

A bibliographical note on Richardus Praemonstratensis

The commentary on the canon of the Mass printed by the canons of St. Victor among the works of Hugh of St. Victor (Rouen, 1648), and reprinted by J.-P. Migne (*Patrologia latina*, vol. 177 [Paris, 1854] : 455-470) under the attribution of John of Cornwall, is now usually attributed to Richard of Wedinghausen, or Arnsberg, a twelfth century Premonstratensian canon. A re-evaluation of the evidence available concerning this work raises, I believe, serious doubts concerning these attributions.

The work has been attributed to several authors. Barthélemy Hauréau, "Notice sur une exposition du canon de la messe contenue dans les nos. 1009, 5317, 11579, 15988 and 16499 des manuscrits latins à la Bibliothèque Nationale," *Notices et Extraits des Manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, vol. 24, 2nd part (Paris, 1879), pp. 145-166, discusses all the attributions : Lanfranc, Thomas Aquinas, William of St. Thierry, Hugh of St. Victor, Hugh of Fouilloy, Robert Paululus, Richard of St. Victor, and John of Cornwall. He cites a twelfth century manuscript from Clairvaux (now Troyes, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS. no. 302) which contains the rubric : *Sermo de canone, factus in capitulo Claraevallensi a quodam canonico de ordine Praemonstratensi*. Hauréau believes this to be the original transcription of the sermon, and that the author was a certain *Richardus Praemonstratensis*. He finds support for this thesis in several manuscripts which attribute the work to *Richardus*. He cites Lisbon, Biblioteca nacional, MS. Alcobaça 142; Cambridge, St. Benedict's College MS. no. 122 (now Corpus Christi College Ms. no. 441), and quotes the description of Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. 1992 (now Bodleian MS. 157) given by Thomas Bodley, *Librorum manuscriptorum bibliothecae bodleianae classis sexta*, p. 101 (printed in *Catalogi librorum manuscriptorum Angliae et Hiberniae* [Oxford, 1697]) : *Richardi, Albae Ecclesiae Praemonstrati ordinis Tract. De Officiis Missae, seu de differentiis Missae in Canone, in Crucibus faciendis &c.*" Finally, Hauréau mentions a marginal note in a late twelfth century manuscript

(Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, latin MS. 812, fol. 358) which refers to the opinion of a *Richardus Praemonstratensis*, clearly indicating the work in question. Hauréau then follows Jean Lepage, *Bibliotheca praemonstratensis ordinis* (Paris, 1683), p. 305, in associating this *Richardus* with Richard of Wedinghausen.

This association was first made by John Pits, *Relationum historicarum de rebus anglicis ... quatuor partes complectens (De illustribus britanniae scriptoribus)*, (Paris, 1619; reprinted, Farnborough, Hants., 1969), pp. 255-256, and is based on a passage from Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus miraculorum*, dist. 12, c. 47 (edited by Joseph Strange [Cologne, Bonn and Brussels, 1851], vol. 2, p. 354) : "In Arinsburgh monasterio ordinis Praemonstratensis, sicut audiui a quodam sacerdote eiusdem congregationis, scriptor quidem erat Richardus nomine, Anglicus natione." According to Caesarius, Richard died and was buried by the monks of Wedinghausen in a place of honor. After twenty years, Richard's tomb was opened and his hands were miraculously saved from putrification because of his devout work as a scribe.

Victor de Buck, in an article on Saint Ursula in *Acta Sanctorum*, Octobris, vol. 9 (Brussels, 1858), pp. 92-93, discusses the early literature on Richard, and calls into question the probability of Richard ever having been an English canon, since no *alba ecclesia* can be identified. He alone of modern writers has questioned the authenticity of Pits' identification while disproving the alleged authorship by Richard of a life of St. Ursula. All other modern references to Richard that I have seen depend directly or indirectly on the identification by Pits.

