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DRAFT 2 (29th July 2020)

Within the mansion of Ian Doyle's mind, a spacious room was reserved for John Dygon. The interest lay in the rich evidence for Dygon as a scribe and reader in a Carthusian context.² He was born in 1384 and was at the University of Oxford at the very start of the fifteenth century, taking his BCL in 1406. His subsequent clerical career saw him based in the 1410s and 1420s in the diocese of Salisbury; he then moved east to Sible Hedingham (by then the resting place of the mortal remains of that quintessential Essex bad boy, Sir John Hawkwood), and eventually to London. He held the rectorship of St Andrew's Holborn for less than two years from September 1433: in the summer of 1435, he retired, in his early fifties, into reclusion at the Carthusian priory of 'Jesus of Bethlehem' founded by Henry V in the grounds of the royal palace of Sheen at Richmond. He died there, probably in the second half of the 1450s.³ He had made provision for the fate of some of his books — though that phrasing overstates the sense of personal ownership. Several include a note of intended bequest, written by Dygon but presenting himself as co-donor with Joanna Greenwood, stated to be the anchorite of St Botolph-without-Bishopsgate, London. In each case, the eventual beneficiary was to be an Oxford college. One volume was to go to Exeter College; it now

¹ I am grateful to the editors for the invitation to contribute to this volume dedicated to a true scholar. I would also like to thank Professors Ralph Hanna and Vincent Gillespie for their supportive readings of this chapter.

² Doyle's interests in the Carthusians informed his 1967 Lyell Lectures, which have not been printed in full. It is reflected in his contribution of editions of the extant book-lists of Carthusian houses to Vincent Gillespie ed., *Syon Abbey* [Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues, ix] (London, 2001). See A. I. Doyle, 'Publication by members of the religious orders' in Jeremy Griffiths and David Pearsall ed., *Book Production and Publishing in Britain 1375-1475* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 109-24; id., 'Book Production by the Monastic Orders in England (c. 1375-1530): assessing the evidence' in Linda Brownrigg ed., *Medieval Book Production. Assessing the Evidence* (Los Altos Hills, 1990), pp. 1-19 (with the Carthusians discussed at pp. 13-15) and id., 'English Carthusian books not yet linked with a charterhouse' in T. C. Barnard et al. ed., *A Miracle of Learning. Studies in manuscripts and Irish learning. Essays in honour of William O'Sullivan* (Aldershot, 1998), pp. 122-36. Doyle discusses Dygon explicitly in 'The European Circulation of Three Latin Spiritual Texts' in A. J. Minnis ed., *Latin and Vernacular. Studies in Late-Medieval Texts and Manuscripts* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 129-146 at pp. 130-33 and 138.

³ Dygon's career was first reconstructed by W. A. B. Coolidge, 'The Magdalen MS. of the 'Imitation', 1438', *Notes and Queries* 6th ser., iii (1881), 181-82, 202-204, 222-224; cf. A. B. Emden, *A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford*, 3 vols (Oxford, 1957-59) [hereafter *BRUO*]; further detail was provided by Hanna, 'John Dygon, Fifth Recluse of Sheen: his career, books, and acquaintance' in Stephen Kelly and John J. Thompson, *Imagining the Book* (Turnhout, 2005), pp. 127-141. On Dygon's dying after the mid-point of the 1450s, see p. ++ below.

resides a few hundred yards further north, at St John's College, where it was described in the 1990s by Ralph Hanna.⁴ The others which include directions were marked for a younger foundation, William Wayneflete's Magdalen College. In drafting the catalogue of that institution's medieval manuscripts, Prof. Hanna studied all those now in the collection which can be linked with Dygon.⁵ I have had the privilege of following in his footsteps as I prepare the catalogue for publication. What follows, then, provides, in effect, some footnotes on those manuscripts; it also attempts not so much to put them in context but to shed light on them by drawing a contrast with those of another collector.

Prof. Hanna noted twenty manuscripts as being written or having interventions by Dygon, all but two of them now in Magdalen.⁶ He also mentioned that there were others in Magdalen which had generic similarities in their annotations with those definitely by Dygon but he stopped short of attributing any of them to him, resisting, as he said, 'the temptation to find him everywhere'.⁷ My first contribution is to corroborate Hanna's good sense in this: some of those volumes have a provenance which denies the possibility that they were once in Dygon's hands and others have nothing to permit a secure association with him.⁸ I have, then, no manuscripts to add to the twenty identified; instead, I have one to subtract. It is a twelfth-century copy of Peter Lombard on the Psalter, made in Italy.⁹ Hanna attributes one layer of annotation to Dygon but, to my eyes, while they are of a similar date, they are by another

⁴ Oxford: St John's College, MS. 77; see Ralph Hanna, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Western Medieval Manuscripts of St John's College Oxford* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 100-105.

⁵ As well as the article mentioned above, see Ralph Hanna, 'Producing Magdalen College MS lat. 93', *The Yearbook of English Studies*, xxxiii (2003), pp. 142-155, reprinted in id., *Patient Reading / Reading Patience* (Liverpool, 2007), pp. 107-122, supplemented by an addendum at p. 123.

⁶ Apart from the St John's manuscript, there is BL, MS. Royal 1.B.X, noted in Hanna's addendum (see previous note). It was identified by Kathleen Scott, *Tradition and Innovation in Later Medieval English Manuscripts* (London, 2007), pp. 87-117, with Dygon discussed in detail at pp. 115-116; Hanna provides an admirably detailed discussion of Dygon's interventions in the volume at Ralph Hanna, 'Two British Library Biblical MSS: some observations', *Journal of the Early Book Society*, viii (2008), pp. 189-96.

⁷ Hanna, 'Dygon', p. 131 (n. 14).

⁸ Thus, from that list, Oxford: Magdalen College, MSS lat. 181 and 200 reached the college by a different route, having been owned by John Foxe, the martyrologist; likewise, MS. lat. 202 was formerly in the hands of Dygon's contemporary, William Worcestre, the proto-antiquary (I intend to discuss this elsewhere). MSS. lat. 173 and 179 have no annotations to confirm Dygon's ownership, and those in MS. lat. 204 are in a similar but different hand. The final volume in that 'possible' list, MS. lat. 212, is promoted in the addendum to 'Producing' to being 'certainly ... part of Dygon's relictia' on the basis of its contents: it is one volume of a sermon cycle known as the *Congesta*, which is associated with Syon Abbey and of which another part exists as MS. lat. 96. There are, in fact, few marginalia in MS. lat. 212 but more in MS. lat. 96; the content of the annotations is similar to Dygon's practice but the writing is different: less pressure is exerted by the pen on the page than is Dygon's habit, and the script is both less angular and more unsteady (perhaps by someone of advanced years?). I suggest we should stand by Hanna's earlier scepticism. On the *Congesta*, see now Seigfried Wenzel, 'The Work called *Congesta* and Fifteenth-Century English Theology', *Traditio*, lxxiii (2018), pp. 291-319.

