

Stephen of Lexington, the Abbey of Savigny, and Problems in the Cistercian Order in the Thirteenth Century

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The Abbey of Savigny in western Normandy was founded in 1112. It attracted the attention of kings and princes, particularly Stephen of Blois, count of Mortain, nephew of Henry I, and later himself king of England, since Savigny lay within the county of Mortain. Savigny became the mother house of its own reformist monastic order, which expanded rapidly in Normandy, England, the Loire, and even into the Capetian Ile-de-France with the founding of the abbey of Les Vaux-de-Cernay. Perhaps it grew too fast. In the late 1140s, the order was absorbed by the Cistercians, though it retained its own identity and its own filiation within the Cistercian family. The two orders had much in common, but it was, nonetheless, something of a hostile takeover. Initially, after the death of King Stephen in 1154, the abbey and its daughter houses suffered from their close association with him, but Henry II became a supporter, and was deeply impressed by Hamon, master of the *conversi* at the abbey, one of those holy men to whom Henry was susceptible. The abbey's saints, including Hamon, and the founder St Vitalis, attracted pilgrims, and a new and impressive abbey church designed to house them was finished in 1200, though the saints' relics were not translated into it until 1243.¹

In the thirteenth century, the abbey of Savigny lost some of its lustre. When the English kings lost Normandy in 1204, Savigny lost its royal patrons, having to make do with the patronage of the relatively local lords of Fougères instead. When the abbey produced a list of miracles worked by the founder saints to encourage pilgrimage around 1240, it was clear that the pilgrimage was very local.² Nevertheless, the

monks of Savigny seem to have had aspirations for the monastery and its order, for in 1229, they elected Stephen of Lexington as their abbot. For almost fifteen years, the abbey and the order of Savigny was under the command of one of the most impressive of contemporary churchmen. By 1243, Stephen's reputation within the ecclesiastical world stood so high that he was elected abbot of Clairvaux, which, while not the mother house of the Cistercian order, still possessed the prestige of having been the house of St Bernard.

Stephen of Lexington was English, the son of one of King John's justices and administrators.³ One of his brothers worked in royal administration. Two others pursued ecclesiastical careers, one becoming bishop of Lincoln between 1253 and 1258. Stephen was born around 1185. He must have intended a career in the secular church and studied the arts in Paris, probably around 1212. He returned to England in 1215, and received a prebend which allowed him to continue his studies in theology at Oxford. Here he was a student of Master Edmund of Abingdon, who had himself studied in Paris with Stephen Langton, before Langton became archbishop of Canterbury. Edmund of Abingdon himself would become archbishop of Canterbury in 1234. He died in 1240 and was canonised in 1246. One day in 1221, the abbot of the English Savigniac abbey of Quarr came to one of Edmund's lectures at Oxford, and persuaded seven of the students to come back with him to take up the monastic life at Quarr. Stephen was one of them. Edmund, according to his *Vita*, was shocked to lose one of his best students, but master and ex-pupil remained close friends until Edmund's death in 1240.⁴ One might note that the abbot of Quarr was acting just like the Dominican friars, who arrived in Oxford in 1221, and who recruited rapaciously in lectures.⁵

In 1223, Stephen was elected abbot of the Savigniac abbey of Stanley near Salisbury. It was an ideal position for him. His friend and master, Edmund of Abingdon, was now treasurer of Salisbury cathedral, and Stephen had other close friends at the cathedral, including bishop Richard Poore, Robert Bingham who would succeed Poore as bishop, and the archdeacon of Wiltshire. In 1227, Stephen's brother, Robert of Lexington, received a prebend at Salisbury. Bishop Richard Poore was in the process of building his new cathedral, and

gathering around himself an entourage of educated and cultivated clergy. Bishop Richard and his entourage were all followers of Stephen Langton, moralists intent on implementing the pastoral reform programme outlined at the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215. They were called the ‘langtonians’, the *lingua tonens* – the voices of thunder.⁶ Stephen of Lexington found himself at home in this intellectual and moral context. He corresponded throughout his life with Richard Poore and the archdeacon of Wiltshire.⁷ When Richard Poore was elected bishop of Durham in 1228, he wrote to Stephen to complain that he would be henceforth ‘in the midst of a barbarian people, whose language he did not understand’.⁸ When Stephen was elected abbot of Savigny, he wrote to Richard Poore in sympathy, for he too was now required to go to ‘a distant land, and an unknown people’. Stephen used the word ‘ignotus’ for the people of Western Normandy: ‘unknown’, but also ‘ignoble’.⁹ The two men saw themselves as being thrust out of the Garden of Eden to be sent to live among savages on the borders of Scotland in one case and the borders of Brittany in the other.

Stephen of Lexington, as a good ‘langtonian’, ensured that a register was kept of his letters, his abbatial visitations and the rules that he imposed on the abbeys under his care as abbot of Stanley and of Savigny up to 1240. The document is now housed in the library of the city of Turin in Italy. It seems likely that Stephen lost the register in 1241, when, along with a large number of other important ecclesiastical figures, he was captured by Italian pirates in the pay of the Emperor Frederick II, on his way to a papal council in Rome.¹⁰ Stephen’s register was published by Griesser in *Analecta Sacri Ordinis Cisterciensis* in 1946 and 1952. It provides a rich insight into the actions and motivations of Stephen, and his contemporaries, which has not been exploited as much as it deserves by historians – partly, perhaps, because even Griesser’s commentary is in Latin.

