

**MONASTICISM WITHOUT FRONTIERS:  
THE EXTENDED MONASTIC COMMUNITY OF THE  
ABBOT OF CLUNY IN ENGLAND AND WALES**

**C. P. PEARCE**

Submitted to the University of Wales in fulfilment of the requirements for the

Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

University of Wales, Trinity Saint David

2017

## Table of Contents

Abstract .....	iii
Acknowledgements .....	iv
Abbreviations .....	vi
List of figures .....	viii
Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1 Foundations .....	26
Chapter 2 Cluniac Sites: the dynamics of the choice of location .....	59
Chapter 3 Administration.....	86
Chapter 4 Observance.....	129
Chapter 5 Construction: the physical setting and environment.....	152
Chapter 6 Cluniac priories and secular settlement .....	183
Chapter 7 Economy .....	208
Chapter 8 Relations between the Cluniac Priories and secular and ecclesiastical authority .....	245
Conclusion .....	286
Appendix A Cluniac Foundations in England and Wales .....	298
Appendix B Dependency Relations of Cluniac Priories .....	299
Appendix C Relative Dates of Foundation of Cluniac Priories .....	301
Figures .....	302
Bibliography .....	331

## **Abstract**

Cluniac monasteries, so called because of their relationship to the abbot of Cluny in Burgundy, have been estimated to have numbered over seven hundred foundations at one time, distributed throughout France and in England, Wales, Scotland, Lombardy, and Spain. To date Cluniac studies have tended to concentrate on the abbey of Cluny, undoubtedly the fullest expression of Cluniac monasticism. Much work has been done on other individual Cluniac foundations but there has been little attempt to place the resulting information in the context of an organisational relationship between Cluniac monasteries and the abbot of Cluny, because this relationship is poorly understood. This thesis redresses this neglect by for the first time providing a model for this relationship whereby all Cluniac monks are said to have constituted an extended monastic community under the authority of the abbot of Cluny whose purpose was the transmission and maintenance of a distinctive monastic observance. This model was developed from a comprehensive examination of evidence of a variety of types, viewed from specific perspectives, relating to all the Cluniac foundations in England and Wales. This shows clear evidence of the involvement of centrally coordinated Cluniac administration in the regulation of these monasteries from the foundation process, the selection of their sites and their relationship with secular settlement and ecclesiastical and secular authority to provide optimal conditions for the following of a distinctly Cluniac monastic observance by their resident monks. It is argued on the basis of this model that future Cluniac research will be far more fruitful if it is re-orientated towards the study of the extended Cluniac monastic community.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to acknowledge the assistance of my supervisors, Professor Janet Burton and Professor David Austin in the preparation of this thesis. I would also like to acknowledge the support of my wife Colette



## Abbreviations

- Annals of Bermondsey*      *Annales Monasterii de Bermundeseia, A.D. 1042–1432*, in *Annales Monastici*, ed. H. R. Luard, 5 vols (London: Rolls Series, 1864–69), III, pp. 421–87
- CCR*      *Calendar of the Close Rolls preserved in the Public Record Office AD 1227–1509*, ed. H. C. Maxwell Lyte et al., 61 vols (London, 1902–63)
- CFR*      *Calendar of Fine Rolls preserved in the Public Record Office*, 22 vols (London, 1911–62)
- Cal. Papal Reg.*      *Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers relating to Great Britain and Ireland*, ed. W. H. Bliss et al. (London, 1983– )
- CPR*      *Calendar of the Patent Rolls preserved in the Public Record Office* (London, 1891– )
- Chartulary of Lewes*      *The Chartulary of the Priory of St Pancras of Lewes*, parts 1 and 2, ed. L. F. Salzman, Sussex Record Society, 38, 40 (Lewes 1933–35)
- Chartulary of Pontefract*      *The Chartulary of St John of Pontefract*, ed. R. Holmes, 2 vols, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, 25, 30 (1899–1902)
- Cartulary of Daventry*      *The Cartulary of Daventry Priory*, ed. M. J. Franklin (Northampton, 1988)
- Domesday*      *Domesday Book*, ed. A. Williams and G. H. Martin (London, 1992)
- EYC*      *Early Yorkshire Charters*, 12 vols, I–III ed. W. Farrer (Edinburgh, 1914–16) ; IV–XII ed. C. T. Clay, Yorkshire Records Society, extra series (1935–65)
- LP Henry VIII*      *Calendar of the Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, ed. J. Brewer, J. Gairdner, and R. Brodie, 22 vols (London, 1864–1932)
- Monasticon*      William Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, revised edn by J. Caley, H. Ellis, and B. Bandinel, 6 volumes in 8 (London, 1817–30)

<i>Montacute Cartulary</i>	<i>Two cartularies of the Augustinian Priory of Bruton and the Cluniac Priory of Monacute in the County of Somerset</i> , Somerset Record Society, 8 (1894)
<i>Pat. Lat.</i>	<i>Patrologia Latina Cursus Completus</i> , ed. J. P. Migne, 221 vols (Paris, 1878–90)
<i>Recueil</i>	<i>Recueil de chartes et documents de St Martin des Champs</i> , ed. J. Depoin, 8 vols (Les Archives de la France Monastique, 1913–21)
<i>Recueil des Chartes</i>	<i>Recueil des chartes de L'Abbaye de Chuny</i> , ed. A. Bernard and A. Bruel, 6 volumes (Paris, 1876–1903)
<i>SAC</i>	<i>Sussex Archaeological Collections</i>
<i>Tax. Eccl.</i>	<i>Taxatio Ecclesiastica</i> , ed. T. Astle, S. Ayscough, and J. Caley (London: Record Commission, 1832)
<i>VCH</i>	<i>Victoria County History</i>
<i>Valor Ecc.</i>	<i>Valor Ecclesiasticus</i> , ed. J. Caley and J. Hunter, 6 vols (London: Record Commission, 1810–34)

## **List of figures**

Fig. 0.1 Map showing the extent of the distribution of Cluniac foundations in France

Fig. 0.2 Map showing the location of the abbey of Cluny

Fig. 0.3 Map showing the locations of Cluniac foundations in England and Wales

Fig. 2.1 Map showing the relative sites of the priory and castle in Lewes

Fig. 2.2 Map showing the relative positions of the priory and castle at Castle Acre

Fig. 2.3 Map showing the relative locations of the castle, settlement and priory at St Clears

Fig. 2.4 Map showing the relative locations of the castle, settlement and priory at Thetford

Fig. 2.5 Map showing the relative locations of the castle, settlement and priory at Dudley

Fig. 2.6 Aerial photograph showing the island setting of Bromholm Priory surrounded by relict watercourses

Fig. 5.1 The chancel arch and capitals of St Clears Priory

Fig. 5.2 Ground plan of conventual complex of Bermondsey Priory

Fig. 5.3 Ground plan of conventual complex of Bromholm Priory

Fig. 5.4 Ground plan of conventual complex of Castle Acre Priory

Fig. 5.5 Ground plan of conventual complex of Dudley Priory

Fig. 5.6 Ground plan of conventual complex of Lewes Priory

Fig. 5.7 Ground plan of conventual complex of Mendham Priory revealed by cropmarks

Fig. 5.8 Ground plan of conventual complex of Monk Bretton Priory

Fig. 5.9 Plan of extant standing remains of Monk Horton Priory

Fig. 5.10 Plan of remains of Monkton Farleigh Priory revealed by excavation

Fig. 5.11 Ground plan of conventual complex of Much Wenlock Priory

Fig. 5.12 Ground plan of conventual complex of Pontefract Priory

Fig. 5.13 Ground plan of conventual complex of Prittlewell Priory

Fig. 5.14 Ground plan of conventual complex of Thetford Priory

Fig. 5.15 Views of architectural elaboration in the chapter house of Bromholm Priory

Fig. 5.16 Views of architectural elaboration in the chapter house of Much Wenlock Priory

Fig. 5.17 Antiquarian drawings of architectural elements from Mendham Priory

Fig. 5.18 Ground plan of the second and third abbey churches at Cluny

Fig. 5.19 Ground plan of the church of the priory of La Charite sur Loire

Fig. 5.20 Ground plan of the church of Lenton Priory

Fig. 5.21 Plan showing the evolution of the east end of the priory church of Bermondsey recovered by excavation

Fig. 5.22 Modifications to the west range at Castle Acre Priory

Fig. 5.23 View of the west front of Castle Acre Priory

Fig. 6.1 Map showing the relative locations of Prittlewell parish church and the priory site

Fig. 6.2 Map showing the relative location of the castle and settlement of Castle Acre Priory relative to the permanent position of the priory

Fig. 6.3 Map showing the relative sites of the priory, castle and settlement at Pontefract (first revision Ordnance Survey 1888–1914)

# Introduction

## The argument

The year 2010 marked the eleventh hundredth anniversary of the establishment of a monastic organisation whose foundations numbered over 700 abbeys and priories throughout Europe (Fig. 0.1).<sup>1</sup> Yet outside of its place of origin this anniversary passed almost unmarked. The organisation was that of the Cluniacs which was established with the foundation of the abbey of Cluny in Burgundy in the year 910 (Fig. 0.2).<sup>2</sup> This neglect is all the more striking when compared with the widespread commemoration in 1998 of the nine hundredth anniversary of the foundation of the abbey of Cîteaux, the birthplace of the Cistercian Order, which resulted in a range of significant publications.<sup>3</sup> An examination of the corpus of comparative published material relating to monasticism in general reveals a similar neglect of Cluniac monasticism. The studies dedicated to Cluniac monasticism that exist both in English and

---

<sup>1</sup> Marrier lists some 716 Cluniac abbeys and priories (M. Marrier and A. Duchenne, ed., *Bibliotheca Cluniacensis* (Paris, 1614; reprinted Macon 1915), cols 1705–52). Evans suggested that this list referred to numbers of foundations at a date not earlier than the second half of the fourteenth century and more probably the fifteenth century: J. Evans, *The Romanesque Architecture of the Order of Cluny* (Cambridge, 1938), p. 8. The number of foundations varies depending on the criteria used for inclusion which is a point addressed in this thesis. I contend that only foundations containing monks that acknowledged the authority of the abbot of Cluny should be considered Cluniac rather than those that adopted Cluniac customs but retained their independence. By this definition a number of foundations remained Cluniac for only part of their existence and subsequently seceded from the Cluniac organisation. Conant without any apparent authority suggested that there were over 1300 Cluniac foundations: K. Conant, *Carolingian and Romanesque Architecture 800–1200* (London, 1973), pp. 108–9. Aston states that there were as many as 2000 Cluniac foundations: M. Aston, ‘The expansion of the monastic and religious orders of Europe from the eleventh century’, in G. Keevill, M. Aston, and T. Hall, ed., *Monastic Archaeology: papers on the study of medieval monasteries* (Oxford, 2001), pp. 9–36 (p. 10). The point to be made is that the number of foundations was significant.

<sup>2</sup> The date of the foundation charter of the abbey of Cluny: J. Evans, *Monastic Life at Cluny* (Oxford, 1968), p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Examples include R. de Bourbon Parme, *Les Cisterciens 1098–1998* (Paris, 1998), and two publications dealing with Cistercian foundations in Britain: D. Robinson, ed., *The Cistercian Abbeys of Britain: Far from the Concourse of Men* (London, 1998) and G. Coppack, *The White Monks: The Cistercians in Britain 1128–1540* (Stroud, 1998).

French focus almost exclusively on the abbey of Cluny, both its archaeology and history.<sup>4</sup>

While accounts of the history and archaeology of other individual Cluniac foundations in France exist, these are largely descriptive and there is almost no attempt to place them in the context of a Cluniac monastic organisation.<sup>5</sup>

There were 35 Cluniac priories in England and Wales, the largest number of Cluniac priories outside the heartland of Cluniac monasticism in Burgundy and France (Fig. 0.3 and Appendix A), yet there has been only one reasonably comprehensive account of the Cluniac foundations in England and Wales which is now some 105 years old, and two short summaries.<sup>6</sup> The important general studies of monasticism covering England and Wales make almost no reference to Cluniac monasticism let alone the Cluniac priories in the two countries.<sup>7</sup> Certainly to date there has been no publication dedicated to the Cluniac foundations in England and Wales to compare with those dedicated to the other main types of contemporary monastic foundations in these countries, namely those of the Augustinians and Benedictines as well as the Cistercians.<sup>8</sup> The most recent study related to Cluniac foundations

---

<sup>4</sup> English examples dealing with the archaeology of the abbey of Cluny include K. Conant, *Cluny: les églises et la maison du chef d'Ordre* (Macon, 1968) and the more recent A. Baud, *Cluny: un grand chantier médiéval au cœur de l'Europe* (Paris, 2003), while significant publications dealing with the history of the abbey include Evans, *Monastic Life at Cluny*, and D. Vingtain, *L'Abbaye de Cluny Centre de l'Occident médiéval* (Paris, 1998).

<sup>5</sup> Examples include P. Beaussart, *L'Église Benedictine de La Charité sur Loire 'Fille Aînée de Cluny'* (La Charité sur Loire, 1929) dedicated to this important Cluniac priory, and L. Faton, 'Cluny a la decouverte des sites clunisiens', in *Dossiers d'Archeologie no. 275 juil./aout 2002* (Dijon, 2002), pp. 14–139, which provides a summary of the principal Cluniac foundations in France, Italy and Spain.

<sup>6</sup> L. Guilloreau, 'Les prieurés anglais de l'ordre de Cluny', in *Congres du Millenaire de Cluny*, I (Macon, 1910), pp. 291–373. R. Graham 'The Cluniac order and its English province', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 28 (1922), 169–74, is short and factual but does not attempt to examine the nature of the organisational relationship between the abbot of Cluny and the Cluniac foundations in England. Barlow's account in *The English Church 1066–1154* (London, 1979) pp. 184–5, is even shorter and similarly does not address the issue of organisation.

<sup>7</sup> These include: G. Coppack, *Abbeys and Priories* (Stroud, 1993), J. P. Greene, *Medieval Monasteries* (London, 1992) and M. Aston, *Monasteries in the Landscape* (Stroud, 2000).

<sup>8</sup> As well as the commemorative publications dedicated to the Cistercians referenced above, these include: J. C. Dickinson, *The Origins of the Austin Canons and their Introduction into England* (London, 1950) and J. M. Luxford, *The Art and Architecture of English Benedictine Monasteries 1300–1540* (Woodbridge, 2012). On the Cistercians see recent publications: J. Burton and J. Kerr, *The Cistercians in*

in England is now thirty years old and is restricted to a comparative study of the first founders and their foundations.<sup>9</sup> Yet an examination of the primary source material pertaining to these foundations, both documentary and archaeological, reveals a rich profusion of information. There are also a wealth of secondary source studies related to individual Cluniac priories in England and Wales which have drawn on this primary source material. Yet there has been almost no attempt in these studies to place this information in the context of a wider Cluniac organisation.<sup>10</sup>

How can this neglect be explained? It is the argument of this thesis that it is related to a misunderstanding of the nature and purpose of the Cluniac monastic organisation which largely results from a top down examination of this phenomenon which only views monastic organisation as a relationship among foundations. This Cluniac monastic organisation has variably been described as ‘a loose confederation, depending in every case upon a series of individual acts or capitulations’,<sup>11</sup> a congregation,<sup>12</sup> a family,<sup>13</sup> or as a monarchical organisation,<sup>14</sup> centred on the abbey of Cluny. These descriptions to varying degrees carry the negative connotation of control of one foundation by another. This is emphasised by the great historian of medieval monasticism in England, Dom David Knowles, himself a Benedictine

---

*the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2011), and E. Jamrozak, *The Cistercian Order in Medieval Europe* (London, 2013).

<sup>9</sup> B. Golding, ‘The coming of the Cluniacs’, in *Proceedings of the Battle Conference*, 3 (Woodbridge, 1980), pp. 65–77.

<sup>10</sup> A typical example is the recent study of Lewes Priory, G. Mayhew, *The Monks of St Pancras, Lewes Priory, England’s Premier Cluniac Monastery and its Dependencies 1076–1537* (Lewes, 2014), which contains a wealth of information about Lewes Priory and the Cluniac foundations which were made dependent on it without exploring the nature of this dependence and the relationship between these priories and the wider Cluniac organisation.

<sup>11</sup> D. Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England*, second edn (Cambridge, 1963), p. 154.

<sup>12</sup> N. Hunt, *Cluny under St Hugh 1049–1109* (London, 1967), p. 185.

<sup>13</sup> M. Pacaut, *L’Ordre de Cluny* (Paris, 1986), p. 307.

<sup>14</sup> Guilloreau, ‘Les prieurés anglais de l’ordre de Cluny’, p. 332.

monk, a member of an order that for the greater part of its existence eschewed an inter-relationship between monastic foundations and emphasised the independent existence of monastic communities.<sup>15</sup> He describes the organisation of Cluniac monasticism in the eleventh century as ‘a body and head of members loosely knit together by bonds resembling those of contemporary feudal institutions’ and argued that ‘the existence of the vast Cluniac body showed at once the possibility and dangers of the dependence of a large number of houses upon a single head’.<sup>16</sup>

Later authors have uncritically followed this assessment. For example Burton writing in 1994 states that ‘On the whole, there seems little reason to question the verdict delivered on the English Cluniacs by David Knowles, namely that as a group they were loosely organised and played no outstanding part in public life’.<sup>17</sup> The implication is that there is nothing much more worth saying about the subject. From this perspective Cluniac priories are invariably seen as aberrant examples of Benedictine monasticism, the relationship between them poorly understood and not worthy of further investigation. It seems that for this reason that the study of the nature of the organisational relationship within Cluniac monasticism has been neglected in favour of other types of monastic organisation such as the Cistercians with their clearly stated constitutional relationship between monastic foundations.<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup> C. Brooke, *The Age of the Cloister: the story of monastic life in the Middle Ages* (Stroud, 2003), p. 60. He states ‘The history of Benedictine communities has been the story of a long struggle to preserve the independence that was traditionally regarded as an essential mark of Benedictine monasticism’. See also C. H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism* (Harlow, 2001), p. 25: ‘the kind of monastery described by the Rule [of St Benedict] was an autonomous unit, economically self-supporting and having no constitutional links with any other religious house’.

<sup>16</sup> Knowles, *The Monastic Order*, p. 146.

<sup>17</sup> J. Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders in Britain, 1000–1300* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 38.

<sup>18</sup> Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders*, p. 64: ‘It is the organisation of Cîteaux, the creation of an international order which followed common statutes and bound house to house by a system which overrode political boundaries, which was the unique contribution of Cîteaux to the monastic life of the twelfth century’.



This thesis will make a unique contribution to monastic studies by demonstrating for the first time that there was a distinctive organisational relationship within Cluniac monasticism. Instead of a relationship among foundations, as pertained within contemporary monastic organisations such as the Cistercians, Augustinians and smaller groupings or congregations of Benedictine foundations, the most important dynamic was a relationship between Cluniac monks wherever they were and the abbot of Cluny.<sup>19</sup> All the Cluniac monks who populated Cluniac priories constituted a single extended monastic community which acknowledged the supreme authority of the abbot of Cluny which crossed the frontiers that had previously existed between foundations. Although the structure consisted of a spatially dispersed monastic community under the ultimate authority of a single abbot it was faithful to that envisioned by the the Rule of St Benedict, which made the abbot the pivot of the community.<sup>20</sup> This argument is developed from a bottom up study of the Cluniac foundations in England and Wales examined from specific perspectives, integrating both documentary and physical evidence, which reveal the nature of this relationship. It will further be argued that the purpose of this organisation was the transmission and maintenance of a distinctive Cluniac monastic observance.

It will also be argued that while this Cluniac organisational relationship existed from the date that the abbey of Cluny was founded, the way in which it was administered evolved – principally by the delegation of administrative authority by the abbots of Cluny – as the extended monastic community increased in size.<sup>21</sup> This was followed by the development of

---

<sup>19</sup> For the Cistercians, relations of dependence were maintained between daughter houses and the mother houses from which they originated : Burton and Kerr, *The Cistercians in the Middle Ages* , pp. 96–7. The same relationship pertained to Augustinian monasteries and the foundations derived from them: M. Heale, *The Dependent Priors of Medieval English Monasteries* (Woodbridge, 2004), pp. 114–24.

<sup>20</sup> *The Rule of St Benedict*, trans. C. White (London, 2008), pp. 13–15.

<sup>21</sup> Knowles was of the opinion that features such as visitations and general chapters derived from other types of monastic organisation, and that their use by the Cluniacs was the first evidence of a constitution that applied to the Cluniac foundations as a whole: Knowles, *The Monastic Order*, p. 146. In contrast, the administrative relationship between Cistercian foundations seems to have existed from the start and

mechanisms for checking the effectiveness of this delegated authority, official visitations of Cluniac foundations and interval meetings of the priors of Cluniac foundations in the presence of the abbot of Cluny, the General Chapters. It will be demonstrated that the effectiveness of this form of monastic organisation meant that a distinctive Cluniac monastic observance was maintained in the Cluniac priories in England and Wales until their dissolution at the Reformation. It follows that Cluniac studies would be most effectively re-orientated to a study of the extended monastic community of the abbot of Cluny.

Because the organisation within Cluniac monasticism is seen to be between the monks that occupied the various Cluniac foundations and the abbot of Cluny and his delegated authority, rather than a relationship between foundations centred on the abbey of Cluny, the body of the text of this thesis will consciously avoid discussion of Cluniac foundations in continental Europe including the abbey of Cluny except where they directly relate to the priories here under consideration, such as in the administrative relationship between priors of certain of the French Cluniac priories and those of their dependencies in England and Wales, and where better documentation such – as for example that regarding the nature of Cluniac monastic observance – serves to shed some additional light on monastic practice in the Cluniac foundations in England and Wales. As will be suggested in the Conclusion of this thesis this model of analysis could now be applied to an examination of the Cluniac monastic community in a region of France or another country such as Spain or Germany. First it is necessary to start with some background to the development of a Cluniac organisation.

---

visitations and general chapters were a natural extension of this. It will be argued below in Chapter 3 that these features of administration were used in subtly different ways by the Cluniacs.

## Background

The year 910 marked the origin of a Cluniac monastic organisation.<sup>22</sup> In this year the abbey of Cluny was founded in the duchy of Burgundy, north-west of Macon (Fig. 0.2) with monks from the abbeys of Baume and Gigny in the Jura region of France. The monks were brought to Cluny by their abbot, Berno; Berno became the first abbot of Cluny, but remained abbot of Baume as well as abbot of Gigny until his death in 927. The first Cluniac community therefore consisted of the monks of Baume and Gigny as well as those of Cluny.

The monastic observance followed at Cluny and its associated foundations was a reformed observance based on that of Benedict of Aniane who had been a close associate of the Carolingian emperor, Louis the Pious. The monk John, biographer and friend of Odo, second abbot of Cluny, stated that ‘Euticus [the baptismal name of Benedict of Aniane by which he was also known] was the founder of those customs which to this day are kept in our monasteries’.<sup>23</sup> This observance augmented the Rule of St Benedict, which had dealt with general principles of monastic life, by a significant expansion of its liturgical content and an increase in the elaboration of its performance with a particular emphasis on processions and chant. All other aspects of monastic life also became closely prescribed. These changes were formulated in the Constitutions of Aachen delivered in 816 or 817.<sup>24</sup> It was this reformed observance that persisted at the abbey of Baume following the collapse of the Carolingian dynasty. In his will Abbot Berno enjoined the monks of his foundations ‘to keep staunchly

---

<sup>22</sup> Evans, *Monastic Life at Cluny*, p. 3.

<sup>23</sup> *St Odo of Cluny Being the Life of St Odo of Cluny by John of Salerno*, ed. and trans. G Sitwell (London, 1958), p. 26. Much important work has been done by Boynton and Cochelin on the evolution of the monastic observance followed at the abbey of Cluny, principally described in S. Boynton and I. Cochelin, ed., *From Dead of Night to End of Day: the Medieval Customs of Cluny* (Turnhout, 2005). The nature of the relationship between this observance and that followed at the Cluniac priories in England and Wales is discussed further in Chapter 4.

<sup>24</sup> Brooke, *Age of the Cloister*, p. 61.

united, to observe with the same exactness as before the established usage in the chanting of psalms, in keeping silence, quality of food and raiment, and above all in the contemning of authority'.<sup>25</sup> The concept of a Cluniac monastic organisation under the authority of a single abbot, whose purpose was to further a common observance, had been established. This type of organisation contrasted with other contemporary monastic practice where the authority of the abbot did not extend beyond a single foundation, as was the case with the vast majority of Benedictine monasteries. While there were other examples of groupings of monasteries under the authority of a single abbot, these did not undergo the subsequent expansion seen with the Cluniacs and remained relatively small and usually geographically localised.<sup>26</sup> The foundation charter of the abbey of Cluny emphasised certain features that would prove critical to the maintenance of a Cluniac monastic observance. These were immunity from secular and ecclesiastical interference and the appointment of the pope as protector of the monastic community.<sup>27</sup> These were, again, not features unique to Cluniac monasticism, and other groupings of foundations enjoyed the same privileges, but they did not offer a comparable dynamic and reinforcement to the scale of expansion subsequently seen within the Cluniac monastic community.

The united Cluniac monastic community was subsequently expanded by the foundation of new monasteries. The foundation of Romainmotier in Switzerland by the Empress

---

<sup>25</sup> Marrier and Duchenne, *Bibliotheca Cluniacensis*, p. 9; translated and cited in J. Evans, *Monastic Life at Cluny*, p. 9.

<sup>26</sup> A group of some 170 monasteries were involved in the reform centred on the abbey of Gorze in Lorraine. This was never as centralised as Cluny, but 31 houses were attached to Gorze as its priories: Aston, 'The expansion of the monastic and religious orders', p. 11. See also A. Mundo, 'Monastic movements in the East Pyrenees', in N. Hunt, ed., *Cluniac Monasticism in the Central Middle Ages* (London, 1980), pp. 98–111, discusses groups of monasteries in Catalonia and the province of Narbonne, while closer to home ten or eleven dependencies of the abbey of Le Bec existed in England and a similar number in Normandy and the other Norman abbeys of Jumièges and Saint-Wandrille each had one or two priories in England and over a dozen in Normandy. See M. Chibnall, 'Monastic foundations in England and Normandy, 1066–1189', in D. Bates and A. Curry, ed., *England and Normandy in the Middle Ages* (London, 1994), pp. 37–49.

<sup>27</sup> Evans, *Monastic Life at Cluny*, p. 6

Adelaide in 929 was made conditional on the new foundation being as ‘one community with Cluny’.<sup>28</sup> The Cluniac monastic community remained small until the abbacy of Odilo (994–1049). By 937 Abbot Odo (927–942) had just seventeen houses subject to him while his successor, Majolus (954–994), had thirty seven houses subject to him when he died in 994.<sup>29</sup>

The influence of Cluniac monasticism increased more rapidly, however, as the monastic observance followed at Cluniac houses was adopted by pre-existing monastic foundations over an increasingly wide geographical area. This was at the request of secular patrons, abbots, and bishops to the abbot of Cluny as they fell under the influence of the appeal of the conviction of Cluniac abbots that this restored Benedictine monastic life, which they believed united monks to God through the practice of unbroken prayer, provided the only safe route to salvation.<sup>30</sup> In 931 Pope John XI granted to the then abbot of Cluny, Odo, the right to reform any monastery given to him for that purpose.<sup>31</sup> Transmission of observance was achieved either by sending monks from Cluny to the foundation to be reformed or the dispatch of monks from the foundation to be reformed to spend sufficient time at Cluny to become appraised of the observance followed there<sup>32</sup>. Initially no formal constitutional relationship was established between pre-existing foundations and the abbot of Cluny and they maintained their independent identity that had formed part of the tradition established by the Rule of St Benedict.

---

<sup>28</sup> Hunt, *Cluny under St Hugh*, p. 157.

<sup>29</sup> R. Graham, ‘The relation of Cluny to some other movements of monastic reform’, in *English Ecclesiastical Studies* (London, 1929), pp. 1–29 (p. 7).

<sup>30</sup> Abbot Odo’s doctrine of monastic life is discussed in R. Morghen, ‘Monastic reform and Cluniac spirituality’, in N. Hunt, ed., *Cluniac Monasticism in the Central Middle Ages* (London, 1971), pp. 11–28 and K. Hallinger, ‘The spiritual life of Cluny in the early days’, also in Hunt, *Cluniac Monasticism in the Central Middle Ages*, pp. 29–55.

<sup>31</sup> *Joannis Papae XI Epistolae et Privilegia, Pat. Lat.*, 132, cols 1055–1062 (cols 1055–59).

<sup>32</sup> This seems to have been the way by which Cluniac customs were introduced to the abbey of Farfa in the form of the so-called Farfa customary: S. Boynton, *Shaping a Monastic Identity: Liturgy and History at the Imperial Abbey of Farfa, 1000–1125* (London, 2006), pp. 124–6, and Hunt, *Cluny under St Hugh*, p. 11.

During the abbacy of Odilo formal relations with reformed foundations increased in frequency as a result of increasing lapses in observance which might occur following the death of a reforming abbot, or his immediate disciples, or the initial incomplete adoption of Cluniac observance. The monks of these foundations became integrated into the Cluniac monastic community and accepted the authority of the abbot of Cluny. It became increasingly clear that membership of the Cluniac monastic community was required in order to maintain Cluniac monastic observance. Certain of the foundations that became integrated within the wider Cluniac monastic community were able to retain the title of abbey and even to appoint their own abbot.<sup>33</sup> This is an example of the compromise that subsequently became a distinctive and effective feature of Cluniac administration.<sup>34</sup> The cohesion of this expanded monastic community was strengthened by the extension of papal patronage and immunity from secular and ecclesiastical interference, first granted in the foundation charter of the abbot of Cluny, to all Cluniac foundations. In 1016 Pope Benedict VIII issued a bull applying to all her dependencies the diocesan immunity which Cluny had already secured for herself. In 1024, Pope John XIX, extended this immunity to all Cluniac monks *ubicumque positi*, or wherever situated.<sup>35</sup>

By the time of his death in 1049, sixty five houses were subject to Abbot Odilo both in Burgundy but also France and other countries. The major Cluniac expansion however, occurred during the abbacy of his successor, Hugh of Semur, who ruled from 1049 until 1109. This period saw the foundation of Lewes Priory, the first Cluniac priory in England, in

---

<sup>33</sup> Hunt, *Cluny under St Hugh*, pp. 162–6.

<sup>34</sup> See above Chapter 8 in regard to such issues as permitting limited involvement of the patron of Cluniac priories in the appointment of a new prior and flexibility over the influence of bishops in the appointment process.

<sup>35</sup> *Joannis XIX Papae Epistolae et Diplomata, Pat. Lat.*, 141, cols 1115–1156 (cols 1135–1137).

1077. By the time of his death 200 houses were immediately subject to the abbot of Cluny.<sup>36</sup> This expansion in members and geographical distribution meant that it was increasingly difficult for abbots of Cluny directly to supervise the entire Cluniac monastic community under their authority. It became necessary for the abbots to delegate administrative authority to priors of other foundations. While the day to day administration of individual Cluniac priories was the responsibility of their priors, their administration was overseen by the priors of another Cluniac foundation delegated to carry out that role by the abbot of Cluny. The abbot retained sole authority over the profession of novices and so effectively controlled any addition to the Cluniac monastic community. Later, the introduction of visitations to Cluniac priories by official visitors of the abbot of Cluny and the General Chapters held at the abbey of Cluny would serve as means of checking on the effectiveness of this delegated administration and to correct any deficiencies found.

The increase in size of the Cluniac community was paralleled by an expansion of Cluniac observance. This is reflected in the various successive forms of the written customs of the abbey of Cluny. Three surviving versions from the tenth century consist solely of liturgical observances and the order of the monastic day.<sup>37</sup> The next in chronological date were written for the monastery of Farfa in Italy between 1030 and 1048.<sup>38</sup> The most detailed form of the customs was written *c.* 1075 by Bernard, a monk of Cluny during the abbacy of Hugh de Semur. It appears to be the only form of the customs written for use at the abbey of Cluny and it has been suggested that it was written for the instruction of the large number of

---

<sup>36</sup> Graham, 'The relation of Cluny', p. 7.

<sup>37</sup> *Consuetudines Cluniacenses Antiquiores*, in *Consuetudines Monasticae*, 5 volumes, ed. Dom B. Albers, 5 vols (Stuttgart, 1900, and Monte Cassino, 1903–12), II, pp. 1–61.

<sup>38</sup> *Consuetudines Farfenses*, in *Consuetudines Monasticae*, I.

novices present at the abbey by that date.<sup>39</sup> A later version of these customs, abridged and rearranged c. 1083 by another monk of Cluny, Ulrich, was made for William, abbot of Hirschau. In general there is a tendency towards an increasingly prescribed ritualization of monastic life in the different versions of the customs.<sup>40</sup>

While features such as the maintenance of silence, provision of charity, and hospitality are common to all forms of the Customs, liturgical practice became increasingly elaborate; there was both a rise in the number of services and an increasing elaboration of ceremonial in the performance of the liturgy. St Peter Damian writing in the eleventh century provides a vivid portrait of liturgical practice at the abbey of Cluny, ‘one found the monks, praying and saying psalms in the church, in the fields, in the buildings...and this murmur of psalmody, alternating with chants, fills the monastery day and night without interval’.<sup>41</sup>

Much work has been done on the various Cluniac customaries, particularly by Boynton and Cochelin,<sup>42</sup> providing invaluable information of the way in which Cluniac monastic observance was put into practice. It has to be emphasised that these customs relate to monastic observance at the abbey of Cluny at particular times. As will be discussed in Chapter 4 it is unclear how this observance was amended to make it observable at Cluniac priories with much smaller monastic populations. Although as this thesis will demonstrate, the scale of liturgical observance was curtailed at smaller foundations, what is known about monastic observance at the abbey of Cluny provides useful indications as to how other aspects of observance were likely to have been practised at other Cluniac foundations

---

<sup>39</sup> Bernard, ‘Ordo cluniacensis’, in *Vetus disciplina monastica*, ed. M. Herrgott (Paris, 1726) pp. 136–64. A more recent transcription of these customs is forthcoming as *Bernardus Ordo Cluniacensis MS Paris Bnf, Latin 13875 Disciplina Monastica I*, ed. I. Cochelin and S. Boynton.

<sup>40</sup> The differences between the customs of Ulrich and Bernard and their differing roles are discussed in S. Boynton, ‘The customaries of Bernard and Ulrich as liturgical sources’, in Boynton and Cochelin, ed., *From Dead of Night to End of Day*, pp. 109–30.

<sup>41</sup> *Petri Damiani Iter gallicum*, *Pat. Lat.*, 145, cols 865–80 (col. 871).

<sup>42</sup> Boynton and Cochelin, *From Dead of Night to End of Day*.



including those in England and Wales, for which there is no other evidence, for example in ritual relating to death.<sup>43</sup> Cluniac monastic observance was subsequently augmented by statutes issued by various abbots of Cluny at the General Chapters held at the abbey of Cluny. Some of these statutes made prescriptions for Cluniac monks outside of the abbey of Cluny, for example that all novices should be professed by the abbot of Cluny within three years.<sup>44</sup>

### **Methodology and research questions**

The Cluniac priories in England and Wales are ideal for this case study, the aim of which is to develop a model for the nature and purpose of the organisational relationship among Cluniac foundations. They were all new foundations and so no compromise was necessary in the way they were integrated into the Cluniac monastic community. They were established at a significant distance from the residence of the abbot of Cluny in Burgundy and therefore would be expected to test the limits of any organisational process. They were also all founded after the apogee of Cluniac administration had been reached during the abbacy of Hugh of Semur and Cluniac observance had reached its greatest documented extent. They also existed at the stage that the most significant later changes were made to Cluniac administration with the introduction of official visitations and the general chapters. The expansion of Cluniac priories in England and Wales occurred against a backdrop of expansion of other types of monastic foundation in both countries, initially so-called alien priories founded from pre-existing foundations in Normandy and France, then Augustinian foundations from the late

---

<sup>43</sup> F. S. Paxton, 'Death by customary at eleventh-century Cluny', in Boynton and Cochelin, *From Dead of Night to End of Day*, pp. 297–318, and F. S. Paxton with I. Cochelin, *The Death Ritual at Cluny in the Central Middle Ages*, *Disciplina Monastica*, 9 (Turnhout, 2013).

<sup>44</sup> Hunt, *Cluny under St Hugh*, p. 176.

eleventh century onwards,<sup>45</sup> and Cistercian abbeys, beginning in 1128 with the foundation of Waverley Abbey (Surrey).<sup>46</sup> These developments not only provide a contemporary context for Cluniac expansion but the ways in which they differ from Cluniac monasteries serve to show what was distinctive about Cluniac monasticism.

The method of this study has been to carry out a bottom up comparative examination of the Cluniac priories in England and Wales, using all available types of evidence, from specific perspectives which might be expected to reveal most information about the nature and purpose of Cluniac organisation. The perspectives chosen are: (i) the foundation of the priories, which draws principally on primary sources including copies of foundation charters, and examines the role of Cluniac administration in the foundation process; (ii) site selection, which utilises topographical evidence to examine the considerations which determined the selection of sites for new priories and what they reveal about Cluniac priorities; (iii) the way in which the priories of England and Wales were administered, how and to what extent the administrative responsibility of the abbot of Cluny was delegated and what checks were introduced to test the effectiveness of this delegated authority; (iv) the observance that was followed in them; (v) the way in which the built fabric accommodated the requirements of Cluniac monastic observance; (vi) the relationship between the priories and secular settlement; (vii) distinctive features of the economy of the priories that influenced monastic observance; and (viii) the relationship between the priories and secular and ecclesiastical authority and in particular the extent to which they were able to retain their immunity from these bodies.

---

<sup>45</sup> J. C. Dickinson, *Monastic Life in Medieval England* (London, 1961) pp. 79–84.

<sup>46</sup> Robinson, *The Cistercian Abbeys of Britain*, pp. 14–26.

Where relevant comparison will be made with other types of contemporary monastic organisation to place this study within the context of monasticism in England and Wales to demonstrate what was distinctive in the Cluniac approach to monastic organisation.

## **Sources**

This study utilises a range of source material. The categories are essentially documentary, comprising primary written material as well as maps and antiquarian descriptions and illustrations, and physical sources in the form of standing remains of the priories and excavation evidence. Extensive use has also been made of secondary documentary sources that have drawn on these different types of primary source and which have been discussed earlier. It will be shown that the integration of these types of evidence will reveal much greater information than would be available from each type of evidence considered in isolation.

### *Documentary*

There are no known surviving original foundation charters for any of the Cluniac priories in England and Wales apart from what appears to be an original foundation charter for Lewes Priory.<sup>47</sup> As will be demonstrated in Chapter 1, it appears to have been a specific policy that all original foundation charters were sent to the abbey of Cluny and were kept there as opposed to being retained at the new monastery as was the case with Benedictine and Cistercian foundations. It seems likely that these charters were subsequently destroyed and there are no other examples amongst surviving documentary records at Cluny or in the Bibliothèque nationale in Paris, the other main depository of Cluniac records. The priors of

---

<sup>47</sup> *EYC*, VIII, pp. 54–5. This document was originally at Cluny before being transferred to the Bibliothèque nationale, Paris.

many of the Cluniac houses requested copies of foundation charters from the founder or his successors as secular patron of the foundation as public verification of their right of ownership of items included in the foundation bequest. As a result some priories had several copies of their foundation charter, originating from different dates, with different witnesses and often referring to bequests that post-dated their foundation.<sup>48</sup> These documents were usually copied into the cartularies of the respective priory, together with other charters recording later bequests, of which several survive including those for Lewes, Bromholm, Castle Acre, Daventry, Montacute, and Pontefract. Those for Daventry<sup>49</sup>, Montacute,<sup>50</sup> and Pontefract,<sup>51</sup> have been transcribed, while that for Lewes has been partially transcribed.<sup>52</sup> Often written late in the history of each foundation – that of Lewes, for example, dates from 1444 and that of Daventry from the fourteenth century – they carry the risks of inaccuracy of any document compiled at a date distant from the charters that they record. Nevertheless it is likely that charters relating to earlier bequests were carefully stored and were used to compile the cartularies of later date. The Lewes cartulary contains endorsements which show attempts to classify the charters from the late twelfth century down to the time when the cartulary was made.<sup>53</sup> The charters not only served as a public verification of right of the priories to the various bequests contained within them, but also served to link their monastic communities to the abbot of Cluny as in many cases the priory concerned was granted to the current abbot of

---

<sup>48</sup> It will be argued above in Chapter 1 that a unique understanding and acceptance of the distinctive conditions of foundation of a new Cluniac priory by the parties involved made it unnecessary for a new priory to retain its foundation charter but public verification of right became increasingly important in time as the relationship between founders and secular patrons became less close. This was not an issue for those new Benedictine, Cistercian or Augustinian foundations which retained their original foundation charter.

<sup>49</sup> *Cartulary of Daventry*.

<sup>50</sup> *Montacute Cartulary*.

<sup>51</sup> *Cartulary of Pontefract*.

<sup>52</sup> *Cartulary of Lewes*.

<sup>53</sup> B. Crook, 'The charters of Lewes Priory', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, 82 (1941), 73–95 (p. 73).

Cluny.<sup>54</sup> In at least one case, as will be argued below, that of Bermondsey Priory, the absence of a foundation charter in the priory's records enabled it to re-invent its past including the identity of its founder. As well as charters issued by founders and patrons there exist papal, royal and episcopal sources, such as papal bulls and episcopal registers, which also confirmed the possessions of individual foundations. Apart from providing evidence of the relationship between Cluniac priories and ecclesiastical and secular authorities these documents provide evidence relevant to the administration and economy of each priory. Evidence is also drawn from other official government records including the Close and Patent Rolls.

Two sources are of particular use for this thesis. The first is William Dugdale's *Monasticon Anglicanum*, a seventeenth-century antiquarian work which was subsequently expanded. This contains transcriptions of copies of foundation charters and other important charters related to each of the Cluniac priories, together with an introductory description of each foundation drawing on these primary sources.<sup>55</sup> The *Monasticon* is particularly valuable when it contains copies of documents no longer extant in medieval copies. In the nineteenth century Sir George Duckett compiled three collections of records drawn from all the documents in the Bibliothèque nationale that relate to the Cluniac foundations in England and Wales. The earliest volume contains transcriptions of charters and records related to all of the priories together with a brief introduction to each document. It also contains transcriptions of the visitation reports compiled by the official visitors of the abbots of Cluny for several years, and records from the General Chapter which relate to the Cluniac priories in England and Wales.<sup>56</sup> A separate volume consists of an English translation of the visitation reports.<sup>57</sup>

---

<sup>54</sup> This is discussed below, Chapter 1.

<sup>55</sup> *Monasticon*.

<sup>56</sup> G. F. Duckett, ed., *Charters and Records of Cluni*, 2 vols (London, 1888).

<sup>57</sup> G. F. Duckett, ed., *Visitations of English Cluniac Foundations* (London, 1890).

These sources are particularly valuable for the information they reveal about the administration of the Cluniac priories and for the incidental references to observance, the area of Cluniac studies at least in England for which there is a paucity of evidence.

At least two priories compiled annals, records of significant events in the history of that foundation as well as events related to other monasteries and records of other contemporaneous events. Examples exist for Lewes of fourteenth-century date,<sup>58</sup> and Bermondsey, probably compiled in 1433.<sup>59</sup> Although written long after the events they record their accuracy is questionable not only for that reason. They also offered their compilers the opportunity to alter past events in order to represent the past in a particular way. It is argued in Chapter 1 that the identity of the founder of Bermondsey was intentionally incorrectly identified in the Annals of Bermondsey to further the prior's aspiration to promote his foundation to the status of an abbey. The foundation was attributed to an obscure Englishman at a time when the prior was able to exploit the contemporary political situation, characterised by hostility to links between monastic foundation in England and those in France, by inventing an English origin for his foundation in a successful attempt to garner secular support for the enhancement of status for his foundation. Rose Graham has suggested that no event recorded in the Annals of Bermondsey should be accepted unless it can be verified by a different source.<sup>60</sup>

### *Maps and antiquarian illustrations*

In several instances antiquarian descriptions of priories provide an important record of the extent of the surviving structures at that time. In some cases this is the only surviving record

---

<sup>58</sup> *Annals of Lewes.*

<sup>59</sup> *Annals of Bermondsey.*

<sup>60</sup> R. Graham, 'The priory of La Charité sur Loire and the monastery of Bermondsey', in *English Ecclesiastical Studies* (London, 1929), pp. 91–124 (p. 93).

of the buildings or ground plan of a priory site. Maps are also useful in examining the topographical relationships between priory sites and other landscape features such as castles, secular settlements, and communication links. Graham's survey of the extant fabric of Cluniac priories is useful if rather brief in content.<sup>61</sup> The thesis has also drawn on Lockett's description of Romanesque period sculpture from those priories where this survives.<sup>62</sup>

### *Standing remains*

The Cluniac priories in England and Wales have generally fared poorly in terms of extant surviving remains compared to the remains of monasteries of the Cistercians or Augustinians. Located adjacent to settlement they provided a source of building stone as well as a site for later building. There are however significant standing remains on the sites of Bromholm, Castle Acre, Dudley, Lewes, Monk Bretton, Much Wenlock, Prittlewell, and Thetford priories. A parish church that accommodated a Cluniac priory survives at St Clears in Wales. The reconstructed parish church at Malpas incorporates the chancel arch that separated the Cluniac oratory in its predecessor from the nave of the church. A parish church that was associated with a Cluniac priory at Wangford survives but the chancel that housed the oratory of the monks was demolished after the priory was dissolved.

### *Excavation evidence*

A number of priory sites have been subject to excavation which has provided important information about the development of the priory site and its buildings. In some cases such as

---

<sup>61</sup> R. Graham, 'A history of the buildings of the English Province of the Order of Cluny after the Suppression of some priories and the general Dissolution of the Monasteries', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 15 (1952), 13–43.

<sup>62</sup> R. B. Lockett, 'A catalogue of Romanesque sculpture from the Cluniac houses in England', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, third series, 34 (1971), 43–51.

Bermondsey, Lenton, Monkton Farleigh, and Pontefract they have provided the only material evidence for the development of the conventual complex. In other cases such as Castle Acre, Lewes, Much Wenlock and Thetford they have provided significant additional to that to be derived from the extant remains.

### **The structure of the thesis**

The first chapter of the thesis examines the process of foundation of the priories, drawing on the limited amount of primary source material including copies of foundation charters and Cluniac primary source material relevant to the subject. It will be argued that the introduction of Cluniac monasticism into England resulted from an Anglo-Norman noble's personal experience of Cluniac monastic observance at the abbey of Cluny but only occurred once the then abbot of Cluny had established suitable conditions for the establishment of the first Cluniac priory at Lewes. These included the confirmation from secular interference in the appointment of priors and the establishment of system of future succession of priors that attempted to secure the effective administration of what was always the most important Cluniac priory in England and Wales. It will be argued that the spread of Cluniac monasticism was piecemeal rather than planned, and that it was dependent on founders who shared in the value of the intercessory prayer of an extended Cluniac monastic community for which they were willing to accept a limited degree of control over the foundations for which they were responsible. The majority of founders were united by ties of social status, relationship, and the distribution of their landholdings, whose investment in Cluniac monasticism was continued by their successors and feudal vassals, some of whom sought increased connection with the extended Cluniac monastic community through burial and/or honorary or actual membership of it.



It will be argued that once the process of foundation of a new Cluniac priory had been initiated by the direct or indirect approach by a founder to the abbot of Cluny, this process was continued by a centrally coordinated standardised process. This involved the dispatch to the abbey of Cluny of a foundation charter which confirmed the foundation bequest sufficient to support the first monks of a foundation. This was followed by the appointment of a pre-existing Cluniac foundation by Cluniac administration on which the new foundation was made dependent. The remarkable appeal of Cluniac monasticism is revealed by the length of time – previously not appreciated – over which new Cluniac priories continued to be founded, and their ability to compete for patronage with other monastic organisations such as the Augustinians well into the early thirteenth century.

Consideration of the process of foundation leads onto a discussion of the selection of sites for new priories, the subject of Chapter 2, which demonstrates the primary role of Cluniac administration in the selection of a site. The choice may have been limited by the land holdings of the founder, but it is argued that Cluniac sites had characteristic features which served to provide an appropriate setting for the following and maintenance of a distinctive Cluniac monastic observance. Chapter 2 thus examines the considerations which determined the sites of new Cluniac priories and demonstrates that these went far beyond basic requirements of a water supply and adequate drainage. It argues that there was an initial association with castles as a source of security for new foundations, but that this association was abandoned once security improved. Instead sites were sought which would minimise interference with monastic observance; also evident is a desire to establish a link with the pre-existing religious significance of sites.

Chapter 3 discusses the nature of Cluniac administration, including the ways in which – and extent to which – the administrative responsibility of the abbot of Cluny was delegated; the mechanisms that were later put in place to check on the effectiveness of this delegated

administration, and to introduce changes to and correct any deficiencies in monastic observance. Chapter 4 examines what is known about Cluniac monastic observance in these foundations. As there is no known surviving customary for any of the priories under consideration the evidence regarding the observance followed at the priories is largely derived from incidental references to it. It will be demonstrated that the transmission of observance was essentially oral, initially from the first monks of new Cluniac foundations and then reinforced by the appointment of priors both groups of which would have been experienced in Cluniac monastic observance from other Cluniac houses and would have been able to transmit this knowledge to recruits. These conclusions are reinforced by the well documented oral transmission of monastic observance at the abbey of Cluny in its surviving customs.<sup>63</sup> It will also be demonstrated that observance was subject to modification by the general incorporation of feasts associated with saints associated with the sites of certain of the Cluniac priories and through the agency of the visitations and General Chapters, and that visitations provided a means of assessing how well observance was maintained. This chapter also discusses what is known about the liturgical and non-liturgical component of observance. It will be shown that it was considered distinctive in extent by both Cluniac and non-Cluniac sources and was modified in extent to make it appropriate to the smaller scale of many of the monastic communities of the Cluniac priories in England and Wales. Research has revealed that devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary among the Cluniacs was as extensive as it was in its more generally recognised association with the Cistercian Order. It will be demonstrated that the delegated system of Cluniac administration discussed in Chapter 3 was effective in maintaining observance.

---

<sup>63</sup> S. Boynton, 'Oral transmission of liturgical practice in the eleventh-century customaries of Cluny', in S. Vanderputten, ed., *Understanding Monastic Practices of Oral Communication* (Turnhout, 2011), pp. 67–83.

Chapter 5 examines the physical setting of Cluniac monastic observance. It investigates how this was accommodated either by the adaptation of the chancel of parish churches as a permanent oratory or by the construction of new buildings which in some cases incorporated pre-existing structures of religious significance on the sites of certain priories into the fabric of the priory church. It will be shown how construction was controlled to meet available financial resources by building in phases but giving priority to construction of those parts of the conventual complex that were most relevant to monastic observance, namely the priory church and the chapter house. It will be demonstrated that architectural elaboration was restricted to these areas. The influences that guided the plans of the priory churches will be discussed including the later reconstruction of the east end that seems to have been influenced by the need to construct or reconstruct Lady Chapels. The chapter will conclude with an assessment of the rising influence of the priors on the built fabric of the church in the fourteenth century, in particular the remodelling of existing buildings to provide separate accommodation for the prior and the reconstruction of gatehouses.

In Chapter 6 the relationship between Cluniac priories and neighbouring secular settlements is examined. The non-participation of Cluniac monks in manual labour and the absence of a separate work force within the priories such as the lay brothers of Cistercian houses meant that the monks were dependent on secular help to support them in their monastic observance. This chapter demonstrates that the relationship between the priories and secular settlement was distinctive and carefully managed to ensure that the monks had the assistance they required to follow their monastic observance while minimising any interference resulting from proximity to secular settlement.

Chapter 7 turns to the economy of the priories, sources of income and expenditure, and the ways in which these were managed to protect monastic observance. It is argued that specific features of this economy, in particular its dependence on bequests rather than the

exploitation of other potential sources of income left it vulnerable to debt. It will be shown that increased expenditure caused by the imposition of royal rents during the wars between England and France, and the inability of Cluniac administration to assist the priories contributed to the fragmentation of the extended Cluniac monastic community in England and Wales.

Finally Chapter 8 examines the relationship between the Cluniac foundations and secular and ecclesiastical authority. It argues that there was a general acceptance of the immunity of the Cluniac priories from interference by royalty and secular patrons until the beginnings of war with France in the fourteenth century. Thereafter, the imposition of royal rents on Cluniac priories who as a body were viewed as sympathetic to France resulted in increasing financial difficulties for the priories which were only relieved by their purchase of charters of naturalisation which weakened their links to the wider Cluniac monastic community. It is also demonstrated that Cluniac priories remained essentially immune from episcopal control apart from minor compromises that did not significantly weaken Cluniac administration, and that the papacy carried out the responsibility enshrined in the foundation charter of the abbey of Cluny to protect the Cluniac priories by confirming their possessions and upholding Cluniac administrative practice during conflicts with secular and episcopal authority. This role extended to the protection of the priories during the papal schism even when this conflicted with the authority of the abbot of Cluny. Finally, it is argued that the increasing independence of Cluniac priories from Cluniac administration brought about by these events led to permanent secession of the monks of all the Cluniac priories in England and Wales from the wider Cluniac monastic community and this was supported by the papacy.

As recently as 2012 a leading scholar of Cluniac monasticism, Giles Constable, could write that although much has been written on Cluny ‘it is easy to forget how much work

remains to be done'. Among the areas for future research he urges further assessment of the nature of Cluniac monasticism, the community at Cluny itself, the occupations of the monks, Cluniac organization, that is, the order and its governance, and finally 'why Cluny' – what gave it its special place in European monasticism?<sup>64</sup> This thesis addresses and provides answers for the last two questions in relation to the Cluniac monastic community in England and Wales.

---

<sup>64</sup> G. Constable, 'The future of Cluniac studies', in *The Journal of Medieval Monastic Studies*, 1 (2012), 1–16.

## Chapter 1

### Foundations

The aim of this chapter is to examine the process by which Cluniac priories became established in England and Wales. The chapter will begin with an assessment of the preparations that were made to allow for the establishment of Lewes, the first Cluniac priory in England. This will be followed by a discussion of the founders of Cluniac priories, what motivated them to choose Cluniac monks for their foundations, how they became aware of Cluniac monasticism, and their common characteristics. The chapter then turns to the relative contribution of the founders and of central Cluniac administration to the foundation process, and examines how these reflected the nature of the relationship between the founders and Cluniac monasticism. The chapter will conclude with an examination of the time period over which Cluniac expansion occurred in England and Wales.

The coming of Cluniac monks to England was preceded by a period of monastic expansion in the country that had followed the Norman Conquest and the grants made by the new king, William I to his followers. Members of the Norman nobility used their newly acquired wealth to found new monasteries in the country in order to consolidate their control over their newly acquired land holdings. In most cases these were offshoots of monasteries in Normandy and other parts of France with which the new founders had familial ties; they were Benedictine houses over which the founders and varying degrees of control.<sup>1</sup> The coming of the Cluniacs represented a distinct change in that it marked the establishment of monasteries

---

<sup>1</sup> Golding, 'Coming of the Cluniacs', p. 77, and D. J. A. Matthew, *The Norman Monasteries and their English Possessions* (Oxford, 1962), pp. 50–1 and 55–7.

for the first time populated by a new type of monk with which the founders of Cluniac priories had no previous familial association and in most cases no previous direct contact.

### **The beginning of the Cluniac expansion: Hugh of Cluny, William de Warenne, and Lewes Priory**

The arrival of Cluniac monks in England was preceded by a statement of concern for their wellbeing made by the abbot of Cluny and recorded in a copy of the foundation charter of Lewes Priory, the first Cluniac foundation in England. It followed a request to Abbot Hugh of Cluny by the prospective founders, William de Warenne and his wife Gundrada for three or four monks to establish a new Cluniac priory. The charter records that ‘the holy abbot was at first very adverse to us to hear our petition, on account of the distance of the foreign land and especially by reason of the sea’.<sup>2</sup> This clearly demonstrates that Hugh viewed himself as responsible for the ongoing welfare of these monks even though they would subsequently belong to a new Cluniac foundation. Only four monks, including Lanzo who was to become the first prior, were sent to the site of Lewes Priory in 1077 to establish the new foundation (Fig. 0.2). This was even though William de Warenne’s foundation charter bequeathed land to support twelve monks, the usual number for a new Benedictine foundation.<sup>3</sup> The monks

---

<sup>2</sup> A partial translation of this foundation charter is reproduced in W. H. St John Hope, ‘The architectural history of the Cluniac priory of Saint Pancras at Lewes’, *Archaeological Journal*, 41 (1884), 1–28 (p. 2). Clay has thrown doubt on the authenticity of this charter due to inconsistencies in the text (*EYC*, VIII, p. 57). It is here argued that its apparent inconsistencies reflect the Cluniac practice of keeping all original foundation charters at the abbey of Cluny. Copies of foundation charters were frequently issued to provide public verification of right of ownership at the request of Cluniac priors. This document is the product of such a request to Cluny by Prior Nelond of Lewes in the fifteenth century and it was entered into the cartulary of Lewes at that time. There would appear to be no reason for forging the narrative content and like many such copies it consists of a conflation of early and more recent bequests.

<sup>3</sup> Twelve was thought to be a usual number for a new monastic foundation at the time representing with their head, Christ and the twelve apostles (St John Hope, ‘Architectural history’, p. 2, note). The number of twelve monks was reiterated as the canonical minimum for a monastery in a papal bull of 1528: G. W. Bernard, *The Late Medieval English Church* (London, 2012), p. 199. Twelve monks and an abbot constituted the required number for new Cistercian foundations: Burton and Kerr, *The Cistercians in the Middle Ages*, p. 22. The year of foundation of Lewes is suggested by several sources. The annals of

were only dispatched once Abbot Hugh had received William de Warenne's foundation charter at the abbey of Cluny,<sup>4</sup> and after he had extracted a condition from the founder that he would obtain written consent for the foundation from King William I of England. This was also subsequently sent to the abbot together with royal confirmation of William de Warenne's grant.<sup>5</sup> Founders of the Cluniac priories that followed Lewes continued to obtain royal consent for their foundations. Roger Bigod sought royal consent for the foundation of Thetford by what is referred to as a *preceptum* drawn up in the accepted form.<sup>6</sup> Although the exact meaning of this term is unclear it suggests that there seems to have been a standard form of document that ensured royal consent for the establishment of a new Cluniac priory which served to minimise royal interference in the administration of the new foundation.

The request for royal confirmation is likely to have been the result of Hugh's awareness – which is documented – of the reputation of William I for interfering in the administration of monasteries. This had been an important feature of William's monastic policy from his time as duke of Normandy where he had used the foundation of monasteries and the appointment of the heads of both these foundations and those of his vassals for political ends.<sup>7</sup> William as duke clearly believed that his authority superseded that of his vassals even when it came to appointing abbots of their own foundations. It seems likely that this procedure was used to emphasise this authority. William had previously replaced Robert of Grandmesnil, abbot and co-founder of the monastery of St Evroult in the far south of the diocese of Lisieux, with his

---

Lewes specify the year: *1077 Lanzo prior Sancti Pancratii venit in Anglia (Annals of Lewes p. 23)*; this occurs in an entry for the same year in the annals of Bermondsey: *Lanzo, prior Sancti Pancrati Leweniensis venit in Angliam (Annals of Bermondsey, p. 425)*.

<sup>4</sup> This included the act of bequest of the church of St Pancras and the properties of Farmele and Swanberg: *Recueil des chartes*, V, no. 3559.

<sup>5</sup> *EYC*, VIII, pp. 54–5.

<sup>6</sup> *Recueil des chartes*, V, no. 3749.

<sup>7</sup> M. Chibnall, *The World of Orderic Vitalis: Norman monks and Norman knights* (Woodbridge, 2001), p. 48.



own candidate, Osbern, while Robert had been forced into exile in Italy;<sup>8</sup> and Abbot Hugh had been informed of these developments by Mainer, a monk of St Evroult, who had gone to Cluny on the leave and advice of Abbot Osbern.<sup>9</sup> Given the duke's reputation for overruling the appointment of abbots of his vassals' foundations it is understandable that Abbot Hugh sought to underline the freedom of the new Cluniac foundation of Lewes, also initiated by a vassal of the now King William, from secular interference by obtaining royal consent for the foundation. Abbot Hugh's mistrust of the king is also reflected in the negotiations of King William to obtain six or twelve monks from the abbot for an unspecified purpose that is likely to have followed a documented meeting between Abbot Hugh, William de Warenne, and the king, then in Normandy, between 1078 and 1080. The request was refused by Hugh on the grounds that the monks would have no chapter to support them and because the king had offered 100 pounds of silver for each monk, an act considered simony.<sup>10</sup> Hugh's reply suggests that the monks were not requested to form the founding community of a new monastic house, such as his new foundation at Battle populated with monks from Marmoutier, but to participate in some way in the reform of the church in the land that King William had conquered. As has been pointed out, the Normans used the church as an agent of colonisation and by the end of William's reign the episcopate had been almost totally Normanised and the greater abbeys were also ruled by members of the conquering race.<sup>11</sup> Interestingly, because the observance in these abbeys followed the Constitutions of Lanfranc

---

<sup>8</sup> Orderic Vitalis, *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, ed. M. Chibnall, 6 vols (Oxford, 1969–80), II, pp. 96–7. Several other kinsmen of Robert including the knights Ralph de Tosny, Hugh de Grandmesnil, and Arnold d'Echaauffour were deprived of their lands and driven into exile at the same time by Duke William because of their supposed role in a rebellion against him without any proof of guilt (M. Haggart, 'Kinship and identity in eleventh-century Normandy: the case of Hugh de Grandmesnil, c. 1040–1098', *Journal of Medieval History*, 32 (2006), 212–30 (p. 218).

<sup>9</sup> *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, II, pp. 107–8.

<sup>10</sup> *S. Hugonis abbatis Cluniacensis, Pat. Lat.*, 159, cols 845–984 (cols 923–8).

<sup>11</sup> C. Harper Bill, *The Anglo-Norman Church* (London, 1992) pp. 13–14.

compiled about 1077, which were influenced by the customs of the abbey of Cluny,<sup>12</sup> there was to be a significant Cluniac influence on the Norman reform of monastic observance in England.

In spite of this refusal the king and his wife, Matilda, made bequests to the abbey of Cluny, consisting of gifts of ecclesiastical vestments, and sought and were granted confraternity there, as had William de Warenne and his wife Gundrada. Even though subsequent Norman kings were to act as patrons of the Cluniacs, none was to found a Cluniac priory in England, that is, a monastic foundation that acknowledged the ultimate authority of the abbot of Cluny. Even though King William II made the principal bequest which allowed the foundation of Bermondsey Priory he was not recorded as its founder.<sup>13</sup> The Empress Matilda was a benefactor of several Cluniac priories, in particular Farleigh, to which she bequeathed a relic of a girdle of St Mary Magdalene.<sup>14</sup> The abbeys of Reading and Faversham, founded by Kings Henry I and Stephen respectively, with Cluniac monks from Lewes and Bermondsey, had their own abbots and did not acknowledge the authority of the abbot of Cluny.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, as Marjorie Chibnall pointed out, ‘though the first community of monks [of Reading] consisted of Cluniac monks, Henry had, within two years, made it quite clear that Reading was to be an independent Benedictine house with Cluniac liturgical customs’.<sup>16</sup> Thus, it seems clear that these kings, although they sought an association with the Cluniacs, were unable to accept the degree of immunity from secular interference that was

---

<sup>12</sup> Knowles, *The Monastic Order*, pp. 123–4.

<sup>13</sup> See below Chapter 8.

<sup>14</sup> J. E. Jackson, ‘The History of the priory of Monkton Farley’, *Wiltshire Historical Society Magazine*, 4 (1858), 267–85 (p. 276).

<sup>15</sup> Golding, ‘Coming of the Cluniacs’, pp. 76–7.

<sup>16</sup> M. Chibnall, ‘The changing expectations of a royal benefactor: the religious patronage of Henry II,’ in E. Jamroziak and J. Burton, ed., *Religious and Laity in Western Europe, 1000–1499: interaction, negotiation, and power* (Turnhout, 2006), pp. 9–21 (p. 10).

made conditional by the abbot of Cluny for the foundation of a Cluniac priory. It is striking that the abbot of Cluny was not only able to guarantee immunity of the new Cluniac foundation from royal interference but was also able to resist the request of king William I for Cluniac monks to help in his colonisation of his new territory while remaining on good terms with him. This suggests that the abbot was held in high esteem by the king and is also evidence of the power of Cluniac immunity.

William de Warenne seems to have had no such reservations regarding Cluniac immunity. He was of high noble status, having obtained an important barony in Normandy through marriage to Gundrada, who came from a noble Flemish family. Warenne was close to Duke William, having accompanied him at the Battle of Hastings and helped suppress the rebellion led by Hereward centred on Ely.<sup>17</sup> He was rewarded with land in twelve counties, constructed castles at Lewes, Reigate, and Castle Acre, and his two principal residences were Lewes (Sussex) and Conisborough (Yorkshire).<sup>18</sup> According to a copy of one of the foundation charters of Lewes he had visited Cluny with Gundrada in 1074, having been diverted there from their intended goal of pilgrimage to St Peter's in Rome as result of conflict between Pope Gregory VII and Emperor Henry IV, because Cluny was dedicated to the saint and possessed some of his relics.<sup>19</sup> William de Warenne subsequently wrote to its abbot, Hugh, requesting monks for a Cluniac priory at his caput in England, Lewes.<sup>20</sup>

Even after monks had been sent to establish Lewes, development of the priory seems to have been slow. The return of Prior Lanzo to Cluny for a period of up to a year seems to have been construed by the founder as a lack of commitment on behalf of the abbot of Cluny to the

---

<sup>17</sup> Golding, 'Coming of the Cluniacs', p. 72.

<sup>18</sup> J. Burton, *The Monastic Order in Yorkshire 1069–1215* (Cambridge, 1999), p. 56.

<sup>19</sup> St John Hope, 'Architectural history', p. 2.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

new foundation and he considered transferring his patronage to another monastery, that of Marmoutier, which had already provided the monks for the royal foundation of Battle Abbey.<sup>21</sup> He was only reassured following the meeting in Normandy with Abbot Hugh of Cluny at which King William I was present, referred to above.<sup>22</sup> It is likely that this anxiety on the part of the founder arose from a misunderstanding of the process of establishment of Cluniac priories and Cluniac administrative practice.<sup>23</sup> As will be discussed below, Cluniac priories were usually established with a small number of monks and expansion of the monastic population of a priory only occurred once available resources allowed it.<sup>24</sup> The return of Lanzo to Cluny would not in any case have precluded an increase in size of the monastic population of Lewes for which there are no figures at this time. The priors of Cluniac dependencies were the equivalent of the monastic officials, or obedientiaries, of Benedictine abbeys and could be summoned to Cluny on administrative business or even permanently transferred to another Cluniac priory. The return of such an important figure as Lanzo, second only to the prior of Cluny, to the abbey is more likely to have been related to his requirement for administrative business there than any lack of commitment to Lewes on behalf of the abbot. The documented concern of the abbot of Cluny for the welfare of his monks would not have allowed him to leave Cluniac monks at Lewes while their prior was at Cluny if he had no commitment to the foundation. If he had had any uncertainty about the new foundation he would surely have recalled all the monks there, not just the prior.

---

<sup>21</sup> F. Barlow 'William I's relations with Cluny', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 32 (1981), 131–41 (pp. 135–6).

<sup>22</sup> H. E. J. Cowdrey, 'William I's relations with Cluny further considered', *Monastic Studies*, I, ed. J. Loades (Bangor, 1990), pp. 75–85 (p. 75).

<sup>23</sup> Historians have also shared his view; see, for example Golding, 'Coming of the Cluniacs', p. 65.

<sup>24</sup> See below Chapter 5.

The meeting between Abbot Hugh and William de Warenne in Normandy resulted in two new conditions regarding Lewes Priory.<sup>25</sup> First, it was established that its prior should always be the most able monk after the prior of Cluny and the prior of another important Cluniac priory, La Charité sur Loire. Second, it was laid down that the prior should not be removed without due cause. Traditionally these conditions have been seen as concessions extracted from the abbot by the founder to reinforce Abbot Hugh's commitment to the new Cluniac priory. If this interpretation is accepted we may see the conditions laid down by William de Warenne as aiming first to ensure an ongoing commitment by the abbot to providing the new foundation with an effective head, and second to prevent the abbot and his successors from replacing the prior. There is, however, no evidence that Hugh had ever intended permanently to replace Lanzo, and it can be argued that it was just as likely that the new conditions were Hugh's initiative and therefore laid down by him. From this reading the first condition would be intended to secure the future administrative wellbeing of Lewes, which was the first and always the most important Cluniac priory in England and Wales. The second condition would be a more explicit statement clarifying the limits of the founder's control over the foundation for which he was responsible and specifically intended to prevent the founder and his successors interfering in the appointment of priors of Lewes as King William had previously done with St Evroult, for reasons of political expediency. Subsequent priors of Lewes were permanently replaced on the initiative of the abbots of Cluny, which also suggest that the second condition was laid down by Abbot Hugh. The known original foundation charter for Lewes is brief and makes no reference to either condition and it seems quite possible that Hugh made use of the meeting with its founder to clarify these features of Cluniac administrative practice.

---

<sup>25</sup> St John Hope, 'Architectural history', p. 3.

To summarise: the events relating to the foundation of Lewes Priory illustrate distinctive features of Cluniac monasticism. These include the concern of the abbot of Cluny for monks that would be spatially separated from him, and his concern to establish appropriate conditions for their welfare by insisting on the receipt of a document confirming the initial endowment for the new foundation before the monks were dispatched. In addition, confirmation of immunity from secular interference was obtained by negotiation with the founder – and indirectly through the founder with the king – to ensure that the priory operated independent of secular interference, in particular to guard against the removal of its prior without cause. A small number of monks with a prior, who had delegated responsibility for their welfare, were dispatched to take possession of the foundation bequest and the long term effectiveness of administration of the foundation in a foreign land was assured by ensuring that the prior and his successors would be men of ability. The founding monastic population could be small because it would remain part of an extended monastic community rather than forming an independent monastic house. The prior would remain part of an extended monastic population with responsibilities stretching beyond the spatial constraints of the new foundation; he could be recalled by the abbot of Cluny if necessary.

The foundation process was, however, initiated by its founder, and the abbot of Cluny expressed concern for the extent of spatial separation of the new foundation from Cluny rather than initiating the process. However, when he was given assurance of suitable conditions for the establishment of a new priory, he supported the process. The lack of familiarity of the founder with Cluniac administrative practice is revealed in William de Warenne's specific request for twelve monks for the new foundation and his concern for the long term survival of the foundation when its prior was recalled to Cluny. This unfamiliarity is understandable given that this is the earliest documented contact between the Anglo-Norman nobility and the abbot of Cluny.

## Why the Cluniacs?

It is necessary to determine what motivated William de Warenne to choose Cluniac monks for the foundation that he had been planning to establish for some time on his newly acquired land holdings and for which he had sought the advice of Archbishop Lanfranc of Canterbury.<sup>26</sup> Cluniac customs had been introduced into Normandy in 1001 by William of Volpiano, specifically to the abbey of Fécamp of which he became abbot. He had moved there from the headship of the Cluniac foundation of St Benigne in Dijon which he had reformed from Cluny in 978. However, this had not resulted in a Cluniac foundation in Normandy and indeed may not have had less influence on monastic observance there than has generally been understood. Lanfranc's Constitutions had more in common with the customs of the abbey of Cluny than with the observance followed at Lanfranc's own abbey of Bec in Normandy. These were composed, possibly under the influence of William de Warenne, with whom Lanfranc had close relations.<sup>27</sup> It therefore seems unlikely that this earlier contact with Cluniac monastic observance would have directly influenced William de Warenne's choice of the Cluniacs for his new foundation in England. There is therefore nothing to suggest that the reason for the choice of the Cluniacs is anything other than that given in the same copy of the foundation charter. The charter states that following the arrival of William de Warenne and Gundrada at the abbey of Cluny

---

<sup>26</sup> St John Hope, 'Architectural history', p. 2. Lanfranc was himself to be influenced by Cluniac monastic observance, possibly under the influence of William de Warenne and his Cluniac foundation at Lewes. Lanfranc's customs, composed about the year 1077, the year of the foundation of Lewes Priory and introduced first at Christchurch Canterbury had more in common with Cluny than with the observance followed at his own abbey of Bec (Chibnall, *The World of Orderic Vitalis*, p. 66). The influence may have been derived from the observance followed at Lewes by its first monks rather than coming direct from the abbey of Cluny or any Norman influence resulting from the earlier contact with Cluniac customs. See below, Chapter 4.

<sup>27</sup> Chibnall, *The World of Orderic Vitalis*, p. 60.

we found the sanctity, the religion, and the charity so great there....we began to have a love and devotion towards that Order and to that house above all other houses which we had seen.<sup>28</sup>

The charter continues:

I and my wife had it in purpose and desire to found some house of religion for our sins and the safety of our souls, it then seemed to us that we wished to make it of no other Order so gladly as the Cluniac.<sup>29</sup>

Thus it was their personal experience of a distinctive Cluniac monastic observance that motivated their choice of the Cluniacs. One of the principal functions of Cluniac liturgical observance was to intercede on behalf of benefactors. William de Warenne and Gundrada as founders of a Cluniac priory could expect to benefit from the intercessory prayer of the monastic community of Cluny, not only the monks of the abbey of Cluny but all Cluniac monks wherever they were situated. This compounded the intercession which was due to them from their having been granted confraternity, honorary membership of the Cluniac monastic community and participation in all the spiritual richness of the great body.<sup>30</sup> One of the principal benefits of confraternity was from the intercessory prayer of this community.

### **After Lewes: founders and their motives**

The foundation of Lewes was followed by a piecemeal foundation of other Cluniac priories.

This contrasts with the expansion of Cistercian monasteries, which followed a more

---

<sup>28</sup> St John Hope, 'Architectural history', p. 2.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Bernard, 'Ordo Cluniacensis', in *Vetus disciplina monastic*, ed. M. Herrgott (Paris, 1726), pp. 136–64 (p. 136).



systematic colonisation of the country driven by Cistercian administration.<sup>31</sup> The spread of Cluniac priories was, with one notable exception, a product of the initiative of founders who had already founded a Cluniac priory or who wanted to invest in Cluniac monasticism by establishing a new Cluniac priory for the first time. There is no evidence of an expansion in Cluniac priories in England and Wales driven by Cluniac administration, that is, directed by the abbot of Cluny.<sup>32</sup>

This conclusion is at odds with the traditional model of Cluniac dispersal, in which it is viewed as aggressively expansive. Writers such as Lyman refer to the ‘Cluniac takeover’ of Saint Martial in Limoges,<sup>33</sup> while Williams writes of Cluniac expansion into Spain: ‘the opportunity to spread the Order and its reform seems at least to have been matched in Cluny’s eyes by the prospects of financial gain’.<sup>34</sup> Perhaps this is a natural conclusion given that the basis of the spread of Cluniac influence was its reformed monastic observance. But there is a distinction to be made between reformed and reforming, that is, between the reformed monastic observance followed at Cluniac priories and the act of reforming by the foundation of new Cluniac priories in England and Wales. In examining the evidence related to the spread of Cluniac priories in England and Wales there is nothing to suggest that expansion was anything other than passive. It is possible that expansion in England and Wales was atypical given Abbot Hugh’s initial reluctance to support it, but given the conclusion in

---

<sup>31</sup> Robinson *The Cistercian Abbeys of Britain*, p. 17. Writing of the spread of Cistercian foundations in England he states ‘St Bernard was able to plan the mission from Clairvaux to Britain, and direct it from afar, using his connections with princes and churchmen to foster the new foundations. Cistercian involvement in its own expansion was active, not passive’.

<sup>32</sup> As discussed below, the foundation of Bermondsey may have been initiated by the abbot of Cluny to gain a strategic foothold for the Cluniacs in England close to its capital.

<sup>33</sup> T. W. Lyman, ‘The politics of selective eclecticism: monastic architecture, pilgrimage churches, and “resistance to Cluny”’, *Gesta*, 27/1 and 2 (1988), 83–92 (pp. 85–6).

<sup>34</sup> J. Williams ‘Cluny and Spain’, in *Gesta*, 27/1 and 2 (1988), 93–102 (p. 93).

relation to England and Wales, it is a subject worthy of review in relation to the accepted view of Cluniac expansion elsewhere.

William de Warenne I, who had already founded Lewes, furthered his association with the Cluniacs by initiating the foundation of a second Cluniac priory in his Norfolk caput of Castle Acre. In a copy of one of the foundation charters for Lewes he stated his intention to found a monastery for monks of the Cluniac Order at Castle Acre.<sup>35</sup> He issued a charter of foundation before his death in 1089 in which he enumerated various bequests to the new foundation.<sup>36</sup>

Sentiments expressed in the preambles of the foundation and other charters of other Cluniac priories suggest that their founders shared William de Warenne's interest in the intercessory prayer of a wider Cluniac monastic community and chose the Cluniacs for their foundations for this reason. Richard fitz William granted to St Mary, and the monks at Thetford (the Cluniac priory which was dedicated to St Mary), the church of St Peter, Wangford, which became the site of a Cluniac priory, requiring for an acknowledgment, no more than the prayers of the monks of Thetford Priory from which the monks of Wangford came and on which it was made dependent; these prayers were for the souls of his grandfather, father, and all his ancestors, and also for the salvation of himself and his heirs.<sup>37</sup> Thus the benefits of intercessory prayer from a Cluniac extended monastic community were perceived as reaching beyond the frontier of death to benefit predecessors and beyond the frontier of personal experience to benefit successors. Godfrey de Lisseurs transferred Normansburgh Priory, an existing Augustinian foundation, to Cluniac control and it was made dependent on Castle Acre, with the only condition of the bequest being the prayers of

---

<sup>35</sup> It seems likely that his son, William de Warenne II, usually credited with the foundation of Castle Acre, merely completed the process initiated by his father. *Monasticon*, V, p. 13.

<sup>36</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 89.

<sup>37</sup> T. Gardner, *An Historical Account of Dunwich* (London, 1754), p. 255.

the two churches of Acre and Normansburgh.<sup>38</sup> Even though Roger Bigod's motivation for the foundation of Thetford is generally given as being in lieu of performing a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, he was counselled in his choice of the Cluniacs for his foundation by a monk of Castle Acre, William of Wals, who pointed out to the founder that because of this action, the monks of Castle Acre would pray unceasingly for him and his descendants.<sup>39</sup>

There is evidence that founders of Cluniac priories did subsequently benefit from the prayers not only of the foundation for which they were responsible – as would also be the case for a Benedictine foundation – but also the prayers of an extended Cluniac monastic community. The anniversary of Joel of Totnes, founder of Barnstaple Priory, was long kept at the priory of St Martin des Champs, Paris, on which Barnstaple was dependent, as well as at Barnstaple.<sup>40</sup> Adam fitz Sweyn, founder of Monk Bretton Priory in about 1154, obtained a year's obit and an anniversary in the priories of La Charité and Pontefract 'and in all the places where this order is kept, a trental,<sup>41</sup> and in others prayers as for a monk of Cluny' in exchange for his bequest.<sup>42</sup> This example illustrates how founders of later foundations were able to specify the content of the intercessory prayer which was linked to the foundation process rather than simply specifying prayer in general.

The bond between founders and the Cluniacs could be furthered by their choosing a Cluniac priory as their place of burial. In this way they benefited from the particular association of the Cluniacs with the commemoration of the dead in their liturgical practice

---

<sup>38</sup> J. H. Bloom, *Notices, Historical and Antiquarian, of the Castle and Priory at Castleacre, in the County of Norfolk* (London, 1843) p. 149.

<sup>39</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 664.

<sup>40</sup> *Recueil de chartes*, III, p. 9.

<sup>41</sup> This consisted of 30 masses said for the dead.

<sup>42</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 136.

and in the compilation of extensive necrologies listing individuals to be commemorated.<sup>43</sup>

William de Warenne and his successors were buried at Lewes.<sup>44</sup> Joel of Totnes was buried in

his foundation of Barnstaple Priory in 1125. Roger Bigod seems to have intended that he be

buried in his foundation of Thetford Priory but was finally buried in Norwich Cathedral.<sup>45</sup>

Occasionally a founder was buried in a Cluniac priory that he had not himself founded.

Simon de St Liz, founder of Northampton, following his death returning from Palestine

between 1107 and 1108, was buried at La Charité in France rather than his own foundation.

Some founders strengthened their relationship with Cluniac monasticism by becoming Cluniac monks themselves. Joel of Totnes became a member of the monastic community of his foundation at Barnstaple in about 1123 ‘to await with more security divine pity, by which he sought to please the Lord by retiring from the world’.<sup>46</sup> William of Mortain, son of the founder of Montacute, who was closely involved with the establishment of his father’s foundation, became a monk at Bermondsey rather than Montacute. This suggests that founders identified with the larger Cluniac monastic community rather than just the monks of the foundation for which they were responsible. Identification between founder and the individual foundation for which they were responsible does not seem to have been encouraged by Cluniac administration; rather identification was encouraged with the wider Cluniac monastic community. The fact that benefits to a founder of a Cluniac house were restricted to intercessory prayer beyond the limits of that provided by the monks of the foundation for which they were responsible and a place of burial no necessarily at that

---

<sup>43</sup> For example the necrology of the priory of Villars-les-Moines is discussed in J. Wollasch ‘A Cluniac necrology from the time of Abbot Hugh’, in Hunt, *Cluniac Monasticism*, pp. 143–90.

<sup>44</sup> B. Golding ‘Anglo-Norman knightly burials’, in C. Harper-Bill and R. Harvey, ed., *The Ideals and Practice of Medieval Knighthood*, I (Woodbridge, 1986), pp. 35–48 (p. 42).

<sup>45</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 153.

<sup>46</sup> *Recueil*, III, p. 9.

foundation, discouraged such an association.<sup>47</sup> In a confirmation of his father's grants Alured, son of Earl Robert, founder of Holme Priory, stated that his father's grants to that foundation were quit of all suit and service, save of celebrating divine offices for the soul of the founder, of his ancestors and successors, and of all the faithful departed.<sup>48</sup> There was none of the personal identification of a monastic foundation with its founder that characterised the relationship between founder and foundation of other types of monastic organisation.<sup>49</sup> Undoubtedly for this reason if a founder was also responsible for the foundation of a non-Cluniac foundation he tended to develop a closer personal identification with the latter. Thus Roger de Montgomery, founder of Wenlock Priory, chose to become a member of the monastic community at his Benedictine foundation of Shrewsbury where he was also buried.<sup>50</sup> Gervase Pagnell, son of the founder of Dudley Priory, was buried at his Benedictine foundation of Tickford Priory which was located in the centre of the Pagnell landholdings in Buckinghamshire.<sup>51</sup>

### **Founders, families, and political networks**

There is no evidence that any of the founders of the Cluniac priories in England and Wales, other than William de Warenne I, had had any personal experience of Cluniac monastic observance before initiating the process of establishing a new Cluniac priory. This raises the

---

<sup>47</sup> At the same time, as the example of Lewes shows, the burial of descendants of a founder at the same foundation was not discouraged; this permitted a Cluniac priory effectively to become the mausoleum of a particular dynasty. As will be discussed in Chapter 7, this practice encouraged investment in a priory which could become a significant source of income.

<sup>48</sup> *VCH Dorset*, vol. 2, ed. W. Page (1908), p. 80.

<sup>49</sup> It is for this reason that bequests from descendants of founders that did not share the same relationship with an extended Cluniac monastic community were limited, as will be discussed further in Chapter 7.

<sup>50</sup> Golding, 'Coming of the Cluniacs', p. 67.

<sup>51</sup> C. A. R. Radford, 'The Cluniac priory of St James at Dudley', *Antiquaries Journal*, 20 (1940), 449–59 (p. 449).

question of what introduced these individuals to Cluniac monasticism. Like William de Warenne, other founders were members of the Anglo-Norman nobility and also like him had close links to King William I, who himself was a benefactor to Cluny and had been granted confraternity with the Cluniac monastic community, and to each other. Simon fitz Richard, founder of Clifford, was a cousin of King William I and also brother-in-law of his daughter Margaret. Joel of Totnes, a Breton lord, founder of Barnstaple Priory, had accompanied William to England. He was one of his most loyal supporters and was granted Totnes castle with its borough by the king as well as 107 manors in Devon and Cornwall.<sup>52</sup> William Peverell, founder of Lenton Priory, was a Norman baron to whom the king granted the castle of Nottingham in 1086. He was lord of the Peak barony and held land in seven counties other than Nottinghamshire.<sup>53</sup> Roger Bigod, founder of Thetford Priory, had been made first earl of Norfolk and was a friend of King William.<sup>54</sup> Robert de Lacy, founder of Pontefract Priory, had been granted unusually large and concentrated estates, centred on the town of Pontefract that had become his caput.<sup>55</sup> Simon de St Liz, founder of Northampton Priory, accompanied William to England in 1066 and became earl of Northampton and count of Northampton and Huntingdon.<sup>56</sup> Robert, count of Mortain, was half-brother of William. By his wife Matilda de Montgomery he was son-in-law to Roger de Montgomery, founder of Wenlock; as the foundation of Montacute (about 1078) preceded that of Wenlock this relationship could have been the reason for his father-in-law's choice of the Cluniacs for Wenlock Priory. Humphrey

---

<sup>52</sup> Golding, 'Coming of the Cluniacs', p. 67.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid. The foundation of Thetford is noted by William of Malmesbury, who gives credit for its establishment to Bishop Herbert Losinga of Norwich: William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Pontificum: the history of the English bishops*, ed. and trans. R. M. Thomson, and M. Winterbottom (Oxford, 2007), I, pp. 240–1.

<sup>55</sup> Golding, 'Coming of the Cluniacs', p. 68.

<sup>56</sup> *ibid.*, p. 67.

Bohun II, founder of Farleigh, was son of Hunphrey Bohun I, who accompanied William to England. Family connections extended to benefactors of the Cluniacs. Emma Cownie has drawn attention to the endowment of Castle Acre by Robert Malet and his second wife, Aveline de Hesdin; with her first husband, Alan fitz Flaad, Aveline had been a benefactor of Castle Acre.<sup>57</sup>

Many of the founders had been granted landholdings that bordered those of William de Warenne, or each others' estates, and may have become familiar with Cluniac monasticism through this proximity. Robert de Lacy's landholdings lay alongside the south Yorkshire manors of Conisborough and Wakefield of which William de Warenne was tenant in chief.<sup>58</sup> The latter may have been the source for the comment in the copy of the foundation charter of Pontefract of the 'good report and honourable reputation of the Cluniac order'.<sup>59</sup> Robert de la Haye, founder of Malpas, was sheriff of lands of William de Mortain in Pevensey which bordered the land holdings of William de Warenne. Ralph Pagnell, founder of Dudley, had the centre of his landholdings at Newport Pagnell which lay alongside the landholdings of Simon de St Liz, founder of Northampton Priory. William Peverell, founder of Lenton, also held lands in Northamptonshire bordering those of Simon de St Liz. The identity of the founders reveals a close knit group of elite members of the baronial class who would have been in close contact with the king and each other and, moreover, whose estates were in close geographical proximity. This must go some way to explaining the dynamic of Cluniac expansion in England.

