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Behind Every Man(uscript) Is a Woman: Social Networks, Christine de Pizan, and Westminster Abbey Library, MS 21

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Abstract

London, Westminster Abbey Library, MS 21, a French lyric anthology dating to the mid-fifteenth century, bears the names of two male figures. Thomas Scales (c. 1399–1460), an English war commander, had his name and personal motto elaborately incorporated into the explicit of Christine de Pizan’s *Epistre au dieu d’amours*. Decades later, a Tudor reader added the name “Wyllam courtney” to the manuscript’s margins. These two male names, physically visible on the surface of the manuscript, represent stable points of provenance data that provide important information about the use, meaning, and circulation of this medieval miscellany and the texts it contains. But how did Westminster 21 move from a fifteenth-century war commander to a Tudor courtier? A close examination of Westminster 21’s texts and marginalia reveals an invisible social network of female book owners undergirding the male-dominated historical record for this manuscript. This study traces a direct line between the two recorded male owners of Westminster 21 and finds that the compilation passes through several generations of women who married into homosocial male networks and built them up through their literary activities and social standing. By piecing together the available evidence surrounding Westminster 21’s male owners, we can produce an outline of the absent female presences in the history of this material artifact. We demonstrate that visible transnational, horizontal reading networks of men are invisibly and transhistorically structured by vertical female reading networks, rendering women’s reading practices integral to late medieval literary culture as a whole, rather than separable from men’s reading practices.

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Keywords

manuscript circulation; social and textual networks; women readers and book owners; gendered reading practices; Christine de Pizan; manuscript miscellany; Anglo-French literary culture; French in Tudor England; marginalia; household pedagogy

LONDON, WESTMINSTER ABBEY LIBRARY, MS 21 is a French lyric anthology of largely love poetry with several male names in its marginalia. The compilation's earliest mark of ownership, contemporary or near-contemporary with the manuscript's production in the early–mid-fifteenth century, belongs to Thomas Scales, who was a commander under John of Bedford in France in the 1420s and 1430s. Pointing to the presence of another name, “Strelley,” elsewhere in the manuscript's margins, Carol Meale has suggested that the manuscript is linked to Bedford's entourage, as a John Strelley was a *valet-de-chambre* of Bedford's in 1431.¹ This Bedford connection suggests that Westminster 21 was part of the large cache of French materials brought over to England during the Lancastrian occupation of France in the final phase of the Hundred Years War. Meanwhile, the compilation's later marginalia from the late fifteenth to the early sixteenth century feature a number of names, including two instances of “Wyllam courtnay,” tentatively identified by Julia Boffey as a late fifteenth-century Member of Parliament.² With no known connection between this William Courtenay and Thomas Scales, the manuscript appears to have followed the route of many compilations that end up far afield from their original owners and readers.

Ownership marks, clearly visible on a manuscript's surface, represent stable points of provenance data providing important information about

¹Carol M. Meale, “Reading Women's Culture in Fifteenth-Century England: The Case of Alice Chaucer,” in *Mediaevalitas: Reading the Middle Ages*, ed. Piero Boitani and Anna Torti (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1996), 81–101 (89); see further Jenny Stratford, *The Bedford Inventories: The Worldly Goods of John, Duke of Bedford, Regent of France (1389–1435)*, Reports of the Research Committee of the Society of Antiquaries of London 49 (London: Society of Antiquaries of London, 1993), 405. For a different identification for Strelley, see Julia Boffey, “English Dream Poems of the Fifteenth Century and Their French Connections,” in *Literary Aspects of Court Culture: Selected Papers from the Seventh Triennial Congress of the International Courtly Literary Society* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1996), 113–21 (120).

²Boffey, “English Dream Poems,” 119–20.

the use, meaning, and circulation of a given material object. But, despite appearances, ownership marks do not actually tell us who owned the manuscript. Instead, they indicate who, among a manuscript's owners, inscribed their name into the manuscript, whether because of privileges of literacy, or circumstances of acquisition of the material object and/or their particular use of or investment in that object. Given this reassessment of ownership marks, did Westminster 21 end up, like so many other manuscripts, far afield from its original owner? Or is this impression of haphazard transmission an accident of the fragmented historical record that has, for so many centuries, foregrounded men over women?

As “ambassadors of culture” and “arbiters of lay culture” in Susan Groag Bell’s influential terms, and “disseminators of culture” as per Sharon Michalove, women profoundly shaped medieval literary culture, particularly in terms of geographic and transhistorical access to books as well as their dispersal.³ Objects of circulation in transregional marital economies themselves, aristocratic women and their patterns of book ownership fomented a concomitant movement of books within and across family networks. Uniting noble families of far-flung territories through marital contracts and betrothals, women often brought manuscripts with them to their new homes, thus linking diverse geographies through cultural contacts.⁴ The well-documented interest of female book owners in French and Latin reading material stimulated translingual manuscript circulation and nourished translation activity from those languages into less culturally elite vernaculars, such as English.⁵ Women’s role in early education, especially in the *lingua materna* (maternal tongue), further fostered household book acquisition and book production for the purposes of

³See Susan Groag Bell, “Medieval Women Book Owners: Arbiters of Lay Piety and Ambassadors of Culture,” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 7, no. 4 (1982): 742–68; and Sharon Michalove, “Women as Book Collectors and Disseminators of Culture in Late Medieval England and Burgundy,” in *Reputation and Representation in Fifteenth-Century Europe*, ed. Douglas L. Biggs (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 57–79.

⁴Bell, “Medieval Women Book Owners,” 763–65. See also S. C. Kaplan and Sarah Wilma Watson, “Books of Duchesses: Mapping Women Book Owners in Francophone Europe, 1350–1550; Initial Findings,” *JEBBS* 23 (2020): 27–59. For Kaplan and Watson’s digital project, *Books of Duchesses*, see <https://booksofduchesses.com/> (accessed May 13, 2021).

⁵Bell, “Medieval Women Book Owners,” 758–60; Carol M. Meale, “. . . alle the bokes that I haue of latyn, englich, and frensch’: Laywomen and Their Books in Late Medieval England,” in *Women and Literature in Britain, 1150–1500*, ed. Meale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 128–58 (138–39).

language pedagogy, as well as didactic, moral, and religious instruction.⁶ Finally, female book owners' tendencies to pass on books to their sons and daughters ensured the transhistorical transfer of reading material down family lines.⁷ By inheriting books and marrying into new families, subsequent generations of female readers further widened existing social networks.⁸

Despite this ample evidence of women's literary activities, women's ownership marks appear less frequently in medieval books than men's, and even when female inscriptions do make it into the historical record, they are often fragmentary, elided, or suppressed. For example, in October 1731, Cotton MS Otho D.II, an early fifteenth-century collection of travel narratives, was heavily damaged in the Cotton Library fire.⁹ The front pages, the margins, and the end of the book's final text, Jean d'Arras's *Melusine*, are now missing, and with them the possibility of finding ownership marks or reader responses. However, thanks to a 1696 catalogue of the Cotton Library written by Thomas Smith, we can recapture an important piece of provenance information. Of Cotton MS Otho D.II, Smith writes: "Liber iste, elegantissimus figuris illuminatus, olim pertinebat ad D. Jaquettam Luxemburgicam, Ducissam Bedfordiæ, ut illa propria manu in fine libri testatur" (This book, illustrated with most elegant figures, was once connected to Jacquetta of Luxembourg, duchess of Bedford, as her

⁶Bell, "Medieval Women Book Owners," esp. 753–58; Michalove, "Women as Book Collectors"; Felicity Riddy, "'Women talking about the things of God': A Late Medieval Sub-Culture," in *Women and Literature in Britain, 1150–1500*, ed. Carol M. Meale, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 104–27; Carol M. Meale and Julia Boffey, "Gentlewomen's Reading," in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, Vol. 3, 1400–1557, ed. Lotte Hellinga and J. B. Trapp (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 526–40; and Carol M. Meale, "'Gode men/Wiues maydnes and alle men': Romance and Its Audiences," in *Readings in Medieval English Romance*, ed. Meale (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1994), 209–25 (221–25).

⁷Women especially gave books to other women: Bell, "Medieval Women Book Owners," 749–50; we can also discern female book owners from men's wills, when they become the legatees of an inheritance: see the examples in Bell, "Medieval Women Book Owners," 748–49. See also Riddy, "Women talking," 108–10; Michalove, "Women as Book Collectors," 64–65; and Meale, ". . . alle the bokes," 130–31. On women's reading communities fostered by the porous border between gentry laywomen and religious women in enclosed communities, see Mary C. Erler, *Women, Reading, and Piety in Late Medieval England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006). See also Susan Hagen Cavanaugh, "A Study of Books Privately Owned in England, 1300–1450," Ph.D. diss. (University of Pennsylvania, 1980).

⁸For an excellent case study of this phenomenon, see Meale, "Reading Women's Culture."

⁹"Cotton Manuscripts," British Library, <https://www.bl.uk/collection-guides/cotton-manuscripts> (accessed June 5, 2020).

own hand in the margin of the book testifies).¹⁰ Smith's note displays a curious combination of confidence and caution. His assertion that Jacquetta marked the manuscript in "her own hand" suggests an intimate interaction with the book, while the use of the word "testifies" grants her personal signature the status of evidence and underlines the connection between Jacquetta and the book. At the same time, Smith is careful to use the verb *pertineo* (to pertain to; to relate to) when describing the connection between Jacquetta and Cotton MS Otho D.II. He does not assert that she *owned* the book or *read* the book but simply that she was *connected* to the book, even though she physically wrote in it.

