

THE HOSPITAL OF ST. STEPHEN AND  
ST. THOMAS, NEW ROMNEY:  
THE DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

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A recent re-examination of the history of the Hospital of St. Stephen and St. Thomas at New Romney has suggested that this institution, along with the Hospital of St. Mary at Ospringe, may have been peculiarly unable to adapt to the changing conditions of the fourteenth century.<sup>1</sup> Using documentary and archaeological evidence in conjunction, two main phases of activity have been identified. It has been argued that though the later limits of both phases are uncertain 'The house was a going concern from the 1190s until at least the 1320s, and again, from the 1360s until some time in the middle of the fifteenth century'.<sup>2</sup> What is more, it seems, the evidence of pottery types lends some weight to the suggestion of a mid-fourteenth century break in continuity and 'an effective *terminus ad quem* for everything on the site in the second-third of the fifteenth century'.<sup>3</sup> Yet any precision of dating would seem to be strongly reliant on what is acknowledged to be extremely meagre documentary evidence. There exists, however, among the archives of Magdalen College, Oxford,<sup>4</sup> and elsewhere, further documentary evidence which permits a more detailed discussion of the history of the Hospital and tests the validity of the hypothesis based upon pottery evidence.

<sup>1</sup> S.E. Rigold, 'Two Kentish Hospitals Re-examined: S. Mary, Ospringe, and SS. Stephen and Thomas, New Romney,' *Arch. Cant.*, lxxix (1964), 31-69. For earlier discussions of the Hospital at New Romney see Canon Scott Robertson, 'Destroyed Churches of New Romney', *Arch. Cant.*, xiii (1880), 247-49; *VCH (Kent)* ii, 225; and K.M.E. Murray, 'Excavations on the Site of the Leper Hospital, New Romney,' *Arch. Cant.*, xlvii (1935), 198-204.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, *Arch. Cant.*, lxxix (1964), 60.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> I am grateful to the President and Fellows of Magdalen College, Oxford, for permission to use their archives and especially to Dr. G.L. Harris, for his assistance.

Traditionally, and largely on the basis of the information contained in an *inspeximus* of 1363–64, the Hospital is said to have been founded by Becket's repentant enemy Adam of Charing.<sup>5</sup> Early charters among the Magdalen College archives, however, provide no direct proof of this claim. The earliest charter in the College's Romney collection (possibly of c. 1180)<sup>6</sup> is a grant from William son of Wulfi to Adam de Cherringes of nine acres of land of the manor of Aldington and seven acres and three parts of an acre of the manor of East Chart conditional upon payment of certain specified rents and an entry-fine of one mark. Among the eighteen witnesses was one Stephen, chaplain of the Hospital of the blessed Stephen and Thomas of Romney. Three charters record grants from Adam de Cherringes. In one of these he conveys to the chapel of the blessed martyrs Stephen and Thomas of the hospital 'infirmorum de Rumenal' and to the chaplain of the altar in the said chapel, one Stephen, and his successors for their provisions ('ad victualiam suam') together with income from offerings the lands which he held of William son of Wulfi, presumably those conveyed to him by means of the charter mentioned immediately above.<sup>7</sup> In the second of these charters Adam de Cherringes grants, in perpetual alms, to the lepers dwelling now and in the future in the Hospital of St. Thomas at Romney, forty acres of his land at Snargate and twenty shillings rent per annum from his lands at Langport.<sup>8</sup> The third charter is a confirmation of lands granted by Adam de Cherringes, including lands and rents at Snargate and Langport and, additionally, land 'que fuit Galfridi Turcople'.<sup>9</sup> None of these charters is a foundation charter and, moreover, none of them gives any indication that Adam de Cherringes was the founder. Indeed, the grants to the chaplain and to the lepers in the Hospital as well as the confirmation would seem to have been made after the foundation of chapel and hospital, when Stephen was already chaplain.

Five deeds from the early thirteenth century give evidence of continuing benefaction. Alda, daughter of William Crispin and lord of Langport, granted to the 'Maladerie de rumenel' one acre of land lying

<sup>5</sup> For the text of the *inspeximus* see *Litterae Cantuarienses* (Rolls Series), ii, 436–42; *Cal. Pat. Rolls, 1361–64*, 481; Dugdale, *Monasticon* (1830), vi (2), 641. For discussion of Adam of Charing's career see *op. cit.*, *Arch. Cant.*, lxxix (1964), 47–49.

