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## A Sentence of Cursing in Pembroke College, Cambridge MS 285

Niamh Pattwell

The influence of the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 and the Lambeth Council of 1281 on the production of vernacular manuals of religious instruction has been well documented.<sup>1</sup> In the spirit of ecclesiastical reform, it was perceived that the less learned clergy required simple, pastoral manuals from which to instruct the laity, at least three or four times a year, in the six principles of faith. Throughout the thirteenth century, the English Church held a series of councils to publicise legislation dealing with such matters, including the administration of the sacraments, preaching and excommunication. Chapter nine of Archbishop Pecham's 1281 Lambeth Council statutes, otherwise known as *Ignorancia Sacerdotum*, was undoubtedly the most influential part of this legislation.<sup>2</sup> It was a concise document, outlining exactly the principal tenets of the faith: the fourteen articles of faith, ten commandments, two evangelical commandments, seven works of mercy, seven capital sins with their branches, seven principal virtues and the seven sacraments. *Ignorantia Sacerdotum* was little more than a syllabus, but it was considered substantial enough to circulate as an independent tract. More often, however, it was appended to or collated with other tracts to form a comprehensive programme of religious instruction including the *Pater Noster*, the *Ave Maria*, the Bidding Prayers and the General Sentence of Excommunication. The commonplace nature of the material, as well as the scribal tendency to replace tracts of one manual with tracts from another, is confusing for editors and scholars of religious writing. For example, it can be difficult to distinguish one version of a tract on the Ten Commandments from another. Bibliographical aids such as the *Manual of the Writings in Middle English 1050-1500* and the *Index of Middle English Prose (IMEP)* have alleviated some of the difficulties, with the latter particularly helpful for its inclusion of the incipit of each tract of the manual.<sup>3</sup>

The Sentence of Cursing or General Sentence of Excommunication is one of the more popular items in the manuals of religious instruction. It was usually appended to the end of the manual, sometimes circulating independently before inclusion in a codex of religious writings. Its importance can be attested to by the frequency with which it appears in codices of religious writings, where occasionally it is the only Middle English item.<sup>4</sup> A Sentence was composed of three distinct parts: a prologue invoking heavenly and earthly authority, a list of offences and a curse that 'departith a man from the blisse of heuen, fro howsel, shrifte and al the sacramentis of Holy Chirche and betake hym to the deuy!'.<sup>5</sup> In 1981, Oliver Pickering classified over forty different Middle English versions of the Sentence into nineteen groups.<sup>6</sup> Until then, 'no attempt to list them all seems ever to have been made'; catalogues included the material under a generic title 'A Sentence of Cursing' or 'General Sentence of Excommunication'.<sup>7</sup>

Since Pickering's article appeared, the Sentence has been included as a distinct item within bibliographical works, although the efforts to classify and thereby establish the inter-relationship of each Sentence have not always been so consistent. In 1985, R.E. Lewis *et al.* included the Sentence of Excommunication in their *Index of Printed Middle English Prose*.<sup>8</sup> They divided the Sentence into nine different categories, largely dependent on Pickering's, and added a manuscript copy of the Sentence, British Library, Royal MS A11.A.i, to group C of their classification which corresponds with group 4 of Pickering's classification. In 1986, Robert R. Raymo included a section on the Sentence of Cursing in his 'Works of Religious Instruction and Philosophy'. He added five more manuscripts with the Sentence to Pickering's list, but did not attempt to classify them. They are: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley MS 692, fol. 31<sup>r</sup>; Pembroke College, Cambridge MS 285, fols 57<sup>v</sup>–60<sup>r</sup>; British Library, Additional MS 11579, fols 141<sup>r</sup>–143<sup>r</sup>; British Library, Royal MS 8 B.xv, fols 186<sup>v</sup>–187<sup>r</sup>; Worcester Cathedral MS F.172, fols 150<sup>r</sup>–154<sup>r</sup>.<sup>9</sup> *IMEP III* (1986) added Oxford, Bodleian Library, Digby MS 77, fol. 148 to group 4 of Pickering's classification.<sup>10</sup> *IMEP V* (1988) included the Sentence in BL Additional MS 11579, fols 141<sup>v</sup>–43<sup>r</sup> but did not attempt to classify it.<sup>11</sup> *IMEP VI* (1989), cataloguing the two Sentences of Cursing in York Minster MS XVI.M.4 (both of which are considered to be York versions of the Sentence), included the Digby 77 and Royal 8 B.xv manuscripts mentioned above. Pickering and Powell also listed a number of manuscripts noted by R.M. Ball in his dissertation on clerical education in the Middle Ages: British Library, Harley MS 2379, fols 105<sup>r</sup>–09<sup>v</sup>, New College, Oxford MS 292, fol. 115<sup>v</sup>, Manchester, John Rylands University

Library, Lat MS 339 fol. 147<sup>r-v</sup>, and Salisbury Cathedral MS 126, fol. 3<sup>r</sup>.<sup>12</sup> They also cited Society of Antiquaries MS 718 in this entry. The Sentences were not classified.