These kinds of obfuscations attend records of female book ownership on numerous levels. Women's names in books were often copied by the mediation of male amanuenses because of varying levels of literacy rates and the disjunction between female reading- and writing-culture in the late medieval period.¹¹ Scholars further depend on archival records such as inventories and wills in an era when women's possessions often reverted to their fathers, husbands, and sons and were thus absorbed into men's archival records.¹² Marital changes to women's surnames further tangle neat lines of book ownership.¹³ As a result of women's absent presence in the archive, scholars often work, out of necessity, on visible female culture: books with women's names overtly written into them, inventories clearly designating female book owners, material artifacts featuring overtly female-oriented subjects such as conduct manuals and books of hours, or books including clear iconographic representations of women or addresses to female audiences.¹⁴

¹⁰Thomas Smith, *Catalogus librorum manusciporum Bibliothecae Cottonianae* (1696; repr., Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1984), 74–75. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are our own.

¹¹Meale, ". . . alle the bokes," 134; and Mary C. Erler, "Devotional Literature," in Hellinga and Trapp, *Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, 3:495–525 (497–98). See further Bella Millet, "Women in No Man's Land: English Recluses and the Development of Vernacular Literature in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries," in Meale, *Women and Literature*, 86–103; and Julia Boffey, "Women Authors and Women's Literacy in Fourteenth- and Fifteenth-Century England," in Meale, *Women and Literature*, 159–82.

¹²Meale, ". . . alle the bokes," 132. See Meale, "Reading Women's Culture," 83–84, on the concomitant problem of modern scholars automatically assuming that women's books belong not to them but to the men in their family.

¹³Meale, ". . . alle the bokes," 135–36.

¹⁴On the representation of women, especially women reading, see Bell, "Medieval Women," 761–63; and Carol M. Meale, "Speaking Volumes: The Middle-Aged Woman and the Book in Medieval England," in *Middle-Aged Women in the Middle Ages*, ed. Sue Niebrzydowski (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2011), 83–99. See also Boffey, "Women

But a focus on clear marks of female ownership risks siloing female literary spheres from broader literary trends. Further, the example of Jacquetta above reveals that the very concept of female ownership can be shaped by gendered presuppositions of later record-keepers, rendering it a not always reliable starting-point for investigations into manuscript provenance and transmission. Given these challenges, what other kinds of historical evidence can we bring to bear, beyond ownership marks, to pull obscured connections between these visible data-points—and the ideological valences embedded in them—into sharper focus? This article offers a case study in working with and through the *invisibility* of female book owners. Looking beyond ownership marks to the contents of Westminster 21, and to the male readers' visible engagement with those contents through their marginalia, we place Westminster 21 within a larger context of uses of similar texts, by both genders, in the late medieval period. In other words, rather than focus on male ownership marks as indicators of male social reading networks, this article places male reading within a broader context that incorporates female readers as integral to, rather than separable from, male engagement with material texts.

Through this work, we unveil a hidden social network of female book owners undergirding the male-dominated historical record for this manuscript. Offering a different identification for William Courtenay, this article is able to trace a direct line between the two recorded male owners of this manuscript, revealing that its transmission is far from haphazard. Significantly, however, this transmission does not rely on male-to-male inheritance, as we might expect from its male-dominated ownership record. Instead, Westminster 21 passes through several generations of women who marry into homosocial male networks and build them up through their literary activities and social standing. We thus produce an outline of the absent female presences in the history of this material artifact and reveal it to be constitutive of, rather than separable from, that history.

In this way, our investigation of Westminster 21 recovers more evidence for the importance of medieval female reading culture. But it also aims to complicate our notion of the female reading sphere—and of the medieval literary sphere more generally—by refusing to view male and female book ownership as detachable from one another. As we will show, visible

Authors," 165–71, on the challenges of determining authorial gender for anonymous texts featuring a female narrator.

transnational, horizontal reading networks of men are invisibly and trans-historically structured by vertical female reading networks. By thinking about men and women jointly reading manuscripts, we investigate the imbrication of male literary networks created by war and politics with female literary networks connected to childhood education and household life. Medieval reading spheres, we suggest, interweave the binaries of male vs. female, parent vs. child, husband vs. wife, transnational vs. transhistorical, horizontal vs. vertical, and foreign vs. domestic, rather than being conditioned by any one of those individual terms or compartmentalized pairings.

The Manuscript: Contents and Visible Male Ownership

Westminster 21 is an unadorned anthology of French *formes fixes* lyric.¹⁵ Mostly containing *balades*, along with some *rondeaux*, *lais*, and *virelais*, the collection also features several longer popular works: *Le blasme des femmes* (1271–83), Christine de Pizan's *Epistre au dieu d'amours* (1399) and *Dit de la pastoure* (1403), and Oton de Granson's *Complainte de Saint Valentin* (late fourteenth century).¹⁶ Some of the lyrics are drawn from Guillaume de Machaut's *Loange des dames*, which dates to the mid-fourteenth century, while Christine de Pizan's poems date to the turn of the fifteenth century. Containing some overlaps with other late fourteenth- and early–mid-fifteenth-century lyric compilations such as Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania, Codex 902, Westminster 21 offers a fine representation of late medieval French lyrics in broad circulation in this period.¹⁷

¹⁵On the origins and development of this genre, see Ardis Butterfield, *Poetry and Music in Medieval France: From Jean Renart to Guillaume de Machaut* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); and Yolanda Plumley, *The Art of Grafted Song: Citation and Allusion in the Age of Machaut* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

¹⁶For a full list of contents, see Paul Meyer, "Notice d'un recueil manuscrit de poésies françaises du XIII^e au XV^e appartenant à Westminster Abbey," *Bulletin de la Société des Anciens Textes Français* 1 (1875): 25–36. Personal correspondence from Rodney Merrill to Catherine Reynolds, Westminster Abbey Library head librarian from 1975, enclosed with the manuscript, further correctly identifies several pieces as being by Granson.

¹⁷On overlaps between Westminster 21 and the Pennsylvania manuscript, see James Wimsatt, *Chaucer and the Poems of "Ch,"* rev. ed. (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2009). On such collections, see further Margaret Connolly and Yolanda Plumley, "Crossing the Channel: John Shirley and the Circulation of French Lyric Poetry in England in the Early Fifteenth Century," in *Patrons, Authors and Workshops: Books and Book Production in Paris around 1400*, ed. Godfried Croenen and Peter Ainsworth (Louvain: Peeters, 2006), 311–32; and Giovanni Matteo Roccati, "Entre France et Angleterre: Une petite collection de ballades d'Eustache Deschamps (ms. Cambridge, Trinity College, R.3.20),"

The manuscript is written on paper by two main scribes in an early–mid-fifteenth-century Gothic cursive with some decorative ascenders and descenders, penwork flourishes, and lightly caudeled initials: the first main scribal hand runs from fols. 1 to 4, and the second runs to the end of the volume.¹⁸ Measuring $8\frac{1}{4} \times 11\frac{1}{8}$ inches, the manuscript contains 78 folios, with no catchwords. The manuscript appears to be a rather ad hoc production: some pages are unruled, others are individually ruled, and little care has been taken to conserve space. Most pages include only one or two items and have ample empty space, a *mise-en-page* suggesting an agglutinative, rather than a planned, production. Though now in a nineteenth-century binding, the collection may have originally circulated as a stack of loose-leaf pages in a limp vellum folder: such a folder, covered in Dutch annotations, is bound at the end of the manuscript.¹⁹ The opening fly-leaves and folio of the manuscript are missing, and the opening quire is heavily damaged, a condition consistent with an originally unbound state.

An elaborate penwork initial on fol. 64v offers a clue to the manuscript's early provenance. The name "Scales" and the phrase "La non chalang," evidently a personal motto, are incorporated into the explicit to Christine de Pizan's *Epistre au dieu d'amours*, suggesting Scales's early ownership of the manuscript.²⁰ The ownership mark draws the viewer's attention: roughly five lines in height, the "S" of Scales, delicately caudeled in each curve of the letter with extending tendrils and expansive ascenders and

in *Contatti, passaggi, metamorfosi: Studi di letteratura francese e comparata in onore di Daniela Dalla Valle* (Roma: Edizioni Storia e Letteratura, 2010), 3–19.

¹⁸Wendy Pfeffer suggests that the manuscript's watermarks postdate 1430: "The Dits, the Genre, the Text, the Language," in *Three Medieval Views on Women*, ed. Gloria K. Fiero, Pfeffer, and Mathé Allain (York: York Medieval Press, 1989), 1–27 (14). Meyer suggests that it dates from the mid-fifteenth century: "Notice d'un recueil," 25. Based on paleographical features and contents, this general date range seems reasonable to us as well.