<sup>6</sup> Magd(alen) Coll(ege) Mun(iments), Deeds, Romney Marsh, 62. Macray dates this charter as c. 1180.

<sup>7</sup> Magd. Coll. Mun., Deeds, Romney Marsh, 60, dated by Macray as c. 1186.

<sup>8</sup> Magd. Coll. Mun., Deeds, Romney Marsh, 61, dated by Macray as c. 1186. A note on the *recto* in a fourteenth century (?) hand reads: "P'dict' Ada' decessit q'rto die Julij A° do° M°CC°IX°".

<sup>9</sup> Magd. Coll. Mun., Deeds, Romney Marsh, 58. This confirmation is written on paper and would seem to be, as Macray suggests, a fifteenth-century copy.

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next to the house of Eilnod the weaver;<sup>10</sup> Stephen son of Hamo gave the Hospital the moiety of a mill;<sup>11</sup> Adam de Bendenges conferred upon the Hospital and its brethren rent of 3s. 11¼*d.* from two and a half acres, a fourth part of an acre and an eighth part of an acre, and 18*d.* from an acre lying between the road which led to the Black Wall ('Nigra Walla') and the land of St — de Boxle;<sup>12</sup> and, finally, the same Adam de Bendenges, here describing himself as the grandson of the founder of the Hospital, Adam de Cherringes, granted to the hospital (i), all the lands, saltpan, and other appurtenances formerly conveyed to him by William Puignant, lands which included all that upon which the Hospital had been founded, all that on which stood the messuage of the chaplain of the Hospital, half an acre lying between the road and the house of William Bavec, half an acre lying to the right of the Hospital, and five acres with an access road in which stood a saltpan with all its appurtenances lying between the river called 'He' and the land of Thomas the priest's son, and (ii) he also granted as much land outside the wall to the west of the Hospital for a wall against the tidal action of the sea ('tantum terre extra wallam ex westparte Hospital' unde walla possit teneri contra fluctus maris').<sup>13</sup> In 1211 Pope Innocent III confirmed to the Lepers' Hospital at Romney the following possessions: six acres of land and one saltpan, eighty acres called 'terra Turcopule' in the close of St. Thomas, forty acres at Snargate, twenty shillings rent of land at Langport, one acre near a bridge at Romney, one acre at Oswarston, various pieces of land in Romney, the moiety of a windmill in the marsh, and, for the food and clothing of the chaplain, sixteen acres of land and the offerings at the Hospital Chapel, apart from the messuage belonging to the said Chapel.<sup>14</sup> A grant of letters of protection to the Hospital in 1232<sup>15</sup> concludes the documentary information for the first half of the thirteenth century but enough is now available to draw some picture of its organization and sources of income during the difficult years of the first half century of its existence.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Magd. Coll. Mun., Deeds, Romney Marsh, 38, dated by Macray as c. 1200. The dorse bears the note 'Carta de j acra terre in Oswarston' in what seems to be a fourteenth-century hand.

<sup>11</sup> Magd. Coll. Mun., Deeds, Romney Marsh, 37, dated by Macray as c. 1200–1210.

<sup>12</sup> Magd. Coll. Mun., Deeds, Romney Marsh, 57, dated by Macray as 1210–20.

<sup>13</sup> Magd. Coll. Mun., Deeds, Romney Marsh, 53, dated by Macray as c. 1220. This charter provides the earliest mention of Adam of Charing as founder.

<sup>14</sup> Magd. Coll. Mun., Deeds, Romney Marsh, 31, dated by Macray as 8th March, 1211, from what he describes as a fourteenth-century copy. This copy, however, no longer survives and the account is dependent upon Macray's notes.

<sup>15</sup> *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1225–32, p. 497.

<sup>16</sup> For a general discussion of this period see P.D.A. Harvey, 'The English Inflation of 1180–1220', *Past & Present*, 1973.

