

DERBYSHIRE ARCHÆOLOGICAL AND NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY.

The Abbey of Dale.

By CHARLES J. COX, LL.D., F.S.A.

IF I was asked to state which place in the fair and infinitely varied county of Derby, after a close acquaintance with that shire for well over half a century, appealed to me the most, as the early home of the veritable romance of the religious life, I should instantly think of Dale. Whether we think of the solitary life and prayers of the hermit, who, seven and a half centuries ago, cut for himself a hermitage in the rocky side of Deepdale, which remains to this very day, or of the community of White Canons who ere long, after some disappointments, succeeded in erecting here a stately foundation, the centre of the religious life of the district, with a goodly roll of successive abbots for many generations, until her downfall and secularisation in the miserable overthrow under Henry VIII. It will be well remembered by the older and original members of this Society that very soon after its inauguration, namely, in the autumn of 1878, nearly two months were spent in the extensive excavation of the foundations of the ancient Premon-

stratensian abbey church and of its adjacent buildings.¹ Living, as I then was, not many miles from the site during the whole of that period, I was but rarely absent for many hours from the absorbingly interesting scene of our labours, though I was most ably assisted by the aid of my colleagues, especially by Sir W. H. St. John Hope, and by the late Captain Beamish, R.E. The services of the latter were invaluable as a surveyor and draughtsman of technical plans, whilst the former compiled the valuable letterpress of the articles that appeared in the first and second volumes of the Society's *Journal*, descriptive of the excavations of 1878 and of their resumption in 1879.

The abbey of Dale, sometimes known as the abbey of Stanley Park, is exceptionally fortunate in possessing among the Cotton MSS. of the British Museum (Vesp. E) an exceptionally full and varied chartulary, with which I have long been most intimately acquainted. I caused it to be thoroughly analysed by a most competent British Museum hand in 1875-6 when I designed to bring out a monograph on this monastery. Subsequently this idea was improved upon by securing, in 1881, Sir. W. H. St. John Hope's co-operation, but alas! we never got further with the work than the issuing of a prospectus, and drawing up of a plan of the chapters.

Meanwhile my colleague, in the fifth volume of this *Journal* (1883), wrote a very good article of some length, entitled: "The Abbots of the Monastery of St. Mary de Parco Stanley, or Dale, Derbyshire," the chief part of which is a fresh literal translation of the fascinating Chronicle by Thomas de Musca, canon of Dale, which is now bound up with the Chartulary. This Chronicle sets forth the early story of the hermit of Dale and of

¹ A member of this Society and of its Council has given me a sad account of the neglected state of these ruins, of the growth of brambles and grass and weeds of like nature over what the Society spent both money and loving care in excavating. I trust by the time this article is published this neglect will no longer exist.—EDITOR.

the eventual founding of the Premonstratensian abbey in thirteen most vivid chapters. The original Latin is given in the extended Dugdale's *Monasticon* (vol. vi, pt. 2, p. 192), and a rather poor translation in Glover's *History of Derbyshire*.

Shortly after this accurate translation was given in our *Journal*, the Rev. Charles Kerry, afterwards our editor, contributed to the 1884 volume of the quarterly *Reliquary*, then under the editorship of Mr. Llewellyn Jewitt, a thorough interesting paper of over twenty pages on Deepdale, reproducing Glover's translation of the Chronicle but adding thereto a variety of notes, not to be found elsewhere, as to the exact topography of the place with which he had been long acquainted, and with some most reasonable solutions as to difficulties connected with the age and features of the present church. Put shortly he believed, and gives sound reasons for each suggestion, that (1) the oratory and cottage erected after a rude style by the hermit Cornelius stood on the site of the south aisle of the church; (2) that about 1150 the present nave and chancel of the church were added to the original oratory; (3) that about 1250 the oratory or south aisle, falling into decay, was entirely rebuilt; and (4) that about 1450 the church underwent a considerable transformation. He also considered it probable that the adjoining church-house was altogether detached from the church before 1400, where Richard the chaplain lived. About 1480 the old house was entirely rebuilt of half-timbered work, and I have no doubt whatever, from repeated visits and measurements long before the excavations, that his conjecture as to it then being used as an infirmary for the residents in the monastery, with a gallery opening out of the house into a gallery of the church, so that the sick and invalids might therefrom hear the Mass, is the right and sound solution.

