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**THE AUGUSTINIAN CANONS IN ENGLAND AND WALES:
ARCHITECTURE, ARCHAEOLOGY
AND LITURGY 1100–1540**

This note introduces readers of the *Monastic Research Bulletin* to two initiatives concerned with the Augustinian canons: a long-standing research programme by the author, and a forthcoming conference in Oxford. The particular focus of both these initiatives is on buildings, with the intention of presenting fresh insights into the architecture and archaeology of Augustinian monastic churches and claustral buildings, as well as considering the all-important liturgical use of these spaces. In broad terms, the primary aim of the research programme is to produce an architectural history of the Augustinian canons in England and Wales. The conference, on the other hand, will consider a wider spectrum of evidence from across the entire British Isles. In both cases, however, there is a clear appreciation that in order to understand the Augustinians in Britain, it is essential to take into account the wider European historical and architectural contexts.

To begin with, and by way of background, the opportunity is taken to review the existing literature on the Augustinians in two sections. The first looks at material with a largely historical bearing on the canons in England and Wales, and the second considers our present state of knowledge on their buildings.

The Augustinian Canons

The Augustinian canons remain very much the Cinderellas of British medieval monastic history. Despite their prolific numbers, the not inconsiderable quantity and quality of their archives, and the fame and celebrity of much of their surviving architecture, the canons continue to stand in the shadow of the more familiar and generally better-researched monastic groups, most notably the Benedictines and the

Cistercians.¹ To underline this point, it is worth remembering that in the classic twentieth-century account of the monastic order in England, by Dom David Knowles, coverage of the Augustinians barely fills more than two pages.² Although Knowles devoted slightly more space to the canons in his three-volume set dealing with the religious orders in England, generally they are again given rather scant attention.³

In part, this historic neglect of the Augustinians may be explained by the difficulties of defining the characteristics of the various regular canonical groups at large with any degree of precision.⁴ After all, in the literature there have sometimes been at least tacit suggestions that the canons do not fit readily into overviews of archetypal monastic

¹ For Sir Richard Southern, such neglect could readily be explained as their just deserts. Most unfairly, he claimed: ‘the Augustinian canons ... lacked every mark of greatness. They were neither very rich, nor very learned, nor very religious, nor very influential’; R.W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages* (London, 1971), p. 248. Setting such views firmly to one side, numerically the Augustinians easily outstripped the Cistercians in England and Wales, by a factor of around three to one. They also outnumbered the principal grouping of Benedictine houses, though admittedly with the addition of alien cells (most of which had disappeared by 1420) the black monks edged ahead by a small margin; D. Knowles and R.N. Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses: England and Wales*, 2nd ed. (London, 1971), pp. 52–95 (Benedictines), 110–28 (Cistercians), 137–82 (Augustinians).

² D. Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, 1963), pp. 175, 359–60. The volume covers the period 940–1216.

³ D. Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, 1948–59). The volumes look at the years 1216–1540. His views on the canons were, in any case, not always the most favourable. With reference to the smaller priories in the later Middle Ages, he claimed: ‘Taken as a whole, they were by the fifteenth century the least fervent, the worst disciplined and the most decayed of all the religious houses’; *ibid.*, II, p. 361.

⁴ This is a point recently made in J. Burton and K. Stöber (eds.), *The Regular Canons in the Medieval British Isles* (Turnhout, 2011), p. 1.

history.⁵ For A. Hamilton Thompson, for instance, communities of canons were to be viewed as ‘clerks in holy orders, banded under rule in the religious life’, and more recently C. H. Lawrence has described them as ‘a hybrid order of clerical monks, congregations of clergy living under a monastic rule’.⁶ And yet, at the same time, both these – and other – authors acknowledge a strong degree of commonality in the everyday life of the two broad religious groupings. Thompson thought that in their daily office ‘there was little to distinguish such canons from monks’, and Lawrence says that in all ‘essentials the canonical observance was monastic’.⁷ To this, one could certainly add a comment on the similarity of architectural aspiration. In the British Isles at least, when looking at the essential planning elements within a monastic complex, or making comparisons in the huge variety that might occur in the scale of building operations, there are no fundamental differences to be observed between the Augustinians and, say, the Cluniacs, the Benedictines, or the Cistercians.⁸

⁵ In other words, it is understandable that Knowles, a Benedictine monk, should devote little space to any group other than the Benedictines, or those closely allied orders following the *Regula Benedicti*.

⁶ A.H. Thompson, *History and Architectural Description of the Priory of St Mary, Bolton-in-Wharfedale, with some Account of the Canons Regular of the Order of St Augustine and their Houses in Yorkshire*, Publications of the Thoresby Society, 30 (Leeds, 1928), p. 4; C.H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism: Forms of Religious Life in Western Europe in the Middle Ages*, 3rd ed. (Harlow, 2001), p. 160.

⁷ Thompson, *Priory of St Mary*, p. 3; Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism*, p. 163. For more on this theme in general, see C.N.L. Brooke, ‘Monk and Canon: Some Patterns in the Religious Life of the Twelfth Century’ in W.J. Sheils (ed.), *Monks, Hermits and the Ascetic Tradition*, Studies in Church History, 22 (Oxford, 1985), pp. 109–29.

⁸ This is of course a very general point and is concerned merely with the broad disposition of monastic churches and cloister buildings, and with the varying scale of these structures. On monastic building in general, see R. Gilyard-Beer, *Abbeys: An Illustrated Guide to the Abbeys of England and Wales*, 2nd ed. (London, 1976); J.P. Greene, *Medieval Monasteries* (Leicester, 1992); G. Coppack, *Abbeys & Priors* (Stroud, 2006).

This is not the place to attempt a fresh overview or a clearer understanding of the Augustinian canons, though one hopes this may be forthcoming from another quarter before too long. Rather, it may be useful to look, albeit briefly, at the way some of the more significant historical material on the Augustinian houses in England and Wales has developed over the years.

For the many individual abbeys and priories stretched right across the country there is no shortage of specific site histories, stretching back over at least two centuries. Not all are of the quality one might hope for, but they certainly began to proliferate from the late nineteenth century onwards, occasionally reaching exhaustive proportions.⁹ Then, from the beginning of the twentieth century, the landmark *Victoria County History* accounts began to appear, providing the raw material for generations of subsequent monastic historians. One has to say there is nothing particularly distinctive in the entries on the canons, but certainly their scope and quality has improved immeasurably over the decades, in line with the series coverage of medieval religious houses generally.¹⁰

⁹ See, for example, the accounts of Taunton, Merton, and Coxford; T. Hugo, 'Taunton Priory', *Proceedings of the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society*, 9 (1859), I, pp. 49–59, II, pp. 1–127; A. Heales, *The Records of Merton Priory, in the County of Surrey, Chiefly from Early and Unpublished Sources* (London, 1898); H.W. Saunders, 'A History of Coxford Priory', *Norfolk Archaeology*, 17 (1910), pp. 284–370. As part of my own research programme (see below), I have sought to maintain as full a bibliography as possible on all houses. I am happy to share information with fellow researchers.

¹⁰ *The Victoria History of the Counties of England* (London and Oxford, 1900–, in progress). The earliest accounts of Augustinian sites appeared (with the other religious houses) in volume II of the county of *Hampshire* (1903), pp. 152–81. The very much fuller accounts of the canons in, for example, volume III of *Staffordshire* (1970), pp. 237–67, and in volume II of *Shropshire* (1973), pp. 59–83, are particularly good. The Staffordshire entries are by the doyen of Augustinian studies in England, J. C. Dickinson. Long

Meanwhile, other raw material that has been made readily available to historians interested in the canons includes transcribed and edited versions of cartularies and other primary documents. In all, more than forty full or abbreviated editions of Augustinian cartularies are now available in print form, with at least a dozen having appeared since 1980.¹¹ To these one can add transcripts of occasional estate documentation, such as rentals and account rolls, often with important introductions and analysis.¹² Meanwhile, one source which remains far too little known – the observances in use at Barnwell Priory in Cambridgeshire, representing the one known ‘customary’ from any of the English houses – was published over a century ago and continues to be fundamental to our appreciation of daily canonical life.¹³ There is also an edited compendium of material relating to the general chapters of the Augustinians in England and Wales.¹⁴

As for studies which have considered the Augustinian houses of England as entire group, or at least have sought to pick out some of their principal characteristics, one of the earliest was produced in the 1880s by Alfred Heales, in a paper otherwise concerned with

awaited, the most recent entries to appear are those in volume II of *Cornwall* (2010), pp. 136–221, by Nicholas Orme.

¹¹ For both the published and unpublished material, see G.R.C. Davis, *Medieval Cartularies of Great Britain and Ireland*, revised by C. Breay, J. Harrison, & D.M. Smith (London, 2010), pp. 3–221, *passim*. There is an earlier list in J.C. Dickinson, *The Origins of the Austin Canons and their Introduction into England* (London, 1950), pp. 286–89.

¹² There is no readily available list, but I maintain details in my site bibliographies.

¹³ J.W. Clark (ed.), *The Observances in use at the Augustinian Priory of S. Giles and S. Andrew at Barnwell, Cambridgeshire* (Cambridge, 1879 and repr. 2011). The source, London BL, Harley 3601, is apparently the subject of fresh study: J. Harmon, ‘Barnwell Priory, Cambridge: An Early Norman Foundation’, *Monastic Research Bulletin*, 16 (2010), pp. 57–9.

¹⁴ Chapters were held after the papal reforms of 1215: H.E. Salter (ed.), *Chapters of the Augustinian Canons*, Canterbury and York Society, 29 (London, 1922); Knowles, *Religious Orders*, I, pp. 28–31.

Tandridge Priory.¹⁵ Much better informed, and paving the way forward, was A. Hamilton Thompson's introduction to his study of Bolton Priory, published in the 1920s.¹⁶ However, students of monastic history were obliged to wait until 1950 for the appearance of the first full-length study of the English Augustinians, written by the Reverend John Compton Dickinson.¹⁷ In the preface to that volume, Dickinson remarked that he would 'deal with the origins of the most neglected religious order of the medieval church', though in fact his coverage proceeds beyond origins to look at developments in England through to the early thirteenth century. Dickinson's book quickly became the standard authority, though given his own comment on earlier neglect, it occasions at least some surprise that more than sixty years later it still stands as the sole significant work of reference.¹⁸

Within a year of his major publication, Dickinson went on to produce a paper analyzing the reasons for the large number of early suppressions of Augustinian houses in England,¹⁹ and another looking at what he described as the Continental influence on the progress of the regular

¹⁵ A. Heales, *The History of Tandridge Priory, Surrey; and Some Account of the Canons Regular of the Order of St Augustine, Commonly Called the Austin Canons* (London, 1885), pp. 60–90.

¹⁶ The piece is entitled 'The Canons Regular of the Order of St Augustine, with Special Reference to their Houses in Yorkshire'; Thompson, *Priory of St Mary*, pp. 3–49.

¹⁷ Dickinson, *Austin Canons*.

