Monastic Hospitality

The Benedictines in England, c.1070–c.1250

JULIE KERR

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For mum and dad

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List of Abbreviations

AN Studies	*Anglo-Norman Studies: Proceedings of the Battle Conference* (Woodbridge, 1979–)
ANTS	Anglo-Norman Texts Society
Bury Customary	*The Customary of the Benedictine Abbey of Bury St Edmunds in Suffolk*, ed. A. Gransden, HBS 99 (Chichester, 1973)
Caesarius, *Dialogue on Miracles*	*The Dialogue on Miracles*, trans. H. von E. Scott and C. C. S. Bland, 2 vols (London, 1929)
Canivez, *Statutes*	*Statuta Capitulorum Generalium Ordinis Cisterciensis ab Anno 1116 ad Annum 1786*, ed. J. M. Canivez, 8 vols (Louvain, 1933–41)
Chronicle of Lanercost	*The Chronicle of Lanercost, 1272–1346*, trans. with notes by Sir Herbert Maxwell (Glasgow, 1913; Llanerch facsimile 2001)
CCCM	*Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis*
CFMA	*Classiques français du Moyen Age*
Chronica Majora	*Matthaei Parisiensis, monachi Sancti Albani, Chronica Majora*, ed. H. R. Luard, 7 vols, RS 57 (London, 1872–84)
CS	Camden Society
De Obedientiariis	'*De Obedientiariis Abbendoniae*', in *Chronicon Monasterii de Abingdon*, ed. J. Stevenson, 2 vols, RS 2 (London, 1858), 2, pp. 335–417
Dugdale, *Monasticon*	*Monasticon Anglicanum*, ed. Sir William Dugdale, rev. J. Caley, H. Ellis, B. Bandinel, 6 vols, in 8 (London, 1817–30)
EHR	*English Historical Review*
EYC	*Early Yorkshire Charters*, vols 1–3, ed. W. Farrer (Edinburgh, 1914–16); index to vols 1–3, ed. C. T. and E. M. Clay; vols 4–9, ed. C. T. Clay, YAS Rec. Ser., extra ser. (Edinburgh, 1935–65)
Eynsham Customary	*The Customary of the Benedictine Abbey of Eynsham in Oxford*, ed. A. Gransden, *Corpus Consuetudinum Monasticarum* 2 (Siegburg, 1963)
GASA	*Gesta Abbatum Monasterii Sancti Albani a Thomas Walsingham, regnate Ricardo Secundo, ejusdem ecclesiae Prae centore, compilata*. ed. H. T. Riley, 3 vols, RS 4 (London, 1867–69)
Gervase, *Chronicle*	*Historical works, the Chronicle of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II, and Richard I*, by Gervase, the Monk of Canterbury, ed. W. Stubbs, 2 vols, RS 73 (London, 1879–80)
HBS	Henry Bradshaw Society
History of Abingdon	*Historia Ecclesiae Abbendoniensis: The History of the Church of Abingdon* 2, ed. and trans. J. Hudson, OMT (Oxford, 2002)
Idung, *Dialogue*	Idungus of *Prüfening*, 'A dialogue between a Cluniac and a Cistercian', trans. J. O'Sullivan in *Idung of Prüfening, Cistercians and Cluniacs: the Case for Cîteaux* (Kalamazoo, 1977), pp. 3–141
Instructio Noviciorum	'*Instructio Noviciorum*' in *The Monastic Constitutions of Lanfranc*, rev. D. Knowles and C. N. L. Brooke (Edinburgh, 2002), pp. 198–221

JEH	*Journal of Ecclesiastical History*
JMH	*Journal of Medieval History*
Jocelin	Jocelin of Brakelond, *The Chronicle of Jocelin of Brakelond*, ed. and trans. H. E. Butler (Edinburgh, 1949)
L/P Henry VIII	*Letters and Papers Foreign and Domestic in the Reign of Henry VIII*, arranged and catalogued J. S. Brewer, J. Gairdner and R. H. Brodie, 22 vols (London, 1862–1932)
Lanfranc, *Constitutions*	*The Monastic Constitutions of Lanfranc*, rev. edn D. Knowles and C. Brooke, OMT (Oxford, 2002)
Liber Eliensis	*Liber Eliensis: A History of the Isle of Ely from the Seventh Century to the Twelfth Century*, trans. with notes J. Fairweather (Woodbridge, 2005)
Materials for Becket	*Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury*, ed. J. C. Robertson and J. B. Sheppard, 7 vols, RS 67 (London, 1875–85)
NLT	*Narrative and Legislative Texts from Early Cîteaux*, ed. and trans. C. Waddell (Cîteaux, 1999)
OMT	Oxford Medieval Texts
Orderic	*The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, ed. and trans. M. Chibnall, 6 vols, OMT (Oxford, 1969–80)
PL	*Patrologia cursus completes, series Latina*, ed. J. P. Migne *et al.*, 221 vols (Paris, 1844–64)
PR	*Pipe Rolls*, published by Pipe Roll Society
PRS	Pipe Roll Society
RAC	*Reading Abbey Cartularies*, ed. B. R. Kemp, 2 vols, CS, 4th ser. 31, 33 (London, 1986–87)
RS	Rolls Series: *Rerum Brittanicarum Medii Aevi Scriptores, Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland during the Middle Ages*, 99 vols (1858–96)
Rule of St Benedict	*The Rule of St Benedict*, ed. and trans. D. O. Hunter Blair, 5th edn (Fort Augustus, 1948)
St Augustine's Customary (c. 1250)	'*Consuetudines Monasterii Sancti Augustini Cantuariae compendiose notatae*', in *The Customary of St Augustine's, Canterbury and St Peter's, Westminster*, ed. E. M. Thompson, 2 vols, HBS 23, 28 (London, 1902–4), 2, appendix, pp. 249–318.
St Augustine's Customary (fourteenth-century)	*Customary of St Augustine's, Canterbury, and St Peter's, Westminster*, 1
St Mary's Customary	*The Chronicle of St Mary's, York*, ed. H. H. E. Craster and M. E. Thornton, SS 148 (London, 1934), pp. 80–108
SS	Surtees Society
Thomas Marlborough, *History of Evesham*	Thomas Marlborough, *History of the Abbey of Evesham*, ed. and trans. J. Sayers and L. Watkiss, OMT (Oxford, 2003)
TNA	The National Archives
TRHS	*Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*
VCH	*Victoria County Histories*
Vita Anselmi	Eadmer, *The Life of St Anselm, Archbishop Canterbury*, ed. and trans. R. W. Southern, Nelson's Medieval Texts (London, 1962), 2nd edn OMT (Oxford, 1972)
Westminster Customary	*Customary of St Augustine's, Canterbury and St Peter's, Westminster*, 2
YAS Rec. Ser.	Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series

