

# *What's in a Booklist? Institutional Formation and the Creation of Lincoln Cathedral's First Catalogue*

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In the long and messy history of organizing Lincoln's cathedral library, Rodney Thomson, in his 1989 *Catalogue of the Manuscripts of Lincoln Cathedral Chapter Library*, produced apparently for the first time a comprehensive and navigable catalogue of Lincoln's manuscripts. One booklist survives from before 1200 listing a total of 136 books, of which 39 are known to be extant.<sup>117</sup> The earliest part of the list dates to about 1148. By this time Lincoln's first two bishops, Remigius and Robert Bloet had already come and gone, Alexander the Magnificent was at the end of his career, and Robert de Chesney would shortly take his place on the episcopal throne. Thomson notes that the cathedral collection prior to 1148 is rather small compared to those at cathedrals like Durham and Salisbury, whose book collections had already become fairly substantial by 1100.<sup>118</sup> He concludes his introduction to the old catalogue (Cat. Vet.) with two points warning against 'making too much, a priori, of the encomia about Lincoln as a centre for theological scholarship at the turn of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.'<sup>119</sup>

- The library's modest size, the absence of a co-ordinated programme of acquisition and of even single copies of obvious textbooks, let alone multiple sets, do not reflect an environment of enthusiastic teaching and learning.<sup>120</sup>
- [The contents of the catalogue suggest] that teaching and learning at the cathedral were neither highly institutionalized nor continuous. They were probably dependent upon the chance presence of one or two chancellors with such interests and reputations.<sup>121</sup>

While acknowledging Thomson's warning, I would like to explore some possible alternatives to his conclusions. When Thomson discusses the books in the collection he mainly speaks of trends rather than irregularities. He recognizes 'two classes' of texts, which he says are in line with what 'one would expect at a secular

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<sup>117</sup> RODNEY M THOMSON. *Catalogue of the Manuscripts of Lincoln Cathedral Chapter Library*. Woodbridge, Suffolk: Published on Behalf of the Dean and Chapter of Lincoln by D.S. Brewer, 1989. xiii. Booklist, fig. 1.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid*, xiv.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid*, xv.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid*, xv.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid*, xvi.

cathedral: ten [volumes] are collections of sermons, and four, grouped together in the inventory are on canon law'.<sup>122</sup> Although Thomson cites the lack of continuity in any particular discipline as an important factor in determining Lincoln's intellectual tradition, recent research suggests that 'continuous' interest in any subject, and in particular the study of law, must be understood within the context of the medieval cathedral school. In his 2007 study on the development of medieval legal practice, Stanley Chodorow found that law libraries and legal schools were not well-organized by the time the Cat. Vet. was created around 1148.<sup>123</sup> Even a collection of four or five volumes at that time could indicate the presence of sustained legal study.<sup>124</sup> And the notion of a well-defined legal tradition did not exist in any recognizable form:

In the twelfth century the study of law was not organized institutionally, but rather by schools that individual masters would found at given institutions. Thus, with the great law institutions of the twelfth century we are really looking at popular schools whose masters were around long enough to attract people who could eventually fill their positions, thus maintaining an interest in law at those institutions.<sup>125</sup>

At this early stage of its development the study of law was restricted primarily to cathedral collections and their *magistri scholarum*, and a duration of as short as thirteen years for any particular cathedral 'school' would have constituted a significant amount of time.<sup>126</sup>

Thomson's focus on continuity may also miss some valuable discontinuities that hint at a more vibrant intellectual community. To take a simple example, there are several glossed books and classical texts which Thomson doesn't mention in any significant way. What might these tell us about attitudes toward learning and education at the cathedral? What requirements need to be met in order to say that an English Cathedral in the twelfth century was or was not a vibrant intellectual centre? Lincoln was not a large producer of contemplative theology during the period, but are there other ways of understanding the contributions of particular religious houses to the culture of English learning? This paper will argue that Thomson's conclusions about the educational environment (1 and 2 above) depend too much on the numerical book-count in the Cat. Vet. and focus too little on the book list as a cultural document that can provide hints about the intellectual environment of the time. Incorporating biographical material concerning the bishops of Lincoln serves to highlight their role in establishing traditions of specialized intellectual pursuit outside the scope of pure theology, with a particular focus on practical knowledge, or knowledge of action. The cathedral at

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<sup>122</sup> THOMSON, xiv.