¹⁸ For the quote, see Dickinson, *Austin Canons*, p. v. We are also told in the preface that the book was almost complete when war broke out in 1939. That it remains the only fundamental source of reference, with virtually nothing on the later history of the canons in England, echoes the remarks made in the opening paragraphs above. Indeed, the opinions of Knowles and Southern would certainly not have helped.

¹⁹ J.C. Dickinson, 'Early Suppressions of English Houses of Austin Canons', in V. Ruffer and A.J. Taylor (eds.), *Medieval Studies Presented to Rose Graham* (Oxford, 1950), pp. 54–77.

canons in this country.²⁰ Less well known is his 1962 paper looking at the contribution of the canons to ecclesiastical reform in England in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, published in Italian.²¹ That aside, it was essentially three decades before anyone attempted to add significantly to Dickinson's major work. The present author made some attempt to do just this, offering the canons a new setting in what is fundamentally an overview of their settlement pattern in England and Wales, drawing on evidence of the economies of the various houses.²² In subsequent years, the Augustinians have been given a more prominent place in monastic studies.²³ Things might be said to have taken off with the coverage given in Janet Burton's survey of the monastic and religious orders in Britain; and the canons are again given rightful prominence in her excellent regional study of Yorkshire.²⁴

²⁰ J.C. Dickinson, 'English Regular Canons and the Continent in the Twelfth Century', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th ser., 1 (1951), pp. 71–89. Here, Dickinson looks primarily at the settlement of the Victorine and Arrouaisian canons in England, though he also considers two other minor groups. He omits the far more significant (in English terms) Premonstratensians, aware that a book was about to be published: H.M. Colvin, *The White Canons in England* (Oxford, 1951).

²¹ J.C. Dickinson, 'I canonici regolari e la riforma ecclesiastica in Inghilterra nei secoli XI e XII', in *La vita commune del clero nei secoli XI e XII (Atti della settimana di studio, Mendola, settembre 1959, Miscellanea del Centro di Studi Medioevale, III)* (Milan, 1962), I, pp. 274–303.

²² D.M. Robinson, *The Geography of Augustinian Settlement in Medieval England and Wales*, 2 vols., British Archaeological Reports, 80 (Oxford, 1980). See, also, idem, 'The Site Changes of Augustinian Communities in Medieval England and Wales', *Medieval Studies*, 43 (1981), pp. 425–44.

²³ For an interesting contribution in the 1980s, see J. Herbert, 'The Transformation of Hermitages into Augustinian Priors in Twelfth-Century England', in Sheils, *Monks, Hermits*, pp. 131–45.

²⁴ J. Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders in Britain* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 43–62; idem, *The Monastic Order in Yorkshire, 1069–1215* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 69–97.

It is pleasing to record that in the past decade or so the canons have received much more attention from a new generation of monastic historians. There have, for instance, been important studies of individual houses, such as Bolton, Kirkham, Nostell and Plympton.²⁵ Moreover, several recent doctoral theses, notably those by Andrew Abram and Nick Nichols, have looked anew at the characteristics of regional groupings of houses.²⁶ And finally there is a major new collection of essays on the regular canons in the British Isles generally, with much of the content dealing specifically with the Augustinians.²⁷

There is not space here to detail the extensive Continental literature on the canons, and in any case one has to admit it is no straightforward task. In France, Italy, Spain and elsewhere, the regular canons generally divide into more independent orders, congregations, or affiliations than are found in Britain.²⁸ Of course, the most familiar are

²⁵ J. Burton, *Kirkham Priory from Foundation to Dissolution*, Borthwick Papers, 86 (York, 1995); K. Legg, *Bolton Priory: Its Patrons and Benefactors 1120–1293*, Borthwick Papers, 106 (York, 2004); J. Frost, *The Foundation of Nostell Priory, 1109–1153*, Borthwick Papers, 111 (York, 2007); A. Fizzard, *Plympton Priory: A House of Augustinian Canons in South-Western England in the Late Middle Ages* (Leiden, 2007). One should also mention the important collection of papers on Osney, going back to the 1970s, made available as, D. Postles, *Osney Abbey Studies* (Leicester 2008): <http://webdoc.sub.gwdg.de/ebook/mon/2008/ppn%20569792517.pdf>

²⁶ A. Abram, ‘The Augustinian Canons in the Diocese of Coventry and Lichfield and their Benefactors, 1115–1320’, (PhD thesis, University of Wales Lampeter, 2007); N. Nichols, ‘The Augustinian Canons in the Diocese of Worcester and their Relation to the Secular and Ecclesiastical Powers in Late Medieval England’ (PhD thesis, University of Wales Lampeter, 2009).

²⁷ Burton and Stöber, *The Regular Canons*.

²⁸ Although dated, for an introduction, see C. Dereine, ‘Chanoines des origines au XIII^e siècle’ in A. Baudrillart, A. De Meyer & E. van Vauwenbergh (eds.), *Dictionnaire d’histoire et de géographie ecclésiastique*, 12 (1953), cols. 353–405; and for further background, J. Châtillon, *Le mouvement canonique au Moyen Âge: Réform d l’Église, spiritualité et culture*, Bibliotheca victorina, 3 (Turnhout, 1992).

those which are indeed represented on these shores, notably the Arrouaisians, the Premonstratensians, and the Victorines.²⁹ But there are other groups too, such as the canons regular of Saint-Ruf, or the canons regular of the Holy Cross of Coimbra, often with their own customaries and general chapters.³⁰ In short, before one attempts to make any measured historical or architectural comparisons between the largely autonomous British houses of Augustinian canons and those of a similar status on the Continent, it is important to appreciate just how these various independent groups fit into the overall picture. That said, attention might be drawn to two especially interesting and comparatively recent works, the one examining the regular canons in Normandy, and the other a valuable collection of essays looking more

²⁹ For the Arrouaisians, see L. Milis, *L'ordre des chanoines réguliers d'Arrouaise: Son histoire et son organisation, de la fondation de l'abbaye-mère (vers 1090) à la fin des chapitres annuels (1471)*, 2 vols. (Bruges, 1969); for the Premonstratensians, see B. Ardura, *Abbayes, prieurés et monastères de l'ordre de Prémontré en France des origines à nos jours: dictionnaire historique et bibliographique* (Nancy, 1993); J. Bond, 'The Premonstratensian Order: A Preliminary Survey of its Growth and Distribution in Medieval Europe' in M. Carver (ed.), *In Search of Cult: Archaeological Investigations in Honour of Philip Rahtz* (Woodbridge, 1993), pp. 153–85; Colvin, *White Canons*; for the Victorines, see F. Bonnard, *Histoire de l'abbaye royale et de l'ordre des chanoines réguliers de Saint-Victor de Paris*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1905–7).

³⁰ Saint-Ruf (Vaucluse), on the southern outskirts of Avignon, was head of a significant congregation in southern France, but with its influence spreading to Catalonia: U. Vones-Liebenstein, *Saint-Ruf und Spanien: Studies zur Verbreitung und zum Wirken der Regularkanoniker von Saint-Ruf in Avignon auf der iberischen Halbinsel (11. Und 12. Jahrhundert)*, 2 vols., *Bibliotheca victorina*, 6 (Turnhout, 1996). Coimbra's authority appears to have been largely contained within Portugal: A.A. Martins, *O mosteiro se Santa Cruz de Coimbra na Idade Média* (Lisbon, 2003).

widely at their emergence and expansion across Europe as a whole.³¹

To conclude this section, and returning to something said above, what one hopes for now is a mature and up to date account of the Augustinian canons in Britain, something which at long last may serve to supplement if not supersede Dickinson's admirable, but now very dated, study of 1950. Ideally, this would look again at the beginnings of the congregation in Europe, drawing on more of the sources now readily available. After the foundation of the earliest British houses, it would be of great interest to trace the gradual emergence of what might be considered a true Augustinian 'order', probably after 1215. And of course, if we are to gain a clearer understanding of the canons overall activities, whether they be liturgical, educational, economic, parochial, or the extent of their involvement within local communities generally, then developments should be followed through to the sixteenth century.

The Study of Augustinian Architecture

In the autumn of 1882, two of the greats of late 19th-century British architectural history, E. A. Freeman and J. T. Micklethwaite, were at Carlisle for the annual meeting of the Royal Archaeological Institute. During an excursion to Lanercost Priory, Micklethwaite drew attention to the single-aisled nave of the priory church, arguing that this particular form was a distinct characteristic of the Augustinian congregation.³² Freeman, speaking in his turn at the cathedral priory of

³¹ On Normandy (actually the province of Rouen), see M. Arnoux (ed.), *Des clercs au service de la réforme: études et documents sur les chanoines réguliers de la province de Rouen*, Bibliotheca victorina, 9 (Turnhout, 2000). The collection of essays, which includes material on France, Italy, the Empire and the Iberian peninsula, is M. Parisse (ed.), *Les chanoines réguliers: Émergence et expansion (XI^e–XIII^e siècles)*, CERCOR Travaux et Recherche, 19 (Saint-Étienne, 2009). See, also, the sources given by Burton and Stöber, *Regular Canons*, p. 2, n. 2.

³² *Archaeological Journal*, 39 (1882), p. 458.

Carlisle, doubted that ‘an archaeologist suddenly dropped from the clouds’ could readily distinguish the building as Augustinian. ‘He might think that it was a church of Benedictines’, said Freeman; ‘he could not tell by the light of nature that it was a church of Austin canons’.³³

Largely in response to these views, the Reverend J. F. Hodgson was prompted to write a series of three extended articles on the general planning of Augustinian churches, published between 1884 and 1886.³⁴ Hodgson spilt much ink in testing a series of propositions, chiefly the extent to which fundamental differences of plan existed between churches of the Augustinian canons and those of the mainstream monastic orders. He was further concerned to assess the extent to which Augustinian churches were parochial.

Hodgson’s work has since been judged rather harshly, despite the fact that some of his individual observations remain insightful. Perhaps the most interesting point, however, is the subsequent reluctance of scholars to revisit the architecture of the Augustinian canons as a distinct and related grouping. This is yet more noteworthy when we consider the amount of material produced on the buildings of several other religious orders in England and Wales, especially the Cistercians, but also the Carthusians and the Premonstratensians.³⁵ To a degree, it is a lacuna which almost certainly reflects the scale of the task involved,

³³ *Archaeological Journal*, 39 (1882), pp. 446–47.

³⁴ J.F. Hodgson, ‘On the Difference of Plan Alleged to Exist between Churches of Austin Canons and those of Monks; and the Frequency with which such Churches were Parochial’, *Archaeological Journal*, 41 (1884), pp. 374–414; 42 (1885), pp. 96–119, 215–46, 331–69, 440–68; 43 (1886), pp. 52–74, 290–305, 403–22.

³⁵ On the Cistercians, for example, see D.M. Robinson (ed.), *The Cistercian Abbeys of Britain: Far from the Concourse of Men* (London, 1998); C. Norton and D. Park (eds.), *Cistercian Art and Architecture in the British Isles*, repr. with addition (Cambridge, 2011), both with extensive bibliographies.

with upwards of 200 sites to consider.³⁶ At the same time, one suspects that it derives in part from an historic view that it could well prove a fruitless exercise. In other words, one may well search in vain for any form of distinctive architecture among houses of the Augustinian canons.

