ‘the triumph of the laity’.²² She argues that the reforming ideals of the new religion had a strong appeal to the merchants, craftworkers and peasants, and quickly gained popularity. These studies prompted more research on the spread of Protestantism, such as that of J.J. Scarisbrick, Christopher Haigh and, most recently, Eamon Duffy, which started from an alternative perspective and argued that the laity’s reception of Protestantism could vary between different areas of England.²³ Scarisbrick, for example, highlighted the laity’s strong commitment and enthusiasm for late-medieval religion, and Haigh’s case-study of Lancashire has demonstrated that the religious reforms encountered much resistance in that region.

Another criticism which can be made of studies which emphasise the impact of the Reformation and print on reading and book ownership is that they are a product of periodisation. The English Reformation and the invention of the printing press occurred at the time in which the ‘Middle Ages’, so-called, become the ‘early modern’ age. Traditionally, historical and literary studies have defined and delimited the two periods through sets of dichotomies. According to the Marxist model, medieval England is feudal whereas early modern England is capitalist or at least proto-

²⁰A.G. Dickens, *The English Reformation* (New York, 1964).

²¹Haigh, ‘Recent Historiography’, p. 21.

²²Claire Cross, *Church and People 1450-1600* (London, 1976).

²³J.J. Scarisbrick, *The Reformation and the English People* (Oxford, 1984); Haigh, *Reformation and Resistance*; Christopher Haigh, *English Reformations: Religion, Politics and Society under the Tudors* (Oxford, 1993); Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars* (New Haven and London, 1992).

capitalist.²⁴ The medieval period is also characterised by Catholicism, restricted literacy and the manuscript book. In the early modern age, however, it is assumed that literacy has been ‘democratised’ through Protestantism and print. These impressions are reinforced by the tendency of studies to stop at the end of the Middle Ages and begin at the start of the early modern period.²⁵ The exaggerated contrast between the medieval and early modern periods has been challenged by a number of scholars in different disciplines.²⁶ This study, by focusing on the interface between the ‘medieval’ and ‘early modern’ periods, and analysing both the changes and continuities in book production and reading over the period, aims to avoid these pitfalls.

iii. Literacy

The theories of progress advocated by scholars who discuss the effects of print and the Reformation have not found clear support in studies which have focused on the evidence of literacy. Some medievalists stress the importance of the rising literacy of the laity in preparing the way for print. According to H.S. Bennett, for example, ‘a reading public ... had been created, mainly during the fifteenth century, and the

²⁴Rodney Hilton (ed.), *The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism* (London, 1976); Christopher Dyer, ‘Were there any Capitalists in Fifteenth-Century England?’ in Jennifer Kermode (ed.), *Enterprise and Individuals in Fifteenth-Century England* (Stroud, 1991), pp. 1-24.

²⁵Examples include: S.H. Cavanaugh, ‘A Study of Books Privately Owned in England: 1300-1450’ (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1980); J.T. Rosenthal, ‘Aristocratic Cultural Patronage and Book Bequests: 1350-1500’, *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library* 64 (1981-2): 522-48; Jeremy Griffiths and Derek Pearsall (eds.), *Book Production and Publishing in Britain 1375-1475* (Cambridge, 1989); David Cressy, *Literacy and the Social Order: Reading and Writing in Tudor and Stuart England* (Cambridge, 1980).

²⁶Examples include Alan Macfarlane, *The Origins of English Individualism: the Family, Property and Social Transition* (Oxford, 1978); Lee Patterson, ‘On the Margin: Postmodernism, Ironic History and Medieval Studies’, *Speculum* 65 (1990): 87-108; Judith M. Bennett, ‘Medieval Women, Modern Women: Across the Great Divide’, in David Aers (ed.), *Culture and History 1350-1600* (Hemel Hempstead, 1992), pp. 147-75.

conditions were ripe for the coming of printing.’²⁷ This claim arises principally from Bennett’s estimation that around 6000 books containing English texts were published before the mid-sixteenth century, which he interpreted as direct evidence of the existence of a substantial lay reading public.²⁸ More recently, M.T. Clanchy has investigated the growth of skills in reading and writing amongst the lay population of England between 1066 and 1307 in the context of the increasing bureaucracy of the royal government. He asserts that as early as the beginning of the fourteenth century knowledge of Latin may have been sufficiently widespread among the laity to include peasants.²⁹ Likewise, Jo Ann Hoepfner Moran, in her study of lay involvement in schooling, suggests that not only did skills in reading and writing become more extensive throughout the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, but that evidence of literacy can be found at all social levels.³⁰ In support of this thesis, she refers to the distribution of written notices, posted bills, the painting of passages of the Scriptures on the walls of churches, the reading of the vernacular Bible and the spread of Lollardy among ‘the most humble classes’.³¹ As we shall see in this thesis, pragmatic considerations, such as the need to deal with financial and legal documents, were important in the development of literacy.³² However, evidence of levels of literacy

²⁷Bennett, *English Books and Readers 1475 to 1557*, pp. 9-10.

²⁸Ibid., p. 20.

²⁹M.T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066-1307*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1994), p. 237.

³⁰Jo Ann Hoepfner Moran, *The Growth of English Schooling, 1340-1548: Learning, Literacy and Laicization in Pre-Reformation York Diocese* (Princeton, 1985), p. 172.

³¹Ibid., pp. 172-4. See also M.B. Parkes, ‘The Literacy of the Laity’, in *Scribes, Scripts and Readers: Studies in the Communication, Presentation and Dissemination of Medieval Texts* (London and Ohio, 1991), pp. 275-97.

³²See also, Richard Britnell (ed.), *Pragmatic Literacy, East and West 1200-1330* (Woodbridge, 1997).

during this period is ambiguous and difficult to interpret, and therefore we cannot say with confidence that literacy was steadily progressing.

Support for this view comes from historians who have taken a more pessimistic stance towards the education and literacy of the laity. The existence of two contrasting standpoints, one optimistic, the other pessimistic, may owe a great deal to a confusion about which particular part of society is being discussed. The conclusions of a study of lay literacy focusing on the aristocratic or courtly milieu will differ considerably from research on the reading skills of merchants, artisans or husbandmen. There is also a difference in the types of sources used. Literacy has been analysed through the evidence of book ownership in wills and indirect indications of reading, the use of signatures or the description of witnesses in court depositions. David Cressy, for example, who has analysed the literacy of the laity of Tudor and Stuart England by studying the use of signatures, concludes that: 'Generally the demand for literature was sluggish. The incentives and rewards repeatedly publicised by authors and preachers were not sufficiently strong to break people from their deep-rooted and quite comfortable illiteracy.'³³ Sylvia L. Thrupp has researched levels of literacy in London during the period 1467-1476 using depositions of the consistory court.³⁴ The clerk recorded forty-eight of the 116 male witnesses as literate, which Thrupp interprets as having the ability to read some Latin. From this evidence that 40% of the witnesses could understand some Latin, Thrupp argues that it was likely that around 50% could read English. A more pessimistic conclusion was reached by L.R. Poos in his study of literacy in rural Essex, likewise based on the descriptions of deponents as literate or

³³Cressy, *Literacy and the Social Order*, p. 13.

³⁴Sylvia L. Thrupp, *The Merchant Class of Medieval London 1300-1500* (Ann Arbor, 1962), pp. 156-8.

otherwise in late fifteenth-century consistory court records.³⁵ The different results probably reflect differences in the social composition of the two samples. Poos's sample included more rural inhabitants than Thrupp's, which was predominantly composed of craftworkers. The findings of Poos that all labourers and nearly all artisans and retailers were illiterate, while 85% of agriculturalists were also described as 'illiteratus', support Cressy's pessimistic comments on the growth of English literacy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.³⁶

We can therefore see that there are essentially three different interpretations of literacy during the period c. 1450-1550: a rapid development as a result of print and the Reformation; an emphasis on the advances before print; or a pessimistic impression of literacy compared with the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This case-study of Yorkshire will assess the evidence of literacy over the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries through a statistical analysis of wills and probate inventories (the strengths and limitations of which I will discuss shortly). I will analyse the different levels of literacy of different sections of society and will indicate how the education and learning of the inhabitants of the urban centres contrasted with those of the rural areas. I shall show that direct evidence of an increased literacy is rare, and that we are dependent instead on indirect indications which need careful interpretation.

2. L'Histoire du Livre

My decision to research both the production and use of books has been influenced by the discipline of the 'history of the book', or *l'histoire du livre*, which is distinguished from histories of printing or the book trade by focusing both on the book producers and

³⁵L.R. Poos, *A Rural Society after the Black Death: Essex 1350-1525* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 286-7.

their customers and methods of reading.³⁷ This field of study, which originates in the work of Febvre and Martin, approaches the history of book production and consumption from a sociological perspective.³⁸ Its scope is wider than the history of printing, dealing with the role of the book in society. Although the study of book production together with book use is not exclusive to and was not pioneered by *l'histoire du livre*, this discipline has encouraged more detailed analysis of the wide range of issues in the history of the book.³⁹ A model for the analysis of book history has been suggested by Robert Darnton, who describes a 'communications circuit' which incorporates the separate stages in the life-span of a book, from the author's pen to the reader.⁴⁰ An alternative model has been suggested by Thomas R. Adams and Nicholas Barker, who criticise Darnton's circuit for concentrating on the people who use or produce the book and not on the book itself.⁴¹ In their model of book history, the different processes in the life-span of the book, that is publication, manufacture, distribution, reception and survival, are placed in the centre, and the variety of influences that affect the book, such as commercial pressures, public taste and social conventions, surround and press inwards on it.

³⁶The definition of 'literate' in this context is taken to mean an ability to read English, with possibly some Latin: Poos, *Rural Society*, p. 285.

³⁷David D. Hall, 'The History of the Book: New Questions? New Answers?', *Journal of Library History* 21 (1986): 27-38.

³⁸Wallace Kirsop, 'Literary History and Book Trade History: the Lessons of *L'Apparition du Livre*', *Australian Journal of French Studies* 16 (1979): 488-535.

³⁹Bennet, for example, considers both the publications of the early London and Westminster printers, as well as their intended customers. The work of Eisenstein also looks at both printing industries and methods of reading, but she does not refer to *l'histoire du livre*.

⁴⁰Robert Darnton, 'What is the History of Books?', *Daedalus* 111 (1982): 65-83.

⁴¹Thomas R. Adams and Nicholas Barker, 'A New Model for the Study of the Book', in Barker (ed.), *Potencie of Life*, pp. 5-43.

I would argue that the model of Adams and Barker is a better representation of textual history. A model which focuses on people, as that of Darnton does, suggests that the book stays constant through the course of the life-cycle and it is only those people who create and use the book who change. But the book itself can and often will undergo many changes during its life-cycle. Furthermore it is not always, or even often, possible to separate the 'actors' who play a part in the different stages in the life-cycle of a book. For example, in writing a book, which may go through several drafts, the author may be influenced to a greater to lesser extent by the suggestions or comments of his or her employer, publisher or intended audience.⁴² Thus we should concentrate on the book itself and not the people who create, influence or use it.

My study of the history of the book in Yorkshire follows the discipline of *l'histoire du livre* in its concern with the whole life-cycle of the book, from production to reception. This thesis applies the methodology and rationale of *l'histoire du livre* to manuscript books as well as just printed books. The most influential studies of *l'histoire du livre*, such as those of Febvre and Martin, and Darnton, deal only with printed books; the discipline has not yet significantly expanded its boundaries to include the period before print.⁴³ Only a few studies of both the production and reception of manuscript books have been undertaken.⁴⁴ In particular, although some investigation has already been made of reading and the ownership of books in York and its hinterland, these have nearly always been undertaken separately from research on book artisans or the output of the printing presses. The ownership of books by the

⁴²Jerome J. McGann, *A Critique of Modern Textual Criticism* (Chicago and London, 1983).

⁴³Another example is the work of David D. Hall, *Culture of Print: Essays in the History of the Book* (Amherst, 1996).

⁴⁴An example is Kate Harris, 'Patrons, Buyers and Owners: The Evidence of Ownership and the Rôle of Book Owners in Book Production and the Book Trade', in Griffiths and Pearsall (eds.), *Book Production and Publishing*, pp. 163-99.

inhabitants of Yorkshire during the late Middle Ages has been discussed by Moran, Jonathan Hughes, P.J.P. Goldberg and others.⁴⁵ Biographical information about the early York printers and descriptions of surviving books produced for the York market have been presented by Robert Davies, E. Gordon Duff and W.K. Sessions.⁴⁶ The research of J.B. Friedman is unusual in its focus on both book ownership and production in Northern England in the late Middle Ages. His principal concern is, however, with demonstrating the presence of a thriving provincial production of illuminated manuscripts, and the areas of book production and ownership are dealt with separately. Moreover, Friedman is concerned only with manuscript books. There are consequently many unexplored questions concerning the relationship between the late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century reading public and the professional book trade. How did the book producers respond to the different literary interests and need for diverse books generated by the different sections of society? Can the development of a professional trade in books be linked to a growing market for books? In this case study of late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century Yorkshire, I analyse the relation between literacy and the demand for manuscript and printed books, and I also consider other factors which may have stimulated literacy.

⁴⁵Moran, *Growth*, pp. 152-9, 187-213; P. Mackie, 'Chaplains in the Diocese of York, 1480-1530: the Testamentary Evidence', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 58 (1986): 123-33; Jonathan Hughes, *Pastors and Visionaries: Religion and Secular Life in Late Medieval Yorkshire* (Woodbridge, 1988); P.J.P. Goldberg, 'Lay Book Ownership in Late Medieval York: the Evidence of Wills', *The Library*, 6th series 16 (1994): 181-9; Edward L. Meek, 'Printing and the English Parish Clergy in the Later Middle Ages', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 11 (1997): 112-26.

⁴⁶Robert Davies, *Memoir of the York Press*, 2nd edn (York, 1868, repr. 1988); E. Gordon Duff, 'The Printers, Stationers and Bookbinders of York up to 1600', *Transactions of the Bibliographical Society* 5 (1899): 87-107; Duff, *English Provincial Printers*; Duff, *Century*; William K. and Margaret Sessions, *Printing in York from the 1490s to the Present Day* (York, 1976); William K. Sessions, *Les Deux Pierres: Rouen, Edinburgh, York* (York, 1982).

The focus of this thesis on a particular community is also influenced by *l'histoire du livre*. The use of case studies as a means of constructing a comprehensive history of the book is advocated by the socio-economic scholars of *l'histoire du livre*. Such studies can provide specific information and also stimulate questions which have important implications for broader understanding.⁴⁷ A criticism which has been made of the work of Eisenstein is that she has not made enough use of primary sources and is too sweeping in her generalisations.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, it can be argued that her aim was to stimulate research by suggesting hypotheses for other scholars to investigate and test by means of more detailed and focused research. This study will focus on York and its county in order to analyse in detail Eisenstein's theories concerning the effects of print on literacy and methods of reading.

3. Case-study of the York Book Trade

Although the focus of this thesis is on book production and ownership in Yorkshire, the study of the professional book trade in chapters one and two will concentrate on the city of York. As I shall show in chapter one, York was the only town in the county with a significant production of and trade in books during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. This thesis will investigate the social, economic and religious factors which affected the book trade in York. The evidence of book production in other book trade centres, in particular London and the university towns, will be used to elucidate the use of trade terms and the organisation of the trade. York was the fourth most important book-producing centre in England, behind London, Oxford and Cambridge, but ahead of other provincial cities and towns. London, not surprisingly, led the English book

⁴⁷Sandra Hindman, 'Introduction', in *Printing the Written Word: The Social History of Books circa 1450-1520* (Ithaca and London, 1991), pp. 1-18.

trade. The research of C. Paul Christianson on the book trade of London during the period 1300-1520 has revealed 117 stationers, thirty-five illuminators, thirty textwriters, six artisans who both wrote and decorated books, forty-five bookbinders, twelve parchment makers and ten servants and apprentices to book producers.⁴⁹ Christianson has shown that they formed a self-conscious group of book artisans and traders who lived in the vicinity of St Paul's Cathedral and who had close social and business connections with one another. The early development of a book trade in Oxford and Cambridge was stimulated by the demand for books generated by the university scholars. In thirteenth-century Oxford, four bookbinders, four parchment makers, four illuminators, a scrivener and a copyist resided in Catte Street, and in Schools Street could be found an illuminator, scrivener and parchment maker.⁵⁰ A survey of the records of illuminators in England has revealed the names of seventy-two illuminators in Oxford during the period 1190-c.1340.⁵¹ The book producers and sellers were included amongst the privileged persons of the university who were allowed to practise a trade in the city without becoming free.⁵² A large community of writers, illuminators and stationers was likewise working in Cambridge from the late thirteenth century. As early as 1271 the university authorities asserted in a dispute with the archdeacon of Ely that the book artisans and traders should be under the jurisdiction

⁴⁸See, for example, Hunter, 'Impact', pp. 335-52 and the review of Eisenstein by Daniel Traister in *Printing History* 4 (1982): 71-3.

⁴⁹C. Paul Christianson, 'Evidence for the Study of London's Late Medieval Manuscript-Book Trade', in Griffiths and Pearsall (eds.), *Book Production and Publishing*, p. 88; C. Paul Christianson, *A Directory of London Stationers and Book Artisans 1300-1500* (New York, 1990).

⁵⁰Janet Cooper, 'Medieval Oxford', in H.E. Salter and Mary D. Lobel (eds.), *The Victoria History of the Counties of England: Oxfordshire* (London, 1979), 4: 28.

⁵¹M.A. Michael, 'English Illuminators c.1190-1450: A Survey from Documentary Sources', *English Manuscript Studies 1100-1700* 4 (1993): 63; see also Reginald W. Jeffrey, 'Industries', in William Page (ed.), *The Victoria History of the Counties of England: Oxfordshire* (London, 1907), 2: 235-40.

of the university.⁵³ Unlike Oxford and Cambridge, the book trade in York was not dominated by the demands of a university but seems to have been largely dependent on the custom of the Minster and parish churches and, to a lesser extent, the wealthier laity.

As I have already said, York apparently had a larger book trade than other provincial non-university cities and towns. This may be partly due to the nature of the evidence. The unusually informative York freemen's register, which will be discussed in more detail below, preserves the names of the thirty-eight textwriters or scribes, thirty-five parchment makers, fourteen stationers, printers and bookbinders and three illuminators who took up the freedom in York during the period 1450-1550. In Exeter, during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, one parchment maker and two bookbinders are known to have become free of the city.⁵⁴ In Norwich, book artisans appear in the county assize rolls and city deeds from the late thirteenth century.⁵⁵ The freemen's register names forty-four scribes, fifteen parchment makers, one scribe and illuminator, one textwriter and one bookmaker during the period 1450-1550. Yet in contrast to the early appearance of stationers in York (from the first half of the fourteenth century) there is no record of any stationers in Norwich before the Elizabethan period.⁵⁶ Evidence of book crafts in Bristol is available from the apprentice books which date from 1532 and the accounts of the city's churchwardens,

⁵²Cooper, 'Medieval Oxford', pp. 55-7, 161-3.

⁵³Frances M. Page, 'Industries', in L.F. Salzman (ed.), *The Victoria History of the Counties of England: Cambridge and the Isle of Ely* (London, 1948), 2: 368; M.H. Black, *Cambridge University Press 1584-1984* (Cambridge, 1984), pp. 6-13; Michael, 'English Illuminators', p. 74.

⁵⁴Margery M. Rowe and Andrew M. Jackson, *Exeter Freeman, 1266-1967*, Devon and Cornwall Record Society, extra series 1 (1973), pp. 69, 72, 75.

⁵⁵A.I. Doyle, 'The English Provincial Book Trade before Printing', in P. Isaac (ed.) *Six Centuries of the Provincial Book Trade in Britain* (Winchester, 1990), p. 20.

but the cumulative evidence is again much less than that for York. In 1534, for example, Samson Shelley was apprenticed to Robert Wudward, a stationer, and in 1546 Francis Busserd, late bookbinder, was also mentioned in the register of apprentices.⁵⁷ The churchwardens' accounts of St Ewen's Church in Bristol include payments in the late fifteenth century to a John Textwriter, a William Writer, and John Wyghton, who is described as both a stationer and illuminator.⁵⁸ Lincoln is likewise known to have had an illuminator in around 1250, a female parchment maker in 1275 and a bookbinder in 1319.⁵⁹ Other towns, such as Winchester, Durham and Bury St Edmunds, also have occasional references to book producers and tradesmen during the later medieval period.⁶⁰

The prominence of York as a provincial book trade centre is supported by the fact that printing presses were established in the city during the early sixteenth century. A total of five printers, more than any other provincial town, are known to have worked in York between around 1509 and 1534.⁶¹ There is evidence of the activity of only two printers in Oxford before the mid-sixteenth century. We do not know the identity of the Oxford printer who produced three books between 1478 and 1481, but it may have been

⁵⁶David Stoker, 'The Regulation of the Book Trade in Norwich 1500-1800', *Publishing History* 5 (1979): 132.

⁵⁷D. Hollis (ed.), *Calendar of the Bristol Apprentice Book, part 1: 1532-1542*, Bristol Record Society 14 (1948), p. 47; Elizabeth Ralph and Nora M. Hardwick (eds.), *Calendar of the Bristol Apprentice Book, part 2: 1542-1552*, Bristol Record Society 33 (1980), p. 46.

⁵⁸B.R. Masters and Elizabeth Ralph (eds.), *The Church Book of St Ewen's Bristol 1454-1584*, Publications of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society Records Section 6 (1967), pp. 16, 107-8, 113, 132, 138.

⁵⁹Doyle, 'English Provincial Book Trade', p. 21; Francis Hill, *Medieval Lincoln* (Cambridge, 1948), p. 161.

⁶⁰Doyle, 'English Provincial Book Trade', pp. 21-3.

⁶¹A detailed survey of the evidence for York printing will be given in chapter two.

Theodoric Rood of Cologne, who printed eleven books there from 1481.⁶² A second press was established in Oxford by John Scolar, who later moved to Abingdon where he produced a breviary for the monks of St Mary's.⁶³ Cambridge did not have a press until at least twelve years after York. The first Cambridge press was set up by John Siberch, who produced ten books in the period 1521-1522.⁶⁴ Although the university of Cambridge was granted Letters Patent in 1534, which allowed the appointment of both stationers and printers, another press is not known to have been set up before 1584.⁶⁵ Eight books were produced at St Albans by the 'schoolmaster' printer between around 1479 and 1486.⁶⁶ In 1534 John Herford established a second press in St Albans, which continued to print until the suppression of the abbey in 1539.⁶⁷ A monk of the monastery of Tavistock, Thomas Rychard, printed two books in 1525 and 1534.⁶⁸ John Mychell, who had begun his career by printing in London, set up a press in Canterbury which was in operation from at least 1549, and may have produced pro-reformist books in 1536.⁶⁹ Books containing imprints of Ipswich were produced by John Oswen, John Overton and Anthony Scolock, but it is likely that only the nine books printed by

⁶²Colin Clair, *A History of Printing in Britain* (London, 1965), pp. 112-3; Norman F. Blake, 'The Spread of Printing in English during the Fifteenth Century', *Gutenberg Jahrbuch* 62 (1987): 26-8.

⁶³Clair, *History of Printing*, pp. 113, 116; Henry R. Plomer, *Wynkyn de Worde and his Contemporaries from the Death of Caxton to 1535* (London, 1925), pp. 235-6.

⁶⁴Plomer, *Wynkyn de Worde*, pp. 237-44; Black, *Cambridge University Press*, p. 14; Clair, *History of Printing*, p. 120.

⁶⁵William K. Sessions, *The Spread of British Printing 1557 to 1695* (York, 1988), pp. 136-7; Black, *Cambridge University Press*, pp. 22-4.

⁶⁶Blake, 'Spread of Printing', pp. 28-9.

⁶⁷Clair, *History of Printing*, p. 114; Plomer, *Wynkyn de Worde*, p. 252.

⁶⁸Clair, *History of Printing*, p. 116; Plomer, *Wynkyn de Worde*, p. 252.

⁶⁹Clair, *History of Printing*, p. 116; William K. Sessions, *John Mychell: Canterbury's First Printer from 1536 and from 1549* (York, 1983).

Oswen were actually produced in the town. Oswen later moved to Worcester, where he exercised his privilege to print service books and books of instruction.⁷⁰

Studies of the Edinburgh book trade have indicated that the industry there was very different in character from that in York. The main source of evidence for book production in Scotland comes from extant manuscripts, which reveal that although there was a significant growth in the scribal profession during the fifteenth century, the production of texts was mainly carried out by notaries public.⁷¹ The first press in Scotland was set up by Andrew Myllar in 1508 in Edinburgh in partnership with a merchant, Walter Chepman. From this press was issued a series of vernacular literary texts. The publication of the Aberdeen breviary was financed by Chepman in 1510. The second printer in Edinburgh, during the early sixteenth century was Thomas Davidson, who produced *The New Acts and Constitutionis of Parliament* and *The Hystory and Croniklis of Scotland* in around 1542.⁷² The book trade of Edinburgh during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, like that of London, seems to have been concerned with texts which were considered to be of political and literary significance. The book trade of York, in contrast, was focused on liturgical and grammar texts that were primarily aimed at the ecclesiastical market. In its choice of texts, the printing trade in York was therefore closer to Oxford and Cambridge.

⁷⁰Clair, *History of Printing*, p. 117; S.F. Watson, *Some Materials for a History of Printing and Publishing in Ipswich* (Ipswich, 1949).

⁷¹George Stevenson (ed.), *Pieces from the Makculloch and the Gray MSS together with the Chapman and Myller Prints*, Scottish Text Society 65 (1918); R.J. Lyall, 'Books and Book Owners in Fifteenth-Century Scotland', in Griffiths and Pearsall (eds.), *Book Production and Publishing*, pp. 239-56.

⁷²Franc Isaac, *English and Scottish Printing Types, 1501-35, 1508-41* (Oxford, 1930), figs. 86-90; Franc Isaac, *English and Scottish Printing Types, 1535-58, 1552-58* (Oxford, 1932), figs. 169-71; William Beattie (ed.), *The Chepman and Myllar Prints*, Edinburgh Bibliographical Society (1950); Clair, *History of Printing*, pp. 121-3;

4. Socio-economic context

The business of the artisans and entrepreneurs involved in the trade in books was tied to the socio-economic fortunes of the city. This, and the religious background, provide the context in which the market for books needs to be placed. I shall discuss the economic and religious background briefly here and refer to it in the course of the thesis. York was the political, social and economic centre of the North of England. The city was the administrative centre of a county which covered around 6,000 square miles.⁷³ The city was an important industrial and redistribution centre. Its most important exports were cloth and lead.⁷⁴ A wide range of goods could be acquired in York, such as metalwork and leather goods, as well as specialist and high status merchandise, for example, stained glass, church bells and dyestuffs. The city also served as a distribution centre and market for produce from the region, such as grain, beans and fish.⁷⁵ Wine, timber, iron, furs and other goods were imported to Hull and then distributed through York.⁷⁶

Using the evidence of the fall in the admissions to the franchise and the volume of wool exports from Hull, J.N. Bartlett has argued that the city of York was in a period of economic recession during the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.⁷⁷ This study has received some criticism from a number of scholars, including R.B. Dobson, who

William K. Sessions, *A Printer's Dozen: The First British Printing Centres to 1557 after Westminster and London* (York, 1983), pp. 31-41.

⁷³E. Miller, 'Medieval York', in R.B. Pugh (ed.), *The Victoria History of the Counties of England: the City of York* (Oxford, 1961), p. 29; D.M. Palliser, *Tudor York* (Oxford, 1979), p. 3.

⁷⁴D.M. Palliser, 'York Under the Tudors: The Trading Life of the Northern Capital', in Alan Everitt (ed.), *Perspectives in English Urban History* (London, 1973), pp. 39-59.

⁷⁵*Ibid.*, p. 49-50.

⁷⁶P.J.P. Goldberg, *Women, Work, and Life-Cycle in a Medieval Economy* (Oxford, 1992), p. 25.

has shown that the fluctuation in the number of new freemen admitted to the city was related to mortality and cannot therefore be used as a simple barometer of the city's prosperity.⁷⁸ The payment of a fine by townsmen to escape the financial burden of civic office has often been cited as a symptom of economic crisis, yet, as Kermode has shown, this practice was not widespread in late fifteenth and early sixteenth century York and can be explained by other factors than decreased prosperity.⁷⁹ Although there is continued debate as to when the earlier stages of recession began, there is a broad consensus that the early fifteenth century was generally prosperous and it was only in the middle of the century that signs of economic malaise begin to appear.⁸⁰ The most important factor in the diminished prosperity of the city was the decline of York's cloth export industry and a general fall in long-distance trading activity.⁸¹ The York weavers had depended on the export market and had allowed the regional market to be claimed by West Riding manufacturers from the later fourteenth century. It was only in the mid-fifteenth century, when the export market began to suffer that the York manufacturers looked to alternative markets and found them unavailable.⁸² The

⁷⁷J.N. Bartlett, 'The Expansion and Decline of York in the Later Middle Ages', *Economic History Review*, 2nd series 12 (1959-60): 17-33.

⁷⁸R.B. Dobson, 'Admissions to the Freedom of the City of York in the Later Middle Ages', *Economic History Review*, 2nd series 26 (1973): 1-21.

⁷⁹Jennifer I. Kermode, 'Urban Decline? The Flight from Office in Late Medieval York', *Economic History Review*, 2nd series 35 (1982): 179-98.

⁸⁰R.B. Dobson, 'Urban Decline in Late Medieval England', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th series 27 (1977): 1-22; D.M. Palliser, 'A Crisis in English Towns? The Case of York, 1460-1640', *Northern History* 14 (1978): 108-25; Sarah Rees Jones, 'Property, Tenure and Rents: Some Aspects of the Topography and Economy of Medieval York' (DPhil diss., York University, 1987), p. 304; Goldberg, *Women, Work and Life-Cycle*, p. 77.

⁸¹Miller, 'Medieval York', p. 90; Palliser, *Tudor York*, pp. 208-11; Jennifer I. Kermode, 'Merchants, Overseas Trade and Urban Decline', *Northern History* 23 (1987): 51-73; A.J. Pollard, *North-Eastern England during the Wars of the Roses: Lay Society, War and Politics 1450-1500* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 71-2.

⁸²Goldberg, *Women, Work, and Life-Cycle*, pp. 75-6.

recession is also signalled, and was exacerbated, by a drop in the city's population.⁸³ From being the second largest city in England after London at the time of the 1377 lay poll tax, York was ranked as the fifth most important provincial town according to the 1524/5 lay subsidy.⁸⁴ Economic decline was worsened by the dissolution of the monasteries in the later 1530s, which had provided important custom for York goods, particularly luxury and specialist items, including books. The city's financial difficulties were also exacerbated by the cost of maintaining the city's elaborate administrative and governmental structure, such as the annual sum which was owed to the crown for its corporate privileges.⁸⁵ However, indications of a recovery from the recession can be seen as early as the 1530s and the establishment of the King's Council in the North in 1561 also helped the city towards economic improvement.⁸⁶

The general recession in York during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries did not, however, reach all sectors of the economy. It is possible that standards of living were improving during the fifteenth century.⁸⁷ One indication of better living standards is the improvement in housing which can be seen in York during this period.⁸⁸ The declining property market prompted landlords to renovate their houses in order to attract tenants. Cash wages, which had been rising since the thirteenth century, also reached in peak in the fifteenth century.⁸⁹ Furthermore, there are indications that the city's importance as a regional centre was shifting from

⁸³Miller, 'Medieval York', p. 84; Pollard, *North-Eastern England*, pp. 43-4; Goldberg, *Women, Work and Life-Cycle*, p. 299.

⁸⁴Alan Dyer, *Decline and Growth in English Towns 1400-1640* (Basingstoke and London, 1991), p. 66.

⁸⁵Palliser, 'Crisis', pp. 108-25.

⁸⁶Dyer, *Decline*, p. 27; Palliser, 'Crisis', p. 117.

⁸⁷Christopher Dyer, *Standards of Living in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1989), p. 204.

⁸⁸Rees Jones, 'Property, Tenure and Rents', pp. 236-70, 304.

manufacture to the provision of professional services, such as the work of lawyers, clerks and physicians, during the second half of the century.⁹⁰ As will be explored, the thriving production of and trade in books in late fifteenth-century York may be seen as part of this trend.

5. Religious context

Unlike London and the south-east, the county of York was largely conservative in religion during the first part of the sixteenth century.⁹¹ The degree of religious conservatism varied, however, between different areas in Yorkshire. Studies of the formulae in the preambles to wills, for example, have suggested that the inhabitants of Hull, a port with close trading links with Germany and the Low Countries, were more receptive to Protestant ideas than were those in York or Leeds.⁹² The conservatism of York was probably related to the large number of clergy in the city as Claire Cross has suggested.⁹³ The city was the seat of an archbishop and the administrative centre of the largest English diocese which included not only all of Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire, but until 1541 also parts of Lancashire, Westmorland and Cumberland when a separate

⁸⁹Dyer, *Standards of Living*, p. 216.

⁹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 304; Miller, 'Medieval York', p. 86; Goldberg, *Women, Work and Life-Cycle*, p. 77.

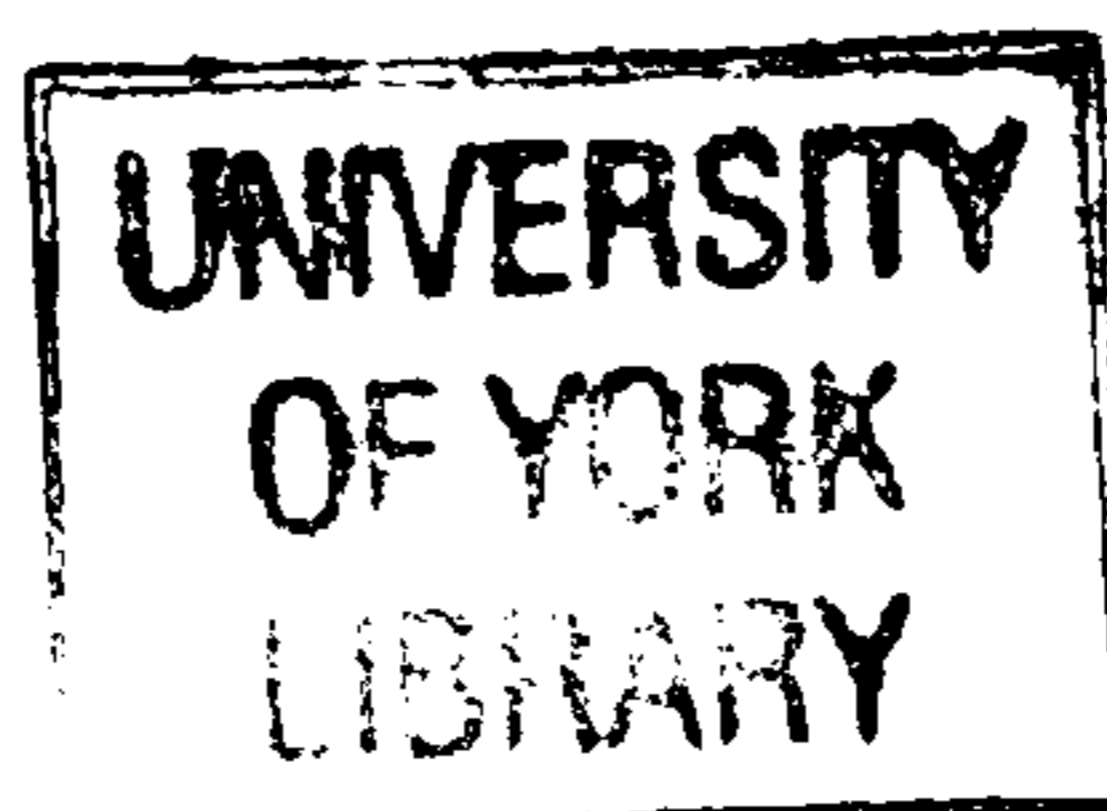
⁹¹D.M. Palliser, *The Reformation in York 1534-1553*, Borthwick Papers 40 (1971); D.M. Palliser, 'Popular Reactions to the Reformation during the Years of Uncertainty 1530-70', in Heal and O'Day (eds.), *Church and Society*, pp. 35-56.

⁹²Claire Cross, 'Parochial Structure and the Dissemination of Protestantism in Sixteenth-Century England: A Tale of Two Cities', in Derek Baker (ed.), *The Church in Town and Countryside*, Studies in Church History 16 (1979), pp. 269-78; Claire Cross, 'Priests into Ministers: the Establishment of Protestant Practice in the City of York', in P.N. Brooks (ed.), *Reformation Principle and Practice* (London, 1980), pp. 203-25; Claire Cross, 'The Development of Protestantism in Leeds and Hull, 1520-1640: the Evidence of Wills', *Northern History* 18 (1982): 230-8. On the trading links of Hull, see Jennifer Kermode, *Medieval Merchants: York, Beverley and Hull in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 159-82.

⁹³Cross, 'Parochial Structure', p. 278.

diocese of Chester was formed.⁹⁴ The city can be described as 'church-dominated'. It has been estimated that around one hundred beneficed and unbeneficed clergy served the city's forty parish churches in 1520, while some fifty canons and ecclesiastical administrators, vicars choral and chantry priests belonged to the Minster.⁹⁵ The city also contained St Mary's Abbey and St Leonard's Hospital, respectively the most important Benedictine house and the largest hospital in the north, together with a Gilbertine house at St Andrew's, Fishergate, St Clement's Priory and houses of the four mendicant orders.⁹⁶

In my case-study of Yorkshire I shall investigate the books owned by the clergy and laity in order to assess the older historiographical tradition outlined above. This thesis will show firstly that despite the conservatism of most of the inhabitants of Yorkshire, they were aware of and were responsive to some of the religious trends of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, such as the increasing emphasis placed on preaching. Secondly, the Yorkshire evidence will demonstrate that Protestantism was not essential for a literate laity or an educated clergy. In the county of York during the period studied here, we can see changes in book production and an animated interest in books despite a general lack of fervour for reformed ideology. The general conservatism of the county of York allows us to investigate the importance of other factors in the literacy of the laity, such as the need to deal with administrative and financial documents.



⁹⁴Moran, *Growth*, p. xiii; Palliser, *Tudor York*, p. 4.

⁹⁵Claire Cross (ed.), *York Clergy Wills 1520-1600: I Minster Clergy*, Borthwick Texts and Calendars 10 (1984), p. iv; Claire Cross (ed.), *York Clergy Wills 1520-1600: II City Clergy*, Borthwick Texts and Calendars 15 (1989), p. vi.

⁹⁶Miller, 'Medieval York', pp. 357-64.

6. Sources

As I have already suggested, there is a wealth of information available for the book trade in York compared with other provincial urban centres. The trades and occupations of the freemen were generally more diligently recorded in the York register than in other surviving registers, with the exception of Norwich (see table 1). This study is heavily reliant on the register for the names of York book artisans. Around half of the known members of the city's book trade during the period 1450-1550 are only recorded in the franchise register. Yet the freemen's register is a problematic source for urban occupational structure.⁹⁷ It was not always necessary to be free of the city in order to trade. Women and part-time workers are under-represented in the register, as are the trades of those who practised more than one occupation.⁹⁸ My discussion of the professional book producers is dominated by men, but it is unlikely that women were in fact absent from the crafts. Wives and other female relatives may have assisted male masters, and widows, who were free by right of their late husbands, could continue the family trade without being named in the register. The printing activities of widow Warwick, for example, who does not appear in the freemen's register, will be discussed in chapters one and two. Furthermore, the freedom of the city was not necessary for those who worked or traded within the liberties of St Peter, St Leonard's Hospital, St Mary's Abbey or one of the other ecclesiastical liberties of

⁹⁷The edition by Francis Collins does not address the problem of the different dating systems used in the register: Francis Collins (ed.), *Register of the Freemen of the City of York I: 1272-1558*, Surtees Society 96 (1897). Collins did not take into account the change in the starting date of the chamberlains' year of office in 1375, from 29 September to 3 February. In accordance with this, the dates of admission after 1375 given in this study are one year ahead of those in Collins' edition; D.M. Palliser, 'The York Freemen's Register 1273-1540: Amendments and Additions', *York Historian* 12 (1995): 21-7.

⁹⁸Heather Swanson, *Medieval Artisans: An Urban Class in Late Medieval England* (Oxford and New York, 1989), p. 106.

York.⁹⁹ As I shall show in chapter two, a number of stationers and printers are known to have worked within the liberty of St Peter. Artisans who were contracted to work for an employer on a piece rate basis, and who therefore did not trade retail, could also avoid becoming free of the city.

⁹⁹Dobson, 'Admissions to the Freedom', p. 13.

Table 1**Proportion of Freemen for whom the Trade is given in the Registers**

	Total no of freemen recorded	No which give trade	%
Canterbury			
1392-1550	2069	1819	87.9
Chester*			
1392-1550	955	651	68.2
Exeter			
1450-1550	1227	409	33.3
Leicester			
1465/6-1553/4	1205	798	66.2
Lynn			
1450-1550	1176	549	46.7
Norwich			
1485-1547	1805	1789	99.1
Wells**			
1451-1552	687	180	26.2
York			
1450-1469	1399	1380	98.6

*The records of only sixty-nine years over this period have survived.

**There are gaps in the record for twelve years between 1454 and 1538.

Sources:

Joseph Meadows Cowper (ed.), *The Roll of the Freemen of the City of Canterbury from AD 1392 to 1800* (Canterbury, 1903); J.H.E. Bennett (ed.), *The Rolls of the Freemen of the City of Chester, part 1 1392-1700*, Lancashire and Cheshire Record Society 51 (1906); Margery M. Rowe and Andrew M. Jackson (eds.), *Exeter Freemen, 1266-1967*, Devon and Cornwall Record Society, extra series 1 (1973); Henry Hartopp (ed.), *Register of the Freemen of Leicester* (Leicester, 1927); *A Calendar of the Freemen of Lynn*, Norfolk and Norwich Archaeological Society (1913); John L'Estrange (ed.), *Calendar of the Freemen of Norwich from 1317 to 1603* (London, 1888); Dorothy O. Shilton and Richard Holworthy (eds.), *Wells City Charters*, Somerset Record Society 46 (1932), pp. 148-178; F. Collins (ed.), *Register of the Freemen of the City of York 1: 1272-1558*, Surtees Society 96 (1897).

Yet the freedom did provide advantages, such as the right to hold civic office and guild mastership, and to train apprentices.¹⁰⁰ From the fourteenth century onwards, it is not uncommon to find residents of the liberty of St Peter becoming free.¹⁰¹ The artisans who did not take up the freedom were mainly those who worked for the Minster, such as Thomas Bakar, who was paid for covering two epistle books in 1518/9 and who probably lived in the liberty of St Peter.¹⁰² Nevertheless, the Minster also employed freemen of the city such as Thomas Richardson, stationer, who mended and bound some books for the Minster in c.1556.¹⁰³ Moreover, all of the book artisans who are

¹⁰⁰Goldberg, *Women, Work and Life-Cycle*, p. 49.

¹⁰¹Rees Jones, 'Property, Tenure and Rents', p. 294.

¹⁰²YML, Fabric Roll, E3/37; J. Raine (ed.), *The Fabric Rolls of York Minster*, Surtees Society 35 (1859), p. 99.

¹⁰³YML, Fabric Roll, E3/48; Raine (ed.), *Fabric Rolls*, p. 113.

known to have worked for the city during the period 1450-1550 were free.¹⁰⁴ Overall, the correlation between the evidence of the freemen's register for book artisans and evidence from other sources is high. Of the 114 known book makers and scribes of York who will be the focus of the first two chapters, only eighteen cannot be matched in the register.

The other sources which give additional biographical information about the York book artisans and entrepreneurs, include the account books and rolls of the city chamberlains.¹⁰⁵ These accounts record fines imposed on artisans and also payments made to parchment makers for materials. Information on the place of business of the different book crafts in the city is available from records of the lay subsidies.¹⁰⁶ The trading activities of stationers and the importation of books and paper from abroad are recorded in the customs accounts of Hull.¹⁰⁷ An indication of the range of books sold by a stationer of York, Neville Mores, is given in his probate inventory, made in 1538.¹⁰⁸ Evidence of the purchase of books by York Minster is provided in the fabric rolls and chamberlains' rolls.¹⁰⁹ There is a paucity of churchwardens' accounts for Yorkshire during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, but a few references to books have been found in the accounts of St Michael, Spurriergate in York.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁴Examples include Richard Catryk, John Cotom, John Fournays, John Kirkton and John Loftehous.

¹⁰⁵YCA, C1:1-C4:1, CC1-CC4.

¹⁰⁶YCA, E48, E49, E50; E. Peacock, 'Subsidy Roll for York and Ainsty', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 4 (1877): 170-201.

¹⁰⁷Wendy R. Childs (ed.), *The Customs Accounts of Hull 1453-1490*, YASRS 144 (1984); London, PRO, E 122/60/3, E 122/64/2, E 122/64/5, E 122/202/4, E 122/202/5, E 122/202/6.

¹⁰⁸D.M. Palliser and D.G. Selwyn, 'The Stock of a York Stationer, 1538', *The Library*, 5th series 27 (1972): 207-19.

¹⁰⁹YML, E1/16-E1/34; E3/24-E3/48.

¹¹⁰York, BIHR, PR Y/MS/3 and PR Y/MS/4.

The main sources of evidence used in this study for the size, composition and interests of the reading public of York and its hinterland, are wills and probate inventories. The fifteenth- and sixteenth-century records of the York diocese include an abundant survival of testamentary materials. It has been estimated by Moran, for example, that the registers of the Prerogative and Exchequer Court of York alone contain around 7,400 wills for the period 1530-1548.¹¹¹ The registers of the Dean and Chapter of York Minster, the court of the archbishop of York, the Prerogative Court of Canterbury and a number of peculiar jurisdictions also contain registered wills.¹¹² The collection of wills surviving for the diocese of York from the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries is therefore substantial, so much so that it has been impracticable to read them all for the purposes of this study. In order to analyse the composition of the lay reading public and literacy rates among the laity over the period, I have read six samples, each of 200 wills, of the lay inhabitants of Yorkshire taken at twenty-year intervals between 1450 and 1550.¹¹³ As fewer than 200 wills were registered for the years 1450, 1470 and 1490, I took wills from the following year, then the previous year and so on until the quota was met. When only part of a year's registered wills were needed (that is, when more than 200 wills were registered), the wills were sorted into alphabetical order and the first 200 read. These 1,200 wills will be used to assess literacy rates over the period c.1450 to 1550.

I also extended my survey of book bequests by using published editions of Yorkshire wills and secondary studies of reading and book ownership of the period

¹¹¹Moran, *Growth*, p. 227. The registers of the Exchequer Court in the BIHR are hereafter cited as Prob. Reg.

¹¹²YML, L2/4, L2/5a, L2/5b; BIHR, Archbishop's Registers, vols 19-29; London, PRO, Prerogative Court of Canterbury wills (hereafter cited as PCC).

¹¹³R.S. Schofield, 'Sampling in Historical Research', in E.A. Wrigley (ed.), *Nineteenth-Century Society* (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 146-90.

1440-1550.¹¹⁴ Published sources have provided 259 clerical wills and an additional 129 lay wills from Yorkshire which mention books. These were checked against the originals and have been used to give further information concerning the reading interests of both the laity and clergy and how they may have changed. My discussion of the book ownership of the laity is therefore based on two samples of wills, that is the survey of 1,200 wills and the survey of wills mentioned in published sources, while the analysis of clerical book ownership uses only the survey of published references to wills that include bequests of books. I have also read all the 137 lay and clerical probate inventories surviving for Yorkshire from 1450 to 1550 for the mention of books.¹¹⁵

The question concerning what constitutes reliable evidence for reading is a debatable topic. It can be argued, for example, that the references to books in wills and inventories are no more than anecdotes. How many examples of bequests are needed before it can be said that a book is 'popular' or 'widely read'?¹¹⁶ Testamentary sources are a problematic source for the ownership of books.¹¹⁷ It cannot be assumed, for

¹¹⁴The more useful sources have been: James Raine (ed.), *Testamenta Eboracensia I-V*, Surtees Society 4, 30, 45, 53, 79, 106 (1836-1902); James Raine (ed.), *Wills and Inventories from the Registry of the Archdeaconry of Richmond*, Surtees Society 26 (1853); J.T. Fowler (ed.), *Acts of the Chapter of the Collegiate Church of SS Peter and Wilfrid, Ripon*, Surtees Society 64 (1974); Cross (ed.), *York Clergy Wills: I Minster Clergy*; Cross (ed.), *York Clergy Wills: II City Clergy*; M.G.A. Vale, *Piety, Charity and Literacy among the Yorkshire Gentry 1370-1480*, Borthwick Paper 50 (1976); Moran, *Growth*, pp. 152-9, 186-220; Hughes, *Pastors and Visionaries*; Goldberg, 'Lay Book Ownership'; Friedman, *Northern English Books*; Mackie, 'Chaplains'; S. Gee, 'Books owned by the Minor Clergy of Late Medieval and Early Modern York' (MA diss., University of York, 1996); Meek, 'Printing'.

¹¹⁵YML, L1(17)6-49; BIHR, Dean and Chapter original wills, Sede vacante wills, Exchequer and Prerogative Court of York original wills, Alne and Tollerton Peculiar, Acomb Peculiar; Leeds, Brotherton Library, Acts of the Chapter of the Collegiate Church of St Peter and St Wilfrid, Ripon, 432.1; Peter C.D. Brears (ed.), *Yorkshire Probate Inventories 1542-1689*, YASRS 134 (1972), pp. 1-3.

¹¹⁶Heather Dubrow, 'The Status of Evidence: Introduction', *PMLA* 111 (1996): 7-31.

¹¹⁷Discussion of the numerous problems inherent in testamentary sources can be found in Goldberg, 'Lay Book Ownership', pp. 181-9; Moran, *Growth*, p. 186; Cavanaugh,

instance, that the mention of a book in a will is direct evidence of book ownership and use. This can be best illustrated by the bequest of books to parish churches. Statements such as *'lego ecclesie de Baynton unum ymnale'* leave it unclear whether the testator was presenting a book from his or her own library, or merely wished to provide the money for such a text to be bought.¹¹⁸ Consequently, the bequest cannot be taken as clear evidence of book ownership or even the literacy of the testator. Furthermore, there was no need for testators to name all their books in a will and even the makers of a probate inventory might overlook small or old texts. The 1540 will of William Crosby, a vicar choral of York Minster, for example, mentions no books, yet a Bible and other books worth 9s are itemised in his probate inventory.¹¹⁹ Even when a testator took the trouble to mention a book in his or her will, only a short title or description is normally given, despite the fact that manuscript books could contain a large number of different texts in one volume. A book called *'summa confessorum'* was bequeathed in 1475 by William Braunde, a receiver general of the see of York, to Robert Edmundson.¹²⁰ A volume in Lincoln Cathedral library can be identified as this manuscript, as it contains ownership inscriptions by both Braunde and Edmundson.¹²¹ The volume is a comprehensive handbook of pastoral instruction, containing a large number of different works, including the *Summa rudium*, an extract from Mechtild of Hackeborn's *Liber spiritualis gratiae*, Cyprian's *De oratione dominica*, the *De visitatione infirmorum* attributed to Augustine and the *Formula honestae vitae* of

'Study of Books'; Clive Burgess, 'Late Medieval Wills and Pious Convention: Testamentary Evidence Reconsidered', in M.A. Hicks (ed.), *Profit, Piety and the Professions in Later Medieval England* (Gloucester, 1990), pp. 14-33.

¹¹⁸'I leave to the church of Bainton [E.R.] a hymnal'. BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 8, ff. 25r-6r.

¹¹⁹YML, L2/5a, ff. 185v-6r; BIHR, Dean and Chapter original wills, 1540.

¹²⁰BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 4, f. 127r-v.

Martin of Braga. The main difficulty therefore is that wills and inventories generally under-represent literacy and the ownership of books. However as long as these problems are taken into consideration, the evidence of wills and inventories can give an indication of patterns of book ownership. Comparisons of the frequency of references to books and the types of texts mentioned in the wills of the laity and clergy, wealthy and poor, city dwellers and rural inhabitants, suggest differences or changes over the period c.1450-1550 which can stimulate and complement a more qualitative analysis.

Extant manuscripts and printed texts also provide valuable evidence of the production and ownership of books. The most comprehensive survey of the books owned by the religious houses and parish churches of England, both manuscript and printed, is still that by N.R. Ker with the supplement by Andrew G. Watson.¹²² I have traced extant manuscripts with Yorkshire connections using the list of northern manuscripts compiled by Friedman, together with the catalogues of the larger libraries containing manuscript books.¹²³ Additional information concerning extant service books of York use is available in the handlists of liturgical texts compiled by Walter

¹²¹Lincoln Cathedral Library, MS 210; Rodney M. Thomson, *Catalogue of the Manuscripts of Lincoln Cathedral Library* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 170-3.

¹²²N.R. Ker, *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain: A List of Surviving Books*, 2nd edn (London, 1964); Andrew G. Watson, *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain: Supplement to the Second Edition* (London, 1987).

¹²³Friedman, *Northern English Books*, pp. 237-54; the catalogues consulted include N.R. Ker and A.J. Piper, *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries* (Oxford, 1969-92); Albinia de la Mare, *Catalogue of the Collection of the Medieval Manuscripts bequeathed to the Bodleian Library, Oxford, by James P.R. Lyell* (Oxford, 1971); P.D. Record, *A Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford* (Oxford, 1953), vol. 7; Andrew G. Watson, *Catalogue of Dated and Datable Manuscripts c.435-1600 in Oxford Libraries* (Oxford, 1984); P.R. Robinson, *Catalogue of Dated and Datable Manuscripts c.737-1600 in Cambridge Libraries* (Cambridge, 1988); Andrew G. Watson, *Catalogue of Dated and Datable Manuscripts c.700-1600 in ... the British Library* (London, 1979); R.A.B. Mynors and R.M. Thomson, *Catalogue of the Manuscripts of Hereford Cathedral Library* (Cambridge, 1993); Thomson, *Catalogue of the Manuscripts of Lincoln Cathedral Library*; Seymour de Ricci, *Census of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the United States and Canada* (New York, 1935-1940).

Howard Frere and S.J.P. van Dijk.¹²⁴ *The Linguistic Atlas of Late Medieval English* has also been an invaluable source in finding manuscripts which were written by scribes of Yorkshire origin.¹²⁵ For evidence of the production and publishing of books in print by the printers and stationers of York I have used the revised *Short Title Catalogue* of early printed books.¹²⁶

7. Structure of the Thesis

This study is divided into three main sections, each consisting of two chapters. The first section (chapters one and two) discusses the production of, and trade in books in York. Chapter one concentrates on the book crafts of writing, illuminating, binding and parchment making, and includes an analysis of the changes in these crafts both before and after the advent of print. The production and sale of books by stationers, bookbinders and printers is the focus of the second chapter. I will demonstrate the importance of entrepreneurial activity, and the transition from a production industry to a predominantly service trade. The first two chapters show that the advent of print brought significant changes to the York book trade, and thus contrast with the evidence of book ownership studied in the next section.

The customers of the book trade are the focus of section two (chapters three and four). The demand for books generated by the secular clergy and religious institutions of Yorkshire will be discussed first in chapter three. The Minster, parish churches and

¹²⁴Walter Howard Frere, *Bibliotheca Musico-Latina: A Descriptive Handlist of the Musical and Latin Liturgical MSS of the Middle Ages* (Lambeth and Oxford, 1901); S.J.P. van Dijk, 'Handlist of the Latin Liturgical Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, Oxford' (typescript in Oxford, Bodleian Library, 1957-60).

¹²⁵Angus McIntosh, M.L. Samuels and Michael Benskin (eds.), *A Linguistic Atlas of Late Medieval English* (Aberdeen, 1986).

¹²⁶Alfred William Pollard and Gilbert Richard Redgrave, *A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland and Ireland and of English Books Printed Abroad...*, 2nd edn (London, 1986-1991).

religious houses were the most important customers of the York book trade during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. The patterns of book ownership indicate that a significant number of the clergy were generally enthusiastic about books and were receptive to certain trends which have been linked to the Reformation, for example, an increasing interest in preaching and grammar teaching. Nevertheless only a few changes in the literary interests of the secular and religious clergy can be related to the advent of print. In chapter four, I survey the different types of books owned by the laity of Yorkshire in order to test theories concerning the impact of print and the Reformation. Again, the evidence of lay ownership of books suggests that the effects of technological advances and religious changes seem to have been exaggerated. This case-study will show the importance of other factors in the rise of literacy amongst the laity, such as the public display of writing and a pragmatic need for reading skills.

The contrasting evidence of sections one and two shows that we cannot make assumptions about book production from the evidence of book ownership, or about book ownership from the evidence of book production. The first section suggests that print had a profound effect, while the second section indicates the opposite. Consequently, in the third section, the book trade and the market for books are considered together and I analyse the relationship between the two. This section (chapters five and six) concentrates on the cost of books and the distribution of texts during this period. In chapter five, my discussion of the ownership of books by the inhabitants of Yorkshire challenges the assumption that the lower cost of printed books, as compared with manuscript texts, promoted the spread of literacy and encouraged readers to acquire larger libraries. My investigation of the cost of reading in Yorkshire during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries involves a study of the different formats in which reading matter could circulate, such as booklets, second-hand texts, paper or parchment, manuscript or print, and their relative expense. In chapter six, I

investigate the ways in which texts travelled between different owners, and the role of religious institutions in disseminating texts before the advent of print. It has been assumed that methods of distribution improved rapidly after the advent of print, enabling readers to have better access to books. Using the case-study of Yorkshire, I assess the impact of print on the personal methods of distribution of texts that were predominant during the manuscript era. I then investigate commercial methods of distribution and how they may have improved after the advent of print.

The study of the evidence for both book production and book ownership in section three shows that there were other ways in which readers could obtain books than by buying them. Books were borrowed from libraries or lent or given between friends, and this also casts doubt on the argument that print straightforwardly 'democratised' reading. My analysis thus demonstrates that theories about the impact of print have often been too simplistic. The theories of progress do not take into consideration the variety of ways in which books passed between people and that many of the methods of the dissemination of manuscript books continued to be used after the advent of print. The varieties of reading formats and practices and the continuing importance of personal relations and of reading as a social activity meant that there was no simple transition from a manuscript to a print culture.

Chapter 1

The Book Craftsmen

This study begins by investigating the personnel and the organisation of book production during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. In this first section, the work, residence and social connections of the artisans and entrepreneurs involved in the book trade will be discussed. As will be shown, there were many changes in the book trade during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries which can be attributed to the coming of print. This argument is divided into two chapters which focus respectively on the artisans who produced books, and the entrepreneurs who organised book production and the trade in books.

In order to investigate the changes in urban book production, this section will concentrate on the city of York. Only for the city of York is there evidence of a significant production of and trade in books during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, which indicates that York was probably the only important book-trade centre in the county during this period. Evidence of book production in the rest of Yorkshire is rare. There are occasional references to professional book services in Beverley, perhaps as a result of the large clerical presence in the town. As well as the collegiate church of St John the Evangelist, Beverley was the site of houses of the Black Friars, the Grey Friars and several hospitals.¹ Henry le Scrope of Masham, who died in 1415, left a book of *Revelations* of St Bridget which he had bought in Beverley.² Richard Hopirton and Robert Jakson, both

¹A.G. Little, T.M. Fallow and A. Hamilton Thompson, 'Religious Houses', in William Page (ed.), *The Victoria History of the Counties of England: Yorkshire* (London, 1913), 3: 263-6, 301-3, 353-9.

²James Raine (ed.), *Testamenta Eboracensia III*, Surtees Society 45 (1865), p. 33n.

textwriters, became free of the town in 1449 and 1450 respectively.³ The surviving chamberlains' accounts also mention the enfranchisement of John Clerk and John Brown, parchment makers, in 1450 and 1502-3.⁴ The later accounts cease to record the trades of the new freemen. Evidence of a book trade in Hull is limited to the presence of scribes. There is no evidence of their involvement in the production of books. In 1473 and 1491, for example, William Haryngton, a scrivener of Hull, witnessed the wills of Robert Peton, a mariner, and Agnes Robynson.⁵ We also have the will of a parchment maker of Scarborough, John Pennoke, who died in 1520.⁶

The methodology of the first section of this thesis is influenced by the comprehensive work of C. Paul Christianson on the book craftsmen of London.⁷ Through extensive documentary research, Christianson has gone beyond a survey of the London book craftsmen in order to discuss the growing professionalism of the book trade through a study of their social relations and trade organisation. His work has revealed that the London book artisans and sellers were a close-knit community, many of them acting as sureties or executors for others. The development of a specialist group of book makers and dealers is, however, a reflection of the professionalisation of the book trade in London and may not be indicative of the organisation of the book trade in other towns. In this chapter I will

³Beverley, East Riding of Yorkshire Archives and Records Service, BCII/6/12,13.

⁴Beverley, East Riding of Yorkshire Archives and Records Service, BCII/6/13,16.

⁵BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 4, ff. 209v-10r; vol. 5, f. 92r. See also C.W. Chilton, 'Early Hull Printers and Booksellers: An Account of the Printing, Bookselling and Allied Trades from their Beginnings to 1840' (typescript in York City Library, 1982), in which the earliest reference to a book trade in Hull dates to 1596.

⁶BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 9, f. 134v.

⁷C. Paul Christianson, 'A Century of the Manuscript Book Trade in Late Medieval London', *Medievalia et Humanistica*, new series 12 (1984): 143-65; 'Early London Bookbinders and Parchmeners', *The Book Collector* 34 (1985): 41-54; 'Paternoster Row and the Tudor Book-Trade Community', *The Library*, 6th series 11 (1989): 352-6; 'Evidence', pp. 87-108; *Directory*; 'The Stationers of Paternoster Row, 1534-1557',

analyse the activities of the York craftsmen, in particular, the scribes, illuminators, bookbinders and parchment makers. The different ways in which print had an impact on the livelihoods and work of the book craftsmen will be discussed. I will argue that, up to the fifteenth century, most of the production of manuscript books was undertaken by literates who had religious vocations, that is, the monks, friars and the secular clergy. Over the course of the fifteenth century, however, as revealed by the trade descriptions in the freemen's register (see table 2), full-time book producers began to assert their identity through the formation of guilds. We shall see that, with the exception of the parchment makers, the manuscript crafts suffered a serious loss of business after the advent of print. It will be suggested that this loss of trade encouraged some artisans to become more involved in entrepreneurial activities. This entrepreneurial trade will be discussed further in chapter two.

Table 2

Number of Book Craftsmen who became Free of York during the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries.

	Scrivener	Scriptor	Writer	Textwriter	Illuminator	Flourisher
1400-1409	2				1	
1410-1419	2		1		2	
1420-1429	1				1	
1430-1439	1				3	
1440-1449		3				
1450-1459			2			
1460-1469	1				2	
1470-1479	3		1	4	1	
1480-1489	5		1	2		
1490-1499	2			6		
1500-1509	1			1	1	1
1510-1519	1			1		
1520-1529	4					
1530-1539	2					
1540-1549	2					
1550-1559	2					
1560-1569	3					
1570-1579	6		1			
1580-1589	1					
1590-1599						

Table 2 (continued)

	Parchmener	Bookbinder	Stationer	Printer
1400-1409	1			
1410-1419	2			
1420-1429	4	1		
1430-1439	1			
1440-1449	1		1	
1450-1459	2	2		
1460-1469	2			
1470-1479	2			
1480-1489	3			
1490-1499	3	2	1	
1500-1509	2			
1510-1519	2	1	2	1
1520-1529	6		1	
1530-1539	4	1	1	
1540-1549	4		2	
1550-1559	6	1	4	
1560-1569	6		1	
1570-1579	4		2	
1580-1589	8		3	
1590-1599	7			

Sources:Francis Collins (ed.), *Register of the Freemen of the City of York I: 1272-1558*, Surtees

Society 96 (1897); *Register of the Freemen of the City of York II: 1559-1759*, Surtees Society 102 (1900).

The Scribes and Illuminators

i. The Scribes before Print

The craft of writing books was open to all those who could manipulate a pen and had access to paper or parchment. During the later medieval period, a wide range of literates, for example secular and religious clergy, are known to have produced books for sale. An example is the compendium of popular science called the *Liber cosmographiae*, compiled by a Yorkshire cleric, John de Foxton.⁸ Foxton began his clerical career when ordained subdeacon of York Minster in 1388, and in 1406 he became vicar of Fishlake.⁹ According to an inscription by Foxton in the volume, the *Liber cosmographiae* was finished in 1408. Many of the sources used in the *Liber cosmographiae*, such as the *Fulgentius metaforalis*, were held in the library of the York Augustinian friars and Foxton may have used this library in order to compile his book.¹⁰ The volume contains twelve full-page illustrations, the first four of which were probably made in York.¹¹ They can be linked stylistically with Cambridge, Trinity College, MS O.3.10 which, as will be discussed later, was most likely produced in York. Another example is John Maltster, a chaplain of St Giles in York, who gave a book of Bonaventure to St Leonard's hospital in 1428 which he said he had written himself.¹² In 1443/4 a priest was employed by the mercers' guild to rule lines on to sixteen

⁸Cambridge, Trinity College, MS R.15.21.

⁹John B. Friedman, 'John Siferwas and the Mythological Illustrations in the *Liber cosmographiae* of John de Foxton', *Speculum* 58 (1983): 395.

¹⁰John B. Friedman, *John de Foxton's Liber cosmographiae (1408)* (Leiden, 1988), pp. xxxv-xl.

¹¹Kathleen L. Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts, 1390-1490* (London, 1996), 2: 114-7.

¹²BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 533r-v.

pieces of parchment to make a register book.¹³ The churchwardens' accounts of Louth for 1510-11 include a payment to 'William Prince prest for songs prekyng at Yorke'.¹⁴ Later he was paid 5d for 'prekyng a new antym Salve Regina five parts'.¹⁵ The vicars choral of York Minster may also have copied books, some of which may later have been sold. A large number of iron points, used for pricking holes in manuscripts to mark where the lines should be, have been found near the Bedern, the residence of the vicars choral.¹⁶

Another group of literates who participated in the production of books for sale were the monks of York. Up until the twelfth century, the centres of professional book production were the monasteries. At the beginning of this period, the majority of the work on the books was probably done by the monks themselves, but the number of scribes and artists employed to assist the religious probably grew in the high Middle Ages.¹⁷ A book containing the *Imago mundi*, for example, was produced for and possibly by the Cistercian monks of Sawley abbey in or around the period 1180-1190.¹⁸ An illustrated breviary, dating from around 1220, may likewise have been produced in Holy Trinity Priory, York.¹⁹ The

¹³York, Merchant Adventurers' Hall, Mercers' Guild draft account book 1443-5.

¹⁴'Pricking' refers to the writing down of music in a book using pricks or marks; MED, 8:1294.

¹⁵Reginald C. Dudding (ed.), *The First Churchwardens' Book of Louth 1500-1524* (Oxford, 1941), pp. 131-48.

¹⁶Mike Daniels, 'Bedern', *Interim: Bulletin of the York Archaeological Trust* 6 (1979): 18-26.

¹⁷A.I. Doyle, 'Book Production by the Monastic Orders in England (c.1375-1530): Assessing the Evidence', in Linda L. Brownrigg (ed.), *Medieval Book Production: Assessing the Evidence* (Los Altos Hills, 1990), p. 1.

¹⁸Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 66; Cambridge, University Library, MS Ff.I.27; C.M. Kauffman, *Romanesque Manuscripts 1066-1190* (London, 1975), p. 123; Ker, *Medieval Libraries*, p. 177; Montague Rhodes James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1912), 1: 137-45.

¹⁹Oxford, St John's College, MS 61; Ker, *Medieval Libraries*, p. 218; Nigel Morgan, *Early Gothic Manuscripts 1190-1250* (London, 1982), p. 90.

thirteenth century has been accepted as the point from which the monasteries were no longer the masters of book production, their place being taken by the universities.²⁰ The change is attributed to the rise of the universities themselves, which, because of the demands for texts by students and academics, developed a much more efficient system of book production. It has been argued by Ian Doyle that the religious orders came to buy their books, either new or second-hand, as they needed them, or relied on gifts and donations.²¹ This is supported to a certain extent by the Yorkshire evidence. A large number of the manuscripts known to have belonged to Yorkshire monasteries bear inscriptions which record that they were purchased for the houses. These include Oxford, University College, MS 101 (a thirteenth-century breviary bought by Monk Bretton priory), Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley MS 842 (purchased by John Gillyng, a monk of Byland abbey in 1477) and Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 96 (a chronicle acquired by Abbot John Bromton of Jervaulx in 1436).²²

Occasional examples of scribal production by the members of religious houses of Yorkshire during the late medieval period can nevertheless be found. Archaeological evidence indicates that writing took place at the Gilbertine Priory of St Andrew in York. An excavation at 46-54 Fishergate, once the site of the priory, has revealed prickers and lead points, used to prepare parchment for writing.²³ Evidence of writing by the monks of Monk Bretton in the West Riding can be seen in the records of a suit for tithes of pasture in

²⁰James Moran, 'Stationers' Companies of the British Isles', *Gutenberg Jahrbuch* 62 (1962): 533-40.

²¹Doyle, 'Monastic Orders', p. 1.

²²Ker, *Medieval Libraries*, pp. 235, 271, 282.

²³In order to mark the position of lines on the pages, holes were pricked at the edge of the parchment; Nicky Rogers, 'Monks and Manuscripts', *Interim: Bulletin of the York Archaeological Trust* 14 (1989): 18-21.

a close called Hellwicket-smallage in 1575.²⁴ The cartulary of the priory was presented as evidence in the case and witnesses were called to testify to the authenticity of the manuscript. The first witness, John Foxe, a husbandman, related how two monks of the monastery, Thomas Wilkinson and William White, wrote out 'bookewyse in parchement' the indentures of the monastery. Robert Scoleye, vicar of Brodsworth, who had been a monk of the house for eighteen or twenty years before the dissolution, likewise described how the evidence had been written into the register.²⁵

A few extant manuscripts written in a formal book hand are also known to have been produced by the monks of Yorkshire. An example is London, British Library, MS Additional 24361. The contents are a miscellaneous collection, including Richard de Bury, *Philobiblon de laude librorum* and Alan de Insula's *De planctu nature*. The manuscript is signed by Walter Hotham, a monk of St Mary's Abbey, who was licensed to preach in the diocese of York in 1478.²⁶ The volume is written in an anglicana hand, with a few secretary features such as the single-lobed 'a' with a pointed head. It is possible that monks who, like Hotham, had an ability in book hand, also produced texts for sale or gift outside the monastery.