<sup>123</sup> STANLEY CHODOROW, 'Law Libraries and the Formation of the Legal Profession in the Late Middle Ages'. *Tarlton Law Library Legal History Series* 1st ser. 7 (2007), 4.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid*, 3.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid*, 4.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid*, 4.

Lincoln may not deserve ‘too much...encomia,’ but it nonetheless provided diverse educational opportunities for some of the best historical, legal and political minds of the century and attracted intellects from both England and the continent through their own reputation for knowledge and patronage.

The booklist appears on folio 2 of Lincoln MS. 1 (A.1.2.), the first volume of a two-volume bible which Henry of Huntingdon’s father Archdeacon Nicholas donated to the cathedral, probably at his death around 1110.<sup>127</sup> The list has two primary sections. The first primary section is itself divided into two sections. The first of these is a list of forty-four books found in the cathedral’s ‘armarium,’ essentially a large chest, shortly after Bishop Alexander appointed Hamo as chancellor around 1148.<sup>128</sup> The second is Treasurer Jordan’s list of 26 service-books, which probably also originally dates from around 1148, as he and Hamo were appointed around the same time.<sup>129</sup> The second primary section is a list, in multiple hands, concerning the donations (*de dono*) of different dignitaries of the church from the time of Alexander’s death (on or before February 20 1148) into the thirteenth century. The hand in the first primary section is a fairly consistent proto-gothic, with one obvious exception above the line beginning ‘*Reliq.*,’ where it looks as if someone has written in two patristic holdings.<sup>130</sup> The list itemizing Alexander’s gift to the cathedral, beginning column two, is written in a hand more consistent with that of the first primary section in column one, and thus would probably predate the *de dono* of Gerald of Wales listed at the end of column A in a different hand. This makes sense of the two major temporal divisions beginning columns A and B:

*Quando hamoni Cancellario Cancellaria data fuit...*

*Postquam ut Cancellaria data fuit magistro hamoni...*<sup>131</sup>

Since a great deal of the information available concerning the intellectual environment at Lincoln Cathedral during the twelfth century depends in some form on this single folio, I will begin by taking a critical look at its content as well as several of its structural features. Rodney Thomson is primarily interested in questions having to do, obviously enough, with cataloguing. His basic goal is to make connections between the books mentioned on the list and those still present in Lincoln’s library. Besides Thomson, other scholars have made extensive use of the booklist’s contents in order to make connections between Lincoln’s intellectual

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<sup>127</sup> THOMSON, 3. I use Thomson’s catalogue when referring to extant books still housed at Lincoln Cathedral.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, xiii.

<sup>129</sup> ‘Treasurers’, *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1066-1300: volume 3: Lincoln* (1977), p 18–20.

<<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=33564&strquery=Hamo>> [accessed 21 March 2013].

<sup>130</sup> The hand looks similar to the hand that appears at the bottom of column A, potentially suggesting a date later than 1187.

<sup>131</sup> THOMSON, Pl. 3.

culture and its more famous personages.<sup>132</sup> Diana Greenway, for instance, employs many of the titles from the booklist to describe where Henry of Huntingdon might have obtained his knowledge of the *artes*, classical mythology, military tactics, and canon law.<sup>133</sup> Greenway's priority is to shed light on the intellectual background of the twelfth century historian. Because these scholars are approaching the book list with very different motivations, their results are understandably varied, but I think it is important to point out that their interests in the booklist inevitably limit their description in some way or another. And they should. Spending a lot of time describing books no longer extant wouldn't make much sense to Thomson's project, just as making correlations between booklist books and current library holdings would be useless to Greenway. As important as these limitations are to constructing a coherent and economical scholarly narrative, they can also conceal the value of the booklist as itself a cultural product of twelfth-century England.

