

Vita sancti Nicholai

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ST. NICHOLAS WAS BORN OF HIGH PARENTAGE IN THE CITY OF PATRAS (2)

SEynt Nicholas þe holie Man : þat guod confessour was, [folio 111]
Of hei e men he was i-come : In þe cite of patras :

For in patras he was i-bore— : nelle ich þar-of nou t lye;
his moder name was Ione : his faderes epiphanie. 4

HE WAS RELIGIOUS, EVEN IN HIS BOYHOOD (5)

Pe furste day þat he was i-bore : þat child, þat was so guod,
Ase it was in ane mele i-baped : al one upri t it stod.

Ano[n] so he was i-bore : he*. [MS. and] gan to beo guod and clene;
he nolde fridai ne wodnesday : souke nou t bote ene. 8

Po he coupe gon ant speke : he ne pleide neuere mo,
Ake wane oþur children rageden*. [orig. raieden] faste : to churche he wolde go;

he nolde speke non ydel word : ase swuche children doth;
Lei ingue and plei es and ragingues : he bi-lefte al-so. 12

Po he was sethþe of grettore elde : to scole he was i-set;
So wel he leornede : þat man nuste, no child leorni bet.

AND QUICK AT LEARNING (16)

Sethþe þo he more*. [al. m. wit] coupe : al his studie he tok
to guodespelles ant to holi writes : and alle oþere bokes for-sok. 16

So clene lijf he ladde ong : þat deinte it was to wite;
More godnesse ne mi te beo : þane we findeth of him i-write.

Po is fader and is moder weren dede : þis holie child Nicholas

luyte tolde of heore guode : þei he heore eyr was : 20

to pouere Men he af it clene : ware he sai neode;
And heo þat nolden bidde him non : stilleliche he gan hem beode.—

An hei Man þare was bi-side : þat sethþe þoru luper cas
his guod was al-clene a-wei i-go : and al pouere bi-come he was. 24

he hadde þre dou tren faire i-nou : clene and guode al-so;
In so gret Meseise heo weren i-brou t : þat heo nusten wat to do.

Po heo nusten ware-bi libbe— : for heore guod heom was bi-nome—
heore red huy nomen alle þreo : fole wommen to bi-come 28

And raper þanne heo in swuche houngur weren : to libbe bi hore | *. [MS. heore] dom.
Pe olde man, heor alre fader : gret deol to him he nom.

gret pite hadde in is heorte : þe guode seint Nicholas,
Po he i-heorde þe deolfole mone : þat a-mong heom alle was. 32

ST. NICHOLAS GIVES AWAY HIS GOODS, AND SAVES GIRLS FROM A SINFUL LIFE

Of is fader guode a ny t : ane bei *. [al. weg] of gold he nam,
I-wounde in one cloute : and stilleliche to heore house he cam,

to a derne wyndouwe softeliche : seint Nicholas gan gon
And caste in þat gold priueliche : and wende a- ein a-non. 36

Pis housebonde a-ros a-Moruwe : ant þar-of nuste nou t :
he com and fond þane bei of gold : þat seint Nicholas hadde i-brou t.

Par-of he was glad i-nou : þei he nuste ho it brou te;
he it nam and þonkede Iesu crist : þat on is meseise þou te. 40

Pare-with he conseilede swyþe wel : his eldeste dou ter sone
With fair bruydale and gret honour : ase ri t was for-to done.

Seint Nicholas i-sai al þis : and napeles uyt he þou te
Pat þis selie Man neode hadde : þat he more guod to him brou te. 44

A ni t he a-waitede swyþe wel : ase ore louerd it wolde,
And at one fenestre caste In eft-sone : ane oþur bei of golde. [folio 111b]

Pis housebonde a-morewe a-ros : þat gold he fond sone;

he þonkede god with guode heorte : þat hadde i-heord is bone. 48

And natheles him wondrede mucche : ho is freond so wel were,
And þou te þat he a-waiti wolde : if he more come þere.

he conseilede is oþur dou ter : swiþe wel with þis golde,
With gret nobleie and fayr bruydale : ase ore louerd it wolde. 52

ST. NICHOLAS'S GOODNESS IS DISCOVERED.

eot þou te þis guode Nicholas : þo þis was al i-do,
Pat it were guod to conseili : þe þridde dou ter al-so
:
A ni t he wende wel stilledliche : to þat fenestre eft-sone
And caste In ane bei of gold : ase he was i-woned to done. 56

Dis housebonde hadde i-waked longue : for-to wayti of þis cas :
So þat, þo seint Nicholas cam : wakiende he was.

Op he sturte and siwede him : and bi is cloþus heold him faste,
he ne let nou t go are þe guode man : i-kneu him*. [al. was iknowe] at þe laste. 60

eorne bad seint Nicholas : þat he to no man ne sede,
Pe wyle þat he a-liue were : of þis priue dede.