¹⁹The Dutch annotations on the vellum wrapper date to the mid-sixteenth century. A modern curatorial note found with the manuscript offers a partial transcription and translation of the writing: "An° xvc liij den xvij januarii stert Joost van Aemstell van Mijnden Heer tot Loenresloet die te wive had jotter Philippota Amelis dochter uten-Eng deer hij bij wan een zoen die nee zijn doot gheboren ende nae hem ghenoept is ende legt onder dese zarek" ("Anno 1553[4] on 18th January died Joost van Aemstell van Mijnden, Lord of Loenersloot [*sic*], who had to wife Mistress Philippota, daughter of Amelis Uteneng, by whom he had one son, who was born after his death and named after him and lies under this stone").

²⁰Unless otherwise noted, all transcription of manuscript materials is our own, with silent expansion of abbreviation and light punctuation added. On Scales as the early owner, see Meale, "Reading Women's Culture," 89; Boffey, "English Dream Poems," 119; and Stephanie Downes, "Not for Profit: 'Amateur' Readers of French Poetry in Late Medieval England," in *Spaces for Reading in Later Medieval England*, ed. Mary C. Flannery (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 63–78 (71–72).

descenders curling into the margins, takes up space. The ascender of the “I” in “Scales” is also elongated and decorated, while the rest of the letters are carefully rendered in a display script version of Gothic cursive. The motto “La non chalant” is neatly written over “ales,” on either side of the “I,” in a close-set cursive. Intersecting with the letter “d” in “Explicit leprestre au dieu damours,” the ownership mark organically grows out of the end of Christine’s text to dominate the page.

Sir Thomas Scales (c.1399–1460), a Knight of the Garter and commander in the Hundred Years War, served on the Continent intermittently from the 1420s during the Lancastrian usurpation of France. In 1435, he was appointed the steward of Normandy by the duke of Bedford and did not return to England permanently until 1449.²¹ It is likely during this period of service that Scales obtained Westminster 21, whether it was created specifically for him or acquired by him at a later date. The identical color of the ink makes it difficult to determine if the mark of ownership was added by the main scribe or incorporated at some later point, but the physical grafting of the mark on the explicit for Christine’s text indicates intentionality in noting Scales’s ownership of the compilation. Sebastian Sobocki and Sonja Drimmer suggest that the Scales inscription is similar to secretary hands used in England during the reigns of Henry VI and Henry VII.²² Regardless of when and where Scales’s inscription was created, it seems likely that he brought the manuscript with him upon his return to England in 1449.

Scales’s ownership of this French lyric anthology places Westminster 21 within a transnational horizontal network of male readers who used their position in the Lancastrian occupation of France to import and commission a vast quantity of continental French manuscripts. The epicenter of this material and cultural transfer was John of Bedford and his circle of learned captains, a group of men who fought under Henry V and assisted Bedford in the task of governing the Anglo-French dual

²¹Helen Castor, “Scales, Thomas, Seventh Baron Scales (1399?–1460),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) (ODNB), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/24776> (accessed May 5, 2021).

²²Via personal communication at the Early Book Society Conference at the University of Dublin on July 7–11, 2019. Drimmer further notes that the inscription shares similarities, most notably the use of crossbars, with the signature of John Skelton. On these secretaries and their cross-Channel connections, see Jocelyn Otway-Ruthven, *The King’s Secretary and the Signet Office in the XV Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1939); and Sebastian Sobocki, “The Handwriting of Fifteenth-Century Privy Seal and Council Clerks,” *RES* 72 (2020): 1–27.

monarchy.²³ These men, including Bedford, William de la Pole, Thomas Scales, John Fastolf, and John Talbot, acquired and personalized existing French manuscripts of authors such as Christine de Pizan and Vegetius, as well as commissioning and gifting new manuscripts based on continental archetypes. By curating a collection of French cultural objects, including books, English elites expressed their growing sense of entitlement to French land and culture as the war turned (temporarily) in their favor.²⁴

Beyond its general connection to this network through Scales, Westminster 21 shares specific content and design features with French manuscripts made for English officers in this period. The banderole decoratively wrapped around the ascender in the “I” of “Scales” recalls the work of Ricardus Franciscus, who was either a continental French scribe working in England or a continentally trained English scribe who traveled between England and Lancastrian-occupied France.²⁵ The same Ricardus collaborated with the so-called Fastolf Master on a lavish copy of Christine’s *Epistre Othea* (now Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud. misc. 570) for John Fastolf, with whom Scales served in the 1420s and 1430s; this copy was commissioned upon Fastolf’s return to England in 1450.²⁶ As in Westminster 21, Fastolf’s personal motto, “Me fault faire,” is decoratively incorporated

²³See Jeremy Catto, “After Arundel: The Closing or Opening of the English Mind?,” in *After Arundel: Religious Writing in Fifteenth-Century England*, ed. Vincent Gillespie and Kantik Ghosh (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 43–54 (50).

²⁴On the duke of Bedford’s acquisition of the French royal library held at the Louvre, see Stratford, *The Bedford Inventories*. See further Catherine Reynolds, “English Patrons and French Artists in Fifteenth-Century Normandy,” in *England and Normandy in the Middle Ages*, ed. D. Bates and A. Curry (London: Hambledon Press, 1994), 299–313; Catherine Reynolds, “Les Anglois, de leur droicte nature, veullent touzjours guerree: Evidence for Painting in Paris and Normandy, c. 1420–c. 1450,” in *Power, Culture and Religion in France c. 1350–c.1550*, ed. Christopher Allmand (Cambridge: Boydell Press, 1989), 37–55; and Catherine Nall, *Reading and War in Fifteenth-Century England from Lydgate to Mallory* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2013), 11–47.

²⁵Martha Driver, “More Light on Ricardus Franciscus: Looking Again at Morgan M. 126,” *South Atlantic Review* 79, nos. 3–4 (2014): 20–35.

²⁶While Westminster 21 and Laud. misc. 570 are similar insofar as they include French continental literature and are personalized with an English owner’s French motto, they are different in terms of quality. Laud. misc. 570 is an extremely deluxe production on parchment, while Westminster 21 is an ad hoc production with minimal decoration on paper. While it was more common for English aristocrats to acquire and commission deluxe French books during the fifteenth century (such as John Bedford’s acquisition of the French royal library), more quotidian French collections such as Westminster 21 were not unknown. In her forthcoming dissertation “‘C’est livre est a moy’: French Books and English Readers in Fifteenth-Century England,” J. R. Mattison at the University of Toronto identifies six French paper manuscripts circulating in England during the fifteenth century. These include: Westminster MS 21; London, British Library (BL), MS Royal 19 A.III (a poetic collection of Alan Chartier); Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Cherry 4 (René d’Anjou’s

around the main text of the Christine manuscript, although here the motto appears inside the decorative banderoles themselves.²⁷

Scales's incorporated motto "la non chalang" further echoes Charles d'Orléans's "Chateau de Nonchaloir," or "Castle of No Care," to which he retires when he has grown weary of love in his poetry.²⁸ This connection is underwritten by the presence of a lyric on fol. 27v with a refrain—"Je meur de soif bien pres de la fontaine" (I die of thirst quite close to the fountain)—pointing to the famous incipit "Je meurs du soif aupres de la fontaine" (I die of thirst beside the fountain) of a multi-authored cluster of poems in Charles d'Orléans's enormous personal collection of poetry produced after his return to France from English captivity in 1440.²⁹ Held prisoner in England between 1415 and 1440, Charles d'Orléans exemplifies the way in which the Hundred Years War, particularly in its final phase, promoted the overlap of elite male literary circles in France and England, as envoys, prisoners-of-war like Charles, and their texts traveled back and forth across the narrow English Channel.³⁰

The presence of Scales's motto in a text by Christine de Pizan further situates this manuscript within the contemporary vogue for Anglo-French wartime literary exchange. Officers of the Hundred Years War were particularly interested in material by Christine: John of Bedford likely acquired BL, MS Harley 4431 (a deluxe collected works of Christine de Pizan) from Isabel of Bavaria in 1425; John Talbot commissioned BL, MS Royal 15 E.VI (a chivalric and political anthology including Christine's *Livre des fais d'armes et de chevalerie*) for Margaret of Anjou in 1444; Richard, duke of York, likely purchased BL, MS Royal 19 A.XIX, a copy of Christine's *Livre de la cité des dames*, around 1450; and, as noted above, John

Le mortifiement de vaine plaisance); London, College of Arms, MS M 18 (the *Tractatus de armis* in French), and Boston Public Library, MS f. med. 92 (Honoré Bonet's *L'arbre des batailles*).

²⁷See Martha W. Driver, "'Me fault faire': French Makers of Manuscripts for English Patrons," in *Language and Culture in Medieval Britain: The French of England*, ed. Jocelyn Wogan-Browne (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2009), 420–43. On John Fastolf, see G. L. Harriss, "Fastolf, Sir John (1380–1459)," in *ODNB*, <https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/9199> (accessed May 5, 2021).

²⁸See Downes, "Not for Profit," 72.

²⁹This is Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Fr. 25458. On the making of this manuscript, see Jane H. M. Taylor, *The Making of Poetry: Late-Medieval French Poetic Anthologies* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 83–146; and Mary-Jo Arn, *The Poet's Notebook: The Personal Manuscript of Charles d'Orléans (Paris BnF MS fr. 25458)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008).

³⁰For the seminal study of this cultural moment, see Ardis Butterfield, *The Familiar Enemy: Chaucer, Language, and Nation in the Hundred Years War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); and, for an excellent extension of the discussion, Joanna Bellis, *The Hundred Years War in Literature: 1337–1600* (Cambridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2016).

