

Herbert of Bosham

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Herbert of Bosham

A Medieval Polymath

Edited by
Michael Staunton



THE UNIVERSITY *of York*

YORK MEDIEVAL PRESS

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Abbreviations

CCCC	Cambridge, Corpus Christi College
CCCM	<i>Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis</i>
CCSL	<i>Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina</i>
CSEL	<i>Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum</i>
CTB	<i>The Correspondence of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1162–1170</i> , ed. A. Duggan, 2 vols. (Oxford, 2000)
EHR	<i>The English Historical Review</i>
Fitzstephen	William Fitzstephen, <i>Vita Sancti Thomae</i>
HB	<i>Epistolae Herberti de Boseham in persona S. Thomae Cantuariensis et aliorum scriptae</i> , 2 vols., ed. J. A. Giles (London, 1845–46); repr. in <i>PL</i> 190
LJS	<i>The Letters of John of Salisbury</i> , ed. and tr. W. J. Millor, H. E. Butler and C. N. L. Brooke, 2 vols (Oxford, 1955, 1979)
MTB	<i>Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury</i> , ed. J. C. Robertson and J. B. Sheppard, 7 vols, RS 67 (London, 1875–85)
ODNB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> (Oxford, 2004)
PL	<i>Patrologiae Cursus Completus, series Latina</i> , ed. J.-P. Migne, 221 vols (Paris, 1844–64)
PR	<i>The Great Roll of the Pipe</i> (Pipe Roll Society)
RS	<i>Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevi Scriptores</i> ('Rolls Series'), 251 vols (London, 1858–96)

CHAPTER SEVEN

John Allen Giles and Herbert of Bosham: The Criminous Clerk as Editor

Nicholas Vincent

WHAT we know of Herbert of Bosham we owe to two chief causes. The first and fundamental is the role that the self-dramatising Herbert played in the even greater drama of Thomas Becket. From this in turn springs the second cause for our knowledge of Herbert: the Victorian fascination with Becket. It was as a minor satellite of Becket's stardom that Herbert attracted an editor, John Allen Giles. In turn, it was Giles' edition of Herbert's works, published in 1845–46, that first brought Herbert to wider attention. Even now, it is Giles' edition as pirated by the Abbé Migne for volume 190 of his *Patrologia Latina* (1854) that still serves as the principal port of entry for modern scholars interested in Herbert's career. Even today, it is Giles' edition with its many failings and omissions that continues to determine Herbert's reputation in our post-Victorian age. In what follows, I hope to subject both Giles and his edition to a degree of scrutiny. To understand Giles and his work, nonetheless, we must begin not with Giles himself but with the wider Victorian reception of Thomas Becket.

Becket mattered to the Victorians in ways that have only recently begun to be appreciated.¹ As a bone of contention, left over from the great ossuary that Henry VIII and the Protestant Reformers had made of such remains, Becket could not be ignored by any historian of the Catholic Middle Ages.² To a majority of writers, from the 1530s through to the 1790s, he remained nonetheless a divisive and for the most part indigestible medieval relic. To declare oneself in favour of St Thomas was to side unequivocally with a Catholic or crypto-Catholic cause, with a love for saints, relics and ritual. Such was the case, for example, with the Jesuit scholar Thomas Stapleton, author of the *Tres Thomae* published in 1588 as parallel lives of St Thomas the Apostle, St Thomas Becket and St Thomas More.³ To declare oneself

¹ See here N. Vincent, 'Thomas Becket', in *Making and Remaking Saints in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, ed. G. Atkins (Manchester, 2016), pp. 92–111.

² For his reception by the reformers, see H. L. Parish, *Monks, Miracles and Magic: Reformation Representations of the Medieval Church* (London, 2005), esp. pp. 92–105; A. F. Marotti, *Religious Ideology and Cultural Fantasy: Catholic and Anti-Catholic Discourses in Early Modern England* (Notre Dame, 2005), pp. 16, 213–14 n.28.

³ T. Stapleton, *Tres Thomae seu res gestae S. Thomae apostoli, S. Thomae archiepiscopi*

against Thomas, by contrast, was to stand proudly for Reformation, King, country and the established Protestant church. Those in the first camp were inclined to refer to 'St' or 'the Blessed' Thomas. Those in the second, to 'Becket'. In either case, Thomas himself remained combustible stuff.

Change here came in the late eighteenth century, not least as a result of the fading away of terminal-phase anti-Popery in the aftermath of the Gordon riots of 1780. It can be traced in visual as well as literary terms. From the 1790s, images in the popular histories tend to show Becket no longer as an epicene conspirator under the red thumb of Rome, but, as in John Opie's 'Murder of Thomas a Becket' (c. 1795, now in the Canterbury City Art Gallery), as a Lear-like victim of tyranny, struck down by brute intimidators on the flagstones of Canterbury cathedral. In the histories themselves, we witness a shift from the Protestant certainties of Lord Lyttelton (who in 1767 had characterised Becket as 'guilty of a wilful and premeditated perjury ... in the highest degree ungrateful to a very kind master') to the far more sympathetic portrayal by Catholic writers such as Joseph Berington or John Lingard, presenting Becket as a friend of the poor, a defender of liberty and a saint martyred for his conscientious defence of the church.⁴ Save in the most Catholic of retellings, Becket himself was always a figure of light and shadow, his good qualities matched and on occasion overwhelmed by the bad. Even so, from 1800 or so, the heroic version of his story tended to predominate.

Into this already contested field there entered, in the 1830s, the person of Richard Hurrell Froude (1803–36). As a defender of ecclesiastical privilege, penance, self-mortification and the cult of friendship, Froude's attraction to Becket was intense. Beginning in 1832, and continuing thereafter until the end of his brief life, Froude embarked upon a translation of those of Becket's letters that had found their way into the 'Quadrupartitus' collection of letters and lives, first published in Brussels in 1682.⁵ He also sought out manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford and further afield. It was in part in pursuit of such materials, in part to alleviate the symptoms of the tuberculosis that was soon to kill him, that Froude embarked for Rome in 1833. With him travelled his closest friend from the Oriel Senior Common Room, John Henry Newman. In Rome, not only did Froude and Newman seek out churches dedicated to San Tommaso, but they arranged Newman's first meeting with the keeper of Arabic manuscripts in the Vatican library, Nicholas Wiseman,

Cantuariensis et martyris, Thomae Mori Angliae quondam cancellarii (Douai, 1588), 2nd edn (Cologne, 1612).

⁴ Vincent, 'St Thomas of Canterbury', citing George, Lord Lyttelton, *The History of the Life of King Henry the Second and of the Age in which he Lived*, 3rd ed., 6 vols. (London, 1769), iv, 361–3, and for what is otherwise the best of the modern accounts of this transformation, see C. A. Simmons, *Reversing the Conquest: History and Myth in Nineteenth-Century British Literature* (New Brunswick, 1990), esp. ch. 4, pp. 113–39.

⁵ *Epistolae et vita divi Thomae martyris et archiepiscopi Cantuariensis*, ed. Christian Lupus, 2 vols. (Brussels, 1682), and for Froude's translations, published anonymously, 'Thomas a Becket', *The British Magazine and Monthly Register of Religious and Ecclesiastical Information* 2 (1832), 233–43 (starting November 1832), 453–9; 3 (1833), 31–8, 140–57, 399–411, 525–34; 4 (1833), 255–60, 376–82, 607–11; 5 (1834), 11–15, 655–8.

hoping thereby to obtain access to manuscripts of Becket's letters.⁶ The rest, as the saying goes, is history.

Although Newman never fully succumbed to the allure of Becket, the *Remains* of Froude that he and John Keble published after Froude's death in 1836 included an entire volume dedicated to Froude's St Thomas. In it were many translations, some of them from Vatican manuscripts, that Newman had retrieved (and almost certainly improved) from Froude's unpublished papers.⁷ Becket was thereby enshrined amongst the foundational patrons of the Oxford Movement and, in due course, of the movement's drift towards Rome. In John Henry Newman's novel *Loss and Gain* (1848), for example, and in the real-life experience of Newman's most fervent disciple, Frederick Faber, plunging to Rome in February 1846, a devotion to Becket and his physical remains played a significant role in conversion to Catholic truth.⁸ Henry Manning, archdeacon of Chichester, attempting in the 1840s to bolster his childhood Protestantism, found himself reading the Constitutions of Clarendon as a medicinal exercise.⁹ Far from purging him of his Catholicism, the Constitutions helped to drive him into the welcoming arms of Rome. Manning had by this time twice visited the English College in Rome, first in December 1838 (his first encounter with Wiseman, made in company with Gladstone), and again in December 1848. Both visits were deliberately timed to coincide with the feast of the martyrdom of St Thomas (29 December), the College's patron saint.¹⁰

I have told various of these, and other such stories, elsewhere.¹¹ They will in due course form parts of a book on the Victorian Becket cult. For present purposes, they sound various themes that will loom large hereafter. The first is the degree to which the letters and lives of Becket had, by the 1830s, become the focus of intense polemic within English ecclesiastical circles. Polemic, of course, was an integral feature of Becket's story from the outset, and as is often the case, polemic itself was closely related to war. Becket was a product of the England of King Stephen, just as Froude and Newman were children of the Napoleonic convulsions. In both cases,

⁶ Vincent, 'St Thomas of Canterbury'.

⁷ *Remains of the Late Reverend Richard Hurrell Froude, M.A.*, 4 vols. (London and Derby 1838–9), iv (2 part ii, 1839), including a note at p. 196, 'These letters are not among those published by Christianus Lupus. There are, however, more than 100 in the Vatican MS. which have not been published.'

⁸ J. H. Newman, *Loss and Gain: The Story of a Convert*, ed. A. G. Hill (Oxford, 1986), p. 201; J. E. Bowden, *The Life and Letters of Frederick William Faber, D.D.* (London, 1869), pp. 270–3. For a sermon on Becket preached by Faber in the church of St Thomas Fulham on Becket's feast day (29 December) 1848, see F. W. Faber, *Notes on Doctrinal and Spiritual Subjects*, 2 vols (London, 1866), i, 355–80.

⁹ D. Newsome, *The Parting of Friends: The Wilberforces and Henry Manning*, 2nd edn (Leominster, 1993), p. 329. Manning subsequently cited the Constitutions (in this telling a bad thing), as part of his defence of the decisions of the Vatican Council of 1870: E. S. Purcell, *Life of Cardinal Manning Archbishop of Westminster*, 2 vols (London 1896), ii, p. 481.

¹⁰ Vincent, 'Thomas Becket', p. 103, citing W. Ward, *The Life and Times of Cardinal Wiseman*, 2 vols. (London 1897), i, pp. 271–2; Purcell, *Life of Manning*, i, pp. 155–6, 367; *The Gladstone Diaries*, ed. M. R. D. Foot and H. C. G. Matthew, 14 vols (Oxford, 1968–94), ii, p. 542.

¹¹ Vincent, 'St Thomas of Canterbury', pp. 92–111.

there was a tendency to invest lives and letters (be they of Becket or of Froude) with topicality and a wartime sense of struggle between good and evil, of utter black versus absolute white.¹² This tendency was perhaps exaggerated in the case of clergymen such as Froude and Newman, disbarred from any more conventional military vocation and therefore all the keener to prove the manliness and militancy of their clerical profession.