Expressed in such wholly negative terms, this outmoded view is certainly open to question, with no shortage of material on which to marshal the case. Indeed, in parallel with the information covering the history of the canons in England and Wales, in this context there are numerous architectural and archaeological studies which again go back more than two centuries. From as early as 1770, for example, there is a pioneering account of Lesnes Abbey by one of the fathers of antiquarian investigation, William Stukeley.³⁷

As general scholarly interest in monastic sites grew through the nineteenth century, quite a number of standing Augustinian buildings became the subject of technical recording through measured plans and elevations. Many other sites were explored archaeologically for the first time, in the hope of recovering both lost features and buried artefacts. Standards inevitably varied, and one cannot chart a single and entirely progressive overall pattern, but there are undoubtedly numerous highlights.³⁸

³⁶ On these numbers, see Knowles and Hadcock, *Religious Houses*, pp. 137–45; Robinson, *Augustinian Settlement*, I, pp. 22–73. In contrast, the Premonstratensians, with between thirty and forty ‘permanent’ houses in England and Wales, can be covered quite manageably; A. Clapham, ‘The Architecture of the Premonstratensians, with Special Reference to their Buildings in England’, *Archaeologia*, 73 (1922–3), pp. 117–46.

³⁷ W. Stukeley, ‘Account of Lesnes Abbey’, *Archaeologia*, 1 (1770), pp. 44–8.

³⁸ For summaries on the nineteenth-century growth in ‘monastic archaeology’ in general, see Greene, *Medieval Monasteries*, pp. 32–40; Coppack, *Abbeys*, pp. 11–36.

One of the earliest accounts of upstanding fabric, complete with carefully drawn plans and sections, is John Britton's investigation of St Frideswide's Priory at Oxford (now Oxford Cathedral).³⁹ Marginally later, though no less impressive, is the contribution on Christchurch Priory in Dorset by the architect Benjamin Ferrey.⁴⁰ Both these examples rank among the best of their kind, certainly for their date, but they were matched – sometimes even exceeded – by several later nineteenth-century studies, with the work of Francis Dollman on Southwark, and Charles Hodges on Hexham, certainly standing out.⁴¹ From the first quarter of the twentieth century there is an equally elaborate monograph on St Bartholomew's Priory, Smithfield, though in general terms works of this kind were becoming far less common by this time.⁴²

In terms of archaeological excavation, it is difficult to quantify the precise number of Augustinian sites explored over the course of the nineteenth century. All too often our only knowledge of work having taken place rests on a brief note or a casual reference, with the findings otherwise left unpublished.⁴³ Even when reports of some form do exist for early archaeological work, as is the case for the priories at Bicester

³⁹ J. Britton, *The History and Antiquities of the Cathedral Church of Oxford, Illustrated by a Series of Engravings, of Views, Plans, Elevations, Sections, and Details of that Edifice* (London, 1821).

⁴⁰ The work was first published in 1834, but see B. Ferrey, *The Antiquities of the Priory of Christ-Church, Hampshire, Consisting of Plans, Sections, Elevations, Details, and Perspective Views, of the Present Church*, 2nd ed., rev. by J. Britton (London, 1841).

⁴¹ F.T. Dollman, *The Priory of St Mary Overie, Southwark: Comprising I. The History; II. The Description; III. The Illustrations, of the Church and Conventual Buildings* (London, 1881); C.C. Hodges, *Ecclesia Hagustaldensis: The Abbey of St Andrew, Hexham* (Hexham, 1888).

⁴² E.A. Webb, *The Records of St Bartholomew's Priory and of the Church and Parish of St Bartholomew the Great, West Smithfield*, 2 vols. (London, 1921).

⁴³ Such references occur, for example, in county histories, or in the reports of field visits found in one of the many national and county archaeological journals.

and Walsingham, to name but two, we are often left wondering about the accuracy of the detail or the reliability of the interpretation.⁴⁴ From the last years of the nineteenth century, however, and on into the twentieth century, we begin to see an increase not only in the quality of such work, but also in the sheer quantity of Augustinian sites under investigation. Even today, our knowledge of many churches and claustral buildings, or at least large sections of them, is known primarily from excavations carried out between the 1880s and the 1930s. This is true, for instance, of Repton, Burscough, Haughmond (partially re-excavated since), Lesnes, Bradenstoke, Kenilworth, Westacre, Conishead and Butley.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ For Bicester, see J. Dunkin, *Oxfordshire: The History and Antiquities of the Hundreds of Bullington and Ploughley*, 2 vols. (London, 1823), II, pp. 250–52; for Walsingham, see J.L. Warner ‘Walsingham Priory: A Memoir Read at the Meeting of the Institute in Cambridge, June 1854, with an Account of Recent Discoveries’, *Archaeological Journal*, 13 (1856), pp. 115–33. In my catalogue of sites, I am gradually seeking to document all known excavation work. The fully published studies are already included in my bibliographies.

⁴⁵ There are more one could mention, but for those mentioned see W.H.St.J. Hope, ‘Repton Priory, Derbyshire’, *Archaeological Journal*, 41 (1885), pp. 349–69; J. Bromley, ‘Notes on Some Recent Excavations at Burscough Priory’, *Transactions of the Historical Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*, ns. 5 (1889), pp. 127–46; W.H.St.J. Hope and H. Brakspear, ‘Haughmond Abbey, Shropshire’, *Archaeological Journal*, 66 (1910), pp. 281–310; A.W. Clapham, *Lesnes Abbey in the Parish of Erith, Kent* (London, 1915); H. Brakspear, ‘Excavations at Some Wiltshire Monasteries’, *Archaeologia*, 73 (1922–3), pp. 225–52, at 225–35; E. Carey-Hill, ‘Kenilworth Abbey: A Record of the Ruins Excavated in 1890 and 1922–3’, *Birmingham Archaeological Society Transactions and Proceedings*, 52 (1927), pp. 184–227; F.H. Fairweather and H.L. Bradfer-Lawrence, ‘The Priory of St Mary and All Saints, Westacre, and Excavations upon its Site’, *Norfolk Archaeology*, 23 (1929), pp. 359–94; P.V. Kelly, ‘Excavations at Conishead Priory’, *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society*, ns. 30 (1930), pp. 149–68; J.N.L. Myers, W.D. Carøe & J.B. Ward Perkins, ‘Butley Priory, Suffolk’ *Archaeological Journal*, 90 (1933), pp. 177–281.

The early twentieth century was also the period when growing concern for the conservation of ancient monuments led to the State taking on responsibility for a substantial number of our greater monastic ruins, including an important collection of Augustinian sites. Before the Second World War, the English sites taken into care were St Botolph's at Colchester, Guisborough, Haughmond, Kirkham, Lanercost, St Olaves, and Thornton. Their ruins were consolidated, buried walls uncovered, and in each case the results of investigation were generally published, at least in an official site guidebook.⁴⁶

After the war years, not surprisingly, it took some time before further significant architectural and archaeological investigation of individual Augustinian houses began to take place once more. But in any case, for all that had been achieved by the mid-twentieth century, scholars still lacked a reliable overview of the buildings of the Augustinian congregation at large, something which might help serve to contextualize or interpret particular findings at any one site.

Finally, in the 1960s, it was again John Dickinson who was the first modern scholar to attempt something by way of an introductory overview, in two separate articles. The first, published in French in 1967, dealt in very summary fashion with the characteristics of Augustinian monastic planning in England, going on to explore the documentary evidence for the chronology of construction at some of

⁴⁶ The course of events behind State intervention, and the subsequent process of investigation at each site, might well form a study in itself. After the war, other English and Welsh Augustinian sites continued to be taken into care: Brinkburn, Bushmead, Creake, Haverfordwest, Lilleshall, Llanthony I, and Thetford (Holy Sepulchre). The list of Augustinian sites taken into care in Scotland during the twentieth century includes Holyrood, Inchmahome, Jedburgh, and St Andrews.

the earlier houses.⁴⁷ The second essay, which appeared a year later, is an interesting piece looking at the fate of English Augustinian buildings since the suppression of the monasteries of the 1530s.⁴⁸ Dickinson outlines, for example, why a considerable number of Augustinian churches survive in whole or in part. He also takes us through various examples of the many conversions of different elements in the monastic buildings, usually done for domestic purposes, and explains why in other cases almost the entire site has been swept away.

Although neither of Dickinson's articles can be considered in any way definitive, in the forty years and more since they were produced there has been no further attempt to summarize the characteristics of Augustinian architecture in medieval England and Wales. This can only be regarded as a disappointment, especially when at the same time a huge body of fresh evidence has come to light, either through large-scale archaeological excavation, or as a result of extensive new studies of upstanding fabric.

The buried remains of Cirencester Abbey, for example, were partially uncovered as early as 1964–66, and one can be thankful the principal findings have now been published. Founded by King Henry I no later than 1130, the abbey was of huge importance, becoming one of the largest and richest houses of the congregation in England. The excavations uncovered the plan of much of the twelfth-century and later abbey church, together with a large part of the east range of cloister buildings. Of further interest, Cirencester was the site of a ninth-century Anglo-Saxon minster, with the foundations of a

⁴⁷ J.C. Dickinson, 'Les constructions des premiers chanoines réguliers en Angleterre', *Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale*, 10 (1967), pp. 179–98, especially 184–98.

⁴⁸ J.C. Dickinson, 'The Buildings of the English Austin Canons after the Dissolution of the Monasteries', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 3rd ser., 31 (1968), pp. 60–75.

substantial basilican-style church located beneath the nave of the Augustinian abbey.⁴⁹

At Norton Priory (later Abbey), a landmark series of excavations was begun in 1971 under the direction of Patrick Greene. Within a few seasons, Greene's work had made Norton something of a 'type site' for demonstrating the benefits of a modern approach to monastic archaeology. In particular, we were made aware of the rapidity of change, seeing how an aisleless cruciform twelfth-century church and associated cloister buildings could be adapted in phase after phase to suit the needs of the community and its patrons. The excavations continued through to 1987, with Greene subsequently producing an innovative book based on his multi-disciplinary researches. The final excavation report appeared in 2008.⁵⁰

Meanwhile, other protracted excavation programmes were carried out during much the same era at two of England's premier Augustinian sites, the priory of Holy Trinity at Aldgate in London, and Merton Priory in Surrey. Holy Trinity was founded in 1107–8 by Henry I's queen, Matilda, and Merton was established in 1114–17 by one of the king's more significant courtiers, Gilbert, sheriff of Surrey (d. 1126). Given the royal connections of both houses, coupled with the fact they went on to colonize some ten further priories across the southern part of the country, knowledge of their buildings has at least the potential to

⁴⁹ D.J. Wilkinson and A.D. McWhirr, *Cirencester Anglo-Saxon Church and Medieval Abbey*, Cirencester Excavations, 4 (Cirencester, 1998), pp. 23–66. One has to say, however, that the report contains virtually nothing by way of architectural context for the Augustinian buildings.

