

## TONBRIDGE PRIORY.

BY J. F. WADMORE, A.R.I.B.A.

I TRUST I may not be deemed presumptuous in calling attention to the Priory of St. Mary Magdalene at Tonbridge for Canons Regular of the Order of St. Augustine, the history of which is more or less shrouded in obscurity, and its site forgotten.

Of its buildings not a vestige remains; the South-Eastern Railway uses the site for a Goods Station, and the land is cut up with rails and sleepers. Here once stood one of the finest monasteries in the ancient diocese of Rochester; consisting of a \*Chapter-house, Dormitory, Refectory, Church, Vestry, Library, and other offices, which were unfortunately totally destroyed by fire on †the 11th of July 1337. John de Stratford being at that time Archbishop of Canterbury, and Hamo de Hethe Bishop of Rochester, the Prior and convent at once appealed to the King, and to their diocesans for assistance. Their appeal to the King appears to have been presented by ‡Ralph Baron de Stafford, and was responded to by the Chancellor, John de Offord, Dean of Lincoln, in A.D. 1349. That addressed to §Bishop Hamo de Hethe only received a reply after John de Shepey had succeeded to the See of Rochester—it is dated 25th of February 1353.||

The prayer of the memorialists was favourably received, and the revenues of the Church and Vicarage of Leigh were appropriated to the Priory, for the maintenance of two canons, and the rebuilding of the Monastery.

Having thus briefly touched upon the site of the Priory, we may proceed to gather from various sources, something of its founder, its history, and its possessions.

Richard de Clare, Earl of Hertford, the founder of the Priory of

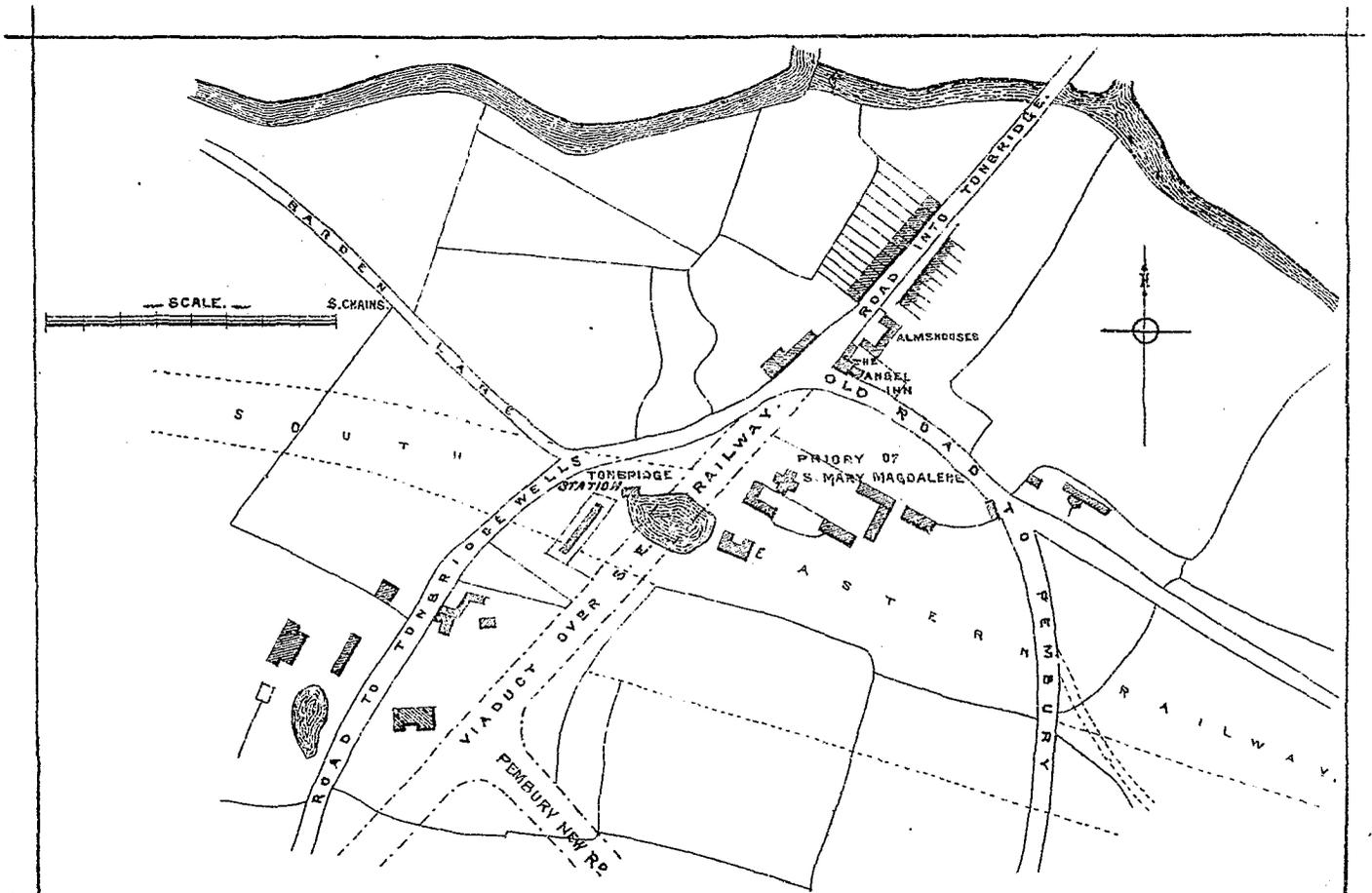
\* *Registrum Roffense*, p. 464.

† *Calendar of MSS. in the Bodleian Library at Oxford*, by Messrs. Turner and Coxe, p. 137 (ww) (zz).

‡ *Reg. Roff.*, p. 463.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 464.

|| Dugdale appears to have assumed that the fire took place in this year.



Whitman & Bass. Photo Litho. London.

— SITE OF THE —  
**PRIORY OF S. MARY MAGDALENE TONBRIDGE KENT**  
 FROM TITHE MAP A. D. 1836.

J.F. WADMORE A.R.I.S.A.

St. Mary Magdalene, was descended from a natural brother of the first Richard, Duke of Normandy, to whom and to his son Guislebert he gave considerable possessions in Normandy. To Richard the son of Guislebert the Castle of Brionne was given.\*

Robert de Monte, in his History of Henry I, says, "There are many old people who say that Richard Fitz Guislebert, Roger's father, had long ago received the town of Tonbridge in England in exchange for this same Castle [of Brionne], for they say, that the *leuga* of Brionne in the first instance was measured with a line, and that the same line was carried across into England, where it enclosed the same quantity of land which formed the *leuga* of Tonbridge, so that the district of Tonbridge embraces the same number of miles as that of Brionne."†

This statement appears to be correct; as Richard de Tonbridge was present at Pennenden Heath, when Lanfranc the archbishop regained all the possessions of the See of Canterbury.

It is at this distance of time, and in the absence of direct evidence, difficult to give the exact date of the foundation. Three of the earliest charters of the Priory, now preserved in the Bodleian Library, are ascribed by Messrs. Turner and Coxe to *circa* A.D. 1135 and *circa* A.D. 1180.‡ Pope Celestine's Bull of Confirmation, dated 1191, is printed in Thorpe's *Registrum Roffense*.§

One Roger de Clare, Earl of Hertford, younger brother and heir of Gilbert de Clare, was a benefactor to the Knights Hospitallers of Jerusalem; he granted to them the rectorial rights of the Parish Church of Saints Peter and Paul, Tonbridge. Thorpe has printed the charters in his *Registrum Roffense*, to this effect.

¶ Be it known to all sons of our Holy Mother the Church that I Roger de Clare, Earl of Hertford, give and concede, and by my charter confirm, to the Brethren of this Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem, for my health and for the souls of

\* Stephens's *Church History*, vol. v., p. 32. † *Ibid.*, vol. v., p. 15.