Stephen’s reputation as a moralist and reformer was well-established within the Cistercian order when he was still abbot of Stanley. In 1227, the Chapter General asked him to go to Ireland to reform the Irish Cistercian houses.¹¹ Stephen found the Irish communities in crisis, and tried to impose new strict rules to deal with disorder, drunkenness and a range of sexual practices. Stephen was

shocked to hear the monks speaking Irish. He put in place measures to educate them, so that they should be 'lettered', and should speak and read Latin, or at the very least French.¹² He exiled many recalcitrant monks to either England or France, and broke-up the most important filiation in Ireland, that of Mellifont.¹³ It seems that some disaffected monks tried to assassinate him, though they did not succeed.¹⁴ He had only just returned from Ireland when he heard in May 1229, that he had been elected abbot of Savigny.¹⁵

Despite his reservations about finding himself in a distant land among and unknown people, Stephen found the Abbey of Savigny itself in good shape. But during his visitations he found many of the abbeys within the Savigniac filiation were very badly run. At the abbey of Longvilliers, founded by Stephen of Blois in the county of Boulogne, Stephen found the sort of moral decadence he had confronted in Ireland.¹⁶ At Furness in Lancashire, also founded by Stephen of Blois, Stephen found 'scandal and dissension'.¹⁷ At Aunay-sur-Odon, in Normandy, the monks amused themselves in the refectory with cats and birds.¹⁸ Everywhere, Stephen found the abbey precinct was all too permeable. There were too many outsiders within the monasteries; conversely, the monks were too often able to leave the confines of the abbey. The monks of Aunay-sur-Odon ate and drank in taverns of the surrounding towns of Bayeux, Caen and Saint-Lô, and elsewhere. Stephen insisted that the monks should be enclosed in their cloisters. He gave detailed attention to means of access, ordering that gates into the abbey, and gates controlling areas within the abbey, should be locked or even walled up. At Longvilliers, he had particular concerns about monks leaving the claustral areas for the apple orchard.¹⁹ Everywhere within the filiation, he imposed silence. Everywhere he was concerned at what he saw as the 'troubling' influence of the lay brothers, the 'conversi'.²⁰ Everywhere he sought to ensure that the abbeys were financially secure, insisting on regular and public accounting sessions, and the recording of accounts.²¹ At Savigny itself, he established a complex accounting system, ensuring that all the claustral officers should produce their own separate accounts - for instance those of the cellarer for the clothes and shoes - before those of the entire abbey were addressed.²² He insisted that abbeys should establish budgets, especially when they were in debt, like Longvilliers,

Champagne (in Maine) and Les Vaux-de-Cernay (in the forest of Iveline to the west of Paris).²³ Debt horrified him: he spoke of the ‘abyss of debt’ – ‘abyssus debitorum’.²⁴ Frequently he limited the numbers of monks and lay brothers to ensure that a monastery could survive on its own resources.²⁵ He forbade some monasteries to construct new buildings if they were in debt²⁶ – something which he had also had to do in Ireland.

At Savigny itself, Stephen ensured that the abbey buildings were in good repair, and built new when necessary. In 1242, he persuaded the Chapter General of the Cistercian Order to authorise the translation of the saints of Savigny from the chapel of Ste Catherine into the choir of the abbey church. The relics of the saints had been placed in the Chapel of Ste Catherine during the construction of the new choir during the late twelfth century. With its ambulatory and radiating chapels, the new choir of the abbey church was perfectly designed to house the relics of the order’s saints, indeed had probably been designed to do so. Nevertheless, the monks of Savigny had left the relics in their provisional resting place until Stephen organised their translation into the great abbey church in 1242.²⁷

Like his fellow langtonians, Richard Poore and Edmund of Abingdon, Stephen insisted on the proper performance of the liturgy. Henceforth, the filiation of Savigny must use the chant favoured by St Bernard himself, without ornamentation.²⁸ Stephen was a stickler for aesthetic simplicity. Frequently he evoked the ‘laudable simplicity of the order’ (*laudabile simplicitas ordinis*), and declared that everything should be done ‘according to the simple and original beauty of the order’ (*secundam simplicem et antiquam ordinis formam*).²⁹ There has been a recent tendency among art historians to downplay this desire for aesthetic simplicity within the Cistercian order. It is certainly true that several abbots, perhaps under pressure from their powerful lay patrons, ignored the rules against excessive luxury in architecture and liturgical objects promulgated by the Cistercian chapter general – though, like the abbots of Vaucelles and Royaumont, they were both criticised and punished by the chapter general for doing so.³⁰ Stephen’s register reveals how seriously this particular – and influential – member of the order took aesthetic simplicity. He expected liturgical objects to be simple in form and in material. He ordered that altar

cloths should be white, that painted decoration should be limewashed over, and that coloured glass windows and tile pavements should be removed.³¹ He would not accept sculptural embellishment. At Beaubec he ordered that: ‘knots and horns and other obvious sculpture should be removed from all around the cloister, and it should be returned to the simplicity of the order, in the number of both columns and rounded (rose?) windows’.³² At Fontaine-les-Blanches (Touraine) he warned ‘that they should take care in the making of capitals and other things in the new works on the church....which in the works now being done is discordant with/moves away from the simplicity and beauty of the order.’³³ At Barbery (Normandy), he insisted that ‘they should reduce the columns of the cloister to the simplicity of the order, in so far as that can be done with honesty and without the danger of ruin’.³⁴