The second theme resides in the way that the Becket lives and letters, strung together into a coherent narrative, mirrored the attempts made by modernists and 'Germanisers', from the 1830s onwards, to establish the historical credentials of the life of Christ. This itself was now told through a combination of lives (the Gospels) and letters (St Paul), with the teller no longer as mere reporter but as an active critic of the sources.¹³ The third theme, and one prominent in Giles' edition of Herbert of Bosham, is the extent to which the search for new Becket 'materials' had already led, by the 1830s, to a combing of Continental libraries, and in due course to a dawning awareness that a great deal of evidence for English history was to be found not in England but in manuscript collections on the 'wrong' side of the English Channel.¹⁴

So we come to John Allen Giles and his edition of Herbert of Bosham.¹⁵ Herbert was unknown to Froude or Froude's followers. John Allen Giles was his prophet. Superficially, Giles and Froude had much in common. Both were West Country men, Froude from Devon, Giles (1808–84) from the Somerset levels. Both emerged from those fringes of the lower upper class from which so much Victorian achievement derived, though in Giles' case rather further towards the lower than the upper edge of that fringe. Both completed their educations in the Oxford of the 1820s. Froude's Oriel fellowship preceded Giles' at Corpus Christi by only a few years. Thomas Mosley, fellow of Oriel and in later life controversial chronicler of the Froude–Newman circle, was Giles' friend from their schooldays together at

¹² In general, for this sense of 'The Persistent Enemy', see P. Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (Oxford, 1975), pp. 105–13.

¹³ For 'Germanisers', T. Hughes, *Tom Brown at Oxford* (Cambridge and London, 1861), ch. 26. So far as I am aware, although implied in earlier efforts such as those of Froude and Newman, a parallel between the Becket lives and the synoptic Gospels was first openly acknowledged by Edward Augustus Freeman in 1860, in an essay on 'St Thomas of Canterbury', reprinted in Freeman, *Historical Essays* (London, 1871), pp. 79–113, at 91–2. It finds its fullest expression in the work of E. A. Abbott, *St Thomas of Canterbury: His Death and Miracles*, 2 vols (London, 1898).

¹⁴ For a wider picture here, see the introduction to N. Vincent, *Norman Charters from English Sources: Antiquaries, Archives and the Rediscovery of the Anglo-Norman Past*, Pipe Roll Society n.s. 59 (2013).

¹⁵ For what follows, I depend upon the brief but thorough account by J. Blair, 'Giles, John Allen (1808–1884)', *ODNB*, and in particular upon the six volumes of Giles' Diary (Oxford, Bodleian Library mss. Eng. b.2097–2102). The publication of these as *The Diary and Memoirs of John Allen Giles*, ed. D. Bromwich, Somerset Record Society, 86 (2000) must be accounted a triumph, not least since it involved persuading a local record society to publish so vast a text of which only a small portion touches upon the history of any particular county. The originals nonetheless should still be consulted for their wealth of images, photographs and other miscellaneous materials not reproduced in the edition.

Charterhouse.¹⁶ In 1829, Giles played a thrilling part in the Oxford parliamentary election in which the high church party, to which both Froude and Giles belonged, unseated Sir Robert Peel, himself branded a traitor to the Tory cause for his support of Catholic emancipation. Giles it was who paid for the bells of the University church to ring out in victory.¹⁷ It should be remembered here that, in the 1820s, although Thomas Becket was consciously invoked by the emancipationists as a role model, the Anglican high church party was as bitter in its hostility to Rome as ever it was in its reaction against Wesley and the nonconformists.¹⁸ Many of the protagonists here, including Giles, were inclined to controversy. This was, after all the period of slack following the great storm that had ended at Waterloo. In the 1830s, as a century later, the degree of ideological polarisation and the sheer venom of intellectual debates can be read as one consequence of a generation spared war's physical dangers, yet born and habituated to the rhetoric of war.¹⁹

For what we know of Giles we depend very heavily upon his *Diary*: a compilation of the late 1870s, re-editing his earlier journals into a consistent narrative, and in doing so adopting very much the combination of life and letters that was central to nineteenth-century biographical writing. The *Diary* is a remarkable record, albeit sprung from a genre in which truth tends to be not just varnished but primed, stretched, tastefully reframed and displayed in the best of all possible lights. In his youth, Giles had been no stranger to the chimes at midnight. Later, a degree of Pooterishness contributes to the autobiography of one whom John Blair describes as 'warm-hearted, considerate, convivial, but lacking practical sense and dignity of manner': in short, the very picture of a don *manqué*.²⁰ Across the *Diary* as a whole, two themes predominate. The first is an almost complete absence of anything that might be considered a priestly vocation; Giles does not so much as mention his ordination, either as deacon or priest, and the best that he can offer in terms of theological reasoning is an insistence that all be permitted to worship as and how they see fit, in perfect liberty.²¹ The second theme is good humour maintained in the face of adversity.

¹⁶ Giles, *Diary*, pp. 142–3 (June 1836).

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 81–2, recording the composition of *A Reply [by J. A. Giles] to An Expostulatory Letter Addressed to the Members of the University of Oxford who Voted for the Anti-Catholic Petition, by Pertinax Peerwell* (Oxford, 1829), and for the wider pamphlet war fought out on this occasion, see 'Oxford Election Pamphlets', in *The Crypt or Receptacle for Things Past* ns 1 part 2 (Winchester, September–December 1829), p. 221.

¹⁸ For Becket as role model, especially in the rhetoric surrounding Daniel O'Connell 'Ireland's Liberator', see Vincent, 'St Thomas of Canterbury', pp. 100–1.

¹⁹ For Giles' memory of the war before 1815, and especially of the invasion scares, see Giles, *Diary*, pp. 14–15, 348–9.

²⁰ Blair, 'John Allen Giles', also reporting the description of Giles (from Oxford, Magdalen College ms.800 i) as 'a very short, wiry little man, with iron-grey hair' (and cf. Giles, *Diary*, p. x, for a similar description by Giles' son). A portrait of him in his head-magisterial pomp, by J. D. Miller (before 1840), still hangs in the City of London School. A later photograph and portrait are reproduced in Giles, *Diary*, as frontispiece, and in T. Hinde, *Carpenter's Children: The Story of the City of London School* (London, 1995), p. 26.

²¹ Giles, *Diary*, pp. 200, 229, 317.

Giles' optimism here was hard won. Aged six, he plunged his leg into a kettle of boiling water and was scarred for life.²² Aged thirteen, he witnessed his youngest brother drown in a skating accident.²³ Some years later, his daughter, left to play with a ball of phosphorus in front of a lighted fire (not an experiment that most fathers would encourage) very nearly died. Giles was in his library when he heard the screams.²⁴ Giles, as we shall see, spent a lot of time in libraries. Newly elected a fellow of Corpus, he made his first extended continental tour, arriving in Paris in July 1830, just in time to experience the outbreak of a second French Revolution.²⁵ Returning to Bridgewater, he witnessed the suicide of his innkeeper's wife.²⁶ Consulting the parish registers of his native village of Mark in expectation of finding wealth and status, he discovered instead that his father, always considered an eldest son, had in fact been predeceased by an elder brother, the unforgettably named John Giblett Giles.²⁷

Throughout his life, accidents multiplied to such an extent that one wonders whether contemporaries can ever have been entirely at their ease when Giles came to call. At Berne, in 1869, he witnessed a drunken Englishman fall to his death in the bear pit, 'crushed to death in a moment by the gigantic bear'.²⁸ Money invested by Giles in plate (stolen by absconding tenants together with a silver teapot in which Giles had placed an irreplaceable title deed, granting him the copyright to Lemprière's *Classical Dictionary*), in Bohn's publishing ventures (culminating in bankruptcy in 1844), or in a scheme to build a crammer's ('Alexandra College') in Ealing (crashing in 1865 with a loss of £3000), ran through his fingers.²⁹ At Bruges, in 1845, his poor command of French led to an accusation that he had mutilated books.³⁰ In Surrey, one of his servants was arrested for highway robbery, and another man hanged himself in front of Giles' house.³¹ Bad luck was perhaps infectious, communicated merely by contact with Giles. The archbishop of Paris, Georges Darboy, who in the 1840s had made a (heavily criticised) French translation of Giles' *Life of Becket*, and whom Giles visited in September 1869, was shot dead just over a year later by the Paris communards, himself now a martyr to secular intimidation in much the same way as Becket, almost exactly seven hundred years before.³²

Even on his first foreign tour, in 1830, Giles had experienced misfortunes. At Boulogne, for a wager, he drank two bottles of champagne and spent the night in the local lock-up. A week later, he persuaded his travelling companion to sell

²² Ibid., pp. 19–20.

²³ Ibid., p. 25, and cf. 390.

²⁴ Ibid., pp. 19–20.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 100.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 116.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 4, and cf. 92, 364.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 384.

²⁹ Ibid., pp. 198, 201–2, 204–6, 209, 216, 239, 365–9.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 243.

³¹ Ibid., p. 217.

³² Ibid., pp. 253, 385, 398, 444.

him a valuable gold watch.³³ Outside Geneva, this was spotted by smugglers who waylaid Giles and attempted to murder him.³⁴ The watch featured in the story of Giles' edition of Herbert of Bosham, since it was to redeem his watch, pawned for 100 francs in Paris in December 1843, that he crossed again to France in April 1844. Thus began a tour of northern French libraries in which he first encountered the more important of the Herbert manuscripts at Arras.³⁵ The watch was with him still, in 1877, when he composed his recollections.³⁶ Watches and clocks, indeed, will play a surprisingly sinister role in the story that follows. Once again, there was perhaps a family curse. A cousin of Giles' wife was very nearly decapitated in the 1840s by sticking his head precipitously out of one of the openings in the dial of the great clock of St Paul's cathedral.³⁷

Meanwhile, committed to a career in the law, and with no discernible religious bent, Giles was persuaded by his father to enter the church. He was then, in effect, disinherited as a result of his father's financial mismanagement. His career as founding headmaster of the City of London School from 1837, where it was hoped he might follow in the footsteps of Thomas Arnold, proved disastrous. Rather than Arnold's discipline of cold baths and the birch, Giles' school became a place of indiscipline and paranoia.³⁸ In 1840 he was ejected. After a period living in Surrey and then in north Oxford as an independent crammer and man of letters, he was offered, in January 1846, the curacy of one of the three portions of the immensely rich living of Bampton in Oxfordshire: a parish of more than 11,000 acres, with a tithe income approaching £1000. Giles was offered £150 and free accommodation, to serve as curate to the vicar of the first portion.³⁹

Giles' principal misfortune was perhaps twofold: a refusal ever to decline an argument, combined with a pathological addiction to seeing his words in print. This infirmity obliged him, across the course of a long career, to publish nearly 180 books. The compulsion came upon him early. His first publication was a stirring address against Peel, as prospective MP for Oxford in 1829. It was followed a year later, and only a few months after Giles himself had obtained his BA, with an edition of Greek fragments, grandiloquently entitled *Scriptores Graeci Minores* 'Volume 1'. In this he claimed to have laid before the public 'the whole remains (including fragments) of Sappho, Alcaeus, Anyta, Corinna, Archilocus, Erinna, Hedlye, Melinno, Mimnermus, Musaeus, Myro, Nossis, Praxilla, Pythagoras, Simmias,

³³ Ibid., p. 98.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 105.

