

## MONASTIC RESEARCH BULLETIN

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## A LOST LETTER OF PETER OF CELLE

In 1867, Henri d'Arbois de Jubainville, the celebrated French antiquarian, published a transcription of a previously unedited letter of Peter of Celle.<sup>1</sup> This existed only in a seventeenth-century copy, and today even that appears to be lost. The letters of Peter of Celle, abbot of Montier-la-Celle, Troyes, (1145-1161/2) and Saint-Rémi, Reims, (1161/2-1181), and bishop of Chartres (1181-3), survive mostly in two large collections, one relating to each of the two abbasies he held, amounting to 177 letters.<sup>2</sup> Both were sender's collections, comprising predominantly letters written by, rather than addressed to, Peter - the most common type of letter collection in the period. Only twelve letters, including the one under discussion here, are known to survive outside these main collections.<sup>3</sup> For five of these twelve letters, separate copies also survive in the main collections,<sup>4</sup> leaving only seven letters known exclusively from other sources. Furthermore, five of these twelve letters in fact survive as part of other major letter collections, including three of those found exclusively outside the sender's collections.<sup>5</sup> That is to

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<sup>1</sup> H. d'Arbois de Jubainville, 'Lettre de Pierre de Celle, qui paraît inédite', *Revue des sociétés savantes des départements*, series IV, tome 5 (1867), p. 539; also noted in *Repertorium Fontium Historiae Medii Aevi* ix (Rome, 2003), p. 127.

<sup>2</sup> On the textual history see *The Letters of Peter of Celle*, ed. and trans. J. P. Haseldine, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford, 2001), pp. xxxiv-lvi. In this edition the two original collections are kept separate.

<sup>3</sup> The others are *Letters of Peter of Celle* as nos. 27, 50, 51, 75, 118, 119, 136, 137, 161, 162 and 180; see *ibid.* pp. xlvi-lix.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* nos. 27, 50, 51, 118 and 161.

<sup>5</sup> Letters 50 and 51 survive in the collections both of Peter of Celle and of Nicholas of Clairvaux (where they are numbered 51 and 53: *PL* cxcvi,

say, only four letters, including the one under discussion here, survive exclusively outside any major letter collection.<sup>6</sup> This is not surprising: the overwhelming majority of medieval letters have come down to us not as survivals from administrative archives but as part of collections. There has been much discussion of the principles of selection and degree of later revision applied to letters between their original composition and their preparation for inclusion in such collections.<sup>7</sup> Those few letters that owe their transmission to other routes can offer tantalising glimpses into what was left out of the big ‘official’ collections. At the same time, they should not be confused with the contents of letter collections or treated as potential additions to them: letter collections are a specific literary genre and the value of their contents as evidence depends on an appreciation of their nature.<sup>8</sup> Six letters surviving exclusively outside the sender’s collection were printed in my edition, but their separate status was clearly indicated; they could equally validly, although perhaps less conveniently for the reader, have been relegated

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1593-1654); letter 75 only in the Thomas Becket collections; letter 136 only in the John of Salisbury collections, and letter 180 only in the Saint-Victor collections: for full details and references, see *Letters of Peter of Celle* pp. li-liii.

<sup>6</sup> The other three are *ibid.* nos. 119 (of which no manuscript copy survives: see below), no. 137 and no. 162 (in fact part of a collection, but a very small one: see *ibid.* pp. xlix-l).

<sup>7</sup> The best introduction to medieval Latin epistolography remains G. Constable, *Letters and Letter Collections*, *Typologie des Sources de Moyen Âge Occidental*, fasc. 17 (Turnhout, 1976).

<sup>8</sup> See J. P. Haseldine, ‘The Creation of a Literary Memorial: The Letter Collection of Peter of Celle’, *Sacris Erudiri* 37 (1997), pp. 333-79, at pp. 333-8, 373-6.

to an appendix.<sup>9</sup> I also suggested that further items not integral to the collection were likely to come to light.<sup>10</sup>

The text of the letter found by d'Arbois de Jubainville was printed with no discussion beyond three footnotes.<sup>11</sup> The only indication of provenance is the note:

Copie du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle sur papier. Archives de l'Aube, fonds de Moutier-la-Celle [sic], carton coté provisoirement 7H35 (Inventaire Vallet (de Viriville), Liasse 311). Pour copie conforme: D'Arbois de Jubainville, Correspondant.<sup>12</sup>

Auguste Vallet de Viriville, archivist at the Aube from 1838 to 1841, and his successor, Philippe Guignard (1843-1852), were responsible for first cataloguing the archives,<sup>13</sup> including the surviving *fonds Montier-la-Celle*, which had been inventoried in detail before the Revolution.<sup>14</sup> At some

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<sup>9</sup> See *Letters of Peter of Celle*, p. lvii; the letters are nos. 75, 119, 136, 137, 162 and 180.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. p. xxxv, n. 58.

<sup>11</sup> Quoted in full in their original places in the notes to the text below, in square brackets.

<sup>12</sup> D'Arbois de Jubainville, 'Lettre de Pierre de Celle'. There is also a footnote: 'Voir le rapport de M. Delisle, du 5 mars 1866, *Revue*, 4<sup>e</sup> série, t. III, p. 329', but this only refers to the committee section of an earlier issue of the journal noting Delisle's intention to publish miscellaneous pieces in future editions, including this and another item provided by d'Arbois de Jubainville: *Revue des sociétés savantes des départements*, series IV, tome 3 (1866), p. 329.

<sup>13</sup> See G. Bernard, *Guide des Archives de l'Aube* (Troyes, 1967), pp. 5-18.

<sup>14</sup> 'Inventaire général des chartres, titres, documents et papiers concernant les biens de l'abbaye royale de Montier-la-Celle lès Troyes, contenus es archives de ladite maison, par Dom Ernault', 2 vols., c. 1750, Archives

stage these *fonds* were reorganised into 34 cartons, and most of an earlier series of *cotes*, 7H 35 – 7H 299, are now listed as ‘vacantes’. The entire *fonds Montier-la-Celle* were re-catalogued in 1941-3, and a modern concordance exists, but this does not point to any extant version of the text in question.<sup>15</sup> D’Arbois de Jubainville, himself archivist from 1852 to 1880 and responsible for a general reorganisation of the archives, was in any case evidently referring not to the original classification but to a provisional classification. The *fonds* have also suffered losses in the interim, and there are a number of empty folders within the cartons. The text in question appears not to have survived, nor is there any reference to it in the surviving papers of Jean Godefroy, who worked on Peter of Celle; nor is it noted by Richard Keyser.<sup>16</sup>

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départementales de l’Aube 7H 300 and 7H 301; it does not mention this letter.