As abbot of Savigny, Stephen found himself in charge of a large number of female monastic communities. Vitalis of Savigny, like his colleague, Robert of Arbrissel, attracted many women followers, and he founded the Abbaye-Blanche at Mortain for them, and (probably) for his sister. In the course of the twelfth century, three other female communities (Villers-Canivet, Bival and Bondeville), attached to the order of Savigny, were founded throughout Normandy.³⁵ The Cistercian order itself had a different tradition, less welcoming toward female religious. Nevertheless, in the late twelfth century and the first half of the thirteenth the Cistercian order found itself under pressure from patrons who wished to found communities of Cistercian nuns. In many, but by no means all, cases, these patrons were women from powerful aristocratic or royal families, who founded the nunneries in the expectation that they might retire there in their old age and be buried there at their death, and that they themselves or a close relation might become abbess. These female patrons were supported in this by their powerful families, and often by important members of the secular clergy – bishops, and masters from the schools, usually secular clergy who belonged to the reformist wing of the church. The Cistercian order had to set aside its reservations in the face of the piety and determination of women like Isabelle countess of Chartres, Blanche of Navarre, countess of Champagne, or Blanche of Castile, Queen of France.³⁶

Alongside the Norman Savigniac female houses, Stephen of Lexington found himself overseeing two new Cistercian houses founded after 1200, Moncey in Touraine and Porrois or Port-Royal in the forest of Iveline to the west of Paris. They fell under Stephen's control because both were placed under the immediate protection of existing and nearby Savigniac abbeys. Moncey was adjacent to Fontaine-les-Blanches; Porrois to Les Vaux-de-Cernay. The abbey of Porrois was founded in 1204 by Matilda, widow of Matthew of Marly, a member of the Montmorency family.³⁷ Matilda's niece was married to the great crusader and 'athleta christi', Simon de Montfort. The Montfort and their Montmorency relations were committed supporters of the Cistercian order, patrons of the male houses of Les Vaux-de-Cernay and Le Val, and were now also committed supporters of female Cistercian monasticism.³⁸ Several members of these two intertwined families had important careers within the church. Matilda of Marly's grandson, Theobald of Marly, became a monk, and later abbot at Les Vaux-de-Cernay, and was soon regarded as a saint. Stephen wrote to him as if to a close friend.³⁹ Matilda of Marly had episcopal support, and her new foundation of Porrois was soon accepted as a member of the Cistercian order, under the immediate protection of Les Vaux-de-Cernay.⁴⁰

Stephen, with his background of study at Paris and Oxford, and his adherence to the langtonian group of reformists, was probably much more receptive to the idea of female houses than some of his more traditional Cistercian colleagues. Both Stephen Langton's brother, Simon, and Edmund of Abingdon maintained friendly relations with Blanche of Castile, a prominent supporter of female Cistercian monasticism.⁴¹ Stephen of Lexington found most of the female houses in his charge as well run as their male counterparts, though they often had less substantial and extensive revenues and landed resources - and Stephen was always concerned to ensure that an abbey had sufficient resources to avoid debt. With female houses as with male, Stephen insisted on rigorous accounting, and limited the numbers to reflect the resources of the house.⁴² In 1231, he established a set of statutes for the Abbaye-Blanche at Mortain.⁴³ As for monks, he insisted that the nuns remained enclosed within the abbey precinct.⁴⁴ But he was flexible enough to adapt to particular

circumstances. At the request of the abbot of Cîteaux, he wrote to the abbess of the Cistercian convent of Saint-Antoine, just outside Paris, to remind her that the nuns should not dine, or stay the night in Paris, but should return to their convent, except for those who were in the entourage of the queen, Blanche of Castile.⁴⁵ This suggests that it was relatively normal for some nuns, perhaps those with offices such as cellarer, to leave the precinct to do business in the city. This letter dates from around 1240. From 1236, Blanche of Castile had been in the process of setting up her new Cistercian nunnery of Maubuisson, with nuns drawn from Saint-Antoine. Royal household accounts for 1239, and Blanche's own household accounts for 1241-2, show that the abbess of Saint-Antoine was frequently in the Queen's entourage.⁴⁶

Saint-Antoine was not part of the filiation of Savigny. But Stephen was often asked to offer advice, or make judgements or arbitrations beyond the confines of the filiation. In 1237, the Cistercian chapter general chose him as arbiter in an obscure internal quarrel within the order. John of Boxley, abbot of Cîteaux, had been forced out of his office as abbot by the abbots of the five principal daughter houses of Cîteaux, who refused to accept his authority.⁴⁷ Cîteaux was heavily in debt at the time, and John of Boxley was English – which may have exacerbated the breakdown in trust.⁴⁸ Whatever the precise causes, the episode reveals serious conflict at the heart of the Cistercian order. At the request of the papacy, Stephen visited and imposed reform at two Benedictine abbeys, Redon in Brittany,⁴⁹ and Saint-Serge at Angers.⁵⁰ The papacy also appointed him as arbiter in conflicts between the archbishop of Rouen and Blanche of Castile as queen regent,⁵¹ and between the bishop of Avranches and the Abbot of Le Mont-Saint-Michel.⁵²