Although many founders may have become acquainted with Cluniac monasticism through their links with William de Warenne, King William, and each other, as Cluniac

---

<sup>57</sup> E. Cownie, *Religious Patronage in Anglo-Norman England* (London, 1998), pp. 78–9.

<sup>58</sup> Burton, *The Monastic Order in Yorkshire*, p. 56.

<sup>59</sup> *propter bonum ordorum et honestam famam ordinis Cluniacensis: Chartulary of Pontefract*, I, i.

priorities started to become established, the good reputation of Cluniacs already present in England is also likely to have been a factor in the foundation of new Cluniac priorities. The monastic chronicler William of Malmesbury records the good reputation of Lanzo, first prior of Lewes: ‘a monk of Cluny he was, and prior of St Pancras in England, and by his noble character raised that house to such an admirable pitch of monastic excellence that it is truly said to be, as a dwelling-place of holiness, in a class by itself’.<sup>60</sup> It is reported that Roger Bigod founded Thetford Priory under the counsel of William of Wals, a monk of Castle Acre.<sup>61</sup> William of Malmesbury several times praised the Cluniacs for their piety. Noting Herbert Losinga’s part in the foundation of Thetford he remarked ‘he established at Thetford monks from Cluny, for members of that house are scattered almost over all the world, rich in worldly wealth and distinguished for their religious devotion;’<sup>62</sup> and of Henry I’s foundation of Reading he noted his introduction of ‘Cluniac monks who set an example of holiness and unfailing hospitality.’<sup>63</sup>

Only some – indeed a minority – of the founders could be described as Anglo-Norman.<sup>64</sup> Apart from Joel of Totnes at least one other founder, Ralph fitzBrian, founder of Stanesgate Priory, was also of Breton origin. Another important group of seemingly interrelated founders were of English origin. Robert, son of Sweyn, founded Prittlewell Priory. His father Sweyn had held the manor of Prittlewell on the site of an important Anglo-Saxon estate centre, the eventual site of the priory, at the Conquest.<sup>65</sup> Waltheof, son of

---

<sup>60</sup> William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum: the history of the kings of England*, ed. and trans. R. A. B. Mynors, R. M. Thomson, and M. Winterbottom, 2 vols (Oxford, 1998–99), I, pp. 788–95 (p. 789).

<sup>61</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 141.

<sup>62</sup> William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Pontificum*, I, pp. 240–41.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 302–5.

<sup>64</sup> Golding, ‘Coming of the Cluniacs’, pp. 65–77, gives the impression that the foundation of the Cluniac priorities was essentially an Anglo-Norman phenomenon.

<sup>65</sup> *VCH Essex*, vol. 2, ed. W. Page and J. Horace Round (1907), p. 485.



Sweyn, who was possibly a relative, granted to Bermondsey Abbey the chapel or church of St James Derby, which became the site of a Cluniac priory.<sup>66</sup> Adam fitz Sweyn, another possible kinsman, founded Monk Bretton Priory.<sup>67</sup> His father Sweyn had obtained extensive lands in Cumberland and Essex at the Conquest and he was a notable benefactor of Pontefract Priory.<sup>68</sup> The fitz Sweyn family was the wealthiest family of English descent to survive as honorial barons in the honour of Pontefract, and in 1166 the family held eight fees of the Lacys, the largest holding of any tenant.<sup>69</sup> Sweyn's own father, Ailric, had been a land owner in the reign of Edward the Confessor and became a tenant of the Lacy family, a member of which, Robert de Lacy, founded Pontefract Priory.<sup>70</sup> Matilda, the younger daughter of Waltheof, the English count of Huntingdon, was involved in the foundation of Preston Capes Priory.<sup>71</sup> Upon the death of Waltheof, part of his landholdings and the honour of Huntingdon were granted to Simon de St Liz together with the hand in marriage of his daughter Matilda.<sup>72</sup> The choice of the Cluniacs by these nobles of English descent is likely to have been influenced by their interaction with the Anglo-Norman nobility but it can also be seen as a move to integrate themselves into a new power base.

Another important group of founders had familial or feudal ties to founders or important benefactors of existing Cluniac priories. These relationships themselves were undoubtedly an important factor in the choice of the Cluniacs. Although it has been argued

---

<sup>66</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 104.

<sup>67</sup> *EYC*, III, no. 1486.

<sup>68</sup> R. Graham and R. Gilyard-Beer, *Monk Bretton Priory* (London, 1989), p. 3.

<sup>69</sup> W. E. Wightman, *The Lacy family in England and Normandy, 1066–1194* (Oxford, 1966), pp. 39, 41; *Chartulary of Pontefract*, I, 2.

<sup>70</sup> Golding, 'Coming of the Cluniacs', p. 69.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.* p. 69.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

above that Cluniac founders were motivated by the desire to share in the intercessory prayer and the relationship with the wider Cluniac monastic community, such an intention is not incompatible with their patronage as a marker of political identity and aspiration. Founders might become associated with priories established by their fellow barons. William de Mortain, son of Robert de Mortain, founder of Montacute, established St Carrock Priory but also became a member of the monastic community of Bermondsey Priory.<sup>73</sup> William de Warenne III, whose family had already established the Cluniacs at Lewes and Castle Acre, granted the chapel on Slevesholm to become a Cluniac priory of the same name.<sup>74</sup> Hugh de Leicester, sheriff of Northamptonshire and seneschal to Matilda, sister of Simon de St Liz, founded Preston Capes Priory; the house was subsequently (between 1107 and 1108) relocated to Daventry with the consent of Simon de St Liz and established on a site granted by Matilda de St Liz that included the church of Daventry, which was subsequently used as the oratory of the Cluniac monks of the new priory.<sup>75</sup> The examples above reinforce the importance of family and political networks in the spread of Cluniac foundations in England.

### **Cluniac foundations in England and Wales as dependencies: Cluny, La Charité, and St Martin des Champs**

The first two Cluniac priories to be founded in England, Lewes and Montacute, had been made dependent on the abbey of Cluny and had received their first monks and a prior from that foundation. The third priory to be established, Much Wenlock, received its first prior and monks from the priory of La Charité sur Loire and was made dependent on that foundation

---

<sup>73</sup> Golding, 'Coming of the Cluniacs', p. 69.

<sup>74</sup> Bloom, *Notices*, p. 147.

<sup>75</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 178.

(see Appendix B for dependency relationships).<sup>76</sup> La Charité was referred to by the abbots of Cluny as the eldest daughter of Cluny, and its prior was reckoned to be the most able after the prior of the abbey of Cluny itself.<sup>77</sup> La Charité, with some 54 dependent priories,<sup>78</sup> is likely to have served as a centre of recruitment and of training in Cluniac monastic observance, which is why it provided monks for so many other Cluniac priories. There is no evidence of a link between the founder of Wenlock, Roger de Montgomery, and La Charité before the establishment of the new priory. It is unlikely that the founder would himself have chosen La Charité to provide the first monks for the new priory as he is likely to have been influenced in his choice of the Cluniacs by his son-in-law Robert of Mortain, whose own foundation had been made dependent on the abbey of Cluny. There is also no evidence of a preceding relationship between the founders of the other Cluniac priories in England, Pontefract and Northampton that were made dependent on La Charité and that foundation. Although Daventry was founded by a vassal of Simon de St Liz, Hugh de Leicester, it was made dependent on La Charité rather than his lord's foundation, Northampton Priory.<sup>79</sup> This suggests that the decision to make these new Cluniac priories dependent on La Charité was a Cluniac one and was uninfluenced by their founders.

Another group of new priories including Barnstaple was made dependent on the important Cluniac priory of St Martin des Champs outside Paris, and received their first monks and their prior from that foundation. The priory of St Martin had been granted to the

---

<sup>76</sup> Hunt, *Cluny under St. Hugh*, p. 124.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid. See above in relation to Abbot Hugh's insistence that the prior of Lewes should be the most capable monk after the prior of Cluny and the prior of La Charité. See also G. de Valous, *Le monachisme clunisien au XVe siècle : vie intérieure des monastères et organisation de l'ordre* (Paris, 1970), p. 65.

<sup>78</sup> C. Voros, *Sites clunisiens en Europe* (Moisenay, 2004), p. 38.

<sup>79</sup> It appears in a papal bull of 1144 confirming the possessions of La Charité which was included in the cartulary of that foundation: see *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum ab condita ecclesia ad annum post christum natum*, ed. P. Jaffé, (Rome, 1851) i, no. 8572; *Cartulaire du prieure de la Charité sur Loire (Nievre)*, *Ordre de Cluni*, ed. R. Lespinasse (Nevers, 1887), no. 168.

abbot of Cluny by King Philip of France in 1079 and prospered under the rule of its first two priors attracting many benefactions.<sup>80</sup> It was also ranked amongst the five principal Cluniac foundations by the abbots of Cluny. The observance of monastic life at St Martin, as Abbot Peter the Venerable of Cluny (1122–1156) testified, resembled that at Cluny exactly as the wax impression of a seal.<sup>81</sup> By the mid thirteenth century it had thirty dependent priories mainly in northern France, and was referred to as the Cluny of the north.<sup>82</sup> Like La Charité it seems to have been a training and recruitment centre. Several priors of St Martin des Champs became abbots of Cluny and others were promoted to become priors of La Charité. There is also no evidence of a previous association between the founders of the new priories made dependent on St Martin and that foundation. This suggests that the decision as to which foundation a new priory would be made dependent on and from which it would receive its first monks and prior was a Cluniac one. In time many new Cluniac priories in England were made dependent on a pre-existing Cluniac foundation in England and it also seems likely that these relationships were decided by Cluniac administration. It seems possible that a founder could occasionally influence the decision about the choice of a mother house. Thetford Priory, although it received its first monks and prior from Lewes, was subsequently made dependent on Cluny. It seems possible that this change of relationship was determined by the founder, Roger Bigod who may have been unwilling to agree to the foundation for which he was responsible being made dependent on that founded by another prominent Anglo-Norman noble.

---

<sup>80</sup> *Receuil*, I, pp. 14–18.

<sup>81</sup> R. Graham, 'The Cluniac priory of Saint-Martin des Champs, Paris, and its dependent priories in England and Wales', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, third series, 11 (1948), 35–65 (p. 36).

<sup>82</sup> Hunt, *Cluny under St Hugh*, p. 124.

As stated earlier, other than a single foundation charter for Lewes Priory, there is no evidence for the survival of the original of the foundation charter for any other Cluniac priory whichever priory it was made dependent on. The absence of other original foundation charters of Cluniac priories in England and Wales that were directly dependent on the abbey of Cluny is explained by their likely destruction as discussed above. There is no record of similar destruction of documents at La Charité sur Loire or St Martin des Champs and no original foundation charter of a Cluniac priory in England and Wales dependent on either foundation has come to light. Similarly no original foundation charter for a Cluniac foundation in England that was made dependent on a pre-existing Cluniac priory in England seems to have survived. There is evidence that the original foundation charter of at least one Cluniac priory in England and Wales was sent to the abbey of Cluny. William de Warenne II drew up a copy of the foundation charter for Lewes, a dependency of Cluny, because the original had been sent to the abbey of Cluny.<sup>83</sup> The Cluniac foundations in England and Wales which were dependent on St Martin des Champs were referred to in papal bulls enumerating the possessions of this priory. The earliest reference to St Clears occurs in a papal bull of Lucius III, dated 1184, enumerating the possessions of the priory of St Martin des Champs on which it had been made dependent.<sup>84</sup> No foundation charter for Malpas, a dependency of Montacute, appears to have survived among the documents presented to the Court of Augmentations at the time of the dissolution of Montacute. It seems at least likely that the original foundation charters for all the Cluniac priories in England and Wales were sent to the abbey of Cluny and their destruction there, apart from the original of a foundation

---

<sup>83</sup> *EYC*, VIII, p. 55.

<sup>84</sup> *Recueil*, VIII, p. 55. See also K. Stöber, 'The social network of late medieval Welsh monasteries', in J. Burton and K. Stöber, ed., *Monasteries and Society in the British Isles in the Later Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2008), pp. 11–24.

charter of Lewes now in the Bibliothèque nationale in Paris, explains why no others have come to light.

The documents and correspondence relating to the priories in England were kept in a special cabinet in the archive of the abbey of Cluny: *In primo armario versus hostium superius sunt littere de tota Anglia.*<sup>85</sup> The retention of the originals of foundation charters at Cluny may explain the frequent issuing of copies of foundation charters, inspeximus and papal bulls by the descendants of founders and by kings and popes, requested by the monks and entered into the cartularies of the priories or the cartulary of the house on which they were made dependent, to provide a public verification of right of their possessions. The earliest known reference to Malpas occurs in the cartulary of Montacute. Entry number 165 is a charter of Robert, earl of Gloucester, who had inherited the patronage of Malpas, following the transfer of the overlordship of Gwynllŵg, in which Malpas lay, to him from its founder Robert de la Haia (Haia). It confirmed to the monks of Montacute serving God at Malpas all the gifts which Robert de Haia gave to them, namely the town of Malpas, with the church and lands.<sup>86</sup>

Copies of foundation charters differed stylistically from the form of charter contemporary with the date of foundation of priories and often refer to individuals as witnesses contemporary with the date of the copy and included bequests post dating the date of foundation of a priory. In other words they are composite documents. A deed of Robert, earl of Gloucester, records that its founder, Robert de la Haia, granted the town of Malpas, with the church and lands, to the monks of Montacute serving God there, indicating that by

---

<sup>85</sup> *Recueil des chartes*, VI, p. 947.

<sup>86</sup> *Montacute Cartulary*, no. 165. On Malpas see F. G. Cowley, *The Monastic Order in South Wales, 1066–1349* (Cardiff, 1977), p. 40; B. Coplestone-Crow, 'The foundation of the priories of Bassaleg and Malpas in the twelfth century', *Monmouthshire Antiquary*, 14 (1998), 1–13; Stöber, 'The social network of late medieval Welsh monasteries'.

the date of Robert's charter of confirmation the priory had been established.<sup>87</sup> The copy of the foundation charter for Lenton is not typical of the style of charter of the early twelfth century when the priory was founded. It also records bequests that the priory had in its possession at a later date.<sup>88</sup> A copy of the foundation charter of Dudley, dated about 1180 some thirty one years after the earliest possible year for the foundation of the priory, confirmed to the priory, the church of Wombourn whose acquisition by the priory post-dated its foundation.<sup>89</sup> Such inconsistencies have led to claims that some of these charters may have been forged, as for example in the different copies of the foundation charter for Lewes,<sup>90</sup> but there seems to be no grounds to challenge their veracity, given the above explanation.

The lack of original foundation charters for all but one Cluniac foundation in England and Wales means that there is an absence of important information about the foundation of many of the priories. For example, the identity of the founder of St Clears is not known. The grant of the church or chapel of St James, Derby, to Bermondsey by Walfeoth, son of Sweyn, is not specifically linked to the foundation of the new priory there, as might be expected to have been specified in the foundation charter.<sup>91</sup> The identity of the founders of St Helen's on the Isle of Wight, a dependency of Wenlock, and Aldermanshaw Priory, another dependency of Bermondsey, are also not known because no foundation charter for either priory survives.

The evidence suggests that the foundation of a new Cluniac priory followed a standardised procedure. The founder would approach the abbot of Cluny either directly or

---

<sup>87</sup> *Recueil des chartes*, VI, p. 947.

<sup>88</sup> H. Green, 'Lenton Priory', *Journal of the Thoroton Society*, 40 (1936), 29–90 (p. 32).

<sup>89</sup> The latest date for this acquisition is 1160 as it belonged to the period of the episcopate of William Durdent, who held the see of Lichfield and Coventry from 1149 to 1160 (Radford, 'The Cluniac Priory of St James', p. 450).

<sup>90</sup> *EYC*, VIII, p. 57.

<sup>91</sup> D. Knowles and R. N. Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses England and Wales*, second edn (London, 1971), p. 99.

through an intermediary with the offer to found a new priory and a foundation bequest to support its establishment. On the occasion of the foundation of Thetford, William de Wals, a monk of Castle Acre put the founder, Roger Bigod, in contact with Hugh, abbot of Cluny through Lanzo, prior of Lewes, who acted as an intermediary and the abbot accepted his request. The foundation was accompanied by the donation of bequests and buildings to the abbey of Cluny by the founder.<sup>92</sup> In some cases the intermediary was the prior of an existing Cluniac priory. The prior of Pontefract seems to have acted in this role in the foundation of Monk Bretton. Both Adam fitz Sweyn, the founder of Monk Bretton, and Roger, archbishop of York, spoke of Adam, then prior of Pontefract as ‘the man who founded and acquired this place’ (*ejusdem loci adquistor et primus fundator*).<sup>93</sup> The prior of La Charité reminded the founder of his obligation to Adam, *cujus consilio tam salubre opus inceptis* (on whose advice you began such wholesome work).<sup>94</sup> Adam subsequently left Pontefract to become first prior of Monk Bretton. It is possible that this dispute set the seed that led to the eventual secession from the wider Cluniac monastic community in 1281.<sup>95</sup> Once agreed, the foundation process would have been formalised in a foundation charter sent to the abbey of Cluny where it was stored. The copy of the foundation charter of Lenton refers to the priory being granted by the founder, his wife, and their sons, to Pons (1109–1122), then abbot of Cluny.<sup>96</sup> The foundation charter of Horton was addressed to the abbot of Cluny, and the then abbot, Peter the Venerable, approved this foundation.<sup>97</sup> These examples argue that the foundation was bequeathed to the abbot as head of the wider monastic community of Cluny. The abbot would

---

<sup>92</sup> *Recueil des chartes*, V, no. 3748.

<sup>93</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 163.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>95</sup> Graham and Gilyard-Beer, *Monk Bretton Priory*, p. 4.

<sup>96</sup> Green, ‘Lenton Priory’, p. 33.

<sup>97</sup> Guilloreau, ‘Les prieurés anglais’, p. 320.



then have decided the existing foundation on which the new priory would be made dependent and which would provide its first monks and a prior.

In at least one case the foundation of a new Cluniac priory appears to have been initiated by the Cluniac administration itself. It is here argued that Bermondsey Priory was established by the Cluniac administration for strategic reasons. Situated close to London, the principal city of England, and at a major river crossing, Bermondsey could serve as an administrative centre supporting the wider Cluniac monastic community in England and Wales. Previous scholarship has argued that the founder of Bermondsey was one Ailwin Child, a citizen of London.<sup>98</sup> The source for this statement is the early fifteenth-century annals of Bermondsey which purport to give a history of the foundation from its inception.<sup>99</sup> The annals date from a period of conflict between the priory and the abbot of Cluny, when Bermondsey was headed by English priors who sought to raise the status of the priory to an abbey against the wishes of the then abbot of Cluny. This resulted in the priory being created an abbey by Pope Boniface IX at the request of Richard II.<sup>100</sup> The conflict resulted in the secession of Bermondsey from the wider Cluniac monastic community. It clearly would have suited the foundation to be able to claim that it had an English founder, emphasising its national identity with the country in which it was located rather than its likely Cluniac origins.

All that is known about Ailwin Child is that he was a burgher or wealthy citizen of London who in 1082 granted some rents in London to the priory of La Charité, on which

---

<sup>98</sup> Golding, 'Coming of the Cluniacs', p. 75.

<sup>99</sup> *Annals of Bermondsey*. The year of the last entry is 1433. Their accuracy has been previously questioned by Rose Graham who has stated that no statement made in them should be considered true unless it can be verified from another source: R. Graham, 'The priory of La Charité and the monastery of Bermondsey', pp. 91–124.

<sup>100</sup> Graham, 'The priory of La Charité', p. 115.

Bermondsey was made dependent, and which contributed to its foundation.<sup>101</sup> By far and away the largest and most significant bequest towards the establishment of the new priory was made by King William II. In 1089 he granted the manor of Bermondsey, a large estate valued at £15 in 1086;<sup>102</sup> on this land had been constructed a *nova et pulchra ecclesia* ('a new and beautiful church'), which, as will be argued below, is likely to have been the location of the first Cluniac oratory that was subsequently incorporated into the priory church.<sup>103</sup> This royal bequest may have encouraged other gifts to the foundation, which served to consolidate the new priory and allow its expansion; these grants are distinctive in their wide and varied distribution rather than being focussed on the possessions of a single individual.<sup>104</sup>

If indeed Bermondsey was established on the initiative of the Cluniacs themselves, it is possible to see how confusion over the identity of a founder and secular patron would have enabled the compiler of the Bermondsey Annals to identify an otherwise unknown Englishman as founder. Ailwin Child had no known links with La Charité suggesting that his bequest was directed by Cluniac administration to contribute towards the funding of a new priory already planned in the vicinity of London. He is unlikely to have been able to stimulate the bequests both spiritual and temporal to the priory as suggested in the Bermondsey Annals.

### **Continued interest in Cluniac monasticism**

Although the foundation of the Cluniac priories in England and Wales started with that of Lewes in 1077 it has not been generally recognised until now that the major period of

---

<sup>101</sup> Golding, 'Coming of the Cluniacs', p. 75.

<sup>102</sup> *Domesday Book*, ed. A. Williams and G. H. Martin, (London, 1992), vol. I, fol. 30 p. 72; Golding, 'Coming of the Cluniacs', p. 75.

<sup>103</sup> See below Chapter 5.

<sup>104</sup> *VCH Surrey*, vol. 2, ed. H. E. Malden (1995), p. 65.

establishment of new priories appears to have been in the second half of the twelfth century (see Appendix C), and continued into the thirteenth century with the foundation of Slevesholm in 1222.<sup>105</sup> The Cluniac priories founded from the mid twelfth century onwards mainly had small maximum recorded monastic populations and small scale conventual buildings. Most of the Cluniac priories in England and Wales were, however, started with small numbers of monks and increased in size according to available resources from bequests. It might have been expected at the time of their foundation that these later priories could have followed a similar pattern of expansion but it is also likely that Cluniac administration valued small foundations as part of an extended monastic population.

Some of these later priories were founded by seculars of a lower social standing and with fewer available assets to bequeath. Malpas was founded by a minor noble, Robert de la Haye, and Preston Capes (later Daventry) by Hugh de Leicester, sheriff of Northamptonshire,<sup>106</sup> but many were of significant social status. St James Exeter was founded by Baldwin de Redvers, first earl of Devon<sup>107</sup>; Monks Horton by Robert de Vere, constable of England and earl of Oxford, and his wife Adelina, daughter of Hugh de Montfort<sup>108</sup>; Kersal by Ranulf de Gernons, earl of Chester;<sup>109</sup> Kerswell by Matilda Peverel, daughter of William Peverell, lord of the Peak barony and also founder of Lenton Priory.<sup>110</sup> It seems that it was acceptable to Cluniac administration that new priories could remain small in size and, as is

---

<sup>105</sup> Golding dealt with the earliest and ultimately largest Cluniac priories and a result has tended to suggest that the period of establishment of these foundations was the climax of Cluniac expansion in England and Wales: Golding, 'Coming of the Cluniacs'.

<sup>106</sup> Knowles and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses*, p. 99.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid. p. 101.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid. p. 100.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

discussed below, the welfare of the monks that formed their communities were seen as just as important as the monks that populated the larger Cluniac priories.

The second half of the twelfth century was also, however, associated with major phases of construction of the conventual complexes at those priories where such construction occurred, and at least one unplanned extension to the size of the claustral ranges at Lewes Priory, presumably stimulated by an expanding monastic population which itself reflected increased endowment in the foundation.<sup>111</sup> Monks were also available at existing priories to provide the first monastic communities of new priories. There were at least two examples of Augustinian foundations being appropriated to the Cluniacs to form new Cluniac priories, namely Stanesgate and Normansburgh, at a time when this order was particularly popular. All of these features suggest that Cluniac monasticism remained attractive to the nobility in England for longer than has previously been thought and that it was able to compete effectively with newer monastic movements including the Augustinians and Cistercians for endowment.

This chapter has shown how the abbot of Cluny, negotiated optimal conditions for the establishment of the first Cluniac priory in England, Lewes. He obtained the support of a founder with personal experience of Cluniac monastic observance, one who was able to secure the consent of an English king with a reputation for interference in the administration of monasteries, and who was able to provide a foundation bequest sufficient to establish a small monastic community which could then be expanded as resources permitted. The abbot thereby ensured optimal conditions for the introduction of Cluniac monastic observance in England to be followed by monks that belonged to his extended monastic community and for which he continued to have responsibility. The founder was willing to concede personal influence over this foundation in return for the intercessory prayer of this extended monastic

---

<sup>111</sup> St John Hope, 'Architectural history', p. 18.

community with which he was able to forge closer links by confraternity, honorary membership of this extended monastic community. He was able to influence other individuals to which he was linked by social status, kinship and the proximity of their landholdings to found other priories in exchange for the establishment of similar links with this wider Cluniac monastic community including burial and even full membership of the Cluniac monastic community by becoming monks of individual Cluniac priories in England. Other founders were similarly influenced to establish Cluniac priories by the reputation of the Cluniacs once they had arrived in England.

A clear process of foundation has been demonstrated by which founders approached the abbot of Cluny either directly or through an intermediary with a request to found a new Cluniac priory. Once permission had been given the agreement was formalised by the issuing of a foundation charter which was sent to the abbot of Cluny at the abbey of Cluny where it was kept. This later necessitated the issuing of copies of foundation charters as documentary verification of ownership by the priories of their foundation bequests. The foundation charter documented the benefit to be received from the founder in intercessory prayer together with the foundation bequest that provided the financial basis for the establishment and subsequent expansion of the priory. The abbot then decided which pre-existing Cluniac priory the new priory should be made dependent on as well as the priory which should provide the first monks and prior of the new priory which in the majority of the cases was the same. The evidence suggests that Bermondsey was distinctive in that it was established by Cluniac administration, rather than on the initiative of a lay founder or patron, as a strategic stronghold for the support of the wider Cluniac monastic community in England and Wales. The evidence indicates that Cluniac expansion otherwise continued to be a passive process, the founding of new Cluniac priories simply dependent on the availability of a founder with appropriate resources to support a new Cluniac foundation. The sources also reveal that,

contrary to the received interpretation of the Cluniac expansion, Cluniac monasticism continued to have appeal, as reflected in the continued foundation of new but generally smaller priories until the early part of the thirteenth century.

The foundation process and the distinctive role of a centralised Cluniac authority based around the abbots of Cluny at every step in this process, has not previously been recognised. By contrast the arrival of the Cistercians in England with the foundation of Waverley in 1128 seems to have occurred without the involvement of Abbot Bernard of Clairvaux. It was only with the foundation of Rievaulx in 1131 with monks from his foundation, that Bernard's involvement in the establishment of Cistercian foundations in the country began and this was – at least in terms of the surviving documentary evidence – limited to a letter carried by the monks to King Henry I in which he informed the king that he intended that the monks should found a Cistercian monastery on English soil which formed the basis of an active Cistercian colonisation of England and Wales which as discussed earlier contrasts with the spread of Cluniac foundations.<sup>112</sup> The proposed motivation of the founders of Cluniac priories, a desire for the intercessory prayer and actual or quasi- membership of the Cluniac monastic community in exchange for control over the priories has also not previously been recognised. Golding's suggestion that the founders wanted to engage with French but not Norman monastic foundations given the above evidence seems a much more limited and unsatisfactory explanation.<sup>113</sup>

---

<sup>112</sup> Robinson, *The Cistercian Abbeys of Britain*, pp. 15–16.

<sup>113</sup> Golding, 'Coming of the Cluniacs', p. 77.

## Chapter 2

### **Cluniac sites: the dynamics of the choice of location**

This chapter examines the considerations that determined the selection of the site of new Cluniac priories. It also examines the relative role of founders and Cluniac administration in this process. The discussion covers the types of sites selected for new priories and considers what this reveals about the concerns of Cluniac administration. The chapter begins with a consideration of the influence of security on site selection. This is followed by an examination of the different types of pre-existing religious significance that seems to have influenced the choice of sites for new Cluniac priories. These include chapels, parish churches, sites of previous monastic foundations, minsters, as well as landscape features that were characteristic of early monastic foundations. The chapter concludes with a consideration of other issues that seem to have influenced site selection including secular settlement and communication links.

The primary documentary evidence relevant to this subject is limited. Reasons for the selection of a particular site for a new Cluniac priory are rarely stated but it is possible to establish patterns by comparing examples where the evidence is strongest with examples where there is little if any evidence. The chapter draws heavily on the topographical distribution of sites and other landscape features. This approach illustrates the effectiveness of integrating documentary and physical evidence.

With only one notable exception, that of Preston Capes which was transferred to Daventry, the sites of Cluniac priories in England and Wales did not change. In a few other cases the first monks of a foundation were accommodated in a temporary location until the conventual complex of the foundation could be constructed. This suggests that particular care

was exercised in selecting sites that were appropriate as a setting for Cluniac monastic observance. This continuity of settlement is quite different from that of, for example, the Cistercians where site changes were relatively common due to a variety of factors including an insufficient water supply or flooding.<sup>1</sup> For example, the monastic community of Whalley Abbey in Lancashire had originally occupied a site at Stanlaw in Cheshire but their patron had agreed to the transfer to Whalley since the original site was susceptible to flooding and the community's lands were being eroded by spring tides.<sup>2</sup>

### **The influence of natural phenomena**

Certain minimal conditions were required for the site of any monastic foundation whether Cluniac or not. These included the availability of an adequate water supply and drainage from the site.<sup>3</sup> The insufficiency of the water supply was given as one of the reasons for the relocation of the monks of Preston Capes to Daventry.<sup>4</sup> This change of location was exceptional in the sense that it is the only example of the relocation of a Cluniac priory due to the influence of natural phenomena. This suggests that selection of other sites was made with sufficient care for the availability of these minimal requirements. Other sites were affected by physical location and climatic conditions. Lewes and Bermondsey were affected by flooding as they were partly on low lying land, while significant areas of the landholdings of Bromholm were lost to the sea due to costal erosion.<sup>5</sup> The influence of these factors was

---

<sup>1</sup> M. Aston, *Monasteries* (Stroud, 1993), p. 78; Burton and Kerr, *The Cistercians in the Middle Ages*, pp. 63–4.

<sup>2</sup> Robinson, *The Cistercian Abbeys of Britain*, p. 202.

<sup>3</sup> Aston, *Monasteries*, p. 90.

<sup>4</sup> *Monasticon*, V, pp. 178–9.

<sup>5</sup> For Bermondsey see *VCH Surrey*, vol. 2, p. 68; for Lewes see, *VCH Sussex*, vol. 7, ed. L. F. Salzman (1940), p. 68. In 1385 a licence granted to Bromholm for the appropriation of the church of Berdwell



never enough to result in a relocation of these priories, which suggests that they otherwise met desired criteria.

### **Cluniac sites and castles**

Many of the first Cluniac priories were sited at least initially, close to a castle, usually the caput of the founder. Lewes was sited on the side of a ridge at the foot of a hill on which the Warenne castle had been built (Fig 2.1). Barnstaple was located in a chapel dedicated to St Mary Magdalene just below the castle of its founder, Joel de Totnes, which served as the administrative centre of his north Devon estates. Montacute lay close to the castle which formed the caput of the landholdings of the founder, Robert de Mortain. The first monks at Castle Acre were accommodated within the limits of the castle of the de Warenne family (Fig. 2.2). The first monks at Clifford were accommodated adjacent to the parish church which was itself located close to the castle of William fitzOsbern, first earl of Hereford. Malpas was sited about one and a half miles north of the motte and bailey castle built by its founder Robert de la Haye as his caput. St Clears was located just to the north of the motte and bailey castle that served as the focus of the secular settlement there (Fig. 2.3). The first monks of what became the community of Lenton Priory were probably initially accommodated in caves under Nottingham castle in a chapel dedicated to St Mary, called le Roche, or St Mary of Roche.<sup>6</sup> At Northampton the first monks occupied a site just below the castle built by the founder of the founder, Simon de St Liz as his caput. The first monks at Thetford occupied a site in the church of St Mary which had been the site of the bishopric of Norfolk before it was transferred to Norwich and this site was close to that of the Bigod

---

issued by Richard II stated that the priory lands had been much wasted by the sea: *CPR 1381–1385*, p. 579 and *CPR 1385–1389*, p. 7.

<sup>6</sup> Green, 'Lenton Priory', pp. 34–5.

castle there (Fig. 2.4). Preston Capes Priory was close to the castle of Hugh de Leicester, its founder. Dudley Priory was established on a site adjacent to the castle of its founder, Ralph Paganell (Fig. 2.5). These examples of the siting of priories close to the castle in the caput of the founder suggest that this relationship was important as least at the time the priories were initially established. It is a relationship that is not unique to Cluniac foundations.<sup>7</sup> It has been argued in the case of Norwich, for instance, that the siting of the Benedictine cathedral and priory in close proximity to the castle and constructed at about the same time, consolidated Norman control over the settlement. The suggestion that monastic communities were established in such locations to provide for the spiritual needs of the baronial castle and household, and that the monks performed a parochial function there, is not, however, supported by any evidence that Cluniac monks did furnish parochial services (see below in this Chapter); this is, however, in contrast to other orders for which there is such evidence.<sup>8</sup> It has also been suggested for this and other examples, that the combination of castle and monastery were component parts of a designed and elite landscape, this model seeming to emphasise the benefit to the founder of such a relationship.<sup>9</sup> Such models stress the advantage to the founder but there is no reason why the close relationship should not have also have allowed Cluniac monks to benefit. The physical proximity of the monks to the founder in

---

<sup>7</sup> See, for instance, Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders*, pp. 33–5, 131–2, which draws attention to M. W. Thompson, ‘Associated monasteries and castles in the Middle Ages: a tentative list’, *Archaeological Journal*, 143 (1986), 305–21. For Welsh Benedictine examples see J. Burton, ‘Transition and transformation: the Benedictine houses’, in J. Burton and K. Stöber, ed., *Monastic Wales: new approaches* (Cardiff, 2013), pp. 21–37 (pp. 22–6).

<sup>8</sup> For Benedictine examples see D. Matthew, *The Norman Monasteries*, pp. 56–8. An Augustinian example is provided by Portchester, which was sited within the bailey of the castle. It was founded c. 1133 in more settled times when security would have been less of an issue. The monks there, as in many parish churches associated with Augustinian priories, are likely to have provided parochial services to the castle: Knowles and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses*, p. 174.

<sup>9</sup> Liddiard develops the concept of an elite landscape based on a castle but incorporating other elements such as a religious house: R. Liddiard, *Landscapes of Lordship: Norman castles and the countryside in medieval Norfolk, 1066–1200* (Oxford, 2000). See also R. Liddiard, ‘The castle landscapes of Anglo-Norman East Anglia: a regional perspective’, in C. Harper-Bill, ed., *Medieval East Anglia* (Woodbridge, 2005), pp. 33–51 (p. 34). In this article Castle Acre Castle and its relation to the Cluniac priory as components of an elite or designed landscape are discussed.

these situations certainly suggests a very close relationship between the two which might be more important than such utilitarian considerations. As will be seen below in other examples the final site of the Cluniac priory was determined by the requirements of the monks rather than any potential benefit to the founder.

Proximity to a castle allowed the first monks of these priories to benefit from the security offered by the castle at a time when their founders were establishing their authority over their landholdings. Anglo-Norman expansion into Wales occurred at a later date and only once the Normans had consolidated their control over most of England. This is likely to explain the fact that the Cluniac priories in that region Clifford, Malpas, and St Clears were sited close to a castle at a time when Cluniac priories in England had started to be located at a distance from such strongholds. The security of these Welsh priories would have remained a concern at a much later date and the area around St Clears remained an area of conflict and therefore insecurity for most of its existence. The siting of Dudley Priory close to Dudley Castle may have been influenced by concern for the security of its monks. It was founded some time between 1149 and 1160, so very possibly during that period of civil unrest, often known as the 'Anarchy', brought about by conflict between King Stephen (1135–1154) and the Empress Matilda. During this period the castle was held by Ralph Paganell who first intended to found the Cluniac priory, the foundation of which was completed by his son.<sup>10</sup> This period of unrest only ended with the coronation of King Henry II in 1154. In addition to Dudley the troubled reign of King Stephen may have seen two further foundations: Mendham (before 1155) and Wangford (before 1159). It would appear that in contrast to the Cistercians,

---

<sup>10</sup> Radford, 'The Cluniac priory of St James', p. 449.

for whom the ‘Anarchy’ was a peak period of expansion, the Cluniacs were little affected, at least in this respect, by the period of disorder.<sup>11</sup>

With no previous history of association with England or Wales and arriving for the first time in these countries where a foreign power was still consolidating its control, the security of the first Cluniac monks was a concern for the abbot of Cluny. Awareness of this was expressed in the copy of the foundation charter for Lewes which documents Abbot Hugh’s initial reluctance to the foundation of Lewes Priory: ‘the holy abbot was at first very adverse to us to hear our petition (to send Cluniac monks to Lewes), on account of the distance of the foreign land and especially by distance of the sea’.<sup>12</sup> It is also reflected in his insisting on royal consent for this and subsequent Cluniac foundations before monks were sent to establish them. By contrast new foundations such as Battle Abbey, populated by Benedictine monks and established by King William I, could be sited away from castles as they enjoyed royal protection and a Benedictine tradition relating to the monks present in pre-Conquest abbeys in England belonging to the same Order.

Too close proximity to a castle, however, was likely significantly to interfere with the observance of the Cluniac monks. This disturbance is given as the other reason for the relocation of the monks of Preston Capes Priory to Daventry.<sup>13</sup> It is also reflected in the damage done to Pontefract Priory. The early buildings were partially destroyed during a feud between Gilbert de Gant and Henry de Lacy, rival claimants to the de Lacy estates, between 1141 and 1151.<sup>14</sup> In those cases where Cluniac monks were initially accommodated in closest proximity to castles, Castle Acre, Barnstaple, Montacute, Clifford, Nottingham, and St Clears

---

<sup>11</sup> For Cistercian foundations in this period, see, for instance, J. Burton, ‘The foundation of the British Cistercian houses’, in C. Norton and D. Park, ed., *Cistercian Art and Architecture in the British Isles* (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 24–39 .

<sup>12</sup> St John Hope, ‘Architectural history’, p. 2.

<sup>13</sup> *Monasticon*, V, pp. 178–9: *propter castelli propinquitatem*.

<sup>14</sup> *Chartulary of Pontefract*, nos 399 and 400.

this relationship may always have been seen as a compromise arrangement. It is unclear whether it was always viewed as a temporary arrangement by Cluniac administration but it may have been expected that the security of the first Cluniac monks would improve as the Normans continued to consolidate their control over their land holdings. In any case, the improving security situation would have made the siting of later Cluniac priories close to a castle less of a consideration especially given the disadvantages of this arrangement. It also allowed existing Cluniac priories that had initially been sited close to a castle to be relocated to an alternative planned site at a greater distance from the castle. The copy of the foundation charter for Castle Acre issued by William de Warenne stated that the monks should *at first* be placed in his castle.<sup>15</sup>

As security in England and Wales improved and the Normans consolidated their control over their new landholdings, new Cluniac priories began to be sited away from castles. These included : Bermondsey, Bromholm, Kerswell, Monk Bretton, Monkton Farleigh – whose founder’s caput was located a significant distance away in Trowbridge – Monks Horton, Prittlewell, Normansburgh, Daventry, Horkesley, Kersal, Mendham, Slevesholm, Stanesgate, St James, Exeter, St James, Derby, and Wangford.

Most founding monastic populations initially accommodated closest to castles were subsequently relocated to permanent sites at a distance from the castle. The monks of Northampton Priory were relocated to a site close to but outside the ramparts and one of the gatehouses of the town. The monks accommodated in the chapel of St Roche, Nottingham, were settled in a permanent site in Lenton, a suburb of the secular settlement of Nottingham west of the castle. The first monks of Barnstaple Priory were moved from the chapel dedicated to St Mary Magdalene to a permanent site outside the town wall between the North and East gates of the settlement, bounded on one side by the river Yeo. While considerations

---

<sup>15</sup> Duckett, *Charters and Records of Cluni*, I, p. 50: *de quibus eciam posuimus primo in ecclesia castelli nostri de Acra.*

such as the inadequacy of the size of early sites close to castles as monastic populations expanded may have been a factor in relocation, it seems likely that these initial sites of Cluniac monastic communities were always seen as temporary to provide security for the initial small numbers of monks while a permanent site more suitable for the demands of Cluniac monastic observance could be established. Certainly the foundation bequest for these examples was sufficient to assume that the initial monastic population would grow. The monks of Montacute Priory remained on the same site but the castle which had been included in the foundation bequest of the priory was demolished and stone from the castle was used to construct the conventual buildings on the site.<sup>16</sup>

The relocation of the first monks of priories occurred with the support of the founders who provided land for the new priories.<sup>17</sup> This suggests that the identification of the Cluniac foundation with the founder expressed though its location adjacent to his centre of power was something a founder was willing to concede in return for the other benefits consequent on the foundation of a Cluniac priory and the association this brought with the wider Cluniac monastic community. The distance moved was sometimes small, sufficient to minimise any negative impact on monastic observance, while allowing the founder to continue to benefit from proximity to his priory. The monks of Castle Acre were moved to a permanent site situated approximately a quarter of a mile to the south west about a year after they arrived in Castle Acre (Fig. 2.2). The copy of the charter of William de Warenne II stated that ‘the church in which they now dwell is too strait and very inconvenient for an abode of monks’.<sup>18</sup> By the time that this charter was issued the monks had already begin to build on the new site and ‘they had founded their new church with his (William de Warenne II’s) encouragement’.

---

<sup>16</sup> Golding, ‘Coming of the Cluniacs’, pp. 74–5.

<sup>17</sup> F. J. E. Raby and P. K. Baillie Reynolds, *Thetford Priory* (London, 1990) p. 11; *VCH Norfolk*, p. 363.

<sup>18</sup> W. H. St John Hope, ‘Castleacre Priory’, *Norfolk Archaeology*, 12 (1894), 105–57 (p. 106); charter in *Monasticon*, V, pp. 49–50.

In the cases where priories adjacent to castles were not relocated, such as Dudley, the site of the priory was already at a sufficient distance from the castle that it did not interfere significantly with monastic observance. Thus to summarise it seems likely that earliest Cluniac priories were established on sites where they would benefit from the security provided by the castle in the caput of the founder. As immediate threats receded new Cluniac priories were established apart from castles and many priories were relocated to sites where the proximity of a castle would not interfere with monastic observance.

### **Cluniac sites and existing structures**

Regardless of the proximity of the relationship between the sites of priories and the castles of their founders, a distinctive feature of the sites was that they were all occupied by a structure that could immediately serve as an oratory for the first monks. There is no evidence for the construction of a temporary timber oratory on sites such as has been documented at Cistercian sites such as Fountains Abbey.<sup>19</sup> This suggests that the initial or permanent sites of the priories were chosen because they could provide such a structure and that immediate continuation of liturgical observance by the first monks was expected. In almost every case the Cluniac priory adopted the dedication of the structure that was used as the initial oratory of the first monks of each priory. This dedication was retained if the priory was permanently established on a different site. In many cases the structure was an existing church or chapel. The first Cluniac monks at Lewes used the pre-existing church of St Pancras which according to the copy of the foundation charter had been reconstructed in stone from wood by the

---

<sup>19</sup> G. Coppack, *Fountains Abbey: The Cistercians in Northern England* (Stroud, 2009), p. 22. Coppack also states that many such buildings are described in Cistercian chronicles and later sources, for instance at Clairvaux, Foigny, Rievaulx, and Meaux.

founder, William de Warenne.<sup>20</sup> At Bermondsey the oratory is likely to have been the *nova et pulchra ecclesia* referred to in the Domesday Survey and dedicated to St Saviour included in the manor of Bermondsey granted by King William II.<sup>21</sup> The first monks at Barnstaple made use of the chapel dedicated to St Mary Magdalene below the castle which was included in the foundation bequest for the priory.<sup>22</sup> The first monks at Montacute, dedicated to St Peter and St Paul, made use of the pre-existing church of St Peter, *ecclesiam S. Petri juxta castellum meum Montem Acutum sitam*, as their oratory.<sup>23</sup> The first monks of Lenton Priory made use of the chapel of Roche. Those of Pontefract made use of the chapel in the hospital of St Nicholas which had been granted to the priory.<sup>24</sup> The first monks at Thetford dedicated to St Mary would have made use of the church and former cathedral of St Mary, left vacant following the transfer of the episcopal see of East Anglia to Norwich in 1095.<sup>25</sup> At Dudley Priory, which is dedicated to St James, the pre-existing church of St James, Dudley, which was included in the foundation bequest of the priory, is likely to have functioned as the oratory.<sup>26</sup> It is likely to be the structure which was incorporated into the later priory church as its south transept. It is of strikingly different orientation to the rest of the priory church suggesting its pre-existence when the remainder of the church was constructed (Fig. 5.5). At Kersal the church of the hermitage of St Leonard would have been used from which the

---

<sup>20</sup> St John Hope, 'Architectural history', p. 2: 'a church, which we built of stone in place of a wooden one, below our castle of Lewes, that was of old time in honour of St Pancras'.

<sup>21</sup> London, British Library, MS Lansdowne 863, fol. 91, cited in *VCH Surrey*, p. 64. This refers to the grant of Bermondsey to the priory wherein the church was located.

<sup>22</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 197.

<sup>23</sup> *Montacute Cartulary*, no. 1.

<sup>24</sup> *Chartulary of Pontefract*, I, p. 1. Leland states 'there was a college and hospital in Brockenbridg (Pontefract) before the Conquest, wher the Monkes lay ontill the priorie was erected. It is yet an hospital': see John Leland, *The Itineraries of John Leland the Antiquary*, ed. T. Hearne, 9 vols (London, 1744–5), III, p. 37.

<sup>25</sup> *VCH Norfolk*, vol. 2, ed. W. Page (1906), p. 363.

<sup>26</sup> *VCH Worcestershire*, vol. 2, ed. J. W. Willis-Bund and W. Page (1906), p. 159.



Cluniac priory derived its dedication.<sup>27</sup> At Slevesholm the church of the pre-existing religious community dedicated to St Mary and St Giles would have been used.<sup>28</sup>

### *Parish churches and Cluniac sites*

In some cases the chancel of an existing parish church was used as the oratory while the nave of the church was adapted as a separate setting for secular worship. This arrangement could be temporary while the east end of a separate priory church was constructed or permanent when grants and bequests were insufficient to fund such construction. Examples of the former included: Prittlewell (St Mary),<sup>29</sup> Clifford (St Mary), and Bromholm (St Andrew). Examples of the latter include: Daventry, the parish church of which was dedicated to St Augustine;<sup>30</sup> Malpas, the parish church, dedicated to St Mary, granted to the priory by the founder Robert de la Haye;<sup>31</sup> St Clears;<sup>32</sup> St James, Derby;<sup>33</sup> St Helen's on the Isle of Wight;<sup>34</sup> Horkesley, the parish church dedicated to St Peter;<sup>35</sup> and Wangford dedicated to St Mary, St Peter, and St Paul.<sup>36</sup> Although monks and canons of other orders shared parish churches with a secular community, for example Benedictines at Binham Priory in Norfolk, and Augustinians at

---

<sup>27</sup> *VCH Lancashire*, vol. 2, ed. W. Farrer and J. Brownbill (1908), p. 113. This is a charter of Henry II regranting Kersal to Lenton Priory.

<sup>28</sup> *VCH Norfolk*, p. 359.

<sup>29</sup> The parish church of St Mary was included in the foundation charter of the priory: *VCH Essex*, p. 138.

<sup>30</sup> *Cartulary of Daventry Priory*, pp. xvii–xviii.

<sup>31</sup> *Montacute Cartulary*, no. 165. The priory is sometimes referred to as having the dual dedication to St Triac and St Mary (*Montacute Cartulary*, nos 164, 165), suggesting an early date for the parish church.

<sup>32</sup> The priory is referred to interchangeably as *Prioratus Sancte Maria Magdalenes aut S. Clari: Recueil*, VIII, p. 55; *S. Clorus and prioratus beate Marie Magdalene alias Sancti Clari in (de) Vallis* in Cluniac records: Duckett, *Charters and Records*, p. 211.

<sup>33</sup> Knowles and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses*, p. 99.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.* p. 102.

<sup>35</sup> R. Graham, 'A history of the buildings of the English Province of the Order of Cluny', p. 21.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

Cartmel in Cumbria and many other Augustinian foundations, there are no examples of a church being newly constructed to serve as a shared place of worship for Cluniac monks and seculars suggesting that the arrangement was viewed as a compromise to be avoided if sufficient resources existed to provide a separate site for monastic observance.

The relationship between the dedication of a Cluniac priory and that of the parish church in the associated secular settlement, in cases where the latter served as a permanent or temporary oratory, is so consistent that if the dedication is the same it is likely that the oratory of the parish church was used as the temporary oratory of the first monks. The first Cluniac monks at Clifford Priory, which is dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, are likely to have used the chancel of the pre-existing parish church of the same dedication as their temporary oratory even though there is no documentary evidence for this and the earliest surviving fabric in the church is of thirteenth-century date.

#### *Sites of previous monastic foundations*

In other cases there is evidence that an alternative type of pre-existing structure of religious significance was used. At Wenlock a pre-existing structure with an apsidal east end, recovered by excavation, seems to have been used as the first oratory and this was incorporated into the permanent priory church on the site of its crossing.<sup>37</sup> William of Malmesbury noted the previous significance of Wenlock ‘but the place had been quite abandoned when the earl filled it with Cluniac monks, and now lovely shoots of virtue stain towards the sky’.<sup>38</sup> It has been suggested that this could have been the oratory of the pre-

---

<sup>37</sup> D. H. S. Cranage, ‘The monastery of St Milburge at Much Wenlock, Shropshire’, *Archaeologia*, 62 (1922), 106–17 (pp. 106–7).

<sup>38</sup> William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Pontificum*, I, pp. 464–5.

existing church of the monastery of St Milburge and that the priory retained this dedication.<sup>39</sup> Other sites also seem to have been those of a pre-existing monastery or religious foundation. The priory of St Carrock in Cornwall was founded on the site of a small pre-Conquest monastery, mentioned in the Domesday Survey and seized after the Conquest by the father of the founder, Robert de Mortain.<sup>40</sup> The Cluniac priory is variably referred to as St Cyriac or Syriac, St Carricius,<sup>41</sup> St Cyriacus and Julitta, St Cadix, and St Cyret and Julette.<sup>42</sup> This suggests that the Cluniac priory adopted the dedication of the pre-existing monastery. When Cluniac monks were transferred from Preston Capes to the final site of the Cluniac priory in Daventry, the site had been that of a college of canons possibly founded before the Conquest. Of the four canons in residence at the time that the first Cluniac monks arrived, two became Cluniac monks while the other two were able to keep their prebend for life.<sup>43</sup> The priory adopted the dedication of St Augustine, which had been that of the college and parish church. The Cluniac monks subsequently acquired that part of the endowment that had remained in the hands of the remaining secular canons, arguing that it should be theirs in view of that fact that it had belonged to the pre-existing religious foundation with which they had established continuity.<sup>44</sup> Normansburgh was an Augustinian foundation established by the founder of the Cluniac priory, Godfrey de Liseurs, but transferred to become a Cluniac priory.<sup>45</sup> It was dedicated to St Mary and St John the Evangelist and had been populated by canons. The

---

<sup>39</sup> C. Pearce 'The Priory of St Milburge, Much Wenlock and the Abbot of Cluny. A Case Study of Extended Monastic Community?', unpublished M. Phil. thesis, University of Wales, Lampeter 2006, p. 80.

<sup>40</sup> *Montacute Cartulary*, no. 13.

<sup>41</sup> Knowles and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses*, p. 102.

<sup>42</sup> Leland, *Itineraries*, III, p. 37.

<sup>43</sup> *Daventry Cartulary*, no. 664.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, nos 2 and 3.

<sup>45</sup> Knowles and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses*, p. 101.

Cluniac priory retained the same dedication. Slevesholm was sited on the island of St Mary in the moor or fen of Melewode. It had been a religious foundation and reference is made in the grant of the site to Castle Acre of Paul and his brother monks serving God there, *et fratri Paulo et fratribus ibidem Deo servantibus*, and dedicated to St Mary and St Giles.<sup>46</sup> Again, the Cluniac priory retained the dedication of the pre-existing religious site.

There is evidence that the site of Lewes Priory also have been the site of a previous religious foundation. The copy of the foundation charter to the priory included the grant of the church of St Pancras and its appurtenances suggesting it was more than an isolated building and reference to the church as *ab antiquo in honore sancti Pancratii* is evidence of its longevity and possible importance.<sup>47</sup> Excavations on the site of the priory between 1969 and 1982 revealed evidence of Saxon occupation, pre-dating the priory, which may have been monastic in character.<sup>48</sup> The excavations revealed evidence of burnt Saxon material indicating destruction of buildings on the site. This included evidence of a small church or shrine with a central ritual shaft, beneath the site of the later Cluniac infirmary chapel, ephemeral buildings beneath the later eastern claustral range, part of the southern frater wall, and the so-called sacristy building.<sup>49</sup> An earlier excavation report had noted of the fabric of the frater that the

herringbone work which is on the south face of the refectory wall...dates from a very short period after the Norman conquest and not much later than 1100. It is not a Saxon method, and I do not think that it can be called Norman in origin; it seems to have appeared suddenly and

---

<sup>46</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 75.

<sup>47</sup> Duckett, *Charters and Records*, I, p. 44.

<sup>48</sup> M. Lyne, *Lewes Priory Excavations by Richard Lewis 1969–82* (Lewes Priory Trust, 1997).

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

disappeared almost at once. In the south wall of the undercroft there are three double-splayed windows. The double-splayed window is usually a Saxon feature.<sup>50</sup>

The earlier building remains were all orientated differently from the later Cluniac structures, suggesting their earlier date. It has been suggested that the church of St Pancras may have been the structure later converted to use as an infirmary chapel. This seems unlikely because as indicated by the examples of Wenlock and Dudley, discussed above, the structure first used as an oratory by Cluniac monks was venerated by being incorporated into the fabric of the priory church. An alternative candidate exists for the site of the church of St Pancras in an apsidal building revealed by the construction of a railway line through the site in the nineteenth century. The excavated plan reveals that this building was of the same orientation and attached to the southern lesser transept of the east end of the final priory church (Fig. 5.6).<sup>51</sup> Like the structure at Dudley Priory it became part of the fabric of the priory church. Whatever its original location, the church of St Pancras may have been part of an earlier monastic complex and it was selected as the site for the Cluniac priory for that reason. The selection of a site associated with St Pancras may also have had a symbolic importance to the Cluniacs. It was the dedication of the first church consecrated by St Augustine following his arrival in Canterbury in 597. St Augustine had been a monk in the monastery of St Andrew in Rome, founded by St Gregory on land that had belonged to the Pancras family, descendants of the family of the boy martyr, St Pancras, executed by sword during the Diocletian persecution in 303 and 304.<sup>52</sup> By choosing a site associated with St Pancras for their first foundation in England they established an association between Cluniac expansion into England with the first Christian mission to the country.

---

<sup>50</sup> W. H. Godfrey, 'Lewes: the priory of St Pancras', *Archaeological Journal*, 116 (1959), 258–9 (p. 258).

<sup>51</sup> M. A. Lower, 'Further report on discoveries at Lewes', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 2 (1847), 104–8.

<sup>52</sup> F. Bond, *Dedications and Patron Saints of English Churches* (Oxford, 1914) pp. 66, 114.

The site of Farleigh Priory may also have had an earlier monastic association and been chosen as the site of the Cluniac priory for that reason. The priory is frequently referred to in Cluniac documents as ‘Coniss’ which could refer to a possible earlier name for a monastic foundation on the site. During an excavation on the site of the Cluniac priory a gravestone was recovered within the priory church dedicated to one Lawrence and dated to the year 616.<sup>53</sup> The retention of this grave marker within the walls of the priory church suggests that it had some significance to the Cluniac monastic community and may have been associated with the founder or head of a previous religious foundation on the site. This may have been located on the site of the south transept of the later priory church as excavation has revealed that this part of the final priory church incorporated an earlier structure possible pre-existing the arrival of the Cluniacs and presumably used as their first oratory (Fig. 5.10).<sup>54</sup>

Documentary references exist referring to possible earlier religious foundations on the sites of other Cluniac priories. The monastic chronicler Ingulf, writing at Croyland Abbey, claimed to have met two monks at Croyland Abbey in 1076 who had been professed at St Andrew’s Northampton, some seventeen years before the first possible date for the foundation of the Cluniac priory of the same dedication there.<sup>55</sup> There are documentary references for an earlier monastic foundation at Bermondsey. There is an Anglo-Saxon reference to an earlier abbey of Bermondsey from records allegedly from Peterborough Abbey. Peterborough was known as Medeshamstede in the Anglo-Saxon period and a

---

<sup>53</sup> H. Brakspear, ‘Excavations at some Wiltshire monasteries, Monkton Farley Priory’, *Archaeologia*, 73 (1923), 235–44 (p. 238).

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 241. Brakspear thought that this structure had been built by the first Cluniac monks.

<sup>55</sup> *VCH Northamptonshire*, vol. 2, ed. R. M. Serjeantsen, W. Ryland, and D. Adkins (1906), p. 102, note 1, cites Ingulf but dismisses his statement without explanation as does Guilloreau (Guilloreau, ‘Les prieurés anglais’, p. 300, note 3), giving as his reason the reputation of Ingulf for inaccuracy in England. It has since been established that Ingulf’s chronicle is likely to have originated from the thirteenth or fourteenth century and considered a fabrication to justify landholdings of Croyland Abbey in its vicinity. Even if that is the case it seems likely that some of its content refers to earlier events in the history of the abbey there seems no reason to suppose that this statement is untrue. See Walter de Gray Birch, ed., *The Chronicle of Croyland Abbey by Ingulf* (Wisbech, 1883), pp. vi–xii.

Bermondsey Abbey was named as a daughter house of Medeshamstede in the tenth century ‘it cam to pass that from that very minster were founded many other with brothers and abbots from the same congregation as at ...Bermondsey’.<sup>56</sup> A much earlier eighth-century papal privilege supposedly granted by Constantine to Hedda, abbot and priest of two minsters of Bermondsey and Wokingham, is also preserved in Peterborough’s archive; it placed the minsters under papal protection and decreed

that the local bishop should ordain a priest or deacon for the community of his own choosing and should consecrate whomsoever the congregation should choose as their abbot without imposing any stranger on them and should otherwise interfere in their affairs only if they committed faults contrary to the sacred canons.<sup>57</sup>

Although continuity in site between the eighth and twelfth century seems unusual there is at last one other Cluniac example which provides an even longer continuity of site, that of Wenlock Priory founded between 1077 and 1083 on the site of a pre-Conquest monastic community originally founded by Milburge daughter of Merewald King of Mercia in 690 and from which the Cluniac foundation took its dedication.<sup>58</sup>

In choosing the site of Bermondsey for a Cluniac priory, a tradition of papal protection and immunity from ecclesiastical authority was inherited from the Constantine privilege, from which the Cluniac monastic community would continue to benefit. Excavations on the site of the priory revealed a series of foundations and robber trenches in the north-eastern part of the site which were so incorporated with the other later remains as to leave no doubt that

---

<sup>56</sup> F. M. Stenton, ‘Medeshamstede and its colonies’, in J. G. Edwards et al, ed., *Historical Essays in Honour of James Tait* (Manchester, 1933), pp. 313–26.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid. pp. 320–1; W. Levison, *England and the Continent in the Eighth Century* (Oxford, 1946), p. 26, no. 2.

<sup>58</sup> Pearce ‘The priory of St Milburge’, p. 7.

they were earlier than anything else on the site.<sup>59</sup> It is possible that they are the remains of the minster referred to in these documents. The same excavations revealed evidence of another earlier church on the site with a series of parallel apses at the east end.<sup>60</sup> It seems likely that this was the newly built church – *nova et pulchra ecclesia* – referred to in the Domesday Survey in 1086 and which the annals of Bermondsey stated was a church dedicated to St Saviour.<sup>61</sup> Presumably this church replaced that of the earlier minster and had been rebuilt because of its significance. This would have provided the first Cluniac monks on the site with an oratory and the dedication of the priory. It was venerated by becoming incorporated within the fabric of the later Cluniac church.

In all of these examples the selection of the site of the Cluniac priory seems to have been influenced by the presence of a pre-existing monastic foundation on the site. Continuity is established with the pre-existing foundation by adopting its dedication, the use of part of the structural remains of the pre-existing foundation as the first oratory of the Cluniac monks and its veneration by incorporation into the fabric of the later Cluniac priory church. This association was sometimes taken further by, for example, the use of an image of St Pancras dressed in a Cluniac monastic habit in the later seal of Lewes Priory.<sup>62</sup> The tombstone of Gundrada, wife of William de Warenne and co-founder of Lewes Priory, bears an inscription in which she appeals to St Pancras as possessor of the lands granted to the Cluniacs by her and her husband and makes the saint her heir.<sup>63</sup> Images of the Saviour and St Milburge are

---

<sup>59</sup> W. F. Grimes ‘The Cluniac abbey of St Saviour, Bermondsey’, in *The Excavation of Roman and Medieval London* (London, 1968), pp. 210–17 (p. 213).

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 215.

<sup>61</sup> *Annals of Bermondsey*, p. 426.

<sup>62</sup> *VCH Sussex*, vol. 7, pp. 70–1.

<sup>63</sup> E. van Houts, ‘The Warenne view of the past’, *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 26 (2004), pp. 103–21 (p. 108). This author suggests that the founders viewed St Pancras as the heir of the lands granted by them to Lewes Priory. It is clear from the evidence presented above however that the site of the priory was already associated with the saint and that the inscription furthers this association.



present on seals of Bermondsey and Wenlock Priory respectively. These constitute a rare moment where documentary and material evidence come together.<sup>64</sup> The identification of the foundation with its dedication was so complete that the use of reference to St Pancras in Cluniac and non-Cluniac documents was taken as referring to Lewes Priory.

On other occasions sites of priories had another type of pre-existing religious significance. Montacute Priory was sited close to a hill top on which according to the late twelfth-century account of the foundation of Waltham Abbey, a wonder-working cross was discovered in about the year 1035 by Tofig, sheriff of King Harthacnut.<sup>65</sup> The cross was moved to a new religious foundation on Tofig's estate of Waltham while the place where the cross was discovered retained a religious significance because of its association with the cross and was granted to the local abbey of Athelney from which Robert de Mortain, founder of Montacute Priory, acquired it by land exchange.<sup>66</sup>

### *Minster sites*

Other sites seem to have been minster centres where the church had a particular early religious significance because it housed clergy that provided religious services over an unusually large area which was later subdivided into parishes.<sup>67</sup> The site of Mendham Priory, the island of St Mary, had been the site of a minster with one hide of land in the tenth century.<sup>68</sup> A church there is mentioned in the will of Theodred, bishop of Elmham, in the year

---

<sup>64</sup> Graham, 'The priory of La Charité sur Loire', pp. 119–21.

<sup>65</sup> Golding, 'Coming of the Cluniacs', p. 74; S. Prior, *A Few Well-Positioned Castles: the Norman Art of War* (Stroud, 2006), pp. 101–104.

<sup>66</sup> *Domesday Book*, ed. Williams and Martin, p. 247.

<sup>67</sup> J. Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society* (Oxford, 2010), pp. 4–5; R. Morris, *Churches in the Landscape* (London, 1989), pp. 128–30.

<sup>68</sup> *Early Charters of Eastern England*, ed. C. Hart (London, 1966), p. 53.

950.<sup>69</sup> The parish pattern of Mendham and its neighbouring parishes of Withersdale and Metfield is extraordinarily complex, suggesting that they once formed a single minster-land.<sup>70</sup> Domesday Book entries for Mendham included lands now in Metfield, Withersdale, and Weybread, suggesting that these parishes arose from a later sub-division of a larger land area. Unusually this lay on both sides of the county boundary between Norfolk and Suffolk suggesting that it may even have preceded the establishment of this boundary.<sup>71</sup> It is possible that the dedication of the Cluniac priory to St Mary originated from the use by the first Cluniac monks of a pre-existing minster church of the same dedication in the vicinity of the subsequent site of the priory. The site also had the benefit of associated cultivated land and marshland for grazing. These lands may have been developed to support the minster and granted intact to the Cluniac priory because of their previous association.<sup>72</sup>

The parish church of St Mary, Prittlewell, incorporates remains of an earlier seventh-century church and may have served as a minster. It was held by three priests who retained their rights for life when the priory was founded.<sup>73</sup> It seems likely that the church was part of an important Anglo-Saxon estate centre of the East Saxon kingdom. The site of the church and later priory lay to the west of an Anglo-Saxon cemetery. Excavations from this site have revealed an early seventh-century high status burial chamber orientated east to west and including amongst its grave goods a Coptic bowl, a possible baptismal spoon, and gold foil

---

<sup>69</sup> D. Whitelock, ed., *Anglo-Saxon Wills* (Cambridge, 1930), no. 1.

<sup>70</sup> P. Warner, *The Origins of Suffolk* (Manchester, 1996), p. 133.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 149.

<sup>72</sup> These lands included Ulveshage, in which were situated granges, the cultivated land Micheleheg, the lands of Langahaga, Gernagodi, Hussale and a wood called Midelhal.

<sup>73</sup> *Monasticon*, V, pp. 22–3.

crosses indicating Christian influence. It seems likely that the first Cluniac monks used the oratory of the church of St Mary from which the dedication of the priory was derived.<sup>74</sup>

The parish church of St Peter, Wangford, is likely to have been a minster before it became the site of the Cluniac priory. Wangford is the name of the hundred in which the parish is located. It seems to have been the focus of a great pre-Conquest estate whose dependent chapels and churches of Southwold and Reydon eventually grew to become fully-fledged churches of neighbouring parishes.<sup>75</sup> Clifford church, the chancel of which seems likely to have been used by the first Cluniac monks there as their first oratory, may also have been a minster. The parish of Clifford is one of the largest in England with at one time a total area of some 10,500 acres and is referred to in Domesday.<sup>76</sup> Like the sites of Mendham and Slevesholm it has Marian associations. It was formed from two pre-Norman foci of settlement, Llanfair-ar-y-bryn (St Mary on the Hill) and Llanfair-yn-y-cwm (St Mary in the valley). The latter settlement became the site of the Cluniac priory dedicated to St Mary as is the parish church on the hill above the priory.

Certain characteristic landscape features suggest that the church at Malpas, which became the site of a Cluniac priory, had a significant previous religious significance. The churchyard can be seen to have had a curvilinear northern boundary on the tithe map of 1847. A partly curvilinear boundary has been identified as a feature of a significant proportion of pre-Norman ecclesiastical sites identified from documentary sources.<sup>77</sup> The church also lay within an outer concentric enclosure which is curved on the south and west and demarcated by a lane on the south and south-west. These features suggest that the pre-existing church

---

<sup>74</sup> S. Hirst et al., *The Prittlewell Prince* (London, 2004).

<sup>75</sup> Warner, *The Origins of Suffolk*, p. 134.

<sup>76</sup> *Domesday Book*, ed. Williams and Martin, p. 507.

<sup>77</sup> D. L. Brook, 'Early Ecclesiastical Sites in South-East Wales', unpublished MA thesis, Cardiff University (1977).

dedicated to St Triac could have been an example of a *clas* church, the Welsh equivalent to a minster.<sup>78</sup> The churchyard of the church which provided the setting for the other Cluniac priory in Wales at St Clears, also has a partly curvilinear boundary. The Cluniac priory was endowed with the advowson of two other neighbouring churches as well as that of the church of St Clears itself, dedicated to St Clorus, a co-dedication of the priory. It is possible that the church of St Clorus was also a *clas* church, on which the other two churches, were dependent. By choosing a minster or *clas* church as the focus of the site of a Cluniac priory, the priory inherited a site of pre-existing religious significance as well as pre-existing integral supportive infrastructure which could be transferred to the support of the priory.

#### *Greenfield sites with features characteristic of early monastic sites*

Sites without evidence of a pre-existing religious significance often had features characteristic of early monastic sites.<sup>79</sup> Bromholm Priory, as the place name suffix suggests, was situated on a holm, denoting an island in a marsh.<sup>80</sup> Aerial photographs reveal that the priory site was surrounded by relict watercourses (Fig. 2.) and field-walking of the monastic precinct demonstrated that the site chosen for the priory was virgin ground without any Roman or Anglo-Saxon precedent.<sup>81</sup> Holme Priory in Dorset had a similar setting. Dudley achieved the same effect by having a series of watercourses dug around the priory site. Horkesley was situated on a low island as indicated by the place name suffix –eg for an island<sup>82</sup> and the permanent sites of Castle Acre, Clifford, and Horton were in valley settings. These foundations shared these site characteristics with early monastic sites such as St

---

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> T. Pestell, *Landscapes of Monastic Foundation* (Woodbridge, 2004), pp. 223–26.

<sup>80</sup> K. Cameron, *English Place Names* (London, 1996), p. 173.

<sup>81</sup> Pestell, *Landscapes of Monastic Foundation*, p. 211.

<sup>82</sup> Cameron, *English Place Names*, p. 172.

Botolph's Iken in Suffolk and Brandon in Norfolk, as well as early sites of religious significance which became sites of Cluniac priories, such as Slevesholm, Mendham,<sup>83</sup> Bermondsey, and Lewes, which is referred to in a copy of its foundation charter as *Insulam in qua monasterium situm est*.<sup>84</sup> These landscape features provided their Cluniac priories with relative isolation and an association with a landscape type which they could share with earlier monastic foundations.

### **Other considerations: secular settlement, communication links**

As will be discussed below (Chapter 6) proximity to secular settlement was an important consideration in the selection of a site for a Cluniac priory. This was because the monks did not participate in manual labour and did not to any significant degree benefit from the presence of *conversi* or lay brothers within their communities. They therefore depended on proximity to a secular settlement to provide them with the support that they needed to be able to carry out their observance. In many cases a secular settlement already existed in suitable proximity to the site of the priory but in those cases where none did such as at Bromholm or in existing larger settlements, foci of secular settlement soon developed adjacent to the site of the priory to provide support to the monastic community.

Strategic considerations also seem to have governed the selection of sites for priories. This has already been discussed in relation to the likely process of foundation of Bermondsey Priory, located close to a major crossing of the river Thames to London, the principal city of England. Interconnectedness between priories would also have been important to allow priors to visit those priories which were dependent on them. The effectiveness of strategic links

---

<sup>83</sup> The site of Mendham was referred to as the Island of St Mary, *insulam de Bruniggehurst*, the island of Brunningehurst (*Monasticon*, V, p. 58, nos 1, 2).

<sup>84</sup> *EYC*, VIII, p. 55.

between the priories is revealed by the relative speed with which the official visitors of the abbot of Cluny were able to travel among foundations when conducting their visitations.

Between 25 July and 1 October 1279 eighteen different priories were visited (see below Chapter 3).<sup>85</sup>

Many priories were sited close to a major thoroughfare. Lewes, Horton, and Bermondsey were located close to major roads that connected London with the south coast. Clifford was adjacent to a route of major strategic importance allowing access to and from Wales from England, at a likely ford over the River Wye that had been in use since at least the Roman period. Castle Acre was located close to a major crossing of the navigable river Nar on an early important thoroughfare, the Peddar's Way. Many priories were located close to a navigable river or the coast which allowed waterborne access to and between priories in England and Wales and France. Barnstaple was located on the north coast of Devon in a bay into which drained the River Taw. Kersal was close to the River Irwell. St James, Exeter was close to the River Exe on the south coast of England. Lenton was located close to the River Trent. Monks Horton was on a tributary of the River Stour. The river Nene formed one side of the precinct boundary of Northampton Priory. Bromholm was located on the north Norfolk coast. St Carroc was sited on the Penpol Creek of the River Fowey close to the south coast of Cornwall. St Helen's was on the Isle of Wight. Malpas and St Clears were close to the south Wales coast, the latter adjacent to a navigable waterway, the River Cynin. Stanesgate was located on a crossing of the River Blackwater close to the Essex coast; its name could be interpreted as stone street suggesting a ford over the River Blackwater at that site. Prittlewell was close to the Essex coast on a tributary of the River Roach, and Wangford was within easy reach of the Suffolk coast. Lewes was located close to a major road between London and the south coast. Evidence of an artificial embankment suggests that ships were able to dock and

---

<sup>85</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, pp. 20–37.

discharge their cargoes along the south side of the monastic precinct at high tides until at least the end of the eleventh century. All such features served to enhance the interconnectedness of the monks situated in the various priories and so to strengthen the link within the extended Cluniac monastic community.

Transmarine travel was essential to allow priors of foundations that were directly dependent on Cluny to attend the General Chapter, for visits to England and Wales by the abbots of Cluny and for unprofessed monks to reach and return from Cluny. The priors of La Charité and St Martin des Champs relied on sea and river access to administer their dependencies in England and Wales. It is because of the strategic setting of many Cluniac priories that they were confiscated early following the start of conflict between England and France. All the alien priories within a certain distance of the coast were confiscated to prevent them communicating with France.<sup>86</sup> The importance given to strategic siting and interconnectedness of priories is another reflection of how the Cluniac organisation can be seen as an extended monastic community which depends on effective links to function effectively.

\*\*\*\*\*

This chapter has shown for the first time that particular care was exercised by a centrally coordinated administration in selecting appropriate sites for new Cluniac priories in England and Wales so that they provided for the requirements of Cluniac monastic observance, the effectiveness of which is demonstrated by the fact that with one exception – other than locations that were always intended to be temporary – the sites of the priories did not change. The requirements for sites clearly exceeded the basic necessities of a well drained site with a good water supply. In fact such considerations could be ignored if particular sites had other

---

<sup>86</sup> R. Graham, 'The Cluniac Order', p. 173.

advantages. The most immediate requirement was for a structure that could immediately serve as an oratory for the first monks so that liturgical observance could remain uninterrupted. Both the type of structure chosen for this purpose and the way in which its identity was appropriated by the monastic community suggested that the site of the oratory was chosen because of its pre-existing religious significance. The dedication of the structure whether it be a chapel, the chancel of a parish church or a surviving building on the site of a previous monastic community or minster was adopted by the Cluniac monastic community and retained even when the monastic population was moved to a different permanent site. The consistency of this pattern has revealed the likely pre-existing religious significance of the sites of Cluniac priories where this had not generally been recognised such as the sites of Bermondsey, Lewes, and Mendham priories. This pattern suggests a desire on behalf of the Cluniacs to establish a relationship with the pre-existing religious identity of the site. While not a consideration unique to Cluniac monasteries, there are examples of both Benedictine and Cistercian monasteries being sited on sites of pre-existing significance,<sup>87</sup> the number of cases and the depth of association between the Cluniac priory and the pre-existing significance of its site indicate that this was of distinct importance and has not been previously recognised. The reason for this is not known but perhaps there was a desire on the part of the Cluniacs to preserve and enhance the religious significance of their sites by associating them with the Cluniac monastic observance. Clearly other considerations governed site the selection of sites for new priories including, initially, security, which required the first monks of new priories to be accommodated close to or even within a castle, but subsequent relocation minimised any adverse effect on Cluniac monastic observance from too close proximity to a castle. Other considerations such as the proximity of secular

---

<sup>87</sup> Burton and Kerr, *The Cistercians in the Middle Ages*, pp. 61–2. On Augustinian reoccupation of sites of earlier significance, see A. Abram, ‘Augustinian canons and the survival of cult centres in Medieval England’, in J. Burton and K. Stöber, ed., *The Regular Canons in the Medieval British Isles* (Turnhout, 2011), pp. 79–95.



settlement for monks that did not participate in manual labour, and effective communication links by road and waterway that enabled the Cluniac priories in England and Wales to become an interconnected network reflecting the extended Cluniac monastic community, clearly also influenced site selection. The predominance of considerations in site selection relevant to Cluniac monastic observance suggested that Cluniac administration was able to exercise more or less complete control over the selection process, the founders willing to surrender their influence over selection of the site of the priory which they were responsible for founding because of the other benefits to be obtained from association with the wider Cluniac monastic community. Presumably once the abbot of Cluny had received a request from a founder to establish a new priory, monks were dispatched to visit the landholdings of the prospective founder to select an appropriate site. These monks may have come from the foundation on which the new priory was going to be made dependent rather than the abbey of Cluny.

## Chapter 3

### Administration

This chapter investigates how the Cluniac priories in England and Wales were administered. As they were located so far from the immediate sphere of control of the abbot of Cluny in Burgundy some form of delegated administration was required to provide oversight. This may have been one of the considerations of Abbot Hugh when he expressed his concern before the foundation of Lewes for his monks ‘on account of the distance of the foreign land and especially by reason of the sea’.<sup>1</sup> All the Cluniac foundations in England and Wales were established as priories and remained dependencies as far as Cluniac administration was concerned throughout the period of their existence.<sup>2</sup> This status technically denoted their ultimate dependence on a single abbey, Cluny, but, as will be argued, for the Cluniacs it more accurately denoted the ultimate dependence of the monks of these foundations on the abbot of Cluny. It is argued in this thesis that the organisation of Cluniac monasticism was one of a relationship between the monks of widely dispersed foundations and the abbot of Cluny, rather than, as for other types of monastic organisation, a relationship among foundations, for instance, the mother house-daughter house relationship of the Cistercians. It is further argued that the authority of the abbot of Cluny was delegated to priors (see Appendix B) who were responsible for providing the founding monastic communities for new priories, appointing their priors and overseeing their administration. The abbot of Cluny remained directly responsible for the administration of Lewes, Lenton, and Montacute, as these foundations were direct dependencies of Cluny. He also became responsible for Thetford from 1107 which had been a

---

<sup>1</sup> St John Hope, ‘Architectural history’, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Bermondsey’s change of status from a priory to an abbey in 1399, authorised by Pope Boniface IX at the request of King Richard II, was never acknowledged by Cluniac administration: Duckett, *Charters and Records of Cluni*, II, p. 57.

dependency of Lewes, and from 1195 for Bromholm which had previously been a dependence of Castle Acre.

Unlike the situation in France, where existing abbeys such as Moissac were incorporated into the Cluniac community, all of the priories established in England and Wales were new foundations. Some of the ancient abbeys resisted Cluniac attempts to reduce their status to that of a priory and retained certain rights such as the profession of their own novices and the right to elect their own abbot.<sup>3</sup> The administration of the Cluniac priories in England and Wales therefore illustrates the policy unaffected by such considerations at a time when it had arguably reached its fullest state of development.

### **From novice to monk**

The abbot of Cluny still had ultimate responsibility for all Cluniac monks wherever they were. He also retained the sole authority to profess or ordain novices who took their vows in his presence. As a result all Cluniac novices in England and Wales were expected to make the long and expensive journey to Cluny to be professed, unless this action was able to be performed during the occasional visits of abbots of Cluny to England. In 1325 it was reported that monks of Castle Acre received their profession from the abbot of Cluny during his visitations to the priory when he came to England.<sup>4</sup> Abbot Arduin of Cluny received the profession of thirty-two monks when he came to the priory in 1350. To try and alleviate the difficulties posed by the profession of monks in distant abbeys, Abbot Peter the Venerable issued a statute, one of many issued at the meeting of the heads of all Cluniac foundations at the abbey of Cluny in 1132,

---

<sup>3</sup> Hunt, *Cluny under St Hugh*, pp. 162–4.

<sup>4</sup> *CPR 1334–1338*, p. 490.

which extended the period that a novice had to make their profession to three years.<sup>5</sup> The absence of significant numbers of novices listed at priories in England and Wales in visitation reports suggests that in spite of the potential difficulties profession of novices by the abbot of Cluny occurred at an acceptable rate. During the wars between England and France in the fourteenth century, which made travel of novices to Cluny and visits of abbots of Cluny to England, difficult, the prior of Lewes was granted permission to ordain novices.<sup>6</sup>

### **The appointment of priors**

One of the rights that a founder surrendered in founding a Cluniac priory was any influence over the appointment of the prior of that foundation; this stands in contrast to founders of Benedictine monasteries who generally did have some influence over the control of the heads of the foundations with which they were associated.<sup>7</sup> Cluniac practice seems to have been accepted, as attempts to intervene in the appointment of priors were infrequent and usually only involved later secular patrons. The responsibility for the appointment of priors rested with the prior of the foundation on which a new priory was made dependent. The relationship of dependence was made explicit in a copy of the foundation charter of Mendham Priory dated to about 1155. It stated that the new priory was ‘to show such subjection to Castle Acre, as Castle Acre did to the priory of St Pancras at Lewes, and as Lewes did to the mother house of Cluny’.<sup>8</sup> In a thirteenth-century confirmation of the priory of Kerswell by Hugh Peverel,

---

<sup>5</sup> *Petri Venerabilis Statuta, Pat. Lat.*, 189, cols 1023–48 (col. 1036), n. xxxvii: *Extra Cluniacum novitii recepti usque ad primum vel secundum aut plus tertium annum ad benedicendam Cluniacum adducantur.*

<sup>6</sup> Duckett, *Charters and Records*, I, pp. 200–10.

<sup>7</sup> Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders*, pp. 212–5.

<sup>8</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 58: *Praeterea sciendum est quod qualem subjectionem et libertatem ecclesia Acrensis debet ecclesiae sancti Pancrati, vel illa ecclesiae Cluniacensi, talem subjectionem et libertatem supradicta insula persolvat ecclesie sanctae Mariae de Acra.*

nephew of the founder, it was stipulated that the monks of Kerswell should pay due obedience and reverence to the prior and convent of Montacute.<sup>9</sup> These statements suggest Cluniac authorship and the need to make explicit to monks and seculars alike a relationship which had previously not been stated specifically probably because it had been understood to be a part of standard Cluniac administrative practice.

The responsibility of priors was not restricted to the appointment of the head of a new foundation. They were also responsible for overseeing the administration of the dependent priories. The copy of the foundation charter for Monks Horton ordained that ‘the prior of St Pancras (that is Lewes Priory), from time to time should have the management, government and disposition of the prior and monks, in the same manner as of his own, according to the Rule of St Benedict and the Order of Cluny’.<sup>10</sup> The prior of the dependent foundation was, however, responsible for the day to day administration of his priory. Thus it is stated in the copy of the foundation charter for Lewes that ‘the mother house (that is Cluny Abbey) would interfere in domestic affairs only when issuing regulations for the entire Order.’<sup>11</sup>

A further consequence of dependence was that the foundation on which a new priory was made dependent provided the first prior and monks for the new foundation. The priory of La Charité provided Pontefract with its first prior, Wilencus, and three monks. It also provided the first monks for Northampton Priory.<sup>12</sup> Although Thetford subsequently became dependent on Cluny it was initially dependent on Lewes which had provided it with its first prior and monks.

---

<sup>9</sup> *Montacute Cartulary*, no. 150.

<sup>10</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 34 : *Habet autem prior de sancto Pancratio inperpetuum emendationem ordinationem et mercationem de priore at monachis de Horton tanquam de suis propriis secundum regulam sancti Benedicti et ordinem de Cluniaco.*

<sup>11</sup> *Monasticon*, V, pp. 12–13, no. 2.

<sup>12</sup> *VCH Northamptonshire*, p. 102.

The first prior, Malgod, was replaced by Stephen, who was appointed from Cluny, after which Thetford remained dependent on Cluny.<sup>13</sup>

### **The *apport* and its significance**

The priory on which a new foundation was made dependent received an *apport* or census. This seems to have been a fixed amount which was paid annually by a prior to the prior of the foundation on which his house was dependent. This can be seen as an acknowledgement of the status of the prior with responsibility for overseeing the administration of the dependent foundation and also as compensation for providing this service. It also placed a limit on the amount of money that could be exacted from the new priory by the foundation on which it was made dependent. Thus, in charters of Lewes it is stated that no other payments were due to Cluny except the *apport*.<sup>14</sup> In the copy of the foundation charter for Horkelesley Priory it was stated that beyond the payment of half a mark of silver annually to Thetford by Horkelesley, nothing was to be exacted from the monks.<sup>15</sup> There were occasions when a priory tried to exact additional revenues from its dependencies. In 1337 when Peter de Joceaux became prior of Lewes he found that all of the plate and other articles provided for the service of the refectory had been stolen or alienated. In order to raise funds for the replenishment of the refectory he passed an ordinance that every subordinate prior should pay, within one year of appointment, 20s if conventual and 13s 4d if non-conventual to the refectorian.<sup>16</sup> The size of the *apport* was

---

<sup>13</sup> D. Knowles, C. N. L. Brooke and V. C. M. London, ed., *The Heads of Religious Houses: England and Wales 940–1216*, second edn (Cambridge, 2001), p. 125.

<sup>14</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 13.

<sup>15</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 155.

<sup>16</sup> *VCH, Sussex* vol. 7, p. 67. The distinction between conventual and non-conventual priories is discussed further below but essentially non-conventual priories were subject to a higher degree of supervision by the prior on which the priory was dependent; in particular they could not recruit their own monks. See the foundation charter for Mendham: *Monasticon*, V, p. 59.

usually small and unchanging so that its relative value declined with time.<sup>17</sup> The value of the *apport* varied according to the size of the dependent foundation. While Lewes paid 100s annually to Cluny,<sup>18</sup> Lenton paid a mark of silver,<sup>19</sup> Montacute paid 12 marks of silver and Thetford paid 2 marks.<sup>20</sup> It would also appear that the size of the *apport* was in direct proportion to the size of priory on which a new house was made dependent: the smaller the priory, the smaller the *apport*. Thus, while Wenlock paid 100s annually to La Charité, only 20s was paid by Barnstaple to St Martin des Champs,<sup>21</sup> and Farley was decreed to pay one mark of silver and Prittlewell 13s 4d to Lewes ‘in recognition’.<sup>22</sup> Only half a mark was paid by Wangford and Horkesley to Thetford and the same amount was paid by Mendham to Castle Acre ‘as an acknowledgment of submission’.<sup>23</sup> There is no documentary evidence that some small foundations ever paid an *apport*. It is possible they were excused payment because of their small size. For example there is no evidence of an *apport* having been paid to St Martin des Champs by St Clears or to Montacute by Malpas.

There is also evidence that the *apport* was not paid for years at a time. Despite this, the *apport* had an important symbolic significance in the acknowledgement of the authority of this delegated administration. When its payment was temporarily suspended during the wars between England and France in the fourteenth century and then permanently abolished following the purchasing of denization status by the priories, it became easier for priories to

---

<sup>17</sup> An exception seems to have been the *apport* paid by Lewes, which was increased to 100s having been stated as 50s in a copy of the foundation charter of Lewes.

<sup>18</sup> Duckett, *Charters and Records of Cluni*, I, pp. 86–92.

<sup>19</sup> *VCH Nottinghamshire*, vol. 2, ed. W. Page (1907), p. 91.

<sup>20</sup> *VCH Norfolk*, p. 363.

<sup>21</sup> *The Registers of Bishops Bronescombe and Peter Quinil*, ed. F.C. Hingeston-Randolph (London, 1889), p. 113.

<sup>22</sup> *VCH Wiltshire*, p. 264, and *Monasticon*, V, p. 138.

<sup>23</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 155.

secede from the wider Cluniac monastic community as the links between priories was weakened.

### **The geography of dependence**

The first Cluniac priories to be founded in England and Wales were made dependent on a pre-existing Cluniac foundation in France (see appendix B). These were restricted to the abbey of Cluny, starting with the foundation of Lewes, and the priories of La Charité sur Loire and St Martin des Champs (see above Chapter 1). Bermondsey, Daventry, Much Wenlock, Northampton, and Pontefract were made dependent on La Charité. Barnstaple, St James Exeter, and St Clears were made dependent on St Martin des Champs. The direct dependencies of the abbey of Cluny were Lewes, Montacute, Lenton, and Thetford. All later foundations were made dependent on existing priories in England. Castle Acre, Clifford, Horton, Prittlewell, and Stanesgate were made dependent on Lewes. Holme, Kerswell, Malpas, and St Carrock were made dependent on Montacute. Monk Bretton was made dependent on Pontefract. Kersal was made dependent on Lenton. Aldermanshaw and St James, Derby, were made dependent on Bermondsey. Dudley and St Helen's on the Isle of Wight were made dependent on Wenlock. Bromholm, Mendham, Normansburgh, and Slevesholm were made dependent on Castle Acre. Wangford and Horkesley were made dependent on Thetford.

