

The Proceedings Against the Templars in the British Isles

Volume 2: The Translation

Translated by Helen J. Nicholson



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Translated by

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Abbreviations

ASV	Archivio Segreto Vaticano
BL	British Library
CCR	<i>Calendar of the Close Rolls preserved in the Public Record Office, prepared under the superintendence of the Deputy Keeper of the Records</i> (London, 1892–1963)
CDRI	<i>Calendar of Documents Relating to Ireland in the Public Record Office, London</i> , ed. H.S. Sweetman <i>et al.</i> , 5 vols (London, 1875–86)
CPR	<i>Calendar of the Patent Rolls preserved in the Public Record Office, prepared under the superintendence of the Deputy Keeper of the Records</i> (London, 1891–1986)
Gooder	Eileen Gooder, <i>Temple Balsall: the Warwickshire Preceptory of the Templars and their Fate</i> (Chichester, 1995)
Larking and Kemble	<i>The Knights Hospitallers in England, Being the Report of Prior Philip de Thame to the Grand Master Elyan de Villanova for AD 1338</i> , ed. Lambert B. Larking, intro. John Mitchell Kemble, Camden Society 1st series, 65 (1857)
MS A	Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 454
MS B	London, British Library, Cotton MS Julius B xii
MS C	Vatican, Archivio Segreto Vaticano, <i>Armarium XXXV</i> , 147
MS D	London, British Library, Additional MS 5444
ODNB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> , ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison, 60 vols (Oxford, 2004) and online at: http://www.oxforddnb.com/
OED	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i> , 2nd edn, 20 vols (Oxford, 1989)
RCH	<i>Rotulorum Patentium et Clausorum Cancellarie Hibernie Calendarium</i> , vol. 1, part 1, <i>Hen. II–Hen. VII</i> , ed. Edward Tresham (Dublin, 1828)
RS	Rolls Series
Schottmüller	<i>Der Untergang des Templer-Ordens mit urkundlichen und kritischen Beiträgen</i> , ed. Konrad Schottmüller, 2 vols (Berlin, 1887, repr. Vaduz, 1991), vol. 2
TNA: PRO	The National Archives: Public Record Office at Kew, London, UK
VCH	<i>The Victoria History of the Counties of England</i> , ed. William Page, <i>et al.</i> (London, 1900–)
Wilkins	<i>Concilia Magnae Britanniae et Hiberniae</i> , ed. David Wilkins, 4 vols (London, 1737), vol. 2

Introduction to the Translation

The trial of the Templars, 1307–12, has been the subject of extensive scholarly research. Not only have editions of the trial proceedings from various regions been published, but also many scholarly analyses of the material contained in these proceedings and wide-ranging studies of the trial of the Order.¹ The proceedings against the Templars in the British Isles have been the subject of a number of analytical studies,² but research has been

¹ For a survey of the bibliography, see Malcolm Barber, *The Trial of the Templars*, 2nd edn (Cambridge, 2006), pp. 362–5. A detailed bibliography of the published trial proceedings was produced by Anne Gilmour-Bryson in 1996: Anne Gilmour-Bryson, ‘Sodomy and the Knights Templar’, in *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 7 (1996), p. 152, n. 3. She herself published *The Trial of the Templars in the Papal State and the Abruzzi* (Vatican City, 1982), and a translation of the complete Cyprus proceedings: Anne Gilmour-Bryson, *The Trial of the Templars in Cyprus: A Complete English Edition* (Leiden, 1998). Additional proceedings not listed by Gilmour-Bryson include: Josep Maria Sans i Travé, ‘L’inedito processo dei Templari in Castiglia (Medina del Campo, 27 aprile 1310)’, in: *Acri 1291: La fine della presenza degli ordini militari in Terra Santa e i nuovi orientamenti nel XIV secolo*, ed. Francesco Tommasi (Perugia, 1996), pp. 227–64; Francesco Tommasi, ‘Interrogatorio di Templari a Cesena (1310)’, in: *ibid.*, pp. 265–300. Studies include Malcolm Barber, *The Trial of the Templars* (Cambridge, 1978); Marie Luise Bulst-Thiele, ‘Der Prozess gegen den Templerorden’, in *Die geistlichen Ritterorden Europas*, ed. Josef Fleckenstein and Manfred Hellmann, Vorträge und Forschungen, 26 (Sigmaringen, 1980), pp. 375–402; Kaspar Elm, ‘Der Templerprozess, 1307–1312’, in his *Umbilicus Mundi: Beiträge zur Geschichte Jerusalems, der Kreuzzüge, des Kapitels vom Hlg. Grab in Jerusalem und der Ritterorden* (Bruges, 1998), pp. 507–27 (reprinted from *Macht und Recht. Grosse Prozesse in der Geschichte*, ed. Alexander Demandt (Munich, 1990), pp. 81–101, 297–9); Barbara Frale, *L’ultima battaglia dei Templari: dal codice ombra d’obbedienza militare alla costruzione del processo per eresia* (Rome, 2001); Alan Forey, *The Fall of the Templars in the Crown of Aragon* (Aldershot, 2001); Alain Demurger, *Jacques de Molay: le crépuscule des templiers* (Paris, 2002); Barbara Frale, *Il Papato e il processo ai Templari: L’inedita assoluzione di Chinon alla luce della diplomazia pontificia* (Rome, 2003); Philippe Josserand, *Église et pouvoir dans la Péninsule Ibérique: les ordres militaires dans le royaume de Castile (1252–1369)* (Madrid, 2004), pp. 50–60; Pierre-Vincent Claverie, *L’ordre du Temple en Terre Sainte et à Chypre au XIIIe siècle* (Nicosia, 2005), vol. 2, pp. 272–308; Julien Théry, ‘Procès des Templiers’, in *Prier et Combattre: Dictionnaire européen des ordres militaires au Moyen Âge*, ed. Nicole Bériou and Philippe Josserand (Paris, 2009), pp. 743–51. See also *The Debate on the Trial of the Templars, 1307–1314*, ed. Jochen Burgdorf, Paul Crawford and Helen J. Nicholson (Farnham, 2010).

² Charles G. Addison, *The History of the Knights Templars* (London, 1842); Clarence Perkins, ‘The Trial of the Knights Templars in England’, *English Historical Review*, 24 (1909), 432–47; Thomas W. Parker, *The Knights Templars in England* (Tucson, 1963), pp. 91–106; Rosalind Hill, ‘Fourpenny Retirement: The Yorkshire Templars in the Fourteenth Century’, in: *The Church and Wealth: Papers read at the 1986 Summer Meeting and the 1987 Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, ed. W.J. Sheils and Diana Wood, *Studies in Church History*, 24

limited by the fact that the proceedings themselves have not been fully edited. These two volumes seek to remedy this problem by providing a complete edition of the proceedings, with a translation, additional information and analysis. This second volume contains the translation and additional information: volume one contains the Latin text.

This introduction will begin with a survey of the documents contained in the proceedings, then consider the potential use of the trial testimonies as historical evidence, and finally consider some of the problems in producing the translation.

The Trial of the Templars in the British Isles – a Survey

It is not intended here to trace the origins and course of the trial of the Templars outside the British Isles. Suffice it to say that on 20 December 1307, following the papal bull *Pastoralis praeeminentiae* of 22 November 1307,³ King Edward II ordered the arrest of the Templars within his domains.⁴ Trial proceedings, however, did not begin for another twenty months. In August 1308, Pope Clement V had sent instructions as to how the trial was to proceed and indicating his intention to appoint inquisitors to take part in the trial.⁵ The proceedings recorded in MS A open with these instructions, the bull *Faciens misericordiam*.⁶

(1987), pp. 123–8; Anne Gilmour-Bryson, ‘The London Templar Trial Testimony: “Truth”, Myth or Fable’, in: *A World Explored: Essays in Honour of Laurie Gardiner*, ed. Anne Gilmour-Bryson (Melbourne, Australia, 1993), pp. 44–61; Eileen Gooder, *Temple Balsall: The Warwickshire Preceptory of the Templars and their Fate* (Chichester, 1995); J.S. Hamilton, ‘Apocalypse Not: Edward II and the Suppression of the Templars’, *Medieval Perspectives*, 12 (1997), 90–100; Evelyn Lord, *The Knights Templar in Britain* (Harlow, 2002), pp. 191–203; Eileen A. Gooder, ‘South Witham and the Templars. The Documentary Evidence’, in: *Excavations at a Templar Preceptory: South Witham, Lincolnshire, 1965–67*, ed. Philip Mayes (Leeds, 2002), pp. 80–95; Alan J. Forey, ‘Ex-Templars in England’, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 53 (2002), 18–37; Helen J. Nicholson, *The Knights Templar on Trial: The Trial of the Templars in the British Isles, 1308–1311* (Stroud, 2009).

³ Barber, *Trial of the Templars*, 2nd edn, pp. 2, 89–91; Sophia Menache, *Clement V* (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 216–17.

⁴ Perkins, ‘Trial of the Knights Templars’, 432; Herbert Wood, ‘The Templars in Ireland’, *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, section C, 26 (1906–7), 327–77 (here 346–8); Martin Messinger, ‘The Trial of the Knights Templar in Ireland’, unpublished M.Phil. thesis, University College Dublin, 1988, pp. 16–17; *Fædera, Conventiones, litteræ et cuiuscunque generis Acta Publica inter reges Angliæ et alios quosvis Imperatores, Reges, Pontifices, Principes vel Communitates ...*, ed. Thomas Rymer and Robert Sanderson, revised by Adam Clarke and Frederick Holbrooke, vol. 2, part 1, 1307–1327 (London, 1818), p. 23; *Calendar of the Justiciary Rolls, or Proceedings in the Court of the Justiciar of Ireland, I to VII years of Edward II*, ed. Herbert Wood and Albert E. Langman, revised by Margaret C. Griffith (Dublin, 1956) (hereafter vol. 3), pp. 23–4. For the early stages of the trial as a whole, and of the trial in the British Isles, see Nicholson, *Knights Templar on Trial*, pp. 19–90.

⁵ MS A, fols 3v, 6v.

⁶ MS A, fols 1r–7r.

Faciens misericordiam: *the authority for the trial in the British Isles*

In *Faciens misericordiam*, Pope Clement explained that the leading officials of the Temple in France – Jacques de Molay, the grand master, Hugh Peraud, visitor and commander in France, Raimbaud de Caromb, commander of *Outremer* (Cyprus), Geoffrey de Charny, commander of Normandy, and Geoffrey de Goneville, commander of Poitou and Aquitaine – had confessed before a commission of cardinals to the charges against them, recanted, and been absolved.⁷ Stating that the Templars had gravely sinned (*graviter deliquisse*),⁸ the bull indicates that the pope regarded the Templars' confessed crimes as extremely serious. They were guilty of types of heresy, *hereses varias*, and disgusting and shameful things, *orribilia et inhonesta*. He gave instructions for investigations to proceed throughout the rest of Christendom, specifying whom he was appointing to conduct the trial.⁹

The accuracy of the confessions described in *Faciens misericordiam* is extremely uncertain. A manuscript in the Vatican Archives containing a detailed record of the testimonies that were summarised in *Faciens misericordiam* was published by Heinrich Finke in 1907; a still more detailed record from the Vatican Archives was published by Barbara Frale in 2003.¹⁰ These records of the proceedings reveal that the leading Templars' confessions were not as comprehensive as *Faciens misericordiam* implies.

Although those Templars who made confessions denied that they had confessed because of torture, the assertion that confession had been made freely and without coercion was normal procedure when heretics confessed and abjured heresy. Since 1252, the use of torture had been permitted in the interrogation of heretics in order to obtain confessions, and was in fact normal procedure in heresy cases where suspects refused to confess.¹¹

⁷ Barber, *Trial of the Templars*, 2nd edn, pp. 125–6, 332, n. 34; the date on the bull is 12 August, but as the interrogations described were not actually completed until 20 August, the true date was probably over a week later.

⁸ MS A, fol. 3r–v: *invenimus sepefatos Magistrum et fratres in premissis et circa premissa licet quosdam ex eis in pluribus et alios in paucioribus [3v] graviter deliquisse*.

⁹ MS A, fol. 6v.

¹⁰ Vatican, ASV, *Registra Avenionensia* 48, Benedicti XII, vol. 1, fols 437f, in *Papsttum und Untergang des Templerordens*, ed. Heinrich Finke, 2 vols (Münster, 1907), vol. 2, pp. 324–9, no. 154; Vatican, ASV, *Archivum Arcis, Armarium D 217*, ed. Frale, *Il Papato*, pp. 198–214. Alain Demurger has commented that the discovery of 'the Chinon document' has not given historians any 'radically new' information: Alain Demurger, *Jacques de Molay: Le crépuscule des templiers*, 2nd edn (Paris, 2009); translated by Antonia Nevill as *The Last Templar: the Tragedy of Jacques de Molay*, 2nd edn (London, 2009), p. 225.

¹¹ Edward Peters, *Torture* (Oxford, 1985), pp. 50, 57–8, 65–6; Andrew P. Roach, *The Devil's World: Heresy and Society, 1100–1300* (Harlow, 2005), pp. 148–9; Barber, *Trial of the Templars*, 2nd edn, pp. 28–9; see also pp. 133–4. Roach points out that interrogators apparently used psychological torture more than physical torture. See also Robert Bartlett, *Trial by Fire and Water: The Medieval Judicial Ordeal* (Oxford, 1986), pp. 139–43, who argues that: 'it is reasonably clear that in the period 1200–1700 judicial torture fulfilled the same function as ordeals had done in the period 800–1200' (p. 142). Kenneth Pennington disagrees: 'Torture and Fear: Enemies of Justice', *Rivista Internazionale di Diritto Commune*, 19 (2008), 203–42, at note 94.

Some contemporaries expressed doubts over the use of torture as a means of revealing the truth, and those who questioned the confessions extracted during the trial of the Templars in the French king's dominions emphasised the fact that torture had been used to extract those confessions, casting doubt on the validity of their testimonies.¹² All the leading Templars mentioned in *Faciens misericordiam* had either been physically tortured or subjected to other duress in order to gain a confession from them.¹³

Faciens misericordiam established the basis for the proceedings against the Templars throughout Christendom. It insisted that the Templars had confessed to heresy, and that this should be thoroughly investigated by Provincial Church Councils, which should absolve or condemn the individual Templars. The pope reserved for himself the investigation against the Order as a whole, and had appointed others to investigate the grand commander in England.

The Proceedings in the British Isles

The *inquisitores pravitatis heretice* Pope Clement V eventually sent to conduct the trial in England, Scotland, Ireland and Scandinavia were Dieudonné, abbot of Lagny in the diocese of Paris, and Sicard de Vaur, canon of Narbonne and papal chaplain, who did not arrive in England until mid-September 1309.¹⁴ The interrogations in the British Isles were based on a short list of 88 charges against the Templars devised for use in episcopal inquiries.¹⁵

The trial in England began in London in October 1309. Proceedings in London continued through four separate sets of interrogations until June 1310;¹⁶ proceedings began at Lincoln in March 1310 and continued until June; those Templars were

¹² Barber, *Trial of the Templars*, 2nd edn, pp. 92–4. The second anonymous tract discussed by Barber stated that the Templars in France were imprisoned in poor conditions, threatened and tortured, so that 36 in the Parisian house alone died under torture rather than confess to the charges: 'Lamentacio quedam pro Templariis', in C.R. Cheney, 'The Downfall of the Templars and a Letter in their Defence', in C.R. Cheney, *Medieval Texts and Studies* (Oxford, 1973), pp. 314–27, at p. 323. The majority of the brothers in England stated that if Templars overseas had confessed, they had lied; some singled out confessions in France as unreliable: MS A, fols 73r, 75v; some specified that this was because torture had been used on them to force them to confess: MS A, fols 73v, 112v, 126v, 129r (twice), 131r, 133r. For a heresy trial a few years earlier, in 1299–1300, in which contemporaries doubted confessions obtained by torture, see James Given, 'Social Stress, Social Strain, and the Inquisitors of Medieval Languedoc', in *Christendom and its Discontents: Exclusion, Persecution and Rebellion, 1000–1500*, ed. Scott L. Waugh and Peter D. Diehl (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 67–85, at p. 80.

¹³ Barber, *Trial of the Templars*, 2nd edn, pp. 80–84.

¹⁴ *Fædera*, ed. Rymer, vol. 2, pt 1, p. 88; MS A, fol. 1r.

¹⁵ The short list of charges appears in MS A, fols 7r–8v, and was previously printed by Wilkins, pp. 331–2. A longer list, comprising some 127 charges, was used in Paris by the papal commissioners and in Brindisi: see Barber, *Trial of the Templars*, 2nd edn, p. 152; *Le Procès des Templiers*, ed. Jules Michelet, 2 vols (Paris, 1841–51, repr. 1987), vol. 1, pp. 89–96; Schottmüller, pp. 119–24.

¹⁶ MS A, fols 10v, 90v.

interrogated again in London in March to April 1311.¹⁷ At York, proceedings began in April 1310 and lasted until the beginning of May.¹⁸ The papal inquisitors did not proceed to Ireland themselves but appointed judges delegate, who received a safe conduct from King Edward II of England on 29 September 1309; another judge delegate was appointed for Scotland.¹⁹ Proceedings began in Scotland on 17 November 1309, and broke off prematurely because of the war: *propter hostium incursus et guerre continue tempestatem*;²⁰ proceedings in Ireland began in early February 1310²¹ and ended in early June.²²

As the inquisitors were unable to obtain any substantial information from the Templars in the province of Canterbury using the 88 questions laid down by Pope Clement V, they devised a further set of 25 questions, which developed the premise that the Order of the Temple was a tightly organised institution, with a top-down command structure and all members following the same procedures, established by the grand master. As the grand master in France and the leading officials of the Temple in France had confessed to the charges against the Order, all the Templars (the inquisitors alleged) must be guilty of the abuses with which they were charged. Forty-seven Templars had been interrogated on the original 88 charges in London, not including the grand commander of England, William de la More; 34 were asked the second set of questions, including William de la More.²³ Following this, the inquisitors drew up another four questions that attempted to establish that all Templars in the province of Canterbury knew each other and had been received in the same way, and a fifth that alleged that deceased Templars were buried in secret. Thirty-one Templars were cross-examined this time, including the grand commander.²⁴ A final round of questioning asked about absolution procedures in chapter meetings; this time, 39 Templars were cross-examined, and William de la More gave evidence twice.²⁵

The twenty Templars who were initially imprisoned at Lincoln were asked the same questions, but in a different order: on 1 June 1310 at Lincoln eighteen of them were asked about absolution procedures,²⁶ and then from 30 March to 2 April 1311, in London, eighteen of them were asked 28 questions that combined the 25 and five questions that the Templars imprisoned in London had been asked the previous spring.²⁷ It was clear from their answers that the English Templars were confused about the theological details of absolution and penance and the role of a priest, and that they had different views of the correct procedures. Although these requestionings provided the bulk of the inquisitors' evidence, such as it was, against the Templars in the Province of Canterbury, no record

¹⁷ MS A, fols 105v, 116r, 117r, 124v.

¹⁸ MS A, fol. 127v, 133r.

¹⁹ *Fœdera*, ed. Rymer, vol. 2, pt 1, pp. 93, 94; *CPR, 1307–1313*, p. 192.

²⁰ MS A, fols 155, 159r.

²¹ See note on MS A, fol. 134r, below.

²² MS A, fol. 155; and see *CPR, 1307–1313*, p. 267.

²³ MS A, fols 63v–64v. For the answers to these questions, see MS A, fols 64v–81v.

²⁴ MS A, fols 81v–86r.

²⁵ MS A, fols 87v–90v.

²⁶ MS A, fols 115r–116r.

²⁷ MS A, fol. 117r–v for the questions, fols 117v–124v for the answers.

Table 1 The Trial of the Templars in the British Isles – Chronology

13 October 1307	Templars in France are arrested on the orders of King Philip IV of France, charged with heresy
22 November 1307	Pope Clement V issues <i>Pastoralis praeeminentiae</i> , ordering the arrest of Templars throughout Christendom
15–20 December 1307	King Edward II orders arrest of Templars in British Isles
9–11 January 1308	arrest of Templars in England
3 February 1308	arrest of Templars in Ireland
12 August 1308	Pope Clement V issues <i>Faciens misericordiam</i> , setting out the case for the trial to proceed throughout Christendom
Mid-September 1309	two inquisitors appointed by the pope arrive in the British Isles
End September/ start October 1309	the papal inquisitors appoint judges for Ireland and Scotland
23 October 1309	trial begins in London with three Templar witnesses not on oath
25 October 1309	proceedings against the Templars begin in London
17 November 1309	proceedings in Scotland begin and end
19 November 1309	interrogation of non-Templar witnesses in London begins
9 January 1310	interrogation of non-Templars in London ends
27 January 1310	first round of interrogations of Templars in London continues
30 January 1310	second round of interrogations of Templars begins in London
6 February 1310	second round of interrogations in London ends; summing up on 10 February
6 February 1310	proceedings in Ireland begin
3–4 March 1310	third round of interrogations of Templars in London
18 March 1310	the final Templar in London gives his first testimony
31 March 1310	proceedings against the Templars begin in Lincoln
27 April 1310	proceedings against the Templars begin at York
4 May 1310	proceedings at York end
1 June 1310	proceedings in Lincoln end
6 June 1310	proceedings in Ireland end
8–9 June 1310	fourth round of interrogations of Templars in London
30 March–2 April 1311	‘Lincoln’ Templars interrogated again in London
22 April–29 April 1311	petition by all the Templars held at London, to the inquisitors
10 June 1311	King Edward II notes that Stephen of Stapelbrugge has been arrested in Wiltshire
23 June 1311	‘confession’ of Stephen of Stapelbrugge
26 June 1311	‘confession’ of Thomas Totty of Thoraldby begins
27 June 1311	abjuration of Stephen of Stapelbrugge
29 June 1311	‘confession’ of Thomas Totty ends; followed by abjuration
1 July 1311	‘confession’ of John of Stoke
3 July 1311	abjuration of John of Stoke
5 July 1311	Templar Grand Commander William de la More meets the bishop of Chichester at the church of All Hallows Barking; refuses to admit any error
6 July 1311, Southwark	first group of five Templars declares willingness to abjure all heresies and be reconciled with the Church

9 July 1311, lodging of the Dean of St Paul's	the second group, of thirteen Templars, declares willingness to abjure all heresies. These two groups abjure, and are reconciled to the Church
10 July 1311	eight Templars abjure before the Church Council at London
12 July 1311	nineteen Templars abjure before a large crowd and the Church Council
13 July 1311	five old and feeble Templars abjure at the church of St Mary Barking. Seven further Templars abjure before the Church Council. Fifty (should be 57 or 39) Templars are absolved and reconciled. Dispersal of Templars to monasteries for penance begins immediately
29 July 1311	twenty-four Templars from the province of York and Scotland are absolved at York
18 August 1311	King Edward II orders the sheriff of York to hand over all Templars in his custody to Robert of Pickering, the archbishop of York's vicar-general, for dispersal to monasteries
16 October 1311	Church Council at Vienne opens
22 March 1312	Pope Clement V takes the decision to dissolve the Order of the Temple
3 April 1312	Pope Clement V announces that he is dissolving the Order: 'not by judicial sentence but by way of provision or papal ordinance' (<i>Vox in excelso</i>)
2 May 1312	the pope announces that the Templars' property will be transferred to the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem (<i>Ad providam</i>)
Autumn 1312	the commander of Ireland is released from prison on bail
December 1312	William de la More dies in the Tower of London
4 April 1313	the sheriffs of London are ordered to hand over Himbert Blanc, grand commander of the Auvergne, to the archbishop of Canterbury for sentence

survives in the fullest record of the proceedings (Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Bodley 454; MS A in this edition) of such questioning at York. The summary sent to the papal commissioners preparing for the Council of Vienne hints that William of Grafton was questioned a second time (fols 9v–10r of ASV, *Armarium XXXV*, 147; MS C in this edition), but this is not clear. No questioning occurred in Scotland or in Ireland. Perhaps time constraints prevented such repeated questioning, but much must also have depended on the willingness of the local ecclesiastical and secular authorities to co-operate in the imprisonment and interrogation of the Templars.

Templars Missing from the Proceedings

The records of the proceedings do not state why some Templars were spared certain interrogations. In Ireland, the commander until the beginning of 1308, William of Warenne, was not, apparently, interrogated, although a pension was being paid to him with the other Templars until at least 1312. Possibly he was spared the shame of interrogation because of his noble status – he was related to the powerful Botiller family.²⁸ William de la

²⁸ For William de Warenne as commander of Ireland until early 1308, see Wood, 'Templars in Ireland', 333; *Calendar of the Justiciary Rolls or Proceedings in the Court of the Justiciar of Ireland Preserved in the Public Record Office of Ireland: Edward I, Part 2, XXXIII to XXXV Years*, ed.

More, grand commander of England, may have been spared the first questioning because Pope Clement had stated in *Faciens misericordiam* that he had instructed others to investigate him.²⁹ His name appears at the end of the list of Templars who were to be interrogated at London, MS A, fol. 11b(alt)r, but although the testimonies of all the other Templars on this list appear in the order given, William de la More's testimony does not appear. The same papal injunction may have applied to William de Warenne, although as no copy of the version of *Faciens misericordiam* sent to Ireland survives, this can be only speculation. However, while there is no record that William de Warenne was ever interrogated, after the initial round of questioning William de la More was interrogated as thoroughly as the other Templars in England.

