MONASTIC RESEARCH BULLETIN

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MONASTIC HISTORY IN CLERICAL TAXATION RECORDS[*]

The E 179 project, or to give it its current formal title 'Records of Clerical Taxation in England and Wales', is an ongoing cataloguing project based at The National Archives (TNA) under the aegis of the History Department of the University of York. It is making available new and rich sources for the history of the English and Welsh monasteries. The purpose of this paper is to furnish a guide to the sorts of information that can be found in these records that would be of interest to researchers into the history of monasticism.

1. History and Methodology of the E 179 Project

Having benefitted from research grants totalling over £1,000,000 since its inception in 1993, the E 179 project is one of the longest running research projects in the fields of both medieval and early modern history. Its aim has been to re-catalogue the 36,000+ documents in the record series Exchequer, King's Remembrancer, Lay and Clerical Subsidies, c.1190-c.1690, E 179 in an online database,[1] effectively replacing the highly inaccurate nineteenth-century paper catalogue. The E 179 records do not comprise the main series of crown taxation records in TNA – those are the large official enrolments of the collectors' receipts (Exchequer, Pipe Office, Enrolled Accounts, E 359) – but rather documents *subsidiary* to these accounts. These assessments, accounts, certificates, schedules, petitions, receipts, writs and other miscellanea reveal much more about the taxpayers, collectors and the tax-levying process than the enrolled accounts.

      The clergy were usually taxed separately from the laity until they relinquished this right in 1664 and the organisation of the E 179 records by their nineteenth-century cataloguers into two separate lay and clerical series reflects this dichotomy, the former being arranged by county and the latter by diocese. The re-cataloguing of the far larger and more frequently consulted lay series was completed in 2003, opening the way for work to begin on the clerical

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documents. After a six-month pilot project in 2004, the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) made a grant in 2006 to the University of York to fund two research assistants – Helen Watt and myself – to undertake this task for 2½ years. Having recently completed the documents relating to the province of Canterbury, we are now seeking further funding for the province of York.

Following the same basic pattern as the lay project, the cataloguing work has three components. The first is to associate each individual document with the grant of taxation to which it relates. Whereas the lay taxes were, for the most part, granted by the commons and lords in parliament, the medieval clergy of each province met in convocation to grant their own subsidies to the crown until the Reformation, after which both provinces granted taxes jointly. During the pilot project I entered into the database a register of all the grants of clerical taxation made to the crown, as well as all subsidies imposed by the papacy – from the first papal subsidy imposed by Pope Alexander III in 1173 to the four clerical subsidies granted to King Charles II in 1663. Although compiled chiefly for the purpose of re-cataloguing the documents, this authoritative register of grants, prefaced by a substantial introduction, is intended to be published at the end of the project as a companion volume to the register of lay taxes published in 1998.[2]

Having ascribed an individual document to a grant of taxation, the second cataloguing component is its description. This includes its physical characteristics, date and (sometimes lengthy) descriptive notes. The third component is the indexing of all the place names listed in the document – i.e., churches, chapels, monastic houses. This entails their identification with modern place names, which is the most time-consuming aspect of the project.

2. Monasticism and Clerical Taxation
i. The Taxation of the Monastic Clergy

Of foremost importance for monastic historians are the assessments of English and Welsh monastic wealth in the E 179 documents: they contain valuable evidence of the income and finances of the monasteries. The earliest extant

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[2] M. Jurkowski, C.L. Smith and D. Crook, *Lay Taxes in England and Wales, 1188-1688*, PRO Handbook 31 (PRO Publications, 1998). A new edition of this work is also planned.

assessment is the 1254 'valuation of Norwich' (named after the chief assessor, the bishop of Norwich) made for the collection of three papal tenths, although it survives only in part, primarily in monastic archives.[3] Royal and papal taxes were collected from the clergy in accordance with this assessment until the valuation made in 1291 for the sixth papal tenths imposed by Pope Nicholas IV. This comprehensive assessment of all ecclesiastical income, known as the *Taxatio*, included monastic income from both temporal lands and spiritualities, the latter in the form of appropriated churches, tithes, portions of tithes and pensions, and it remained the basis of all clerical taxation from 1295 to 1524.

Unsurprisingly, multiple copies of the *Taxatio*, dating from the late-thirteenth to the mid-sixteenth century, survive among the E 179 documents, some of which provided base texts for the edition of the *Taxatio* published in 1802.[4] Considerable improvements to this edition have been made by Professor Jeff Denton in his database of the *Taxatio*, hosted by the Humanities Research Institute, University of Sheffield,[5] not the least of which is his authoritative identification of both the modern names of the churches taxed and the monastic patrons of appropriated churches. Denton's database, which will form the basis of a new printed edition, deals with spiritual income only, however, and excludes monastic temporalities. We break new ground, therefore, in the identification of the temporal lands of the monasteries in our indexes of the place names in the E 179 copies of the *Taxatio*, using resources such as the English Monastic Archives database, hosted by University College London.[6] The task has been particularly difficult in the case of Welsh monastic lands, since these are still badly served by the secondary literature, and this paucity of

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[3] The one exception is the assessment of the diocese of Durham: E 179/62/1. All the extant assessments were printed in W.E. Lunt, *The Valuation of Norwich* (Oxford, 1926).

[4] *Taxatio Ecclesiastica Angliae et Walliae, Auctoritate P. Nicholai IV, circa A.D. 1291* (London, Record Commission, 1802).

[5] www.hrionline.ac.uk/taxatio

[6] www.ucl.ac.uk/history/englishmonasticarchives, and see: *English Monastic Estates, 1066-1540*, ed. Maureen Jurkowski and Nigel Ramsay, with Simon Renton, 3 volumes (List and Index Society, Special Series, 40-42, 2007).

published information makes our indexes all the more valuable for historians interested in locating Welsh monastic property.[7]

The *Taxatio* was of course a snapshot of ecclesiastical wealth taken in 1291, and some institutions, having been deemed too impoverished to pay, such as hospitals and 'poor nuns', were omitted. Both were taxed, however, for the 'moiety' (that is, the half of clerical income!) granted to Edward I by the southern province in 1294, when he was desperate for funds to finance his Scottish wars, and a surviving assessment from the diocese of Canterbury provides an extremely rare valuation of the property of lesser nunneries and hospitals there.[8] By the latter part of the next century, circumstances had changed and new forms of clerical taxation had to be devised to include institutions and other categories of clergy omitted from the *Taxatio* who could now afford to pay. The experimental poll taxes levied by Edward III and Richard II in 1377, 1379, 1380 and 1381, by taxing individual members of the clergy, attempted to ensure that no one escaped paying. Assessments and 'particulars of account' (finalised copies submitted to the Exchequer during the accounting process) divulge names and numbers of monastic (and other) clergy. To see the names of the monastic clergy taxed, researchers will still have to look at the original documents, but we have listed the numbers of monks, canons and nuns in each monastic house in the descriptive notes in the database. The notes to E 179/52/5, for example, reveal that this fragment of the particulars of account rendered by the collectors of the 1379 poll tax in Berkshire archdeaconry contains a full list of the 51 taxable clergy resident in Abingdon Abbey.[9]

Poll tax assessments for only a few dioceses have been published – most notably, Alison McHardy's editions of the returns from Lincoln and

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[7] The indexing of many of the copies of the *Taxatio*, listed separately by the 19th century cataloguers, will be completed with the documents of the province of York.

[8] This unique assessment valued all temporalities of monastic houses in the diocese, even those falling under the minimum threshold of liability of 10 marks per annum: E 179/8/1A. Several schedules of arrears from other dioceses do, however, survive in this series.

[9] The list begins with the abbot and prior and then lists 49 other residents of the house, all presumably monks and/or acolytes: E 179/52/5.

London dioceses.[10] Given their value to ecclesiastical historians, it is surprising that there are not more in print, but it is perhaps just as well, since we have discovered many previously unidentified poll tax returns – chiefly loose membranes and fragments, but sometimes wrongly categorised whole documents – which, most likely, would have been omitted. Two portions of the 1381 assessment of the archdeaconry of Leicester, for example, not included in McHardy's edition of the Lincoln diocese documents, have since been located,[11] and, similarly, a new fragment for the same tax from London.[12] From Rochester diocese, an additional piece of the 1381 assessment, wrongly catalogued, has been discovered, which lists the nuns of Malling Abbey, Higham Priory and Dartford Priory.[13]

Sometimes whole assessments, now dispersed, have been reconstructed in the database. This is the case, most notably, for the 1381 poll tax returns from Norwich diocese. The particulars of account for the archdeaconries of Suffolk and Sudbury – covering the whole county of Suffolk and a small part of Cambridgeshire – once comprised a roll of eight membranes, but this roll, like many E 179 documents, has been ill-treated over the centuries and two of its membranes have become detached. All of the constituent parts have now been located, however, spread among three different documents in the E 179 series, and their original order has been reconstructed on the database, together with extensive notes detailing the contents.[14] Although partly illegible, all of the membranes survive. The particulars of account for the archdeaconries of Norwich and Norfolk (that is, the whole county of Norfolk) are even more widely dispersed. Once a well-organised roll of three rotulets, it listed the clergy

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[10] *Clerical Poll-Taxes of the Diocese of Lincoln, 1377-1381*, ed. A.K. McHardy (Lincoln Record Society, 81, 1992); *The Church in London 1375-1392*, ed. A.K. McHardy (London Record Society, 13, 1977).

[11] Both are fragments, legible only under ultraviolet light: E 179/362/15; E 179/376/52.

[12] E 179/42/20.

[13] Not all of the names are now wholly intact, however. Malling had an abbess and 14 nuns, Higham had a prioress and 14 nuns, and Dartford a prioress and 19 nuns: E 179/271/24. It was once joined to another remaining fragment of the assessment, now E 179/50/4.

[14] The eight membranes, placed in their original order, are now as follows: E 179/45/5B, mm. 1-3; E 179/45/17; E 179/47/291; E 179/45/5B, mm. 4-6.

in four separate categories: beneficed clergy (rot. 1); unbeneficed chaplains (rot. 1d); bishop of Norwich and monastic clergy (rots. 2-2d); and unbeneficed clerks (rot. 3). The first membranes of each of the three rotulets, still joined together by the original parchment tie, survive as E 179/45/5A, but the rest now comprise eight different documents.[15] The names of the taxable inhabitants of 39 monastic houses are given – among them, for example, the prior and all 49 monks resident in Norwich cathedral priory and the prior, five canons, two lay brothers, the prioress and 21 nuns of the Gilbertine house of Shouldham.[16]

Of course, it is not only the assessments and particulars of the poll taxes that list individual clergy, but sometimes also schedules of arrears. A schedule of delinquent payers of the 1379 poll tax in Berkshire archdeaconry, for example, lists what appears to be all the residents of two secular colleges – St. George's Chapel, Windsor, and Wallingford College – who probably claimed exemptions.[17]

A series of poll taxes on unbeneficed clergy – granted in 1406, 1419, 1429, 1435 and 1449 – were similarly designed to tax those who had hitherto escaped. The target was primarily parochial and other stipendiary chaplains, but they were also aimed at priests serving in chantries and secular colleges founded after the compilation of the *Taxatio*. Bishops' assessments given to the collectors and nominal lists submitted to the Exchequer both survive in E 179. Among those assessed to pay the 1406 poll tax in Middlesex deanery, for example, were twelve vicars-choral in the royal chapel of St. Stephen, Westminster, and ten stipendiary priests in the hospital of St. John of Jerusalem in Clerkenwell.[18] The poll taxes of 1406 and 1449 also held friars with stipendiary income uniquely liable to pay the flat rate of 6*s*.8*d*., and some,

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[15] The membranes of the original second rotulet, listing monastic clergy, are now as follows: E 179/45/5A (blank); E 179/45/9; E 179/45/14. For the reconstruction of the original first and third rotulets, see the database notes to E 179/45/5A. Only one membrane of the whole roll (from the third rotulet, listing unbeneficed clerks) appears still to be lacking.