It has been argued above (Chapter 1) that the decision as to what existing priory a new Cluniac priory was to be made dependent on was largely a Cluniac one. Evidence for the identity of the house on which a new priory became dependent usually derives from copies of foundation charters. Often the foundation bequest was made to the founding priory although the conditions of dependence were limited to the provision of the first prior and monks, the appointment of subsequent priors, and the supervision of administration of the new priory.



There is no actual ownership or other control over the dependency implied by the wording as was the case for the cells of Augustinian or Benedictine foundations where the mother house exercised a much greater degree of control over the dependent foundation.<sup>24</sup> It can be seen that while some priories had no dependent priories, others had one or two dependencies but some had four or more.

Geographical proximity does not always seem to have been an important consideration when determining which existing foundation a new priory should be made dependent on. While some priories and their dependencies were in close proximity to each other, for example Pontefract and Monk Bretton, and Lewes and Monks Horton, others were separated by a considerable distance (see Fig. 0.3). St James, Exeter, although situated much closer to Montacute, was made dependent on St Martin des Champs, and Stanesgate was made dependent on Lewes even though it was much closer to Thetford. Other examples of priories and their dependencies separated by a significant distance include Wenlock and St Helen's, Lewes and Clifford, and Bermondsey and St James Derby, and all of the foundations dependent on a priory in France.

Geographical proximity between a priory and the foundation it had been made dependent on must have provided a significant advantage in overseeing the administration of the dependency. In spite of this there is no obvious evidence that the administration of priories separated from foundations on which they were dependent, such as those in France, was any less rigorous than that of priories which lay close to the foundation on which they were dependent. This argues for the effectiveness of lines of communication between Cluniac priories. It is also possible that geographical separation of priories and their dependencies was intentional to prevent a priory from developing a regional power base that might conflict with its identification with the wider Cluniac monastic community.

---

<sup>24</sup> For the Benedictines and Augustinians, and other forms of dependencies, see Heale, *The Dependent Priors of Medieval English Monasteries*, pp. 83–90.

## **Recruitment: novices and monks**

An existing priory that a new priory was made dependent on had to have sufficient monks to provide the prior and first monks of the new foundation. It is possible that existing foundations faced with an expanding monastic population which they could not support were chosen for this reason. By providing monks for a new foundation they could reduce their monastic population to a more manageable level. This can be compared with the policy stated in the Cistercian *Carta Caritatis* which assumes that a new foundation was made when an existing one grew large enough.<sup>25</sup> One such case might be Aldermanshaw, founded with monks from Bermondsey in the early thirteenth century when Bermondsey was in significant debt. By about 1450 Aldermanshaw was in ruins suggesting that its administration had not been overseen adequately.<sup>26</sup>

It also seems likely that certain priories in England were selected to become administrative and recruitment centres as had La Charité sur Loire and St Martin des Champs in France. Seven priories in England received their founding monastic populations and had their administration overseen by the prior of Lewes (see Appendix B) who was ranked greatest in importance after the priors of Cluny and La Charité sur Loire. These priories would actively recruit monks to provide the founding monastic communities of new priories and have priors selected for their particular skill in overseeing their administration. Founders are likely to have had some role in determining the relationship. The case of Thetford has already been discussed (see above Chapter 1), and it is likely that William de Warenne I influenced the decision to make his second Cluniac foundation, Castle Acre, located in his Norfolk caput, dependent on his first Cluniac foundation of Lewes. The concentration of the group of priories dependent on

---

<sup>25</sup> See, for instance, Burton and Kerr, *The Cistercians in the Middle Ages*, pp. 29–32.

<sup>26</sup> Knowles and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses*, p. 98.

Montacute in the south west founded by the descendants and vassals of de Mortain suggests some influence of these founders. William de Mortain may have influenced the decision to make the foundation of St Carrock, for which he was responsible, dependent on Montacute. It might explain why this group of priories had a particular cohesion. Montacute paid the annual ferm imposed on its dependencies during the wars with France in the thirteenth century and all the dependencies shared in the charter of denization subsequently obtained by Montacute.

Once a new priory had been established, evidence suggests that at least initially recruitment to it was controlled by the foundation on which it was made dependent. An exception was made for individuals who were close to death. A copy of the foundation charter for Mendham stated that the convent was ‘to receive any man betaking himself to Mendham through fear of death but no one in health was to be admitted without the consent of the prior of Acre [on which Mendham was dependent] until the house so increased as to sustain its whole congregation when the convent was complete and they were to be at liberty to receive any according to their own discretion’.<sup>27</sup> This had occurred by 1204 when the convent was described as complete.<sup>28</sup> The copy of the foundation charter for Dudley stated that the prior of Wenlock on which Dudley was dependent should select the monks for this foundation until the priory could support itself.<sup>29</sup> A deed witnessed by Robert son of the founder, Ralph Paganel, stated that ‘we John, prior of Wenlock, and the convent of the same do ordain a convent, so that Osbert now prior of St James [Dudley], and Robert and Hugh his brothers do make wholly and fully a convent’.<sup>30</sup> This seems to have been the Cluniac definition of conventual, a description that could from then on be applied to both priories. In 1403 when the prior of

---

<sup>27</sup> *Monasticon*, V, pp. 58–9.

<sup>28</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 59.

<sup>29</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 86; *VCH Worcestershire*, p. 159.

<sup>30</sup> *VCH Worcestershire*, p. 159, citing Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Dodsworth IX, p. 132.

Barnstaple succeeded in purchasing a charter of denization and freeing itself from paying an annual ferm or rent to the Crown the prior of St Clears was unable to do so because he could not show that his priory had ever been conventual and so remained subject to the ferm.<sup>31</sup> This suggests that although the size of the monastic population of a Cluniac priory could be small when it reached conventual status, three monks at Dudley and eight at Mendham, significantly smaller than the standard twelve monks and an abbot or prior for the founding monastic populations of the foundations of other types of monastic organisation, there was a size limit below which a priory could never be considered conventual.<sup>32</sup> The maximum recorded monastic population for St Clears never appears to have exceeded three monks and for most of its existence it seems to have consisted of two monks.<sup>33</sup>

Where conditions existed from the start for the monastic community to support itself, usually in situations where the founding monastic community was of significant size, it was able to control recruitment from the start. Farley with a founding monastic population of twelve monks and a prior, was able to choose its novices from its inception. Presumably recruitment was regulated to ensure that new monks were already conversant with Cluniac monastic observance through being members of another Cluniac house rather than being novices. Novices would require instruction in this while existing Cluniac monks transferred from another foundation would arrive immediately able to carry out this observance. It would thus make sense to limit recruitment of novices while a priory was becoming established. There was also probably an economic consideration whereby recruitment was limited to the size of monastic population that could be supported by available resources.

---

<sup>31</sup> Graham, 'The Cluniac priory of Saint-Martin des Champs', p. 47.

<sup>32</sup> For Dudley, see Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Dodsworth IX, p. 132, and for Mendham, *Monasticon*, V, p. 59.

<sup>33</sup> Knowles and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses*, p. 102.

There is evidence that novices were recruited from the immediate neighbourhood of a priory. In the mid-twelfth century a tenant of Henry de Lacy, secular patron of Pontefract, Ralph de Chevercourt, and his sister Beatrix sold the vill of Barnsley to the priory in return for which the priory agreed to receive Ralph as a monk when he wished to leave the world and granted to him a monk's tunic (*pellica monachorum*) and a pair of boots every year.<sup>34</sup> Ranulph the physician was an early recruit to Malpas.<sup>35</sup> The surnames of monks at Montacute including Montague or Montacute, Yevill, and Sherborne, also the names of neighbouring settlements to the priory, in the record of the court of Augmentations, indicate local recruitment.<sup>36</sup> As a result of this pattern of local recruitment the relative proportion of monks of English origin increased. By 1337 the prior and all the monks of Mendham were English.<sup>37</sup>

### **Nationality and origin of priors**

Some priors remained French for much longer and well into the mid fourteenth century. The Frenchman Robert de Beck was recorded as prior of Malpas in 1303.<sup>38</sup> Gerald de Noiale, also French, occurs as prior of Holme as late as 1344.<sup>39</sup> In 1279 the prior of Horton was reported to be English.<sup>40</sup> The first English prior of Lewes was John of Newcastle in 1298.<sup>41</sup> The earliest English prior of Clifford was Richard Kenting in 1330, but the French Peter de Caro Loco

---

<sup>34</sup> *EYC*, vol. III, no. 1771; Burton, *Monastic Order in Yorkshire*, pp. 62, 68.

<sup>35</sup> *Montacute Cartulary* no. 165.

<sup>36</sup> *Monasticon*, V, pp. 173–4.

<sup>37</sup> *CCR 1337–1339*, p. 157.

<sup>38</sup> D. Smith and V. London, ed., *The Heads of Religious Houses: England and Wales 1216–1377* (Cambridge, 2001), p. 235

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.* p. 229.

<sup>40</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, p. 36.

<sup>41</sup> Smith and London, *Heads of Religious Houses, 1216–1377*, p. 234.

occurs after him.<sup>42</sup> The first prior of Dudley with an obvious English identity, Thomas of Londoniis, occurs as late as 1338 while the first English prior of Farleigh was Geoffrey of Walton in 1354.<sup>43</sup> The first English prior of Horkesley was Roger de Ware in 1370 while the first English prior of St Clears was Thomas Telford in 1372.<sup>44</sup> French appointments continued in spite of opposition from ecclesiastical and secular authority. The first record of a prior of definite English nationality at St Carrock was in 1385 when William Smethe was appointed.<sup>45</sup> The prior of Karswell was English in 1278 but the local diocesan, Bishop Grandisson, notified the king in 1334 and again in 1339 that a French prior resided at Karswell.<sup>46</sup> In spite of conflict between England and France Edward III allowed the ‘mother houses to nominate men of foreign birth’ as priors of Cluniac foundations in England. He employed the French John of Jancourt, prior of Lewes, in his diplomatic service.<sup>47</sup> In 1342 he accepted Francis of Bruges as prior of Northampton on the grounds that the Flemings were his allies.<sup>48</sup> Local English recruitment ran the risk of a priory becoming increasingly local and English in identity weakening its links with the wider Cluniac monastic community. The appointment of French priors countered this trend and maintained links between the priories and the wider Cluniac monastic community. In 1376 the Commons asked that foreign superiors should appoint vicars-general in England, so that Englishmen should become priors, and that monks in

---

<sup>42</sup> Ibid. p. 235.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 227 and p. 238.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 250.

<sup>45</sup> *The Register of Thomas de Brantyngham, Bishop of Exeter (AD 1370–1394)*, ed. F.C. Hingeston-Randolph, 2 vols (London, 1901–6), II, p. 582.

<sup>46</sup> *The Register of John de Grandisson Bishop of Exeter (AD 1327–69)*, ed. J. De Berkeley et al., 3 vols (London, 1894–99), I, p. 58, II, p. 763.

<sup>47</sup> *VCH Sussex*, vol. 7, p. 68.

<sup>48</sup> *VCH Northamptonshire*, vol. 2, p. 109.

Cluniac houses should be Englishmen and all French monks banished.<sup>49</sup> The petition was marked as ‘nothing done’ but in a bid to offset any further action against the Cluniac priories, priors appointed after this date were almost universally English. The last non-English prior of Pontefract was Peter de Tevolio in 1364. The last French prior was Francis de Baugiaco, prior of Montacute who died in 1404 and was replaced by William Creech who had been prior of Karswell since 1377.<sup>50</sup>

The prior of the foundation on which another priory was made dependent continued to appoint the prior of the dependency even when the new priory had become established. If an appointment resulted from the death of a prior, the prior making the appointment was compensated by receiving the palfrey, cope and breviary of the late prior. For example the priors of Barnstaple, St James, Exeter, and St Clears were nominated by the prior of St Martin des Champs. Upon the death of a prior of one of these three foundations, messengers were dispatched to St Martin des Champs, taking with them the palfrey, cope and breviary of the late prior for the prior of St Martin des Champs.<sup>51</sup> Upon the death of John of Avignon, prior of Lewes, in 1298, his breviary, cope and palfrey were sent to the abbot of Cluny.<sup>52</sup>

Appointees could be drawn from other Cluniac priories in England or France and were not limited to monks in the other immediate dependencies of the prior making the nomination, his own priory or the foundation of the previous prior. For example the prior of La Charité appointed Prior Henry of St Helen’s, a dependency of Wenlock, to become prior of Bermondsey. Benedict of Cluny was appointed prior of Castle Acre by the prior of Lewes.<sup>53</sup> In

---

<sup>49</sup> R. Graham, ‘The papal schism of 1378 and the English Province of the Order of Cluny’, *English Ecclesiastical Studies* (London, 1929), pp. 46–61 (p. 49).

<sup>50</sup> Smith and London, *Heads of Religious Houses, 1216–1377*, pp. 247, 241, 231.

<sup>51</sup> Graham, ‘The Cluniac priory of Saint-Martin des Champs’, p. 35.

<sup>52</sup> Duckett, *Charters and Records of Cluni*, I, p. 112.

<sup>53</sup> Smith and London, *Heads of Religious Houses, 1216–1377*, p. 224.

1288 William de Arraines, prior of St Clears was transferred to become prior of St James, Exeter, by the prior of St Martin des Champs.<sup>54</sup> In 1333 another prior of St Clears, John Soyer, was appointed prior of Barnstaple, another dependency of St Martin des Champs by its then prior.<sup>55</sup> The last prior of Malpas, which was an immediate dependency of Montacute, John Montague, presumably a monk of Montacute, was described in the *Valor* as being given his position and being removable from it at his wish by the prior of Montacute.<sup>56</sup> A record in the court of Augmentations notes how ‘one John Cogyn, monk of Montacute’, described how when Thomas Chard was prior of Montacute, Nicholas Yevill was prior of Malpas but was called home to Montacute by him and John Cogyn was sent in his place to be porter but then was prior for fourteen years before being called home to Montacute by the then prior Robert Sherborns, later to be replaced by John Montague.<sup>57</sup> Monks of Wenlock were appointed priors of Dudley, its immediate dependency by the prior of Wenlock in 1381 and 1394. In an inspeximus of 1309 it was stated that the prior of Castle Acre should appoint the prior of Slevesholm, a dependency of Castle Acre from amongst his own community.<sup>58</sup>

Appointment of priors from amongst the community of which a prior had been head, the normal source of heads of to foundations of other orders, was uncommon. Again, perhaps, this had the intention of preventing individual priories developing an identity independent of the wider Cluniac monastic community. The above examples show how it was common for priors of one Cluniac foundation to be appointed prior of another foundation not only in England but also in France. In 1257 William de Foulville, prior of Northampton, became prior of Lewes.<sup>59</sup>

---

<sup>54</sup> Ibid. p. 249.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid. p. 219.

<sup>56</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 173.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., p.174.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., p. 75.

<sup>59</sup> Smith and London, *Heads of Religious Houses, 1216–1377*, p. 233.



In 1275 Prior Peter de Villiaco of Souvigny became prior of Lewes.<sup>60</sup> John of Avignon was prior of Wenlock until 1285 when he became prior of Lewes.<sup>61</sup> John of Ok became prior of Lewes in 1397 having been prior of Castle Acre.<sup>62</sup> John de Monte Martini was transferred to become prior of Lewes in 1307 from Prittlewell where he had also been prior.<sup>63</sup> John de Caroloco had been prior of Bermondsey when he became prior of Lewes in 1364.<sup>64</sup> In 1370 the prior of Kerswell was Ralph de Chelsham who is recorded as prior of St James, Exeter, in 1369.<sup>65</sup> In 1274 Prior Miles de Columbiars of Lewes became prior of Vezelay.<sup>66</sup> In 1285 Prior John de Theynges of Lewes was transferred to the continental priory of St Mary la Woute in the Auvergne.<sup>67</sup>

Some priors were heads of more than two foundations during their lifetime. John de Chartres, prior of Bermondsey between 1266 and 1272, became prior of Wenlock in 1272 and was then made prior of Lewes in 1285.<sup>68</sup> It was therefore uncommon for an appointed prior to remain in that position for life as was more likely to be the case of the head of a foundation of other monastic orders. Normally such movement would be seen as a contravention of the concept of stability outlined in the Rule of St Benedict where monks were forbidden to move outside the physical limits of their community, normally a single monastery. For the Cluniacs, community was not limited to the physical limits of a single priory but consisted of all Cluniac

---

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 234.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> *VCH Norfolk*, vol. 2, p. 358.

<sup>63</sup> Smith and London, *Heads of Religious Houses, 1216–1377*, p. 234.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 235.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., p. 231.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., p. 234.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., pp. 241 and 234 respectively.

monks wherever they were, and the transfer of priors was therefore consistent with movement within its single extended community.

It was also common for an individual priory to have multiple different priors within a relatively short period of time. St Helen's Priory had twelve different priors between 1249 and 1381.<sup>69</sup> Pontefract had eleven priors between the year of its foundation and 1216, and twenty-two priors between 1216 and 1380.<sup>70</sup> This had led an early historian, William Cole (1714–82) to speculate that the numerous short priorates at Bermondsey were due to a high death rate caused by its environment.<sup>71</sup> Although positions could indeed become vacant through death or resignation, it seems that there was a deliberate policy of moving priors from one foundation to another. This may have been intended to prevent too close a relationship developing between an individual prior and a priory which might lead the foundation to develop an identity independent or at least at odds with membership of a wider Cluniac monastic community. Priors seem to have been conceived of as the equivalent of obedientiaries within a single monastic foundation who could be moved from one position to another at the will of the abbot of Cluny or his delegated authority. In support of this argument there were examples of the appointment of priors who had been obedientiaries at other priories. The chamberlain of Lewes became prior of Monkton Farleigh in 1191.<sup>72</sup> In 1279 the visitation report for Clifford reported that the then prior received the house on his first appointment, which suggests that this was seen as exceptional.<sup>73</sup> In contrast to the mobility of priors, other professed monks were forbidden to leave their priory unless they went to a foundation with a more rigid rule. There were however occasions when monks were moved from their priory to another Cluniac

---

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., p. 250.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., pp. 246–7.

<sup>71</sup> Cited in Graham, 'The priory of La Charité sur Loire', p. 99.

<sup>72</sup> Knowles, Brooke and London, *Heads of Religious Houses 940–1216*, p. 120.

<sup>73</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, p. 27.

foundation, usually because of some infraction. In 1266 the sub-prior and nine monks of Lewes were sent out of the convent to do penance in other houses for conspiracy and faction. In 1314 the prior of Horton was reported by the official visitors for failing to send a monk to Prittlewell.<sup>74</sup> One of the monks of St James, Derby, who was reported as living disreputably, was expelled by the official visitors of the abbot of Cluny on the occasion of a visitation of that foundation, and removed to do penance at Bermondsey.<sup>75</sup>

On occasions priors resisted their replacement. The records of the Chapter General for 1283 confirm that William of Shoreham, prior of Castle Acre, fortified the monastery against the prior of Lewes with the help of the men of the secular patron, the earl Warenne, defying all efforts to dislodge him in favour of Benedict of Cluny, who had been appointed in his place. The abbot of Cluny was bidden to write to the earl with the object of inducing him to throw over the rebels and allow the new prior to take possession of the monastery.<sup>76</sup> Occasionally the replacement of priors could prove difficult because of the dearth of individuals willing to take up the position. The visitation report for Castle Acre recorded that the then prior 'would resign gladly enough if he could, but the difficulty was to find someone willing to replace him, and take over the house.'<sup>77</sup>

There were occasions where secular patrons attempted to resist Cluniac policy of transferring priors between foundations. They may have wanted to avoid the interruption to continuity of administration that inevitably resulted from a frequent change of prior and which could undermine the effectiveness of administration of a priory. They may also have been attempting to enhance the independent identity of a priory in which they had invested and with

---

<sup>74</sup> G. F. Duckett, *Visitations and Chapters General of the Order of Cluni* (London, 1893), p. 301.

<sup>75</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, p. 30.

<sup>76</sup> Duckett, *Visitations and Chapters General*, p. 112.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.* p. 34.

which they could identify against Cluniac policy, which seemed to discourage the independent identity of priories whose monks were seen as members of a wider Cluniac monastic community. Perhaps the most notable example was the condition William de Warenne obtained from Abbot Hugh of Cluny that the prior of Lewes would not be removed without just cause.<sup>78</sup> It is possible that this condition was designed to prevent secular interference in the administration of the priory but, if indeed it was the result of an attempt to prevent the transfer of priors from Lewes, it was unsuccessful. Although the first prior, Lanzo, remained prior until his death in 1107, the third prior of Lewes, Hugh (1120–23), became first abbot of Reading, and the fifth prior, Ansgar (c. 1126–30) replaced him as abbot of Reading.<sup>79</sup> Other founders also attempted unsuccessfully to resist the policy either by including a clause in the copy of the foundation charter or by obtaining a later written agreement restricting transfer of the prior. A copy of the foundation charter of Mendham stated that the prior was not to be deposed, save for disobedience, incontinence, or dilapidation of the house and then deposition was not to take place without the advice of the monks of Mendham.<sup>80</sup> Around 1233 Henry de Tracy, lord of Barnstaple and secular patron of St Mary Magdalen Priory, Barnstaple, entered into a formal agreement with the prior of that foundation to ask the prior and convent of St Martin des Champs, to grant that the prior, as in other Cluniac priories should be perpetual and not removable without reasonable cause.<sup>81</sup> In both cases the stricture was not observed and priors were replaced as for other Cluniac priories. Adam fitz Sweyn, founder of Monk Bretton, obtained agreement from the prior of La Charité that the prior of Monk Bretton should hold office for life. This condition may have been suggested by Adam, first prior of Monk Bretton

---

<sup>78</sup> St John Hope, 'Architectural history', p. 3.

<sup>79</sup> Knowles, Brooke, and London, *Heads of Religious Houses, 940–1216*, pp. 63, 119, 268.

<sup>80</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 58–9.

<sup>81</sup> Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, L. 875, no. 878, cited in Graham, 'The Cluniac priory of Saint-Martin', p. 41.

to prevent his removal. It seems possible that the foundation of Monk Bretton had been suggested to the founder by Prior Adam himself. He had been prior of Pontefract, and the foundation of a new priory of which he was prior gave him a degree of independence that may have contributed to the later secession of the monks of Monk Bretton from the wider Cluniac monastic community.<sup>82</sup>

It is sometimes unclear what governed the choice of monk to be appointed prior. In principle, appointing a prior with administrative ability would have been of benefit to the appointing prior and would have ensured that best practice was shared. By selecting a candidate with administrative skill he would have made his role of overseeing the administration of the dependent priory easier. However, it is clear that priors with administrative skill were not always chosen. At the Chapter General for the year 1314 the prior of Montacute was forced to admit that the then prior of Malpas, whom he had appointed, was not a very good administrator.<sup>83</sup> In 1368 Thetford Priory's temporalities were said to be badly regulated.<sup>84</sup> There were even instances of a prior being transferred to become prior of another foundation when he had contributed to the financial ruin of the previous foundation. The role of the prior was, however, multiple. He was responsible for ensuring that all aspects of monastic observance were followed at the priory of which he was head, as well as ensuring as far as possible that it remained in financial balance; in theory that he was to leave it in at least as good a financial condition as he found it. Clearly it is likely that some priors were more effective in some parts of their role than others but regulation of finances were essential to ensure that there were adequate resources available to support the monastic population of a priory. In 1317 there is a record of a report of lack of corn and provisions at Lewes which it

---

<sup>82</sup> Graham and Gilyard-Beer, *Monk Bretton Priory*, p. 4; Burton, *Monastic Order in Yorkshire*, pp. 64–6.

<sup>83</sup> Duckett, *Visitations and Chapters General*, p. 303.

<sup>84</sup> *Statuts, chapitres generaux et visites de l'Ordre de Cluny*, ed. G. Charvin, IV, 1360–1408 (Paris, 1969), p. 51, no. 340.

was the prior's duty to provide.<sup>85</sup> It is also possible that the appointing priors did not always exercise complete care in the selection of their candidate. There were, however, cases in which changes of prior resulted in a significant improvement of the administration of a dependent priory. When Malgod, first prior of Thetford, was replaced after three years, his successor Stephen, a monk sent from Cluny, is said to have soon revealed his competence in administration.<sup>86</sup> A new prior of Pontefract succeeded in reducing the liabilities of the foundation from £2,133 in 1267 to £233 in 1279.<sup>87</sup> The visitation report of Holme Priory in 1279 stated that the prior who had been in office for three years had taken over the house burdened with a debt of 20 marks, which he had managed to pay off, and it was now free of debt.<sup>88</sup> There may well have been undocumented cases in which the appointment of a prior resulted in an improvement of aspects of observance at a dependent foundation.

Lengthy absences of priors from their foundation are also likely to have interfered with their ability to provide effective administration. Priors became increasingly involved in roles outside their priories in the fourteenth century both in the wider Cluniac monastic community and in secular diplomatic roles. In 1310, for instance, Guichard, prior of Pontefract, was nominated attorney for the abbot of Cluny.<sup>89</sup> He was reported as going beyond the seas in 1313.<sup>90</sup>

Responsibility for the appointment of the prior of a foundation was rarely made explicit at least in earlier copies of foundation charters. This is likely to have been because the arrangement was standardised and was understood by Cluniacs and secular and ecclesiastical

---

<sup>85</sup> Duckett, *Charters and Records*, p. 130.

<sup>86</sup> *VCH Norfolk*, vol. 2, p. 363. Debt and its management are discussed further in Chapter 7.

<sup>87</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, pp. 14, 33.

<sup>88</sup> Duckett, *Charters and Records*, II, p. 136.

<sup>89</sup> *CPR 1307–1313*, p. 223.

<sup>90</sup> *CPR 1313–1317*, p. 2.

authorities alike and for this reason it did not need to be stated. The absence of specific stated arrangements for the appointment of priors resulted in later challenges by secular patrons, sometimes with the support of the monks of certain priories. In 1200, when the secular patron of Lewes, Hamelin, earl de Warenne, challenged the appointment of the prior by the abbot of Cluny, he did so with the support of some of the monks who maintained that with the exception of paying 100s yearly to the abbot, they were independent of the mother house, and had the right of free election.<sup>91</sup> Roger Bigod, second earl of Norfolk and secular patron of Thetford, claimed the founder's right of appointment to Thetford.<sup>92</sup> In 1374 the prior of Horkesley, Roger De Ware, was 'signified' for arrest by the prior of Thetford but secured exemption by appealing to the pope on the grounds that Horkesley was not subject to the jurisdiction of Thetford.<sup>93</sup> In the same year the king ordered the prior of Thetford to appear in Chancery to show why the writ should not be 'superseded' (presumably overturned).<sup>94</sup> Roger succeeded in retaining his position of prior as he occurs later as prior of Horkesley. In an enumeration of Cluniac foundations in England dated to about 1450 it is explicitly stated that the prior of Horkesley was immediately subject to Thetford.<sup>95</sup>

Appeals to the papacy by the abbot of Cluny or Cluniac priors regarding their appointments in the face of attempted interference secular patrons were usually found in their favour. An appeal to the pope by the abbot of Cluny regarding the challenge to his appointment of prior to Lewes in 1200 by Hamelin de Warenne, was found in favour of the prior, and the monks of Lewes were ordered to obey his nominee. The earl appealed against this decision and

---

<sup>91</sup> Duckett, *Charters and Records*, I, pp. 86–92; S. Wood, *English Monasteries and their Patrons in the Thirteenth Century* (Oxford, 1955), p. 57.

<sup>92</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 141; K. Stöber, *Late Medieval Monasteries and their Patrons: England and Wales, c. 1300–1540* (Woodbridge, 2007), pp. 97–8.

<sup>93</sup> *VCH Essex*, p. 138.

<sup>94</sup> *CPR 1374–1377*, p. 56.

<sup>95</sup> Duckett, *Charters and Records*, II, p. 211.

the abbot of Cluny put the church of Lewes under an interdict. The archbishop of Canterbury and the bishops of Chichester and Ely were appointed by the pope to decide the case and eventually succeeded in inducing both sides to accept a peace with honour in 1201.<sup>96</sup> In 1229, however, at the request of Abbot Barthlemy of Cluny, Pope Gregory IX declared the agreed compromise agreement void and vested the right of appointment solely with the abbot of Cluny.<sup>97</sup>

Challenges to the appointment of priors were usually resolved by a compromise that acknowledged some form of influence of the secular patron but that did not fundamentally challenge standard Cluniac administrative arrangements. In the copy of the foundation charter for Dudley dated about 1180 it was stated that the prior of Wenlock should 'by the consent of the founder and his heirs appoint a prior for Dudley from his own chapter'.<sup>98</sup> The terms of the agreement reached between the abbot of Cluny and the secular patron of Lewes in 1201 were that in future when a vacancy occurred the monks and earl should send representatives to Cluny to announce the fact, and the abbot should then nominate two suitable candidates, of whom the earl's proctors should choose one, who should at once enter upon the office of prior.<sup>99</sup> In 1208 it was agreed that on a vacancy at Farleigh, a dependency of Lewes, the secular patron, the earl Henry de Bohun or his agents with two monks of the priory would go to Lewes, where the prior would nominate two candidates taken from any Cluniac house; of these the representatives of Farleigh would select one as prior.<sup>100</sup> In or before 1233, Henry de Tracy, lord of Barnstaple, entered into a formal agreement with the priory of St Mary Magdalene to ask the prior and convent of St Martin des Champs that on the death or lawful withdrawal of the prior,

---

<sup>96</sup> *Recueil des chartes*, VI, no. 4398.

<sup>97</sup> *Recueil des chartes*, VI, no. 4574; Duckett, *Charters and Records*, I, pp. 186–7.

<sup>98</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 85.

<sup>99</sup> Duckett, *Charters and Records*, I, pp. 92–3.

<sup>100</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 27.



the monks with the consent of Henry de Tracy and his heirs, should choose a prior from their number, send him to Paris and ask the prior and convent of St Martin to nominate him and, if they would not, to send a worthy prior.<sup>101</sup> In 1255 it was agreed that the prior of Montacute should send the monk whom he nominated as prior of Karswell with a sealed letter to the then secular patron, Hugh Peverel, asking for his grace and favour.<sup>102</sup> In an inspeximus of 1309 it was stated that the man appointed to the office of prior at Slevesholm by the prior of Castle Acre should be presented to the secular patron to receive the temporalities of the foundation.<sup>103</sup> In 1422 the prior of Wenlock presented three monks of his house to the king by reason of the minority of John, son of Thomas, late baron of Dudley and secular patron of Dudley Priory, praying him to admit one as prior.<sup>104</sup>

Where compromise could not be reached the consequences could be serious. Disputes between the priors of Pontefract and its dependency led to the drastic outcome of the secession of Monk Bretton from the Cluniac monastic community. An attempt was made to settle the issue by an appeal to the pope. In 1255 Pope Alexander IV commissioned the dean and archdeacon of Lincoln to decide between the two parties but without success.<sup>105</sup> In 1269 Henry de lacy, lord of Pontefract and secular patron of Pontefract Priory presided over an enquiry and attempted to settle the controversy but in vain.<sup>106</sup> In 1279 the official visitors of the abbot of Cluny were refused admittance at Monk Bretton. After an appeal to the king Edward I, the sheriff's officers were sent and the prior of Montacute entered as visitor. The monks refused to

---

<sup>101</sup> Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, L. 875 no. 878, cited in Graham, 'The Cluniac Priory of Saint-Martin', p. 43.

<sup>102</sup> Graham, 'The Cluniac priory of St Mary Carswell', *Transactions of the Devon Association*, 84 (1953), 115–18 (p. 116).

<sup>103</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 75.

<sup>104</sup> *CPR 1416–1422*, p. 396.

<sup>105</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 131.

<sup>106</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 123.

answer him in the chapter house and he excommunicated them on the authority of the abbot of Cluny.<sup>107</sup> Monk Bretton subsequently became an independent Benedictine monastery whose first head, William de Rihale, was elected by the monks in 1281.<sup>108</sup> In 1291 Monk Bretton was struck off the list of Cluniac foundations.<sup>109</sup>

Apart from appointing the priors of dependent foundations, the prior of the foundation on which such foundations were dependent was also responsible for overseeing their administration. The copy of the foundation charter of Prittlewell stated that the prior of Lewes as prior of the foundation on which Prittlewell was dependent was to have in perpetuity powers of correction and government there as if the monks were his own.<sup>110</sup> At Farley, the prior of Lewes had powers of correction.<sup>111</sup> Rolls and accounts recording the yearly account taken of the prior of Malpas by the prior of Montacute were among the documents presented to the Court of Augmentation. The copy of the foundation charter for Lewes stated that the abbot of Cluny, as head of the foundation on which Lewes was directly dependent, should only interfere in disciplinary matters when the prior was unable to deal with the situation, and that the dependencies of Lewes shall be under her own control.<sup>112</sup> It is possible that Lewes was granted special status in this respect as the same document stated that the mother house (Cluny) would interfere in domestic affairs only when issuing regulations for the entire Order.<sup>113</sup> These statements show to what extent the foundation charters of the priories were of Cluniac authorship and directed at their monastic communities.

---

<sup>107</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, pp. 32–3.

<sup>108</sup> Smith and London, *Heads of Religious Houses, 1216–1377*, p. 100.

<sup>109</sup> Knowles and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses*, p. 100.

<sup>110</sup> *Monasticon*, V, pp. 22–3.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, V, p. 13.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 12–13, note 2.

The responsibility of a prior extended to overseeing business transactions of the prior of the dependent foundation. The approval of the prior of St Martin des Champs was needed for the grant of property by its dependencies, the priories of Barnstaple and St Clears, until the end of the thirteenth century, whether it was the lease of a tenement in Exeter or a small piece of land outside Barnstaple. An agreement between the prior and monks of Barnstaple and William de Raleigh, whereby they were granted a yearly due of two pounds of wax in compensation for the grant of a piece of land, was approved by the prior of St Martin and sealed in Paris in 1248 in the presence of Oliver de Tracy, lord of Barnstaple Castle.<sup>114</sup> A twelfth-century seal of St Martin des Champs is attached to the grant to a goldsmith in Exeter of a piece of land between the High and St Martin's Street by St James Exeter, indicating that the grant was made with the consent of the prior of St Martin des Champs,<sup>115</sup> another dependency of St Martin des Champs. A grant of tithes was made by the prior and convent of Stansgate to the nuns of Clerkenwell with the consent of the prior and convent of Lewes.<sup>116</sup> Permission had to be obtained by the priory of Farley from the prior of Lewes, recorded in a deed of 1323, to lease out the offices of sower, reaper, and clerk of the priory church of Farley.<sup>117</sup> These examples show the kind of detail with which a prior was expected to oversee the administration of a dependency. A careful check on the appropriateness of business transactions was however essential to ensure that the welfare of the monastic community of a dependency was maintained.

If deficiencies occurred in the administration of a dependent priory the prior of the foundation on which it was dependent was expected to rectify the situation. In 1259 the prior of

---

<sup>114</sup> Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, L. 875, no. 878, cited in R. Graham, 'The Cluniac Priory of Saint-Martin', p. 43.

<sup>115</sup> Graham, 'The Cluniac priory of Saint-Martin des Champs', p. 39.

<sup>116</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 75.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 69.

Lewes was called on to answer for the alienation of Stansgate Priory.<sup>118</sup> In 1293 the church of Stanesgate Priory was threatened with ruin and the prior of Lewes was ordered to find a suitable remedy to be applied to the prior of Stansgate. In 1306 the order was repeated and the house was described as spiritually and temporarily destroyed, suggesting that the influence of the prior had been ineffective or that nothing had been done.<sup>119</sup> Responsibility for overseeing the financial wellbeing of a dependent foundation fell short of providing direct financial support. Support was limited to advice on how to manage debt. The only exception to this appears to have been the paying of the annual ferm or rent to the Crown for certain dependent foundations including Malpas by Montacute.<sup>120</sup> There is therefore no evidence that a Cluniac foundation suffered financially from the delegated administration of the abbot of Cluny.<sup>121</sup> Administration of dependent priories would have involved visits of the prior to his dependencies. These are referred to in reports of the official visitors of the abbot of Cluny where deficiencies in observance had been corrected before their arrival at a particular foundation. Contact would also have occurred by the meeting of the priors of the dependencies with the prior at the foundation on which they were dependent. This eventually became standard practice. The priors of the Cluniac foundations dependent on St Martin des Champs met annually on 4 July.<sup>122</sup> Such meetings provided an opportunity to examine observance at the dependent foundations as well transmitting any alterations to observance brought about by the issuing of statutes by abbots of Cluny at the Grand Chapter.

---

<sup>118</sup> Duckett, *Visitations and Chapters General*, p. 218.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 212, 280.

<sup>120</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 173.

<sup>121</sup> Valous, *Le monachisme clunisien*, pp. 70–94.

<sup>122</sup> Graham, 'The Cluniac Priory of Saint-Martin des Champs', p. 43.

## Visitation and the General Chapter

The delegated administration of dependent priories was supplemented by visits of abbots of Cluny to England. Because of the widespread geographical distribution of priories and the wide variety of additional responsibilities that the abbot of Cluny was expected to fulfil, such visits could only be occasional. Most visited was Lewes, as the abbots of Cluny were heads of the foundation on which Lewes was directly dependent but also because Lewes always seems to have been regarded as the principal Cluniac foundation in England and Wales. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records the visit of Abbot Peter the Venerable to England in 1130: ‘the Abbot of Cluny, Peter, came to England by permission of the king and was received everywhere, wherever he came, with great honour.’<sup>123</sup> Abbot Hugh V was at Lewes in 1200 at the time of the dispute with Hamelin de Warenne over the right of appointment of priors to Castle Acre.<sup>124</sup> In 1218 Abbot Geraud established himself at Lewes from which he visited Daventry. Abbot Hugh VII visited Lewes in 1237. Abbot William de Pontoise spent more than a month at Lewes in 1251 before journeying to Somerset in mid May, according to Mark, prior of Montacute, another direct dependency of the abbey of Cluny. Abbot Yves de Vergy was at Lewes in 1266 between 1 and 6 September.<sup>125</sup> His successor Abbot Yves de Chassant came to England to negotiate with King Edward I about affairs of the Order, and on 16 June 1277 he presided over the profession of 36 novices. He then visited several priories including Northampton. He subsequently convened all the English priors at Bermondsey on 1 August in a sort of provincial chapter where he promulgated statutes of reform specially directed to their

---

<sup>123</sup> *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, ed. D. Whitelock, D. C. Douglas, and S. I. Tucker (London, 1961), p. 196.

<sup>124</sup> *Jocelin of Brakelond Chronicle of the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds*, trans. D. Greenway and J. Sayers (Oxford, 1989), p. 110.

<sup>125</sup> ‘Chronicle of Lewes’ in *Apostolatus Benedictinorum in Anglia sive Disceptatio Historica de Antiquitate Ordinis Congregationisque Monachorum Nigarum S. Benedicte in regno Angliae* ed. C. Reyner (Douay, 1626), tract. II sect. iv, p. 62, cited in Guilloreau, ‘Les prieures anglais’, p. 345.

intention by his predecessor.<sup>126</sup> In 1325 it was reported that the abbot of Cluny used to visit Castle Acre when he came to England.<sup>127</sup> Apart from providing an opportunity to profess novices who would otherwise have had to make a long and expensive journey to Cluny, such visits provided an opportunity to reinforce the unity of the wider Cluniac monastic community by exposure to the individual whose ultimate authority every monk acknowledged. There are also records of abbots of Cluny writing to priories in England.

Visitations to priories in England provided a means of checking on the effectiveness of the system of delegated administration. This process was initiated by Abbot Hugh V of Cluny in 1200.<sup>128</sup> Official visitors were appointed by the abbots of Cluny at the General Chapter to carry out enquiries at all Cluniac priories by a process of visitation. For this purpose the Cluniac monastic community was divided into ten provinces of which England, Wales, and Scotland constituted one. There were two visitors appointed for each province. One always seems to have been the prior of a Cluniac priory in England while the other was prior of a Cluniac priory in France. In 1262 they were the prior of Bermondsey and the prior of Ganicourt,<sup>129</sup> in 1275 John, prior of Wenlock and Arnulf, constable of the abbot of Cluny,<sup>130</sup> and in 1279 the priors of Lenton and Montdidier.<sup>131</sup> Following their visitation, the visitors compiled a report that was presented to the General Chapter, more specifically to a commission, the *diffinitorium*, chosen among the members of the General Chapter, who made decisions, known as *diffinitiones* based on the visitation reports.

---

<sup>126</sup> 'Chronicle of Lewes' in *Apostolatus Benedictinorum in Anglia sive Disceptatio Historica de Antiquitate Ordinis Congregationisque Monachorum Nigarum S. Benedicte in regno Angliae* ed. C Reyner (Douay, 1626), tract. II sect. iv, p. 62, cited in Guilloureaux, 'Les prieures anglais', p. 345.

<sup>127</sup> *CPR 1334–1338*, p. 490.

<sup>128</sup> *Hugo V Abbas Cluniacensis XVII Statuta, Pat. Lat.*, 209, cols 881–906 (cols 893–4).

<sup>129</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, p. 11.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

It is unclear how often visitations took place. Records of visitation reports exist for foundations in England and Wales for the years 1262, 1275–6, 1279, 1298, 1390, and 1405,<sup>132</sup> but there are incidental references suggesting that visitations occurred in other years. For example it was recorded at the General Chapter of the year 1314, a year for which no visitation report has come to light, that the sub-prior of Montacute was forced to admit to the visitors that the prior of Malpas was not a very good administrator<sup>133</sup> suggesting both that a visitation occurred in that year, and that records of visitation are not complete.<sup>134</sup>

There seems to have been a specific policy regarding the correct number of monks that should be present at any one priory at any one time. This seems to have been related to available resources, both the foundation bequest and then ongoing resources. Comments in the visitation reports indicate that it was seen as important that the number of monks was maintained at a level to match available resources. It also seems to have been accepted that some foundation bequests could prove inadequate to support the intended size of monastic population. Holme for example was founded for thirteen monks but the endowment proved insufficient and the ‘statutory’ number of monks was given as four in 1281.<sup>135</sup> In an apparent attempt to maintain the monastic population at this level an inquisition held in this year declared that the prior of Montacute, as prior of the foundation on which Holme was dependent, held the church and manor of Holme subject to the charge of finding four monks to sing for the soul of Alured, the founder, and his progenitors and successors.<sup>136</sup> In spite of this attempt to maintain the number of monks at four, monastic populations of three in 1279, 1298, and 1405 seem to have been accepted by Cluniac administration.<sup>137</sup> At Monks Horton, founded

---

<sup>132</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, pp. 8, 9 and 11.

<sup>133</sup> Duckett, *Visitations and Chapters General*, p. 303.

<sup>135</sup> *Montacute Cartulary*, no. 118 pp. 160–1; Knowles and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses*, p. 99.

<sup>136</sup> *VCH Dorset*, p. 81.

<sup>137</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, pp. 27, 43.

with twelve monks and a prior, there were by the reign of King Henry VI only six monks, although it was pointed out that ‘by their charter of foundation thirteen were to be maintained, or if their revenues came short at least eight’.<sup>138</sup> Perhaps more realistically Stanesgate was founded ‘for as many monks as could be maintained’.<sup>139</sup> Cluniac administration similarly resisted the attempt of the secular patron of Barnstaple Priory, Henry de Tracy, lord of Barnstaple, in or about 1233 to raise the number of monks there to thirteen by granting the parish churches of Tawstock and Barnstaple to the priory.<sup>140</sup> The bequest never took place and the highest recorded monastic population thereafter was six monks.<sup>141</sup> Castle Acre was founded for twenty-six monks and this was the monastic population in 1390, but by 1450 the number had dropped to twenty. An apparently critical statement, which appears to have been compiled at Cluny in the middle of the fifteenth century, understood that the full complement of monks was twenty-six, and towards the end of the sixteenth century, twenty-six was again given as the correct number *ab antiquo*.<sup>142</sup> At Farley the statutory number of monks was given as twenty in 1377 but in 1472 the ‘correct’ number was given as fourteen, suggesting that contraction of monastic population was allowed to match diminishing resources.<sup>143</sup> However, there were limits to the extent that the monastic population could contract. In a deed entered into the Lewes cartulary, dated to the reign of Edward IV, Farley is described as being for thirteen monks, and that they once incurred forfeiture for having maintained only ten monks for nine years.<sup>144</sup> Occasionally there seems to have been some doubt about the decreed size of the

---

<sup>138</sup> This is a clear statement that size of monastic populations was related to resources.

<sup>140</sup> Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, L. 875, no. 878, cited in R. Graham, ‘The Cluniac priory of Saint-Martin’, p. 43.

<sup>141</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, p. 24.

<sup>142</sup> Knowles and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses*, p. 98.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.* p. 99.

<sup>144</sup> Jackson, ‘A History of the Priory of Monkton Farley’, p. 275.



monastic population. In an enumeration of Cluniac foundations of about the year 1450 it was stated that the monastic population of Horkesley according to some should be three monks and according to others, two.<sup>145</sup>

As discussed above (Chapter 1) most Cluniac priories were initially established with a small number of monks. Lewes, Pontefract, and Bermondsey had initial monastic populations of just four monks who presumably took control of the foundation bequest.<sup>146</sup> There were exceptions, such as the founding monastic population of Monks Horton which consisted of a prior and twelve monks.<sup>147</sup> Where the scale of this bequest made it clear that it could support a much larger monastic population, the number of monks is likely to have increased fairly rapidly, as suggested by the size of the priory church and conventual complex built to accommodate it. It is estimated from the size of the dormer and reredorter that the monastic population at Lewes had increased to between 50 and 60 monks.<sup>148</sup> There is no other record of the size of monastic populations until 1262. By this year the monastic population of Bermondsey had increased to thirty-two monks and a lay-brother. The recording of monastic populations in the reports of the official visitors demonstrates a concern to maintain monastic populations at a level that can be maintained by available resources. In 1294, when the number of monks at Castle Acre was reported as excessively diminished, the prior of Lewes was ordered to see that the house was restored to its 'ancient and accustomed number' suggesting that the reduction in number occurred for reasons over which the prior had some control.<sup>149</sup>

---

<sup>145</sup> Duckett, *Charters and Records*, II, p. 211.

<sup>146</sup> The first monks at Bermondsey were Petreus who became its first prior in 1089, Richard, Osbert and Umbaud: *Annals of Bermondsey*, p. 427.

<sup>147</sup> *Montacute Cartulary*, no. 118, pp. 160–1.

<sup>148</sup> St John Hope, 'Architectural history', p. 18.

<sup>149</sup> Knowles and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses*, p. 100. As is discussed in Chapter 7 there is evidence that some priories allowed their monastic populations to contract by not replacing monks lost to illness or natural causes as a way of reducing expenditure.

Many priories seem to have had small monastic populations for the entire period of their existence, significantly below the standard minimum of thirteen monks for Benedictine and Cistercian foundations. As much care was taken to ensure the wellbeing of priories with small monastic populations as was taken over larger houses. This can be explained by the fact that every Cluniac monk was seen as belonging to the extended monastic population under the authority of the abbot of Cluny rather than as an occupant of a community defined by the physical limits of the priory which he inhabited.

Not all of the priories were visited during a single visitation. In 1262 reports survive for just nine priories in England and Wales. At least initially there seems to have been a policy of combining visits to priories with a centralised assessment process. For this the visitors established themselves at one priory to which the prior or various monastic officials or obedientiaries were invited to provide information regarding their foundations. This may have been designed to reduce expenditure to certain foundations as when a foundation was visited it was responsible for the expenses of the visitors. On the occasion in 1279 when the priors of St Clears and St James, Exeter, were summoned to Barnstaple, the visitors stated in their report that ‘we knew that he (the prior) was very poor and would be very much inconvenienced by receiving us at his own priory’.<sup>150</sup> As well as assisting expenditure such streamlining would also accelerated the visitation process. In 1262 Lewes was visited but then the visitors based themselves in London and summoned to themselves the almoner and sub-cellarer of Lenton, the sub-prior of Thetford, the almoner of Montacute, the procurer of Holme and the chamberer and granier of Wenlock, and produced their report by questioning them.<sup>151</sup> They then visited

---

<sup>150</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, p. 25.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

Northampton, after which they returned to London and then Bermondsey, to which they summoned the guest master and sacristan of Pontefract.<sup>152</sup>

The available evidence from visitation reports indicates that not all priories in England and Wales were assessed during any one visitation. In 1275 ten priories were visited: Monks Horton, Bermondsey, Northampton, Wenlock, Montacute, Monkton Farleigh, Lenton, Thetford, Castle Acre, Bromholm, and Prittlewell.<sup>153</sup> In 1279 nineteen priories were assessed: Bermondsey, Northampton, Montacute, Barnstaple, to which the priors of St James Exeter and St Clears were summoned, Karswell, Holme, Monkton Farleigh, Clifford, Wenlock, Derby, Lenton, Monk Bretton, Pontefract, Castle Acre, Thetford, Little Horkeley, Prittlewell, Lewes, and Monks Horton.<sup>154</sup>

The evidence suggests that visitation was occasional rather than occurring at regular intervals. Although the visitations were largely concerned with assessing the state of observance at each foundation they seem to have been directed at particular priories and for other specific and differing reasons. The visitation of 1262 assessed observance (see below Chapter 4) and the financial state of the priories (see below Chapter 7), while that of 1275–6 was concerned with observance, indebtedness, and the number of monks at each foundation. The visitation of 1279 examined observance, the number of monks, indebtedness and in particular whether sufficient resources were available to support the monks of the various priories. This was obviously a requirement to enable monks to follow their observance. The later visitations placed particular emphasis on the number of masses being said at each priory and what relative proportion of masses were chanted and said, as well as the number of monks. This was essential for them to be able to continue to live according to the terms of their

---

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., pp. 13–14.

<sup>153</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, pp. 13–19.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid., pp. 20–37.

observance. Particular enquiry was made of St Clears in the same year because the visitors had understood that ‘the prior and his colleague were leading an immoral and incontinent life; neither do they agree with one another’.<sup>155</sup> This indicates that visitation could be targeted to investigate specific matters.

There are instances when a visitation report refers to a priory having been visited by the prior on which the priory was dependent before the official visitation, and that as a result deficiencies in observance had been corrected. It is unclear if these visits were simply opportunistic in order to correct any problems. A reference to the prior of Farleigh being deposed at the visitation of the prior of Lewes in 1300<sup>156</sup> suggests that visits of dependent priories occurred at other times as there is no evidence of an official visitation having occurred during that year. The official visitors compiled a visitation report for each foundation assessed, which was then presented at the next General Chapter. On occasions where the priory visited was a direct dependency of Cluny the official visitors acted as representatives of the abbot of Cluny, in his role as overseer of the administration of the priory, to reinforce observance. In 1276 when visiting the priory of Montacute, a dependency of Cluny, the visitors found that the altar lights were not lighted, and gave strict instructions that this should be remedied.<sup>157</sup>

Apart from the instance of resistance to the reception of the official visitors at Monk Bretton, discussed above, there were other instances of the official visitors being treated inappropriately; this may indicate that there was some resistance to their authority. In 1314 the visitors to Horton complained that they were irreverently received and their expenses not paid.

---

<sup>155</sup> Duckett, *Charters and Records*, II, p. 136.

<sup>156</sup> *Chartulary of Lewes*, pp. 14–15, no. 23.

<sup>157</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, p. 17.

The prior disobeyed their order to send a monk to Prittlewell, and when cited to the General Chapter to answer for this, did not come.<sup>158</sup>

The earliest reference to a meeting of all the priors of Cluniac foundations at the abbey of Cluny was in the year 1132 but this appears to have been a one-off. It was convened by Abbot Peter the Venerable, and 200 heads of foundations attended, including priors from foundations in England. Orderic Vitalis recorded that ‘at that time Peter, abbot of Cluny, sent out messengers with letters to all the dependent cells, and summoned the priors of all the cells in England and Italy and other realms, ordering them to come to Cluny on the third Sunday in Lent, to hear rules for a stricter observance of monastic life than they had hitherto shown.<sup>159</sup> The priors met in the chapter house at the abbey of Cluny. This was therefore a meeting of the representatives of all the monks that constituted the extended monastic community of the abbot of Cluny held in his presence in a structure built so that it could accommodate them. The term General Chapter originates from a similar meeting in 1200 introduced by an edict of Abbot Hugh V ‘for the extirpation of abuses and the maintenance of good material and moral order’.<sup>160</sup> This became an annual event held on the third Sunday after Easter.<sup>161</sup> The earliest General Chapters for which records of the proceedings survive are for the years 1259 and 1260.<sup>162</sup>

There are records of letters of excuse issued by priors from foundations in England for non-attendance, indicating the difficulties involved for priors in travelling to the abbey of Cluny for this annual event. In 1240 the prior of Lewes invoked the need to plead before

---

<sup>158</sup> Duckett, *Visitations and Chapters General*, p. 301.

<sup>159</sup> *Orderic Vitalis, Ecclesiastical History*, VI, pp. 424–46 (p. 424).

<sup>160</sup> *Hugo V Abbas Cluniacensis XVII Statuta, Pat. Lat.*, 209, col. 895.

<sup>161</sup> Valous, *Le monachisme clunisien*, pp. 95–114.

<sup>162</sup> Guilloreau, ‘Les prieurés anglais’, pp. 342–3.

itinerant judges.<sup>163</sup> In 1245 the prior of Wenlock declared that he was unable to leave his foundation in the state of disorder in which he had found it.<sup>164</sup> The prior of Lenton cited his great age.<sup>165</sup> The prior of Bromholm ‘pleaded his affairs’ (that is, he claimed he was too busy to attend) in 1286 and his bad health in 1294.<sup>166</sup> In 1292 the *diffinitor* remarked that the prior of Lewes had not attended the General Chapter for four years.<sup>167</sup>

From 1301 the interval between General Chapters was increased to two years for priors from Cluniac foundations in England, and only priors of foundations directly dependent on the abbey of Cluny were expected to attend every year, probably in recognition of the time and cost involved in attendance.<sup>168</sup> The priors that were expected to attend yearly therefore included those of Lewes, Bromholm, Lenton, Montacute, and Thetford. Priors from the other foundations in England and Wales were expected to attend a regional chapter meeting at the foundation on which they had been made dependent. It was thus the duty of the prior of Barnstaple to attend an annual chapter at the priory of St Martin des Champs on 4 July. During periods of conflict between England and France in the fourteenth century, royal consent was required by priors to attend the General Chapter at Cluny. This was issued to the prior of Lenton by King Edward I in 1305.<sup>169</sup> Letters of protection were granted for the same purpose to the prior of Lewes in 1320<sup>170</sup> and to the priors of Montacute and Lenton in 1332.<sup>171</sup> An

---

<sup>163</sup> *Recueil des chartes*, VI, no. 4772.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.* no. 4833.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 5110.

<sup>166</sup> Duckett, *Charters and Records*, II, pp. 12 and 13.

<sup>167</sup> Duckett, *Visitations and Chapters General*, p. 246.

<sup>168</sup> *Statuts de Cluny edictes par Bertrand, abbé de Cluny, le 23 Avril 1301*, ed. C Douais (Paris, 1893), p. 390.

<sup>169</sup> *CCR 1296–1302*, p. 485.

<sup>170</sup> *CPR 1317–1321*, p. 434.

<sup>171</sup> *CPR 1330–1334*, p. 329.

analogous authorisation was granted to the priors of Wenlock and Bermondsey to attend the chapter at La Charité sur Loire in 1306.<sup>172</sup> Even though these accommodations were made with the best intentions it must have weakened the unified identity of all Cluniac monks belonging to a single community which had been reinforced by the earlier annual General Chapters.

Apart from providing a congregation of the heads of the various Cluniac foundations in the presence of the abbot of Cluny, the General Chapters provided a venue for the transmission of changes to monastic observance made by the abbots of Cluny. These were issued in the form of statutes. The meeting convened in 1132 by Peter the Venerable allowed him to communicate the important group of statutes that he issued to supplement the Cluniac customs in the form that they were in at that time.<sup>173</sup> Once only priors of foundations directly dependent on the abbey of Cluny attended the General Chapter, these statutes had to be transmitted to the other priors in England and Wales at the annual regional chapter meetings. The General Chapter was also an opportunity for reviewing the visitation reports of the official visitors of the abbot of Cluny and issuing instructions for the correction of any deficiencies of observance revealed by them. Priors of Cluniac foundations not directly dependent on Cluny could be summoned to the General Chapter to answer for non-compliance with the instructions of the official visitors. When the prior of Horton disobeyed the order of the visitors in 1314 to send a monk to Prittlewell, he was summoned to the General Chapter.<sup>174</sup> The official visitors, however, as illustrated by this example, also had the authority to issue instructions for the correction of observance at the time of the visitation. These had usually been carried out by the time of the next visitation. The visitors also had the authority to expel monks to another priory for

---

<sup>172</sup> *CCR 1296–1302*, p. 539.

<sup>173</sup> Guilloreau, 'Les prieurés anglais', p. 342.

<sup>174</sup> Duckett, *Visitations and Chapters General*, p. 301.

correction. In 1279 the visitors to Derby expelled one of the monks who lived disreputably and removed him to do penance at Bermondsey whilst another was substituted in his place.<sup>175</sup>

The prior of the foundation on which a Cluniac priory was directly dependent was instructed to correct any deficiencies of observance as well as any financial difficulties at that priory revealed to the General Chapter. In 1259 for example, the prior of Lewes was ordered by the General Chapter to punish the prior of Castle Acre because, although he had been formerly summoned, he did not come to the Chapter, nor send his excuses. He had pledged the seal of the convent on behalf of secular persons, and this may have been the reason for which he was summoned.<sup>176</sup> In 1279, following their meeting with the prior of St Clears at Barnstaple, the official visitors reported to the General Chapter that

he (the prior) and his companions were leading evil lives and the property was in a bad state, as far as construction or buildings go in the aforesaid house they may be considered nil for everything has been made away with, the Divine Offices are not only totally neglected but the prior takes on all sorts of manual labour and acts more like a subordinate, the goods of the church are for the most part dissipated and alienated and the prior forced to work as a chaplain to support himself. For all the state of things the prior and monseigneur the abbot of St Martin (des Champs) must provide whatever remedy they think fit.<sup>177</sup>

In 1293, when it was reported that Castle Acre had a debt of a thousand marks sterling, the prior of Lewes was instructed to set matters right.<sup>178</sup> When in 1314 the prior of Horton disobeyed the order of the visitors to send a monk to Prittlewell, he was cited to the General Chapter to answer for this but did not attend.<sup>179</sup> As Horton was a dependency of Lewes, its

---

<sup>175</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, p. 30.

<sup>176</sup> Duckett, *Visitations and Chapters General*, p. 279.

<sup>177</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, p. 26.

<sup>178</sup> Duckett, *Visitations and Chapters General*, p. 360.

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 301.



prior was ordered to send the prior of Horton to Cluny before Michaelmas to receive punishment. The same visitation report for Horton reported that the sacrist had not enough rents to supply lights and other ornaments for the church or provide for the sick. The prior of Lewes was ordered by the General Chapter to go to Horton and see that this was amended.<sup>180</sup>

The generally positive comments in most visitation reports for the Cluniac priories in England and Wales suggest that with relatively minor exceptions monastic observance was well maintained, even when many of the foundations were in significant financial difficulty for long periods of time. This in turn suggests that the system of delegated administration, whereby priories were made dependent on a Cluniac foundation other than the abbey of Cluny, was effective. It is possible to question the impartiality of a visitation report for a foundation where one of the official visitors was also head of that foundation. This was the case for the visitation reports for Bermondsey in 1262, Wenlock in 1275, and Lenton in 1279. The process whereby reports were compiled from interviewing obedientiaries at another priory also seems to have been inadequate as it largely appears to have been abandoned after 1262 the first year for which visitation reports survive.

\*\*\*\*\*

This chapter has drawn on the available documentary evidence to analyse the ways in which the Cluniac priories in England and Wales were administered. The congregation of Cluny in England and Wales provides an unusual and interesting case study. As all the priories under consideration were new foundations they reveal Cluniac administration uncluttered by the need to adjust it to accommodate the demands of pre-existing foundations as had been the case in France. While ultimate responsibility for every Cluniac monk rested with the abbot of Cluny –

---

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

as reflected in the requirement for every novice to be professed by the abbot of Cluny – some of this responsibility had to be delegated because dispersal of Cluniac foundations had made personal administration of every foundation by the abbot of Cluny impossible and this was used to supplement the occasional visits of abbots of Cluny to England.

Delegation of authority involved making most of the priories in England and Wales dependent on a pre-existing Cluniac foundation other than the abbey of Cluny. A minority of foundations were directly dependent on Cluny. Rather than a relationship between foundations this was effectively a relationship between the prior of the Cluniac house that a new priory was made dependent on and its own prior. The respective foundations of the two priors were often geographically distant, possibly to prevent the development of regional power bases that might compete with the extended Cluniac monastic community. The dependent priory received its first monks and a prior from the existing Cluniac foundation whose prior thereafter was responsible for overseeing the administration of the new priory by his appointed candidate, although the new prior was responsible for the day to day administration of the new priory with the support of a variable number of obedientiaries. This ranged from responsibility for ensuring that the new foundation was financially sound, including the supervision of financial transactions, to the maintenance of the size of the monastic population as well as all aspects of monastic observance. Initially recruitment by the new prior, which tended to be from the local area, was also overseen but when the size of the monastic population reached that which could be supported by its available assets, the priory was considered conventual and could thereafter control its own recruitment. The prior of each dependency continued to be appointed by the prior of the foundation on which it was dependent. In compensation the dependency paid an annual *apport* to the prior of the foundation on which it was dependent which, as we have seen, was usually a fixed amount designed to compensate the prior but also to limit any payment made but on the death of a prior of a dependency the appointing prior received the cope,

breviary and palfrey of the deceased prior. There is no evidence of any dependent priory having received financial support from the priory on which it had been made dependent.

The decision about which priory should receive a dependent foundation seems to have been essentially a Cluniac one. The two priories were often geographically distant and this may have served to prevent the development of regional power bases that could have competed with the extended Cluniac monastic community. Some foundations seem to have been developed as centres of administration, including Lewes and Castle Acre, while the need to reduce the size of the monastic population of a priory might have determined its choice to support a new foundation. Priors seem to have been changed frequently, functioning as the equivalent of obedientiaries in the extended Cluniac monastic community, and this seems to have been a deliberate policy to prevent too close an association developing between an individual and the foundation for which he was immediately responsible.

Priors remained of French nationality well into the fourteenth-century governing monastic populations which were increasingly English. This served to strengthen the identification of the monastic populations with the extended monastic community of the abbots of Cluny. Later secular patrons sought to influence the appointment of priors and also to resist their transfer once appointed taking advantage of the lack of detail in copies of foundation charters as to the appointment process. A process of visitation was developed in the early thirteenth century, to supplement the occasional visits of abbots of Cluny to England, whereby appointed representatives of the abbot of Cluny inspected priories and reported their findings to the General Chapter. This was initially an annual meeting of all the heads of Cluniac foundations held at the abbey of Cluny in the presence of the abbot of Cluny but thereafter reduced to attendance of all priors of foundations directly dependent on the abbey of Cluny every two years. From the time of the adjustment annual chapter meetings for the priors of dependent foundations were held at the foundation on which they were dependent. The General

Chapter provided a means whereby the abbot of Cluny could transmit changes to monastic observance to all Cluniac monks in the form of statutes. Visitations seem to have been occasional and apart from examining observance dealt with other specific issues such as the financial wellbeing of priories, the provision of adequate resources to support the monks of each foundation, determination that the size of the monastic population of each foundation was appropriate and that liturgical observance was appropriate including the number of masses performed at each. Visitations and the General Chapters effectively functioned as a means of assessing the effectiveness of the authority delegated by the abbots of Cluny. The generally positive reports from the years for which visitations survive indicate that observance was generally very well observed and to this extent the system of delegated authority can be seen to have been a success. The congregation of Cluny was more than a name: it was a reality.

This chapter constitutes the first comprehensive analysis of the way in which authority was delegated by the abbots of Cluny to administer the Cluniac foundations in England and Wales. It had previously been noted that there was a dependency relationship between Cluniac priories,<sup>181</sup> but not that the relationship was really between priors and the way in which it was organised had not been studied. The means employed to prevent the development of an identity independent of that of the extended Cluniac monastic community including the spatial separation of priories and their dependencies, frequent changes of prior and the appointment of priors of French nationality well into the fourteenth-century had also not been appreciated. Although the process of visitation and the General Chapters had been written about,<sup>182</sup> there had been no real understanding of their role in testing the effectiveness of the delegation of authority by the abbots of Cluny over the government of their extended monastic community.

---

<sup>181</sup> Graham, 'The Cluniac Order', p. 171.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid. p. 172.

## Chapter 4

### Observance

This chapter explores what can be known about the observance followed by the monks in the Cluniac priories in England and Wales, how this observance was transmitted, maintained, and adapted to make it manageable by the smaller monastic populations present in these foundations. This observance can be divided into liturgical and non-liturgical components. The former comprised the round of services followed in the monastic church, composed of the eight canonical hours and all other communal divine offices, as well as readings outside the monastic church in the infirmary and refectory. Non-liturgical observance broadly covered areas dealing with the behaviour of the monks, such as the maintenance of silence and the practising of hospitality and charity.

While the various customaries of the abbey of Cluny have been extensively studied (see below note 2), it is clear that they describe the observance followed at that particular foundation and make no reference to the observance followed at other Cluniac monasteries. The nature of the observance followed at Cluniac priories in England and Wales has not previously been studied. This chapter will demonstrate how a distinct Cluniac monastic observance adapted to be suitable for the much smaller monastic populations in these foundations was transmitted and followed.

The chapter begins with a consideration of how observance was transmitted, maintained, and modified in the Cluniac priories under consideration. This discussion is followed by a consideration of what is known about the liturgical and non-liturgical components of observance. The chapter concludes with an assessment of how well observed monastic observance was in the Cluniac priories in England and Wales.

## The transmission of observance

Evidence as to the nature of the monastic observance that was followed in Cluniac priories in England and Wales remains limited. This is disappointing given the fact that the maintenance and transmission of observance was, as this thesis will argue, in essence the purpose of Cluniac monasticism. There are no known surviving customaries, detailed prescriptions of liturgical practice, from any one of this group of priories such as survive from Benedictine foundations such as Norwich Cathedral Priory.<sup>1</sup> The extant customaries from the abbey of Cluny, distinctive in their detailed prescription of non-liturgical as well as liturgical aspects of monastic observance, relate to observance at that foundation and not to the Cluniac congregation at large.<sup>2</sup> With the exception of the customary of Bernard of Cluny, produced around 1085 to instruct the large number of novices at the abbey at that time,<sup>3</sup> the customaries were produced as a record of observance at Cluny for non-Cluniac foundations as a means of introducing the reformed monastic observance practised at Cluny to these houses.<sup>4</sup> It is possible that the Constitutions compiled by Archbishop Lanfranc of Canterbury for Canterbury Cathedral Priory, were influenced by Cluniac observance.<sup>5</sup> Although the lack

---

<sup>1</sup> D. Chadd, 'The medieval customary of the Cathedral Priory', in I. Atherton et al., ed., *Norwich, Cathedral, City and Diocese 1096–1996* (London, 1996) pp. 314–24.

<sup>2</sup> Four customaries survive: the *Consuetudines antiquiores*, *Liber tramitis*, the customary of Ulrich of Zell, and that of Bernard of Cluny. They were compiled over the course of nearly a hundred years beginning at the end of the tenth century (Boynton and Cochelin, *From Dead of Night to End of Day*, p. 11). Boynton and Cochelin have written extensively on the Cluniac Customs: I. Cochelin, 'Evolution des coutimieres monastiques dessinee a partir de l'etude de Bernard', and S. Boynton, 'The customaries of Bernard and Ulrich as liturgical sources', in Boynton and Cochelin, ed., *From Dead of Night to End of Day*, pp. 29–66 and 109–130 respectively.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12. A new translation of this text is forthcoming (Bernardus Ordo Cluniacensis, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS Latin 13875, *Disciplina Monastica*, ed. S. Boynton and I. Cochelin (Turnhout, forthcoming)).

<sup>4</sup> The *Liber tramitis* for the abbey of Farfa in Italy, and the customary of Ulrich of Zell for the abbey of Hirsau in Germany. For the former see J. Hourlier, 'St Odilo's Monastery', in Hunt, *Cluniac Monasticism*, pp. 56–76, and S. Boynton, *Shaping a Monastic Identity: Liturgy and History at the Imperial Abbey of Farfa, 1000–1125* (London, 2006), pp. 129–34.

<sup>5</sup> The *Constitutions of Lanfranc*, a form of observance written by Archbishop Lanfranc about 1077 for Christchurch Cathedral Priory, Canterbury and subsequently introduced to other abbeys in England (D.

of written evidence may be due to chance survival or non-survival, the absence of later customaries both from the abbey of Cluny and from its direct or indirect dependencies in England and Wales suggests that transmission of observance within or outside the abbey of Cluny was not achieved by the use of the written word but by oral transmission. This approach contrasted with that of the Cistercian Order where written material had a much greater role in the transmission of observance. Early in the history of the order, the Cistercians developed a revised repertory of chant melodies that were supposed to be distributed in written form to all the houses of the order and in general liturgical observance was regulated by a standard customary meant to ensure uniformity among the houses of the order.<sup>6</sup>

It seems likely that transmission to new dependent foundations was achieved through the agency of the professed monks and prior sent from established Cluniac foundations, who constituted the founding communities of new priories. Boynton has written extensively on the potential oral transmission of the customs within the abbey of Cluny providing a mechanism of instruction that could be readily extended to other foundations.<sup>7</sup> The professed monks would have been well versed in the monastic observance followed at the foundation from which they came, and the prior – as part of his duties of the day to day administration of each priory – would have been responsible for ensuring that observance was followed. As

---

Knowles, ed. and trans, *The Monastic Constitutions of Lanfranc* (London, 1951) show evidence of having been influenced by the customaries of Cluny: Knowles, *The Monastic Order*, pp. 123–4. It seems likely, given the links between Lanfranc and William de Warenne, that the basis for Lanfranc's Constitutions was the observance followed at Lewes Priory rather than the customs of Bernard of Cluny. William de Warenne participated in the suppression of the rebellion of the earls of Hereford and Norfolk in 1075, which was overseen by Lanfranc acting as protector of England while King William was out of the country (M. Gibson, *Lanfranc of Bec* (Oxford, 1978), pp. 156–7). Gibson states that Lanfranc used the Bernard's customary for Cluny but does not provide a source for this statement (*ibid.*, p. 173). Although the customs followed at the abbey of Bec from which Lanfranc came had themselves been influenced by the introduction of Cluniac customs to the abbey of Fécamp by William of Volpiano, Knowles has pointed out that the *Constitutions* bear a much closer resemblance to the customs of Cluny. This seems to suggest a more recent Cluniac influence on their authorship.

<sup>6</sup> S. Boynton, 'Oral transmission of liturgical practice', p. 82.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 67–84.

discussed above, recruitment from Cluniac foundations with a particular emphasis on monastic observance, in effect operating as training and recruitment centres, may have been a factor in determining this dependency arrangement.<sup>8</sup> This may be the reason why such foundations as La Charité, St Martin des Champs, Cluny itself, and later Lewes and Castle Acre, were the sources of monks for almost all of the Cluniac foundations in England and Wales. The transmission of observance is likely to have been an important factor in the initial regulation that priories retained over their dependencies in recruitment of monks until they reached conventual status,<sup>9</sup> and may well, as discussed in the previous chapter, have been a defining feature of this status. As has been shown, initial recruitment of monks from an established Cluniac foundation consolidated observance until a monastic community with a fully established observance was achieved. The new foundation could then recruit novices to whom the monks of the new foundation would transmit this observance. Subsequently, observance could be reinforced by the appointment of priors from other existing Cluniac foundations by the prior of the foundation on which the new foundation was dependent. Gesture or sign language is likely to have been the principal method of transmission of observance to novices and modifications of observance to choir monks given the significant restrictions placed on speech.<sup>10</sup>

What is known of the monastic observance followed at Cluniac priories in England and Wales is largely derived from incidental references to it. It is clear that it was considered distinctive both by Cluniacs and non-Cluniacs alike. A bull of Pope Lucius III, issued in 1181 on behalf of Everard, then prior of Dudley, and his brethren, ordained that in their church the

---

<sup>8</sup> See above Chapter 3 in relation to the priories of La Charité sur Loire and St Martin des Champs.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., for the example of Mendham.

<sup>10</sup> S. G. Bruce, *Silence and Sign Language in Medieval Monasticism: The Cluniac Tradition c. 900–1200* (Cambridge, 2007).



order of St Benedict should be observed according to the constitutions of Cluny.<sup>11</sup> William of Malmesbury records that Lewes was made famous by its first prior Lanzo as an abode of spiritual excellence and its monks were models of devotion, courtesy and charity.<sup>12</sup> This reputation for devotion, charity, and liberal hospitality was maintained by his successor Hugh (1107–23).<sup>13</sup>

Knowledge of the scale and elaboration of the observance followed at the abbey of Cluny from the various customaries makes it clear that this would have had to be adapted to be performed by what were often considerably smaller monastic populations in other Cluniac priories including those in England and Wales. This would certainly have been the case for liturgical observance but possibly less so for aspects of non-liturgical observance such as the maintenance of silence and treatment of sick and dying monks. Although there is no extant documentary reference to liturgical practice relating to treatment of the sick or dying monk in the infirmary from any extant source related to Cluniac priories in England in Wales it is certainly possible for it to have followed the procedure stated in detail in the customaries of the abbey of Cluny.<sup>14</sup>

There are likely to be many other examples where the detailed observance recorded in Cluniac customaries provides an indication as to the procedure followed in the group of priories under consideration. It is to be hoped that the soon to be published edition of Bernard's customary, referred to above (see note 3) will shed further light on areas where this might be the case. There are other examples of likely differences in liturgical practice between that followed at the abbey of Cluny and the Cluniac priories in England and Wales.

---

<sup>11</sup> W. Holtzmann, ed., *Papsturkunden in England*, 3 vols (Berlin and Göttingen, 1930–50), I, p. 134.

<sup>12</sup> William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum*, I, p. 789, *Gesta Pontificum*, pp. 240–41.

<sup>13</sup> Charter of Bishop Ralph of Chichester, London, British Library Cotton MS Vitellius E. X (codex of charters *in folio male habitus*), item 19, fol. 182, dated 1121; quoted in *VCH Sussex*, vol. 7, p. 65.

<sup>14</sup> F. Paxton, 'Death by customary at eleventh-century Cluny', in Boynton and Cochelein, *From Dead of Night to End of Day*, pp. 297–318.

One example is the route of the procession on Sundays and Easter Day described in the customaries of the abbey of Cluny which included a pause in the narthex of the abbey church.<sup>15</sup> There is at present no evidence for a narthex at any of the priories in England and Wales. It is possible that the route was adapted so that the procession could have paused in the west end of the nave.

### **Modifications to observance**

Observance was also subject to continual modification as a result of changes introduced by the statutes of various abbots of Cluny issued at the General Chapters from 1132 onwards. Unlike the customaries of the abbey of Cluny, statutes were targeted at other Cluniac foundations including the abbey of Cluny. Those of Abbots Peter the Venerable (1122–56) and Hugh V (1199–1207) were the most significant.<sup>16</sup> As discussed in Chapter 3, until 1301 these changes were transmitted to other Cluniac foundations by their prior as a result of the prior having attended the General Chapter at the abbey of Cluny. From this year onwards the changes to observance introduced by statutes were only transmitted in this way directly to those monks whose priory was directly dependent on the abbey of Cluny. The other monks would have been informed of them at the regional chapters held for the priors of foundations dependent on another Cluniac priory. Visitations provided a means of examining observance including those changes in observance introduced by statutes. The visitation report made in 1262 relating to Lewes Priory stated:

that all devotional offices were becomingly performed, that all monastic obligations and duties, such as the observance of silence at enjoined times; almsgiving; hospitality; and the

---

<sup>15</sup> K. Kruger, 'Monastic customs and liturgy in the light of the architectural evidence: a case study on processions', in Boynton and Cochelin, *From Dead of Night to End of Day*, pp. 191–220.

<sup>16</sup> Vingtain, *L'Abbaye de Cluny Centre de l'Occident Medieval*, p. 48.

administrative daily business of the monastery, pertaining to the necessary requirements of the whole community, were, according to the concurrent testimony of all evidence adduced, conducted to the upholding of the statutes regulating such things.<sup>17</sup>

Visitation also served to reinforce existing observance as well as changes made to it. The visitation report of Prittlewell in 1262 stated that ‘we (the official visitors) corrected whatever was amiss and gave similar orders in other respects as we had already done at Farley’.<sup>18</sup> As discussed above in Chapter 3, official visitations may also have been used to introduce changes to observance. The instruction that the community and the prior were to make use of sandals or leggings on certain regulated occasions and that the prior was not to ride out without a crupper (*postella*) to his saddle, was issued to ten out of the eleven priories visited in the visitation of 1275–6, suggesting that it represented a change to standard observance.<sup>19</sup>

### **Liturgical observance**

As discussed in Chapter 2, the need for the first Cluniac monks at new foundations to maintain an uninterrupted liturgical observance has already been witnessed in the requirement to provide a suitable setting for immediate continuation of the liturgy on the sites of new foundations. A building that could serve as an oratory for the first monks of any new Cluniac foundation, often the east end of an existing parish church, was available on or adjacent to the site of all new Cluniac priories in England and Wales. This distinguished Cluniac from Cistercian practice where the first monks in many cases constructed a building

---

<sup>17</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, p. 11.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* p. 19.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 14–20.

which could function as a temporary oratory while construction of a permanent monastic church proceeded.<sup>20</sup>

The importance of liturgical observance is also demonstrated by the priority given to construction of a new permanent monastic oratory where this was possible before construction of other parts of the conventual complex.<sup>21</sup> In cases where the east end of a parish church became the permanent oratory of the Cluniac monks priority was given to its sub-division from the nave of the parish church, the setting of secular worship, by the construction of a chancel arch before any other construction.<sup>22</sup> This created a setting for liturgical observance for the exclusive use of the monastic community. The importance of liturgical observance is also demonstrated by a particular structural modification made to the setting provided for it. Reconstruction of the roof of the monastic oratory in stone from wood in several monastic churches, including Lewes and Castle Acre, improved the acoustic quality of the space enhancing the transmission of the liturgy and in particular through the chant which visitation reports suggest was an important element of liturgical observance.<sup>23</sup>

Calendars of feast days recorded in the only two surviving service books from Cluniac priories in England provide significant information about liturgical observance. They consist of a psalter from Bromholm Priory<sup>24</sup> and a breviary from Lewes.<sup>25</sup> Both list feast days of specifically Cluniac significance: those of the Cluniac abbots, St Odilo on 2 January and St Hugh on 29 April. The breviary also lists the feasts of the Cluniac abbots St Maieul on 11

---

<sup>20</sup> Coppack, *The White Monks*, p. 23.

<sup>21</sup> This is discussed further below, Chapter 5.

<sup>22</sup> Extant examples of such chancel arches include surviving examples from Malpas and St Clears priories (Fig. 5.1).

<sup>23</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, pp. 37–43; see below in Chapter 5.

<sup>24</sup> P. Lasko and N. J. Morgan, *Medieval Art in East Anglia* (Norwich, 1973), p. 20.

<sup>25</sup> V. Leroquais, *Le Breviaire-Missel du Prieuré Clunisien de Lewes* (Paris, 1935), p. 3.

May and St Odo on 11 November. This suggests that these specifically Cluniac feasts formed part of the liturgical observance of all Cluniac priories. The two calendars also list the feast of St Pancras on 10 October;<sup>26</sup> the breviary lists that of St Milburge (23 February) to whom Much Wenlock Priory was dedicated, and St Cyrici and St Iulitte (16 June), one of the joint dedications of St Carrock Priory.<sup>27</sup> This indicates how feast days associated with specific Cluniac foundations, which had adopted the dedication of pre-existing monastic communities that had occupied the site of their priories, became part of the liturgical observance not only of those foundations themselves but also of other Cluniac priories. St Pancras was the dedication of the church, and possible pre-existing monastic site used by the first Cluniac monks of Lewes Priory, which adopted the same dedication. St Milburge was the dedication of the former monastic foundation that had occupied the site of Wenlock Priory which in turn adopted the same dedication. Sts Cyrici and Iulitte was the dedication of a small pre-Conquest monastery in Cornwall which became a Cluniac priory with the same dedication.<sup>28</sup> These examples indicate how liturgical observance at Cluniac foundations in England and Wales had a distinctly Cluniac identity but was also able to incorporate feast days of saints, associated with specific Cluniac foundations, but not traditionally associated with the abbey of Cluny. These feast days may have been limited to saints to which pre-existing monastic foundations were dedicated and whose site was subsequently occupied by a Cluniac priory.

The priority of given to certain saints and those particularly associated with intercession, the Blessed Virgin Mary, St John, and St Mary Magdalene, is reflected in the dedication of Cluniac priories. Six priories received their dedication to the Blessed Virgin Mary, two to St John the Evangelist and one to St Mary Magdalene, from a pre-existing

---

<sup>26</sup> The importance of this feast was emphasised by its being associated with the issuing of a copy of the foundation charter of Lewes Priory on this date by a descendent of the founder William de Warenne I.

<sup>27</sup> Leroquais, *Le Breviaire-Missal*, p. 8.

<sup>28</sup> Knowles, *Medieval Religious Houses*, p. 102.

dedication of the site, while of the eleven cases where the site had no existing dedication four were dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, two were dedicated to St John the Evangelist and five to St Mary Magdalene (see Appendix A). The calendar of the Lewes breviary lists the feasts of Mary Magdalene on 22 July<sup>29</sup> and St John on 28 January.<sup>30</sup> A mass to the Blessed Virgin Mary formed part of the expected daily liturgical observance of all Cluniac priories held in the chapel dedicated to her. The report of the visitation to Monks Horton Priory in 1276 stated that ‘the mass of the Blessed Virgin was not properly celebrated, if at all, and we strictly enjoined that this office should be daily celebrated with all due solemnity in the Chapel of the said Virgin’.<sup>31</sup> The feast of the Purification of the Virgin Mary was celebrated in all Cluniac houses with particular reverence,<sup>32</sup> further evidence – together with the dedications of priories and early construction and reconstruction of Lady Chapels in many Cluniac churches (see Chapter 5) – of a particular Cluniac association with the Blessed Virgin Mary. As will be argued elsewhere such practice may reflect a difference in perception of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Cluniac monasticism, also revealed in the writings of early abbots of Cluny,<sup>33</sup> from that which underlay the later cult of the Virgin and the Cistercian emphasis on her.<sup>34</sup> It will be argued that she was seen as a fellow intercessor on behalf of those for whom the Cluniac monastic community prayed.

---

<sup>29</sup> Leroquais, *Le Breviaire-Missal*, p. 9.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>31</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, p. 15.

<sup>32</sup> *Recueil des chartes*, VI, p. 1356.

<sup>33</sup> Notably those of Abbot Odo. For example Sitwell, *St Odo of Cluny*, p.10: ‘O Holy Mother of Mercy’, I cried, ‘on this night you brought forth the Saviour into the world; deign to intercede for me. I seek refuge, O most loving one, in the merits of your glorious and singular child bearing, and do you incline the ears of your piety to my prayers. I fear greatly lest my life should be displeasing to your Son, and because, O lady, through you He manifested Himself to the world, through you may He hasten to have mercy on me.’

<sup>34</sup> M. Rubin, *Emotion and Devotion: The Meaning of Mary in Medieval Religious Culture* (New York, 2009), pp. 17–19. For the Cistercians see E. Jamroziak, *The Cistercian Order in Medieval Europe*, pp. 141–2; Burton and Kerr, *The Cistercians in the Middle Ages*, pp. 125–31.

The feast of the Exaltation of the Cross (14 September) figured prominently in the calendar of Bromholm Priory, again a possible indication of a particular significance of the Cross to the Cluniacs, together with the enthusiasm with which that priory accepted a relic of the True Cross and the presence of relics, images of and altars dedicated to the True Cross in other Cluniac foundations.<sup>35</sup> The importance of the feast at Bromholm Priory was emphasised by its association with an annual fair to be held for three days on the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, the day before and the day after.<sup>36</sup> It would not be surprising if the Cross with its close physical association with the crucified Christ would have had significance to the Cluniacs with their particular role in intercession.<sup>37</sup>

In the earliest collection of visitation reports of the abbot of Cluny for the year 1262 observance is referred to in general terms. Thus for Pontefract, ‘all such matters as are accustomed to be observed in the cloister are there duly performed.’<sup>38</sup> At Bermondsey the visitors found that ‘all devotional offices and rites are most properly and becomingly performed...almsgiving and hospitality are there carried out according to established custom’.<sup>39</sup> At Wenlock they recorded that ‘divine offices are there conducted with all possible solemnity and propriety, silence is observed’.<sup>40</sup> At Northampton, too, the report was in this respect favourable, for ‘all Divine and solemn offices [are] becomingly celebrated and performed and all other obligations rightly carried out’.<sup>41</sup> Other reports carried similar

---

<sup>35</sup> Bermondsey possessed a relic and image of the True Cross, Pontefract an image of the True Cross, and altars dedicated to the Cross were to be found at Montacute and Lewes.

<sup>36</sup> *CCR 1224–1227*, p. 105.

<sup>37</sup> The Cistercian General Chapter began on the Feast of the Exaltation. See Burton and Kerr, *The Cistercians in the Middle Ages*, pp. 31–2 and note 36.

<sup>38</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, p. 14.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 13–14.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

messages. At Montacute, ‘all Divine offices celebrated with usual becoming solemnity and other matters relating to spiritualities were suitably carried out’.<sup>42</sup> For Thetford ‘all divine offices were conducted and celebrated and all other spiritualities becomingly and suitable observed’.<sup>43</sup> At Lenton ‘the Convent was all that could be desired in respect of spiritualities and Divine offices were conducted becomingly and according to church ritual’.<sup>44</sup> Finally, at Lewes, ‘all devotional offices were becomingly performed...all monastic obligations and duties such as observance of silence at enjoined times, almsgiving, hospitality conducted to the upholding of the statutes regulating such things’.<sup>45</sup> Thus, liturgical observance is referred to as ‘divine or devotional offices, rites and other spiritualities’ without providing any detail as to what these constituted. The same is true for the visitation reports of the year 1279.<sup>46</sup>

Certain details of required liturgical observance are revealed by their non-compliance in the set of visitation reports for 1275. Thus for Monks Horton, ‘at the celebration of the High Mass the convent dispensed entirely with the functions of the deacon’, and a feature of his role is revealed as it ‘was enjoined in future at this celebration the gospel should be read by one of the brotherhood delegated to officiate as deacon’.<sup>47</sup> Evidence for prescribed adjustment to the scale of observance between foundations is revealed in the statement that this practice should be observed ‘as (the foundation) is conventual’. This indicates that this feature of observance was not required at foundations that did not have conventual status indicating that a reduction in extent of observance was a feature of this classification. Often

---

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>45</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, p. 11.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., pp. 12–37.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 15.



such priories had small monastic populations so that it might be expected that there might not be sufficient monks for one to be delegated to officiate as deacon. At Montacute the visitors ‘found that altar lights were not lighted and gave strict instructions that this should be remedied’.<sup>48</sup>

The requirement that there should be a reader in the refectory at ‘the hour of dinner’ is revealed by its non-compliance in the same report and that for Montacute.<sup>49</sup> The same reports ordered that ‘the prior and the convent were not to eat meat before seculars or in their houses’, and that for Montacute that ‘no person was to remain in the priory after the hour of compline without manifest and proper reason’.<sup>50</sup>

The difficulty in following any form of standardised observance in foundations with a small monastic population is both revealed and understood in the visitation reports. Thus for Holme in 1279 ‘there are two monks and a prior who live regularly and commendably and fulfil their different religious duties according to the exigencies of the place and the limited number of the community’,<sup>51</sup> while in St James Exeter, where the community consisting of the prior and a non-ordained colleague, it was ‘impossible for Divine offices to be regularly or properly conducted’; however, the expectation was that this could be corrected. The visitors impressed upon the prior ‘the necessity of getting a canon from the Prior of Montacute’,<sup>52</sup> thus indicating that there was an expectation that a foundation with a monastic community of two ordained monks could carry out some form of standardised, although limited, liturgical observance.

