ELEVEN YEARS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH AT RUSHEN ABBEY, 1998 TO 2008

BACKGROUND

Man lies in the northern Irish Sea almost equidistant from Cumbria, Galloway and Ulster and only slightly further from Anglesey in North Wales. In the early Middle Ages it had developed an almost legendary reputation for its natural resources - considerable areas of good agricultural land, excellent fisheries and mineral deposits. With the Viking presence in the region, the Island, which almost blocks passage through the North Channel, also took on a key strategic role. Its possession became an essential prerequisite for any group wishing to control the northern Irish Sea area and also the Hebrides. After more than a century of power struggles between and with a variety of local Viking leaders, especially those based in Dublin who owed theoretical allegiance to the Norwegian crown, one of their number, Godred Croven (*c*.1079-95), took possession of Man and the Hebrides and established a dynasty that was to last for two-and-a-half centuries. The Island also proved attractive to the reformed monastic orders that, in the twelfth century, were expanding rapidly throughout Europe.

Rushen Abbey

In 1134 Godred's son Olaf I (1114-53) offered to the Savignac abbey of Furness, in Cumbria, a grant of land for the foundation of a daughter house at Rushen.[1] In 1153 a papal bull of Eugenius III confirmed to Furness, now an enforced Cistercian house, its lands in the Isle of Man, which are named.[2] The abbey's primary estate was located in the south-east and ranged from the sea at Hango Hill to the slopes of South Barrule and included within it the most productive land in the Island.

Coincident with the foundation of Rushen Abbey, royal power was further emphasized with the grant to Furness of the right to elect a bishop for the kingdom and with the election of the Manx Cistercian monk Wimund as bishop. He was followed by John, a Savignac, and Nicholas, formally abbot of Furness. For a time, at least, the abbey also had a voice, through its motherhouse at Furness, in the election of the bishops of Sodor,[3] who were frequently Cistercian themselves.[4] In the absence of a fixed seat until the mid-thirteenth century, the abbey also probably provided a local power-base for the bishop.

1 Oliver (1861), pp. 1-3.

2 *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

3 Usually *Sodorensis* in the medieval documents, meaning 'of the Southern Isles', that is the Hebrides, including Man, as opposed to Orkney and Shetland.

4 Harrison (1879), pp. 56-8.

The creation of the see of Nidaros by Pope Anastasius IV in 1154[5] confirmed the Norwegian basis of the kingship of the Isles and the later construction of Castle Rushen provided a physical seat of power that lay at the boundary of the abbey demesne.[6] Thus, by the mid-twelfth century, the abbey formed an integral part of the corporate royal identity. This identification with the Norse kings is very much reflected in the tone and bias of the *Chronicles of the Kings of Man and the Isles*, which were probably written some hundred years later by monks at the abbey.[7]

The Manx royal line continued an interest in the monastic orders throughout its tenure of power. The foundation of Rushen Abbey was merely the first, albeit the most important, of a series of grants made by them to both resident and non-resident monasteries, which included the establishment of a nunnery in Douglas and gifts to alien houses in neighbouring parts of England, Scotland and Ireland (Fig 1). The abbey, along with Douglas Priory, a 'Cistercian' nunnery, and the House of Friars Minor at Ballabeg, was dissolved by Edward, Earl of Derby in the summer of 1540.[8]

Previous excavations at Rushen

Archaeological excavation at the abbey is first recorded under the auspices of the Manx Archaeological Survey in the early years of the twentieth century. Although never published, the surviving plan shows that parts of both the east and south ranges were located, though their positions in the claustral plan were not identified.[9] William Cubbon, in a series of excavations in the 1920s and 1930s recorded in detail in a notebook by J. R. Bruce,[10] explored parts of the church and east range. He made a number of very interesting finds, especially associated with burials, which formed the basis of a site museum, the contents of which are now held by Manx National Heritage. Bruce also recorded the disturbance of a cemetery in the construction of a dance floor to the south of the main monastic complex. Both Cubbon and Bruce failed to understand the nature of the tower that had been placed within the north transept and, therefore, were unable to relate the church correctly to the other structures present on the site.

Butler's two campaigns in the late 1970s and late 1980s did much to change this situation.[11] He clearly established the plan of the church with its two transepts and pairs of transeptal chapels and made some progress in investigating the east

5 cf Munch (1874), pp. 274-84.
6 cf Broderick (1979), f. 49v.; the first actual mention of the Castle is under the year 1265.
7 Williams (1995), pp. 16-18.
8 Davey and Roscow (forthcoming).
9 Plan in MNH library.
10 Bruce notebook in MNH library.
11 Butler (1988); (2002).

Rushen Abbey land

Other monastic land

- - - - - - Sheading boundary

· · · · · · · · Parish boundary

———— Boundary between
Northside and Southside

St Bees
Priory

Myroscough

Bangor
Abbey

Sabal
Abbey

Douglas Priory

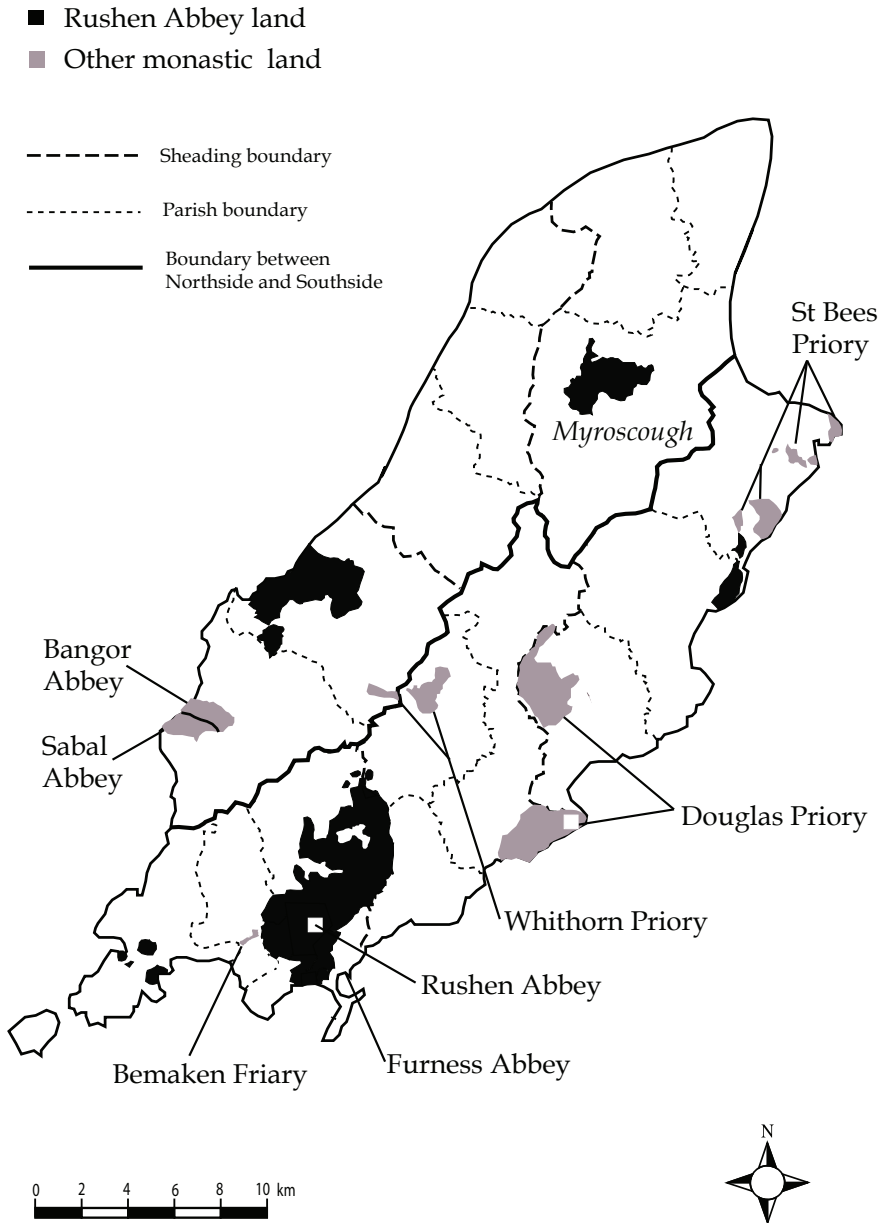Whithorn Priory

Rushen Abbey

Bemaken Friary

Furness Abbey

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Figure 1. Monastic holdings in the Isle of Man

range. Owing partly to the presence of modern garden features that masked medieval structures and a bowling green that he was not allowed to disturb, and partly due to lack of time, his interpretation of the internal features of the range lacked conviction. His excavations failed to establish the position and size of the cloisters, or the nature of the structures in the south and west ranges.

Recent excavations

Early in 1998 the Manx Government purchased the site and transferred its management to Manx National Heritage with an instruction that it should be made ready to be opened to the public in the year 2000.

The excavations carried out in 1998 and 1999 by the Centre for Manx Studies on behalf of Manx National Heritage had two objectives. Initially in 1998 some 24 test-pits and trenches were dug over the whole precinct in order to establish the degree of survival of medieval remains in the entire site. In the event complex medieval stratigraphy was located everywhere, except in its extreme southerly limits. In 1999 the objectives of the excavation changed. Whilst the test-pits had normally excavated a small sample of medieval stratigraphy down to natural deposits – mostly river gravels – in 1999 the work was focussed on recovering the plan of the core of the abbey, in particular the church, cloister and claustral buildings, in order that the site could be displayed in a coherent way to the public in the spring of 2000. This strategy meant that the buildings that were identified and the plan that was defined are that of the abbey as it was in the mid-sixteenth century immediately prior to its dissolution (Fig. 2 and Fig. 3).

The excavations conducted since 2001 have had two further objectives. First, an area to the south of the site (Area S) which contained, until 1998, the standing remains of a gymnasium and night club were investigated. This was of interest because in the construction of the suspended dance floor a number of medieval burials were encountered. Secondly, structures that had been located by the test-pits in the western courtyard of the abbey were investigated between 2004 and 2008.

THE RESULTS

The church

The church was an aisle-less cruciform structure with transepts and transeptal chapels. In addition, a further chapel or mortuary house had been added at the north-west corner of the north transept and a tower constructed within and projecting above the main north transept space, utilising its eastern wall and that of the adjacent chancel. Previous excavations that recovered significant numbers of burials and many encaustic floor tiles had defined the plan of the eastern part

Figure 2. The 1999 excavations of the cloisters in progress (Copyright Manx National Heritage)

of the church. No recorded excavations have been undertaken in the main body of the nave. The position of its north wall is clear both from the section that survives to full height as a buttress to the north transept and from a fragment towards the western end at present-day ground level that is overlain by the curved retaining wall of the prospect mound.[12] Whether the church possessed a crossing tower is a matter for debate. Given that its weight would have to have been supported by the transepts and nave walls alone, in the absence of any separate foundations, if it

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12 cf .J R. Bruce Notebook, 27th May 1927. This section of wall foundation was still visible in 1998, but is now hidden by the low earthen wall constructed to assist interpretation of the site to the general public.
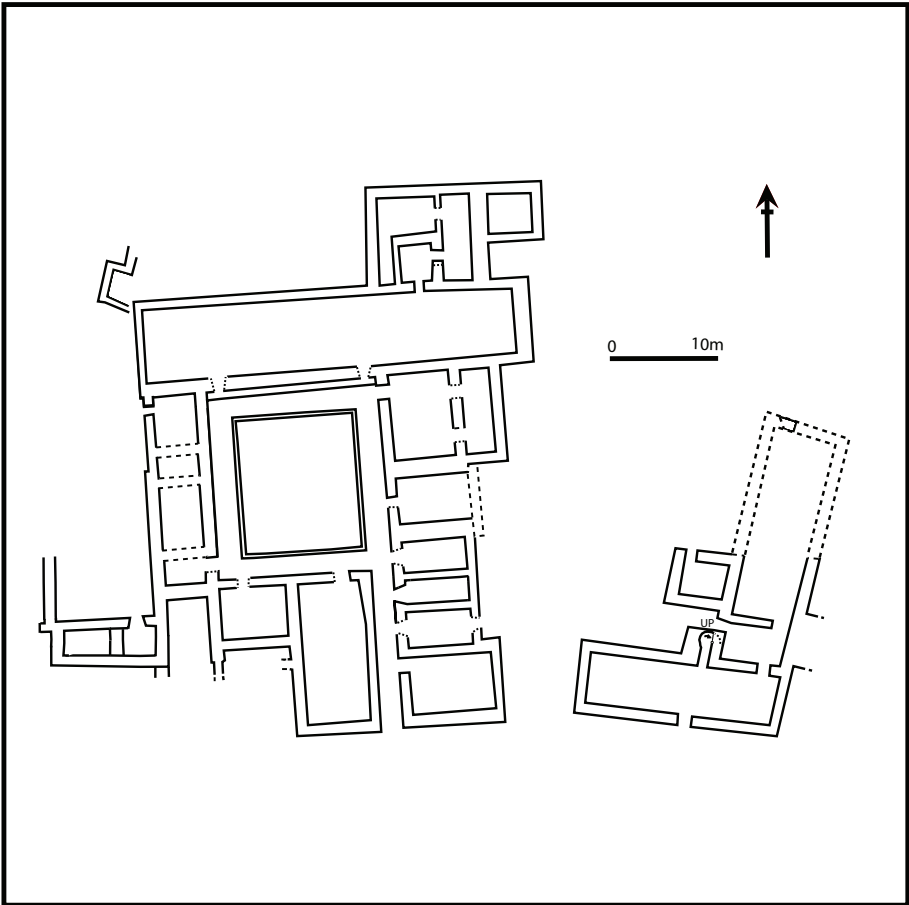
Figure 3. Rushen Abbey plan as excavated

existed it could only have been the slightest of structures.