With þis gold þe þridde dou ter : wel i-conseilled was;
And alle þreo weren riche*. [al. gode] wiues : þoru seint Nicholas. 64

In þis manere seint Nicholas : ase ich nouþe hadde i-sed,
Delde al is heritage : þo is fader was ded.

wane oþur Men eoden to hadde solas : he nadde þar-to no*. [MS. ne] wille :
to churche he wolde and in one huyrne : is beden bidde wel stille.—

¶ Hit bi-feol þat þe bischop : of Mirre was ded,
And folk cam to cheose ane oþur : and þar-of hy nomen heore red;

So þat heo weren in hore beden : ny t and dai wel faste
Pat ore louerd heom sende ane guode man. : and he herde heom ate laste. 72

For a ny t þare cam a voiz : ase it were in metingue,
to a bischop þat was maister þer : and tolde him þis tyþingue*. [al. of þe cheosinge]

And seide, "goth to-morewe to churche*. [to ch. on the margin.] sone : ri t are hit dai beo

De furste man þat e þare mouwen : i-heore oþur i-seo
 And þat hote Nicholas : takez him wel sone
 And makez him bischop of Mirre! : god hath i-heord ower bone." 78

þe bischop and þat oþur folk : a-risen are hit dai were,
 And comen to churche, and founden sone : Nicholas stonde þere : 80

In one huyrne he stod ful stille. : heo axeden wat he was
 And wat were is ri te name. : he seide hem "Nicholas."

WHEN THE BISHOP OF MIRRE DIED NICHOLAS WAS APPOINTED HIS SUCCESSOR (84)

heo nomen and ladden him with gret honour : to þe churche of Mirree
 And sacreden him to bischop þere : and setten him in is se. 84

IN HIS OFFICE HE WAS HUMBLE AND HELPFUL, A PRIEST TO ALL MEN (86)

Do he was hei man i-maked : þis guode Nicholas,
 More bou sum and milde he bi-cam : þane euer er [he] was;

luyte pruyte he hadde of is power : wane men him wolden a-loute,
 And if it nere for ei e of god : leouere him were with-oute. 88

So prest he was to alle men : þat on him beden & cride,
 And so muche for heom he dude : þat men speken þar-of wide.—

Mucche folk In a time : In-to þe se i-wende [folio 112]
 In a schip, to don heore neode : if ore louerd þe grace heom sende.

So þat þere cam a gret tempeste : þat heo wenden alle a-drenche. 93
 Alle guodnesse heo bi-hei ten god : þat heo mi ten on bi-þenche.

So þat heo þou ten, ase heore schip : toward þe grounde was,
 On þe guodnesse þat men tolden : of þe bischop Nicholas : 96

"Leoue louerd Nicholas" : wel loude alle heo criden,
 " if it is*. [MS. it] soth þat we habbez : i-heord tellen of þe wide,

In þis peril saue us nouþe : þat we ne beon a-dreint;
 Louerd Nicholas, help us nouþe : are ore schip beo a-seint!" 100

Ase heo gradden, þare cam on eorne : on-owarde þe watere bi-side

A bischop in abite swiþe fair. : wel loude on him huy cride.

"Lo me here," quath þis holie man : " e cleopeden me wel faste.
Seggez wat ouwer wille beo : and warof e beon a-gaste!" 104

"Louerd," heo seiden, "Nicholas : if it is þi wille,
Saue us noupe of þis tempeste : þat we he[re]*. [MS. he] ne a-spille"

HE WALKS ON THE SEA; THE CREW OF A SHIP WERE MIRACULOUSLY SAVED BY HIM DURING A
STORM (108)

"Ne habbe e," quath þis holie man : "her-of none drede!"
Pat weder bi-cam þo stille inou : þo he þeos wordes sede. 108
heo bi-heolden þo after him— : heo nusten ware he was;
And þonkeden mucche ore swete louerd : and þene bischop Nicholas.

Þene wei stille and murie : toward þe londe huy nome;
With-oute eche destourbingue : to londe wel glade heo come. 112

Alle heo duden heom fort a-non : to þe bischope Nicholas,
Ase to a man þat heo neuere ne sei en : ne nusten wuch he was.

Ech of heom bi-heolden him faste : þat to þis guode man com :
Alle heom þou te þat it was he : þat þene deth heom bi-nam. 116

"Louerd," heo seiden, "i-hered þou beo! : to þe we gradden bliue;
On-ouewarde þe se þo þou come : and brou test us to liue.

I-hered beo þe tyme þat þou most : a-mong men on eorþe beo!
For swucche grace ne hadde neuere eorþelich Man : ase man may on þe i-se." 120

DURING A TIME OF FAMINE ST. NICHOLAS SECURED SUFFICIENT CORN FOR THE PEOPLE
THROUGH A MIRACLE, AND MIRACULOUSLY REPLACES IT (122)

Þis guode Man, þo he i-heorde þis : þonkede and herede al-so
Ore louerd, þat wolde for is loue : sych miracle do.—

¶ hit bi-feol In ane oþur tyme : of þe bischop Nicholas,
Pat gret hongur al-a-boute : In is bischopriche was; 124

So luþere fullen þe eres alle : þat no corn nou were nas.
gret deol hadde þis guode bischop : of þat luþere cas.