Introduction

> From receiving guests cheerfully the reputation of the monastery is increased, friendships are multiplied, animosities are blunted, God is honoured, charity is augmented and a plentiful reward is promised in heaven.[1]

Hospitality has been integral to society from time immemorial. Its significance in Biblical times is reflected in the Old and New Testaments, chiefly in Abraham's encounter with the angels in Genesis 18: 1–15 and Christ's injunctions to care for the stranger in Matthew 25: 40. Its importance in classical and medieval times is evident in contemporary writings such as the works of Homer and Cicero, the Anglo-Saxon poem, *Beowulf*, and the Arthurian romances.[2] Whether these writings reflect the ideals or the practices of the societies that produced them, they are a testimony to the place they accorded hospitality.[3] Of course, hospitality is not a Western phenomenon. Anthropological studies have highlighted its significance to other cultures, notably, Marcel Mauss' pioneering analysis of the gift-exchange which considers what compelled people to give, receive and reciprocate, and Julian Pitt-Rivers' study of honour in contemporary Mediterranean societies.[4]

1 'Of the hosteller', *The Observances in Use at the Augustinian Priory of Barnwell in Cambridgeshire*, ed. and trans. J. W. Clark (Cambridge, 1897), ch. 41, 'De hospitario' (pp. 192–3). The ordinances have been dated to the late thirteenth century.

2 For a useful overview see J. Kristeva, *Strangers to Ourselves* (New York, 1991), and for further discussion see M. T. Bruckner, *Narrative Invention in Twelfth-century French Romance: the convention of hospitality, 1160–1200* (Lexington, 1980); R. A. Greer, 'Hospitality in the first five centuries of the church', *Monastic Studies* 10 (1974), pp. 29–48; J. Kerr, 'The open door: hospitality and honour in twelfth- / early-thirteenth-century England', *History* 87 (2002), pp. 322–35, 'Food, drink and lodging: lay hospitality in twelfth-century England', *Haskins Society Journal* 18, ed. S. Morillo (forthcoming, Woodbridge, 2007), 'Welcome the coming, speed the departing guest', *JMH* (forthcoming); J. Koenig, *New Testament Hospitality: partnership with strangers as promise and mission* (Philadelphia, 1985); S. Reece, *The Stranger's Welcome: oral theory and the aesthetics of the Homeric hospitality scene* (Kalamazoo, 1993).

3 Note Jaeger's discussion of the educative and mimetic function of Arthurian literature, for example, in his *The Envy of the Angels: cathedral schools and social ideals in mediaeval Europe* (Philadelphia, 1994), p. 15.

4 M. Mauss, 'Essai sur le don', *The Gift: forms and functions of exchange in archaic societies*, trans. W. D. Halls (London, 1990); J. Pitt-Rivers, *The Fate of Shechem: essays*

Whilst hospitality has a long and enduring history, its significance in the twelfth century is of particular interest, both in a European and Anglo-Norman context. This was a dynamic period that gave rise to a number of religious, social and economic developments. The institution of a new ruling class in England following the Conquest of 1066 strengthened links with the Continent, for it brought greater access to foreign ideas, practices and texts. This would have generated more traffic, with a number of lords now travelling to their familial lands across the water, prelates visiting their dependencies and attending meetings at the mother-house, and scholars seeking knowledge in the schools. A renewed interest in civility and courtesy at this time, coupled with a concern to codify and set down in writing existing practices, led to the proliferation of works on conduct. Nicholas Orme has justifiably described the twelfth century as 'a new era in the history of manners'. It gave rise to the first comprehensive etiquette texts and the earliest courtesy book compiled c. 1140 by Petrus Alfonsi.[5] The first in England, the *Urbanus* or *Liber Urbani* ('Book of the Civilised Man'), was produced some fifty years later by Daniel of Beccles who is thought to have been a member of Henry II's court, writing c. 1180.[6] His poem, which consists of some 3000 lines of Latin, was and remains the most extensive in any language.[7] These same concerns nurtured the compilation of prescriptive texts in the religious houses, primarily, customaries and guides for novices. This means that there is now a large corpus of evidence to enable us access to the ideals and practices of religious life at the time. The Victorines of Paris made a particularly notable contribution producing a detailed customary, the *Liber Ordinis*, c. 1116, and Hugh of St Victor's *Institutione Novitiorum* which is thought to date from the early 1120s. The latter was highly influential and has been described by C. S. Jaeger as the 'best documentation in ethical training', for it is especially concerned with manners and gestures.[8]

in the anthropology of the Mediterranean (Cambridge, 1977); 'Honour and social status', *Honour and Shame*, ed. J. Péristiany (London, 1966).

5 N. Orme, *From Childhood to Chivalry: the education of the English kings and aristocracy 1066–1530* (London, 1984), pp. 136–41.

