

The Heads of Religious Houses: England and Wales, Vol. I: 940-1216.

Edited by David KNOWLES, C.N.L. BROOKE and Vera C.M. LONDON (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 2001; pp. xlvii + 360. £45).

The Heads of Religious Houses: England and Wales, Vol. II: 1216-1377.

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In 1929 the late Dom David Knowles, O.S.B., started to collect contemporary references to the abbots and priors of monastic houses from 1066 to 1216, when he began his research on England's monastic records. Over the coming decades Knowles enlisted the help of Z.N. Brooke (d. 1946) and his son C.N.L. Brooke and eventually, with the collaboration of Vera C.M. London, the lists were systematized and expanded. *The Heads of Religious Houses* (hereafter *Heads*) was well received by the academic community when it was published in 1972, and rapidly went out of print. The publication of the second edition will undoubtedly receive a similar, warm reception and is timely because of renewed interest in the medieval religious orders. The book aims to list all known monastic superiors in England and Wales between 940-1216, encompassing monks, canons regular and nuns and four classes of religious houses, namely autonomous abbeys and priories, dependent priories with regular life and smaller priories or cells. The lists are arranged by order, though female communities have been grouped in a separate section, apart from the Gilbertines. Emphasis has been placed on collecting references to superiors in manuscript sources, which include chronicles, annals, charters, obituaries and calendars. The sensitivity in which these documents are quarried, and printed primary material, is a model lesson on the analysis of historical resources. The preface includes an examination of problems encountered in ascertaining the accuracy of dates in certain documentation, such as forgery and episcopal charters, especially those from the twelfth century, and pre-conquest charters, which are discussed with clarity and precision. In effect the volume is a reprint of the 1972 edition, but with a number of important additions. Asterisks in the main body of the text refer to a section of 'Corrigenda and Addenda', which reflect further progress in ascertaining the dates within which superiors held office. These incorporate clarifications and additional references and occurrences, and discuss problems relating to identification. There is also more bibliographical material. Concerning the Premonstratensian lists, the editors were provided with an excellent basis in the 'List of Abbots' — and prioresses — compiled by H.M. COLVIN in *The White Canons in England* (Oxford, 1951, pp. 392-422), which have been largely superseded. A modest (pp. 288-9), though necessary, 'corrigenda and addenda' relating to the white canons, has been appended. For example Newbo Abbey, for which no abbots were previously noted, is now included, with the cautious appearance of William de Kermont, whom a fourteenth-century source claims to have been abbot during the reign of

King Richard I (1189-98). Prior Peter of Hagnaby, occurring c.1228-32, was mistakenly referred to as 'abbot' in the first edition. Robert of Ramp-ton, abbot of Barlings, previously known to have occurred c.1203-22, also appears c.1227-30, according to a seventeenth-century manuscript; and an unnamed abbot of Egglestone was deposed in or before 1219. Hopefully the publishers will fully incorporate these and other alterations into the lists in any future reprint.