The 1999 excavations recovered foundations for the whole length of the southern wall of the nave. Mostly surviving as a boulder-filled trench, at its western end the first course of dressed masonry survived. This consisted of thin limestone slabs that appear to have functioned as levelling-up as well as a damp-proof course. The south-western corner of the nave was located, together with traces of a line of wall plaster on the inner edge. The position of this corner implies that the north-western corner of the nave lies beneath the curved retaining wall of the prospect mound and immediately adjacent to the south-eastern corner of the 'west tower'. It is assumed, but not yet established, that the church had a main door in the west end.

The cloister

The excavations also exposed a small cloister some 13m square. With the exception of a small area at the south-eastern corner of the arcade that had been destroyed by a post-medieval pit, the cloister walk and foundations of the arcade were exposed throughout. The garth itself was not excavated. The build of the arcade was not uniform with slightly different materials and widths in different sections, implying different periods of construction or phases of redesign. A number of small foundations, probably for small buttresses, were identified on the inside of the western arcade. The eastern arcade foundations are interrupted by an unusual sculptured block that implies a narrow entrance at that point. The cloister walk had been floored with limestone flags. It provided the location for a number of burials both in its eastern and western sections. The northern cloister walk had been narrowed by the construction of what appears to have been a bench along the outside wall of the nave. At the northern end of the eastern walk residual foundations for steps leading to the main door into the church were recovered.

The east range

The most recent excavations were hampered by three quite unrelated factors. First, the east range had been excavated at least three times before.[13] The Archaeological Survey, Cubbon and Butler excavations had tackled the site in quite different ways. The Survey and Cubbon had concentrated on following wall lines and exposing the surviving structure. Butler excavated a series of quadrats within the range. Their excavations were to differing depths. It proved necessary to excavate rather more of the surviving archaeological deposits than elsewhere on the site in order to make some sense of the whole internal area of the range.

Secondly, the vaulted structure that survived at the north end of the range, adjacent to the south transept, was in a very unstable condition. Its western gable required careful demolition and partial reconstruction. The building also needed a new buttress on its northern side. The presence of these conservation works prevented the eastern limits of the structure from being identified.

Thirdly, Butler had been unable to investigate the west wall of the range as Cubbon had 'reconstructed' it with concrete and iron stanchions, as the revetting for a raised flowerbed. In 1999 this wall was carefully removed down to medieval foundation levels.

In plan the range consists of three distinct elements: a vaulted structure adjacent to the south transept, then a series of three quite narrow spaces with a common east wall, followed at the southern end of the range by a larger room with internal 'benches'.

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13 Johnson (1998), p. 15.

The vaulted building

The function of the vaulted building has been the subject of some discussion. Butler pointed out that, as its northern wall has no openings connecting it with the church, it could not be a sacristy.[14] Lacking any knowledge of the construction of its gables and given the likely size of the cloister, he interpreted the structure as a slype, or passage, connecting the cloistral area with the monastic cemetery and more secluded areas to the east. The 1999 excavations did, however, locate the northern half of the western gable of the building, most of the southern part having been destroyed by a post-medieval pit. The masonry in the gable was of the same type and bonded to that of the south transept and survived to about one metre above contemporary ground level. The northern jambs of both a doorway and narrow lancet window were also uncovered. Because of conservation work no possible eastern gable was identified.

The central area of the range

In Butler's 1988 report he interpreted the space to the south of the slype as the chapter house. In his 1988-9 excavations of the range he identified two internal sub-divisions. The 1999 programme exposed the whole of the internal area of the range and its western and eastern gables. It had been presumed by Cubbon that the eastern wall of the range formed a single line from the south-east corner, where he found foundation material *in situ*, to a putative eastern gable of the slype. Neither Cubbon nor Butler was able to locate the eastern wall of the proposed chapter house. The recent excavations located the wall almost two metres to the west. They were also able to investigate further Butler's two internal sub-divisions, parts of which had been obscured by baulks. The foundations uncovered were much more substantial than those recorded by Butler and suggested that the walls have a more serious structural purpose. In addition, the removal of Cubbon's reconstructed west wall of the range revealed separate doorways into the first two spaces south of Butler's slype.

Suggested function of the rooms in the range

Taking these new details into account, in the context of a very small cloistral area, the present interpretation of the rooms within the east range is as follows. The vaulted structure, because of the nature of its west door and window, together with its position, opening as it does on to the cloister walk, is seen as the chapter house. Despite a lack of any stone foundations for seating benches, this location is not uncommon. In particular, the position of the chapter house both at Furness Abbey

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14 Butler (1988), p. 66.

and at Calder, another of its daughters also founded in 1134,[15] is the same as is now proposed for Rushen.

The next small room to the south may have functioned as a library. It has a separate entrance and was presumably lit by a window in its east wall. Given the absence of structures to the south of Cubbon's excavations, both beyond the larger room in the south or in the corridor, the next, narrower, space seems likely to have formed the location of the day stairs from the dormitory to the cloister walk.[16] The fourth room in the range is difficult to interpret as no obvious openings were found in the foundation material that would indicate its relationship to the other spaces and the corridor. Given the internal benches the fifth room probably functioned as a parlour. As the day stair would not have required windows at ground floor level, it is also suggested that the garderobe for the dormitory may have projected to the east at this point.[17]

The south range

The range consisted of two elements. The first, a rectilinear structure some 12.5m by 6m with its long axis north south, from its position and size is interpreted as the refectory. The single doorway is offset to the east of centre (Fig. 4). The second, a much smaller, almost square room 6m by 5m, from its burnt clay flooring and quantities of domestic debris, including many animal and fish bones, is thought to have functioned as the kitchens. The single doorway is offset to the west of centre. An annex or southerly extension of the kitchens was located but not excavated.

The west range

The 1999 excavations exposed a narrow building, 4.0m wide and at least 17.5m long - its southern end was not investigated. At the time, given that the cloister was thought to approach in size a standard Cistercian 100-foot square it was originally thought that these wall foundations might have represented an *alleé de confrères* and that the accommodation range itself lay further to the west. A number of factors argue very strongly against this idea. First, there are at least three cross-walls which, although not excavated, appear to have divided the internal space and would have made perambulation difficult. Secondly, the width of the foundations is the same for both east and west walls, implying a consistent weight above both. They are equivalent to other foundations on the site, such as in the east range, which certainly supported two storeys. Thirdly, there is no direct route between the

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15 Coppack, Fawcett and Robinson (2000), pp. 84-5.
16 The Centre is very grateful to Glyn Coppack for this suggestion and for much valued advice during the 1998-1999 excavations.
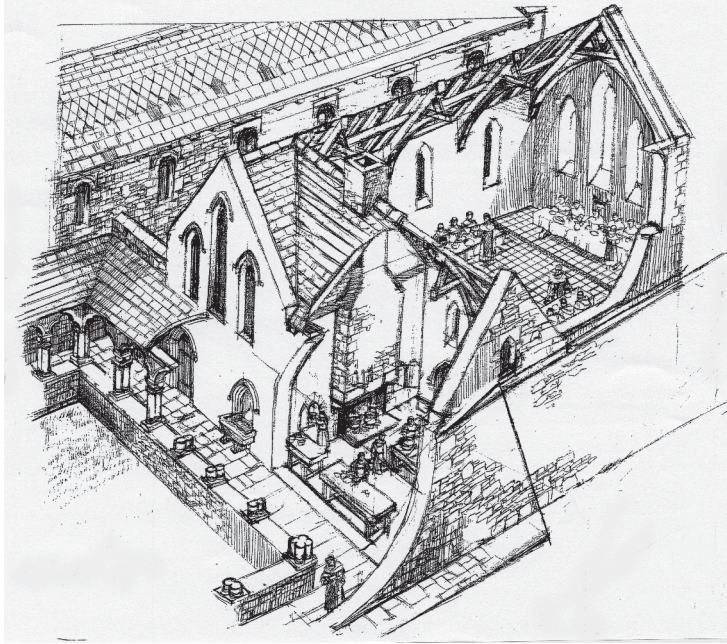17 *pace* Glyn Coppack.

Figure 4. Architectural reconstruction of the refectory as it may have appeared in 1540, based on the excavation evidence (Illustration by Brian Byron Copyright Manx National Heritage)

range and the church at ground level - a necessary element in a lay brothers cloister. Fourthly it would be very unusual for a west range to project for its whole width beyond the west wall of the church. Fifthly, the 1998 test trenches established that there was no major structural wall further to the west.[18] Finally, given the actual dimensions of the cloisters identified in 1999, the range is of the size and in the place to be expected (Fig. 5).

There is an entrance to the range from the south-west corner of the cloister walk and an exit in its western wall at the northern end, presumably to allow access to the church from a door, not yet exposed by excavation, in its western wall. It is unclear how movement about the internal space of the range was organized, or how access was gained to its southern extension. A pad of stones set into the floor of the building recorded in a test trench[19] suggests a possible pier base for

18 Trench N cf Davey (1999), pp. 27-8; an area extended during the teaching excavation in 1999.
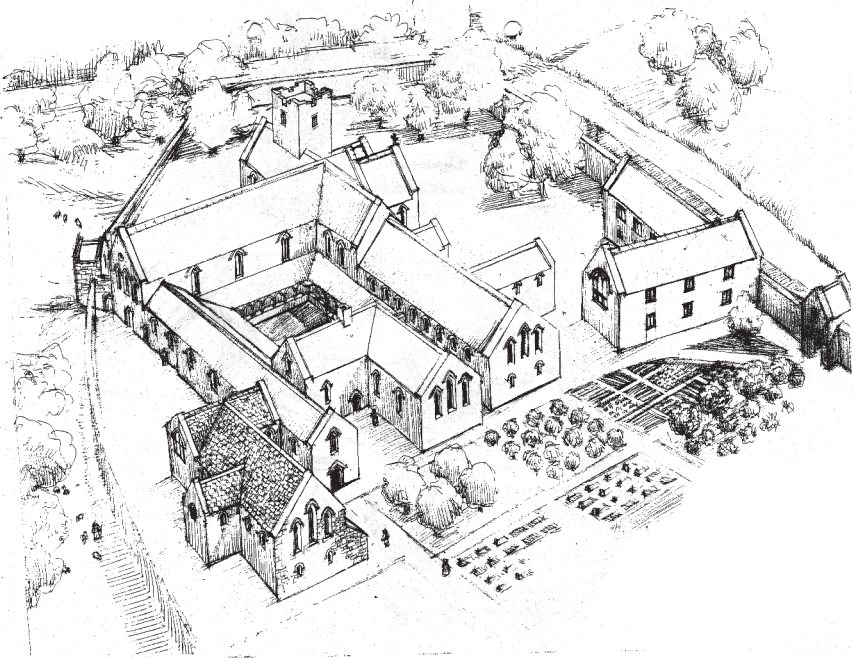19 Trench Q, *ibid*.