Fastolf commissioned a deluxe copy of Christine's *Epistre Othea* (1399) from a continental archetype around the same time.³¹ As a prolific and well-known French author closely associated with the French royal court, Christine and her texts offered a concentrated dose of cultural cachet that appealed to English readers.³² Further, her wide variety of texts, which included love poems, dream visions, mirrors-for-princes, and military manuals, spoke to the literary, intellectual, and political interests of a range of readers. Christine's powerful appeal to male readers in particular, who read and promulgated her work across the Channel, offers one important reminder of the porous boundaries between male and female literary spheres. The foregrounding of her text in Westminster 21 reinforces those overlapping connections.

Westminster Abbey 21 in Tudor England

Following Scales's death in 1460, concrete provenance data for Westminster 21 grows slim. However, an abundance of marginalia dating from the late fifteenth to the early sixteenth century testifies to the manuscript's

³¹While it has often been assumed that Bedford acquired MS Harley 4431 along with the contents of the Louvre Library, Lori Walters argues that he may have come to possess the manuscript, and probably other books and goods owned by Queen Isabel of Bavaria, in a separate transaction. Around 1425, Bedford paid 1,200 livres for "certains livres" to Pierre de Thury, the sculptor working on the double tomb of Charles VI and Isabel. Walters speculates that Isabel, perhaps short on money, sold some of the books in her collection to finance the construction of this tomb, a monument that inserted her into the French royal line and possibly seemed a more permanent mode of commemoration than a personalized manuscript (personal correspondence with Walters on May 25, 2017). See also Stratford, *The Bedford Inventories*, 95. On Richard, duke of York's possession of MS Royal 19 A.XIX, see Meale, ". . . alle the bokes," 135. On Fastolf, see Richard Beadle, "Sir John Fastolf's French Books," in *Medieval Texts in Context*, ed. Graham D. Caie and Denis Renevey (London: Routledge, 2008), 96–112. On the interrelation of Anglo-French politics, book production, and gender more generally, see Nancy Bradley Warren, "French Women and English Men: Joan of Arc, Margaret of Anjou, and Christine de Pizan in England, 1445–1540," *Exemplaria* 16, no. 4 (2004): 405–36; and Nancy Bradley Warren, "The Sword and the Cloister: Joan of Arc, Margaret of Anjou, and Christine de Pizan in England, 1445–1540," in *Women of God and Arms: Female Spirituality and Political Conflict, 1380–1600* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 58–86.

³²Between 1400 and 1403, some years before Bedford, York, Fastolf, and Scales all acquired Christine manuscripts, Henry IV invited Christine to come to the English court as resident poet. This unprecedented request was a testament both to Christine's international fame and to the English king's interest in cultivating a francophone culture at his court: see further James C. Laidlaw, "Christine de Pizan, the Earl of Salisbury and Henry IV," *French Studies* 36, no. 2 (1982): 129–43. For an extended discussion of Christine de Pizan's reception in fifteenth-century England, see Sarah Wilma Watson, "Women, Reading, and Literary Culture: The Reception of Christine de Pizan in Fifteenth-Century England," Ph.D. diss. (University of Pennsylvania, 2018), esp. 22–76.

continued use, even as its status and function as a material object have undergone major transformation. Scales's lavishly decorative inscription asserts his ownership over a French compilation in a historically vexed moment that sees English military officers conquering France yet continuing to look toward its material artifacts as objects of immense cultural prestige. One hundred years later, Westminster 21 continues to serve as an object of cultural prestige on account of its French contents, but its new main annotator engages with that prestige from a markedly different sociocultural position. From the late fifteenth to the early sixteenth century, the manuscript seems to become a household object of linguistic instruction for a—likely young—man, who is struggling to make sense of its contents and who uses it in his daily life.³³

The marginalia found in Westminster Abbey 21 evince an interest in the quotidian: there is a supply list for horse meal, bread, butter, and ale on fol. 27v; a list of names followed by a payment record on fol. 8r; the opening of a letter to a “Trysty and wolbelovyd frynd” on fol. 38r; the draft of a letter to “mystrys Alles” on fol. 41v; and the draft of a letter to a “Tristy and welbelovyd master gylle” on fol. 51v. Occurring mostly on folios that have been left blank, these materials suggest that the manuscript came to circulate in a household, and was used, at least in part, as a convenient space for drafting out personal notes and correspondence.

Beyond these indications of daily domestic use, however, the later annotator also demonstrates concerted, if halting, engagement with the French texts of this collection, as well as with Latin. The top of the blank verso of fol. 51 is occupied by a short text in Latin, taking up just over four lines, copied in a different mid-to-late fifteenth-century hand and concerning the receipt of certain promised letters. Recopied verbatim by the main English annotator, just above his draft of the letter to “master gylle,” this English transcription of the Latin text bears signs of unfamiliarity with the culturally prestigious tongue. For example, the annotator recopies “amantissime” as “amanti Ssunt” because of difficulties in reading the Latin scribe's hand.

Working with a poorly known other language is still more on display in the marginal annotator's treatment of the French texts copied into the manuscript compilation. The English annotator copies out bits of French

³³The manuscript also contains later marginalia, postdating the sixteenth century, that remain outside the present discussion.

phrases and rubrics from the main text on fols. 8r, 35r, 42r, and 52r, but, as with Latin, the annotator does not appear to be a confident reader of French. On fol. 8r, for example, he copies several garbled lines that reproduce the main text on the page. One of the lines from the main French text reads: "Ou laube espine fleurie," where "fleurie" is particularly cramped, so that the crossbar of the "f" is minimally visible in that letter but goes through the entirety of the "l." At the parallel moment in his transcription, the English annotator copies a long "s" with no crossbar, followed by an "f" with a thick crossbar, resulting in a nonsensical word. Similarly, on fol. 52r, the French scribe, or a later corrector, has rubbed out and rewritten "epistre" in the rubric to Christine's text: "Cy commence le pistre au dieu damours." This correction proves a stumbling block to the English annotator, who copies out: "Cy comm en[c]e lep stouo audieu damours," evidently unable to parse the filled-in erasure, and struggling with spacing. The annotator's difficulties, particularly with a rubric to Christine's extremely popular text, speak not only to a lack of familiarity with French, as with the Latin, but also to hesitancy in the act of transcribing as well. Our annotator seems to be in the process of learning not only languages but also letter forms.

Stephanie Downes suggested that the annotator's draft letters and foreign language trials speak to an amateur's "particularly affective mode of reading: reading for pleasure, reading for delight."³⁴ She argues that the English annotator is picking up on the language of supplication in the French lyrics and responding to them with copied-out snatches of lines and English petitionary letters that match the general tone of the French contents.³⁵ But the annotator's basic struggles with transcribing French and Latin suggest instead that the marginalia are but loosely linked to the compilation's contents. Rather, the combination of quotidian items with autodidactic pen trials in French and Latin points to a reader's making use of the wide margins and linguistic content of a manuscript to practice reading and writing in the culturally dominant languages of late medieval England.

In fact, the repeated addresses to the "welbelovyd frynd" and other figures seem more like epistolary practice runs than drafts of supplications composed in direct response to the manuscript's texts, especially given their empty, repetitive content: "I recomandyd me vn to praying you to send me word of that mater" (fol. 38r); "I comaund me vn to you praying you

³⁴Downes, "Not for Profit," 76.

³⁵Ibid., 73–76.

to send me word of the mater that I spake to you of" (fol. 41v); "I com-maund me vn to you praying you to send me word of the mater that I spake to you of and I pray you to speke the man of the mater" (fol. 51v). The Latin text on fol. 51v, recopied by the English annotator, follows the same pattern: "I received the letter that you had sent . . . dear brother, through which I understood that you have most freely received the letter from Master[?] Scindeford . . . whom I approached in your name, and I beseeched him to send a letter to you."³⁶ Notably, like Scales, the English annotator seems particularly focused on Christine's *Epistre au dieu d'amours*. The Latin text and transcription, and the letter to "master gylle," all occur on the blank page before the garbled attempt to transcribe that text's rubric.

The English marginalia thus seem to belong to a figure under household pedagogical instruction. In this context, the annotator's attention to Christine de Pizan's text is not surprising, since didactic works in Christine's oeuvre were regularly used for pedagogical purposes in noble households in fifteenth-century England. Christine's *Epistre Othea*, a mirror-for-princes that takes the form of a verse letter written by Othea, the goddess of prudence, to Hector, the young prince of Troy, was among the earliest of Christine's texts to reach England, and circulated in French and in English translations through the fifteenth century. In around 1399, Christine likely sent a copy of the *Othea* to the household of John, earl of Salisbury, where her thirteen-year-old son Jean de Castel was serving as a companion to Salisbury's son Thomas Montagu (also about thirteen). Christine may have considered the *Othea* a particularly appropriate text for her son and Salisbury's, who were both on the cusp of manhood, an ideal age for education in good social and moral behavior.³⁷

Some seventy-five years later, Christine's *Epistre Othea* was still being used as a tool for elite education in England. Between 1478 and 1483, Edward IV commissioned two deluxe *Othea* manuscripts, one of which, BL, MS Royal 14 E.II, was part of a group of manuscripts most likely intended as instructional texts for Edward's two sons, Edward, Prince of Wales and Richard, duke of York.³⁸ Around the same time, Edward IV's

³⁶The original text reads: "litteras quas . . . in miseris recepi, frater amantissime, quibus te liberime litteras m[agistro?] Scindeford . . . recepisse intellexi cui tuo nomine adivi eum que oravi litteras tibi ut destinaret" (fol. 51v). We sincerely thank Anna de Bakker and Sarah Baechle for their transcription of the challenging text, and Joshua Byron Smith for the translation.

