The Readers of the *Manuel des péchés* Revisited

**Krista A. Murchison**

In her book-length study of William of Waddington’s *Manuel des péchés* (Dean no. 635), Ulrike Schemmann laments that the Anglo-Norman guide for penitents “has not yet found the interest it deserves.” Despite her contribution and several others on the subject, the situation remains largely unchanged. The text is in many ways an important one for understanding vernacular theological literature of the late medieval period. Written sometime between 1250 and 1260, it is one of the earliest of the comprehensive devotional guides that became increasingly popular in the second half of the thirteenth century. It survives in twenty-eight medieval copies and fragments, and sparked three independent adaptations into English, including *Handlyng Synne*, which itself survives in nine copies. Extracts of it were translated into Latin and Icelandic. Given this popularity, it stands as a valuable witness to late medieval literary tastes.

My present purpose is to take up one question that has become central to studies of the *Manuel des péchés* and of late medieval vernacular pastoral texts more generally: who read it? I will answer this question as best as possible given the available evidence by surveying all available catalogue information for copies of the text. As we shall see, discussions of the audiences of the *Manuel* generally focus on the number of copies owned by the clergy, but this has obscured the significant number owned by the laity. The question of who read the text is important, because the *Manuel* was written on the cusp of an emerging wave of texts concerned with penitents. This development was described perhaps most famously by Leonard Boyle in several groundbreaking studies of medieval *pastoralia*—a “very wide term indeed” in Boyle’s estimation that “embraces any and every manual, aid or technique, from an episcopal directive to a mnemonic of the seven deadly sins, that would allow a priest the better to understand his office, to instruct his people, and to administer the sacraments, or, indeed, would in turn enable his people the readier to respond to his efforts in their behalf and to deepen their faith and practice.”
According to Boyle, “the first wave of manuals of confession—that up to about the year 1260—is largely concerned with educating priests,” while “the second wave of penitential pastoralia,” “that around or about 1260—has a broader basis and is more directly concerned with the penitent as such and with the education of the penitent.” Given the relatively early date of the Manuel des péchés, it is an important witness to this emerging emphasis on educating the penitent. Indeed, Rob Lutton calls it “one of the earliest” of the vernacular works on confession produced in wake of the Fourth Lateran Council.6

To date, most discussions of the text’s audiences—both intended and actual—have focused on the clergy. In an early discussion of its intended audience, Charlton Laird supposed that, “our author did not expect penitents to use the Manuel as a reference work,” and suggested that it was instead intended for preachers. He argued that clerical readers were also part of its actual audience: “The manuscripts leave us in no doubt that the Manuel became popular as a reference book for preachers.” Matthew Sullivan examined the issue of audience at length in his dissertation on the text and in a subsequent series of articles. Like Laird, Sullivan argued emphatically that the Manuel was intended for the clergy. Although the Manuel’s prologue contains several lines explicitly addressing a lay audience, Sullivan suggested that these were later additions that had no bearing on William’s original. Sullivan also held that clerical readers were the text’s actual audience. He based this claim on an examination of about half of the surviving copies and fragments.8

In a more recent study, Schemmann examined the text’s intended audience. She offered a correction to Sullivan’s approach to the text by showing that Waddington intended it for lay audiences in addition to, and, perhaps, before, religious ones. Among the evidence she provided was a refutation of Sullivan’s theory of textual corruption. Yet although she questioned Sullivan’s view of the intended audience of the text, she nevertheless supported his view of the text’s actual audience, writing that the “real value of his work” lay in “his study of the later owners of manuscripts of the Manuel dé Pechez.”9

Around the same time as Schemmman was reevaluating the work’s intended audiences, Alexandra Barratt took up the question of its actual ones. In a chapter on works of religious instruction in the Cambridge History of the Book in Britain, Barratt wrote that, “The Manuel seems to have had wide appeal among male religious,” and provided several examples of lost and surviving copies that circulated among the clergy. She did, however, mention that at least one copy was commissioned by a lay patron.10
None of the studies of the actual audiences of the Manuel hitherto mentioned have been based on a systematic analysis of available medieval circulation evidence, so this is the aim of the current study. As we shall see, Barratt and Sullivan were right that many copies of the Manuel were owned by members of the clergy. Its English translator, Robert of Brunne, was apparently aware of his source’s appeal to them when he suggested that a member of the clergy would recognize it: “Yn frenshe þer a clerk hyt sees / He clepyþ hyt manuel de pecchees.” But when we take a comprehensive look at the evidence concerning the circulation of the Manuel, we find that the text also appealed to lay owners. Indeed, the numbers suggest that lay owners were nearly as important as clerical ones in its circulation.

Before proceeding, it is worth noting that the term clergy carried different connotations in the medieval Church than it does now. The Middle English clergie could be used either to describe one who was ordained within the Church or one who had attributes related to such a position (i.e., possessing clerical learning or training). Complicating the situation further, there was what Nicole Rice describes as “slippage between these two categories.” In common parlance, clergy is often used to describe those whose professions fall primarily within the established Church, while laity refers to those whose professions fall outside of it. This categorization can obscure some of the complexities of the medieval Church organization, especially for those whose roles do not fit cleanly into either group. But since previous studies of the Manuel’s readers have adopted this categorization, and since it provides a useful framework for analyzing medieval manuscript circulation, I have adopted it here, while acknowledging its obvious limitations.

It is also worth noting that the information about the owners of a manuscript presented here can tell us only so much about its audience. A volume containing the Manuel might be acquired for any number of reasons, not all inspired by or even related to a desire to read the text. Some owners received their copies through charitable donations or wills, and may have had no interest in reading the text. Some fragments of the Manuel circulated as binding material, and one, placed in a loan chest as a surety, was exchanged as part of a financial transaction, rather than strictly as reading material. Even owners who commissioned the text for themselves might not have done so with the intent of reading it or having it read to them, since the acquisition of religious literature could serve any number of social functions, including advertising one’s piety to others. Other difficulties arise when using the owners of a text to identify and distinguish between its lay and clerical readers. A layperson could acquire or commission a copy of a text for the use of a sponsored group of religious or for a private chaplain or
confessor, so lay ownership does not necessarily suggest lay readership, and, conversely, a religious institution or individual might acquire a copy with the intent of reading it to the laity. Nevertheless, ownership information can be a valuable source of evidence for determining the readership of a text in cases, such as that of the Manuel, where little other information is available, and I will therefore rely on it here, while approaching such evidence with necessary caution.

The list below includes all the medieval evidence I could gather regarding who owned and commissioned copies of the Manuel des péchés. Most of the the manuscripts in question have been studied in depth, so this study is in many ways a synthetic one, aimed at bringing together and evaluating provenance information from disparate sources. It therefore draws heavily on the detailed descriptions provided by Arnould, Laird, and Sullivan, which have been checked against catalogue descriptions and the information provided by Ruth Dean and Maureen Boulton. But I have also sought to build on the findings of others, and in many cases supplement these with my own.

Medieval Owners of the Manuel des péchés

My intention is to gather together all known medieval provenance information about copies of the Manuel. Since my focus is on ownership and audience, and since these manuscripts have, for the most part, been described in depth already, I have omitted, in the interest of concision, aspects of manuscript descriptions that have limited bearing on questions of audience. In all cases, I have aimed to be cautious about drawing inferences, since inquiries into the owners of medieval texts provide limited certainties. I have been especially cautious when using the contents of a manuscript to draw inferences about its owners, since we know that lay and clerical owners had similar tastes in many respects. I therefore avoid making conclusions based on contents unless these would be of direct use to one group alone (as in a text on estate management, which would be of direct use to a lay household alone). In the list below, I have adopted manuscript sigla from Arnould’s study and have assigned new ones to those not described by Arnould. Numbers in parentheses refer to folio numbers unless otherwise indicated. The language of a work is specified when this is not clear from its title.

