

**THE KING'S CLASSICS. THE LOVE  
OF BOOKS: THE PHILOBIBLON OF  
RICHARD DE BURY. NEWLY  
TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH BY E.  
C. THOMAS.**

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THE LOVE OF BOOKS  
BEING THE PHILOBIBLON  
OF RICHARD DE BURY



*The Seal of Richard de Bury  
Bishop of Durham.*

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THE PHILOBIBLON  
OF RICHARD DE BURY  
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AUNGERVILLE, RICHARD, known  
as RICHARD de BURY, bp. of  
DURHAM.

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"TAKE THOU A BOOK INTO THINE HANDS AS SIMON THE JUST  
TOOK THE CHILD JESUS INTO HIS ARMS TO CARRY HIM AND KISS  
HIM. AND WHEN THOU HAST FINISHED READING, CLOSE THE  
BOOK AND GIVE THANKS FOR EVERY WORD OUT OF THE MOUTH  
OF GOD ; BECAUSE IN THE LORD'S FIELD THOU HAST FOUND A  
HIDDEN TREASURE."

THOMAS À KEMPIS : *Doctrinale Juvenum*

## PREFACE

**The Author of the Book.** Richard de Bury (1281-1345), so called from being born near Bury St. Edmunds, was the son of Sir Richard Aungerville. He studied at Oxford; and was subsequently chosen to be tutor to Prince Edward of Windsor, afterwards Edward III. His loyalty to the cause of Queen Isabella and the Prince involved him in danger. On the accession of his pupil he was made successively Cofferer, Treasurer of the Wardrobe, Archdeacon of Northampton, Prebendary of Lincoln, Sarum, and Lichfield, Keeper of the Privy Purse, Ambassador on two occasions to Pope John XXII, who appointed him a chaplain of the papal chapel, Dean of Wells, and ultimately, at the end of the year 1333, Bishop of Durham; the King and Queen, the King of Scots, and all the magnates north of the Trent, together with a multitude of nobles and many others, were present at his enthronization. It is noteworthy that during his

stay at Avignon, probably in 1330, he made the acquaintance of Petrarch, who has left us a brief account of their intercourse. In 1332 Richard visited Cambridge, as one of the King's commissioners, to inquire into the state of the King's Scholars there, and perhaps then became a member of the Gild of St. Mary—one of the two gilds which founded Corpus Christi College.

In 1334 he became High Chancellor of England, and Treasurer in 1336, resigning the former office in 1335, so that he might help the King in dealing with affairs abroad and in Scotland, and took a most distinguished part in diplomatic negotiations between England and France. In 1339 he was again in his bishopric. Thereafter his name occurs often among those appointed to treat of peace with Philip of France, and with Bruce of Scotland. It appears that he was not in Parliament in 1344. Wasted by long sickness—*longa infirmitate decoctus*—on the 14th of April, 1345, Richard de Bury died at Auckland, and was buried in Durham Cathedral.

*Dominus Ricardus de Bury migravit ad Dominum.*

**The Bishop as Booklover.** According to the concluding note, the *Philobiblon* was completed on