The revised first volume of *Heads* appears with the publication of the second volume, edited by David M. Smith and Vera London, which continues the lists from 1216 to 1377. This book has, indeed, 'been long in the making' (preface, p. vii). Though such lists can 'never attain to anything approaching completeness' (*ibid.*), a wide net has been cast in the use of manuscript sources: the list of printed material which was consulted extends to forty-six pages (pp. xix-lxiv). The aims and format of the book largely concur with those of the previous volume, though one should note a number of refinements and the nature of the sources used. While chronicles, charters and other 'older' documentary forms have been utilised, the period 1216-1377 witnessed the development of record keeping in England, particularly in governmental and ecclesiastical circles, and consequently the growth of source material. The editors note that bishops' rolls or registers, which seem to have developed from the early thirteenth century onwards, are 'of considerable importance' in furnishing information on the religious orders featured in the lists: one could add to this sources such as the papal registers and 'significations of excommunication' (p. 2). The introduction in vol. II contains an excellent analysis of the process of electing superiors and the importance of this information for ascertaining or estimating the period in which they held office. For example, in episcopal registers, there happens to be little information relating to the election of superiors who enjoyed exemption from diocesan control, including those of the Cistercians and Premonstratensians. The formal procedure of election was conducted internally without episcopal involvement: 'the system of filiation meant the supervision of the election process by the father-abbot of the house from whom it had been established and colonised' (p. 4: though see COLVIN, *White Canons*, pp. 237-9 on changes of filiation among the English and Welsh Premonstratensians). Nevertheless the episcopal blessing of newly elected prelates and their oath of obedience were frequently recorded. One should note that the mendicant friars, who arrived in England in the thirteenth century, and several other groups, have not been included in this volume, partly because detailed biographical registers are currently being compiled by other scholars. However the inclusion of the 'alien' priories and cells of continental houses, such as S. Etienne (Caen), Marmoutier and Bec, in both volumes of *Heads*, should be of particular interest to historians of the French monasteries, as will DMS's discussion of the appointment and status of the superiors of these dependencies (pp. 7-8). The Premonstratensian lists (pp. 491-518) make further, important emendations to those of Colvin, and

include known superiors from the dependencies of Cammeringham (Blanchelande), Charlton and Upchurch (L'Île-Dieu), Hornby (Croxton) and West Ravendale (Beauport). The abbots of the Welsh abbey of Talley are also given, as in vol. I, and the male and female superiors of England's Premonstratensian nunneries, where these can be ascertained. Among the more notable alterations made to Colvin's lists is the addition of five abbots of Leiston, named Hugh (occ. 1228-30), Peter (occ. 1234-43), Geoffrey (occ. 1256-7), Robert (occ. 1274-5) and William (n.d., first half of 14th century) and seven abbots of Newbo, two called William (occ. 1257 and *temp.* Edward I respectively), 'J' (occ. 1314), Ralph (occ. 1318-19), Geoffrey (occ. 1347-8), Roger de Thurverton (c.1356-82) and Robert of Bennington (occ. 1386-96). While comparatively little reliance was placed upon Cardinal GASQUET's *Collectanea Anglo-Premonstratensia* (3 vols, Camden Society third series, vi, x, xii, 1904-6), the editors did not utilise the list of corrections to this work compiled by Colvin (Bodleian Library Oxford, MS. Eng. Hist. D.227). In one instance where CAP is cited, for example, Abbot W(illiam) de Digepe(?) of Langdon (pp. 504-5) is said to have occurred in August 1345 (CAP III, no. 645). There is no year given in the document which Gasquet transcribed — 1345 was a silent editorial addition — and Colvin suggested that it dates from 1339. This appears to be the correct year as the document mentions the recent death of John of Norwich, abbot of Wendling, whom *Heads* vol. II correctly relates was dead by 4 July 1339 (p. 516). However such matters do not detract from the fact that this book is clearly a work of meticulous scholarship and a considerable achievement in English monastic studies. Both volumes of *Heads* are essential research tools for medieval historians on either side of the English Channel and further afield, and every monastic library should obtain them.

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Dietmar VON HUEBNER, *Frühe Zeugnisse prämonstratensischer Choraltradition (1126-1331)*. Studie zu Offiziumsantiphonen des Prämonstratenserordens. 3 Bde., DVH-Verlag, Münschen 2001. Bd. 1 Kommentar VIII+596 pp. ISBN 3-933720-01-X; Bd. 2 Tabulae XXI+659 pp. ISBN 3-933720-02-8; Bd. 3 Exempla XVI+458 pp. ISBN 3-933720-03-6.

In drei Bänden legt Dietmar von Huebner im DVH-Verlag seine Studie „Frühe Zeugnisse prämonstratensischer Choraltradition“ vor. Band I ist Kommentar, Band II sind *Tabulae* und Band III *Exempla*. Sie sind das Ergebnis einer über 40-jährigen akribischen Forschungsarbeit, die weit