Lengthy and Structurally Coherent Copies

A – London, British Library, Harley 273

Date: Six parts, bound together by the early fourteenth century

Place of production: Unknown; bound together in the West Midlands

Foliation: ff. iii + 1*+ 217 (with ff. 1*, 216 and 217 flyleaves)


Contents:

**Part 1:** Calendar, ff. 1r–6v
Indulgences, f. 7r
Oxford Psalter (A–N) (Dean no. 445), ff. 8r–53r
Canticles and hymns (A–N) (Dean no. 457), ff. 53r–57v
Prayer, f. 57v
Litanies, ff. 57v–58v
Pater Noster (A–N) (Dean no. 840), ff. 58v–59r
Hours of the Virgin, Prayers, Magnificat (A–N) (Dean nos. 680, 814, 821, 823, 827, 828, 834, 835, 838, 860, 868, 939), ff. 59r–67v
Hours of the Dead (A–N) (Dean no. 829), ff. 68r–69v

**Part 2:**
Richard de Fournival, *Bestiaire d'amour*, ff. 70r–81r
Robert Grosseteste’s *Reules Seynt Roberd* (A–N) (Dean no. 392), ff. 81r–85r
Rules of Friendship (A–N) (Dean no. 246), ff. 85r–85v
Charms, f. 85v

**Part 3:**
*Pseudo-Turpin Chronicle*, ff. 86r–102v
Text on Penance (A–N) (Dean no. 672), ff. 103r–110r
Prayers (A–N) (Dean nos. 772, 891, 951), f. 110r
Guide to Meditations (A–N) (Dean no. 861), ff. 110v–112v
Charms, f. 112v
The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit (A–N) (Dean no. 615), f. 112v
Ave Maris Stella (A–N) (Dean nos. 811, 815), f. 112v

**Part 4:**
*Manuel des péchés*, ff. 113r–190v
Notes on confession in Latin and French, including a passage from Richard Wethringsette’s *Summa*, ff. 190v–191r
Purgatoire de S. Patrice (Dean no. 550), ff. 191v–197v

**Part 5:**
Nicholas Bozon’s *Pleinte d’Amour* (Dean no. 690), ff. 199r–203r

**Part 6:**
Prayers, ff. 204r–209r
Charms, prayers, and recipes for dyes (Latin and A–N) (Dean no. 387), 209r–213v
Prayers against danger, ff. 214r–v
Charms and prognostications, ff. 215r–v

Ownership Category: **Part 4**: Unknown; **whole MS**: clerical possession (14th C), based on contents; lay possession (15th C), based on ownership inscription

Sullivan suggests that the part of this manuscript containing the *Manuel* “was designed for and originally owned by a (probably wealthy and well-educated) layman,” based on the “presence of the charms and the pragmatic content and presentation of the others texts.” But Sullivan bases this claim on the assumption that the *Manuel* part of the manuscript formed a booklet along with parts 2 and 3, which contain, among other texts, Robert Grosseteste’s *Reules Seynt Roberd* (Dean no. 392) (81r–85r), a discourse on the proper management of an estate. In the most recent catalogue description, the *Manuel* is listed instead in a part containing only one other text: *Purgatoire de S. Patrice* (Dean. no. 550). This latter text provides little insight into the intended audience of the part containing the *Manuel*, so Sullivan’s assumption may be incorrect.

The other parts were bound to this one by the early fourteenth century, according to the catalogue description. Both the calendar and a list of indulgences (7r) which was, according to the description, copied between 1314
and 1329, suggest that the booklets were joined while the manuscript was owned by a religious institution. This was probably in the West Midlands, as the calendar records the dedication of the Church of St Lawrence in Ludlow (1v). Moreover, a hand added to this calendar “thome herford” (5v), referring to Thomas de Cantilupe, whose feast day was established in 1320. On these grounds, the manuscript has been listed among those owned by the clergy in the fourteenth century.

By the fifteenth century, the manuscript was in lay hands, according to an inscription: “Iste liber constat John Clerk grocero apocethario regis Edwardi quarti post conquestum” (1r). The catalogue notes that this is “John Clerk, warden of the London Company of Grocers in 1467 and 1475 and appointed grocer and apothecary to Edward IV.”

**B – London, British Library, Harley 4657**

**Date:** Three parts, all from the first quarter of the fourteenth century, bound together by the early fifteenth

**Place of production:** Northern

**Foliation:** ff. 1–104

**Contents:**
- **Part 1: Apocalypsis Goliae**, ff.1v–4v
  Didactic verses, including verses on table manners (Latin), f. 4v
  Poem addressed to the Virgin, alternating French and Latin (Dean no. 808) f. 4v

- **Part 2: Manuel des péchés**, ff. 5r–85r
  Alphabet, f. 86v

- **Part 3: Disticha Catonis** (a-N) (Dean no. 256), ff. 87r–97r
  Prayer for Mercy (a-N) (Dean no. 773), ff. 97v–98r
  Alexandrine Prayer (a-N) (Dean no. 889), ff. 98v–99r
  Proverbial Follies (a-N) (Dean no. 266), ff. 99r
  *Une petite sume de set pechez morteus* (The Mortal Sins) (a-N) (Dean no. 653), ff. 99v–103v

**Ownership Category:** Part 2: Unknown; whole MS: lay possession (date unknown), based on contents; clerical possession (15th C), based on an inscription

This manuscript is composed of a series of booklets. Sullivan finds that they were all written in the early fourteenth century and bound together by the early fifteenth. The first contains the *Apocalypsis Goliae* (a Latin satire of the clergy) (1v–4v), some verses on table manners, a poem to the Virgin, and more didactic verses, the last of which warn against foolish spending (4v). Next is a booklet of the *Manuel* (5r–85r), and the final booklet contains the *Disticha Catonis* (87r–97r), two Anglo-Norman prayers (97v–99r), an Anglo-Norman list of thirty-six follies (99r), and *Une petite sune de set pechez morteus* (The Mortal Sins)—a late thirteenth-century French text for penitents. Describing the *Manuel* booklet alone, Sullivan writes that its “ neatness” “might suggest that it was a clerical production,” but of course, neatness does not necessarily signal a clerically produced manuscript. The contents of the other booklets, including the texts on manners, suggest lay
use, and Sullivan notes that these “seem slightly more common.” It seems likely, then, that the booklet was in lay hands at the time that it was bound with the others, sometime before the early fifteenth century. On these grounds, the manuscript has been counted in the lay possession category.

A fifteenth-century inscription in the final booklet describes a number of gifts: “Ista sunt dona mihi data: de priore xl d; de Mascam xl d; de Gisborn xl d; de Graystays x; de Poklyngton xx d; de Fowne xx d; de Berry xl d; de Esche xij d; de Helaw xx d; de Wessyngton xl d; de Mors xx d; de bursaris xl d” (104r). The use of “mihi” here suggests a single individual writing on his own behalf. A. W. Taubman suggests that “Gifts from a prior and bursar could indicate a religious or someone lodging at religious houses.” The manuscript is therefore included among those in clerical possession. The presence of Yorkshire town names has led several to suggest that the manuscript circulated in that region.

Sullivan finds that this copy is one of three that were owned by the Tempest family in the seventeenth century. He notes, moreover, of the above inscription, that “several identifiable places listed are within a few miles of Tempest family seats in Yorkshire and Co. Durham.” He finds several connections, dating back to the thirteenth century, between the Tempest family and the area where the author of the Manuel was born, but he notes that these links could be coincidental, so we cannot conclude from these that the Tempests owned the volume in the medieval period.

C – London, British Library, Harley 4971

Date: four previously independent parts, dating from the early 14th to 15th centuries, bound together after 1390

Place of production: Unknown

Foliation: ff. 1–131 (with ff. 1 and 129–131 flyleaves + 4 unfoliated flyleaves at the beginning and 4 at the end)

Contents:
Table of contents (fifteenth-century hand), f. 3r

Part 1: Grammatical, legal, and household management texts, including:
Orthographia Gallica (A-N) (Dean no. 287), ff. 4r–6v
Various Vocabularies (Dean no. 300), ff. 4r–6v, 33v
Domestic Economy (A-N) (Dean no. 397), ff. 7r–9r
Ars Dictaminis (A-N) (Dean no. 317), ff. 9r–22v
Conjugations from Donatus (A-N) (Dean no. 293), ff. 23r–26r
Expense roll of John Bromleye, clerk of the household of Ralph, Earl of Stafford, f. 27r–v
Record of a loan from Roger E. to Isabella Cornwayl, f. 33r
Medical Prescriptions (A-N) (Dean no. 439), f. 34r

Part 2: Legal formulary, ff. 42r–65v
Statutes, ff. 66r–92v

Part 3: Manuel des péchés, ff. 93r–127r
The Fall, Harrowing of Hell, and Passion (A-N) (Dean no. 599), f. 127v
La Rounde Table, f. 127v
Grant of land at Aldwinkle, f. 128v
Capitulum de Purificatione beate Marie moralisata, f. 128v
This manuscript is composed of four previously independent parts. At the end of the first, a fifteenth-century hand wrote the name “Willelmus Smyth” (41v). A different fifteenth-century hand wrote that the book belonged to Bury St Edmunds’ and also copied a table of contents of the major parts (3r), which indicates that these were bound together by the fifteenth century. They could not have been bound together before 1390, since the second part contains a statute dating from 1388–90. The Manuel appears at the beginning of the third part (93r–127r). Following it is The Fall, Harrowing of Hell, and Passion (127v), and, in a later hand, a short selection from Chrétien de Troyes’ Erec et Enide, entitled “la rounde table” (127v). The last folio of this part contains what J. A. Herbert describes as a grant of land at Aldwinkle (in Northamptonshire) from Simon de Repindon to John de Aldewynycle and his wife Agnes, dating to July 5th, 1308 (128v). Herbert also finds a Latin text on the Virgin, entitled “Capitulum de Purificatione beate Marie moralisata,” which is followed by some verses on love in a later, fifteenth-century hand (128v).

