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# Heaven On Earth

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## THE LETTERS OF NICOLAS OF CLAIRVAUX

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**N**ICOLAS OF CLAIRVAUX, a secretary to St Bernard, abbot of Clairvaux, composed various letters of his own, which this paper will survey. Though we will deal primarily with Nicolas' letters, we must also go to other twelfth-century documents to see the true Nicolas, for there is no complete, up-to-date account of that monk elsewhere, and--as yet--no translation of his letters in print. Valuable material may be found in Constable's second volume of *The Letters of Peter the Venerable*,<sup>1</sup> in several articles by John F. Benton of the California Institute of Technology,<sup>2</sup> and a few by the benedictine scholar, Jean Leclercq.<sup>3</sup>

First, let me review the main facts of Nicolas' life, without an understanding of which many of his letters will be incomprehensible. He was born in France in the early part of the twelfth century and educated at the benedictine monastery of Montiéramey, where he later became a monk. Early in his early monastic life, he became chaplain for Bishop Hato of Troyes, a city ten miles from his monastery, and held this position until Hato retired to Cluny in 1145 or 1146. During this period, too, Nicolas spent some time in Rome, apparently on business. An encounter with Bernard may have influenced Nicolas in his later decision to enter Clairvaux, as he did, quite probably in 1146, remaining there until he fled that house in 1152.

The letters are of value, I think, in giving a glimpse of monastic life, in showing us the interests and thoughts of a twelfth century monk, and in illustrating contrast between the newly-founded cistercian house of Clairvaux and the older benedictine monastery of Cluny.

In greater part, the letters were assembled by Nicolas himself and dedicated to Henry, brother of King Louis VII, and to Gerard of Pérrone, another of Bernard's secretaries. They were first published in Paris in 1610, by Jean Picard. This text was republished in Lyons in 1677, and reprinted by Migne with the addition of two letters. Since Picard had access to a manuscript or manuscripts now lost, his text is believed to have the value of an original. There are other manuscripts containing a limited number of letters: a Paris manuscript with letters 28-49; MS Phillipps 1719 with letters 3-42 in succession and five others; a Dijon MS with letters 7 and 15; a British Museum Harley MS, published by Jean Leclercq; a Vatican MS with Nicolas' Letter to Pope Adrian IV; a MS in the Biblical Museum at Troyes; a Letter 35, reproduced by Leclercq in the *Cistercienses*,<sup>4</sup> MS Jesus 46 with one letter at Cambridge (England); Le Haye MS, Bibliothèque Royale; and Florence, Laurentianum, Strozzi 28, the

last two manuscripts containing the same letter.

Nicolas was not a distinguished writer. His passion for improving his style led him to a repetition of clichés and commonplace quotations. There is some plagiarism, especially in his sermons, though he attempts to excuse this by saying that he borrowed only in *paucis locis*. He succeeded in writing Bernard's letters, probably because Bernard dictated most of them to him. When he was left to his own resources, his writing was turgid, involved, and often difficult to comprehend. He seems to have prided himself on his literary ability, though he makes an occasional effort to depreciate himself, as in Letter 1 where he says that 'his thoughts are sometimes expressed in a hidden way, sometimes more distinctly'.<sup>5</sup> In the same letter he says: 'I am not an orator, but a simple home-abiding man, rather a country farmer, who trims sycamore trees'--true enough of the prophet Amos, but mock-humility in Nicolas.

Nicolas' letters do not enable us to build up a complete biography of the man, though they do help us to follow his career in a general way. As a young monk, he was clearly a favorite of his abbot. He writes:

I was young in age, heartless, a weakling in spirit, fickle in word, indiscreet in works, vicious in tongue, and proud in knowledge.... How often did I sit at his table when he was present and presiding, nor was I so much as associate and fellow-servant as master.... At my wish a table companion and a feast were provided, for he knew that I was accustomed to splendid banquets. He arranged for me whatever delicacies there were, and placed them before me, though he himself fasted while I feasted.... He would do wholly whatever I wished, and he assigned to himself any act that would distinguish me.<sup>6</sup>

Apparently this was done to avoid envy on the part of the other monks. I suspect that few young monks have been coddled in this way in the Middle Ages or today.