In *IMEP VIII* (1991), Sarah Ogilvie-Thomson listed the fragment of the Sentence of Excommunication found in New College, Oxford MS 292, fol. 115<sup>v</sup>, but is somewhat ambivalent in her classification. She sends the reader to another entry in *IMEP VIII*, the two versions of the Sentence found in Trinity College, Oxford MS 86 [20] and [23], both of which were included in Pickering's system in two different groups.<sup>13</sup> It is unclear whether New College MS 292 bears any textual relationship to either of the Trinity MS 86 Sentences. Ogilvie-Thomson also drew attention to the existence of Pembroke College, Cambridge MS 285, without classification. *IMEP XIII* (1999) cited the Lambeth Palace MS 172, fols 172–73<sup>v</sup> listed in Pickering's original article, commenting that a similar version has not yet been identified and referring the reader to previous volumes of the *IMEP*.<sup>14</sup> Valerie Edden included Worcester Cathedral MS F.172, fols 148<sup>v</sup>–155 and Worcester Cathedral MS Q.9, fol. 315 in the *IMEP XV* (2000). The former she described as 'a free-standing version of *IPMEP* 122' and the latter she did not classify at all, merely pointing to Pickering's article.<sup>15</sup>

It is clear then, that while Pickering's classification has been considered useful it has not always been applied, even in the *Index of Middle English Prose*. Many would-be classifiers acknowledge the Sentence as a separate tract within a larger manual, but they do not always attempt to establish the relationship of one version to another. To be fair, classification of the Sentence is not always easy. It is dependent on access to already classified versions and, even then, it can be difficult to discern one version from another. At what point does one decide that this is not merely an adaptation of an already existing version but is, in fact, a new version requiring a new classification?

While working on an edition of *Sacerdos Parochialis*, a religious instructional manual of the early fifteenth century, I discovered that the Sentence of Cursing accompanying that text in Pembroke College, Cambridge MS 285 (fols 57<sup>r</sup>–60<sup>r</sup>) was not the usual Sentence found with that manual.<sup>16</sup> With the assistance of Pickering's article, I discovered that the Sentence of Cursing that normally accompanies *Sacerdos Parochialis* belongs to group 2 of his classification.<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, British Library, Burney MS 356 contains two Sentences, both the group 2 Sentence of Cursing and the Sentence of Cursing found in Pembroke MS 285. The longer, group 2, version occurs first in the Burney manuscript (fols 50<sup>v</sup>–53<sup>r</sup>), immediately after the tract on the Sacraments,

followed by the shorter, simpler group 10 version (fols 53<sup>r</sup>-54<sup>v</sup>). In Pembroke MS 285, the group 10 Sentence is the only Sentence of Cursing in the manual. Apart from the fact that both the Burney and Pembroke manuscripts contain *Sacerdos Parochialis* and that both are the only manuscripts of the *Sacerdos Parochialis* tradition to include the group 10 version of the Sentence, there is no other discernible link between the two manuscripts. The versions of *Sacerdos Parochialis* contained in both are not textually close. Moreover, the Burney manuscript also contains a version of the Sentence found in the other *Sacerdos Parochialis* manuscripts.

In this article, my primary objective is to establish the relationship of the Pembroke Sentence to other Sentences within Pickering's classification. Secondly, but no less importantly, I wish to discuss briefly the implications of this inter-relationship and to consider why the Pembroke scribe used a different Sentence; this discussion will illustrate the importance of further reflections on the Sentence of Cursing.