The very sad part about this paper of Mr. Kerry's is

to be found on page 21, where he tells us that, since the preceding notes were written, the old church-house of Dale—the house so rich in history, which had there been visited by thousands of tourists, and where I almost lived during the excavations—“ has been swept away for ever. One fragment of it only remains in *situ*, viz., the wall of the parlour with its projecting chamfered besement. This, as a low wall, now protects the garden from the road. The old oak mantle beam, formerly spanning the parlour hearth, has been perched midway up the new parlour and *outside the building*, so that in a few years the date and initials carved thereon will be obliterated by exposure to the weather. But this is not all.” We must not, however, quote any more, but Mr. Kerry proceeds to show that a Norman abutment or buttress, an original portion of the church, and in no sense private property, was at the same time destroyed.

On referring to the society's *Journal* as to this shameful act of vandalism, we see that on p. xli of the sixth volume (1884), it is stated that “ it is with keen regret that we mention the fact that the old Guest House (a wrong name) at Dale Abbey has been pulled down during the past year, and we cannot help feeling that there were members of the Society residing in the neighbourhood who might have notified to the Council the intended demolition before it was actually accomplished.”

In vol. xxiv of the *Journal* (1902), I set forth all the Chartulary of Dale with an analysis of the same, omitting the Chronicle and certain extraneous matter, in a paper occupying 79 pages.

Again, in 1907, was issued the second vol. of the folios of the *Victoria History of the County of Derby*. To it I contributed, *inter alia*, a considerable number of pages on the Religious Houses of the shire, wherein Dale played no small part, and wherein a good deal not hitherto known found a place.

Of far greater moment was the publication in 1904-6 by my staunch friend, to whom I owe so much—that great scholar and historian Abbot Gasquet, now Cardinal—of three quarto volumes, under the auspices of the English Historical Society, entitled *Collectanea Anglo-Premonstratensia*, wherein original research has brought to light a great variety of contemporary manuscripts pertaining to all the English Houses of that great religious Order, among which the Abbey of Dale, eventually colonized from Newhouse, occupied so dignified a position. Many momentous facts, such as Visitations, are recorded of this ancient establishment by her abbots, more especially in volume ii, pp. 164-201, as well as incidentally in various other places.

With all this amount of information readily at hand to any members in the Society's *Journals*, and in certain other books here specified, which are fairly accessible as pertaining to the county, it might naturally be thought that Dale and her abbey might be well let alone.

But our invaluable Editor, who has such a hard task to keep the *Journal* going during this sad season of war distress, kindly gives me leave to follow up this subject yet further, as he rightly thinks that one portion of the *Journal* should be reserved for information that may be helpful for future historians of the county, if such can be found from any far less accessible sources.

For instance, we are inclined to believe that the following early charters, even of Dale, have not hitherto been published though brought to light as long ago as 1890.

In that year it was stated in the ninth report of the Historical MSS. Commissioners, p. 403, that the MSS. of Mr. Henry Chandos Pole-Gell, of Hopton Hall, included several original charters of grants to Dale Abbey. The following are specially named :—

13th cent. Grants by Hugh de Ferrars of lands to the abbey of Park Stanley.

13th cent. Pentecost. Cecily, daughter and heiress of Hugh de Ferrars, in her widowhood, grants and confirms to God and the Church of St. Mary of Park Stanley, and the Canons of the Premonstratensian Order there serving God, all the gift which William son of Robert Ingram of Nottingham made to the Canons in the territory of Bracington, Mersinton, and Hopton in frankmayne. Witness M. Thomas de Ferrars, her uncle, and others.

13th cent. William de Ferrars, Earl of Derby, grants to William de Grendofree 40 acres of land in the territory of Bracinton; Impeximus and Confirmation by Robert de Ferrars, son and heir of William de Ferrars, formerly Earl of Derby, of the above-mentioned deed by Cicely, daughter and heir of Hugh de Ferrars. Fine round red seal, $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, arms of Ferrars on one side, and on the reverse a horseman with the horse trappings ornamented with the like arms.