In the meantime, Nicolas was considering a transfer to Clairvaux, and says that it was the fear of God that prevailed on him and influenced his decision to transfer from a cluniac house to the Cistercians. This word got out. The abbot of Mortiéramy was probably the last to hear of it (as sometimes happens in monasteries). When he did, he convened the monks, together with Nicolas, and found that the rumor was true.

At once, his face changed, and with deep sighs,

his grief overflowed into streams of tears. He begged prayerfully. Using precepts, he urged me to reconsider.<sup>7</sup>

But Nicolas was as a man 'not hearing'. The bonds of a sincere affection had been broken. Nicolas betook himself to the abbey church, where he prayed fervently; in his mind he reviewed his relation with the abbot who, he says, 'had preferred him to all the rest'. He considered himself an Absalom, and says that in spirit he would

Grovel at his feet, cling to his knees, hold his hands tight, hang on to his neck, and kiss his dear and friendly face if only I would hear the pardon of my sins and a peaceful dismissal.<sup>8</sup>

But regardless of his feelings and his regret at causing sorrow to his abbot, his determination to leave for Clairvaux remained unchanged.

He initiated his transfer to that house by writing to Fromont, the guestmaster, telling him of his sufferings:

If you are willing to listen to me, briefly hear what the situation is. Who will give water to my head and a fountain of tears to my eyes, for I am forced to live without you (i.e., the monks of Clairvaux)....Suggest to the fathers and to our brothers that they bring me out of this prison, that they take me into the place of the admirable tabernacle, into the house of God that I may not die in the bitterness of my soul. If I were able to be here any longer, death would be preferable to life.<sup>9</sup>

Nicolas, with several of his brother monks, then attempted to leave Montiéramey for Clairvaux. Of this flight he writes:

Who will tell of how we slipped away from their hands (the abbot and monks) without garments, without money, without servants, and with difficulty we got to Aripatorium.<sup>10</sup>

From there, they fled to Clairvaux, where they were reclaimed by Nicolas' abbot and forced to return home. Nicolas was grief-stricken over his own failure and the suffering of his fellow-monks. He says:

They are afflicted with death all day long, and I

cannot lessen their sufferings even for an hour.<sup>11</sup>

In a letter to the monks and prior of Clairvaux, he relates his misery:

I who sit in darkness and do not see the light of heaven, the light of Clairvaux....I say before God that if all the kingdoms of the world and their glory were conferred upon me, it were as nothing, if I could not be with you in that place. Clairvaux is in my affection, Clairvaux is in my feelings, Clairvaux is in my presence, Clairvaux is in my memory, Clairvaux is in my mouth, Clairvaux is in my heart, and inflames my soul with tender thoughts...if there is any devotion, any affection and love, have pity on me, have pity on me, and take me out of this prison-house, for without you, everywhere is a prison.<sup>12</sup>

Nicolas got to Clairvaux, probably in 1146, and soon became a full-time secretary to Bernard. He was happy to have a little scriptorium of his own (the other scribes worked in a common room in which architectural drawings of Clairvaux at that time show space for eight). His room he described in some detail, indicating that it was surrounded on the right by the monks' cloister, on the left by the infirmary and the ambulatory for the sick. Though walled off on all sides, it opened into the novices' cells. He expressed his satisfaction with it, saying:

Do not think my little nook is to be despised, for it is desirable for its effect, delightful to see and a place to recline when one wishes to withdraw.<sup>13</sup>

Nicolas also mentions that it was full of books, giving rise to the impression that he may also have been Clairvaux's librarian.

Bernard had a voluminous correspondence, which must have kept his secretary busy. Nicolas complained of being overburdened with work while the other monks had time for meditation and prayer. Yet Nicolas still found time to write his own letters, especially to his friends, to the 'high and mighty' he had known earlier, and he entered heartily into the task of appealing for vocations to Clairvaux, often encouraging monks to enter or to return.