Fram feorrene contreies*. [al. om.] þare comen schipes : with mucche corn þare | bi-side :
Pis bischop wende a- ein heom sone : and bad heom one stounde a | bide, 128

"For þe loue of Iesu crist : leneth me," he sede,
"Ane hondret quarters of þat corn : þat e þare doth lede,

to þis selie men þat beoth here : nei for houngur dede;
heo ne habbeth no corn to libbe bi : to sede ne to brede." 132

"Certes, sire," þis schipmen seiden : "þat ne dorre we nou t :
For al þis corn þat þou i-sixt : þat we habbez here i-brou t,

SOME PILGRIMS TO THE CHURCH OF MIRRE HAD BROUGHT OINTMENT WITH THEM, WHICH
THEY HAD RECEIVED FROM THE DEVIL IN THE SHAPE OF A WOMAN, TO SMEAR TO ILL INTENT
ON THE HOLY WALLS (135)

With swyþe schars met with-alle : bitau t it is us echone
Pat we it leden þe Aumperour— : ne dorre we make no lone." [folio 112b]

"With-oute faille," quath þis gode man : "ne dredez ou ri t nou t,
if e me wollez þar-of lene : þat eov schulle faili ou t; 138

Pe folle e schulle elden þe Aumperoure : ase men token ou for-to lede,
No-þing ne schal ou failli : ne þarf ov no-þing drede." 140

Pe schipmen ope truste of is word : wel largeliche him mete
And token þe bischope wel i-metene : Ane houndred quarteres wete;

And wenden forth to þe Aumperour : and is corn him ladde;
And beden is stiwardes meten wel : if heo þe folle hadden. 144

huy meten, and founden al þe fulle : and wel more þare-to.
For wonder heo axeden þe schipmen : wi it woxe so.

heo þonkeden a-non þane gode bischop : þat is neode to heom mende,
And tolden fore þe Aumperoure : hou mucche corn heo him lende,

And hou he bi-het heom þat it ne scholde : þare-fore ne wanie nou t,
And hou heo hadden bi large met : wel more corn i-brou t.

Pis guode bischope heo hereden swiþe : and þonkeden mucche also,
Pat hadde þoru ore louerdes grace : swche miracle i-do. 152

Al þe contreie hadde i-nou : to mete and to sede,

To er and more, of þat corn : þat heo gonne þare lede.—

THE DEVIL'S TRICK TO DESTROY ST. NICHOLAS'S CHURCH IS FRUSTRATED BY THE SAINT

¶ In an oþur tyme þis guode bischop : bi a fair treo com :
he fond þare men þat duden þing : a- ein heore cristine-dom : 156

heo stoden þare, ase heo ofte duden : and maden heore sacrefise
to þe deuel onder þis treo : þat men*. [superscribed.] mi ten þar-of a-grise.

Seint Nicholas heom tornede echone : gode men for-to be,
And dude heom for-sake þe feondes lore : and hewe a-doun þat treo.

Þe deuel after þulke tyme : to him hadde gret onde : 161
For-to a-batien is pouwer : in alle manere he gan fonde.—

pilegrimes weren in þe se : to seint Nicholas for-to wende,
For þe guodnesse þat huy of him herden : if god heom wolde þe grace sende. 164

In fourme of a fair womman : þe deuel cam heom to
And seide, "louerdingues, wel is eou : þat e mouwen ouwer wille do

For-to seche þis holie man : þat so milsful is and hende!
Leouere ich hadde þane ani-þing : mi te ich with ou wende : 168

For ich ne wilni no-þing so mucche : ase þane holie man to seo.
A luyte þing e moten for me don : wane it ne may oþur beo :

Nimeth here þis guode oygneþent : þat deorewurþe is with-alle,
And wane e into is churche comiet : smeorieth in eche walle, 172

For-to wurthschapien þane guode man : þat is of so gret pouste;
And wane ich ne mai to him come : doth þat In þe muynde of me!"

Dis pilegrimes with glade heorte : þis oynement to heom nome,
to smerien with þis holie churche : wane heo þudere come. 176

Ase he wenden forth in þe se : sone it dude bi-falle
Þat þare cam to heom a schip : with faire men with-alle;

A bischop þare was a-mong heom : swiþe fair man and hende.
he grette heom faire and axede a-non : wodere heo þou ten wende.

heo seiden þat heo wolden : if it godes wille were, [folio 113]

to þe church of Mirree : for-to Anouri seint Nicholas þere. 182

" wat was þe womman," þe bischop seide : "þat wile er eou cam to,
And wat was it þat heo eou bi-tei te? : wat schulle e þare-with do?" 184

"Sire, it is an oynement" : þeos pilegrimes seden,
"Þe guode womman eorne us bad : to þe holie church it lede

And þare-with in muynde of hire : wane it were þudere i-brou t,
Smeorie þe holie church woves— : þat we ne leten it nou t!" 188

ST. NICHOLAS EXPOSES THE DEVIL'S TRICK. (189)

" e, e," quath þis holie man : " e nuten nou t wat heo is.
takez me þat oynement : and e schullen i-seo, i-wis."