⁹ Oxford: Magdalen College, MS. lat. 113.

hand: the aspect is thinner and more angular than that we expect to find when Dygon writes and any similarities of letter-forms are outweighed by the differences.¹⁰ In addition, and as I will explain later, the manuscript's provenance, as far as it can be reconstructed, does not fit comfortably with it being in Dygon's cell at Sheen.¹¹ The significance of this is that it is one of two manuscripts — both now at Magdalen — that have been associated not only with Dygon but also with a book-collector of a rather different stripe: Andrew Holes, notorious for having amassed during his years at the papal curia in Italy a library so large that he had to hire a ship to carry it home.¹² On the basis of these two volumes, supplemented by a tentative suggestion about a third (also at Magdalen), Hanna has posited a personal acquaintance between the two men, forged, he suggests, by time shared in Salisbury.¹³ In what follows, I am going to propose that both the codicological evidence and what we know of the two men's biographies forces us to reject this hypothesis, but that it is a felicitous error which encourages us to consider further a comparison between them.

Holes was known to Ian Doyle, who advised his Durham colleague, Margaret Harvey, when she was compiling her seminal article on him.¹⁴ She traced his career from the Wykehamist foundations of Winchester College and New College, Oxford, to his later years in the cathedral close of Salisbury (with trips to Wells where he was archdeacon), but she concentrated her attention on his mid-career, when he was in Italy.¹⁵ He was a proctor for English interests, including those of the crown, at the curia in this unsettled time when the pope, Eugenius IV, had to flee Rome and take up residence in Florence (Holes must have been in the city when, in the cathedral, Paolo Uccello's fresco of Sir John Hawkwood was unveiled). It was in Florence that he commissioned many of the manuscripts he came to own. One of the benefits of Harvey's article is that she reconstructed what we can know of Holes's

¹⁰ The annotations occur at Oxford: Magdalen College, MS. lat. 113, fol. 62^v, 133 and 168^v (the lower note: for the upper note, see n. 23 below and Fig. 1). While the squashed **g** with pointed lower bowl is similar, note the differences in **a** — with Dygon preferring a double-bowled form, and this reader the single-bowled — and the double-bowled **e**: with this scribe, the division between bowls is horizontal (created by forming a loop above the graph's broader curve), while with Dygon it is vertical (the pen forms a circle, ending at top centre and then moving vertically down to the line).

¹¹ See below p. ++.

¹² The tale is told by Vespasiano da Bisticci, *Vite*, ed. Aulo Greco, 2 vols (Florence, 1970-76), i, pp. 311-13.

¹³ Hanna, 'Dygon', pp. 137-138.

¹⁴ Margaret Harvey, 'An Englishman at the Roman Curia during the Council of Basle: Andrew Holes, his sermon of 1433 and his books', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, xlii (1991), pp. 19-38; she discusses him further in ead., 'A sermon by Andrew Holes, 29 December 1432', *Ephemerides Liturgicae*, cviii (1994), pp. 161-182. See also ead., *England, Rome and the Papacy, 1417-1464* (Manchester, 1993), pp. 13-14 and *passim*.

¹⁵ At Wells, he paid for the rebuilding of the archdeaconry: E. Buckle, 'The Old Archdeaconry, Wells', *Papers and Proceedings of the Somersetshire Archaeological and Natural History Society*, n.s., xvii ([1892 for] 1891), pp. 119-126.

book-collection, which mainly now resides, through his bequest, at his Oxford *alma mater* but with some volumes later arrivals at Magdalen; in doing this, she acknowledged the generous assistance of the doyenne of palaeographers of the Renaissance, A. C. de la Mare. Working out from those manuscripts with explicit statements of ownership by Holes, de la Mare identified his annotating script which she then discovered in other volumes and so she was able substantially to increase our knowledge of his library.

At this point, I should introduce some new information about Holes. Lurking in de la Mare's research on Holes lies a conundrum: two rather different scripts add marginalia. One is basically a secretary hand in a markedly spiky style, the other is less formal and employs a diminutive, impressionistic *manicula*. While, of course, in the later middle ages, one scribe was often capable of shifting between scripts (and we shall see an example of that later), the contrast is so significant that it encourages the hypothesis that we are seeing two hands owned by separate individuals.¹⁶ This speculation is corroborated by a brace of codices now in the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris, which share a seventeenth-century English provenance, having been owned by Richard Smith (1590-1675).¹⁷ What has not been noticed before is that both, in fact, spent their early life in England, after having been produced in Florence. Both manuscripts include works by Coluccio Salutati, the Chancellor of Florence at the turn of the Trecento to the Quattrocento, who was the mentor to the first generation of the Florentine humanists of the new century. In one of the manuscripts, a collection of Salutati's letters written in an Italian small gothic cursive bookhand (but with tall final s, thus showing some consciousness of the humanist reform of script) is followed by another recent work, composed on the other side of Italy — *De re uxoria* by the Venetian patrician, Francesco Barbaro — copied here by another hand which is a match for the spiky script seen in annotations in Holes's books. What is more, the copyist ends the volume by revealing his identity: 'Johannes Burgh'.¹⁸ This is the name of Andrew Holes's secretary, who must have followed his master to Italy fresh out of New College, Oxford, where he was admitted in

¹⁶ The example relates to Thomas Colyngburne, on whom see p. ++ below. I touch on polygraphism in David Rundle, *Renaissance Reform and Britain* (Cambridge, 2019), pp. 9-10 and 277.

¹⁷ The manuscripts are BnF, MS. lat. 8572 and 8573 (both of which are digitised, in black and white, on the Gallica website [last accessed 6th September 2019]). They appeared in the sale of *Biblioteca Smithiana* of 1682 (no. 100 and 101) and were bought by Jean-Baptiste Colbert (1619-1683), thus moving to France. For the biography of Smith (or Smyth), see Vanessa Harding in *ODNB*; for the sale, see T. A. Birrell, 'Books and Buyers in Seventeenth-Century English Auction Sales' in R. Myers et al. ed., *Under the Hammer: book auctions since the seventeenth century* (New Castle DE, 2001), pp. 51-64 at 55-58.