6 *Urbanus Magnus Danielis Becclesiensis*, ed. J. Gilbart Smyly (Dublin, 1939). For details of Daniel and his work see R. Bartlett, *England Under the Norman and Angevin Kings, 1075–1225* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 582–8 and J. Gillingham, 'From *civilitas* to civility: codes of manners in medieval and early modern England', *TRHS* 6: 12 (2002), pp. 267–89. Beccles' work should not be confused with the *Urbanus Paruus*, also known as *Facetus*, see A. Rigg, *A History of Anglo-Latin Literature, 1066–1421* (Cambridge, 1992), p. 127.

7 J. Nicholls, *The Matter of Courtesy: Medieval Courtesy Books and the Gawain Poet* (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 179–90 (p. 185).

8 C. S. Jaeger, 'Humanism and ethics in the School of St Victor in the early twelfth century', *Mediaeval Studies* 55 (1993), pp. 51–79 (pp. 53–4). For the number of surviving manuscripts, which indicate its popularity, see p. 54. The potential impact that Victorine humanism had on the importance and practice of monastic hospitality in England is considered below, pp. 6–8.

Monastic hospitality

The subject of this book is monastic hospitality in England over a long twelfth century, extending from c. 1070 until c. 1250. It is chiefly concerned with Benedictine hospitality, particularly the large southern houses of Abingdon, Bury St Edmunds, Christ Church, Canterbury and St Albans for which there is a relatively rich and varied body of surviving evidence. As royal foundations that were situated in the towns they inevitably faced considerable demands and were frequently called upon to entertain royalty and ecclesiastics, and to host important state gatherings. Moreover they might expect a number of pilgrims to visit their shrines. Accordingly their experience of hospitality and the nature of their provision for guests may have differed considerably from Benedictines living in smaller and more remote communities. Future research may shed light on these less well documented houses and offer a wider perspective of Benedictine hospitality. To set the Benedictine material in context other orders are considered, especially the Cistercian monks who settled in secluded sites rather than urban centres.

Hospitality was of particular significance in the Benedictine monastery and from the outset monks were charged with a special role *vis à vis* the reception of guests. The *Rule of St Benedict* addresses the reception of guests in chapter 53 and these precepts remained the backbone of monastic practice throughout the Middle Ages. Given that monks had, in theory, retreated from the world it may seem incongruous that hospitality should be accorded such importance, yet there were Biblical precedents, and the care of guests was closely associated with charity.[9] In twelfth-century England some houses were established specifically to provide hospitality, for example, Henry I's foundation at Reading. Morville Priory was converted from a minster to a cell of Shrewsbury Abbey in 1138 on the understanding that the abbey sent monks to take over the church at Morville and provide hospitality there.[10] While hospitality was integral to monastic life the admittance of guests and their entertainment within the precinct had to be carefully organised lest it impeded rather than fulfilled monastic ideals, and drained the community's resources.[11]

Developments in the administration of the Benedictine monastery during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries had an impact on the organisation and execution of monastic hospitality, chiefly, the abbot's growing withdrawal

9 Chapter 36 of the thirteenth-century *Rule* of Grandmont presents charity as the motive, hospitality as the action, 'For the sake of charity you will show hospitality', see C. A. Hutchinson, *The Hermit Monks of Grandmont* (Kalamazoo, 1989), p. 85.

10 Bishop Robert de Bethune of Hereford granted Morville to Shrewsbury in 1138 on this understanding, *The Cartulary of Shrewsbury Abbey*, ed. U. Rees, 2 vols (Aberystwyth, 1975), 2, no. 334 (pp. 303–4); 1210 x 1219 Morville was given the chapel of Astley by Hugh of Hereford, to improve upon hospitality at the priory, no. 347 (p. 313); see also M. Heale, *The Dependent Priories of Medieval English Monasteries*, Studies in the History of Medieval Religion 22 (Woodbridge, 2004), p. 58 n. 151.

11 This is discussed in chapters 2 and 6.

Figure 1 Waterworks Plan, Christ Church, Canterbury, Eadwine Psalter, Trinity College Cambridge, MS R.17.1, fols 284v–285r (c. 1165).

from communal life and his establishment of private quarters, the division of revenues between the prelate and convent and the distribution of resources amongst the various monastic offices. In a number of houses this led to the division of guests between the abbot and convent, and meant that there might now be several officials associated with the administration of hospitality and various places within and outside the precinct where guests were entertained.[12]

12 See in particular chapters 2 and 4.

It is useful to consider the arrangements at Christ Church, Canterbury whose buildings are shown in a mid-twelfth-century plan known as the Waterworks Plan. This depicts the monastery's hydraulic system, which was central to Prior Wibert's building programme of 1155–67, and is the only known plan of a western monastery prior to the sixteenth century.[13] The plan shows various lodgings at Christ Church associated with hospitality, namely, the prior's lodgings to the NE of the church, the *domus hospitum* that stood to the NW of the cloister, and the *aula nova*, in the NW corner of the precinct. It reveals little about the interior layout of these buildings or their use but it is likely that the prior received more distinguished visitors in his lodgings, while the cellarer and guestmaster entertained middling guests in the *domus hospitum* and guests arriving on foot were shown to the *aula nova*.[14] As the seat of the primate and a popular pilgrim site, even before the martyrdom of 1170, Christ Church is not, perhaps, representative of other houses but most monasteries at this time would have had several lodgings for guests within the precinct.