47 Henry III. Vigil of St^s Philip and James. Robert de Ferrars, son and heir of William de Ferrars, takes the abbey under his protection. Large red seal as before.

34 Edward III. Thursday after the Feast of the Translation of St. Thomas the Martyr. Henry Duke of Lancaster, Earl of Derby, Lincoln, and Lancaster, and Steward of England, releases to the Abbot and Convent of De La Dale, the 12^s of rent which they paid for land granted to them by Cicely, daughter and heir of Hugh de Ferrars, and which gift was confirmed by Robert de Ferrars. The land was in Bracington, Hopton, and Kersington. Red seal of the arms of England.

As to various other detached bits of information, they have been gleaned from two or three score of volumes, pertaining exclusively to the present century, which have been garnered, after some plodding research, and which are usually spoken of under the generic term of Chronicles and Memorials.

Owing to the rare industry of the band of competent officials now working at the Public Record Office in Chancery Lane, the Deputy Master of the Rolls has secured the issue of a very large number of substantial volumes of printed calendars of the various kinds from

original stores, extending over several centuries, which are invaluable to historical students. When they were fewer in number, such official volumes were usually to be met with in the great libraries of most county towns, but that is now very far from being the case. For the most part these calendars have to be searched for on the shelves of the Public Record Office, the British Museum, or the Society of Antiquaries at Burlington House.

It has therefore entered into my head that I may possibly prove helpful to those who cannot readily spare the time to run up to town for the purpose of consulting these calendars, or if there to find the necessary leisure to do so. The following short extracts from the calendars put forth since the year 1899 are not verbatim transcripts, for occasionally records are omitted and in other places interpolated. However, in most cases the actual original rolls have been consulted in the usually vain endeavour to see if anything material has been omitted. Especially is this the case with the large number of references from the Patent Rolls, each one of which has been tested by myself or by a thoroughly qualified friend. I am sure I shall be forgiven for not writing a syllable on these special Rolls, or as to what we may reasonably expect to find within them, suffice it to say, in a single short sentence, that they are the sources of the actual history of bygone times.

As they are the most numerous, we will begin the list with the Patent Rolls. It should always be recollected that the considerable gaps under different reigns can often be supplied by consulting the calendars which were brought out prior to 1900.

Pat. 48 Henry III (1264), part i, m. 14.

Simple protection was granted this year by the King, until the next Michaelmas, to the abbot of Dale.

Pat. 17 Edward II (1323), pt. 1, m. 9. Dated at Belper, 7 Dec.

License, by privy seal, for the abbot and convent of Dale,

after inquisition *ad quod damnum*, to acquire in mortmain lands and rents to the value of 100^s a year.

Afterwards vacated and surrendered because the said abbot and convent, on 30 June 15 Richard II, acquired land and rents in full satisfaction of the said sum, therefore these letters were cancelled.

Pat. 17 Edward III (1343), pt. i, m. 10.

License for the alienation in mortmain to the abbot and convent of Dale, in satisfaction of 10^s of the 100^s yearly by land and rent which they held the license of Edward II to acquire of the following toft and land of the value of 5^s 2^d yearly, as appears by inquisition taken by Nicholas de Langeford, escheator in the counties of Nottingham and Derby:—

by Richard le Curson, parson of the church of Bredeshale, and William Shymongay 60 acres of moor in Hopton.

And by Robert de Sallowe a toft, 7½ acres of land and an acre of meadow in Stanton by dale.

Pat. 18 Edward III (1344), part i, m. 10.

Protection for the abbot of Dale, appointed by the abbot of Premontrè as his deputy to make visitation of all houses in England subject to him, to correct and amend what he shall find amiss and to punish and chastise any delinquent canons and lay-brethren in their houses, and for the men of his household and horses, harness and all things belonging to him.

Pat. 18 Edward III (1344), part i, m. 14.