¹⁸ BnF, MS. lat. 8572, with the Barbaro occupying pp. 195-245 and being followed by the *Dissuasio Valerii ad Rufinum* (by Walter Map but here unattributed) in the final leaves, pp. 246-254, concluding with Burgh's name.

1432.¹⁹ It has previously been known that he acted as a courier, ferrying back and forth between England and Florence; to that, we can now add that his secretarial duties included acting as a scribe and textual corrector for Holes.²⁰

We have, then, an identification for the person responsible for one set of marginalia in Holes's books, and we can have some confidence that the other interventions — those with the diminutive *manicula* — are by their owner himself.²¹ This script is particularly active in the letters of *Salutati*, an author in whom we know Holes had an interest: he owned the unique witness the Chancellor's *magnum opus*, the *De laboribus Herculis*, until, that is, back in England, he was persuaded to make of it a gift to a higher-born book-collector, Humfrey, duke of Gloucester.²² If, furnished with this new precision we turn to those manuscripts of Holes's now in Magdalen, we can see him annotating his copies of Aquinas's *Catena aurea* and of Bartolomaeus de S. Concordio Pisanus; in the Peter Lombard which I have already mentioned, his hand does not appear but, instead, he delegated the note-making to his secretary.²³

There is another Magdalen book that appears in Margaret Harvey's discussion of Holes, and this manuscript definitely passed through Dygon's hands.²⁴ It is a composite volume, formed of two parts, with the second part made up of five booklets, with all the contents of both parts listed by Dygon at the front pastedown. The first work is Petrarch's *De vita solitaria*, copied in England in 1433 and signed by 'J.F.'. Harvey drew attention to the notes that accompany the text, taking them to be by Holes.²⁵ This was on the advice of de la Mare but that scholar's own notes show that she later recanted the view — and rightly so.²⁶ Neither the large secretary-influenced script nor the highly distinctive and artfully drawn *manicula*, with hand often drawn at right-angles to its wrist, is by Holes or by Burgh. There is no parallel for these interventions in books which we know for certain were Holes's, and,

¹⁹ J. W. Bennett, 'Andrew Holes: a neglected harbinger of the English Renaissance', *Speculum*, xix (1944), pp. 314-35 at pp. 326-327; *BRUO*.

²⁰ For one instance of his being in England (in 1441), see *Official Correspondence of Thomas Bekynton*, ed. George Williams, 2 vols (London, 1872), i, pp. 225-226.

²¹ For an example of his script, see Fig. 2.

²² For Holes's marginalia, see David Rundle, 'Andrew Holes and John Burgh: two Wykhamists, one manuscript collection', *New College Library Record*, forthcoming. The *De laboribus* is now BAV, MS. Urb. lat. 694.

²³ In MS. lat. 113, Burgh annotates at, e.g., fol. 3, 3^v, 4, 5, 5^v, 6-8, 10, 17, 28, 30^v, 34, 37 37^v, 38, 39^v, 40, 52, 52^v, 76, 119^v, 127, 132^v, 133, 138, 152^v, 168^v (top note; for the lower note, see n. 10 above and Fig. 1), 173^v, 174, 175, 178, 182^v. He also adds trefoils in the outer margin of fol. 27 and 35.

²⁴ MS. lat. 141. See Fig. 3.

²⁵ Harvey, 'Englishman', p. 34.

²⁶ De la Mare's papers are held in the Bodleian; I thank Dr Martin Kauffmann for his assistance in gaining access to them.

moreover, they were added to the margins of the Petrarch too early to be by him.²⁷ They include textual corrections in plummet which are then repeated in a bookhand, and at one point, a manicula has been overlaid by the flourishing of the initial. In other words, this reader was active around the date of the copy's completion in 1433 — a point at which Holes was on the other side of Europe in Italy.²⁸ We should, in short, reject the assumption that this book was owned by Holes.

On my submission, then, of the two codices in Magdalen which have been thought to prove a link between Holes and Dygon, one was certainly owned by Dygon but was never in Holes's library, while the other — the Peter Lombard — was certainly owned by Holes but has no definite proof of association with Dygon. I would go further and suggest that what exiguous provenance evidence the Lombard manuscript does contain excludes the possibility of it having been used by Dygon. At the top of the rear pastedown, there was once an inscription, now removed by rewashing and so only partially recoverable. It was formed of two parts: the more visible section, centred on the page, recorded a price, 'Precium xxxs'. This, in itself, militates against the passage of volume from Holes to Dygon: while the former gave away some elements of his precious collection in his lifetime (as shown by his gift to Humfrey, duke of Gloucester), there is no other sign of his putting books onto the market and his library was largely intact at his death in 1470, probably more than a decade after Dygon himself died. If, then, the sale of this book was arranged by Holes's executors, Dygon could not have been a purchaser. Furthermore, the second part of the inscription, written to the left of the price by the same hand has two lines of text, nearly completely irrecoverable, but appearing to include on the first line the word 'parochia'. It would seem, then, that this volume came to be owned by a parish, rather than an individual. It must have been one that did not chain its books, as there is no evidence of damage from a staple at the pastedowns, and this also militates against the possibility of it moving (as Dygon's books did) early to Magdalen, where manuscripts were chained.

²⁷ There may be an explanation for the confusion: in another manuscript which was owned by Holes, Oxford: Bodleian, MS. Bodl. 247, an angled manicula appears, though it is clearly by another hand from that in MS. lat. 141 (in MS. Bodl. 247, the wrist is drawn like a triangle with a double line for its base: see, e.g. fol. 64^v, 65, 159). The reader who adds these also provides some notes (e.g. fol. 62, 142^v, 165) in a script which — to complicate matters — has strong affinities with John Dygon's *anglicana*, but is not his: it is written more lightly and with some telling differences in letter-forms (e.g., the **d** is more pointed than the bulbous forms Dygon employs). These interventions may date from the first quarter of the century and precede MS. Bodl. 247's reaching Holes; he adds his manicula at, e.g., fol. 160, 185^v.

²⁸ MS. lat. 141, fol. 2 (manicula overlaid by flourishing), 11 (plummet note).