Figure 5. Architectural reconstruction of south-west view of Rushen Abbey in 1540, based on the excavation evidence (Illustration by Brian Byron Copyright Manx National Heritage)

a vaulted undercroft,[20] whilst an apparent secondary buttress in the same trench implies either a structural weakness or additional stresses caused by new building work or alterations to the range.[21] All the evidence points to a two-storey building; the most likely arrangement originally would have been storage at ground level and living accommodation on the first floor.

From 2004 to 2008 part of a multi-phase, complex building was uncovered in a trench in the western courtyard[22] (Fig 6). The latest plan of these structures suggests that they are the remains of a guest-house located on the south side of the courtyard. This may be physically linked to the substantial building identified as demolition debris in 1998 further to the south. Each of these buildings was a substantial stone structure, probably two storeys high.

The north-west tower

This structure, sometimes referred to as the watch-tower, stands just outside the west end of the abbey church and at a considerable angle to it. The position of the

20 *Ibid.*, pp. 32-3, Fig. 13, Context 7.
21 *Ibid.*, pp. 29-31, Fig. 12, Context 10.
22 Trench M, *ibid*.

Figure 6. Aerial view of the excavation site in the western courtyard 2004 to 2008 (Copyright Manx National Heritage)

west wall of the nave of the church, located in 1999, together with a straight joint visible between the damaged south wall of the tower and the stone revetting for the later prospect mound, implies that the tower butted directly on to the nave. Indeed, the coursing of the tower wall at this point had already cambered before the prospect mound had been constructed, implying that the structure had stood in a derelict state for some time. In the upper part of the north wall of the tower an opening survives that can be seen in more complete form in an early nineteenth-century woodcut by J. T. Blight (Fig. 7).[23]

This feature has every appearance of a garderobe chute. Clearance of *Clematis vitalba* revealed the springer of an arch or masonry projection for the upper part of the southern wall. It seems possible that the tower represents the northern survivor of a small double-towered gatehouse that had accommodation on its upper floors.

The abbot's lodgings and pigeon tower
An L-shaped range of buildings lay between the cloisters and the river. The southerly building still survives to roof height and appears to have had three floors

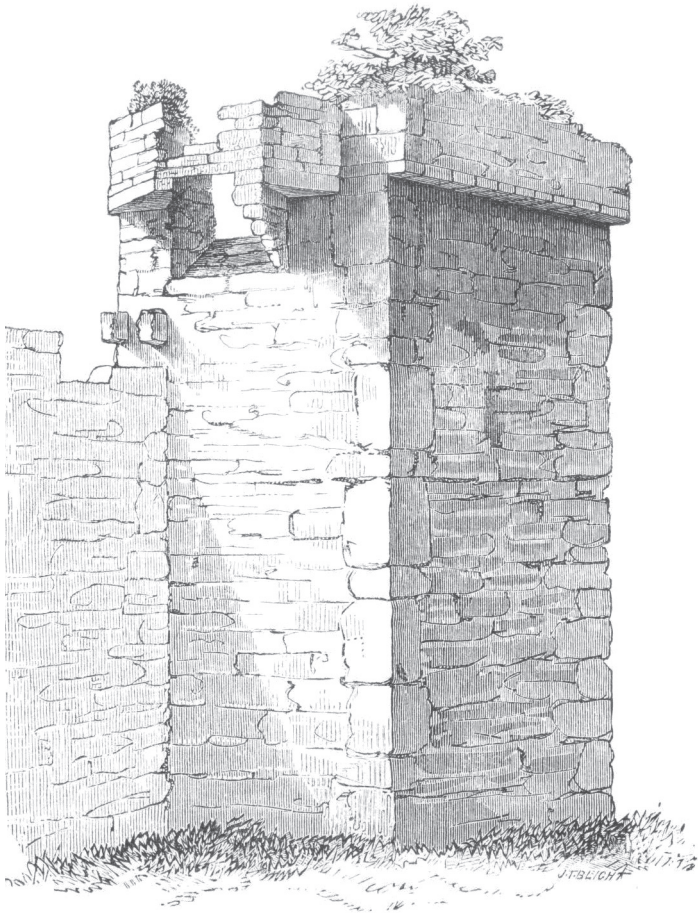23 Cumming (1868), opp. p. 40; Bruce Notebook, 24; MNH Accession No 9856.

Figure 7. The north-west tower, sketch by Blight

each of which linked it to an even larger building to the north that survives only at its southern end. In 1998 the foundations of this structure were located in three separate places,[24] at two of which *in situ* dressed masonry was recovered from upper foundation levels.[25] They show that this wing of the range is large, almost 24 m long, and was the third medieval building to have been constructed at that

24 Trench L (Davey (1999), pp. 15-21, cf Fig. 6) and Trench V (Ibid., pp. 46-50, cf Fig. 18).
25 As part of the conservation and presentation programme for the whole of the site staff at the Centre, Manx National Heritage and its conservation consultants have carried out detailed recording of all of the masonry in this range. The results of this research will be published in due course as part of the final report on the site.

location. It is difficult to be sure of the function of these two buildings, but their scale and the quality of some of the surviving detail suggests the abbot's lodgings. The abbot as a major secular baron would have needed accommodation both for administrative purposes and for the conduct of public audiences, including the holding of the baron court as well as for his own private use. It seems most likely that the south range provided the public space and the mostly demolished east range the private.

The pigeon tower, because of its dependence on the pre-existence of the other buildings, is presumed to be of late medieval date. Despite the post-medieval remodelling of much of its upper levels, it may originally have functioned as the abbey's *columbarium* (Fig 8). The small square foundations, discovered in 1999 at the angle of the two larger buildings, appear to represent a staircase turret that, given the thickness of its western walling, probably also functioned as a garderobe. This tower appears to be that shown on the Hollar view of around 1650.[26] The joist sockets revealed by the removal of vegetation and wall stubs recovered from excavation of the eastern wall of the range may also imply a garderobe for the longer north-south building. If this were the case the main drain would have flowed from beneath the day stairs in the east range, across to the Hollar tower and then to the structure immediately between the range and the river.

Other structures

The 1998 excavations revealed the presence of a number of other structures that probably survived until 1540, but were not explored sufficiently to elucidate a plan or possible function. For example, fragments of a substantial stone building were located to the south of the claustral buildings[27] that may either have formed part of the structures identified to the south-west of the west range, or may represent a self-standing building such as an infirmary or guest-house.[28] Even further to the south[29] a sequence of probable timber-framed buildings was sampled.[30] At the eastern end of a trial trench to the north-east of the church a metalworking area was revealed, apparently inside a building, whose plan could not be determined within the scope of the trench.[31] Further extensive excavation, in particular of the southern part of the site and the Abbey Hotel car park would almost certainly locate further elements of the abbey plan as it existed in 1540.

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26 Johnson (1998), p. 72, Fig. 2.

27 In Trench T.

28 Davey (1999), pp. 43-5, cf Fig. 17.

29 In Trench D.

30 *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7, cf Fig. 2; Milek (1999), pp. 78-83.

31 Trench W.

Figure 8. The Pigeon Tower in 2005

Summary of structures

The recent excavations at Rushen Abbey have revealed a modest, isle-less church and cloister with associated claustral buildings of commensurate size. A probable chapter house, sacristy and warming room occupy the east range, a north-south refectory and kitchen complex the south and a much thinner and longer building to the west. The full extent of the abbot's lodgings has been located together with further industrial buildings to the north. To the west and south of the cloisters lie further groups of stone buildings, including a guest-house; most remain to be investigated. Much further to the south, on the eastern side of the site a complex communal cemetery with double ditched boundary has been identified. The ground level of the whole of this area appears to have been lowered during the medieval period and subsequently divided into small ditched enclosures.

MATERIAL CULTURE

The archaeological finds recovered since 1999 from the levelling that encompassed most of the cloistral buildings and the western courtyard offer some insight into the nature of life in the abbey at the point of its dissolution. They also provide some degree of independent dating evidence. There are three

distinct elements - architectural fragments, other constructional elements and domestic rubbish.[32]

Architectural fragments

The demolition of the major buildings of the abbey was carried out in order to sell any reusable assets, such as lead, timber and stone.[33] The limestone and sandstone ashlar blocks were removed, together with all of the more elaborately cut masonry, including door and window cills, jambs and tracery. The rubble cores of the walls, consisting largely of glacial boulders were valueless and retained on site. Large quantities of erratics, associated with sixteenth-century ceramics, were located in a levelling up layer outside the west range.[34]

A number of broken dressed stone door cills and the lowest course of door jambs were left *in situ*, particularly in the cloistral buildings. In addition, the demolition deposits produce some two-dozen architectural fragments. Many were too small to assign to a style or period; some showed evidence of alteration. The larger pieces included tracery, column and column-base fragments dating from the twelfth to the sixteenth century, demonstrating both that elements of the earliest building had survived up to the dissolution and that the fabric of the abbey had been significantly modified during its life. The abbey that was suppressed in 1540 was a compound, multi-phased set of structures.

Excavation of one of the rooms in the possible guest house in the western courtyard revealed a mass of crushed and decaying red and yellow sandstone fragments many of them containing architectural detail. Although these are still the subject of detailed analysis the stone appears to be of Triassic origin, probably from north-west England.

Other constructional elements

Many fragments of lead, glass, iron, mortar, plaster, slate and floor tile were recovered from the demolition layers. As with the architectural fragments, these finds can help reconstruct the physical details of the abbey buildings in 1540. They are difficult to date and, in any case, may have been incorporated into the buildings at any stage in the life of the monastery.

Although some 39 cwt of lead from the site was sold for £6 at the Dissolution,[35] many small pieces were not retained for sale. The majority were short lengths of crushed window cames. A few small pieces of lead sheeting, probably from roof

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32 A full reporting of these finds will be given in the final excavation report. Only a summary account is given here.
33 PRO SC6/Henry VIII/5682; e.g. arrears of £13 6s 8d.
34 cf Davey (1999), pp. 21-9.
35 PRO SC6/Henry VIII/5682; e.g. arrears £10 10s.

flashing, were found and a number of lumps of lead that had been inserted into slots in masonry were apparently too fixed to be easily removed. A number of runnels were also recovered which may have been the result of melting the lead down on site in preparation for the dissolution sale, or possibly the product of earlier repairs.[36]

Many fragments of broken flat glass quarries were found. The material is potash glass that has weathered so badly that all translucency has been lost. Fire-rounded cylinder edges can be seen on a number of examples, showing that they were manufactured by the cylinder or broad glass method for producing flat glass. A single example of 'stained glass' was found in 1998.[37] The presence of so many cames and fragments of flat glass, together with evidence from at least one architectural fragment that tracery had been altered to take glass, suggests that by the sixteenth century most of abbey buildings had plain glass windows in small diamond panes.

Many hundreds of iron nails were found. Some would have been associated with the constructional timbers of the abbey that was one of the principal items sold off at the dissolution. Others might have held panelling, architraves and other decorative wooden elements. No items made of wood survived the site soil conditions.

Large amounts of mortar and plaster were spread over the whole cloistral area, giving it a whitish appearance. The mortar was more or less uniformly distributed through the demolition layers, implying that the stone walls of the abbey, including the rubble core, were mortared throughout. Quantities of mortar adhering to glacial erratics and the evidence of surviving fragments of actual walling tend to confirm this. Concentrated spreads of white wall plaster, sometimes interrupted by layers of more general demolition material, bear evidence for the locations where material hacked off the walls was allowed to accumulate. The impression given by these finds is that all of the main stone buildings were covered with white plaster, certainly on the inside, but probably on the exterior as well.

One of the most bulky finds from the demolition deposits were Manx Group[38] roofing slates in many shapes and sizes. Although many were broken, sufficient complete examples were recovered to suggest that there may not have been a local market for such materials. The sheer quantity involved from so many demolished buildings, together with the structural strength needed to support a whole roof covering may have reduced their attractiveness to a potential buyer. With the exception of the castles, cathedral and, possibly Bishopscourt, there would have

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36 Davey (1999), pp. 62-3.
37 Hurst Vose (1999), p. 58.
38 Local Lower Palaezoic rock.

been no buildings on the Isle of Man able to withstand such a heavy roof. Although, given the variety of sizes present, it seems likely that the slates were graded in size on individual roofs, the dispersion of all the finds and materials from the buildings over the site during its demolition did not allow this hypothesis to be proven. Finds of roofing slate from the western courtyard included numbers that are of north Welsh origin, providing at least a late medieval date for the rise of the influence of this important industry in the Irish Sea area.