<sup>15</sup> P. Cravayat and R.-H. Bautier, ‘Abbaye de Montier-la-Celle. Sous-série 7 H. Répertoire numérique (1941-1943)’, now available from the Archives départementales de l’Aube and [www.archives-aube.com](http://www.archives-aube.com) (accessed April 2007), headed ‘Nouvelle dactylographie 2003’. The modern concordance gives for 7H 35 the modern 7H 709, which contains no such text. Vallet de Viriville’s original labels for the classification also survive (Archives départementales de l’Aube 7H 310), but offer no further clues. The state and complex modern history of the *fonds Montier-la-Celle* is also usefully summarised in J.-M. Roger, *Montier-la-Celle, abbaye bénédictine, milieu du vii<sup>e</sup> siècle – 1792* (Troyes, 1984); the most detailed account, however, can be found in Richard L. Keyser, ‘Gift, Dispute and Contract: Gift exchange and legalism in monastic property dealings, Montier-la-Celle, France, 1100-1350’, PhD thesis, Johns Hopkins University, April 2001 (in 2 vols). A book length study based on the thesis is in preparation (I am grateful to Dr Keyser for his personal communications on this subject).

<sup>16</sup> Godefroy papers: Archives départementales de l’Aube 7 J 79; Keyser, ‘Gift, Dispute and Contract’, ii. pp. 614-16; Appendix 1: ‘Excluded Acts’, noting miscellaneous items from the *fonds Montier-la-Celle* not included

D'Arbois de Jubainville's text, printed below, thus now appears to be our only witness:

*Text:*<sup>17</sup>

Charissimo domino et praecordiali amico M[attheo], Dei gratia Trecensi episcopo,<sup>18</sup> frater P[etrus], humilis abbas sancti Remigii, Francorum apostoli, salutem et dilectionem.

Scimus vos non latere, quo et quanto familiaritatis et fidei studio ecclesiae Cellensi, cui quondam auctore Deo praefuimus, in suis necessitatibus et justis petitionibus, cum possimus prodesse, deesse nec velimus nec debeamus. Hinc est quod vestrae discretioni volumus innotescere, quod quando apud Sanctum Letum<sup>19</sup> vobis offuimus, nobis memoriae non occurrit: scilicet quod ecclesias et Sancti Michaelis et Sancti Andreae<sup>20</sup> in ea libertate et immunitate, quae in diebus nostris et antecessorum vestrorum episcoporum Trecensium Cellensis ecclesia hactenus habuerat, divinae iusticiae timore et honore nostraque pariter

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in the main survey of charters and other legal documents. I am grateful to M. Xavier de la Selle, *directeur*, and Mme. Gangarossa, of the *Archives départementales de l'Aube*, for their generous help in my search through the *fonds Montier-la-Celle*.

<sup>17</sup> D'Arbois de Jubainville, 'Lettre de Pierre de Celle'.

<sup>18</sup> [Mathieu, évêque de Troyes de 1169 à 1180, Gall. christ. XII, 501-502.]: d'Arbois de Jubainville.

<sup>19</sup> [Saint-Lyé, Aube, une des résidences des évêques de Troyes.]: d'Arbois de Jubainville.

<sup>20</sup> [Saint-André, Aube. L'église Saint-Michel, dont la mention précède immédiatement, était une église paroissiale située sur le territoire de la même commune. Elle n'existe plus, mais il en est encore question dans les textes du XIV<sup>e</sup> et du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle.]: d'Arbois de Jubainville.

admonitione et obsecratione ad propria jura in prefatis ecclesiis in pace possidere sinatis. Testor enim quod usque ad tempus vestrum in ecclesia Beati Michaelis presbiter curam animarum non habuit.

*Translation:*

To his most beloved lord and dearest friend Matthew, by the grace of God bishop of Troyes, brother Peter, humble abbot of Saint-Rémi, apostle of the Franks, greetings and love.

We know that it is not hidden from you with what friendly and faithful devotion we would wish not to fail the church of Montier-la-Celle (nor ought we to), over whom we were once set by God's authority, in her need and just petitions, when we are able to help her. So it is that we wish to make known to your discretion what escaped our memory when we were before you at Saint-Lyé: that is, that you should allow Montier-la-Celle peaceful possession of the churches of Saint-Michel and Saint-André by that liberty and immunity which, in our time and that of your predecessors as bishops of Troyes, she already held, through fear and honour of divine justice and equally by our admonition and appeal to her rights of ownership in the aforesaid churches. I testify that up until your time, in the church of Saint-Michel the priest did not have cure of souls.

The letter cannot be dated more closely than 1169 x 1180.<sup>21</sup> Its intention, as a supplement to a piece of local business conducted in person, is self-evident. Saint-André itself stands

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<sup>21</sup> See above n. 18.

within 500 metres of the site of Montier-la-Celle and was one of the abbey's earliest possessions.<sup>22</sup> Nor is it surprising that Peter of Celle, who took a continuing close interest in the affairs of his former house, would be involved in this way. Letter collections, with their concern for epistolary style, important disputes or points of general principle, rarely include such communications. The content of the letter is indeed not comparable with that of any preserved in the sender's collections, only a very few of which are similarly brief and concerned only with business, and most of these are appeals to the papal curia. It is also different from the other letters known from outside the sender's collection. Letter 180 is also brief and businesslike, but concerns dues owed to the king and survived as part of a major letter collection, at Saint-Victor, where much royal correspondence was collected. The closest comparisons are letters 118 and 119 to Erlembald of Stavelot, acknowledging outstanding debts (see also below). None of the other extraneous letters are comparable in content or transmission history.<sup>23</sup>

The apparent presence of this text at some time among the *fonds Montier-la-Celle* suggests that the seventeenth-century copy which d'Arbois de Jubainville saw may have been based on an archive copy held at the abbey. Isolated survivals of original letters are extremely rare; some letters survive in cartularies or narrative sources, usually if they had

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<sup>22</sup> See Keyser, 'Gift, Dispute and Contract', i., pp. 92-153, see esp. pp. 124 ff.

<sup>23</sup> Letter 27 is a letter of friendship and exhortation, nos. 50 and 51 part of a theological debate, no. 137 a deathbed greeting, and nos 161 and 162 part of a pro-Cistercian mini-collection concerned with *transitus*; and on nos. 75 and 136, see below.

legal or evidential value.<sup>24</sup> Such may have been the case with letters 118 and 119.<sup>25</sup> But the present letter cannot be associated with any known cartulary, nor is it a recipient's copy, but an interested third party's copy. Two of the other extraneous letters were likewise third party copies, but both survive only as part of other major letter collections, and are anyway of a very different character from the present letter.<sup>26</sup> Transcriptions of letters are sometimes found in antiquarian works, as was Peter of Celle's letter 137,<sup>27</sup> but the seventeenth-century history of the abbey in the present *fonds Montier-la-Celle* contains no such text.<sup>28</sup>

In the absence of any manuscript witness or better evidence of provenance, all we can say is that a copy of this letter found its way to Montier-la-Celle, possibly, although by no means certainly, soon enough after its original composition to be of use to the community, and represents a rare example of the sort of everyday correspondence mostly lost to students of epistolography.

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<sup>24</sup> Constable, *Letters and Letter Collections*, pp. 55-6.

<sup>25</sup> This seems to have been the case, but the manuscript of the recipient's copies is lost: *Letters of Peter of Celle*, pp. 1-li.

<sup>26</sup> Letters 75 and 136: see above, n. 5.

<sup>27</sup> *Letters of Peter of Celle* p. 1.

