

PETER OF CORNWALL'S  
BOOK OF REVELATIONS

This is the first book-length study of Peter of Cornwall, prior of Holy Trinity, Aldgate, London, whose *Liber Reuelationum* (Lambeth Palace Library, MS 51), dated to the year 1200, is a compilation of over 1,100 chapters, excerpted from some 275 Latin texts, dealing with visions of the otherworld and revelatory appearances of God, Christ, Mary, angels, saints, devils, and revenants. Peter's purpose in collecting such material from saints' Lives, chronicles, and free-standing vision texts from the first century AD through to his own day was to provide evidence to convince unbelievers of the existence of God, the soul, and life after death. Accounts of new visionary experiences circulating in England in the 1190s doubtless prompted his collection. Like his other large-scale work, *Pantheologus*, Peter of Cornwall's Book of Revelations was intended to assist preachers with propagating the fundamentals of the faith. This volume introduces Peter's life and writings and presents editions with parallel English translations of those parts of the Lambeth manuscript that Peter composed himself. A detailed description of the manuscript is included, and a Calendar identifies the source for each of Peter's chapters. A bibliography and indices complete this volume, which provides a marvellous resource for scholars interested in the Latin literature of medieval dreams, visionary experience, and the eschatological concerns of sin, penance, death, the afterlife, and the judgement of the soul.

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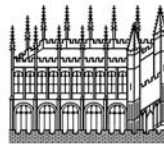
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PETER OF CORNWALL'S  
BOOK OF REVELATIONS

By ROBERT EASTING  
and RICHARD SHARPE



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Nisi signa et prodigia uideritis, non creditis.

Io 4: 48

Cum uirtute signorum concorditer loquitur ratio uerborum.

Gregory, *Dialogi*, II 23. 7



# Contents

Plates	<i>following page</i>	352
Preface		ix
Acknowledgements		xi
Notes on the Presentation of the Latin Texts		xii
Abbreviations and Short Titles		xiv
1 The Life and Writings of Peter of Cornwall		i
2 <i>Liber Reuelationum</i> : Introduction and Peter's Prologue		35
TEXT AND TRANSLATION		74
3 Peter of Cornwall's Account of St Patrick's Purgatory		116
TEXT AND TRANSLATION		130
4 The Visions of Ailsi		142
TEXT AND TRANSLATION		186
5 Visions at the Cistercian Abbey of Ham, Essex		216
TEXT AND TRANSLATION		226
6 Visions at Lessness, Kent		254
TEXT AND TRANSLATION		260
7 Other Tales Told by Peter of Cornwall		268
TEXT AND TRANSLATION		280
8 The Manuscript of <i>Liber Reuelationum</i>		342
Calendar of <i>Liber Reuelationum</i> , Lambeth Palace Library, MS 51		355
BOOK ONE		357
BOOK TWO		395
Bibliography		551
Index of Chapters		573
Index of Authors and Works		582
Index of Saints		587
Index of Chapters by <i>BHL</i> Number		591
General Index		597



## Preface

This volume is intended as an introduction to Peter of Cornwall (c. 1140–1221) and his *Liber Reuelationum* (1200), a work preserved only in London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS 51. Revised versions of some previously published work are brought together with new editions, translations, and discussions of previously unpublished sections of Peter's collection of revelatory material. A complete Calendar identifies, wherever possible, the texts copied or excerpted in Peter's collection.

Not a lot has been written about Peter of Cornwall. After being looked into by Henry Wharton in 1691, two centuries passed before the *Liber Reuelationum* was next commented on by G. G. Coulton in 1918, who printed a translation of the dream of John of Orpington and parts of the Visions of Ailsi. Coulton had been alerted to the manuscript by M. R. James long before James and Jenkins completed and published their catalogue of the Lambeth manuscripts, which did not appear until 1930; here James began the examination of Peter's sources. R. W. Hunt discussed Peter's *Pantheologus* briefly in an influential article on English learning in the twelfth century (1936), and he published an important article on Peter's *Liber Disputationum contra Symonem iudeum* (1948). Dom André Wilmart (1938) used Peter's excerpts from Goscelin's *Vita S. Edithae* for his edition, noting (p. 15) that Peter's text was better and notably older than the other surviving witnesses, and that his copies were reliable, being habitually literal (p. 16). Christopher Holdsworth identified and published from the *Liber Reuelationum* a group of visions connected with the Cistercian monastery of Ham, alias Stratford Langthorne, in Essex (1962, Chapter 5 below).