The growing burden of monastic hospitality

> At that time monks did not yet feel the press of a tumult of strangers crowding upon them.[15]

Various developments may have heightened the importance of monastic hospitality throughout Europe in the twelfth century, not least of all an increased number of people on the roads travelling by horse and on foot. Communities certainly felt that they were now more greatly burdened by guests than their predecessors. Both Peter the Venerable, abbot of Cluny (d. 1156), and Hildegard of Bingen (d. 1178) cited this as a reason for modifying Benedict's precepts and curtailing hospitality. The Cluniac in Idung of Prüfening's 'Dialogue' (c. 1155) claimed that if they were to follow the *Rule of St Benedict* and welcome all guests who flocked to the house, they would not themselves have enough to survive.[16] Pilgrimage, the Crusades and urban renewal meant there was potentially a vast and wide range of people requiring refreshment, accommodation or provisions along the way. The monastery's role in providing provisions for travellers to purchase *en route* is

13 Trinity College Cambridge, MS R171.1 (987), fols 284v–285r (large diagram), fol. 286r (smaller sketch). F. Woodman, 'The Waterworks drawing of the Eadwine Psalter', *The Eadwine Psalter: Text, Image and Monastic Culture in Twelfth-Century Canterbury*, ed. M. Gibson, T. A. Heslop, R. W. Pfaff (London, 1992), pp. 168–77 (p. 172). See below, appendix 2.

14 These buildings are discussed in greater detail in appendix 2.

15 *Hildegard of Bingen, Explanation of the Rule of St Benedict*, trans. with intro., notes and commentary by H. Feiss, Peregrina Translation Series (Toronto, 1998), ch. 26, 'On hospitality', p. 32.

16 *Hildegard, Explanation of the Rule*, ch. 26, 'On hospitality', p. 32; *The Letters of Peter the Venerable*, ed. G. Constable, 2 vols (Cambridge, MA, 1967), 1, ep. 28, clause 9 (pp. 71–2 at p. 72); Idung, *Dialogue*, III: 54 (p. 139).

an aspect of their care that merits closer analysis.[17] The monastery was not the only recourse for travellers, particularly in the towns where alternative lodgings could be secured with locals or in a hospice. Visitors attending the consecration of the church at Ely in 1252 were accommodated in the monks' buildings, the bishop's lodgings and also with the townsfolk.[18] Eastbridge Hospital in Canterbury was established for pilgrims travelling to the shrine of Thomas Becket, and the miracle stories suggest it was common for pilgrims to stay with locals.[19] A number of nobles had houses in urban centres such as London and Winchester, but it is difficult to gauge how many visitors to the monastery would have expected to secure independent lodgings and how extensive this provision was.[20] Still, the monastery remained an important source of hospitality, particularly in remote areas where there were was little other provision for travellers. Several Cistercian houses claimed this as the reason for an influx of guests. In 1336 the abbot of Margam complained that as the abbey was on the high road and far from other places of refuge it was 'continuously overrun by rich and poor strangers'.[21] The Cistercians, or the White Monks as they were also known, were perhaps more susceptible since they chose sites 'far from the haunts of men'.

Hospitality and humanism

Advances in scholasticism and humanism may have enhanced the importance of monastic hospitality in England, and more specifically, how it was practised. The humanism propounded by the School of St Victor, Paris, linked manners with the 'congruence of inner world and outer appearance'.[22] Accordingly, it placed great import on gestures, speech, gait and manners, which were regarded not simply as an outer manifestation of inner harmony, but a means of achieving this. Rigorous training in decorum and control of one's actions were thus seen as ways to attain beauty within. For Jaeger, the founders and early teachers of St Victor's took from Cicero an 'ethic of refined bearing' which they superimposed 'onto the ideals of the apostolic life, equality of

17 For brief reference to this in the later Middle Ages, see J. Kerr, 'Cistercian hospitality in the later Middle Ages', in *Monasteries and Society in the later Middle Ages*, ed. J. Burton and K. Stöber (forthcoming, Woodbridge, 2008).

18 *Chronica Majora* 4, p. 322.

19 Eastbridge Hospital is discussed below, p. 207 n. 18.

20 According to William Fitzstephen's late-twelfth-century description of London almost every bishop, magnate and abbot in England had a 'lordly habitation' here where he stayed in splendour when summoned to the city, either to attend a council or assembly, or simply to conduct personal affairs, *Materials for Becket* 3, p. 8. For the London houses of the abbots of Reading, Bury and Abingdon, and the bishop of Lincoln, see *RAC* 1, p. 469; *Feudal Documents from the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds*, ed. D. C. Douglas, Records of the Social and Economic History of England and Wales, 8 (London, 1932), nos 176–7; *History of Abingdon* 2, pp. 18–19; *Magna Vita Sancti Hugonis*, ed. and trans. D. Douie and D. H. Farmer, 2 vols, OMT (Oxford, 1961–62), 2, p. 184.

21 In 1384 reference was made to its 'great hospitality', as it was on the public route, D. H. Williams, *The Welsh Cistercians* (Leominster, 2001), p. 144.

22 Jaeger, 'Humanism and ethics', p. 62.

manners and renunciation of possessions'.[23] This would clearly have had important consequences for hospitality since the reception of guests offered an opportunity to exhibit and develop courtesy, and was subsequently an effective way to attain this. Not least of all, it provided an audience to witness this laudable conduct and would undoubtedly have helped to curry good favour and enhance the community's reputation. Indeed the Cistercian monk, Caesarius of Heisterbach (c. 1180–c. 1240), paid tribute to the Victorines' willingness to help outsiders and the promptness with which they acted. He recounts how one student who arrived at the house wracked with guilt asked for the prior to hear his confession. The prior came immediately to meet him since he, like all the brethren there, 'was always ready for that duty'. The prior evidently conducted himself with the utmost courtesy, for after delivering the customary exhortation he remained silent, allowing the student to make his confession.[24]