Monks were not the only religious involved in book production, however. Evidence of scribal activity by a friar can be seen in an astronomical calendar which was signed by Richard de Thorpe of the Augustinian house in York.²⁷ Thorpe was ordained deacon and

²⁴J.S. Purvis, 'New Light on the Chartularies of Monkbretton Priory', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 37 (1951): 67; J.W. Walker (ed.), *Abstracts of the Chartularies of the Priory of Monkbretton*, YASRS 66 (1924), pp. 5-9.

²⁵BIHR, Cause Paper, G 1757.

²⁶Ker, *Medieval Libraries*, pp. 217, 320; Friedman, *Northern English Books*, p. 244.

²⁷The manuscript is in the collection of Dr I.J. Pincus, Beverley Hills, California. John B. Friedman, 'Richard de Thorpe's Astronomical Kalendar and the Luxury Book Trade at York', *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 7 (1985): 137-60.

priest at York in 1362.²⁸ It has been argued by Friedman that the book was made between 1381 and 1389, but Philip Stell has shown that this is based on insufficient evidence.²⁹ Friars also appear regularly in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century accounts as receiving payments for writing music books. A Dominican friar, John Roose, for example, was paid for sheets of organ music by the Dean and Chapter of York Minster in 1458 and 1469.³⁰ The churchwardens of St Michael's, Spurriergate, paid 4s to a friar for writing a sequence in 1526.³¹ Similarly, a 'friar Peter' was hired by the churchwardens of St Lawrence church in Reading in 1531-2 to write and note a new gradual.³² The production of books of liturgical polyphony was probably a specialist skill in the later Middle Ages, necessitating a knowledge of music.³³ The friars, especially the Franciscans, had a particular interest in music.³⁴ As well as using popular music in their preaching, they also wrote and sang sacred music, such as sequences and hymns.³⁵

The clerks of York who dealt with the city's administrative and legal documentation may likewise have produced books for extra income. They were usually employed by a particular institution, mainly the Dean and Chapter of York Minster, the mayor and

²⁸Ibid., p. 151.

²⁹Ibid., p. 147; P.M. Stell, 'Medical Care in Late Medieval York' (MA diss., York University, 1995), pp. 16-18.

³⁰YML, Fabric Rolls E3/23, E3/24.

³¹BIHR, PR Y/MS/4, f. 61r; C.C. Webb (ed.), *Churchwardens' Accounts of St Michael, Spurriergate, York, 1518-1548*, Borthwick Texts and Calendars 20 (1997), 1: 116. A sequence is a hymn sung or said after the Gradual or Alleluia that precedes the Gospel.

³²Charles Kerry, *A History of the Municipal Church of St Lawrence, Reading* (Reading, 1883), pp. 116-17.

³³Andrew Wathey, 'The Production of Books of Liturgical Polyphony', in Griffiths and Pearsall (eds.), *Book Production and Publishing*, pp. 143-61.

³⁴Manfred F. Bukofzer, 'Popular and Secular Music in England', in Don Anselm Hughes and Gerald Abraham (eds.), *Ars Nova and the Renaissance 1300-1450* (London, 1960), pp. 107-33.

³⁵Ibid., pp. 117-18.

aldermen of the city or one of the forty or more parish churches to write the required deeds and other legal documentation. The York mercers' account rolls, for example, include payments to clerks, such as Richard Makblith between 1485 and 1497, for a variety of documents such as a charter and a writ, a letter, deeds and evidences as well as the accounts themselves.³⁶ In 1438, 12d was spent on the writing of a prayer book.³⁷ The scribe's name is not given, but it may have been one of the guild's clerks.

Another body of scribes, more prestigious than the ordinary clerk, were the notaries public. They were often called '*magistri*', and were usually unmarried but not in priests' orders.³⁸ In York, it is possible that notaries were occasionally employed to write books. In 1432, the treasurer of York Minster, Robert Wolveden, bequeathed to John Appleton five books including '*alium librum scriptum de manu magistri Johannis Arston*'.³⁹ John Arston was a married clerk and notary public from Germany. In his will, dated 1432, he referred to '*dominus meus Thesaurarius*' and bequeathed all his books except two to Master John Wenslay.⁴⁰ Another body of clerks worked for the ecclesiastical courts of York in the precinct of the Minster.⁴¹ The registrar was responsible for overseeing the maintenance of the records of the court and recording the proceedings and decisions in the act books.⁴² He was assisted in this duty by a staff of clerks, who did most of the mundane

³⁶York, Merchant Adventurers' Hall, account rolls, listed in David M. Smith, *A Guide to the Archives of the Company of Merchant Adventurers of York*, Borthwick Texts and Calendars 16 (1990), pp. 28-33; Maud Sellers (ed.), *The York Mercers and Merchant Adventurers 1356-1917*, Surtees Society 129 (1918), pp. 49 and passim.

³⁷York, Merchant Adventurers' Hall, account roll 1438.

³⁸R.B. Dobson, *Durham Priory 1400-1450* (Cambridge, 1973), pp. 140-1.

³⁹'another book written by the hand of Master John Arston'. YML, L2/4, ff. 235r-6r.

⁴⁰'my lord treasurer'. YML, L2/4, ff. 234v-5r.

⁴¹K.F. Burns, 'The Administrative System of the Ecclesiastical Courts in the Diocese and Province of York. Part 1: The Medieval Courts' (Leverhulme research project, typescript in BIHR, 1962), p. 126.

⁴²*Ibid.*, p. 143.

paperwork while he supervised. The registrar Peter Wynton, for example, who kept the act books of 1417-30, corrected a mistake made by one of his assistants in a proctorial mandate of 1417/18.⁴³

Alongside these literates who did occasional scribal work, there is evidence from the early fourteenth century of professional scribes in York. Scribes called ‘scrivener’ or in Latin ‘*scriptor*’ are recorded in the York freemen’s register from the early fourteenth century.⁴⁴ The use of the English or Latin term depended on the language preference of the scribe of the register. ‘Scrivener’ is first found in 1317 and then over the period 1355-1381.⁴⁵ Between 1386 and 1396, the scribes in the register were called ‘*scriptor*’. In the fifteenth century, the English term is used rather than the Latin, except during a short period in the mid 1440s.⁴⁶

The first ordinances of the York guild of the ‘*escriveners de tixt*’ copied in French into the A/Y Memorandum Book, are unfortunately undated.⁴⁷ They were probably registered in the early fifteenth century, as they are preceded by the early fifteenth-century ordinances of the chandlers, and are followed by the butchers’ ordinances (dated to both 1405 and 1425). With the exception of the guild of clerks established in Lincoln in 1547, no other guild of scribes is known to have been set up in an English provincial city before 1550.⁴⁸ The Norwich scriveners did not belong to a guild until the early seventeenth century, when they shared a mystery with the haberdashers, mercers, bakers, pinmen and

⁴³BIHR, A.B.Cons 28 Feb 1417/8, People of Hazlewood vs J. Mounteferte, cited in *ibid.*, p. 143.

⁴⁴‘Scrivener’ is defined as a professional copyist, scribe, clerk or notary; MED, 10: 246-7.

⁴⁵Collins (ed.), *Freemen I*, p. 17.

⁴⁶Collins (ed.), *Freemen I*, pp. 164, 167-8.

⁴⁷YCA, E20 (A/Y Memorandum Book), f. 21r.

⁴⁸J.W.F. Hill, *Tudor and Stuart Lincoln* (Cambridge, 1956), p. 30.

joiners.⁴⁹ Newcastle had a guild of scriveners in 1675.⁵⁰

There are many possible reasons for the formation of a guild and we cannot assume that the scribes of York were more numerous than those in other towns simply because they drew up guild ordinances. The craft guilds of late-medieval England were groups or associations of craftsmen, usually pursuing the same or related craft, who had joined together to help protect both their economic and social interests. As well as regulating their work and training, the associations were also concerned with the spiritual well-being of their members by, for example, organising obits for deceased colleagues. It has been argued by Heather Swanson that the formation of a guild was often to serve the political and administrative interests of the city corporation.⁵¹ The civic authorities gained a great deal from the establishment of craft associations and may frequently have compelled a group of artisans to join together for the profit of the corporation. The guilds provided revenue for the city corporation from the fines imposed by the searchers. The guilds also gave the mercantile elite the opportunity to regulate or police the manufacture of goods by the artisans. Moreover, some towns including York had a Corpus Christi Play and the guild structure was used to finance and to organise the performance of pageants. This interpretation of the role of guilds in civic life has, however, been criticised and challenged by the research of P.J.P. Goldberg and Gervase Rosser who emphasise the desire of the artisans themselves to form guilds. The benefits of forming a fraternity included support to those members of the craft who were undergoing a period of hardship, and measures attempting to regulate the activities of those whose trade encroached on the craft's

⁴⁹C.W. Brooks, R.H. Helmholz and P.G. Stein, *Notaries Public in England since the Reformation* (Norwich, 1991), p. 77.

⁵⁰John Brand, *The History and Antiquities of the Town and County of the Town of Newcastle upon Tyne* (London, 1789), 2: 354.

⁵¹Heather Swanson, 'The Illusion of Economic Structure: Craft Guilds in Late Medieval

interests.⁵² Goldberg has demonstrated that in York there was often a close link between the subject-matter of a pageant and the craft which performed it which indicates that the pageants were not simply allocated according to the wishes of the corporation.⁵³ Participation in the Play would have been attractive to the artisans because it permitted them to raise funds which could also be used for other purposes and it gave them an opportunity to express their craft solidarity and their devotional enthusiasm. The formation of a guild by the York 'escriveners de tixt' can likewise be linked to the Corpus Christi procession. In the 1415 listing of pageants, the scribes were responsible for the pageant of the Incredulity of St Thomas.⁵⁴ In the ordinances of the guild, the penalty for disobeying the regulations was a fine of 20s, of which 10s was to go towards financing the pageant.⁵⁵

By the early fifteenth century, therefore, the scribes of York had formed a collective identity that was related to the financing of a pageant. As I have shown, the freemen's register had been using the English term 'scrivener' since 1317. Over the course of the fifteenth century, however, more terms began to be used for the scribes. In 1419 the term 'writer' is first recorded in York to describe the trade of a new freeman, Thomas Lymber.⁵⁶ The term was next used in respect of Richard Welles, who became free in 1452, and then by William Jameson in 1456 and William Letheley in 1470.⁵⁷ In 1473 Richard Couke was

English Towns', *Past and Present* 121 (1988): 29-43.

⁵²Gervase Rosser, 'Crafts, Guilds and the Negotiation of Work in the Medieval Town', *Past and Present* 154 (1997): 3-31.

⁵³P.J.P. Goldberg, 'Craft Guilds, the Corpus Christi Play and Civic Government', in Sarah Rees Jones (ed.), *The Government of Medieval York: Essays in commemoration of the 1396 Royal Charter*, Borthwick Studies in History 3 (1997), pp. 141-63.

⁵⁴YCA, E20 (A/Y Memorandum Book), ff. 252v-5r.

⁵⁵YCA, E20 (A/Y Memorandum Book), f. 21r.

⁵⁶Collins (ed.), *Freemen I*, p. 128.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 172, 175, 190.

the first to be recorded as a ‘textwriter’.⁵⁸ He was followed by the textwriters Thomas Lemyng and Henry Archer in 1479 and William Sted and John Markynfeld in the early 1480s.⁵⁹ During the period 1470-1489 the number of scribes who became free of the city also rose. They included Thomas Benyt in 1478, John Calton in 1480 and Richard Riplyngham in 1484.⁶⁰

Thus we can see that not only were there increasing numbers of scribes obtaining the franchise in the fifteenth century, particularly during the second half of the century, but also that more terms were being used to describe their trade. I would like to suggest, therefore, that over the course of the fifteenth century the scribal trade gradually became more specialised. The description of the scribes in the early fifteenth-century guild as ‘escriveners de tixt’ seems to be a French term for textwriter. The guild was formed before different English terms for scribes began to be used in the York records and therefore the scribes in this guild are likely to have included writers of all types of documents. By the late fifteenth century, however, scribes were called either ‘scrivener’, ‘textwriter’ or ‘writer’. It is possible that these different terms came to be used to indicate different areas of expertise. The use of the words ‘writer’ and ‘textwriter’ may have been deliberately chosen to distinguish their trade from that of the scriveners. Evidence of the work of scribes in York is rare. However, the little evidence that we do have of the activities of the scriveners and textwriters supports this division of work. The scriveners of York are only known to have been involved in the production or authentication of administrative and legal documents. The scrivener Adam Gunby, for example, was paid 6d by the city chamberlains in 1449-50

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 193.

⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 200-201, 204, 206.

⁶⁰Collins, *Freemen I*, pp. 199, 201, 207.

'pro scripsione diversorum billarum tangentium justiciarios pacis civitatis'.⁶¹ He also appears as a witness to legal documents in 1446, 1456, 1458, 1474 and 1476.⁶² In 1446 and 1475 he was appointed as an attorney.⁶³ John Wod, who became free as a scrivener in 1486, frequently appears as a witness to wills before his death in 1497, which indicates that he often wrote out the last wishes of testators.⁶⁴

The textwriters or writers, in contrast, may have specialised in the production of books by the late fifteenth century. Evidence of a textwriter producing a book can be seen in York, Minster Library, MS Additional 30, a missal of York use. The volume was produced by at least seven different hands.⁶⁵ The person who wrote folios 125v-6v and 129r-147v can be identified as Thomas Lemyng, a textwriter, who inscribed in the bottom margin of folio 132r: 'Thomas Lemyng dwellyng in Yorke'. A mid-fifteenth century date has been suggested for this manuscript, but as Lemyng became free of the city of York in 1479, it is more likely that it was written in the last quarter of the century.⁶⁶

This interpretation of the changes in the York scribal trade, which argues that a distinction may have emerged between the scribes and textwriters by the late fifteenth century, is supported by a comparison with earlier developments in the London book trade. During the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, a specialist trade in writing books was developing in London. In 1357 the mayor and aldermen of London issued an ordinance

⁶¹'for the writing of diverse bills concerning the justices of the peace of the city'. YCA, C3:2; R.B. Dobson (ed.), *York City Chamberlains' Account Rolls 1396-1500*, Surtees Society 192 (1980), p. 67.

⁶²YCA, E20 (A/Y Memorandum Book), f. 309v; E20A (B/Y Memorandum Book), ff. 85r, 96v, 138v, 156v.

⁶³YCA, E20A (B/Y Memorandum Book), ff. 132r, 133r, 137r.

⁶⁴Wod is cited as a scribe in BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, ff. 402r, 418v, 472v, 473v and also appears thirteen times as a witness to a will, ff. 378v-481v.

⁶⁵Ker and Piper, *Medieval Manuscripts*, 4: 800-802.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, 4:800; Friedman, *Northern English Books*, p. 140; Collins (ed.), *Freemen I*, p. 201.

which exempted the limners, barbers, and scribes who wrote either court letter or text letter from serving on sheriffs' inquests. The distinction made between writers of court and of text letter is instructive: by the middle of the fourteenth century a contrast was being made in London between the scribes who used a quick, cursive hand, commonly employed for administrative documents, and those who used a more formal text hand, most often found in books. A guild of the writers of court letter was formed in 1373 and in 1403 an amalgamated mystery of textwriters, illuminators and those who bound and sold books was formed. The formation of separate mysteries emphasised the distinction between the two types of scribal activity. By the end of the fifteenth century in London the term scrivener had come to refer only to legal writers.⁶⁷

The main distinction between the scriveners and textwriters in York and London was probably that the scriveners needed specialist knowledge of legal procedures and formulae. They had to know how to lay out different types of legal and administrative documents in the appropriate format. The two types of scribe could also have been distinguished to a certain extent by the type of handwriting they used. In the A/Y Memorandum Book, for instance, the ordinances of the carpenters which were enrolled in 1462 are written in a secretary hand with a few anglicana features such as the double compartment 'a' and the long 'r'.⁶⁸ The ordinances of the guilds of sadlers, dyers, shipmen, parchment makers and vintners were also written in a hybrid secretary script.⁶⁹ Literary texts, in contrast, were generally written in a more formal hand. A fifteenth-century copy of the *Oculus sacerdotis* of William of Pagula owned by William Hobbyses, a Yorkshire rector, was written in

⁶⁷Christianson, *Directory*, pp. 22-3.

⁶⁸YCA, E20 (A/Y Memorandum Book), f. 293v.

⁶⁹Ibid., ff. 295r, 299v, 304v, 307r, 329v, 363r.

anglicana.⁷⁰ A book of music written in anglicana was owned by Byland Abbey during the fifteenth century.⁷¹ For liturgical texts, a textura script was generally used. A few examples of books written in textura are Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Gough liturg. 5 (a late fifteenth-century York manual); Cambridge, Trinity College, MS O.4.40 (a fifteenth-century volume of the *Dicta* of Robert Grosseteste, owned by Archbishop Thomas Rotherham of York, 1480-1500) and Cambridge, University Library, Ff.VI.1 (pontifical of Archbishop Bainbridge of York, 1508-1514).

The division between the work of the scrivener and the work of the textwriter is unlikely, however, to have been simple and clear-cut. The difficulty lies in how a book is defined. Not all manuscripts can be easily defined as a literary text or administrative document. An example is the York Corpus Christi Play register. The four scribes who contributed to the text wrote in bastard secretary, which suggests that it was originally perceived as an administrative document.⁷² The main scribe of the text also shows an ability to write in more formal hands. Stage directions and the names of speakers were usually written in either bastard secretary or bastard anglicana, but a few were also in the book hand called textura. This example of a scribe who could use a variety of styles of handwriting is unlikely to have been exceptional, and other scribes may also have been able to write in formal book hands and to produce literary texts for private commissions. It is unlikely therefore that the craft of scrivenering and textwriting were completely autonomous. Instead, the use of the different terms may signify scribes whose primary

⁷⁰Cambridge, Pembroke College, MS 248; Montague Rhodes James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Pembroke College, Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1905), p. 223.

⁷¹Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 842.

⁷²Peter Meredith, 'John Clerke's Hand in the York Register', *Leeds Studies in English*, new series 12 (1981): 245-71; Richard Beadle and Peter Meredith (eds.), *The York Plays: A Facsimile of British Library MS Additional 35290*, Leeds Texts and Monographs 7 (1983),

business was documentary production in contrast to others who depended for their livelihood mainly on the writing of books.

ii. The Illuminators before Print

Like writing, the skill of illuminating was practised both by full-time ‘professionals’ and by those in other vocations who only decorated books on an occasional basis. There has been discovered near the Bedern, the college of the vicars choral, the base of a pot (dating from the fourteenth century) which contained red colourant, probably used for the rubrication of manuscripts.⁷³ Another example is a late fifteenth-century vicar choral called John ‘le luminer’.⁷⁴ An indication of the size of the ‘professional’ craft of book decorating can be seen in the freemen’s register. Ten limners became freemen of the city during the fifteenth century.

The frequent mention of luxury books decorated with colour and gold in the wills and inventories of Yorkshire testators in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, and the survival of extant decorated manuscripts with York connections, likewise indicates that book-decorating services were readily available in the city. Hawisia Aske, a gentlewoman of York, for example, bequeathed a psalter illuminated with gold in 1450.⁷⁵ Illuminated psalters were also mentioned in the inventory of William Duffield, archdeacon of Cleveland, in 1453/4 and John Dautre, a York lawyer, in 1459.⁷⁶ Likewise in 1466, Sir Ranulph Pigott

p. xx.

⁷³Sonia O’Connor and Dominic Tweddle, ‘A Set of Waxed Tablets from Swinegate, York’, in Elizabeth Lalou (ed.), *Bibliologia 12: Les tablettes à écrire de l’Antiquité à l’Epoque Moderne* (Brepols, 1992), p. 315.

⁷⁴Nigel J. Tringham (ed.), *Charters of the Vicars Choral of York Minster: City of York and its Suburbs to 1546*, YASRS 148 (1993), p. 106.

⁷⁵YML, L2/4, ff. 264v-5v.

⁷⁶YML, L1(17)37; BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 412r-4r.

of Clotherholme bequeathed to his private chapel ‘*unum psalterium allomnatum*’.⁷⁷ A Book of Hours with arms painted inside was also passed down by Sir Nicholas Mounteney of Ecclesfield to his son in 1499.⁷⁸

Although some of these books may have been decorated in southern centres of illumination, such as London, Oxford or East Anglia, the evidence of illumination activity in the north suggests that it is at least possible that they were produced in Yorkshire. John B. Friedman has carried out an exhaustive study of the illumination of books with connections in the north of England. The decoration of Yorkshire manuscripts, he suggests, shows archaizing features and a preference for the colours green and purple. A group of four manuscripts called the ‘Green Canon-Page’ group are linked through similar miniatures of the Crucifixion and a distinctive preference for the colour green. An ‘Archaizing’ group of manuscripts of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, consisting of a volume of John of Tynemouth’s *Historia aurea* (Cambridge, University Library, MS Dd.10.22) and two York missals (Boston, Public Library, MS 1576 and Dublin, Trinity College, MS 83) is defined by an extensive use of purple and old-fashioned decorative styles.⁷⁹ The force of Friedman’s argument concerning colours is impeded by his use of black and white plates only as examples. Kathleen Scott also comments on the use of green in the fifteenth century, but none of the examples she gives of manuscripts which show an unusually extensive use of this colour, such as London, British Library, MS Cotton Nero A.X or Cambridge, Trinity College, MS B.10.2, are associated with Yorkshire.⁸⁰ The use of green colourant cannot therefore be accepted as a northern characteristic.

Another common feature, according to Friedman, found in the decoration of northern

⁷⁷‘an illuminated psalter’. BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 4, ff. 23r-4r.

⁷⁸BIHR, Archbishop’s Register, vol. 23, f. 369r-v.

⁷⁹Friedman, *Northern English Books*, pp. 90-107.

manuscripts, in particular those with connections with the city of York, is an unusual combination of interlace border decoration and mask-like faces, resembling lions.⁸¹ Within this group Friedman defines sets of manuscripts which are linked by a preference for jutting leaves, an italianate leaf style or an interest in carpels and calyxes.⁸² Friedman's study is useful in that it analyses the different types of motifs and styles that were used in northern manuscripts. However, as no extensive discussion is made of contemporary southern styles, these features cannot be taken as distinctly northern characteristics.

The manuscripts with Yorkshire connections studied by Friedman and Scott date predominantly from the early fifteenth century. Scott has identified two particular York characteristics of this period: sprigs drawn with three black lines ending in a ball, coloured either rose or blue with a white dot in the centre, and gold balls held between the border and a row of leaves.⁸³ The late fourteenth- and early fifteenth-century service books of York use also show a preference for flat kite-shaped leaves and leaves that jut out from the band borders. Some examples are Boulogne-sur-Mer, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 93 (a late fourteenth-century Book of Hours of York use), Cambridge, Trinity College, MS O.3.10 (an early fifteenth-century York psalter) and Bodleian Library, MS Laud. Misc. 84 (an early fifteenth-century York breviary), which are shown in figures 1-3.⁸⁴ An early fifteenth-century Book of Hours in York Minster Library, which is associated with the Bolton family of York, has ribbon-like leaves that wrap around the band borders (figure 4).⁸⁵ As will be

⁸⁰Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*, 1: 39.

⁸¹Friedman, *Northern English Books*, pp. 108-12.

⁸²Ibid., pp. 115-47.

⁸³Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*, 2: 118.

⁸⁴Ibid., 2: 37-9, 117-19; Otto Pächt and J.J.G. Alexander, *Illuminated Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, Oxford* (Oxford, 1973), 3: 72.

⁸⁵YML, MS Additional 2; Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*, 2: 119-21. This manuscript will be discussed further in chapter two, p. 98.

shown in the following discussion of late fifteenth-century manuscripts, the motifs identified by Scott do not continue in the second half of the century. The later fifteenth-century illuminated manuscripts with Yorkshire connections can also be distinguished from the late fourteenth- and early fifteenth-century manuscripts through the painting of curling acanthus leaves instead of kite-shaped leaves and the greater use made of sprigs and tendrils, as we shall see in the following examples.

The border sprays in a copy of the *Myrroure of the Blessed Lyf of Jesu Christ* in Glasgow University Library and a York Book of Hours, now York, Minster Library, MS XVI.K.6, were probably produced in the same shop in York, and possibly by the same illuminator or flourisher (figures 5-7).⁸⁶ The *Myrroure* manuscript can be dated to around 1430-1440 and is likely to have been commissioned by Robert Lord Willoughby of Eresby (1409-1452) whose arms are depicted in an initial on folio 1.⁸⁷ In the calendar of the York Hours is noted the dedication of All Saints Church, Pavement in York, on 15 May.⁸⁸ The volume contains thirty-five pages with three-quarter or full borders, thirty-two historiated initials and many more floriated initials. The border sprays in the two volumes are both fairly straight and have similar trefoil leaves in blue and pink which are folded over. They both also end in gold blobs, with a green 'tail'. In the Pavement Hours the sprays sometimes have small blue or red flowers.

⁸⁶YML, MS XVI.K.6 and Glasgow University Library, MS General 1130.

⁸⁷Nigel Thorp, *The Glory of the Page: Medieval and Renaissance Illuminated Manuscripts from Glasgow University Library* (London, 1987), p. 85; Kathleen L. Scott, 'The Illustration and Decoration of Manuscripts of Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*', in Shiochi Oguro, Richard Beadle and Michael G. Sargent (eds.), *Nicholas Love at Waseda* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 61-86; Ker and Piper, *Medieval Manuscripts*, 2: 925.

⁸⁸The York Book of Hours is also known as the Pullein Hours as the calendar contains the late sixteenth-century and early seventeenth-century obits of the Pullein family of Pontefract. The Hours are described in Ker and Piper, *Medieval Manuscripts*, 4: 727-30 and mentioned by Ker, *Medieval Libraries*, p. 224 and Watson, *Supplement*, p. 74.

It is tempting to assume that service books of York use or other manuscripts intended for use in Yorkshire were produced, if not in York itself, then in the county or diocese. However, as this discussion of late fifteenth-century texts will show, not all manuscripts with Yorkshire connections are similar in style. A comparison can be made, for example, between the style of decoration of Oxford, University College, MS 78B and of York, Minster Library, MS Additional 30, both missals of York use which contain the feast of the relics of York Minster.⁸⁹ Folio 7r of the University College missal (figure 8) has a vynet initial and a spray border with barbed cinquefoils and acanthus and kidney-shaped leaves. The decoration on the York Minster missal is far more elaborate (figure 9). Mention has already been made of Thomas Lemyng, the York textwriter, who contributed to the York Minster missal. Although, therefore, this manuscript was probably written in York, it may not have been decorated there.⁹⁰ The volume is extensively illuminated with coloured initials up to the size of eight lines. Fifteen pages have decorated borders with acanthus leaves and leaves shaped like kidneys and hearts. Some of the staves of the music in the book are emphasised with strapwork and pen-work faces.⁹¹

A northern provenance is suggested by Friedman for Cambridge, Sidney Sussex College, MS 37, a mid fifteenth-century Book of Hours (figure 10). Although it is of Sarum use, a connection with the north is suggested by the inclusion of the anniversaries of John of Beverley, William and Cuthbert in the calendar.⁹² However, an analysis of the style of decoration in MS 37 does not indicate that it is a likely example of Yorkshire

⁸⁹The contents of the University College missal are listed in J.J.G. Alexander and Elzbieta Temple, *Illuminated Manuscripts in Oxford College Libraries, the University Archives and the Taylor Institution* (Oxford, 1985), p. 50, and Henry O. Coxe, *Catalogus Codicum MSS qui in collegiis aulisque Oxoniensis I* (Oxford, 1852), p. 23.

⁹⁰A description of this manuscript is given in Ker and Piper, *Medieval Manuscripts*, 4: 800-2.

⁹¹See, for example, ff. 225r-v.

production. The Book of Hours has four and five line initials with large flowers inside and some pages are decorated with floriated designs which are used to fill the whole of the margins, unlike, for example, the University College missal and MS General 1130, where only a single tendril is used in the margins. A similarity between the border decoration and that in Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, MS 56, which was probably produced in London during the period c. 1470-1490, has been suggested by Scott.⁹³

The frequent reference to York Minster in the calendar of Cambridge, Sidney Sussex College, MS 33, a late fifteenth-century missal, indicates that it was intended for use in York.⁹⁴ Friedman accepts the manuscript as a northern production and a member of his carpel and calyx group (figure 11).⁹⁵ The margins of seventeen pages of the volume are decorated with acanthus leaves and flowers and there are a number of floriated seven line initials. Drawings in ink of leaves and carpels can also be found. Another example of an elaborately illuminated service book of York use is York Minster Library, MS Additional 69.⁹⁶ Unfortunately a large number of the decorated initials have been cut out of the volume.⁹⁷ The breviary contains the feasts of the name of Jesus and the Transfiguration, which indicates that it can probably be dated after 1489 when these feasts were promulgated in the diocese.⁹⁸ The first folio has a twelve line initial filled with acanthus leaves and the borders are decorated with tendrils ending in barbed cinquefoils and green and gold blobs.

⁹²Friedman, *Northern English Books*, p. 240.

⁹³Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*, 2: 328-30.

⁹⁴W.G. Henderson (ed.), *Missale ad Usus Insignis Ecclesiae Eboracensis*, Surtees Society 59 (1874), p. x; Montague Rhodes James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1895), 1: 16-18.

⁹⁵Friedman, *Northern English Books*, p. 132.

⁹⁶A description of this book can be found in Ker and Piper, *Medieval Manuscripts*, 4: 1816-8.

⁹⁷For example, ff. 33v, 136v, 156r, 161v, 167v.

⁹⁸R.W. Pfaff, *New Liturgical Feasts in Late Medieval England* (Oxford, 1970), pp. 30, 74.

The illuminator of this volume was fond of painting orange carpels or fruits which can be found in most of the surviving floriated initials. An example is folio 159r which contains a large orange carpel in a seven-line initial and the left margin is filled with a curling tendril and acanthus leaves (figure 12). Tendrils are used exclusively in the breviary to decorate the borders; there are no band borders.

Manuscripts decorated with well-executed illuminations were also owned by the gentry of Yorkshire who may have commissioned them from urban book producers. An example is Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, MS 34, a missal owned by the Fitzwilliam family of Sprotborough during the late fifteenth century.⁹⁹ It is possible that this missal was the same as that mentioned in Sir Richard Fitzwilliam's will in 1479. Sir Richard bequeathed '*unum novum missale de novo factum in capella mea existens*' to his wife Elizabeth, who later passed on the book to her heirs, together with her psalter.¹⁰⁰ On the first folio is a full page miniature showing the Fitzwilliam arms, below which are the two patrons praying. Richard holds a scroll with '*Jhesu fili dei*' and Elizabeth's scroll continues '*miserere nobis*'. A full page miniature of the crucifixion appears on the second folio. Seventeen other pages are decorated with floriated borders and there are two line coloured initials throughout the volume. Some of the larger initials contain pictures of saints, such as on folios 19r, 97v and 138r. On folio 11r (figure 13), a seven-line initial shows Richard Fitzwilliam kneeling in his armour and offering his soul, represented by a small naked man, to God. The borders are decorated with curling tendrils which fill the margins. From the

⁹⁹Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, MS 34 is described in Montague Rhodes James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Fitzwilliam Museum* (Cambridge, 1895), pp. 87-8; William George Searle, *The Illuminated Manuscripts in the Library of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1876), pp. 146-9; L. Best, 'Pride, Public Relations or Piety?' (MA diss., York University, 1997), pp. 31-5. The manuscript is not included in Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*.

¹⁰⁰'a new missal, newly-made, lying in my chapel'. BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, f. 185r-v; vol. 6, ff. 66v-7r.

band borders sprout aroid flowers, and acanthus leaves curl around the borders. The tendrils end in acanthus or kidney shaped leaves, or gold and green blobs.

There is a striking similarity between the border decoration of the Fitzwilliam missal and that of York, Minster Library, MS XVI.A.9, another missal of York use (figure 14).¹⁰¹ These two manuscripts may have been produced by the same illuminator. Both manuscripts display a lavish use of orange fruits and have the same type of swirling tendrils which fill the margins and end in acanthus leaves and kidney-shaped leaves. The York Minster missal is, however, less impressively illuminated than the Fitzwilliam missal. Ten pages of the York Minster missal contain floriated two-band borders with three to five-line decorated initials. An early fifteenth-century date has been suggested for the York Minster missal, but its similarity with the Fitzwilliam missal indicates a later date.

It is possible that the decoration of the guild book of the barber surgeons of York was produced within the city.¹⁰² The volume was begun in 1486 and contains later additions. Folios 44-70 constitute the medieval section and include a calendar of York use, tables and charts, notes on the zodiac and the days of the year, a treatise on the plague and a poem on bloodletting.¹⁰³ The dialect of the English text has been pinpointed to the city of York.¹⁰⁴ It contains four full-page miniatures, all of which were produced by the same artist in a Flemish style.¹⁰⁵ The first miniature, on folio 50r, is of 'Homo venorum', the Bloodletting

¹⁰¹The contents of this missal are listed in Ker and Piper, *Medieval Manuscripts*, 4: 693-5.

¹⁰²London, British Library, MS Egerton 2572.

¹⁰³*Catalogue of Additions to the Manuscripts in the British Museum, 1876-1881* (London, 1882), pp. 334-5; Jay A. Levenson, *Circa 1492: Art in the Age of Exploration* (New Haven and London, 1991), p. 220; Irma Taavitsainen, 'A Zodiacal Lunary for Medical Professionals', in Lister M. Matheson (ed.), *Popular and Practical Science of Medieval England* (East Lansing, 1994), pp. 283-300.

¹⁰⁴McIntosh, Samuels and Benskin (eds.), *Linguistic Atlas*, 1:252.

¹⁰⁵Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*, 2: 363-4; Peter Murray Jones, *Medieval Medical Miniatures* (London, 1984), pp. 71, 74, fig. 30.

Man. On the verso is depicted Zodiac Man or ‘Homo signorum’ (figure 15). A volvelle with depictions of the signs of the zodiac and the occupations of the months is given on folio 51r. Around it are pictures of four saints: John the Baptist and John the Evangelist (patron saints of the guild) and Damian and Cosmas (patron saints of medicine and surgery). The four Humours are shown on folio 51v, represented by four male figures: Melancholic Man, Sanguine Man, Phlegmatic Man and Choleric Man. The illustrations are drawn in brown ink with only occasional use of tint.

The illuminators of York were probably also commissioned to work on secular documents. A charter for the incorporation of the York guild of Corpus Christi, dated to 1458, has a flourished initial ‘H’ and a decorated border at the top and sides (figure 16).¹⁰⁶ The acanthus and kidney-shaped leaves are coloured in blue, green and red and the tendrils end in green and gold blobs. A carpel is depicted in the centre of the initial. It can be argued that this charter may have been produced in York as it is different in style from a group of charters which were produced in London and decorated with strapwork.¹⁰⁷ Strapwork (which refers to interlacing penwork strokes) did not become popular in York until later.¹⁰⁸ Some simple strapwork can be seen in the probate registers of the Exchequer court from 1465, the accounts of the city chamberlains for 1486-7 and House Book 8, which dates from 1503.¹⁰⁹ Strapwork does not appear in the fabric rolls of York Minster until the 1530s.¹¹⁰ The use of floriated initials and borders instead of strapwork in the York

¹⁰⁶YCA, A23.

¹⁰⁷Elizabeth Danbury, ‘The Decoration and Illumination of Royal Charters in England, 1250-1509: an Introduction’, in Michael Jones and Malcolm Vale (eds.), *England and her Neighbours, 1066-1453: Essays in honour of Pierre Chaplais* (London, 1989), pp. 157-79.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., pp. 166-167; A.C. Cawley and Martin Stevens (eds.), *The Towneley Cycle*, Leeds Texts and Monographs (1976), pp.ix, xvii.

¹⁰⁹BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 4, YCA, C4:1; B8 (1503-19).

¹¹⁰YML, E3/42.

Corpus Christi charter may therefore be an indication that it was not decorated in London, but in York. The decoration contains elements which we have seen in other possible Yorkshire productions, such as the floriated initial with acanthus leaves and the small leaves which jut out from the two-band border, but these are not enough to argue for a York or even northern provenance. Yet the charter does contain an unusual style of leaf which folds over on both sides and from which issues tendrils. This leaf also appears in two earlier manuscripts which are more skillfully and lavishly decorated. The first is the Hours of Elizabeth the Queen, which was probably produced in London in c.1420-30 (figure 17).¹¹¹ With the exception of folio 7, all the borders and floriated initials in the Hours were done by one artist.¹¹² In the York charter, the leaf can be found in the middle of the top band border and in the right border, and in the top and bottom borders of the Hours. The leaf also appears in the Anonymous or Fitzhugh Chronicle which was written in around 1425.¹¹³ This book was obtained for Jervaulx abbey by abbot John Brompton, who was in office between 1436 and the 1460s.¹¹⁴ This leaf is also used in the Pavement Hours which, as we have already discussed, may have been produced in York and is contemporary with the charter.¹¹⁵ We may conjecture therefore that the folded-over leaf was a motif originating in London in the early fifteenth century and which was adopted by a York illuminator or illuminators during the middle of the century. Yet this can be no more than speculation; overall, there is insufficient evidence to locate the illuminator of the Corpus Christi charter

¹¹¹London, British Library, MS Additional 50001; Margaret Rickert, *Painting in Britain: The Middle Ages* (Harmondsworth, 1954), pp. 174-5.

¹¹²Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*, 2: 175.

¹¹³Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 96; James, *Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Corpus Christi College*, pp. 183-4; Anne F. Sutton and Livia Visser-Fuchs, *Richard III's Books: Ideals and Reality in the Life and Library of a Medieval Prince* (Sutton, 1997), p. 165, fig. 55.

¹¹⁴Ker, *Medieval Libraries*, pp. 27, 105.

¹¹⁵YML, MS XVI.K.6, f. 31r.

in York.

iii. The Guild of Textwriters, Limners, Noters, Turnours and Flourishers

In 1487 the ordinances of a guild which comprised both scribes and illuminators were registered with the city corporation.¹¹⁶ Included in the guild were ‘textwriters, lominers, notors, tournours and florisschers’. These ordinances can be interpreted in two possible ways. First, this guild may have been a later form of the earlier fifteenth-century guild of ‘escriveners de tixt’. As I have discussed, the guild of the ‘escriveners de tixt’ was formed before the English terms ‘textwriter’ or ‘writer’ came to be used alongside ‘scrivener’. The early fifteenth-century ordinances give no indication of the type of texts that the scribes wrote at this time, referring only to ‘foreign’ scribes, apprentices and the fines imposed by searchers. It is likely therefore that the early guild included scribes who wrote a wide variety of documents. Likewise, the later fifteenth-century guild may have continued to be a guild for a range of scribes together with the illuminators, flourishers, noters and turnours. However, the references to textwriters but not scriveners in the ordinances is, I think, important.

The second possible interpretation of the ordinances is that the late fifteenth-century guild was a new guild formed by the textwriters who separated themselves from the scriveners in order to join with other book crafts. The illuminators and the flourishers of letters who were included in the guild would have worked mainly on books. The meaning of ‘turnour’ is ambiguous, referring in general to those who turn or fashion things, or, from the fourteenth century, a translator.¹¹⁷ In 1498 the parish of Walberswick in Suffolk paid

¹¹⁶YCA, E20A (B/Y Memorandum Book), f. 149r-50r.

¹¹⁷MED, 12: 1182.

Robert Gardener for ‘tornyng and florysyng’ the letters of the new feasts.¹¹⁸ During the period 1450-1550, nine turnours became free of the city of York. There is no evidence, however, of their activities. The description of the guild also includes noters who were writers of musical scores.¹¹⁹ The 1487 ordinances may therefore suggest that there were then two guilds of scribes, one of the scriveners who kept the early fifteenth century ordinances, and a new guild of textwriters and other book crafts.

I have already shown that the distinction between textwriters and scriveners could be blurred. Likewise, the skills of flourishing, illuminating, turning and noting are unlikely to have represented separate crafts. Nevertheless, the deliberate mention of these trades in the ordinances suggests that they were specialist skills. After the guild was established, illuminators almost completely disappear from the freemen’s register. In 1503 John Weston became free as a textwriter, limner, flourisher, turnour and scrivener. This description was not meant as a list of his skills, but instead indicated that he was a member of the 1487 guild. Likewise, other book decorators who obtained the franchise may have given the name of the textwriters’ guild thus obscuring which aspect of the craft they practised. The new freemen who called themselves textwriters during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries may, therefore, have included some illuminators and flourishers.

The 1487 ordinances reveal a preoccupation with the production of books. If a foreigner (that is, a person who was not a member of the franchise) wanted to sell books in the city, he was ordered to contribute to the upkeep of the guild’s pageant in the Corpus Christi play. A literal reading of the ordinances indicates that this anxiety was caused by the production of books by non-guild part-time scribes. Yet, as we have seen, the scribal

¹¹⁸Judith Middleton-Stewart, ‘The Provision of Books for Church Use in the Deanery of Dunwich, 1370-1547’, *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History* 38 (1994): 149-63.

¹¹⁹MED, 6: 1098.

and illuminating activities of monks, friars and secular clergy was not new in the fifteenth century. To a certain extent, the ordinances may be an indication that larger numbers of secular and religious clergy were producing books in the mid to late fifteenth century. The increased competition for clerical livings during the late fifteenth century may have prompted more clergy to try to earn money through their scribal skills. Moran has shown that the population of secular clergy grew as much as 63-88% between 1377 and 1500.¹²⁰ The main period of growth was from the 1460s onwards, a generation before the 1487 ordinances.¹²¹ The rise in ordinations may therefore have been dramatic enough by 1487 to have prompted the self-protecting activities of the scribes and other book artisans.

A more likely explanation for the preoccupation with books of the 1487 guild, however, is that there was a growing demand for books during the fifteenth century which enabled more scribes to be employed full-time as book producers. These scribes would therefore have relied on book production as their main source of income. In the 1470s and 1480s, however, a threat to this source of revenue appeared. Printed books began to arrive in England during this period and in 1476 the first English press was set up by Caxton at Westminster.¹²² The earliest references to the use of printed books in York come from bequests of books which may have been acquired a number of years before the writing of the will. John Gunthorpe, a prebendary who held benefices in Yorkshire, owned printed volumes of Cicero and Pliny before his death in 1498 and Archbishop Thomas Rotherham of York bequeathed a total of thirty-four printed books to the University of Cambridge in 1500.¹²³ Although the first service book of York use was not published until 1493, printed

¹²⁰Moran, *Growth*, p. 127.

¹²¹*Ibid.*, pp. 125, 137.

¹²²Hellinga, *Caxton in Focus*, p. 54. The early history of printing will be discussed further in chapter two, pp. 100-101.

¹²³A.B. Emden, *A Biographical Register of the University of Cambridge to 1500*

books of Sarum use had been produced since around 1475 and could be used without difficulty. An example which illustrates the use of Sarum books in the diocese of York is the bequest of James Bathley, a chantry priest of Newark in Nottinghamshire, in 1517/8: ‘Also I gif and bequeth to the church of Hokerton [Hockerton] ... a portouse of York use with an other of Salesbury use in prynt’.¹²⁴

The looming threat of print on the growing trade in books is likely therefore have been the main cause of the guild’s opposition to the activities of part-time scribes. An example is the dispute with William Incecliff, a chaplain of the chantry of Thomas Holme in St Anne’s chapel on the Foss Bridge.¹²⁵ In 1486/7 Incecliff was fined 8s for writing books when he was not a member of the guild.¹²⁶ In 1487 the textwriters Henry Archer, Thomas Lemyng and John Markyngton on one side and Incecliff on the other side were compelled to swear that they would do each other no bodily harm.¹²⁷ An arbitration between the parties decided that Incecliff should be allowed to finish the two books he was making, one of which was for his own use and the other for his chantry. He was also allowed to keep an apprentice and sell any books that the two of them made as long as it was for the upkeep of the apprentice and not for his own profit.¹²⁸ Nevertheless, despite this settlement with Incecliff, problems must have occurred because the conflict continued.

Revised regulations of the guild of textwriters were presented to the civic authorities in 1491/2.¹²⁹ The main changes in the ordinances concern the amounts set for the fines,

(Cambridge, 1963), pp. 275-7, 489-91.

¹²⁴BIHR, Archbishop’s Register, vol. 27, f. 145r.

¹²⁵Collins (ed.), *Freemen I*, p. 210.

¹²⁶YCA, C4:1; Dobson (ed.), *Account Rolls*, p. 178.

¹²⁷YCA, B6, f. 71r.

¹²⁸Ibid., ff.150r-v.

¹²⁹Ibid., f.161.

which indicates that the guild was experiencing difficulties in asserting its authority. For example, the fee to set up a business was doubled, the fines on aliens was raised from 20s to 40s, and perhaps most interestingly, the fine on priests who wrote books was increased from 13s 4d to 40s. It was agreed that no priest with a salary of seven marks or above would be allowed to exercise the craft or to take an apprentice.¹³⁰ Details of the conclusion of the dispute with Incecliff are recorded in the B/Y Memorandum Book after the ordinances.¹³¹ This seems to have been the final settlement. The regulations concerning priests who did scribal work were repeated. Incecliff was allowed to finish the books he was writing, but he could not take an apprentice and henceforth he and other priests were only permitted to produce texts ‘to ther awn proper use or to giffe in almose and charitie’.

The attempts of the scribes to demarcate their area of expertise seems also to have had some small success in forcing other literates to join their guild if they wanted to produce books for sale. In 1496, for example, James Macomase became free of the city of York as both a parish clerk and a textwriter.¹³² In the next year, Richard Flynt, chaplain, appealed to the city corporation to be allowed to become free of the textwriters craft in order to ‘writte, make, bynd, note and florysche bokes and theym sell’ as he did not earn more than four marks a year. His request was granted, with the condition that he should retire from textwriting as soon as he gained a benefice or salary of over seven marks.¹³³

It has been suggested that the involvement of priests, monks, friars and other scribes in the production of books shows that the professional textwriters could not satisfy the demand for books and consequently readers were forced to resort to scribal skills outside

¹³⁰Seven marks or £5 was the usual annual wage of a chantry priest during the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries: Kermode, *Medieval Merchants*, p. 128.

¹³¹YCA, E20A (B/Y Memorandum Book), ff. 162v-3r.

¹³²Collins (ed.), *Freemen I*, p. 220.

¹³³YCA, B8, f. 5r.

the craft.¹³⁴ It may indeed sometimes have happened that the textwriters of the city were overwhelmed by commissions, but the evidence from York indicates that the efforts of the textwriters to establish a monopoly for themselves and to compete against the more usual production of books by a wide range of scribes and literate persons was novel in the late fifteenth century. The self-protecting activities of the book scribes were probably stimulated by a growing market for books, which had enabled some scribes to specialise in the production of books, combined with the threat to their business by the new technology of print.

iv. The Scribes and Illuminators after the Advent of Print

We might expect the scribes and illuminators to have viewed the advent of print with dread and fear, as the market for books in Yorkshire was filled with cheap, ephemeral texts printed on paper. Yet the only surviving record of protest by the book craftsmen to the new technology is the ordinances of the textwriters' guild. The absence of direct opposition to printing in York is similar to the situation in most other European cities.¹³⁵ Print did not immediately destroy the demand for elaborately decorated parchment books which had sustained the crafts of illuminating and writing during the manuscript period. Illuminated books continued to be bequeathed in Yorkshire wills during the early sixteenth century. It can of course be argued that these decorated texts may have been commissioned during an earlier period, and had just continued to survive until the sixteenth century. However, these bequests show that a taste for sumptuous texts did not suddenly vanish after the arrival of

¹³⁴A.I. Doyle and M. B. Parkes, 'The Production of Copies of the *Canterbury Tales* and the *Confessio amantis* in the Early Fifteenth Century', in M.B. Parkes and A.G. Watson (eds.), *Medieval Scribes, Manuscripts and Libraries: Essays presented to N.R. Ker* (London, 1978), pp. 163-210.

¹³⁵U. Neddermeyer, 'Why were there no Riots of the Scribes?', *Gazette du livre medieval* 31 (1998): 1-8.

print, and it is not a great leap in interpretation to suggest that luxury books continued to be made, as well as read. In 1511, for example, a York horner, William Beilby, gave ‘a sawter of parchment lymmed with golde’ to William Fox.¹³⁶ The 1512 will of Thomas Taylour, a priest of Pontefract, included amongst the bequests an illuminated psalter.¹³⁷ A painted mass book was mentioned in the will of John Hart, a rector of St Martin’s in Micklegate, York, in 1519 and in the same year, a decorated volume of the *Sermones discipuli* was bequeathed by Thomas Robson, a York priest.¹³⁸ The York city corporation continued to employ illuminators to decorate its charters. In 1546-7, 30s were paid for flourishing a charter.¹³⁹ The account for the great charter confirmed in 1554 likewise includes payment for ‘the fyrst skyn floresshyng and gyldyng 26s 8d’.¹⁴⁰

There would also have been a continued need for the writing of texts which had not yet been printed, or were not available in print locally. Examples are payments for manuscript books of music which continued throughout the first half of the sixteenth century. Mention has already been made of William Prince, a priest of York, who was paid by the church of Louth to prick song books between 1510 and 1513.¹⁴¹ The fabric rolls of York Minster, for instance, include expenses to John Gibbons in 1518-9 ‘*pro les prikking diversorum ymnorum et ‘Te Deum’ in diversis libris in choro.*’¹⁴² In 1526 the church of St Michael, Spurriergate, paid a friar to write a sequence and later in 1536 for three mass

¹³⁶BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 8, f. 77r-v.

¹³⁷BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 8, f. 85r.

¹³⁸BIHR, Archbishop’s Register, vol. 27, f. 147r-v; Prob. Reg., vol. 9, ff. 84v-5r.

¹³⁹YCA, B18, f. 137r.

¹⁴⁰YCA, CC4, p. 138.

¹⁴¹Dudding (ed.), *First Churchwardens’ Book*, pp. 131, 148.

¹⁴²‘for the ‘pricking’ of diverse hymns and ‘Te Deum’ in diverse books in the choir’. YML, E3/38.

books as well as copying four ‘feries’ into a book.¹⁴³ The 1544 accounts record the following entries: ‘Item to Thomas Glasyng for syngyng amynd of me, 2d; Item to a stacioner for makyng of them in a boke, iiijd.’¹⁴⁴ Some English processional books also continued to be written. Although there are no examples of this in the Yorkshire sources, there is evidence of the writing of processional books elsewhere in England. The clerk of St Mary the Great, Cambridge, for example, received 16d in 1545 for writing two English processioners.¹⁴⁵ The churchwardens of Yatton in Somerset likewise paid a priest Nicholas Poore in 1548/9 ‘for wrytynge ye masse in Englych, viijd’.¹⁴⁶

Yet despite the continued demand for luxury texts and other books not produced by print, it is evident that the livelihood of the manuscript producers was seriously threatened. The most serious threat to the illuminator’s craft was probably the increasing use of woodcut pictures to illustrate both printed and manuscript books. The religious upheavals of the sixteenth century also had adverse consequences for the trade of illuminating. As we have seen, the most extensive and sumptuous decoration could be found on the traditional Catholic service books. It was these texts that invited the scorn and condemnation of the reformers, who fought to replace them with printed copies of approved Protestant books. The abrupt religious changes and resulting uncertainty may have discouraged churches from spending large sums of money on decorating books which could quickly become obsolete. The fall in the demand for the decoration of books may also have been exacerbated by a feeling that printed texts were generally more ephemeral and less valuable than their

¹⁴³BIHR, PR Y/MS/4, ff. 61r, 125v; Webb (ed.), *Churchwardens’ Accounts*, 1: 116, 179. ‘Feries’ were probably services and prayers for weekdays; MED, 3: 504.

¹⁴⁴BIHR, PR Y/MS/3, f. 85r; Webb (ed.), *Churchwardens’ Accounts*, 2: 332.

¹⁴⁵J.E. Foster (ed.), *Churchwardens’ Accounts of St Mary the Great, Cambridge, from 1504 to 1635* (Cambridge, 1905), p. 107.

¹⁴⁶Bishop Hobhouse (ed.), *Churchwardens’ Accounts of Croscombe, Pitton, Yatton, Tintinhull, Morebath and St Michael’s, Bath*, Somerset Record Society 4 (1890), p. 161.

manuscript predecessors, and therefore not worth the expense of decorating.

Sheets of paper decorated with woodcut designs had been imported into Hull since the late fifteenth century. The primary uses of the paper would have been as wall paper or material for binding books.¹⁴⁷ In 1471-2, Maynard Clauson brought a cargo of 120 painted papers into Hull.¹⁴⁸ ‘Paynted paupirs’ were imported to Hull on 11 February 1511 by Clemence le Countay, and on 29 August of the next year by Harman Johnson, both times aboard ships from Dieppe.¹⁴⁹ Seventy painted papers were likewise brought to Hull by William Dew in 1520 on another ship from Dieppe, the *Margaret*.¹⁵⁰ Dew also had in his cargo 220 playing cards which were probably woodcuts.¹⁵¹ More decorated papers arrived in Hull on the *Bonaventure* of Dieppe in 1526.¹⁵²

Woodcut pictures to illustrate the text of a book are frequently found in the early printed editions of York service books; a few examples will have to suffice. The title page of the 1507 edition of the *Expositio hymnorum et sequentiarum* produced by Pierre Violette contains a woodcut of a scholar sitting before two books on a lectern.¹⁵³ Borders decorated with some woodcut pictures can be found on the pages of a York Hours printed in Rouen in around 1516.¹⁵⁴ Eight full-page woodcuts are also used in the Book of Hours, as well as a small picture of the crucifixion and a number of woodcut decorated initials. The first

¹⁴⁷Nicholas Pickwood, ‘Onward and Downward: How Binders coped with the Printing Press before 1800’, in Robin Myers and Michael Harris (eds.), *A Millenium of the Book* (Winchester, 1994), pp. 61-106; Wendy R. Childs (ed.), *The Customs Accounts of Hull 1453-1490*, YASRS 144 (1984), p. 244.

¹⁴⁸Childs (ed.), *Customs Accounts*, p. 163.

¹⁴⁹PRO, E 122/60/3, f. 4v; E 122/64/2, f. 21r.

¹⁵⁰PRO, E 122/64/5, f. 12r.

¹⁵¹Arthur M. Hind, *An Introduction to the History of Woodcut* (New York, 1963), 1: 84-9.

¹⁵²PRO, E 122/202/5, f. 19v.

¹⁵³STC 16119; Davies, *Memoir*, p. 10.

¹⁵⁴STC 16103; YML, XI.O.28.

page of a York Hours produced by Guillaume Bernard and Jacques Cousin of Rouen in around 1517 shows a woodcut of the Virgin Mary.¹⁵⁵ In February 1518, Simon Lambard imported 120 painted papers and twenty-four painted books into Hull on the *James* of Dieppe.¹⁵⁶ The painted books are likely to have referred to volumes decorated with woodcut pictures.

The production of printed service books and grammar texts within the city of York, and the importation of a wide range of other printed texts, particularly legal works, clerical manuals and vernacular books, also seriously affected the trade of the scribes. In 1519 a Latin grammar text produced in London proclaimed ‘Pryntyng hath almooste undone scryveners crafte’.¹⁵⁷ The use of the term textwriter quickly declined during the early sixteenth century. Fifteen textwriters became free in the period 1450-1499, compared with only two in the period 1500-1549 and only one in the second half of the century. A possible explanation for this trend is that a greater proportion of the work of the scribes was scrivenering or documentary production as the demand for manuscript books fell after the advent of print, which prompted some of the textwriters to start calling themselves scriveners. Henry Archer, for example, became a freeman of the city as a textwriter in 1479.¹⁵⁸ But in his will, proved in 1520, he described himself as a scrivener.¹⁵⁹ Likewise, in 1483, John Markynfeld obtained the city’s freedom as a textwriter, yet when he witnessed the will of Ninian Markenfeld, knight, in 1528, he was called a scrivener.¹⁶⁰ Richard Middleton, who had become free as a textwriter in 1512, appears in a register of bonds as

¹⁵⁵STC 16104; London, British Library, C.53.bb.12.

¹⁵⁶PRO, E 122/202/4, f. 9v.

¹⁵⁷William Horman, *Vulgaria* (London, 1519), p. 82.

¹⁵⁸Collins (ed.), *Freemen I*, p. 200.

¹⁵⁹BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol 9, f. 96v-7r.

¹⁶⁰Collins (ed.), *Freemen I*, p. 206; BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 9, f. 407r-8r.

a scrivener in 1532.¹⁶¹ These are the only examples we have of York scribes that were called both textwriters and scriveners. It is meaningful that in each of these cases, the scribes were first called textwriter and then scrivener, and that all of these examples date to the early sixteenth century. This suggests that the distinctions between scrivening and textwriting were significant, and that during this period Archer, Markynfeld and Middleton began to focus more on legal and administrative documents.

The craft of the scrivener continued to attract new freemen throughout the first three quarters of the sixteenth century, which suggests that their trade was not greatly impaired by the advent of print. Between 1500 and 1589, twenty-one scriveners became free of the city of York, including a rush in the 1570s when there were six new entrants to the craft. Demand for the copying and authenticating of wills, deeds, letters and other legal and administrative records continued. Nevertheless, there is evidence that the scribes' production of indulgences began to be usurped by the presses during the early sixteenth century. In 1519, Ursyn Milner, a York printer, produced copies of an indulgence for the York guild of St Christopher and St George and an indulgence for the confraternity of St Mary of Mount Carmel in York was printed in around 1520 by Richard Pynson.¹⁶² In 1527, widow Warwick was paid 10s by the city authorities for 'pryntyng of a thowsand breyffes'.¹⁶³ 'Brief' is a very vague term which may refer to a letter, writ, a written order or document.¹⁶⁴ The printed brief produced by widow Warwick was likewise probably an indulgence as in the same year, 1527, the civic authorities were granted the right to issue

¹⁶¹Collins (ed.), *Freemen I*, p. 235; YCA, F86, f. 17v.

¹⁶²STC 14077c.84, 14077c.84A. The printing of the indulgence for the Carmelite confraternity by Pynson and not by a York printer may suggest that Milner's press was no longer in operation. As will be discussed further in chapter two, p. 105, the indulgence printed by Milner in 1519 is his last known production and there is no evidence of other printers working in York at this time.

¹⁶³YCA, CC3, f. 188v; I am grateful to Jennifer Kaner for this reference.

an indulgence to raise funds for rebuilding the Ouse Bridge.¹⁶⁵ The production of a large number of indulgences was necessary as they were intended for sale not just in York and its hinterland, but around England. The register of Charles Booth, bishop of Hereford, refers to a licence to collect alms granted to William Morgan and William Buckshawe, proctors, for the repair of the four bridges over the Ouse and Foss on 10 December 1527.¹⁶⁶ A commission by the mayor of York, dated 30 April 1528, appointed two citizens as messengers to collect gifts in the dioceses of Lincoln, Norwich and Ely for the bridges.¹⁶⁷ In 1530, indulgences were being sold to inhabitants of the south-west of England by representatives of a York guild.¹⁶⁸ The advantage of printing technology for producing indulgences may also have been capitalised on by the Dean and Chapter of York Minster, who had made payments for the writing of indulgences during the fifteenth century. In 1469-70, for example, 18s 2d was paid for the writing of 312 indulgences.¹⁶⁹ The production of books was therefore not the only type of scribal activity affected by the new technology of print. The printing of indulgences in the early sixteenth century represents a significant loss of work and revenue for the scribes.

2. Parchment Makers

Parchment making should not strictly be defined as a book craft as parchment was used for

¹⁶⁴MED, 1: 1125-6.

¹⁶⁵BIHR, Archbishop's Register, vol. 27, f. 131r.

¹⁶⁶Arthur Thomas Bannister (ed.), *Registrum Caroli Bothe, Episcopi Herefordensis*, Canterbury and York Society 28 (1921), p. 358.

¹⁶⁷YCA, G24A.

¹⁶⁸Robert Whiting, *The Blind Devotion of the People: Popular Religion and the English Reformation* (Cambridge, 1989), p. 113. I owe many thanks to Dr Robert Swanson for these references and his advice on the subject of indulgences.

¹⁶⁹YML, E3/24.

a variety of documents, not just books. Nevertheless, the considerable demand for parchment generated by the book craftsmen meant that the trade of the parchment makers or ‘parchmeners’ was likely to be affected by changes in the book trade, in particular the advent of print. During the fifteenth century, parchment making was a large and important industry in the city. The production of parchment in York is recorded from the early thirteenth century.¹⁷⁰ The first ordinances of the guild of parchmeners copied into the A/Y Memorandum Book are undated.¹⁷¹ They were probably of the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century as they mention John de Cateryk and John de Willyngham, who became free of the city in 1395 and 1396 respectively.¹⁷² The makers of parchment were required to be well practised and expert at their craft and searchers were appointed to be vigilant for ‘false work’. In 1422 the ordinances were revised.¹⁷³ The ordinances were very similar to those drawn up for other guilds. Craftsmen who rebelled against the searchers were ordered to pay 40d in fines. Any parchment that was to be sold in the city had to be worked in the craftsman’s home or shop. The term of apprenticeship was set at seven years and no one was to work on a Sunday or holy day. An addition was made to the ordinances in 1474.¹⁷⁴ Henceforth, all masters of the parchment makers’ craft were allowed to take up to three apprentices, the terms and length of apprenticeship to be agreed in an indenture. The admittance of parchment makers to the freedom of the city during the fifteenth century was fairly constant, averaging around two per decade.

In contrast to the difficulties suffered by the illuminators and some scribes, the parchment makers seem to have remained fairly unscathed by the advent of print.

¹⁷⁰Tringham, (ed.), *Charters*, pp. 14-15, 94, 182, 184.

¹⁷¹YCA, E20 (A/Y Memorandum Book) f. 21r (scriveners) and f. 25v (parchmeners).

¹⁷²Collins (ed.), *Freemen I*, p. 96.

¹⁷³YCA, E20 (A/Y Memorandum Book), f. 249v.

¹⁷⁴YCA, E20 (A/Y Memorandum Book), f. 329v.

Admissions to the craft of the parchmeners continued to be healthy in the sixteenth century. There continued to be a demand for manuscripts to be mended or covered with parchment. In 1515-16 the Dean and Chapter of York Minster paid for three skins of parchment to mend the books in the choir.¹⁷⁵ A dozen calf skins and half a dozen sheep skins were also bought in 1518-19 for Neville Mores, the stationer, to bind books.¹⁷⁶ Six deer-skins to cover choir books were purchased in 1527-8.¹⁷⁷ Likewise, six skins were bought for the sequences in 1526 by St Michael's, Spurriergate in York, and in 1537 parchment was needed to write indentures on.¹⁷⁸ In 1541, the churchwardens' accounts include an entry for 'byndyng of two bokes of the fest of the visitacion of our lady and for ij coverynges of parchment to them, iiijd'.¹⁷⁹ The account rolls of the city officials, the Chamberlains and Bridgemasters, as well as the rolls of the mercers' guild, and the Chamberlains and Dean and Chapter of York Minster, were written on parchment into at least the mid-sixteenth century. Other parchment records include the Corpus Christi Register (1408-1547), the Corpus Christi accounts (1415-1541), the book of statutes of the Dean and Chapter (fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries) and the vicars choral statute book (fifteenth century to 1928). Therefore, although we know with hindsight that the advent of print would ultimately ensure the triumph of paper, parchment was still in great demand in the sixteenth century and the craft of the parchmener continued to prosper. Although it is hard to generalise about the wide variety of documents that were produced on parchment, it seems that parchment continued to be favoured for records that were intended to be the

¹⁷⁵YML, E3/36.

¹⁷⁶YML, E3/37.

¹⁷⁷YML, E3/39.

¹⁷⁸BIHR, PR Y/MS/4, f. 61v; MS/3, f. 27v; Webb (ed.), *Churchwardens' Accounts*, 1:116, 2:195.

¹⁷⁹BIHR, PR Y/MS/3, f. 53v; Webb (ed.), *Churchwardens' Accounts*, 2:248.

final, neat draft, as opposed to rough notes made on paper. Parchment was therefore probably considered a more durable material for the preservation of information.

3. Bookbinders

The craft of the bookbinder, like that of the illuminators, was practised by only a small group of artisans before the advent of print who were commissioned to work on a variety of texts. The bookbinding trade may have been introduced to York by artisans from Oxford during the early fourteenth century, when bookbinders such as Adam de Oxenforth and Peter de Oxenford first appear in the freemen's register.¹⁸⁰ The main centres of decorated binding work during the late Middle Ages were London, Oxford and Cambridge.¹⁸¹ Some evidence for the decoration of bindings has also been found for Salisbury, Canterbury and Winchester.¹⁸² A.I. Doyle has also described a group of blind-stamped bindings which were probably produced at or near Durham.¹⁸³ During the fifteenth century only five bookbinders became free of the city of York.¹⁸⁴ There may also have been craftsmen who bound books for the Minster without obtaining the franchise. Thomas Bakar, for example, covered two epistle books in 1518/9 for the cathedral, but he does not appear in the freemen's register.¹⁸⁵ This is not a serious problem of the evidence, however, as there is also indication that some binders who worked for the Minster were free of the city, presumably to enjoy the

¹⁸⁰Collins (ed.), *Freemen I*, pp. 37, 57.

¹⁸¹J. Basil Oldham, *English Blind-stamped Bindings* (Cambridge, 1952), p. 24.

¹⁸²Graham Pollard, 'The Names of some English Fifteenth-Century Binders', *The Library*, 5th series 25 (1970): 193-218; Mirjam Foot, 'English Decorated Book Bindings', Griffiths and Pearsall (eds.), *Book Production and Publishing*, pp. 65-86.

¹⁸³A.I. Doyle, 'Medieval Blind-Stamped Bindings associated with Durham Cathedral Priory', in G. Colin (ed.), *De libris compactis miscellanea. Studia Bibliotheca Wittockiana I* (Brussels, 1984), pp. 31-42.

¹⁸⁴Collins (ed.), *Freemen I*, pp. 138, 170, 172, 219, 221.

¹⁸⁵YML, E3/37.

advantages of guild membership and to be able to work for other customers in York as well. In 1475/6 and 1484/5, John Messyngham was paid by the Minster for binding books.¹⁸⁶ He had become free of the city in 1453.¹⁸⁷ Another freeman, Thomas Messyngham, presumably a relation of John, bound a gradual and a book for the choristers of the Minster in 1485.¹⁸⁸ The first ordinances of a guild of bookbinders in York are dated to the mayoralty of Thomas Wrangwishe, which means that they were registered in 1476 or 1484.¹⁸⁹

The medieval bindings on books with York connections are nearly all plain, and so it has not been possible to define a particular York style of binding. Examples of plain medieval binding which may have been produced in York can be found on Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 131 (a copy of Nicholas Love's *Myrrour of the Blessed Lyf of Jesu Christ*, containing a letter of recommendation by the prior of the York Augustinians), which has white leather on bevelled boards and one clasp missing, and Selden Supra 52 (a metrical Old Testament history written in the Yorkshire dialect in the mid-fifteenth century) in the same library which also has a clasp missing from a binding of brown leather on boards.

Like the textwriters and illuminators, the bookbinders of York competed against others, usually monks and friars, who undertook occasional binding work. A fifteenth-century volume of sermons by John Lensean, originally owned by Jervaulx Abbey, is bound in brown leather. A stamp showing the Virgin with orb and sceptre was used to decorate the binding and may have been intended as an ownership mark of the monastery.¹⁹⁰ Payments for the binding of books were made in 1526, 1527 and 1536 by the church of St Michael, Spurriergate in York to Richard Fort, who may be identified as the Dominican friar

¹⁸⁶YML, E3/27 and E3/30.

¹⁸⁷YCA, CC1a, f. 103v.

¹⁸⁸Collins (ed.), *Freemen I*, p. 172; Raine (ed.), *Fabric Rolls*, p. 88; YML, E3/30.

¹⁸⁹YCA, E20A (B/Y Memorandum Book), f. 148v.

¹⁹⁰G.D. Hobson, *English Binding before 1500* (Cambridge, 1929), p. 53, pl. 32a.

who was ordained priest in York in 1511.¹⁹¹ Mention has already been made of the 1575 suit for tithe of pasture which gives the details of the making of the register of Monk Bretton priory. The suit also records that William Lounde, a monk of the monastery, had made a binding for the register.¹⁹²

The more rapid production of books after the advent of print put pressure on the bookbinders to increase the speed of their work and to reduce costs. Greater efficiency and economy could be achieved by using cheaper materials and taking less care over and simplifying the binding process.¹⁹³ Coverings of parchment began to replace boards, and the use of endbands, which secured the pages to the boards at the head and tail, became rarer. The techniques of sewing the binding also became simpler and less time-consuming.¹⁹⁴ Blind-stamped panels could also be used to decorate books in a quick but pleasing manner.¹⁹⁵ The use of two panels for decorating book bindings, showing St Barbara and St Nicholas, can be assigned with reasonable certainty to Thomas Richardson, a York stationer and bookbinder who became free in 1532.¹⁹⁶ The panels appear together on Durham Cathedral, N. III 64, which was printed in Lyons in 1511 and a York manual published by Gachet in around 1530.¹⁹⁷ On the last leaf of the manual is written ‘Yf thes ij bookis be nott for you send ther agane unto Thomas Rychardson and they shalbe changed and they cost iiijs viijd. One proccessioner and one manuell’. In around 1556, Richardson

¹⁹¹Webb (ed.), *Churchwardens' Accounts*, 1: 9-10; BIHR, PR Y/MS/4, ff. 61r, 68v, 125v.

¹⁹²BIHR, Cause Paper, G 1757.

¹⁹³Mirjam M. Foot, *Studies in the History of Bookbinding* (Aldershot, Hants., 1993), pp. 8-9.

¹⁹⁴Pickwoad, ‘Onward and Downward’, pp. 61-106.

¹⁹⁵Ibid., pp. 93-5.

¹⁹⁶J. Basil Oldham, *Blind Panels of English Binders* (Cambridge, 1958), pp. 9, 37, 42; Collins (ed.), *Freemen I*, p. 252.

¹⁹⁷Ampleforth Abbey, C.V.95; STC 16161.

was paid 7s by the Dean and Chapter of York Minster for mending and binding books.¹⁹⁸

We might expect an increase in the business of the bookbinders to be represented by a rise in the number of binders who became free of the city. Yet the freemen's register instead shows that fewer binders obtained the franchise during the sixteenth century than in the previous century. The fall in the number of textwriters, illuminators and bookbinders admitted to the freedom of York may not simply represent a decline in the number of artisans who practised these crafts. Another possible interpretation is that increasing numbers of book artisans were undertaking an entrepreneurial role in the trade, which may have overshadowed a continuing involvement in book production. The larger number of books produced by the presses is likely to have encouraged the book craftsmen to become more involved in the trade and sale of books. They may consequently have described themselves as booksellers, thus hiding their other activities as book producers.¹⁹⁹ This interpretation of the freemen's register is supported by the increasing use of the word 'stationer' in London to describe a variety of book craftsmen who were also involved in the selling of books from the mid-fifteenth century.²⁰⁰ The evidence of the increasing importance of entrepreneurial activities in the York book trade and the role of stationers both as supervisors of the book-making processes and as book traders will be the focus of the next chapter.