Fragments of lead glazed, line-impressed encaustic floor tiles were mainly concentrated in the eastern area of the cloister garth. Their distribution, added to the 1998 finds from the south transept[39] and earlier *in situ* groups from the church by Cubbon[40] and Butler,[41] suggests that parts of the east range, at least, had also possessed decorated ceramic tiled floors. The majority of the tiles appeared to be of fourteenth century date and, presumably, continued in use until the sixteenth century.

Domestic debris
The excavation of the demolition deposits produced many hundreds of fragments of domestic rubbish, including items of pottery, glass, silver, copper, iron, lead, bone and stone. Where datable the vast majority were of sixteenth-century types; none of the items can be dated more precisely on stylistic evidence. The pottery in particular shows a wide range of sources including a regionally significant assemblage of both northern and south-western French imports. A few pieces of pottery and metal items appear to be of earlier medieval date and are likely to be residual in the contexts in which they were found. The finds strongly support the inference from the documents that the demolition took place in the summer of 1540, but do not prove it. Rather the clarity of the historical evidence for the clearance of the site can be used to provide a fixed point in the chronology of production for much of the material evidence recovered.

The finds themselves give a detailed insight into life at the abbey in its final years. Fragments of iron and copper door and furniture fittings, keys, hooks, a window catch and a lock fastener give an idea of the relative sophistication of the furnishing of the domestic space, even though no items of wood have survived. The same is true of metal and bone items that were dress accessories. Numbers of strap and belt fittings, toggles, lace tags, buttons, buckles and brooch pins were found together with more personal items such as a stylus, an ear scoop and fragments of a urinal. Other domestic items include pins, needles, thimbles, coins, counters, and parts of knives, spoons, forks and stylus heads. The butchered and

39 Davey (1999), pp. 56-7.
40 W. C. Cubbon Papers, MNH Library, Accession Number 9858, paras 14-16.
41 Butler (1988), pp. 73-4.

consumed bones of cattle, sheep and pig were found in considerable numbers with smaller quantities of shellfish, fish and bird bones. Evidence for cooking and consumption consisted of pottery and glasswares for use at table and in the kitchen and a fragment of rotary quern. Musket balls, lead shot and a bone working part from a crossbow hint at the more violent aspects of contemporary life (Fig. 9). Runnels and blobs of lead, and part of a ceramic crucible, together with iron slag associated with partially burnt coal indicate that small-scale metalworking was being carried out within the abbey precinct.

Discussion

The abbey's plan and size

The excavations at Rushen Abbey have revealed a conventional plan with a church on the north side of a set of cloistral buildings. Although the detailed arrangement and interpretation of the rooms in the east range remains a matter for debate, the structures excavated on the south side of the cloister are convincing as refectory and kitchen, with an accommodation range to the west. The existence of further suites of buildings beyond the cloisters, such as the abbot's lodgings to the east or guest house to the south-west is to be expected. What is unusual about Rushen is its small size. In particular, the area occupied by the cloisters is tiny by any standard. For example when compared with Irish Cistercian sites whose cloistral area is known, it is the smallest by far:

Table 1: The cloistral areas of Irish Cistercian monasteries in square feet with a 16th century assessment of annual income, where available.

	Sq ft	£
Dunbrody	14173	£41
Graiguenamanagh	14161	£88
Boyle	13000	
Monasteranenagh	12854	
Mellifont 2	11748	£352
Abbeyknockmoy	10918	£78
Jerpoint	10396	£88
Mellifont 1	8407	
Grey	7437	
Holy Cross	7219	£66
Kilcooly	6816	£46
Hore	5776	£21
Inch	5140	
Bective 1	4640	
Corcomroe	3672	£8
Bective 2	3249	£84
Rushen Abbey	**2590**	**£269**

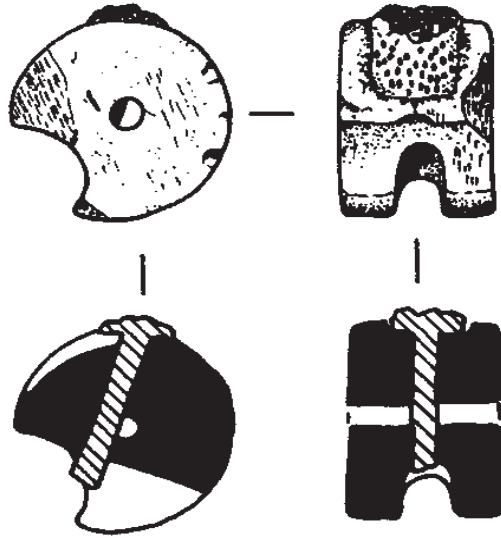Hildemar of Corbie said, 'A cloister should be a hundred feet square and no less

Figure 9. Artefact from the dissolution debris: bone crossbow piece
(diameter = 30mm)

because that would make it too small'. In other words an official Cistercian norm
would be 10,000 square feet. Rushen is about one quarter size. In comparison
the cloister at Fountains is 125` square, an area of some 15,625 square feet.[42]

It is difficult to explain the small size of Rushen's aisle-less church and cloister.
There seem two clear possibilities, neither easy of resolution. The first is that the
abbey was originally designed with a more normal sized church, with an aisle or
aisles and a cloister somewhere near one hundred feet square, and that the plan
revealed in the excavations of 1998 to 2000 represents a rebuilding of the whole
site on a contracted scale. The very small precinct at Bective 2, for example, relates
to a substantial redesign of the site in the late middle ages. As the excavations only
revealed the latest phases of the buildings it is perfectly possible that the remains
of an earlier and larger cloister lie beneath the structures now being presented to
the public. A number of the test-pits in 1998, especially those on the west side of
the west range[43] revealed substantial earlier buildings on a different plan than those
nearer the surface. A comparison of the Rushen Abbey excavated plan with that of

42 Stalley (1987), p. 54.
43 Areas M, P and Q: Davey (1999), pp. 29-33.
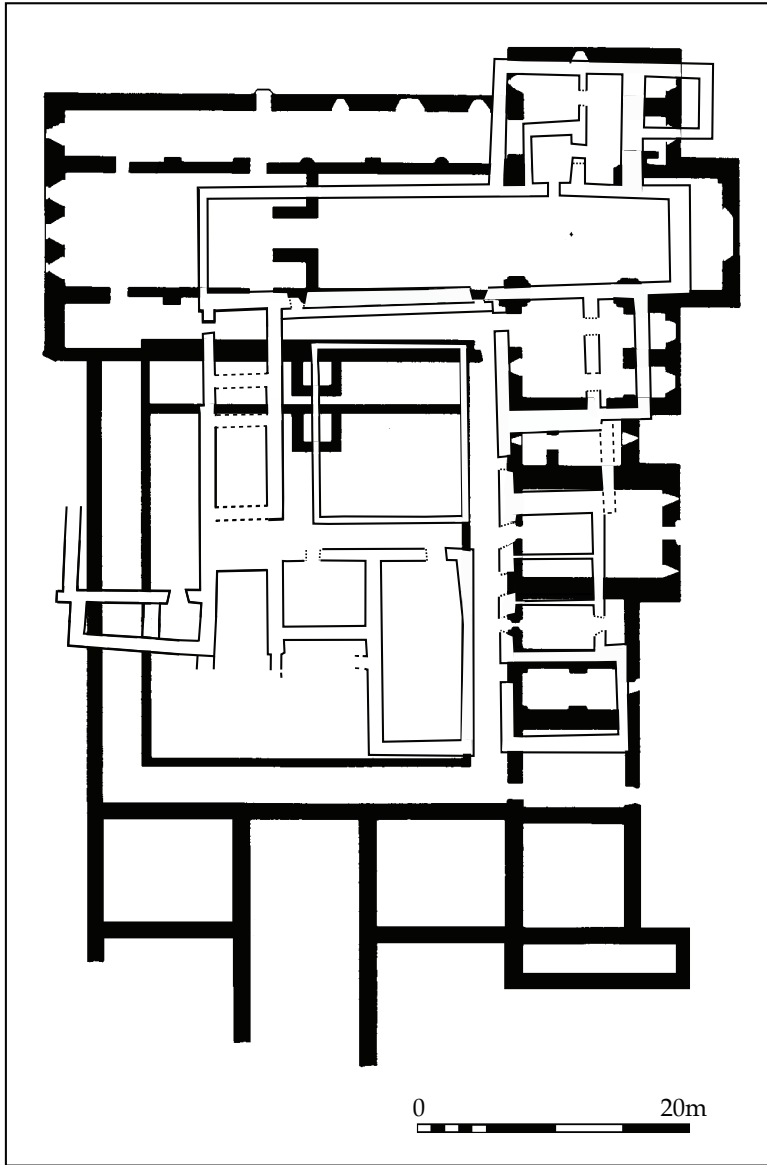
0 _____ 20m

Figure 10. Excavation plan of Rushen Abbey (white walls) overlain on a plan of Jerpoint (black walls) at the same scale.

Jerpoint shows clearly the significant difference in scale (Fig. 10).

The second explanation is that the form, plan and size of the abbey are as originally designed in the twelfth century. If this is the case the size of the abbey might be related to its function as a royal foundation and mausoleum.[44] It is possible that the kings of Man and the Isles did not require a fully-sized monastery on their headquarters island, but rather a nominal one that would function as a dynastic burial place and clearly link the king to the reforming orders and all of the new thinking that went with them.

Future research

In tandem with the excavations the Centre for Manx Studies has carried out a field survey of the abbey lands and a detailed assessment of the documentary sources, especially the accounts produced for the Court of Augmentation and the rich insular administrative records. In 2008 a detailed survey of the village of Ballasalla, combined with the evidence of the rent rolls and composition books has allowed the location and size of the cottage plots that paid rent to the abbey to be identified.

Further excavation will concentrate on exploring the earlier history of the site in order to establish its plan and chronology. Further extensive survey will attempt to locate other potentially important archaeological sites that form part of the monastic landscape and economy.

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44 For example the burial of Olaf 11 in 1237, Reginald 11 in 1249 and Magnus in 1265 (Broderick (1979), f. 44v, f. 47r and f. 49v).

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P. J. Davey
Centre for Manx Studies
University of Liverpool
Email: pjd1@liverpool.ac.uk

THE 'MONASTICON HIBERNICUM PROJECT': A RESEARCH TOOL FOR EARLY AND MEDIEVAL ECCLESIASTICAL SETTLEMENT IN IRELAND

A new database of early and medieval ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland (5th to 12th centuries AD) is scheduled for launching on the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies website in Autumn 2008. The 'Monasticon Hibernicum Project', sponsored by the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS) from October 2003 until January 2007, was based at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth, Co. Kildare. Under the general direction of Kim McCone, professor of Old and Middle Irish, the project was managed by Ailbhe MacShamhráin, with the assistance of Aidan Breen and Nora White.

Four years ago, when the database was still at an early stage of development, it was introduced to readers of the Bulletin.[45] Inspired by the monumental *Monasticon Hibernicum* of eighteenth-century antiquarian and clergyman Mervyn Archdall (to whose scholarship it pays tribute), the project is rather more than a revised version of Archdall's opus.[46] While Archdall's eight-hundred page encyclopedia of pre-Reformation monasteries and abbeys covered some five-hundred and fifty sites, the new computer-database of pre-twelfth century ecclesiastical settlement records ten times that number. It is also, in its own way, even more ambitious – insofar as it seeks to include a wider range of material and to apply modern critical standards to the way in which data is interpreted.

The aim of the project, as stated above, is to record early and medieval ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland from the introduction of Christianity in the fifth century to the twelfth-century Church Reform. On this account, it might fairly be described as an 'ecclesiasticon' rather than a 'monasticon'. How many of the sites included were indeed community foundations (monastic or otherwise) is a moot point: some, indeed, were pre-Reform parish centres, cathedrals, hermitages, or proprietary churches. However, it was felt that to retain the term 'monasticon' in the project title (along with its Archdall associations) might make its content and purpose more understandable – particularly outside of specialist circles.