To a certain Theobald who had entered Clairvaux about the same time Nicolas did, but had left for Cluny, Nicolas wrote:

I grieve over you and that grief is always in my sight....You were a man in a position of honor, well-on in age, well-disposed toward letters, very useful and a delightful associate.<sup>14</sup>

He spoke of their close friendship, and of how 'they had fled the shadows of Cluny to the purity of the Cistercians'. He then drew an interesting comparison of life at those houses:

If that former place (Cluny) had been without fault, surely we would not have sought out a second place (Clairvaux)....For in gold and purple, in food and drink, and in various ablutions, they brought in every rite of divine worship....Where there is more gold, there is believed to be more merit; where there are more coverlets, more moral living; where there is more sumptuous food and elegant garments, there is more perfect observance of commands....<sup>15</sup>

As to their decisions, he says:

You left them (Cluniacs), you advanced to those (Cistercians), but you have returned to them, and your return is a detestable act. Leaving, you left a scandal; returning, you have multiplied it....Perhaps you may say: 'the tunic pricked me, the food annoyed me, the heat overcame me, the vigils wore me out, the silence crucified me, and meditation left me dizzy'.<sup>16</sup>

Nicolas ends this five-page letter with the exhortation: 'Pick up your heart, my beloved, and come to a man of God'--to Bernard, of course.

In a letter which is lengthy, wandering, replete with scriptural quotations and figurative allusions, he pleads that Walter, a noble youth, ought to be ashamed 'to be devoted to his stinking limbs and his own flesh'. Should he return, Nicolas promises: 'how willingly would I share with you cold bread, cooked with the fat of wheat in the heavenly Jerusalem'.<sup>17</sup>

Continuing his efforts to secure vocations for Clairvaux, he wrote to Peter, deacon of Trier, reminding him of his past, urging his conversion, as he says:

I say to you, Peter, that tonight before the rooster crows, who awakens the whole world

with his strident music, you sleep too much,  
you are too much given to lethargy'.<sup>18</sup>

Philip, archdeacon at Liège, was reminded of their friendship at Rome, in younger days, when 'they passed over and climbed slippery mountains' and 'watched by night in the hills of the Tivoli mountains'. Referring to the same time in an earlier letter, Nicolas threw light on his own character by saying:

Entering and leaving in the clothing of the humility of Christ, I leaped into a whirlwind of pleasure; I appeared as a monk without a rule, a priest without reverence. Going in curiosity to the Roman curia, and returning, I made a great name for myself'.<sup>19</sup>

Elsewhere, he admitted that he was never a monk at heart. But still he encouraged vocations to Clairvaux, or congratulated newcomers, as he did one Garner, who left Cluny, apparently with the approbation of his abbot, Peter the Venerable, to come to Clairvaux.

A letter to Henry, brother of King Louis VII, who had been a monk at Clairvaux expresses Nicolas' concern:

After your departure, joy left me, and my soul was disturbed, nor was this strange, for half of my soul was deserting me, and the better portion right before my face. When you mounted your horse, adorned with rustic trappings, I began to be astonished and violently disturbed. I wondered that you were so departing, you who a little earlier, aflame in scarlet, shining in gold, brilliant in silk, whom a horse, nay horses, had preceded and followed.<sup>21</sup>

Nicolas went on to express his feelings at being deprived of Henry's companionship in a lengthy lament, and closed his letter with these words:

The Lord knows that I write these last words with tears. Return, return, my beloved, return that we may look at you. Return because of my grief, return because of Andrew, and our community which awaits you as an angel of God!.<sup>22</sup>

But Henry did not return. Instead he becomes bishop of Beauvais, (his election having already been assured at the time he left

Clairvaux), and later archbishop of Rheims. His illness, the alleged reason for leaving monastic life, was apparently not too serious to impede ecclesiastical preferment, and may have been the kind that afflicted others who pleaded it and returned to secular life from monasteries.

Friendship played an important part in Nicolas' life as it did in that of other twelfth-century persons. Peter the Venerable spoke of it as 'a port in storm', a 'well-favored wine', 'a silver cord' or 'fair weather'. Nicolas' philosophy about it found expression when he said " 'The absence of friends were intolerable were it not for the remedy of letters'.<sup>23</sup> As an example of this, we may cite a paragraph from his letter to the cantor of Grandisylva, a dependency of Clairvaux:

He who knows the hidden thoughts of the heart knows how much I love you in the bosom of Jesus Christ. For your memory has rushed deeply into my heart; it has taken possession of it rather completely. It possesses it permanently and lives with it alive. Who will grant that I will never abandon your memory, never be separated from it....<sup>24</sup>

The letter was written for another, but it expresses his own feelings.