[16] E 179/45/9.

[17] The schedule names 11 canons, 12 chaplains, a deacon and a subdeacon at Windsor, and a dean, 3 chaplains, 4 clerks, a deacon and an acolyte at Wallingford: E 179/52/4.

[18] E 179/42/49.

occasionally, as well as canons and monks serving as parochial clergy, appear in the assessment rolls.[19]

By the mid-fifteenth century many monastic houses had purchased royal letters of exemption from paying clerical tenths and a unique tax granted in 1450 attempted to force houses with such letters to pay on this one occasion, when the crown was particularly hard-up for money. The tax was levied at a rate of 2*s*. in the pound (i.e., a tenth), and the particulars of account which survive from virtually every diocese list the temporalities and spiritualities owned by each of the houses liable to pay. These lists were not the result of any fresh assessments, but were taken from the 1291 *Taxatio*. They do provide handy summaries of monastic holdings, however, and also reveal that a surprisingly high number of houses were by then exempt from paying tenths, as some of the lengthier rolls attest.[20]

Little survives in the E 179 records for the experimental taxes of the early Reformation period, since the Exchequer was not involved in their collection, but subsidies levied in the reign of Mary and the earliest years of Elizabeth (from 1555-60) sometimes contain lists of ex-monastic clergy, who were required to pay a tax of a tenth on their pensions. Such lists survive from the old dioceses of Chichester, Ely and Carlisle, and the new dioceses of Bristol, Gloucester and Peterborough, usually giving the names of ex-monks, canons and nuns, the amounts of their pensions and the houses in which they had lived.[21]

ii. Monastic Exemptions for Hardship

Alongside the indicators of increased prosperity enjoyed by some clerics, the E 179 records also provide evidence of various types of hardship suffered by

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[19] I intend to deal separately with this subject elsewhere.

[20] The particulars of the archdeaconries of Norwich and Norfolk, for example, form a roll of eight membranes, assessing the possessions there of some 40 English and Welsh monasteries, all normally exempt from paying tenths: E 179/46/153.

[21] E 179/6/5, 14, 15 (Bristol, including Dorset archdeaconry, formerly in Salisbury diocese); E 179/13/156 (Chichester); E 179/23/96, 99 (Ely); E 179/28/2 (Gloucester); E 179/49/10 (Peterborough); E 179/60/19-22 (Carlisle). The Carlisle lists do not identify the former houses of the ex-religious, grouping them together with ex-chantry priests, but the others do.

monastic houses. It is clear that many houses made representations before convocation – some repeatedly – asking to be excused payment of their taxes and giving details of their financial problems. The exemptions granted at convocation are listed within the texts of the tax grants, usually recited in the royal orders to the bishops to appoint collectors enrolled on the Chancery Fine Rolls (TNA, Chancery, Fine Rolls, C 60), and I have entered all of the exemptions recited in these rolls in the register of tax grants.[22] The lists of exemptions became ever longer in the course of the fifteenth century, especially in the northern province, reflecting widespread worsening economic conditions. Many exemptions were granted because of the general poverty of these houses, but often specific reasons are given. Flood and fire damage to monastic property were most commonly cited, but other forms of *force majeure*, such as the collapse of churches or conventual buildings, requiring the outlay of funds for rebuilding, are also detailed here.[23]

Convocation also gave the bishops authority to grant further exemptions in their dioceses, as appropriate, after the dismissal of convocation, provided that they informed both the tax collectors and the Exchequer accordingly, and the E 179 documents abound with evidence of these subsequent exemptions.[24] Bishop Philip Repingdon of Lincoln diocese was especially assiduous in sending files of certificates to the Exchequer notifying the barons of the

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[22] They are also calendared (up to 1509) in the *Calendar of Fine Rolls*, 22 vols. (London, 1911-62) [hereafter *CFR*].

[23] The Augustinian priory of Southwick in Hampshire was exempt from the tenths levied from 1512 to 1517 because of fire damage to the fabric and ornaments of its church, caused by lightning striking the steeple: London, Guildhall Library, MS 9531/9, Register of William Fitzjames, Bishop of London, fols. 47v-48, 120-122. For the fire, see further: *The Cartularies of Southwick Priory*, ed. Katharine A. Hanna, 2 vols. (Hampshire Record Series, vols. 9-10, 1988-9), I, pp. xxxv-vi. Thurgarton Priory in Nottinghamshire was excused half of its tenth in 1421 on account of 'the threatening collapse of the conventual church, and the necessary repairing of the same': *CFR 1413-22*, p. 411.

[24] See, for example, the bishop of Chichester's certificate for the abbey of Tewkesbury, excusing it from paying the tenth granted in 1478 on two of its manors in Sussex – Kingston by Sea and Wick (in Lyminster) – because they had recently been flooded by river and sea and were mostly submerged: E 179/12/130. Flooding was a particular problem in Chichester diocese, as it was in York diocese.

exemptions that he had granted, usually to nunneries, on grounds of poverty.[25] After 1425 and the institution of a minimum threshold of liability of 12 marks for ecclesiastical benefices, bishops simply listed the names of the houses excused at the beginning of their schedules of exempt benefices – most notably in the large dioceses of Lincoln and Norwich, where a great many houses were excused for poverty. Occasionally, however, one still finds certification of exemptions for unusual circumstances. The Augustinian priories of Markby and Kyme in Lincolnshire were both excused payment of the tenth granted in 1472 because their houses had been raided by insurgents and despoiled of their moveable goods during the Lincolnshire rebellion of 1470.[26] Whether the houses were targeted for specific reasons or simply lay in the rebels' path might be a possible subject for further investigation.[27]

Another category of exemption first instituted in 1429, and included in every subsequent tax grant up to 1497, is for clerics indicted, arrested or incarcerated by the lay power, reflecting the clergy's chronic complaint that they were continually subject to malicious indictments by the laity. This phenomenon was explored by the late Professor Robin Storey, but without the benefit of the considerable body of evidence provided by the numerous certificates and schedules of exemptions in the E 179 series,[28] and I intend to re-visit this issue in a larger study elsewhere. Suffice it to say here, however, that

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[25] E 179/35/95B, 107, 110, 122-125, 126A, 127-129, 166B-H, 166K-L, 166N-Q, 201D-F, 210A; E 179/36/213.

[26] E 179/39/709, 711. The terms of the tenth granted in 1472 expressly allowed for such an exemption: *CFR 1471-85*, p. 50. Master John Brown, rector of Walpole in Norfolk, was also excused for this reason: TNA, E 179/46/180. For the rebellion, see Patricia Holland, 'The Lincolnshire Rebellion of March 1470', *English Historical Review*, 409 (1988), 849-69.

[27] Note that a Henry Welles was prior of Markby in the early 16th century, and that the rebellion had begun as part of a local quarrel (albeit with Lancastrian-Yorkist overtones) between Thomas, Lord Burgh of Gainsborough, and Richard, Lord Wells, and his son Robert: *Heads of Religious Houses in England and Wales*, III, *1377-1540*, ed. David M. Smith (Cambridge, 2008), p. 476; Holland, 'Lincolnshire Rebellion', 853-9.

[28] R.L. Storey, 'Malicious Indictments of Clergy in the Fifteenth Century', in *Medieval Ecclesiastical Studies in Honour of Dorothy M. Owen*, ed. M.J. Franklin and Christopher Harper-Bill (Woodbridge, 1995), pp. 221-40.

monastic clergy figure strongly in these indictments for crimes such as assault, murder and rape, as well as misdemeanours such as illegal hunting.[29]

In sum, the E 179 certificates and schedules of exemption are unexploited sources not only for the study of the finances and economy of late medieval monasteries, but also their social, political and even environmental history.

iii. Heads of Monastic Houses as Tax Collectors

Although in theory responsible for the collection of clerical taxes in their dioceses, bishops did not personally collect them, but appointed others – almost invariably heads of monastic houses – to the task. It is in their role as collectors that one most readily associates monasteries with clerical taxation. Alison McHardy has written about monastic collectors and their unwanted burden of tax collection in the fifteenth century, and much of her analysis applies generally to the previous century as well.[30] They were usually appointed to collect taxes in one or two archdeaconries and evidence of the appointment of specific houses is found in abundance in the E 179 series: in the many individual accounts that they rendered, in bishops' letters of appointment, in certificates of appointment sent to the Exchequer and in petitions that the collectors submitted during the accounting process to be discharged from collecting unleviable taxes.

Neither friaries nor nunneries were ever appointed, but many small houses, and even hospitals, were landed with this duty. The increasingly widespread practice of purchasing royal exemptions from appointment as collectors lessened the pool of available collectors, presenting a particular problem for bishops, as McHardy has noted.[31] An ingenious solution to the

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[29] See, for example, E 179/18/417, which describes the indictment of two monks of Dieulacres Abbey in 1462 for the murder of a layman, reportedly on the abbot's orders. For the alleged rape of a woman at Royston, Hertfordshire, by a canon of Little Dunmow Priory in 1476, see E 179/43/243. For unlicensed hunting in Delamere Forest by the abbot of Vale Royal in 1484, see E 179/18/451.

[30] A.K. McHardy, 'Clerical Taxation in Fifteenth-Century England: the Clergy as Agents of the Crown', in *The Church, Politics and Patronage in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Barrie Dobson (Gloucester and New York, 1984), pp. 168-92.

[31] *Ibid*., pp. 171-2, 177-8.

problem was a tax on exempt collectors, granted in 1449 and 1450 at the rate of a quarter of a tenth, and at half a tenth in 1453, 1472 and 1484, but cancelled for all houses prepared to surrender their letters of exemption. The plentiful surviving returns for the three earlier of these taxes, as opposed to the total lack of returns from 1472 and 1484 suggests that over the course of time this remedy was increasingly effective. These returns, in the form of accounts and particulars of account, can be used by researchers, in any event, to identify houses with collecting exemptions.

