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Dieulacres Abbey

By

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DEDICATION

To the Memory of HUGH ROBERT LEECH,
Senior Lecturer in History at the
University of Keele, who died on the
30th. April, 1967; in grateful
remembrance of his work in connection
with this thesis.

02.404



1 Dieulacres: Abbey Farm c1620

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

B.M.	British Museum
C.Ch.R.	<u>Calendar of Close Rolls</u>
C.Ch.R.	<u>Calendar of Charter Rolls</u>
C.P.L.	<u>Calendar of Papal Letters</u>
C.P.R.	<u>Calendar of Patent Rolls</u>
DC/1	<u>Dieulacres Cartulary</u> (a 17th. century trans- cript of a lost cartulary)
DC/2	<u>Dieulacres Cartulary</u> (a 14th. century cartulary roll in the William Salt Library, Stafford.)
E.C./	Eaton Charters.
E.H.R.	English Historical Review.

PREFACE

Dieulacres Abbey has always held out a strange fascination for me. As a schoolboy I often used to walk over the hill behind Abbey Farm and look down at the cluster of trees and shrubs which screened the abbey ruins, trying to picture what the buildings must have looked like in medieval times. Although I knew of the local legends concerning a secret tunnel running from the Abbey to the Parish Church, and a golden chair and candlesticks buried somewhere in the ruins, I knew practically nothing about the history of the place; and I often thought that I would like to find out all I could about Dieulacres and commit it to paper. This childhood dream has now come true, and I have found the work both interesting and rewarding.

During the course of my research I have received help and guidance from various sources, and I would like to acknowledge my indebtedness to all those who have assisted me in any way. First of all my thanks are due to the University of Keele for their grant of a Research Studentship during my period of study. My transcription of the Dieulacres Chronicle was made possible through the kindness of Mr. B.M. Cocks, Librarian of Gray's Inn, who permitted me to examine the document

on several occasions and who arranged to have photostat copies made of those sections which I wished to study closely. Free access to the Eaton Charters was granted to me by the Trustees, and I am most grateful to the archivist, Mr. A.R. Mitchell, for his friendly assistance on the occasions when I have visited the Eaton Estate Office. My thanks are also due to M. Pierre Chaplais and Mr. N.R. Ker of the University of Oxford for their help with certain palaeographic queries, and to Professor Margaret Deanesly who first suggested that I should work for a Research Degree. For the help which I have received with my illustrative material I would like to thank the Photographic Department of the University Library for reproducing my maps and documents, Mrs. A. Docksey of Abbey Farm for allowing me to photograph the house and ruins, and Mr. Gerald Mee for the pictures of St. Edward's Church and the Dieulacres Chalice. I am greatly indebted to Miss Millington of Leek for typing the bulk of this work - a difficult task in view of the numerous footnotes and Latin quotes. Finally, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Mr. H.R. Leech, who has supervised my work so efficiently throughout, and who has always been ready and willing to give me every possible assistance over the past eighteen months.

MICHAEL J.C. FISHER.

LEEK, Staffs.,
1st. May, 1967.



Dieulacres Abbey Farm - front entrance.

DIEULACRES ABBEY

Introduction.

The remains of the Cistercian monastery of Dieulacres lie to the north of the market-town of Leek, in the heart of the Staffordshire Moorlands. A few broken columns and a short section of wall mark the site of the abbey church; but of the rest of the conventual buildings practically nothing has survived. After the dissolution of the abbey in 1538 the site was continually plundered by people from the locality who found it a convenient source of ready-cut stone. The present Abbey Farm, dating from the early seventeenth century, contains in its walls fragments of sculptured stone which give a clue as to their origin, and similar fragments have been found in other buildings in the vicinity. By the beginning of the nineteenth century the site of the abbey church was covered by a mound of earth and debris which had accumulated over the centuries. In 1818 this mound was excavated and more stone was taken away for use in the construction of the barns and outbuildings which lie to the east of Abbey Farm.^{1.} Since then the ruins have been left more or less undisturbed, and almost forgotten.

1. An account of this excavation appears in Gentleman's Magazine, vol. 89 part 1, (1819) pp. 120-122.

2.

Like the abbey ruins, the history of Dieulacres has suffered neglect. Although a few attempts have been made to gather together various deeds and documents which have come to light,² there has been no serious attempt to make a thorough survey of the history of the abbey from its foundation to its dissolution. Such a task is by no means easy. In studying the history of any small monastic foundation one is faced with numerous difficulties, the greatest of which is the absence of a full set of contemporary records. Not a single set of accounts has survived from Dieulacres, and it is therefore extremely difficult to form a clear picture of the internal affairs and administration of the monastery. As Dieulacres was an abbey of the Cistercian Order, and therefore exempt from episcopal control, one can glean very little from Diocesan records which are so useful for the history of the Black Monk Houses. In addition, the records of the General Chapter of the Order are of little value for the later history of individual houses, owing to the breakdown in the relationship of the English abbeys with Citeaux which occurred in the fourteenth century.

2.e.g. Dugdale, Monasticon, V, pp. 627-8; and John Sleight, A History.... of Leek, 1883. The best short account of Dieulacres Abbey is by Mary Bayliss, North Staffs. Journal of Field Studies, vol. II, 1962, pp. 78-87.

these

In spite of ~~the~~ difficulties it is still possible to trace the history of a foundation such as Dieulacres. The numerous deeds and charters which have survived enable one to ascertain the nature and extent of the monastic estates. Two copies of the abbey's cartulary are still extant¹, and the Chronicle of Dieulacres has proved to be of value not only for the account which it gives of local affairs, but also for the light which it throws on national events at the end of the fourteenth century². The many references which appear in the Patent Rolls, Close Rolls and in the records of the various courts of law tell us of the abbey's dealings with the outside world; while the records of the Court of Augmentations give a very full account of the state of Dieulacres on the eve of its dissolution.

In certain respects Dieulacres was somewhat unusual. After some sixty years' existence on the banks of the River Dee at Poulton, near Chester, the entire community moved to a new site in North Staffordshire. In itself there was nothing very odd about a Cistercian monastery changing its

1. The earliest is a fourteenth century cartulary roll which contains copies of 64 deeds and charters, (DC/2) Known as the Swynnerton Cartulary, it is now preserved in the William Salt Library at Stafford. The other version (DC/1) is a seventeenth century transcript of a much more complete cartulary which has since been lost. It was compiled by Benjamin Rudyard of Leek and it contains copies of 182 charters. It is known as the Rudyard-Macclesfield cartulary and it is kept in the Leek Public Library. Another partial copy, very abbreviated, forms part of MS B.M. Harley 2060 (ff.24-29). This also dates from the 17th. century.

2. See below, pp. 172-189.

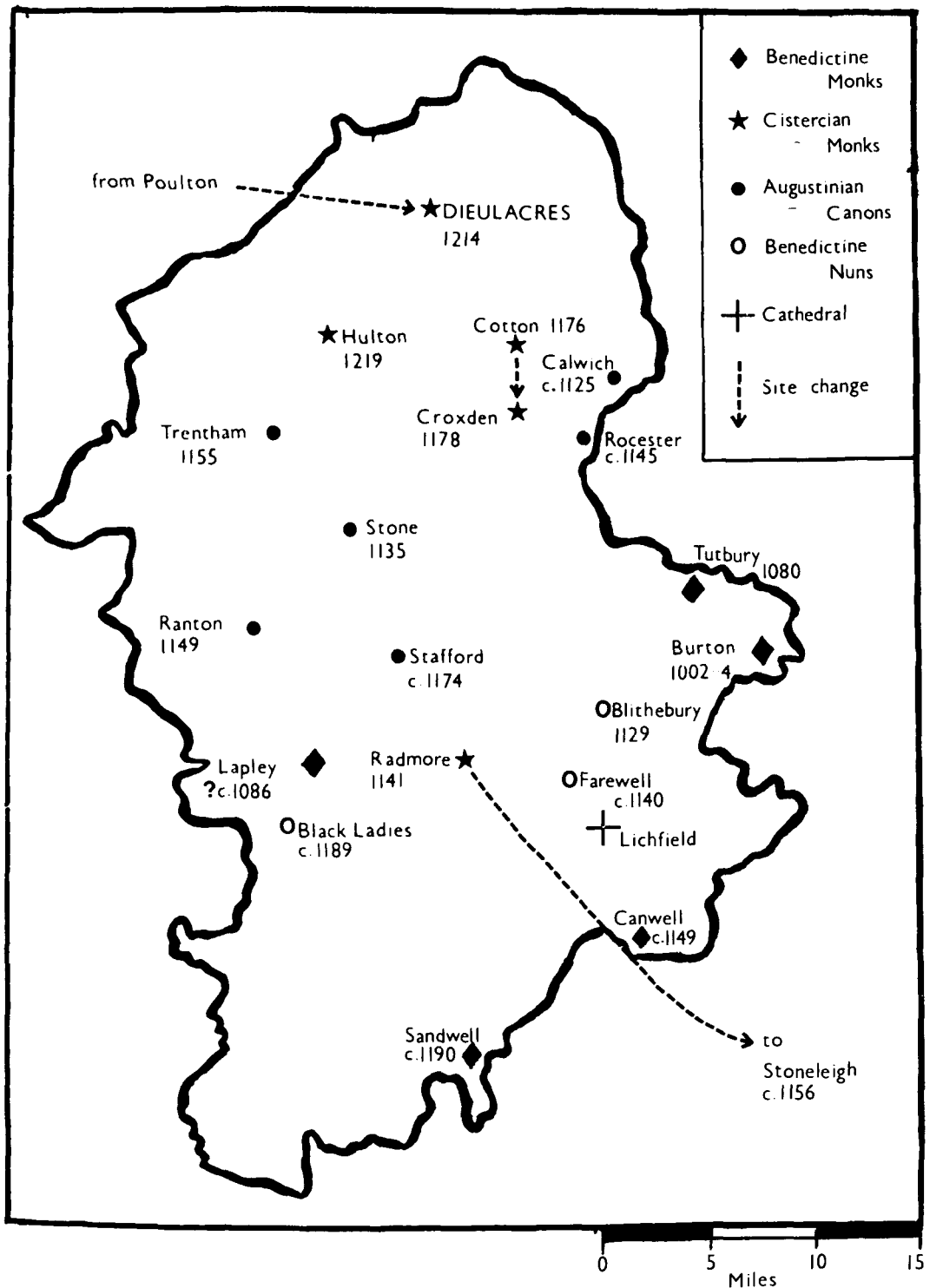
site after an unsatisfactory beginning. Some twenty-five Cistercian and Savigniac houses changed their sites within a few years of their foundation, and of these, three moved several times.¹ However, in the case of Dieulacres the change took place a long time after the original foundation had been made, and one can find parallels only in the cases of Conway and Stanlaw. In addition, there was a combination of interesting motives behind the translation of Poulton such as cannot be discerned elsewhere.

Another unusual feature of Dieulacres was its relationship with the Crown. After the translation of the convent in 1214 the patronage of the abbey was appropriated by the Earl of Chester; but when the Norman Earldom came to an end a few decades later the rights of patronage passed into royal hands. This change proved to be something of a mixed blessing for the abbey, and it had far-reaching consequences.

Until the latter part of the twelfth century there were few monastic foundations in the north of Staffordshire. The Benedictines and Augustinians chose to settle in the middle and southern parts of the county, where the country-

1. Calder (founded in 1135) moved four times in the course of 40 years. Kingswood moved to Hazleton, and from there to Tetbury and back to Kingswood again within ten years. Rhedynog-Felen (Caernarfon) moved to Conway in 1190, only two years after its foundation, and from Conway to Maenan in 1283. Vide R.A. Donkin's article on site changes in Geography, vol. XXIV part 4 (November 1959), p.251 et seq.

Staffordshire Monasteries, 1220



side was less rugged than in the north, and where the land was more suitable for the growing of crops and the rearing of animals. The first Cistercian settlement was made in 1141, when a group of hermits who were already living at Radmore, on Gannock Chase, decided to join the Order. However, the site turned out to be unsuitable for a Cistercian community¹ and in about 1156 the monks moved to a new site at Stoneleigh in Warwickshire.

In many respects North Staffordshire was ideal for the plantation of Cistercian communities. A good deal of it was covered with forest, and the rest consisted mainly of moorland: hilly and very sparsely populated. Nevertheless, it was not until 1178 that a permanent settlement was made at Croxden, under the patronage of the Verdun family. Dieulacres followed in 1214, and Hulton in 1219. By the time that these foundations had been made the "golden age" of the Cistercian Order in England was over; and the reforming zeal which had kindled the hearts of Robert of Molesme, Stephen Harding and Ailred of Rievaulx was burning much less brightly than it had done a century before. Charges of avarice and greed were being levelled at the Cistercian monks and certain decrees of the General Chapter

1. The monks were continually harassed by the huntsmen who frequented the chase.

concerning the English houses bear out these charges to a certain extent.² That certain houses were in debt by the end of the twelfth century is proved by an enactment of the General Chapter of 1190 which stated that no loans were to be taken up on usury, and that none were to be received from Jews. Another decree issued by the same Chapter was designed to restrain the desire for possessions,³ and thus to refute the charges of avarice.³ This, together with the accusations of profit-making which were levelled against the English lay-brethren by the General Chapter⁴ of 1214, would seem to suggest that in some quarters material wealth was considered to be of greater value than the gold of obedience. The drunken carouses which the lay-brethren of the Welsh granges were wont to indulge⁵ in had few parallels in England at this early stage; but by the end of the twelfth century there were definite signs of a decline, especially in the smaller establishments.

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2. The most notable critics were Gerald of Wales and Walter Map. The extent to which their criticisms were justified is discussed by David Knowles, The Monastic Order in England, 1963, pp. 662-678.
 3. Statuta, vol. I, p. 120.
 4. ibid., p. 426. They were accused of buying wool and re-selling it at a higher price.
 5. There is evidence of excessive beer-drinking on the Welsh granges as early as 1190. Statuta, I, pp. 123 and 193.

The reason for this decline can be found in the fact that over the years the whole character of the Cistercian Order had changed. It had started out as a small reforming movement composed of a few dedicated men whose chief aim was a return to the simpler form of monasticism. Under the direction of St. Bernard of Clairvaux it became a net which drew in all manner of fishes. The idea put forward by Bernard and Ailred of Rievaulx that the Cistercian Order should be a home for all types was bound, in the long run, to lead to trouble; and they would have done well to have taken a lesson from their Carthusian brethren on this point. Moreover, the Cistercians came to play an increasingly large part in the affairs of the Church; and this, too, had a detrimental effect on the original ideals of the Order. A man of Bernard's undoubted sanctity could enter into the wider sphere of Church politics, and even into European politics, without losing sight of his true vocation; indeed, he was able to do so without even leaving his cell. When lesser men tried to do the same thing their success was much more limited. Over the years the Cistercians were brought into closer contact with the secular world, and a decline in standards was the inevitable consequence of this trend. By the time that the Staffordshire houses had been established this decline had

already begun; and the constitutional machinery of the Order could not of itself arrest the process. Like any other instrument of government, it was liable to fail when those who were responsible for its operation were not prepared to accept their full responsibility.

The administrative machinery of the Cistercian Order was strained almost to breaking-point by the rapid expansion which took place in the twelfth century. The Carta Caritatis and the Instituta were originally designed to meet the needs of a small group of monasteries; and although adjustments were made from time to time in an attempt to meet the needs of an expanding order they were not of themselves sufficient. It was a sheer impossibility, even in the early years, for the abbot of Clairvaux to visit all his daughter-houses; and how could the abbot of Fountains be expected to make the hazardous journey across the North Sea every year to visit the Lysekloster, near Bergen? It is true that some attempt was made to check the expansion, for in 1152 the General Chapter decreed that no further foundations were to be
¹
made.

1. Statuta, I, p.45 no. I.

9.

In spite of this prohibition, eleven new abbeys were founded in England between 1152 and 1220; and of these, three were in Staffordshire.

In a sense, therefore, Dieulacres was conceived in the sin of disobedience; for although it was settled by monks who had moved from another site it was to all intents and purposes a completely new foundation. Its close proximity to the town of Leek¹ was a further irregularity, and it was a sign of the times that within a very few years the abbot of Dieulacres was enjoying rights and privileges which had been strictly prohibited by the statutes of his Order. Chief among these were advowsons and manorial lordships, both of which involved the abbey in a good deal of litigation. In its Staffordshire aspect, Dieulacres failed from the very start to be true to the Cistercian ideal; but before dealing with this in detail we must first examine the early history of the house and the events which led to its re-foundation.

1. "In civitatibus, castellis, villis, nulla nostra construenda sunt cenobia, sed in locis a conversatione hominum remotis."
Statuta, I, p.13, (Statutorum Annorum Precedentium Prima Collectio, no. I.)



Dieulacres Abbey Farm - rear view. Note the blocked up gateway on the left. This is older than the rest of the building and it is likely that it once formed part of the abbey buildings.

Chapter one.

THE FOUNDATION OF POULTON AND THE TRANSLATION TO
DIEULACRES, 1146-1214

As we have already seen, the story of Dieulacres Abbey begins not in Staffordshire, but at Poulton, some five miles to the south of the city of Chester. In 1146 Robert Pincerna, hereditary Butler in the household of Ranulph II, Earl of Chester, granted to the abbot and monks of the Savigniac house of Combermere half of his estate in Poulton for the establishment of a new monastery. At the time of the foundation of Poulton Abbey¹ the Earl of Chester was very much involved in the civil war which was taking place between King Stephen and the Empress Matilda. He had married Maud, daughter of Matilda's brother, Robert Earl of Gloucester; and on account of this relationship and a personal grudge² against Stephen he took the side of the Empress in the wars. He captured Stephen at Lincoln in 1141, and was himself captured and imprisoned by the King in 1146.

-
1. The monastery was not known as Dieulacres until after its translation to Staffordshire in 1214.
 2. Ranulph was incensed by Stephen's action in creating Henry, son of King David of Scotland, Earl of Northumberland, giving him Cumberland and the town of Carlisle. Ranulph claimed Cumberland as part of his own patrimony.

It was this latter misfortune which prompted Robert Pincerna to establish a community of monks at Poulton to pray for the well-being of his lord and master.

In 1147 the abbey of Combermere, along with the other houses of the Savigniac Order, was submitted to the Order of Cîteaux at the Cistercian General Chapter; and thus the new foundation at Poulton was of the Cistercian obedience almost from its very beginning. So popular was the Cistercian Order in England that by 1152 thirty-seven foundations had been made; and the addition of the Savigniac houses brought the total to fifty.

Granted that the novel aspects of the Cistercian Order and the powerful personality of St. Bernard of Clairvaux were bound to attract attention and admiration, one might still ask why so many foundations were made in a space of less than twenty-five years and in a country which already contained a large number of religious houses owning vast estates. In many cases the appeal was purely spiritual, as in the instance of the monks who left the flesh-pots of St. Mary's York to build the abbey

1. Serlo, abbot of Savigny, was a great admirer of the Cistercians, and the submission was largely his idea. However, the union was not so popular with the English houses, the majority of which did not change until late in 1148.

of Fountains in the wilderness of Skeldale. What is most interesting is the fact that most of the Cistercian foundations, and a good many foundations of other obediences, were made during the troubled period of the Anarchy, at a time when such men as Geoffrey de Mandeville were making things decidedly uncomfortable for religious communities which had been in existence long before Cîteaux was dreamed of. The large number of abbeys which were founded during this period have led some scholars to the conclusion that the Anarchy was much more limited in place and time than was once thought; and in support of this conclusion it can be said that there was a significant lack of Cistercian foundations in this period in areas which are now generally agreed to have been major theatres of war.

1

2

It has been suggested by some historians that many monasteries were founded at this time as a direct result of the Anarchy. The names of many of the turbulent barons appear as benefactors in the foundation charters of a large number of abbeys. Doubtless they thought that

1. An exception to this rule was Kingswood, Gloucs., which had a very precarious existence during the wars. See D. Knowles and R.N. Hadcock, Medieval Religious Houses in England and Wales, 1953, p.110.
2. Notably A.L.Poole, From Domesday Book to Magna Carta, 1955, pp.186-189; and F.M.Stenton, First Century of English Feudalism, 1932, p.244.

such acts of piety would, to some extent, atone for their deeds of violence. Stephen's famous Captain of Mercenaries, William of Ypres, founded the abbey of Boxley in 1143; and the foundation charter of Poulton contains a reflection on the transitoriness of earthly life and reveals a certain anxiety on the part of the founder to do something good before it is too late. Only a short time after the foundation charter of Poulton had been granted, ~~and~~ ^{the} founder's master, Ranulph of Chester, led an orgy of pillage comparable only to that of Geoffrey de Mandeville in the Fens. Later he granted various privileges to the monks at Poulton. The attitude of such men is hard to understand: They destroyed villages, caused untold misery and waste, and endowed religious houses with the proceeds.

The cost of founding a Cistercian or Savigniac abbey was considerably less than that of establishing a Black Monk community; and doubtless this factor was taken into careful consideration by would-be benefactors. As far as the White Monks were concerned, everything depended on the existence of large tracts of unexploited land, far away from any town; and of this there was no shortage in twelfth-century England. It was clearly laid down in the

early legislation of the Cistercian Order that the monks were to live by the labour of their own hands, accepting no land that was already under cultivation, or any buildings.¹ In short, the Cistercians were prepared to settle where no-one else would; and from the point of view of a potential founder the endowment of a White Monk abbey was an excellent way of saving his soul at the minimum of expense. However, in their sudden fits of pious enthusiasm the patrons of the New Orders overlooked one important point. Although the Cistercians estates were, in the main, desolate wildernesses to begin with, it was not long before they were turned into useful sources of profit; and their frankalmoign tenure freed them from all secular demands. Had the twelfth-century patrons been able to foresee what was to happen in later years, it is unlikely that they would have been so generous.

Poulton Abbey was founded in the heyday of Cistercian colonisation; and its foundation charter is both interesting and curious. It is believed to be the only genuine foundation charter of a Cheshire monastery

1. Statuta, I, p; 14, no. 5.

still extant in the original, and it raises certain questions concerning the actual date of the foundation. An endorsement on the back of the charter contains the date 1158, which Dom David Knowles allowed as a possible terminus post quem.² Dugdale favoured 1153, and it has been suggested that the foundation could have taken place at any time between the two dates.³ There is, however, evidence available to shew that the charter was in fact granted in 1146; and that although the process of foundation may have taken a few years to complete, the monastery was definitely in existence by 1153.

First of all there is the evidence of the foundation charter itself. The document states that the abbey is to be founded "for the health and safety of.... the most illustrious Earl of Chester." In this context one would normally expect to find the word salus used, signifying spiritual salvation; but in the Poulton charter we find Incolumitas as well, suggesting that the Earl was in some

-
1. G. Barraclough, Early Cheshire Charters, 1957, p.1. The so-called "original" of the foundation charter of Combermere is probably a forgery. Foundation charters of Chester Abbey, Norton and Stanlaw exist only in later transcripts. For a transcript of the Poulton charter see Appendix A.
 2. Knowles & Hadcock, Medieval Religious Houses, 1953, p.108.
 3. *ibid.* See also pp. 107 and 113. The writer is informed by Professor Knowles that the date 1135 on these pages is a misprint for 1153.

kind of physical danger at the time. In 1146 Earl Ranulph was indeed in danger, as a prisoner of King Stephen; and it is logical to associate his captivity with the foundation of Poulton Abbey.

The charter states quite definitely that the new monastery is to be of the Order of Savigny and a daughter-house of Combermere. Had the charter been granted any later than 1147 it is hardly likely that Savigny would have been specified in this way, for this was the year in which the Savigniacs were submitted to the Order of Cîteaux.

In spite of the curious endorsement on the back of the charter which contains the date 1158 there is other evidence in the charter which makes it impossible that the document could have been drawn up as late as this. William, the first abbot of Combermere, appears as one of the witnesses to the charter, and it is known that by 1149-50 at the latest he had died and had been succeeded by Abbot Geoffrey.

The most conclusive proof that 1146 was the true date of the foundation comes from a document whose provenance has only recently been established. In his notes on Dieulacres Dugdale¹ cites a manuscript history of England which he

1. Monasticon, V. p. 627.

ascribes to Henry of Huntingdon, and which says that in the year that Earl Ranulph was captured (1146) Robert Pincerna began to found (inceptit fundare) the abbey of Poulton. A further statement, contrasting with this one, says that Poulton was founded, (i.e. that the foundation was completed) in 1153.¹ Dugdale did not, however, see this "manuscript history" at first hand. From his arrangement of the various extracts it is clear that he was quoting a transcript which had been sent to Roger Dodsworth by William Vernon of Shakerley in 1638,² and which had subsequently been passed on to him. Moreover, both Dugdale and the author of Vernon's MS were mistaken in ascribing the original work to Henry of Huntingdon, for apart from certain errors on the part of the transcribers, the extracts are in both cases identical with those sections of the Chronicle of Dieulacres Abbey³ which describe the foundation of Poulton and the translation of the convent to Dieulacres. The foliation which the author of the Vernon MS quotes at the beginning of each extract leave little doubt that he saw the Dieulacres Chronicle at first hand; but he was misled by an acknowledgement of f. 88 of this document⁴ into believing

1. ibid.

2. MS Bodley Dodsworth 41., ff. 94-96.

3. Gray's Inn MS no. 9. See below, pp. ~~149-50~~. 100-103

4. The acknowledgement states that the historical narrative which follows was written by Henry of Huntingdon. The section ends on f. 128r.

that because some of the earlier folios consisted of extracts from Henry of Huntingdon's Chronicle the entire manuscript could be ascribed to him. Not having seen the original for himself, Dugdale fell into the same trap. The relevant section of the **Chronicle** (ff.137v-140v.) is a thirteenth century account of the Earldom of Chester and the early history of Poulton and Dieulacres, put together by a monk of Dieulacres and transcribed into its present form in the early fifteenth century. Much of it is original work, written from a local viewpoint; and where the author *does* look to another source for his information he uses a continuation of the Polychronicon of Ranulph Higden - a far more relevant source for Cheshire events than Henry of Huntingdon, who is not quoted anywhere in this particular section of the **Chronicle**.

The Chronicle of Dieulacres will be dealt with in more detail in another chapter. Its importance in this context is to establish the fact that the foundation of Poulton Abbey was begun in 1146 and was completed by 1153; and this it does beyond any shadow of doubt. In addition to the two clear statements already referred to, the continuator goes on to say, on f. 138v., that Earl Ranulph made several benefactions to the monks of Poulton.

Since Ranulph II died in 1153 the monastery must obviously have been in existence before this date.

Robert Pincerna's grant consisted of half the lands in Poulton which he held of the Earl and which had been held by his family since before Domesday.¹ The original grant does not appear to have been made in frankalmoign² - certainly there is no mention of frankalmoign in the foundation charter. The grant was confirmed by Earl Ranulph as chief lord of the fee, and by Ranulph's son, Hugh Cyveliock, in about 1174.³ Here again, there is no mention of free-alms; but when Robert Pincerna of Engleby, the son of the founder, confirmed his father's grant, he did so "in perpetuum elemosinam....liberam et quietam ab omnibus secularibus serviciis."⁴ In the same charter he gave the monks the other half of Poulton, but this was to be held in fee-farm at an annual rent of three marks.

High Cyveliock confirmed this second grant, and released the monks from all the services which th

1. Ormerod, II, p. 860.

2. This was unusual and, indeed, irregular in the case of a Cistercian or Savigniac foundation.

3. DC/1/75.

4. *ibid.*, no. 78.

monks from all the services which were due to him as chief lord of the fee;¹ but it was not until 1241 that the heirs of Robert Pincerna quit the monks of the twenty shillings' rent which they were still obliged to pay each year for part of the Poulton estate.²

At a later date Robert Pincerna of Engleby gave the monks a **garden** near the bridge at Chester which had been excluded from the previous grant.³ He died in or around 1182, and as he had no male heirs his lands were partitioned between his daughters - Matilda, the wife of Roger de Somerville; and Edelina, who had married Ralph of Measham. Matilda, describing herself as Matilda Pincerna, granted the monks of Poulton quittance of five shillings' annual rent which they normally paid to her,⁴ and her husband confirmed her father's grant of the garden in Chester.⁵ After this time the Pincerna family seems to have severed its connections with Poulton, at least until the convent moved to Staffordshire. In any case, the family was now moving in Derbyshire circles - as early as 1130 they had

1. *ibid.*, no 79.

2. see below, p. ~~33~~

3. DC/1/no.92.

4. *ibid.*, no 86.

5. *ibid.*, no. 91; and E.C./Henry II/ no. 7.

taken up their residence at Engleby - and by granting the remainder of Poulton to the monks the founder's son was probably parting with the last remnant of his Cheshire estates. The rights of protection and custody, which normally belonged to the family of the founder of a monastery, now passed into the hands of the Earls of Chester.

In addition to confirming his father's charters to Poulton Abbey, Hugh Cyveliock, the fifth of the Norman Earls of Chester, made several gifts of his own, including certain lands and pastures at Gorstella and Kalvermore, to the north of Dodleston. It appears that there had been some controversy over these lands between the monks of Poulton and the men of the nearby village of Eaton.¹ Earl Hugh died in 1181 at his hunting-lodge at Swythamley, near the Staffordshire-Cheshire border; and he was succeeded in the earldom by his son, Ranulph III "de Blundeville". Ranulph confirmed his father's donations to the monks of Poulton, and in addition he gave them fishing rights on the Dee at Chester.²

1. DC/1/no. 77; and E.C./Henry II/ no. 1.

2. DC/1/no. 80.

The small nucleus of lands in and around Poulton was gradually augmented by the gifts of local benefactors. Richard, lord of Aldford, on the east bank of the Dee, gave the monks further fishing rights on those stretches of the river which flowed through his lands, and confirmed a previous charter by which he had given them certain lands in his manor.¹ He made a further donation of lands adjoining his manor of Alderley, together with rights of pasture and pannage.² At some date before 1213 Sir John Arderne, who had married Richard's daughter and heiress, succeeded to the Great Fee of Aldford, and he granted to Poulton Abbey certain other properties near Alderley in exchange for the lands which they held in the manor of Aldford. His charter was subsequently confirmed by Earl Ranulph.³ To the south of Aldford lay the village of Churton, near which the monks had established a grange; and their possessions here were added to by the gifts of Robert of Hokenhull.⁴

It is interesting to observe that most of the benefactions which were made to the monks of Poulton between

~~Excerpt~~

1. *ibid.*, no 97.

2. DC/1/no.92.

3. *ibid.*, no. 86.

4. *ibid.*, no 91; and E.C./Henry II/no. 7.

c.1200 and 1214 consisted of properties situated quite some distance away to the north-east of Poulton, and completely detached from the rest of the estates. In addition to the lands adjoining Alderley, Richard of Aldford gave the monks his manor of Byley, in the parish of Middlewich, with its mill and other appurtenances.¹ This grant took place at some date between 1209 and 1213; and it occasioned a series of grants and quitclaims from various landowners and tenants living in the vill of Byley. One such grant came from Hugo Judeus, whose son Henry confirmed it in return for a corrody.² After the translation of the convent to Dieulacres in 1214 the entire vill of Byley was given to the monks, in free-alms, by Ranulph de Blundeville.³ In 1210 the monks were given pasturing rights at Chelford and Withington, only a few miles from Macclesfield, through the gift of Gilbert Pigod.⁴

The acquisition of lands and privileges so far away from the abbey is not difficult to explain when one considers the fact that Poulton was very close to the Welsh border. There is evidence that the Poulton estates were on more than one occasion ravaged by bands of Welsh raiders who from time to time made incursions into the

1. *ibid.*, no. 97

2. DC/1/nos. 66, 98 & 99.

3. *ibid.* no. 65.

4. *ibid.*, no. 89.

Palatinate of Chester; and the livestock of the abbey would obviously have been far safer at Alderley and Chelford than at Aldford and Poulton. Richard of Aldford's charter gave the monks wide privileges as regards pasture and pannage. They were given a croft on which to grow barley and build a sheepfold, and enough pasture on which to keep thirty mares, sixty pigs and forty sheep.¹

The transference of livestock to safer pastures solved only part of the problem. The monks themselves were still in danger, and the conditions at Poulton could hardly have been ideal for the strict observances which the Cistercian regulations demanded. The abbey's patron, Ranulph de Blundeville, was doubtless aware of the situation, and eventually he gave the monks of Poulton a sizeable estate near his Staffordshire Manor of Leek on which to build a new monastery. On the 22nd April, 1214, the convent of Poulton was transferred to its new site, and the old abbey on the banks of the river Dee was reduced to the status of a grange.

Various theories have been put forward as to why the Earl took the initiative in the translation of the convent from Poulton. The Chronicle of Dieulacres contains an interesting story which may have some truth in it. The story tells of Ranulph's divorce from his first wife, Constance of Brittany, and his subsequent marriage to Clementia de

1. *ibid.*, no. 104.

Anglie & ffinae. Rex de ffincop idiam
fua festinavit iohannis est Rex corio
Anglie fca ibi uoxa aliquam ad m
fui iohannes nisi dno nnuicoyz et dnce
In fca captus Scuditus est impatori
allemanne Henr d quo in custodia du
tent redemptus est ab anglia p ead
unlibz Abzaz argenti Ranulpho com
ceffu qm cu Rege captus filiat Andree
qd comidap debet latent de custodia.
pda dnce hufte pdne emfit et iufmufi
me pthz dm manst

Anno .v.º nonagesimo nono Ricº
Rex qui jallo letare est unhat in obse
dione curdm capelli. ista Regem Ricº
quere dfficator sic extollit ptonno
vora deliquit qz Ricº impmst
Rege dnce uice vitiu ple capente.
En conlu letus fuit p forba qz faicez
Tora Gallia uensta Gallia conuicpit
Alma bytamea qn leonca uifa fiesit
vlt montan tista auulqz pagam
ab bellu pmd stutu timuef leonid
Rex e tunc qd pna pepert d fedº.
Quo subieroz jagm tenuit fcaidz
postea pfmud capto bellant endo
yffano teste fua ayda fit maifeste
dite fua uqz fuit elton reddita qmz
Cycimian fua altus hies penepit
Rajam naqz Dannaeta cepiam qz
He maidebat d gce uifia cadobab
Et fupadm uideit qn Galadim
Itu Ricº paxt postrema dadi
line neft faji in cor hio medtari
Quoim fozmari condidone paji
uortuo Rege Ricº Jobes fiat co fures
fit a ortodei amº jofut. De hie heredi
tilijs istus Regis in Gallia p ffices oau
patis ant quda neufta Jofus fuit i des
fensa sub amº. Qu qd deliquit Gallis
possessa reliquit

Ranulphus Comes cetero iudex de tñs
maximo pthz reliquit constancia co
mittissa hntame quda dndi de consilio
Regis honº dndat p copulauit d o lo
menca fua Radulphi de ffengese qe
Ranulphus Comes cu quada nocte fca
fuo quiescet appmt ei p fua Ranulph
Comes amº fms diceo. Vade ad ehol
posda lo qd est in tftoro de fca em
illo loco in quo queda capella i honore
lto gnye uare olim fuit cofmcta
ffmdibus abbtam abg ordie in dchop
e cam dfficijs m fca y abas p possessio
mbz amplabiz. Et est gaudiu tibi
e mltis alijs qm p lona illu saluabit
Ibi em engenda est scala p qua des
cendentes e ascendentes Angli ptea
e vota homi deo offerent e refertant
gram. Est qz nome dm inoatid sup
lona illi de pteone affidna. Et hoc t
hoz qz mico signu est. Pre dnc pº
xpianitate in Anglia in dnetia tu
mim ibis ad m dchoc de pntion qz
Abbtam pbtus pmdia ms i noie
meo fundant e papies ibi fuaqnta
dnc. Habent em pmlgnd hcc fms
fundatoribz ministis e in septimo
ano m d dionie tufferes eodem
m dchoc ad lona que p dixi. Que cu
Ranulphus Comes e lencencie comiffie
retuliffet e m dno loco se uelle coffyº
yofpnd m dcaffet. illa in Gallia dº
Ac indit d dng ences. Et comº cos
tulans ad dem emº. hoc mgmt est no
men emº lona Dealenges.

Ultimo .p. Jofus de anno mact mit dnd
in Anglia eo qd idem Rex Jofes fophm
de langneton Cantuarieus d p m
p ipm confirmatu p fugarit e dno joni
funtt. In fup m dchoc Cantuarieus p fugarit

In dnd
Anct

The Chronicle of Dieulacres Abbey, f. 139r. The legend of Ranulph de Blundeville's vision is recounted in col. II

rougerès. One night, the Earl had a dream in which he saw a vision of his grandfather, Ranulph II, in whose name the monastery of Poulton had originally been founded. The Earl was told by his ghostly ancestor to go to "Cholpesdale", in the vicinity of Leek, and to establish a monastery of White Monks at a place where there was once a chapel dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. He was also told that the Pope was shortly to place England under Interdict, and that in the seventh year of the Interdict the convent of Poulton was to be transferred to its new site. When the Earl awoke from his dream he told his wife of the vision. On hearing that a new monastery was to be founded, Clemencia is recorded to have said, in Norman-French, "Deux encres" (i.e., "May God prosper it"). Thereupon the Earl declared that the name of the new foundation would be Deulencres. The Chronicler goes on to say that when Ranulph laid the foundation stone of the new abbey he repeated his wife's blessing, "Deux encres," and those standing by responded, "Amen".¹

The story of the vision is impossible to prove or disprove, but it would appear that for some years before 1214 the earl had some scheme in mind for the re-foundation of Poulton. As patron de facto he probably felt obliged to do

1. Dieulacres Chronicle, f. 139r. See below, pp.200-203

something for the abbey with which his ancestors had been so closely connected, and to alleviate the difficulties which the monks were facing. Although alternative theories have been advanced as to the origin of the name "Dieulacres",¹ there is no real reason for thinking that the story in the Chronicle is untrue, especially when one bears in mind the fact that the chronicler consistently refers to the abbey as "Doulencres", and that this form of spelling occurs frequently in other contemporary documents relating to the abbey. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that a Premonstratensian abbey called Dieulacresse was founded in Ireland in about 1200.²

It has already been noted that there was nothing particularly extraordinary about a Cistercian monastery changing its site. In Staffordshire alone two communities moved to new sites within a few years of their foundation. The monks of Radmore moved to Stoneleigh, Warwickshire, after fourteen unsettled years; and the convent which the Verdun family established at Cotton in 1176 moved to Croxden some two years later. The strange thing about the move from Poulton to Dieulacres was that the monks were leaving a site which they had occupied and cultivated for sixty years in

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1. The Rev. Thomas Barnes suggested that it might be a play on the Celtic words tulach rus (i.e. "Wooded hill"). The high ground behind the abbey is, in fact, known as Hillswood, and was so called in the 13th century. "Some further Notes on Celtic Place Names," Trans. N.S.F.C. 1910, p.163.
 2. R. Aubert & E. Van Cauwenbergh (ed.), Dictionnaire d'Histoire et de Géographie Ecclesiastiques, vol. 4, 1960, cols. 452-3.

order to go to a wilderness in the Staffordshire Moorlands where a good deal of effort would be required to make the land fit for use. The Dieulacres Chronicle states quite clearly that the Earl's main motive for transferring the monks from Poulton was the damage which was being caused to the monastic estates by the Welsh invaders.³ Troublesome as the Welsh raiders must have been, one cannot help feeling that the Earl had an economic motive as well. The Cistercians were by this time renowned as agriculturalists and pioneers of land-development; and the Earl's estates in the north of Staffordshire were in need of development at the beginning of the thirteenth century. Perhaps Ranulph had heard of the progress which was being made by the monks of Croxden, not far away from the manor of Leek, and saw in the foundation of a Cistercian abbey an ideal solution to his own problems in the area.

The reference in the Dieulacres Chronicle to the Chapel of the Blessed Virgin seems to indicate that there was some kind of religious establishment at Dieulacres before the Cistercians arrived there in 1214, and there is a certain amount of archaeological evidence to support this. Close by the abbey ruins, at the side of the road which leads to Abbey Farm, there is a cavern which runs several feet into the hillside. It appears to be partly natural and partly man-

1. "maxime propter incursiones Wallensium per quos multa dampna perpassi sunt." Dieulacres Chronicle, fo. 139v.

made; and the interior is divided into three cells, two of which occupy the now open front of the cave. The third is much smaller, and is cut into the rock behind the other two. The left-hand cell has a small aumbry cut into the wall, at the back of which is an ornamented engraving. The remains of a doorway are still to be seen, together with a chimney-groove and the weather-groove of a roof which once overhung the entrance. It is thought¹ that this was once the "Chapel of Our Lady" referred to in the story of the vision, and that like the ill-fated abbey at Radmore, Dieulacres was built round an existing hermitage.

The foundation charter of Dieulacres² gives the details of the boundaries of Earl Ranulph's grant as follows: "by the water of Luddebeche, which runs between Rudyard and Leek as far as the house of Ralph Bec, and from thence to Merebroc, and from Merebroc to Gaviendhul and down by the house of Dodi as far as 'Sepulchrum Thoni'. From thence to Falingbroc and by Falingbroc to Fulhe and from thence to Luddebeche."³ At first sight these landmarks seem rather puzzling, and the village of Meerbrook is the only one which is readily recognisable today. "Luddebeche",

1. Vide M.H. Miller, Olde Leeke, vol. I, 1891, p.150-152.

2. DC/2/no. 1.

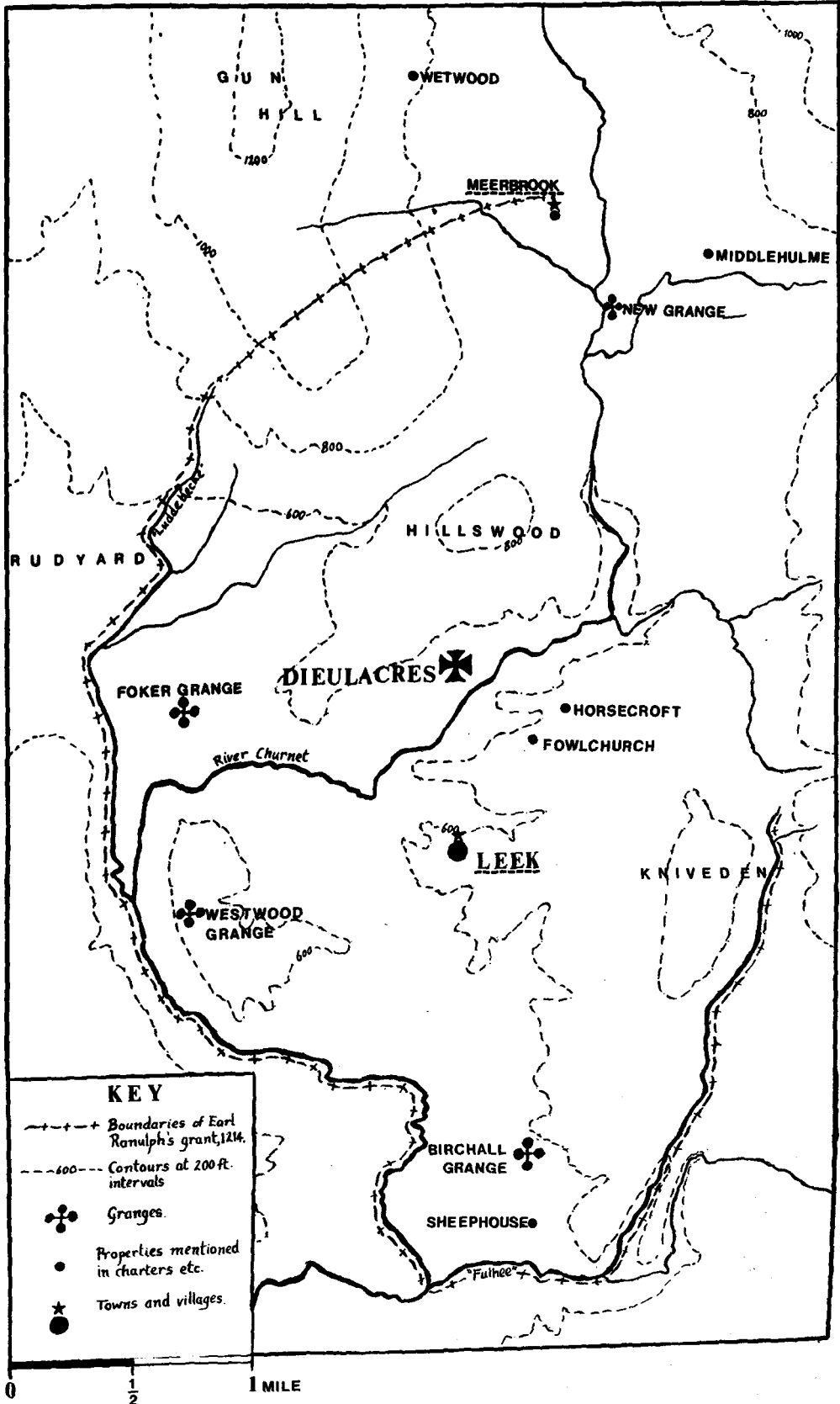
3. In an Inspeximus of 1467 (CvP.R., 1467-1477, pp.34-5) and in certain other documents where the charter is quoted, the final boundary mark is given as "Luddebroc" or "Lodebroc."