Group 10 of Pickering's classification includes three manuscripts: British Library, Arundel MS 130; British Library, Burney MS 356; and Trinity College, Oxford MS E.86.<sup>18</sup> According to Pickering, these three manuscripts 'textually appear to stand mid-way between' the two preceding groups: group 8 which is the York Sentence of Cursing and group 9 which he calls R.<sup>19</sup> Group 8 or the York Sentence is preserved in five manuscripts and in one printed edition.<sup>20</sup> Pickering notes that 'the printed edition and these five manuscripts appear to preserve practically the same text of the Sentence'.<sup>21</sup> A relatively modern edition of the Sentence was published by W. G. Henderson in 1875 for the Surtees Society.<sup>22</sup> Group 9, or R, is found in *Quattuor Sermones*, a manual of religious instruction printed by Caxton in 1483-4, and in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS A.381, fols 1<sup>v</sup>-2<sup>v</sup>.<sup>23</sup> The Sentences contained in both these treatises are textually very close.

The texts in group 10 are similar enough to be identifiable as a particular recension of the York Sentence, but do not show the same cohesion as the York and R versions. Burney MS 356, for example, contains an item on simony not found in any other version of this Sentence. Arundel MS 130 omits an item on heresy and money-clippers found in the other two manuscripts of this group.<sup>24</sup> The Pembroke Sentence contains a version of the Sentence of Cursing sometimes closer to that found in Burney MS 356 (fols 53<sup>r</sup>-54<sup>v</sup>) at other times closer to the Sentence found in Trinity MS E.86. The identification of the Pembroke Sentence with group 10 depends not only on similarities between the Pembroke Sentence

and the Burney, Arundel and Trinity Sentences, but also on how the Pembroke Sentence differs from the York and R Sentences, particularly where the York and R Sentences exhibit unique features.

Like Burney, Pembroke includes an item on abandoning children (see accompanying table, item 16.3) that does not occur in the Trinity and Arundel Sentences. Nor is this item a feature of R, but it is found in the York Sentence. Both the Pembroke and Burney Sentences mention the difficulty of not knowing whether the child is christened or not, and refer to 'weyletes' or 'crosse way' which the York Sentence omits.<sup>25</sup>

Burney MS 356, fol.54<sup>r</sup>:

Also alle wommen þat here chyldron in cherche porches oþer in weyletes oþer in feeldes leggeþ, or leueþ y-crystnede or now3t y-crystnede wher-fore þe[y] beþ y-called fondelynges.

Pembroke MS 285, fol.59<sup>r</sup>:

Alle þo þat leye or doþ leye her children by ony crosse way or at þe chirche dore or in any oþer vnleful place to be founde of oþer men nat knowynge wheþer þei be crystened or noon.

*York (Manuale et Processionale, ed. by Henderson, p. 121):*

Also alle they that wylfully lese theyr children, or leuys them in felde, or in towne, or in chirche dore, or in any other place, and leuys them socourles.

The Pembroke and York Sentences, on the other hand, agree in their use of the nominative third person pronoun 'þo' or 'they' instead of 'women' and in their positioning of the main verb 'leye' or 'lese' immediately after the subject. In the Burney Sentence the main verb occurs in the finite position of the clause. The phrase 'or in any other place' is also common to both the Pembroke and York Sentences.

In the item on theft of church property (see table, 12.1-2), the Pembroke Sentence also shows textual affinities to both the York and Burney Sentence. It – uniquely – uses both 'restitucion' of the York Sentence and 'satisfaccion' of the group 10 and R.

*York (Manuale et Processionale, ed. by Henderson, p. 120):*

Also alle that houses, maners, graunges persones or vicars, or of any other men of holy Chirche ageynst theyr attorney wyll any maner of good mouable or onmouable away beres, or with strength or wrongfully away drawes or wastis: of the whiche cursynge they may nat be assoyled tyll they haue made restitucion to them that the wronge is done to.

Pembroke MS 285, fol.59<sup>r</sup>:

Alle þo þat houses, manners or granges of parsones or vicars or eny oþer men of holy chirche a3eyn hur wille, eny manere good mevable or unmevable a-way beren wit streyngþe or wrongfullyche a-way drowen or wasten, of wyche cursyng þei mowe not be assoyled tel þei haue made restitucion and satisfaccion to whom þe wrong his doon to.

Burney MS 356, fol 53<sup>v</sup>:

Also alle þey þat ow3t of houses of maneres, grawnges or gardynes of archbysshopes, bysshopes, abbates, pryores, abbesses, pryoresse, parsones, vycares, or any oþer man of holy cherche a-3en here wyll or a-3en here torneys wyll any manere gowd mevable or onmevable away bereþ wyþ strenkþe or wronglyche a-wey draweþ or wasteþ; of whyche corsyng þey mow now3t be a-soyled for he haue y-maked satysfaccyon to hym þat þe wrong was y-do to.