The Victorine brand of humanism would most probably have made other communities more conscious of how they received their guests and perhaps also heightened the expectations of their visitors. It may help to explain why the *Constitutions* compiled by Archbishop Lanfranc in the late eleventh century is a rather 'dry and practical' text that does not discuss the reception of guests, yet subsequent customaries compiled in England set out the procedure for their welcome and also the qualities required of the guestmaster and other officials responsible for visitors. Examples include the *De Obedientiariis* of Abingdon which was probably compiled c. 1220, and the customary of Eynsham Abbey which is later, but thought to stem from the same source.[25] In fact, the Eynsham customary in places cites the *Liber Ordinis* of St Victor's verbatim. This change in the content of the customaries can perhaps be attributed to the widespread influence of Victorine humanism and the dissemination of their ideas and texts in England. It is unfortunate that so little is now known of the library holdings at Eynsham and Abingdon, and also of their neighbouring canons at Osney for it may have been through Osney that the text was transmitted. The houses were relatively close, Osney being some six miles from Eynsham which was nine miles from Abingdon.[26] The communities may even have been connected through the D'Oilly family, who held the constableship of Oxford. Robert D'Oilly I (d. c. 1093) and his wife were buried in the chapter-house of Abingdon. Robert II who founded the Augustinian house at Osney in 1129 was a benefactor of Eynsham, where he was buried in 1142. The foundation charter of Osney reveals that it was witnessed by two monks of Abingdon.[27]

23 Jaeger, 'Humanism and ethics', p. 53.

24 Caesarius, *Dialogue on Miracles* 1, bk II: 10, pp. 82–4.

25 The customaries are discussed below, pp. 13–18.

26 It is perhaps significant that the canons of Osney, like those of St Frideswide, were to be more fully integrated than other canons whenever they dined in the refectory at Eynsham; this implies that there were ties of sorts, *Eynsham Customary*, ch. 19: 2 (506), p. 200 lines 11–17.

27 E. Amt, *Oxford DNB* 41, p. 644; *History of Abingdon* 2, pp. lvii n, 32–5, 330–1; see also pp. 2–3, 10–11, 18–19, 326–31.

Not everyone subscribed to the Victorines' humanism, and it was rejected by Peter Abelard (c. 1079–1132). Another opponent was the Cistercian, Bernard of Clairvaux (c. 1090–1153), who held that fine manners were innate and could not be learned; he thus regarded Christ as the true master of *mores*.[28] Whilst this obviously undermined the need for training in decorum, which was fundamental to the canons, it was nonetheless an acknowledgement of the link between inner harmony and outer behaviour.

The guests

A vast and diverse number of people availed themselves of monastic hospitality throughout the Middle Ages, whether they travelled on horse or on foot. The late-thirteenth-century account book of the Cistercian abbey of Beaulieu incorporates a comprehensive list of would-be guests. This includes royalty, barons, church dignitaries, monastic officials, clerics, relatives, messengers, mariners and grooms.[29] How they were received and where they were entertained invariably depended upon their standing and relationship with the community. At Beaulieu, visitors were carefully graded at the door and provided for accordingly.[30] This would not have included women who were prohibited from entering the Cistercian precincts as guests. This ban extended to royalty as much as lay women, and in 1246 the prior and cellarer of Beaulieu were deposed for having permitted the queen to stay in their infirmary for almost three weeks, to tend the young prince, Edward.[31] The Benedictine stance is less easy to determine, and whilst there may not at this time have been an official policy, the order was evidently less exclusive. Abbot Geoffrey of St Albans (1119–46), for example, built a chamber especially for the use of the queen and her attendants.[32]

Not everyone who entered the monastery precinct was received as a guest but the division between visitors and guests is rather hazy. Moreover, it is often unclear when charity should be distinguished from hospitality, since the lines of distinction are not absolute. Thus, while the administration of alms at the gate hardly constituted hospitality, the poor were at times received as guests, for example, on Maundy Thursday they were refreshed within the monastery gates.[33] The presence of corrodians living within the precincts is

28 Jaeger, *Envy of the Angels*, p. 272.

29 *The Account Book of Beaulieu Abbey*, ed. S. F. Hockey, CS, 4th ser. 16 (London, 1975).

30 *Account Book of Beaulieu Abbey*, p. 33.

31 *Annales Monastici*, ed. H. R. Luard, 5 vols, RS 36 (London, 1864–69), 2, p. 337. See also below, p. 82.

32 The reception of women is discussed below, pp. 82–3, 139, 176.

33 For contemporary discussions of charity, see Hugh of St Victor's *De Sacramentis*, *On the Sacraments of the Christian Faith*, ed. and trans. R. J. Deferrai (Cambridge, MA, 1951), e.g. pp. 378–9, 381, 393; Aelred of Rievaulx's letter of advice to his sister describes charity as love of God and love of one's neighbour, '*De Institutione Inclusarum*', *Aelredi Rievallensis, Opera Omnia 1: Opera Ascetic*, ed. A. Hoste and C. H. Talbot, CCCM 1, pp. 635–82 (p. 659). A stimulating discussion of charity is R. H. Bremner's *Giving: charity and philanthropy in history* (New Brunswick and London, 1996).

also problematic, but as they were effectively members of the wider community who resided in the monastery on a fixed basis, they are not included as recipients of hospitality in this analysis.[34] In contrast, troops billeted at the house stayed at the monastery on a temporary basis and are perhaps best regarded as an example of hospitality functioning within lordship. Similarly, ecclesiastical dignitaries who arrived to conduct visitation and were refreshed and accommodated by the community are included as a type of guest, although they were clearly more than guests and the implications of receiving them might have significant consequences.[35]

A group commonly associated with monastic hospitality is that of pilgrims (*peregrini*). Yet most would not have stayed within the monastery precinct but in the vill, or perhaps in a hospice built especially for their use at the abbey gates, such as those constructed by abbots Odo of Battle (1175–1200) and Hugh II of Reading (1186–99). The account of the dedication of Bec in 1077 explains that visitors refreshed at the abbey were lodged in nearby houses and remote villages.[36] Pilgrims seeking relief at the saint's shrine may have spent the night in vigil in the church or simply returned home; analysis of the miracle collections suggests that a number of these pilgrims lived in the locality.[37] Access for these visitors might be restricted to prevent undue disruption. The sick who flocked to Dunfermline Abbey seeking miraculous relief from St Margaret were accustomed to visit on Saturdays and the vigils of feasts, and were monitored by a clerk stationed at the door of the church.[38] The crowds that visited to celebrate a dedication or translation would have likely been entertained to a fine celebratory feast within the precinct.[39] The term *peregrinus* could, of course, be used for a high-ranking individual, including the