³⁷See further Laidlaw, "Christine de Pizan."

³⁸Janet Backhouse, "Founders of the Royal Library: Edward IV and Henry VII as Collectors of Illuminated Manuscripts," in *England and the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Daniel

brother-in-law Anthony Woodville produced a Middle English translation of a text by Christine, *The Morale Prouerbes of Cristyne* (1478), and may also be the author of *The Book of the Body of Politic* (1470s), a translation of Christine's *Livre du corps de policie* (1406–7). Like Edward's newly commissioned *Othea*, Woodville's translations were likely prepared for the education of the two young princes, Woodville having been made their tutor around 1473.³⁹ Throughout the fifteenth century, Christine's texts provided material for the moral, social, and political formation of young noblemen in England, and offered language and cultural instruction that would prepare them to move in a transcontinental aristocratic community. This multivalent use of Christine's text, attractive to the aristocracy and moving fluidly between adults and children in aristocratic households, speaks to the close relationship between the domestic and military spheres, as boys become men.

Taken together, the cumulative evidence suggests that Westminster 21 came to circulate in a late medieval noble or gentry household with an aspirational interest in the cultural cachet of French and Latin. A list of names on fol. 8r offers evidence pinpointing the later fortunes of the manuscript. Here the annotator copies seven names, including "Wylllam courtnay," "Jhon ellyate," and "Jhon frynche." On fol. 38r, the annotator copies the name "Wylllam courtnay" a second time, just above the letter draft to the "trysty and wolbelouyd frynd." Boffey tentatively suggests that this figure may be Sir William Courtenay of Powderham in Devon, knighted sometime between 1462 and 1464, and Member of Parliament for Somerset. She draws support for this identification from another name in the list, which she reads as "Thomas Hill." An individual named Thomas Hill served as Member of Parliament for Plymouth in Devon in 1449.⁴⁰

Williams (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1987), 23–74 (27, 39). See also A. Sutton, "Choosing a Book in Late Fifteenth-Century England and Burgundy," in *England and the Low Countries in the Late Middle Ages*, ed. Caroline Barron and Nigel Saul (Stroud: Sutton History Paperbacks, 1995), 61–98 (81).

³⁹Diane Bornstein, *The Middle English Translation of Christine de Pisan's "Livre du corps de policie": Ed. from MS C.U.L. Kk.1.5* (Heidelberg: Winter, 1977), 31–38; Diane Bornstein, "French Influence on Fifteenth-Century English Prose as Exemplified by the 41 Translations of Christine de Pisan's *Livre du corps de policie*," *Mediaeval Studies* 39 (1977): 369–86; and Michael Hicks, "Woodville [Wydeville], Anthony, Second Earl Rivers (c. 1440–1483)," in *ODNB*, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/29937> (accessed May 5, 2021). See also Nicholas Orme, "The Education of Edward V," *Historical Research* 57, no. 136 (1984): 119–30.

⁴⁰Boffey, "English Dream Poems," 120.

Boffey's identification is supported by the localizability of other names in the list to Devon: there were several individuals named "John Elyot" and "John French" active in Devon in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century, who appear numerous times in archival records.⁴¹ However, UV lighting reveals the name "Thomas Hill" actually to be a "Thomas Hilton."⁴² More importantly, there is no clear link between William Courtenay of Powderham and Westminster's early owner Thomas Scales, or between this Courtenay and French literary material. In and of itself, the lack of a clear connection does not signify much: many manuscripts end up in the hands of wholly unconnected later readers. But the continued interest of the English annotator in French material, and in Christine's work in particular, gives pause because of its neat alignment with Scales's and his broader circle's reading proclivities. What if the manuscript *didn't* fall into random hands?

William Courtenay is a name popular enough to raise the possibility that we are dealing with a different figure. In fact, there was another William Courtenay, first earl of Devon (1475–1511). Descended from a parallel branch of the extensive Courtenay family, this William Courtenay was the son of Edward Courtenay (d. 1509), grandson of Sir Hugh II Courtenay (d. 1471), and kin to the aforementioned William Courtenay of Powderham.⁴³ After having been made a Knight of the Bath at the coronation of Elizabeth of York in 1487, in 1495 this William Courtenay married the queen's younger sister Katherine (1479–1527), sixth daughter of Edward IV and Elizabeth Woodville and granddaughter to Richard,

⁴¹The name "John Eliot/Elyot/Elliot" appears in Devonshire records dating to 1473 (Devon Archives [DA], 2203A-2/PF 67), 1476 (DA, 3799M-0/ET/4/40), 1479 (DA, 3799M-0/ET/4/41), 1481 (DA, 123M/TB538A), 1493–1500 (The National Archives [TNA], C 1/186/95), 1504–15 (TNA, C 1/318/17), 1518–29 (TNA, C 1/590/26), and 1526 (TNA, C 241/278/1). The 1504–15 "John Eliot" is identified as a "clerk" and the 1526 "John Elyot" is identified as a "gentleman." John Frenche/Frenshe appears in records dating to 1474 (DA, 1638F/T 22), 1486–93 or 1504–15 (TNA, C 1/134/35), 1504–15 (TNA, C 1/345/28), and 1532–38 (TNA, C 1/710/4).

⁴²We have been unable to identify a "Thomas Hilton" active in Devon for the period in question. However, there were at least two men named "Thomas Hilton" active in the first half of the sixteenth century. A "Sir Thomas Hilton" appears in records dating to 1550 (Lambeth Palace Library [LPL], MS 3193), 1551 (LPL, MS 3206), and 1553 (LPL, MS 3194). A "Thomas Hilton, citizen and merchant of London" appears in a record dating between 1538 and 1544 (TNA, C 1/1004/51), and a "Thomas Hilton, gentleman" (perhaps the same man) is granted a close in Shoreditch in 1553 (W. J. Hardy and W. Page, *A Calendar to the Feet of Fines for London and Middlesex*, Vol. 2, *Henry VII–12 Elizabeth* [London, 1893], 85).

⁴³For a diagram of the many branches of the Courtenay family tree, see J. L. Vivian, *The Visitations of the County of Cornwall: Comprising the Herald's Visitations of 1530, 1573, & 1620, with Additions* (Exeter: William Pollard, 1887), 105–11.

third duke of York.⁴⁴ Unlike the Powderham William Courtenay, this William Courtenay is directly linked to Thomas Scales through transgenerational ties of marriage; filiation; and, most importantly, ongoing female ownership and transmission of French literary material. These connections may help to explain why the English marginalia of Westminster 21 point to an English reader in a household with aspirational investments in French language acquisition.

Scales to Woodville: From Male Battlefield to Female Household

Thus far, we have discussed Thomas Scales's—and, by extension, Westminster 21's—imbrication with purely homosocial networks, but transnational networks forged in war inevitably intersect with domestic networks maintained beyond wars. Thomas Scales had only one surviving heir: his daughter Elizabeth, who inherited his title. Between 1458 and 1462, Elizabeth married Anthony Woodville (1440–83), likely the result of a homosocial wartime bond in and of itself, as Richard Woodville, Anthony's grandfather, was John of Bedford's chamberlain and would have thus known Scales.⁴⁵ His son, also named Richard, Anthony's father, served alongside Scales during the Lancastrian occupation of France and eventually married Jacquetta of Luxembourg, Bedford's widow.⁴⁶ Another of Richard's children, Anthony's elder sister Elizabeth, went on to become Edward IV's queen in 1464 and mother to Katherine of York, William Courtenay's wife (see Appendix).

Anthony Woodville was deeply interested in French literature, especially the works of Christine de Pizan, as we saw earlier. His father, Richard, purchased Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS 264, a deluxe French manuscript of Alexander romances.⁴⁷ Anthony also inherited a lavish copy of Christine's collected works (BL, MS Harley 4431) from his mother, Jacquetta, a book that Jacquetta had obtained in turn from Bedford, her first hus-

⁴⁴S. J. Gunn, "Courtenay, Edward, first earl of Devon (d. 1509)," in *ODNB*, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/6448> (accessed May 5, 2021).

⁴⁵Lynda Pidgeon, "Anthony Wydevile, Lord Scales and Earl Rivers: Family, Friends and Affinity; Part 1," *The Ricardian* 15 (2005): 1–19 (2–3); Lynda Pidgeon, "Anthony Wydevile, Lord Scales and Earl Rivers: Family, Friends and Affinity; Part 2," *The Ricardian* 16 (2006): 15–45 (15–16).

⁴⁶Pidgeon, "Anthony Wydevile . . . Part 2," 16; Pidgeon, "Anthony Wydevile . . . Part 1," 6.