Documentary evidence for the second half of the thirteenth century is extremely sparse. An action brought by a leper's wife in 1255 gives some indication of the Hospital's continuing activity<sup>17</sup> and the bequest in 1278 by Robert le Pere of Romney of 2s. 6d. for a trental in the Hospital and of 20s. to the brothers and sisters there demonstrates that a Hospital fulfilling its intended function still attracted benefactions.<sup>18</sup> Not until 1298 is any substantial documentary material available and then it is in the form of a commission of investigation into alleged maladministration instigated by Archbishop Winchelsey.<sup>19</sup>

Whatever the condition of the Hospital in 1298, it has been argued that in 1322 'the paper strength (thirteen to fifteen inmates) and rations of the house were not being maintained'.<sup>20</sup> Three leases among the Magdalen College deeds, perhaps, lend weight to the idea of an early fourteenth-century crisis for the Hospital. On 26th April, 1322, Gervase son of Alard, patron of the Hospital, granted a lease of the Hospital and its properties to Nicholas Gobylonde;<sup>21</sup> on 7th August, 1339, Gervase Alard leased the same property to Robert de Harnhelle of Ruckinge for ten years at £7 16s. 0d. per annum;<sup>22</sup> and on 25th April, 1340, he leased it again to Robert ate Smethe and Alan Cok of Fairfield for the lower rent of five pounds per annum over ten years.<sup>23</sup>

Of the remaining years before John Frauncey's refoundation of the Hospital in 1363–64 little is known but it seems that Ralph Caunvill was chaplain there until 8th November, 1349,<sup>24</sup> and in 1362(–63) Agnes, widow of Gervase Alard of Snargate (presumably the same Gervase Alard acting as patron and lessor above), granted the advowson of the Hospital with all rights and appurtenances to John Fraunceys of Romney.<sup>25</sup> Finally, in an undated conveyance enrolled in the register of Daniel Rough, town clerk of Romney, which must ante-date the transference of the advowson to John Fraunceys, Reginald Cobham

<sup>17</sup> R. Furley, *A History of the Weald of Kent*, (Ashford, 1874), Vol. II, Pt. I, 64.

<sup>18</sup> C.E. Woodruff, 'Some Early Kentish Wills', *Arch. Cant.*, xlvi (1934), 29.

<sup>19</sup> R. Graham, ed., *Registrum Roberti Winchelsey Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi, A.D. 1294–1313*, Vol. I, Canterbury and York Society Vol. LI (1952), 220–21, and see discussion by Rigold, *op. cit.*, *Arch. Cant.*, lxxix (1964), 49–50. Rigold's statements that the Hospital 'was already being seriously maladministered' in 1298 and that 'The maladministration apparent in 1298 continued ...' seem to this writer to be tendentious.

<sup>20</sup> Macray, *Notes from the Muniments of Magdalen College, Oxford*, 131, cited by Rigold, *op. cit.*, *Arch. Cant.*, lxxix (1964), 50. For a different use of the same reference see *VCH (Kent)*, ii, 225.

<sup>21</sup> Magd. Coll. Mun., Deeds, Romney Marsh, 36.

<sup>22</sup> Magd. Coll. Mun., Deeds, Romney Marsh, 34.

<sup>23</sup> Magd. Coll. Mun., Deeds, Romney Marsh, 50.

<sup>24</sup> *Cal. Pat. Rolls, 1348–50*, 422.

<sup>25</sup> Magd. Coll. Mun., Deeds, Romney Marsh, 15, and K.M.E. Murray, ed., *Register of Daniel Rough, Common Clerk of Romney, 1353–1380, Kent Records*, xvi (1945), 158–59.

and his sister Agnes, wife, or more probably widow of Gervase Alard, acting jointly as patrons, made a grant to John de Holdesdoun, chaplain, of property belonging to the Hospital, a grant which provides important information about the institution shortly before John Fraunceys transformed it.<sup>26</sup> John de Holdesdoun was to have for his life a room in the close of the Hospital beyond the gate and a barn and a rick-yard<sup>27</sup> in the same close. He was also given seventeen acres of land with all the hemp growing there and all appurtenances: eight acres lying in the parish of St. Clement in Old Romney next to the mill of Aghenie and called Spitteland, three acres in Dymchurch known as Holwest, four acres in Romney next to Spitelberghe called Spitilacre, two acres lying below the Hospital close, and the hemp growing beneath the said close. Various rents were granted to him amounting to twenty-seven shillings and one hen per annum and he was to receive the offerings from the Hospital chapel. More particularly, thirteen shillings of the rent was drawn from land in Ivychurch called Spitelmanland, ten shillings from the manor of the Abbot of Boxle at Cheyne Court, twelve pence and one hen from a messuage of William Heyman, sixteen pence from a messuage of Thomas Soutere, sixteen pence from a meadow near Hythe known as Spitelmed, and four pence from a tenement belonging to the heir of William Gode in the parish of St. Laurence in Romney. In return the chaplain was to pay John Barrok one pound of cinnamon and four pence per annum from the hemp-growing ground mentioned, maintain the room and barn at his own expense, celebrate Masses in the Hospital chapel on behalf of Reginald and Agnes, and provide for two processional candles there at all times.