<sup>28</sup> 'Histoire de l'abbaye royale de Montier-la-Celle' (c. 1661-1661), Archives départementales de l'Aube 7 H 311.

## **MONKS OF THE FURTHEST WEST**

Visitors to Cornwall who think of monks will probably imagine early 'Celtic' clergy in beehive huts, rather than monks in stately abbey buildings like Fountains or St Albans. In fact, as far as records go, Cornwall was not a great monastic county at any period. The monastic huts once posited at Tintagel have been re-classified as a secular settlement. Early 'Celtic' monks can only be securely linked with two places, St Kew and an unlocated site, described in the eighth-century 'First Life' of St Samson. By the tenth century, when Cornwall emerges into the era of documentation, all its religious communities were minsters staffed by canons, priests, or clerks. In 1066 there was no monastery, in the strict sense of the word, west of Tavistock in Devon.

The revival of monasticism in twelfth-century England spread to Cornwall, but touched it with less effect than in many other regions. The first post-Conquest monastery to be founded was St Nicholas Priory on Tresco, Isles of Scilly, in 1114. This was a cell for two or three monks from Tavistock who also organised a pastoral ministry for the islands. Nearly all the other twelfth-century monastic foundations were similar cells of other houses: St Anthony-in-Roseland, St Carroc, Lammana, St Mary Vale, St Michael's Mount, Minster, Tregony, and Tywardreath. Of these only the Mount and Tywardreath had significant amounts of landed property and more than a couple of monks.

The largest houses to be founded in the twelfth century were the priories of Bodmin, St Germans, and Launceston. These were all pre-Conquest minsters which were

reorganised as Augustinian houses by bishops of Exeter. Each had a dozen or two dozen canons and substantial land-holdings and each, unlike the cells, was an independent foundation. But Cornwall never gained a Cistercian, Premonstratensian, or Carthusian monastery, and even extending monasticism to include friars and military orders adds only two friaries and a single small preceptory of the Order of St John of Jerusalem.

In religious terms, Cornwall was notable in other respects than monasticism: its wealth of local saints, its numerous guilds attached to parish churches, and its huge complement of parochial chapels. Nevertheless, the history of the monasteries – though modest in national terms – is not without interest.

Their siting drew something from their ‘Celtic’ past. Three were on islands: Scilly, the Mount, and Lammana, the latter (the modern Looe Island) being apparently a thirteenth-century attempt by Glastonbury Abbey (to which it belonged) to mimic the Mount. Like the latter, its church was dedicated to St Michael, and pilgrims were encouraged to cross to it from the mainland, albeit by boat not causeway. A fourth house, St Mary Vale, lay in a remote wooded valley near Bodmin, a place that must have been chosen for its seclusion.

Smallness of size caused the Cornish houses to be closely involved with the everyday world around them. St Anthony, St Germans, Minster, Scilly, and Tregony were also parish churches, where the monks or canons had some responsibility for local pastoral care. Most of the houses had shrines and relics of saints, sometimes local saints – Entenin at St Anthony, Petroc at Bodmin, Carroc at St Carroc, Mertherian at Minster – which people were encouraged to visit and did visit. Tywardreath’s confraternity book survives,

witnessing to the links it established with gentry all over Cornwall.

As usual in England, the houses reached their acme of prosperity in the thirteenth century. Then decline set in. Even during that century, Glastonbury and Merton, the mother houses of Lammana and Tregony, closed their cells in order to save money. The following century brought the Hundred Years War with the attendant difficulties for the four houses that were 'alien priories' belonging to French abbeys: St Carroc, Minster, the Mount, and Tywardreath. As usual these suffered confiscation of property and revenues by the crown, and after 1378 they could no longer receive French monks.

The alien priories proved surprisingly resilient in their difficulties. All survived the fourteenth century, although Minster was turned into a parish church soon after 1400. The Mount managed to turn itself into an English house for a time, produced a cartulary of its property, and successfully appropriated the legend of its mother house, Mont St Michel, that St Michael had honoured it with a personal appearance and had ordered its foundation. The Mount might well have survived until the Reformation, but Henry V gave it to Syon Abbey in the 1410s, after which it was served by three chaplains, although it continued to trade successfully on St Michael and became an important place of pilgrimage.

Tywardreath did better, partly because it was the largest and wealthiest of the cells. It seems to have had no monks save the prior by the 1380s, but the priors remained French and a series of them gained appointment and governed the house until 1433. The last of these, Jean Roger, made himself useful to Henry V and succeeded in acquiring independent status for his house and a legal judgment that it was

‘conventual’, a monastic community, although he was undoubtedly the only monk and sometimes not even there.

After Roger’s resignation in 1433, Henry VI appointed an English prior – but still a man who had lived at an abbey in France – and this man, John Brentyngham, and his successor Walter Barnecote, a Cornishman, rebuilt a community of English Benedictine monks. This was no mean achievement, given that there was no other Benedictine house in the county. By the 1490s Tywardreath had regained its original strength of seven monks and was in a prosperous condition, belying the judgment of modern historians (based on some pre-Reformation scandals) that it was a derelict and doomed community.

By the Reformation there were only six monasteries left. Scilly had been reduced to a single monk, and that left only four independent houses and two cells. They all came to an end quietly between 1536 and 1539, but not without covert resistance. Thomas Wadsworth, the last prior of Bodmin, foresaw the end earlier than most, and in the summer of 1537 he persuaded his brethren to relinquish their lands to the local gentry by long and generous leases. When in 1546 the crown woke up to the fact, it was too late; Bodmin had disposed of its lands before the date at which such leases were unlawful.

Cornwall may not be a great monastic county, then, but it is not lacking in interest for students of monasticism. We still possess the cartularies of Launceston and the Mount, a register from Launceston, the famous early ‘Bodmin Gospels’ and a fifteenth-century canon’s miscellany, along with the confraternity book from Tywardreath. And visitors to Cornwall can still see some substantial and evocative remains. Most of the priory church of St Germans survives,

and very impressive it is. There are the footings of the east end of Launceston's church, some altered church remains at St Anthony-in-Roseland and Minster, two picturesque arches of Scilly in the abbey gardens on Treco, and the lonely deserted site of St Mary Vale. Look out for them next time you cross the Tamar!

Nicholas Orme's concise history of the medieval Church in Cornwall, *Cornwall and the Cross: Christianity 500-1560*, was published by Phillimore and Victoria County History in September. His larger study, *Victoria County History of Cornwall*, vol ii (including histories of all the religious houses) will appear during the next six months.

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## **A NEW PROJECT AT STRATA FLORIDA, CEREDIGION, WALES**

### **Introduction**

Strata Florida is well known as the site of an important Cistercian Abbey, maintained by Cadw as a guardianship monument (Robinson and Platt 1992, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. 2007). It is sited in the upper valley of the Afon Teifi in central Ceredigion in west Wales, just to the east of the village of Pontrhydfendigaid, but the project's scope is the whole territory once in the hands of the abbey (fig. 1). The new work at Strata Florida began in the late 1990's, partly as an

initiative to create a core programme for the teaching of archaeological practice in the Department of Archaeology and Anthropology at the University of Wales Lampeter, and partly as a reflexive and co-operative research project designed to engage the university in a wider, interdisciplinary partnership with colleagues from other institutions in Wales and beyond. At the same time the department was keen to engage with a broad spectrum of individuals and enterprises within its own regional communities in west Wales in recognition of its obligation to share its knowledge and make it work for the local society and economy.