Eliminating as proof the two manuscripts discussed so far leaves the other book which with more circumspection has been proposed as possibly linking Dygon and Holes.²⁹ Magdalen's MS. lat. 182 is an interesting concoction of astrological texts bound together for the college at the end of the 1580s. It is formed of four fascicules, the first two of which were recent arrivals at the college.³⁰ The other two share sixteenth-century marginalia, demonstrating they were together by that point: the last fascicule is partly in Dygon's hand, while the one that immediately precedes it was produced in Italy, early in the fifteenth century. Ralph Hanna legitimately wondered whether Holes might have imported that fascicule to England but, as he himself says, there is no sign of his annotations in these pages, nor does Burgh appear there, and the interventions that do occur are in English scripts not seen in Holes's other manuscripts.³¹ What is more, the fascicule is patently a mere fragment, its early foliation showing that it came from a middle of the volume and even in that section is incomplete.³² This suggests that if it did reach Dygon — and there is no explicit evidence it did — there was some disruption and damage before he gained it, which speaks against it having passed directly from one collector to another.

In other words, there is no manuscript in Magdalen which can incontrovertibly reveal a personal association between Holes and Dygon that is otherwise hidden from us. The details of their professional lives do not help: the two men tread some of the same ground but not at the same time.³³ Holes went up to Oxford a couple of years after Dygon had received his BCL, and his own early career after university was in his home county of Cheshire, and further west, as archdeacon of Anglesey; his long association in Salisbury, in which diocese Dygon had been based in the 1410s and 1420s, only began with his appointment as its chancellor in 1438, while he was in Italy, and it was after his permanent return to England in 1444 — nine years into Dygon's reclusion — that he became resident there.

If this serves to emphasise the distance between the two men's biographies, it should not be taken to deny the important truths to which Hanna has alerted us. We know most about

²⁹ Hanna, 'Dygon', p. 137 (n. 27).

³⁰ They were bequeathed by an alumnus, John Bolderne (d. 1577), on whom see Joseph Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses: The Members of the University of Oxford, 1500–1714*, 4 vols. (Oxford, 1891–2), i, p. 145; William D. Macray, *A Register of the Members of Saint Mary Magdalen College, Oxford...New Series*, 8 vols (London, 1894–1915), ii, pp. 90–91.

³¹ There is a paper slip inserted between fol. 109 and 110 with a note in anglicana; another script, showing some secretary influence, appears in the other margin of fol. 116.

³² It has 21 leaves, numbered at top right in pen '48' to '83' but with a quire omitted after its '59', one leaf after '72' and two after '76'.

³³ What follows is based on the biographies provided by *BRUO*.

Dygon after his retirement to Sheen but, before that, he had been alive to a clerical culture which was learned and engaged, and, after 1435, he was by no means dead to the wider world. There are also some similarities between him and Holes. They had literary interests in common: though the latter was not a previous owner of Dygon's Petrarch, he did have an interest in that author, owning a copy of his *Libri familiarum rerum*.³⁴ Holes also showed some sympathy for Carthusian culture, leaving one of his books to their house of Witham, Somerset.³⁵ These two men — the recluse and the well-travelled — may never have collided in the same square foot but they did coincide in aspects of their cultural activities.

Having said that, it seems to me that what is most informative lies not in those similarities but in the contrasts, which can help delineate what is remarkable about each of them. Between them, they reflect something of the variety of book-collecting in fifteenth-century England. I want, in the second half of this essay, to draw attention to a couple of those contrasts before concluding by considering the place of Dygon's manuscripts in Magdalen.

Andrew Holes is witness to that English tradition of explicitly and perhaps self-consciously cosmopolitan library-making made possible through affluence. His role as ecclesiastical diplomat required that he had a secretary, whose hand could be turned to transcribing, and he also had the capacity to employ professional scribes. We know one of the latter by name, Johannes Baerts, who is presumably to be counted among the plentiful Dutch copyists at work around the curia in Italy.³⁶ For the self-projection of a cultured ecclesiastic, such foreign scribes and their products were a useful accoutrement, both in Italy and back in England. Such patrons — William Gray, who arrived at the curia about the time Holes was leaving, provides a yet grander example — did not dirty their fingers by acting as their own copyist.³⁷ John Dygon too was acquainted with professional scribes. One of those mentions his name in an aide-memoire inserted at the foot of a folio in one of Dygon's books: 'this quayer is half writt vnpay[d] aftir the copie' followed by the date and 'Thomas Colyngburne

³⁴ Now Oxford: New College, MS. 268, on which see Nicholas Mann, 'Petrarch MSS in the British Isles', *Italia Medioevale e Umanistica*, xviii (1975), pp. 139-527 (no. 246), and Harvey, 'Holes', p. 34.

³⁵ Oxford: Magdalen College, MS. lat. 191.

³⁶ He produced for Holes Oxford: Bodleian, MSS. Bodl. 339 and Rawl. G. 48, Oxford: Magdalen College, MS. lat. 191, and Oxford: New College, MSS. 201, 219, 224. On the phenomenon of northern scribes — mainly Low Countries and those, more widely, of 'the German nation' — in Italy, see Rundle, *Renaissance Reform*, pp. 92-93, 121-22 and id., «La Renaissance de la *littera antiqua*: une entreprise cosmopolite» in Denis Crouzet, Elisabeth Crouzet-Pavan, Philippe Desan and Clémence Revest ed., *L'humanisme à l'épreuve de l'Europe (XVe-XVIe siècles)* (Seyssel, 2019), pp. 91-111.

³⁷ On Gray as a collector, see R. A. B. Mynors, *Catalogue of the Manuscripts of Balliol College Oxford* (Oxford, 1963), pp. xxiv-xlv, and Rundle, *Renaissance Reform*, pp. 74, 129-30, 179-80.

seni[or]'.³⁸ This occurs in a partial copy of Thomas Docking on the Galatians written in a cursive bookhand mixing anglicana and secretary elements. Incidentally, the comparative which is the last word of that inscription has been taken as distinguishing its writer from another scribe of the same name, who employs a more uneven script with less secretary influence.³⁹ In fact, the evidence of another manuscript made for Dygon, in which the handwriting shifts between the two styles, suggests that one person is responsible for all and is, thus, symptomatic of the polygraphism prized by fifteenth-century professional scribes as a marketable skill.⁴⁰

As will be clear, Colyngburne worked for Dygon on more than one occasion but the note quoted in the previous paragraph suggests that there may have been money troubles. When a parish priest, Dygon may have had some financial resources, but most of the volumes related to him date — either definitely or probably — from after his retreat from worldly things into his cell, where whatever purchasing power he had was presumably confined to allowances permitted by his prior.⁴¹ One result of this was that (in strong contrast to Holes) Dygon often acted as his own scribe. What, however, is more striking is that, in the case of several of his manuscripts, each was patently a 'communal production'.⁴² Prof. Hanna has discussed in detail a particularly complex example, Magdalen MS. lat. 93, and it is worth reiterating his main conclusions, for they pertain beyond that one volume.⁴³ A 'Dygon manuscript' is often a composite construction, a bringing together by him of booklets which were produced independently but usually for him, sometimes with his own interventions. Turning the leaves of a codex like MS. lat. 93, one is struck by the sociability of the page: while Holes's books present the monotony of a single scribe working week after week on an extended text, Dygon's teem with the signs of many hands, some closer to being competent than others.⁴⁴ In MS. lat. 93, about a dozen scripts can be identified. Dygon's collaborators

³⁸ Oxford: Magdalen College, MS. lat. 154, fol. 18.