‡ Turner and Coxe's *Calendar of Charters in the Bodleian Library*, p. 117, *Charter* 1; and p. 118, *Charters* 2 and 3.

§ Pages 666-8. It mentions the following possessions of the Priory, *inter alia*:—The churches of Yalding (with Brenchley chapelry), Mereworth, and Stradesbelle; the "Schafes" of Wetelestone and Smocham, "et dominium de mesuagio quod fuit Algari, *ante portam castelli* [de Thonebregge]; totam terram de Dudingburie cum pertinenciis suis, que fuit Roberti Greelle, totam terram de Hallo, quam Acius tenuit; duas summas frumenti annuatim de Farlega; unum messuagium *juxta barram in villa de Thonebregge*; et sex denarios, singulis annis, de domo que fuit Agnetis, *juxta pontem de Thonebregge*; sex denarios in Roffa singulis annis, de donacione Randulfi filii Danat; terram que fuit Gilberti le Filz *juxta portam nostram*; terram de Wichehendenne, que fuit Willielmi janitoris, et terram quam tenetis *juxta domum vestram*, que fuit ejusdem Willielmi."

¶ Thorpe's *Registrum Roffense*, p. 665.

my ancestors and heirs, the Church of Tonbridge, with its Chapel, and all other things adjacent belonging to the said Church all that I hold, or could hold.

I place this deed and concession in the hands of Richard Turk, their Prior in England, for the use of the poor of the Hospital of Jerusalem, in free and perpetual alms. Witnesses:—Brother Richard, chaplain, Brother William de Fereres, Brother Thomas, Brother Robert de Storce, Brother Waryn, Brother Hugh Fuhet, Brother William, Pincerna, Reginald de Cruce, John, the Prior's Clerk, Robert, the Sacrist, Adam, a Clerk, Alan, the Prior's Chamberlain, Geoffry, the Cook, and others.

This is followed by the gift of the advowson of the Parish Church of Tonbridge to the Brethren of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem.

\*To all sons of our Holy Mother the Church present and future Roger de Clare Earl of Hertford, greeting; Know that I have given and conceded and by my Charter confirmed to God and St. John the Baptist, and the Brethren of the Hospital of Jerusalem, the advowson of the Church of Tonbridge, and all rights I have in it, in free and perpetual alms as well and as freely as the advowson of any church can be given. And I have given thus the aforesaid advowson with all its appertinences to the aforesaid Brethren, for the health of myself and my heirs, and for the souls of all my ancestors. This thus freely and for a perpetual alms gift I grant and confirm to the hands of Richard Turk, their Prior in England. These witnessing, Richard de Clare, brother of the Earl, Richard, son of the Earl de Clare, Brother Richard, a Chaplain, Brother Thomas, Brother William de Fereres, Brother Robert de Storce, Brother Waryn, Brother Hugh, Brother William, Pincerna, Reginald de Cruce, Robert, a Chaplain, John, a Clerk of the Earl, Robert, son of Baldewyne, William, son of John, Ingelram de Aberun, Hugh de Walbade, Gilbert, son of Humfry, Robert, son of Hubert, Gerard, son of David, Theobald Sorel, William de la Marc, Thomas le Arblastier, Gilbert of Flanders, Eudo, Paymaster, John, a Clerk, Alan, a Chamberlain, and others.

This is followed by a confirmation of the grant of the Parish Church of Tonbridge to the Brethren of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem by Walter who was Bishop of Rochester, from 1148 to 1182.

†Walter, by the Grace of God, Bishop of Rochester, a humble servant of the Church, to all faithful servants of the Church residing in the diocese of Rochester. Be it known to all present and future that Roger, Earl of Clare, in the presence of Richard his son, and in my presence, conceded and gave the right of advowson of Tonbridge Church, and whatever right he before had in the aforesaid Church, to the House of the Hospital of Jerusalem, and to the brethren serving God therein, *etc.*

I much wish that I could give some description of these and other documents referred to, which were transcribed and edited by Thorpe in his *Registrum Roffense*; unfortunately I am unable to do so, although, by the kindness of the very Rev. Dean Scott and the Canons of Rochester, I was permitted, with the assistance of Mr. Knight the chapter-clerk, to examine all the MSS. in their strong

\* Thorpe's *Registrum Roffense*, p. 665.

† *Ibid.*, p. 666.

rooms, I failed to discover this or any other MSS. edited by Thorpe.

It is true that I did not devote more than a few hours to the search, but this time was sufficient for me to come to the conclusion that they were not to be found amongst those which I saw, and Mr. Knight himself knew of no others.

If so, what has become of these valuable documents since the time that they were seen by Thorpe? Are they in some hidden chest, which still slumbers in a dark recess?

In the year 1267 we find that the Prior and the Sub-Prior of Tonbridge were commissioned by the Prior of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem to induct their representative into corporal possession of the Parish Church of Tonbridge.

\*To all those to whose knowledge these presents may come, the Brothers P . . . . and R . . . . Prior and Sub-Prior of Tonbridge acting on behalf (*gerentes vices*) of that discreet man, the Prior of Cruceroys, conservator of the privilege and grace conceded to the Prior and Brethren of the Hospital of Jerusalem, by the Apostolic See, health in the Lord. We have received the mandate of the aforesaid Prior in these words: "The Prior of Cruceroys," etc., etc. And having received that mandate, we out of reverence to the Apostolic See, going personally to the Church of Tonbridge, have inducted into corporal possession of Tonbridge Church, and its appurtenances, Brother Henry, Master at Sutton of the Hospital of Jerusalem (the lawful Proctor of the Prior and Brethren of the Hospital), in the name of the said Prior and Brethren; and by the delivery of a chalice and the key of the said church, we have invested their said proctor with the said church. And the said Prior and Brethren; of the Hospital so canonically inducted by us, according to the form delivered unto us, we, by the clemency of God, will defend. There were present and assisting at the same induction, Master William de St. Quintin, our colleague in this matter fulfilling with us, the ceremony of induction; Sir Hugh de Tonbridge, chaplain, Sir Nicholas de Blakenam, Canon of Tonbridge, William Purde, clerk, Richard le Mus, Henry le Cafur, Lewyn Warne, and other parishioners of the same Church. Given and done at Tonbridge, in the said Church, on the Monday before the conversion of St. Paul, in the year of grace 1267.

Among documents in the Bodleian Library calendared as belonging to Oseney Abbey (No. 28) is an account of the weekly consumption of food within the *Priory of Tonbridge* in the time of Edward I. The consumption on Christmas-day appears as follows:†—

For the bakehouse	}	On Christmas-day one quarter 2 bushels of wheat for the bakehouse, of which 40 manchetts with two hundred loaves, 4 bushels for bread for the brethren. Two bushels of mixtal, also 2 hams.
1 quarter 6 bushels of wheat, 4 bushels of mixtal.		
From the store of Tonbridge two pigs.		
From the store of Elding 7 capons.	}	2 quarters of beef, 2 pigs from the store of Tonbridge killed for the larder of the price of 6s.
	}	Seven capons from the store of Eldyng, price 17½d.

\* *Reg. Roff.*, p. 669.

† Turner and Coxe's *Calendar*, Preface, p. x.

From the store of Brenchley 6 cocks.	} Six cocks from the store of Brenchley, price 9d. ; for carriage 10d. ; for veal 6d. ; for mustard 3d.
From the store of Tonbridge 1 boar.	
From the brew- house 10 quarters of oats, 6 bushels of wheat.	Also 10 quarters of oats for the brewhouse with 6 bushels of wheat from which 2½ casks with one barrel of better beer.
Total 3s. 7d. ; Total store 13s. 2½d.	

