

The Language and Meaning of the College Motto

'Manners makyth man

Bradford Peverell church, near Dorchester, where the motto appears on a scroll above the arms in the form *in manu mactant* represents its earliest known use outside College. This church was given by William to Winchester College in 1395. These three earliest examples of the motto all display the singular form of the first noun. The standard orthography now found

clerics.¹⁰ Furthermore, English mottoes seem to have had their origins in war cries such as *Dieu et mon droit* (the royal motto), *De par Homont, ich denck* (that of the Black Prince),¹¹ terse expressions uttered in the need of a principle for which one was prepared to die; and their pre-Tudor development still preserved a memory of them as authoritative injunctions or exhortations,¹² so that if *manners makyth man* enjoyed an earlier life as a saying (which appears quite likely) with the primary sense