Stephen's prominence must have led to the invitation to attend the papal council in Rome in 1241. Those who were captured alongside him on the ill-fated voyage included the Cistercian James of Pecoria, previously abbot of Trois-Fontaines, and at this stage Cardinal-bishop of Praenestae, the abbots of Cîteaux and Clairvaux, and another English Cistercian, John of Toledo, who was abbot of L'Epau. L'Epau, founded by Richard I's queen, Berengaria, was outside Le Mans, not far from Savigny, and it is clear that John of Toledo and Stephen were close friends. John was made Cardinal

priest of San Lorenzo in Lucina in 1244, and appointed one of Stephen's relatives, William of Lexington, as his chaplain.⁵³ In fact, Stephen seems to have escaped from his captors speedily, owing to his 'knightly strength and finesse'.⁵⁴ Within the Cistercian order, and at the papal curia, Stephen was admired for his administrative gifts and his strict reformist approach. It was not surprising that he was elected abbot of Clairvaux, the house of Saint Bernard, and thus perhaps the most prestigious of the daughter houses of Cîteaux, in 1243.

As abbot of Clairvaux, Stephen founded the *College des Bernardins* in Paris after 1245.⁵⁵ He had always been conscious of the fact that few Cistercian monks studied the theology taught at the schools of Paris or Oxford. Around 1235, when still abbot of Savigny, he wrote to abbot John of Pontigny - who was himself a master of theology - arguing that the Cistercian order should establish their own 'studium', their own school, to produce monks capable of arguing against heresy. Stephen pointed out that the Dominicans were much more advanced in this area than Cistercian monks, and he thought that there was a real danger that Dominican friars would launch enquiries about heresy within the Cistercian order itself.⁵⁶ Stephen viewed the Dominicans as both a model and a threat for the Cistercians. He himself had been seduced from his studies by the Cistercian abbot of Quarr, just as the Dominicans were accused of enticing scholars and monks from other orders into their own ranks. Stephen's predecessor at Clairvaux had indeed sent some monks to study at Paris, lodging them in a house given by Matilda of Marly, the founder of Porrois.⁵⁷ But it was Stephen who transformed this small house of scholar-monks into a Cistercian college of the University of Paris. His model, it seems, was the Parisian college of the Dominicans. In this project, he had the full support of his friend, John of Toledo, now Cardinal priest of San Lorenzo in Lucina.⁵⁸

But it is clear that there was resistance to this new initiative within the Cistercian order. Stephen had been educated in the schools before becoming a monk. This was true of some other prominent Cistercians, for instance, abbot John of Pontigny.⁵⁹ Usually, those Cistercian monks who had been educated in the schools, like Stephen, had brilliant careers within the order and outside it. Often they were raised to bishoprics, or occupied important positions at the papal

court. Two close friends of Stephen might be cited as examples - James of Pecoria, abbot of Trois-Fontaines, then Cardinal-bishop of Praenestae, and above all John of Toledo, who had studied the sciences at Toledo, and became doctor to the pope. A gulf was opening within the Cistercian order between those who had been educated at Paris or other universities, who were likely to be influenced by the pastoral and reformist agenda of the Fourth Lateran Council and the 'langtonians', and who were likely to be accommodating towards the presence of women monastics within the order (John of Toledo was a particularly active founder and supporter of female Cistercian houses),⁶⁰ and those who wanted to remain enclosed within their abbeys to pursue the intense and interiorised study of the bible in the tradition of Saint Bernard. In 1256, a conflict broke out between Stephen and his friends at the papal court on the one hand, and the traditionalists on the other.⁶¹ This time, Stephen did not prevail. The abbot of Cîteaux deposed him from his abbacy at Clairvaux. Stephen retired to the abbey of Ourscamp, where he died and was buried in the following year.

The career of Stephen of Lexington throws light on many aspects of the history of the Cistercian order in the thirteenth century. It suggests that the Abbey of Savigny, while not quite what it had been in the early thirteenth century, was still an institution of some weight within the Cistercian order, an institution whose monks placed themselves under the leadership of a formidable abbot who upheld the traditional Cistercian values of simplicity, enclosure and restraint. Stephen's strictures and statutes show that some prominent thirteenth-century Cistercians took the 'simple and original beauty of the order' more seriously than art historians have assumed. Stephen might be a traditionalist in asceticism and aesthetics, but he brought a new intellectual perspective to the order. His insistence on financial good order, so that the communal life was not subsumed in the 'abyss of debt', reflected the family background in royal administration, and the early-thirteenth century revulsion against debt and usury prevalent among Paris-educated churchmen.⁶² Too many Cistercian houses, including Cîteaux under John of Boxley, were in debt; and that episode, as well as Stephen's own problems as abbot of Clairvaux,