Whereas the abbot of Premontrè, superior of the Premonstratensian Order, has deputed the abbot of la Dale to make a visitation for him of the houses of the Order within the realm of England and the latter has not dared to act on such appointment without the King's license, the King by these presents grants him license to do all that is necessary for the visitation and correction of the houses according to the ordinance of his superior, and to levy charges and expenses and other things of right due by reason of such visitation and correction; but he shall not by any colour send or cause to be brought cess or tribute to his superior or any other beyond the seas or attempt anything contrary to the statute and ordinances against making such tribute.

Pat. 19 Edward III (1345), part ii, m. 21.

License for the abbot and convent of la Dale to appropriate a moiety of the church of Egyngton, of their advowson, which is not held in chief as is said.

20 Edward III (1346), part i, m. 33.

Whereas the abbot of Premontrè, the superior abbot of the

Order, has appointed and deputed the abbots of Newhouse and la Dale to visit the houses of the Order in England and reform any abuse therein and they dare not without the King's license levy what by virtue of their appointment they should have for securing the privileges of their Order, and their labours and expenses in that behalf; the King hereby gives them special license to act upon the said appointment and levy what by right is reasonably due. They are not however to send any tribute or cess to their said superior or to any other beyond the seas by any colour.

21 Edward III (1347), part ii, m. 23.

Promise to the abbot of Dale to repay 50^s at All Saints, 1345 lent by him as the receipt of the exchequer towards the expedition of the war of France.

37 Edward III (1364), part ii, m. 14.

License, by privy seal, on consultation, that the abbot and convent of Dale and their successors continually and specially have daily recommendation of the king by name in their prayers and suffrages, as well in their masses as in their chapters, for ever, for them to acquire in mortmain 20^{li} yearly of land and rent not held in chief, provided that inquisitions thereof be made in due form.

38 Edward III (1364), part i, m. 291.

Commission to the abbot of Dale, William Lawrence, John Faucher, Edward Faucher, William Gilbert, and Henry de Bredon, to make a visitation of the hospital of St. Leonard, Derby, of the foundation of the King's progenitors and his patronage, which is reported to have become greatly decayed by the carelessness and negligence of masters or wardens of the same.

39 Edward III (1365), part i, m. 10.

License for the abbot and convent of Dale, co. Derby, to acquire in mortmain, after inquisition, land and rent in Derby by whomsoever held not exceeding the value of 60^s yearly, for the lodging and receiving of their victuals and other things and necessities.

Pat. 49 Edward III (1375), part i, m. 14.

License for the alienation in mortmain of Geoffrey de Chaddesden, parson of the church of Lay Whetton, Leicester, Richard Whiteman of Stanley, chaplain, and Thomas Powse of Aylwaston, chaplain to the abbot and convent of Dale, co. Derby, of a messuage in Derby, held of the King in burbage, which is of the yearly value of 10^s, as is found by an inquisition taken by John Foucher, escheator in the co. Derby, to hold in satisfaction of 13^s 4^d of

the 60^s yearly in land and rent in Derby, which the abbot and convent had the King's license to acquire.

Pat. 7 Richard II (1378), part ii, m. 28.

April 1st. The abbot of Dale lent the King 5 marks for the war.

Pat. 9 Richard II (1385), part i, m. 34.

License by privy seal, for the alienation in mortmain by Hugh de Wyloughby, clerk, John Pole of Burburgh, William de Sallowe of Stantone, Henry Coton parson of Aston, Richard parson of Haughton, and John de Halum, parson of Lomley, of the advowson of the church of Ilkeston, not held in chief, to the abbot and convent of Dale, and for the appropriation of the same by them.

Pat. 16 Richard II (1391), part i, m. 1.

License, for 2 marks paid to the King by the abbot and convent of Dale, for the alienation in mortmain by them of a yearly rent of 26^s 8^d, not held in chief, from their lands and tenements in Stanley, co. Derby, to John de Kirkeby, chaplain, and his successors, celebrating divine service daily in the said abbot's convents' chapel of St. Cross, Stanley, in aid of their maintenance.

Pat. 70 Richard II (1397), part ii, m. 18d.