⁵⁰ J.P. Greene, *Norton Priory: The Archaeology of a Medieval Religious House* (Cambridge, 1989); F. Brown and C. Howard-Davis, *Norton Priory: Monastery to Museum, Excavations 1970–87*, Lancaster Imprints, 17 (Lancaster, 2008).

inform our understanding of the nature of early Augustinian architecture in Britain at large.⁵¹

The report on the investigations at Holy Trinity represents an exemplary combination of archaeological, architectural and historical study, drawing on a wide variety of sources. In the event, only limited areas of the church and monastic buildings have so far been excavated, and it seems very likely that further material remains (including much of the nave and cloister) lay undisturbed beneath the urban topography. Even so, in the published findings we are already presented with an informative picture of an impressive post-1132 Romanesque priory church of substantial proportions.⁵²

The work at Merton Priory was partly informed by an earlier phase of excavations, carried out in 1921–2. But the more recent findings derive from two principal campaigns: the chapter house was explored in 1976–8, and major rescue excavations were carried out (under difficult circumstances) on the church, cloister, infirmary, and cemetery areas between 1986 and 1990.⁵³ To select just one point of particular note, at least four principal phases have been identified in the construction of the priory church. A mid-12th-century (if not earlier) building is known only from *ex situ* fragments, though it is suggested that this was replaced by an aisleless cruciform structure of late 12th- to early 13th-century date. Based on documentary evidence for extensive storm damage and the collapse of a tower, a further major remodelling – with the addition of an aisled nave – is thought to date from the 1220s onwards. Finally, around 1300, a large new four-bay presbytery was

⁵¹ Dickinson, *Austin Canons*, pp. 109–19, 128–29; Robinson, *Augustinian Settlement*, I, pp. 43–45.

⁵² J. Schofield and R. Lea, *Holy Trinity Priory, Aldgate, City of London: An Archaeological Reconstruction and History*, Museum of London Archaeological Monograph, 24 (London, 2005).

⁵³ P. Miller and D. Saxby, *The Augustinian Priory of St Mary Merton, Surrey: Excavations 1976–90*, Museum of London Archaeological Monograph, 34 (London, 2007).

constructed in a single operation, with a two-bay Lady Chapel projecting from the east end.

Having dwelt a little on the detail uncovered at these four sites, one can begin to appreciate something of the richness of the new information which has become available on Augustinian building in England. Yet there is a great deal more to be taken into account. For instance, another major programme of rescue excavations was carried out in 1988–91 on the site is St Gregory’s Priory at Canterbury, one of the houses colonized by Merton.⁵⁴ No less important are the discoveries made at several smaller-scale excavations, especially those where the findings have been combined with analysis of upstanding buildings, as is the case at the two northern priories of Kirkham and Hexham.⁵⁵ We should remember, too, that there is still further material awaiting full publication, including the discoveries made at Selborne, Haughmond, Haverfordwest, and St Botolph’s Colchester.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ M. Hicks and A. Hicks, *St Gregory’s Priory, Northgate, Canterbury: Excavations 1988–1991*, *Archaeology of Canterbury*, ns. 2 (Canterbury, 2001).

⁵⁵ For Kirkham, see G. Coppack, S. Harrison & C. Hayfield, ‘Kirkham Priory: The Architecture and Archaeology of an Augustinian House’, *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 148 (1995), pp. 55–136. Hexham bears some comparison with Cirencester, in that it was the site of a highly significant Anglo-Saxon minster, in this case founded by St Wilfrid in the 670s. The famous crypt survived beneath the nave of the Augustinian priory: E. Cambridge and A. Williams, ‘Hexham Abbey: A Review of Recent Work and its Implications’, *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 5th ser., 23 (1995), pp. 51–138. See, also J. Crook, *English Medieval Shrines* (Woodbridge, 2011), pp. 54–56, 162–64, 182–87.

⁵⁶ An extended series of excavations was carried out at Selborne between 1953 and 1971. At long last, a report on the work, by David Baker, is nearing completion. Haughmond was excavated in 1975–79, with the report by Jeffrey West and Nicholas Palmer at press with English Heritage. Haverfordwest was excavated under the direction of Sian Rees from 1983 through to the 1990s. Post-excavation work is in hand, but for an interim, see S. Rees, ‘The Augustinian Priory’ in D. Miles (ed.), *A History of the Town and County of*

Alongside this extensive body of archaeological material, over the past few decades there have also been a number of admirable architectural studies of English and Welsh Augustinian houses. Not to be overlooked, for example, are the revised and expanded entries in the Pevsner Architectural Guides for each county.⁵⁷ However, as regards studies of individual houses, there are now up-to-date architectural accounts of St Frideswide's Priory at Oxford, Lanercost, and Carlisle, as well as the Arrouaisian house at Dorchester and the Victorine abbey at Bristol.⁵⁸

Summing up on all of this information which has appeared since Dickinson's articles of the 1960s, two interrelated points might be made. On the one hand, there can be no doubt that the majority of the work is of excellent quality, and occasionally there have been attempts to place the findings in either regional or Augustinian contexts. Yet one cannot escape the feeling that this contextual work would have been somewhat more refined, perhaps more conclusive, had some

Haverfordwest (Llandysul, 1999), pp. 55–78, 250–1. The important work at St Botolph's Colchester was undertaken in the early 1990s, with no more than an interim account so far published; C. Crossan, N. Crummy & A. Harris, 'St Botolph's Priory', *The Colchester Archaeologist*, 5 (1991–92), pp. 6–10.

⁵⁷ The original Nikolaus Pevsner material is gradually being updated by a new generation of architectural historians; *The Buildings of England* (New Haven and London, 1951–, in progress).

⁵⁸ J. Blair, *Saint Frideswide's Monastery at Oxford* (Gloucester, 1990), especially pp. 115–83; H. Summerson and S. Harrison, *Lanercost Priory, Cumbria: A Survey and Documentary History*, Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society Record Series, 10 (Kendal, 2000), especially pp. 95–140, 177–83; M. McCarthy and D. Weston (eds.), *Carlisle and Cumbria: Roman and Medieval Architecture, Art and Archaeology*, British Archaeological Association Conference Transactions, 27 (2004), especially pp. 73–145; W. Rodwell, *Dorchester Abbey, Oxfordshire: The Archaeology and Architecture of a Cathedral, Monastery and Parish Church* (Oxford and Oakville 2009); J. Cannon and B. Williamson (eds.), *The Medieval Art, Architecture and History of Bristol Cathedral: An Enigma Explored* (Woodbridge, 2011), especially pp. 32–246.

general study of the canons been available for consultation. With this said, the second point almost makes itself. In short, we clearly require a comprehensive architectural history of the Augustinian canons in England and Wales, not just to provide a full assessment of what has been written over the past two centuries, but also to provide a framework for future research work on individual houses across the country.

All the same, it would be wrong to conclude this section with the implication that scholars had given absolutely no thought to Augustinian buildings during the past few decades. On the contrary, one line of enquiry follows an observation made as far back as 1900, when Edward Prior drew attention to the use of ‘giant order’ elevations in several twelfth-century churches of the Augustinian congregation, going so far as to call this an Augustinian type.⁵⁹ More recently, Richard Halsey has looked at the possibilities in relation to St Frideswide’s Oxford, suggesting that the canons appear to have had ‘a discernible – if tenuous – interest in linked storeys’.⁶⁰

Other important observations on the architecture of the canons have been made in several insightful articles by Jill Franklin. In particular, in a work in which she provides a context for the twelfth-century church at Carlisle, Franklin reminds us of the clear Augustinian preference for churches of unaisled cruciform plan, at least during the twelfth century.⁶¹ We are further reminded that at the heart of the existence of all regular canonical life was an adherence to the life of

⁵⁹ E. Prior, *A History of Gothic Art in England* (London, 1900), pp. 102–03.

⁶⁰ R. Halsey, ‘The Twelfth Century Church of St Frideswide’s Priory’ in Blair, *Saint Frideswide’s*, pp. 115–67, at 155–58 and especially 157.

⁶¹ J. Franklin, ‘Augustinian Architecture in the Twelfth Century: The Context for Carlisle Cathedral’ in McCarthy and Weston, *Carlisle and Cumbria*, pp. 73–88. The Augustinian preference for unaisled naves during the twelfth century was noted by Micklethwaite in the 1880s, though he also observed that there was often a subsequent addition of a single aisle, on the side away from the cloister; *Archaeological Journal*, 39 (1882), p. 458. Similarly, in

the Apostles, or *vita apostolica*. The intriguing question posed by Franklin is whether the single-vessel plan was deliberately chosen by the reforming canons of the twelfth-century with reference to an appropriate iconographic model, as a way of emphasizing their separate identity from monks.⁶²

As it happens, a similar approach to the architecture of the English regular canons at large had earlier been pioneered by Professor Peter Fergusson. In an inspiring study, Fergusson drew our attention away from churches to think instead about claustral buildings.⁶³ In particular, he focused on refectories, starting with the superb structure which survives at Premonstratensian Easby, and going on to look at whether it might represent an exemplar of a distinct form of architecture with a clear iconographic, as well as apostolic, model. In sum, Fergusson points to the large number of refectory ranges, at houses of the Augustinian, Premonstratensian and Gilbertine canons, where the refectory itself was located at first-floor level, above a cellar or undercroft. He assembles a highly persuasive argument, suggesting that the arrangement was a conscious and deliberate reflection of the

their account of work at Haughmond Abbey, Hope and Brakspear noted: ‘By far the larger number of canons’ houses ... had, in the first place, churches without aisles either to the presbytery or nave ... In nearly all cases these aisleless churches seem to have been inconvenient, and an aisle was added upon the side away from the cloister’: Hope and Brakspear, ‘Haughmond Abbey’, p. 285.

⁶² In her 2004 article, Franklin suggests the iconographic source for the plan may be found in Early Christian architecture, and in particular the Basilica Apostolorum in Milan. She developed her thesis further in a lecture given at a 2010 London conference entitled ‘Romanesque and the Past’. The paper is to be published as: ‘Iconic Architecture and the Medieval Reformation: Ambrose of Milan, Peter Damian, Stephen Harding and the Aisleless Cruciform Church’, in J. McNeill and R. Plant (eds), *Romanesque and the Past* (Forthcoming, 2013).

⁶³ P. Fergusson, ‘The Refectory at Easby Abbey: Form and Iconography’, *Art Bulletin*, 71 (1989), pp. 334–51.

cenacle (*cenaculum*) in Jerusalem, the upper room of the Last Supper, situated on Mount Sion.⁶⁴

There is clearly much to consider here, with these and similar lines of enquiry most definitely worthy of further investigation. However, to finally draw this review to a close, there are just one or two other areas of study one should mention. In a British context once again, there has been growing interest in the landscape archaeology of entire monastic precincts. Augustinian houses have been the subject of several investigations of this nature, with the findings and interpretation at Haughmond and Thornton of enormous interest.⁶⁵ Such work adds a rich new layer to our understanding of the sites in question, and one hopes more will be forthcoming in the future.