---

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p. 17.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, p. 17.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., pp. 25–6.

One set of visitation reports shows how just one element of liturgical observance, the number of daily masses said, was adjusted according to the size of the monastic population of each foundation in the year that the visitation was conducted.<sup>53</sup> Thus, at Lewes with thirty-five monks, eight daily masses were to be said,<sup>54</sup> while at Kersal and Slevesholm with just one monk and the prior, only one mass was required.<sup>55</sup> The minimum requirement was for one daily mass. Foundations with three to five monks were expected to have two daily masses, and those with eight to nine monks, three daily masses. Foundations with eleven to sixteen monks were expected to say four daily masses. The report for Bromholm, with a monastic population of sixteen, reported that five daily masses were said but it was stated that the proper number of services was four.<sup>56</sup> Foundations with populations between twenty and forty monks said between four and eight daily masses. This number of communal daily masses is unusually high indicating the unusual scale of liturgical observance characteristic that had always been a feature of observance at the abbey of Cluny. In comparison, at Cistercian foundations daily masses were generally limited to High Mass and a Lady Mass.<sup>57</sup>

The high degree of elaboration of liturgical practice is also reflected in the unusually large number of masses conducted with chant, this being used as a medium for the transmission of liturgy often within settings, in the cases of monastic churches with stone ceilings especially adapted for this purpose. At foundations where more than one daily mass occurred, those with a monastic population of three or more, at least half of these were commemorated with chant (sometimes referred to as conventual), the remaining masses, in

---

<sup>53</sup> Duckett conflates this set of visitation reports under the years 1298, 1390 and 1405 and it is unclear exactly to which year this set of reports refers (Duckett, *Visitations*, pp. 37–43). All of the following information regarding liturgical observance is taken from this source.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 43.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 42.

<sup>57</sup> Burton and Kerr, *The Cistercians in the Middle Ages*, pp. 103–6.

some cases referred to as low masses,<sup>58</sup> being said throughout. Thus at Wangford with a monastic population of five monks in the year that the visitation occurred, the two daily masses were both chanted,<sup>59</sup> while at Castle Acre with a monastic population of twenty-six, three of the seven daily masses were conducted with chant.<sup>60</sup>

In some cases the purpose of the masses is stated. At Monks Horton the three daily masses consisted of High Mass, the Mass of the Blessed Virgin and the mass for the dead.<sup>61</sup> At Clifford, of the five daily masses, one was for the 'dead' and another for 'benefactors' and these were both said.<sup>62</sup> Of the six daily masses at Lenton the three masses without chant included one for the Trinity to which the priory was dedicated and the other two were masses 'for the dead'.<sup>63</sup> These examples reflect the emphasis in Cluniac observance on the commemoration of the dead and intercession on behalf of benefactors which would include the founder, his descendants and predecessors as specified in many copies of foundation charters. The dead who were commemorated may have included such seculars, founders, and secular patrons of other Cluniac priories as well as those seculars particularly associated with that priory, the intercessory prayer of an extended monastic community being the particular benefit due to founders and secular patrons of Cluniac foundations. The liturgical observance would have included other commemorations of benefactors including the intercessory prayer specified in the copies of later foundation charters of certain of the priories.<sup>64</sup>

---

<sup>58</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, p. 42.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 39–40.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38.

<sup>64</sup> For examples see above, Chapter 1.

Although the visitation returns are a rich source for the performance of the liturgy in the English and Welsh Cluniac houses, incidental references to intercessory liturgical activity occur in other types of documents. The register of Archbishop Courtenay of Canterbury records how the monks of Bermondsey pledged themselves to keep the anniversaries of Prior Richard Downton, a former prior of Bermondsey (1373/4–1390),<sup>65</sup> and of Archbishop Courtenay himself, with a requiem mass at the high altar, and to celebrate mass daily for the archbishop, his father, mother, brothers, and sisters, and for William of Montacute, earl of Salisbury, and for Prior Richard Downton.<sup>66</sup> Specific intercessory commemorations were laid down for certain priors and their relatives. When Prior Nelond of Lewes died in 1429 an agreement was made for the daily performance of a mass for his soul and those of his brother, John, and John's wife, Margaret.<sup>67</sup> Two other priors of Lewes, Hugh de Chyntriac and John de Caroloco, are recorded in 1480 as commemorated by anniversary feasts and the ringing of the great bell. With them were classed William Laxman, 'special benefactor'.<sup>68</sup>

### **Non-liturgical observance**

Visitation reports also contain references to aspects of non-liturgical observance, presumably singled out because of their significance to Cluniac customs. Reference is made to almsgiving, hospitality, and silence and it was stated that these were imposed according to centrally required standards.<sup>69</sup> The visitation report for Wenlock for the year 1262 stated that

---

<sup>65</sup> Knowles and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses*, p. 177.

<sup>66</sup> *VCH Sussex*, vol. 7, p. 65.

<sup>67</sup> *VCH Sussex*, vol. 7, p. 69.

<sup>68</sup> London, National Archives, SC6/1023/30, Ministers' and Receivers' Accounts, Lewes Priory, Office of Procurator.

<sup>69</sup> For the significance of hospitality in the Rule of St Benedict, see White, *Rule of St Benedict*, pp. 78–9. Charity and hospitality had long been activities singled out as activities associated with the the abbey of

‘silence is observed and the sub-prior’s duties in respect thereof firmly and strictly observed’, indicating that the sub-prior had a particular role in the maintenance of silence.<sup>70</sup> That for Lewes for the same year recorded ‘observance of silence at enjoined times, almsgiving and hospitality conducted to the upholding of the statutes regulating such things’, indicating the existence of statutes that specified the scale of these activities.<sup>71</sup> The visitation report for Bermondsey for the year 1262 reported ‘that almsgiving and hospitality are there carried out according to established custom’.<sup>72</sup>

The latest surviving set of visitation reports provides some fuller detail about the practice of almsgiving. At Thetford ‘one tenth the part of bread is reserved for distribution and almsgiving’.<sup>73</sup> At Northampton ‘ordinary monks’ loaves (or bread baked for them) should weigh 52 (pounds)’ and again ‘one tenth the part of what is baked for the conventual establishment is distributed to the poor’.<sup>74</sup> At Prittlewell ‘the only alms distributed to the poor are remains or leavings from the refectory or what may be collected from the prior’s table’.<sup>75</sup> That for Wenlock states that ‘alms are daily bestowed on the poor’.<sup>76</sup> That this relatively small scale of alms distribution draws no criticism suggests that it was considered adequate and by this date symbolic rather than substantive.<sup>77</sup>

---

Cluny. The foundation charter of the abbey includes the phrase ‘We ordain also that our foundation shall serve for ever as a refuge for those who having renounced the world as poor men bring nothing with them but their good will, and we desire that our superfluity shall become their abundance’ (Hunt, *Monastic Life at Cluny*, p. 5).

<sup>70</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, p. 13.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, p.11.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 13–14.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 42.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.

<sup>77</sup> For monastic charity in general see B. Harvey, *Living and Dying in England 1100–1540* (Oxford, 1993), pp. 7–33.

The inclusion of hospitals in the foundation bequest of several priories,<sup>78</sup> which were subsequently maintained, and the establishment of a hospital at Bermondsey late in its history, argues for an emphasis on hospitality as well as care for the sick. Many hospitals served as accommodation for the poor rather than for the provision of medical services. In the reign of Edward I Lewes was bequeathed property in the will of one Gilbert Sikelfoot ‘for the support of the sick poor in the great hall of Southover hospital’, which was the located in the *hospitium* adjacent to the gatehouse of the priory. A rubric in the cartulary of Daventry priory refers to the hospital ‘which is what the almonry is called’.<sup>79</sup> The first Cluniac monks of Pontefract were housed in the hospital of St Nicholas, which was given to the new priory for the provision of the poor.

This emphasis on hospitality to individuals of higher status is also reflected in the construction of guesthouses in early phases of building campaigns of individual priories.<sup>80</sup> It may also have been the cause for the particularly widespread activity of the accommodation of seculars as corrodians, individuals who were granted accommodation for the rest of their lives in return for a money payment in many of the priories.<sup>81</sup>

The importance given to care of the sick members of the monastic community is expressed in the prominence given to the infirmary in the claustral complexes of several of the priories for which the location of this building is known. It was often one of the first buildings completed and in several cases formed the focus of a separate claustral complex

---

<sup>78</sup> Examples include hospitals at Lenton, Daventry, Derby, Lewes, and Pontefract.

<sup>79</sup> *Cartulary of Daventry*, no. 245.

<sup>80</sup> For further discussion see below, Chapter 5.

<sup>81</sup> The economic impact of these is discussed below, Chapter 7; for their imposition by royal authority in the fourteenth century see below, Chapter 8. For corrodies in general see Harvey, *Living and Dying in England*, pp. 179–209. For incidences among houses of regular canons see A. Fizzard, ‘Corrodies at houses of regular canons c. 1485–1539’, in J. Burton and K. Stöber, ed., *The Regular Canons in the Medieval British Isles* (Turnhout, 2011), pp. 193–211.

located to the east of the main cloister. Examples include Thetford, Much Wenlock, and Pontefract (see figs 5.14, 5.11. and 5.12). It was also one of the few buildings within the claustral complex to be rebuilt at a later date. That at Lewes is a good example (see fig. 5.6). This emphasis on care of the sick is also likely to have figured large in the observance followed at the priories. The customaries of the abbey of Cluny contain almost obsessively precise regulations for the care and conduct of the sick, as well as for their relations with the healthy.<sup>82</sup>

The latest extant set of visitation reports contains the only reference to the attendance of the monastic community of a priory in the chapter house. That for Montacute states: ‘brethren assemble regularly for the daily chapter’.<sup>83</sup> The daily chapter, at which priory business would have been discussed, punishments inflicted etc was so much a routine practice that it would not normally elicit comment – which makes it more surprising that in this instance routine observance was indeed noted.

### **The materiality of observance**

The visitation returns also contain incidental references to the equipment required to carry out the liturgy.<sup>84</sup> At Stansgate, then with a monastic population of three, an account rendered in 1324 by the keeper of the priory listed goods including, among other items, two chalices, two

---

<sup>82</sup> R. Christiani, ‘Integration and marginalisation: dealing with the sick in eleventh-century Cluny’, in Boynton and Cochelin, *From Dead of Night*, pp. 287–96.

<sup>83</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, p. 38.

<sup>84</sup> At Stansgate in 1324, an account rendered by the keeper of the priory listed goods including: 2 chalices, 2 copes, 4 sets of vestments, 2 missals etc (London, National Archives, SC6/1125/11, Ministers’ and Receivers’ Accounts, possessions of alien priories). An inventory of Kerswell in 1332 mentions a variety of liturgical vessels and vestments. This included a chalice (‘tolerabilis’), cup lids, pyx, and a processional cross (‘vetus et insufficiens’): *Monasticon*, V, p. 172.

copies, four sets of vestments, and two missals.<sup>85</sup> This demonstrates the scale of liturgical apparatus required of even the smallest of Cluniac priories. A reference to a processional cross in an inventory of Kerswell in 1301 is evidence of processions which formed such an important part of liturgical observance at the abbey of Cluny. The breviary from Lewes and the psalter from Bromholm are the only known surviving liturgical manuscripts from any of the Cluniac priories in England and Wales. In fact they are the only known material remains of Cluniac liturgical observance with no known surviving vestments, chalices or processional crosses for example.

### **Evaluation of the visitation evidence**

References to observance in all the sets of surviving visitation reports are nearly universally favourable. Specific instances of failure in observance, such as those previously mentioned, are characterised by their infrequency. The 1275–6 report for Thetford mentions Ralph the cellarer whom the visitors found guilty of incontinency and living disreputably. They expelled him and ordered him to be removed to do penance at a distant convent.<sup>86</sup> Similarly the 1279 report for Derby draws attention to one monk living disreputably whom the visitors removed to do penance at Bermondsey.<sup>87</sup> The report of the same year for St Clears records that the prior and his colleague were leading an immoral and incontinent life; they could not agree with one another and the divine offices were totally neglected.<sup>88</sup> Traditionally, both in the sixteenth century and in modern historiography, small religious houses have been seen as

---

<sup>85</sup> London, National Archives, SC6/1125/11, Ministers' and Receivers' Accounts, possessions of alien priories.

<sup>86</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, p. 18.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.



a source of poor observance, immorality, and decay.<sup>89</sup> However, the evidence discussed in this chapter indicate that the few recorded examples of incontinency were by no means only the preserve of the smallest Cluniac foundations but as likely to be found in the larger houses. The recording of instances of non-compliance in visitation reports also suggests an attempt to be accurate.

The impartiality of the visitation reports can be questioned. Some were compiled from witness accounts of monastic officials invited to attend another Cluniac foundations rather than the direct observation of the visitors. On several occasions one of the official visitors was also prior of the foundation he visited. That the report for St Clears was compiled as a result of independent information of incontinent behaviour reveals that the visitors could respond to information from non-Cluniac sources. Positive reports of observance also occur from non-Cluniac sources. Prior Hugh of Lewes continued the tradition of the priory ‘for...charity and liberal hospitality’.<sup>90</sup>

Critical references in the documentary record from non-Cluniac sources occur late; they were often politically motivated and therefore of questionable accuracy. They also occur after all the Cluniac foundations in England and Wales had seceded from the wider Cluniac monastic community, so that any deficiencies in observance could not reasonably be attributable to the abbots of Cluny. At St James Exeter in 1428 jurors reported that for a great time no services had been held, and in 1444 King Henry VI granted the priory to his new foundation, Kings College, Cambridge.<sup>91</sup> In 1535 the inquisitor Layton visited Farley Priory

---

<sup>89</sup> For the sixteenth century see the Act of Suppression 1536 and for modern historiography D. Knowles, *Bare Ruined Choirs* (London, 1977), pp. 180–3. For a more recent corrective, see for example L. Rasmussen, ‘Why small monastic houses should have a history’, *Midland History*, 28 (2003), 1–27; J. Burton, ‘After Knowles: recent advances in monastic studies’, in D. A. Bellinger and S. Johnson, ed., *Keeping the Rule: David Knowles and the Writing of History* (Stratton-under Fosse, 2014), pp. 117–38 (pp. 120–27).

<sup>90</sup> Charter of Bishop Ralph of Chichester, London, British Library Cotton MS Vitellius E. X (codex of charters *in folio male habitus*), item 19, fol. 182, dated 1121; quoted in *VCH Sussex*, vol. 7, p. 65.

<sup>91</sup> *CPR 1441–1446*, p. 279.

where he allegedly found unspeakable abominations which ‘as appears by the confession of a fair young monk, a priest late sent from Lewes’ were also present at that foundation.<sup>92</sup>

When Castle Acre was visited in 1536 by the inquisitors Leigh and Rice, they claimed that seven of the monks had confessed to foul sins.<sup>93</sup> However, in the same year the six remaining religious at Farley were described as ‘all being priests of honest conversacion, holley desyryng continuance in religion’.<sup>94</sup>

\*\*\*\*\*

In spite of the limited evidence this chapter has for the first time revealed important insights into the observance followed by the monks in the various Cluniac priories in England and Wales. It has revealed that it was considered distinctive by both Cluniacs and non-Cluniacs. It was transmitted orally by the first monks from pre-existing Cluniac foundations that formed the nucleus of a new community and reinforced by appointed priors as well as the prior of the foundation on which new foundations were made dependent. The various forms of the written customaries of the abbey of Cluny suggest ways in which monastic observance was followed at other priories although it specifically describes the observance followed at that foundation. The observance was subject to continuous modification by statutes issued by the abbot of Cluny and enforced by priors through the agencies of the grand chapter and visitations. The evidence suggests a primary role for liturgical observance reflected in an increased numbers of masses sung with chant and emphasised in re-construction in the replacement of wooden roofs by stone in the monastic oratory.

---

<sup>92</sup> *LP Henry VIII*, 9, p. 42.

<sup>93</sup> *VCH Norfolk*, p. 357.

<sup>94</sup> *VCH Wiltshire*, p. 267.

The observance had features common to all Cluniac priories such as feast days of the various saint abbots of the abbey of Cluny and saints particularly associated with intercession; however, it was also subject to modification by the incorporation of feast days of saints associated with pre-existing monastic foundations on sites of new Cluniac priories. A particular devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary is reflected in the presence in the liturgy of a daily mass dedicated to her in a built setting in the monastic church reserved for this purpose. The scale of liturgical observance was adjusted in order to be manageable by a reduced monastic population but even the smallest community followed a distinctive devotional round that incorporated a daily mass and had to be supported by the availability of a significant liturgical apparatus. The observance also emphasised characteristic features of Cluniac practice, notably the importance of communal intercession revealed in specific elements of the liturgy associated with benefactors and the dead, an expansion of the liturgy to include an increased number of masses and the correct observance of silence. Emphasis was also placed on hospitality and almsgiving, the former reflected in an association of many foundations with hospitals. The evidence that the observance was followed, with relatively few exceptions, to a very high standard throughout the lifetime of these priories argues for the effectiveness of the Cluniac system of delegated authority used to transmit and maintain this observance.

## Chapter 5

### **Construction: the physical setting and environment of worship and living**

This chapter examines the construction of the setting for the observance of the monks at the priories under consideration. Although there is a rich and varied supply of evidence of the layout and structure of many of the houses, both documentary and material from standing remains and evidence derived from excavation, this chapter presents the first comparative study of these structures and their relationship to monastic observance. It discusses how the built environment was designed to meet the needs of the distinctive monastic observance discussed above in Chapter 4, and adapted to meet the requirements of monastic populations of varying size. As monastic observance was divided into liturgical and non-liturgical components so too was the setting for these activities. The oratory of the monks served as the setting for liturgical observance, while the latter was provided for by the rest of the conventual complex located within a precinct whose limits were dictated by a boundary of some sort accessed by a gatehouse. Once the site for a priory had been selected and the structure that was to serve as the oratory of the first monks had been adapted for their use, construction of the remainder of conventual complex was begun. Evidence from observation of standing remains and archaeological excavation, as well as documentary sources, indicates that the scale and rate of construction varied considerably among priories. It seems likely that this variation was dictated by available resources.

The chapter begins with a consideration of how the chancels of certain parish churches were adapted for the exclusive use of the Cluniac monks of small priories. This discussion is followed by an examination of how new conventual complexes were constructed. It will be shown that priority was given to construction of components of the conventual complex most

relevant to monastic observance. These were the oratory of the monks, the setting for liturgical observance, and the chapter house, which was the meeting point of the monastic community. It will be demonstrated that construction of the conventual complex was conducted in phases or campaigns, presumably dictated by financial resources, and that the construction of conventual complexes in a single phase was exceptional. It will be shown how pre-existing structures on the sites of certain priories and used as the first oratories of the monks were subsequently incorporated into the east end of the new priory churches, in the same way that feast days of saints associated with these structures were incorporated into a congregational liturgical observance. It will be argued that architectural elaboration was restricted to the same parts of the conventual complex of most relevance to Cluniac liturgical observance. The plans of the east end of the priory churches, the setting of liturgical observance will then be assessed to analyse what influences governed their planning, from developments at the abbey church of Cluny to the influence of contemporary monastic churches of other types of monastic organisation. The modifications that were made to the east end of the priory churches will next be considered, including the influence of a distinctive Cluniac devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary manifested in the construction and reconstruction of Lady Chapels. Finally the impact of the increasing influence of the priors of Cluniac foundations in the fourteenth century on the fabric of the conventual complex will be discussed, in particular the emergence of separate living accommodation for priors.

### **The adaptation of parish churches**

It has been demonstrated above that a number of the priories were initially or permanently located in existing parish churches. In the case of the smaller priories, initial construction was limited to the adaptation of the chancel of the parish church, which became the permanent

oratory of the few monks and the building of simple dwellings adjacent to this in which the monks were accommodated. This can be observed at Wangford, Chapel Preen, Daventry, Malpas, and St Clears. The oratory of the monks was subdivided from the nave of the parish church either by an elaborate stone chancel arch or some other kind of barrier. Good examples of chancel arches survive in St Clears church (Fig. 5.1) and in the reconstructed nineteenth-century parish church at Malpas which incorporates the arch from the earlier medieval church. Although chancel arches are a feature of non-monastic parish churches, the dating of these arches by architectural style suggests that they were constructed soon after the priories were founded and they are notable for their high quality of construction.<sup>1</sup> This indicates that the boundary between the exclusively monastic and parochial parts of the church had particular significance to the monks. The chancels at Daventry and Wangford churches were demolished and nothing remains of the chancel arches that are likely to have separated the two parts of the original church.

It seems unlikely that the buildings that were constructed adjacent to the parish church to accommodate the small monastic populations of these priories followed a plan similar to that at the larger priories. Evidence for a rectangular range east and south of the original site of the chancel at Wangford has been recovered by excavation<sup>2</sup> and may have been the remains reported as still visible by Taylor in 1821.<sup>3</sup> A geophysical survey of the area south of the church at St Clears has revealed evidence for a rectilinear layout of buildings. There is documentary evidence for a cloister to the north of the parish church at Daventry.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> M. Thurlby, *Romanesque Architecture and Sculpture in Wales* (Little Logaston, 2006), pp. 113–17, 133–4 and 177. Thurlby describes the chancel arch at St Clears as one of the most ambitious chancel arches in Wales; this is likely to be related to the fact that it was part of a Cluniac priory.

<sup>2</sup> V. Fisher, *The Church of St Peter and Paul, Wangford, A Brief Guide to Visitors* (Stradbroke, 1982), p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> R. Taylor, *Indexus Monasticus* (London, 1821) p. 91.

<sup>4</sup> *Cartulary of Daventry*, p. xxiv.

## Newly constructed conventual complexes

In other cases a complete conventual complex, including a permanent monastic church and associated claustral buildings, was newly constructed to provide for the needs of the monks and any use of the chancel of the adjacent parish church as a monastic oratory was temporary. Those priories for which sufficient archaeological and historical evidence exists for such a complex include: Bermondsey (Fig. 5.2), Bromholm (Fig. 5.3), Castle Acre (Fig. 5.4), Clifford, Dudley (Fig. 5.5), Kerswell, Lenton, Lewes (Fig. 5.6), Mendham (Fig. 5.7), Monk Bretton (Fig. 5.8), Monks Horton (Fig. 5.9), Monkton Farleigh (Fig. 5.10), Montacute, Much Wenlock (Fig. 5.11), Pontefract (Fig. 5.12), Prittlewell (Fig. 5.13), and Thetford (5.14).

The scale and rate of construction of these building complexes varied considerably. Building seems to have occurred in phases or campaigns revealed by variation in date of different parts of the conventual complex indicated in standing remains or by excavation. After the completion of the east end of the priory church at Bromholm construction seems to have been suspended until the early thirteenth century when the chapter house and remainder of the eastern cloister range were constructed. This conclusion is based on the architectural style of the sculpture in the building (Fig. 5.15).<sup>5</sup> The scale and rate of construction are likely to have been dictated by available resources in view of the high cost involved. This was particularly the case because permanent construction was in stone and was of uniformly high quality. In 1279 the official visitors of the abbot of Cluny commented that the church of Barnstaple Priory was strongly built and beautiful.<sup>6</sup> Readily available supplies of stone from local quarries at the sites of some priories would have reduced expenditure. Examples include

---

<sup>5</sup> H. Harrod, *Gleanings among the Castles and Convents of Norfolk* (Norwich, 1857), p. 222.

<sup>6</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, p. 25.

Dudley,<sup>7</sup> Wenlock, and Pontefract, where the foundation bequest included quarries at Brackenhill about one and half miles from the site of the priory.<sup>8</sup> At Montacute the castle adjacent to the priory site was included in the foundation bequest of the priory and was subsequently demolished to provide a source of building stone.<sup>9</sup> The cost of construction at other priories without locally available supplies of limestone, such as Lewes, Thetford, and Castle Acre, would have been increased by the need to import stone either from Caen in Normandy or a distant source in England. At Lewes limestone from Quarr in the Isle of Wight was used until 1140 but thereafter was supplanted by Caen stone.<sup>10</sup> Caen stone is distinguished by its cream white colour from the darker limestone from quarries at Barnack in Nottinghamshire, used at Castle Acre.<sup>11</sup> There seem to be examples whereby resources were specifically directed to building to try and overcome any limitation on permanent construction in stone dictated by available resources. For example, in the copy of the second foundation charter for Mendham Priory, the founder, William de Huntingfield, confirmed the gifts of Roger de Hammesurl, William son of Hoscotel, and Sigar, and stated that these should only be used towards providing the monks with a church of stone.<sup>12</sup> Completion of the nave of the church of Wenlock Priory was funded by a specific bequest.<sup>13</sup> On other occasions

---

<sup>7</sup> J. Hemingway, *An Illustrated Chronicle of the Cluniac Priory of St James, Dudley* (Dudley, 2005), p. 13.

<sup>8</sup> C. V. Bellamy, *Pontefract Priory Excavations 1957–1961*, Thoresby Society Publications, 49 (1962–4), pp. ix–xv.

<sup>9</sup> *Monasticon*, V, pp. 165–6.

<sup>10</sup> Lyne, *Lewes Priory*, pp. 133–4.

<sup>11</sup> Coad and Coppack, *Castle Acre Castle and Priory*, p. 24.

<sup>12</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 58.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* p. 82, translated in Graham, ‘The history of the alien priory of Wenlock’, *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, third series, 4 (1939), 117–30 (p. 126). The grant was made because ‘the monks of Wenlock have no resources nor any benefices assigned for the construction or maintenance of construction of the church of St Milburge’. The bequest was made with the permission of Hugh Foliot, bishop of Hereford, in 1220. He stipulated that one of the monks would be pledged to spend all the revenues received from the bequest ‘on the building and maintenance of the church of St Milburge and not on anything else except necessary expenses’. For the licence by Bishop Hugh to appropriate the



building was given increased priority to ensure that it was accomplished. The construction of the Lady Chapel of Thetford Priory in the thirteenth century was apparently the result of a dream involving the appearance of the Blessed Virgin Mary who requested its construction in stone. As a consequence a new Lady Chapel was constructed to the north east of the presbytery of the priory church.<sup>14</sup> This example bears a striking resemblance to the dream of the monk Gunzo that effectively justified the construction of the final church at the abbey of Cluny known as Cluny III despite the enormous expense involved.<sup>15</sup> The correspondence of the two accounts suggests the degree of shared culture and shared identity between Cluny and its dependent priory of Thetford.

In spite of apparent attempts to match the cost of construction to available resources, it would always have been difficult to estimate how much building would cost. This might be particularly the case where building occurred over a long period of time. Building costs are likely to have contributed considerably to the debts accumulated at many priories. This can

---

church of Clun and its chapels *in fabricam predicte ecclesie de Wenloc' convertendam* see *English Episcopal Acta VII Hereford 1079–1234*, ed. J. Barrow (Oxford, 1993), no. 360.

<sup>14</sup> Raby and Reynolds, *Thetford Priory*, p. 14. Raby refers to this as a legend. 'A certain craftsman of Thetford, who had long suffered from an incurable disease, prayed incessantly to Our Lady for the restoration of his health. She appeared in a vision and bade him tell the prior to build her a chapel on the north side of the priory church. After three repetitions of the dream the man told the prior, who was so impressed that he gave orders for a wooden chapel to be built. But when the craftsman returned to him and said that it was Our Lady's wish that the chapel should be of stone the prior ignored him. A woman of Thetford had a similar vision and was told to instruct a certain monk to urge the prior to hasten the building of the chapel. When the woman took no notice of this dream her arm became paralysed and so she went in tears to the prior. The latter was convinced and built the stone Lady Chapel.'

<sup>15</sup> C. M. Carty, 'The role of Gunzo's dream in the building of Cluny III', *Gesta*, 28/1 and 2 (1988) pp. 113–25. In this case St Peter appeared to the paralysed Gunzo as he slept in Cluny's infirmary and commissioned him to convey to Abbot Hugh a plan for the new church in return for which he would be freed of his paralysis. St Peter tells Gunzo 'we want the abbot to build (the church) larger without being afraid of the expense, for it will be our affair to make provision for everything necessary to this project'. He was also told to advise Hugh that if he did not comply he would be afflicted with Gunzo's illness (ibid. p. 113). The importance of the dream as a reflection of divine will was reflected in the books listed in the monastic library at the abbey of Cluny that dealt with this subject (ibid. 113–16). There is an earlier example of the role of a dream to justify Cluniac building activity. John of Salerno recounts in his life of Abbot Odo that when he had expended all available money on monastic building at Cluny, St Martin appeared to him and pledged to provide funds that would abundantly suffice not only for the present time but also for the future (Sitwell, *St Odo of Cluny*, pp. 41–2).

be seen by the presence of debt at foundations that had just or were in the process of completing a building phase (see below, Chapter 7).

The dating of construction of the various components of the conventual complex is largely based on the architectural style of standing remains or remains recovered by excavation. There was a priority in which components of the conventual complex were constructed. In all cases the east end of the priory church was included in the initial building campaign.<sup>16</sup>

### **First phase of construction**

That the fabric at the east end of the church is earlier than the rest can be seen at Bermondsey (Fig. 5.2), Castle Acre (Fig. 5.4), Dudley (Fig. 5.5) Monkton Farleigh (Fig. 5.10), and Prittlewell (Fig. 5.13). In the cases of Dudley, Monkton Farleigh, and Bermondsey pre-existing structures were incorporated to form part of the east end of the priory church because they had served as the initial of the oratory of the first Cluniac monks on the site. At Dudley an earlier pre-existing single-celled structure indicated by its different orientation to the rest of the building, seems to have been incorporated into the east of the church.<sup>17</sup> It seems likely that this was used as the first oratory of the monks and may have been the pre-existing church of St James, used as the first oratory of the monks, which was included in the foundation bequest of the priory and from which it may have taken its dedication. At Farleigh a possible pre-existing single celled structure with an apsidal east end became the south transept of the priory church which is also likely to have been used as the first oratory (see above Chapter 2

---

<sup>16</sup> The first plan of the east end is referred to as this was later altered as will be discussed further below.

<sup>17</sup> Radford, 'The Cluniac priory of St James', p. 450.

and Fig. 5.10).<sup>18</sup> At Bermondsey the pre-existing component of the east end of the priory church seems to have been a central apse flanked by north and south aisles also ending in apses which may have belonged to the *nova et pulchra* mentioned in Domesday dedicated to St Saviour from which the priory obtained its dedication. This structure would have likely to have served as the first oratory of the Cluniac monks. The first phase of construction on this site resulted in the addition of apsidal chapels to the north and south of the aisles flanking the central apse and the construction of north and south transepts further west.<sup>19</sup> This is likely to have been the structure that was consecrated in 1089. The first phase of construction at Castle Acre consisted of the east end of the church and the first bay of the nave.<sup>20</sup> This is likely to have been the structure that was consecrated in 1146 x 1148.<sup>21</sup> At Bromholm (Fig. 5.3) construction of the east end of the priory church constituted the first phase of building. The east end of the church contained the choir of the monks where all services took place. The priority given to its construction reveals the emphasis that was given to construction of a suitable setting for liturgical observance. Its priority of construction reflects the importance of liturgical observance to Cluniac monks.

In at least once case, presumably where financial resources allowed, construction of the east claustral range occurred in the same building phase as the east end of the priory church. This seems to have been the case at Lewes (Fig. 5.6). The first date for consecration of the priory church was between 1091 and 1092, indicating that at least the east end of the church had been constructed by that date. There is documentary evidence for the presence of the chapter house in the east claustral range by this date as William de Warenne II had issued a

---

<sup>18</sup> Brakspear, 'Excavations at some Wiltshire monasteries', p. 240.

<sup>19</sup> Grimes, 'The Cluniac abbey of St Saviour, Bermondsey', p. 21.

<sup>20</sup> E. Impey, *Castle Acre Priory and Castle* (London, 2014) p. 49.

<sup>21</sup> St John Hope, 'Castle Acre Priory', p. 106.

copy of the foundation charter to the monks in the chapter house about 1089, following the death of his father.<sup>22</sup> Excavations between 1900 and 1902 carried out in the area during the construction of a railway line through the site revealed two lead cysts within the structure that could be identified as the chapter house. Inscriptions on the cysts revealed that they contained the remains of the founder, William de Warenne and his wife, Gundrada.<sup>23</sup> They are likely to have been buried in the newly constructed chapter house. This range also contained other buildings referred to in charters of William de Warenne.<sup>24</sup> These included the monastic dormitory with its undercroft and adjacent reredorter, standard components of the east range of the Benedictine ground plan. The construction of an infirmary and chapel also seems to have belonged to this phase of building and seems to have been built on the foundations of an Anglo-Saxon structure.<sup>25</sup> This was replaced by a later infirmary in 1218–19.

At other sites construction of the east claustral range followed that of the east end of the priory church. This can be seen where the north end of the range is built up against the south wall of the south transept of the priory church rather than being incorporated into its fabric. This occurs at Castle Acre (Fig. 5.4). At Dudley Priory the eastern claustral range which in this case lay to the north of the church, is of almost contemporary date with the first east end of the priory church (Fig. 5.5). There is no break in the masonry of the east wall of the cloister and the simple opening into the dayroom has ashlar dressings like those of the south transept; however it seems to belong to a second phase of construction as the east wall of the cloister range over sails the plinth of the north transept with a straight joint against the

---

<sup>22</sup> *EYC*, VIII, pp. 62–4.

<sup>23</sup> St John Hope, ‘Architectural history’, p. 19. The original twelfth century tombstone of Gundrada has also been recovered. See Chapter 1 for discussion of its inscription. See also van Houts, ‘The Warenne view of the past’.

<sup>24</sup> *EYC*, VIII, pp. 62–4.

<sup>25</sup> Lyne, *Lewes Priory*, pp. 15–32.

masonry above.<sup>26</sup> Excavation of the east cloister range at Bermondsey Priory, as well as the infirmary and its chapel, indicates that these were in existence by the late eleventh and early twelfth century and probably belonged to a second single phase of construction (Fig. 5.2), which is still very early for a second phase of building.<sup>27</sup> At Monk Bretton Priory (Fig. 5.8) the monastic church was free-faced on the south, suggesting that construction of the monastic church belonged to a separate phase following construction of the east range of the cloister, which is of thirteenth-century date.

The east claustral range included the chapter house which also had a particular importance to Cluniac monastic observance which emphasised the importance of community.<sup>28</sup> The chapter house provided a setting for the communal aspects of Cluniac monastic observance. These included the daily chapter meeting where a chapter of the Rule of St Benedict was read, the commemoration of dead members of the wider monastic community and seculars granted confraternity, which included burial within the building,<sup>29</sup> the dispersal of statutes which connected the monks of a priory with the wider Cluniac monastic community and their abbot of Cluny. The chapter house also served as the location for meetings of the priors of dependent foundations and the setting for the signing of important charters and deeds.<sup>30</sup> Its importance is also indicated by its being one of only four

---

<sup>26</sup> Radford, *The Cluniac Priory of St James at Dudley*, p. 451.

<sup>27</sup> T. Dyson et al., *The Cluniac Priory and Abbey of St Saviour Bermondsey, Surrey: Excavations 1984–95* (London, 2011).

<sup>28</sup> On the chapter house in general see Greene, *Medieval Monasteries*, passim; M. Thompson, *Cloister, Abbot and Precinct* (Stroud, 2001), pp. 38–46; Cassidy-Welch, *Monastic Spaces and their Meanings*, pp. 105–3; Hicks, *Religious Life in Normandy*, pp. 37–8, 147–8. The first chapter house at Cluny is likely to have been one of the first if not the first constructed emphasising its importance. Such a structure is absent from the ninth-century St Gall plan.

<sup>29</sup> As revealed by the recovery of bone remains within the chapter houses of Lewes (St John Hope, 'Architectural history', pp. 19–20), and Thetford (R. Robertson-Mackay, 'Recent excavations at the Cluniac priory of St Mary, Thetford, Norfolk', *Medieval Archaeology*, 1 (1957), 96–103 (p. 98) that included child and female burials.

<sup>30</sup> For example the issuing of the charter of William de Warenne in the chapter house of Lewes (*EYC*, VIII, p. 63).

buildings that were reconstructed later in the history of priories (the other three being the east end of the priory church, the Lady Chapel and the infirmary). Examples of reconstructed chapter houses include the polygonal examples at Prittlewell and Pontefract (Figs. 5.13 and 5.12). The latter was reconstructed in the thirteenth century.<sup>31</sup>

In two cases those of Monks Horton and Pontefract the entire claustral complex seems to have been constructed in one phase soon after the priory was founded. The surviving buildings of the west cloister range at Monks Horton can be dated on stylistic grounds to the second half of the twelfth century as can surviving parts of the west end of the church (Fig. 5.9). The founding monastic population of Monks Horton consisted of 12 monks and a prior, as opposed to the more usual three or four monks that would have needed accommodating. The size of the founding community and the scale of buildings constructed to house them soon after the foundation of the priory suggest that the foundation bequest must have been exceptionally large. This also seems to have been the case at Pontefract. The first phase of construction datable to the late eleventh to early twelfth century from excavation resulted in the building of the entire plan of the monastic church and the claustral complex (Fig. 5.12).

The layout of buildings within the claustral complex seems to have followed a standard pattern also seen in Benedictine foundations.<sup>32</sup> The uniformity of ground plan and location to the south of the monastic church is striking, suggesting that in itself this was important. Although the claustral complex at Dudley was constructed to the north of the church it follows the same ground plan. Construction of the claustral complex in this position seems to have been determined by the use of the pre-existing church of St James by the monks as their first oratory which became the south transept of the monastic church leaving too little space

---

<sup>31</sup> Bellamy, *Pontefract Priory Excavations*, p. 1.

<sup>32</sup> Gilyard-Beer, *Abbeys*, pp. 26–37; Coppock, *Abbeys and Priories*, pp. 61–80; Thompson, *Cloister, Abbot and Precinct*, pp. 39–46.

on the site granted to the priory to the south for construction of the claustral complex (see Fig. 5.5). This is not the case with the ground plans of other monastic orders where adjustments to meet the limitations of the local geography of a site are relatively common. While standardisation of the ground plan may have been important, it is possible that the uniformity of the ground plan of those Cluniac examples in England that can be elucidated simply reflects the care with which their sites were selected allowing sufficient space for its construction.

The east range also contained the dormitory of the monks over the chapter house and a work room further south and connected to the reredorter which was orientated east to west. The south range contained the dormitory and the west range guest accommodation on the first floor over an area used for cellarage.

An infirmary complex, consisting of accommodation for the sick and a separate chapel to serve those monks unable to use the monastic church, usually lay east of the main cloister. It was often an early and substantial structure, sometimes incorporated into a smaller cloister as in the examples at Thetford (Fig. 5.14), Pontefract (Fig. 5.12), and Much Wenlock (Fig. 5.11). It was another building that underwent later reconstruction, the earlier infirmary at Lewes being replaced by a much expanded double aisled structure in the thirteenth century (Fig. 5.6). The prominence of the death ritual and care for the sick monks in the monastic observance known to have been followed at the abbey of Cluny is likely to account for the prominence given to the infirmary within the claustral complex. At Cluny the infirmary had to be large enough to accommodate the whole monastic community at any one time, since the monks processed there to attend the anointing of the dying. This may have been the reason why Abbots Hugh and Peter the Venerable enlarged the infirmary complex there. Although located east of the buildings of the eastern cloister range, occasionally within a separate cloister, the infirmary and its inhabitants, whether dying or sick or old, remained very much

part of the monastic community of these priories, and they were expected to partake in as much of the liturgical round as possible.<sup>33</sup> This stands in sharp contrast with Cassidy-Welsh's interpretation that within Cistercian monasteries this location emphasised its separation from the rest of the claustral complex and entry into a different sort of place designed to keep the inhabitants away from the rest of the monastic community.<sup>34</sup>

Examples of where the entire claustral complex appears to have been built in a single phase include Castle Acre (Fig. 5.4), completed by the mid-twelfth century and Prittlewell (Fig. 5.13), completed in the late twelfth century. In such cases the cloister is usually square. The complex was situated to the south of the priory church except at Dudley and possibly Daventry. At Dudley (Fig. 5.5) the remaining ranges of the cloister appear to have been built in one phase.<sup>35</sup> The other three walls forming the sides of the cloister including that of the north wall of the aisleless nave appear to be of the same construction and this phase is likely to have involved construction of the refectory in the south range, but too little of the fabric of the latter structure survive to give a reliable date.

The nave of the church was often the last part of the conventual complex to be completed suggesting that it was of relatively little importance. In contrast to the churches of other monastic organisations, most of the Cluniac priory churches had either a very truncated or no nave for most of the period of their existence. In 1268 Prior Folville of Lewes granted 200 marks in his will towards the completion of the two western towers of the nave of Lewes Priory.<sup>36</sup> At Dudley construction of the upper part of the north wall of the aisleless nave and its west and south walls containing lancet windows, followed construction of the south and

---

<sup>33</sup> Paxton, 'Death by customary', pp. 297–318 and Paxton and Cochelin, *The Death Ritual at Cluny in the Central Middle Ages*, pp. 179–82.

<sup>34</sup> Cassidy-Welsh, *Monastic Spaces and their Meanings*, pp. 133–65.

<sup>35</sup> Radford, 'The Cluniac priory of St James', p. 452.

<sup>36</sup> St John Hope, 'Architectural history', p. 5.



west cloister ranges and can be dated to the thirteenth century on the basis of architectural style.<sup>37</sup> The south aisle of the nave at Bermondsey was completed about 1392. At Prittlewell the nave and south aisle of the monastic church was only completed following construction of the claustral complex between the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth century. St John Hope, noting that the arcades in the western part of the nave at Castle Acre were of a richer character, semi-cylindrical with deeply incised grooves and other irregularities, suggested a distinct break in construction between the third and fourth bays of the nave.<sup>38</sup> The later style of architecture to the upper part of the south west tower, of pointed rather than rounded shape, indicates that it was constructed after completion of the claustral complex. This can also be seen by the fact that the west end of the priory church is bonded onto the north end of the west claustral range. At Monk Bretton there is evidence that the nave had not been laid out until about 1290; it was not completed until the fourteenth century.<sup>39</sup>

The best preserved nave of a Cluniac church in England is that at Much Wenlock. It contains a chapel built at first floor level in the south aisle (Fig. 5.11). Rose Graham suggested that this might be a chapel dedicated to St Michael.<sup>40</sup> A number of other Cluniac monastic churches, including the abbey of Cluny itself, had chapels at first floor level in the nave adjoining the west front of the churches dedicated to this saint. Examples occur at the Cluniac priories of Payerne and Romainmotier in Switzerland.<sup>41</sup> At Cluny the chapel dedicated to St Michael was located on the first floor of the south aisle of the narthex the abbey church referred to as Cluny III. This recurrent pattern suggests that this structure had a

---

<sup>37</sup> Radford, 'The Cluniac priory of St James', p. 453.

<sup>38</sup> St John Hope, 'Castle Acre Priory', p. 117.

<sup>39</sup> Graham and Gilyard-Beer, *Monk Bretton Priory*, p. 8.

<sup>40</sup> Graham, 'The history of the alien priory', p. 129.

<sup>41</sup> Faton, 'Cluny et la decouverte des sites clunisiens', pp. 61, 98.

liturgical significance.<sup>42</sup> Insufficient remains of the nave exist at the other priories in England to know if they also contained such a structure. Castle Acre (Fig. 5.4) does have a chapel at first floor level at the north of the west cloister range, features of which suggest that it was contemporary with the original fabric of this range whose completion preceded that of the west end of the nave of the priory church. It is also decorated with an early scheme of wall painting which has been dated to the twelfth century. This chapel also had access to the nave of the church by a stairway in its north east corner. Traditionally this chapel has been called the prior's chapel and it may well have become so following the extensive reconstruction of the west cloister range in the fourteenth century, which definitely seems to have accommodated the prior in its northern part from that time onwards.<sup>43</sup> There is however no earlier evidence that the prior at Cluniac priories in England had separate accommodation until the fourteenth century. It seems possible that the first floor chapel in the west range of Castle Acre Priory may have served a similar function to that at Much Wenlock but was constructed in this location because the west end of the nave of the priory church had not been completed by that date.<sup>44</sup>

A consequence of phased construction was that at any time before the conventual complex was completed, temporary, presumably wooden structures would have existed to serve the function of the parts of the complex still to be built. Naturally such structures subsequently underlay the later permanent stone buildings and do not tend to leave much evidence of their existence. At Prittlewell excavation revealed evidence for a small timber building about 20 feet long and 6 feet in diameter on the site of the priory.<sup>45</sup> Remains of

---

<sup>42</sup> I have been unable to find any evidence for a similar structure in the churches of the monasteries of other orders which suggests it might be specific to Cluniac monastic churches.

<sup>43</sup> P. A. Faulkner, 'A model of Castle Acre Priory', *Medieval Archaeology*, 6 and 7 (1962–3), pp. 300–3.

<sup>44</sup> C. Babington, T. Manning, and S. Stewart, *Our Painted Past: wall paintings of English Heritage* (London, 1999), p. 56.

<sup>45</sup> J. W. Burrows, *The History of Prittlewell Priory* (Southend, 1970), p. 13.

Kersal Priory incorporated into a residential structure of post-dissolution date included wattle and daub of twelfth to thirteenth century date. As a result of phased construction the original scale of the conventual complex could prove inadequate if the monastic population increased significantly. This seems to have occurred at Lewes where the dormitory had to be extended in the last quarter of the twelfth century to the south by 111 feet and also to the east.<sup>46</sup> A new reredorter had to be constructed to the south of the dormitory extension between 1180 and 1200 and the refectory was extended to the west resulting in a rectangular cloister.<sup>47</sup> At Bermondsey there is also evidence for a late twelfth- and early thirteenth-century reconstruction of the buildings of the claustral complex relatively soon after their initial construction. Such elaborations of original plans are also likely to have resulted in significant increased expenditure.

### **Architectural elaboration: the Chapter House**

Although construction in stone was of a uniformly high standard, evidence suggests that architectural elaboration was restricted to certain parts of the conventual complex. These include the monastic church and the chapter house, those areas that provided settings for the most important aspects of monastic observance. Surviving examples of architectural elaboration of the monastic church include Castle Acre, Bromholm, and Thetford.

There is evidence for elaborate architectural schemes within chapter houses at Castle Acre, Bromholm (Fig 5.15), Thetford, Much Wenlock (Fig. 5.16), and Mendham (Fig. 5.17). The decorative scheme remains well preserved at Much Wenlock with its series of horizontal interlacing arcades and elaborate entrance. Surviving architectural fragments and antiquarian

---

<sup>46</sup> St John Hope, 'Architectural history', p. 25.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 18.

illustrations indicate that the walls of the chapter house at Castle Acre were similarly elaborately decorated with three horizontal series of interlacing arcades.<sup>48</sup> The floor of thirteenth-century date was also elaborately decorated with tiles.<sup>49</sup> At Thetford the spacing of the column bases in the walls of the chapter house suggests that they were also decorated with interlacing arcades.<sup>50</sup> At Mendham, antiquarian descriptions of the standing remains, before they were pulled down in 1815, reported that the walls of the chapter house were divided by columns into ten recesses with semicircular arches on each side and eight at the east end. The arches and those of the entrance doorway rested on square capitals profusely ornamented with sculptured foliage.<sup>51</sup> The decorative scheme of the capitals within the chapter house was distinguished by their character and variation.<sup>52</sup> Before the restoration of the church of Wangford in 1864, the setting of the Cluniac priory, comprising six small bays of Romanesque arcading, could be seen in the west wall of a building north of the chancel which may have served as the chapter house of the priory.<sup>53</sup> The surviving thirteenth-century scheme of decoration within the chapter house at Bromholm updates the pattern of arcades seen within the earlier chapter houses (Fig. 5.15). In many cases the apsidal ending of the chapter house was replaced by flat end into which a large and elaborate window was fitted to illuminate the building.

Where architectural elaboration occurs the style tends to be local suggesting that local craftsmen were used in their construction. Sculptural parallels between Cluniac foundations

---

<sup>48</sup> Bloom, *Notices of Castleacre*, pp. 212–16; H. Harrod, *Gleanings among the Castles and Convents of Norfolk* (Norwich, 1857), pp. 114–5; St John Hope, ‘Castleacre Priory’, pp. 128–9; Impey, *Castle Acre Priory and Castle*, pp. 8–10.

<sup>49</sup> Bloom, *Notices of Castleacre*, pp. 213–5.

<sup>50</sup> Harrod, *Gleanings*, p. 21; Raby and Baillie Reynolds, *Thetford Priory*, p. 5.

<sup>51</sup> W. Aldis, ‘Antient and Modern State of Mendham Priory’ *Gentleman’s Magazine*, 78, pt II (1808), p. 969.

<sup>52</sup> J. A. Repton, ‘Mendham Priory Suffolk’, *Gentleman’s Magazine*, 2, pt. 2 (1836), 601–4 (pp. 602–3).

<sup>53</sup> Fisher, *The Church of St Peter and Paul, Wangford*, p. 3 and illus. p. 9.

in England and Wales and those in France including the abbey of Cluny, even those foundations that were dependent on a foundation in France, are rare.<sup>54</sup> There is, however, a common emphasis on architectural elaboration of the same parts of the conventual complex but using local designs. Parallels between the Cluniac priories in England do exist but are few and involve only simple and common types of decoration. Certainly nothing resembling a Cluniac group can be substantiated. Parallels such as in pier bases between Castle Acre and Thetford are more likely to reflect local construction rather than emulation.<sup>55</sup> The same applies to the later elaboration of parts of the conventual complex such as the east end of priory churches and their chapter houses such as the polygonal examples mentioned earlier which are reminiscent of similar examples in the Benedictine foundation of Westminster Abbey and Augustinian Bolton.<sup>56</sup> The result is that the final form of a Cluniac conventual complex in England, even though it shares architectural elaboration of the same areas of the conventual complex, could be quite different in appearance to that of a Cluniac example in northern France which in turn could be quite different to an example in Burgundy, but similar to that of contemporary monastic foundations of other orders. It is interesting to speculate as to what effect this difference in design might have had on the identification of the monks who inhabited the different priories with a wider Cluniac monastic community and to what extent it encouraged identification with a distinctly English monastic milieu.

The remaining buildings in the conventual complex, although of high quality lacked ornamentation reflecting their functional role.

---

<sup>54</sup> Lockett, 'Catalogue of Romanesque sculpture from the Cluniac houses in England', p. 46. There are, however, similarities in the ground plan of monastic churches as will be discussed later in this chapter.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., pp. 48 and 58 respectively.

<sup>56</sup> Gilyard-Beer, *Abbeys*, p. 28.

### **Architectural elaboration: the west front of the priory church**

The other area that was subject to most architectural elaboration was the west front of the Cluniac monastic church. The surviving example at Castle Acre (Fig. 5.23) demonstrates the extent of elaboration. It had a principal doorway of four orders with elaborate mouldings, set in a triple series of wall arcades, separated by ornamental string courses.<sup>57</sup> At Monks Horton, the surviving fragment of the west wall of the church is also richly ornamented. Portions of interlaced arcading are preserved on the upper parts of the wall.<sup>58</sup> Evidence from surviving fragments suggests that the west front at Thetford would have been equally elaborate.<sup>59</sup> The west front of the priory church was the boundary between the area preserved for use by the monastic community and the outside world. This was effectively equivalent to the architecturally elaborate chancel arches that separated the chancel, the preserve of the monastic community, from the nave in those priories where the chancel of the parish church became the permanent oratory.

### **Plans and modifications to the east end of priory churches**

The east ends of the earliest priory churches all ended in a series of apses. The most common structure seems to have been a wide central apse projecting slightly forward of flanking northern and southern aisles, also ending in apses. To the north and south of the crossing there were transepts each of which had either one or two apsidal chapels projecting eastwards. This was the layout at Castle Acre (Fig. 5.4), Thetford (Fig. 5.14), and Pontefract

---

<sup>57</sup> Raby and Caillie Reynolds, *Castle Acre Priory*, pp. 8–10.

<sup>58</sup> W. E. Godfrey, 'Monks Horton', *Archaeological Journal*, 86 (1929), 314–6 (p. 315).

<sup>59</sup> Raby and Baillie Reynolds, *Thetford Priory*, p. 3.

(Fig. 5.13).<sup>60</sup> At Dudley (Fig. 5.5) and Monkton Farleigh (Fig. 5.10) there was just a central apse, while at Bermondsey (Fig. 5.2) excavation evidence suggests that a pre-existing church ended in a similar series of three apses to which an additional northern and southern apse were added as well as a north and south transept.<sup>61</sup> The choir of the east end of the church would have occupied the crossing and possibly the first bays of the nave, and would have extended eastwards. The central apse contained the matitudinal or morrow altar around which processions were held. The apses contained altars that had to be of sufficient numbers to enable the monks to say their daily private mass.

It is likely that the design of individual priory churches was influenced by that of the church of the priory from which the first monks came. It can be seen that the design of the east end of Castle Acre and Thetford churches resembles that of the second church of the abbey of Cluny, dedicated between 955 and 1000 and known as Cluny II (Fig. 5.18).<sup>62</sup> This should not be surprising as both foundations were populated by monks from Lewes whose monastic community in turn was derived from the abbey of Cluny. The east end of the first priory church at Lewes, is likely to have followed the same triple aisled form but destruction to the site of the church caused by construction of the Lewes to Brighton railway line is likely to have removed any evidence of this.<sup>63</sup> The later east end of the priory church recovered by excavation could have contained such a structure (marked in green on Fig 5.6) and it may have been a first church of this plan that was consecrated at some point between 1091 and 1098 by Bishops Ralph of Chichester, Walkelin of Worcester, and Gundulf of Rochester, and which was referred to in a the charter in which the first prior, Lanzo, requested the earl

---

<sup>60</sup> C. V. Bellamy, 'Pontefract Priory excavations', *Medieval Archaeology*, 12 (1968), pp. 171–2.

<sup>61</sup> Grimes, 'The Cluniac abbey of St Saviour, Bermondsey', pp. 210–7.

<sup>62</sup> Conant, *Carolingian and Romanesque Architecture 800–1200*, p. 109.

<sup>63</sup> St John Hope, 'Architectural history', p. 6.

Warenne as founder to have the completed church of St Pancras dedicated.<sup>64</sup> It is the plan of such a church populated by monks from Cluny at a time when this was also the plan of the abbey church at the abbey. It is the plan of this first church that is likely to have influenced the plan of the churches at Castle Acre and Thetford, both of which were founded with monks from Lewes rather than the plan of these churches being directly influenced by that of Cluny II as has been suggested by Conant.<sup>65</sup> At Bermondsey the series of parallel apses in the east end of the first priory church resembles the layout at La Charité sur Loire (Fig. 5.19) from where the first monks came to establish the London priory.<sup>66</sup> Looking at the issue in another way it can be argued that the design of these churches was modular, based on combinations of apses which could be adapted to suit local requirements and it is unlikely that concerns to reproduce a particular ground plan drove construction. For example, it seems likely that plans to construct a north transept for the first priory church at Wenlock were abandoned as it would have disturbed burials in that area.<sup>67</sup> The presence of two apsidal chapels in each western transept at Lewes and Bermondsey compared to the single chapel in the transepts of Castle Acre, Thetford, Dudley, and Monkton Farleigh possibly reflects a larger monastic population at Lewes and Bermondsey at the time of construction but there is no other independent evidence to verify this.

At later foundations the plan for the east end of the priory church was modified by the incorporation of a semicircular ambulatory from which apsidal chapels radiated. Lenton

---

<sup>64</sup> EYC, VIII, p. 63.

<sup>65</sup> K. Conant, 'Medieval Academy excavations at Cluny, IX: systematic dimensions in the buildings', *Speculum*, 38 (1963), 1–45 (p. 3). The point to be emphasised is that there was no attempt to emulate a standard church design in the way it has been argued that that the Bernardine plan influenced the plan of early Cistercian churches.

<sup>66</sup> H. Hilberry, 'La Charité-sur-Loire priory church', *Speculum*, 30 (1955), 1–14 (p. 4).

<sup>67</sup> C. Pearce, 'The Priory of St Milburge, Much Wenlock and the Abbot of Cluny. A Case Study of Extended Monastic Community', unpublished M. Phil Thesis University of Wales, Lampeter, 2006, p. 79.



seems to have been the first priory church in England and Wales that had this layout. In 1935-6 excavations revealed the site of the choir of the monastic church. The remains of two piers were identified as the remnants of an apsidal arcade of an ambulatory, and of an apsidal chapel (Fig. 5.19).<sup>68</sup> This is likely to have been influenced by the contemporary reconstruction of the east end of the abbey church at Cluny, known as Cluny III (Fig. 5. 18), part of which was dedicated in 1095,<sup>69</sup> from which the first monks came to Lenton between 1102 and 1108. Cluny III ended in an ambulatory from which apsidal chapels radiated.<sup>70</sup> The design seems to have been influenced by that of monastic churches on the pilgrimage route to Santiago where it allowed circulation of pilgrims around shrines located in the east end of the churches.<sup>71</sup> At Cluny and Lenton it allowed the larger monastic populations in these foundations at the time these churches were constructed to process around the east end of the church,<sup>72</sup> an important element of Cluniac liturgical observance. It also increased the number of apsidal chapels which provided more altars. The east end of the priory church at Lewes was also modified by an eastwards extension which incorporated an ambulatory and five radiating apsidal chapels. It also contained the eastern pair of transepts seen in the layout of Cluny III (Fig. 5. 6).<sup>73</sup> The range of dates for its consecration (between 1142 and 1147) is provided by William de Warenne III (d. January 1148), Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury

---

<sup>68</sup> Green, 'Lenton Priory', pp. 80–1.

<sup>69</sup> Conant, *Carolingian and Romanesque Architecture*, p. 116.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> T. W. Lyman, 'The politics of selective eclecticism, monastic architecture, pilgrimage, churches, and "Resistance to Cluny"', *Gesta*, 28/1 and 2 (1988), 83–92.

<sup>72</sup> Conant, *Carolingian and Romanesque*, p. 113. In 1042 there were about 70 professed monks at Cluny, but under Abbot Hugh the number had increased to 200 by 1085 and, there was a further increase to about 300 in 1109, at the death of Abbot Hugh V. There is no evidence for shrines in the east end of Cluniac churches such as the famous Benedictine examples at Bury St Edmunds, St Albans and Christchurch Canterbury (J. Crook, *English Medieval Shrines* (Woodbridge, 2012)), and no evidence of lay access to the east end of priory churches except for burial, as will be discussed later in Chapter 6.

<sup>73</sup> St John Hope, 'Architectural history', p. 11.

(1139–1161), Robert, bishop of Bath (1136–66), and Ascelin, bishop of Rochester (1142–January 1148). A charter of William de Warenne III which can reliably be dated to 1147 was concerned with the dedication of a third church dedicated to St Pancras.<sup>74</sup> The first was the pre-existing church dedicated to St Pancras and used by the first monks as their oratory while work occurred on the second church which was dedicated between 1091 and 1092. Both of these features provided an increased number of altars and a route for procession for an expanding monastic population. The location of the pre-existing church of St Pancras used by the first monks at Cluny is unclear. Up until now it has been claimed that it underlay the later Cluniac infirmary, excavation of which has revealed Anglo-Saxon foundations. The tendency of the Cluniacs to incorporate pre-existing structures on their sites into the fabric of their churches discussed above raises another possible location for this structure. During the excavations that revealed the plan of the ambulatory and apsidal chapels of the later priory church another building was identified south of the southernmost apsidal chapel. It was reported at the time that its floor was at a lower level than the chapel and its walls were decorated with the remains of wall paintings of a figure in sacerdotal robes. This building was incorporated onto the fabric of the later priory church and is orientated on the same axis. It would not have been easy to incorporate into the plan of the proposed first constructed priory church at Lewes as the presence of the structure that became the infirmary chapel prevented building to the south of it. It was possible to incorporate this structure into the extended east end of the church and the fact that this occurred could be explained by its use as the first oratory of the monks and therefore its identity as the pre-existing church of St Pancras.

A third layout of the eastern part of first priory churches is seen in Cluniac foundations in England. At Monk Bretton the central vessel and associated north and south aisles and

---

<sup>74</sup> *EYC*, VIII, pp. 84–7.

transepts were square ended (Fig. 5.8).<sup>75</sup> This design is likely to have been influenced by that of the reconstructed priory church at Pontefract from which the first monks at Monk Bretton came. At Pontefract the reconstructed priory church was extended to the east and was square ended (Fig. 5.12). This reconstruction was necessitated by the partial destruction of the first monastic buildings during the Anarchy, between about 1141 and 1151 as a result of a family feud between rival claimants to the de Lacy estates. The vanquished Gilbert de Gant compensated the monks for the damage which ‘I brought upon them and their church through the war between me and Henry de Lacy’.<sup>76</sup> The reconstructed priory church was consecrated in 1159 by Roger, archbishop of York.<sup>77</sup> The design with a plan similar to the Bernardine plan of the Cistercian Order is likely to have been influenced by that of the Cistercian Kirkstall Abbey founded between 1147 and 1152 which the de Lacys founders of Pontefract had also founded.<sup>78</sup> This shows that the Cluniacs were willing to incorporate local advances in structure which served the requirements of their liturgical observance rather than slavishly copying the design of pre-existing Cluniac priory churches. The change of design to that more typical of neighbouring monastic churches of other orders may have helped to weaken the identity of priories with the wider Cluniac monastic community.

Later many of the Cluniac priory churches were extended to the east and became square-ended. This did not occur at the abbey of Cluny. Examples include the reconstructed churches at Castle Acre (Fig. 5. 4), Thetford (Fig. 5.14), and Mendham (Fig. 5. 7). Pontefract itself was extended further east in the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century to form a five bay rectangular aisled structure. This was aisled on both sides and had five chapels against its

---

<sup>75</sup> Graham and Gilyard-Beer, *Monk Bretton Priory*, pp. 7–12.

<sup>76</sup> *Chartulary of Pontefract*, nos 399 and 400.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.* no. 10.

<sup>78</sup> Robinson, *Cistercian Abbeys of Britain*, pp. 132–4.

east wall. The centre bay projected about eight feet further east than the two pairs of flanking bays. The morning or matutinal mass was located in the central apse while the high altar was located further west. At Castle Acre the central apse of the east end of the first church was taken down in the fourteenth century to allow for an eastward extension of the presbytery by three bays, thirty-two feet in length with a straight east end. At the same time the eastern apse of the south aisle was taken down and replaced by a square end.<sup>79</sup> At Mendham Priory positive crop marks showed that the church had a square end. The southern choir aisle was also flat ended. Both features are likely to represent an eastwards extension to the first priory church.<sup>80</sup> At Bermondsey the projecting central apse and its northern and southern counterparts were incorporated within a square east end which had the same width and length (Fig. 5.21). According to the *Annals of Bermondsey*, the modified church was dedicated in 1338.<sup>81</sup> At Montacute rebuilding of the presbytery was begun in 1260.<sup>82</sup> At Monkton Farleigh the priory church was extended to the east, a square east end replacing the earlier central apse (Fig. 5. 10).<sup>83</sup> At Dudley the choir was extended in the second half of the thirteenth century, a square end replacing the original apse. A chapel was added south of the choir which was modified between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries (Fig. 5.5).<sup>84</sup> Even the chancel apses of the churches of St Clears and Malpas, used as oratories of their respective priories, were

---

<sup>79</sup> Raby and Baillie Reynolds, *Castle Acre Priory*, p. 10.

<sup>80</sup> E. A. Horne, 'St Mary's Priory Mendham Suffolk: air reconnaissance, 1975-77', *Aerial Archaeology*, 1(1979), pp. 16-17; L. E. Webster and J. Cherry, 'Suffolk: Mendham', *Medieval Archaeology*, 23, 252-3.

<sup>81</sup> *Annals of Bermondsey*, p. 473.

<sup>82</sup> London, British Library, MS Cotton Tiberius A. x. fos 169v, 170, cited in Graham, 'A History of the Buildings', p. 25.

<sup>83</sup> Brakspear, *Excavations*, p. 236.

<sup>84</sup> Radford, 'The Cluniac priory of St James', p. 456.

replaced by square ended ones.<sup>85</sup> The reason for these extensions is not always clear. There is not always evidence that they corresponded with increasing monastic populations. Such extensions provided more space within the liturgically important part of the church. In some cases enhancement of the east end of the priory church was accompanied by replacement of the original roof by a stone ceiling as mentioned above in Chapter 4. At Bermondsey a wall parallel with and some 25 feet north of the original presbytery wall was later inserted abutting on the west wall of the northernmost apsidal chapel to the east. Its position was dictated by the northern extremity of this structure and westwards it crossed the foundations of the north transept. It was equipped with external buttresses at intervals of 12 to 14 feet to support a replacement stone roof in the reconstructed east end of the church, dated to 1387.<sup>86</sup> The monastic church at Monks Horton had been re-roofed by 1279.<sup>87</sup> At Montacute the building of a high vault was begun in 1260.<sup>88</sup> Stone vaulting enhanced the acoustic properties of the space, particularly important for the chant which later visitation reports show was a significant component of liturgical observance of all but the smallest priories.<sup>89</sup>

## Lady Chapels

Modifications of the east end of priory churches were often associated with the reconstruction of Lady Chapels and this may even have driven the process of reconstruction of the east end

---

<sup>85</sup> This is the structure now present at St Clears church and the square ended chancel of Malpas church is described in an antiquarian account of Malpas Priory. See W. Coxe, *An Historical Tour in Monmouthshire*, 2 vols (Monmouth, 1801), I, 78.

<sup>86</sup> *Annals of Bermondsey*, p. 481.

<sup>87</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, p. 36.

<sup>88</sup> London, British Library, MS Cotton Tiberius A. x. fos 169v, 170 cited in Graham, 'A history of the buildings', p. 25.

<sup>89</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, pp. 37–44.

of the church in certain cases. They were usually built to the north of the choir as at Thetford where this structure was contemporary with the eastwards extension of the choir in the thirteenth century (Fig. 5. 14).<sup>90</sup> The visitation report of 1275–6 refers to a chapel of the Blessed Virgin at Monks Horton.<sup>91</sup> At Montacute the new Lady Chapel had been built by 1305.<sup>92</sup> At Castle Acre the reconstructed Lady Chapel appears to be later in date (Fig. 5.4). Its construction involving the taking down of the apse of the north transept chapel and that of the north choir aisle to accommodate it to the north east of the choir has been dated to the early to mid fourteenth century. It also had a vaulted ceiling.<sup>93</sup> A north eastern extension of the priory church of Mendham might also represent the site of a Lady Chapel. Occasionally the Lady Chapel was constructed east of the presbytery as at Much Wenlock.<sup>94</sup> Lady Chapels were often features of the reconstructed east ends of the monastic churches of other monastic organisations but there seems to be evidence of Lady Chapels in the reconstructed east end of Cluniac priory churches at a particularly early date. In 1229 the Annals of Lewes record that ‘the chapel of the Blessed Virgin was constructed anew, and the first mass celebrated in it on the vigil of St Nicholas’.<sup>95</sup> Exactly what modification to the priory church occurred at that time to accommodate this new chapel is unclear. The will of Richard, third earl of Arundel and Surrey, dated 1375, gives some idea of its location as he directs ‘mass to be said for the repose of his soul...in the chapel of Our Lady on the north of the great church’.<sup>96</sup> There are also records of altars within the priory church dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. At

---

<sup>90</sup> Raby and Baillie Reynolds, *Thetford Priory*, p. 4.

<sup>91</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, p. 15.

<sup>92</sup> *Montacute Cartulary*, p. 140.

<sup>93</sup> Raby and Baillie Reynolds, *Castle Acre Priory*, p. 10.

<sup>94</sup> J. Pinnell, *Wenlock Priory* (London, 1999), p. 7.

<sup>95</sup> *Annals of Bermondsey*, p. 457.

<sup>96</sup> St John Hope, ‘Architectural history’, p. 94.

Karswell there was reference to such an altar.<sup>97</sup> The relatively early reconstruction of Lady Chapels on a large scale is further evidence of a distinctive Cluniac veneration of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

### **Modifications to the west claustral range: priors' lodgings**

A major alteration of the west cloister range of some priories occurred in the fourteenth century. The upper storey was refashioned to provide accommodation for the prior and probably additional guest accommodation. This seems to reflect a change in status of the prior from simply being a monastic official who could be moved from one foundation to another, to that of an individual, usually an Englishman, who identified with a single foundation, could participate in diplomatic activity outside the limits of the precinct of the priory and who had become integrated into a national monastic system. There is no documentary or archaeological evidence for separate accommodation for the prior at any of the foundations under consideration before the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century. This is quite unlike the situation for the abbots of Benedictine and Cistercian foundations who had separate accommodation from at least the late twelfth century onwards, either in the upper floor of the west range or in a free-standing structure.<sup>98</sup> Even the priors of Augustinian foundations such as Norton Priory had separate accommodation in the first floor from the twelfth century onwards.<sup>99</sup> It seems quite likely that until this period the Cluniac priors of

---

<sup>97</sup> Graham, 'The Cluniac priory of St Mary Carswell', p. 115.

<sup>98</sup> Thompson, *Cloister, Abbot and Precinct*, pp. 65–92.

<sup>99</sup> Greene, *Medieval Monasteries*, p. 9. This accommodation also underwent improvement but at a significantly later date. The prior's accommodation at Norton Priory was extended in the fifteenth century in the form of a tower house in the west range 'fit for an abbot': *ibid.*, p. 19.

England and Wales slept in the communal dormitory with the rest of the monks.<sup>100</sup> All surviving west ranges show evidence of significant reconstruction from the late thirteenth century onwards.

At Castle Acre the rearrangement of the first floor can be dated to the mid-fourteenth century. The room over the outer parlour in the north end of the range became a state room for the prior with its own garderobe and access to the first floor chapel to the west which probably now became the personal chapel of the prior. New schemes of wall painting also date from this period, showing figures in ecclesiastical robes and an image of the Virgin.<sup>101</sup> Further work on this range in the fifteenth century welded the whole of the west range into a house devoted to the needs of the prior as a great landlord rather than just a monastic official (Fig. 5. 22).<sup>102</sup> At Monks Horton (Fig. 5. 9) the stylistic changes to the extant west range can be dated to between the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. It was reroofed and the first and ground floors furnished with new windows. The walls were ashlar-faced with dressings and decoration of high architectural quality.<sup>103</sup> At Clifford, an extant five bay fourteenth-century building orientated north-south probably constituted the prior's residence in the west cloister range.<sup>104</sup> The range was re-roofed. Similar accommodation survives at Prittlewell Priory. The inventory taken by the king's commissioners in 1536 at its dissolution provides evidence of the sumptuousness of the prior's accommodation. The furnishings included: hangings of

---

<sup>100</sup> Evidence of a separate garderobe in the west wall of the dormitory at Castle Acre might indicate the position of a separate cell or cubicle for the use of the prior: St John Hope, 'Castleacre Priory', p. 128; Raby and Baillie-Reynolds, *Castle Acre Priory*, p. 8; Coad and Coppack, *Castle Acre Castle and Priory*, p. 31.

<sup>101</sup> Babington, *Our Painted Past*, p. 56; J. Spooner, 'The fourteenth-century wall paintings at Castle Acre Priory and Greyfriars, Great Yarmouth', in *Kings Lynn and the Fens: Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology*, ed. J. McNeil (Leeds, 2008), pp. 170–85 (p. 173).

<sup>102</sup> C. Baily, 'Monks Horton Priory', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 10 (1876), 81–9; P. A. Faulkner, 'A Model of Castle Acre Priory', *Medieval Archaeology*, 6 and 7 (1962–3), 300–3.

<sup>103</sup> Godfrey, 'Monks Horton', pp. 314–6.

<sup>104</sup> Royal Commission on Historical Monuments England, 'Herefordshire vol. I south-west' in *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in Herefordshire* (London, 1931), p. 40.



green serge with a painted border over the walls of the prior's chambers. The bed had a tester, green curtains and a coverlet of tapestry. There were two counter tables, one with leaves, six stools, a chair, carpet, four cushions, a cupboard painted green, and fire irons.<sup>105</sup> The northern end of the range also contained a chapel for the private use of the prior.<sup>106</sup> In some cases separate accommodation was provided for the prior for the first time outside the claustral complex. At Wenlock an elaborate lodging of early fifteenth-century date was constructed for the prior in the east range of the infirmary cloister.<sup>107</sup> It had fenestration facing into the infirmary cloister along corridors at both floor levels and two pairs of round-headed lights set between each buttress. At each level there were three divisions, services and chambers on the ground floor with the main hall on the first floor, again flanked at either end by chambers. Its construction followed the mitring of the then prior by the pope. At Thetford (Fig. 5.14) the prior was accommodated in a separate range situated to the north west of the west cloister range and orientated east-west. Excavations revealed reconstruction and extension of this range in phases from the late thirteenth to fourteenth centuries to form the basis of a separate lodging for the prior.<sup>108</sup> These ranges survive because they had come to so resemble secular accommodation that they could be adapted to secular use with minimum input after the Dissolution.

At several priories reconstruction of parts of the conventual complex occurred at about the same time or after separate accommodation was provided for the prior, perhaps used to underline the prior's change of status. At Bermondsey a change of prior was underlined by a building campaign that included reconstruction of the cloister and refectory and reroofing of

---

<sup>105</sup> R.C. Fowler, 'Inventories of Essex Monasteries in 1536', in Burrows, *The History of Prittlewell Priory*, pp. 39–46.

<sup>106</sup> Burrows, *The History of Prittlewell Priory*, p. 44.

<sup>107</sup> Cranage, 'The Monastery of St Milburge', pp. 106–17.

<sup>108</sup> R. Wilcox, 'Thetford Cluniac Priory Excavations 1971–4', *Norfolk Archaeology*, 40, pt 1 (1987), 1–18.

the presbytery and nave of the priory church in the late 1380s.<sup>109</sup> The prior was Richard de Downton and the building campaign coincided with the prior's bid to have the status of the priory increased to that of an abbey.

In several other cases gatehouses were reconstructed, the point of access to the priories. At Thetford the gatehouse of fourteenth-century date was of three storeys. The earlier gatehouse seems to have been incorporated into the range that became the prior's lodgings.<sup>110</sup> The gatehouse of late fifteenth- to early sixteenth-century date at Castle Acre bears shields depicting the arms of the secular patron of the prior, the de Warennes, and that of the priory itself emphasising its distinct identity.<sup>111</sup> The almost complete fifteenth-century gatehouse at Montacute bears the initials of one of its priors, Thomas Chard, who was prior between 1514 and 1532, a clear indication that by this date that an independent identity had developed between the priors of Cluniac priories and their foundations which conflicted with their previous identity as an outpost of the extended monastic community of the abbot of Cluny.

To summarise: this chapter has examined how the built fabric of the conventual complexes was adapted or constructed to serve the needs of the monastic observance of the priories under consideration. It has been shown that priority was given to the provision of an appropriate setting for liturgical observance. This varied from adaptation of the chancel of parish churches for the permanent use of the monks of small priories to the construction of new priory churches to a plan influenced by that of the church from which the first monks of priories originated. The plans of the east end of the priory churches were directly or indirectly influenced by developments of the changing plans of the abbey church at Cluny but later also the plans of contemporary monastic churches of other monastic organisations in particular the

---

<sup>109</sup> *Annals of Bermondsey*, p. 450.

<sup>110</sup> Raby and Baillie Reynolds, *Thetford Priory*, p. 9.

<sup>111</sup> J. Coad and G. Coppack, *Castle Acre Castle and Priory* (London, 1998), p. 22.

Cistercians. Such structures were able to provide for the provision of liturgical observance from the provision of altars for the monks who were priests and therefore had to say a daily private mass to a ground plan that could accommodate the processions which had become such a characteristic feature of Cluniac liturgical observance. It has been demonstrated that construction was generally conducted in phases dictated by available resources because of the relative expense of permanent construction in stone and the cost of architectural elaboration. Single phase construction of conventual complexes was the exception. Various measures were employed to avoid this restriction including the linking of bequests to building projects and the use of dreams and visions to drive construction. It was demonstrated that architectural elaboration was restricted to those parts of the conventual complex most relevant to monastic observance, the priory church and the chapter house, the meeting point of the monastic community in the east cloister range. The style of this elaboration was local and again there was no attempt to emulate a standard Cluniac plan. This is consistent with an extended monastic community that identified with an abbot rather than a place.

The influence of a distinctive Cluniac devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, previously discussed in Chapter 4 in the way it was reflected in Cluniac monastic observance, was discussed in relation to the elaboration of the east end of priory churches to accommodate the construction or reconstruction of Lady Chapels and the provision of other altars associated with the saint in other areas of the priory churches. Finally the influence of the increasing independent identity of the priors on the built fabric of what became increasingly their priories was discussed, manifested in the provision of opulent separate living accommodation and reconstruction of the gatehouses of priories, the face of the foundation to the outside world.

## Chapter 6

### Cluniac priories and secular settlement

This chapter examines the relationship between the Cluniac priories of England and Wales and secular settlement. This is another area which has not been investigated previously in monastic studies. The chapter argues that this relationship was distinctive and was primarily related to the fact that Cluniac monks did not participate in manual labour or incorporate, into their communities, lay brothers or *conversi* to carry out manual labour on their behalf on anything like the same scale as the Cistercians.<sup>1</sup> In the twelfth century the abbey of Cluny was criticised for not keeping the Rule of St Benedict because of the absence of manual work. Abbot Peter the Venerable did not deny the charge, but argued that manual work was unnecessary if the monks were otherwise profitably occupied.<sup>2</sup> The implication was that the requirement for manual labour in the Rule had been to avoid the consequences of idleness and that if monks were continually employed,<sup>3</sup> as the Cluniac monastic observance demanded, this was no longer required.<sup>4</sup> The consequence of this interpretation of the Rule was that Cluniac priories were dependent on secular society to provide those services that were necessary to support them in their day to day requirements. The only mention of manual

---

<sup>1</sup> For Cistercians and the use of *conversi* see Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders*, p. 65, and Burton and Kerr, *The Cistercians in the Middle Ages*, pp. 151–60; for their accommodation within the claustral complex see M. Cassidy-Welch, *Monastic Spaces and their Meanings: Thirteenth-Century English Cistercian Monasteries* (Turnhout, 2001), pp. 167–93. That there were elements in Cluniac houses known as *conversi* is clear from the visitation reports for the year 1276 which record the presence at Much Wenlock Priory, for example, of 40 monks and 3 lay brethren, and at Lenton 27 monks and 4 lay brethren at Lenton (Duckett, *Visitations*, p. 18).

<sup>2</sup> Hunt, *Cluny under St Hugh*, pp. 118–9.

<sup>3</sup> See *Rule of St Benedict*, chapter 48: ‘Idleness is the enemy of the soul. The brethren, therefore, must be occupied at stated times in manual labour, and again at other hours in sacred reading.’

<sup>4</sup> On changing attitudes towards manual labour among Benedictines, see Orderic’s account of the debate at Molesme which led to the secession to the New Monastery (Cîteaux): *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, IV, pp. 318–21.

labour in documentary evidence relating to the Cluniac priories in England and Wales suggests that it was actively discouraged. The prior of St Clears was criticised in the visitation report of 1279, among other things, for indulging in all sorts of manual labour.<sup>5</sup>

This dependence carried the risk of disruption to the observance itself. As a consequence, the relationship between the Cluniac monks and seculars needed to be carefully managed to ensure that seculars provided what was required, but at the same time any disruption to observance was minimised. This discussion will involve some repetition of areas covered in previous chapters, in particular the relationship between castles and priories and the influence of the presence of secular settlement on site selection, as discussed in Chapter 2. Chapter 5 has drawn attention to the permanent use, by some priories, of the chancel of parish churches, but the consequences of the shared use of these churches between priory and parish clearly also requires further discussion. The chapter accordingly addresses further how this shared use and the separation of space used for parochial worship and monastic liturgical observance were managed. This is followed by an analysis of measures that were adopted to increase the relative separation between the priories and secular settlement, and by an analysis of secular access to the priories and the way in which this was controlled.<sup>6</sup> The chapter concludes with a discussion of the interrelationship between priories and secular settlement and an analysis of the extent to which they depended on each other.

---

<sup>5</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, p. 26.

<sup>6</sup> Two recent studies have dealt with this subject from the point of view of Cistercian and Benedictine foundations respectively. They offer a comparative analysis to the present studies and indicate what was distinctive about Cluniac practice. See Cassidy-Welch, *Monastic Spaces and their Meanings*, and R. Gilchrist, *Norwich Cathedral Close: The Evolution of the English Cathedral Landscape* (Woodbridge, 2005), especially pp. 236–51.

## Cluniac priories and parochial service

It is important to recognise that, in contrast to a number of Benedictine and Augustinian monastic churches, newly constructed Cluniac priory churches were not intended to serve as settings for parochial worship.<sup>7</sup> Nor were Cluniacs themselves intended to provide pastoral care. The visitation report for 1279, mentioned above, also criticised the prior of St Clears for supporting himself by acting as a chaplain; what is not clear from this source is whether he was acting as a parochial chaplain or a private one.<sup>8</sup> In August 1401 Pope Boniface IX granted an indult to the prior of Bromholm to hear the confessions of, and grant absolution to, pilgrims visiting the priory to make offerings to the relic of the Holy Rood that it possessed because ‘some, their sins it is supposed being the cause, are unable to look perfectly upon the said piece (of the Rood), thereby sometimes incurring infirmities of divers sorts’.<sup>9</sup> This confirms that the conferring of this sacrament by Cluniac monks was considered exceptional. As a result separate arrangements had to be made to provide parochial services for any secular settlement associated with a Cluniac priory. This could range from the use of the nave of a parish church where the chancel served as the oratory of the Cluniac monks to the construction of a separate church to provide parochial services to any secular settlement specifically associated with a priory.

Several models can be recognised which allowed increasing degrees of separation between monks and seculars. First, the monks made permanent use of the chancel of the church of a single parish and developed a small conventual complex adjacent to this part of

---

<sup>7</sup> Examples of Benedictine houses in which the nave was used as a parish church include Wymondham Abbey and Binham Priory, both in Norfolk. See P. Cattermole, *Wymondham Abbey* (Wymondham, 2007), p. 47; A. Hundleby, *Binham Priory* (Binham, 2004), p. 4. The naves of Cistercian abbeys generally – at least in the heyday of the *conversi* – served as the setting for their attendance at certain services: Jamroziak, *The Cistercian Order*, p. 64.

<sup>8</sup> Duckett, *Charters and Records*, II, p. 136.

<sup>9</sup> *Cal. Papal Reg.*, V, pp. 432–3.

the church to accommodate the monastic community. In a second type the founding monks made temporary use of the chancel of the parish church as an oratory while a separate conventual complex was constructed on an adjacent but separate site within the same parish. In a third model, the earliest monks were accommodated in a pre-existing fully functioning monastic church with an established associated secular settlement sufficiently close by to support the new Cluniac monastic community. In a further model the first Cluniac monks were temporarily accommodated in a non-parochial building such as a castle chapel or hospital in a pre-existing settlement while a new conventual complex was constructed on a different site. In a final model the first Cluniac monks made use of a pre-existing structure on the permanent site of the priory on which the conventual complex was constructed while a secular settlement developed adjacent to the site of the priory whose expansion could be controlled by the priory to meet the needs of the Cluniac monastic community while minimising its effect on monastic observance.

*Permanent use of the chancel of the parish church as oratory*

Where endowment to a priory was small, insufficient resources existed to fund the construction of a separate conventual complex. The Cluniac monks accordingly made permanent use of the chancel of a parish church as the monastic oratory and a limited form of conventual complex was constructed adjacent to it.<sup>10</sup> This arrangement brought the monastic community into a permanent close relationship with the adjacent secular settlement where the parish church was often usually the focal point.<sup>11</sup> Examples of this type include Church

---

<sup>10</sup> As was discussed above in Chapter 5 it is unlikely that this conformed to the more standard layout of the claustral complex at the larger Cluniac priories.

<sup>11</sup> This was also the case at many Augustinian foundations such as Cartmel and Norton Priory but in contrast there is no example of a church being newly constructed to serve as a setting for Cluniac monastic worship and that of the laity. In the Cluniac examples this was always a compromise arrangement and separation between monastic and lay communities was made as strict as possible.

Preen, Daventry, Derby, Holme, Horkesley, Malpas, St Clears, St Helen's on the Isle of Wight, and Wangford. The nave of the parish church became the setting for parochial worship provided from a separate altar located at the east end of the nave. If the priory inherited the advowson of the parish church either in the foundation bequest or by subsequent endowment, a priest would be appointed who would be the rector. Alternatively if the parish church had been appropriated by the priory, the priory became a corporate rector and the prior would appoint a vicar who was supported by a proportion of the church revenues.<sup>12</sup> The monks of Daventry referred on one occasion to 'our vicar of Daventry'<sup>13</sup> and on another to 'Henry the chaplain (*capellanus*) of Daventry'.<sup>14</sup> The parochial part of the church could be expanded by the addition of aisles to provide for the needs of an expanding secular settlement.<sup>15</sup> Examples of this type of enlargement occurred at Church Preen, Daventry, Derby, Horkesley, Malpas, St Clears, St Helens, and Wangford.

As Leonie Hicks has demonstrated in relation to Norman monastic churches which served a parochial function, careful arrangement and division of the physical spaces of worship were necessary if conflict and competing claims were to be avoided.<sup>16</sup> There were a number of manifestations of this phenomenon among the Cluniac priories of England and Wales. The permanent subdivision of the parish church was emphasised by the construction

---

<sup>12</sup> Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders*, pp. 245–6. This arrangement was not only characteristic of the parish churches shared with secular settlement; as is discussed below in Chapter 7, Cluniac priories often possessed the advowson of, or had appropriated to them, many parish churches, from which they derived a significant proportion of their income because of their share of the parish tithes consequent on this arrangement.

<sup>13</sup> *Cartulary of Daventry*, no. 245.

<sup>14</sup> *Cartulary of Daventry*, no. 351.

<sup>15</sup> At Horkesley and Daventry a south aisle was later added to the nave of the parish church.