¹⁹⁸YML, E3/48; Raine (ed.), *Fabric Rolls*, p. 113.

¹⁹⁹A.S.G. Edwards and Derek Pearsall, 'The Manuscripts of the Major English Poetic Texts', in Griffiths and Pearsall (eds.), *Book Production and Publishing*, p. 260; Christianson, 'Century', p. 143.

²⁰⁰Christianson, *Directory*, pp. 24-5.

Chapter 2

The Organisation of the Book Trade

This discussion of the different processes in book production and how they were organised has been introduced in the previous chapter in which I have hypothesised that the York book artisans were becoming more involved in entrepreneurial activity during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. In this chapter, the role of overseers of book production and booksellers will be analysed through a discussion of supervisory roles carried out by stationers and some artisans. As we have seen, Christianson has found a high degree of organisation in the London book trade during this period.¹ The London book artisans and traders had frequent business and social dealings with each other and formed a close-knit community. I shall consider whether this model applies to York. The effect of print on the organisation of the book trade in York will then be investigated. I shall argue that, as a result of the new technology, the book trade in York changed from being predominantly bespoke to large-scale speculative activity. Whereas in the fifteenth century only a few stationers are known to have worked in York and their activities are largely unknown, in the sixteenth century stationers were far more numerous and they operated as wholesale traders in books and may also have financed print runs.

1. The Stationers' Trade before Print

Studies of the London book trade have revealed many examples of book artisans who were also involved in the trade in books. An example of a scribe who supervised the commission for a book can be seen in the Auchinleck manuscript.² The manuscript, dating to 1330-40,

¹Christianson, 'Century', pp. 143-65; *Directory*.

²Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, MS Advocates 19.2.1; Laura Hubbard Loomis,

contains a total of forty-four texts, including romances, chronicles, miracle stories, legends, religious works, debates, satires and humour. Six scribes contributed to the making of the compilation which, according to Laura Hubbard Loomis, suggests that the text was copied in a type of lay scriptorium.³ Timothy A. Shonk, however, argues that the commissioning of the texts was controlled by an overseer (scribe 1), who parcelled out the work to a team of scribes who each worked separately.⁴ After the main texts had been written, flourishing was added by at least three different rubricators. Scribe 1, who had also written some 237 folios, finished off the commission by adding titles, catchwords and folio-numbers.

The research of Doyle and Parkes on an early fifteenth-century copy of Gower's *Confessio amantis* likewise reveals an organised system of book production in London. In contrast with the Auchinleck manuscript however the work was not supervised by one of the book craftsmen involved, but instead by an entrepreneur.⁵ The five scribes who contributed to the manuscript were probably independent writing-masters, employed individually by the stationer who controlled the commission. Scribes B and D were textwriters who had also separately produced a number of works by Chaucer, Gower, Langland and Trevisa.⁶ Scribe E, who has been identified as Thomas Hoccleve, was a clerk of the Privy Seal. Nothing is known of scribes A and C.⁷ None of the scribes is known to have worked with one or more of the other copyists on any other commission. Also in the fifteenth century, parchment makers, such as Richard Collop, bookbinders, who included

³'The Auchinleck Manuscript and a Possible London Bookshop of 1330-1340', *PMLA* 57 (1942): 605; Derek Pearsall and I.C. Cunningham (eds.), *The Auchinleck Manuscript: National Library of Scotland Advocates' MS 19.2.1* (London, 1979).

⁴Loomis, 'Auchinleck Manuscript', pp. 599-600.

⁵Timothy A. Shonk, 'A Study of the Auchinleck Manuscript', *Speculum* 60 (1985): 71-91.

⁶Cambridge, Trinity College, MS R.3.2 (581); Doyle and Parkes, 'Production', pp. 163-210.

⁷Doyle and Parkes, 'Production', pp. 170, 177.

Thomas Broke and John Barell, and illuminators, for instance Thomas Fyshe and William Abell, likewise described themselves as stationers.⁸

The evidence of the fabric rolls and chamberlains rolls of York Minster likewise indicates the involvement of overseers in the book production in York. However, as I will show, in contrast with the range of book craftsmen involved in organising the production of books in London, in York this entrepreneurial activity seems to have been limited to the bookbinders. The accounts of the Dean and Chapter include many payments for paper and parchment, and the making, binding and repair of books. Contemporary with the Auchinleck manuscript, in 1346, Robert Brekeling was paid for the writing and decorating of a psalter.⁹ Specific instructions are given as to the contents of the service book, the colour of the illuminations and the size of the initial letters: *'Et omnes litere in principiis versuum erunt lunate de azuro et vermilionis bonis, et omnes litere in inceptione nocturnorum erunt grosse litere unciales continentis v lineas ...'*¹⁰ There are two possible interpretations of this commission. Brekeling may have had a role similar to that of the overseer who was involved with the Auchinleck manuscript, and thus he would have passed the different jobs of writing and illuminating on to other craftsmen. Brekeling's commission may therefore suggest that the production of books was organised in a similar manner to that in London during the early to mid fourteenth century. A more likely interpretation is that Brekeling was a general 'book-producer' who could both write and illuminate books. The early date of the commission and the detailed instructions to Brekeling suggests that he probably did all the work himself. Similar 'jacks-of-all-trades' worked in rural parishes as late as the

⁷Ibid., p. 185.

⁸Christianson, 'Early London Bookbinders', p. 52.

⁹YML, H1/2, f. 30r; Raine (ed.), *Fabric Rolls*, pp. 165-6.

¹⁰'And all the letters at the beginning of the verses will be illuminated with blue and good red, and all the letters at the beginning of the nocturns will be large letters, an inch high,

fifteenth century. The church of Andover in Hampshire, for example, paid William Clifford for writing the 'Jesus mass' and binding another book, as well as amending a breviary and processional. He also mended a banner, an alb and a surplice.¹¹ Brekeling was probably likewise a 'jack-of-all-trades', a craftsman who could be employed for a number of book-making skills.

At the turn of the fifteenth century, the Dean and Chapter of York employed a variety of book craftsmen to keep the Cathedral well-stocked with all the necessary liturgical texts. William de Ellerker received various sums of money between 1393 and 1399 for writing service books and providing parchment for them.¹² In 1394, for example, £11 13s 3d was paid to Ellerker '*in plenam solucionem pro scriptura et pergameno empt' pro iiij libris pro choro.*'¹³ Payments for parchment were also made to John Brignale in 1395. A bookbinder called Robert bound liturgical texts of the Minster in 1395, 1396 and 1399 and he supplied his own materials for the job.¹⁴ The work of illumination over this period was done by Richard de Sterton or Streton, who was employed by the Dean and Chapter in 1393, 1395, 1399 and 1402.¹⁵ In Sterton's last commission he was paid 20s '*in alumpnacione magni gradalis in choro*'.¹⁶ Gold initials were provided by a goldsmith called William Selar.¹⁷ The naming of individual artisans and the separate payments to each seems to suggest that an

containing five lines'; YML, H1/2, f. 30r.

¹¹John Foster Williams (ed.), *The Early Churchwardens' Accounts of Hampshire* (Winchester, 1913), pp. 1-5.

¹²YML, E1/16, E1/19, E1/20, E1/22, E1/23, E1/24, E1/29; Raine (ed.), *Fabric Rolls*, pp. 130-2.

¹³'in full payment for the writing and parchment bought for four books for the choir'; YML, E1/20.

¹⁴YML, E1/22, E1/23, E1/29.

¹⁵YML, E1/16, E1/22, E1/34. The 1399 reference in Raine's edition is probably E1/31, which is missing from YML.

¹⁶'for illuminating the large gradual in the choir'; YML, E1/34.

official of the Dean and Chapter approached the craftsmen separately with the pages or volume which he wanted written, decorated, bound or mended. This interpretation of the accounts differs from that of Friedman, who suggests that the book craftsmen worked as a team, supervised by William de Ellerker, but there is no evidence of this.¹⁸ The late fourteenth- and early fifteenth-century accounts therefore do not indicate entrepreneurial activity in the book trade.

By the later fifteenth century, however, a different pattern emerges. In the fabric rolls of the second half of the fifteenth century, payments to individually named craftsmen are rare compared with the end of the fourteenth. The only artisans who are mentioned by name are the bookbinders. This may suggest that the bookbinders had begun to take on a role as supervisors of book production. The binding work of John and Thomas Messyngham in the 1470s and 1480s for the Minster has already been mentioned.¹⁹ Thomas was also paid 8s 6d in 1485 for '*uno libro de novo facto empto pro choristis*'.²⁰ There is no record of payment for the writing or decoration of this volume, so it is at least possible that Thomas had organised this himself. Moreover, instead of commissioning separately the binding, writing, illumination or parchment, the different stages that went into making a book were paid for all together. In 1498-9 the Dean and Chapter paid £4 9s 6½d '*pro scriptura et ligatura ac lymmyng unius libri vocati antepnoner pro medio choro Cath' Ebor*'.²¹ The payment of a lump sum for the new service book and the omission of the names of the textwriters or limners who would have contributed to the making of the

¹⁷YML, E1/22.

¹⁸Friedman, *Northern English Books*, pp. 35-6.

¹⁹YML, E3/27, E3/30.

²⁰'a newly-made book bought for the choristers'; YML, E3/30.

²¹'for the writing and binding and illuminating of a book called an antiphoner for the middle choir of York Cathedral'; YML, E3/32.

volume indicate the possible involvement of an overseeing craftsman. The accounts of the Dean and Chapter of York Minster of the late fifteenth century suggest that a more organised production of books had developed by the late fifteenth century in which the different skills involved in book making were sub-contracted out by an overseer. In contrast to the London book trade, however, there is no evidence of the involvement of textwriters, illuminators and parchment makers in entrepreneurial activity. Instead it was the bookbinders alone who received payments for book commissions.

Another way in which we can investigate the organisation of the York book trade compared with London is by studying the use of the word 'stationer'. The trade of the stationer originated in the universities. In Oxford, a stationer called Reginald was brought to court in 1262 over a book worth 20s.²² Stationers are first recorded at Cambridge in 1271, involved in a dispute between the archdeacon of Ely and the university.²³ The university stationers operated a system of pledges for loans. If the loan was not repaid, the stationers would sell the pledged items, which often included books.²⁴ An example is the *Digestum infortiatum* given to Alan the stationer as a pledge by Andrew Halstead in Oxford in around 1325.²⁵

The first London stationer, William de Southflete, appears in the accounts of the Royal Wardrobe in 1311. He was paid for supplying parchment and for making and binding the four volumes of accounts.²⁶ By the fifteenth century, in both London and Oxford, the

²²Graham Pollard, 'The Company of Stationers before 1557', *The Library*, 4th series 18 (1937): 2.

²³Frances M. Page, 'Industries', in L.F. Salzman (ed.), *Victoria County History: A History of Cambridge and the Isle of Ely* (London, 1948), 2: 368.

²⁴Doyle, 'English Provincial Book Trade', p. 16; Black, *Cambridge University Press*, p. 9.

²⁵M.B. Parkes, 'The Provision of Books', in J.I. Catto and Ralph Evans (eds.), *The History of the University of Oxford II: Late Medieval Oxford* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 418-9, 465.

²⁶Pollard, 'Company of Stationers', p. 3.

term 'stationer' came to be associated more strongly with the book trade, referring to book craftsmen who were involved in the sale of books, and merchants who included books in the range of goods they sold.²⁷ The role in the book trade undertaken by an Oxford stationer is revealed in the records of a dispute in 1445 between a stationer, John Godsond, and John Coneley, who was a limner.²⁸ As they had failed to settle it between them within the given time limit, the matter was referred to the Chancellor of the University. He decided that the illuminator should work for the stationer for the period of a year for a wage of 4 marks and 10s. Coneley was expected to collect work from Godsond and return the final product back to him. The stationer was to give instructions to the illuminator, lend him his colours and check the finished sheets. Godsond was also allowed free access to Coneley's place of work. Likewise, in a will of 1458, for example, Thomas Faukys, rector of St Bride's, Fleet Street, London, mentioned an old missal which he had bought from a stationer, John Scot.²⁹ An example of a stationer who was a general trader in merchandise including books is John de Medyn.³⁰ Medyn became free as a stationer of London in 1464 and dealt in Spanish wine and other commodities as well as books.

As in London, the first record of a stationer connected with York dates to the early fourteenth century. The wardrobe accounts of Edward II for 1318-19 record payment to a Walter de Briggenhale, a stationer at or of York, for writing the accounts of the wardrobe in parchment books at York.³¹ There is no direct evidence, however, that Briggenhale was involved in the book trade. We cannot assume therefore that he was therefore a bookseller,

²⁷Christianson, *Directory*, p. 25.

²⁸Henry Anstey (ed.), *Munimenta Academica II*, Rolls series 50b (1868), pp. 550-1.

²⁹Christianson, 'Century', p. 157.

³⁰Christianson, *Directory*, p. 41.

³¹'Waltero de Briggenhale stacionar' Ebor''. London, British Library, MS Additional 17362, f. 8r.

more likely he was someone who was skilled at valuing and accounting for expensive commodities. Furthermore, whereas the term stationer quickly became common in both Oxford and London, stationers very rarely appear in York during the later medieval period. A total of six stationers is recorded in Oxford before 1300 and there is also evidence of six stationers in London during the fourteenth century.³² In contrast, after Briggenhale, only four other stationers are known to have lived in York before the end of the fifteenth century. The stationers Adam de Hustwayt and John Kirkham became free in 1335 and 1449 respectively.³³ In the 1400 probate inventory of Thomas de Dalby, archdeacon of Richmond and residentiary canon of York Minster, payment was made to Robert Hode, stationer, for a psalter and missal.³⁴ This is the earliest record of a York stationer dealing in books. In 1484, Richard Garnet, stationer, was mentioned in the will of George Bailye, a clerk.³⁵ Garnet supplied the city chamberlains with ink in 1501, and in 1502 he was allowed to pay £4 to be discharged from holding office in York.³⁶ Garnet can be identified with the Richard Garnet who became free of the city in 1470 as a parish clerk.³⁷ If so, this suggests that Garnet's involvement in the book trade followed on from his scribal responsibilities. Overall, there is a significant lack of evidence of entrepreneurial activity in the York book trade compared with London and Oxford. Only a few stationers are known to have lived in York before the sixteenth century and there is little indication of their activities. The stationers of York do not seem to have organised the production of books as they are known to have done in Oxford and London.

³²Pollard, 'Company of Stationers before 1557', pp. 2-3.

³³Collins (ed.), *Freemen I*, pp. 30, 169.

³⁴YML, L1(17)34. Thanks are owed to Ann Rycraft for this reference.

³⁵BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, f. 219r-v.

³⁶YCA, C5:1; B8, f. 128v.

³⁷Collins (ed.), *Freemen I*, p. 190.

Another way in which we may investigate the organisation of the York book trade is through an investigation of the cooperation between different book artisans in the fulfilment of a book commission. Cheryl Greenberg has suggested that the most efficient way of organising the cooperative production of books would have been to employ various scribes, limners, rubricators and binders on a full-time basis to work as a team together in a large shop.³⁸ This hypothesis is based on a study of John Shirley (c.1366-1456) who copied several works by Chaucer and Lydgate. More recent research on Shirley, however, has shown that, although he rented shops in Smithfield, the production and dissemination of his books were not commercial. Shirley's scribal productions were instead aimed at a readership in the household of Richard Beauchamp, 14th Earl of Warwick, including both the family members and their servants.³⁹

As has been shown by C. Paul Christianson, there is likewise no evidence that the commercial production of books was carried out in large workshops. Instead, the stationers of London probably worked in small, rented properties and employed the services of independent book craftsmen who worked in their own shops.⁴⁰ This hypothesis was suggested by Kathleen Scott's study of the activities of a London illuminating shop and is strongly supported by Christianson's research into the residence of the book craftsmen of London.⁴¹ He has found the locations of the shops and/or residences of 131 London book artisans. In the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, they were concentrated around St

³⁸Cheryl Greenberg, 'John Shirley and the English Book Trade', *The Library*, 6th series 4 (1982): 369-80.

³⁹Julia Boffey and John J. Thompson, 'Anthologies and Miscellanies: Production and Choice of Texts', in Griffiths and Pearsall (eds.), *Book Production and Publishing*, pp. 279-315; Margaret Connolly, *John Shirley: Book Production and the Noble Household in the Fifteenth Century* (Aldershot, 1998).

⁴⁰Christianson, *Directory*, pp. 30-1.

⁴¹Christianson, 'Evidence', p. 96; Kathleen L. Scott, 'A Mid Fifteenth-Century Illuminating Shop and its Customers', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 31 (1968): 170-

Paul's. A group of sixteen, perhaps eighteen, book craftsmen worked in Paternoster Row which runs alongside the Cathedral. Within this small area, a stationer could easily find all the skills he needed for the commission of a book.

Collaborative activity between book craftsmen in small shops may likewise have taken place in York. The size of artisans' households in York was generally small during the later medieval period, consisting usually of husband, wife, children and servants.⁴² In 1415 the pageant of Abraham and Isaac in the York Corpus Christi play was co-produced by the parchment makers and the bookbinders.⁴³ Associations between various types of book artisans would also have been facilitated by the existence of the guild of textwriters, limners, noters, turnours and flourishers. It can be argued that the composition of the guild reflects cooperative book production by the various crafts. The presence of various book craftsmen together in one guild may have been a product of the frequent, perhaps even daily, dealings between the different crafts in the preparation of texts.⁴⁴

The location of the shops and residences of York artisans may give us an indication of the business relations between different book crafts. If, like the book trade of London, the book crafts were centred on the same area, this would suggest that also they had close business connections. Archaeological evidence suggests that an area between Walmgate and Navigation Road was the site of a large scale industry using sheep skin, which may have been parchment making. A number of shallow pits have been found filled with the lower limb bones of sheep. It is possible that raw sheep skins were brought to the site to be treated and made into parchment.⁴⁵ The evidence of wills, the lay subsidy return of 1524/5

96.

⁴²Swanson, *Medieval Artisans*, pp. 7-8.

⁴³YCA, E20 (A/Y Memorandum Book), ff. 252v-5r.

⁴⁴Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*, 1: 27.

⁴⁵'Sites Review: Walmgate', *Interim: Bulletin of the York Archaeological Trust* 5 (1978):

and the royal subsidies indicate, however, that the York parchment-making business was located in the parish of Holy Trinity, Goodramgate. The parchment makers who are known to have lived in or around Goodramgate during the period 1450-1550 include John Wodhall, Richard Wilson, Roger Chambre and Thomas Mason.⁴⁶ The exception is John Crosby, who became free of the craft in 1519.⁴⁷ In the lay subsidy of 1524/5 a John Crosby was recorded as living in the parish of St Sampson in Girdlergate.⁴⁸ The location of Goodramgate and the immediate area as the centre of the parchment industry is further supported by the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century charters of the vicars choral of York Minster. In the early thirteenth century a piece of land in Monkgate was granted by John son of Lisiard to Walter de Coverham, parchment maker.⁴⁹ A mid thirteenth-century charter records a grant of rent to the vicars choral of a property in Goodramgate, which lay next to the land of Gilbert le parcheminer.⁵⁰ There is also an indenture, dated 1367, concerning a cellar and chamber in the street of Goodramgate which used to be inhabited by Thomas le parchemyner.⁵¹ The contradiction between the archaeological and the documentary evidence may suggest that parchment was manufactured on the outskirts of the city in Walmgate, but was brought into the city to be sold in Goodramgate, near the Minster. This hypothesis is supported by the different locations for the manufacture and retail of hides in London.⁵² The early fourteenth-century tanners of London had their

35-8; T.P. O'Connor, *Selected Groups of Bones from Skeldergate and Walmgate*, The Archaeology of York 15/1 (London, 1984).

⁴⁶YCA, E48, f. 2r, 31r; E49, pp. 203, 238, 270; E50, p. 159; BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 3, f. 309r; vol. 5, f. 128; vol. 6, f. 112; Peacock, 'Subsidy Roll', p. 184.

⁴⁷Collins (ed.), *Freemen I*, p. 241.

⁴⁸Peacock, 'Subsidy Roll', p. 179.

⁴⁹Tringham (ed.), *Charters*, p. 182.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 94.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 122.

workshops outside the walls of the city and they sold their goods at the Tanners' Seld in Cheapside. In York, the parish of Holy Trinity, Goodramgate was also occupied by other leather-working trades.⁵³ There is no record, however, of any artisans who produced books living or working in this area.

A number of textwriters and scribes lived in the area around Ouse Bridge. Between 1435 and 1441, Robert Mason, who is described both as a clerk and a '*scriptor*', rented a shop on the Ouse Bridge.⁵⁴ In his will, proved in 1521, Hugh Holme, '*scriptor*', also described himself as belonging to this parish.⁵⁵ The 1524/5 lay subsidy assessments of the parish of St Michael, Ouse Bridge, included a William Wylson, who may have been the William Wylson, scrivener, who became free of the city in 1534.⁵⁶ The parish of St John, Ouse Bridge End, likewise housed the textwriters Thomas Beke and Richard Middleton during the same assessments.⁵⁷ It is perhaps surprising to find a group of scribes so far from the Minster. The scribes living here cannot have considered the Minster as their main source of income. Far more important must have been the city council which was located on the north side of the Ouse Bridge near St William's Chapel. In the Chamber the city officials, including the Lord Mayor, the Common Clerk or Town Clerk and the city servants held office, and the records of the city were also stored here. A textwriter, William Robynson, is also recorded as living in the parish of All Saints, Pavement in the same lay subsidy returns.⁵⁸

⁵²Derek Keene, 'Tanners' Widows, 1300-1350', in Caroline M. Barron and Anne F. Sutton (eds.), *Medieval London Widows 1300-1500* (London and Rio Grande, 1994), pp. 1-27.

⁵³Rees Jones, 'Property, Tenure and Rents', pp. 64-5.

⁵⁴YCA, C82.5-C82.10.

⁵⁵BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 9, f. 208.

⁵⁶Peacock, 'Subsidy Roll', p. 177; Collins, *Freemen I*, p. 253.

⁵⁷Peacock, 'Subsidy Roll', p. 190.

⁵⁸Peacock, 'Subsidy Roll', p. 176.

Although the parchment makers and scribes seem on the whole to have favoured a particular district of the city, there are indications that some book-making crafts were located in the parish of St Michael le Belfrey and Stonegate, which may have formed a modest version of London's Paternoster Row.⁵⁹ A charter of the vicars choral of York Minster, dated to around 1265, records that John the illuminator, a chaplain, was living in Stonegate. A scrivener and bookbinder were also resident in the parish of St Helen in Stonegate at the time of the 1381 poll tax and another scrivener was living in the parish of St Michael le Belfrey. Leading from the Minster into Stonegate is the street called Minster Gates which, from the late fifteenth century at least, was known as Bookland Lane. The origins of the name probably come from the Old English term 'boc-land', which referred to land granted by charter.⁶⁰ It is possible, however, that the name began to reflect the book trade services available in the street, even before the advent of print.⁶¹

Wills also provide evidence about the commercial associations between York's book craftsmen. Again, the main impression of the individual book crafts is their insular nature, but some association between the artisans can occasionally be seen. John Wodhall, a York parchment maker, referred to two other parchment makers in his will in 1478, William Smallom and Thomas Shipman, but not to any other book artisans.⁶² Richard Middleton, textwriter, was likewise the only book craftsman mentioned in the will of Hugh Holme, 'scriptor', in 1521.⁶³ An exception to this insularity is the friendship between John Loftehous, parchment maker, and the bookbinder John Kirkton. Loftehous's will which

⁵⁹The dispersal of craftsmen was common in other York crafts; see Neville Bartlett, *The Lay Poll Tax Returns for the City of York in 1381* (Hull, 1953), pp. 8-10.

⁶⁰D.M. Palliser, 'The Medieval Streetnames of York', *York Historian* 2 (1978): 6.

⁶¹A. Raine, *Medieval York* (London, 1955), p. 34.

⁶²BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, f. 128r.

⁶³BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 9, f. 208r.

was proved in 1465, was witnessed by Kirkton and when Kirkton died the next year, he left a bequest of 20d to Lofthous's widow, Margaret.⁶⁴ Friendship, or at least association, between William Incecliff, chaplain and textwriter, and a parchment maker John Lounsdale, is also indicated. During the dispute between Incecliff and representatives of the textwriters and scribes, Lounsdale bound himself on Incecliff's behalf.⁶⁵ This is but slight evidence and the evidence of wills as a whole does not reveal many associations between different book craftsmen. The location of a few shops of book craftsmen and stationers in the parish of St Michael le Belfrey is the only indication that the stationers may have involved themselves in the business of the book artisans and may have supervised the book-making process, as they did in Paternoster Row.

As well as organising the production of bespoke manuscripts, some of the London stationers are known to have acquired or commissioned books for speculative sale. An example is the stationer Peter Bylton, who kept in stock a fourteenth- and fifteenth-century double volume of the works of St Augustine and St Gregory and a thirteenth-century book of the works of St Bernard.⁶⁶ A group of late fifteenth-century *Nova Statuta* manuscripts also bear indications that they were produced speculatively.⁶⁷ The group of statute books are all of approximately the same size, written by one scribe, and all conform to the same format of decoration, despite being produced by as many as ten different artists. In some copies, spaces were left for the insertion of heraldic arms, and in others the arms were squashed on top of the borders, which suggests that a large part of the text had already been written and decorated, before a customer had been found for the text. Some manuscripts

⁶⁴BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 3, f. 303r; YML, L2/4, f. 312v.

⁶⁵YCA, B9, f. 71r.

⁶⁶Christianson, 'Century', pp. 148-50.

⁶⁷K.L. Scott, 'A Late Fifteenth-Century Group of *Nova Statuta* Manuscripts', in A.C. de la Mare and B.C. Barker Benfield (eds.), *Manuscripts at Oxford: An Exhibition in Memory*

of Nicholas Love's *Myrrour of the Blessed Lyf of Jesu Christ* may also have been made for speculative sale as they were popular and were probably worth the risk of investment.⁶⁸

Speculative sale of new books may likewise have taken place in York during the manuscript period, but evidence of this is very rare. Some of the Books of Hours produced in the Low Countries for the English market were acquired by readers in Yorkshire. In 1446 William Revetour, a chaplain of York, bequeathed to Isabel Bolton, '*unum primarium largum cum ymaginibus intus scriptum ad modum Flandriae*'.⁶⁹ It has been suggested that this Book of Hours may be York, Minster Library, MS Additional 2 which contains the obits of Isabel's parents John Bolton in 1445 and Alice Bolton in 1472.⁷⁰ Although the calendar contains saints that were popular in the North and the style of decoration is English, the organisation of the sequence of Hours is the same as that found in other Flemish primers aimed at the English market. A Flemish Book of Hours, now Durham, Ushaw College, MS 10, was also owned by Sir Brian Roucliffe of Cowthorpe who died in 1495.⁷¹ The text was written by Johannes Heineman at Bruges. The book is possibly the same large primer which had belonged to Elizabeth Elyngham and was mentioned in Roucliffe's will.⁷² Nevertheless, only one of the Flemish/English primers listed by Nicholas Rogers is of the use of York, which suggests that the book producers in the Low Countries were not greatly impressed by the York market. The title of the York book was later

of Richard William Hunt (Oxford, 1980), pp. 102-5.

⁶⁸A.I. Doyle, 'Reflections of Some Manuscripts of Nicholas Love's *Myrrour of the Blessed Lyf of Jesu Christ*', *Leeds Studies in English*, new series 14 (1983): 82-93.

⁶⁹'a lavish primer with images inside written in a Flemish style'. BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 137v-8v.

⁷⁰Pamela M. King, 'Corpus Christi Plays and the 'Bolton Hours' 1: Tastes in Lay Piety and Patronage in Fifteenth-Century York', *Medieval English Theatre* 18 (1996): 46-62.

⁷¹Nicholas John Rogers, 'Books of Hours produced in the Low Countries for the English Market in the Fifteenth Century' (PhD diss., Cambridge University, 1982), pp. 168, 343.

⁷²BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, ff. 457v-9v.

changed so that it could be sold as a Sarum prayer-book, presumably because it had failed to attract a purchaser as a York Hours.⁷³

Although there are only occasional indications of a speculative sale of new books in York, the trade in second-hand texts seems to have been more prolific. Testators often specify in their wills a desire that a book, or even their whole library, should be sold and the proceeds given towards causes such as the parish church or a boy's upbringing. John Newton of York, for example, stated in his will in 1443 that his copy of the *Polychronicon* should be sold and the proceeds distributed for the sake of his soul.⁷⁴ Likewise, in 1452, John Affordeby, master of the hospital of St Mary in York, requested that his breviary be given to a chaplain, Radulph Lymis, and then after Lymis's death, to be sold for the best possible price.⁷⁵ A breviary and two other books were bequeathed to George Jackson in 1482 on the condition that he should become a priest. If he did not, the testator, John Austewyk of Pontefract, stipulated that they should be sold and the money to be used for prayers for the soul of John Greyson, chaplain.⁷⁶ We can therefore see that there was some speculative trade in books before the advent of print. After the arrival of print, however, the sale of speculatively produced books in York came swiftly to dominate the book trade. The import of printed texts into York and the establishment of presses within the city meant that the business of the stationers and bookbinders came now to be concentrated on speculative trade and retail.

⁷³Melbourne, State Library of Victoria, MS *f096/R66Hb; Rogers, 'Books of Hours', pp. 21, 373.

⁷⁴BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 71v-2r.

⁷⁵BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 249r-v. For other examples, see YML, L2/4, ff. 151v (Kexby), 194v-6v (Cawode).

⁷⁶BIHR, Prob. Reg. vol. 5, ff. 25v-6r.

2. The Advent of Print in York

The first printed book, the Mainz Psalter, is dated 1457. By the late 1460s customers of the book trade were beginning to bring products of the new technology over to England.⁷⁷

The first publication of a book on the continent of Europe but intended for sale in the English market was a Sarum breviary dated 1475.⁷⁸ Its exact place of printing is not known, but it was probably in the southern Netherlands.⁷⁹ Two years later, Caxton arrived in England from Bruges and set up the first English press at Westminster.⁸⁰ Soon after, presses were also established in Oxford in 1478 and in St Albans in 1479.⁸¹

Print came to York first in the form of imported books. The commerce in continentally produced books was given a stimulus in 1484 when the importation of books was exempted from an act restricting the business of foreign merchants in England.⁸² In 1493 an edition of the York breviary was produced in Venice by John Hanman.⁸³ In 1507 Pierre Violette, who was printing in Rouen, also began to issue service books of York use.⁸⁴ The Rouen printers Pierre Olivier and Nicholas le Roux also later produced liturgical texts for the York market. The interest of Rouen printers in the English market for service books can be partly attributed to the similarity between the liturgy used in England and that in

⁷⁷E. Armstrong, 'English Purchases of Printed Books from the Continent 1465-1526', *English Historical Review* 94 (1979): 268-90.

⁷⁸STC 15794.

⁷⁹Armstrong, 'English Purchases', p. 272.

⁸⁰Bennett, *English Books and Readers 1475-1557*, pp. 11-12.

⁸¹Clair, *History of Printing*, pp. 112-3; Blake, 'Spread of Printing', pp. 26-9.

⁸²1 Richard III, c. 9; *The Statutes of the Realm printed by Command of his Majesty King George the Third* (London, 1816), 2: 489-93; Sutton and Visser-Fuchs, *Richard III's Books*, pp. 243-64.

⁸³STC 15856.

⁸⁴STC 15857, 16119, 16220.

Rouen which was identical except for certain offices.⁸⁵ According to Edward Frere, the same typographic composition could be used for both English and Norman service books.⁸⁶ London printers and stationers likewise issued books aimed at the York market. York Hours were printed by Richard Pynson, probably in 1510, and by Wynkyn de Worde in around 1515.⁸⁷

Printing in York began around the turn of the sixteenth century. We know about most of the York publications through the chance survival of only a few copies or even just a fragment. It is therefore very likely that more printing took place in the city than the evidence suggests. The first press was almost certainly operated by Frederick Freez who became free of the city as a bookbinder and stationer in 1497.⁸⁸ In 1510, during the proceedings of the court case over the goods of his brother Gerard Wanseford, he was described as a 'buke prynter'.⁸⁹ In a record of his renting of some common ground in Coney Street, Freez was called a 'Dutchman'.⁹⁰ It has been suggested by Dickens that the name Freez probably came from Vries or de Vries.⁹¹ Unfortunately, none of his publications have survived.

Probably at the same time as Freez was printing, a press was also operated in York by Hugo Goes. Like Freez, Goes was most likely a Dutchman, possibly of the same family

⁸⁵Edward Frere, *Des Livres de Liturgie des Eglises d'Angleterre (Salisbury, York, Hereford), imprimés à Rouen dans les xv^e et xvi^e siècles* (Rouen, 1867), p. 6.

⁸⁶Ibid., p. 7.

⁸⁷STC 16102-16102.5.

⁸⁸Collins (ed.), *Freemen I*, p. 221.

⁸⁹YML, Pi(i)vii(8); E. Brunskill, 'Missals, Portifers and Pyes', *The Ben Johnson Papers 2* (1974): 22.

⁹⁰YCA, B9, f. 32v.

⁹¹A.G. Dickens, *Lollards and Protestants in the Diocese of York 1509-1558* (London, 1959), p. 30.

as Matthias Goes or Vander-Goes, a printer in Antwerp (1483-1497).⁹² There is no evidence for this, however, apart from the similarity in names. Goes is known to have been printing between around 1506 and 1513. He appears to have worked mainly in London and York, but also in Beverley and Cambridge. Most of the texts he produced are undated, however, so it is very difficult to establish a chronology of his movements. It is likely that Goes first came to London.⁹³ That he also worked in Cambridge is suggested by two surviving copies of a printed indulgence, now contained in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Barlow 13 (ff. 152, 153), which have been identified as products of Goes's press.⁹⁴ The indulgence was issued by the chancellor of the diocese of Ely for the chapel of St Mary in the Sea, near Newton in Cambridgeshire in 1506 (see figure 18). Fragments of wall-paper, discovered in 1910 during the restoration of the Master's Lodge of Christ's College Cambridge, may also have been products of Goes's press.⁹⁵ It is likely that the wall-paper was produced at the time of, or just after, the completion of the original Master's Lodge in 1509. The wall-paper has been described as a 'conventional pine-cone centre, surrounded by strapwork and flying birds' (figure 19).⁹⁶ A small 'h' and a bird can be seen in the centre left and right of the design. Duff has suggested that the bird is a goose, referring to Goes. On the other side of the wall paper is some English black letter printing which may have been produced by de Worde, including a poem on the death of Henry VIII, proclamations and an indulgence. These publications suggest that Goes worked in

⁹²Davies, *Memoir*, p. 15.

⁹³Details of Goes's printing activities in London will be given later in this chapter, pp. 117-18.

⁹⁴Barlow 13 is a compendium of theological and antiquarian notes made by Archbishop James Usher and others in around 1600-33; STC 14077c.63; C.J.H., 'Recent Finds of English Early Printing in Oxford Libraries', *Bodleian Quarterly Record* 7 (1935): 11-12.

⁹⁵Charles Sayle, 'Cambridge Fragments', *The Library*, 3rd series 8 (1911): 339-55; Sessions, *Printer's Dozen*, pp. 50-1.

⁹⁶Sayle, 'Cambridge Fragments', p. 342.

Cambridge for a period. The production of indulgences suggest that his business connections would have been with the Church authorities rather than with other book-retailers. Indulgences were not sold by book-sellers; they were issued by the Church in order to raise money for a particular cause and sold by pardoners or other representatives of the intended recipients.

Goes is known to have printed three texts in York, but only copies of his 1509 edition of the *Directorium sacerdotum* have survived (figure 20).⁹⁷ A *Donatus* and *Accidence* printed by Goes were described by Christopher Hildyard in 1667 in manuscript notes which he made on his copy of *A List or Catalogue of all the Mayors and Bailiffs, Lord Mayors and Sheriffs ... of York*.⁹⁸ The two grammar texts examined by Hildyard were bound together with a grammar text of Wynkyn de Worde, which begins '*Iste sunt regula informationis prime secundum usum magistri Johanni Boothby senioris*' and which was printed in 1506. 'Boothby' is a mistake for John Barchby who wrote the *Regula informationis* produced by de Worde in 1506. Only a fragment of the title-page and last leaf of one copy of this edition has survived, now in Lambeth Palace Library in London.⁹⁹

There is also evidence that Goes printed for a time in Beverley. Joseph Ames mentions a broadside printed by Goes which has a woodcut picture of a man on horseback, holding a shield with the arms of France in his left hand, and in his right, a spear.¹⁰⁰ According to Ames, the antiquary Thomas Martin of Palgrave (1697-1771) is said to have owned a copy of the broadside, which bore the colophon 'Emprynted at Beverley in the

⁹⁷STC 16232.4; Cambridge, Sidney Sussex College, Bb.5.17 and YML, XI.N.31; Davies, *Memoir*, pp. 16-17. Isaac, *English and Scottish Printing Types, 1501-35, 1508-41*, fig. 35, describes Goes's type as 112 textura.

⁹⁸London, British Library, Harley 6115, p. 6. Christopher Hildyard was a lawyer, recorder of Hedon and steward of the lands of St Mary's abbey: James M. Biggins, *Historians of York*, St Anthony's Hall Publications 10 (1956), pp. 5-6.

⁹⁹STC 1380.5.

Hye-gate, by me Hewe Goes' and showed his printer's device of a large 'h' and a goose, but no date is given.¹⁰¹ A printed fragment found in the bindings of a *Boetii cum triplici commento* printed in Lyon in around 1512 may also have been produced by Goes, although it is not known where (figure 21).¹⁰² The STC identifies the fragment as part of the grammar text, the *Ortus vocabulorum*.¹⁰³ The type has been recognised as Goes's 95 Textura. Goes's movements between London, York, Beverley and perhaps Cambridge suggest that he was adventurously trying out new and different markets where he was not sure of the demand for books.

Another press was operated in York from at least 1513 by Ursyn Milner. In that year, he produced a supplement to the York breviary called the *Officia nova*.¹⁰⁴ Another product of his press, a *Festum visitationis Beate Marie Virginis* is described by Ames, but there are now no surviving copies.¹⁰⁵ According to Ames, the colophon read: '*Feliciter finiunt festum visitacionis beate Marie virginis, secundum usum Ebor*'. *Noviter impressi [sic] per Ursyn Mylner, commorantem in cimitero ministerii sancti Petri*'.¹⁰⁶ The same colophon has been found on two folio sheets used as endleaves to a printed copy of Joannes Gaufredus, held in Hereford Cathedral Library.¹⁰⁷ The colophons can be differentiated by four minor variations in spelling, which suggest that the waste sheets had been used as

¹⁰⁰Joseph Ames, *Typographical Antiquities* (London, 1749), p. 468.

¹⁰¹For more information on Thomas Martin, see DNB, 36: 297-8.

¹⁰²Canterbury, Cathedral Library, B1099. I am grateful to Sheila Hingley, cathedral librarian, for this information.

¹⁰³STC 13829.7; Sessions, *Printer's Dozen*, p. 53.

¹⁰⁴STC 15861; Cambridge, Emmanuel College, 4.4.21.

¹⁰⁵Ames, *Typographical Antiquities*, p. 468.

¹⁰⁶'Here happily ends the feast of the visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary according to the use of York. Newly printed by Ursyn Milner, dwelling in the churchyard of the Minster of St Peter'.

¹⁰⁷STC 15861.3; Paul Morgan, 'Early Printing and Binding in York: some new facts', *The*

proofs. The *Festum* was probably produced soon after 1513 when the feast was established by statute at York.¹⁰⁸ In 1516 Milner printed an edition of a grammar of Whittinton called *Syntaxis*, which has survived in one copy.¹⁰⁹ The type used by Milner has been described as 64 textura.¹¹⁰ The grammar text includes Milner's device of a shield, which depicts a sun and a windmill, hanging on a tree (figure 22). Underneath the shield is a bear and an ass. The bear (in Latin '*ursus*') refers to 'Ursyn', and the windmill to 'Milner'. It has also been suggested by Edward Hodnett that Milner printed an edition of the *Mirrore of Conscience*.¹¹¹ The reasons for this attribution are not clear, as only the first leaf of a book of this edition survives which shows a woodcut of the crucifixion and there is no reference to Milner or York.¹¹² Milner produced an indulgence for the York guild of St Christopher and St George in 1519, a copy of which is held in Yale University Library (figure 23).¹¹³ We have evidence, therefore, that Milner was working in York between 1513 and 1519. The poor survival rate of his editions and the length of time that Milner was in York indicates that he may have produced a number of other texts of which no record has survived.

The York printer, 'widow Warwyk', was discussed in the previous chapter. As we have seen, widow Warwick produced a thousand indulgences for the city authorities which are likely to have been sold in different areas of England.¹¹⁴ She may be identified as

Book Collector 30 (1981): 216-24.

¹⁰⁸Pfaff, *New Liturgical Feasts*, pp. 59-60.

¹⁰⁹STC 25542; British Library, 68.B.21.

¹¹⁰Isaac, *English and Scottish Printing Types, 1501-35, 1508-41*, fig. 44.

¹¹¹STC 17979.5; Edward Hodnett, *English Woodcuts 1480-1535: Additions and Corrections* (London, 1973), p. 11, no.*2076a; R.E. Lewis, N.F. Blake and A.S.G. Edwards, *Index of Printed Middle English Prose* (New York and London, 1985), p. 98.

¹¹²London, British Library, C.18.e.2/113*.

¹¹³STC 14077c.84A.

¹¹⁴YCA, CC3, f. 188v.

Elizabeth Warwick, whose husband John Warwick, a stationer, died in 1524.¹¹⁵ Elizabeth was probably carrying on a printing business that had been set up by her husband. The printing trade seems to have continued in the family, as in 1531 another John Warwick became free of the city as a printer.¹¹⁶ John Warwick junior was the son of Edward Warwick, a merchant, but his relationship to Elizabeth and John Warwick senior is not known.

In 1532 John Warwick produced an edition of the grammar of John Stanbridge, of which one copy has survived.¹¹⁷ The colophon reads: ‘Imprynted in yorke at the sygne of the Cardynalles hat by Johan Warwyke. In the yere of our lorde god MCCCCXXXII.’

The list of debts owed to Warwick, recorded his probate inventory in 1542, includes three schoolmasters.¹¹⁸ William Dobson, schoolmaster of Darlington, owed Warwick 9s 9d for books. We are not told details of the debts of the next two entries (Mr Paister, teacher at Pickering school and Mr Granger, teacher of Malton) but they were almost certainly for grammar books as well. The inventory also itemises the contents of Warwick’s ‘printing chamber’. Inside the room was stored ‘the pryse with iij maner of letters with brasse letters iij matteresses with all other thinges concernynge the prynthinge with glasse, viij li vs.’ A stock of books, valued at £22 10s 10d, is also mentioned. It has been suggested that this press was the same as that used by Milner.¹¹⁹

It is possible that the establishment of the printing trade in York, like that of other towns, was encouraged by patronage. The importance of patronage in the choice of texts

¹¹⁵YML, L2/5a, f. 201r.

¹¹⁶Collins (ed.), *Freemen I*, p. 250.

¹¹⁷STC 23151; London, British Library, C.70.bb.18.

¹¹⁸BIHR, Dean and Chapter original wills, 1542.

¹¹⁹Katherine F. Pantzer, *A Short-title Catalogue of Books printed in England, Scotland and Ireland, 1475-1640* (London, 1991), p. 177.

to print, for financial assistance or for a stamp of approval on a book is most evident in the editions produced by Caxton. Caxton's patrons included Henry VII and his wife Elizabeth of York, Lady Margaret Beaufort, Earl Rivers and John de Vere, thirteenth earl of Oxford.¹²⁰ In Cambridge, Richard Croke, a Greek scholar, commissioned John Siberch to print an edition of his *Rudimenta* and a loan of £20 was granted from university funds.¹²¹ The printing of the Aberdeen breviary was encouraged by William Ephinstone, Bishop of Aberdeen.¹²² Although there is no direct evidence that the establishment of printing presses in York was supported by the patronage or the interest of benefactors in the city, we should not discount this possibility. The production of grammar books by Goes, for example, may have been encouraged by William Melton, chancellor of York from 1495 to his death in 1528.¹²³ In a sermon delivered to ordination candidates in around 1510, Melton stressed the importance of knowledge of Latin amongst the clergy. A confident grasp of Latin grammar would help the priest to fulfil his pastoral duties properly and would also guard against laziness and sin.¹²⁴ Likewise, Goes's decision to print an edition of a new revision of the *Directorium sacerdotum* by a chaplain of St Gregory's, Micklegate, York and Thomas Hothysall, a vicar-choral of York Minster, may also have been due to clerical influence.¹²⁵

The possibility that the early printing trade in York was patronised by York Minster

¹²⁰Clair, *History of Printing*, pp. 22-3; Bennett, *English Books and Readers 1475-1557*, pp. 15-17, 40-53.

¹²¹E.P. Goldschmidt, *The First Cambridge Press in its European Setting* (Cambridge, 1955), pp. 2, 18-19; Clair, *History of Printing*, p. 120.

¹²²Clair, *History of Printing*, p. 122; Sessions, *Printers' Dozen*, p. 37.

¹²³Emden, *Biographical Register of the University of Cambridge*, pp. 400-1.

¹²⁴William Melton, *Sermo Exhortatorius cancellarii Eboracensis hiis qui ad sacros ordines petunt promoveri* (STC 17806); Moran, *Growth*, p. 139; Peter Heath, *The English Parish Clergy on the Eve of the Reformation* (London, 1969), pp. 70-1.

¹²⁵Moran, *Growth*, p. 199.

and its chancellor is supported by the residence of the printers in the parish of St Michael le Belfrey in the liberty of St Peter. As we have seen, the parish of St Michael le Belfrey may already have been developing into a book-trade centre during the fifteenth century. While he was resident in York, the printer Hugo Goes produced his books from a property in Stonegate. The copy of the *Directorium sacerdotum* in Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, contains the colophon '*Impressum Ebor*' per me Hugonem Goes in vico qui appellatur Steengate'.¹²⁶ According to Hildyard, the *Donatus* produced by Goes, but now lost, likewise contained a colophon which read '*impressum Eboraci in vico que nuncupat*' Steengate per me Hugonem Goes'.¹²⁷ In 1511, the printer Ursyn Milner was called upon to testify in the court case over a stock of printed books of a stationer, Gerard Wanseford. In his deposition he is described as resident in the parish of St Michael le Belfrey.¹²⁸ The colophon of Milner's 1516 edition of Whittinton, however, reveals that he was then working in Blake Street which runs north-west from Stonegate.¹²⁹ In the same year, Milner was admitted to the franchise of the city as a printer; his decision to move out of the liberty of St Peter into Blake Street meant that Milner needed to acquire the franchise to continue his business.¹³⁰ John Warwick, printer, also lived in the parish of St Michael le Belfrey and the inventory of his property is witness to his wealth.¹³¹ His house included a hall, buttery, kitchen, brewhouse, stable, parlour, five chambers and a printing room.

The establishment of printing presses in York probably also owed a great deal to

¹²⁶Printed at York by me, Hugo Goes, in the street which is called Stonegate'. Cambridge, Sidney Sussex College, Bb.5.17, ff. 125v-6v.

¹²⁷London, British Library, Harley 6115, p. 6.

¹²⁸YML, Pi(i)vii(6) and (7); Brunskill, 'Missals', pp. 25, 27.

¹²⁹London, British Library, 68.B.21: '*Whittonyntoni Editio de consivitate grammatices et constructione noviter impressa Ebor per me Ursyn Mylner in urbe parrochia sancte helene in vico (Blaake Strete) moramtraheotis*'.

¹³⁰Collins (ed.), *Freemen I*, p. 238; Duff, *English Provincial Printers*, p. 57.

trading links. As we have seen, both Freez and Goes were Dutchmen. Milner's unusual name likewise suggests that he was Dutch or German. During the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, there was much trade between Hull and the Low Countries.¹³² The close links between Yorkshire and the Low Countries is also revealed by the presence of Dutch heretics in the county in the early sixteenth century.¹³³ In the stock of books listed in the probate inventory of a York stationer, Neville Mores, is included 'a litill booke of duche' and a 'dictionarius in duche'.¹³⁴ We can speculate that Freez, Goes and Milner learnt the art of printing in the Low Countries or Germany and then, having heard about the market in Yorkshire from merchants and traders, decided to come across the North Sea. It is likely that the presses in York were set up by foreigners because it was these entrepreneurs who had business contacts with printers and stationers in their own countries, and perhaps most importantly paper suppliers. As will be discussed in chapter five, with the exception of John Tate's mill at Hertford, paper was not manufactured in England during the late fifteenth or early sixteenth centuries.

3. The Stationers' Trade after the Advent of Print

The large numbers of books produced in and imported into the region produced a rise in the number of artisans and tradesmen who became free of the city as stationers. Between 1450 and 1500, only one stationer had become free of the city. During the first half of the sixteenth century six more stationers appeared in the register and in the following half century a further nine stationers obtained the city's freedom. The sudden increase in the

¹³¹BIHR, Dean and Chapter Original Wills, 1542; YCA, E64, f. 81r.

¹³²Childs (ed.), *Customs Accounts*, p. xxi.

¹³³Dickens, *Lollards and Protestants*, pp. 16-29.

¹³⁴Palliser and Selwyn, 'Stock', pp. 207-19.

number of stationers in York was presumably a result of the greater number of books which meant that merchants and book artisans who may have dabbled in the retail of books during the manuscript period, could now specialise in the sale of books. The activities of the York stationers in the early sixteenth century show that they were booksellers who organised the importation of foreign-produced books and who may have helped to finance print runs. An edition of the *Expositio hymnorum et sequentiarum* was produced by Pierre Violette in 1507 for sale by Gerard Freez alias Wanseford, a York stationer.¹³⁵ Mention has already been made of the litigation which arose at Gerard's death in 1510 over his import of 252 missals, 399 portifers and 570 picas.¹³⁶ The case was heard in the court of the Dean and Chapter of York. Wanseford, in a business venture with Ralph Pulleyn, a York merchant, and a Mr Manard of London, had purchased the books in France and brought them to York, where they were kept in a room in Wanseford's house. Once Pulleyn heard of Wanseford's death, he seized the stock of books and took them to his own house. His actions were challenged by Wanseford's brother, Frederick Freez, who won the case.

The most well-documented York stationer who financed the production of texts abroad aimed at the York market, was a French stationer, John Gachet. At least six editions of service books were printed in Rouen and Paris and then sent to Gachet for sale in the city.¹³⁷ The customs accounts of Hull record the importation of printed books by Gachet in 1517/8, 1520 and 1525/6.¹³⁸ Another York stationer, also French in origin, Neville Mores, is also known to have imported books through Hull but unlike Gachet he is not known to have financed print runs. On 5 August 1520, Mores paid customs dues on a

¹³⁵STC 16119.

¹³⁶YML, Pi(i)vii; Brunskill, 'Missals', pp. 20-33.

¹³⁷STC 15858, 16135, 16221, 16223, 16250.5, 16251.

¹³⁸PRO, E 122/202/4, f. 18r; E 122/64/5, f. 3r; E 122/202/5, f. 4r.

cargo of printed books valued at £4 13s 4d.¹³⁹ The 1538 probate inventory of Mores's stock of 126 books, valued at £3 3s 10d, has survived.¹⁴⁰ Mores also appears amongst the debts in the 1531 inventory of Robert Lokesmyth, a vestmentmaker of York, for 'bokes that he sende to Biland Abbay'.¹⁴¹ It is likely that Lokesmyth was a general retailer as well as a vestmentmaker since in 1530/1 Lokesmyth provided York Minster with parchment.¹⁴²

In 1534, an Act of Parliament tried to curtail the activities of foreign merchants who sold heretical and seditious books in England.¹⁴³ It did not, however, greatly affect the regular trade in foreign-produced books. The Act forbade stationers to bring into England any books that had already been bound in boards, leather or parchment. Furthermore, no one was allowed to buy a foreign-produced book from a foreign stationer except by wholesale. The prohibition of the importation of ready-bound texts was intended to safeguard the business of native bookbinders, who 'having no other faculty wherewith to get their living, be destitute of work, and like to be undone'. In May of the next year the French stationer John Gachet was granted denizen status, presumably so that he could continue to sell books directly to English readers.¹⁴⁴ Books printed abroad also continued to be imported into the York market by foreign stationers who sold their wares to native booksellers. An example of the continuing trade links with Normandy is the York Hours produced in 1536 by Nicholas le Roux of Rouen for John Growte or Groyat, stationer in

¹³⁹PRO, E 122/64/5, f. 21v.

¹⁴⁰BIHR, Dean and Chapter original wills, 1538; Palliser and Selwyn, 'Stock', pp. 207-19.

¹⁴¹BIHR, Dean and Chapter original wills, 1531.

¹⁴²YML, E3/41.

¹⁴³25 Henry VIII c.15; *Statutes of the Realm*, 3: 456; Clair, *History of Printing*, p. 106; Graham Pollard, 'The English Market for Printed Books', *Publishing History* 4 (1978): p. 21; Lotte Hellinga, 'Importation of Books Printed on the Continent into England and Scotland before c.1520', in Sandra Hindman (ed.), *Printing the Written Word: The Social History of Books, circa 1450-1550* (Ithaca and London, 1991), p. 209.

¹⁴⁴James Gairdner and R.H. Brodie (eds.), *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of*

London and Jean Marchant, stationer in Rouen.¹⁴⁵

The specialist knowledge of books that the early sixteenth-century stationers of York had is also shown by the fact that they often acted as valuers of books. The stationer Thomas Richardson, for example, was an appraiser of the stock of books of Neville Mores in 1538.¹⁴⁶ Together with John Gachet, he also appraised the books of Edward Kellet, precentor of York Minster, in 1539 and John Warwick, printer, in 1542.¹⁴⁷ It is possible that the York printers were also stationers. Freez, as I have mentioned, was described as both a stationer and printer. However, there is no evidence that the other York printers imported books or sold their wares in a shop. The printers may therefore only have sold their publications wholesale to stationers.

The wealth of the early sixteenth-century stationers is indicated by their residence in the prosperous parish of St Michael le Belfrey, where the printing trade was also based. We might expect that a considerable amount of capital was needed in order to invest in the importation of a large stock of books. In the lay subsidy of 1524/5, the parish of St Michael le Belfrey ranked as one of the wealthiest and it is clear that the stationers of York were able to live up to its exclusiveness. The assessment for the parish of St Michael le Belfrey include entries for 'John Gachell Frencheman' (John Gachet), 'Nevel Morrens Frenceman' (Neville Mores) and Thomas Richardson, another stationer.¹⁴⁸ By ranking the 110 residents who paid tax according to the amount levied, Gachet appears as the third wealthiest assessed on £40 in goods and Mores, assessed on 20 marks in goods, as the ninth.¹⁴⁹ Mores

the reign of Henry VIII (London, 1901), 8: 305.

¹⁴⁵STC 16106; Duff, *Century*, pp. 61, 92, 98; Sessions, *Les Deux Pierres*, pp. 31-3.

¹⁴⁶BIHR, Dean and Chapter original wills, 1538; Palliser and Selwyn, 'Stock', p. 213.

¹⁴⁷BIHR, Dean and Chapter original wills, 1539, 1542.

¹⁴⁸Peacock, 'Subsidy Roll', pp. 170-2.

¹⁴⁹O.M. Saunders, 'Minster and Parish: the Sixteenth-Century Reconstruction of the Church

had a large and well-furnished house, as revealed by the probate inventory compiled on his death in 1538. Lists of goods were compiled in respect of the hall, kitchen, stables, two parlours and four chambers.¹⁵⁰ The total valuation for his estate was £17 4s 6½d.

After the advent of print the connections between bookselling and bookbinding grew stronger. The prominent role played by the binders of York in the supervision of manuscript book production has already been discussed. This entrepreneurial activity by the binders continued in the trade of printed books, whereas evidence of the participation for other book artisans, such as scribes and illuminators, in the sale of books is rare. Some of the York printers are known to have also been bookbinders. There was a technological link between printing and binding since presses were used by binders to stamp designs on the covers of books.¹⁵¹ As we have seen, Frederick Freez, the York printer, had become free of the city as a stationer and bookbinder.¹⁵² The probate inventory of the York printer, John Warwick, likewise indicates that he was a bookbinder. The inventory itemises five dozen tanned skins and five hundred boards for large and small books.¹⁵³ There is no other record that testifies that Warwick was a binder, so it is at least possible that the other York printers also bound books, but that the evidence has not survived.

As well as the connections between printing and binding, the bookbinders who were already established in York would have been in an advantageous position to develop their role in the trade and sale of printed books. It is likely that many of the books imported from London or overseas would have been unbound as they would have been less expensive to

of St Michael le Belfrey' (MA diss., York University, 1996), pp. 36-7.

¹⁵⁰BIHR, Dean and Chapter original wills, 1538.

¹⁵¹Bernard C. Middleton, *A History of English Craft Bookbinding Technique* (New York and London, 1963), p. 225; Oldham, *English Blind-stamped Bindings*, p. 1.

¹⁵²Collins (ed.), *Freemen I*, p. 221.

¹⁵³BIHR, Dean and Chapter original wills, 1542.

transport. Moreover from 1534, as I have discussed, the importation of bound books from abroad was prohibited.¹⁵⁴ The business of a York bookbinder and stationer, Neville Mores, is revealed in the inventory of his stock compiled at the time of his death in 1538.¹⁵⁵ The inventory lists 126 volumes at a total value of £3 3s 10d. These included in the same shop both bound volumes, which no doubt showed off Mores' binding expertise, and unbound ones, which a customer could have bound to order, if so desired. The first entry, for example, was of 'iij dozen of messe bookes bound and unbound – xxvijs'.¹⁵⁶ The last ten items of the inventory are of tools used for the binding of books, including presses, hammers, a knife and clasps.¹⁵⁷ In 1524-5, Mores was employed by the city chamberlains 'for the making of a newe register'.¹⁵⁸ This probably referred to the binding of loose sheets of paper on which had already been written administrative or financial records. Another likely example of a bookbinder who was also involved in the trade in books is John Welles. In 1519 Welles became free of the city of York as a bookbinder.¹⁵⁹ He was probably the same John Welles who imported a stock of printed books to Hull aboard the *Bonaventure* of Dieppe on 16 August 1526.¹⁶⁰

The evidence of an extant printed copy of the *Collectarius iuris* of Joannes Gaufredus, studied by Paul Morgan, suggests that John Gachet may also have been a practising bookbinder as well as a bookseller.¹⁶¹ The end leaf of the Gaufredus volume is a sheet from an edition of the *Ortus vocabulorum* printed in Rouen in 1517 for the

¹⁵⁴25 Henry VIII c.15; *Statutes of the Realm*, 3: 456.

¹⁵⁵Palliser and Selwyn, 'Stock', pp. 207-19.

¹⁵⁶Ibid., p. 213.

¹⁵⁷Ibid., p. 219.

¹⁵⁸YCA, CC2, f. 194v.

¹⁵⁹Collins (ed.), *Freemen I*, p. 241.

¹⁶⁰PRO, E 122/202/5, f. 27v.

stationers Jean Caillard of Rouen and John Gachet, who was at that time in Hereford. Two blind-tooled rolls were used to produce a vertical pattern within a border on the covers of the book, and the spine has four bands with hatching at the top and bottom. This French style of decoration of the boards suggests that the binding was done by a craftsman from France. Morgan concludes that this was probably Gachet or an employee. Likewise, in 1509/10 and 1525/6 the Dean and Chapter of York Minster paid a 'John Franchman' or 'Franshman' to bind books and this may also have been Gachet.¹⁶² The bookbinding and selling activities of Freez, Mores and Gachet show that the two trades, which had already been associated together in the fifteenth century, became more integrated after the advent of print. It is likely that the increase in the number of stationers who became free of the city in the sixteenth century is an indication that the term 'stationer' became the more common trade description of binders who sold books. A similar pattern can also be seen at Norwich where bookbinders are recorded since the thirteenth century. Between 1550 and 1595, however, the period when stationers first appear in Norwich, bookbinders disappear from the city's franchise register.¹⁶³ Likewise, in Oxford, bookbinders were less numerous in the sixteenth century than in the fifteenth.¹⁶⁴

A guild of 'bookebyndars or stacionars' presented their ordinances to the city council in November 1554.¹⁶⁵ The term of apprenticeship was set at the customary seven years and it was declared that 'no stranger or forynar' would be allowed to sell books in York, on the pain of forfeiting their stock. The 'foreigners' in this context referred to Englishmen who were not free of the city of York, whereas 'stranger' probably meant other nationalities.

¹⁶¹Morgan, 'Early Printing', pp. 216-24.

¹⁶²YML, E3/35, E3/38.

¹⁶³Stoker, 'Regulation', pp. 127-41.

¹⁶⁴Jeffrey, 'Industries', p. 237.

¹⁶⁵YCA, E20A (B/Y Memorandum Book), ff. 211v-2r; B21, ff. 63v-4r.

It is possible that the stationers' and bookbinders' desire to have these ordinances registered with the city was prompted by recent legislation which attempted to curb the influx of Protestant refugees from Continental Europe resulting from the greater strength of the Protestant faction in England after the accession of Edward VI.¹⁶⁶ The refugees included stationers and printers, such as the Dutch printers Stephen Mierdman and Gellius Ctematius, who are likely to have continued their book-trade activities in England and thus encroached on the business of the native book producers and sellers.¹⁶⁷ With the accession of Queen Mary in 1553 and the change to a Catholic regime, these Protestant refugees were no longer welcome. In February 1554, Mary issued a proclamation which ordered all undenized foreigners, particularly printers, booksellers and preachers, out of her kingdom, but it does not seem to have been effective.¹⁶⁸ In 1555 the city authorities of London attempted to help the business of native artisans and retailers by prohibiting Londoners in certain trades, including the selling and printing of books, from employing foreigners. It is possible that the ordinances of the York guild of bookbinders and stationers, dated less than a year after the royal proclamation, were likewise prompted by the activities of immigrant booksellers.

The importation of books into York enabled the development of book-trade links between London and York. Some of York's supply of books which had been printed on the continent may have passed through the port of London before travelling north. Entries for printed books in the customs rolls for London are found from the end of 1477.¹⁶⁹ When service books of York use began to be produced by Continental printers, London-based

¹⁶⁶Duff, *Century*, p.xxv.

¹⁶⁷Ibid., pp. 44, 105.

¹⁶⁸Ibid., p.xxvi; Cyprian Blagden, *The Stationers' Company: A History, 1403-1959* (London, 1960), p. 30.

¹⁶⁹Armstrong, 'English Purchases', p. 273.

publishers were sometimes involved in the enterprise. The publication of the first York breviary, printed in Venice in 1493, was financed by Frederick Egmont, stationer of London and Paris.¹⁷⁰ The cooperation of the York booksellers with the stationers of London in the importation of foreign-printed texts is also revealed in the court case over the book stock of Gerard Wanseford. As I have already mentioned, Wanseford had arranged the importation of books from France in partnership with Ralph Pulleyn, a York goldsmith, and Mr Manard of London.¹⁷¹ Wanseford probably also had business dealings with Wynkyn de Worde. De Worde had taken over Caxton's press in 1491 and stocks of books produced by him may have been bought by Wanseford for sale in York. Wanseford's will contains a bequest of 40s to de Worde 'which I howght him', presumably from a business deal.¹⁷² Close personal relations with de Worde are also indicated by his role as an executor to Wanseford's will. The will also contains bequests to 'Meyner Werwyk of London' and an unidentified Richard Watterson of London.

It has already been suggested that the York printer Hugo Goes worked for a period in London, where he would have become acquainted with de Worde. Goes used a set of printing types which had previously been employed by de Worde. In 1513 Goes published an edition of *The Expert Gardener* with Henry Watson, an assistant of de Worde, at Charing Cross in London.¹⁷³ A grammar book printed in London by Goes is also referred to by Ames, which may have been the same text mentioned by John Bagford (1650-1716) with the colophon '*Donatus cum Remigio impressus Londonii iuxta Charring Crose per me Hugonem Goes et Henery Watson*'.¹⁷⁴ It is also interesting to note that the *Hortus*

¹⁷⁰Duff, *Century*, pp. 42-3.

¹⁷¹YML, Pi(i)vii(5), (7); Brunskill (ed.), 'Missals', pp. 24, 33.

¹⁷²YML, L2/5a, ff. 97v-8v.

¹⁷³STC 11562.7.

¹⁷⁴'Donatus with Remigius printed at London near Charing Cross by me Hugo Goes and

vocabulorum and *Robyn Hode* printed by Goes sometime between 1506 and 1509 had previously been printed by de Worde.¹⁷⁵ Milner may also have worked in London before going to York. The privy purse expenses of Henry VII for 1502/3 record payment of £2 for ‘two new bokes bought of Ursyn’.¹⁷⁶ A woodcut used in the grammar book produced by Milner had likewise been used by de Worde. The woodcut shows a schoolmaster with three pupils seated on a bench before him.¹⁷⁷

There may also have been business dealings between de Worde and John Gachet of York. In 1509, an edition of the York manual was produced with a title page bearing a device of de Worde that was used for books printed in France for sale by him.¹⁷⁸ The colophon however records that the book was printed by de Worde for John Gachet and James Ferrebouc, a printer working in Paris: ‘*Impressum per Wynandum de Worde commorantem Londonii. in vico nuncupato Fletestrete sub Intersignio solis vel in cimiterio sancti pauli sub ymagine dive marie pietatis pro Johanne gaschet et Jacobo ferrebouc sociis finit*’ 1509’.¹⁷⁹

The new contact with the London printers and stationers and the involvement in the international trade in books was not entirely beneficial to the York book community. The

Henry Watson’. Ames, *Typographical Antiquities*, p. 468; London, British Library, MS Harley 5974, f. 95. John Bagford had collected information and examples of printing which he had intended to publish as ‘An Historical Account of the Art of Typography’, see Melvin H. Wolf (ed.), *Catalogue and Indexes to the Title pages of English Printed Books preserved in the British Library’s Bagford Collection* (London, 1974).

¹⁷⁵STC 13829, 13829.7, 13689.3; A.S.G. Edwards and Carol M. Meale, ‘The Marketing of Printed Books in Late Medieval England’, *The Library*, 6th series 15 (1993): 121-2.

¹⁷⁶Henry R. Plomer, ‘Bibliographical Notes from the Privy Purse Expenses of King Henry the Seventh’, *The Library* (1913): 1-17.

¹⁷⁷Edward Hodnett, *English Woodcuts 1480-1535* (Oxford, 1973), pp. 11, 263-4, fig. 75.

¹⁷⁸Clair, *History of Printing*, pp. 30-1, 116; Duff, *English Provincial Printers*, p. 58.

¹⁷⁹‘Printed by Wynkyn de Worde dwelling in London in the street called Fleet Street beneath the sign of the sun or in the churchyard of St Paul under the image of the divine Mary of mercy, for John Gachet and James Ferrebouc partners, finished in 1509’. STC

increasingly mercantile nature of the book trade brought the York stationers into competition with the enterprising Londoners. Already during the fifteenth century London merchants dealing in such commodities as lead and cloth had managed to capture the bulk of the trade from Yorkshire retailers. The Londoners achieved a monopoly in the export trade through the establishment of a national company of merchant adventurers, from which the Yorkshire merchants were excluded.¹⁸⁰ In the early sixteenth century, London printers and stationers worked actively to promote their own interests in the book trade at the expense of their provincial counterparts. The incorporation of the London Stationers' Company in 1557 marks the end of an era of provincial printing.¹⁸¹ The royal charter granted to the Company stated that henceforth only those who were a member of the Company or who had a special licence from the queen were allowed to print.¹⁸² The incorporation can be seen as an attempt by the crown to control printing. The desire to eradicate Protestantism and heresy were the major concerns, but the incorporation also gave the queen greater control over the dissemination of ideas that threatened the state.¹⁸³ The immediate result of the incorporation was to give the Londoners a monopoly over printing and to ensure that no presses could be set up in the provinces.¹⁸⁴ The only exception was Cambridge which was granted letters patent to exempt the university from the regulations of the London Company, but did not take advantage of this privilege until 1584.¹⁸⁵

16160; Duff, *Century*, p. 46.

¹⁸⁰Kermode, *Medieval Merchants*, p. 252.

¹⁸¹See, for example, Duff, 'Printers, Stationers and Bookbinders', p. 105.

¹⁸²Frederick Seaton Siebert, *The Freedom of the Press in England 1476-1776* (Urbana, 1965), p. 66; Blagden, *Stationers' Company*, p. 21.

¹⁸³Patricia Margaret Took, 'Government and the Printing Trade, 1540-1560' (DPhil diss., London University, 1978), p. 11.

¹⁸⁴*Ibid.*, p. 10.

¹⁸⁵Sessions, *Spread of British Printing*, pp. 136-7; Black, *Cambridge University Press*, p. 33.

Not too much emphasis should, however, be placed on the effects of the incorporation of the Stationers Company on York printing as the last known York publication was made in 1532. It has been suggested that the York market for books was simply not big enough to support a press and that printing activity in the city failed substantially before 1557 owing to a lack of demand.¹⁸⁶ The operation of presses in York by at least five printers during the end of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, however, suggests that this is hardly an adequate reason for the demise of printing after 1532.

The most likely explanation for the apparent cessation of printing before the incorporation of the London Stationers' Company is the increasing advantage and control that the London printers and stationers had over the English book trade, through the abolition of the different liturgical uses and the issue of patents and privileges. As we have seen, the York printing industry had been dependent on service books and grammar texts. The religious controversies and changes during this period may have deterred prospective printers from risking their money on print runs of books which could suddenly become obsolete or forbidden. During the 1530s the traditional festivals and liturgy was attacked, which would have made the publication of service books a risky enterprise. In 1532, many festivals were removed from the calendar.¹⁸⁷ I have shown in the previous chapter that Sarum service books could be used in the diocese of York. The abolition of many local festivals would have undermined the distinctive nature of the calendar of York use. Consequently, the liturgical texts of York use may have lost out to the Sarum editions that were produced by London printers and distributed through their mercantile networks. The different liturgical uses were officially abolished in 1549 with the publication of the *Book of Common Prayer* together with the royal mandate that all Latin service books should be

¹⁸⁶Blagden, *Stationers' Company*, p. 28.

