

Caxton's Addition to the "Legenda sancti Augustini"*)

In the late fifteenth century, not many years before the Augustinian canons regular were expelled from Carlisle Cathedral, which for centuries they had occupied until the Dissolution²⁾), as part of their programme for adorning their church and for attracting pious visitors, four painted screens were erected. One shows the twelve apostles, each with the verse of the Latin creed which he was traditionally credited with having composed. This is a commonplace, already well documented³⁾. The other three screens show scenes, in series of vertical strips, from the lives, respectively, of St. Cuthbert, the saint most venerated in his native Northumbria, St. Anthony the Hermit, and St. Augustine, obedience to whose Rule the canons, as well as their rivals, the friars hermit, professed. There is a variety of evidence, much of it collected and reproduced by those indefatigable scholars, Jeanne and Pierre Courcelle⁴⁾), that in the late Middle Ages such cyclical representations of events in saints' histories were frequent; but very few of them survived the zeal of iconoclasts in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. At Carlisle, the screens became so offensive to Protestant frequenters of the cathedral that they were removed from their places and covered with whitewash; and it would seem that for many years they lay neglected and forgotten. Fortunately, when they were rediscovered, their rarity and antiquarian interest were recognized, and since then they have been

*) I am indebted to the British Academy for subvention of my researches into the history of the Carlisle Augustine screen. The Dean of Carlisle, the Very Reverend J. H. Churchill, and his Chapter have given me every help, as has Mr. Guy Pawle with his expert photography of what proved to be difficult subjects. At the British Library, Dr. Lotte Hellinga and Miss Anna Simoni have responded generously to appeals for assistance.

²⁾ James Wilson, art.: 'The Priory of Carlisle', *Victoria County History, Cumberland* ii, 1905, pp. 131-136.

³⁾ According to Curt F. Bühler, 'The Apostles and the Creed', *Speculum* xxviii, 1953, pp. 335-339, the tradition is as early as the fourth century, implied by Rufinus, reported by Augustine.

⁴⁾ The Carlisle screen is described on pp. 119-132 and its pictures are shown in Plates lxxv-xcv of the second volume of their series, *Iconographie de saint Augustin: Les cycles du XV^e siècle*, Paris, 1969, although the value of this is diminished by its many inaccuracies of transcription. See also Bertram Colgrave: 'The St. Cuthbert Paintings on the Carlisle Cathedral Stalls', *The Burlington Magazine* xxiii, July, 1938, pp. 17-19.

carefully restored and preserved. The St. Cuthbert and St. Anthony screens have suffered more than the other two from decay and obliteration; the pictures from Augustine's life, however, with accompanying couplets composed in English doggerel verse — intended, we may surmise, to be read aloud for the edification of pilgrim-tourists whose literacy could not be assumed — and, in places, Latin inscriptions, are still discernible and legible.

There can be no doubt that the subject-matter of these paintings, and the explanatory verses and inscriptions, derived from James of Voragine's Augustine biography in his *Legenda aurea*; and it may be that contemporary interest was stimulated by the publication, c. A.D. 1485⁵), of William Caxton's English translation of James's work. It is the present writer's intention to analyze each scene in the Carlisle screen and to examine James's sources for the incidents which he recounted, and the artist's treatment of them. As a preliminary to such studies in Augustine-iconography, he now offers this brief examination of the one detail which, Caxton himself declared, he did not find in the *Legenda* but chose to add.

Caxton's career as a publisher shows that he was astute in forecasting what would sell. He had spent many years in the Low Countries, assessing demand there for English goods, supplying them and exporting local commodities which he judged likely to appeal to tastes in England. When he perceived the commercial potentialities of the revolutionary new artefact, the printed book, he had gone to Cologne to master the skills for producing it, and then had returned to Bruges, where he must have been as much at home as in London, to make his first ventures⁶). When he thought the moment ripe for repatriation, and established his press in the precincts of Westminster Abbey, he had surely learned by the successes, and the failures, of such undertakings in the Netherlands and the Rhineland, observing what could confidently be predicted as suited to readers' preferences; and in this he was guided by his own discriminat-

⁵) Seymour de Ricci: *A Census of Caxtons*, Oxford, 1909, p. 101, no. 98.

⁶) George D. Painter: *William Caxton: a Quincentenary Biography*, London, 1976. On his Cologne training, first attested by his Alsatian pupil and successor Wynkyn de Worde, see L. A. Sheppard: 'A New Light on Caxton and Colard Mansion', *Signature*, New Series xv, 1952, pp. 28-39, which Bühler praised for its 'immensely sound reasoning and good common sense', *The Library*, Fifth Series viii, 1953, pp. 53-56, in disproving the fiction, invented in 1844 by A. J. V. Le Roux de Lincy, that Caxton learned the trade in Bruges from Mansion. A recent note on Colard Mansion, 'that brilliant and mysterious figure', is by Sarah Bradford: 'Sale of MSS from the Bute Collection', *Times Literary Supplement*, 24 June 1983.

ing knowledge of letters. He was a cultivated man, whose interests extended to the objects he had seen on his travels; and we may deduce that by disposition he favoured the art and the literature which would encourage orthodox, conservative piety.