"Falingbroc" and "Fulhe" are obviously names of streams, and although none of these names has survived to the present day it is possible to make certain deductions as to their whereabouts (see Map 2). "Luddebeche" is described as running between Rudyard and Leek. Apart from the River Churnet, which is not mentioned anywhere in the charter, the only stream which answers to this description is the one which rises on the southern slopes of Gun Hill, not far from Rudyard Hall (ref. SJ967596). This stream is followed by a modern parish boundary and it enters the Churnet below Westwood Hall. Presumably the house of Ralph Bec stood somewhere near the source of this stream, and from here the boundary would have followed a north-easterly course to the village of Meerbrook. "Gaviendhul" is impossible to identify by any modern place-name;² but it has been suggested that the house of Dodi or Dodin might be equated with Dane's Mill at Upperhulme.³ The streams referred to as "Falingbroc", "Fulhe" and "Luddebroc" are mentioned in other documents. In an agreement settling a dispute between Dieulacres and the neighbouring abbey of Hulton over pasture rights at Morridge, Fulhee is described as running between Morridge and the River Churnet

2. The Inspeimus of 1467 gives it as "Quamendhul."

3. W. Beresford, "The Cartulary of Dieulacres Abbey" Trans. N.S.F.C., Vol. 39 (1904-5), p.161.

DIEULACRES circa 1230



"outside the boundaries of Birchall and Bradnop."¹ As late as the eighteenth century this stream was still known as Fulhee, for in the 1730's the Rev. Thomas Loxdale, then Vicar of Leek, wrote of "Cartledge-brook which creeps along under Kniveden till it falls into Fulhee."² Fulhee, therefore, can definitely be identified with the stream which runs down the valley between Bradnop and Ashenhurst, joining Cartledge brook below Birchall (ref. SJ994539) and entering the Churnet at Leekbrook. If we assume that Falingbroc was the medieval name for Cartledge brook,³ then we can plot the eastern and southern boundaries of the estate fairly accurately.

Meerbrook appears to have been the northernmost boundary, and Fulhee the southernmost. Within the boundaries of the estate were the areas known as Foker, Westwood and Birchall, where granges were established in the early years. New Grange, to the south of Meerbrook was also within the suggested boundaries, and the fact that none of these properties appears to have been acquired by a separate grant⁴ gives weighty support to the argument that the original grant of 1214 included properties to the south of Leek as well as to the north. The Manor of Leek itself was not

1. DC/1/no. 174.

2. ~~In an Inquisition of 1467 (C.P.R., 1467-1477, pp. 34-35) and~~
In an unpublished manuscript history of Leek, preserved at St. Edward's Vicarage, Leek.

3. Later boundary disputes between Dieulacres and Hulton make it fairly certain that the eastern boundary ran along this brook, below Morridge. See below, pp. 50-52

4. No such grants are recorded in the Cartularies. The only charter relating to Birchall (DC/1/11 is a quitclaim.

included in Earl Ranulph's charter, but it was acquired by the abbey shortly afterwards. In fact, its appropriation by Dieulacres was almost inevitable, for the grant of 1214 left it as a kind of island in a sea of monastic property. The original charter by which the manor was granted to the abbey is no longer extant, but a confirmation of it appears in the fourteenth century cartulary roll in the Salt Library.¹ An Inquisition of 1339 tells us that the manor was granted to Dieulacres some 60 years before the Statute of Mortmain, i.e. around 1219.²

After the foundation of Dieulacres in 1214, Ranulph of Chester became preoccupied with more weighty matters, and he left the monks to their own devices for a time. As the greatest baron in the realm, and a co-executor of King John's will, he was greatly involved in the affairs of the kingdom during the minority of Henry III; and one of the first tasks to be completed after the death of King John in 1216 was the defeat of the invasion which Prince Louis of France had mounted against England. This done, Ranulph went on a crusade to the Holy Land where he made something of a name for himself as a soldier of Christ. However, Dieulacres was not entirely forgotten. On the return

1. DC/2/no. 2.

2. C.Cl.R., Ed. III, 1339-1341, pp. 204-5.

journey from the Holy Land there was a fearful storm at sea; and it occasioned great panic amongst the terrified crew of the ship. By some means or other the Earl managed to put on a brave face, and he was apparently undisturbed by the prospect of a watery grave. The next day, when the storm had subsided, the captain of the ship asked him why he had not been afraid. Ranulph replied that he had taken great comfort from the fact that around midnight he had thought of the monks of Dieulacres, who at that time would have been saying the Night Offices; and that because of their prayers God had given him strength and stilled the storm.¹

On his return to England, the Earl built two castles: one at Beeston and the other at Chartley. He made further gifts to the monks of Dieulacres, including a large area of land at Leekfrith. This grant,² made between 1229 and 1232, consisted of the areas known as Gun and Wetwood, adjoining the northern boundaries of the grant of 1214. The monks were also given the corn-mills at Leek and Hulme, where the Earl ordered his men to have their corn ground.³ Ranulph issued two charters addressed to his constable, justiciar,

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1. Dieulacres Chronicle, f. 139v. The Chronicle of the Cistercian house of Vale Royal, Cheshire, contains a similar story about Edward I. The foundation of Vale Royal by Edward in 1277 was a kind of thank-offering for safe deliverance from a storm at sea. Vide Ormerod, II.p.147.
 2. DC/i/no. 24.
 3. *ibid.* No. 2.

sheriff, and all his bailiffs and men stating that the monks of Dieulacres, their men and all their possessions, were in his custody and protection. The monks were to be quit of all courts, tolls, aids, customs and demands for the lands which they had acquired or were to acquire in the future.¹ A third charter of protection, relating more specifically to the abbey's possessions in Cheshire, declared that the Dieulacres estates were held in frankalmoign, and that neither the Earl nor his heirs were to have any rights therein.²

Although Earl Ranulph formally took over the rights of custody and protection, the patronage of the abbey still lay, technically speaking, with the heirs of Robert Pincerna; and the monks were still obliged to pay an annual rent of twenty shillings for part of the Poulton estate to William of Measham, who was the heir of Robert's daughter, Edelina. William objected to the translation of the convent from Poulton, and a controversy over this matter between William and the abbot went on until 1241, when William finally quit-claimed the rent and any other rights which he claimed over the abbey, asking in return that his body might be buried at Dieulacres.³

1. *ibid.*, nos. 167 & 169.

2. *ibid.*, no. 170.

3. *ibid.*, nos. 181 & 182.

At some date between 1215 and 1224 the Earl asked the Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, William de Cornhull, to grant the Parish Church of St. Edward the Confessor, Leek, together with its chapelries, to the monks of Dieulacres. The Bishop, "taking compassion on the poverty of the house of Dieulacres, and observing their laudable life and honest conversation," acceded to the Earl's request.¹ The monks accepted the gift, in spite of the Cistercian injunctions concerning the possession of advowsons and churches.² In addition to Leek, the monks also held the advowsons of Sandbach, Rocester and Cheddleton. The advowson of Cheddleton proved, in the long run, to be something of a burden, as we shall see in a later chapter.

Ranulph de Blundeville's last benefaction to Dieulacres was his heart, which he bequeathed to be buried there.³ He died at Wallingford in October 1232. His body was buried ~~with~~ alongside those of his ancestors in the Chapter House of St. Werburgh's Abbey at Chester; and at Dieulacres, above the spot where his heart was interred, a marble

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1. DC/1/nos. 3-8. The chapelries were at Ipstones, Horton and Cheddleton. Rushton was added at a later date. The advowson of Cheddleton was held separately by the lords of Cheddleton. See below, pp. 102-106.
 2. "Ecclesias, altaria, sepulturas, decimas, alieni laboris vel nutrimentis, villas, villanos....et his similia monasticae puritati adversantia, nostri et nominis et ordinis excludit institutio." Statuta, I, pp. 14-15.
 3. Ormerod (vol. I, p. 40) quotes a transcript of this charter which he found in a 17th, century manuscript. The original charter was supposed to have been in the possession of Mr. Thomas Rudyard of Rudyard, but it does not appear in Benjamin Rudyard's transcription of the Dieulacres Cartulary.

monument was erected, bearing the following inscription:

"Proh dolor in muro iacens hic sub marmore duro
 Cor Comitum clausum qui cunctis prestitit ausum
 Christi Dei filii quo cuncta creantur in yli¹
 Hostia facta poli Ranulpho claudere noli.

The Dieulacres Chronicle contains an interesting story concerning the Earl's death. The legend runs that on the day that Ranulph died "a great company in the likeness of men, headed by a certain powerful person," hastily passed by an anchorite's cell near Wallingford. The hermit asked them where they were going to in such a hurry, and one of them replied, "We are demons making speed to the death of Earl Ranulph, to the end that we may accuse him of his sins." On hearing this, the hermit asked the demon to return the same way and let him know what took place. The demon came accordingly, and said that for his iniquities the Earl had been condemned to the torments of Hell; but that "the great hounds of Dieulacres and with them many other dogs² had howled so loudly when the sentence was passed that the depths of Hell had been disturbed by the noise, and their prince had been compelled to release Ranulph. The demon added that no greater enemy of theirs had ever entered the kingdom of darkness, inasmuch as the prayers which had been offered for him had released from the torments the souls of thousands who had been associated with them in these supplications."³

1. Dieulacres Chronicle, f. 140r.

2. Obviously a derogatory term for the monks.

3. Dieulacres Chronicle, f. 140v.

Ranulph died without issue, and the Earldom passed into the hands of his nephew, John Scot, Earl of Huntingdon. John confirmed all the charters which his uncle had granted to the monks of Dieulacres, and placed the abbey under his protection.¹ John died without heirs in 1237, and the succession to the Earldom raised difficult problems. He had four sisters: Margaret, who through her marriage to Alan of Galway became the grandmother of John Baliol, future King of Scotland; Isabella, mother of Robert Bruce; Alda, the wife of Henry Hastings; and Matilda, who died without issue. The rights to the title and the appurtenances of the Earl which were considered to be impartible were eventually settled upon Isabella, the elder daughter of John's eldest sister, who had married William de Forz, Count of Aumâle. A dispute arose as to whether the lands of the county of Chester went with the title, but they were finally agreed to be partible. Henry III bought up all the rights of the co-heiresses, "ne tam preclara dominacio inter colos feminarum dividi contingeret,"² William de Forz and his wife quitclaimed all their rights to the title to the Crown. Henry divided the Honor of Huntingdon into three parts, one of which he gave to the father of Robert Bruce, and another to Alan of Galway. The third was granted to Henry Hastings, the grandfather of John Hastings of Abergavenny. The title to the Earldom of Chester was now safely in the hands of the Crown.

1. DC/1/nos. 165 & 166.

2. Dieulacres Chronicle, f. 140v & Higden, Polychronicon, VIII, pp. 208-9

Clemencia, the widow of Ranulph de Blundeville, lived on for some twenty years after the death of her husband. She died in 1253 and was buried at Dieulacres. The only miracle which is recorded to have taken place at the abbey is supposed to have occurred at her tomb. It concerns a blind monk who received his sight through the merits and intercessions of the Countess.¹

In the year following the death of the Countess, Henry III gave the shire and city of Chester to his eldest son, the Lord Edward; and from this time onwards it ~~has been~~ was customary for the eldest son of the reigning monarch to be created Earl of Chester. The fate of the Earldom was of crucial importance to the monks of Dieulacres, and the acquisition of the title by the Crown was to have far-reaching consequences. Ever since the foundation of Poulton in 1146 the Earls of Chester had taken a keen interest in the abbey, and had guaranteed to uphold all the privileges which the monks enjoyed. The rights of patronage now devolved upon the heirs to the Throne; but apart from the Lord Edward, Edward III and the Black Prince, few of them took more than an intermittent interest in Dieulacres. Now that the Earldom was in royal hands there was even some doubt as to the status of the abbey, and at least one sovereign tried to claim that the abbot held his lands as a tenant-in-chief of the Crown.² To the King, the Earls of Chester had been over-mighty subjects, but to the monks of Poulton and Dieulacres they had been generous

1. Dieulacres Chronicle f. 140v.

2. i.e. Edward III in 1346. See below, pp. 109-111.

benefactors and powerful protectors. Once the Norman Earldom had disappeared, the monks had no effective local patron who would take ~~and~~ a continued and active interest in their affairs and, what was probably even more important, no-one to keep a watchful eye on their activities.

By the time of John Scot's death the new monastery of Dieulacres was firmly established, and it had a steady source of income from three groups of estates. However, as far as strict observance of the Cistercian Statutes was concerned, it was doomed to failure from the very beginning. It was a sign of the times that among the gifts which the convent accepted was the Manor of Leek, together with all its rights and privileges. Ownership of manorial rights was wholly contrary to the spirit of the Cistercian Order, which had sought, through its insistence on the use of granges and lay-brethren, to avoid the evils which inevitably arose from the adoption of a manorial economy. The Order had always permitted the use of hired labour, but the manorial system, with its villeins, rents, revenues and courts was expressly forbidden. Almost from the very start the abbots of Dieulacres were more than just spiritual leaders; and their involvement in secular affairs, which was the natural consequence of their position as feudal lords, brought them out of that atmosphere of retirement from the world which had been the ideal of the early fathers of Cîteaux, and into an atmosphere of commerce

and lawsuits. Their possession of scattered estates in Staffordshire, Cheshire and Lancashire made complete retirement from the world impossible anyhow; and in addition, the administrative problems which arose after 1214 could not be solved by granges and lay-brethren alone. As far as Dieulacres was concerned, a change to a manorial economy was a necessary evil; and it is hardly surprising to find that the process began at a much earlier date than in most Cistercian monasteries.

Chapter Two.

THE ESTATES OF DIEULACRES IN STAFFORDSHIRE, c1220 - 1300

The Earl of Chester's grants left Dieulacres with a sizeable estate; but the biggest part of it was covered with heath, moorland and forest. The lands to the north of the village of Meerbrook were known as the Frith (derived from the Old English fyrh i.e. "woodland") and a good deal of disafforestation was needed in order to turn it into good agricultural land. A large part of Gun Hill remains desolate and windswept to this day, and over to the east the sheer rocky precipices of the Roaches and Hen Cloud look very much as they did centuries ago. Beyond the Roaches, the abbey's estates included Swythamley, where the northernmost grange was established, and the mysterious Back Forest, which leads down to the River Dane and Black Brook, the northern boundaries of the estate.¹ The abbey itself was built just to the north of Leek, below Hillswood, where the River Churnet wound its way through a wide fertile valley. At some time in the middle of the thirteenth century the course of the river was straightened and pushed back to the side of the valley nearest to the town,² and this operation left a wide, flat area of cultivable land between the abbey buildings and the Churnet;

but as the river bed had been raised in places by as much

1. Swythamley and these northern areas were acquired by separate grants after 1214. They may have formed part of the appurtenances of the manor of Leek.
2. The Churnet still flows along this artificial course.

as ten feet above the floor of the valley and held in check by an artificial embankment, precautions had to be taken against flooding. Medieval technology may have been primitive by modern standards, but the Cistercian monks were renowned in their day for their skill in reclaiming waste land and for the techniques which they used. In the Churnet valley the monks of Dieulacres laid an intricate system of drains to cope with any flooding which might occur, and many of these drains are still serving a useful purpose. Down the centre of the valley, following approximately the old course of the Churnet, a large stone-lined culvert was constructed, and smaller drains ran into it at regular intervals. The course of this culvert can still be traced as it runs from a point near to the abbey ruins towards Broad's Bridge on the Abbey Green Road. From here it sweeps away to the north-west and enters the Churnet at Bridge End. The culvert was large enough to give rise to a legend (which is still popular in the locality) of a secret tunnel leading from the abbey to St. Edward's Church, nearly a mile away. For technical reasons alone it is unlikely that such a tunnel could ever have been constructed, nor ^{can} any rational explanation be found as to why the monks of Dieulacres should have frittered away their time and energies on such a pointless operation.

The best land lay mainly in or near the Churnet valley, and it is here that the first granges were established. The principal granges were at Foker, Westwood, Birchall and Beerbrook (New Grange). The use of the grange system necessitated the extensive use of Conversi or lay-brethren who would have been recruited from the neighbourhood to perform the manual tasks of the community, under the supervision of the abbey's Cellarer. The Cistercian regulations required that the granges be no more than a day's journey away from the monastery; otherwise adequate supervision would be impossible. Choir monks were not permitted to live on the granges, and the lay-brethren themselves were required to return to the monastery from time to time.¹ When one group of conversi were ready to leave their grange, another group would take their place. This system enabled the lay-brethren to become familiar with all parts of the estate, and also to spend some time in the convent itself. In the case of the granges which lay close to the abbey site it is unlikely that the conversi lived there permanently; and in the case of Dieulacres there would have been no difficulty in running places like Foker and Westwood on a day-to-day basis. The use of hired labour was permitted by the Cistercian Order, and as Lord of the Manor of Leek the Abbot of Dieulacres

1. Vide Statuta, I, p. 29 (1134).

would have found little difficulty in finding enough labourers to work on his demesne land.

However, as far as the more distant granges, such as Roach Grange and Swythamley, were concerned, the convent must have relied almost entirely on the use of conversi, for they were situated in the more remote parts of Leckfrith, and there were no settlements close at hand. In theory at any rate the use of conversi had two big advantages over the manorial system, which was a feature of Black Monk economy. It enabled the Cistercians to exploit their possessions without relying too heavily on outside assistance, and it also enabled men who were too illiterate to become choir monks to enjoy some form of monastic life. The disadvantages of the conversi system were revealed particularly in the more remote areas where they infused into the monasteries a good deal of the character of the locality. This character was not always a wholesome one, as was the case on some of the Welsh granges.¹ In the thirteenth century, when granges multiplied rapidly, it became quite common to abandon the idea of direct supervision of the granges, and allow the conversi to run them by themselves. Many of the granges ceased, therefore, to be conventual, and became purely economic units without any religious significance.

1. In 11946 the conversi of Cwmhir stole the abbot's horses in revenge for his prohibition of beer. Statuta, I, p.191 No.66.

Throughout the middle years of the thirteenth century the Staffordshire estates of Dieulacres continued to grow, and in the main they were consolidated into compact holdings. The abbey's possessions on the west side of Gun Hill were augmented by the addition of Barnswood, in the fee of Rudyard.¹ Further to the north, land was acquired at Heaton in exchange for certain lands which the monks held as parcel of the church of Cheddleton; and the grant of Wormhough, at the north-west of Heaton, brought the Dieulacres estates down to the River Dane at Hugbridge.²

To the east of Gun Hill Dieulacres acquired an eighth part of the villis of Upperhulme, Middlehulme and Netherhulme by the gift of Henry, son of William the Forester in about 1240. In return for this gift, Henry received a corrody and the sum of twenty shillings to pay for his son's wedding.³ Shortly afterwards further lands at Hulme were granted to the abbey by Benedict de Coudrey. Benedict's charter is interesting, for it gives the boundaries of the abbot's forest which apparently extended from Hulme in a north-westerly direction across the Roaches and down to Black Brook and the River Dane.⁴

In addition to these grants of lands which were adjoin-

1. DC/1/nos. 15-19.

2. *ibid.*, nos. 31 & 33.

3. *ibid.*, no. 25.

4. *ibid.*, no 27. It is not known how the convent originally came to be in possession of this forest, unless it was in some way attached to the Manor of Leek.

ing, or in close proximity to the main estates of the abbey, several grants were made consisting of land situated quite some distance away. By virtue of their possession of Leek Parish Church, the monks were responsible for the parochial chapels of Cheddleton, Ipstones, Rushton and Horton; and it is hardly surprising to find that they came to possess lands and privileges in each of these places. In addition to the lands belonging to Cheddleton church, they were given a further messuage at Cheddleton on which to build a grange. The main purpose of this grange was the storing of various tithe-offerings. Adjoining the grange the monks were to have sufficient pasture-land on which to graze the oxen which drew the tithe-waggons to the grange at harvest-time.¹ The abbot enjoyed pasturing rights at Ipstones,² and at Horton he held four bovates known as Cockshut Hay by the grant of Ranulph de Blundeville.³ Further land at Horton was given by Ranulph Large in about 1240. Ranulph's charter gave back to the abbey certain lands at Horton and Gratton which he had received from the convent at some earlier date in exchange for land at Birchall.⁴

The most distant of the abbey's estates in Staffordshire were at Field, in the parish of Leigh, near Uttoxeter.

1. DC/1/no. 34.

2. *ibid.*, nos. 178-9. Vide also

S.H.C., vol.IV, pt.I, p.102.

3. DC/1/no. 21.

4. *ibid.*, no. 20.

In about 1245 Alice de Seymore, sister of the Lord of Field, and widow of William de Leigh, gave to the abbot and convent of Dieulacres all the lands and buildings which she had received as a dowry at the time of her marriage. The donation included 52 selions or strips of ploughland, free pannage for pigs in the woods at Field, and common of pasture, at a nominal rent of six barbed arrows per year.¹ At a later date, Henry de Field, son of Alice de Seymore, granted to Dieulacres some 8½ acres of land in Field which his mother had given to him, together with some buildings situated near to those which the monks were already using.² Other gifts which the convent received round about this time included one acre and sixteen selions of land at Field together with a villein and his family.³ This last gift gives some indication of how the estates at Field were exploited. It is very unlikely that the grange and conversi systems would have been introduced there. The land was already under cultivation and had buildings on it, and it is almost certain that the monks of Dieulacres would have adopted wholesale the manorial system which was already in operation there.

1. *ibid.*, no. 36.

2. *ibid.*, no. 39.

3. *ibid.*, no. 40. The acceptance of villein service was, of course, wholly contrary to Cistercian legislation.

It has already been noted that Dieulacres was a late foundation. By 1214 the monastic settlement of Staffordshire was virtually complete, and the existing houses had a considerable interest in some of the areas where the new monastery of Dieulacres was making acquisitions. This inevitably led to disputes over the proximity of granges, pasturing rights and tithes; and there are references to many of these disputes in the decrees of the Cistercian Chapter and in the Dieulacres Cartulary.

The acquisition of land at Field was the cause of a dispute which arose between Dieulacres and Croxden in the 1240's. At the time of the foundation of Dieulacres an agreement had been made between the two houses to the effect that the monks of Dieulacres could acquire any lands they wished within a mile of their own abbey; but outside that mile they were not to acquire any lands in the direction of Croxden except those which belonged either to the Manor of Leek or to the demesne lands of the Earl of Chester.¹ Field was quite close to Croxden, and when the monks of Dieulacres accepted Alice Seymore's gift the abbot of Croxden accused them of breaking the agreement. The matter was brought before the General Chapter in 1248, and the abbots of Buildwas and Rufford were appointed to investigate and settle the dispute.²

1. DC/1/no. 40.

2. Statuta, 1248, no. 30.

The quarrel was not finally resolved until 1251, when it was agreed in the presence of the adjudicators that the abbot of Croxden should allow the monks of Dieulacres to keep all the lands which they already held at Field, and to acquire more in the future if they so desired. If the convent of Croxden wished to hold any land there, they were to seek the permission of the abbot of Dieulacres. Similarly, the monks of Dieulacres were to seek licence from Croxden before acquiring^{any} land at Field which was situated nearer to Croxden or to Leyes Grange than their existing holdings. Notwithstanding this agreement, or any decree of the General Chapter regarding the distance between granges,¹ the monks of Croxden were permitted to acquire whatever lands and possessions they wished around the vill of Field; and the monks of Dieulacres were allowed to acquire possessions which were more distant from Croxden and Leyes Grange. In addition, the abbot of Dieulacres granted to the convent of Croxden quittance of markets, fairs, tolls and whatever other dues they might be liable to pay in the town of Leek.²

Croxden was not the only monastery which quarreled with Dieulacres over the proximity of estates. In 1241 the

1. The minimum permitted distance between the granges of different houses was six miles. Statuta, I, p.20 (1134) no. 32.

2. DC/1/no. 175.

General Chapter instructed the abbots of Buildwas, Croxden and Rufford to investigate a dispute which had arisen between Dieulacres and its mother-house, Combermere.¹ The monks of Dieulacres had built a grange at Swythamley,² less than a mile away from the grange which the monks of Combermere had established at Wincle, on the other side of the River Dane; and it appears that the monks of Combermere were claiming pasturing rights in the Swythamley area. An agreement was finally reached whereby the abbot of Combermere renounced all claims to pasture within the boundaries of the Manor of Leek. In addition he undertook not to raise any further dispute over the proximity of any granges which the monks of Dieulacres established within those boundaries. The abbot of Dieulacres was permitted to enclose his pasture-land with a fence and a ditch, and a further agreement was made with Combermere regarding the recovery of any animals which might accidentally stray from one estate to the other.³

The constitutions of the Cistercian Order had originally forbidden the acceptance of tithes,⁴ but a distinction soon grew up between the tithes belonging to the lands which the

1. Statuta II, (1241). no. 57

2. The Earls of Chester once had a kind of hunting-lodge at Swythamley, and Hugh Cyveliok is supposed to have died here in 1181. It was probably an appurtenance of the Manor of Leek, for it does not appear to have come to Dieulacres by a separate grant.

3. DC/1/no. 172.

4. Statuta, I, pp.14-15 (1134).

Cistercians worked for themselves, and the tithes of goods produced by other men. The former they naturally kept for themselves, and the latter they originally refused to accept. However, the acquisition of churches inevitably led to the acceptance of both kinds of tithe, as in the case of Dieulacres. Leek Parish Church had dependent chapelries situated outside the boundaries of the monastic estates, and attempts were made to exact tithes not only from individuals, but also from other religious houses holding land in the parish of Leek.

In the 1240's a dispute arose between Dieulacres and the neighbouring Cistercian foundation at Hulton. Hulton had been founded in 1219 by Henry de Audley, and the various grants which had been made to the abbey included lands at Bradnop and Morridge, close to the estates of Dieulacres, and within the boundaries of the parish of Leek. The tithes of Bradnop belonged to St. Edward's Church, Leek, and the dispute concerned the payment of these tithes as well as the question of pasturing rights in Bradnop and on Morridge. Numerous clashes occurred, and in 1249 the abbots of Buildwas and Rufford were instructed by the General Chapter to resolve the dispute and to define the respective rights of Dieulacres and Hulton in these areas.¹ An agreement was reached whereby the

1. *ibid.*, II. p.

(1249) no. 45.

abbot of Dieulacres was to allow the monks of Hulton to retain the lands which they had already enclosed at Mixon, to the north-west of Bradnop. They were also permitted to have a sheepfold and whatever else they wished to have at Mixon, so long as there was suitable access to common pasture land for the benefit of both houses. The monks of Hulton were permitted to enclose 240 acres of land around their sheepfold, but if they used any part of this land for growing crops they were to pay tithes of novalia (i.e. newly-sown lands) for the whole acreage to the abbot of Dieulacres. After the crops had been gathered, the monks of Dieulacres were to be allowed to take their cattle there for autumn grazing. As long as the 240 acres remained enclosed, the abbot of Hulton was to pay half a mark annually to the abbot of Dieulacres, or ten shillings if it remained unenclosed. In addition, the abbot of Hulton undertook to make no further encroachments in the parish of Leek without licence from Dieulacres. The tithes of Bradnop still remained as an appurtenance of the Parish Church of Leek, and as such they were paid to the abbot of Dieulacres. A further concession was made by the abbot of Hulton to the effect that the monks of Dieulacres were to have common of pasture on Morridge for all their pigs, and pasture for 200 cattle during the summer months. In return, the monks of Hulton were permitted to bring their cattle down as far as the River Churnet, but they were to remain outside

the boundaries of Birchall Grange. Any monk or conversus of Hulton who presumed to break this agreement was to be dealt with by the abbot of Dieulacres, and vice-versa.¹ A later agreement states that the abbot of Combermere (the father-abbot of both Dieulacres and Hulton) was to see that these terms were adhered to.²

The establishment of a grange and tithe-barn at Cheddleton has already been mentioned. In the 1240's the monks of Dieulacres built a bridge over the River Churnet in order to make access to this grange easier; and they also proposed to construct a road to connect the bridge with the grange. The lands which they owned at Cheddleton bordered on the lands of Wall Grange, which belonged to the Augustinian Priory of Trentham; and it appears that the proposed new road was to pass through this property. The Priory naturally took exception to the scheme, but an agreement between the two houses was eventually reached in about 1244. The Prior of Trentham allowed the monks of Dieulacres to proceed with the work, and they were permitted to bring their waggons to and from the bridge through parts of Wall Grange. However, they were not to claim any rights to pasture on the Prior's land; but any animals which might accidentally stray from one property to the other were to be returned to their rightful owners.³

Around the same time, another dispute arose between

1. DC/1/no. 173.

2. *ibid.*, no. 174.

3. DC/1/no. 177.

Dieulacres and Trentham. This time it concerned the question of tithes, and eventually the quarrel came to the ears of Pope Innocent IV who, in September 1246, appointed the abbot of Lavendon (Premonstratensian) and the Prior of Wroxton (Augustinian) as arbitrators. The abbot of Dieulacres had sued the prior of Trentham for various tithes in the land of Wall, including the tithes of novalia, the young of **animals** on the pastures of Wall Grange, and various other **small** tithes which the abbot claimed as the right of the Church of Leek. In 1257 the two parties reached an agreement. The abbot remitted the action which he had begun against the Priory, and he also renounced his claim to the tithes of novalia and the young of animals. However, he was allowed to keep the tithes of certain meadows and lands which the Church of Leek had been accustomed to receive from time immemorial, together with tithes from the meadows and lands of all the Prior's tenants at Wall. In return for this concession the Prior was to pay the sum of two shillings annually to the church of Leek for as long as he continued to hold the lands at Wall. If at any time the priory conveyed the land to the Hospitallers, Templars, or to any other privileged body, they were still to pay the two shillings; but if the land was sold to any secular persons then the buyers would be liable to pay the full tithes of novalia.¹

Tithes were the subject of a quarrel which took place

around 1240 between the abbot of Dieulacres and William of Ipstones. The chapel at Ipstones belonged to Leek Parish Church, and as patron of the church the abbot claimed certain tithes at Ipstones as his right. The Archdeacon of Stafford was called in to settle the controversy, and it was agreed that for the duration of his life William of Ipstones should pay a hay-tithe of twelve shillings per year, and that his men should pay a tithe of eight shillings.¹

By about 1270 the estates of Dieulacres in Staffordshire were virtually complete, and it appears that the abbey was finally at peace with its neighbours after a difficult settling-down period. In 1279 the Statute of Mortmain temporarily checked the flow of bequests of land to religious houses all over the country. For many years there had been complaints that lords were losing services and escheats because of the large amount of land which was being alienated into the "dead hand" of the Church, and especially the land which was being granted in Frankalmoign. After 1279 special licences had to be obtained before such alienations could take place. Mortmain acted as a deterrent to would-be benefactors for a short while, but later on the granting of licences became quite frequent. In 1282 the abbot of Dieulacres was given three messuages and a hundred acres of land at Upperhulme

1. *ibid.*, no. 176.

and Netherhulme, and a messuage and forty acres at Tittesworth. A special licence had to be obtained by the grantors before this property could be handed over.¹ In 1315 the abbot was pardoned for acquiring several acres, messuages and bovates in and around Leek without having obtained a licence,² and in 1332 he was granted a special licence to acquire further lands and rents, not held in chief, to the yearly value of £10.³ By 1334 he had already obtained a further 38 acres of land, 10½ messuages and 5 tofts, together valued at £3 per year.⁴

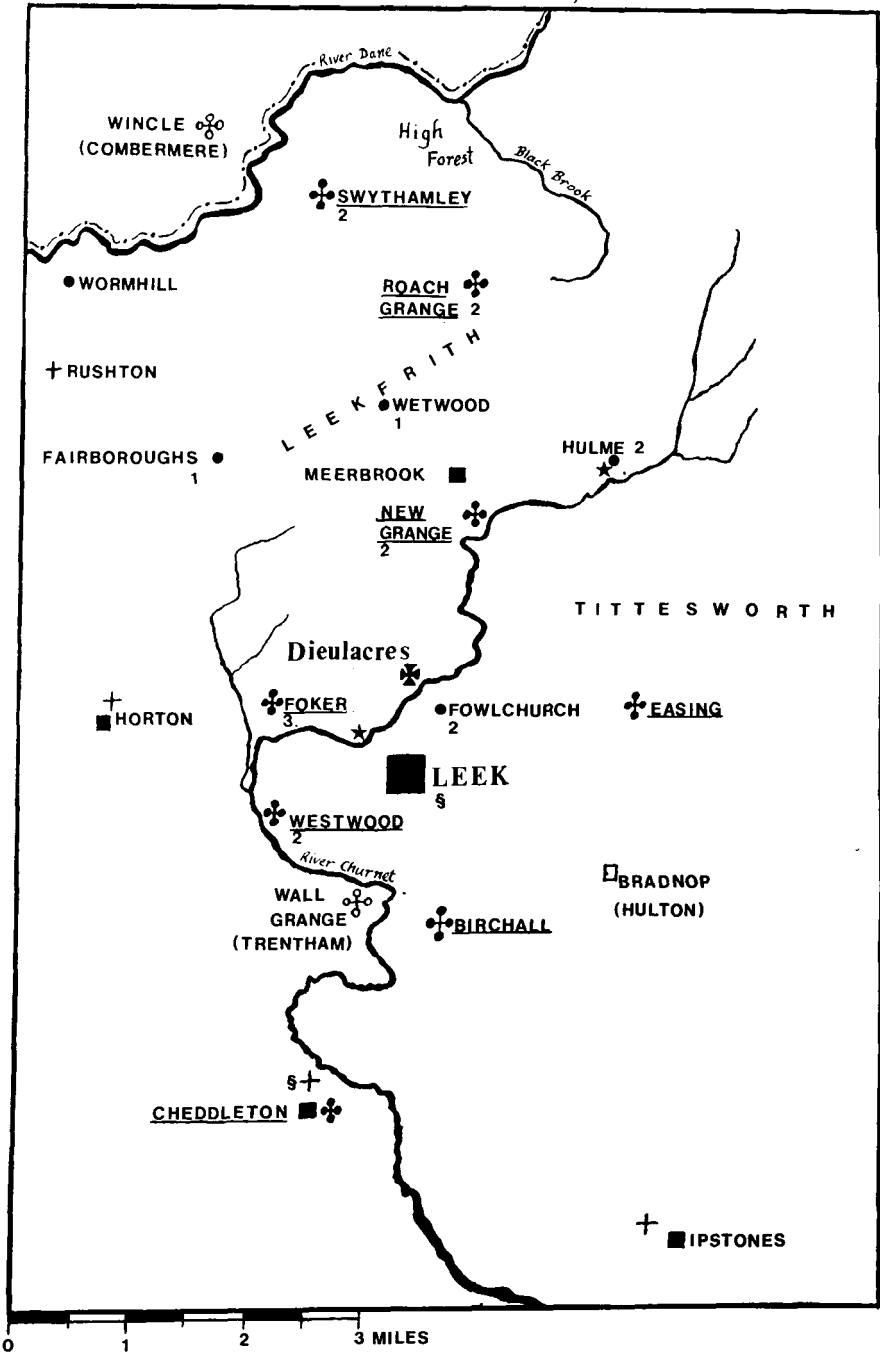
In 1288 Pope Nicholas IV permitted Edward I to levy a tenth upon ecclesiastical property for a period of six years. To enable this tenth to be raised a survey was made of the possessions of all religious establishments, and the resulting assessments became the basis upon which all ecclesiastical taxes were levied until the time of the Valor Ecclesiasticus some 250 years later. The Taxatio of 188-91 reveals that the temporal possessions of Dieulacres in Staffordshire were valued at £37/13/8d., and the tenth paid was £3/15/4¼d. The only other Staffordshire house which had anything like the income of Dieulacres was the neighbouring Cistercian abbey of Croxden, whose Staffordshire estates were assessed at

1. C.P.R., Ed.I., 1281-1292., p.137.

2. C.P.R., Ed.II., 1313-1317, p.332.

3. C.P.R., Ed.III, 1330-1334, p.372. 4. *ibid.*, p.562.

Possessions of Dieulacres in North Staffordshire, 1291.



- Staffordshire - Cheshire Border.
- Towns and villages.
- ⊕ Dieulacres Granges. (Number of carucates shown as in *Taxatio*)
- Other Dieulacres properties.
- § advowsons.
- + chapeltries
- ★ mills
- ⊕ } Properties of other houses
- }

£36/19/-; but when one takes into account the Lancashire and Cheshire estates of Dieulacres, and the revenues from spiritualities, one finds that Dieulacres was by far the wealthiest monastery in the county as far as real estate was concerned. The total assessment amounted to £164/18/8d., yielding a tenth of £16/9/10½d.¹ The total assessment for Croxden amounted to £139/12/8d., and for Hulton, a mere £25¹¹/17/6d. Even the great Benedictine abbey of Burton was not as wealthy as Dieulacres at this time, for the Taxatio gives its total assessment as £115/11/-. The Taxatio was not unnaturally resented by the religious as an unjust imposition, but there was little that could be done about it, especially in view of the papal sanction which it carried.

As well as giving us the value of the Dieulacres estates at the close of the thirteenth century, the Taxatio also tells us something about their size. As one would expect, the granges formed the largest blocks of cultivable land. As far as the Staffordshire estates were concerned, Foker Grange, close to the monastery itself, was the largest. It consisted of three carucates of land, valued at 15/- per carucate. Assuming that the standard carucate of 120 acres was the norm in Staffordshire, this would give a total of 360 acres, excluding non-arable land,

1. Taxation Ecclesiastica Angliae et Walliae Auctoritate P. Nicholai IV, Record Commission, 1802, pp. 243, 252, 259, 309.

which cannot be calculated from the information supplied by the Taxatio. Westwood Grange, New Grange, Roach Grange and ~~Swy~~thamley Grange each had two carucates, i.e. 240 acres. It is hardly surprising to find that the most valuable land was that which lay in or near the Churnet valley. The carucates at Westwood were worth £1 each, and at Foker and Fowlchurch a carucate was valued at 15/-. In the less fertile regions near the Roaches and Gun Hill a carucate was worth as little as 9 or 10 shillings. Livestock through^{out} the Staffordshire estates was assessed at £12/12/-, or just less than half the total assessment. It is curious that the Taxatio makes no mention of the granges at Cheddleton and Birchall. Neither was on lease at this time, and right up to the dissolution Birchall was kept in demesne as the main source of produce for the monastic hospitium. All told, the Staffordshire estates of Dieulacres are recorded in the Taxatio as amounting to 19 carucates, or 2,280 acres of arable land. If the pasture, meadow, forest and waste-land could be calculated, the total acreage would probably be many times larger.

The only Staffordshire property which appears to have been on lease at this time was the Manor of Leek, which was being farmed out at an annual rent of £10/6/8d. Revenues from the manorial corn-mill, and various other appurtenances brought the total value of the manor to £12. Apart from the lands at Field, which were not on lease, most of the Staffordshire

possessions of Dieulacres were situated fairly close to the abbey, and would not have presented administrative problems sufficiently great to encourage leasing on a large scale at this time. It is therefore difficult to explain why the manor of Leek was on lease as early as 1291. The Cistercian regulations forbade the possession of manors, but as this and other injunctions of the General Chapter were by this time being generally disregarded, there is no reason to suppose that by farming out the manor of Leek the abbot of Dieulacres was attempting to pay lip-service to his superiors. He still enjoyed the revenues from the manorial courts and various other perquisites, and he held other manorial rights outside Staffordshire.

The spiritualities of Dieulacres in the county of Stafford included St. Edward's Church, Leek, and its various chapelries. These were assessed together at £28. The church of Cheddleton was assessed separately at £8 per annum. This separate assessment seems curious at first sight; but the reason for it probably lies in the fact that although Cheddleton was technically regarded as a chapel dependent upon Leek, it had a separate patronage which had been in the hands of the Lords of Cheddleton until about 1220 when Hugo de Cheddleton granted it to Dieulacres.¹ This advowson was the subject of a long dispute ~~with~~ between the abbots and the lords of Cheddleton which began in the very years of the Taxatio².

1. DC/1/no.10.

2. See below, pp.101-106



Church of St. Edward the Confessor, Leek - the fourteenth century chancel before the rebuilding of 1867.

The revenues from spiritualities amounted altogether to £36; and out of this sum the abbot had to pay a suitable stipend to the Vicar of Leek. When the Earl of Chester gave the church of Leek to the abbey in about 1220 the bishop stated that the Vicar was to receive a stipend of £13/6/8d.,¹ but it would appear that by 1288 this sum was not sufficient to meet his needs. It was the responsibility of the Vicar to pay the stipends of the curates who served the chapels, and he had to find this money out of his own stipend, without any further assistance from the abbot. In 1288 an agreement was made between the abbot and Robert de Tutbury, then vicar, to the effect that the stipend was to be raised to £24/6/8d. Of this, £6 was to be paid directly by the abbot, and the rest was to be made up from the revenues of various tithes, offerings, and surplice-fees.² The vicar was still responsible for paying the stipends of his curates; i.e. £5 to the curate of Ipstones, £5/6/8d. to the curate of Cheddleton, and £4/13/4d. to the curate of Horton. This left him with a net income of £9/6/8d. - no great fortune, but a considerable improvement on what he had hitherto been receiving. The abbot still made a tidy profit out of the church, for even after paying the increased stipend he was left with the sum of £11/13/4d. for himself.

1. DC/1/no.5. 2. This agreement is in Loxdale's MS at Leek Vicarage. Loxdale says that the original was in an old ledger-book of Dieulacres which in 1670 was in the hands of a Mr. Hollins of Mossleigh. It has since been lost.

By the end of the thirteenth century Dieulacres had become a very wealthy establishment. The monks had made good use of the lands which they had, and they had a steady source of income from spiritual sources and from their participation in the wool trade - an important factor which will be examined in the next chapter. In Staffordshire at least the system of direct exploitation, either by conversi or by hired labour, seems to have been working satisfactorily at the end of the century. There is little evidence of early leasing, and the manorial system was, as far as is known, limited to Leek and Field. However, by the end of the 13th century the conversi were beginning to disappear from Cistercian estates all over the country, and in the next century a number of factors combined to accelerate this process, and also the gradual change from demesne farming to a system of rents and leases. On the Lancashire and Cheshire estates of Dieulacres this change began rather earlier than in Staffordshire, and it is time now to examine the abbey's possessions in these two counties.

Chapter three.

THE DIEULACRES ESTATES IN CHESHIRE AND LANCASHIRE, 1214-c1300,
AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WOOL-TRADE.

