

## THE JOHN SCHORN BOOK OF HOURS

[EDITORS' NOTE.—*The article on this manuscript is reproduced, with some slight modifications, from a paper by Mr. M. F. Bond, in the Annual Report of the Society of the Friends of St. George's, and the Descendants of the Knights of the Garter for the year 1949. We are grateful to Mr. Bond and to the Editor of the Report, and the Committee of the Friends, for their generous permission to use this material. They also most kindly placed the blocks of plates 3 and 4 at our disposal.*

*In November 1949 it became known that this manuscript, formerly in the collection of Captain R. G. Berkeley, of Spetchley Park, Worcester, was coming up for sale at Sothebys. The Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society was keenly interested in view of Schorn's connexion with the county at North Marston, and endeavoured to secure it; but the price was more than could justifiably be afforded, and it was bought by Sir Owen Morshead, the Royal Librarian, for £286, on behalf of the Friends of St. George's, who presented it to the Chapel. This purchase is almost equally appropriate, for the book is now placed near the spot where John Schorn's body eventually rested after its removal from North Marston to Windsor. It is in a casket in the niche beside the Schorn or Lincoln Chapel in the South Choir Aisle.*

*The note on John Schorn himself is taken from that by General R. T. Pelly, which prefaces Mr. Bond's main paper; and a list of references may here be conveniently given. Schorn's veneration as a Saint was opposed in a sermon by Latimer; he is dealt with in Bulwer's *Norwich Archaeology*, II, 280-90 (1849); by *Hastings Kelke* in *Records of Buckinghamshire*, II, 60-74 (1863); and by *Sparrow Simpson*, *ibid.*, III, 354-69 (1870), (both illustrated); and by *Scott Robertson* in *Archaeologia Cantiana*, XI, pp. xxxvii, and lxi-lxv (1877).]*

### JOHN SCHORN

Brig.-Gen. R. T. PELLY, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.

*Master John Schorn, Gentleman born  
Who Conjured the Devil into a Boot*

JOHN SCHORN, Rector of North Marston, Bucks., a militant churchman, was reputed to have miraculous powers to heal sickness and particularly the ague, nowadays known as malaria, which was very prevalent in England in the thirteenth century. He became Rector in 1290, died in 1314, and was buried at North Marston. For some 200 years North Marston became a place of pilgrimage where the sick sought healing at the good Rector's tomb.

Shortly after King Edward IV commenced the great work of building St. George's Chapel, it occurred to Richard Beauchamp, Bishop of Salisbury, 'our dearly beloved Cousin' as he is called in the letters patent announcing that the King had put him in charge of the work, that it would advantage the new House of God if it contained some Holy relics that would attract pilgrims (and their offerings). What better draw could be found, and one so near at hand, than the bones of the revered and saintly

Master John Schorn? So application was made to Pope Sixtus IV, who issued a bull authorizing the removal of these relics from North Marston to Windsor Castle. The first of St. George's chantry chapels to be completed, viz. that at the south-east corner of the building, was set aside for their reception. An elaborate shrine was constructed in the centre of the chantry which forms part of an octagon, and an altar set up against the south-east wall. The tomb was evidently handsomely decorated, as it is recorded that the sum of £4 13s. 4d. was paid to Thomas Turner, the painter, for this work—a considerable sum in those days. A box for pilgrims' offerings was also set up, believed to have been similar to that later made by John Tresilian for offerings at Henry VI's tomb and possibly by the same hand. This belief is based on a bill in the Chapter muniments, unfortunately without date or signature, which reads in part: 'ffor making . . . a box for Maist' John Shorn . . . and for IIII lokes to the said box w<sup>h</sup> the keys and with the Hed of the Box and the keyhole kev'ed' (? kerved, i.e. carved).

Great as was the attraction of the good man's bones as they rested in the Buckinghamshire village, even greater was it in the magnificent surroundings of the King's new chapel. The pilgrims came in their hundreds and their thousands. Daily the box was filled and emptied, and the Bishop smiled with satisfaction at the success of his plan.

For nearly three years all went well, but gradually the popularity of the tomb of King Henry VI at Chertsey Abbey increased as miracles of healing were reported there, and the feet of the pilgrims were diverted south across the Surrey border. . . .