These qualities are displayed in his handling of what were to be 'his longest and most ambitious books'⁷⁾, the *Morte Darthur* and the *Golden Legend*. It is clear that his preparation of copy from the Thomas Malory manuscript which he adapted was a slow and careful process⁸⁾; yet once the work was completed, its appearance on 31 July 1485⁹⁾ could not have occurred more auspiciously. Three weeks later, at Bosworth, Henry VII's supporters invested him with the crown of the dead Richard III; and the Tudor dynasty then inaugurated was to promote the cult of King Arthur so that 'in the sixteenth century ... it flourished as never before'¹⁰⁾. The pains which Caxton had spent on these fables of a Celtic Christian golden age were well recompensed. Very soon he seems to have regained the position as royal printer-in-ordinary which he had occupied under Edward IV and then lost¹¹⁾; and the esteem which he had won for Malory's book did not diminish. Wynkyn de Worde reprinted it in 1529; and it saw two later issues while Mary I and Elizabeth I were queens.

Despite this early improvement in his affairs, helped, there can hardly be question, by the publication of his *Morte Darthur*, the printing of the *Golden Legend* caused Caxton anxieties. It was an independent project; R. F. Green is wrong in stating that the translation had been commissioned by William FitzAlan, ninth earl of Arundel¹²⁾. Caxton's own report is different. He must have planned the book as it was executed, a lavish edition on extra large paper, from additional presses requiring increased supplies of type to serve its great length, and copiously illustrated¹³⁾, although, in places, indiscriminately — the same

⁷⁾ Painter, p. 124.

⁸⁾ Sally Shaw's 'Caxton and Malory', in J. A. W. Bennett, ed.: *Essays on Malory*, Oxford, 1968, pp. 114-145, is still of value, though it has now been augmented from the results of ultra-sophisticated scanning techniques, applied by Hilton Kelliher, further refined by Lotte Hellinga, and reported in her aptly-named *Caxton in Focus*, London, 1982, pp. 89-94.

⁹⁾ De Ricci: *Census*, p. 81, no. 76.

¹⁰⁾ Antonia Gransden: *Historical Writings in England ii*, London, 1982, pp. 470-473.

¹¹⁾ N. F. Blake: *Caxton and his World*, London, 1969, pp. 75-76, 98, although the evidence is somewhat tenuous.

¹²⁾ *Poets and Princepleasers: Literature and the English Court in the late Middle Ages*, Toronto, 1980, p. 158.

¹³⁾ Painter, p. 143, using Blades's data; see note 23.

engraving of a bishop in pontificals is made to serve for the lives of St. Augustine, f. cclxxij^a, St. Edmund Rich, f. cclxxiij^d, and St. Erkenwald, f. ccclxxxviii^j^d. This lack of originality and distinction continues the tradition of mediaeval *Legenda* manuscripts, which contain little to interest or inform iconographers. They were never designed as the 'poor relations' of more sumptuous books appealing to rich bibliophiles, but for customers with money to spend on useful works of reference, not on luxuries. Caxton was fearful that he might lose by the edition, and considered abandoning it, until FitzAlan, to whom he appealed for help, promised that he would purchase 'a reasonable quantity' of finished copies, and also make an annual gift of game¹⁴). N. F. Blake will not accept Caxton's reasons for seeking FitzAlan's patronage¹⁵). He considers that this was because he needed to find other influential sponsors to replace the Woodvilles, whose fortunes declined abruptly after Edward IV's death, and were not restored until 1486, when their kinswoman, Edward's daughter, married Henry VII. Blake had no facts with which to support his rejection of Caxton's statement, though Lotte Hellinga has since then, in *Caxton in Focus*, suggested that it was the most powerful of the Woodvilles, Anthony, Earl Rivers, who is the 'certain gentleman' named in the prologue to *Morte Darthur* as having given Caxton the manuscript which served as his copy-text, and that this is the 'Winchester MS', known now, after its acquisition by the British Library, as the 'Malory MS', in which offsets caused not by water-based scribe's ink but oil-based printing ink may show that it was for a time in the Westminster office. Dr. Hellinga cautiously describes these seductive hints only as 'The trails pointing to Earl Rivers'; and she observes that after his violent overthrow the prologue is at pains to conceal his identity. We may regret that less is still known about the printer's finances, and whether they were sufficient to cover a great outlay without jeopardizing other ventures. Nelly Kerling's enterprising investigations of the records of the London customs authorities showed him as active in the import and export of printed books¹⁶); but nowhere do we learn what we so often would wish to be told about the first booksellers, what was their price for a single volume, how many were sold and what profits

¹⁴) Painter, p. 144.