³⁵ Ibid., pp. 233, 236, 239.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 98.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 285.

³⁸ Hinde, *Carpenter's Children*, pp. 25–32.

³⁹ Giles, *Diary*, p. 252, noting the arrangements with Mr Kerby, senior vicar of Bampton. For the parish, see *A History of the County of Oxford: Volume 13, Bampton Hundred (Part One)*, ed. C. R. J. Currie, Victoria County History (Oxford, 1996), pp. 6ff., esp. 6, 49–50, 52–3.

Simonides, Solon, Sophron, Tyrtaeus, Stesichorus, Theosebia, Alcman, Telesilla, Phocylides and', he adds somewhat superfluously, 'a few others'.⁴⁰

The rate of his publications did not really gather pace until the period between his sacking from London and his removal to Bampton in January 1846. It was during these years, living in lodgings in Oxford, that he executed his two-volume edition of Herbert of Bosham, itself only a portion of the eight volumes that he dedicated to the lives and letters of St Thomas in the two years 1845–46. In 1843–44 he had already published a 'complete' edition of the works of the Venerable Bede in twelve volumes, the works of St Boniface in two volumes, Lanfranc in a further two, and single volumes dedicated to St Aldhelm and the letters of Arnulf of Lisieux. In 1847–48, he went on to publish a further four volumes of Peter of Blois, and five volumes of John of Salisbury: thirty-five volumes in only four years, entitled collectively the *Patres Ecclesiae Anglicanae*. Over this same four-year period, and under a separate imprint, the 'Caxton Society', he also published the works of Geoffrey of Monmouth, the Peterborough Chronicle, the chroniclers of William the Conqueror, the letters of Herbert Losinga, the letters of Alan of Tewkesbury and the chronicle of Geoffrey le Baker, a further six volumes. This in addition to many other volumes of translations from religious and classical texts, and elementary school books ('First Lessons' in Roman, English and French history and so forth), eventually to grow into the twenty or more volumes of 'Dr Giles's Juvenile Library'.⁴¹ Over more or less the same period, from 1844 to 1849, the Abbé Migne, with far superior resources and merely plagiarising the editions of his predecessors, managed only the first seventy-three volumes of the *Patrologia Latina*, a rate of production that seems snail-like in comparison to that achieved by Giles.⁴² Migne's subscription to Giles' *Patres Ecclesiae Anglicanae* was first paid in 1843, sandwiched between rather less ominous payments from the Reverend John Keble and various Cambridge colleges.⁴³ In Paris, in October 1843, Giles visited Migne's 'splendid office' outside the Barrière d'Enfer. There he naively accepted a promise from Migne to 'take a copy of all the Patres that I should undertake to publish'.⁴⁴

Two themes stand out here: the need, keenly felt by the 1840s, for accessible modern editions of medieval letters and chronicles neglected since the decline of seventeenth-century antiquarianism, and the imperative to search out new manuscripts of these sources, if necessary overseas. To this, we should add Giles' own particular addiction both to polemic and to an industrialised rate of production. Giles edited texts in much the same way that Mr Gladstone read books: by the cartload. In doing so, he

⁴⁰ *Scriptores Graeci minores*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1831; 2nd edn 1839), and cf. Giles, *Diary*, p. 90 (Giles to the book's future dedicatee, Thomas Gaisford, Regius Professor of Greek and from 1831 Dean of Christ Church Oxford).

⁴¹ See here the list of Giles' publications in Giles, *Diary*, pp. xii–xviii.

⁴² For Migne's vast enterprise, see R. H. Bloch, *God's Plagiarist* (Chicago, 1994), esp. pp. 58–75.

⁴³ Giles, *Diary*, pp. 221–2.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 229–30, 233, expressing some surprise that Migne was both clergyman and publisher.

cut almost as many corners as the Abbé Migne. Even today, one of the Bodleian Library's two copies of Pierre de Goussainville's 1667 edition of Peter of Blois carries an inscription by Giles reporting that he had donated this book in exchange for an older decayed copy that he had been allowed to mark up and send to his printer as the basis for his own edition of Peter.⁴⁵ By such means, books can be produced surprisingly quickly. To an editor of such industry, mechanisation was irresistible. Just as the motor car proved mesmeric to Mr Toad, so the printing press came to fascinate Giles. The comparison here is apt, since for Giles, as for the terrible Mr Toad, mechanisation was to spell not only ruin but incarceration in Oxford gaol.

As early as the 1840s, Giles' productivity came at a price, both financial and personal. He commanded an income from his translations and other popular works. From January 1846, he had his annual £150 and his house at Bampton, although even here his expenses on publication were such that, by 1853, he was once again advertising for pupils to board with him at Bampton for £100 a year 'according to age and requirements'.⁴⁶ The problem was that his scholarly editions simply failed to pay. Hence his yearning for a Maecenas capable of deferring the cost. Money was always a problem, and its short supply perhaps contributed to the nervous breakdown of Giles' wife, first apparent on their return from Paris in 1841.⁴⁷ It was in these circumstances that in 1844, unsuccessfully, Giles approached the government of Sir Robert Peel offering his services as a searcher-out and transcriber of manuscripts in Continental libraries.⁴⁸ On the Continent not only were there archival resources awaiting discovery, but the costs of living for any middle-class Englishman were far lower than they would have been at home.⁴⁹ For his work on Becket, as early as March 1844 we find Giles approaching John Henry Newman, who granted him permission to take away any waste sheets of Froude's *Remains* (published in 1838–39) that might be lying around.⁵⁰ A year later, he was once again in correspondence

⁴⁵ As pointed out to me by Richard Sharpe.

⁴⁶ Oxford, Bodleian Library ms. Philipps-Robinson c.522 fols. 10r–13r (prospectus, and letter from Giles to Sir Thomas Philipps, 6 August 1853).

⁴⁷ Giles, *Diary*, pp. 198–200, 226.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 240, 242, and for his letters to Peel, 4 December 1844, BL ms. Additional 40555 fols. 52–53, following a plea (fols. 11–12, 29 November 1844) to William Buckland, then canon of Christ Church, shortly to replace Samuel Wilberforce as Dean of Westminster, asked by Giles to further his cause with Peel. Giles suggested a payment of £100 for his first three or four months in the libraries of Belgium and Holland. Buckland took the trouble both of consulting James Norris, President of Corpus, Giles' old college (fols. 13–14), and of writing to Peel, who informed Buckland on 8 December of his intention to reject the proposal (fols. 15–16, and cf. the draft to Giles, fol. 54), largely on the basis of an assessment by the Revd Josiah Forshall, Secretary of the British Museum (fols. 92–98), in no way disparaging of Giles ('spoken of with respect and as a person of much more than ordinary abilities'), but demanding a scheme undertaken on far more 'definite and well matured' principles, and drawing attention to the vast extent of the manuscript holdings even of the two countries that Giles had named.

⁴⁹ Economy appears amongst the motives for his visits to France and Germany in 1841–42: Giles, *Diary*, pp. 198, 214.

⁵⁰ *The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, ed. C. S. Dessain and others

with Newman, who asked Mark Pattison to offer 'any Belgian introductions' he might have, presumably to assist Giles with his work in Flanders and northern France.⁵¹ The progress of his edition of Herbert of Bosham, as of the other sources for St Thomas, can be traced from Giles' *Diary*, beginning at Saint-Omer and Arras in April 1843.⁵² He revisited Arras in April 1844, and it was on this occasion that he made his 'discovery' of the manuscript of Herbert's Life of St Thomas. He subsequently paid an amanuensis, Louis Madelin, to transcribe this, the transcript arriving in Oxford in July 1845.⁵³ It is today in the British Library, bound up with Giles' own copy from the Cambridge manuscript of Herbert's Letters.⁵⁴

At Arras, Giles could not fail to notice that the manuscript of Herbert was sadly mutilated. As yet, he seems not to have known that various of the mutilated leaves had been sold, as long ago as 1828, to Sir Thomas Phillipps. Giles was nonetheless aware of Phillipps as a famed collector of manuscripts, perhaps also as a potential source of patronage. As early as November 1844, he had written to Phillipps asking after a manuscript of Peter of Blois.⁵⁵ From this point onwards, Phillipps' correspondence takes up the tale.⁵⁶ Although immediately invited to Middle Hill, Giles was suffering a severe attack of rheumatism and was unable to accept. At the same time, he did his best to interest Phillipps in his ongoing edition of medieval authors. Claiming that not even the Bodleian could rival the Phillipps collection, Giles also suggested installing his family in a farmhouse near Middle Hill in order that he might spend several months with Phillipps' books.⁵⁷ After this perhaps rather too enthusiastic introduction, nearly two years passed without further communication.

(Birmingham and Oxford 1961–), x (1843–45), p. 152 (4 March 1844), cf. *ibid.*, viii (1841–42), p. 501, where Newman acknowledges receipt of the prospectus for Giles' *Patres Ecclesiae Anglicanae*, as early as April 1842, and cf. Giles, *Diary*, p. 218.

⁵¹ *Letters and Diaries of Newman*, x, p. 571 (24 February 1845), and cf. Giles, *Diary*, pp. 243–4, also noting letters of introduction from the archbishop of Canterbury, William Howley.

⁵² Giles, *Diary*, p. 237.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 245, 247. From Bruges, on 1 April 1845, he wrote to Sir Frederic Madden at the British Museum, drawing his attention to the cartulary of the Abbey Dunes in the library of the Grootseminarie and its various charters of Richard I, John and Henry III: BL ms. Egerton 2844 fols. 37–38, suggesting that Giles procure a transcript of the entire manuscript, which would cost much less made in Belgium than it would in England.

⁵⁴ BL ms. Additional 20702, acquired by the library in 1855, presumably as a result of Giles' disgrace. Here copying the materials, principally the 'Liber Melorum' from the Arras manuscript, with interleaved attempts by Giles to make good the missing or mutilated sections from the incomplete copy of the 'Liber' in Oxford, Corpus Christi College ms.146.

⁵⁵ Oxford, Bodleian Library ms. Phillipps-Robinson d.131 fols. 5r–6r (Giles to Phillipps, 1 November 1844); *ibid.* e.378 fols. 5v–6r (Phillipps to Giles, 7 November 1844).

⁵⁶ For Phillipps more generally, the essential authority remains A. N. L. Munby, *Phillipps Studies*, 5 vols (Cambridge 1951–60), but with Giles afforded only the briefest of notices, *ibid.*, iv ('The Formation of the Phillipps Library from 1841 to 1872'), p. 111.

⁵⁷ Oxford, Bodleian Library ms. Phillipps-Robinson d.131 fols. 7r–8r (Giles to Phillipps, 11 November 1844).