In this item on church property, the Pembroke Sentence does not share the extra material found only in the Burney Sentence. The Burney Sentence expands the subject matter to include 'gardens' and specific titles of 'men of holy chirche' such as 'archbysshopes, bysshopes, abbates, pryoresse' as well as 'parsones and vycares'. This appears to be unique to the Burney Sentence, and perhaps indicative of an adaptation to a monastic audience.<sup>26</sup> The Pembroke Sentence, in this case, remains closer to the Trinity Sentence.

The Pembroke Sentence is quite clearly not a version of the York Sentence. R and the three manuscripts in group 10 of Pickering's classification share a feature not found in the York Sentence: they mention specifically the province of Canterbury in the item on tithing (see table, 24.2), whereas the York version does

not make mention of a particular province. The Pembroke Sentence agrees with R and group 10, against the York Sentence, in naming the province of Canterbury in that particular item.<sup>27</sup> The item on incendiaries (see table, before 18) unique to the York Sentence is omitted from the Pembroke Sentence and item 1.4 on tithes does not follow the lengthier York version. In other words, the Pembroke Sentence does not have any of the items unique to York.

Nor is the Pembroke Sentence a version of the R Sentence; it is free of items unique to R such as the longer item on tithing (see table, 29) or the placement of the item on witches (see table, 13.2).<sup>28</sup> In the York and group 10 Sentences, the item on witches follows the item on heresy (13.1) whereas in R it occurs much later, after the item on the consistory courts (see table, 25). Pembroke agrees, in this case, with the York and group 10 Sentences.

The Pembroke and Burney Sentences are further linked through the items 1.8 and 2.1, even if the link is caused by scribal confusion. The Burney Sentence is the only version to list the item forbidding the spilling of blood on hallowed grounds (see table, 1.8), immediately after the item forbidding the purchase of letters in secular courts (see table, 1.7) and just before the item condemning those who disturb the peace of the land (see table, 2.1). In the York, R and Trinity versions of the Sentence, the item on disturbing the peace of the land (2.1) precedes the item on spilling blood (1.8). The Pembroke Sentence initially follows the order of the Burney Sentence, by placing the item on the spilling of blood (1.8) immediately after the item on the purchase of letters (1.7). However, it then omits completely the item on the disturbing of the peace and the items condemning those against the king's right (2.1-2). Whether this was an accidental or deliberate omission is unclear. However, this is not the first time that the copyist or scribe of this second half of Pembroke MS 285 has mislaid material in this way. For example, he conflates the sixth and seventh commandment in the copy of Pecham's syllabus found in this manuscript on fol. 50<sup>r</sup>, possibly through eye-skip. It is possible therefore, that he once again misplaced two or three items on closely related material in the Sentence of Excommunication. The order of material might, therefore, have originally followed the Burney version of the Sentence, but later have become confused through scribal error.

The inter-relationship between the Pembroke and Burney Sentences would therefore be fairly well established if it were not for another expansion unique to the Burney Sentence. In the item forbidding war against the king's peace, the Burney Sentence includes a note against war on the peace of the land.



*York (Manuale et Processionale*, ed. by Henderson, p. 118):  
Also alle those that are ageynste the Kynges right. Also all those  
that the warre susteynes ageynst the Kynges peas wrongfully.

*Quattuor Sermones*, p. 82:

And alle tho that ben ageyn the right of our lord the kyng. And al  
tho that werre susteyne agaynst the kyng wrongfully.

Burney MS 356, fol.53<sup>v</sup>:

Also alle þat bep a-3en þe ky[n]gges ryht of þe reme. Also alle  
þat werre susteyneþ wrongfullyche a-3en þe kyng, or þe pees of  
þe londe.

Trinity MS E.86:

All-so all tho that the rightes of the kyng be a3en. Als[o] all tho  
þo þat werre susteyne a3en the kynges pes wrongfully.

Pembroke MS 285, fol. 58<sup>v</sup>:

Alle þo þat werre sustene a3eyn þe kynges pees wrongfulliche.

The Pembroke Sentence, despite beginning to follow the order of material in the Burney Sentence, agrees with the other versions of the Sentence (especially Trinity MS E.86) against the Burney Sentence by not including the expansion concerning the 'pees of the londe'.