The Manuel part dates to the early fourteenth century, but its origins are unknown. Sullivan writes that “The simple and tidy presentation of the Manuel (rubrics and initials only, with almost no annotation) suggests that the MS. in which it appears was produced by and for clerics,” and he holds that this part may have been produced at Bury St Edmunds, since it was there at some point in the fifteenth century. Yet the 1308 land grant in this part suggests a more complicated provenance. The Agnes and John de Aldewycle mentioned in this grant are clearly layfolk, and there is some evidence to suggest the same of Simon de Repindon. In Lincolnshire in 1331, a Simon de Repindon was charged with prosecuting a debt on behalf of one Joan Orger of Freston. Since Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire are close, it seems likely that the Simon who was prosecuting a debt in Lincolnshire is the Simon from the land grant. It is therefore likely that all three parties in the grant were layfolk. This suggests that the manuscript was in lay hands at the time of the grant in 1308, although we cannot rule out the possibility that the manuscript was in clerical hands and the grant was recorded in it for safekeeping, or for some other reason.

The Manuel part features another fourteenth-century inscription, the name “William Cartere” (128v). Sullivan notes this, but does not remark upon it. The name is not uncommon, but, given the date of the inscription
and the manuscript’s ties to Lincolnshire, it could be that of the William Cartere who, in 1328, was tried for two acts of thievery in the area: the first in Lincolnshire, and the second in York. Cartere’s name, and those of the layfolk in the early grant, make it likely that this part of the manuscript was in lay hands in the fourteenth century.

D – London, British Library, Royal 20 B.X IV
Place of production: “Probably Southwestern”
Contents: Manuel des péchés, ff. 1r–52v
Mirour de Seinte Eglise (Dean no. 629), ff. 53r–65v
Exhortation to Love God (Dean no. 618), ff. 65v–68r
Le Roman de Philosophie, by Simund de Frené (Dean no. 243), ff. 68v–77v
The Corruption of the World (Dean no. 602), ff. 77v–87v
Le Chasteau d’Amour (Dean no. 622), ff. 87v–95v
Le Roman des Romans (Dean no. 601), ff. 96r–102v
Miracles of the Virgin (Dean no. 559), ff. 102v–170r, 173r–v
The Life of St. Mary of Egypt (A-N) (Dean no. 576), ff. 119r–121v
Record of 1307 burial of Thomas Button, Bishop of Exeter, f. 166r
Le Petit Sermon (Dean no. 636), ff. 170r–172v

This is an early fourteenth-century manuscript containing a range of religious texts. It begins with the Manuel (1r–52v), followed by the French version of Edmund of Abingdon’s Speculum, the Mirour de Seinte Eglise (53r–65v). The version in this manuscript is the one that A. D. Wilshere, in his study of this text, terms the “unrevised ‘religious’ version.” Next is a poem on the love of God (65v–68r), Simon de Frené’s Le Roman de Philosophie (68v–77v), a poem on the corruption of the world (77v–87v), Le Chasteau d’Amour (87v–95v), the Roman des Romans (96r–102v), Miracles of the Virgin (102v–170r, 173r–v) and Le petit sermon (170r–172v). There is also a single folio recording the 1307 burial of Thomas Button, Bishop of Exeter (166r). Both this folio and the religious version of Edmund’s Mirour suggest clerical origins. The freedom with which the scribe adapted the opening description of the contents of the Chasteau d’Amour, along with other strange aspects of this text, has led Evelyn Mackie to posit that the scribe copying the manuscript may have designed it for his own use.

An inscription records that it was owned by Lord Walter Hungerford (1368–1449) of Wiltshire, so the manuscript is counted among those in lay possession in the fifteenth century. It is not clear who owned it prior to Walter. There is a tantalizing inscription in a late fourteenth-century hand: “Iste liber est Iohannis Colyford de manu eiusdem scriptus (sic)
apud Glametun anno domini millesimo trisentesimo sexagesimo primo” (172v). The catalogue notes that the date, 1361, is too late for the hand of the manuscript itself.49 “Glametun,” surely a variant of “Galmetun” could be any of three areas, two in Devonshire and one in Yorkshire.50 The Yorkshire Galmetun is possible, given the Manuel's Yorkshire connections, but a Devonshire Galmetun is more likely given both the folio recording the burial of the Bishop of Exeter, and the manuscript’s connection to Wiltshire through Hungerford.

I have found several people from the period named “Johannes Colyford,” some with southwestern connections. A prior of St John's Hospital, Exeter had this name, but he died in 1468, so he is surely too late to be our John.51 A “Johannes de Colyford” was serving as the Member of Parliament for the south western region of Bridport (Dorset) in 1313, and he, or one of his relatives, seems a likely candidate.52 Although the attribution is uncertain, the manuscript can be tentatively included among those owned by layfolk in the fourteenth century.

E – London, British Library, Arundel 288
Date: late 13th C
Place of production: Unknown
Foliation: ff. 126 (with 2 paper flyleaves at the beginning, and 1 at the end)
Contents:54
Poem on the passion (A-N) (Dean no. 892) (later hand), ff. 1r–3v
Prayers and meditations (A-N) (Dean no. 942) (later hand), ff. 3v–4r
Manuel des péchés, ff. 5r–83v
De Poenis Purgatorii (A-N version) (Dean no. 645), ff. 84r– 91v
Sermo de passione Domini (A-N), ff. 91v–97r
Le Petit Sermon (Dean no. 636), ff. 97r–103r
Mirour de Seinte Eglise, by Edmund of Abingdon (Dean no. 629), ff. 103r–122r
The Nine Words of Charity (A-N) (Dean no. 617) (later hand), ff.122r–123r
On Monastic Obedience (A-N) (Dean no. 715) (mid-14th C hand), ff. 123r–v
Desputeison de l’Alme et du Corps (A-N) (Dean no. 691) (later hand), ff. 123v–126v
God’s Mercy (A-N) (Dean no. 616) (later hand), f. 126v
Ownership Category: possibly produced for lay owners, based on contents; clerical possession (14th C), based on contents

This may be the oldest copy of the Manuel.55 Sullivan guesses that it was prepared for the clergy, judging from two supposedly clerical texts that accompany the Manuel des péchés in this manuscript: De Poenis Purgatorii and Edmund's Mirour.56 But neither of these was limited to clerical readers; De Poenis Purgatorii appears in the Compileison, which is addressed to lay and religious readers alike.57 And Edmund's Mirour was, as Wilshere notes, adapted for lay circles.58 Indeed, Reeves finds that “the redaction of the Mirour that it contains is one that is meant to provide the basic requirements of the life of a Christian layperson,” and on this account decides “to
suspend judgment and note the possibility that it could have been prepared for a lay owner. A forty-four-line poem on monastic obedience, added in the fourteenth century, suggests that the manuscript fell into clerical hands in this period.

**F** – Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 99 (4057)

*Date:* two MSS joined together (probably after 1454); **MS 1:** early 14th C, **MS 2:** later, possibly 15th C

*Place of production:* Unknown

*Foliation:* iv + 180 leaves (with 178–79 flyleaves)

*Contents:*

**initial flyleaves:** Latin grammatical treatise, ff. iii–iv

**MS 1:** *Manuel des péchés,* ff. 1r–153v

**MS 2:** *Chasteau d’amour* (Dean no. 622), ff. 154r–177v


*Ownership Category:* **MS 1:** lay possession (15th C), based on a gift inscription; **whole MS:** unknown

This manuscript is composed of two sections which, according to Arnould, circulated independently. The first, which Arnould dates to the early fourteenth century, is the *Manuel* (1–153v). The second is the *Chasteau d’amour* (154r–177v), and Arnould notes that the hand of this section is clearly different, and probably later, than that of the first. In his edition of the *Chasteau d’amour*, J. Murray suggests that this copy is from the fifteenth century. It is not clear when the two parts were joined, but it was probably in the fifteenth century or later, since Laird finds the initial flyleaves (iii–iv) are from “an early 15th c. Latin grammatical treatise.” The closing flyleaves (178–79), which Laird dates to ca. 1319, and which record the miracles of the tomb of the Archbishop of Canterbury Robert Winchelsey, tell us little about the early provenance or binding of the manuscript.