Richard III became aware of the diversion of pilgrimages from Windsor to Chertsey. His remedy was swift and sure. He ordered the removal of King Henry's remains from Chertsey to Windsor, much to the annoyance of the worthy Abbot and his good monks, who saw one of their most fruitful sources of revenue snatched from them. The pilgrims returned to Windsor, and although John Schorn was still held in reverence, it was Henry who was the main attraction. This state of affairs continued until the time of the Reformation. In 1585, Edward Clinton, 1st Earl of Lincoln, died, who had served his country as Lord High Admiral in three reigns, not only at sea, but on land, where he had been Governor of Boulogne and later Governor of the Tower. He had earlier earned the gratitude of his Royal master in saving bluff King Hal the necessity of pensioning off a discarded mistress, by taking as the first of his three wives Elizabeth Blount, mother of the illegitimate Duke of Richmond. Such a notable servant of the State was deserving of a worthy burial-place, and as a Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter it was fitting that he should be laid to rest in St. George's Chapel. All the chantry chapels but one were occupied by Knights of the Garter or Deans, and this one exception contained the bones of some long-forgotten country rector, a most unworthy use for the oldest of the eight chantries. So poor Master Schorn's handsome shrine was demolished and the beautiful alabaster tomb containing the bodies of the noble earl and his third wife, the beautiful Lady Elizabeth Fitzgerald, set up in its place. Where are Master John Schorn's bones now? In all probability beneath those of the Earl of Lincoln and his Lady.



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PLATE 3. JOHN SCHORN'S TOWER, now called the Lincoln Chapel in St. George's Chapel, Windsor



*Reproduced by permission of the Society of the Friends of St. George's, Windsor*

PLATE 4. THE JOHN SCHORN BOOK OF HOURS. The opening of  
Matins in the Book of Hours

## THE JOHN SCHORN BOOK OF HOURS

M. F. BOND, M.A., F.S.A.

The Friends of St. George's have recently purchased and presented to the Dean and Canons a Book of Hours of great historical and liturgical interest, previously the property of Captain. R. G. Berkeley, of Spetchley Park, Worcester. The 'hours' contained in this book are the seven services once said at various hours of the day, following the example of the Psalmist, 'seven times a day do I praise thee'.<sup>1</sup> They are not, however, the lengthy hours recited by monks and canons<sup>2</sup> in their churches from great Breviaries, but shorter offices intended for those who had not the time for nine lessons and eighteen psalms at matins. Books of Hours were essentially private prayer-books, and rich laymen of the later Middle Ages lavished large sums of money on them. Careful instructions would be given to the scribe, perhaps a chantry priest or chaplain, as to which letters should be limned in gold, which in vermilion, what incidents from the lives of saints should be drawn as miniatures, where the family arms should be included, and where prayers for members of the family might be added; and the finished work, set in a rich binding, would form a valuable family possession. Somewhat less elaborate books—of which the present book is an example—were written for poorer people and for the clergy. The clergy in particular found a Book of Hours extremely useful when they wished to pay especial honour to Our Lady or any other saint who had a 'little office' of his or her own.<sup>3</sup> (Priests were in fact supposed to say the Hours of Our Lady daily.) What the priest's book lacked in miniatures or floriated margins it might make up in fullness of text; the priest would have various offices added as he came across them, and might even, as in this case, write prayers of his own and add special devotions on fly-leaves or gatherings of vellum which he then stitched in.

The present book seems to have been written *c.* 1430–50—this can be gauged from a study of the festivals included in the Kalendar—and it was probably written for or by a priest called 'John', although later in its career it seems to have passed into the hands of a Dominican friar. One of its early owners, perhaps John himself, must have suffered from gout or some other ailment which turned his devotion towards Master John Schorn, at whose shrine in North Marston miraculous cures had then been worked for a century or more. Perhaps, book in hand, John made the pilgrimage to Marston and there joined in the hymns and prayers said at the Holy Well and before Schorn's tomb. And there, very likely, he or the then owner of the book wrote down on a fly-leaf the hymn, versicle, response, and collect which to-day make it of almost inestimable value to us at St. George's.