We have made it a specific policy to include always the names of the monastic collectors in our document descriptions, wherever they occur, and researchers can find this information simply by looking through the database. Most accounts were rendered by the (named) attorneys appointed by the heads of houses, and a surprising number were their own monks or canons.[32] Although they are not usually named as obedientiaries, many were perhaps cellarers. Certainly, in the exempt jurisdiction of St. Albans the abbot and cellarer often served jointly as collectors.[33] We have recorded all of the attorneys' names, as a matter of course, in our document descriptions. Often a layman and a monk/canon were appointed as joint attorneys, and sometimes a layman alone. Monastic legal retainers, therefore, can be traced in the database as well. A fine example occurs in the account rendered by the young lawyer William Paston as attorney to the prior of Bromholm, collector in the archdeaconries of Norwich and Norfolk of the one and a half tenths granted in

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[32] To cite just two of very many examples, both from houses situated far from London: John Boner, a canon of the Augustinian priory of Christchurch Twynham (now) in Dorset, rendered account as attorney for his prior, who was collector in 1414 in Winchester archdeaconry (E 179/55/53), and William Bateyll, a monk of the Cistercian abbey of Robertsbridge in Sussex, did the same for his abbot, as collector in 1433 in the archdeaconry of Lewes (E 179/11/66).

[33] The cellarer John Blebury, for example, was joint collector in 1407, as was the cellarer Michael Cheyne in 1417: E 179/35/101; E 179/36/243. See also the role of the cellarer of the abbey of Bury St. Edmunds in the collection of the 1489 lay income tax in Norfolk and Suffolk: Maureen Jurkowski, 'Income Tax Assessments of Norwich, 1472 and 1489', in *Poverty and Wealth: Sheep, Taxation and Charity in Late Medieval Norfolk*, ed. Mark Bailey, Maureen Jurkowski and Carole Rawcliffe (Norfolk Record Society, 71, 2007), pp. 109-10.

1402. This is one of the earliest references to the famous Judge Paston and it furnishes important evidence of the Pastons' long association with that Cluniac house.[34]

iv. Heads of Monastic Houses as Crown Lenders

A form of interim account found frequently in the E 179 series, known as the 'view of account' (*visus compoti*), often provides details of crown creditors who were repaid by assignments on clerical tenths, particularly in the mid and later fifteenth centuries (notably, during the reign of Edward IV), when the combination of foreign campaigns and domestic dynastic wars raised the profligacy of the English crown to new heights. That such creditors were often heads of monastic houses will come as no surprise. Specific information about repayment of loans can be elusive, however, and these documents provide a welcome additional source of evidence for them. Our descriptive notes in the database have given as much information about these assignments as practicable, often reproducing all of what is stated – namely, the lender's house, date of assignment (or tally) and the amount repaid.

The longest list of assignments to monastic creditors occurs in a *visus* for the two tenths granted in 1453 – a particular year of crisis for the war in France – when eight heads of houses in Norfolk, together with the prior of St. John of Jerusalem, formed the majority of lenders repaid with the takings of the first tenth levied there, although none had lent as much as the wealthy and famously hawkish Sir John Fastolf, who was repaid 100 marks.[35] Another time of financial crisis was the regime-changing year of 1461, when monastic creditors with assignments on the clerical tenth included the abbots of Battle (£20), Ramsey (100 marks), Crowland (£30), St. Albans (100 marks), Walden (£10), Glastonbury (£50) and Peterborough (amount not recorded), and the

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[34] The document probably dates from around 2 February 1404: E 179/45/22. For the Pastons and Bromholm, see Colin Richmond, *The Paston Family in the Fifteenth Century, The First Phase* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 3-4, 9n.

[35] E 179/46/164. The monastic lenders were as followers: prior of St. John of Jerusalem (£50); abbot of West Dereham (100*s*.); prior of Norwich Cathedral (£33 6*s*.8*d*.); prior of Walsingham (100*s*.); prior of Thetford (100*s*.); abbot of St. Benet of Hulme (£24); prior of St. Faith, Horsham (100*s*.); prior of Castleacre (100*s*.); and prior of Pentney (60*s*.) For monastic lenders in Somerset repaid by revenue from the same tax, see E 179/4/100.

priors of Bath (£10) and Spalding (£20).[36] Whether these heads had lent money to Edward IV by way of political support is a question perhaps worthy of further consideration.[37]

v. Stray Documents from ex-Monastic Archives and Other Crown Series

Occasionally, documents from other series have found their way into E 179. From the early modern period, this is the case, most notably, and perhaps understandably, for records from the Office (or Court) of First Fruits and Tenths. An important series of strays with significance for monastic historians are the inquests into alien clergy ordered by Edward III and Richard II in the 1370s, during periods of hostility with France. Such inquests into alien clergy and their property in England were ordered on three occasions – in 1370, 1374 and 1377 – preparatory to the confiscation of their estates by the crown, and in 1378, their expulsion from England.[38] A few of these inquests were properly catalogued into the Exchequer series E 106 (Exchequer, King's Remembrancer, Extents of Alien Priories, Aliens etc.),[39] but several more were placed in the E 179 series under the misapprehension that they had something to do with the levy of clerical taxes.

Twelve inquests, eight of them responding to the 1377 mandate, and four from 1370, survive in the E 179 series.[40] Not all contain details of alien monks, and, indeed, the returns made from the dioceses of St. Asaph and

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[36] E 179/4/106; E 179/12/113; E 179/39/671, 673, 674, 676A; E 179/43/223B.

[37] For other sources of evidence for loans and their political context, see Hannes Kleineke, 'The Commission *De Mutuo Faciendo* in the Reign of Henry VI', *English Historical Review*, 116 (2001), 1-30.

[38] See A.K. McHardy, 'The Alien Priories and the Expulsion of Aliens from England in 1378', in *Church, Society and Politics*, ed. Derek Baker (Studies in Church History, 12, 1975), pp. 133-41.

[39] E 106/10/2 (Coventry and Lichfield, Ely, Exeter and Winchester, 1370); E 106/10/14 (Llandaff, *temp*. Edward III); E 106/10/13 (Hereford, 1374); E 106/11/1 (St. David's, 1377-8); E 106/11/18 (Salisbury, 1377-8).

[40] In addition to the returns referenced below, they are: E 179/3/1A (Bangor, 1377-8); E 179/15/3A (Coventry and Lichfield, 1377-8); E 179/33/1 (Llandaff, 1370); E 179/35/4 (Lincoln, 1370); E 179/35/6B, part 1 (Lincoln, 1377-8); E 179/45/1A (Norwich, 1377-8); E 179/50/1 (Rochester, 1377-8); E 179/55/5C (Winchester, 1377-8).

Worcester, dating from 1370 and 1378, respectively, claimed that no alien clergy resided there at all.[41] In some dioceses, however, the alien count was high, and bishops had been instructed to divulge their names (and surnames), the benefices that they held and the total value of their property. Archbishop Sudbury's return from Canterbury diocese in 1378, in particular, was especially full. He named the prior and two monks of the Cluniac house of Monks Horton, the prior and two monks of the Benedictine priory of Folkestone (a cell of the Norman abbey of Lonlay), and a few secular clergy. He also gave details of the numerous alien houses who received spiritual or temporal income from the diocese, and the value of their holdings.[42] In returns from London and Chichester dioceses, the names of alien monks occupying benefices appear.[43]

Other strays of monastic significance in E 179 are documents from the archives of the houses themselves which came into the crown's hands at the Dissolution, or later. This is the case, notably, for the one of the earliest clerical tax documents in E 179: a receipt given in 1269 to the prior of Anglesey by the prior of Barnwell as collector in Ely diocese of the three papal tenths imposed by Pope Clement IV for three years in 1266. Since the Exchequer played no part in the collection of these taxes, its presence in the E 179 series would be hard to explain, were it not for the fact that many deeds, charters and manorial documents from Anglesey's archive survive in TNA, spread throughout various other series.[44] Similarly, a transcript from an Exchequer roll recording the exoneration of the nuns of St. Michael's Priory, Stamford, for clerical taxes on their possessions in Ely and Lincoln dioceses in 1415 and 1417, seems to have been written for their own archive, much of which is now dispersed among several TNA series.[45]

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[41] E 179/1/2 (St. Asaph); E 179/58/3A (Worcester).

[42] E 179/8/1BB.

[43] E 179/42/3B (London, 1370); E 179/11/1A (Chichester, 1377-8).

[44] E 179/277/63. See especially Exchequer, Treasury of Receipt, Ancient Deeds, Series A, E 40; Exchequer, Court of Augmentations, Ancient Deeds, Series B, E 326 and Special Collections, Court Rolls, SC 2. For a list of the houses whose archives survive, in significant part, in TNA, see: Maureen Jurkowski, 'Monastic Archives in The National Archives', *Archives*, 32 (2007), 16.

[45] E 179/279/74; and see *ibid.*, 16.

Two rather bizarre strays into E 179 are a royal writ dated 19 January 1457 to John Willyam, mayor and escheator of Southampton, confirming the election of Brother William Norman as prior of St. Denys, Southampton, and ordering him to deliver the house's temporalities to him, and an indented copy of an inquisition *post mortem* held before the same official into the death of the previous prior Thomas Arnewod, on 28 September 1457, giving his date of death as 4 January last past, as well as details of his estates. Both have found their way, inexplicably, into the original leather pouch containing the particulars of account of the prior of Bath as collector in the diocese of Bath and Wells of the half a tenth on exempt collectors granted in 1453, and are almost certainly from the St. Denys archive, now scattered throughout several series in TNA.[46]

Perhaps the most significant example of this phenomenon, however, is a stray catalogued with the E 179 documents from Lincoln diocese. This is a receipt given on 16 August 1531 to the abbot of Pershore by Robert Catton, abbot of St. Albans and prior of Norwich Cathedral Priory, in his capacity as collector in Worcestershire of the triennial contribution of 1*d*. in the mark levied by the general chapter of Benedictine monks in England. Attesting that Catton had received 33*s*.11¼*d*. as half of the abbot's contribution due at the last general chapter – that held at Westminster in July 1531, as it expressly states – it provides rare (if not unique) evidence that a Benedictine general chapter was held in 1531.[47] The document has nothing to do with royal taxation of the clergy, and it almost certainly came from the archive of Pershore Abbey, now similarly spread among various series in TNA.[48]

3. Conclusion

These are just some of many unexpected treasures for monastic historians among the E 179 documents. I would encourage all monastic researchers to browse the database as well as search the place-name index for specific monastic houses of interest. The database is easy to use and freely accessible through The National Archives website. Good hunting!

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[46] E 179/4/98; and see *ibid*., 16.

[47] E 179/279/80. Note its absence from the list of general chapters in W.A. Pantin, 'General and Provincial Chapters of the English Black Monks, 1215-1540', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 4th series, 10 (1927), Appendix A, p. 256.

[48] Jurkowski, 'Monastic Archives in TNA', 16.

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A NEGLECTED SOURCE FOR MONASTIC HISTORY: PETITIONS TO THE CROWN FROM ENGLISH RELIGIOUS HOUSES

Petitions to the Crown from English Religious Houses, c. 1272-1485, ed. G. Dodd and A. K. McHardy, is shortly to be published by the Canterbury and York Society. The volume is the outcome of a British Academy funded project which began in June 2007 and was based in the School of History, University of Nottingham. The project was a joint undertaking with Dr. A. K. McHardy; Mrs Lisa Liddy was employed as a Research Assistant. In this short report I should like to explain some of the background to the project, what we have discovered and what contribution we hope our publication will make to scholarship of late medieval monasticism.