¹⁵) *Caxton and his World*, pp. 91-92.

¹⁶) 'Caxton and the Trade in Printed Books', *The Book Collector* iv, 1955, pp. 190-199.

they yielded. And nothing which she found supports, as Blake implies¹⁷), another of his assumptions, that Caxton dealt also in manuscripts. It is true that since he wrote evidence has been published that in the fifteenth century such books were being copied and decorated in Bruges for sale overseas¹⁸); but no circumstance points to Caxton's engaging in this trade, with the one possible exception of his statement that he had sold to Margaret Beaufort a copy of the French *Blanchardyn and Eglantine* which he then translated at her request¹⁹). Kathleen Scott believes that this was 'certainly' a manuscript²⁰); but the certainty would be demolished if a printed French version were to come to light. Almost a century ago, Leon Kellner showed how rare copies, whether written or printed, of this text in any language are²¹); and very seldom thereafter have fresh examples been discovered²²). Lacking so much that we need to know of the details of Caxton's early publications, we shall be safer with what he tells us than with conjectures. In the event, whatever risks Caxton may have taken were justified. The first edition may have sold out, because traces of a second can be discerned²³). Before 1527, Wynkyn de Worde and Julian Notary had made six separate re-issues of the *Legend*²⁴).

This new English translation perhaps scored a success greater even than earlier versions of James of Voragine's *Legenda*, but from its first appearance the work had been a best seller. We still possess no critical

¹⁷) *Caxton and his World*, p. 35, note 1.

¹⁸) Edmund Colledge: 'South Netherlands Books of Hours made for England', *Scriptorium* xxxii, 1978, pp. 55-57.

¹⁹) L. Kellner, ed.: *Caxton's Blanchardyn and Eglantine*, EETS OS lviii, 1890, pp. 1-2.

²⁰) *The Caxton Master and his Patrons*, Cambridge, 1976, p. xi.

²¹) *Blanchardyn and Eglantine*, p. CXI.

²²) *Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke*, no. 4402.

²³) De Ricci, *Census*, p. 106, no. 99, relying on William Blades: *The Life and Typography of William Caxton*, London, 1861, pp. 151-156, 182-183, which is also supported by E. Gordon Duff: *Fifteenth Century English Books*, Oxford, 1917; but Dr. Hellings, now engaged in preparing Painter's investigations and her own for the *Legend* entry in a forthcoming volume of BMC, *Catalogue of Books printed in the XVth Century now in the British Museum*, has informed me of her inability to accept Blades's opinion that a complete second edition was printed. The problems arising from the *Legend* are so complex that one will do better to await her considered verdict than to quote her careful expositions of what, she stresses, are provisional explanations of how such problems may have originated.

²⁴) A. W. Pollard and G. R. Redgrave: *Short-Title Catalogue*, London, 1926, nos. 24875-24880.

edition of the Latin²⁵); yet surviving manuscripts show that the very speed with which these immensely long codices were copied — two of the earliest examples, both transalpine, were written in James's own lifetime²⁶) — suggests that, long before Caxton, the stationers had realised that the scribes' fees involved would be a prudent investment. James was by no means the first to have undertaken an encyclopaedia of the lives, deaths and wonders of the saints; but he had been able to augment the works on which he had drawn, notably those of his brother Dominicans, Bartholomew of Trent's *Liber epilogorum*²⁷) and Jean de Mailly's *Abbreviatio*²⁸), so as to heighten their popular appeal. These present studies can concern themselves only with the *Legenda sancti Augustini*; but some of their findings may be applicable to other parts of the entire *Legenda aurea*.

Although this was one of the most widely-read, often-quoted books produced in the Middle Ages, retaining its pre-eminence unchallenged for two centuries and more, there has never been a serious assessment of all that it accomplished, though now there are signs that students' attention is reviving. James was a scholar of much distinction, and in composing his Augustine biography his methods were those which, four centuries later, the Bollandists were to follow for their *Acta*. First he had recourse to the primary sources, the saint's own autobiographical statements, in the *Confessions* and the many other writings where he had reflected on his life and times. Then James had consulted, as Stillingh²⁹) in his turn was to do, such biographical notices, particularly Possidius's *Vita*, as could incorporate the testimony of those who had lived and worked with Augustine and had learned from him. Only then did James's legend turn to the next constituent part of his treatment of most saints, accounts of the miracles worked through the subject's intercession.

²⁵) On the present state of *Legenda aurea* studies, see Edmund Colledge and J.C. Marler: 'Céphalologie: a recurring Theme in classical and mediaeval Lore', *Traditio* xxxvii, 1981, pp. 411-426.

²⁶) Munich clm 13039 and Brussels 21877, both dated A.D. 1282. James died as archbishop of Genoa in 1298; Eubel: *Hierarchia catholica* i, 281.

²⁷) Giuseppe Abate: 'Il Liber epilogorum ...', *Miscellanea Pio Paschini*, 2 vols., Rome 1948-1949, i 269-292.