reveal stresses at the heart of the Cistercian order in the mid-thirteenth century. There was, it seems, a struggle between those who clung to older intellectual traditions, and rejected the new learning of the schools and universities, and the small group of university-educated Cistercians, including Stephen, who embraced them. The university-educated Cistercians, like Stephen, were closely connected with those secular clergy and masters, like Stephen Langton, who set the agenda for or implemented the pastoral reforms associated with the Fourth Lateran Council. University-educated Cistercians, like Stephen and John of Toledo, with their close connections to reformist secular clergy, were perhaps more likely to be sympathetic towards female monasticism, and the laity, both female and male, who patronised it, than their more traditional colleagues. The reformist secular clergy, and the pious lay patrons who patronised female Cistercian houses, also tended to be patrons of or closely associated with the new mendicant orders, the Dominicans and Franciscans. But Stephen's attitude to the mendicants was defensive. His determination to return the houses under his care to the simplicity of the past may have been in response to Franciscan ideals of poverty. He feared that the Dominicans might find heresy among uneducated Cistercian monks, but the great college that he established in Paris for the education of Cistercian monks was modelled directly on that of his Dominican rivals.

Notes

- 1 For the history of the abbey see Claude Auvry, *Histoire de la Congregation de Savigny*, ed. by Auguste Laveille, 3 vols, (Rouen: Société de l'histoire de Normandie, 1896-89), and see now the articles in *L'Abbaye de Savigny (1112-2012). Un chef d'ordre anglo-normand*, ed. by Brigitte Galbrun and Véronique Gazeau, (Rennes: Presses Universitaire de Rennes, 2019). The present article is based on my own article in this collection. For patronage of the abbey and its order, see Beatrice Pouille, 'Savigny and England', in *England and Normandy in the Middle Ages*, ed. David Bates and Anne Curry (London: Hambledon Press, 1994), pp. 159-68; Claude Groud-Cordray, 'L'abbaye de Savigny et ses premiers bienfaiteurs', in *L'Abbaye de Savigny (1112-2012)*, pp. 85-101; Daniel Pichot, 'L'abbaye de Savigny et l'aristocratie', *L'Abbaye de*

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- Savigny (1112-2012)*, pp. 103-117; Christophe Mauduit, 'Les comtes de Mortain et l'abbaye de Savigny', in *L'Abbaye de Savigny (1112-2012)*, pp. 119-145, and Lindy Grant, 'Savigny and its Saints', in *Perspectives for an Architecture of Solitude: essays on Cistercians, Art and Architecture in Honour of Peter Fergusson*, ed. Terryll Kinder (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), pp. 109-110. For the abbey at the end of the twelfth century and early thirteenth century, and for the new church, see *ibid.* *passim*, and Jean-Baptiste Vincent, 'Savigny, Cîteaux et la Normandie: Bilan archéologique et perspective de recherche', *L'Abbaye de Savigny (1112-2012)* pp. 219-235.
- 2 Grant, 'Savigny and its Saints', pp. 110, 112.
 - 3 For Stephen's life and career before 1229, see C. H. Lawrence, 'Stephen of Lexington and Cistercian University Studies in the Thirteenth Century', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 11 (1960): 166-168.
 - 4 This story was told by the Dominican Robert Bacon, regent master of Theology at Oxford, and close friend of St Edmund, in his deposition on the sanctity of Edmund, recorded by Matthew Paris, see C. H. Lawrence, *St Edmund of Abingdon: A study in Hagiography and History*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960), pp. 118-9, 251, and C. H. Lawrence, (ed. and trans.) *The Life of St Edmund by Matthew Paris*, (Oxford: Sutton, 1996), p. 141. For the continuing friendship between Stephen and Edmund, see Lawrence, *The Life of St Edmund*, introduction, p. 39, and Lawrence, *St Edmund of Abingdon*, pp. 118-9.
 - 5 For the Dominicans' predatory approach to attracting student, and criticisms of it, see for Paris, Ian Wei, *Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris: Theologians and the University*, (Cambridge: CUP, 2012), pp. 115-6, and for England, especially Oxford, William Hinnebusch, *The Early English Friars Preachers*, (Rome, ad Santa Sabina, 1951) esp. pp. 264-5, quoting Jordan of Saxony, the leader of the Dominicans, writing around 1230: 'At the University of Oxford, where I am at present staying, Our Lord has given me the promise of a good catch'. See also, William Hinnebusch, *History of the Dominican Order*, 2 vols, (New York: Alba House, 1965-73) I, pp. 312-5; 321-323.
 - 6 On Richard Poore and his entourage, and the influence of Stephen Langton, see Lawrence, *The Life of St Edmund*, introd., pp. 23-4, 37-41, and Lawrence, *St Edmund of Abingdon*, p. 122.
 - 7 Stephen's letters are published in two parts in Fr. B Griesser, 'Registrum Epistolarum Stephani de Lexington', *Analecta Sacri Ordinis Cisterciensis*, vol. 2 (1946), p. 1-118 (part I); vol. 8 (1952), pp. 181-378 (part II). For his letters to Richard Poore, *ibid.*, I, pp. 50-1, no. 40, pp. 97-8, no 101, II, pp.