<sup>16</sup> L. V. Hicks, *Religious Life in Normandy, 1050–1300: Space, Gender and Social Pressure* (Woodbridge, 2007), pp. 75–7. For a detailed discussion of the shared arrangements in one English Augustinian house, see J. Burton, 'Priory and Parish: Kirkham and its Parishioners, 1496–7', in *Monasteries and Society in Medieval Britain, Proceedings of the 1994 Harlaxton Symposium* 6, ed. B. Thompson (Stamford, 1999), pp. 329–44.



of architecturally elaborate stone arches between the chancel and nave of the church discussed above in Chapter 5, a good example of which survives in the church of St Clears (Fig. 5.1). They can be viewed as the equivalent of the architecturally elaborate west fronts of Cluniac priory churches, such as the fine surviving example at Castle Acre (Fig. 5.23). Like these west fronts the chancel arches marked the beginning of the liturgically significant part of their Cluniac priories. As the nave altar that served parochial worship was usually set up against the chancel arch it represented the limit of secular encroachment on the Cluniac priory. The opening to the surviving examples is quite narrow. This had the effect of minimising the transmission of sound between chancel and nave, increasing the seclusion of the monastic oratory.<sup>17</sup>

In all of the examples of this type of relation with secular settlement cited above, with the possible exception of Daventry, the pre-existing settlement was small. In the case of St Clears the secular settlement adjacent seems to have also been small, as the main focus of settlement was centred on the motte and bailey castle to the south. The small size of these settlements minimized potential disruption to monastic observance, and this was of particular importance given the intimate association of priory and parish church. Interference from the adjacent secular settlement was also reduced by the peripheral location of parish churches relative to settlement. The church of St James, Derby, and the land of the priory abutted Sadler's Gate in the settlement. Secular encroachment on the site of the priory was limited by the control the foundation had over access to the site due to its possession of an adjoining bridge, called St James Bridge. The chamberlains of Derby rendered annually to the priory, two pounds of wax for the right of passage over the bridge.<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup> During a visit to Malpas church one of the churchwardens commented to me about how difficult it still is to hear from the nave what is being said in the chancel.

<sup>18</sup> *VCH Derbyshire*, p. 46.

### *Temporary use of the chancel of the parish church as oratory*

Where endowment sufficed to fund the construction of a conventual complex on a different site, the use of the chancel of the parish church was temporary. Once a new monastic oratory had been constructed, the monks transferred to their new buildings, and the church returned to the exclusive use of the secular settlement. Usually it was possible to locate the permanent site of the priory on the periphery of the adjacent secular settlement, thus minimising any interference with monastic observance. Examples of this arrangement included Bromholm, Clifford, and Mendham Priors. The first monks at Bromholm probably used the chancel of the parish church of Bacton as a temporary oratory. The conventual complex of Bromholm Priory was constructed to the east of the parish church peripheral to the main focus of settlement, in a hamlet of the same name, belonging to the same parish of Bacton. The initial accommodation of the monks in the parish church may have been the cause of confusion among antiquarian sources in which the two sites are identified as two separate foundations or as having two different founders.<sup>19</sup> That of Clifford was constructed in a valley setting to the south of the parish church and that of Prittlewell some 550 yards to the north of the parish church (Fig. 6.1).

In Bromholm and Clifford the permanent site of the priory seems to have resulted in the development of a sub-settlement of the parish that developed adjacent to the priory site, presumably consisting of a population that provided direct support to the priory. At Bromholm a sub-settlement of the parish of Bacton developed to the north of the precinct boundary of the priory with a separate market place and streets one of which is still called Back Street possibly denoting its relationship with the neighbouring priory.<sup>20</sup> At Clifford a

---

<sup>19</sup> T. Tanner, *Notitia Monastica* (Cambridge, 1787), p. 906.

<sup>20</sup> Field walking has revealed evidence of concentrations of local medieval unglazed pottery of twelfth- to fourteenth-century date to the east, north and west of the priory precinct, suggesting extra-mural secular settlement contemporary with the priory: Pestell, *Landscapes of Monastic Foundation*, pp. 211–14.

sub-settlement developed adjacent to the priory site based on a pre-existing sub-division of the town called Llanfair-yn-y-Cwm whose development was likely driven by the presence of the priory.

#### *Adoption of pre-existing monastic and secular settlement sites*

In the cases of the priories of Normansburgh, Slevesholm, and probably St James Exeter, the first Cluniac monks inherited small existing monastic foundations in isolated locations which provided existing buildings suitable for their liturgical requirements and accommodation. Pre-existing secular settlements were sufficiently close by to provide for their limited needs as the Cluniac monastic population remained small. The settlement of Methwold lay about one and a half miles to the east of Slevesholm. The exact site of the Cluniac priory at Normansburgh has left no remains, but an existing wood named Norman's Burrow lies close to the settlement of South Raynham within the parish of the same name. The churches in these settlements would have provided for the parochial needs of the existing population which is unlikely to have needed to expand to provide for the requirements of the small monastic populations of the nearby Cluniac priories.

#### *Temporary use of non-parochial buildings in larger settlements*

As discussed above in Chapter 2, the first monks of several priories were initially accommodated on sites adjacent to the castle of the caput of their founder. Examples include Barnstaple, Castle Acre, Lenton, Northampton, Pontefract, and Thetford. As caput centres, the secular settlements in each town were significant in size, but the impact of proximity to them by the permanent sites of the priories was diminished by the location of these permanent sites on their peripheries. The first monks at Barnstaple were transferred from their temporary site in the chapel of St Mary Magdalene just below the castle to a permanent

site outside the town wall between its North and East Gates. The first monks at Castle Acre were transferred from their initial site, which seems to have been within the castle limits, to a permanent site south west of the new Norman settlement (Fig. 6.2). Evidence that the first site was always seen as temporary is provided in the copy of the foundation charter for the priory of its founder William I de Warenne. It stated that the monks should at first be placed in the castle but included the two carucates of land which was to be the permanent priory site.<sup>21</sup> The first monks of Lenton were transferred from their initial site in the St Mary Roche chapel situated in caves below Nottingham Castle to their permanent site in a chapel at Lenton, approximately a mile away in a suburb of Nottingham. The first monks at Northampton initially occupied a house adjoining the chapel of St Martin which lay close to the castle,<sup>22</sup> but the final site of the priory at Northampton was situated outside the wall of the settlement, close to the ramparts to its north west.<sup>23</sup> The first monks of Pontefract Priory were transferred from their temporary site in Kingsthorpe or St Nicholas Hospital to a permanent site separated from the secular settlement by the castle itself which lay some 500m to the south-west (Fig. 6.3). The first monks at Thetford were initially accommodated in the church of St Mary situated towards the centre of the settlement. This had been the seat of the episcopal see before it was transferred to Norwich in 1095 and as it had no parish there was no requirement for the monks to share the church. Because of its location there was little room for construction of a conventual complex. Construction on the site was halted in 1106 following the appointment of the second prior, Stephen. He obtained a new site for the priory, granted by its founder Roger Bigod, on the north bank of the river to the north and west of the settlement. The first stone was laid by the founder on 1 September 1107 but the claustral

---

<sup>21</sup> Duckett, *Charters and Records*, I, p. 50.

<sup>22</sup> *CPR 1348–50*, p. 247.

<sup>23</sup> Leland, *Itineraries*, I, p. 9.

complex was not completed until 1114. On 11 November of that year the community relocated to the new site.<sup>24</sup> This peripheral location allowed the priory to benefit from proximity to the neighbouring settlement while minimising any disturbance arising from it.

#### *Initial sites on the periphery of settlements*

As stated above, the first monks of this group of priories adopted pre-existing structures of religious significance as their first oratories and incorporated them into the fabric of the priory church. All the sites were peripheral to neighbouring settlement. They offered the immediate benefits of proximity to secular settlement without the need for relocation to minimise disruption to monastic observance. These included the sites of Bermondsey, Dudley, Lewes, and Montacute. The first monks at Bermondsey are likely to have used the pre-existing church described as the *nova et pulchra ecclesia* in the Domesday survey and stated by the Annals of Bermondsey to be the church of St Saviour from which the priory obtained its dedication.<sup>25</sup> The final priory church incorporated parts of an earlier church likely to have been this structure and a claustral complex was constructed to its south. This site benefited from strategic proximity to London but its peripheral location on the southern bank of the river Thames minimised interference from this large settlement.

The first monks at Dudley are likely to have used the pre-existing church of St James as their first oratory. The priory was sited to the north of the adjacent settlement and separated from it by its castle.<sup>26</sup> The foundation charter included the grant of the site of the church of St James.<sup>27</sup> The south transept of the priory church is orientated slightly different than the rest of

---

<sup>24</sup> *Annals of Bermondsey*, p. 432.

<sup>25</sup> *Annals of Bermondsey*, p. 426.

<sup>26</sup> The priory was located north-east of the castle approximately a quarter of a mile from the centre of the pre-existing secular settlement.

<sup>27</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 84.

the church suggesting an earlier date of construction (Fig. 2.5).<sup>28</sup> It seems possible that this was the church of St James which served as the initial oratory of the Cluniac monks and from which it obtained its dedication. It was subsequently incorporated into the priory church and a claustral complex was constructed to its north. The two remaining churches of St Edmund and St Thomas located at either end of the secular settlement provided for the parochial needs of the secular population from which the priory received support (Fig. 5.5).

In the case of Lewes, the first monks used the church dedicated to St Pancras, newly constructed in stone from wood by its founder William de Warenne, as their oratory around which the conventual complex developed. This was located to the south of the secular settlement, with its castle, on a south facing ridge, separated from the main settlement by this and a valley through which flowed a tributary of the river Ouse. At Montacute the priory was constructed to the south of the pre-existing and pre-Norman secular settlement of Bishopston to the east of the castle. A church dedicated to St Peter adjacent to the castle already existed on the site before the priory was founded.<sup>29</sup> The foundation bequest to the priory also unusually included the castle. It is likely that the church was used as the oratory of the first monks and may have been incorporated into the monastic church of which there are no remains. The castle was dismantled and stone from it used to construct the conventual complex. It therefore never had the opportunity to interfere with monastic observance.

In the case of Montacute, Bermondsey, Lenton, Lewes, and Farleigh, a secular sub-settlement developed adjacent to the priory site. That these five priories were those with the largest monastic populations suggests that this development was driven by the size of these foundations, that is, that they grew to such a size that a separate parish church had to be constructed by the priory to serve the needs of its secular population. The new church at

---

<sup>28</sup> Radford, 'The Cluniac priory of St James', plate LXXX, p. 460.

<sup>29</sup> *Montacute Cartulary*, no. 1, p. 119.

Montacute was dedicated to St Catherine and the presence there of a Romanesque arch suggests that it was constructed soon after the foundation of the priory.<sup>30</sup> The church survives on a site to the north of the monastic precinct. In all five cases the churches were constructed within but then subdivided from the monastic precinct. Most were constructed to the north of the priory church on the opposite side to the claustral complex and separated from the precinct by a boundary.

Some of these churches had typical Cluniac dedications. That at Bermondsey, constructed to the north of the monastic church, was dedicated to St Mary Magdalene. That at Farleigh, located to the south of the likely precinct boundary, was dedicated to St Peter and continues to serve as a parish church. At Lenton a pre-existing hospital chapel dedicated to St Anthony seems to have served both residents of the hospital and the secular settlement that developed adjacent to the Cluniac priory.<sup>31</sup> It was located to the north of the priory church within the northern boundary of the monastic precinct.<sup>32</sup> That at Lewes was constructed from the *hospitium* or guesthouse of the priory adjacent to the gatehouse entry to the monastic precinct. In 1121 it was referred to as ‘the chapel of St John the Baptist within the priory cemetery’.<sup>33</sup> The churches were served by a chaplain or vicar appointed by the priory for this purpose. In 1263 there is reference to James de Divona as ‘rector of the secular chapel of St John the Baptist, in the court of the Cluniac monastery of Lewes’.<sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>30</sup> Aston, *Monasteries in the Landscape*, p. 107.

<sup>31</sup> R. H. Elliott and A. E. Berbank, ‘Lenton Priory: excavations 1943–1951’, *Transactions of the Thoroton Society*, 56–58 (1952–4), 41–53 (pp. 50–1). For shared use of hospitals with parochial congregations see R. Gilchrist, *Contemplation and Action: The other Monasticism* (Leicester, 1995), p. 20.

<sup>32</sup> It is likely to have originally housed the architecturally elaborate Romanesque style font now present in the parish church of Holy Trinity, Lenton.

<sup>33</sup> W. E. Godfrey, ‘Southover Church’, *Archaeological Journal*, 116 (1959), 250–62 (p. 258).

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

Where the priory controlled the land surrounding the monastic precinct it could exert control over the expansion of secular settlement. At Wenlock where the priory owned the manor, secular settlement seems to have been allowed to develop to the west and south of the monastic precinct. It was centred on the churchyard of the pre-existing but ruined church dedicated to the Holy Trinity. This was reconstructed for parochial use and its churchyard became the site of the weekly market. This development resulted in the priory occupying a position peripheral to the adjacent secular settlement which minimised any interference from it. At the same time the priory was able to benefit from the adjacent secular settlement and provide for its needs without compromising monastic observance.<sup>35</sup>

As a result of these various types of location and relocation the Cluniac priories under consideration did not occupy the focal centre of the combined settlement of monastery and secular settlement as was often the case for Benedictine foundations such as Bury St. Edmunds, St. Albans and Norwich. Instead even in cases where the priory could control the distribution of secular settlement it occupied a position peripheral to it. This allowed the priory all the benefits of proximity to its associated settlement while minimising the potential disturbance to monastic observance that could otherwise result from this relationship.

### **Precincts, gatehouses and other measures used to reduce the impact of secular settlement on priory sites**

Various other measures could be adopted to manage the relationship between the priories and adjacent secular settlement. Boundaries around the precincts of the larger priories where the church did not provide a setting for secular worship, usually constructed in stone, provided a physical barrier between monastic and secular space. Significant remains of precinct walls

---

<sup>35</sup> Pearce, 'The Priory of St Milburge'.



remain at Bromholm, Castle Acre, Lewes, Thetford, and Wenlock priories. Access to the precinct was controlled by a gatehouse, as was the case the case at many other types of monasteries. However, at Cluniac priories there was usually only a single gatehouse, allowing greater control over secular access. Gatehouses survive in an almost complete form at Bromholm, Castle Acre, Lewes, Montacute, and Thetford priories. The gatehouse at Thetford was sited in the northern precinct boundary facing away from the secular settlement which lay to the south of the conventual complex. The site of the gatehouse at Wenlock also faces away from the secular settlement. The gatehouses at Castle Acre and Wenlock are approached along a recessed entry, increasing the separation of point of access to the priory precinct from the secular settlement. The sites of many of the gatehouses are at the greatest possible spatial separation from the claustral complex. At Dudley Priory spatial separation was achieved by the construction of an elaborate system of waterways around the conventual complex, a single bridge providing access to the priory gatehouse. At Mendham the valley floor site of the conventual complex was accessed by a causeway.

In cases where the priory shared the parish church, and therefore shared access to the area immediately adjacent to the church, with seculars, the space occupied by the churchyard is likely to have been subdivided.<sup>36</sup> It is likely that certain areas were restricted to the monastic community. At St Clears an earthen bank and hedge seems to have separated the monks' accommodation to the south of the church from the western part of the churchyard through which seculars entered the nave. There were also separate points of access to the churchyard for monks and seculars. Seculars entered the parish church by an entrance to the churchyard on the west, while a separate entrance to the south is likely to have been reserved for use by the monastic community.<sup>37</sup> In 1442 the diocesan bishop ruled that seculars were

---

<sup>36</sup> For examples from Norman monasteries see Hicks, *Religious Life in Normandy*, pp. 76–7.

<sup>37</sup> D. A. Thomas, 'St Clears in the Middle Ages 1100–1500', *The Carmarthenshire Historian*, 6 (1969), 59–71 (p. 78).

not to have access to the parish church of Daventry through the priory cloister, having learned that the parishioners were gaining access to the parish church through the great gates and cloister.<sup>38</sup> An antiquarian drawing of Malpas yields evidence for a boundary wall extending south from the west end of the church.<sup>39</sup> A rental report for the priory dating from soon after its dissolution describes how the churchyard was subdivided into precincts, possibly reflecting an earlier subdivision of the area into areas preserved for monastic and secular access.<sup>40</sup> At Daventry the same point of access to the churchyard was allowed to monks and seculars at different prescribed times.<sup>41</sup> That reports of conflict between seculars and the monastic community in such proximate settings were rare, suggests that the regulation of access was effective. There were however, exceptions. In the reign of Henry VI, the prior of Wangford went to law against several of the inhabitants of the neighbouring settlement who had ‘broken up the walls of the nave of the church and would have the monastic cloister come to them’.<sup>42</sup> In 1390 a dispute arose between the monks of Daventry and the parishioners over the sounding of bells before the rising time of the monks and access to the cemetery.<sup>43</sup>

### **Secular access to Cluniac priories**

Access by seculars to the precinct of Cluniac priories was necessary to allow them to act as servants to the monastic community. There are no references to the number of servants

---

<sup>38</sup> *VCH Northamptonshire*, p. 112.

<sup>39</sup> *Coxe, Historical Tour of Monmouthshire*, I, p. 78.

<sup>40</sup> *CPR 1547–48*, p. 198.

<sup>41</sup> *Cartulary of Daventry*, p. xxxv.

<sup>42</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 162.

<sup>43</sup> *VCH Northamptonshire*, p. 112.

attached to a particular priory such as survive for some Benedictine foundations.<sup>44</sup> It seems likely that the servants employed by a particular Cluniac foundation lived in the adjacent secular settlement rather than within the monastic precinct, the close proximity of the secular settlement making this possible. Castle Acre is the only site at which a service range has been identified within the monastic precinct. This lay to the south west of the conventual complex and consisted of a water mill, granary, kiln, bakehouse, and brewhouse,<sup>45</sup> but it is not necessary to assume that domestic activity within precincts was limited; there has been relatively little archaeological investigation of the monastic precincts of the other Cluniac priories. The cellarer's account for Bromholm Priory for the years 1415–6 yields valuable evidence of how domestic support was provided to the monastic community. The dairy herd was farmed by a woman named Isabella and supplied the monks with calves and dairy produce for their refectory.<sup>46</sup> Servants receiving an annual wage and therefore likely to have been permanently attached to the priory included a carpenter, a carter, three ploughmen, a shepherd, a gardener, a washerwoman, and six other servants. Servant officials receiving an annual wage included a bailiff, a carpenter, two sub-chamberlains, a gelder of the pigs, a marshal of the horses, a maltster, and five other individuals. These served fifteen monks.<sup>47</sup> Wages were also paid on an occasional basis to individuals carrying out seasonal activities including bringing in the tithe corn and threshing and winnowing.<sup>48</sup>

Occasional secular access to the precinct for specific events seems to have occurred.

The presence of trade related artefacts recovered from field walking studies in a specific area

---

<sup>44</sup> For monastic servants see Harvey, *Living and Dying in England*, pp. 146–78.

<sup>45</sup> Raby and Baillie Reynolds, *Castle Acre Priory*, p. 17.

<sup>46</sup> L. J. Redstone (ed.), 'The cellarer's account for Bromholm Priory, Norfolk 1415–1416', *Norfolk Record Society*, 17 (1944), 45–91 (p. 83).

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.* p. 87.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 81, 79.

of the monastic precinct at Bromholm Priory suggests that such activity occurred within the precinct. These included a variety of lead steelyard weights, silver coins and trade jettons.<sup>49</sup> It seems possible that they relate to the annual three day fair held around the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross on 14 September.

Access to the conventual complex also seems to have been limited. As at Benedictine foundations, interaction between monastic officials and seculars was possible in the outer parlour, which was located at the north end of the west cloister range such as the surviving example at Castle Acre (Fig. 5.4).<sup>50</sup> Guests were also accommodated in the upper floor of the west range as also occurred in Benedictine foundations.<sup>51</sup> That at Castle Acre was extensively remodelled in the fourteenth century to provide guest accommodation as well as improved accommodation for the prior.<sup>52</sup> Founders and benefactors could have access to the chapter house as evidenced by the signing of a copy of the foundation charter of Lewes priory by William de Warenne II in its chapter house.<sup>53</sup> The discovery of burials, on the site of the chapter house at Lewes and Thetford, also indicates that not only founders and their wives were buried there but also children, demonstrating the desire of entire families to share in a physical association with this important building which represented the Cluniac community.<sup>54</sup>

It is unclear what secular access was permitted to the priory church. Seculars were buried in the eastern part of the priory church,<sup>55</sup> but there is no other evidence of secular

---

<sup>49</sup> E. Shepherd, *Norfolk Archaeological Unit Annual Review 1997–8* (Norfolk Archaeological Unit, 1998), p. 15.

<sup>50</sup> Gilchrist, *Norwich Cathedral Close*, pp. 132–4

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 132–42.

<sup>52</sup> Faulkner, ‘A model of Castle Acre Priory’, pp. 300–3.

<sup>53</sup> Lyne, *Lewes Priory*, p. 7.

<sup>54</sup> Lower, ‘Further report on discoveries at Lewes’, p. 104; R. Robertson-Mackay, ‘Recent excavations at the Cluniac priory of St Mary, Thetford, Norfolk’, *Medieval Archaeology* 1 (1957), 96–103 (p. 98).

<sup>55</sup> See Chapter 5 for burials in Lady Chapels. A tomb slab identifying Ilbert de Chaz, a benefactor of Monkton Farleigh, was recovered by excavation to the north of the main altar: Brakspear, ‘Excavations at

access to this part of the priory church, which was the setting of monastic liturgical observance. There is no evidence at Cluniac houses for relic shrines in the east end of the priory church including that for the relic of the True Cross at Bromholm Priory. The site of the relics in the churches is unknown but there is no evidence for shrines in other locations to which secular access was permitted. In contrast, relics were housed in the east end of the monastic church at Benedictine foundations such as the abbeys of Canterbury, Bury St Edmunds and St Albans. The acquisition in 1270 by the Cistercian monks of Hailes (Gloucestershire) of a phial of the Holy Blood of Christ led to the rebuilding and remodelling of the east end of the church.<sup>56</sup> It is unclear how pilgrims visiting Cluniac foundations interacted with relics. At Wenlock Priory the relics of St Milburge were carried in procession and this may have been the only exposure that seculars would have had to them. It seems possible that the east end of the priory church remained solely accessible to the monastic community.<sup>57</sup> As discussed above, the function of the nave of these Cluniac priories remains unclear. As discussed in Chapter 5, many were only constructed late in the history of their respective foundations suggesting that they were of least importance for monastic observance. There is surviving evidence for altars in the nave of Castle Acre Priory. The elaborate funeral of Sir John Paston in 1466 held in the priory church at Bromholm and recorded in the Paston Letters was an occasion when secular access was permitted to the priory church.<sup>58</sup> It is unclear however whether this was exceptional.

---

some Wiltshire monasteries', p. 242. For secular burials at the east end of the church of Dudley Priory see Radford, 'The Cluniac priory of St James', pp. 454–5.

<sup>56</sup> Robinson, *Cistercian Abbeys of Britain*, p. 124.

<sup>57</sup> This situation contrasts with that at Benedictine foundations where the laity could be given access to relics either in shrines or in the case of Norwich, contained in a niche beneath the bishop's throne: Gilchrist, *Norwich Cathedral Close*, p. 246.

<sup>58</sup> N. Davis, ed., *Paston Letters and Papers of the Fifteenth Century*, 2 vols (Oxford, 1971), p. 442.

Burials at Cluniac priories do not seem to have been restricted to patrons and benefactors. There is evidence for burial of seculars of lower status in the cemeteries at some Cluniac foundations.<sup>59</sup> If burials of seculars were accepted, compensation had to be made to the neighbouring parish. In 1200 Albert de Nevill, rector of Manchester, complained that the rights of the parish church were being usurped by the priory of Kersal, in that people were seeking burial at the chapel there and paying their funeral dues to the monks. An agreement was made between the two parties to the effect that parishioners of Manchester might choose to be buried at Kersal, but all appropriate fees were to be paid to Manchester parish church and Kersal was to make to the church an annual gift of one and a half pounds of wax.<sup>60</sup>

### **The interrelationship of Cluniac priories and secular settlement**

The most visible evidence of the development of a specific association between several Cluniac priories and their adjacent secular settlement is in the place name of the settlement. Several contain the prefix Monk in their title: Monks Horton, Monkton Farleigh, and Monk Bretton, where the pre-existing settlements of Horton, Farleigh and Bretton were renamed following the establishment of Cluniac priories. The interrelationship between secular settlement and priory is illustrated by the establishment and expansion of the associated settlement at a rate proportionate to the size of the monastic population of the priory. This is most evident at Wenlock, where the priory owned the manor and so had complete control over the growth of the neighbouring settlement. It has also been shown above how the expansion of secular settlement adjacent to the priories of Bermondsey, Lewes, and

---

<sup>59</sup> On burials, other than those of patrons, see, for example, D. Postles, 'Monastic burials of non-patronal lay benefactors', in D. Postles, *Missed Opportunities: religious houses and the laity in the English 'High Middle Ages'* (Washington, 2009), pp. 61–84.

<sup>60</sup> *VCH Lancashire*, p. 113.

Montacute, presumably in relation to increasing need from their monastic populations, was evidenced by the construction of new parish churches on land sub-divided from the monastic precinct and therefore presumably initiated by their priors.

In cases where the monastic population remained small there is no evidence for expansion of the associated settlement. This is evident, for example, in the lack of enhancement of the nave of the parish church serving the associated secular settlement by the addition of new aisles. The single cell of the nave of the parish church of Malpas, as opposed to the multicellular structure of naves and aisles, served the requirements of the associated settlement throughout its existence. In those examples where the parish church was shared with the monastic community only Daventry<sup>61</sup> and Horkeley<sup>62</sup> seem to have been expanded before the dissolution of the priory by the addition of an aisle to the south of the nave. It is evident that in general the size of secular settlements remained in proportion to the size of the monastic populations of the associated priory. This allowed for the needs of varying size of the monastic population to be met while minimising the impact of secular settlement on monastic observance. There are no examples of the priory allowing or controlling expansion of the associated settlement to allow it to become an economic asset from generated income, as was the case at urban Benedictine foundations such as St Albans, Norwich, and Bury St Edmunds. In the case of the latter the town was planned on a grid structure with the abbey as its focal point.<sup>63</sup> Such an arrangement would invariably have brought the monastic community into a much closer contact with the secular settlement. It could also result in conflict between the monastic population and the neighbouring settlement if the latter felt it was being exploited by the former. The history of all three of these Benedictine foundations

---

<sup>61</sup> *Cartulary of Daventry*, p. xxxii.

<sup>62</sup> Constructed in 1340 with the west tower.

<sup>63</sup> Green, *Medieval Monasteries*, p. 174.

is marked by outbreaks of serious conflict between abbey and settlement. At Norwich in 1272 conflict between the cathedral priory and the town resulted in the destruction of the cloister and several other buildings in the conventual complex by fire while in 1327 serious rioting in Bury St Edmunds caused great damage to the abbey.<sup>64</sup> It must be noteworthy that there are no similar accounts in the documentary record of such conflict between Cluniac priories and their associated settlements.

The symbiotic relationship or interdependence between Cluniac priory and its associated settlement can also be observed in the contraction or complete disappearance of many associated secular settlements following dissolution of the priory. A deed recording a bequest to Malpas Priory mentions a town associated with the priory.<sup>65</sup> There is no evidence of this town on the earliest post-Dissolution map of the area (an undated tithe map), and only a vestigial settlement is shown to the south-west of the church on the Ordnance Survey map dated 1840.<sup>66</sup> There are now no remains of the sub-settlement associated with Clifford Priory, Llanfair-yn-y-cwm. At Mendham the principal thoroughfare through the settlement associated with the priory survives only in the road that now has the name Wiresdale Street. Without the requirements of the priory the settlement was unable to diversify and simply disappeared.

Apart from providing domestic services to Cluniac priories, the secular settlement was also an important source of income to the priory in rents due from tenancies of land and property. In 1305 the prior of St Clears received 32s annually from 32 burgages in the adjoining borough and 5s from 12 *chensarii*.<sup>67</sup> By 1373 this amount had almost doubled.<sup>68</sup> In

---

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> *Montacute Cartulary*, no. 165, p. 183.

<sup>66</sup> These maps are held at Newport, Gwent Archives.

<sup>67</sup> London, The National Archives, E 106/4/19 (writ and inquisition relating to St Clears). *Chensarii* were tenants who were not obliged to perform weekwork but could be called on to perform extra work for the lord of the manor on other occasions such as harvest.



1291 Malpas received 36s from the Novo Burgo of Malpas by hand and 12s from proper tenants.<sup>69</sup> There is no evidence that rents were increased even when many of the priories went through periods of serious debt. It must have been realised by the priors that any short term gain from increased income from rents would not have been offset by destabilising the relationship between the priory and its settlement. That seculars looked favourably on Cluniac monastic communities is revealed in the bequests made to the priory of Montacute in Somerset wills.<sup>70</sup>

\*\*\*\*\*

This chapter has examined the way in which the Cluniac priories in England and Wales interacted with secular settlement. It has discussed the way in which this relationship was managed, necessitated by the non-participation of Cluniac monks in manual labour, to maximise the benefit to the monastic communities while minimising any interference in monastic observance. The nature of the relationship was seen to be primarily influenced by available resources and dependence on secular security. Where resources were limited priories were forced into a much closer relationship with secular society as they permanently shared its place of worship. The impact of this was minimised by ensuring a permanent subdivision of the parish church symbolised by the chancel arch, the provision of a non-monastic rector or vicar to provide parochial services and a separation of secular and monastic access, in space, by a subdivision of the churchyard and in time by a separation of secular and

---

<sup>68</sup> London, The National Archives, E/106/11/1 (extents of alien priories); London, British Library, Add. MS. 6164, fos 352–3.

<sup>69</sup> *Monasticon*, v, p. 173.

<sup>70</sup> *Somerset Medieval Wills 1383–1558*, Somerset Record Society, 2 vols (1905), I, p. 316 and II, pp. 29, 165.

monastic worship. When resources permitted a separate conventual complex could be constructed on the periphery of adjacent secular settlement minimising any interference resulting from physical proximity to it. When an existing monastic site was adopted use could be made of pre-existing settlement, the small size of Cluniac monastic communities not having any additional impact on secular settlement. The reliance on castles for security brought early Cluniac monastic communities into temporary proximity to castles but any long term effect on monastic observance was minimised by the permanent establishment of priories on the periphery of the settlements associated with the castles. The initial occupation of a site peripheral to secular settlement curtailed any interference from secular settlement and the disruption required from relocation but an increasing reliance on secular settlement could result in the development of sub-settlements adjacent to the priory site for which new parish churches had to be constructed.

Various landscape features could be employed to minimise the effect of adjacent settlement on the priories. The necessary access of seculars of various types to the monastic precinct was regulated. Although an income was drawn from settlements in rents, there is no evidence that the settlement was developed as an independent economic asset with the potential to generate conflict with settlement and so disrupt monastic observance. In cases where it was possible for a priory to regulate the size of the adjacent settlement this was contained to provide only what was necessary to support the monastic community. The mutual interdependence of Cluniac priory and adjacent secular settlement is reflected in the relative decline of such settlements following the dissolution of their priories. This chapter has demonstrated that there was a carefully managed and distinctive relationship between Cluniac priories and adjacent secular settlement that allowed the monks of these priories to be supported in their monastic observance while minimising any disruption to this way of life. A picture emerges of an ideal Cluniac monastic landscape consisting of a conventual complex

located in a peripheral relationship to a secular settlement whose size is regulated to serve for the needs of the priory at any given time and whose parochial requirements are served by a separate parish church.

## Chapter 7

### Economy

The establishment and maintenance of a Cluniac priory, and of the monastic observance that was followed within it, were dependent on its ability to balance its income and expenditure. Income, in the form of the endowment provided by the founder, allowed the establishment of the priory and, together with additional bequests from other secular – and occasionally ecclesiastical – patrons, balanced expenditure incurred from any increase in size of the monastic population and construction of buildings. An ongoing income was required to maintain the monastic community and its accommodation once it had been established. As Cluniac monastic observance did not allow monks to take part in manual labour, they were entirely dependent on an external source of income to survive.

This chapter examines the nature of income and expenditure of the Cluniac foundations in England and Wales. It argues that proscriptions on permitted sources of income that arose from features of Cluniac monastic observance left the priories vulnerable to over expenditure. These proscriptions are apparent from a comparative study of this group of priories, but like many other aspects of Cluniac administrative practice were not enshrined in legislation. It is perhaps for this reason that a distinctive Cluniac economy has not previously been recognised. This problem might be compounded by the fiscal naivety of individual priors who may often have been appointed for their ability to maintain monastic observance rather than the financial wellbeing of their priory.<sup>1</sup> The inability of the abbot of Cluny and his delegated administration to provide financial assistance to the priories, whose financial condition was later further weakened by the need to pay annual rents to the Crown, led to

---

<sup>1</sup> For a recent comprehensive study of the role of heads of religious houses, see M. Heale, *The Abbots and Priors of Late Medieval and Reformation England* (Oxford, 2016); for their financial activities see especially pp. 101–38.

fragmentation of the extended monastic community as individual foundations purchased charters of denization to free themselves from the royal exactions.<sup>2</sup> Evidence suggests that individual foundations were responsible for their own financial management. Instances of the provision of financial assistance to a dependent foundation by the prior of the foundation on which they had been made dependent were extremely rare. This questions the assertion by Knowles that, from a financial point of view, dependencies were ‘a source of weakness rather than of strength to the monastic body’.<sup>3</sup> Financial contribution by a dependency to the priory on which it was made dependent was limited to the often token annual *apport* or census preventing financial exploitation of the dependent foundation.<sup>4</sup> The responsibility for the financial administration of each Cluniac house thus lay with the prior of that foundation. It was expected that an outgoing prior should leave the foundation for which he had been responsible in at least as good a state of financial balance as that in which he had taken charge of it and certainly not in debt.

This chapter first examines the different elements that contributed to the income of Cluniac priories, and assesses the balance of income from spiritualities and temporal sources of income. The effect of the Gregorian pronouncement on the ownership of tithes, supported by the abbot of Cluny, is also discussed. This is followed by an examination of factors that contributed to continuity and discontinuity in endowment. These included the ability of Cluniac priories to retain possession of land holdings previously owned by religious houses that had occupied the site of their priory, and the continuity – or otherwise – of the interest of founders and patrons. Other measures that were adopted by priors to generate income as bequests reduced are assessed, as are the ways in which Cluniac administration regulated

---

<sup>2</sup> D. Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, 3 vols (Cambridge, 1948–59), II, pp. 257–66.

<sup>3</sup> Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England*, p. 153.

<sup>4</sup> On the *apport* see above, chapter 3.

these measures to prevent them influencing monastic observance. The chapter also pays attention to the way in which certain potential sources of income, exploited by other types of monastic organisation, were proscribed because of their potential to interfere with Cluniac monastic observance. This is followed by an examination of factors contributing to the expenditure of Cluniac priories, including size of monastic population, building, and the presence of corrodians. The way in which over-expenditure contributed to debt is analysed, including factors beyond the control of priories, including the later imposition of royal rents. The chapter concludes with an assessment of how inherent features of Cluniac economy contributed to the secession of the Cluniac priories in England and Wales from the wider Cluniac monastic community

## **Income**

The endowment of all the Cluniac foundations in England and Wales consisted of a combination of spiritualities and temporalities.

### *Spiritualities*

Spiritualities largely consisted of income generated from parish churches. Where a priory had been granted the advowson of a church, the prior had the right of presentation of the incumbent and received a pension as income. The income to be derived from a church could be significantly increased if it was appropriated by the priory. This usually had to be licensed by a bishop or pope even when a lay person granted it so that it could be appropriated. It then passed to the priory *in proprios usus*, literally ‘to their own uses’ and the priory received all the income due from the church. The prior appointed a vicar who received part of this income, normally about a third, but the prior’s share of the income could be increased by appointing a chaplain to provide parochial services who usually received a lesser amount to

support him.<sup>5</sup> For example, on 3 August 1233 Bishop William Brewer of Exeter sanctioned the appropriation of the parish church of Barnstaple, its chapels, tithes, and dues, to the prior and monks of St Mary Magdalene Priory, who were bound to provide a chaplain for the service of the parishioners.<sup>6</sup> The size of the income so generated by parish churches could be considerable. The income to Pontefract Priory from its appropriated churches of All Saints Kirkby, Darrington, Ledsham, and Silkstone increased from £8 to £30, from 13s 4d to £13 6s 8d, from £4 to £10, and from £5 to £57 6s 8d, respectively between 1229 and 1291, as vicarages were established and the monks took a greater proportion of revenues from them.<sup>7</sup> The income derived from a parish church could be increased by reducing the payment due to the delegated chaplain. At Daventry church, appropriated to the Cluniac priory of Daventry, the chaplain had no share of the tithes allotted to him, though alms and mass pennies throughout the combined parishes were part of his prerequisites. Only the mortuary offerings of the relatively insignificant were to be his alone by right. Offerings of more than 6 pence were to be shared with the monks.<sup>8</sup> That Cluniac priories did not take all the income due from parish churches by providing the parochial services themselves, as Augustinian foundations often did, is further evidence that Cluniac monks did not provide parochial services.<sup>9</sup>

Such bequests came with other financial responsibilities as the priory, as rector, was responsible for the maintenance of the chancel of appropriated parish churches, while the cost

---

<sup>5</sup> Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders*, pp. 245–7.

<sup>6</sup> *Monasticon*, V, 198, 199.

<sup>7</sup> *Chartulary of Pontefract*, pp. xxxii, xxii.

<sup>8</sup> *Rotuli Hugonis de Welles episcopi Lincolnensis AD MCCIX–MCCXXXV*, ed. W. P. W. Phillimore and F. N. Davis, 3 vols (Canterbury and York Society, 1907–9, and Lincoln Record Society, 1912–14), I, p. 204.

<sup>9</sup> Heale, *The Dependent Priors*, pp. 35–9. For discussion of the involvement of monks and canons in parochial and pastoral work see B. Kemp, ‘Monastic possession of parish churches in England in the twelfth century’, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 31 (1980), 133–60; J. Burton, ‘Monasteries and parish churches in eleventh- and twelfth-century Yorkshire’, *Northern History*, 23 (1987), 39–50. On the Augustinians in particular see N. Nichols, ‘The Augustinian canons and their parish churches: a key to their identity’, in J. Burton and K. Stöber, ed., *The Regular Canons in the Medieval British Isles* (Turnhout, 2011), pp. 313–37.

of maintenance of the rest of the church had to be met by the parishioners. A statute of Bishop Quinel for his diocese of Exeter in 1287 stated that *onus constructionis et reparacionis cancelli matricis ecclesie ad ipsius ecclesie rectorem, navis vero ecclesie ad parochianos volumus et precipimus pertinere, consuetudine contraria non obstante*.<sup>10</sup> In the case of Daventry the monks were responsible for all the costs of the church. There is, however, evidence that Cluniac priors did not always carry out their obligations in relation to their appropriated churches. In 1426 the parishioners of West Hoathly, Patcham, and Ditchling complained that since the appropriation of their churches to Lewes Priory in 1391 the buildings had fallen into ruin, divine services and parochial administrations had been neglected and the hospitality shown to the poor by the former rectors had been withdrawn.<sup>11</sup> Endowments made to individual priories could include a significant number of parish churches. For example, the foundation bequest to Lewes included all nine churches in Lewes, as well as nine other churches in Sussex, eleven churches in Yorkshire, one in Essex, seven in Norfolk and St Olave's in Southwark.<sup>12</sup> The foundation bequest to Lenton included eleven appropriated churches.<sup>13</sup> The foundation bequest to Dudley included the churches of St Thomas and St Edmund in Dudley itself and those of Sedgeley, Inkpen, and Bradfield.<sup>14</sup> In 1140 Bishop Ebrard of Norwich confirmed 26 churches or portions (a part share of the income from a church) of churches to Castle Acre.<sup>15</sup> Prittlewell possessed nineteen parish

---

<sup>10</sup> *Councils and Synods with other documents relating to the English Church, II, AD 1205–1313*, ed. F. M. Powicke and C. R. Cheney (Oxford, 1964), p. 1003.

<sup>11</sup> *Cal. Papal Reg.* VII, p.145.

<sup>12</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 54.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 111.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 85.

<sup>15</sup> *Monasticon*, V, pp. 53–4.



churches at various times.<sup>16</sup> A comparison with the income from temporalities, to which this chapter now turns, reveals that the greater part of the income enjoyed by the Cluniac priories in England and Wales derived from *spiritualia*.

### *Temporalities*

Temporalities consisted of income from land holdings and other non-ecclesiastical sources of revenue. The latter could be varied and valuable. The founder of Barnstaple Priory, for instance, compelled the secular community of the town to have their corn ground at the prior's mill and to pay a toll in kind.<sup>17</sup> In a document dated to before 1210 the mayor and burgesses of Barnstaple bound themselves and their successors never to allow their corn to be ground at any other mill and not to erect any kind of mill to the prejudice of the monks.<sup>18</sup> The foundation bequest to Farleigh Priory included an eel fishery.<sup>19</sup> The initial endowment of Wangford Priory included the water mill of Reydon, with the mere or pool and one acre of land lying near the mill, to provide income for the repair of the pool.<sup>20</sup> Bequests of land were relatively uncommon, and endowment to Cluniac priories including their foundation bequest were characterised by a preponderance of spiritualities over temporalities. As stated above, William de Warenne I endowed Lewes Priory generously with churches, whereas temporalities were limited to land in Swanborough, close to Lewes, and a further carucate in an unnamed vill, as well as William de Warenne's demesne land in Fulmer.<sup>21</sup> Spiritualities

---

<sup>16</sup> *VCH Essex*, p. 139.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 197. On the importance of mills and rights of culture to monasteries see Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders*, pp. 241–2.

<sup>18</sup> *Calendar of Documents Preserved in France, Illustrative of the History of Great Britain and Ireland*, ed. J.H. Round (London, 1899), p. 461.

<sup>19</sup> *Monasticon*, V, 68.

<sup>20</sup> Gardner, *An Historical Account of Dunwich*, p. 254.

<sup>21</sup> Duckett, *Charters and Records*, p. 44.

continued to form the majority source of income throughout the lifetime of the priories. In the taxation of 1291 Wangford held spiritualities, worth £22, while its income from temporalities was only £12 1s.<sup>22</sup> Of the total assessed annual income of Monks Horton of £19 18s 6½, £11 came from a portion of the rectory of Fressingfield.<sup>23</sup> Stanesgate held spiritualities of £3 9s, out of a total income of £5 14s 7½d.<sup>24</sup> The spiritualities of Clifford amounted to £33 13s 4d, while the temporalities amounted to £18 12s 4½d.<sup>25</sup> Those of Dudley amounted to £21 16s 10d, out of a total income of £27 11s 4d. The assessed value of St Clears was £13 6s 8d out of a total value of £15 19s 2d.

Land grants to Cluniac priories remained a small proportion of the total endowment granted by their founders to the priories they established and evidence suggests that they parted with only a small proportion of their landed property to provide them. Golding estimated, for instance, that the founder of Pontefract, Robert de Lacy, only alienated some 5–8% of his demesne lands to the priory, while land bequests to Montacute by William de Mortain represented only a little over 20% of the total assessed income of his estate.<sup>26</sup>

### **Consolidation of interests and Management of financial assets**

Spiritualities required limited administration by priories but temporalities had to be actively managed to maximise their income potential. The monks of Cluniac foundations in England and Wales had limited involvement in the management of their temporal possessions,

---

<sup>22</sup> Although this is an unreliable, as it tends to underestimate income, it provides a useful comparative source: R. Graham, 'The Taxation of Pope Nicholas IV', in *English Ecclesiastical Studies* (London, 1929), pp. 271–301.

<sup>23</sup> *Tax Eccl.* pp. 92b, 94b, 104, 104b, 105, 107, 115b, 118b, 126b, 127b.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 21b, 23, 25, 28.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 171, 173b.

<sup>26</sup> Golding, 'Coming of the Cluniacs', p. 73 and 74.

presumably because of the impact that this activity would have had on monastic observance. Soon after the 1170s, Lewes decided to discontinue its practice of maintaining a monk in Norfolk to manage its estates there.<sup>27</sup> As a result seculars had to be appointed to manage temporalities on their behalf, and this brought with it a financial cost. This cost was enhanced when temporal possessions were far flung. Lewes held land in Surrey, Sussex, Wiltshire, Cambridgeshire, and Norfolk, largely because of the similarly distributed landholdings of their de Warenne patrons. Bermondsey came to possess manors in Somerset, Berkshire, Kent, Essex, Hertfordshire, and Gloucestershire because it benefited from a large number of widely dispersed benefactors with similarly widespread estate centres. The foundation bequest of Lenton Priory included the manor of Cortahall in distant Hampshire. In contrast, the landed grants to Pontefract by its founder, with the exception of the manor of Dodsworth some 20 miles from the priory, lay close to Pontefract and were therefore compact and easier to manage. Priors also exchanged land grants to consolidate their landholdings and make them easier and less expensive to manage. As a result, new temporal sources of income appeared in assessments of income which had not been mentioned in early charters or bequests. In the taxation of Pope Nicholas in 1291, Mendham Priory was recorded as receiving income from lands and rents in ten Norfolk and Suffolk parishes, the majority of which had not been mentioned in earlier charters and land exchange probably accounted for at least a portion of them.<sup>28</sup> There is evidence of widespread leasing of temporal possessions to seculars, as discussed below. This allowed the priory to gain an income from its temporal possessions without having to manage them directly. There is in fact evidence that the proportion of

---

<sup>27</sup> V. H. Galbraith, 'Osbert, Dean of Lewes', *Economic History Review*, 69 (1954), 289–302 (pp. 294–5).

<sup>28</sup> *Tax. Eccl.*, pp. 92b, 94b, 104, 104b, 105, 107, 115b, 118b, 126b and 127b.

income derive from spiritualities increased as temporalities were sold off to generate immediate income.<sup>29</sup>

The reform brought about by Pope Gregory with Cluniac support had argued against lay ownership of the tithes associated with parish churches.<sup>30</sup> It is possible that Cluniac benefactors may have been particularly influenced by this ruling because of their contact with the Cluniacs and this may have influenced their tendency to endow spiritualities. In his grant to Lewes c. 1095 at the dedication of the new priory church, William de Warenne II specifically referred to the churches and tithes ‘which I could not myself keep in my own hand or have at my disposal’.<sup>31</sup> Once Cluniac secular patrons accepted this argument parish churches could have no value to them. It is likely that this argument was reinforced by Cluniac administration after founders had proposed the establishment of a Cluniac priory and at the time that the foundation bequest was being prepared. By bequeathing parish churches to Cluniac foundations patrons increased the value of their bequest and its intercessory return without significantly reducing their own acceptable income. The bishops present at the dedication of the priory church when this charter was issued commenting on William de Warenne’s bequest of churches and tithes to Lewes stated that ‘such a grant was no great generosity’.<sup>32</sup> The grants of Hugh de Laval, secular patron of Pontefract consisted of little except churches,<sup>33</sup> and the de Lacy grants to the same foundation consisted almost entirely of churches and tithes which they described as ‘of little value to lay men’.<sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>29</sup> See below.

<sup>30</sup> For the Cluniac involvement in the Gregorian reform, see H. E. J. Cowdrey, *The Cluniacs and the Gregorian Reform* (Oxford, 1970). This example of the influence of Cluniac reform should be distinguished from any plan to reform monasticism in England and Wales by the foundation of new Cluniac priories, as discussed above in Chapter 1.

<sup>31</sup> *Chartulary of Lewes*, I, p. 16. For similar sentiments expressed by grantors of churches to monasteries in a regional context, Yorkshire, see Burton, *Monastic Order in Yorkshire*, pp. 235–42.

<sup>32</sup> Golding, ‘Coming of the Cluniacs’, p. 72, n. 71.

<sup>33</sup> EYC, III, nos 1486, 1487; Wightman, *The Lacy Family in England and Normandy*, p. 67.

Although spiritualities contributed to the bulk of the initial income of most Cluniac priories, there is limited evidence for priories augmenting their income by the acquisition of churches later in their existence; these were usually authorised for specific reasons. The churches of Wangford, Covehithe, Southwold, and Stoven, together with portions of the churches of Uggeshall and Easton Bavent, were appropriated by Wangford Priory at a date subsequent to its foundation.<sup>35</sup> In 1391 the pope consented to the appropriation by Lewes of the churches of West Hoathly, Patcham, and Ditchling, together with the chapel of Wivelsfield. This was to compensate the priory for the ransom that the monks of Lewes had had to pay for the return of their prior, John de Caroloco, captured during a French raid that landed at Rottingdean in 1377, the capture of their serfs, the loss incurred from the burning of their crops and losses due to inundation by the sea.<sup>36</sup> Lewes also appropriated the church of Feltwell in Norfolk in 1398,<sup>37</sup> and that of Horsted Keynes in 1402.<sup>38</sup> In 1303 the prior and convent of Clifford had licence to appropriate the church of Dorston.<sup>39</sup> In 1337 Monks Horton was granted licence for the appropriation of the church of Purleigh.<sup>40</sup> Evidence for earlier financial difficulties at the priory was revealed in a report of the official visitors of the abbot of Cluny for the year 1314. It stated that the sacrist had not had enough rents to supply lights and other ornaments for the church or provide for the sick.<sup>41</sup> It seems possible that the

---

<sup>34</sup> Ibid. p. 231.

<sup>35</sup> *Valor. Eccl.*, III, p. 438.

<sup>36</sup> *Cal. Papal Reg.* IV, p. 396.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., V. p. 153.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., V, p. 548.

<sup>39</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 41.

<sup>40</sup> *CPR 1334–1338*, p. 506.

<sup>41</sup> Duckett, *Visitations and Chapters General*, p. 301

later appropriation which was licensed by the Crown may have been an attempt to ease ongoing financial difficulties.

Temporal bequests to priories after their foundation also seem to have been very limited. Golding has shown that about 50% of the income of Pontefract derived from *temporalia* in 1535 came from lands granted by its founder,<sup>42</sup> while in 1291 nearly 90% of the income of Montacute from *temporalia* came from manors granted by the founder.<sup>43</sup> In the same way that Cluniac priories were able to appropriate parish churches by arguing that lay ownership of tithes was unauthorised they were in certain cases able to augment their landholdings by arguing that churches or lands had previously been in the possession of a religious foundation. In 1161 Stephen of Welton allowed the monks of Daventry to have the church of Staverton, which he admitted had been part of the endowment of St Augustine's long before.<sup>44</sup> Wenlock was able to add to its landholdings by the grant of the manor of Stoke St Milborough by its founder Roger de Montgomery. Stoke had initially been granted by the founder to his domestic chaplains but was granted to the priory on expiration of their rights of ownership because the priory was able to argue that it had been part of the landholdings of the monastic foundation of St Milburge whose site the Cluniac priory had adopted.<sup>45</sup> Lewes obtained its largest manor of Fulmer by arguing that it had previously been in monastic ownership, in this case the abbey of Wilton.<sup>46</sup> It had been in the possession of the abbey in 1066 and had then become de Warenne demesne land valued at £20.<sup>47</sup> The Cluniacs were

---

<sup>42</sup> Golding, 'Coming of the Cluniacs', p. 73

<sup>43</sup> *Valor. Eccl.*, I. p. 200

<sup>44</sup> *Cartulary of Daventry*, no. 429, p. 135.

<sup>45</sup> *VCH Shropshire*, vol. 2, p. 39

<sup>46</sup> Golding, 'Coming of the Cluniacs', p. 71

<sup>47</sup> *VCH Sussex*, vol. I, pp. 446–7.

able to use the antiquity of their sites and their role in their ensuring their continuity to their own financial advantage.

### **Continuity and discontinuity of endowment**

As noted above, Golding demonstrated that the foundation bequests to the larger Cluniac priories contributed a significant proportion of the total income of each priory from their foundation to their dissolution.<sup>48</sup> In the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, income arising from temporal bequests to Lewes amounted to £214 4s 6d, from a total amount arising from *temporalia* of nearly £600.<sup>49</sup> In 1535 about 50% of Pontefract's temporal income came from lands granted by its founder Robert de Lacy.<sup>50</sup> The value for Montacute is over 70% of the priory's total income.<sup>51</sup> This indicates that bequests to priories after the foundation bequest were limited. This suggests that the particular reason for investment in Cluniac monasticism that led the founders to establish Cluniac priories did not transfer easily to their successors as secular patrons. As discussed in Chapter 1, the relationship was personal and specific to the founder and emphasised association with the wider Cluniac community rather than a specific foundation. Later secular patrons were unlikely to have the particular relationship with the wider Cluniac monastic community that motivated the endowment of their predecessors and may have been motivated by different concerns.

Foundation bequests were augmented by immediate descendants of the founder, his vassals and inheritors of the secular patronage of individual foundations as well as their vassals but this was not always the case. William de Huntingfield, son of the founder of Mendham added

---

<sup>48</sup> Golding, 'Coming of the Cluniacs', p. 75.

<sup>49</sup> *Valor Eccl.*, I, pp. 329–31.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, V, p. 65.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, I, pp. 195-6.

to the endowments of his father. William's grants included the church of St Mary, Linstead Parva, a moiety of the church of Linstead Magna, and all his right in the church of Mendham.<sup>52</sup> William II and III de Warenne continued to concentrate their grants on Lewes and Castle Acre and these largely consisted of churches and tithes.<sup>53</sup> Ilbert II de Lacy, son of Robert de Lacy, the founder of Pontefract Priory, on the other hand does not appear to have made any grants to Pontefract Priory, and his brother, Henry, though he made generous grants to a number of monasteries, gave little to Pontefract. He chose to invest in his Cistercian foundation of Kirkstall Abbey which had been founded in 1147.<sup>54</sup>

The early endowment of Cluniac priories could also be augmented by their vassals. Ralph de Chesney, vassal of William de Warenne I, granted five churches in Sussex to Lewes. Another vassal, Walter de Grancurt, granted four churches in Norfolk to the same foundation.<sup>55</sup> Bretel of St Clare, one of Robert de Mortain's most important tenants, granted to Montacute Priory the hide of land that he held of the Mortain barony in Montacute itself.<sup>56</sup> Alured *pincerna*, one of the most important of the Mortain tenants in the south-west, granted to Montacute lands, churches, and demesne tithes in Somerset, Dorset, Devon, and Cornwall.<sup>57</sup> Another vassal, Ranulf the chancellor, gave his share of the manor of Thorn Coffyn and tithes of several Somerset and Dorset estates.<sup>58</sup> Henry of Essex, heir to Robert de Vere, founder of Monks Horton, made other grants to his foundation.<sup>59</sup> Hugh de Laval who

---

<sup>52</sup> *Monasticon*, V. p. 58.

<sup>53</sup> Golding, 'Coming of the Cluniacs', p. 72.

<sup>54</sup> On the Lacys and Pontefract and Kirkstall, see Burton, *Monastic Order in Yorkshire*, pp. 56–7, 118–20, 203–4.

<sup>55</sup> *VCH Sussex*, p. 65.

<sup>56</sup> *Montacute Cartulary*, no. 9, p. 125.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> *VCH Kent*, vol. 2, ed. W. Page (1926), p. 151.



obtained the secular patronage of Pontefract Priory after the exile of the de Lacy family increased bequests to the priory, and Robert de Friston, tenant of Hugh de Laval, granted to Pontefract a mill in Friston in the second quarter of the twelfth and his son William gave two bovates and three acres there to the priory.<sup>60</sup>

Those descendants and vassals that did invest in Cluniac priories may have been influenced by their feudal links to the founder rather than a shared interest in Cluniac monasticism. There were exceptions, the son of the founder of Wangford Priory, Ansered of France, became a monk of that priory, and so clearly shared his father's identification with Cluniac monasticism. Inheritors of the secular patronage of individual priories may have invested in the founder's priory to consolidate and legitimise their inheritance rather than because of a wish to invest in Cluniac monasticism. On other occasions where secular patronage of a priory was interrupted following confiscation of the landholdings of the founder, benefactions ceased. A number of founders of Cluniac priories were dispossessed of their land holdings. In 1088 Joel of Totnes, founder of the priory of St Mary Magdalene, Barnstaple, was deprived of his landholdings by King William II when he took the side of Robert of Normandy and remained in exile until the accession of Henry I in 1100. In 1173–4 Gervase de Pagnell, founder of Dudley, supported the rebellion of the son of Henry II and was deprived of his possessions, and Dudley Castle was destroyed.<sup>61</sup> In both cases significant endowment to Barnstaple and Dudley Priors was interrupted. Further expansion of Mendham Priory was prevented by an interruption in secular patronage resulting from the death of the founder William de Huntingfield in 1204.<sup>62</sup> Endowment to Lewes diminished

---

<sup>60</sup> *EYC*, III, no. 1541 and note.

<sup>61</sup> I. C. Hannah, 'Priory and churches', in J. Roper, ed., *Dudley: the medieval town* (Dudley, 1962), pp. 57–66 (p. 59).

<sup>62</sup> *VCH Suffolk*, p. 87.

after 1200, following a change in secular patronage. Perhaps the same independent mindedness that had led founders of Cluniac priories to invest in Cluniac monasticism also led them to behave in a way that led to their dispossession.

In some cases continued investment in a priory occurred when the priory became the site of burial of successive generations of a founder or secular patron.<sup>63</sup> The foundation bequest of Dudley Priory was linked to the burial of Agnes de Somery in the church of St James, the likely location of the oratory of the first monks at the priory.<sup>64</sup> This heralded the beginning of an association between the priory and the burial site of benefactors. A bull of Pope Lucius III confirmed that the priory had obtained right of sepulture for all who desired to be buried in their church, saving the rights of those churches to whom the said bodies should belong.<sup>65</sup>

All the de Warennes and their successors as earls of Surrey until Richard I who died in 1375-6, were buried in the chapter house or church of Lewes Priory, with the exception of William III who died on crusade in Laodicea in 1147-8, and his successor, William de Blois, who died and was buried in Toulouse during the 1159 campaign.<sup>66</sup> Burial of the founder at another non-Cluniac foundation could on the other hand interrupt investment in the Cluniac priory. Roger de Montgomery, founder of Wenlock, was buried in his other major foundation, Benedictine Shrewsbury Abbey.<sup>67</sup> His descendants subsequently made bequests to Shrewsbury rather than Wenlock Priory. Individuals were also able to obtain right of burial

---

<sup>63</sup> For the significance of burial within monasteries see Stöber, *Late Medieval Monasteries and their Patrons*, pp. 112-46; Golding, 'Anglo-Norman knightly burials'; A. Abram, 'Monastic burial in Medieval Wales', in J. Burton and K. Stöber, ed., *Monastic Wales: New Approaches* (Cardiff, 2013), pp. 103-15.

<sup>64</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 85.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> *Chartulary of Lewes*, I, 15.

<sup>67</sup> Chibnall, *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, IV, p. 302.

in the priory church in exchange for bequests to the priory. William, constable of Withermarsh, granted in his will to the monks of Wangford, in frankalmoin, land in Withermarsh, Nayland, Shelley, Horkesley, and Reydon and left his body to be buried in the chapel of St Mary in the priory church.<sup>68</sup>

There is a general picture of declining investment in the priories from the second half of the thirteenth century onwards. There were however exceptions to this pattern. Some bequests continued to be made in return for intercessory prayer. In 1379 John de Rookwoded granted lands in Wiston which had descended to him from John de Lacford and others to feoffees to grant by royal licence to the prior and convent of Wangford to celebrate for the souls of John de Lacford and others.<sup>69</sup> Land and rent were also acquired by the same foundation in Little Horkesley and Wormingford in 1412.<sup>70</sup> In 1340 John de Cornere gave the priory of Derby an acre and a half of land for the enlargement of their house.<sup>71</sup>

Later bequests were sometimes linked to a specific purpose rather than being absorbed into the general expenditure of the house.<sup>72</sup> It was a way of ensuring that features essential for monastic observance were provided for and may have been suggested by the priories themselves. Matilda de Senlis granted a fixed revenue from three mills in Daventry for the purpose of providing cowls ('coulles') and hoods for the monks. Another of her grants was made to procure wine for the Eucharist.<sup>73</sup> On a larger scale some bequests were linked to construction. The charter of William de Huntingfield confirming the gifts to Mendham of

---

<sup>68</sup> Gardner, *Account of Dunwich*, p. 255.

<sup>69</sup> *CPR 1377–1381*, p. 344.

<sup>70</sup> *CPR 1408–1413*, p. 414.

<sup>71</sup> *VCH Derbyshire*, vol. 2, ed. W. Page (1907), pp. 45–46.

<sup>72</sup> Burton argues that the evidence of monastic benefaction in Yorkshire suggests that during the course of the twelfth century 'benefactors seem to have been more self-confident in their freedom to specify a particular purpose' for their grants, citing the provision of lights, building work, shoes for the poor, and other purposes: *Monastic Order in Yorkshire*, p. 210.

<sup>73</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 181.

Roger de Hammesirl, William son of Hoscotel, and Sigar, stated that these should be used towards providing the monks with a church of stone.<sup>74</sup> The grant of the church of Clun with its seven chapels to Wenlock by Isabella de Say in the thirteenth century was specifically linked to completion of the nave of the priory church and cloister ranges.<sup>75</sup>

### **Leasing and alienation of temporal possessions**

The decline in additional bequests meant that existing assets, whether spiritualities or temporalities, had to be carefully managed to support the monastic community in its observance. The priories had little influence over income generated from spiritualities. Rather than being held in demesne, which would require at least monastic supervision of a lay labour force, landholdings were either sold or leased. In 1536 Farley's temporalities were estimated at a total annual value of £195 2s 8½d, of which only £18 4s 6d derived from its demesne, the rest being leased to tenants.<sup>76</sup> The sale of land generated a fixed non-recurring income whereas rental provided a regular source of income. Nevertheless, there is evidence of fairly extensive sale of land. By 1291 the total land area owned by Malpas had declined to 53 acres, whereas a single bequest to the foundation at its establishment had consisted of 230 acres.<sup>77</sup> Of these 53 acres, part remained in demesne, valued at 26s in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, but the priory also received an annual income from land rentals of £4 6s 3d, suggesting that the land area that remained in demesne was very small.<sup>78</sup> In addition fisheries, on the Rivers Usk

---

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., p. 58.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., p. 82.

<sup>76</sup> *Monasticon*, V, pp. 73–4.

<sup>77</sup> *Montacute Cartulary*, no. 164, p. 182.

<sup>78</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 173.

and Ebbw, which formed part of the same initial bequest had presumably been sold or alienated.

Leasing of landholdings and other temporal assets was however widespread. When Leigh and Layton visited Derby in 1536 they reported that its rent amounted to £10 annually out of a total annual income from temporalities of £11 15s 11d at its dissolution.<sup>79</sup> In 1291 Normansburgh had a total assessed annual value of £6 0s 10d, of which rents comprised 2s 6d in Brisel, 14s 6d in Oxewyk, 3s in Godewyck, £4 14s 6d in Reinham St Martin from rent and land, and 6s 6d from rent in land in Reynham St Mary.<sup>80</sup> A salmon fishery near Fretherne on the banks of the River Severn granted to Farley Priory was afterwards rented to a family called the Berkeleys.<sup>81</sup> In the taxation roll of 1291 it was recorded that one carucate or 120 acres of land belonging to the priory was leased.<sup>82</sup> Landholdings not immediately suitable for cultivation or pasture could be increased in value by the practice of assarting whereby they were made suitable for this use. These areas could then be leased to generate a tenancy. In 1262 Prior Aymo de Montibus of Wenlock Priory was granted permission to to assart a total of 60 acres ‘to bring the said land under tillage and enclose it. A survey of 1308–22 contained many references to new land in Little Wenlock.<sup>83</sup>

Income was also obtained by the sale of liturgical equipment or other property of the priories. This was carefully regulated by the prior of the foundation on which a priory was dependent. Such activity carried the risk of interfering with monastic observance and presumably occurred as a last resort. All new priors took an oath not to alienate property

---

<sup>79</sup> *VCH Derbyshire*, p. 46.

<sup>80</sup> *VCH Norfolk*, vol. II, p. 359.

<sup>81</sup> *VCH Wiltshire*, p. 263.

<sup>82</sup> *Tax. Eccl.*, p. 228

<sup>83</sup> W. F. Mumford, *Wenlock in the Middle Ages*, second edn (Shrewsbury, 1989), pp. 57 and 51.

without the consent of the prior of the foundation on which his house was dependent.<sup>84</sup> The visitation report for St Clears for the year 1279 criticised the prior for – presumably without agreement – alienation of property: ‘the goods of the church are for the most part dissipated or alienated...as far as construction or buildings go...they maybe considered nil for everything has been made away with’.<sup>85</sup>

As discussed above in Chapter 6, priories could also receive an income from tenancies in their associated secular settlement. In 1305 the prior of St Clears received 32s annually from 32 burgages in the adjoining borough, and 15s 12d from 12 ‘chensarii’ (a rent paying tenant who was not obliged to perform week-work but could be called on to perform extra work for the lord of the manor e.g. at harvesting or haymaking). By 1373 this amount had almost doubled.<sup>86</sup> In 1291 Malpas received £1 16s from the Novo Burgo of Malpas and from ‘proper’ tenants 18s.<sup>87</sup> The evidence indicates that rents were not raised significantly even in times of financial hardship, suggesting the importance the monks placed on maintaining a good relationship with an associated secular settlement: it was not thought worth risking destabilising this relationship by a disproportionate increase in rents to generate additional income. The result was that whereas rents from secular settlements were a source of income, they always remained proportionate to the size of the secular settlement; this was itself contained as far as possible to provide for the needs of the monastic population but not allowed to expand to a size where it would interfere unnecessarily with monastic observance.

Exemption from taxation, reflecting Cluniac immunity from secular interference reinforced by papal authority, increased the relative value of landholdings. Lewes was

---

<sup>84</sup> Duckett, *Charters and Records*, II, pp. 43, 44.

<sup>85</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, p. 26.

<sup>86</sup> London, The National Archives, E/106/4/19 and E/106/11/1; London, British Library, Add. MS 6164, fos 352–3.

<sup>87</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 173.

exempt from scutage tax.<sup>88</sup> The liberties granted to Dudley were freedom from soc, sac, thol, thac and theam.<sup>89</sup> A bull of Pope Lucius stated that the exaction of tithes of lands cultivated by the priory or at their expense was prohibited.<sup>90</sup> Expenditure was also reduced by the granting of exemption from other dues. Roger, earl of Hereford, granted Clifford Priory the liberty of buying and selling in his lands free of toll, and John, son of Gilbert of Monmouth, gave the priory freedom of toll in his own town of Monmouth.<sup>91</sup> King Henry I and II granted Castle Acre charters of freedom from toll.<sup>92</sup> Despite these exemptions, priories seem to have voluntarily contributed to taxation on occasion. In 1233 King Henry III received £106 at Wenlock Priory, being an instalment of the tax of the fortieth assessed in the previous year on Shropshire even though the lands of the prior were especially stated as exempt from this tax.<sup>93</sup> They may have been encouraged to do so by Cluniac administration to deflect any criticism that might otherwise have been levelled at Cluniac houses because of their privileged status. Greater protection to priories could be gained by voluntary contribution to taxation. The prior of Pontefract was granted royal protection in 1294 because he had given to the king a moiety of his goods and benefices according to the taxation last made for a tenth of the Holy Land.<sup>94</sup>

Income from commerce was usually limited to an annual fair focussed on a feast day of particular importance to a priory and may have been regarded primarily as of liturgical importance rather than a source of income. Dudley acquired a right to hold a fair in the town

---

<sup>88</sup> B. M. Crook, 'The charters of Lewes Priory', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, 82 (1942), 73–95 (p. 80).

<sup>89</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 86.

<sup>90</sup> *Papsturkunden in England*, I, p. 134..

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.* p. 80.

<sup>92</sup> Recorded in the Register of Castle Acre, fol. 107 (*Monasticon*, V, p. 84).

<sup>93</sup> Mumford, *Wenlock in the Middle Ages*, p. 18.

<sup>94</sup> *CPR 1292–1301*, p. 174.

of Dudley on the feast of St James to whom the priory was dedicated.<sup>95</sup> An annual fair at Bromholm occurred on the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross and the days before and after.<sup>96</sup> Lenton was granted the right to hold an annual fair of eight days duration in the reign of Henry II.<sup>97</sup>

There is also little evidence of significant income being derived from oblations at Cluniac priories that held relics, although the sources that might yield this information (account rolls etc) are not common. There is documented evidence of relics at a number of Cluniac priories. Castle Acre possessed an arm of St Philip,<sup>98</sup> Bermondsey an image of the True Cross,<sup>99</sup> Farley a girdle of St Mary Magdalene,<sup>100</sup> Wenlock the remains of St Milburge, and Pontefract a shrine dedicated to Thomas of Lancaster.<sup>101</sup> Only the late and short lived shrine at Pontefract and the relic of the True Cross at Bromholm provide any evidence of being at all well known.<sup>102</sup> The former was essentially of local political importance, while the Bromholm relic was of national and even international significance, being mentioned in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. The relic of the True Cross,<sup>103</sup> Thomas of Lancaster's remains,

---

<sup>95</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 82.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 112.

<sup>98</sup> *VCH Norfolk*, vol. 2, p. 357.

<sup>99</sup> Graham, 'The priory of La Charité sur Loire', pp. 108–10.

<sup>100</sup> *LP Henry VIII*, 9, p. 11, no. 42. Richard Layton wrote to Cromwell in August 1535 sending St Mary Magdalene's girdle, which the prior told him the Empress Matilda had given to Farleigh Priory.

<sup>101</sup> R. C. Finucane, *Miracles and Pilgrims Popular Beliefs in Medieval England* (London, 1995), p. 33. Thomas was executed in 1322 by order of Edward II and buried near the high altar of the priory church.

<sup>102</sup> F. Wormald, 'The Rood of Bromholm', in *Studies in English and Continental Art of the Later Middle Ages*, ed. J. J. G. Alexander et al (New York, 1988), pp. 123–37.

<sup>103</sup> The monastic chronicler Capgrave recorded that in 1223, 39 were raised from the dead and 19 blind persons were restored to sight by the relic: *Monasticon*, V, p. 61.



and those of St Milburge, were also miracle working, a feature normally guaranteed to generate the attention of pilgrims.<sup>104</sup>

The Bromholm relic also gained royal patronage. Henry III visited the priory on several documented occasions, and the fame of the relic was associated with important bequests that included the right to hold a three day annual fair around the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross.<sup>105</sup> Evidence of pilgrimage to Bromholm is, however, slight. Recorded oblations were never large.<sup>106</sup> There is no evidence for a permanent stationary shrine designed to hold the relic in the priory church on the scale of the examples at Benedictine foundations such as St Albans, Bury St Edmunds, and Canterbury.<sup>107</sup> The way in which seculars interacted with the relic – how they accessed it or saw it – is unknown. Representations of the relic in Books of Hours show it incorporated within a portable casing and it is possible that it was brought out of the priory church and displayed to seculars.<sup>108</sup>

There is evidence that the bones of St Milburge were carried in procession at Wenlock Priory. A letter from the year 1163 from the monks of the priory to the prior of La Charité claimss that the relics of St Milburge were carried in procession about the priory buildings and then about the neighbouring town.<sup>109</sup> There is little evidence of significant accommodation for pilgrims in the documentary record in the associated secular settlement of the same name, although it is possible that two standing buildings, one called ‘The Pilgrims’

---

<sup>104</sup> William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum*, I, pp. 267–8.

<sup>105</sup> *CCR 1224–1227*, p. 105.

<sup>106</sup> In the *Valor* of 1535 (*Val. Ecc.*, III, p. 344) the offerings at the cross of Bromholm amounted to 112s 9d, while oblations in the chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Walsingham in the same record amounted to £250 1s. (*Valor Ecc.*, III, p. 385).

<sup>107</sup> Crook, *English Medieval Shrines*, pp. 140–45, 145–8 and 213–19 respectively.

<sup>108</sup> Wormald, ‘Rood of Bromholm’, p. 124.

<sup>109</sup> R. Graham, ‘Roland Gosenell, prior of Wenlock’, in *English Ecclesiastical Studies* (London, 1929), 125–45 (p. 125).

House', may have served as guest houses for pilgrims. The Augustinian priory at Walsingham is recorded as possessing some twenty-six buildings that served this purpose.<sup>110</sup>

There is also little other evidence for pilgrimage activity at Bromholm itself. Systematic fieldwalking and metal detecting of the monastic precinct has revealed very limited evidence of pilgrimage activity. A cast rectangular lead sheet portraying a woman with a swaying posture, probably of early fourteenth-century date, is thought to represent an *ex voto*. Three lead discs have also been found, bearing on one side the head of Christ wearing the crown of thorns, and on the other the distinctive cross of Bromholm with its double bar. The discs, of exactly the same design but not mould-identical, are probably some form of token issued at the priory.<sup>111</sup> Pilgrim badges associated with Bromholm are few in number compared with the wide variety of such artefacts associated with the pilgrimages to Canterbury and Walsingham.<sup>112</sup> As with pilgrim badges from Canterbury and Walsingham they are widely distributed, examples having been found in London and on the Continent, suggesting that there was international interest in the relic and that in this respect the pilgrimages to Canterbury, Walsingham and Bromholm can all be considered international.<sup>113</sup>

The papal indulgence granted by Pope Boniface IX in 1401 to penitents who, on Passion Sunday and three days preceding and as many following, would visit and give alms for the conservation of Bromholm Priory, makes no mention of the relic of the True Cross.<sup>114</sup> The evidence suggests that although the relic of the True Cross had the potential to attract significant income it was not exploited as a source of income by Bromholm Priory in the

---

<sup>110</sup> P. J. Goodrich, *Walsingham and its History and its Shrine* (Norwich, 1937), pp. 38–9.

<sup>111</sup> Pestell, *Landscapes of Monastic Foundation*, p. 215 and plate 10.

<sup>112</sup> B. Spencer, *Pilgrim Souvenirs and Secular Badges* (London, 1998), pp. 161–5.

<sup>113</sup> H. J. E. van Beuningen, 'Brian Watson Spencer's Good Work', in *Beyond Pilgrim Souvenirs and Secular Badges: Essays in Honour of Brian Spencer* (Oxford, 2007), pp. 17–36, refers to the finding of a Bromholm pilgrim ampulla in Middelburg, Holland (p. 27).

<sup>114</sup> *Cal. Papal Reg.* V, 384.

same way that Walsingham was by the Augustinians or the shrine of St Thomas Becket at Canterbury by the Benedictine foundation of Canterbury. This suggests that Bromholm was of international awareness rather than a site of organised international pilgrimage. It is possible that pilgrimage was not encouraged and was more likely to have been positively discouraged because of the potential for such activity to disrupt monastic observance. The apparent exclusion of seculars from the liturgically important eastern part of the priory church would have prevented secular access to the types of shrine located in that part of the monastic church at Benedictine foundations.

## **Expenditure**

The expenditure involved in the maintenance of Cluniac monks in their particular monastic observance is likely to have been relatively high. Many features of this observance had consequences for expenditure. The emphasis on the provision of charity and hospitality increased expenditure.<sup>115</sup> In addition the diet, clothing and accommodation required to support Cluniac monks in the practice of their observance are likely to have been relatively expensive. Travel to France of priors for attendance at the General Chapter at Cluny and for the profession of novices also contributed to expenditure. Debt was given as a reason for non-attendance at the General Chapter by the prior of Bermondsey in 1238.<sup>116</sup>

### *Expenditure and the size of the monastic population*

As expenditure was proportionate to the size of the monastic population, regulation of that population was important. The initial size of the monastic population is likely to have been determined by the extent of the foundation bequest. Robert fitz Godebold and his wife

---

<sup>115</sup> For monastic expenditure on hospitality in general see J. Kerr, *Monastic Hospitality: The Benedictines in England c. 1070–1250* (Woodbridge, 2007).

<sup>116</sup> Duckett, *Charters and Records*, II, p. 201.

Beatrice founded Little Horkeley for ‘as many monks as could be maintained’.<sup>117</sup> Holme Priory was founded for thirteen monks but the endowment proved insufficient to support this number.<sup>118</sup> The largest recorded monastic population was a prior and two monks in 1279.<sup>119</sup> Many founding monastic populations were small and their expansion is likely to have been determined by the availability of additional resources. Thus it is likely that the size of monastic populations at any time was related to available resources. Concern for the welfare of monastic communities by the delegated administration of the abbot of Cluny seems to have ensured this. In or before 1233 Henry de Tracy, lord of Barnstaple, promised so far as was in his power, to grant the parishes of Tawstock and Barnstaple to St Mary Magdalene Priory at Barnstaple for the sustenance of the prior and monks that they may raise their number to thirteen.<sup>120</sup> This proposed increase in monastic population never occurred because the local diocesan bishop blocked the appropriation of the parish church of Tawstock.<sup>121</sup> It is also likely that de Tracy failed to gain the support of central Cluniac administration.

Reduction in the size of monastic populations was also used as a method of cutting expenditure as resources diminished. The monastic population was allowed to decline as monks died and were not replaced, rather than actively sending them to another priory. A reduction in the number of monks had however to be permitted by Cluniac administration. In the visitation report for 1405 it was laid down that at Lewes ‘the regulated number of monks

---

<sup>117</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 155.

<sup>118</sup> *Montacute Cartulary*, no. 118 pp. 160–61.

<sup>119</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, p. 27.

<sup>120</sup> Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS L. 875, nos 49, 50, cited in Graham, ‘The Cluniac priory of Saint-Martin’, p. 43.

<sup>121</sup> Graham, ‘The Cluniac Priory of Saint-Martin’, p. 41

should be as a rule 35, although in olden times according to some it was higher',<sup>122</sup> even though the recorded monastic population had previously been as high as sixty.<sup>123</sup> There are instances where reductions in size of monastic populations were detected by the official visitors of the abbot of Cluny during a visitation and in some cases the priory was ordered to correct the reduction. The visitation report for Bermondsey for 1279 stated that

there ought to be 32 brethren, but at this time there were not more than 18. We addressed the Prior and Convent 'How is it that the number of your brethren have diminished?' To this the Prior answered that the Convent was overwhelmed with debt'.<sup>124</sup>

In the 1275 visitation report of Horton it was noted

We found 12 brethren, but two of the prescribed number were wanting, and our intention was, had we been able to have had access to Lewes, to have made up the right number of resident monks.<sup>125</sup>

When monastic populations expanded to a size at which they could not be supported by available resources they could reduce the size of their total monastic population by providing the founding monastic population of another Cluniac priory. This may have been a factor in determining what existing priory a new Cluniac was made dependent on. This was discussed

---

<sup>122</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, p. 37. The reason for requiring a smaller number of monks is not explained but seems likely to refer to the fact that the assets of the priory at that time were considered inadequate to support a larger population.

<sup>123</sup> Knowles and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses*, p. 100

<sup>124</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, p. 20.

<sup>125</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, p. 15.

above in Chapters 1 and 2. There is no evidence that this did happen but it seems to have at least one parallel in the management of monastic populations by Cistercian foundations.<sup>126</sup>

### *Items of expenditure*

Items of expenditure at any priory would have included wages paid to secular servants to support the monastic population, as well as food and clothing for the monks. At its dissolution the size of the monastic population of Lewes numbered 24 and it was supported by at least 80 servants.<sup>127</sup> Construction was another significant source of expenditure, particularly because permanent Cluniac buildings in the conventual complex were of high quality and built in stone. Construction seems to have been carefully regulated to match the availability of resources to finance it. In some cases building activity it was limited to the provision of a stone arch separating the oratory of the chancel of a parish church from the nave and probably some fairly rudimentary form of claustral complex adjacent to it to provide accommodation for the few monks that constituted the maximum monastic population of the priory. Where resources allowed for the construction of a separate conventual complex expenditure on construction could be regulated by prioritising which buildings were constructed and building in distinct phases.<sup>128</sup> Thus the resulting conventual complexes of the priories have structures of different dates. At Bromholm the priory church is of Romanesque construction while the chapter house is of Early English design. Attempts were made to subvert restriction on expenditure on building activity. Bequests could be specifically linked to construction. The second charter of William de Huntingfield confirmed the gifts of Roger de Hammesirl, William the son of Hoscotel, and Sigar and stated that these

---

<sup>126</sup> See Burton and Kerr, *The Cistercians in the Middle Ages*, pp. 22–35. This discussion stresses the proactive nature of the Cistercian expansion.

<sup>127</sup> *LP Henry VIII*, 13, pt I, p. 384.

<sup>128</sup> For discussion of the evidence for the construction of priory churches and conventual buildings see above Chapter 5.

should only be used towards providing the monks with a church of stone.<sup>129</sup> As noted above in Chapter 5 the construction of the Lady Chapel at Thetford in stone was influenced and apparently justified by an elaborate series of dreams and visions.

Because building campaigns could occur over a long period of time it was impossible to predict their eventual cost in terms of materials and the wages needed to pay for their construction. In addition once constructed the buildings required maintenance which added to the expenditure associated with them. It is likely that the expenditure associated with construction and maintenance significantly contributed to the recorded debt of many priories. Inadequacy of resources to maintain buildings is revealed in the records of collapse of towers of priory churches and the comments of the official visitors of the abbot of Cluny. In 1279 the visitors reported that the church roof of Derby Priory was in a bad condition and they directed the prior to have it renewed.<sup>130</sup> In April 1438 the tower of the priory church of Farley fell down ‘crushing the quire and destroying their [the convent’s] books, bells and other ornaments’.<sup>131</sup> Because insufficient resources were often available to maintain priory buildings, funds had to be obtained from other sources. Papal indulgences could be granted to priories to fund repair of buildings. In 1401 the indulgence of the Portiuncula was granted by Pope Boniface to penitents who on the next Passion Sunday and on the feast of St James should visit the Cluniac church of Castle Acre and give alms for the repair of the church.<sup>132</sup>

Later in the life of many priories expenditure involved the accommodation of seculars known as corrodians. These were individuals that were accommodated within the priory precinct for the remainder of their lives in return for a one off payment.<sup>133</sup> In some cases the

---

<sup>129</sup> *Monasticon*, V, 58.

<sup>130</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, pp. 30, 31.

<sup>131</sup> *CPR 1436–1441*, pp. 237, 244.

<sup>132</sup> *Cal. Papal. Reg.* V, p. 415.

<sup>133</sup> For discussion of monastic corrodies see B. Harvey, *Living and Dying in England*, pp. 170–209.

payment was made to the prior and provided a finite source of income to the priory. Increasingly in the fourteenth century corrodians were imposed on priories by royal authority without any payment being made to the prior. As it was impossible to predict how long a corrodian would live, in cases where the corrody was paid to the prior it might be significantly less than the ultimate cost of accommodating a corrodian for the remainder of his life, thus involving net expenditure to the priory. Clearly in cases where no corrody was paid to the prior the accommodation of the corrodian only contributed to expenditure. Lewes was charged with many pensions or corrodies.<sup>134</sup> Corrodies could only be revoked by a considerable payment to the individual concerned. In 1307 Lewes paid William de Echingham 100 marks for the surrender of his corrody.<sup>135</sup>

To a significant extent maintenance of a financial balance between income and expenditure was dependent on the administrative ability of the prior. Evidence suggests that although some income was assigned to obedientiaries to finance their activities this was on a much more limited scale than was the case at many Benedictine foundations.<sup>136</sup> At Lewes certain properties were placed in the hands of the infirmarer, sacristan, and the fraterer, with the object of supplying a small income to them for the discharge of their duties,<sup>137</sup> but on nothing like the scale that occurred at major Benedictine houses such as Bury St Edmund's Abbey.<sup>138</sup> This was partly due to the fact the small number of monks that staffed many of the Cluniac priories had to take on more than one of the roles normally carried out by the

---

<sup>134</sup> Duckett, *Charters and Records*, II, p. 316; *CCR 1313–1318*, p. 460; *CCR 1318–1323*, p. 116.

<sup>135</sup> W. H. Blaauw, 'On the early history of Lewes Priory, and its seals, with extracts from a MS chronicle', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, 2 (1849), 7–37.

<sup>136</sup> For the obedientiary system see Knowles, *The Monastic Order*, pp. 431–9.

<sup>137</sup> For an example see Redstone, 'Cellarer's account for Bromholm Priory', p. 45.

<sup>138</sup> The monastic chronicler Jocelin of Brakelond records how the misuse of finances by obedientiaries was on a sufficient scale to cause significant debt at the abbey: *Jocelin of Brakelond*, pp. 3–5.



obedientaries of a larger Benedictine monastery. As a result the bulk of a priory's revenue remained in the hands of the prior, and the other monastic officers had no control over the prior's administration.<sup>139</sup>

Evidence demonstrates that not all priors were always good administrators. At the General Chapter of 1314 the subprior of Montacute was forced to admit that the prior of Malpas, a dependency of Montacute, 'was not a very good administrator'.<sup>140</sup> Undoubtedly priors were selected for a variety of reasons of which administration of finance was only one, although a very important one. There were also cases where insufficient care was exercised by the prior responsible for the appointment of the prior of his dependent foundation. As argued above (Chapter 3), the frequent changes of prior at any one foundation prevented continuity of administration, making it difficult to develop consistent strategies of financial regulation.

There were also factors affecting the economy of individual houses over which their priors had no control. In 1279 the official visitors of the abbot of Cluny summoned the prior of St Clears to Barnstaple because 'we knew that he was very poor and would be very much inconvenienced by receiving us at his own priory'. The resulting visitation report is testament to the desperate financial situation at the priory at that time.

The property was in a bad state, as far as construction or buildings go...they may be considered nil for everything has been made away with...the goods of the church are for the most part dissipated and alienated and the prior forced to work as a chaplain to maintain himself.<sup>141</sup>

That this situation may not only have been due to maladministration by the prior but may also have been due to a deteriorating security situation is suggested by a letter dated a few years

---

<sup>139</sup> Crook, 'Charters of Lewes Priory', p. 82.

<sup>140</sup> Duckett, *Visitations and Chapters General*, p. 303.

<sup>141</sup> Duckett. *Visitations*, p. 26.

later in 1288 to the prior of Barnstaple, on which St Clears was dependent, from the master of the hospital of the Order of St. John at Slebech which stated that 'you are aware that there has been war in Wales for a year and the whole countryside of St Clears has been destroyed'.<sup>142</sup>

Many priories were in debt for most of the duration of their existence as a result of some or all of these features of the Cluniac economy.<sup>143</sup> By 1279 Lewes had a debt of 2,800 marks, having been in credit in 1262.<sup>144</sup> Another 250 marks were owed for the building of the church which was still under construction at that date.

As much was owing for the stocking of the manors, and for payment of this silver vessels of the house were pledged; another 100 marks were due for wool which had been paid for by merchants but not delivered. There was also a threatened deficiency of all necessities from the time of Lent until the next harvest. The stock on the manors was greatly depleted, 100 marks owed for wine and the yearly *apport* to Cluny was £100 in arrears.<sup>145</sup>

This report of 1279 provides clear evidence of the effects of debt. These include an interruption to the construction of the church, inadequate stocking of the manors, threat to the material wellbeing of the monastic community as well as non-compliance with payment of dues to its mother house. It also indicates measures already undertaken to reduce debt such as pre-selling of wool, a practice of which the Cistercians were often accused,<sup>146</sup> and others that would have directly impacted on liturgical observance such as selling of liturgical equipment

---

<sup>142</sup> Graham, 'The priory of Saint-Martin des Champs', p. 48.

<sup>143</sup> Many Benedictine, Cistercian and Augustinian foundations were also in debt particularly in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries mainly due to maladministration. The evidence suggests that Cluniac debt began earlier and was generally heavier. For comparison see R. H. Snape, *English Monastic Finances in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1926).