By the time that Agnes Alard conveyed the advowson to John Fraunceys the Hospital may already have begun to change its function. Fraunceys may possibly have exaggerated the degree of dilapidation in his charter of restoration and refoundation but his ordinances for its regulation demonstrate a decisive break with previous use. No longer used as a leper hospital it now became more like a chantry, with two priests, one of whom would act as warden or master and be appointed by the patron and the other of whom would be appointed by the warden; and both would have the responsibility of celebrating Masses in perpetuity for the souls of the founders and benefactors.<sup>28</sup> In addi-

<sup>26</sup> K.M.E. Murray, *op. cit.*, *Kent Records*, xvi (1945), 272-74; see also *Historical Mss Commission Report*, iv, App., 427. This conveyance has been noted in *VCH (Kent)*, ii, 225 and by Rigold *op. cit.*, *Arch Cant.*, lxxix (1964), 49 but only briefly

<sup>27</sup> Murray's translation of 'unam grangiam cum bertona', *op. cit.*, *Kent Records*, xvi, 272.

<sup>28</sup> See above n. 5. The suggestion that the Hospital was refounded 'as an almshouse attached to a chantry and served by two chaplains' (Murray, *op. cit.*, *Kent Records*, xvi (1945), 272, n. 1) would seem to be a misunderstanding.

tion to the already existing endowment it may be that, in the words of a fifteenth-century rehearsal of evidences, 'John Fraunces to the helpe and exhibicion of the same Master and Chaplen yaff dyvers other lands and tenements of his owen'.<sup>29</sup> Charters of relaxation and warranty came from John, son of Hamo Colyn of Lydd and heir of Gervase Alard in 1363–64, and from William, son of Laurence Holden of Shipborne by Tonbridge in 1366–67, and ratification and confirmation came from Edward III in 1364–65.<sup>30</sup>

The history of the ensuing years is difficult to disentangle but, in 1419, an inquisition was held by Archbishop Chichele into the vacancy and patronage of the Hospital, the wardenship falling vacant on the recent resignation of Robert Haddelsay, and the conclusions reached provide some help.<sup>31</sup> The inquisition found that the current patrons were Thomas Stonlyng, by right of his wife, Johanna, and William Clyderowe, by right of his wife, Margaret, both wives being daughters of John Fraunceys. The responsibility for appointment was, seemingly, taken alternately. The appointment of Haddelsay had been made by John Badmynton the former husband of Margaret now wife of William Clyderowe. Enrolled among the fifteenth-century rehearsals of evidences,<sup>32</sup> however, are three charters which, while helping to bridge the gap between the death of John Fraunceys and the activities of his daughters, present their own problems of interpretation. In 1384–85 one Katherine Fraunces of Romney (possibly an heir or executor of John Fraunceys), by a charter of enfeoffment and warranty, conveyed to Sir Richard att Lese, William Topclyff, Marcellus at Leese, and Simon Clerke, all the lands and tenements in the advowson of the Hospital; and in 1398–9, by reciprocal grants, first John Salerne, junior, conveyed one rod of land lying to the east of a 'barton' (all formerly belonging to John Fraunceys) and the advowson of the Hospital to John Frebody, clerk and master of the Hospital in 1400,<sup>33</sup> John Roger, and Simon Nolle of Romney, and then they conveyed the same to him.

In 1427–28 Thomas Stonlyng of Gesselyng, in Sussex, and his wife, Johanna, granted lands and advowson of the Hospital to Andrew Alwyn, clerk, and registered the conveyance in the king's court and in Romney where reference was made to a messuage called 'le Brenton' and Alwyn was described as clerk of Lydd. Alwyn, described as vicar of Promhyll, granted the advowson to Magister Thomas Mone, rector

<sup>29</sup> Magd. Coll. Mun., Deeds, Romney Marsh, 15.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> E.F. Jacob, ed., *The Register of Henry Chichele, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1414–1443*, i, *Canterbury and York Society*, xlv (1943), 188–89.

<sup>32</sup> Magd. Coll. Mun., Deeds, Romney Marsh, 15.

<sup>33</sup> *VCH (Kent)*, ii, 225, citing Pardon Roll 1–14 Hen IV, m. 17.