The first fieldwork was undertaken as an undergraduate course in May and June 1999 and 2000 when earthworks to the south of the main monastic buildings were surveyed, as was a site of *bwthyn* or 'squatter' cottage holdings on the edge of a raised bog called Rhos Gelli Gron. Just before the third season was due to begin, however, the 2001 outbreak of foot and mouth struck and we had to abandon our plans. For a number of reasons we were not able to return to the field until 2004 when, effectively, we had to begin the whole programme again. It was at this time that a series of excavations began. By this time, however, we had had a few more years of reflection and development and the concept of a twin-track approach emerged to carry the project forward. The teaching and research programme became the Strata Florida Project involving a number of scholars as well as all undergraduate and postgraduate year groups in the department, and the community engagement led eventually to the formation of the Strata Florida Trust. Although structurally distinct they are closely inter-woven and together

they represent a long-term project on this iconic site and its beautiful landscape.

## **The Research Agenda**

The new research has a primary source of inspiration: the site has a profound meaning for contemporary people in Wales. It was an intellectual centre for the development of an ideology of Welshness and it promoted the writing of Welsh as history and poetry in its scriptorium. Arguably Wales' greatest poet, Dafydd ap Gwilym is buried here in a humble setting beneath a yew tree. At a time of important changes in the structural politics of Wales following devolution, we believe that a greater understanding of this site is timely and can contribute to the debates about Welsh identity and historical trajectory.

The Strata Florida Project was begun specifically from a landscape perspective and driven initially by the archaeological or material culture agenda. This is in the belief that the next generation of Cistercian and monastic studies must locate and situate our understanding of the presence of the coenobitic community in its temporal, social, physical and symbolic context. For this reason the project is examining the broad antecedents of the abbey, taking us back into the Iron Age and forward to the present day. However, to maintain a generic and broad inter-disciplinary approach, we have debated and agreed six major themes within which research can be conducted. These are: social identity; class; spatial and environmental perception and meaning; cultural production; spiritual and ritual performance; and community. Under the umbrella of these themes specific research programmes will be undertaken. The first of these are: survey and excavation of the Abbey Precinct and its immediate

context; and the study of the wider landscapes of ‘granges’ and their secular neighbours.

## **The precinct and landscape**

Initial work focused on establishing the extent of the original precinct and the quality of surviving archaeological remains. The results of this work will be drawn together in our first publication in the spring of 2008. To date, we have established the archaeological survival of major buildings in a field of earthworks to the south of the Church and Cloister in the Cadw guardianship area. These include the Infirmary and the Abbot’s lodgings, as well as elements of the south range never exposed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century excavations. The southern end of this field has complex water management systems, within which the remains of a large mill can be identified. The potential height of its wheel and early results from preliminary excavations suggest that this is perhaps related to metalworking rather than being a grist mill.

Very recent geophysics in ploughed fields to the west of the Church have shown the extensive remains of other major buildings, including, it is thought, the Guest-House and Inner Precinct gatehouse. In addition to this, analysis of air photographs and early maps have led us to propose a precinct consisting of two main elements, laid out over approximately 120 acres (fig. 2). Associated with the precinct is a landscape beyond it we are calling the ‘Abbey demesne’, consisting of an extensive ancient woodland with many traces of long-term management and of specialist farms for a variety of agrarian outputs, such as horses, dairy, oxen breeding, pigs, arable and hay. On the upland fringes of this demesne there are major

earthwork sites, such as Troed y Rhiw, interpreted as *bercaria* or *laneria*.

These sites are being surveyed with our research partner, the Royal Commission for Ancient and Historic Monuments in Wales and includes both historical ecology and environmental archaeology. Beyond these immediate landscapes we are examining the organisation and archaeology of the Abbey administrative units known as *granges* in the later documents. Our initial research is leading us to the hypothesis that these *granges* were largely areas based on pre-Cistercian territories from which the Abbey drew renders and rents, but neither altered their structure nor put their own buildings on them. This is leading us to consider that the original grants encompassed the transfer of royal rights under Welsh law, rather than *bookland* under English or Norman law. The Abbey thus focused its productive input on the *demesne* and the mountain sheep pastures supplemented by renders from ancient territories. One further element for which there is a growing body of archaeological evidence, including small-scale excavation, is the exploitation of the bodies of metal ore, mostly lead, iron and silver in the Cambrian Mountains. This almost certainly relied on sophisticated water management and this is also to be found in the earthworks of the water supply system of the Abbey lying to the west in the valley of the *Afon Glasffrwd*. The water being accessed by this system also includes a holy well, still today known for its curative effect for eye complaints.

The project is still in its development phase and we shall be gearing up for an expanded programme of work in 2008 beginning after Easter and continuing until July. There



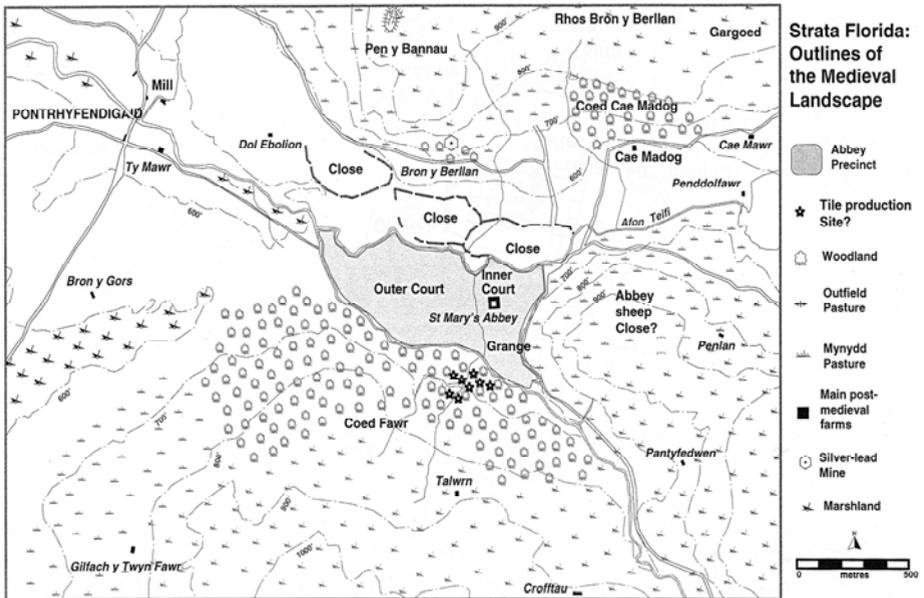


Figure 2. A first speculative reconstruction of the Abbey precinct and some of its adjacent demesne (first drawn in 2002 and now needing some minor amendment – see web-site in April 2008)

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## **A NEW INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH CENTRE FOR THE COMPARATIVE HISTORY OF RELIGIOUS ORDERS IN EICHSTÄTT (GERMANY)**

In July 2005, the Research Centre for the Comparative History of Religious Orders (FOVOG) began its operations at the Catholic University of Eichstätt (in Bavaria, Germany). The core of the project is to analyse the establishment and development of forms of institutionalised religious life between antiquity and the early modern period. Those initiating this centre – namely Prof. Dr. Gert Melville as its director and Dr. Anne Müller as the academic co-ordinator – strive for research that is dedicated to the comprehensive social and cultural meaning of both monastic and religious life.