To begin, I ask a simple question: 'why a booklist?' What can the very fact that a booklist appears around 1148 tell us about institutional developments that are taking place during this period? The first lines of the booklist, 'Quando hamoni Cancellario Cancellaria data fuit. & libroru(m)Cura comissa ; hos In armario invenit libros. 7 sub custodia sua recepit,'<sup>134</sup> suggest that Hamo the chancellor oversaw the production of the inventory, or perhaps made it himself, and that the inventory occurred sometime before the death of Alexander, since Alexander appointed him chancellor. This is significant because it turns out that Hamo was the first dignitary to be given that title at Lincoln cathedral.<sup>135</sup> The development of the position of cathedral chancellor is obscure, but the first English churchmen to be called by that title were the third cathedral dignitaries at Salisbury and Lincoln, two organizations with familial ties.<sup>136</sup> It is thought that the chancellorship came to coincide with and eventually replace the traditional position imported from the continent of *magister scholarum*.<sup>137</sup> This was the title of Henry of Huntingdon's school master at Lincoln and was a title also given to other dignitaries before Hamo.<sup>138</sup> The chancellorship was thus the head of the schools as well as the primary librarian. And according to Kathleen Edwards,

the first half of the twelfth century, when the change of title normally took place, was also the period when the growth of the chapter's business and the multiplication of official correspondence was causing the *scholasticus*, at those churches in which he acted as the chapter's secretary, to devote much more of this attention than he

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<sup>132</sup> cf. XENIA MURATOVA, 'Bestiaries: an Aspect of Medieval Patronage', in F. H. Thompson, ed., *Art and Patronage in the English Romanesque* (London: Society of Antiquaries of London, 1986), 118-144.

<sup>133</sup> HENRY and DIANA E. GREENWAY, *Historia Anglorum: The History of the English People* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996), xxix-xl.

<sup>134</sup> THOMSON, Pl. 3.

<sup>135</sup> KATHLEEN EDWARDS, *The English Secular Cathedrals in the Middle Ages: A Constitutional Study with Special Reference to the Fourteenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1967), 179.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid*, 179.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid*, 179-80.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid*, 180.

had previously done to his secretarial duties. These duties were similar in character to those of contemporary royal and other chancellors, and so it was natural for him to assume a title similar to theirs.

Since there is no precedent for the position of chancellor in Normandy until after the first half of the twelfth century, Edwards argues that we must look for alternatives to a continental derivation.<sup>139</sup> She suggests an origin at Salisbury, but Lincoln is clearly the first to record a cathedral dignitary with this position, about seven years before Salisbury.<sup>140</sup> I would argue that while Normandy is indeed not a viable option, other continental examples such as Chartres, Paris, and Laon would have been available. Bishop Alexander studied at the cathedral school of Laon in the second decade of the twelfth century and Laon had already had a chancellor position for some time, not to mention the fact that Anselm held the position when Alexander was studying there.<sup>141</sup> It seems perfectly plausible that Alexander would have wanted to model his library on that of his prestigious alma mater. If this is the case, the booklist, in addition to being a catalogue, may also serve as a kind of foundational document helping to establish the duties of the position within the context of the still developing Anglo-Norman church.

The motivation to organize the contents of the library could also have been driven to varying degrees by broader administrative efforts to render large bodies of people and knowledge manageable. With the Domesday Book being the most far reaching example of the Anglo-Norman monarchy's effort to keep track of its subjects and their taxable possessions, the booklist could provide information about the valuable literary holdings of various monastic and secular houses. These bishops, so close to the Norman monarchy, would have recognized and likely acted upon such pressures. Robert Bloet, Lincoln's second bishop, was a royal chancellor and justiciar for King Henry who developed a reputation as an keenly organized legal mind and would have been the first to really foster a concentration on law, both canon and civil, at the Lincoln school. Lincoln's lower dignitaries begin to show signs of legal expertise beginning with Bloet's succession, suggesting that this kind of knowledge was being encouraged before the turn of the twelfth century.<sup>142</sup> He sent many of his canons to study canon law under Ivo of Chartres, and presumably these canons would have come back to teach at Lincoln. Greenway suggests that Henry of Huntingdon might have been among them. Books of canon law, including 'two copies of Ivo's *Decretum*, the 'Lanfrancian' collection, '*Statuta Romanorum Pontificum*', and '*Decreta Pontificum*' (possibly a second copy of the first part of the Lanfrancian collection), represent one of the two largest groups of texts in the 1148 booklist, and multiple copies of the same