In March 1846, however, and inconveniently just as Giles' edition of Herbert of Bosham was passing through the press, Giles learned from Parker, the Oxford bookseller and publisher of his 'Patres', that Phillipps claimed to possess not only manuscripts that might make up gaps in the existing corpus of Herbert's works, but another life of Becket, perhaps Benedict of Peterborough's (a version still untraced, that in due course Phillipps entirely denied possessing).⁵⁸ Phillipps replied that he did indeed own an alternative manuscript of Herbert's 'varying in some degree from the copy at Arras', together with leaves that had been nefariously cut out 'by that rascal Caron, the librarian at Arras, who did it to spite the mayor and corporation ... because they would not grant him some request which he made'.⁵⁹ Phillipps recalled buying these leaves at Amiens together with several pounds' weight of materials excised from other Arras manuscripts:

I offered to restore them to the mayor and the library if they would merely repay me the money I gave for them. They refused!!! and in disgust I kept them, but the greatest part being theological, I left them on the continent and sent them to an inn, but whether they ever reached their destination I never heard. The leaves of Herbert being English history I brought home.⁶⁰

Let us note here the assumption amongst Englishmen, not unknown even today, that Continental libraries and European history more generally are chiefly of interest for what they tell us of 'English' history. Giles meanwhile had sent Phillipps the two volumes of his edition of Herbert, begging for further details of what else there might be at Middle Hill.⁶¹ By June 1846, a visit was arranged.⁶² This visit, prolonged for nearly a fortnight, proved significant to both men. Giles was allowed to consult several manuscripts, although apparently not yet the Arras leaves, still untraceable amidst the chaos at Middle Hill.⁶³ More to the point, he began to see his way to a rather grander scheme.

Both Giles and Phillipps were obsessive, one as an editor, the other as a collector of manuscripts. Both dreamed of publishing books faster and in greater quantity

⁵⁸ Ibid. c.494 fols. 104r–105r (Giles to Phillipps, 13 March 1846). The mystery 'life' was probably one or others of those attached to Phillipps' two copies of the 'Miracula' by Benedict, today Brussels, Bibliothèque royale ms. IV.600, and London, British Library ms. Egerton 2818 (formerly Phillipps ms. 10227, Miracles with the 'Life' by John of Salisbury). For the Brussels ms., see below n.138.

⁵⁹ Oxford, Bodleian Library ms. Phillipps-Robinson e.379 fols. 44v–46r (Phillipps to Giles, 22 March 1846), also referring to a manuscript of Guernes de Pont-Saint-Maixence.

⁶⁰ Ibid. fols. 47r–48v (Phillipps to Giles, 26 March 1846), an account to some extent confirmed by Phillipps' correspondence from 1829: *ibid.* c.425. And for the wider story here, see the articles below by Sabina Flanagan (pp. 156–67) and Christopher de Hamel (pp. 168–83), and Vincent, *Norman Charters*, pp. 40–1.

⁶¹ Oxford, Bodleian Library ms. Phillipps-Robinson c.494 fols. 106r–107r (Giles to Phillipps, 23 March 1846).

⁶² Ibid. fols. 110r–114r (Giles to Phillipps, 2 and 7 June 1846).

⁶³ For their non-discovery, *ibid.* e.379 fols. 81v–82r (Phillips to Giles, 4 June 1846). For what was seen, there is a list of manuscripts 'Dr Giles to examine': *ibid.* c.672 fol. 53r (June 1846, including 'Benedict of Peterborough').

than any commercial printer could achieve. Giles had long been interested in the mechanical reproduction of the written word. As headmaster of the City of London School, in 1838, he had invested in a 'curious machine' allowing him to write two letters with a single stroke of the pen.⁶⁴ Even earlier, he had admired the 'immense numbers' of books printed and bound by the press belonging to the family of his Oxford friend, Thomas Mosley.⁶⁵ As curate of Bampton, he had access to an untapped stream of labour amongst the children of his parish, many of them trained to reading and writing in the village's national school, established in 1812, teaching upwards of 150 girls and boys.⁶⁶ What if such production could be mechanised? Having observed Phillipps' printing press at Middle Hill, Giles was now determined to acquire something similar for himself at Bampton. As he put it in writing to Phillipps: 'I effectively caught the printing mania at Middle Hill.'⁶⁷

By August 1846, fired up by his encounter with Phillipps' press, he had ordered a set of type and an Albion printing machine.⁶⁸ There followed all manner of travails, as Giles came to realise that his enterprise required official licence, not obtained until July 1849. Not only this, but his printer's assistant was afflicted with St Vitus' dance.⁶⁹ In Giles' universe, nothing ever ran entirely straight. From 1847, he nonetheless began to train up girls from the local national school to compose type: twenty-four such girls over the next seven years. This was done so successfully that even the great Dr Pusey enquired whether the experiment might be repeated by the Sisters of Mercy, Pusey's Anglican nunnery in Plymouth.⁷⁰ At the suggestion of a Mr Black, an Oxford bookseller, Giles selected his girls according to the smallness of their fingers, 'better suited for picking up and setting the type'.⁷¹ In due course he invited an old acquaintance from his Continental travels, Major Anstruther, an exile from the revolutions of 1848, to share his house in Bampton, there to co-operate in the edition of medieval texts. It was the fact that Anstruther edited the letters of Herbert of Losinga, in succession to Giles' edition of the life and letters of Herbert of Bosham, that persuaded Giles to have his own son, born in 1845, christened Herbert Allen Giles. Herbert Giles was to enjoy a career rather less turbulent than that of his father, dying in 1935 as Professor Emeritus of Chinese at Cambridge University.⁷²

⁶⁴ Giles, *Diary*, pp. 169–70.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

⁶⁶ For the schools, *VCH Oxfordshire*, xiii, 58–60.

⁶⁷ Oxford, Bodleian Library ms. Phillipps-Robinson c.494 fols. 121r–122r (Giles to Phillipps, 21 October 1846).

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* c.494 fols. 119r–120r (Giles to Phillipps, 1 August 1846).

⁶⁹ Giles, *Diary*, pp. 261, 267–8. Giles' press is briefly noticed, with admiration for the quality of its productions, by H. R. Plomer, 'Some Private Presses of the Nineteenth Century', *The Library* ns 1 (1900), 407–28, esp. 421–2.

⁷⁰ Giles, *Diary*, pp. 268, 281, 290. In this context, it is worth noting a definition, reported in Giles' *Diary*, p. 43, that 'Puseyism/Pussyism' might best be defined as 'a mixture of catechism and dogmatism'.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 302.

⁷² *Ibid.*, pp. ix, 264. Herbert Giles left an intellectual autobiography, now Cambridge

Meanwhile, on 27 June 1846, the very day after his return to Bampton, Giles wrote to Phillipps promising holograph specimens from the first of his child amanuenses, the twelve-year-old Edward Carter, 'a pertinacious, dogged little fellow that will master whatever he undertakes'.⁷³ By August, and despite objections from the village schoolmaster, he was informing Phillipps that the boy, son of a respectable local stonemason, would be delivered to Middle Hill by his father as soon as his mother had his clothes ready: 'I think you will find him of much use, *where there are so many manuscripts*'. The intention at this stage was that Giles and Phillipps should embark on editions of a Latin chronicle of the reign of Edward IV, and the customal of the shrine of St Thomas at Canterbury, possibly also of the mysterious and apparently still untraced life of St Thomas by Benedict of Peterborough.⁷⁴ Giles then set out for Paris, reporting minor discoveries but, on his return in October 1846, reverting to the scheme to have Edward Carter installed at Middle Hill 'before the winter becomes more severe'. Middle Hill, lying high up on the Cotswold escarpment, remains a mightily cold place in winter. Despite this, Giles advised Phillipps against paying Carter any wages, advice that, given Phillipps' attitude to money, was surely superfluous.⁷⁵

Worthy of Peter Grimes, this scheme came to nothing, no doubt much to the relief of young Carter. Phillipps suffered what he described as 'a long attack of cholera' (itself hardly a reassuring advertisement of the amenities of Middle Hill).⁷⁶ More to the point, he had been impressed by the legibility but not as yet by the speed or the firmness of Carter's script and wished the boy to obtain proper initiation in medieval writing: 'You no doubt have one or two manuscripts on vellum, one of which he can copy from until I am ready to receive him'.⁷⁷ Rather as if he were judging root vegetables, Phillipps suspected that Carter might 'improve with his stronger growth'.⁷⁸ As for Giles' Bampton printing press, Phillipps responded with modified rapture:

I am delighted to see you have a press of your own. Every gentleman who proposes to print something annually thro(ugh) life ought to get one of his own immediately. I like your type, but I do not approve of your great space between the lines. One lead is enough. Do you not see that you are wasting your paper by so much not being printed upon, and that in fact it is making

University Library ms. 8964/1, but it begins only in the 1860s, with his introduction to eastern languages, lacking anything on childhood.

⁷³ Oxford, Bodleian Library ms. Phillipps-Robinson c.494 fols. 115r-116v (Giles to Phillipps, 27 June 1846).

⁷⁴ Ibid. fols. 117r-120r (Giles to Phillips, 15 July and 1 August 1846), referring to the 'officium feretrariorum s(ancti) Thomae' and the 'Vie de S. Thomas par Benoit'.

⁷⁵ Ibid. fols. 121r-122r (Giles to Phillipps, 21 October 1846): 'You will perhaps see the propriety of paying him (Carter) nothing at first.'

⁷⁶ Ibid. e.380 fol. 83v (Phillipps to Giles, 19 August 1846).

⁷⁷ Ibid. fols. 74r-v, 107v-108r (Phillipps to Giles, 10 July and 26 October 1846).

⁷⁸ Ibid. fol. 74r-v (Phillipps to Giles, 10 July 1846), also in Giles, *Diary*, p. 256.

people pay for blank paper so many as buy your book? I wish you had a living near me.⁷⁹

The pursuit of a church living was to occupy Giles, on and off, for much of the next eight years. In part this was due to Phillipps, who kept this *ignis fatuus* always glowing, always for one reason or another plucked from Giles' grasp.⁸⁰ As for the Bampton press, although financially unsuccessful, this was kept at work in ways that Phillipps had not anticipated. Phillipps wished for editions of his own manuscripts, above all for his cartularies, considered his *sancta sanctorum*. Giles had other priorities. Whilst prepared to seek occasional subventions from Phillipps, asking at first £20, later £10, to supply a transcript of the earliest Bampton parish register, he held off until 1854 from any promises involving Phillipps' other manuscripts.⁸¹

His new-found interest in cartularies came after what was, in fact, only his second meeting with Phillipps, face to face, in April 1854. Giles was still anxious to inspect the leaves, looted from the Arras manuscript of Herbert of Bosham, that Phillipps was still unable to locate.⁸² Above all, he needed a patron. Phillipps secured offers from Giles to print cartularies and also fifty copies of Bigland's *History of Gloucestershire*, which had earlier been rejected as a joint venture, being too large for Giles' press when set up in four columns of type. In May 1854, Phillipps visited Bampton. He found Giles away from home, but was most impressed by Giles' 'Press Gang' (the words are underlined by Phillipps): the girls operating the Bampton printing machine.⁸³ By this time, however, a greater nemesis had begun to unfold. It came from two directions more or less simultaneously. To begin with, Giles experienced a catastrophic falling out with his bishop, Samuel Wilberforce. They had first met in convivial circumstances, in 1849, when the conversation turned to 'Rousseau's Dream', the tune chimed by the clock of Bampton church. This, apparently, was known to monoglot locals not as 'Rousseau's' but as 'The Horse's Dream'.⁸⁴ This exchange too, as we shall see, was to suffer a haunting aftermath.