General Pelly has already explained<sup>4</sup> the close connexion of Schorn with St. George's Chapel and has told how Bishop Beauchamp brought the remains of Master John Schorn to what is probably still their resting-place, the chapel at the south-east corner of the building.<sup>5</sup> There, in the early 1480s, whilst the area of the nave was still open ground, though doubtless piled with builders' materials, and whilst scaffolding still obstructed the choir, Bishop Beauchamp had a large shrine constructed for John Schorn.<sup>6</sup> To it the faithful came in numbers, slipping their offerings into the iron box standing by, and hanging up round the shrine wax models of those limbs they wished cured by Schorn's intercession.

Master John Schorn may therefore be said to have presided over the construction of the magnificent new chapel of Edward IV, and undoubtedly this hymn, so long unknown to us at St. George's, must once have been sung daily, perhaps hourly, within the chapel. Even if the rest of the Book of Hours were of no interest—which is indeed far from being the case—the acquisition of a copy of this rare hymn and its accompanying prayers alone constitutes a considerable event in the history of the chapel, bound to kindle our interest in what was once the focus of the religious life of the chapel, the area at the east end of the south choir aisle.

The hymn of Master John Schorn is in the form known as *prosa* or a sequence intended to be sung between the Epistle and Gospel at mass. (More famous sequences still in use are the *Veni Sancte Spiritus*, *Stabat Mater*, and *Dies Irae*.) Or, with the response and collect which follow the hymn, it could form a useful devotion to be said by the faithful on their sick bed or on pilgrimage. Its Latin text is as follows (I add a translation):

[PROSA B. JOHANNIS SCHORN]

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Ave gemma curatorum<br>O Johannes flos doctorum<br>Rector de Merstonia         | Hail, gem of pastors,<br>O John, flower of teachers,<br>rector of Marston            |
| Ave lux predicatorum<br>Vas virtutum, via morum<br>ducens ad celestia          | Hail, light of preachers,<br>vessel of virtues, way of manners<br>leading to heaven  |
| Ave pater clericorum<br>Exemplar presbiterorum<br>In carnis munditia           | Hail, father of clerks<br>example of priests<br>in chastity of body                  |
| Ave consors angelorum<br>Contemplator supernorum<br>Et vincens demonia         | Hail, companion of angels,<br>who dost enjoy the heavens,<br>and conqueror of demons |
| Ave salus infirmorum<br>Medicina vexatorum<br>Febrium molestia                 | Hail, help of the sick,<br>medicine of those harassed<br>by the pain of fevers       |
| Ave lumen oculorum<br>Liberator languidorum<br>dentium angustia                | Hail, light of the eyes,<br>liberator of the weak<br>from the toothache              |
| Ave cum miraculorum<br>Redivivus bos <sup>7</sup> tuorum<br>profert testimonia | Hail, since the ox<br>restored to life<br>gives witness of your miracles             |
| Ave tu qui es cunctorum<br>suscitator submersorum<br>per tua suffragia         | Hail, thou who art the<br>rescuer of all the drowned<br>by thy prayers               |

Ave divini\* puerorum  
Consolator miserorum  
qui sunt in tristitia

Hail, heavenly consoler  
of wretched boys  
who are in sadness

Ave dux peregrinorum  
Esto ductor viatorum  
Ad superna gaudia

Hail, leader of pilgrims,  
lead thou wayfarers  
to the joys above.

Ora pro nobis, sacerdos Christi, Johannes  
Ut nos a cunctis febribus defendat gratia Christi.

Pray for us, John, priest of Christ  
That the grace of Christ may defend us from all fevers.

#### OREMUS

Domine Jesu Christe fili Dei vivi qui a socru Petri filio quoque reguli virtute verbi tui febres fugare voluisti, concede propitius cunctis febricitantibus devotissimi sacerdotis tui Johannis memoriam facientibus ut si sit placitum tuae pietati eos amplius vexandi non habeant febres potestatem, qui cum Deo patri et spiritu sancto vivis et regnas Deus per omnia secula seculorum.

#### *Let us Pray*

Lord Jesus Christ, son of the living God, who by the power of thy word wast willing to put fevers to flight from Peter's mother-in-law and the son of the ruler, grant in thy mercy to all fevered persons who honour the memory of thy priest, John, that if it be thy will, fevers may have no power to trouble them further, who livest and reignest, etc.