\*By a writ of Edward II, in the eleventh year of his reign, addressed to Roger D'Ammory of Bodegesham, the Prior of Tonbridge is allowed to appear and plead by proxy. In 1319, John, the Prior of Tonbridge, appoints in his place Richard de Hoton, to make suit to the Court of his Lord, Sir Roger de Ammory of Bodegesham, according to the tenor of the King's writ directed to the Bailiff of the said Court ; this is dated at Tonbridge on the Day of the Annunciation, 13 Edw. II. †From a letter of John de Harewell, addressed to Robert de Caustone, it seems possible that this matter may have related to the settlement of debts due to the Prior of Tonbridge by Sir Hugh de Audeley, Earl of Gloucester, at the time of his decease, and the receiving at the hands of the Prior the following goods, which were in the Prior's Custody ; viz. :—Six quillers d'or et de Jaspre, et en cire oevrez cxc livres ; xij pieces de orailes de leuer en amaillez ; viij papilons des margeries, un Pyn de Ivoir ; un Tablet de Ivoyr de ymagerie ; ij petitz forceas de Ivoyr, dont jay donez luu al Eglise a mettre dedeynz Corpus Christi et altres reliques.

The Prior also requested the good office of the Earl of Lancaster for obtaining a licence of mortmain, from the King, for the purchase of £20 worth of Lands and Rents of Hugh de Audeley late Earl of Gloucester.

At ‡this time it appears that Edward II issued his writ to the Sheriff, and to Henry de Shipton, who at that time held Tonbridge Castle for his Lord, to seize the goods, lands, and possessions of §Hugh de Audeley jun., no doubt for the part he had taken in opposing the King, and harassing the Lands and property of his favourite Despenser. In Nov. 1326|| we find a Royal Writ addressed to his servant Thomas de Blakebroke, bailiff of the Manor of Ealding (which the King had seized, on the forfeiture of Hugh

\* Turner and Coxe's *Calendar*, p. 126 (mm).

† *Ibid.*, p. 138 (ccc).

‡ A.D. 1321 (14 Ed. II).

§ Turner and Coxe, pp. 125-6.

|| *Reg. Roff.*, p. 670.

de Audley, junior), authorising him to pay to the Prior of Tonbridge the accustomed allowance of 5*l*s. 5*d*. per annum out of the revenues of the manor.

This is followed by a similar writ of Edward II to his beloved and faithful Henry de Cobham, custodian of the lands and tenements, which belonged to our enemies and rebels in the County of Kent, now in our hands.

\*Because we have received by the inquisition of our beloved and faithful friends Thomas de Faversham and William de Cotes, made by our command, and returned into our chancery, that the present Prior of Tonbridge in the 11th year of our reign, on the day of the nativity of the blessed Virgin Mary, gave and granted to Thomas, the son of Thomas Colepeper, 113 acres of land with their appurtenances in Pepingbury, and Capel, to be held by the said Thomas and the heirs of his body (but if the said Thomas died without issue, then the aforesaid lands and the appurtenances should revert again to the Prior, and his successors), giving to the aforesaid Prior, and his successors yearly, two marks, viz., at the feast of the Nativity of our Lord, 13*s*. 4*d*., and at the feast of St. John the Baptist, 13*s*. 4*d*.; and that up to the time of his forfeiture the aforesaid Thomas had satisfied the Prior for the aforesaid lands; and that the Prior had not remitted the ij marks to Thomas, nor in any way altered his state; and that the aforesaid land is now in our hands through the forfeiture of the aforesaid Thomas, and for no other reason; and that it is held of the heir of Robert de Gretle by a fee of three peppercorns at Christmas, for all services and customs, and that the whole yearly value is xxv s. v d. We command therefore that you shall deliver to the same Prior the aforesaid lands, which he shall hold at our will, on the payment of the aforesaid 2 marks and henceforward we hold you exonerated. Tested at Kenilworth, 25th day of April.

Shortly after this the Prior and convent of Tonbridge received a confirmation of the Charter of Richard de Clare, Earl of Hertford, 1326.

†The King unto his beloved and faithful Henry of Cobham, the guardian of certain lands and tenements, which belonged to enemies and rebels in the County of Kent, now in our hands, greeting.

Because we have received by enquiry made by our command, through the well-beloved Thomas of Faversham and William de Cotes, and returned into our chancery, That RICHARD DE CLARE, at one time Earl of Hertford, FOUNDED a certain Priory in his Manor of Tonbridge, time out of mind, and by his charters, gave and granted to the Canons regular, there appointed, and to be appointed, ten marks to be received yearly from the said Earl's Manor of Tonbridge, and 5*l*s. 5*d*. to be received yearly from all the said Earl's corn lands of the old and new land of Dennemannesbroke, and likewise that the said Earl granted, by his charters, to the aforesaid Canons, that they should have yearly one hundred and twenty swine freely pastured in the forest of the said Earl at Tonbridge, and likewise that the said Canons should have two wagon loads of dead wood to be freely and quietly carried for them daily from the nearest forest of the said Earl; and likewise that they should have one buck yearly, for ever, at the feast of St. Mary Magdalene, to be taken by the men of the said Earl, and that the then Prior of Tonbridge, and all his successors have duly received, and have been quietly seised of all the benefits thus granted, during the whole time aforesaid, until the aforesaid manor, wood, and forest

\* *Reg. Roff.*, p. 671; from Close Roll, 19 Edward II, membrane 7.

† Dugdale's *Monasticon* (Caley and Ellis), vol. ii., p. 258, and *Reg. Roff.*, p. 671; from the Close Roll, 19 Edward II, memb. 20.

fell into our hands through the forfeiture of Hugh de Audley, junior; and that the said manor with the forest is held of the Archbishop of Canterbury by the service of acting as seneschal of the Hall of the Archbishop at his enthronization, and is worth eighty pounds per annum, and the aforesaid corn lands are portions of the demesnes of the manor of Ealdyng which is of the honor of Clare; and that the said manor is held of us by the service of one Knight's Fee, and is worth one hundred marks per annum. And we command that you pay to the Prior and Convent of Tonbridge, whatever arrears there may be of the aforesaid ten marks, and of the aforesaid 5*l.* 5*s.*, for the time during which you have had the custody of the manor and corn lands; and that henceforward the said sums shall be paid at the accustomed time of payment, and also that you shall allow to the said Prior and Convent the dead wood, in the quantity before mentioned, and pannage for one hundred and twenty swine in the forest of Tonbridge, and one buck every year at the feast of St. Mary Magdalene. And we will make due allowance to you for these things in your account to our treasury of the revenues of the aforesaid manor corn lands, wood and forest. Tested at Chippenham xii day November.

We have now reached a period when the Priory of Tonbridge, dedicated to St. Mary Magdalene, had largely increased both in wealth and importance. The mere Calendar of the title-deeds of its possessions in twenty-six parishes occupies fourteen pages of Messrs. Turner and Coxe's book (110-124). Its voice in the Chapter of the Order of Monks of St. Augustine was admitted, and its Prior was intrusted with visitatorial power for the regulation of other monasteries of the same order.

John, who at this time held the appointment of Prior, appears to have been a man of independence and ability. Presiding in his Chapter, he writes to the Archbishop (Walter) signifying the appointment of William de Frend, Canon of Tonbridge, as Proctor to appear before him in the Church of St. Paul's, in London, on Friday next after the Sunday *Quasimodo*, to consult for the advantage of the Church of England, dated at Tonbridge, on the Ides of April, 1318.\* He likewise received a letter, dated London, 8 June 1318, from the Pope's Nuncio, to provide a good horse, a palfrey, and a sumpter horse caparisoned, to be sent to his Chamberlain.