When the monks of Poulton moved to Dieulacres in 1214 they retained all their possessions in Cheshire. The principal Cheshire estates were centred around Poulton and Pulford; and for many years after the translation of the convent the monks of Dieulacres continued to acquire lands and privileges in this area. At some date between 1251 and 1255 Richard, lord of Pulford, granted in free-almes all the lands which the monks had formerly held of him in fee at Pulford;¹ and several other grants and quitclaims occurred in Pulford at this time.² The abbey owned a grange at Churton, across the Dee from Pulford, and here the monks acquired further lands and rights, together with certain lands in the City of Chester itself.³ At Dodleston and Balderton William de Boidle confirmed his father's grants to the abbey, and in addition he granted part of his own demesne lands adjoining Dodleston grange, with the right to construct a road.⁴ At Saltney, to the north of Poulton and Dodleston, the monks already had pasture rights, and in the early 1230's they received from William de Boidle additional pasture for forty mares, forty cows, two teams of oxen and two hundred sheep, together with a place of refuge for all the abbey's cattle feeding in Saltney.⁵ These charters bear witness

1. DC/1/no.51.

2. *ibid.*, nos.42-48: 52.3. *ibid.*, no. 59.4. *ibid.*, nos. 60-63.5. This grant is recorded in an Inspeximus of 1330. C.Ch.R., vol. IV, 1327-1341, pp.154ff.

to the fact that there was considerable activity on the Poulton estates long after the translation of the convent; and that in spite of the alleged dangers from Welsh raiders a large number of animals was still kept there. It is impossible to estimate exactly how much of the estate was exploited directly by conversi, but a charter of protection granted by the lord of Bromfield in 1257 mentions the monks, servants and conversi at Poulton, Dodleston and Churton.¹ This would seem to indicate that a combination of conversi and hired labour was being used at this time, and that choir monks were living on the granges. Further indication that the old abbey site at Poulton was still a conventual grange in the 1250's is given by a certificate which the abbot of Dieulacres issued in 1250 stating that his chapel at Poulton was to be of no prejudice to the mother-church.²

Shortly before the foundation of Dieulacres the monks of Poulton had been given the manor of Byley, near Middlewich; and in about 1228 Philip de Orreby, Justiciar of Chester, granted the entire vill of Byley to the abbey.³ This grant was confirmed by Ranulph de Blundeville as chief lord of the fee. Ranulph also quit the monks of all services and suit of courts.⁴ At some uncertain date Roger de Mainwaring gave the monks a grange at Byley, together with common of pasture and pannage

1. EC/Henry III/18.

2. EC/Henry III/13.

3. DC/1/no. 120.

4. *ibid.*, no. 65.

for forty pigs in his woods at Peover.¹ The original grant of the manor of Byley (1209-1213) had occasioned a series of quitclaims by various tenants; and these later grants resulted in several more. Warin de Byley quitclaimed all his lands in the vill in exchange for a piece of land between Rudheath and the river Dane, and his daughter Emma quitclaimed all the lands in Byley and Ravenscroft which she had received from her father as a dowry.² A further quitclaim was made by the Prior of the Hospital of St. John, Chester, in return for an annual payment of four shillings.³ The Rector of Middlewich handed the tithes of Byley over to Dieulacres,⁴ and the abbey's possessions in Byley were completed in 1270, when the Lord Edward gave the monks certain rights in the waste of Rudheath.⁵

The acceptance of the gift of a vill by a Cistercian monastery was, of course, highly irregular; but by the beginning of the thirteenth century the practice was becoming fairly common. Two alternatives were open to the monks, one of which paid lip-service to the letter of the Statutes, and the other which was wholly irregular. When they accepted gifts of developed land and settlements the monks sometimes tried to fulfil the conditions of personal labour and remoteness from the world by removing the inhabitants out of the area and

1. *ibid.*, no. 119.

2. *ibid.*, nos. 121 & 122.

3. *ibid.*, no. 123.

4. *ibid.*, no. 131.

5. *Inspeximus*, 1330, *C.Ch.R.*, vol. IV, p. 154, no. 16.

and that a fair proportion of the Byley estate was being leased out.¹

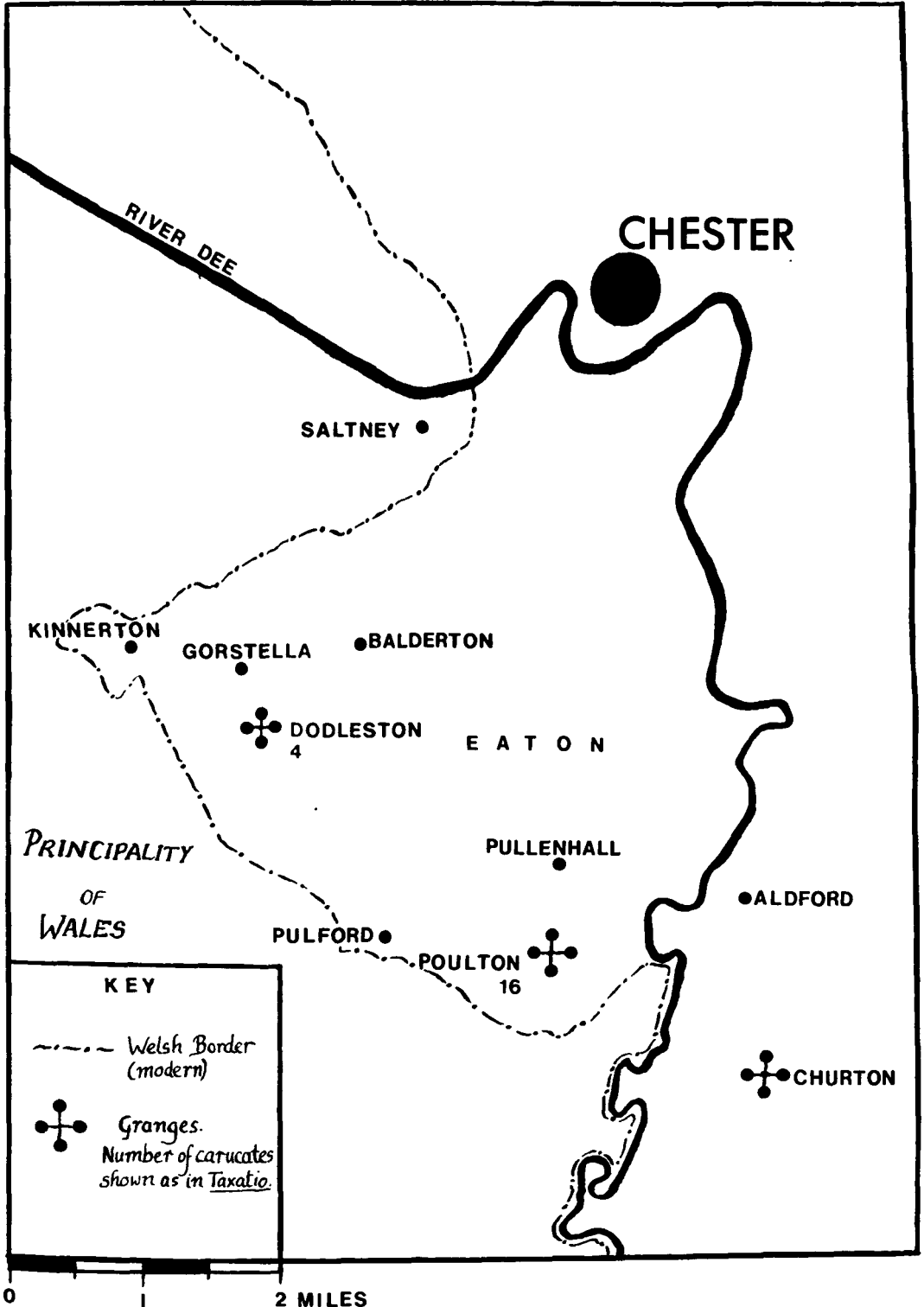
As well as gifts of land and manorial rights in Cheshire, the monks of Dieulacres acquired a number of salt-pans which brought in a steady income. One of the first to be acquired was in Middlewich, and this was granted to the abbey by William de Mainwaring, who held it of the abbey of Basingwerk. The monks were to pay the sum of 6d. annually to the abbot of Basingwerk for all services.² Four more salt-pans in Middlewich were acquired through the gifts of Robert Kel and Richard Dun,³ and yet another at Nantwich.⁴

In addition to these temporal sources of income, the monks also enjoyed revenues from spiritualities. They held the tithes of Byley, and also the church of Sandbach with its chapels at Goostrey and Holme (Holmes Chapel). Sandbach church had been given to Dieulacres in about 1230 by Ranulph de Blundeville,⁵ and in 1254 a dispute arose concerning the advowson. At that time there was a vacancy in the church, and an assize of darrein presentment was brought against the abbot by Roger de Sandbach, who claimed that the advowson had belonged to his father, Richard. On behalf of the abbot it was argued that

1. Taxatio, p.259. 2. DC/1/no. 124.
 3. ibid., nos. 110, 126, 127. 4. ibid., no. 129.
 5. The grant of Sandbach Church is not recorded in the Dieulacres Cartulary. However, the charter appears in an Inspeximus of 1330 (EC/Edward III/7a), and C.Ch.R., vo. IV., P. 153. William de Vernon, Justiciar of Chester, was one of the witnesses to the charter, and so the date must be between 1229, the year in which he took office, and 1232, the year in which Ranulph died.

the assize ought not to be made, because after the institution of the last vicar, Ranulph de Blundeville had proved that the advowson belonged not to Richard de Sandbach, but to him. Moreover, the Earl's main piece of evidence lay in the relevant entry in Domesday Book, which said quite clearly that the advowson belonged to the Earl of Chester. Now that Ranulph was dead, Roger de Sandbach was eager to recover the advowson, and in spite of the decision of the previous assize he pressed on with his claim. The King ordered the Justiciar of Chester to bring a copy of the Cheshire Domesday into the Court, and it was proved conclusively that the advowson had belonged to the Earl. In addition, it was discovered that from the time the Earl had deraigned the advowson against Richard de Sandbach and given it to the monks of Dieulacres, no priest had ever been instituted, and that therefore no assize of darrein presentment could be brought against the abbot. The case was therefore dismissed, and the abbot of Dieulacres continued to hold the advowson until the time of the dissolution. It appears that since the death of the last vicar the abbot had made no attempt to institute a new priest, but had himself been enjoying the revenues of the vacant church. This kind of practice was quite common, but in this instance it was not allowed to continue. Although the abbot kept the advowson, the Justiciar of Chester was directed to send letters to the Bishop instructing him to admit, at the abbot's presentation,

Poulton and Dodleston, 1291.



a suitable priest as soon as possible.¹

The Taxation reveals that the Cheshire estates of Dieulacres amounted to 25 carucates of arable land, or 3,000 acres - a somewhat larger amount of arable than in Staffordshire. The largest single estate was at Poulton and Pulford - some 16 carucates assessed at 15/- per carucate. Dodleston amounted to four carucates, and Byley five.² No mention is made in the Taxatio of Saltney, Eccleston, or of the abbey's possessions in Chester.

Some indication is given in the Taxatio as to which parts of the estate had been leased out by this time. The fact that certain lands at Byley were on lease has already been mentioned, and by 1291 the abbot was receiving a total of £2/10/- per annum in rents from these properties. All of the abbey's lands at Bradford (near Alderley) appear to have been on lease at this time, and they were bringing in the sum of £2 per annum. It is impossible to say precisely when this policy of leasing began, for no records for Byley of Bradford have so far been found. However, it is known that in 1266 the abbot leased a messuage of land in Chester for an annual rent of five shillings.³ All that can be said definitely is that the change from direct exploitation to a system

1. C.P.R., Henry III, vol. IV (1247-1258), p.431; S.H.C., vol. IV, part I., (1883) p.130; Abbreviation Placitorum, Record Commission, 1811, pp. 142-3.

2. Taxatio, p.259.

3. EC/Henry III/29.

of leases and rents began, as far as the Cheshire estates were concerned, at some date between c.1266 and 1288. On the Staffordshire estates only two leases granted before 1300 are recorded¹, but when one bears in mind the distance which separated Dieulacres from the bulk of the Cheshire properties it is hardly surprising to find that leasing began at an earlier date in Cheshire than in Staffordshire.

The total assessment of the Cheshire estates of Dieulacres is recorded in the Taxatio as £29/15/-. Of this, £14/15/- came from arable land, £1 from meadow and pasture, £5 from miscellaneous rents and £9 from livestock. No mention is made of revenues from spiritualities, which is somewhat curious, for it is known that the abbot of Dieulacres held the tithes of Byley and the Parish Church of Sandbach. In the Valor Ecclesiasticus the spiritual revenues from the Cheshire estates are recorded as £24/10/8d., so one can tentatively suggest that the total value of the Cheshire estates in 1291 was in excess of £50.²

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1. i.e. the lease of the Manor of Leek which is recorded in the Taxatio, and a grant to Randle le Guyte of half the lands in Tittesworth which he already held in fee, in return for an annual payment of 1/5³d. B.M. Additional Charters, no. 46, 876.
 2. Revenues from spiritual sources do not appear to have altered very much between 1291 and 1535. In the Valor the revenues of the church of Leek are assessed at £41/11/8d. as opposed to £36 in 1291. The reason for the difference probably lies in the fact that at some date after 1291 the abbey came to possess an additional chapelry at Rushton.

The estates of Dieulacres Abbey in Lancashire were centred around the Manor of Rossall, in the Hundred of Amounderness. In 1190 Rossall consisted mainly of pasture-land from which the lords of the Honor of Lancaster received an annual profit of £5 from those who grazed their sheep and cattle there. At this time the Hundred of Amounderness was granted to Theobald Walter, brother of Hubert Walter, Archbishop of Canterbury. At a later date Theobald's seizin was withdrawn by King John, but it was given back to him in 1202 and he continued to hold it until his death in 1206. The issues of the Hundred are recorded in the Pipe Rolls from 1206 until 1215, and it was not until 1216 that Rossall was granted out again. In this year, at the instance of Ranulph de Blundeville, King John bestowed the custody of the land of Rossall on the monks of Dieulacres, and it was to be held by them in bail during the King's pleasure. The writ for the delivery of the seizin is dated August 28th., 1216¹. The monks' seizin was withdrawn in 1226², but in June of the following year Henry III issued a charter granting the pasture of Rossall to the monks of Dieulacres, again during the King's pleasure.³ In 1228 the King granted two

1. Rot Litt. Claus., vol. I, pp. 384, 474b.

2. ibid., vol. II, p. 160b.

3. C.P.R., Henry III, 1225-1232, p. 125.

more charters to Dieulacres. By the first, which was dated the 21st April, he gave the monks leave to keep their sheep and other animals at Rossall until the 24th June.¹ This suggests that he was intending to terminate the monks' tenancy for a second time; but on the 12th June he granted them, in frankalmoign, all the land of Rossall, with its appurtenances, which they had formerly held in bail.² Another charter was issued in July 1247 stating that all the land of Rossall had been granted to the monks of Dieulacres in free-arms forever, "for the salvation of the soul of King John and the souls of our predecessors and successors."³

The charters of July 1228 and July 1247 stipulate quite clearly that Rossall was to be held in frankalmoign; but there is evidence to show that the acquisition of Rossall was not quite so simple as it might seem at first sight. The Dieulacres Chronicle says that in 1227-28 Ranulph de Blundeville concluded an agreement with the King whereby he was to have the Manor of Rossall for the use of the monks of Dieulacres in return for a payment of 700 marks. The abbot was to pay this sum in seven annual instalments.⁴ The chronicler adds that all the money had been paid by 1233-4; but it appears

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1. C.Cl.R., Henry III, 1227-1231, p.35.
 2. ibid., pp. 62-3; and C.Ch.R., vol. I, 1226-1257, p.78.
 3. C.Ch.R., vol. II, 1226-1257, p. 325; and DC/1/no. 116.
 4. Dieulacres Chronicle, f.140r. H.Fishwick, in his History of Poulton-le-Fylde (Chetham Society, Vol.8, 1885) says that in 1220 Henry III issued a writ to ascertain the extent of the pasture at Rossall, and that in 1227-8 the abbot paid the King 500 marks for all his land at Rossall and agreed on a rental of 100 marks per year.

that the abbot still owed money to the Exchequer for the time when ~~in~~ he held the lands in bail. In 1292 King Edward I sued the abbot for Rossall in a plea of Quo Warranto. The abbot maintained that he now held the manor in frankalmoign through the charter which Henry III had granted to his predecessor in 1247. On behalf of Edward I, William Inge said that King Henry's charter was invalid, because he was never properly seized of the manor of Rossall. The abbot denied this, and said that the right to the manor descended automatically from King John to Henry as his son and heir. He said that King Henry had enfeoffed his predecessor of the Manor with all its appurtenances, and he appealed to a jury which concluded that the abbot had the greater right of holding the manor, by virtue of King Henry's charter.

William Inge was still not satisfied. He said that even though the abbot held the manor in frankalmoign at that time, his predecessors had held it in bail of King John and similarly of Henry III for at least thirty years before the frankalmoign grant of 1247. The manor was then worth £66/13/4d. per year, and therefore the abbot owed arrears amounting to £2,000 for all the time he and his predecessors held it in bail. William Inge said that the abbot was unjustly detaining some £666 of this sum "to the damage of

the Lord King." The abbot admitted that his predecessors had held the manor in bail, first of King John, and then of Henry III, but he maintained that the bail had been granted without any rent being charged. For the King, William Inge said that the abbot ought to be able to prove this by a special grant, or call to evidence the Chancery Rolls, the Exchequer Rolls or some other legitimate evidence. The abbot was forced to admit that he had no proof of his predecessors' quittance of the rent apart from the charter of Henry III which he had already called to witness. William Inge therefore asked for judgment in favour of the King because Henry III's charter contained nothing which said that the abbot was quit, and also because at the beginning of his reign Henry III was a minor.

It was finally agreed that the King should recover from the abbot the value of the use of the manor for all the time when it was in the hands of the abbot's predecessor in bail; and an enquiry was made as to the precise length of time during which it was held in bail and the value of the property at that time. The jury stated that the abbot's predecessors held the manor in bail for a period of seven years¹ during the reign of King John, and that it was then worth £20 per year. In the first 24 years of Henry III's reign it was
 1. This suggests that the monks held Rossall before they moved to Dieulacres in 1214, but King John's writ of seisin, addressed to the Earl of Chester, is clearly dated August 28th, 1216. Rot. Litt. Claus., vol. I., p. 284.

also valued at £20, and from 1241 to 1247 it was worth £26/13/4d. The abbot was therefore liable for arrears amounting to £780.¹ † This was an enormous imposition, for as we have seen, the assessment of the entire estates of Dieulacres in 1291 amounted to only £164/18/8d., and the total profits from the wool-trade would hardly have doubled this figure. In all probability the abbot lodged an appeal, for in June 1293 Edward I pardoned him for the arrears and ordered the Treasurer and Barons of the Exchequer to acquit him of the £780. However, they took no action. In 1296 the matter was again brought to the attention of the King. He issued further letters in which he expressed surprise that his previous orders had not been carried out.²

Henry III's earlier charters of 1227-8 occasioned a number of quitclaims from the principal tenants in the vicinity of Rossall, notably from Roger de Heton, William de Thacham, William de Clifton, and from Theobald Walter's son.³ By 1234 the monks appear to have been in full possession. Grants of other lands around the original holding were made by local gentry, and in particular by members of the Singleton family. Roger de Singleton gave the monks several plots of land in the vill of Staynole,⁴ and his brother, William, gave them common of turbary and a right of way to Bispham Mere for sheep-dipping.⁵ Further rights of turbary on

1. Placita de Quo Warranto, Record Commission, pp. 374-5.

2. C.C.L.R., Edward I., Vol. III, 1288-96, p.499.

3. DC/1/nos.133-136.

4. *ibid.*, nos. 138-142.

5. *ibid.*, no. 154.

Angotmoss and of sheep-dipping in Bispham Mere were granted by William de Newton, William de Karleton and William Pincerna.¹ Another member of the Pincerna family, Richard, gave the monks a number of bovates of land in Norbreck.² Whether these Pincernas were in any way connected with the family of Robert Pincerna, the founder of Poulton, is a matter for conjecture.

Several deeds in the Cartulary record gifts of villeins to the monks of Dieulacres. All told six villeins, together with their families, goods and chattels, were handed over to the monks in the 1230's and 40's.³ These gifts seem to indicate that almost from the beginning the monks of Dieulacres administered the Rossall estate on a manorial basis, using a mixture of hired labour and serfs, rather than granges and conversi. Of all the estates of Dieulacres, Rossall was the most distant, and although the adoption of the manorial system and seff-labour was totally out of keeping with the principles upon which the Cistercian Order had been founded, the monks of Dieulacres had no real alternative, as far as the Rossall estates were concerned, but to adopt the system which was already in operation there.

1. DC/1/nos. 148-50.

2. *ibid.*, no. 137.

3. *ibid.*, nos. 156-162.

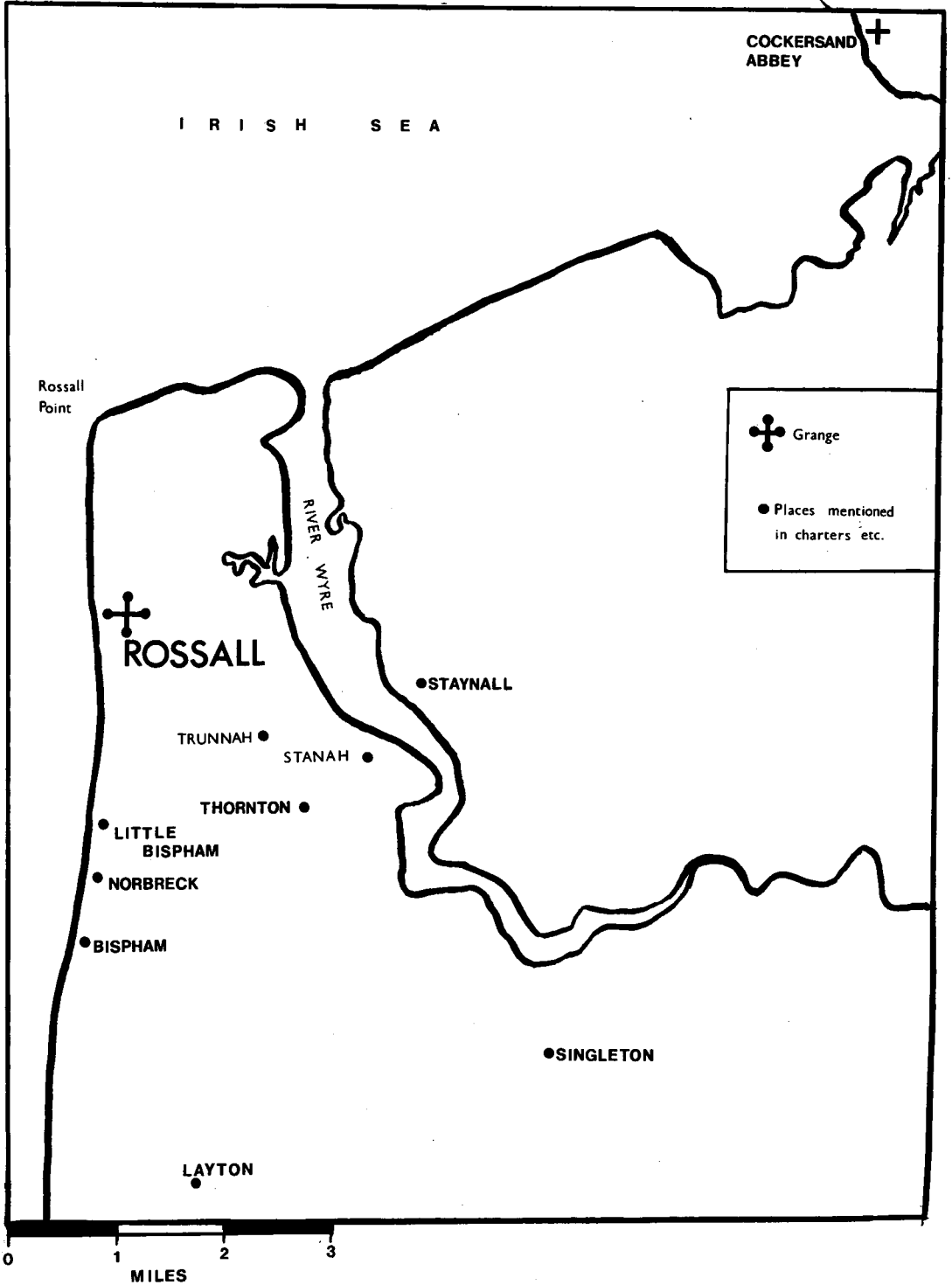
Dieulacres was not the only religious house which owned land around Rossall. On the banks of the River Wyre the Dieulacres estates bordered on those of the Premonstratensian abbey of Cockersand; and the abbey of St. Peter, Salop, had lands at Norbreck and Bispham, and the churches of Waleton and Kirkham. At some date after 1228 the abbot of Salop gave to the monks of Dieulacres the villis of Norbreck and Bispham, together with the tithes of Laton. These gifts were to be held in fee-farm; and a later confirmation of the charter stipulated an annual rent of eight marks. Excepted from the endowment were the advowsons of the churches of Waleton and Kirkham which the abbot of Salop reserved to himself.¹ On the Lancashire estates the monks of Dieulacres seem to have been free from those quarrels with neighbouring monasteries which were such a prominent feature of their early years in Staffordshire.

The references to Rossall in the Taxatio are very scanty. The assessment is given as £61/10/- for the entire holding, and there are no separate assessments for the various plots, or for the spiritualities.² It is therefore impossible to say how much arable land there was, and how much it was worth per carucate. However, when one compares the assessment of

1. S.H.C., vol. IX, New Series, pp.364-5. (From the Cartulary of Salop Abbey.)

2. Taxatio, pp. 309, 329.

Rossall.



Rossall with the assessments of the temporal possessions of the abbey in Staffordshire and Cheshire it can safely be said that the Lancashire estates formed the most valuable group of possessions. As we have seen already from the Quo Warranto proceedings of 1292, Rossall itself was worth only £26 in 1247. This leads one to the conclusion that the monks had carried out considerable improvements by 1291 and also that they had acquired a considerable amount of additional land around the original holding.

The numerous references to sheep-dipping and grazing land which occur in the Rossall charters suggest that this area was important for sheep-rearing, and that Rossall was one of the principal sources of the abbey's wealth. Sheep farming had always been a prominent feature of Cistercian economy. The sheep had far more uses than any other animal, for in addition to wool it provided skins for parchment and tallow for candles. Moreover, sheep could be reared on land which was too barren for growing crops or grazing cattle, and the majority of Cistercian estates had a plentiful supply of such land. The regulations of the Order stipulated that the monks were to keep only as many sheep as were essential for their own needs; but after a time, when supply began to exceed demand, the temptation to sell the surplus wool at a profit was too great to be resisted. It was ironical that

by settling on some of the poorest agricultural land in the country the Cistercians placed themselves in the way of one of the most lucrative businesses of the Middle Ages - the wool trade. They arrived in England at a time when the wool trade was beginning to emerge as a powerful force in the country's economy; and their agricultural methods, together with the grange and conversi systems, was ideally suited to the production of large quantities of wool at a comparatively low cost. At first the Cistercians had insufficient money to allow them to build on a large scale, and the money which they raised through sheep-farming enabled them, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, to make considerable improvements and additions to the fabric of their monasteries. It would almost be true to say that the fine churches at Fountains, Rievaulx and Tintern were literally built on wool; and it is significant that the abbey church at Dieulacres was completely rebuilt in the first decades of the fourteenth century, when the wool-trade was at its height.

The part which the Cistercian monks played in the evolution of the English wool-trade has been subject to exaggeration; and it is important to remember that they were neither the originators, nor the monopolisers, of the wool market. Long before the Cistercians arrived, the Black Monks and many lay landowners had reared flocks for commercial

purposes, and they continued to do so throughout the Middle Ages. It just so happened that at the time when the Cistercians were developing their estates the Flemish cloth industry was expanding and looking for new sources for raw materials. Bearing these points in mind, it is true to say that although the Cistercians were not the originators of the English wool-trade, they were nevertheless responsible for the development of sheep-farming for export purposes on a scale hitherto unknown; and that they remained, at least until the middle of the fourteenth century, the most powerful group of wool-producers.

At the end of the twelfth century three factors combined to tempt the Cistercians to enter the wool-trade and to depart from their simple, self-sufficient, economy. The surplus of wool and the desire to build on a large scale have already been referred to; and added to these factors was the presence in England of woolmongers with plenty of cash who were prepared to purchase whatever was offered for sale. The period from c1200 to c1340 was the age of wholesale contracts. The monasteries often disposed of their surplus wool-crop by contracting for it with an export merchant who would send his agent round to see the crop when it was ready, or even to contract for it in advance. Transactions of this kind were facilitated by the circulation among the various

business houses of lists which gave details of monasteries which produced the best fleeces. A list of Cistercian and other houses which supplied wool was prepared around 1280 by the Florentine merchant, Francesco Pegolotti.¹ This list reveals that the Yorkshire and Lincolnshire houses formed the largest group of Cistercian exporters. They supplied 447 sacks per annum out of a total of 1,117 for the whole of England. Fountains alone supplied 76 sacks a year, and Rievaulx 60. The average for the remainder of the Yorkshire and Lincolnshire houses was 28 sacks per year. Each sack contained 26 stone of wool, and the average price per sack was 18 marks for the best grades, and 11 marks for the middle grades. The short wools of the Welsh border were in high repute and were realising the highest prices. Dore and Tintern were selling their best wools at 28 marks per sack - a price which was unparalleled by any other house in England and Wales.

In the southern counties the wool was generally of a mediocre quality. The monks of Buckfast were receiving as little as 12½ marks per sack for their best wools, and in Suffolk, Essex and Kent the average price was 16 marks.

1. Pegolotti's list is printed as an appendix by W. Cunningham, The Growth of English Industry and Commerce, Vol. I, 1910, pp.628-641.

In the Midlands, prices ranged between 14 and 27 marks for the better grades, and the average price was about 19 marks. Among the Staffordshire houses, the monks of Croxden were selling the most, and were getting the highest prices. They are recorded as selling 30 sacks per year to foreign markets, and their best wool was worth 21 marks per sack. The wool produced on the Dieulacres estates was not of such a high standard. The best grades were selling at 16 marks per sack, and the middle grades at 10 marks - rather less than the average for the Midlands. To some extent, however, quantity made up for quality. The monks of Dieulacres are recorded as supplying 20 sacks per year - some 5 sacks more than the midland average. It is impossible to estimate precisely how much money was raised from the sale of wool in any one year. Pegolotti's list was intended to be a guide for prospective buyers, and therefore it only indicates the gross number of sacks supplied each year, and the prices of the various grades. It would have been impossible for him to have said exactly how many sacks of a particular grade were supplied, since the proportions must inevitably have varied from year to year.

In spite of these difficulties it is still possible to make a rough estimate of the amount of money raised through the sale of wool. In an exceptionally good year, when prices

were high and the quality of the crop was first-rate, the monks of Dieulacres could have brought in something in the region of £200; but in a poor year this sum could have been almost halved. The average wool-crop would have realised a figure in the region of £120 to £140. As far as the wool-trade was concerned, the monks of Dieulacres were by no means as well-off as their brethren at Croxden, whose average gross income from the sale of wool was in the region of £290 per annum. The poor relation among the Staffordshire houses was the abbey of Hulton, whose sales are recorded as 8 sacks per annum at 14 marks per sack.

A comparison of the figures given in Pegolotti's list with those in the Taxatio reveal that Croxden relied far more heavily on the wool-trade and on livestock generally than did Dieulacres. Although the monks of Croxden were raising twice as much money as Dieulacres through the wool-trade, their real estate was worth considerably less. The figures in the Taxatio shew that, excluding livestock, the temporal and spiritual possessions of Croxden were assessed at £109/18/2d., whereas a similar examination of the figures for Dieulacres produces an assessment of £131/16/-. While the wool-trade flourished, Croxden was in an advantageous position, and enjoyed a much larger income than Dieulacres.

In later years, however, when sheep-farming declined and the Cistercians generally came to rely on leases and rents as their main source of income, the advantage lay with the monks of Dieulacres, for they had larger estates than the monks of Croxden and they kept very little in demesne. In view of this, it is hardly surprising to find that by the beginning of the sixteenth century the position had been reversed, and the total net income of Dieulacres was more than double that of Croxden.

From the selling of surplus wool to the Flemish and Florentine markets it was but a short step to mortgaging a year's crop in advance. When faced with the need to raise ready cash, either for building or to repay a debt incurred through some misfortune, an abbey would sometimes contract for one, two, or even as many as twenty years in advance to deliver a specified number of sacks to an exporter. In return a lump sum would be received for the first year's delivery, or even for several years. The dangers of this system do not need enlarging upon. If the crop failed, and the advance payment had been spent, the abbot could find himself in a very delicate situation. These mortgages took no account of unforeseen hazards which might prevent the abbey from meeting the demands of an agreement. On several occasions sudden levies of wool and money were raised by the Crown, and these inevitably put a strain on an abbey's resources. In 1193,

when a collection was made throughout the realm to ransom Richard I, the Cistercians, so far true to their statutes, had nothing to give in the way of precious metals, and so they were forced to give a year's supply of wool. During the Interdict, King John mulcted the Cistercians of some 24,000 marks, and the abbey of Meaux, whose abbot was already in the King's bad books, had to pay an additional fine of 1,000 marks. As a result, the monks of Meaux had to disperse, and no other Cistercian house could afford to maintain them.¹

The Taxatio of 1288-91 placed an additional financial burden on the shoulders of the monks, and in 1306 another tenth was raised for the Holy Land. For this last levy, Dieulacres was obliged to find £6/14/10d. - considerably more than the amounts paid by the other houses in the county.² In 1310 the monasteries were again asked for a subsidy; this time for Edward II's expedition to Scotland. In addition to livestock, quantities of cereals were demanded, and Dieulacres supplied 40 quarters of wheat, 50 quarters of oats, 20 oxen and 60 sheep.³ Needless to say, the result of the Scottish campaign brought little cheer to the hearts of those who had given of their livelihood in order to keep it well supplied.

1. D.Knowles, The Monastic Order in England, pp.353-4.

2. C.P.R., Edward I, 1301-1307, p.450.

3. F.A. Hibbert, Monasticism in Staffordshire, 1909, p.82.

Edward III utilised the monastic wool-merchants in 1338 when he exacted 600 sacks of wool from Staffordshire alone, and some of it was never paid for. The monks of Dieulacres were obliged to supply the King with $7\frac{1}{2}$ sacks - more than a third of the amount which they normally put on the market. They were, however, fortunate enough to receive the sum of $8\frac{1}{4}$ marks for each sack - just over half its market value.¹ Yet another loan in wool was levied in 1347.²

In view of these contingencies, the practice of mortgaging the entire wool-crop to merchants several years in advance was a highly dangerous business, and it is hardly surprising to find that contracts were sometimes broken and that debts were incurred. Although there is no direct evidence that the monks of Dieulacres entered on long-term contracts, or that they got into debt, there is no reason to suppose that they acted in any way differently from their brethren in other parts of the country.

The Cistercian General Chapter did what it could to prevent the illicit transactions; but so many monasteries became involved that effective prohibition was impossible. By 1278 we find the General Chapter actually permitting sales in advance for one year, and in 1279 the statute was modified still further.³

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1. C.P.R. Edward III, 1338-1340, p.297.
 2. C.Cl.R., Edward III, vol. VIII, pp.262,70.
 3. Statuta, III, 1278, no. 5, and 1279 no. 2.

In spite of these irregular business methods, it is still true to say that as late as 1300 the Cistercians still retained at least part of their primitive organization. The conversi and grange systems were still in operation, and although there is evidence of leasing before 1300, especially in the case of houses with far-flung properties, there was, as yet, no wholesale recourse to a system which depended primarily on leases and rents. The financial administration of the Cistercian abbeys was still relatively simple, and there was no hierarchy of officials as in the Black Monk houses. In the course of the fourteenth century, however, a number of important changes took place in the economy and administration of the Cistercian Abbeys: changes which resulted in the Cistercian economy becoming almost identical with that of the **Black Monks**.

Chapter Four.ECONOMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES, c. 1260 - c. 1410.

During the course of the late thirteenth century and in the fourteenth century a number of important changes took place in the economy and administration of the Cistercian houses in England. The first, which has already been mentioned, was the gradual change from demesne farming to a policy of leasing out large parts of the monastic estates to lay tenants. The second, which was the inevitable corollary of this policy, was the virtual disappearance of the conversi who had hitherto been an essential feature of Cistercian agrarian economy. The third change, namely the breakdown in the relationship between the English houses and Cîteaux, came about in the middle and later years of the fourteenth century as a result of the Hundred Years' War and the Great Schism. Let us first take a look at the economic changes, and see what effect they had on Dieulacres.

Originally, the Cistercian Statutes had expressly forbidden the leasing of monastic lands to lay persons.¹ However, there is evidence that this statute was disregarded at an early stage, especially in the case of monasteries holding lands which were too far distant from the convent to enable advantageous cultivation possible. In 1208 the

1. Statuta, I, p.19, (1134:I), no. 26.
~~2. ibid., p.346-(1208), no. 5.~~

General Chapter actually permitted the leasing of distant or less useful properties,¹ but the prohibitions were renewed again in 1214 and 1215.² In 1220 the original statute was again rescinded, and the General Chapter allowed short-term renting of lands and granges which the senior monks and the father-abbot or visitor considered to be "less useful." In 1315 the General Chapter went a stage further and permitted the leasing of good lands and possessions to laymen for life or perpetual farm if the usefulness of such transactions was evident from the location of the properties in question.³

As far as Dieulacres was concerned, the policy of leasing, and even of selling, distant properties began in the 1240's - only a few decades after the re-foundation of the abbey. Like many Cistercian abbots, the abbot of Dieulacres had property in the City of London, and in about 1248 he sold most of it for the sum of one hundred marks.⁴ Some twenty years later he leased out another piece of town property, this time a messuage in the City of Chester.⁵ Towards the end of the thirteenth century, he began to dispose of some of his Staffordshire estates, for we know that by 1291 the Manor of Leek was being farmed out at an annual rent of £10/6/8d.⁶

1. *ibid.*, p.346, (1208), no.5.

2. *ibid.*, pp.428-9 (1214), no.58; and p.448 (1215), no.64.

3. *ibid.*, p.517 (1220), no.5; and II, p.31 (1224), no. 10.

4. *Statuta*, III, p.330 (1315), no.4. 5. DC/1/no. 69.

6. EC/Henry III/ no. 29.

From the evidence which is available we find that most of the leases which were granted before 1300 concerned the more distant Cheshire estates. In the Taxatio we learn that in 1291 the abbot was receiving ten shillings per year in rents from part of the Poulton estates, and £2/10/- from lands in Byley. He was also receiving an annual rent of £2 for his lands near Alderley.¹ In the 1290's the policy of leasing estates in Cheshire was continued and extended during the abbacy of Robert le Burgilon. In 1294 Robert granted several pieces of land to William of Doncaster, a citizen of Chester. The grant included all the abbey's lands at Balderton, a piece of land near Dodleston, and three selions and an acres of meadow near Saltney. The term of the lease was for 30 years, at a rent of 6 shillings per year for the first 15 years, and 24 shillings per year for the remainder of the term.² In 1299 the abbot made a further grant to William of Doncaster. The entire Manor of Dodleston was leased to him for a period of 45 years, together with the fields of Pullenhall and Blackgreves at Pulford. He was to receive all this at a nominal rent of one rose per year, and one wonders what advantage the monks of Diaulacres could possibly have gained through such a transaction.³

1. *ibid.*, p.259.

2. EC/Edward I/no. 17.

3. *ibid.*, no. 26. William of Doncaster may have had some special relationship with the abbey, or with Robert Burgilon, but so far no written evidence of this has come to light.

By 1300 the demesne lands of Dieulacres in Cheshire had been reduced considerably. They consisted of part of the Poulton estate and about half of the Byley estate, together with smaller properties and rights such as the Middlewich salt-pans and the advowson of Sandbach church. Gradually the majority of these were granted out, but it seems that the Poulton estate was kept in demesne until 1504.¹ It was a valuable holding, consisting of 16 carucates of land; but even though it may have been kept in demesne until the early sixteenth century, there is evidence to suggest that towards the end of the thirteenth century the grange and conversi systems had been replaced by a mixture of hired labour and serfs. In about 1290 Robert de Pulford gave the abbot a number of bondservants, together with their goods and issue,² and this bequest has parallels on the Rossall estates which were also too far distant from Dieulacres to make the grange system a practical proposition.

During the early years of the fourteenth century the monks of Dieulacres continued to acquire small pieces of land, together with various rents and privileges in Poulton

1. The first recorded lease of Poulton is dated 1504;
EC/Henry VII/no. 22.

2. EC/Edward I/no. 52.

and Pulford;¹ and the transactions which took place during this period point to a policy of consolidation rather than large-scale leasing, as far as the Poulton estate was concerned. A number of exchanges of land took place in the 1330's between the abbot of Dieulacres and Robert, lord of Pulford, who was also Rector of the church of Cheadle (Cheshire). In 1337 the abbot released to Robert all the lands which he had in the lordship of Pulford, with the exception of the lands at Pullenhall and Blackgreves which he had leased to William of Doncaster. In exchange, the abbot was given a piece of land adjoining the Poulton estate, just outside the boundary trench which the monks had once made between the lands of Poulton and Pulford. This exchange was to last for a period of 45 years.² A more permanent arrangement was made between the same parties very shortly afterwards. Robert of Pulford gave the abbey a piece of arable land in Pulford in exchange for a toft and certain other lands lying between his demesne and certain properties belonging to Dieulacres. This agreement was made in perpetuity.³

The changeover from direct exploitation to a more extensive use of hired labour and serfs, and the adoption

1. EC/Ed. I/no.35; Ed. II/no.61; and Ed.III/nos. 38 & 39.
 2. EC/Ed. III/no. 22. 3. *ibid.*, no. 30.

of the rental system, were accompanied by the disappearance of the conversi from the Cistercian estates. It was once thought that the conversi disappeared as a result of the Black Death which swept across England in the middle of the fourteenth century. The scarcity of labour, and the rise in wages which occurred after the Plague were thought to have attracted men who would formerly have entered the monasteries as lay-brethren into jobs in the secular world. While the Black Death undoubtedly reduced the numbers of conversi on the estates, and while conditions which prevailed after the Plague undoubtedly attracted the labouring classes away from the semi-religious but financially unrewarding existence offered by the Cistercian monasteries, it is now quite clear that the reduction in the numbers of conversi began long before the time of the Black Death, and as the result of a deliberate policy on the part of the Cistercian Order. It has already been said that the presence of lay-brethren in the monasteries was something of a mixed blessing, and there is abundant evidence to shew that the conversi system did not work as well as it should have done. At the General Chapter of 1273 it was said that frequent, continuous, and entirely disgusting complaints had been received concerning the outrages of the conversi committed against the abbots and choir-monks in many houses of the

Order.¹ Between 1168 and 1308 there were at least 123 revolts in English Cistercian houses, and in the majority of cases, the conversi were directly responsible.² The practice of allowing conversi to run the granges by themselves was on more than one occasion proved to be a supreme folly. In the Chronicle of Meaux we read that a granary containing a valuable stock of grain was completely destroyed by fire while the lay-brethren were participating in some kind of drunken orgy;³ and in 1257 the Lord of Bromfield took under his protection a number of conversi on the Cheshire estates of Dieulacres who had been implicated in the murder of a local inhabitant.⁴

The unruly behaviour of the conversi on many Cistercian estates, together with the change in the economic principles of the Cistercians - particularly the change in their attitude towards leasing - were primarily responsible for the deliberate reduction in the numbers of the lay-brethren. By the time of the Black Death there had been a very considerable decrease in numbers. In 1348, just before the Plague, the abbey of Meaux had only 7 conversi, whereas a century before there were 90.⁵ In 1335 there were 21 monks at Vale Royal, but apparently there were no conversi at all.⁶ Unfortunately we do not know how many

1. Statuta, III, P.104 (1272), no.5.

2. J.S.Donnelly, The Decline in the Medieval Cistercian Lay-Brotherhood, 1949, pp. 72-78.

3. Chronica Monasterii de Melsa, II, p.109.

4. EC/Henry III/no. 18.

5. J.S. Donnelly, "Changes in the Grange Economy of English and Welsh Cistercian Abbeys," Traditio, X, 1954, p.453.

6. ibid., p.454

conversi there were at Dieulacres; nor, in fact, is there any clue as to the number of choir monks in the abbey before 1377.¹ Nevertheless, we do know that a good deal of property was on lease by the beginning of the fourteenth century, and that in places where leasing had not yet begun, hired labour and serfs were being used. As a result, the monks of Dieulacres would have required far fewer conversi, and we can assume that Dieulacres, like the rest of the Cistercian houses, had drastically reduced the number of lay-brethren on its estates well before the Black Death.