The Pembroke Sentence has a unique feature. It omits the item on violence against clergy from its usual place (see table, 14) (either after the item against witches as in the Burney, Trinity and York Sentences (13.2), or after the item forbidding stealing goods from a church in the R Sentence (12.2)) to include it after the item on disruption of Christian consistory courts (see table, 25). There is no discernible explanation for this change in the order of material. The absence of a conclusion in the Pembroke Sentence is, however, also a feature of the Arundel Sentence.<sup>29</sup>

A final note on the manuscripts in which the Pembroke and Burney Sentences are found confirms the inter-relationship of these texts and highlights the importance of further study on the Sentence of Cursing. As previously stated, the Sentence in Pembroke MS 285 and the Sentence in Burney MS 356 form part of a religious instructional manual for the clergy known as *Sacerdos Parochialis*.

This is a late fourteenth-century or early fifteenth-century manual of religious instruction intended to assist the less literate clergy in their pastoral duties. The manual, although it begins with the rubric from Pecham's 1281 statute *Ignorancia Sacerdotum*, is largely derived from William Pagula's Latin manual (or a later version of it) of the early fourteenth-century, *Oculus Sacerdotis*. *Sacerdos Parochialis* includes instruction on the *Pater noster*, *Ave Maria*, fourteen articles of faith, ten commandments, seven works of mercy, seven principal virtues, seven deadly sins and the seven sacraments. Most versions of the treatise also include a set of bidding prayers and, as stated earlier, a Sentence of Cursing. The Sentence of Cursing usually found with *Sacerdos Parochialis* is a much more complex and lengthy Sentence than that under discussion here.<sup>30</sup> Did the scribe-compiler of Pembroke MS 285, unlike other scribes or copyists of *Sacerdos Parochialis*, deliberately choose the shorter Sentence of Excommunication to accompany his copy of the manual, or was it a simple matter of availability or accident?

*Sacerdos Parochialis* generally circulated independently in one quire, or two at most. The Sentence of Cursing was one of the last tracts in the manual and, therefore, most prone to being accidentally lost. It is quite possible that the Sentence of Cursing was already missing from the exemplar and the copyist merely supplemented with whatever Sentence was available to him. However, the replacement of one Sentence of Cursing with another in Pembroke MS 285 is probably more deliberate. One might even call it an act of editing. The Sentence of Cursing that normally accompanies *Sacerdos Parochialis* is long and unwieldy, embedded with Latin references to Canon Law. As such, it would be difficult material for 'illiterate' clergy, without Latin or a degree in Canon Law, or for the laity. Pickering describes the York Sentence, of which R and group 10 are obviously relations (if not recensions), as follows:

In comparison with some of the forms of Sentence described above, the York Manual's is a plain text, comprising a simple list of some fifty of the usual offences. No authorities are cited, and the formal curse at the end is given in Latin.<sup>31</sup>

The York, R and group 10 versions of the Sentence are indeed simpler and more 'vernacularised' than the Sentence of Cursing that normally circulated with *Sacerdos Parochialis*. As such, it would appeal to a lay reader, ignorant of Canon Law and to those who believed in the use of the vernacular as a means of education in matters of faith.<sup>32</sup> We already have evidence of a conscious compiler

or scribe in Pembroke MS 285, even if he is occasionally careless. He supplements the usual form of the *Pater Noster* with a longer version, includes a sermon not found elsewhere, and excises the usual tract on the seven deadly sins to include another known as *Every Christian Man and Woman*.<sup>33</sup> The whole of *Sacerdos Parochialis*, including the supplementary material, is written in the same fifteenth-century hand. The codex is not the work of *ad hoc* collections of quires or tracts, but suggests deliberation and editorial choice, perhaps for a less literate audience. Unfortunately, the only name in the manuscript is in a sixteenth-century hand, "Raffe Mainarde oeth this book". A.I. Doyle suggests that the sequence of St. Sitha included in the manuscript indicates a link with the Augustinian Priory in Ossyth, Essex.<sup>34</sup> It is arguable that the manuscript was compiled for use by a secular cleric, employed by the Augustinians to work as curate in one of the parishes in their care.