Toward the end of the first section, an inscription records that Margaret Cokfeld gave the manuscript to Margaret Byngham in 1454 (138v). According to Laird, this means that this section was “in private hands” at this time, and it is therefore counted among those owned by the laity in the fifteenth century. The inscription’s position toward the end of the *Manuel* section suggests that it had not yet been joined with the *Chasteau*, offering further evidence that the two were separate until at least the fifteenth century.

**G** – Oxford, Bodleian Library, Greaves 51 (3823)

*Date:* two parts, joined together (date unknown); **part 1:** second half of the 13th C; **part 2:** early 14th C

*Place of production:* Southwest

*Foliation:* ff. i + 73
The Manuel text in this manuscript concludes with the name of its copyist, one Adam de Furches.⁷⁰ This Adam has not yet been identified, but may be the “Adam de Fourches of Cropthorn” listed in the register of William Gainsborough, bishop of Worcester.⁷¹ This register records Adam’s ordination as subdeacon in 1306. The same Adam de Fourches of Cropthorn also appears in the register of the next bishop of Worcester in 1312.⁷² This Adam fits with Laird’s description of the manuscript as “early fourteenth century, Southwestern.”⁷³ It is not clear if Adam copied the Manuel text before or after his ordination, but we can tentatively conclude that it was copied in a clerical context.

There are two relevant fourteenth-century inscriptions on the last folio.⁷⁴ Laird gives the first as: “the statement that Johannes Prohin “prestravit unum palladum in pasco de Cronham” (“lays down a stake in the field at Cronham”), and he posits that this refers to “Cronham-Hurst, Surrey.”⁷⁵ Arnould gives only the name, and Barratt, drawing on this reading, suggests that John “may have been a priest,” but does not explain her reasoning for this.⁷⁶ Since the full inscription apparently describes the demarcation of land, this John was more likely a layman, but the evidence is hard to read. I can find no other “Johannes Prohin” or “de Prohun,” but the Victoria County History of Surrey mentions “a certain John Prudhomme” who “held lands in Heywood in Cobham in 1317” and who granted lands in Cobham to Newark priory, near Guildford, in 1331.⁷⁷ It is apparently the same John in the fourteenth-century obituary calendar of the Monastery of Guildford, his name transcribed as “John Prodomine [? Prudom].”⁷⁸

The second inscription identified by Laird is “Dominum Johein Burgeys preceptis.”⁷⁹ This John may be the same as the recipient of a 1334 land grant, described in the Calendar of Patent Rolls as “John Burgeys of Ledred of the bailiwick of Coppethorne of Effyngham co. Surrey.”⁸⁰ In sum, there is reason to suspect that the manuscript was produced in the southwest in a clerical context and, within a century of its production, moved into a lay one in Surrey.

H – Cambridge, University Library, Mm. 6.4
Date: early 14th C
Place of production: possibly Devonshire
Foliation: ff. 262
Contents:⁸¹
Sullivan states that this manuscript was “originally owned by and probably copied at the Cistercian house at Quarr, on the Isle of Wight.” He bases this on a fourteenth-century ownership inscription toward the middle of the manuscript (178r). This inscription indicates that we can count this manuscript among those owned by the clergy, but it tells us little about the origins of the manuscript. Its contents, however, are somewhat more suggestive. Following the Manuel is Alain de Lille’s De Sex Alis Cherubim (99v–103r), a poem by John Goddard, abbot of Newnham (in Devonshire) (103v–118r), a story about a repentant woman (119r–121r), miracles (121v–122r), the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs (122r–159r), and a vision story from Essex (160r–177r). This is followed by the aforementioned inscription and eight blank leaves. After these appear more short Latin works, including a letter by Goddard to Margaret, abbess of Tarente (237r–256r). A single folio at the end contains lines from Tristan and Yseut (262r). Most of these works suggest clerical origins, and the writings of Goddard might indicate Devonshire origins.

This manuscript is from the early fourteenth century. Its medieval provenance is unknown. The Manuel appears first (1r–79r), followed by the
French *Prose Brut* to 1307 (Dean no. 44) (79v–142r). Sullivan holds that “The contents and the almost complete lack of annotation suggest that the volume was clerically-produced”, but some copies of the *Brut* were owned by lay readers, so we cannot make any conjectures. It contains the name “Thomas Knyuett” (1r). Sullivan identifies him as the early seventeenth-century bibliophile Thomas Knyvett of Ashwellthorpe, but Arnould suggests a different Thomas Knyvett (m. 1512).

K – Cambridge, St John’s College, F.30 (167)
Date: two parts bound together, both ca. 1300
Place of production: Unknown
Foliation: ff. iv + 157 + iv
Contents:
Part 1 - *Lumere as lais* by Pierre D’Abernon (Dean no. 690), ff. 1r–83v
Part 2 - *Manuel des péchés*, ff. 84r–157v
Ownership Category: Part 2: unknown; whole MS: lay possession (15th C), based on ownership inscription

Arnould dates this manuscript to cc. 1300. Pierre D’Abernon’s *Lumere as lais* (1267) appears first (1r–83v), followed by the *Manuel* (84r–157v). Arnould finds the following fifteenth-century inscription at the end of the *Manuel*: “Iste liber constat Johanni Strelley de Lyndeby.” This is surely the “Johannes Strelley de Lyneby” who is listed as an “armiger” (i.e., a person with a coat of arms) in Nottingham County in 1450. A “Johannes Strelley” was a knight in the neighboring county of Derbyshire in 1412, and the manuscript can therefore be counted among those owned by the laity. Hanna and Turville-Petre find some connections between the seventeenth-century members of the Strelley family and the Willoughbys, who owned the Nottingham manuscript. It has been suggested that this manuscript is the same as the Southwell Minster one described below, since, as Sullivan notes, Linby is 10 miles west of Southwell Minster.

L – Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, Français 14959
Date: late thirteenth century
Place of production: Unknown
Foliation: ff. i+ 64
Contents:
*Manuel des péchés*, ff. 1–62v
Blank, f. 63
*Les Voeux du paon* (30 lines), f. 64r
Ownership Category: Unknown

Laird suggests that this copy was produced on the continent, “since it formerly rested in the abbey library at Saint-Evroult.” In an eighteenth-century catalogue of Saint-Evroult, it is listed as “Le manuel des pechés, ou la maniere de se bien confesser en vers Français fort anciens,” but it is not clear
when it arrived in the collection. Laird writes that it might have been in England at one point because it contains “thirty lines of ecclesiastical verse in a fifteenth century English hand on the last folio (64r).” But these lines are from Jacques de Longuyon of Lorraine’s 1312 *Les Vœux du paon*, and this provides few clues about the manuscript’s provenance. The romance was popular on the continent but had limited circulation in England, and Dean does not list an Anglo-Norman version. It was, however, a source for the insular 1438 *Buik of Alexander.*

M – York Minster XVI.K.7  
**Date:** late 13th C  
**Place of production:** Unknown  
**Foliation:** ff. 70  
**Contents:**  
Part 1: *Manuel des péchés*, f. 1r–65r  
Part 2: *Chasteau d’amour* (frag.) (Dean no. 622), ff. 66r–70v  
**Ownership Category:** clerical possession (date unknown), based on marginal inscription

This manuscript is composed of two booklets, each in a different thirteenth-century hand. The first is our text (1r–65r), and the second is part of the *Chasteau d’amour* (66r–70v). These provide no provenance clues. Arnould finds the following inscription, which he suggests is later than the manuscript itself: “De Cauntebrige fu frer Hue; out a noun de Wodefort, frere prechur de seint conversaciun” (52). Arnould takes this as a connection to Canterbury. So, we can tentatively count this manuscript among those owned by clerical institutions.

N – San Marino (California), Huntington Library, HM 903  
**Date:** mid-14th C  
**Place of production:** Unknown  
**Foliation:** ff. ii + 205 + ii  
**Contents:**  
*Manuel des péchés*, ff. 1–66v  
Misbound:  
Robert de Greatham, *Miroir des domnees* (Dean no. 589), ff. 140r–205v, 68r–123v  
—lacuna between 205v and 68r  
Three metrical sermons, ff. 123v–139v  
**Ownership Category:** clerical possession (15th C), based on ownership inscription

Neil Ker traces this copy to St Mary’s abbey based on a mid-fifteenth-century ownership inscription. It does not appear in the abbey’s fifteenth-century library catalogue in *Benedictine Libraries*. But the editors of this catalogue note that “The limited scope of the catalogue may indicate that it was not an official list,” so the omission of the manuscript does not tell us anything about when it arrived at St Mary’s. Another inscription, noted by Laird, reads: “ex pensis augusti prima septi mana xiiiij. s xj d.” Laird takes this as the
sum paid for the book initially, and surmises from this and the clean layout of the manuscript that it was produced by “a professional scribe.” Yet the inscription does not necessarily pertain to the book’s initial commission, so it tells us little about its origins.

O – Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Pal. lat. 1970
Date: late 13th C
Place of production: Unknown
Foliation: ff. iii + 95 + ii
Contents:
Section of the Book of Jeremiah, f. iii’ (flyleaf)
Section of the Gospel of Matthew, f. iii’ (flyleaf)
Sermon, f. 1r
Manuel des péchés, ff.1r–92r
Blank, ff. 92v–95v
Ownership Category: Unknown

Aside from some Latin biblical texts used as flyleaves, the Manuel is the only text in this manuscript, and there are no signs of its medieval provenance. Arnould dates it to the late thirteenth century.

Z – Leeds, University Library, 1
Date: early 14th C
Place of production: possibly in the Yorkshire area
Foliation: ff. ii + 101 + ii (paginated)
Manuel des péchés, pp. 1–200
Medical prescription (Dean no. 439), p. 201
Ownership Category: clerical possession (date unknown), based on an inscription

The Manuel is the only extensive text in this early fourteenth-century manuscript. Laird finds that “An inscription connects the manuscript with the Augustinian Priory at Newburgh, Yorkshire, near Coxwold.” It seems that it remained in the Yorkshire region; in the nineteenth century it belonged to William Constable Maxwell of Everingham Park, Yorkshire.

Pr – Princeton, University Library, Taylor Medieval MS. 1
Date: second half of the 13th C
Place of production: East Midlands or upper East Anglia
Foliation: ff. i + v + 204 + i
Contents:
Moral diagrams, ff. ii’–iv’
Table of contents (19th C), f. iv’
Prayer to the Virgin (Latin), f. v’
Manuel des péchés, ff. 1r–150v
Le Roman des Romans (Dean no. 601), ff. 151r–164v
Lament of the Virgin (Dean no. 955), ff. 165r–170r
Homilies of Maurice de Sully (Latin with A-N translation) (Dean no. 587), ff. 170v–171r
Blank, ff. 171v–172r
Chasteau d’amour (Dean no. 622), ff. 172v–198r
READERS OF THE MANUEL DES PÉCHÉS

Joan Tateshal, a wealthy Lincolnshire landholder, commissioned this copy in the late thirteenth century for her own use. Adelaide Bennett, who has studied this manuscript in depth, finds that Joan wanted her involvement in the production of this manuscript recorded; the Manuel begins with an initial containing a drawing of her and the scribe who she employed.  

Incomplete Copies and Longer Fragments

P – London, British Library, Harley 337

Date: five previously independent parts, bound together (date unknown; after the early 14th C); part 1: second half of the 13th C; part 2: ca. 1314; part 3: last quarter of the 12th C; part 4: second half of the 13th C; part 5: last quarter of the 12th C

Place of production: part 1: The Benedictine Abbey of St. Augustine, Canterbury

Foliation: ff. 72 (with 4 unfoliated flyleaves at the beginning and 3 at the end)

Contents:

Part 1: Miscellany, including a cartulary from St. Augustine’s Abbey, Canterbury, ff. 1–11v
Part 2: Manuel des péchés, ff. 12r–31v
Part 3: Origen’s Commentary on Leviticus (frag.), ff. 32r–53v
Part 4: Pope Innocent III’s De comtemptu mundi, and short theological texts, ff. 54–65v, 65v–71v
Part 5: Pseudo-Hippocrates’s Capsula eburnea, Analogium, Indicia valetudinum (frag.), ff. 72r–v

Ownership Category: Part 2: lay possession (14th C), based on marginal illustrations; whole MS: clerical possession (date unknown, after the early 14th C), based on contents

Sullivan finds that this is a collection of five previously independent parts. The Manuel part, the second of these, is badly damaged (12r–31v). Sullivan writes that its hand dates from the early fourteenth century. He describes a series of armorials in its margins, and notes that the names corresponding to them were added in the early fourteenth century. The lay associations of these arms makes it likely that the Manuel part was in lay hands before it was bound with the others. They do not necessarily indicate that this was a lay commission. At least one was drawn over the decoration of the Manuel text (27r), so they must have been added after the Manuel was decorated.

It is not clear when the five parts were joined, but Sullivan finds that it happened before the mid-seventeenth century, and he suggests the third and fourth at least were bound by the mid-fourteenth. The first part is a cartulary from the Benedictine Abbey of St Augustine at Canterbury, which suggests that the entire manuscript was put together there. Sullivan finds a table of debts from the early fourteenth century in the third fragment of the manuscript (71v), including the name “R. <b>rune”, which he claims is visible in ultraviolet light. He suggests that this refers to the translator of the Manuel, but since we do not know when the fragments were bound
together, the name tells us little about the origins of the Manuel fragment. It seems likely that the part containing the Manuel was in lay hands in the early fourteenth century, and the entire manuscript was in the collection of St Augustine’s at some point after that.

Q – London, British Library, Harley 3860

Date: early 14th C
Place of production: Unknown
Foliation: ff. 82 (with ff. 1 and 2 flyleaves)

Contents:
Harley Epitome (A–N), ff. 3r–11v
Genealogies of the Kings of England (A–N), ff. 12r–18r
Chronicle of Scottish wars (1291–1303) (A–N), ff. 18r–22r
Seven Sages of Rome, ff. 23r–47v
Chasteau d’amour (Dean no. 622), ff. 48r–61r
Manuel des péchés, ff. 61v–77v
Walter Henley’s Housbondrie (Dean no. 394), ff. 77v–82v

Ownership Category: Unknown

This early fourteenth-century manuscript begins with chronicle material (3r–11v, 28v), including the early fourteenth-century Harley Epitome, edited by A. G. Rigg. Following this is the Seven Sages of Rome (23r–47v), and the Chasteau d’amour (48r–61r). Two books of the Manuel follow (61v–77v) and are followed in turn by an extract from Walter Henley’s Housbondrie (77v–82v). Sullivan writes that the manuscript is “written in three booklets by four co-operating scribes and probably originally bound as one volume.” Its contents reveal little about its initial owners.

An early fourteenth-century note, described by Sullivan, refers to the Bishop of Durham (2r). A hand that Sullivan dates to the fifteenth century inscribed “John Dent” on a flyleaf (1v). A Johannes Dent appears in a Yorkshire land dispute record from 1567, possibly the same John, or a relative. This suggests that the manuscript was in lay hands in the fifteenth century, but given the mention of the Bishop of Durham and its later ties to Durham, discussed below, it is safest not to make assumptions.

It is inscribed with the name of Sir Thomas Tempest (d. 1743), who, according to A. I. Doyle, wrote his name in his books between 1662 and 1692. Cyril Ernest Wright suggests that it came from the Benedictine Priory of St Cuthbert, Durham since many of Tempest’s books came from there. Doyle finds that a monk of Durham, Nicholas Marley, left many of the priory’s books with the Tempest family after the dissolution. Doyle notes, however, that not all of Tempest’s books came from Durham, so this attribution is conjectural. Since the evidence is hard to read, the manuscript has not been counted in any ownership category.
READERS OF THE MANUEL DES PÉCHÉS 179

R – Oxford, Bodleian Library, Rawlinson Poetry 241 (14732)
Date: first quarter of the 14th C
Place of production: Unknown
Foliation: Paginated vi + 290 (with blank pages at the end)
Contents:
Theological and other notes (Latin)(in a later hand), pp. 1–7
Proverbes de bon enseignement (Dean no. 252), pp. 8–19
Dimensions of St Paul’s Church and Monastery, London, p. 20
La Plaînte d’Amour, by Nicholas Bozon (Dean no. 690), pp. 21–37
Le Petit Sermon (Dean no. 636), pp. 37–50
Le Dialogue de Saint Julien (Dean no. 628), pp. 50–77
Miracles of the Virgin by Everard Gately (Dean no. 560), pp. 77–96
Manuel des péchés, pp. 96–162
Edmund of Abingdon’s Mirour de Seinte Eglise (A-N) (Dean no. 629), pp. 163–89
Liber Metodii Episcopi (Latin), pp. 189–96
The Marriage of the Devil’s Nine Daughters (A-N) (Dean no. 686), pp. 196–207
Dyte Pretious (different hand) (Dean no. 420), pp. 207–10
Petite Philosophie (different hand) (A-N) (Dean no. 325), pp. 211–46
Lunarie de Salemon (continental) (Dean no. 366), pp. 246–57
The Beginning and End of the World (A-N) (Dean no. 606), pp. 259–71
Ownership Category: Unknown

This manuscript contains a series of exempla from the Manuel (pp. 96–163), alongside French devotional works, including two ascribed to Nicholas Bozon: the Proverbes de bon enseignement (pp. 8–19) and the Plaînte d’Amour (pp. 21–37).125 Paul Meyer dates the hand in the Manuel portion to the first half of the fourteenth century. He notes that the provenance of the manuscript is unknown.126 Sullivan suggests that it might have originated at Bury St Edmunds because it contains a text by a member of this house.127 The notes on St Paul’s London might also suggest clerical origins. But it is worth noting that Bozon’s Proverbes states that it is for “amis / Ke de clergie n’unt apris” (“Friends / who lack learning/clerical training”) and that, like Arundel MS 288, this manuscript contains the lay version of Edmund’s Mirour.128 Moreover, it contains what Sullivan describes as “notes on military fees.”129 These contents seem most helpful for lay readers, but tell us nothing conclusive about the manuscript’s provenance, and the manuscript has therefore not been placed in an ownership category.