Dis guode man nam þat oynement : and a-midde þe se it caste.
Pat watur bi-gan to berne a-non : a- ein is kuynde, wel faste; 192

Fram stude to stude þat fuyr orn : and barnde þe se, i-wis.
Po seide þe guode man, "here e iseoth : wat ouwer oynement is.

hadde e ani-þing þarof : on þe church-walles i-do,
Al þe church hadde for-barnd : and al þe toun al-so. 196

hit was þe foule feond of helle : þat it ou tok with honde
For-to brenne þulke church : for he haueth þar-to onde."

Forth wende þis bischop and alle his : anon-ri t þoru godes sonde.
Þe pilegrimes roweden*. [orig. rewe] þene nexte wey : so þat huy comen to londe.

to seint Nicholas heo wenden þo : þat heo so wide sou te.
A-non so heo i-sei en þis guode man : heo stoden in grete þou te;

heom þou te þat it þe bischop was : þat in þe se to heom cam,
Pat schewude hem þat oynement : and þe feondes swykedam. 204

"Louerd," heo seiden, "nov þin ore! : muche is þi pouwer :
Pat we i-sei en in þe se : are we comen her."

heo hereden muche þene holie man : as it wel ri t was. 207
Þe guode man faste heom for-bed : þat heo ne tolden nou t þis cas.

Fairore Miracle on eorþe : ne mi te we neuere i-wite

Pane we of seint Nicholas : findeth ofte i-write!—

A WAR BETWEEN THE EMPEROR OF 246 ROME AND HIS ENEMIES WAS BROUGHT TO AN END
THROUGH ST. NICHOLAS CONVINCING THE INVADERS OF THEIR ERROR AND STAYS
OPPONENTS FROM FIGHTING (211)

In a tyme lufere men weorreden : þene Aumperour of rome
And destruyden is londes faste : and bataille a- ein him nome. 212

Þe Aumperour nam þre grete loueringues : and opere wel mani on,
For-to wenden, I-armede swyþe wel : to fi ten a- ein is fon.

Þis þreo princes with heore men : in þe se forth i-wenden,
to fi ten a- ein is wyþerwynes : ase þe Aumperour heom sende. 216

So þat þe wynd heom drof : ase it were bi cas,
to þe contreie of Mirree : þare þis bischop was.

Þe bischop heorde of hem telle. : a en heom he wende sone, 219
And bad heom come and ete with him : and huy graunteden is bone.

Þis [þe]*. [om.] guode man dude for heo ne scholden : none robberie do.
he made hem suyþe wel an ayse : and fair semblaunt al-so;

So þat þoru þis holie bischop : heo and heore fon
With-oute dunt oþur blod i-sched : a-corded*. [orig. acordet] weren a-non,

ST. NICHOLAS RECONCILES THREE PRINCES AND THEIR FOES (232)

Al-to þe Aumperores guode : ant to his honour al-so.
Þeos þre maistres wenden hamward : þo þis dede was i-do. [folio 113b]

heo comen and tolden þe Aumperour : hov heo hadden on i-take.
Þe Aumperour was wel a-payd : and gret feste gan heom make. 228

heore lufere felawes comen sone : and þare-to hadden envie,
And seiden heo hadden þe Aumperoure : i-don gret tricherie

And with is fon imaked a fol pays : and with grete feolonie,
to þe deseritisun of þe Aumperour : ope heom heo gunne lye. 232

Þe Aumperour in grete wrathþe : let heom nime faste
And binden þeos þre princes : and in strongue prisone caste.

So faste weren þis lufere men : ope þis princes þreo
Pat þe Aumperour swor is oth : A-slawe heo scholden beo. 236

he let somony is kny tes alle : þat heo a-morewe come
For-to bringuen þeos þreo princes : to deþe þoru heore*. [al. his] dome.

A-non so þe tþingue was i-brou t : to þis princes*. [al. prisons] þreo,
heo weopen and criden deofulliche : þat reuþe it was to se, 240

heo weopen and heore cloþes teren : and heore her al-so;
And þou ten on þe grete godnesse : þat seint Nicholas hadde i-do.*. [vv. 241-2 al. om.]

"Louerd," heo seiden, "Nicholas : fro wam wel glade we eode,
And also wis ase we gultelese beoth : help us in ore neode, 244

HE RESCUES THE PRINCES WHEN FALSELY ACCUSED (246)

Ne lat us neuere þus gulte-lese : to deþe beon i-brou t!"
Pe holie bischop Nicholas : ne fur- at heom nou t :*. [vv. 245-6 al. om.]

For a ny t, ase þe Aumperour : ase a louerd lay and ase a sire,
In-to is paleis, þat was so strong : and i-barred al with ire, 248

to him ri t bi-fore his bed : þis holi bischop com,*. [orig. caom]

And seide, "sire Aumperour, wat þencst þou : with þi false dom?
wi hast þou þis gultelese men : In þi prisone i-brou t
And gulteles þenchest heom a-quelle? : ich rede, with-drau þi þou t!