34 The type of corrody awarded could vary greatly, and range from the allocation of basic supplies to men and women living outside the precinct, to board and lodging within the confines of the monastery. The latter, the full corrody, was more common in the later Middle Ages. For discussion of corrodies and corrodians, see B. Harvey, *Living and Dying in England 1100–1540: The Monastic Experience* (Oxford, 1993), pp. 179–209; for a list of corrodians at Westminster, 1100–1540, see pp. 239–51. For corrodians in Cistercian houses in the later Middle Ages, see D. H. Williams, 'Layfolk within Cistercian precincts', *Monastic Studies* 2, ed. J. Loades (Bangor, 1991), pp. 87–117 (pp. 101–4).

35 This is discussed in chapter 3.

36 *Vita Domni Herluini Abbatis Beccensis Liber Domni Gisleberti Abbatis de Simoniacis*, ed. J. A. Robinson, *Gilbert Crispin, Abbot of Westminster: A Study of the Abbey Under Norman Rule* (Cambridge, 1911), pp. 87–110 (p. 107). Hospices outside the abbey gates are discussed further in chapters 1 and 2.

37 E.g. L. Milis, *Angelic Monks and Earthly Men: Monasticism and its Meaning to Mediaeval Society* (Woodbridge, 1992), p. 83, explains that from analysis of shrines in England and France it emerges that half of the devotees returned home the same day that they left; three-quarters came from a thirty-seven-mile radius. Others would have kept vigil at the shrine, and clearly would not have required lodging, see B. Ward, *Miracles and the Mediaeval Mind: theory, record and event, 1000–1215* (London, 1982), e.g. pp. 73, 94.

38 'The miracles of St Margaret', *The Miracles of Saint Aebbe of Coldingham and Saint Margaret of Scotland*, ed. and trans. R. Bartlett, OMT (Oxford, 2003), no 1 (pp. 74–7).

39 See below, p. 11–12, 160–1.

king, and pilgrims of this ilk would inevitably have been warmly received by the community. But, certainly in the twelfth century the term *peregrini* seems to have defined a group of visitors distinct from guests (*hospites*), for the two are often set in apposition. For example, Geoffrey of Burton's *Life* of the fifth-century saint, Modwena, describes how she divided her monastery's revenues in three, setting aside one portion for the poor, another for guests and pilgrims, and a third for the building of churches and for the salvation of souls.[40] Hugh of Coventry (February 1188 x March 1198) conceded that the profits of the church of Baschurch should be used to support guests, pilgrims and the poor at Shrewsbury Abbey upon the deaths of the present incumbents. Archbishop Thurstan stipulated that the monks of Fountains Abbey should only spend the revenues and tithes of their churches on guests, pilgrims and the poor.[41] The term *supervenientes* may have similarly been used to distinguish visitors who actually stayed at the house (*hospites*) from those who simply passed through, for again, the terms often appear together. It is perhaps significant that the customary of Eynsham Abbey describes how the hosteller need only celebrate Compline with those staying in the dormitory.[42]

If monastic hospitality is most frequently associated with pilgrims and patrons, it is rarely thought of in terms of visiting monks who might be required to travel to conduct business or undertake research, to deliver messages or to visit their families. Yet, as the following analysis will seek to show, they constituted a significant proportion of the community's guests and, certainly by the end of our period, were often assigned their own hosteller and separate quarters. This was not a twelfth-century development. St Benedict refers specifically to visiting monks in chapter 53 of his *Rule*, and the idealised plan of St Gall (c. 820) allocates them separate accommodation so that they might continue their observances unimpeded.[43] This remained an important concern and in the set of injunctions he issued to Christ Church, Canterbury, in December 1298, Archbishop Winchelsey complained of the inadequate provision for visiting monks who were forced to seek inappropriate lodgings with laymen.[44] An anecdote recounted by the German Cistercian, Caesarius of Heisterbach, underlines the risk this posed, and from even the most well meaning of hosts. Caesarius describes one occasion when Ensfrid, dean of Cologne, generously offered hospitality to some religious guests only to find that he had no convent food. He therefore asked his steward to make a hash

40 *Geoffrey of Burton: Life and Miracles of St Modwena*, ed. and trans. R. Bartlett, OMT (Oxford, 2002), p. 63. Geoffrey was writing in the early twelfth century.

41 *Cartulary of Shrewsbury* 1, no. 71 (pp. 70–1); 'Narratio de fundatione Fontanis monasterii', *Memorials of the Abbey of St Mary of Fountains* 1, ed. J. R. Walbran, SS 42 (Durham, 1862), pp. 1–129 (p. 21). The Cistercians prohibited their abbeys from receiving tithes unless this was to support the poor, guests and pilgrims, see clause 9 of the *Institutes of the General Chapter*, ed. and trans. C. Waddell, *NLT*, p. 460.

42 See chapter 5.

43 An accessible analysis of the plan is L. Price, *The Plan of St Gall in Brief* (University of California, Berkeley, CA, and London, 1982).