²⁸) A. Dondaine: 'Le Dominicain français Jean de Mailly et la Légende Dorée', *Archives d'histoire dominicaine* i, 1946, pp. 53-102.

²⁹) The Bollandists' editor, in *Acta sanctorum Augusti* vi (1743) of their main and extensive Augustine entry. On Stillingh's achievement, see David Knowles: *Great Historical Enterprises*, London, 1963, pp. 17-18; but his source, their obituary notice (Stillingh's dates are 1703-1762) appears not in that volume of *ASS* but in *Octobris* i (1765).

Yet before finishing with Augustine's self-revelations, James selected from them one or two allusions to supernatural interventions in his history. There is the story, taken from the *Confessions*, of the consolation which Monica received from the 'most handsome youth' in her grief over her erring son: 'Esto secura, quia ubi tu ibi ille'³⁰). He repeats, from the same source, how the prayers of the people had gained Augustine's recovery from the toothache which had rendered him speechless³¹). There is also, from Book xxii of *De ciuitate dei*, the account of the cures of a virgin possessed of a devil and of a man thought to be in dire need of surgery³²), effected through the petitions of a priest whom Augustine does not name but who, James believed, (though Possidius is silent) was the saint himself, an identification which Stillingh pronounced uncertain though not improbable. Then James turned to posthumous legend, to the narrative of the divine inspiration which had moved Ambrose and Augustine, at his baptism, to compose the *Te deum* antiphonally³³).

Examination of the rest of James of Voragine's notice, the healings worked through the dead Augustine's prayers, the miracles associated with the translation of his relics from Sardinia and with their veneration at Liutprand's new shrine at Pavia, and of the sources on which James drew, will be the subject of a separate enquiry; but we should here observe the decision with which Stillingh rejected two anecdotes: how a woman came for counsel in her afflictions and found Augustine so rapt in thought that he was unaware of her presence or words, and how he saw, in the devil's 'book of death', a fault of omission incurred by him, an entry which, once the lapse had been repaired, was deleted from the book, to the devil's mortification. The story of the woman coming unperceived into Augustine's study is dismissed, because Stillingh found it wholly contradictory of all that we know about the saint's many precautions in his dealings with women. The Bollandist's terse comment on the second story is: 'Non meretur seriam refutationem tam inepta historiuncula, quae fingi non potuit, nisi ab homine plane indocto'³⁴).

³⁰) *Sancti Augustini Confessionum libri xiii*, ed. L. Verheijen, *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina* xxvii, Turnhout, 1981, p. 38.

³¹) *Ibid.*, p. 130.

³²) *Sancti Aurelii Augustini De ciuitate dei*, ed. B. Dombart and A. Kalb, *CCSL* xlvii-xlviii, 1955, i pp. 826-821.

³³) According to J. Leclercq, *Dictionnaire d'Archéologie Chrétienne et de Liturgie* xv 2, 1953, col. 3021, this story is first found in the *Datiana historia ecclesiae Mediolanensis*, a late version of *De situ urbis Mediolanensis*, which is to be dated before A.D. 1000; *DACL* xi 1, 1933, coll. 984-985.

³⁴) *ASS* Augusti vi, p. 359.

Stilingh's judgment has been confirmed. We find that the Cistercian Caesarius of Heisterbach tells a similar story of recorded sins marvelously blotted out, but of a sainted prior of St.-Denis hearing the confession of a dissolute Paris student³⁵), and the anecdote is illustrated in a fifteenth-century English painted window, but with Martin of Tours, not Augustine, as the subject³⁶).

Stilingh reserved for more detailed examination and condemnation another item of the Augustine legend, which is not found in James of Voragine. Since Caxton specially mentions its absence, which he makes good, from the *Legenda aurea*, the words of the English may be quoted:

... Many other myracles hath god shewed by his lyfe / and also after his deth / whiche were ouer longe to wryte in this booke / For they would I suppose conteyne a book as moche as al this & more / but among other vnder correction I wylle sette here in one myracle / whiche I haue sene paynted on an aulter of saynt Austyn at the blacke Freres at Andwerpe / how be it / I fynde hit not in the legende myn exampler / neyther in Englysshe Frensshe / ne in latyn / It was soo that this glorious Doctor made and compyled many volummes as a fore is sayd / among whome he made a book of the Trynnye / In whiche he studyed / and mused sore in his mynde / soo ferforthe / that on a tyme as he wende by the see syde in Aufryke studyeng on the Trynnye / he fonde by the see syde a lytel childe / whyche hadde made a lytel pytte in the sonde / and in his honde a lytel spone / And wyth the spone he tooke oute water of the large See / and poured hit in to the pytte 'And whanne saynt Augustyn behlde hym / he merueyled / and demaunded hym / what he dyde And he answerd and sayde / I wylle lade oute / and brynge alle this water of this See in to thys pytte / what sayd he / hit is Impossyble / How maye hit be done / sythe the See is soo greete and large / and thy pytte and spone soo lytyle / yes forsothe sayd he / I shalle lyghtlyer / and sonner drawe alle the water of the See / And brynge hit in to this pytte / than thou shalt brynge the mysterye of the Trynnye and his dyuynnye in to thy lytel vnderstandynge / as to the regard therof For the mysterye of the Trynnye is greter and larger to the comparyson of thy witte and brayne / than is this grete see vnto this lytel pytte And therwith the childe vanysshed (f. cclx(x)vij^a) away / thenne here may euery man take ensample / that no man / and specially symple lettred men / ne vnlearned presume to entremete