Beyond Britain, scholars of recent decades again appear to have been reluctant to look at the architecture of Augustinian houses – either for any particular region or in a country as whole – as a distinct and related group. Encouragingly, though, there have at least been several cursory studies which have considered the architectural identity of the canons

⁶⁴ This is not the place to examine the argument in any detail. I can, though, confirm that in my own work I have traced something of the refectory arrangement at approximately 51 Augustinian sites. Of these, in at least 23 cases the refectory was definitely at an upper level. At a further 21 sites there is an indication this may have been the case. In other words, the known percentage is very high, especially in comparison to the Cistercians. The situation with the Benedictines requires further investigation.

⁶⁵ For Thornton, see A. Oswald, J. Goodall, A. Payne & T-J. Sutcliffe, ‘Thornton Abbey, North Lincolnshire: Historical, Archaeological and Architectural Investigations’, Unpublished English Heritage Research Department Report Series, 100-2010 (Portsmouth, 2010). The Haughmond work (by Paul Everson and Trevor Pearson) is to be published as part of the forthcoming monograph by West and Palmer, see note 55, above.

in Ireland.⁶⁶ The findings are not without interest, and there is certainly more than enough scope for further detailed examinations of both the churches and claustral buildings. As for the Continent, there appears to be nothing of major significance available for any country, at least not yet.⁶⁷ There is certainly no up-to-date general overview of Augustinian architecture in France, though the comprehensive and highly stimulating study of the abbey of Saint-Jean-des-Vignes at Soissons (Aisne), by Professor Sheila Bonde and Professor Clark Maines, is a very notable contribution on a single house.⁶⁸ The published volume represents a rich multi-disciplinary study, in which the findings from archaeological excavation are set alongside an analysis of the standing buildings. More importantly, the combined results are set within their appropriate historical context, and the whole is given meaning by constant reference to the liturgical use of all spaces.

Current Research Project

A clear and long-standing gap has been identified in the existing British literature on the buildings of the Augustinian canons. The present author hopes to remedy this, at least to some extent, by producing a comprehensive architectural history of their houses in England and Wales. Indeed, this is something which has been under

⁶⁶ T. O’Keeffe, *An Anglo-Norman Monastery: Bridgetown Priory and the Architecture of the Augustinian Canons Regular in Ireland* (Cork, 1999), pp. 107–45; idem, ‘Augustinian Regular Canons in Twelfth and Thirteenth-Century Ireland: History, Architecture and Identity’, in Burton & Stöber, *Regular Canons*, pp. 469–84.

⁶⁷ Admittedly, I am best informed about France, and have yet to explore in any detail the relevant literature on Italy, Germany, Spain, and elsewhere.

⁶⁸ S. Bonde and C. Maines (eds.), *Saint-Jean-des-Vignes in Soissons: Approaches to its Architecture, Archaeology and History*, Bibliotheca victorina, 15 (Turnhout, 2003). The authors note that ‘Augustinian architecture generally ... has been almost totally neglected’; adding that they eventually ‘intend to reassess critically the question of Augustinian architecture in France’ (p. 170, note 48).

consideration for a number of years.⁶⁹ In the 1980s, a proposed book was sketched out with John Dickinson, with some preliminary chapters drafted at that time. In the event, the scale of the task proved too great, and it became difficult to maintain any real progress alongside formal work commitments. Nevertheless, a site by site catalogue and bibliography has been maintained ever since, with information gathered on a total of some 226 sites.

The purpose of the catalogue entries is to provide what might be called the basic record. Each one offers a concise summary of the historical, archaeological and architectural information on the abbey, priory, or cell in question. The entries begin with various headline information: the site name; the present local authority administrative area; the medieval diocese in which the house lay; a six-figure national grid reference; an indication of statutory protection (with the reference numbers from the National Heritage List for England); the dates of foundation and suppression; the approximate assessed income in 1535; and the dedication.

The entries themselves are then arranged under several broad headings, with an emphasis upon the architecture and archaeology of the site. To begin with, however, the basic historical framework of the house is outlined, including coverage of the post-suppression years. This draws largely, though not exclusively, on published sources. Secondly, there is a general indication of the siting of the church and claustral complex, together with an overview of the surviving remains. Next, there is an historiographical review of existing knowledge on the buildings, noting all known excavations and studies of upstanding fabric, from antiquarian observations through to the most recent accounts. Finally, the longest section tends to be the outline structural history of the medieval buildings, which draws both on the fabric evidence, and on

⁶⁹ In 1980, drawing on the most readily available ground plans, I assembled a series of rudimentary but nevertheless convincing statistics on Augustinian buildings: Robinson, *Augustinian Settlement*, I, pp. 155–71; II, pp. 397–98.

any available documentary sources. The entries are completed with a full bibliography of all known publications, regardless of whether they are relevant to the history or to the architecture of the house.

The catalogue is already close to 150,000 words in length, and is likely to be considerably more when finalized. Whether this can be published in a traditional paper format has yet to be determined, though some form of web-based dissemination obviously springs to mind.⁷⁰ It is, nevertheless, the catalogue that will provide the raw material for a synthesis, or overall architectural history, which will hopefully appear in book form in due course. The author has yet to determine whether the project as a whole may be eligible for some form of research funding, which would undoubtedly enable things to be placed on a proper footing. One aspect yet to be addressed, for example, is that of computer-generated graphics. Maps, plans, elevations and other drawings are all seen as essential requirements, and funding would certainly enable progress to be made in this area.⁷¹

The proposed book is likely to follow a narrative structure, beginning in the twelfth century with what is known of the earliest Augustinian churches and cloister buildings. Developments will be followed all the way through to the last phases of construction in early sixteenth century. That said, the narrative is likely to be punctuated by major thematic elements, whether it be the question of aisleless naves (which continued to prove popular), or first-floor refectories, or the motivation behind so many extended presbyteries in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, or the Augustinian interest in shrines, or even the significance of their large and impressive gatehouses. Indeed, some of

⁷⁰ This would almost certainly require the support of a university, or other sympathetic research-based organization.

⁷¹ A great deal of raw material has already been assembled with the draft catalogue entries, but plans and elevations drawn to common scales are invaluable in such studies. Meanwhile, I propose to provide the photography myself, with recent digital images so far gathered on approximately half of the sites.

these ideas were covered in a sweeping overview presented at the 2007 conference on the Regular Canons in the British Isles. That lecture was very much seen as a work in progress, and was probably not suitable for publication at that stage.⁷² Similarly, at the 2008 conference on St Augustine's Abbey at Bristol (now Bristol Cathedral), in a paper covering the settlement of the Victorine canons in England, some preliminary thoughts on the architecture of that group of houses were put forward, again as a work in progress.⁷³

Regardless of whether research funding becomes available, the author most definitely intends to maintain and to expand his site catalogue and bibliography. He would be very pleased to hear from anyone working on aspects of Augustinian architecture and archaeology. In return, he is more than happy to share material from the catalogue.

Oxford Conference, 7–9 November 2014

There will be another opportunity to address the lacuna in studies of the architecture of the Augustinian canons at a forthcoming conference in Oxford. The conference is in the early stages of planning, but will be built around the theme of 'The Augustinian Canons in Great Britain: Architecture, Archaeology and Liturgy'. It will be held at Rewley House, under the auspices of the Department of Continuing Education at the University of Oxford. The conference is scheduled to run from Friday to Sunday, 7–9 November 2014. The author will act as the conference director, with Dr Cathy Oakes as Director of Studies for the department.

⁷² The proceedings have recently been published under the editorship of the conference organizers: see Burton and Stöber, *Regular Canons*. The editors were kind enough to invite me to submit a written contribution.

⁷³ I was again asked to submit a written contribution, but felt more work needed to be done. The proceedings are now published under the editorship of the conference organizers: Cannon and Williamson, *Bristol Cathedral*.

As the working theme or title implies, the principal focus will undoubtedly be on houses of the Augustinian canons in Great Britain. Nevertheless, so as to broaden the context, and to provide points of comparison, it is very much hoped that the conference will attract scholars working on similar material on the Continent, or in Ireland.

Ideally, proposals for conference papers should be based on significant programmes of work, something which offers wider understanding for the Augustinian congregation at large. Contributions on the houses of a particular region, or on a particular affiliation of houses would be especially welcome, as would those looking at one of the many thematic issues. Something on shrines, for example, would be of great interest, or perhaps something on chapter houses, or on the links between patronage, burial, and the expansion of eastern arms. There is also much to say about the residences of abbots and priors, especially in the later Middle Ages. And anything which might contribute to a clearer picture of the liturgical use of space is very much to be desired.

The author is interested in hearing from anybody who may wish to contribute a paper at this conference. Further notice of the conference will be given in the next volume of the *Monastic Research Bulletin*, hopefully with an indication of the programme content.

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**MONASTIC PATRONAGE AND THE BEGINNING OF JOHN
OF SALISBURY'S CAREER, WITH A REVISED
CHRONOLOGY FOR 1147–1148**

John of Salisbury famously began his career, in the *curia* of Archbishop Theobald of Canterbury, with the help of a testimonial letter from Bernard of Clairvaux, then established as one of the most influential monastic leaders in Europe. However, the standard account of the events leading to this preferment is clearly contradicted by evidence which has been in print for over half a century. Presented here is a reconstruction of the critical events which began the career of a man renowned as one of England's most illustrious diplomats, humanists and political thinkers which is not only consistent with the evidence but offers a fuller insight into the importance of monastic patronage networks in launching John's career.