Easting's first encounter with Peter of Cornwall was in 1970 when he read the partial translation of Peter's account of St Patrick's Purgatory in Shane Leslie's *Saint Patrick's Purgatory. A Record from History and Literature* (1932), 11–12, where Leslie misdates Peter's work c. 1230, some nine years after he had died. Easting subsequently published this account (1979, Chapter 3 below). Sharpe identified an extant manuscript of Peter's *De reparatione lapsus* (1984). Having prepared an edition of the Visions of Ailsi, in 1987 Easting (RE) met Sharpe (RS) and was presented by him with his published edition of the same material (1986). We subsequently collaborated on a new edition of these visions (1988, Chapter 4 below), and the present volume

is a belated outcome of that first meeting twenty-six years ago. We are delighted that Christopher Holdsworth (CH) has joined us and with his help we have revised his article for inclusion in Chapter 5. These earlier publications have prompted a few further mentions of Peter of Cornwall, and we have attempted to take these into account in what follows.

Several chapters below are, therefore, revisions of earlier articles: Chapters 1 and 4 are based on Peter Hull & RS, 'Peter of Cornwall and Launceston', *Cornish Studies* 13 (1986), 5–53, and RE & RS, 'Peter of Cornwall. The Visions of Ailsi and his sons', *Mediævistik* 1 (1988), 207–262; Chapter 3 is a reworking of RE, 'Peter of Cornwall's Account of St Patrick's Purgatory', *AB* 97 (1979), 397–416, with a new facing-page translation by RE; Chapter 5 is based on C. J. Holdsworth, 'Eleven visions connected with the Cistercian monastery of Stratford Langthorne', *Cîteaux: Commentarii Cistercienses* 13 (1962), 185–204, with a new facing-page translation by RE.

This book has been a collaborative venture. Responsibility for the initial writing was as follows: CH Chapter 5, revised by RS and RE; RS Chapter 1, the historical aspects in Chapters 3, 4, and 6, Chapter 8, and the General Index; RE Chapters 2 and 7, the Calendar and Indexes, the visionary aspects of 3, 4, and 6, the text of 6, and the translations of 3, 5, and 6. In Chapter 4 the text is by RS and RE, and the initial translation was by Peter Hull, revised by RS and RE. In the course of rewriting and preparation for publication, both RS and RE have contributed to and revised all parts of the book.

## Acknowledgements

For permission to print material from the *Liber Reuelationum* we thank His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Trustees of Lambeth Palace Library. For permission to reprint and revise our own previously published material we are grateful to the Bollandists (Chapter 3), Prof. Dr. Peter Dinzelbacher, editor of *Mediaevistik*, and earlier to Prof. Charles Thomas, editor of *Cornish Studies* (Chapter 4), and the editorial board of *Cîteaux: Commentarii Cistercienses* (Chapter 5). For permission to reprint excerpts from translations of Augustine and Gregory for Peter's Prologue (Chapter 2), we thank Dr Trevor Lipscombe and the Catholic University of America Press. The image for the dust jacket is provided by courtesy of the Musée Condé, Chantilly. The illumination was executed within a few years of *LR*, which contains the legend of Theophilus at 2. 541.

We thank Christopher Holdsworth for reading and commenting on a draft of the book as well as for collaborating in the revision of his Chapter 5. We are also very grateful to the press readers for helpful suggestions, and especially to Christopher McDonough, who generously provided very detailed corrections to the texts and translations, which have been invaluable for our final revisions.