⁷⁹ Oxford, Bodleian Library ms. Phillipps-Robinson e.380 fols. 107v–108r (Phillipps to Giles, 26 October 1846).

⁸⁰ Hopes first pinned on the living at Buckland in Gloucestershire, thereafter transferred to Broadway and then to nearby Willersley, both in Worcestershire: *ibid.* d.147 fols. 135r–138r (January–February ?1847); c.503 fols. 7r–8r (Giles to Phillipps, 10 January 1847), 15–18r (Phillipps to Giles and Giles to Phillipps, 16 and 18 October 1849); e.384 fol. 25r (Phillipps to Giles, 20 June 1849); Giles, *Diary*, pp. 263, 265.

⁸¹ Oxford, Bodleian Library ms. Phillipps-Robinson e.385 fols. 28v–29r (Phillipps to Giles, 28 October 1849); c.503 fols. 19r–25r (Giles to Phillipps, 28 and 31 October, 27 November and 13 December 1849). For the cartularies, *ibid.*, d.160 fols. 22r–24r, 28r–32r (Giles to Phillipps with responses, 26 and 28 April, 2 June, 2 and 12 July 1854), and cf. Giles, *Diary*, p. 297.

⁸² Oxford, Bodleian Library ms. Phillipps-Robinson d.147 fols. 137r–139r (Giles to Phillipps, 12 February and 15 June ?1848); d.160 fols. 20r–21r; d.160 fol. 25r (Giles to Phillipps, 26 March 1854).

⁸³ *Ibid.* d.161 fols. 82r–83r, 91v–92r (Phillipps to Giles, 9, 14 and 31 May 1854), and for Bigland, see also *ibid.* c.494 fols. 110r–112r (Giles to Phillipps, 7 June 1846 and 12 May 1854).

⁸⁴ Giles, *Diary*, p. 265.

Giles was the broadest of broad churchmen. Until now, whatever scrapes he had got into had been personal rather than doctrinal. At the great King Alfred millennial celebrations at Wantage, in 1849, for example, he had fallen foul of the high church vicar of Wantage, William Butler, subsequently dean of Lincoln. Horrified by the vulgarity of the celebrations, and knowing that Giles was liberal in his interpretation of scripture, Butler declared that Giles was 'neither a Christian nor a gentleman'.⁸⁵ Giles' *History of the Ancient Britons* (1847) had been censured in *The Guardian* for dismissing the doctrine of the Trinity as a 'knotty point'.⁸⁶ In 1852, things took a more serious turn. There is no reason to suppose that Giles had read the 'Germanisers' of Tübingen. In 1830, it has been estimated, there had been only two German-speaking theologians in the whole of Oxford.⁸⁷ Like many clerical contemporaries, however, Giles was in no doubt that the Bible was the work of man rather than God. It was therefore encrusted with error and confusion.⁸⁸ Textually, and despite wails of disapproval from the Evangelicals, it required a more scientific edition than anything that could be claimed for the Authorised Version of 1611.⁸⁹ George Eliot's translation of David Strauss' *Das Leben Jesu* (1835) had been published amidst clerical uproar in 1846, to be followed in 1853 by her translation of Feuerbach's *Essence of Christianity* (1841).⁹⁰ Early in 1852, in company with a local squire, Mr Birch of Pudlicote near Charlbury, and the Reverend Thomas Wilson, author of a collection of 'discourses' on *Catholicity Spiritual and Intellectual*, Giles agreed to print a Bible supplied with commentary.⁹¹ Giles' role was to deal 'with historical and critical questions only'.

By October, specimen pages from this work, already being described as the 'Bampton Bible', had been brought to the attention of Bishop Wilberforce.⁹² The

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 272.

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 262.

⁸⁷ Newsome, *The Parting of Friends*, p. 78.

⁸⁸ Giles, *Diary*, pp. 324, 327, noting his agreement on these issues with Mark Pattison, who undoubtedly had read the Germans.

⁸⁹ O. Chadwick, *The Victorian Church*, 2 vols., 2nd ed. (London, 1972), ii, 40–4.

⁹⁰ For Strauss, see V. A. Dodd, *George Eliot: An Intellectual Life* (London, 1990), pp. 87–93; Chadwick, *Victorian Church*, i, 487–8; ii, 61–2. For German influence more generally, see M. A. Crowther, *Church Embattled: Religious Controversy in Mid-Victorian England* (Newton Abbot, 1970), esp. pp. 40ff.

⁹¹ T. Wilson, *Catholicity Spiritual and Intellectual* (London, 1850): an attempt (p. 3) to assert 'the spirit of Christianity' wherever necessary contradicting 'the letter of systematic theology, Patristic or Mediaeval', thereby steering a middle way between the opposed forces, 'Roman or Rational'. For Birch, who later did his best to help Giles, but who emigrated to America in 1856, see Giles, *Diary*, pp. 325, 334.

⁹² Eventually published in two parts as *The Holy Bible: First Division: The Pentateuch, or Five Books of Moses ... edited by the Rev. Thomas Wilson M. A., of C. C.C. Cambridge, author of 'Spiritual Catholicity', 'Travels in Syria, Palestine etc'* (London, John Chapman, 1853, with a fine set surviving as Cambridge University Library printed books 1897.12.43), the title here referring to Wilson's *Nozrāni in Egypt and Syria* (London, 1846), a series of lectures intended to raise funds for the restoration of Wilson's church of St Peter Mancroft in Norwich. Wilson, in his introduction to part 1 of *The Holy Bible* (1853), pp. iii–vi, sets out both the circumstances in which Giles was obliged to withdraw his name from

nomenclature here was not insignificant, threatening as it did to couple Giles' thoroughly unorthodox Bible criticism with the name of the most prestigious series of Anglican theological lectures: the 'Bampton Lectures', delivered annually in Oxford since 1780 (named after their founder, John Bampton, rather than through any association with Bampton in Oxfordshire). There followed an acrimonious exchange in which, having raised various thorny points over the dating and authorship of the Book of Joshua, Giles agreed to withdraw from the enterprise. He did so firmly proclaiming his right to return to matters of biblical history whenever it might please him, without accepting episcopal censorship.⁹³

The outcome, published by Whittaker's of London in the early summer of 1854, was a book entitled *Christian Records*. Here, and in continuation of a volume published in 1853 as *Hebrew Records*, Giles set out to demonstrate that, far from being the work of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, the Gospels and the books of Acts were 'not in existence before the year 150 of the Christian era'.⁹⁴ In this he claimed to challenge the historicity of the New Testament without in any way undermining Anglican doctrine. Bishop Wilberforce thought otherwise. In the ensuing exchange, and far from wisely, Giles complained that he was being persecuted merely for exercising his right to rational judgement:

I have no wish to become a martyr, even though my becoming so would probably do me more worldly good than ever the church has done me. But I have hitherto adhered to the church as a progressive institution, and shall do so if I am allowed.⁹⁵

All of this in July 1854, with Giles displaying his customary combination of flippancy, self-pity and pugnacity, perhaps not entirely by coincidence within only a few weeks of the British declaration of war in the Crimea. Having agreed to withdraw his book from sale, Giles then compounded his offence, persuading the London printer of his *Records* to publish his exchange of letters with Bishop Wilberforce.⁹⁶

In Wilberforce's eyes this was worse than insubordination; it was positively ill mannered. As bishop of Oxford, Wilberforce was pathologically sensitive to any whiff of heterodoxy. Not only was he bishop of a diocese that would for ever be associated with the apostasy of Newman and Newman's acolytes, but he himself sprang from a family riven with confessional doubts. By virtue of their evangelical

association with the venture, and his own departures from 'episcopal authority' and 'Ecclesiastical interpretation', denying any 'religious obligation to believe' in miracles and emphasising the essentially 'mythical' nature of Genesis, as of much else in scripture.

⁹³ Giles, *Diary*, pp. 293–5.

⁹⁴ J. A. Giles, *Christian Records: An Historical Enquiry Concerning the Age, Authorship and Authenticity of the New Testament* (London, 1854), here citing p. 6, at p. 10 even threatening to redate the letters of St Paul.

⁹⁵ Giles, *Diary*, p. 299.

⁹⁶ First published as *The Lord Bishop of Oxford's Letters to the Rev. Dr Giles, for Suspending the Publication of 'Christian Records', with Dr Giles's Letters in Reply* (London, 1854), reprinted in Giles, *Diary*, pp. 299–301, the original of the 'Diary' here (Oxford, Bodleian Library ms. Eng.b.2100 pp. 485ff.) being taken from cuttings from the printed pamphlet.

father, the great abolitionist William Wilberforce, Samuel and his two brothers had been marked out from birth as special members of the Anglican communion: as close as Anglicanism permitted, outside the royal family, to a dynasty of saints. All three of the Wilberforce brothers had been enchanted by Newman and his siren songs. Samuel's youngest brother, Henry, was received as a Catholic by the Jesuits at Brussels in September 1850. The middle sibling, Robert, was likewise driven Romewards by the Gorham Case, and in 1854 was already teetering on the brink of his own, even more controversial conversion, solemnised at Paris on 31 October.⁹⁷

There were also local but pressing reasons for caution in the Oxfordshire of 1854. In April 1853, as bishop, Samuel Wilberforce had founded his Oxford Diocesan Seminary at Cuddesdon, intended to train graduates for ordination. Cuddesdon was duly opened in June 1854. From the start, it became the focus of intense scrutiny, both from strict Protestants fearful of its Catholic tendencies as from those of broader churchmanship concerned that too much theological speculation might muddy the limpid waters of Anglicanism.⁹⁸ Giles, as the notoriously and eccentrically disorganised curate of Bampton, was already marked down in that great book of life that was Wilberforce's visitation records.⁹⁹ Indeed, Wilberforce's visitation sermon of November 1854 might almost have been composed with Giles in mind. Here we find the bishop castigating 'self-willed rashness' and urging a more professional training of the clergy. Only thus were the faithful to be steered between the Scylla and Charybdis of 'latitudinarianism on the one hand, or the poisonous blight of Roman error on the other'.¹⁰⁰

All might still have been smoothed over, with Wilberforce notoriously amongst the smoothest of the smooth. Instead Giles now committed an act of suicidal recklessness. It was an act directly linked to Giles' interest in Herbert of Bosham, since it was Herbert who had first drawn Giles into the orbit of Sir Thomas Phillipps and it was from Phillipps that Giles had caught his 'mania' for the printing press. In September 1854, Jane Green, one of the girls employed for the last five years in Giles' press, asked to be married to a local shoemaker named Richard Pratt. Persuaded by the girl that gossip amongst their fellow villagers might lead to 'Rough Music', Giles agreed to marry them without banns and by special licence. On Sunday 1 October 1854, Giles used the Bampton press to run off further copies of his pamphlet against Bishop Wilberforce, now with a stinging 'additional note' drawing

⁹⁷ Newsome, *The Parting of Friends*, esp. pp. 354–60, 370–402.

⁹⁸ O. Chadwick, *The Founding of Cuddesdon* (Oxford, 1954), esp. pp. 14–18.