A-ris op sone, ich rede þe : and lat heom of prisone wende, 253
Oþur ichulle mine louerd bidde : þat he þe weorre sende,*. [al. schal þe schende]

Pat þare-inne þou worst al-to-boned : and i-brou t of lijf-dawe,
Pat foules schullen and wilde bestes : þi caroyne al-to-drawe."*. [vv. 255-6 al. om] 256

" wat artov," quath þe Aumperour : "oþur of wat pouste,
Pat in þis tyme art i-come : in-to mi paleys to me

And swuche bolde wordes spext? : wonder me þinchez of þe!"
"Ich am," quath þis Nicholas : "bischop of mirree." 260

ST. NICHOLAS PROCURES THE RELEASE OF THE THREE PRINCES UNJUSTLY IMPRISONED

¶ Seint Nicholas wende al-so : to þe Aumperoures hei e Iustise,
Pare he lai bi-side in þe paleys : and made him sum-del a-grise :

"Pov witlese wrechche," he seide : " wat hauestou i-þou t?
Rastov þat þis gultelese men : to deþe beon i-brou t? 264

With-drau þi red, ich þe rede, sone : oþur þou schalt al for-dwyne
And for-leose al þi guod : and dey e in strongue pine."

" wat artou," þis oþur seide : "þat spext wordes þus grete
And þe Aumperores hei e Iustise : þus baldeliche darst þrete?" 268

"Ich am," he seide, "Nicholas : bischop of Mirree.
bote þou with-drawe þi red sone : þou schalt i-leue me."

Pe Aumperour lai and quakede sore : and sende after is Iustise, [folio 114]
Pat was al-so sore a-drad : and soruful in eche wise. 272

Eyþur tolde oþur fore : hou he to heom seide
And wel baldeliche þretneþe heom. : ware-fore heo weren in drede.

For-to schilden heom fram is wrathþe : an-oþur heo mosten rede :
Pis þre prisonas heo leten up nime : and sone bi-fore heom lede. 276

Swiþe sore heo weren a-dradde : for heo wenden a-non beo dede;
To þe bischop Nicholas : reuliche heo gonne grede.

"beaus amis," quath þe Aumperour : " wat-manere men beo e,
Pat þus þoru ouwer enchauntement : a-ni t drechcheth*. [al. derieþ] me?" 280

"A, sire, merci," þis oþure seide : " wi wolle e seggen so?
Of anchauntement ne couþe we neuere : ope god we wollez us do.

Ake gultelese men we buth : with onri te hidere i-brou t; 283
Al-so wis god schilde us fram þe deth : ase we ne beth gultie nou t."

"I-knowe e ani Man," quath þe Aumperour : "þat hote Nicholas?"
Pare nas neuere on, for þis word : þat in gre[t] hope ne was!

heore hondene heo heolden op on hei : and wel loude gradden 287
to þe bischope*. [MS. bi bischope] Nicholas : þat he reuþe of heom hadde.

"Þoru him," quath þe Aumperour : " e beth to liue i-do,
Ich ou iue lijf and lime : and ouwer chateles al-so.

goth nouþe hasteliche to him : and tellez him wel bliue
hou þat for þe loue of him : ich let ov gon a-liue; 292

biddeth þat he for- iue me is wrathþe : and non harm for eu me do,
Ake þat he bidde god for me : and for mi kynedom al-so."*. [vv. 293-4 al. om.]

Pis prisonnes wenden with glade heorte : to þe bischope Nicholas,
And þonkeden him, ase heo au ten wel : of þis Ioyfule cas. 296

Ich wene, þere nas neuere haluwe : seint Nicholases i-per,
Pat so manie faire Miracles : bi is liue dude her;

For to come into so strong paleis : and gon op-on þe se al-so,
gret wonder was þat ani-bodi : swuch miracle mi te do! 300

Muche of þe kuynde of heuene : ore louerd here him sende,
Aungles dede a-liue to do : are he hennes i-wende.*. — [vv. 297-302 al. om.]

ANGELS APPEARED TO HIM BEFORE HIS DEATH (303)

Po ore louerdes wille was : þat he scholde hennes wiende,
he bad ore louerd þat he scholde : aungles to him sende. 304

Po he i-say þe Aungles to him come : he þonkede ore louerd faste.
Pe þrittibe saume of þe sauter : he bi-gan þus ate laste
"In þe, louerd, ich habbe i-hoped : þat ich i-confundet ne beo,
Pine holie ere bei a-doun to me : hei e and deliuere me." 308

he deide ate sixte vers : þat on e[n]glichs to seggen is
"Mine soule, louerd, ich bi-take þe : þou bou test hire, i-wis."

Pe soule out wende with þulke worde : and þe Aungeles forth hire bere;
Alle þe felaweschipes of heuene : wel glade þere-with were. 312

he deide þre houndret er : and in þe þreo and fourtyþe ere
After þat god was i-bore : as þe bok us deth lere.

HEALING SPRINGS START FROM HIS MARBLE TOMB

In one tounge of Marbre he was i-leid : swyþe faire with-alle.
Out of þe harde Marbre-ston : þe oyle gan out walle; [folio 114b] 316

A welle of eoyle þare sprong out : ri t at is heued a-non,
And at is fet a welle of water : of þe harde Marbre-ston.*. [vv. 317-8 al. om.]