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- 365-8, no. 150, pp. 372-3, no. 155. For his letters to the archdeacon of Wiltshire, *ibid.*, I, pp. 51-2, no. 41, p. 61, no. 59, II. P. 363, no. 147, p.364, no. 149.
- 8 'Registrum', I, p. 109, no. 107.
- 9 'Registrum', I, pp.97-8, no. 101.
- 10 'Registrum', I, p. 3.
- 11 For the letters concerning the Irish abbeys, 'Registrum', I, pp.12-116. These letters have been edited separately in English translation, B. O'Dwyer, *Letters from Ireland: Stephen of Lexington*, (Kalamazoo, [Cistercian Fathers' Series, 28] 1982). See Also B. O'Dwyer, 'The Problem of Reform in the Irish Cistercian Monasteries and the Attempted Solution of Stephen of Lexington in 1228', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 15 (1964): 186-191.
- 12 'Registrum', I, pp. 47-48, no. 37; pp. 93-94, no. 95 'Articuli generaliter per Hiberniam observandi'. O'Dwyer, 'The problem of reform', p.189.
- 13 O'Dwyer, 'The problem of Reform', p. 188.
- 14 'Registrum', I, p. 36, no. 21.
- 15 'Registrum', I, pp.97-8, no. 101, letter to Richard Poore, bishop of Durham. 'E Chronico Savigniacensi', in *Recueil des historiens des Gaules et de la France*, ed. M. Bouquet et al., 24 vols, (Paris, 1869-1904), vol. 23, p. 584.
- 16 'Registrum', II, pp. 191-4, for his visitation and his statutes of 1231; for other visitations, pp. 202, 205-6, and pp. 222-223, with an ordinance to reform the finances of Longvilliers. For the foundation of Longvilliers, *Gallia Christiana*, ed. D. de Sainte-Marthe et al., 17 vols (Paris, 1715-1865), vol. 10, col. 1615.
- 17 'Registrum', II, pp. 202-4, for the visitation of 1231: Stephen found there: 'magnas dissensions nec non et pericula....animarum', p. 202.
- 18 'Registrum', II, p. 214: 'Item ciconie et cati, que monachos ad risum et levitates quasdam in refectorio excitare solent, penitus amoveantur'.
- 19 For outsiders within monasteries, 'Registrum', II, pp. 192-3, 197, 211-3. For monks leaving the monastic enclosure, 'Registrum', II, pp. 194, 195, 198, 202, 213, 215, 222, 223, and pp. 220-1 for Aunay-sur-Odon: 'Item, inhibition in capitulo facta de non potando vel comendo apud Baiocum, Cadomum, Sanctum Laudum vel alias in tabernis....firmius caveatur, ne scandalo de hujusmodi suborto'. For Stephen's observations on routes of access, see 'Registrum', II, pp. 196, 203, 207, 211, 213, and p. 193 for Longvilliers, 'Item, omnes officine claudantur ita quod nullus ab ipsis pateat exitus versus pomerium propter sinistras suspiciones.'; and p. 199

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- for Champagne, ‘Omnes porte et exitus in muro abbacie, ubicumque fuerint, excepta porta majori penitus obstruantur’.
- 20 He insisted on silence at Chaloché (Anjou), Beaubec (Upper Normandy), Clermont (Maine) and La Vieuville (Brittany), see ‘Registrum’, II, pp. 194, 199, 195, 198, 209, 212. For his concerns about lay brothers, ‘Registrum’, II, pp. 193, 196, 201.
- 21 ‘Registrum’, II, pp.192-3 for Longvilliers: ‘Item, compota thesauriorum, cellariorum, furni, bracini, semel infra circulum sex ebdomadaram diligenter audiantur atque distincte; quibus intersit ad minus duodecim monachi, compota nummorum officinarum semel audiantur quolibet anni quarterio’. Cf also ‘Registrum’, II, p. 199 (Champagne), pp. 203-4 (Furness, Lancashire), p. 209 (La Vieuville), p. 216 (Les Vaux de Cernay).
- 22 ‘Registrum’, II, pp. 224-232, ‘Conductus domus sapienter staurate (pro Domo de Savigniaco)’, and p. 232-3, ‘Modus computationis, de quibus scilicet fieri debet.’
- 23 ‘Registrum’, II, pp. 192-3, 199, 216.
- 24 ‘Registrum’, II, p. 206; p. 207 , ‘Item, ut domus relevetur ab abyssio debitorum’.
- 25 ‘Registrum’, II, p. 194, limiting Longvilliers to 40 monks and 60 lay brothers; p. 205, limiting Byland (Yorkshire) to 80 monks and 140 lay brothers.
- 26 ‘Registrum’, II, p. 207, at Beaubec, ‘Item, omnia edificia tam intra abbatiam quam extra interdicuntur ne fiant, quousque domus ab obligatione tanti debiti relevetur’. Cf. ‘Registrum’, II, p. 197 (Barbery, Normandy), p. 198 (Champagne), p. 207 (Les Vaux-de-Cernay).
- 27 Grant, ‘Savigny and its Saints’, pp. 111-112: ‘Ex Libro de Miraculis Santorum Savigniacensium’, in *Recueil des historiens des Gaules et de la France*, vol. 23, pp. 587-89.
- 28 ‘Registrum’, II, p.217 for Chaloché, ‘Item cantor et succentor student diligenter quod in choro cantantes competenter pausando concorditer cantent alterutrum auscultantes secundum formam a beato Bernardo prescriptam’. Cf. also ‘Registrum’, II, pp. 202, 218.
- 29 ‘Registrum’, II, pp. 191, 206, 210, 216.
- 30 See for instance the discussion of these issues in Alexandra Gajewski, ‘The Architecture of the Choir at Clairvaux Abbey: Saint Bernard and the Cistercian Principle of Conspicuous Poverty’, in *Perspectives for an Architecture of Solitude*, pp. 72-77. For the criticisms of the abbot of Vaucelles in 1192, see *Statuta Capitulum Generalium Ordinis Cistercienses ab Anno 1116 ad Annum 1768*, ed. J. M. Canivez,