⁴⁷Meale, "Gode men," 215.

band.⁴⁸ Anthony used this manuscript as the basis for his English translation of Christine's *Proverbes moraux*, printed by Caxton in 1478.⁴⁹ As mentioned earlier, he may also have been responsible for the anonymous English translation of Christine's *Livre du corps de policie*, dating to the 1470s, as Diane Bornstein has suggested. The texts found in Westminster 21, especially the two works by Christine, are thus consonant with Woodville's documented literary interests. Furthermore, if Woodville indeed owned Westminster 21, the "Scales" inscription would have taken on personal meaning when he assumed the title "Lord Scales" in 1462.⁵⁰ The transference of this title from Thomas Scales to Anthony Woodville through Elizabeth Scales effectively illustrates the ways in which women's lives invisibly undergird the economic and cultural interests of the men visible in the historical record.

In the case of the Woodvilles, women did more than invisibly undergird men's lives: they raised them to social prominence. In addition to gaining a title, and possibly a manuscript, from his first wife, Anthony Woodville also gained social and political advancement through the influence of his sister Elizabeth Woodville, who became Edward IV's queen in 1464. In 1473, as noted above, Woodville was made the mentor and tutor of his nephews, the young princes Edward and Richard.⁵¹ Woodville's term as tutor coincided with his translation activities: he translated *The Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers* (1477) specifically for Prince Edward's benefit, and his *Morale Prouerbes of Cristyne* (1478) was similarly didactic.⁵² Could Westminster 21 have served a similarly pedagogical purpose? While less explicitly instructional, as a collection of fashionable French literature Westminster 21 may have interested the young princes. If so, then the later English annotator's overt use of Westminster 21 as a tool for French pedagogical instruction begins to make increasing sense; the manuscript

⁴⁸For provenance information on BL, MS Harley 4431, see the British Library catalogue entry: http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Harley_MS_4431 (accessed May 5, 2021).

⁴⁹Jennifer Summit, *Lost Property: The Woman Writer and English Literary History, 1380–1589* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 83. See further A. E. B. Coldiron, "Taking Advice from a Frenchwoman: Caxton, Pynson, and Christine de Pizan's *Moral Proverbs*," in *Caxton's Trace: Studies in the History of English Printing* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006), 127–66 (129).

⁵⁰Michael Hicks, "Woodville [Wydeville], Anthony."

⁵¹*Ibid.*

⁵²Orme, "The Education of Edward V," 123; cf. Martha W. Driver, "Women Readers and Pierpont Morgan MS M. 126," in *John Gower: Manuscripts, Readers, Contexts*, ed. Malte Urban (Turnhout, Brepols: 2009), 71–107 (101).

may have been passed down as an item of instruction for a younger member of the household.

The circumstances of Anthony Woodville's death make tracking the subsequent movement of Westminster 21 difficult, as, given his deep ties to Edward IV's household, Woodville became caught up in the ensuing struggle for the throne and was executed at Pontefract on June 25, 1483.⁵³ He died without any legitimate heirs and was survived by his second wife, Mary FitzLewis.⁵⁴ It is possible that Mary inherited Westminster 21. However, the wording of Anthony's will suggests that she received specific items (none of which seem to be books) while the rest of Anthony's household possessions were intended to pass to his father's heirs:

and that my wyfe have all such plate as was the same Henry Lowes, and other of my plate to the valure of asmoche thing as I hadd of his; also that she have all such plate as was geven hyr at our' mariage, and the sparver of white sylke w^r iij peyre of shetes, ij payre of fustians, a federbed, j chambring of gresylde; and (except that stuffe) all other stuffe of howsehold in the Mote and at my place in the Vyntree, to be to my seid lord my faders heyres[.]⁵⁵

At the time of his death, Anthony's father's heirs would be Anthony's siblings, the eldest of whom included Elizabeth Woodville, who was hiding in sanctuary at Westminster with her second son and her five unmarried daughters; Richard Woodville, who became third Earl Rivers upon Anthony's death; and Edward Woodville, who became Lord Scales.⁵⁶

Given that the connecting link between Anthony Woodville and William Courtenay lies through two women—Anthony's sister Elizabeth, and her daughter Katherine of York, who became William's wife—it seems likely that Westminster 21's heretofore male-structured literary circle became increasingly female-dominated, while the manuscript itself expanded its role as a tool for pedagogical household instruction in French. While the whereabouts and dispersal of Anthony's goods at the time of his death remain uncertain, it is plausible that Anthony's sister Elizabeth came to possess some of those goods, perhaps including his books.⁵⁷

⁵³Hicks, "Woodville, Anthony."

⁵⁴Pidgeon, "Anthony Wydevile . . . Part 2," 20–22.

⁵⁵"Will of Anthony, Earl Ryvers 1483," in *Excerpta historica; or, Illustrations of English History*, ed. Samuel Bentley (London: S. Bentley, 1831), 247.

⁵⁶Hicks, "Woodville, Anthony."

⁵⁷Michael Hicks notes that in 1483 Elizabeth withdrew to sanctuary in Westminster with "so much personal property that a breach was made in the walls between the palace and abbey for easier access": Michael Hicks, "Elizabeth [née Elizabeth Woodville] (c.

Although we do not know a great deal about Elizabeth's literary interests, she can be associated with at least six books, including a copy of John Gower's *Confessio Amantis* and John Lydgate's *Life of Our Lady*.⁵⁸ Elizabeth's copy of Gower's *Confessio*, now New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M.126, was made by Ricardus Franciscus, the same Anglo-French scribe in the broader homosocial Anglo-French wartime coterie, to which Westminster 21 also originally belonged.⁵⁹ Finally, Elizabeth is the daughter of Jacquetta of Luxembourg, who owned and personally marked at least three books, including the aforementioned collected works of Christine de Pizan, a copy of Gower's *Confessio*, and Cotton MS Otho D.II, containing Jean d'Arras's *Melusine*.⁶⁰

Elizabeth Woodville's daughters continue this trend of literary engagement: Elizabeth of York and Cecily of York wrote their names on the front fly-leaf of BL, MS Royal 14 E.III, a collection of French Arthurian Grail Cycle romances originally made for King Charles V of France.⁶¹ This manuscript demonstrates the same kind of transmission pattern that we

1437–1492), Queen of England, Consort of Edward IV," in *ODNB*, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/8634> (accessed May 5, 2021).

⁵⁸See Ann F. Sutton and Livia Visser-Fuchs, "A Most Benevolent Queen: Queen Elizabeth Woodville's Reputation, Her Piety and Her Books," *The Ricardian* 10, no. 129 (1995): 214–45; and Driver, "Women Readers." Other books associated with Elizabeth Woodville include a copy of William Caxton's *Recuyell of the Historiyes of Troye* (San Marino, Huntington Library, RB 62222), an *Hours of the Guardian Angel* (Liverpool Cathedral, MS Radcliffe 6), and an unspecified £10 book bought through a "Master Wulflete" of the University of Cambridge (Sutton and Visser-Fuchs, "A Most Benevolent Queen," 227–32). Nicholas Orme also suggests that Elizabeth is the unnamed female patron of Caxton's printing of *Le Chevalier de la Tour Landry* (1483), in *From Childhood to Chivalry: The Education of the English Kings and Aristocracy 1066–1530* (New York: Routledge, 1984), 108; cf. N. F. Blake, *Caxton and His World* (London: Deutsch, 1969), 92–93.

⁵⁹Driver, "Women Readers," 92.

⁶⁰See further Lucia Diaz Pascual, "Jacquetta of Luxembourg, Duchess of Bedford and Lady Rivers (c. 1416–1472)," *The Ricardian* 21 (2011): 67–91. For Jacquetta and her books, see Sarah Wilma Watson, "Jacquetta of Luxembourg: A Female Reader of Christine de Pizan in England," *Women's Literary Culture and the Medieval Canon*, February 27, 2017, <https://blogs.surrey.ac.uk/medievalwomen/2017/02/27/jacquetta-of-luxembourg-a-female-reader-of-christine-de-pizan-in-england/> (accessed May 5, 2021); Watson, "Women, Reading, and Literary Culture," 133–85; and Sarah Wilma Watson, "Another Woman Reader of John Gower's *Confessio Amantis*: Jacquetta of Luxembourg and Cambridge, Pembroke College MS 307," *JEB* 21 (2018): 159–70.

⁶¹The inscription "Elysabeth, the kyngys dowter and Cecyl the kyngys dowter" is found on fol. 1r: see British Library catalogue entry for MS Royal 14 E.III: http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Royal_MS_14_E_III (accessed May 5, 2021). The inscription "E. Wydevyll" is found on fol. 162r. The British Library catalogue temptingly suggests that this is the signature of Elizabeth Woodville, but Sutton and Visser-Fuchs caution that Elizabeth would have only signed her name in this way prior to becoming queen, after which point she signed her name as "Elysabeth." The signature may rather belong to her brother Edward Woodville: Sutton and Visser-Fuchs, "A Most

are positing for Westminster 21. MS Royal 14 E.III was acquired by Richard Roos (c. 1410–82), who also served in France as part of the Lancastrian administration and is the attributed Middle English translator of Alain Chartier's *Belle dame sans mercy*.⁶² At his death in 1482, Roos bequeathed this manuscript to his niece Alyanor Hawte, whose husband, Richard Hawte, was kin by marriage to the Woodville family; the presence of Alyanor's mark of ownership in this manuscript suggests she could have passed it on to Elizabeth Woodville and her daughters as, in Meale's words, an "informed" choice of gift.⁶³ MS Royal 14 E.III thus offers another example of how French books move through women from Anglo-French homosocial coterie to female reading circles. Such shifts from male to female agents in manuscript provenance effectively remind us that we need not necessarily insist on the divergence of male and female readership circles, nor on the divergence of reading interests between the male battlefield and the female domestic sphere. Elizabeth and Cecily's names are also found in Princeton University Library, MS Garrett 168, a French translation made around 1482 of a 1481 Italian letter concerning the death of Ottoman Sultan Mehmed II, who had conquered Constantinople in 1453.⁶⁴ Elizabeth of York later engaged in several acts of patronage alongside her bookish mother-in-law, Margaret Beaufort, including commissioning Caxton's *Fifteen Oes* (1491) and promoting Wynkyn de Worde's *Scala perfectionis* (1494).⁶⁵ The French Westminster 21, with its wartime connections, would not have been out of place amidst this coterie of women book owners.