¹⁸⁷Duffy, *Stripping*, pp. 394-5.

destroyed.¹⁸⁸ The *Book of Common Prayer* was printed in several editions during that year by the London printers Edward Whitchurch and Richard Grafton. Whitchurch and Grafton held a patent from the king to print all service books in English or Latin.¹⁸⁹ A patent of monopoly was awarded for certain types of literature and prohibited other printers not only from reprinting that category of books but from printing new works in the reserved field.¹⁹⁰

The printing of grammar books and private prayer books was likewise taken over by London printers. In 1543 William Lily's *Institutio compendaria totius grammaticae* secured royal approval and letters patent were sent out ordering that this grammar should replace all others: 'We will and command, and straightly charge, all you schoolmasters within this our realm and other our dominions ... to teach and learn your scholars this *English Introduction* here ensuing and the *Latin grammar* annexed to the same, and no other'.¹⁹¹ The grammar was printed by Thomas Berthelet, the King's printer.¹⁹² In 1545 Richard Grafton, who later succeeded Berthelet as the King's printer in 1547, published a primer which officially replaced all previous English or Latin primers.¹⁹³ Thus, we can see that the printing industry in York had been destroyed long before 1557. It is therefore too simplistic to explain the cessation of York printing during the sixteenth century to an insufficient market. The uncertain political and religious climate, the removal of the different liturgical uses and the patents and privileges held by the London printers are likely to have been the main factors.

This analysis of the book trade in York has revealed swift changes over the period c.

¹⁸⁸Paul Hughes and James Larkin (eds.), *Tudor Royal Proclamations* (New Haven, Conn., 1964), 1: 485-6; STC 16267.

¹⁸⁹Clair, *History of Printing*, p. 64.

¹⁹⁰Siebert, *Freedom*, p. 38.

¹⁹¹Hughes and Larkin (eds.), *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, 1: 317; STC 15610.6.

¹⁹²Clair, *History of Printing*, pp. 57-8.

1450-1550. During the fifteenth century, the book industry was dominated by book artisans, particularly binders and textwriters who produced books on a mainly bespoke basis for customers. The processes involved in making a book could have been supervised by a bookbinder. Only a few stationers are known to have lived in the city of York before the early sixteenth century and there is little direct evidence of their activities. After the arrival of printed books and printing technology in York, the trade came to be dominated by entrepreneurial activity. Although, as we have seen, the stationers did sell some books speculatively before print, after the advent of print the speculative trade came to dominate their business. The entrepreneurial activity of the bookbinders, which we have seen the beginnings of in the late fifteenth century, increased and many of them worked also as stationers. In the early sixteenth century, the stationers were international traders with considerable amounts of capital and who could help finance print runs. Thus, as a result of the advent of print, the production of books in York changed from being a predominantly bespoke trade to a large-scale speculative trade. With the demise of the printing industry in York in the early 1530s, the book trade in York became essentially a distributive industry, dependent on trading links with printers on the continent and in London for a supply of books. We might expect these changes in the production and sale of books to be reflected in the patterns of book ownership and reading practices of the book trade customers. In order to investigate this premise, the next two chapters will analyse the ownership of texts by the secular and regular clergy and laity of Yorkshire, and how this may have changed over the period.

¹⁹³Hughes and Larkin (eds.), *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, 1: 349-50; STC 16034.

Chapter 3

The Demand for Books: The Clergy and Religious Institutions

In the discussion of the book trade in the previous chapter, I have argued that the religious and clerical market for books was vital in the York book trade. This is shown by the popularity of the parish of St Michael le Belfrey near the Minster as the industrial centre of bookselling and printing, and the production of service books by the York printers. This suggests that we should focus initially on the clergy and the religious houses of Yorkshire in order to investigate the developments in the book trade. In this chapter, I investigate the market for books generated by both the secular and the regular clergy of Yorkshire. As will be shown, despite the religious conservatism of most of the Yorkshire clergy, a significant proportion seem to have been concerned with educating themselves for the cure of souls. I discuss the evidence of wills, probate inventories, and extant books, which suggests that the reading interests of the secular and religious clergy did not notably change over the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, despite the advent of print and the upheavals of the early years of the Reformation.

Evidence for the reading interests of the regular clergy of Yorkshire is provided by extant manuscripts, early printed books and library catalogues. I have already mentioned Ker's guide to manuscripts and printed texts owned by religious houses, and the supplement by Watson.¹ As only a few catalogues have survived for Yorkshire monasteries and friaries, I include in this analysis lists of library books in religious houses made in the fourteenth century in order to investigate how their reading interests may have changed over the period. A catalogue of the books of the York Augustinians' library made in 1372 survives,

¹Ker, *Medieval Libraries*; Watson, *Supplement*.

which lists over 2100 texts in 656 volumes.² Two thirteenth-century catalogues were made for Rievaulx, although one is little more than an abbreviation of the other, and an inventory dating from 1396 is available for the Cistercian abbey of Meaux.³ A fifteenth-century list of 653 volumes of select authors and subjects survives for St Mary's Abbey, York.⁴ Bequests of books to members of the religious orders can also be used as an indication of their reading interests. A note in Cambridge, King's College, MS 18 lists twelve volumes donated to the Cistercian convent at Swine by Peter, a vicar of Swine, during the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century.⁵ The books owned by the religious houses of Yorkshire are likewise revealed in the inventories of the ex-religious who took volumes away with them after the dissolution of the monasteries. In 1552, for example, the former prior of Haltemprice Priory, who had become a parish priest after the dissolution, bequeathed to the parish church at Cottingham at least eight books which he had probably obtained from the priory library.⁶ The cartulary of Monk Bretton priory contains a list of 148 books belonging to the former prior and two monks of the house in 1558.⁷ It is likely that most of the books that are included in the list were taken from the library of Monk Bretton when it was dissolved in 1538.⁸ As I will show, the evidence of surviving

²Francis Roth, *The English Austin Friars 1249-1538: I History* (New York, 1966), p. 375; K.W. Humphreys (ed.), *The Friars' Libraries*, Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues (London, 1990), pp. 11-154.

³David N. Bell (ed.), *The Libraries of the Cistercians, Gilbertines and Premonstratensians*, Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues 3 (London, 1992), pp. 35-82, 87-140.

⁴R. Sharpe, J.P. Carley, R.M. Thomson and A.G. Watson (eds.), *English Benedictine Libraries: The Shorter Catalogues*, Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues 4 (London, 1996), pp. 677-785.

⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 144-6.

⁶BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 13, ff. 951v-2v.

⁷Walker (ed.), *Abstracts of the Chartularies*, pp. 5-9; Sharp, Carley, Thomson and Watson (eds.), *English Benedictine Libraries*, pp. 266-87.

⁸Claire Cross, 'A Medieval Yorkshire Library', *Northern History* 25 (1989): 282-3.

catalogues, extant manuscripts and early printed books can give an indication of the eclectic reading tastes, including both Latin and vernacular texts, of the regular clergy of Yorkshire.⁹

It has been estimated that the diocese of York supported some 4,500 secular clergy in 1500.¹⁰ Although literacy was a requirement for all the clergy, only a small proportion of clerical wills and inventories mention books. A study of the 247 wills of the minor clergy of York in the period 1450-1550 has revealed book bequests in 100 or around 40%.¹¹ This present study is based on 259 wills and twenty-one inventories of Yorkshire book-owning clergy from 1440 to 1550. This is a total of 274 book owners.¹² The sample of clerical wills which mention books has a fairly even distribution over the period (as shown in table 3) which will facilitate a study of the changes and continuities in clerical reading interests during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

Table 3

Number of Wills and Inventories of the Yorkshire Clergy which mention Books

	1440 - 1460	1461 - 1480	1481 - 1500	1501 - 1520	1521 - 1550	Total
Wills	54	57	44	44	60	259
Inventories	3	1	1	4	12	21

Sources:

Sample of clerical wills and inventories.

⁹See Madeline Blaess, 'Les manuscrits français dans les monastères anglais au Moyen Age', *Romania* 94 (1973), 321-58.

¹⁰Jo Ann Hoepfner Moran, 'Clerical Recruitment in the Diocese of York, 1340-1530: Data and Commentary', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 34 (1983): 19-54.

¹¹Gee, 'Books Owned by the Minor Clergy', p. 7.

¹²Both a will and inventory mentioning books have survived for Richard Oliver and William Vavasour, both York priests; John Chambre, subchanter of York; Martin Collins, treasurer of York; William Duffield, archdeacon of Cleveland and Thomas Symson, a parson of York Minster.

Forty of the clerical book owners in this survey are known to have been graduates. The graduate clergy and ecclesiastical administrators of York Minster had the most impressive libraries, such as the collection of over 150 books of theology and law owned by Martin Collins, treasurer from 1503 to 1509.¹³ Another notable bibliophile was William Melton, chancellor of York, who died in 1533. Around 110 books, most of theology, but also including a number of humanist works, are named in his probate inventory.¹⁴ Not all of the wealthier and more prestigious ecclesiastics mentioned books in their wills, however, although we may be reasonably confident that they were highly literate. No books were bequeathed in the wills of Richard Wiatt, a precentor and doctor in divinity of York Minster or John Hertley, a canon of the chapel of St Mary and the Holy Angels in York.¹⁵ Many of the lesser parish clergy and chaplains reveal an enthusiasm for reading in their wills. Libraries of at least six volumes are mentioned in the wills of William Revetour, a York chaplain (1446), John Fernell, another York chaplain (1466), John Burn, a parson of York Minster (1479), Thomas Gree, a chaplain of the newly founded Jesus College in Rotherham (1505) and William Dautre, a rector of Hetton (1510).¹⁶ Nevertheless, the non-graduate clergy generally were less likely to bequeath books than the wealthier ecclesiastics. Over half of the wills and inventories of the lesser ministry in the survey of clerical book owners mention only one or two texts.

The different types of books which were left by the Yorkshire clergy between 1440 and 1550 is shown in table 4. First I will discuss the books which were intended to aid the secular and religious clergy in their pastoral and sacramental duties, that is, the service

¹³YML, L1(17)18.

¹⁴YML, L1(17)43.

¹⁵BIHR, Archbishop's Register, vol. 27, f. 159r-v; YML, L2/5a, ff. 152v-3v.

¹⁶BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 137v-8v; vol. 4, f. 67v; Archbishop's Register, vol. 25, ff. 163v-4r; vol. 26, f. 138v; YML, L2/4, f. 345r-v.

books, manuals for preaching and taking confession, the Bible and other devotional books.

I will then discuss the ownership of manuals for teaching, that is, grammar books, and lastly, academic texts.

Table 4

Book Ownership by Category of Literature by the Yorkshire Clergy

Total no. of wills and inventories	280
No. which mention:	
Service Books	194 (69.3%)
Preaching and Confession Manuals	67 (23.9%)
Bibles and Commentaries	54 (19.3%)
Classical / Grammar	42 (15.0%)
Devotional	32 (11.4%)
Law	30 (10.7%)
Saints' Lives	21 (7.5%)
Theology	15 (5.4%)
Patristic	15 (5.4%)
History	13 (4.6%)
Medicine / Logic / Astronomy	10 (3.6%)

Sources:

See table 3.

1. Pastoral and Sacramental Duties

i. Service Books

In spite of the great variation in education and wealth amongst the late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century clergy, all had responsibilities as intermediaries with God. Nearly 70% of the wills and inventories of the clergy (see table 4 above) which mention books contain references to liturgical and prayer aids. There was a wide range of service manuals to assist the clergy in their celebrations, including prayer books for the hours, such as antiphoners, breviaries, hymnals, legendaries, ordinals, pyes, psalters and song-books, as well as processional books for the church processions, manuals for the mass, such as missals and grails and guides for the administration of marriages, baptisms and other church occasions.¹⁷ The most widely owned of the church manuals was the portable breviary, also known as a '*portiforium*' or '*portus*'. It is mentioned in 124 wills and inventories over the period 1440-1550 which include the bequest of a book. The popularity of the breviary was due to its comprehensive nature. It comprised a psalter, antiphoner, lessons, prayers, hymns, kalendar and martilogium.¹⁸ An early fifteenth-century breviary in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, was probably used by a resident of York as it contains votive offices of St William of York and the obits of a number of York Minster dignitaries.¹⁹ These include John Kemp, cardinal of York and Archbishop of Canterbury, William Felter, dean of York and John Berningham, treasurer, who died in 1443, 1451 and 1457 respectively. The death of Robert Whixlay, alias Wilkinson, a vicar of Kildwick in Craven, in 1557 is also recorded.

The most frequently mentioned book in the testamentary sources after the breviary

¹⁷C. Wordsworth and H. Littlehales, *The Old Service-Books of the English Church* (London, 1904), pp. 28-9.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 74; John Harper, *The Forms and Orders of Western Liturgy* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 61-2.

¹⁹The decoration of this manuscript has been discussed briefly in chapter one, p. 57. Oxford,

was the missal, which contains the office of the mass. Missals appear in thirty-eight wills and inventories of the book-owning Yorkshire clergy in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. In 1446, for example, John Bempton, rector of St Cuthbert's in Peasholme in York, bequeathed a missal to the vicar of St Nicholas church in Micklegate.²⁰ John Exylby, a chaplain of Ripon, likewise gave a missal to the altar of St John in Beverley Minster in 1471.²¹

The ownership of psalters is particularly noticeable in the period 1440-1480 when nineteen of the Yorkshire clergy in this survey mentioned them in their wills and inventories. In 1449, for example, '*unum psalterium debile*' was bequeathed by Thomas Northus, vicar choral of York Minster.²² The best psalter of William Hawk, professor of theology and rector of Berwick, was given to Thomas Sayle, monk of St Mary's Abbey in 1471.²³ Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Lat. Liturg.g.1 is an early fifteenth-century psalter which may have been used in York despite being of Sarum use. It was written for the use of a Benedictine monastery and the calendar is similar to that of York. A note has also been written inside recording the birth of Elizabeth of York in February 1465/6.²⁴ The mention of psalters in the wills and inventories falls dramatically after 1480, however. Between 1480 and the mid-sixteenth century, only three psalters are mentioned in the wills or inventories of the book-owning Yorkshire clergy. It is possible that the clergy came to prefer the comprehensive breviary over the psalter, particularly after the printing of the first

Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc 84; Frere, *Bibliotheca Musico-Liturgica*, 1: 14.

²⁰BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 135r-v.

²¹Fowler (ed.), *Acts of the Chapter*, p. 168.

²²'a worn psalter'. YML, L2/4, ff. 263r-4r.

²³BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 4, f. 171r.

²⁴Ker, *Medieval Libraries*, p. 217; Falconer Madan and H.H.E. Craster, *A Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, vol. 6: Accessions 1890-1915* (Oxford, 1924), p. 45.

Sarum breviary in around 1475.²⁵ The possible use of service books of Sarum or Salisbury use in the York diocese is shown by the 1523 probate inventory of Thomas Barton, a vicar of York, which included an ‘olde halfe portus of Sarome’ valued at 8d.²⁶

Religious houses also used service books of all kinds and they frequently received bequests of liturgical texts. The performance of the liturgy was one of the essential duties of monastic life, for which a stock of liturgical aids was needed.²⁷ The fourteenth-century inventory of the Cistercian abbey of Meaux, for example, is divided into eight sections, corresponding with the eight different places in which the books were kept. Collections of service books could be found near the high altar, in the choir and in the chapel of the infirmary.²⁸ An extant fifteenth-century manual contains an inscription recording that it was given to the church of St Leonard’s hospital by John Castylfurth and William Bramelay.²⁹ Bramelay was a parson of York Minster who was buried in St Leonard’s hospital in 1454. A John Castlefurth, chaplain, was named as an executor to his will.³⁰ Joan Ince, the widow of a York merchant, bequeathed a missal to her daughter Margaret in 1489.³¹ In her will she stated that after Margaret’s death, the missal should be passed to Agnes Ince, a nun of Hampole and her sister nuns.

The parish churches were also required to maintain a stock of liturgical texts for use by visiting clergy, or those who could not afford their own copies. The city of York was divided into around forty parishes, of which twelve were under the jurisdiction of the Dean

²⁵STC 15794.

²⁶BIHR, Dean and Chapter original wills, 1523.

²⁷David Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England* (Cambridge, 1957), 2: 334.

²⁸Bell (ed.), *Libraries of the Cistercians*, p. 35.

²⁹Cambridge, University Library, MS Ee.IV.19.

³⁰YML, L2/4, ff. 276v-7r.

³¹BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, ff. 362v-3r.

and Chapter.³² The records of the visitations of the Dean and Chapter show that the availability and condition of the required texts was an important concern.³³ The churches were expected to have, at the minimum, an antiphoner, a grail, a missal, a breviary and a processioneer. The 1481 visitation, for example, reported that two processioners were missing from the church of South Cave, that the missal and grail held by the church of Acklam were imperfect and that the breviary in Grimston church was not bound.³⁴ Most churches, however, would have required more books than the accepted minimum in order for the clergy to perform the daily office. In 1497, the church of Adel received a processioneer from Thomas Wilkinson, rector, and a hymnal was given to the church of St Lawrence in York by a clerk of the same church, Thomas Hemyngburgh, in 1503.³⁵ The church of St John in Hungate in York owned two missals, two couchers (large service books), two legends, two large grails, one small grail, one manual and one venite book in 1519.³⁶ John Elton, a parson of Stainton, likewise requested in his will, which was dated 1535, that his books of law should be sold and the money used to buy a missal, grail and antiphoner for the church of North Collingham.³⁷ A stock of service books was also maintained for the clergy who officiated in York Minster. The pre-Reformation fabric rolls of York Minster, for example, give details of the purchase or repair of liturgical texts. In 1473, payment was made for the binding and correction of an antiphoner and in 1481-2 a new cover was bought for a grail.³⁸

³²Palliser, *Tudor York*, p. 77.

³³Raine (ed.), *Fabric Rolls*, pp. 242-74.

³⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 260-1.

³⁵BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, ff. 494v-5r; YML, L2/5a, f. 34v.

³⁶Raine (ed.), *Fabric Rolls*, p. 269.

³⁷BIHR, Archbishop's Register, vol. 28, ff. 171v-3r.

³⁸YML, E3/27, E3/29.

Not only were service books in demand by the whole body of clergy and religious institutions, but their use as everyday manuals meant that they became worn and fell apart quickly. References to the rebinding of old liturgical texts can be found in the clerical wills and inventories. Robert Gillesland, a vicar choral of York Minster, for example, bequeathed in 1471 his breviary which had been newly bound.³⁹ The short lifespan of service books is also revealed in the will of Robert York, vicar of Warthill, who desired that his breviary should be given to a succession of poor priests ‘als lang as it will last’.⁴⁰ The churchwardens’ accounts of St Michael Spurriergate are extant for the period 1518-48.⁴¹ They contain frequent references to the buying of service books, and the repair and binding of old books. Missals, for example, were acquired in 1520 and 1529.⁴² In 1541, two books of the feast of the visitation of the Virgin Mary were newly bound with parchment and in 1545 two clasps were bought for an ordinal.⁴³

The strength of the demand for service books generated by the clergy and religious communities of Yorkshire is shown by the production of liturgical texts of York use produced by printers in York, London and continental Europe. The first extant printed edition of the York breviary was produced in 1493 by John Hamman or Hertzog.⁴⁴ Hamman was a printer of Venice, who specialised in the production of service books from 1488 to the early sixteenth century.⁴⁵ Another edition of the York breviary was produced

³⁹YML, L2/4, f. 325r-v.

⁴⁰YML, L2/5a, ff. 99v-100r.

⁴¹BIHR, PR Y/MS/3,4; Webb (ed.), *Churchwardens’ Accounts*.

⁴²BIHR, PR Y/MS/4, ff. 21v, 81v; Webb (ed.), *Churchwardens’ Accounts*, 1:78, 135.

⁴³BIHR, PR Y/MS/3, ff. 53v, 75r; Webb (ed.), *Churchwardens’ Accounts*, 2:248, 305.

⁴⁴STC 15856.

⁴⁵Duff, *Century*, p. 71.

by Pierre Violette in Rouen in 1507, and survives in one imperfect copy.⁴⁶ It may have been Violette's edition of the breviary which was referred to in the will of William Savage, a parson of York Minster, proved in 1508. Savage bequeathed to a Thomas Pylle, '*unum lez portus in pryntt quod iacet ad altare meum*'.⁴⁷ François Regnault, printer and bookseller of London and Paris, also produced breviaries of York use in 1526 and 1533.⁴⁸

The earliest extant York missal was produced by Violette. The one surviving copy, now held in Cambridge University Library, was once owned by Martin Collins, treasurer of York.⁴⁹ Violette's edition is undated and Duff has suggested a date of around 1507, which agrees with the testamentary evidence. Martin Collins bequeathed missals (one of which was described as printed) to a number of Yorkshire churches, including Bishop Wilton, Alne, Acomb and Barton, in his will dated 1508.⁵⁰ The 1508 will of John Rumpton, sacrist of York Minster, also made mention of two printed missals.⁵¹ Missals of York use were also produced by Pierre Olivier, printer of Rouen, in 1516 and 1517.⁵² Another edition of the York missal, dated 1530, has the name 'Holivier' on the title-page, and so can be attributed to Olivier's press, which continued after his death.⁵³ Regnault likewise produced an edition of the York missal in 1533.⁵⁴

In 1507, Violette was commissioned by the York stationer, Gerard Wanseford, to

⁴⁶Cambridge University Library, Syn 8.50.11; STC 15857.

⁴⁷'a breviary in print which lies on my altar'. YML, L2/5a, ff. 45v-6r.

⁴⁸STC 15858, 15859.

⁴⁹Cambridge University Library, F150.a.41; STC 16220.

⁵⁰BIHR, Archbishop's Register, vol. 26, ff. 135r-6v.

⁵¹YML, L2/5a, f. 73r.

⁵²STC 16221, 16222; Duff, *Century*, p. 115; Sessions, *Les Deux Pierres*, pp. 17-18.

⁵³STC 16223; Duff, 'Printers, Stationers and Bookbinders', p. 103.

⁵⁴STC 16224.

produce an edition of the *Expositio hymnorum et sequentiarum*.⁵⁵ The *Expositio* was a commentary on the hymns and sequences of the mass which was popular in song schools and cathedral grammar schools.⁵⁶ The edition produced by Violette was in fact based on the Sarum rite, but the phrase ‘*ad usum Sarum*’ was omitted from the title page, perhaps so that it could be more easily sold in the north.⁵⁷ Two editions of the York processional were also printed by Olivier or his successors in around 1516 and 1530, as well as a hymnal of York use in 1517.⁵⁸ The printing of a York manual was financed by the York stationer John Gachet in 1530. The printer’s name and place of printing is unknown. The one surviving copy belonged to the parish church of Ratcliffe-upon-Soar in Nottinghamshire in 1553.⁵⁹

Service books were also produced by the printers who worked in the city of York. The *Directorium sacerdotum*, printed by Goes in 1509, is otherwise known as a pica or pye.⁶⁰ The pye was a service book printed with black letter type on white paper. It had been previously printed by Caxton in c.1487 and 1489.⁶¹ As we have seen, Milner also printed two small service books, a supplement to the Sanctorale of the breviary and a *Novum festum* in York in around 1513.⁶² The interest of printers in the York market and the repeated editions of breviaries, missals and processioners reveals that the demand for service books generated by the clergy and religious institutions was large enough not to be

⁵⁵STC 16119.

⁵⁶Vincent Gillespie, ‘The Literary Form of the Middle English Pastoral Manual with Particular Reference to the *Speculum Christiani* and some related texts’ (PhD diss., Oxford University, 1981), pp. 57-62.

⁵⁷Duff, ‘Printers, Stationers and Bookbinders’, p. 90; Plomer, *Wynkyn de Worde*, p. 246.

⁵⁸STC 16135, 16250.5, 16251.

⁵⁹STC 16161; Henderson (ed.), *Manuale et Processionale*, p. xiv.

⁶⁰See chapter two, pp. 103.

⁶¹Clair, *History of Printing*, p. 18.

saturated by the output of the presses. The trading activities of Gerard Wanseford also testify to the large market for service books in the diocese of York. As has been discussed, in 1510 Wanseford imported into the city of York 252 missals, 399 breviaries and 570 pyes, which are stated in the court case to have been bought in France.⁶³ The missals and breviaries were probably the editions produced by Violette. Although no extant pye of York use printed before 1510 has been traced, it is possible that Wanseford's stock of pyes had also been produced by Violette. The secular and regular clergy's need for service books thus quickly attracted the interest of printers from the city, as well as from London and the Continent, and soon came to dominate the book trade.

ii. Pastoral Manuals

The next category of literature most frequently bequeathed by the book-owning clergy of Yorkshire (see table 4 above) was the manuals which gave advice and guidance in pastoral duties and preaching. Texts which provided a comprehensive 'summa' of guidance on a wide range of responsibilities, such as the taking of confession and preaching, are particularly prominent in the wills and inventories. Since the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, the laity had been instructed to make confession to their priest once every year.⁶⁴ In 1281, Archbishop Pecham of Canterbury instructed priests to preach to their parishioners four times a year on Christian beliefs and morals. The decree was reiterated by Archbishop John Thoresby in 1357 for the diocese of York.⁶⁵ Pastoral manuals would therefore have appealed principally to the parochial clergy who were responsible for the cure of souls, not

⁶²See chapter two, pp. 104-5.

⁶³YML, Pi(i)vii(6); Brunskill, 'Missals, Portifers and Pyes', p. 28.

⁶⁴L.E. Boyle, 'The Fourth Lateran Council and Manuals of Popular Theology', in T.J. Heffernan (ed.), *The Popular Literature of Medieval England* (Knoxville, 1985), pp. 30-45.

to the chaplains or chantry priests whose main duty was the celebration of mass.⁶⁶ Nevertheless, priests may have required assistance in the fulfilment of some pastoral duties, such as hearing the confessions of parishioners at Easter, and were therefore allowed to license the chaplains of the church to help.⁶⁷ Chaplains and students could also receive licences to preach.⁶⁸ Pastoral manuals were therefore of potential interest and use to a wide variety of secular clergy.

The bestseller list of pastoral manuals in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries was headed by the *Pupilla oculi* of John de Burgh. It was divided into ten chapters or books. After the first introductory chapter, books two to eight each dealt with one of the seven sacraments. Instruction on miscellaneous subjects such as burials, wills, tithes and residence was provided in chapter nine, and chapter ten explained the programme of instruction that the priest should expound to his parishioners.⁶⁹ It has been asserted that the *Pupilla* was an elitist work aimed at the graduate clergy, rather than parish priests.⁷⁰ Academic issues, such as the procedure for baptising monsters that are half man and half beast, which would have been of little practical use to most parochial priests or chaplains, are discussed and a number of references to civil law were also included.⁷¹ Also, as I shall discuss in chapter five, the *Pupilla* was a lengthy text and therefore expensive. Nevertheless, the mention of

⁶⁵Heath, *English Parish Clergy*, p. 95; Hughes, *Pastors and Visionaries*, pp. 146, 153-4.

⁶⁶Heath, *English Parish Clergy*, pp. 19-23.

⁶⁷Heath, *English Parish Clergy*, p. 7; Peter Marshall, *The Catholic Priesthood and the English Reformation* (Oxford, 1994), p. 12; Clive Burgess, "For the Increase of Divine Service": Chantries in the Parish in Late Medieval Bristol', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 36 (1985): 46-65.

⁶⁸Heath, *English Parish Clergy*, p. 94.

⁶⁹W.A. Pantin, *The English Church in the Fourteenth Century* (London, 1955), pp. 213-4.

⁷⁰R.M. Ball, 'The Education of the Secular Clergy in the Later Middle Ages' (PhD diss., University of Cambridge, 1977), passim; Gillespie, 'Literary Form', p. 1.

⁷¹Ball, 'Education', pp. 66, 70.

copies of the *Pupilla* in the Yorkshire wills and inventories shows that it was owned by a much wider range of clergy than just the graduates and ecclesiastical administrators.

The graduate owners of a copy of the *Pupilla* included William Duffield, a residentiary canon of York and William Rowkshaw, a canon and prebendary of the chapel of St Mary and the Holy Angels, who died in 1453 and 1504 respectively.⁷² William Merton, rector of St Crux church in York, who bequeathed a *Pupilla* in 1540, may also have held a BA from Cambridge.⁷³ Another member of this élite group may have been John Bulmer, rector of Bulmer and probably a son of Sir William Bulmer, who left a *Pupilla* at his death in 1441.⁷⁴

The manual of John de Burgh also appears in the wills of a number of less educated Yorkshire clergy, which suggests that it was not a privileged interest in the late fifteenth century, even before it was first printed in Paris in 1510.⁷⁵ A copy of the *Pupilla* was bequeathed by Richard Drax, a chaplain of York in 1443.⁷⁶ John Witer, rector of Rowley, likewise referred to his text of the *Pupilla* in his will, proved in 1469.⁷⁷ The same manual also appears in the wills of William Marshall, a vicar of York (1474), John Danby, a York parson (1485), John Gayneforth, priest of Aldborough (1545) and Lawrence Hall, a York priest (1548).⁷⁸ The 1547 probate inventory of a chantry priest of York Minster, John

⁷²YML, L1(17)37; BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 6, f. 113r; Emden, *Biographical Register of the University of Cambridge to 1500*, p. 493; A.B. Emden, *A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to A.D. 1500* (Oxford, 1957), 1: 601-2.

⁷³BIHR, Archbishop's Register, vol. 28, f. 182r-v; Cross (ed.), *City Clergy*, p. 19.

⁷⁴BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 30r-v; Ball, 'Education', p. 141; James Raine (ed.), *Testamenta Eboracensia II*, Surtees Society 30 (1855), p. 82n.

⁷⁵Ball, 'Education', p. 357.

⁷⁶BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 75v-6r.

⁷⁷BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 4, f. 138r-v.

⁷⁸BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 4, ff. 119v-20; YML, L2/4, ff. 361v-2; L2/5b, ff. 10v, 20r-v.

Hixon, likewise reveals the ownership of a *Pupilla*.⁷⁹ The evidence of the ownership of the *Pupilla* by parish priests, chaplains and chantry priests of late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century Yorkshire, as well as the graduate clergy, shows that its appeal was not restricted to the intellectual élite. The comprehensive nature of the *Pupilla* meant that it contained a wide range of subjects that could interest and stimulate a broad spectrum of clergy both before and after it was available in print.

Like the *Pupilla*, the *Oculus sacerdotis* of William of Pagula has been labelled an elitist work.⁸⁰ The *Oculus sacerdotis* is divided into three parts, of which the first often circulated separately, known as the *Pars oculi*. The *Pars oculi* was a manual for hearing confession. The *Dextra pars* or second part provided instruction on preaching, outlining the information, such as the duties of the laity and the Christian doctrine, which the parishioners should be taught. The sacraments were dealt with in the third part.⁸¹ The *Oculus sacerdotis* contains many citations of canon law which may indicate that it was too academic for most parish priests. However, the ownership of the manual by the Yorkshire clergy reveals that it was not restricted to use by graduates. Copies of the *Pars oculi* were bequeathed by Nicholas Holme, a canon of Ripon (1458), Robert Langthwatte, a chaplain of Loversall (1473), John Burn, a parson of York Minster (1479) and Thomas Okes of Adwick (1504), none of whom is known to have been a graduate.⁸² Despite this evidence of the ownership of the text during both the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, the *Oculus sacerdotis* was never printed.⁸³ Thus, although the scholarship of the *Pupilla oculi*

⁷⁹BIHR, Dean and Chapter original wills, 1547.

⁸⁰Ball, 'Education', pp. 24, 31, 48-9, 51.

⁸¹Pantin, *English Church*, pp. 197-8.

⁸²BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 399r, vol. 4, ff. 199v-200r, vol. 6, f. 125r; YML, L2/4, f. 345r-v.

⁸³L.E. Boyle, 'The *Oculus Sacerdotis* and some other works of William of Pagula', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, fifth series 5 (1955): 95.

and the *Oculus sacerdotis* may have deterred some parish priests and chaplains, the usefulness of these manuals seems to have been appreciated by a significant number of graduate clergy and the lesser ministry alike throughout this period.

Some manuals, such as the *Manipulus curatorum* of Guy of Mont Rocher, were aimed at the minor clergy. The use of a less academic style and the prominence given to information that was of most relevance to parish priests assured that the manuals would appeal to the minor clergy, but at the cost of losing the interest of the graduates and ecclesiastical administrators. The *Manipulus curatorum*, which is only a quarter of the length of the *Pupilla oculi*, deals with the sacraments, confession and preaching.⁸⁴ The eight Yorkshire owners of the *Manipulus curatorum* were all non-graduate priests and chaplains. Although the *Manipulus curatorum* was written in 1333, nearly all of the bequests of the manual are dated after its first printing in 1498 by Pynson.⁸⁵ The pattern of book bequests thus suggests that the printing of this manual may have promoted its use by the clergy.

These pastoral manuals probably owed much of their appeal to their comprehensive nature as guides to a variety of priestly duties. Manuals which concentrated on the individual duties of confession and preaching were also available. The favourite confession guide seems to have been the *Summa confessorum* of Thomas of Chobham, which survives in more than a hundred manuscripts.⁸⁶ The '*liber de confessione*' mentioned in the will of Thomas Goldhow, a rector of Wigginton in 1446, may have been Chobham's *Summa*.⁸⁷ In

⁸⁴Ball, 'Education', pp. 8-9.

⁸⁵YML, L2/4, f. 370r (Buntynge); L2/5a, f. 115v (Knotton); L2/5b, f. 9Ar-v (Symkyn); YML, L1(17)11 (Chyld); BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, ff. 502r-3r (Warde); vol. 8, f. 85r (Taylour); vol. 12B, f. 4v-5r (Urre); Archbishop's Register, vol. 29, f. 87v (Barker).

⁸⁶Thomas of Chobham, *Summa Confessorum*, ed. F. Bloomfield (Paris, 1968); Gillespie, 'Literary Form', p. 99.

⁸⁷BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 130r-v.

1475, William Braunde, receiver general of the see of York, gave a '*summa confessorum*' to the official of the court of York.⁸⁸ A book called 'Thomas Cabam' was also bequeathed by a chaplain of St Crux church in York, John Bullington in 1480.⁸⁹ Bullington requested that the volume should be given first to another chaplain, William Barker, and then, after Barker's death, to be chained in the choir of the church. A copy of Chobham's *Summa* was also given to Lowthorpe church by William Rowkshaw, a canon of York, already mentioned.⁹⁰ Thomas Gree, a chaplain of Rotherham, also included '*unum librum vocatum summa confessi omni*' in his will proved in 1505.⁹¹

A *Summa confessorum* had also been written by John Nider, a Dominican, in the 1430s. It may have been this work which was referred to as 'Nider' in the will of a priest of York Minster, William Warde, in 1496.⁹² The *Confessionale* of St Antoninus, first printed in Cologne in around 1470, was also bequeathed by Thomas Helton, provost of the college of St Andrew in Acaster Malbis in 1505.⁹³ A book called 'Raymunda' was mentioned in the will of William Barker, vicar of Kirkby Moorside in 1548.⁹⁴ This was probably the *Summa de casibus penitentiae* of Raymund de Penafort. The mention of these manuals in the Yorkshire wills and inventories therefore reveals that an interest in confession was not restricted to the priests who had responsibility for the cure of souls. A demand for pastoral manuals was generated by a wide range of clergy, including

⁸⁸BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 4, f. 127r-v.

⁸⁹BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, f. 96v.

⁹⁰BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 6, f. 113r.

⁹¹'a book called *Summa confessi omni*'. BIHR, Archbishop's Register, vol. 25, ff. 163v-4r.

⁹²BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 4, ff. 502r-3r.

⁹³BIHR, Archbishop's Register, vol. 25, f. 164r-v; P.P.A. Biller, 'Marriage Patterns and Women's Lives: A Sketch of a Pastoral Geography', in P.J.P. Goldberg (ed.), *Women in Medieval English Society* (Stroud, 1997), p. 98n.

⁹⁴BIHR, Archbishop's Register, vol. 29, f. 87v.

ecclesiastical administrators, for example, William Braunde, and chaplains, such as John Bullington and Thomas Gree throughout the period c. 1450-1550.

During the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, the bequest of books by the Yorkshire clergy indicates a growing interest in preaching. It is possible that the ownership of preaching manuals during the sixteenth century was encouraged by the early Protestant reformers. Although the importance of preaching for the edification and spiritual stimulation of parishioners had been emphasised by the Church authorities since the thirteenth century, the reforming thought of the early sixteenth century insisted on the duty of a priest to preach and thus incite individual faith and religious knowledge, over his duty of ministering the sacraments.⁹⁵ Greater emphasis was placed on the importance of teaching the catechism to parishioners.⁹⁶ A pronounced increase of interest in preaching has, however, been traced by R.M. Ball to the late fifteenth century, thus antedating the Protestant reforms. Through the evidence of annotations on extant manuscripts of pastoral manuals, Ball has discovered that the owners of the texts reveal a greater preoccupation with pastoral duties, in particular preaching, in the late fifteenth century compared with the previous half century, during which the role of the priest as celebrant of the mass received more emphasis.⁹⁷ The bequests of sermon collections by the Yorkshire clergy during the early sixteenth century is more likely to reflect a late fifteenth-century development than one in the sixteenth century, as it is only on the death of the reader, which may have been a number of years since he acquired the text, that evidence is left of the ownership of books in a will or inventory. The sermon collections left by the Yorkshire clergy in the early

⁹⁵Heath, *English Parish Clergy*, p. 93; Marshall, *Catholic Priesthood*, p. 88; Margaret Christian, 'Preaching and Sermons', in Hans J. Hillerbrand (ed.), *The Oxford Encyclopaedia of the Reformation* (Oxford, 1996), 3: 328-9.

⁹⁶Margaret Aston, *England's Iconoclasts: Laws against Images* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 345-9.

⁹⁷Ball, 'Education', pp. 211, 225-6.

sixteenth century were the same manuals that had been popular in the late-medieval period, and which were criticised by the Protestant reformers. Wilfrid Holme of Huntingdon, an anticlerical poet, ridiculed the clergy in his book *The Fall and Evill Success of Rebellion*, published in 1537, for using the *Manipulus curatorum*, the *Gesta romanorum*, *Sermones parati* and *Sermones discipuli*.⁹⁸ The increasing interest in preaching and demand for sermon manuals suggested by the testamentary evidence therefore probably began in the late fifteenth century, and is consequently not a product of the Protestant reforms.

In 1446, William Revetour, a chaplain of York, gave a *Sermones quadragesimales* by James of Voragine to John Fox, chaplain.⁹⁹ Voragine's *Sermones dominicales* was also bequeathed by John Berningham, treasurer of York and Thomas Worthington, vicar of Sherburn in Elmet in 1457 and 1475 respectively.¹⁰⁰ In the sixteenth century, the sermon collection which appeared most often in the wills and inventories of the Yorkshire clergy was the *Sermones discipuli* of John Herolt. It was bequeathed by a chaplain of Rotherham, Thomas Gree, in 1505 and by Stephen Elys, a parson of Bolton, in 1515.¹⁰¹ In 1519, Thomas Robson, a York priest included in his will 'a peynted booke callede Sermones Discipuli'.¹⁰² Copies of Herolt's manual were also bequeathed by Robert Alman, a vicar of Normanton, Gregory Woodall, a York chantry priest, and Humphrey Gascoign, parson of Barnburgh, in 1520, 1539 and 1540 respectively.¹⁰³ Robert Alman was also an owner of the collection of sermons by Vincent Ferrer. A copy of the '*Sermones vincentii*' in three books was likewise mentioned in the probate inventory of John Hixon, a chantry priest of

⁹⁸Dickens, *Lollards and Protestants*, pp. 114-31.

⁹⁹BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 137v-8v.

¹⁰⁰BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 348v-9v; YML, L2/4, f. 336v.

¹⁰¹BIHR, Archbishop's Register, vol. 25, ff. 163v-4r; vol. 27, ff. 139v-40r.

¹⁰²BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 9, ff. 84v-5r.

¹⁰³BIHR, Archbishop's Register, vol. 27, f. 152r; vol. 28, ff. 182v-3v; Prob. Reg., vol. 11,

York, in 1547.¹⁰⁴

Books called 'festival' are also repeatedly mentioned in the wills and inventories of the Yorkshire clergy. They probably referred to the *Festial*, an English sermon collection of John Mirk, which was printed nineteen times between 1483 and 1532.¹⁰⁵ A 'festival' was bequeathed by Henry Knotton, vicar of Wawne in 1517 and Lancelot Smyth, parson of Hilton in 1544.¹⁰⁶ The '*Sermones Magdalene*' or '*Maudlan sermones*' of John Felton was also mentioned in the will of Thomas Taylour, a priest of Pontefract in 1512.¹⁰⁷ A book of Sunday sermons, which may have been the compendium of James of Voragine, was included in the bequests of William Merton, a rector of York in 1540.¹⁰⁸ Other collections of sermons such as '*Sermones parati*' and '*Sermones michaelis*' were owned by seven more clergy, including William Wilcok, vicar of Silkestone (1514); Edmund Longe, vicar of Rawcliffe (1521); Richard Ellis, parson of Gilling (1534) and Thomas Urre, priest of Birdsall (1544).¹⁰⁹

Reference books for preaching usually took the form of collections of exempla and moral stories, arranged alphabetically by subject. An example is the *Alphabetum narracionum*, written in 1308 and attributed to Etienne de Besançon.¹¹⁰ A copy of the text was given to Robert Fenwyke by John Chaloner, a York chaplain, in 1458.¹¹¹ Chaloner also

ff. 268v-9r.

¹⁰⁴BIHR, Dean and Chapter original wills, 1547.

¹⁰⁵Susan Powell, 'John Mirk's *Festial* and the Pastoral Programme', *Leeds Studies in English*, new series 22 (1991): 85-102; Heath, *English Parish Clergy*, p. 94.

¹⁰⁶YML, L2/5a, f. 115v; L2/5b, f. 9Ar-v.

¹⁰⁷BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 8, f. 85r.

¹⁰⁸BIHR, Archbishop's Register, vol. 28, f. 182r-v.

¹⁰⁹BIHR, Archbishop's Register, vol. 27, f. 153r-v; vol. 28, ff. 165r-6r; vol. 29, ff. 82r-4r; Prob. Reg., fol. 12B, ff. 4v-5v.

¹¹⁰M.M. Banks (ed.), *Alphabetum narracionum*, EETS o.s. 126-7 (London, 1905).

¹¹¹BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 363v.

owned a *Gesta romanorum*, which was a collection of stories including classical and oriental tales, miracle stories and popular legends.¹¹² In 1469, Christopher Burgh, a parson of York Minster and rector of Scrayingham, bequeathed a book called 'Bromeyard' to Christopher Lofthous.¹¹³ A *Summa praedicancium* had been written by John of Bromeyard in the first half of the fourteenth century. Another preaching manual, the *Rosarium theologie*, was bequeathed by John Colne, a rector of Methley in 1442, and in 1483, Robert Abdy, rector of Campsall and a master of Balliol College, Oxford, gave a *Fasciculus morum*, to another priest.¹¹⁴ The *Fasciculus morum* was a standard reference text for preaching, dealing with the vices and virtues and the catechism.¹¹⁵ The wills and inventories of both the parochial clergy and chaplains during the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries therefore indicate a growing interest in preaching that preceded and was independent of the reforms of the English Protestants.

A demand for manuals of pastoral care and preaching was also created by the members of some religious orders. The prior of a Carthusian house, for example, was responsible for hearing the confession of the monks and giving religious instruction to the initiates and lay servants of the house.¹¹⁶ Many of the religious may also have been involved in pastoral care in lay society. Dispensations awarded to friars and monks, particularly the Benedictines, to undertake the duties of vicars and rectors in the parishes become

¹¹²S.J.G. Herrtage (ed.), *Gesta romanorum*, EETS e.s. 33 (London, 1879).

¹¹³YML, L2/4, ff. 322r-3r.

¹¹⁴BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 53v; vol. 5, f. 201r-v.

¹¹⁵Siegfried Wenzel, *Verses in Sermons: Fasciculus Morum and its Middle English Poems* (Cambridge, Mass., 1978), pp. 9-10.

¹¹⁶Vincent Gillespie, 'Cura Pastoralis in Deserto', in Michael G. Sargent (ed.), *De Cella in Seculum: Religious and Secular Life and Devotion in Late Medieval England* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 162, 165.

increasingly common in late-medieval England.¹¹⁷ Preaching was a traditional activity of the friars.¹¹⁸ A preaching manual called *Florarium Bartholomei* had been kept at Mount Grace priory before 1458, when it passed into the hands of William Banks, a layman of York.¹¹⁹ Literature devoted to the cure of souls is also prominent in the collections of the ex-religious of Monk Bretton, including around sixteen sermon collections, as well as the confession manual of John Nider and the *De modo confitendi*, attributed to Thomas Aquinas.¹²⁰ The donation of twelve volumes to Swine convent by Peter, vicar of Swine, likewise included an *Oculus sacerdotis* and a *Manipulus curatorum*, as well as a book of sermons by James of Voragine.¹²¹

The evidence for an interest in pastoral care and the instruction of the laity is therefore generally positive. The Yorkshire wills and probate inventories suggest that an interest in reading in preparation for the cure of souls could be found amongst both the graduate and non-graduate clergy. A concern for the fulfilment of pastoral duties is also indicated by the catalogues and extant manuscripts of the libraries of the religious houses. The pattern of bequests of pastoral manuals does not seem to have been greatly affected by the printing of these texts. The only exception is the *Manipulus curatorum* which was mentioned more often in the wills and inventories after it was printed. Likewise, the pattern of bequests of the Bible and Scriptural commentaries reveals much continuity during the period c.1450-1550. The testamentary evidence does not reveal that the secular and religious clergy's

¹¹⁷R.N. Swanson, *Church and Society in Late Medieval England* (Oxford, 1989), p. 86; H. Leith Spencer, *English Preaching in the Late Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1993), pp. 60-1; Heath, *English Parish Clergy*, p. 175.

¹¹⁸Spencer, *English Preaching*, p. 59.

¹¹⁹YML, L2/4, f. 288r-v.

¹²⁰Sharpe, Carley, Thomson and Watson (eds.), *English Benedictine Libraries*, pp. 266-87, nos 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 20, 21, 66, 87, 91, 109, 110.

¹²¹Bell (ed.), *Libraries of the Cistercians*, pp. 144-6.

interest in the Scriptures was affected to any large extent by the Protestant reforms or the advent of print.

iii. The Bible and Scriptural Commentaries

Surviving catalogues and extant books suggest that the main reading interest of the regular clergy was the Scriptures and commentaries and the works of the church fathers.¹²² An overview of the literary concerns of two Yorkshire Cistercian houses, Meaux and Rievaulx, is shown in table 5. The overwhelming preoccupation seems to have been the Bible and theology, texts of which constituted over eighty percent of the books in the libraries of both houses.¹²³ The predominant concern of the monks of St Mary's Abbey in York was likewise probably theology and devotion. A total of 136 works of Augustine alone are itemised.¹²⁴ The main interest of the ex-religious of Monk Bretton also seems to have been Scriptural texts and commentaries, works of the Church fathers, theology and other devotional texts.¹²⁵ The list of the books owned by the ex-prior of Haltemprice Priory, some of which were itemised in his will in 1552, includes a Latin Bible and an *Historia scholastica*.¹²⁶ The *Historia scholastica* was written in the twelfth century by Peter Comestor and printed in Strassburg and Reulingen in Germany in around 1470.¹²⁷ It was originally intended to serve students at the university of Notre Dame in Paris as an abridgement and gloss of the Bible, containing Old Testament apocrypha and influenced by Jewish and Hebrew learning and traditions. It was translated into many vernaculars and

¹²²Margaret Deanesley, *The Lollard Bible* (Cambridge, 1920), p. 168.

¹²³See also Knowles, *Religious Orders*, 2: 335.

¹²⁴Sharpe, Carley, Thomson and Watson (eds.), *English Benedictine Libraries*, pp. 677-8.

¹²⁵Ibid., pp. 266-87.

¹²⁶BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 13, ff. 951v-2v.

¹²⁷James H. Morey, 'Peter Comestor, Biblical Paraphrase and the Medieval Popular Bible',

appealed to lay readers as an entertaining narrative of the Bible.

Table 5

Categories of Books in the Libraries of Meaux and Rievaulx (%)

	Meaux	Rievaulx
Theology	81.3	85.3
Grammar / Logic	5.3	3.3
Philosophy	2.6	1.05
Law	2.7	2.3
Classics	1.8	1.05
Science / Medicine	2.9	3
History	3.4	4

Sources:

David N. Bell (ed.), *The Libraries of the Cistercians, Gilbertines and Premonstratensians*, Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues 3 (London, 1992), p.xxv.

The wills and inventories of the Yorkshire clergy also reveal a significant interest in reading the Bible and Scriptural commentaries, even before the reforms of the English Protestants. A total of twenty-five clerical testators of Yorkshire over the period 1440-1550 mentioned the whole Bible in their wills or probate inventories. They included both the graduate clergy such as Thomas Babthorp, a canon of York, who died in 1478 and William Poteman, an archdeacon of the East Riding, as well as many of the lesser ministry.¹²⁸ In 1459, for example, John Ardeslaw, a chaplain of All Saints, Pavement in

Speculum 68 (1993): 6-35.

¹²⁸YML, L2/4, f. 341r; L2/5a, f. 1r.

York, gave a Bible to the Friars Minor of the city.¹²⁹ A '*biblia picta*' was likewise bequeathed by John Lese, a chaplain of Pontefract in 1486.¹³⁰ A student, Peter Mydelton, was given a Bible by a vicar of Doncaster, Simon Robynson, in 1528 on the condition 'if he will continue the scole and do well or els not'.¹³¹ The already mentioned Biblical paraphrase of Peter Comestor was bequeathed by Thomas Helton, a York parson in 1481 and John Buntynge, a vicar choral of the Minster, in 1487.¹³² Only nine of these bequests of the whole Bible were made in the sixteenth century. The testamentary evidence therefore does not reveal an increase in the ownership of Bibles which we might expect as a result of the insistence on Bible reading by the early reformers.

Volumes containing only a part of the Scriptures were in demand by the Yorkshire clergy throughout the period. A book of the Letters of St Paul was bequeathed by Nicholas Holme, a canon of Ripon in 1458 and John Fewlare, a chaplain of York Minster in 1530.¹³³ John Dove, a parson of York Minster likewise mentioned a volume of the Acts of the Apostles in his will of 1486 and Thomas Blyth, a vicar of Keyingham, gave to his parish church a book of the Evangelists and a book of Genesis with a preface.¹³⁴ The most frequently mentioned excerpt of the Bible by far was the glossed psalter. Nine of the wills and inventories of the Yorkshire clergy mentioned a glossed psalter over the period 1440-1550, only one of which was bequeathed in the sixteenth century. Nearly all of the owners of the psalter were non-graduates, including William Barbour, a chaplain of York (1477)

¹²⁹BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 406r-v.

¹³⁰BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, f. 284r.

¹³¹BIHR, Archbishop's Register, vol. 27, f. 163r-v.

¹³²YML, L2/4, ff. 347v-8r, 370r.

¹³³BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 399r; YML, L2/5a, f. 156r-v.

¹³⁴YML, L2/4, f. 368; BIHR, Archbishop's Register, vol. 28, ff. 169v-70r.

and Thomas Pynchebek, a parson of York Minster (1479).¹³⁵ Bequests of separate volumes of the New Testament begin to appear in the early sixteenth century. A New Testament was owned by Lawrence Hall, a York priest, Edward Smithe, a rector of York, and Lancelot Smyth, a parson of Hilton in Holderness, all of whom died in the 1540s.¹³⁶ The pattern of book bequests by the Yorkshire clergy may therefore suggest that ownership of the New Testament was becoming more common as the popularity of the psalter declined.

Commentaries on the Bible were also in demand by a wide range of clergy during both the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Robert Alne, a parson of York Minster and examiner general, who held an MA from Cambridge, bequeathed in 1440 a copy of Nicholas de Lyra's gloss on the New Testament.¹³⁷ Another parson of York Minster, Richard Ulleskelfe, also mentioned in his will, proved in 1446, a glossed text of the book of Mark and a commentary of John Chrysostom.¹³⁸ Also in the same year, William Revetour, a chaplain of York, bequeathed a large roll with a tract on the Bible in Latin.¹³⁹ A book called '*Petrum Plesaunce super Job*' was bequeathed by Thomas Anlaby, a rector of Kirk Ella in 1476/7.¹⁴⁰ A volume of postilla on the gospels and epistles was likewise mentioned in the 1521 will of Edmund Longe, a vicar of Rawcliffe.¹⁴¹

The testamentary evidence thus reveals that some Yorkshire clergy were concerned with reading the text and interpretations of the Bible even before the English Reformation. There is no clear indication from the wills and inventories that this interest was greatly

¹³⁵BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, f. 15v; YML, L2/4, f. 343r.

¹³⁶YML, L2/5b, ff. 9Ar-v, 20r-v; BIHR, Archbishop's Register, vol. 29, ff. 77v-8r.

¹³⁷YML, L2/4, f. 250r-v; Emden, *Biographical Register of the University of Cambridge*, pp. 10-11.

¹³⁸YML, L2/4, f. 259r-v.

¹³⁹BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 137v-8v.

¹⁴⁰BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, f. 9r.

¹⁴¹BIHR, Archbishop's Register, vol. 27, f. 153r-v.

stimulated by the reforms of the early sixteenth century. Nevertheless, evidence of an increase of interest in the Bible during the Reformation may be obscured due to the availability of Bibles in parish churches, which meant that the clergy did not have to possess a copy themselves. The injunctions of 1536, 1541 and 1547 stated that every parish church should possess both a Latin and an English Bible.¹⁴² In 1539, the accounts of the church of St Michael, Spurriergate in York record a payment to John Warwick, stationer, ‘for on halff of ye bybylle’.¹⁴³ The churchwardens of the parish of Ecclesfield collected 17s 6½d in 1540-1 in order to buy a Bible, and three years later they paid 5s 9d for it to be mended.¹⁴⁴ Also, in 1541 and 1547/8, the Dean and Chapter of York purchased Bibles for the six churches in York and St Mary’s in Layerthorpe.¹⁴⁵ Thus, although the English Reformation stimulated the production and demand for Bibles by the parish churches, this may have resulted in a lessening of demand for such texts by the clergy, who could now use the copy held in a nearby church.

iv. Other Devotional Texts

A concern with contemplation and devotion can be seen in the wills and inventories of the Yorkshire clergy during the late fifteenth century. Like the pattern of bequests of Scriptural texts, the mention of books of devotion in the wills and inventories does not seem to have increased in the early sixteenth century. Instead, particular authors seem to have lost their interest for the Yorkshire clergy, while other works became more popular. An interest in the mystical works of Rolle can be found in the wills of Robert Alne, the already-mentioned

¹⁴²See chapter six, pp. 282-3.

¹⁴³BIHR, PR Y/MS/3, f. 41r; Webb (ed.), *Churchwardens’ Accounts*, 2: 221.

¹⁴⁴J. Eastwood, *History of the Parish of Ecclesfield in the County of York* (London, 1862), pp. 173-4.

¹⁴⁵J.S. Purvis, ‘Notes from the Diocesan Registry at York’, *Yorkshire Archaeological*

examiner general of York Minster (1440), Thomas Beleby, a York parson (1446), Nicholas Holme, canon of Ripon (1458), Robert Est (1467) and Thomas Pynchebek, both parsons of York (1479).¹⁴⁶ Alne also owned a copy of the *Orologium divine sapientie* and the *De consolatione philosophiae* of Boethius.¹⁴⁷ The *Orologium*, a spiritual autobiography of the Dominican Henry Suso, likewise appears in the will of Richard Ulleskelfe, a parson of York Minster, together with a book of prayers and meditations of St Anselm in 1446.¹⁴⁸ Unspecified books of devotion or meditation were also bequeathed by Thomas Monkton, a chaplain of York in 1446.¹⁴⁹ Books of the life and passion of Jesus Christ were owned by Thomas Howren, a priest of York, Thomas Horneby and William Warde, both chaplains of York in 1467, 1486 and 1496 respectively.¹⁵⁰

The owners of devotional texts during the sixteenth century include John Smart, vicar of North Frodingham, who bequeathed a summa of Bonaventure in 1502 and John Fitzherberd, a vicar choral of York Minster, who left an *Oculus moralis* in 1506 to the monastery of Thornton.¹⁵¹ The *Oculus moralis*, which discussed the moral significance of the eyes, was written by Peter de Lacediera.¹⁵² In contrast with the bequest of the works of Rolle during the fifteenth century, however, Rolle is not mentioned in the early sixteenth-century wills of the Yorkshire clergy. The testamentary evidence may therefore indicate a decline of interest in the works of Rolle which may be symptomatic of a changing attitude towards the monastic life. The ideals of a contemplative religious life were praised and

Journal 35 (1943): 389-403.

¹⁴⁶YML, L2/4, ff. 250r-v, 261r-v, 331r-v, 343r; BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 399r.

¹⁴⁷YML, L2/4, f. 250r-v.

¹⁴⁸YML, L2/4, f. 259r-v; Hughes, *Pastors and Visionaries*, p. 204.

¹⁴⁹BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 132v.

¹⁵⁰BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 4, f. 233r; vol. 5, ff. 260r-v, 502r-3r.

¹⁵¹BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 6, f. 56v; YML, L2/5a, ff. 63v-4v.

exhorted in devotional texts such as the writings of Rolle. It is therefore possible that the fall in the bequests of works of Rolle may be related to an increasing ambivalence or even contempt of the monastic life that antedates the main advance of Protestantism in the mid and late sixteenth century.¹⁵³ Too much emphasis should not be placed on the testamentary evidence, however, as the works of Rolle and other devotional writers continued to attract the attention of printers in London. The publications of Wynkyn de Worde, for example, included three editions of *Myracles of oure blessyd Lady*, two editions of the *Contemplacions of the drede and love of God* attributed to Rolle, the *Scale of Perfection* of Walter Hilton in 1494 and *The passyon of our lorde* in 1521.¹⁵⁴

In contrast with the fall in the number of bequests of Rolle, books on the life and passion of Christ begin to appear more frequently in the testamentary sources during the early sixteenth century. A '*vita Christi*' was bequeathed by Robert Bechame, a chantry priest of All Saint's church, Pavement in York and Robert Strey, a priest of Sprotbrough, in 1521/2 and 1545.¹⁵⁵ A book described as '*laudulphus de vita Christi*' was mentioned in the will of a priest of Doncaster, Robert Denton, in 1531.¹⁵⁶ The version of the life of Christ by Ludolph of Saxony had been published in Strasbourg in 1474 and was reprinted in twelve other editions before the sixteenth century.¹⁵⁷ The Yorkshire clergy's continuing interest in the life of Christ is paralleled in the frequent publication of *Vita Christi* texts in London. An English version was first produced by William Atkinson, and then by de

¹⁵²Boyle, '*Oculus Sacerdotis*', p. 83.

¹⁵³Helen C. White, 'Some Continuing Traditions in English Devotional Literature', *PMLA* 57 (1942): 966-80.

¹⁵⁴STC 14042, 14558, 17539-41, 21259-60; Margaret Connolly (ed.), *Contemplations of the Dread and Love of God*, EETS o.s. 303 (1993), p. xvi.

¹⁵⁵BIHR, Archbishop's Register, vol. 27, f. 154-v; Prob. Reg., vol. 13, f. 24r-v.

¹⁵⁶BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 10, f. 99v.

¹⁵⁷F.R. Goff, *Incunabula in American Libraries* (New York, 1964), L336-349.

Worde in 1502 and Pynson in 1503 and was repeatedly reprinted.¹⁵⁸

A variety of devotional texts was owned by the religious houses of Yorkshire up until the dissolution. An interest in meditation and contemplation is most evident at the priory of Mount Grace, to which five fifteenth-century manuscripts have been linked. The texts include the *Cloud of Unknowing*, the autobiography of Margery Kempe and the *Speculum spiritualium*.¹⁵⁹ The *Prick of Conscience* was also owned by Fountains abbey and the Franciscan convent in York.¹⁶⁰ The list of books given to Swine convent in the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century include the *Liber specialis gratiae* of Mechtild of Hackeborn and a book of the *Revelations* of St Bridget of Sweden.¹⁶¹ The books of the dissolved library of Monk Bretton retrieved by some of its former monks likewise included the *Vita Christi* of Ludolph of Saxony, the *Revelations* of St Bridget and a copy of the *De consolatione philosophiae* of Boethius.¹⁶²

While evidence of the ownership of saints' lives by the graduate clergy is very rare, these texts appear relatively frequently in the wills and inventories of the Yorkshire chaplains. There is no obvious correlation between the interest of the chaplains in particular saints and the dedications of the altars or chantries at which they prayed, which suggests that their interest in saints extended beyond their liturgical duties. James of Voragine's *Legenda aurea* was repeatedly mentioned in the testamentary sources. Owners of this text included Thomas Roger, vicar of Batley, John Arnclif, a chaplain of St Mary's church in Ripon and Thomas Anlaby, rector of Kirk Ella.¹⁶³ Works on the life of the Blessed Virgin

¹⁵⁸White, 'Some Continuing Traditions', p. 976.

¹⁵⁹Ker, *Medieval Libraries*, p. 132.

¹⁶⁰Ibid., pp. 88-9, 218.

¹⁶¹Bell (ed.), *Libraries of the Cistercians*, pp. 144-6.

¹⁶²Walker, *Abstracts*, pp. 5-6.

¹⁶³BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 154r; vol. 5, f. 9r; Fowler (ed.), *Acts of the Chapter*, p. 182.

Mary were also in demand. William Downholm and Thomas Spawde, chaplains of York and John Danby, a York parson, each owned a life of the Virgin Mary in the late fifteenth century.¹⁶⁴ A life of St Thomas of Canterbury was likewise mentioned in the wills of John Knapton, a subtreasurer of York who died in 1471 and William Barbour, a chaplain of All Saints church, Peasholme in York in 1477.¹⁶⁵

The evidence of the bequests of devotional texts is thus similar to the patterns I have analysed for pastoral manuals and Scriptural texts. There are indications that certain texts, such as those on the life of Christ, became more popular after they were available in print. In general, however, the testamentary sources suggest that the reading interests of the clergy remained fairly constant over the period c.1450-1550. There are indications of a gradual waning of interest in the works of Rolle over the period, but it is likely that this was independent from the sixteenth-century reforming ideology.

2. Manuals for Teaching

The evidence of wills and inventories has therefore indicated some changes in the ownership of pastoral and sacramental texts, such as an increasingly interest in preaching, that were not directly related to the Reformation or the new technology of print. The ownership of grammar books likewise seems to have become more common during this period, and this trend also predates the Reformation. The late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries were a period of growing interest in and promotion of education. Moran has traced a significant and sudden rise in the evidence for schools in York diocese in the sixteenth century.¹⁶⁶ Before 1548, eighty-five grammar schools are known to have existed in the diocese. The

¹⁶⁴BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 487v-8r; vol. 4, ff. 149v-50r; YML, L2/4, ff. 361v-2r.

¹⁶⁵YML, L2/4, f. 326r-v; BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, f. 15v.

¹⁶⁶Moran, *Growth*, pp. 95-98.

first documented date for forty-five or over half of these schools is in the early sixteenth century. Likewise, while only thirty-eight reading schools are known in Yorkshire during the period 1401-1450 and forty-seven between 1451 and 1500, 109 reading schools are recorded during the early sixteenth century.¹⁶⁷

Moran argues that the rise in the number of schools was a result of the laity's growing interest in education.¹⁶⁸ In chapter three I will discuss the factors which stimulated the laity to learn to read and write. Ownership of grammar books by the clergy shows that they were responsive to this growing demand for elementary education during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Although some of the texts may have been for the cleric's own study, most of them seem to have been intended for use as teaching aids in the parish or local grammar school. The *Doctrinale* of Alexander de Villa Dei, for example, was a standard text for teaching.¹⁶⁹ The occurrence of this text in the will of Thomas Taylour, a priest of Pontefract, in 1512 suggests that he may have undertaken teaching.¹⁷⁰ A '*liber de incarnatione verbis*' was also bequeathed by William Monceaux, a chaplain of the hospital of Burton Agnes, in 1505.¹⁷¹ There is evidence that Burton Agnes held a reading school in 1497 and a song school in 1519.¹⁷²

Dictionaries were particularly in demand during the period. An example is the *Catholicon* of John de Balbis, a Dominican of Genoa. It was mentioned in nine clerical wills of Yorkshire, six of which are dated to the sixteenth century.¹⁷³ The *Medulla*

¹⁶⁷Ibid., p. 102.

¹⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 99, 159-60.

¹⁶⁹Ibid., pp. 26-7.

¹⁷⁰BIHR, Archbishop's Register, vol. 25, ff. 161v-2r; Prob. Reg., vol. 8, f. 85r.

¹⁷¹BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 6, f. 139r.

¹⁷²Moran, *Growth*, p. 243.

¹⁷³BIHR, Archbishop's Register, vol. 20, f. 273v (Skelton); vol. 25, ff. 8r-9v (Duffield); vol. 27, f. 153r-v (Longe); Prob. Reg., vol. 5, f. 486r (Farbarn); vol. 6, f. 113r (Rowkshaw); vol.

grammaticae, a Latin-English dictionary, was also bequeathed in 1440, 1479, 1512 and 1513.¹⁷⁴ The three wills and one inventory mentioning another Latin-English dictionary, the *Hortus vocabulorum* attributed to Geoffrey the Grammarian, are all of the sixteenth century.¹⁷⁵ Unspecified books of grammar also continued to be popular throughout the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.¹⁷⁶

This growing concern with education was quickly perceived and acted on by the York printers and stationers. In 1512 Harman Johnson paid customs dues at Hull on a cargo which included fifty grammar books.¹⁷⁷ As has been discussed in chapter two, elementary grammar books, suitable for use in grammar schools, were produced by the early sixteenth-century York printers. A *Donatus minor* and the *Accidence* of John Stanbridge are known to have been produced by Goes although no copies have survived. The *Ars minor* of Donatus provided an introduction to the parts of speech and their properties.¹⁷⁸ Stanbridge's *Accidence* was a manual for teachers that helped them to give lessons in English on Latin grammar.¹⁷⁹ In 1516, Milner produced an edition of a grammar text of

8, f. 85r (Taylour); YML, L2/5a, ff. 156r-v (Fewlare), 161r-3r (Cook), 190v-1r (Rayner).

¹⁷⁴YML, L2/4, ff. 348v-9r (Lythe); L2/5a, ff. 99v-100r (York); BIHR, Archbishop's Register, vol. 26, f. 141v (Shirburn); Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 17r (Bagule).

¹⁷⁵YML, L2/5a, f. 141r (Usher); BIHR, Dean and Chapter original wills, 1547 (Hixon); Prob. Reg., vol. 11, ff. 368v-9r (Woodall); Archbishop's Register, vol. 29, ff. 75v-6v (Plumtre).

¹⁷⁶Fowler (ed.), *Acts of the Chapter*, p. 86 (Forster), p. 153 (Brompton); p. 295 (Dokker); BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 469v (Lassels); vol. 4, f. 67v (Fernell); vol. 5, f. 284r (Lese); Archbishop's Register, vol. 25, ff. 163v-4r (Gree); vol. 27, f. 153r-v (Longe); YML, L2/4, f. 368r (Dove); L2/5a, ff. 99v-100r (York), 143v-4r (Barra).

¹⁷⁷PRO, E122/64/2, f. 21r.

¹⁷⁸Vivien Law, 'The Study of Grammar', in Rosamund McKitterick (ed.), *Carolingian Culture: Emulation and Innovation* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 89.

¹⁷⁹Nikolaus Henkel, 'Printed School Texts: Types of Bilingual Presentation in Incunabula', *Renaissance Studies* 9 (1995): 212-27.

Robert Whittinton and in 1532 Warwick printed another edition of Stanbridge.¹⁸⁰ The publication of these texts by Goes, Milner and Warwick was a risky undertaking as these works had already been printed in London. The *Ars minor* of Donatus, for example, had been printed in the late fifteenth century by Caxton, William de Machlinia, Richard Pynson and Wynkyn de Worde.¹⁸¹ The reprinting of these grammar texts in York suggests that the market for these works in the north was substantial.

Classical texts and grammar books can also be found in the catalogues of the religious houses of Yorkshire, such as the collections of books kept by the ex-religious of Monk Bretton. Unlike the wills and inventories of the secular clergy in general, however, the library of Monk Bretton reveals an interest in humanism. The library included two copies of the *Familiarum colloquiorum formulae* of Erasmus, a copy of the letters of Horace and a volume containing Laurentius Valla's *Elegantiae de lingua latina*, *Distichs* of Cato and Martin of Braga's *Formula vitae honestae*, attributed to Seneca.¹⁸² The wills and inventories of the secular clergy, and the limited evidence of the curricula of Yorkshire schools in contrast only rarely reveal humanist interests.¹⁸³ An example is Richard Oliver, a vicar of All Saints in North Street, who bequeathed a dictionary called 'Callepyn', a book of the adages of Erasmus and two works by Cicero.¹⁸⁴ This suggests that the interest in grammar amongst the secular clergy was not therefore prompted by enthusiasm for humanism, but was instead a response to the growing demand for and promotion of education by the laity.

¹⁸⁰London, British Library, Harley 6115, p. 6; STC 23151, 25542.

¹⁸¹STC 7013-7016.

¹⁸²Sharp, Carley, Thomson and Watson (eds.), *English Benedictine Libraries*, pp. 266-87, nos. 74, 140-2.

¹⁸³Moran, *Growth*, pp. 214-19.

¹⁸⁴BIHR, Archbishop's Register, vol. 28, ff. 168r-9r.

3. Academic Subjects

In this analysis of clerical reading interests so far, I have been generally positive about the literary interests of both the graduate and non-graduate clergy. However, the testamentary sources suggest that the academic subjects of law, medicine and theology continued throughout this period to be a concern of the clerical élite. The wills and inventories of the book-owning graduates of Yorkshire were around five times as likely to mention a law text as those of the other clergy in the survey. An example is Robert Abyrforth, rector of Ryther with an MA from Oxford, who was supplicated for a B.Cn.L.¹⁸⁵ In his will, proved in 1471, Abyrforth left to Robert Ryther, a bachelor of law, a volume of *Decretales* and the *Apparatus* of Innocent IV.¹⁸⁶ Law books were also mentioned in the wills of Richard Tone, an archdeacon of the East Riding and doctor of canon law, and William Braunde, a receiver general of the see of York in 1464 and 1475 respectively.¹⁸⁷

The parochial clergy and chaplains of Yorkshire who revealed an unusual interest in law favoured the standard reference texts such as the *Decretum* of Gratian and *Decretales* of Gregory IX.¹⁸⁸ Books of ‘decrees’ or ‘decretals’ were bequeathed by Roger Rasker, rector of Deighton in 1445; John Witer, rector of Rowley in 1469 and John Arnclif, a chaplain of Ripon in 1478.¹⁸⁹ John Danby, a parson of York Minster, bequeathed a *Summa*

¹⁸⁵Emden, *Biographical Register of the University of Oxford*, 1: 3.

¹⁸⁶BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 4, f. 172r.