The precise effects of the Black Death on the monasteries of North Staffordshire are not known. The Chronicles of Dieulacres and Croxden make only passing references to the Plague, and the absence of any Court Rolls for Leek make it impossible to say how the pestilence affected the surrounding area. However, in 1351 the Black Prince, in an order addressed to the Justiciar of Chester, made reference to the fact that the abbeys of St. Werburgh, Combermere, Vale Royal and Dieulacres had insufficient possessions "for the sustenance of the small number of monks at present serving God there."² This can perhaps be taken

as an indication that the Black Death had claimed a large

1. There were seven monks at Dieulacres in 1377. See below, pp. 94 & 265

2. Register of Edward the Black Prince, III, p.18.

number of victims among the monks and servants of Dieulacres, and that the abbey's economy was also suffering as a result. After the Black Death, the number of monks at Dieulacres appears to have increased very slowly. There were still only seven in 1377, although this figure had risen to ten by 1381.¹ There is no evidence at all to suggest that conversi were recruited by the monks of Dieulacres after the Plague, although we know that other monasteries had conversi in the 1380's and even as late as the 1530's.²

Another important feature of Cistercian life which underwent a significant change during the fourteenth century was the relationship of the English monasteries with Cîteaux. Strictly speaking, every Cistercian abbot was obliged to travel to Cîteaux each year in order to attend the General Chapter, taking with him a monetary contribution (known as apportum) from his own house. Some abbots attended less regularly than others, and it appears that by the end of the thirteenth century the abbot of Dieulacres was attending once in every three years.³

However, the financial policy of Edward I and the outbreak of the Hundred Years' War led to a suspension in the connections with Cîteaux. In 1298 Edward I forbade any of

1. J.C. Russell, "The Clerical Population of Medieval England," Traditio, II, 1944, pp.195-6.

2. Donnelly, op. cit., Traditio, X, 1954, pp. 452-4.

3. C.P.R., Ed. I., 1272-1281, p.454; 1281-92, pp.130 & 269.

the English abbots to attend the General Chapter, and he requisitioned for his own purposes the apportum which they would normally have taken with them.¹ In 1300 permission was given for the abbots to attend the Chapter, but they were not allowed to take any silver with them, or to make a subsidy of any kind to the abbot of Cîteaux.² The temporary ban on the export of English money was made more permanent in 1307 by the Statute of Carlisle, and Cistercian abbots were obliged to seek the King's licence before crossing the Channel to attend the General Chapter. Only one such licence is recorded as having been granted to the abbot of Dieulacres. This was in 1333, when he was given leave to cross from Dover with his men and horses and whatever he needed in the way of expenses for himself and his household.³

The outbreak of the Hundred Years' War led to a complete severance in the relationship of the English houses with Cîteaux; and although the abbot of Cîteaux sent envoys to England to try to elicit the arrears of apportum from the English abbots, they met with no success; for the King ordered that it was all to be paid into the Exchequer.⁴

On the administrative side, the English Cistercians took

1. C.Cl.R., Ed. I, vol. IV., pp. 215-217.

2. ibid., ~~1343-1346~~, pp. 348-9.

3. C.Cl.R., Ed. III., 1333-1337, p. 121.

4. ibid., 1343-1346, pp. 74-5.

matters into their own hands; and in the early 1340's the abbots of Waverley, Tintern and Quarr called together a provincial Chapter and passed decrees which the General Chapter at Cîteaux subsequently revoked.¹

A much more serious break in the connections between the English houses and Cîteaux took place during the Great Schism at the end of the century. Cîteaux, along with the other French houses, adhered to the Popes of Avignon. England and Wales followed the Roman Pope, Urban VI; and provision had to be made for the administration of the English and Welsh² **Benedictian** houses on more or less national lines. Urban VI appointed "shadow" abbots of Cîteaux and the chief daughter-houses, and in 1381 a mandate was sent to the abbots of Rievaulx and Warden to summon the abbots in England and Wales to General Chapters and to appoint visitors with powers of correction. The danger that the English houses might go their own way was increased in 1390 when a General Chapter of the abbots of the Roman obedience agreed to give a "charitable subsidy" to assist the Roman cause. The Statute of Carlisle precluded the English abbots from contributing the 6,000 gold florins which was their share; and the "shadow" General Chapter

1. David Knowles, The Religious Orders in England, II, p.127.

2. The Scottish houses followed the Avignon Popes.

went so far as to threaten excommunication if the money was not paid. In 1394 the English and Welsh houses were granted a greater degree of self-government. In this year Boniface IX requested the abbots of Boxley, Stratford Langthorne and St. Mary Graces to summon a General Chapter and to appoint a president and visitors. The Chapter was to have all the powers of the abbot and General Chapter of Cîteaux. The system did not work as well as it should have done,¹ and in 1401 it was amended. The abbots of Waverley and Furness were ordered to choose four senior abbots and with them to nominate the executive officers of the Chapter. The six abbots were then to choose two presidents who, together with the General Chapter, were to have the same authority as the abbot and General Chapter of Cîteaux. This arrangement had more respect for seniority than the former one, and it appears to have worked more satisfactorily.² When the Schism ended, the relations with Cîteaux were to some extent renewed, and abbots from England were present at the General Chapter of 1411. However, the status quo of 1377 was never quite restored, and attendances of English abbots at Cîteaux diminished gradually throughout the fifteenth century. A general leave of absence was granted in 1485.

1. The abbey of St. Mary Graces had been founded as recently as 1350, and the choice of this monastery as the location of the General Chapter was resented by some because it ran against the Cistercian traditions of seniority.
2. For a full treatment of this subject see Rose Graham, "The Great Schism and the English Monasteries of the Cistercian Order," E.H.R., vol.45, 1929, pp.377 ff.

What was the effect of these changes in the relationship with the Mother-House and the General Chapter?

There is abundant proof that the English Chapter did not enjoy the same respect as the General Chapter of Cîteaux, and that matters which would normally have been brought to the attention of the Chapter were often settled without reference to it. In the case of Dieulacres we find that during the late fourteenth century and the early fifteenth century many of the abbots misbehaved themselves,¹ and it was no mere coincidence that these outbreaks of lawlessness occurred at a time when the old-established administrative system of the Order was in a state of suspension.

The Schism also resulted in an increasing amount of papal interference in Cistercian affairs. We have seen how the Roman Pope took the initiative in the reorganisation of the English Abbeys during the Schism; and between 1377 and 1417 there was a remarkable increase in the number of papal privileges granted to Cistercian monks. In 1398 the dignity of papal chaplain was conferred upon Richard Perris, a monk of Dieulacres; and seven other Cistercian monks received similar honours at the same time.² The grant of

1. See below, pp. 116-127

2. C.P.L., V, 1396-1404, p.116. In the fifteen years of his reign, Boniface IX granted more than 260 chaplaincies to English monks, compared with a mere 3 during the reign of Gregory XI (1370-1378). See David Knowles, The Religious Orders in England, II, pp.170-174.

a papal chaplaincy hit at the very roots of the monastic way of life, for in addition to its prestige-value it often carried with it a number of privileges, including exemption from regular life and obedience. In addition to granting privileges to individual monks, we also find the Popes of the Schism exercising functions which were strictly speaking peculiar to the General Chapter of the Order. In 1401 Boniface IX wrote to Richard Whitmore, abbot of Dieulacres, granting him and his monks permission to eat meat on lawful days when they were away from the monastery on business.¹

There is no indication that after the Schism the abbots of Dieulacres put in regular appearances at the General Chapter at Cîteaux. Indeed, the last reference to Dieulacres in the Statutes occurs in 1344.² Internal disputes which took place appear to have been settled, in the main, without any reference to superior authority; and in one early sixteenth century dispute when an appeal was made, it was addressed to the King as patron of the abbey rather than to the abbot of Cîteaux or the General Chapter.³

1. C.P.L., vol. V., p.398.

2. Statuta, IV, pp.880-1 (1344) no.15. The abbot of Dieulacres was instructed to investigate the case of an unruly and apostate monk at Hulton.

3. See below, pp.135-136

Chapter Five.

DIEULACRES AND THE OUTSIDE WORLD - DISPUTES WITH NEIGHBOURS
AND PATRONS, 1290-c.1450.

A significant consequence of the commercial activities of the Cistercian monks was that they were removed still further from that atmosphere of solitude and retirement from the world which had been so precious to the early fathers of Cîteaux, and were brought into a world of bargaining and litigation. The position of the abbot was altered drastically. Added to his spiritual duties were the functions of a businessman, and in many cases those of a lay baron and a politician. Cistercian abbots were often summoned to Parliament, and these summonses were by no means limited to the mitred abbots. The abbot of Dieulacres did not have the privilege of wearing a mitre, but we find in the lists of parliamentary writs that he was summoned on five occasions between 1295 and 1305.¹ Like many Cistercian abbots he had lands, rights and privileges in the city of London. In about 1248 he sold most of these to Adam de Stanes and Peter de Bristow for a hundred marks. Shortage of ready cash may have occasioned this sale, or it may have formed part of the abbot's policy of disposing of the more distant properties of the abbey by lease or sale. Nevertheless, the abbot still

1. Palgrave (ed.), Parliamentary Writs and Writs of Military Summons, Record Commission, 1827, vol. I., pp. 30, 48, 84, 89, 137.

retained a capital messuage and a hospitium in Wood Street, so that he would have suitable accommodation whenever he went to London.¹ The abbot also owned a house in Stafford,² and properties in several other towns; and it would appear that business of various kinds caused him to be absent from his monastery on many occasions. Though doubtless beneficial to the abbot himself, involvement in secular affairs inevitably made him materialistic and less mindful of his spiritual calling; and the activities of some of the abbots of Dieulacres, particularly in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, shew that they were no more charitable in their dealings with their neighbours than were the lay-magnates of the time.

By the end of the thirteenth century the abbot of Dieulacres had become a county magnate of no little standing, owning vast estates and numerous privileges. As lord of the Manor of Leek he often presided over the manorial courts.³ He had the right to hold markets and fairs, and the Sheriff could not enter his estates to serve writs without the consent of the abbot's bailiff. On the spiritual side, the abbot owned churches, chapelries and tithes. Possessions of this kind had been strictly prohibited by the early Cistercians who had learned from the mistakes of the Black Monks

1. DC/1/no.69.

2. ibid., no. 68.

3. His Court-leet was supposed to have been attended by as many as three hundred persons. F.A. Hibbert, Monasticism in Staffordshire, 1909, p.45.

that such things were often more trouble than they were worth, quite apart from the fact that they were totally out of keeping with the monastic ideal. As with the prohibitions concerning business transactions, the statutes concerning manorial rights, tithes and advowsons were ignored; and the consequences of this disobedience are reflected in the numerous quarrels and lawsuits which took place over the possession of them.

A very common source of trouble between an abbey and its neighbours was the possession of advowsons. As far as it is known, Dieulacres held four - Leek, Cheddleton, Rocester and Sandbach. The abbot quitclaimed Rocester to John Scot in 1233,¹ but the others were retained until the dissolution. The abbot's title to St. Edward's Leek was never disputed, but trouble arose over Cheddleton and Sandbach,² and the abbot was put to a good deal of trouble in the process of establishing the validity of his claims.

The Cheddleton case is probably the more interesting of the two. Although Cheddleton church was treated as a chapel dependent upon Leek, it had a separate advowson which had been granted to the abbot of Dieulacres by Hugh de Cheddleton shortly after the foundation of the abbey.³ In 1290 Nicholas de Audley, guardian of the lands and heir

1. C.Cl.R., Henry III, 1231-1234, p.220.

2. For the Sandbach case, see above, pp.65-67

3. DC/1/no.10.

of the late Richard de Cheddleton, brought an assize of darrēn presentment against the abbot. He claimed that the last presentation to the church had been made in the reign of King John by Robert, then lord of Cheddleton, who had presented his clerk Peter to the benefice. Since Peter's death in about 1280 no priest had ever been instituted, and Nicholas de Audley claimed the advowson on behalf of his young ward on the grounds that the last presentation had been made by a member of the de Cheddleton family. A writ was sent to the bishop of Coventry and Lichfield asking him to certify whether the church was vacant or not, and if it was not vacant to state at what time and at whose presentation the benefice had been filled. The bishop sent back an unsatisfactory reply, and another writ was sent to him asking him for a more precise statement. In the meantime the abbot served a writ of inhibition on the bishop, thereby preventing him from certifying to the first writ. However, the bishop wrote back to the Court and said that the abbot alleged that the church was being served by the monks of Dieulacres, and that the abbot was prepared to give proof of his title. The abbot appeared before the Court and stated that Hugh de Cheddleton, the ancestor of the present heir to the Cheddleton lordship, had granted the advowson to Dieulacres, and he produced the original charter as evidence. However,

the jury stated that the last presentation to the church had been made in the reign of King John by Robert de Cheddleton, and that since the death of the last incumbent some ten years before no presentation had been made. It was therefore decided that Nicholas de Audley should recover the advowson.¹ The loss of the advowson was unfortunate from the abbot's point of view, but he had had ten years in which to find an incumbent. However, there is no evidence that the church was being neglected, or that regular services were not being held there. The bishop stated quite clearly that it was being served by the monks, and as Cheddleton was only a few miles away from Dieulacres there would have been little difficulty in running the church on a week to week basis, sending one of the brethren to say Mass and hear confessions at the appropriate times. There was an added advantage to this system, for the abbot was able to enjoy the revenues which would normally have gone to the incumbent.

The decision of the jury in 1290 did not, however, result in a permanent settlement. The abbot was determined to have the judgment reversed and to recover the advowson; and in the process he aroused the animosity of the de Cheddleton family. Nicholas de Audley's ward, William de Cheddleton, grew up into a somewhat unsavoury character.

1. SH.C., vol. VI, part I., pp. 191, 195, 199.

In 1324 he was described as "a notorious disturber of the peace and a maintainer of false quarrels," and it was alleged that he was in the habit of riding around the countryside with a band of armed men and terrorising the people. It was stated that in 1320 he had gone to Dieulacres and had so insulted and abused the abbot that he did not dare to leave the doors of his abbey for fear of his life. It was also alleged that in 1323 the same William de Cheddleton, together with six other men, had beaten up William Maunche, a servant of the abbey in Leek.¹ William de Cheddleton was duly punished, and shortly afterwards the judgment of 1291 respecting the advowson of Cheddleton church was reversed, and the abbot was re-instated.² It appears that William de Cheddleton subsequently reformed himself, and became mellow with age. In 1345 he quitclaimed all his rights to the church and its lands to the abbot and convent of Dieulacres.³

In spite of the reversal of the judgment and the subsequent quitclaim, two more cases of presentment were brought against the abbot of Dieulacres in the course of the fourteenth century. The first was in 1347, shortly after the death of William de Cheddleton. James de Audley, who was at that time acting as the guardian of William's heir

1. S.H.C., vol. X part I., pp. 50-51.

2. ibid., p. 56; and Abbreviatio Placitorum, Record Commission, 1811, p. 344.

3. J. Sleight, A History ofLeek, 1883, p. 51.

Matthew, put in another claim on behalf of the de Cheddleton family.¹ The second took place in 1360 when Edward III sued John de Haukestone and the abbot of Dieulacres for the next presentation to the church.² Neither case was successful, and the abbot held on to the advowson until the dissolution. In 1450 Cheddleton ceased to be a chapel of ease to Leek. At this time the Vicar of Leek was complaining that the chapelries were a financial burden to him, as he was responsible for paying the curates' stipends. On July 22nd, 1450 they were taken off his hands and the full responsibility for them was laid on the abbot of Dieulacres.³

Among the temporal possessions of Dieulacres, the Manor of Leek stands out as a main source of controversy and litigation; and in the disputes which took place, the abbot had to defend his right not against a local neighbour, but against the King. The Manor had once formed part of the demesne lands of the Earl of Chester; and although Ranulph de Blundeville had granted it to the monks of Dieulacres in frankalmoign,⁴ the abbey's rights were called into question on several occasions after the annexation of the Earldom by the Crown. When Henry III acquired the Earldom he took with it the rights of patronage of Dieulacres, and in 1254

these rights devolved upon the Lord Edward, who was created

1. S.H.C., vol. XII, Part I., pp. 69, 77.

2. S.H.C., vol. XIV, part I., pp. 102-3.

3. J. Sleight, op. cit., p. 51.

4. DC/2/no.2.

Earl of Chester in that year. In 1270 the Lord Edward issued a charter granting to the abbot and convent all the lands and possessions which they had received from Earl Ranulph, together with all the rights and liberties pertaining to them. The charter stated quite clearly that the Manor of Leek was to remain free and quit, in accordance with Ranulph's charter of which the abbot had the King's full confirmation. Neighbouring sheriffs and bailiffs were forbidden to interfere with the manor, or with any of the monks' liberties, upon pain of a £20 fine.¹

As Earl of Chester, the Lord Edward looked after the rights and liberties of Dieulacres like a good patron. After he became King in 1272, however, he took a rather different attitude. In 1275 he ordered an inquisition which concluded that the abbot of Dieulacres held Leek as a tenant-in-chief of the Crown.² In 1292 an Inspeximus confirmed the frankalmoign charter of 1270,³ but in the following year the abbot was obliged to appeal to a Great Assize in order to prove his seizin against the King.⁴ At the same time he was summoned to shew his warrant to hold Pleas of the Crown and to have free-warren, market, fair, gallows and wayf in Leek.⁵ The abbot disavowed all claim to hold pleas

1. C.Ch.R., vol. II, 1257-1300, pp. 417-8.

2. S.H.C., vol. V., Part I, p. 117.

3. ~~XXIX~~ C.Ch.R., vo. II., pp. 417-8.

4. S.H.C., vol. VI, part I, p. 246.

5. SH.C., vol. VI Part I., pp. 246-7.

of the Crown, but as regarded the other liberties, he said that King John had granted to Earl Ranulph the right to hold a weekly market and an annual fair at Leek,¹ and that his predecessors had held the manor by the gift of the Earl. He claimed free-warren by a charter of Edward I which he produced as evidence.² As far as infangenthef, wayf, gallows, and View of Frankpledge were concerned, the abbot stated that the Earl's gift of the manor had included all the liberties which pertained to it, and that the gift had received royal confirmation. The King's attorney disputed that such rights could be conferred by implication in this way; but the result of the case was that the abbot was allowed to keep all the rights and liberties which he claimed, with the exception of the privilege of taking tolls from all waggons which passed through Leek.³

In the middle years of the fourteenth century more disputes arose over the abbot's tenure of Leek. Notwithstanding a further Inspeximus and confirmation of the Dieulacres charters in 1330, the King's escheator saw fit, some nine years later, to seize the Manor of Leek on behalf of the King, on the grounds that the abbot had acquired it after the publication of the Statute of Mortmain and

without the Kings licence. It was not difficult for the

1. DC/1/no.1. 2. C.Ch.R., vol. ii., 1257-1300, p. 264.

3. S.H.C., vol. VI, part I, p. 267.

abbot to produce the charter by which the manor had originally been granted to Dieulacres - some sixty years before the Statute of Mortmain - and the King ordered his escheator to take no further action.¹

In 1345 a dispute over a corrody led to the questioning of the abbot's tenure of the monastery site itself. In this year the abbot, Randolph, was sued for contempt of the King's writ because he had refused to grant a corrody which the King had requested in the previous year for a servant of his, Richard de Preston. In the proceedings which ensued the King's attorney claimed that there was a precedent for royal corrodians at Dieulacres. He said that Edward I had requested a corrody for Robert de Carmenton, to whom the abbot had given sustenance for all his life "in bread, beer and kitchen and other necessaries in the same way as a monk of the house; and 14 shillings annually for a robe, and for the tailoring of the same 9d., and for his shoes 4 shillings annually.² The attorney alleged that Robert de Carmenton was in continual receipt of this corrody until his death, after which Edward III had requested a similar corrody for Richard de Preston.² It was stated that three writs were

sent to the abbot between the beginning of October and
 1. C.P.R., Edward III, 1338-1340, p.3333 and C.Cl.R.,
 1339-41, pp. 204-5.

2. The King's writ to the abbot is recorded in C.Cl.R.,
 Ed.III., vol. VII, 1343-6, p.486.

Christmas 1344, and that all of them had been treated with contempt. The abbot was represented by his attorney who denied that there had been any contempt and said that he was prepared to prove that no writs had been delivered at Dieulacres. Furthermore, he stated that the abbot was in no way obliged to receive royal corrodians, for the abbey lands had been granted to the monks by the Earl of Chester in frankalmoign, and that the abbey was therefore free from all secular demands and exactions. He also denied that there was any precedent, for he said that no corrody had ever been granted to Robert de Carmenton by the abbot of Dieulacres.

The King's attorney replied that the abbey lands which had been referred to were situated quite outside the bounds of the County of Chester, and that Earl Ranulph had held them of the King's predecessors. Consequently, he alleged, the abbot held them as a tenant-in-chief of the present King; for he could shew no licence for their alienation. Since the death of Ranulph he Blundeville, the County of Chester, the demesne fees and all the possessions of the Earl had come into the hands of the King's ancestors, and the abbot could shew no reason why the patronage of the abbey should have devolved upon the present Earl of Chester (i.e. Edward the Black Prince) nor why it should not have devolved upon the King. Regarding the corrody, the King's attorney

declared that the abbot held the Manor of Leek, the wood~~X~~ of Hillswood and the Manor of Birchall Grange as a tenant-in-chief of the King; and by virtue of this tenancy he was obliged to provide corrodies for the King's servants.

The abbot replied that he held the Manor of Leek, the wood of Hillswood and the Manor of Birchall Grange of the Earl of Chester, as of the honor of his sword of Chester, and not in chief of the King. Again he denied that Robert de Carmenton had ever received a corrody at Dieulacres and appealed the whole issue to a jury which met at Easter in the following year (1346). The jurors stated on oath that the abbey of Dieulacres was of the foundation of the Earl of Chester and that the abbot and his predecessors held the abbey, together with the other lands referred to, in frank-almoign of the Earls of Chester, and not in chief of the King. They also stated that Robert de Carmenton had never received a corrody at the command of Edward I. The suit was therefore dismissed.¹

This was the last occasion on which the abbot's tenure of the Manor of Leek was challenged by the Crown; but the outcome of the Preston case did not prevent the King from making further requests to the abbot of Dieulacres for

Corrodies to be provided for his servants and friends.
1. C.P.R., Ed. III, 1345-6, pp. 83-4; and S.H.C., vol. XIV part I, pp. 65-66.

Towards the end of Edward III's reign Giles Birforde, a falconer, was given a corrody at the King's command; and between 1380 and 1394 Richard II had three corrodians at Dieulacres - Matthew de Swettenham, a Yeoman of the King's Chamber; Richard Woodward, a Royal Serjeant; and John Rose.¹ It is more than likely that the presence of these three royal corrodians at Dieulacres at the end of the fourteenth century was to some extent responsible for the pro-royalist bias which is reflected in the continuation of the Dieulacres Chronicle which describes the revolution of 1399.²

Certainly such men as these would be in possession of exactly that kind of information which the author of the continuation has recorded. Neither Henry IV nor Henry V appear to have sent corrodians to Dieulacres. At any rate there is no record of any writs being sent to Dieulacres between 1399 and 1422. However, Henry VI requested corrodies for a serjeant and three esquires between c.1436 and 1447.³

In addition to corrodies which were demanded for servants of the Crown, sustenance was often given voluntarily to private individuals, sometimes as a kind of retaining fee to a useful workman or agent. Corrodies were also given in

1. C.Cl.R., Richard II, 1381-85, p.418; 1392-96, p.292.

2. See below, pp.177-80. Matthew de Swettenham was moved from Dieulacres in 1400 and was given a corrody by the Prior and Convent of Coventry. Soon afterwards he was moved to Worcester. C.Cl.R., Henry IV, vol. I, p.117.

3. C.Cl.R., Henry VI, 1441-47, p.47; & 1447-55, p.27.

return for gifts of land, and a number of these are recorded in the Dieulacres Cartulary. As early as 1230 a forester's son from Middlehulme, near Meerbrook, quitclaimed all his lands to the abbey in return for sustenance and clothing; and he promised in addition that he would work for the monks either at Dieulacres or on some other part of the abbey's estates.¹ Round about the same time a corrody was granted to a Jew (Henricus filius Hugonis Judei) in return for a number of bovates and selions in Byley.² Corrodies which were given voluntarily in this way could be profitable to a monastery; but royal corrodians seldom gave anything in return for their board and lodging, and their visits often imposed a strain on the resources of the community. The abuse to which monastic hospitality was subjected is reflected in an order which was sent in 1351 by the Black Prince to Thomas Ferrers, Justiciar of Chester. It stated that the abbey of St. Werburgh Chester, Vale Royal, Combermere and Dieulacres "which were founded and endowed by the Prince's predecessors and are of his patronage, are so excessively burdened by the frequent visits of people of the country, with grooms, horses and greyhounds, and are so wrongfully annoyed and harassed in many other ways by people of those parts who aim at abasing them, bringing them to servitude

1. DC/1/no. 25.

2. *ibid.*, no. 99.

and doing them damage, that their possessions hardly suffice for the sustenance of the small number of monks at present serving God there." ^B The Justiciar was ordered to keep a close watch on these abbeys and to see that these indiscriminate visits and charges were stopped. He was also instructed to take proceedings against any persons "who from malice are going about to molest or annoy them wrongfully!" ¹

The disputes which we have examined concerning the status of the lands and possessions of the abbot of Dieulacres suggest that the royal patronage of the abbey brought much trouble and little benefit to the community. However, this is not entirely true. The royal patrons seem to have taken a genuine interest in the abbey from time to time, as is shewn by Henry III's grant of Rossall, Edward I's free-warren charter, and the Black Prince's intervention on the monks' behalf in 1351. In this year the Black Prince paid a visit to Dieulacres on his return journey from Chester. He saw the unfinished church, which even then was described as "miram structuram," and gave a donation of 500 marks towards its completion. ² This gift was thought to represent a tenth of the money which had been exacted from the county of Chester earlier in the year.

1. The Register of Edward the Black Prince, III, p. 18; and see above, pp. 93-94
2. "Et in redeundo venit princeps per abbathiam de Dewleuares (sic) et vidit ibi miram structuram fabricae ecclesiae quam inceperat rex bonus Edwardus, et contulit eis de mera eleemosyna sua in subventionem operis predicti Vc marcas. Chronicle of Henry of Knighton, II, p. 75.

when a Court of Trailbaston had inflicted severe penalties on offenders who had openly resisted a circuit of judges.¹

Unfortunately, very little remains of Edward III's church at Dieulacres; but the sheer size of the surviving piers and columns suggest that it was indeed a marvellous building. During the excavation which took place in 1818 measurements were taken of the foundations². The total length~~th~~ of the nave and choir was estimated at about 160 feet. The width of the nave was 29 feet and the side aisles 17 feet, giving a total width of 63 feet. At the east end, low walls were built between the piers to shut off the side aisles from the choir. A comparison with Croxden reveals that the nave and choir at Dieulacres were somewhat larger than those of its sister-house. The nave and choir at Croxden measured 150 feet by 51 feet. However, the abbey church at Croxden had a large presbytery with an ambulatory and five apsidal chapels behind - an almost unique feature. This brought the total length of the church to some 235 feet.³ In the report of the excavation of 1818, no mention is made of a presbytery at Dieulacres, although there must have been one; and it is impossible, using existing archaeological evidence, to assess accurately the total length of the structure. If one allows

1. *ibid.*

2. A report is given in Gentleman's Magazine, vol. 89, part I (1819), pp. 120-22.

3. C. Lynam, The Abbey of St. Mary, Croxden, 1911, plan 4.

Dieulacres - the Abbey Church



(a) One of the piers of the central crossing.



(b) Part of the north wall of the Nave.



The Abbey ruins – general view

about 60 or 70 feet for a presbytery and a central crossing and tower,¹ the total length of the church would be in the region of 220 to 230 feet; but until a thorough excavation has been carried out, it is impossible to reach any definite conclusions.

The observations which the Black Prince made in 1351 concerning the unfair treatment which some of the religious were receiving from their secular neighbours indicates that there was a certain amount of ill-feeling abroad between the abbeys and the community at large in the middle of the fourteenth century. Some abbots were undoubtedly high-handed in their dealings. As early as 1275 the abbot of Dieulacres was arousing the animosity of certain people in the neighbourhood, for at an inquisition held at Stafford concerning the Hundred of Totmonslow it was stated that he had serjeanties and that he was exacting by force unjust tolls from those who passed through his demesne lands.²

Quarrels between servants of the abbey and the townfold of Leek sometimes led to brawls and private feuds; and it was not unknown for the abbot to take the law into his own hands instead of acting through the normal channels. In 1379 a royal commission was granted to Hugh, Earl of Stafford, to

1. There must have been a tower, for an inventory drawn up at the dissolution mentions six bells. PRO/E/315/vol. 172/p. 48.

2. S.H.C., Vol. V, part I, p. 119.

enquire into the activities of the abbot of Dieulacres and his men. Information had been received to the effect that the abbot, William de Lichfield, was "desiring to perpetuate maintenance in his marches and to oppress the people." It was alleged that the abbot had twenty retainers who were common disturbers of the King's peace, and who did all the mischief they could in the county of Stafford, committing assaults and even murders.¹ In 1380 a number of these men, led by Henry de Bradshaw of Leek, were accused of lying in wait for John Warton, also of Leek, with the intent to murder him. Warton was already in the abbot's bad books, for he had been accused of assaulting some of the servants of the abbey and wounding them so badly that their services were lost for a length of time.² In all likelihood some of the wounded servants were friends of Bradshaw's, and they decided to settle the score in their own way. Eventually Bradshaw's men encountered Warton. One of them struck him down with an arrow and called on him to surrender to the peace. Warton surrendered and was subsequently carried away and imprisoned at Leek for a period of four days, during which time Bradshaw and his followers decided what was to be done with him, probably in consultation with abbot William de Lichfield. At the end of this time Warton was taken out of the gaul and marched to a place called Leek Moor, just outside the town.

There he was beheaded, apparently without any kind of trial.

1. C.P.R., Richard II, 1377-81, p. 362.

2. S.H.C., vol. XIII, part I, pp. 153-4.

In the inquisition which followed this outrage, it was alleged that the abbot continued to harbour the felons, knowing that they had been responsible for the murder.¹ In another inquisition it was stated that the abbot had himself given instructions to the effect that Warton was to be killed. It was also alleged that after the murder Bradshaw and his companions had despoiled the body of various items of clothing, weapons² and valuables, and had raided the dead man's house at Leek. Edmund de Draycote, cellarer of the abbey, and William del Brugge, Vicar of Leek, were accused along with the abbot of harbouring the felons afterwards.³ The proceedings which followed were long and involved. Warton's widow, Almarica, brought a separate suit against Bradshaw, and her story differed in certain respects from that of the witnesses at the inquisition. She said that Bradshaw, together with his brother and seven other men, had lain in wait for her husband on the 24th April 1379; and she alleged that when Warton appeared on the scene he was murdered outright. She made no mention of the alleged imprisonment, but said that Henry de Bradshaw shot her husband ~~and~~ to the heart and killed him. However, in her desire to implicate the remaining eight men she went on to say that

1. S.H.C., vol. XIV part I, pp. 153-4.

2. It seems that Warton himself was well armed, for at the time of his capture he was carrying a bow, arrows and a sword.

3. S.H.C., vol. XIV, part I, p. 154.

any of them could have struck the fatal blow, for all of them had assaulted her husband in some way. She declared that after Henry de Bradshaw had shot his arrow, Thomas Page struck Warton on the head with a baselard (i.e. a dagger) and caused a mortal wound, "so that if he did not die of the blow of the said Henry, he died of the blow given him by the said Thomas. And Robert le Wryght shot him with an arrow in the back and gave him a mortal wound, so that if he did not die of the blow given him by the said Thomas, he died of the blow given him by the said Robert. And Richard del Kychen struck him in the stomach with a sword and caused a mortal wound, so that if he did not die of the blow given him by the said Robert, he died of the wound given him by the said Richard."² Four other men were accused of striking "mortal blows" and the alleged mutilation was completed by William Balle who decapitated Warton with his sword.¹

A commission was appointed to round up all the felons, and also the vicar of Leek and the abbot of Dieulacres. However, the perpetrators of the crime concealed themselves so cleverly that none of them could be apprehended. The abbot surrendered himself and was committed to the Marshalsea gaol, but as Henry de Bradshaw and the others who were indicted as principals had not been found, he was admitted to bail. He found security himself at £100 - doubtless

1. S.H.C., vol. XIV Part I, pp. 151 and 156.

borrowed from the abbey's funds - and four sureties at £40 each for his good behaviour. At Easter 1381 one of the principals, Robert Tuphead, surrendered and was imprisoned. He pleaded not guilty to the charge of murder and appealed to a jury which was summoned to meet at the end of April in the following year. In the meantime two of the accessories to the murder, William Dyke and the Vicar of Leek, gave themselves up. When they were brought before the court they produced Letters Patent pardoning them from all felonies committed before the 14th December 1381. Robert Tuphead also procured a pardon, and he was therefore released before his appeal to the jury was due to be heard. The abbot appeared for a second time, together with his cellarer. They too produced royal pardons and they were discharged on finding bail for their future good conduct. The process against Richard Bradshaw continued until October 1382 when a writ of nisi prius was issued, moving the case to be heard at Stafford by the Justices of Assize. A jury ~~after~~ stated on oath that he was not guilty, and he was released after being granted 100 shillings as damages. The case against the other felons continued until all of them managed

to procure royal pardons. The last man to surrender was Nicholas le Hunte, who appeared, complete with pardon, at Trinity Term 1385.¹

It appears that Richard Bradshaw was not satisfied with a mere acquittal and damages. In January 1383 he brought a plea of conspiracy and trespass against John de Wolaston, one of the members of the commission which had been appointed to enquire into the murder, and against three members of the jury which had first alleged that he and his brother were guilty of the crime.²

Shortly after the murder of John de Warton, the abbot of Croxden, William de Gunstone, was involved in a similar incident at Cheadle. The victim in this case was John Galpyn, a retainer of the abbot of Dieulacres who had acted as the abbot's attorney in the Warton case.³ The man accused of the murder was Nicholas Whelock of Cheshire, and the abbot of Croxden was accused of helping to procure the felony. Like his brother-abbot at Dieulacres, he was allowed bail, and in 1383 he was acquitted without so much as a fine for misconduct.⁴

1. S.H.C., vol. XIV part I, pp. 153-4 & p. 156.

2. ibid., p. 162.

3. Galpyn was coroner for Stafford until February 1381, when he was removed from his post because he was defending the abbot of Dieulacres against the King in the murder case.

C.Cl.R., Richard II, 1377-81, p. 436.

4. S.H.C., vol. XIV, part I, pp. 157-8.

In the many disputes which took place between the abbot of Dieulacres and his neighbours at the end of the fourteenth century and the beginning of the fifteenth century, one finds that more often than not it was the abbot who was the injured party. In spite of the instructions which the Black Prince had given to the Justiciar of Chester asking him to restrain anyone who **harmed** the monasteries which were under his protection, the assaults and trespasses continued to occur. In 1383 Abbot William de Lichfield sued John Beeke for forcibly entering his close at Tittesworth, cutting down his trees and taking timber to the value of £5. At the same time he accused Robert and Margaret de Chaterton for causing waste in the lands, houses, woods and gardens at Field which they held on Lease from the abbey.¹

William de Lichfield's successor as abbot of Dieulacres, Richard de Whitmore, was frequently involved in quarrels and lawsuits. In the 1390's the position became so bad that he sent a number of petitions and bills to the Court of Chancery alleging that various people were causing wilful damage to his property and assaulting his servants and tenants. In 1395, as a result of his petitions, a commission of oyer et terminer was appointed to investigate his grievances.² The findings of the commission are not known,

1. S.H.C., vol. XIII, p. 185.

2. C.P.R., Richard II, 1391-96; and C.Cl.R., 1396-99, p.62.

but they did little to remedy the situation. Although the trouble appears to have subsided for a short time, the assaults and trespasses broke out again with renewed vigour in the early years of the fifteenth century. In 1402 the abbot sued Henry Coly and Roger de Waterfall for breaking into his close and free-warren at Leek, cutting down his trees and taking fish valued at £20 from the abbey's fish-ponds. They were also accused of taking rabbits, hares, pheasants and partridges from the abbot's estates and of trespassing with their cattle on his pasture land.¹

In 1413 Abbot Whitmore accused a group of five men of breaking into his close and houses at Cheddleton and cutting down trees and underwood to the value of £5. It was alleged that the men had threatened the servants of the abbey with loss of life and limb to such an extent that they did not dare to carry out their duties, so that the abbot was deprived of their services.² The felons were most probably servants of William Egerton of Cheddleton Manor, for later in the year a similar incident, which had all the appearances of a reprisal, took place on Egerton's estates at Cheddleton. Nicholas de Pulton, a monk of Dieulacres, together with a number of the abbot's servants, was said to have gathered a band of about 80 men, some of

1. S.H.C., vol. XV, p. 98.

2. S.H.C., vol. XVII, pp. 43-4.

them wearing armour and carrying swords and axes. They marched to Cheddleton "in the manner of war", raided the park and manor of William Egerton, and took by force a quantity of stone worth £5 - the exact value of the timber which had been stolen from the abbot earlier in the year. The abbot was accused of harbouring the men afterwards, knowing full well that they had been responsible for the raid. Nicholas de Pulton and the other ringleaders were arrested and put in the Marshalsea. When they came before the justices they pleaded not guilty and appealed to a jury which acquitted them of the charge. The abbot, who had been indicted as an accessory, was also acquitted.¹

In 1416 Abbot Richard de Whitmore was involved in a dispute with the Prior of Trentham who owned certain lands bordering on the Manor of Leek at Wall Grange. The prior accused Whitmore of breaking into his close at the grange and taking goods and chattels valued at £20. The abbot was also accused of trespassing with his livestock on the pasture-land at Wall Grange, and it was stated that his cattle had consumed grass valued at a further £20.²

During the next few years a number of incidents

1. *ibid.*, pp. 7 & 23.

2. *S.H.C.*, vol. XVII, p. 56. This sum of money seems unusually large. Perhaps the trespasses had been going on for a number of years.

occurred in which it was the abbot who suffered loss and damage. In 1419 two Cheshire gentlemen, Thomas Coton of Coton and Robert Nedeham of Granage, broke into the abbot's close at Leek. They assaulted some of the servants of the abbey and injured them so badly that they were unable to carry out their duties for a length of time.¹ In 1424 Abbot Whitmore sued another Cheshire man, William Jonesson of Sutton, and William Proudying of Leek, for trespassing on his property and stealing a horse.²

Richard Whitmore's successor as abbot was John Goodfellow, and it was not long before he earned himself a bad reputation. In 1443 John Holand, knight, sued him, together with the parish clerk of Leek and three other men, for taking by force certain goods and chattels of his worth £40.³ Shortly afterwards, Goodfellow managed to get himself involved in a private ~~feud~~^{feud} which was taking place between the Bassets of Blore and the Meverells of Throwley. The abbot was a supporter of the Meverell faction, and on at least two occasions his servants were involved in brawls with Basset's men. In 1447-8 a dispute arose concerning the tithes of Throwley which belonged to Ilam church. The Vicar of Ilam, John Southworth, had granted the tithes to

Ralph Basset, thereby incurring the anger of Sampson

1. S.H.C., vol. XVII, pp. 66 & 69.

2. ibid., p. 98.

3. S.H.C., vol. III, New Series, p. 163.

Meverell who claimed that the tithes should have been given to him. He was determined to wrest the tithes from Basset, and in January 1448 he gathered together a band of about 40 men armed with swords, bows and arrows. They assembled at the hamlet of Thorpe, only a short distance from Ilam, and from there they set out in search of the vicar. When they eventually found Father Southworth they insulted him and threatened him with a violent death unless he agreed to disassociate himself from Ralph Basset and grant the tithes of Throwley to Sampson Meverell. At first the priest refused, but when it became apparent that the gang intended to carry out their threats he gave way, and released the tithes to Meverell. Basset refused to agree to this, and subsequently he and John Southworth brought an indictment against Meverell. Meverell appealed to a jury which met at Michaelmas in the same year and found him not guilty of the charges that were brought against him.¹ Before the jury met, however, Meverell took his quarrel with Ralph Basset a stage further. In June 1448 he gathered together a group of thirteen people including Isabella his wife, John Goodfellow, abbot of Dieulacres, and William Rufford, a priest from Grindon. They marched on Basset's residence at Blore, broke into his house and closes and stole 12 oxen and 12 cows. They also insulted and attacked Basset's servants, three of

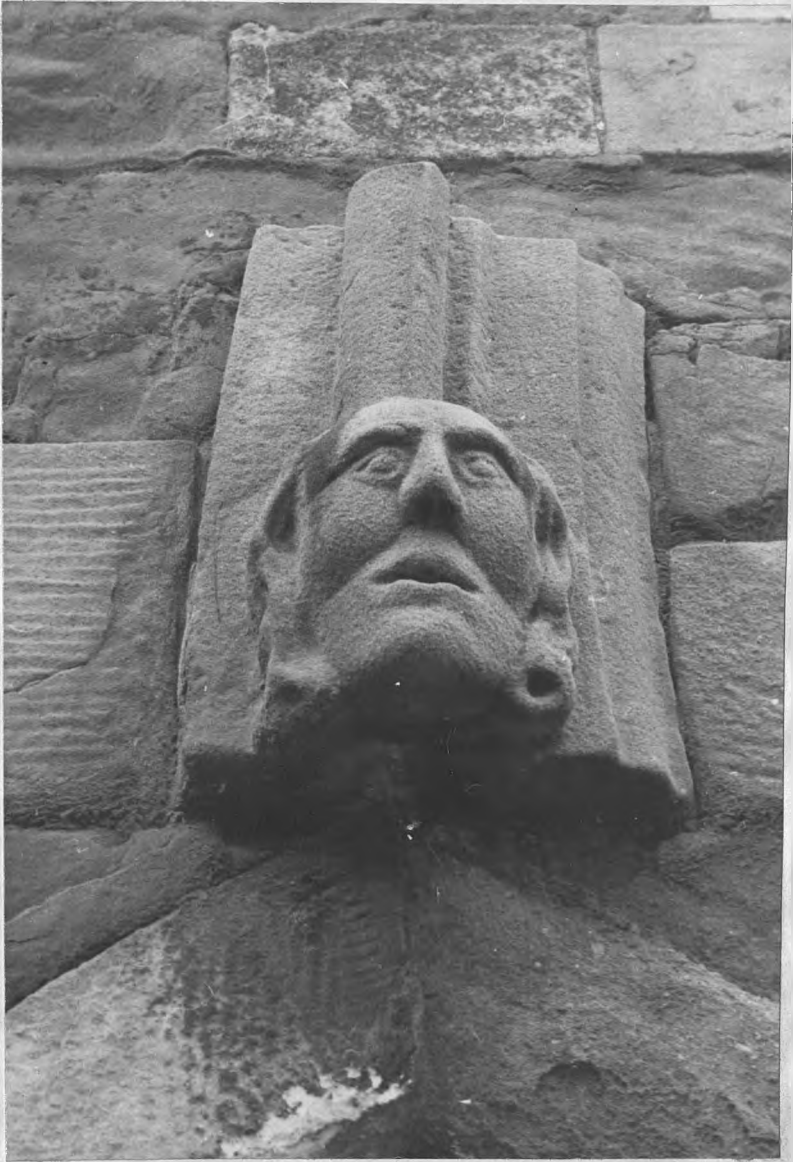
1. S.H.C., vol. III, New Series, p. 182.

whom were badly injured in the fray. Basset claimed £40 as damages for the loss of their services. Meverell, together with the abbot and the others accused were indicted at Trinity Term 1449 when they appealed to a jury whose verdict is not known.¹

The activities of John Goodfellow and of some of his predecessors reveal that the religious life, as it was being lived at Dieulacres at the beginning of the fifteenth century, left much to be desired. The sight of a Cistercian abbot leading bands of armed vagabonds around the countryside and involving himself in local feuds is not a very edifying one; and such incidents as the murder of John Warton and the ill-treating of Ralph Basset's servants must undoubtedly have added to the anti-clerical feelings which were growing up at this time. These incidents were indicative of the gradual demoralisation of the regular clergy which was taking place all over the country, and particularly in the more remote areas. As far as the Cistercian Order was concerned, the loosening of the ties between the English houses and the General Chapter was accompanied by a loosening of discipline; but as we have already seen, the decline in standards began long before the Hundred Years' War and the Schism. At an early stage the Cistercian monks became

1. *ibid.*, pp. 182-3, 185.

involved in secular affairs, and the numerous quarrels which arose over tithes, advowsons and manorial rights would never have occurred if they had kept true to their original ideals.