³⁵) J. Strange, ed.: *Caesarii Heisterbachensis Dialogus miraculorum*, 2 vols., Cologne, 1851, i, pp. 73-76.

³⁶) In St. Martin's, York, where I was obliged to Dr. Peter Newton for pointing this out.

ne to muse on hyghe thynges of the godhede ferther than we be enfourmed by our faythe / For our only feyth shalle suffice vs ...³⁷⁾

In his analysis, Stilingh received this story with marked scepticism. He had found it in the *Catalogus sanctorum* of Peter of Natalis, ob. 1370³⁸⁾, the Venetian secular priest, later bishop of Iesolo, who had compiled a manual for preachers' use of hagiographical material, some of it additional to what could be found in the *Legenda aurea*. Stilingh's adverse judgment was partly based on the lateness of this recording, on the appearance of the incident in a number of other mediaeval Augustine sources of unequal value, and on their disagreement about where the apparition took place. Again, the Bollandist's verdict is shown to be just by more recent investigations. Elena Croce reported³⁹⁾ that in the thirteenth century the same story had been recounted, but not with Augustine as the central figure. It is told by Caesarius of Heisterbach, ob. c. 1240, in his *Libri miraculorum* ii 1:

Die quadam cum Parisius in scholis cuiusdam eximii magistri disputatio haberetur de sacramento Trinitatis, ceperunt scolares ab eo requirere aliquam manifestam similitudinem, per quam intelligere valerent, quomodo in una deitate tres esse possent persone, Pater scilicet, Filius et Spiritus Sanctus, ita ut quilibet earundem personarum Deus sit, nec tamen tres dii, sed unus credendus sit. Quibus ille de sciencia sua presumens respondit: 'Cras dicam vobis bonam similitudinem'. Cui tota nocte per cogitacionem laboranti, cum nichil relatione dignum occurreret et mane scholas intranti discipuli dum promissam similitudinem importunius exigerent, tacuit ille. Qui cum instarent, magister capucio caput operiens cum silencio exivit et supra ripam Secane residens amplius de interrogatis meditari cepit. Et ecce infantulum speciosissimum contra se sedere conspexit, qui fossam modicam quam fecerat digitulo flumini crebrius intincto eandem fossulam diligenter intus circumlinivit. In cuius aspectu delectatus, cum eum interrogaret et diceret: 'Quid operaris, bone puer?', respondit: 'Ego omnes aquas huius fluminis inducere volo in hanc fossam'. Cui cum diceret scolasticus: 'Hoc omnino impossibile est', subiunxit infans: 'Possibilis est michi hoc

³⁷⁾ From the British Library copy. Ff. cc(l)xxvj-cclx(x)vij are K^{ij} and Kⁱⁱⁱ, two folios from the second edition; De Ricci: *Census*, p. 102, no. 98, and see note 23 above.

³⁸⁾ Eubel i 24; on the *Catalogus*, see A. Poncelet: 'Le légendier de Pierre Calo', *Analecta Bollandiana* xxix, 1910, pp. 5-116, 34-35.

³⁹⁾ *Bibliotheca Sanctorum* i, Rome, 1961, art.: 'Agostino Aurelio' vi: 'Iconografia e Monumenti'.

facere quam te per similitudinem sacramentum Trinitatis posse explicare'⁴⁰).

In this version, it will be seen, the recipient of the vision is not named, but we are told that he was a distinguished scholar of Paris; and the child has dug its ditch in the bank of the Seine. Elena Croce also relates another form of it, by Robert of Sorbon, ob. 1274, in which, likewise, the scene is the river Seine, but the scholar is identified as Alan of Lille.

Here we are presented with the phenomenon, familiar to hagiography, of transference, the process by which such an account, or, it may be, some trait pictorially represented, became detached from its original subject and, as it were, floated freely, available for borrowing by the biographers of other saints. We have already noticed that it was, in one version, the fault committed by Augustine which was entered in the devil's book, to be miraculously expunged when he had made reparation, yet, in another, it was Martin and not Augustine who had received this sign of forgiveness. Elsewhere it has been observed that we are told, in one 'history', about Thomas Aquinas, in another of Francis of Assisi, that the saint's sudden longing to eat herrings, rare and unprocurable, was wonderfully gratified⁴¹); and more recently it has been shown⁴²) that the legend of the *Schutzmantelmadonna*, visions of Mary enfolding favoured souls in her protecting mantle, originally, it would seem, Cistercian in origin, was appropriated by Henry Suso for his autobiography, where he told it of himself.