Background

The project has its roots in, and was made possible by, recent work on the large and assorted collection of petitions kept by The National Archives and known collectively as 'Ancient Petitions' (TNA SC 8). There are well over 17,000 supplications in this series, most dating to the late medieval period (i.e. 1272-1485). SC 8 is the largest extant collection of supplications which were addressed and presented to the king and his council, largely it seems in the context of parliament.[1] Thanks to an AHRC funded Resource Enhancement

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[1] A full consideration of the provenance of this source is in G. Dodd, 'Parliamentary Petitions? The Origins and Provenance of the "Ancient Petitions" (SC 8) in the National Archives', in *Medieval Petitions: Grace and Grievance*, ed. W. M. Ormrod, G. Dodd and A. Musson (Woodbridge, 2009), pp. 12-46. For historical context, see G. Dodd, *Justice and Grace: Private Petitioning and the English Parliament in the Late Middle Ages* (Oxford, 2007).

Scheme ('Medieval Petitions: A Catalogue of the "Ancient Petitions" in the Public Record Office', directed by Professor W. Mark Ormrod, 2003-7) the contents of the petitions are now fully searchable via the National Archives' on-line Catalogue[2] and digitised images of the original documents can be downloaded, free of charge, via TNA's special facility DocumentsOnline.[3] The new accessibility of the archive makes it possible to appreciate how commonly and widely religious houses made use of petitions to solicit favour from the crown. We estimate that well over a thousand such cases can be found in SC 8, and many more if one includes examples in which abbots or priors are named as third parties.

The project and the resulting publication are underpinned by an underlying concern to establish why religious houses presented petitions to the crown. Because of trends in modern scholarship, as well as past difficulties in searching the contents of SC 8, this question has not yet been properly explored, at least on a systematic basis.[4] The project was therefore conceived as a way of investigating for the first time the special role which petitions played in defining the interface between religious communities and secular (royal) authority. To this end, we have selected for publication over two hundred examples to represent the full range of circumstances which impelled religious houses to appeal to the crown. We have provided full transcriptions of the original documents (most of which were written in Anglo-Norman French), together with English summaries and detailed supporting notes. An extended Introduction explains our methodology and places the petitions in a historical context. One of the most rewarding aspects of the project was the chance it offered to span the artificial divide which can sometimes notionally, if not in reality, separate scholarship of the late medieval Church from scholarship on the late medieval English state. The collaborative nature of the volume is a reflection of the fact that the petitions fit exclusively into neither classification.

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[2] http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/catalogue/.
[3] http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documentsonline/.
[4] The one notable exception is J. H. Tillotson, 'Clerical Petitions 1350-1450: A Study of some Aspects of the Relations of Crown and Church in the later Middle Ages', Unpublished D. Phil. Thesis, Australian National University (1969). It is regrettable that Tillotson published only a small proportion of his research.

In fact, they are a most apposite reminder of the extent to which the late medieval spiritual and secular worlds were intermeshed.

Findings

The petitions cover a remarkable range of subject matter. Moreover, it was not just the richest and most influential abbeys and priories which sought royal intervention: many examples can be found of cases brought before the king by smaller, less powerful communities, including a good sample of convents and alien priories. We have been particularly pleased to include a number of requests from hospitals, such as the petition of the brothers and sisters of the hospital of St. Mary Magdalene, Winchester, who complained in 1333 of the misgovernment of their warden and the unfortunate position they now faced in relying on the good will of his concubine, Juliana, wife of Thomas Gautron, to receive their livery. The full spectrum of religious orders is represented, though there is a preponderance of petitions from Benedictine, Cistercian and Augustinian houses. But again, some of the lesser known orders are included. One of the best examples is an early petition from a member of the Pied Friars of Norwich who, in the 1280s, asked for the king's assistance because he and another man who had been appointed as keepers of the house were forcibly removed from their positions and then subjected to beatings and imprisonment by Walter of Croxton, who claimed to be the provincial prior of the order (the other keeper was said to have died of hunger without making his confession). It has become clear that one of the reasons why petitions were presented by such a broad range of different types of religious house is that requests could arise as much from a community's position of relative strength (e.g. when it wished the crown to uphold its rights or franchises) as from its position of inherent weakness (e.g. when it was powerless to resist the seizure of its property by a local thug). The common thread which linked all the petitions was an assumption that no other means of obtaining a resolution was available, and so the intervention of the king was sought as a matter of last resort.

We found the best way of organising most of the material in the volume was to separate the cases into three distinct categories defined by the type of action which was solicited from the crown to satisfy the community's request. This organization has the advantage of exposing, at least partially, the

underlying motivation which compelled religious communities to seek the crown's support. The three categories are:

1) Matters which placed the crown under an implied **obligation** to provide redress, because the difficulties facing the religious house were entirely of the crown's making. An example is the petition from the alien priory of Boxgrove in 1383 which complained that they had been wrongfully impeached and taken into the king's hand because of the war against France, in spite of the fact that Edward III had granted them denizenship in 1348.

2) Matters which required the king to exercise his **grace**, because the monastery wished for special dispensation or favour which it could not readily expect to obtain. An example is the request of the friars minor of Bury St. Edmunds, in 1302, which asked the king to ensure that the courthouse of Cattishall was rebuilt away from their house so that the inhabitants of the town would not use their church for refuge (for themselves and their horses!) when it rained.
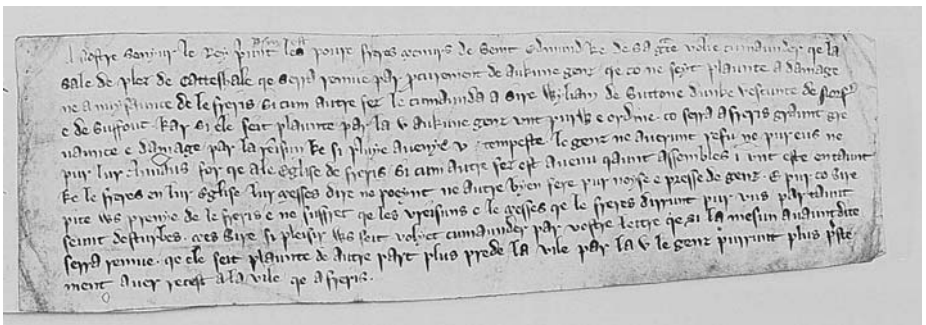
SC 8/1/21. A Petition from the Friars Minor of Bury St. Edmunds, 1302. Image reproduced with permission of The National Archives.

3) Matters which invited the crown to offer **arbitration** (indeed, to render judgment) in cases brought against third parties. An example is the petition from the beleaguered abbot of Newenham in 1402 who complained that Sir Philip Courtenay had abducted him from his abbey with the assistance of 60 armed men and imprisoned him in Courtenay's manor of Bickleigh (from where, it

seems, he had somehow managed to arrange for his petition to be presented before the royal council).

This third category is the largest in the volume and incorporates numerous petitions against likely adversaries such as a monastery's tenants, neighbouring urban communities and members of the secular landed elite. But we were also surprised to discover the extent to which the crown was invited to arbitrate amongst the religious themselves – either within or between communities – and not always because one or both parties were subject to royal authority by virtue of being in the king's patronage.

Many of the cases presented in petitions are articulated in a straightforward 'factual' manner, but it is not uncommon to find some wonderfully colourful detail, or an opinionated remark or comment offered as an aside. One of our favourites is the complaint from the prior of Plympton (Devon) in 1439 which detailed various transgressions committed by the inhabitants of Plympton in their attempts to have their chapel of St. Mary's, which was situated in the priory's grounds, recognised as their community's parish church. This included the exhumation and mistreatment of the body of one of the prior's servants whose hand was said to have been filled with silver coin and kissed, before the corpse was tossed into a ditch in the church yard. The townsmen were also accused of disrupting the prior's procession by locking the doors to the chapel to bar its way, and they were said to have assaulted one of the canons while he was saying mass.

Petitions did not always cast religious houses as the victims. In the final category of the volume we offer a sample of cases in which the religious were themselves the subject of complaint. We present these examples as a reminder that the king's relationship with monasteries is not to be defined simply in terms of his providing them with support and protection when they needed it, but that on occasion he might be called upon by other parties to act *against* them if accusations of wrongdoing were brought to his attention. Take, for example, the people of King's Langley (Herts.) who presented Henry VI with a whole litany of complaint about the transgressions which were said to have been committed by the members of the Dominican Friary of the same place. Their English-language petition contains accusations of assault and the spoliation of pasture land, but it also exhibits, significantly, a barely disguised sense of indignation

that the friars were failing to live up to some of the basic ideals of their religious vocation. 'Contrary to their profescion and religion', it reads, '[the friars] have a certeyn gate made owte of their closure, which at their first fundacion was close and pulid, to th'entent they shuld kepe their regular observaunce and divine service'. As a result of this new access to the outside world it was claimed that, 'the said religious men have suffred to fall down by cause they wolde have the husbandry and besynes in their own handes'. It was not right, it was asserted, that religious men should 'medill with catell nor husbondry'. The friars were also accused, perhaps predictably, of 'resorten to suspect persones and to myslyveng women of their bodyes, to the great displeasure of Almyghty God'. Finally, the king was implored to intervene, 'so that the said freres may live according to their religion'.
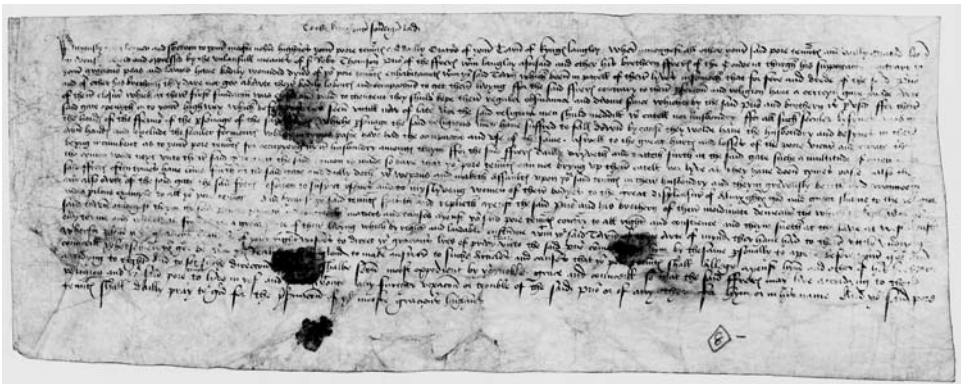
SC 8/345/E1324. A petition from the tenants of the town of King's Langley, 1425-50, against the Dominican Friars of King's Langley. Image reproduced with permission of The National Archives.