In 1955 Christopher Brooke ended three quarters of a century of debate about the early stages of John of Salisbury's career, showing that he had entered Theobald's *curia* in 1147 or 1148, after a brief period in the employ of Peter of Celle, and dismissing the theory, first proposed in 1881 and elaborated influentially by R.L. Poole in 1920s, that he had worked as a papal clerk between his student years in Paris and 1154, when the evidence of his first letter collection sets him in Canterbury.¹

¹ The case was first made by R. Pauli, 'Über die kirchenpolitische Wirksamkeit des Iohannes Saresberiensis', *Zeitschrift für Kirchenrecht*, 16 (1881), pp. 265–87, countered by P. Gennrich, 'Zur Chronologie des lebens Johans von Salisbury', *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, 13 (1892), pp. 544–51, and defended and elaborated in R.L. Poole, 'John of Salisbury at the Papal Court', and 'The Early Correspondence of John of Salisbury', in id., *Studies in Chronology and History*, ed. A.L. Poole, pp. 248–58 and 259–86 (first published separately in *English Historical Review*, 38 (1923), pp. 321–30, and *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 11 (1924), pp. 27–53, respectively, the first being revised for the 1934 re-publication). The debate turned largely on whether certain passages in John's *Historia Pontificalis* were eye-witness accounts. Schaarschmidt, John's first modern biographer, had originally

Brooke noted that Bernard's testimonial, which refers to John's financial straits and asks Theobald to accept him urgently, better fits John's circumstances in 1147 than after some years as a papal clerk, and that, as Bernard had died in 1153, John would, in 1154, have been presenting a seven-year-old testimonial containing an urgent request from a man now dead. On the grounds that Bernard had stated that he was recommending by letter a man whom he had commended previously in person, and that Bernard, Theobald and John were all present at the Council of Reims in March 1148, Brooke suggested this as the *terminus post quem* for John's move to Canterbury and as the likely occasion of this personal commendation.² However, in 1956 Avrom Saltman published evidence that John was already at Canterbury, as a member of Theobald's *curia*, by January 1148, before the Council of Reims. This rules out the Council as the occasion for the personal commendation and implies an earlier, unrecorded meeting between Theobald and Bernard.³ Brooke agreed with Saltman's dating,

proposed that John entered Theobald's service in 1147 or 1148, but other aspects of his account of these years have been revised: C. Schaarschmidt, *Johannes Saresberiensis nach Leben und Studien, Schriften und Philosophie* (Leipzig, 1862), pp. 25–8. John's first letter collection: *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, vol. 1, *The Early Letters (1153–1161)*, ed. W.J. Millor, H.E. Butler and C.N.L. Brooke, Nelson's Medieval Texts (Edinburgh, 1955), re-issued with *corrigenda* and *addenda*, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford, 1986); this edition places the earliest letter possibly in late 1153.

² *Letters of John of Salisbury*, vol. 1, pp. xv–xix; Brooke's conclusions were provisional and he noted that Saltman's then still ongoing work on Theobald's charters might offer more evidence for John in Canterbury. Bernard's testimonial is *Sancti Bernardi Opera*, ed. J. Leclercq, H. Rochais and C.H. Talbot, 8 vols. (Rome, 1957–77), vol. 8, pp. 307–8, no. 361.

³ A. Saltman, *Theobald Archbishop of Canterbury*, University of London Historical Studies, 2 (London, 1956), pp. 169–75, and charter no. 147 at pp. 369–70, to which John was witness and which must be dated before 24 Jan. 1148; this will be charter no. 204 in the forthcoming edition of Theobald's *acta* edited by Martin Brett and Christopher Brooke in the series *English Episcopal Acta*, which will confirm a date before the Council of Reims (I am very grateful to Dr Martin Brett and Professor Christopher Brooke, and to Dr

noting this in the 1986 re-print of his edition of John's early letters,⁴ yet the account of the commendation taking place at Reims in 1148 is still routinely repeated in the literature.⁵ There is in fact a more plausible reconstruction of events which fits the available evidence. Both Theobald and Bernard were in Paris in the late spring of 1147, Bernard having travelled there with Pope Eugenius III, whom he had received at Clairvaux in April.⁶ It is generally accepted that it was Peter of Celle who secured Bernard's commendation of John: the two were well acquainted and John later thanked Peter for helping him to return to his homeland.⁷ There is no evidence for Peter's presence in Paris in the spring of 1147 (but nor is there for his presence at Reims in

Philippa Hoskin, the series General Editor, for their personal communications about this forthcoming volume).

⁴ *Letters of John of Salisbury*, vol. 1, (1986 repr.), p. 298; Brooke had already noted elsewhere that the testimonial must date to 1147, but without suggesting a reconstruction of the relevant events: C.N.L. Brooke, 'John of Salisbury and His World', in *The World of John of Salisbury*, ed. M. Wilks, Studies in Church History Subsidia, 3 (Oxford, 1984, 1994), pp. 1–20, at p. 8.

⁵ The most recent biographical study, for example, C.J. Nederman, *John of Salisbury*, Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 288 (Tempe, AZ, 2005), pp. 11–13, elaborates the Council of Reims theory, speculating that John may have attended as Peter of Celle's agent (there is no doubt about John's attendance, but it was as a member of Theobald's *curia*).

⁶ Theobald met Eugenius III in Paris in May 1147; Bernard was there at some point between 20 April and 7 June, after which he returned eastwards while Theobald was still with Eugenius' *curia* at Meaux in late June (Saltman, *Theobald*, pp. 23–24; *Bernard de Clairvaux*, Commission d'histoire de l'Ordre de Cîteaux, 3 (Paris, 1953), pp. 606–9). Martin Brett's draft itinerary of Theobald for the forthcoming *English Episcopal Acta* volume (see above n. 3) cites Saltman for Theobald's presence in Paris, thus not affecting this as the likely occasion for the meeting with Bernard (personal communication from Professor Christopher Brooke, June 2012).

⁷ *Letters of John of Salisbury*, vol. 1, pp. 55–8, no. 33. Peter of Celle (c.1115–83) was abbot of Montier-la-Celle (c.1145–62) and Saint-Rémi, Reims (1162–81) and bishop of Chartres (1181–3): *The Letters of Peter of Celle*, ed. J.P. Haseldine, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford, 2001), pp. xxviii–xxxiii.

1148), but Bernard had been near Troyes, the location of Peter's abbey, Montier-la-Celle, in April of that year, providing a possible occasion for the intervention.⁸ Thus the most likely reconstruction is that Bernard met Theobald in Paris in the late spring of 1147 and recommended John to him in person, most probably at the intervention of Peter of Celle, whom he may have met in April of the same year as he passed by Troyes.

Less is known of John's own movements at this time. His own account of his student years in Paris in his *Metalogicon* has famously engendered decades of scholarly controversy, including sparking the debate over the nature or existence of the 'school of Chartres'; as regards the present question, however, the most recent and detailed reconstruction suggests that he left Paris in mid to late 1147.⁹ He then spent some time as a clerk in Peter of Celle's employ, possibly in Provins - the two had met as students and by 1147 Peter was established as abbot of Montier-la-Celle and able to help his friend, now evidently in financial difficulty.¹⁰ This allows time for John to

⁸ *Bernard de Clairvaux*, p. 607. The site of Montier-la-Celle, now in an inner suburb, is approximately one and a half kilometres from the centre of the medieval city of Troyes. Interestingly, Peter's own letters preserve examples of others attempting to intercept, in these cases, travelling cardinals, to obtain patronage: *Letters of Peter of Celle*, pp. 362–3, 378–81, nos. 83 and 89.

⁹ K.S.B. Keats-Rohan, 'John of Salisbury and Education in Twelfth century Paris from the Account of his *Metalogicon*', *History of Universities*, 6 (1987), pp. 1–45, at p. 19; see also O. Weijers, 'The Chronology of John of Salisbury's Studies in France (*Metalogicon*, II.10)', in *The World of John of Salisbury*, ed. Wilks, pp. 109–16. Both also refer to the extensive literature on John's Paris years.

¹⁰ In his letter 97 Peter described John as 'once our cleric' ('quondam clericus noster'), *Letters of Peter of Celle*, pp. 404–5. Montier-la-Celle had a dependency, Saint-Ayoul, at Provins, and John had certainly been in Provins at some point before 1155 and later referred to time spent there together with Peter, although it is not clear when (*Letters of John of Salisbury*, vol. 1, pp. 62, n. 9, and 184, nos. 34 and 112); L.K. Barker, 'Ecclesiology and the Twelfth-Century Church in the Letters of Peter of Celle', (MA diss.,

have secured the written testimonial and moved to Canterbury before January 1148.¹¹ John may have met Bernard in person just before he left Paris or have acquired the testimonial a little later - there is, indeed, no need to assume a personal meeting: Bernard referred, in the testimonial, to John as 'amicum meum et amicum amicorum meorum' ('my friend and a friend of my friends' - the latter term usually taken as an allusion to Peter of Celle but also a version of a fairly common *topos*), but it has long been established that personal acquaintance was far from being a prerequisite to calling others friends in medieval letters.¹² Letter collections of this period are also replete with references to messengers carrying letters, gifts and other documents. The means by which John acquired possession of the testimonial thus present no difficulties in the light of what we know of the common practices of communication of the time.¹³ It was the original

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1978), pp. 7–11, examines the possibility of them having been together at Provins for some time from c.1135/6; on the origins and nature of their relationship, see *ibid.* and J. P. Haseldine, 'A Study of the Letters of Abbot Peter of La-Celle (c.1115–1183)', (PhD. thesis, University of Cambridge, 1991), pp. 76–86.

¹¹ It also means that his time in Peter's employ must have been short, but there is no evidence to suggest that it was not, nor is there any indication in his surviving writings that John (in any case employed as a clerk) had contemplated a monastic career in France, and Peter most likely regarded his employment as a temporary act of support since he also evidently sought alternative patronage for John, not only from Bernard but also from Count Theobald of Champagne; *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, vol. 2, *The Later Letters (1163–1180)*, ed. W.J. Millor and C.N.L. Brooke, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford, 1979), pp. 314–17, no. 209.

¹² For a discussion of Bernard's use of friendly address to strangers, or preceding personal acquaintance, see J.P. Haseldine, 'Friends, Friendship and Networks in the Letters of Bernard of Clairvaux', *Cîteaux: Commentarii Cistercienses* 57 (2006), pp. 243–280.

¹³ This also removes the possible difficulty of assuming that John must have taken possession of the testimonial before the end of June, when Bernard left Paris, but did not leave France for some months, although of course he would

recommendation to Bernard, almost certainly by Peter of Celle, which was the crucial matter. By 1147 Peter of Celle had already established strong cooperative links with Clairvaux. He had received critical support from them when faced with an evident challenge to his authority early in his first abbacy, probably in 1145, and these links, which embraced a number of members of the community, were to last; he also acted as an intermediary for Bernard.¹⁴ The account of John meeting Bernard at the Council of Reims, quite apart from the evidence against it, would suppose John travelling to the Council as an impoverished English scholar or minor clerk, and gaining an audience with the great man, a man indeed then engaged in the prosecution of John's recent former master, Gilbert de la Porée.¹⁵ In fact, what this new reconstruction reveals is John, after his student years in Paris, being able to access an established, functioning monastic patronage network to launch his career.

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have had to make arrangements beyond simply acquiring one testimonial, however important the writer.

¹⁴ See *Letters of Peter of Celle*, pp. xxiv–xxv; *Sancti Bernardi Opera*, vol. 8, pp. 210–11, 403–4; Montier-la-Celle is only some 50 km from Clairvaux.

¹⁵ John had studied under Gilbert for some time during 1141 and 1142 and his account of the trial in the *Historia Pontificalis* suggests that he regarded his former master with affection (*Ioannis Saresberiensis Historia Pontificalis. John of Salisbury's Memoirs of the Papal Court*, ed. M. Chibnall, Nelson's Medieval Texts [Edinburgh, 1956], repr. Oxford Medieval Texts [Oxford, 1986], pp. 15–41, chapters viii–xiv; the new dating proposed here thus removes the possible difficulty of supposing John to be seeking a recommendation from Bernard while Bernard was actively engaged in prosecuting Gilbert.