¹⁸⁷BIHR, Archbishop’s Register, vol. 20, f. 287r; Prob. Reg., vol. 4, f. 127r-v; James Raine (ed.), *Testamenta Eboracensia III*, Surtees Society 45 (1865), p. 216n; John Le Neve, *Fasti Ecclesie Anglicanae 1300-1541: VI Northern Province* (London, 1963), pp. 23, 72, 83.

¹⁸⁸F.A.C. Mantello and A.G. Rigg (eds.), *Medieval Latin: An Introduction and Bibliographical Guide* (Washington, 1996), pp. 241, 246; James A. Brundage, *Medieval Canon Law* (London and New York, 1995), p. 190.

¹⁸⁹BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 119r-v; vol. 4, f. 138r-v; Fowler (ed.), *Acts of the Chapter*, p. 326.

summarum to St William's college of chantry priests in 1485.¹⁹⁰ The *Summa summarum* was a compendium of theology and canon law in five books, compiled by William of Pagula.¹⁹¹ Volumes of *Constitutiones provinciales* or *Constitutiones othoni et othoboni* also appear in the wills of John Arnall, a York rector (1446), Henry Knotton, vicar of Wawne (1517) and Lawrence Hall, a York priest (1548).¹⁹² The *Institutiones* of Justinian, which provided an introductory guide to Roman law, was itemised in the probate inventory of Thomas Barton, a vicar of York in 1523.¹⁹³ These parochial clergy and chaplains who owned legal texts are not known to have been involved in the church courts. The law books may have been acquired to assist in pastoral care. According to William of Pagula, a knowledge of canon law was a necessity for all clergy who were involved in the cure of souls.¹⁹⁴ An understanding of canon law could be particularly useful in taking confession and deciding on appropriate penances.¹⁹⁵

Books of academic theology are usually only found in the wills of the more senior and educated clergy. Robert Alne, the already mentioned examiner general of York Minster and MA graduate of Cambridge, for example, owned a number of scholarly texts including two works of Thomas Aquinas, the *Secunda secundae summa theologia* and the *De veritate* in 1440.¹⁹⁶ Theological and philosophical texts, such as the *In quartum librum sententiarum* and *Compendium theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas and the *Liber sententiarum* of Peter Lombard, likewise formed the main part of the library of Edmund Norton, who was

¹⁹⁰YML, L2/4, f. 361v-2r.

¹⁹¹Boyle, 'Oculus Sacerdotis', pp. 81-110; Pantin, *English Church*, p. 196.

¹⁹²BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 144v; YML, L2/4, f. 115v; L2/5b, f. 20r-v.

¹⁹³Mantello and Rigg (eds.), *Medieval Latin*, p. 255; BIHR, Dean and Chapter original wills, 1523.

¹⁹⁴Ball, 'Education', p. 189.

¹⁹⁵Ibid., p. 193.

¹⁹⁶YML, L2/4, f. 250r-v.

probably a fellow of Balliol College, Oxford and a Yorkshire priest in 1467.¹⁹⁷ William Braunde, a rector of Settrington, gave the Archbishop of York a theological text called *Pharetra* in 1475.¹⁹⁸ An impressive library of theological books including the works of St Jerome, Chrysostom, Origen and Bede, was also mentioned in the will of Charles Parsons, a vicar of Ecclesfield who died in 1549.¹⁹⁹ An interest in medicine also seems to have been confined to the graduate clergy throughout the period c.1450-1550. A copy of the *Rosa anglica practica medicine* of John of Gaddesden was bequeathed by William Duffield, the already mentioned residentiary canon of York, in 1453 and in 1458 Nicholas Holme left an unspecified book of medicine in his will.²⁰⁰ The *Regimen sanitatis* of Salerno was also included in the 1508 probate inventory of Martin Collins, a residentiary canon of York.²⁰¹ Thus the testamentary sources indicate that books on academic subjects continued to be a concern only of the clerical élite during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries and that their appeal does not seem to have been affected by the advent of print.

This detailed survey of the texts mentioned in the wills and inventories of the clergy and religious institutions of Yorkshire in the period 1450-1550 enables us to suggest a profile of the types of books in demand by the variety of secular and regular clergy. The wide variety of secular clergy, including graduates, ecclesiastical administrators, parochial clergy and chaplains, needed liturgical texts for the celebration of mass. They also seem to have shared a common interest in pastoral manuals and preaching aids, devotional texts, Scriptural works and grammar books. The reading concerns of the graduate clergy can be

¹⁹⁷Leonard E. Boyle and Richard H. Rouse, 'A Fifteenth-Century List of the Books of Edmund Norton', *Speculum* 50 (1975): 284-8.

¹⁹⁸BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 4, f. 127r-v.

¹⁹⁹BIHR, Archbishop's Register, vol. 29, ff. 94v-5r.

²⁰⁰YML, L2/4, ff. 272v-4r; BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 399r.

²⁰¹YML, L1(17)18.

distinguished from the lesser ministry, however, as their wills and inventories indicate a greater interest in the more academic pastoral manuals, theology, and the more specialist law texts and medicine. The non-graduate clergy are also known to have possessed the more 'heavy-going' pastoral manuals, but they seem to have preferred the less demanding texts, such as the *Manipulus curatorum*. The interest of the parochial clergy and chaplains in saints' lives was also only rarely revealed in the wills and inventories of the graduate clergy. The literary interests of the religious communities also differed in emphasis from those of the secular clergy, and therefore stimulated a market for different texts. Evidence of the ownership of a wide range of texts, such as pastoral manuals and preaching aids, grammar and physic, can be found, but these interests were subordinate to the overwhelming concern with Scripture and theology. This profile of clerical reading is very similar to that found for Norwich.²⁰² The non-graduate clergy of Norwich owned mainly saints' lives, pastoral manuals and books of sermons, while Scriptural texts and works of the Fathers of the Church were more frequently found in the possession of the graduate clergy.

Little indication is given in the testamentary evidence of the effect of print on the reading interests of the clergy or religious institutions. The extant printed books known to have been purchased by the monasteries and friaries of Yorkshire at the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth century show the same concerns as during the manuscript period. Fountains Abbey, for example, owned printed texts such as a Bible with gloss, a breviary, the sermons of Vincent Ferrer and a work of Petrus Berchorius, which may have been his dictionary or *Morale reductorium super totam Bibliam*.²⁰³ Likewise, a Bible, the

²⁰²Norman P. Tanner, *The Church in Late Medieval Norwich 1370-1532* (Toronto, 1984), pp. 35-42.

²⁰³Ker, *Medieval Libraries*, pp. 88-9.

Fortalium fidei of Alphonsus a Spina and a volume of works of St Anselm in print were held in the library of Mount Grace.²⁰⁴ The Augustinian priory of Nostell likewise owned a Bible with the commentary of Nicholas de Lyra and the *De ratione studii ac legendi* of Erasmus.²⁰⁵ It is also difficult to perceive any major changes in the book bequests of the clergy due to the advent of print. Over the period 1440-1550 an increasing interest in preaching and grammar, and a slight waning of enthusiasm for the works of Rolle are suggested by the testamentary sources, yet there is no reason to suggest that these changes were prompted by the advent of print or the English Reformation. Nevertheless, it is possible to see a hint, but no more than that, of the effects of print in the choice of individual texts owned by the secular clergy. As I have shown, the pattern of the mention of books in wills and inventories suggests that particular books, such as the *Vita Christi* of Ludolph of Saxony, the *Manipulus curatorum*, the *Ortus vocabulorum* or the *Sermones discipuli*, were more frequently mentioned in the wills and inventories of the early sixteenth century. This may be an indication of a ‘concentration’ of texts. The production of books from the presses may have had the result of channelling the interests of readers towards the books that were easily available in a bookshop. Furthermore, the large number of texts produced in any edition would have enabled a book to achieve greater popularity. Too much emphasis should not be placed on these changes for the period 1450-1550, yet there is a hint of them in the pattern of clerical book ownership.

An indication of the importance of the demand for books generated by the secular clergy, the Minster and parish churches, and the religious houses in the book trade of York can be gained from an assessment of the stock of texts held by Neville Mores in 1538. Caution is required in using the evidence of Mores’ stock of books. The list is a probate

²⁰⁴Ker, *Medieval Libraries*, p. 132; Watson, *Supplement*, p. 49.

²⁰⁵Watson, *Supplement*, p. 51.

inventory of the texts he held at the time of his death. It is not an account of the sale of books and therefore cannot be used as a simple indication of the popularity of certain books. The stock is a snapshot of what was available to buy in his shop at that particular time and may include texts which Mores had held for a long time because he had failed to find a buyer for them.

An analysis of Mores's stock suggests that he served a specialist market, catering primarily for a clerical and religious clientele. This argument will be developed further in chapter four, where the lay market for books will be discussed. Mores held a large stock of service books, including thirty-six missals, twenty-five breviaries, a psalter and processional.²⁰⁶ These texts were needed by both the religious and secular clergy and institutions. The large number of missals and breviaries in stock reflects the patterns of ownership of these texts in the early sixteenth-century wills of the clergy.²⁰⁷ Between 1501 and 1550, forty-four breviaries and thirteen missals were bequeathed, compared with only three processionals and two psalters. Manuals of pastoral care were also provided by Mores, including the *Pupilla oculi* and a number of sermon collections.²⁰⁸ As well as service books and pastoral manuals which would have appealed to a wide range of clergy, the stock also included more specialist subjects which indicates that Mores was particularly interested in the custom of the religious houses and graduate clergy of the Minster. A large selection of legal texts, such as legal commentaries of Bartolus de Saxoferrato and the *Digestum infortiatum*, *Digestum novum* and *Institutiones* of Justinian are itemised.²⁰⁹ Mores also stocked some classical and humanist texts and books of medicine, such as the

²⁰⁶BIHR, Dean and Chapter original wills, 1538; Palliser and Selwyn, 'Stock', pp. 207-19, nos 1, 2, 12, 42, 43.

²⁰⁷See appendix three.

²⁰⁸Palliser and Selwyn, 'Stock', nos 17, 24-26, 28, 29, 31, 39.

²⁰⁹Ibid., nos 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13 etc.

Sex comoediarum opus of Terence, a volume of dialogues of Lucian, Ovid's *De remedio amoris*, and the *Summa conservationis et curationis* of William de Saliceto.²¹⁰

Mores seems to have been up to date with the trends we have seen in the patterns of book bequests. The growing demand for grammar texts as a result of the increasing interest in education was perceived and exploited by Mores. Mores had in stock a number of grammar texts including 'Roullinos', which was perhaps a grammar book or dictionary of Johann Reuchlin; the *Synonyma* ascribed to John of Garland; the *Synonyma* of Cicero Victurius and the *Expositio Donati*.²¹¹ Mores did not, however, stock books of devotion and contemplation. As I have shown, the testamentary evidence suggests that an interest in contemplation and mysticism, in particular the works of Rolle, may have begun to wane in the early sixteenth century.

The overwhelming proportion of Latin texts in Mores' inventory can be taken as further evidence that he was predominantly concerned with the clerical market. Nevertheless, despite the traditional association of Latin for the clergy and English for the laity, the ownership of vernacular works by the religious and secular clergy of late fifteenth and early sixteenth century Yorkshire was not unusual. Two unnamed English books were mentioned in the will of John Belamy, a rector of York, in 1452.²¹² A *Legenda sanctorum* 'in lingua anglicana scriptum' was also bequeathed by Thomas Thorp, a chantry chaplain of St Mary's Abbey in 1463.²¹³ In 1483, a chaplain of Stamford Bridge, William Beverley, likewise gave an unnamed English book to John Mason.²¹⁴ The libraries of the dispossessed of Monk Bretton also included vernacular texts such as an English *Legenda aurea*, *The*

²¹⁰Ibid., nos 21-23, 38, 45, 47, 51, 55.

²¹¹Ibid., nos 19, 33, 48, 49.

²¹²BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 251r-v.

²¹³'written in the English language'. BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 594v-5r.

²¹⁴BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, f. 207r-v.

Flour of the Commaundementes of God and *The Pylgrimage of Perfection*.²¹⁵ The abilities of late medieval nuns to understand or write Latin were generally less confident than their male counterparts, and their libraries show a preference for English texts. A direct comparison between the literary interests of the female and male religious can be made by studying the libraries of Syon Abbey.²¹⁶ The library of the female members of the abbey contained twenty-three theological texts, of which seventeen were in English. Out of the 1421 books held in the library of the brothers, however, only around thirty were in English or French. The Benedictine nunnery at Marrick owned an early fifteenth-century text of *The Dream of the Pilgrimage of the Soul*.²¹⁷ Agnes Vavasour, a nun of the Cistercian nunnery of Swine, also received an English book of the life of St Katherine from a York chaplain, Thomas Horneby, in 1486.²¹⁸ Thus, the testamentary evidence for the ownership of vernacular texts and the evidence of library catalogues contrasts with the absence of these books in the inventory of Mores. It is possible that the demand for English books by the secular and religious clergy was not large enough to make a profit and therefore Mores did not stock them. Alternatively, the problematic evidence of the probate inventory leaves the possibility that Mores did usually sell English texts but that he had run out of these books at the time the inventory was made.

The books held by Mores therefore suggest that his most important customers were the religious houses and clergy, particularly the wealthy ecclesiastics who served or visited the Minster. The books stocked by Mores are very similar to the types of books sold by the

²¹⁵Sharpe, Carley, Thomson and Watson (eds.), *English Benedictine Libraries*, nos 26-8.

²¹⁶David N. Bell, *What Nuns Read: Books and Libraries in Middle English Nunneries* (Kalamazoo, 1995), pp. 74-5; Eileen Power, *Medieval English Nunneries c.1275-1535* (Cambridge, 1922), p. 249.

²¹⁷Ker, *Medieval Libraries*, p. 129.

²¹⁸BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, f. 260r-v.

Oxford stationer, John Dorne, in 1520 despite the different types of evidence for each.²¹⁹ Evidence of the book trade of Dorne comes from his day-book or ledger, in which were recorded the titles of the books he sold and the price. Dorne's sales on 11 November 1520, for example, included two volumes of grammar by Sulpitius, the *Adagia* and *Colloquia* of Erasmus, the *Decretales*, two primers, a missal, a breviary, the *Pupilla oculi*, the *Manipulus curatorum* and a book of sermons. Both Mores and Dorne therefore relied to a large extent on the demand for books generated by the high-ranking ecclesiastics and scholars.

The location of the shops of other York stationers and printers, such as John Gachet and Thomas Richardson, in the parish of St Michael le Belfrey near the Minster indicates that Mores was not unusual in his dependence on this section of Yorkshire society.²²⁰ The fortunes of the professional book trade are likely therefore to have followed closely the changes in the clerical readership. There is evidence that from the 1450s to the first decade of the sixteenth century, the clerical population of the diocese of York grew rapidly.²²¹ At the beginning of the period, an average of around ninety-eight ordinations occurred each year. By the early sixteenth century, this had risen to around 221, an increase of 124%.²²² The dramatic increase in the numbers of clergy in Yorkshire during this period would have stimulated a demand for more liturgical texts, pastoral manuals and other books favoured by the clergy. It is at least possible that the increasing number of book-producers and traders in the city over the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries may have been partly in response to this demand.

The probate inventory of Mores was made during the period of the dissolutions. In

²¹⁹F. Madan, 'Day-Book of John Dorne, Bookseller in Oxford, A.D. 1520', *Oxford Historical Society Publications* 5 (1885): 71-177; 16 (1890): 453-78.

²²⁰See chapter two, pp. 107-8, 112.

²²¹The rise in clerical ordinations has already been briefly discussed in chapter one, p. 68.

²²²Moran, 'Clerical Recruitment', pp. 47-9.

the same year (1538), Holy Trinity Priory, St Andrew's Priory and the four friaries of York were dissolved. The suppression of St Mary's Abbey and St Leonard's Hospital followed in the next year.²²³ The effects of the dissolution of the religious houses of England on the book trade would not have been immediate. The monks and friars who enjoyed books are likely to have continued to be customers of the book trade after their communities had been dispersed. Moreover, a number of dispossessed monks and friars continued to serve the cure of souls or managed to obtain parochial livings, and therefore still needed service and prayer books.²²⁴ Nevertheless, the evidence I have presented of the importance of the demand for books generated by the religious houses suggests that in the long term the suppression would have resulted in a serious loss of custom for book producers and traders. The community of religious had promoted and encouraged an interest in reading amongst their members, not simply as intellectual stimulation, but as the *lectio divina*.²²⁵ The fourteenth-century customary of St Mary's Abbey, for example, describes the programme of reading in the cloister every day, which included Gregory's *Dialogues*, Isidore's *Sententiae* and the *Vitae patrum* of Jerome.²²⁶ The wealth of the houses, which enabled them to patronise the book trade and accumulate large libraries, was also lost or dispersed. The annual income of St Mary's Abbey had been £2,085 before the dissolution.²²⁷

It is likely that the dissolution of the chantries in 1548 also reduced the demand for

²²³Palliser, *Reformation in York*, p. 12.

²²⁴Cross, 'Parochial Structure', p. 273; Claire Cross, 'The Dissolution of the Monasteries and the Yorkshire Church in the Sixteenth Century' in John C. Appleby and Paul Dutton (eds), *Government, Religion and Society in Northern England 1000-1700* (Stroud, 1997), pp. 159-71.

²²⁵Beryl Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1941), pp. 13-23.

²²⁶Sharpe, Carley, Thomson and Watson (eds.), *English Benedictine Libraries*, p. 677; Abbess of Stanbrook and J.B.L. Talhurst (eds.), *The Ordinal and Customary of the Abbey of Saint Mary, York*, Henry Bradshaw Publications 73, 75, 84 (1936-51).

²²⁷Sharpe, Carley, Thomson and Watson (eds.), *English Benedictine Libraries*, p. 677.

service books. The impact of the dissolution would have been more acute in the north and west of England where the average number of chantries for each church was higher than elsewhere in England, with the exception of London. The churches of the West Riding of Yorkshire, for example, contained approximately ten times as many chantries as those in Suffolk.²²⁸ The city of York alone contained around one hundred chantries.²²⁹ The visitation records of the Dean and Chapter reveal that each chantry had been expected to possess at least one missal.²³⁰ St Michael's chantry in St Helen's in Stonegate, York, was given a hymnal and a quire with the psalm 'venite' in 1443.²³¹ In 1480, the chantry of St Katherine in St Crux, York, was given seven marks for a new missal by John Bullington, a chaplain of the church.²³² No definite conclusions can be made relating to the impact of the Reformation on the book trade as the late sixteenth century is beyond the scope of this thesis. Nevertheless, I have shown that the custom of the religious houses and the chantries was important for the book producers and sellers, and this indicates that these respective dissolutions had an adverse impact on the book trade.

The clergy and religious institutions thus stimulated a market for books that was large enough to attract the attentions of continental and London printers and which constituted the main source of income for Mores, and probably the other York stationers and printers. Over the period c. 1450-1530 this market was expanding, not only with the growing popularity of particular texts such as preaching manuals and the life of Christ, but also with the rise in the number of clergy who were ordained and the increasing interest in education

²²⁸ Alan Kreider, *English Chantries: the Road to Dissolution* (Cambridge, Mass., 1979), pp. 15, 90.

²²⁹ Palliser, *Reformation in York*, p. 4.

²³⁰ Raine (ed.), *Fabric Rolls*, pp. 274-306.

²³¹ BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 75v-6r.

²³² BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, f. 96v.

by the laity. Despite the general religious conservatism of the Yorkshire clergy, the testamentary sources indicate an enthusiasm for manuals to assist in pastoral and sacramental duties and in teaching the laity. The advent of print therefore served a readership that was already well established and thriving. Although there are indications that the production of printed books may have served to increase the popularity of particular books, the wills and inventories do not reveal an overall expansion of the variety of books read during this period.

Chapter 4

The Demand for Books: The Laity

Discussions of the reading and writing skills of the laity and their ownership of literary texts in late-medieval and early-modern England have often presented a contrast between the extent of literacy during the manuscript era and that after the advent of print.¹

Examples have already been given of theories that in the late Middle Ages the literacy of the laity was restricted by the cost and scarcity of manuscript books and the clergy's condemnation of lay reading of suspect vernacular books. Medieval culture was supposedly dominated by the use of images and the need for memorisation. Early-modern England, in contrast, is said to have enjoyed widespread literacy as a result of the Protestant emphasis on the laity's reading of the English Scriptures and the availability of cheap books produced from the printing presses.²

These arguments are seductive in that they present a very clear and simple interpretation of the impact of print and the Reformation on the literacy of the laity. The aim of this chapter is to analyse whether the transition from medieval to modern and from print to manuscript was indeed as straightforward as has been suggested. I will investigate both the continuities and the changes over the period with respect to lay literacy, the ownership of books and their relation to the rise of a professional provincial book trade. Using the evidence of wills, probate inventories and extant books, I will suggest a profile of the lay reading public of Yorkshire during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. The mention of books in testamentary sources will be analysed to see if any effects of print

¹For examples, see the introduction, pp. 3-5.

²See, for example, Luxton, 'Reformation and Popular Culture', pp. 57-77; Stone, 'Literacy and Education', pp. 69-139; Patrick Collinson, *The Birthpangs of Protestant England: Religion and Social Change in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (New York, 1988),

and the Reformation can be perceived. The stimulus given to the literacy of the laity by the production of cheap books by the presses will not be an important concern in this discussion, as it will be explored more fully in chapter five (on the cost of books). The focus of this chapter is on the different incentives which prompted the laity to learn to read, such as a need for private spiritual edification or in order to deal with business documents, and the variety of reading interests revealed by the books that they owned.

This discussion of the lay reading public of Yorkshire is dependent to a large extent on the evidence of inventories and the sample of 1,200 lay wills. The problematic nature of testamentary evidence has been discussed in the introduction to this thesis. It must be emphasised that the conclusions drawn from these sources many present only a limited picture and cannot be used as an accurate representation of the literacy or book ownership of all the lay inhabitants of Yorkshire. Nevertheless, the statistical study of the wills and inventories will stimulate a more qualitative discussion of the patterns of book ownership. In chapters five and six, the testamentary evidence will be assessed together with a greater range of evidence to confirm or qualify the initial impressions presented here.

The frequency of book bequests in the sample of Yorkshire lay wills according to occupation and status is shown in tables 6 and 7. Women have been categorised according to the occupation of their husbands. Those who are known to have practised more than one trade have been included under each of the different categories. Information concerning the occupation of testators has been gained from details given in the wills themselves and through identifications made with the freemen's register of York. The figures must be treated with caution: it has been possible to find out the occupation of only 393 of the 1,200 testators or their husbands (around 33%). The small number of identified artisans in certain categories may give a misleading result. An example is the group of wood-

workers; the one book owner amongst a total of nine wood craftsmen gives the high result of an 11.1% rate of book ownership. With this caveat in mind, it is nevertheless possible to get a general impression of how the frequency of book bequests varies between the different trades and occupations in the period 1450-1550.

Table 6

Proportion of Yorkshire Lay Book Owners according to Occupation and Status

	Total no. of men and women	Total no. which mention books	%
Gentry / Aristocracy	74	9	12.2
Mercantile	54	3	5.6
Victuals	46	3	6.5
Metal	25	2	8
Wood	9	1	11.1
Textile	27	-	-
Clothing	12	-	-
Leather	32	-	-
Building	7	-	-
Agriculture	61	1	1.6
Professional	10	4	40
Miscellaneous	31	1	3.1

Sources:

Sample of 1,200 Yorkshire lay wills; F. Collins (ed.), *Register of the Freemen of the City of York, 1272-1558*, Surtees Society 96 (1897).

Table 7**Book Ownership by the Yorkshire Laity according to Occupation and Status**

	Men		Women	
	Total no. of wills	No. which mention books	Total no. of wills	No. which Mention books
Gentry /				
Aristocracy	62	5	12	4
Mercantile				
Chapman	2			
Draper	6			
Mercer	7			
Merchant	36	1	3	2
Total	51	1	3	2
Victuals				
Baker	9	1	1	
Brewer	1			
Butcher	18	1		
Cook	4		1	
Fishmonger	5		1	
Grocer	2		1	
Miller	2	1		
Mustard maker	1			
Spicer	1			
Vintner	3			
Water leader	1			
Total	42	3	4	
Metal				
Armourer	1			
Bladesmith	1			
Brazier	2			
Cutler	1			
Founder	1			
Girdler	4	1		
Goldsmith	2		1	
Ironmonger	1	1		
Marshal / Smith	5			
Pewterer	2			
Pinner	1		1	
Spurrier	1			
Plumber	1			
Total	23	2	2	

Table 7 (continued)

	Men		Women	
	Total no. of wills	No which mention books	Total no. of wills	No which mention books
Wood				
Bowyer	2		1	
Cooper	2			
Fletcher	3	1		
Wright	1			
Total	8	1	1	
Textile				
Dyer	11		1	
Haberdasher	1			
Shearman	1			
Walker	1			
Weaver	12			
Total	26		1	
Clothing				
Capper	1			
Glover	4			
Tailor	7			
Total	12			
Leather				
Cordwainer	4		1	
Currier	1			
Parchmener	1			
Saddler	5			
Skinner / Tawyer	6			
Tanner	9		1	
Tapiter	4			
Total	30		2	
Building				
Carpenter	3			
Glazier	3			
Mason	1			
Total	7			

Table 7 (continued)

	Men		Women	
	Total no. of wills	No. which mention books	Total no. of wills	No. which mention books
Agriculture				
Farmer	1			
Husbandman	46		1.	
Yeoman	13	1		
Total	60	1	1	
Professional				
Apothecary	1	1		
Clerk	3	1	1	
Lawyer	1	1		
Notary	1	1		
Stationer	1			
Surgeon	1			
Textwriter	1			
Total	9	4	1	
Miscellaneous				
Baggar	1			
Barber	7			
Cartwright	1			
Cellarer	1			
Chandler	3			
Custodian	1			
Guardian of the palace	1			
Horner	1	1		
Janitor	1		1	
Labourer	4			
Mariner	5			
Organ maker	1			
Roper	1			
Servant	1			
Shipman	1			
Total	30	1	1	

Sources:

See table 6.

The gentry and aristocracy were the most frequent donors of books in their wills

(12.2%). The high rate of education and literacy amongst the gentry and aristocracy is indicated by evidence of their writing abilities. The only examples of lay people writing their own wills in the period 1450-1550 belong to these classes. Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland, for example, wrote a codicil to his will which was proved in 1491.³ The 1498 will of Richard York, a knight and alderman of York, was also by his own hand.⁴ Other examples of members of the gentry and aristocracy who wrote their own wills include Sir Ralph Gascoigne of Burnby, Sir Nicholas Conyers of Stokesley, Sir William Holbeck and Sir Ambrose Pudsey of Bolton.⁵ These examples of the gentry composing their own wills can also be taken as an indication that such people were familiar with the appropriate legal formulae for wills. We should not therefore assume that others who did not write their own wills were illiterate, they may simply not have been knowledgeable about the law.

Book bequests can also be found in the wills of the mercantile traders of Yorkshire (5.6%), although they are far less common than in the wills of the gentry. The proportion may be misleading as a result of the small number of merchants in the sample. In order to test the sample, a separate study of the 291 wills of known Yorkshire merchants over the period 1440-1550 has also been undertaken. Only fourteen of the wills, 4.8%, mention books, a smaller proportion than before. It must be emphasised that testamentary evidence (as a result of the limitations I discuss in the introduction) is likely to underestimate book ownership. The negative evidence of the wills and inventories therefore needs to be treated with caution.

The analysis of the sample of wills of the Yorkshire laity reveals book ownership by a fairly wide range of craftworkers. No books were mentioned in the wills of the laity of

³BIHR, Archbishop's Register, vol. 23, ff. 347v-9v.

⁴James Raine (ed.), *Testamenta Eboracensia IV*, Surtees Society 53 (1869), pp. 134-7.

⁵BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, f. 340v, 509v; vol. 8, f. 96v; vol. 9, f. 214v.

the building, leather, textile or clothing crafts, but a girdler, a fletcher, an ironmonger, a horner and a baker each owned at least one volume.⁶ Three books were also mentioned in the 1490 probate inventory of John Collan, a goldsmith of York.⁷

The bequest of books by agriculturalists is rare. Only one out of the sixty-one wills of husbandmen and yeomen of Yorkshire between 1450 and 1550 makes mention of a book. The wording of the bequest of Robert Hemsworth, yeoman of Swillington, also leaves it unclear whether or not he owned the book before donating it: ‘Moreover I will bequeath to the church of Swyllyngton one Anthephon’.⁸ There is good reason to believe that a large proportion of the testators in the sample whose occupation is unknown may also have been husbandmen or yeomen. Many of the wills contain references to livestock, fields and bushels of wheat or barley, but few other goods. A few examples are John Alan of Dewsbury (1509), John Leeke of Lockington (1510) and John Burneholme of Cawood (1511).⁹

The professional trades of clerk, lawyer, notary and textwriter necessitated a certain level of literacy. It is therefore not surprising to find a high incidence of book bequests in their wills. At least one book was bequeathed by Thomas Bemyslay, a clerk of York, John Chapman, a notary and merchant of York, and William Copeley, a lawyer of Doncaster.¹⁰ Literacy may also have been an advantage in the medical profession. In 1492, Lawrence Swattok, an apothecary of Hull, left three books in his will, including two books of physic.¹¹

⁶BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol.2, ff. 192r-3r; vol. 5, ff. 339v, 360v; vol. 8, ff. 65v-6v, 77r-v.

⁷BIHR, Dean and Chapter original wills, 1490.

⁸BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 11, f. 44v.

⁹BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 8, ff. 13r, 51r, 90r; see also Prob. Reg., vol. 8, ff. 17v, 54v, 55r, 65r; vol. 10, ff. 19v, 31r, 51r-v, 65r, 74v.

¹⁰BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, f. 389r; vol. 10, ff. 52v-4v; Archbishop’s Register, vol. 23, ff. 341r-2v.

¹¹BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, ff. 410v-11r.

The sample of 1,200 wills of the Yorkshire laity thus reveals a fairly wide range of book owners. Books were most frequently mentioned in the wills of the gentry and those with professional scribal skills. Evidence of book ownership can also be found, although to a lesser extent, amongst the mercantile trades, and the artisans who worked with metal and textiles and with provisions. This pattern of book ownership can be compared with the social range of the 129 book owners from the period 1440-1550 whose wills have been discovered through published primary and secondary sources. The trades of sixty-six of these book owners are known and are shown in table 8. Over 45% were knights, esquires or gentry; the professionals comprised nearly 25% of the identified book owners; and around 18% belonged to the mercantile classes. The survey of lay book owners also includes a number of craftsmen, including John Stafforth, a York dyer (1458), John Childe, a shearer also of York (1481) and John Austewyk, a dyer of Pontefract (1482).¹² The bequest of books in late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century wills shows, therefore, that literacy and book ownership were not restricted to only the wealthiest and most powerful circles of Yorkshire society. Instead, a demand for books was generated by a range of lay people including urban artisans, even before the advent of print and the upheavals of the Reformation era.

¹²BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, 365v-6r; vol. 5, ff. 25v-6r, 107; Collins (ed.), *Freemen I*, p. 141.

Table 8**Range of Lay Book Owners according to Occupation and Status from Published Sources**

	Men	Women	Total	%
Gentry /				
Aristocracy	22	8	30	45.5
Mercantile				
Draper	1			
Merchants/				
Mercers	7	4		
Total	8	4	12	18.2
Professional				
Apothecary	1			
Clerk	4			
Illuminator	1			
Lawyer	3			
Notary	2			
Proctor	3			
Scholar	2			
Total	16	-	16	24.2
Other Trades				
Chandler	1			
Dyer	2			
Fishmonger	1			
Sacrist	1			
Shearer	1			
Tailor		1		
Vinter	1			
Total	8	1	8	12.1
Overall total	53	13	66	100.0

Sources:

Survey of lay wills which mention books, identified from published primary and secondary sources.

The two samples of wills also enable us to compare the patterns of book bequests of female and male testators. The incidence of book bequests according to gender in the wills

of the 1,200 Yorkshire testators sampled from the period c.1450-1550, is shown in table 9. The use of books by women of aristocratic and mercantile families in late-medieval England has already been highlighted by a number of studies.¹³ What may be surprising, however, is the incidence of book bequests by the female testators in this study compared with their male counterparts. The statistics indicate that twice as many wills of women in the sample mentioned a book as did those of men. It can be argued from the figures, therefore, that women had a more competent literacy and a greater importance as users of texts and thus were more active participants in the rise of a professional book trade, than men.

Table 9

Proportion of Yorkshire Male and Female Book Owners

	Total no. of wills	No. which Mention books	%
Men	1034	24	2.3
Women	166	8	4.8
Total	1200	32	2.7

Sources:

Sample of 1,200 Yorkshire lay wills.

There are, however, a number of alternative explanations which must be considered

¹³See, for example, Susan Groag Bell, 'Medieval Women Book Owners: Arbiters of Lay Piety and Ambassadors of Culture', in M. Erler and M. Kowaleski (eds.), *Women and Power in the Middle Ages* (Georgia, 1988), pp. 149-87; Josephine Koster Tarvers, "'Thys ys my mystrys boke": English Women as Readers and Writers in Late Medieval England', in Charlotte Cook Morse, Penelope Reed Doob and Marjorie Curry Woods (eds.), *The Uses of Manuscripts in Literary Studies: Essays in Memory of Judson Boyce Allen* (Kalamazoo, 1992), pp. 305-27; Carol M. Meale, "'... alle the bokes that I have of latyn, englich, and frensch": Laywomen and Their Books in Late Medieval England', in Carol M. Meale (ed.), *Women and Literature in Britain, 1150-1500* (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 128-58; Goldberg, 'Lay Book Ownership', pp. 181-9; Anne Marie Dutton, 'Women's Use of

before accepting the statistics at face-value. It is possible that the women testators in the sample were generally from wealthier and higher status families than the male testators. Out of the eight women book owners, Hawisia Aske, Jane Boynton and Margaret la Zouch were from the gentry and greater aristocracy, Ellen Marshall had been the wife of a York mayor and Matilda Metcalf had been married to a recorder and M.P.¹⁴ The statistics may also reflect the different role of women as testators from that of men. The majority of female testators in the sample were widows. Very few single and married women left wills during this period.¹⁵ The will of a widow may often have included the books that had belonged to her husband and other household or commonplace books. Alice Scoreby, widow of a York merchant, for example, made mention in her will of a prayer-book '*nuper predicti Thome viri mei*'.¹⁶

Nevertheless, the high incidence of book bequests by women should be taken as a positive indication of the literacy and book ownership of Yorkshire women. Books were owned by a wide social range of female testators, and were not restricted to the women of noble families. Joan, the already-mentioned widow of John Ince, a merchant of York who had served as a constable of the mercer's guild and a chamberlain of the city, bequeathed a book to her daughter in 1489.¹⁷ Also, a total of twenty-six women book owners appear among the 129 Yorkshire book owners identified from published sources. They include Joan Blackburn (1446), Margaret Brereton (1481/2) and Jane Harper (1512), all of whom

Religious Literature in Late Medieval England' (DPhil, York University, 1995).

¹⁴YML, L2/4, ff. 264v-5v, 376v; BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, ff. 351v-2r, 407v; Archbishop's Register, vol. 19, ff. 156r-7r.

¹⁵Moran, *Growth*, p. 234; Richard H. Helmholz, 'Married Women's Wills in Later Medieval England', in Sue Sheridan Walker (ed.), *Wife and Widow in Medieval England* (Ann Arbor, 1993), pp. 165-82; Caroline M. Barron, 'The 'Golden Age' of Women in Medieval London', *Reading Medieval Studies* 15 (1989): 35-58.

¹⁶'recently of the said Thomas, my husband'. BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 624v-5r.

¹⁷BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, ff. 362v-3r.

were from merchant families of York.¹⁸ Three volumes were bequeathed in the will of Agnes Bedford, widow of a Hull merchant in 1459.¹⁹ Margaret Rawlyn, the widow of a York tailor, also mentioned three books in her will proved in 1496.²⁰ The extent of female literacy in Yorkshire in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries is also suggested by the bequests of books to women. In 1446, William Birkhede, a merchant of York, bequeathed his primer first to his son and then to his daughter, Margaret.²¹ John Huet, a proctor of York, likewise gave his wife a primer in his will proved in 1454.²² Women of merchant and artisan families, as well as of gentry status comprised a significant element in the market for books in Yorkshire in the period 1440-1550. These examples, mostly from the mid- and late fifteenth century, show that literacy was not an unusual accomplishment amongst women before and at the time of the first arrival of printed books in York.

Hidden within the statistics are a variety of reading practices and interests which could vary greatly between one testator and another. Literacy could be used in a number of ways: for the purposes of earning a living, to deal with day-to-day administrative tasks, for spiritual edification and for recreation. This variety of incentives to become literate and the different types of reading will now be assessed.

1. Professional and Pragmatic Literacy

The largest group of readers classed as professional literates were the clergy, who have been discussed in the previous chapter. Lay professional literates included lawyers, school-teachers, clerks and scribes. York housed a wealth of legal talent in the late fifteenth and

¹⁸BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 141v-2r; vol. 5, ff. 57v-8r; vol. 8, ff. 98v-9r.

¹⁹BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 418r-9r.

²⁰BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, ff. 480v-1v.

²¹BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 150v.

early sixteenth centuries. Together with the numerous county and civic courts, the six major church courts provided employment for a large number of proctors, advocates, clerks and notaries.²³

The education and literacy of the lawyers gave them a quasi-clerical status. The libraries of these professional laity often rivalled those of the graduate clergy. The education and confident literacy of the York lawyer, John Dautre, is evident in his will, proved in 1459.²⁴ At least fourteen books were bequeathed by Dautre, including books on English law and a book called 'Cato'. This was probably the *Distichs* of Cato, a popular Latin learning aid. John Dautre had received seven books from his father, Thomas, who had also been a lawyer and who died in 1437.²⁵ William Copeley, a lawyer of Doncaster, gave all his law texts and other books to his nephew in 1490.²⁶ A total of thirty-eight books, most of which were of law, were listed in the probate inventory of John Underwood, a York lawyer, made in 1515.²⁷ An unspecified number of books was also mentioned in the wills of Brian Roucliff, a lawyer and baron of Cowthorpe in 1495, and Robert Sothill, a lawyer of Haslewood in 1526.²⁸

Robert Esyngwald, a proctor of the court of York, bequeathed in 1446 a 'Clement', a 'Raymond' and a book called 'Innocent'.²⁹ These books can be identified as the *Clementines* of Clement V, the *Summa* of Raymund of Penaforte and Innocent IV's *Apparatus*. Another proctor of York, John Huet, left in 1454, a primer and 'omnes libros

²²BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 305Av-6r.

²³Palliser, *Tudor York*, pp. 4, 146-7.

²⁴BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 413r-4r.

²⁵BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 3, ff. 493v-4r.

²⁶BIHR, Archbishop's Register, vol. 23, ff. 341r-2v.

²⁷BIHR, Dean and Chapter original wills, 1515.

²⁸BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, ff. 457v-9v; vol. 9, f. 342r.

meos'.³⁰ It is likely that the unnamed books included law manuals and other reference texts. A library of law books was also owned by the York proctor Brian Wensdaill before his death in 1519.³¹ To John Metcalf he gave 'a litill buyk viz Dicisions of Root'. This text, which was probably a volume of decrees of the papal curia or 'Rota', also appears in the inventory of John Underwood.³² Robert Cheston and William Wright, two notaries of York, both received from Wensdaill a copy of the *De electionibus* of William of Mandagout.

Notaries and clerks constituted another group of professional lay literates. William Westerdale, a public notary and registrar of the court of York, for example, bequeathed a primer and '*omnes libros meos propios ac prothocola mea in officio meo infra clausum Ebor*' in 1474.³³ Thomas Tubbac, a merchant who had been employed by the mercers' guild for scribal work between 1475 and 1486, bequeathed all his books to be distributed amongst the children of his son Robert.³⁴ One of the recipients of a law book from Wensdaill, the York notary William Wright, also mentions his collection of books in his will proved in 1522/3.³⁵ Sir Edmund Metcalf and Wright's cousin, Martin, were instructed to choose a book each from Wright's library. We can only guess how many other books Wright owned. John Chapman, described as both notary and merchant in his will of 1531,

²⁹BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 149v-50v.

³⁰'all my books'. BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 305Av-6r.

³¹YML, L2/5a, f. 118v.

³²BIHR, Dean and Chapter original wills, 1515.

³³'all my own books and my documents in my office in the close of York'. BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 4, f. 217r.

³⁴BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, f. 299v; Louise Wheatley, 'Biographical Register of Members of the York Mercers' Guild 1420-1502' (typescript in York, Merchant Adventurers' Hall, 1993), p. 55.

³⁵YML, L2/5a, ff. 134v-5r.

left *'omnes libros meos tam practicos quam alios'* to Mr William Claiburgh.³⁶

Parish clerks may also be considered as professional literates. In 1234, Gregory IX decreed that every parish clerk should be learned enough to sing in the church services, read the epistle and lesson, and teach in a school.³⁷ By the late fifteenth century, however, it is likely that most of the responsibility for teaching had passed to the chaplains.³⁸ The wills of the parish clerks only rarely show a notable interest in books. In his will dated 1463, Robert Davison, a clerk of York, gave a psalter containing the service of Corpus Christi and a hymnal to the church of Terrington.³⁹

Although most of the teaching in parish and cathedral schools would have been done by the clergy, pupils may also have been taught by lay grammar masters. Three of the known twelve grammar masters of York Minster between 1266 and 1535 were laymen.⁴⁰ In 1472, John Hamondson, master of St Peter's school in the Minster, bequeathed four books in his will.⁴¹ They included the *Elementarium* of Papias. An unspecified number of books was also bequeathed by Robert Hunter, who described himself as a scholar of York in his will proved in 1447.⁴² The number of lawyers, notaries, clerks and grammar masters did not constitute a large section of Yorkshire lay society, but their professional literacy made them important customers of the book trade. The size of their libraries can only be guessed at since the majority of testators referred only to 'all my books'. Their main reading interests seem to be connected with their professions: law books and grammar texts

³⁶'all my books, the practical ones as well as others'. BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 10, ff. 52r-4v.

³⁷Moran, *Growth*, p. 78.

³⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 79-80.

³⁹BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 587v-8r.

⁴⁰Jo Ann H. Moran, *Education and Learning in the City of York 1300-1560*, Borthwick Papers 55 (1979), pp. 39-40.

⁴¹BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 4, f. 85r.

⁴²BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 159v.

are most frequently mentioned in their wills.

Law books were also in demand by some laymen of the aristocracy and gentry. During the fifteenth century, legal training was undertaken by many sons of the aristocracy as part of their education and upbringing. Study at the Inns was seen as desirable not only for knowledge in law, but also to form social connections and cultural skills.⁴³ In 1485/6, Stephen Copsyndale, an esquire of Beverley, bequeathed a pair of decretals to Mr Stephen Staunders.⁴⁴ A copy of the *Tenures* of Littleton was mentioned in the will of James Roos, an esquire of Ingmanthorpe, which was proved in 1515/6.⁴⁵ An edition of the *Tenures* had been first published in 1481 by J. Lettou and W. de Machlinia, and reprinted in 1510 by Richard Pynson.⁴⁶ Richard Peke, a gentleman of Wakefield, left in 1516 two books of law, the statutes and a book of his farms.⁴⁷ A unknown number of law books was likewise bequeathed by Marmaduke Constable, esquire of North Cliff, in 1525.⁴⁸ An early fourteenth-century book of statutes was owned by the Swillington family of Yorkshire.⁴⁹ The book is decorated with four illuminated initials, the last of which contains the royal arms.⁵⁰ Law notes in French, written during the time of Henry VIII have been inserted at the beginning of the volume.

Some of these gentlemen may have been parliamentary representatives or had duties

⁴³Felicity Heal and Clive Holmes, *The Gentry in England and Wales, 1500-1700* (Basingstoke and London, 1994), pp. 270-3.

⁴⁴BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, f. 271r-v.

⁴⁵BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 9, f. 28r-v.

⁴⁶Bennett, *English Books and Readers 1475-1557*, p. 79.

⁴⁷BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 9, f. 38r-v.

⁴⁸BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 9, f. 352r-v.

⁴⁹Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Ashmole 1152; a description of this manuscript is given in William Henry Black, *Catalogue of the Manuscripts Bequeathed ... by Elias Ashmole* (Oxford, 1845), p. 1017.

⁵⁰Bodleian Library, MS Ashmole 1152, ff. 10r, 34r, 189r, 284r.

in the local courts, which would have made desirable a knowledge of legal practice. An example is Sir Peter Arden, who served as baron of the Exchequer.⁵¹ Arden, who held lands in Little Driffeld, Huby, Easingwold and Galtres Forest in Yorkshire, owned a number of books of statutes, terms and assizes. Legal knowledge and access to reference volumes of laws and statutes may also have been valuable in managing estates and dealing with the complaints of tenants and disputes with other landholders. The wives and widows of gentlemen and knights are also known to have undertaken the management of estates, but no record has been found in the testamentary sources that any Yorkshire women owned law texts.⁵²

The wills and inventories also suggest that an interest in Latin grammar was a male preserve, although unlike law texts it was not restricted to the aristocracy, gentry or professional laity. In 1466, John Elwyn of Hedon gave all his grammar texts to the parish school of Hedon for the instruction of the pupils there.⁵³ A number of grammar books were also bequeathed by John Towthorpp, a butcher of York, in 1471.⁵⁴ Thomas Roos, esquire of Ingmanthorpe, bequeathed a Latin dictionary called *Catholicon* in 1505, and in 1543 Thomas Mounteney, a gentleman of Sandall, left a book of Cato.⁵⁵ The autobiography of Sir John Savile of Methley, baron of the Exchequer, includes details of his literary education and interests before he was admitted to Brasenose College, Oxford in 1561.⁵⁶ He first

⁵¹Raine (ed.), *Testamenta Eboracensia IV*, pp. 102-3n.

⁵²Rowena E. Archer, "How ladies ... who live on their manors ought to manage their households and estates": Women as Landholders and Administrators in the Later Middle Ages', in P.J.P. Goldberg (ed.), *Woman is a Worthy Wight: Women in English Society c. 1200-1500* (Stroud, 1992), pp. 149-81.

⁵³BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 4, ff. 66v-7r.

⁵⁴BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 4, f. 162v.

⁵⁵BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 6, f. 134; vol. 11, ff. 662v-3r.

⁵⁶J.W. Clay and John Lister, 'Autobiography of Sir John Savile of Methley, Knight, Baron of the Exchequer, 1546-1607', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 15 (1900): 420-7.

learnt to read during the reign of Edward VI using the Catechism. He then moved on to the grammar text of Donatus, the *Ars minor*, Aesop's *Fables* and the *Sacred Dialogues* of Castilion. The *Sacred Dialogues* were discussions of church history aimed at children. His education was then focused on the classics, such as Virgil, Cato, Terence and Ovid, in preparation for university. In 1563 he returned home from Oxford to Bradley in Elland on account of the plague, but continued to study in order to gain some knowledge of law by reading Littleton's *Tenures*, the *Magna charta*, Rastall's *Abbrevimenta* and other legal texts.

The ownership of grammar and law books reflects a desire by the readers to improve their learning and literacy, and so increase their prospects of social advancement. Status and prestige were important elements in the rise of a lay reading public throughout the Middle Ages and early modern period. Often too much emphasis has been placed on the revolutionary consequences of printing and the Reformation, causing the more evolutionary aspects of the gradual increase in lay literacy to be ignored. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the need for pragmatic literacy in order to cope with day-to-day administrative and business documentation continued to grow.⁵⁷ In London in the fifteenth century, literacy in English at least was becoming a requirement for many craft guilds. An example is the goldsmiths, who forbade any guild member to take on an apprentice who was illiterate.⁵⁸ There is no surviving evidence, however, that similar regulations were held by the York craft guilds. Although literacy was not a necessity for most occupations, it was an increasingly important advantage, particularly in urban society.

Inscriptions would also have been a common sight by the early sixteenth century

⁵⁷The increasing use of administrative and business documentation during the High Middle Ages has been shown by Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*.

⁵⁸Thrupp, *Merchant Class*, p. 158.

around the streets of York.⁵⁹ In 1487, sixty yards of the city walls near Fishergate Bar were rebuilt and a stone recording it was displayed on the renovated wall: ‘AD MCCCC LXXXVII Sir Will. Tod, Knigght and Mayre, this wal was mayd in his days LX yardys’. A sculpture of Sir William being knighted was erected nearby with the inscription: ‘A Dom 1487 Sir Willm Tod, Mair [who at one] tyme was schyriffe dyd this coste himself’.⁶⁰ Another inscription was found in 1768 at the corner of Nessgate and High Ousegate during the demolition of a house. The plaque reads: ‘This was built by Mr Bertram Dawson AD 1500’.⁶¹ Official notices were also sometimes displayed at prominent positions in the city. In 1405, for example, a sermon by Archbishop Scrope expressing grievances against certain powerful men of the realm was written down in English and displayed on the city gates.⁶² A paper bill concerning the city crane was read aloud in 1506 and then copied onto parchment and displayed on the crane.⁶³

Unofficial bills, such as those intended to spread rumours and slander, also occasionally appeared around the city. In 1536, legal action was taken to discover the culprit who had set up slanderous bills against Mr Hogeson and Mr North and their wives.⁶⁴ Thomas Abney, a merchant, was accused. A servant of Abney reported that Nicholas Green, Abney’s brother-in-law, had ‘resortyd myche to her maisters howse and ther wrote dyverse thynges, but she saythe that she could [not] tell of trouthe what it was’. Green then confessed that he had written them with the connivance of Abney’s wife, Elizabeth. A

⁵⁹A general survey of the evidence for inscriptions in English, both in religious and secular contexts, has been undertaken by Anthony S.G. Edwards, ‘Middle English Inscriptional Verse Texts’, in John Scattergood and Julia Boffey (eds.), *Texts and Their Contexts: Papers from the Early Book Society* (Dubline, 1997), pp. 26-43.

⁶⁰Raine, *Medieval York*, p. 18.

⁶¹*Ibid.*, p. 177.

⁶²Davis (ed.), *English Chronicle from 1377 to 1461*, Camden Society 64 (1856), pp. 32-3.

⁶³YCA, B9, f. 31r.

confession was then given by Elizabeth Abney, who admitted that ‘she causyd the seyde Nicholas Greyn, her broder, to wryte three copys of the same bills by an other byll that she hadde devysed before that tyme’. Thomas Abney’s punishment was to be set on horseback, backwards, ‘and a paper to be set of his hede and also he to have another lyke paper to hold betweyn both his hands with this scrypture folowyng to be writtyn in bothe the seyde papers: “For setting up of sclaunderous bylls and wyful perjury, thus to be punysshed deservyd have I”’. The same punishment was also ordered for Elizabeth.

The use of a written notice proclaiming the nature of the culprit’s crime was not uncommon in sixteenth-century York. A letter, dated 7 December 1548, was sent to the Lord Protector, informing him of certain slanderous bills which had been set on doors and windows of York.⁶⁵ The Earl of Somerset’s reply ordered that the scholar who had distributed the bills should be set in the pillory with a paper declaring the cause. Likewise, in 1556, John Peesgrave was found guilty of owning three heretical books and was ordered as a punishment to walk barefoot around the markets of Beverley, wearing a jacket with a paper at the front and back which read ‘This man hath kept hereticall and sediciouse books contrarie to the lawes’.⁶⁶

For those who aspired to civic office, literacy would have been a notable advantage. An indication of the growing importance of pragmatic literacy for the urban elite is the increasing number of references to ‘debt books’ in the lay wills and inventories. Books of debts or ‘parcels’ were bequeathed by Peter Jackson, alderman of York, Thomas Williamson, merchant of Hull, and Thomas Grenewod of Wakefield, in 1530, 1536 and

⁶⁴YCA, B13, ff. 57-64.

⁶⁵YCA, B19, f. 42v.

⁶⁶Dickens, *Lollards and Protestants*, p. 229.

1550 respectively.⁶⁷ In 1989 a set of wax tablets was found at Swinegate in York, on which had been written text in a fourteenth-century cursive *anglicana* hand.⁶⁸ They consist of eight small boxwood tablets with black wax, held in a leather case with an iron stylus. Inscribed on the wax are three texts all in the same hand. The first text is probably an English verse, the second is perhaps a list of accounts and the third is in Latin and may be a legal text. The use of notices and bills in the city of York, and the benefit of literacy for holding civic office, are therefore a few examples of the importance of the written word in urban society.

Literacy was also of great benefit in the rural areas, although to a lesser extent than in the towns. The management of land necessitated paperwork, such as title deeds and accounts. Although some landholders may have hired clerks to assist them in these duties, the laity who regularly dealt with correspondence, written transactions and financial records may have been prompted to learn basic reading and writing skills in order to keep a tighter control over their affairs and to prevent fraud. I have already argued a link between the law books owned by the gentry and their duties in local administration. The responsibilities that some of the gentry had in local affairs - such as commissions of the peace, gaol delivery, for sewers, or in the local courts - would have encouraged them to improve their reading and writing skills.⁶⁹ Like the inhabitants of the towns, the rural gentry also owned debt books. An example is the debt book mentioned in the 1491 will of Anthony Woodville, lord Rivers.⁷⁰

⁶⁷BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 11, f. 1r, 240v; vol. 13, f. 700r. See also YML, L2/5a, ff. 62r-3v; BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 13, ff. 419v-20r; YCA, House Book 13, f. 58r.

⁶⁸Michelle P. Brown, 'The Role of the Wax-Tablet in Medieval Literacy: a Reconsideration in Light of a Recent Find from York', *British Library Journal* 20 (1994): 1-16; O'Connor and Tweddle, 'Set of Waxed Tablets', pp. 307-22.

⁶⁹Julian Cornwall, 'The Early Tudor Gentry', *Economic History Review*, 2nd series 17 (1965): 456-75; K.B. McFarlane, *The Nobility of Later Medieval England* (Oxford, 1973), pp. 230-3.

⁷⁰PRO, PCC 40 Milles.

The use of the written word was also prominent in both the urban and rural churches. Inscriptions and ‘*tabulae*’ were a common sight in Yorkshire churches, even before the 1547 injunction that churches should set up boards inscribed with the Ten Commandments.⁷¹ ‘*Tabulae*’ were wooden tables hung on the walls of churches, on which words had been painted or a written parchment was affixed. They could be used to inform visitors of the privileges or history of the church.⁷² A late fifteenth-century description has survived of a *tabula* at the lady altar in York Minster. It depicted five images of the Virgin Mary, each of which was accompanied by three Latin distiches.⁷³ Inscriptions recording a donation of money or gift and requesting prayers for the deceased were also displayed in some churches. A number of inscriptions in All Saints’ Church, North Street, have survived to the present day. At the south aisle of the chancel, for example, a rectangular plate inscribed with black letter reads: ‘*Orate specialiter pro animabus Willelmi Stokton et Roberti Colynson quondam maiorum civitatis Ebor & Isabelle uxoris eorundem quorum animabus propicietur deus Amen*’.⁷⁴ Stockton was mayor of York in 1446 and died in 1471.⁷⁵ In the north aisle, inscriptions on floor slabs and monuments commemorated a number of notable late-medieval York citizens, including John de Wardalle, a barker (free in 1355); John Bawtrie, succentor to the vicars choral of the Minster; John de Coupeland, a tanner (free in 1425); and William Londisdall, another tanner, and his wife Alice (dated

⁷¹Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, p. 485; J. Charles Cox and Alfred Harvey, *English Church Furniture* (London, 1907), pp. 356-7.

⁷²Vincent Gillespie, ‘Medieval Hypertext: Image and Text from York Minster’, in P.R. Robinson and Rivkah Zim (eds.), *Of the Making of Books* (Aldershot, 1997), pp. 206-29.

⁷³*Ibid.*, p. 206.

⁷⁴‘Pray specially for the souls of William Stokton and Robert Colynson, once mayors of the city of York, and Isabelle their wife, may God have mercy on their souls, Amen’.

⁷⁵Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in the City of York: III Southwest of the Ouse* (London, 1972), p. 7.

1487).⁷⁶ Moreover, in the stained glass of the church is depicted St Anne teaching the Virgin to read with a book on which is written the first verse of psalm 143. The stained glass image of St Christopher likewise bears around his head a scroll inscribed '*Cristofori dominus sedeo qui crimina tollo*'.⁷⁷ A sequence of fifteen windows on the north wall show the signs of the end of the world as described in the *Prick of Conscience*, each with a quote from the text.⁷⁸ The *Prick of Conscience* is a poem on death, judgement, heaven and hell.⁷⁹ Inscriptions were also made on the walls of churches in the more rural parts of Yorkshire. On the walls of Wensley church, for example, illustrations of *Les Trois Vifs* and *Les Trois Morts* were accompanied by text, and a medieval religious stanza in English was written on the wall of Campsall church, also in Yorkshire.⁸⁰

It cannot be denied that oral communication still predominated in many aspects of sixteenth-century life, as it does today. In 1552, for example, a bill concerning alehouses was sent to priests to be read aloud to their parishioners.⁸¹ Nevertheless, we can see in the use of inscriptions, notices and bills an assumption that a significant proportion of the laity could read them. It is likely that when such notices were displayed, a group of interested people would gather around and one of them would read it aloud.⁸² Yet the benefit of being able to read them for oneself would have become of increasing advantage and importance over the period. A rise in lay literacy as a result of pragmatic considerations may only have

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 10.

⁷⁷'the Lord who takes away sins sits in judgement upon Christopher'.

⁷⁸Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, *Inventory*, p. 8; E.A. Gee, 'The Painted Glass of All Saint's Church, North Street, York', *Archaeologia* 102 (1969): 151-202.

⁷⁹Albert E. Hartung (ed.), *A Manual of the Writings in Middle English 1050-1500* (Connecticut, 1967-93), 7: 2268; Pantin, *English Church*, p. 230.

⁸⁰Edwards, 'Middle English Inscriptional Verse Texts', pp. 30, 35.

⁸¹YCA, B20, f. 105v.

⁸²Keith Thomas, 'The Meaning of Literacy in Early Modern England', in Gerd Baumann (ed.), *The Written Word: Literacy in Transition* (Oxford, 1986), pp. 97-131.

had a tenuous link with the book trade. A desire to learn to read in order to deal with business and administration documentation does not necessarily produce an interest in reading and owning books. Moreover, the pragmatic stimulus to literacy was generally unaffected by developments in the book trade. Reports of printed notices sent from parliament to York only survive from the late sixteenth century, and even these might have been delivered orally rather than displayed. In 1561, for example, a book of law and statutes in print, received by the mayor of York from the Queen's commission was read aloud.⁸³ From the late-medieval period onwards, the laity learned to read because access to the written word enabled them to participate more fully in a society in which increasing reliance was placed on writing. The wide variety of political, economic and religious activities, which would have been inaccessible to an illiterate, were opened up to them.

2. Religious and Recreational Reading

The book most often mentioned in the wills and inventories of the laity of Yorkshire was the primer or Book of Hours. The primer was a personal book of devotion which generally consisted of the Hours of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Seven Penitential Psalms, the Fifteen Gradual Psalms, the Litany, the Office for the Dead and the Commendations.⁸⁴ Out of the 129 known lay book owners of Yorkshire between 1440 and 1550, forty-five mention a primer in their wills and inventories. John Steton, a merchant of Hull, for example, referred in his will of 1458 to '*premarium meum cum matitutinis et horis marie virginis*'.⁸⁵ In 1459 Agnes Bedford, the widow of a Hull merchant, gave to John Swan junior her primer which

⁸³YCA, B23, f. 27r.

⁸⁴Wordsworth and Littlehales, *Old Service-Books*, pp. 248-54.

⁸⁵'my primer with the matins and the hours of the Virgin Mary'. BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 394r-v.

she said she used everyday.⁸⁶ A ‘daily prymer’ was likewise bequeathed by Sir Peter Ardem in 1464.⁸⁷ References in the wills to books with ‘placebo and dirige’ or the Seven Penitential Psalms can also be identified as primers. In 1451 Robert Smeton of York bequeathed in his will ‘*unum librum de placebo et dirige*’ and in the same year, John Bedford, a merchant of Hull gave his wife Agnes ‘*unum parvum librum cum septem salmis*’.⁸⁸ A ‘*primarium cum placebo et dirige*’ was given by William Brounfeld, a mercer of York, in 1482 to his daughter, Joan.⁸⁹ An elaborate description of a primer is given in the 1444 will of Thomas Seggefield, burgess of Hull: ‘*Item lego Agneti Smyth quondam famule mee quemdam librum cum duobus signaculis argenti in quo continentur septem psalmi penitenciales, placebo cum dirige et oraciones vocatum quindecim oes et alios oraciones*’.⁹⁰

Not only were primers repeatedly bequeathed by the Yorkshire laity, they were also owned by testators of a wide social range. Primers were mentioned in the wills of members of the aristocracy and gentry, such as Agnes Stapleton, William Stillington and Brian Roucliff, as well as in the wills of merchants and artisans. Primers are the only books bequeathed in the wills of a shearer, fishmonger, girdler and fletcher, all from York.⁹¹ The 1490 probate inventory of John Collan, goldsmith of York, likewise mentions a primer and two other unnamed books.⁹² It has been suggested that Books of Hours had a particular

⁸⁶BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 418r-9r.

⁸⁷Raine (ed.), *Testamenta Eboracensia IV*, pp. 102-3n.

⁸⁸BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 220r-1r, 225v-6r.

⁸⁹BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, f. 31v.

⁹⁰‘Also I leave to Agnes Smith, once a servant of mine, a certain book with two silver clasps in which are contained the seven penitential psalms, placebo and dirige and the prayers called the Fifteen Oes and other prayers’. BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 85v.

⁹¹BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, ff. 107, 177r, 339v, 360v.

⁹²BIHR, Dean and Chapter original wills, 1490.

appeal to women.⁹³ An example is Agnes Bedford, mentioned above, who, as well as giving a primer which she used everyday to John Swan junior, gave her new primer to Agnes Swan.⁹⁴ Simple versions of the primer could be used as an aid in literacy and religious instruction for children.⁹⁵ Furthermore, as some of the above examples show, it was not unusual for testators to own more than one primer. In his will proved in 1449, John Preston, a York ironmonger, referred to his best primer and his second primer.⁹⁶ No less than four primers were bequeathed by Hawisia Aske, widow of Roger Aske, esquire, in 1450.⁹⁷ Primers or Books of Hours were clearly in great demand by the literate gentry, merchants and artisans of Yorkshire in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

Other types of liturgical and prayer-books were also mentioned in the wills, but with much less frequency. The book most often mentioned after the primer was the psalter. The psalter was available in both a liturgical and a non-liturgical version. The non-liturgical psalters contained only the psalms, while the liturgical texts served as guides to the church services, containing antiphons, prayers and other parts of the mass as well as the psalms.⁹⁸ These two kinds of psalter are rarely differentiated in the wills, however, as the testators favoured other forms of identification. In 1459 John Dautre, a York lawyer, gave his son Richard ‘*meum psalterium elomned cum auro*’.⁹⁹ The ‘best’ psalter of John Marton,

⁹³Sandra Penketh, ‘Women and Books of Hours’, in Lesley Smith and Jane H.M. Tylour (eds.), *Women and the Book: Assessing the Visual Evidence* (London, 1996), pp. 266-80; Dutton, ‘Women’s Use of Religious Literature’, pp. 75-6; Goldberg, ‘Lay Book Ownership’, p. 185.

⁹⁴BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 418r-9r.

⁹⁵Moran, *Growth*, pp. 43-4; Margaret Aston, ‘Devotional Literacy’, in *Lollards and Reformers: Images and Literacy in Late Medieval Religion* (London, 1984), p. 125; Bell, ‘Medieval Women Book Owners’, pp. 163-5.

⁹⁶BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 192r-3r.

⁹⁷YML, L2/4, ff. 264v-5v.

⁹⁸Wordsworth and Littlehales, *Old Service-Books*, p. 108.

⁹⁹‘my psalter illuminated with gold’. BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 413r-4r.

alderman of York, was likewise bequeathed to his son, William, in 1463.¹⁰⁰ The will of Euphemia Langton, the widow of a knight, also mentions two psalters.¹⁰¹ In the mid-fifteenth century, Katherine Chadderton (sister of Sir Robert Plumpton) wrote to George Plumpton requesting that he send her daughter a book, either a psalter or a primer.¹⁰²

Some of the liturgical texts mentioned in the Yorkshire wills seem not to have been the personal prayer-books of the testator, but instead part of the equipment of his or her private chapel. William Dyneley, a gentleman who was buried at Rockley, for example, bequeathed to the chapel in Holbeck ‘my messall, my portus in prynte, my vestment, albe and al other thynges to the same apperteynynges’ in 1507.¹⁰³ Similarly, ‘*unam tabulam albasturam, unum calicem, unum missale cum omnibus aliis ornamentis capelle mee apud manerium meum de Wigglesworth*’ was given by John Hamerton, esquire of Wigglesworth to his son Stephen in 1514/5.¹⁰⁴ It was not only the gentry who had private chapels requiring prayer books. In the 1512 will of Jane Harper, who belonged to a York merchant family, she bequeathed an altar cloth, altar clothes, a pax bread with the images of St Katherine and St Christopher and a printed massbook belonging to the altar in her parlour.¹⁰⁵ Although such service books may have been for the use of chaplains, and not read personally by the testators, they nevertheless represent a demand by the laity who were wealthy enough to own a private altar or chapel, for books to equip it.

Most of the service books were given to churches, and the wording of some of the

¹⁰⁰BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 589r-v.

¹⁰¹BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 597v-8r.

¹⁰²Joan Kirby (ed.), *The Plumpton Letters and Papers*, Camden Society, 5th series 8 (Cambridge, 1996), p. 24.

¹⁰³BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 7, ff. 17v-19r.

¹⁰⁴‘an alabaster panel, a chalice, a missal with all other ornaments in my chapel at my manor of Wigglesworth’. BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 9, f. 2r-v.

¹⁰⁵BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 8, ff. 98v-9r.

bequests leaves it unclear if the testator was donating a volume which he or she already owned. In 1533/4, for example, the church of Stokesley received a printed antiphoner from Robert Pennyman, a parishioner of the church.¹⁰⁶ Although we cannot assume that the volume was read by the testator, the bequests do reveal the laity participating in literate culture through the purchase and gift of books to churches, as a way of expressing their piety. Even the illiterate could become active customers of the book trade by acquiring and presenting service books to religious institutions. The book trade of York thus did not only cater for those who could read. In 1448, Sir John Burnham of Hull gave £5 to Holy Trinity chapel in Hull to buy a new antiphoner.¹⁰⁷ An antiphoner worth 2s was also given to the church of Swillington in 1502 by Thomas Hemsworth.¹⁰⁸ Service books of all kinds were therefore in large demand amongst the laity of Yorkshire in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, not only as guides to the church services and as personal prayer books, but also as equipment for chapels and as gifts to churches and other religious institutions.

An interest in and demand for other texts to stimulate devotion, such as saints' lives or the writings of the mystics, is also revealed in the wills of the pre-Reformation Yorkshire laity. This interest seems to have been less common and more socially restricted than the ownership of primers and other prayer books, however. Nearly all the books of contemplation and meditation were owned by members of the aristocracy or gentry, or professional classes. A particularly devout gentlewoman was Agnes Stapleton, who belonged to a knightly family of Yorkshire, and who died in 1448.¹⁰⁹ In her will she mentions a book of Bonaventure, the *Prick of Conscience*, the *Chastising of God's*

¹⁰⁶BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 11, f. 69.

¹⁰⁷BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 179r-v.

¹⁰⁸BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 6, f. 25v.

¹⁰⁹J.W. Clay (ed.), *North Country Wills: Abstracts of Wills at Somerset House and Lambeth Palace, 1383-1558*, Surtees Society 116 (1908), pp. 48-9.

Children, a book of vices and virtues and a French life of the saints. The *Chastising of God's Children* was written for a religious woman by her spiritual advisor, and discusses the benefit of spiritual and physical trials and afflictions on the human soul.¹¹⁰ A book called 'Roulys' was also bequeathed by Elizabeth de la Ryver, a gentlewoman of York in 1454.¹¹¹ This was probably a work of Richard Rolle of Hampole, a fourteenth-century Northern mystic. The 1468 probate inventory of Elizabeth Sywardby, a gentlewoman of York, likewise reveals a strong enthusiasm for devotional texts.¹¹² Her library included an English translation of the revelations of St Bridget, both a Latin and an English life of Christ, an English book on the mystery of the passion of the Lord, a quire of the visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary and a book of meditations on the passion of the Lord by Rolle. In 1509 an English book of the Virgin Mary and St Bernard was bequeathed by Alison Sothill of Dewsbury.¹¹³

The bequest of books by the Yorkshire laymen shows that an interest in devotion was by no means an exclusively female interest. Indications of an interest in mysticism or moral self-scrutiny are, however, less evident among the laymen compared with the women.¹¹⁴

An exception is the inventory of John Underwood, a York lawyer, which included a *Consilium conscientiae*.¹¹⁵ The devotional reading of the laymen of Yorkshire was focused to a greater extent on saints' lives. As I have shown, the laywomen in the sample owned

¹¹⁰Joyce Bazire and Eric Colledge (eds.), *The Chastising of God's Children and the Treatise of Perfection of the Sons of God* (Oxford, 1957), p. 41; Hartung (ed.), *Manual*, 9: 3132.

¹¹¹BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 301r; James Raine (ed.), *Testamenta Eboracensia II*, Surtees Society 30 (1834), p. 173n.

¹¹²YML, L1(17)9; Rees Jones, 'Property, Tenure and Rents', p. 274.

¹¹³BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 8, ff. 17v-18v.

¹¹⁴A similar pattern of book ownership has been found in Norwich wills: Tanner, *Church in Late Medieval Norwich*, p. 112.

¹¹⁵BIHR, Dean and Chapter original wills, 1515.

mainly the lives of female saints, especially the Virgin Mary. The interest of the laymen of Yorkshire, in contrast, seems to have been male saints. John Dautre, a York lawyer, bequeathed in his will a book of Bonaventure, a life of St Thomas of Canterbury and ‘[*unum*] *librum devocionum qui fuit patris mei*’.¹¹⁶ The list of books in the 1515 probate inventory of John Underwood, mentioned above, included a life of St Thomas and a book of his miracles, and a life of Job.¹¹⁷ Sir Peter Arden likewise owned a life of St Thomas.¹¹⁸ The life of St Thomas of Canterbury may have had particular interest to lawyers, as Becket had studied canon law at Bologna and Auxerre before becoming chancellor of England in 1155.¹¹⁹ A ‘lagantt aure’ was also given to the prior of the Carmelites in Hull in 1521 by John Fynwell.¹²⁰ This was the collection of saints’ lives called the *Golden Legend*, translated by Caxton and first printed in 1483.¹²¹

Occasional references to secular works are made in the wills and inventories of the Yorkshire laity. Chaucer’s *Troilus and Criseyde* was bequeathed by William Bank, a gentleman of York, in 1458.¹²² John Dautre, a York lawyer mentioned above, owned a book of the deeds of Alexander the Great and a book of the Trojan War before his death in 1459.¹²³ There were a number of different texts about Alexander and the history of Troy available by the late fifteenth century and thus it is not possible to identify Dautre’s

¹¹⁶ ‘a book of devotions which had belonged to my father’. BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 413r-4r.