Significance of the Petitions

Petitions will enable a clearer delineation of the extent to which monastic life was regulated by the English monarchy. More than this, though, they underline a key and hitherto understated dynamic in the relationship between religious communities and the English crown; namely, that the crown's regulation of the affairs of the religious was often by direct invitation, because the king could

offer a level of support and protection to monasteries that could not be found anywhere else. Petitions were thus an affirmation of the power and authority of the crown over religious houses, but the scope and extent of this power was to a great extent defined by the religious themselves. Our hope is that the volume will stimulate further work in this area and that petitions become more firmly assimilated into the body of records which scholars of late medieval monasticism draw on. In many ways, though, the significance of petitions lies in what else remains to be discovered. The volume necessarily captures only a small proportion of the material which is contained in SC 8: much work remains before the full potential of the archive is realised. It is not just in relation to big historical themes that this potential exists. The petitions provide a wealth of detail about the circumstances of individual religious houses, much of it never before used. Sometimes the requests stand alone, as sole witnesses to the challenging times faced by a community. Frequently, they form part of a more elaborate paper trail, which includes other types of document, and which together describe a protracted legal dispute or a lengthy campaign to secure a favour or special dispensation. Not uncommonly we have discovered hitherto unnoticed petitions which fill important gaps in our knowledge about well known disputes or crises; undoubtedly, many more such cases wait to be found. With a fully searchable electronic catalogue and freely available downloadable images of the originals, accessible from any web-linked computer in the world, there is no reason why the great richness of the petitions as a source for monastic history cannot now be fully explored and exploited.

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THE MEDIEVAL RELIGIOUS LIFE AS GENERATOR AND MEDIATOR OF ENTERTAINMENT GAMES IN MEDIEVAL SOCIETY: TENSION BETWEEN NORM AND DEVIANCE[∗]

This research project, begun in January 2009, and financed by the German Research Foundation (DFG), deciphers the apparent contradiction between contemplative monastic life and the playing of games for entertainment. An analysis of the relevant sources yielded a multifaceted spectrum of ball, board, card, trivia and mystery games. The project has two dimensions. The first (Part A) analyses the games, their rules, their historical evolution, and their divergent contemporary evaluations which ranged from monastic conformity to deviance. The second part (Part B) focuses on the potential for innovation in games played in monasteries. Part B investigates entertainment inspired by Christianity as well as the receptivity of monastic environments to the integration of Muslim and pagan components. This investigation deals with the impact of religious life on the worldview of entertainment, how entertainment evolved and influenced courtly, urban and rural culture and became an important element of everyday life and culture in pre-modern society.

According to John 19:24, Matt. 27:36, Luke 23:34 und Mark 15:24, the Roman soldiers threw dice to decide who would receive the clothes of Jesus Christ. Thus, every kind of gambling reminded clerical players of this biblical scene, their playing turning them symbolically into blaspheming Romans. On the other hand, medieval monks embodied and brought to life the heavenly land of peace where innocent infants would play in blessedness just as Isaiah had promised. According to Zech. 8:5, innocent boys and girls would play on the streets and places of the new Jerusalem. And due to their vows, were monks and nuns not baptised children of God? Tertullian condemned nearly all kinds of physical exercise although martyrs would be received in paradise with music-playing and games.[1] The Cistercian Conrad of Eberbach († 1221), Francesco Petrarca († 1374), the Franciscan Bernardinus of Siena († 1444) or the

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[1] Compare H. Kraft, *Die großen Denker der christlichen Antike* (Augsburg 1999), p. 262.

Dominican and religious zealot Savonarola disdained every type of game.[2] Then again, the Benedictine monk Notker Balbulus († 912) had already written on a "*ludens* […] *ecclesia*". In his *Püchlein vom Guldin Spil*, the Dominican Master Ingold Wild († before 1450) even discussed playing cards as a helpful agent in the battle against the seven deadly sins.[3]

Part A:

There is no doubt that this project includes a wide range of definitions of a 'game' from medieval to modern terminology, determined by different levels of understanding. Just the word *ludus* typifies several kinds of sport, board games, theatre plays and even poems. It can even be used metaphorically. For this reason, an exact classification of the research vocabulary must be established. Entertainment games of sporting and non-sporting character performed by monks and nuns will be at the centre of this investigation. The project analyses the integration of the so-called *ioca monachorum*, of chess or backgammon as well as games of recreation (e.g. tennis) into everyday life. It is of particular interest when and where these or other games were played. Thus, the diverse symbolic potentials of place, space, games and players might be found to coincide.[4]

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[2] *Conradus Eberbacensis, Exordium Magnum Cisterciense. Bericht vom Anfang des Zisterzienserordens*, Teil 2, ed. H. Piesik, Quellen und Studien zur Zisterzienserliteratur 5 (Langwaden 2002), V, 1, p. 136. For other authors, see J. M. Mehl, *Les Jeux au royaume de France du XIIIᵉ au début du XVIᵉ siècle* (Paris 1990), pp. 153, 174, 317, 320-323, 333 and 439.

[3] Compare *Notker der Dichter und seine geistige Welt. Editionsband*, ed. W. Von Den Steinen (Berlin 1948), p. 114: 'Sieh, unter dem lieben Weinstock, o Christus, spielt voller Frieden, behütet im Garten die heilige Kirche'. Furthermore, see *Das goldene Spiel von Meister Ingold*, ed. E. Schröder, Elsässische Literaturdenkmäler aus dem XIV-XVII Jahrhundert 3 (Straßburg 1882); or R. Schnell, *Was haben Schachspiel und Ehe gemeinsam? Zum Goldenen Spiel des Basler Dominikaners Meister Ingold (1432)*, in: *Begegnungen mit dem Mittelalter in Basel*, ed. S. Slanička, Basler Beiträge zur Geschichtswissenschaft 171 (Basel 2000), pp. 91-121.

[4] For the omnipresent role of symbolism in medieval monasticism, see J. Sonntag, *Klosterleben im Spiegel des Zeichenhaften. Symbolisches Denken und Handeln hochmittelalterlicher Mönche zwischen Dauer und Wandel, Regel und Gewohnheit*, Vita regularis. Abhandlungen 35 (Berlin 2008).

A comparative, comprehensive insight into the fascinating reservoir of entertainment games played by monks and nuns demands an extensive pre-selection of religious communities. The multi-faceted focus concentrates on the traditional Benedictines, the Cistercians, the mendicant Orders, especially the Franciscans and Dominicans, and the regular canons. These communities provide the most substantial spectrum of normative sources. There is, of course, much more material, for instance from Vallumbrosa, Fontevrault, from the Carthusians or from the Carmelites and military Orders. The experiences of the Carmelites and military Orders in particular and their contacts to the Holy Land could be fundamental for a transfer of games and their principles to the Occident. Only this European-wide view of the subject allows an objective comparison. Additionally, the project is searching the appropriate chronicles for real-life examples. These chronicles are much closer to the daily life of monks and nuns than the regulations and requirements of normative texts. In this way, it is possible to clarify ideal and reality. The chronicle of St Gall written by Ekkehard IV around 1050, for instance, reports on *pueri* playing board and ball games in the *schola* of the monastery.[5] In the year 1165, John Beleth was the first to inform about a clerical ball game which was based on the pagan 'Freedom of December' and was played within the choir of cathedrals or conventual churches.[6] The monastery of Auxerre had its own *Ordinatio de pila facienda* from the year 1396 onwards: men who wanted to become monks had to bring a ball which could not be caught with one hand. In the following Easter Play, the dean took the ball, intoned the antiphon '*Victimae Paschali laudes*' and performed a solemn pacing dance around the choir. The other monks joined hands for a round dance, they moved along the labyrinth of the floor mosaic of the choir, and were thrown the ball in turn.[7]

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[5] Compare, for instance, *Ekkehardi IV. Casus sancti Galli*, ed. H. F. Haefele, Ausgewählte Quellen zur deutschen Geschichte des Mittelalters 10 (Darmstadt 1991), 135, p. 262.

[6] *Johannes Belethus, Rationale officiorum divinorum*, 120, in: Migne, *PL* 202, col. 123 C.

[7] *Ordinatio de pila facienda*, in: *Glossarium mediae et infimae*, vol. 6, ed. Ch. du Fresne du Cange (Graz 1954), pp. 253 s. Compare R. Stumpfl, *Kultspiele der Germanen als Ursprung des mittelalterlichen Dramas* (Berlin 1936), pp. 136-140.

The project also analyses the monastic arguments which justified such an extensive range of games. First of all, there is a strategy in which games of bad repute are said to be part of a great monastic spiritual background which allows for no aspersions on the game's suitability. One example is the so-called 'heavenly chess'. The authority of God, the *principium*, was reflected in times and numbers. For the monks, the numbers indicated the primordial order of God and, simultaneously, the customs that grew over time. The entertainment games of the so-called *computus* or *rhithmomachia*, for example, aimed to reconcile both dimensions. Within the 'heavenly chess' the four elements, the stars, planets and signs of the zodiac constituted a symbolic world created by the digits on the dice thrown by seven players. A heptagonal game board showed the way to heaven and helped to fathom its mysteries.

Another monastic strategy was to draw a seemingly clear-cut distinction between permitted games of knowledge and forbidden games of chance. An exact definition of these terms and of their content is outstanding to this day. Indeed, the binary distinction of games of knowledge and games of chance was essential to salvation because gambling evoked a double provocation of God's prevision. Someone who aimed to win a game of chance was obviously not content with his or her own position within the world. At the same time, such a player wanted to enforce the love of God. This is why the project has to screen the paraenetic sources and to evaluate the results geared to particular epochs and to the several Orders or communities. What kinds of games were said to be games of chance? Why were they thus categorised? How were such games reinterpreted, and how did they receive other meanings and new transcendent links (e.g. 'heavenly chess')? Which historical evolutions can be traced within a specific categorisation? These are only some of the questions still demanding theologically-grounded answers. The project tries to answer these questions. It analyses the individual concepts of explanation and comprehension of games played in medieval monastic life. The project evaluates whether a comparative perspective of playing games between the Orders allows conclusions as to the *proposita* of the particular religious communities. Apparently, there was a difference between the Cistercian and the Franciscan attitude towards laughter, preached by Bernard of Clairvaux on the one hand and the first generation of the Franciscans on the other. The project acts on the heuristic assumption that the essential needs of medieval society can crystallise and become manifest in

monastic life. This investigation may be able to mark those potential processes of transformations by taking an integrative look at the (several) religious, political and social environments.

Part B:

In a second step, the project focuses on the categorisation and description of games or their specific components as reception or innovation. While exploring the fruitful tension between monastery and secular world, this analysis tries to open up the immense capacities of transfer from medieval monasticism to pre-modern society. Religious Orders and communities were able to incorporate elements from another culture, to transform or purify them, and to make them meaningful and usable for the world outside the monastery. Within the cloister and in the games played there, elements of play from different cultural spheres (Germanic or Muslim, courtly, monastic or urban) could affiliate. Inevitably, accepting games from another culture meant endorsing the worldview that had shaped the games. From within the cloister the games would stream back into the world of court or town. For instance, the ball as a pagan symbol of a solar presence appeared to new symbolism in nativity and other mystery plays. In the 15th century, the paschal ritual of the bishop of Orleans and the general chapter of the Canons Regular of the Order of the Holy Cross incorporated items of play. The bishop presented the friars with a white dove. He in his turn received tennis balls and, some time later, a tennis racquet.[8] Thus, the symbolism of the sign of the Holy Spirit, embodied in the dove, was seen to 'rank' as highly as the formerly pagan sign of fertility and now the Christian sign of the world, visualised in the ball, or even the social significance of a tennis racquet. This interchange brings to mind the eighth scene of 'The second shepherd's play', an English Christmas play, written about 1475. Here, one of the monks acting as shepherd gives a ball to the infant Jesus and speaks the words: *I bryng the bot a ball: Haue and play the withall, And go to the tenys*.[9] The ball which had once represented the sun in pagan symbolism, now was the sun of Jesus Christ, the *sol salutis*. This kind of spiritual reinterpretation of the ball seems to be

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[8] T. Stemmler, *Kleine Geschichte des Fußballspiels* (Frankfurt 2004), p. 10.