Of the Templars imprisoned in London, Richard of Herdwick and John of Euley died after the first cross-examination,³⁰ while of those imprisoned in Lincoln, Alexander of Althon or Halton gave testimony twice in Lincoln, but was not among those interrogated at London in March 1311 and was not listed among the Templars imprisoned in London on 29 April 1311, so presumably had died.³¹ On 3 March 1310, Thomas of Tholouse was reported as dead – but was still alive 9 June 1310; however, at Michaelmas 1310 he was reported as having died on 7 September 1310.³² Presumably he had been ill in spring 1310, and this was why he was interrogated only twice rather than four times. As he claimed to have joined the Order 43 years before, in June 1267,³³ his death cannot have been a complete surprise. Of the two who joined with him, William of the Ford and Richard Peitevin or Poitevin,³⁴ William was interrogated four times but Richard only twice.³⁵ In July 1311, Richard Peitevin was one of those described as *senibus et decrepitis, et stare pre senio nequeuntibus*, and too feeble to travel from the Tower of London to St Paul's

James Mills, under the direction of the master of the rolls in Ireland (Dublin, 1914) (hereafter vol. 2), pp. 291, 292, 334, 357; for his pension in 1312 see *Irish Exchequer Payments, 1270–1446*, ed. Philomena Connolly (Dublin, 1998), p. 217; for his relatives see *Calendar of the Justiciary Rolls*, vol. 3, p. 36. For discussion of his relationship to the Botillers, see Helen Nicholson, 'The Testimony of Brother Henry Danet and the Trial of the Templars in Ireland', in *In Laudem Hierosolymitani: Studies in Crusades and Medieval Culture in Honour of Benjamin Z. Kedar*, ed. Iris Shagrir, Ronnie Ellenblum and Jonathan Riley-Smith (Ashgate, 2007), pp. 411–23: here pp. 422–3.

²⁹ For further discussion of the position of William de la More, see Nicholson, *Knights Templar on Trial*, pp. 52–3. There remains a possibility that both these commanders were interrogated and that a copy of their testimonies was sent directly to the papal court rather than being included in the proceedings for Ireland and England. No such copies, however, have been identified.

³⁰ MS A, fols 84r, 84v, 121v; TNA: PRO E142/98, m. 7.

³¹ MS A, fols 109r–v, 115v; not mentioned in fols 101v–102r or fols 117v–124v.

³² MS A, fols 83v, 90r; TNA: PRO E142/98, m. 7.

³³ MS A, fol. 24r. If in fact he was received by Himbert Peraud, as he claimed, he could not have been received before 1268, as the first mention of Peraud as grand commander of England is early in that year: *Close Rolls of the reign of Henry III preserved in the Public Record Office, printed under the superintendence of the Deputy Keeper of Records*, ed. H.C. Maxwell-Lyte and A.E. Stamp, 14 vols (London, 1902–1938), vol. 13, 1264–1268, p. 514.

³⁴ MS A, fols 19v, 21r. The name 'Peytevyn' or Poitevin appears frequently in fourteenth-century sources, but it is not possible to link Brother Richard to any other known Peytevyns.

³⁵ Richard: MS A, fols 19v–20v, 71v; William: fols 21r–v, 71r–v, 82r, 88v.

cathedral to perform his abjuration and to be absolved.³⁶ Of the other four brothers in the same state of health – Henry de La Wole, William of Welles, Robert of the Wolde and William of Chesterton – Henry had been interrogated three times,³⁷ but the others had each been interrogated only once, on 17 November 1309.³⁸ A fourth Templar interrogated on that day, Alexander of Bulbeke, who had joined the Order 30 years previously, was also interrogated only once, and died before the end of April 1311.³⁹ Clearly excessive age, and the resultant physical weakness and possibly mental weakness, led the inquisitors to spare certain Templars repeated interrogation. In contrast, William of the Ford, who was probably of similar age to Thomas of Tholouse and Richard Peitevin as he joined the Order on the same day, abjured heresy on 12 July 1311 at St Paul’s cathedral with a crowd of other Templars, and went to do penance in Lincoln diocese.⁴⁰

Age, however, does not explain why John Coffin, who was still alive in 1338,⁴¹ and so was presumably relatively young in 1309–11, was interrogated only twice, in the first and final interrogations in London. He was among the first group of Templars at London to abjure heresy, each stating that they had been new entrants into the Order, had not attended chapter meetings and had no knowledge of the secrets conducted by the senior men of the Order: *quod novi erant in ordine, et quod nunquam fuerunt in Capitulis celebratis generaliter per magistrum nec in secretis tractatibus maiorum ordinis*.⁴² But Alan of Newsam, who was also in that group, and was also still alive in 1338, had been interrogated four times.⁴³ Perhaps some Templars’ insistence of ignorance – John Coffin insisted that he had never been to a chapter meeting and knew nothing of the alleged heresies⁴⁴ – was taken seriously by the inquisitors.

Some were interrogated only once because they failed to return for further interrogation. The priest Roger of Stowe was not interrogated after his initial interrogation at London because he failed to reappear on the date set.⁴⁵ Thomas ‘Totty’ of Thoraldby missed the second and third interrogations of the Templars imprisoned at Lincoln because he escaped after his first interrogation.⁴⁶

In contrast, the inquisitors gave particular attention to the grand commander of the Auvergne, variously called Imbert, Himbert or Humbert Blanc or Blank, who had been arrested at Temple Ewell in Kent with the grand commander of England, William de la More, and others.⁴⁷ Scholars have speculated as to why he was in England at the time of the

³⁶ MS A, fol. 168v.

³⁷ MS A, fols 103r–v, 115v, 118v–119r.

³⁸ MS A, fols 51r–52r, 52r, 53v–54r.

³⁹ MS A, fols 52v–53r: not mentioned in fols 101v–102r.

⁴⁰ MS A, fol. 168r; *CCR, 1307–1313*, p. 365.

⁴¹ Larking and Kemble, p. 209.

⁴² MS A, fol. 166v.

⁴³ Larking and Kemble, p. 209; MS A, fols 31v–32v, 78r–v, 82v, 90r–v.

⁴⁴ MS A, fol. 90r.

⁴⁵ MS A, fols 32v–33v.

⁴⁶ MS A, fol. 162r.

⁴⁷ Gooder, p. 88, citing TNA: PRO E 358/20, rot. 6d under ‘compotus Henrici de Cobham’; MS A, fol. 44v; and see Nicholson, *Knights Templars on Trial*, p. 54. For a summary of his career, see *Le procès des Templiers d’Auvergne, 1309–1311: Edition de l’interrogatoire de juin 1309*, ed. Roger Sève and Anne-Marie Chagny-Sève (Paris, 1986), pp. 273–4.

arrests in France, on 13 October 1307.⁴⁸ Alain Demurger noted that in winter–spring 1307 he had been involved in a naval expedition in the eastern Mediterranean, possibly a preliminary expedition for the grand master’s planned crusade.⁴⁹ Possibly he came to England later in 1307 to promote another such expedition to the East, only to find himself ‘trapped’ there when the Templars in France were arrested in October. In any case, as some testimonies given by his brothers in the diocese of Clermont indicated that he had been involved in blasphemous procedures, the inquisitors in England considered him highly suspect.⁵⁰

When Himbert was interrogated in London he denied all knowledge of the alleged blasphemies. The inquisitors in the diocese of Clermont, in the Auvergne, sent to England the testimonies of eight Templars who had testified that they had been received into the Order by Brother Himbert: six stated that he had employed the blasphemous practices, and two that he had not.⁵¹ These testimonies did not result in Brother Himbert changing his testimony, but they did result in the Church Council condemning him to prison, on the basis that there was strong, although not conclusive, evidence against him.⁵² The cross-checking of testimonies also took place in the other direction. An English Templar named John of Stoke, who was also called ‘of Sutton’ to distinguish him from the priest-brother John of Stoke, stated that he had been received at Grand Selve in Picardy in Ponthieu, on the Sunday before Pentecost, 1295, by Jean de Villeneuve-le-Roi. In fact two Templars interrogated in France had noted that Jean de Villeneuve might have used *dicta illicita* (the blasphemous practices of which the Templars were accused) when receiving brothers into the Order, so that John of Sutton’s testimony was suspect. Evidently John’s testimony was sent to France, as on 30 March 1310 the papal commissioners asked one of those whom John had noted as present, the priest-brother Giles *de Rotangi*, whether John’s account was true. Giles confirmed that nothing *illicitum vel inhonestum* had taken place at John’s reception.⁵³

Two other testimonies were sent to England. Landolfo Brancaccio, cardinal-deacon of St Angelo and one of the papal commissioners involved in the French trial, sent to Sicard de Vaur the testimony of the Templar Robert de Saint-Just of Beauvais diocese, who had been received into the Order at ‘Stannford’ (Sandford, Oxfordshire). Robert claimed that the alleged blasphemies had occurred during his reception; he had been received, he said, by Brother Imbert Iderand, by whom he presumably meant Himbert Peraud, long dead – so

⁴⁸ The various theories of scholars are summarised by Sève and Chagny-Sève in their *Procès des Templiers d’Auvergne*, p. 246, n. 7: ‘Peut-être s’y trouvait-il à cause de ses fonctions ..., peut-être s’y était-il rendu par prudence ... peut-être comme le laisserait penser une liste de frères en fuite, s’y était-il réfugié.’

⁴⁹ Demurger, *Jacques de Molay*, pp. 209–11; quoting Jacques de Molay’s memorandum in *Vitae Paparum Avenionensium*, ed. Étienne Baluze (Paris, 1630–1718), new edn ed. G. Mollat, 4 vols (Paris, 1916–22), vol. 3, pp. 145–9, here pp. 148–9; translated in Malcolm Barber and Keith Bate, *The Templars: Selected Sources* (Manchester, 2002), pp. 105–9, here p. 108; see also Claverie, *L’ordre du Temple en Terre Sainte et à Chypre au XIIIe siècle*, vol. 2, pp. 270–71.

⁵⁰ Interrogations: MS A, fols 16v–18r, 75r, 85r, 88r; suspect: 100v–101r, 170r.

⁵¹ MS A, fols 16v–18r, 75r, 85r, 88r, 100v–101r.

⁵² MS A, fol. 170r.

⁵³ MS A, fols 42v–43v; *Procès*, ed. Michelet, vol. 1, pp. 489, 536–7; vol. 2, p. 132.

the story did not prove anything against the present Templars, except that those Templars in England who had been received by Himbert Peraud might also have had a blasphemous reception. They had, however, denied this.⁵⁴

The testimonies from Clermont and Beauvais were summarised, but the inquisitors in England also inserted into their records a complete transcription of the testimony of Brother Geoffrey de Goneville, grand commander of Aquitaine, just as it had been recorded at Paris on 15 November 1307. Brother Geoffrey had stated that he had been received 28 years before, at London, by Robert de Turville, and that blasphemous procedures were followed.⁵⁵ Geoffrey's testimony was made during the interrogations that followed immediately after the arrest of the Templars in France. Following the instructions of King Philip IV, he would have been imprisoned in isolation and tortured to force him to confess to the charges of blasphemous practices.⁵⁶ His evidence is therefore unreliable. Twenty-six Templars in the British Isles had been received into the Order by the late Robert de Turville.⁵⁷ They had all denied that anything blasphemous occurred during their receptions, but Geoffrey de Goneville's testimony, however distorted by torture, gave the inquisitors grounds to claim that the Templars in the British Isles were lying.

The Findings from the Interrogations

In all, 108 Templars were interrogated in the British Isles, and – until June 1311 – none confessed to any of the charges regarding denial of Christ, idolatry, disbelief in the sacraments, and sodomy. Two brothers in Scotland, two at York and six in Ireland⁵⁸ did confess to charges 24–9, which stated that the grand master and other lay commanders of the Order could absolve them of their sins; but the great majority denied these charges. All the Templars in the British Isles confessed to charges 34–7, which stated that during a reception ceremony the receivers made those whom they were receiving swear that they would not leave the Order without proper authority (although they differed over whether they swore a solemn oath or merely promised); that newly received brothers were regarded at once as being fully professed, without having a year of probation, and that receptions took place in secret with no one present except brothers of the Order of the Temple. Some Templars also confirmed charge 72, that they should not reveal the method of their reception to anyone,⁵⁹ and charge 75, that they were not to confess to anyone

⁵⁴ MS A, fols 19v, 21r, 24r, 53r, 93r.

⁵⁵ MS A, fol. 93r; *Procès*, ed. Michelet, vol. 2, pp. 398–401.

⁵⁶ Barber, *Trial of the Templars*, 2nd edn, p. 68, citing *Le dossier de l'affaire des templiers*, ed. Georges Lizerand (Paris, 1923), pp. 24–8.

⁵⁷ MS A, fols 18r, 26r, 30v, 44v, 49r, 51r, 53v, 103r, 104r, 105r, 105v, 107v, 108r, 111v, 125r, 128r bis, 128v, 129r, 129v, 130r, 136v, 142r, 143v, 146r, 148r.

⁵⁸ For example, in Ireland, MS A, fols 141r, 148r: Henry Danet first stated that the charges were true, then later denied them; Richard of Burthesham did the same (fols 134v, 143r). See also Robert of Pourbrigg, fols 138r–v, Henry of Aslackby, fol. 153r; Henry Mautravers, fol. 142r; William of Kilros, fols 148v, 150r. At York: Thomas of Staunford, fol. 126r; Ralph of Ruston, fol. 127r; in Scotland: Walter of Clifton, fol. 156v; William of Middleton, fol. 157r.

⁵⁹ A few of the Templars from the province of Canterbury stated that they swore not to reveal the secrets of chapter, but believed that the reception ceremony was not part of the secrets of chapter

outside the Order.⁶⁰ But they all insisted that all these things were done for honourable reasons and there was nothing untoward or heretical in the Order.

The points that they had to promise not to leave the Order and that they should confess only to the Order's priests were both in the Order's regulations;⁶¹ and the prohibition on leaving the Order without official permission was not peculiar to the Templars, for the Hospitallers, Teutonic Order and Order of Santiago also had regulations forbidding members from leaving their orders.⁶² Although religious orders generally had a period of probation, the military religious orders did not, because of the need to recruit brothers quickly after losses on the battlefield; while the lack of a probationary year was regrettable, it was not inherently heretical.⁶³ The question of whether or not they could reveal the method of their reception depended on whether or not the reception had formed part of a chapter meeting, for the regulations forbade the Templars to discuss chapter proceedings with anyone who had not been present – again, this was a regulation also enforced by other

(e.g., John of Stoke or Sutton, MS A, fol. 43v; John of Stoke, priest, fol. 55r). All but six of the 23 Templars interrogated at York took the line that the reception ceremony was part of the secrets of chapter that must not be revealed to outsiders: William of Grafton senior (fol. 125r); William of the Fenne (fol. 125v); Henry of Kerby (fol. 126v); Ralph of Ruston (fol. 127r); Richard of Casuyt (fol. 127v); Stephen of Radenhall (fol. 127v); Michael of Sowerby (fol. 128r); Thomas of Bolerby (fol. 128v); Godfrey des Arches (fol. 128v); John of Walpole (fol. 129r); Ivo of Hoghton (fol. 129v); Robert of Langton (fol. 130r); Robert of Hogyndon (fol. 131r); Geoffrey of Welton (fol. 131v); Walter of Gadesby (fol. 132r); Richard of Ripton (fol. 132r); Thomas of Strech (fol. 132v). The brothers in Ireland stated that they were not allowed to talk about their receptions, but had never heard of anyone being punished for doing so: Richard of Burthesham (fol. 136r); Henry of Aslackby (fol. 137v); Robert of Pourbrigge (fol. 139r–v); Henry Danet (fol. 141v); Henry Mautraviers (fol. 142r); John Romain (fol. 143v); Hugh Brogham (fol. 144r); Ralph Bradley (fol. 145r); Adam of Langeport (fol. 145v); Richard of Upleadon (fol. 146v); Walter of Choresby (fols 147v–148r); John of Faversham (fol. 148v); William of Kilros (fol. 149r); Henry of the Ford (fol. 149r).

⁶⁰ Four Templars confirmed that this was the case: Richard of Burthesham (MS A, fol. 136r); Henry of Aslackby (fol. 137v); Robert of Pourbrigge (fol. 139v); Henry of the Ford (fol. 149r–v). At York, Brother Thomas of Staunford or Stamford stated that they should not confess to an outsider if a Templar priest was available, because a Templar priest was the equivalent of a bishop or archbishop for the Templars, but they were not forbidden to confess to outsiders (fol. 126r); Henry of Kerby (fol. 126v), Stephen of Radenhall (fol. 127v) and John of Walpole (fol. 129r) agreed. In Ireland, Henry Danet, fol. 141v, said that the charge was true if they could get a Templar priest (so in fact it was not true, as usually they would not be able to get one); Henry Mautraviers (fol. 142r), John Romain (fol. 143v), Hugh of Brogham (fol. 144r–v), Ralph of Bradley (fol. 145r), Adam of Langeport (fol. 145v), Richard of Upleadon (fol. 146v), Walter of Choresby (fol. 148r) and John of Faversham (fol. 148v) agreed.

⁶¹ Promising not to leave the Order: *La Règle du Temple*, ed. Henri de Curzon (Paris, 1886), section 676, translated by J.M. Upton-Ward, *The Rule of the Templars: the French Text of the Rule of the Order of the Knights Templar* (Woodbridge, 1992), p. 171; *Il Corpus normativo templare: Edizione dei testi romanzi con traduzione e commento in italiano*, ed. Giovanni Amatuccio (Galatina, 2009), p. 386, section X.7.

⁶² Alan J. Forey, 'Desertions and Transfers from Military Orders (Twelfth to Early-Fourteenth Centuries)', *Traditio*, 60 (2005), 143–200: here 143–5.

⁶³ See Alan Forey, 'Novitiate and Instruction in the Military Orders during the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries', *Speculum*, 61 (1986), 1–17, esp. 9.

military religious orders.⁶⁴ The Templars interrogated in London and at Lincoln did not know of any regulation against discussion of receptions, but those at York and in Ireland thought that this fell under the regulations regarding chapter proceedings, although they did not know of anyone who had been disciplined for discussing their reception.⁶⁵

All agreed with certain qualifications that receptions were held without any outsiders being present, but some of the Templars and non-Templars indicated that outsiders were present before and after the new member gave his vows. For example, in his initial interrogation, given without being put on oath, Brother William Raven stated that when he was received at dawn in the chapel of Temple Combe around five years previously, around 100 secular persons had been present, but that when he made the vows, only brothers of the Order were present.⁶⁶ However, when he was interrogated on oath he did not mention the outsiders and agreed that receptions took place without outsiders being present.⁶⁷ Brother Hugh of Tadcaster explained that brothers were received into the Order with only other Templars present, with doors open but guarded by a Templar so that secular persons could not enter.⁶⁸ William of Chalesey and John of Newent confirmed that the doors were kept open.⁶⁹ Outsiders would have been able to watch proceedings from outside the open doors. A friar, Richard of Bokingham, testified that around five years previously he had been at the Templars' commandery of Faxfleet in Yorkshire at the time of a reception ceremony. He and his comrade waited with many other people in the hall outside the chapel while the Templars held a chapter meeting and a reception in the chapel. After the meeting, Brother Richard entered the chapel and celebrated mass, and saw the newly admitted Templar still in the chapel.⁷⁰ It is possible, but was not recorded, that the others present were the family and friends of the candidate for admission, while Brother Richard was present in order to celebrate mass after the reception ceremony. Geoffrey of Nafferton, a parish priest, also reported that he had celebrated mass for the Templars in connection with a reception ceremony, but in his case he celebrated mass at the beginning of proceedings, then had had to leave the chapel and wait in the hall outside while the reception took place.⁷¹ Outside the British Isles, there is some evidence that outsiders could attend reception ceremonies. One German Templar who was arrested and interrogated within France stated that in Germany honest, respectable outsiders could attend.⁷²

⁶⁴ *Règle*, ed. Curzon, sections 225, 418, 550; trans. Upton-Ward, pp. 73, 112, 143; *Corpus normativo*, ed. Amatuccio, pp. 128, 214, 286–8, sections V.2, VII.114, VIII.3; *Cartulaire général de l'Ordre des Hospitaliers de Saint-Jean de Jérusalem, 1100–1310*, ed. Joseph Delaville le Roulx, 4 vols (Paris, 1894–1906), nos 2213.82, 3396.24; *Die Statuten des Deutschen Ordens nach den Ältesten Handschriften*, ed. Max Perlbach (Halle, 1890), p. 83, no. 3.

⁶⁵ See note 59 above.

⁶⁶ MS A, fol. 11v.

⁶⁷ MS A, fol. 22r–v. A few Templars claimed to have been present at receptions that took place before they joined the Order, but their memories may have been at fault: see p. li, below.

⁶⁸ MS A, fol. 25v.

⁶⁹ MS A, fols 29r, 51r.

⁷⁰ MS A, fol. 97r.

⁷¹ MS A, fol. 99r.

⁷² Barber, *Trial of the Templars*, 2nd edn, p. 70, citing Hans Prutz, *Entwicklung und Untergang des Tempelherrenordens* (Berlin, 1888), p. 327; also mentioned by Jonathan Riley-

This conflicting evidence could suggest that a Templar reception ceremony took place in two stages, the first in a public space, such as the commandery hall, with family and friends of the applicant for admission present; then the Templars and the applicant proceeded into the chapel for the second part of the ceremony, with the door left open or closed and a Templar standing at the door to prevent non-Templars entering the chapel during the ceremony. This would allow William Raven to have had 100 guests at his reception into the Order, yet to have had none but Templars present when he made his vows.

Himbert Blanc, grand commander of the Auvergne, stated that although the reception took place without non-Templars present, *non fiunt ibi occulta quin totus mundus posset videre* – nothing was done that the whole world might not see – and the practice of secrecy had been foolish.⁷³ A few other Templars in the British Isles offered explanations of why receptions took place in secret. Ralph Barton, prior of the New Temple in London, believed that the first founders of the Order had begun the practice,⁷⁴ and Thomas the Chamberlain also believed that it was written in the book of their regulations:⁷⁵ but in fact this was not the case. Perhaps they meant that as receptions took place as part of a chapter meeting, and non-Templars were excluded from chapter meetings, receptions must necessarily be private affairs.

It is possible that outsiders were kept out of receptions in order to maintain an atmosphere of solemnity. Some comments in the English proceedings by both Templars and non-Templars indicate that Templar chapels were normally open to outsiders.⁷⁶ This being the case, it would be desirable to keep the door shut or guarded during reception ceremonies in order to prevent outsiders from wandering in and disrupting proceedings. Another possibility is that the deliberate separation of the would-be Templar from his family and friends, leading him into a spiritual place and preventing his worldly connections from following him, symbolised the beginning of his new life in the Order. Yet, if such thinking lay behind the exclusion of non-Templars from proceedings, at least one of the senior brothers should have said as much. That they did not suggests that, until the charges were brought against the Order in October 1307, it had never occurred to any of them to question the Order's practice of private ceremonies, nor had any of them realised that excluding outsiders left the Order open to suspicion. Yet when all was said and done, the exclusion of outsiders from the admission ceremony was not in itself a heretical practice, and all the Templars in the British Isles insisted that nothing dishonourable was done during the reception of brothers into the Order.

The Templars in England and Scotland either expressed ignorance of, or rejected, charges 82–5 (on the truth of French Templars' confessions), some stating that those confessions had been extracted by torture.⁷⁷ In Ireland, in contrast, the Templars stated that

Smith, 'Were the Templars Guilty?', in *The Medieval Crusade*, ed. Susan J. Ridyard (Woodbridge, 2004), pp. 107–24, here p. 115.

⁷³ MS A, fol. 17r.

⁷⁴ MS A, fols 14v–15r.

⁷⁵ MS A, fol. 13r.

⁷⁶ MS A, fols 56r, 96v, MS C, fol. 3r.

⁷⁷ Confessions in France were seen as unreliable: MS A, fols 73r, 75v; some specified that this was because torture had been used on them to force them to confess: MS A, fols 73v, 112v, 126v, 129r (twice), 131r, 133r.

they believed that the French Templars had confessed to the charges; but they themselves confessed to very little. Two Templars – the commander, Henry Danet, and the chaplain, William of Kilros – made statements that implicated the Order generally without actually confessing to anything themselves.

The only point on which some of the Templars of the British Isles were clearly out of line with current Catholic canonical practice was the question of whether laymen could absolve sins; some knew that they could not, but several in Ireland and at York, and the two brothers interrogated in Scotland, believed that they could.⁷⁸ As members of a religious order, the Templars should have known the difference between a sin and breaking the Order's regulations; but the majority of them were uneducated laymen. It is interesting that those who made the most incriminating admissions regarding lay absolutions were senior Templars. Although their seniority would have led to their being well informed, they may also have been more susceptible than younger brothers to aggressive interrogation techniques, and more likely to become confused through the stress of the situation, so more easily led to say what they did not mean.⁷⁹ Moreover, two of the senior Templar priests – William of Kilros in Ireland and Ralph of Ruston in Yorkshire, who had been in the Order for seventeen years and 23 years before their interrogations respectively – shared the error.⁸⁰ However, as the Franciscan, Dominican, Carmelite and Austin friars who had been acting as the Templars' priests and confessors⁸¹ should have corrected such misunderstandings, the fact that these errors were expressed by the Templars' priests would have reflected badly on the friars.

The extract from the Anglo-Norman version of the Templars' regulations that is included in MS A highlights the British and Irish Templars' confusion over absolution procedures.⁸² The Anglo-Norman regulations are considerably shorter than the French

⁷⁸ The following confirmed the charge of lay absolution – from Ireland: Richard of Burthesham (MS A, fol. 134v, denied on fol. 143r), Henry of Aslackby (fol. 153r), Robert of Pourbrigge (fol. 138r–v), Henry Danet (fol. 141r, denied on fol. 148r), Henry Mautravers (fol. 142r–v), William of Wilros or Kilros, priest (fols 148v–149r); from Scotland: Walter of Clifton (fol. 156v), William of Middleton (fol. 157r); at York: Thomas of Staunford (fol. 126r), Henry of Kerby (fol. 126v), Ralph of Ruston, priest (fol. 127r), Geoffrey of Welton (fol. 131v), Walter of Gadesby (fol. 131v). The following agreed that the grand master, visitor and commanders could relax penance that the chaplain had imposed for confessed sins – from Ireland: John Romyne (fol. 143r), Hugh of Broghem (fol. 144r), Adam of Langport (fol. 145v), Richard of Upleadon (fol. 146r), Walter of Choresby (fol. 147v). Some of the Templars interrogated in London and Lincoln agreed that the keyholder (*claviger*) absolved lay servants of the Order from the sin of perjury, *peccato perjurii*: William of the Ford (fol. 71r); Richard Peitevin (fol. 71v). On this, see Nicholson, *Knights Templar on Trial*, pp. 106–7, 108–9. William Raven (MS A, fol. 72r) specified that laymen absolved transgressions against the Order only, not sins. Richard of Newent (fol. 123v) said that the absolution was for transgressions against the precepts of the house (that is, not for sins).