**‘NON MONACHUS, SED DEMONIACUS’:
CRIME IN MEDIEVAL RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IN
WESTERN EUROPE, 12TH – 15TH CENTURIES**

Past historiography of religious communities has not addressed the topic of medieval clergy and crime in general, but only dealt with certain aspects of it.¹ Indeed, serious infractions perpetrated by professed religious men and women were clearly regarded, especially by Catholic historians, as scandalous matters that should be hidden rather than studied. This Ph.D. thesis weaves together two distinct historiographical strands: first, research on crime and criminal justice and, secondly, research on religious orders.² It offers an analysis of monastic criminality by examining serious crimes committed by monks or regular canons against other members of their community, such as violence, murder, theft or conspiracy, from the twelfth to the fifteenth century. Far from being peaceful places, monasteries in the late Middle Ages saw many violent conflicts. A comparative

¹ For an overview of the state of research into the connection of clergy and violence, see Peter Clarke, “The medieval clergy and violence: an historiographical introduction”, in *Violence and the Medieval Clergy*, ed. Gerhard Jaritz and Ana Marinkovic (Budapest/New York, 2011), pp. 3–16. On criminality in medieval monasteries, see Anselme Dimier, “Violences, rixes et homicides chez les Cisterciens”, in *Revue des sciences religieuses*, 46 (1972), pp. 38–57; Jane Sayers, “Violence in the Medieval Cloister”, in *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 41 (1990), pp. 533–542; and Thomas Fuser, *Mönche im Konflikt, Zum Spannungsfeld vom Norm, Devianz und Sanktion bei den Cisterziensern und Cluniensern (12. bis frühes 14. Jahrhundert)*, (Münster, 2000).

² The thesis, entitled ‘Non monachus sed demoniacus’. Recherches sur la criminalité au sein des communautés régulières en Occident, XII^e–XV^e siècle, was defended in October 2011 at the University of Paris Ouest Nanterre La Défense. Jury: Franck Collard (supervisor), Franz Felten (University of Mainz), Claude Gauvard (University of Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne), Martin Heale (University of Liverpool), Corinne Leveleux-Teixeira (University of Orléans), and Catherine Vincent (University of Paris Ouest Nanterre La Défense).

framework allowed for a comprehensive study of male and female religious, belonging to orders such as Cluniacs, Cistercians, Premonstratensians and Carthusians or to less legally defined communities, that is the monks who followed the rule of St Benedict, or the regular canons who lived according to the rule of St Augustine. The scope is European with a special interest in France and Britain. By examining serious transgressions to the rule, this essay aims to explore what it meant for the men and women who entered the monastery to take vows and subject themselves to the austerities of the cloister. How did monks adjust to confinement and the lack of privacy? Was the monastery a “total” institution³ or was it permeable to world’s values? Moreover, how did Church authorities deal with monastic delinquents? How did they punish and correct them?

This study is founded on three methodological premises, explained in detail in the first part. In order to examine monastic criminality, historians have to overcome obstacles such as the silence of primary sources. Chapter 1 examines how abbots and ecclesiastical authorities tried to stop the dissemination of scandal and the leakage of monastery secrets by ordering that visitation reports should be destroyed or by condemning monks who disclosed monasteries’ or orders’ secrets. If general chapters’ registers mention disciplinary infractions, they seldom describe violations in detail, preferring instead the use of opaque terms such as *crimen*, *enormia*, *excessus*. The surviving documentation reveals only the tip of an iceberg and is far from complete. Chapter 2 concerns the corpus of documentary material. By the twelfth century, monastic delinquents had ceased to be disciplined only by the abbot and were examined and chastised by the new monastic authorities of religious orders (the general chapter) or by bishops or the papacy. Different types of record provide a view of monastic transgressions: internal administrative accounts (such as visitation reports), the *acta* of the orders’ annual assemblies and

³ Erving Goffman, *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates* (Garden City, N.Y., 1961), p. xiii.

external documents of practice such as episcopal registers or unpublished registers of petitions brought by criminal monks and canons to the Holy See and to the papal Penitentiary.⁴ This central office of the late medieval Church was established to deal with matters of conscience that could not be handled by the local bishop on his own authority or by the general chapter. These types of source are, however, inherently biased documents, designed to reveal faults in observance so that they can be corrected. In addition to these documents of practice, the study analyses normative sources such as rules, books of customs, general chapters' definitions or decretal collections, and also narrative sources (historical writings and hagiography). Finally chapter 3 describes major infractions committed by religious men and women (assault, murder, theft, arson, forgery, alchemy, etc.). A thorough survey of such cases among members of European religious houses lists no fewer than 1370 cases from 1100 to 1530. Violence (*iniectio manuum*) and murders (*homicidium*) account for 55% and 22% in the surviving documentation.

Part II considers criminal practices of medieval monks and regular canons. Firstly chapter 4 examines the profiles of offenders and victims. The majority of offenders (60%) were monks or canons, usually priests, who entered a monastery voluntarily. This chapter also studies the question of lay brothers' and nuns' criminality. 3% of the offenders were religious women, often accused of serious crimes such as poisoning or infanticide.⁵ In the apostolic penitentiary's registers, Catherine Morelle, a Benedictine Nun of Nyoiseau (diocese of Angers), admitted in 1486 that she had had sexual relations with a priest and become pregnant. She tried to kill the child in her womb by eating certain herbs. As she failed, she gave birth to her child and made

⁴ Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Penitenzieria Apostolica [ASV, PA]

⁵ On nuns' criminality, see Elisabeth Lusset, "'Propriae salutis immemores'? Réflexions sur la correction des moniales criminelles en Occident, XIII^e–XV^e siècle", in *Figures de femmes criminelles, De l'Antiquité à nos jours*, ed. L. Cadiet, F. Chauvaud, C. Gauvard, P. Schmitt-Pantel et M. Tsikounas (Paris, 2010), pp. 255–265.

him perish.⁶ Monastic superiors and obedientiaries (cellarer, sacristan and so forth) accounted for 20% of the offenders. The analysis of the relations between offenders and victims of assaults and murders demonstrates that, although superiors were attacked by their *subditi* (20%), they were not the main targets of the monks and canons who mainly assaulted their fellow brothers. Chapter 5 explores the circumstances of the crime, which played a major role in determining the gravity of an infraction. Violations within monasteries were often perpetrated in the church – the most sacred place – or in the dormitory. Offenders often acted alone, without accomplices, and used offensive weapons (knife, sword, stick) to commit their crimes. Chapter 6 deals with the offenders’ motivations. The laconic nature of the documentation frustrates any hope of understanding motivations for violations. In order to mitigate their guilt, particularly in violent outbursts, offenders often invoked extenuating circumstances such as demonic possession (*instigante diabolo*), drunkenness, rage or madness. The sharing of power, benefices and goods in monasteries was sometimes a cause of rivalries, which sometimes degenerated into violent conflicts and crimes. In particular, a large number of crimes could be explained by conflicts over the exercise of superiors’ authority: some monks or canons refused to be disciplined and showed rebellion and disobedience to their abbot or prior. Others accused their superior of using illegitimate violence. One example concerns a Benedictine abbot of Tavistock (Exeter diocese), who was charged, in 1437, with having struck his monks *in casibus a iure non permissis*.⁷ Chapter 7 then pursues these arguments through an analysis of the permeability of the monastery to worldly attitudes. Clergy were supposed to be teachers and models of Christian living. Christ taught his followers to love their enemies and shun violence even in self-defence, turning “the other cheek” to attackers. However many members of the clergy violated this restriction. Criminality within

⁶ ASV, PA, Reg. 35, fol. 147r.

⁷ *The register of Edmund Lacy, Bishop of Exeter, 1420–1455: Registrum Commune*, ed. G. R. Dunstan, 5 vols. (London, 1963–1972), III, p. 215.

monasteries reveals that monastic ideals, which exalt humility, self-control and forgiveness, at times, came into conflict with the individuals' desires to defend their honour by seeking revenge. For instance, after he had been publicly insulted by one of the brethren in 1456, a monk of Saint-Vosy (diocese of Puy-en-Velay) challenged his opponent with a sword and killed him.⁸ Evidence in the acts tells us that some monks or canons did not remove themselves from the influence of family and friends.

By considering the way monastic justice operated – which is, simultaneously, disciplinary and administrative, penitential and penal – the third section analyses the mechanisms of institutionalisation of the religious orders. First, chapter 8 examines how ecclesiastical authorities construed the monks' deviance. Indeed general chapters, bishops and popes tried to limit the effect of misbehaviour upon the orders' self- and public image, by denouncing the scandal of such infractions and by prescribing harsh punishments. Chapter 9 investigates the role that each ecclesiastical authority played in prosecuting, judging and correcting religious offenders. Exempt from the jurisdiction of the bishop, the Cistercian, Carthusian, Cluniac and Premonstratensian Orders operated their own system of inspection. Monastic visitors reported major violations to the general chapter. Disciplinary actions were then discussed by the *diffinitores*, who delegated disciplinary responsibilities down the order's hierarchy to the abbots and priors of individual houses. When religious houses were not exempt, they were submitted to the visitation of the local bishop. Furthermore, from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries onwards, the papacy reinforced its disciplinary power on religious houses, by prosecuting monastic infractions itself or by receiving petitions of religious men or women, who complained about the misgovernment of their monastic superior or who asked for the pope's assistance because they were involved in violence and even murder. Chapter 10 focuses on visitation and judicial procedures against criminals (open

⁸ ASV, PA, Reg. 5, fol. 160v.

denunciations during the *capitulum culpa*, trials initiated by accusation or *inquisitio*, uses of the summary procedure etc.). Chapter 11 then studies how religious orders and communities developed a judicial and penal system. Major offences were punishable by harsh penalties such as excommunication, temporary or perpetual incarceration and banishment, combined with traditional penances (flagellations, fasts).⁹ If the *correctio* was aimed at preserving the Church's integrity by avoiding scandal, it also sought to amend the culprit, whose absolution and reconciliation to community remained the ultimate goal. Chapter 12 highlights a major aspect of monastic government: the special role which petitions for absolution played in defining the interface between religious communities, bishops and papal authority. Since the twelfth century, canon law had imposed automatic penalties (excommunication and impediment to receiving and exercising holy orders) for certain grave sins and required those guilty of them to seek absolution from ecclesiastical authorities. At the end of the century, popes delegated to the religious orders the right to give absolution in most cases¹⁰. Abbots, general chapters or local bishops had the faculty to absolve and dispense monks who had acted violently towards another monk in the same monastic house. However religious men or women who had hurt clerics severely ("with very great shedding of blood") or who had committed acts of violence against their superiors needed an apostolic absolution. Only the pope, in the plenitude of his power, could offer a fully secure and satisfying remedy in reserved case. The medieval records of the Apostolic Penitentiary consist of volumes of registers which contain abbreviated copies of petitions directed to and approved by the papal office. The complete series of registers start from the middle of the fifteenth

⁹ On monastic prison, see Elisabeth Lusset, "Entre les murs. L'enfermement punitif des religieux criminels au sein du cloître (XII^e-XV^e siècle)", in *Enfermements. Le cloître et la prison (VI^e-XVIII^e s.)*, ed. Isabelle Heullant-Donat, Julie Claustre and Elisabeth Lusset (Paris, 2011), pp. 153-168.