¹¹⁷ BIHR, Dean and Chapter original wills, 1515.

¹¹⁸ Raine (ed.), *Testamenta Eboracensia IV*, pp. 102-3n.

¹¹⁹ DNB, 19: 645.

¹²⁰ BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 9, f. 191r.

¹²¹ STC 24873.

¹²² YML, L2/4, f. 288r-v.

¹²³ BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 413r-4r.

versions.¹²⁴ Books of chronicles were bequeathed by John Hamondson, a York grammar master, in 1472 and John Preston of York in 1474.¹²⁵ A 'boke of bocas' which was probably John Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*, was mentioned in the will of Marjory Salvayn of York in 1496.¹²⁶

The small number of secular works bequeathed by the Yorkshire laity may be surprising if we consider the abundance of extant texts of romances and chronicles such as the prose *Brut*, which has survived in at least 172 manuscripts.¹²⁷ The mid fifteenth-century compilations of Robert Thornton, a gentleman of Ryedale in the North Riding of Yorkshire, for example, include an extensive collection of texts which conflicts with the infrequent bequests found in the wills and inventories.¹²⁸ London, British Library, MS Additional 31042 contains part of the *Cursor mundi*, *The Sege of Jerusalem*, *Richard the Lionheart*, *The Sege of Melayne*, *Verses on the Kings of England* and a *Dietary* by John Lydgate and other works.¹²⁹ A wide collection of religious and secular works likewise make up Lincoln, Cathedral Library, MS 91, including the *Morte Arthure*, the *Romance of Octovyane*, the *Romance of Sir Isambrace*, *Sir Degrevante* and *Sir Eglamour*.¹³⁰ It is likely that Robert

¹²⁴Hartung (ed.), *Manual*, 1: 104-17; 6: 1913-17.

¹²⁵BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 4, ff. 85r, 220r.

¹²⁶BIHR, Prob. Reg, vol. 5, f. 480r.

¹²⁷Hartung (ed.), *Manual*, 8: 2629.

¹²⁸George R. Keiser, 'Lincoln Cathedral Library MS 91: Life and Milieu of the Scribe', *Studies in Bibliography* 32 (1979): 158-79; John J. Thompson, 'The Compiler in Action: Robert Thornton and the 'Thornton Romances' in Lincoln Cathedral MS 91', in Derek Pearsall (ed.), *Manuscripts and Readers in Fifteenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 113-24.

¹²⁹For a complete list of contents see Karen Stern, 'The London "Thornton" Miscellany: A New Description of British Museum Additional Manuscript 31042', *Scriptorium* 30 (1976): 26-37, 201-18; Gisela Guddat-Figge, *Catalogue of Manuscripts containing Middle English Romances* (München, 1976), pp. 159-63; John J. Thompson, *Robert Thornton and the London Thornton Manuscript* (Cambridge, 1987). See also John J. Thompson, *The Cursor Mundi: Poem, Texts and Contexts*, Medium Aevum, new series 19 (1998).

¹³⁰A complete list of contents can be found in Guddat-Figge, *Catalogue of Manuscripts*, pp.

Thornton obtained exemplars for his compilations from local gentry, clergy and religious houses, in particular, the nunnery at Nun Monkton.¹³¹ However, as John J. Thompson has shown, the networks of readers who may have influenced the collection and nature of Thornton's books was far more extensive than has been supposed. Thornton's compilations would have been affected by the interests and concerns of the readers or spiritual directors who annotated or copied the exemplars which Thornton used.¹³²

The secular works mentioned in the wills and inventories of the Yorkshire laity may likewise have referred to volumes which contained more than one text. Instead of listing all of the volume's contents in the will, the testator might have identified the book by the first or longest text. Sir Peter Arden, for example, bequeathed 'my booke of English of Boys de Consolatione Philosophie with the booke of Huntyng therin'.¹³³ This text can be identified as London, British Library, MS Additional 16165 which not only contains Chaucer's *Boece* and the *Master of Game* by Edward of York (entitled 'The booke of huntyng' in the manuscript) mentioned in Arden's will, but also Trevisa's *Gospel of Nicodemus* and a number of other works by Chaucer and Lydgate.¹³⁴ Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 185, which is dated to the fifteenth century, likewise contains texts of the *Brut*, Thomas Hoccleve's *De regimine principum*, the romance of King Ponthus of

135-42; Thomson, *Catalogue of the Manuscripts of Lincoln Cathedral Chapter Library*, pp. 65-9.

¹³¹Keiser, 'Lincoln Cathedral Library MS 91', pp. 158-79; George R. Keiser, 'More Light on the Life and Milieu of Robert Thornton', *Studies in Bibliography* 36 (1983): 111-19; George R. Keiser, "'To Knowen God Almyghtyn": Robert Thornton's Devotional Book', *Analecta Cartusiana* 106 (1984): 103-29.

¹³²John J. Thompson, 'Another Look at the Religious Texts in Lincoln, Cathedral Library, MS 91', in A.J. Minnis (ed.), *Late Medieval Religious Texts and their Transmission: Essays in Honour of A.I. Doyle* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 169-87.

¹³³Raine (ed.), *Testamenta Eboracensia IV*, pp. 102-3n.

¹³⁴M.C. Seymour, *A Catalogue of Chaucer Manuscripts I: Works before the Canterbury Tales* (Aldershot, 1995), pp. 49-50.

Galicia and the princess Sidon and other stories from the *Gesta romanorum*.¹³⁵ The arms of the Swillington family of Yorkshire are depicted in initial letters on folios 1r, 80r, 157v and 166r. The evidence of the wills and inventories of the Yorkshire laity may therefore give a misleadingly pessimistic impression of their interest in secular works. Although the title of only one text may be given to identify a book, this may not necessarily mean that only one work was contained in the volume. The infrequent mention of secular works in the testamentary sources may also reflect their lower status compared with religious books. Not only were religious texts, especially service and prayer-books, generally more heavily decorated but they were also held to have particular value in their role as an aid to devotion.¹³⁶ Furthermore, religious texts were probably more likely to be mentioned in a will than secular works because of the nature of the document. The bequest of a primer or other devotional text would serve as written evidence of the testator's devotion.¹³⁷

Bibles or selections of the Scriptures, with the exception of psalters, are mentioned very rarely in the wills and inventories. In 1471, John Pykeryng, a layman of York, bequeathed to Thomas Helton, provost of North Acaster, a bound volume of the book of Ecclesiastics and the book of Chronicles.¹³⁸ Thomas Tubbac, a merchant of York, also gave an *Historia scholastica* to the church of St John the Evangelist in 1486/7.¹³⁹ It is likely that the suspicion against and condemnation of lay reading of the Scriptures in the vernacular during the fifteenth century deterred the laity from owning Bibles and Biblical commentaries. In 1409 the constitutions of Archbishop Arundel forbade the translation of

¹³⁵A description of the manuscript is given in William D. Macray, *Catalogi Codicum Manuscriptorum Bibliothecae Bodleianae pars nona, codices a viro clarissimo Kenelm Digby* (Oxford, 1883), pp. 195-6.

¹³⁶Goldberg, 'Lay Book Ownership', p. 184.

¹³⁷Dutton, 'Women's Use of Religious Literature', p. 67.

¹³⁸BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 4, f. 95v.

¹³⁹BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, f. 299v.

a text of Scripture into English and also the ownership of any translation which had been made since Wycliffe's time, without diocesan permission.¹⁴⁰ The two exceptional bequests of Biblical works in the wills of the Yorkshire laity support the theory that it was only with the availability of the vernacular scriptures, promoted by the Protestant reformers during the Reformation, that the laity could gain access to the whole text of the Bible, where previously they had been reliant on the preaching of the parish priest and the images and ritual of the church.¹⁴¹

The English Protestant reformers campaigned for the complete Bible to be translated into English. The first printed English New Testament was produced by William Tyndale in March 1526 and illegal copies were brought secretly into England.¹⁴² In 1534, publication of the English Scriptures began to receive the tacit approval of Thomas Cranmer and Thomas Cromwell. In December of that year, Convocation petitioned the king for an English translation of the Bible, but it was unsuccessful.¹⁴³ The first complete English Bible, translated by Miles Coverdale, was finally published on 4 October 1535. This was followed by injunctions to have both a Latin and an English Bible set up in the parish churches for the laity to use in 1536, 1538 and 1539. A cheaper edition of the Great Bible, aimed at the private reading of the laity, was produced in April 1540.¹⁴⁴ On 8 May 1543, a blow was struck at the laity's access to the vernacular scriptures. The Act 'for the advancement of true religion' restricted Bible reading to the aristocracy and gentry, denying the rest of the

¹⁴⁰Nicholas Watson, 'Censorship and Cultural Change in Late Medieval England: Vernacular Theology, the Oxford Translation Debate, and Arundel's Constitutions of 1409', *Speculum* 70 (1995): 822-64.

¹⁴¹This theory of the impact of the Reformation on lay literacy has been outlined in the introduction, pp. 5-8.

¹⁴²Haigh, *English Reformations*, p. 60.

¹⁴³Charles C. Butterworth, *The English Primers, 1529-1545* (New York, 1971), p. 49.

¹⁴⁴Dickens, *English Reformation*, p. 134.

laity access to the Scriptures.¹⁴⁵ For nine years, therefore, from 1534 to 1543, the laity had the right to buy, read and interpret for themselves the Word of God. Yet only one mention of a Bible or Biblical commentary has been found in the lay wills of Yorkshire from this period. In 1543, Thomas Mounteney, a gentleman of Sandall, bequeathed a book of exposition of the seven psalms.¹⁴⁶ An analysis of testamentary sources for the south-west of England has also produced a disappointing result: none of the 398 wills made by the laity over the period 1520-69 includes the bequest of a Bible.¹⁴⁷

Caution must be used in assessing a negative result from the testamentary sources. It is at least possible that some lay people did own Bibles and Biblical commentaries, but that it has not been recorded in their wills and inventories. The more frequent bequest of the traditional service books and prayer aids during both the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries compared with the Scriptures may suggest that the Yorkshire laity were content with the devotional manuals already available. Primers, which, as we have seen, were repeatedly mentioned in the wills and inventories of the Yorkshire laity, contained a significant amount of material from the Bible. In them could be found excerpts from both the Old and New Testaments and some forty to sixty psalms, as well as the Pater Noster, Creed and Ten Commandments.¹⁴⁸ Psalters, both liturgical and non-liturgical, were composed of a large number of psalms. Thus, even before the Reformation, a significant amount of the Scriptures was available for the laity to read in their prayer-books and books of devotion.

It can nevertheless be argued that the importance of the Reformation for the devotional reading of the laity lay in its emphasis on the use of the vernacular. It is assumed

¹⁴⁵Haigh, *English Reformations*, p. 161.

¹⁴⁶BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 11, ff. 662v-3r.

¹⁴⁷Whiting, *Blind Devotion of the People*, p. 190.

that the laity of late-medieval England could not understand Latin. Although primers and other prayer-books were predominantly in Latin, it was possible to use the prayer-aids without a strong grasp of the language. It was not considered necessary for the worshipper to understand the prayers that he or she was reciting. Consequently, the reading ability of most owners of primers may have been limited to understanding the letters and pronouncing them, rather than understanding the meaning.¹⁴⁹ The primer or prayer-book may also have contained short English prayers which the celebrant could read and understand fully. The already mentioned Pavement Hours in York Minster Library, for example, contains some English passages.¹⁵⁰ The first folio has English verses on *Domina labia mea*, beginning ‘Lord vndo my lippis ihesu heven kyng...’ An English prayer to St Helen can also be found in the volume. The Book of Hours may also have been used by an illiterate parishioner who wanted to look at the pictures as a stimulus to his or her devotion. Although the volume originally contained no illuminations, eight cuttings from other books have been pasted in. A woodcut added at folio 44v contains an indulgence note in English. Early printed editions of prayer books also included illustrations and English rubrics and prayers, in order to help the reader find his or her way around the text.¹⁵¹

Indications of comprehension literacy in Latin in the testamentary sources are rare and confined to the professional and gentry classes. An ability in Latin is suggested by the bequest of a Latin life of Christ by Elizabeth Sywardby and the bequest of Latin scriptural

¹⁴⁸Butterworth, *The English Primers*, pp. 1-3.

¹⁴⁹Paul Saenger, ‘Books of Hours and the Reading Habits of the Later Middle Ages’, in Roger Chartier (ed.), *The Culture of Print: Power and the Uses of Print in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford, 1989), p. 142.

¹⁵⁰YML, MS XVI.K.6; Ker and Piper (eds.), *Medieval Manuscripts*, 4: 727-30; see chapter one, p. 59.

¹⁵¹Martha W. Driver, ‘Pictures in Print: Late Fifteenth and Early Sixteenth-Century English Religious Books for Lay Readers’, in Michael G. Sargent (ed.), *De Cella in Seculum: Religious and Secular Life in Late Medieval England* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 229-44.

works by John Pykeryng and Thomas Tubbac, which have been cited above. We must be cautious, however, as it is not known whether the testators read these books themselves or if they were used by other members of their household. The books of Elizabeth Sywardby, for example, were kept in her chapel.¹⁵² An indication of the extent of Latin learning amongst the laity can also be seen in a court case of 1556 concerning the ignorance and immoral behaviour of a York curate, Robert Fox. Seven lay witnesses were summoned to testify to the vicar's competence in Latin. Most of them were unable to understand Latin and therefore comment on the vicar's learning, but a scrivener and a baker were both able to question certain phrases that Fox had said.¹⁵³ The exceptional examples of Latinity discovered in the wills and inventories are mainly by professional lawyers and teachers, or the gentry; they cannot be seen to be representative of the Yorkshire laity as a whole.

References to French books are also only found in the wills and inventories of the gentry and lay professionals. Three books in French were mentioned in the will of Agnes Stapleton, mentioned above.¹⁵⁴ In 1450, Thomas Wentworth, an esquire of Doncaster, gave Agnes Constable of Flamborough a French text of the *Lucidarius* of Honorius of Autun.¹⁵⁵ A French book was likewise bequeathed by Margaret la Zouch of Kirklington to her daughter Elizabeth in 1451.¹⁵⁶ Sir Peter Arden included a French book amongst the bequests in his will proved in 1464.¹⁵⁷ Another suggestion of literacy in French can be seen in the will of James Roos, an esquire of Ingmanthorpe, which mentions a psalter written in

¹⁵²YML, L1(17)9.

¹⁵³Claire Cross, 'Lay Literacy and Clerical Misconduct in a York Parish during the reign of Mary Tudor', *York Historian* 3 (1980): 10-15.

¹⁵⁴Clay (ed.), *North Country Wills*, pp. 48-9.

¹⁵⁵BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 207r.

¹⁵⁶BIHR, Archbishop's Register, vol. 19, ff. 156r-7r.

¹⁵⁷Raine (ed.), *Testamenta Eboracensia IV*, pp. 102-3n.

Latin and French, given to his daughter-in-law, Mary, in 1515/6.¹⁵⁸

Enthusiasm, perhaps even a preference, for English literature is therefore indicated in the wills and inventories. The English devotional reading of Agnes Stapleton, Elizabeth Sywardby and John Fynwell has already been mentioned. Reference has also been made to the copy of Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* bequeathed by William Bank, a gentleman of York, and John Lydgate's *Fall of Princes* bequeathed by Marjory Salvayn of York.¹⁵⁹ A book of 'devynyte' in English was also mentioned in the will of John Newton of York in 1443.¹⁶⁰ Margaret Pigot, widow of Geoffrey Pigot of Rotherham and daughter of Elizabeth Sywardby, bequeathed her red English book in 1485.¹⁶¹ In 1523, Thomas Boynton of Roxby gave all his English books to his son Matthew.¹⁶²

Thus, although the language of many of the books mentioned in the wills and inventories is not specified, a significant number of books were in English, the language of everyday communication and thought. Indications of comprehension literacy in Latin or French was limited to the professional literates and a few gentry. A greater number of laity had only a phonetic understanding of written Latin, but comprehension literacy in English.¹⁶³ However, long devotional and secular texts in English, suggesting an easy and confident ability to read, were predominantly bequeathed by the professional and gentle classes. The competence of the less prosperous laity in reading English is likely therefore to have been restricted to reading short prayers and rubrics. Consequently, not only would the text of the Latin Bible have been incomprehensible to nearly all lay society, but the

¹⁵⁸BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 9, f. 28r-v.

¹⁵⁹See p. 200-1.

¹⁶⁰BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 71v-2v.

¹⁶¹Fowler (ed.), *Acts of the Chapter*, p. 274; Raine (ed.), *Testamenta Eboracensia III*, p. 161n.

¹⁶²BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 9, f. 251r-v.

vernacular translation of the Scriptures may also have been beyond the ability of most lay people. Thus, the lack of evidence in the testamentary sources for the ownership of the English Bible may not simply reflect a dearth of enthusiasm, but rather a lack of confidence in reading large texts in the vernacular.

The wills of the second quarter of the sixteenth century continue to mention the traditional Catholic prayer and service books, and lives of the saints. This may reflect a political or religious agenda which the laity had in mind when they composed their wills. The bequest of the Catholic prayer or service books may have been a way of expressing their continuing loyalty to the old religion. A *Golden Legend* was bequeathed by John Marshall, a merchant of York, to the nuns of Appleton in Cheshire in 1526.¹⁶⁴ The contents of the private chapels of Robert Roos and Roger Rockley, including service books, were listed in their wills in 1532 and 1534/5 respectively.¹⁶⁵ In 1539, Lancelot Stapleton of Wath gave a little processioner to the parish church of Hovingham.¹⁶⁶ The evidence of book bequests in wills thus supports a picture of early sixteenth-century Yorkshire society as conservative and unenthusiastic about the Protestant reforms. It is hard to perceive any notable change in the devotional reading of the Yorkshire laity over the period from the testamentary evidence, despite the publication of polemical works and the vernacular translation of the Bible.

Nevertheless, it is possible that the evidence of book ownership in wills may be misleading. There is a danger that lay access to the vernacular Bible is not revealed in the testamentary sources, as access did not depend on the purchase and ownership of texts. As we have seen, the Protestant reformers made the Bible available to the laity through the

¹⁶³Saenger, 'Books of Hours', p. 142.

¹⁶⁴BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 9, ff. 357v-8r.

¹⁶⁵BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 11, ff. 12r-v, 124v-5v.

medium of the parish church. It was ordered that Bibles should be chained in an open space for the laity to read aloud. The laity would also have been discouraged from purchasing a Bible for themselves by the price.¹⁶⁷ In 1541, for example, the churchwardens of Ecclesfield collected over 14s for a Bible.¹⁶⁸ It is unlikely, therefore, that there was a significant increase in the demand for Scriptural texts by the laity.¹⁶⁹ Doubts can also be cast upon the theory that the availability of the English Scriptures stimulated the laity to learn to read. Those who were illiterate could listen while another read the Scripture aloud.¹⁷⁰ The evidence of the book bequests of the Yorkshire laity, therefore, suggests that the promotion of the English Scriptures did not have an immediate effect on the literacy of the laity. It is possible that the vast majority of laymen and women could not confidently read the text of the vernacular Bible. Those who could read English fluently could use the copy of the Bible available in the churches and therefore may not have created a demand for private copies. Instead, the patterns of book bequests show a continuing enthusiasm for manuals for church services and private prayers during both the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Their religious conservatism does not, therefore, seem to have discouraged them from reading.

Through the discussion of the different types of books mentioned in the wills and inventories, we can suggest a profile of lay demand for books in Yorkshire during the pre-Reformation period. The most important lay customers of the book trade seem to have been the professional teachers, lawyers and scribes, and the gentry and aristocracy. The

¹⁶⁶BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 11, f. 349v.

¹⁶⁷Whiting, *Blind Devotion*, pp. 196-7.

¹⁶⁸Alfred Scott Gatty (ed.), *Registers of Ecclesfield Parish Church, Yorkshire* (London and Sheffield, 1878), p. 159.

¹⁶⁹Richard Gawthorp and Gerald Strauss, 'Protestantism and Literacy in Early Modern Germany', *Past and Present* 104 (1984): 31-55.

¹⁷⁰Susan Brigden, *London and the Reformation* (Oxford, 1989), p. 90.

wills and inventories of laymen of both of these groups reveal an interest in a wide range of literature, including legal texts, grammar books, works of contemplation and meditation, and secular works. It is not unusual to find indications of comprehension literacy in two or more languages, and they usually owned the largest libraries. However, no examples are known of gentlewomen owning books of grammar or law, and evidence of them reading secular romances or histories in the period c. 1450-1550 is rare. This may be a result of the limitations of the testamentary evidence. It is likely that evidence of reading by lay women may not have been captured in the wills and inventories. Nevertheless, a few lay women, in particular Agnes Stapleton and Elizabeth Sywardby, are known to have owned impressive libraries which may suggest a competence in reading at least two languages. The next category of literates as suggested by the testamentary sources were the merchant families of the Yorkshire towns. It is rarer to find evidence of an interest in law, grammar, works of devotion or secular recreational subjects, but a few examples, such as in the will of John Marshall of York, are known. It seems unlikely that many merchants or their wives had comprehension literacy in Latin, as nearly all their wills and inventories mention only service and prayer books. With one or two rare exceptions, primers, psalters and other prayer books likewise constituted the only books bequeathed by artisans and craftsmen. Other laymen and women may have had enough understanding of written English to grasp the meaning of an inscription or notice, but were not able to acquire books, or simply not interested in doing so. The testamentary sources do not reveal any significant changes in the composition of the lay reading public of Yorkshire over the period c. 1450-1550. Thus, the wills and inventories do not clearly show any immediate or dramatic effects that the technology of print or the early reforms of the English Protestants may have had on lay book ownership.

Using this profile of the extent of literacy amongst the Yorkshire laity, it is possible

to assess the importance of the demand for books generated by laymen and women within the book trade. Between 1493 and 1536, twenty-three editions of York service books are known to have been printed within the city of York, or by stationers in London or abroad for sale within the city. Only a few of these books, in particular the primers, would have been suitable as a private devotional aid but the wide variety of service books would have been useful to the laity who had their own private chapels, or who wished to make a gift to a church or other religious institution. The book most frequently bequeathed by the laity, the primer, was printed repeatedly for use within the diocese of York in the early sixteenth century. Primers of York use were printed by both Richard Pynson, possibly in 1510, and by Wynkyn de Worde in around 1515.¹⁷¹ Two editions of the York Book of Hours were also financed by Guillaume Bernard and Jacques Cousin, stationers of Rouen, probably in 1516 and 1517.¹⁷² In 1536 an edition of the York Hours was produced by Nicholas le Roux, a printer of Rouen, for John Growte or Groyat, stationer in London, and Jean Marchant, stationer in Rouen.¹⁷³

A total of sixty-five service and prayer books were itemised in the 1538 stock list of Neville Mores including two Books of Hours.¹⁷⁴ It is possible to put either an optimistic or pessimistic interpretation on the small number of primers. On the one hand, it may be that the demand for personal prayer-books was not an important concern of Mores. On the other hand, primers may have been a 'best-seller' which Mores often and quickly ran out of. The stock of Mores also included one Roman psalter; no psalters of York use are known to have been published before his probate inventory was made.

The market for books generated by lay professionals was quickly perceived by the

¹⁷¹STC 16102, 16102.5.

¹⁷²STC 16103, 16104.

¹⁷³STC 16106.

English printers, particularly W. de Machlinia, who printed eleven editions of law texts and Richard Pynson, who published nearly a hundred and fifty books of law.¹⁷⁵ As has been discussed in the previous chapter, the probate inventory of Mores includes a number of law and grammar texts, and grammar books had also been printed by Goes and Milner. Although the main market for these books was probably the clergy, the interest of the lay professional and gentry classes in these texts may also have been a consideration.

Evidence of the production and sale in York of other books which appealed to the literate laity is, however, sparse. It is likely that the printers of York did not produce vernacular texts because this market was already being supplied by printers in London. The *Chastising of God's Children*, for example, was printed by Wynkyn de Worde in 1493, and in the next year an edition was produced of the *Fall of Princes* by John Lydgate.¹⁷⁶ As I have already shown, the stock of Mores shows no interest in the vernacular market. Besides two small French books and two books of Dutch, his probate inventory itemises only Latin texts; there are no English works. We should not assume, however, from the lack of evidence of the sale of vernacular texts in York that these books were not available. A book called 'proclamacion of the highe' was bequeathed in the will of Thomas Mounteney, a gentleman of Sandall, in 1543. This was probably a copy of the 1543 edition of *A proclamacyon of the hygh emperour Iesu Christ* printed by Richard Redman.¹⁷⁷ Evidence of the activities of stationers such as Mores, John Gachet and Thomas Richardson is available because books were a major or main part of their trade and because they worked at a fixed place of business. Small stocks of books, including vernacular works printed in London and Westminster, may also have been sold in York by general retailers along with

¹⁷⁴Palliser and Selwyn, 'Stock', pp. 207-19.

¹⁷⁵Bennett, *English Books and Readers 1475-1557*, pp. 76-7.

¹⁷⁶STC 3175, 5065.

other goods, or by chapmen.¹⁷⁸ Thus the evidence of the demand for vernacular texts by the Yorkshire laity as revealed by their wills and probate inventories, and the ecclesiastical concerns of Mores's stock, suggest that the literary interests of the laity were not in general catered for by the more prominent stationers of York. We can, therefore, postulate that the nature of the trade in books aimed at the lay reading public was different from that of the ecclesiastical market.

The case-study of book ownership in Yorkshire suggests that previous interpretations of the role of the increasing literacy of the laity in the development of the professional book trade have to be refined. Despite the technological advances in the book trade and the promotion of the vernacular scriptures, the testamentary sources do not reveal an obvious change in the lay reading public or their reading interests over the period 1440-1550. The evidence of lay book ownership thus corresponds to the evidence of clerical reading which likewise gave an impression of continuity. The conservative nature of lay and clerical book ownership contrasts with the changes in book production and trade that I discussed in section one.

In this chapter, I have indicated that there was not always a direct link between book production and book ownership. On the one hand the evidence of the lay wills shows that the book trade of York served a larger market than those who could read. A demand for books for use by private chaplains, and as gifts, was generated by a wide range of laity. On the other hand an improvement in the general literacy abilities of the laity does not automatically produce a greater demand for books. The pragmatic incentive to literacy, in order to deal with documentation, can remain distinct from reading for recreational and

¹⁷⁷STC 14561.

¹⁷⁸The role of chapmen in the distribution of goods will be discussed further in chapter six, p. 273.

spiritual purposes. The links between the book trade and reading were also weakened by the availability of Bibles in parish churches and the continuing vogue for the reading aloud of books. In section three, the relationship between the production and ownership of books will be analysed in more detail by studying the dissemination of books and the cost of reading.

Chapter 5

The Cost of Reading

The testamentary evidence studied in chapters three and four for the book ownership of the laity, clergy and religious institutions has suggested that print and the Reformation did not alter reading interests to any large extent. The arguments of section two contrast with the evidence for change in the book trade in section one. In this last section the book trade and the market for books will be considered together in order to analyse the effect of print on the cost of books and distribution methods. As I have shown in the introduction, some studies have postulated that there were immediate changes in the cost of books and the means of disseminating books during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. However, as I will argue, these simple theories of progress do not take into account the wide variety of book formats, reading practices and text dissemination, which complicate a straightforward contrast between manuscript and print.

In this chapter, a detailed investigation will be undertaken of the effects of print (and to a lesser extent, the Reformation) on the price of books. The traditional view is that, in the Middle Ages, books were ‘essentially a luxury commodity’.¹ The high cost of books effectively restricted reading for pleasure and the ownership of a personal library to the clergy, the aristocracy and the more prosperous mercantile families, and to the students who copied their own texts.² With the invention of printing, however, it is argued that the price of a book was dramatically reduced and all levels of literate society could now own and use a library.

¹H.E. Bell, ‘The Price of Books in Medieval England’, *The Library*, 4th series 17 (1937): 312-32; see also, W.L. Schramm, ‘The Cost of Books in Chaucer’s Time’, *Modern Language Notes* 38 (1933): 139-45.

²C.H. Talbot, ‘The Universities and the Medieval Library’, in Francis Wormald and C.E.

Print is also credited with putting an end to the medieval scarcity of books. It is a common view that the limitations of medieval book production, providing only a few books at a time and at a high cost before the invention of print, hindered lay access to books. Parkes has argued that: ‘The general pattern of the evidence indicates that from the thirteenth century onward increasing reliance and importance was placed upon the written word. This was accompanied by the growth of the reading habit, checked only by the high price of a book or by the necessity to write it for oneself’.³ With the arrival of printing technology and printed texts, these barriers were removed and the laity could fill their homes with a variety of texts to satisfy their intellectual interests and leisure.

These simple, and consequently suspect, theories of the impact of print on the cost of reading and the availability of books will be analysed. This will necessitate an evaluation of the cost of books during the manuscript period, compared with the texts produced by the presses. During both the late medieval and early modern period, reading was not restricted to the purchase of books. I will discuss the alternative ways in which readers could obtain access to books without spending money, such as the use of libraries. As I will show, the availability of cheaper booklets, paper books and second-hand texts, cast doubt on the traditional theories of the revolutionary impact of print. I will also argue that printed books were not invariably less expensive than manuscript texts. Instead printing was simply the means by which texts could be produced more cheaply. I will then use the evidence of wills and probate inventories of the Yorkshire laity in the period c.1450-1550 to argue that there is no clear evidence of an increase in lay literacy or the size of libraries owing to a fall in the general cost of books.

It must be made clear at the beginning of this analysis that there are many pitfalls in

Wright (eds.), *The English Library before 1700* (London, 1958), pp. 66-84.

³Parkes, ‘Literacy of the Laity’, p. 296.

the investigation of the value of books. We often do not know if the priced book was plain and undecorated or lavishly illuminated with many full page miniatures, unbound or bound in expensive leather, with or without clasps and other ornaments; each of which conditions could affect the price of the book greatly. Likewise, the price of a text will often depend on the circumstances of the valuation. The price given to a book in the new stock of a bookseller is likely to vary from the price given to a second-hand copy of the same text which had been valued for a probate inventory. The descriptions of books in probate inventories can be very terse, which poses a problem for the evaluation of manuscript texts. We cannot be sure if the book contained the whole of the text or only part, or if the named text was bound together with other works. The value of service books is also likely to differ greatly between those intended for general church use (which had to be large with big lettering, so that they could be read by a priest as he celebrated the mass), and those intended for private worship (often small enough to be held in the hand and carried around in the pocket).

The different formats of books, and the uncertainty of how they were valued, are only some of the many obstacles in comparing the price of manuscript and printed texts. The sixteenth century was a period of price inflation. In the 1540s alone, prices had doubled due to Henry VIII's debasement of the coinage.⁴ Furthermore, the price of liturgical texts was affected by more than just the advent of print in the sixteenth century. The reforms of the Protestants in the reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI quickly transformed the nature of church worship, causing the traditional Catholic service books to become obsolete. By means of the 1532 Act 'for the abrogation of certain holydays', many major festivals and

⁴Francis R. Johnson, 'Notes on English Retail Book-Prices, 1550-1640', *The Library*, 5th series 5 (1950): 83-112.

some local ones, were removed from the ritual year.⁵ Further upheaval was to follow in June 1535 when a letter was sent to the bishops instructing them to ensure that all references to the pope were erased from service books.⁶ In November 1538, Henry VIII ordered that the name of Thomas Becket be obliterated from all books of prayer and the liturgy.⁷ The King's Primer was published in 1545, which officially replaced all other primers.⁸ This was followed in 1549 by an order from the Privy Council that all Latin service books should be destroyed and replaced by the Book of Common Prayer.⁹

Some of the proscribed books were hidden away in hope of a change of religious climate. Many others were either confiscated or disposed of, in accordance with the instructions. For the rest of Edward VI's reign, the Catholic service books, which had once been valued at as much as £4 each, were now worth no more than the gold on the page.¹⁰ The 1549-51 churchwardens' accounts of St John's church, Winchester, for example, disposed of one and a half hundred weight of parchment books for only 9s.¹¹ The pre-Reformation accounts of St Michael, Spurriergate, York make mention of a legend, verse book, two books of the feast of the visitation, a coucher, a book of sequences, a manual and at least three massbooks, one of which was bought in 1520 for 5s.¹² In 1549, all these books became worthless.

The traditional Catholic mass was restored with the succession of Mary. Once again, books of the Catholic liturgy were expensive and in great demand, and the parish churches

⁵Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, pp. 394-5.

⁶Haigh, *English Reformations*, p. 124.

⁷Hughes and Larkin (eds.), *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, 1: 275-6.

⁸Ibid., 1: 349-50.

⁹Ibid., 1: 485-6.

¹⁰YML, L1(17)47.

¹¹Williams (ed.), *Early Churchwardens' Accounts*, p. 166.

often had to pay large sums in order to acquire the requisite number of manuals.¹³ The parish church of Sheriff Hutton in Yorkshire, for example, paid the York stationer, Thomas Richardson, 10s in 1553 to equip the church with the required manuals.¹⁴ Within only seven years, however, the tide turned again with the succession of Elizabeth. Out went the newly-bought Catholic service books, replaced by a revised Book of Common Prayer.¹⁵

1. The Cost of Manuscript

Even keeping in mind the problems involved with evaluating the cost of books, it is hard to deny that the price of books in the Middle Ages was higher than most could afford. The 1449 inventory of Thomas Morton, a residentiary canon of York, for example, includes an old missal of York use worth £1 6s 8d, a York breviary worth £11 3s 6d, a large breviary of Sarum use at £2 13s 5d and a glossed psalter, valued at £2.¹⁶ In order to put these prices in perspective, we can compare them with the value of goods in probate inventories and the average annual incomes of the majority of inhabitants of York. A founder, tailor and hosier of York each left around £30 in goods.¹⁷ They were probably amongst the more wealthy craftsmen of York as the inventory of the goods of a stringer of the same city, who died in 1436, came to a total of only £6. It has been estimated that skilled building workers generally earned between £5 and £7 a year during the late fifteenth century.¹⁸ In the 1524 lay subsidy, over a third of the taxpayers were wage-earners who were assessed on only a

¹²BIHR, PR Y/MS/3,4; Webb (ed.), *Churchwardens' Accounts*.

¹³Haigh, *English Reformations*, pp. 206-9.

¹⁴J.S. Purvis, 'The Churchwardens' Book of Sheriff Hutton, A.D. 1524-1568', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 36 (1944): 178-89.

¹⁵Haigh, *English Reformations*, pp. 241-2.

¹⁶YML, L1(17)44a-b.

¹⁷Dyer, *Standards*, p. 195.

few or no possessions.¹⁹ Another 20% of the taxpayers were worth only £2 in goods. Furthermore, a large number of the city's inhabitants were not recorded as they did not earn enough to be taxed. Not one taxpayer, for example, is recorded in ten of York's forty parishes.

The large monetary value of certain manuscript volumes, especially service books, is exemplified by the widespread custom of chaining books and locking them away in chests so that they would not be stolen. An instruction to chain the books in the stall before the rector in the choir was tied to the bequest of three books to All Saints Church in North Street, York, by James Bagule in 1440.²⁰ As I have mentioned in chapter four, in 1486/7, Thomas Tubbac, merchant of York, bequeathed to the church of St John the Evangelist, also in York, '*unum librum vocatum historia scholastica cum cathena ferrea ligandum et in summo choro dicte ecclesie permanendum.*'²¹

Another common practice which testifies to the high cost of some manuscript texts is the charitable bequest of a volume or collection of texts to readers who could not afford to buy their own books. An example of a 'common-profit scheme' is detailed in the will of William Wilmyncote, a chaplain of York, who died in 1404/5.²² Wilmyncote stated in his will that seven books from his library should be given to John Morele, chaplain, and a clerk called Richard de Swayneby. On their deaths, the collection of books should be given to other poor unbeneficed priests. A similar scheme was financed in 1506 by John Fell, a

¹⁸Ibid., p. 196; Swanson, *Medieval Artisans*, p. 155.

¹⁹Palliser, *Tudor York*, pp. 136-7.

²⁰BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 17r.

²¹'a book called *Historia scholastica* to be fixed with an iron chain and to remain forever in the high choir of the said church'. BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, f. 299v.

²²BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 3, ff. 226v-7r; Jo Ann Hoepfner Moran, 'A 'Common-Profit' Library in Fifteenth-Century England and other Books for Chaplains', *Manuscripta* 28 (1984): 17-25.

chantry priest of York Minster.²³ Fell instructed the executors of his will to give his breviary to ‘some well disposid priest and with out a portus so that he fynd them surtis to leiff the same aftur hys dyseeas to a prest’. Another breviary, given first to William White, was also intended by Fell to circulate among priests of the Minster who presumably could not afford their own manuals.²⁴

The considerable value of many manuscript books is also revealed in the frequent use of books as pledges for loans or other promises. Edmund Norton, a Yorkshire priest who was mentioned in chapter three, acquired the *Quodlibet* of Scotus as a pledge for a loan of 10s.²⁵ A book of physic valued at five marks was also pledged in a plea of detinue in York between Adam Mylorde, a mason and Anthony Delupean in 1479.²⁶ In the same year, prior Robert of Holy Trinity priory in York failed to appear in the sheriff’s court to answer for a debt of £3 3s. It was therefore ordered that three books belonging to Robert, worth a total of 21s 8d, should be confiscated.²⁷

2. Paper

Manuscript books did not have to be expensive, however. The cost of a book depended on a number of factors, including the decoration, the type of script, the size of the volume and the material used. The use of paper instead of parchment, for example, could reduce the cost of making a book. Parkes has argued that it was the ‘increasing demand, better

²³YML, L2/5a, ff. 371v-2r.

²⁴For another example of a common-profit scheme, see Wendy Scase, ‘Reginald Pecock, John Carpenter and John Colop’s ‘Common-Profit’ Books: Aspects of Book Ownership and Circulation in Fifteenth-Century London’, *Medium Aevum* 61 (1992): 261-74.

²⁵Boyle and Rouse, ‘Fifteenth-Century List’, pp. 284-8. The Oxford University system of pledges is discussed in Parkes, ‘Provision of Books’, pp. 418-67.

²⁶YCA, E25, p. 67.

²⁷YCA, E25, p. 102.

organised production, cheaper handwriting, and the introduction of paper' that enabled the provision of cheap books.²⁸ According to R.J. Lyall, it is possible to discern a steady reduction in the price of books over the course of the fifteenth century, which halved by the middle of the fifteenth century and then halved again by 1500.²⁹ He concludes by stating that 'the introduction of paper transformed the book trade, bringing the acquisition of manuscripts within the reach of a larger section of society than ever before and paving the way for the new technology of print'.³⁰

Paper was by no means a novelty in York by the mid-fifteenth century. The material had to be imported as paper manufacture did not take off in England until the second half of the sixteenth century.³¹ Only one paper mill is known to have operated in England in the period 1450-1550. This was the mill of John Tate of Hertford, who supplied paper to Wynkyn de Worde for his edition of Bartholomew's *De proprietatibus rerum*.³² The watermarks of the paper documents used in York suggest that Rouen, Troyes, Lisieux and Chateaudun in France were the main suppliers. York's paper was most likely imported through the port of Hull, whose late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century customs accounts make frequent mention of imports of paper in quantities varying from two reams to 300 reams.³³ A ream was equivalent to 20 quires or 500 sheets.³⁴ The accounts of the second half of the fifteenth century do not generally give a description of the paper, although there

²⁸Parkes, 'Literacy', p. 286.

²⁹R.J. Lyall, 'Materials: the Paper Revolution', in Griffiths and Pearsall (eds.), *Book Production and Publishing*, pp. 11-29.

³⁰Ibid, p. 26; see also Carol Meale, 'Patrons, Buyers and Owners: Book Production and Social Status', in Griffiths and Pearsall (eds.), *Book Production and Publishing*, p. 217.

³¹D.C. Coleman, *The British Paper Industry 1495-1860* (Oxford, 1958), pp. 42.

³²STC 1536; Allen Stevenson, *The Problem of the Missale Speciale* (London, 1967), p. 94.

³³Childs (ed.), *Customs Accounts*, pp. 12, 161, 163, 164 etc.

³⁴Lyall, 'Materials', p. 28n; Stevenson, *Problem*, pp. 293-4n.

are a few references to writing paper, black paper and cap-paper.³⁵ By the early sixteenth century, however, it was usual to describe paper as either black, white, brown or grey; grey was the most common. The customs accounts of April 1532 to April 1534, for example, mention the import of seventy reams of grey, seven reams of brown and four reams of black paper.³⁶

A large proportion of documents for both civic and private administration were written on paper. The earliest use of paper in York was by the mercers, probably as a result of their trading activities which brought them into contact with the manufacture and sale of paper abroad. The account book of the guild of St Mary was written on paper as early as 1358.³⁷ The mercers' journal, which dates from 1420, and the draft accounts, which survive from 1433, were also kept on paper.³⁸ An early use of paper was also made by the scribes of the city's courts. The volumes recording the proceedings of the Consistory Court, for example, which date from 1417, are all made of paper, as well as a few of the late fifteenth-century cause papers of the court of the Dean and Chapter.³⁹ Paper was also employed for the record-keeping of the civic administration. The first known use of paper by the scribes of the city corporation was in the account books of the chamberlains, which date from 1446.⁴⁰ The House Books (beginning in 1476) are also all of paper, with the exception of volume nine (1503-19).⁴¹

³⁵Childs (ed.), *Customs Accounts*, pp. 161, 163, 165, 203-4.

³⁶PRO, E 122/202/6, ff. 1v, 4v, 5v, 6r, 16r.

³⁷York, Merchant Adventurers' Hall; Smith, *Guide to the Archives*, p. 26.

³⁸York, Merchant Adventurers' Hall; Smith, *Guide to the Archives*, pp. 34-5; Alexandra F. Johnston and Margaret Rogerson (eds.), *Records of Early English Drama: York* (Toronto, 1979), 1: xxvii.

³⁹BIHR, Consistory Court Act Books, vols. 1-19; Dean and Chapter cause papers 1489/1, 1491/1, 1494/1, 1496/2.

⁴⁰YCA, CC1-.

⁴¹YCA, B1-.

The merchants or mercers who supplied the city chamberlains with paper were often officials of the city at the time of the sale, sometimes even chamberlains themselves. Their posts in the civic administration were clearly advantageous for the retail of their goods. Thomas Beverley, for example, who was paid 15d for five quires of paper from the city finances in 1447, was chamberlain during that year.⁴² Likewise, John Ince held the post of chamberlain in 1448 when he supplied the city administration with a quire of paper for 8d.⁴³ The other merchants who are known to have sold paper to the chamberlains are Thomas Barker (1448), John Cateryk (1453-4), Christopher Bothe and Thomas Tubbac (1454), John Tonge (1562-3), Thomas Abney (1520-21) and Robert Peyrson (1522).⁴⁴ From 1535 it seems that the supplies of paper, parchment and ink were bought by the common clerk, who was reimbursed by the chamberlains.⁴⁵

A boost to the market for paper is likely to have resulted from the establishment of printing presses in the city at the turn of the sixteenth century. All of the surviving printed texts produced in York (with the exception of Milner's 1519 indulgence) are on paper, and although we can only guess at the size of each print run, they would have created a far greater demand for paper than had previously been required by the York scribes. A variety of watermarks appear in the York Minster copy of Goes' *Directorium Sacerdotum* of 1509. These include a shield, a letter 'P' and an unidentified four-legged animal.⁴⁶ The different watermarks suggest that Goes was not able to procure a large enough supply of one paper stock, but instead had to use a number of stocks in order to complete the print run. There

⁴²YCA, CC1, p. 72; Collins (ed.), *Freemen I*, p. 165.

⁴³YCA, CC1, p. 144; Collins (ed.), *Freemen I*, p. 167.

⁴⁴YCA, CC1, p. 145; CC2, ff. 26r, 62r, 104v; Dobson (ed.), *Chamberlains' Account Rolls*, pp. 83, 99, 116.

⁴⁵YCA, CC3, p. 110, f. 26v; CC4, 69v.

⁴⁶STC 16232.4; YML, MS XI.N.31.

is, unfortunately, no surviving record of Goes's paper suppliers. The surviving customs accounts of Hull contain frequent reference to cargoes of paper, yet none of the known York stationers appears as an importer of paper. It is likely therefore that the stationers depended on the trading activities of merchants or chapmen for a supply of paper. A stock of paper books was included in the inventory of the York chapman, Thomas Gryssop, who died in 1446.⁴⁷ The inventory itemises: '*Et de j libro de paupiro prec' viijd ... Et de vij blak paper bokes prec' xd ... Et de iij quayer paper prec' ix d ... Et de vj libris de paupiro prec' ix d ... Et de j dos' paper bokez prec' xvij d*'. John Warwick, the York printer, died in 1542 owing 38s 8d 'to maister Robert Haulle of Yorke fore pauper'.⁴⁸ This is a considerable sum; in 1525/6, the city chamberlains bought a dozen reams of white paper for only 14d.⁴⁹

Despite the extensive use of paper for documents and printed books, evidence of the use and ownership of manuscript paper books is sparse. This is not a true reflection of their availability or popularity in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, but rather a consequence of their cheap, ephemeral nature which meant that they were less likely to be mentioned in a will or probate inventory. Between 1440 and 1550 only twelve testators bequeathed a book specifically said to be written on paper. Two of the bequests of books described as paper were made in the sixteenth century. One, the bequest of William Rowkshaw, rector of Lowthorpe, was of printed paper books.⁵⁰ The other, a large paper massbook of York use bequeathed by Humphrey Gascoign, parson of Barnburgh, may also have been printed.⁵¹ Four paper books were bequeathed between 1430 and 1449, two in the period 1450-1469,

⁴⁷BIHR, Dean and Chapter original wills, 1446.

⁴⁸BIHR, Dean and Chapter original wills, 1542.

⁴⁹YCA, CC2, f. 236v.

⁵⁰BIHR, Prob. Reg. vol. 6, f. 113r.

⁵¹BIHR, Archbishop's Register vol. 28, ff. 182v-3r.

and four in the 1470s. The pattern of bequests does not reflect an increased use of paper books over the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, nor should we expect it to. Books written on paper are more likely to have been noted as such in the early fifteenth century due to their comparative rarity. In the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, however, with the increased production of paper books by the printing presses, the use of this material would have ceased to have been a novelty and it would no longer have been useful to describe a book as made of paper.

Four of the testators did not give any indication of the contents of their paper books, including John Chaloner, a York chaplain, and John Knapton, subtreasurer, who noted only that their volumes contained diverse tracts.⁵² Most of the paper books that are described were religious. The paper books bequeathed did not, however, include any liturgical texts. They were all works of devotion and meditation. A paper book beginning with the office of Richard Rolle was owned by John Maltster, alias Welton, a chaplain of York who died in 1428.⁵³ William Gate, also a parson of the Minster, gave away his paper copy of the *Lectiones mortuorum* of Richard Rolle in his will proved in 1431.⁵⁴ In 1446, Thomas Beleby bequeathed '*unum librum de speculo humane salvacione in paupiro scriptum*', and a book of Bonaventure's *Meditationes* on paper was mentioned in the will of John Burn, parson of York Minster, in 1479.⁵⁵

Robert Ragenhill, advocate of the court of York, made mention in his will of a number of legal texts on paper: '*Item lego eadem librario ecclesie Ebor*' *quatuor libros in papiro scriptos et compilatos per dominum Bartholomeum doctorem iuris civilis super digesto veteri novo et inforciato ac codice. Item lego eidem librario ecclesie Ebor*' *unum*

⁵²BIHR, Prob. Reg. vol. 2, f. 363v; YML, L2/4, f. 326r-v.

⁵³BIHR, Prob. Reg. vol. 2, f. 533r-v.

⁵⁴YML, L2/4, ff. 233v-4r.

librum scriptum in papiro per dominum Johannem de Liniano super clemintinis cum aliis tractatibus diversis conscriptis in eodem libro'.⁵⁶ The only other non-religious paper book was the volume of chronicles bequeathed by John Hamondson, a master of St Peter's school in York, in 1472.⁵⁷

The evidence of extant manuscripts is also biased against paper books due to their generally ephemeral and cheap form. A common type of manuscript paper book was that written by a member of the minor clergy in an economical format for his own use. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Selden Supra 40, an fifteenth-century ordinal of York use written on paper, contains a colophon stating that it was 'by me, Rychards Lostman, preyst'.⁵⁸ The volume is undecorated except for paraph marks in red. Richard Burton, a priest of the York diocese, also wrote a compendium of treatises on paper for his own use. The miscellaneous contents included liturgical texts, grammatical treatises, tables of chronology and lists of meanings of Latin words.⁵⁹ The priests who wrote these manuscripts clearly intended the volumes to be handbooks designed towards their own needs. They were functional and economical, for which paper was the most suitable material.

The paper commonplace book of Sir William Fitzwilliam of Sprotborough is another example of a cheap text which also served as a book to jot down miscellaneous notes.⁶⁰ The

⁵⁵'a book of *Speculo humane salvacione*, written on paper'. YML, L2/4, ff. 261r-v, 345r-v.

⁵⁶'Also I leave to the library of the church of York four books written on paper and compiled by Bartholomeus, doctor of civil law, on the Old Digest, the New Digest and the second book of the Digest and the Codex. And I leave to the same library of the church of York a book written on paper by John de Liniano on the Constitutions of Clementine with other diverse treatises also written in the book.' YML, L2/4, ff. 232r-3v.

⁵⁷BIHR, Prob. Reg. vol. 4, f. 85r.

⁵⁸A list of the contents of this manuscript can be found in Van Dijk, 'Handlist', 3: 231.

⁵⁹A full description is given in Martin Haines, *Ecclesia Anglicana: Studies in the English Church in the Later Middle Ages* (Toronto, 1989), pp. 156-79.

⁶⁰Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Ashmole 45; Guddat-Figge, *Catalogue of Manuscripts*, pp. 28, 247-8; also described in C.M. Meale, 'The Social and Literary Contexts of a Late

main text of the volume is *The Story of the Erle of Tolous*, which was written in the early sixteenth century. Fitzwilliam used the blank pages before and after the text to record a variety of items including a petition, a pudding recipe, an anti-papist tract and prayers. The will of Fitzwilliam, proved in 1518, unfortunately does not refer to this book or any others.⁶¹

Having established the availability of cheap, paper volumes, it is now necessary to investigate the extent of their ‘cheapness’ compared with parchment books. We might expect the contrast in the cost of paper versus parchment books to reflect the difference in price of the raw materials. James E. Thorold Rogers estimated that the average price of a dozen parchment skins was around 2s 5d in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.⁶² During the same period, a dozen quires of paper, each of which produced twenty-five sheets, cost on average 2s 9d.⁶³ Similar prices have been found for York. The cost of a skin of parchment varied between 3d and 4d in fifteenth-century York.⁶⁴ In the early sixteenth century, the price paid for a parchment skin by the city chamberlains and the parish churches of St Michael, Spurriergate and St Martin, Coney Street was normally between the reduced price of 2d and 3d.⁶⁵ In comparison, in the 1440s and 1450s the city chamberlains were paying 3d for a quire of paper, from which could be produced eight times as many leaves as a skin of parchment.⁶⁶ In 1520, however, they paid only 2d.⁶⁷

Medieval Manuscript: A Study of British Library MS Harley 2252 and its Owner John Colyns’ (DPhil diss., York University, 1984), p. 203.

⁶¹BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 9, f. 66v.

⁶²James E. Thorold Rogers, *A History of Agriculture and Prices in England* (Oxford, 1882), 4: 608.

⁶³Ibid., 4: 606.

⁶⁴For examples, see YCA, C1:1, C1:2, C2:3; CC1, p. 34, 72; CC1a, ff. 32v, 33r, 70v, 95v, 116v, 134r; Dobson (ed.), *Chamberlains’ Account Rolls*, pp. 6, 17, 55.

⁶⁵YCA, CC2, f. 62v; BIHR, PR Y/MS 3, ff. 57r, 61v, 125v; PR Y/MCS 16-17, f. 32r.

⁶⁶YCA, CC1, p. 72; CC1a, ff. 32v, 116v; C3:2; Dobson (ed.), *Chamberlains’ Account*

Likewise, while in the mid-fifteenth century the chamberlains of York were paying 5s for a ream of paper, by the 1520s it cost just over 2s.⁶⁸

Too few examples of the price of paper books in York before the advent of print have survived to make a valid comparison with the cost of such texts if they had been written on parchment. Only one example of the valuation of a manuscript paper book is known. This is a pye (a service book of York use) on paper, worth 2d, mentioned in the probate inventory of Robert Danby, vicar of York, in 1480.⁶⁹ The price placed on the text cannot be taken as representative of the value of paper books as the volume was second-hand and the valuers of Danby's goods are unlikely to have had much expertise in the assessment of a book's worth. Probate valuations may also under-estimate the value of goods. The variety in size, decoration and binding of books could easily blur the difference in price between a paper and a parchment text. Not all paper books were aimed at poorer readers. Paper volumes could be made more valuable through decorative binding or painting of the page. Nevertheless, the reduced cost of paper provided a means of acquiring or making a relatively cheap book for poorer readers even before the advent of print.

3. Booklets and Second-hand Books

Certain types of parchment book were also inexpensive. There is substantial evidence of the distribution and circulation of separate quires or booklets in the later Middle Ages, which enabled readers to buy copies of individual texts and to build up a fairly inexpensive

Rolls, p. 99.

⁶⁷YCA, CC2, f. 26r.

⁶⁸YCA, CC2, ff. 33r, 236r; C3:1; Dobson (ed.), *Chamberlains' Account Rolls*, p. 83.

⁶⁹YML, L1(17)35.

library.⁷⁰ Most of our evidence about the circulation and use of booklets, which could be made of parchment or paper, comes from manuscripts which were compiled from a number of different quires or booklets. The extant manuscripts of Richard Rolle, in particular, suggest that his works were often written in booklets. One example is Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson C.285. It is a fifteenth-century manuscript made up of four booklets.⁷¹ The first and last booklets contain the first two books of Hilton's *Scale of Perfection*, and the *Form of Living* of Rolle. Other devotional works can be found in the middle two parts of the manuscript. The first folio of the volume records the obit of 'Johannes Marshal' who may be the same John Marshal, parson of York Minster, who bequeathed a '*liber de moralibus*' in 1466.⁷² As I have mentioned in chapter two, the stock of books in the probate inventory of Neville Mores also includes some unbound books.⁷³ Towards the end of the inventory are included piles or 'bounshes' of small quires which may have been booklets.

Further evidence of the use of booklets and individual quires can also be found in wills and probate inventories. This is somewhat surprising, as we might expect the small books to escape the concern of the testator or executor. Nevertheless, a substantial number of examples survive, showing a wide variety in the range of texts that circulated in booklet form. Selections of the liturgy and church services are most common. Richard Drax, chaplain, for example, gave to St Helen's church in Stonegate, York, a hymnal and two

⁷⁰Anne Hudson, 'A Lollard Quaternion', *Review of English Studies*, new series 22 (1971): 435-42; Phillipa Hardman, 'A Mediaeval Library *in parvo*', *Medium Aevum* 47 (1978): 262-73; Ralph Hanna III, 'Booklets in Medieval Manuscripts: Further Considerations', *Studies in Bibliography* 39 (1986): 100-11; Ralph Hanna III, 'The Production of Cambridge University Library Ff.1.6', *Studies in Bibliography* 40 (1987): 62-70.

⁷¹A description of the manuscript is given in William D. Macray, *Catalogi Codicum Manuscriptorum Bibliothecae Bodleianae* (Oxford, 1878), 5: 123-4.

⁷²'a book of ethical writings'. Vincent Gillespie, 'Vernacular Books of Religion', in Griffiths and Pearsall (eds.), *Book Production and Publishing*, pp. 327-8; YML, L2/4, f. 313r-v.

quires with the feast of St Helen and the psalm ‘venite’.⁷⁴ Likewise, in 1446 ‘*unam quaternam cum sequenciis totius anni et unam quaternam pro precessionibus*’ was given to the chantry of St Peter the Apostle in All Saints Church, Pavement, York, by Thomas Monkton, another chaplain.⁷⁵ The inventory of Elizabeth Sywardby of York, mentioned previously, includes an entry for a quire of the visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary valued at 8d.⁷⁶ Excerpts from the Bible were also available in booklets. In his will proved in 1435, William Stanes, a layman of York, made mention of a quire containing the Evangelists and Epistles.⁷⁷ Likewise, a quire of St Paul’s Epistles had belonged to John Fewlare, chaplain of St Stephen’s altar in York Minster, before his death in 1530.⁷⁸

Booklets of secular works are rare in comparison. In 1437, Thomas Dawtre, a lay clerk of York, left to his son John seven books including ‘*quaternam meam de croniciis*’.⁷⁹ Only one bequest of a booklet in English has been found. In 1486, a chaplain of Pontefract, John Lese, gave to Edmund Bank a quire beginning ‘for asmuch’.⁸⁰ Unentitled quires and booklets were also mentioned in the inventories of Thomas Symson, parson of York, and William Smyth, a notary of Rawcliffe in 1490 and 1525 respectively.⁸¹

As has been discussed in chapter two, books, whether on paper or parchment, could also be bought second-hand at a reduced price. There is abundant evidence in extant manuscripts connected with York of the long life and multiple owners of texts. Many of

⁷³BIHR, Dean and Chapter original wills, 1538; Palliser and Selwyn, ‘Stock’, pp. 207-19.

⁷⁴BIHR, Prob. Reg. vol. 2, ff. 75v-6r.

⁷⁵‘a quire with the sequences of the whole year and a quire for processions’. BIHR, Prob. Reg. vol. 2, f. 132v.

⁷⁶YML, L1(17)47.

⁷⁷BIHR, Prob. Reg. vol. 3, f. 435v.

⁷⁸YML, L2/5a, ff. 156r-v.

⁷⁹‘my quire of chronicles’. BIHR, Prob. Reg. vol. 3, ff. 493v-4r.

⁸⁰BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, f. 284r.

these volumes probably passed from one pair of hands to another by means of a bequest, but the transfer may also have occurred through the second-hand book market. One person who is known to have frequented York's market for books is John Shirwood, a prebendary of Masham. In October 1465 he bought a twelfth-century copy of Justin's abridgement of Pompeius Trogus in York and recorded the purchase on the first leaf of the volume.⁸² A curious note of purchase also occurs on Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 842, a volume of music composed by Tenred of Dover. On folio 1r is the inscription: '*Liber fratris Johannis Gillyng monachi Bellalande emptus a quodam carpentario nomine Sproxton anno domini 1477 septimo Kalendas Junii*'.⁸³ More information concerning the mysterious Sproxton, the bookselling carpenter, has unfortunately not been found. Booklets and second-hand texts were therefore a relatively inexpensive way to buy a desired text in the later Middle Ages.

4. Libraries

Libraries also offered the opportunity of reading books without great expense. The libraries of the religious orders were probably only accessible to a small number of secular clergy and laity who had friends or relatives within the house.⁸⁴ Nevertheless, a large collection of books in the Minster was available for the secular clergy of York, as well as smaller libraries in the colleges, parish churches and St Leonard's hospital. The Minster library was housed

⁸¹BIHR, Dean and Chapter original wills, 1490 and 1525.

⁸²Oxford, Corpus Christi College, MS 81.

⁸³'Book belonging to John Gillyng, a monk of Byland Abbey, bought from a certain carpenter called Sproxton in the year of our Lord 1477, the seventh of the kalends of June [26 May]'.

⁸⁴This will be discussed further in chapter six, pp. 262-4.

in a room on the south side of the cathedral.⁸⁵ It is likely that the collection was only for the use of the major clergy of the Minster, as all the known gifts of books to the library were made by graduates or ecclesiastical administrators. In 1430, Robert Ragenhill, an advocate of the court of York, bequeathed two books by Nicholas de Lyra and five paper books to the library.⁸⁶ Four volumes including Giles's *De regimine principum*, were also given to the library by Robert Alne, an examiner general, at his death in 1440.⁸⁷

In 1461 St William's College was founded for the twenty-three chantry priests of the Minster.⁸⁸ It is possible that a college had already existed before 1461 as Richard Ulleskelfe, a chantry priest of the Minster, gave a Bible and William Brito's *Expositio vocabulorum Biblie* to the 'collegio parsonarum ecclesie Cath' Ebor' in 1446.⁸⁹ During the fifteenth century a collection of reference books was built up through the bequests of books made by priests who had lived there. Psalters were donated to the college by John Marshall, John Burn and Thomas Pynchbek in 1466, 1479 and 1480 respectively.⁹⁰ The college also received two volumes from John Danby and a Bible from Thomas Helton.⁹¹ Another chaplain of the Minster, William Warde, gave three books including a *Life of Christ* to the college in 1497.⁹²

The vicars choral of the Minster had access to a library at their residence in the

⁸⁵C.B.L. Barr, 'The Minster Library', in G.E. Aylmer and R. Cant (eds.), *A History of York Minster* (Oxford, 1977), pp. 487-539.

⁸⁶YML, L2/4, ff. 232r-3v.

⁸⁷YML, L2/4, f. 250r-v; see also Gee, 'Books owned by the Minor Clergy', pp. 17-19.

⁸⁸David Knowles and R. Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses: England and Wales* (London, 1953), p. 346; Barrie Dobson, 'The Late Middle Ages, 1215-1500', in Aylmer and Cant (eds.), *History of York Minster*, p. 97.

⁸⁹'the college of the parsons of the Cathedral church of York'. YML, L2/4, f. 259r-v.

⁹⁰YML, L2/4, ff. 313r-v, 343r, 345r-v.

⁹¹YML, L2/4, ff. 347v-8r, 361v-2r.

⁹²BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, ff. 502r-3r.

Bedern, which was incorporated in 1421.⁹³ In 1446, the college of the vicars choral was given a book of John Chrysostom and a glossed text of St Mark's Gospel by the York parson, Richard Ulleskelfe, mentioned above.⁹⁴ During the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, the Bedern also received a copy of Peter Comestor's *Historia scholastica*, a *Manipulus curatorum* and a *Chronicles of England*.⁹⁵ The residence of the city's chantry priests in Peasholme also housed a small collection of books.⁹⁶ Donations of books to the library were made by Robert Est, a parson of the Minster in 1467, and William Warde, chaplain, in 1496.⁹⁷

A number of volumes were also donated to the hospital of St Leonard, presumably to form a library. In 1428, a life of Christ by Bonaventure was given to the hospital by John Maltster, a chaplain of York.⁹⁸ A copy of the *De proprietatibus rerum* of Bartholomaeus Anglicus was also bequeathed by Robert Ragenhill, a York advocate, in 1430.⁹⁹ Robert Alne, an examiner general of York, likewise gave two volumes to the hospital. The *Summa de casibus conscientiae* of Bartholomaeus was to be given first to Christopher Doble, chaplain, then on Doble's death, it was to be placed in a public place '*ut volentes in materiis dicto libro content' possint melius informari*'.¹⁰⁰ St Leonard's Hospital also received a *Polychronicon* from John Preston, a York layman in 1474, and Peter Comestor's

⁹³ Knowles and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses*, p. 346; Dobson, 'Later Middle Ages', p. 90.

⁹⁴ YML, L2/4, f. 259r-v.

⁹⁵ YML, L2/4, f. 370r; vol. 2, ff. 56r-7r.

⁹⁶ Raine, *Medieval York*, pp. 85-6.

⁹⁷ YML, L2/4, f. 331r-v; BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, ff. 502r-3r.

⁹⁸ BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 533r-v.

⁹⁹ YML, L2/4, ff. 232r-3v.

¹⁰⁰ 'so that those wishing to be better informed in the matters contained in the said book'. YML, L2/4, f. 250r-v.

Historia scholastica from Thomas Helton, a parson of the Minster in 1481.¹⁰¹

It was not unusual for parish churches to maintain small collections of reference volumes for the use of priests and chaplains. John Elwyn, a layman of Hedon in Holderness, gave a *Legenda sanctorum* to his parish church in 1466.¹⁰² St Crux church in York was likewise given a copy of the *Summa confessorum* of Thomas Chobham by John Bullington, a chantry chaplain of the same church in 1480.¹⁰³ A book of sermons was donated to Silkestone church by the vicar, William Wilcock, in 1514.¹⁰⁴ The vicar of Acklam, Edmund Cook, bequeathed a *Catholicon* to his church at his death in 1531.¹⁰⁵ In 1535, Thomas Blyth, vicar of Keyingham, distributed his library among a number of parish churches, including Ottringham, Winestead and Patrington.¹⁰⁶

The resources of the libraries of the Minster, St Leonard's Hospital, the colleges and parish churches were probably only available to the clergy who served there. The loan of books between friends and family, which was another cheap way of obtaining reading matter before the advent of print, was however available to the clergy and laity alike. In 1467, for example, Robert Chamyr, a chaplain of Ripon, gave Robert Brownfeld '*portiforium meum iam in manibus domini Johannis Exilby, vicarii*'.¹⁰⁷ John Hamondson, a master of St Peter's school in York, stated in his will in 1472 that John Horbery should keep the book he had lent him.¹⁰⁸ Likewise, William Danby was bequeathed a number of

¹⁰¹BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 4, f. 220r; YML, L2/4, ff. 347v-8r.

¹⁰²BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 4, ff. 66v-7r.

¹⁰³BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, f. 96v.

¹⁰⁴BIHR, Archbishop's Register, vol. 27, f. 139r.

¹⁰⁵YML, L2/5a, ff. 161r-3r.

¹⁰⁶BIHR, Archbishop's Register, vol. 28, ff. 169v-70r.

¹⁰⁷'my portus now in the hands of John Exilby, vicar'. Fowler (ed.), *Acts of the Chapter*, p. 135.

¹⁰⁸BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 4, f. 85r.

texts by John Danby, a parson of York Minster, which John had sent him before he had made his will in 1485.¹⁰⁹

5. Printed Books

The use of libraries and loaned books, and the ownership of booklets, paper volumes and second-hand texts show that not all reading was expensive before print. Nevertheless, there are indications that printed texts could be much cheaper than their manuscript counterparts.

This can be illustrated by the value placed on copies of the clerical manual, the *Pupilla oculi* before and after it was first printed in Paris in 1510.¹¹⁰ Between then and 1518 it was published at least twice more, at Rouen and London.¹¹¹ A printed copy of the *Pupilla*, owned by John Hixon, a York chantry priest, was valued at only 4d in his inventory dated 1547.¹¹² A copy of the same work valued in the stock of the York stationer, Neville Mores, which we might expect to be somewhat more expensive as it was probably a new copy of the text, was priced at 6d in 1538.¹¹³ The values given to these texts can be compared with the manuscript copies of the manual owned by William Duffield, archdeacon of Cleveland and Thomas Morton, residentiary canon of York, in the mid-fifteenth century, worth 20s and 26s 8d respectively.¹¹⁴ We do not know exactly what kind of books they were, for although they contained the same text, they may have greatly differed in their size and any decoration. Thus it is too simple to claim that manuscripts were expensive and printed books were cheap. Instead, it is more accurate to say that print made it possible to produce

¹⁰⁹YML, L2/4, ff. 361v-2r.

¹¹⁰Ball, 'Education', p. 357.

¹¹¹Boyle, '*Oculus sacerdotis*', p. 94.

¹¹²BIHR, Dean and Chapter original wills, 1547.

¹¹³BIHR, Dean and Chapter original wills, 1538; Palliser and Selwyn, 'Stock', p. 216.

¹¹⁴YML, L1(17)37 (Duffield); L1(17)44a-b (Morton).

cheaper versions of texts which had, during the manuscript period, generally been expensive.

Among the other manuscripts that Duffield owned were a Bible worth £6 13s 4d, Sarum and York use breviaries both worth 53s 4d and a York missal valued at £4 8s 4d. In contrast, the 1544 probate inventory of William Vavasour, a York priest, itemised an impressive library of 160 printed books kept in his study, which were valued collectively at only £8.¹¹⁵ Likewise, the prices of the books in the sixteenth-century stock of Mores usually varied between 1d and 6d. These included thirty-six massbooks, both bound and unbound, valued at 28s (or 9d each), and 25 breviaries at 20s 10d (or 4½d each).¹¹⁶ The prices of books given in the probate inventory of Mores should be treated with caution, however, as they do not represent the price at which the books were sold, but rather the value decided by the four compilers of the inventory. Only one of the compilers was a stationer, and they may have kept the valuations low.¹¹⁷ A more reliable indication of the cost of printed books can be obtained from the ledger of the Oxford stationer John Dorne (mentioned above), and also from the accounts of an unknown bookseller made in 1553-4.¹¹⁸ The two accounts detail the sale of books and the prices paid for the texts. A wide range of prices, including a book of ballads worth 1d and a work of Ovid worth 12s 8d is given in the accounts of John Dorne.¹¹⁹ In the accounts of the Marian stationer, a large proportion of the books were sold for half a shilling or less. These included copies of the ABC, primers, grammar texts and a quire about husbandry. The accounts also mention

¹¹⁵YML, Dean and Chapter original wills, 1544/5.

¹¹⁶BIHR, Dean and Chapter original wills, 1538; Palliser and Selwyn, 'Stock', p. 213.

¹¹⁷Palliser and Selwyn, 'Stock', pp. 210-11.

¹¹⁸John N. King, 'The Account Books of a Marian Bookseller, 1553-4', *The British Library Journal* 13 (1987): 33-57; Madan, 'Day Book'.

¹¹⁹Madan, 'Day Book', pp. 91, 117.

more expensive works, such as an abridgement of the statutes which sold for 2s 8d, a Bible for 11s and an English chronicle for 12s.

6. A Statistical Analysis of Wills and Inventories

One way in which it may be possible to assess the change in the price of books following the advent of print, is by examining the pattern of book ownership revealed by the wills and inventories of the Yorkshire laity over the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. The traditional view is that the fall in the cost of books prompted the illiterate to learn to read and the size of private libraries to grow. However, Eisenstein, who has argued strongly for the great impact that printing had on early modern society, has been noticeably cautious on the question of literacy.¹²⁰ She acknowledges that there is no hard data with which to test the effect of print on literacy, and that, as a result, it is possible to put forward either a revolutionary or an evolutionary change in literacy in the sixteenth century. According to Clanchy, it is ‘unlikely’ that an increased volume of cheap books in print would have motivated the laity to learn to read. He refers to modern-day societies where there is no demonstrable relationship between literacy and the availability of texts.¹²¹ Furthermore, Natalie Zemon Davis has argued that the advent of print enabled books to be produced more cheaply, but it did not necessarily improve the methods of distribution of texts or increase the need for literacy amongst the laity. Illiterate laymen and women did not suddenly develop a need or want for books, or ready access to them, with the transition from a scribal culture to that of print.¹²²

The profile of lay literacy discussed in chapter four indicates that book ownership was

¹²⁰Eisenstein, *Printing Press*, 1:61.