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<sup>139</sup> Ibid, 176.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid, 183.

<sup>141</sup> JAMES R. GINTHER, *The Westminster Handbook to Medieval Theology* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2009), 145.

<sup>142</sup> GREENWAY, xxix.

work is an indication that these books served as reference materials for a 'small [school] of legal studies'.<sup>143</sup> In F.M. Stenton's analysis,

The earliest episcopal documents follow very closely the general lines of a royal writ. Nothing can be more concise than the language in which Robert Bloet, bishop of Lincoln, confirms one of the first gifts made to the priory of St. Andrew's, Northampton.<sup>144</sup>

Unlike other institutions where 'free composition' began to dictate the form of the episcopal writ, Lincoln maintained the tradition of the 'simpler style' that Bloet had established.<sup>145</sup> The significance of this for the booklist is that while it appears primarily as a catalogue of the cathedral's books, it also has some characteristics of a legal document, recording transactions and gifts to the cathedral, exposing hints of an established culture of literary exchange.

The first point to make in this regard is that the first section of the inventory listed in Lincoln MS. 1 is itself a copy from an earlier document dating to some time before 1148, when Bishop Alexander appointed Hamo as chancellor.<sup>146</sup> It thus represents a snapshot taken of the 'foundational' collection prior to Alexander's death, which was then recopied c. 1160.<sup>147</sup> This supposedly still image, however, shows signs of motion. One Master Gerard has lost a copy of Boethius but replaced it with a book containing Vegetius' *De Re Militari* and Eutropius.<sup>148</sup> And a Master Reginald provides one volume of a six-volume passional to make up for a book of saints' lives he had misplaced.<sup>149</sup> While Thomson uses this evidence to make an offhand comment about irresponsible canons it nonetheless presents a problem for the stability of the book list. Were these lost books lost in 1148 or were they only recently lost in 1160 and copied into Lincoln MS. 1 to note changes that had occurred to the original in the ensuing twelve or so years? Looking at the manuscript itself may reveal a clue. When the scribe cites the exchange of Vegetius' *De Re Militari* and Eutropius for the lost copy of Boethius,<sup>150</sup> the two lines containing information about the person who lost the Boethius occur as a noticeably smaller script,<sup>151</sup> with a marked shift to a primarily curved 'd'. This may suggest that the scribe has noted a change in the original catalogue and left space for further discovery of the original book's whereabouts. This would perhaps indicate that the loss of the Boethius had occurred after the original cataloguing effort, between 1148 and 1160. Whether the exchange was new or retained from the

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<sup>143</sup> STANLEY CHODOROW, 'Law Libraries and the Formation of the Legal Profession in the Late Middle Ages', *Tarlton Law Library Legal History Series* 1st ser. 7 (2007), 3. Also cf. GREENWAY, xxxiii, THOMSON, xiv.

<sup>144</sup> F.M. STENTON, 'Acta Episcoporum'. *Cambridge Historical Journal*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (1929), 11.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid*, 11.

<sup>146</sup> Fasti <<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=33563&stquary=Hamo>> [accessed 21 March 2013].

<sup>147</sup> THOMSON, xiii.

<sup>148</sup> GREENWAY, xxxii, or Cat. Vet. 23 (not extant).

<sup>149</sup> GREENWAY, xxxii, or CV 18a (NE).

<sup>150</sup> Column I, ll. 26-27 from the to Beg. 'nosticon[...]'.