Woodville to Courtenay: Men and the Women behind Them

While Elizabeth Woodville's sixth daughter Katherine of York cannot be directly associated with literary manuscripts, she was at court with her

Benevolent Queen," 228–30, exemplifying some of the challenges of reading ownership marks outlined in this article's introduction.

⁶²Douglas Gray, "Roos [Ros], Sir Richard," in *ODNB*, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/37912> (accessed May 5, 2021).

⁶³Meale, ". . . alle the bokes," 140.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 144; see further *Checklist of Western Medieval, Byzantine, and Renaissance Manuscripts in the Princeton University Library* (Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, August 2018), 33, <https://library.princeton.edu/special-collections/sites/default/files/Medieval%20Renaissance%20Byzantine%20Checklist%20Dec%202016.docx.pdf> (accessed May 5, 2021).

⁶⁵Susan Powell, "Lady Margaret Beaufort and Her Books," *The Library* 6, no. 3 (1998): 197–240 (211, 215–16). See also Catherine Nall, "Margaret Beaufort's Books: A New Discovery," *JEBS* 16 (2013): 213–20 (213).

mother and sisters throughout the 1480s and 1490s. She accompanied her mother into sanctuary in Westminster in 1483 and attended her funeral in 1492.⁶⁶ If Katherine shared the literary interests of her mother and, like her elder sisters, had access to books held at court, one of these could have been Westminster 21. In 1495, Katherine married William Courtenay (c. 1475–1511), heir to the earl of Devon.⁶⁷ If Katherine came to possess Westminster 21, she could easily have shared it with her new husband, William Courtenay.

In the same way that Elizabeth Scales and Elizabeth Woodville improved the social and political standing of Anthony Woodville, Katherine of York raised the fortunes of William Courtenay. Building on his father's loyalty to Henry VII, William's marriage to Katherine increased his social status and proximity to the royal household.⁶⁸ Katherine's position particularly assisted William some years later when, after being accused of treason and imprisoned, he was able to reacquire his lands and title. In a document (TNA, E 41/205) dated April 12, 1511, Henry VIII grants William and Katherine's petition concerning the restoration of William's lands, rights, and titles. Notably, it is Katherine's social position, rather than that of her husband, that is foregrounded in this document. While William is referred to simply as "William Courteney, knight," Katherine is identified by her royal connections as "the lady Kateryne . . . one of the daughters of kyng Edward the iiiij, late king of Englonde, grauntfader to oure seid soveraigne lord." As in the case of her mother, Elizabeth Woodville, and her grandmother, Jacquetta of Luxembourg, Katherine's social position supported the political fortunes of her male family members. In this context, it seems not impossible that Katherine may have also underwritten her husband's intellectual endeavors by bringing Westminster 21 into their shared household, especially since French literacy, both literal and cultural, continued to be tightly imbricated with social standing in this period.

This proposed route of transmission, from Scales to Woodville via Elizabeth, to Courtenay via Katherine, sheds further light on part of the English annotator's marginalia in Westminster 21. Below the aforementioned Latin passage on fol. 51v, the English annotator drafts a letter to a "master Gylle." The letter draft itself does not contain many clues: like the

⁶⁶Margaret R. Westcott, "Katherine, Countess of Devon (1479–1527)," in *ODNB*, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/70277> (accessed May 5, 2021).

⁶⁷*Ibid.*

⁶⁸*Ibid.*

others, it asks “Gylle” to send the author “word” of some “mater.” However, given the connections to the education and bookish interests of the Yorkist royal princes and princesses discussed above, this name could refer to the highly influential royal household figure Gilles Duwes (d. 1535). Duwes, whose illustrious career at the court of Henry VII began in the mid-1490s, was the royal lute-player, royal librarian, and French tutor to the four children of Henry VII as well as to Henry VIII’s daughter Mary.⁶⁹

Toward the end of his career as a tutor, Duwes wrote the *Introductorie for to Lerne to Read, to Pronounce and to Speke French Trewly* (1533–34), a bilingual work of French pedagogy for English pupils, in which he discusses at length his work in French instruction with his charges. Duwes opens the prologue to his work with the explanation that his authority in writing the book comes out of his experience with his pupils, whom he lists as “prince Arthur, the noble king Henry . . . the queenes of France and Scotlande, with the noble marquis of Excestre.”⁷⁰ This final figure is none other than Henry Courtenay (c. 1498–1538), son and heir to William Courtenay and Katherine of York, who became marquess of Exeter in 1525. From 1507 onward—by which point nine-year-old Henry would have likely been a pupil—royal household books identify Duwes specifically as “Master Giles Luter.”⁷¹ William Courtenay’s son appears listed after the prominent royal figures of Prince Arthur; Henry VIII; Mary Tudor, queen-consort to Louis XII of France; and Margaret Tudor, queen-consort to James IV of Scotland. His presence in this illustrious list speaks to the role of aspirational French instruction in continuing to afford the Courtenay family a prominent position at the Tudor court, even after William Sr.’s death in 1511, clearly facilitated by Henry’s mother Katherine’s royal birth. This connection lends further support to the proposition that Westminster 21 ended up, through its female owners, with the Courtenay family, where it was valued as an object of French pedagogical instruction for Katherine of York’s progeny.⁷²

⁶⁹Gordon Kipling, “Duwes, Giles [*pseud.* Aegidius de Vadis] (d. 1535),” in *ODNB*, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/7575> (accessed May 5, 2021).

⁷⁰Gilles Duwes, *An Introductorie for to Lerne to Read, to Pronounce and to Speke French Trewly* (repr.; Project Gutenberg, June 8, 2009), <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/29068>, 896 (accessed May 5, 2021).

⁷¹Kipling, “Duwes, Giles.”

⁷²Another piece of intriguing, if ambiguous, evidence connects Westminster 21 to William Courtenay. As noted above, in a document (TNA, E 41/205) dated April 12, 1511, Henry VIII grants William and Katherine’s petition concerning the restoration of William’s lands, rights, and titles. William and Katherine acknowledge receipt of this document by attaching their seals and signatures: “Wyllyam courtenay” and “Kathryn.”

Whether the English annotator of Westminster 21 is William Courtenay himself, or another member of the Courtenay household, such as his son Henry, his or her use of the anthology is consonant with the continued significance of French for the Tudor court in general and for the Courtenay family under the Tudor period in particular. As A. E. B. Coldiron has shown, English interest in France and French culture continued into the Tudor period and beyond. French remained the dominant language of the Tudor court, nominal claims to the throne of France persisted, and England held Calais until 1558.⁷³ This political interest in France was paralleled by a continued investment in French books, learning, and literature: thus, Henry VII inherited a fine array of French-language manuscripts from his predecessor Edward IV, and further curated the collection by having his arms added to numerous royal manuscripts and by hiring the first royal librarian, Quentin Poulet, a native of Lille, in around 1492.⁷⁴ Henry VII also employed a French royal poet, Bernard André, and the aforementioned Gilles Duwes, who succeeded Poulet as the librarian of the predominantly Latin and French Tudor library.⁷⁵

Frenchness also permeated the world of print. Many Tudor printers, such as Wynkyn de Worde and Richard Pynson, were francophone, and

Courtenay's name here bears some similarities to the two instances of "William Courtenay" in Westminster 21 found on fols. 8r and 38r. The "W" is formed in the same way in all three examples, though it is much looser in the TNA document. In the double "l," the tilt of the second "l" toward the first is the same in the TNA document and in the second signature in Westminster, and the "y" forms are similar as well. The stumbling block is the "c," which is formed in a similar manner in the two Westminster examples but differently in the TNA document. Differences in time and purpose may account for the variation: if, as we speculate, William Courtenay acquired Westminster 21 through his wife, Katherine, he could have written his name in the manuscript as early as 1495, whereas the signature on the TNA document was executed in 1511. It is also possible that the circumstances of writing account for these differences. The signature in the TNA document is careful and complete, while the marginal annotations in Westminster 21 are informal. Finally, it is possible that the divergence in the formation of the "c" could be a matter of capitalization. In the same way that medieval orthography was not fixed, even for proper names, so capitalization was not standardized. We thank Linne Mooney and Margaret Connolly, who generously offered their assessment of the signatures to us through personal correspondence on July 21, 2019 and July 25, 2019, respectively.