⁷⁹ Thomas of Staunford: MS A, fol. 126r; William of the Ford: fols 21r, 58r; Richard Peitevin: fols 19v, 168v. See also their careers, in Appendix 1.

⁸⁰ William of Wilros or Kilros, priest: MS A, fols 148v–149r; Ralph of Ruston, priest: fols 126v–127r.

⁸¹ MS A, fols 91v, 92r–v, 94v, 96r, 97r–v, 151r, 153r.

⁸² MS A, fol. 159*.

version.⁸³ Whereas the French version of the regulations states that the Templars could not be absolved for faults that they had not confessed because of embarrassment or fear of the Order's justice, this Anglo-Norman version indicates that they could (*Mes toutes les choses que vous lessez a dire pour honte de la char, ou pour peur de la Justice de la mesoun que leur ne la prenge, requier dieu pour la requeste de la sue douce mere, le vous pardoint*). This is also what William de la More, grand commander of England, told the inquisitors on 8 June 1310 (*set alia peccata que non audent confiteri propter erubescenciam carnis vel timorem iusticie ordinis, ex potestate sibi concessa a deo et domino papa ipse remittit ei in quantum potest*). However, on 9 June, after discussing the matter with Himbert Blanc, grand commander of the Auvergne, William de la More returned before the inquisitors and corrected his statement: he could remit only faults that Templars had confessed (*set alia peccata que ipsi non omiserunt confiteri, propter erubescenciam carnis vel timorem iusticie ordinis, ex potestate sibi concessa a deo et domino papa ipse remittat eis quantum potest*).⁸⁴ Himbert Blanc had told him that he was mistaken. The other Templars interrogated on this point differed in their opinions: some thought that only confessed sins could be remitted and others that sins that had not been confessed because of embarrassment or fear of the Order's justice could nevertheless be remitted.⁸⁵ Apparently, then, the English Templars had been allowing Templars to receive remission for sins that they had repented but had not openly confessed. This was not the procedure followed by the rest of the Order. However, the fact that the grand commander corrected himself as soon as his mistake was pointed out to him meant that this could not be seen as a serious shortcoming.

The inquisitors blamed their failure to extract any significant confessions from the Templars on the failure of the king and his ministers to co-operate fully with their investigation, especially in the matter of torture.⁸⁶ In December 1309 the inquisitors obtained King Edward II's agreement that torture could be used, but no one could be found who was prepared to torture the brothers.⁸⁷ In England, the investigation of heresy had

⁸³ *Règle*, ed. Curzon, sections 269, 538–40 (trans. Upton-Ward, pp. 79, 140–41); see also *Corpus normativo*, ed. Amatuccio, pp. 144, 278, sections VI.2, VII.189.

⁸⁴ *Règle*, ed. Curzon, section 539; *Corpus normativo*, ed. Amatuccio, p. 278, section VII.189; MS A, fols 88r, 90v, 159*.

⁸⁵ William of Sautre, William of the Ford, John of Stoke, priest, Philip of Meux, Ralph of Barton, John of Moun, John of Coningston, Richard of Colingham, John of Stoke called 'of Sutton', stated that sins which had not been confessed out of embarrassment or fear could be remitted (MS A, fols 88r–89v). At Lincoln on 1 June 1310, Simon Strech, Ralph Tanet, Robert of Amoldon, Thomas of Walkington, John of Eagle, Robert of Spanton and William of Winchester had said the same (fols 115r–116r). In addition to Himbert Blanc, William of Scotho, Walter of Rockley, William of Barton, William of Hereford and Thomas of Staundon stated that only those who had confessed their faults could have their sins remitted (fols 88v, 89v, 90r). Thomas of Burton stated that the regulations allowed the master to absolve Templars who had not confessed their faults because of embarrassment or fear, but that he did not do so (fol. 89v). On 9 June 1310, after William de la More corrected his testimony, William of Sautre also did so (fol. 90v).

⁸⁶ MS B, fol. 80r.

⁸⁷ *CPR, 1307–1313*, p. 203; *Fædera*, ed. Rymer, vol. 2, pt 1, p. 100. The point is discussed by Barber, *Trial of the Templars*, 2nd edn, pp. 221–8; Perkins, 'Trial of the Knights Templars', 435–6, 438–43, 445, 447.

been *de facto* the responsibility of the sheriff, rather than the religious authorities,⁸⁸ and torture was not used as a method of collecting evidence. The inquisitors also suspected that the English Templars had conspired together to agree their defence,⁸⁹ and were anxious that they should be brought into the Church's custody so that they could be imprisoned more securely.⁹⁰ Comments towards the end of MS A indicate that eventually torture was applied.⁹¹ However, in May or June 1310 the inquisitors were complaining that it had not yet been used.⁹² The king gave permission again in August 1310,⁹³ but no interrogations are dated after that date until late March 1311,⁹⁴ and it is not until the end of June 1311 that torture was specifically mentioned as having been used, in the interrogation of Stephen of Stapelbrugge at London.⁹⁵ It is likely, then, that torture was not used effectively until the end of June 1311, in a determined effort to obtain confessions that could be debated at the Church Council of London, then in progress and debating the Templars' affair.⁹⁶ It was not used in the province of York or in Scotland, and there is no clear evidence that it was used in Ireland.⁹⁷

⁸⁸ Frederick Pollock and Frederic William Maitland, *The History of English Law before the time of Edward I*, 2nd edn, vol. 2 (Cambridge, 1968), pp. 547–9, especially p. 549 on the role of the sheriff. The author of *The Mirror of Justices* (which in the second decade of the fourteenth century was included in a compilation of English legal treatises by Andrew Horn: see Jeremy Catto, 'Andrew Horn: Law and History in Fourteenth-century England', in *The Writing of History in the Middle Ages: Essays presented to Richard William Southern*, ed. R.H.C. Davis and J.M. Wallace-Hadrill (Oxford, 1981), pp. 367–91, here pp. 373–4) was also of the opinion that heresy was a matter for the king's court: *The Mirror of Justices*, ed. William Joseph Whittaker, Selden Society, 7 (1895), pp. 59–60. This author regarded heresy as lese-majesty, an opinion that may have derived from Roman Law; in the Theodosian Code, heretics were accorded the same punishment as high treason: *The Theodosian Code and Novels and Sirmondian Constitutions*, trans. Clyde Pharr (Princeton, 1952), Bk 16.1.4 (p. 440); 16.4.1 (p. 449); 16.5.40 (p. 457). According to the papal bull *Ad abolendum* (1184), the responsibility for seeking out heresy belonged to the bishop; but this was not *de facto* the case in England.

⁸⁹ See the last testimony on MS A, fol. 92v.

⁹⁰ MS B, fol. 80v.

⁹¹ MS A, fol. 161r: (Stephen of Stapelbrugge) *dicendo se de morte corporis nec de aliquo tormento non curare sed solummodo de salute anime*; fol. 170r (the whole trial): *viasque ad provocandum dictos fratres ad detegendum veritatem inventas et excogitatas, modo per Episcopos personaliter, modo per clericos ipsorum, et eciam severas et crudelas personas laicas iudicium sanguinis quandoque exercentes ex certa scientia eis ad terrorem missos, modo per constantem accusationem, trium confitentium de dicto ordine aliquando contra unum, aliquando contra duos de negantibus et errorem diffitentibus*.

⁹² MS B, fol. 80r–v.

⁹³ *CCR, 1307–1313*, p. 279.

⁹⁴ MS A, fol. 117r: 30 March 1311.

⁹⁵ MS A, fol. 161r.

⁹⁶ *Councils and Synods with Other Documents Relating to the English Church, II: A.D. 1205–1313, part 2: 1265–1313*, ed. F.M. Powicke and C.R. Cheney (Oxford, 1964), p. 1298.

⁹⁷ York: *The Chronicle of Walter of Guisborough, previously edited as the Chronicle of Walter of Hemingford or Hemingburgh*, ed. Harry Rothwell, Camden Society 3rd series, 89 (London, 1957), p. 392; the archbishop of York asked his clergy whether he should bring torturers from overseas; but apparently nothing was done, as the Templars were allowed to make a simple abjuration of all heresy (p. 395). There is no evidence from Scotland. Ireland: Perkins, 'Trial of the

Two of the three Templars who gave confessions in London between 23 June and 1 July 1311, Stephen of Stapelbrugge and Thomas ‘Totty’ of Thoraldby, were Templars who had evaded capture or escaped after being arrested and who were therefore in a weak position: their failure to come forward when summoned indicated their guilt, and neither had a satisfactory explanation as to why they previously had failed to give themselves up. The third, John of Stoke, priest, had previously been treasurer at the New Temple in London and had been present at the burial of Walter the Bachelor, former commander of Ireland, who had been imprisoned by the Templars for stealing from the Order and who had died in prison.⁹⁸ John, also, had initially been slow to come forward to give testimony, and possibly there were unanswered questions about his financial management at the New Temple, which the merchants of London and many English nobles used as a safe-deposit.⁹⁹ His previous testimonies had also contained inconsistencies and unverifiable details about other Templars.¹⁰⁰ In any case, his testimony is remarkably similar to those given by the French Templars who confessed to irregularities at their reception into the Order. Despite these confessions and any pressure or threats of torture brought to bear, the rest of the Templars in the British Isles maintained their innocence of the charges, and the grand commander of England, William de la More, refused to admit to any errors.

Assembling the Evidence

At some point before the three confessions were obtained, the inquisitors in London drew up a summary of the Templar testimonies from the British Isles, which appears in MS A at fol. 91r. To judge from its position in the codex, it was drawn up in April 1311. This, and the collection of non-Templar evidence that follows on fols 91r–100r, could represent the formal compilation of the evidence against the Templars that was presented to the Templars themselves on 22 April 1311;¹⁰¹ or, alternatively, Maeve Callan suggests that this summary was drawn up for the reconvened Provincial Council of Canterbury, which resumed on 23 April 1311 at St Paul’s in London.¹⁰² The summary refers to charges having been *probatus*, or proven, but the evidence cited here cannot all be matched up to actual testimonies recorded elsewhere. A few examples will suffice. For instance:

Knights Templars’, 444–5, argues that torture was used; Maeve B. Callan, ‘“No such art in this land”: Heresy and Witchcraft in Ireland, 1310–1360’, Ph.D. thesis, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL (2002), pp. 68, 69, 81–4, argues that torture was not used.

⁹⁸ See MS A, fol. 55r–v. For comment on this case in the context of punishments within the order of the Temple see Alan Forey, ‘Judicial Processes in the Military Orders: The Use of Imprisonment and Chaining’, in *The Hospitallers, The Mediterranean and Europe: Festschrift for Anthony Luttrell*, ed. Karl Borchardt, Nikolas Jaspert and Helen J. Nicholson (Aldershot, 2007), pp. 87–97, here p. 91.

⁹⁹ MS A, fol. 35r and note on John of Stoke; Agnes Sandys, ‘The Financial and Administrative Importance of the London Temple in the thirteenth century’, in: *Essays in Medieval History presented to Thomas Frederick Tout*, ed. A.G. Little and F.M. Powicke (Manchester, 1925), pp. 147–62.

¹⁰⁰ Discussed below, pp. lv–lvi.

¹⁰¹ MS A, fol. 101v.

¹⁰² Callan, ‘“No such art”’, pp. 71–5.

Item advertendum est an possit colligi ex deposicionibus quod de mortalibus non debbant confiteri nisi in capitulo et de venialibus tantum sacerdoti, per dicta Willelmi capellani, Ymberti et Henrici, v testimoniam Imberti et Radulphi de Roston presbiteri et Thome de Staunford Ebor'. (MS A, fol. 91r)

(Again, it should be noted whether it is possible to deduce from the testimonies that they ought not to confess mortal sins except in chapter and only venial sins to the priest, according to the statements of William Chaplain, Ymbert and Henry, the fifth testimony of Imbert and Ralph of Roston, priest, and Thomas of Staunford at York.)

Six brothers are listed as holding this error. The first Templar indicated was William of Kilros, chaplain in Ireland, who stated that the grand master could absolve Templars of the Order from their penance, that Templars confessed mortal sins in chapter and were absolved by the master or commander, and should confess venial sins to the priest.¹⁰³ This was certainly an error. Ymbert must be Imbert or Himbert Blanc, who did not state this in his surviving testimonies.¹⁰⁴ 'Henricus' could be one of two Templars in Ireland: both Henry de Aslackby and Henry Mautravers believed that the master, visitor and commander could absolve brothers of their sins;¹⁰⁵ either could be meant. The next 'Imberti' must also refer to Himbert Blanc, as he was the only Templar named Imbertus who is recorded during the trial in the British Isles; but there is no fifth testimony from Himbert Blanc in the surviving records of the trial. Ralph of Ruston, chaplain at Faxfleet, Yorkshire and Thomas of Staunford, brother at Newsam, Yorkshire, did confirm that the master could absolve serious sins in chapter, while the brother-priest absolved less serious charges.¹⁰⁶

So this statement does tie up to some actual testimonies, but not exactly as stated. Two Templars named Henry gave the evidence here ascribed to one brother, and no Templar named Imbert gave such evidence. When the inquisitors restated this charge, in MS C, fol. 4v, they cited only William of Kilros and Ralph of Ruston as agreeing with it; in MS D, fol. 183r–v, four Templars were said to have confirmed it.

In another case, the summarisers changed a denial to a confession: '*Item quod iurabant acquirere religioni per phas vel per nephas, probatus per iij testes*' (MS A, fol. 91r) (Again, they swore to acquire [wealth for] the religious order by legal and illegal means, proven by three witnesses). This was not what the Templars had said. Richard of Burthesham, a Templar in Ireland, had agreed that the Templars swore to increase the house, but they believed it was a great sin to do this by unjust means; Henry of Aslackby and Robert of Pourbrigge agreed.¹⁰⁷

In a third instance, the Templars' evidence had differed, but only those who confirmed the charge were mentioned in the summary: '*Item quod inhibeatut eis ut non confiteantur nisi propriis sacerdotibus, probatus per iij testes*' (MS A, fol. 91r) (Again, that they are forbidden to confess except to their own priests, proven by four witnesses). The four were all in Ireland: Richard of Burthesham, Henry of Aslackby, Robert of Pourbrigge and Henry

¹⁰³ MS A, fols 148v, 150r.

¹⁰⁴ MS A, fols 16v–18r, 75r, 85r, 88r.

¹⁰⁵ MS A, fols 142r, 153r.

¹⁰⁶ MS A, fols 126r, 127r.

¹⁰⁷ MS A, fols 136r, 137v, 139v.

of the Ford.¹⁰⁸ In Yorkshire, Thomas of Staunford stated that they should not confess to an outsider if a Templar priest was available, because a Templar priest was the equivalent of a bishop or archbishop for the brothers; but they were not forbidden to confess to outsiders. Henry of Kerby and John of Walpole agreed.¹⁰⁹ In Ireland, Commander Henry Danet said it was true if they could get a Templar priest (so in fact it was not true, as usually they would not be able to get one); Henry Mautravers, John Romayn, Hugh of Brogham, Ralph of Bradley, Adam of Langport, Richard of Upleadon, Walter of Choresby and John of Faversham agreed.¹¹⁰ So four Templars denied the charge outright, eight denied it in part, and the Templars in England all denied it. However, the summary noted only the four who confirmed the charge.

Although the summary in MS A, fol. 91r, is not a complete and accurate summary of what the Templars in the British Isles had actually said, it represents an early attempt by the inquisitors to summarise the Templars' evidence. The inquisitors went on to compile a more detailed and exact summary of the trial testimonies, which formed MS C. As discussed in the Introduction to Volume 1, MS C was produced for use by the papal commissioners at Malaucène in their preparations for the Church Council of Vienne, where the fate of the Order would be decided. It was also used as the basis of MS D, which is essentially a summary of MS C and which (as argued in the Introduction to Volume 1) was probably produced for the use of the Church Council of London when it discussed the Templars' case, 27 June–13 July 1311.

In producing MS C, it became clear to the inquisitors that they had obtained virtually no useful information from the British and Irish Templars. They claimed on fols 10r–11v that the charges were proven, on the basis that: (a) the Templar brothers Robert de Saint-Just and Geoffrey de Goneville, interrogated in France, had confessed that they had been received in England, and that they had been received with the alleged abuses; (b) all the English Templars insisted that the same method of reception was in use everywhere; (c) therefore, the inquisitors argued, all the Templars in England must also have been received with the abuses. This ignored the fact that torture or the threat of torture had been used in France, so that – as some of the English Templars pointed out – their testimonies were unreliable. The inquisitors themselves were clearly aware of this, as they searched for other evidence against the Templars in the British Isles.

Non-Templar Evidence

It has already been noted that the papal inquisitors in England had referred to their colleagues in France, who sent them the confessions of Templars who had been received in England and who had confessed to the charges. These confessions were included with the non-Templar testimonies in MS A, and thence in the summaries in MSS C and D, where they were presented as being confessions by the Templars in England.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸ MS A, fols 136r, 137v, 139v, 149r.

¹⁰⁹ MS A, fols 126r–v, 129r.

¹¹⁰ MS A, fols 141v, 142r, 143v, 144r–v, 145r, 145v, 146v, 148r, 148v.

¹¹¹ MS A, fols 93r–94r; MS C, fol. 1r–v, 2v; MS D, fol. 179r.

Study of the non-Templar witnesses indicates that the inquisitors followed up every other possible avenue of information, although this is not evident from the trial proceedings. Although the Templars had a great many corrodians in 1308,¹¹² none of the witnesses are identified as corrodians of the Templars. Nevertheless, some in fact were. William the Dorturer, notary public of London, gave evidence about the timing of the Templars' chapter meetings and indicated that the secrecy of their reception ceremonies had aroused his suspicions; he also gave evidence about the Templars' punishments and absolutions of their servants.¹¹³ A William le Dorturer of Selborne, notary public, worked at the New Temple, London, in 1303; and in 1306 the English Templars' annual chapter meeting granted one William le dorturer 20 *solidi* sterling per year for his lifetime and a robe at Christmas, in return for the faithful work he had for a long time done for the House.¹¹⁴ As 'le Dorturer' was not a common surname, these three were probably the same man. However, the records of the proceedings did not mention that William le Dorturer was a corrodian of the Templars.

One Robert of Gunwardeby, *clericus*, who was a corrodian of the Templars,¹¹⁵ may be the same as the Robert de Gonewardeby mentioned as attending Templar funerals by Templar brother William of the Ford,¹¹⁶ and the Robert of Gowardeby who gave evidence about the Templars' administrative procedures.¹¹⁷ The latter was apparently an agent for the Templars: he stated that he had twice attended the Templars' chapter meeting at Paris in connection with the accounting for the Templars' revenues, had seen Grand Master Jacques de Molay hold an assembly in England some eighteen years previously, had seen the visitor, Hugh Peraud, when he came to England, and had seen him convene a chapter. Neither William of the Ford nor Robert's own testimony mentions that Robert was a corrodian of the Templars, although in the latter case this information would have strengthened the evidence by demonstrating the witness's closeness to the Templars.

The witness who followed Robert of Gowardeby in MS A, Hugh of Ayesbury, was also familiar with the Templars' chapter meetings.¹¹⁸ He was probably identical with the Hugh of Aylesbury who in 1298 was granted by Brian le Jay, grand commander of England, in return for his service and a payment of 20 marks, a place at the Templars' table at their commandery at Dinsley and either a robe worth one mark or one mark in cash, each year for his lifetime. Hugh was to act as clerk to the commander of Dinsley until he became too old to work, when he should receive his bed and board in the commandery. On his

¹¹² 'Corrodia petita de domibus Templariorum, annis I^o & II^o Edwardi II', in *Documents Illustrative of English History in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries, selected from the Records of the Department of the Queen's Remembrancer of the Exchequer*, ed. Henry Cole (London, 1844), pp. 139–230 (edition of TNA: PRO E 142/9); SC 8/191/9530: William de la More asks King Edward II to make provision for the Templars' many pensioners, chantries, etc.

¹¹³ MS A, fols 60r, 98r.

¹¹⁴ C.R. Cheney, *Notaries Public in England in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (Oxford, 1972), pp. 46, 127–8; 'Corrodia petita', ed. Cole, pp. 220–21; see also *CCR, 1307–1313*, p. 498.

¹¹⁵ 'Corrodia petita', ed. Cole, pp. 151, 152, 170.

¹¹⁶ MS A, fol. 82r.

¹¹⁷ MS A, fol. 94v.

¹¹⁸ MS A, fol. 94v.

death he should leave half his possessions to the Order. He also had a similar arrangement at Rothley commandery, granted by grand commander William de la More.¹¹⁹ Again, however, the record of Hugh's testimony does not mention that Hugh had this close link to the Order.

As it was admissible to use *fama* (public reputation) in a heresy trial,¹²⁰ the inquisitors also fell back on rumours and anecdotes against the Order of the Temple reported by outsiders. The means by which the inquisitors identified potential non-Templar witnesses are set out in a document of 25 May 1310, in which Archbishop William Greenfield of York instructed his official to question the parish priests, monks and friars who used to hear the Templars' confessions, clergy and laity who were in the Templars' service, and their household servants and friends.¹²¹ On the following 20 June he commissioned two rectors to go to the area around the Templars' manors of Ribston, Wetherby and Newsam in the West Riding of Yorkshire and summon those who were said to have been in the Templars' service in the past – presumably those identified by his official in accordance with his earlier instructions. The rectors should ask these people whether they had ever served the Templars, and if so where and when, and when they had left their service; whether any Templars were received into the Order while they were in the Templars' service, and if so whether they were received at night and whether the witness was present. Witnesses were also asked whether they knew anything about the reception ceremonies, and generally whether they knew, or had heard or seen anything about the Templars that made them suspect that they were guilty of the alleged abuses. The replies were to be recorded in writing under the two rectors' seals and sent to the archbishop by 29 September 1310. Those questioned should be warned that they should not talk about their testimony, on pain of excommunication; this was to prevent 'copycat' testimonies.¹²² A similar investigation was ordered by Archbishop Robert Winchelsey of Canterbury in the environs of the Templar commandery of Ewell in Kent.¹²³ Pope Clement V's bull of 30 December 1308, which excommunicated those who assisted the Templars and placed

¹¹⁹ 'Corrodia petita', ed. Cole, pp. 141, 145–6; and see TNA: PRO E 142/104, m. 1.

¹²⁰ Paul Hyams, 'Due Process versus the Maintenance of Order in European Law: the Contribution of the *ius commune*', in *The Moral World of the Law*, ed. Peter Coss (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 62–90, here p. 82: 'The jurists could and did develop more flexible rules of proof, often involving the use of *fama*, a device that enabled them to use public reputation as an indication of likely guilt. In the course of the thirteenth century, they carefully reinterpreted this *fama* to fill the role of the "undoubted *indicia*" required by Roman law and thereby justify the practice of the Italian city states amongst which they lived and worked. In doing so they had to step delicately around the imputation that *fama* was just another word for hearsay evidence, which Roman law banned.' For further discussion of *fama*, see: *Fama: The Politics of Talk and Reputation in Medieval Europe*, ed. Thelma Fenster and Daniel Lord Smail (Ithaca and London, 2003).

¹²¹ *The Register of William Greenfield, Lord Archbishop of York, 1306–1315*, ed. William Brown and A. Hamilton Thompson, 5 vols, Surtees Society 145, 149, 151–3 (1931–40), vol. 4, p. 286, end of no. 2271.

¹²² *Register of William Greenfield*, vol. 4, pp. 334–5, no. 2301.

¹²³ *Registrum Roberti Winchelsey Cantuariensis archiepiscopi*, ed. Rose Graham, 2 vols, Canterbury and York Society, 51–2 (Oxford, 1952–56), vol. 2, p. 1241; discussed by Menache, *Clement V*, p. 232.

under interdict any place where they were received, was included in his bull *Nuper contra fautores*, and was sent to the archbishop of York on 2 January 1309.¹²⁴ This bull could have been used against anyone who was suspected of knowing information about the Templars but who failed to come forward.

The only surviving complete record of non-Templar testimonies that appear to have been collected by the method described in the archbishop of York's instructions are those taken at London between 19 November 1308 and 9 January 1310 and recorded in MS A, fols 60r–62v, and MS B, fol. 81v. Some of these testimonies are favourable towards the Templars. However, none of these favourable comments was included in the summary of non-Templar testimonies assembled in MS A, fols 91r–100r. Clearly the summary included only those testimonies that were judged to support the case against the Templars.

In addition to the negative testimonies from London, the summary includes testimonies presented before the inquisitors in Ireland (MS A, fol. 91r–v) and Scotland (fol. 93r) and some testimonies sent by the inquisitors in France (fols 93r–94r). There are also other testimonies given before a diocesan bishop, such as the bishop of Hereford (fol. 96v) and of Lincoln (fols 92r, 97r–v), and groups of testimonies from specific dioceses such as Canterbury (fols 95v–96r), York (fols 91v–92r) – perhaps the fruits of the investigations ordered in the documents mentioned above – and Lincoln (fol. 94r–v). There are also groups of testimonies from members of specific religious orders, such as the Franciscan friars (fol. 92r–v) and the Carmelite friars (fols 95r–v, 96r); and one group of testimonies that had been submitted in writing (fol. 92r–v). Some testimonies were included more than once. All of this evidence is against the Templars. Just as none of the favourable testimonies from London was included here, the favourable comments made in Scotland and in Ireland were also omitted.¹²⁵ In short, there may have been considerable evidence given in the Templars' favour in the British Isles, but as it was omitted from the summary it has been lost to us. The only dates within this summary are 16 April 1311, Saturday in Easter week 1311 (fol. 98v) and 5 May 1311 (fol. 99v) – shortly before the two papal inquisitors left England, in the middle of May 1311.¹²⁶

The compilers of MSS C and D made extensive use of the material in this summary. However, some of these non-Templar testimonies appear at more length in MS C. For example, the testimony of Thomas of Witringham or Wintersham in MS C, fol. 3v, has more information than his testimony in MS A, fol. 92r, including giving the name of his colleague, while John of Dunstable's story in MS C, fol. 4r, concludes the story of the Templar who asked him whether the sacrament of the mass is true (MS A, fol. 92v) with the statement that the Templar's companion assured him that he should not take the question seriously as his friend was only joking. MS C also corrects some of the errors of MS A: in MS A, fol. 91v, William of Jafford, rector of Croft, is named William of the Ford,

¹²⁴ *Register of William Greenfield*, vol. 4, pp. 307–10, no. 2280.