⁹⁹ *Bishop Wilberforce's Visitation Returns for the Archdeaconry of Oxford in the Year 1854*, ed. E. P. Baker, Oxfordshire Record Society, 35 (1954), pp. 10–12. Note here Giles' extremely terse return to the visitation questions compared to the far more open answer offered by the incumbents of the other two portions of Bampton. There seems to be nothing on Giles in *The Letter-Books of Samuel Wilberforce, 1843–68*, ed. R. K. Pugh and J. F. A. Mason, Oxfordshire Record Society, 47 (Leeds, 1970), and the only references to him in *The Diocese Books of Samuel Wilberforce*, ed. R. and M. Pugh, Berkshire Record Society, 13 (Reading, 1980), pp. 27, 115, are discreet to the point of deliberate *suppressio veritatis*.

¹⁰⁰ *A Charge to the Diocese of Oxford at his Third Visitation, November, 1854, by Samuel, Lord Bishop of Oxford* (London, 1854), esp. pp. 10–11.

attention to the recent flight to Rome by the bishop's brother, Robert.¹⁰¹ Two days later, on the morning of Tuesday 3 October, Giles went to Bampton church to conduct the marriage of Jane Green, taking care to secure the key to the church the night before, without informing the parish clerk of his intentions. Arriving 'a little before 8 o'clock', and to save time waiting, he filled out the register with the names of the married couple and their witnesses. But the groom did not appear. Learning that Pratt's employer had refused him permission to leave work, Giles agreed that the marriage might take place two days later, well before work began. He himself was distracted throughout this period by the illness of his son Herbert. He was also annoyed at the waste of time that might otherwise have been devoted to his scholarly pursuits. On Thursday 4 October, 'about 7 o'clock' in the morning, he once again went to church. There he married Jane Green to Richard Pratt, with his eldest son, Arthur Giles, as witness but without waiting for the second witness whose name had already been entered in the register: his servant, the appropriately named Charlotte Lait.¹⁰² Gold watch or not, Giles had never been a good time-keeper. The church clock at Bampton, with its musical chimes, philosophical or equine, was notoriously unreliable.¹⁰³

By marrying Jane Green to Richard Pratt, Giles committed at least three serious offences. Despite what the bride had been told, no special licence had been obtained. Giles, contemptuous of formalities and either naively, or for want of funds, failed to purchase one. He had entered false evidence in the register, since one of the witnesses had not been present, and the ceremony itself was misdated to 3rd rather than 4th October. Far more seriously, under the terms of the 1753 Marriage Act, it was a criminal offence, punishable by up to fourteen years' transportation, for any clergyman to conduct a marriage service before 8 o'clock in the morning. The Act's intention had been to outlaw clandestine marriages and the forced abduction of heiresses. Giles claimed that in 1854 he had no idea that such a law existed.¹⁰⁴ Be that as it may, time had literally caught up with him.

On Saturday 7 October he received a personal complaint from Pratt's employer that Pratt had been married without permission. Giles did his best to respond. The shoemaker (like the vicar of Wantage, also named Butler) was persuaded to write to the bishop. On Monday 9 October the bishop wrote to Giles, a letter of accusatory enquiry that Giles initially tore up but then glued back together and preserved

¹⁰¹ *The Lord Bishop of Oxford's Letters to the Rev. Dr Giles ... 2nd edition*, dated at Bampton, 1 October 1854 (copy in BL printed books 4405.k.1 no.17).

¹⁰² Here relying heavily upon the account supplied in the late 1870s by Giles, *Diary*, pp. 302–4, 319–21. See also the account that Giles himself caused to have printed, in March 1855, of which there is a copy in Oxford, Bodleian Library ms. Phillipps-Robinson c.531 fol. 99r, noting that 'I was in a hurry to get back to my books, the hour or two before breakfast being almost my only time for private study.' The affair goes entirely unmentioned in the contemporary lives of Samuel Wilberforce or in his episcopal letter books. However, various letters preserved as Oxford, Oxfordshire Record Office CPZ1/1–105 make the extent of the bishop's involvement abundantly clear.

¹⁰³ As noted in the *VCH Oxfordshire*, xiii, 57; Giles, *Diary*, p. 307.

¹⁰⁴ Giles, *Diary*, pp. 303–4.

in his *Diary*.¹⁰⁵ By Wednesday, 11 October, when Giles went to Oxford and heard rumours that the bishop's lawyer, Mr Davenport, was determined upon prosecution, things had begun to look bleak. At some point here, Giles himself wrote the bishop a letter, subsequently used in evidence against him in court, although the text itself seems not to survive.¹⁰⁶ On Sunday 22 October, as he was preparing to preach in the neighbouring hamlet of Lew, Giles was arrested by the Witney constable. He was bailed on the following day, under £500 of sureties supplied by his friend, Mr Birch of Pudlicote, and an old undergraduate acquaintance, the vicar of Witney. At the same time he was warned that further charges involving a marriage conducted before 8 o'clock, two years earlier, were likely to require yet further sureties of £500. Gossip suggested that there was more to the marriage than met the eye: a clergyman, marrying off one of his indoor servants, with only his son as witness, in a ceremony conducted outside canonical hours. At this point, and advised by his brother, a lawyer, Giles determined on flight. In all likelihood, his nerve simply failed him.

Rather than appear to answer further charges on Friday 27 October, Giles set out for London. It is some indication of his disordered priorities, bordering on derangement, that as early as 31 October he was writing from London to his wife, asking that she forward him the proof sheets of whatever publications he had in hand, and also that she pack up his printing press, to be sent to London to be used by a friend. His books he asked to be sold at Sotheby's in the Strand. The whole debacle he blamed on the vicar of Wantage, William Butler, acting in league with Bishop Wilberforce.¹⁰⁷

Even Giles' friends in Bampton, including the Reverend Dacres Adams, the resident vicar, were prepared to admit that the parish was now 'freed for ever from the ministrations of one who for many years was quite unfitted for his office'. Despite this, Adams insisted, Giles was guilty of no immoral conduct, merely of 'folly and ignorance which has marked his every step in this miserable transaction'. The only parties now determined on prosecution with a fervour bordering on persecution were the Witney magistrate, Leonard Pickering, who refused any offer of backstairs negotiation from the bishop's lawyers, and Frederick Newman, Giles' fellow curate at Bampton. A high churchman who insisted on preaching in a surplice, Newman

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 304, from Oxford, Bodleian Library ms. Eng. b.2100 p. 492, where the torn fragments are preserved together with a transcript, and for this act of preservation cf. Giles, *Diary*, p. 317.

¹⁰⁶ It is referred to in letters from Giles' brother, William, sent to the bishop from Taunton on 24 October, Oxford, Oxfordshire Record Office CPZ1/18: 'I found waiting for your lordship the accompanying letter, which had been sent off by my brother before my arrival, and which I now transmit to you ... I am aware, and am not surprised at the facts, that there many of the parishioners who from proper motives have desired my brother's removal from his office, but I am quite sure that that being attained, there will be no wish to bring on him consequences so disproportionate to the case and so utterly inappropriate to that which is the root of the evil – his disaffection to the church.' Cf. ibid., no. 102, where on 7 March 1855 Davenport writes to the bishop over 'the delicate matter of producing in court the letters written by Dr Giles to your lordship', seeking to exonerate himself and instead blaming Giles' counsel for the circumstances in which these letters were cited in evidence against their client.

¹⁰⁷ Giles, *Diary*, pp. 305–6.

was determined to give evidence against Giles, should there be even the remotest chance of an acquittal.¹⁰⁸

In theory Giles was now a fugitive from justice, having forfeited the £500 raised as surety for his bail. In practice, sounder sense prevailed.¹⁰⁹ The bishop, anxious to avoid a scandal, made it known, even before the end of October, that he had no desire to pursue the full rigour of the law.¹¹⁰ Consultation with an eminent solicitor, Gabriel Goldney (later 1st Baronet), persuaded Giles to appear before the magistrates at Witney on 5 December. By Christmas, Richard and Jane Pratt, the chief prosecution witnesses, whether legally married or not, had emigrated to Australia, speeded on their way with £50 supplied by a friend of Giles.¹¹¹ A suggestion was made by Davenport to the Witney magistrates that the bishop might prefer the prosecution to be dropped, if only Giles would retire to live as a tutor near London.¹¹² Doubt was cast upon the supposed timing of events, not least because of the notorious inaccuracy of the Bampton church clock. Even so, on 5 December further charges were raised in respect to earlier marriages that Giles had conducted, and sureties totalling £3200 were demanded for bail. The whole sad saga came before the Oxford assizes in March 1855. There, in a court presided over by Lord Campbell (born 1779, Chief Justice since 1850), Giles was convicted of falsifying an entry in the register, having married Richard Pratt to Jane Green outside the canonical hours. His conviction owed a great deal to letters that he himself had written to Bishop Wilberforce, in effect confessing his guilt: letters that in circumstances of less than perfect candour, Wilberforce allowed to be read out in court.¹¹³ Giles was sentenced to twelve months in Oxford gaol, although with a private assurance that he would be released earlier. In fact, his release came on 3 June, after only three months, thanks to interventions by Wilberforce, themselves provoked by Giles' many friends.¹¹⁴

Here was melodrama worthy of any number of Victorian novels; the forgery of signatures and false witness (Trollope's *Orley Farm*, 1861–62, and *Last Chronicle of Barset*, 1867), scheming lawyers (Dickens, *Bleak House*, 1852–53), tampering with parish registers (Wilkie Collins, *The Woman in White*, 1859) and the nobbling of witnesses to protect a clergyman in difficulties (Trollope, *The Vicar of Bullhampton*, 1870). Even the 'Rough Music' threatened by Giles' parishioners reminds us of the

¹⁰⁸ Oxford, Oxfordshire Record Office CPZ1/33, 35, 45. For the surprise, Giles, *Diary*, p. 319. For Leonard Pickering, the Witney magistrate, who both initiated the prosecution and refused any hint that it might be set aside, *ibid.*, pp. 305, 314.

¹⁰⁹ For what follows, Giles, *Diary*, pp. 306–14.

¹¹⁰ Oxford, Oxfordshire Record Office CPZ1/19, 26, 32, recording negotiations between Wilberforce, Davenport and Giles' brother William. Other letters in this collection (esp. CPZ1/3, 4, 7, 9, 11) make the extent of the collusion between Wilberforce and Davenport abundantly clear.

¹¹¹ Giles, *Diary*, pp. 307, 314–15, 324–5, and for Giles' subsequent low opinion of the advice and (high) fees of Goldney, see p. 320.

¹¹² Oxford, Oxfordshire Record Office CPZ1/33, 35.

¹¹³ Giles, *Diary*, pp. 312–13, and cf. 485–6.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 312, 325.

fictional *Mayor of Casterbridge* (Thomas Hardy, published in 1886 though set in the 1840s). Perhaps it is no coincidence that this was an era of doubt and dissolving certainties. The falsification of church records, especially those involving marriage, that most brittle and endangered of Victorian sacraments, served as metaphor for the far wider collapse of faith in scriptural certainties literal and historic. Truly, the sea of faith was no longer at the full (Matthew Arnold, *Dover Beach*, c. 1851). Giles was undone by precisely the forensic methods that he himself had employed in his *Christian Records*.¹¹⁵ Perhaps fortunately for the parties concerned, Giles himself was cut from no tragic cloth. On the contrary, he accepted his fate, served out his sentence and then bounced back. Even in gaol, he continued to edit and translate, in this instance collecting evidences for the early history of the Jews that in due course became his *Heathen Records* (1856), a companion to his *Hebrew and Christian Records*, in due course reissued in 1877 as a two-volume set.¹¹⁶ By such means did he signal his refusal, even now, to submit to episcopal discipline.