I may as well here remark, that these and the following extracts are taken from some valuable MSS., collected by Anthony A. Wood and others, and bequeathed by him to the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, and carefully collated, catalogued, and edited by William H. Turner, Esq., under the direction of the Rev. H. O. Coxe, M.A., Librarian of the Bodleian. These writings belonged to the twenty-two religious houses suppressed by a bull of Pope Clement VII dated at Rome, 5 id. March 1525; the revenues of which were

\* Turner and Coxe's *Calendar*, p. 124 (c).

sequestered for the purpose of founding Cardinal Wolsey's College at Oxford. After his fall divers of the said lands were sequestered, and given by the King to laics; but the deeds which appertained to the houses lay in a careless manner, subject to wet, at the mercy of rats. Many of them were printed by Dodsworth and Dugdale in the *Monasticon*; and most of them are quoted in Tanner's *Notitia*. A Calendar of the whole series was published by Messrs. Turner and Coxe in 1878.\*

At this time the Prior and Convent of Tonbridge present Benedict de Ealdyng to the Church of Stradeselle in the diocese of Norfolk. At which presentation Benedict indemnifies the Prior against any suit, and promises to be satisfied with the allowances hitherto paid. This letter of indemnification is dated on Thursday next before the feast of the Apostles Simon and Jude, 1318.†

Simon de Clare, clerk, swears that he will be faithful to the Church of St. Mary Magdalene, Tonbridge, and his lords the Prior, and Convent of the same place, on the Assumption of the B.V.M., 1316.‡ A citation is received from the Priors of Ledes and of Combewelle, visitors of the Houses of the Order of St. Augustine within the dioceses of Canterbury and Rochester, desiring the Prior of Tonbridge to come to a general council, to be held in Christ Church, London, 1318.§ Letters are received from Walter, Archbishop of Canterbury, concerning an exchange between William, Rector of Merston, and the Vicar of Brenchley. John, the Prior, and Convent of Tonbridge grant to Sir Thomas Somersete, chaplain, a corrody of two white loaves, and one gallon of the better conventual beer, from their common cellar, commencing the Sunday on the feast of the exaltation of the Holy Cross, A.D. 1320.||

¶ Claricia, the wife of Sir Roger Wellesworth, Kt., deceased, and Alice, wife of Sir John de Hamme, Kt., deceased, daughters and heirs of Sir Roland de Hokstede, deceased, present to the Prior and Convent of Tonbridge their faithful clerk Robert Quyntyn as a Canon of their house, Aug. 14, 1319.

In the following year, Richard de Holdene, Priest, having been presented by the Prior and Convent of Tonbridge to the

\* These facts are quoted from their Preface, pp. iii, iv.

† Turner and Coxe's *Calendar*, p. 125 (u).

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 125 (v).

§ *Ibid.*, p. 126 (ff) (ii).

¶ *Ibid.*, p. 125 (cc).

¶ *Ibid.*, p. 126 (kk).

Church of Leigh, indemnifies them against any claim to the advowson.\*

In 1322, John, the Prior of Tonbridge, appoints William de Mallyng, Canon of the same house, to be his Proctor to act for him at the General Chapter to be held at St. Frideswide, Oxford.† In the same year, the Prior of St. Gregory of Canterbury and John, Prior of Tonbridge, are appointed Visitors of the Order of St. Augustine for Canterbury and Rochester dioceses, to cite the Prior and Convent of Ledes to be present at a visitation of their house to be held the Monday next after the translation of St. Thomas the Martyr, and also citing the Prior to a General Chapter to be held at St. Frideswide, Oxford, on the 2nd day after the feast of St. Margaret the Virgin. Prior John appoints William de Mallyng to be his Proctor.‡

In the absence of John, Prior of Tonbridge, Nicholas de Faversham, the Sub-Prior, nominates a fit clerk to the Bishop of Norwich for the Church of Stradeselle then vacant.§

In October 1329, a citation is issued from Wrotham by the Archbishop of Canterbury (Simon de Meopham) to the Prior and Convent of Tonbridge, to appear at the court—day after the feast of St. Luke the Evangelist, or to show their privileges.||

In 1329, also a mandate is received from Hamo Bishop of Rochester, for excommunicating certain parishioners of Brenchley who absent themselves from and injure the Church; dated at Hallyng.¶

John, the Prior, grants a licence to Lawrence de la Wealde to live in the family of Sir Hugh de Audele and the Lady Margaret Countess of Cornwall, A.D. 1329.

In 1330, a mandate is received by the Dean of Mallyng, from the Official of Rochester, commanding him to cite the Prior and Convent of Tonbridge, to appear, by themselves or a proctor, on the Monday next after the feast of the translation of St. Thomas the Martyr, in the Church of Mallyng, to answer certain articles of Robert the Master, and the brethren of the Hospital of Strode, which appear to be for the subtraction for three and a half years of the tithes of a place commonly called Horsherst in the parish of Aldyng. From Longefeld, 5 kl. March 1331, the Archdeacon of Rochester issues a mandate to the Dean of Mallyng, commanding

\* Turner and Coxe's *Calendar*, p. 126 (oo).

† *Ibid.*, p. 127 (b).

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 128 (m).

† *Ibid.*, p. 127 (c).

§ *Ibid.*, p. 127 (k).

¶ *Ibid.*, p. 129 (gg).

him to sequester the Churches of Aldyng, Brenchley, and Teudeley for defaults in not repairing them.\*

†Prior John, however, appears, more than once, to have incurred the ecclesiastical censure of his superiors: firstly, in 1318, for having refused to contribute his portion to a subsidy for the prosecution of a lawsuit against the Priory of Twynham; according to a mandate directed to the Prior of Merton by the Abbot of Cirencester and the Prior of Lanthony, presiding at a General Chapter of the Order of St. Augustine. The severe sentence of excommunication appears to have been fulminated against him; but the greater sentence was almost immediately revoked, by William, Abbot of St. Mary of Merton. And a second time for the non-payment of Peter's pence for 1329 and 1330; on this occasion a mandate was issued, by Icherus de Concreto, Canon of Sarum, and Nuncio of the Pope, to the Bishop of Rochester and his Archdeacon, promulgating a sentence of excommunication; dated at Rochester on the ides of May 1331.‡ A relaxation of the mandate was, however, received ten months later; so that it is more than probable that John and his Canons had made honourable amends to his ecclesiastical superior.

§In October 1333, the Abbot of Leicester and the Prior of Kenilworth, presiding at the General Chapter of the Order of St. Augustine within the province of Canterbury, issued a mandate to the Priors of St. Gregory, Canterbury, and of Tonbridge, commanding them personally to visit each house of the above Order in the dioceses of Canterbury and Rochester, to inquire concerning the state, reformation, and observance of the Order, whether by the head or its members, and to correct and reform abuses, and in case of being themselves unable to settle any matters, then to cite the heads of the houses to the General Chapter to be held at Dunstable on the octave of the Holy Trinity in 1334. The same Abbot also sends his mandate to all the heads of the monasteries of that Order within the aforesaid diocese, commanding them to receive the Priors of St. Gregory, Canterbury, and of Tonbridge in a suitable manner at their visitation, and to carry out sentences of excommunication, or suspension, should they be promulgated; and N— de T., Canon of Tonbridge, and Master Richard, Rector of St. Benedict of Wodwarf, in the diocese of London, are appointed to act as proctors for the Prior and Convent of Tonbridge, conjointly or separately.

\* Turner and Coxe's *Calendar*, p. 130 (uu).

‡ *Ibid.*, pp. 128 (r) and 129 (pp).

† *Ibid.*, p. 124 (i).

§ *Ibid.*, p. 130 (vv).