It must also be conceded that not all foundations included here are strictly pre-1100. The Church Reform of the twelfth century was not a single event but a

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45 Ailbhe MacShamhráin, 'The new Monasticon Hibernicum and inquiry into the Early Christian and medieval church in Ireland', *Monastic Research Bulletin*, 10 (2004), pp. 1-16.
46 Mervyn Archdall, *Monasticon Hibernicum or a history of the abbies, priories and other religious houses in Ireland*. (Dublin, 1786; reissued in an incomplete form, edited by P.F. Moran, Dublin, 1873).

movement, which made gradual impact over the course of many decades. However, monasteries and priories belonging to Continental religious orders, such as the Benedictines, Cistercians or Augustinians – or, by the same token, parish churches which postdate the twelfth-century diocesan reorganisation – are not covered. Such foundations are, by definition, products of the twelfth-century Church Reform and, of themselves, have little to tell us regarding native Irish ecclesiastical settlement. However, there are examples of post-Reform Continental foundations, and indeed thirteenth-century parish churches, which can be shown to have occupied sites of earlier Irish churches. At Kilbeggan, Co. Westmeath, a twelfth-century Cistercian foundation, traces of an enclosure and a local tradition of St Beccán are suggestive of Early Christian origins. At Clontuskert, Co. Galway, an Augustinian priory is situated on a possible Early Christian site, with the remains of a togher, and early medieval field systems - while in the same county the fourteenth-century Franciscan friary of Kilconnell occupies a more clearly-defined early site, complete with horizontal mill. In Co. Meath, the parish church of Diamor is perhaps to be identified with Diammar of Finngán mac [an] Airchinnig, mentioned in the Martyrology of Tallaght. Quite a number of sites for which there is no convincing evidence for a pre-twelfth century date have been included – purely on the grounds that there is, by the same token, no clear case for excluding them. Such sites are marked with an asterisk. Some may well be omitted when the database is revised, while other early sites will no doubt come (or be brought!) to notice.

The new 'Monasticon' is intended as a research tool to facilitate inquiry mainly in the fields of history and settlement studies. While concerned mainly with historical and archaeological testimony, some account is taken of evidence from other related disciplines including placename study and folklore. It is hoped that the database, although a modest project carried out on a limited budget, will serve as a companion to works produced by grander undertakings in these fields, including the CELT Project,[47] the LOCUS Project,[48] the Irish Historic Towns

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47 The CELT Project, based at NUI Cork under the direction of Professor Donnchadh Ó Corráin, is creating electronic versions of historical and literary texts relating to Ireland. To date it has produced texts of all the Irish annals, and several nineteenth-century editions of 'Lives' of saints.

48 Also at NUI Cork, under the direction of Professor Pádraig Ó Riain, the LOCUS Project has produced an electronic version of Edmond Hogan's *Onomasticon Goedelicum*, and a new multi-volume reference-book is in process – the *Historical Dictionary of Gaelic Placenames/Foclóir Stairiúil Áitainmneacha na Gaeilge*, edited by Pádraig Ó Riain, Diarmaid Ó Murchadha and Kevin Murray – published by the Irish Texts Society, London. Two fascicles have appeared to date, I: names in A- (2003, reprinted with addenda and corrigenda 2007) and II: names in B- (2005).

Atlas,[49] the Dictionary of Irish Biography[50] and the series of county archaeological inventories.[51] Ways in which the 'Monasticon' can illuminate historical inquiry into topics such as ecclesiastico-political relationships, pre-reform church organisation, the dissemination of saints' cults or gender-politics in the Irish church - or, for that matter, can be used as a resource for settlement studies - have already been explored with reference to some of the Leinster data.[52]

In planning the database, we endeavoured to take account of the spatial dimension of these and other lines of inquiry relating to early ecclesiastical history and settlement in Ireland. On this account, seven of the twenty-three data fields are locational – covering the civil (townland, civil parish, barony, county and province) and ecclesiastical (parish, rural deanery, diocese and ecclesiastical province) administrative divisions of Ireland - arranged in ascending order. In this way, data can be retrieved relating to specific classes of site (e.g. foundations associated with particular saints, with male or female communities, possessing certain archaeological features etc.) in any division (or group of divisions) within the country. Of the other data fields, four relate to foundations and founders, three to historical sources, four to 'historical issues' and three to archaeological and folklore data.[53]

Earlier articles about the 'Monasticon' have given some account of the database planning for the project and of its subsequent management. Matters discussed included the range of historical sources used (annals, genealogies, hagiographical texts, charters and – on occasion – late medieval or early modern tracts), and appeal to the evidence of archaeology and toponomy. The project proceeded through compiling data from published historical sources, archaeological inventories, excavation reports, and placename studies, taking account of previously published

49 The Royal Irish Academy Historic Towns Atlas project is under the general direction of professors Anngret Simms, Howard Clarke and Raymond Gillespie. Atlases with significant Early Christian components, which have appeared since the 'Monasticon' commenced, include Trim, by Mark Henneessy (2004), Derry-Londonderry by Avril Thomas (2005) and Armagh by Catherine McCullough and W. H. Crawford (2007).
50 The general editors of the *Dictionary of Irish Biography* are Aidan Clarke, Ronan Fanning, K. T. Hoppen, Edith Johnston-Liik, Maureen Murphy, James McGuire (managing editor) and James Quinn (executive editor). (Oxford: OUP for Royal Irish Academy, 2009, forthcoming).
51 The most recent publications in this series are M. J. Moore, *Archaeological inventory of County Leitrim* (Dublin: Oifig an tSoláthair, 2003) and U. Egan, E. Byrne, M. Sleeman, S. Ronan and C. Murphy, *Archaeological inventory of County Sligo*, I, South Sligo (Bray, 2005).
52 Ailbhe MacShamhráin, 'The Monasticon Hibernicum project: the diocese of Dublin', 114-43, in Seán Duffy (ed), *Medieval Dublin*, VI (Dublin, 2005).
53 For a more detailed explanation and discussion of the data-fields see the introduction and field-key to the 'Monasticon Hibernicum Project'.

compendia of church sites, diocesan and county histories, and such monographs and articles as could be obtained. A parallel task to the compilation of data on ecclesiastical sites was locating them, and placing them within the hierarchical framework of administrative divisions. Rarely was this done – or carried out to a satisfactory standard – in editions of texts, inventories or secondary literature. Phase 1 of the project, conducted during the academic year 2003-04, focused on the ecclesiastical province of Dublin (south-eastern Ireland). Subsequent phases saw the focus shift to the ecclesiastical provinces of Cashel (Munster), Armagh (the north and midlands) and Tuam (Connacht).

As the 'Monasticon' developed, various issues (including operational problems) had to be confronted – some of which are outlined in the introduction to the project and few of which merit repetition here. Suffice to say that, during 2005, Excel Spreadsheet replaced Microsoft Access in order to accelerate file-building and, in practice, data gathering on a county by county basis was more efficient – because most of our secondary sources were county-based. Because of work-time lost, due to Dr Breen's increasing commitments abroad and my own on-going serious illness, progress slowed down during 2005-06. That June, Dr Breen tendered his resignation and Dr Nora White was appointed for the remaining months of the project. Subsequently, in view of my personal difficulties, a special agreement was made (with the kind approval of the IRCHSS) that the project be extended to the end of January 2007. At that stage, a final report was submitted accompanied by a full listing of site-records which then stood at 4,363 - although it was recognised that, in order to make the body of records into a useful database, much remained to be done. Indeed, steps had already been taken towards this end. In June 2006, Professor Kim McCone and Professor Liam Breatnach, then Director of the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, agreed to accommodate the database on the DIAS website. In this way, it would be searchable on the widest range of search engines, and be available to the widest range of users, which would better serve IRCHSS interests.

From February 2007 to August 2008, the body of records was revised and expanded with a fuller bibliography. Throughout this time, Nora White was of invaluable assistance – volunteering to revise certain earlier files and working with me on compiling the bibliography. Similarly, Marie Fingleton generously undertook extensive checking of placename details and helped to source bibliographical references and compile abbreviation-lists. Even in the later stages of the project, new challenges arose. Prominent amongst these was the on-going appearance of new material. There is an understandable tendency to presuppose a connection between new data and archaeological discovery – and there can be little doubt but that, in recent years, field survey has detected sites that were hitherto

unknown,[54] while excavation has informed us further about these and other sites that were already known but not fully understood. In some instances, electronic survey or excavation have proven to be the only means of establishing that a particular site was Early Christian (rather than late medieval) in origin. Numerous recent investigations have brought to light large circular or oval enclosures, cross-inscribed graveslabs or other features accepted as characteristic of Early Christian ecclesiastical sites and have, in rare cases identified dateable remains of church buildings or evidence of occupation prior to the twelfth century.[55] It must be stressed, however, that archaeology is not solely responsible for the appearance of new data in the last few years; toponomy has made a significant contribution with publications such as those of Ó Cearbhaill and Ó Crualaoich in which various sites (in Cos Tipperary and Wexford, respectively) are made known for the first time to modern scholarship on the basis of placename evidence.[56] Similarly, in the disciplines of early Irish history and Old Irish literature, a plethora of publications has appeared since 2004. Included here are the long-awaited volume one of the

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54 A particular case in point is Oldtown, Co. Dublin; see Christine Baker, 'A lost ecclesiastical site in Fingal: Oldtown, Swords, Co. Dublin', *Archaeology Ireland*, 18 no. 3 (Autumn, 2004), pp. 14–17.

55 See for instance Ailbhe MacShamhráin. 'An ecclesiastical enclosure in the townland of Grange, parish of Holmpatrick', pp. 52–60 in A. MacShamhráin (ed), *The Island of St Patrick: Church and ruling dynasties in Fingal and Meath 400–1148* (Dublin, 2004); Michael Ryan et al. 'Church Island: a description', ibid, pp. 106–24; Aidan O'Connell. 'A bivallate ecclesiastical enclosure at Kill St Laurence, Co Waterford'. *Decies*, 60 (2004); Jenny White-Marshall & Claire Walsh. *Illaunloughan Island: an early medieval monastery in Co Kerry* (Bray, 2005); M. Kelly. 'History of the site of Lullymore, Co Kildare', *JRSAI*, 136 (2006), pp. 173–81; Paul Stevens. 'A monastic enclosure site at Clonfad, Co Westmeath'. *Arch Ire.*, 20 no 2 (Summer 2006), 8–11; Paul Gibson. 'An archaeomagnetic investigation of the monastic site at Kilskyre, Co Meath'. *Ríocht na Midhe*, 18 (2007); Fionbarr Moore. *Ardfert Cathedral: summary of excavation results.* (Dublin, 2007); Brian Ó Donnchadha. 'The oldest church in Ireland's *oldest town*'. *Arch Ire.*, 21 no.1 (Spring 2007), pp. 8-10 (Donaghmore, Ballyshannon); Edmond O'Donovan. 'Excavations at St Nahi's, Taney', in Seán Duffy (ed), *Medieval Dublin*. IX (Dublin, 2009, forthcoming). References to numerous other sites published prior to 2004 are given in the bibliography of the 'Monasticon Hibernicum' Project.

56 Pádraig Ó Cearbhaill. *Cill i logainmneacha Chontae Thiobraid Árann.* (Dublin, 2007); Conchúr Ó Crualaoich, 'Saint Vogue's of Carne revisited'. *The Past: the organ of the Uí Cinsealaigh Historical Society*, 26 (2005), pp. 42-8; Idem, 'Shemogues and St Awaries'. *The Past: the organ of the Uí Cinsealaigh Historical Society*, 27 (2006), pp. 39–49.

New History of Ireland,[57] a specialist encyclopedia of Medieval Ireland,[58] along with various monographs[59] and a number of papers[60] and compendia[61] which bring new insights to our understanding of ecclesiastical settlement and of its historical context.

Ways in which the 'Monasticon' database could potentially be employed to further inquiry into the early Irish church, on various historical and settlement-study issues, have already been discussed in relation to the data for Dublin and Leinster. The dissemination of saints' cults was one theme considered. It was noted, for instance, that the distribution of sites with Brigidine associations (both historically documented sites and 'traditional' dedications) in Co. Dublin was almost equally numerous in the north (which lay outside the Leinster overkingdom) as in the south (which was within the historical realm of the Leinstermen). As against this, it was seen that north Co. Kildare (where St. Brigit's caput is located) was well endowed with Brigidine sites, but not so the south. As data-collection extended throughout the country, it emerged that Brigidine sites in the north-east

57 Dáibhí Ó Cróinín (ed), *A New History of Ireland,* I: *Prehistoric and Early Ireland* (Oxford, 2005). The decision to include contributions on the early church by the late Kathleen Hughes, which were writtten some thirty years prior to eventual publication, has drawn criticism; however, papers by Donnchadh Ó Corráin ('Ireland c.800: aspects of society', pp. 549-608) and Francis J. Byrne ('Church and politics, c.750–c.1100', pp. 656–79) feature comments on ecclesiastical settlement and history that are more reflective of recent thinking.