This preoccupation with love and friendship runs through a number of other letters, though equally frequent are letters he wrote that are purely eulogistic or flattering--hog-wash, one of my Sister-colleagues, an English teacher, called them. To an archdeacon, probably one Gebuinus, he wrote:

It is daring and presumptuous of me to write to you because of my poor understanding and blunt style which stand in awe of your wisdom and revere your eloquence....Your polished tongue, your pleasant countenance, your rhetorical style, pleasing to your friends and not unpleasant to your enemies, has overcome infelicitous envy with a more felicitous glory. The Giver of gifts has given you two talents, and that lavishly. He has endowed you with a two-fold spirit, the spirit of subtle intelligence and the spirit of discretion....<sup>25</sup>

To Bishop Amadeus of Lausanne he wrote in somewhat the same strain:

...I have seen you noble without pride, powerful without envy, religious without being

superstitious, well-lettered without being proud, serious without folly, facetious without study, and constant without being bitter....<sup>26</sup>

The purpose of this type of letter is difficult to discern unless it is simply taken as an expression of Nicolas' desire to remain on good terms with 'the high and mighty'.

One sometimes wonders why Nicolas wrote so little of monastic life in terms of spirituality or theology. One lengthy letter, to Peter, abbot of Celle, was a reply to that abbot's discourse on the Trinity. Yet Nicolas' letter is pedantic and involved. When I finished translating it, I found myself in the same mood as Graham Greene's character, Morin, who says:

A man can accept anything to do with God until scholars begin to go into details and the implications. A man can accept the Trinity but the arguments that follow--no, no, that's the rub.<sup>27</sup>

Still, Nicolas spoke with admiration of the prayer life of his fellow-monks at Clairvaux:

I have seen them standing as a guard of the Lord, entire days and entire nights, clothed with breast plates of justice and the helmet of salvation, having the shield of faith, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. With the eyes of faith, I saw men of one way of life dwell in a house, rise at night to praise the name of the Lord, to proclaim it evening, morning and noonday, and to announce his glory and to devote all their zeal to the round of divine service'.<sup>28</sup>

Nicolas also expressed deep sympathy for the monks during the customary period of blood-letting,<sup>29</sup> when in spite of weakness, they continued unabated in their strenuous life of work and prayer.

Nicolas' letters show, too, that he borrowed books from Cluny, specifically, the history of Alexander the Great, and Augustine's treatise *Contra Julianum*.<sup>30</sup> We also think that Henry of Champagne aided Nicolas in his acquisition of books.<sup>31</sup> It may well be that Nicolas did for the library at Clairvaux what Lupus of Ferrières had done for his monastery in the ninth century. And it is to be noted that when Nicolas left Clairvaux for good, he took books with him.

An unusual letter, written with a touch of humor and an unusual

use of Sacred Scripture belongs to the Phillipps collection (1719) at Berlin. Professor Benton suggests that it may have been written to Bishop Aline of Auxerre (1152-1167) who had once been a monk at Clairvaux.<sup>32</sup> Having spent some time at Auxerre on business for Bernard, as a letter to Peter the Venerable indicates,<sup>33</sup> Nicolas uses a more familiar tone in the letter than he otherwise would in writing to a bishop. The letter reads:

To the bishop of Auxerre: his Nicolas assures his devotion.

To use the words of the gospel: 'they have no more wine'. Send me not 'the wine of perdition' but 'the wine which gladdens the hearts of men', whose excellence, color, sweet flavor and pleasant odor bear witness to its quality. It is in these three elements that its perfection is manifested, and 'the rope with the three threads does not break easily'.

Send me the wine, the barrel and the cart, since you have given me this hope because you promised it to me. But if the cart poses a problem (and I'm afraid it does), send it rather than have me lose the wine.

...Command that the barrel be clean so that so noble a drink may not be spoiled by the coarseness of the wood. Send one separately for the abbot (probably of Montiéramey) and one for me, 'for Jews do not associate with Samaritans'.<sup>34</sup>

The letter probably belongs to the period after Nicolas left Clairvaux, for Nicolas would hardly be asking for wine for Bernard, having gone out from Clairvaux in disfavor.