Dieulacres - fragment of sculpture.

Chapter Six.

THE LAST ABBOTS OF DIEULACRES, 1500-1536.

Virtually nothing is known of the history of Dieulacres during the last decades of the fifteenth century. The Chronicle of the abbey was completed, in its present form, at some date before 1413;¹ and as far as is known, no further continuations were compiled after this date. With the exception of an Inspeximus of 1467,² not a single deed or charter relating to Dieulacres appears to have survived from this period, and it is therefore impossible to trace the development of leasing in the latter half of the fifteenth century. From c.1500 onwards, however, there is a plentiful supply of records; and it is possible to give a fairly complete account of the activities of the last four abbots of Dieulacres.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century the monks of Dieulacres appear to have been living a fairly quiet existence, and there is no evidence to suggest that the abbot was following the traditions of John Goodfellow and his equally unsavoury predecessors. The policy of leasing out the more distant properties of the abbey, which had begun in the 1260's, was still continuing; and by the early 1500's only a few granges were still held in demesne. These

1. See below, pp. 172-189

2. C.P.R., Edward IV and Henry VI., 1467-77, pp. 34-5.

included Birchall Grange, which was used for the production of foodstuffs for the community, Fowlchurch Grange, Westwood, Woodcroft, and other lands immediately adjoining the abbey site. The demesne lands at Westwood consisted of some 300 acres of arable, meadow and pasture land, and it is known that these were still held in demesne in 1537.¹

Among the Cheshire estates of Dieulacres, the Manor of Poulton was leased in 1504 to Nicholas Manley and Ellen his wife for a term of 89 years, at an annual rent of £50.² The lease included all the appurtenances of the manor, and the chapel of Poulton with its tithes and oblations. The abbot, John Newton, inserted some rather interesting conditions in the lease. The Manleys were required to entertain him, together with twelve mounted companions, twice a year for six days. They were also required to entertain the cellarer and other servants of the abbey, whenever they came to Poulton. The Manley's, for their part, stipulated that they should not be expected to provide wine, fresh salmon and oysters on these occasions. When Nicholas Manley died in about 1520, Abbot John Woodland re-leased the manor to his son, Henry Manley, for 61 years, under the same conditions.³ The conditions attached to

1. The abbot, Thomas Whitney, granted Westwood to one of his friends about a year before the dissolution. P.R.O.
MS E/321/29/6. See below, p. 163
2. EC/Henry VII/22.
3. EC/Henry VIII/14.

he leased the grange of Rossall to his kinsman George. The property remained in the family until 1553. George's grandson, William, later rose to fame as Cardinal Allen, the founder of Douai College.¹ Name and vocation were probably all that the Cardinal had in common with his distant Cistercian relative, for the first William Alben conducted himself so badly when he was abbot of Dieulacres that he was eventually deposed from office.

In 1516 there was an affray in the town of Leek, during which a man called Paunsfote was murdered by some servants of the Steward of the town, Sir John Savage. William Alben, together with John Brereton² and other servants of the abbey were indicted as accessories. William Egerton of Wall Grange was appointed King's Commissioner to investigate the incident and to arrest those responsible; but at the instigation of John Brereton about 200 of the abbot's servants and tenants gathered together in a riotous manner and tried to impede the course of justice. They pursued Egerton, who was forced to run from house to house until he was eventually cornered at one of the local taverns. John Brereton and his men (some of them armed) surrounded the tavern, and they were later joined by the abbot and

1. ~~V.C.H.~~ V.C.H., Lancs., vo. VII, pp. 235-6. Dictionary of National Biography, vol. I, p.314.

2. John Brereton had a long association with Dieulacres and exerted considerable influence there. See below, pp. 161-2;

eight of his monks. They waited for about an hour, hoping that Egerton would venture out, and in the meantime Brereton shot an arrow through the window of the room in which the Commissioner was sitting. Witnesses declared later that they saw the abbot himself "take his bow from his monk Whitney¹ and take an arrow from under his girdle and nick it into his bow."² Eventually the men grew tired of waiting and went away. Egerton then ventured forth from the tavern and moved on to another house. About an hour later John Brereton returned with three of the abbot's brothers and went to the house of John Fairfield where other adherents of his were waiting. Thinking that the coast was clear, Egerton and his friends made off in the direction of Wall Grange. However, some of Brereton's men saw what was happening and raised the alarm. Brereton, together with the Alben brothers and their retinue, followed in hot pursuit. The Commissioner and his friends were forced to seek sanctuary in Leek Parish Church, and there they stayed for the next few days. Meanwhile, the abbot's servants blocked up the main road with trees, poles and ladders, so that no help could reach Egerton from outside the town. Several attempts

1. Thomas Whitney became abbot of Dieulacres in about 1523.

were made to convey food and provisions to the refugees in the church, but Brereton's men were ready at hand to capture and carry off anyone who was rash enough to go near the churchyard.

The whole affair was brought to the attention of the Court of Star Chamber, and the depositions of the various witnesses were taken before the Abbot of ^aHulton, Ralph Egerton, Mayor of Newcastle-under-Lyme, and others.¹ The incident shews clearly that the abbot and his men had a very powerful hold over the town of Leek. In spite of the mischief which he and many of his predecessors had caused, he still had a considerable following at the beginning of the sixteenth century; and both he and his tenants were prepared to go to great lengths in order to resist interferences on the part of an outside authority.

As a result of his escapades in 1516, Abbot William was imprisoned in the Fleet Gaol for quite some time.² On his return, he found that all was not well at Dieulacres. Some of the monks had been misbehaving themselves, and it seems that John Brereton was virtually in control of the monastery and doing more or less what he liked. A spell in prison had given the abbot ample opportunity for reflection, and it appears that he emerged a much-reformed character. He had heard that his brethren at Dieulacres
 1. P.R.O./STA.CHA./2/24/no. 23. S.H.C., 1912, pp.9-13.
 2. until about 1519.

were doing untold mischief and earning the monastery a thoroughly bad name, and on his return he set about the task of putting the house in order. Neither John Brereton nor the unruly monks particularly relished the idea of being reformed, especially by a man who, a few years before, had been no more virtuous than they. It was decided that at all costs William Alben must go. Brereton and the recalcitrant monks wrote to the abbot of Combermere, the mother-house of Dieulacres, and made nasty insinuations about their abbot. As a result, the abbot of Combermere made a visitation to Dieulacres to examine their allegations more closely. The precise nature of the charges against William Alben are not known, but they were sufficiently grave to bring about his downfall. As a result of the visitation he was deposed from the abbacy and was compelled "for fear of his life," to take a pension at the assignment of his monks. As one might have expected, the pension was not paid, and the ex-abbot soon found himself in dire straits. He appealed to the King in Chancery, complaining that what had been done was wholly contrary to the decrees and statutes of the Cistercian Order.¹ Henry VIII, as patron of Dieulacres, took the matter in hand. He directed the

1. The fact that the appeal was made to the King rather than to the Cistercian General Chapter is very revealing. See above, pp. 96-99

abbots of Vale Royal and Combermere to make a fresh visitation to the abbey to find out the precise reasons why William Alben had been deposed and whether there was any truth in the allegations which had been made against him. The abbot of Vale Royal was specifically instructed to enquire into the allegedly unreligious behaviour of the abbot of Combermere during the first visitation. If it turned out that Alben had been deposed through the malice and ill-will of his brethren, the abbot of Vale Royal was to appoint the abbot of Combe as his associate and to proceed with the matter according to the ordinances and statutes of Cîteaux.¹

The outcome of the second visitation is not recorded, but it is fairly certain that William Alben remained deposed. We know that in 1520 a man called John Woodland was abbot, and his activities at Dieulacres reveal his character to be wholly consistent with the man who was elected to the abbacy by a group of unruly monks in order to resist reform. His principal contribution to the history of Dieulacres was a not unsuccessful attempt to reduce the monastery to a state of financial ruin. In a bill of complaint which was brought into Chancery by his successor, it was stated that without any regard to the wealth and prosperity of Dieulacres,

1. P.R.O. /E/135/22/21 (undated).

About John not only "wasted and spent a large amount of the goods of the abbey," but also "of evil mind and intent" drew up a number of blank forms, sealed with the conventual seal. He distributed these amongst his friends, who were left to write on them what they pleased.¹ Quite apart from the economic implications of John Woodland's acts of folly, the spiritual life of the community could hardly have benefited from the example of such a man.

John Woodland was deposed from office in about 1523. His successor was Thomas Whitney, a close friend of John Brereton, and whose career has left an indelible mark on the history of Dieulacres. His activities from the time of his election until the time he surrendered the monastery to the Royal Commissioners in 1538 shew that he inherited some of the more unpleasant characteristics of his immediate predecessors.

When he became abbot, Thomas Whitney was faced with the task of clearing up the financial troubles which he had inherited from John Woodland, and it must be said to his credit that by the time of the Dissolution Dieulacres was not heavily in debt. Whitney made several attempts to recover the blank deeds which his predecessor had given away, and he managed to trace several of them. However, one of the ex-abbot's friends, Edmund Washington, repeatedly

refused to surrender those what were in his possession. Abbot Whitney had no idea whatever as to what had been written on the blanks, and the bill of complaint which he brought into Chancery in about 1535 reveals a genuine fear that Washington was planning to cause further hardship to the abbey.¹

The Egerton-Brereton affair of 1516 had taught Thomas Whitney how to organise a first-class riot, and when he became abbot, John Brereton was still at hand to give him extra tuition. In 1530 they were both involved in a quarrel which took place between Hugh Willoughby and Hugh Bagnall on the one part, and William Chetwyn and Henry Brooke on the other. The dispute concerned the possession of certain lands at Cheddleton, and the abbot took the side of Willoughby and Bagnall. An armed band was raised, and an attempt was made to evict Chetwyn, Brooke, and their tenants from the lands in question. An attack was made on the house of one of Chetwyn's farmers, John Masse. There were violent scenes, and Masse's children were thrown out of the windows. The man proceeded to round up cattle and other livestock belonging to Masse and drove them off the land so that he could not find them again. When accused, the abbot denied the charges and said that they had been

1. *ibid.* Thomas Whitney was not averse to granting blank charters and ante-dated leases to his own friends.
See below, pp. 161-164.

slanderously contrived to put him and his associates to unjust cost. None of them, he maintained, was guilty of riot.¹

In the same year Abbot Whitney attempted to evict one of his own tenants - John Leigh, who held a mease and six acres of land in the manor of Leek, The abbot, together with Henry Brereton, assaulted Leigh, broke down his hedges and destroyed his grass.² In 1531 Whitney leased to this same Henry Brereton some lands in the manor of Heaton, and this lease³ provoked yet another violent dispute. Peter Willott of Heaton claimed that one of these tenements, called "Feirebarous,"⁴ had been held by his family for many years, and that Abbot William Alben had ratified the lease and had received £4 for so doing. Willott had paid his rent promptly each year, but he said that Abbot Whitney, "of his covetous mind intending the utter impoverishment of your orator, his wife and children," had recently made out a new lease to Henry Brereton. The abbot ordered Willott to quit, and when he refused, Henry Brereton and several others went to Heaton where they assaulted Willott's wife and took away his livestock. The case was brought before the Court of Star Chamber, and the abbot admitted that

1. S.H.C., vol. X, New Series, part I, pp. 143-149; 180-183.

2. S.H.C., 1912, p.40.

3. Oddly enough, this deed is among the Eaton charters (Henry VII/82a). It probably came to be there as a result of a confusion of Heaton with Eaton.

4. i.e. the present Fairboroughs Farm, Heaton. The nearby mound is still called Willott's Hill.

William Alben had granted the lease to Wyllott's father and that he had confirmed the lease in Wyllott's favour when he became abbot. Nevertheless, Brereton maintained his claim, and said that the premises had been demised to him for a period of 31 years commencing in 1531.¹

This may have been the end of the affair as far as Thomas Whitney was concerned, but the personal quarrel between Wyllott and Brereton continued for some time. In 1535 Henry Brereton was complaining that Wyllott, his wife and sons and several of his friends, had lain in wait to assault him with bows, arrows, clubs and staves; and that on the 4th February 1535 he had been attacked so violently that he would certainly have been murdered "if great and good help had not come."²

The most violent dispute which occurred over a lease during this period took place in 1535-6. The property in question was Easing Farm, just outside Leek, which Thomas Whitney had leased, or re-leased to a man called Mounford shortly after he took office. Mounford had died in about 1526, leaving his thirteen year old grandson, Richard Mounford, in possession of the farm. Several friends and relatives of the boy had requested the abbot to re-lease the farm to him and to his widowed grandmother.

1. PR.O./STA/CHA./2/6/68-9; S.H.C., 1919, pp. 65-66, and 1912, p. 57.

2. S.H.C., 1910, p.64.

The abbot had agreed, and had granted a lease for 12 years to Richard Mounford, the term to begin after the death or marriage of his grandmother. Richard's grandmother took a second husband in 1527-8, and so the lease became operative within a few months. However, the boy's uncle, William Arment, took over the farm, and appropriated all the revenues and profits which Richard should have enjoyed. Moreover, the abbot aided and abetted him in this act of injustice, in spite of the agreement which he had made only a few months before. This state of affairs continued until after Richard's 21st birthday, (1535) when, on the advice of his friends, he decided to stand up for his rights and take full possession of the farm. His action annoyed the abbot, who directed William Arment and his men to evict him. This they did with great violence and tyranny as "hath not lately been seen practised nor used amongst Christian men." They emptied the house of all Richard's belongings, ill-treated his cattle and assaulted the young man himself in a most cruel and malicious way. Not content with this, they pulled down one of the two houses which comprised Easing Farm, destroying such ~~things~~ goods as remained inside and leaving Richard homeless.

The abbot took things a stage further. He indicted Richard Mounford before the Justices of the Quarter Sessions on a charge of forcible entry. The young man was so impoverished by this time that he was unable to take any action to

redress his grievances; but fortunately he had one or two good friends who brought the matter to the attention of the Court of Star Chamber and asked that the abbot and his abettors be summoned to answer for their outrages.¹

On addition to the evictions and quarrels over leases which took place in the decade before the dissolution, there were also disputes over smaller rights and perquisites. In about 1535 Thomas Whitney antagonised one of the residents of Leek, John Dale, who was the executor of the late Elizabeth Fowell. Elizabeth had held certain lands on lease from the abbot, and Dale alleged that since her death the abbot had taken by force from him two ~~two~~ cows and a mare to compensate for arrears of rent. In addition, Dale maintained that Whitney had wrongfully taken three oxen as mortuary dues - one after the death of Elizabeth, and two after the death of two of her children.²

Unfortunately there is no means of ascertaining the spiritual state of Dieulacres on the eve of the dissolution. Indeed, the fact that the history of the abbey emerges from obscurity in the early years of the sixteenth century is due almost entirely to the misdemeanours of the abbots. The incidents which we have just examined suggest that there was something drastically wrong, for in their dealings with their tenants and with the townspeople of Leek, the later

1. P.R.O./STA.CHA./2/28/107.

2. S.H.C., 1910, p. 64.

abbots of Dieulacres often displayed an alarming lack of Christian virtue. The activities of such men as William Alben, John Woodland and Thomas Whitney must inevitably have had an adverse effect on the moral outlook of the monks committed to their charge; and we have seen that on a number of occasions certain of the brethren were themselves involved in brawls and violent disputes. One assumes that the Opus Dei was still being sung at the appropriate times, but here again, it is difficult to believe that all of the brethren were present for all of the time. As far as the common life was concerned, there is evidence that the dormitory at Dieulacres had been abandoned and that the monks were living in well-furnished private rooms.¹ Indeed, the whole tendency at Dieulacres and elsewhere was to abandon the common life which had been so essential to the monastic ideal, and live like members of a club.² While the energetic Jean de Cirey was abbot of Cîteaux (1476-1503), there was a distinct possibility of drastic reforms being implemented in the English Cistercian houses. In 1490 Jean de Cirey proposed to make an official visit to England, but he was unable to obtain a safe-conduct. In 1502 there was talk of the abbot of Morimond coming, and in 1531 the General Chapter appointed

1. See below, p. 155.

2. Hamilton-Thompson, The English Clergy, 1947, p. 176.

the abbot of Chaloché to visit and reform the English houses.¹ At this stage, however, there was little hope of getting Henry VIII's co-operation, and such reforms as might have been instigated would have come far too late to forestall the events of 1536-9.

1. David Knowles, The Religious Orders in England, III,
p. 30.



Examples of stone-carving from Dieulacres: a fragment of window tracery with "green man", and a roof-boss.

Chapter Seven.

THE DISSOLUTION.

The story of the last years of Dieulacres is closely interwoven with the series of national events which marked the beginning of the English Reformation. For several years before the attack on the monasteries began, there were rumours that the Church in England was about to undergo some kind of change; and the King's divorce case and the subsequent break with Rome were thought by many to be merely a foretaste of things to come. On the Continent, Luther launched his attack on monasticism in 1521, and eight years later the word "Protestant" was coined at the Diet of Speyer. By the 1530's many of the new ideas were being eagerly absorbed by clerics and laymen in England. ~~and~~ However, the dissolution of the monasteries, which on the Continent accompanied or came after the religious revolution, preceded the doctrinal reformation in England by some eleven years.

In many ways the dissolution of the monasteries was the least revolutionary part of the English Reformation; for attacks had been made on church property many times before. However, the Act of Supremacy of 1534 conferred upon Henry VIII powers which were far greater than any which had been exercised by previous sovereigns. The legislation which culminated in the Supremacy Act substituted the King

for the Pope in the English Church. Henry VIII became both rex et sacerdos.¹ Over the question of Supremacy, the regular clergy were in a somewhat different position from their secular brethren. The monks were part of a supra-national organisation; and certain orders, like the Cistercians, owed a special allegiance to Rome and were exempt even from the control of their local diocesan. This state of affairs was completely at variance with the concept of national sovereignty which was the essential ingredient of the Tudor Revolution, and which is expressed so concisely in the preamble to the Act in Restraint of Appeals.² From the beginning, therefore, the position of the monks was anomalous: there was no place for them in the Henrician State.

Thomas Cromwell had had dissolution in mind for some time, and on the technical side of things he had Wolsey's precedents to guide him. A pretext had to be found, and the corruption which undoubtedly existed in certain houses at this time was as good an excuse as any. In 1535 a Commission was appointed to visit all the religious foundations and to ascertain the amount and value of their property.³ In

1. Despite the term sacerdos, Henry never claimed the right to exercise priestly functions. He claimed only the potestas jurisdictionis or rule of the Church's temporal sphere. Nevertheless, through his control of appointments, dignitaries, and ecclesiastical laws and courts he could influence the exercise of potestas ordinis without actually claiming it for himself.
2. Vide G.R. Elton, The Tudor Constitution, 1960, p.344.
3. There were legitimate grounds for such a visitation. The last survey of ecclesiastical property in England had been the Taxatio of Pope Nicholas IV in 1288-91.

addition to the compilation of the tax book known as the Valor Ecclesiasticus, reports were made on the spiritual and moral state of the monasteries. On the whole, the visitation was hostile and hypocritical; for right from the very beginning it was intended to end rather than to mend, and the visitors knew that they were expected to concentrate on the less commendable features of sixteenth century monastic life. In 1536 the smaller monasteries were dissolved on the pretext that "manifest sin, vicious, carnal and abominable living" were rampant in those houses which contained less than twelve religious,¹ and which had an income of less than £200 per annum. There was a certain amount of truth in this charge, for although it is difficult to believe that the line which divided the smaller incomes from the larger ones was exactly the line which divided vice from virtue, it is arguable that an annual income of £200 was approximately the sum required to maintain a community of twelve monks.² Some houses had an income of less than £50; and it is hardly surprising that corrupt practices were discovered in houses which were in financial straits.

1. Act for the dissolution of the smaller monasteries. Vide G.R. Elton, op. cit., p. 374.

2. The number twelve had for centuries been the traditional number of a perfect community, with the abbot as thirteenth. The Cistercians had always regarded it as the essential number for a new foundation. Vide D. Knowles, The Religious Orders in England, III, p. 304.

The visitation of Staffordshire which took place in 1535 revealed that next to Burton, Dieulacres had the greatest annual net income - some £227. In 1291 the various properties had been assessed at a total of £164/18/8d., and by 1535 there had been considerable changes in the value of certain estates. The Valor gives the total assessment of the Staffordshire lands, including those held in demesne, as £93/1/4d., compared with £37/13/8d. in 1291. The value of the Cheshire estates had risen from £29/15/-; but the assessment for Rossall shewed an extraordinary and inexplicable decrease from £61/10/- in 1291 to a mere £20/10/8d. in 1535.¹

In 1535 the abbot of Dieulacres still held certain lands in demesne, including Birchall Grange, Westwood, and certain other lands near to the abbey. These were assessed together at £8/18/6d. The spiritual revenues from Leek Parish church had increased from £36 in 1291 to £44 in 1535, by which time an additional chapelry had been established at Rushton. The spiritual revenues from Sandbach, Goostrey and Holmes Chapel amounted to £24/10/8d., bringing the total revenues from spiritual sources to £68/10/8d. For the purposes of the assessment for the tenth, certain sums were deducted from the gross figure. These amounted to £15/18/6d., and they included various fees, stipends and rents, including an annual payment of 18/6d. to the mother house of Combermere

1. Valor Ecclesiasticus, Record Commission, 1817, vol. III, p. 123.
~~2. Visitation Records, P.R.O. B/515/279/pp. 43-49. See below, Appendix C - pp~~

and £3/13/4d. to the abbot of Salop for the lands which the abbot of Dieulacres held of him in Norbreck and Bispham. At Dieulacres, as at other monasteries, the Commissioners tried to reduce these allocations as much as possible, so as to shew the greatest possible net income. There is no mention of alms-giving, and yet we know from another source¹ that the abbot of Dieulacres was maintaining several "lauders and pore bede-women."⁸

In 1535 Croxden Abbey had an annual net income of £90, and Hulton £76. The monks of Croxden still had a fair amount of land held in demesne at Musden Grange, Caldon and Onecote, and this was assessed at £36/16/8d. - two-fifths of the monastery's total assessment.² In spite of the fact that they were well below the deadline of £200 per year, both Croxden and Hulton managed to escape the suppression of 1536, on payment of "continuance fines".³ Dieulacres was safe for another two years; but it was apparent to all concerned that the King was not going to leave the larger abbeys untouched for very long. The suppressions of 1536 had whetted his appetite for further financial gains, and the failure of the Pilgrimage of Grace in 1536 demonstrated

1. Visitation Records., P.R.O. E/315/172/pp.41-49. See below, Appendix C. pp.260

2. Valor Ecclesiasticus, III, p. 125.

3. The Act of Suppression reserved to the King the freedom to permit any houses he might select to remain in being. The Act also promised that all those who wished to do so could be transferred to the larger monasteries. However, the dissolution was carried out so swiftly that it was more expedient to allow a large number of the doomed houses to remain in being on payment of a fine which usually amounted to a year's net income.

to Henry and Cromwell that such opposition as there might be could be effectively dealt with.

Knowing the fate which sooner or later was likely to befall Dieulacres, Abbot Whitney began to prepare a scheme which would to some extent circumvent the plan for wholesale dissolution and confiscation. To help him in his schemes he had around him a very convenient number of his relations. There were at Dieulacres, apart from himself, no fewer than four Whitneys - his brother John, his nephew Nicholas, Humphrey Whitney who was made bailiff of the Cheshire estates, and Geoffrey Whitney.

In 1534 the abbot granted to his brother John, and to his heirs and assigns, the lease of Swythamley Grange for a period of 70 years.¹ In 1537 Humphrey Whitney was given the lease of a salt-pit in Middlewich, and Geoffrey Whitney, who was a lawyer and citizen of London, was granted an annuity of four marks arising out of the manor of Leek.² In April 1536 the abbot's nephew Nicholas received an annuity of five marks charged upon the abbey's estates in Rossall.³ In the same month he and his wife were granted the lease of Rossall Grange with all its lands and appurtenances for a term of 60 years.⁴ Two years earlier the grange had been

1. Sleight, p. 58. Sleight does not say where he saw the deed.

2. *ibid.*, p. 63, and P.R.O. E/315/100p. 284.

3. P.R.O. E/315/96/p. 101.

4. P.R.O. E/315/100/p. 28.

leased to John Alen and his eldest son George.¹ John was bailiff of Rossall, and the abbot stipulated in the lease to his nephew that the Alens were to enjoy all the privileges which had previously been granted to them. Shortly afterwards the abbot gave a seventy years' lease of the rest of the abbey's Lancashire possessions, including Ritherham and a windmill in Norbreck, to a person or persons unknown. This lease appears to have been confirmed from time to time by Nicholas Whitney who received £10 of the annual rent of £23/6/8d.²

In addition to putting long-term leases in the hands of his relations, Thomas Whitney also made several grants to various servants of the abbey. In 1531 he granted to Richard Day a piece of land near the Roches, the lease to take effect from the 25th March 1535. Day was also given a field called the Coke Hays, as from 1537. The lease was for 39 years, and in addition to paying an annual rent of £1/6/3d., Day was expected to plough for one day in each year, to reap for another, and to do suit of court and "mylle werke", and to give two capons yearly at Easter.³

In 1535 William Davenport of Leekfrith, who had been held in high regard by the abbot and convent for some time, was

1. V.C.H. Lancs., pt. 2, vol. VII, p. 236.

2. V.H.C. Lancs., vol. VII, p. 236.

3. P.R.O. E/315/100/ p. 145.

granted ~~the~~ office of bailiff and collector of rents throughout all the Staffordshire estates of Dieulacres, with the exception of the burgages and lands of Leek.¹ Round about this time, Thomas Whitney took a leaf out of the book of his predecessor, John Woodland, and issued a number of ante-dated leases and ~~black~~ charters to his relatives and friends, in an attempt to cheat the Royal Commissioners still further. Both Richard Day and William Davenport were involved in this conspiracy, which met with only limited success.²

In 1537 the attack on the greater monasteries began. A fresh visitation of the large houses was made in order to induce voluntary surrender; the friars were suppressed, and there was a systematic pillage of the greater shrines such as Hailes and St. Edmundsbury. Some of the voluntary confessions which were made to the visitors reveal that, contrary to what might have been expected, the monks were generally no more papally-minded than the secular clergy, and few were prepared to share the fate of the abbots of Whalley and Jervaulx. The Cistercian monks of Bittlesden were willing to put their names to a glowing recantation of popery, declaring that "the manner and trade of living which we and others of our pretended religion have practised and

1. P.R.O. E/315/104/p. 25.

2. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~. See below, pp. 161-163

used many days, doth most principally consist in dumb ceremonies and in certain constitutions of Rome and other forinsical potentates."¹ If the Commissioners were unable to extort a confession from the brethren, they tackled the abbot alone, sometimes with letters from Cromwell himself, plainly demanding surrender. This happened at Combermere in 1538.²

In April of the same year it appears that the abbot of Dieulacres was similarly approached, for he wrote a very plaintive letter to Cromwell:

".... We have no more churches but one adjoining our monastery, to which belongs no corn, but oats; and no granges or demesne lands in our own hands; only a few closes to keep our horses and cattle. We beg therefore that such small things as we have may remain in our possession, for divers gentlemen make great labour to the King to have them from us."³

Thomas Whitney's pleadings were all in vain, for in October 1538 the Commissioners were on their way to take possession of the abbey. The fate of Dieulacres had already been sealed. The Bishop of Lichfield, Dr. Rowland Lee, wanted the site and buildings for his friend, the Earl of Derby, who already held the office of Steward of Dieulacres as a sinecure. The Bishop petitioned the King through Cromwell, and his wishes were granted. On the 20th October, Dr. Thomas Legh, "an arrogant young man with a satrap-like

1. LP, XIII (ii) p.421.

2. ibid., XIII (i), p.969.

3. ibid., (ii), p. 515. Whitney's statement was only a half-truth, as subsequent events were to shew.

countenance,"¹ and his auditor, William Cavendish, arrived at Dieulacres. The monastic buildings must have presented a fine sight amongst the autumn leaves of the Churnet valley, but the Commissioners had little time to admire the view. They inspected the buildings, drew up inventories of everything they found, and then proceeded to the work of dissolution and sale. The convent seal was confiscated after it had been used for the last time on the deed of surrender. The lead was stripped off the roof of the church, the windows and iron glazing bars were removed; the paving stones and even the gravestones were torn up and offered for sale. Within a matter of hours Dieulacres was reduced to a windy ruin.

From the inventories which the Commissioners drew up,² it is possible to form some picture of the material state of Dieulacres on the eve of dissolution. Judging from the long list of servants and labourers who received "rewards," it is clear that the old obligations on the part of the monks to do manual labour had become a dead letter. The Commissioners found only twelve monks, while the lay members of the household comprised six stewards and bailiffs, (excluding the Earl of Derby), a forester, and eleven others

1. So one of his contemporaries described him. Vide. G.R. Elton, England Under the Tudors, 1955, p. 144.

2. See below, Appendix C.



Dieulacres - stone 'coffin-lid and fragment of window
tracery.

who were given fees and annuities. In addition there were thirty servants and labourers on the premises. The only other religious house in the county which could boast of such a company was the Priory of St. Thomas, Stafford, with its twenty-nine servants, ten stewards and bailiffs, and only seven monks.

A survey of the contents of the conventual buildings reveals that the monks were living a fairly comfortable life; and there is evidence that wide departures had been made from the Cistercian regulations. There is no mention in the inventory of any beds of bedding in the dorter, but a number of smaller rooms were quite lavishly furnished. The "Corner Chamber" had in it a mattress, feather bed, two pillows, a blanket, coverlet, and silk hangings. It would seem that the monks had abandoned the common dormitory in favour of more comfortable accommodation in private rooms. From this it is perhaps arguable that the Night Office had been discontinued at Dieulacres, as, for its celebration, the dormitory with night stairs leading directly into the church was obviously the most convenient sleeping-place.¹

None of the graver charges, however, especially of immorality, which were brought against the religious at the time of the Dissolution, were even hinted at in the 1. This is the opinion of Sister Mary Laurence, "St. Mary's Abbey, Croxden," *Trans. N.S.F.C.*, vol.88, 1953-4, p.B78.

Staffordshire monasteries. The conduct of some of the later abbots of Dieulacres was not always in keeping with their vocation, but there are signs that the community as a whole was still respected in the locality. The presence of eight "lauders and pore bedewomen" at the abbey in 1538¹ shews that Dieulacres was still giving alms to the needy. The only serious charge which can be brought against the Staffordshire houses in general is occasional insolvency; and the debts which were owed by some of the smaller houses which survived until 1538 were due largely to the "continuance fines" which they had been obliged to pay. At Dieulacres and Stafford the debts were in the form of fees to various officials, ~~and~~ stipends and wages. Throughout the whole of the county only two cases of borrowing are recorded, although St. Thomas' Priory, Stafford, mortgaged some plate for £43,² The gross income of Dieulacres appears in the Valor Ecclesiasticus as £243/3/6d. (£227/5/- net) so the debt of £171/10/5d. which the monks owed cannot be called unreasonable.

The contents of the monastic buildings were sold for a total of £63/14/10d. There was no great hoard of church plate, and the church itself was not elaborately furnished.

The candlesticks and the lectern were made of latten, and

1. P.R.O. E/315/172/p. 45.

2. F.A. Hibbert, The Dissolution of the Monasteries, 1910, p.

the main altar was in the form of an alabaster table. The nave, which had once been used for the services of the conversi, now contained a number of side-altars. The entire contents of the church realised only 44 shillings. The vestry contained an impressive collection of vestments, some made of silk, and some of baudekyn, which was the most expensive of all ecclesiastical fabrics - a kind of heavy silken brocade, often interwoven with gold and silver thread. However, the whole collection was sold for as little as £3. No mention is made of books in the inventory, and one wonders what happened to the monastic library. Such documents as were of importance as title-deeds were, of course, preserved; and a fourteenth century copy of the Dieulacres Cartulary is still extant.¹ Apart from this, the most important document which has survived from the Dieulacres Library is a fifteenth century Chronicle.² Bound up with this document is a transcript of the medieval poem Speculum Humanae Salvationis and the Chronicle ends with a theological tract entitled Turris Sapientiae, so one can assume that at some stage the monks of Dieulacres had both of these works in their possession, if only for copying purposes. The Chronicle itself contains large

1. At the William Salt Library, Stafford; M 539.

2. Gray's Inn MS no. 9. See below, pp. 112-147

extracts from the Chronicles of Henry of Huntingdon and Ranulph Higden, and quotations from the works of Merlin and John of Bridlington, so it is likely that the monastic library also contained standard historical works as well as the popular versified histories of the time.

The inventories which the Commissioner drew up give us valuable information about the amount of livestock on the Dieulacres estates in 1538; and it seems that in addition to leasing out lands to his friends and relations, Thomas Whitney had been selling off some of his best animals. Legh found only sixty lambs and ewes, valued at £3/3/6d., six oxen which were sold for £4/5/-; three horses which went for £1 and twelve swine which realised 13/4d. The contents of the barns and granaries were as follows: 159 bushels of oats which were sold for £11/19/-., rye worth £1/-/- and 29 loads of hay valued at £3.¹ These figures represent only a fraction of the stock which had formerly made the abbey so rich and prosperous, although it is probable that the list included only the animals which were on the estates immediately adjoining the abbey. Even so, the sixty lambs and ewes, the six oxen and twelve pigs would have given very little occupation to the large number of servants who applied for "rewards." It is clear that the monks saw what was coming to them and sold as much as they could and dared

1. P.R.O.E/315/vol. 172, pp. 41-45.

as the threat of dissolution became more and more imminent. The prices at which the rest were sold would indicate that they must have been of inferior breed, although the fact that the sales were compulsory and hurried might have resulted in the prices being lower than they might have been under more favourable circumstances. Another interesting fact which emerges is that if Dieulacres really possessed only sixty sheep of inferior breed in 1538, then it had sadly declined; for sheep-farming had been the principal source of the abbey's wealth. There had indeed been a general decline in sheep-farming since the fourteenth century, but nevertheless there must have been a much larger number of livestock on the estates of Dieulacres just before the suppression than the records indicate, otherwise it is impossible to account for the large body of labourers.

After the dissolution, the monks of Dieulacres received pensions ranging from £2 to £6. The abbot received a reward of £6 and a pension of £60. It seems that these pensions were not paid as regularly or as promptly as they should have been; for in April 1539 Thomas Whitney wrote to John Scudamore, the particular receiver of the suppressed lands in Staffordshire and other Midland counties. He complained that the bailiff, William Davenport, was keeping back £4 of his pension in order to settle a debt which had

been incurred by a previous abbot and which was still outstanding at the time of the suppression.¹ In September 1540 his pension was whittled down even more, for in that year a subsidy was levied on monastic pensions at the rate of two shillings in the pound for pensioners, and six shillings and eightpence for stipendiaries.² Whitney's pension should have been paid to him at Michaelmas, 1540, but by December he had received nothing. He borrowed £8 from his brother, whom he sent to Lichfield to straighten things out with John Scudamore. He also sent his servant, Richard Day, to collect the pensions which were due to his "poor brethren that are not able to labour for them."³ He also asked Scudamore to write to the bailiffs instructing them to pay his pension regularly in the future.

A year or so later, Whitney was still in financial difficulties. He wrote to Sir Richard Rich, Chancellor of the Court of Augmentations, saying that at the time of the suppression he had made true and plain declaration to the visitors of all the goods, chattels, plate and ornaments of the monastery, and had reserved nothing to himself; but "truly and without deceit had made them privy to all that he had." In return for his honesty the Commissioners had allowed him to keep for his own use certain rents and

1. LP, XIV (i), p. 385.

2. LP, XVI, p. 731.

3. *ibid.*, p. 152.

tithes which were still owing to the abbey at the time of the suppression. Since then, however, the people concerned had refused to pay the rents and tithes; and although the ex-abbot had tried on several occasions to make them pay, no money was forthcoming.¹

In spite of his protestations of honesty and integrity, Whitney had, just before the dissolution, made careful plans to keep some of the possessions of the abbey out of the grasping hands of the Commissioners. We saw earlier how he granted leases, annuities and offices to members of his family, and one would not expect a man of Whitney's calibre to have surrendered everything to the Commissioners. When he left the abbey in October 1538, he took with him a chalice of silver-gilt which he had concealed from the visitors, and which he later bequeathed to his nephew.² He also issued a number of leases to various servants of the abbey. These leases, which were drawn up about a year before the dissolution, were ante-dated and sealed with the convent seal. The abbot kept the documents in his own possession until the Commissioners had gone away, whereupon he distributed them to the various lessees. Among the beneficiaries of Whitney's well-laid schemes ^{was} ~~were~~ John Brereton, the disreputable character whose associations with Dieulacres dated back to

1. P.R.O., E/321/18/2.

2. See below, pp. 165-166

Abbot William Alben's days. The other principal lessees were Thomas Vygors, a servant of the abbey, and Agnes Whyte, one of the bedeswomen. The lands concerned included Birchall Grange, Fowcher's Grange,¹ Horsecroft, Oxhay and Calfhay. The whole shady business was discovered by the Earl of Derby after he had been given the abbey site and demesne lands in 1538. The lands in question formed part of the demesne lands which he claimed as his right, and in about 1540 he brought a bill of complaint into the Court of Augmentations.² By this time John Brereton the elder had died; and his estate was being looked after by John Brereton junior and Ralph Rudyard. Brereton's share of the pickings had been quite considerable. It comprised Birchall Grange with various pastures and closes adjoining it, Calfhay and Oxhay; and the value of it was estimated at £2/6/8d. per year over and above the annual rent stipulated in the indenture. After Brereton's death Ralph Rudyard and his co-executors leased the grange to William Fyney, William Braddock and other, and refused to allow the Earl of Derby to take possession of what he considered to be lawfully his by grant of the Crown.

Meanwhile, John Brereton the younger went off to Ireland

so that no action could be taken against him.³

1. i.e. the present Fowlchurch Farm, on the opposite side of the Churnet to the abbey.

2. P.R.O. E/321/13/74a

3. P.R.O. E/321/13/74 and E/321/17/71.

In addition to Birchall, John Brereton the elder had received from the abbot the lease of a messuage and three hundred acres of land, meadow and pasture at Woodcroft and Westwood, which were part of the demesne lands of the abbey. This lease does not appear to have been challenged by the Earl of Derby; but when John Brereton died, leaving the lands to his son Andrew, Ralph Rudyard tried to claim them as his own inheritance (probably as co-executor of Brereton's will). Rudyard, who was described as "a very troublesome and disquiet person", drove his cattle on to the land, cut down most of the timber growing there, and made a general nuisance of himself.¹

Another of the ante-dated leases was made out to Edward Lodge of Haughmond, Salop. The lands in question were claimed by the Earl of Derby as parcel of the demesne lands of the abbey. The Augmentations records are incomplete as regards this case, and the lands are not specified in the surviving documents,² However, it is known from another source that in 1538 Lodge had received from the abbot a 90 years' lease of seven pastures adjoining Swythamley Grange,³ and it is possible that it was this lease which the Earl called in question.

The Whitney family did not do as well out of Dieulacres as the old abbot had hoped. John Whitney enjoyed only six

1. P.R.O. E/321/29/6.

2. P.R.O. /E/321/11/12.

3. Sleight, p. 58. Sleight does not say where he saw this document.

years of his 70 years' lease of Swythamley Grange, for in 1540 it was granted in fee to William Trafford of Wilmslow, Cheshire.¹ Nicholas Whitney and John Allen lost their tenure of Rossall and other Lancashire estates in March 1553, when the properties were granted to Thomas Fleetwood for a twentieth part of a knight's fee;² and in the same year Humphrey Whitney lost his Middlewich salt-pit to Thomas Venables.³

Little is known about the careers of the monks of Dieulacres after the suppression. Some of them may have entered the ranks of the secular clergy; others may have left the Church altogether. It is known that two of the monks, Henry Bennett and Ralph Maddershead, continued to live in or around Leek. At some date before 1547 Henry Bennett died, and a dispute arose between his brothers and Thomas Whitney over his will. The Bennett brothers claimed that Henry had bequeathed his goods and chattels to them; but that since his death his possessions and his will had come into the hands of Thomas Whitney, John Whitney and Ralph Maddershead, and that they had refused to hand them over. The Whitneys denied that they had taken any of the dead man's goods, apart from the sum of ten shillings which they had received from him before his death for the saying

1. LP, XV, p.342. 2. C.P.R., Ed. VI, vol. V., p.199.
3. ibid.

of a trental of masses for his soul. As far as the will was concerned, Ralph Moddershead admitted that Henry Bennett had made one, and that he and the other defendants had written it out at his dictation. However, Bennett had made no mention of his brothers as executors, and in any case he had himself destroyed the will before he died.¹

Thomas Whitney had a house in Mill Street, Leek; and he spent a good deal of his time there after the suppression. He was friendly with Oliver Lyngard, the curate of St. Margaret's Church, Westminster; and it is possible that he made occasional visits to London. The death of Edward VI in 1553 and the accession of the Catholic Mary Tudor aroused certain hopes in him that Dieulacres might be restored; for in his will, dated the 3rd August, 1558, he bequeathed a silver-gilt chalice to his nephew Nicholas, with the proviso that "if the monastery of Delencres be hereafter re-edified, the said chalice be restored to the said monastery."² He also expressed his wish to be buried in Westminster Abbey, which was once again occupied by Benedictine monks. Thomas Whitney breathed his last only a few days after making his will, and so he was spared the disappointment of seeing Abbot Feckenham and his monks ejected from Westminster and the final extinction of the monastic orders of medieval England. What

1. P.R.O. C/1/944/22.

2. Sleight, p. 64, and Monasticon, V. p.626. Dugdale quotes the will as being in MS B.M. Cole, vol.xxvii, f.89v.



The "Dieukacres" Chalice.

happened to his chalice is uncertain, but it would be pleasant to think that the fourteenth century silver-gilt chalice which has been in the keeping of St. Edward's Church, Leek, really did come from Dieulacres, as local tradition has it.¹

In dealing with the dissolution of the monasteries, one is always tempted to ask whether the religious orders in England deserved the fate which befell them in the 16th century. That there was corruption and laxity in certain quarters cannot be denied; and Dieulacres provides a fairly typical example of a medium-sized Cistercian abbey. Nevertheless, it is very difficult to believe that the only remedy for the evils which undoubtedly existed was wholesale dissolution and confiscation. Some houses were completely untouched by corruption of any kind; and within the Cistercian Order as a whole there were definite signs of reform at the beginning of the 16th century. The oft-repeated saying that the monasteries had outlived their usefulness does not bear critical examination; for the daily life of the religious was centred around the Opus Dei, and there is no evidence to suggest that the prayers of the monks were needed any less in the 16th century

than in the 12th. An examination of the relevant figures²

1. There can, of course, be no definite proof; and the fact that this chalice was made in North Germany might seem to suggest the contrary. Vide S.A. Jeavons, "Church Plate in the Archdeaconry of Stoke-on-Trent," Trans. Birmingham and Midland Institute, Archaeological Section, vol. 77,

1959, p.62.