58 Seán Duffy (ed), *Medieval Ireland: an Encyclopedia* (New York & London, 2005), contains entries by a number of contributors on ecclesiastical settlements and their associated history amongst which are items on Airbertach mac Cosse of Roscarberry, Máel-Mura of Othain and Íte of Kileady – foundations which to date have attracted relatively little attention in historical literature.

59 For example, Paul McCotter, *Colmán of Cloyne: a study* (Dublin, 2004), and Brian Lacey, *Cenél Conaill* (Dublin, 2006).

60 See for instance, Máire Herbert, 'Observations on the life of Mo-Laga', pp. 139-52, in J. Carey, M. Herbert & Kevin Murray (eds), *Cín Chille Cúile: essays in honour of Pádraig Ó Riain*. (Aberystwyth, 2004); Charles Doherty, 'The earliest cult of Molaisse', pp. 13-24, in Henry A. Jefferies (ed). *History of the Diocese of Clogher from earliest times*. (Dublin, 2005); Ailbhe Mac Shamhráin, 'Brian Bóruma, Armagh and High-Kingship', *Seanchas Ard Mhacha*, 20 no. 2 (2005), pp. 1-21; Padraig Ó Riain, 'The Lives of St Ciarán, Patron of the Diocese of Ossory', *Ossory, Laois and Leinster*, 3 (2008), pp. 25–42.

61 Amongst these are the *Atlas of Cork City,* ed. J. Crowley et al. (Cork, 2005), which includes contributions on early ecclesiastical settlement by Pádraig Ó Riain (pp. 79–84) and by Maurice F. Hurley (pp. 85–92), while the *History and Society* series produced volumes on Fermanagh (ed. Eileen Murphy & William Roulston, 2004) and Kildare (ed. William Nolan & Thomas McGrath, 2006).

are apparently concentrated in eastern Down (baronies of Lecale and Ards) and in northern Antrim. Sites associated with St Brigit are widely distributed in Connacht, but in Co. Galway they tend to cluster in the south-west, near Lough Mask. In contrast to the wide distribution of sites associated with 'major saints' like Brigit, Patrick and Columba, cults associated with minor figures can be quite localised. Although dedications to Mo-Chuille do occur in Cos Carlow and Cork, the extent to which they are concentrated in east Co. Clare (especially in the baronies of Tulla) seems curious. The significance of these and of a great many other apparent patterns of cult distribution remain to be explored.

Other issues previously raised related to the placename element *domnach*, and to womens' foundations. If the argument of the late Deirdre Flanagan is accepted – that the element *domnach* (from British Latin *dominicum*, a church; Anglicised as Donagh- or Donny-) ceased to be used for coining placenames AD c.600– the distributional implications for early Christianity in Ireland are manifest.[62] However, Flanagan was reluctant to consider placenames attested in charters but not precisely locatable on the ground, or 'Sunday's Wells' as possible indicators to former *domnach* sites. If these classes of toponym are admissable, the number of such sites in Co. Dublin increases from four to a possible ten.[63] Similar cases can be found throughout the country. To mention but two examples, a site at Croneskagh (Co. Carlow) is referred to as 'Kill Donagh' in the Ordnance Survey Letters, while Altaghoney (Co. Derry) is thought to represent Alt a' Dhomnaig.[64] It would seem, therefore, that the distribution of the domnach element is more widespread and greater in density than previously thought. On the other hand, the data-records may not greatly alter the received picture in relation to the numbers of womens' foundations (counting churches where the reputed founder was female, or where a female succession is attested, it seems there were over 600) or the noted tendency for them to locate in close proximity to mens' communities.[65] However, there is clearly scope for further inquiry here.

An important matter not hitherto raised is the potential role of the database in regard to the history of historiography. It might well be argued that

62 Deirdre Flanagan, 'The Christian impact on early Ireland: the placenames evidence', P. Ní Chatháin & M. Richter (eds), *Ireland and Europe: the early church* (Stuttgart, 1984), pp. 25–51.
63 MacShamhráin, 'The Monasticon Hibernicum project: the diocese of Dublin', pp. 132–3.
64 Anna Brindley & Annaba Kilfeather. *The Archaeological Inventory of Co Carlow* (Dublin, 1993), p. 66; Henry A. Jefferies & Ethna Johnston. 'Early churches in the Faughan River valley, Co Derry', pp. 49–72, in Henry A. Jefferies & Ciarán Devlin (eds.). *History of the Diocese of Derry from earliest times*. (Dublin, 2000), at p. 61.
65 Lisa Bitel, *Land of women* (Ithaca & London, 1996), p. 174; Christina Harrington, *Women in a Celtic Church* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 105ff.

Mervyn Archdall's contribution as a scholar, and the extent of his influence on the historiography of the early Irish church over the following century or more, has not been adequately assessed. Archdall's *Monasticon Hibernicum,* inspired by Dugdale's *Monasticon Anglicanum*, was forty years in the making, having been greatly slowed by the death of his patron, Bishop Richard Pococke of Ossory. He was obliged to cut back the scale of his project, and an 800-page volume eventually saw publication in 1786.[66] His work has often been criticised for omissions (although his coverage of Leinster was considerably more extensive than the adumbrated reprint of 1873 implies) and for errors (he misidentifies certain sites and wrongly locates others), but account must be taken of the pioneering character of his work. He had no Irish template to follow, archaeology had not yet developed as a discipline and he had few printed sources at his disposal. Nonetheless, it seems that his work endured and influenced others. It can be observed that there is a strong correlation between sites identified by Archdall, and those recorded by nineteenth-century scholars, including Cogan, Reeves and even O'Donovan. If this new work, which takes its inspiration from his achievement, can facilitate inquiry into the early Irish church, or stimulate debate for even half as long, it will have achieved its purpose.

Ailbhe MacShamhráin
Scoil na Gaeilge
N.U.I. Maynooth
Email: macsh@elivefree.net

RELIGION AND PUBLIC LIFE IN LATE MEDIAEVAL ITALY: A PROJECT

Introduction
'Religion and Public Life in Late Medieval Italy' is a project funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and led by Dr Frances Andrews, with Drs Caroline Proctor and Agata Pincelli as research fellows. It is based in the St Andrews Institute for Mediaeval Studies (SAIMS) at the University of St Andrews, accessible online at http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/saims/ with the project details at http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/~rplife/.

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66 Linde Lunney, 'Archdall, Mervyn (1723-91)', in Dictionary of Irish Biography, forthcoming; the author notes here that Archdall commenced his chosen project while still a postgraduate student at Trinity College Dublin, and completed it in the same year in which he was appointed rector of Slane, and became a founder member of the Royal Irish Academy.

The project uses the phenomenon of communal officeholding by men vowed to the religious life to investigate relations between secular and religious communities between c. 1250 and c.1450. It aims to test the emphasis of recent historiography on collaboration and cohesion, re-integrating the secularizing, anti-clerical tendencies identified by earlier historians.

The key questions to be tackled and their subsidiary elements are:

- **How widespread was the employment of professional religious in secular office?** Which offices were filled by religious and which were not? Why?

- **To what extent did this practice differ across the centre and north of the peninsula from c.1250 to c.1450?** (i.e. from when can it first be widely documented to when it had disappeared in many, but not all, cities.) What were its roots? How did it change? What were the mechanisms and criteria of selection? To what extent did cities copy each other, replicating statutes and practices?

- **What was the attitude of religious leaders and secular elites?** What evidence is there for approval or criticism? What problems were raised by the need for oaths of office, payment of stipends, and absence from the cloister? What do transitions from lay to religious officials or *vice versa* reveal about changing attitudes to lay and religious roles? How extensively did ideas about separation or collaboration between religious and seculars circulate and with what effect?

- **How did the two elements, religious and secular, negotiate their relationships with each other?** What role did economic and financial issues, the need for trust or levels of expertise play? What were the benefits or disadvantages for each party? What bearing did personal ties, patronage or membership of a particular order or religious house have on offices held or refused?

Background

In the communes of Siena and Florence, it became common in the mid-thirteenth century for the treasurer to be a Cistercian monk. Brothers of the Humiliati order, friars and other regular or third order religious soon joined them in office. A preliminary survey of city statutes across central and northern Italy shows that such men undertook both major and minor administrative tasks on behalf of numerous communal governments over two centuries and in some cases until the 1500s. It is arguably one of the most revealing aspects of the interplay of secular and religious ideas and practices in lat mediaeval Italy. Yet, with rare exceptions, historians have taken very little notice.

In 1978 Richard Trexler published a seminal article on religious office-holders in

Florence, arguing that the clergy provided a guarantee of the quality of government underwritten by reliance on the religious person's obedience to his superior.[67] This was, he argued, an obligation insured by the threat of excommunication for sin, as no merely civil oath could be. Scholars since Trexler have tended to consider the case closed, but Trexler was concerned with structures, not how these might have changed over time. Nor did he attempt to document the identity, ideas or motives of the religious engaged. His angle was that of the Florentine urban elite, setting aside any consideration of negotiation between the parties involved, or more than a cursory comparative analysis (a brief reference to Siena).

In the past fifteen years a few historians have offered insights into the phenomenon.[68] These hint at the illuminating potential of this data for our understanding of the interface between religious and secular thinking. An initial study of Siena has documented the mechanisms, revealing a much more complex dynamic than Trexler envisaged.[69] Thus in Siena, monks from the Cistercian house at San Galgano (about a day's ride south west of Siena) were required as communal treasurers to live apart from their community, for months or years at a time. They wore special mantles of office, received a regular stipend and their activities were subject to scrutiny under the supreme magistrate, the secular podestà. This remarkable removal of monks from the exclusive jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical courts was supported and approved by the abbot; indeed the first, reluctant appointee was required to take office as treasurer by his religious superiors. By contrast, recent work on religious orders has documented the strong desire for a separate and autonomous institutional identity, free of secular obligations and burdens. The Cistercian hierarchy certainly shared this ideal. In the case of Siena, the apparent paradox may be resolved by evidence for the monks' quasi-membership of the citizen body, a point underlined by the social makeup of their community, largely drawn from the same Sienese elite who held the political offices of the commune. It is apparent that there were also necessary benefits to the remotely located abbey

67 R. C. Trexler, *Honor among thieves. The Trust Function of the Urban Clergy in the Florentine Republic*, in *Essays presented to Myron P. Gilmore*, ed. Sergio Bertelli and Gloria Ramakus, The Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, 2 vols (Florence, 1978), i, pp. 317–334.

68 Notably: M. Haines and L. Ricetti, eds, *Opera: Carattere e ruolo delle fabbriche cittadine fino all'inizio dell'Etá Moderna* (Florence 1996), on religious employed in urban building projects; G. Casagrande, *Religiosità penitenziale e città ai tempi dei comuni* (Rome, 1995), on Perugia; C. Caby, *De l'érémitisme rural au monachisme urbain: Les Camaldules en Italie à la fin du Moyen Age* (Rome, 1999).

69 F. Andrews, 'Regular Observance and Communal Life: Siena and the employment of religious', in Pope, Church and City', *Essays in Honour of Brenda M. Bolton ed. F. Andrews, Christoph Egger and Constance Rousseau* (Leiden, 2004).

in the form of protection.

Siena is an important case because it introduces evidence for negotiation between the different parties involved, and also the visual document of the *Tavolette di Biccherna*, the painted wooden covers of the communal account books, familiar to art historians and restored for a recent exhibition, though never yet subject to analysis in this context.[70] They depict Cistercians, Humiliati, Servites and Vallambrosans as communal treasurers, combining the iconography of the religious habit with the trappings of the commercial world. What they provide is an exceptional insight into the self-perception of the men portrayed: there is no hint here of any embarrassment of riches on the part of the men dedicated to the monastic vow of poverty.