¹²⁵ MS A, fol. 153v: Thomas of Broghton's statement that the Templars did not, as rumoured, kill one of their number in each chapter meeting; fol. 158v: Henry of Sinclair and Hugh of Rydale's statement that the former Templar master of Balantrodoch was a pious man.

¹²⁶ *CCR, 1307–1313*, p. 351 (10 May 1311); *Registrum Simonis de Gandavo diocesis Sareshbiriensis, A.D. 1297–1315*, ed. C.T. Flower and M.C.B. Dawes, Canterbury and York Society, 40–41 (Oxford, 1934), vol. 1, p. 408 (24 May 1311).

rector of Crofton; but MS C, fol. 1v, gives him the correct surname. In MS C, fol. 6v, the scribe has included the word ‘ordinis’ after the word ‘dicti’ in John of Nassington’s testimony; in MS A, fol. 91v, the word ‘ordinis’ is missing, so that the word ‘dicti’ appears to be an error. These examples indicate that the scribe who produced MS C was working from the original records of the testimonies rather than the summary in MS A itself, or at least could refer to these original records.

There are also differences between the accounts given in MSS C and D that indicate that, although MS D is essentially a summary of MS C, the compiler of MS D had access to MS A, fols 91r–100r, or to the testimonies on which MS A was based. For example, on fol. 186v, the compiler of MS D had more information about John of Bercia’s testimony than is contained in the corresponding passage in MS C, fol. 6v.

The numbering of the witnesses differs between the manuscripts. In MS A, fols 93r–98r, the witnesses were numbered in the margin, but the numbers between 24 and 35 were omitted (fol. 93r) so that the subsequent numbers were incorrect. The numbering ceased with no. 69, John of Bercia (fol. 98r), and from Agnes Louekete on 16 April 1311 the witnesses were not numbered – the current numbering was inserted much later. The copyist of MS D followed the numbering of MS A down to no. 69, and then used letters: Agnes is ‘A’ (MS D, fol. 181r), the next witness, John Welby, is ‘L’ (fol. 188v), and the next, Richard of Kocfeld, is ‘E’ (fol. 185v). The numbering used in MS C followed a different sequence: for example, William of Jafford, rector of Croft, is witness no. 4 in MS A, fol. 91v, and MS D, fol. 184r, but no. 64 in MS C, fol. 5r. Again, this suggests that the compilers of MS C had independent access to the records of non-Templar testimonies, and that the compiler of MS D referred to MS A.

Clearly evidence continued to reach the inquisitors even after the completion of the compilation of non-Templar testimonies in MS A, fols 91r–100r, for MSS C and D contain references to the testimonies of four Dominican friars and one Carmelite whose evidence does not appear in MS A. In MS C, fols 2v and 4r, there are the testimonies of Thomas of Redemere, who reported a story he had heard from Reginald of Braybof (summarised in MS D, fols 179r–v, 181v), and Reginald of Braybof or Bray, who reported a story he heard from William of Pilton, sub-prior of the Dominican convent of Lincoln, who had heard it from Henry of Celeby, lector of the same Order (MS D, fol. 182r); in MS C, fols 2r and 3r, there is the testimony of Nicholas of Redemere (MS D, fols 178r, 180r), part of whose evidence came from a lady of the Keele area, Staffordshire; on fol. 2v John Taltet reported a story he had heard at York (MS D, fol. 179v); and on fol. 3r Robert of Edelincton reported a story he had heard from a woman in Lincoln (MS D, fol. 180r–v).

The Quality of the non-Templar Evidence

In producing their summaries of the proceedings, the inquisitors did not question how probable an anecdote was; they simply recorded everything said against the Order and included it in their collection of evidence. However, when the non-Templar testimonies in MSS A, C and D are examined in detail, it becomes clear that hardly any of the evidence brought against the Order was first hand. Much was reported as being told by persons unknown to the witness, and as many of those involved – both the witness’s informants and the Templars mentioned – were dead, their stories could not be checked. That the

inquisitors did attempt to check stories is evident from the fact that some of those who are mentioned by one witness as being the source of a story later appear in the record themselves. For example, John of Bercia's source, Agnes Louekete, follows him in MS A (fols 98r–v); John Welby's source, John of Dingeton, Digneton or Donington, follows him in MS A (fols 98v, 99v); and Thomas of Redemere's source, Reginald of Bray or Braybof, follows Thomas – but Reginald's source does not appear in the record (MS C, fol. 4r). Agnes's account is presented here as a duplicate, while Reginald's story is presented as if it were a separate event, and John of Donnington's story differs from John Welby's: according to John Welby, the Templars in England possessed three idol heads, but his source John of Donington told the inquisitors that they had four (MS A, fols 98v, 99v).

Some of the non-Templar evidence in MS A was misrepresented in the summaries in MSS C and D to appear more reliable than it actually was. Lord William of Jafford, rector of the church of Croft, York, and receiver of the archbishop of York,¹²⁷ gave evidence recorded in MS A, fols 91v–92r, about a dying Templar who had confessed to an Austin friar, who was now also dead. Clearly for modern historians this evidence is unsatisfactory, as it could not be checked. However, the summaries in MSS C and D made repeated reference to this testimony, and MS D even presented it as a first-hand Templar confession – to the confusion of at least one modern historian.¹²⁸

Sometimes the summary in MS C actually gives more information about the source, which shows a seemingly plausible story in MS A to be less reliable than MS A indicated. For instance, in MS A Nicholas of Chinon, Franciscan friar, heard the story he relates from Robert of Trikenham of the same Order. But in MS C we discover that Brother Robert had heard it from 'a certain lady whose name the witness does not know', and as the Templar commander and his son who are the centre of the story also remain unnamed, as does the commandery, and Nicholas relates that everything took place under conditions of the greatest secrecy, the whole tale now appears even more questionable than before.¹²⁹

The non-Templar witnesses that appear MS C but not in MS A or B appear even less reliable than the others. For example, three friars – Thomas of Redemere, John Peters and Robert of Edelinton – told a story about a Templar's sister who came to prepare her dead brother's body for burial. Although she had been strictly instructed not to undress the body she did so in order to wash it, and discovered a cross embroidered on the Templar's underpants (demonstrating that the Templars dishonoured the cross).¹³⁰ Robert of Edelinton said that he had heard the story from a certain woman, whose name he did not know, in his church in Lincoln. The friars Thomas of Redemere and Reginald of Braybof told a second-hand story about a dying Templar in Lincoln castle, who was being cared for by a woman; Reginald had heard the tale from a friar in Lincoln, William of

¹²⁷ *Register of William Greenfield*, vol. 4, p. 319, no. 2285, etc., p. 389 (index).

¹²⁸ MS C, fols 1v, 2r, 5r, 6r, 6v; MS D, fols 178v, 184r–v, 186r, 187r. This story is cited as a Templar confession by Michael C. Prestwich, 'The court of Edward II', in *The Reign of Edward II: New Perspectives*, ed. Gwilym Dodd and Anthony Musson (Woodbridge, 2006), pp. 61–75, at p. 71, citing: *Annales Londonienses and Annales Paulini*, ed. William Stubbs, in: *Chronicles of the Reigns of Edward I and Edward II*, ed. William Stubbs, RS 76, 2 vols (London, 1882), vol. 1, p. 192 (MS D, fols 185v–186v).

¹²⁹ MS A, fol. 92r; MS C, fol. 8v.

¹³⁰ MS C, fols 2v, 3r. Reginald of Braybof also repeated the end of this story in MS C, fol. 2v.

Pilton.¹³¹ Another friar told a story of Templars staying with a married woman in York and what she found when she took their clothes for washing.¹³² These stories were inherently unlikely, as the Templars' own Rule and customs would not allow them to lodge with or be cared for by a woman, the Templars had their own house at York where they would have lodged, the Order had its own hospitals for sick brothers at Denny and Eagle where brothers could be cared for, and a dead Templar would be prepared for burial by his Order.¹³³ However, the stories reflect women's stereotypical gendered roles within society (as carers, suppliers of hospitality and laundry services),¹³⁴ and allowed a means for the secret events to become known, for the woman could have repeated the story.

Anne Gilmour-Bryson has examined some of these non-Templar testimonies and concluded that they stemmed 'from what is probably long-standing popular myth or fable'.¹³⁵ This is certainly true of most: some, particularly those told by John of Bercia, Agnes Louekete and Nicholas of Chinon, contain the 'horror' element common in medieval descriptions of heresy,¹³⁶ while others reflect traditional gender stereotypes.¹³⁷ However, a few contain some verifiable information – albeit not presented in a way that was complimentary to the Order.

Robert the Dorturer, notary public of London, gave evidence against the Templars, which is recorded in MS A and some of which was included in the summaries.¹³⁸ Much of his evidence is vague or relates to deceased persons. His information about the Templars' procedures for punishing and absolving their servants agrees with that given by other non-Templar witnesses, but is not supported by evidence from outside the trial. However, on one point his words can be checked against independent evidence. He was asked whether the Templars believed it was no sin to acquire property for the Order unjustly. He

¹³¹ MS C, fols 2v, 4r.

¹³² MS C, fol. 2v.

¹³³ *Règle*, ed. Curzon, sections 61, 62, 190–98, 563, 566, 578–82, 625, 679 (trans. Upton-Ward, pp. 34, 65–7, 146–7, 149–51, 160, 172); *Corpus normativo*, ed. Amatuccio, pp. 32–4, 110–14, 298–300, 308–12, 352, 386, sections I.45–6, III.138–44, VIII.15, 18, 29–32, 84, X.8. For York, Denny and Eagle, see Appendix 2.

¹³⁴ See, for example, Carole Rawcliffe, *Medicine and Society in Later Medieval England* (Stroud, 1995), pp. 205–13; Nicholson, 'Women in Templar and Hospitaller Commanderies', *La Commanderie: Institution des ordres militaires dans l'Occident médiéval*, ed. Anthony Luttrell and Léon Pressouyre (Paris, 2002), pp. 125–35, at pp. 131–2 and notes 22–3, citing especially: P.J. Goldberg, *Women, Work and Lifecycle in a Medieval Economy: Women in York and Yorkshire c. 1300–1520* (Oxford, 1992), p. 135; P.J. Goldberg, 'Women's Work, Women's Role in the Late-Medieval North,' in *Profit, Piety and the Professions in Later Medieval England*, ed. Michael Hicks (Gloucester, 1990), pp. 34–50; Henrietta Leyser, *Medieval Women: A Social History of Women in England, 450–1500* (London, 1995), p. 151–2.

¹³⁵ Gilmour-Bryson, 'The London Templar Trial Testimony', p. 56.

¹³⁶ MS A, fols 98r–v; MS C, fols 8v–9r; see, for example, *Heresies of the High Middle Ages*, ed. Walter Wakefield and Austin Evans (repr. New York, 1991), nos 3A, 3B, 42B, pp. 75, 79, 254; Norman Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons: The Demonisation of Christians in Medieval Christendom*, rev. edn (London, 1993), pp. 9, 40–41, 48–9.

¹³⁷ For example, Richard of the Heuse, MS A, fol. 96r; Thomas of Redemere, John Peters and Robert of Edelinton in MS C, fols 2v–3r.

¹³⁸ MS A, fols 60v–61r, 92r, 97r; MS C, fols 5r, 6r, 12r; MS D, fols 183v, 184r, 186r, 190v.

replied that he did not know, except regarding certain pastures at Isleworth, which they acquired unjustly from certain men of this country, and which were more than they were accustomed to have there.¹³⁹ Isleworth is a parish in Middlesex, on the river Thames. In 1300–1301 Earl Edmund of Cornwall had quit-claimed rent in Isleworth to the master and brothers of the Temple in England and gave them common rights of pasture and heath in the hundred of Isleworth.¹⁴⁰ Presumably the *quibusdam pascuis apud Istelworthe* to which Robert the Dorturer referred were connected to the pasture rights at Isleworth that the earl gave the Templars. But in this case the Templars did have a valid right to hold them – unless the witness was referring to additional pastures that they had acquired since.

It is worth noting that in January 1304 one Robert the Dorturer gave a message in Charing (*La Cherryng*), in the parish of St Martin-in-the-Fields, to the Templars. During the legal investigation that must precede a donation to a religious order, the jurors explained that the land actually belonged to the Templars, and Robert the Dorturer was only returning to them what was already theirs.¹⁴¹ There is no indication as to why he was doing this, and whether it followed some dispute between the two parties. It is possible, however, that the two parties had disagreed over Robert's tenure of the land, and that this was why he came forward to give evidence against the Templars.

William Bogeys, who stated that he had personally been beaten by a Templar – although his crime against the Order is not recorded – and Gilbert of Bruer, who stated that his father had been absolved by the Templars, again for an unrecorded crime – may have been telling the truth, but Gilbert's assertion that 'this used to be commonly done' (*hec solebat fieri generaliter*) is frustratingly vague.¹⁴² There were other stories that may contain a little truth, set down in such a way as to imply the worst about the Templars. The friars' stories of new recruits who were deliberately sent overseas to be killed could reflect the anger and grief of Templars' relatives at the Templars' recent heavy losses in the East.¹⁴³ Richard of Bokingham's story of his involvement in a reception ceremony at Faxfleet has been discussed above. Another account that may be partially true was told by Adam of Smeton, an Austin friar, about the Templars at Sandford, Oxfordshire. Brother Adam had met an elderly man who had served at the commandery of Sandford for twenty years, who told him how before the Templars set out on a journey they used to go into the chapel, take out of the altar a stone slab like a little super-altar and kneel before it and adore it. While they were doing this, no one was allowed into the chapel.¹⁴⁴ This is perfectly reasonable; the inventory that the sheriff of Oxford took at the Templars' arrest mentions that there was a *phylatorium* (a reliquary) in the chapel;¹⁴⁵ it was common to have relics enclosed in an altar; and it would be normal for devout Latin Christians to adore a reliquary before setting out on a journey. What was more, as the Order had been given permission to have its own

¹³⁹ MS A, fol. 60r–61v: *Respondit quod nescit nisi de quibusdam pascuis apud Istelworthe que ab hominibus illius patrie acquisiverunt in iniuste et ultra id quod habere consueverunt.*

¹⁴⁰ TNA: PRO C 143/31/4 and C 143/34/4.

¹⁴¹ TNA: PRO C 143/44/5, m. 2.

¹⁴² MS A, fols 96v, 98r.

¹⁴³ See note on translation of Robert of Maidenesford's testimony, MS A, fol. 95v.

¹⁴⁴ MS A, fol. 96r–v.

¹⁴⁵ TNA: PRO E 142/13, m. 3: *phylator*'.

chapels so that the Templars did not have to mix with outsiders,¹⁴⁶ it would be entirely reasonable for outsiders to be excluded from the chapel at all times, not just during services. However, the episode was presented in the proceedings as implying that the Templars were heretical.

The vast majority of the non-Templar witnesses were persons of little importance; even the majority of the friars are obscure. Of 78 witnesses against the Templars in England, it has been possible to find information about only 22 of them;¹⁴⁷ of 49 witnesses against the Templars in Ireland, and others present at proceedings, additional information is available on only thirteen;¹⁴⁸ of 52 witnesses in Scotland, there is additional information on only eight.¹⁴⁹ None of this evidence was substantial. Clarence Perkins described the English non-Templar evidence as ‘almost entirely heresay ... The stories themselves were extremely fantastic and improbable in character, remarkable productions of overheated imaginations’, while the Scottish evidence contained only ‘vague suspicions and some evidence of avarice’ and the Irish gave ‘no important evidence’.¹⁵⁰ This raises the question of why this evidence was presented.

A significant motivation for the friars giving evidence against the Templars would have been to avoid being accused of heresy themselves. The trial testimonies indicate that the mendicant friars performed priestly functions for the Templars in Britain and Ireland.¹⁵¹ This was essential for the spiritual wellbeing of the Templars, because before the arrests the Order had only eleven priests in the British Isles.¹⁵² Hence the friars should have known about the Templars’ alleged heretical practices and either taken action themselves to correct the brothers or reported them to the bishop; yet they had done nothing until King

¹⁴⁶ *Papsturkunden für Templar und Johanniter*, ed. Rudolf Hiestand, *Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen, Phil.-hist. Klasse, dritte Folge no. 77* (Göttingen, 1972), no. 3, p. 208.

¹⁴⁷ William the Dorturer, notary public of London; Gilbert of Bruer, clerk; Robert the Dorturer, notary public of London; Philip Walrand; John of Nassington; John of Eure, knight, sheriff of York; William of Jafford, rector of the church of Crofton in York diocese; John of Dunstable; Adam of Overton; Hugh of Ayesbury; John of Lacock; John of Prestbury; John of Blaxan; Robert of Maidenesford; Thomas of Mepham; Thomas, rector of the church of Staplehurst; Roger, rector of the parish church of Godmersham; William, vicar of the church of St Clement of Sandwich; Richard of the Hewse; William of Radinges; Roger of Ware; Laurence of Sandwich.

¹⁴⁸ Richard Balybyn, Philip of Slane, Philip of Herdele, Roger of Eton, William of Hothum, John the Marshal, Hugo the Luminour, Nicholas of Kilmainham, Thomas of Ratho, Roger Kilmainham, Ralph Kilmainham, Gilbert the Prior, John the Palmer.

¹⁴⁹ Adam of Wedale, Henry Sinclair, Fergus Marshal, William of Ramsey, Hugh of Rydale, William of Preston, John of Wigmore, William Sinclair.

¹⁵⁰ Perkins, ‘Trial of the Knights Templars’, 440, 444, 445.

¹⁵¹ See MS A, fols 91v, 92r–v, 94v, 96r, 97r–v, 151r, 153r.

¹⁵² William de Kilros was the only Templar priest in Ireland in 1308, of the fourteen Templars interrogated. In England, of the Templars interrogated, Brothers Ralph of Barton, Roger of Stowe, Thomas of Burton, William of Warwick, John of Stoke, John of Waddon, William of Winchester, Randolph of Evesham and Ralph of Ruston were priests (MS A, fols 13r–v, 32v, 36r, 49v, 54r, 106v, 110v, 111r, 126v). The priest Robert of Bernewelle (Goode, p. 149; TNA: PRO E 358/18, rot. 18d) was apparently too ill to be interrogated; it is not possible to know when he had last exercised priestly duties.

Philip IV of France acted against the Order in autumn 1307. As a result the mendicants themselves would have been under suspicion for not reporting heresy.

The Franciscans, otherwise known as the Friars Minor or Grey Friars (due to the colour of their habits), were already under suspicion of heresy because of the debates within the Order over the significance of actual poverty.¹⁵³ The Dominicans, also known as the Friars Preacher or Black Friars, were also experiencing problems of discipline within their Order. In 1314 a group of English Dominicans complained to Brother Berengarius, then master of the Order, at the Council at London about *quasdam abusiones insanissimas juri divino et humano contrarias, que in dicto ordine excercentur, necnon alia enormia, que sine heretica pravitate tolerari non poterunt* (certain most insane abuses contrary to divine and human law, which are practised in the said Order, and other enormities, which cannot be tolerated without heretical depravity) – these included concealing suicides by making *effigies seu ydola* (effigies or idols) of friars who had killed themselves and pretending that the friars were still alive but sick; then claiming that the sick friar had died a natural death and giving the effigy Christian burial, *prefatis falsitatibus sacrilega scelera sunt adjecta* (sacrilegious crimes are added to the aforementioned falsities); and inhumane imprisonment of friars.¹⁵⁴

In addition, both the Franciscans and Dominicans had aroused the anger of the secular clergy in England. Sometime during the years 1305–10, the rectors of London churches wrote to the archbishop of Canterbury to complain that the friars were overstepping their rights and taking over the work and the income of the secular clergy.¹⁵⁵ Bringing accusations against the Templars would distract attention from the friars' own internal problems and establish their orthodoxy and hostility to heresy. In contrast to the situation in the British Isles, at the University of Paris the Franciscan and Dominican friars supported the Templars as an exempt Order of the Church, against King Philip IV of France.¹⁵⁶

In the case of the Carmelites, their testimonies against the Templars may reflect the Order's vulnerability after the Second Council of Lyon (1274) had declared that no order founded after 1215 should be allowed to continue – forcing the Order to reform itself and to demonstrate its loyalty to the papacy, which alone could decide the Order's fate – and the Carmelites' interest in the recovery of the Holy Land, although apparently not in crusading. Their reforms had brought them criticism from those who thought the choice of a pure white cloak was arrogant. Even though their Order's continuation was assured by Pope Boniface VIII, not until 1317 did the Carmelites win fully exempt status, and not until 1326 did Pope John XXII confirm their status as mendicant friars.¹⁵⁷ The Carmelites

¹⁵³ David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans: From Protest to Persecution in the Century after Saint Francis* (Philadelphia, 2001); Michael Robson, *The Franciscans in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2006), pp. 101–7, 119–140.

¹⁵⁴ A.G. Little, 'A Record of the English Dominicans, 1314', *English Historical Review*, 5 (1890), 107–12 (here 107–9), and 6 (1891), 752–3.

¹⁵⁵ *Councils and Synods*, vol. 2, pt 2, ed. Powicke and Cheney, pp. 1242, 1255–63.

¹⁵⁶ Paul Crawford, 'The University of Paris and the Trial of the Templars', in *The Military Orders*, vol. 3: *History and Heritage*, ed. Victor Mallia-Milanes (Aldershot, 2008), pp. 115–22.

¹⁵⁷ Frances Andrews, *The Other Friars: The Carmelites, Augustinian, Sack and Pied Friars in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2006), pp. 13–21, 49, 50; Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and*

in the British Isles in 1308–11 could have damaged their Order if they had defied papal orders, and instead some demonstrated their loyalty and closeness to the papacy by speaking against the Templars. One of the English Carmelites wrote elsewhere that the Templars were guilty of the charges against them, but his work has not survived.¹⁵⁸

Very few of the non-Templar witnesses were lay people, and hardly any of them were of noble birth: in Scotland there were Fergus Marshal, Henry Sinclair and his son William, eight other ‘domicelli’ or young gentlemen, and three other knights; in England the only lay witness of any social standing was John de Eure, sheriff of York (who as lord of Stokesley was overlord of the Templars’ commandery of Westerdale),¹⁵⁹ while in Ireland one lay witness was a *latimer* or interpreter, one was a servant, and two had travelled to Cyprus so may have been merchants. The English lay nobility are scarcely mentioned in the trial proceedings until Monday 12 July 1311, when four of the Lords Ordainer attended the ceremony of the Templars’ abjuration at London.¹⁶⁰ It may be that lay people, and especially the lay nobility, had no information to give about the Templars, but it is more likely that – through influence, or simply failing to come forward – they were able to avoid becoming involved in the proceedings.

In short, in assembling their summaries of the proceedings against the Templars in the British Isles, the inquisitors downplayed the Templars’ denials of the charges against them and made only limited use of evidence from well-informed individuals such as Robert of Gowaardeby. Instead, they made extensive use of evidence of uncertain provenance retold second or third hand. Much of this evidence was given by representatives of the orders of friars, whose members had been compromised through acting as priests for the Templars, or who may have been vulnerable to charges of irregularity for other reasons. Careful assembling of this evidence enabled the compilers of MSS C and D to present an apparently conclusive case against the Templars in these islands.

The End of the Trial

At the Church Council of London between 27 June to 13 July 1311, the Templars in the Province of Canterbury made statements explaining that they had been so defamed that they could not clear themselves, but they abjured all heresy and threw themselves on the mercy of the Church.¹⁶¹ They were absolved, reconciled to the Church and sent to monasteries to do penance. In the Province of York the Templars, including the two

Antiquity: Mendicants and their Pasts in the Middle Ages (Oxford, 2002), pp. 15–17, 36–7, 39–40 and n. 141, 45–78 (on the change of cloak).

¹⁵⁸ MS A, fol. 96r: William of Radinges, doctor of theology. John Bale recorded that William de Radinges wrote two books, one titled: ‘Against the Templars in England’, but this does not survive: Richard Copsey, ‘An Anonymous Chronicle from the Carmelite House, Calais’, in idem, *Carmel in Britain: Studies on the Early History of the Carmelite Order*, vol. 3: *The Hermits from Mount Carmel* (Faversham, England, and Rome: 2004), pp. 51–73, here p. 55.

¹⁵⁹ *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem and other Analogous Documents preserved in the Public Record Office, prepared under the superintendence of the Deputy Keeper of the Records*, vol. 5, *Edward II* (London, 1908), pp. 411, 412.

¹⁶⁰ MS A, fol. 168r.

¹⁶¹ MS A, fols 164v–170r; Perkins, ‘Trial of the Knights Templars’, 442–3.

who had been living in Scotland, made a statement abjuring heresy and were likewise absolved.¹⁶² The records of the Church Council that decided the Templars' case in Ireland have not survived, but in autumn 1312 the commander of Ireland was released from prison on bail.¹⁶³ There is no record of the Irish Templars being sent to monasteries to do penance, as was done in England, but a regular pension was paid to them.¹⁶⁴

Of the 108 Templars who had given evidence, no information survives on the fourteen Templars in Ireland. One of the Templars at York, Robert of Camville, apparently died before abjuring heresy; the remaining 22, and the two Templars from Scotland, abjured all heresy. Of those in the Province of Canterbury, two – William de la More and Himbert Blanc – refused to abjure heresies which they had not committed, while one – the former Templar priest Roger of Stowe – had run away. Richard of Herdwick, John of Euley and Thomas of Tholouse had died. Alexander of Althon, Alexander Bulbeke and John of Newent are not mentioned in the abjurations of heresy at London and so presumably had died before July 1311. Three had 'confessed' – Stephen of Stapelbrugge, Thomas of Thoraldby and John of Stoke the priest – and 57 abjured heresy and were absolved.¹⁶⁵

The Church Council at Vienne in France, which at last opened on 16 October 1311, discussed the Templars' affair but did not reach a formal decision. On 3 April 1312 a bull of Pope Clement V, dated 22 March and beginning with the words *Vox in excelso*, set out the evidence against the Templars (on the same lines as his earlier bull *Faciens misericordiam*) but concluded that it was insufficient to prove the guilt of the whole Order. Nevertheless, he dissolved the Order 'not by definitive sentence, but by apostolic provision or ordinance' – in other words, although the case was unproven the Order had been so defamed that he considered it could not continue in existence. In the bull *Ad providam*, dated 2 May 1312, he transferred the Order's property – except that in the Iberian Peninsula and Mallorca – to the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem, which would carry on the Templars' vocation in defending Christendom.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶² Forey, 'Ex-Templars', 18–21; *Councils and Synods*, vol. 2, pt 2, ed. Powicke and Cheney, pp. 1338–9.