<sup>151</sup> Column I, ll. 28-29 from the to Beg. 'qd magist[...]'.

1148 catalogue, there are a number of legal reasons to retain or note documentation of restitutions. Concerning a bestiary associated with Lincoln cathedral, Xenia Muratova notes that book theft was common enough to drive one scribe to threaten excommunication as punishment for anyone caught stealing his book.<sup>152</sup> The kind of documentation witnessed in this booklist would help to protect against such accusations, and underscores the unassuming yet efficient legal notation prevalent among Lincoln dignitaries and canons.

The records of lost books may also be able to tell us something about rates of exchange and a recognition of the value of individual books during this period. Why, for instance, was one volume of a six volume set of *Passionals* seen to be equivalent to a manuscript containing the *Lives of John the Almoner and St. Faith*? Or why was book of *Vegetius and Eutropius* considered a proper repayment for the loss of a *Boethius*? Even this small sample suggests an understanding of thematic equivalence, where saints' lives are exchanged for saints' lives and two classical texts on military and historical topics for one book of philosophy. In the order of the books listed the catalogue at least initially seems to follow the standard hierarchy of content in medieval library catalogues, beginning with the bible and patristic texts, moving subsequently to works of canon law and commentaries, and then into various pagan texts. Whether this is an indication of monetary value is difficult to say, but it does suggest that the list may be structurally organized according to the predominant Christian system of valuation, and that exchange value might have followed these accepted hierarchies.

These book exchanges also raise questions about the libraries of the canons and other clergy members with their own book collections. Thomson mentions that Philip Harcourt, who was dean of Lincoln c. 1130-40, owned a collection of around 140 books, which he gifted to the Abbey at Le Bec after his death.<sup>153</sup> There were more books in Harcourt's private collection than there were in the entire book list by the time of Robert de Chesney's death in 1166. While Harcourt's numbers may be an exception, it nonetheless highlights that the books recorded on the *Cat. Vet.* are part of a much larger network of literature that Lincoln dignitaries would have had access to. Remigius appointed Albinus of Anjou as *magister scholarum* from the cathedral school at Angers some time before the bishop's death in 1092. According to Greenway,

Angers was an important intellectual centre in the eleventh century, with schools, libraries, and scriptoria in the cathedral and religious houses. And as Kathleen Edwards pointed out, it is quite likely that Remigius chose to recruit, as master of the schools at Lincoln, a canon trained at the flourishing cathedral school of Angers.<sup>154</sup>

I think it unlikely that Albinus would have come to Lincoln empty-handed, and there is some evidence to suggest that he indeed came equipped with some works of his teachers. Greenway has found that particular rhetorical and metrical

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<sup>152</sup> MURATOVA, 'Bestiaries: an Aspect of Medieval Patronage', 119.

<sup>153</sup> THOMSON, xv.

<sup>154</sup> GREENWAY, xxx-xxxi.

techniques of the poet and hagiographer Marbod show up in the poetry of Henry of Huntingdon, whom Albinus educated in the first decade of the 1100s.<sup>155</sup> Albinus would likely have trained under Marbod at Angers before Remigius appointed him *magister* at Lincoln, so some textual transmission seems likely in this case.<sup>156</sup> The evidence of the book exchanges recorded in the booklist, of Albinus, and of dean Harcourt suggests that the cathedral school dignitaries were often in possession of book collections that were readily available for use in the cathedral schools.