³⁹ Oxford: Merton College, MS. 153, fol. 122-181. See Hanna, 'Dygon', p. 137 (n. 25).

⁴⁰ Oxford: Magdalen College, MS. lat. 145, which is unsigned. Colyngburne also wrote for Dygon and signed Oxford: Magdalen College, MS. lat. 188, fol. 1-8. An implication is that the scribe's activities probably moved between London, where Hanna, 'Dygon', p. 138 with reason places him, and Oxford, where the manuscript now in Merton was definitely produced.

⁴¹ BL, MS. Royal 1.B.X stands out among Dygon's books for being rich in illumination in its fifteenth-century section. I would hazard that this was work undertaken for him (and not by him) before he became a recluse.

⁴² The phrase is Hanna's, 'Producing', p. 153.

⁴³ Hanna, 'Producing'. On the sermons in this volume, see also Siegfried Wenzel, *Latin Sermon Collections from Later Medieval England* (Cambridge, 2005), pp. 100-115.

⁴⁴ We know how long it took one of Holes's scribes to copy one of the manuscripts for him since MS. lat. 136 includes dated colophons reflecting the progress of transcription: it took at most eighty days to copy 150 large folios (written space: 261 × 174mm, with central reservation of 24mm).

fall into three groups: those — a small minority — who worked with him on more than one manuscript; others — the most numerous — who had their own writing stints and were perhaps working independently, and, finally, those who appear on the very same page as Dygon himself and so would seem to have been sitting beside the recluse as they shared the pen.

None of these amanuenses has been identified. Some were presumably visitors to his cell; others were perhaps located nearby and were enlisted in the task of helping a recluse by transcribing edifying texts. This raises a further question. Given that Dygon explicitly connected some of his books to a fellow recluse, Joanna Greenwood, and given the interest shown by some of these books in female spirituality (Catherine of Siena, Bridget of Sweden), can we with any certainty deny the possibility that one or more of the helping hands belonged to a woman?⁴⁵ Perhaps not Greenwood herself, given the physical distance of eleven miles, but are we to say that none among the sisters of Syon could have assisted? It has proven notoriously difficult to reconstruct the literacy of that community, and it is likely that, in an even higher proportion than among their male equivalents at that double foundation, some could neither read nor write while some only read, without writing.⁴⁶ Moreover, if, from among those who had both of the fundamental elements of literacy, there was a nun collaborating with Dygon, it would not be immediately obvious on the page: there was no equivalent here of so-called ‘nuns’ Beneventan’ in Naples.⁴⁷ There are, in other words, no scripts in these manuscripts which could be gender-stereotyped. The identification of a female presence is certainly difficult but — I am proposing — it would be worth scholars

⁴⁵ Letters relating to Catherine of Siena appear at Oxford: Magdalen College, MS. lat. 141, fol. 39-42, while, for Bridget’s *Revelation*, see Oxford: Magdalen College, MS. lat. 77.

⁴⁶ Doyle, ‘Book Production’, p. 15, noted the absence of evidence for female scribes even among the Carthusians and the Birgittines. Good work has more recently been done on Syon: see Virginia Bainbridge, ‘Syon Abbey: Women and Learning c. 1415-1600’ in E. A. Jones and Alexandra Walsham ed., *Syon Abbey and its Books. Reading, Writing and Religion, c. 1400-1700* (Woodbridge, 2010), pp. 82-103, Christopher de Hamel, *Syon Abbey. The Library of the Bridgettine Nuns and their Peregrinations after the Reformation* (Otley, 1991) and Veronica M. O’Mara, ‘Scribal Engagement and the Late Medieval English Nun: The Quest Concludes?’ in Virginia Blanton ed., *Nuns’ Literacies in Medieval Europe: The Antwerp Dialogue* (Turnhout, 2018), pp. 187-208, which expresses shrewd caution and introduces an example from the second quarter of the sixteenth century, on which she expands in Veronica M. O’Mara, ‘A Syon Scribe Revealed by Her Signature: Mary Nevel and Her Manuscripts’ in Elin Andersson et al. ed., *Continuity and Change: Papers from the Birgitta Conference at Dartington 2015* (Stockholm, 2017), pp. 283-308. For the sisters’ library at Syon, see Ann Hutchison, ‘What the Nuns Read: Literary Evidence from the English Bridgettine House, Syon Abbey’, *Mediaeval Studies*, lvii (1995), pp. 205-222.

⁴⁷ Virginia Brown, ‘The Survival of Beneventan Script’ in ead., *Terra Sancti Benedicti. Studies in the palaeography, history and liturgy of medieval Southern Italy* (Rome, 2005), pp. 149-274.

looking at the ‘Dygon’ books with fresh eyes and as potential evidence for engagement in the copying enterprise by women as well as men.

There is a further implication of the contrast between Holes and Dygon. As the case of Colyngburne suggests, the latter’s ability to commission work may have been affected by what we might euphemistically call cash-flow issues. Indeed, soon after having recorded he had not been paid, Colyngburne appears to have upped tools: the manuscript in which he makes the note has only 30 leaves, breaking off in the middle of the second column of a recto, and omitting the final third of Docking’s commentary on Galatians.⁴⁸ This, though, is by no means the only occasion on which a text is incomplete, and not all the absences are to be explained by Dygon being a bad debtor. Perhaps, in a few cases, the rarity of the text mattered more to Dygon than its imperfect ending, as with the unique copy of Robert Grosseteste on the Galatians which came into his possession.⁴⁹ Yet, given how well-connected Sheen was, lack of appropriate prototype was not often going to be the cause. For some manuscripts, we cannot entirely exclude the possibility that some have suffered losses after leaving Dygon’s hands (and we will see in a moment when that might have happened). This might be our assumption when his copy of *Somme le Roi* ends abruptly, with a catchword at the final verso.⁵⁰ Other volumes, however, show we cannot often employ that explanation. For example, a collection of sermons, for which Colyngburne is also responsible, similarly breaks off *in medias res*, with a catchword telling us how the next quire should have started. Dygon’s title for the manuscript — ‘Sermones seu Omelie in Euangelijs super festis Sanctorum incompleti uel incomplete’ — shows that it was already imperfect when he had it, which was early in the book’s existence, as his annotations were added before it was illuminated.⁵¹ Likewise, while it is unsurprising that Dygon had a copy of the *Revelations* of Bridget of Sweden, given that there were exemplars available nearby at Syon, what is more notable is that it ends halfway through Book II, also with a catchword for the following quire.⁵² Once again, Dygon’s inscription is at the front and opens by describing the codex as a ‘librum incompletum’.