- (Louvain, Bibliothèque de la Revue ecclésiastique, 1933-1935), vol. 1, pp. 151-2; for Royaumont in 1263, *ibid.* vol. 3, p. 11.
- 31 For his demands for white altar cloths, see 'Registrum', II, pp. 201, 203, 205, 206, 210, 213. Orders for the suppression of paintings, 'Registrum', II, p. 191 (Longvilliers), p.216 (Champagne). Orders for the removal of coloured glass, 'Registrum', II, p. 191 (Longvilliers), p. 211 (Aunay-sur-Odon). Order to take up tile pavement, 'Registrum', II, p. 211 (Aunay-sur-Odon).
- 32 'Registrum', II, p. 206: 'a clastro circumquaque nodi et cornua aliaque sculpture notabiles amoveantur, et ad simplicitatem ordinis tam columpnarum multitudo quam fenestrarum rotundarum redigantur. The 'round windows' may refer to the windows between the chapter house and the east range of the cloister, suggesting that their design featured tracery with lancets beneath roundels, but the fact that Stephen objected to their numbers may suggest that the cloister arcades were traceried with roundels above lancets.
- 33 'Registrum', II, p.208: 'in primis de capitellis at aliis in novo opera ecclesie faciendis caveatur....quod ab ordinis simplicitate vel a forma operis jam facti discordet in aliquo'.
- 34 'Registrum', II, p. 213: 'columpne claustra, quantum fieri poterit cum honestate absque ruine periculo, ad ordinis simplicitatem preparentur'. Cf also p. 210.
- 35 A. Bonis and M. Wabont, 'Cisterciens et Cisterciennes en France du Nord-Ouest: typologie des fondations, typologie des sites', in *Cîteaux et les Femmes*, ed. A. Bonis, S. Dechavanne and M. Wabont, (Paris: Creaphis, 2001), pp. 155-159: For female Savigniac/Cistercian houses in Normandy, see Lindy Grant, *Architecture and Society in Normandy 1120-1270*, (London/New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), p. 23. In addition to the Savigniac female houses in Normandy, one might note that the Empress Matilda founded Saint-Saëns as a daughter of Clairvaux in the 1160s.
- 36 *Cîteaux et les Femmes*, introduction, pp.7-12 ; Bonis and Wabont, 'Cisterciens et Cisterciennes', pp. 159-163. For statutes of the Cistercian general chapter attempting to limit the numbers of nuns and numeries, see *Statuta Capitulum Generalium Ordinis Cistercienses*, vol. I, pp. 485, 502, 517; vol. II, pp. 36, 68, 139, 169. For relationships between the order and aristocratic/royal women patrons, *Statuta Capitulum Generalium Ordinis Cistercienses*, vol. 2, p. 10, 33, 36-7 (Blanche of Navarre, Countess of Champagne); pp. 115, 131 (Isabella, Countess of Chartres); pp. 155, 166, 167, 172, 331 (Blanche of Castile). See also