Sike men þare gonne sone : wel þicke þudere gon.

Par-of men beren wide a-boute : and eot men doth al-so; 320

gret botningue þar is uyt : of men þat comieth þare-to—
For þe welle of eoyle and of watur : ase manie men i-seoth,

In þe harde ston lastez eot : þare is holie bones beoth.—
Many fair Miracle þare*. [om. þare] hath of him : sethþe he deide, i-come. 324

MANY MIRACLES ARE RECORDED OF HIM (326)

Pei we ne mouwen nou t tellen alle : we moten tellen of some.*.]— [vv. 320-5 al. om.
¶ To a giv at one tyme : a cristine man eode

For-to borewi gold of him : to is muchele neode.
he ne mi te finden him nanne boru : ne wed nadde he non : 328

Pane giv to seint Nicholas churche : he bad with him gon;
Op-on seint Nicholases auter he swor : at one certeyne daye,

So god him helpe and seint Nicholas : his gold him for-to paye.
Dis giv for seint Nicholas loue : his oth nou t ne for-sok, 332

Ake seint Nicholas to borewe he nam : and þat gold him bi-tok.
Dis lupere cristine man : þo it cam to is daye,

Pat gold nolde he elde nou t : ake þou te þane giv bi-traye.
Pe giv cam and axede him : wanne he it elde wolde. 336

"Þov false schrewe," þe oþur seide : "ich it þe habbe i- olde."
Pe giv seide nay, and he us : bote al ne heold it nou t.

Pe giv let him somoni : þat he was to court i-brou t.
Ake þis false cristine man : þou te op one feolle gynne : 340

Ane staf he nam op-on is hond : —holu he was with-inne—
Pare-inne he dutte al þat gold : þat he scholde þe giwe elde,

And feolliche dutte hine and faste : þat men ne scholden him bi | melde.
bi-fore þe bayllifs huy comen : þe giv and he boþe. 344

ST. NICHOLAS TAKES VENGEANCE ON A FALSE CHRISTIAN, WHO CHEATS A JEW; THE
CHRISTIAN WAS CRUSHED TO DEATH BY A CART THROUGH THE SAINT'S ANGER (356)
he with-sok þe giwes dette : and was i-don to ane oþe.

Do he scholde is oth do : is false staf he bi-tok

Pe giwe, and bad him witie þe wile : he leide is hond on þe bok;
And seide, "al-so muche gold al-so ich borewede : of þe giv þat here is, 348

So helpe me crist and seint Nicholas : ich tok him a- ein, i-wis."
Pis lūpere man with is fals oth : swiþe wel i-leued was,

And þe oþur, for he was a giv : no-þing i-leued he nas.
" wane þou me hast bi-giled : with þi false cas, 352

Ich bidde þine borou þat he it me elde : þe guode seint Nicholas."
Pe giv with wel sorie chere : wende him forth a-non,

And þe false man nam is staf : and hamward bi-gan to gon.
Al-so he wende bi þe weie hamward : to slepe he hadde grete wille :

Pare twei wei es to-gadere comen : a-doun he lai wel stille. 357
As þis false man lay and slep : a cart þare cam gon,

And al-to-bruysde is false bones : þat he deide a-non.
Pat o weol to-brak þane false staf : ase mani a man i-sai :*. 360

[[Here a folio is wanting in MS Laud; MS. Harl continues :]]

[Pat gold schadde out al-abrod : & amidde þe weye lay.
¶ þe gyw, þo he þis ise : loude he gan to crie

& þonkede seint Nicholas : þat schewede his tricherie.
For þe miracle men him radde : cristene forto beo. 364

"Certes, ynelle," quap þis oþer : "er ic more iseo;
Ac if god & seint Nicholas : wolde þis liþer manes*.lyf sende, [al. man is]

Cristene ic wolde þanne beo : & serui hem to mi lyues ende."
¶ Fram deþe to lyue þis false man : þurf seint Nicholas com. 368

Anon so þe gyw þis ise : he wilnede cristendom,
& bileouede on ihesu crist : & god man euereft was.

Pis me þin þ a fair miracle : of seint Nicholas!
her e seop hou hit goþ bi men : þat wiþ gyle swerieþ, iwis; 372

Þe he þurf gyle swerie soþ : iwis forswore he is.—

¶ A god man þer was in a tyme : þat longe was mid his wyue,

Pat no childe nemi te habbe : þat euere cam to lyue.

To seint Nicholas ofte hi bede : achild hem to sende,

376

& bihete him, if hit so were : to him forto wende.

¶ Seint Nicholas ihurde here bone : —for god he is & mylde :

hit biful þer-after sone : þat his wyf was mid chylde,

& brou te forþ afair sone. : glad þis gode man was!

380

he let arki a fair coupe : to seint Nicholas.