¹⁶³ Callan, "'No such art'", p. 55, n. 133, citing Philomena Connolly's then forthcoming edition of the justiciary roll for 6–7 Edward II. Dr Connolly died in 2002.

¹⁶⁴ Wood, 'Templars in Ireland', 357–9.

¹⁶⁵ MS A, fols 164v–169v (abjurations at London); *Councils and Synods*, vol. 2, pt 2, ed. Powicke and Cheney, p. 1338; *CCR, 1307–1313*, pp. 373, 384 (abjurations at York); Perkins, 'Trial of the Knights Templars', 443; Forey, 'Ex-Templars', 19–20.

¹⁶⁶ These proceedings are described more fully by Barber, *Trial of the Templars*, 2nd edn, pp. 267–71; Menache, *Clement V*, pp. 235–40; William Chester Jordan, *Unceasing Strife, Unending Fear: Jacques de Thérines and the Freedom of the Church in the Age of the Last Capetians* (Princeton, 2005), pp. 40–55. For the bulls, see Norman Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils* (London, 1990), vol. 1, pp. 336–43, 343–6. For the Hospitallers' crusade see Anthony Luttrell, 'The Hospitallers and the Papacy, 1305–1314', in *Forschungen zur Reichs-, Papst- und Landesgeschichte: Peter Herde zum 65. Geburtstag von Freunden, Schülern und Kollegen dargebracht*, ed. Karl Borchardt and Enno Bünz (Stuttgart, 1998), pp. 595–622.

The Trial Testimonies as Historical Evidence

Prima facie, the testimonies from the proceedings against the Templars should offer valuable insights into the beliefs and everyday lives of the members of this religious military order at the beginning of the fourteenth century, but the fact that torture or the threat of torture was used to extract confessions from the Templars in France,¹⁶⁷ parts of Italy and the Crown of Aragon¹⁶⁸ (although the trial in Aragon produced no evidence of Templar guilt), and towards the end of the English trial, renders much of the Templars' testimony effectively worthless as a means of establishing actual conditions within the Order.

The trial in the British Isles concluded with three confessions which the trial proceedings indicate were extracted through torture or the fear of torture,¹⁶⁹ and throughout the trial in the British Isles the Templars were under at least verbal pressure, and aware that torture had been applied to their brothers in France.¹⁷⁰ The inquisitors themselves commented that the Templars in England were so terrified of them that they were not giving accurate answers. One witness was recorded as giving his evidence stammering – perhaps with fright – while Thomas Totty of Thoraldby complained that he had been threatened by one of the papal inquisitors when he refused to give a false confession. William of Chesterton referred to the probability of his being burned for his membership of the Order.¹⁷¹ The situation in Ireland is more difficult to assess, for the record is incomplete and gives no indication of whether torture was used or not.¹⁷² Overall, we are faced with the possibility that none of the Templar evidence from the trial in the British Isles can be trusted as a guide to realities within the Order.

¹⁶⁷ Barber, *Trial of the Templars*, 2nd edn, pp. 28–9, 68, 71, 80–84, etc.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 236–7, 248–50; Forey, *Fall of the Templars in the Crown of Aragon*, pp. 86–7.

¹⁶⁹ MS A, fols 161r, 170r; discussed by Perkins, 'Trial of the Knights Templars', 441–2.

¹⁷⁰ MS A, fols 73r, 73v, 112v, 126v, 129r (twice), 131r, 133r; for the pressure applied to the Templars in the province of Canterbury, see: MS A, fol. 170r: *viasque ad provocandum dictos fratres ad detegendum veritatem inventas et excogitatas, modo per Episcopos personaliter, modo per clericos ipsorum, et etiam severas et crudelas personas laicas iudicium sanguinis quandoque exercentes ex certa scientia eis ad terrorem missos, modo per constantem accusationem, trium confitentium de dicto ordine aliquando contra unum, aliquando contra duos de negantibus et errorem diffitentibus.*

¹⁷¹ MS B, fol. 80v: *credimus quod templarii ita terreantur in nostra presencia quod facilius dicerent veritatem coram regnicolis quam coram nobis.* MS A, fol. 88v: *Et iste deposuit in Anglico et titubando.* MS A, fol. 162r: *Interrogatus qualiter et quare apostotavit et fugit de ordine, Respondit quod propter timorem mortis quia Abbas de Latigniaco apud Lincolniam ubi eum examinavit petiit ab eo si vellet alia confiteri, Et cum respondisset se nescire alia dicere nisi admisceret falsitatem, Abbas apposita manu ad pectus iuravit in verbo dei, quod ipse redderet ipsum confitentem antequam evaderet manus suas, ut dixit. Ex quibus timens iste iuratus.* MS A, fol. 52v: *mallet cicius statim comburi quam exire dictam religionem.*

¹⁷² For references, see note 97, above.

Torture and the Evidence from the Templars' Trial

The use of torture during the French interrogations has attracted considerable scholarly debate, with some scholars regarding it as invalidating the French Templars' confessions, while others consider that torture could do what its supporters claimed: force the Templars to tell the truth.¹⁷³ Scholars drawing on evidence from the trial proceedings, alone or in conjunction with other evidence, have reached widely differing conclusions on the state of the Order at the start of the fourteenth century.¹⁷⁴

The fundamental issue here is whether evidence extracted by torture and the threat of torture is accurate. Those who accept the evidence given by the Templars who were tortured or threatened with torture do not discuss the extensive scholarly psychological research that shows that torture does not lead those being interrogated to tell the truth, but only to say what their interrogators wish to hear, and to endorse material suggested to them by their interrogators.¹⁷⁵ This denial, or refusal to acknowledge, the workings of torture is characteristic of the debate over interrogation techniques.¹⁷⁶ Moreover, historians using torture-induced evidence from the Templar trials do not discuss modern historical studies of evidence obtained through the use of torture in other heresy trials. John Arnold, a leading scholar in this area, has argued that inquisitorial records are a 'discourse of power', which cannot be taken at face value: the inquisitors in effect created an alternative reality to which the accused must conform or be condemned as obdurate heretics. He contends that the reason for the similarities between heretical confessions is not that the heretics believed the same things, but that the inquisitors had already decided what they wanted

¹⁷³ See Barber, *Trial of the Templars*, 2nd edn, pp. 68, 69–72, 80–84, 120, 133–7, 143–7, 150–51, 155, 160–61, 180, 184, 192–6, 283; and his discussion of the work of Marian Melville, Norman Cohn, Peter Partner and Andreas Beck (who considered that confessions extracted under torture are not good legal evidence) and J.R. Strayer (who considered that they could be true): pp. 296–304, especially p. 304. See also Riley-Smith, 'Were the Templars Guilty?', pp. 107–24; discussed by Barber, *Trial of the Templars*, 2nd edn, pp. 307–8. Alain Demurger, *Les Templiers: une chevalerie chrétienne au moyen âge* (Paris, 2005), pp. 489–94, offers a more nuanced discussion: he concludes that the charges represented 'un rite de passage', an initiation test, of new recruits, but does not believe that the Templars were heretics. See also Arnaud de la Croix, *L'Ordre du Temple et le reniement du Christ* (Paris, 2004), Barbara Frale, 'The Chinon Chart: Papal absolution to the last Templar, Master Jacques de Molay', *Journal of Medieval History*, 30 (2004), 109–34: esp. 127, and her other works on the Templars' trial.

¹⁷⁴ Jonathan Riley-Smith, 'The Structures of the Orders of the Temple and the Hospital in c. 1291', in *Medieval Crusade*, ed. Ridyard, pp. 125–43; Alan Forey, 'Notes on Templar personnel and government at the turn of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries', *Journal of Medieval History*, 35 (2009), 150–70, here 170; Jochen Burgdorf, *The Central Convent of Hospitallers and Templars: History, Organization, and Personnel (1099/1120–1310)* (Leiden, 2008), p. 711.

¹⁷⁵ This point is made by William Jordan in his review of Alain Demurger, *Les Templiers*, in *Crusades*, 6 (2007), 195–7: 'Nor has there yet appeared a sophisticated investigation drawing on the extraordinary and also extraordinarily sophisticated body of research on modern torture and fear of torture and the truth content of confessions to try to assess the Templar data' (p. 196).

¹⁷⁶ See discussion by Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: the Making and Unmaking of the World* (New York and Oxford, 1985), pp. 27–59, esp. p. 56: 'the person's pain ... is ... categorically denied'.

from those accused of heresy and shaped their questioning to obtain it.¹⁷⁷ Arnold points out that statements made by the accused with no heretical intent were ‘repositioned by inquisitorial discourse as “heresy”’, and reminds us that in the early fourteenth century a Franciscan friar, Bernard Délicieux, denounced certain inquisitorial registers as ‘false, fictitious and contrived’ and said that ‘if St Peter and St Paul were tried by inquisition, even they would be found guilty’.¹⁷⁸ Similar conclusions have been reached by James Given, who has described the trial of the Templars in France as ‘the most famous example of inquisitorial ability to bend truth to its needs ... the medieval inquisitors had perfected techniques by which the very fabric of reality could be altered’.¹⁷⁹

Some scholars believe that this sceptical approach to inquisitorial records has gone too far, contending that it portrays the heretics as passive and ignorant victims of the inquisition and – in the case of the Cathars – suggests that the entire Cathar heresy was invented by the Catholic Church. For example, Caterina Bruschi has appealed for a ‘middle way’ between ‘radical scepticism and simple positivism’, arguing that the judicial records ‘are not only fragments of constructed text’, but preserve something of the heretics’ original voices. Well aware that ‘the original dialogue between inquisitors and witnesses has been modified several times’, she discussed at length the ““filters” through which we should look at the confessions’, including the inquisitors’ selection of material, its organisation, and later copying. However, while contending that both the heretics and the inquisitors tried ‘to drive the dialogue, to select the facts’, she did not consider how far torture or other aggressive interrogation techniques might have distorted the heretics’ voices.¹⁸⁰

While historians of heresy do not agree on the status of interrogation records, it is clear that they agree that they cannot be taken at face value. This raises the question of the basis on which historians of the Templars should use the interrogation records from the Templars’ trial as historical evidence.¹⁸¹

Torture has its apologists, who claim that – whatever the ethical issues – in extreme situations torture is necessary to force suspects to tell the truth. The classic justification for this is the so-called ‘ticking time-bomb’ scenario, which proposes that a man who has hidden a bomb which is about to explode may be tortured to force him to tell where he has hidden it, in order to save many lives. Anecdotal evidence is also used to justify torture as a means of extracting evidence from suspects. However, those who oppose the use of torture

¹⁷⁷ See Roach, *Devil’s World*, p. 250; John H. Arnold, *Inquisition and Power: Catharism and the Confessing Subject in Medieval Languedoc* (Philadelphia, 2001), pp. 7–15, 76–8, etc.; John Arnold, ‘Inquisition, Texts and Discourse’, in *Texts and the Repression of Medieval Heresy*, ed. Caterina Bruschi and Peter Biller (Rochester, NY, 2003), pp. 63–80.

¹⁷⁸ Arnold, ‘Inquisition’, pp. 76, 64.

¹⁷⁹ James Given, ‘The Inquisitors of Languedoc and the Medieval Technology of Power’, *American Historical Review*, 94 (1989), 336–59, here 351–2.

¹⁸⁰ Caterina Bruschi, *The Wandering Heretics of Languedoc* (Cambridge, 2009), pp. 3–8, 11–49, quotations from pp. 7, 3, 4, 14, 46; torture is mentioned only on p. 156, and its possible impact is not discussed.

¹⁸¹ A point made by Barber, *Trial of the Templars*, 2nd edn, pp. 308–9, citing Leonard Boyle, ‘Montaillou revisited: *Mentalité* and methodology’, in *Pathways to Medieval Peasants*, ed. J.A. Raftis (Toronto, 1981), pp. 119–40.

argue that the anecdotal evidence is mixed, and that torture is just as likely to produce false evidence as true.¹⁸² As there is no means of separating true evidence from false, the interrogator in the ‘ticking time-bomb’ scenario may be disastrously misled.

Arguments that torture is a scientific process have been labelled as ‘folk psychology’ and ‘folk neurobiology’.¹⁸³ Recent medical study shows that, far from focusing the memory and making a person more likely to tell the interrogator the truth, the stress of prolonged interrogation damages those parts of the brain responsible for memory, so that the suspect is less likely to remember the truth. If physical torture is added, memory is still further impaired. What is more, the greater the pressure inflicted on the suspect, the more likely it is that any information given to the suspect by the interrogator will be confabulated by the suspect to form a false memory, so that s/he no longer knows what actually happened and what is invention. Suspects learn that if they talk, the torture stops, so they say whatever the interrogator wants them to say – and the interrogator, who is also under stress, readily accepts this as a confession. The study concludes: ‘In sum, coercive interrogations involving extreme stress are unlikely to facilitate the release of veridical information from long-term memory ... on the contrary, these techniques ... [compromise] brain tissue supporting memory and executive function.’¹⁸⁴ In medieval heresy trials, interrogation was intended to obtain confirmation of the charges rather than to obtain the truth,¹⁸⁵ but the process was the same as in the modern day.

It could be suggested that those Templars who confessed in France and elsewhere had not necessarily been tortured, for many of the French Templars told the papal commissioners that they had not. In fact there was no clear definition of torture: a Templar who did not confess during torture or immediately after, but only after three weeks in prison on bread and water, was recorded as having confessed *spontanea voluntate sine aliqua coactione*.¹⁸⁶ Moreover, some Templars who initially denied having confessed because of torture later admitted that they had been tortured,¹⁸⁷ while at least one Templar

¹⁸² Richard A. Posner, ‘Torture, Terrorism and Interrogation’, in *Torture: A Collection*, ed. Sanford Levinson (Oxford, 2006), pp. 291–8; Richard H. Weisberg, ‘Loose Professionalism, or Why Lawyers take the Lead on Torture’, in *ibid.*, pp. 299–305; Andrew Sullivan, ‘The Abolition of Torture’, in *ibid.*, pp. 317–27; Darius Rejali, *Torture and Democracy* (Princeton, 2007), pp. 446–79; Jeannine Bell, ‘“Behind This Mortal Bone”: The (In) Effectiveness of Torture’, *Indiana Law Journal*, 83 (2008), 339–61, here 353–4; William Ranney Levi, ‘Interrogation’s Law’, *The Yale Law Journal*, 118 (2009), 1434–83, here 1476–7; Michael Welch, ‘American “pain-ology” in the war on terror: a critique of “scientific” torture’, *Theoretical Criminology*, 13 (2009), 451–74, here 461; Shane O’Mara, ‘Torturing the brain: On the folk psychology and folk neurobiology motivating “enhanced and coercive interrogation techniques”’, *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 13 (2009), 497–500, here 498.

¹⁸³ O’Mara, ‘Torturing the brain’, 497. The physical, psychosocial and psychological damage inflicted by torture is discussed in *Torture and its Consequences: Current Treatment Approaches*, ed. Metin Başoğlu (Cambridge, 1992).

¹⁸⁴ O’Mara, ‘Torturing the brain’, 499.

¹⁸⁵ A point made by Barber, *Trial of the Templars*, 2nd edn, p. 29.

¹⁸⁶ Schottmüller, p. 65 and n. 4: *Frater Geraldus de Sto Marciali, miles preceptor de Charreriis*.

¹⁸⁷ See Barber, *Trial of the Templars*, 2nd edn, particularly pp. 69–72. Some examples of torture are particularly notable: see *ibid.*, pp. 136, 196–9, and *Procès*, ed. Michelet, vol. 1, p. 521:

admitted that he had confessed at the simple threat of torture and without torture having actually been applied.¹⁸⁸ There was powerful motivation for those who confessed as a result of torture to deny that torture had been the cause of their confession. As under Roman Law torture should normally be applied only to slaves and persons of low birth,¹⁸⁹ it was deeply demeaning for free men and especially for knights to have to admit to having been tortured, still more to admit to having given false testimony as a result of torture.¹⁹⁰ Some Templars told the papal commissioners at Poitiers that although they had confessed under torture, it was not the torture that had caused them to confess.¹⁹¹ Having once confessed, even if this was a result of torture, the Templars could not go back on their confessions; those who did so were liable to be burned at the stake as relapsed heretics.¹⁹²

John of Cormeilles, *serviens*, did not wish to speak to the papal commissioners about his reception because of the torments he had gone through during his interrogation at Paris, during which he had lost four teeth; vol. 2, pp. 13–14: William of Errée, *serviens*, of Le Mans diocese, had confessed from fear of torture to the bishop of Saintes about spitting and denying, but before he was put on bread and water he had denied all this; *ibid.*, p. 15: Brother Thomas de Pamplona, commander of the houses of Aberin and Ribaforada in Navarre, stated that he had confessed to the bishop of Saintes *ob vim multorum tormentorum prius illatorum eidem* at Saint-Jean-d'Angély; *ibid.*, p. 19: Brother Peter Theobald, *serviens*, confessed to the bishop of Saintes *metu tormentorum prius scilicet per dimidium annum ante recognitionem predictam sibi illatorum et eciam propter minas que per alios, non per dictum dominum episcopum, inferebantur eidem*; *ibid.*, p. 210: Brother Helias Costati, *serviens*, said he knew nothing about the charges, but he had confessed to the bishop of Saintes *propter carceris asperitatem et propter terrorem qui ab aliis quam a dicto domino episcopo inferebatur eidem*; in contrast, *ibid.*, pp. 423–515, in the interrogation of the Templars of the diocese of Roussillon (where no torture was used) all the Templars denied all charges. See also for reports during the proceedings at Poitiers, 28 June–2 July 1308, of earlier torture: Schottmüller, pp. 48, 49, 52, 62, 65, 67, 68, 69, 71.

¹⁸⁸ Schottmüller, p. 49: *frater Petrus de Conders, miles preceptor, 'Interrogatus si fuit tormentatus, dixit, quod ipsi volebant eum ponere ad tormenta, sed statim viso tormento confessus est.'*

¹⁸⁹ S.P. Scott, *The Civil Law*, vol. 15: *The Code of Justinian*, 2nd edn (Cincinnati, 1932, repr. New York, 1973), Bk 9, tit. 41 (pp. 66–70); *The Theodosian Code*, trans. Pharr, Bk 9.35 (pp. 250–51).

¹⁹⁰ Schottmüller, p. 52: *Frater Guillelmus de Lemoricinio, miles templarius: 'Interrogatus si fuit tormentatus vel teritus dixit, quod non, tamen aliqui de sotiis tormentati fuerunt.'* This is contradicted by the testimony of *Petrus de Conders* (p. 49), a knight who was threatened with torture but surrendered at the sight of the torture; and *Frater Iterius de Rupe Forti, miles et preceptor*, who also felt degraded by being interrogated by his social inferiors (p. 48): *'Interrogatus si fuit tormentatus post captionem suum, dixit quod sic pluries ... dixit tamen, quod si fuisset ibi aliqua bona persona, fuisset confessus predicta omnia sine tormento, sed erant ibi multi astantes et multi pueri garziones.'*

¹⁹¹ Schottmüller, p. 68: *Deodatus Jefet, frater serviens* was tortured, but confessed not because of this but *'inspiratus a deo et beata Maria virgine'*; p. 69: *Frater Ato de Salvignaco, miles, preceptor*, stated that he was not tortured but was in prison on bread and water for four weeks before he confessed.

¹⁹² Fifty-four Templars were burned at the stake outside Paris on 12 May 1310 for this reason, and others may have been burned elsewhere in France: Barber, *Trial of the Templars*, 2nd edn, pp. 178–80, 337 n. 15; Jacques de Molay and Geoffrey de Charny were burned at the stake for retracting

In any case, whether or not the experiences of the French Templars should be labelled torture, modern scientific research has shown that any confession evidence is unreliable, as many people confess to crimes which they have not committed.¹⁹³ In 1993, the Royal Commission on Criminal Justice reported that it is not possible to calculate how often false confessions occur, but: ‘a retracted confession may nevertheless be true, and defendants who have made false confessions may have reasons of their own for adhering to them’. However, the report noted ‘there is now a substantial body of research’ which has identified ‘four distinct categories of false confession’.¹⁹⁴

This ‘substantial body of research’ relating to false confessions was published in 1992 by Gisli H. Gudjonsson, a clinical psychologist. The four categories of false confessions that he identified have been summarised as:

‘fantasy confessions’ made by people suffering from severe mental problems which prevent them from distinguishing fact from reality; what may be termed ‘diversionary confessions’ made in the attempt to protect someone else from interrogation and prosecution; ‘coerced-compliant confessions’ made by those who desperately want to escape the stress caused by police interviews; and ‘coerced-internalized confessions’ made by the highly suggestible who, though entirely innocent and sometimes even physically incapable of having done what is alleged, none the less [come to believe that they have committed the crime].¹⁹⁵

While it is unlikely that several men within a group would be suffering from ‘severe mental problems’, it is possible that the other three categories could have applied to at least some of the Templars.

Gudjonsson discussed how interrogators could quite unintentionally influence the responses given by those under interrogation.¹⁹⁶ In the same way, any patterns running through the French Templars’ confessions do not demonstrate that there was any truth in the confessions, because the inquisitors worked together. From the 1240s, those involved in the investigation of heresy had kept registers of testimonies and compared notes with

their confessions: *ibid.*, pp. 281–2. See also Bernard Hamilton, *The Albigensian Crusade*, Historical Association Pamphlet G. 85 (London, 1974), pp. 25–7.

¹⁹³ Gisli H. Gudjonsson, *The Psychology of Interrogations, Confessions and Testimony* (New York, 1992). The growing body of literature is discussed by, for example, Hollida Wakefield and Ralph Underwager, ‘Coerced or Nonvoluntary Confessions’, *Behavioural Sciences and the Law*, 16 (1998), 423–40; Jessica R. Klaver, Zina Lee and V. Gordon Rose, ‘Effects of personality, interrogation techniques and plausibility in an experimental false confession paradigm’, *Legal and Criminological Psychology*, 13 (2008), 71–88.

¹⁹⁴ Royal Commission on Criminal Justice, *Report*, chairman Viscount Runciman of Doxford, Cm.2263 (London, 1993), p. 57, paras 31–2. It was noted by the Royal Commission that ‘a small number of police officers have been proved to be dishonest in fabricating confessions’ (p. 60, para. 49); historians of the present day have no means of knowing whether or not any of the Templars’ confessions were in fact fabricated.

¹⁹⁵ Gudjonsson, *The Psychology of Interrogations*, esp. pp. 205–59; the summary of the four categories is from Steven Greer, ‘Towards a Sociological Model of the Police Informant’, *The British Journal of Sociology*, 46 (1995), 509–27, here 524.

¹⁹⁶ For example, Gudjonsson, *The Psychology of Interrogations*, pp. 239–40; see also p. 259 on information ‘unwittingly communicated’ to suspects by interrogators.

each other.¹⁹⁷ We have already seen that, during the trial of the Templars in England, the inquisitors obtained evidence from their French colleagues which could be presented to the English Templars in an attempt to make them confess to similar things.¹⁹⁸ The inquisitors also asked the Templars in France about evidence presented by the Templars in England.¹⁹⁹ It is therefore very likely that they also presented Templars who were under interrogation in France with the confessions of their fellow-Templars within France and urged them to make similar confessions, so building up a pattern and developing themes which had no existence outside the trial proceedings. Even where the Templars had had the time and opportunity to ‘invent and elaborate stories’,²⁰⁰ they had to produce a story which fitted into the pattern which the inquisitors required, for interrogation would continue until they did so. A Templar who had confessed under torture to some of the charges discovered that the questioning continued in an attempt to make him confess to everything.²⁰¹

Considering the problem of false confessions, Gudjonsson conducted empirical and scientific studies to establish how it could come about that ‘suggestible innocent people may be led to believe that they are in fact guilty’.²⁰² He established that, in a significant minority of confessions which were later found to be false, the confessor actually confessed to a crime which had in fact not taken place.²⁰³ Some scholars have observed that the French Templars’ recorded confessions contain much circumstantial detail which apparently could not have been invented²⁰⁴ and which should thus offer valuable insights into the order, but in fact such detail is not evidence that these stories are true. All the examples of false confessions discussed by Gudjonsson contained considerable circumstantial detail and were sufficient to lead to a conviction. However, these apparently clear-cut cases turned out to be miscarriages of justice.²⁰⁵

Gudjonsson also noted that a ‘strong tendency to comply with people in authority, and language problems’ could ‘contribute in varying degrees’ to an accused’s ability to cope with interrogation.²⁰⁶ Study of cases and experimental investigation has further indicated that ‘individuals with an external locus of control, who believe that powerful others, fate

¹⁹⁷ Roach, *The Devil’s World*, pp. 139, 145.

¹⁹⁸ See above, pp. xviii–xix; MS B, fol. 80v: ‘*confessiones et pronunciationes regni Francie et aliorum regnorum ubique in regno Anglie publicarentur, ut sic sine scandalo populi ad questiones melius et honestius deveniretur. Item quod predictae publicaciones et confessiones legerentur eisdem sic quodammodo cogeruntur ad confitendum.*’

¹⁹⁹ *Procès*, ed. Michelet, vol. 2, p. 132.

²⁰⁰ Riley-Smith, ‘Were the Templars Guilty?’, p. 116.

²⁰¹ Schottmüller, p. 48: *Frater Iterius de Rupe Forti, miles et preceptor: ‘Interrogatus si fuit tormentatus post captionem suam, dixit quod sic pluries, quia licet omnia predicta confessus fuisset in primo tormento statim, tamen querebantur ab eo alia, que omnia ignorabat, sicut et de ydola et de aliis.’*

²⁰² Gudjonsson, *The Psychology of Interrogations*, pp. 205–59; quotation from the review by Peter N. Naish in *Journal of Psychophysiology*, 13 (2) (1999), 126–7.