S – Cambridge, University Library, Gg. 1.1130
Date: first quarter of the 14th C
Place of production: Unknown
Foliation: ff. ii + 633 + ii
Contents: Various texts, most in Anglo-Norman, but some in Latin and Middle English, including:
Lumère as lais by Pierre D’Abernon (Dean no. 690), ff. 17r–110v
Image du Monde (A-N), ff. 346r–390r
Seven Sages (A-N), ff. 440r–463v
Birth Predictions (A-N), ff. 466v–469r
Excerpts from the Bible (Latin), ff. 491r–494v
This is a lavish and substantial volume, with an abridged copy of the *Manuel*. A number of its texts seem most useful for a lay patron, such as the text that Sullivan describes as a “list of knights’ fees in England and Ireland,” and the “rules of love for clerks and knights.” It also includes Walter Bibbesworth’s *Tretiz*, a French vocabulary text addressed to a lay reader. Sullivan concedes that these contents are “occasionally appropriate for secular reception,” but claims that they “are collectively so vast, varied, and so demanding of an exceedingly patient and educated mind that one must doubt that the book’s patron was a layman.” But it was not unusual for lay readers to own luxury manuscripts. Given the contents, it seems likely that it was commissioned by a lay patron, and this is certainly Mary Carruthers’s view.

Laird dates this manuscript to the late thirteenth century, but Arnould suggests the early fourteenth. The *Manuel* appears first, its ending apparently lost (1r–103v), followed by the French lives of saints Eustace (104r–119v), Marguerite (119v–128r), and Mary Magdalene (128r–v). Saints’ lives, of course, can appeal to a variety of readers. The name of “Joannes Pye” appears toward the end of the *Manuel* (98r), and, as noted below, he can plausibly be identified with the Pye who was a Northern landowner and bookowner in the late fourteenth century, so the manuscript has been included among those owned by layfolk in the fourteenth century. The other two names in the manuscript, “Johannes Smyth” (13r), and “Thomas Smyth” (80r), are not helpful for tracing its medieval owners, since Arnould has traced them to the manuscript collector Thomas Smith (1638–1710).
Robert of Gretham’s *Mirur* (A-N) (Dean no. 589), ff. 57r–171r

**Ownership Category:** Unknown

The manuscript is entirely in one late thirteenth-century hand. The *Manuel* appears first, its beginning missing (1r–56r), and it is followed by the only complete copy of Robert of Gretham’s *Mirur* (57r–171r). Rob Lutton notes that it was in the collection of the Willoughbys of Willoughby-on-the-Wolds by the sixteenth century, but it is unclear when it fell into their possession. He writes that “it was probably after 1460 and possibly as late as the second decade of the 16th century.” Given the uncertainty of the dates in this attribution, I have not counted this manuscript in an ownership category.

**Shorter Fragments**

V – Blackburn, Stonyhurst College, 27 (A.VI. 22) (HMC 31)

**Date:** two parts first quarter of the 14th C

**Place of production:** Unknown

**Foliation:** ff. 115

**Contents:**

**Part 1:** *Summa de Officiis Ecclesiasticis*, ff. 1r–72v

**Part 2:** French legal tract, f. 73v

John Beleth’s *Summa de Officiis Ecclesiasticis*, starting on f. 75 and interspersed with Notes on the former, f. 74v, 100r, 108r

Latin legal tract, f. 82v

*Manuel des péchés* (frag.), ff. 103v–107r

**Ownership Category:** produced for clerical owners, based on contents; lay possession (14th C), based on marginal inscription; clerical possession (15th C), based on marginal inscription

This manuscript is composed of two originally separate parts, and it is not known when they were joined. The first contains a text which, in its *explicit*, is entitled *Summa de Officiis Ecclesiasticis* (1r–72v). The second contains a different *Summa de Officiis Ecclesiasticis*—that of John Beleth. Arnould notes that the latter appears in a series of fragments, and a number of texts have been inserted before and among its leaves, written either in spaces left blank or on parchment scraps. These include a French legal tract from 1300 concerning royal forests, land ownership, and metal work (73v). There is also a Latin legal tract from 1299 (82v), also concerning royal forests and addressed to the Duke of Norfolk. There are notes on Beleth’s *Summa* (74v, 100r, 108r), which Arnould suggests were written by a student. The *Manuel* fragment is the last substantial one (103v–107r). Arnould dates its hand to 1310. On the last folio of the *Manuel* and in the same hand is a brief Latin text on the Devil’s daughters, and, in two different hands, French proverbs (107r).
Based on these contents, Sullivan suggests that this was “used as a textbook for clerics.” He is undoubtedly right that the main works suggest clerical origins, but since the Manuel is in a later hand than these, we cannot assume that it was added while the manuscript was in clerical possession. Nevertheless, this does seem likely, since it was apparently added within a few decades after the clerical texts were copied. The two legal tracts tell us very little; they could be useful for either group.

The name John Pye appears in both this manuscript and York Minster XVI.K.13. Sullivan suggests that Pye “may have been a collector of MSS.” Arnould notes that it is difficult to determine who Pye was, finding two by that name in the Dictionary of National Biography. There is, however, reason to suspect that this Pye, whose name is inscribed “Joannes Pye” in the York Minster manuscript (103r), was the “Johannes Pye” who held lands in the late fourteenth century in Ulverston, in the Northern county of Cumbria. Both Pye manuscripts seem to have Northern origins, which makes it plausible that the Ulverston landholder owned them.

The manuscript also contains the name of Hugh Damlett, who was a fifteenth-century book collector and the rector of St Peter Cornhill in London. The evidence therefore suggests that this fragment of the Manuel was copied in a clerical context, moved to a lay one within a century of its production, and then returned to a clerical context within another century.

X – London, British Library, Arundel 372
Date: second half of the 13th C
Place of Production: Unknown
Foliation: ff. i + 70 + (unfoliated) flyleaves
Contents:
 Manuel des péchés (frag.), ff. 2r–3v
Many Latin theological texts, including Anselm of Canterbury’s Monologion and several prayers
Ownership Category: clerical possession (14th C), based on loan chest inscription

Two badly damaged leaves of the Manuel precede a series of Latin theological texts, including several by St Anselm. The manuscript contains a 1394 inscription regarding its placement in a loan chest: “Caucio Willemi [. . . ] exposita in ciste neel pro xij s. iiiij d. in pesto apostolorum petri et pauli [i.e., 29 June] Anno domini millesimo CCC nonagesimo quarto” (4r). This indicates that it was placed as surety for a loan in one of two chests donated by the fourteenth-century alderman Walter Neel, at Oxford and Cambridge respectively. In his study of loan chests, Graham Pollard notes that their use was restricted to students or graduates of the University. By comparing the value of this loan to the typical loans for various ranks of students given by Pollard, we can conclude that William was in the lowest
rank, a scholar. Based on Pollard’s findings, it seems that the erasure of William’s name means that his loan was never repaid. Since most scholars of the time would have been members of religious orders, it seems probable that, prior to this inscription being written in 1394, the manuscript was in clerical hands.

The name “Anna Hoeham” appears in a fifteenth-century hand on the first folio, but I can find no record of anyone by that name active in the fifteenth century.