2. See Appendix D.

shews that there were more monks and nuns in England in 1536 than at any time since the 1330's, so it cannot be said that there was no demand for the religious life. The monasteries still gave sustenance to the poor and needy, and the larger establishments, particularly in the north, still gave shelter to travellers. Their standards of cleanliness and sanitation were extremely high, and far superior to anything that could be found at a wayside inn. One fact cannot, however, be denied. There were too many abbeys and priories concentrated in comparatively small areas, and some of them had a struggle to keep going. Wolsey had begun a policy of "weeding out" the more unhealthy offshoots in the 1520's and had this policy been continued sensibly, and in conjunction with a thorough-going policy of reform, the religious orders could easily have continued to play a useful role in the life of the English Church. As it happened, Henry VIII was not really interested in reform. He had his eyes on the enormous wealth of the monasteries; and this, together with the notion that the religious orders were a hazard in the way of his nationalist policies, were enough to convince him that the only answer was complete extermination. Whether there was any undercurrent of religious feeling is a matter for conjecture. Outwardly at any rate, the King remained a Catholic to his

death; but the ferocity with which religious monuments, images and shrines were pitilessly destroyed seems to indicate that not a few of the royal agents had absorbed some of the New Teaching from the Continent. "Popery" and "superstition" became little more than vain excuses for sheer vandalism, and it was not to be long before the parish churches were similarly pillaged and stripped of their medieval splendours.

Had there been a genuine policy of reform, Dieulacres could well have survived. Its financial condition was fairly sound, and the transference to it of the communities of the smaller and less wealthy houses of Croxden and Hulton would have resulted in a convent of 35 monks - a presentable figure. However, no such scheme was ever mooted. Besides, any kind of monastic reform would have required men of outstanding spiritual calibre to lead it; and although there were in England in the sixteenth century many devout persons who were still dedicated to the monastic ideal, one looks in vain for a Bernard or an Ailred. The great churchmen of the age were concerned with intellectual and doctrinal issues rather than with monastic reform; and it is significant that the leading figures in the English Reformation came from the ranks of the secular clergy.

The detailed history of the site of Dieulacres Abbey after the monks left it does not really concern us here, and a very brief account will suffice. In about 1550 the abbey site was granted to Sir Ralph Bagnall, the son of a former Mayor of Newcastle-under-Lyme, together with 12,000 acres of land in North Staffordshire. Bagnall was an ardent Protestant, He sat in the Parliament of 1554-5, and drew attention to himself by refusing to kneel for the Pope's blessing. He subsequently fled to France, handing over his estates to his brother, Sir Nicholas Bagnall. Nicholas was also in difficulties, and he sold Dieulacres in 1556 to Valentine Browne. After the accession of Elizabeth I Ralph returned to England, and he re-bought Dieulacres for £2,111. For the rest of his life he was in financial difficulties, and he had to re-sell the greater part.¹ The abbey site passed into the hands of the Rudyard family, and it was probably they who were responsible for building the present Abbey Farm at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Benjamin Rudyard had in his possession a very full version of the Dieulacres Cartulary, of which he made a careful copy. The copy was subsequently passed on to the Parker family, who later bought the abbey site, but the original has

1. S.H.C., 1917-18, pp. 325-7.

unfortunately been lost or destroyed.

After the dissolution many of the conventual buildings were pulled down, and the stone was carted away and used in the construction of other buildings in the vicinity.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century the site of the abbey church was covered by a mound of earth and debris, but an excavation of this mound revealed a number of large clustered columns and fragments of the exterior walls of the church. The excavation was not, however, carried out by expert archaeologists, and it was only by sheer fortune that an interested antiquarian visited the site and made a brief report.¹ Much of the stone that was unearthed was taken away and used by the occupants of Abbey Farm to build a range of barns and outbuildings. Several of the clustered columns have survived to the present day, and beneath the adjoining fields lie the foundations of the cloisters and other conventual buildings. In 1964 the present writer expressed concern that no measures had been taken to ensure that the existing ruins would be protected from further acts of vandalism. As a result, an inspection was carried out by the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works, and the site has now been

1. A Mr. A.J. Blackwell visited Dieulacres during the excavation of 1818, and his observations appear in Gentleman's Magazine, vol. 89 part I, 1819, pp. 120-122. ~~See below, pp.~~

properly scheduled as an Ancient Monument. It is to be hoped that when circumstances are more favourable than they are at the present time, a properly conducted excavation will be carried out; for an archaeological report would make an interesting and valuable contribution to the history of Dieulacres Abbey.



Dieulacres - inner gateway to Abbey Farm (mid 17th. century)
incorporating fragments of medieval sculpture.



Dieulacres Gateway - detail of sculpture (Left.)



Dieulacres Gateway - detail of sculpture (Right).

Chapter Eight

THE DIEULACRES CHRONICLE

Apart from the Cartularies, the most important single document which is known to have come from Dieulacres is a tripartite chronicle, much of which was compiled by a monk of Dieulacres at the beginning of the fifteenth century. The chronicle is at present preserved in the Library of Gray's Inn,¹ and hitherto only a few small fragments of it have ever been examined and transcribed. The document has had an interesting history, and it is only recently that its true provenance has been discovered.

It is not known definitely how the chronicle came to be in the Gray's Inn Library, but two alternative theories can be put forward. About half of the medieval MSS at Gray's Inn have a definite Cheshire interest. Nos. 1, 5, 11, and 12 are known to have belonged to the Friars Minor at Chester, and it is not unlikely that nos. 2, 6, 7, 14 and 23 came from the same place. MS no. 10 is definitely known to have been in the possession of Ralph Egerton in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century, and it is possible that at one time he owned the entire collection, including no. 9. His half-brother, Thomas

Egerton,² was the owner of Dodleston Manor, which had
 1. Gray's Inn MS no. 9.
 2. Thomas Egerton was Solicitor General from 1581 to 1594, and Lord Chancellor from 1596 to 1617.

formerly belonged to the monks of Dieulacres, and the Egertons may well have acquired the chronicle along with other documents and title-deeds relating to the property of the dissolved monastery. The strong connections which the Egertons had with the Inns of Court would have made it easy enough for the chronicle, together with the other volumes, to pass on to the Library of Gray's Inn.

There is, however, evidence to suggest that the chronicle may have been passed on to the Library through Richard Bostock of Tettenhall, whose son John was admitted at Gray's Inn in 1632. A section of the Harleian MS 1989¹ contains a transcript of certain folios of the Dieulacres Chronicle which describe in detail the events of 1399. The transcript forms part of a set of notes made by Randle Holme, the Cheshire antiquarian, from a manuscript belonging to Richard Bostock. There is a further reference to Bostock on f. 403 of Harley 1989: "All that below is found is gathered out of an Ancient Manuscript sometime in the custody of Mr. Bostock of Tatenell." From this we can assume that if Bostock was not personally responsible for handing the Chronicle over to Gray's Inn, he must have had it in his possession at some point in the late sixteenth or seventeenth century.

An examination of the Dieulacres Chronicle reveals
1. ff. 376v-383v.

a number of very interesting points about its compilation. It can be divided into three distinct sections. The first 30 folios of Part I are missing, and the present manuscript begins on f.31r with a kind of index. Ff. 32-86 consist of a copy of the well-known Latin poem Speculum Humanae Salvationis,² written in an early fifteenth century hand identical with that of ff. 133-147 of the Chronicle. The poem is written on slightly larger parchment than the rest of the manuscript and it is clear that it once formed a separate volume. When it was bound up with the Chronicle, the numeration of the succeeding folios was altered accordingly.

The Chronicle proper begins on f.88,³ which bears the rubricated heading, "Incipit historia Anglorum contexta ab Henrico archidiacono ad alexandrum Lincolniensem episcopum anno ab incarnatione domini nostri Iesu Christi M^oC^oxl^ov^o." The section which follows is in a fourteenth century hand, and it consists mainly of large extracts from Henry of Huntingdon's Chronicle, beginning with a general description of the British Isles. Ff. 90v-93r contain brief notes on the Roman Emperors from Julius Caesar to Theodosius II, and these are followed, on ff. 93r-118v, by a history

2. The best-known version of this poem is Bodley MS Douce, 204. There is a printed edition by J. Lutz and P. Perdrizet, 1907 (2 vols.)

3. i.e. f. 2. according to the original foliation.

of England from the adventus Saxonum down to 1148. The next two folios (119-120) contain a summary of events from the reign of Alfred to the death of Henry II, ending with a genealogy of the Dukes of Normandy. On ff.123-128 is a description of the laws and customs of England under Edward the Confessor and William I. Three-quarters of f. 128r and the whole of 128 have been left blank, presumably for further entries to be made at a later stage.

The hand changes again on f.129r to a degenerate book-hand; and on f. 132v it changes to the early fifteenth century hand in which the Speculum is written. The section from f. 129r to 136r consists of a general description of England, its laws and customs and geography, taken from Bede, Higden and Giraldus Cambrensis. Part of col. II on f. 130r and the whole of f. 130v are left blank, and the text continues on f. 131r with an exact repetition of f. 130r. The scribe realised his mistake afterwards and inserted excision marks in the appropriate places. This section ends on f. 136r, "Explicit pars prima."

The rest of the Chronicle (ff. 136r-147r) was compiled by the scribe of the Speculum and the last few folios of pars prima. He was not himself the author, but was merely transcribing the work of others in a not unsuccessful attempt to combine local and national history. For ff. 136r-141r he used an earlier chronicle of Dieulacres

and a continuation of the Polychronicon of Ranulph Higden. The section begins with a list of the Kings of England from Brutus to Henry IV, together with the dates of their coronation, and a note of their burial-place. The last entry records the coronation of Henry IV, and a blank space is left for the date of his death. This suggests that the chronicle, in its present form, was completed before 1413. The list of Kings is followed, on ff. 137v-141r, by a history of the Earls of Chester, and the author's principal interest in the Earls is as founders and patrons of Poulton and Dieulacres. In his account of Ranulph I, Ranulph II and Hugh Cyveliok, the continuator relies very heavily upon Higden, with the exception of one or two insertions from the earlier chronicle of Dieulacres, including the priceless statement on f. 138v. which settles the date of the foundation of Poulton.¹ From f. 139 to f. 141 he borrows much less from Higden and uses the earlier domestic chronicle which unfortunately is no longer extant. The motives behind the translation of the convent from Poulton to Dieulacres as described here are found in no other medieval source, and the continuator has preserved for us several other legends concerning Ranulph de Blundeville

1. See above, pp. 14-18

and his connections with the abbey which are not recorded elsewhere. The continuation ends on f. 141r; "Explicit pars secunda."

"Tercia pars", which follows on immediately from this, consists of a history of England from 1337 to 1403, and it was copied, by the scribe of "pars secunda", from the work of two previous continuators who followed each other very closely in point of time. The first of these (Continuator "A") was an ardent supporter of Richard II, and his successor (Continuator "B") was an equally ardent partisan of Henry IV.

For the events of 1337-1377, Continuator "A" used a meagre continuation of the Polychronicon, and this section is of no great interest. With the accession of Richard II however (f. 142v.), there is a noticeable change in style. With the exception of one or two quotations from the works of John of Bridlington, the continuator ceases to borrow from other sources, and he himself becomes the author. His partisanship is revealed in the first paragraph, which describes the coronation of the nobilis et excellentissimus Rex Regum omnium terrenorum Ricardus secundus. There then follows a list of prophecies de nobilitate istius Regis, taken from John of Bridlington. The continuous history of Richard's reign which follows is coloured throughout by the author's unqualified belief in the rightness of the

in King and the wickedness of his opponents. Such phrases as Rex innocens, justus rex and Ricardus nobilis Rex, occur very frequently. The fact that Continuator "A" was very much biased in Richard's favour does not affect the accuracy of his continuation, for although it was arrived at by independent means, the Dieulacres account of the events of August and September 1399 is corroborated by the contemporary French Chroniclers¹ in all the essential details. Richard received Henry Bolingbroke's envoys at Conway, and they swore on the consecrated Host that Richard should remain King (ut staret in suo regali potestate et dominio). Richard accepted their terms, and yet at Flint and in the Tower he was treated like a slave and finally forced to abdicate. The significance of the Dieulacres account of the deposition of Richard II will be discussed in a later paragraph.

Continuator "A" has little to say about Henry IV, but his concluding remarks mention the death of Henry Percy. This suggests that he finished his continuation sometime after July 1403. His successor, Continuator "B", begins his narrative with an attack on "A's" partisanship. He says that "A" praised the things which he should have condemned and vice-versa. He also says that "A" relied too much on 1. i.e. Creton and the anonymous author of the Chronique de la Traison et Mort de Richard Deux.

heresay, but that he ("B") knows what he is talking about because he has witnessed many of the events for himself:

"Iste commentator in locis quampluribus vituperat commendanda et commendat vituperanda et hoc est magnum viciū in scripturis et maxime in strenuis personis quando aliquis scribit de eis enormia per aliorum loquelam et non per veram noticiam sicut in copis multa fuerunt scripta minus vera et hoc scio pro certo quia in multis locis interfui et vidi et propterea veritatem novi." (f. 145v.)

This clash of opinion is interesting, for although it is easy to assume that there were controversies in religious houses over political issues, it is not often that one can find such concrete proof of it. The partisanship of "A" can perhaps be accounted for by the fact that in the last decade of the fourteenth century there were three royal corrodians at Dieulacres - Richard Woodward, one of the King's serjeants; Matthew de Swettenham, a Yeoman of the King's Chamber; and John Rose.¹ These men would obviously have been in possession of accurate information about Richard II and his movements - information which could hardly be dismissed as hearsay. It has been suggested by Professor Galbraith and Miss M.V. Clarke² that the pro-Lancastrian Continuator "B" was possibly a clerk in the service of Henry Bolingbroke who entered Dieulacres after the revolution of 1399. His vivid description of Henry at the Battle of Shrewsbury (f. 147r) makes it fairly certain that he knew

1. See above, pp. III-III

2. Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, vol. 14 no. 1, January 1930, p. 133.

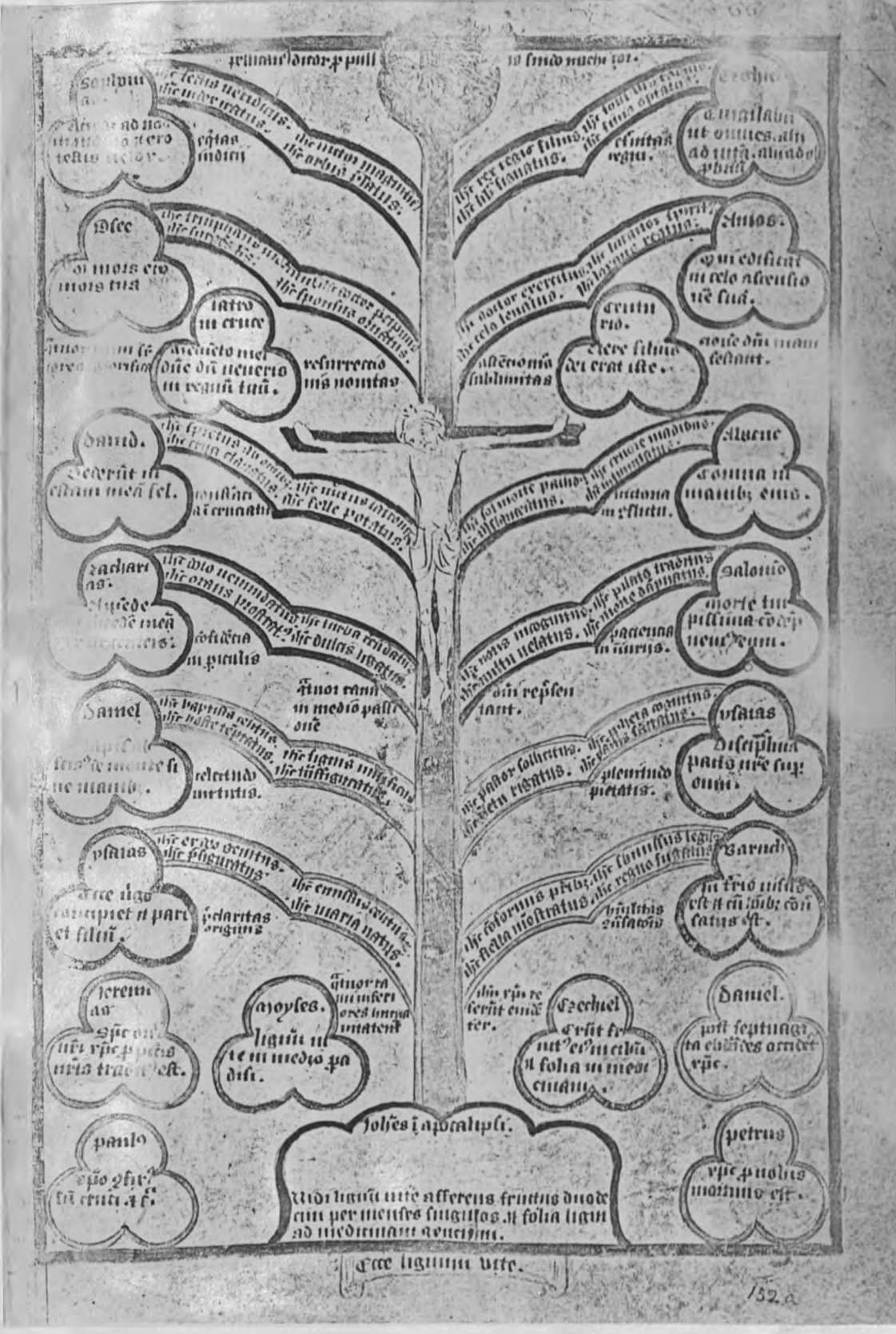
the King at first hand; and he also knew the name of Henry's confessor, Robert Marshall - a detail which no other chronicler has recorded.

"B's" continuation ends on f. 147r with his account of the Battle of Shrewsbury and the subsequent fate of Henry Percy. On f. 146r he states in effect that he finished his work before the death of Edmund Mortimer (1408-9).¹ A third scribe, whom we may call "C", then copied the continuations of both "A" and "B" into their present form, together with the earlier sections which we have already examined. The later folios reveal a certain anxiety on the part of "C" to complete the Chronicle as soon as possible, for he abbreviates many of his sentences with the words et cet. He had, of course, a good deal of ground to cover, for the Chronicle as it stood when he took over only ran to 1189; and before he could resume his historical narrative he had to complete his predecessor's collection of geographical descriptions. He completed the chronicle in its present form at some date before March 1413. The fact that the three scribes follow each other so closely in time gives additional support to the view that although the various

1. "...captoque Edmundo le Mortimere a sua familia, ut dicitur, decepto et cum Owyno converso eius filiam desponsavit et in operatione istius cronice in eodem errore perseveravit." Edmund Mortimer, the uncle of the Earl of March, died during the siege of Harlech in the winter of 1408-9.

continuations in "pars tercia" are the work of a number of authors, they have a common place of origin; for the suggested dates (c.1403 for "A", c.1403-9 for "B" and ante 1413 for "C") allow little time for the circulation of manuscripts. In addition, Continuator "B's" opening comments about his predecessor argue strongly in favour of some personal connection, such as common membership of the same house.

After the conclusion of the historical narrative, there follow six blank pages (ff. 147v-150r.) left, presumably, for a further continuation. Originally there was a seventh, but this is now missing. The last few folios of the MS bear the old numeration (i.e. 65-68). They contain a short theological tract, with accompanying diagrams, describing a "Tower of Wisdom". This is also incomplete, for there are fragments of two more folios (69 and 70) at the end. The author of the tract calls himself "Magister Johannes Metensis", and there has been some speculation as to his identity. The seventeenth century transcriber of the extract in Harley 1989 assumed that he was also the compiler of the historical continuation to 1403, but there can be no proof of this. Indeed there is no reason whatever to suppose that he was even a monk of Dieulacres. The "Tower of Wisdom" in the ~~1. So the writer is informed by Mr. N.R.Ker, who says that one copy has recently been offered for sale.~~



One of the illustrations accompanying the Turris Sapientie (Dieulacres Chronicle, f. 152r).

Gray's Inn MS is in all probability a copy. Other copies of this work have been encountered elsewhere,¹ and although the Dieulacres version is in an earlier hand than the preceding folios,² it is clearly a part of the main body of the MS. Unlike the Speculum, it was never a separate volume. The identity of Johannes Metensis, or John of Metz, still remains a mystery; but the nature of the tract suggests that he might be identifiable with the "Johannes Metensis monachus Montis Dei" who wrote a number of mystical and theological works in the mid-fourteenth century.³ The anonymous type-written notes inside the back cover of the Gray's Inn MS consist of an analysis of the "Tower of Wisdom" and the author suggests that the tract might have been written by a Franciscan preacher called John of Metz who flourished about 1270.

We know that during the course of the seventeenth century at least two antiquarians saw the Dieulacres Chronicle and made partial transcripts of it. Neither of them, however, appear to have connected it directly with Dieulacres. Randle Holme, the author of the extracts in Harley 1989, was interested only in the later sections of the Chronicle - the continuations of "A" and "B"; and he transcribed none of the

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1. So the writer is informed by Mr. N.R. Ker, who says that one copy has recently been offered for sale.
 2. It is in a book-hand of the second half of the 14th century.
 3. He was a monk of the Charterhouse of Mont-Dieu in the Ardennes. Vide Ulysse Chevalier, Repertoire des Sources Historiques du Moyen Age, 1894-1907, p.2444, and Samaran et Marichal, Catalogue des Manuscrits en Ecriture Latine, tome V. plates 52 and 54.

preceding folios which might have given later readers of his MSS a clue as to the provenance of the original document.

In 1638 William Vernon of Shakerley, Cheshire, sent a series of extracts from ff. 138-140 of the Chronicle to Roger Dodsworth.¹ Dodsworth passed them on to Dugdale who subsequently included them in his notes on Dieulacres in Monasticon.² There is little doubt that the author of Vernon's MS had seen the Dieulacres Chronicle at first hand, for the foliation which he quotes at the beginning of each extract is identical with that of the Gray's Inn MS. Moreover, he was obviously interested in the history of Dieulacres Abbey and no more, for he copied only those sections which deal specifically with the abbey. However, neither Vernon, Dodsworth nor Dugdale realised the true provenance of the original manuscript. The author of Vernon's transcript was tricked by an acknowledgement on f. 88 of the Chronicle into believing that because some of the succeeding folios consisted of extracts from the works of Henry of Huntingdon, the whole of the Gray's Inn MS could be ascribed to him.³ Dugdale, who obviously never saw the original Chronicle for himself, faithfully copied out the error, in spite of the fact that the vast majority of the extracts which follow under Vernon's misleading heading are concerned with events which took place long after Henry of Huntingdon's death.

1. MS Bodley Dodsworth 41, ff. 94-96.

2. Monasticon, V, pp. 627-8.

3. See above, pp. 15-14

The fact that none of the seventeenth century antiquarians who saw the Gray's Inn MS appear to have connected it with Dieulacres, although one at least was aware of its interest for the history of the abbey, inevitably raises the question as to whether one is justified in ascribing the whole, or even part of the Gray's Inn MS to a monk of Dieulacres. The numerous references to the town and county of Chester which occur in ff. 141r-145v of the Chronicle could be taken as an indication that the author of these folios was living permanently in Chester at the end of the fourteenth century. The section which deals with the history of Dieulacres itself (ff. 137v-141r) is slight in comparison with the rest of the document, and the narrative is very much interwoven with the history of the Norman Earldom of Chester, which again might seem to indicate Chester as the more likely place of origin. Also to be taken into consideration is the fact that the majority of the Gray's Inn MSS which are known to have a monastic origin can be traced back to the Friars Minor at Chester. Is it possible, therefore, that MS no. 9 originates not from the Cistercian monastery of Dieulacres, but from a Franciscan house in the city of Chester?

It has been pointed out by Professor Galbraith and Miss Clark~~s~~ that although the references to Chester are

frequent, they are never in the first person; and some seem to be written from a very detached point of view, as in the description of Henry Bolingbroke's arrival in Chester in 1399: ".... et deus scit quo animo a civibus receptus." (f. 144v.) In his account of the Peasants' Revolt (f. 143r) the continuator concerns himself solely with London events, and makes no mention of the revolt of the bondmen of St.

Werburgh's Abbey Chester, which could hardly have escaped his notice had he been ~~xxxx~~ a religious living in the city of Chester at that time. The nature of the Cheshire references as a whole suggests that the author was not resident in Chester at all, but that news of Cheshire events came to him intermittently, in the way that it must have come to the monks of Dieulacres.

It is ff. 137v-141r which really decided the issue of the provenance of the chronicle. They consist, as we have seen, of a history of the Norman Earldom of Chester, interspersed with details of the foundation and early history of Dieulacres which appears to be the author's principal interest. The list of the Earls on f. 137v is appropriately headed "Comites Cestrie Fundatores de Deulencres."¹ The fact that the continuation is of Cistercian, rather than

Franciscan, origin, is borne out by the references to the
 1. The scribe consistently uses the form "Deulencres"; but this can hardly be taken to settle the thorny question of the correct spelling, since the charters of Ranulph de Blundeville all contain the spelling "Deulacres".
 DC/1 nos. 164, 167, 169, 170; and DC/2 no. 1.

foundation of Cîteaux, the election of St. Bernard as abbot of Clairvaux, and the submission of the Savigniac houses to the Cistercian Order (f. 138r). On f. 140r there are summaries of certain decrees of the Cistercian General Chapter. Even though this section consists of transcripts from earlier documents, it is highly unlikely that details of this kind would have interested a Minorite chronicler at the beginning of the fifteenth century. It is true that the account of the Norman Earls is of a wider interest, but here again the author is concerned with the Earls first and foremost as the founders and benefactors of Dieulacres and Poulton. The details of the foundation and subsequent translation of the convent, the grant of the Rossall estates, and the various legends connected with the abbey, would have been of little value to anyone outside Dieulacres itself; and the fact that the author attached great importance to them is made clear by the marginal notes which he inserted against each reference to the abbey. The compiler was in no way attempting to produce a domestic Chronicle, for there was already one in existence. What he was attempting to do was to produce a national history, inserting details of local events wherever he considered them to be appropriate. In spite of the diversity of sources used by the various authors, the continuations follow a logical pattern; and

the chronicle as a whole is not merely a heterogenous collection of extracts from the standard works of the time. Moreover, when one looks at the document carefully, it becomes clear that in spite of the skilful editorship of Continuator "C", the Dieulacres Chronicle as it stands is not a fair copy, but an archetype which has grown over a period of time, and in which spaces have been left for further additions to be made.

After the Chronicle was handed over to the Gray's Inn Library it appears to have been forgotten; so much so that when, in 1846, Randle Holme's 17th century extract from it (i.e. Harley MS 1989) was printed, no-one knew where the original was; and there was no clue whatsoever in this particular extract as to the provenance of the original. It was Benjamin Williams who used the extract in Harley 1989 as an appendix to his edition of the Chronique de la Traison et Mort de Richard Deux,¹ a French account of the deposition of Richard II written by an anonymous author at the beginning of the fifteenth century. The account of the deposition as given in Harley 1989 confirmed the statements made by the author of the Traison and by his contemporary, Creton, that Richard was made a prisoner and forced to resign his Crown, and that he did not abdicate as cheerfully or as willingly

1. English Historical Society, 1846.

as the official Lancastrian apologists and the Parliament Roll suggest. Moreover, in the Harley MS, as in the French accounts, Henry Bolingbroke is shewn up to be an oath-breaker, for he promised under oath that Richard should remain King. The accounts of the French chroniclers had always been regarded as untrustworthy, but here, in Harley 1989, was an apparently independent confirmation of their stories written by someone who, if not an eye-witness, was certainly a contemporary who had an accurate source of information. Nevertheless, it was still impossible to prove conclusively that the testimonies of the Parliament Roll, Adam of Usk and the St. Albans chroniclers were false, for the original authorship and provenance of the transcript in Harley 1989 were still unknown.

The issue might have been settled in 1869, when A.J. Horwood catalogued the Gray's Inn MSS. Horwood noticed the clash of opinion on f. 145v of MS no. 9, but, amazingly enough, he did not track down his texts to the Harleian MS which had appeared in print some twenty years before. It was not until the late 1920's that ff. 376v-383v of Harley 1989 were identified with ff. 141-147 of the Gray's inn MS, thereby providing the vital information that Benjamin Williams had lacked, i.e. that the original MS from which his extract had been compiled was an independent English Chronicle.

Only then was it possible to dismiss once and for all the official versions of the events of September and October 1399 as deliberate falsifications designed by the supporters of Henry IV to gloss over some very ugly facts.¹

1. The importance of the Dieulacres Chronicle in this context is dealt with very exhaustively by Professor V.H. Galbraith and Miss M.V. Clarks, "The Deposition of Richard II", Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, vol. 14, January 1930. F. 143-147 of the Gray's Inn MS are printed as an appendix to this article, and for the sake of completeness the present writer has incorporated them in the transcript of parts II and III of the Chronicle which appear below.

THE CHRONICLE OF DIEULACRES ABBEY.

(Gray's Inn MS no. 9)

Notes on the Transcription.

The transcription which follows consists of ff. 137v - 147r. of the Dieulacres Chronicle. In the original MS the text is arranged in double columns, but for the sake of convenience this arrangement is not reproduced below. As far as possible the original punctuation has been preserved. The sections which consist mainly of extracts from the works of other authors are marked with a line down the left-hand margin, and the original source is given in the footnotes.

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Chronicon Monasterii de Dieulacres

Pars Secunda, f. 137v., col. I

Comites Cestrie Fundatores de Deulencres.

- Primus Hugo Lowe, xlv annis.¹
- ij^{us} Ricardus Puer, xix annis.
- iiij^{us} Ranulphus Gernoniis,² viij annis,
- iiij^{us} Ranulphus Meschenes,³ xxv annis
- v^{us} Hugo Kevelocis, xxix annis
- vj^{us} Ranulphus Blandevill, l annis
- vij^{us} Johannes Scoticus, quinque annis
- viiij^{us} Rex Anglie Henricus tercius, xvi annis.

1. recte xxxi annis
 2. recte Ranulphus Meschenes.
 3. recte Ranulphus Gernoniis.

Anno domini millesimo cc^{mo} liiiij^o predictus Rex Anglie dedit Edwardo filio suo primogenito Comitatum Cestrie, et sic omnes primogeniti Regum Anglie deinceps facti sunt Comites Cestrie.

Descripcio Genealogie Comitum Cestrie et qua de causa Comitatus Cestrie devenit ad manus primogenitarum Regum Anglie unde versus,

Dicuntur vere Rex ut sua iura tenere

Et possessere quod vi gladii tenere.

Narrant historie quod sanctus ^{Edwardus} (col. II) confessor carens sobole et videns impotenciam heredum suorum regni Anglie, Willelmo cognato suo Normannorum Duci misit Robertum Cantuariensem archiepiscopum, et de regno Anglie eum heredem instituit. Sed et Haraldum Comitem post eum misit et de regno apud Rotomagum ei fidelitatem iuravit.

Defuncto Edwardo Haraldus regnum invasit, quod audiens Willelmus forti cum classe apud Pevensellum applicuit, ibique castro edificato apud Hastings alias condidit. Cui occurrens Haraldus cum Anglia sub hora diei tertia, pridie Idus Octobris¹ bellum intulit, in quo ipse Haraldus in primo conflictu occubuit. Bello tum usque ad noctem protracto Willelmus victor effectus est et in subsequenti nativitate domini incarnationis dominice, Anno millesimo sexagesimo sexto, Londoniis Rex Anglorum coronatur et regnavit annis viginti uno. Et venit cum Willelmo conquestore

1. i.e. 14th. October.

Anglie quidam Baro nomine Hugo Lupus nepos eius ex parte sororis et adquisivit Comitatum Cestrie et sic habuit Leek herues (sic) ut parcellam Comitatus Cestrie.

Anno millesimo octogesimo septimo, mortuo Willelmo conquestore successit Willelmus Rufus filius eius et regnavit xiiij annis.

Anno millesimo nonagesimo tercio venerabilis Anselmus Abbas Rectensis (sic) venit de Normannia in Anglia rogatu dicti Hugonis Comitis Cestrie tribus de causis (ut videlicet monasteria que prius in Anglia fundaverat a gravi tributo regio levigaret, (ut dictum Hugonem Comitem tunc graviter egrotantem visitaret, (et ut monasterium apud Cestriam fundaret, cui loco capellanum suum Ricardum primum abbatem assignaret, canonicos seculares in monachos regulares convertendo, sed inde redeundo factus est archiepiscopus cantuariensis. (f. 138r., col. I)

Anno millesimo nonagesimo octavo fundata est Abbatia Cistercii in Burgundia, sub sancto Roberto abbate.

Anno millesimo C^{mo} Willelmus Rufus casu occiditur sagitta in venando, cui successit Henricus frater suus et regnavit xxxv annis.

Henricus Rex ab neptem Sancti Edwardi Matildam duxit uxorem semen regnorum Anglorum et Normannorum coniuges cum de utroque semine imperatrix Matilda processit.

Anno millesimo C^{mo} primo, Hugo Comes Cestrie obiit
cui successit filius suus Ricardus puer vij^{tem} annorum.
Sed comitatum diu non tenuit.

Anno millesimo C^{mo} xij^{ol} servus Dei Bernardus annos
natus xxiij Cistercium ingressus est cum fratribus et sociis
fere triginta suam iugo Christi collum submitit. Bernardus
vero cito postea factus primus abbas Clarevallensis, cepit
innumeris pollere virtutibus. E diversis namque regionibus,
odore religionis illius ubique diffuso, fratres ad fundandum
monasteria invitantur. Sed et diversarum regionum Civitates
ex hoc collegio habuerunt episcopos.

In primis Roma Summum Pontificem, Sanctum Eugenium
tercium qui claruit multis miraculis. In ipsa quoque
Romana Curia duo monachi, alter presbiter, alter Diaconum,
ordinati sunt cardinales. Et in aliis mundi partibus
quindecim monachi facti sunt episcopi. Ipse eciam sanctus
Bernardus a multis Civitatibus petitus fuit in episcopum.
Sed fratres sui et filii speciales privilegiati fuerunt ne
aliquis tolleret gaudium suum ab eis. Nam ex hiis solis
qui specialiter eius filii videbatur praeter eos qui per
octoginta monasteria fuerant per eum propagati ea die qua
sanctus pater ex Clarevalle meruit celum ascendere, relinquit
habitantes in ea septingentas animas domino servientes.

Anno millesimo C^{mo} octavodecimo¹ ordo Saviniensi
ordini Cisterciensi coniungitur per Sanctum Bernardum.

(1) Anno millesimo C^{mo} xxj^{o2} submersi sunt duo filii
Henrici Regis, Willelmus et Ricardus et Ricardus Comes
Cestrie cum uxore sua Regis nepte apud Barbeflet, in Anglia
venire volentes et multi Normannorum et Anglorum nobiles
cum eis. Insuper ille Willelmus, Regis primogenitus, palam
comminatus fuerat Anglis quod si aliquum dominum super
eos acciperet, quasi boves ad aratrum trahere faceret.

Quin etiam Ricardus Comes Cestrie comminatus fuerat
quod cum de Normannia rediret, monachos Cestrensis deleret,
quos pater suus instituterat.

Filia vero ipsius Henrici Regis Matilda Romanorum
imperatorii Henrico nupsit quo decedente nupta est Gaufrido
Plantagenetis Comiti Andegavie, de quo secundum Henricum
Regem Anglie concepit.

(ii) Submerso Ricardo Comiti Cestrie ut dictum est successit
ei Ranulphus dictus de Gernoniis³ filius sororis Hugonis
primi qui prefuit octo annis.

1. recte 1147

2. recte 1120

3. recte "de Meschenes," but MS "A" of the Polychronicon
gives "de Gernoniis".

(i) Polychronicon Ranulphi Higden (Rolls Series), vol. VII
(1879), p. 460.

(ii) ibid., p. 464.

Anno millesimo C^{mo} vicesimo sexto celebrato consilio
Londonie regni proceres iuraverunt coram Rege Henrico
(i) servare regnum Anglie ad opus Matilde imperatricis si
ipsa patrem sine liberis decedentem superviveret.¹

Anno millesimo C^{mo} vicesimo octavo mortuo Comite
(ii) Cestrie Ranulpho primo successit Ranulphus de Meschenes²
filius eius viginti quinque annis.

Anno millesimo C^{mo} tricesimo tercio fundata est
Abbatia de Combermere filia de Saveney. (f. 138v., col. I)

Anno millesimo tricesimo quinto obiit Henricus Rex
cui successit Stephanus filius viz. Adale sororis eius
et Stephani Comitis Blesensis, vir quidam strenuus et
(iii) audax, sed contra iuramentum imperatrici prestitum die
Sancti Stephani³ Londonie coronatus est a Willelmo
Cantuariensi archiepiscopo qua propter idem Willelmus
anno non supervixit. Fertur quod ea die hostia Christi
Regi porrecta de manu archiepiscopi lapsa disparuit.

Anno quinto Stephani Regis Matilda imperatrix venit
in Angliam ius sibi hereditarium et filio suo in regno
vendicans Anglorum. Interea Rex Stephanus cepit castrum
Glovernie contra Robertum Comitem Glovernie fratrem nothum

1. The oath was taken on the 1st. January 1127.

2. recte "de Gernoniis".

3. i.e. 26th. December 1135; recte 22nd. December.

(i) Higden, VII, p. 468.

(ii) *ibid.*, p. 470.

(iii) *ibid.*, pp. 478-480.

(i) imperatricis et obsedit Lincolniam. Igitur circa festum Purificacionis beate Marie, Ranulphus Comes Cestrie et Robertus Comes Glovernie cum pluribus Wallensibus ad solvendum Regis obsidionem venerunt et commisso proelio inter ipsos et Regem captus est Rex et sequente anno redditus est pro predicto Roberto Comite Glovernie qui apud Wyntoniam captus fuit. Postea concordati sunt Rex Stephanus et Henricus Dux Normannie filius imperatricis tali condicione, scilicet, quod Rex tota vita sua regnaret et qui alteri supermaneret regnum heredet.

(ii) Ranulphus vero Consul Cestrie cum magnis militum copiis apud Walyngford veniens cum Rege concordatus est. Sed cito postea in Parlamento apud Norhamptoniam tento dolose captus est, nec liberari potuit donec Castram Lincolnie reddidisset.

Interim Wallenses provinciam Cestrie vastaverunt. Sed apud Wycum Malbanum¹ intercepti sunt.

Sub hoc tempore Robertus Pincerna incepit fundare Abbatiam de Pultona in provincia Cestrie et adduxit ibidem conventum Cisterciensis ordinis ad deprecandum pro salute et incolumitate domini (col. II) sui prefulgentissimi Cestrensis Comitis² Ranulphus, dum ipse Ranulphus esset in

1. i.e. Nantwich.

2. Wording as in the foundation charter of Poulton. See below, pp. 248-9.

(i) Higden, VII, p. 486.

(ii) ~~the~~ Higden, VIII, pp. 2-4.

custodia Regis,¹ quam eciam abbatiam idem Comes Ranulphus postmodum confirmavit, et dedit illis Piscariam de Dee et quietanciam tolneti de blado suo proprio in molendinis suis Cestrie.

Anno millesimo quinquagesimo tercio fundata est Abbatia de Pultona, filia de Combermere.

(i)

Eodem anno obiit Comes Cestrie Ranulphus secundus cui successit Hugo dictus Kevelochus filius eius qui prefuit viginti novem annis et multa strenue egit. Iste Hugo terram de Bromfeld acquisivit Abbatie de Pultona contulit possessiones et libertates multas.

Anno millesimo C^{mo} quinquagesimo iij^{to} Stephanus Rex obiit cui successit Henricus filius imperatricis et regnavit viginti quinque annis.² Rex vero Henricus uxorem duxit Elienoram que fuit filia Ducis Aquitanie et heres ipsius.

(ii)

Anno millesimo C^{mo} octogesimo tercio³ obiit Hugo Comes Cestrie apud Leek, cui successit Ranulphus dictus Blandevile filius eius qui prefuit in Ducatu illo 1^{ta} annis. Henricus Rex fecit Ranulphum Comitem Cestrie fore militem et dedit ei in uxorem Constanciam Comitissam

1. i.e. 1146. See above, pp. 14-19

2. recte triginta quinque annis.

3. Recte octogesimo primo.

~~ix~~ (i) Higden, VIII, p. 20. Higden makes no reference to Poulton. (ii) *ibid.*, pp. 64-6.

Britannie relictam Gaufridi filii sui cum tota Britannia minore et cum comitatu Richemundie.

Anno millesimo C^o octogesimo ix^o mortuo Rege Henrico successit filius suus Ricardus regnavitque novem annis, hic secundo anno regni sui, cum Sarisberienſe Episcopo Ranulpho Comite Cestrie et aliis multis iter Jerosolomit-
anum aggressus Ciprum insulam cepit, ipsius insule imperatore victo et capto. Deinde venit in terram Jerosolomitam et capta est civitas Tolomayda que nunc Acres dicitur a coregibus (f. 139r., col. I) Anglie at Francie. Rex vero Francorum in terram suam festinanter reversus est. Rex vero Anglie facta ibi mora aliquamdiu cum in sua reverteretur insidiis inimicorum a Duce Histrie captus venditus est imperatori Allemannie Henrico a quo in custodia diu tentus redemptus est ab Anglis pro Centum milibus librarum ~~xx~~ argenti. Ranulphus vero Comes Cestrie, qui cum Rege captus fuerat, audiens quod venndari (sic) deberet, latentis de custodia predicti Ducis Histrie solus evasit et in transmarinis partibus diu mansit.

Anno millesimo C^{mo} nonagesimo nono, Ricardus Rex quarello letaliter est vulneratus in obsidione cuiusdam castelli. Istum Regem Ricardum quidam versificator sic extollit preconis:

"Mors deliquisti que Ricardum rapuisti
~~Rex~~ Regem vincentem nece victum prole carentem.
En vultu letus fuit et fortisque facetus,
Scocia Wallia Neustria Gallia conticuerunt,
Arma Britannica que leonica visa fuerunt
Ultramontani tusci ciculique pagani
Ad bellum primum scutum timuere leonum
Rex et tancredus pacis pepigit sibi fedus
Quo subiectorum regnum tenuit siculorum
Postea profundo capto bellavit eundo
Yssaquo teste sua captiva fit maiestate
Arbe sua vique fuit acton (sic) reddita quique
Circummanserunt altas turres pecierunt,
Kayram namque Damietam cesareamque
Hic invadebat si gentes adversa cadebat,
Et saffadinus vidit que Saladinus
Ictu Ricardi peclit postrema bardii.
Lingua nequit fari nec cor hominis meditari
Quemquam formari condicione pari."