In the second section of the booklist there is also reason to rethink the number of manuscripts available at Lincoln by or c. 1148. As Diana Greenway notes, 'the mid-twelfth-century catalogue of the books in the 'armarium', drawn up when Master Hamo was appointed as the first chancellor in the mid-1140s, reveals a small collection, of only forty-four titles'.<sup>157</sup> These forty-four, added to the 26 volumes in the care of treasurer Jordanus, give us an initial total of 70 volumes. The later list of books donated to the cathedral after 1148 lists the gifts of bishops Alexander and Robert de Chesney along with those of many other canons and lower dignitaries associated with the cathedral. One thing to keep in mind is that these gifts most often occur at the donor's death and represent anywhere between all and a small portion of the books in the donor's possession. Robert de Chesney is known to have commissioned a Digest of Justinian that shows up nowhere on the 'Cat. Vet.' Many of these donors would have been at the peak of their careers when the scribe first compiled the booklist in 1148, and there is little reason to think that at least some of these books, especially those of Alexander, Robert de Chesney, and other dignitaries associated specifically with Lincoln, would have been available before or shortly after that date. Thus if we leave out all of the donations of the lower dignitaries, taking only Alexander's gift of seven books and Robert de Chesney's gift of ten books (with the assumption that Robert's collection would have grown throughout his career), and add it to the list of 70 books from the 1148 list, that amounts to between 77-87 manuscripts available at Lincoln in the years immediately following 1148.

We know too, that miscellanies constituted a significant part of the Lincoln collection, and that often the scribe has recorded only the primary work in the manuscript. Of the twenty-seven extant manuscripts we know to have been in the possession of Lincoln Cathedral in the twelfth century, five contain works by authors other than those listed in the Cat. Vet., and three contain multiple works by the same author, also unacknowledged in the old catalogue.<sup>158</sup> It is also reasonable to think that bishops Alexander and Robert de Chesney would have possessed copies of the several works dedicated to them, which puts the *Historia Anglorum*, *Prophetiae Merlini*, *Vita Merlini*, and perhaps a copy of the *Historia Regum Britanniae* among the bishops' holdings between 1129 and 1166.<sup>159</sup> All of these had

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<sup>155</sup> Ibid, xxxvi.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid, xxxi.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid, xxxii.

<sup>158</sup> Lincoln MSS. 1 (A.1.2.), 13 (A.1.26), 16, 107 (A.4.15), 134 (C.5.10), 141 (C.1.1), 145 (C.1.6).

<sup>159</sup> Henry completes the first version of *Historia Anglorum* by 1129. 1166 is the date of Robert de Chesney's death.

been completed by the 1160 copying of the 'Cat. Vet.' and all but one<sup>160</sup> were in circulation by the time the first list was taken down in 1148.

In addition to the questions that arise concerning the recopying of the booklist, the snapshot has also been understood to represent the collection of the cathedral up to c. 1148 when it was first created. Both Thomson and Greenway use the 1160 copy of the catalogue to claim that Lincoln Cathedral's book collection was considerably smaller than others at the time. Thomson bases his claim that 'teaching and learning at the cathedral were neither highly institutionalized nor continuous' primarily on the evidence of this list. While book production at Lincoln does not seem to have been as vigorous as at places like Salisbury and Durham, it was nonetheless continuous. This is evidenced by an early group of extant books associated with Lincoln MS. 1 that bear stylistic and decorative resemblances indicative of some scribal consistency.<sup>161</sup> There is no conclusive evidence as to whether or not this constituted a Lincoln scriptorium, but even the prospect that there might have been invites us to think more about broader historical obstacles that would have contributed to slower production.

Remigius' tenure saw several setbacks. Shortly after his appointment as bishop of Dorchester, a 'royal writ claiming the authority of pope Alexander and his legates, as well as of Lanfranc and the English bishops, ordered the transfer of the see to Lincoln and augmented its possessions there and elsewhere'.<sup>162</sup> While Remigius is thought to have brought some books with him to Lincoln, for the most part it seems that he had to start from scratch.<sup>163</sup> In addition to this he had to build a cathedral, which wasn't completed until after his death in 1092. Throughout his time as bishop he was in the middle of fights between Canterbury and York concerning jurisdiction of the Lincoln see. These factors could all have contributed to a slow start in book production under the first bishop of Lincoln. This is not to say, however, that Remigius was lacking motivation. On the contrary, he was likely to have had scholarly training of the highest caliber. But to get at his architectural interests it is necessary to go back to his pre-Conquest position as almoner at the abbey of Fécamp. Remigius served under John of Ravenna, who had assumed the abbacy after his own schoolmaster, the Italian architect, writer and reformer, William of Volpiano became unable to fulfil the requirements of his post. Abbot William was involved in the design and construction of some of the continent's most well-known Romanesque ecclesiastical structures, including those at Mont Saint Michel, Dijon Cathedral and the Abbey at Saint Germain des Prés.<sup>164</sup> As Frank Barlow notes, Remigius,

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<sup>160</sup> This was the *Vita Merlini*, GEOFFREY and BASIL FULFORD LOWTHER CLARKE, *Life of Merlin: Vita Merlini* (Cardiff: University of Wales [for] the Language and Literature Committee of the Board of Celtic Studies, 1973), vii.