Nicolas' friendship with Peter the Venerable, abbot of Cluny, remained very close, but there were times when apparently Bernard was not happy at having his secretary off visiting Cluny. In the fall of 1150, Peter wrote to Bernard asking that Nicolas come and stay until Christmas, a visit which never materialized because Nicolas was ill at the time. Later, Peter wrote Bernard asking that Nicolas come for Easter, reminding Bernard that he had given up several of his monks to Clairvaux, and also that the two of them had discussed Nicolas' visits when Bernard had been at Cluny at some time; Bernard had then asked Peter frankly: Why do you want Nicolas? Peter admits he had given him an evasive answer, not the one in his heart. We do not know whether the Easter visit took place even though Peter petitioned Bernard, the Prior Philip, the cellarer Gaucher, and Nicolas himself.

Nicolas' tendency to be a little deceptive appears in several of his letters, especially in one he wrote Peter about the Easter visit. He suggested to Peter that he send copies of his letters to Bernard secretly to himself, and added:

I know my lord abbot told you not to ask for me unless it were necessary...but it is necessary, and very necessary to see you. Order that I may come.<sup>35</sup>

That was probably Nicolas' last letter to Peter the Venerable, for Nicolas seems to have left Clairvaux in May of 1152. Peter's last letter to him had been written in May of that year. In the previous September Bernard had written to Pope Eugene III, a former Cistercian monk, to reveal his worries about his secretary. He wrote, paraphrasing 1 Cor 11:26:

I am in peril from false brethren, and many forged letters under my forged seal have come into the hands of many men, and it is said, what I fear more, that this falseness may even have reached you. I have therefore thrown away that (old seal), and am using a new one....<sup>36</sup>

After Nicolas' departure, Bernard wrote again to Eugene III with much more vehemence:

That man Nicolas had gone out from us, because he was not of us (1 Jn 2:19); but he has left foul traces behind him (*Aeneid*, III, 244). I had for a long time known the man for what he was, but I waited either for God to convert him or for him to betray himself like Judas, which is what happened. For when he left there were found upon him, besides books, money, and much gold, three seals: one his own, one the prior's, and the third one mine, and that not the old one but the new one, which I was recently forced to change on account of his deceits and secret frauds. I remember writing to you about this, naming no names, but saying that I was in peril from false brethren. Who can say to how many people he has written in my name whatever he wanted, without my knowing....It has been partly proved and partly confessed that he wrote falsely to you not just once but on several occasions. I shall not sully my lips or your

ears with his base deeds, with which the earth is polluted and which have become a byword among all men. If he comes to you (for he boasted of this and relied on having friends in the curia) remember Arnold of Brescia, since here is a man worse than Arnold. No man more richly deserves perpetual imprisonment; nothing is more fitting for him than perpetual silence.<sup>37</sup>

In earlier letters to the pope, Bernard had spoken of Nicolas with genuine affection and trust; he had used similar language in his letters to the papal chamberlain, Haimeric; in a letter to Peter the Venerable, he had called him 'our common son'. No more. His favorite secretary had failed him.

It may be well to remember that Bernard was not well at this time, for his life was drawing to a close. Jean Leclercq thinks that he was unnecessarily severe, saying that Bernard expelled Nicolas 'with an energy one would have to call excessive'.<sup>38</sup> Harsher than Bernard was the great scholar Mabillon, who in his work on St Bernard spoke of Nicolas as a 'hypocrite, a cheat and a liar', and added: 'How far the inconsiderate and confiding kindness of his patrons conduced to spoil a clever, conceited, ambitious young man, is more than I can pretend to say'.<sup>39</sup>

Bernard's biographer, Vacandard, spoke of Nicolas as having practically disappeared from history after his expulsion.<sup>40</sup> Not so! Recent research, especially by John Benton, disproves this statement. Nicolas may have gone to Montiéramey after leaving Clairvaux, but within a year or two he was found, as might be expected, 'in high places', first in Rome in the service of Cardinal Rolando Bandinelli, the future pope Alexander III. Through the cardinal, a close friend of Pope Adrian IV, Nicolas secured the attention and favor of that pope, and from him received some sort of pardon, as a letter to Adrian indicates. In it, Nicolas wrote:

I will never forget your mercies, O most blessed Father, for with these you have given me life. I had been turned over to oblivion as one dead at heart. You recalled me from being dead and buried....<sup>41</sup>

Nicolas gave the pope certain sermons of Bernard as a gift, and then asked to return to France:

Send me back to the land of my birth that I, poor, may die among the poor and attain the reward of poverty which is the kingdom of heaven.<sup>42</sup>

But that Nicolas' last years were spent in poverty is doubtful. By 1158 he was back at Montiéramey, his first monastic home, and in 1160 he was prior at the small dependency of Montiéramey, Saint Jean-en-Châtel near Troyes. There he lived until his death some time between 1175 and 1178.