Y – London, British Library, Arundel 507
Date: Compiled in the late 14th C; some items 13th C
Place of Production: Compiled in Durham
Foliation: ff. 100 (with unfoliated paper flyleaves)
Contents:
Many theological texts, most in Latin, but including three French texts:
Manuel des péchés (frag.), ff. 81r–v
Proverbes de bon enseignement (Dean no. 252), ff. 95r–99r
Proverbial Follies (Dean no. 266), ff. 99v–100r
Ownership Category: produced for clerical owners, based on contents; clerical possession (14th C), based on inscription

This manuscript is not mentioned by Arnould, Laird, or Sullivan, perhaps because it contains only a single leaf of the Manuel (81r–v). It is primarily a collection of theological works, many of which would be best suited to a monastic context, such as a tract entitled “De quator generibus monachorum in omni claustro” (39r) and the Latin list of rules for monks (78v–79v). It is therefore counted among manuscripts produced for the clergy. It also contains a Middle English poem ascribed to Richard Rolle (54v–66r). According to a list on folio 92v, it was, in 1396, in the possession of Richard Segbruck, a monk of the Benedictine Priory of St Cuthbert in Durham.

Wr – Worcester, Cathedral Library, Q.35
Date: 14th C
Place of Production: Unknown
Foliation: ff. 66 (with 2 binding leaves at the beginning and 2 at the end)
Contents:
Manuel des péchés (frag.), front and back flyleaves
Commentary on Peter Lombard’s Sentences, ff. 1–66v
Ownership Category: clerical possession (date unknown), based on current location

Dean notes that the flyleaves to this fourteenth-century manuscript contain parts of Book II of the Manuel. The manuscript also contains commentary on Peter Lombard’s Sentences (1–66v). It was likely in the library at Worcester cathedral in the late medieval period, judging from the provenance of the library’s collection.
Dean, citing Ker, notes that the paste-downs in this printed book are two bifolia of the Manuel. They contain “passages on the Creed and the Ten Commandments.”160 The book contains Bernhard von Breydenbach’s Peregrinatio in terram sanctam (1490) and was owned by William Smith, Bishop of Lincoln and founder of Brasenose College (d. 1514).161 As noted above, the name William Smith appears in Harley MS 4971, and it would be interesting if the folios used as pastedowns in the Brasenose book had originated in the Harley one, but this seems unlikely, since the Harley text is copied in three columns, while the Brasenose one is in two.162

This early fourteenth-century manuscript contains four tales from the Manuel on one leaf (134r–v).164 James suggests that the manuscript “was probably compiled by a parish priest.” It contains a variety of exempla, some of which pertain to the powers of confession.165

Other Copies

We have records of some copies, now lost, which nevertheless offer insight into the medieval readers of the Manuel. One copy appears in a 1369 list of the books available to Richard of Normanton, the vicar of Southwell Minster, in Nottinghamshire.166 Taubman suggests that this was St John’s College MS F.30, since this manuscript also has connections to Nottinghamshire.167 Barratt notes that a copy appears in a 1400 catalogue of the
books of Titchfield Abbey, in Hamshire. There is also one in the 1389 catalogue of Dover Priory and another in the 1396 catalogue of Meaux Abbey. Leicester Abbey might have had a copy; their fifteenth-century catalogue lists a “manuale in gallico” which might be the Manuel, although the attribution is uncertain and it has consequently been left off the list below. Barratt also finds that St Augustine’s Abbey, Canterbury had one, a gift from “the monk Richard of Canterbury (fl. ca. 1320).” This could be the booklet of the Manuel that was eventually bound into Harley MS 337, since, as noted above, the first fragment in this manuscript is a cartulary from St Augustine’s. A physician and fellow of Merton College, Oxford, Simon Bredon, granted his copy to the nuns of Malling Abbey in 1368. Stacey Gee finds that one John Affordeby, “a master of the hospital of St Mary in York,” bequeathed in his 1452 will a copy to the Moxby Convent library. Finally, William Creyke, rector of All Hallows, London, left a copy to one of his parishioners, named John Milton.

Summary of Findings

The type of evidence used for determining provenance appears beside each copy. Since a manuscript produced for one audience may not necessarily have reached it, copies listed in the “produced for” categories are not included in the “possession” categories, unless, as in the case of Y, there is other evidence to suggest that they were in the possession of a certain group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Copies in lay possession</th>
<th>Produced for lay owners</th>
<th>Lay possession (14th C)</th>
<th>Lay possession (15th C)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6 and 1 fragment</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copies</td>
<td>E Pr</td>
<td>C (booklet)</td>
<td>A D F K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>contents (uncertain)</td>
<td>inscriptions, ownership inscriptions, ownership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>illustration</td>
<td>ownership, contents, ownership,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D G</td>
<td>marginal inscriptions, ownership,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>marginal inscriptions, ownership,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ownership, ownership,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ownership, ownership,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost</td>
<td></td>
<td>All Hallows will</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incomplete</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>P (booklet) T</td>
<td>armorials marginal inscription</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>contents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short fragments</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>marginal inscription</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Copies in clerical possession

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Produced for clerical owners</th>
<th>Clerical possession (14th C)</th>
<th>Clerical possession (15th C)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3 and 3 short fragments</td>
<td>9 and 2 short fragments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copies</td>
<td>G scribe contents H contents D contents</td>
<td>A contents E contents H contents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost</td>
<td>Meaux Southwell Dover All Hallows Malling St Augustine's library catalogue book list library catalogue will will gift inscription</td>
<td>Titchfield Moxby library catalogue will</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incomplete</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short fragments</td>
<td>V contents Y contents Pc contents</td>
<td>X contents Y loan chest inscription Ub V donor inscription</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Copies in lay possession (date unknown)** (1)

B (contents)

**Copies in clerical possession (date unknown)** (3 and 1 short fragment)

M (marginal inscription), Z (inscription)

Incomplete: P (contents) (may be the same as St Augustine's)

Short fragments: Wr (current location)

**Medieval provenance unknown** (6)

I, L, O

Incomplete: Q, R, W

### Conclusions

Perhaps the most surprising of these findings is that we have an equal number of copies containing evidence of having been produced for lay owners (3) as those containing evidence of having been produced for clerical ones (3). Early copies can be found among both those produced for lay owners
and those produced for clerical ones, and this strongly suggests that, from early on, the text was understood as holding value for both lay and clerical audiences. An objection might be raised that some of the layfolk for whom the text was produced did not intend to use it themselves, but wanted it instead for its perceived benefit to a religious reader in their acquaintance, such as a private confessor. Yet we have in the case of manuscript Pr, which was commissioned by Joan Tateshal for her own use, a testament to genuine lay interest in the text. And manuscripts E and S, both counted among lay commissions because they contain clearly lay-oriented texts, were surely intended for, if not used by, their lay patrons themselves or their families. So at least a few copies of the Manuel were intended for lay readers from their inception.

Also surprising is the number of copies owned by layfolk in the fourteenth century (6 copies and 1 fragment) compared to the number owned by the clergy or its institutions (9 copies and 2 fragments). Its lay connections indicate that the Manuel participated, to a larger extent than usually acknowledged, in the growing emphasis on lay education that developed in England over the course of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Early lay interest in the text is especially interesting given that the Manuel was, as Lutton notes, among the earliest of the vernacular manuals about confession produced after the Fourth Lateran Council. The number of layfolk who apparently commissioned copies for themselves, and who owned copies in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, suggests that a desire to prepare oneself for confession took hold among the laity in the century following the Fourth Lateran Council. It is also worth acknowledging that at least four copies were either commissioned by, or owned by, women—a surprising fact, given how rarely women are mentioned among its readers.

Claire Waters speaks of the proliferation of texts for religious education in this period and finds that these “offered audiences able to read or hear them a new way of imagining themselves as religious subjects.” By providing the basics of theological instruction alongside lists of sins through which penitents could examine themselves in preparation for confession, the Manuel helped foster in its readers both theological knowledge and a deeper awareness of their own behaviors, habits, and failings in the eyes of the Church—in other words, a kind of self-knowledge. The Manuel’s circulation among the laity, then, is suggestive of the methods of self-reflection and the kinds of self-knowledge available to the laity in this period.

The Manuel’s circulation among clerical owners is well recognized, but the ownership information above reveals some surprising aspects of clerical ownership. First, the number of copies that moved from lay to clerical
hands, or vice versa, is notable and provides fascinating insight into some of the connections between these groups in the late medieval period. The number of fragments and incomplete copies in clerical possession is also notable. Some of these are limited to series of exempla from the Manuel.\textsuperscript{178} This offers support for E. J. Arnould’s suggestion that the clergy were particularly drawn to this aspect of the text.\textsuperscript{179} Probably these exempla served to vivify and exemplify moral teachings in contemporary sermons. It is also notable that there was significant diversity even among clerical owners of the text. Communities of monks, individual brothers, scholars, and the occasional parish priest are all represented among its owners, and this speaks to its broad appeal.