<sup>144</sup> Duckett, *Charters and Records*, II, p. 122.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.* p. 143.

<sup>146</sup> Burton and Kerr, *The Cistercians in the Middle Ages*, p. 185

and inadequate provision of wine for services. The report continued mysteriously: 'by what means and though whose action it has been brought down to such a lamentable condition is sufficiently well known, according to the common report of reliable witnesses'. This statement would seem to imply that local factors such as maladministration by the prior were responsible for the debt.

Other foundations, however, were in significant debt at the same time. At Pontefract in 1262 the liabilities of the house were £666 and this sum had risen to £2,133 by 1267.<sup>147</sup> Northampton was in debt to the tune of 272½ marks in 1262 and was heavily in debt to the amount of 700 marks between 1275 and 1276.<sup>148</sup> In 1262 Montacute was 300 marks in debt and in 1279 the debt had reduced only slightly to 290 marks.<sup>149</sup> In 1262 Lenton Priory was in debt to £1000, Thetford to 610 marks, Wenlock to 1,626 marks and Bermondsey to 266 marks.<sup>150</sup> In 1279 it was recorded that the prior of Derby on his appointment had found the house in debt to 40s, but as there was nothing in the house, and he was unable to obtain anything in the neighbourhood, he was under the necessity of contracting a further debt of £4 10s.<sup>151</sup> In 1276 an official visitation of Castle Acre reported that the debts of the house amounted to £504.<sup>152</sup> By 1279 this had risen to 1,700 marks, although the debt had only been 600 marks when the then prior was first appointed; there was also an insufficiency of grain, or what would be necessary to last until the coming harvest.<sup>153</sup> While the prior of Castle Acre is here criticised for being too extravagant, these figures suggest common factors contributing

---

<sup>147</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, p. 14.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid. pp. 13 and 17 respectively.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid. pp. 12 and 23 respectively.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid. pp. 12–14.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., pp. 30–31.

<sup>152</sup> Duckett, *Charters and Records*, II, p. 127.

<sup>153</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, p. 34.

to such widespread debt at the Cluniac foundations. It is also notable that the smaller priories did not have the largest debts and indeed sometimes had no debt at all. In 1291 the assessed value of St Clears had increased from 72 marks in 1279 to £15 19s 2d and thereafter it increased to £19 6s 8d in 1378.<sup>154</sup>

Debt could however be reduced or in some cases eradicated. The visitation report of 1275–6 for Monks Horton recorded a debt of 80½ marks but by the time of the next visitation in 1279 the visitors were able to report that the spiritualities and temporalities were in the most satisfactory condition, the house owned nothing and the necessary amount of grain and stock for the subsistence of the community was in superabundance.<sup>155</sup> The debt at Lewes continued to rise to 8,650 marks in 1294 and 22,000 marks in money and wool in 1301.<sup>156</sup> By the mid-fourteenth century the debt had been reduced to £2000 and the buildings had been restored and fresh built.<sup>157</sup> Although the debt had increased again to 3,200 marks by about 1414, this was completely cleared by the next prior Thomas Nelond.<sup>158</sup> This suggests that careful administration by individual priors could have a significant beneficial impact on the economy of individual foundations.

While Cluniac administration was aware of debts and that measures needed to be taken to reduce these debts to protect the wellbeing of Cluniac monks in the various foundations and to enable them to conduct their observance, it appeared unable to provide direct assistance to improve the situation. By 1292 it was reported to the abbot of Cluny that Lewes was so involved in debt that there was no hope that it could recover unless it was speedily

---

<sup>154</sup> Duckett, *Visitations*, p. 26.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36.

<sup>156</sup> Duckett, *Charters and Records*, II, p. 267.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 302.

<sup>158</sup> *VCH Sussex*, vol. 7, pp. 68–9.

assisted.<sup>159</sup> The following year when the prior of Lewes was at Cluny, ‘the abbot (of Cluny) was advised in face of the ruin which threatened Lewes, to take security from him (the prior) that he would consult the best interests of the convent’.<sup>160</sup> In 1294 when the prior (of Lewes) was only paying off 50 marks yearly, that abbot had to write threatening to proceed against the prior if he were not more industrious in clearing the debt.<sup>161</sup> A similar injunction was addressed to the newly appointed prior in 1299.<sup>162</sup> In spite of these interventions by the abbot of Cluny the debt at Lewes continued to rise.

The abbot of Cluny, whose own foundation was also in significant debt at the time, actually compounded the financial difficulties of the priories by imposing occasional special subsidies on them. Previously the only income to the abbey of Cluny had been from the annual *apports* due from the priories in England directly dependent on Cluny. In 1240 the earl of Surrey as patron of Lewes approached Pope Gregory IX stating that ‘the abbot and convent of Cluny, under pretext of spiritual jurisdiction, made inroads on the property of the said priory’. It had previously been agreed that Cluny should limit its contribution from the priory to its traditional annual *apport* of 100s. The pope confirmed this, denying a later claim for all Cluniac priories to pay a tenth of their revenues for three years to Cluny because it was burdened by debt. Later, in 1346, however, King Edward III granted the request of Pope Clement VI and sanctioned the abbot of Cluny’s subsidy of three tenths, roughly estimated to yield £2,000, and the king ordered the priors of Cluniac foundations in England to pay it.<sup>163</sup>

---

<sup>159</sup> Duckett, *Charters and Records*, p. 246.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 246.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.* p. 249.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.* p. 259.

<sup>163</sup> *Cal. Papal Reg.*, III, p.19; *CPR 1345–1348*, p. 63; *CCR 1346–1349*, p. 28.

Some of the English Cluniac houses, including Montacute, Northampton, and Lenton, objected because of their financial difficulties.<sup>164</sup>

The financial condition of the priories was made even more precarious by the imposition of an annual ferm on every foundation by royal authority that followed the onset of war with France in the late thirteenth century.<sup>165</sup> The ferm was often substantial and had to be paid to allow the prior of each foundation to retain possession of his foundation and its temporalities. The priory could remain in royal hands until the ferm was paid. The annual ferm imposed on St Clears, for instance, varied from £2 to £7 after it was seized in 1294.<sup>166</sup> Its total assessed value in 1291 had been £15 19s 2d. In 1339, after Prior Poncius petitioned that he might be given custody of his priory, he was required to pay £4 from the time when the alien priories had been seized in 1337, and 40s per annum after the custody had been formally committed to him.<sup>167</sup> In 1393 prior Thomas de Thetford was charged £7 for the rent of St Clears payable to the Crown during the war with France.

There is little evidence of the intervention of Cluniac administration to assist the priories whose financial condition was worsened in this way as the abbey of Cluny was itself in debt at this time but also because, as discussed in Chapter 3, it seems to have been Cluniac policy that individual priories would be responsible for their own finances.<sup>168</sup> Exceptionally Montacute assisted its dependency at Malpas by paying its annual ferm. Avoidance of the annual ferm could only be achieved by the purchasing of a charter of denization or

---

<sup>164</sup> *Recueil des chartes*, VI, nos 4732 (letter from prior of Montacute), 4745 (letter from prior of Northampton), 4805 (letter from the subprior of Lenton).

<sup>165</sup> Guilloreau, 'Les prieurés anglais', pp. 357–64.

<sup>166</sup> Graham, 'The priory of Saint-Martin des Champs', p. 48.

<sup>167</sup> *CFR 1337–1347*, p. 136.

<sup>168</sup> D. Riche, *L'Ordre de Clun à la fin du moyen âge : 'Le vieux pays clunisien', XIIe–XVe siècles* (Saint-Etienne, 2000), p. 574.

naturalisation again at a significant but finite cost.<sup>169</sup> Thereafter the annual *apport* due from the priories to the foundation on which they were dependent was paid to the Crown. Dependent foundations usually shared in the charter of denization of the priory on which they were dependent.<sup>170</sup> Foundations dependent on a priory in France could only purchase their own charter if they were conventual. As the prior of St Clears could not show that his foundation had ever been conventual, he was not able to purchase a charter of denization, and the priory remained in royal hands. The annual ferm of £7 continued to be paid until 1444 when the priory was granted to Archbishop Chichele's new foundation of All Souls College.<sup>171</sup> The purchasing of a charter of naturalisation resulted in most cases in an improvement in the financial state of the priory. In spite of this only ten foundations had an income of more than £200 in 1535.

\*\*\*\*\*

This chapter has identified distinctive features of the income and expenditure of the Cluniac priories in England and Wales, which seem to have been imposed by a centralised Cluniac administration originating from the abbots of Cluny, which increasingly left them susceptible to debt. Income was dependent on endowment made early in the history of each priory mainly by the founder but also by his vassals and descendants as secular patron motivated in various and often different ways to invest in Cluniac foundations. The majority of bequests to Cluniac priories came in the form of income from parish churches surrendered, by secular patrons who accepted the Cluniac sponsored movement against lay ownership of tithes from

---

<sup>169</sup> R. Graham, 'The Papal Schism of 1378 and the English Province of the Order of Cluny', in *English Ecclesiastical Studies* (London, 1929), pp. 46–61 (pp. 57–8).

<sup>170</sup> There seem to have been exceptions. Aldermanshaw, a dependency of Bermondsey, was reported to be in ruins by 1450: Knowles and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses*, p. 98.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.* p. 102.

parish churches. Temporal bequests were much more limited in extent and carried responsibilities of management, which were at odds with Cluniac monastic observance. As a result landed endowments tended to be leased or even sold, which in turn restricted the income that could be generated from them. Restrictions against potential sources of revenue which carried a significant risk of interfering with monastic observance, including the development of secular settlements as an independent source of revenue and pilgrimage, severely restricted the ability of priories to generate additional income. As a result of this and the inability to sufficiently regulate expenditure, debt was widespread at most Cluniac priories. Because priories were seen as financially independent, dependent priories were unable to benefit from financial assistance from the foundation on which they were dependent and the prior of each foundation was expected to pay the annual *apport* to the prior of the foundation on which his priory was dependent even though this amount does not appear to have increased over time and was often not paid.

This situation was made worse by the imposition of the annual ferm on the priories in the fourteenth century which could only be avoided by the additional expense of purchasing a charter of naturalisation. The inability of Cluniac administration, ultimately the abbot of Cluny, to protect the priories from this situation, because of the indebtedness of the abbey of Cluny and those priories in France on which Cluniac priories in England and France were dependent, weakened the links that bound the priories to the abbot of Cluny and contributed to the disintegration of the extended monastic community of the abbot of Cluny in England and Wales.



## Chapter 8

### Relations between the Cluniac priories and secular and ecclesiastical authority

This chapter examines the relationship between the Cluniac priories and both secular and ecclesiastical authorities. The foundation charter of the abbey of Cluny provided the abbey with immunity from secular and ecclesiastical authority:

It has pleased us to set forth in this testament that from this day forwards the monks united in congregation at Cluny shall be wholly freed from our power, from that of our kindred, and from the jurisdiction of royal greatness, and shall never submit to the yoke of an earthly power. I beg and pray that no secular Prince, no Count, no Bishop, no pontiff of the Roman Church, by God and through God and all his saints, under threat of the awful day of judgement, may ever invade the possessions of these servants of God'.<sup>1</sup>

The charter also placed the foundation under the direct protection of the papacy: 'May they have as protectors the Apostles themselves, and for defender the Pontiff of Rome'.<sup>2</sup> Cluniac monastic observance was thus protected from the potentially destabilising effects of interference from secular and ecclesiastical authority and reinforced by the ultimate religious authority, that of the pope. Subsequently this immunity and protection were extended to Cluniac monks wherever they were.<sup>3</sup> This chapter explores to what extent these features can be seen to apply to Cluniac priories in England and Wales.

---

<sup>1</sup> From the translation of foundation charter of the abbey of Cluny in Evans, *Monastic Life at Cluny*, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> For the emergence of the concept of immunity and its evolution see B. Rosenwein, *Negotiating Space: Power, Restraint, and Privileges of Immunity in Early Medieval Europe* (Ithaca, 1999); for its particular relationship to the abbey of Cluny see *ibid.*, pp. 156–83.

In England and Wales Cluniac priories interacted with secular authority on several levels. Each new priory depended for its existence on a secular founder and for its continued existence on secular patrons, usually the heirs of the founders. These founders and patrons themselves were under the authority of the king. Each priory was located in a diocese over which a bishop held ecclesiastical authority and in a province over which an archbishop asserted ecclesiastical authority, but both operated under the ultimate authority of the pope as head of the church. Each priory therefore needed to interact with a variety of types of secular and ecclesiastical authority.

### **Secular authority**

As discussed earlier in Chapter 1, founders of Cluniac priories appeared willing to accept limited influence over the priory they established.<sup>4</sup> It was argued that this was because the perceived spiritual benefit founders received from the process outweighed any other benefit arising from closer control. Unlike in other monastic organisations, personal identification between founder and foundation was sometimes accepted but not encouraged by Cluniac administration and was effectively replaced by the establishment of a relationship between the founder and the extended monastic community of the abbot of Cluny. The only specific condition made by founders in the establishment of Cluniac priories, made explicit in the copies of foundation charters, was the provision of intercessory prayer. There was not even a requirement to accommodate the founder when visiting the priory, a common condition of the foundation of Benedictine monasteries.<sup>5</sup> Such an arrangement seems to have been assumed, however, during periods when patronage of Cluniac priories passed to the Crown. This led to

---

<sup>4</sup> See above Chapter 1.

<sup>5</sup> For the right of secular patrons to accommodation see Stöber, *Late Medieval Monasteries and their Patrons*, pp. 74–5 and Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders*, p. 221.

royal visits to priories, such as that of Henry III to Wenlock Priory in 1231 and 1233, which resulted in significant expenditure by the priories to accommodate the king and his retinue.<sup>6</sup> The same assumed right of royal control over Cluniac priories seems to have resulted in the later imposition of royal followers as corrodians on Cluniac priories whose secular patronage had devolved to the Crown.

### *The English kings and the Cluniac priories*

As discussed in Chapter 1, the interactions between the Anglo-Norman kings and Cluniac monasticism reveal an awareness and indeed an acceptance, on the part of the former, of the immunity of Cluniac priories from secular interference. King William I accepted the refusal of Abbot of Hugh of Cluny to provide him with Cluniac monks for a purpose which is unclear but may have been connected with royal desire to found a Cluniac priory.<sup>7</sup> In spite of this rebuff, William went on to receive confraternity with the abbey of Cluny and to donate ecclesiastical vestments to the abbey.<sup>8</sup> The gift of the manor of Bermondsey by William II provided a site for the priory of the same name, but there is no evidence that he sought to have himself identified as its founder.<sup>9</sup> In contrast Reading Abbey, founded by Henry I, and Faversham Abbey, founded by King Stephen, both with Cluniac monks, never acknowledged the authority of the abbot of Cluny and became traditional royal and Benedictine foundations.<sup>10</sup> However, both Henry and Stephen added to the bequests of William II to Bermondsey with manors and churches in Surrey, Kent, and elsewhere.<sup>11</sup> Henry I granted,

---

<sup>6</sup> Mumford, *Wenlock in the Middle Ages*, p. 18.

<sup>7</sup> Cowdrey, 'William I's relations with Cluny', p. 75.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. p. 75.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid; *VCH Surrey*, p. 64.

<sup>10</sup> Barlow, *The English Church 1066–1154*, p. 193; Graham, 'The priory of La Charité sur Loire', p. 96.

<sup>11</sup> Golding, 'Coming of the Cluniacs', p. 75.

among other things, an annual revenue of 100 marks to Cluny and also contributed to the construction and embellishment of the third abbey church at Cluny, referred to as Cluny III.<sup>12</sup> Thus, while these kings acknowledged the immunity of Cluniac priories on their territory and were themselves willing to act as benefactors to Cluniac foundations, they did not demonstrate any desire to found a Cluniac priory over which they would have no control.

In cases where the founders of Cluniac priories were subsequently dispossessed of their landholdings by royal decree, their priories were not affected. When Johel de Totnes, was disgraced by William II, the king did not interfere with the foundation of Barnstaple Priory.<sup>13</sup> When the heir of Roger de Montgomery was dispossessed of his landholdings, Wenlock Priory of which he had become secular patron was not affected.<sup>14</sup> This could have been out of respect for monastic communities in general. Alternatively either the kings accepted the immunity of the priories from secular interference or the priories were not perceived as having any significant relationship with these founders.

Successive kings offered protection and support to Cluniac priories in England by confirming their holdings. The foundation bequest to Lewes was confirmed by King William I who also wrote to Archbishop Lanfranc and Bishop Odo of Bayeux, earl of Kent, informing them that he was ratifying the project.<sup>15</sup> There exist two charters for Lenton Priory from Henry I confirming the free enjoyment of their acquisitions received from the foundation bequest and some others subsequently received.<sup>16</sup> King Stephen confirmed the grant of the church of St James, Derby, which was to become the site of a Cluniac priory, to

---

<sup>12</sup> *Recueil des chartes*, V, no. 4019.

<sup>13</sup> Graham, 'The Cluniac priory of Saint-Martin des Champs', p 37.

<sup>14</sup> Mumford, *Wenlock in the Middle Ages*, p. 14

<sup>15</sup> *EYC*, VIII, pp. 55–6.

<sup>16</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 112.

Bermondsey.<sup>17</sup> The possessions and liberties of the church were separately confirmed in charters of Kings Stephen and Henry II. In 1227 King Henry III confirmed the bequests made to Monks Farleigh.<sup>18</sup> Kings Henry I and II each provided a charter of confirmation to Montacute.<sup>19</sup> Henry II confirmed to Thetford the church of St Peter, Reydon, with all that belonged to it.<sup>20</sup> He also confirmed the grants of William de Warenne I and his son to Castle Acre.<sup>21</sup> Thus successive kings offered what might be perceived as conventional support for the houses of the congregation of Cluny in England.

*Secular patrons, their expectations and responsibilities*

More frequent, however, than contact between the Cluniac priories and the kings of England was their interaction with their founders, and their founders' successors, their patrons. While founders might accept the immunity of their Cluniac foundation from secular interference including any role of the founder in the appointment of prior of that foundation, this was not always the case with their descendants. Increasingly patrons sought to interfere in such matters as the appointment of the prior of the foundation over which they exercised secular patronage. Among Benedictine and Augustinian houses such influence was common.<sup>22</sup> Instances of challenges, by descendants of founders, to the right of appointment of priors seem to have been related to the fact that few copies of foundation charters of Cluniac priories made explicit who had the right of appointment of priors. It seems to have been assumed and generally accepted and understood at the time that the foundation charter was

---

<sup>17</sup> *Annals of Bermondsey*, p. 436

<sup>18</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 27.

<sup>19</sup> *Montacute Cartulary*, nos 120–1 and 125–6.

<sup>20</sup> Taylor, *Index Monasticus*, p. 91.

<sup>21</sup> Quoted in full in Bloom, *Notices of Castleacre*, p. 134.

<sup>22</sup> Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders*, p. 215.

compiled, that this right fell to the prior of the Cluniac foundation on which the new foundation was made dependent. It was not stated specifically because it was understood to the extent that the founder of Binham Priory, Peter de Valognes, required in a charter of the early twelfth century that the priory 'should be subjected to the church of St. Albans in *cella* in the same way that the church of St Pancras of Lewes is subject to the church of St Peter of Cluny'.<sup>23</sup> Challenges to the right of appointment of priors by secular patrons resulted in the addition of clauses in the foundation charters of later Cluniac foundations making the appointment process explicit.<sup>24</sup>

As has been demonstrated above in Chapter 3 challenges by the secular patron to the appointment process were usually settled by compromise. There is evidence of a number of occasions on which the prior of the foundation on which the Cluniac priory had been made dependent accepted a degree of loss of control over the appointment process. In or before 1233, for instance, Henry de Tracy III, lord of Barnstaple, entered into a formal agreement with the prior of St Mary Magdalene that on the death or lawful withdrawal of the prior, the monks, with the consent of the secular patron, should choose a prior from their own number, send him to Paris, and ask the prior and monks of St Martin des Champs to nominate him; if they would not do so, they were requested to send a worthy prior in his place.<sup>25</sup> On the occasion of the death of a prior of Barnstaple, messengers returned from the priory of St Martin des Champs, on which Barnstaple Priory was dependent, with letters referring to the patrons' rights, in this case to the heirs of the lordship of the barony of Barnstaple. The influence of the monks of Barnstaple over the control of the appointment of their prior seems

---

<sup>23</sup> *Monasticon*, III, pp. 345–6, no. 1.

<sup>24</sup> For the complaint, by Hamelin de Warenne (1200) that the abbot of Cluny had appointed a prior of Lewes instead of a candidate who was elected by the chapter being approved by him, as patron, see Wood, *English Monasteries and their Patrons*, p. 57.

<sup>25</sup> Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS L. 875, no. 878, cited in Graham, 'The Cluniac Priory of Saint-Martin des Champs', p. 41.

only to have been temporary. By 1281 an inquisition by local jurors some twenty years after the death of their patron, Henry de Tracy, lord of Barnstaple, stated that after every voidance of the priory the prior of St Martin des Champs should select a monk and make him prior, although letters were still sent to the secular patron to inform him of the appointment.<sup>26</sup> In a copy of the foundation charter of Dudley, the founder and his descendants claimed the right to grant consent to the appointment of the prior of that foundation although it is unclear whether they ever exercised this right.<sup>27</sup> The son of the earl of Devon in his confirmation charter dated 1157 claimed founder's rights over St James, Exeter, and, on the death of the prior, messengers returned from St Martin with letters to the patrons.<sup>28</sup> The first prior of Mendham was appointed with the permission of the son of the founder, Roger de Huntingfield, in a charter that added bequests to that of the foundation endowment of his father.<sup>29</sup>

More commonly, influence over the appointment of prior on the part of a secular patron was limited to a requirement that the monks notify the secular patron once a candidate had been selected or to have him presented to the secular patron; this seems to have occurred later in the history of the priories. From the thirteenth century the appointments of new priors to Bermondsey were notified to the king as secular patron by the prior of La Charité on which Bermondsey was dependent. This seems to have occurred as a result of the financial difficulties experienced by the priory at this time which were partly ascribed to unfortunate nominations of priors by the prior of La Charité. New priors were also required to swear fealty to the king.<sup>30</sup> In an inspeximus of 1309 to Slevesholm Priory, a dependency of Castle

---

<sup>26</sup> Graham, 'The Cluniac priory of Saint-Martin des Champs', p. 40.

<sup>27</sup> *Monasticon*, V, pp. 85–6.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 106–7.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 58–9.

<sup>30</sup> *CCR 1307–1313*, p. 207; *CCR 1318–1323*, p. 358.

Acre, the Earl Warenne added that the prior should be presented to him or his heirs before institution.<sup>31</sup>

Cluniac administration was still able successfully to resist attempted interference by secular authority in the appointment process. In 1303 the king complained that although the abbot of Cluny, at the king's request, had promised that Arnold, a Cluniac monk and royal chaplain, should have the first acceptable benefice in England within the gift of the abbot or the prior of Lewes, the prior of Lewes had conferred the vacant priory of Castle Acre upon the prior of Clifford. The king therefore after expressing his astonishment at this procedure, pressed for the appointment of Arnold if the benefice was still vacant or at any rate that he should be made prior of Clifford.<sup>32</sup> There is no evidence that he ever became prior of either foundation.

In other cases a secular patron might try to intervene to try and prevent a change of prior, a process which was a frequent occurrence at Cluniac priories. In or before 1233 Henry de Tracy III, the lord of Barnstaple and secular patron of Barnstaple Priory, entered into a formal agreement with the prior of St Mary Magdalene to ask the prior and convent of St Martin des Champs to grant that the prior, as in other Cluniac priories in England, should be perpetual and not removable without reasonable cause.<sup>33</sup> Ten different priors are listed as being prior of Barnstaple between 1227 and 1319, suggesting that this request was not upheld.<sup>34</sup> The limits of secular control over the priories, undocumented in copies of foundation charters – because they were understood by both parties – were revealed by unsuccessful attempts to influence the economic affairs of priories. In 1404 the earl of

---

<sup>31</sup> *Monasticon*, V, pp. 75–6.

<sup>32</sup> Smith and London, *Heads of Religious Houses, 1216–1377*, p. 224; *CCR 1302–1307*, p. 6.

<sup>33</sup> Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS L. 878, no. 878, cited in Graham, 'The Cluniac priory of Saint-Martin des Champs', p. 41.

<sup>34</sup> Smith and London, *Heads of Religious Houses, 1216–1377*, pp. 219–20.



Arundel, secular patron of Castle Acre extracted an oath from Simon Sutton, then prior, not to alienate his woods or possessions, nor to manumit his serfs without licence of the earl or his successors. Subsequently the prior regretted taking this oath, fearing that it might prejudice the priory's rights, and he appealed to the pope for a ruling as to its lawfulness. Innocent VII, after passing a salutary penance on Simon for his incautious oath, decided that the oath was void, as laymen had no power over persons and things ecclesiastical.<sup>35</sup>

Founders, descendants of founders, and secular patrons, frequently confirmed the possessions of priories by issuing copies of an original foundation charter, or an *inspeximus*, a confirmation of the accumulated holdings of a foundation. William de Warenne confirmed his initial endowments to Lewes, in a separate charter twelve years after its foundation, at Winchester in the presence of King William II.<sup>36</sup> William de Warenne II confirmed his father's grants to Castle Acre.<sup>37</sup> Henry of Essex, constable of England and heir to the founder of Monks Horton, confirmed his predecessor's grant to that house.<sup>38</sup> Humphrey de Bohun III and his wife confirmed the grants of his father, founder of Farleigh, and those of his knights including Ilbert de Chaz, and the grants of Empress Matilda.<sup>39</sup> The gift of St Peter's church, Reydon, was confirmed to Thetford by Roger Bigod after the death of his father, the founder of Thetford Priory.<sup>40</sup> The charter and privileges of Slevesholm were confirmed by John Plantagenet, sixth earl of Warenne, in an *inspeximus* of 1309 which was recorded in the cartulary of Castle Acre, the priory on which Slevesholm had been made dependent.<sup>41</sup>

---

<sup>35</sup> *Cal. Papal. Reg.*, VI, p. 78.

<sup>36</sup> *EYC*, VIII, pp. 62–4.

<sup>37</sup> *Monasticon*, V, pp. 49–50.

<sup>38</sup> *VCH Kent*, p. 151.

<sup>39</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 26.

<sup>40</sup> Taylor, *Index Monasticus*, p. 91.

<sup>41</sup> *Monasticon*, V, pp. 75–6.

Individuals that succeeded to the patronage of a priory, though not in direct succession from the founder, also confirmed the founder's bequest and in doing so helped to legitimise their inheritance as well as reinforcing the rights of the priory. Hugh de Laval succeeded to the patronage of Pontefract in 1122 and confirmed the lands and possessions given by the founder and by the founder's heir Henry de Lacy, in a charter issued in 1159 on the day of the dedication of the rebuilt priory church.<sup>42</sup> Robert, earl of Gloucester, who inherited the patronage of Malpas from its founder Robert de la Haye, confirmed its possessions.<sup>43</sup> By 1233 the possessions of Stanesgate Priory were confirmed to it by Americ Peche, son of Bartholomew Peche, who had been granted wardship of the priory from Ralph fitzBrian, a descendant of the founder, by the Crown.<sup>44</sup>

The issuing of charters confirming the possessions of the priories by successive secular patrons, reinforced by royal confirmation, suggests a concern for legitimising the right of ownership of patrons over their priories. This is likely to reflect not only a lack of detail in copies of early foundation charters but also the tendency to keep original charters not at a priory in England or Wales but at Cluny itself. Thus William de Warenne II confirmed his father's bequest to Lewes in two separate charters twelve years after the foundation in place of its original foundation charter which resided at Cluny.<sup>45</sup> These documents served as a public declaration of right of ownership to stave off the possible challenges to possession which can be detected in secular challenges to the appointment of priors, and could be used to defend ownership. In 1342 the bishop of Worcester summoned the community of Dudley Priory and required them to exhibit their title for the appropriation of the church of Dudley, and this was

---

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., V, pp. 121–2.

<sup>43</sup> *Montacute Cartulary*, no. 165.

<sup>44</sup> *CCR 1231–1234*, p. 204.

<sup>45</sup> *EYC*, VIII, pp. 62–7.

subsequently allowed.<sup>46</sup> Challenges to possession of patronage seem to have been rare and, where they did occur, to have come late in the history of the priories. Secular patrons also served as witnesses to agreements between a priory and seculars. An example is provided by Oliver de Tracy, lord of Barnstaple and secular patron of its priory, who served as witness to agreements between Barnstaple Priory and one William de Raleigh which concerned a yearly due of two pounds of wax to be paid to the monks in compensation for the grant of a piece of land.<sup>47</sup>

There were occasions when the temporal possessions of a priory were placed under the control of constables appointed by the secular patron or the king if patronage of a priory had devolved to the Crown.<sup>48</sup> This only seems to have happened consistently for some priories and is documented only from the late thirteenth century onwards. Most commonly this occurred when a vacancy occurred in the office of prior, in the interval between the death or transfer of a prior to another foundation and the appointment of another head of the house. It also occurred when a priory was unable to manage its debt or when it failed to maintain its monastic population. At an inquisition held *c.* 1281 the local jurors stated:

After every voidance [of the priory] the lord [of Barnstaple] shall send a man into the priory to keep and save the goods of the house without taking anything, saving meat and drink for the time he abideth there. The prior of St Martin [des Champs, on which Barnstaple was dependent] shall command a monk and make him prior, the which shall have letters from the

---

<sup>46</sup> *A Calendar of the Register of Wolstan de Bransford, Bishop of Worcester, 1339–49*, 2 vols, ed. R. M. Haines (London, 1966), I, p. 59.

<sup>47</sup> Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, L. 875, no. 46, cited in Graham, 'Cluniac Priory of Saint-Martin des Champs', p. 40.

<sup>48</sup> This was however a common, even standard procedure for other types of monastery: Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders*, p. 215.

prior and St. Martin to the lord of Barnstaple, and then the lord shall warn his warden and the prior shall have the entry into the priory, just to say into temporalities.<sup>49</sup>

In an inspeximus of 1309 to Slevesholm, a dependency of Castle Acre, the earl Warenne stated that the prior should be presented before institution to him or his heirs, who were alone to admit him to the administration of the temporal possessions.<sup>50</sup> On 14 July 1421 the king restored to the new prior, William Canke, the temporalities of Dudley Priory which were in his gift by reason of the minority of the secular patron John, son of Thomas Sutton, late baron of Dudley,<sup>51</sup> The temporalities passed to the lords of Dudley during a vacancy of the office of prior on other occasions.<sup>52</sup> In 1409 Farleigh and its estates were in the hands of Crown custodians in consequence of forfeiture for not maintaining the full complement of brethren.<sup>53</sup>

Although such examples appear to constitute a contravention of the immunity of Cluniac priories from secular interference, these temporary confiscations do not seem to have been opposed by Cluniac administration. This was possibly because this measure served to safeguard the temporal possessions of the priories concerned and hence their brethren during periods of vulnerability. It also served to protect the temporal investment in the priories by the secular patron and his predecessors. Interestingly there was never any challenge to possession of spiritualities by priories, suggesting that these were considered as being outside secular interference. There were recorded instances of appointed constables being accused of neglecting their responsibility. In 1409, when Farleigh was in the hands of Sir Walter

---

<sup>49</sup> Graham, 'The Cluniac priory of Saint-Martin des Champs', p. 40.

<sup>50</sup> *Monasticon*, V, pp. 75–6.

<sup>51</sup> *CPR 1416–1422*, p. 381 and London, British Library, Harleian MS 6962 p. 160, cited in *VCH Worcestershire*, p. 161.

<sup>52</sup> *CCR 1409–1413*, p. 395; *CCR 1413–1416*, p. 304.

<sup>53</sup> Jackson, 'The History of the Priory of Monkton Farley', p. 275, note 1.

Hungerford and Lord Sturton on behalf of the Crown, the former petitioned the Commons in that year:

that whereas certain commissioners sent into Wiltshire had reported that he and Lord Sturton had suffered the priory of farley to fall into dilapidation whilst it was in their care, he pray that the matter be judged by a jury of his peers.<sup>54</sup>

### *The move towards denization and its consequences*

Although such secular interference in the possession of the temporalities of priories seems to have preceded conflict with France, the wars of the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries resulted in much more wide ranging confiscation of the possessions of the priories and interference with their monastic communities. It is possible these earlier instances of interference by patrons provided a precedent for royal intervention in the control of priories where none had occurred previously. From 1295 when war broke out between King Edward I and Philip the Fair, king of France, Cluniac priories were designated as alien.<sup>55</sup> In September of that year the king instructed his sheriffs to remove all alien monks from houses near the coast and to transfer them to other monasteries in the interior of the country replacing them with religious of English nationality, a measure designed to prevent connivance with any enemy attack, and to seize their ships and boats.<sup>56</sup>

Cluniac foundations were treated differently from other alien foundations, although no distinction was made between the priories dependent on another Cluniac foundation in England and those dependent on a French foundation. This suggests that all Cluniac priories

---

<sup>54</sup> Ibid. p. 275.

<sup>55</sup> Graham, 'The Cluniac Order and its English Province', pp. 172–3; Knowles, *Religious Orders*, II, pp. 158–61.

<sup>56</sup> *Rymer's Foedera*, eds. T. Rymer and R. Sanderson, 9 vols (London, 1816–69), I, p. 286.

and their monastic communities were viewed as ultimately dependent on the abbot of Cluny. Within a week of the issuing of these orders, as a result of protests backed by the testimony of patrons and neighbours or because their prior was not French, supplementary letters were issued ordering royal officers to leave in peace the Cluniac communities of Monks Horton, Lewes, Carswell, and Wenlock, followed by Prittlewell and Castle Acre.<sup>57</sup> The prior of Monks Horton was allowed to remain in his house as it was testified that he was not French.<sup>58</sup> The temporalities of these foundations were confiscated and remained in royal hands. By the end of that year certain priories were able to retain their temporalities on payment of a ferm or rent. These included Prittlewell, Monks Horton, Thetford, Stanesgate, Wenlock, Northampton, Lenton, and Castle Acre.<sup>59</sup> In 1307 the king issued the Statute of Carlisle, forbidding the abbots of Cluny, Cîteaux, and Prémontré from receiving any subsidy from their daughter houses in England. As a result the *apport* normally payable by any Cluniac priory dependent on a priory outside England was confiscated and paid to the Crown.<sup>60</sup> As payments by the priories to the French Cluniac priories on which they were dependent was limited to this annual *apport*, which was small, did not increase with time, and was frequently unpaid, the impact on the economy of the French houses was minimal unlike the French Benedictine foundations which received a significant income from their alien foundations in England. Secular interference was not only limited to the temporalities of the priories. The king claimed the right to present to the advowsons of priories when they were in his possession. For instance, he claimed to present to the advowsons of Castle Acre, and on 8 December 1338 he presented on that ground to the church of St Andrew, Tattersett.<sup>61</sup>

---

<sup>57</sup> *CCR 1288–1296*, pp. 460, 470.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 460.

<sup>59</sup> *CPR 1292–1301*, p. 176.

<sup>60</sup> Graham, 'The Cluniac Order and its English Province', p. 73.

<sup>61</sup> *CPR 1338–1340*, p. 174.

When the temporalities were in the hands of the Crown, the custody of a priory was granted to seculars. This procedure had previously occurred at certain foundations before the outbreak of war, and it was to occur with greater frequency once hostilities had ceased. When Monks Horton was taken into the king's hands in 1325 an account of the keeper of the priory set out its stock and expenses in detail: wages of 3s weekly were allowed to the prior and 1s 6d to each of seven monks.<sup>62</sup> There is evidence that the secular representatives of the Crown benefited from this appointment. In 1340 Edward III granted the custody of Karswell and six other alien priories to his clerk, Thomas Crosse, for good service and in recompense of losses sustained by him especially beyond the seas.<sup>63</sup> Those to whom custody of priories was granted might also inflict injury on them. Within six weeks of the priory being placed in the hands of lay custodians, the prior of Karswell, John Gyot, received the custody of his priory in return for payment of a subsidy because 'the king's faithful servant had already done damage and destruction'. It may be surmised that he had cut down trees in Karswell wood'.<sup>64</sup>

In some cases custody of a priory was granted to its secular patron rather than to royal constables. In 1340, for instance, Edward III granted to the secular patron of Montacute, William de Montacute, earl of Salisbury, and his heirs at the earl's petition, the custody of the Montacute dependencies of Holme, Karswell, Malpas, and St Cadix whenever they should be seized into the king's hand by reason of the war with France.<sup>65</sup> Such an arrangement, however, did not protect these priories from royal interference. Notwithstanding the grant of

---

<sup>62</sup> London, The National Archives, SC 6/1125/18 and 20 (extents of alien priories).

<sup>63</sup> Graham, 'The Cluniac priory of St Mary Carswell', p. 117.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> *CPR 1338–1340*, p. 475.

the custody of Holme to its secular patron, the prior of Holme was summoned before the council at Westminster with other aliens to answer for his charge in 1341 and again in 1347.<sup>66</sup>

In some cases secular patrons were able to ensure that the priory of which they were patron was restored to the prior because the prior was English or because the priory paid an *apport* to another Cluniac priory in England by reason of dependence. An order in January 1325 was issued to the treasurer and barons of the exchequer 'cause Castle Acre to be restored to the prior, the prior having given to the king (Edward II) to understand that the keepers of alien priories in Norfolk and Suffolk had taken the house into the king's hands by virtue of a general order affecting the lands of aliens in the power of the king of France, whereas the late king (Edward I) in 1306 had made exception in favour of Castle Acre.' The reason for the exemption was that the king had heard from John de Warenne, earl of Surrey, and others, that the prior and convent were Englishmen and not aliens. 'And that they did not pay tax or pension to any of the power of France, and were not bound by obedience or affinity to any of that affinity, save that the abbot of Cluni used to visit the priory when he came to England, and that the prior and convent in such visitations received their professions from the abbot'.<sup>67</sup> In the following year the king's order was repeated.<sup>68</sup> Protection for a year was granted to the prior on 14 August 1337, because 'he was not by birth of the power of the king of France, paid no cess or pension to any religious house, and was bound in obedience to none save to the abbot of Cluny when visiting his kingdom'.<sup>69</sup>

Dependent Cluniac priories could remain in the hands of their priors while the priory on which they were dependent had been seized, because of the nationality of its prior. In 1325

---

<sup>66</sup> *CCR 1341–1343*, p. 359; *CCR 1346–1349*, p. 287.

<sup>67</sup> *CCR 1323–1327*, pp. 251–2.

<sup>68</sup> *CCR 1337–1339*, p. 48

<sup>69</sup> *CPR 1334–1338*, p. 490; *CCR 1337–1339*, p. 151.



commissioners stated that they had left the land of the priory of St James Derby at Quorndon in Leicestershire and at Derby in the hands of Nicholas de Clifford, the prior, as the king had taken the priory of Bermondsey, upon which Derby was dependent, into his protection, its prior John de Cusancia, claiming to be Burgundian and not French.<sup>70</sup>

More general evidence of friction between the largely English monastic populations of Cluniac foundations in England and French priors is revealed by a petition to the king in parliament in 1330 by English Cluniac monks. In this the monks complained that Frenchmen ruled over them as though by hereditary right, though they were few in number and their deeds were evil, and the English monks were subject to them though their deeds were good. They claimed that two nations would never agree in the same house.<sup>71</sup> Nationality was also important in this case regarding Monks Horton. In 1339 Prior William de Warena, of Monks Horton, a dependency of Lewes, was permitted to hold his priory without rendering any ferm as he had shown he was an Englishman, and neither he nor his predecessors had been bound to pay any tax to any religious house beyond the seas.<sup>72</sup> In 1337 Edward III ordered that Mendham, a dependency of Castle Acre, should be restored to its prior together with all its lands, benefices, goods and chattels, because the then prior and all the monks were Englishmen and sent no *apport* or contribution across the seas.<sup>73</sup>

Contact between the priories and Cluniac foundations in France was affected by restrictions placed on the movement of monks during the conflict between England and France. Following the capitulation of Gascony in 1324 all alien monks were forbidden to leave the kingdom without a letter.<sup>74</sup> When Adam of Winchester was appointed prior of

---

<sup>70</sup> London, The National Archives, SC 6/1127/18 (extents of alien priories).

<sup>71</sup> Graham, 'The Cluniac Order and its English Province', p. 73.

<sup>72</sup> *CCR 1339–1341*, p. 82.

<sup>73</sup> *CCR 1337–1339*, p. 157.

<sup>74</sup> *Rymer's Foedera*, II, p. 275.

Lewes by Pope John XXII in 1325, he was summoned to Cluny by its abbot to explain the circumstances of his appointment; en route he was detained at Dover by the royal constable, Robert of Kendall.<sup>75</sup> Such restrictions on movement and travel would have affected the profession of novices as well as attendance of priors at the General Chapter and interval meetings at La Charité and St Martin des Champs.

The return of a priory to the prior and its retention by him were conditional on the payment of an annual ferm or rent to the Crown. Other conditions were sometimes imposed on the return of the priory to the prior which benefited the monastic community in the same way that they had done before the conflict with France when linked to the return of the temporalities by the secular patron following the appointment of a new prior. On the return of the temporalities of St Clears to the prior in 1339 and 1341 he was required to take full responsibility for the sustenance and stipends of the monks and servants of the house and other liabilities, and to give an undertaking that he would not withdraw goods of the priory or send any revenues of tribute to foreign parts.<sup>76</sup> In 1377 the English prior of Carswell was given custody of the priory with the condition that he maintain its buildings.<sup>77</sup>

The annual ferm was often a significant amount and a significant proportion of the total expenditure of the priories and it thereby contributed to their impoverishment.<sup>78</sup> After 1303 the temporalities of St Clears were granted to the prior for an annual ferm of £2. Poncius, a monk of St Clears, was granted keeping of the priory on 16 July 1339 during the French war, and again in 1341 as the prior preferred by the prior of St Martin des Champs. The payment was £4 from the time when all alien priories were seized by the Crown until 1337 and 40s,

---

<sup>75</sup> *CCR 1323–1327*, pp. 530, 532.

<sup>76</sup> *CFR 1337–1347*, pp. 136, 222.

<sup>77</sup> Graham, 'The Cluniac priory of St Mary Carswell', p. 117.

<sup>78</sup> See above Chapter 7.

each year payable in 2 instalments after the custody of the priory had been formally committed to him.<sup>79</sup> On 3 August 1337 the prior of St James Derby was ordered to pay 100s annually as a due to the Crown, together with 50s for permission to retain the custody of the house. On 28 August the sheriff was commanded to proceed to the priory and demand immediate payment of the 50s or, on refusal, to levy the money on the goods and chattels of the monks, and to take the prior to London to answer for his contempt.<sup>80</sup> In 1337 the prior of Holme was ordered to pay a ferm of 6 marks and 40s for the custody of the priory.<sup>81</sup> In the same year, the French prior of Carswell, Philip de Chinty, was granted the custody of the house on condition that he would be of good behaviour, and also in condition that he would send neither goods nor money to foreign parts, and would pay a rent of £10 13s 4d to the Exchequer.<sup>82</sup> On his death in 1339 his successor, John Goyt, rode to London, appeared before the king and Council, made instant petition for the custody of the priory, and received it on the same terms.<sup>83</sup> In 1381 the annual rent for Carswell was raised from £2 to £6 13s 4d. In the fourteenth century the ferm payable by Stanesgate was £4.

The size of the annual ferm was higher for priories dependent on a Cluniac foundation in France. At one point it was 500 marks for Lewes, £120 for Montacute, £100 for Bermondsey, £125 for Wenlock, 200 marks for Northampton, and 100 marks for Thetford.<sup>84</sup> The amount was reduced for those priories with smaller monastic populations. Lenton paid £40, Pontefract 40 marks and Barnstaple 10 marks.<sup>85</sup> Cluniac priories dependent on another

---

<sup>79</sup> *CPR 1337–1347*, p. 136.

<sup>80</sup> *CCR 1337–1339*, pp. 164, 176.

<sup>81</sup> *CCR 1330–1333*, p. 592.

<sup>82</sup> Graham, 'The Cluniac priory of St Mary Carswell', p. 116

<sup>83</sup> *CFR 1337–1347*, pp. 124, 165, 175, 178; *CFR 1377–1383*, pp. 40, 253.

<sup>84</sup> Guilloreau, 'Les prieurés anglais', pp. 357–64.

<sup>85</sup> *CCR 1337–1339*, pp. 176, 164 and 163.

Cluniac priory in England also paid smaller amounts. Thus Prittlewell paid £40, Farleigh 40 marks, Monks Horton 27 marks and 6s 8d, Stanesgate £4, St Helens £13 6s 8d, St James's Priory, Derby, 50s, and Carswell 16 marks.<sup>86</sup> Additional occasional contributions were also imposed on certain priories. Until 1342 Prittlewell, Montacute, and Pontefract contributed to the annual pension of £800 that King Edward III granted to Robert of Artois.<sup>87</sup>

Occasionally concessions were made by the Crown because of the poverty of a priory. In May 1338 the king instructed the treasury to forego the demand for 100s yearly from St James Derby in consideration of the poverty of the house, and the sheriffs of Derby and Leicestershire were ordered to deliver all the prior's lands and possessions to him, together with the issue thereof; and as the king understood that the income hardly sufficed for the maintenance of the prior, he was willing to pardon the above payment so long as the priory remained in the hands of the Crown.<sup>88</sup>

A general but temporary release of all alien priories, including Cluniac priories, from control of the Crown occurred in 1399, at the instigation of Henry IV, on the ground that they had suffered enormous damage and that the intentions of their founders had been frustrated.<sup>89</sup> In 1401 the abbot of Cluny sent the priors of Crespy and Dompierre to England to recover possession of four manors belonging to Cluny.<sup>90</sup> They were also instructed to collect arrears of money representing the annual *apport* due to the abbey from its dependencies, the *spolia*, namely the breviary, cope, and palfrey due from Lenton on the death of the last prior, and

---

<sup>86</sup> Guilloreau, 'Les prieurés anglais', pp. 357–64.; *CCR 1337–1339*, pp. 451–3.

<sup>87</sup> *Rymer's Foedera*, II, p. 10; *CCR 1337–1339*, pp. 449–50, 451–3 and 435–7; *CCR 1339–1341*, p. 60.

<sup>88</sup> *CCR 1337–1339*, p. 423.

<sup>89</sup> *Rymer's Foedera*, VIII, p. 101.

<sup>90</sup> These had been confiscated in spite of the prior of Lewes having urged the abbot of Cluny to sell them, and remained in royal hands until they were granted by Henry V in 1414. The visitors sent from Cluny in 1458 to plead for their recovery, reproached Henry VI for despoiling Cluny in aid of colleges of students and thus robbing Peter to pay Paul: Duckett, *Charters and Records*, II, pp. 80–3.

large sums from several subsidies levied since 1346. They brought a letter to the king begging him to restore patronage of the priories and to allow them to go on visitation.<sup>91</sup> The English priors refused to pay anything on the ground that the abbot and monks of Cluny were schismatics, referring to the fact that during the papal schism, the abbot of Cluny supported the popes in Avignon rather than the pope in Rome who had the support of the English.<sup>92</sup>

The annual ferm could only be permanently avoided by the purchasing of a charter of denization or naturalisation. Petitions for charters of denization were not identical but there was a fairly general plea that the monks were Englishmen born and bred, and their monastery was in danger of ruin and destruction through the misgovernment of foreign priors in the past. It was a popular appeal as it occurred against a background of national hostility to France and veiled the truth that they had no money to keep their buildings in repair or to restock their manors, because the Crown took such enormous sums in taxation from them as aliens. Some of the earliest priories to petition for charters of denization were those that paid the highest level of annual ferm because of their dependence on a Cluniac foundation in France. Thetford became naturalised on 20 May 1377,<sup>93</sup> Bermondsey on 2 April 1381,<sup>94</sup> Lenton, Pontefract, and Wangford in 1393,<sup>95</sup> Wenlock on 20 February 1395,<sup>96</sup> Northampton on 22 May 1405,<sup>97</sup> and Montacute and its dependencies including Malpas and Holme in 1407.<sup>98</sup> On most

---

<sup>91</sup> Duckett, *Charters and Records*, I, pp. 190–2.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.* p. 189. See also Graham, ‘The Papal Schism of 1378’.

<sup>93</sup> C. Reyner, *Apostolatus Benedictinorum in Anglia, sive Disceptatio historica de Antiquitate Ordinis Congregationisque Monachorum Nigrorum S. Benedicti in Regno Angliae* (Duaci, 1626), Appendix, p. III, no. LXXXI, is the petition of the convent of Thetford to obtain letters of naturalisation.

<sup>94</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 101, no. VIII.

<sup>95</sup> *CPR 1391–1396*, p. 195; *ibid.*, p. 330.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 552.

<sup>97</sup> *CPR 1405–1408*, p. 12.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 337.

occasions the dependencies of Cluniac foundations in England were able to share in the charter of denization purchased by that foundation. In 1374 the charter of denization purchased by Lewes in 1351 was extended to its dependencies.<sup>99</sup> St James, Derby, was included in the authorisation granted by royal letters to Bermondsey in 1381.<sup>100</sup> Dudley shared in the charter of denization granted to Wenlock in 1395.<sup>101</sup> Horkelesley became denizen in 1377 with the other dependencies of Thetford Priory.<sup>102</sup> There was at least one exception: St Helen's, although a dependency of Wenlock, remained in the king's hands and was subsequently granted to Eton College by Edward IV in 1467.<sup>103</sup> It is clear that sharing in the denization charter of another Cluniac priory did not always protect a dependency from early dissolution. Stanesgate, a dependency of Lewes, and Horkelesley, a dependency of Thetford, were both suppressed by Cardinal Wolsey in 1525 for the endowment of colleges in Oxford and Cambridge.<sup>104</sup>

The cost of charters of denization was also significant but it was a single payment that avoided any further royal exactions. Lenton paid 500 marks for its charter, Pontefract 100 marks, Wenlock 600 marks, Barnstaple 160 marks, Northampton 100 pounds, and Montacute 300 marks.<sup>105</sup> Certain priories were unable to purchase a charter of denization because they could not prove that they had ever been conventual. As they were also dependent on a Cluniac foundation in France they could not share in the charter of denization of the foundation on which they were dependent in the way that the dependent priories of

---

<sup>99</sup> Duckett, *Charters and Records*, I, p. 31; *CPR 1370–1374*, p. 268.

<sup>100</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 101, no. vii.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78; *CPR 1391–1396*, p. 552.

<sup>102</sup> *CPR 1374–1377*, p. 301.

<sup>103</sup> Knowles and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses*, p. 102.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102 and 100 respectively.

<sup>105</sup> *CPR 1391–1396*, pp. 195 and 215–16; *Monasticon*, V, p. 78; *CPR 1401–1405*, p. 251; *CPR 1405–1408*, p. 12 and *ibid.* p. 337 respectively.

Montacute had shared in its charter of naturalisation. This was the case for St Clears and St James Exeter, which remained in royal hands because they could no longer pay the annual ferm. The situation prompted an attempt by the prior of St Martin des Champs, on which the two priories were dependent, to exchange them with Lewes for two of its dependencies in France. The move failed because the prior of Lewes had insisted that the exchange should include Barnstaple.<sup>106</sup> In about 1414 St Clears was dissolved and there are no recorded priors after that year.<sup>107</sup> In 1428 jurors reported that for a great time no services had been held at St James, Exeter. In 1440 a commission was appointed to deal with all remaining alien priories which were in royal hands. St Clears was granted to Archbishop Chichele's new foundation of All Soul's College, Oxford, in 1442,<sup>108</sup> and St James, Exeter, to his new foundation of King's College, Cambridge, by King Henry VI in 1444.<sup>109</sup> The abbot of Cluny (rather than St Martin des Champs) was supposed to be compensated for these closures but received nothing. It was a principal condition of the charter of denization that no payment should be made by the prior of a naturalised Cluniac priory to another Cluniac priory whether in France or England. The annual *apport* that had previously been due from a dependent Cluniac priory now passed to the Crown. These were regularly granted away at first as rewards for faithful service,<sup>110</sup> and – as the cases cited above demonstrate – as endowments for colleges.

There is no other evidence for significant secular interference in the administration of the Cluniac priories until 1536 when those priories with a net annual income of less than £200 were suppressed by the Act of Suppression.<sup>111</sup> These included Barnstaple, Bromholm,

---

<sup>106</sup> Duckett, *Charters and Records*, I, p. 237, 238.

<sup>107</sup> Knowles and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses*, p. 102.

<sup>108</sup> *CPR 1441–1446*, p. 227.

<sup>109</sup> *Rymer's Foedera*, X, pp. 802, 803; *CPR 1441–1447*, p. 279.

<sup>110</sup> *CPR 1429–1436*, p. 45; *CPR 1436–1431*, p. 529.

<sup>111</sup> Knowles, *Religious Orders*, III, pp. 291–393; Dickinson, *Monastic Life in Medieval England*, p. 126.

Clifford, Derby, Farleigh, Horton, and Prittlewell. The wealthier Cluniac priories were subsequently dissolved in a piecemeal fashion. Lewes and its dependency of Castle Acre were dissolved in 1537, Bermondsey and Lenton in 1538, and Pontefract and Montacute (with its dependencies of Holme and Malpas) in 1539. Thetford and Wenlock, with its dependencies of Church Preen and Dudley, were not dissolved until 1540.<sup>112</sup>

### **Ecclesiastical authority**

The ecclesiastical hierarchy, or the hierarchy of the secular church, in England and Wales, cascaded down from the pope and the papal curia, through the two archbishops in England, Canterbury and York, down to the bishops who served their dioceses and the lower levels of authority within the dioceses. This section examines the relations of the Cluniac priories of England and Wales with these various levels of authority, and how far Cluniac immunity was, or was not, maintained in the face of other pressures.

#### *The bishops*

From the time of its foundation in 910 Cluny had been immune from episcopal visitation and this immunity had subsequently been extended to all Cluniac priories.<sup>113</sup> This included all Cluniac priories in England and Wales, and there is no evidence of any challenge to this feature of Cluniac monasticism throughout the history of these foundations by the episcopal or archepiscopal authority. In fact, alleged requests by Cluniac priories for episcopal visitation were seen as evidence of an attempt to secede from the Cluniac community and therefore of incompatibility with membership of the extended monastic community of the

---

<sup>112</sup> Knowles and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses*, pp. 96–8.

<sup>113</sup> Hunt, *Cluny under St Hugh*, pp. 166–9. The majority of Benedictine and Augustinian houses were subject to episcopal visitation but Cistercian foundations were also exempt: Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders*, p. 184



abbot of Cluny. At the General Chapter of 1291 it was alleged that the priories of Barnstaple and Exeter were trying to slip out of the Order: their priors were promising obedience to the bishop, admitting him for visitation and paying procurations.<sup>114</sup> As the Cluniac priories were situated in dioceses and in a country where there was no pre-existing tradition of immunity from the ecclesiastical authority of the bishops and archbishop of Canterbury, and given the reputation of the Cluniacs for appropriate compromise, it might be expected that a degree of compliance with local and national ecclesiastical authority occurred to avoid conflict. A Benedictine abbey or priory was subject to visitation by the bishop of the diocese in which it was located. They also depended on the bishop for the blessing of abbots and priors and his consent for the appropriation of parish churches to the monastery. Finally a bishop was required to consecrate any new abbey or church.

In at least some situations the priories required the services of a bishop. The consecration of the priory church and associated claustral complex could only be conducted by a bishop. There are documented instances of this being carried out by local diocesan bishops. The church and cloister of Castle Acre were consecrated between 1146 and 1148 by William Turbe, bishop of Norwich.<sup>115</sup> The restored buildings of Pontefract were consecrated by Roger de Pont l'Evêque, archbishop of York, in 1159.<sup>116</sup> A charter records the consecration of the cemetery of the monastery church of St James, Exeter, by Bishop Robert of Exeter c. 1146.<sup>117</sup> There is evidence, however, that priories may have sought to underline their independence from local diocesan authority by inviting bishops from other dioceses or titular bishops to carry out this procedure. In 1206 the bishop of Carlisle dedicated an altar in

---

<sup>114</sup> Duckett, *Visitations and Chapters General*, p. 207.

<sup>115</sup> *VCH Norfolk*, vol. 2, p. 356.

<sup>116</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 118.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 106–7.

the choir of Bermondsey Priory to the Blessed Virgin Mary and All Saints.<sup>118</sup> On other occasions Cluniac monks who were also bishops provided this service.

There is evidence that in many instances the episcopate had a positive attitude towards Cluniac priories. Thurstan, archbishop of York, was buried at Pontefract in 1141. He had made a vow in his youth that he would end his days as a Cluniac monk. He was a man who encouraged a wide variety of monastic vocations for men and women, and was instrumental in supporting the monks who left the Benedictine abbey of St Mary's, York in 1132, and the foundation of the Cistercian abbey of Fountains. Yet it was at Pontefract that he retired in January 1140, taking the Cluniac habit and dying there within a month.<sup>119</sup> There are many documented instances of bishops assisting Cluniac priories. When Johel de Totnes, founder of Barnstaple Priory, was disgraced by the King William II, the bishop of Exeter, William Warelwast, intervened on behalf of the founder to guarantee the safety of the monks there.<sup>120</sup> William de Warenne, secular patron of Slevesholm, wrote to Pandulph, bishop of Norwich, requesting his protection of the monks dwelling on the island of Slevesholm.<sup>121</sup> Gilbert Foliot, bishop of London between 1163 and 1187, appealed for contributions for the completion of the priory church of Prittlewell.<sup>122</sup>

Bishops could even act in the foundation of a Cluniac priory and consolidate its foundation by confirming its foundation bequest and reconfirming its possessions. The foundation charter of Holme stated that the gift, presumably the foundation bequest, was

---

<sup>118</sup> A. Binns, *Dedications of Monastic Houses in England and Wales* (Woodbridge, 1989), p. 110.

<sup>119</sup> D. Nicholl, *Thurstan, Archbishop of York (1114–1140)* (York, 1964).

<sup>120</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 196.

<sup>121</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 75.

<sup>122</sup> This was in the form of a brief addressed to the faithful of his diocese exhorting them to contribute towards 'the construction of the Priory Church... unless the devotion of the faithful comes to their aid, they cannot complete the fabric of the Church they have begun': J. H. Round, 'Letters of Gilbert Foliot', *Journal of the Essex Archaeological Society*, new series, 15 (1896), 76–98 (p. 90, no. 428).

made with the advice and consent of the bishop of Salisbury.<sup>123</sup> The foundation charter of Normansburgh was addressed to the bishop of Norwich, and the grants of the founder were confirmed by John, bishop of Norwich and Hubert Walter, archbishop of Canterbury.<sup>124</sup>

The appropriation of parish churches to monasteries, that is, the grant *in proprios usus*, which conveyed all the assets and responsibilities of the church to the monks, usually needed to be authorised by the local diocesan. However, this is infrequently recorded. This may suggest that it was not seen as essential by Cluniac priories for the parish churches they received as bequests; more likely, perhaps, they sought such licence from the pope. On the other hand ecclesiastical confirmation of right of possession of its spiritualities had the same value to the priory as confirmation of right of possession of its temporal possessions by secular authority and may have been sought or at least not resisted by Cluniac priories. It also served to minimise potential friction with local diocesan authority that might have arisen from a public declaration of immunity from its influence. The foundation grant of William de Warenne I to Castle Acre was confirmed by the local diocesan, Bishop Herbert de Losinga.<sup>125</sup> Bishop Richard Peche of Coventry and Lichfield confirmed to the monks of Dudley the church of Sedgeley, and also confirmed that the chapels of Trysull and Seisdon that constituted part of the grant of Wido de Offendi, while Walter Durdent, the preceding bishop of the same diocese, confirmed the grant of the church of Wombourn to the priory.<sup>126</sup> Richard de Belmeis, bishop of London, confirmed the foundation of Horkesley Priory with its possessions, including half of Boxted churches and churches in Nanewdon and Ovington.<sup>127</sup> A

---

<sup>123</sup> *Montacute Cartulary*, no. 118.

<sup>124</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 73.

<sup>125</sup> *English Episcopal Acta, VI, Norwich 1070–1214*, ed. C. Harper Bill (Oxford, 1990), p. 6, no. 6; *Monasticon*, V, p. 53.

<sup>126</sup> *English Episcopal Acta, XIV, Coventry and Lichfield 1072–1159*, ed. M. Franklin (Oxford, 1997), p. 53, no. 55.

<sup>127</sup> *English Episcopal Acta, XV, London 1076–1187*, ed. F. Neinger (Oxford, 1999), p. 25, no. 33.

charter was issued to Pontefract in 1229 by Archbishop Walter Gray, dealing exclusively with the pensions to be paid to the priory by its various churches.<sup>128</sup> The appropriation of the church of Steeple and the possession of the tithes were confirmed to Stanesgate by William, bishop of London.<sup>129</sup>

Attempts by bishops to block the appointment of rectors and appropriation of parish churches by Cluniac priories without their consent were seen by the papacy as a violation of Cluniac immunity from ecclesiastical interference. In 1272 Prior Simon de Gournay and the monks of Barnstaple presented William de Hasebeche to the rectory of Tawstock. Without waiting for the bishop's consent William sent his proctor, a priest named Nicholas de N. to Tawstock; he allegedly seized the goods of the previous rector, Oliver de Tracy and partially 'consumed' them. The bishop had been notified that Peter de Sancto Maria, archdeacon of Surrey, had made a claim for the large sum of £137 6s 8d from the executors of Oliver de Tracy. Prior Simon de Gournay and the monks of Barnstaple were placed under sentence of excommunication by the bishop. Although he subsequently absolved the monks, his action and that of other bishops was seen as a flagrant violation of ecclesiastical immunity by the papacy.<sup>130</sup> Occasionally compensation was voluntarily paid by a priory to the local diocesan following the appropriation of a parish church. The prior of Dudley, for instance, paid 8d to the bishop of Lichfield for the appropriation of the church of Sedgely, granted by the founder Gervase de Paganell, and this was still being paid at the dissolution of the priory.<sup>131</sup>

Other attempts by the episcopate to place Cluniac monks under interdict were also resisted by papal authority at the request of the abbot of Cluny. In 1286, in response to a

---

<sup>128</sup> *Chartulary of Pontefract*, p. 73.

<sup>129</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 74.

<sup>130</sup> *Cal. of Papal Reg.*, I, p. 405.

<sup>131</sup> Hemingway, *Illustrated Chronicle of the Cluniac Priory of St James, Dudley*, p. 13.

petition from the abbot of Cluny, Pope Honorius IV warned judges in England against issuing writs for priors and monks of the Cluniac Order who had been excommunicated for 40 days when required to act by the bishops. The pope added that archbishops and bishops had issued sentences of excommunication, which they could not lawfully do.<sup>132</sup> This fresh papal prohibition did not deter Archbishop Winchelsea in 1297 from asking for the arrest of the prior, some monks, and servants of Barnstaple under excommunication after 40 days.<sup>133</sup>

There is evidence of instances when bishops sought greater influence over the administration of Cluniac priories in their diocese. The priors of St Clears, who were appointed by the prior of St Martin des Champs, were admitted and canonically instituted by the bishop of St David's to be inducted by the archdeacon and to render oaths of obedience in the usual form.<sup>134</sup> The bishop of Exeter in whose diocese were located the priories of Barnstaple and St James, Exeter, insisted on having new priors appointed to these priories notified to him and then presented to him. On the occasion of the death of a prior of Barnstaple and of a prior of St James, Exeter, messengers returned from the priory of St. Martin des Champs with letters to the bishop of Exeter.<sup>135</sup> On 20 August 1265 Prior Simon de Gournay was instituted to Barnstaple and took a solemn oath of obedience and reverence to Bishop Bronescombe of Exeter. He promised not to give up his office by any persuasion or mandate under penalty of deprivation by the bishop; to use the property of the priory solely for its benefit, saving only the annual *apport* of 20s due to St Martin and no more; and in addition to raise the number of monks to thirteen as soon as he should find suitable persons,

---

<sup>132</sup> *Recueil des Chartes*, VI, p. 753.

<sup>133</sup> R. C. Fowler, 'Secular aid for excommunications', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, third series, 8 (1894), 113–17.

<sup>134</sup> *The Episcopal Registers of the Diocese of St Davids, 1397 to 1518*, ed. R. F. Isaacson, 3 vols, Cymmrodorion Record Series, 6 (1917–20), I, p. 222.

<sup>135</sup> J. R. Chanter and T. Wainwright, *Barnstaple Records*, vol. I (1900), p. 104.

according to the papal judgement.<sup>136</sup> This can be interpreted as an attempt on behalf of the bishop to subvert the Cluniac practice of transfer of priors and to raise the monastic population to the standard Benedictine complement of a prior and twelve monks, regardless of available resources to support this number. By 1272 Prior Simon had been excommunicated and was replaced by a new prior in 1275, suggesting that episcopal interference in the administration of the priory had been ineffective.<sup>137</sup> Pressure to increase the size of the monastic community had been only partially successful. Before 1279, when the recorded number of monks at the priory was six, there had been fewer, but the bishop had compelled the prior to take a fifth monk and has insisted on more.<sup>138</sup>

At an inquisition held about 1281, the local jurors stated that a new prior appointed to Barnstaple ‘shall go to the bishop of Exeter with letters from the prior of St Martin to the bishop of whom he shall receive the spiritualities’.<sup>139</sup> The other conditions seem to have been dropped by this time. It is possible that subsequent priors colluded with the attempts of the bishops of Exeter to interfere with the administration of the Cluniac priories in their diocese as their terms provided the possibility of greater independence from Cluniac administration and made it difficult for them to be replaced. This may have given rise to the allegation at the General Chapter of 1291 that the priors of Barnstaple and St James, Exeter, were ‘trying to slip out of the Cluniac order; their priors were promising obedience to the bishop, admitting him for visitation and paying procurations’. The prior of St Martin was ordered to restrain them and punish the offenders.<sup>140</sup> In 1323 unfavourable reports of John de St Gemme, prior

---

<sup>136</sup> *Register of Bishop Bronescombe*, p. 112.

<sup>137</sup> Smith and London, *Heads of Religious Houses, 1216–1377*, p. 228.

<sup>138</sup> Duckett, *Charters and Records*, II, p. 134.

<sup>139</sup> Chanter and Wainwright, *Barnstaple Records*, I, p. 104; cited in Graham, ‘Cluniac priory of Saint-Martin des Champs’, p. 40.

<sup>140</sup> Duckett, *Visitations and Chapters General*, p. 207.

of Barnstaple, reached Bishop Stapledon of Exeter, who appointed a commission of inquiry, with instructions that it was to suspend the prior if the members found him to be extravagant and wasteful.<sup>141</sup> He remained in office until 1332 and it seems that concerns regarding the prior's behaviour were unfounded, as when the bishop of Exeter learnt that another prior had been sent to Barnstaple, he wrote to the prior of St Martin urging him to send back the same John whose zeal and honourable life were strongly commended in the neighbourhood.<sup>142</sup> Subsequently the bishop of Exeter failed to prevent the appointment of John Soyer as prior of Barnstaple in 1333. He was reluctant to admit him on the grounds that he had been publicly defamed for being dissolute, having children, dilapidation, and simony, while prior of St Clears.<sup>143</sup>

#### *Papal authority*

According to the terms of the foundation charter of the abbey of Cluny the papacy was appointed ecclesiastical patron of the monastery and, as the congregation grew and flourished this role was extended to cover the whole monastic community of the abbot of Cluny. The foundation charter stated: 'May they have as protectors the Apostles themselves, and for defender the Pontiff of Rome'.<sup>144</sup> The papacy was also acknowledged to be the ultimate ecclesiastical authority by both secular and ecclesiastical society and so such patronage provided very valuable protection to the extended monastic community of the abbot of Cluny.

Evidence for the role of the papacy as ecclesiastical patron of the extended monastic community is revealed in the participation of the popes in public confirmation of the holdings

---

<sup>141</sup> *The Register of Walter de Stapledon, Bishop of Exeter (1307–1326)*, ed. F. C. Hingeston-Randolph (London, 1892), p. 41.

<sup>142</sup> *The Register of John de Grandisson, Bishop of Exeter (1327–1369)*, 2 vols, ed. J. de Berkeley et al (London, 1894–99), I, p. 263.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, II, p. 672.

<sup>144</sup> Evans, *Monastic Life at Cluny*, p. 6.

of individual foundations and the reconfirmation of the grants of previous and future secular patrons. These took the form of papal bulls issued presumably at the instigation of Cluniac administration. In 1131 Pope Innocent II confirmed to Farleigh Priory all grants past and future from the king, the founder and others.<sup>145</sup> The possessions of Horton were confirmed in a bull of Pope Lucius II dated 11 May 1144.<sup>146</sup> In a bull of 1182 Pope Lucius III confirmed the possessions of Dudley Priory, issued on behalf of the then prior, Everard.<sup>147</sup> This confirmed to the priory all previous possessions, together with a licence to retain in canonical possession whatever might thereafter be added to them. The Pope also decreed that all ancient and reasonable custom observed up until the present should be retained in the future, and that no one should molest or in any way vex them saving the authority of the pope, diocesan law and reverence due to the church of Cluny.

Papal authority was also invoked to protect the rights of Cluniac priories, to protect them against potential inappropriate interference from the priory on which they had been made dependent, and to reinforce other aspects of Cluniac administration. In a bull of Pope Celestine issued about 1190 the previous donations to Dudley were confirmed to the monks but in addition the right of burial in Dudley Priory was conferred, saving the particular privileges of neighbouring churches. The same bull gave to the house, during the term of any general interdict, the privilege of celebrating the divine offices with closed doors, in a low voice without bells. It also gave the priory the right to receive such persons into their fraternity as they should think fit, which was the right of any conventual Cluniac priory; and prohibited anyone who had made his profession there from departing, without leave of the

---

<sup>145</sup> *Papsturkunden in England*, I, pp. 238–9.

<sup>146</sup> *Papsturkunden in England*, I, p. 153.

<sup>147</sup> *Papsturkunden in England*, I, p. 134.



prior, unless it should be to enter into a house of a stricter order, a tenet of Cluniac administration.<sup>148</sup> By this bull also all persons were forbidden to molest the monks.

Appeals to the papacy were also made by the abbot of Cluny to protect the priories from infringements of their immunity from ecclesiastical interference. In 1286 in response to a petition from the abbot of Cluny, Pope Honorius IV warned judges of England against issuing writs for priors and monks of the Cluniac Order who had been excommunicated for forty days when required to act by the bishops; adding that archbishops and bishops had issued sentences of excommunication which they could not lawfully do.<sup>149</sup> As discussed earlier in this chapter appeals to the papacy were also made to settle disputes between individual foundations and their secular patrons over rights of appointment of priors.

Popes could also act to provide financial support to priories by licensing the appropriation of parish churches to individual foundations to provide for the wellbeing of the monks and to ensure that they could continue to maintain their observance. In 1391 Pope Urban VI awarded the patronage of West Hoathly church, along with those of Patcham, Ditchling and the chapel of Wivelsfield, to Lewes Priory:

in consideration of their losses of arable and fruit-bearing lands, meadows, and pasturages etc, through maritime and other inundations, of the ransom they have had to pay for their prior, taken by the French and Spaniards near the priory, and long held captive in France, of the destruction by the same of their possessions, the burning of their crops, and the capture of their serfs, whereby the priory, in which there are at present 58 monks and one lay-brother, and which is situate near the king's highway, cannot sustain itself nor exercise hospitality.<sup>150</sup>

---

<sup>148</sup> *Monasticon*, V, p. 83.

<sup>149</sup> *Recueil des chartes*, VI, p. 753.

<sup>150</sup> *Cal. Papal Reg.*, IV, p. 396.

The papacy could also act to generate income to priories to support their repair by the granting of indulgences to those visiting a priory and making donations to it. In 1400 Pope Boniface IX granted indulgences for a period of ten years to penitents who visited Prittlewell on mid Lent Sunday and on the feast of the nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and two days following each, and gave alms for its repair and conservation.<sup>151</sup> He also granted an indulgence ‘to penitents who from the first to the second vespers of Whitsunday, and during the two following days, visit the church of the Cluniac Priory of Lewes, in which diverse relics of saint are buried, visit the altar of the said relics, and give alms for the repair of the church.’<sup>152</sup> In 1401 Pope Boniface IX granted an indulgence to penitents who should visit the church of Castle Acre and give alms for its repair.<sup>153</sup> Evidence suggests that such grants resulted from a direct request to the pope from the priory concerned rather than through the agency of the abbot of Cluny. Thus, the prior and monks of Montacute petitioned Pope Clement VI writing that their church had long been destroyed (by an earthquake) and that they had begun a new church, a costly work and could not complete it.<sup>154</sup>

During the papal schism that occurred between 1378 and 1409, the abbot of Cluny supported the Avignon popes while the English Crown supported the Roman papacy.<sup>155</sup> Even before this period there is evidence of a shift from support of the abbot of Cluny in the administration of his priories in England and more direct intervention by the papacy in their administration often in direct conflict with the abbot, but reinforcing standard Cluniac administration. In 1325 Pope John XXII appointed Adam of Winchester as prior of Lewes. The appointment was challenged by the abbot of Cluny, who had the right of appointment to

---

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., V, p. 405.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid., p. 415.

<sup>154</sup> *Montacute Cartulary*, no. 199, p. 202.

<sup>155</sup> Graham, ‘The Papal Schism of 1378’, p. 49. See also Knowles, *Religious Orders*, II, pp. 167–74.

the priory under Cluniac administrative process, but the nomination was only cancelled two years later following the intervention of the secular patron, John de Warenne, who objected to the appointment because he had not been consulted as he was away at war and Adam was replaced by the candidate nominated by the secular patron.<sup>156</sup> This reveals the complexity of interests in the appointment of Cluniac priors in England and Wales during the years of schism. Following the appointment of Pope Alexander V in 1409, whose authority was acknowledged by England and France, there is evidence of increasing papal usurpation of the authority of the abbot of Cluny in the administration of the Cluniac priories in England and Wales. Bermondsey was created an abbey on the pope's orders in 1399, secured by a papal bull dated that year obtained by the then prior, John of Attleborough; John became first abbot of Bermondsey on 13 August 1399 but his elevation was never accepted by the abbots of Cluny.<sup>157</sup> The monks of Bermondsey obtained the right of electing their own abbot, and as a consequence the prior of La Charité lost the right to nominate the head of Bermondsey in the long as well as the short term.<sup>158</sup> When, between 1432 and 1434, the prior of Lewes, John Burghersh, attempted to visit Bermondsey in his role as vicar general of the abbot of Cluny, Raymond de Cadoene, he was prevented and King Henry IV forbade him to pursue his mandate without royal licence.<sup>159</sup>

Pope Urban VI (1378–1389), in his role as ecclesiastical patron of the Cluniac priories in England and Wales, did not wish them to suffer because of the papal policy of the abbot of Cluny. He issued a bull which provided for a caretaker administration when communication between the priories in England and Wales and the abbot of Cluny and priors of La Charité

---

<sup>156</sup> Duckett, *Charters and Records*, I, p. 122.

<sup>157</sup> *Annals of Bermondsey*, p. 483; *Cal. Papal Reg.*, V, pp. 506, 603.

<sup>158</sup> *CPR 1476–85*, p. 209; Duckett, *Charters and Records*, II, pp. 53–8.

<sup>159</sup> Duckett, *Charters and Records*, II, p. 37.

and St Martin des Champs was not possible. He sent a mandate to the priors of Thetford and Bermondsey (rather than Lewes because the then prior, John de Charlieu opposed the new arrangement), ordering them to summon all priors of the foundations who were accustomed to attend the General Chapter at Cluny, to attend an alternative general chapter at a suitable place in England and to elect two persons of the order who should exercise all the powers of the abbot of Cluny and the general chapter during the schism.<sup>160</sup> The priors subsequently came to a general chapter which was probably held at Bermondsey. The priors of Lewes, Montacute, and Lenton, who were French, protested that some of the priors ought not to be admitted to this general chapter because their priories were immediately dependent on La Charité and would not normally have attended the General Chapter at Cluny by that date. They subsequently refused to take part in any election and further refused to obey the priors of Thetford and Bermondsey when they were elected; instead they appealed to the pope themselves. This, as expected, failed as the pope had himself suggested the process, and on 5 July 1389 – just three months before his death – Pope Urban granted to the priors of Thetford and Bermondsey together with the archbishop of Canterbury, acting in his capacity as papal legate, rights of jurisdiction, visitation, and all other powers usually exercised by the abbot of Cluny, the prior of La Charité, and the General Chapter. He conferred on the prior of Bermondsey the power to receive the profession of monks during the schism. Urban VI died on 15 October before the bull was properly executed and on 12 November his successor, Boniface IX, issued a new bull to give effect to that of Urban VI, adding a clause that the archbishop and the two priors could act together, or the archbishop with either of them.<sup>161</sup>

This episode demonstrates how relations between the Cluniac houses of England and Wales,

---

<sup>160</sup> This bull was not entered in the existing papal registers. A bull of Pope Boniface IX summarising that of Urban VI, was entered in the register of Bishop Stafford of Exeter: *The Register of Edmund Stafford (1395–1419)*, ed. F. C. Hingeston-Randolph, 2 vols (London, 1886), I, p. 144; Graham, ‘The Papal Schism’, p. 50.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

and Cluniac administration, with the papacy were not static, but changed with the changing conditions of ecclesiastical politics.

Between 1390 and 1404 the priors of Thetford and /or Bermondsey together with the archbishop of Canterbury appointed new priors to Bermondsey, Northampton, Wenlock, Barnstaple, St James Exeter, St Clears, Montacute, and Pontefract.<sup>162</sup> General chapters were held at Bermondsey in 1392 and 1395, as previously at Cluny on the third Sunday after Easter, at which the exact procedure of Cluny was followed.<sup>163</sup> On the death of a prior whose house was subject to Cluny, La Charité or St Martin des Champs, his palfrey, breviary, cope, and the ornaments of his private chapel were to be divided equally between the priors of Thetford and Bermondsey in payment for their trouble and expenses.<sup>164</sup> At the general chapter of 1392 the priors of Bermondsey and Derby were appointed visitors-general of the Order with powers to coerce and imprison monks and remove them to another house with the consent of their priors. Subsequently individual monks appealed directly to the pope against being moved to other houses, not as punishment but in accordance with the special power of the abbot of Cluny to transfer monks from one house to another, which was now exercised by the presidents of the general chapter of England. For example, in 1398 John Abiford, a monk of Pontefract, appealed to the pope against the order of Archbishop Arundel and the prior of Bermondsey transferring him to Bermondsey, as no fault was alleged against him, and he had always lived an honourable life at Pontefract.<sup>165</sup>

---

<sup>162</sup> Richard Ludlow, a monk of Bermondsey, was appointed prior of St Clears in 1402 by the prior of Bermondsey and the archbishop of Canterbury: D. M. Smith ed., *Heads of Religious Houses England and Wales, 1377–1540* (Cambridge, 2008), p. 354.

<sup>163</sup> Their definitions or acts were entered in a manuscript of Lewes Priory which is now in the Bodleian Library: Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Rawlinson C. 236, fols 90–92v, cited in Graham, ‘The Papal Schism’, p. 52.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> *Cal. Papal Reg.*, V, p. 162.

This system, although in accordance with normal Cluniac administrative process, effectively excluded the authority of the abbot of Cluny. In 1410 however, the earl of Arundel as patron of Lewes, wrote to the abbot of Cluny, asking that the prior of Lewes might have the power of acting for him and the priors of La Charité and St Martin des Champs, and of nominating the heads of the English houses, presumably in contravention of the system established by the papacy.<sup>166</sup> The abbot of Cluny conferred the powers of vicar general on the prior of Lewes<sup>167</sup> which included visitation of foundations in England.<sup>168</sup> He also ratified all professions made in England by papal authority during the schism, but he refused to sanction provincial chapters as contrary to the constitutions of a previous pope, Benedict XII (1334–42) and the invariable custom of Cluny.<sup>169</sup> He also declined to make Lewes an abbey.

At the end of the papal schism in 1409 monks were dispatched to England bearing letters to King Henry IV and the archbishop of Canterbury from the abbot of Cluny. The archbishop was requested to intercede with the king for the recovery of the rights of which Cluny had been deprived on account of the wars and the pestilent schism.<sup>170</sup> English Cluniac priors having proposed to the abbot of Cluny in or about 1415 that he should depute his functions and powers of jurisdiction, sought to continue their independent administration supported by papal authority. By receiving the right to continue freely to elect their priors and profess their own monks, they effectively seceded from the monastic community of the abbot of Cluny which acknowledged the sole authority of the abbot of Cluny. These priories came

---

<sup>166</sup> Duckett, *Charters and Records*, I, no. 208.

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, nos 455–6.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, nos 202–7.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, nos 149, 150.

under the direct administrative authority of the papacy and papal legates were dispatched to conduct visitations of them.

Thetford had secured a papal bull granting freedom of election to the monastic community there before 1376.<sup>171</sup> This right was confirmed during the papal schism by Pope Boniface IX in 1399.<sup>172</sup> It was expanded to allow profession of monks by their prior in 1447.<sup>173</sup> King Henry VI helped the monks of Pontefract to obtain a papal bull in 1441, enabling them to elect their prior in absolute independence, and giving the prior power to profess his own monks.<sup>174</sup> In a bull of 1480 Pope Sixtus IV made Lewes directly subject to the papal see and gave the monks the privilege of freely electing their own prior.<sup>175</sup> He granted a similar exemption from Cluny for Lenton in 1484.<sup>176</sup> In 1494 Wenlock secured a bull releasing it from all dependence on Cluny or La Charité and giving them free election.<sup>177</sup> In 1490 Pope Innocent VIII gave the archbishop power to visit, correct and reform all exempt monasteries, among them those of the Order of Cluny.<sup>178</sup>

As traditional protectors of Cluniac foundations, popes continued to intervene to defend individual foundations from secular interference. Pope Innocent VII decided that an oath taken by Simon Sutton, prior of Castle Acre, to its secular patron, the earl of Arundel in 1404 by which he agreed to not to alienate his woods or possessions, not to manumit his serfs

---

<sup>171</sup> *CPR 1374–1377*, p. 301.

<sup>172</sup> *Cal. Papal Reg.*, IV, p. 196.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*, X, p. 305.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, IX, p. 205, X, p. 133.

<sup>175</sup> Duckett, *Charters and Records*, II, pp. 92–8.

<sup>176</sup> *Cal. Papal Reg.*, XIII, p. 191.

<sup>177</sup> Shropshire Records Office, no. 1224, box 342 (*Wenlock Register*, fos 47–8; Graham, ‘Roland Grosnell, prior of Wenlock’, p. 125.

<sup>178</sup> D. Wilkins, ed., *Concilia Magne Britanniae et Hibernie*, 3 vols (London, 1737), III, pp. 630–2, cited in R. Graham, ‘The English Province of the Order of Cluny in the Fifteenth Century’, in *English Ecclesiastical Studies* (London, 1929), p. 87.

without licence of the earl or his successors, was void as laymen had no such power over persons and things ecclesiastical.<sup>179</sup> The papacy did not, however, always act in the interest of Cluniac priories. Cardinal Wolsey obtained papal permission in 1524, in the form of a bull of Pope Clement VII, to dissolve Stansgate, Little Horkesley, and Daventry under the pretext of using the revenues generated to establish Cardinal's Colleges at Oxford and Cambridge.<sup>180</sup> This paved the way for the complete usurpation of papal authority by the English Crown that led to the dissolution of the remaining Cluniac priories.

\*\*\*\*\*

This chapter has demonstrated that by and large the Cluniac priories were able to benefit from the immunity from secular and ecclesiastical interference promised in the foundation charter of Cluny and thereafter extended to all Cluniac priories. Founders and secular patrons were willing to give up control over the Cluniac priories they established in exchange for the intercessory prayer resulting from the extended monastic community of the abbot of Cluny. Although successors to the patronage of priories attempted to exploit the lack of specific detail in foundation charters – for instance in relation to the appointment of priors – in order to obtain greater control over them, and certain bishops attempted to assert authority over the priories in their dioceses, these actions did not significantly undermine the effectiveness of Cluniac administration which was reinforced by papal authority. Kings, secular patrons, bishops, archbishops and the papacy all acted to benefit the Cluniac priories by confirming their possessions.

---

<sup>179</sup> Bloom, *Notices of Castleacre*, p. 134.

<sup>180</sup> *VCH Northamptonshire*, p. 113.



Confiscation of Cluniac priories along with alien foundations by the Crown during periods of war with France, and the imposition of an annual ferm that each prior had to pay to retain control of his priory, had a significant effect on the expenditure of the priories, particularly those dependent on a Cluniac foundation in France, those with French priors, and the priories whose secular patronage had devolved to the Crown. These factors encouraged priors to assert personal control over their foundations at the expense of Cluniac administration, and their application for charters of denization which was the only way of avoiding the annual payment to the Crown. This served to weaken the bond between priories and the extended monastic community of the abbot of Cluny, a process accelerated by the increasing direct intervention in the administration of the priories by the papacy as a result of the papal schism. The ultimate result was a fragmentation of the link between Cluniac priories in England and those in France and a substitution of the authority of the abbot of Cluny by the papacy which paved the way for the dissolution of the priories in the reign of King Henry VIII.

## Conclusion

This thesis has demonstrated that the expansion of Cluniac monasticism, characterised by the foundation of new priories, was initiated by an Anglo-Norman noble, William de Warenne I, motivated by his personal experience of Cluniac monastic observance. The establishment of the first Cluniac priory in England at Lewes only occurred once the abbot of Cluny had ensured that appropriate conditions existed to ensure the welfare of his monks there. These included confirmation of immunity from secular interference, the provision of an endowment to support a monastic community, and the establishment of an arrangement for ensuring that successive priors would be of particular ability.

Cluniac expansion thereafter occurred in a piecemeal fashion generated by founders and benefactors motivated by ties of kinship, feudal links to other founders, and the desire to legitimise inheritance of landholdings. An important group, however, linked to William de Warenne by ties of relationship, social status, and proximity of landholdings, also shared a desire to benefit from the intercessory prayer of the wider Cluniac monastic community that was consequent on the foundation and support of Cluniac priories. This group established a relationship with the wider Cluniac monastic community evidenced by statements in copies of their foundation charters for Cluniac priories, choice of burial place, the adoption of confraternity with – and on occasion actual membership of – the Cluniac monastic community at a priory other than the one for which they were responsible. This particular relationship was obtained in return for an acceptance of loss of influence over the Cluniac priory which a founder had endowed, including the right to control which existing Cluniac monastery a new Cluniac priory would be dependent on. It is also clear from the evidence discussed in this thesis that Cluniac endowment characterised by the establishment of new priories and the expansion of existing ones occurred over a much longer time than has

previously been recognised and is evidence of the continued attraction of Cluniac monasticism and its ability to compete effectively for endowment with other types of monastic organisation.

The thesis has also argued that immunity from secular interference extended to the selection of sites for new priories. Both temporary and permanent sites were chosen with consideration of the welfare of the monks of the priories and the demands of Cluniac monastic observance. The absence of a pre-existing association between Cluniac monasticism and England and Wales and a stabilising political situation resulted in the monks of new priories being at least temporarily accommodated in association with the castle of the caput of their founder. That sites of Cluniac priories – with one exception – did not change suggests that considerable care was exercised in their selection.