⁴⁸ Oxford: Magdalen College, MS. lat. 154, with the last verse glossed being Galatians 4:12.

⁴⁹ Oxford: Magdalen College, MS. lat. 57, fascicule I.

⁵⁰ Oxford: Magdalen College, MS. lat. 188.

⁵¹ Oxford: Magdalen College, MS. lat. 156; Dygon’s title is at fol. ii; at fol. 5, the spray of the initial is painted over Dygon’s paraph.

⁵² The copy is Oxford: Magdalen College, MS. lat. 77. The Medieval Libraries of Great Britain website, MLGB3, lists as extant copies of the *Revelations* from Syon BL, MS. Harl. 612 (scribe: Thomas Colyngburne) and Oxford: Bodleian, MS. Bodl. 169; the Harleian manuscript provides fourteen books over its 302 folios (the first seven, which are often considered Bridget’s *Revelations* ‘proper’, occupy fol. 1-104^{ra}), in a format nearly

How are we to read that adjective, ‘incompletum’? Is it apologetic? If so, Dygon had many occasions to feel sorry, for it is striking that, among his books, the incomplete are in the majority.⁵³ Even in the manuscript on which he must have lavished most expense, the richly decorated copy of Peter of Poitiers on Christ’s genealogy appended to an earlier Paris-style Bible, some sections of some pages are left blank.⁵⁴ Furthermore, when he acts as his own copyist, the transcription is sometimes abandoned in the middle of a project, as happened with the set of sermons which open MS. lat. 93.⁵⁵ Perhaps, like many of us, he was better at beginning than at finishing. He must have become so used to having something less than the full text that it became his normality (and so contrasts markedly with Holes’s experiences). In these circumstances, his reaction may have gone beyond simple resignation and reached the point where he could imagine that some spiritual efficacy resided in this incompleteness. Janet Backhouse once famously mused whether the minor lapses in some of the illumination of the Lindisfarne Gospels were an expression of humility by Eadfrith.⁵⁶ Dygon was certainly no Eadfrith, and there is little subtlety in the flaws to his manuscripts: these are not perfectly imperfect. Nonetheless, the humility of the recluse, who was attempting to look beyond the words in front of him to see The Word (which is God), may have encouraged the reflection that his books were an honest expression of our imperfect knowledge.

This leaves us, however, with another quandary: what inspired Dygon to donate flawed manuscripts to an Oxford college? For, among the five which record the intentions of himself and his fellow recluse, Joanna Greenwood, four of them are fragmentary.⁵⁷ The exception, in fact, is the book given to Exeter College, which also stands alone in being a direct donation, in contrast to the others where the college, Magdalen, had only a reversionary interest.⁵⁸ In the incomplete copy of Bridget’s *Revelations* Dygon stated that it should be passed to his successor as recluse and, if there was not one, then be redirected to

double the size of the Magdalen book, which has 77 leaves. For other copies, now lost, see Gillespie, *Syon Abbey*, SS1.798-800.

⁵³ This does not include those occasions when the imperfect nature of a transcription may reflect a fault with the exemplar. See, for instance, Oxford: St John’s College, MS. 77, fol. 88-91, on which Hanna, *St John’s*, p. 103, citing Benedict Hackett et al., ‘William Flete’s “De Remediis contra Temptaciones” in its Latin and English Recensions: The Growth of a Text’, *Mediaeval Studies*, xxvi (1964), pp. 210-230.

⁵⁴ BL, MS. Royal 1.B.X.

⁵⁵ Cf. the sermons which he copies in MS. lat. 60 which break off *in medias res*.

⁵⁶ Janet Backhouse, *The Lindisfarne Gospels* (Oxford, 1981), p. 55.

⁵⁷ Three of them announce their incomplete status — Oxford: Magdalen College, MSS lat. 77, 154 (where the inscription notes it as ‘librum incompletum’), 156 — while another, Oxford: Magdalen College, MS. lat. 177, lacks perhaps only one leaf at its end.

⁵⁸ Oxford: St John’s College, MS. 77.

Magdalen.⁵⁹ This serves to remind us of another curiosity: there is no evidence that he planned to leave any of his books to the main library of the Charterhouse.⁶⁰ There is later evidence for the ‘reclitorium’ having its own book-collection but, patently, Dygon’s manuscript was not part of that for long.⁶¹ The inscriptions in the other three books envisaged them moving quickly away from Sheen: Joanna’s son, Thomas, was to have lifetime use of each of them, after which they should be sent to Magdalen. In one of those volumes, however, Thomas’s name is erased, and that has led Hanna to surmise that Thomas predeceased his mother and Dygon.

Let me rephrase the earlier question and make it more specific: why did Dygon select Magdalen as the eventual permanent home of these manuscripts? It is not clear how Dygon became aware of Waynflete’s Oxford plans, though the phrasing of his donation notes mentioning ‘aula vel collegium’ suggests he was informed of the shift from the bishop’s original idea of a Hall, south of High Street, on the city side of the Eastgate, to a college that would sit just beyond the city walls.⁶² It is on this basis, that Hanna wisely dates these notes to the mid-1450s, when that change of scheme took shape. The two men shared an interest in the university which educated them both, but not at the same time, as Dygon was Waynflete’s senior by about a decade. There could, instead, have been contact at Sheen, since it is likely that Waynflete visited the royal palace while he was provost of Eton College, and we know that he was there at least once when he was a bishop, in 1452.⁶³ We do not need to imagine that Waynflete himself called upon the recluse’s cell, but one of his entourage may have informed Dygon of the developing scheme for a new educational foundation.

Perhaps Dygon was attracted to Magdalen by hearing that its purpose included rooting out heresy (whatever Wycliffite tinge has been detected in some of the sermons he owned).⁶⁴

⁵⁹ Oxford: Magdalen College, MS. lat. 77, front pastedown.