44 *Registrum Roberti Winchelsey* 2, transcribed and ed. R. Graham, Canterbury and York Society 52 (London, 1956), pp. 813–27 (pp. 822–3), cited in D. Webb, *Pilgrimage in Medieval England* (London, 2000), p. 225.

from the meat and serve it as turbot. The meal passed harmoniously until one of the guests found a pig's ear on his plate; unperturbed, Ensfrid simply declared that turbot had ears.[45]

To prevent mishaps of this kind the community might secure independent urban lodgings or obtain a hospice along a well-trodden route. Abbot William of St Albans (1214–35) purchased a house in London so that he, the brethren and his successors would find appropriate and private lodgings when visiting the city; Faritius of Abingdon (1101–17) secured a hospice for his monks *en route* to London.[46] The monks might, of course, break their journey at a manor, grange or a cell of their house. When the legate, Nicholas of Tusculum, left Bury St Edmunds in 1213, he was accompanied by various members of the community, including the prior, the abbot-elect and the sacrist of Bury; the party stayed overnight at a manor belonging to the house.[47] Matthew Paris praised Abbot John of St Albans (1195–1214) for the 'pious statute' he issued in the first year of his abbacy whereby any brother of the house making a journey might stop off at one of their manors if he was tired and night was approaching, and there find refreshment for himself, his companions and horses.[48]

The monastery as a venue

The size, grandeur and often the location of monasteries meant they were frequently regarded as an ideal venue for a national or international gathering. This might be a ceremonial occasion, such as a coronation, crown-wearing or dubbing, or an important state or ecclesiastical council. The monastery might also be used as a military base. Following the Conquest of 1066, English rebels stayed at Ely for a year. In 1143, during the civil war of Stephen's reign, the king took over the town of Wilton and lodged within the abbey precinct; unfortunately for the nuns this resulted in the burning of their abbey.[49] The threat of civil war in November 1263 prompted Henry III and his whole army to stay at Abingdon, where they remained for three days 'with banners flying'.[50]

45 Caesarius, *Dialogue on Miracles* 1, bk VI: 10 (pp. 397–401).

46 *GASA* 1, p. 289; *History of Abingdon* 2, pp. 142–5; see below, p. 46. It was common for the nobility to secure urban lodgings, see above n. 20.

47 *The Chronicle of the Election of Hugh, Abbot of Bury St Edmunds and Later Bishop of Ely*, ed. and trans. R. M. Thomson (Oxford, 1974), p. 34.

48 *GASA* 1, p. 234; trans. R. Vaughan, *Chronicles of Matthew Paris: Monastic life in the thirteenth century* (Gloucester, 1984) p. 25.

49 *Liber Eliensis*, pp. 179–81, esp. p. 181; Dugdale, *Monasticon* 2, pp. 316–17. The fate of the Cistercian monks of Rievaulx who had sheltered Edward II in 1322 and were raided by the Scots is vividly recounted in the *The Chronicle of Lanercost, 1201–1346* (Glasgow, 1913; Llanerch facsimile, Felinfach, 2001), p. 240.

50 M. Cox, *The Story of Abingdon: Part 2, medieval Abingdon, 1186–1556* (Abingdon, 1996), p. 41. Edward I and his troops used a number of monasteries as their military headquarters during the campaigns against the Welsh and the Scots, for example, he stayed at Aberconwy, Cymmer, Melrose, Strata Florida – see Kerr, 'Cistercian hospitality', forthcoming.

The great royal abbeys of Reading and Westminster were popular venues for meetings of state which would have often been held in the chapter-house; indeed, Reading had one of the finest chapter-houses in the country.[51] At Westminster Abbey, the infirmary chapel of St Catherine's was sometimes used, and 'parliament' gathered here at Easter 1229; amongst those who attended were archbishops, bishops, the king, priors, Templars, Hospitallers, earls and barons.[52] On these occasions the monastery essentially functioned as a venue, and whilst the community would no doubt have suffered disruption and was probably drained of resources, it did not, strictly speaking, administer hospitality. Moreover delegates did not necessarily stay at the monastery. When Henry II held a council at Eynsham Abbey in 1186 to discuss matters of state with the bishops and nobles of the kingdom, Archbishop Baldwin and his suffragans lodged freely at the abbey and the king stayed at the royal hunting lodge at Woodstock, commuting daily to the abbey.[53] Henry III stayed at Woodstock when he visited Abingdon Abbey in August 1255. The royal entourage arrived at the abbey after supper. This was an impressive line-up for the king and queen were accompanied by their daughter, Margaret, her husband, Alexander III of Scotland, and their son, Prince Edward with his child wife, Eleanor of Castile.[54]

The staging of a council or another important event at the monastery would invariably have affected the entire town or neighbourhood, and locals would often have been called upon to provide lodgings and provisions. The *Life of Godric of Finchale* describes a crown-wearing at Bury St Edmunds in Henry II's reign, and explains that the town was overwhelmed by the number of visitors who stayed there; this included the royal retainers.[55] The pressure that events of this kind must have put on the town is aptly illustrated in a later example relating to Abingdon, where Henry VIII arrived unexpectedly in 1518, to escape the sweating sickness in London. The town was hard pressed to accommodate the royal entourage that encamped here for almost three weeks, prompting the king's secretary, Richard Pace, to complain to Wolsey of the lack of accommodation in the town. He recommended that great persons should be forewarned of this and the lack of fodder, and advised to travel with a small retinue.[56]

51 J. B. Hurry, *Reading Abbey* (London, 1901), pp. 31–3.

52 *Chronica Majora* 3, p. 186. Additional parliaments held at Westminster in the first half of the thirteenth century include those of 1231, October 1233, February and April 1234, *Chronica Majora* 3, pp. 200, 251, 268, 278.

53 *Magna Vita* 1, p. 92.

54 Cox, *The Story of Abingdon*, pt 2, p. 39.

55 *De Vita et Miraculis S. Godrici, Hermitae de Finchale Auctore Reginalso Monacho Dunelmensis*,ed. J. Stevenson, SS 20 (Durham, 1847), pp. 178–9 (p. 178). While the text refers to this as a 'coronation' it was probably Henry II's crown-wearing at Pentecost, 1157 for *coronandus* could either refer to a coronation or a crown-wearing, H. G. Richardson, 'The coronation in medieval England', *Traditio* 16 (1960), pp. 111–202 (p. 127).