Only one other version of this office is known to survive. It was found amongst a collection of 'medical receipts' in the Sloane MSS. of the British Museum dating from the fifteenth century, and was printed by the Rev. W. Sparrow Simpson in vol. XLI of the *Journal of the Archaeological Association* (1885).<sup>9</sup> This version is headed 'A flare prayer of Mr. John Shorne for y<sup>e</sup> Axes' (i.e. ague); its text follows ours with slips and omissions—its scribe must have been a most illiterate person, and its value is correspondingly less. At the end is a quaint remedy for a sick person 'in joperdye of dethe'; he is simply to say the mysterious word 'ananizapta'<sup>10</sup> and make the sign of the cross. It is not clear, however, whether this has any connexion with the cult of Schorn or is simply one further 'receipt'.

To return to our Book of Hours: it contains, besides this valuable office of Schorn, a very rare office of 'the Eternal Wisdom and the Glorious Name of Jesus' and a remarkable collection of prayers, some in French, which would repay careful study. Finally, there are three English prayers in verse of importance in the development of fifteenth-century literature, which have been quoted in the standard work on the subject: Carleton Brown's *Register of Middle English Religious and Didactic Verse*. I add a short technical description of the Book of Hours, a list of its contents, and a note on the page reproduced as an illustration.

### DESCRIPTION OF THE BOOK

It consists of 177 leaves of vellum written in a Gothic hand, 22–24 lines to a page. The first page of Matins<sup>11</sup> has a large illuminated 'D' and full floral border, and there are numerous other large and small illuminated initials. Some of the text is in red, and there is much gold leaf, in a brilliant condition, in the illuminated initials. The book is bound in its original oak boards, though these are partly broken, and there is a fragment of the original hide cover adhering to the upper board. The size of the leaves is  $8\frac{3}{4}$  inches by  $6\frac{1}{8}$  inches. The Chapter is having the binding repaired and re-covered by Mr. Roger Powell.

### LIST OF CONTENTS

- Folio 1r. Prose of Master John Schorn (transcribed and translated above).  
1v. Kalendar.  
3r. Matins of Our Lady. (This and the following offices are according to the Use of Sarum.)  
6v. Lauds.  
13v. Prime.  
15v. Terce.  
16v. Sext.  
17v. None.  
19r. Evensong.  
20r. Compline.  
22r. The 7 Psalms and the Gradual Psalms.  
28r. Litany and suffrages.  
31v. Vigils of the Dead (*Placebo*).  
34r. Matins of the Dead (*Dirige*).  
45v. Commendation of Souls and Psalms.  
(The above form the usual Book of Hours.)  
53r. Psalms of the Passion.  
57r. Seven Words from the Cross.  
59r. Hours of the Holy Trinity with Memorials. French rubrics. (The script and illumination change slightly in style at this point.)  
67r. Hours of All Saints. At the bottom of fo. 75r. the name 'Spryngat' has been jotted down in a XV<sup>th</sup> century hand.  
84r. Hours of Eternal Wisdom and Glorious Name.  
92v. Prayers to Our Lady.  
93r. Prayers to Our Lord.  
94r. Prayer of St. Gregory, etc.  
100r. Prayers 'of a certain religious'.  
100v. Prayers in French.  
103v. (Earlier part ends here. Later hand: 'E Libris'. It seems likely that for some time the book ended at this point.)  
104r. Collection of prayers taken from Bible begins here. English rubrics.  
105r. Prayer of thanksgiving.  
105v. Prayers for those in temptation.  
106v. Prayer of thanksgiving.  
107r. Prayer for sinners.  
108r. Prayer of King Manasses.  
108v. Prayer for grace.  
109v. Prayer for those in tribulation.  
110v. Thanks for deliverance.  
111v. Prayer for those married or about to be.  
112r. Prayer for help.