⁶⁰ The one Dygon manuscript for which we do not have a late-fifteenth-century location — and so we cannot entirely rule out the possibility that it stayed at Sheen — is BL, MS. Royal 1.B.X. Hanna, ‘Two BL Biblical MSS’, p. 192, hypothesises that it too went to Magdalen and then left through the agency of an alumnus, John Theyer (1597-1673). However, as this manuscript was not listed by Thomas James’s *Ecloga* (London, 1600), it is more likely that it never reached the college and so its travels remain unclear.

⁶¹ The manuscript given to the reclusory is now BL, MS. Harl. 3820; it is a pocket volume of texts for meditation mainly by Augustine and Bernard. It was given to the reclusory by Hugh France, who became a fellow of Queen’s College, Oxford in 1462 and who later donated incunables to that college: *BRUO*, pp. 722-23. The manuscript’s only annotations appear at fol. 102-104 and there is no overlap with Dygon’s marginalia; it presumably arrived after he had died.

⁶² L. W. B. Brockliss ed., *Magdalen College. A History* (Oxford, 2008), pp. 1-10.

⁶³ Virginia Davis, *William Waynflete Bishop and Educationalist* (Woodbridge, 1993), pp. 38, 161.

⁶⁴ That the purpose of Magdalen was the ‘extirpatio heresium’ was stated in the royal patent for the college’s foundation: *Statutes of the Colleges of Oxford*, 2 vols (Oxford, 1853), ii, part 1, p. v. For the detection of Lollard

Perhaps what weighed more with him was that the energy and authority Waynflete brought to his role as founder allowed the impression that this would be a lasting and thriving institution where, through the gifts he and Greenwood made, their names would be among the first of the benefactors to be remembered. Indeed, Dygon's inscriptions stated explicitly that the purpose of donation was that both recluses should be included in the fellows' prayers.⁶⁵ For them, in other words, the status of the texts they donated was not a primary concern: it was the act of passing over ownership of the volumes — rather than whether or not they supplied complete texts — that placed the onus on the college fellowship to assist their passage through purgatory.⁶⁶

Our quandary, then, should be considered from the other side of the transaction: why would a founder like William Waynflete have accepted them for his new library? If there was an attraction in the idea that his college could bear witness to the spiritual vibrancy elsewhere in Lancastrian England, that may have lost some of its sheen (so to speak) when he realised the four books designated for his book-presses were all fragmentary. For sure, they were not the only ones that reached Magdalen; another fourteen followed the same route. Among those was the *Somme le Roi* mentioned above, which is bound with a quire from an Anglo-Norman/English vocabulary — both vernacular texts not of immediately obvious relevance to either the curriculum or the pastimes of this learnedly Latinate community.⁶⁷ The sermon collections, including the macaronic ones, could have been of greater edification for those fellows thinking of their expected pastoral duties, though at least one later member of the college did not respond positively: at the front of one of those collections, an italic-influenced script of the turn of the sixteenth to the seventeenth century exclaims 'dii magni horribilem & gravem libellum', where *gravis* is clearly intended in its pejorative sense.⁶⁸

However horrible these books were, however mismatched to the educational intentions of the foundation, there is some evidence that money was spent upon them soon after their arrival. Most of Dygon's books were rebound in the early seventeenth century but

sympathies in some of the texts, see Wenzel, *Latin Sermon Collections*, pp. 108-109; on at least one occasion, Dygon adds a marginal note reading 'nota contra Lollardos' (Oxford: Magdalen College, MS. lat. 177, fol. 33).

⁶⁵ E.g. Oxford: Magdalen College, MS. lat. 177, fol. iii: the book is given to Magdalen 'ad vsum studencium et predicantium sociorum eiusdem loci vt ipsi orent pro animabus predictorum Iohannis et Iohanne vt ad gaudia perueniant eterna'.

⁶⁶ For prayers to benefactors, see *Statutes*, ii, part 1, pp. 52-55.

⁶⁷ Oxford: Magdalen College, MS. lat. 188.

⁶⁸ Oxford: Magdalen College, MS. lat. 60, fol. i^v; the combination of adjectives may be a conscious echo of Cicero, *Pro Sestio*, xxiv.

four are in their medieval bindings.⁶⁹ One may have been commissioned while Dygon was alive, as its stamps are associated with the so-called ‘Sheen Binder’.⁷⁰ Three others are in fifteenth-century alum-tawed bindings.⁷¹ By their nature, they lack the potentially revelatory information which blind-stamped tools provide, but they do share some characteristics, including the gentle bevelling of the boards, and the double thickness of cord for the bands. The similarities suggest that they were bound in the same workshop; what is more, there are other bindings in the Magdalen collection which provide close parallels.⁷² In other words, it is likely that they were all bound for the college as part of a larger campaign. We might be able to narrow down their date further.

On 20th September 1481, Waynflete visited his Oxford foundation, bringing with him ‘diuersos libros quam plurimos pro noua libraria octingentos aut circiter preter libros prius ibidem repertos datos et legatos ex diuersis benefactoribus’.⁷³ The figure of 800 is astounding, even during these first decades of print: it would be nearly equivalent to the stock of the University Library at its height and surely dwarf any other college collection in the city. Such an outsize addition to Magdalen’s existing library might well have given impetus to a campaign of binding. This explains the group of covers in a similar style, one which was old-fashioned by this date but which would have had the advantage of being cheaper than having them all adorned with blind-stamped leather.⁷⁴ These were probably not replacement bindings — as the presence of one ‘Sheen Binder’ book suggests, those already in wooden boards retained them — and, instead, were imposed only on those manuscripts which came either unprotected or in loose covers. An example of the latter is the sermon collection which Hanna has discussed in detail because of its codicological complexities: its parts were

⁶⁹ Most were rebound, in reversed calf with a centrepiece, in a campaign of the second quarter of the seventeenth century, but one, MS. lat. 177, is in a slightly earlier blind-stamped binding by the Oxford binder, Roger Barnes.

⁷⁰ Oxford: Magdalen College, MS. lat. 145 (given the style of binding, this must have been, at the earliest, in his last years).

⁷¹ They are Oxford: Magdalen College, MSS lat. 93, 156, 188. For advice on the bindings, I thank Magdalen’s former Fellow Librarian, Daryl Green.

⁷² See n. ++ below. Fuller discussion of the variety of tawed bindings now in the college will appear in the catalogue of Magdalen’s manuscripts.

⁷³ Oxford: Magdalen College Archives, EL/1 (Ledger A), fol. 7^v.