Particular emphasis centres on the complex inter-relations between cloister and society, whereas the long-term goal is to cover (adopting a comparative approach) not only examples from across the Christian spectrum, but also religious life in other cultures. Special attention will be paid to the question of how monastic life since late antiquity could be collectively realized in diverse ways according to fixed rules and norms and how, in doing so, it shaped the understanding of community and civilisation. Overall systematic aspects are also being investigated – for instance, the relationship between norms and spiritual ideals, between the individual and the community, between authority and obedience or between charisma and the creation of institutional structures, including forms of symbolism and imagery, rituals, and other means of self-representation.

A principal aim of the FOVOG is to establish a network of co-operating projects at the Catholic University of

Eichstätt and to co-ordinate international research on the topic of religious orders. Meanwhile, numerous renowned scholars from all parts of the world have already become associated members of the FOVOG. They have accepted the task of supporting the institute with advice on its research activities on the one hand, and of presenting their own projects and methodological approaches at regular workshops and conferences on the other. The next significant, international FOVOG conference, anticipated for January of 2009, will be dedicated to the forms of early female *vita religiosa*.

In this year, the institute's research activities have been expanded considerably through the setting up of a fellowship programme and a graduate college. Presently three Ph.D students are focusing on central aspects of the history of religious orders: Peter Dänhardt. M.A. is analysing religious orders as bearers of technical innovations in medieval times (Peter.Daenhardt@ku-eichstaett.de). Gerd Jäkel. M.A. is concerning himself with a comparison of the individual institutional histories of religious orders (Gerd.Jaekel@ku-eichstaett.de). Tobias Tanneberger's work deals with the vernacular transmission of normative basic texts of religious orders, such as rules and their commentaries (Tobias.Tanneberger@hotmail.com). Besides these theses, there is a postdoctoral project by Dr. Anne Müller on constructions of the past in English Benedictine monasteries following the Norman Conquest (Anne.Mueller@ku-eichstaett.de). Two larger research projects are planned for the near future. At their centre will be issues connected to the importance of monasteries as laboratories of innovation in the high middle ages and the symbolism of space in medieval religious life.

Furthermore, the FOVOG can invite up to five scholars per year to come to Eichstätt for one month as fellows. This year the fellowships were awarded to historians from France, Italy, Poland, Denmark and England. In this way the themes of research stretched from the eremitic life that emerged in Italy (Prof. Nicoangelo D'Acunto, Milano), to the symbolic nature of the Dominican constitution (Dr. Florent Cygler, Nantes), the function of *exempla* in the Cistercian Order (Prof. Brian P. McGuire, Roskilde), the contribution of friars to the Christianization of East-Central Europe (Prof. Marek Derwich, Wroclaw), to standards and realities of life in the Franciscan Order in England during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (Prof. Jens Röhrkasten, Birmingham).

The FOVOG maintains two websites: The first can be accessed at [www.fovog.de](http://www.fovog.de) and presents the activities of the institute and its members. The other site, at [www.vita-religiosa.de](http://www.vita-religiosa.de), is an information platform on medieval monasticism and religious life, including comprehensive bibliographies, address directories, source databanks, and conference announcements (please contact us to advertise your own projects and activities). We also have our own series "Vita Regularis" (LIT publishing company; [www.litverlag.de/reihe/VIREG](http://www.litverlag.de/reihe/VIREG)), which currently includes thirty-three themed volumes. A handbook for the comparative history of religious orders, which should appear consecutively in thematic fascicles, is currently being designed.

The FOVOG sees an interdisciplinary approach as offering the best opportunity for innovative research and we express our hope for intensive international co-operation. If you are working in the field of medieval religious orders or

monasticism, we cordially invite you to participate in our collaborative research project.

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## **HISTORY OF WOMEN RELIGIOUS OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND (H-WRBI)**

### **Who are we?**

In 2001, following the History of Women Religious (HWR) Conference at Milwaukee, Caroline Bowden and Carmen M. Mangion set up this research network to encourage research and facilitate exchanges between historians of women religious using a listserv, a website and an annual conference. The organisation includes academics, archivists, students and others interested in the history of women religious. We currently have over 160 members from all over the world. We meet at an annual conference and otherwise communicate electronically via our listserv.

## **H-WRBI listserv**

This listserv is used primarily by members to ask research questions on the history of women religious. We also promote research by making available information about relevant conferences and other academic events (especially if there are papers being given on religious life) and we publish book reviews. If you would like to participate in this discussion please contact Pascal Majerus at [pascal.majerus@skynet.be](mailto:pascal.majerus@skynet.be).

## **H-WRBI website**

<http://www.rhul.ac.uk/bedford-centre/history-women-religious/>

This website has been created by members of the History of Women Religious of Britain and Ireland in order to encourage research on the history of women religious by making available material to facilitate research. It contains a list of current events, a detailed bibliography, a book and conference reviews section, a sources section, a gallery and a links section. We encourage members to contribute to the website. If you have sources and images for the sources and gallery section please contact Caroline Bowden at [c.bowden@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:c.bowden@rhul.ac.uk). Please contact Carmen Mangion at [c.mangion@history.bbk.ac.uk](mailto:c.mangion@history.bbk.ac.uk) with any updates to the bibliography or events sections or if you have a suggestion for a book review or a conference review.

## **H-WRBI annual conference**

In 2007, we held our sixth annual conference: **CONSECRATED WOMEN: TOWARDS A HISTORY OF WOMEN RELIGIOUS OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND**. It was held on 31 August 2007 at the Institute of Historical Research, London, United Kingdom. The papers' themes included the provision of healthcare, the wealth and influence of women religious, material and literary culture, canonical issues, constitutions and the approval of congregations. A report on this conference is appended to this article.

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## **CONFERENCE REPORT: CONSECRATED WOMEN: TOWARDS A HISTORY OF WOMEN RELIGIOUS OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND**

The History of Women Religious of Britain and Ireland (H-WRBI) research network held their sixth annual conference on 31<sup>st</sup> August, satisfying a continuing need for a forum for what continues to be an area of research neglected by mainstream historiography, but one of great intrinsic value and considerable import for our broader understanding of the religious, social and cultural history of Britain and Ireland and the history of the women of those shores. Held at the Institute of Historical Research, London, the one-day event organised by Carmen Mangion (Birkbeck College, University of London), Caroline Bowden (Royal Holloway, University

of London) and Susan O'Brien (Margaret Beaufort Institute of Theology, Cambridge) was dedicated to the memory of Sister Gregory Kirkus CJ, who died aged ninety six on 30<sup>th</sup> August. Archivist and librarian at the Bar Convent, York for over twenty-five years, she was affectionately regarded by those working in the field of the history of female religious, her own work in this area being highly valued.