⁷³A. E. B. Coldiron, "French Presences in Tudor England," in *A Companion to Tudor Literature*, ed. Kent Cartwright (Malden, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 246–60 (248).

⁷⁴See Backhouse, "Founders of the Royal Library"; and Janet Backhouse, "Illuminated Manuscripts Associated with Henry VII and Members of His Immediate Family," in *The Reign of Henry VII: Proceedings of the 1993 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. Benjamin Thompson (Stamford: Paul Watkins, 1995), 175–87.

⁷⁵Coldiron, "French Presences," 247. See also H. Omont, "Les manuscrits français des rois d'Angleterre au château de Richmond," in *Etudes romanes dédiés à Gaston Paris* (Paris: E. Bouillon, 1891), 1–13.

others, such as William Caxton, spent many years on the Continent and employed French materials and styles in their printing workshops.⁷⁶ Furthermore, the texts these printers produced were very often translations from French, such as the very first book printed in English, Caxton's *Recuyell of the Histories of Troye* (1475), a translation of Raoul Lefèvre's *Recueil des histoires de Troye* (1464).⁷⁷ Additionally, nearly half of the poetry printed in England before 1557 was translated, the majority of it from French.⁷⁸ Coldiron draws attention to a number of French authors and genres that were especially popular during the Tudor period. In particular, this period reveals the continued significance of Christine de Pizan's work to Tudor England, as five works by Christine were printed in England before 1550: the aforementioned *Moral Proverbs of Cristyne* (1478 and 1526), *The Book of Fayttes of Armes and Chyvalrye* (1489), *The Boke of the Cyte of Ladyes* (1521), the aforementioned *Boke of the Body of Polycye* (1521), and *The 100 Hystories of Troyes* (the *Othea*) (c. 1549).⁷⁹ Similarly, French dictionaries found a ready audience among English readers who, as Coldiron puts it, "[had] the desire to encounter French but not the linguistic means to do so"; one of Caxton's earliest publications was a French–English wordlist.⁸⁰ Finally, French presence was particularly pronounced in poetry, whether romantic, religious, or moral verse; Coldiron estimates that "more than 100,000 lines of French-derived verse were printed in England between 1476 and 1557."⁸¹

This set of popular authors and genres aligns surprisingly closely with the contents of Westminster 21 and may help to explain why the manuscript saw such active use during the Tudor period. Westminster 21 would have supplied a Tudor reader with a rich collection of late medieval French lyrics, including works by the illustrious French poets Oton de Granson and Guillaume de Machaut. The collection also features examples of the *querelle des femmes*, a genre widely read in Tudor England.⁸² Christine's *Epistre au dieu d'amours* is typically regarded as part of the *querelle de la rose*,

⁷⁶Coldiron, "French Presences," 252–54.

⁷⁷N. F. Blake, *William Caxton and English Literary Culture* (London: Hambledon, 1991), 75.

⁷⁸Coldiron, "French Presences," 257.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, 254.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, 251.

⁸¹*Ibid.*, 255.

⁸²See A. E. B. Coldiron, *English Printing, Verse Translation and the Battle of the Sexes, 1476–1557* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009); and Stephanie Downes, "Fashioning Christine de Pizan in Tudor Defences of Women," *Parergon* 23, no. 1 (2006): 71–92.

a subgenre of the *querelle des femmes* centered on the *Roman de la Rose*. Two additional texts in the manuscript can also be categorized as participating in the gender debate. *Le blâme des femmes*, rubricated as “Le dit de la condicion des femmes” in Westminster 21 and found in eight insular and continental manuscripts, participates in the anti-woman side of the debate, describing women as “the root of all evils” (“racyne de tous maus”) and the instigators of “battle and wars” (“bataille e guere”).⁸³ Immediately following this text in Westminster is a poem beginning with the incipit “Puis que femmes furent bonnes galoises” (Given that women were loose flirts), which similarly critiques women. The same text is also found in Antoine Vêrard’s monumental printed collection of poetry *Le jardin de plaisance et fleur de rhétorique* (1502), where it is headed by the title “Balade des abus des femmes” (*Balade* concerning the abuses of women), testifying to its popularity in this period.⁸⁴ Although the English annotator may still be at a rudimentary level of French instruction, as we have earlier seen, Westminster 21 offers an attractive quarry of texts to the aspirational reader in a period still deeply invested in French literary thought.

Finally, the Courtenay household’s ownership of a French manuscript is consonant with the broader literary interests of other branches of the far-flung Courtenay clan. In the fourteenth century, Hugh de Courtenay, earl of Devon (1303–75), and his wife, Margaret de Bohun (1311–91), owned a number of French manuscripts: Hugh’s will lists an unnamed “French book” (“une livre Fraunceys”) and Margaret’s includes five (likely French) books: “[un] liure appelle Tristram . . . un liure appelle Artur de Britaigne . . . un liure de medycynys . . . un liure appelle vices et vertues . . . un liure appelle merlyn” (a book called Tristan . . . a book called Arthur of Britain . . . a book of medicines . . . a book called vices and virtues . . . a book called Merlin).⁸⁵ Additionally, in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, Bodleian Library, MS e mus. 65, a fourteenth-century copy of the *Roman de la Rose*, was owned and annotated by John

⁸³Pfeffer, “The Dits,” 12. See also “Art 77, Le blasme des femmes,” in *The Complete Harley 2253 Manuscript*, ed. Susanna Greer Fein (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2015).

⁸⁴Antoine Vêrard, *Le jardin de plaisance et fleur de rhétorique*, intro. and notes by E. Droz and Arthur Piaget (Paris: Didot, 1910–25), Vol. 2, fo. Lxiiij. See also Stephen Minta, *Love Poetry in Sixteenth-Century France: A Study in Themes and Traditions* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1977), 21.

⁸⁵Cavanaugh, “A Study of Books,” 212–13.

Courtenay (c. 1566–1615) and Edward Courtenay (c. 1570–1622).⁸⁶ William and Katherine Courtenay's possible ownership and annotation of Westminster MS 21 in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century thus resonate with the Devonshire Courtenay family's sustained interest in French and English literature.

Conclusion

Tracing the movement and use of Westminster 21 reveals the imbrication of male and female literary networks, a phenomenon that is further exemplified by the location of Thomas Scales's ownership mark and William Courtenay's marginalia on and around Christine de Pizan's *Epistre au dieu d'amours*. While Christine is most famous today as a proto-feminist writer who imagined a community of female readers in her "city of ladies," the preceding discussion demonstrates that she is also a labile author valued by a multitude of reading circles that include military officers as well as both male and female household readers, adult and child. Christine's wide appeal highlights the limitations of taking a dichotomous approach to male and female literary culture. Paradoxically, studying female readers in isolation marginalizes the active participation of women in mainstage literary culture and contributes to the invisibility of female reading practices. To reconstruct female readership and book ownership demands an approach that treats late medieval literary culture as a whole. This approach, as we have hoped to show above, centers on the gendering of literary spheres and their resultant differences but does not assume that this gendering closes the spheres off from each other. Instead, the gendering of literary spheres is a dynamic cultural force affecting the dimensions, design, and reach of the circulation of late medieval literary artifacts.

Late medieval women not only read alongside men, but, through their gifts, bequeathals, and influence, shaped the formation of far-ranging reading publics. This work, then as now, is occluded by the men who stand at the forefront of literary culture; who write their names in books with

⁸⁶We are grateful to J. R. Mattison for alerting us to these annotations and providing us with high-resolution photographs of the fly-leaves of this manuscript. See also Boffey, "English Dream Poems," 113; and Elizabeth Solopova and Matthew Holford, *A Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1895–1953), Vol. 2, Part 2, 728. For more information on John and Edward Courtenay (the sons of Peter Courtenay [1536–1606]) see Vivian, *The Visitations of the County of Cornwall*, 117–18.

prominent flourishes; who use blank pages to draft their letters; who benefit from greater access to written culture and education; and who, as a result, have been the chief focus of twentieth-century scholars. If we think of the historical record as a tapestry, then the history of men comprises the compelling images proudly displayed upon its surface. Recovering women's history, however, involves following the thin, tangled threads of information on the underside of the tapestry, without which the images on the tapestry would never exist. It is all too easy to despair of the threads on the tapestry's underside as composing an undifferentiated mass of knotted material: untraceable and indistinguishable, especially in comparison to the tapestry's other side. But as these fruits of a multiyear collaboration between two scholars seek to reveal, this detailed work—this “women's work” in the sense of work by, for, and on behalf of all women—is a way forward, empowering us to recover not just the fullness of late medieval female reading culture but the fullness of *late medieval reading culture* itself.

**Appendix. Proposed Route of Transmission—
Westminster Abbey Library, MS 21**

Owner	Relationship	Dates owned
Thomas Scales (1399–1460)	Early owner	c. 1440–60
Elizabeth Scales (1438–73)	Sole heir of Thomas Scales	1460–73
Anthony Woodville (1440–83)	Husband of Elizabeth Scales	c. 1460–83
Elizabeth Woodville (1437–92)	Sister of Anthony Woodville	1483–92
Katherine of York (1479–1527)	Daughter of Elizabeth Woodville	c. 1492–1527
William Courtenay (1475–1511)	Husband of Katherine of York	1495–1511