There serious reasons, however, for doubting the identification of Richard, the Premonstratensian canon who wrote this tract and the scribe Richard of Wedinghausen. A review of the information available shows no grounds for such an identification. Hauréau makes use of three basic sources for his information about Richard : 1) the works which refer to the author by name alone (the marginal note of B.N. latin MS. 812, Corpus Christi MS. 441), 2) the works which refer to Richard as a Premonstratensian canon who gave this sermon at Clairvaux (Troyes 302, copied by Alcobaça 142) and 3) Thomas Bodley's description of Bodl. MS. 157 which refers to Richard as coming from *Alba ecclesia*. The first set of sources offers too little information to be useful. The second set of sources gives reliable

information for the place in which the sermon took place, and the status of Richard as a Premonstratensian canon. Thomas Bodley's inscription, however, deserves a closer inspection. A twelfth century manuscript from Jesus College, Cambridge, MS. Q.B.21, gives this commentary on the canon of the Mass with the following rubric : *Incipit tractatus in canone misse de differentiis in faciendis crucibus et de pluribus aliis necessariis, ... a richardo abbate ecclesie premonstraci ordinis editus*. If this inscription is compared with that of Bodley, and with that which the modern catalogers of the Bodleian collection give, it becomes evident that Bodley mistakenly read *albe* for *abbe*, the abbreviation for *abbate*. The later Bodleian manuscript (13th-14th century) follows the Jesus manuscript in its inscription which is given by F. Madan and H. H. E. Craster, *A Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford*, vol. 2, part 1 (Oxford, 1922), p. 150. The three inscriptions read :

Jesus College MS.
Q.B.21, fol. 111r.

Incipit tractatus in canone misse, de differentiis in faciendis crucibus et de pluribus aliis necessariis, ... a richardo abbate ecclesie premonstraci ordinis editus.

Bodleian MS. 157
(Madan and Craster)

Tractatus de differentiis misse in Canone in crucibus faciendis et pluribus aliis necessariis ... a Ricardo abbate ecclesie Premonstrati ordinis editus.

Bodleian MS. 157
(Thomas Bodley)

Richardi, Albae Ecclesiae Praemonstrati ordinis Tract. De Officiis Missae, seu de differentiis Missae in Canone, in Crucibus faciendis &c.

The known facts about this tract are then 1) that in the manuscripts, the author's name is given as Richard, 2) that Richard was a Premonstratensian canon, 3) that as a canon, he gave this sermon at Clairvaux, and 4) that sometime later he became an abbot of a Premonstratensian house. There is no evidence to suggest that he was in any way connected with the monastery at Wedinghausen. Indeed there is good reason to doubt any connection. There is no mention of any abbot named Richard at Wedinghausen (cf. Norbert Backmund, *Monasticon Praemonstratense*, vol. 1 [Straubing, 1949], pp. 149-151), and it is unlikely that a man known at the great abbey of Clairvaux and an abbot in his own right, could retire to Wedinghausen to become a simple scribe. Therefore, until further evidence is forthcoming, it would be best to treat the *Richardus Praemonstratensis* who wrote this tract as different from Richard, the holy scribe of Wedinghausen.

If no identification can be made of the author of this tract among the abbots of Wedinghausen, an indication of the direction in which research might proceed is given by the provenance of the earliest known manuscripts. Of the six earliest manuscripts, one is from Clairvaux, two are of unknown provenance, and three are from the north of England. Of these last three one of the manuscripts is Jesus College MS. Q.B.21 which speaks of Richard as abbot of a Premonstratensian house, and comes from St. Andrew's Abbey, Hexham (cf. M. R. James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Jesus College, Cambridge* [London, 1895], p. 59). The remaining two manuscripts, Jesus College MS. Q.G.17 and Sidney Sussex College MS. 50, offer the work of Richard anonymously and appear to come from Durham (cf. James, *ibid.*, p. 100, and M. R. James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge* [Cambridge, 1895], p. 36). The only source of information which refers to Richard as an abbot, then, comes from the north of England, and there is some evidence that the sermon was copied there soon after it was given. Further indication appears in a thirteenth/fourteenth century manuscript from Durham, which contains a list in a later hand including the notice: "*Item sermo dicti Bernardi brevis: Brevis compilatio Domni Richardi abbatis Praemonstratensis*" (described by Edm. Mikkers, *Un traité inédit d'Étienne de Salley sur la Psalmodie: Cîteaux*, 23[1972], 246-249. Of the Premonstratensian houses near Hexham and Durham, only one, Alnwick, is known to have had an abbot Richard. Very little evidence survives concerning this man. The Chronicle of Melrose (facsimile by Alan Orr Anderson and Marjorie Ogilvie Anderson [London, 1936], p. 37, fol. 20) mentions that Richard became abbot in 1167, after having served as prior at Alnwick. A single charter is known, dated 1167-1184, which mentions Richard, abbot of Alnwick (*Early Yorkshire Charters*, ed. by William Farrer, vol. 1 [Edinburgh, 1914], no. 269, cf. Backmund, vol. 2, p. 33, and David Knowles, C. N. L. Brooke, and Vera C. M. London, *The Heads of Religious Houses: England and Wales, 940-1216* [Cambridge, 1972], p. 192).

