

**THE CHRONICLES OF  
THE CANONS REGULAR  
OF MOUNT ST. AGNES**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649736812

The Chronicles of the Canons Regular of Mount St. Agnes by Thomas À. Kempis & J. P. Arthur

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

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**THOMAS À. KEMPIS & J. P. ARTHUR**

**THE CHRONICLES OF  
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LONDON: KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH,  
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Regular of Mount  
St. Agnes**

WRITTEN BY  
THOMAS À KEMPIS



TRANSLATED BY J. P. ARTHUR

LONDON  
KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH, TRÜBNER & CO., LTD.  
DRYDEN HOUSE, GERRARD STREET, W.

1906



### Μ

Τί δῆτα οίμεθα, εἴ τῳ γένοιτο αὐτὸ τὸ καλὸν ἰδεῖν,  
εἰδικρινές, καθαρὸν, ἄμικτον, ἀλλὰ μὴ ἀνάκλειον σαρκῶν  
τε ἀνθρωπίνων καὶ χρωμάτων καὶ ἄλλης πολλῆς φθαρσίας  
θητιῆς, ἀλλ' αὐτὸ τὸ θεῖον καλὸν δύναίτο μονοειδῆς  
κατιδεῖν.



## TRANSLATOR'S NOTE



THE Chronicle of Mount St. Agnes is the only work of Thomas à Kempis of which no English translation has yet appeared, and even in its original form the book is not readily accessible to readers, since the only text is that published by Peter and John Beller of Antwerp in 1621. The ordinary collections of the works of à Kempis do not contain the Chronicle, although there is no doubt as to the authenticity of the book, which is of considerable importance to students of the movement known as "The New Devotion," and to those who are interested in the Brotherhood of the Common Life. The last nine pages of the Latin text have been added by an anonymous writer, and carry on the chronicle from the year 1471, in which à Kempis died, to 1477, but since this portion of the book is

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### TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

included in the first printed edition, and contains a notice of the author written by a contemporary member of the community, I have included the addition in the present translation of the Chronicle.

The Mother House of the Chapter to which the Monastery of Mount St. Agnes belonged, was the Monastery at Windesheim, of which we have a full account from the pen of John Buschius, a younger contemporary of à Kempis. This work is too long to be included in the present volume, although the Antwerp edition before mentioned puts the two Chronicles together; Busch's "Chronicon Windesemense" will therefore appear separately; but as the account of the foundation of the Mother House, written by William Voern, or Vorniken, supplements the information given by à Kempis, a translation of it is annexed to this book. The writer was Prior of Mount St. Agnes before his promotion to the same office in the Superior House, and it was under his rule that à Kempis spent the early years of his priesthood, those years in which he composed the first part at least of the great work with which his name is associated. William Vorniken also tells in outline the story of the conversion of the Low Countries to Christianity by Anglo-

### TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

Saxon missionaries, and for all these reasons it has been thought that his "letter" may be of interest to English readers.

It will be seen that the spelling of proper names is both peculiar and variable, but the principle observed in this translation has been to adopt the spelling given in the text, except in cases where variation is evidently the result of a printer's error, and in those instances in which the writer *translated* names, *e.g.*, Hertzogenbosch appears in the Chronicle as Buscoducis, and Gerard is called sometimes Groot, Groot, or Groet, and sometimes Magnus.

Further accounts of the lives of some of the Brothers who are mentioned in this Chronicle may be found in a translation of another work of à Kempis published last year, and entitled "The founders of the New Devotion," Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co.; and the history of the other houses of the Chapter to which the Monastery of Mount St. Agnes belonged, has been treated exhaustively by Dr. J. G. R. Acquoy, "Het Klooster te Windesheim." Utrecht, 1880.

For the English reader the best accounts of the Brotherhood and of à Kempis himself, are the works of Rev. S. Kettlewell and Sir F. R.

### *TRANSLATOR'S NOTE*

Cruise. The former, however, is quite unreliable as a translator, and draws untenable deductions from extracts whose purport he has misunderstood; but the latter is both accurate and interesting, being in fact the leading English authority on the subject which he has made his own.