The type of site varied depending on the scale of the foundation bequest. There was in all cases the requirement for a pre-existing structure that could serve as an oratory for the first monks of a priory to allow the immediate commencement of liturgical observance. The nature of the first oratory varied from being the chancel of a parish church to a structure associated with a previous religious use of the site either as a monastery or minster. That the selection of sites was more than a utilitarian consideration is revealed by the adoption of the dedication of the pre-existing structure for the new Cluniac priory providing evidence of a desire to establish a link between the Cluniac priory and the previous religious use of the site.

Other considerations for the selection of sites included proximity to a secular settlement, dictated by the fact that Cluniac monks did not participate in manual labour, and communication links. Proximity to roads and navigable rivers and the coast allowed the priories to be interlinked and eased access to them by the abbots of Cluny in Burgundy and strengthened links between dependent priories in England and Wales and the French priories of La Charité and St Martin des Champs in Paris upon which some of the priories were

dependent. It is also suggested that the priory of Bermondsey was established by the abbot of Cluny for strategic reasons close to England's major city, London, to provide support for the emerging Cluniac presence in England and Wales.

The abbot of Cluny retained the authority for the profession of all Cluniac novices and this involved monks travelling to the abbey of Cluny for this purpose as the abbots of Cluny only visited England occasionally because of the wide dispersal of Cluniac foundations throughout Europe. A significant proportion of the administration of Cluniac priories was delegated to priors. The prior of a new Cluniac priory was responsible for the day to day running of his priory but his administration was overseen by the prior of an existing Cluniac priory either in England or France. In a minority of cases new Cluniac priories remained directly dependent on the abbots of Cluny. A dependent priory also received its first monks from the priory on which it was made dependent and the appointment of priors of dependencies was also the responsibility of the prior of the foundation on which a new Cluniac priory was made dependent. In recognition of his administrative responsibility the prior received an annual payment, an *apport*, usually a fixed sum from the dependent priory which was generally the only payment that a prior received from a dependency.

The degree of delegated responsibility for the administration of a new Cluniac priory was greatest at its foundation. In the majority of cases the dependent priory was described as non-conventual and it was unable to regulate its own recruitment. A priory became conventual when it was fully established and was deemed able to take over part of its own administration including the recruitment of novices. A minority of priories remained non-conventual. Priors were appointed from a different foundation and were frequently changed. It has been suggested that this was to prevent too close an identification developing between priors and individual foundations and to strengthen identification with the wider Cluniac monastic community. Because direction as to responsibility for appointment of priors was not

initially mentioned in foundation charters, later secular patrons were able to try and influence this process. This usually resulted in some minor compromise to the appoint process which was often only short lived.

The introduction of General Chapters and official visitations provided a means of checking on the effectiveness of delegated responsibility. Visitations were occasional and supplemented those of abbots of Cluny to England and while consistently reported on monastic observance, addressed other issues such as the size of the monastic population of a priory and whether there were sufficient resources to support it. Apart from providing a means of checking on the effectiveness of delegated responsibility, visitors also transmitted changes to observance introduced by the abbots of Cluny. General Chapters consisted of a meeting of Cluniac priors at the abbot of Cluny. Initially this was of all priors and held annually. From 1301 it was held every two years for priors from England and Wales and only involved priors of foundations directly dependent on the abbot of Cluny while other priors attended a chapter held at the priory on which they were dependent. Reports compiled by the official visitors were heard and responsible priors were requested to correct any deficiencies in observance. They also provided a means of introducing changes to monastic observance introduced by statutes of the abbots of Cluny. It has been argued that the generally positive reports on monastic observance suggest that this system of delegated responsibility was effective. The later appointment of English priors and their involvement in diplomatic activity which took them outside the confines of their priory together with the increasingly frequent issuing of excuses for non-attendance at the General Chapter served to weaken their association with the wider Cluniac monastic community.

The thesis has argued that monastic observance was transmitted orally by the first Cluniac monks at new priories and reinforced by the appointment of priors. It was considered distinctive in content and extent by Cluniacs and non-Cluniacs alike. The Cluniac identity of

liturgical observance was revealed by the listing of feast days of commemoration of Cluniac saint abbots in the calendars of service books, but the presence of saints associated with earlier monastic foundations such as St Milburge (Wenlock Priory) and St Pancras (Lewes Priory) which became the sites of Cluniac priories has provided evidence of how Cluniac liturgy could be augmented in this way and followed at Cluniac priories with no association with these saints. The prominence of feasts associated with the Blessed Virgin Mary in these calendars, as well as the requirement for priories to celebrate a daily mass to the Blessed Virgin Mary revealed in visitation reports, suggests a particular Cluniac association with her. Visitations also indicate how the scale of liturgical observance was adjusted depending on the size of the monastic population of different priories. They also reveal evidence of intercessory masses and charity. Evidence of hospitals on the site of many priories it is argued reflect the importance attached to hospitality in Cluniac monastic observance.

The thesis has argued that the scale of new construction on the sites of new Cluniac priories related to the size of the foundation endowment. It varied from the adaptation of the chancel of a parish church to serve as the permanent oratory to the construction of a complete conventual complex. Building generally occurred in phases presumably dictated by available resources. Priority was given to construction of a new oratory in the east end of the priory church and then the Chapter House, the meeting point of the Cluniac community. Architectural elaboration was restricted to the priory church and chapter house, reflecting the importance and acting as a medium for the transmission of Cluniac monastic observance. It has been argued that the ground plan of Cluniac priory churches was determined by that of the priory from which the monks originated. There is no evidence of a conscious attempt to emulate the evolving ground plan of the abbey church at Cluny. As new priories became influenced by contemporary churches of other types of monastic organisation they came to increasingly resemble such churches particularly in the reconstruction of their east ends. It is

suggested that this reconstruction was influenced by the construction and reconstruction of Lady Chapels. The final phase of new building involved the adaptation of existing buildings to provide separate accommodation for the prior and the reconstruction of gatehouse often bearing the personal coats of arms of priors.

The thesis has also demonstrated that there was a distinctive relationship between Cluniac priories and secular settlement. This resulted from the exclusion of manual labour from Cluniac monastic observance and the consequent reliance on seculars to provide services to support the monks in their observance. The relationship required careful management to provide the services that were needed without further interfering with monastic observance. In cases where the chancel of a parish church was adapted to become the permanent oratory of the monks the church had to be subdivided by a chancel arch, and the separation from secular worship was enhanced by the non-provision of parochial services by the monks. Newly constructed Cluniac priories were located on the periphery of settlements to minimise any disruption to monastic observance. In time, a secular settlement developed adjacent to some Cluniac priories to a size that necessitated the construction of a separate parish church for secular worship on a site subdivided from the monastic precinct. The relative separation of secular settlement and priory was increased by the use of landscape features such as moats and the subdivision of churchyards in those cases where the priory shared the use of the parish church. Access to the monastic precinct was controlled to allow access to servants, limited trade, secular burial, and the accommodation of guests. The priory also received an income from the settlement but this was not developed as an independent economic asset and the interdependence of priory and secular settlement is revealed by the contraction of these settlements following the dissolution of the priory with which they were associated.

It has been demonstrated that there were distinctive features of the economy of Cluniac priories influenced by monastic observance that left them vulnerable to debt. The income of the priories was characterised by a preponderance of spiritualities over temporalities. This is likely to have at least partially resulted from the success of the Cluniacs in convincing benefactors that lay possession of tithes was unacceptable. Although endowment was sustained largely as a result of feudal ties but also ongoing secular interest in Cluniac intercession, from the second half of the thirteenth century bequests declined. It was difficult to transfer the particular relationship that founders had had with a wider monastic community to later secular patrons. The exclusion of manual labour from Cluniac monastic observance resulted in a tendency to lease or sell land holdings rather than even supervising their administration.

There is no evidence that other potential sources of income including pilgrimage and the exploitation of associated secular settlements as independent economic assets occurred and this may have been because of their potential to interfere with monastic observance. It is argued that the expenditure of Cluniac priories was relatively high due to the cost of building and amongst other factors the imposition of royal corrodians. Managed reduction in the size of monastic populations of priories was allowed to reduce expenditure. Most priories developed significant debts. There is no evidence that smaller priories were any more indebted than larger Cluniac priories and no evidence that the debt of larger priories was related to their administrative responsibility for their dependencies. The situation was significantly exacerbated by the imposition of royal farms following the beginning of conflict with France in the fourteenth century, which were applied to all the Cluniac priories whether they were directly dependent on Cluny or not. The priories were encouraged to purchase charters of denization which freed them from the annual farms but also significantly weakened their relationship with the wider Cluniac monastic community.



The thesis has demonstrated that the Cluniac priories in England and Wales were largely able to remain immune from secular and ecclesiastical interference for most of the time of their existence. Founders and their descendents as secular patrons acted to confirm the possessions of the priories. Attempts by later secular patrons to influence the appointment of priors were settled by compromises which were often temporary and did not significantly diminish the authority of Cluniac administration. The temporary possession of the temporalities of some priories by their secular patrons while a new prior was being appointed was extended during the conflict with France in the fourteenth century by the general confiscation of priories by royal authority which could only be overturned by the payment of an annual ferm which contributed significantly to the debt of priories. The inability of the abbots of Cluny to influence this situation resulted in priories purchasing charters of denization which freed them from royal exactions. The thesis has also shown that the priories remained largely free from ecclesiastical interference. Bishops often acted to confirm their possessions and minor concessions to ecclesiastical authority over the appointment of priors did not significantly undermine Cluniac administration. The papacy in line with their role as protector of Cluniac priories enshrined in the foundation charter of the abbey of Cluny acted to support the priories in many ways. Their possessions were confirmed and they were provided with financial assistance by the issuing of indulgences to those visiting Cluniac priories to make offerings and in licensing the appropriation of parish churches. They supported Cluniac immunity in the conflicts between priors and secular patrons over the appointment of priors and prevented the issuing of interdicts against the monastic communities of priories during conflicts between priors and bishops over the appropriation of churches by Cluniac priories. The situation changed dramatically during the papal schism during which Cluny supported the popes in Avignon while the English supported the popes in Rome. The latter supported the Cluniac priories in England to maintain a national

administration that included visitation and general chapters and the appointment of priors by certain priors appointed vicars general. The attempts by the abbot of Cluny to impose his authority at the end of the papal schism was not supported by papal authority and instead links between the Cluniac priories and the wider Cluniac monastic community were permanently broken and authorised by papal bulls freeing priories from the authority of the abbot of Cluny and giving them permission to elect their own priors. This paved the way for the closure of the remaining Cluniac priories at the general dissolution of the monasteries in the years after 1536.

In all of these areas there is clear evidence of the operation of a unique centrally coordinated system of administration under the ultimate authority of the abbots of Cluny, which acted to ensure the wellbeing of all Cluniac monks in England and Wales from the single monk at some stages in the smallest Cluniac priories to the monks in the largest Cluniac foundations such as Lewes Priory, and to provide for them the best possible conditions for the maintenance of a distinctive monastic observance. The effectiveness of this system, despite the strains of distance, financial difficulty, and conflicts of national identity, is evidenced by the survival of a significant number of priories, some with a very small monastic population, for such a long time and the overwhelmingly positive reports of monastic observance in the priories concerned. The monks of the Cluniac priories in England and Wales can clearly be seen to have constituted an effective extension of the monastic community of the abbot of Cluny.

This model of Cluniac organisation could only have been derived from this type of bottom up study integrating different types of evidence. It illustrates the dangers of reaching conclusions from a top down perspective, and it seems likely that opinions of Cluniac organisation reached from such a perspective have led to the misunderstanding of the nature of Cluniac organisation which in turn has led to the failure of English Cluniac study. The

thesis thus provides an essential and much overdue reassessment of Cluniac monasticism in England and Wales which can be seen to have been inappropriately neglected. It also for the first time arrives at conclusions which are relevant to Cluniac monasticism as a whole. The first of these is the motivation of founders and their distinctive relationship with Cluniac monastic observance. Second, the importance of pre-existing religious significance for the sites of new priories not only determined their dedication but also modified the liturgical observance followed by the monks that constituted the extended monastic Cluniac monastic community by the incorporation of feast days associated with them. The third lies in the first clear description of Cluniac administration, which enabled the abbot of Cluny to delegate his responsibility for the monks of his extended monastic community, and – in his role as stated in the Rule of St Benedict – to ensure their continued wellbeing by ensuring appropriate conditions for the establishment and continued pursuit of a distinctive monastic observance; the effectiveness of this is revealed in evidence from visitation and reports of the General Chapter and was strengthened by the ability of the extended monastic community in England and Wales for so long to maintain immunity from secular and ecclesiastical influence.

It is also now possible to identify a model for an ideal Cluniac monastic landscape as distinctive as that of the much studied Cistercian type. This consisted of a priory church and claustral complex occupying a site of pre-existing religious significance whose scale was determined by the size of its monastic population, and which was adjacent to a secular settlement provided with a separate place of worship, the size and position of which was regulated to provide for the material requirements of Cluniac monastic observance while minimising any negative impact. It is also for the first time possible to identify the inherent weaknesses of certain features of the economy of Cluniac monasteries such as the dependence on bequests and restrictions on the exploitation of potential resources which had

the potential to interfere with this observance. This ultimately led to the disintegration of the extended Cluniac monastic community in England and Wales

By developing an accurate model for the organisational relationship of Cluniac monasticism it is hoped that this thesis will contribute significantly to monastic studies and will encourage a reorientation of future Cluniac studies towards the extended monastic community of the abbot of Cluny rather than individual Cluniac foundations. To this end a similarly structured study looking at Cluniac priories in a region of France and another country such as Spain or Germany would help to test the validity of this model.

This thesis has also thrown up other significant aspects of Cluniac monasticism which are worthy of further study. First, it has developed a model for the relationship between the Cluniac monastic community and the founders of Cluniac priories, which is quite different from that suggested by other historians such as Golding and Rosenwein, and which demonstrates that secular preoccupation with intercessory prayer was not just a late medieval phenomenon.<sup>1</sup> Second, it has revealed evidence of a Cluniac desire to select sites for new priories of previous religious significance and to venerate this association by adopting the dedication of any saint associated with such sites for the new priory, to incorporate feast days associated with these saints into the extended Cluniac liturgy and also to incorporate pre-existing buildings associated with previous religious use of such sites and used as the first oratory of the monks into their newly constructed priories. The motivation for such activity is unclear. Finally the study has demonstrated a Cluniac identification with the Blessed Virgin Mary that is in its way as distinctive as that of the Cistercians. It extends from the choice of the dedication of new Cluniac priories to the Blessed Virgin Mary, together with other

---

<sup>1</sup> Golding argued that founders were influenced by a desire to express their new distinctive Anglo-Norman identity by founding Cluniac priories rather than investing in existing Norman monasteries: Golding, 'Coming of the Cluniacs', p. 77. Rosenwein argued that what was important about Cluniac benefactors was that they had experienced a sudden shift in their status or fortune: B. Rosenwein, *Rhinoceros Bound Cluny in the Tenth Century* (Philadelphia, 1982), p. 40.

intercessory saints such as St Mary Magdalene and St John the Evangelist, to the prominence with which she features in the extended Cluniac liturgy as feast days associated with the Blessed Virgin Mary and the daily Lady Mass, to the priority given the construction and reconstruction of Lady chapels on the sites of Cluniac priories. It is suggested in this thesis that this might reflect a different type of relationship between the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Cluniacs where she is seen as a fellow intercessor on behalf of secular society.

The thesis also provides a comprehensive and up to date bibliography of both primary and secondary references to Cluniac monasticism in England and Wales which will hopefully assist a renewed interest in the subject.

## Appendix A

### Cluniac Foundations in England and Wales

	Dedication	Source
Aldermanshaw		
Barnstaple	St Mary Magdalene	chapel/Cluniac
Bermondsey	St Saviour	church
Bromholm	St Andrew	parish church
Castle Acre	BVM	Cluniac
Church Preen	St John the Baptist	parish church
Clifford	BVM	parish church
Daventry formerly Preston Capes	St Augustine	parish church
Derby	St James	parish church
Dudley	St James	parish church
Holme	BVM	parish church
Horkesley	St Peter	parish church
Kersal	St Leonard	hermitage
Kerswell	BVM	Cluniac
Lenton	Holy Trinity	Cluniac
Lewes	St Pancras	church
Malpas	BVM/St Triac	parish church
Mendham	BVM	Cluniac
Monk Bretton	St Mary Magdalene	Cluniac
Monks Horton	BVM/St John the Evangelist	Cluniac
Monkton Farleigh	St Mary Magdalene	Cluniac
Montacute	St Peter and Paul	church
Much Wenlock	St Milburge	monastery
Normansburgh	BVM/St John the Evangelist	monastery
Northampton	St Andrew	monastery
Pontefract	St John the Evangelist	Cluniac
Prittlewell	BVM	? church
St Carrock	St Carrock	monastery
St Clears	St Mary Magdalene	Cluniac
St Helens, Isle of Wight	St Helen	parish church
St James, Exeter	St James	church
Slevesholm	St Giles	hermitage
Stansgate	St Mary Magdalene	Cluniac
Thetford	BVM	church
Wangford	BVM	parish church

## Appendix B

### Dependency Relations of Cluniac Priors in England and Wales

#### *Dependent on the abbot of Cluny*

Lewes  
Bromholm (from 1195)  
Lenton  
Montacute  
Thetford (from 1107)

#### *Dependent on the prior of La Charite*

Bermondsey  
Daventry  
Much Wenlock  
Northampton  
Pontefract

#### *Dependent on the prior of St Martin des Champs*

Barnstaple  
St Clears  
St James, Exeter

#### *Dependent on the prior of Lewes*

Castle Acre  
Clifford  
Monks Horton  
Monkton Farleigh  
Prittlewell  
Stansgate  
Thetford (until 1107)

#### *Dependent on the prior of Castle Acre*

Bromholm (until 1195)  
Mendham  
Normansburgh  
Slevesholm

#### *Dependent on the prior of Bermondsey*

Aldermanshaw

St James, Derby

*Dependent on the prior of Montacute*

Holme

Kerswell

Malpas

St Carrock

*Dependent on the prior of Much Wenlock*

Church Preen

Dudley

St Helens, Isle of Wight

*Dependent on the prior of Lenton*

Kersal

*Dependent on the prior of Pontefract*

Monk Bretton

*Dependent on the prior of Thetford*

Horkesley

Wangford



## Appendix C

### Relative dates of foundation of Cluniac priories<sup>1</sup>

---

1070 1080 1090 1100 1110 1120 1130 1140 1150 1160 1170 1180 1200 1210

Lewes  
Montacute  
Wenlock  
  Castle Acre  
  Bermondsey  
  Pontefract  
  Preston Capes  
    Northampton  
      Thetford  
      Lenton  
      Barnstaple  
      Daventry  
      Bromholm  
      Kerswell  
      Monkton Farleigh  
      Prittlewell  
      Stansgate  
      St Carrock  
      Horkesley  
      Clifford  
      Derby  
      Kersal  
      Monks Horton  
      Church Preen  
      St James, Exeter  
      Slevesholm  
      Dudley  
      Monk Bretton  
      Mendham  
      St Clears  
      St Helens  
      Wangford  
      Normansburgh  
      Aldermanshaw

---

<sup>1</sup> Dates of foundation from Knowles and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses*, pp. 96-8.

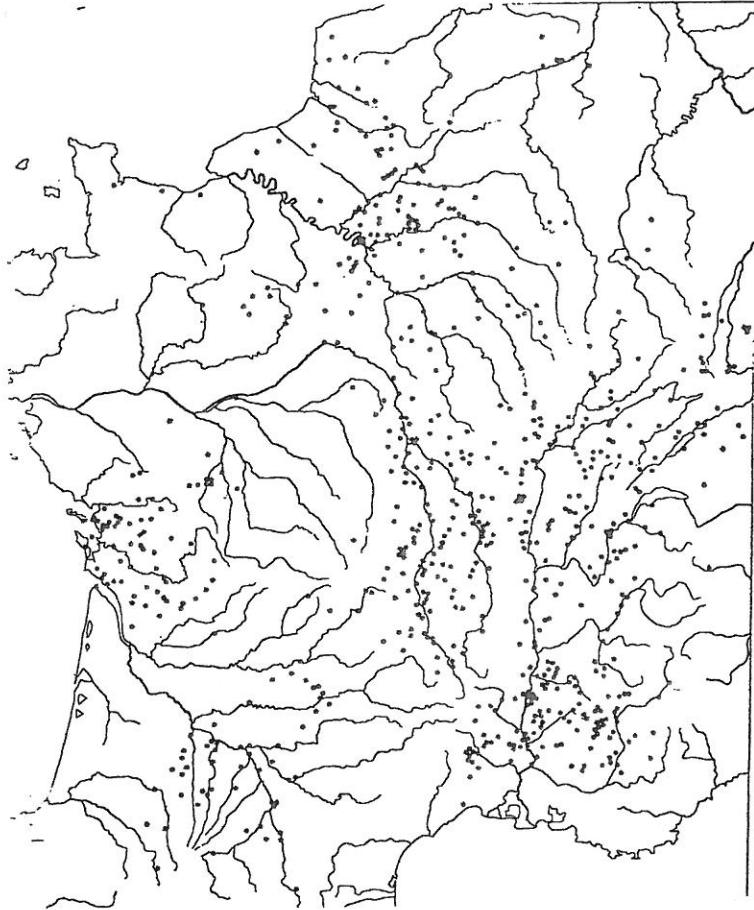


Fig. 0.1 Map showing the extent of the distribution of Cluniac foundations in France



Fig. 0.2 Map showing the location of the abbey of Cluny relative to Lewes

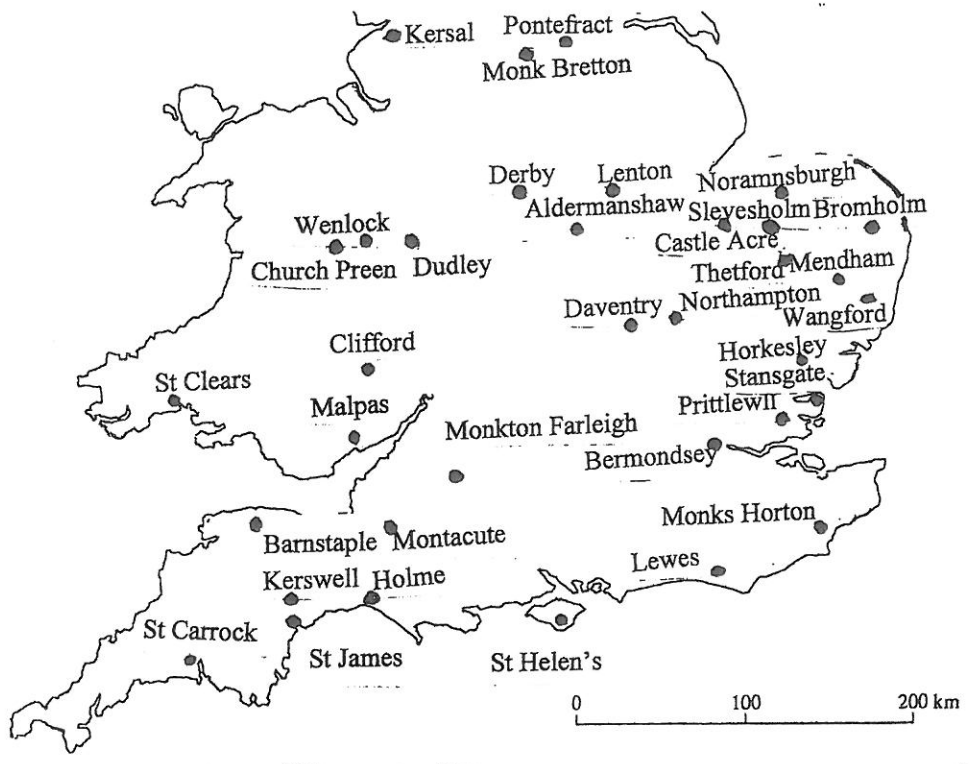


Fig. 0.3 Map showing the locations of Cluniac foundations in England and Wales

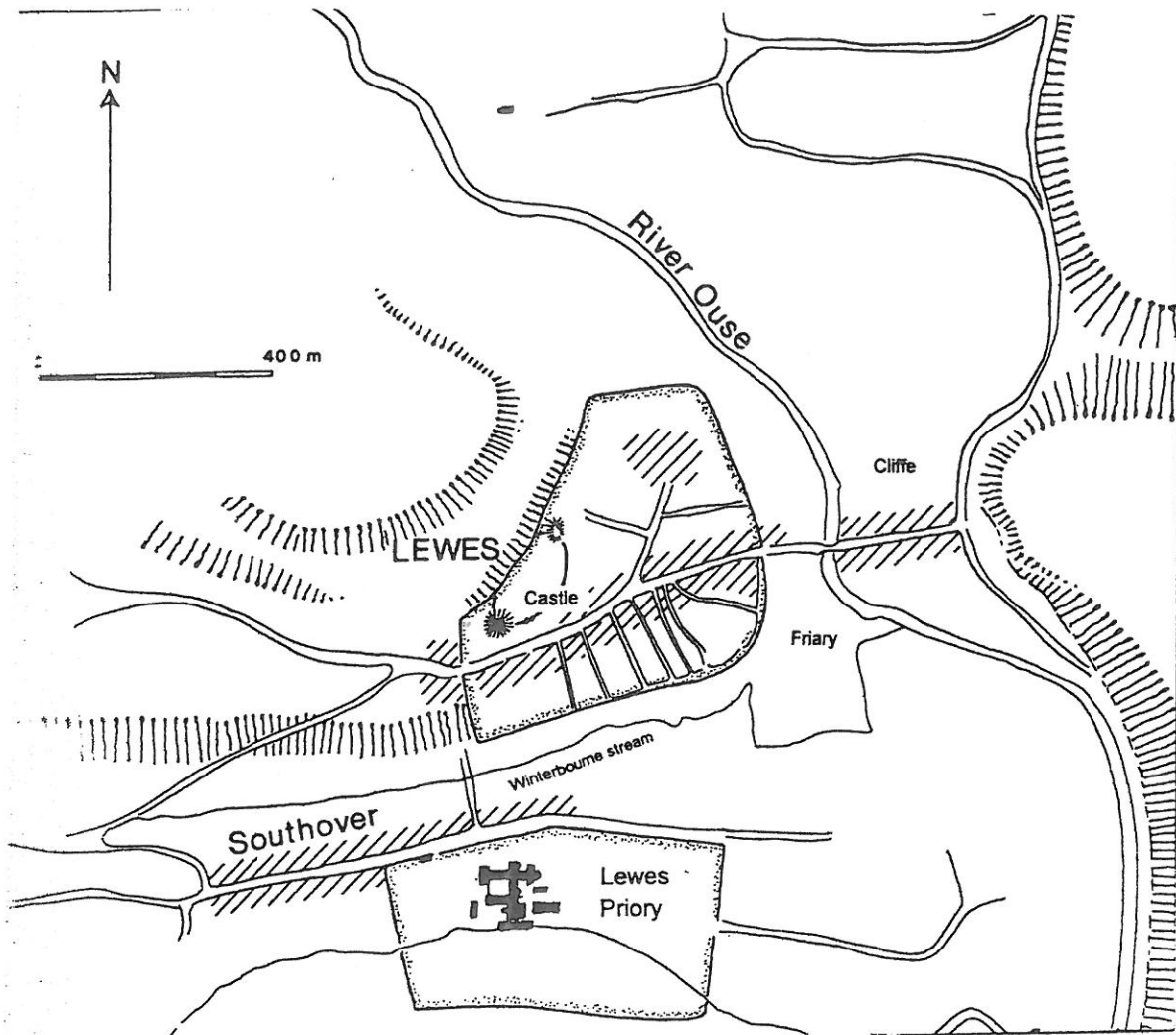


Fig. 2.1 Map showing the relative sites of the priory and castle in Lewes (from M. Lyne 1997)

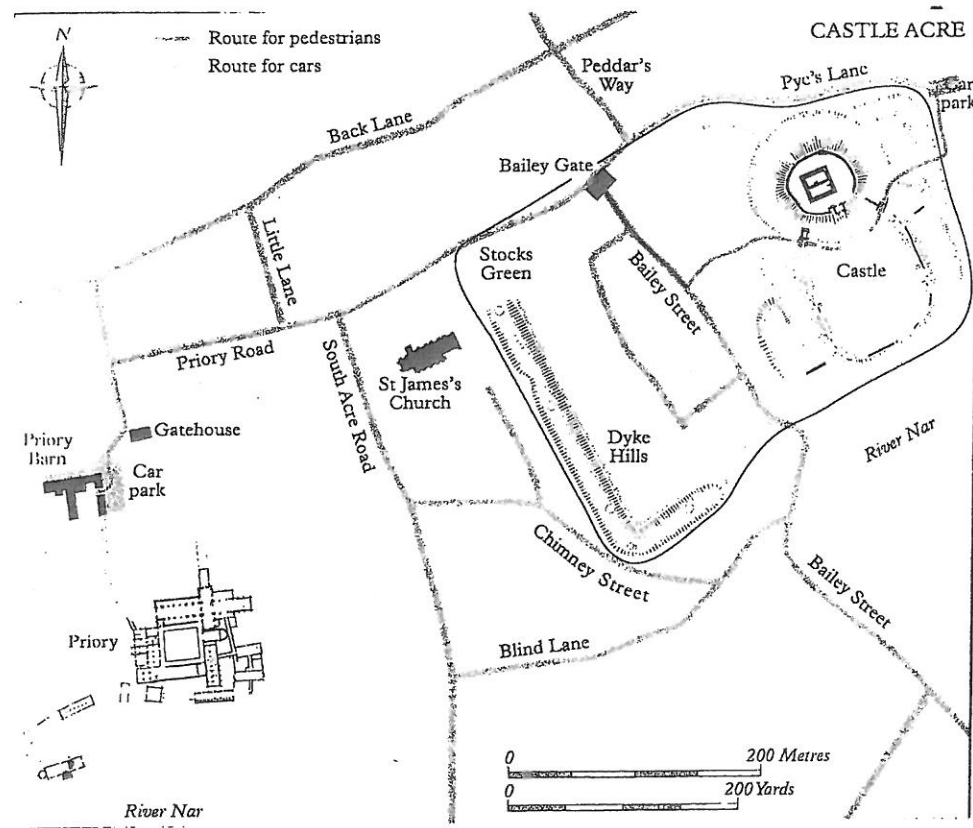


Fig. 2.2 Map showing the relative positions of the priory and castle at Castle Acre (from J. Coad and G. Coppack 1998)

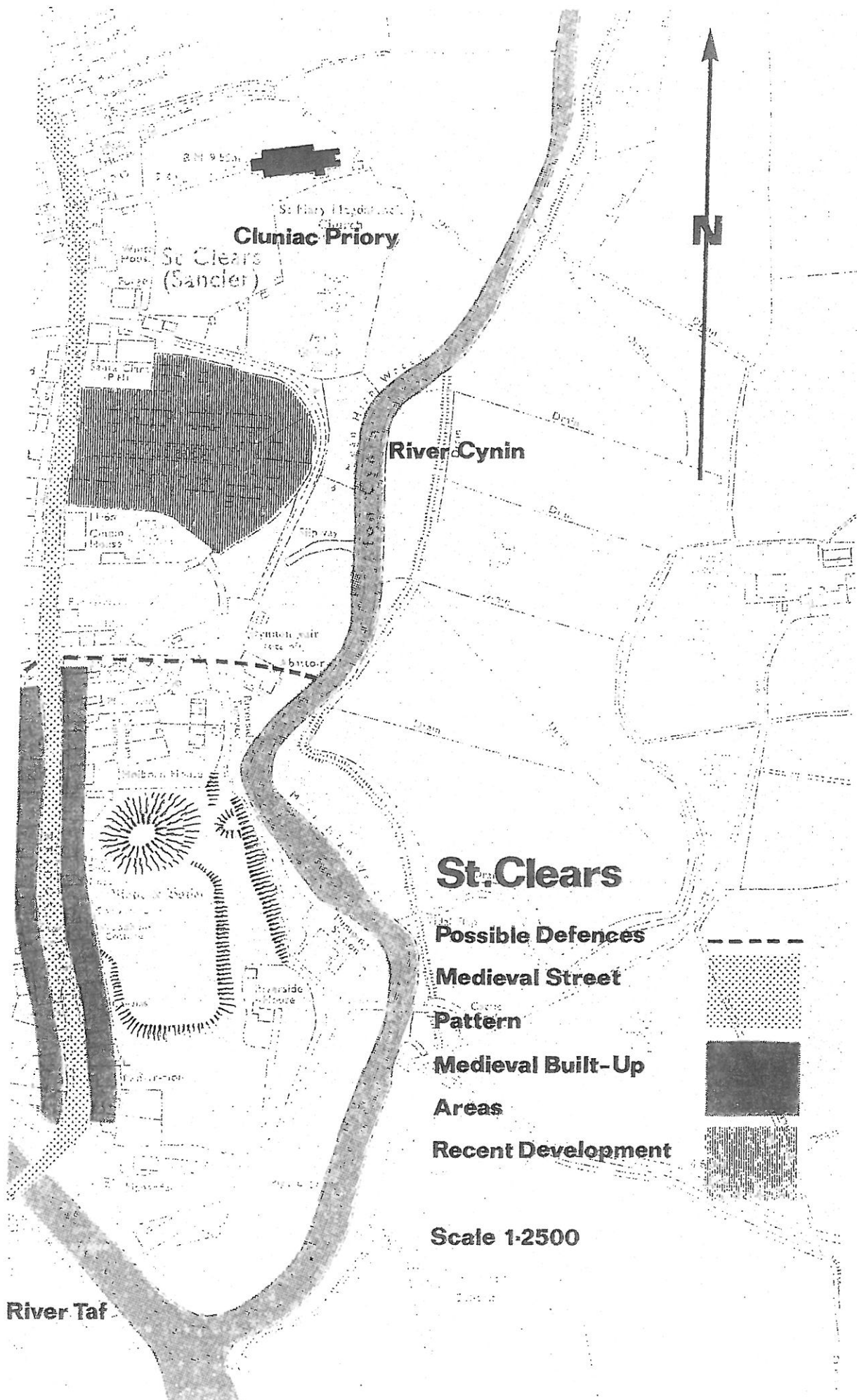


Fig. 2.3 Map showing the relative locations of the castle, settlement and priory at St Clears

Fig. 6 Religious houses and hospitals

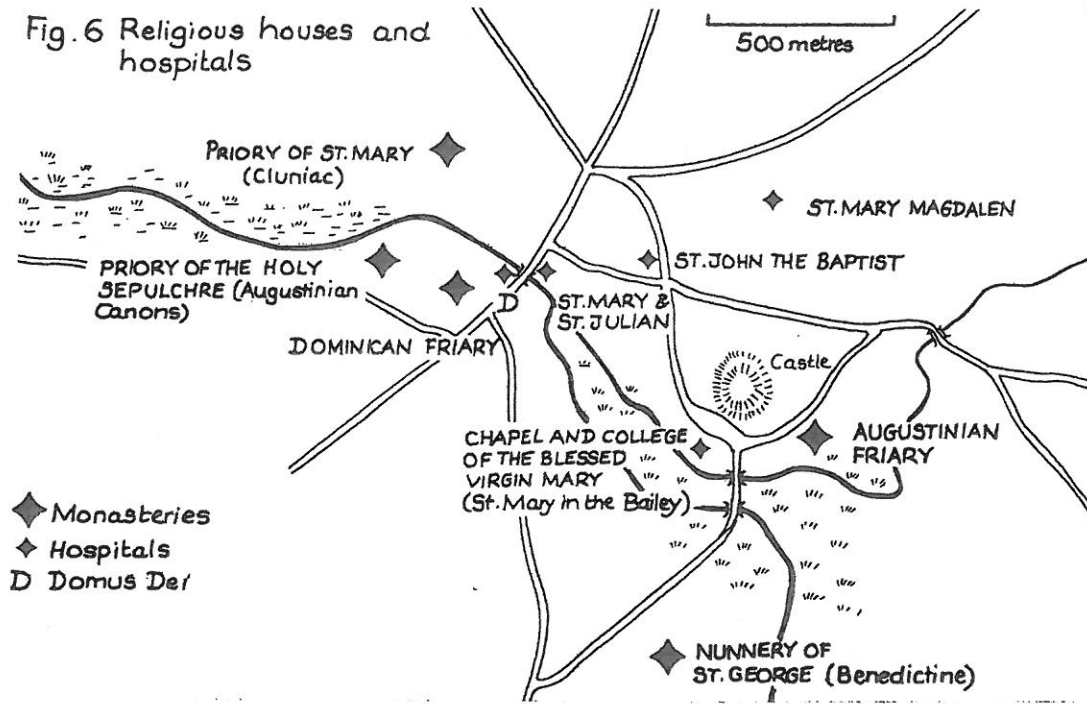


Fig. 2.4 Map showing the relative locations of the castle, settlement and priory at Thetford (A Crosby 1986)



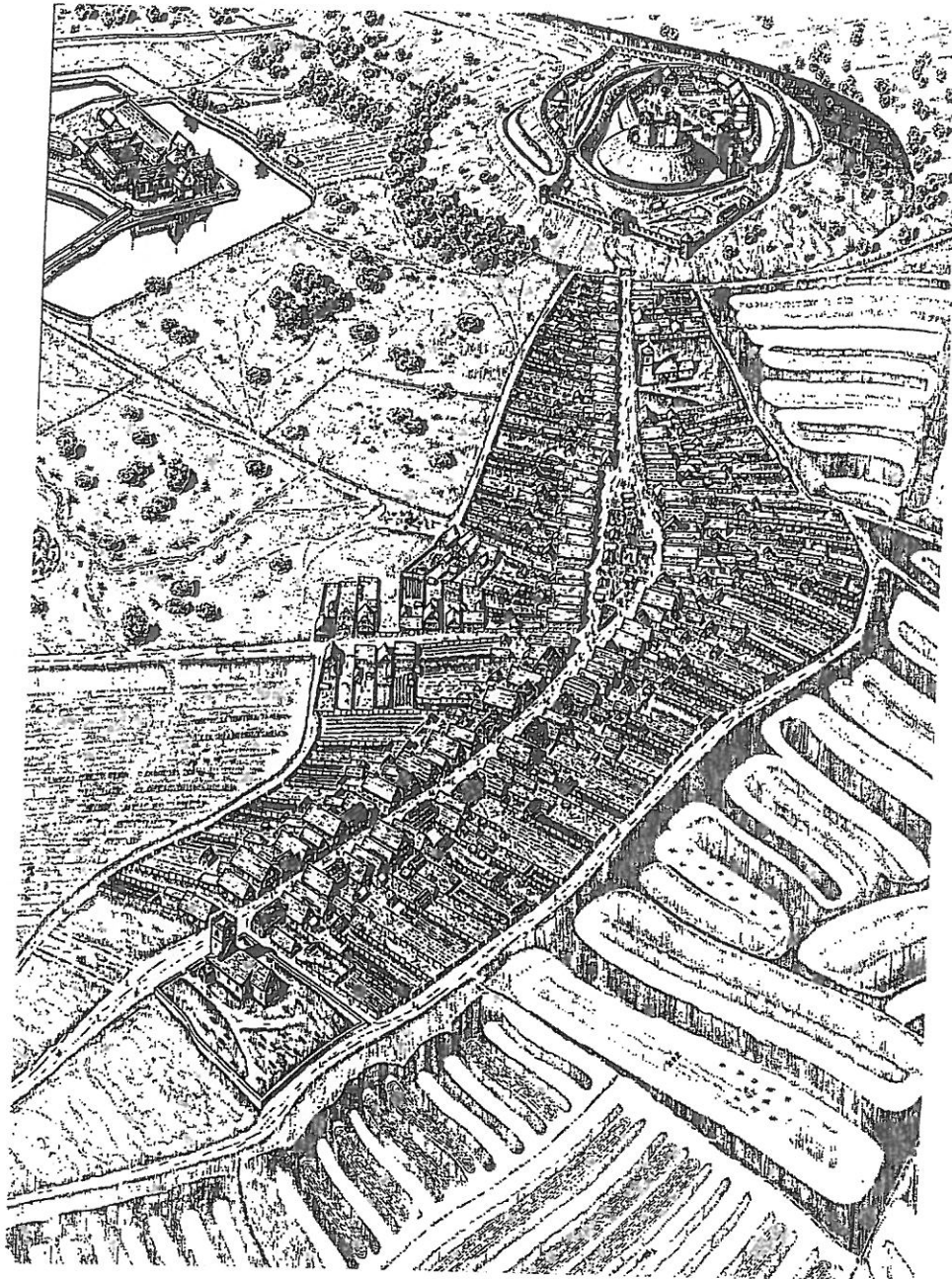


Fig. 2.5 Map showing the relative locations of the castle, settlement and priory at Dudley (from J. Hemingway 2005)

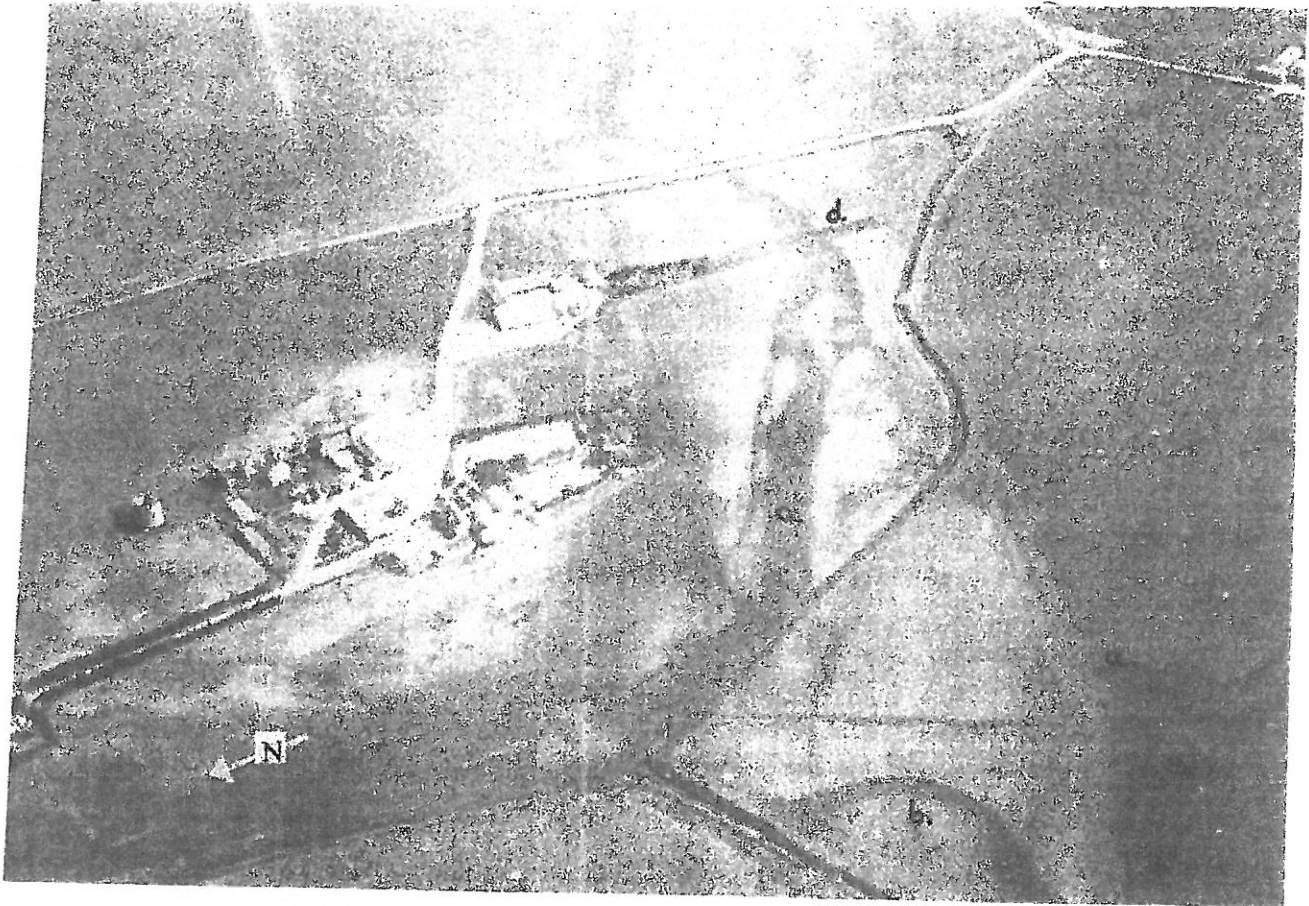


Fig. 2.6 Aerial photograph showing the island setting of Bromholm Priory surrounded by relict watercourses

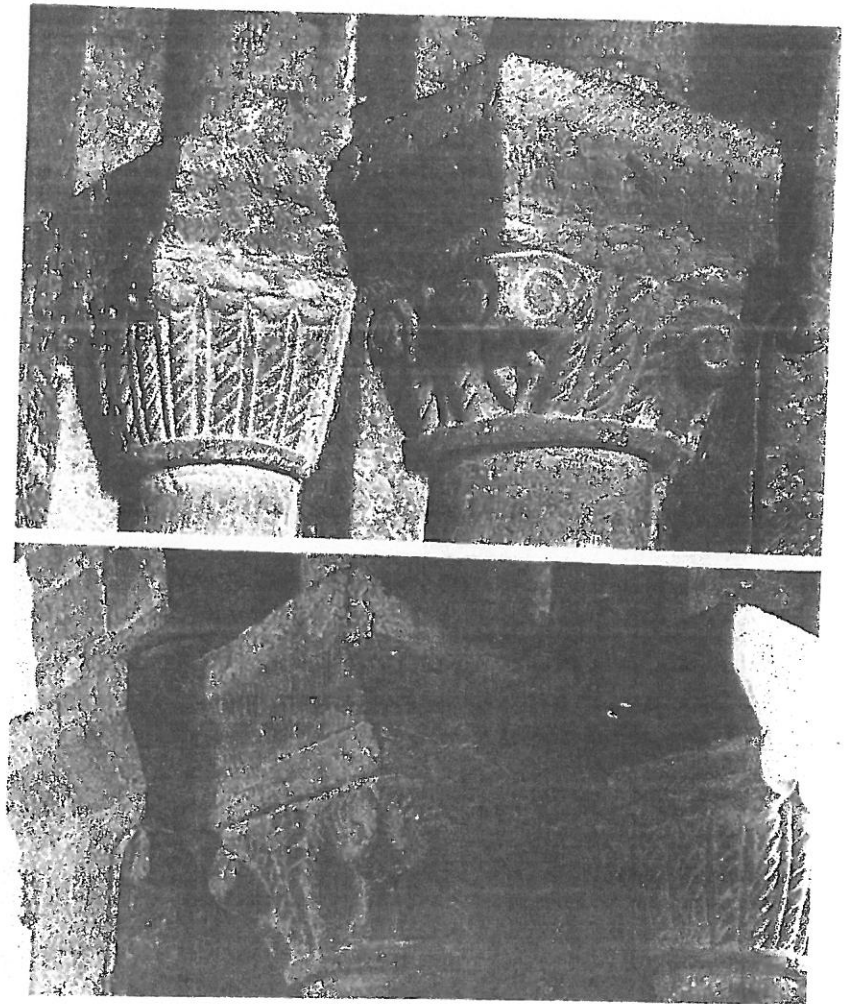
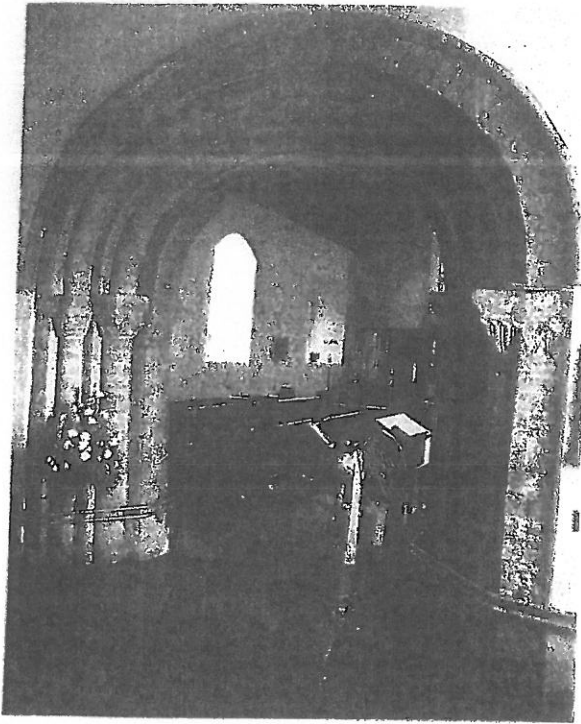
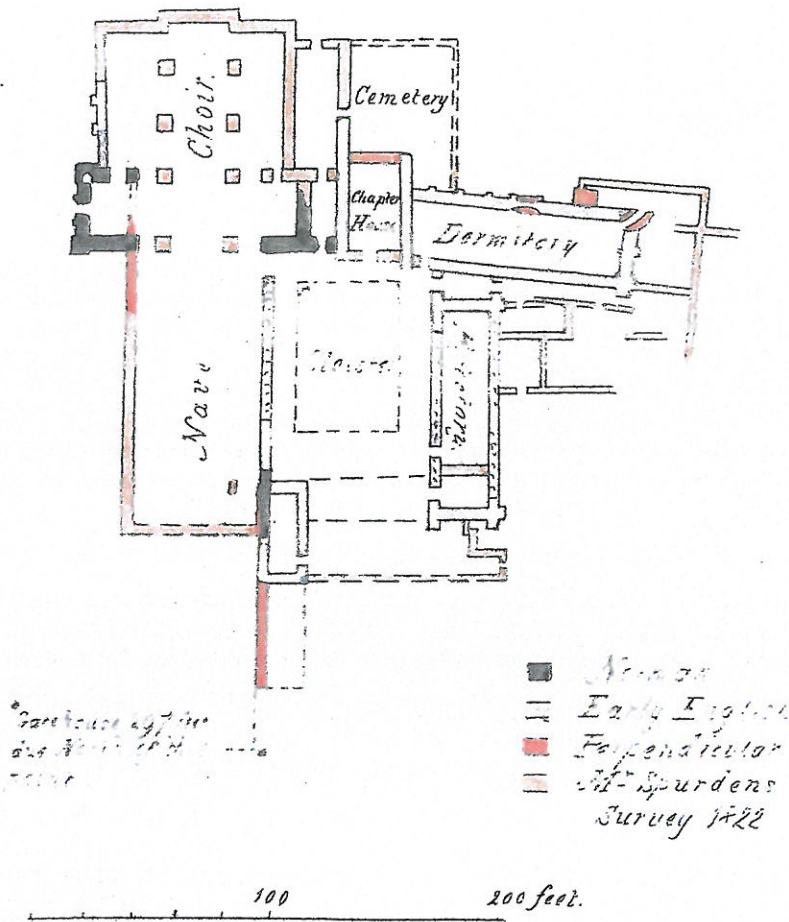


Fig. 5.1 The chancel arch and capitals of St Clears priory



Fig. 5.2 Ground plan of conventual complex of Bermondsey Priory (from T.Dyson et al 2011)



**BROMHOLM PRIORY.**

1854.

Fig. 5.3 Ground plan of conventual complex of Bromholm Priory (from H. Harrod 1857)



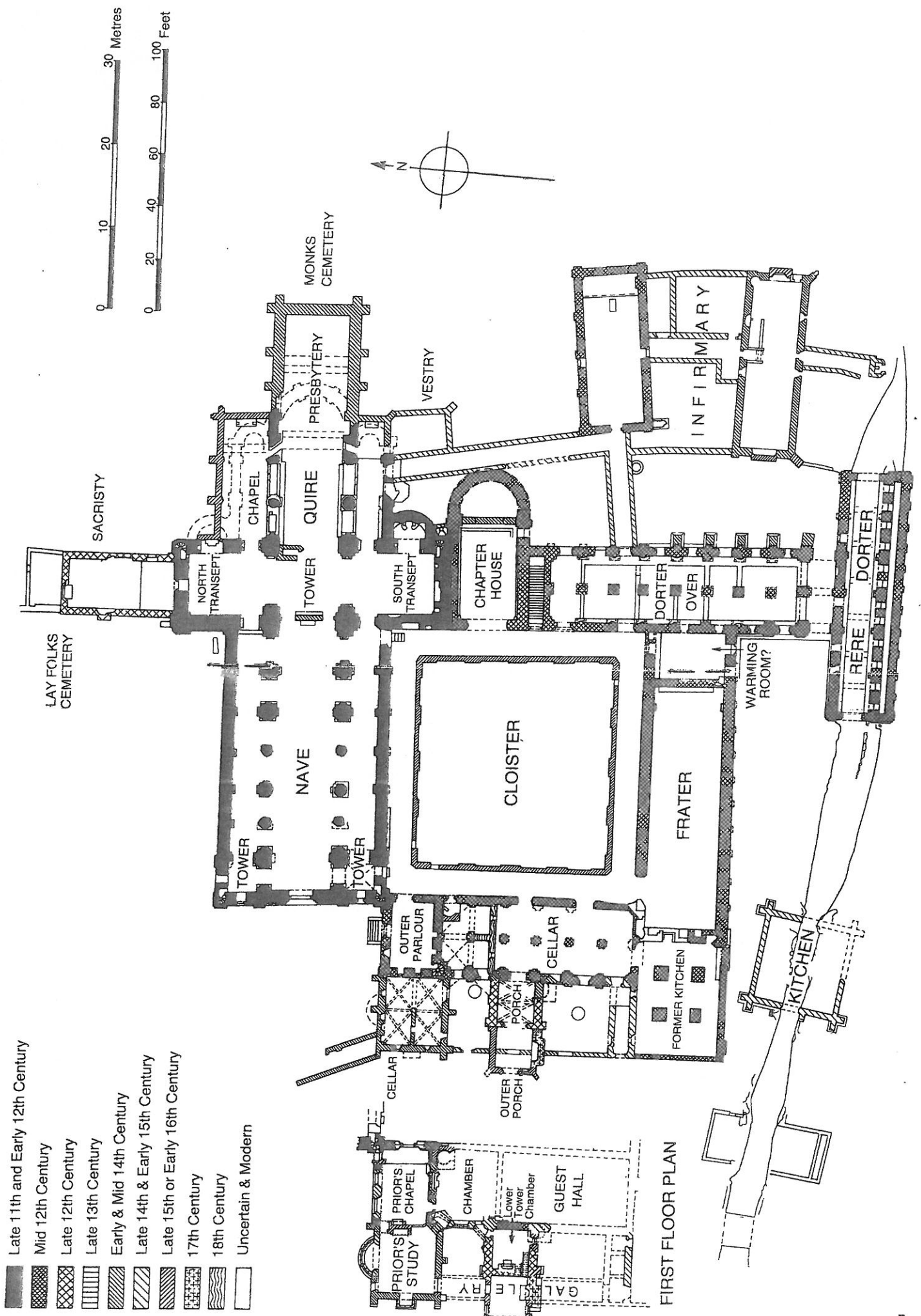


Fig. 5.4 Ground plan of conventual complex of Castle Acre Priory (from FJE Raby and PK Baillie Reynolds)

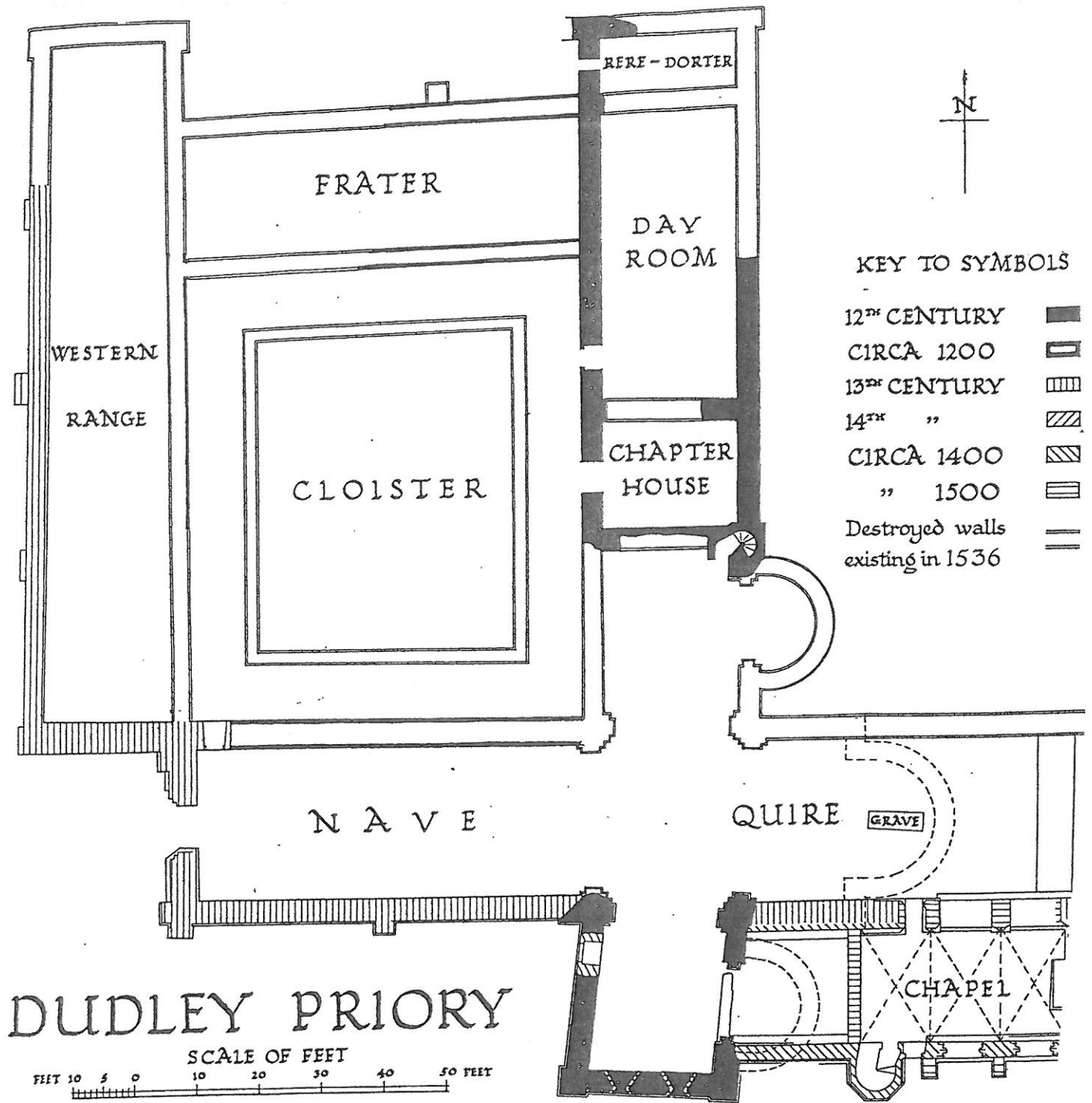


Fig. 5.5 Ground plan of conventual complex of Dudley Priory (from CAR Radford 1940)

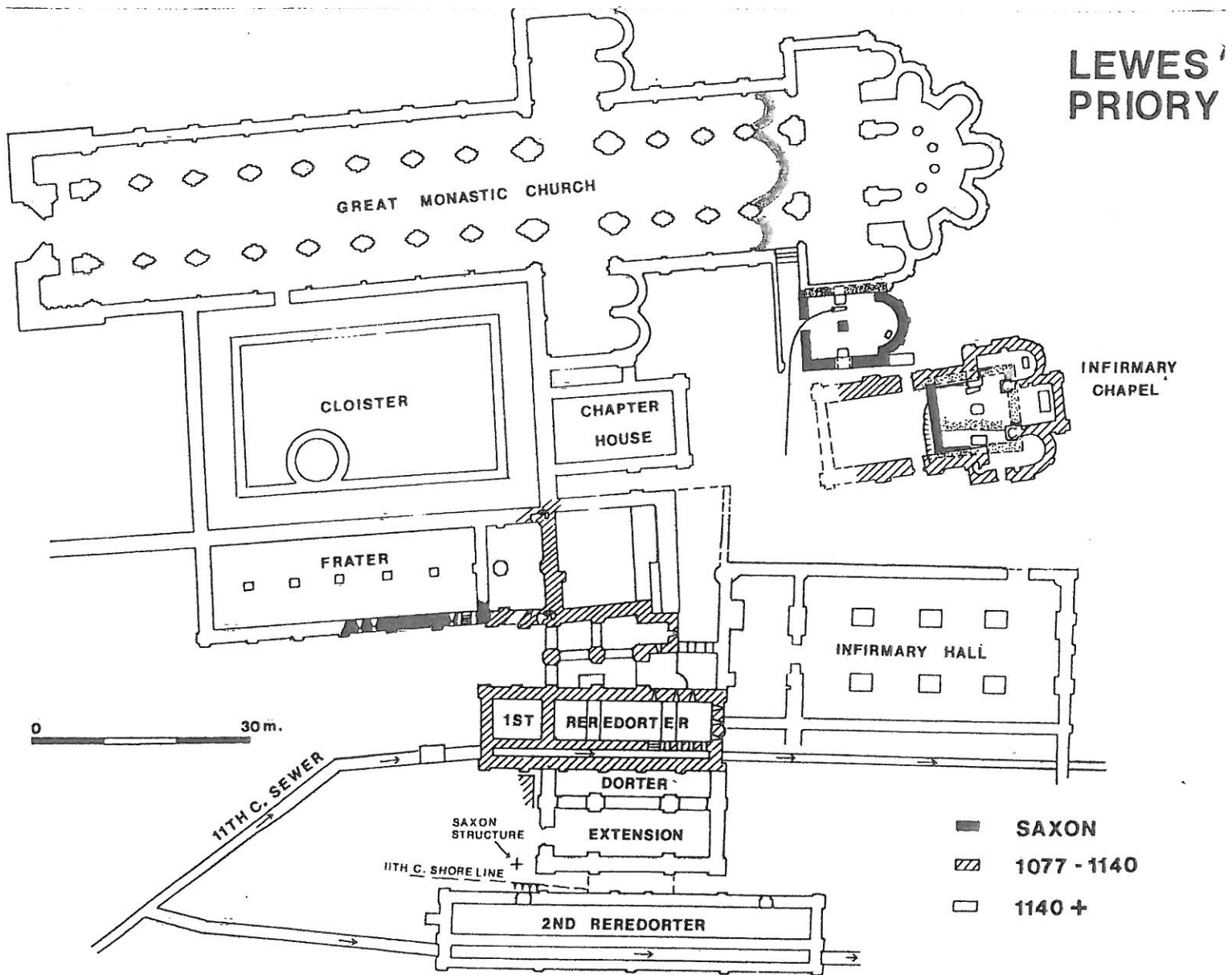


Fig. 5.6 Ground plan of conventual complex of Lewes Priory (from Lynne, M 1997)



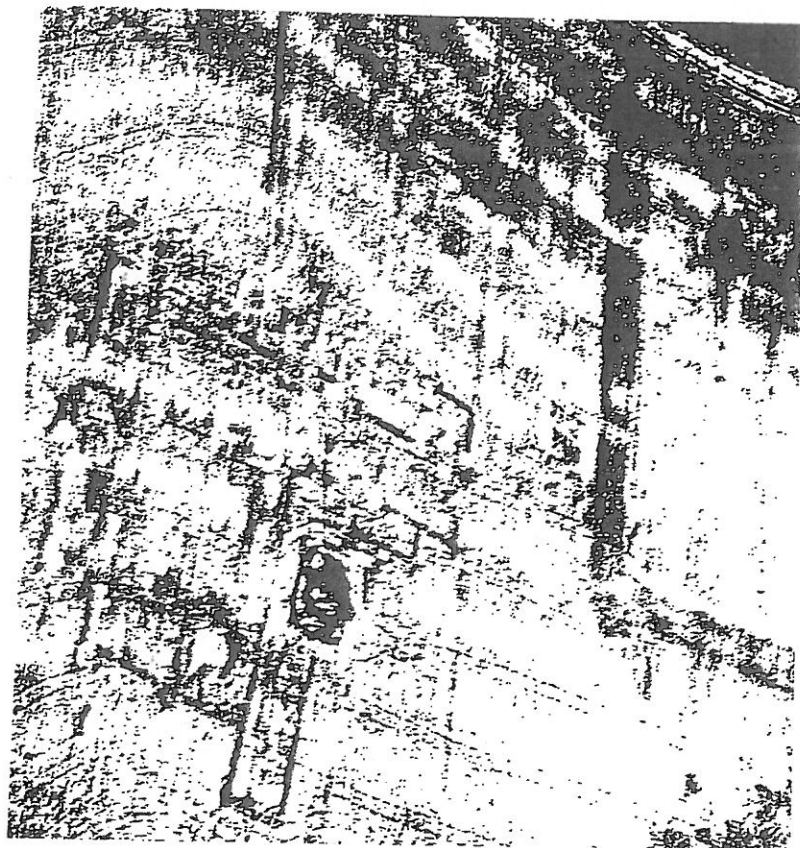
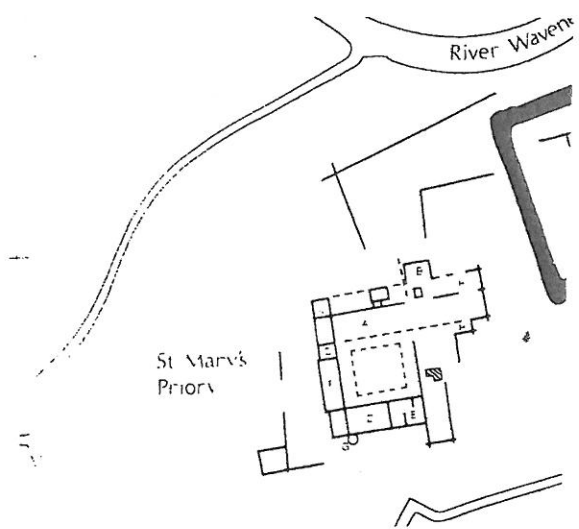


Fig. 5.7 Ground plan of conventual complex of Mendham Priory revealed by cropmarks (from LE Webster and J. Cherry 1979)

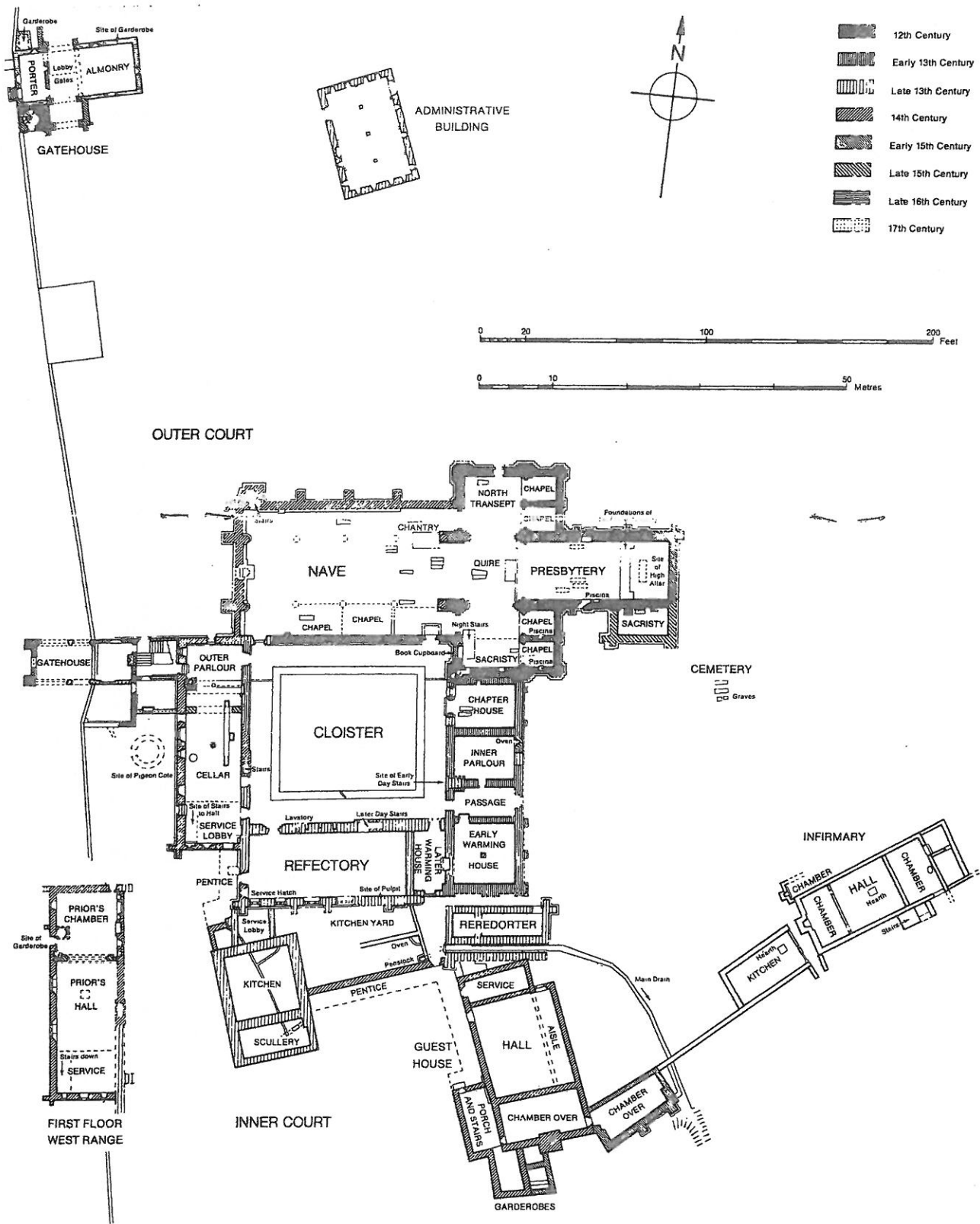


Fig. 5.8 Ground plan of conventual complex of Monk Bretton Priory (from R. Graham and R. Gilyard-Beer 1989)

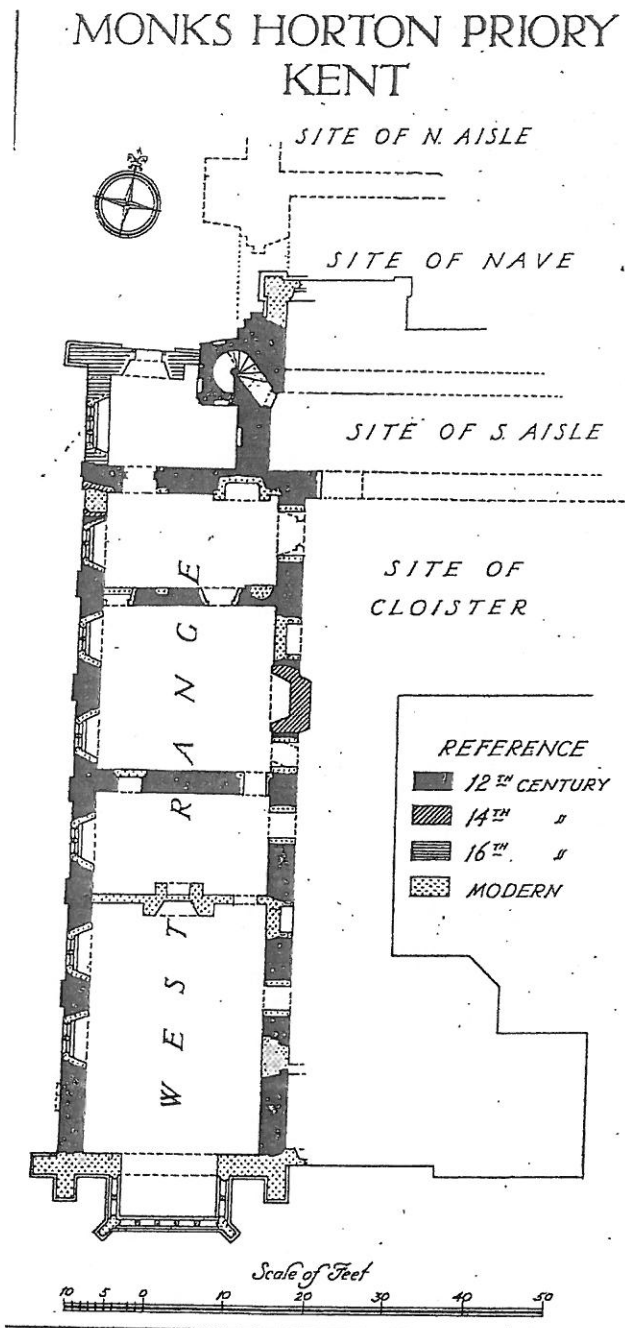


Fig. 5.9 Plan of extant standing remains of Monk Horton Priory

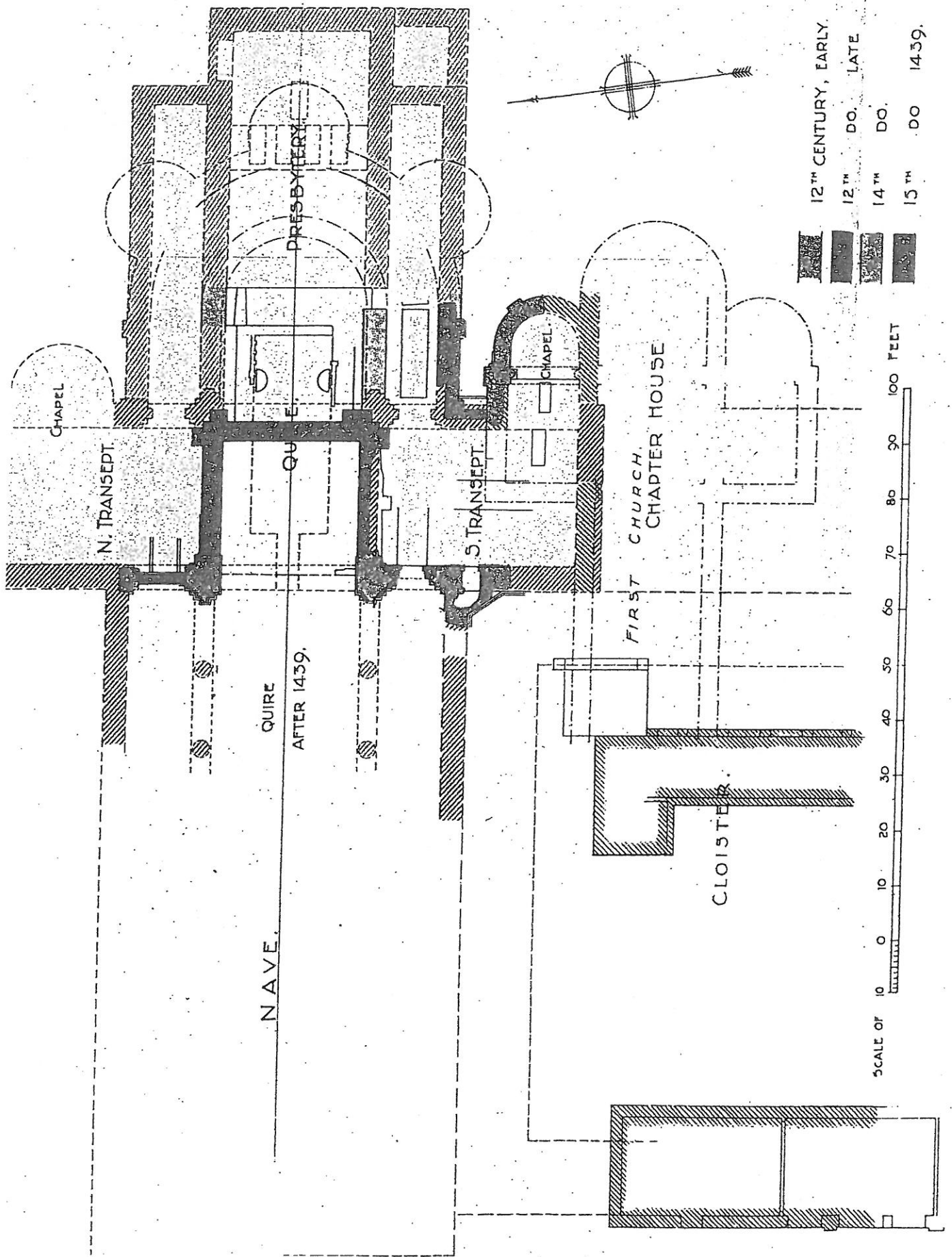


Fig. 5.10 Plan of remains of Monkton Farleigh Priory revealed by excavation (H. Brakspear.)

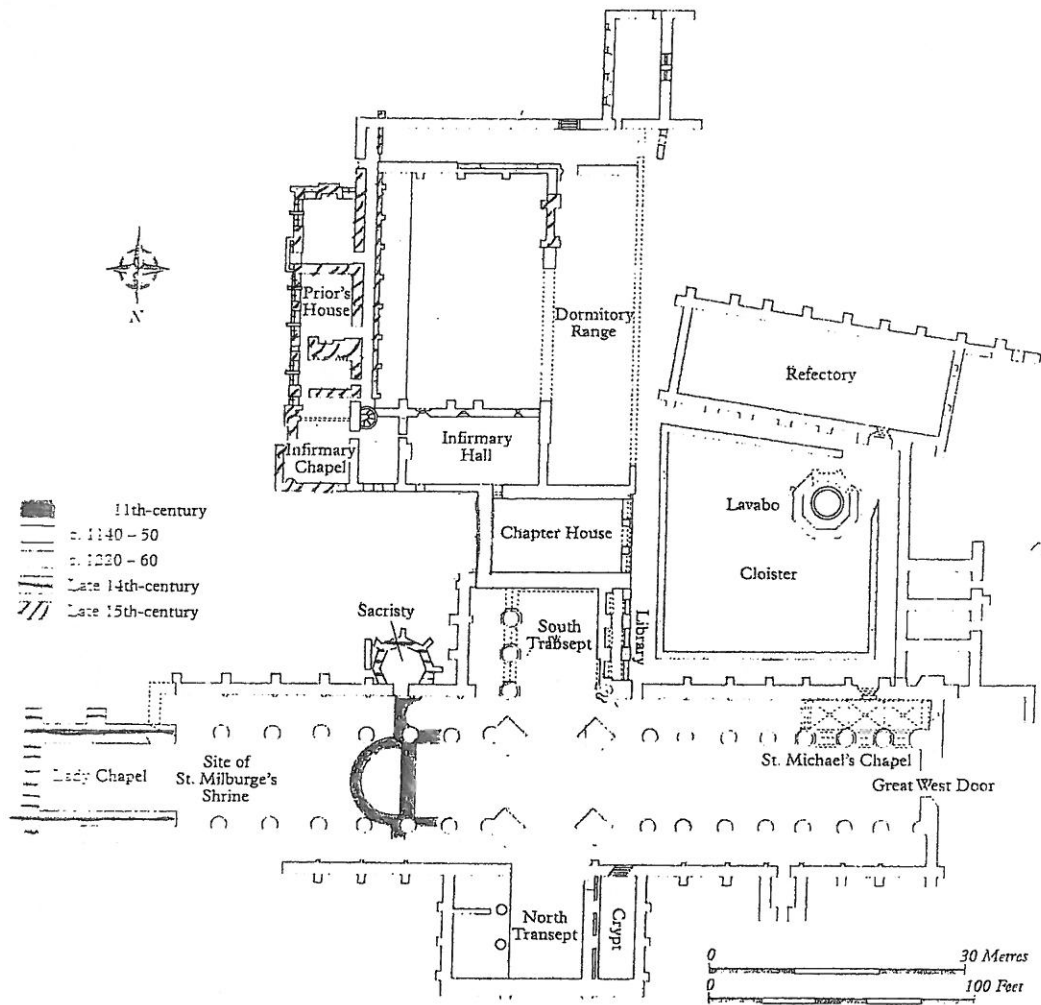


Fig. 5.11 Ground plan of conventual complex of Much Wenlock Priory (from J. Pinnell 1999)

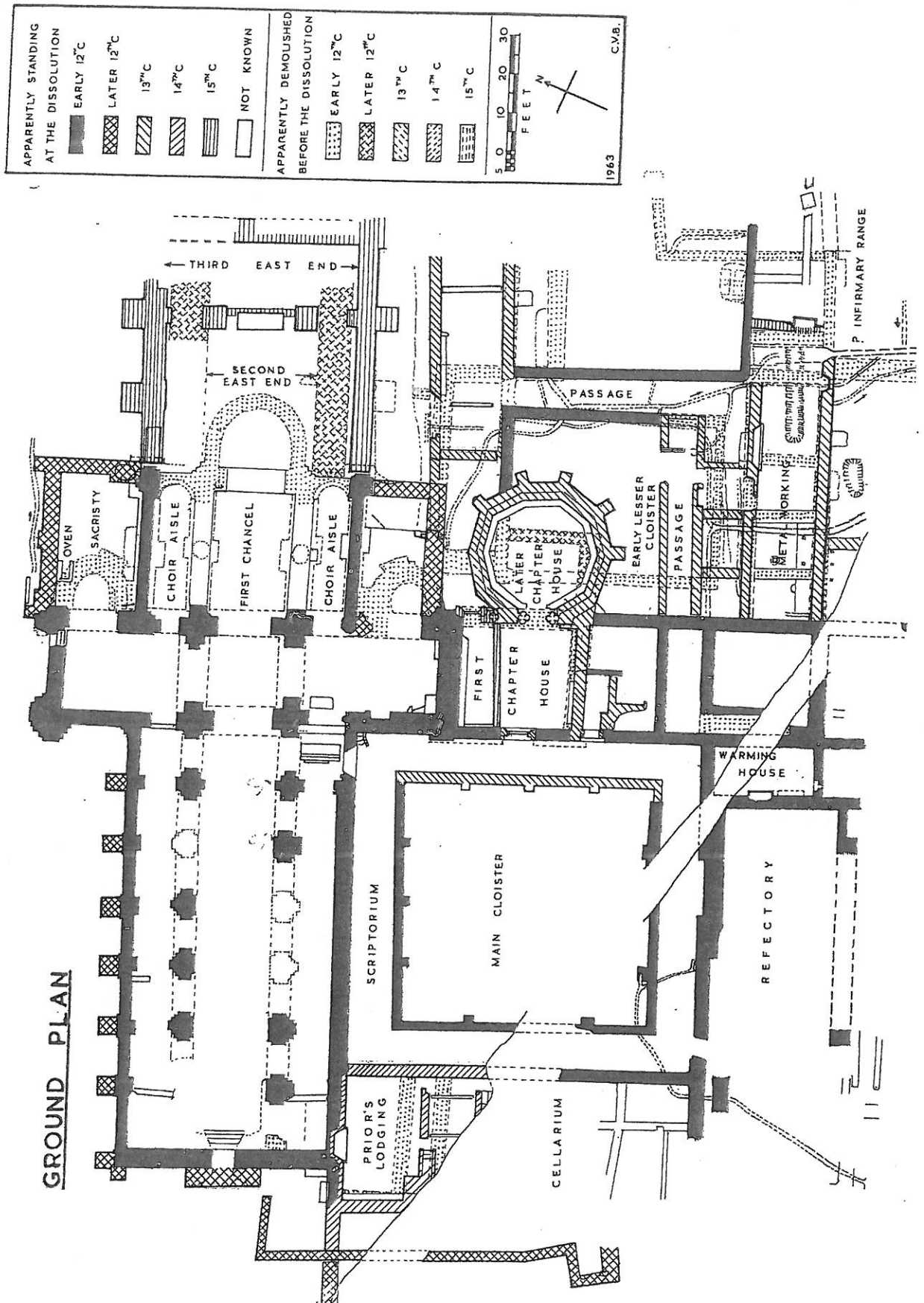













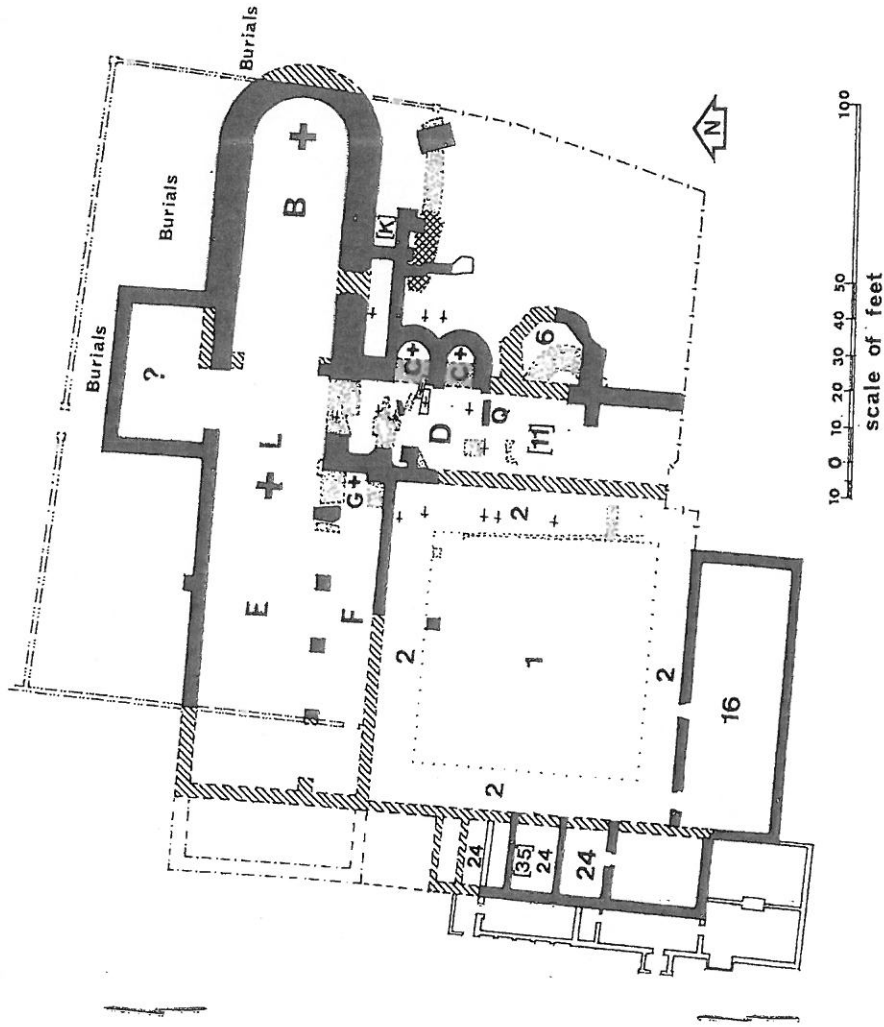
Fig. 5.12 Ground plan of conventual complex of Pontefract Priory (CV Bellamy 1959)

## KEY TO THE PLAN

To enable correct comparison to be made, the letters and numbers used in this key are those used by H.M.S.O. in their handbook on "Abbeys". Letters and numbers in square brackets indicate rooms on the floor above.