\*We have now arrived at a period in the history of this monastery when a sudden, great, and unexpected calamity occurred. On the 11th of July 1337,† the whole of the conventual buildings were burnt down to the ground, so that nothing remained for the use of the brethren. The conventual buildings, at that time, consisted of a Chapel, Vestry, Dormitory, Refectory, and Library. Together with the building, the books, MSS., ecclesiastical vestments, goods, and furniture were consumed, as well as the stores of hay and corn. ‡In this emergency the Prior and Canons appeal both to the Bishop and Pope, praying that the tithes, privileges, and indulgences, rents, services, lands and possessions with their appurtenances, may be confirmed to them under pain of excommunication, and requesting that the Church of Leigh, which was taxed at £12 per annum, might be appropriated and incorporated for the support of two Canons in the Priory. At the same time, a petition was presented by Ralph, Baron of Stafford, to Edward III; to which the King replied by the hands of his Chancellor, John de Offord, Dean of Lincoln, granting his licence for the appropriation of the Church of Leigh. Letters patent were accordingly issued, 22 Edw. III, A.D. 1349, and a fine of twenty marks was paid into the treasury.§

An indulgence of forty days was at once granted by John, Archbishop of Canterbury, to all who should assist in rebuilding that portion of the Priory buildings which was destroyed. The Bishop is also petitioned for an indulgence to all who pray for the soul of Sir Richard de Clare, Earl of Hertford, whose body then lay in the Church of St. Mary Magdalene, for the souls of all faithful deceased, and also for those who should assist in the building, or sustentation of lights, etc., of the said Priory Church.||

Letters of attorney from the Prior of Tonbridge are granted appointing G . . . de B . . . Canon, to be their proctor, to receive in their name oblations and gifts for rebuilding their church; also

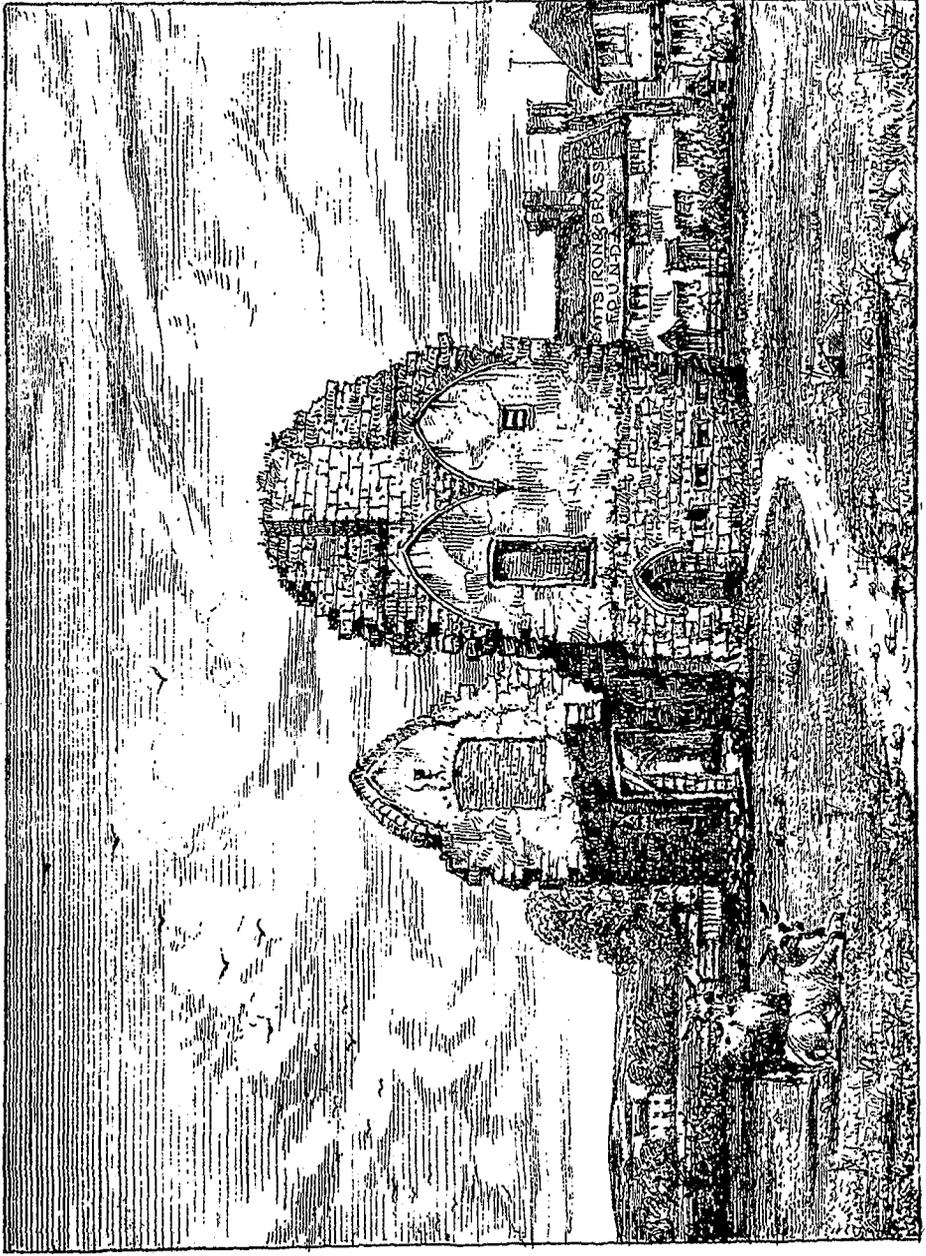
\* Turner and Coxe's *Calendar*, p. 137 (ww) (zz).

† Dugdale's *Monasticon*, vol. vi., part i., page 188, states that this fire occurred in 1333; but from an inspection of the petition to the Pope, now in the Bodleian Library, it appears to have been in 1337; not 1327 as given by Messrs. Turner and Coxe, p. 137.

‡ *Reg. Roff.*, p. 464.

§ Turner and Coxe's *Calendar*, p. 137 (uu) (vv) (ww). Ralph, Lord Stafford, Lord of Tonbridge, commanded the van of the army at Cressy, under the Black Prince; he died A.D. 1373, and was buried in the Priory Church of St. Mary Magdalene, and his estates descended to his son and heir, Ralph, Earl of Stafford.

|| Turner and Coxe's *Calendar*, pp. 132 (l) and 127 (l).



W. & A. S. Swanwick, London.

RUINS OF TONBRIDGE PRIORY. A.D. 1838.

notifying indulgences amounting in the whole to eight years and two hundred and thirty days, from the Pope, the Archbishops, and Bishops, to all benefactors, with participation in the masses and other services of the Church.\* Before proceeding further it may be as well to make a few extracts from the mandate of John de Shepey, Bishop of Rochester, to all the faithful in Christ.

†Setting forth that in the time of his predecessor the church and chapter-house, dormitory, refectory, as well as the library and vestry, together with the books and vestments, ecclesiastical ornaments, and many other valuable and precious reliques, together with the splendid and noble buildings of the monastery, had been destroyed by a terrible and unfortunate fire; and without any fault or want of care of the inmates they were reduced to ruin; and their corn and hay and the major part of their subsistence destroyed. To add to these horrors they were situated on the confines of a neighbouring river, which was frequently transformed into a furious torrent, and the rainfall of the upper waters which were held back, often gathered and overflowed the lands, so that they were rendered useless to the monastery, which was situated near and adjoining the King's highway, that this was a source of great trouble, as the road to the monastery was frequently rendered impassable to numbers of people.

For these reasons they were oppressed and overwhelmed with debt.

Therefore they besought that illustrious man his predecessor, that he would give them the Parish Church of Leigh, in the aforesaid diocese, the value of which barely amounted to twelve pounds per annum; and that he would see fit to grant the patronage to them and to their monastery.

‡“Therefore” (continues the mandate) “we grant to these religious men possession of the said church of Leigh, reserving to us and our successors the obedience of the Prior and Canons of the aforesaid Priory and Convent of Tonbridge, in respect of the aforesaid Church of Leigh, and the visitation and other rights of our Church of Rochester, and what is due to the Bishop and Archdeacon, according to custom and all other things reserved by our right. Also reserving, with the consent of the Prior and Convent, twenty shillings sterling in the name of our procurator for the entertainment of us and our household, as often as we or our successors shall visit the said Church of Leigh, to be paid within ten days after the visitation.”