¹²¹Clanchy, *From Memory to the Written Word*, p. 12.

¹²²Natalie Zemon Davis, ‘Printing and the People’, in *Society and Culture in Early Modern*

tied to wealth throughout the period 1450-1550. The pattern of book ownership follows the pattern of social stratification, with the gentry and professional classes as the most frequent owners of texts. Moreover, the sample of testators represents the wealthier section of Yorkshire society as it was only these people who had property of worth who were willing to pay to have their wills proved. The book owners themselves are often distinguished by their wealth and prosperity. In his will, proved in 1458, John Stafforth, a dyer of York, bequeathed a hundred marks for the marriage of his daughter, the same amount to his son William, forty pounds towards the schooling of his son Thomas, as well as many other generous bequests, including a book to another son, George.¹²³ A number of books were also owned by John Huet, a proctor of York, who displays considerable wealth in his bequests, such as a total of 85s given to nine monasteries such as Furness and Conishead.¹²⁴ William Barker, a baker of York who bequeathed a missal in 1510, owned tenements in Coppergate and Fossgate in York and property in other areas outside the city, including Acomb and Fenton.¹²⁵ The book-owning John Chapman, merchant and notary of York, was likewise assessed on £160 in goods in the lay subsidy of 1524.¹²⁶ In contrast, the lack of evidence of literacy amongst the building workers of Yorkshire may not be surprising considering that they were one of the poorest groups of urban artisans.¹²⁷ The importance of wealth for book ownership is also shown in a comparison of the book bequests of the Yorkshire merchants compared with their colleagues in London. The incidence of book bequests in the wills of the Yorkshire merchants (around 5%) is far below

France (London, 1975), p. 197.

¹²³BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 365v-6r.

¹²⁴BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 305Av-6r.

¹²⁵BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 8, ff. 65v-6v.

¹²⁶Peacock, 'Subsidy Roll', pp. 170-201.

¹²⁷Swanson, *Medieval Artisans*, pp. 6, 152.

the proportion discovered by Thrupp in her study of fifteenth-century London merchants (around 20%).¹²⁸ The London merchants were generally more wealthy than those in Yorkshire.¹²⁹

No indication is given by the wills and inventories that book ownership by the less prosperous laity became more common during the early sixteenth century. This argues against the theory that print had an immediate effect on literacy and suggests that the restriction of book ownership to the wealthier laity is unlikely to be a result simply of the cost of books. Other economic factors were also involved. During the late Middle Ages and early modern period, it was normally only the gentry and more prosperous laity who were willing to pay for educating their children beyond basic elementary reading and numeracy, unless it was hoped that the child would enter the ranks of the clergy. Education often necessitated the payment of tuition fees, and the family would always lose out on the labour of the child who was studying. The amount of money necessary for a child's education is evident through bequests in wills. In 1454, John Huet, a clerk of York, gave all his books and five silver marks towards the schooling of his grandson, Thomas.¹³⁰ The sum of three pounds was likewise bequeathed by John Haldisworth of Halifax to pay for his son to have four years of schooling.¹³¹ Printing may have decreased the general price of texts, but it did not directly affect the cost of learning to read books.

It is also possible that a lack of leisure time prevented artisans and labourers from attaining the literary accomplishments of the aristocracy or gentry. An Act of 1514, for example, included regulations concerning the length of the working day. It laid down that every artificer should work from 5am to 7 or 8pm from mid March to mid September and

¹²⁸Thrupp, *Merchant Class*, p. 161.

¹²⁹Kermode, *Medieval Merchants*, p. 319.

¹³⁰BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 305Av-6v.

from dawn to dusk during the winter months.¹³² Yet it would be an oversimplification to postulate a direct relation between recreation and reading. Not all literary texts were reserved for use during a layperson's free-time. Primers and liturgical books were often perused during church services, and legal texts, manuals of instruction and similar works could also form part of the working day. Examples are the book beginning 'to make glewe that no watter shall hurte it' bequeathed by Thomas Mounteney of Sandall in 1543 and the grammar books owned by the scholar and teacher of St Peter's in York, John Hamondson.¹³³ As is the case today, free time can be filled with a variety of pursuits and does not automatically lead to reading, whereas an enthusiastic reader can often grab a spare moment or two during the course of a day to pore over a text.

A statistical analysis of the bequests of books in wills can be used as an indication of the effect of the advent of print and cheaper printed books on the literacy of the laity. The wills of the Yorkshire laity over the period c.1450-1550 reveal a decline in the incidence of book bequests (table 10). The proportion of wills mentioning books during the late fifteenth century (samples A-C) is around 4% compared with approximately 1% in the first half of the sixteenth century (samples D-F). A decrease in the proportion of book bequests has also been revealed in the wills of the clergy of Norwich between 1500 and 1550 and the clergy of the dioceses of York and Ely in the period 1400-1549.¹³⁴

¹³¹BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 11, f. 161r.

¹³²Marjorie Plant, *The English Book Trade* (London, 1965), pp. 45-6. A similar daily routine is described by Charles Phythian-Adams, *Desolation of a City: Coventry and the Urban Crisis of the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1979), pp. 74-9.

¹³³BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 11, ff. 662-3r; vol. 4, f. 851.

¹³⁴Heath, *English Parish Clergy*, p. 87; Meek, 'Printing', pp. 112-26.

Table 10**Number of Book Bequests by the Lay Testators of Yorkshire**

Samples	Total no. of wills	No. which mention books	%
A (c.1450)	200	10	5
B (c. 1470)	200	4	2
C (c.1490)	200	11	5.5
D (c.1510)	200	5	2.5
E (c.1530)	200	2	1
F (1550)	200	-	-

Sources:

Sample of 1,200 Yorkshire lay wills.

Three possible suggestions can be put forward to explain the data. Firstly, the phenomenon may be a result of the changing social composition of the will-makers. In the first half of the sixteenth century, there is a large increase in the number of extant wills proved in the Exchequer court, the Archbishop's Chancery court and the court of the Dean and Chapter of York Minster.¹³⁵ Moran has estimated that the number of wills proved in the Courts of the Archbishop and the Dean and Chapter increases by 60% from the first quarter to the last quarter of the fifteenth century. There is a further increase of 27% between 1500 and 1530. Consequently, the sample of testators may have included a smaller proportion of high status or prosperous lay people in the period 1500-1550, which may have distorted the statistics concerning book ownership.

In order to overcome this uncertainty an analysis has been made of the book bequests by the merchants and mercers of Yorkshire between 1440 and 1550. The results are shown in table 11. Too much confidence should not be placed on the statistics as the number of book bequests is small, particularly in the sixteenth century. Nevertheless, once again the

¹³⁵Moran, *Growth*, pp. 230-3.

incidence of references to books is generally lower in the early sixteenth century than in the preceding sixty years. Thus, even where we are certain that the social composition of the testators remains constant over the period, the number of book-bequeathing wills is still generally higher in the last half of the fifteenth century than later. As a result, the fall in the proportion of book-bequeathing wills cannot be attributed solely to a possible change in the social composition of the sample.

Table 11

Number of Book Bequests by the Merchants of Yorkshire

	Total no. of wills	No. which mention books	%
1440-1470	82	6	7.3
1471-1500	85	5	5.9
1501-1525	69	1	1.4
1526-1550	55	2	3.6

Sources:

Wills of 291 Yorkshire merchants and mercers.

A second possible reason why fewer books were mentioned in the wills of the early sixteenth century is that cheaper, printed books were more often neglected and ignored than manuscripts texts. This is the theory favoured by Friedman, Moran and Goldberg.¹³⁶ As we have seen, inexpensive books, such as paper books or booklets (some of which did appear as bequests in wills), were available before the advent of print; that certain texts were likely to be overlooked is a problem that besets the fifteenth-century evidence as well. Nevertheless, the fall in the incidence of book bequests may be taken as an indication of the increasing ownership of cheaper books over the period 1450-1550.

¹³⁶Friedman, *Northern English Books*, p. 8; Moran, *Growth*, p. 186; Goldberg, 'Lay Book Ownership', p. 182n.

Thirdly, the fall in the proportion of book-bequeathing wills may suggest that the exclusiveness and prestige of literacy and book ownership was declining. During the period when the ability to read and write was the preserve of the clergy and the aristocracy, the possession of a book was an obvious symbol of status, wealth and education. As literacy spread more widely, the mere possession of a book may have lost the significance and appeal that it had held before. This, of course, would have been a long process, and it is still possible to see the close links between literacy and social status in the mid-sixteenth century. An example is the Act 'for the advancement of true religion', cited above. The Act complained that lay persons 'of the lower sort' had formed 'divers naughty and erroneous opinions' from reading the Bible, but that much virtue and profit had been gained from the reading of the Scriptures by the more well-off laity. As a result, it was decreed that none of the lower orders of society should henceforth be allowed to read the Bible.¹³⁷ Thus the mention of a book in a will may often have been a way of showing off. Testators may have deliberately included books in their bequests because the texts proved their education and status. The decrease in the mention of books in wills may suggest that the mention of books in a will was no longer as prestigious.

The pattern of book ownership is therefore, at best, only an indirect indication of an improvement in lay literacy. The fall in the number of references to books may imply that ownership of cheap, printed texts became more common, but this does not necessarily indicate that the number of book owners was growing. Improved education and literacy are possible contributory factors in the decreased value of books, but so are the use of paper and the introduction of printed books. The evidence of wills therefore does not show conclusively that literacy and book ownership increased after the advent of print.

The decreasing cost of books may also have had the effect of improving the quality

¹³⁷Haigh, *English Reformations*, p. 161.

of reading of those who were already literate. In the opinion of Eisenstein, the printing press supplied a richer variety of reading material than had been possible in a scribal culture.¹³⁸ During the manuscript period, when books were supposedly expensive and difficult to obtain, reading was 'intensive'. Readers owned only a few texts which they read repeatedly. With the coming of print, however, 'extensive' reading of a wide variety of books was made possible.¹³⁹ The results of the study of the Yorkshire laity are, again, inconclusive as there is no clear rise in the size of personal libraries over the period. A tendency to bequeath or itemise a collective number of books, such as 'all my books of grammar' is most noticeable in the period 1460-1520. After this period less care is taken to mention books in inventories or wills. However, in the clerical wills of Yorkshire which mention books there is a noticeable increase in the bequest of a collective number of books (table 12). The incidence of bequests of 'all my books' fluctuates between around 7% and 18% in the late fifteenth century, and then rises to over a third of the wills which mention books during the period 1521-1550. The increase in the number of bequests of an unspecified number of books suggests that less care was being taken to mention books in wills.

¹³⁸Eisenstein, *Printing Press*, 1: 72.

¹³⁹*Ibid.*, 1: 72.

Table 12**Proportion of Clerical Wills from Yorkshire which mention a Collective Number of Books**

	Total no. of wills	Collective no. of books	%
1440-1460	54	6	11.1
1461-1480	57	10	17.5
1481-1500	44	3	6.8
1501-1520	44	12	27.3
1521-1550	60	21	35.0

Sources:

Sample of clerical wills from published and unpublished sources.

Furthermore, the availability of cheap books from the presses did not put an end to the writing of books by readers themselves. Compilations of texts made to the personal tastes of the reader have been discussed as a means by which readers during the manuscript period could build up a library of texts without great cost. This economical way of acquiring reading material continued after printed books became available. The study of commonplace books by Carol Meale has shown that they continued to proliferate during the early sixteenth century.¹⁴⁰ An example is the common-place book of John Gisburn, canon of Coverham, compiled during the reign of Henry VIII.¹⁴¹ Most of the volume, which includes prayers and devotional treatises, medical recipes, instructions for producing different colours of wax and for preparing writing surfaces, was written in the hand of Gisburn, who records his name on folio 12r.¹⁴²

The evidence of the wills and inventories of the Yorkshire laity is therefore very

¹⁴⁰Meale, 'Social and Literary Contexts', p. 211.

¹⁴¹London, British Library, MS Sloane 1584; Claire Cross and Noreen Vickers, *Monks, Friars and Nuns in Sixteenth-Century Yorkshire*, YASRS 150 (1995), p. 355.

¹⁴²Ker, *Medieval Libraries*, pp. 55, 250.

problematic as it is affected by a number of circumstances, including the different formats of books and the desire of testators to show off their books as a form of social prestige. The wills and inventories do not show clearly that the advent of print was indeed a step towards the 'democratisation' of reading. The testamentary sources suggest that social status and wealth continued to be important factors in reading and book owning throughout the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. These factors were not owing simply to the price of books, but also to the cost of education and the desire for self-advancement. For those who were determined to read but who had only limited resources, there were a number of ways to acquire a 'cheap' text. As we have seen, before the advent of print, paper books, booklets and second-hand texts provided an alternative to large and highly-decorated volumes. It was also possible to borrow books from a library or friends and family. It is thus too simplistic to assume that books were expensive during the manuscript period, but cheap after the advent of print.

Chapter 6

The Distribution of Books

The traditional view of the impact of print on the circulation of books has been succinctly summarised by Kate Harris: ‘The import of books ... seems to have been conducted by individuals through personal contacts, until, that is, the advent of printing, necessarily bringing with it a revolution in marketing practice, created a commercially organised, internationally based, wholesale book trade’.¹ Once again we are dealing with sharply defined contrasts. According to this argument the book trade of York was essentially bespoke up until the advent of print. The production of books to order meant that there was little need for the stationer or scribe to organise the distribution of his texts. A reader in York during the manuscript era had to seek out a desired book on his or her own initiative, relying on the literary interests of friends and acquaintances, or sheer luck, for success. With the arrival of printing technology, and with it a speculative trade in books, the distribution of texts began to be organised by the printers or stationers themselves and their customers could expect a variety of books to be brought to them.

Stated in these terms, the impact of print appears to have been very dramatic. However, as I have suggested, there are indications of a speculative trade in books before the advent of print. In this chapter, an investigation will be made of the book distribution methods during the period c.1450-1550 as shown by the test-case of York and its county. First, I will show the importance of personal contacts in the manuscript era by looking at the dissemination of devotional works and works of religious instruction by York Minster and the Carthusian house of Mount Grace during the fifteenth century. The effects of the

¹Kate Harris, ‘Patrons, Buyers and Owners: the Evidence for Ownership, and the Role of Book Owners in Book Production and the Book Trade’, in Griffiths and Pearsall (eds.), *Book Production and Publishing*, p. 180.

arrival of printing technology and printed books on these medieval systems of text distribution will then be assessed. Then I will focus on the changes in the commercial distribution of books over the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. An examination will be made of the movement of books from continental Europe and London to York, and the supply of books from York to its hinterland. I will argue that the advent of print did not have as immediate an impact on book distribution as is traditionally believed, as there were many factors which impeded a widespread distribution of a variety of books. The personal and ecclesiastical networks which were essential during the manuscript period continued to be crucial in the dissemination of books after the advent of print, as I will discuss in the third part of this chapter.

1. Ecclesiastical and Social Networks before Print

It has been argued that, in the fifteenth century, the circulation of the works of Richard Rolle owed much to an enthusiasm for devotional texts stimulated in York Minster by a group of Cambridge graduates.² The graduate clergy and ecclesiastical administrators of York were anxious that ‘approved’ texts of devotional literature should be made available in order to combat the spread of unorthodox Lollard writings. The treasurer John Newton, for example, was active in correcting corrupt versions of Rolle’s works and providing ‘*tabulae*’ to the manuscripts. In order to facilitate the clergy’s access to these works, Newton’s library, which included works of Rolle, Hilton and John of Hevendon, was donated to the newly-founded Cathedral library.³ The connections of the ‘*sublimes et literati*’ of the Minster with the universities facilitated the spread of Rolle’s texts to Oxford and especially Cambridge. In the period 1435-1500 all but one of the canons who resided

²Hughes, *Pastors and Visionaries*, pp. 197-250.

in York Minster had completed a university degree. The exception was John Gysburgh who had been a personal chaplain to Archbishop Bowet.⁴ It was usual for a graduate to leave at least part of his library to his university college in his will. A later example is William Melton, the already mentioned chancellor of York, who bequeathed ‘certan bookes as apperith by a bill of his hand’ to Michaelhouse in Cambridge in 1528.⁵ The interest in Rolle by fellows of Peterhouse may have been stimulated by the gift of books by York canons. A copy of Rolle’s *Melos amoris* was also bequeathed to Cambridge University Library by Robert Alne, a fellow of Peterhouse and examiner general of the court of York in 1440.⁶

The enthusiasm for contemplation and mysticism shown by Newton and the other graduate clergy of York Minster was quickly transmitted to the chaplains and priests of the city. The spread of interest in the works of Rolle and other mystical writers shows that the intellectual circles of the high and low ranking clergy were not divorced from each other. Many of the clergy of York Minster acted as patrons of education by accepting younger relatives and friends into their ‘*familiae*’.⁷ John Chambre, subchanter of York Minster, for example, bequeathed a new set of clothes and all his books to Roger Trew, described as ‘childe of my chambre’.⁸ The reading interests of ecclesiastical officials may also have been passed on to the clergy who served them as clerks. The interaction of interest in devotional works between the wealthy and influential ecclesiastics of the cathedral and the lesser ministry of chaplains and parsons is shown clearly in the will of John Knapton, subtreasurer

³BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 1, f. 168r.

⁴Barrie Dobson, ‘The Residentiary Canons of York in the Fifteenth Century’, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 30 (1979): 156.

⁵YML, L1(17)43.

⁶Emden, *Biographical Register of the University of Cambridge*, pp. 10-11.

⁷Dobson, ‘Residentiary Canons’, p. 159.

⁸YML, L2/5b, ff. 4v-5r.

of the Minster, who died in 1471.⁹ To John Hert, doctor of theology, he gave a commentary on the Evangelists and to the treasurer of the cathedral, a *Legenda sanctorum*. A book of homilies of St Gregory was given to Thomas Symson, a parson who served in the cathedral. Thomas Aquinas's *De veritatibus* and a chronicle were bequeathed to the community of vicars of the cathedral, and the parsons received a book called 'Lincoln'.

An emphasis on the importance of the Minster in the transmission of reading interests may give the misleading impression that the social and intellectual circles of the cathedral and the city clergy were distinct. This is not supported by the evidence of the testamentary material. A study of the circulation of devotional texts shows that the readers formed a distinctive circle of friends, a circle that included both clergy of the Minster and of the city. Christopher Doble, a chaplain who was buried at All Saints church, York, for example, was bequeathed a troper book by Thomas Howren, a priest of All Saints, in 1467 and the *Speculum historiale* of Vincent of Beauvais by Thomas Spawde, another York chaplain, in 1468, who also owned a book of miracles of the Blessed Virgin Mary.¹⁰ The will of Howren likewise included a gift of the *Revelations* of St Bridget to Robert Est, parson of York Minster. One of the executors of Est's will in 1467 was Thomas Symson, another parson of the Minster, whose library included a book of revelations of St Mechtild of Hackeburne and the *Speculum beatorum* of William Peraldus.¹¹ Symson had also acted as an executor of the will of Thomas Pynchebek, a Minster parson and owner of a book of Richard Rolle of Hampole and a book '*cum devocionibus*'.¹²

A similar pattern of dissemination through the ranks of York Minster to the lesser ministry of Minster chaplains and priests and the city clergy, can be seen in the ownership

⁹YML, L2/4, f. 326r-v.

¹⁰BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 4, ff. 149v-50r, 233r.

¹¹YML, L2/4, ff. 331r-v, 375v-6r.

of the pastoral manual of John de Burgh, the *Pupilla oculi*. In chapter three I have shown that the *Pupilla oculi* was the most popular pastoral manual amongst the late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century Yorkshire clergy and that it was owned by both graduates and non-graduates. The initial centre of distribution of the manual during the fourteenth century was probably Cambridge University.¹³ The text quickly gained popularity at York Minster, where it was used by such ‘*sublimes et literati*’ as John Newton, treasurer, William Duffield, a residentiary canon and Robert Fitzhugh, doctor of divinity and canon of York.¹⁴ By the mid-fifteenth century, the *Pupilla oculi* can be frequently found in the hands of the non-graduate clergy, both of the city of York and the more rural areas of Yorkshire. An important factor in the distribution of texts of de Burgh’s manual to the parish clergy of the region was the gift or loan of copies by the graduate clergy. In 1464, a copy of the *Pupilla oculi* was left to ‘*Ricard Pereson capellano meo*’ by Richard Tone, archdeacon of the East Riding.¹⁵ Richard Pereson may have been the rector of Garforth of the same name who died in 1473.¹⁶ De Burgh’s manual was also bequeathed by John Knapton, subtreasurer of York, to William Ward in 1471.¹⁷ The recipient can be identified as the William Ward, chaplain of York, who bequeathed six books in his will in 1496.¹⁸

In 1458, Nicholas Holme, a canon of Ripon, left a *Pupilla oculi* to the parish church of Redmarshall in the county of Durham.¹⁹ Copies of the *Pupilla oculi* were also donated

¹²‘with devotions’. YML, L2/4, f. 343r.

¹³Hughes, *Pastors and Visionaries*, pp. 193-4.

¹⁴YML, L1(17)37; Hughes, *Pastors and Visionaries*, p. 194.

¹⁵‘Richard Pereson, my chaplain’. BIHR, Archbishop’s Register, vol. 20, f. 287r.

¹⁶BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 4, f. 211r.

¹⁷YML, L2/4, f. 326r-v.

¹⁸BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, ff. 502r-3r.

¹⁹BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 399r.

to the churches of Huddersfield and Fishlake in 1468 and 1496 respectively.²⁰ It can be argued that the gift of the pastoral manual to parish churches by the graduate clergy represents a deliberate policy to improve clerical standards.²¹ However, the bequests of the *Pupilla oculi* are not frequent enough in the wills of the Yorkshire clergy to suggest a planned scheme by the Church authorities to educate the lesser clergy through the dissemination of a large number of manuals. As has been shown by Ball, the intended readership of the *Pupilla oculi* was not primarily the parish clergy.²² The predominant interest of the graduate clergy in donating copies of the manual seems to be personal; they were mainly concerned with churches where they may have served at one time, or had a relative serving there. William Rowkshaw, a doctor of theology and prebendary of the Chapel of St Mary and Holy Angels in York, for example, bequeathed a *Pupilla oculi* to Catton church in 1504. Rowkshaw had been a rector of Catton since 1484.²³

The vital factor of social connections is also apparent in the spread of other texts of religious instruction. Attention will be focused on two manuals with origins in or around York: the *Speculum vitae*, written by William Nassington, an advocate of the court of York who died in 1359, and the *Speculum christiani*, which was probably written in Northern England in the third quarter of the fourteenth century.²⁴ Unlike the *Pupilla oculi*, both of these manuals were aimed at a non-graduate readership amongst parish priests and chaplains.

²⁰BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 4, ff. 148v-9r; vol. 5, f. 486r.

²¹David Lepine, *A Brotherhood of Canons Serving God: English Secular Cathedrals in the Later Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 1995), pp.169-70.

²²Ball, 'Education', pp. 25, 61-71.

²³BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 6, f. 113r; Emden, *Biographical Register of the University of Cambridge*, p. 493.

²⁴Gustaf Holmstedt (ed.), *Speculum Christiani*, 2nd edn, EETS o.s. 182 (1971); Gillespie, 'Cura Pastoralis in Deserto', pp. 161-81; Hughes, *Pastors and Visionaries*, p. 148.

The popularity of the *Speculum christiani* amongst the clergy of York Minster suggests that it was one of the centres for producing and distributing copies. The most effective way of ensuring the wide dissemination of the manuals would have been to have organised the transcription of a large number of copies and then to give them to the priests. However, there is no evidence that this occurred. The length of the *Speculum vitae* (around 16,000 lines) may have discouraged the establishment of a scriptorium to produce copies of it.²⁵ The textual evidence of the extant manuscripts of the *Speculum christiani* studied by Holmstedt has revealed the ‘family tree’ relationship of the texts. One or more copies were made from a single exemplar, from which more copies were transcribed.²⁶ This suggests that the texts were disseminated by means of the individual initiative of the priests. Those who desired to own a copy of the text would have borrowed a book from a friend, transcribed it and then lent their own texts to others to copy.

A copy of the *Speculum christiani* was donated to Wenlock parish church in 1437 by John Corve, a married clerk.²⁷ In 1467, Robert Est, a parson of York Minster, left to the parish church of Briggesley ‘*unum librum de papiro qui vocatur Speculum christiani*’.²⁸ The will of Robert Lythe, a chaplain of York, likewise mentioned the *Speculum christiani*, which was bequeathed to ‘*uno honesto presbitero ad celebrandum pro unum annum pro anima mea*’ in 1479.²⁹ Another chaplain of York, John Couper, received a copy of the *Speculum christiani* in 1491 from Thomas Symson, a parson of the Minster.³⁰ Cambridge, University Library, MS Ff.I.14 contains a number of miscellaneous works of religious

²⁵Holmstedt (ed.), *Speculum Christiani*, pp. xix-cxxix.

²⁶Ibid., pp. cxxxiv-clxxiv.

²⁷Gillespie, ‘Literary Form’, p. 239.

²⁸‘a paper book which is called *Speculum christiani*’. YML, L2/4, f. 331r-v.

²⁹‘an honest priest to pray for one year for my soul’. YML, L2/4, ff. 348v-9r.

³⁰YML, L2/4, ff. 375v-6r.

instruction and edification, including the *Speculum christiani* on folios 22r-69r. At the end of several texts is inscribed the name of ‘*Robertus Wasselyn, capellanus*’. The scribe may have been the same Wasselyn who became a member of the York Corpus Christi Guild in 1446.³¹ Dialectal analysis of the extant manuscripts of the *Speculum christiani* reveals that they were disseminated to a fairly limited area of England, before it was first printed in 1480. Evidence of ownership is mainly confined to the East Midlands, in particular Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire and Warwickshire.³²

An English book of the Pater Noster, which probably referred to the *Speculum vitae*, was owned by John Tavener, a chaplain of Ripon, who died in 1430.³³ Paternoster books were also bequeathed by Thomas Skynner and William Downholm, chaplains of York, and John Burn, a parson of York Minster in 1458, 1464 and 1479 respectively.³⁴ From this distribution centre in Yorkshire, texts of the *Speculum vitae* travelled north into the North and West Ridings of Yorkshire, and south to Worcestershire, Ely and Suffolk.³⁵

The rare instances of ownership of these texts by the graduate or regular clergy are too few to suggest that they set an example in the use of these manuals or provided copies for the priests to use or transcribe. Oxford, Corpus Christi College, MS 155, a fifteenth-century manuscript containing the *Speculum christiani*, was owned by William Spenser, abbot of Rievaulx. The textual evidence of the manuscripts of the *Speculum christiani* does

³¹Robert H. Skaife (ed.), *Register of the Guild of Corpus Christi in the City of York*, Surtees Society 57 (1872), p. 45.

³²Richard Beadle, ‘Middle English Texts and their Transmission, 1350-1500: Some Geographical Criteria’, in Margaret Laing and Keith Williamson (eds.), *Speaking in Our Tongues: Proceedings of a Colloquium on Medieval Dialectology and Related Disciplines* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 83.

³³BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 625r-v.

³⁴BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 487v-8r; vol. 3, f. 598r-v; YML, L2/4, f. 345r-v.

³⁵Beadle, ‘Middle English Texts’, pp. 84-5.

not indicate that any other extant copies were likely to be descended from Spenser's text.³⁶

The distribution pattern of the *Speculum christiani* and the *Speculum vitae* thus differs from that of the *Pupilla oculi* and devotional works as they were not disseminated through the ranks of the Church hierarchy. Nevertheless, the importance of personal connections in the spread of interest in these works is still apparent.

In order to investigate the dissemination of texts and reading interests between the religious houses of Yorkshire and the secular clergy and laity in the period 1450-1550, attention will be focused on the literary productions of Mount Grace. In 1410 Archbishop Arundel of York gave his approval to a translation of the pseudo-Bonaventuran *Meditationes vitae Christi*, made by the prior of Mount Grace, Nicholas Love. It was entitled the *Myrroure of the Blessed Lyf of Jesu Christ*.³⁷ It was probably intended for circulation outside the order, particularly amongst the laity, in order to combat Lollardy.³⁸ The complete text survives in forty-seven manuscripts, while six more contain extracts; a clear indication of its popularity.³⁹ By the time it was printed in 1486 by Caxton, the text was in circulation in both the north and the south of England.

Mount Grace was probably also responsible for the composition and early transmission of *The Holy Boke Gratia Dei* in the early fifteenth century. This work contains teachings concerning grace, daily work, prayer and meditations on the Passion and the three arrows of Domesday.⁴⁰ The earliest known copy of the text, which survives in a manuscript

³⁶Holmstedt (ed.), *Speculum Christiani*, p. cliv.

³⁷Elizabeth Salter, *Nicholas Love's "Myrroure of the Blessed Lyf of Jesu Christ"*, *Analecta Cartusiana* 10 (Salzburg, 1974).

³⁸Michael G. Sargent, 'The Transmission by the English Carthusians of Some Late-Medieval Spiritual Writings', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 27 (1976): 225-40.

³⁹Elizabeth Salter, 'The Manuscripts of Nicholas Love's *Myrroure of the Blessed Lyf of Jesu Christ* and Related Texts', in A.S.G. Edwards and Derek Pearsall (eds.), *Middle English Prose: Essays on Bibliographical Problems* (New York and London, 1981), pp. 115-27.

⁴⁰Hartung (ed.), *Manual*, 9: 3133-4.

alongside Love's *Myrrour*, belonged to the Ingelby family, who were patrons of Mount Grace. Two other manuscripts of the text are also in a north-east dialect.⁴¹ A translation of the *Horologium sapiencie*, the spiritual autobiography of Henry Suso, is also likely to have been made at Mount Grace.⁴² The translation is called *The Tretys of the Seven Poyntes of Trewe Love and everlastynge wisdame*. The colophon '*scriptum finaliter in monte gracio ultimo die mensis mayi 1419*' can be found in two of the eight surviving manuscripts of the text.⁴³

The networks of monasteries and friaries may have been a vital factor in facilitating the spread of texts around England. One of the earliest copies of the *Myrrour*, for example, was probably sent or loaned to another Carthusian house to be transcribed.⁴⁴ Likewise, a monk of St Mary's Abbey, Christopher Braystones, transferred from the York house to the Carthusian house at Beauvale taking his books with him. Indulgences awarded to Braystones can be found in a manuscript of Pseudo-Bonaventure and a compilation of works by Rolle.⁴⁵ The latter text was given by Braystones to the library of Beauvale. Other examples of the movement of texts between religious houses include the gift of a manuscript containing the *Contemplations of the Dread and Love of God* and William Flete's *De remediis contra temptationes* by the prioress of Swine nunnery in the East Riding to Joan

⁴¹Hughes, *Pastors and Visionaries*, pp. 231-2.

⁴²Ibid., p. 105.

⁴³'finally written at Mount Grace on the last day of the month of May 1419'.

⁴⁴Cambridge, University Library, MS Additional 6578; A.I. Doyle, 'A Survey of the Origins and Circulation of Theological Writings in English in the Fourteenth, Fifteenth and Early Sixteenth Centuries with Special Consideration of the part of the clergy therein' (PhD diss., Cambridge University, 1956), pp. 144-5.

⁴⁵Lincoln, Cathedral Library, MS 228 and Cambridge, University Library, MS Mm.V.37; Sargent, 'Transmission', pp. 232-3; Margaret Deanesley, 'The *Incendium Amoris* of Richard Rolle and S. Bonaventura', *English Historical Review* 29 (1914): 98-101.

Hiltoft, a nun of Nun Cotham priory in Lincolnshire.⁴⁶ A number of devotional texts, including works by Rolle, the *Chastising of God's Children* and meditations of St Augustine, were also brought to Hull Charterhouse from London by John Spalding, a monk who died in 1528.⁴⁷ These examples show the importance of the social contacts of the enclosed religious with the members of other houses, and the movement of monks and friars between different houses, in the copying and dissemination of texts to different parts of England.

The number of surviving copies of works produced or translated at Mount Grace may suggest the existence of scriptoria within the houses of the Carthusian order. An organised centre of book production within Mount Grace would have facilitated the quick and accurate copying of the texts for distribution outside the house. However, by the fifteenth century, there is little evidence that the regular clergy of England were employed in large-scale organised scribal activity.⁴⁸ The previous examples of the dissemination of devotional texts through social connections and the transport of books between houses by monks, suggests that the production of texts in the houses depended on personal initiative. As I have discussed in chapter one, there are only occasional examples of monastic production of books in Yorkshire and these cases were of individual scribes, not organised activity. An individual monk or friar who had an interest in a particular text, or who knew someone who wanted a copy, would undertake the work of transcription. This is supported by evidence from the south of England. An example is the activity of Stephen Dodesham, a Carthusian at Sheen Abbey who died in 1482. Three of the extant manuscripts of the *Myrroure* can be

⁴⁶London, British Library, MS Harley 2409; Connolly (ed.), *Contemplations*, p. xvi.

⁴⁷E. Margaret Thompson, *The Carthusian Order in England* (London, 1930), pp. 324-6.

⁴⁸Doyle, 'Book Production by the Monastic Orders', pp. 1-20.

attributed to his hand.⁴⁹ They are all very different in style, suggesting that Dodesham produced them as commissions or gifts for friends.

The spread of these texts outside the religious houses suggests that there was an easy channel of literary texts and exemplars between the monasteries of Yorkshire and the laity and secular clergy. A significant proportion of the surviving texts of the *Myrrour* bear ownership marks of secular priests and lay readers. An example is Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 131. The *Myrrour* forms folios 1-122 of the manuscript, followed by a number of short devotional treatises including a vernacular translation of the *De remediis contra temptationem* by William Flete.⁵⁰ The book is likely to have been written in or at least near to York, as a watermark of a crown, very similar to that found in the York Chamberlains' account book of 1449, appears throughout the volume.⁵¹ Two letters of recommendation have been copied into the last folios of the manuscript. In the first letter, dated 1438, William, prior of the Augustinian house in York, commended John and Julianna Morton to the spiritual aid of the Austin friars. The following letter recommended Agnes Wyndhyll, John her son and Robert to the Carmelite convent in 1396. John Wyndhyll can be identified as a rector of Arncliffe who died in 1433. His will includes a bequest to a John Morton. He also left a copy of *Piers Plowman* to John Kendale, a vicar choral of York Minster, and an English exposition of the Evangelists to Robert Forest.⁵²

Bequests of English books on the life of Christ and of 'Bonaventure', which may

⁴⁹Doyle, 'Reflections', pp. 82-93.

⁵⁰Falconer Madan and H.H.E. Craster, *A Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, vol. 2, part 1: The Seventeenth Century* (Oxford, 1922), pp. 152-3; Hope Emily Allen, *Writings Ascribed to Richard Rolle, Hermit of Hampole and Materials for his Biography* (New York, 1966), pp. 371-2.

⁵¹YCA, CC1a, ff. 98-117; C.M. Briquet, *Les Filigranes: Dictionnaire historique des Marques du Papier* (New York, 1966), no. 4637; the watermark was produced in Bâle in 1430.

⁵²Hughes, *Pastors and Visionaries*, pp. 187, 239.

sometimes have referred to Love's *Myrroure*, occur frequently in the wills of the Yorkshire secular clergy in the fifteenth century. In 1428, John de Broughton, a chaplain of York, made mention in his will of English books '*cum passione christi et aliis tractatibus*'.⁵³ John Affordeby, master of the hospital of St Mary, likewise bequeathed a book called Bonaventure in 1452.⁵⁴ An English book of the life of Jesus Christ was also left in 1486 by Thomas Horneby, a York chaplain and in 1496 another York chaplain, William Warde, bequeathed '*unum librum vocatum Vita Jhesu*'.⁵⁵

Extant manuscripts and testamentary records also provide abundant evidence that the *Myrroure* was quickly discovered and enjoyed by the laity of Yorkshire. The coat of arms of Robert, Lord Willoughby of Eresby (1409-52), are displayed in an initial on folio 142 of a mid-fifteenth century manuscript of the *Myrroure*.⁵⁶ Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley e.Mus.35 has the initials M.N., and the arms of Neville and Beaufort. It was probably commissioned for Joan Beaufort, an important literary patron and her husband, Ralph Neville, Earl of Westmorland.⁵⁷ In chapter four a number of bequests of Bonaventure were mentioned; it is worth citing them again here. In 1437, Thomas Dautre, a lawyer of York, left to his son John a book called Bonaventure.⁵⁸ When John died in 1459 the book was again passed from father to son.⁵⁹ Another book called Bonaventure was bequeathed by

⁵³'with the passion of Christ and other treatises'. BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 540v.

⁵⁴BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 249r-v.

⁵⁵'a book called the life of Jesus'. BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, ff. 260-v; 502r-3r.

⁵⁶Glasgow, University Library, MS General 1130 (see chapter one); Salter, *Nicholas Love's "Myrroure..."*, p. 12.

⁵⁷Pächt and Alexander, *Illuminated Manuscripts*, 3: 82; Falconer Madan, H.H.E. Craster and N. Denholm-Young, *A Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, vol. 2, part 2: The Seventeenth Century* (Oxford, 1937), p. 792.

⁵⁸BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 3, ff. 493v-4r.

⁵⁹BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 413r-4r.

Agnes Stapleton in 1448.⁶⁰ Sir Peter Arden likewise left at his death in 1464 ‘my boke of Englissh called Bonaventura et vita et passione Christi’.⁶¹ A book of the life of Christ ‘*in lingua materna*’, together with a Latin version of the same, was itemised in the probate inventory of Elizabeth Sywardby, dated 1468.⁶²

These numerous examples of the ownership of the *Myrroure* amongst the secular clergy and laity suggest that the literary culture of the monasteries, in particular Mount Grace, was not insular, but instead helped to enrich the devotional reading of society outside the houses.⁶³ The nature of the dissemination of texts from monastic houses to the laity and clergy is still not clear, however. We need not assume that the popularity of the *Myrroure* is evidence that the literary resources of Mount Grace and other monastic houses were available to all. Nevertheless, there are indications that some of the secular clergy and laity were allowed to read and borrow texts from the libraries of religious houses. Regulations concerning the use of the library by ‘outsiders’ can be found in the rules of some religious houses. The Austin friars of Cambridge, for example, laid down a rule in 1438 that every non-Augustinian admitted to the library should be attended by a resident friar.⁶⁴ William Banks, a gentleman who died in 1458 and was buried in York Minster, stated in his will that he wished ‘*quod prior et conventus de Monte Gracie nichil habeant de predicta xxs si aliquod clameum faciant pro libro vocato Florarium Bartholomei*’.⁶⁵

In 1460, Henry Kipping likewise bequeathed to the abbey of Whitby all the debts that were

⁶⁰Clay (ed.), *North Country Wills*, pp. 48-9.

⁶¹Raine (ed.), *Testamenta Eboracensia IV*, pp. 102-3n.

⁶²‘in the mother tongue’. YML, L1(17)47.

⁶³The interaction between the literary culture of lay and clerical society has also been argued by George R. Keiser in his study of the compilations of Robert Thornton: Keiser, ‘Lincoln Cathedral Library MS 91’, p. 168; Keiser, ‘More Light’, pp. 115-18.

⁶⁴Friedman, *John de Foxton’s Liber Cosmographiae*, p. xxxvi.

⁶⁵‘that the prior and convent of Mount Grace may have nothing of the said 20s if they

owing to him, as long as no claim was made for any debts owed by him to the abbey, with the exception of three books which had been lent to him.⁶⁶ Richard Pereson, rector of Garforth, also mentioned in his will in 1473 a book which the abbot of 'Heppa' had lent to him.⁶⁷

Books may also have passed beyond the walls of a religious house through sale, but it is unclear if this was a frequent, or even acceptable, practice. A note on Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 77, a fourteenth-century collection of theological and philosophical tracts including the *Summa problematum* of Aristotle, records that the volume was owned by 'Wilflete'. He can probably be identified as William Wilflete, a master of Clare Hall, Cambridge (1445-1455).⁶⁸ Wilflete wrote an inscription on folio 147v stating that he wanted the book, which he had purchased from a monk of Meaux abbey, to be returned to the house as he doubted that the monk had had authority or permission to sell. Wilflete also mentioned a book of Thomas Aquinas which he had likewise bought from the monk for 3s 4d.

A close examination of the wills of owners of the *Myrroure* and other devotional texts reveals the importance of personal relations with the inhabitants of monastic houses. Access to the literary culture and resources of the religious houses may only have been possible for those who had enclosed friends or relatives. The shared literary culture of laywomen and women religious has been revealed in studies by Felicity Riddy and Anne

should make any claim for a book called *Florarium Bartholomei*'. YML, L2/4, f. 288.

⁶⁶BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 449r-50r.

⁶⁷BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 4, f. 211v. Heppa probably refers to the hospital of Allerburn in the barony of Hepple in Northumberland. Examples of clergy outside Yorkshire who borrowed books from religious houses can be found in *Calendar of the Patent Rolls ... Henry VI, vol. 2, 1429-1436* (London, 1907), pp. 95, 483.

⁶⁸Ker, *Medieval Libraries*, pp. 130, 281; William D. Macray (ed.), *Catalogi Codicum Manuscriptorum Bibliothecae Bodleianae* (Oxford, 1883), 9: 83-4; Emden, *Biographical Register of the University of Cambridge*, p. 657.

Dutton.⁶⁹ A study of the origins of Yorkshire nuns has shown that the majority of nuns were of gentry stock.⁷⁰ The contacts of enclosed religious with the lay aristocracy and gentry may account for the initial circulation of copies of the *Myrrour* and other devotional texts amongst the more wealthy and prestigious families. Nevertheless, once the devotional texts had been discovered by a lay readership, they could circulate independently of the networks of religious communities. Moreover, the dissemination of reading interests and texts was not a one-way passage from the religious houses to the ‘outside world’. Instead it is possible to see a ‘cross-fertilisation’ of literary interests between the religious houses, the laity and secular clergy. The copy of Bonaventure belonging to Agnes Stapleton was bequeathed to the nuns of Sinningthwaite.⁷¹ She also gave a crucifix and a French book to the abbess of Denney in Cambridgeshire. Her *Prick of Conscience* was donated to the Cluniac nuns of Arthington, the *Chastising of God’s Children* to the Cistercian nuns of Esholt and a book called *Vices and Virtues* to the Benedictine nuns of Nunmonkton. Elizabeth Sywardby, whose library was also discussed in chapter four, gave a life of St Bridget to Agnes Vavasour, a nun.⁷² In 1481, William Overton of Helmsley gave his niece Elena, a nun of Arden, a large primer.⁷³ A *Legenda aurea* or 5s was bequeathed to the

⁶⁹Felicity Riddy, ‘“Women Talking about the Things of God”: a Late-Medieval Sub-Culture’, in Carol Meale (ed.), *Women and Literature in Britain, 1150-1500* (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 104-27; Dutton, ‘Women’s Use of Religious Literature’; for a general study of the contacts of nuns with the outside world, see Power, *Medieval English Nunneries*, pp. 394-419.

⁷⁰Noreen Vickers, ‘The Social Class of Yorkshire Medieval Nuns’, *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 67 (1995): 127-52; see also Marilyn Oliva, ‘Aristocracy or Meritocracy? Office-holding Patterns in Late-Medieval English Nunneries’, *Studies in Church History* 27 (1990): 197-208; Barbara J. Harris, ‘A New Look at the Reformation: Aristocratic Women and Nunneries, 1450-1550’, *Journal of British Studies* 32 (1993): 89-113.

⁷¹Clay (ed.), *North Country Wills*, pp. 48-9.

⁷²YML, L1(17)47.

⁷³BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, ff. 41v-2r.

priory of Sinningthwaite in 1505 by Sir Thomas Roos of Ingmanthorp.⁷⁴

The testamentary records reveal that the secular clergy of Yorkshire also had close links with members of the religious communities.⁷⁵ An example is the connections of John Affordeby, a master of the hospital of St Mary in York who has already been mentioned. In his will, proved in 1452, he gave his copy of Bonaventure to the convent library at Moxby, together with a *Manuel des péchés*.⁷⁶ Affordeby also gave a psalter and small book to Alice Affordeby, a nun at Moxby. John Parke and John Hamerton, brethren of Holy Trinity Priory in York, received bequests in 1460 from Henry Cattall, a chaplain of the city.⁷⁷ Cattall also gave a book of vices and virtues to Henry Archer of the order of preachers.

The distribution of texts from Mount Grace during the fifteenth century is therefore similar to the networks of dissemination from York Minster in showing the paramount importance of social connections. The evidence of ownership inscriptions on extant manuscripts shows that it was not uncommon for manuscripts to pass between several hands. Books were presented to friends and family as loans and gifts, both during the donor's lifetime and as bequests in wills. The importance of social links meant that the initial circulation of texts from the religious houses of Yorkshire and from the higher ranks of York Minster would have followed different paths. The literary interests of Mount Grace were eagerly taken up by its patrons, and the lay gentry families and secular clergy who had friends or relatives in the house. The distribution of the *Pupilla oculi* and the devotional works of Rolle and other books of meditation likewise follows a pattern of dissemination

⁷⁴BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 6, f. 134r.

⁷⁵Claire Cross, 'Monasticism and Society in the Diocese of York, 1520-1540', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th series 38 (1988): 140-3.

⁷⁶BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 249r-v.

⁷⁷BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 439v-40v.

from above. The graduate clergy can be seen as ‘trend-setters’ whose literary interests were passed on to their university colleagues and the chaplains and priests of York. The pastoral manuals called *Speculum christiani* and *Speculum vitae*, in contrast, seem to have circulated almost exclusively amongst parish priests and chaplains.

Nevertheless, it is not the intention of this study to suggest that the transmission of texts through the patronage of Mount Grace and York Minster was independent and distinct. During the fifteenth century there is much evidence of interaction in the patronage of texts. This is exemplified by the cooperation of Nicholas Love and Archbishop Arundel in the promotion of the *Myrroure*. The ownership of copies of the *Myrroure* in Yorkshire shows a great deal of fluidity in the circulation of the texts between the laity, the secular clergy and the members of religious orders. I have already mentioned the English life of Christ owned by Thomas Horneby, a York priest, which was passed on his death in 1486 to a nun of Nunmonkton.⁷⁸ He may have acquired the volume from Elizabeth Sywardby, the nun’s aunt. An English life of Christ was also mentioned in her probate inventory and Horneby appears as one of her legatees.⁷⁹ Works by Rolle likewise easily passed between religious houses and the secular clergy. The Cistercian convent at Hampole was given a glossed psalter written by Rolle from Robert Est, a parson of York Minster, in 1467.⁸⁰

There is little to suggest that the distribution of approved texts from either Mount Grace or York Minster was conducted by means of speculative production in organised scriptoria. The circulation of books instead depended mainly on the ability of the leading religious and secular clergy to inspire individual initiative and enthusiasm in the copying of texts. During the fifteenth century, a time when fear of heresy and a mistrust of English

⁷⁸BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 5, f. 260r-v.

⁷⁹YML, L1(17)47.

⁸⁰YML, L2/4, 331r-v.

devotional works was prevalent, the circulation of texts would also have benefited greatly from the stamp of approval that the ecclesiastical authorities could bestow on a work.

So far this argument of the importance of social connections in the dissemination of reading interests has focused on the evidence of the transmission of texts. Reading interests could, however, also be passed on through the reading of books aloud. Joyce Coleman, for example, has shown that many wealthy and literate laity in late medieval England and France who could afford to build up their own private libraries still enjoyed listening to books.⁸¹ A well-known example is Cicely, duchess of York, who used to listen to the reading of a devotional text, such as Walter Hilton or Bonaventure or the life of St Katherine, during dinner.⁸² At supper she would read aloud the same lecture which she had heard to others. Lectures on the Scriptures were also read aloud to the vicars-choral of York Minster during meal times.⁸³ The reading interests of the parish clergy could also be passed on to their parishioners through preaching and the taking of confession.

The vital connection between social relations and reading can also be argued from another angle. It is possible that the sharing of similar reading interests and the gift and loan of books helped the formation of and encouraged the development of personal relations.

A parishioner who had a particular interest in devotional literature might approach a member of the parish clergy or religious orders in order to discuss their reading. The friendship between William Revetour, a chaplain of York, and Alice Bolton, for example, may have been founded on the reading of devotional texts together. In 1446, Revetour

⁸¹Joyce Coleman, *Public Reading and the Reading Public in Late Medieval England and France* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 53, 55, 87, 143.

⁸²*A Collection of the Ordinances and Regulations for the Government of the Royal Household* (London, 1790), p. 37.

⁸³F. Harrison, *Life in a Medieval College: The Story of the Vicars-Choral of York Minster* (London, 1952), p. 58.

bequeathed to Alice a book of prayers and an English book called '*stimulus conscientie*'.⁸⁴

2. Development of Commercial Networks

It can be argued that the activities of the religious houses in the dissemination of reading interests and exemplars and the importance of social connections became overshadowed and eventually obsolete during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries due to the advent of print. A few presses were set up under monastic direction in England but these did not last long. The press established at St Albans was probably set up by the abbot of the Benedictine abbey. Eight texts are known to have been produced from this press in the late 1470s and 1480s, including the *Libellus super Tullianis eleganciis* by Augustinus Datus, the *Nova rhetorica* of Laurentius Guglielmus de Saona and a *Chronicles of England*.⁸⁵ A second press was operated in St Albans from at least 1534 until the dissolution of the monastery in 1539. In 1534 the *Lyfe and passion of Seint Albon* by John Lydgate was produced for the abbot by John Herford, who also produced in 1536 *The confutacyon of the fyrst parte of Frythes boke* by John Gwynneth, a monk of the house.⁸⁶ Abingdon abbey, another Benedictine house, also sponsored the printing of a breviary in 1517-8 by John Scholar for use by the brethren.⁸⁷ A press was likewise set up at Tavistock, from which was printed *The boke of comfort*, a translation of Boethius's *De consolacione philosophiae* by a monk Thomas Rycherd in 1525.⁸⁸ A book of statutes was produced at the same place in

⁸⁴BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, ff. 137v-8v.

⁸⁵Blake, 'Spread of Printing', pp. 28-9; Clair, *History of Printing*, pp. 113-14; Duff, *English Provincial Printers*, pp. 35-9.

⁸⁶Clair, *History of Printing*, p. 119.

⁸⁷Duff, *English Provincial Printers*, pp. 99-100.

⁸⁸Duff, *English Provincial Printers*, p. 98.

1534.⁸⁹ It is also possible that a press was set up at Mount Grace. Excavations at the site of Mount Grace in 1975 revealed a stone mould which has letters cut out of the base. The groove is about 10mm wide and 90mm long and 5mm deep, and could have been used to cast metal letters for a press.⁹⁰

These attempts by monastic houses to sponsor presses reveal an eagerness to participate in the benefits of the new technology and to continue to play an important part in the distribution of texts. Nevertheless, it can be argued that once the works of Rolle or other devotional texts were produced in print, the role of social connections in the dissemination of texts is likely to have become less important. The printing of devotional and other types of text may have had the result that readers would no longer have needed to approach a religious house, or friend or relation, for a book, as copies were henceforth available in large numbers through the professional book trade. The *Myrroure* was first printed by Caxton in 1486 and again in 1490, then by Pynson and de Worde in 1494, and was republished four more times during the early sixteenth century.⁹¹ The *Super lectiones Job in officio mortuorum* of Rolle was printed in Oxford in 1483 and Paris in 1510.⁹² In 1506 an edition was produced of the *Contemplacions of the drede and love of god*, attributed to Rolle.⁹³ This was followed two years later by *The remedy ayenst the troubles of temptacions* by Rolle.⁹⁴ Other early sixteenth-century editions of Rolle include his

⁸⁹Clair, *History of Printing*, p. 116.

⁹⁰Sessions, *Printer's Dozen*, pp. 108-10.

⁹¹Salter, *Myrroure*, pp. 18-19; John J. Thompson, 'Popular Reading Tastes in Medieval English Religious and Didactic Literature', in John Simons (ed.), *From Medieval to Medievalism* (London, 1992), p. 93; Lotte Hellinga, 'Nicholas Love in Print', in Shoichi Oguro, Richard Beadle and Michael G. Sargent (eds.), *Nicholas Love at Waseda* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 143-62.

⁹²STC 21261.

⁹³STC 21259.

⁹⁴STC 21262.

Speculum spiritualium and *De emendatione peccatoris*.⁹⁵ The technology of print made possible the production of a greater number of books which suggests that readers were not limited to texts that were available through their social connections. The increase in the number of books sold speculatively made it easier for readers to browse through the shelves of books in a shop. A customer may therefore have had more independence after the advent of print in choosing his or her reading matter.

These arguments that a greater number of books automatically results in easier access to books are commonplace, but they deserve to be examined in more detail. I will now investigate the distribution of books during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries in order to assess if there was indeed a revolution in the efficiency of book distribution after the advent of print. If a bookseller only dealt in a small number of books, there would probably have been little incentive to organise the transportation or distribution of texts. During the manuscript era and the first decades after the invention of the press, the purchase of books may often have depended on the initiative of the readers themselves, who sent an agent or journeyed in person to find a desired text.⁹⁶ An example is John Shirwood, a prebendary of Masham in 1471 and later Bishop of Durham, whom I have already briefly mentioned in chapter five.⁹⁷ From the evidence of extant manuscripts, we know that he bought a commentary on the Psalter in London in 1461 and a book of Roman history in 1464, also in London. In 1465, after taking up the office of archdeacon of Richmond, he bought an abridgement of Pompeius Trogus in York. By 1474 he was in Rome, where he acquired a printed copy of Cicero's *Orations* and a volume of Livy. After a brief return to

⁹⁵STC 23030.7; Allen, *Writings*, pp. 9-14.

⁹⁶The few exceptions to this, such as the importation of manuscript Books of Hours from the Low Countries have been discussed in chapter two, p. 98.

⁹⁷P.S. Allen, 'Bishop Shirwood of Durham and his Library', *English Historical Review* 25 (1910): 445-56.

England, Shirwood continued his residence in Rome, where he purchased a number of classical works including the letters of Jerome and Cicero and the *Lives* of Plutarch.

As has been discussed in chapters two and five, there are indications that some books were sold speculatively before print, such as second-hand texts and Books of Hours. Nevertheless, the advent of print made possible speculative production of books on a much larger scale. With the arrival of printing technology a greater number of books entered the market for which there was no guaranteed customer. We might expect that the necessity of attracting readers to buy the books stimulated printers and stationers to develop their methods of selling books. The speculative production of books by the presses forced the booksellers to look beyond the demand of one town or city and to consider how they could reach other markets. An indication of how the increase in a speculative import of books may have transformed the York book trade can be gained from an examination of the stock of Neville Mores.⁹⁸ The probate inventory lists around sixty-one titles, all but one of which had been produced outside York. They include works produced in Paris, Rome, Strasbourg, Lyons and other continental cities. The range of places from which Mores' books had been transported gives clear support to the assertion that the advent of print stimulated a great advancement in the distribution of texts.

We might expect the availability of a wide range of printed books in York to have increased the importance of the city as a centre of distribution to the rest of the county. Already in the late Middle Ages, as we have seen, the citizens of York could boast of a flourishing production of manuscript books, which may have attracted customers from the hinterland. Readers may also have travelled to York in order to buy second-hand books in the markets. Far more numerous than those who came to York specifically for books, are the customers who were in York on other business and may have decided to buy or

commission a book while they were there. As I have discussed in the introduction, York was the administrative centre of the largest shire in England, comprising around 6,000 square miles, and the ecclesiastical centre of a diocese which included not only Yorkshire, but also parts of Nottinghamshire and Cheshire.⁹⁹ The county courts and assemblies were held in the city, together with numerous ecclesiastical courts, such as the Archbishop's chancery court, which heard over 400 cases a year.¹⁰⁰

Goods were also sought at York by customers who had travelled some distance to the city. A brief description of the economic fortunes of the city has already been given, but it is worth emphasising again York's role as a regional centre. Although the cloth exports of the city were declining in the late fifteenth century, York continued to be a major manufacturing and retail centre which offered a wide range of goods and services.¹⁰¹ In York could be obtained the products of the countryside, as well as specialist goods such as spices, oil, glass, pewter, wine from Gascony, Greece and Spain, and gold and jewellery work.¹⁰² A merchant from Ripon bought pepper in the city, for example, and iron was purchased by a Scriven smith.¹⁰³ York also supplied Durham Priory with a variety of goods including fish, paper, sugar and raisins.¹⁰⁴ Yorkshire lead was sought in the city by traders from Hull, Newcastle, Boston and London.¹⁰⁵ Moreover, as we have seen, it is likely that the service industries in York were increasing in importance during this period. York's

⁹⁸BIHR, Dean and Chapter original wills, 1538; Palliser and Selwyn, 'Stock', pp. 207-19.

⁹⁹Palliser, *Tudor York*, p. 3.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., pp. 3-5.

¹⁰¹Goldberg, *Women, Work and Life-Cycle*, pp. 23-6.

¹⁰²Bartlett, 'Expansion and Decline', p. 19; Miller, 'Medieval York', pp. 97-106; Goldberg, *Women, Work and Life Cycle*, pp. 24-6.

¹⁰³Palliser, *Tudor York*, p. 186.

¹⁰⁴Ibid, p. 184.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., p. 2.

goods and services were therefore sought after by merchants and customers from all over Yorkshire and beyond. The medieval book trade of York would thus been able to reach into the hinterland through the flow of people in and out of York, even before the arrival of printed books.

It is likely that the advent of print increased the importance of York's supply of books as an incentive for people to journey to the city. Readers would have been attracted to York to sample the printed books available there, which had been imported from London and the continent, as well as printed in the city itself. As I have discussed in chapter two, in 1510 Gerard Wanseford imported into York 252 missals, 399 breviaries and 570 pyes, which are stated in the court case to have been bought in France.¹⁰⁶ From the size of the cargo, Wanseford was buying to sell not only to the inhabitants of the city, but to a much wider market probably comprising most of Yorkshire and possibly beyond.

It is also possible that pedlars and chapmen may have helped the dissemination of texts into the countryside of Yorkshire.¹⁰⁷ There is occasional evidence from the late sixteenth century of book pedlars who carried stocks of small texts into the rural areas of England.¹⁰⁸ The only example of a chapman who dealt in books in Yorkshire during the period studied here is Thomas Gryssop, who has been mentioned in the previous chapter.¹⁰⁹ Gryssop's probate inventory includes debts that he owed in London. The lack of evidence of other chapmen or pedlars who likewise sold books may be explained by their trade in a wide range of goods as well as books.

Yet although we might expect that the advent of print facilitated the spread of books into the countryside, direct evidence of this is lacking. The chapmen are only likely to have

¹⁰⁶YML, Pi(i)vii; Brunskill, 'Missals', pp. 20-33.

¹⁰⁷See chapter four, p. 213-14.

¹⁰⁸Tessa Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety 1550-1640* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 28, 267.

penetrated the districts where they could be reasonably confident of a market for their wares. They would consequently have been more interested in the towns where there was already a significant reading public. The advent of print would not necessarily therefore have stimulated a great improvement in the dissemination of books into the rural areas of Yorkshire during the early sixteenth century. A rural community with a thriving oral culture is unlikely to have developed a need or preference for reading with the availability of printed books. Instead, it is likely that the arrival of printing technology and printed books had the result of accentuating the differences in the literary culture of town and country. The research of Roger Chartier and Natalie Zemon Davis, for example, has shown that in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century France, the traditional oral customs of the rural areas continued to be mainly unaffected by print.¹¹⁰ Print seems to have had a far greater impact on the French towns, however, as a result of the already thriving trade in manuscript books, the display of printed bills and notices and because the residents had daily access to written culture.¹¹¹ Likewise, a study of book ownership in late sixteenth-century Oxfordshire and Kent has revealed disappointing evidence of the use of printed books in the countryside.¹¹²

These theories concerning the effect of print on the reading and book ownership of the inhabitants of towns compared with the countryside can be investigated for Yorkshire using the sample of 1,200 wills of lay testators over the period c.1450-1550. Table 13 shows the results of a comparison between urban and rural testators. Tables 14 and 15 show the proportion of known trades and occupations that are represented in the sample

¹⁰⁹BIHR, Dean and Chapter original wills, 1446.

¹¹⁰Davis, *Society and Culture*, pp. 197-200; Roger Chartier, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane, 'Publishing Strategies and What the People Read, 1530-1660', in Roger Chartier (ed.), *The Cultural Uses of Print in Early Modern France* (Princeton, 1987), p. 145-82.

¹¹¹Chartier, 'Publishing Strategies', p. 180.

¹¹²Peter Clark, 'The Ownership of Books in England, 1560-1640: the Example of Some Kentish Townsfolk', in Lawrence Stone (ed.), *Schooling and Society: Studies in the History*

of testators of Yorkshire. The statistics must be used with caution as the occupation or status of a large percentage of the testators is not known. Nevertheless, the figures can be used in conjunction with the profile of lay literacy in Yorkshire discussed in chapter four, to provide a general indication of the literacy of the inhabitants of York and the other urban centres of Yorkshire compared with the rural areas.

Table 13
Proportion of Book Owners by Location

	Total no. of wills	No. which mention books	%
York	304	16	5.3
Urban Yorkshire*	169	9	5.3
Rural Yorkshire	723	7	1.0
Unknown	4	—	—
Total	1200	32	2.7

*Beverley, Doncaster, Hull, Pontefract, Ripon, Rotherham, Scarborough, Sheffield, Wakefield.

Sources:

Sample of 1,200 Yorkshire lay wills.

Table 14**Proportion of Known Occupations of Yorkshire Testators**

	York	Urban Yorkshire*	Rural Yorkshire
Total known Occupations	204 (67.1%)	56 (33.1%)	133 (18.4%)
Total unknown	100 (32.9%)	113 (66.9%)	590 (81.6%)
Overall total	304 (100%)	169 (100%)	723 (100%)

*see note in table 13.

Sources:

Sample of 1,200 Yorkshire lay wills; F. Collins (ed.), *Register of the Freemen of the City of York, 1272-1558*, Surtees Society, 96 (1897).

Table 15**Occupations of Yorkshire Testators according to Residence**

	York	Urban Yorkshire*	Rural Yorkshire
Gentry / Aristocracy	15 (7.4%)	7 (12.5%)	52 (39.1%)
Mercantile	29 (14.2%)	21 (37.5%)	4 (3.0%)
Victuals	39	7	5
Metal	21	4	0
Wood	7	1	1
Textile	20	3	3
Clothing	9	1	2
Leather	25	5	2
Building	6	0	1
Total crafts	127 (62.3%)	21 (37.5%)	14 (10.5%)
Agriculture	2 (1.0%)	1 (1.8%)	58 (44.6%)
Professional	7 (3.4%)	2 (3.6%)	1 (0.8%)
Miscellaneous	24 (11.8%)	4 (7.1%)	4 (3.0%)
Total known Occupations	204 (100.1%)	56 (100%)	133 (101%)

*see note in table 13.

Sources:

See table 14.

The total percentage of book owners among the testators in table 13 indicate that the inhabitants of urban Yorkshire were far more likely to be book owners and readers than the laity resident in rural Yorkshire. As we have seen, the most frequent book owners amongst the Yorkshire laity were the gentry and greater aristocracy. A large proportion of the sample of lay testators from rural Yorkshire were from this class (nearly 40%). The testators from York and the other major towns included a smaller proportion of gentry and

greater aristocracy. Nearly 45% of the wills by testators in the countryside of Yorkshire, however, were made by agriculturalists such as yeomen and husbandmen, who very rarely bequeathed books. The low incidence of book ownership in rural Yorkshire can therefore be related to the large proportion of agriculturalists.

The higher incidence of book ownership in the towns can also be attributed the greater number of professional literates in the urban areas (nearly 4%) than in the countryside (under 1%). The inhabitants of York and the other major towns are also represented by far more merchants (14.2% and 37.5%) than those of the countryside (3%). The majority of the York lay testators, of whom the occupation is known, were craftsmen (over 60%). As we have seen in chapter four, there are several examples of book ownership by artisans of the victualling, metal and wood trades. These results support the theory of the 'hothouse' effect on literacy within the urban centres.¹¹³ The 'hothouse' effect is produced by a number of factors, including a greater supply of books, more schools, the use of written notices and inscriptions and, most importantly, the concentration of a number of professional literates within one area. There may also have been a greater impulse and incentive for urban dwellers to learn to read for the purposes of greater social distinction and prestige.

The presence of literate and book-owning gentry, merchants, professionals and craftsmen as well as clergy in the towns would have quickly attracted the attention of printers and ensured the swift penetration of printed books into urban culture. The clergy and gentry would also have created a market for books in the rural areas of Yorkshire, but as I have shown, this market was smaller than that of York and the other towns. Over the period 1450-1550 all but one of the lay testators from rural Yorkshire who bequeathed

¹¹³R.A. Houston, *Literacy in Early Modern Europe: Culture and Education 1500-1800* (London and New York, 1988), pp. 140-3.

books in their wills were from gentry or greater aristocratic stock. In 1503, Anthony Langdayle, an esquire of Holton, bequeathed ‘*unum missale de lez prynted* [sic]’.¹¹⁴ A printed breviary was also given by Robert Lassals, esquire of Brakenbarghe, to his heirs in 1508.¹¹⁵ Lancelot Smyth, a parson of Hilton in Holderness, bequeathed a printed manual in 1544.¹¹⁶ There is no indication in the testamentary sources that printed books were penetrating the lives of the non-gentry lay inhabitants. The gentry may have maintained residences in York and they could afford to travel regularly or send servants to the urban centres in order to purchase printed books.¹¹⁷ Examples are the Scropes of Bolton and Masham who owned houses in the city.¹¹⁸ Thus, as the market for books in the rural areas of Yorkshire seems to have depended predominantly on the custom of the gentry and clergy, there would have been less incentive for book pedlars to travel into the countryside compared with the towns. An exception can possibly be made for other forms of print, such as the indulgences and woodcuts discussed in chapters one and two, which may have penetrated the smaller towns and rural areas more easily than books as they were smaller and more convenient to carry. The already mentioned Pavement Hours in York Minster Library, for example, has small woodcuts sewn into the book.¹¹⁹ By the end of the sixteenth century, the Hours were in the hands of the Pullein family of Pontefract.

Therefore we can see that the statistical evidence indicates that the advent of print did not improve the commercial book trade networks in the rural areas. The difficulties encountered by Robert Parkyn, priest of Aldwick-le-Street in the West Riding, in obtaining

¹¹⁴BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 6, f. 67v.

¹¹⁵BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 7, ff. 32r-5v.

¹¹⁶YML, L2/5b, f. 9Ar-v.

¹¹⁷Christopher Dyer, ‘The Consumer and the Market in the Later Middle Ages’, in *Everyday Life in Medieval England* (London and Rio Grande, 1994), pp. 257-81.

¹¹⁸Rees Jones, ‘Property, Tenure and Rents’, p. 272.

certain texts is an example of the deficiencies in the commercial distribution of texts during the sixteenth century. He had to ask his brother, who was a fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge to send them to him. A letter from John to Robert, written around 1554-5, states that John had sent over Harding's *Chronicles* and a copy of the Acts of Parliament.¹²⁰ A commentary of Dionysius Cathusianus on the Bible was also sent to Robert with another letter in 1555.¹²¹

3. Ecclesiastical and Social Networks after the Advent of Print

Social networks which, as I have shown, were crucial for the dissemination of texts in both urban and rural Yorkshire, did not decline after the advent of print. The testamentary evidence reveals that the donation of books to churches, for example, continued to be popular.¹²² Like manuscript books, it was usual for printed books to pass between a number of readers. An example is the copy of the *Liber cronicarum* of H. Schedel, printed in 1497 in Augsburg, which bears inscriptions of ownership by William Thornton, prior of Wetheral in Cumberland, Thomas Barwyk, a monk of St Mary's Abbey, York, and an unidentified Edmund Tyndall.¹²³

The networks of the regular and secular clergy of Yorkshire also played an important role in the distribution of printed books as they had done for manuscript texts. The graduate clergy of York Minster were among the first known residents of York to own

¹¹⁹YML, XVI.K.6, ff. 26v, 27r, 44v, 45r, 94r, 106r, 108r.

¹²⁰A.G. Dickens, 'John Parkyn, Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge', *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society* 43 (1950): 23.

¹²¹Ibid., p. 24.

¹²²See, for example, BIHR, Archbishop's Register, vol. 27, ff. 139r, 158v; vol. 28, ff. 168r-9r; vol. 29, ff. 94v-5r; Prob. Reg., vol. 11, ff. 225r-v, 565v, 640r. This is a contradictory argument to that of Meek, 'Printing', p. 123.

¹²³Ker, *Medieval Libraries*, pp. 197, 217, 320; Watson, *Supplement*, p. 70.

printed books. These texts had probably been bought in the university towns or in London. The probate inventory of Martin Collins, treasurer from 1503 to 1509, for example, itemises at least fifty-three printed books.¹²⁴ The impressive library of printed law texts accumulated by Edward Kellet, precentor of York Minster, may have been available to his friends and dependants in York Minster, such as John Nosterfield, a chantry priest. In his will, proved in 1532, Nosterfield left a printed copy of the *Constitutiones provinciales* to Kellet, whom he called ‘*venerabilem virum magistro meum*’.¹²⁵

The religious houses of Yorkshire were likewise enthusiastic purchasers of printed books, which may also have been an important factor in the penetration of print culture in the north. Evidence of the acquisition of printed books can be found in the 1558 list of books of the ex-religious of Monk Bretton. Many of the books are known to refer to printed texts as the title given in the list is the same as the title of the printed edition. An example is item 7: ‘*sermones Meffreth, alias hortulus Regine de tempore*’ which can be identified as the 1483 edition of the *Sermones Meffreth, alias Hortulus regine de tempore*, printed in Basel.¹²⁶ The catalogue therefore shows that the monks of Monk Bretton were active purchasers of printed texts up until the house’s dissolution. Printed books were also owned by members of St Mary’s Abbey in York. A copy of the *Speculum exemplorum*, printed in Deventer in 1481, bears the inscription, ‘*Acquisit’ per fratrem Thomas Staveley Ebor’ monachum*’.¹²⁷ Staveley was ordained an acolyte of St Mary’s Abbey in 1496 and later priest in 1502. After the dissolution of the house in 1539, Staveley settled in St

¹²⁴YML, L1(17)18.

¹²⁵‘the venerable man, my master’. BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 2, f. 163r-v.

¹²⁶Sharpe, Carley, Thomson and Watson (eds.), *English Benedictine Libraries*, p. 269.

¹²⁷‘Acquired by brother Thomas Staveley, a monk of York’. Urbana, University of Illinois Library, q.251.Sp.31, 1481; Ker, *Medieval Libraries*, p. 217; Watson, *Supplement*, p. 70; N.R. Ker, manuscript notes in a card index in the Bodleian library.