[9] This mystery play is published: *The Second Shepherd's Play. Everyman and Other Early Plays*, ed. C. G. Child (Boston 1910).

absolutely comparable to the reinterpretation of the chess pieces. Chess found its way from India and the Muslim culture to the court via the monastic culture. Until the 12th century, European chess players had used 'foreign' pieces which were still assigned to a Persian-Indian battle formation. The monastic world decisively transformed these pieces into counters which equate much more to the tri-functional society of the Middle Ages. The Christian king took the place of the shah; the bishop was used instead of a battle elephant; the queen (according to the social rise of courtly love) displaced the grand vizier. Thus, monks transformed the Muslim infiltrates, once adapted by monastic writers themselves in the 8th century, into Christian emblems.

However, the ball and the game of chess are only the two most exposed instances of a cultural-historical subjugation. Many game boards were suddenly endowed with crosses. Skittles had been forgotten since antiquity but in the time of the crusades this game – which had often been demonised by the church – was reintroduced by European monks and found its way into European society. In the monasteries, this game primarily was given an obviously symbolic name which appealed to audiences at the time: 'Killing the pagans'. In spite of some prohibitions, above all in England (1388), playing skittles became extremely popular in urban culture. The foundation of many societies and even guilds for skittles players document this fact.[10] The conservation of antique astrological knowledge by the monastic 'chess of heaven' has already been mentioned.

This part of the project focuses on moments of receptivity or capacities of transformation by medieval religious life and on the influence of monastic life on the mythologisation of diverse games, for example of football. The question to what extent the religious (within their own encoded world of iconography or signification) accommodated themselves to foreign religions or cultures is a fundamental research subject of current religious studies. For the monasteries acted as an intersection between a variety of cultural spheres and worlds of signs, and since games usually refer to diverse social and transcendental dimensions, the project expects an innovative increase in knowledge which could extend into the field of the history of thought. Observing the quality of inventing and transforming entertainment games, bringing their historical

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[10] A. Ader, *Kirche und Sport in Altertum und Mittelalter*, Schriften zur Sportwissenschaft 42 (Hamburg 2003), p. 72.

evolutions into focus, and classifying those processes of transfer and purification as intentional or accidental – all this carries a notably high research yield for understanding transfers of medieval cultures and ideas in general. This increase in knowledge will hopefully have the dynamic to amend and push forward the current discussion on "Tradition, Innovation, Invention"[11] in pre-modern society, and the capacity of medieval society for innovation by means of a monastic contribution.

Moving beyond the analysis of the monastic capacity of transfer to the world outside, the project examines the multiple levels of communication through games. Games 'transport' their guiding principles or social backgrounds. Even forecourts of churches and monasteries could occasionally become a 'playground' for monks and townsmen. In the year 1450, the cloister of Exeter cathedral had to be closed on demand of the dean because of the noise made by ball players.[12] The so-called Easter-Ball took place under the eyes of a lay audience. Monks, especially mendicants, were present both at the courts of the Occident and the Orient. Kings and princes visited the monasteries and sometimes they brought their own players and noise into otherwise silent spaces, as in the case of St Gall.[13] Academic religious men received their education at university and continued to influence the life there. This is a fact documented by an example in Norwich, a monastery whose cloister is characterised by detailed game regulations carved into stone.[14] The most successful tennis player of her time was Margot of Mons (Hennegau) who, engaged by Philip the Good, enhanced the prestige of the duke by playing tennis matches as a member of the duke's entourage. Some time later she taught her

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[11] Compare *Tradition, Innovation, Invention. Fortschrittverweigerung und Fortschrittsbewusstsein im Mittelalter*, ed. H.-J. Schmidt, Scrinium Friburgense 18 (Berlin/New York 2005); and *Ordnungskonfigurationen im hohen Mittelalter*, eds. B. Schneidmüller & S. Weinfurter, Vorträge und Forschungen 64 (Ostfildern 2006).

[12] H. Gillmeister, *Aufschlag für Walther von der Vogelweide. Tennis seit dem Mittelalter* (München 1986), pp. 44 s.

[13] *Eccardus Sangallensis, Casus s. Calli* (note 5 above), 14, pp. 40-42.

[14] Without reference to games, see J. Greatrex, 'Monk Students from Norwich Cathedral Priory at Oxford and Cambridge, c. 1300 to 1530', in *The English Historical Review* 106, 420 (1991), pp. 555-583.

skills to nuns, and took the veil.[15] Furthermore, instruction books and codes of practice were mostly written by religious men. Only discovery of further examples will show if an empirically supported quantification of such modes of communications is possible, and if such quantification makes sense. Games – rules as well as utensils – were and are able to preserve and transport social standards and standings. The most precious game boards and counters used at the court were produced in monastic manufactories. Monks who did not enter into the monastery as oblates had mostly been socialised in courtly or urban spheres before entering the religious life. They did not usually sever these personal links completely. Whether or not this theorem based purely on experience includes a basic element for communicating entertainment games, its verification belongs in the area of tension presented above. At any rate, the project must unravel this close-knit communication network and visualise its intricacy and spectrum on the basis of case studies.

The game affected 'saints' as well as the 'sanctimonious'. This project hopes to open up untouched fields of monastic history to researchers. Using the medium of games some of the so-far unknown pillars of medieval society are uncovered. The project's methodology is based on text-orientated fundamental research and implements the theoretical approach of cultural studies. Because the game of a *homo ludens* is a central aspect of every society, the culmination of this research will be a monograph where the intersection of social anthropology, culture, and religious science leads us along a previously unknown path to a better understanding of life in the Middle Ages.

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[15] Stemmler, *Kleine Geschichte* (note 8 above), pp. 18 s.

THE RECORDS OF PETERBOROUGH ABBEY

Spring this year saw the publication of an edition which marks a new beginning in the long-running project to edit and publish the complete records of the medieval abbey of Peterborough. *The Pilsgate Manor of the Sacrist of Peterborough Abbey*, edited by Margaret E. Briston and Timothy M. Halliday, appeared as volume 63 of the publications of the Northamptonshire Record Society, and volume 4 of the publications of the Anthony Mellows Memorial Trust; it presents an edition of the early fifteenth-century sacrist's register of Peterborough Abbey in British Library ms. Cotton Faustina B iii, fols. 1-157. It edits and translates some 310 items, mostly charters of various kinds, but also memoranda and rentals. They document the accumulation of the sacrist's estate in Pilsgate and its immediate vicinity through the progressive acquisition and management of a large number of peasant holdings. The volume also contains many antecedent deeds which record the earlier history of these holdings, often including transactions concerning them made between peasants themselves. As such, the register has many points of contact with the better-known and much-used *Carte Nativorum* register of Peterborough Abbey, which comprises a large collection of peasant charters from the abbey estates.[1]

The publication of this edition was made possible through the existence of the endowments of the Anthony Mellows Memorial Trust, which was specifically set up to ensure the publications of the records of Peterborough Abbey. The scheme for doing this was devised in the 1940s by W.T. Mellows, Peterborough solicitor and clerk to the dean and chapter, who had himself published a number of volumes of or derived from the Peterborough records; his decision to create a generous charitable endowment for this purpose was prompted by the death of his only son, Anthony Mellows, fighting with the Maquis in France in 1943.[2] It was W.T. Mellows's intention that the creation of scholarly editions of the voluminous records of Peterborough Abbey should form a lasting memorial to his son, and so he named the trust in honour of him,

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[1] *Carte Nativorum: A Peterborough Abbey Cartulary of the Fourteenth Century*, ed. C.N.L. Brooke and M.M. Postan, Northamptonshire Record Society 20 (1960).
[2] Sandra Raban, 'Records of the Past: William Mellows and the Monks of Peterborough', *Northamptonshire Past and Present* 58 (2005), 7-16, at 7-11 explains the circumstances behind the creation of the trust.

and stipulated that his son's name should appear on all publications which benefitted from the financial support of the trust. He seems to have envisaged that much of the work would be completed fairly quickly, building on his own extensive transcripts, but this did not come to pass. Two volumes begun by William Mellows before his death in 1950 were completed using funds from the trust;[3] the *Carte Nativorum* was published in 1960 using Mellows funds in addition to contributions from other sources;[4] 1978 saw the appearance of Janet Martin's *The Cartularies and Registers of Peterborough Abbey*,[5] which calendars the surviving records that Mellows intended to have published; 1984 saw Joan Greatrex's *Account Rolls of the Obedientiaries of Peterborough*,[6] Northamptonshire Record Society 33 (1984); and 2001 Sandra Raban's *The White Book of Peterborough*.[7]

The years of relative inactivity had one unforeseen consequence; the assets of the trust increased considerably, so that it has become possible to sponsor research as well as subsidize publication. Sandra Raban's 2001 volume was expedited through the services of a paid assistant who contributed to the transcription, and since 2006 Nicholas Karn has worked as part-time series editor to assist the various projects in progress, including *The Pilsgate Manor of the Sacrist of Peterborough Abbey*. The project as a whole has been directed by an active committee comprising the various editors and other interested parties.

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[3] *The Book of William Morton, Almoner of Peterborough Monastery 1448-1467*, ed. P.I. King, with annotations by W.T. Mellows and introduction by C.N.L. Brooke, Northamptonshire Record Society 16, Anthony Mellows Memorial Volume no. 1 (1954); *Peterborough Local Administration: Elizabethan Peterborough: The Dean and Chapter as Lords of the City*, ed. W.T. Mellows and Daphne H. Gifford, Northamptonshire Record Society 18, Anthony Mellows Memorial Volume no. 2 (1956). The latter is still available in print through the Northamptonshire Record Society, £3 to members, £6 to non-members.

[4] See note 1 above.

[5] Northamptonshire Record Society 28, Anthony Mellows Memorial Trust volume 1. Orders for this volume and all subsequent ones should be sent to: Chapter Clerk, 12 Minster Precincts, Peterborough. PE1 1XS. £6 only.

[6] Northamptonshire Record Society 33, Anthony Mellows Memorial Trust volume 2. £9 only.

[7] Northamptonshire Record Society 41, An Anthony Mellows Memorial Trust volume. £15 only.

As such, publication of volumes under the terms of the trust will be much more frequent over the next few years. Two volumes of court rolls for the abbots' estates during the rule of Godfrey of Crowland (abbot of Peterborough 1299-1321) are at an advanced stage of preparation, and are likely to be published in 2010;[8] three volumes covering the extensive general cartularies of the abbey are not far behind;[9] the court rolls for the convent manors exist in draft edition; the remaining part of the sacrist's register, which will complement the volume that appeared this year, is in active progress,[10] as are two volumes comprising the house chronicles of the abbey.[11] There are also other volumes at a less advanced stage of preparation.