-  lines of walls standing at the Dissolution
-  walls, not proved by excavation, but for which reasonable evidence exists that they stood at Dissolution
-  probable site of west front of Priory Church; deduced on logical grounds but for which no excavation evidence has, at present, been obtained
-  foundations which carried walls during earlier phases of the Priory's development.
-  'sleeper' or bonding foundation at base of apsidal chapels
-  site of first early 12th century oratory
-  post-monastic building
-  standing brick wall enclosing church site
-  marks limit of ground available for excavation
-  burials
-  altars

- |     |              |      |                         |
|-----|--------------|------|-------------------------|
| B   | quire        | P    | tomb                    |
| C   | chapel       | Q    | night stairs (probable) |
| D   | transept     | 1    | cloister garth          |
| E   | nave         | 2    | cloister alley          |
| F   | aisle        | 6    | chapter house           |
| G   | Lady chapel  | [11] | dorter                  |
| [K] | (bell) tower | 16   | refectory               |
| L   | rood screen  | 24   | cellar or store         |
|     |              | [35] | Prior's chamber         |



**PRITTEWELL PRIORY**  
Plan of main buildings at the  
Dissolution (as known in 1969)

Fig. 5.13 Ground plan of conventual complex of Prittlewell Priory (from JW Burrows)



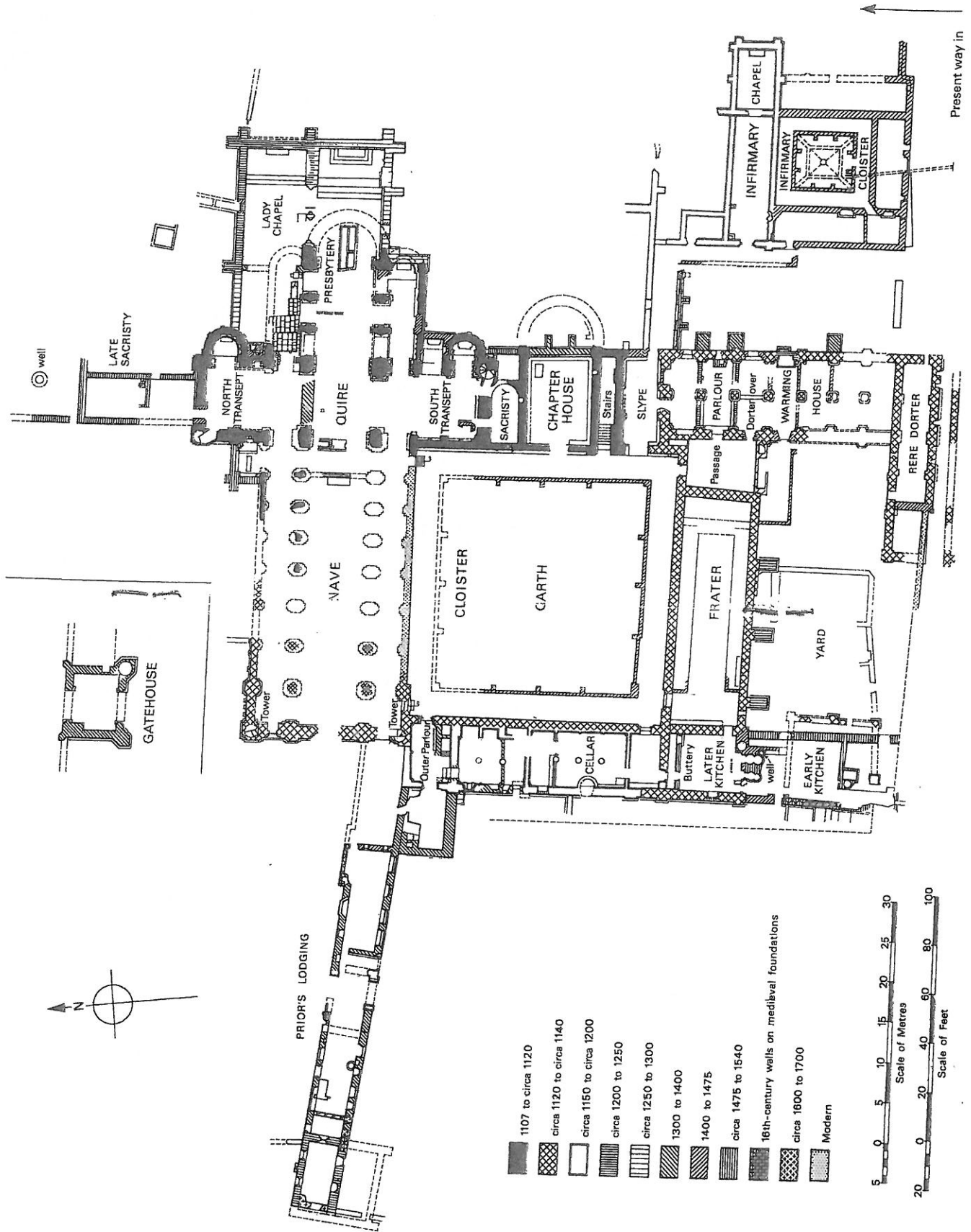


Fig. 5.14 Ground plan of conventual complex of Thetford Priory (from FJE Raby and PK Baillie Reynolds 1990)



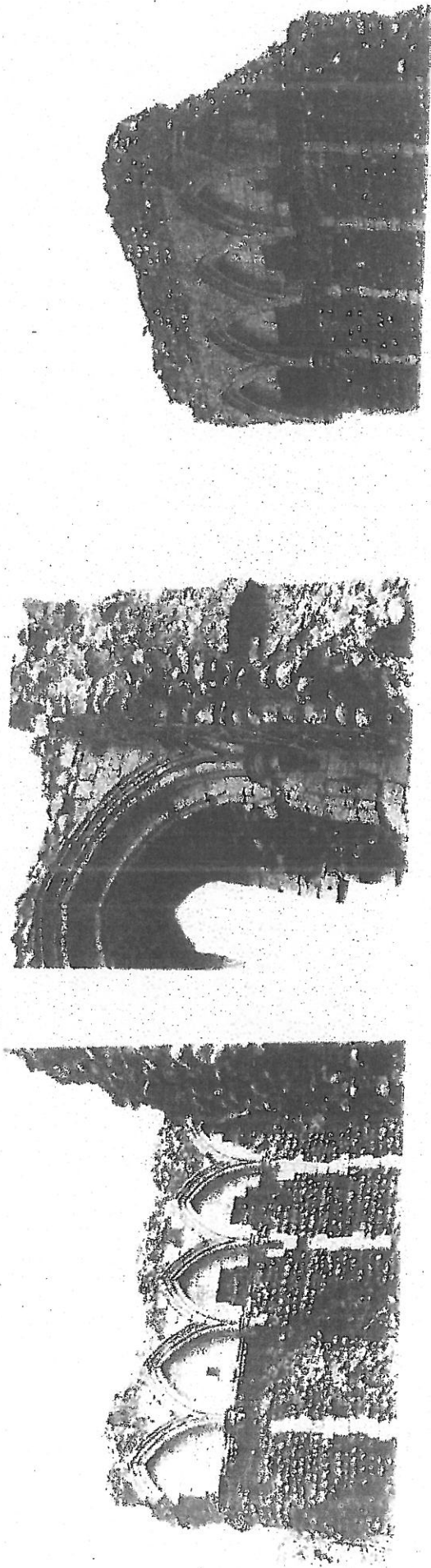
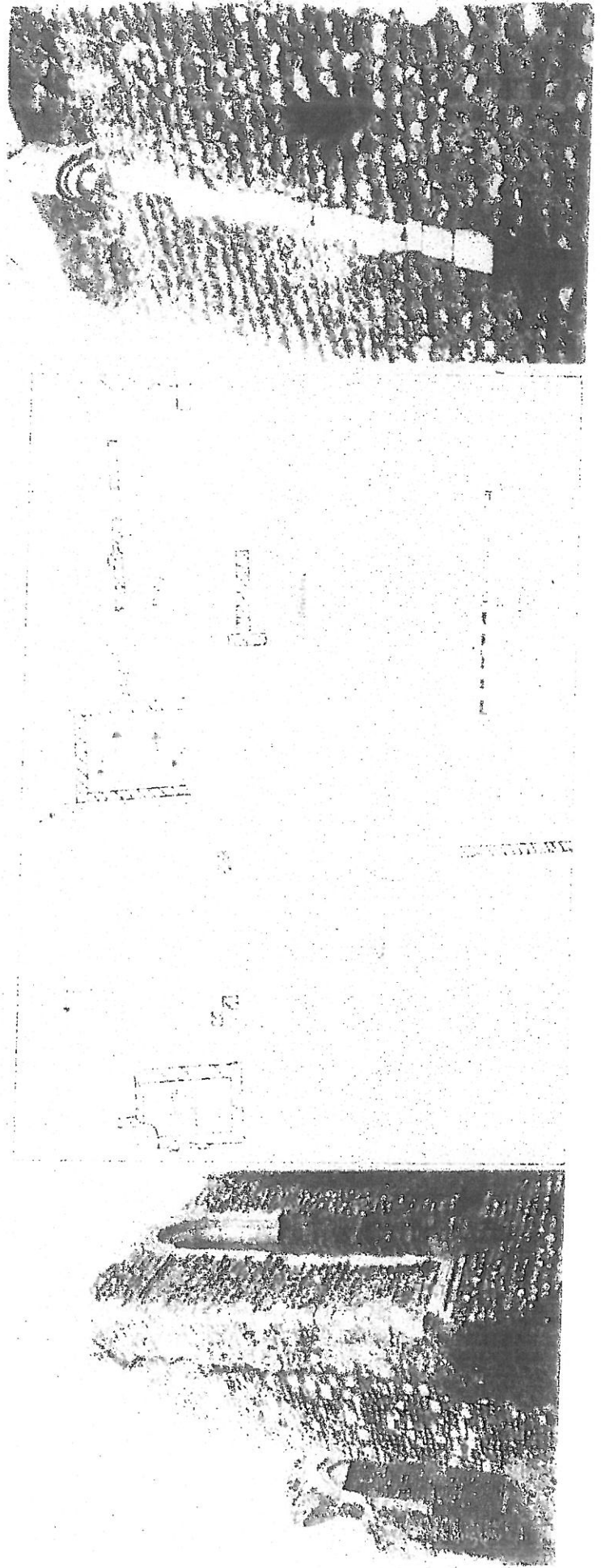


Fig. 5.15 Views of architectural elaboration in the chapter house of Bromholm Priory



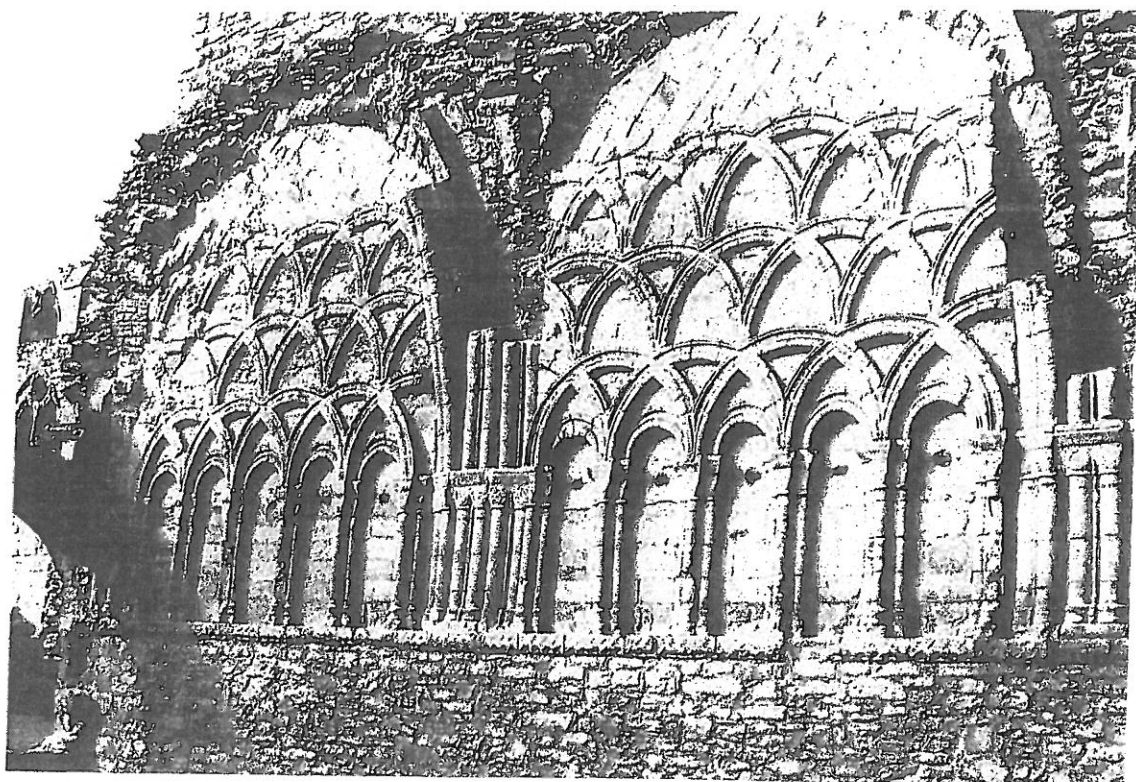
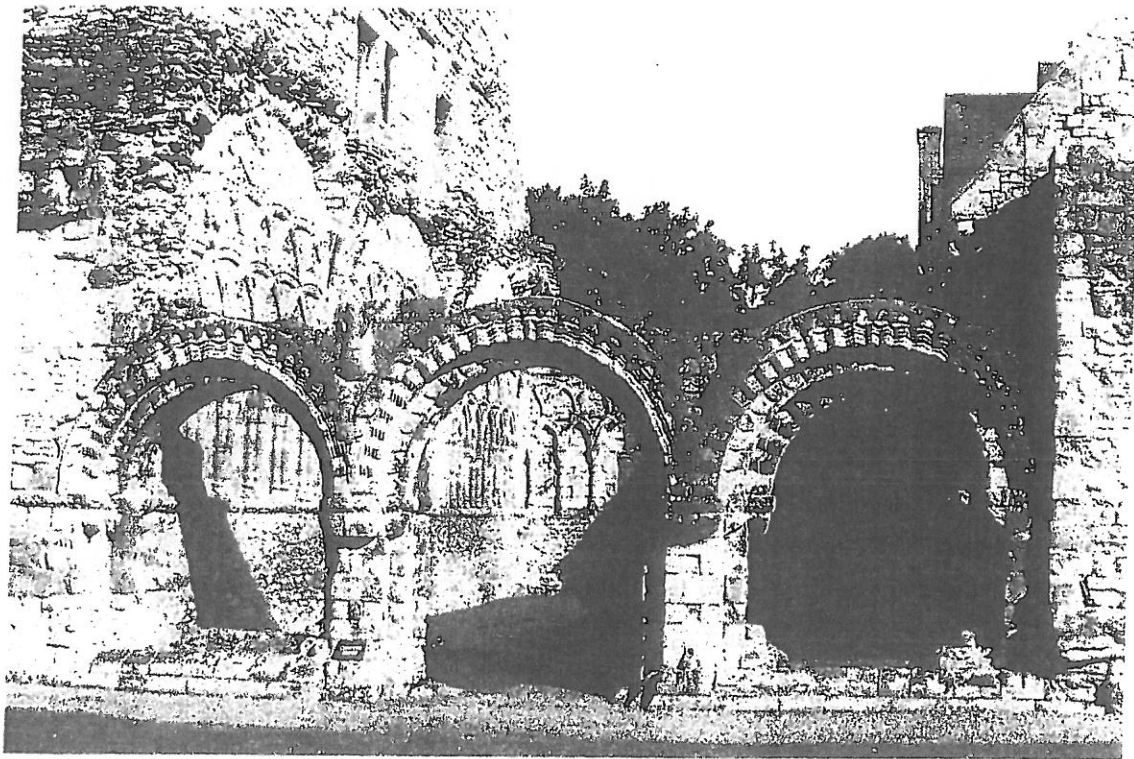


Fig. 5.16 Views of architectural elaboration in the chapter house of Much Wenlock Priory

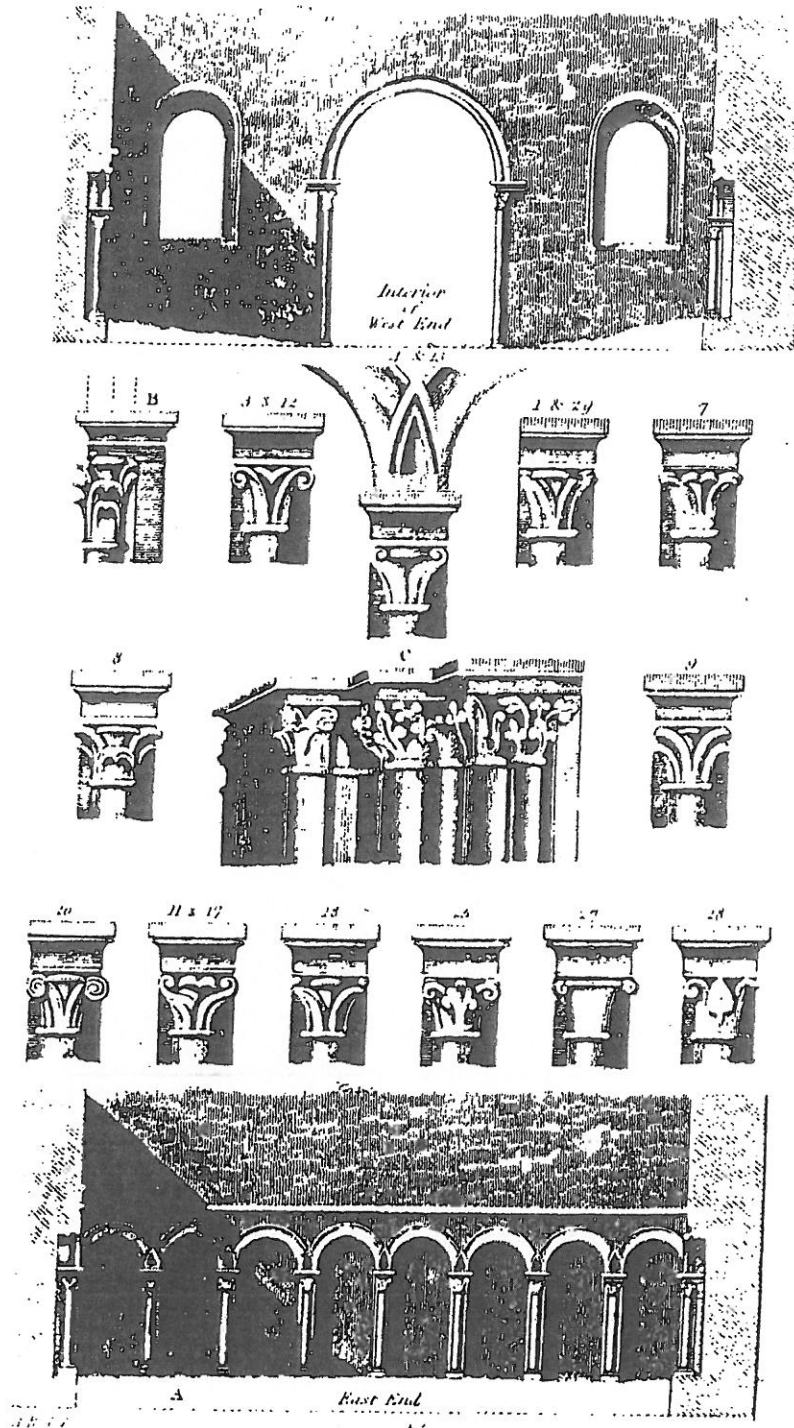
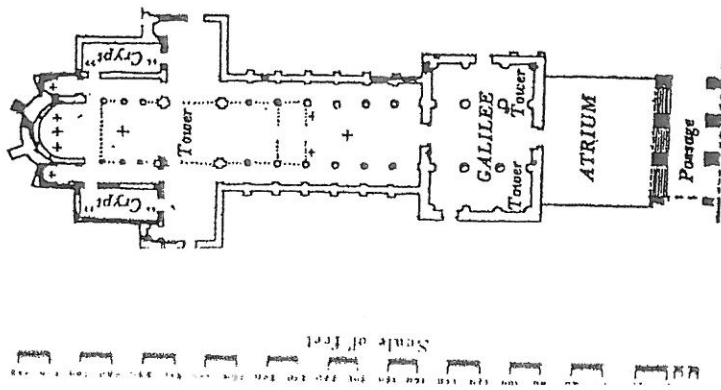
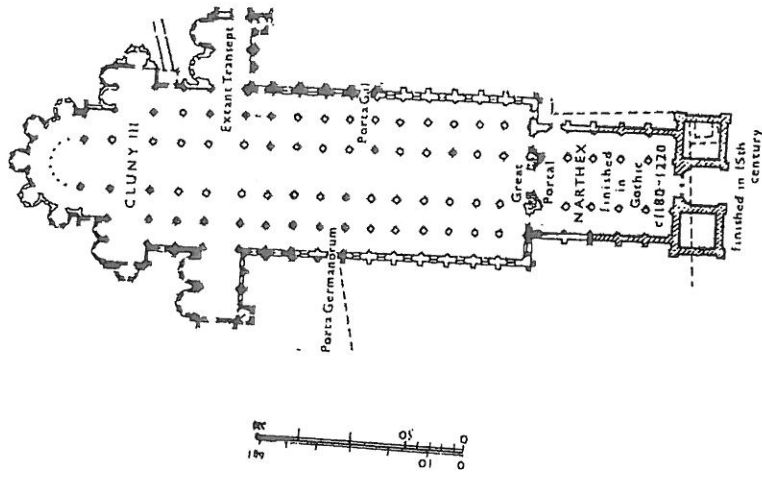


Fig. 5.17 Antiquarian drawings of architectural elements from Mendham Priory (from JA Repton 1836)



Reconstruction of ground plan of Cluny II.



Ground plan of Cluny III.

Fig. 5.18 Ground plan of the second and third abbey churches at Cluny

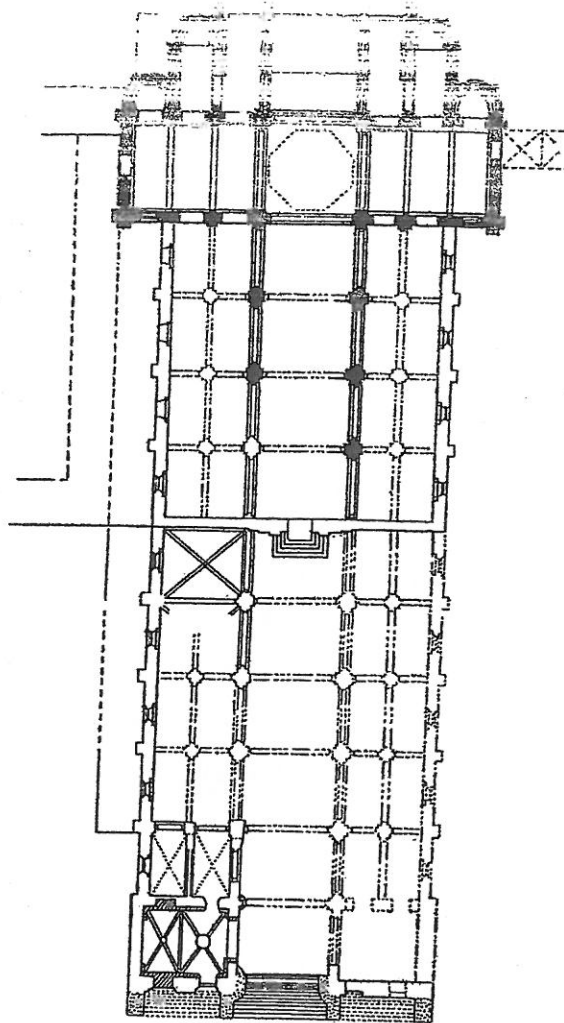


Fig. 5.19 Ground plan of the church of the priory of La Charite sur Loire

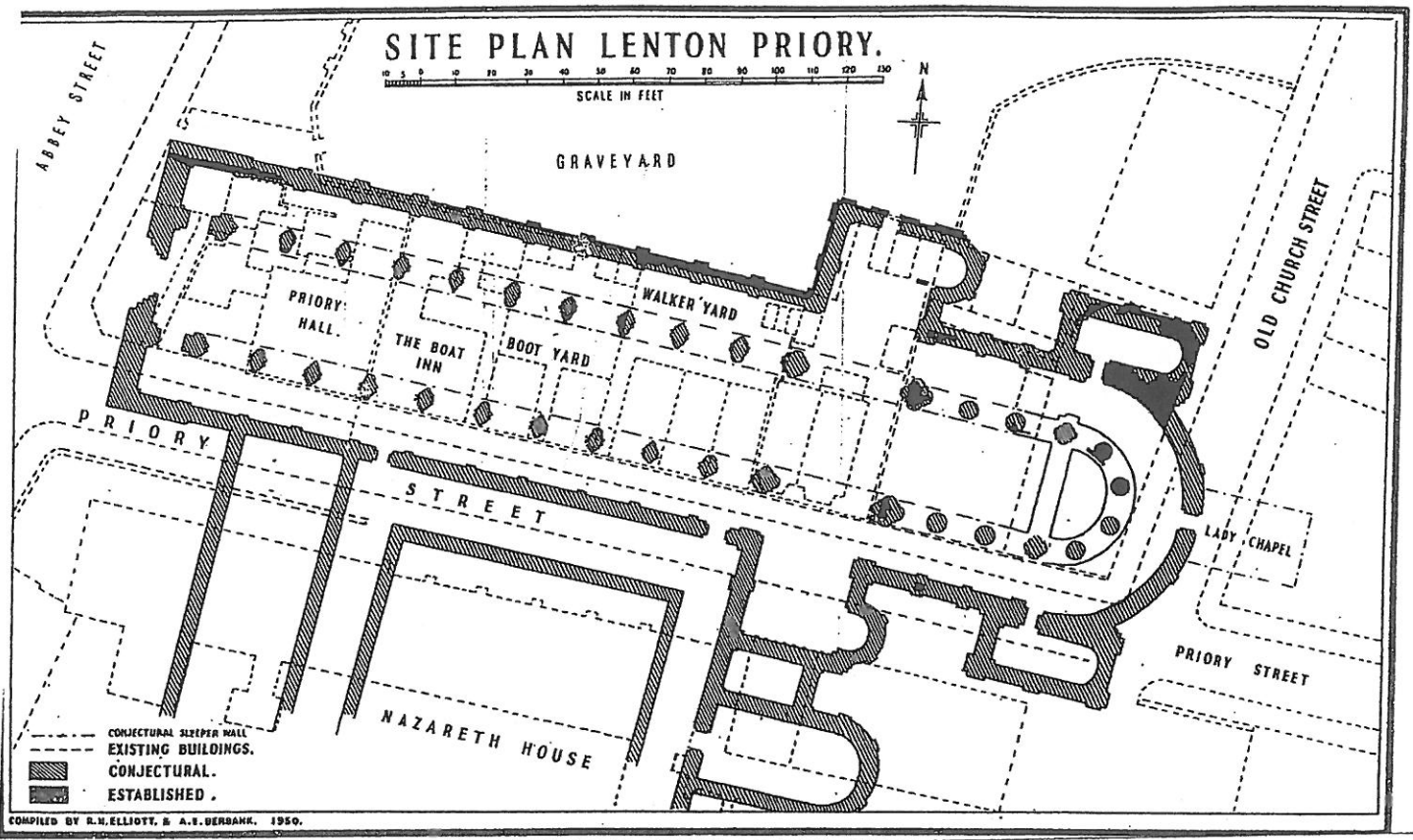


Fig. 5.20 Ground plan of the church of Lenton Priory (from RH Elliott and AE Berbank 1952)



BERMONDSEY ABBEY: the east end of the monastic church

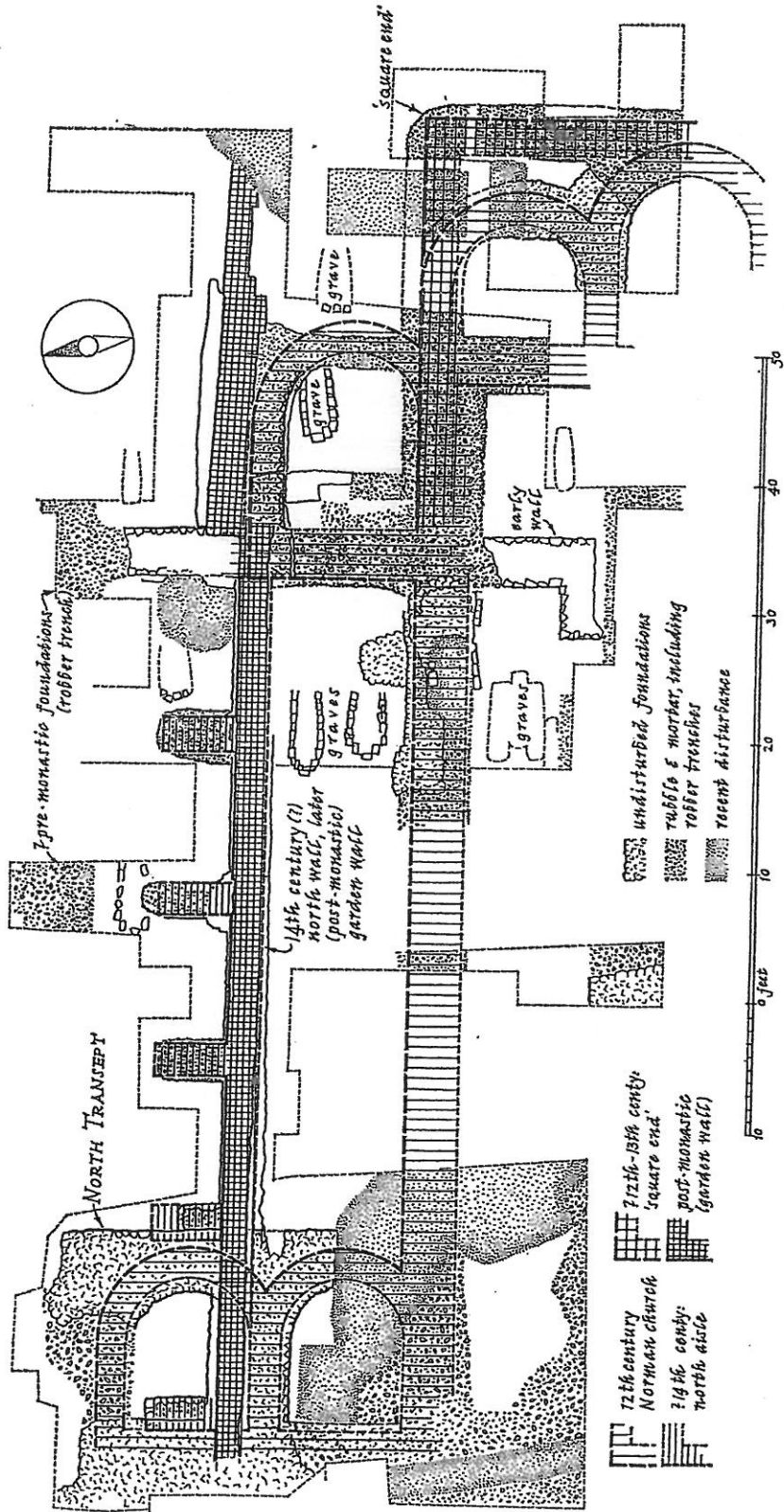


Fig. 5.21 Plan showing the evolution of the east end of the priory church of Bermondsey recovered by excavation (from WF Grimes 1968)

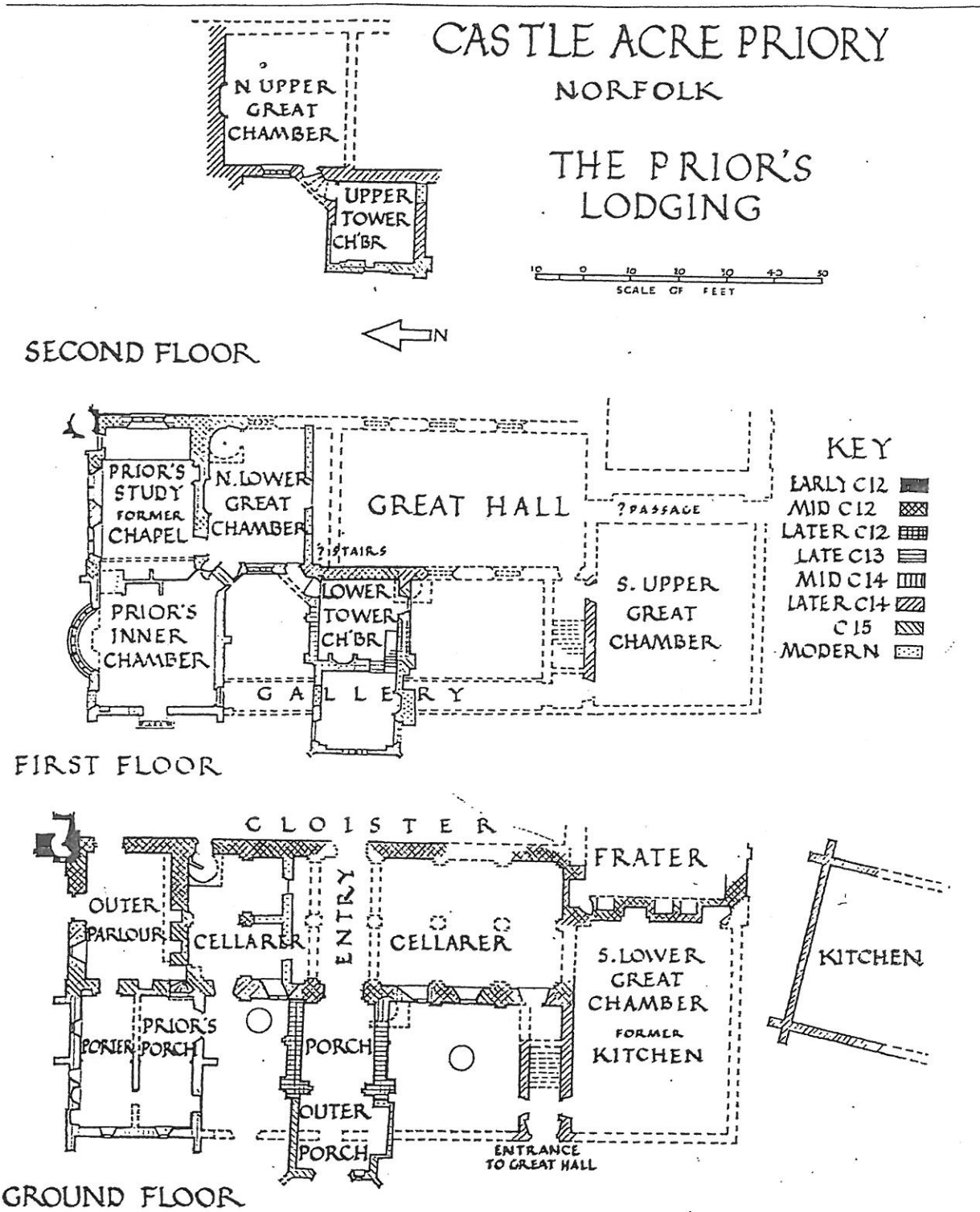
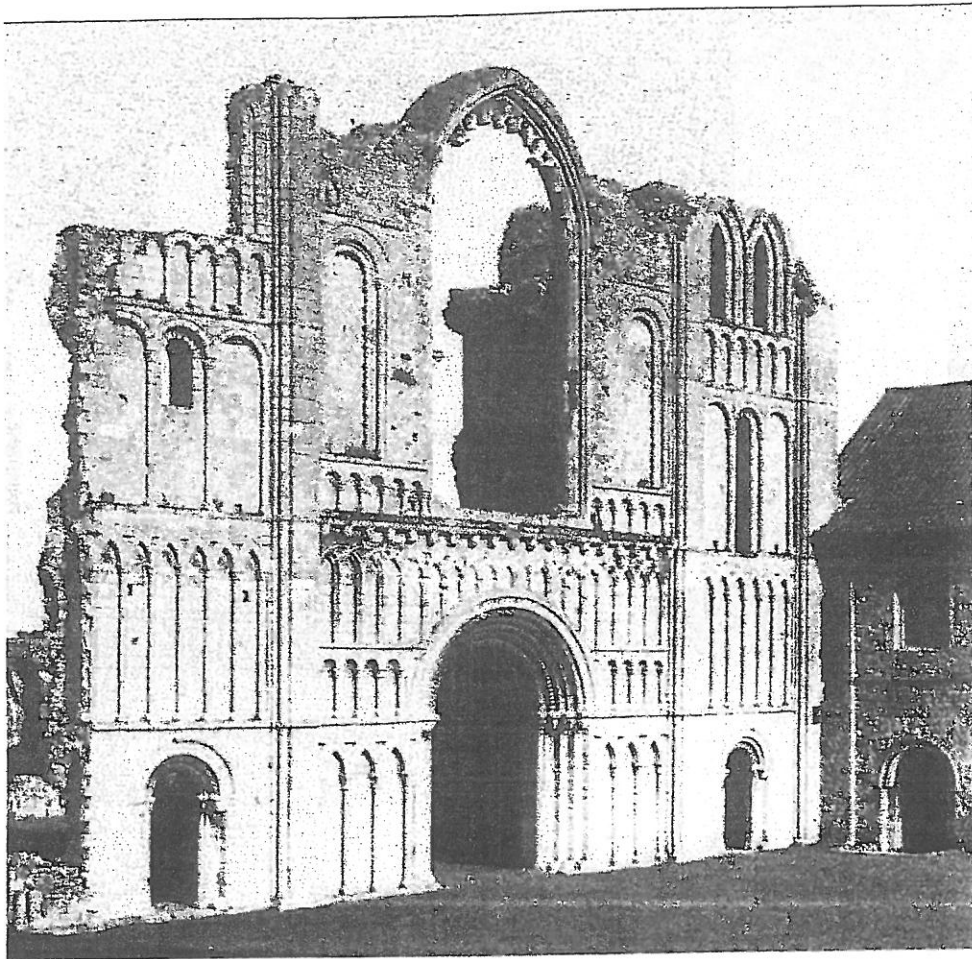


Fig. 5.22 Modifications to the west range at Castle Acre Priory (from PA. Faulkner 1962)





---

Fig. 5.23 View of the west front of Castle Acre Priory

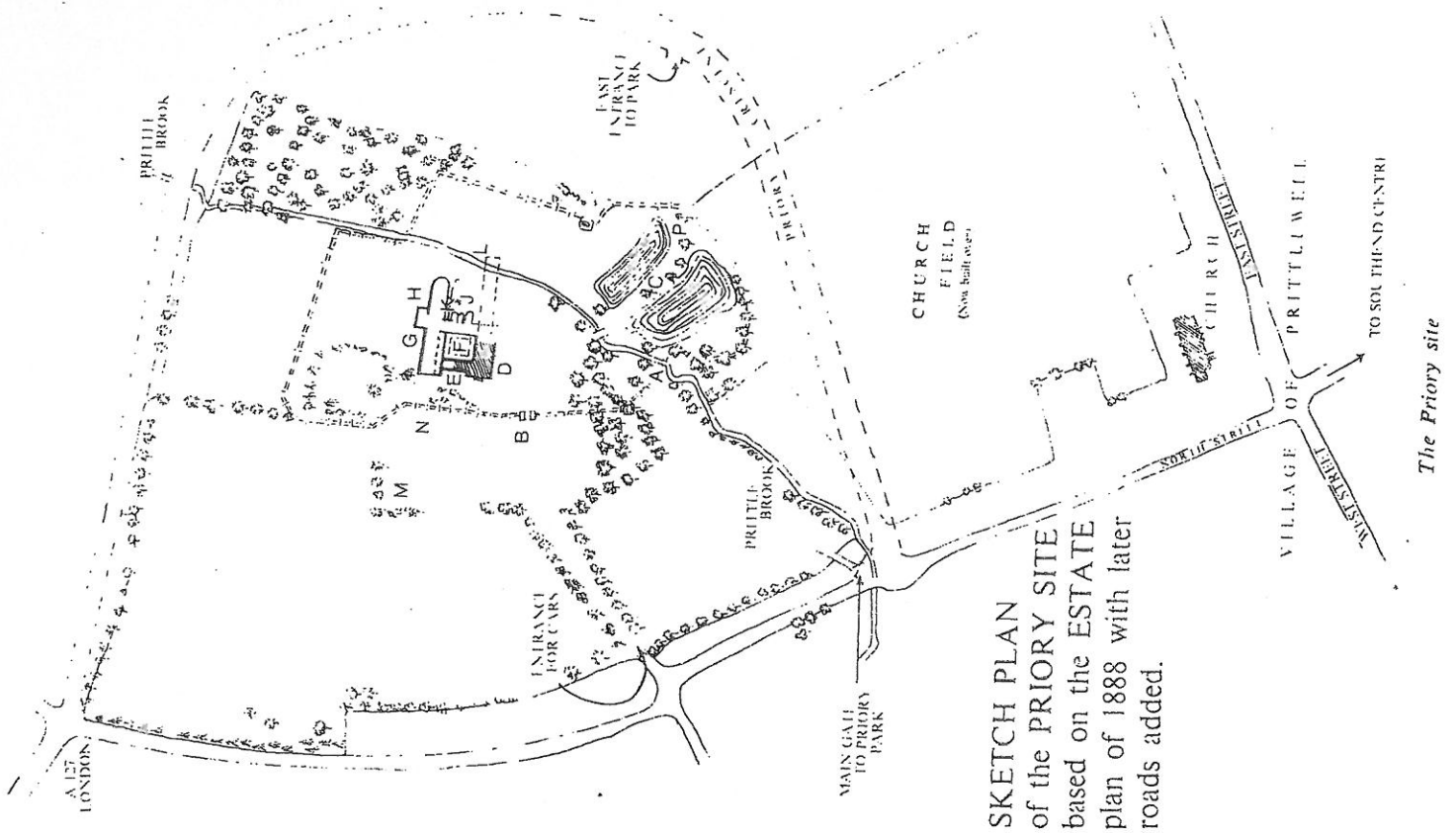
### KEY TO SKETCH PLAN

==-|-|== Probable line of boundary wall of the Priory. It is possible that this may have been sited along the line of trees to the west, but the suggested line is supported by the existence of light foundations noted beneath the soil at "A".

- B Probable site of Priory Gatehouse
- C Monastic fishponds
- D Refectory
- E Cellars with Prior's Chamber above
- F Cloister Garth
- G Site of Church
- H Lay folks burial ground in a corner of what is now the "Old World Garden"
- J Site of the Chapter House
- K Apsidal Chapels to east of south transept
- L Probable site of rere dorter
- M Car park
- N Cafe
- P Site of spring

### Illustrations

The exterior arch of Cellar entrance as seen from the 'Well' ... ..	...	Cover
Sketch plan of the Priory site showing the probable line of the boundary 'wall' and gatehouse; incorporating present day roads and access points ... ..	...	3
The Refectory and 19th century wing, from the south: The Prittle Brook in the foreground ... ..	...	5
The Church site and Cloister Garth from the north east: showing line of north wall of church in foreground; foundations of south transept, apsidal chapels and Chapter House in the middle ground ... ..	...	6
The reconstructed pent roof to Cloister walk; showing also the relaid pavement of original 14th century bricks; 'Prior's' Doorway in background ... ..	...	7
Title page of the Sales Brochure of 1888 ... ..	...	9
The 'Well' ... ..	...	10
The North wall of the Refectory showing original and re-placement lancet type windows; re-set reading arch and setting of 16th century fireplaces ... ..	...	12
The 14th century crown-post roof of the Prior's Chamber ... ..	...	15
The 16th century fireplace in the Prior's Chamber originally situated against the entrance to the cellar ... ..	...	16



SKETCH PLAN of the PRIORY SITE based on the ESTATE plan of 1888 with later roads added.

Fig. 6.1 Map showing the relative locations of Prittlewell parish church and the priory site (from L. Helliwell 1972)

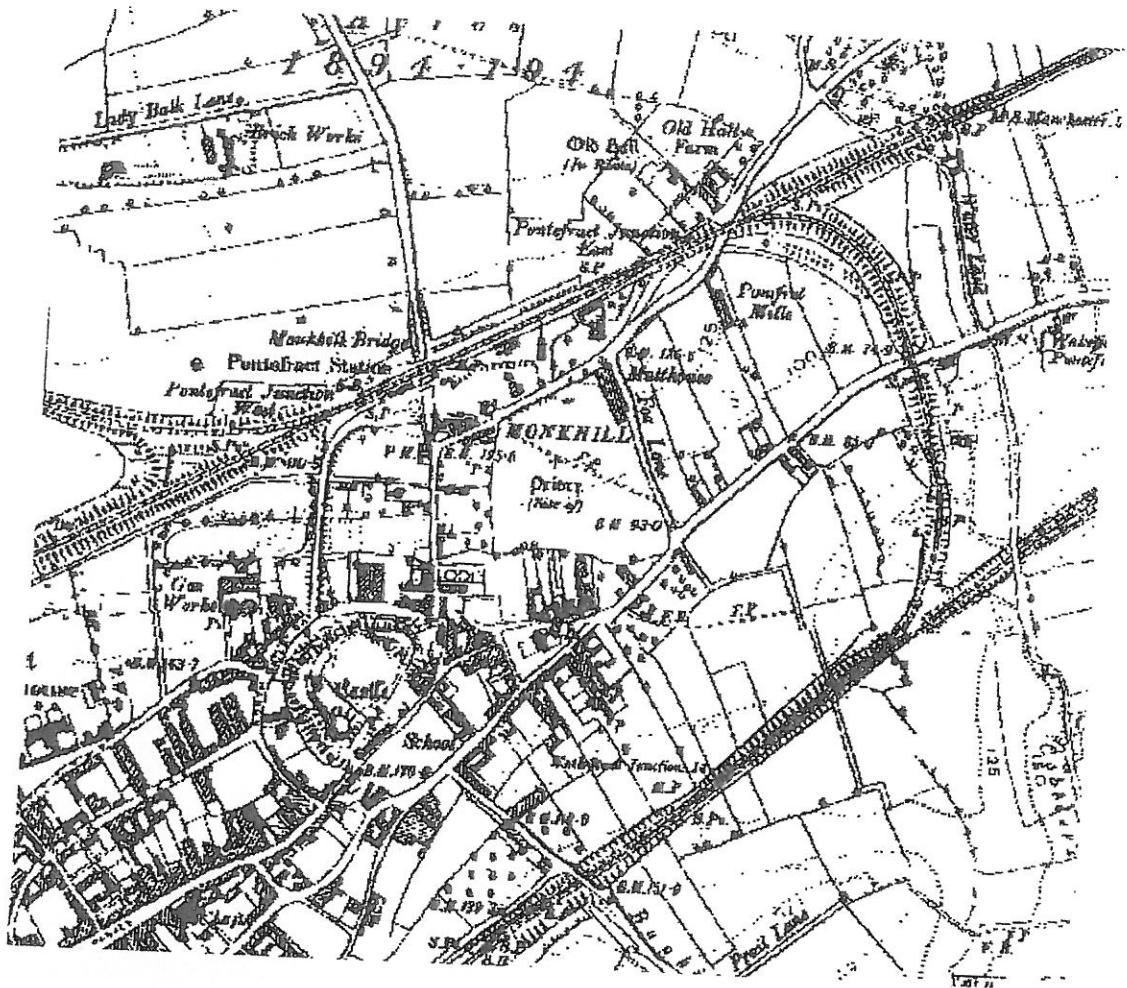


Fig. 6.2 Map showing the relative sites of the priory, castle and settlement at Pontefract (first revision Ordnance Survey 1888-1914)

## Bibliography

### Unpublished sources

London, British Library

Cotton MS Vitellius (charter of Bishop Ralph Luffa)

London, The National Archives

E 106/4/19 (writ and inquisition relating to St Clears

E 106/11/1 (extents of alien priories)

SC6/1023/30 (ministers' and receivers' accounts, Lewes Priory, office of procurator)

SC6/1125/11 (ministers' and receivers' accounts, possessions of alien priories)

SC 6/1125/18 and 20 (extents of alien priories)

Newport, Gwent Archives

Tithe map of Malpas

Shrewsbury, Shropshire Record Office

1224 box 342. Wenlock Register

### Published primary sources

*The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, ed. D. Whitelock, D. C. Douglas, and S. I. Tucker (London, 1961)

*Anglo-Saxon Wills*, ed. D. Whitelock (Cambridge, 1930)

*Annales Monasterii de Bermundeseia, A.D. 1042–1432*, in *Annales Monastici*, ed. H. R. Luard, 5 vols (London: Rolls Series, 1864–69), III, pp. 421–87

*Barnstaple Records*, I, ed. J. R. Chanter and T. Wainwright (Barnstaple, 1900)

Bernard, 'Ordo Cluniacensis', in *Vetus disciplina monastica*, ed. M. Herrgott (Paris, 1726) pp. 136–64

*Bibliotheca Cluniacensis*, ed. M. Marrier and A. Duchenne (Paris, 1614; repr. Macon 1915)

*Calendar of Charters and Rolls preserved in the Bodleian Library*, ed. W. H. Turner and H. O. Coxe (Oxford, 1878)

*Calendar of the Close Rolls preserved in the Public Record Office AD 1227–1509*, ed. H. C. Maxwell Lyte et al., 61 vols (London, 1902–63)

*Calendar of Documents Preserved in France, Illustrative of the History of Great Britain and Ireland*, ed. J. H. Round (London, 1899)

*Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers relating to Great Britain and Ireland*, ed. W. H. Bliss et al. (London, 1983–)

*Calendar of Fine Rolls preserved in the Public Record Office*, 22 vols (London, 1911–62)

*Calendar of the Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, ed. J. Brewer, J. Gairdner, and R. Brodie, 22 vols (London, 1864–1932)

*Calendar of the Patent Rolls preserved in the Public Record Office* (London, 1891–)

*A Calendar of the Register of Wolstan de Bransford, Bishop of Worcester, 1339–49*, ed. R. M. Haines (London, 1966)

*Cartulaire du prieuré de la Charité sur Loire (Nievre), Ordre de Cluni*, ed. R. de Lespinasse (Nevers, 1887)

*The Cartulary of Daventry Priory*, ed. M. J. Franklin (Northampton, 1988)

*The Chartulary of the Priory of St Pancras of Lewes*, parts 1 and 2, ed. L. F. Salzman, Sussex Record Society, 38, 40 (Lewes, 1933–35)

*The Chartulary of St John of Pontefract*, ed. R. Holmes, R. 2 vols, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, 25, 30 (1899–1902)

*The Chronicle of Croyland Abbey by Ingulfed*. W. de Gray Birch (Wisbech, 1883)

Chronicle of Lewes, in *Apostolatus Benedictinorum in Anglia sive Disceptatio Historica de Antiquitate Ordinis Congregationisque Monachorum Nigarum S. Benedicte in Regno Angliae*, ed. Reyner, C. (Douay, 1626).

*Consuetudines Cluniacenses Antiquiores*, vol. 2 of *Consuetudines Monasticae*, ed. Dom. B. Albers, 5 vols (Stuttgart, 1900, and Monte Cassino, 1903–12), pp. 1–61

*Consuetudines Farfensis*, vol. 1 of *Consuetudines Monasticae*, ed. Dom. B. Albers, 5 vols (Stuttgart, 1900 and Monte Cassino, 1903–12)

*Councils and Synods with other documents relating to the English Church, vol. II, 1205–1313*, ed. F. M. Powicke and C. R. Cheney (Oxford, 1964)

Crook, B., 'The charters of Lewes Priory', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, 82 (1941), 73–95

*Domesday Book*, ed. A. Williams and G. H. Martin (London, 1992)

Duckett, G. F., 'Charters of the Abbey of Cluni', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, 34 (1886), 121–26

- Duckett, G. F., ed., *Charters and Records of Cluni*, 2 vols (London, 1888)
- Duckett, G. F., ed., *Visitations of English Cluniac Foundations* (London, 1890)
- Duckett, G. F., ed., *Visitations and Chapters General of the Order of Cluny* (London, 1893)
- Early Charters of Eastern England*, ed. C. Hart (London, 1966)
- Early Yorkshire Charters*, 12 vols, I–III ed. W. Farrer (Edinburgh, 1914–16); IV–XII ed. C. T. Clay, Yorkshire Records Society, extra series (1935–65)
- English Episcopal Acta VII Hereford 1079–1234*, ed. J. Barrow (Oxford, 1993)
- English Episcopal Acta, VI, Norwich 1070–1214*, ed. C. Harper Bill (Oxford, 1990)
- English Episcopal Acta, XIV, Coventry and Lichfield 1072–1159*, ed. M. Franklin (Oxford, 1997)
- English Episcopal Acta, XV, London 1076–1187*, ed. F. Neining (Oxford, 1999)
- The Episcopal Registers of the Diocese of St Davids, 1397 to 1518*, ed. R. F. Isaacson, 3 vols, Cymmrodorion Record Series, 6 (1917–20)
- Hugo V Abbas Cluniacensis XVII Statuta, Pat. Lat.*, 209, cols 881–906
- Ingulf, *Historia Croylandensis* in *Rerum Anglicarum Scriptorum Veterum*, ed. W. Fulman (Oxford, 1864), pp. 1–130, 451–578
- Joannis Papae XI Epistolae et Privilegia, Pat. Lat.*, 132, cols 1055–1062
- Joannis XIX Papae Epistolae et Diplomata, Pat. Lat.*, 141, cols 1115–1156
- Jocelin of Brakelond Chronicle of the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds*, trans. D. Greenway and J. Sayers (Oxford, 1989)
- John Leland, *The Itineraries of John Leland the Antiquary*, ed. T. Hearne, 9 vols (London, 1744–5)
- The Letters of Peter the Venerable*, ed. G. Constable, 2 vols (Cambridge, Mass. 1967)
- Lists of Original Ministers Accounts present in the Public Record Office* (London, 1896)
- Monasticon Anglicanum*, ed. W. Dugdale, revised edn by J. Caley, H. Ellis, and B. Bandinel, 6 vols in 8 (London, 1817–30)
- Orderic Vitalis, *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, ed. M. Chibnall, 6 vols (Oxford, 1969–80)
- Papsturkunden in England*, ed. W. Holtzmann, 3 vols (Berlin and Göttingen, 1930–50)

- Paston Letters and Papers of the Fifteenth Century*, ed. N. Davis, 2 vols (Oxford, 1971),
- Patrologia Latina Cursus Completus*, ed. J. P Migne, 221 vols (Paris, 1878–90)
- Petri Damiani Iter gallicum*, *Pat. Lat.*, 145, cols 865–80
- Petri Venerabilis Statuta*, *Pat. Lat.* 189, cols 1023–48
- Recueil des chartes de l'abbaye de Cluny*, ed. A. Bernard and A. Bruel, 6 vols (Paris, 1876–1903)
- Recueil de chartes et documents de St Martin des Champs*, ed. J. Depoin, 8 vols (Les Archives de la France Monastique, 1913–21)
- Redstone, L. J., ed., 'The cellarer's account for Bromholm Priory, Norfolk 1415–1416', *Norfolk Record Society*, 17 (1944), 45–92
- Regesta Pontificum Romanorum ab condita ecclesia ad annum post christum natum*, ed. P. Jaffé (Rome, 1851)
- Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum, 1066–1154*, ed. H. W. C. Davis, C. Johnson, H. A. Cronne and R. H. C. Davis, 4 vols (Oxford, 1913–69)
- The Registers of Bishops Bronescombe and Peter Quinil*, ed. F. C. Hingeston-Randolph (London, 1889)
- The Register of John de Grandisson Bishop of Exeter (AD 1327–69)*, ed. J. De Berkeley et al., 3 vols (London, 1894–99)
- The Register of Thomas de Brantyngham, Bishop of Exeter (AD 1370–1394)*, ed. F.C. Hingeston-Randolph, 2 vols (London, 1901–6)
- The Register of Walter de Stapledon, Bishop of Exeter (1307–1326)*, ed. F. C. Hingeston-Randolph (London, 1892)
- Reyner, C., *Apostolatus Benedictinorum in Anglia, sive Disceptatio historica de Antiquitate Ordinis Congregationisque Monachorum Nigrorum S. Benedicti in Regno Angliae* (Duaci, 1626)
- Rotuli Hugonis de Welles episcopi Lincolniensis AD MCCIX–MCCXXXV*, ed. W. P. W. Phillimore and F. N. Davis, 3 vols (Canterbury and York Society, 1907–9, and Lincoln Record Society, 1912–14)
- The Rule of St Benedict*, trans. C. White (London, 2008)
- Rymer's Foedera*, ed. T. Rymer and R. Sanderson, 9 vols (London, 1816–69)
- S. Hugonis abbatis Cluniacensis*, *Pat. Lat.*, 159, cols 845–984

*St Odo of Cluny Being the Life of St. Odo of Cluny by John of Salerno*, ed. and trans. G. Sitwell (London, 1958)

*Somerset Medieval Wills 1383–1558*, Somerset Record Society, 2 vols (1905)

*Statuts, chapitres generaux et visites de l'Ordre de Cluny*, ed. G. Charvin, IV, 1360–1408 (Paris, 1969)

*Statuts de Cluny edictes par Bertrand, abbe de Cluny, le 23 Avril 1301*, ed. C. Douais (Paris, 1893)

Tanner, T. *Notitia Monastica* (Cambridge, 1787)

*Taxatio Ecclesiastica*, ed. T. Astle, S. Ayscough, and J. Caley (London: Record Commission, 1802)

*Two Cartularies of the Augustinian Priory of Bruton and the Cluniac Priory of Montacute in the County of Somerset*, Somerset Record Society, 8 (1894)

*Valor Ecclesiasticus*, ed. J. Caley and J. Hunter, 6 vols (London: Record Commission, 1810–34)

William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Pontificum: the history of the English bishops*, ed. and trans. R. M. Thomson, and M. Winterbottom (Oxford, 2007),

William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum: the history of the kings of England*, ed. and trans. R. A. B. Mynors, R. M. Thomson, and M. Winterbottom, 2 vols (Oxford, 1998–99)

## Secondary Sources

Abram, A., 'Augustinian canons and the survival of cult centres in Medieval England', in J. Burton and K. Stöber, ed., *The Regular Canons in the Medieval British Isles* (Turnhout, 2011), pp. 79–95

Abram, A., 'Monastic burial in Medieval Wales', in J. Burton and K. Stöber, ed., *Monastic Wales: New Approaches* (Cardiff, 2013), pp. 103–15

Aldis, W., 'Antient and modern state of Mendham Priory', *Gentleman's Magazine*, 78, pt II (1808), 969

Anderson, F., 'St Pancras Priory, Lewes: its architectural development to 1200', in *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 11 (Woodbridge, 1988), pp. 1–35

Anon., *Wangford Priory: the evidence from excavation* (Bury St Edmunds, 1976)

Aston, M., *Monasteries* (Stroud, 1993)

Aston, M., *Monasteries in the Landscape* (Stroud, 2000)



Aston, M., 'The expansion of the monastic and religious orders of Europe from the eleventh century', in G. Keevill, M. Aston, and T. Hall, ed., *Monastic Archaeology: papers on the study of medieval monasteries* (Oxford, 2001), pp. 9–36

Babington, C., Manning, T., and Stewart, S., *Our Painted Past: Wall Paintings of English Heritage* (London, 1999)

Baily, C., 'Monks Horton Priory', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 10, (1876) 81–9

Barlow, F., *The English Church, 1066–1154* (London, 1979)

Barlow, F., 'William I's relations with Cluny', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 32 (1981), 131–41

Barral i Altet, X., 'Early Cistercian Architecture: originality and functionality of a building model', in *The Cistercian Arts from the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, ed. T. Kinder and R. Cassanelli (Milan, 2014), pp. 35–74

Baud, A., *Cluny: un grand chantier medieval au coeur de l'Europe* (Paris, 2003)

Beaussart, P., *L'église Benedictine de La Charité sur Loire 'Fille Ainee de Cluny'* (La Charité sur Loire, 1929)

Bellamy, C.V. 'Pontefract Priory', *Medieval Archaeology*, 3 (1959), 306

Bellamy, C. V. *Excavations at Pontefract Priory, Thoresby Society Publications*, 49 (1965)

Bellamy, C. V., 'Pontefract Priory', *Medieval Archaeology*, 12 (1968), 171–2

Bernard, G. W., *The Late Medieval English Church* (London, 2012)

Binns, A., *Dedications of Monastic Houses in England and Wales* (Woodbridge, 1989)

Blair, J., *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society* (Oxford, 2010)

Blaauw, W. H., 'On the early history of Lewes Priory, and its seals, with extracts from a MS Chronicle', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, 2 (1849), 7–37

Bloom, J. H., *Notices, Historical and Antiquarian, of the Castle and Priory at Castleacre in the County of Norfolk* (London, 1843)

Bond, F., *Dedications and Patron Saints of English Churches* (Oxford, 1914)

Bond, J., *Monastic Landscapes* (Stroud, 2004)

Bourbon Parme, R. de, *Les Cisterciens 1098–1998* (Paris, 1998)

Boynton, S., 'The customaries of Bernard and Ulrich as liturgical sources', in *From Dead of Night to End of Day: The Medieval Customs of Cluny*, ed. S. Boynton and I. Cochelin (Turnhout, 2005), pp. 109–30

Boynton, S., *Shaping a Monastic Identity: Liturgy and History at the Imperial Abbey of Farfa, 1000–1125* (London, 2006)

Boynton, S., 'Oral transmission of liturgical practice in the eleventh-century customaries of Cluny', in *Understanding Monastic Practices of Oral Communication*, ed. S. Vanderputten (Turnhout, 2011), pp. 67–83

Boynton, S., and Cochelin, I., ed., *From Dead of Night to End of Day: The Medieval Customs of Cluny* (Turnhout, 2005)

Brakspear, H., 'Excavations at some Wiltshire monasteries: Monkton Farley Priory', *Archaeologia*, 73 (1923), 235–44

Brooke, C., *The Age of the Cloister: The Story of Monastic Life in the Middle Ages* (Stroud, 2003)

Bruce, S. G., *Silence and Sign Language in Medieval Monasticism: the Cluniac tradition c. 900–1200* (Cambridge, 2007)

Burrows, J. W., *The History of Prittlewell Priory* (Southend, 1970)

Burton, J., 'The foundation of the British Cistercian houses', in C. Norton and D. Park, ed., *Cistercian Art and Architecture in the British Isles* (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 24–39

Burton, J., 'Monasteries and parish churches in eleventh- and twelfth-century Yorkshire', *Northern History*, 23 (1987), 39–50

Burton, J., *Monastic and Religious Orders in Britain 1000–1300* (Cambridge, 1994)

Burton, J., 'Priory and Parish: Kirkham and its Parishioners, 1496–7', in B. Thompspn, ed., *Monasteries and Society in Medieval Britain, Proceedings of the 1994 Harlaxton Symposium*, 6 (Stamford, 1999), pp. 329–44

Burton, J., *The Monastic Order in Yorkshire 1069–1215* (Cambridge, 1999)

Burton, J., 'Transition and transformation: the Benedictine houses', in J. Burton and K. Stöber, ed., *Monastic Wales: new approaches* (Cardiff, 2013), pp. 21–37

Burton, J., 'After Knowles: recent advances in monastic studies', in D. A. Bellenger and S. Johnson, ed., *Keeping the Rule: David Knowles and the Writing of History* (Stratton-on-Fosse, 2014), pp. 117–38

Burton, J., and Kerr, J., *The Cistercians in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2011)

Burton, J., and Stöber, K., ed., *Monasteries and Society in the British Isles in the Later Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2008), pp. 11–24

- Burton, J., and Stöber, K., ed., *The Regular Canons in the Medieval British Isles* (Turnhout, 2011)
- Burton, J., and Stöber, K., ed., *Monastic Wales: new approaches* (Cardiff, 2013)
- Cameron, K., *English Place Names* (London, 1996)
- Carty, C. M., 'The role of Gunzo's dream in the building of Cluny III', *Gesta*, 28/1 and 2 (1988), 113–25
- Cassidy-Welch, M., *Monastic Spaces and their Meanings: Thirteenth-Century English Cistercian Monasteries* (Turnhout, 2001)
- Cattermole, P., *Wymondham Abbey* (Wymondham, 2007)
- Chadd, D., 'The medieval customary of the cathedral priory', in I. Atherton et al., ed., *Norwich, Cathedral, City and Diocese, 1096–1996* (London, 1996), pp. 314–24
- Chibnall, M., 'Monastic foundations in England and Normandy, 1066–1189', in D. Bates and A. Curry, ed., *England and Normandy in the Middle Ages* (London, 1994), pp. 37–49
- Chibnall, M., *The World of Orderic Vitalis: Norman Monks and Norman Knights* (Woodbridge, 2001)
- Chibnall, 'The changing expectation of a royal benefactor: the religious patronage of Henry II', in E. Jamroziak and J. Burton, ed., *Religious and Laity in Western Europe 1000–1400: interaction, negotiation, and power* (Turnhout, 2006), pp.9–21
- Christiani, R. 'Integration and marginalisation: dealing with the sick in eleventh-century Cluny', in S. Boynton and I. Cochelin, ed., *From Dead of Night to End of Day: The Medieval Customs of Cluny* (Turnhout, 2005), pp. 287–96
- Coad, J. and Coppack, G., *Castle Acre Castle and Priory* (London, 1998)
- Cochelin, I., 'Evolution des coutumieres monastiques dessinée a partir de l'étude de Bernard', in S. Boynton and I. Cochelin, ed., *From Dead of Night to End of Day: The Medieval Customs of Cluny* (Turnhout, 2005), pp. 29–66
- Cook, G. H., *English Monasteries in the Middle Ages* (London, 1961)
- Conant, K., 'Medieval Academy excavations at Cluny, IX: systematic dimensions in the buildings', *Speculum*, 38 (1963), 1–45
- Conant, K., *Cluny: les églises et la maison du chef d'Ordre* (Macon, 1968)
- Conant, K., *Carolingian and Romanesque Architecture 800–1200* (London, 1973)

- Constable, G., 'Monastic legislation at Cluny in the eleventh and twelfth centuries', in *Proceedings of the Fourth International Congress of Medieval Canon Law* (Toronto, 1976), pp. 151–61
- Constable, G., *The Abbey of Cluny* (Berlin, 2010)
- Constable, G., 'Commemoration and confraternity at Cluny', in G. Constable, ed., *The Abbey of Cluny* (Berlin, 2010), pp. 313–38
- Constable, G., 'The Abbot and Townsmen of Cluny', in G. Constable, ed., *The Abbey of Cluny* (Berlin, 2010), pp. 469–89
- Constable, G., 'The future of Cluniac studies', *Journal of Medieval Monastic Studies*, 1 (2011), 1–16
- Coppack, G., *Abbeys and Priories* (Stroud, 1993)
- Coppack, G., *The White Monks: The Cistercians in Britain 1128–1540* (Stroud, 1998)
- Coppack, G., *Fountains Abbey: The Cistercians in Northern England* (Stroud, 2009)
- Coplestone-Crow, B., 'The foundation of the priories of Bassaleg and Malpas in the twelfth century', *Monmouthshire Antiquary*, 14 (1998), 1–13
- Cowdrey, H. E. J., 'Unions and confraternity with Cluny', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 16 (1965), 152–61
- Cowdrey, H. E. J., *The Cluniacs and the Gregorian Reform* (Oxford, 1970)
- Cowdrey, H. E. J., 'William I's relations with Cluny further considered', in *Monastic Studies*, I, ed. J. Loades (Bangor, 1990), pp. 75–85
- Cowley, F., *The Monastic Order in South Wales, 1066–1349* (Cardiff, 1977)
- Cownie, E., *Religious Patronage in Anglo-Norman England, 1066–1135* (London, 1998)
- Coxe, W., *An Historical Tour in Monmouthshire*, 2 vols (Monmouth, 1801)
- Cranage, D. H. S., 'The monastery of St Milburge at Much Wenlock, Shropshire', *Archaeologia*, 62 (1922), 106–17
- Creighton, O., *Castles and Landscapes* (London, 2002)
- Creighton, O., *Designs upon the Land: elite landscapes of the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2009)
- Crook, B. M., 'The charters of Lewes Priory', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, 82 (1942), 73–95
- Crook, J., *English Medieval Shrines* (Woodbridge, 2012)

- Crosby, A., *A History of Thetford* (Oxford, 1986)
- de Bourbon Parme, R., *Les Cisterciens 1098–1998* (Paris, 1998)
- Dickinson, J. C., *The Origins of the Austin Canons and their Introduction into England* (London, 1950)
- Dickinson, J. C., *Monastic Life in Medieval England* (London, 1961)
- Dyson, T., et al., *The Cluniac Priory and Abbey of St Saviour Bermondsey, Surrey: Excavations 1984–95* (London, 2011)
- Elliott, R. H. and Berbank, A. E., ‘Lenton Priory excavations 1943–51’, *Transactions of the Thoroton Society*, 56–8 (1952–3), 41–53
- Evans, J., *The Romanesque Architecture of the Order of Cluny* (Cambridge, 1938)
- Evans, J., *Monastic Life at Cluny* (Oxford, 1968)
- Faton, L., ‘Cluny a la decouverte des sites clunisiens’, in *Dossiers d’Archeologie*, no. 275 juil./aout (Dijon, 2002), pp. 14–139
- Faulkner, P. A., ‘A model of Castle Acre Priory’, *Medieval Archaeology*, 6 and 7 (1962–3), 300–3
- Finucane, R. C., *Miracles and Pilgrims, Popular Beliefs in Medieval England* (London, 1995)
- Fisher, V., *The Church of St Peter and Paul Wangford, A Brief Guide to Visitors* (Stradbroke, 1982)
- Fizzard, A., ‘Corrodies at houses of regular canons c. 1485–1539’, in J. Burton and K. Stöber, ed., *The Regular Canons in the Medieval British Isles* (Turnhout, 2011), pp. 193–211
- Fowler, R. C., ‘Inventories of Essex monasteries in 1536’, in J. M. Burrows, ed., *The History of Prittlewell Priory* (Southend, 1970), pp. 39–46
- Fowler, R. C., ‘Secular aid for excommunications’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, third series, 8 (1894), 113–17
- Galbraith, V. H., ‘Osbert, dean of Lewes’, *Economic History Review*, 69 (1954), 289–302
- Gardner, T., *An Historical Account of Dunwich* (London, 1754)
- Gibson, M., *Lanfranc of Bec* (Oxford, 1978)
- Gilchrist, R., *Contemplation and Action: the other monasticism* (Leicester, 1995)
- Gilchrist, R., *Norwich Cathedral Close: the evolution of the English cathedral landscape* (Woodbridge, 2005)

- Gilyard-Beer, R., *Abbeys: an introduction to religious houses of England and Wales* (London, 1958)
- Godfrey, W. H., 'Monks Horton', *Archaeological Journal*, 86 (1929), 314–6
- Godfrey, W. H., 'Lewes: the priory of St Pancras', *Archaeological Journal*, 116 (1959), 258–9
- Godfrey, W. H. 'Southover Church', *Archaeological Journal*, 116 (1959), 250–62
- Golding, B., 'The coming of the Cluniacs', in R. Allen-Brown, ed., *Proceedings of the Battle Conference*, 3 (Woodbridge, 1980), pp. 65–77
- Golding, B., 'Anglo-Norman Knightly Burials', in C. Harper-Bill and R. Harvey, ed., *The Ideals and Practice of Medieval Knighthood*, I (Woodbridge, 1986), pp. 35–48
- Goodrich, P. J., *Walsingham and its History and its Shrine* (Norwich, 1937)
- Graham, R., 'The Cluniac Order and its English Province', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 28 (1922), 169–74
- Graham, R., 'The relation of Cluny to some other movements of monastic reform', in *English Ecclesiastical Studies* (London, 1929), pp. 1–29
- Graham, R., 'The Papal Schism of 1378 and the English Province of the Order of Cluny', in *English Ecclesiastical Studies* (London, 1929), pp. 46–61
- Graham, R., 'The English Province of the Order of Cluny in the Fifteenth Century', in *English Ecclesiastical Studies* (London, 1929), pp. 62–89
- Graham, R. 'The priory of La Charité sur Loire and the monastery of Bermondsey', in *English Ecclesiastical Studies* (London, 1929), pp. 91–124
- Graham, R. 'Roland Gosenell, prior of Wenlock', in *English Ecclesiastical Studies* (London, 1929), pp. 125–45
- Graham, R., 'The Taxation of Pope Nicholas IV', in *English Ecclesiastical Studies* (London, 1929), pp. 271–301
- Graham, R., 'The history of the alien priory of Wenlock', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, third series, 4 (1939), 117–130
- Graham, R., 'The Cluniac priory of Saint-Martin des Champs, Paris and its dependent priories in England and Wales', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, third series, XI (1948), 35–65
- Graham, R., 'A history of the buildings of the English Province of the Order of Cluny after the suppression of some priories and the general dissolution of the monasteries', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 15 (1952), 13–43

- Graham, R. 'The Cluniac priory of St Mary Carswell' in *Transactions of the Devon Association*, 84 (1953), 115–8
- Graham, R and Gilyard-Beer, R., *Monk Bretton Priory* (London, 1989)
- Green, H., 'Lenton Priory', *Transactions of the Thorton Society*, 40 (1936), 29–90
- Greene, J. P., *Medieval Monasteries* (London, 1992)
- Grimes, W.F., 'The Cluniac abbey of St Saviour, Bermondsey', in W. F. Grimes, ed., *The Excavation of Roman and Medieval London* (London, 1968), pp. 210–17
- Guilloureaux, L., 'Les prieurés anglais de L'ordre de Cluny', in *Congres du Millenaire de Cluny*, I (Macon, 1910), pp. 291–373
- Haggart, M., 'Kinship and identity in eleventh-century Normandy: the case of Hugh de Grandmesnil, c. 1040–1098', *Journal of Medieval History*, 32 (2006), 212–30
- Hallinger, K., 'The spiritual life of Cluny in the early days', in N. Hunt, ed., *Cluniac Monasticism in the Central Middle Ages* (London, 1971), pp. 29–55
- Hannah, I. C., 'Priory and churches', in J. Roper, ed., *Dudley: the medieval town* (Dudley, 1962), pp. 57–66
- Harper-Bill, C *The Anglo-Norman Church* (London, 1992)
- Harrod, H., *Gleanings among the Castles and Convents of Norfolk* (Norwich, 1857)
- Harvey, B., *Living and Dying in England 1100–1540* (Oxford, 1993)
- Heale, M., *The Dependent Priors of Medieval English Monasteries* (Woodbridge, 2004)
- Heale, M., *The Abbots and Priors of Late Medieval and Reformation England* (Oxford, 2016)
- Helliwell, L., *Prittlewell Priory* (Southend, 1972)
- Hemingway, J., *An Illustrated Chronicle of the Cluniac Priory of St James, Dudley* (Dudley, 2005)
- Hicks, L. V., *Religious Life in Normandy, 1050–1300: Space, Gender and Social Pressure* (Woodbridge, 2007)
- Hilberry, H., 'La Charité-sur-Loire priory church', *Speculum*, 30 (1955), 1–14
- Hirst, S., et al., *The Prittlewell Prince* (London, 2004)
- Horne, E. A., 'St Mary's Priory, Mendham, Suffolk: air reconnaissance, 1975–77', *Aerial Archaeology*, 1 (1979), 16–17

- Hourlier, J., 'St Odilo's monastery', in N. Hunt, ed., *Cluniac Monasticism in the Central Middle Ages* (London, 1971), pp. 56–76
- Hundleby, A., *Binham Priory* (Binham, 2004)
- Hunt, N., *Cluny under St Hugh 1049–1109* (London, 1967)
- Hunt, N., ed., *Cluniac Monasticism in the Central Middle Ages* (London, 1971)
- Impey, E., *Castle Acre Priory and Castle* (London, 2014)
- Jackson, J. E., 'The history of the priory of Monkton Farley', *Wiltshire Historical Society Magazine*, 4 (1858), 267–85
- James, T., 'Carmarthenshire's religious houses: a review of recent archaeological work', *The Carmarthenshire Antiquary*, 36 (2000), 58–70
- Jamroziak, E., *The Cistercian Order in Medieval Europe 1090–1500* (London, 2013)
- Jamroziak, E., and Burton, J., ed., *Religious and Laity in Western Europe: interaction, negotiation and power* (Turnhout, 2006)
- Kemp, B., 'Monastic possession of parish churches in England in the twelfth century', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 31 (1980), 133–60
- Kerr, J., *Monastic Hospitality: The Benedictines in England c. 1070–1250* (Woodbridge, 2007)
- Knowles, D., *The Religious Orders in England*, 3 vols (Cambridge, 1948–59)
- Knowles, D., *The Episcopal Colleagues of Thomas Becket* (Cambridge, 1951)
- Knowles, D., *The Monastic Order in England*, second edn (Cambridge, 1963)
- Knowles, D., *Bare Ruined Choirs* (London, 1977)
- Knowles, D., Brooke, C. N. L., and London, V. C. M., ed., *The Heads of Religious Houses: England and Wales 940–1216*, second edn (Cambridge, 2001)
- Knowles, D., and Hadcock, R. N., *Medieval Religious Houses England and Wales*, second edn (London, 1971)
- Kruger, K., 'Monastic customs and liturgy in the light of the architectural evidence: a case study on processions', in S. Boynton and I. Cochelin, ed., *From Dead of Night to End of Day: The Medieval Customs of Cluny* (Turnhout, 2005), pp. 191–220
- Lasko P., and Morgan N. J., *Medieval Art in East Anglia* (Norwich, 1973)
- Lawrence, C. H., *Medieval Monasticism* (Harlow, 2001)



- Leroquais, V., *Le Breviaire-Missel du Prieuré Clunisien de Lewes* (Paris, 1935)
- Levison, W., *England and the Continent in the Eighth Century* (Oxford, 1946)
- Liddiard, R., *Landscapes of Lordship: Norman castles and the countryside in medieval Norfolk, 1066–1200* (Oxford, 2000)
- Liddiard, R., ‘The castle landscapes of Anglo-Norman East Anglia: a regional perspective’ in C. Harper-Bill, ed., *Medieval East Anglia* (Woodbridge, 2005), pp. 33–51
- Lockett, R. B., ‘A catalogue of Romanesque sculpture from the Cluniac houses in England’, *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, third series, 34 (1971), 43–51
- Lower, M. A., ‘Further report on discoveries at Lewes’, *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 2 (1847), 104–8
- Luxford, J. M., *The Art and Architecture of English Benedictine Monasteries 1300–1540* (Woodbridge, 2012)
- Lyman, T. W., ‘The politics of selective eclecticism: monastic architecture, pilgrimage churches, and “resistance to Cluny”’, *Gesta*, 28/ 1 and 2 (1988), 83–92
- Lyne, M., *Lewes Priory, Excavations by Richard Lewis 1969–82* (Lewes Priory Trust, 1997)
- Matthew, D. J. A., *The Norman Monasteries and their English Possessions* (Oxford, 1962)
- Mayhew, G., *The Monks of St Pancras, Lewes Priory, England’s Premier Cluniac Monastery and its Dependencies 1076–1537* (Lewes, 2014)
- Morghen, R., ‘Monastic reform and Cluniac Spirituality’, in N. Hunt, ed., *Cluniac Monasticism in the Central Middle Ages* (London, 1971), pp. 11–28
- Morris, R., *Churches in the Landscape* (London, 1989)
- Mundo, A., ‘Monastic movements in the East Pyrenees’, in N. Hunt, ed., *Cluniac Monasticism in the Central Middle Ages* (London, 1971), pp. 98–111
- Mumford, W. F., *Wenlock in the Middle Ages*, second edn (Shrewsbury, 1989)
- Nicholl, D., *Thurstan, Archbishop of York (1114–1140)* (York, 1964)
- Nichols, N., ‘The Augustinian canons and their parish churches: a key to their identity’, in J. Burton and K. Stöber, ed., *The Regular Canons in the Medieval British Isles* (Turnhout, 2011), pp. 313–37
- Norfolk Archaeological Trust, *Spring Newsletter* (2014)
- Pacaut, M., *L’Ordre de Cluny* (Paris, 1986)

Paxton, F., 'Death by Customary at Eleventh-Century Cluny', in S. Boynton and I. Cochelin, ed., *From Dead of Night to End of Day* (Turnhout, 2005) pp. 297–318

Paxton, F. with Cochelin, I., *The Death Ritual at Cluny in the Central Middle Ages*, *Disciplina Monastica*, 9 (Turnhout, 2013)

Pestell, T., *Landscapes of Monastic Foundation* (Woodbridge, 2004)

Pinell, J *Wenlock Priory* (London, 1999)

Postles, D., 'Monastic burials of non-patronal lay benefactors', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 47 (1996), 620–37; repr. in Postles, D. A., *Missed Opportunities: religious houses and the laity in the English 'High Middle Ages'* (Washington, 2009), pp. 61–84

Prior, S., *A Few Well-Positioned Castles: the Norman Art of War* (Stroud, 2006)

Raby, F. J. E., and Baillie Reynolds, P. K., *Castle Acre Priory* (London, 1994)

Raby, F. J. E., and Baillie Reynolds, P. K., *Thetford Priory* (London, 1990)

Radford, C. A. R., 'The Cluniac priory of St James at Dudley', *Antiquaries Journal*, 20 (1940), 449–59

Rasmussen, L., 'Why small monastic houses should have a history', *Midland History*, 28 (2003), 1–27

Repton, J. A., 'Mendham Priory, Suffolk', *Gentleman's Magazine*, 2, pt. 2 (1836), 601–4

Riche, D., *L'Ordre de Clun à la fin du moyen âge : 'Le vieux pays clunisien', XIII–XVe siècles* (Saint-Etienne, 2000)

Robertson-Mackay, R., 'Recent excavations at the Cluniac priory of St Mary, Thetford, Norfolk', *Medieval Archaeology*, 1 (1957), 96–103

Robinson, D., ed., *The Cistercian Abbeys of Britain: far from the concourse of men* (London, 1998)

Rosenwein, B., *Rhinoceros Bound: Cluny in the Tenth Century* (Philadelphia, 1982)

Rosenwein, B., *Negotiating Space: power, restraint, and privileges of immunity in early medieval Europe* (Ithaca, 1999)

Round, J. H., 'Letters of Gilbert Foliot', *Journal of Essex Archaeological Society*, new series, 15 (1896), 115–28

Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, England, 'Herefordshire vol. I south-west', in *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in Herefordshire*, vol.1 (London, 1931)

Rubin, M., *Emotion and Devotion: the meaning of Mary in medieval religious culture* (New York, 2009)

- Shepherd, E., ed., *Norfolk Archaeological Unit Annual Review 1997–8* (Norfolk Archaeological Unit, 1998)
- Smith, D. M., ed., *Heads of Religious Houses England and Wales, 1377–1540* (Cambridge, 2008)
- Smith, D., and London, V., ed., *The Heads of Religious Houses: England and Wales 1216–1377* (Cambridge, 2001)
- Snape, R. H., *English Monastic Finances in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1926)
- Spencer, B., *Pilgrim Souvenirs and Secular Badges* (London, 1998)
- Spooner, J., ‘The fourteenth-century wall-paintings at Castle Acre Priory and Greyfriars, Great Yarmouth’, in J. McNeil, ed., *Kings Lynn and the Fens Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology* (Leeds, 2008), pp. 170–85
- St John Hope, W. H., ‘The architectural history of the Cluniac priory of Saint Pancras at Lewes’, *Archaeological Journal*, 41 (1884), 1–28
- St John Hope, W. H., ‘Castleacre Priory’, *Norfolk Archaeology*, 12 (1894), 105–57
- Stenton, F. M., ‘Medeshamstede and its colonies’, in J. G. Edwards et al., ed., *Historical Essays in Honour of James Tait* (Manchester, 1933), pp. 313–26
- Stöber, K., *Late Medieval Monasteries and their Patrons: England and Wales, c. 1300–1540* (Woodbridge, 2007)
- Stöber, K., ‘The social network of late medieval Welsh monasteries’, in J. Burton and K. Stöber, ed., *Monasteries and Society in the British Isles in the Later Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2008), pp. 11–24
- Taylor, R., *Index Monasticus* (London, 1821)
- Thomas, D. A., ‘St Clears in the Middle Ages 1100–1500’, *The Carmarthenshire Historian*, 6 (1969), 59–71
- Thompson, M., *Cloister, Abbot and Precinct* (Stroud, 2001)
- Thompson, M. W., ‘Associated monasteries and castles in the Middle Ages: a tentative list’, *Archaeological Journal*, 143 (1986), 305–21
- Thurlby, M., *Romanesque Architecture and Sculpture in Wales* (Little Logaston, 2006)
- Valous, G. de, *Le monachisme clunisien au XVe siècle : vie intérieure des monastères et organisation de l’ordre* (Paris, 1970)

- van Beuningen, H. J. E., 'Brian Watson Spencer's Good Work', in S. Blick, ed., *Beyond Pilgrim Souvenirs and Secular Badges: Essays in Honour of Brian Spencer* (Oxford, 2007), pp. 17–36
- van Houts, E., 'The Warenne view of the past', *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 26 (2004), pp. 103–21
- Victoria County History of Derbyshire*, vol. 2, ed. W. Page (1907)
- Victoria County History of Dorset*, vol. 2, ed. W. Page (1908)
- Victoria County History of Essex*, vol. 2, ed. W. Page and J. Horace Round (1907)
- Victoria County History of Kent*, vol. 2, ed. W. Page (1926)
- Victoria County History of Lancashire*, vol. 2, ed. W. Farrer and J. Brownbill (1908),
- Victoria County History of Norfolk*, vol. 2, ed. W. Page (1906)
- Victoria County History of Northamptonshire*, vol. 2, ed. R. M. Serjeantsen, W. Ryland, and D. Adkins (1906)
- Victoria County History of Nottinghamshire*, vol. 2, ed. W. Page (1910)
- Victoria County History of Suffolk*, vol. 2, ed. W. Page (1907)
- Victoria County History of Surrey*, vol. 2, ed. H. E. Malden (1995)
- Victoria County History of Sussex*, vol. 2, ed. W. Page (1907)
- Victoria County History of Sussex* vol. 7, ed. L. F. Salzman (1940)
- Victoria County History of Wiltshire*, vol. 3, ed. R. B. Pugh and E. Crittall (1956)
- Victoria County History of Worcestershire*, vol. 2, ed. J. W. Willis-Bund and W. Page (1906)
- Victoria County History of Yorkshire*, vol. 3, ed. W. Page (1913)
- Vingtain, D., *L'Abbaye de Cluny Centre de l'Occident Médiéval* (Paris, 1998)
- Voros, C., *Sites clunisiens en Europe* (Moisenay, 2004)
- Warner, P., *The Origins of Suffolk* (Manchester, 1996)
- Webster, L. E. and Cherry, J., 'Suffolk: Mendham', *Medieval Archaeology*, 23 (1979), 252–3
- Whitley, H. M., and St John Hope, W. H., 'Lewes Priory', *Archaeological Journal*, 59 (1902), 100–02
- Wightman, W. E., *The Lacy family in England and Normandy, 1066–1194* (Oxford, 1966)

Wilcox, R., 'Thetford Cluniac Priory Excavations 1971–4', *Norfolk Archaeology*, 40, pt I (1987), 1–18

Williams, J., 'Cluny and Spain', in *Gesta* 27/1 and 2 (1988), 93–102

Wollasch, J., 'A Cluniac necrology from the time of Abbot Hugh', in N. Hunt, ed., *Cluniac Monasticism in the Central Middle Ages* (London, 1971), pp. 143–90

Wood, S., *English Monasteries and their Patrons in the Thirteenth Century* (Oxford, 1955)

Wormald, F., 'The Rood of Bromholm', in J. J. G. Alexander et al., ed., *Studies in English and Continental Art in the Later Middle Ages* (New York, 1988), pp. 123–37

### **Unpublished theses**

Brook, D. L., 'Early Ecclesiastical Sites in South-East Wales', unpublished MA thesis, Cardiff University, 1977

Pearce, C. P., 'The Priory of St Milburge, Much Wenlock and the Abbot of Cluny. A Case Study of Extended Monastic Community?', unpublished M.Phil. Thesis, University of Wales, Lampeter, 2006