In conclusion, the Pembroke Sentence fits best in group 10 of Pickering's classification. It does not share any of the unique features of the York or R Sentences and it contains material found only in the manuscripts of group 10. Unfortunately, the Pembroke Sentence is not consistent in following one version of the Sentence found in any of the three manuscripts in group 10, although it does have some strong links to the Burney manuscript, not least the unique order of items 1.8-2 and the inclusion of the item on abandoned children. It is also impossible to ignore the *Sacerdos Parochialis* connection. There is evidence that the compiler or scribe of *Sacerdos Parochialis* in the Pembroke manuscript excised and replaced material elsewhere in the text. He appears to have applied the same selectivity to the Sentence, preferring a simpler version to the usual lengthy Sentence normally associated with *Sacerdos Parochialis*. While Sentences have already been associated with particular geographical areas (the Sarum Sentence with Salisbury Cathedral, for example), there is a suggestion in the Pembroke manuscript that the Sentence may have been chosen for a particular audience.<sup>35</sup> It is a 'simpler', less canonical or Latinate version than that usually included in *Sacerdos Parochialis*, therefore easier reading for a 'simple cleric' if not a lay reader.

The above analysis of the Sentence and its place within the *Sacerdos Parochialis* tradition is by no means complete. However, it does point to the importance of further study and the need for more consistent attempts to classify material. Only then can we hope to establish patterns of distribution, to locate Sentences both geographically and chronologically. The Sentence of Cursing has much to contribute to the study of religious writing and manuscripts of the late Middle Ages.

		Burney MS 356	Pembroke MS 285	Trinity MS E86	York	Quattor Sermones	Rawlinson MS A381
	Prologue	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
1.1	Violation of freedom of church	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes. Presented as one item.	Yes. Presented as one item.
1.2	Being against the freedom of church.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
1.3	Making the church pay secular taxes.		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
1.4	Withholding tithes or other payments from church.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (longer)	Yes	Yes
1.5	Denying someone the right to sanctuary in a church.	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
1.6	Sacrilege through removal or damage of church property.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
1.7	Seeking authority of secular courts over church courts.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
1.8	Committing an act of violence on hallowed grounds.	Yes	Yes	Disturb Peace (2.1)	Disturb Peace	Disturb Peace	Disturb peace
2.1	Disturbing the peace of the land	Yes	No	Draw blood (1.8)	Draw blood	Draw blood	Draw blood
2.2	Being against the king's right of the realm.	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2.3	Sustaining war against King, and peace of the land.	Yes.	Yes. Omits reference to land.	Yes. Omits reference to land.	Yes. Omits reference to land.	Yes. Omits reference to land.	Yes. Omits reference to land.
3	Robbers or murderers unless it is in self-defence.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4	Being against Magna Carta.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
5	Lying in court in cause of matrimony.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
6	Lying to disinherit someone else.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
7	Lawyers who lie for profit.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
8	Defaming someone maliciously.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
9	Interfering with ecclesiastical presentation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

10.1	Despising the king's commandment	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Presented as one item.	Yes	Yes	Yes
10.2	Preventing capture of cursed man	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
11	Receiving profit to disturb peace	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
12.1	Taking goods from the houses of clergy or religious without their consent		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
12.2	Taking goods violently from churches	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
13.1	Maintaining or belief in heresy	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
13.2	Witches	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
14	Violence against clergy	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
15	Supporting Saracens	Yes	Yes	Heathens	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
16.1	Women who procure abortions	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Name wrong father knowingly	Name wrong father knowingly	Name wrong father knowingly
16.2	Women who knowingly name the wrong father	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Procure abortions	Procure abortions	Procure abortions
16.3	Women who abandon children	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
17.1	Falsifying the king's money	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
17.2	Copying or reducing the value of coins	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
17.3	Falsifying legal documents	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
17.4	Buying or selling by false measures	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
17.5	Falsifying the king's standard	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
17.6	Preventing the fulfillment of a will	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
17.7	Swearing falsely for profit or to hurt another	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
30	Incendiaries (York only)	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
18	Robbers	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
19	Withholding another's goods	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
20	Disturbing the peace	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Thieves
21	Thieves and those who support	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Disturbing peace

## Appendix

	them							
<b>22</b>	False conspirators	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
<b>23</b>	Making untrue claims in court	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>24.1</b>	Withholding goods reserved for tithes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
<b>24.2</b>	Giving away tithes to pay a debt	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>25</b>	Preventing church courts	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>26</b>	Simony	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Witches (no. 13 above)	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
	Violence against clergy (no. 14 above)	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
<b>27</b>	Heretics who do not believe in the Eucharist	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>28</b>	Usurers	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>29</b>	Withholding of tithes	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes (longer version)
	Conclusion	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes Latin

This table lists each item or offence as it occurs in the shorter version of the Sentence contained in British Library, Burney MS 356. The division of the Sentence into the items is entirely my own. An attempt has been made to divide each item into parts that are linked thematically. For example, the first item is made up of any offence that violates the freedom of the Church; the second item includes any attempt to disrupt the peace of the land, and so on. The division is employed to facilitate comparison between the versions of the Sentence. The numbers reflect the sequence in the Burney MS 356 Sentence; items not occurring in the Burney Sentence have been given additional numbers. See, for example, no. 30 after 17.7 where this item is found only in the York Sentence.