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of Deal, and Richard Glover of Lydd in the same year of 1427–28 and, eight years later, Mone, described as rector of Rocking (Ruckinge?), and Glover regranted the advowson to Alwyn for Alwyn to grant the same advowson to Mone and Thomas Breggis of Lydd and his heirs.<sup>34</sup> On 7th March, 1436, Andrew Alwyn, chaplain, was made master of the Hospital.<sup>35</sup>

Two undated charters record that John Baker of Lydd, in accordance with the will of John Badmanton<sup>36</sup> granted certain lands and tenements and a moiety of the advowson to Margaret Cledrowe for her life and to her son John Badmanton after her death; and John, son and heir of John Badmanton subsequently granted lands and moiety of advowson to John Greneforde and John Chenwe. The 1430s saw a series of grants which concludes the evidence now contained among the Magdalen College deeds. In 1435–36, in a charter of enfeoffment and warranty, Margaret, formerly wife of William Cledrowe of Romney, conveyed the advowson, which she had received after the death of her father John Fraunceys, to Johanna, wife of Sir William Brenchley, Richard Wakehurst, and Thomas Horden and their heirs. Two years later, on 3rd August, 1438, Thomas Mone, Thomas Breggis and Richard Glover, in a charter of enfeoffment, granted the advowson to the same Johanna Brenchley, Richard Wakehurst and Thomas Horden; by an indenture dated the following day, Stephen Slegge and Thomas Breggis entered into a bond with Thomas Mone and Richard Glover in order that the clerk, Andrew Alwyn, would enjoy the profits and emoluments of the Hospital for his lifetime without disturbance by Johanna Brenchley, Richard Wakehurst, and Thomas Horden; and on 6th August in the same year Alwyn released to Brenchley, Wakehurst and Horden any right he might have in the advowson of the Hospital. Finally, by a charter of release and warranty, John Badmanton, son of Margaret, daughter of John Fraunceys and former wife of William Cledrowe, conveyed his interest in the advowson to Brenchley, Wakehurst and Horden.<sup>37</sup> Johanna Brenchley was dead by 1453<sup>38</sup> and though her heirs presumably enjoyed the patronage little is known of their involvement or, indeed, seems to have been known in the fifteenth century when the preamble to the rehearsal of evidences among the Magdalen College deeds blandly states that 'The patronage whereof afterward came to one Jane Brencheley ..... and the seyd hospitall nowe ys occuppyed to thuse of Mawdelyn Colage yn

<sup>34</sup> Magd. Coll. Mun., Deeds, Romney Marsh, 15.

<sup>35</sup> E.F. Jacob, *op. cit.*, *Cant. and Yk. Soc.*, xlv (1943) 291.

<sup>36</sup> Presumably the same as Badmynton above.

<sup>37</sup> Magd. Coll. Mun., Deeds, Romney Marsh, 15.

<sup>38</sup> C.E. Woodruff, 'The Sacrist's Rolls of Christ Church, Canterbury,' *Arch. Cant.*, lxxviii (1936), p.61.

Oxford'.<sup>39</sup> And what is known of the interest of the patrons through the charters in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is reinforced by the available information concerning the tenure of the office of warden or master of the Hospital: between 1364 and 1458 eleven such officers are known but for the period between 1458 and the dissolution and absorption of the Hospital by Magdalen College in 1481 no further evidence has been discovered.<sup>40</sup>

In 1485–86, however, a valor of the Magdalen College estates enrolled in the College accounts gives some insight into the management of the Hospital in the last decades of the fifteenth century.<sup>41</sup> Under the heading 'Romney mershe' the rent income for that year is put at £5 7s. 2d. and the income from the lease of the Chapel ('Firma capelle') at £6. Outgoings for repayment of rent, waterscotts, expenses on the Chapel, the stipend of a chaplain (26s. 8d.), expenses in Rogation week, and the wage of a rent-collector for the lands of the Abbot of Bloxley (*recte* Boxley) are said to amount to £6. 4s. 4d. leaving a clear balance of £5 2s. 10d.<sup>42</sup> In 1481–82 Robert Baron had acted as receiver of rents for Romney Marsh as well as for Oxford and Ramsey in Essex, in 1484–85 William Dobull (or Dobyll) was listed as lessee of Romney Marsh and in 1490–91 was described as rent-collector for the same property.<sup>43</sup> The bequest of 6d. made to the Hospital in the will of William Bounde of Canterbury in 1485, moreover, may also be suggestive of continuing activity in these years.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Magd. Coll. Mun., Deeds, Romney Marsh, 15.