By the same deed a Vicarage was ordained at Leigh and the rights of the Vicar are subsequently defined to consist of—

“A manse for the Vicar and his household, to be provided at the cost of the Priory, and to consist of a hall, with two chambers, a kitchen, a stable and one curtilage all to such as befit the Vicar's position, and also eight marks of silver annually out of the spiritual oblations made in the aforesaid Church.” Also the tithes of certain things, flax, hemp, milk, butter, cheese, calves, wool, etc., which I insert from the original as shewing the peculiar and idiomatic expressions plentifully interspersed throughout:—‘Lini, canabi, lactis, butiri, casei, vitulorum, lane, agnorum, aucarum, anatarum, porcellorum, ovorum, cere, mellis, pomorum, pirorum, columbellorum, piscariarum, aucupacionum, venacionum et negociacionum totiusparochie de Leghe. Item in decimis feni, herbagii, et silve cedue, ex parte Occidentali, et Boreali, parci de Pensherste, vocati Essshoresparke, et a dicto parco per Medeweiam, usque molendinum de Yenesfeld et vie que ducit a dicto molendino per mansum Johannis de Polle, et per cimiterium de Leghe, usque pontem vocatum Bittebregge, cum feno herbagio et silva cedua de Holydenne.’§ . . . .

¶“In testimony of which we, John, Bishop of Rochester, and also the Prior

\* Turner and Coxe's *Calendar*, p. 134 (k).

† *Reg. Roff.*, p. 465.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 466.

† *Reg. Roff.*, p. 464.

¶ *Ibid.*, p. 467.

and Convent of Rochester, have affixed our seals to these presents, and for greater security and record we have caused these our letters to be strengthened with the seal and subscription of Master John de Kenyngtone, notary public with apostolic authority. Given at Rochester in the Chapter House the 25<sup>th</sup> day of February, A.D. MCCCLIII. In the 2nd year of the Pontificate of our Lord Innocent the VI. In the presence of John de Meleford, John de Fynchyngfield, Adam Clement, and Nicholas Herynge of the dioceses of Canterbury and Rochester as witnesses."

John de Magham, who up to this time held the living, then resigned, and Nicholas de Chilham was appointed his successor by the Prior and Canons of Tonbridge.

The revenues of the Priory, in 1353, were such that a subsidy of one halfpenny, upon every mark, produced 6s. 2½d.,\* or 149 halfpence. Therefore the income of the Priory was assessed at £99 6s. 8d. per annum; a sum equivalent to more than £1000 of modern money. At about the same date, A.D. 1377, we find a list of the ornaments, vestments, and books at Yaldyng, Brenchley, Tudeley, and Leigh. Passing over those of the three former parishes, we find the parish of Leigh to have had the following:—

† "Primo ij missalia, j Processionale, j Troparium cum Kyrie Sequentiis et Process. j Baptisterium, ij Gradalia, j Antiphonarium, ij Portiforia plenaria, Legenda Sanctorum et temporalium in j volumine, j Psalterium bonum et j debile, j ordinale, j Martilogium; Primo iiij Calices, ij Vestimenta principalia, item ij Dominicalia Vestimenta et ij ferialia, item ij Tuallia cum paruris, et ij sine paruris pro altari. Item v parva Tuallia tersoria, j Tunica, j Dalmatica. Pannus de serico, j capa processionalis, ij Cruces, argentee, j Crux de laton, ij Superpellic., ij Candelabra de piautre, et ij Candelabra de cupro, et ij ferr et j magnum ferreum."

The following interesting accounts of the dress and furniture of the brethren on entering the Monastery is given by Messrs. Turner and Coxe, which I venture to transcribe, and this I gladly do without attempting a translation, as the extract would lose much of its inherent interest; it is headed—

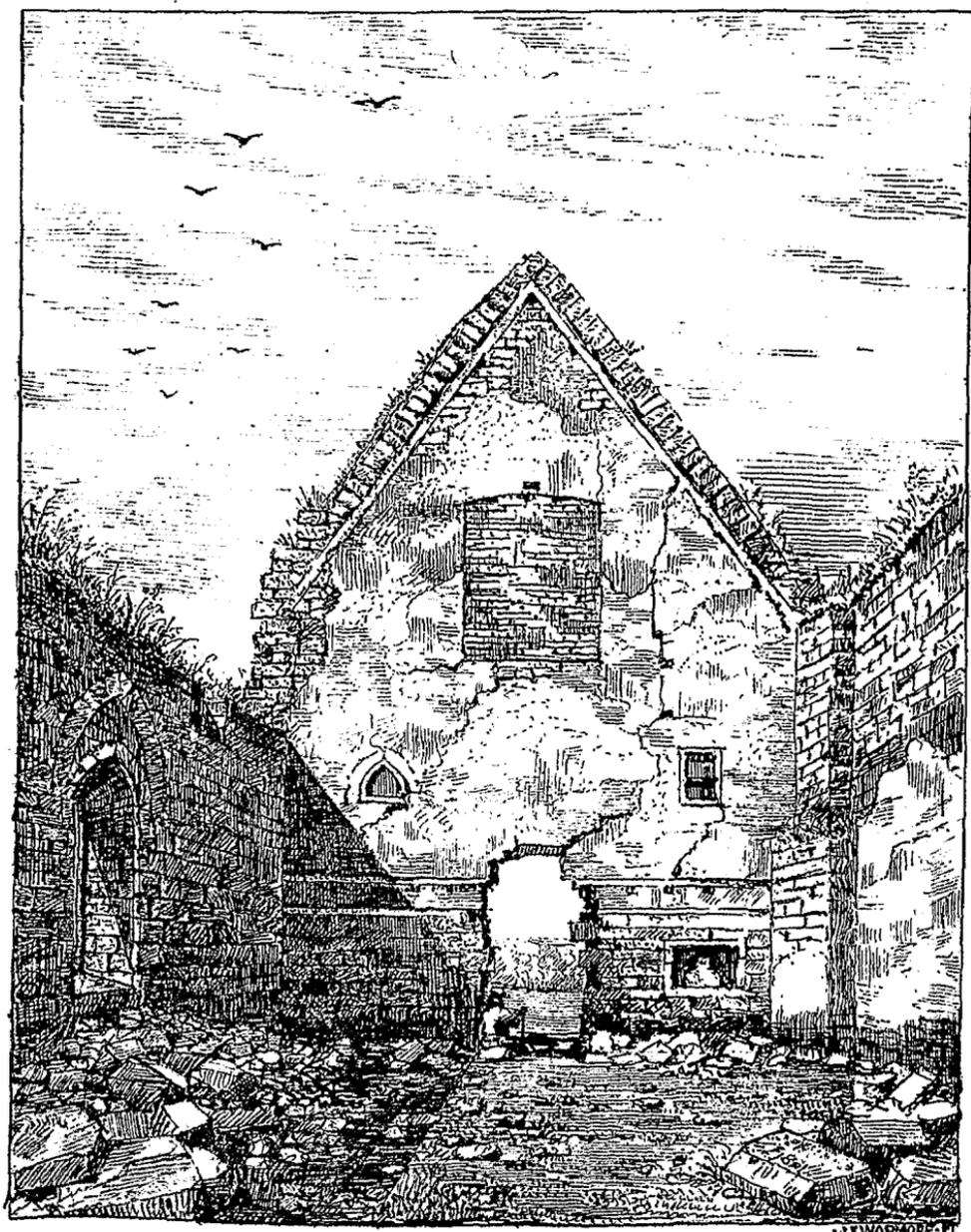
‡ *Habitus noviciorum in primo adventu et introitu ipsorum.*

"Ut *Habitus canonicorum breviter describatur.* In primis, habeant duas cappas de Worthestede, et unam de frisono, quarum duo capucia furrantur nigris pellibus agninis. Item unum pallium de burneto furratum pellibus agninis albis. Item duo superpellicia ad cotidianum usum et tertium de Eylesham ij rochet. cotidian. et j rochet. de Eylesham. Item duas tunicas de blanketo, et unam supertunicam furratam et j corsetum furratum albis pellibus agninis. Item unam tunicam tenuem pro estate. Item tria paria linee telc. Item duo lumbaria. Item duo paria sotularium, de cordewan et j par de coreo bovino et j par nocturnalium cum filtro linitum. Item duo paria caligarum lancarum. Item duo paria caligarum de kanefas. Item duo paria peduorum de blanketo. Item unum par de pinsones. Item j zonam, cum loculo et cultello majore pro mensa et minori pro pennis, et cum j pare tabularum cum pectine, et j acularium cum acu et filo. Item j coclear argenteum et j ciphum de mureno.