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- Constance Berman, 'Noble Women's Power as Reflected in the Foundation of Cistercian Houses for Nuns in Thirteenth-Century Northern France', in *Negotiating Community and Difference in Medieval Europe*, ed. Katherine Allen Smith and Scott Wells (Leiden and Boston Mass, 2009), pp. 137-149, and Lindy Grant, *Blanche of Castile, Queen of France* (London/New Haven, Yale, 2016) esp. pp. 212-219. For a nuanced discussion of the Cistercian order's attitude to women religious, see also, Anne E. Lester, *Creating Cistercian Nuns: The Women's religious movement and its reform in Thirteenth Century Champagne*, (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2011), esp. pp. 92-116.
- 37 *Gallia Christiana*, vol. 7, col. 910-912. *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Porrois au diocèse de Paris, plus connue sous son nomme mystique de Port-Royal*, ed. A. de Dion, (Paris, 1903), vol. I, p. ix, 1-2, and nos. I-IV, pp. 25-30. *Nécrologe de l'Abbaïe de Notre-Dame de Port-Royal des Champs*, ed. A. Rivet de la Grange, (Amsterdam, 1723), vol. I, pp. 114-5.
- 38 For Matilda of Montmorency and her niece, Alice, wife of Simon de Montfort, see Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, *The History of the Albigensian Crusade*, ed. and trans. W. A. Sibley and M. D. Sibley, (Woodbridge : Boydell, 1998), pp. 294-8, esp. p. 297, and M. Zerner, 'L'épouse de Simon de Montfort et la croisade albigeoise', in *Femmes, Mariages, Lignages, XIII-XIVe siècles. Mélanges offerts à Georges Duby*, (Brussels, 1992), p. 455. For Montfort/ Montmorency patronage of Le Val and Les-Vaux-de Cernay, see Lindy Grant, 'The Montfort and the Capetian Court', forthcoming.
- 39 'Registrum', II, pp. 319-320, no. 195, probably written when Theobald was elected abbot of Les Vaux-de-Cernay. For Theobald de Marly, see L. Morize and A. de Dion, *Etude Archéologique sur l'Abbaye de Notre Dame des Vaux de Cernay*, (Tours, 1889), pp. 38-42. For his entry into the abbey, see *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Notre-Dame des Vaux-de-Cernay de l'ordre de Cîteaux au Diocèse de Paris*, ed. L. Merlet and A. Moutié, (Paris, 1857-8), vol. 1, pp. 251-2, nos. clxv and cclxvi.
- 40 Bonis and M. Wabont, 'Cisterciens et Cisterciennes', pp. 159-161.
- 41 Grant, *Blanche of Castile*, pp. 219-222.
- 42 Orders to produce accounts: 'Registrum', II, pp. 236, 238 (Abbaye-Blanche at Mortain), p. 243 (Villiers-Canivet), pp. 243, 245 (Moncey, Touraine). Limitations on numbers of nuns: 'Registrum', II, pp. 244, 239 (Moncey), p. 235. (Abbaye-Blanche), p. 251 (Porrois).
- 43 'Registrum', II, pp. 234-7.

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- 44 'Registrum', II, pp. 239, 241 (Abbaye-Blanche), p. 242 (Villiers-Canivet), p. 244 (Moncey). 'Registrum', II, pp. 253-257, no 25: rules for the occasions on which monks must visit female houses.
- 45 'Registrum', II, p. 252, no. 24.
- 46 Grant, *Blanche of Castile*, pp. 118-120. 'Itinera, dona et hernesia : AD 1238 inter Ascensionem et Omnes Sanctos' in *Recueil des historiens des Gaules et de la France*, vol. 22, pp. 590, 591, 593. 'Comptes de dépenses de Blanche de Castille', ed. by E.S. Bougenot, in *Bulletin du Comité des travaux historiques et scientifiques : section d'histoire et de philologie*, (1889), p. 89.
- 47 'Registrum', II, pp. 308-310, nos 96-97: *Statuta Capitulorum Generalium Ordinis Cistercienses*, vol. 2, pp. 182, 187, 195-6, 200.
- 48 'Registrum', II, pp. 308-310, nos. 96-97.
- 49 'Registrum', II, pp. 323-355, nos 110-139.
- 50 'Registrum', II, pp. 373-375, nos 156-158.
- 51 *Les Registres de Grégoire IX*, ed. L. Auvray, (Paris: Fontemoing, 1896), vol. 1, cols 836-837, no. 1510. A letter from Stephen to the archbishop of Rouen, asking him to moderate his actions, probably relates to this affair, see 'Registrum', II, pp. 375-6, no. 159. For the dispute, see Grant, *Blanche of Castile*, pp. 100-103.
- 52 'Registrum', II, pp. 358-361, nos 143-144.
- 53 For accounts of the capture of the prelates, Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora*, ed. H. R. Luard, (London, Rolls, Series, 1872-1883), vol. 4, pp. 125-130; 'Ryccardi de Sancto Germano notarii chronica', in *MGH Scriptores*, vol. 19, (Hannover, 1866) pp. 380-383. For John of Toledo, Jane Sayers, 'Centrality and Locality: aspects of papal administration in England in the later thirteenth century', in *Authority and Power: Studies in Medieval Law and Government presented to Walter Ullmann on his seventieth birthday*, ed. by Brian Tierney and Peter Linehan, (Cambridge: CUP, 1980) pp. 118-9, and Hermann von Grauert, 'Meister Johann von Toledo', in *Sitzungsberichte der philos.-philol. und der hist. Klasse der Kgl. bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, (1901), no. 2
- 54 Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora*, IV, p. 125.
- 55 Lawrence, 'Stephen of Lexington', pp. 169-178.
- 56 'Registrum', I, appendix, pp. 116-118, esp. pp. 117-8.
- 57 Lawrence, 'Stephen of Lexington', p. 169.
- 58 Sayers, 'Centrality and Locality', p. 119. Cf. also *Statuta Capitulorum Generalium Ordinis Cistercienses*, vol. 2, p. 290, for the role of John of Toledo in this affair. For the idea that the college was inspired by the

- college of the Dominicans, see Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora*, vol. 5, pp. 528-529.
- 59 Lawrence, 'Stephen of Lexington', p. 173. For Abbot John of Pontigny, see also W.-B. Henry, *Histoire de l'abbaye de Pontigny, ordre de Cîteaux* (Auxerre: Maillefer, 1839), pp. 109, 117.
- 60 Grauert, Johann von Toledo, pp. 125-7.
- 61 Lawrence, 'Stephen of Lexington', pp. 176-177: Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora*, vol. 5, p.596.
- 62 For attitudes to money, finance, debt and usury among Paris scholars, see Wei, *Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris*, pp. 296-355.