- 113r. Prayer for a widow.  
 113v. Prayer of thanks for victory.  
 114v. Prayer for those with estates.  
 115r. Prayer for those in prosperity.  
 116r. Prayer for all holy church.  
 117v. Prayer for sick.  
 118r. Prayer for holy church.  
 119r. Prayer of thanks for sick.  
 119v. Prayer for wisdom.  
 120r. Prayer of King Solomon.  
 120v. Prayer of praise.  
 121v. Prayer for those with sundry vices.  
 122r. Prayer for those who preach or hear the word of God.  
 123r. Prayer for celibates.  
 124v. Prayers for good estate of holy church.  
 126v. Prayer for those with great disease.  
 127v. Prayer of thanksgiving.  
 128v. Prayers for good estate of holy church.  
 129v. Prayer for those maliciously accused.  
 130r. Prayer for those in great distress.  
 131v. Prayer of praise.  
 132r. 'Now he that this compilacion of orisons hath drawn out of all holy writ (*asks*) hym that list to rede hem, or devoutedly say hem to praise god or love hym' to pray for the compiler.  
 133r. Prayers to saints.  
 134r. Prayers to Our Lady in French.  
 136r. Prayers to Our Lady in Latin.  
 138r. Indulged Prayer of John XXII for those saying these prayers following at the divine office in honour of the Holy Trinity. Prayers follow.  
 145v. Office of All Saints for Tuesdays.  
 147v. Office of the Dead for Sundays.  
 149r. Office of Corpus Christi for Thursdays.  
 151v. Indulged Prayers.  
 155r. Office of Our Lady for Saturdays followed by saints' memorials.  
 163r. Indulged prayers.  
 164v. Matins of Holy Spirit for Wednesdays.  
 165v. Matins of Cross for Fridays.  
 The following in less formal book hand:  
 167r. Memorials of apostles, etc.  
 169r. Three English prayers in verse. The first begins:  
     Jhesu yat art lord of myght  
     My loue I-hure and vnderfonge (*love, help and support*).  
     It is a prayer of the Five Wounds, and consists of one seven-line and four eight-line stanzas. The second is a prayer on going to bed, beginning:  
 171v.     Jhesu lord welle of goodnesse  
           ffor thil grete pite y the pray.  
     There are five stanzas of four lines each and three final lines.  
     The last, a prayer at the Elevation in the Mass, comprises five six-line stanzas, commencing:  
 172r.     Welcu(m) lord in forme of brede  
           In the is bothe lyfe and dede.

There are also three leaves inserted before the first leaf at a later date, including memorials, possibly written by a Dominican, into whose possession the Book of Hours may have passed in the latter part of the fifteenth century.

#### THE LEAF ILLUSTRATED IN PLATE 4

The illustration shows the third leaf of the book (after the inserted gathering, which contains the later memorials). On it is written the text of the first part of matins:

*Domine labia mea aperies.*

*Et os meum annuntiabit laudem tuam.*

*Deus in adiutorium meum intende.*

*Domine ad adiuuandum me festina.*

*Gloria patri et filio et spiritu sancto.*

*Sicut erat in principio et nunc et semper et in secula seculorum amen. Alleluya.*

*Ave maria gracia plena, dominus tecum.*

*Psalmus.*

*Venite exultemus domino iubilemus deo salutari nostro.*

*Preocupemus faciem eius in confessione et psalmis iubilemus ei.*

*Ave maria.*

*Quoniam, etc.* (The rest of the Venite follows.)

This is practically the opening used for the present service of Matins: O Lord open thou my<sup>11</sup> lips. And my<sup>12</sup> mouth shall shew forth thy praise. O God, make speed to save me. O Lord, make haste to help me. Glory be to the Father, etc. As it was in the beginning, etc. Alleluya. And then: the Venite: O Come let us sing unto the Lord. But, as this is the office of Our Lady, Hail Mary is said at the beginning of the Venite and then a section of it, or the whole sentence, after each of the five verses into which the Venite used to be divided. This page is very similar to most of the others in this very full and, so far as the text is concerned, extremely well-preserved book.

Since the original paper was published, there has been opportunity for Mr. Bond to study the Schorn manuscript further, and he contributes the following note:

'The John Schorn Book of Hours, bought by the Friends to present to the Chapter, has now been repaired at the Chapter's expense. The work was superbly executed by Mr. Roger Powell, of Froxfield. The sewing of the volume, although 500 years old, was discovered to be sound and was retained, but some mends had to be made in the leaves and a good deal of subsidiary work done to the spine. The boards were removed and repaired with additions of English oak from the roof of Staple Inn, London—actually older, it is believed, than the original boards. A recess was cut in the front board to accommodate an electrotype of the John Schorn "Pilgrim's Token", showing Schorn preaching from a pulpit. The book was finally covered in white alum-tawed goatskin, and two straps were attached in the original position.