²⁰³ Gudjonsson, *The Psychology of Interrogations*, pp. 208, 211.

²⁰⁴ Malcolm Barber, *The New Knighthood: A History of the Order of the Temple* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 306, citing Prutz, *Entwicklung und Untergang*, p. 231; Riley-Smith, ‘Were the Templars Guilty?’, p. 118.

²⁰⁵ Gudjonsson, *The Psychology of Interrogations*, pp. 234–73.

²⁰⁶ Gudjonsson, *The Psychology of Interrogations*, p. 259.

or chance primarily determine events, may be at differential risk for false confession'.²⁰⁷ The more inexperienced and less worldly-wise the suspect, the more liable s/he is to be persuaded by an authority figure into making a false confession.²⁰⁸ According to this evidence, the Templars would have been particularly vulnerable to being coerced into making false confessions. They had taken a vow of obedience to their superior, and were conforming members of a society that prized obedience to authority, so were predisposed to comply with people in authority. The charges against them and the record of their testimony were written in Latin, a language very few of them knew. Few of them were educated, hardly any had training in the law, and many had never left their local area.²⁰⁹ They were members of a religious order whose beliefs centred on a 'powerful other' who primarily determines events – God.

Since Gudjonsson's studies, further scientific experiments have been set up to test human behaviour when faced with false accusations of guilt. A laboratory experiment by S.M. Kassin and K.I. Kiechel in 1996 established that false confessions could be elicited from a significant percentage of young adults who did not know whether or not they had committed a certain error. Further experimentation has showed that the percentage increases if participants are under stress. Younger and more imaginative participants are more likely to confess falsely, while the presentation of false evidence of their guilt also encourages the innocent to confess to errors they have not committed.²¹⁰ However, in this case the participants did not know whether they were actually guilty or not, and the fact of having made the error carried no potential long-term harmful effects for them. An experiment, published in 2005, presented student participants with an accusation that, if

²⁰⁷ Klaver *et al.*, 'Effects of personality ... in an experimental false confession paradigm', 73.

²⁰⁸ The evidence relates to evidence from children and adolescents and from adults with a low IQ: Robert Weinstock and Christopher Thompson, 'Commentary: Ethics-Related Implications and Neurobiological Correlates of False Confessions in Juveniles', *Journal of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law*, 37 (2009), 344–8; Valerie F. Reyna, Robyn Holliday and Tammy Marche, 'Explaining the development of false memories', *Developmental Review*, 22 (2002), 436–89.

²⁰⁹ Obedience to authority was central to the Templars' discipline and effectiveness in their vocation: *Règle*, ed. Curzon, sections 1, 39, 41, 98, 233, 274–5, 313, 382, 661, 664, 667, 675; trans. Upton-Ward, pp. 19, 29, 44, 74, 81, 88, 104, 169–71; *Corpus normativo*, ed. Amatuccio, pp. 2, 24, 54, 58, 130, 146–8, 162, 196, 378–82, 384, 404, 411–12, sections I.1, 26 III.15–16, 33, V.10, VI.9, VII.19, 85, X.1,7; and sections 1 and 33 of the primitive latin rule. On the Templars' lack of education, see Alan Forey, 'Literary and Learning in the Military Orders during the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries', in *The Military Orders*, vol. 2: *Welfare and Warfare*, ed. Helen Nicholson (Aldershot, 1998), pp. 185–206; on their lack of lawyers, see: James Brundage, 'The Lawyers of the Military Orders', in: *The Military Orders: Fighting for the Faith and Caring for the Sick*, ed. Malcolm Barber (Aldershot, 1994), pp. 346–57. For lack of mobility, see: Gilmour-Bryson, *The Trial of the Templars in the Papal State and the Abruzzi*, p. 38; Christian Vogel, 'The Mobility of Templars from Provence', in *International Mobility in the Military Orders (Twelfth to Fifteenth Centuries): Travelling on Christ's Business*, ed. Jochen Burgdorf and Helen Nicholson (Cardiff, 2006), pp. 114–29, here p. 124; Jean-Marie Allard, 'Templar Mobility in the Diocese of Limoges according to the Order's Trial Records', in *ibid.*, pp. 130–41, here p. 137.

²¹⁰ Klaver *et al.*, 'Effects of personality ... in an experimental false confession paradigm', 74, citing S.N. Kassin and K.L. Kiechel, 'The social psychology of false confessions: Compliance, internalization, and confabulation', *Psychological Science*, 7 (1996), 125–8.

proved against them, would result in loss of credit and possible action against them for cheating. Some students were in fact guilty and others were not. Some students were offered a deal by which they should sign a confession of guilt and would have to return for a further session, but after this no further action would be taken; if they did not sign, the professor in charge of the study would be contacted and ‘would handle the situation as he saw fit’. Eighty-seven per cent of guilty participants who were offered this ‘deal’ accepted it, as did 43 per cent of innocent participants.²¹¹ Clearly these innocent participants believed that there was a high likelihood that they would be severely punished for the crime that they had not committed – the university’s penalty for cheating could include expulsion from the institution – and they preferred to settle for a known, small penalty, even though they were actually not liable for any penalty. In the words of the experimenters’ report: ‘Our results indicate that offering deals to suspects in the real world may lead innocent people to confess simply because they believe that they are better off accepting the known consequences of the deal than taking their chances of winning at trial.’²¹²

These results offer a possible reason for the confessions of some groups of Templars – for example, the 40 who confessed in the Auvergne, as against the 29 who denied the charges²¹³ – and the willingness of all but two of the Templars in Britain to abjure all heresy and accept the penance that would follow, rather than refuse to abjure sins that they had not committed and remain in prison, as William de la More and Himbert Blanc did. The confession or abjuration offered a way out of their situation – whereas to insist on their innocence, when their interrogators insisted on their guilt, could result in a far worse punishment: even if innocent, they could face lifetime imprisonment or burning at the stake as obdurate heretics.

All in all, the modern scientific evidence suggests that historians have been at best naïve in accepting the evidence from the Templars’ trial as a sound historical source. Because torture was permitted as a means of interrogation in the dominions of the king of France, it is not possible to state with confidence that any Templar’s confession in those dominions was accurate – even if he himself claimed that it was. Not only was the trial of the Templars in the British Isles ordered by the pope on the basis of unreliable confessions, but the evidence given by the Templars within the British Isles can also be called into question. According to Thomas Totty, intimidation was used even before torture was brought into play; and even if we share Abbot Dieudonné’s opinion of Thomas Totty’s stories, some Templars in the British Isles – particularly the old and the pious – would have been vulnerable to being led into giving inaccurate evidence even without torture being used.

²¹¹ Melissa B. Russano, Christian A. Meissner, Fadia M. Narchet and Saul M. Kassim, ‘Investigating True and False Confessions within a Novel Experimental Paradigm’, *Psychological Science*, 16 (2005), 481–6.

²¹² Russano *et al.*, ‘Investigating True and False Confessions’, 485.

²¹³ *Procès des Templiers d’Auvergne*, ed. Sève and Chagny-Sève, pp. 41–3.

Other Problems

However, given that, even when torture was used, only three of the Templars in Britain actually confessed to any of the blasphemous practices of which they were accused, it could be argued that the majority of the testimonies in the trial in Britain probably give a generally reliable picture of what the Templars actually believed – although not necessarily of the actual situation. Yet, as noted in the introduction to the Latin text of MS B in Volume 1, there are some substantial differences between the two versions of the Templar testimonies from the Province of Canterbury preserved in MSS A and B, the result of two different notaries recording the Templars' testimonies as they gave them, so that it is not possible to reconstruct exactly what these Templars said. As the testimonies were given in French or English,²¹⁴ and were recorded in Latin, the simple process of translation into Latin would result in differences (for example, *cingula* or *cordula*),²¹⁵ but could also change subtle nuances of meaning within the testimony, so that (to take one example) one notary recorded a Templar stating: 'if they confessed, he does not reckon them to be Christians', while the other wrote: 'if they confessed, they are not Christians' (MS A, fol. 29v; MS B, fol. 71v). In addition, the notaries would differ in how they phrased different points and in what they believed to be important. They recorded only information that they believed to be relevant, and discarded the rest.²¹⁶ The differences between MSS A and B indicate that what the Templars actually said included rather more information about, and interpretation of, the Order's procedures than was actually written down by the notaries.²¹⁷ In addition, these differences suggest that the notaries' interpretation could be very general, rather than capturing the subtleties of the Templars' beliefs and opinions. As a result, even if the majority of the Templars in Britain were not tortured, the surviving records of the Templars' testimonies in the Province of Canterbury are at best only a general guide to what they actually said.

The Irish testimonies present different problems. The testimonies suggest that the Templars in Ireland saw themselves as distinct from the Templars in Britain, and that their interpretation of the Order's regulations regarding absolutions and discussion of reception ceremonies differed from views held by the Templars in the Province of Canterbury. However, the Templars in Ireland may have exaggerated their distinction from Britain simply in order to separate themselves as far as possible from the abuses that were alleged to have taken place within the Order. Likewise, the recorded testimonies of the Templars at York indicate that they held views that differed in some respects from those of their brothers further south in England. It is not possible to discern how far this was due to differences in interrogation technique, and how far the York Templars were deliberately

²¹⁴ MS A, fols 88v, 168r.

²¹⁵ For example, MS A, fols 31r, 37v, 38r, 39r; MS B, fols 72r, 74r–v.

²¹⁶ See MS A, fol. 18v: *et multa alia que non pertinent ad inquisitionem*; MS B, fol. 68r: *et multa alia inseruit que non pertinent ad inquisitionem*.

²¹⁷ For example, compare MS A, fol. 112v: *omnia et singula in articulis contenta negat*, to MS B, fol. 76r: *negat in dictis articulis contenta et dicit quod scriptum est in eorum regulam quod convictus de tali crimine amittet habitum*; and compare MS A, fol. 88v: *rogat deum quod remittat eis sicut remisit magdelene, et ipse ex potestate sibi concessa a sede apostolica remittit eis quantum in eo est*, to MS B, fol. 77v: *rogat deum quod remittat eis quantum in eo est*.

separating themselves from any abuses that might have occurred among the Templars in the province of Canterbury. The most that can be said is that the differing testimonies suggest that there were regional differences in practice, but without supporting evidence independent of the trial, this cannot be certain.

Evidence from the Trial Testimonies in the British Isles

Outside Evidence The Templar, non-Templar and inquisitorial testimonies from the British Isles all agreed that the Order was tightly structured and centralised, all Templars following the same procedures. The inquisitors based their case on this fact, arguing that if the French Templars had confessed to heretical procedures, those procedures must also have been followed throughout the Order. The inquisitors also argued that the grand master and convent in the East had authority over the whole Order, and so because the grand master had confessed to the charges, the whole Order must have been infected by the alleged heresies.²¹⁸ The Templars in the Province of Canterbury did not necessarily agree with this last, some indicating that any new observances were decided at a General Chapter meeting in the East, not by the grand master, while many Templars insisted that the Order's observances originated with the Roman Curia.²¹⁹ Nevertheless, there is a little evidence that reform was in progress within the Order. One friar, John of Donington, reported that he had heard from another friar that William de la More, grand commander of England, had brought rolls of new observances into England; he indicated that these were the heretical practices of which the Templars were accused, but in view of the grand master's ongoing attempts to organise a crusade it is more likely that (if such rolls existed) they would have been new statutes issued at a recent General Chapter to make the order operate more efficiently and so help to prepare for a new crusade.²²⁰

In addition, the evidence given by Templars and non-Templars, as well as evidence from the English government records, indicates that, far from being cut off from secular society, Templar houses played an important role in their local communities, not least through employing local people. I have discussed this evidence elsewhere.²²¹

Ages and Procedures The Templar trial testimonies may offer information about how long the Templars in the British Isles had been in the Order of the Temple and the networks of contact within the Order in the British Isles (they do not, unlike the French testimonies, record the Templars' ages), but a comparison of descriptions of reception ceremonies

²¹⁸ MS C, fols 1r, 10r–11v.

²¹⁹ See, for example, MS A, fols 64r–81v, esp. fols 64v, 65r–v, 66r–v, 68v, 69v, 71r, 73r–v, 75v, 76r–v, 77r–v, 78r, 79v–80v (answers to charges 5 and 8); and fols 117r–124v (answers to charges 10 and 13).

²²⁰ MS A, fol. 99v; for discussion of Jacques de Molay's possible reform programme see Demurger, *Jacques de Molay*, pp. 130–37.

²²¹ Helen J. Nicholson, 'Relations between Houses of the Order of the Temple in Britain and their Local Communities, as Indicated during the Trial of the Templars, 1307–12', in *Knighthoods of Christ: Essays on the History of the Crusades and the Knights Templar, Presented to Malcolm Barber*, ed. Norman Housley (Aldershot, 2007), pp. 195–207; for the sources, see MS A, fols 56r, 96v, MS C, fol. 3r. See also Gooder, pp. 28–33, 54.

indicates at least that the Templars' memories were not good enough for modern scholars to place great reliance on them. Jochen Burgtorf has noted that William of Chesterton's claim that he was received by Guy of Forest in 1277 must be inaccurate, as in 1277 Guy of Forest was marshal of the Temple and in the East.²²² Richard Peitevin, William of the Ford and Thomas of Tholouse were received together at Dinsley on 11 June by Himbert Peraud, but could not agree on whether this was 1268 or 1267.²²³ William of Middleton stated that he had been received at Newsam seven years previously (1302) on 16 September by Brian le Jay – but as le Jay had died on 22 July 1298 at the Battle of Falkirk, either there is a scribal error in MS A, giving vij instead of xij, so that Middleton was received in 1297 rather than 1302, or he was received by William de la More.²²⁴ Henry of Kerby stated that he was received by William de la More fifteen years before the arrests – so in 1293 – but William de la More did not become grand commander and receiver until 1298.²²⁵ Ralph of Malton and Richard of Newent claimed to have attended the reception of Henry de la Wole, but Henry joined the Order in 1280, while Ralph was received in 1283 and Richard in 1288.²²⁶ John of Wergrave claimed that Thomas of Walkington had been at his reception at Dinsley, twenty years before 31 March 1310 – although Thomas was not received into the Order for a further six years.²²⁷ Thomas himself claimed to have seen John of Wirkeley received, but the latter did not mention him.²²⁸

John of Wergrave's evidence raises the possibility that Thomas of Walkington was present at a Templar's reception before he himself was received into the Order. Because the Templars could not remember dates accurately – which is hardly surprising, given the long periods of time in question – it is not possible to draw any firm conclusions. However, if Thomas of Walkington had been a donat of the Order of the Temple, there is a possibility that he might legitimately have attended a reception ceremony before he was a full brother. Jochen Schenk has noted that Templar donats 'were expected to play a more central role in the community life of Templar houses than other *confratres*', and 'the act of becoming a donat of the Temple was regarded by some as the first step before full admission into the Order'.²²⁹ In the examples that he cites this did not include attending reception ceremonies, but we might speculate that if donats were regarded as almost certain to enter the Order as full brothers, under some circumstances they might have been treated as full brothers. Regrettably, none of the Templars in the British Isles except Hugh of Tadcaster mentioned whether they had been formally associated with the Order before they were received as full brothers.

²²² Burgtorf, *Central Convent*, p. 553.

²²³ William of the Ford: MS A, fol. 21r; Richard Peitevin: fol. 19v; Thomas of Tholouse: fol. 24r.

²²⁴ MS A, fol. 156v.

²²⁵ MS A, fol. 126r.

²²⁶ MS A, fols 44v, 83r, 103r, 107r, 123v.

²²⁷ MS A, fols 105r, 111v–112r.

²²⁸ MS A, fols 106v, 119v.

²²⁹ Jochen Schenk, 'Forms of Lay Association with the Order of the Temple', *Journal of Medieval History*, 34 (2008), 79–103: here 99. On forms of affiliation see also Damien Carraz, 'L'affiliation des laïcs aux commanderies templières et hospitalières de la basse vallée du Rhône (XIIe–XIIIe siècles)', in *Religiones militares: Contributi alla storia degli Ordini religioso-militari nel medioevo*, ed. Anthony Luttrell and Francesco Tommasi (Città di Castello, 2008), pp. 171–90.

Hugh of Tadcaster remarked that he had been *claviger* before being admitted as a brother of the Order, and that he had asked the master – presumably he meant the grand commander of England – to admit him as a brother: *dicit quod erat claviger in templo dum erat secularis et requisivit Magistrum ut eum reciperet in fratrem*.²³⁰ Non-Templar witnesses claimed that the *claviger* was responsible for locking the doors of the chapel at the start of a chapter meeting or of a reception ceremony, and then unlocking them at the end, but it would have been difficult to organise the locking and unlocking if the *claviger* were not a member of the Order.²³¹ The Templars William of the Ford and Richard Peitevin, and some of the non-Templar witnesses, stated that the *claviger* absolved lay servants of the Order from the sin of perjury (*peccato perjurii*), which was canonically unacceptable as the *claviger* was not a priest – but would have been even more irregular if he were not even a member of the Order.²³² Hugh of Tadcaster did not tell the inquisitors what specific functions he performed for the Order of the Temple while he held the office of *claviger* but had not yet joined the Order. Richard of Newent, on the other hand, who had joined the Order 22 years before his interrogation at the start of April 1310, told the inquisitors that he had held the office of *claviger* in London and elsewhere for almost 30 years, and that he had absolved servants of the Order from transgressions against the house, using the words ‘in the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, say the Lord’s prayer’.²³³ This implies, although Richard did not actually state, that he was carrying out this procedure before his formal admission to the Order.²³⁴

Jochen Schenk has noted that ‘the Templars had a habit of employing lay associates as the administrators of their estates’ and gives the example of a layman, William Michael de la Roche, the nephew of a Templar, who was holding the keys of a Templar dependency in 1308.²³⁵ However, as this man was living alone, the fact that he had not taken full vows (Schenk suggests that he may have been a Templar donat) would not compromise the security of Templar meetings, or impinge on Templar disciplinary procedures.

Clearly, priests might have provided priestly services for the Templars before becoming brothers of the Order. Randolph of Evesham, priest-brother, mentioned that he had seen the grand master, Jacques de Molay, and the visitor, Hugh Peraud, when they were in England and held chapter meetings (the former from late 1293 to early 1294, the latter in May 1299 and again in 1304),²³⁶ but that he had been a *secularis* at that time.²³⁷ As he had

²³⁰ MS A, fol. 12v.

²³¹ MS A, fols 98r, 99r.

²³² MS A, fols 71r–v, 96v–98r.

²³³ *Aliquando famulus domus transgreditur precepta domus prosternitur coram Clavigero et Claviger absolvit eum ab illa transgressione, dicendo ‘in nomine Patris,’ et cetera, ‘Dicas pater noster’. Et hoc dicit se scire quia fuit Claviger fere per xxxta annos, et ita ipse idem London’ et alibi in diversis locis fecit* (MS A, fol. 123v).

²³⁴ MS A, fols 107v (date of admission), 123v (acting as *claviger*).

²³⁵ Schenk, ‘Forms of Lay Association’, 98.

²³⁶ Demurger, *Jacques de Molay*, p. 364; Marie Luise Bulst-Thiele, *Sacrae domus militiae Templi Hierosolymitani magistri: Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Templerordens 1118/9–1314* (Göttingen, 1974), p. 298, n. 20; MS A, fols 69r, 94v.

²³⁷ MS A, fol. 121r.

joined the Order in 1305, clearly he meant that he had not been a member of the Order at that time, but presumably he had been employed as a chaplain by the Templars.

There is also a possibility that the Templars were deliberately giving inaccurate answers. According to the friar W. of Sinpringho', the Templar Roger the Norreis, commander of Temple Cressing, had shown him a letter from William de la More, grand commander of England, in which the grand commander gave instructions about the answers he should give under interrogation, and said that all the other Templars had been similarly instructed.²³⁸ This evidence is not intrinsically unlikely; the Templars in England knew that the French Templars had been tortured, and must have known that they were likely to suffer in a similar way. It would have been reasonable to make some plans in advance of interrogation so that the Templars could present a reasonably consistent case. If this were so, it might help to explain why the Templars in the Province of Canterbury were better informed about the Order's procedures than those at York and in Scotland and Ireland, realising (for instance) that reception ceremonies did not have to be kept secret. However, inconsistencies in dates and names were likely to make the inquisitors suspicious, as it seems to have done in the cases of Thomas Totty and of John of Stoke, chaplain – of which more below. So it is more likely that inaccuracies were due to bad memories than to a deliberate attempt to mislead the inquisitors. Richard of Newent may have been exaggerating when he stated that he had been *claviger* for almost 30 years; Thomas of Walkington may have forgotten how long he had been in the Order, and whose admissions he had attended.

Overall, as the Templars were under stress during their interrogations, even though none of them can be stated to have been physically tortured except Stephen of Stapelbrugge, Thomas Totty and John of Stoke in June/July 1311, the discrepancies in the Templars' own testimonies cannot be used to draw any firm conclusions regarding procedures among the Templars in the British Isles.

Names and Networks The Templars in the Province of Canterbury were asked which Templars they knew in England (in London, specifically which Templars they knew in the Province of Canterbury: *quos fratres in Anglia seu in Cantuariensi provincia novit*), in order to establish how errors in procedure could have been passed around the province.²³⁹ However, as the Templars had been imprisoned together – those from the south of the province in the Tower of London, those from the north in Lincoln Castle – since the beginning of the trial they had all met those from their own half of the province. Some specifically stated which Templars they had known, or had not known, before the arrests, but others simply explained that they now knew all the Templars in their prison.²⁴⁰ So this information is only any use in establishing networks when a Templar referred to brothers imprisoned elsewhere. Despite the reference to the Province of Canterbury, some of the Templars in London did also refer to Templars in the Province of York, but others did

²³⁸ MS A, fol. 92v.

²³⁹ MS A, fols 81v, 117v.

²⁴⁰ See, for example, MS A, fol. 82v, testimonies of William of Warwick (knew all the Templars in the Tower of London), John of Sutton (knew all in the Tower of London), Alan of Newsam (specified whom he had known before the arrests).

not – perhaps because they knew no one there or because they had not been asked about it. What exactly was meant by *novit* was not specified, as some Templars in Lincoln differentiated between those whom they knew or to whom they had spoken and those whom they had only seen.²⁴¹ Some mentioned Templars who were dead or fugitives (the comments to this effect in the record may have been added by the notaries rather than the Templars giving evidence);²⁴² others did not, but this may have been because they were asked about Templars who were currently in the province – which would exclude those who were dead or who had fled. A few referred to Templars who are noted in the manuscript as being overseas or in Ireland, but for the most part they admitted to knowing only the brothers within their own part of the Province of Canterbury.

Some names were probably confused, either by the Templars themselves or by the notaries who took down their testimonies: the ‘Robertus de Wons’ mentioned by William of Hereford should probably have been Robertus de la Wolde, as should William of Sautre’s Robertus de Wans and Henry Paul’s R. de Walt; Walter of Rockley’s ‘W. de Herewyk’ could have been William de Hesewyk, who is mentioned in the accounts of the sheriff of York, John de Gras, but as the other Templars he mentioned were from the southern part of the Province of Canterbury, he may have meant either Ricardus de Herdwyk or Willelmus de Warwick.²⁴³ But matters are complicated by the fact that one individual could have several surnames. On 12 November 1309, King Edward II wrote to William the Plomer, *custos* of the Templars’ lands in Essex, regarding the daily allowance for 21 Templars in the Tower of London, including one ‘William son of John’. This name does not occur in the trial proceedings, but as in the Patent Rolls for 1301 William of Sautre is named ‘William son of John of Sautre’, William of Sautre is probably meant.²⁴⁴ The chaplain at Balsall, William of Winchester, was called ‘William of Balsall’ by William of Burton.²⁴⁵ John of Stoke, commander of Sutton, was also known as John of Sutton, perhaps to avoid confusion with John of Stoke, priest and treasurer of New Temple, but when a Templar referred to John of Stoke he could mean either, unless he specified the priest. Thomas of Thoraldby was also surnamed ‘Totty’.²⁴⁶ Peter of Otringham was also known as Peter of Winton (Winchester).²⁴⁷

Because an individual could be known by more than one surname, it is difficult to match the brothers mentioned by the English Templars as being overseas with those overseas who claimed to have been received in England. Roger the Norreis stated that he had been present at the reception of one John Lynton, now in prison overseas; this could be the same as John Knight, whom William of Hereford mentioned as one of three English brothers currently in Cyprus. In Cyprus there was one John the Englishman, sergeant-brother, who may have been the man intended – except that he was a sergeant, while the ‘John’ known to

²⁴¹ MS A, fols 120v (John of Grafton), 121r (Robert of Amoldon), 121v (John of Balsall).

²⁴² MS A, fol. 84r, 84v.

²⁴³ MS A, fols 82v–83r, 85r–v; see TNA: PRO E 358/18, rot. 31r for W. de Hesewyk.

²⁴⁴ TNA: PRO E 142/95, 6th entry; see also E 142/98, m. 7; *CPR, 1292–1301*, p. 572.

²⁴⁵ William of Burton mentions a William of Balsall, chaplain, at his reception (fol. 27r); William of Winchester, chaplain at Balsall, states (fol. 122v) that he was present at William of Burton’s reception.

²⁴⁶ MS A, fols 42v, 165r.

²⁴⁷ MS A, fol. 94r.

William of Hereford was a knight.²⁴⁸ As John the Englishman was received into the Order in Apulia by Reynald of Varense, ten years before May 1310, he was probably not the same as the man whose reception Roger the Norreis attended, as Brother Roger gave no indication that he had ever been out of England.