The conference delegates were of an extremely varied background and included academics and students from all over Europe and the US, archivists, seminary staff and several members of religious communities. This diversity made for highly engaging discussion sessions as well as stimulating conversations during coffee-breaks. A warm welcome was extended to newcomers to the research network and indeed the conference proved a supportive, open and productive forum for the discussion of research. During the early modern session there was a particularly constructive exchange of ideas about Catholic recusant Mary Ward, with no fewer than four papers being presented on her life and the history of her Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Indeed, several sisters of the Congregation of Jesus were present, as well as representatives of the Sisters of Loreto (thus covering both branches of the IBVM) and the sisters were able to offer privileged insights on their foundress. Together with scholars from the University of York, Queen Mary College, Royal Holloway and the Université d'Aix-Marseille, this surely unrivalled assembly of expertise on Mary Ward made for an excellent survey of current work in this apparently thriving area of research. Other themes covered, which emerged from papers looking at seemingly unconnected issues and disparate historical periods, included moves towards self-determination and self-governance by female religious, the working lives of

both cloistered nuns and active sisters and the representation of women religious in artistic media.

The wide temporal scope of the papers, with contributions covering topics from the fourteenth century to the present day, allowed reflection on the wider issues facing this area of research, irrespective of historical period, and some key theoretical problems were considered. For example, the paper on Margaret of York by Anna Campbell (University of Reading) pushed us to reconsider what we mean by 'women religious' and to what extent ostensibly secular women have been able to share in this identity in the past. At the other end of the time scale, Louise O'Reilly (National University of Ireland, Maynooth) readdressed views of Vatican censure of Catholic sisters post Vatican II, taking the Presentation Sisters as a case study, and thus suggested a rethinking of attitudes about power relationships between women under vows and their churches. The range of approaches utilised was similarly broad and Moira Egan's (City University of New York) art-historical analysis of 'Florence Nightingale receiving the Wounded at Scutari' was particularly notable, using the painting as evidence of the diverse varieties of religious women who worked as nurses during the Crimean War. Virginia Blanton (University of Missouri-Kansas City) and Veronica O'Mara's (University of Hull) literary analysis of CUL Add. MS. 2604, a fifteenth-century manuscript of saints' lives, coupled with their comments on the representation of female saints in late medieval art made for an insightful and thorough account of this source.

At the close of the meeting there was discussion of the possibility of including contributions on women religious in the rest of Europe at next year's conference, but the

consensus amongst the delegates was that the network should maintain its current geographical focus. It is clear that in making this decision the group maintains its power to encourage a parallel literature to the more substantial European scholarship, providing a body of work which can be used comparatively by researchers working in this context. The value of the conference in this respect was demonstrated by the presence of scholars of French, Belgian and Dutch religious history and indeed, it provided fresh inspiration for my own doctoral research on representations of French Carmelite Thérèse of Lisieux. The seventh annual conference promises to be a similarly profitable and enjoyable occasion for all working in the field of the history of women religious.

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## **THE REGULAR CANONS IN THE BRITISH ISLES IN THE MIDDLE AGES**

*Gregynog Medieval Monastic Studies II:*

Conference 6 - 9 March 2008 Gregynog Hall (Powys)

Organisers: Janet Burton, Lampeter; Karen Stöber,  
Aberystwyth

**The Regular Canons in the British Isles in the Middle Ages** is the second in the emerging conference series on

*Medieval Monastic Studies*, organized jointly by the Research Institute for Archaeology, History and Anthropology at the University of Wales, Lampeter, and the Department of History and Welsh History, University of Wales, Aberystwyth.

Following the success of the conference on **Monasteries and Society in the Later Middle Ages**, held at Gregynog in 2005, this collaborative project will once again bring together established and younger scholars in the field of medieval monasticism, on this occasion those with a particular research interest in the orders of Canons Regular in the British Isles. We intend that the conference will lead to the publication of the fruits of their research.

The regular canons were the most numerous religious houses in medieval England. A rough calculation of the number of establishments served by the regular canons in England and Wales brings the number to around two hundred Augustinian houses, thirty-two Premonstratensian abbeys, and eleven priories served by Gilbertine canons – the latter number not including the double houses of Gilbertine canons and nuns. This total of over two hundred and forty houses of regular canons does not take account of short-lived foundations, and small dependent cells. In addition twenty-two convents of nuns opted for the Rule of St Augustine in preference to Rule of St Benedict, more commonly followed by religious women. In terms of male houses, therefore, the regular canons in England and Wales vastly outnumbered other groups such as the Cistercians, on whom so much historical scholarship has been lavished. The canons also made their presence felt in Scotland, where, as in England, they enjoyed the patronage of the royal family, and they also found favour among patrons and benefactors in Ireland.

Despite – or maybe because of – their relative neglect in past scholarship historians are now turning their attention to the activities of the regular canons. Certainly the response to our initial call for papers has suggested that there is important research being carried out in this field. The conference papers will treat a wide range of aspects of the life, the spirituality, and the learning of the canons regular, as well as local studies of individual regions and priories. The importance of their buildings will also receive full attention. Speakers will include James Clark (Bristol), Martin Heale (Liverpool), Julian Luxford (St Andrews), David Robinson and Glyn Coppack (English Heritage), and Tadhg O’Keeffe (Dublin).

We intend to organize a visit to a local place associated with the regular canons, possibly the Shropshire abbey of Lilleshall. The response to our call for papers has been such that we are now intending to run two or three sessions at the International Medieval Congress at Leeds in 2008.

For further details please contact one of the conference organizers or visit our website:

[users.aber.ac.uk/kes/canons\\_conference](http://users.aber.ac.uk/kes/canons_conference)

A booking form is available on the website, and a provisional programme will be posted as soon as possible and updated when appropriate.

We look forward to seeing you at the conference.

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## **THE HISTORY OF BOXLEY ABBEY 1146-1538**

University of Winchester Ph.D thesis, supervised by Professor Michael Hicks and Professor Tom James.

I am in the first year of a part-time PhD, funded by the AHRC, which will consider the Cistercian abbey of Boxley in Kent from its foundation in 1146 to its dissolution in 1538, utilising the significant surviving archive for the abbey contained at the National Archives. The archive includes deeds, ministers' accounts and obedientiary accounts and offers a unique opportunity to study in detail for the later Middle Ages both the workings of a smaller religious foundation, and a Cistercian house outside of the better-known Yorkshire abbeys. This study follows on from my MA thesis which was based upon a limited sample of 26 fourteenth century obedientiary accounts from Boxley, of the bursars, cellarers and subcellarers. My MA shed light upon the management of the Boxley estates and the internal administration of the abbey on a day-to-day basis. It demonstrated that at Boxley agriculture was supplemented by tithes, rents and leases and the abbey was closely integrated with local markets, local society and was in regular contact with the archbishop, archdeacon and its daughter house at Robertsbridge in Sussex.