Professor Benton has shown in an article on the court of Champagne--to which I am indebted for the details that follow--that during this time Nicolas worked closely with his old friend, Count Henry of Champagne. Apparently he was often at Henry's court as a literary counselor, for he witnessed at least six charters for the Count. Henry proved a generous patron, making substantial donations either directly to Nicolas or to his monastery. Among these were an income from a house in the market place in Troyes in 1160, and later the income from two houses at Bar-sur-Aube. As a canon of the church of Saint-Etienne-de-Troyes, Nicolas also received 100 sous annually--a fair income for a monk who had written Adrian IV that he wanted to go back to France to die poor and to receive the reward of poverty. Henry's continued interest and affection, however, relieved him of any financial worries he might have had as prior at St Jean-en-Châtel.

There is a bit of irony in the fact that Nicolas' last days were spent at the little monastic house of St Jean-en-Châtel. Montiéramey had not been big enough for him when he was at the height of his powers. Moving to Clairvaux, he was content at first to be Bernard's secretary, to act in his stead in certain instances. Then the temptation to usurp Bernard's power, by using his seal unlawfully, overcame this ambitious monk and brought about his downfall as a Cistercian and as an intimate of the 'high and mighty'.

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## NOTES

1. Giles Constable, *The Letters of Peter the Venerable*, 2 vol. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967).
2. John F. Benton, 'Nicolas de Clairvaux à la recherche du vin d'Auxerre', *Annales de Bourgogne* 34: pp. 252-55. Idem., 'An Abusive Letter of Nicolas of Clairvaux', *Medieval Studies* 33 (1971) 365-70. Idem., 'The Court of Champagne as a Literary Center', *Speculum* 36 (1961) 551-57.
3. Jean Leclercq, 'Les Collections de Sermones de Nicolas de Clairvaux', *Revue Benedictine* 66 (1956). Idem., *Recueil d'études sur saint Bernard et le texte de ses écrits* (Rome: Storia e letteratura, 1962, 1966, 1969). Idem., *Etudes sur Saint Bernard et le Texte de ses écrits*, *Analecta Sacri Ordinis Cistercienses* 9 (1953) 62-3.
4. For material on the MSS in this paragraph I am indebted for the most part to a personal type-sheet, kindly supplied by John F. Benton.
5. Letter 1; PL 196: 1503-4.
6. The numbering of the Letters is that followed in Migne, PL 196: 1503-1654, in the section entitled, *Nicolai Claravallensis Epistolae*.
7. Letter 40; PL 196: 1636.
8. Ibid.
9. Letter 46; PL 196: 1647.
10. The town, *Aripatorium*, seems to have disappeared from history, for today it is unknown. The reference is in Letter 45; PL 196: 1645.
11. Ibid.
12. Letter 7; PL 196: 1601.
13. Letter 35; PL 196: 1626.
14. Letter 8; PL 196: 1603.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
17. Letter 16; PL 196: 1610.
18. Letter 17; PL 196: 1613.
19. Letter 45; PL 196: 1645.
20. In a letter quoted by Leclercq, *Recueil*, p. 61, Nicolas says: 'Though I wore the insignia of a monk, not even for one day was I a monk'. Elsewhere he refers to his dissolute early life, especially when he was in Rome.
21. Letter 39; PL 169: 1575.
22. Ibid.
23. Letter 35; PL 169: 1626.
24. Letter 50; PL 169: 1649.
25. Letter 5; PL 169: 1598.
26. Letter 34; PL 169: 1625.