The various volumes in progress represent a large part of the medieval records of Peterborough Abbey, but there are nevertheless a number of further items which have not yet received attention. The most significant gap is in relation to the abbots' registers. The series of these from Peterborough is among the most extensive surviving from any English Benedictine house, and the only significantly more extensive series are those for Christ Church, Canterbury, and Durham; those two series, however, are for cathedral priories rather than for abbeys, and therefore omit material relating to duties peculiar to abbots, including, for instance, matters pertaining to the status of a church as a tenant-in-chief by knight service. As such, the Peterborough abbatial registers are important evidence for the administrative content of the office in the later

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[8] The rolls surviving from Peterborough are described in Janet D. Martin, *The Court and Account Rolls of Peterborough Abbey: A Handlist*, University of Leicester History Department Occasional Publication no. 2 (1980).

[9] This edition is built around the Book of Robert of Swaffham, the mid thirteenth-century cartulary which is the largest surviving volume among the abbey's cartularies (described in Martin, *The Cartularies and Registers of Peterborough Abbey*, 7-12, no. 2), though will contain readings and calendars for the other cartularies.

[10] Described in Martin, *The Cartularies and Registers of Peterborough Abbey*, 30-34, no. 12.

[11] The Peterborough chronicles are described in Nicholas Karn and Edmund King, 'The Peterborough Chronicles', *Northamptonshire Past and Present* 61 (2008), 17-29. This edition will focus on the work of Hugh Candidus and its various continuations.

middle ages.[12] So, far the only registers published have been the earliest ones, those of Abbots William of Woodford (1295-1299) and Godfrey of Crowland (1299-1321), which have long been bound together as a composite register and were edited as such by Sandra Raban in *The White Book of Peterborough*. Those of Adam of Boothby (abbot 1321-1338), William Gyenge (1396-1408) and John Deeping (1408-1438), and the fragment of that of Robert Kirkton remain to be worked upon, while the Book of Roger Bird, which presents summaries drawn from the abbots' registers for 1438-96, remains some way from completion.[13] Beyond the abbots' registers, the most substantial gap is the volume known as the Red Book of John of Achurch, a register of pleas heard before the king's justices in the fourteenth century.[14]

Clearly the production of so many editions will add considerably to the fund of data available to monastic historians, as well as to other kinds of historians. Editions of comparable records from other monastic houses exist in some quantity, and have been used extensively; only the abbatial registers represent much of a novel departure, for few of these have been edited previously. The real opportunity and distinctiveness of the Peterborough project does not lie in the editing of new classes of document, but rather in the comprehensiveness of the editing activity. Mellows's ambition was to put the complete surviving corpus of records from Peterborough Abbey into print, including records of wholly different kinds created for widely differing purposes. This has never been done for any major English monastic house before. Of course, important editions exist of significant items from the archives of many houses, and some classes of records, notably cartularies, have been well served by editions; but it remains the case that there are considerable gaps

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[12] W.A. Pantin, 'English Monastic Letter-Books', *Historical Essays in Honour of James Tait*, ed. J.G. Edwards, V.H. Galbraith and E.F. Jacob (Manchester, 1933), 201-222, surveys monastic registers and calendars all known to him at 213-222.

[13] On all these registers, see Martin, *The Cartularies and Registers of Peterborough Abbey*, 38-45, nos. 15-18.

[14] Described in Martin, *The Cartularies and Registers of Peterborough Abbey*, 23-25, no. 8.

in the edition of records from the wealthiest houses, often due to the sheer scale and complexity of the surviving material.[15]

It has never been possible before to view in print the complete surviving archive of any one major institution, or to benefit from the advantages brought by editions, in terms of easy reference between categories and classes made possible through indexes and so forth. It might therefore be hoped that the Peterborough records could stand as a microcosm of monastic administration, an accessible case study of the records of the greater Benedictine houses. For Peterborough, though not on the scale of a Glastonbury or a St Albans, was the eleventh wealthiest monastic house in England according to Domesday,[16] and its administrative structures paralleled those of other great monastic houses. Of course, no great monastic house was entirely typical, and Peterborough's records developed in response to what was particular about its circumstances as well as broader trends in management and the use of literacy through the middle ages and beyond. There are also some significant gaps in the surviving records, most notably in the near absence of original charters, in the lack of many court rolls, and in the loss of some registers.[17] Despite this, what survives is a considerable part of what is known to have existed in the later middle ages, and compares favourably with survivals from many other major houses in quantity, as it parallels what survives elsewhere in terms of form and content.

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[15] Thus, for instance, very little of the numerous survivals from St Albans and Christ Church, Canterbury, have been edited.

[16] D. Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England* (second edition, Cambridge, 1963), 702.

[17] Martin, *The Cartularies and Registers of Peterborough Abbey*, 46-47.

AUGUSTINIANS AND PASTORAL WORK: THE EVIDENCE IN SCULPTURE

The paucity of conventional documents for the early years of Augustinian activity in England prompts me to suggest that historians might be interested in the evidence of some sculpture of the period. Six complex sculptural programmes, five in Yorkshire, have been examined and they demonstrate the involvement of at least one Austin canon in a specialised kind of parish work in the 1120s and 1130s.[1]

The schemes occur at churches belonging to priories (at Bridlington priory itself, and at Kirkburn church belonging to Guisborough), at a church which did not belong to Guisborough until later (Liverton), and at churches which were controlled by the archbishop or the York chapter (Everingham, Kilham). The sixth site, Melbourne church (Derbyshire) seems to have been intended for a small unrecorded community probably colonised from Breedon or Nostell. Despite the various patrons, the content of the sculpture at all these places is sourced in Augustinian texts, mostly of Augustine himself. Although some sculpture in Yorkshire looks naïve, the teaching is well organised and suited to its audience. Unfortunately, little sculpture of the period survives west of the Pennines where the Augustinians had also been established early in the twelfth century and where social conditions may have been somewhat similar. In Herefordshire, Augustinian influence might reasonably be suspected due to

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[1] R. Wood, 'The Romanesque Tomb-slab at Bridlington Priory', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 75 (2003), pp.63-76; eadem, 'The Augustinians and the Romanesque font from Everingham', is being prepared for submission to the *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*. Pictures and a short report are on www.crsbi.ac.uk; eadem, 'Geometric Patterns in English Romanesque sculpture' *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 154 (2001), pp.1-39: the entrance at Kilham, East Riding, is analysed on pp.26-8; eadem, 'The Augustinians and the Romanesque sculpture at Kirkburn church', *East Yorkshire Historian* 4 (2003) pp.3-59; eadem, 'The Romanesque chancel arch at Liverton, North Riding' *YAJ* 78 (2006), pp.111-143; eadem, 'The Romanesque church at Melbourne', *Derbyshire Archaeological Journal* 126 (2006), pp.127-168.

the influence of Bishop Robert de Béthune (formerly prior of Llanthony), but there is not such intensity of teaching in the sculpture.[2]

Four of the six schemes could have been designed by the same individual. A little later in the twelfth century there is evidence of a Cluniac monk from Burgundy who also did this kind of work in England, using biblical and Cluniac texts and other sources.[3] Both men were in demand and mobile, but their work has individual characteristics suiting the distinct tone of their orders. The Cluniac designed grander schemes and worked for the elite, though still providing basic orthodox teaching. It seems likely that the Augustinian designer was free to work within the region/diocese rather than belonging to one particular community, though Nostell is a possibility as a base. He had presumably been trained somewhere, and perhaps already practised his skill, but where? To judge by a few unusual motifs used, there may be links to Flanders or the Rhineland, but comparable sculptural programmes in those areas are not known to me, and if they exist they have probably not yet been examined for their teaching content. Perhaps post-Conquest England was a special case and needed such people. The presence of a specialist designer of sculptural schemes has not previously been recognised as essential to producing a church alongside the patron, priest, master-mason, sculptors and other craftsmen. However, these elaborate 'one-off' sculptural displays demand their own creator, skilled in both visual presentation and theology. The dominant influence of the designer over the content and arrangement of the sculpture calls for some reassessment of current ideas on the role of the patron.

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[2] R. Wood, 'The Romanesque tympanum at Fownhope, Herefordshire and the functioning of the Herefordshire School of Romanesque Sculpture'. *Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club* 53 (2007), pp.51-76, especially pp.67-73.

[3] R. Wood, 'Malmesbury Abbey: the sculpture of the south entrance', *Wiltshire Archaeological & Natural History Magazine*, 91 (1998), pp.42-56; eadem, 'The *Occupatio* of St Odo of Cluny and the porch sculpture at Malmesbury Abbey', *WANHM*, 102 (2009), pp.202-210; eadem, 'The Romanesque Doorway at Fishlake'. *YAJ* 72 (2000), pp.17-39. Uses a passage from Peter the Venerable. Eadem, 'The Romanesque Memorial at Conisbrough, *YAJ* 73 (2001), pp.41-60, particularly pp.59-60; eadem, 'Not Roman but Romanesque: a decayed relief at Conisbrough Church', *YAJ* 76 (2004), pp.95-111. The relief was probably part of a simple standard Cluniac design.

There is an emphasis on baptism in the East Riding programmes, and there are 50 or more fonts of the period in the Wolds. The various kinds of font patterns and the few figurative designs could perhaps be distributed according to the zone of influence of the priories rather than to a particular workshop or quarry. Augustinians were priests not monks, and it looks as though Archbishop Thurstan was directing the priories to work in co-ordination, and to concentrate on baptism and elementary teaching of the general population in an area still recovering from the Harrowing of the North. It is recorded that Thurstan encouraged donations to the order, and he may, for example, have introduced the lord of Everingham, his own tenant, to the designer. The sculptural programmes would have been of limited use unless canons or other trained priests were visiting the parishes to interpret them to the people, and presumably regular follow-up was expected. The Melbourne scheme (1120s) indicates that the trainees would preach outside their priories, because they were to emulate the seventy disciples sent out by Christ (Augustine, sermon 101). The *Bridlington Dialogue* (c. 1150) mentions canons being sent to parishes for a longer or shorter period.

Taking the evidence as a whole, the Augustinians in the early twelfth century were organised to work in their own churches and they took an interest in other parishes too; the designer worked at churches not belonging to a priory. Topics covered by the sculpture include basic Christian doctrine, life in the church community, and sexual restraint. The teaching is practical and realistic: canons themselves are not excluded from warnings of sin. At least two carvings show their patron Augustine struggling with temptation (Kirkburn and Melbourne), and therefore as a role-model. The choice of imagery shows a sympathetic engagement with village life: at Kirkburn there are carvings of contemporary parishioners at the Easter Vigil, bell-ringing, etc, and of clergy. There is a carving of a canon at Bridlington and at Melbourne: they are bearded and tonsured. The overall impression of the teaching which comes over from the sculpture is that the Austin canons were pastorally-sensitive and encouraging, not condemnatory, in their approach to villagers generaly.

Works of St Augustine of Hippo used to construct the teaching programmes and 'quoted' in the sculpture include numerous sermons (22, 101, 111, 151, 223D, 228, 229P, etc), *De Civitate Dei*, *De Catechizandis Rudibus*, *Confessions*, *De Libero Arbitrio*, *In Iohannis Evangelium Tractatus*,

Enarrationes in Psalmos, *De Baptismo*, *Letters, Enchiridion*, etc. The imagery on the font from Everingham is based around the three trees mentioned in Hugh of St Victor's *De Arca Noe Morali*.