The manuscript evidence, then, indicates Richard, abbot of Alnwick as a possible author of this tract, but it must be emphasized that this is only the most probable of several possible lines of research. Three other Premonstratensian abbots in England carry the name Richard during this period: Richard, first abbot of Sulby, c. 1155-1175 (cf.

Knowles, Brooke and London, p. 197); Richard, abbot of Torre, c. 1199 (cf. Knowles, Brooke and London, p. 198; and Richard of Southwell, abbot of Welbeck, c. 1197-1224 (*ibid.*), and there is not even certain evidence that Richard was an English abbot. It can only be hoped that further investigation of the manuscripts of this tract may yield more concrete information.

A word should be said about the dating of the tract. If Hauréau is correct in dating Troyes 302 as coming from the second half of the twelfth century, then the closest dating which can be given is sometime between the middle of the century and the end of the century when the marginal note of B.N. latin 812 occurs.

Since no list of manuscripts exists for this work, the following incomplete listing may prove the beginning of such a list.

12th century

- 1) Cambridge, Jesus College, MS. Q.B.21, fols. 111r-119r. «... a richardo abbate ecclesie premonstraci ordinis editus.»
- 2) Cambridge, University Library, MS. Gg.4.16, fols. 97va-101vb. «Sermo cuiusdam canonici premonstratensis.»
- 3) Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, latin no. 579, fols. 78v ff.
- 4) Troyes, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS. no. 302. «Sermo de canone factus in capitulo Clarevallensi a quodam canonico de ordine Praemonstratensi.»

12th-13th century

- 5) Cambridge, Jesus College, Ms. Q.G.17, fols. 1r-8v.
- 6) Cambridge, Sidney Sussex College, MS. 50, fols. 1ra ff.

13th century

- 7) Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS. 288, fols. 34r ff.
- 8) Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS. 441, pp. 442 ff.
- 9) Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS. 459, fols. 75 ff. «Summa Mag. Ioannis Cornubiensis qualiter fiat sacramentum altaris, etc.»
- 10) Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS. 461, fols 117v ff.
- 11) Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Bodl. 157, fols. 264v ff. «... a Ricardo abbate ecclesie Premonstrati ordinis editus.»
- 12) Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Cod. Laud Misc. 115, fols. 117v ff. «Petri Comestoris liber super expositionem canonis missae.»
- 13) Oxford, University College, MS. 77, fols. 50 ff.

- 14) Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, latin no. 459, fols. 199v ff.
- 15) Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, latin no. 1009, fols. 1 ff.
- 16) Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, latin no. 1858, fols. 98v ff.
- 17) Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, latin no. 2496, fols. 94v ff.

13th-14th century

- 18) Oxford, Merton College, MS. 267, fols. 104v ff.

14th century

- 19) Cambridge, University Library, MS. Gg.1.5, fols. 78v-85v.
- 20) Cambridge, University Library, MS. Ll.1.15, fols. 189rb-193vb (incomplete).
- 21) Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, latin no. 2541, fols. 14v ff.

15th century

- 22) Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS. 179, fols. 39v ff.
 - 23) Paris, Bibliothèque Mazarine, MS. no. 993, fols. 160 ff.
- « Libellus magistri Hugonis Parisiensis. »

Undated or unidentified Manuscripts mentioned by Hauréau

- 24) Lisbon, Biblioteca nacional, MS. Alcobaça 142.
- 25) Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, latin no. 5317 (mentioned only in the title of Hauréau's article)
- 26) Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, latin no. 15988 (attributed to Richard of St. Victor).
- 27) Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, latin no. 16499 (attributed to Richard of St. Victor).
- 28) Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, latin no. 11579.
- 29) Vauclair, an unnumbered manuscript from the Abbey (attributed to William of St. Thierry).

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Nota. Since this article went to print, I have discovered two more manuscripts of this work :

- 30) London, Lambeth Palace Library MS. no. 147, fols. 175v ff. (12th century).
- 31) London, Lambeth Palace Library MS. no. 235, fols. 58v ff. « ... a Ricardo Abate ecclesie premonstrati ordinis editus. » (13th century.)

The provenance of Lambeth Palace MS. no. 147 may be the Augustinian house of Llanthony, near Wales (cf. M. R. James and Claude Jenkins, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Lambeth Palace* [Cambridge, 1930], pp. 235-236).