For their kindness in helping in any of a number of ways, answering queries, offering suggestions, giving technical assistance, or providing personal support, we also thank the following: Michael Barbezat, James Carley, Anne Hudson, Haidee Lorrey, Samu Niskanen, Oliver Padel, Kathryn Walls, John Waś, Peter Whiteford, James Willoughby.

RE, now retired, thanks his former employer, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, for a three-month period of research leave in 2007, and is indebted to Clare Hall Cambridge for a Visiting Fellowship allowing him to devote that time to this book. His greatest debt is to Christine Franzen for all her loving support.

## Notes on the Presentation of the Latin Texts

The hands of the three principal scribes of *Liber Reuelationum* are generally clear book hands, which present no great difficulty in reading. Marks of abbreviation and suspension are common, and have been silently expanded except in rare doubtful cases, e.g. *Lundon(ie)*. Their variable spellings have been retained, apart from the use of long-tailed *i/j* common in final position in numerals and elsewhere, but used inconsistently; this has been printed as *i*. In numerals, the printed version follows the MS use of *D* or *d* for '500', whereas with *L* or *l* for '50', the range of letter shapes can make the distinction less clear, and the printed form is *l*.

Readers must expect to find variations from 'standard' spellings, but these are not unfamiliar to readers of Medieval Latin. For example, *c* for *t* is common, e.g. *eciam*, *equitancium*, and *t* is found for *c*, e.g. *discaltiauit*; *c* for *s* is occasional, e.g. *obcesso*, and *c* for *sc*, which were obviously phonetically equivalent in English Latin of this period, is found more frequently, e.g. *decendere*, *dicipulus*, *nacituum*, *resucitatus*. Scribe B writes both *discipulus* and *dicipulus*, and on one occasion writes the former and deletes the *s* by subpuncting. Occasionally *e* occurs for *i*, e.g. *deademate* for *diademate* (p. 282/15), *descedens* for *discedens* (p. 264/33), *anemequior* for *animequior* (p. 238/21). Sometimes single consonants appear where we would expect double, e.g. *acusatus*, *asistere*, *resurrectionis*, and vice versa, e.g. *apostolos*. Intrusive *b* appears in *coboperire*, and *n* in *congnota* for *cognita*. It is not clear in some cases whether a spelling is a minor slip or an acceptable form, e.g. *antiquus* for *antiquus*, *equm* for *equum*, and *deferetur* for *deferretur*. But the scribes worked carefully and corrections by the primary hands are not uncommon, so we have accepted this kind of variation. Other examples of 'non-standard' spellings include: *arkangelus*, *Christy*, *Kyrie leyson* for *Kyrie eleison*, *monaco* for *monacho*, *patriarchcas*, *sarchofagum*, *talamum* for *thalamum*, but these are oddities, many representing words from Greek, and in general, it must be emphasized, the manuscript's forms are straightforward.

All changes from the manuscript spellings are signalled. Words or letters added to the text by the editors are enclosed within < >; those deleted are bracketed [ ]. Words or letters cancelled by a scribe are bracketed with a dash [ - ]. Scribal cancellation and alteration on the line are shown thus [first/second], cancellation and alteration above the line thus [ \ ]. Letters or words added above the line appear

between \ /, while \ // enclose marginal corrections. Where space for writing on the line was used by a later hand, additions are enclosed between / \. Text restored where the manuscript is damaged is shown in [ ]

Capitalization, including for forms of *Deus*, *Dominus*, *Christus*, etc., are editorial. We have broadly followed the punctuation of the manuscript, but it is sometimes a hindrance to the reader, and we have changed it where this seemed desirable. Speech marks to show dialogue have been incorporated in the editions of chapters, but not when quoted briefly in the rubrics in the Calendar. Paragraphing is editorial and intended to help keep the facing-page translations in parallel. Folio numbers, necessarily approximately placed in the translations because of the changed syntax, are given in the outer margins. In the Prologue (Chapter 2), text by Peter inserted into, or marking substantive alterations to, his source texts, Gregory and Augustine, is marked by †. In other circumstances where Peter's readings are different from his quoted sources, Gregory and Augustine, these are footnoted; where this involves more than one word in a string, the first word is preceded by †. In these circumstances Peter has presumably followed manuscript readings different from the modern critical text.