Augustinians have been suggested as the makers of some illuminated late twelfth- and early thirteenth-century bestiaries, and creatures from the bestiary are made use of in the sculpture. Two characters seen only later in bestiary manuscripts occur in this early sculpture with comparable outlines: the Wolf (at Melbourne) and the Mole (at Kilham): the designer was using versions of these tales in parish work before they moved into the Second Family bestiaries. Similarly, the allegory of a cat catching a mouse by its head (Kirkburn font) is used in the *Ancrene Riwle*, whereas other twelfth-century illustrations show the cat's claws in the body of the mouse. Two trees on the Everingham font recall the forms of trees in later drawings. The favoured bestiary type for illustrations is the Cambridge Bestiary (CUL Ms Ii 4.26), and for text, the Aberdeen Bestiary.[4] The chapter on the Crane in these bestiaries seems to be describing community life with an Augustinian character, and the Crane features in sculpture (Liverton, Melbourne).

The sculptural schemes are each unique designs as a whole, but here and there they make use of widespread motifs. Romanesque imagery generally is remarkably repetitive: could these repeated motifs have been organised according to universal conventions promoted by the specialist designers? Geometric patterns, for example, have a widely-used common 'language' for which a key document almost certainly existed from an early date.[5] Similarly, there are figural motifs that occur widely in English Romanesque sculpture in similar forms but at sites without any known or conceivable connection. One of these motifs is the boar-hunt, an allegory which does not occur in manuscripts but only in sculpture.[6] The repetition of the strikingly similar outlines of this subject could be explained by the existence of theme-books containing drawings coupled with teaching, books intended for the use of those providing sculpture at village churches. Because of their interest in visual aids and because they

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[4] See web-site www.aberdeen.ac.uk/bestiary
[5] 'Geometric Patterns', (note 1 above) pp.3-4, 31.
[6] 'The Romanesque font at St Marychurch, Torquay', *Devon Archaeological Society Proceedings*, 62 (2004), pp.79-98, especially pp.89-96.

worked in parishes in this early period, one might speculate that the Augustinians produced and circulated such books.

Summary of six schemes with Augustinian content

Bridlington priory (East Riding) Tournai marble tomb-slab designed in England, made in Flanders, c.1150, probably to commemorate the founder, Walter de Gant. Like fonts in the East Riding at North Grimston, Cowlam and Langtoft (formerly at Cotham), the various motifs on the tomb-slab have individual teaching and do not form such a sophisticated interlinked programmme as seen at the other sites here listed.

Everingham (East Riding) a font with a scheme based on imagery of Hugh of St Victor and guided by Augustine's manual *De Catechizandis Rudibus*. The sculptor, and perhaps the designer too, also worked at Kirkburn.

Kilham (East Riding) a large gabled doorway presenting baptism as enlightenment.

Kirkburn (East Riding) the doorway uses Augustine's interpretation of Psalm 148, as well as including the eucharist and baptism; the corbels refer, for example, to the harvest of Judgment and the separation of the wheat and chaff; the font has scenes from the Easter Vigil including the arrival of the (arch)bishop and a baptism by Christ; also Augustine and Alypius.

Liverton (North Riding) a grand chancel arch in a tiny church. The sculpture on the capitals is based on two sermons of St Augustine. Includes the boar-hunt allegory.

Melbourne (Derbyshire) the church probably built by Henry I to be staffed by Austin canons. It is suggested that the carvings on capitals at the chancel arch provided teaching for novices who were being trained for a preaching ministry. The carvings illustrate, for example, sermons and *Confessions*. The designer is likely to be the same man as at Kirkburn and Liverton.

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MONASTIC WALES

Readers of the Bulletin may recall seeing notice of a new research project, 'Monastic Wales', directed by Dr Karen Stöber of Aberystwyth University and Professor Janet Burton of the University of Wales Lampeter. We are delighted to report that work has progressed rapidly. We are fortunate to have secured Dr Julie Kerr as our research assistant, and as our advisory board Dr Maureen Jurkowski (The National Archives), Dr Andrew Abram and Professor Andrew Prescott (UWL), and Dr Anne Müller (FOVOG, Katholische Universität Eichstätt). Our website will be launched in mid October – please visit:

www.monasticwales.org

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WORCESTER NUNNERIES. THE NUNS OF THE MEDIEVAL DIOCESE
(PHILLIMORE, 2008)

This book is a study of the six nunneries of the medieval diocese of Worcester. After an opening chapter on the different styles of religious life for women, the book focuses on the history and life of the nunneries. It is a straightforward account of their founding, their economy, their daily life with its regular monastic rhythm interrupted by days of excitement such as an episcopal visitation or a prioress's election and as well, times when the community forgot the Rule, making problems for the bishop or his deputies. It concludes with the unhappiness of the Dissolution and the final chapter looks at what remains of the nunneries today.

This may all seem fairly routine work, but by looking at the nunneries both individually and as a whole some interesting patterns emerge. One is the coincidence of names between three of the last prioresses and the subsequent post Dissolution buyers or grantees of their priories. Why did this come about?

Was there a rumour of the end in the year or two before 1536 which gave hopeful buyers time to position themselves?

Five of the nunneries Westwood, Whiston and Cookhill in Worcestershire, Wroxall and Pinley in Warwickshire followed the Benedictine Rule, while the priory of St Mary Magdalen in Bristol housed Augustinian canonesses. Whiston in particular, Cookhill and Pinley occasionally, are referred to as Cistercian in contemporary documents. I think at times they may have aspired to a Cistercian way of life but none of them was ever officially Cistercian. None of the houses were wealthy, and in fact they all struggled with poverty from time to time in their 400 years of history, resorting to begging in the streets "to the scandal of womankind and the discredit of religion" or soliciting the compassion of the kindly bishops.

Westwood priory, outside Droitwich, was the most prestigious and the best set up of the priories. Interestingly it was of the French order of Fontevrault, a very popular order in France but with only four English houses. The Fontevrault nuns had many royal connections and although Westwood had no princesses or queens as recruits, it must have enjoyed some reflected glory and seems to have been better endowed than the other nunneries. Its economy was involved in the local salt industry and its founding grants came from great nobles such as Ralph, earl of Chester. Fontevrault was a double order and so male religious shared the nuns' enclosure at Westwood until the early fifteenth century. Why they then disappeared is another area of further study. Was there anything beyond the changed post plague economic situation and the hostility to alien priories which caused the men's departure? We know most about Westwood as it has substantial primary source material of which a large part, the Hampton Papers , is available for study in the Worcester Record Office. For the other nunneries the bishops' registers, the Worcester cathedral records, the Close and Patent Rolls and similar sources provide much of the evidence.

I have said in my foreword that in some ways this book is only an introduction to studying the Worcester nunneries. There is more research and thinking to be done and hopefully, one day, more source material may emerge to assist in this task.

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EARLY CHRISTIAN ECCLESIASTICAL SETTLEMENT IN IRELAND DATABASE

'Early Christian Ecclesiastical Settlement in Ireland, 5th to 12th centuries: the database of the Monasticon Hibernicum Project', compiled by Ailbhe MacShamhráin with Nora White and Aidan Breen at Scoil an Léinn Cheiltigh, NUI Maynooth, and funded by the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences (2003-2007), was revised and prepared for the WEB courtesy of the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies (2007-2009).

It may be found at http://monasticon.celt.dias.ie or via the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies website.

For further information see:
Ailbhe MacShamhráin, 'The new Monasticon Hibernicum and inquiry into the Early Christian and medieval church in Ireland', *Monastic Research Bulletin*, 10 (2004), 1-16.
Idem, 'The Monasticon Hibernicum Project: a research tool for Early and medieval ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland'. *Monastic Research Bulletin*, 14 (2008), 24-31.

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MEDIEVAL WELSH CLERICS AND THEIR CAREERS

Wales, initially only a nominal part of the structure of the medieval western church, was brought fully within the ambit of this international establishment by the end of the twelfth century. The old monastic traditions were replaced by European Orders and the church structure came to resemble that of the rest of Christendom, bringing Wales under the control of the English ecclesiastical and secular authorities.

Although this development could have had an adverse effect on Welshmen's careers within the Welsh church, it did in fact give them better prospects of careers and advancement in Britain and further afield. My doctoral thesis, under the supervision of Dr Karen Stöber, seeks to recognise Welsh clerics, both regulars and seculars, who were to be found in ecclesiastical and secular circles outside their native country from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century. This includes considering specific centres where Welsh clerics were numerous, in addition to studying their career paths within church and state.

Although forming a minority of medieval Welsh churchmen in England and the continent, the regulars were an important group and will be a key aspect of my research. The mendicant orders are particularly significant, as they provided many Welshmen with the means of reaching distant ecclesiastical centres and prominent positions. Examples include the Franciscan Philip Wallensis who was sent by his order to lecture at Lyons, and the many Welshmen who became the heads of the Dominican and Franciscan provinces of England, for example Mathew of Burgeveney and Roger of Conwy. The other orders also contributed by sending their members to university and promoting some to English abbacies, such as Richard Penbroke at Evesham, who was probably a Welshman.

My research firstly concentrates on important centres where significant numbers of Welsh clerics were to be found: Oxford, Cambridge, Paris and Rome. The English universities, in particular Oxford, were the destination of a great number of Welsh students, and my research has already identified over seventy regulars in their midst. Most of these were from the Dominican and Franciscan orders, but we have no way of knowing some of their original friaries. Many others, including all the Benedictines and the Augustinian canons, were sent from houses in England and therefore contribute to the broader discussion of the Welshmen's use of English ecclesiastical institutions. It seems that most Welsh Benedictines at Oxford came from houses within Worcester diocese, such as John Rys from Pershore abbey and the aforementioned Richard Penbroke from Evesham. Paris, as one of the main European universities, also attracted many Welsh clerics, and in the thirteenth century two of them, Thomas Wallensis and John Waleys (known as *arbor vitae*), became well-renowned Franciscan regent masters. Many Welsh seculars are known to have served in the *curia* in Rome, as did some regulars like the

Franciscan Hugh David who was proctor of his order there in 1430 before being appointed joint provincial vicar of England. The second section of the thesis will examine the various career patterns manifested by medieval Welsh clerics, discussing connections and patterns of patronage. Some individuals will be looked at in greater detail as case studies of various (sometimes exceptional) career paths, with particular reference to their influence within the institution of the church and the connections and qualities that resulted in personal progress.

Aspects of this field of study have been touched upon by Welsh historians in the past, but there has been no coherent study of Welsh clerics' careers in England and abroad. These clerics provide a useful study, illustrating how the church transcended cultural, social and political boundaries, and showing how changes in their country's political circumstances affected their career prospects. In addition they demonstrate how those on the fringes of European society could be brought into the centre, and how those who were discriminated against in a political context could seize opportunities in another field. This research will therefore lead us to a deeper understanding of the medieval Welsh church, and of the opportunities available to Welsh clerics for a far-reaching ecclesiastical career. Furthermore, this study will further illuminate our understanding of the role of the medieval church, both secular and monastic, in providing stepping-stones on an individual's way to a successful career within church and state.

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