In contrast, Roger de la More, who was noted by William of Hereford as another English brother in Cyprus and whose reception William of Hereford had attended, as had Simon Strech, is almost certainly identical with Roger the Englishman in Cyprus, who gave an account of his reception that – while it did not mention either William or Simon – was not otherwise incompatible with their accounts. He was, he said, received at Dinsley by William de la More, about six years before spring 1310, and Thomas of Tholouse, William of Grafton and Richard the priest-chaplain were present.²⁴⁹

However, Richard of Grafton, priest, is a problem. He is mentioned by Richard of Colingham and William of Hereford as being in Cyprus; John of Stoke and William confirm that he was a priest, and John noted that he had received the deathbed confession of Walter the Bachelor, commander of Ireland, who died in 1301. Ralph Tanet stated that he was present at Richard's reception, which must therefore have been after March 1297; Richard of Colingham stated that Richard of Grafton was at his reception, which was on 29 August 1301.²⁵⁰ On Cyprus, there was only one Brother Richard: the sixth Templar witness in the short depositions was one Richard of Monder (although the surname may be an error, as a different individual is also named 'Richard of Monder' in his testimony), who stated that he had been received seven years before May 1310 (that is, in May 1303), in Burgundy, by Aimo of Oiselay, and that many Templars were present. He did not specify Ralph Tanet as one; and the fact that he was not received until at least 1303 means that he cannot be the same as the Richard of Grafton who heard Walter the Bachelor's last confession in 1301. In addition, he is not identified as a priest or as an Englishman, all of which indicate that this is not Richard of Grafton. However, Anne Gilmour-Bryson notes that 'a résumé of the trial of the Templars in Cyprus appears in the registers of Benedict XII', where this witness is named 'Richardus Anglicus presbiter capellanus', in which case there is an error at this point in the full manuscript, ASV, *Archivum Arcis, Armarium D* 223, and the scribe wrote 'Richardus de Monder' in error for 'Richardus Anglicus presbiter capellanus'. In the 'long depositions' in Cyprus the sixth Templar witness is Richard the Englishman, priest-chaplain, but as no details of his reception are given the problem of the date of his reception remains.²⁵¹

'Richard the Englishman, chaplain', was mentioned by Hugh of Maly and Roger the Englishman as present at their receptions in England, respectively four years and six years previously.²⁵² As this man was English and a priest, it is possible that he was Richard of

²⁴⁸ MS A, fols 56r, 82r; Schottmüller, pp. 185, 299–301; Gilmour-Bryson, *Trial of the Templars in Cyprus*, pp. 107–8, 258–61.

²⁴⁹ MS A, fols 56r, 82v, 119r; Schottmüller, pp. 180, 281–3; Gilmour-Bryson, *Trial of the Templars in Cyprus*, pp. 99–100, 235–8.

²⁵⁰ MS A, fols 39v, 55r, 56r, 122r; Wood, 'Templars in Ireland', 333.

²⁵¹ Schottmüller, pp. 169, 234–6; Gilmour-Bryson, *Trial of the Templars in Cyprus*, pp. 23, 81–2, 175–8, 448.

²⁵² Schottmüller, pp. 172, 180, 234–6; Gilmour-Bryson, *Trial of the Templars in Cyprus*, pp. 88, 99.

Grafton. Richard of Grafton was recorded as being in England in 1313, and Alan Forey has suggested that, like some Aragonese Templars, he had returned from Cyprus to his homeland after the end of the trial.²⁵³ Yet, if the details given for Richard of Monder should in fact belong to Richard of Grafton, he was received into the Order too late to fit John of Stoke's account of his hearing Walter the Bachelor's last confession in 1301, and too late to appear at Richard of Colingham's reception. He might have attended the reception as a priest in the employment of the Order before he joined the Order; some other apparent discrepancies in such dates have been noted above. However, he was unlikely to have heard Walter the Bachelor's last confession under those circumstances.

This raises the possibility that John of Stoke, priest-brother, gave an inaccurate account. Certainly it has not been possible to verify elsewhere four of the names of Templars whom he mentioned: Adam of Chaunis, Hugh of Hege and Ralph, priest of the master, whom John claimed he believed to be sick at Lincoln, but who were not mentioned by the sheriff of Lincoln as being paid expenses there; and Walter of Cowton, whom John stated to be dead, but who again was mentioned by no one else.²⁵⁴ These inconsistencies may lead us to question the accuracy of any of John's statements, and may have led the inquisitors to put John under particular pressure, leading to his confession on 1 July 1311.²⁵⁵ Even in his confession, John stated that Johannes de Sancto Georgio was present as a brother of the Temple at a ceremony in November 1293: but that Templar, giving evidence in Cyprus, stated that he was admitted into the Order ten years previously, so in 1300 – too late to have been at John of Stoke's ceremony.²⁵⁶ Any information given by John of Stoke regarding Templar personnel, then, may be unreliable. Again, it is possible that Richard of Monder gave an inaccurate date to the inquisitors in Cyprus.

Three of the Templars in Cyprus who claimed to have been received in England are not mentioned by the brothers in England as being in Cyprus. For instance, John of Wirkeley mentioned that he was received by William de la More two years before the arrests (that is, in 1305–6), at the same time as Stephen of Burgundy, and Thomas of Walkington also claimed to have been present at the reception; but neither of them stated Stephen's current location. On Cyprus, Stephen of Mally of Valleverçu, knight of Burgundy, stated that he had been received about five years before May 1310 at Dinsley, by William de la More.²⁵⁷ This is clearly the same man. In Cyprus, Hugh of Maly stated he was received at *Meca lingua in Anglica* by William de la More, four years before Pentecost 1310, that is, 1306, and that Philip of Mecans (possibly Meux), and Richard the Englishman, chaplain, were present at his reception. There was no such house as 'Meca', indicating that the scribe had misread his exemplar or had not understood what the witness said; perhaps he meant:

²⁵³ Forey, 'Ex-Templars', 36 and note 101.

²⁵⁴ MS A, fol. 54r.

²⁵⁵ MS A, fol. 164r–v.

²⁵⁶ MS A, fol. 164r; Schottmüller, p. 205; Gilmour-Bryson, *Trial of the Templars in Cyprus*, p. 135. The discrepancy was noted by Riley-Smith, 'Were the Templars Guilty?', p. 117. For the date of the hearings in Cyprus, see Gilmour-Bryson, *Trial of the Templars in Cyprus*, pp. 24–5; Peter W. Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus and the Crusades, 1191–1374* (Cambridge, 1991), p. 125 n. 94.

²⁵⁷ MS A, fols 118v, 119v; Schottmüller, p. 178; Gilmour-Bryson, *Trial of the Templars in Cyprus*, p. 96.

“a mess”, in the English language’.²⁵⁸ As English provincial chapter meetings were regularly held in early June at Dinsley,²⁵⁹ it is possible that Hugh of Maly was received at Dinsley at Pentecost 1306.

Nicholas of Peche or Peccia, knight-brother, who was in England in 1304, attending the reception of Peter of Otringham at Wilbraham, was in Cyprus in 1310, although none of the Templars in England mentioned that he had gone overseas. Nicholas stated that he was received at ‘Linlee’ (possibly Lydley, but more probably Dinsley) by William de la More, around ten years previously, so in 1300.²⁶⁰ His brothers in England had clearly lost sight of Nicholas’s whereabouts since he left England.

Despite these ambiguities, the trial testimonies do supply evidence as to the Templars’ names, which, when combined with the sheriffs’ records of arrests and the royal keepers’ accounts, permit the compilation of a list of Templars in the British Isles at the time of the arrests and during the trial of the Order.²⁶¹ Overall, barring any Templars who may have eluded arrest in 1308 and remained undetected during the following decades,²⁶² there were around 144 Templars in the British Isles (that is, including Scotland and Ireland) at the start of 1308. The number is approximate because the date of death of some Templars who died in 1307 or early 1308 is uncertain, and some names may yet turn out to be duplicates.

For example, Thomas of Frouby, mentioned by William of Burton as one of those present at his reception and described as having fled before the arrests, is not mentioned anywhere else in the trial records. However, Thomas the Chamberlain stated that Thomas Stotty or Totty was present at William of Burton’s reception. Thomas Totty had himself fled before the arrests, and so it is almost certain that ‘Thomas of Frouby’ was a scribal error for Thomas Totty.²⁶³ Again, the accounts of John de Gras, sheriff of York, include lists of the Templars who were imprisoned at York. One list begins: *F[rat]ri Will[elm]o de Grafton’, F[rat]ri Will[elm]o de Hesewyk, F[rat]ri Henr[ico] de Roucheclif, F[rat]ri Henr[ico] de Craven.*²⁶⁴ The second name in the list, Willelmo de Hesewyk, does not appear anywhere else in the trial proceedings. However, a second list clarifies the problem, beginning: *f[rat]ri Will[elm]o de Grafton’, f[rat]ri Ric[ard]o de Hesewyk, F[rat]ri Henr[ico] de Roucheclif’, F[rat]ri Henr[ico] de Craven.* The second name on the list is a variant on

²⁵⁸ Schottmüller, p. 172. For other suggestions, see Gilmour-Bryson, *Trial of the Templars in Cyprus*, pp. 87–8 and note 69.

²⁵⁹ See the entry for ‘Dinsley’ in Appendix 2.

²⁶⁰ MS A, fol. 42r; Schottmüller, pp. 168–9, 231–4; Gilmour-Bryson, *Trial of the Templars in Cyprus*, pp. 80–81, 171–5.

²⁶¹ See Appendix 1, and Nicholson, *Knights Templar on Trial*, pp. 205–17; discussion on p. 49. See also: Forey, ‘Desertions and Transfers’, 183 note 227; Gooder, p. 84 and lists on pp. 147–52; Clarence Perkins, ‘The Knights Templars in the British Isles’, *English Historical Review*, 25 (1910), 209–30: here 222, 224.

²⁶² In June 1336, one William de Langford, claiming that he had been a member of the Order of the Temple and had reached the rank of subdeacon, petitioned for a papal dispensation from membership of the Order so that he could advance through holy orders: TNA: PRO C 70/14, m. 5. I am very grateful to Barbara Bombi for bringing this petition to my attention. No William de Langford is mentioned as a member of the Order during the trial proceedings in the British Isles. On the problem of missing Templars, see Forey, ‘Ex-Templars’, 35–7.

²⁶³ MS A, fols 13r, 27r, 114v.

²⁶⁴ TNA: PRO E 358/18, rot. 31r; and see Gooder, p. 151.

Richard de Chesewyk or Casuyt, commander of Ribston.²⁶⁵ Clearly the first list was copied from the second by a scribe who could not decipher his colleague's writing, and William de Hesewyk is simply a scribal error for Richard of Chesewyk.

Some of the Templars in the Province of Canterbury, listing those Templars whom they knew, declared that they knew all the Templars in London, Lincoln or York except for – and then specified names.²⁶⁶ This suggests that the inquisitors had a list of names of Templars known to have been in the British Isles which was read out to the Templars, and they identified those individuals they knew. Regrettably, no such list is known to have survived.

Terminology The testimonies give some indication of terminology, although because everything the Templars said was mediated through the notaries who recorded their testimonies – which meant that at the very least it was translated into Latin, and may have been further amended – it is not possible to be certain what terms the Templars actually used, and what words were put into their mouths by those taking the records. The charges against the Templars, supported by the French Templars' confessions, alleged that certain procedures took place at chapter meetings (*capitula*). Many of the Templars in the British Isles claimed never to have been in a chapter meeting, or claimed that the meetings that they had attended had not been chapter meetings. Roger of Dalton and Robert of Sautre referred to *generali* and *speciali* chapter meetings (which they had not attended), but did not specify how these differed from each other. However, as Robert of Sautre had been commander of Ewell and, therefore, should have held weekly chapter meetings for his brothers there, presumably he meant that the 'general' and 'special' chapter meetings were at least at the level of provincial chapter meetings.²⁶⁷ Walter of Rockley and William Raven (fol. 89v) referred both to *capitula* and to *congregationes* (assemblies), Roger the Norreis (fol. 65v) distinguished between a *capitulum* and a *concilium*, but did not explain the difference, and William Raven explained (fol. 72r) that he had never been in *magno capitulo*. These Templars indicated that the *congregatio* was of lower status than the *capitulum*, but the *magister* might be present at both types of meeting and pronounce a general absolution for faults against the Order. Yet all these different terminologies may have been no more than word-play: the Templars may simply have been inventing different titles for their meetings in order to disassociate themselves from the transgressions that were alleged to have taken place at the *capitula*. If they could demonstrate that the meetings that they had attended were not *capitula*, then they could not be guilty of the alleged malpractices.

Yet William of Sautre, commander of Sandford, stood firm. The allegations against the order were false, and if the grand master had confessed to them, then William denied that he was grand master. The Order's regulations did not originate with the grand master but from the Roman Curia. As for himself, he had attended chapter every year but one for the last twenty years – and he named the other Templars who had attended with him. He was clearly referring to the provincial chapter meeting at Dinsley, which the Templars'

²⁶⁵ TNA: PRO E 358/20, rot. 32d; MS A, fols 29v, 127r, 147v, etc.

²⁶⁶ MS A, fols 82v (William of Hereford), 83v (Michael of Baskerville), 85r–v (John of Stoke, priest).

²⁶⁷ MS A, fols 58r, 90v.

testimonies indicate took place around the feast of St Barnabas the Apostle (11 June) each year, and was also a favourite time for the reception of new brothers into the Order.²⁶⁸

When the Templars referred to a *magister* being at a *congregatio*, it is not clear which official they meant – the term was used to designate the grand commander in England,²⁶⁹ but it may also have indicated other officials, such as the commander of a house. The supreme official of the Order was generally referred to as the *magnus magister*, but sometimes simply as the *magister*. The context generally made clear which was meant, although when Thomas ‘Totty’ of Thoraldby referred to Guy of Forest as *tunc magistrum preceptorem* in Anglia, and then as *magnus magister*, he seemed to have promoted the former grand commander.²⁷⁰ In the same way, the friar John of Donington promoted Brother William de la More from *magnus preceptor* to *magnus magister*.²⁷¹ In fact, it may have been the notaries recording the proceedings who, confused by the hierarchial structure of the Order, assumed that any *magister* must be the *magnus magister*.

Inquisitorial Procedure Above all else, the trial proceedings from the British Isles reveal the papal inquisitors’ procedures, and show how they attempted to meet the challenge of a kingdom (England) where Roman law did not apply and torture could not be used, a kingdom at war (Scotland) and a domain that was all too often a law unto itself (Ireland). In this respect these proceedings are invaluable evidence for the development of procedures for the prosecution of heresy. Through the series of documents – the full records of the testimonies (MSS A and B), the summary that is now in the Vatican Archives (MS C), and the summary of that summary which was copied into the *Annales Londonienses* (MS D) – we can trace the development of their case against the Templars in the British Isles. It is possible to trace how evidence was gathered and organised, what was selected and what was rejected, and how the final case against the Order was constructed.

Conclusion

It is important for modern readers to remember that, as in heresy trials elsewhere, the inquisitors’ concern was to present confessions rather than obtain evidence of the truth. The fact that they included a particular testimony in these proceedings does not mean that it would meet modern criteria as legal evidence. Although these documents form a record of the proceedings of a trial, much of the information would in modern terms be described as the evidence for the prosecution, not as the balanced summing-up of the judge. This evidence was gathered to make a case against the Templars, not to supply modern

²⁶⁸ MS A, fols 26r–27r, 73r–v, 85v–86r; and see the references under Dinsley in Appendix 2.

²⁶⁹ For example, William de la More is *predictus Magister Milicie Templi* (MS A, fol. 13r); Richard fitz John was *tenentem locum Magistri* when he received John of Moun into the Order (fol. 33v); there was a *camera magistri* at Balsall (fol. 40r) – perhaps the commander’s chamber, or the room where the grand commander lodged when he visited the house; Ralph of Malton and John of Conington were received by *Robertum de Turvile tunc magistrum in Anglia* (fols 44v, 49r) while William of Chesterton was received by Guy of Forest, *tunc Magistrum in Anglia* (fol. 52r).

²⁷⁰ MS A, fol. 162v.

²⁷¹ MS A, fol. 100r.

historians with objective information about the Order. When all is said and done, these trial proceedings reveal how the first large-scale heresy trial in the British Isles was organised and recorded, but may tell us virtually nothing about the Order of the Temple.

The Translation

The translation was initially made on a word-for-word basis, but some paraphrasing has been necessary to produce comprehensible English. Modern capitalisation and punctuation have been introduced. Where words have been added to make sense of the text, these are enclosed within thin square brackets []. Other explanatory text is enclosed within normal square brackets []. Personal names, which may be given several different spellings in the Latin text, have been adapted slightly to fit modern conventions: for example, ‘yng’ has been changed to ‘ing’ and ‘de’ changed to ‘of’. Otherwise names are given as in the Latin text, except in the case of names for which there is an established standard form (William de la More), or where the spelling is so variable that confusion could arise yet there is a clear modern equivalent (Henry of Aslackby). Where the spelling is highly variable but there is no clear modern equivalent (Henry de la Vole/Wole/Valicia, Thomas of Wonhope/Wothopp/Woop), the spelling has not been standardised. Variant names are listed in Appendix 1.

Readers should note that the translation is not a precise reproduction of the Latin text. Certain words and phrases are open to more than one interpretation, according to context. Any reader who requires the precise meaning of a word is advised to refer to the Latin.

The variant readings between MSS A and B have not been included in the translation, except where MS B offers a substantially different meaning. The variant reading has then been placed in the notes. Where information missing from MS A has been added from MS B, the material is included within square brackets, prefaced with the words: [*B adds:*].

Differences between the two summaries, MSS C and D, have been recorded in the notes to the translation. As MS D is essentially a copy of MS C, this has been reflected in the presentation of the translation, which has been designed to emphasise the text that is unique to MS D. The unique text is printed in the standard Times New Roman font used elsewhere in this volume. Text in MS D that is identical to that at the corresponding point in MS C is indicated by a *thin font*. Transposed text is indicated by a *thin italic font*. Where a section of text has been copied directly from MS C, but with words or passages within the section omitted, these omissions are indicated by square brackets, thus: [...].

The layout of the edition of the Latin text for MSS A, B and C has been retained in the presentation of the translation, except where stated in the notes. As MS D is an eighteenth-century copy of a fourteenth-century copy, the layout of the text in the manuscript may or may not be original. Hence the translation has been laid out as seemed most appropriate to the material, rather than following the manuscript.

The notes to the translation include significant variant readings from the manuscripts, variant readings from earlier published editions, cross-references within the manuscripts, information about individuals and places mentioned in the text, and commentary on points raised in the text. The cross-references are given to folio rather than to page number, to enable easy reference to the Latin text.

Oxford, Bodleian Library,
MS Bodley 454 (MS A);
Collated with London, British Library,
Cotton MS Julius B xii (MS B)

[i r] (2409)
Bodley MS 454

[iv r] T
T 8 8 /

[iv v] Oxford University
J. Bridgeman, doctor of divinity, 30th July
1614

T 8 8

[1r] 93

NE.F.5.2
(2409)

In the Lord's name, Amen. AD 1309, 8th indiction, in the fourth year of the Pontificate of ^{Enacted} the most holy father lord Clement V, pope by divine providence, Monday 20th October. Assembled and seated as a tribunal in the bishop of London's hall at the first hour of the day [6.00 am] were the reverend father lord Ralph,¹ by the grace of God bishop of London, and Dieudonné,² abbot of Lagny[-sur-Marne],³ Paris diocese, and Sicard de Vaur,⁴ canon of

¹ Ralph Baldock, bishop of London, 1306–13. With Robert Winchelsey, archbishop of Canterbury, 1294–1313, and the curialist Bishop John Langton of Chichester, 1305–37, who were also involved in the trial of the Templars, he was one of the ordainers appointed by King Edward II 16 March 1310 to reform the realm and the king's household: May McKisack, *The Fourteenth Century: 1307–1399* (Oxford, 1959), p. 10; J.S. Hamilton, 'Lords ordainer (*act.* 1310–1313)', in: *ODNB*, vol. 34, pp. 443–5; H.A. Tipping, 'Baldock, Ralph (*d.* 1313)', rev. M.C. Buck, in *ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 438.

² Dieudonné became abbot of Lagny in 1306. In 1317 Pope John XXII promoted him to bishop of Castres (a town in the Languedoc, to the south of Albi, east of Toulouse, and north-west of Narbonne) where, in 1318, he issued a condemnation of some beliefs ascribed to the Spiritual

Narbonne, Chaplain of the lord pope and Auditor⁵ of causes in his palace. In the presence of the aforesaid lords and ourselves, viz. Pons de Curte,⁶ rector of the church of Saint-Pierre-du-Monastère, Albi diocese,⁷ and Berengar Brossini, rector of the church of Vimenando, Rodez diocese, and Adam, called ‘of Lindsey’,⁸ Lincoln diocese, notaries public,⁹ there was shown to our aforesaid lords and ourselves a letter from the most holy father and lord, lord Clement V, pope by divine providence: a letter that had not been cancelled nor annulled nor in any part corrupted, that was sealed with a hempen thread and a lead seal, containing the words that follow:—

Franciscans, declaring them to be heretical. He died in 1327, after having set up an institution for the care of twelve paupers: *Gallia Christiana in provincias ecclesiasticas distributa: qua series et historia archiepiscoporum, episcoporum, et abbatum Franciæ vicinarumque ditionum*, ed. Denis de Sainte-Marthe *et al.*, 16 vols (Paris, 1715–1865), vol. 1, col. 67; vol. 7, cols 502–3.

³ The abbey of St Peter at Lagny-sur-Marne, now in the east suburbs of Paris, was founded in around 644 by the Irish missionary Fursey.

⁴ Vaur] probably Lavaur, a town between Toulouse and Albi in the Languedoc, whose rulers in the early thirteenth century had been Cathar heretics. Brought up at the centre of early inquisitorial activity against Catharism, Sicard would have been well acquainted with the fight against heresy. Malcolm Barber notes that ‘Sicard of Vaur was a canon lawyer, who had previously acted as locum tenens for the royal *sénéchal* of Carcassonne. In 1303 he was described as “clerk of the king of France”’: Malcolm Barber, *The Trial of the Templars*, 2nd edn (Cambridge, 2006), p. 344 n. 16. Sicard de Vaur or Lavaur remained a ‘auditor of causes’ in the papal palace throughout the pontificate of Clement V’s successor, John XXII (1316–34): Bernard Guillemain, *La Cour Pontificale d’Avignon (1309–1376): Étude d’une Société*, Bibliothèque des Écoles Françaises d’Athènes et de Rome, 201 (Paris, 1962), p. 348.

⁵ Auditor] defined by William H.W. Fanning, ‘Auditor’, in *The Catholic Encyclopedia: an International Work of Reference on the Constitution, Doctrine, Discipline, and History of the Catholic Church*, ed. Charles G. Herbermann *et al.*, 17 vols (New York, 1907–12), vol. 2, pp. 70–71, as: ‘The designation of certain officials of the Roman Curia, whose duty it is to hear (Lat. *audire*) and examine the causes submitted to the pope. They cannot, however, give a decision unless they receive delegated jurisdiction. They are, therefore, not judges in the strict sense of the term.’ See also Guillemain, *La Cour Pontificale d’Avignon*, pp. 346–9.

⁶ Pons de Curte] unidentified. One Pontius or Pons de Cors, nephew of Aimeric of Aigueblanche (chancellor of Hereford diocese, 1270–1286/7), was provided by the pope in May 1290 to the prebend of Hinton: John Le Neve, *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1066–1300*, vol. 8: *Hereford*, ed. J.S. Barrow (London, 2002), p. 42. He had vacated it by 14 October 1297.

⁷ Saint-Pierre-du-Monastère, Albi diocese] this is the translation of the Latin text, but the location remains unidentified.

⁸ Probably Adam, son of Adam of Sweyny de Boterwik, called ‘de Lindeseia’, whom C.R. Cheney noted as a notary public between 1289 and 1305: Cheney, *Notaries Public*, pp. 29, 46, 88, 103, 118, 121, 128–9. Cheney, *ibid.*, p. 88, suggests that he was married and that Henry Adams called ‘de Lindeseia’, who appears as a notary public in 1320 and 1325, was his son.

⁹ Notaries public appeared in English records from the thirteenth century onwards. They were men who drew up legal documents for public record and who held their ‘authority as a writer of public instruments from either the pope or the emperor’: Cheney, *Notaries Public*, pp. 2–3. *Ibid.*, pp. 37–8, describes the notaries’ public role in the trial: ‘Besides normal visitatorial business, exceptionally important ecclesiastical lawsuits called for public instruments. An early example in England is the process against the Order of the Temple ... The replies of the Templars to interrogatories were drawn up by notaries public, and proceedings of the council where sentences were delivered and penances imposed were also drawn up in public form.’

Clement the bishop, servant of the servants of God, to his venerable brothers the Patriarch of Jerusalem¹⁰ and the Archbishop of York¹¹ and bishops of Lincoln,¹² Chichester¹³ and Orléans,¹⁴ and his beloved sons the abbots of the monasteries of Lagny, Paris diocese, and of St Germain des Prés¹⁵ near Paris, and Master Sicard de Vaur, canon of Narbonne, our chaplain and auditor of causes in our palace, and Guy of Vichio,¹⁶ rector of the church of Hayes,¹⁷ London diocese, greeting and papal benediction.

Dealing mercifully with His servant, God's Son the Lord Jesus Christ wished us to be raised to the lofty watchtower of the apostolate, so that acting (although unworthily) on His behalf on Earth in all our actions and processes, we might imitate His footsteps so far as human fragility is permitted to do.¹⁸ Indeed, a while ago, when we were first promoted to be the supreme pontiff, before we came to Lyon where we received the insignia of our coronation and also afterwards, both there and elsewhere, a secret intimation reached us from certain people, hinting that the master, commanders and other brothers of the Order of the knighthood of the Temple of Jerusalem and also the Order itself, which was assigned to the defence of the patrimony of our Lord Jesus Christ in overseas parts,¹⁹ [1v] had fallen into the sinful infamy of apostasy against the same lord, the detestable vice of idolatry, the execrable crime of the sodomites and various heresies. But because it did not seem likely or credible that such religious men – who are known to have often shed their blood and to

¹⁰ Antony Bek, bishop of Durham, 1283–1311, and titular patriarch of Jerusalem; for his career, see C.M. Fraser, 'Bek, Antony (I) (c. 1245–1311)', in: *ODNB*, vol. 4, pp. 862–4. The symbol in the right margin marks the start of a document.

¹¹ William Greenfield, archbishop of York, 1306–15; for his career, see: Roy Martin Haines, 'Greenfield, William (c. 1255–1315)', in: *ODNB*, vol. 23, pp. 590–91.