So faire was þe coupe of golde : þo heo was aru iwrou t,

& þis hosebonde heo was so leof : þat he nolde leue hire no t,

Ac athuld hire in his owe hous : him-silue þer-of to drinke;

384

Anoþer to seint Nicholas : þe goldsmyth he let biswinke.

¶ Do þe coupe was ymaked : to þe louerd seint Nicholas,

he wiste hire wiþ gret drueri : ac þoþer fairere was.

¶ Do his sone was wel i-woxe : & hadde stren þe & mi te,

388

To þe pelgrimage of seint Nicholas : þis gode man him di te,

& nom wiþ him his leoue sone : & þe coupon beye,

Þe furste, þat him was so leof : to serui him bi þe weye,

Þoþer, to ofri seint Nicholas : whan hi þider come.

392

hi greiþede hem a-godes name : & þe holi wei hi nome.

¶ So þat hi come in þe see : as hi þane wei wende.

After water of þe see : þis gode man his sone sende :

"Fech me," he seide, "of þe water : in myn owene coupe!"

396

Pat child dude his fader heste : & to þe water gan stoupe.

Þe coupe ful out of his hond : & anon to grounde sonk;

Þe child ful in afterward : & in þe water adronk.

Gret deol makede þis gode man : þo he se þis cas,

400

Pat he nadde bote þat o child : & he adronke was.
"Awei," he seide,*. [al. þat ic schal] "þis dai abide! : leoue louerd, allas!

wel ic wot, ic haue agult : þe louerd seint Nicholas,
Pat ic bynom him þe furste coupe. : louerd, what schal ic do? 404

Perfore ic habbe ilore nou mi child : & þe coupe also.
Seint Nicholas, for if hit me : & ynelle no t bileue, iwis,

Pat ynelle siche þe : þe me beo bifalle þis!"
¶ Pis gode man [him] wende forþ : in deol & sori þo t; 408

Er he to seint Nicholas com : he neturnde a e no t.
Po he to þe weued com : þat he hadde wide iso t,

De coupe he offrede þerto : þat he hadde þider ibro t.
þe coupe hipte anon a e : he nolde astinte þere, 412

Ac hipte into þe flor : wreche as þe hit were.
Pis gode man hire nom vp : & offrede hire eft þere.

Eftsone heo hipte fram þe weued : forþere þan heo dude ere.
¶ Po was þis gode man agrise : & þoþere aboute also. 416

"Louerd," he seide, "seint Nicholas : ic haue þe moche misdo.
Ich wolde offri þoþer coupe : ac ynemai þerto come :

vnderfong þus, if hit beo þi wille : for þoþer me is bynome.
vnderfong þoþer of mi sone : for þu wost wher he is; 420

Let mi sone to þe offri þulke : & let me offri þis."—
For no hope of his sones lyf : þe gode man þis nesede,

BUT THE FATHER HAVING REPENTED, ST. NICHOLAS RESTORED THE BOY TO LIFE (424)

Ac for he scholde his soule helpe : & þe whatlokere do what he bede.—
¶ Mid þis word þer com in : his sone, þat was adronke, 424

& bar þe coupe on his hond : þat was mid him asonke;
To þe weued he eode & offrede : to seint Nicholas.

wele, louerd, þe grete ioye : þat of þe miracle was!
Gladliche þe fader & þe sone : here offring vp bere; [folio 182] 428

& wende hom wiþ gret ioie : & leuede þe coupen þere,
& herede moche seint Nicholas : as hi wel au te, iwis.—

A JEW BEATS THE STATUE OF ST. NICHOLAS FOR NOT PROTECTING HIS GOODS; ST. NICHOLAS
GOES TO THE THIEVES

Meni is þe faire miracle : þat of seint Nicholas is!—

¶ A gyw was while in a tyme : þat i-hurde meni o tale 432

Of þe miracles of seint Nicholas : þat he dude so fale.
So [þat], þe he were a gyw : vpe him his hurte he caste,

& honurede him ynou : & biþo te him atte laste :
An ymage priueiliche he makede : of seint Nicholas 436

& honurede hit in his hous : þo hit are was.
¶ In a tyme hit biful : þat he hadde to done

In þe contrai þer-aboutte : to come a e wel sone.
he nuste wham his god bitake : forte he a e come : 440

Seint Nicholas ymage he bad : nyme þer-to gode gome.
"Ich þe hadde," he seide, "iloued ynou : do me som god þerfore :

wite mi god forte ic come : þat hit ne beo forlore!
For, bi seint Nicholas þat ic louie : if hit beo awei ibore 444

whan ic come a e, þu schalt : sore abigge þerfore."
De gyw wende forþ his wei : & tok al his god to wite

De ymage, forte he come a e : as hit is iwrite.
Siþþe hit biful þat liþere men : & þeoues þer come*. 448

[[Here MS Laud goes on again.]]