<sup>161</sup> THOMSON, xiv.

<sup>162</sup> H. E. J. COWDREY, 'Remigius (d. 1092)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/23361>> [accessed 18 March 2013].

<sup>163</sup> THOMSON, xiv.

<sup>164</sup> 'Structurae'. *William of Volpiano*. <<http://en.structurae.de/persons/data/index.cfm?ID=d002713>> [accessed 22 March 2013] and Véronique Gazeau. 'Guillaume de Volpiano en Normandie :

like Herbert Losinga later, had served under Abbot John of Ravenna (i.e. John of Fécamp), and so inherited the Italian cultural legacy which had been handed on by William of Volpiano. When he moved his see to Lincoln he built a new church which he constituted on the model of Rouen and in which he established the new learning.<sup>165</sup>

It is Remigius who appoints the first *magister scholarum* Albinus of Anjou, notable as the *magister* of Henry of Huntingdon and probably also Robert of Gloucester, also on the continental example of the cathedral school there.<sup>166</sup> In Remigius' career we see a highly educated man putting his architectural and scholastic knowledge to work by creating structures and educational positions that have all the characteristics of continental learning, only exercised in architectural and institutional rather than scribal output.

While King Stephen's arrest of Alexander in 1139 could have also contributed to a hiatus in developing the book collection, the case is rather difficult because Alexander's arrest seems more than anything to have changed his association with the royal court and secular patronage. Within a few months of his release from prison he became much more involved with monastic patronage and church matters, which could very well have resulted in a keener interest in the church's book collection. Yet a factor that could be implicated in the production of the booklist is the fire that burnt through the cathedral in 1141, causing the roof to collapse and badly damaging other structural features.<sup>167</sup> Within a few years Alexander had rebuilt the roof with stone instead of wood. Not only is it probable that book production would have fallen in priority immediately following this period, but it may very well be that some books were lost in the fire. Hamo's booklist could thus have been affected by several external factors that would have had little to do with the desire to create a thriving hub of learning.

Finally, I want to think a bit more broadly in terms of how each of Lincoln's first four bishops contributed to a tradition of learning and patronage that does indeed have grounds to call itself one of the major centres of learning in Anglo-Norman England. The claim was first made in Xenia Muratova's book article, 'Bestiaries: and Aspect of Medieval Patronage,' but was subsequently challenged by Rodney Thomson on the grounds that the collection was lacking major patristic and theological texts.<sup>168</sup> While it will pale in comparison to some of the great theological establishments of the day, the manner in which it pales is worth considering.<sup>169</sup> The written output of these bishops comprises primarily episcopal

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état des questions'. CRAHM-UMR 6577, Université de Caen Basse-Normandie  
<<http://www.unicaen.fr/mrsh/craham/revue/tabularia/print.php?dossier=dossier2&file=04ga zeau.xml>> [accessed 22 March 2013].

<sup>165</sup> BARLOW, *English Church*, 61. Architectural evidence suggests a similarly continental story that Lanfranc sent the architect who designed the cathedrals at Caen and Canterbury. See DOROTHY M OWEN, *A History of Lincoln Minster* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994), 16.

<sup>166</sup> GREENWAY, xxx–xxxii.

<sup>167</sup> For a discussion of the date of the fire, see OWEN, *A History of Lincoln Minster*, 22.

<sup>168</sup> MURATOVA, 131–34; and THOMSON, xv.

<sup>169</sup> THOMSON, 23.