¹² John Dalderby, bishop of Lincoln, 1300–1320; for his career, see Nicholas Bennett, 'Dalderby, John (d. 1320)', in: *ODNB*, vol. 14, p. 925.

¹³ John Langton, bishop of Chichester, 1305–37: see M.C. Buck, 'Langton, John (d. 1337)', in: *ODNB*, vol. 32, pp. 512–13.

¹⁴ The bishop of Orléans at this time was *Radulphus, clericus regis* (Raoul, king's clerk), who was made bishop in 1308 and died in 1311: *Gallia Christiana*, vol. 8 (1744), cols 1471–2.

¹⁵ St Germain des Prés: abbey founded in the sixth century in the suburbs of Paris by Bishop Germain of Paris; the abbey church was consecrated in 588. The abbot at this time was Pierre de Courpalay, abbot 1303–34: *Gallia Christiana*, vol. 7, col. 457.

¹⁶ Guy of Vichio] below, MS A, fol. 6v, he is Guy of Wych. He was already rector of Hayes by 6 October 1296, when he had recently returned from a journey to Ireland: *Registrum Roberti Winchelsey*, vol. 1, pp. 141–2. His predecessor at Hayes from August 1283 had been Master Reynier de Vichio, called 'of Florence', who was also a canon of Lincoln: *The Register of John Pecham, archbishop of Canterbury 1279–1292*, ed. F.N. Davis and others, Canterbury and York Society, 64–5 (London, 1968–69), vol. 1, pp. 131, 136, 208. Guy of Vichio died before 26 September 1309: *Records of Antony Bek, Bishop and Patriarch, 1283–1311*, ed. C.M. Fraser, Surtees Society 162 (1953), p. 155, no. 145.

¹⁷ Hayes in Middlesex, to the west of London, west-north-west of Southall on what is now the A4020 road to Aylesbury: although it was in the diocese of London, this parish was part of the deanery of Croydon, which was a 'peculiar' of the archbishop of Canterbury (*VCH: Middlesex*, vol. 1, ed. J.S. Cockburn, H.P.F. King, K.G.T. McDonnell (London, 1969), p. 139).

¹⁸ From this point, *Faciens misericordiam* is very like the later papal bull *Vox in excelso* (22 March 1312): see Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, vol. 1, pp. 336–40.

¹⁹ overseas parts] the Holy Land.

have frequently exposed their persons to the danger of death specifically for Christ's name, and who so frequently display many great signs of devotion both in divine worship and in fastings and other observances – should be so forgetful of their own salvation that they should perpetrate such things, taught by the examples of our same lord and the doctrines of canonical scripture, we did not wish to lend an ear to this sort of insinuation and accusation.

But then our dearest son in Christ, the illustrious King Philip of France, to whom the same crimes had been indicated, not out of avarice – because he did not intend to sell the Templars' possessions nor appropriate them, but totally kept his hand from them and had those in his kingdom administered overall by deputies who were appointed by us and administered in their individual dioceses by the prelates of the kingdom of France – but kindled with the fervour of orthodox faith on hearing the aforesaid things, following the distinguished footsteps of his progenitors, informed himself as far as he lawfully could in order to instruct and inform us about these things, and sent much important information to us through his messengers and letters. The Templars' disgrace over the aforesaid sins increased sharply. Also, a certain knight of the same Order, of great nobility²⁰ and held in no little esteem in the said Order, in our presence and on oath told us that at the reception of the brothers of the aforesaid Order this custom (or more truly corruption) is kept: at the instigation of the receiver or his deputy, the one who is received denies Jesus Christ and spits on a cross which is shown to him, as an insult to the Crucified, and the one receiving and the one received do certain other things which are not lawful, nor conform to human decency, according to what he then confessed in our presence. The duty of our office urged that we could not avoid harkening to such a great and widespread clamour.

[2r] Finally, with the spread of public talk, and the clamorous reports from the said king, and from dukes, counts, barons and other nobles and also from the clergy and people of the said kingdom of the French, who came both in person and through representatives to our presence on account of this, we sorrowfully relate that it reached our hearing that the Master, Commanders and other brothers of the said Order and the Order itself were ensnared in the aforesaid crimes and many others. The aforesaid things seemed to be proven to a certain extent through many confessions, attestations and depositions of the aforesaid Master and many Commanders and brothers of the aforementioned Order, made, held and received in the presence of many prelates and the Investigator of heretical depravity in the kingdom of France, and written down in notarial attestations shown to us and our brothers [the Cardinals]. Moreover, the rumour and aforesaid clamourings had increased and grown so much, both against the Order itself and against individual persons within the Order, that they could not be passed over without grave scandal, nor tolerated without imminent danger. On these grounds, we – cleaving to the footsteps of him on whose behalf we act on Earth, although unworthy – decided that it was necessary to proceed to an enquiry about the aforesaid things. We interrogated and examined over the aforesaid things many – as many as seventy-two – of the Commanders, priests, knights and other brothers of the said Order, men of no modest reputation assembled in our presence,

²⁰ Barber, *Trial of the Templars*, 2nd edn, pp. 90, 125, indicates that this Templar has not been identified. This may be the same as the Templar described by Friars John Welby and John Donington: see MS A, fols 98v (and note on translation), 99v.

after they had first given an oath that they would speak the pure and full truth to us on the aforementioned things; and many of our brothers were present with us. Their confessions were diligently written down on the spot by public notaries as legal records, in our and our said brothers' presence, and then after the space of some days we had them read in consistory in their presence and expounded to each in their own language. They stuck to their confessions, expressly and spontaneously approving them as they were read out.²¹

After this, since we intended to enquire of the Master and leading Commanders of the aforementioned Order about the aforementioned matters ourselves, we gave instructions that the Master and Grand Commanders of France, the Land Overseas, Normandy, Aquitaine and Poitou²² [2v] should be brought before us while we were at Poitiers. But since some of them were so unwell at that time that they could not ride and could not by any means be brought into our presence, we – with those who wished to know the truth about all the aforementioned matters and whether the things were true that were contained in their confessions and depositions which were said to have been made in the presence of the Investigator of heretical depravity in the kingdom of France, with certain notaries public and many other good men present, and exhibited and shown under notarial attestation to us and our brothers by the same Investigator – commissioned and instructed our sons Berenger,²³ cardinal-priest of [the church of] Saints Nereus and Achilleus and Stephen, cardinal-priest of [the church of] St Cyriacus in the [Diocletian] Baths,²⁴ and Landulf,²⁵ cardinal-deacon of St Angelo, in whose prudence, expertise and loyalty we have complete trust, to enquire with diligence of the aforementioned Master and Commanders the truth about the aforementioned [accusations] both against them and other individuals of the said Order generally and against the Order itself. They should refer to us anything they discovered about these matters, and take care to have their confessions and depositions set down in writing by notarial attestation and have them brought to and presented to our apostolate, and according to the procedures of the Church bestow on the same Master and Commanders the benefit of absolution from the sentence of excommunication (which they had incurred for the aforementioned matters if they were true), if they humbly and devoutly should seek absolution as they ought.

These Cardinals went personally to the Master and Commanders and set out to them the reason for their coming. And as their persons and those of other Templars resident in the kingdom of France had been handed over to us, they could speak the truth freely, fully and simply on all the aforementioned things to the Cardinals, without fear of anyone. The

²¹ On the confessions of these seventy-two, see Barber, *Trial of the Templars*, 2nd edn, pp. 116–22.

²² Jacques de Molay, grand master; Hugh Peraud, commander of France and Visitor within Europe; Raimbaud de Caromb, commander of Cyprus; Geoffrey de Charny, commander of Normandy; Geoffrey de Goneville, commander of Aquitaine and Poitou: see Barber, *Trial of the Templars*, 2nd edn, p. 130.

²³ Berengar Frérol the elder: see Menache, *Clement V*, pp. 41–2 and n. 37; Lizerand, *Dossier*, p. 151, n. 3.

²⁴ Stephen de Suisy: see Menache, *Clement V*, p. 42 and n. 39; Lizerand, *Dossier*, p. 151, n. 4.

²⁵ Landolfo Brancaccio; according to Lizerand, *Dossier*, p. 151, n. 5, he was from Naples, was legate to France and England 1298–9 and in Sicily 1299, was made cardinal 18 September 1304, and was an enemy of Pope Boniface VIII. See also MS A, fol. 92v.

Master and Commanders of France, the Land Overseas, Normandy, Aquitaine and Poitou, in the presence of those three Cardinals, four public Recorders and many other good men, having touched a copy of the holy gospels of God, and given an oath to tell the pure and full truth about all the aforesaid things, in their²⁶ [3r] presence, each freely and spontaneously, without any coercion or fear being applied, testified and confessed that, among other things, when they were received into the Order of the Temple they denied Christ and spat upon the Cross, and that certain among them had received many brothers in the same way, that is, with denial of Christ and spitting on the Cross.²⁷ Also, some of them confessed other horrible and dishonourable things that we leave unspoken at present, to spare their shame. They also said and confessed that the things that were contained in the confessions and testimonies, which they had made not long since in the presence of the Investigators of heretical depravity, were true. These confessions and testimonies of the said Master and Commanders were written down in legal form by the four public Recorders in the presence of the Master, Commanders and certain other good men, and then after a space of some days were read back to the same on the command and in the presence of the aforesaid Cardinals, and explained to each of them in their own language. They continued to stand by their confessions, approving them expressly and spontaneously as they were read out. After these confessions and testimonies, on bended knee and with hands clasped, humbly and devoutly with great shedding of tears, they sought the Cardinals to give them absolution from the excommunication that they had incurred for the aforegoing things. Because the bosom of the Church is not closed to those who return, the said Cardinals, by our authority, gave the benefit of absolution according to the ritual of the Church to the same Master and Commanders for the heresy that they had expressly abjured. Then, returning to our presence, they presented to us the confessions and testimonies of the aforementioned Master and Commanders written down as spoken as a legal record by notarial attestation, and told us what they had done with the said Master and Commanders. From these confessions, testimonies and report we found that the oft-mentioned Master and brothers in the aforesaid matters and relating to the aforesaid matters – although some of them in more and others in less – had [3v] seriously sinned.²⁸

But because we are not able to enquire into these things in person in all the parts of the world through which the same Order is scattered and the brothers dwell, on our brothers' advice through Apostolic writing we instruct your discretion – in whose circumspection we have special trust – that, going in person to the city, diocese and province of Canterbury, together with our venerable brothers the Archbishop of Canterbury and his suffragans, who we have decided should be joined with you in this action on account of the magnitude of this affair – with any of them in their city and diocese – you have a public announcement made on the authority of yourself, the Archbishop and his suffragans, in the

²⁶ At the centre of the base of this verso sheet, and of each subsequent verso in MS A, are three dots (:).

²⁷ These testimonies, given at Chinon in August 1308, are printed in *Papsttum und Untergang*, ed. Finke, vol. 2, pp. 324–9, no. 154; Frale, *Il Papato*, pp. 198–214. For discussion, see the Introduction, above, pp. xi–xii.

²⁸ Here the later bull *Vox in Excelso* ceased to follow *Faciens misericordiam*: Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, vol. 1, p. 340.

places in which it seems to us and them it should be done, summoning individual persons and brothers of the said Order dwelling in the cities and dioceses of the Archbishop and his suffragans, and also any who might come from other places or perhaps be led thither, and you enquire with due diligence into the truth of the charges which we are sending to you enclosed under our seal and of other things which seem expedient to your prudence. You may, moreover, admit to these enquiries the investigator or investigators into heretical depravity delegated by the papal see in that Province, if they wish to be present at them with you. Proviso: that you, with the Archbishop, bishops and investigators abovesaid, in no way presume to interfere in the investigation against the aforesaid Order and against the Grand Commander of the said Order appointed in the kingdom of England, as we have appointed other people to make these investigations.²⁹ However, if any witnesses who are requested or urged or summoned by you to bear testimony to the truth of the said charges before you, remove themselves from giving testimony through prayer or price, grace or love, hatred or fear; or if favourers, receivers and defenders of the aforesaid brothers who are summoned or called by you as aforesaid to give evidence before you, do not appear; over and above those who presume to impede your [4r] investigation in any way, directly or indirectly, publicly, secretly, through themselves or another man, or other men or women; you may constrain them through ecclesiastical censure, with rights of appeal suspended, calling to your assistance if necessary the aid of the secular arm.³⁰ If you are not all able to be present at these proceedings, eight, seven, six, five, four, or three or two or one of you may no less proceed. Given at Poitiers, 12 August in the third year of our Pontificate [1308].:—

Enacted

. . In the same place and time aforesaid, in the presence of the aforesaid lords, and in the presence of us Notaries aforesaid, was shown a certain transcript of a papal letter under the seal of the reverend father Lord Robert, by the grace of God, archbishop of Canterbury, and Primate of all England, contents written below:—:—:—:—

. . Robert³¹ by divine permission archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of all England, to his venerable brother bishops R. by the grace of God bishop of London, H. of Winchester,³² S. of Salisbury,³³ J. of Lincoln, J. of Chichester,³⁴ R. of Hereford,³⁵ W. of Worcester,³⁶ W. of Coventry and Lichfield,³⁷ J. of Llandaff,³⁸ W. of Exeter,³⁹ R. of Ely,⁴⁰ J. of

²⁹ Pope Clement had set up two enquiries, one against individual Templars and one to investigate the Order as a whole: Barber, *Trial of the Templars*, 2nd edn, pp. 124–7.

³⁰ the secular arm] the forces of secular authority. The investigators should call on the king for assistance in enforcing their authority, if necessary.

³¹ Robert Winchelsey, archbishop of Canterbury, 1294–1313: see J.H. Denton, ‘Winchelsey, Robert (c.1240–1313)’, in: *ODNB*, vol. 59, pp. 683–8. All the names and dates that follow are from *Councils and Synods*, vol. 2, pt 2, ed. Powicke and Cheney.

³² Henry Woodlock, bishop of Winchester, 1305–16.

³³ Simon Ghent, bishop of Salisbury, 1297–1315.

³⁴ John Langton, bishop of Chichester.

³⁵ Richard of Swinfield, bishop of Hereford, 1283–1317.

³⁶ Walter Reynolds, bishop of Worcester, 1308–13.

³⁷ Walter Langton, bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, 1296–1321; for his career, see Roy Martin Haines, ‘Langton, Walter (d. 1321)’, in: *ODNB*, vol. 32, pp. 523–5.

³⁸ John of Monmouth, bishop of Llandaff, 1297–1323.

Norwich,⁴¹ T. of Rochester,⁴² D. of St Davids,⁴³ L. of St Asaph,⁴⁴ and the venerable men lords J. confirmed bishop-elect of Bath and Wells,⁴⁵ and Anian, confirmed bishop-elect of Bangor,⁴⁶ of our church of Canterbury and our suffragans; Greeting and brotherly love in the Lord. Your Fraternity should know that we have received a papal letter, not cancelled, nor annulled nor damaged in any part as appears *prime facie*, sealed with the correct leaden bull hanging from it, which runs as follows:–

‘Clement the bishop, servant of the servants of God, to his venerable brothers the Archbishop of Canterbury and his suffragans, greeting and papal benediction. Dealing mercifully with His servant, God’s Son the Lord Jesus Christ wished us to be raised to the lofty watchtower of the apostolate, so that acting (although unworthily) on His behalf on Earth in all our actions and processes, we might imitate His footsteps so far as human fragility is permitted to do. Indeed, a while ago, when we were first promoted to be the supreme [4v] pontiff, before we came to Lyon where we received the insignia of our coronation and also afterwards, both there and elsewhere, a secret intimation reached us from certain people, hinting that the master, commanders and other brothers of the Order of the knighthood of the Temple of Jerusalem and also the Order itself, which was assigned to the defence of the patrimony of our Lord Jesus Christ in overseas parts, had fallen into the sinful infamy of apostasy against the same lord, the detestable vice of idolatry, the execrable crime of the sodomites and various heresies. But because it did not seem likely or credible that such religious men – who are known to have often shed their blood and to have frequently exposed their persons to the danger of death specifically for Christ’s name, and who so frequently display many great signs of devotion both in divine worship and in fastings and other observances – should be so forgetful of their own salvation that they should perpetrate such things, taught by the examples of our same lord and the doctrines of canonical scripture, we did not wish to lend an ear to this sort of insinuation and accusation.

But then our dearest son in Christ, the illustrious King Philip of France, to whom the same crimes had been indicated, not out of avarice – because he did not intend to sell the Templars’ possessions nor appropriate them, but totally kept his hand from them and had those in his kingdom administered overall by deputies who were appointed by us and administered in their individual dioceses by the prelates of the kingdom of France – but kindled with the fervour of orthodox faith on hearing the aforesaid things, following the distinguished footsteps of his progenitors, informed himself as far as he lawfully could in order to instruct and inform us about these things, and sent much important information to us through his messengers and letters. The Templars’ disgrace over the aforesaid sins became overwhelming. Also, a certain knight of the same Order, of great nobility and held

³⁹ Walter Stapeldon, bishop of Exeter, 1308–26; for his career, see M.C. Buck, ‘Stapeldon, Walter (*b.* in or before 1265, *d.* 1326)’, in: *ODNB*, vol. 52, pp. 272–4.

⁴⁰ Robert Orford, bishop of Ely, 1302–10.

⁴¹ John Salmon, bishop of Norwich, 1299–1325.

⁴² Thomas Wouldham, bishop of Rochester, 1292–1317.

⁴³ David Martin, bishop of St Davids, 1296–1328.

⁴⁴ Llywelyn, bishop of St Asaph, 1293–1314.

⁴⁵ John of Drokensford or Droxford, bishop of Bath and Wells, 1309–29.

⁴⁶ Anian II, bishop of Bangor, 1309–28.

in no little esteem in the said Order, in our presence and on oath told us that at the reception of the brothers of the aforesaid Order this custom (or more truly corruption) is kept: at the instigation [5r] of the receiver or his deputy, the one who is received denies Jesus Christ and spits on a cross which is shown to him, as an insult to the Crucified, and the one receiving and the one received do certain other things which are not lawful, nor conform to human decency, according to what he then confessed in our presence. The duty of our office urged that we could not avoid harkening to such a great and widespread clamour.

Finally, with the spread of public talk, and the clamorous reports from the said king, and from dukes, counts, barons and other nobles and also from the clergy and people of the said kingdom of the French, who came both in person and through representatives to our presence on account of this, we sorrowfully relate that it reached our hearing that the Master, Commanders and other brothers of the said Order and the Order itself were ensnared in the aforesaid crimes and many others. The aforesaid things seemed to be proven to a certain extent through many confessions, attestations and depositions of the aforesaid Master and many Commanders and brothers of the aforementioned Order, made, held and received in the presence of many prelates and the Investigator of heretical depravity in the kingdom of France, and also written down in notarial attestations shown to us and our brothers [the Cardinals]. Moreover, the rumour and aforesaid clamourings had increased and grown so much, both against the Order itself and against individual persons within the Order, that they could not be passed over without grave scandal, nor tolerated without imminent danger. On these grounds, we – cleaving to the footsteps of him on whose behalf we act on Earth, although unworthy – decided that it was necessary to proceed to an enquiry about the aforesaid things. We interrogated and examined over the aforesaid things many – as many as seventy-two – of the Commanders, priests, knights and other brothers of the said Order, men of no modest reputation assembled in our presence, after they had first given an oath that they would speak the pure and full truth to us on the aforementioned things; and many of our brothers were present with us. Their confessions were diligently written down on the spot by public notaries as legal records, in our and our said brothers' presence, and then after the space of some days we had them read in consistory in their presence and expounded to each in their own language. [5v] They stuck to their confessions, expressly and spontaneously approving them as they were read out.

After this, since we intended to enquire of the Master and leading Commanders of the aforementioned Order about the aforementioned matters ourselves, we gave instructions that the Master and brothers, Grand Commanders of France, the Land Overseas, Normandy, Aquitaine and Poitou should be brought before us while we were at Poitiers. But since some of them were so unwell at that time that they could not ride and could not by any means be brought into our presence, we – with those who wished to know the truth about all the aforementioned matters and whether the things were true that were contained in their confessions and depositions which were said to have been made in the presence of the Investigator of heretical depravity in the kingdom of France, with certain notaries public and many other good men present, and exhibited and shown under notarial attestation to us and our brothers by the same Investigator – commissioned and instructed our sons Berenger, cardinal-priest of [the church of] Saints Nereus and Achilleus and Stephen, cardinal-priest of [the church of] St Cyriacus in the [Diocletian] Baths, and Landulf, cardinal-deacon of St Angelo, in whose prudence, expertise and loyalty we have

complete trust, to enquire with diligence of the aforementioned Master and Commanders the truth about the aforementioned [accusations] both against them and other individuals of the said Order generally and against the Order itself. They should refer to us anything they discovered about these matters, and take care to have their confessions and depositions set down in writing by notarial attestation and have them brought to and presented to our apostolate, and according to the procedures of the Church bestow on the same Master and Commanders the benefit of absolution from the sentence of excommunication (which they had incurred for the aforementioned matters if they were true), if they humbly and devoutly should seek absolution as they ought.

These Cardinals went personally to the Master and Commanders and set out to them the reason for their coming. And as their persons and those of other Templars resident in the kingdom of France had been handed over to us, they could speak the truth freely, fully and simply on all the aforementioned things to the Cardinals, without fear of anyone. [6r] The Master and Commanders of France, the Land Overseas, Normandy, Aquitaine and Poitou, in the presence of those three Cardinals, four public Recorders and many other good men, having touched a copy of the holy gospels of God, and given an oath to tell the pure and full truth about all the aforesaid things, in their presence, each freely and spontaneously, without any coercion or fear being applied, testified and confessed that, among other things, when they were received into the Order of the Temple they denied Christ and spat upon the Cross, and that certain among them had received many brothers in the same way, that is, with denial of Christ and spitting on the Cross. Also, some of them confessed other horrible and dishonourable things that we leave unspoken at present, to spare their shame. They also said and confessed that the things that were contained in the confessions and testimonies, which they had made not long since in the presence of the Investigators of heretical depravity, were true. These confessions and testimonies of the said Master and Commanders were written down in legal form by the four public Recorders in the presence of the Master, Commanders and certain other good men, and then after a space of some days were read back to the same on the command and in the presence of the aforesaid Cardinals, and explained to each of them in their own language. They continued to stand by their confessions, approving them expressly and spontaneously as they were read out. After these confessions and testimonies, on bended knee and with hands clasped, humbly and devoutly with great shedding of tears, they sought the Cardinals to give them absolution from the excommunication that they had incurred for the foregoing things. Because the bosom of the Church is not closed to those who return, the said Cardinals, by our authority, gave the benefit of absolution according to the ritual of the Church to the same Master and Commanders for the heresy that they had expressly abjured. Then, returning to our presence, they presented to us the confessions and testimonies of the aforementioned Master and Commanders written down as spoken as a legal record by notarial attestation, and told us what they had done with the said Master and Commanders. From [6v] these confessions, testimonies and report we found that the oft-mentioned Master and brothers in the aforesaid matters and relating to the aforesaid matters – although some of them in more and others in less – had seriously sinned.

But because we are not able to enquire into these things in person in all the parts of the world through which the same Order is scattered and the brothers dwell, on our brothers' advice we instruct your Fraternity through Apostolic writing that you and any of yours –

To the judges

that is, in their city and diocese – together with our venerable brothers, the Patriarch of Jerusalem and the Archbishop of York, the bishops of Lincoln, Chichester and Orléans, and our beloved sons the abbots of the monasteries of Lagny, Paris diocese, and St German des Prés, near Paris, and Master Sicard de Vaur, Canon of Narbonne, our Chaplain and Auditor of causes in our Palace, and Guy of Wych,⁴⁷ Rector of the church of Hayes, diocese of London – or eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two or one of those who we have decided should be joined with you in this action, on account of the magnitude of the affair – should make a public announcement on behalf of yourself and those acting with you, or any of them or anyone in the places in which it seems to us and them it should be done, summoning individual persons and brothers of the said Order dwelling in your cities and dioceses and also any who might come from other places or perhaps be led thither, and you enquire with diligence into the truth of the charges which we are sending to you enclosed under our seal and of other things which seem expedient to your prudence. We additionally wish that when the investigation or investigations of this sort have been made against or on behalf of those individual persons and brothers who were in the same Province, a sentence of absolution or condemnation regarding those things being investigated should be delivered through a Provincial Council in accordance with the exigency of law. You may, moreover, admit to these enquiries and to this pronouncement of sentence the investigator or investigators into heretical depravity, delegated by the papal see in that Province, if they wish to be present at them with you. [7r] Proviso: that you in no way presume to interfere in the investigation or sentencing of the aforesaid Order and of the Grand Commander of the said Order appointed in the kingdom of England, as we have appointed other people to make these investigations. Given at Poitiers, 12 August in the third year of our Pontificate' [1308].:—



We⁴⁸ therefore bring the aforewritten papal letter to the attention of your Fraternity so that you, after having a copy of it made according to the form of the papal mandate, may fulfill that which pertains to your sollicitude in this matter. Regarding the list of charges, however – which we have received under the genuine papal seal and send enclosed under our seal to your Fraternity, to be opened by you – after you have received and have made a copy of the same, send it back enclosed under your seal with the bearer of the present letter. Having thus had a copy of those charges carefully made, take care to guard it well, because it is necessary for you to investigate the truth of the same charges before they are revealed at all. Moreover, you venerable brothers whom the present letter reaches, append your seals to the present letter as an indication that you have received the foregoing [instructions]. Given at Wingham,⁴⁹ 27 September, AD 1309, in the sixteenth year of our consecration.

Also, in the aforesaid place, day and hour in the presence of the aforesaid lords and in the presence of us, the aforementioned Notaries, the charges included under the papal seal were exhibited and set out before us, contents as written below. Enacted

These are the charges on which the brothers of the order of the Knighthood of the Temple are to be questioned, as it were against individuals manifoldly defamed and Charges

⁴⁷ Guy of Wych] above, fol. 1r: Guy of Vichio.

⁴⁸ We] Archbishop Robert of Canterbury continues his letter, addressing his bishops.

⁴⁹ The village of Wingham in East Kent was a manor of the archbishop of Canterbury.