Mortuo Rege Ricardo, Johannes frater eius successit
et octodecim annis regnavit. De terris hereditariis istius
Regis in Gallia per Francos occupatis ait quidam Neustria
Johannis fuit in defensa sub annis. Qui quia deliquit,
Gallis possessa reliquit. (col. II).

Ranulphus Comes Cestrie rediens de transmarinis partibus reliquit Constanciam Comitissam Britannie quam dudum de consilio Regis Henrici duxerat et copulavit sibi Clemeciam filiam Radulphi de Feugeres. Idem Ranulphus Comes, cum quadam nocte in stratu suo quiesceret, apparuit ei per visum Ranulphus Comes avus suus, dicens, Vade ad Cholpesdale quod est in territorio de Leek, et in illo loco in quo quedam capella in honore beate Marie virginis olim fuit constructa Fundabis Abbatiam albi ordinis monachorum et eam aedificatis instaurabis et possessionibus ampliabis. Et erit gaudium tibi et multis aliis qui per locum illum salvabuntur. Ibi enim erigenda est scala per quam descendentes et ascendentes angeli preces et vota hominum Deo offerent et referant gratiam. Eritque nomen domini invocatum super locum illum deprecatione assidua. Et hoc tibi horum que nuncio signum erit. Ecce dominus papa Christianitatem in Anglia interdicet, et tu interim ibis ad monachos de Pultona quorum Abbatiam Robertus Pincerna ius in nomine meo fundavit et percipies ibi sacramenta divina, habent enim privilegium hec suis fundatoribus ministrare, et in septimo anno interdictionis transferes eosdem monachos ad locum quem predixi. Que cum Ranulphus Comes Clemencie Comitisse retulisset et in dicto loco se velle construere monasterium indicasset, illa in Gallicis verbis sic

respondit, Deux encres. Et Comes, congratulans ad dictum eius, hoc inquit erit nomen eius loci Deulencres.
••••

(i) Anno Regni Regis Johannis decimo incepit interdictum in Anglia, eo quod idem Rex Johannes Stephanum de Langneton Cantuariensem Archiepiscopum per papam confirmatum profugavit et omnino recusavit. Insuper monachos Cantuarienses profugavit, (f. 139r., col. I) et bona eorum confiscavit. Qua de causa papa homines Regis Johannis ab eius fidelitate absolvit. Scripsitque conterminis regibus ut in Johannem resurgerent. Rex vero Francie cum copioso exercitu litora Normannie contra Regem Johannem occupavit. Rex autem videns undicumque periculum sibi imminere, tum per Regem Francie, tum per proceres suos qui per scripta sua Regi Francie se dimitterant totum regnum Anglie et Hibernie pro eo et heredibus suis pape Innocencio eiusque catholicis successoribus inperpetuum obligavit. Ita quidem quod ipse et successores sui deinceps forent feodarii ecclesie Romane. Reddendo annuatim pro Anglia Septingentas marcas, et pro Hibernia CCC^{tas}. Ita quod si ipse vel aliquis heredum suorum ab hac condicione vel solucione deficiat, a iure regni cadat.

(ii) Qua de causa incepit guerra inter Regem Johannem et barones Anglie. Unde ad rogatum procerum Angligenarum

(i) Higden, VIII, pp. 188-192.

(ii) ibid., p. 194.

(i) Lodowycus frater Regis Francorum venit in Angliam, cui facte sunt fidelitates a Francis et ab Anglis et eciam ab ipso Rege Scotorum apud London. Sed Legatus pape in Anglia tunc existens excommunicavit Lodowycum cum suis fautoribus. Sed Lodowycus nihilominus cepit Wyntoniam et obsedit Domeram (sic) et Wyndesoram. Rex vero Johannes septimodecimo regni sui anno¹ obiit apud Newerk. Mox ergo in festo Apostolorum Symonis et Jude², Henricus filius Johannis Regis puer novem annorum in Regem erigitur viribus et industria legati pape Wyntoniensis episcopi, Comitis Cestrie et de Penbroke.

Nam Ranulphus Comes Cestrie mox cepit Lincolniam contra Lodowycum, occisis in ea plurimis Francigenis unde Lodowycus videns partem suam debilitari accepta pecunia pro resignacione municionum quas tenuit. Absolucionem a legato pape recepta Franciam rediit. (col. II)

Anno millesimo CC^{mo} octavo incepit generale interdictum in Anglia, ut dictum est, per septem annos duraturum. Sub quo tempore ecclesie (sic) beate Marie de Pultona numquam cessavit a divinis iuxta privilegium Cisterciensis ordini indultum. Quo eciam tempore Ranulphus Comes Cestrie causa patronatus eiusdem ecclesie

1. recte octavodecimo regni sui anno.

2. i.e. 28th. October, 1216.

(i) Higden, VIII, pp. 196-198.

audivit ibidem divina servicia et percepit ecclesiastica sacramenta. Interim idem Ranulphus Comes fundavit abbatiam de Deulencres, et cum poneret primum lapidem fundamenti eiusdem ecclesie, dixit in gallicis verbis Deulencres. Et alii circumstantes responderunt Amen. Et Comes hoc inquit monasterium vocabitur Deulencres, ut nomen Domini super illud iugiter invocetur.

Anno millesimo CC^o xiiij^o conventus de Pultona translatus est apud Deulencres X^o Kal. Maii¹, anniversarius, per Ranulphum comitem Cestrie, maxime propter incursiones Wallensium per quos multa dampna perpassi sunt.

Hoc anno relaxatum est interdictum in Anglia infra octavis apostolorum Petri et Pauli. Et Ranulphus Comes Cestrie, postquam Henricus Rex concordatus est cum procesibus suis profectus est Jerosolimam et capta est civitas Damietta a Christianis ubi Ranulphus Comes Ducatum Christianis prestitit gloriose. Qui in redeundo de terra sancta, cum quadam nocte navis in qua erat subita maris tempestate periclitaretur dixit ad nautas, Quantum temporis est usque ad mediam noctem. Cui responderunt, spacium fere duarum horarum. Quibus ille dixit, laborare interim usque ad mediam noctem, et spero in Deo quod habebitis auxilium et tempestas cessabit. Cumque media

1. i.e. 22nd. April, 1214.

nox appropinquaret, gubernator navis dixit ad Comitem, Domine commenda te ipsum Deo, quia tempestas crescit et nos deficimus labore et in periculo vite sumus. Tunc Ranulphus Comes statim exivit de conclavi (f. 140r., col. I) suo et cepit iuvare fortissime in rudentibus et antempnis aliisque navis armamentis nec multo post omnis pelagi cecidit, fragor omnisque cessavit tempestas. Et die sequenti pacata iam sulcarent equora, et Comes iam lecius apperet, gubernator navis ait ad Comitem, Domine mi Comes narrare nobis velitis si placet qua de causa iuvare nos voluistis usque ad mediam noctem, et tunc vos iuvistis solus plus quam omnes viri qui erant in navi. Cui ille, Quia inquit, a media nocte et deinceps, monachi mei et alii religiosi quos progenitores mei et ego in diversis locis fundavimus surrexerunt ad cantandum divinum servitium et tunc confisus fui in eorum oracionibus et spero quod Deus propter eorum oraciones et suffragia michi dedit fortitudinem quam prius non habui et fecit tempestatem cessare ut predixi.

(i) [Ranulphus Comes reversus de terra sancta edificavit castra de Chertley et de Bestone ad quorum sumptus castrorum cepit tallagium pedale per omnem terram suam.

(i) Higden, VIII, p. 198. ".....castra de Chertley et de Bestone et abbatiam de Deulecress albi ordinis, ad quorum sumptus..... etc."

Anno millesimo CC^{mo} vicesimo secundo Capitulum generale Cisterciens~~e~~ statuit et diffinivit quod quilibet Abbas et conventus dicti ordinis possint recipere quos voluerunt in fraternitatem totius ordinis cisterciensis. Statutum fraternitatis Commune concessum ordinis Cisterciensis per capitulum generale. ordinatum, scilicet, in septingentis quinquaginta domibus ordinis pro omnibus sustentibus et defendentibus ordinem, et pro omnibus fratribus sororibus et benefactoribus eius quolibet anno durante ordine quinquaginta milia missarum et sexaginta tria milia pro vivis et pro defunctis.

Item quolibet anno pro fratribus sororibus servientibus et benefactoribus ordinis duo milia missarum et quingenta. Item de quolibet monacho sacerdote, quolibet anno viginti missarum et de quolibet monacho non sacerdote decem psalteria~~m~~ pro monachis conversis~~is~~ fratribus sororibus (col. II) servientibus et benefactoribus ordinis qui mortui sunt infra eundem annum.

Item quolibet anno tricesies centena milia liberaciones in elemosinis pro vivis et defunctis. Item misse oraciones et alia bona que quolibet die fuerint nullus homo scit narrare vel numerare nisi solus Deus. Sed hodie sunt plus quam mille domus in fraternitate ordinis Cisterciensis.

Anno Regni Regis Henrici tercii xij^o Ranulphus Comes Cestrie finivit cum domino Rege pro habendo manerium de Rossale ad opus Abbati et Conventui de Deulencres pro septingentis marcis argenti, solvendis per septem annos extunc proximos futuros, viz., quolibet anno, Centum marcos quos quidem abbas de Deulencres persolvit ad scaccariam coram domino Hugone de Peteshull thesaurizario, Willelmo de bello campo, et aliis baronibus de scaccario, Anno Regni Regis Henrici xviiij^o et quietus est.

(i)

Anno Domini millesimo CC^{mo} tricesimo secundo, Ranulphus Comes Cestrie, Lincolnie et Huntyngdonie obiit apud Walyngfordiam et sepultus est apud Cestriam in capitulo monachorum cum progenitoribus suis, cui successit Johannes Scoticus, filius sororis eius, qui prefuit quinque annis.

Iste namque Ranulphus legavit cor suum sepeliendum apud Deulencres, et ibi in marmore sculpsit epitaphum:

"Proh dolor in muro iacens hic sub marmore ~~hinc~~ duro
Cor Comitum clausum qui cunctis prestitit ausum
Christe Dei fili quo cuncta creantur in yli,
Hostia facta poli Ranulpho claudere noli."

Iste nempe Ranulphus sine liberis decedens quatuor habuit sorores, quarum senior Matilda nupsit David Comiti

Scocie. De quibus processit Johannes Scoticus iste. Secunda, Mabilia, nupcit Comiti de Arendell. Tercia Agnes nupcit Comiti Derbeie Willelmo Ferures. Quarta Hawisia nupcit Comiti Wyntonie, Roberto Quynsy.

Fertur de isto Ranulpho Comite quod cum obiret multitudo quasi hominum (f. 140v. col. I) cum aliquo potente festinancium tansibat iuxta cellam cuiusdam solitarii qui manebat iuxta Walyngfordiam. Qui interrogavit unum ex eis quinam essent et quo festinarent. Et ille, demones sumus et ad mortem Ranulphi Comitis properamus, ut eum de peccatis suis accusemus. Demon ergo adiuratur ut infra xxx^{ta} dies redeat et quid de Ranulpho Comite actum sit enarret. Qui rediens dixit ille profecimus quod Ranulphus Comes pro maleficiis suis adiudicatus fuit magnis penis inferni, Sed molosi de Deulencres et cum eis alii multi canes sine cessacione pro eo latrabant et habitacula nostra dum apud nos esset replebant, unde princeps noster gravatus, iussit eum de finibus nostris expelli, Cui nunc factus est nobis gravis adversarius, quia suffragia que fuerint pro eo partiter cum aliis et sic multas animas liberat a locis penalibus.

Anno millesimo CC^o tricesimo secundo, viz., xij kal. Decembris,¹ Johannes Scoticus factus est Comes

(i)

Cestrie et Huntyngdonie, qui obiit sine liberis apud Darnale et sepultus est apud Cestriam. Verum quia terra eius regali gaudebat prerogativa, comitatus eius ad manus regias devenit datis terris heredibus eius sororibus in allocacione ne tam preclara dominacio inter colos feminarum dividi contingeret. Habuit namque prefatus Johannes quatuor sorores, scilicet, Margaretam que nubens Alano de Galway genuit Dervegoillam puellam de quo nupta Johanni Baillolli processit Johannes Bailloll Rex Scocie. Altera soror Isabella nupsit Roberto Bruys, Tercia soror Matilda obiit sine liberis, Quarta soror Alda nupsit Henrico de Hastings.

Anno millesimo CC^{mo} quinquagesimo tercio obiit Clemencia Comitissa Cestrie (colꝝ II) apud Repyndon que post obitum viri sui Ranulphi Comitis vixit in pura viduitate annis viginti uno, et sepulta apud Deulencres. Et erat tunc temporis apud Deulencres quidam monachus qui multo tempore fuerat cecus. Iste monachus solitus fuit per singulos dies mittere caput suum in foramine mauseolii ubi Comitissa Clemencia sepelitur, et ibidem se Deo et anime Comitisse donatis precibus commendare. Qui cum quadam vice ibidem oraret, meritis Comitisse visum recepit.

Anno millesimo CC^{mo} quinquagesimo quarto Pax formata est inter Reges Anglie et Francie pro Normannia quam Johannes Rex Anglie nuper amiserat, Normannia in usus Regis Francie deinceps cedente, et quibusdam aliis terris Gasconie adiunctis Regi Anglie appropriatis. Eodem anno Henricus Rex Anglie dedit Edwardo filio suo primogenito Comitatum Cestrie in hec verba:

Henricus Dei gracia Rex Anglie etc. Sciatis me concessisse et hac carta nostra confirmasse Edwardo filio nostro primogenito comitatum nostrum Cestrie, de Rothelond et Flyntes ac terras nostras ibidem cum omnibus pertinenciis suis. Habendum et tenendum eidem filio nostro et heredibus suis regibus Anglie una cum feodis militum, tam forinsecis in Anglia quam aliis et advocacionibus ecclesiarum abbatiarum prioratum hospitalium capellarum domorum religiosorum quaruncumque libertatibus regalibus liberis consuetudinibus, franchisesis, dominis, hundredis, Tancredis (sic)¹ Feriis mercatis Forestis Chaseriis, Piscariis, Boscis, Warenis et omnibus aliis ad eandem Comitalia Castra et terras tam in Anglia quam in Wallia et marchia Wallie qualitercumque spectantibus adeo plene et integre et eisdem modis et condicionibus, sicut nos eadem Comitalia Castra terras et feoda cum pertinenciis

1. recte cantredis.

unquam liberius tenuimus sine ullo retenemento etc.
(f. 141r., col. I) Et eisdem modis et condicionibus
omnes primogeniti Regum Anglorum deinceps facti sunt
Comites Cestrie.

Explicit pars secunda.

Incipiunt guerre inter Angliam et Franciam.

Anno Domini millesimo CCC^{mo} xxxvij^o, Anno Regni

(i) [Regis Anglie Edwardi tercii post conquestum xj^o; orta est
grandis discordia inter Reges Anglie et Francie, eo quod
Rex Francie multas terras et opida in Vasconia improbe
usurpaverat. Qua de causa, Rex Anglie plures oblaciones
humiles Regi Francie fecerat, si saltem sic terras
recuperare posset. Sed cum nil proficeret, collectis
undicumque pecuniis, mare transire disposuit. Iste vero
Edwardus fuit rectus heres Francie ex descensu Isabelle
matris sue que fuit filia Lodowyci Regis Francie. Sed
per consensum duodecim procerum Francorum qui vocantur
Dussiperes, Philippus filius Karoli, avunculi dicte
Isabelle, coronatus est in Regem Francie contra iusticiam
et in preiudicium legum et confusionem predicti Edwardi
non modicam et aliorum sequencium.

Quapropter circa festum beate Margarete¹ Anno domini
etc. viij^o, Rex Edwardus transiit in Flandriam. Inde

1. i. e. 20th. July, 1338.

(i) Higden, VIII, p. 332.

(i) Coloniam adiit ubi imperatorem Bavarrum sibi consiliavit, Brabanos et Flandrenses sibi federavit. De quorum consilio, Arma Francie suis armis immiscuit, et boriales partes Francie usque Tornacum incendit et vastavit.

Unde quidam hos versus recipros composuit:

"Rex sum regnorum bina racione duorum

Anglorum cerno me iure paterno

Matris iure quidem Francorum Rex uxor Idem

Hinc est armorum variacio facta meorum."

Eodem anno circa festum beati Nicholi¹ nix et gelu invaluerunt per viij^{to} ebdomadas continue, ita ut in dissupcione gelicidii multi pontes (col. II) caderent, et maxime apud Cestriam.

(ii) Anno Domini etc. ix^o circa festum Purificacionis beate Marie², Rex Edwardus Angliam rediit uxorem tamen suam cum liberis in illa parte progenitis apud Handwarp in Selandia dimisit, quasi in assecuratione redditus sui. Celebratoque apud London parlamento, aliisque negociis dispositis indixit Angligenis tributum quinte partis boherum et lanas omnium occupavit. Novemque garbam Anglie suis expeditionibus deputavit. De quorum proventu dominos villarum vicinarum respondere fecit

1. i.e. 6th. December.

2. i.e. 2nd. February.

(i) Higden, VIII, pp. 332-334.

(ii) ibid., pp. 334-338.

Hoc anno tanta fuit rerum copia et eris inopia quod quarterium frumenti Londonie ad ij solidos venderetur, et bos pinguis pro vj solidos viij denarios.

Anno Domini etc. xl^o Rex Edwardus in vigilio Sancti Johannis Baptiste¹ cum ducentis navibus mare ingressus est versus Flandriam. Sed iuxta marina Flandrie classem Francorum copiosam et instructam obvium (sic) habuit.

(i) Qua de causa per totum diem illum cum suis deliberans in crastino superveniente in eius auxilium valente milite Roberto de Morley cum boreali classe Anglorum commissum est navale bellum fortissimum, quale circa oras Anglie numquam est visum ubi Deo favente Franci et Normanni acriter sagittati per Anglos sunt devicti, Porcio cesi, partim gratis submersi, partim captis navibus eorum exceptis paucis que aufugerant totaliter occupatis.

Inde Rex Anglie Flandriam attingens, adunato exercitu copioso boreale parte Francie vastavit, urbem munitissimam Tornacum diuscule obsedit. Sed tandem ob defectum pecunie quam sui segnes procuratores ab Anglia non miserunt, contractis trugis et induciis inter Reges utrosque discessum est. (f. 141v., col. I).

1. i.e. 28th. August 1340.
(i) Higden, VIII, pp. 334-338.

Anno Domini etc. xli^o Rex Edwardus cum navigio suo adiit Britanniam Minorem ubi per cibos et potus disconvenientes plures de suis amisit. Missi sunt tamen ad eum duo Cardinales ex parte pape ^{trienniales} trugas/inter Reges reportantes, (i) ut sic in tanto tempore spacio de iure Regis quod in regnum Francie vendicaverit, posset ad plenum disputare. In redeundo quoque de Britannia in Angliam, Rex Edwardus maxima incomoda per marinam tempestatem perpessus est que utique per nigromanticos Regis Francie dicebantur procurari.

Rex Edwardus novam monetam de auro, scilicet, nobile, quod pro vj solidis, viij denariis, obolum, Scilicet, dimidium nobile pro xl denariis, Quadratus pro xx denariis haberetur pro mercimoniis in Anglia currendo. Et quia in bello marino favente Deo victoriam optinuit, navem in nobile fabricari fecit, secundum maris sicut terre iudicium cunctis reliquit.

Anno Domini etc. xlij^o regebat ecclesiam papa Clemens vj, vir quidam litterature insignis & sed (ii) prodigalitatibus profusissime adeo ut dignitates ecclesiasticas in Anglia vacantes suis conferret Cardinalibus. Novosque in Anglia titulos imponere moliretur. Qua de

(i) Higden, VIII, p. 338.
(ii) Ibid.,

causa Rex Anglie offensus, sub Anno Domini millesimo CCC^{mo} xliij^{to}¹ provisiones per papam sic factas irritavit, Ita ut ne tales provisiones afferret, sub pena carceris et capitis interdixit.

(1) Eodem anno in festo translacionis Sancti Thome Cantuariensis² Rex Edwardus ingressus est mare ignorantibus omnibus suis quorsum tenderet. Sed tandem ductu cuiusdam militis de Harcourt nuper de Francia exlegati in australi parte Normannie apud Hoggas iuxta Swanam flumen applicuit, (col. II) Cadamum et alias urbes spoliavit. Unde et sui plurimum ditati sunt, Verum que Philippus Rex Francie pontes fluminum undecumque confregat ne exercitus adinvicem confugere possent. Rex Edwardus Normanniam quacumque versum pertranseundo depredavit. Et tandem die Sancti Rufi³ martyris Regem Francie apud Crescy in Picardia gloriose devicit et fugavit. Duos Reges, scilicet, Boemie et Maoricarum, Ducem Loingie, duos episcopos, viij^{to} Comites, plures nobiles dominos duo milia militum et vulgus π innumerabile occidit. Reliquam partem dispersit, ubi Phillipus Rex Francie in femore et in gutture sagittatus bis per Regem Anglie debellatus

1. In 1343 Edward III sent a strongly-worded letter to the Pope protesting against papal provisions, but the Statute of Provisors was not enacted until 1351.

2. i.e. 7th. July, 1354.

3. i.e. 27th. August 1346; recte 26th. August.

(1) Higden, VIII, pp. 340-342.

aufugit. Extunc quoque in obsidione urbis Calisye cum angligenis infestissime per annum et eo amplius demoratus est Rex Anglie.

(i) Sed circa festum Sancti Bartholomei apostoli¹, Anno Domini etc. xlvij^o, Philippus Rex Francie, qui se ad pugnandum paraverat, et precipue ad dissolvendum obsidionem Calisye propius accesserat diluculo clam aufugit relictis tentoriis suis cum victualibus. Quo viso Calisienses urbem illam Regi Edwardo reddiderunt, quam Rex Edwardus per mensem disponens circa festum Sancti Michaelis² Angliam rediit, concessis ad instanciam domini pape novem mensium treugis. Sed in redeundo sicut quondam de Britannia minore rediens maximam tempestatem et suorum militum perpressus est. Unde Rex Edwardus in talem admirativam queremoniam prolapsus est:

"O bona Domina mea sancta Maria, quid est et quid portendit, quod tendendo versus Franciam aura leta pacior mare arridet et omnia mihi prospere eveniunt. Sed in redeundo versus Angliam infortunia nimis adversa propeior."

(ii) Eodem anno quo factum est (f. 142r., col. I) bellum de Crescy inter Reges Anglie et Francie in crastino

1. i.e. 24th. August, 1347. Edward entered ~~at~~ Calais on the 4th. August.

2. i.e. 29th. September.

(i) Higden, VIII, pp. 342-344.

(ii) *ibid.*, p. 342.

(i) sancti Michaelis in monte tumba¹, contriti sunt Scoti ab Anglis et potissime per clerum Eboracorum et Dunelnorum tam regularem quam secularem qui per instigationem Regi Francie usque Dunelnorum processerant ubi captus est David Rex Scocie, David Bruys, Willelmo Douglace et quidam alii magni ceteris occisis fugatis et dispersis, venerabilis Armiger Johannes Couplond predictum Regem cepit. Istud bellum prophetatum fuit ante per Bridlynton in suis versibus ubi dixit:

"Suspignor et clerus penetrans cognomine verus
Testis erit cultor, David capietur adulator."²

(ii) Willelmus del Souche episcopus Dunelni capitatus fuit. Anno Domini millesimo CCC^{mo} xlviij^o Anno videlicet Regni Regis Edwardi xxij^o, inundavit pluvia nimia a festo Nativitatis Sancti Johannis Baptiste³ usque ad festum Natale Domini proximum sequente, ita ut vix transiret dies quin plueret in die vel in nocte, sub quo temporis decursu magna mortalitas hominum grassata est per orbem, maxime in Curia et circa curiam Romanam, Avinionensem et circa Martinmas⁴ urbes Hybernie Scicie et maxime duravit per biennium dimidiavitque populum, unde de medio duorum annorum reperit quidam versum sic

1. i.e. 17th. October.

2. Wright, Political Poems and Songs, vol. I, p. 156

3. i.e. 24th. June.

4. i.e. 11th. November.

(i) Higden, VIII, p. 342.

(ii) *ibid.*, p. 346.

mors communis in MCCCL minus uno. Erat tunc ut factum est prius letum sine dolore coniugium sine amore.

(i) In anno sequente magna pestilencia erat annus Jubilens¹ unde Curie Romane peregrinorum erat magnus transitus. Quo eciam anno incepit magna caristia rerum, plumbi, ferri, stagni, eris, clavorum, lignorum, canabi, lini et specierum quia multorum opifices permortui sunt.

Anno domini etc. lvj^o erat bellum de Peyters in quo princeps Anglie Edwardus Johannem Regem Francie vicit, multis milibus interfectis captus est, adherente sibi (col. II) Phillippo filio Juniore propter quod Philippus Hardy vulgo vocabatur. Gloriosus ille princeps Edwardus cum Rege predicto et suis captis mare ingressus est et applicuit apud Plymouthe. Ex inde vero amotus Regi Edwardo est presentatus et in custodia castrorum missus. Pro redempcione vero tres miliones sponndit ad plenum nondum soluti, ad suas partes rediit. Hoc anno, xvij kal. Aprilis² natus est Henricus primogenitus Johannis Gaunt Ducis Lancastrie. Isto tempore regnabat in transmarinis partibus illa invictissima societas procerum valencium vocata Graunt Company, quasi flores florum ex diversis mundi partibus congregati, qui utique multa

1. i.e. 1349.

2. i.e. 16th. March.

(i) Higden, VIII, p. 346.

et quasi inaudita in diversorum Regnorum limitibus
conquiescerunt. Inter quos Capitanei et ductores fuerunt
Hugo Calverley, Robertus Knolles, Walterus Bentley,
Johannes Haukewode, Thomas Fogg, Bartholomeus Claykyn,
milites, cum quibusdam pluribus aliis diversorum nacionum
et regnorum.

Anno domini etc. lx^o fuit secunda pestilencia.

Anno domini etc. lxj^o fuit magnus ventus, et princip-
aliter in orientali plage Anglie prostrantes campanilia,
molendina ventritica, opera saxosa ac nemora magna
radicitus extirpando. Crevit autem circa horam vesperarum
in die Sancti Mauri Abbatis¹ et duravit fere usque ad
mediam noctem.

Circa annum domini millesimum CCC^m lxvj Rex Hispanie
Petro dictus quia tenuit quamdam Judeissam fornicariam
abnuente papa per quemdam spurium fratrem suum Henricum
adiutorem dicte Comitive fit disconfectus et effugatus.
Henricus autem supradictus in loco sui coronatus est.

Preterea dictus Petrus dolens de latibukis que
assurgens duas filias sponsas virgines quasi heredes Regni
Hispanie, Edwardo Principi (f. 142v., col. I) apud Burdeux,
pro hostagio pugnandas adduxit, humilime auxilium
subrogavit. Cuius doloris princeps misertus coadunato

exercitu in die Sancti Kalixti¹ iuxta Civitatem Nazareth dictam versus Henricum bastardum congressus est pugna forti et letali in qua multa milia ex parte predicti Henrici occubuerant, in quo congressu mortuus est valens Miles Johannes Fereres, nunc plures valencium. Sane per principem et eius exercitum dicto Henrico disconfecto, Prefatus Petro est in regnum suum restitutus. Preterea due filie prefatis Regis in Angliam misse, mortua Blanchia filia et heres generosi Ducis Henrici Lancastrie Johanni de Gaunt copule unam dictarum puellarum subarruit. Edmundus vero dux Eboraci filius Regis Edwardi aliam sponsavit. Sane ex eis dicti Duces proles suscitaverunt, ex una filia Johannes Ducis Lancastrie Regi Hispanie martitata est. Ex altera vero genuit Dux Eboraci Edwardum ducem Almarle et postea Ducem Eboraci. Et alium habuerit filium juniorem nomine Ricardum.

Obiit gloriosus Edwardus princeps Wallie filius illustrissimi Regis Anglie Edwardi tercii London[¶] anno domini M^{mo} CCC^o lxxvij², et sepultus est Cantuarie in ecclesie salvatoris non longe a feretro Sancti Thome martyris.

Eodem anno Ricardus filius eius factus est princeps

1. i.e. 14th. October.
2. recte 1376.

Wallie et heres apparens Regni Anglie.

Anno domini millesimo CCC^{mo} lxxvij^o obiit invictissimus Rex Edwardus tercius in festo Nativitatis Sancti Johannis Baptiste¹, et sepultus est apud Westmonasterium in sarcofago Regum progenitorum suorum cum regnasset fere quinquaginta duobus annis. (Col. II)²

Anno Domini eodem in festo translacionis Sancti Swithyni³ coronatus est nobilis et excellentissimus Rex Regum omnium terrenorum Ricardus secundus post conquestum filius et here supradicti illustrissimi principis apud Westmonasterium in Regem Anglie anno Nativitatis sue undecimo.

De nobilitate istius Regis Ricardi secundi prophetatum fuit ~~longa~~ de eo longe ante eius nativitatem per Bridlynton in suis versibus sic:

"Gallus erit magnus iustus mansuetus ut agnus,
Ut Taurus fortis equalis munere sortis.
Victus fertilitas hunc gallum nobilitabit.
Actus nobilitas decus illius gemmabit." ⁴

"Gallum de bruto nosces genitum fore scuto.

1. i.e. 24th. June, 1378. Recte 21st. June 1377.
2. At the head of the column is written "Renovabuntur castra veneris." See below, p. 241
3. i.e. 15th. July; recte 16th. July.
4. John of Bridlington. Wright, Political Poems and Songs, I, p. 204.

"In mundo talis nullus gallus volat alis.
Ad gallum nomen tauri transibit et omen.
Nomen mutatur species sed continuatur."¹

Iterum idem de eodem scribit sic:

"Taurus cornutus ex patris germine Brutus
Anglicus est natus gallus certamine tutus.
Triplex natura perquiret pristina iura
Omnia dat gratis fons divine bonitatis."²

Plura de laude et nobilitate istius Regis dicti
Albi Regis et nobilis possent hic interseri secundum
diversorum scripturas. Sed quia estimo quod prolixitas
scripturarum quosdam invidos non modicum tribueret
tedium, Ideo ad p̄esens hic multa omitto, alibi ea
inserere proponendo.

The remainder of the page (about 7 lines) is blank.

(f. 143r., col. I) ³

Anno domini millesimo CCC^{mo} lxxx^o plebani Cancie
Estsexie et aliarum parcium regni vi oppressi inter
quos specialiter nominabant sibi Duces magna excitacione
ut dictum est cuiusdam sacerdotis nephandi Johannis
B, Jak Strawe per Plowman et ceteri nitentes iura et

1. Wright, op. cit., p. 203.

2. ibid., p. 192.

3. The remainder of the transcription follows that of
Miss M.V. Clarke and Professor V.H. Galbraith, Bulletin
of the John Rylands Library, vol. 14, no. I (Jan. 1930).

4. i.e. John Ball.

consuetudines regni destruere inter quos principaliter
bondagium affectantes nativos omni iugo servitutis exui
liberos esse ut eorum domini. Quod quidem facturi timor
multitudinis coadunati ultra modum circum festum corporis
Christi¹ lx milia communium inter vicum dictum le Milles-
ende et turrim Londoniensem convenerunt.

Rex Ricardus petita coactus concessit ne rabies
iniquorum plurimos procerum et ministrorum legis deleret.
Sane dicti Satellitis per ante Symonem de Sudbury Archi-
episcopum Cantuariensem et Cancellarium Domini Regis,
fratrem Robertum Hales, Priorem de Clerkenwell, cum
nonnullis aliis extra turrim Londoniensem decapitabant
verumptamen per ante multos senescallos Iureperitos et
Ballivos combustis rotulis libris statutorum et extractibus
Curie ubique inventis interfecerunt. Interim ille
nephandus Culpeper de Cancia nominatus Jak Strawe nulla
reverencia Regi facta nec capucium deposuit Regem minatur
bulla regia optata confirmari quod pre timore multitudinis
licet invitus concessit. Erat enim cum Rege nobilis
Civis Londoniensis Willelmus Walworthe intuens dictum
maleficum dominum Regem sic inquietare extracto cultello
coram Rege eum interfecit. Ceteris vero Rex parcens terga
vertendo sparsim fugerunt.

1. i.e. 13th. June, 1381.

Verumptamen Johannes de Gaunt tunc Dux Lancastrie ea tempestate formidine communium insurgencium in Scociam fugam tulit et ibidem latuit. Et cum sedata (col. II) fuisset tumultuacio ad suas partes reversus licet maneria diversa cum manerio suo de Saveye Londonie rebelles funditus evertissent culpam ut dictum est condonando pro eorum delictis a Rege veniam impetravit.

Anno domini etc. lxxxij^o terre motus factus est universalis per totam Angliam feria iiij^a ebdomada Pentecostes immediate post horam nonam¹.

Hoc anno venit generalis absolutio a summo pontifice Urbano vi^o de pena et culpa omnibus qui sua largirent vel in propria persona venirent in obsequium dicti patris contra schismaticos adherentes Roberto xij apostolorum Clementis vocatos antipape. Quo anno multi ecclesiastici omnium statuum religionum cum proceribus et valentibus mense Aprilis Flandriam navigaverunt. Inter quos Capitanus et Dux ex auctoritate pape Dominus Henricus Spencer Episcopus Norwicensis erat. Erant autem Willelmus Elmeham et Willelmus Faryngton milites constabularius et marescallus. Fuerunt eciam in dicto exercitu strenui milites Hugo de Claverley, Thomas Fog, Willelmus Bruyz²

1. i.e. Wednesday, 28th. May; recte Wednesday 21st. May.

2. William Bruyz may have come from Bruera, or Chutton Heath, 8 miles south-east of Chester. The monks of Dieulacres had extensive properties in this area.

cum multis aliis quasi Duces et propugnatores, ceperunt villam de Gravenynge et Dunkirke occisis 1^a milibus Flandrensihus mediante villa de Gaunt, Iprum obsiderunt, multa spolia per Anglicos in naves collecta. Sed Episcopus bona cum navibus fecit concremari ne naviganti Regi Francie cum magna classe cederent. Qui accepit villam de Burbrigge ab Anglicis preoccupatam sub condicione quod sani cum suis abscederent, Sicque perempto proposito paucis Anglis perditis vacui ad sua remearunt.

Anno domini etc. lxxxvij^o repertiz sunt quidam vocati ~~xxx~~ proditores Londonie inter quos Nicholus Brembhull et (f. 143v., col. I) Symon Bureley milites decapitantur quamvis iniuste quia tenuerunt cum domino suo Rege iusto unde Postea multe tribulaciones iustorum etc. Preterea repertus est Johannes Tresilyan miles et Iusticiarius per dominum Thomam Ducem Glovernie qui in habitu heremitis diu latuit. Hic vero affilatam sibi barbam fecerat ut dictum fuerit et glutinnie secretissime contextam capite est plexus.

Hoc anno suscitata fuit magna discensio inter innocentem Regem Ricardum et coherentes sibi ex una parte et Thomam Ducem Glovernie et alios multos ex malicia confederatos ex orientalibus et diversis partibus regni coadunatos ex altera ob causam Roberti Veer Comitis

Oxonie qui uxorem suam filiam Isabelle sororis dicti Ducis expellebat et favente altera parte aliam extraneam de Boemia ancillam Anne Regine et patriotam nomine Launchecrone apud Cestriam sibi copulavit propter quod factum dictus Dux cum nonnullis aliis et manu forti orientalium in die Sancti Thome apostoli¹ anno supradicto insultavit dictum Comitem cum sua comitiva versus Londoniam Regi properantem qui assidens bonum equum per aquam Tamysie aufugit ab ~~illis~~ eis et sic eorum minas viriliter exasit domino favente.

Preterea Justiciarius Cestrie Thomas Molyneres qui sepius habuit in mandatis tam per brevia regia quam per secretas litteras anulo regio signatas dictum Comitem Regi securius conducere ibidem capitur cum multis aliis et per Thomam de Mortuo Mari per letale vulnus in capite obiit. Ceteri vero occidentales spoliati nudi quoque dimissi fugerunt. Que arrestatio facta fuit apud Radecotebrugge ubi coadiutores fuerunt dicto Duci Glovernie Henricus Dux Herfordie, Thomas Comes Warwye', (col. II) Ricardus Comes Arundell et Thomas Mowbray Comes de Notyngham vel Dux Norfolch et alii cum predictis pro muneribus confederatis. Sed absurdum est servum vel subditum contra suum dominum esse rebellem. Sed quia

1. i.e. 21st. December; recte 20th. December.

nullum malum erit impunitum Deus cor Regis illustravit ut predictos rebelles quodammodo puniret unde secrete in aurora diei anno domini M^o CCC^{mo} xcv^{to}¹ venit iste iustus Rex cum suis familiaribus ad manerium Thome Ducis Glovernie in Essexia Plashee dictum et arestavit eum et ~~in~~ Calisie misit incarcerationum et ibidem obiit qua morte deus scit, iusto Rege non consciente quamvis multi nephandi et filii mendacii ex malicia propria vel ex suggestione diabòlica Regem innocentem de morte et relegacione dictorum dominorum maliciose accusarunt. Sed origo istius materie imposterum exquisite et plane scietur quis fuit causa dictorum mortis et exulii. Insuper Comes Warwycis exulavit ~~in~~ Insulam de Man atque alii diversimode diversis custodiis custodiri relegantur.

Anno domini millesimo CCC^{mo} xc^o vj^o una magna aula nova facta fuit apud Westmonasterium in qua iudicatus est Ricardus Comes Arundell per Iohannem Ducem Lancastrie ut caput plecteretur, qui sepultus est Londonie in choro fratrum Augustiniorum. Ventilabatur fama inter vulgares caput redintegrari ob quam causam in assistencia Ducis Surrre existimatur iussu Regis quod minime ~~est~~ verum fuit quia Jihannes Dux Lancastrie ivit inter corpus et suum caput iterum una cum capite dicte sepulture traditur.

1. Recte 1397.

Traditur de istis tribus scilicet Thoma Glovernie Duce,
Thoma Comite Warwycis et Ricardo comite Arundell quidam
sic ait:

"Nunc vulpis cauda vigila dum volat alaude

Ne rapidus pecus simul rapietur et equus."¹

Hoc de duce dicebatur qui caudam vulpis (f. 144r., col. I)
in lancea ferre solebat. "Rapidus pecus" est ursus quem
armigeri Warwycis gestare consueverunt. "Equum" vero
generosi Comitibus Arundell deferunt.

Alius loquitur de punitione Regis et nescit quid
dicit quia manifeste mendacia scripsit et hoc evidenter
patebit alias cum Deo placebit quia scriptura dicit
"quem diligo castigo". Et Bridlington dicit:

"Et castigabit in mundo quem decorabit."

Anno domini millesimo CCC^{mo} xc^o vij^o ² anno videlicet
Regis Ricardi secundi xx^o fuit suscitata magna Briga inter
Henricum Ducem Herfordie et Thomam Mowbray Ducem North-
folch ob ~~quibus~~ quibusdam consiliis inter eos motis et cum
palam fierent a dicto Thoma negatis under per dictum
Henricum appellatur ad duellum unde apud Covyntrensem
in die sancte Eufemie virginis³ cum duellare cepissent

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1. John of Bridlington, Wright, Political Poems and Songs,
I, p. 266 & p. 420.
 2. Recte 1398.
 3. i.e. 16th. September, 1398.

Rex autem pacem statim proclamabat, et sine cede dimissi abcesserunt. Et data fuit eis sententia videlicet ut Henricus Dux exul esset ab Anglia X annis, alter vero Thomas imperpetuum. Postea in die translacionis sancti Edwardi Confessoris¹ supradictus Henricus comitantibus secum paucis transfretavit in Franciam cum litteris regalibus Regi Francie deprecatoriis cuius filiam Isabellam mortua Anna prima uxore Rex Ricardus desponsavit. Eodem anno circa festum Purificacionis beate Marie² mortuo Johanne Duce Lancastrie patre dicti Henrici et sepulto Leycestrensi in collegio dicto le Newerke quod fundavit bone memorie Henricus quondam Dux Lancastrie pater Blanchie matris supradicti Henrici Ducis Herfordie misit idem exulatus, ut quidam dicunt, Regi Ricardo litteras placabiles rationabili legacione ut subsidium patrimonii tempore relegacionis sue granciose sibi concederet, nec concessit Rex cum consilio eidem in aliquibus subvenire distributis vero universis terris et mobilibus fiscatis (col. II) usque ad animalia que erant in quatuor forestis in partibus Lancastrie. Rex vero magnum classem versus Hiberniam dirigebat. Demum ut quidam dicunt, Rex suo consilio fulcitus tam Johannem Ducem mortuum quam Henricum

1. i.e. 13th. Octpber.

2. i.e. 2nd. February, 1398; recte 3rd. February 1399.

eius filium in exilio positum imperpetuum relegavit et bannavit ac per universum regnum id acclamari fecit feceruntque quidam albas cartas per omnes comitatus regni sigillari tam per ecclesiasticos quam per seculares et omnes iurare fideliter observare que in eis scribenda forent unde malam famam duri bondagii futuri in tota communitate populi ventilabant.

Rex vero in Hiberniam applicans modicum profuit quia inimici eius et regni latenter et furtive ipso absente in regnum Anglie supervenerunt et suos ministros interfecerunt et ipsum Regem innocentem verbis blandis pacem quasi tractando ipsum fraudilenter circumvenerunt. De hoc dicit Bridlington:

"Porci flandrenses non cedent Angligenses,
Falsi sunt penses cum possint impetuenses,
Pacem tractabant sed fraudes subtus arabunt
Nam fient falsi fideles sint nisi salsi."¹

Anno domóni millesimo CCC^o xcix^o anno Regni Regis Ricardi secundi xxij^o Henricus Dux Herfordie pausavit in Francia et circa festum sancti Johannis Baptiste² levi manu Angliam repeciit, quia absente pastore cum x canibus lupus leviter in ovile ovium transcendit,

1. John of Bridlington, Wright, Political Poems and Songs, I, p. 204.
2. i.e. 24th. June.

Contra naturam tauri dispergere curam¹, ut dixit, ius sue hereditatis vendicaturus et Thomas Arundell Archiepiscopus Cantuariensis cum eorum fautoribus contra eorum iuramentum venerunt. Et quia ut dicit Philippus similia similibus applaudunt, omnes vispilliones latrones, et qui ante fuerunt exulati per adventum istius Ducis ad pacem sive cartis regis sive nummo sunt revocati, et universa castella fere per totam Angliam diversis cautelis dictorum ad opus Ducis capta et occupata fuerunt. Convenerunt (f. 144v., col. I) illi boriales et de partibus Lancastrie Derby et Staffordie multi nobiles et in bellis audaces, ita ut cum manu forti per medium Anglie transeundo fideles quasi proditores insequentes exercitus velut arena maris in dies crescebat. Demum in Castello Bristollie Willelmus Scroupe Comes Wiltonie captus est decapitatus est. Item Henricus Grene, Johannes Busshy eadem pena interierunt quia cum iusto Rege tenuerunt. Abinde revertentes per Gloverniam, Herfordiam, Lemysteriam, Ludlowe, cum Salopie appropinquasset in eius exercitu ultra ducenta milia universorum plures pravorum quam bonorum fuisse referentur. Sicque consiliatur versus Cestriam quia omnes fere odium contra Cestrenses habuerunt "Havok" super eam et eius comitatum proclamato transire.