Evidence offered by mediaeval Augustine-iconography accords with the conclusion which Stillingh drew from the texts, that Caxton's addition represents a late accretion in the evolution of the saint's legend. Whether or not the Carlisle canons had access to the English *Golden Legend* in planning the screen which they were commissioning, they

⁴⁰) Alfons Hilka, ed.: *Die Wundergeschichte des Caesarius von Heisterbach. Publikationen der Gesellschaft für Rheinische Geschichtskunde* xliii, Bonn, 1933, and cfr. Aloys Meister, ed.: *Die Fragmente der Libri VIII Miraculorum des Caesarius von Heisterbach, Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Alterthumskunde und für Kirchengeschichte*, Supplement xiv, Rome, 1901, pp. 68-69.

⁴¹) Edmund Colledge: 'The Legend of St. Thomas Aquinas', in Armand Maurer, ed.: *St. Thomas Aquinas, 1274-1974: Commemorative Studies*, 2 vols., Toronto, 1974, i, p. 15.

⁴²) Edmund Colledge and J.C. Marler: "'Mystical" Pictures in the Suso "Exemplar": MS Strasbourg 2929' (*Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* liv, 1984 — at press).

included no picture to show this event, very probably because their pattern-book for the artist's guidance did not contain it. Two such Augustine pattern-books, fifteenth-century German, are now MS Berlin Kupferstichkabinett 78 A 19 a⁴³) and MS Boston Public Library 1483⁴⁴), both of which lack the scene with the child, as does MS Arsenal 542, a scheme, unillustrated, for forty-eight drawings to show episodes from the saint's life with explanatory captions in Latin, copied from that of the Augustinian friar James Legrand, c. 1365-1415; other transcripts are in two Liège manuscripts⁴⁵). One of the story's first representations to have gained celebrity among the art historians is a fresco, painted 1463-1465, by Benozzo Gozzoli at San Gemignano⁴⁶). Next, probably, one should mention the altarpiece acquired, after many changes of ownership, by the New York Metropolitan Museum, now in The Cloisters. Max Friedländer suggested — though this has been contested — that this is by the same painter as 'A Bishop Enthroned', a painting then recently arrived at the Bruges Museum, in which, to the sitter's right, through an Italianate pillared loggia can be glimpsed the completed bell-tower at Bruges and other landmarks of the city, rendered in painstaking detail. This led Friedländer to propose, for the bishop's portrait, a dating 'certainly ... after 1482 — probably around 1490', and to suggest that the Cloisters triptych, which shows Augustine's legend in much detail, was commissioned for 'a church of the Augustinians in Bruges'⁴⁷). Others are less persuaded of the painter's localization; and 'Augustinians in Bruges' possessed two churches. A house of friars had been founded from Malines in 1250, six years, that is, before the 'Grand Union' achieved the amalgamation of the friars with several smaller congregations following similar ways of life; and their great church in the

⁴³) Jeanne and Pierre Courcelle: xv — see note 4 above — pp. 27-64 and Plates ii-xxxv.

⁴⁴) Jeanne and Pierre Courcelle, ed.: *Vita sancti Augustini imaginibus adornata*, Paris, 1964. Rudolph Arbesmann, whose recent death is so great a loss to classical and mediaeval scholarship, published a perceptive review of this and the Courcelles' other studies: 'A Pioneering Work in Augustinian Iconography', *Recherches Augustiniennes* iv, Paris, 1966, pp. 27-36.

⁴⁵) Jeanne and Pierre Courcelle: xv, pp. 17-23 and Plate i.

⁴⁶) Ibid., pp. 85-106 and Plate lx.

⁴⁷) 'The Bruges Master of St. Augustine', *Art in America* xxv, 1937, pp. 47-54; but see especially the published notes by Nicole Veronee-Verhaegen to Friedländer's *Early Netherlandish Painting* Vol. II, Part II, Leyden, 1971, pp. 119-127, for which second reference I am obliged to Fr. A. Ampe.