NOTES

I am grateful to Brendan O'Connell, Oliver Pickering and Kari-Ann Rand-Schmidt for their help on a draft version of this article.

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Leonard Boyle, 'The Fourth Lateran Council and Manuals of Popular Theology', in *The Popular Literature of Medieval England*, ed. by T. J. Heffernan (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1985), pp. 30-43; Vincent Gillespie, 'Vernacular Books of Religion', in *Book Production and Publishing in Britain 1375-1475*, ed. by Jeremy Griffiths and Derek Pearsall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 317-44; part three of W. A. Pantin, *The English Church in the Fourteenth Century*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955); and H. L. Spencer, *English Preaching in the Late Middle Ages* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1993).

<sup>2</sup> For a list of manuals influenced by Pecham's statute see J. L. Peckham, *Archbishop Peckham as a Religious Educator* (Pennsylvania: Mennonite Publishing House, 1934), pp. 98-113.

<sup>3</sup> Robert R. Raymo, 'Works of Religious and Philosophical Instruction', in *A Manual of the Writings in Middle English, 1050-1500*, ed. by A. E. Hartung, 11 vols (New Haven: Connecticut Academy of Arts, 1967- ), vol. 7 (1986), pp. 2257-357 and 2470-582; *Index of Middle English Prose*, gen. ed. A. S. G. Edwards, 17 vols (Cambridge: Brewer, 1987- ); P. S. Jolliffe, *A Check-List of Middle English Prose Writings of Spiritual Guidance* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1974).

<sup>4</sup> In two cases, British Library, Additional MS 11579, fols 141<sup>r</sup>-143<sup>r</sup> and British Library, Royal MS 8 B.xv, fols 186<sup>v</sup>-187<sup>r</sup>, the Sentence of Excommunication is the only Middle English prose item in the manuscript. In the Royal manuscript, the Sentence is appended to a manual of Latin religious writings which include a version of *Oculus Sacerdotis*, and a tract each on the *Pater Noster* and on the *Ten Commandments*, also in Latin. The Additional manuscript 'is preceded by some related Latin works': see Peter Brown and Elton D. Higgs, *Index of Middle English Prose V* (Cambridge: Brewer, 1988), p. 38.

<sup>5</sup> N. F. Blake, *Quattuor Sermones printed by William Caxton* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1975), p. 81.

<sup>6</sup> O. S. Pickering, 'Notes on the Sentence of Cursing in Middle English: Or, A Case for the Index of Middle English Prose', *Leeds Studies in English*, 12 (1981), 229-44.

<sup>7</sup> Pickering, 'Notes on the Sentence of Cursing', p. 229.

<sup>8</sup> R. E. Lewis, N. F. Blake, and A. S. G. Edwards, *Index of Printed Middle English Prose* (New York: Garland, 1985), pp. 44-46.