27. Graham Greene, 'The Birth of a Catholic Writer', *Commonweal*, Jan. 16, 1981, p. 13. Also in 'A Visit to Morin', a short story in Greene's *A Sense of Reality* (New York: Viking, 1963).
28. Letter 45; PL 196: 1645.
29. Constable notes that the practice of bloodletting was widespread in medieval monasteries. (2: p. 249). In *The Monastic Constitutions of Lanfrance*, edited by David Knowles (London: Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd., 1951) there is a rather complete account of bloodletting. Permission had to be obtained by the monk each time, and a certain ritual accompanied the practice (pp. 93-4). The need for the bloodletting may have been due to physical weakness brought on by an unbalanced or insufficient diet. It was usually followed by a diet of richer and more plentiful food. The time might be chosen by the individual, and could be as seldom as five times a year. (152-3)
30. In Letter 176, Peter the Venerable asks Nicolas to bring these two books with him when he comes to Cluny. (See Constable, *Letters* 1: p. 437).
31. This statement is an inference from the relationship of author and patron established between Henry, Count of Champagne, and Nicolas. Benton says: ('The Court of Champagne as a Literary Center', *Speculum* 36: 557) that Nicolas dedicated some of his works to the Count, who rewarded him with liberality.
32. See *Annales de Bourgogne* 34: 254.
33. Letter 55; PL 169: 1651. Bernard also refers to Nicolas being away at Auxerre in a letter to Peter the Venerable (Constable, *Letters* 2: 324).
34. Phillipps MS 1719; translated from the French in *Annales de Bourgogne* 34; 253-4.
35. Letter 55; PL 169: 1651.
36. Bernard, Letter 284; PL 182: 490-1.
37. Bernard, Letter 298; PL 182: 500-1.
38. Jean Leclercq, *Revue Benedictine* 66; 290-1.
39. Joannes Mabillon, *Opera Omnia Sancti Bernardi*, 1, 4th ed. (Paris: Gaume Fratres, 1839) 1629-30; translation by Constable, *Letters* 2: 329.
40. L'Abbé Elphège Vacandard, *Vie de Saint Bernard*, 2, 4th ed. (Paris: J. Bagalda, 1910) 513.
41. MS Vat. Lat. 5055. The Latin text is published with notes by Jean Leclercq in *Etudes*, 63-64.
42. *Ibid.*
43. *Speculum* (Oct. 1961) 551-7.

## Abbreviations

Adv	Guerric of Igny, <i>Sermo(nes) in adventu Domini</i> (Sermons for Advent)
Anima	Aelred of Rievaulx, <i>De anima</i> (Dialogue on the Soul)
ASOC	<i>Analecta Sacri Ordinis Cisterciensis=Analecta Cisterciensia</i>
CCCM	Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Medievalis
CF	The Cistercian Fathers Series, Cistercian Publications
Circ	<i>Sermo in circumcissione domini</i> (Sermon on the feast of the Circumcision)
CS	The Cistercian Studies Series
CSt	<i>Cistercian Studies</i>
Csi	Bernard of Clairvaux, <i>De consideratione</i> (On Consideration)
DHGE	<i>Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastique</i> , Paris, 1912.
Ep(p)	Epistola(e) (Letter[s])
Ep frat	William of St Thierry, <i>Epistola ad fratres de Monte Dei</i> (The Golden Epistle)
Inst incl	Aelred of Rievaulx, <i>De institutione inclusarum</i> (Rule for a Recluse)
Jesu	Aelred of Rievaulx, <i>De Jesu puero duodenni</i> (On Jesus at the Age of Twelve)
Oner	Aelred of Rievaulx, <i>Sermones de oneribus</i> (Sermons on Isaiah)
Pasc	<i>Sermo in die Paschae</i> (Easter Sermon)
Pent	<i>Sermo in die Sancto pentecostes</i> (Sermon for Pentecost)
PP	Bernard of Clairvaux, <i>Sermo in festo SS. Apostolorum Petri et Pauli</i> (Sermon for the Feast of SS Peter and Paul)
QH	<i>Sermo super psalmum Qui habitat</i> (Lenten Sermons on the Psalm 'He who dwells')
RTAM	<i>Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale</i>
SBOP	<i>Sancti Bernardi Opera</i> , edited J. Leclercq, H. M. Rochais, and C. H. Talbot. Rome, 1957-77.
SC	Bernard of Clairvaux, <i>Sermones in Cantica canticorum</i> (Sermons on the Song of Songs)
Spir amic	Aelred of Rievaulx, <i>De spirituali amicitia</i> (Spiritual Friendship)
TVM	<i>Theologie de la vie monastique: Etudes sur la tradition patristique</i> . Paris, 1961.
Vita Bern	William of St Thierry et al., <i>Vita prima Bernardi</i> (The First Life of St Bernard of Clairvaux)