Martin's parish in Micklegate.¹²⁸ He also owned the *De victoria verbi Dei* of Rupertus abbas, which was printed in 1525 in Nuremberg.¹²⁹ Staveley was a graduate of Oxford, so it is possible that his books were not purchased in York, but in the university town.¹³⁰

Another enthusiastic purchaser of printed texts was the monk Thomas Arrows. Arrows wrote ownership inscriptions on two volumes of Duns Scotus (printed in 1497 in Venice) and a book produced in Cologne in 1501 which contains the *Quodlibeta* of Thomas Aquinas, the *Summa aurea* of Guillelmus and Faber's *Introductio in x. libros Ethicorum Arist.*¹³¹

The laity and secular clergy of Yorkshire continued to maintain important connections with the religious houses up until the dissolution. The prior of the Hull Carmelites was given a *Legenda aurea* in 1521 by John Fynwell, a layman of Hull.¹³² William Wright, a notary of York, requested in his will in 1522/3, that his cousin, Edmund Metcalf, take a book of his choosing from his library.¹³³ Metcalf was a monk of St Mary's, who later possibly became a chantry priest of Newark.¹³⁴ In 1535, Richard Oliver, a vicar of All Saints, North Street in York, requested burial in Holy Trinity Priory, to which he also gave four books.¹³⁵

The continuing importance of ecclesiastical networks for the distribution of books,

¹²⁸Cross and Vickers, *Monks, Friars and Nuns*, p. 80; Cross (ed.), *City Clergy*, pp. 48-9.

¹²⁹Edinburgh, National Library, H.24, f. 10; Ker, card index.

¹³⁰A.B. Emden, *A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford, A.D. 1501-1540* (Oxford, 1974), p. 669.

¹³¹Oxford, Magdalen College, Arch B III 1.7-8 (previously i.1,1-2); Cambridge, Gonville and Caius College, F.5.6; Ker, *Medieval Libraries*, pp. 217, 320; Watson, *Supplement*, p. 113.

¹³²BIHR, Prob. Reg., vol. 9, f. 191r.

¹³³YML, L2/5a, ff. 134v-5r.

¹³⁴Cross and Vickers, *Monks, Friars and Nuns*, p. 88.

¹³⁵BIHR, Archbishop's Register, vol. 28, ff. 168r-9r.

even after the advent of print, can be seen in the provision of Bibles. In 1536 rectors had been ordered to provide Bibles in Latin and English for the parishioners to read in church.¹³⁶ As only a few parish churches had responded to the 1536 injunctions, Cromwell reiterated the instructions in October 1538 and commissioned Miles Coverdale to issue a new translation of the Scriptures.¹³⁷ In May 1541, it was again ordered that all parishes must have a Bible by the next feast of All Saints (1 November), or be fined 40s.¹³⁸ These instructions were repeated by Edward VI in July 1547 and the parishes were allowed three months to acquire a copy of the whole Bible in English.¹³⁹ The limited period of time which was allowed to the parish churches in order to purchase the prescribed books suggests that an efficient method of distributing the texts was in operation.¹⁴⁰ However, many of the parishes were slow to comply with this demand. In the diocese of Lincoln, for example, a report of February 1539 stated that the rectors of forty churches in three deaneries had failed to obtain a Bible for the use of the laity.¹⁴¹ A proclamation of May 1541 complained that : ‘His Royal Majesty is informed that divers and many towns and parishes within this his realm have negligently omitted their duties in the accomplishment thereof, whereof his Highness marveleth not a little’.¹⁴²

To a large extent, the difficulties which the English government had in ensuring the provision of Bibles in the parish churches may reflect the contrary inclinations of the priest

¹³⁶Haigh, *English Reformations*, p. 130.

¹³⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 134-5.

¹³⁸Hughes and Larkin (eds.), *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, 1: 297.

¹³⁹*Ibid.*, 1: 395.

¹⁴⁰M. Spufford, *Contrasting Communities: English Villagers in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Cambridge, 1974), p. 207.

¹⁴¹Haigh, *Reformation and Resistance*, p. 115.

¹⁴²Hughes and Larkin (eds.) *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, 1: 296-8; Haigh, *English Reformations*, pp. 151, 158.

and/or parishioners who resisted the changes. Although evidence of this has not survived from Yorkshire, examples from the south are numerous. At Faversham in 1542, for instance, the vicar removed the Bible which had been displayed in his church.¹⁴³ The struggle to outfit the churches with copies of the Scriptures may also be symptomatic of the deficiencies of early sixteenth-century book distribution. No Bibles, either in English or Latin, appear in the 1538 inventory of the York stationer, Neville Mores. Following the injunctions of 1539, Cromwell tried to guarantee that all English priests were aware of the requirements by printing copies of the instructions and delivering them to the bishops whose duty it was to circulate them around the parishes.¹⁴⁴ This devolution of responsibility on to the bishops was a continuation of ecclesiastical administrative practice from the late Middle Ages and is reflected in the reiteration of the government's orders by the bishops for their own dioceses. Archbishop Edward Lee of York, for example, repeated the instructions for his diocese in around 1538.¹⁴⁵ A similar procedure, in which Bibles were sent to the cathedrals for distribution by the bishops, was probably also used to ensure the provision of Scriptures in the parish churches. As has been mentioned in chapter three, the Dean and Chapter of York paid £2 for Bibles for the churches of St Michael le Belfrey, St Andrew, St Helen of the Walls, St John Ousebridge, St John Hungate in York and St Mary in Layerthorpe in 1541.¹⁴⁶ A further 7s was spent in 1547/8 to provide the parish church

¹⁴³Haigh, *English Reformations*, p. 159.

¹⁴⁴Thomas Cromwell, *Life and Letters of Thomas Cromwell*, ed. Roger B. Merriman, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1968), 2:156-7.

¹⁴⁵Walter Howard Frere and William McClure Kennedy (eds), *Visitation Articles and Injunctions of the Period of the Reformation, 1536-1558*, Alcuin Club Collections 15 (1910), 2: 45; see also the injunctions of Bishop Hooper for the dioceses of Gloucester and Worcester and Bishop Rowland Lee, aimed at the diocese of Coventry and Lichfield, *ibid.*, 2: 19, 289.

¹⁴⁶Purvis, 'Notes from the Diocesan Registry', pp.389-403.

of Topcliffe with a Bible.¹⁴⁷ The distribution of Bibles during the Reformation was therefore dependent to a large extent on the ecclesiastical administrative system. The system of disseminating texts during the early Reformation therefore does not seem greatly advanced from that in operation before the advent of print.

In the first section of this chapter, the importance of personal connections in the distribution of texts during the manuscript period was explored. After the advent of print, social relations continued to play a significant role in the dissemination of books. An example is the New Testament sent by Robert Plumpton to his mother, Isabel, in around 1535/6. Robert advised her that if she could not read the small text of the prologue, she should use his father's copy in which the prologue was printed in bigger letters.¹⁴⁸ The continuing importance of social and personal relations is also shown by the practice of reading aloud, which did not cease due to the advent of print. A late example is Lady Margaret Hoby (1599-1605), a puritan who recorded her daily activities in detail in her diary.¹⁴⁹ Lady Margaret was fond of listening to others read aloud scriptural commentaries or other devotional texts, such as Fox's *Book of Martyrs*.¹⁵⁰ Prelection was thus still an important way in which reading interests could be encouraged after the advent of print.¹⁵¹

Manuscript continued to be important in the circulation of texts that had yet to find a publisher or which were intended for private, especially clandestine, use, as is shown in

¹⁴⁷YML, E3/46; Raine (ed.), *Fabric Rolls*, p. 112.

¹⁴⁸Kirby (ed.), *Plumpton Letters*, p. 205.

¹⁴⁹Dorothy M. Meads (ed.), *Diary of Lady Margaret Hoby 1599-1605* (London, 1930).

¹⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 68, 75, 98, 102-3 etc.

¹⁵¹Further examples of reading aloud can be found in Roger Chartier, trans. Carol Mossman, 'Leisure and Sociability: Reading Aloud in Early Modern Europe', in Susan Zimmerman and Ronald F.E. Weissman (eds.), *Urban Life in the Renaissance* (London and Toronto, 1989), pp. 103-20.

the trial of some Yorkshire heretics in 1568-9.¹⁵² William Coke, a clerk of Stillingfleet confessed that he had transcribed a schedule of seditious news and rumours made by William Jellotson, vicar of the same church. Jellotson later confessed that he had copied his text from a schedule owned by the curate of Escrick, Jasper Bongham. The court case later revealed that Bongham's schedule had been acquired from Edward Fell, a cleric of Escrick, who in turn had received it from Sir George Whyte, a schoolmaster of Sutton. It is likely that this pattern of text dissemination was repeated frequently in the sixteenth century, where the desired text was not in print, or not available nearby. The advent of print did stimulate a great increase in the number of texts available in the urban centres of Yorkshire, including works that had been printed in the south of England, on the continent of Europe and in the city of York itself, but the 'medieval' methods of dissemination through social connections and the gift and loan of books still continued to be necessary.

¹⁵²BIHR, High Commission Act Book, vol. 4, ff. 42v-7v.

Conclusion

This analysis of the relationship between book production and the market for books has challenged some of the assumptions that arose from studies focused solely on the book trade or book ownership. As I have discussed in the introduction, there is a prevailing supposition that the demand for books was related directly to the number of readers and that the success of the new technology of print would not have been possible without a rise in levels of lay literacy during the later Middle Ages. Clanchy, for example, argues that print should be seen as the climax, not the beginning, of a developing need for and growth in literacy.¹ This hypothesis is supported by my case-study in that we have seen some indirect indications of developments in the lay reading public before the advent of print. These include the use of cheaper paper books and booklets, the rise in the number of grammar schools during this period and the increasing need for pragmatic literacy in order to deal with administrative and legal documentation. However, the problematic evidence of an increase in lay literacy is not enough to explain why there seems to have been a more important book trade in York compared with such larger and more prosperous cities as Norwich or Bristol.

If we consider the general economic situation of York in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, there are a number of reasons why the prominence of York in the provincial book trade may seem surprising. The diminished prosperity of the city, largely due to the decline of the export trade, has been much commented on. York was apparently smaller and certainly less prosperous than Norwich, Bristol or Exeter, none of which appear to have had significant book trades. This suggestion must be qualified by the observation that the trades of these three cities have yet to be the focus of more detailed research.

¹Michael T. Clanchy, 'Looking Back from the Invention of Printing', in Daniel P. Resnick

Norwich and Bristol were the largest provincial cities in England during the early sixteenth century, with populations of perhaps around 10,000-12,000 and 9,500-10,000 inhabitants respectively.² It is likely that the city of Norwich was prospering from the production of worsteds by the early sixteenth century, and the establishment of new markets in Spain and Portugal may have boosted the economy of Bristol.³ Exeter likewise was undergoing a period of prosperity between c.1480-1510 due to an expanding cloth industry and its ranking in the lay subsidies had risen from 22nd in 1377 to 3rd in the 1520s.⁴ Yet none of these three cities, unlike York, are known to have had printing presses during this period.

It can be argued that the prominence of York as a centre of the book trade owes a great deal to the more detailed sources of evidence have survived. Accordingly, the more abundant information for York's book trade may simply be a result of the chance survival of evidence. As has been discussed, the freemen's register of York provides most of our information on the city's book craftsmen. Norwich also had a detailed franchise register, but the crafts of the Exeter freemen are only recorded in its register in about a third of all cases. There is no surviving franchise register for Bristol. Furthermore, the distinctive use of York draws to our attention manuscript and printed service books which are likely to have been made for or in the diocese of York. Books connected with Norwich, Bristol or Exeter are less easy to distinguish compared with York because these cities all employed the Sarum use. It is inappropriate, however, to place too much emphasis on the evidence

(ed.), *Literacy in Historical Perspective* (Washington, 1983), pp. 7-22.

²Penelope Corfield, 'Urban Development in England and Wales in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', in D.C. Coleman and A.H. John (eds.), *Trade, Government and Economy in Pre-Industrial England: Essays presented to F.J. Fisher* (London, 1976), p. 222; Tanner, *Church in Late Medieval Norwich*, pp. xvi, 2; Martha C. Skeeters, *Community and Clergy: Bristol and the Reformation c.1530-c.1570* (Oxford, 1993), p. 1.

³J.L. Bolton, *The Medieval English Economy 1150-1500* (London, 1980), pp. 252-3; Dyer, *Decline*, pp. 30, 34; Goldberg, *Women, Work and Life-Cycle*, p. 80.

⁴Dyer, *Decline*, pp. 35, 66; Maryanne Kowaleski, *Local Markets and Regional Trade in*

of the use of York. Our evidence of the production and use of books in the county of York does not depend solely on the use of York, but on inscriptions inside the volumes, and the names of known York printers and stationers in the colophons.⁵

The key factor which distinguished York from other provincial cities and towns was its role as the seat of the Province. As we have seen in chapters three and four a major part of the market for books was generated by the graduate clergy and ecclesiastical administrators attached to York Minster. The importance of the Minster in the book trade is attested by the popularity of the nearby parish of St Michael le Belfrey as the location of the crafts and trade of the York printers and stationers.⁶ As the administrative centre of both the county and the largest English diocese, and the seat of an archbishop, York had a prominence over larger provincial cities such as Bristol which did not have a cathedral until 1542.⁷ The role of the Minster as the heart of the Church in the north and the networks of the religious houses of Yorkshire were also crucial in the distribution of texts and reading interests.⁸ The importance of the residence of an archbishop, as well as a large number of canons and Church administrators, and the networks of the cathedral clergy with the universities, is also revealed by the fact that Canterbury likewise had a press in the early sixteenth century. Canterbury was a smaller city than York but was also the seat of a province.⁹ York's status as an ecclesiastical centre was thus the crucial element in the book trade. This is a contrary hypothesis to that of Moran, who suggests that: 'it was the lay demand for books, especially for service books, that influenced the early book trade in the

Medieval Exeter (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 89-95.

⁵See chapter two, pp. 101-110.

⁶See chapter two, pp. 107-8, 112.

⁷Skeeters, *Community and Clergy*, p. 2.

⁸See chapter six, pp. 250-68, 280-86.

⁹A brief description of the press at Canterbury is given in the introduction, p. 19.

diocese'.¹⁰ My argument is that the laity did create a significant market for books, particularly private prayer books, but the main demand for service books was produced by the secular and religious clergy of the region. The printing and importation of primers and elementary grammar books was probably also encouraged by lay demand, but this lay market was overshadowed by the clergy's need for these texts.

The importance of the custom of the high-ranking ecclesiastics and graduates of the Minster meant that the York book trade shared many of the characteristics of the book trade in the university towns. As we have seen, the same variety of texts could be found in the stock held by Neville Mores of York as that held by John Dorne of Oxford. Furthermore, it is likely that the establishment of presses in York was encouraged and patronised by the Church authorities as was also true of Cambridge and Edinburgh.¹¹ However, there were important differences between the book trade in York and that in the university towns. The trade of the stationer in Oxford originated in the system of pledges in which books and other items were held as securities. There is no evidence of such a system at York and the number of known stationers at work in the city during this period is consequently much smaller. The early printers in the university towns and in York also had different priorities. The publications of Oxford's first known printer, Theodoric Rood, include Cicero's *Pro Milone*, the commentary of Alexander of Hales on Aristotle's *De anima* and the *Vulgaria* of Publius Terentius Afer, which was intended as an aid for learning Latin.¹² The second Oxford printer, John Scoler, who is known to have been printing in 1517-18, was nevertheless more concerned with the old scholastic tradition than with

¹⁰Moran, *Growth*, p. 200.

¹¹See chapter two, pp. 106-7.

¹²Clair, *History of Printing*, p. 112; Nicholas Barker, *The Oxford University Press and the Spread of Learning 1478-1978* (Oxford, 1978), pp. 2-4; Blake, 'Spread of Printing', pp. 26-8.

humanism. His productions include the *Quaestiones moralissime super libros Ethicorum*, which, as it proclaimed in the introduction, was intended for university students, the *Super libros posteriorum Aristotelis* and the *Principia* of William Burley.¹³ The output of the press of John Siberch at Cambridge in 1521-2 in contrast was more dictated by humanist concerns. Siberch's publications include the *De conscribendis epistolis* of Erasmus, Galen's *De temperamentis*, and the *Hermathena* of Papyrius Geminus Eliates, which even contained passages in Greek.¹⁴ The early sixteenth-century printers of York, in contrast, are only known to have published service books and elementary grammar texts. They do not seem to have ventured into the academic market.

The different concerns of the York printers compared with their university counterparts suggests that they had a good idea of their intended market and chose their productions to suit. Oxford's population in the early sixteenth century was only between 2,500 and 3,000 compared with at least 8,000 in York. Whereas the York book trade catered for a static population of clergy, and to a lesser extent, the more wealthy laity, the book trade of Oxford and Cambridge served a regular turnover of students. It has been estimated that around a fifth of the inhabitants of Oxford were employed by the university.¹⁵ Moreover, Oxford had only fourteen parish churches by 1500 compared with forty in York.¹⁶ Thus although the academic interests of the clergy were an important part of the book trade in York, they were not as fundamental to the market as they were in Oxford and Cambridge. The custom of the religious and secular clergy who served the churches and chantries of the city and hinterland were a greater priority.

¹³Plomer, *Wynkyn de Worde*, pp. 235-6; Barker, *Oxford University Press*, pp. 4-6.

¹⁴Black, *Cambridge University Press*, pp. 18-20.

¹⁵A. Crossley, 'Early Modern Oxford', in Salter and Lobel (eds.), *The Victoria History of the Counties of England: Oxfordshire*, 4: 101.

¹⁶Janet Cooper, 'Medieval Oxford', in Salter and Lobel (eds.), *The Victoria History of the*

Another important factor in the York book trade may also have been its distance from London. York's market hinterland may have been larger than other provincial cities which were nearer to London. William More of Worcester Cathedral, for example, bought a number of books in London, of which a list was made in 1531.¹⁷ Two antiphoners and a legend were likewise bought in London in 1555-6 by Canterbury Cathedral.¹⁸ Nevertheless, during the fifteenth century, the trading activities of London merchants encroached increasingly on the interests of York merchants. This is most evident in the trade in lead, cloth and wine.¹⁹ Likewise, we have seen indications that the trade in books between London and York was substantial. The absence among Mores's stock of texts which had previously been produced in London and Westminster suggests that he did not attempt to compete with an already significant trade in these texts from the south. Instead the stationers and printers of York appear with some success to have tried to establish a niche for themselves by concentrating on service books of York use and grammar texts. Thus the book trade of York was affected by a number of economic and social factors, it cannot simply be related to a rise in levels of lay literacy. York's status as an ecclesiastical centre, the seat of a province and its distance from London were more important elements in the production and importation of books.

This study has likewise suggested how the religious and socio-economic context affected the market for books in Yorkshire. It has also become apparent through this case-study that religious conservatism was neither an obstacle to literacy nor book ownership. Despite the general conservatism in religion in the north, the testamentary sources suggest

Counties of England: Oxfordshire, 4: 70.

¹⁷Sharpe, Carley, Thomson and Watson (eds.), *English Benedictine Libraries*, pp. 662-74.

¹⁸C. Eveleigh Woodruff, 'Extracts from Original Documents illustrating the Progress of the Reformation in Kent', *Archaeologia Cantiana* 31 (1915): 92-120.

¹⁹Kermode, *Medieval Merchants*, pp. 252-3.

that the lay reading public of Yorkshire included merchants and the more prosperous laity. The evidence of wills and inventories show that there was an established tradition of devotional reading in Yorkshire during the fifteenth century. This suggests that the supposed vital role of Protestantism in the rise of a literate laity has been exaggerated. The analysis of book ownership by the laity and by the clergy respectively has also revealed developments and changes sometimes associated with the Reformation, but which begin to become apparent in Yorkshire during the late fifteenth century. An example is the increasing interest in preaching shown in the wills of the clergy before the mid-sixteenth century. The Bible is likewise frequently found in the libraries of the Yorkshire clergy during the late fifteenth century and there is no obvious increase in the bequest of Bibles during the early Reformation period. However, the need for caution must again be emphasised. It is possible that the clergy and laity had access to Bibles in the churches and they may have listened to the Scriptures being read aloud.

The importance of analysing the socio-economic context has become apparent in the discussion of the relationship between the consumption of books and urban culture. As has been discussed in chapter six, the testamentary sources suggest that the incidence of book ownership was much higher in the towns than in the rural areas. This can be attributed to the different social composition of the town versus the countryside. In the urban centres there was a greater proportion of merchants and artisans, a significant number of whom were literate, mainly for pragmatic reasons. The importance of urban culture is also related to the 'hothouse' effect, which was a combination of more prominent uses of literacy, more grammar schools and the availability of more book-making skills. The pragmatic incentives to literacy were generally stronger in the towns than in the countryside, for example, notices and bills displayed in the city, the advantage of literacy in holding civic office and the need

to keep business accounts.²⁰

This study of the book producers, sellers and purchasers of York and Yorkshire has revealed many of the ways in which they depended on each other. Book trade networks cannot be comprehended without an understanding of the reading public that created the market, and likewise, the choice of texts owned by readers cannot be understood without some knowledge of the production and trade in books. The separate studies of the book trade in section one and of book ownership in section two have given contrasting views of the production, trade and use of books in Yorkshire during this period. The changes after the advent of print, such as the increase in the number of books which were sold speculatively and the threat to the trade of the illuminators and scribes, contrasts with the evidence for book ownership. Only a few gradual developments can be seen from the mention of books in wills and probate inventories, for example, the frequency of book bequests fell during this period and certain texts were more frequently mentioned in the testamentary sources after they were printed.²¹ As I have discussed, the fall in book bequests may indicate that the ownership of books gradually began to lose prestige after the advent of print. The increased popularity of certain texts after they were printed is likely to have been a result of the larger number of copies available.

This thesis has also suggested ways in which production and consumption could be autonomous, which reinforces the need for them to be studied together. On the one hand, it has become clear that reading was not necessarily tied to the purchase and production of new books. Readers could gain access to books through the use of libraries, through the loan or gift of books and through the reading of books aloud. These methods of acquiring and consuming books were largely independent of the professional book trade and the

²⁰See chapter four, pp. 188-94.

²¹See chapter three, pp. 139, 141-5, 148, 152.

changes that it underwent during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Furthermore, literacy does not automatically signify an interest in books. An increase in the evidence of reading skills would not therefore straightforwardly signify a greater consumption of books. On the other hand, the fragmentary evidence that we have of the activities of book producers and traders does not reflect the interests of the book consumers. The chance survival of the probate inventory of Mores, for example, gives us an insight into the book trade of York. But it is only in comparison with the range of books known to have been owned in Yorkshire that the specialist nature of the stock becomes apparent. We cannot therefore always argue from the evidence of the book trade to book use or from book use to the book trade.

The approach of the discipline of *l'histoire du livre*, which distances itself from the history of printing through its interest in readers and reading thus has much to commend itself.²² However, this case-study of Yorkshire has shown that a concern with the reading public as well as production is still not broad enough. As we have seen, illiterates could participate actively in the book trade by commissioning books as gifts or for use by their private chaplains. Those who could not read themselves could also buy books, or encourage others to do so, and have them read to them. The role of those who could not read must therefore also be considered in any study of the book trade.

This study of book production and book ownership has therefore shown that it is important to investigate the book trade in the context of the socio-economic and religious environment. The socio-economic factors included, for example, the importance of the urban environment, competition with the London merchants and distribution networks. The case-study of Yorkshire has shown that there was not a straightforward rise in levels of lay literacy or book ownership over the late fifteenth or early sixteenth centuries. Nor can

we postulate a simple contrast between manuscript culture and print culture. Instead, changes in reading interest and habits should be seen as complex and variegated in different localities and in different sectors of society.

²²Hall, *Cultures of Print*, p. 30.

Appendix: The Number of Wills and Inventories in which the Following Titles are Mentioned:

Bequests of newly bought books to churches are not included. The numbers in brackets refer to additional bequests of books which do not make clear whether the testator was bequeathing his own copy of a text, or merely providing the money for such a book to be bought.

1. Laymen

	1440- 1460	1461- 1480	1481- 1500	1501- 1520	1521- 1550
Service Books:					
Antiphoner					(2)
Book with the seven penitential psalms	2				
Book with placebo and dirige	1	1			
Gradual	(1)	1			
Hymnal		(2)		(1)	
Jorenall ¹	1				
<i>Legenda sanctorum</i>		1 (1)			
Matins book				1	
Missal/massbook	4	2	5	3 (1)	4 (2)
Mortiferium ²	1				
Portus/breviary	3 (1)	3	4	3	
Primer/book of hours	10	10	11		2
Processioner			(1)		1
Psalter	4	4 (2)	1	3	
Pye				1	
Devotional and Scriptural Texts:					
<i>Ars moriendi</i> ³					1
Bible					1
<i>Booke of good maners</i> ⁴					1
Bonaventura ⁵		2			
Boys de Consolatione Philosophiae ⁶	1				

¹Diurnale.

²Unknown word - it may indicate a breviary ("portiforium" in Latin) used for mortuary services.

³STC 786-790.

⁴Jacques Legrand, translated by Caxton. STC 15394-15399.5.

⁵Probably Pseudo-Bonaventure, *Meditationes Vitae Christi*.

⁶Boethius, *De consolatione philosophiae*.

	1440- 1460	1461- 1480	1481- 1500	1501- 1520	1521- 1550
<i>Consilium constancie</i> ⁷				1	
Eccliastic' paralipominon ⁸		1			
Exposicion of the vij psalmes Festivall ⁹					1 1
<i>Golden legend/ Legenda aurea</i> ¹⁰				(1)	2 (1)
<i>Historia scholastica</i> ¹¹			(1)		
Liber de devynyte	1				
Liber de oracionibus	1	1	1		
Liber de vita Christi					1
Liber devotio	2				
Life of St. Thomas of Canterbury	1	1		1	
Lucerna Consciencie		1			
Lucidary ¹²	1				
Magister sententiarum ¹³				1	
Miracula sancti Thome				1	
Ordnance of Christen men ¹⁴					1
Passion of oure saviour Jhesu Christe ¹⁵					1
Postilla super epistolis				1	
Proclamation of the highe ¹⁶					1
<i>Scala celi</i> ¹⁷					1
Vita de Job				1	

⁷Probably John Awdley, *Concilium conscientiae*.

⁸Books of Ecclesiastics and Chronicles from the Bible.

⁹John Mirk, *Festial*. STC 17957-17975.

¹⁰James of Voragine.

¹¹Peter Comestor.

¹²Honorius of Autun, *Elucidarium*.

¹³Peter Lombard, *Sentences*.

¹⁴*Thordynary of crysten men*. STC 5198-9.

¹⁵*The passion of our lord Iesu Christe wythe the contemplations*. STC 14557.

¹⁶*A proclamacyon of the hygh emperour Iesu Christ*. STC 14561.

¹⁷Johannes Gobijs, *Scala celi*

	1440- 1460	1461- 1480	1481- 1500	1501- 1520	1521- 1550
Clerical Manuals:					
Dormi securis ¹⁸				1	
<i>Pars Oculi</i> ¹⁹			(1)		
<i>Pupilla Oculi</i> ²⁰			(1)		
Raymond ²¹	1				
<i>Templum domini</i> ²²	1				
Grammar and Classical:					
Alphabetum aureum				1	
Brito ²³	1				
<i>Catholicon</i>		1		1	
Cato ²⁴	1				1
Grammar book		3			
Ovidius				1	
Papias in elimentar' ²⁵		1			
Law:					
Baldus super codice ²⁶				1	
Bartholus super extravagan' ²⁷				1	
Bartholus super ff veteri codice et novo ²⁸				1	
Boke of Assises		1			
Boke of Terme		1			
Clement' ²⁹	1				
Decisiones rothe ³⁰				2	
<i>Decreta</i> ³¹				1	

¹⁸Possibly, Richard Maidstone, *Sermones dormi secure*.

¹⁹First part of the *Oculus Sacerdotis* of William of Pagula.

²⁰John de Burgh.

²¹Raymund of Penafort, *Summa de casibus penitentiae*.

²²Robert Grosseteste.

²³William Brito, *Summa difficiliorum vocabulorum Bible*.

²⁴Dionysius Cato, *Distichs*. STC 4850-53.

²⁵Papias, *Elementarium doctrinae rudimentum*.

²⁶Baldo Ubaldi, *Super Codicem*.

²⁷Bartolus de Saxoferrato on the *Extravagantes* of John XXII.

²⁸Bartolus de Saxoferrato.

²⁹Clement V, *Clementines*.

³⁰*Decisiones Rote nove et antique*.

³¹Gratianus, *Decreta*. Strassburg, 1472.

	1440- 1460	1461- 1480	1481- 1500	1501- 1520	1521- 1550
<i>Decretals</i> ³²				1	
Dominicus super sexto ³³				1	
Dominus Abbas super decretalibus ³⁴				1	
Innocenc' ³⁵	1				
Instituta cum parvo volumine ³⁶				1	
Johannes Athon ³⁷				1	
Johannes de Emula super Clementin' ³⁸				1	
Law book	1		2		2
Liber enforciatus ³⁹				1	
Liber vetus de diversis tractatibus				1	
Littilton Tenures ⁴⁰				1	
Mandagud super electionibus ⁴¹				1	
<i>Ordo iudicarius</i> ⁴²				1	
Pare de decreis			1		
Reportorium domini Johannes Mylys ⁴³				1	
Sabrellus super Clementin' ⁴⁴				1	
Sext' cum Clementin' ⁴⁵				1	
Speculum iudiciale ⁴⁶				1	

³²Gregory IX, *Decretales*.

³³Dominicus de S. Germiniano, *Commentarius in Librum sextum Decretalium*.

³⁴Nichoaus Tudeschis, *Super Libris Decretalium*.

³⁵Innocent IV, *Apparatus*.

³⁶The *Parvum volumine*, printed in Mainz in 1477, was a standard collection of legal texts. It included parts of the *Codex* and *Novellae* of Justinian, *Tractatus de pace Constantiae*, *Libri feudorum*, *Extravagentes duae Henrici VII imperatoris* and *Constitutiones Frederici imperatoris*.

³⁷William Lyndwood, *Constitutiones provinciales* or possibly John Acton (Ayton), a fourteenth-century English canonist.

³⁸Johannes de Imola.

³⁹Possibly Justinian, *Digestum infortiatum*.

⁴⁰Littleton, *Tenures*.

⁴¹William de Mandagout, *De electionibus*. Paris, 1506.

⁴²Tancred of Bologna, *Ordo iudicarius*.

⁴³Johannes Milis, *Reportorium juris*.

⁴⁴Franciscus de Zabarellis, *Commentarii in Clementinarum volumen*.

⁴⁵Boniface VIII, *Sextus libri decretalium* and Clement V, *Constitutiones*.

	1440- 1460	1461- 1480	1481- 1500	1501- 1520	1521- 1550
Statuta curie Ebor'				1	
Statuta vetera regia				1	
Statutes		1		1	
History:					
Bedis in hystoris ⁴⁷				1	
Josophi flavij ⁴⁸				1	
Liber croniculorum		1			
Liber de bello troianorum	1				
Liber de gestro Alex'	1				
<i>Policronicon</i>		(1)			1
Sege of Troy		1			
Practical texts:					
Book of fesik			1		
Booke of huntyng		1			
Booke of my fermys				1	
Liber de medicinis		1			
Liber practicarum	1			1	
Regimen sanitalis ⁴⁹				1	
Register	1	1	1		
To make glewe that no watter shall hurte it					1
Miscellaneous and unidentified:					
Bartilmewe de proprietatibus rerum ⁵⁰					1
Belton				1	
Bocas / book of bocas ⁵¹				1	
Booke with much profittable tretes					1
<i>Canterbury tales</i>		1			
Dicta philosophorum					1
English book			1		1
<i>Florarium Bartholomei</i> ⁵²	1	1			

⁴⁶William Durante, *Speculum iudiciale*.

⁴⁷Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica gentis anglorum*.

⁴⁸Possibly Flavio Biondo, *De Roma instaurata*.

⁴⁹Salerno, *Regimen salitatis*.

⁵⁰Bartholomaeus Anglicus, *De proprietatibus rerum*.

⁵¹John Lydgate, *Fall of Princes*. Pynson, 1494. STC 3175.

⁵²John of Mirfeld

	1440- 1460	1461- 1480	1481- 1500	1501- 1520	1521- 1550
French book		1	1		
Giles de Regimine Principum ⁵³		1			
Horsehede		1			
Latin book			1		
Liber beatus Richard Lescrop habuit	1				
Liber de instructione principus				1	
Liber gerochie				1	
Lyves and storis of Adam Roye Mandavell ⁵⁴					1 1
Nicholes Burdit				1	
Parvus liber cum imaginibus	1				
Petrus de remediis universorum ⁵⁵		1			
Riall ⁵⁶					1
Shephard's book ⁵⁷					1
Solempnia pharaoris	1				
Trolias ⁵⁸	1				
Unnamed book	6	5	5	1	7

⁵³Giles of Rome, *De regimine principum*.

⁵⁴John Mandeville, *Travels*.

⁵⁵Petrarch, *De remediis utriusque fortune*.

⁵⁶Caxton's translation of the *Somme le Roi*.

⁵⁷*Kalendar of Shepherds*.

⁵⁸Chaucer, *Troilus and Criseyde*.

2. Laywomen

	1440- 1460	1461- 1480	1481- 1500	1501- 1520	1521- 1550
Service Books:					
Book with placebo and dirige		1			
Missal/massbook		2	5	2	1
Portus/breviary		1	2		
Primer/book of hours	6	3	2	1	
Psalter	2	2			
Devotional and Scriptural Texts:					
Bonaventura ⁵⁹	1				
Chastisyng of goddeschildren ⁶⁰	1				
Englishe boke of our Lady and Sent Barnard				1	
Frensshe vita sanctorum	1				
Liber de certis oficiis divinis		1			
Liber de meditacione passionis domini ⁶¹		1			
Liber de misterio passionis domini		1			
Liber de oracionibus	1			1	
Liber de revelacionibus sancte Brigide		1			
Liber de vita Christi		1			
Prik of conscience ⁶²	1				
Quaternium de visitacione beate marie virginis		1			
Roulys ⁶³	1				
Vice and vertues	1				
Miscellaneous and unidentified:					
Bocas / book of bocas ⁶⁴			1		
English book			1		
French book	2				
Unnamed book			1		

⁵⁹Probably Pseudo-Bonaventure, *Meditationes Vitae Christi*.

⁶⁰*Chastising of God's Children*.

⁶¹Richard Rolle, *Meditations on the Passion*.

⁶²*Prick of Conscience*.

⁶³Richard Rolle, hermit of Hampole.

⁶⁴John Lydgate, *Fall of Princes*. Pynson, 1494. STC 3175.

3. Clergy

The large book collections of William Melton, chancellor, Edward Kellet, precentor, Martin Collins, treasurer of York Minster, and William Duffield, archdeacon of Cleveland have not been included.

	1440- 1460	1461- 1481	1481- 1500	1501- 1520	1521- 1550
Service Books:					
Antiphoner	1	2	1	1	1
Book with placebo and dirige	4	2			
Brevilogus				1	1
Coucher		1	1		
Gradual	1				1
Homylies in Englishe					1
Hymnal	1	4		1 (1)	
Journal/Diurnale	1		3	1	1
King's Book					2
Legenda sanctorum	2	5	1	4	1
Liber cum epistolis		1			
Liber cum missis de Jhesu			1		
Liber cum motetes	1				
Liber cum septem psalmis et placebo	1				
Liber de canticis	1				
Liber de septem sacramentis				2 (1)	
Liber de tractatu officii misse	1				
Liber exequiarum			1		
Manual	1	3 (2)	(1)		2
Martyrology	2				
Missal	9 (1)	10 (1)	3 (1)	6	6 (1)
Penitenciar'	1	1			
Portus / Breviary	29	27	23 (1)	24	20
Priksong book					3
Primer / Book of Hours	4	2	4	3	2
Processional	2	4	(2)	1	2
Psalter	11	5	1	2	
Pye		3	3 (1)		5
Quaternium cum festo sancte Elene	1				
Quaternium cum psalmo venite notat'	1				
Quaternam cum sequenciis totius anni	1				
Quaternium libri penitencii				1	

	1440- 1460	1461- 1481	1481- 1500	1501- 1520	1521- 1550
Quaternam pro processionibus	1				
Rationale divinorum ¹				1	3
Trentale sancti Gregory ²		1			
Troper	1	1			
Scriptural Texts:					
<i>Actus Apostolorum</i>			1		
<i>Aurora</i> ³	1				
Bernardus super cantica ⁴	1				
Bible	4 (1)	6	5	4	5
Book of the Bible					1
Crisostum ⁵					1
Epistolae Pauli glosatae					1
Four Evangelistes and genesis					1
Januensis super sacris scripture ⁶		1			
Johannis Crisostomi super Matheum ⁷	1			1	
Liber continent' dubia sacre scripture			2		
Liber de epistolis Pauli	1				
Liber de epistolis Pauli secundum athanasium ⁸				1	
Liber de evangelis	1	1			
Liber marci evangeliste glosat'	1				
Liber tractatus de bibliam	1				
Johannes Crisostomi operis imperfecti ⁹	2				
New Testament					3
Nicholas de Lyra					1

¹William Durandus, *Rationale divinorum officiorum*.

²See A.E. Hartung, ed. *A Manual of the Writings in Middle English 1050-1500*, vol. 9, pp. 3267-8; Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars* (New Haven and London, 1992), p. 293.

³Versification of the Bible by Peter of Riga.

⁴Bernard of Clairvaux.

⁵John Chrysostom.

⁶James of Voragine, *Super sacris Scripture*.

⁷John Chrysostom, *In evangelium secundum Matthaem*, or Pseudo-Chrysostom, *Opus imperfectum super Matthaem*.

⁸St Athanasius, *In epistolas Pauli*.

⁹John Chrysostom, *Opus imperfectum super Matthaem*.

	1440- 1460	1461- 1481	1481- 1500	1501- 1520	1521- 1550
Nidar de preceptis ¹⁰				1	
Notingham super evangelia ¹¹				1	
Parisien' super evangelia ¹²		1			
Petrus Johannes super Matheum	1				
Psalter, glossed	1	4	1		1
Psalterius de tractatu Ricark Hampole	1				
Psalterius glosatum de propria scriptura beati Ricardi heremite		1			
Lira super novum testamentum	1				
Lira super psalterium	1				
Lira with common glose apon the Bible					1
Magister historias ¹³			2		
Mamattractus ¹⁴				1	
Parisiensis super epistolas dominicales ¹⁵		1			
Petrus Plesaunce super Job ¹⁶		1			
Postell upon the gospels and the epistles					1
Postilla				1	2
Preceptorium de Lira ¹⁷					1
Rotulum tractatum de Biblia	1				
Tabula super Lira				1	
Ten Commaundementes of the Lawe					1
Testament					1
Saints' Lives:					
St Bridget		2			
Cathologus sanctorum				1	
<i>Legenda aurea</i> ¹⁸	1	2	1	1	1

¹⁰John Nider, *Preceptorium divine legis*.

¹¹William of Nottingham, *Questiones super evangelia*.

¹²Gulielmus III Arvernus, *Postilla super epistolas et evangelia*.

¹³Peter Comestor, *Historia scholastica*.

¹⁴Johannes Marchesinus, *Mamatrectus super Bibliam*.

¹⁵Gulielmus III Auvernus, *Postilla super epistolas et evangelia*.

¹⁶Perhaps a mistake for Peter of Blois (Blesensis), *Compendium in Job*.

¹⁷Nicholas de Lyra, *Praeceptorium divinae legis et alii tractatus*.

	1440- 1460	1461- 1481	1481- 1500	1501- 1520	1521- 1550
Liber de miraculis beate Marie virginis		2	1		
Liber de revelacione beati Matildis ¹⁹			1		
Vita sancti Cuthberti					1
Vita Saint Thome		2			
Vita sancte Katerine			1		
Devotional Books:					
Boecio de consolatione philosophie ²⁰	1				
Bonaventure	1				
Bonaventure in meditationes		1			
Collationes sanctorum patrum		1			
Compendium morale	1				
De meditacionibus					1
Destructorium viciorum				1	
<i>Dieta salutis</i> ²¹		1			
<i>Fasciculus temporum</i> ²²				1	
<i>Gratia dei</i>	1				
Hilton		1			
Horelogium ²³			1		
Hugo arra anime ²⁴					1
Hugo de sancto victorio					1
Innocentius de contemptu mundi	1				
Laudulphus de vita christi ²⁵					1
Liber cum devocionibus		1			
Liber cum meditaciones	1				
Liber cum oracionibus	1				
Liber cum speculo consciencie	1				

¹⁸James of Voragine, *Legenda aurea*.

¹⁹Mechtild of Hackeburne, *Revelations*.

²⁰Boethius, *De consolatione philosophie*.

²¹Treatise on the virtues and vices, ascribed to St Bonaventure, but more probably by William de Lavicea; Norman P. Tanner, *The Church in Late Medieval Norwich 1370-1532* (Toronto, 1984), p. 40.

²²Werner Rolewinck, *Fasciculus temporum*.

²³Possibly Henry Suso, *Orologium divine sapientiae*.

²⁴Hugo of St. Victor, *De arra anime*.

²⁵Ludolph of Saxony, *Vita Christi*.

	1440- 1460	1461- 1481	1481- 1500	1501- 1520	1521- 1550
Liber de moralibus		1			
Liber de oracione dominici et stimulus conscientie	1				
Liber de passione Christo		1			
Liber de trinitate	1				
Liber dialogorum sancti Gregory ²⁶			1		
Liber ysidori ²⁷	1				
Liber qui incipit tractatus iste continet ix partes ²⁸	1				
Meditaciones sancti Anselmi	1				
<i>Oculus moralis</i> ²⁹				1	
Omellas beati Gregory ³⁰	1	2			
Origen					1
Orologium divine sapientie ³¹	2	1			
Ricardus de Hampole		1			
Ricardus de Hampole vocatam melos ³²	1				
Sancte Augustyn warkes					2
Sainte Gregorie woorkes					1
Sancte Jerome					2
<i>Speculum beatorum</i> ³³			1		
Speculum ecclesie	1	1			
Speculum humane salvacione	1				
Spectaculum mortalium ³⁴					1
Summa fratris Bonaventure				1	
Vitae patrum in anglice	1				
Vita Jhesu / <i>Vita Christi</i> ³⁵			2	1	2

²⁶Gregory I, *Dialogi*.

²⁷St Isidore, Bishop of Seville.

²⁸Guillelmus Peraldus, *Summa de vitiis et virtutibus*.

²⁹Peter of Lacedonia, *Oculus moralis*.

³⁰Gregory I, *Homelias*.

³¹Henry Suso, *Orologium divine sapientiae*.

³²Richard Rolle, *Melos amoris*.

³³William Peraldus, *Speculum beatorum*.

³⁴Nicholas Denyse, *Speculum mortalium*.

³⁵Pseudo-Bonaventure, *Meditationes Vitae Christi* or Ludolph of Saxony, *Vita Christi*.

	1440- 1460	1461- 1481	1481- 1500	1501- 1520	1521- 1550
Vincentius de speculo historiale ³⁶		1			
xii capitula Ricardi Hampole	1				
Play Texts:					
Le Crede play	1				
Libri de ludo de Pater Noster		1			
Ludum de sancto Jacobo Apostolo	1				
Ludum oregonale Sancti Dionysis	1				
Pastoral Manuals:					
Dextra pars oculi ³⁷		1			
Liber de Pater Noster	1	2			
<i>Manipulus curatorum</i> ³⁸			2	4	3
<i>Manuel de péchés</i>	1				
<i>Pars oculi</i> ³⁹		1	2	2	
Pars pupilla			1		
<i>Pupilla oculi</i> ⁴⁰	4	7	1	1	6
<i>Regimen animarum</i>	2				
<i>Speculum christiani</i>		2	1		
Confession Aids:					
Bartholomeus de casibus ⁴¹	1				
Confessionale antonini ⁴²				1	
Liber de confessione Nider ⁴³	1		1		
Raymunda ⁴⁴					1
Thomas Chobham, <i>Summa confessorum</i>		2		2	

³⁶Vincent of Beauvais, *Speculum historiale*.

³⁷Second part of William of Pagula, *Oculi sacerdotis*.

³⁸Guy of Mount Rocher, *Manipulus curatorum*.

³⁹First part of William de Pagula, *Oculus sacerdotis*.

⁴⁰John de Burgh, *Pupilla oculi*.

⁴¹Bartholomaeus, *Summa de casibus conscientiae*.

⁴²St Antoninus, *Confessionale*.

⁴³Possibly John Nider, *Summa confessorum*.

⁴⁴Raymund de Penafort, *Summa de casibus penitentiae*.

	1440- 1460	1461- 1481	1481- 1500	1501- 1520	1521- 1550
Preaching Manuals:					
<i>Alphabetum narracionum</i> ⁴⁵	1				
Augustinus ad fratres in heremo ⁴⁶					1
Bromeyard ⁴⁷		1			
Dorme secure ⁴⁸					1
Exposiciones dominicales			1		
<i>Fasciculus morum</i>		1	1		
Festival ⁴⁹				2	2
Januensis				1	
Januensis de opere quadregesimali ⁵⁰					1
Liber de gestis romanorum ⁵¹	1				
Maudlan sermones / sermones Magdalene ⁵²		1		2	
Quatuordecim sermones					1
Rosarium theologie	1				
Sermond mater				1	
Sermones and Quinquagesmes of sancte Austayne warke ⁵³					1
<i>Sermones discipuli</i> ⁵⁴				4	3
<i>Sermones dominicales</i> ⁵⁵	1	2			1
Sermones vincentii ⁵⁶				1	1
Sermones michaelis				2	1
Sermones parati					2
Vincent ⁵⁷				1	2

⁴⁵Etienne de Besançon, *Alphabetum narracionum*.

⁴⁶Pseudo-Augustine, *Sermones ad fratres in eremo*.

⁴⁷John of Bromeyard, *Summa praedicancium*.

⁴⁸Possibly Richard Maidstone, *Sermones dormi secure*.

⁴⁹Probably John Mirk, *Festial*.

⁵⁰James of Voragine, *Sermones quadregesimales*.

⁵¹*Gesta romanorum*.

⁵²John Felton, *Sermones Mawdleyne*.

⁵³Aurelius Augustinus, *Sermones and Quinquaginta*.

⁵⁴Johannes Herolt, *Sermones discipuli*.

⁵⁵James of Voragine, *Sermones dominicales*.

⁵⁶Vincent Ferrer, *Sermones de tempore et de sanctis*.

⁵⁷Probably Vincent Ferrer, *Sermones de tempore*.

	1440- 1460	1461- 1481	1481- 1500	1501- 1520	1521- 1550
Law Texts:					
Archidiaconum in Rosario ⁵⁸	1				
Azona in summa ⁵⁹	1				
Bartholus super ff novo ⁶⁰		1			
Berengarius Cardinalis ⁶¹		1			
Clemens ⁶²					1
Conclusionibus rote ⁶³	1				
Constitutiones Othonis et Octobonis	2			1	
Constitutiones Othonis with Constitutiones Legantynes ⁶⁴					1
Constitutiones provinciales ⁶⁵				1	1
Decrees ⁶⁶					1
<i>Decretales</i> ⁶⁷		2		1	2
Dominicus de Gemminiano super Sextam			1		
Dominus Abbate super decretalibus ⁶⁸					1
Dominus Bald super Codicem ⁶⁹			1		
Innocent ⁷⁰	1	1			
<i>Institutes</i> ⁷¹					1
Johanne de Athona ⁷²	1				
Law book		1	1	1	3
Liber continent' extravaganc'					

⁵⁸Guy of Baysio, *Rosarium*.

⁵⁹Azzo, *Summa*.

⁶⁰Bartolus de Saxoferrato, *Super digestum novum*.

⁶¹Bérengar Frédol, canon lawyer.

⁶²Clement V, *Liber septimus* or *Clementinae*.

⁶³The Roman Rota was the papal court.

⁶⁴William Lyndwood, *Incipiunt opera super constitutiones provinciales et othonis*.

⁶⁵William Lyndwood, *Constitutiones provinciales ecclesie Anglicanae*.

⁶⁶Gratian, *Decretum*.

⁶⁷Gregory IX, *Decretales*.

⁶⁸Nicolaus Tudeschis, *Super decretalium*.

⁶⁹Baldus de Ubaldis.

⁷⁰Innocent IV, *Apparatus*.

⁷¹Justinian, *Institutes*.

⁷²Johannes de Atona's glosses on the constitutiones of Otto and Othobonus.

	1440- 1460	1461- 1481	1481- 1500	1501- 1520	1521- 1550
Johannis pape 22 cum gosselino ⁷³	1				
Liber decretorum		1			
Par decretorum	2				
Quinque volumina domini Abbatis ⁷⁴			1		1
Sextus decretales ⁷⁵		1			
Summa hostiensis ⁷⁶		1			
<i>Summa summarum</i> ⁷⁷		1	1		
Willelmus in Rosorio super decreta ⁷⁸		1			
Classical and Grammar:					
Brito ⁷⁹	1				
Callepyn ⁸⁰					1
<i>Catholicon</i> ⁸¹	2		1	2	4
Cato glosatus				1	
Chialides Erasmi ⁸²					1
<i>De eliganciis</i> ⁸³					1
Doctrinale ⁸⁴				2	
De ethemologiis isodori ⁸⁵					1
Grammar book	3	5	2	4	2
Hugutio of Pisa			1	1	
Liber algarismi ⁸⁶				1	
Liber de incarnatione verbis				1	
Liber vocabulorum	1				

⁷³John XXII, *Extravagantes*.

⁷⁴Nicolaus Tudeschis, *Super decretalium*.

⁷⁵Boniface, *Liber sextus*.

⁷⁶Henry of Suso, *Summa aurea*.

⁷⁷William of Pagula, *Summa summarum*.

⁷⁸Guido de Baysio, *Rosarium*.

⁷⁹William Brito, *Expositio vocabulorum Biblie*.

⁸⁰Ambrosius Calepinus, *Dictionum latinum et graecarum interpres*.

⁸¹John Balbis, *Catholicon*.

⁸²Desiderius Erasmi, *Agadiorum chilliades tres*.

⁸³Augustinus Datus, *De eliganciis*.

⁸⁴Alexander de Villa Dei, *Doctrinale*.

⁸⁵Isidore, *Etymologiae*.

⁸⁶Probably the elementary tract on arithmetic by Alexander de Villa Dei.

	1440- 1460	1461- 1481	1481- 1500	1501- 1520	1521- 1550
Magnus opus virgilia ⁸⁷					1
Medulla gramatice	1	2		2	
<i>Ortus vocabulorum</i> ⁸⁸					4
Ovidius in methemorthesios ⁸⁹				1	
Precian major ⁹⁰				1	
Sulpitius ⁹¹					1
Tullius epistles ⁹²					1
Tullius offices ⁹³					1
Virgilius in eneydos ⁹⁴				1	
Theology:					
Augustinus de mandatis				1	
Book of divinytie					1
Liber de ordinibus angelorum			1		
Pharetra		1			
Sanctus Thomas secunda secunde ⁹⁵	1			1	
Sanctus Thomas de veritatibus ⁹⁶	1	1			
Speculum peccatoris	1				
Tractatulus de articulis fidei				1	

⁸⁷Virgil.

⁸⁸*Hortus vocabulorum*, attributed to Geoffrey the Grammarian.

⁸⁹Ovid, *Metamorphoses*.

⁹⁰Priscian, *Institutionum grammaticarum libri xviii*.

⁹¹Johannes Sulpitius Verulanus, *De arte grammatica*.

⁹²Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Epistolarum*.

⁹³Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De officiis*.

⁹⁴Virgil, *Aeneid*.

⁹⁵Thomas Aquinas, *Secunda secunde*.

⁹⁶Thomas Aquinas, *De veritate*, or Hugh Ripelin of Strasbourg, *Compendium theologiae veritatis*, sometimes attributed to Aquinas.

	1440- 1460	1461- 1481	1481- 1500	1501- 1520	1521- 1550
History:					
Bede					1
Bede ecclesiastic' historie gent' Anglorum		1			
Cronica Walteri Gysburn ⁹⁷		1			
English Chronicle / Chronicle of England				2	
<i>Polychronicon</i> ⁹⁸	1	1	1	1	
Medicine:					
Rosa medicine ⁹⁹	1				
Liber de medicinis	1				
Second folio:					
'Diem dilectionis'	1				
'Karecteres'			1		
'Quam laudere'			1		
'Rome Sancti Almachy martiris'	1				
Science:					
Equinox		1			
Lapidare		1			
Magister micheles scot ¹⁰⁰			1		
Miscellaneous and Unidentified:					
Aldred ¹⁰¹					1
Astaxarus			1		
Book of ballads	2				
Breton	1				
Collacionarum				1	
Disput'					1
Egidius de regimine principum ¹⁰²	2				
English book	1	1	1	1	1
Four bookes of Lodulf					1

⁹⁷Walter of Gysburn, *Chronicle*.

⁹⁸Ranulph Higden, *Polychronicon*.

⁹⁹John of Gaddesden, *Rosa anglica practica medicine*.

¹⁰⁰Perhaps the *Phisionomia* of Michael Scot.

¹⁰¹Possibly St. Ailred of Rievaulx, *De spirituali amicitia* or *Vita St. Edwardi*.

¹⁰²Giles of Rome, *De regimine principum*.

	1440- 1460	1461- 1481	1481- 1500	1501- 1520	1521- 1550
Francisco de remedio utriusque fortune ¹⁰³	1				
Jhone Boccas in Inglishe ¹⁰⁴					1
Johannes Billett			1		
Liber Avicenni de physica prima	1				
Liber continent' logicam doctoris subtilis			1		
Liber cum problematibus aristotelis ¹⁰⁵	1				
Liber de diversis tractatibus	1				
Liber glosat'	1				
Liber logical' de exposicione veterus logice		1			
Liber cum multis tractatibus			1		
Liber de intencione bibliotice		1			
Liber de prefacion notatum cum canone	1				
Lillium misse					2
Lincoln ¹⁰⁶		1			
Lucida r'	1				
Magareta poetica				1	
Magister summarum			1		
Mandevell ¹⁰⁷	1				
Mercolphum ¹⁰⁸					1
Odonis doctoris		1			
Quire beginning 'for asmuch'			1		
Beginning 'compotus est Scientia'	1				
Reportary of bart secundi Willelmo in speculo ¹⁰⁹					1
Reportorium		1			
<i>Shephard's kalendar</i>					1
Small book	1			1	1

¹⁰³Francis Petrarch, *De remediis utriusque fortune*.

¹⁰⁴John Lydgate, *The Fall of Princes*.

¹⁰⁵Aristotle, *Problemata*.

¹⁰⁶Probably Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln.

¹⁰⁷John Mandeville, *Travels*.

¹⁰⁸Probably *The Dialogue of Soloman and Mercolphus*; see Hartung, *Manual*, vol. 3, pp. 737-8.

¹⁰⁹Maybe William Durandus, *Speculum iudiciale*.

	1440- 1460	1461- 1481	1481- 1500	1501- 1520	1521- 1550
Testamenta patriarcharum				1	
Tractatus de eccliastico metrodo	1				
Unspecified book	8	9	7	10	26
Willelmus de Constiis		1			
Ymago mundi ¹¹⁰				1	

¹¹⁰Honorius, *Imago mundi*.

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Figure 2:
 Boulogne-sur-Mer, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 93, f. 26r.
 (enlarged)



Figure 3:
 Cambridge, Trinity College, MS O.3.10, f. 52r.
 (enlarged)



Figure 4:
 York, Minster Library, MS Additional 2, f. 78r.

Actual page size: 150 x 105 mm

Original in colour

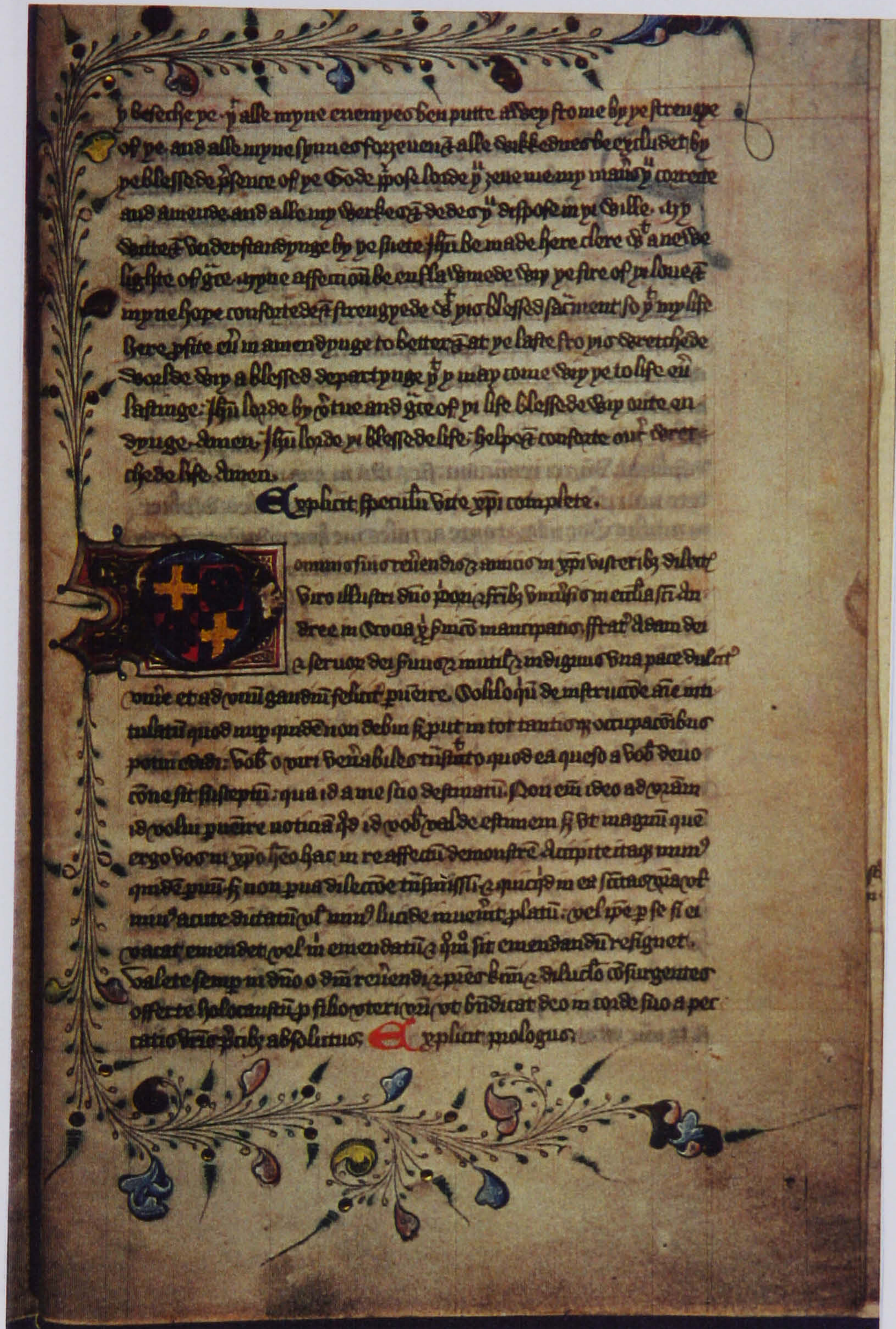


Figure 5:
Glasgow, University Library, MS General 1130, f. 142r.

(reduced)

Original in colour



Figure 6:
York, Minster Library, MS XVI.K.6, f. 7v. (reduced)

Original in colour



Figure 7:
 York, Minster Library, MS XVI.K.6, f. 83v. (reduced)

Original in colour

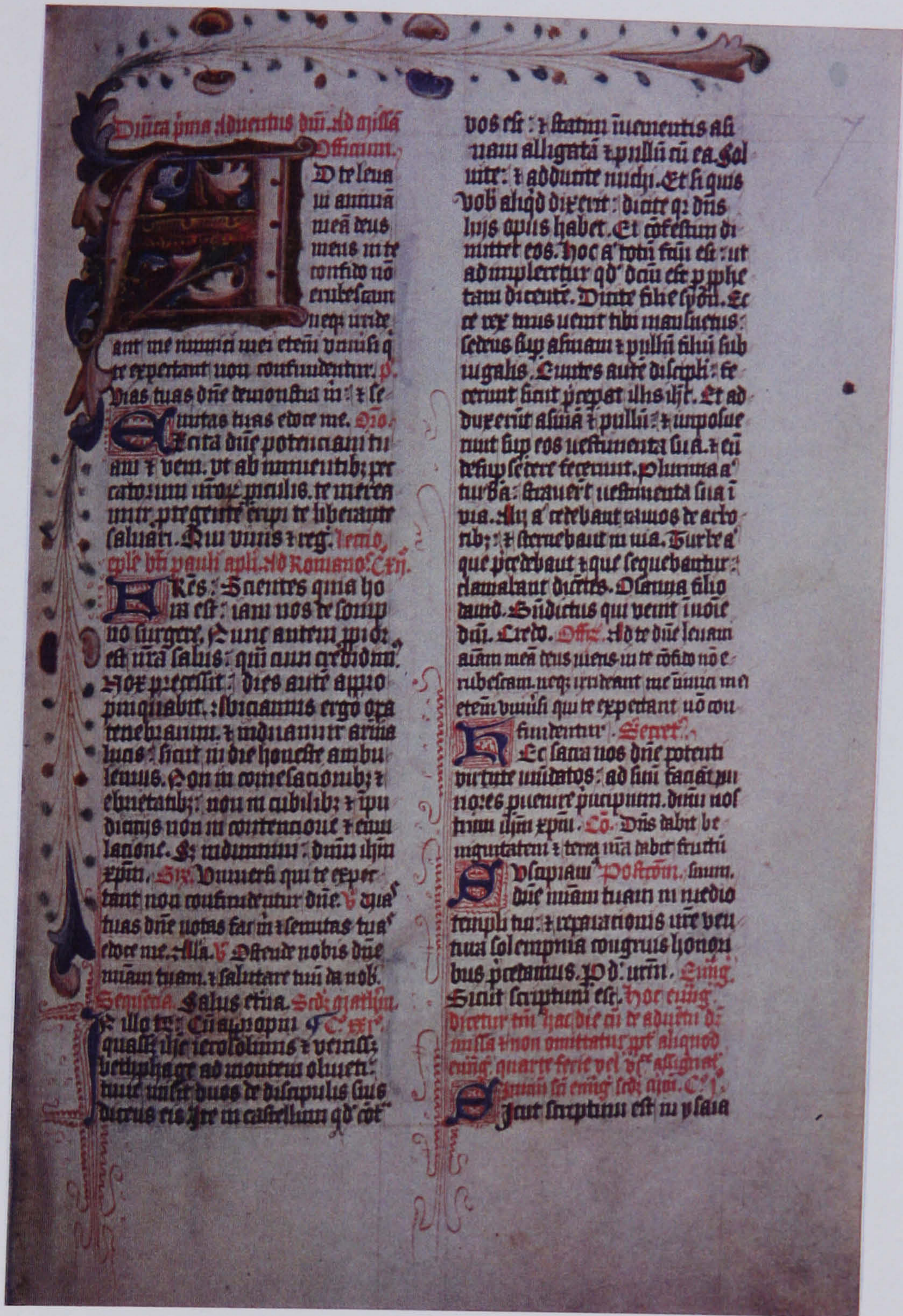


Figure 8: Oxford, University College, MS 78B, f. 7r. (reduced)

Original in colour



Figure 9:
York, Minster Library, MS Additional 30, f. 88v. (reduced)

Original in colour



Figure 10:
 Cambridge, Sidney Sussex College, MS 37, f. 26r. (reduced)

Original in colour



Figure 11: Cambridge, Sidney Sussex College, MS 33, f. 110v. (reduced)

Original in colour

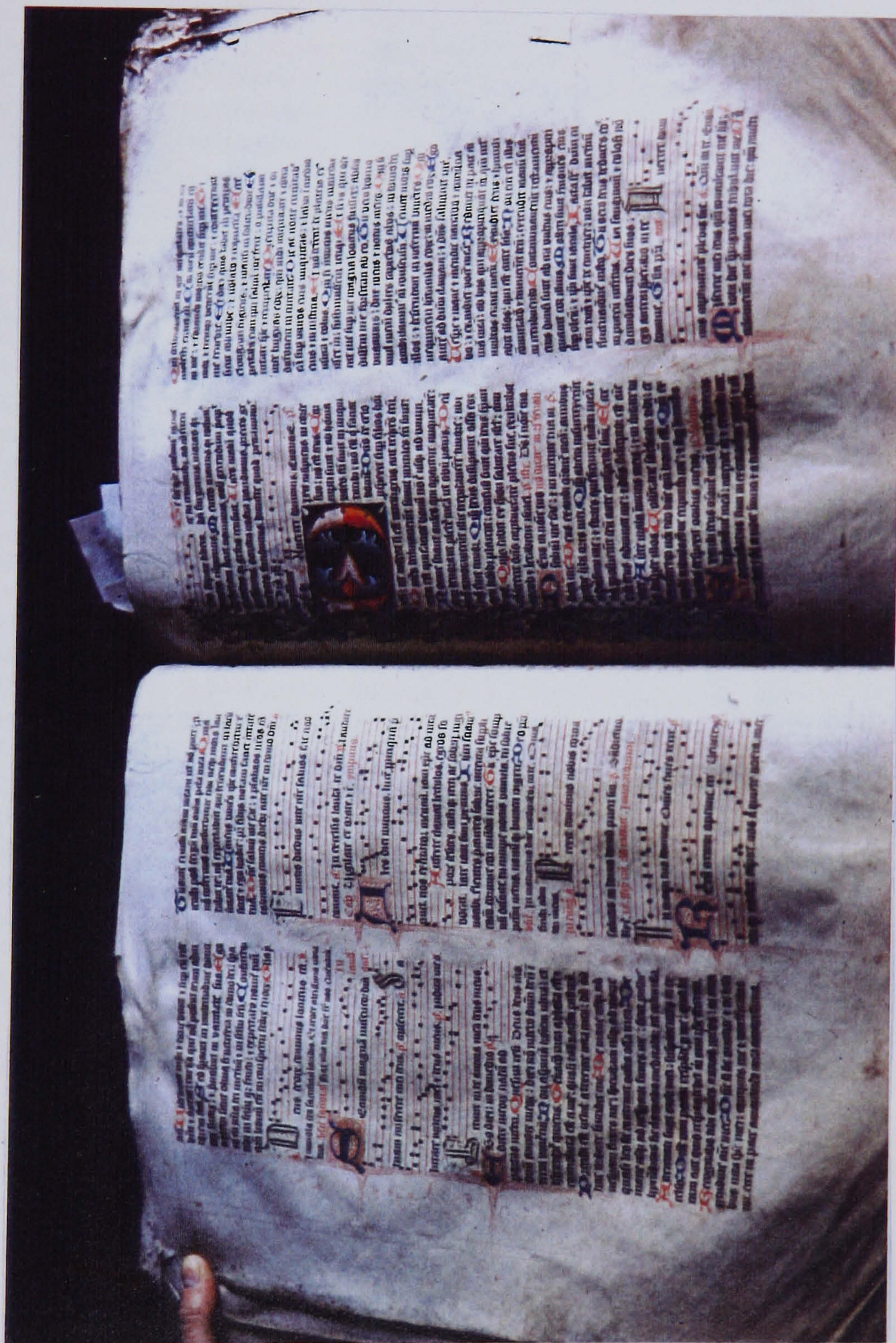


Figure 12: York, Minster Library, MS Additional 69, ff. 158v-9r. (reduced)

Original in colour



Figure 13:
Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, MS 34, f. 11r. (reduced)

Original in colour



Figure 14:
York, Minster Library, MS XVI.A.9, f. 11v. (reduced)

Original in colour



Figure 15:
London, British Library, MS Egerton 2572, ff. 50v-1r. (reduced)



Figure 16: York, City Archives, A23 (York Corpus Christi charter, 1458). (reduced)

Original in colour



Figure 17:
 London, British Library, MS Additional 50001, f. 74v.

(reduced)



Figure 19:
Cambridge, Christ's College, beam paper.

(reduced)

¶ primum:

¶ Incipit Bica siue directorium sacerdotum, ad usum Eboracen;

¶ Ianuarius.

Dominica de circūcissione dñi. festū duplex principale ad scōas vesp̄as fiet memoria cū de scōo Stephano ¶ fe. ii. de octa. s. Stephani. memoria de dñā. de scōo Johānc. & de Innocē. p̄fact. comunis. ¶ fe. iii. de oct. scōi Johā. cū me. de dñā & de in nocē. prefacio de apl̄is ¶ fe. q̄rta de oct. scōy Inno. cē. cū me. de dñā. ip̄fa. vis. vclpe de dñā nō dicunt in choro. ¶ fe. v. de vigi. ep̄i. sic regem̄ie chori nulla me/hac die. ¶ fe. vi. de festo Epipha. fe. duplex p̄cipale & nulla me. ad scōas vesp̄e d̄. me. de scōo edwardo rege s̄m̄. ¶ Sabbato de scōo Edwardo rege et cōfesso. medie scō. de ep̄i. cū me. de eadē & de dñā. Et notādū q̄ resp̄o. de die ordinati dicūt iterata. Ita q̄ Resp̄o: Reges charlis. vltio loco dicat. et R. hodie in toro. s̄m̄ in die d̄. et R. Reges charlis: octauo die dicat s̄m̄ iiii. loco ad vs̄ eodē die. añ. Ante luciferū. et cete añe super psalmos. Dixit dñs. & c. Capl̄m & c. de scōo Willō cū me. de scōo Edwardo. añ. Similabo. vlticul⁹ Justū deduxit. memo. de epipha. & de dñā. ¶ Dñica de trāslatiōe scōi willi. fe. duplex p̄cipale me. de ep̄i. & de dñā. ad scōas vesp̄as. añ. Ante lucife. .xc. Capl̄m. .xc. de scōo Willō. me. de epipha. & de dñā: ¶ fe. ii. de dñica ista. Exp̄o venit ih̄s a galilea. in euā. añ. Celi ap̄t̄l̄at. ad vesp̄. sup psalmū. maḡ. vox de celis. ¶ fe. iiii. de ep̄i. añ. sup ps̄ B⁹. & i trātes. me. de festo. triū scō. s̄m̄ ¶ fe. q̄rta. & v. de epipha. ¶ fe.

Figure 20:

Cambridge, Sidney Sussex College, Bb.5.17.

Actual page size: 190 x 120 mm

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 matices et Constructione: nouiter impressa. Eboꝝ / per
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 strete) Anno domini Millesimo quingentesimo Decimo
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Figure 22:
 London, British Library, 68.B.21.