The project

But were these mechanisms and attitudes the same in Novara, Genoa or Bologna? And if not, why not? The history of late mediaeval Italy has usually been written in fragments: even thematic studies tend to focus on a particular locality or region. Very rarely do they attempt broader comparisons, in large part because the abundance of sources makes this difficult for a single scholar. By contrast, this project, the first to build on Trexler's approach, provides a sufficiently extensive and yet focused comparison to allow useful conclusions to be drawn. It will inform debates current for both ecclesiastical and social historians, who all too often work in isolation from each other. Thus as a study of cultural and administrative practices it will intersect with recent work on officeholding and on religion and economics.[71] It will contribute to discussions of relations between church and government, by Thompson and Dameron, or the way in which secular elites deployed religious practices to bolster their legitimacy and prestige (see *inter alia* the work of G. Rolfi et al).[72] It will also, crucially, re-integrate evidence for an anti-clerical, secularizing climate identified by Burckhardt and hotly debated by the confessionally driven neo-ghibelline and neo-guelf historical schools of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The time is ripe for a sober reconsideration of the relationship

70 A. Tomei, ed., *Le Biccherne de Siena: Arte e finanza all'alba dell'economia moderna* (Rome, 2002).

71 On officeholding see J-C. Maire Vigueur, ed., *I podestà dell'Italia comunale* (Rome, 2000), a rare attempt at comparative work; on religion and economics see J. Aho, *Confession and Bookkeeping: The Religious, Moral and Rhetorical Roots of Accounting* (Albany, NY 2005).

72 A. Thompson, *Cities of God: The Religion of the Italian Communes, 1125–1325* (University Park, PA 2005); G. W. Dameron. *Florence and Its Church in the Age of Dante* (Philadelphia 2005); Rolfi, Gianfranco, Ludovica Sebregondi, and Paolo Viti, eds., *La Chiesa e la città a Firenze nel XV secolo* (Florence 1992).

between secular and religious which takes into account evidence for both hostility and collaboration. The issue of officeholding presents an ideal mechanism for documenting and assessing the possible implications in a realistic timeframe.

The construction of trust between and within communities is also a concern for recent historians of trade and commerce but has not been explored in narrative sources on the subject of officeholding (sermons, chronicles, etc.).[73] Nor has the topicality of the idea that clergy should not engage in secular affairs, although it was already powerfully evident in the Gregorian reforms of the 1000s, echoed in the legislation of Pope and Emperor in the 1200s and vociferously reiterated in the sermons of the Franciscan observant Bernardino of Siena in the 1420s. This research will allow our understanding of its impact in the Italian cities to be refined.

To provide a comparative framework 10 cities will be examined, covering central, north-west and north-east Italy: Siena, Florence, Perugia, San Gimignano, Bologna, Parma, Verona, Milan, Novara and Genoa. The project will use three main groups of primary sources: normative texts produced by city governments and religious authorities (including papal); documentary evidence from the cities (lists of officeholders, records of decision making bodies, account books) and the religious houses identified as producing office-holders; chronicles, treatises and sermons referring to the employment of religious or the need for separation/collaboration between secular and religious communities.

We welcome collaboration with scholars working on religious office-holders in late medieval Europe and a group of scholars working on similar themes in these, other Italian cities and comparative practices elsewhere in Europe will be invited to contribute to a conference, to be held in St Andrews 10-12th September 2009, which will be followed by a volume of essays. Further news of events associated with the project such as papers, publications and conferences will be posted at http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/~rplife/news.html. It is hoped that the project will significantly extend our understanding of the permeable interface between religious and secular communities and ideas.

Frances Andrews
Director, St Andrews Institute of Medieval Studies
Email: fea@st-andrews.ac.uk

Caroline Proctor
Research Fellow, St Andrews Institute of Medieval Studies
Email: cvp1@st-andrews.ac.uk

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73 G. Dahl, *Trade, Trust and Networks: Commercial Culture in Late Medieval Italy* (Sweden 1998).

SIR HOWARD COLVIN: HISTORIAN OF MONASTICISM

The death of Sir Howard Colvin (1919-2007) on 28 December was rapidly followed by newspaper obituaries in which tributes were paid to his achievements as an architectural historian. His *Biographical Dictionary of British Architects, 1600-1840* (first published in 1954, and now in its fourth edition) is an outstandingly valuable work, and it and his many other books and articles on post-medieval architecture constitute the greater proportion of his publications. He was, however, equally pre-eminent as a historian of monasticism.

All of his intellectual interests were formed early, and developed in tandem. It was one of his strengths that he did not see them as distinct areas, to be compartmentalised. Even his *Biographical Dictionary* was begun as an undergraduate. As a schoolboy at Trent College, Nottingham, he was encouraged to get out into the countryside on his bicycle, and in this way he discovered Dale abbey. He excavated its site, and began publishing articles about it—the first in 1939 when he was still in his teens. Dale is surely unique among English monasteries in that some of its stained glass was removed and re-used after the house's dissolution, at Morley church, and Colvin wrote about that too. In all, he published ten articles about Dale abbey in the *Derbyshire Archaeological Journal* between 1939 and 1944.

Dale was a Premonstratensian house, and so it was a natural choice for him to embark on a doctoral thesis about the Premonstratensian order as a whole, in England; as *The White Canons in England*, it was published in 1951. The drawback in studying the Premonstratensian houses is that their archives are extremely limited, virtually no accounts surviving. Colvin was always supremely thorough as an archival searcher, and his book sets out in detail what he did find: principally, charters and cartularies. He surmounted the problem by concentrating on the history of the order as a whole, using its central records and those of the general chapters that were held in England; and he also made the most of the charter-evidence, to produce an extremely full analysis of the role of the houses' founders and patrons. He presented a very different sort of monastic history from that given by Dom David Knowles.

Appointment to a teaching post at St John's College, Oxford, led Colvin into focussing on a fresh order: the Cistercians. St John's is on the site—and incorporates elements of the fabric—of Oxford's Cistercian house of studies, St Bernard's college. W. H. Stevenson and H. E. Salter had published a very full account of *The Early History of St John's College* (1939), dealing with the Cistercian predecessor-institution. By looking through the remnants of Cîteaux in the Departmental Archives at Dijon, he came upon the sizable group of letters and accounts relating to the English Cistercian abbots and, most fortunately, to

the construction of the Oxford house, St Bernard's. (C.H. Talbot subsequently printed this correspondence as *Letters from the English Abbots to the Chapter at Cîteaux, 1442-1521* [1967]). Colvin published an article that, characteristically, synthesised archival and architectural evidence: 'The Building of St Bernard's College, Oxford', *Oxoniensia*, 24 (1960), pp. 37-48.

By 1960 he was already well advanced with his general editorship of the *History of the King's Works*: the first two volumes, on the Middle Ages, were published in 1963. Clearly, it was by his decision that these contain quite lengthy accounts of the architectural history of religious houses that were financed by the Crown: Westminster and Vale Royal abbeys and King's Langley and Dartford priories, as well as other royal foundations and 'charitable works' in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Colvin was as thorough as he was meticulous, and would not tackle a subject without careful groundwork: his mastery of the source-material was always impeccable. He never wrote at length about medieval parish churches, but in a review in the *English Historical Review*, 1983, of Colin Platt's study of *The Parish Churches of Medieval England* he shows in two suggestive sentences something of his qualities of historical imagination as well as of his visual awareness:

'There are some matters about which Dr Platt is either silent or too brief. They include the responsibility for the maintenance of chancels by monastic appropriators, about which he is content to repeat the established wisdom (which is, of course, that they generally neglected it); the history of change-ringing (fundamental, one supposes, to an understanding of that insistence on a west tower which marks out English from so much continental church architecture); and the physical appearance of the churchyard (does the characteristic English churchyard, with its stone or wooden headstones, now being ruthlessly destroyed by a Philistine clergy, go back to the Middle Ages?).'

Nigel Ramsay
University College, London
Email: ucranlr@ucl.ac.uk

SANCTITY, REFORM AND CONQUEST AT BARKING ABBEY, c.950–1100

The central focus of my research is on female monastic houses in England and their negotiation of political and religious shifts during the tenth and eleventh centuries, using the under-exploited hagiographical material produced in them as a major source. With the nunnery of Barking as a central case study, my PhD thesis explores the effects of tenth-century monastic reform, Viking invasion and rule, and Norman Conquest upon English nunneries and their inhabitants. Subjects of discussion include the relationships between local bishops and monastic houses, and the connections between the royal house and the, often royally-founded or sponsored, female monastic institutions.

At Barking, a collection of hagiographical texts was produced in *c*.1080 by the hagiographer Goscelin of Saint-Bertin. These commemorate three Anglo-Saxon saints of the institution, and represent a rich source of information on both pre- and post-Conquest female monasticism. In much of the historiography, these texts have been considered in isolation, and the *Vita Wulfhildae*, which records the life and virtues of Barking's mid-tenth century abbess, has received by far the most attention. The other texts, the *Vita Æthelburgae*, the *Lecciones de Hildelitha*, the 'recital of a vision' and two translation accounts, have been little studied. One of my central concerns is to demonstrate the importance of considering the Barking texts collectively, and with an appreciation of the often multi-layered nature of hagiography, in order to uncover the varied motivations for saint promotion by monastic houses.

I begin with the context for the production of the surviving texts, that is, the immediate aftermath of the Norman Conquest of England. The second half of the eleventh century in England witnessed a significant increase in the production of hagiographies, translation accounts and miracle collections, an increase traditionally seen as an effect of Norman scepticism towards English saints and English religious culture. The two translation narratives and the 'recital of a vision' contain evidence of the nunnery's dispute with the newly-appointed Norman bishop of London. This evidence is considered alongside charter and Domesday source material which suggests encroachment of Barking's landholding and autonomy, a situation which can be contextualised with the experiences of other monastic houses, both male and female.

Consideration of all of the Barking texts, however, will make clear that the post-Conquest situation alone is insufficient as an explanation of their content. The *Vita Wulfhildae*, for example, includes a damning account of Queen Ælfthryth and her involvement in the nunnery's affairs in the later tenth century. Similar negative portrayals of Ælfthryth appear in saints' Lives commissioned by the

abbesses of Wilton and Shaftesbury, nunneries which, among others, appear to have been linked in some way to Barking. This points back to the tenth-century reform movement, which had bestowed powers of intervention in nunneries upon the queen. My study of these sources thus leads on to discussion of these nunneries' involvement in monastic reform, and the issue of monastic imperialism at both female and male religious houses.

The material on the early Anglo-Saxon saints Æthelburg and Hildelith has received less attention. These are of interest both as Bedan saints, but also for the details added to Bede's accounts of them. Both accounts record the nunnery's experience of Viking invasion, and provide evidence of its depredation in the ninth century which can be corroborated with archaeological evidence. But the Life of Æthelburg especially appears to be in dialogue with different tenth- and eleventh-century contexts at Barking. The creation of her as Barking's 'undying landlord' seems to respond to both the Viking and the early Anglo-Norman periods. Æthelburg's status as a Bedan saint may explain the portrayal of her as the central figure of the 'trinity' of Barking saints during a long period of reform which characteristically looked back to the 'golden age' of early Anglo-Saxon monasticism. These features argue for the continuous updating and adjustment of hagiographical material in reaction to changing situations and needs at Barking Abbey.

The Barking 'cycle' of hagiographical texts, while providing insight into the female monastic experience of the tenth and eleventh centuries in England, also demonstrates the fluidity of hagiographical record, and, given the continued prosperity of Barking Abbey, the importance of such records in safeguarding the community for which they were produced. This thesis ultimately aims to enrich our understanding of both Barking Abbey and the English female monastic experience throughout the turbulent years of the tenth and eleventh centuries.

Casey Beaumont
University of Liverpool
Email: C.J.Beaumont@liverpool.ac.uk

A LEGAL STUDY OF KELSO ABBEY'S CHARTERS, c. 1113-1286

Charters are the historian's primary source of information about medieval religious houses. However, despite the importance of these documents, few studies have analyzed them independent of their social or political implications. My thesis will evaluate the charters in the Kelso Abbey cartulary, which is the largest collection of documents surviving from medieval Scotland, from a purely legal perspective. Monastic institutions produced, archived, and copied charters with one purpose in mind: the protection of their property rights. My research assesses them in this context.

The thesis will be divided into four distinct sections. The first section will look at the composition of the cartulary itself, the creation of which I have dated to the late 1320s. This chapter will lay the foundation for the legal analyses in following sections and is meant to establish the strengths and weakness of the study. Questions it will ask include: what were monastic scribes' policies when reproducing the documents, were charters omitted from the collection, when did charter production become routine for Kelso, and did the maintenance of the abbey's archive wax and wane? In spite of the cartulary's large size, my research has found that the collection has limitations as a case study, so certain conclusions will be restricted.