*acta*, and is not generally considered to be of any literary or theological value. But does the lack of written output imply that Lincoln was an intellectual backwater, or is there another way to conceptualize the tradition at Lincoln? Might it be possible, in light of their careers, to think about the intellectual tradition at Lincoln as one of action rather than contemplation, one in which praxis was the fundamental feature? I would like to suggest two primary intellectual trajectories for the bishops of Lincoln. The first is one of patronage. Remigius, Alexander, and Robert de Chesney all oversaw the building of at least two major establishments connected to the diocese, not the least of which was the cathedral itself. Perhaps more important to Lincoln's modern reputation is a strong tradition of historiographical patronage that Alexander and Robert de Chesney inaugurated. The second is juridical. All four bishops, although most notably Robert Bloet, Alexander, and Robert de Chesney, were powerful and innovative legal officials that helped to organize Anglo-Norman administrative and legal practices in both civil and ecclesiastical contexts.

The culmination of both of these traditions occurs in the episcopacy of Alexander. In his tenure we see a continuing interest in legal affairs alongside a renewal of the scholastic goals of Remigius. In a time of much ethnic and political strife, he showed himself to be committed to cross-cultural understanding.<sup>170</sup> Early in his career as bishop he patronized Henry of Huntingdon and Geoffrey of Monmouth, and he brought the Italian scholar master Guido (Wido) to his court to teach scripture to the lower clergy.<sup>171</sup> He was also a patron to Gilbert of Sempringham and helped Christina of Markyate win her legal case not to marry and to become a recluse.<sup>172</sup> Alexander's patronage of Henry of Huntingdon and Geoffrey of Monmouth is well known. But what is it about history writing in particular that became so special to and so associated with Lincoln cathedral? Part of this seems to have had to do with the Anarchy, when Robert of Gloucester was no longer available to patronize Geoffrey of Monmouth. With Alexander being so close to the royal family, and about the same age as Robert of Gloucester himself, there would have been ample opportunity for Alexander to take over the Earl's patronage responsibilities.<sup>173</sup> But beyond this, it might be conjectured that history writing actually appealed to the kind of intellectual and juridical interests of the cathedral itself. Somewhere between theology and chronicle, histories, which in John of Salisbury's words 'demonstrat[e] the workings of Providence on Earth,' embody that scholarship of activity that bishops like Alexander and his successors would have appreciated. His successor Robert II carried on the tradition of legal expertise put in place by Robert Bloet, and his juridical reputation was held in high

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<sup>170</sup> GREENWAY, lvii.

<sup>171</sup> BRIAN GOLDING, 'Wealth and Artistic Patronage at Twelfth-Century St. Albans', F. H. THOMPSON, ed., *Art and Patronage in the English Romanesque* (London: Society of Antiquaries of London, 1986), 110.

<sup>172</sup> DAVID M. SMITH, 'Alexander (d. 1148)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/324>> [accessed 22 March 2013].

<sup>173</sup> GREENWAY, xxx.

enough esteem to attract the young Richard Barre to join legal practice.<sup>174</sup> Both of these examples demonstrate that while contemplative theological productions were minimal until after Robert de Chesney's time, an emphasis on the application of scholarship to practice began with Remigius and Robert Bloet and only grew with the succession of the next two bishops.

None of this activity can be found in the booklist, and yet it is the booklist that has been the basis of many claims for and against the intellectual environment at Lincoln in the twelfth century. Of course we should not diminish the value of the booklist in examining Lincoln's early culture of learning, but instead use the booklist a little more critically than we have in the past to think about the quality of the scholarly community at Lincoln, and we should consider more external evidence to see where it conflicts and coincides with evidence from the booklist. As Rodney Thomson recognizes, we should be careful not to make too much of the encomia about the level of scholarship at Lincoln in the twelfth century, but it would also serve us well not to dismiss it without further investigation.

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<sup>174</sup> RALPH V. TURNER, *Judges, Administrators, and the Common Law in Angevin England* (London: Hambledon, 1994), 182-185.