In January 1858, following his release from prison, he sent his former judge, Lord Campbell, an eight-volume set of his Becket materials. Campbell, acknowledging the gift, reciprocated by sending Giles a set of his *Lives of the Lord Chancellors*, a full ten volumes in the fourth edition of 1856–57, whose first substantial biography (ch. 3) dealt appropriately enough with Thomas Becket.¹¹⁷ In due course, even the perfidy of Samuel Wilberforce faded from recollection, though from time to time the embers still glowed. They glowed most brightly after 1870, when, now as rector of Sutton in Surrey, Giles found himself once again under Wilberforce's jurisdiction as bishop of Winchester. On their one further meeting, at Sutton rectory, there was a tussle over a gooseberry tart. From this Giles claimed to have emerged the moral if not the physical victor.¹¹⁸ There were also reiterated threats of prosecution from Wilberforce, in 1871, over the funeral arrangements for the infant child of a dissenting minister, and in 1873, over the clearing of human remains from Sutton churchyard.¹¹⁹ Wilberforce returned a frosty refusal to Giles' offer to assist with a revised edition of the biblical Apocrypha.¹²⁰ Even after his sudden death in 1873, the bishop remained an object of loathing amongst Giles' children, especially to Herbert Giles, less so to Giles himself.¹²¹

As for his supposed return to Anglican conformity, in 1856, less than a year after his release, Giles was publishing notes on scripture 'for the use of little children',

¹¹⁵ A point rather gloated over by various of his detractors: *ibid.*, pp. 313, 322.

¹¹⁶ J. A. Giles, *Heathen Records to the Jewish Scripture History; containing all the extracts from the Greek and Latin writers, in which the Jews and Christians are named* (London, 1856); J. A. Giles, *Hebrew and Christian Records: An Historical Enquiry Concerning the Age and Authorship of the Old and New Testaments*, 2 vols (London, 1877). For his routine in Oxford gaol, see Giles, *Diary*, pp. 323–4.

¹¹⁷ Giles, *Diary*, pp. 313, 342, and cf. 527 for Giles' continued interest in Campbell and his works.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 386–8, an encounter also noted at pp. 325, 496.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 410, 441.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 449–50.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 454, 460, 464, 491.

remarkably vague on the Christian mysteries. His retelling of the Gospels ends, indeed, without any mention of Christ's resurrection, save for a concluding remark that, having been 'again seen alive by his disciples ... He afterwards went up in to heaven and was seen no more'.¹²² Giles himself, by contrast, lived for a further thirty years, seen by a wide body of friends and enemies, unluckily optimistic, impossibly argumentative to the end.¹²³

In the meantime, at least two further outcomes flowed from the events of 1854–55, both of them with direct consequences for Giles' edition of Herbert of Bosham. The first concerned Giles' relations with Sir Thomas Phillipps. Here was more farce than tragedy. In the immediate aftermath of Giles' arrest, Phillipps appeared to offer support and a refuge for Mrs Giles and her family, should they care to stay in his house at Broadway.¹²⁴ Unfortunately, neither party to this arrangement fully understood the other's intentions. Giles and his wife believed that Phillipps was bent on kindness. Phillipps himself cared nothing for kindness but a great deal for Giles' printing press. He had always struggled to find a printer to operate his own press at Middle Hill. Giles, by contrast, had been followed into disgrace and exile by various of the Bampton girls. As soon as Phillipps learned that Giles' press was in London rather than ready to be moved from Bampton, he withdrew his offer. Not only this, but having agreed to purchase various manuscripts from Giles, including one described as an unknown work by Peter of Blois, he now turned from friend into accuser, demanding 'a better explanation than you have yet given' to justify Giles' false entries in the marriage register, and confessing himself:

Vexed to find that you have not secured to me a printer *as you promised*. If you had found that could not go on with your own press, the least you could have done would have been to transfer your printers to me, *after your promise*.¹²⁵

The italics here show quite clearly what Phillipps' intentions had been. Giles replied with a full account of the Pratt fiasco, and also with an undertaking to do what he could to persuade various of the Bampton girls to remove themselves to Broadway, even though Phillipps' press was a wooden one that the girls would lack the strength

¹²² J. A. Giles, *First Lessons in Bible and Gospel History for the Use of Beginners* (London, 1856), intended according to its preface 'for the use of little children to give them a short general view of the Jewish and Christian sacred History', noting the resurrection at pp. 77–8.

¹²³ For some indication of the lingering whiff of scandal, see Newman, *Diaries*, 21 (1864–65), p. 360, where Newman reports what he feared might be efforts by Giles to reprint Tract XC.

¹²⁴ Oxford, Bodleian Library ms. Phillipps-Robinson d.160 fols. 10r, 12r–17r, 33r–38r (Giles to Phillipps, 8 November 1854; Phillipps to Giles, 9 November, 1854; Mrs Giles to Phillipps, 9, 11 and 29 November 1854).

¹²⁵ Ibid. fol. 17v, 41r–42r (Phillipps to Giles, 10 and 20 December 1854). The manuscripts perhaps included the scrap-book of fragments once belonging to Giles, today BL ms. Egerton 3323, formerly Phillipps ms. 21162, parts of it (especially fol. 17) with Arras connections, perhaps recovered from amongst the detritus that both Phillipps and Giles saw in Arras itself.

to operate.¹²⁶ Even from prison, he continued to write to Phillipps, not least to ask whether he had as yet found the missing Arras leaves of Herbert of Bosham.¹²⁷ Phillipps' reply was phrased in the frosty third person:

Sir T(homas) P(hillipps) is very sorry for Dr Giles's misfortunes but regrets that Dr Giles's neglect of his promise to Sir TP prevents his acceding to Dr G's request, as it implies a neglect of those who wished to be his friends.¹²⁸

So, despite further overtures from Giles, their relations ended.¹²⁹ Giles was never to see the elusive Arras leaves.

Meanwhile, this carries us to the second outcome of Giles' disgrace: his determination to retain control over the Becket materials and to prevent their being republished by any other authority without his permission. He had reasonable cause for grievance here. In 1854, at more or less the same time as his struggles with Bishop Wilberforce, he learned that the Abbé Migne, long a subscriber to his editions of Becket, intended to use them as part of volume 190 of the 'Patrologia'. Giles, naively as ever, seems to have hoped to collaborate with Migne, not least in improving his earlier editions using manuscripts more recently discovered.¹³⁰ Migne, of course, acknowledged no such thing as a collaborator. He merely informed Giles that the 'Patrologia' was finished, and that the relevant volume (of which he claimed, mendaciously, that Giles' work formed only a small part) was already in print.¹³¹ Thus were Giles' endeavours pirated, without any profit to their author.

The scars here were still apparent, a decade later, when the officially sponsored Rolls Series first contemplated a new edition of Becket materials, to be edited by James Craigie Robertson. Giles already had grievances both against the Rolls Series and Robertson. As we have seen, in the 1840s Giles had appealed to the government of Sir Robert Peel for funds with which to complete a proper listing of Continental manuscripts relating to the history of medieval England. From 1862 onwards, precisely such a list was produced for the Rolls Series by Thomas Duffus Hardy. Far from offering proper acknowledgement to Giles, Hardy passed over the majority of Giles' work in silence, creating the impression that little or no serious work had been completed in Giles' field between the demise of Henry Petrie, Hardy's own mentor, and the emergence of the Rolls Series. The thirty-seven volumes of Giles' 'Patres' were dismissed in a single entry in Hardy's index. All the more galling, Hardy's

¹²⁶ Oxford, Bodleian Library ms. Phillipps-Robinson d.160 fols. 43r–44r (Giles to Phillipps, 21 December 1854).

¹²⁷ Ibid. c.531 fols. 95r–6r (Giles to Phillipps, from Oxford Castle, 10 April 1855): 'Can you find the missing leaves of Herbert of Bosham's Life of Beckett, that they may be copied into the French edition by Monsieur Migne of Paris?'

¹²⁸ Ibid. c.542 fol. 76r (Phillipps to Giles, 18 April 1855).

¹²⁹ Ibid. b.158 fols. 12r–13r (Giles to Phillipps, 14 May 1859).

¹³⁰ Above n.126 (Giles to Phillipps, 10 April 1855).

¹³¹ Giles, *Diary*, p. 326.

Catalogue was itself a work shot through with error and confusion.¹³² Robertson, meanwhile, had compounded the offence. In 1859 he had published a life of Becket necessarily heavily dependent upon Giles' editions of the lives and letters. Far from acknowledging Giles' hard work, however, Robertson had devoted several pages of his book to a denunciation of his predecessor.¹³³

Giles, so Robertson wrote, had entirely failed to clear up the chronological sequence of the Becket letters. On the contrary, by arranging his edition by author rather than date, and thereafter by the status of addressees, from clergy via kings to mere laymen, he had 'done all that was in his power to prevent the possibility of reading [the Becket correspondence] with ease or pleasure, and even to throw impediments in the way of understanding it'. Where Froude had corrected various mistakes in dating, Giles had piled error upon error. So much so that:

It really seems as if this editor were animated by a malignant desire to worry and baffle his readers – at once to multiply their toil and to mar the results of it.

Not only was Giles' edition disordered but it lacked any index. Adapting a remark made by Thomas Carlyle in his edition of the letters of Oliver Cromwell, Robertson accused Giles of belonging to the class of editors who edit 'as you edit waggon-loads of rubbish, by turning the waggon-upside-down'. In illustration, he then set about listing various of the more egregious slips in Giles' Latin. His hatchet work here was all the more vicious both for its reference to Lord Campbell as a previous biographer of Becket (a reference that in 1859 could not but be received by Giles and those who knew his circumstances as an allusion to the trial of 1855) and for its willingness to cite Migne's 'Patrologia' as a source of correction, here employing a notoriously pirated reprint as a stick with which to beat Giles, in reality the victim of Migne's piracy.¹³⁴

Certain of Robertson's cuts went deep. What, for example, was one to make of an editor who, as Giles had done, had allowed his own private thoughts to slip from the margins to the text of his edition. Here, for example, in a letter from St Thomas to the cardinal Hyacinthus, we find the (English) thoughts of Giles or his amanuensis, pining for their lunch, suddenly intruded within a passage of over-flowery (Latin prose): 'Sed vobis ut vobis voraciter *δύλλ*'. Migne and more recently Anne Duggan

¹³² T. D. Hardy, *Descriptive Catalogue of Materials Relating to the History of Great Britain and Ireland*, 2 vols. in 3 parts, RS, 26 (London, 1862–65), esp. i part 1, pp. xlvi–liii; i part 2, p. 858; Giles, *Diary*, p. 547.