'In the course of the work a number of further discoveries were made, most notably that on the first "fly-leaf" there is a small pocket of parchment that might well have held a relic—presumably of John Schorn, a fragment of bone or fabric, or a secondary relic, something which had touched his body or shrine. The book, as has been already suggested, although in its original covers, must have existed for a time as three separate books, probably unbound, book A running from present ff. 3 to 58, B from 67 to 99(?), C from 104 to 127 or 135. The remaining leaves between the main "books" and at each end were presumably added later before the

final binding. It should be emphasized, however, that all this work was done in the fifteenth century, and that the completed Book of Hours is a remarkably full and interesting example of one of the most fascinating types of manuscript.<sup>2</sup>

In conclusion, reference may here be made to the discoveries at North Marston itself reported in the present volume of the *Records*, on pages 79 and 143, where the elaborate work at the East end of the South aisle, revealed by the removal of the organ, suggested that in the mid-fourteenth century the 'Saint's' first shrine was here, before the removal of his relics to Windsor, and the sumptuous rebuilding of the chancel at North Marston in the late fifteenth century. It is conceivable that this unusually splendid and accomplished structure was built out of offerings at the Shrine in Windsor as a kind of sop to the local inhabitants for the loss of the relics. It is perhaps significant that Mr. John Harvey has identified the masons' marks at North Marston with a group of craftsmen touring the South Midlands, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, whose work also appears at Eton, Windsor, and Hillesden. In this connexion, see the map on p. 15 of T. D. Atkinson's *Local Style in English Architecture* (1947), and also R. H. C. Davis' 'Masons' Marks in Oxfordshire and the Cotswolds' in *Oxfordshire Arch. Soc. Report*, No. 84 (1938-39).

<sup>1</sup> The joint offices of matins and lauds were usually said before dawn, and then prime, terce, sext, and none followed, as their names suggest, at the first, third, sixth, and ninth hours of the day, counting from six in the morning. Vespers at the eleventh hour (5 p.m.) and compline at the twelfth concluded the day.

<sup>2</sup> Those at St. George's among them. See the *Inventories of St. George's Chapel*, Appendix A.

<sup>3</sup> The saint was commemorated by interspersing the ordinary psalms, etc., with special prayers. In the case of an office of Our Lady, verses from the 'Ave Maria' recurred, as the leaf reproduced in plate 4 shows.

<sup>4</sup> See pp. 299 above.

<sup>5</sup> The parish church of North Marston was granted by the Priory of Dunstable to St. George's Chapel on 30th January, 1480 (W.R.XV.7.16). A licence had previously, in April 1478, been obtained from the Pope to translate Schorn's remains to Windsor (printed in St. John Hope's *Windsor Castle*, vol. II, 466-7), and the enterclose was made in 1480-1, so presumably the relics of Schorn had been translated by 1481 at the latest.

<sup>6</sup> Two storeys were eventually erected above the shrine and the whole tower known—as it should still be known—as the John Schorn Tower.

<sup>7</sup> The script looks very much like 'vos,' but this is clearly a mistake.

<sup>8</sup> For 'divine'?

<sup>9</sup> See also Mr. Sparrow Simpson's articles on Schorn in vols. XXIII (pp. 256-68, 370-8) and XXV (pp. 334-44) of the same journal. He proves conclusively both Schorn's great popularity as a healer and the indignation of the Reformers at his cult. Amongst many interesting quotations is one from *The Fantasie of Idolatry*, reprinted by Foxe in 1563:

To Maister John Shorne,  
That blessed man borne;  
● For the ague to him we apply:  
Which jugeleth with a bote,  
I beschrewe his herte rote  
That will trust him, and it be I.

(*Journal*, vol. XXIII, p. 262.)

<sup>10</sup> This word does not appear in *Ducange* or any of the standard dictionaries. It is possibly made up from the Greek *ana* + *nizo*, 'to purge or cleanse thoroughly'.

<sup>11</sup> See the illustration, plate 4.

<sup>12</sup> Altered to 'our' in the Book of Common Prayer, although 'mouth' remains in the singular.