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- <sup>9</sup> Raymo, 'Works of Religious and Philosophical Instruction', p. 2573.
- <sup>10</sup> Patrick Horner, *Index of Middle English Prose III* (Cambridge: Brewer, 1986), pp. 26-27.
- <sup>11</sup> *IMEP V*, p. 38.
- <sup>12</sup> O.S. Pickering and Susan Powell, *IMEP VI* (Cambridge: Brewer, 1989), p. 55; R. M. Ball, 'The Education of the English Parish Clergy in the Later Middle Ages, with particular reference to the manuals of instruction' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1976), p. 294 n. 1.
- <sup>13</sup> Sarah Ogilvie-Thomson, *Index of Middle English Prose VIII*, (Cambridge: Brewer, 1991), p. 73.
- <sup>14</sup> O. S. Pickering and V. M. O'Mara, *The Index of Middle English Prose XIII* (Cambridge: Brewer, 1999), p. 14.
- <sup>15</sup> Valerie Edden, *The Index of Middle English Prose XV* (Cambridge: Brewer, 2000), pp. 67 and 69.
- <sup>16</sup> Niamh Pattwell, *Sacerdos Parochialis edited from British Library MS Burney 356 and Exornatorium Curatorum edited from Cambridge Corpus Christi Sp. 335.2*, 2 vols (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Trinity College Dublin, 2004). Pembroke College, Cambridge MS 285 contains a version of the *Speculum Christiani* and of *Sacerdos Parochialis*. The Sentence is found on fols 57<sup>r</sup>-60<sup>v</sup> of the Pembroke MS after a brief tract on the five senses and prior to the tract on the *Pater Noster*. A full description of the manuscript is included in my thesis, pp. 58-6. See also V. M. O'Mara, 'A Study of Unedited Late Middle English Sermons that Occur Singly or in Small Groups' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Leeds, 1987). Kari-Ann Rand-Schmidt is currently preparing a volume of the *Index of Middle English Prose* for the Pembroke College manuscripts.
- <sup>17</sup> The other manuscripts with the Sentence are: British Library, MS Harley 4172, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley MS 110, Trinity College, Oxford MS 7. Cambridge University Library MS Dd.12.69 originally had the Sentence of Cursing, but it has since been ripped out. One can read some of the words on the remaining stubs.
- <sup>18</sup> Pickering, 'Notes on the Sentence of Cursing', pp. 237-8.
- <sup>19</sup> See also Pickering, 'Notes on the Sentence of Cursing', pp. 235-7.
- <sup>20</sup> For a list of manuscripts and the printed edition see Pickering, 'Notes on the Sentence of Cursing', p. 235.
- <sup>21</sup> Pickering, 'Notes on the Sentence of Cursing', p. 236.
- <sup>22</sup> Pickering, 'Notes on the Sentence of Cursing', pp. 235-6. *Manuale et Processionale ad Usum Insignis Ecclesiae Eboracensis*, ed. by W.G. Henderson, Surtees Society 63 (Durham: Andrews, 1875), pp. 119-22.
- <sup>23</sup> Blake, *Quattuor Sermones*, pp. 81-5.



<sup>24</sup> British Library, MS Burney 356, fol. 54<sup>v</sup>. I have not seen British Library, MS Arundel 130, so am here dependent on Pickering's comments.

<sup>25</sup> *Middle English Dictionary*, ed. Hans Kurath et al. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1952-2001), s.v. 'Weyletes' n. pl. (see wei-letes): a place where two or more roads meet, junction; also, a street, byway.

<sup>26</sup> The layout and contents of the Burney manuscript would seem to indicate that it was prepared in and for a monastic setting.

<sup>27</sup> Pembroke College, Cambridge MS 285, fol. 59<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>28</sup> This longer item in R is essentially a Middle English translation of Boniface's statute on tithing. For a Latin version of Boniface's statute on tithing see F. M. Powicke and C. R. Cheney, *Councils and Synods with other documents relating to the English Church*, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), vol. 2, pt. 2, pp. 795-7.

<sup>29</sup> Pickering, 'Notes on the Sentence of Cursing', p. 237.

<sup>30</sup> This is the first sentence (fols 50<sup>v</sup>-53<sup>r</sup>) and is included in Pickering's article under group 2: 'Notes on the Sentence of Cursing', p. 230.

<sup>31</sup> Pickering, 'Notes on the Sentence of Cursing', p. 236.

<sup>32</sup> Many scholars have discussed the restrictive nature of Arundel's 1409 Constitutions in which he laid out the Pecham syllabus as the maximum that the laity ought to be taught. The possible effect on vernacular religious writings is treated comprehensively by Nicholas Watson, 'Censorship and Cultural Change in Late Medieval England: Vernacular Theology, the Oxford Translation Debate and Arundel's Constitutions of 1409', *Speculum*, 70 (1995), 822-64.

<sup>33</sup> I have argued in my thesis that *Every Christian Man and Woman* is an abbreviated form of Richard Lavynham's *A Lityl Treatise on the Seven Deadly Sins*. For an edition of the latter see *A Lityl Tretys on the Seven Deadly Sins by Richard Lavynham*, ed. by J. P. W. M. Van Zutphen (Rome: Institutum Carmelitanum, 1956). For a note on the sermon see V. M. O'Mara, 'A Checklist of Unedited Late Middle English Sermons that Occur Singly or in Small Groups', *Leeds Studies in English*, 19 (1981), 141-66.

<sup>34</sup> A. I. Doyle, 'A Survey of the Origins and Circulation of Theological Writings in English in the 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and early 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, with special consideration of the part of the clergy therein', 2 vols (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1955), p. 11 of his notes.

<sup>35</sup> Pickering, 'Notes on the Sentence of Cursing', p. 233.