¹⁰ See Elisabeth Lusset, "Des religieux en quête de grâce. Les suppliques adressées à la pénitencerie apostolique par des clercs réguliers violents au XV^e siècle", in *Médiévales*, 55 (2008), pp. 115-134

century. The survival of these registers, open to researchers since 1983 and currently conserved in the Vatican Archives, allows an in-depth analysis of the system of grace and of the way monks used it, sometimes against the general chapter, in order to avoid punishment.

To conclude, by examining serious transgressions and by considering the gap between quotidian practice and ideal, this PhD thesis seeks to explore and re-evaluate the fabric of monastic norms and values. In addition, it shows how, from the twelfth to the fifteenth century, apart from papal and episcopal jurisdictions, new medieval religious orders sought to reinforce their authority on their members by developing their administration and by using disciplinary mechanisms (punishment and/or reconciliatory measures).

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THE ESTATES OF THE KNIGHTS TEMPLAR IN ENGLAND AND WALES, 1308–1313

The Knights Templar are best known for the myths that have been woven around them by popular writers such as Dan Brown. The Order of the Temple was, strictly speaking, a religious rather than a monastic institution. Its members took the three monastic vows, followed a religious rule and wore a religious habit. Founded in Jerusalem in around 1120, the Order held extensive properties in England, less in Ireland and some scattered property in Scotland and Wales. After the pope dissolved the Order in 1312, most of this property passed to the Order of St John of Jerusalem, otherwise known as the Hospitallers, which held it until the Order was dissolved by King Henry VIII in 1540.

It is popularly believed that very little evidence relating Knights Templar in Britain survives. A quick search on the catalogue of the National Archives suffices to correct this misunderstanding. In particular, the National Archives contains a large number of records relating to the Templars' properties, creditors and dependents from the period 1308–1313, when the Orders' properties were in royal hands. The properties were inventoried when the Templars were arrested in January 1308, and entrusted to royal custodians who kept accounts from the date of the arrests until the official transfer of the estates to the Hospitallers in November/December 1313.

The inventories of the Templars' English and Welsh properties, records of income and expenditure, and associated documents, are at the National Archives: Public Record Office (TNA: PRO) E 142/10–18 and 89–118. E 142/19–22 and E 142/122–123 contain records of corrodies held from the Templars, while E 142/119 contains inquisitions into the Templars' debts. There are also several inventories and accounts at various locations in SC 6. In addition, many of the royal custodians' accounts for the years 1308–1313 survive at TNA: PRO, E 358/18–21.

These records have hardly been studied by scholars, although they have been 'cherry-picked', with individual records published piecemeal in editions of varying quality. The records offer a window into how a non-noble institution exploited its landed property and how it related with its local community. Because the Templars held estates all over England and in south Wales, these records enable comparisons to be made between agricultural and employment practices in different parts of the country in the early fourteenth century. While they cover only a few years, they offer a very wide geographical coverage of England – the Templars held some property in almost every English county. As a religious institution, they were also responsible for churches and chapels and they had many corrodies, some of whom were employees, some patrons and some former servants of the Order.

Following on my recent edition of the proceedings against the Templars in the British Isles (Ashgate, 2011), I am currently working on the transcription and analysis of these records. Some preliminary results have already been published, but I hope eventually to produce an edited edition of these documents with analysis, and a database of the Templars' properties. This will make an enormous quantity of new data available to economic and social historians, in addition to expanding knowledge of the Templars in England and Wales. It would also allow meaningful comparison of evidence from Britain with the inventories of Templars properties in Ireland (which has been published)¹ and the surviving records of Templar property elsewhere in Europe. I am in correspondence with some scholars working on this material in Britain and elsewhere, and would be glad to hear from any others who have an interest in this research.

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¹ 'Documents Relating to the Suppression of the Templars in Ireland', ed. G. MacNiocaill, *Analecta Hibernica*, 24 (1967), 183–226.

BIDDLESDEN ABBEY, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

The Cistercian abbey at Biddlesden, in northern Buckinghamshire, is the focus of my research under the supervision of Dr Clive Burgess at Royal Holloway, University of London. Biddlesden Abbey was founded in 1147 by Arnold de Bosco (du Bois), a trusted retainer of Robert, second earl of Leicester. Once the Cistercian order had become established in the early twelfth century it spread rapidly through Europe. The first house in England was founded at Waverley, Surrey, in 1128. The order spread quickly throughout England and Wales, with a particular burst in 1147 – the official foundation date for nine houses including Biddlesden, and also the year in which a number of English Savigniac houses joined the Cistercian order.¹ The property with which the new house at Biddlesden was founded had been granted to Arnold by the earl of Leicester, but Arnold's title to the land was dubious and was initially challenged by the previous land holder, Robert de Meppershall. Arnold was not, of course, unique in effectively choosing to settle a dispute over property by siting a religious house on the contested land. In doing so he was following in the footsteps of the earl of Leicester, who had used the same approach himself when he had founded Garendon Abbey (also Cistercian).²

Biddlesden was never wealthy and its estimated revenue in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* was only about £125 per annum. It should have been dissolved in 1536, but a payment was made which ensured its survival until 1538. Some of the abbey buildings were converted to domestic use following its dissolution, and when the antiquarian Browne Willis visited the site in 1712 he noted that ‘the Ruins of the Church and

¹ D. Robinson (ed.), *The Cistercian Abbeys of Britain* (London, 1998), p. 20. The other eight foundations were: Bruern, Dore, Kirkstall, Margam, Roche, Sawley, Sawtry, and Vaudey.

² Garendon had been founded in 1133, on land claimed by both Robert and the earl of Chester. See D. Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins* (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 198–9.

Abbey House were left in good part standing'.³ By about 1730, however, the site had been cleared by the Sayers family to enable them to build a new property which is all that remains today.

The only records known to survive from Biddlesden relate to its land holdings. A large number of individual deeds, many with seals, and a cartulary are now held at the British Library and form part of the Harley collection. A small number of documents are held in the Huntingdon Library in California. The cartulary (Harley MS 4714) comprises 363 folios and is organised topographically. It is thought to date from the early sixteenth century.⁴ Cartularies were produced throughout the medieval period, but this is well past the period of peak production and it may be that there were earlier versions (of which no trace survives). Previous research on Biddlesden had focused on the individual deeds with only occasional references to the cartulary. As the separate deeds are the primary documents this seems an obvious place to start, particularly if a cartulary is understood to contain transcripts or calendars 'of the entire muniments of the...house for which it was compiled'.⁵ In fact it is clear that many cartularies did not contain all the muniments of a house and that some process of selection was involved, even if the reasoning behind it is now obscure.⁶ Preliminary surveys of the individual deeds have shown immediately that the compilers of the Biddlesden cartulary were not simply copying out all the available material. I plan to produce a calendar of the cartulary, connecting the documents in it to individual surviving deeds as well as noting additional material. This will be accompanied by a history of the house.

³ B. Willis, *The History and Antiquities of the Town, Hundred and Deanry of Buckingham* (London, 1755), p. 152.

⁴ G.R.C. Davis, *Medieval Cartularies of Great Britain and Ireland*, revised by C. Breay, J. Harrison, and D.M. Smith (London, 2010), p. 13.

⁵ Davis, *Medieval Cartularies*, p. xv.

⁶ T. Foulds, 'Medieval Cartularies', *Archives* xviii, no. 77 (1987), pp. 7–8.

The deeds are the principal source of information for Biddlesden and they include the names of many patrons. Some information is available on the founder and his family, but it will be interesting to identify the kinds of people who supported the abbey and the geographical spread of that support. Many of the deeds are undated. Researching the patrons and also the witnesses will make it possible to suggest dates for many more which will show the pattern of support for the abbey over time. It will also help in understanding the acquisition of the abbey's estates. The lack of physical remains for Biddlesden makes the surviving documents even more important. A study of Biddlesden might also explain why the cartulary (or this version of it, if it did replace an earlier document) was drawn up at such a late date.

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ENGLISH MONASTICISM AND ROYAL GOVERNANCE IN THE FOURTEENTH AND FIFTEENTH CENTURIES

What arguments can relate the history of monasticism to the Henrician Reformation? If late medieval monks were not, as David Knowles believed, unquestionably distanced from the 'spiritual vitality' of their past, then can the suppressions of the early sixteenth century represent anything more than a sudden revolution? What questions should one ask of the Dissolution and the *longue durée*?

My Ph.D. thesis will examine interactions between the royal government and the largest Augustinian, Benedictine and Cistercian houses in the two centuries prior to the Dissolution. More specifically, I discuss a number of sermons, chronicles, and government documents to recreate a view of 'monasticism' from the perspective of the crown, using four distinct lines of analysis:

- The first uses the study of legal documents to address the myriad of attitudes toward monastic lordship in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries reflected in royal records. To what extent can the various lawsuits and riots involving monks be used to create an overarching portrait of ‘monasticism’ as it interacted with royal governance, while still accounting for local contingencies and distinctions between orders?
- The second discusses the use of monastic spirituality as a legitimating force for royal authority, and the corresponding efforts on the part of the crown to define and defend monastic lordship. How were contemporary concerns with clerical lordship related to monastic attempts to signal when lay authority was being justly exercised?
- Third, contemporary definitions of orthodox and heterodox behavior can be related to monastic attempts to sanction the use of coercive violence. How did monastic authors balance their castigations of heresy and descriptions of a militant piety with their desire for reform and reflection?
- Finally, the defence of longstanding monastic rights and privileges held by charter can be judged in light of broader ‘constitutional’ challenges to the royal prerogative in the fifteenth century. Were the means to legitimating secular authority offered through monastic chronicles, and confirmed through the exercise of monastic charters, compatible with the evolving legal culture of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries?

Through addressing each of these questions, this dissertation will create a post-Knowlesian framework through which late medieval monastic history can be viewed.

Analyzing monasticism from the perspective of royal governance also counters a tendency, especially prominent among those interested in state development and modernists seeking to distinguish their own era from the past, to downplay or misunderstand the political role of religion and the religious. Too often, the ‘evolution’ of governance has

been treated in purely secular terms, leaving the study of religious developments separate from the administrative and economic processes affecting laws and politics. This dissertation, by contrast, will treat the secular influence of the Church, and monastic lordship more specifically, as a functioning component of medieval society, one stridently defended not only by monastic authors, but also continuously confirmed through royal actions. Attempts to validate monastic authority played an essential role in regulating and legitimating the exercise of royal authority, and discussions of monastic history require one to appreciate the political potential inherent in claims to spiritual status. Through accounting for both the political repercussions of monastic lordship, and challenges to the same prior to the Dissolution, this dissertation will acknowledge the conflicts and contingencies affecting the religious institutions of the past, while tempering any tendency to dismiss the medieval era as underdeveloped or irrational for accepting non-secular worldviews.

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