1. From John of Bridlington. Wright, Political Poems and Songs, I, p. 195.

Cum vero rumores de Rege Ricardo se non audivisse nec manu forti resistere valuisse eo quod universi fines Anglie post eum abierunt, tunc quidam veritati emuli cuius nomina ad presens referre nolo, se duci predicto reddiderunt et claves per verba optulerunt quia hii de nostro ovili non fuerunt. Preterea Dux predictus cum exercitu suo in vigilia Sancti Laurentii¹ ad Civitatem Cestrie devenit, et deus scit quo animo a civibus receptus.

Pace vero concessa et ad altam crucem proclamata ne occiderent, incenderent seu spoliarent nec quicquam acciperent nisi victualia sibi iumentis proclamari fecit. Isti vispiliones contrarium facientes tam infra civitatem quam extra magna spolia accipientes circumquaque totam depredaverunt et furtive secum abduxerunt, vinumque excussitis doliorum capitibus effuderunt, thesaurum vero et universa in terra abscondita ubique abstulerunt. Annonam vero devastabant (col II) pecudes senes et iuvenes in campis et pascuis occiderunt et ibidem quasi cadavera iacere permiserunt, scalas, cistas, herpicas et alia utensilia agricolis necessaria in domibus ruralibus ubique combusserunt et propterea maledictionem Dei incurrerunt etc.

1. i.e. 9th. August.

Quo in tempore caput Petri de Legh iudicio Ducis sine causa est abscissum et super portem orientalem Cestrie positum cuius anime propicietur Deus. Et corpus sepelitur in ecclesia fratrum Carmelitorum Cestrie.

In anno vero sequente communibus insurgentibus contra magnates propter tallagium caput cum corpore sepelitur.

Eodem anno circa festum Advincula Sancti Petri¹ Rex Ricardus in Hibernia audiens insurrectionem Ducis predicti prodiciose festinantem diu per insanum consilium impeditus fuit, donec eius adversarius totum regnum contra ipsum suscitaverit, tandem transmeavit et ad Caermethyn devenit in Wallia dispersoque exercitu pauci cum Rege permanserunt. Habuit quidem Rex predictus vij^{tem} armigeros valentes et generosos de Comitatu Cestrie et cuilibet eorum circa octoginta vernacules electos specialiter deputatos, excubias regis cum magnis securibus custodientes. Nomina vero eorum hec sunt, Johannes de Legh del Bothes, Thomas Cholmeley, Rauf Davenport, Adam Bostok, Johannes Downe, Thomas Bestone, Thomas Holford. Isti vero signa regalia in scapulis album cervum quasi resurgentem deferebant. Ab eis siquidem mala fama extorcionum in populo ventilabatur. Ob quam rem Rex innocens in odium suorum

1. i.e. ist. August, 1399.

communium letaliter sine merito inciderat.

Insuper, ut dictum est, cum Rex audiret de copioso exercitu Ducis et quasi mundus totus post eum abiit, media nocte comitantibus solummodo (f. 145r., col. I) xv de familiaribus secrete exivit ad Castra de Hardelagh, de Caernarvon de Beaumarrys et de Conway, et in istis, nunc in uno, nunc in alio, prestolabatur.

Mane autem surgens Senescellus Domus Regie innuens eis Regem recessisse virgamque fregit deceptorie et ut quilibet se ipsum salvaret monuit. Sicque dispersi fere sunt omnes, a Wallensibus spoliati unusquisque cum labore ad sua remeabat.

(Space of about 16 lines before the next paragraph.)

Interea Dux, Regem audiens apud Conway prestolari, misit legacionem ut se sponte Duci tunc Anglie Senescallo iure hereditario et communibus secure presentarent. Tunc per mediacionem precipue Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis et Comitis Northamhbrorum et super sacramentum Corporis Christi iurati quod Rex Ricardus staret in suo regali potestate et dominio promiserunt. Et in hac condicione triduo postea ad eos spontanea voluntate se transmisit et cum aliis condicionibus minime retentis sed omnibus

in nichilum redactis apud Castrum de Flynt simul obviverunt. Tunc pulchra promissa defecerunt, quia suum dominum quasi (col. II) captivum vel servum tractaverunt; sicque per Cestriam et eius Comitatum versus London properabant. Tunc quidem erant signa regalia tam cervi quam corone sub abscondite posita, unde creditur quod armigeri Ducis Lancastrie deferentes collistrigia quasi leporarii ad destruendum insolenciam invise bestie albi cervi per annum presignati sunt quodam presagio futurorum.

Quo etiam in festo Sancti Michaelis archangeli¹ factum est parliamentum apud Londoniam ubi intimatum erat Regi pro eius depositione in quantis tam proceres quam plebani eum accusare disponebant. Unde ne parliamentum intraret humiliter, ut dictum est, rogavit; et corona regni super humo posita Deo ius suum resignavit.

(space of about 8 lines before the next paragraph.)

Eodem anno circa festum Epiphaniae domini conspirabant quidam adversus Regem Henricum non immerito ut occideretur, Thomas Dux Surreye, Comes Cancie qui capite est plexus nesciente Rege Henrico in villa sua a suis proditoribus apud Surecestriam², item Comes Sarisburie et fidelis miles Rauf Lomney cum multis aliis nobilissimus personis similiter

1. i.e. 29th. September.

2. i.e. Cirencester.

decapitantur. Et Dux Exonie frater Regis Ricardi apud Plashee fraudilenter est occisus. Verumptamen Rex Henricus fuisset per eos et alios subito occisus, nisi esset premunitus per Edwardum Ducem de Amarle. (f. 145v., col. I)

Eodem anno Ricardo nobile Rege iniurose sic deposito a suis subditis diversis temporibus periuratis in castro de Pontefracto in custodia detentus cum necem propinquorum suorum audiret doluit, ut fertur, usque ad mortem relictoque cibo et potu penitus per xij dies languescens deo animam suam commendavit in die Sancti Valentini¹ martyris cuius ~~corpus~~ corpus ductum est abhinc usque Londoniam in omni villa facie discooperta visui omni palam patuit. Tandem in choro fratrum predicatorum de Langley humatur.

Adeptus culmen regiminis prefatus rex Henricus multa multis promisit et a diversis dona iuste data abstulit et aliis vispillionibus dedit. Ulterius ascolta qualiter quosdam de suis coadiutoribus remuneravit, quia comitem² Northumbrie filium et fratrem pro mercede decapitavit. Inter cetera dominum Thomam de Arundell quem alter fugavit exulem sedi sue archipresulatus Cantuariensis restituit. Et sic facti sunt amici Herodes et Pilatus quia uterque eorum erat periuratus. Alium quem prefatus Ricardus Rex

1. i.e. 14th. February.

2. sic., recte comitis.

instituit Rogerum Waldene iure sede relicta ad sua redire coegit. Ricardum de Bello Campo Comitem Warwycis a relegacione ab insula de Man omnibus iuribus suis evocavit multosque patrie pacificando reduxit.

(Here Continuator "B" begins.¹)

Iste commentator in locis quampluribus vituperat commendanda et commendat vituperanda et hoc est magnum viciium in scripturis et maxime in strenuis personis quando aliquis scribit de eis enormia per aliorum loquelam et non per veram noticiam sicut in copia multa fuerunt scripta minus vera et hoc scio pro certo quia in multis locis interfui et vidi et propterea veritatem novi. Sed multi propter adulacionem invidiam seu iram opera aliorum detestantur cum minime sciunt utrum vituperanda sunt vel non nisi per relacionem aliorum qui forsan erant adversarii predictorum. Nam quilibet Christianus ex iure divino tenetur mori pro veritate citius quam eam negare quia qui veritatem negat Deum negat quia Deus est veritas. Ideo ex hoc sequitur quod qui detestatur opera viri iusti et fidelis in hoc nititur contradicere veritati, id est, Deo; et sic ex hoc patet quis sapere quid hic scriptor videtur sentire et cet.

1. See above, p. 178-9

(Col. II)

Eodem anno in parlamento superius notato Henricus primogenitus Regis Henrici de Hibernia ductus, qui quidem Henricus per Regem Ricardum ibidem in secura custodia fuerat reclusus, ordinatus est heres apparens regni, Princeps Wallie, Dux Cornubie et Comes Cestrie.

Anno domini millesimo CCCC^{mo} quidam maleficus et rebellis cum suis complicibus Wallencium de genere britonum cuius siquidem nomen Owinus Glyndour erat, figens se iure progenitorum suorum principem Wallie fore, villas Angligenas in Wallia, scilicet, Conway, Ruthyn, Oswaldistriam et alias tam mutatas quam nudas, spoliavit et incendit. Quequidem terra Wallie tempore Regis Edwardi primi conquesta fore dinoscitur. Circa idem tempus stella comata apparuit in borialibus partibus Anglie. Que comata scintillans vertebat versus Walliam, et quidam estimant dictam cometam pronosticare bellum Salopie.

Eodem anno Reginaldus Grey dominus de Ruthyn non longe a castro dolo et fraude Wallencium et precipue domus sue captus est et fere per biennium in arcta custodia positus, ultro pro x milibus librarum redemptus est.

Eodem anno quidam Wallencium, Willelmus ap Tuder in die Parasceves¹ hora tenebrarum dolo et fraude custode

1. i. e. Ist. April, 1401.

absente, Johanne Massy de Poddyngton milite capitaneo castello de Conway cepit.

(Space here of 3 lines before the next entry.)

Fertur siquidem in dicto Castello hora supradicta tres Wallicos familiares et duos Anglicos custodes aliis in servicio divino in ecclesia parochiali occupatis remansisse, sicque Anglicis ab eis subdole occisis, castellum vendicarunt; parvo quoque tempore obsidio fessi, ad festum Sancti Johannis Baptiste¹ treugis factis et pace concessa omnibus octo exceptis in manum Principis reddiderunt.

(Space of 4 lines at the foot of the columns)

(f. 146r., col. I) Anno domini millesimo CCCCj^o Owinus iuxta le Pole² primo spoliatus contra Anglicos super undam Sabrine dimicavit suisque letaliter lesis et multis interfectis atque galea de capite proiecta sero profugit ab eis. Sed discreti reputant demenciam quando quis una manu percutit alteram. Sicque Rex Henricus et princeps Henricus diversis temporibus cum manu forti Walliam pergirantes omnia devastabant, quia in primeva fundacione circa ea modicum laborabant.

1. i.e. 24th. June, 1401.

3. i.e. Welshpool.

Illi vero rebelles semper fugiendo latuerunt in montibus boscis et covernis terre, semper machinantes caudam anglicorum perimere.

Hiis temporibus Anglici multa bona et precipue bestiarum omnium generum quasi infinitam multitudinem abduxerunt, ut putaretur quasi impossibile tanta bona in tam modica plaga principaliter bestiarum accreare.¹ Sed mireres, licet tempus esset clarum et tranquillum nunquam habuerunt, cum ibi essent amenum tempus ante reversionem sed inundacionem tonitrum, grandinem et precipue tempore estivali. Sed hoc non videtur difficile ex sortilegio contingere quod putatur fieri per magos Owini et non est impossibile per potestatem immundorum spirituum aerem commovere; sed quampluribus discretis videbatur quod causa dictarum tempestatum principaliter fuit quia predicti iustum titulum contra eos non habuerunt; ideo proposito pene semper caruerunt et in vanum sepius laboraverunt etc.

Eodem anno in die Sancti Albani² in loco qui dicitur Pilale³ Wallici fraude circumvenerunt Anglicos interficientes ex eis mille quingentos captoque Edmondo le Mortimere a sua familia, ut dicitur, decepto et cum Owyno

1. i. e. "to destroy"; a back formation from create

2. i. e. 22nd. June 1402.

3. i. e. Pillith, Co. Radnor, near Knighton in the Teme valley.

conversus eius filiam desponsavit et in operatione istius Cronice in eodem errore perseveravit.

Anno M^o CCCCij^o in festo Exaltacionis Sancte Crucis¹ Scoti intraverunt in Angliam predando et devastando circa xvi milia quibus venit obviam Henricus Percy cum boriamibus (col. II) apud Homuldonhull et pugnatum est fortiter et ceciderunt ex Scotis et Francigenis circa octo milia et ex Anglicis, ut fertur, nisi quinque homines. Capti siquidem fuerunt mille armati cum quinque Comitibus, scilicet, Archibaldo Dowglas, Modrico herede Comitis de Fyth, Comite de Angus, Comite de Orkeneye. Item vij Barones, scilicet, Dominus de Mongomere, Dominus Thomas Haskyn, Dominus Johannes Stiward, Dominus de Sutton, Dominus Willelmus Grame et alius Baro cuius nomen memoria excidit. Isti siquidem fuerunt occisi, Dominus de Gordon et dominus Johannes de Swenton.

Anno domini M^o CCCCij^o circa festum translacionis Sancti Thome martyris² die lune sequente videlicet vij^o Idus Julii³, Henricus Percy Justiciarius tunc Cestrie venit per partes Lancastrie cum parva comitiva pacem similans intravit Comitatum Cestrie, ibique incitavit diversos in conspiracione contra Regem Henricum insurgere;

1. i.e. 14th. September.

2. i.e. 7th. July.

3. Recte vij^o Idus Julii (9th. July)

factumque est populo credere Ricardum Regem superstitem fore. Quod proclamatum bis in Cestria et in diversis foris Comitatus eiusdem fuit proclamatum palam ut qui eum videre affectabant, feria iij^a, scilicet, in die Sancti Kenelmi Regis¹ ultra forestam de Dalamar apud le Sondyweye, hora vj^a convenirent. Fingebant autem dictum Regem Ricardum cum Comite Northumbrie et grandi exercitu ibidem convenire. Accelerabant quoque utriusque sexus admirabilis multitudo desideratum eius adventum intueri. Cumque ibidem venissent perspicua multitudo, precipue bellatorum, affuit Henrico Percy. Ricardus vero Rex ibidem non comparuit quia nondum venerat tempus eius; sed adhuc renovabuntur Castra veneris.² Cum autem defraudati erant a desiderio multitudo inbellicorum utriusque sexus ad sua unusquisque revertebatur. Valentes igitur et belligerosi coacti sunt tam promissis quam (f. 146v., col. I) minarum asperitate longius ire usque Pryseheth ubi Regem Ricardum viderent; sed ibidem non fuit inventus. Abinde movebat exercitum validum versus Salopiam iuxta quam die Veneris pernoctabat.

Die lune perantea (Rex) misit litteras amabiles de Notyngham ad Cestriam per reverendum et spectabilem virum

1. i.e. 17th. July.

2. A note in the margin reads "Merlini". The same quotation is found on the upper margin of f. 142v. Cf. Matthew Paris, Chronica Majora, (Rolls Series) I, p. 209.

religiosum Willelmum fitz Willaim priorem de Bewle¹ ordinis Cartusiensis² illum vero dilectum consanguineum nominando et ut ad eum veniret seu propositum suum fideli legacione mitteret affectuose rogabat; et si quid haberet penes eum sufficienter satisfaceret. De quibus predictus Ambbassiator nullum responsum gaudebit referre. Concilium et legacionem mittit patri Comiti Northumbrie per confessorem suum Robertum Marshall doctorem in theologia. Ducti siquidem sunt multi cum dicto Henrico licet inviti eius propositum aut actum penitus ignorantes et quamquam reverti vellent coacti sunt progredi.

Sabbato in vigilia Sancte Marie Magdalene³ cum exercitu grandi quasi lx^a milia virorum ultra flumen Sabrine in campo ultra villam Salopie et pontem de Attingham⁴ monstrabat exercitum incognitum Henrici Percy expectando. Cum autem notum ei fieret Regis adventus disposuit exercitum quasi vij milia virorum in campo de Harlescote vocato vulgariter le Oldefelde a latere aquilonari ville Salopie. Quod cernens Rex movit exercitum per vada prius incolis ingognita prosperum iter arripuit sed multis non sic contigit etc., et subtus monasterium

1. i.e. Beaulieu.

2. Recte ordinis Cisterciensis.

3. 21st. July.

4. Attingham Hall is 4 miles south-east of Shrewsbury.

in monte Hamonis¹ in conspectu dicti Henrici aciem ordinavit.

Misit sepius ambassiatores et Abbates Salopie et Hamonis et alios ut dictus Henricus a proposito desisteret et quicquid iuste peteret gratanter optineret. Sequens vero Rex mitis consilium sapientis quanto magnus es tanto te humilia in omnibus et eciam (col. II) scripture dicentis qui effunderit humanum sanguinem effundetur sanguis eius. Cum dictus Henricus cedere nollet, misit Rex pacifice per Thomam Percy Comite Wygornie investigans ab eo belli causam et quare adversus eum convenerunt. Qui protinus Regi respondit quod causa corone iniuste occupate que iure hereditario filio Comitum Marchie cederet. ~~Consilium~~ Consiluit proinde Rex discedere sine cede et convenire ad parliamentum non obstante quod specialiter per eos et per proceres electus fuerat; sed probabile signum erat quod Henricus Percy ad hoc non consencit quia in die coronacionis ad festum non incedit quia pro certo ipso invito coronacio facta fuit quia Henricus Dux iuravit aliis duobus Henricis super reliquias de Bridlynton quod coronam nunquam affectaret, et tunc dixit si aliquis dignior corona inveniretur libenter cederet, ducatum Lancastrie sibi sufficere fatebatur. quod nequam consentire videbantur, sed coronam sibi reddere aut

1. i.e. Haughmond.

pro ea pugnare affectabant. Rex vero non obstante proterva eius responsione adhuc ut sepius humanum sanguinem salvare satagens ut cum dicto Henrico duellaret affectans ne plures causa eorum occumberent. Cum vero hoc plane negatum foret et in priori proposito perseverassent ait Rex: "Divulgatum mihi esse vestrum nequam consilium. Profiteor quod me vivente in eternum non fiet: disponitis siquidem filios Comitis Marchie spurios et Edmundum de Mortuo mari¹ proditorem approbare sicque Henricum Percy vel filium eius iure hereditario uxoris sue in Regem coronare." Sicque tractando de pace quod minime concedebatur dies ad horam vesperarum declinaverit. Ait quoque Rex cum nullo modo a cede vellent quiescere, "Precedat vexillum in nomine Domini." Exercitus quoque Regis in tribus aciebus dispositus erat utriusque exercitus pedites obviantes (f. 147r., col. I) congressum est fortiter in campo supranominato. Affirmabant autem qui interfuerunt se nunquam vidisse, nec in Cronicis legisse a tempore Christianitatis tam acrum (sic) bellum in tam parvo tempore nec maiorum stragem quam inibi acciderat.

Comes ergo Staffordie qui primam aciem Regis ducebat una cum suis a sagittis Percii interemptus est. Deinde venit Rex in secunda acie. Cumque utraque pars fere

1. Edmund Mortimer.

sagittas expendissent primo hastis secundo securibus et gladiis dimicabant. Prosternuntur multi ex utraque parte.

Magna pars exercitus Regis, scilicet, orientalis relicto eo equis cariagiis sociorum assumptis fugerunt. Cumque Rex in magno periculo in laciore parte esset super-venit princeps Henricus cum tertia acie et magna valitudine armatorum confligebat acriter. Rex vero accepta secure propriis manibus latam viam et magnam stragam in hostibus fecit et multos propriis manibus prosternabat. Nullus vero validis eius ictibus obstare valebat. Ceciditque vexillum Henrici Percy etiam ipse a Rege in terram prosternitur. Mortuus Gilbertus Halsall et multi alii ut fuerunt manu regia perimuntur. Et sic occidit Saul mille et David decem milia.

Vix fuerunt arma aliqua illo die que sagittis obstare valebant. Cadebant ex utraque parte plures, fitque grandis et letalis strages quoniam in nostro evo nunquam pictabatur in toto mundo tanta multitudo acrearum pugna duarum horarum spacio; armati siquidem inter se acriter confligentes ex parte dicti Henrici Percy disconflicti mediante laudabiliter acie principis dorsa verterunt. Dei gracia factus est Rex victor campi insequentibus autem eos victoribus multi letaliter occumbebant. Denique Rex galea capitis deposita ~~et~~ ~~xxx~~ viva voce sepius acclamavit ne interficiatis

(col. II) plures hominum meorum. Sicque cessantes omnes utriusque partis tam vulnerati quam mortui quasi in momento spoliati sunt et nudi relictii. Ceciderunt in dicto proelio inter v et vj milia virorum extra multis diu languentibus domoque occumbentibus multi vero mutilacione membrorum patientes superfuerunt. Venerabilis princeps Henricus tunc puer quasi xvj annorum graviter vulneratus est in facie cum sagitta prope narem; Dei gracia convaleuit. Mortui sunt milites ex parte Regis ut dicitur circa xxvij, ex parte vero Henrici Percy circa viij; sepulti sunt enim in uno sarcofago in eodem campo ut qui numeravit retulit mille octingenti xlviij^{tem} extra illis qui aliis locis sepulti sunt.

Henricus Percy qui apud Whitchirche fuerat sepultus, in crastino, ~~videlicet~~ scilicet, die dominica, exhumatus est eiusque corpus Salopie reductum ne putaretur a populo vivus evasisse positumque corpus predictum nudum supra unum axem in mola positum in conspectu transeuntium intuendum loquebatur siquidem Rex ut sepius ante initium belli Henrico Percy quasi vivo: Ego appello te in die iudicii de humano sanguine me invito perempto." Die vero lune sequenti dampnati sunt fideles quasi proditores; corpus dicti Henrici quarterizatum sive quadripartitum unumque quarterium Cestriam missum diuque super orientalem

partem civitatis pendeatur. Thomas Percy, Ricardus Venables Baro de Kynderton, Ricardo (sic) le Vernon Baro de Shybroke cum multis aliis tracti, suspensi, et quarterizati sunt. Deditque Rex gratiam et pacem universis cicius causa metus quam amoris et cet, ut quidam dixerunt.

Explicit tercia pars.

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APPENDIX A

I The Foundation Charter of Poulton Abbey, 1146

(DG/1/no. 74)
The original is reproduced in facsimile by G. Barraclough, Early Cheshire Charters,
1954, p. 1.

Universo Sancte matris ecclesie soboli nobilissimi
Cestransis Comitis Ranulphi R. Pincerna, in Christo salutem.
In nomine et individue Sancte Trinitatis patris et filii
et spiritus clarissimi si quidem Cestransis Comitis Karisimi
mei Ranulphi ego Robertus Pincerna considerans omnia que
sub celo sunt esse transitoria statui aliquid facere pro
domino meo Comite Ranulpho et antecessoribus suis, inquam
antecessoribus meis, in celesti palatio in eternum proficiat
ad hoc faciendum dominus noster Jesus Christus me animavit
atque in evangelio suo incitavit dicens, date et dabitur
vobis, hoc etiam dicens, date terrena et recipietis celestia,
date transitoria et pro illis habebitis in perpetuum mansura
et facite vobis amicos de mammona iniquitatis ut etiam ipsi
recipient vos in eterna tabernacula. Date de facultatibus
vestris per iniquitatem adquisitis omnis enim dives aut
iniquus est, aut heres iniqui. Date inquam pauperibus
Christi ut ipsi cum angelis recipiantur vos in eterna gloria.
Quoniam teste Evangelio, ipsorum est regnum celorum. His
igitur, atque aliis sacre Scripture monitis, excitatus de
domino deo creatori de redemptori nostro et gloriose semper
virgini ejus genetrici sanctissime Marie, et Willelmo primo
Abbate Cumbermare, pro salute et incolumitate domini mei

prefulgentissimi Cestrensis Comitibus Ranulphi et antecessorum
suorum, Hugonis videlicet Comitibus, et Ranulphi Consul, et
aliorum necnon et pro redemptione anime mee et uxoris mei
Ivete et filii atque heredis mei Roberti, et pro salute
antecessorum meorum, dimidiam Poutonam cum omnibus pertinentiis
suis in campis et in silvis in viis et in semitis in aquis
et in piscariis in pratis et in pascuis super terram et
subtus terram ad instituendum ibidem quandam Abbatiam
monachorum secundum regula beati Benedicti et secundum
instituta ~~sancti~~ sauvinei vivencium. Huius donationis sunt
testes, Willelmus primus abbas Cumbermara, Germanus monachus
eius, Robertus Pincerna, Robertus filius ejus, Willelmus
spuens mendacium, Herveus de Fulgeriis, Ricardus Wallensis,
Radulphus sacerdos, Morinus, Augerius, Iveta uxor Roberti,
+ Signum Roberti Pincerna + Signum Roberti filii ejus, + Signum
Ivete uxoris ejus.

II The Charter of Ranulph de Blundeville granting the land
of Rudyard to the monks of Dieulacres for the building
of the Abbey (DC/2/no. 1)

Universis Sancte matris ecclesie filiis presentibus
et futuris hanc cartam inspecturis vel audituris Ranulphus
Comes Cestrie et Lincolnie salutem. Noveritis me pro salute
anime mee et antecessorum meorum dedisse in puram et perpetuum
elemosinam Deo et Beate Marie et monachis apud Deulacres Deo

servientibus, terram de Rodeiard cum omnibus pertinenciis suis ad construendam ibidem Abbatiam, scilicet per istas divisas, per aquam de Luddebeche que currit inter Rudiard et Leek usque ad domum Radulphi Bec et inde usque ad Merebroc, et a Merebroc usque ad Gaviendhul et inde deorsum per domum Dodi usque ad sepulchrum Thoni et inde usque ad Falingbroc et per Falingbroc usque ad Fulhe et inde usque ad Luddebeche. Quare volo et firmiter precipio quod dicti monachi mei de Deulacres habeant et teneant in perpetuum predictam terram ad fundandam abbatiam suam eis collatam libere, quiete, pacifice, et honorifice sicut liberam et puram elemosinam cum omnibus pertinenciis suis et libertatibus in bosco, in plano, in pratis in pasturis, in stagnis et molendinis, in moris et mariscis, in viis et semitis, et in omnibus locis et cum eisiamentis que in predicta terra sunt vel fieri possunt. Ita quod predicta terra cum suis pertinenciis sit omnino extra forestam et libera penitus ab omni exactione seculari sicut aliqua elemosina potest esse liberior. Et ut hec mea donacio stabilis sit in perpetuum eam hac carta mea et sigilli mei impressione roboravi. Testibus H. tunc Abbate Cestrie, Petro de Orreby¹ tunc Justiciario Cestrie, Magistro Hugone qui hanc cartam scripsit et multis aliis.

1. Obviously a mistake for Philip de Orreby, who was Justiciar of Chester from 1209 to 1229.

iii Henry III's confirmation of Ranulph de Blundeville's grant to the monks of Dieulacres of the Manor of Leek.

Henricus dei gracia Rex Anglie Dominus Hibernie, Dux Normannie, Aquitanie et Comes Andegavie, Archiepiscopis, Episcopis, Abbatibus, Prioribus, Comitibus, Baronibus, Justiciariis, Vicecomitibus, Prepositis Ministris et omnibus Ballivis et fidelibus suis salutem. Inspeximus cartam Ranulphi Comes Cestrie et Lincolnie quam fecit Deo et ecclesie beate Marie et Abbati et Conventui de Die ulacres in hec verba. Ranukphus Comes Cestrie et Lincolnie universis Christi fidelibus presentem cartam visuris vel audituris salutem. Noverit universitas vestra me pro salute anime mee, animarumque antecessorum et successorum meorum, dedisse, concessisse et hac presenti carta mea confirmasse, Deo et beate Marie et Abbati et Conventui Abbatie mee de Deulacres totum manerium de Leeke cum omnibus pertinenciis et libertatibus suis cum corde meo simul quod ibidem legavi sepeliendum. Habendum et tenendum sibi et successoribus suis bene, quiete, integre et pacifice, in liberam puram et perpetuam elemosinam absque ullo retenemento, et quietum ab omni servicio et exactione seculari. Ego vero et heredes mei predictum manerium cum pertinenciis suis Abbati et Conventui contra omnes gentes warantizabimus imperpetuum. Et ut hec mea donacio perpetue firmitatis robur optineat eam presentis pagine testimonio et sigilli mei impressione roboravi. Hiis testibus, P. Wyntoniense, A. Coventrense et Lichfeldense episcopis, J. de Lascy

Constabulario Cestrie et aliis. Nos igitur donacionem et
concessionem predicti Comit^{is} ratam et gratam habentes eam
pro nobis et heredib^{us} nostris concedimus et confirmavimus
sicut carta ipsius Comit^{is} quam predicti Abbas et Conventus
inde habent rationabiliter testatur. Hiis testibus, P.
Wyntonensi, A. Coventrensi et Lichfeldensi Episcopis, S. de
Segrave Justiciario nostro et aliis. Datum per manum
venerabilis patris nostri R. Cicestrensis Episcopi Cancellarii,
apud Radingam vicesimo quinto die Octobris anno regni nostri
sexto decimo (1232).

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APPENDIX B

A LIST OF THE ABBOTS OF DIEULACRES

<u>NAME</u>	<u>DATE</u>
Ralph, Abbot of Poulton	<u>ante</u> 1214
Richard	occurs * 1214 " 1222-30
Stephen	occurs 1235 " 1244
William	occurs 1250-59
Walter de Morton,	occurs 1271-2. Formerly a monk of Croxden.
Elias	occurs 1274-9 1287.
Richard	occurs 1292
Robert le Burgilon	elected October-November 1292
Nicholas	occurs 1318
Randolf	occurs 1345
Robert de Brigge	elected 1352-3
William de Lichfield	occurs 1379 " 1381
Richard Whitmore	occurs 1401 " 1413-1424
John Godefelow	occurs 1443-8
Thomas	occurs 1499
Adam de Whitmore	occurs 1499
John Newton	occurs 1504 " 1509-10

NAME

DATE

William Alben

occurs 1516
deposed c.1520

John Woodland

elected c.1520
deposed c.1523

Thomas Whitney

elected c.1523

Surrendered the Abbey on the 20th. October 1538

died August 1558.

APPENDIX C

An Inventory drawn up by the Commissioners at the
time of the Dissolution of Dieulacres, October, 1538

(ms P.R.O./E/315/vol. 172/pp. 41-49)

"Hereafter ensueth the names of all and every suche person and persons as was by Thomas Legh, Doctor in the Laws, and Wyll'mus Cavendyshe, Auditor, Commyssioners Appointed by the King our Sovereigne lorde for the dyssolution of the monasterys following, by them indiferently chosyn and sworne of and for the valuyng and ratyng and app'sing of all and singler the goodes and cattels ap'ning and beyng found at the Surrenders taken in the same late dyssolved monasterys and priories within & sundry shires or counties; the names as well of the seyd houses as of persons so sworne folowing hereunder wryghten in order - that is to say.....

No. 3. Delacres. Will'um Butlere, Thomas Johnson, Hy. Atkins, John Flynte, John Arden, Hugh Lathymer, Rychard Luther, John Thomxson, Henry Barber, Thomas Jacson, Will'm Tanner, Thomas Morris, juratores.

The late monastery of Delacres, in the counte of Stafford:-

Hereafter foloweth all suche parcelles of Implements or household Stuffe, corne, catell, ornaments of the Churche

and such other lyke, found within the late monastery ther, at the tyme of the Dyssolution of the same howse, sould by the kyng's commissioners to the honorable Edward, Erle of Derby, the xxi day of October, in the yere of kyng Henry viiiith. A.D. 1538.

"THE CHURCHE". Fyrste, half a dozen of oulde Antyke clothes, 1 fayre table of alerbaster, 2 Candlestykes of latenn on the Alter, 1 great lectern of latenn, the monks' seats in the quere, 1 old lampe in the quere, 4 olde alters in the Iles, 4 alters of Alebaster in the body of the Churche, the Crusifix, 12 candlesticks of latenn before the same, and 1 p'ticion (screen) of Tymber in the body of the Churche sould for 44s.

Item, the $\frac{1}{2}$ pavyng of the churche and the Iles wythe the gravestones, and all glasse, Jeronne (iron), and the tymber Roffes of the same Churche, and also the Iles thereof, ar sould for £13/6/8d.

THE VESTRYE. Item, one sute of vestments of blue sylke, embroidered wyth goulde, and 1 cope of the same; 1 cope of oulde red velvet, and tow tynackes (tunacles) set with grene and whyte, 1 sute of brauched sylke imbroidered wyth gould, 1 sute of brauched sylke spotted with whyte and grene, with byrdes of goulde, and 1 cope of the same; 1 sute of yellow sylke, imbroidered with redde sylke, and one cope of the same; 1 sute of red saye and fustyon, spotted

wyth roses, and a cope of the same; one cope of ould redd velvet, spotted wyth Steres (stars); 1 cope of grene and redd sylke, imroidered together spotted with lyons; 1 ould cope of cloth, peinted with youle (i.e. the hood of the cope was figured with the Nativity of Christ), 1 vestment of grene baudekyne, 1 vestment of whyte baudekyne, 1 vestment of grene and Dunne sylke, 1 vestment of....., 2 Tynackes of grene cleryd sylk, 60s.

THE CLOYSTER. Item, the glass, Jeronn, the monks' setts, the roffes of the seid Cloyster, and a lavar (or lavatorium) ther, and the glasse and jeron in the Chapter-house ar sould for 66s. 8d.

THE DORTER, FRATER, AND FARMERY. Item, glass, Jeronn, and ould desks in the dorter. Item, the tymber of the frater and farmery are sould for 66s. 8d.

THE CORNER CHAMBER. Item, 1 matres, 1 feather bed, 1 boulster, 1 blanket, 2 pillows, 1 coverlett, 1 tester of dorney, 1 fouldyng table, 1 chair wyth 3 cushyon, the hengyng of say, with one matres in the inner chamber ar sould for 16s. 8d.

THE RYDER'S CHAMBER. Item, ther 2 bedsteddes, 1 cupboard, 1 chayre, wyth 1 cushyon, a Tester and the hengyng of payented cloth, sould for 3s.

THE BUTLER'S CHAMBER. Item, 1 matres, 4 coverlets, 2 pyllowes, 1 fetherbed, 1 boulster, sould for 5s.

THE HALL. Item, ther 2 tables, 3 formes, 1 cup-boarde, and 1 olde hengyng, sould for 4s.

THE BUTTERY. Item, ther 5 borde clothes, 5 napkins, 3 peuter salts, wyth 1 Cyner (?), 8 hoggesheads, 6 canlestyks, 1 oulde cheste, and 1 shorte borde wyth 2 trestulls, sould for 7s.

THE LARDER. Item, ther 1 salting-vat, 1 crosse (cruze, or drinking-cup), 4 borde, 2 Tubbes, sould for 4s.

THE KETCHYNNNE. Item, ther 5 great brasspottes, and 4 small pans, 1 Cauderonne, 3 spyttes, 1 skyelett, 2 cupbordes, 1 fyerforke, 1 fleshoke, 1 fyreng panne, 2 cressets, 1 gryderonne, 38 platters, dyshes, and saucers, 1 brasen mortar wyth a pestell, 2 choppyng-knyves, 1 dressing-knyffe, 1 Almery, 1 grater, 2 dressyng-bordes, 2 chafyng-dyshys, and 1 skimmer of brasse, sould for £4/1/8d.

THE BREWE-HOUSE. Item, ther 3 leades, 1 mashingvatt, 12 kelers (coolers) of leade, 2 ye'lyg (?) vattes, 1 table before the ovenne, and 1 sestroume (cistern), sould for £6/11/10d.

THE POULTYNG-HOUSE. Item, ther, 1 poulting-huche,
and certen ouldes crosses and tubs, 1s.

THE LABOURARS' CHAMBER. Item, ther 2 materes, 2 cover-
letts, 1 bordes and 1 forme, souldes for 1/8d.

CATELL. Item, 6 oxenne, £4/5/- . Item 40 Ewys and lammes,
66/8d. Item 3 horses 20/- . Item, 13 swynne, souldes for
13/4d. (£9/5/- is also given here).

GRAYNE. Item 7 score and 19 bushels of otes, £11/19/-
Item, one quarter and 2½ bushels of rye, 21/- Item, 29 lodes
of haye, for 60/-

The summe-totalle of the goodes aforeseid, £63/14/10d.,
whereof: Rewardes gyven to Abbott and Convent of the seid
Monastery at the time of the dyssolution of the same. Fyrst,
to Thos. Whitney, abbott ther, £6. Item, to Robert Bageley,
pryor, Henry Bennett and Geo. Ferny, 1s each. Item, to
fr. Rauffe Motesset, Randall Barnes, fr. Wm. Crosse, fr.
Robert Cherinton, fr. Edmond Bolton, fr. Wm. Prowdluffe,
Thos. Loke, fr. Richard Gordon, and John Bykerton 40s. each,
- £31/10/-.

Rewardes gyven to the servaunts ther the same time:
Item, to Antony Colclough, 20s., John Jorell, 10s., John Wood,
John Feirfeld, Hugh Palyn, and Wm. Rudyerd, 15s. each; Thomas

Vigors, 7/6d., Robert Hardyng, 3/9d., Thomas Calkott, 5s.,
--- Bartram, 15s., Edmund Plumber, 20s., Roger Tatten 3/9d.,
Peter Woodworte 5s., Robert Wardell 10s., Jamys Dadin, 15s.,
Richard Vigors and Harry Simson 7/6d. each, Thomas Tatten
5s., John Fyney 7/6d., John Stele, 5s., Roger Cocker, 7/6d.,
Richard Dale 3/3d., John Banne, 5s., Richard Heygreves and
John Newlys, 15s. each, Thos. Walle - ., Thos. Masters, 7/6d.,
£ Richard Buckyngham, - , Rauffe Chester and Jamys Hardyng
7/6d. each. - £14. - 10d. - £45/15/10d.

Almes given to the lauders and pore Bedewomen there.
Item, to Agnes Wyght, to the wyffe of John Strettel, to
Margery Pole, to secily Brempeyt, to Jone Coke, to Matild
Wyburley, to the wyffe of -- Flyton, and to the wyffe of
Robt. Rudyerd. 28/6d.

Cates (provisions) bought. Item, in cates bought
and spente at the tyme of the Commissioners being there for
to dyssolve the said monastery, and for the saffe keypyng
of the Guddes ther and Catell ther found etc., £10/17/-.

The summe of the payments aforeseid is £57/19/6.
And ther remaineth a specialtie of £20 upon the honourable
Edward, Erle of Derby, for the goodes and catell ther by hym
bought, payable at the feast of St. Andrewe the Appostull,
whych shall be in the yere of our lorde god 1539, £20.

And remayneth in the seid Commissioners' hands nothing, for they have paid more than they have received by the somme of £14/4/8d.

Certejn guddes or stuffe remayning unsould, late belongyng to the seyde late monastery.

Gylte plate. Item, 3 Chalesys and the head of a Crosse-staffe, all gylte, wayeng fourscore and seven ounce.

Whyte plate. Item, broken plate, whych was on a crosse of wood, and 6 sponnes, all whych weyng 30 oz.

Leade remaynyng unsould. Item, ther ys estemyd to be 104 score fothers of leade, valued at the fother £720.

Belles remayning unsould. Item ther remayneth 6 bells weyng 1 hundreth, valued at £37/10/-.

And ther remayneth all the howses edyfydd upon the seyde of the seid late monastery; the pavement, the grave-stones, glasse, Jeronne, tymber and Roffes of the Church, and Iles to it adjoining; the glasse, Jeron of the Chapter-house; the glasse and Jeron in the dorter, and ye tymber of the frateler and farmery only excepted and sould.

And that the said honourable erle of Derby was put into possession of the said late monastery, and the demaynes to it Apperteynyng, to our Soveraygne lorde the kynge's use,

the 21st. day of October, in the 30th. yere of our seyde soveraygne lorde kynge Henry viiith.

Pencions and stypends appointed and allotted to the late Abbott and Convent of the foreseyd late monastery, by the foreseyd Commissioners. Fyrst, to Thomas Whytney, late Abbott, £60; to Robert Bagely, prior, and Harry Bennett, £6 each; to Rauffe Motesett, Randell Barnes, Wm. Crosse, and Robert Cheryngton £5/6- each; Edmund Boultown, and Wm. Prowluffe, £5 each; Thomas Loke, Richard Gordon, and John Bykerton, 40s. each. - £115/6/8d.

SUMMA. Fees and annuities granted owt by Convent seale before the dyssolution of the seyd monastery:-

Fyrste, to my lorde of Derby, stuard of the seif monastery and the towne and manor of Leke, 40/-.

Item, to Rich^d Grosvenor, stuard of Pultoun, 26/8d.

Item, to Umfrey Witney, Baylyffe of the lordesheppes and maners belongyng to the seyde monastery wythyn the Countye of Chester, £5/16/8d.

Item, to William Dampert, Balyffe of all the lordesheppes and maners of the seide late monastery in the countye of Stafford except the Toune of Leke, £4.

Item, to Robert Burgh, forester of the forest of Leke belongyng to the seif late monastery.....

Item, to John Gordoun, Baylyffe of the toune of
Leke, 20/-.

Item, to John Alynn, Baylyff of Rassall, Norbrooke,
and Bysshopam, 26/8d.

Item, to Richd. Daun, late stuard of Houshold ther,
60s.

Item, to Hy. Brereton, 40s., Roger Williamson, 26/8d.,
Laurence Plunte, 20s., John Whytney, 26/8d., Robert Waryngton,
40s., Thos. Whytney, 26/8d., Jamys Coke, 20s., William Halme,
13/4d., Thomas Redhed, 40s., Jamys Statham, 40s., and Nicholas
Whitney, 66/8d. Somma £34.

Dettes owyng by the seid late Abbott to divers persons
as foloweth:

Fyrst, to Henry Hargraves of Luddyngton, £29/4/-.,
Item, to Elizabeth Alenn, of Rossall, £22. John Alenn of
Rossall, £4., Wydowe Amrye, of Londin, £6., Helen Fitton, of
Sidington, £16/13/4d., Robert Burghe, for olde dette, £69/-/9d.,
Thos. Heath, £8/6/8d., Robert Myddleton, of Illyngton, 30s.,
Thomas Maynewaryng, of Londondon (sic) 26/8d., Thos. Balle,
of Chester, 46/8d., Jamys Colgar, £8/15/7d., Robert Waudell,
66/8d., Wm. Srykl'ed, P^rson of Rollestonn, 46/8d., John
Lokker, chapellyn of Upstones, 35s., William Heath, of
P'kelown, 15s., Roger Williamson, £4., John Higgenbotham,
28/4d., John Gudwyn, Chapelayne of Cheddleton, 3/4d., Henry
Bennett, £6/13/4d., Thomas Halton, 44s., Rd. Higgenbotham, 16/6d.,

John Cheryngton, 40s., to the Parishioners of Sandbach, £6.,
William Davenport, 25s., Umfrey Reynolds £5/3/4d., John Hale,
3s., Richard Vigors, 16s., Joh Wood, 23s., Roger Tatten,
10s., John Fayrfeld, 12/4d., Hugh Palenn, 9s., Harry Simson,
8s., Richard Hargreves, 31/8d., John Feny, 9/8d., Thomas
Calton, 2s., Jamys Coke, 49/9d., Christopher Crowther, 3/4d.,
Edward Plummer, 7/4d., Jamys Vygors, taylor, 13/11d., Wm.
Rame, of Newboulte, £10., Sir Thos. Arundell, knyght, 53/4d.,
Sir William Nedham, knight, 33/4d., Robert Waryngton, for
hys fee, 20s. Summa £171/10/5d.

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APPENDIX DNumbers of Religious in Cistercian Monasteries, 1350 - 1539~~555~~

Abbey	Number of Monks (<u>conversi</u> in Roman numerals)			
	c 1350	c 1377	c 1381	1536-9
Buckfast		14		11
Buildwas		6	4	7
Calder			4 (iii)	9
Croxden		7	6	13
Dieulacres		7	10	14
Dunkeswell		8	10	12
Flaxley			5	7(i)
Furness			23	39
Holmcultram			15	25
Hulton		5	4	9
Jervaulx			16(ii)	25
Kirkstall			6	31
Kirkstead		29	21	c16
Louth Park		18(v)	17	11
Meaux	10		22(v)	25
Newenham	3	7		10
Rievaulx			15(iii)	22
Sawley			15(ii)	21
Vaudey		15	14	11
Whalley		(1366) 29	21	14

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