\* Turner and Coxe's *Calendar*, p. 135 (aa).

† *Ibid.*, Preface, p. ix.

‡ *Ibid.*, Preface, p. x.



INTERIOR OF THE RUINS OF TONBRIDGE PRIORY,  
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Item j capam pluvialem cum capello, et j par calcareorum. Item j par cirotecarum cum zona quo vocatur Sucoreye. Item ij pelliceas de pellibus agninis albis. It. j blodbend. Item j almucium de burneto furratum nigris pellibus agninis et j parvam cappam furratam et aliam non furratam pro estate *Vestimenta lectualia*; Imprimis habeant tria Thapeta, et j cooperiens lectum de Yndesay. Item tria paria . . . . et unam culcitram punctatam et j materas j cooperitorium de blanketo furratum et j kanefas desuper pro Stramine j pulvinar longum duo cervicalia, et ij sudaria."

Unfortunately there are no records, as far as I have been able to trace, which throw any light upon the buildings which were erected immediately after the fire. I have been fortunate enough to retain the sketches which I made previous to the demolition of the remains in 1840; they give, I am sorry to say, but a poor idea of what the buildings may once have been.

We have, however, preserved amongst the MSS. a curious memorandum of the value and weight of lead at this time.

\* Memorandum.—A cart-load of lead contains thirty feet, and each foot six stone, and each stone thirteen pounds and a half, and one foot contains eighty-one pounds, and so a cart-load of lead contains according to the weight used at "le Pek" 2430 pounds. Item according to the weight used at Sandwich a cart-load of lead ought to weigh six sacks of wool, and a sack of wool should weigh fifty-two hooks, and each hook contains seven pounds, and so a sack of wool weighs 364 pounds, and so a cart-load of lead weighs by the weight of wool 2184 pounds, and so each cart-load of lead at "le Boles" exceeds the weight of wool 246 pounds.

† In 1348, the Prior appears to have lent £4 to Edward III for assisting in his wars against the French, for the repayment of which letters patent are granted.

‡ In 1358, a warrant is signed by Ralph, Earl of Stafford, addressed to John Fromound, his receiver for the Lordship of Tonbridge, to allow the Prior of Tonbridge to keep sixty pigs, free of pannage, within the forest of Tonbridge. § The Prior and Convent also petition Lionel, Earl of Ulster, for a continuance of their privileges of a daily supply of wood, pannage for 60 pigs, and the yearly gift of a stag within the forest. John Fromond is also directed by Earl Stafford, in 1362 (35 Ed. III), to pay to the Prior and Convent ten marks.||

These and many other interesting facts are to be found in the Calendar of Charters and Rolls, published by Messrs. Turner and Coxe, to repeat which at greater length would make this paper too long. Sufficient is here given to shew the nature and interest of

\* Turner and Coxe's *Calendar*, p. 132 (o).

† *Ibid.*, p. 140 (yyy) (zzz).

§ *Ibid.*, p. 140 (hhhh).

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 140 (aaaa).

|| *Ibid.*, p. 140 (iiii).

these documents, which, as regards Tonbridge, do not extend beyond the forty-first year of Edw. III, A.D. 1368.

A licence\* to hold lands in Mortmain was granted by Richard II, confirming by letters patent the grants of Edward II, to the Prior and Convent of Tonbridge, in the former inquisitions under John Osprengge, William Frenedesbery, and William Malling, formerly Priors† of the aforesaid Convent, in which mention is made of

“ Duo messuagia, duas shoppas, tria gardina, sexaginta et quatuor acras prati, duo opera in autumpno decem solidatos redditus et redditum sex gallinarum, viginti et quinque ovorum et quatuor ferrorum equorum cum pertinenciis in Tonbridge, Brenchele, Bitteberghe, Legh, Shibourne, de Johanne Sumon de Osprengge, Johe. Grelynge, Ricardo Turk, Sampson de Middeltone, Stephano Crabbe, Nicholao Espeloun de Sandwico, Johanne Culpeper, Galfrido Culpeper, Johanne Herry de Kyppyngdale, Ricardo Hesdene, Laurencio filio Willielmi Merifeld, Rogero Messyngleghe, Willielmo fratre ejusdem Rogeri, Ricardo Goldhelle, Nicholas Hemery, Johanne Sampson, Emma Mowes de Tonbrigge, Ricardo Eliot, Ricardo Barbour de Tonbrigge, Johanne Longe, Reginaldo Dyk, Galfrido Mellere de Brenchesley, Johanne Heseldene de Tonbridge, et Thoma filio Georgii Caun.

“ All which shops and gardens are returned at 60s. 8d. per ann. by the inquisition of William Skyppe, our Surveyor in the County of Kent; and the said Prior and Convent have in perpetuity a value of xxvi s. vi d. . . .”

“ And thus the said Prior and Convent or their successor, or the said John Symond, John Richard, etc., etc., or their heirs, shall on no occasion be molested or in any way burdened under the aforesaid statutes by us or our heirs.”

We have glanced at the foundation of this Monastery, its rise and prosperity, its destruction by fire, at the means taken to re-instate it, and at its benefactions and possessions. We now turn to record its fate, and disestablishment.

Cardinal Wolsey appears to have found no difficulty in persuading Pope Clement VIII to sanction the suppression of the following Monasteries for the foundation of his proposed College at Oxford, viz., Tickford, Bradwell, and Ravenstone, Bucks; Daventry, Northamptonshire; Camwell and Sandwell, Staffordshire; Tonbridge

\* A.D. 1393; *Reg. Roff.*, p. 674, pat. 16, R. II, part 2, m. 2.

† From Turner and Cox's *Calendar of the Charters* I glean the following names of Priors of Tonbridge:—P. . . ., A.D. 1267 (*Reg. Roff.*, 669); David, A.D. 1273 (pp. 110, 117, 134, 136); John, A.D. 1278-1305 (pp. 114, 118); Roger, A.D. 1311 (pp. 125, 139); John (a Bishop, p. 128 bb), A.D. 1320-36 (pp. 112, 115, 118, 120, 126-7, 130); William de Frend[esbery] (a Canon in 1318), A.D. 1337 (pp. 121, 124, 131); John de Osprengge, A.D. 1344-9 (pp. 111, 136); Nicholas, A.D. 1349 (p. 134); William de Mallyng, A.D. 1353 (pp. 131, 139); John, A.D. 1370-3 (pp. 110, 122); Robert, A.D. 1377-97 (pp. 110-2, 115, 122, 125); Thomas Lewes, A.D. 1406 (p. 118); Richard Thomlyn, A.D. 1509-25 (pp. 112, 116, 119, 123); William, who surrendered the Priory.

and Lesnes, Kent; Beigham and De Calceto, near Arundel, Sussex; Wykes, Tiptree, Blackmore, Stanesgate, Horkesley, and Thoby, Essex; Poghley and Wallingford, Berks; Dodenash and Snape, Suffolk; St. Frideswide and Littlemore, Oxford. For this purpose a bull of Pope Clement was obtained, dated at Rome,\* on the fifth of the ides of March 1525, in the third year of his pontificate, and confirmed by letters patent, dated 1st of October, 16 Henry VIII, appointing a commission which was presided over by Dr. Burbank, Archdeacon of Carlisle, before whom we find William, the last of the Priors of Tonbridge, summoned to surrender his office at Westminster, on the 8th day of February 1524, when John Cromwell, John Clifton, chaplain, Roland Rokyn, John Luton, and John Payne were present.†

The yearly value of the Priory is stated to have been assessed at £48 13s. 4d. and the temporalities at £120 16s. 11d.; that the Prior of Tonbridge had granted the Rectory of Yalding for £30, and the church lands of Loamstead to Whetenhall for 40s.‡ The Rectory of Leigh by the profits and advantages, £10. Thomas Fane, Smith Land, and Elwood, and two other portions of land, dominzo, and Prior Hammond's of Haysden 13s. 4d.; Edward Markley, land and meadow in the town of Tonbridge, 6s. 8d.; William Waller, 26s. 8d.; Harding a red rose or peppercorn rent, now John Gresham's, Bodesham, 23s. 4d.; Wrotham, £6 6s.; Shipbourne, Richard Dyne, 13s. 4d.; Bodesham to the Prior of Anglesea, 1s.; John Robert Brenchley, £14 0s. 4d.; Henry Everard, 6s. 8d.; Henry, late Prior, and half to Thomas Cromwell, glebe lands, 66s. 8d.; § a grant of Land was made, A.D. 1530, to the Priory of Shene, a farm in the manor of Tonbridge value 23s. 4d. The value of the demesne lands £25 8s.