city, consecrated in 1327, was patronized by communities of resident alien traders, who made costly gifts to embellish the chapels in which they worshipped. The Augustinian general archives record that in 1422 John Multon, a lector of the English province, was appointed to the community 'so that he may provide fitting care for the English merchants living there'⁴⁸). But there is good reason for thinking that the triptych was painted not for friars but for canons regular. At Bruges, the site which became known as the 'Eechhoutte' was granted to them in 1130, an earlier foundation having been destroyed in hostilities. This second house survived until the eighteenth century⁴⁹). Originally, the Courcelles accepted Friedländer's dating and attributions⁵⁰); yet their admirably photographed detail, the scene in the upper right-hand corner of the altarpiece, shows the child, at a river bank where it is endeavouring to pour water into a hole with its cupped hand, being interrogated by Augustine, dressed neither as bishop nor friar, but in a canon regular's choir habit — as too he is in several scenes of the Carlisle screen — white rochet and black almuce, with a doctor's red *pila*⁵¹). Friedländer calls this an 'often-depicted meeting'; yet to Caxton in Antwerp it evidently was novel, which suggests, furthermore, that there was no such picture among the objects in the Bruges friars' church, where very probably he was accustomed to attend Mass. Finally, we may mention Botticelli's 'Vision of St. Augustine', in the San Barnaba predella now in the Uffizi⁵²). Still, despite the distinction of these individual treatments of the subject, there seems to have been little demand for it from patrons.

None the less, the legend and its icon did not disappear; and in one later representation of Augustine we find it as a minor attribute, an allusion to some detail of a saint's history less well known than those which contributed to the emblem by which he is more generally recognized in his pictures. It has, for example, been shown⁵³) that Henry

⁴⁸) Adalbero Kunzelmann: *Geschichte der deutschen Augustiner-Eremiten*: I: *Das dreizehnte Jahrhundert*, Würzburg, 1969, p. 92; IV: *Die kölnische Provinz bis zum Ende des Mittelalters*, 1972, pp. 93, 94, 96 and note 418. I owe these valuable references to Fr. Benedict Hackett.

⁴⁹) Edouard Michel: *Abbayes et monastères de Belgique*, Brussels and Paris, 1923, p. 102.

⁵⁰) Jeanne and Pierre Courcelle: *xvi-xvii*, 1972, pp. 117-119; but see N. Verhaegen's notes — note 47 above.

⁵¹) Jeanne and Pierre Courcelle: *xvi-xvii*, Plate cxxix.

⁵²) G. Kaftal: *The Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting*, Florence, 1952, Fig. 114, p. 110, for which reference, and others, I am indebted to Mrs. Elizabeth Beatson of the Princeton Index of Christian Art.

⁵³) Edmund Colledge and J. C. Marler: "'Mystical" Pictures' — see note 42.

Suso is usually identifiable through the chaplet of red and white roses, signifying his sharing in the sufferings of the Passion and his purity, with which the painters commonly depict him, but that, as two such minor attributes, he is accompanied sometimes by a dog with a rag in its jaws, sometimes by an owl. So too Augustine's most frequent attribute is the heart, pierced with an arrow and aflame, which alludes to his words: 'Sagittaueras cor meum ...'⁵⁴); but in the former house of Augustinian friars at Rohr (Rottenburg, Lower Bavaria), the church has a statue, baroque of the seventeenth or eighteenth century, not, it seems, recorded or illustrated in any study — the generally well-informed *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie* has no 'Löffel' entry — showing him as bishop, with, at his feet, a different emblem, derived from the tale which Caxton related, a seated naked child, which with its left hand points to heaven and with the other grasps a gilded spoon⁵⁵).

One of the interests of this Caxton addition is that it enables us to watch, as we seldom can, iconography at work, achieving its purposes. It is true that the observer is far from being the average man, illiterate, or, as Caxton himself defined it, semi-literate, at whom the painters of holy pictures were aiming. Caxton was well read and of decided tastes, and one may presume that the story of the child on the shore would have affected him in much the same fashion, had he come across it in Peter of Natalis's book. Instead, he learned of it as a still large though by then diminishing section of the public acquired what knowledge of literature they possessed; and the image was sufficiently unfamiliar to provoke his interested enquiries. A guide was on hand to answer them, the Flemish friar; and this illustrates the essential role in such encounters of an informed commentator, who could explain and gloss for the benefit of uninstructed sightseers. Beyond doubt, the religious conducting Caxton would hope, with the Carlisle canons reading off and expounding the couplets on their screen, for visitors' alms; and he would consider the transaction justified, when men simpler far than this travelling English bookseller learned by such means an essential truth, that the doctrine of the Trinity must remain beyond mortal understanding.

Yet the profits accruing from the exhibition of an art-object would be petty in comparison with what a book could produce which met a constant demand. The *Legenda aurea*, we have seen, was bringing such

⁵⁴) *Confessiones* — see note 30 — p. 134.