Chapter divisions are integral to Peter's manuscript, and references within the work take the form 1. 1 to 2. 899 usually without further specification.

## Abbreviations and Short Titles

<i>AB</i>	<i>Analecta Bollandiana</i> 1– (Brussels 1882– )
<i>Acta SS.</i>	<i>Acta Sanctorum quotquot toto orbe coluntur</i> (Antwerp, Tongerlo, Paris, Brussels, 1643–1940)
AFM	Annals of the Four Masters, ed. J. O'Donovan, <i>Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters</i> , 2nd edn, 7 vols (Dublin 1856)
<i>ANRW</i>	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung</i> , ed. W. Haase & H. Temporini, 1– (Berlin & New York, NY, 1972– )
<i>BHL</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina antiquae et mediae aetatis</i> , <i>Subsidia Hagiographica</i> 6, 2 vols (Brussels 1898–9). <i>Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina. Novum Supplementum</i> , ed. H. Fros, <i>Subsidia Hagiographica</i> 70 (Brussels 1986)
<i>Bibl. Casin.</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Casinensis seu codicum manuscriptorum qui in tabulario Casinensi asservantur series</i> , 5 vols (ex typographia Casinensi 1873–94)
BL	British Library, London
BM	Bibliothèque municipale
BNF	Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris
Bodl.	Bodleian Library, Oxford
<i>Catal. Brux.</i>	<i>Catalogus codicum hagiographicorum bibliothecae regiae Bruxellensis</i> , ed. Hagiographi Bollandiani, 2 vols (Brussels 1886–9)
<i>Catal. Paris.</i>	<i>Catalogus codicum hagiographicorum latinorum antiquiorum saeculo XVI qui asservantur in Bibliotheca Nationali Parisiensi</i> , 4 vols (Brussels 1889–93)
CCCM	Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis 1– (Turnhout 1971– )
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina 1– (Turnhout 1954– )
<i>CPG</i>	M. Geerard, <i>Clavis patrum Graecorum</i> , 2nd edn, 5 vols (Turnhout 1974–87)
<i>CPL</i>	E. Dekkers & E. Gaar, <i>Clavis patrum Latinorum</i> , 3rd edn (Turnhout 1995)
CSEL	Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum Latinorum 1– (Vienna 1892– )
<i>DS</i>	<i>Dictionnaire de spiritualité, ascétique et mystique, histoire et doctrine</i> , ed. M. Viller & others, 17 vols (Paris 1932–95)
EEMF	Early English Manuscripts in Facsimile
EETS, OS	Early English Text Society, Original Series
GCS	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte 1– (Leipzig, Berlin, 1897– )