For the initial MPhil stage of this research I am utilising the surviving deeds to establish the identities of the early

patrons and benefactors of Boxley Abbey and determine a chronology for endowment of lands to the house, while simultaneously identifying the religious and local affiliations of the patrons. A study will also be made of the dissolution records to reveal the distribution of the lands in 1538 and the immediate effect this had upon landholding in the area, the physical buildings of the abbey and the monks themselves.

The PhD will build on these foundations to explore how the abbey operated. The remaining obediatory accounts will be further examined in concert with the manorial and estate records to establish how the abbey ran on a day-to-day basis and will, for instance, demonstrate the impact of the Black Death. These sources will shed light on the internal operation of the house and reveal information about consumption and employment. The ways in which the obediatory system and the land management policies of the house adapted over time in response to internal or external factors will be analysed. At this stage the monastic archive will be supplemented by the episcopal records to undertake a limited prosopographical study to establish their origins, numbers, careers and longevity of the Boxley monks.

It is intended that my research will place Boxley Abbey within the economy and society of late medieval Kent and add to current debate on lesser medieval foundations.

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## WALTER DANIEL'S *LIFE OF AILRED OF RIEVAULX* RE-CONSIDERED

Since F. M. Powicke's translation of Walter Daniel's *Life of Aelred of Rievaulx* was published in 1950, one of the striking features occasionally noted by historians is his apparent interest in human bodies, including Aelred's. Powicke himself considered Walter's meticulous descriptions of Ailred's bodily functions to be 'morbid', and both he and C. H. Talbot put it down to the possibility that Walter was Rievaulx's infirmarer.<sup>29</sup> Edward Keeley included both Walter and Ailred among his list of medical practitioners in his study of the Anglo-Norman medicus.<sup>30</sup> Once Walter's text is teased apart and analysed, however, it is apparent that the place of the embodied form within his tale, and a related interest in food and eating, had significance for him beyond simply clinical curiosity.

The method I have adopted in my University of Lancaster PhD thesis (supervised by Dr Andrew Jotischky) has been to go back to the Latin text and where necessary re-translate sections paying close attention to Walter's use of individual words. Thus in places I have departed from the translation given by F. M. Powicke. At the same time I have considered potential sources of influence on Walter's ideas, imagery and language from among the texts likely to have been available to him. Those most notably relevant to this

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<sup>29</sup> F. M. Powicke, ed. and trans., *The Life of Ailred of Rievaulx by Walter Daniel* (London, Edinburgh, Paris, Melbourne, Toronto and New York, 1950), p. xxvii.

<sup>30</sup> E. J. Keeley, *Medieval Medicus: A Social History of Anglo-Norman Medicine* (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University press, 1981), pp. 34, 123, and 149.

enquiry, but not exclusively so, are listed in David N. Bell's edition of the two twelfth-century Rievaulx library lists.<sup>31</sup> So far the research based upon the whole narrative shows that Walter did not simply 'copy and paste' borrowed chunks of text. Instead he used allusions to create intertextual and intratextual bridges so that the literal narrative serves as a prism through which the reader or hearer is able to discern two further layers of meaning: moral and mystical. This structuring of the text in a way which is closely related to methods of biblical exegesis suggests that Walter's intended audience was monastic, though further consideration is needed in order to be certain whether he wrote only for his own community or whether he had in mind a wider readership.

My initial research of the whole text has also revealed that Walter's food-body discourse lies at the centre of his interpretation of sanctity and is not separate from it. If the infirmary contributed to Walter's interest in the physical body then he also found further justification for it beyond its walls. It was shaped by the culture of reforming ideology surrounding him at Rievaulx, where the first abbot had been William, secretary of Bernard of Clairvaux, and the third Ailred himself, who made significant contributions to Cistercian culture. Having said that, some of Walter's signifying stories and symbolism have emerged from within the evolutionary soup of the monastic discourse of late antiquity and, tellingly, the text also contains idiosyncratic tendencies which betray the influence of the hagiographic traditions of both Durham and Canterbury. As the work

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<sup>31</sup> David N. Bell, ed., *The Libraries of the Cistercians, Gilbertines, and Premonstratensians*, Corpus of British Library Catalogues, vol. 3 (London, 1992), pp. 87-137.

continues to develop my aim is to evaluate the relative significance of each of these influences on Walter's ideas, paying particular attention to what they reveal about his understanding of the relationship between embodiment and sanctity. In addition there remains the question of his intended audience, its nature and interests, which might be more easily discerned through having a greater knowledge of the choices he made as he constructed his narrative, since Walter is likely to have had his audience in mind as he made them.

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### **PETER DAMIAN (c.1007-1072), MONASTIC IDEOLOGY AND THE RELIGIOUS REVOLUTION OF THE ELEVENTH CENTURY**

The primary aim of this AHRC-funded, University of Keele doctoral thesis is to re-examine the 180 extant letters of the eleventh-century hermit and reformer, Peter Damian (c.1007-1072). These letters take up seven volumes and have been translated by Owen J. Blum and Irven M. Resnick from the critical edition of Kurt Reindel for the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* from Latin into English.<sup>32</sup> Damian has long been recognised as a leading figure in the so-called

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<sup>32</sup> Peter Damian, *Letters*, 7 vols, trans. O. J. Blum (Washington, D. C. 1989-2005) and Petrus Damiani, *Die Briefe des Petrus Damiani*, 4 volumes, ed. K. Reindel, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*, Briefen der deutschen Kaiserzeit, 5/1-4 (Munich, 1983-1993).

Gregorian Reform movement of the eleventh century and it is perhaps surprising that, despite the publication in recent years of many articles dealing with particular aspects of his spiritual thoughts and writings,<sup>33</sup> it has been nearly fifty years since there was a full-scale biography<sup>34</sup> and sixty years since the publication of Blum's study on Damian's position on the spiritual life.<sup>35</sup> Given recent work on medieval spirituality<sup>36</sup> and on the spiritual and social dimensions of the eleventh-century Gregorian Reform movement,<sup>37</sup> a fresh consideration of this pivotal reformer, especially his contribution to cenobitical and eremitical monastic ideology, is both timely and appropriate.

The main focus of my doctoral research has been to assess Damian's ideas on the concept of spiritual perfection

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<sup>33</sup> See P. G. Jestice, 'Peter Damian against the Reformers' in *The Joy of Learning and the Love of God: Studies in Honour of Jean Leclercq*, ed. E. R. Elder (Kalamazoo, 1995), 67-94 and J. J. Ryan, *St. Peter Damiani and his Canonical Sources* (Toronto, 1995).

<sup>34</sup> J. Leclercq, *St Pierre Damien: Ermite et Homme d'église* (Rome, 1960).

<sup>35</sup> O. J. Blum, *St Peter Damian: His Teaching on the Spiritual Life* (Washington D. C., 1947).

<sup>36</sup> C. Bynum, *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley, 1984); A. Vauchez, *The Spirituality of the Medieval West from the Eighth to the Twelfth Centuries*, trans. C. Frielander (Kalamazoo, MI, 1993); P. G. Jestice, *Wayward Monks and the Religious Revolution of the Eleventh Century* (Leiden, Brill, 1997); R. Fulton, *From Judgment to Passion: Devotion to Christ and the Virgin Mary, 800-1200* (Columbia University Press, New York, 2002); and I. Van't Spijker, *Fictions of the Inner Life: Religious Literature and Formation of the Self in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Disputatio, 4, Turnhout: Brepols, 2004).