And to*. [al. om.]-breken þe giwes hous : and is guod a-wei nome. [folio 115]
Po þe giv cam hom a- ein : and miste al is gvod,*. [orig. good]

gret deol he made and seoruwe i-nov : and ferde ase he were wod.
to þane ymage he wende a-non : ase he bi þe walle stod : 452

"Seie," he seide, " wat hauest þou i-do? : þou hauest i-set harm a-brod.
Ich bi-tok þe to witene al mi guod : þat god lente me :

hit is nouþe al i-bore a-wei : and þat ich wite þe,
wan ich it bi-tok þe in warde : and þou were of pouste 456

to witen it wel, if þat þou woldest. : þare-fore þou haue maugre.*. [vv. 456-7 al. om.]
For wane ich truste so mucche to þe : and þou noldest do mi bone,

bi ri te lawe, ase ich þe bi-het : þov schalt a-bugge sone,
wane þou olde mine godhede : so vuele atþe laste." 460

harde scourgene he nam and stronge : and beot þis ymage wel faste,
Pat grete peces borsten a-wei— : he ferde ase he were wod,

And euere he bad þat seli treo : bringue a en is guod.
Seint Nicholas þare-afterward sone : to þe þeoues wende, 464

Al for-woundet and to-drawe : ase þe giv him to-rende;
"Lo," he seide, "hov ich am for ov : I-woundet and for-gnawe,

blok and blodi, ase e i-seoth : and al mi bodi to-drawe.
bringez a- en, ich red ov, sone : þat e habbez a-wei*. [orig. a- en] i-bore

And istole of þe giwes guode : oþur e schulle hangi þare-fore.*. [vv. 466-9 al. om.]
For-soþe i segge, e schullen hangen : bote e it hom anon lede, 470

e schullen some a-bugge with me : ouwer foule mis-dede."
Peos þeoues weren sore of-dradde : heo nomen heom to rede 472

And ladden hom a- ein þe giwes guod— : huy ne dorsten oþur for drede,*. [orig. fere]
And weren a-knowe of al hore gult : and þe Miracle him sede

ST. NICHOLAS MAKES THE THEIVES RESTORE THE STOLEN GOODS.

hov seint Nicholas to heom cam : with is sidene blod-rede.
Pe giv, and þe þeoues al-so : to seint Nicholas bede 476

Pat he for- eue heom heore gult : and nolden more don to quede.
Pe þeoues bi-comen trewe men : and ne stelen neuereft more,

And þe giv him let cristny sone : and tok him al-to godes lore,
And euereft more euerechone : loueden seint Nicholas. 480

Me þincheth, a-mong alle oþere : a fair Miracle þat was!*.— [vv. 480-1 al. om.]
¶ In an oþur time a guod man was : þat hadde a clerk to sone;

Eche ere he wolde for is loue : a-seint Nicholas dai bi wone

Of manie clerkus gret feste holden : and wurthschipien*. [al. om.] seint Nicholas al-so, 484

with offringue and seruisse at church : gret honour him do.
Pe feond hadde þar-to onde. : a dai he*. [MS. ase he] cam þere

A-seint Nicholas day to þe ate : ase þei it a beggare were,
And bad, for seint Nicholas loue : þat man sum guod him*. [orig. heom] eoue. 488

Anon so þat child wuste him þere : he nolde no leng bi-leue
Ake bred he nam in is hond : þane schrewe forto beode.

And þo þat child cam toward þe ate : þe schrewe aweiward eode;
Pat child eode euere after-ward : to iuen him of þe brede, 492

Ake he eode euere forth, ase it were : a-weiward þat child to lede :
And þo he cam in-to a derne stude : he bi-turnde him ate laste, [folio 115b]

Ase it were to nime þat bred : and anon he nam wel faste
Pat child bi is seli þrote*. [MS. þr ote] : and a-stranglede him a-non;

Pat child lai þare and deide sone : and þe schrewe a-wei gan gon.
Pe guode man, þo he miste is child : he sou te it wel wide; 498

Ake þo he fond it ligge a-slawe : wel deolfulliche he cride.
"Louerd," he seide, "seint Nicholas : ich bidde þe milce and ore!

honoured ich þe hadde mani a dai : ant eot ich hopie more,
And for anchaisun of mi sone : þe more, and for is lore,

Pat þou me sendest Ioie of him : and schildest me fram sore :
wi elstov mine wyle þus? : louerd, wi dest þou so? 504

hov mi tþou þus, seint Nicholas : for reuþe bi me do?
if me gladnesse of mi child : þat ich mote him a-liue i-seo,

A CHILD WHO WAS STRANGLLED BY A DEVIL. ITS FATHER APPEALS TO ST. NICHOLAS;
THE CHILD WAS RESTORED TO LIFE BY THE SAINT (508)

And ich him bi-hote to þine seruisse : and þat he schal guod man beo."
Ase he was þus in is beden : þat child a-ros op allone, 508

And herede god and seint Nicholas : a-mong heom euerechone,
Pat him hadde lijf i-sent : for is fader bone þer;

And he tolde al-hou þe deuel hadde : him a-strangled er,

For al-so mucche ase he honourede so : þane guode seint Nicholas.

Dis, me þinchez, a-mong alle opere : a fair Miracle it was!
Louerd, [þat] for þe loue of seint Nicholas : mani Miracle hast i-do,

513

Pou schild us fram þe pine of helle : and fram dedliche sunne also.