On Feb. 10th, 1526,|| Wolsey granted to John Higden, Dean of the Cardinal's College at Oxford, the site of the late Monastery of Tonbridge, with the various manors and revenues attached thereto. Thos. Cromwell and William Smyth were appointed Wolsey's attorneys to deliver possession to the grantee.

In the 18th year of Henry VIII the value of the possessions of the Cardinal's College at Oxford is set down at the total yearly rental of £2051 9s. 4d.; the income at £2041 16s. 8d.; the annual expenditure at £1982 1s.¶

The divorce of Katherine and Henry's passion for Anne Boleyn soon placed Wolsey in unprecedented difficulty. As Minister of the King and Cardinal Archbishop of York, the dilatory proceedings of the Court of Rome were imputed to his agency; his fall and disgrace followed not long after. At Michaelmas, 1529, he opened the Court with all his usual pomp and ceremony; the next day he remained at

\* Turner and Coxe, Preface, p. iii; State Papers, Henry VIII, vol. x., pt. 3, p. 697.

† D.S.P., Henry VIII, vol. iv., p. 1137.

‡ Vol. iv., pt. 1, No. 2217.

§ *Ibid.*, 4106.

|| *Ibid.*, pt. 3, 1964.

¶ *Ibid.*, pt. 2, 989.

home, but no message came to him from the King, and on the following day the Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk arrived, and required him to deliver up the Great Seal and retire to Esher. Articles of impeachment were drawn up which passed in the Upper House, but by the zeal and ability of his Secretary, Thomas Cromwell, were thrown out in the Commons, but a fresh indictment having been framed on the 16th Statute of Richard II, and also of King Edward, that no one should sue for promotion to the Pope of Rome or elsewhere without the King's authority, it was proved that my Lord Cardinal obtained both his legacy and Cardinalship without the King's licence, and was so cast into premunire. His death took place on Nov. 28th, 1530.

By reason of this escheat all the revenues and possessions of the disestablished Monasteries passed into the King's hand, who, on the 27th of Sept., gave them in trust to John, Bishop of Lincoln, and Sir Thomas Audeley, Keeper of the Great Seal, for the use of the Dean and Chapter of Windsor, including the advowsons of Brenchley, Yalding, Tewdley, and the Priory of St. Mary Magdalen, with the manors of Tonbridge.\*

An assignment of the above-mentioned lands, under the King's warrant, was subsequently made to the King's College at Oxford, dated Sept. 29th, 1532.

The dissolution of the Priory appears to have caused much dissatisfaction in the town of Tonbridge, although Wolsey had kindly and generously proposed to give the inhabitants additional educational advantages. A letter is extant written by Archbishop Warham,† dated June 30, 1525, addressed to W<sup>m</sup> Whetenhall, Waller, and Henry Fane,—

Expressing his surprise that they did not meet him at Tonbridge with the other inhabitants, as he wished to decide whether it were better to have a grammar school founded at Tonbridge, for forty scholars, with exhibitions to Oxford on the Cardinal's foundation, or the Priory. A good number of the townsmen were with him to day, and stated, both orally and in writing, that they thought the Priory better; and he requested them to meet him by 9 A.M. on Monday to give their answer, with the names of those who agree to the school, to be sent up to Wolsey; if this cannot be done on Monday, then to meet him at Maidstone, on St. Thomas day. Dated Otford, June 30, 1525.

On the 3rd of July following Archbishop Warham writes to Wolsey acknowledging the receipt of Wolsey's letter, complaining that he had not followed Wolsey's directions in explaining his mind to the inhabitants of Tonbridge, and desiring him to come to London

\* Dom. State Papers, Hen. VIII, vol. v., 1351.

† *Archæologia Cantiana*, I., 31-33; D.S.P., vol. iv., pt. 1, m. 5, 1459.

and be present at an audience to be given by the King to the President of Rouen.\*

When he was at Tonbridge lately, he told the inhabitants there, of whom not more than sixteen appeared before him, that he and Wolsey had thought it would be better for themselves and their children to have perpetually forty children of that county to be brought up in learning, and afterwards sent to Oxford, and that certain priests should serve there, for their founder, rather than to have six or seven canons. To this all except three answered that they wished to have the canons restored, but desired to be allowed till Friday following to discuss the matter with their neighbours.

On that day they brought to the Archbishop at Otford the names of those who desired the restoration of the canons, but finally referred this matter to the King and Wolsey, he does not see therefore that any bruit should arise of this, but some men in Kent think that nothing can be done without them. That he had written to Sir Edw. Neville and the Vicar of Tonbridge to stop the bruit if such there be; and has ordered the Parish Priest of Cranbroke, and Pike of Tonbridge, to come to him at Maidstone, next Wednesday, that he may know what they have said in this matter. He does not know any ground for Wolsey's suspicion that some of those who raised the bruit, "should be towards me." If he finds them he will not fail to punish them. As to his coming to Lambeth, intends going tomorrow to Maidstone to keep the feast of the translation of St. Thomas on Friday. He had made great preparation there of beer, ale, and wine, and got all his chapel stuff ready; and could not make other arrangements without great loss. He will return to Otford as soon as possible, and remain until he hears further from Wolsey, arranging meanwhile for his coming to Lambeth.

That he has inquired according to Wolsey's letter about the murmur concerning the Priory of Tunbridge, and finds there is none, but that the inhabitants of the town, and others adjoining, had leiver to have the said place not suppressed, if it might stand with the King's pleasure. Henry Fane and others who had a suit with the late Prior were supposed to have started this rumour for fear the Prior should be restored. As to the Parish Priest of Cranbroke, the matter was published by him, by the desire of the inhabitants of Tonbridge, in order to get the advice of those of Cranbroke, as it concerned the interest of both, with regard to the exhibitions at school; and those of Cranbroke concurred with the men of Tonbridge, subject entirely to the King's pleasure. If any bad murmur had arisen he would have been the first to hear of it. He thinks the inhabitants ought not to be suspected of making murmurs on light persons' letters.

With Wolsey's death and the grant of the lands and possession of the Priory at Tonbridge by Henry VIII, as before mentioned, in the year 1532, the inhabitants of the town lost all hope of the advantages they had formerly derived from the Priory, without gaining the school. They had not, however, long to wait before private enterprise and liberality enabled them to obtain the advantages of a good education by the munificence of Sir Andrew Judd, Citizen and Skinner, who resided some time in the neighbourhood of Tonbridge, at a place now, and then, known as Barden. In 1551 he gave, in trust to the Skinners' Company, certain houses and lands for this purpose, and, in 1553, obtained letters patent from Edward VI, which enabled him to re-endow and perpetuate in his free grammar school those advantages which the inhabitants and the county had formerly derived from the disestablished Priory of St. Mary Magdalene.

\* D.S.P., vol. iv., pt. 1, p. 656, No. 1470; Otford, 2nd July 1525.