¹³³ J. C. Robertson, *Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury* (London, 1859), pp. 168ff., and for Robertson, son of a Scots Presbyterian father, from 1846 vicar of Bekesbourne near Canterbury, and from 1859 canon of Canterbury Cathedral, see N. Vincent, 'William of Canterbury and Benedict of Peterborough: The Manuscripts, Date and Context of the Becket Miracle Collections', in *Hagiographie, idéologie et politique au Moyen Âge en Occident*, ed. E. Bozóky (Turnhout, 2012), 347–87, at pp. 352–4.

¹³⁴ Robertson, *Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury*, pp. 169–72, duly indexed in Robertson's book under 'Giles', also noting the much kinder if still condescending comments at pp. 4–5.

have correctly construed this as 'Sed nos, ut vobis veraciter dicimus'.¹³⁵ Robertson, apparently unable to comprehend the full horror of Giles' mistake, initially offered the far lamer 'Sed nos, ut vobis veraciter dico'.¹³⁶ Between 'dicimus', 'dico' and 'dull' stretch scholarly chasms that Giles, and for that matter Robertson, never found easy to leap.

There is no doubt that Giles was an impulsive and impatient editor. At the same time, there is equally no doubt that Robertson's attack, backed up in due course by further sallies from Edward Augustus Freeman, was intended to wound with intent. Robertson and his friends were determined that it should be Robertson rather than Giles who served as editor of the Rolls Series edition of Becket Materials: an undertaking whose editor could expect a far more handsome financial return than anything Giles had achieved from his eight volumes of *Lives and Letters*.¹³⁷ Here too, however, there were consequences for the modern reception of Becket that deserve more general acknowledgement. Precisely because he was determined to signal his departure from Giles and his methods, Robertson decided to begin his Rolls Series edition with a text that Giles himself had not published. Hence the decision that volume one of the Becket Materials should be devoted to the miracle stories collected by William of Canterbury. These were supplied to Robertson from a manuscript at Winchester College, unknown to Giles, and only discovered in 1854, Giles' *annus horribilis*, by the local antiquary (and eccentric), Francis Baigent. In proceeding thus Robertson himself fell into error, pushing ahead with an edition of William of Canterbury that would have been much better had he waited for the discovery of earlier manuscripts, in due course reported from Montpellier and more recently from Evreux.¹³⁸

Not only this, but in his determination to signal his break from Giles and his methods, Robertson 'improved' Giles' edition of Herbert of Bosham by abridgements that today render the Rolls Series edition in many ways less useful even than that by Giles. Giles had attempted, for example, to publish Herbert's 'Liber Melorum' complete and unabridged from the manuscript at Arras. The missing passages here were subsequently the subject of extended correspondence between Giles and Sir Thomas Phillipps. Although unable to locate the most significant witness (the leaves

¹³⁵ J. A. Giles, *Epistolae Sancti Thomae Cantuariensis*, i (in Giles, *The Works of Thomas Becket*, iii) (Oxford, 1845), p. 131 no. 51; *PL*, 190.513; *CTB*, i, 652 no. 141.

¹³⁶ Robertson, *Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury*, p. 172 n., subsequently brought into conformity with Migne, in Robertson's edition of *MTB*, vi, 215 no. 315.

¹³⁷ As is apparent from a letter from J. R. Green to Freeman, of April or May 1864: *Letters of John Richard Green*, ed. L. Stephen (London, 1901), pp. 144–5, noting in particular fears that the Treasury might oppose any proposal that smacked of 'reprinting things printed', but, as antidote, remarking that 'Robertson has (or rather an obscure friend of his has) disinterred "William of Canterbury's Life of Thomas" at Winchester'. For the financial profits that accrued to Rolls Series editors, including something approaching £6600 paid to Stubbs and £6400 to Luard, see M. D. Knowles, 'Great Historical Enterprises IV: The Rolls Series', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th ser. 11 (1961), 157–8, reprinted in M. D. Knowles, *Great Historical Enterprises* (London 1963), p. 131.

¹³⁸ Vincent, 'William of Canterbury and Benedict of Peterborough', esp. pp. 350–6. See Flanagan, below, pp. 156–67.

looted from Arras in 1828), Giles was at least enabled, thanks to another Phillipps manuscript, to repair some of the gaps in his edition of Herbert's 'Life' of St Thomas, collating his version (from Arras) with Phillipps' copy, today in the Bibliothèque royale at Brussels, and publishing the resulting corrections in 1851.¹³⁹ Robertson, by contrast, supplied merely selections from Giles' edition of the 'Liber Melorum', making no attempt whatsoever to repair the Arras gaps from the Phillipps leaves.¹⁴⁰ Likewise, Giles had done his best to supply a complete edition of Herbert's letters, as preserved in a unique manuscript at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. His progress here can be charted from his *Diary*, recording both his initial search of Cambridge collections, conducted in January 1844, and thereafter a much later visit to Corpus, made in June 1880, when he was once again permitted to handle the manuscript of Herbert that he had first seen nearly forty years before.¹⁴¹ Once again, as table 1 below shows, Robertson, in integrating these letters into the Rolls Series Becket Materials, whilst arranging them more sensibly than Giles, in chronological rather than authorial sequence, omitted a great deal that Giles had included. The consequence here is that, even today, Giles remains our chief means of access to no less than fourteen of Herbert's letters of which Giles published forty-two, Robertson a mere twenty-eight.

What are we to conclude from all this? Firstly that, as with any textual edition, it is often as important to understand the editor's circumstances as it is to know those of the text itself. Secondly, that from Froude in the 1830s, through to Giles a decade or more later, the post-Napoleonic years witnessed an admirable determination on the part of English historians to seek out materials until then sunk in Continental obscurity. So much so that, by the 1850s, virtually all of the materials for Herbert of Bosham in use today were already listed and, save for the Arras leaves, presented in print. However slapdash he may have been as an editor, Giles was an assiduous hunter down of manuscripts. It was in those areas where he himself did not venture, as for example in the edition of the Becket miracle collections, that the most serious gaps remained in knowledge of the manuscript transmission. Thirdly, it must by now be apparent that the time has come, after nearly two hundred years, to redefine and in large part re-edit the collections of Becket materials that first Giles and then Robertson bequeathed. Anne Duggan has already led the way, with her magnificent work on Becket's *Correspondence*. Even here, however, nearly a third of the Becket letters presented by Giles and Robertson remain accessible only in their nineteenth-century editions. Not only this, but the time has surely come for new editions of the lives, and especially of the Becket miracles. Such efforts must extend, before long,

¹³⁹ Phillipps' copy of Herbert's *Vita Sancti Thomae* c.1200 (from Aulne-sur-Sambre), once Phillipps ms. 4622, is today Brussels, Bibliothèque royale ms. IV.600, bound up with the *Miracula* of Benedict of Peterborough. For Giles' published corrections, see J. A. Giles, *Anecdota Bedae, Lanfranci et aliorum*, Caxton Society (Oxford, 1851), pp. xii–xiii, 97–113.

¹⁴⁰ Giles, *Herberti de Bosham ... Opera*, 2 vols., as vols. 7–8 of Giles' *Works of Thomas Becket* (Oxford, 1845–46), ii (Works, vol. 8), pp. 1–184; *MTB*, iii, 535–54. For the gaps repaired from Phillipps' ms., see above n.138.

¹⁴¹ Giles, *Diary*, pp. 234–5, 576, reporting that it was Dr Lamb, Master of Corpus, who had served as his host in 1844.

to Herbert's 'Life', 'Letters' and 'Liber Melorum'. The present collection of essays, if it is to serve any purpose, should surely point towards such future endeavours. If they are to prove successful, then best that they be carried out with full knowledge of the circumstances in which, thanks to excessive haste and inadequate time-keeping, John Allen Giles so notoriously yet so heroically failed.

Table 1 Herbert of Bosham's letters in the Giles and Robertson editions

Giles			MTB	Other
1	... <di>screcio tua serenissime	Herbert to (Henry count of Champagne)	-	(Smalley)
2	Quod tam crebris	Thomas to Pope	530	
3	Quum ego pauper	Thomas to Pope	537	
4	Etsi tibi pater sancte	Stephen bishop of Meaux to the Pope	240	
5	Quibus nunc potest	Herbert to William archbishop of Sens	653	
6	Etsi tanta cui scribitur	Herbert to the same	654	
7	Qua verborum facundia	Herbert to the same	652	
(8)	Sciatis (k)arissimi	Thomas to England's clergy	636	CTB 260
(9)	Gratias ago domino meo	Thomas to England's bishops	536	CTB 271
10	Quid nobis de vestra	Thomas to Roger of Worcester	670	
11	Quod nec tanta	Thomas to Robert of St-Omer	171	
12	Suscepi caritatis	Herbert to Nicholas of Mont-aux-Malades	271	
13	Quum ego arripiens	Herbert to prior Wibert	177	
(14)	Que pater in longinquo	Bishops of Canterbury province to Thomas	205	GFL 167
15	Expectans expectaui	Thomas to the bishops	221	
16	Vestre fraternitatis literas	Thomas to the bishops	222	
(17)	Fraternitatis vestrae scriptum	Thomas to the bishops	223	(CTB 95)
18	Quum ego arriperem	Herbert to William elect Chartres	175	
19	Quod mihi vel nunc	Herbert to Gregory abbot Malmesbury	176	
20	Omne gaudium existimo	Thomas to the Pope	156	
(21)	Inter scribendum haec	Herbert to Henry bishop Bayeux	-	
22	Expectans expectaui promissi	Abbot of Soissons to Herbert	-	

23	Lectus dignationis tuae sermo	Herbert to the Abbot of Soissons	-	
24	Quod impraesentiarum aures	Henry count of Champagne to Pope	280	
25	Quia semel coepi	Matthew precentor Sens to Pope	281	
26	Qui quotidie cogor	Thomas to cardinal Raymond	251	
27	Gloria in excelsis	Thomas to Louis VII	247	
28	Ex aliorum relatione	Thomas to Waldemar of Denmark	365	
29	Literas caritatis vestrae	Herbert to William abbot Vézelay	-	
30	Qui quotidie cogor	Herbert to Bartholomew bishop of Exeter	-	
31	Carissime mihi in Cristo	Herbert to Baldwin archdeacon of Exeter	-	
32	Etsi vobis pater sancte	Bishop of Senlis to Pope	241	
(33)	Inter scribendum haec	William archbishop Sens to Pope	735	
34	Quod tantae maiestatis	Herbert to Pope	798	
35	Quoties vel membranula	Herbert to John of Salisbury	-	
36	Gloria in excelsis Deo	Herbert to Gunther	-	
37	Nos qui teneros	William archbishop Sens to abbot Vézelay	-	
38	Omnes nouimus quod omnes	Herbert to John bishop of Poitiers	770	
39	Id in primis scribo	Herbert to cardinals	769	
40	Ego Herbertus sanctitatae	Herbert to the Pope	779	
41	Deuotionis tuae literas	Pope to Herbert	778	
42	Cognito quod horum	Herbert to Hugh bishop of Durham	-	
(43)	Ne in dubium	Cardinals to Henry II	772	
43a	... (n)obis velitis quam citius	?William bishop of Ely to Herbert	-	
44	Celsitudinis vestrae qua debuit	?Herbert to William bishop of Ely	-	
45	Gratissima vestrae consolationis	William bishop of Ely to Herbert	-	
46	Magnam michi	Arnulf of Lisieux to Thomas	(162)	(CTB 45) (Arn 42)

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