- Heads* *The Heads of Religious Houses, England and Wales*, ed. D. Knowles, C. N. L. Brooke, V. C. M. London & D. M. Smith (Cambridge 1972–2006); vol. 1, 2nd edn (Cambridge 2001)
- Herbert, *Cat. Rom.* J. A. Herbert, *Catalogue of Romances in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum*, vol. 3 (London 1910)
- Hodgett, *Cartulary of Holy Trinity* *The Cartulary of Holy Trinity, Aldgate*, ed. G. A. J. Hodgett, London Record Society 7 (1971)
- James, *Cat. Lambeth* M. R. James & C. Jenkins, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Lambeth Palace* (Cambridge 1930)
- LR* *Liber Reuelationum* (London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS 51)
- MGH Monumenta Germaniae Historica
- AA *Auctores antiquissimi*, 15 vols (1877–1919)
- SRG in usum scholarum *Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi* 1– (1871– )
- SRM *Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum*, 7 vols (1884–1920)
- PLAC *Poetae Latinae aevi Carolini*, 4 vols (1881–1923)
- MLD* *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* (Oxford 1975– )
- Mombritius Boninus Mombritius, *Sanctuarium seu Vitae Sanctorum*, ed. [A. Brunet & H. Quentin], 2 vols (Paris 1910)
- Monasticon* W. Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum. A History of the Abbies and other Monasteries, Hospitals, Frieries, and Cathedral and Collegiate Churches with their Dependencies, in England and Wales*, new edn by J. Caley, H. Ellis, & B. Bandinel, 6 vols in 8 (London 1817–30; repr. Farnborough 1970)
- MPSPP* *The Medieval Pilgrimage to St Patrick's Purgatory: Lough Derg and the European Tradition*, ed. M. J. Haren & Y. de Pontfarcy, Clogher Historical Society (1988)
- MRHI* *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland*, ed. A. Gwynn & R. N. Hadcock (Harlow 1970)
- Neuhaus C. Neuhaus, *Die lateinsichen Vorlagen zu den alt-französischen Adgar'schen Marien-Legenden* (Heilbronn 1886)
- N&Q* *Notes and Queries* 1– (Oxford 1849– )
- ODNB* *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford 2004)
- OMT* *Oxford Medieval Texts* (Oxford 1967– )
- PC* Peter of Cornwall
- Pez* *Liber de miraculis sanctae Dei genitricis Mariae*, ed. Bernardus Pez, in *Venerabilis Agnetis Blannbekin . . . Vita et Reuelationes* (Vienna 1731), 303–456; repr. by T. F. Crane (Ithaca 1925)

- PL* J.-P. Migne, *Patrologiae cursus completus. Series Latina*, 217 vols (Paris, 1844–55); Index, 4 vols (1864)
- Poncelet Albert Poncelet, 'Index miraculorum B. V. Mariae quae saec. VI–XV latine conscripta sunt', *AB* 21 (1902), 241–360. [Available in searchable form from the *Cantigas de Santa Maria* Database (Oxford 2005): <http://csm.mml.ox.ac.uk>]
- PRO The Public Record Office of the National Archives, Kew
- PTS Patristische Texte und Studien 1– (Berlin 1964– )
- Regesta* *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum, 1066–1154*, ed. H. W. C. Davis & others, 4 vols (Oxford 1913–69)
- RME* *The Revelation of the Monk of Eynsham*, ed. R. Easting, EETS, OS 318 (2002)
- Rolls Series *Rerum Britannicarum medii aevi scriptores*, 99 vols in 259 (London 1858–1911)
- SASLC* *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture*, ed. F. M. Biggs, T. D. Hill, P. E. Szarmach, E. G. Whately, vol. 1 (Kalamazoo, MI, 2001)
- SCH Studies in Church History 1– (1964– )
- SChr Sources chrétiennes 1– (Paris 1941– )
- SPP* *St Patrick's Purgatory: Two Versions of Owayne Miles and The Vision of William of Stranton together with the long text of the Tractatus de Purgatorio Sancti Patricii*, ed. R. Easting, EETS, OS 298 (1991)
- Surius (1581) *De Vitis sanctorum ab Aloysio Lipomano . . . olim conscriptis, nunc primum a F. Laurentio Surio Carthusiano emendatis, et auctis*, 6 vols (Venice 1581)
- TPSP* *Tractatus de Purgatorio Sancti Patricii*
- Tubach F. C. Tubach, *Index Exemplorum: A Handbook of Medieval Religious Tales*, FF Communications 204 (Helsinki 1969)
- VCH The Victoria History of the Counties of England (London 1900– )
- VME* *Visio [Edmundi] monachi de Eynsham*
- VOWME* R. Easting, *Visions of the Other World in Middle English*, Annotated Bibliographies of Old and Middle English 3 (Cambridge 1997)
- Ward, *Cat. Rom.* H. L. D. Ward, *Catalogue of Romances in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum*, vol. 2 (London 1893, repr. 1962)
- Wilson E. F. Wilson (ed.), *The Stella Maris of John of Garland*, Mediaeval Academy Books 45 (Cambridge, MA, 1946)