<sup>40</sup> *Masters of Hospital SS. Stephen and Thomas*

1364	Elias de Postlyng
1378	Richard Scherewynd
1385	Nicholas Chamberleyn appointed, resigned 1386
1386	Adam de Cokermouth appointed
?	John Harard
c. 1398–1400	John Frebod
1409	John Hale appointed
1419	Robert Haddelsay resigned
	Thomas Morton appointed, resigned 1421
1421	Thomas Stodyer appointed, died 1435
1435	Andrew Aylewyn appointed
1458	Richard Berne appointed

Evidence drawn from: Cant. Arch. Reg. Islip, fo. 363; Macray, *Notes*, 7; Dugdale, *Monasticon*, vii, 640; *VCH (Kent)*, ii, 225, citing Pardon Roll 1–14 H IV, m. 17; Reg. Arundel, ii, fo. 53b; Reg. Chicheley, i, fos. 116, 116b, 128b, 210; Du Boulay, ed., *Reg. Bourgchier Cant. Arch.*, 249.

During this period indulgences were granted to benefactors to the Chapel in 1375, 1379, 1391, and 1451 (*Hist. MSS Com. Rep. IV*, App., 464).

<sup>41</sup> Magd. Coll. Mun., *Liber Computi*, fo. 82.

<sup>42</sup> Interlineated sub-totals of expenditure, in fact, total £6 18s. 7d.

<sup>43</sup> Magd. Coll. Mun., *Liber Computi*.

<sup>44</sup> Cant. Arch. Reg. Wills, PRC 17/4, 1484–87.



Such documentary evidence remains frustratingly inadequate. Nonetheless, a tentative interpretation of the medieval history of the Hospital may now be advanced. Three main periods of development may be identified: (i) the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, (ii) from the second half of the thirteenth to the early fourteenth centuries, and (iii) from the early fourteenth century until, possibly, the early sixteenth century. The first period is that of foundation (though the precise details of this remain unclear) and endowment when, presumably, the Hospital was fulfilling its function as a leper hospital, with separate provision of income for chaplain and brethren. During the second half of the thirteenth century and early fourteenth century the institution may have undergone the first stages of a change of function. The commission of 1298 reveals that its assets were falling into the hands of local lords and by the 1320s the Alard family,<sup>45</sup> as patrons, were leasing out its properties. It may be that as early as this the Hospital had ceased to serve as a leper hospital and had already taken on the role of providing chantry facilities for local townsmen and landlords while its lands were rented out. Certainly, when Fraunceys took over the Hospital from the Alard family it seems unlikely that the break with the past was as great as his charter of refoundation might imply. During the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, whether under the patronage of the Fraunces family, the Brenchley family, or Magdalen College, the management of the Hospital as chantry chapel and leaseholding seems to have been substantially the same.

How, then, does this interpretation square with the archaeological evidence? Far from being unable to adapt to the changing conditions of the fourteenth century, it is argued here that adaptability was exactly what the Hospital displayed, and the forms of adaptation ran parallel to those to be found in contemporary estate management and ecclesiastical foundation. If there was a fourteenth-century break in continuity it would seem to have been the discontinuity of a change of function, though the Chapel was still used and the lessees may have used other buildings, but there is little to suggest that the period 1340–1360 was necessarily to be associated with that change — it may well have taken place earlier. As for the '*terminus ad quem* for everything on the site in the second-third of the fifteenth century' this too would seem to require modification. Even if a documentary silence is permitted to speak for real discontinuity then it is the period between 1458 and 1481 which claims attention. Furthermore, in the period after the acquisition of the Hospital by Magdalen College its management during the remaining years of the fifteenth century would seem to have been much the same as in the previous century and a half. In the light of

<sup>45</sup> Rigold, *op. cit.*, *Arch. Cant.*, lxxix (1964), 49.

all this, it might be asked of the archaeological evidence whether the dating of the re-roofing in harder tile does not become less certain,<sup>46</sup> whether even the dating of the 'solid tomb of yellow brick' found in 1935 does not become a more open question,<sup>47</sup> and, most important of all, whether the analytical division of the pottery into two general chronological categories viz. c. 1260–1340 and c. 1360–1440 is really as secure as has been suggested?<sup>48</sup> The curious development of the historiography of the Hospital of St. Stephen and St. Thomas makes unusually possible the exploration of the relationship between documentary and archaeological evidence. The mutual refinements of techniques of interpretation necessitated by their confrontation in this case may have wider implications for the history of Kentish institutions.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 56.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 50.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 66–7.