56 *L/P Henry VIII*: 2 pt 2, no. 4043 (p. 1249).

The sources

This study of monastic hospitality is based on the analysis of a large body of wide-ranging evidence, for every source potentially offers an insight to the ideals and practices of hospitality at this time. Whereas injunctions, statutes and customaries shed light on the prescriptive, chronicles, letters and miracle collections may offer a glimpse of the reality by describing a particular case. Charters might mention buildings and officials associated with guests and resources assigned to support hospitality, while archaeological research and standing remains can contribute to our understanding of the facilities provided for visitors. An analysis of this kind, which depends on surveying a large and varied corpus of evidence, has been greatly helped in recent years with the publication of new and also revised editions of primary sources. It has similarly benefited from a readiness to work with and learn from other disciplines, notably, archaeological and architectural research, and anthropological studies.

Whilst there is a vast array of sources surviving for this period, evidence is widely scattered. The process of gathering evidence is a piecemeal one, particularly for the nunneries since there are few explicit examples prior to the mid–late thirteenth century and no consuetudinary source survives.[57] The earliest explicit directives in England are the injunctions issued to Marrick Priory in 1252.[58] Furthermore, whereas the Cistercians compiled a detailed customary to be observed in all abbeys pertaining to the Order, the Benedictines at this time were less concerned with implementing uniformity of practice and produced no such blueprint. Practices therefore differed from house to house and the picture that emerges of Benedictine hospitality is rather fragmented. For this reason a number of case studies are included. Most of these relate to the great royal foundations of Bury St Edmunds and Abingdon Abbey, for which a relatively large and diverse body of material survives. However, as noted above this gives a rather limited perspective of Benedictine hospitality.

The monastic customaries and other prescriptive texts

The monastic customaries are central to analysis. They have previously been rather under-used as a source, yet can reveal much about the routine life of

[57] There is perhaps more information relating to Continental Benedictine nunneries, for example, the statutes compiled for the nuns of the Paraclete and Hildegard of Bingen's exposition of the *Rule of St Benedict*, C. Waddell, *The Paraclete Statutes: Institutiones Nostrae* (Trappist, Kentucky, 1987); ep. 8, *Petri Abelardi, Epistolae*, *PL* 178. 113–379 (255–326); *Hildegard, Explanation of the Rule*; and also for other orders, such as the double foundation of Fontevrault and the Institutes of the Gilbertine Order, *Rule of Fontevrault (Fontis Ebraldi)*, *PL* 162. 1079–82, *The Gilbertine Institutiones*, Dugdale, *Monasticon* 6: 2, pp. xxix–lviii.

[58] J. Tillotson, *Marrick Priory: a nunnery in late medieval Yorkshire*, Borthwick Papers 75 (York, 1989).

the monks and the administrative structure of the monastery. Customaries that discuss the material organisation of the convent, or a section of the customary that deals with this,[59] generally include instructions for receiving guests and may shed considerable light on the officials appointed to care for visitors, the resources assigned to support hospitality and the buildings where guests were entertained. Customaries were intended to regularise internal life, either to codify or formalise past and present practice or to introduce new guidelines and effect reform.[60] They might also be regarded as a way of preserving the community's customs from external reform. Thomas of Marlborough, a monk of Evesham who compiled the early-thirteenth-century chronicle of the abbey, explains that on returning from the Papal *Curia* c. 1206 he advised that the customs and revenues of his house be written down, since this was taught in the *Curia* and done at many abbeys elsewhere. Thomas recommended that they be confirmed with the seal of the abbot, convent, legate, and even the Pope, to prevent future controversy.[61] An earlier Continental example is equally instructive. In the mid-eleventh century, Bernard of Cluny compiled a customary for his house as uncertainty and confusion as to what was custom had arisen when the older monks passed away, and had led to disputes amongst the community. Bernard thus sought to establish the truth from written documents so that he might leave a record for his successors and, no doubt, prevent further bickering.[62] Giles Constable explains that oral customs were written down in periods of change and growth, for instance, if old ways were threatened or if these customs were to be introduced to another house.[63]

It is often difficult to know if the customary was intended to reform and implement the new, or if it records customs that were observed at that time, for this is rarely stated. Moreover, it is likely that when circumstance demanded they were adapted to suit the needs of the time.[64] The incorporation of passages copied verbatim from other customaries may lead us to conclude that these were stylised and not used as working manuals. Whilst some sections may well have been formulaic, there is evidence nonetheless that these were living

59 For example, the thirteenth-century customary of Westminster Abbey was originally in four parts and the Norwich customary of c. 1260 in two, *Westminster Customary*, pp. vi–vii; *The Customary of the Cathedral Priory Church of Norwich*, ed. J. B. L. Tolhurst, HBS 82 (London, 1948), p. xiv. Accordingly, it is often difficult to know whether the surviving customary is actually part of a larger work.

60 D. Iogna-Prat, 'Coutumes et statuts Clunisiens comme sources historiques c. 990–c. 1200', *Revue Mabillon* 64 (1992), pp. 23–48 (pp. 31–4); A. Gransden, 'The separation of the portions between the abbot and convent at Bury St Edmunds: the decisive years, 1278–1281', *EHR* 109 (2004), pp. 373–406 (p. 386).

61 Thomas Marlborough, *History of Evesham*, ch. 518 (pp. 484–7).

62 R. Graham, 'The relation of Cluny to some other movements of monastic reform', *Journal of Theological Studies* 15 (1914), pp. 179–95 (p. 182). For Bernard of Cluny's customs see M. Herrgott, *Vetus Disciplina Monastica* (Paris, 1726), pp. 133–374. A new edition by K. Hallinger is under way and will be published in the *Corpus Consuetudinum Monasticarum* series.

63 G. Constable, *Cluniac Studies* (London, 1980), essay 1, p. 152.

64 I am grateful to Miss Barbara Harvey for her helpful comments regarding consuetudinary sources.