⁷⁴ There is evidence for at least one non-Dygon manuscript reaching the college as part of that gift. Oxford: Magdalen College, MS. lat. 12 (written by Simon Aylward in 1456), which is in a tawed binding, has a note at its front flyleaf, ‘Winton. Episcopi’, strongly suggesting it reached the collection from Waynflete. I recognise that my claim may require us to revise our understanding of the decline of that style of binding in England, which is often said to have occurred at the middle of the century: Graham Pollard, ‘The Names of Some English Fifteenth-Century Binders’, *The Library*, 5th ser., xxv (1970), pp. 193-218 at pp. 197-98, and David Pearson, *English Bookbinding Styles 1450-1800* (London, 2005), p. 17. It is, of course, plausible that the books were bound for Waynflete before donation but, if he had arranged the bindings as the various collections reached him over a period of time, one would expect more variation than is seen.

brought together by Dygon within a parchment wrapper which is still retained within the tawed binding that was later provided for it.

In at least one case a binding was supplied for gatherings that had probably before been unprotected: the Anglo-Norman / English vocabulary and *Somme le Roi* in which both parts are imperfect, ending with a catchword for the following quire.⁷⁵ It is clear that the spine was made to the width of the existing quantity of leaves — that, therefore, the losses had occurred before binding. Those absences may be another reflection of Dygon's willingness to countenance the imperfect but, in this instance, the level of incompleteness is so significant it might be better to take it as evidence that there had been disruption to the contents. We can place this example alongside the astrological fascicule (or fascicules) that came from Dygon — they seemed so anomalous or exiguous to their new Oxford owners that they did not bother with binding them, an oversight only remedied at the end of the following century.⁷⁶ The implication, in other words, is that Dygon's books for the most part arrived loose and disordered. The scenario I envisage is that agents of the founder turned up at Sheen on the understanding that there were books intended for the college. In taking them, they ignored Dygon's injunctions for an intermediary stage — perhaps, even, the erasing of the name of Joanna Greenwood's son on one occasion was their work — and expanded their brief by sweeping up what else they could of the fifth recluse's papers that lay there in a sorry state. The priory did not resist because the monks and, more specifically, whoever then inhabited Dygon's cell, either considered them surplus to requirements or was sensible to the power of the bishop of Winchester. The acquisitiveness this implies on the part of Waynflete would not be uncharacteristic: it has a parallel in his dealings with the legacy of John Fastolf, which (in lands as well as books) he had partially re-directed to his new college.⁷⁷

This reconstruction would also help explain the notably high figure of 800: it may count separately unbound parts which were only subsequently brought together into bound volumes, so, for instance, the *Somme le Roi* and the vocabulary now with it may have been considered two items. The description of Waynflete's visit implies pride at this substantial (we might say inflated) figure, intended to inspire library-envy at the more established institutions of the university town. Balliol had very recently had its collection expanded by the bequests of William Gray, bishop of Ely and his archdeacon, Richard Bole, but, judging

⁷⁵ Oxford: Magdalen College, MS. lat. 188.

⁷⁶ Oxford: Magdalen College, MS. lat. 182.

⁷⁷ On that, see Colin Richmond, *The Paston Family in the Fifteenth Century: Fastolf's Will* (Cambridge, 1996); Brockliss, *Magdalen*, pp. 14-16. Note also Hanna's comment on Waynflete's 'canniness': 'Dygon', p. 131.

from the surviving manuscripts, these gifts, combined together, reached a little over two hundred volumes.⁷⁸ New College could boast of a library of 466 items, and that was before the books of Andrew Holes arrived, but that group constituted a little more than a score of manuscripts.⁷⁹ Waynflete's largesse dwarfed the generosity of a generation of benefactors to their *almae matres*, even if its extent was exaggerated by a certain legerdemain.

Mention of Holes returns us to the contrast that has run through this article. He and Dygon can stand as a diptych, displaying two types of engagement with book production. On the one hand, there is Holes, too posh to push a pen himself, who employed an international range of scribes, including his secretary, John Burgh. On the other, there is Dygon who also turned to professional copyists but more often was engaged with others in a less hierarchical relationship of co-producers: there is a sociability of the page that is paradoxical for a recluse. I have mooted that we should consider whether that engagement went beyond the male-dominated culture in which both men were immersed, and whether it included the existence of women not just as textual objects but as scribal partners. The presence of Joanna Greenwood in my title stands witness to female agency, though she herself was probably not one of Dygon's collaborators in copying. That we know so little of her, beyond her name and status as widow, mother and recluse, is typical of our own imperfect knowledge.

I finish writing this in mid-September 2019 in a woefully fractured country (Ian Doyle has been spared the worst of it), where there is too easy recourse to a dichotomy of élite versus popular. What I have just said of Dygon and Holes might seem to echo such a division but, on the contrary, just as the present political fault-lines were created by factions within the well-educated and well-heeled, both men were in that small minority of fifteenth-century England who were highly learned. They may never have met but Ralph Hanna speaks a deeper truth in sensing the similarities between them. Their mental horizons differed but, for both of them, it stretched well beyond England's shores. Dygon's retirement was into a fashionable culture of spirituality defined by contacts across the North Sea; Holes's career looked to the Mediterranean and the reasserted epicentre of Western Christendom, where he indulged in intellectual fashions of another kind. Of the two, the recluse is more obviously other-worldly but both could envisage other worlds beyond their local quotidian here-and-now.

⁷⁸ Mynors, *Balliol*, pp. xxiv-xlix; R. Thomson ed., *University and College Libraries of Oxford* [Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues, xvi], 2 vols (London, 2015), i, pp. 435-437.

⁷⁹ Thomson, *Oxford*, UO70.

Captions for images

Fig. 1: Magd, MS. lat. 113, fol. 168^v – Peter Lombard on the Psalms (Italy, s. xii^{3/4}) – note near top by John Burgh; lower note has been attributed to John Dygon but that identification has to be rejected. Reproduced with kind permission of the President and Fellows of Magdalen College, Oxford.

Fig. 2: MS. lat. 135, fol. 35 – Aquinas, comm. on New Testament, I (Italy, Florence, 1439 x 1440) – note in outer margin by Andrew Holes (correcting name of authority from Augustine to ‘Jeronimus’). Reproduced with kind permission of the President and Fellows of Magdalen College, Oxford.

Fig. 3: MS. lat. 141, fol. 9 – two fascicules: Petrarch, *De vita solitaria* (England, ?London, 1433); works on the solitary life (England, ?Sheen, s. xv^{2/4}) – manicae in the inner and outer margins by John Dygon; the angled manica in the central reservation and ‘Nota hic’ in the outer margin by a reader writing before the illumination was added. Reproduced with kind permission of the President and Fellows of Magdalen College, Oxford.