The second section, which begins the primary investigation, will be an assessment of the types of documents present in cartulary and their legal form and function. The instruments can be roughly divided into two basic categories: 'dispositive' charters which transferred rights and 'compositional' charters which recorded agreements and dispute resolutions. However, these categories can be further subdivided, and like section one, this chapter will cover a variety of topics including confirmations, double exhibitions, and forgeries.

The discussion of the documents themselves will be supplemented by the analysis in section three, namely a study of charter diplomatic. There are two main objectives of this section. The first is to establish the genesis of particular phraseologies and how they evolved of time. The second objective, which naturally coincides with the first, is to establish how the monks of Kelso utilized particular formulae to protect their property rights. Opposed to the observations of other historians, the diplomatic in the Kelso collection exemplifies the presence of an advanced chancellery as early as the mid-twelfth century, so opportunities for analysis abound.

The thesis will conclude with an evaluation of the surviving witness lists. Using extant knowledge of the social, political and legal landscapes in Scotland, England, and France during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, this section will

begin with an assessment of the structure of the lists and their ordering. This will be followed with an attempt to ascertain why specific witnesses were chosen in particular circumstances. Thus far, several observations have been noted in this regard including the fact that representatives of monastic houses were chosen to witness transactions only if the monastery from which they came held property rights less than five miles from the property being transferred.

Ultimately, my thesis will contribute to the growing corpuses of both monastic and legal studies. Though invariably its focus is confined to Scotland and the north of England, many of the conclusions will have far wider ramifications and provide points of comparison for other evaluations. In particular, the study will work towards better defining the nature of monastic charters as historical sources and aid monastic historians in utilizing charter diplomatic and witness lists more efficiently. Thus far, the potential of the charter has not been fully exploited by researchers of religious houses. Hidden under a formulaic guise is a resource which is far more useful than meets the eye and which can be explored for what it is: a legal document created for legal purposes.

Andrew Smith
University of Glasgow
Email: a.smith.3@research.gla.ac.uk

IONA'S LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS IN ARGYLL AND THE ISLES, 1203-c.1575

In my doctoral research I investigate a range of ways in which the monastery of Iona interacted with the region of Argyll and the Isles: as the owner of churches and lands; as the centre of major saints' cults; as the focus of a school of sculpture; and as an important element in local, regional and ecclesiastical politics. A major part of the research is a detailed examination of the local context of each of these links with Iona.

My research project focuses on the monastery of Iona in the period 1203-1575. These dates have been chosen specifically because they encompass virtually the entire period of occupation by the Benedictine monks, and because they apply to the most comprehensive surviving documents that relate to Iona and its landholdings. At the time of the introduction of the Benedictines to Iona, papal protection was sought, and a papal bull of December 1203 records Iona's holdings at this period. Many of these holdings remained in Iona's possession until the Reformation, soon after which time a rental was drawn up listing the abbot's temporal and spiritual

wealth, along with that of the bishop of the Isles, who was by this time also commendator of Iona abbey. These documents serve comprehensively to illustrate the fortunes of the monastery over the later middle ages.

How Iona acquired its lands and churches, and what subsequently became of these possessions, took place in the wider context of the changing political scene. For this reason, the political and social links between the Scottish crown and the Lordship of the Isles, and the relationships among powerful local kindreds, such as the Mackinnons, MacLeans and Campbells, are explored. Iona's relations with other religious houses in Argyll are also considered, particularly in relation to transfer of lands between monastic houses.

Regarding Iona's role as a centre of the cults of saints Columba and Adamnán, the local preponderance of churches dedicated to these and other saints important to Iona is considered in an effort to try to establish how widespread they are, and what are the oldest surviving records of these dedications. Evidence of veneration of particular saints by important families is taken into account, along with another important aspect in Iona's history – pilgrimage to the island, and how this may have affected its fortunes. Looking also at Iona's lands and the dedications of their churches, an attempt is made to discern any patterns; for example, to whom are the churches on Iona's lands dedicated, and when? If churches on lands gifted to Iona had an existing dedication, is this likely to have been changed?

Iona's wider ecclesiastical associations with bishops of neighbouring dioceses, and with the Vatican, are also discussed. Relations between the abbots of Iona and the bishops of Sodor were not always fraternal; the abbot retained a good deal of independence. Iona also had links with the diocese of Argyll, and its relationship with Dunkeld continued for some time, the bishop of Dunkeld consecrating an abbot of Iona c.1320. Iona also held an ambivalent relationship with the papacy. The monastery was considered to be under Rome's protection, but often failed to pay its dues to the Curia, pleading poverty and the expense of having to travel such a long distance.

The monastery's fortunes varied over the course of its existence, depending largely on who held the position of abbot, and on the relationships with powerful local magnates, as well as with other ecclesiastical bodies. It held estates and churches over a wide area, and although it gained many possessions, some were also lost to other houses, and to secular powers. There are many other churches and lands within Iona's sphere of influence, but the nature of the evidence precludes drawing any firm conclusions about how many, if any, of them, were founded or owned by the monastery.

Due to the fragmentary nature of the existing documentary record, I have taken an interdisciplinary approach to this study, involving a heuristic integration of evidence from historical sources, archaeology and place-names. One of the main

fruits of the research has been the production of a gazetteer of Iona's lands and churches held throughout the later middle ages. It is hoped that this may prove a useful tool in further research.

Janet MacDonald
Departments of Celtic and History
University of Glasgow
Email: j.macdonald.1@glasgowalumni.net

http://www.gla.ac.uk/departments/historicalstudies/postgraduatestudy/postgraduatecommunity/researchstudents/macdonaldjanet/

IN THE MONASTERY AND IN THE PARISH: THE AUGUSTINIAN CANONS IN THE DIOCESE OF WORCESTER IN THE LATER MIDDLE AGES

My doctoral thesis is an investigation into the still relatively unplumbed world of the regular canons. Though they have been receiving more attention of late, the Augustinian Canons remain an order that has received little systematic treatment. In an effort to begin remedying such a state, my PhD thesis explores nine monasteries and their relation to the world outside their walls. This thesis adds to some of the recent studies by Allison Fizzard, Anne Geddes and Andrew Abram, whose doctoral work focused on either individual houses or other English dioceses. Along with those theses and the numerous smaller studies of late, I am hoping to add to the understanding of the regular canons in England in the later medieval period.

Worcester diocese provides an excellent microcosm of the order, as it contained several very large Augustinian houses in Cirencester, Lanthony and St. Augustine's Bristol, as well as several small monasteries in Studley, Dodford, Horsely, St. Sepulchre Warwick and St. Oswald's Gloucester. These houses show that the canons were diverse in many ways, as these monasteries represent a royal foundation, a nominally Victorine house, a house of the canons of St. Sepulchre, a royal free chapel, a dependent Augustinian house, and two houses that did not survive until the dissolution, one being combined with a house of Premonstratensian Canons, one ending as a vicarage. My research attempts to integrate the data for all the houses, large and small, to begin to answer the question of how the canons related to those outside the monasteries and whether or not a cohesive Augustinian identity can be described. The thesis focuses on the canons and the power structures, both secular and religious – namely the crown and the nobility, the bishops and the

popes. It also focuses on the place of the canons within the broader ecclesiastical and cultural framework, inquiring into the role of canons and their parish churches, and the canons and their acquisitions in the later middle ages, after the passage of the Statute of Mortmain.

Some of the more compelling patterns emerging from the study relate to the canons and their place within the late-medieval ecclesiastical framework. The thesis endeavors to show how the canons were heavily dependent upon their spiritualities and that this dependency influenced their actions on many occasions, as well as marking them as distinct from the other monastic orders. This question of the Augustinian identity, while elusive, is hopefully clarified by the evidence available from the canons in Worcester. In addition to their parish churches, the canons were almost without exception subject to visitations of the bishops, and in the bishops' stead, the prior of Worcester. These visitations and the other interactions between the bishops and priors caused tremendous strife and conflict between the canons and the episcopal powers. At the same time, however, the canons received many privileges, corporately and individually, that shed light upon the monastic and canonical mindset at the later middle ages.

Additionally, the thesis explores the many ways that the canons interacted with the lay powers. The patronage, provisions and expectations of the crown and nobility all influenced the life of the canons in positive and negative ways. These interactions reveal the ways that the canons thrived or struggled to survive in the later medieval period, and shed light upon not only the overall monastic patterns of life, but also some of the specifically Augustinian circumstances.

Nick Nichols
University of Wales, Lampeter.
Email: elanvail2@yahoo.com

THE RELIGIOSITY OF ENGLISH MEN-AT-ARMS IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

England's relationship with her neighbours throughout the fourteenth century had a significant influence on contemporary society and politics. The crucible of wars with Wales, Scotland, Ireland, and France helped to mould England's armies into a formidable force, yet until very recently, the idea that these political and military actions had any influence upon aristocratic religious belief has been generally disregarded. What this recently-submitted PhD thesis has sought to emphasise is how the martial experiences of men-at-arms could influence their dealings with and dedication to local religious houses, the importance they placed upon the

parish, and their personal piety and charity.

This investigation is based upon a detailed examination of the donations English men-at-arms and their families made to religious establishments. Individuals from across the spectrum have been examined, from the highest members of the titled nobility to relatively minor gentry soldiers of fortune. The evidence gathered for this thesis draws upon the religious donations and observances of more than three hundred individuals, from over seventy comital, noble, and gentry families.

While many of the greater soldiers, the earls in particular, brought the spiritual protection of their parish churches with them on campaign – that being parish priests themselves and portable altars – it seems that the rank and file had less interest in doing so. Despite the dangers they faced while campaigning abroad, most seem to have avoided making their will until it was absolutely necessary and it seems many of those who fell in battle died without making final provisions for their souls.

In terms of the religious observances of these men which this thesis has uncovered, except for a pious and devoted few, making donations to religious institutions was something which individuals did later in life, not only when it became economically feasible, but also at the time when they began to reflect on their past deeds. It is in relation to ways in which these men-at-arms treated monastic orders with foreign ties, that we see the influence which these years of war had upon belief and devotion. To their detriment, the Cistercians, unlike almost all the other orders, maintained the links of *Carta Caritatis* to the ire of the crown and patrons alike. Although they still received seven per cent of overall donations, grants to them were infrequent. The Carthusian order, on the other hand, were able to adapt to the challenges which checked the growth of the Cistercians and therefore occupied their ascetic niche.

In this century when so few new monastic houses were founded, the establishment of six new Charterhouses has attracted a great deal of attention from scholars. However, this examination has revealed that dedication to the Carthusians was never widespread or 'popular' by any means and that they received even fewer donations than houses of the older orders. Few of the Charterhouses seem to have fulfilled their founder's desires to create individualised houses of prayer and burial and all of these new founders tried to leave their own mark upon their Charterhouses, even attaching hospitals and schools to them. The findings of this examination suggest a lack of understanding, or perhaps ambivalence, on the part of most founders of the true nature of Carthusian life and stresses that many of these men may have been motivated by little more than fashionability in their choice of which order was to receive their benefaction.

The overall patterns of donation and devotion which have emerged from this examination, emphasise the continuity of local and familial traditions. It has been

an aim of this thesis to emphasise this point and attempt to rehabilitate the image of the Augustinian canons generally. Devotion to houses of Augustinian canons in the fourteenth century is a much more important trend than dedication to the Carthusians, with the former receiving over five times as many donations as the latter. Those founding houses of Augustinian canons seem to have been doing so with similar motivations as founders of chantries or colleges, but with the desire for their priests to have a more structured existence. The relative flexibility of this structure allowed these men to establish small priories wherever they wanted – usually in close proximity of their *caputs* – and to do so for much less expense than would be necessary if they were establishing houses of other orders.

The patterns which this examination of the devotional practices of men-at-arms has revealed is that even though many of them spent significant amounts of time living and campaigning abroad, they still felt that it was necessary to foster and maintain links within their own parish. It seems that for many of these soldiers, the years which they spent fighting abroad against fellow Christians in the service of the crown only increased the importance of eventually returning to their spiritual homes.

Graham E. St. John
Fitzwilliam College, University of Cambridge
Email: grahamstjohn@yahoo.com

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