The study of manuscripts above offers additional support for the powerful Yorkshire connections of the text, which have been described by Andrew Reeves, Matthew Sullivan, and others. The remarkable number of copies that circulated in this region soon after the text’s production suggests that A. W. Taubman is right that “the Manuel had a notable regional circulation.”\textsuperscript{180} Yet these findings also suggest how far the text travelled from this area. In the fourteenth century, copies were owned by several southern institutions, including Dover Priory (Kent), Titchfield Abbey (Hampshire), and the Abbey of St Mary the Virgin (Quarr). Two have connections to the West Midlands, and another two to Oxford. The text appealed to owners in a variety of different orders, with copies circulating among Benedictines (MS N), Augustinians (MS Z) and Cistercians (MS H).

The wide circulation of the Manuel contributes to our growing awareness of the role of Anglo-Norman in lay households in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. While Anglo-Norman in this period was once seen as a dying language severed from its origins, this paradigm has been revised in recent years.\textsuperscript{181} We are increasingly recognizing that Anglo-Norman persisted as a respectable language for the clergy, but also for business, agriculture, and other lay affairs.\textsuperscript{182} The circulation of the Manuel des péchés across a relatively varied cross section of the medieval population in the fourteenth and fifteen centuries offers further evidence of the importance of Anglo-Norman in lay contexts well into the late medieval period.

\textit{Leiden University}
NOTES


9 For Schemmann’s refutation of Sullivan’s theory of textual corruption, see *Confessional*, 324. The quotation appears at 329.


13 See London, British Library, Arundel MS 372 below.


15 For scholars who describe some of the problems of using documentary evidence (such as ownership inscriptions and wills) to establish the “actual” audiences of a text, see Ruth Evans, “Readers/Audiences/Texts,” in *The Idea of the Vernacular*, ed. Jocelyn Wogan-Browne et al. (Pennsylvania State U. Press, 1999), 112.


18 “Harley MS 273.”

19 Contents of the manuscript are listed at “Harley MS 273,” *British Library Digitised Manuscripts*, http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Harley_MS_273.

20 For the inscription, see Sullivan, “Original,” 115. For Cantilupe’s feast day, see William Smith, *The Use of Hereford: The Sources of a Medieval English Diocesan Rite* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), 601.

21 “Harley MS 273.”


29 Sullivan, “Historical Notes,” 85–86.

30 Arnould, Manuel, 367–69.


32 A fifteenth-century hand has written both a table of contents which describes all the major parts of the manuscript, and, on the same folio, “Liber monachorum Sancti Edmundi in quo subscripta continentur” (f. 3r). Arnould, Manuel, 369. Arnould also finds an ownership inscription, “Liber Johannis Norton” (f. 3r). Arnould suggests that this may refer to the prior of Mount Grace in Yorkshire, who was active in 1485 (Manuel, 369n1).

33 Arnould, Manuel, 367.

34 Sullivan, “Original,” 105; Dean and Boulton, Anglo-Norman, 351.


36 Arnould, Manuel, 369.


44 Arnould, Manuel, 369.


46 “Detailed Record for Royal 20 B XIV”


“Galmetun,” Historical Gazetteer of England’s Place Names, Queen’s U. Belfast et al., place-names.org.uk/. Sullivan identifies this location with “Galmington, Somerset (in Taunton)” but he does not provide evidence for this identification (“Original,” 116, 124n97).

George Oliver, The History of Exeter (Exeter: R. Cullum, 1821), 169. Mackie mentions this Colyford in her examination of this manuscript, but suggests that he is too late to be the owner of the MS (“Robert,” 28).


Herbert, Catalogue, vol. 3, 293.


Hunt, “Une petite,” 72.


Reeves, Religious, 154.

This description draws on Mackie’s description in “Robert,” 35.


Arnould, Manuel, 374.

Murray, Château, 32.


Mackie entertains the possibility that the Manuel and Chasteau had been joined before the inscription was made, but considers it unlikely ("Robert," 28).

Sullivan considers the bindings original but does not date them ("Original," 125); but the bindings are from the fifteenth century according to Falconer Madan, *A Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford*, vol. 2, pt. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1937), 747.

Laird, "Manuscripts," 111.

Arnould, Manuel, 376.


Laird, "Manuscripts," 111.

Sullivan, "Original," 125.

Laird, "Manuscripts," 111n49.

Arnould, Manuel, 375; Barratt, "Spiritual," 354.


Laird, "Manuscripts," 111n49.


Arnould, Manuel, 379.


91 Arnould, Manuel, 379.


98 Laird, “Manuscripts,” 112.


101 Arnould, Manuel, 381.


104 R. Sharpe et al., *English*, 681.

105 The inscription and this commentary are given by Charlton Laird, “A Fourteenth Century Scribe,” *Modern Language Notes* 55 (1940): 603.


113 I have drawn this conclusion from a digitized copy of the folio, available at “Detailed Record for Harley 337.”

114 Sullivan finds that the same mid-fourteenth-century hand made notes in both the third fragment (on fols. 42v–43r) and the fourth fragment (on fols. 56v, and 71v) (121), and concludes from this evidence that the entire manuscript was bound together by the middle of the fourteenth century (120n24). While his supposition may be correct, all we can conclude from this finding with any certainty is that the third and fourth fragments had been joined together at this stage.

115 “Detailed Record for Harley 337.”


117 The description of this MS is based on that given by A. G. Rigg, ed., *A Book of British Kings, 1200 BC–1399 AD* (Toronto: PIMS, 2000), 18. This description has been supplemented with information from J. A. Herbert, *Catalogue of Romances in the Department of Manuscripts British Museum*, vol. 2 (London: Longmans, 1910), 199–206, and from Mackie, “Robert,” 33.

118 Rigg notes that its provenance is unknown (*Book*, 4). It is, however, worth noting that Rigg believes the chronicle was composed near York (4–5).
119 Arnould, Manuel, 385–86.

120 Sullivan, “Original,” 121n61; 108. The note reads “epm. dunelmensis” (i.e., “episcopum dunelmensis”) (fol. 2r) (121n61).


125 Arnould, Manuel, 389–91. This manuscript has been described in detail by Paul Meyer in “Notice du MS Rawlinson Poetry 241,” Romania 29 (1900): 1–84.


128 For the beginning of the Proverbes, see Paul Meyer, “ Notices et extraits du ms. 8336 de la bibliothèque de Sir Thomas Phillips à Cheltenham,” Romania 13 (1884): 540. For the version of the Mirroir contained in this manuscript, see Wilshere, “Introduction,” vi.


130 Description based on that at “Trilingual Compendium of Texts (MS Gg.1.1),” University of Cambridge: Digital Library, University of Cambridge, http://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-GG-00001-00001/1.


133 Laird, “Manuscripts,” 119; Arnould, Manuel, 392.


135 Arnould, Manuel, 392.


139 Lutton, “Vice, Virtue and Contemplation,” 68.


146 Arnould, Manuel, 392.


148 Laird notes that “Both manuscripts are preserved in the North, in collections which seem generally to have been local” (“Manuscripts,” 119).


151 “Arundel 372.”


153 “Arundel 372.”


155 “Arundel 507.”

Forshall, *Catalogue*, 145. In his *Northern English Books, Owners, and Makers in the Late Middle Ages* (Syracuse U. Press, 1995), John B. Friedman gives “John Segbruck” (245), but does not provide any indication of where he got this name.

Dean and Boulton, *Anglo-Norman*, 350.

John Kestell Floyer, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Preserved in the Chapter Library of Worcester Cathedral* (Oxford: James Parker, 1906), 25–26. Floyer writes that “Of the 275 volumes which now remain in manuscript, only a few seem to have belonged to other religious houses” (xi).

Dean and Boulton, *Anglo-Norman*, 350.


Dean and Boulton, *Anglo-Norman*, 349.

James, *Descriptive*, 233.

Barratt, “Spiritual,” 354; Cavanaugh, “Study,” 616–17. In the register printed by Cavanaugh, the *Manuel* is described as ‘unus liber qui vocatur ‘manuale peche,’ lingua gallica conscriptus, pretii iij.s. iiij. d,’ (Cavanaugh, 617).

Taubman, “Clergy,” 49.


174 Of the manuscript produced for the laity, E and Pr were both produced in the thirteenth century, and S in the early fourteenth century. Of those produced for the clergy, G was produced in the thirteenth century, and H and D in the early fourteenth century.


176 These are the copies described above as F, Pr, Malling, and Moxby.


178 See, for example, copies Pc, V, and Y.

179 Arnauld, Manuel, 290.

180 Taubman, “Clergy,” 49.