<sup>37</sup> K. G. Cushing, *Reform and the Papacy in the Eleventh Century: Spirituality and Social Change* (Manchester University Press, 2005) and R. I. Moore, *The First European Revolution* (Oxford, 2000).

and how it might be achieved. Whilst scholars such as Phyllis Jestice have suggested that there existed a ‘tension’ in Benedictine observance during the eleventh century, it is my contention that, rather than being an eleventh-century phenomenon, this anxiety was a symptom of a constantly evolving monastic ideal, present in sources from the seventh century onwards. A critical examination of Damian’s letters has revealed the extent to which the spiritual relationships he fostered with fellow monks, hermits and monastic houses contributed to this evolution in monastic and eremitic ideology. Damian’s spiritual principles were shaped in no small measure by his understanding of various monastic rules and my research has analysed how the influence of early monastic writers, such as the Desert Fathers, contributed to the writing of the ‘Rule’ for Damian’s own community at Fonte Avellana as well as the biography of his celebrated spiritual father, St Romuald of Ravenna (c.951-1027).

It was through the composition of the rule for his brethren that Damian was able to articulate the tenets governing appropriate monastic behaviour in the eleventh century. My thesis follows on from this to examine Damian’s letters to individual hermits, such as the Tuscan monk Teuzo and to other monastic communities, for example, at Vallombrosa. These letters involved a rhetorical onslaught against what Damian believed to be the inappropriate and disobedient behaviour of these sanctimonious monks which, I have argued, contributed to an intensification in religious fervour during this time. An analysis of Damian’s letters has revealed the extent to which he manipulated this heightened commitment to the spiritual ideal, and used it to promote the supremacy of the eremitical lifestyle in the pursuit of spiritual perfection. Through an examination of Damian’s relationship

with the increasingly opulent Benedictine monastery of Montecassino, and particularly with its abbot, Desiderius (1058-87), my research also argues that, despite Damian's affection for the hermitage, his relationship with cenobitical communities in the eleventh century was especially crucial to the evolution of a new monastic ideal. Damian's encouragement of monastic houses to undergo changes in their daily observance to make them increasingly ascetic contributed to the 'reforming' atmosphere of the eleventh century, especially after 1040. My research has concluded that the steady development of monastic ideology, promoted by figures like Peter Damian, can be seen most of all in the need for new monasteries to justify their foundations by separating themselves from other forms of monastic obedience through an appeal to different traditions of the past.

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## **COMMEMORATION IN THE RELIGIOUS HOUSES OF LONDON**

Medieval London was rich in the number of friaries, hospitals and priories, yet all but a handful were destroyed during the Reformation.<sup>38</sup> Those which survived as parish churches, such as the nunnery of St Helen's Bishopsgate,

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<sup>38</sup> Caroline M Barron and Matthew Davies (ed.) *The Religious House of Medieval London and Middlesex* (London 2007).

have suffered from iconoclasm, restoration, war and terrorism, and in some cases, such as the hospital of St Katherine's by the Tower, have been completely destroyed. As such the question of commemoration, and in particular the extent of tombs, effigies, monumental brasses and other forms of funerary monuments, has been neglected. Occasional fragments have been found, especially in the form of palimpsests such as the brass of Walter Curson (d. 1527) and his wife Isabel at Waterperry, Oxfordshire. Here fragments of the effigies and inscription from the brass of Simon Kemp (d. 1442) and his wife Margaret (d. 1442) originally in the priory of Holy Trinity Aldgate were used when producing the Curson brass.<sup>39</sup>

With much of the material remains now lost it is the written record which provides evidence on the extent of tombs and other memorials in the religious houses of London. *The Register of the Greyfriars* contains a list of 765 men, women and children on 671 tombs, and was compiled in the 1520's quite probably as a practical guide on the availability of space for future burials and monuments.<sup>40</sup> Further, John Stow (1525-1605) in *A Survey of London* records a number of tombs from former religious houses.<sup>41</sup> Given that the *Survey* was first published in 1598, it is puzzling how Stow knew of these tombs, many of which, including those at the Greyfriars, had been destroyed in the mid sixteenth century. Clearly Stow had access to manuscript evidence, perhaps in the form of other registers or heraldic

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<sup>39</sup> Christian Steer, 'I didn't know there were pirates in Oxfordshire', [http://www.mbs-brasses.co.uk/pic\\_lib/July2007brassofthemoth.htm](http://www.mbs-brasses.co.uk/pic_lib/July2007brassofthemoth.htm)

<sup>40</sup> C. L. Kingsford *The Register of the Greyfriars* (Aberdeen 1915).

<sup>41</sup> C. L. Kingsford *A Survey of London by John Stow*, 2 vols (Oxford 1908).

notes, from which he listed the former tombs. Other antiquarians, such as John Weever (1575/76-1632) and John Strype (1643-1737) also listed tombs from medieval London but neither added to the lists made by Stow.

Collectively, the *Register* and Stow's *Survey* record 924 tombs in the religious houses of medieval London, commemorating royalty, nobility, the civic elite and 'celebrities' from London's history. Queen Margaret (d. 1317), wife of Edward I, was commemorated at the Greyfriars, as was Queen Isabel (d. 1357); at St Katherine's Hospital were the effigies of John Holland, duke of Exeter (d. 1447) and two of his wives; the tomb of Thomas Knesworth (d. 1513), former mayor and fishmonger, was at the Guildhall Chapel; and at the priory of St Mary Overy was the tomb of John Gower (d. 1408). It is evident that the religious houses were particularly popular for aliens and foreigners, their need for remembrance perhaps being greater away from their home. As well as Irish, French, Spanish and Italians, the religious houses also included commemoration of the likes of Margery de Ilderton (d. 1388) of Northumberland, at the Austin friars, and Sir Robert Knolles (d. 1407) of Norfolk at the Whitefriars.

Testamentary instruction on the type of tomb required is often to be found for Londoners. At the priory of the Holy Cross were tombs for the Narborough family. In the will of William Narborough (d. 1491) he requested his parents be exhumed and re-interred elsewhere in the church with a new monument, and commissioned his own tomb on the site of his parents' former grave.<sup>42</sup> Wills also reveal the influence of London monuments: the will of John Smith of Coventry (d.

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<sup>42</sup> TNA PRO PROB 11/Quire 9 ff. 9r-10v.

1500) requested a monument exactly like the one for William and Joan Maryner at the Greyfriars in London.<sup>43</sup> The proximity of the London workshops in St Paul's Cathedral, St Dunstan in the West and at Blackfriars meant that suppliers of tombs were literally on the doorsteps of many of the religious houses.

The extent of commemoration in the religious houses is still work in progress as part of a PhD thesis under the supervision of Professor Caroline Barron and Professor Nigel Saul at Royal Holloway University of London.

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<sup>43</sup> TNA PRO PROB 11/13 Quire 4 ff. 47v-48v.

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