⁵⁵) Fr. Alexius Nöth kindly drew to my attention this attractive object.

benefits to the book-trade before printing had been invented; and thereafter it was regularly stocked by publishers whose dealings Caxton could have followed. The first Latin illustrated edition came in 1471 from Günther Zainer of Augsburg, where in the next thirteen years it was followed by another eighteen⁵⁶). The earliest production without pictures which can be dated with certainty is of 1475, printed at Paris; and before the English *Legend*, there had appeared, in Latin, three from Venice (1478, 1480, 1482) and one each from Lyons (before 16 April, 1478), and, in 1481, from Cologne, Nuremberg and Strasbourg⁵⁷). Caxton states that in preparing his text he had consulted Latin, French and English versions. The only known earlier English translation of the *Legenda* is the *Gilte Legende*. A cursory comparison of the Caxton 'Augustine' with that in MS British Library Additional 11565, ff. 157^b-160^b, inc.: 'Seint Austyn the noble doctour was borne yn Aufrik yn the cite of Cartage and was of full honest kynrede ...', suggests that Caxton's English may be modernizing the older text, which is also the opinion of Richard Hamer, who has edited from it 'Nicholas', 'George' and 'Bartholomew'⁵⁸); but it would be rash to base conclusions on anything less than a full collation of all manuscripts of the *Gilte Legende* with Caxton and with the Latin and French, for which investigators would still need to produce their own texts. The *Gilte Legende* was made from Jean de Vignay's *Legende Doree*, which is probably what Caxton also used. His second prologue to the book, inc.: 'The holy and blessed doctour St. Jerome says ...'⁵⁹), partly translates Vignay's work, of which a complete edition was printed at Lyons in 1478 by Nicholas Philippe and Mark Reynaud⁶⁰). These figures, which do not comprise translations into languages such as Dutch and German, show steady sales; and it need not be questioned that these came from the clergy, by profession lettered, with funds for book-buying, and eager to acquire aids in that recurring chore, the preparation of Sunday sermons. It has been suggested that this was the object which Bartholomew of Trent had

⁵⁶) Art., 'Legenda aurea', in *Lexikon des gesamten Buchwesens*, Leipzig, 1936.

⁵⁷) Only volumes to which the iconabulists assign specific dates have been cited from the current catalogues of the Bibliothèque Nationale and the British Library.

⁵⁸) *Three Lives from the Gilte Legende*, Middle English Texts, general editor M. Görlach / 9, Heidelberg, 1978, which we had not consulted when we described the *Legende* in 'Céphalologie' — see note 25.

⁵⁹) W. J. B. Crotch, ed.: *The Prologues and Epilogues of William Caxton*, London, 1928, repr. New York, 1971, pp. 71-73.

⁶⁰) Bibliothèque Nationale: *Catalogue général*, 1972, which accepts Copinger's date.

in view, works not intended for reading aloud as part of the liturgical office or during conventual meals, but for private study and rehearsal to the laity⁶¹). As a single instance of the regard in which priests held James of Voragine's work, one may cite the will, proved in 1457, of John Edlington, rector of Kirkby Ravensworth, in which he bequeathed to John Bosbury, evidently serving as his assistant 'my large portiforium, my missal, the book called *Pupilla oculi*, the *Legenda aurea*, a calendar, a chalice parcel gilt and a portable altar of jet with the rest of its ornaments'⁶²), all valuable equipment for a parish cleric living in rural isolation. Those who undertook the printing of the *Legenda* must have regarded this as a safe speculation.

We have already noticed elements in the Augustine legend, as James of Voragine, his precursors and, following him, William Caxton had contributed to it, which Stilingh rejected; and in this we see him applying the principle which his eminent successor, Hippolyte Delehaye, was to formulate: '... ne pas confondre la personnalité du saint avec le portrait imaginé par les hagiographes'⁶³). But Stilingh did not give this as his reason for objecting to the story which Caxton had repeated; he did so chiefly because it created problems of chronology, by in its context implying that Augustine had been engaged in the composition of *De trinitate* much earlier than was the case. Yet the anecdote itself in no way conflicts with what else we know of Augustine's temper, as scholar and as man. It tells us in its artless fashion how he was supernaturally admonished that we shall not enter the kingdom of heaven unless we are made into little children, to whom that divine wisdom is revealed which is hidden from learned men.

Augustine himself had reaffirmed these evangelical sayings:

Res enim magna tractatur, et non a magnis, imo multum parvis: spem tamen et fiduciam dat nobis, qui magnus propter nos factus est parvus. Si enim ab illo non exhortaremur, nec invitaremur ad eum intelligendum, sed desereret nos tanquam contemptibiles; quia capere non possumus divinitatem ipsius, si non caperet ipse mortalitatem nostram, et perveniret ad nos ut loqueretur nobis evangelium; si quod in nobis abjectum et minimum est, nolisset communicare nobiscum; putaremus eum noluisse nobis dare magnum suum, qui suscepit parvum nostrum⁶⁴).

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⁶¹) G. Abate: 'Il Liber epilorum ...' — see note 27.

⁶²) J. Raine, ed.: *Wills and Inventories of the Archdeaconry of Richmond*, Surtees Society xxvi, 1853, p. 3.

⁶³) 'La légende de la bienheureuse Ida de Toggenburg', *Mélanges d'hagiographie grecque et latine*, Brussels, 1966, pp. 347-352; p. 552.

⁶⁴) *In Johannis evangelium tractatus* xxii, PL xxxv col. 1574.