Commission to the abbot of Derby, the abbot of Dale, and John Brewode, clerk, to enquire and certify touching the withdrawal, both in the times of Thomas de Goldyngton, Robert Sandford and other wardens, or in the time of the present warden of prayers, suffrages, and other works of piety usual in the hospital of St. Leonard, Derby, according to its primitive foundation.

Pat. 4 Henry IV (1402), part i, m. 73.

Pardon to John Wylehar, chaplain, of his outlawry in co. Derby for not appearing before the justices to answer to the King for being a maintainer and abettor of one John Orton, clerk, of the co. of Nottingham, who caused a provision to be made to himself from the apostolic see of the church of Ilkeston, lawfully appropriated to the abbot and convent of Dale, contrary to the form of the ordinance in Parliament of Edward III at Westminster, or to the abbot for the injury, he having surrendered to the Marshalsea prison, as William Gascoigne, the King's chief justice, has certified.

Pat. 2 Henry V (1414), part ii, m. 20.

License, for 40^s paid in the hanaper, from Henry Fox, clerk, Roger Wingerworth, Thomas Wade, John Townly, and Nicholas Parker, chaplain, to grant a messuage in Notyngnam, held by the King in burgage, to the abbot and convent of Dale in mortmain, in aid of their maintenance.

Pat. 3 Henry VI (1425), part i, m. 26.

The fealty of the newly appointed prior of Newstead, Robert Cutwolf, commanded by the King to be taken by the abbot of Dale.

Pat. 28 Henry VI (1450), part ii, m. 20d.

Commission to the sheriff of Derby and others to arrest and bring before the King and council Ralph Crouche late of the abbey of Dale, apostale.

Pat. 35 Henry VI (1457), part i, m. 17.

Pardon to William Fytell, of Ilkeston, co. Derby, husbandman, for not appearing before the justices to answer the abbot of Dale touching a trespass.

Pat. 13 Edward IV (1473), part ii, m. 21.

License for the alienation in mortmain by John, bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, and others, to the abbot and convent of Dale of the advowson and patronage of the church of Heanor, not held in chief, in aid of their mortmain and for the celebration of divine service for the good estate of the King; and for the appropriation in mortmain by the said church, provided that a perpetual vicarage be sufficiently endowed, and a competent sum from the profits of the church be yearly distributed among the poor and parishioners of the same by the diocesan of the place.

Pat. 14 Edward IV (1474), part ii, m. 10.

License in fulfilment of the licence of 13 Edward IV as to the church of Heanor granted to John Stanley abbot and the convent of Dale, from which it appears that an inquisition held by Richard Makay, escheator of the co. Derby, that the said church was of the yearly value of 14 marks.

THE CLOSE ROLLS.

Close Rolls, 13 Henry III (1229), m. 7d.

The abbot of Dale and William Earl of Ferrars came before the King, and pray for a perambulation to be made between the land of the said abbot and the land of the court in Spondon, co. Derby.

Close Rolls, 14 Henry III (1230), m. 5.

It is commanded to W. Earl of Warenne and his companions not to oppose the ship of John de Esting which the abbot of Dale had assigned to go to the parts of Norway on the business of the Lord Pope, which had been said some one had arrested at Lynn.

Close Rolls, 16 Henry III (1232), m. 3.

The quarry which the abbot and monks of Stanley held by the King's grant at Biscomb in the Wilts forest of Chippenham, was

impeded in its working by a certain oak, whereupon Peter de Rivell was ordered by the King not to interfere in the felling of the oak by the said abbot and his monks.

Close Rolls, 17 Henry III (1233), m. 10.

It is commanded to Peter de Rivell, on May 9th, to allow the abbot of Park Stanley to have two oaks in the wood of Lyndeby and two oaks in the wood of Willey for the making of shingles for his dormitory, as the gift of the King.

Close Rolls, 18 Henry III (1234), m. 10.

The King commands Walter de Godeville to see that the abbot and monks are not defrauded out of the mediety of the mill of Fulcrottum, which William de Bugheden gave to them for the good of his soul, who is now dead.

Close Rolls, 19 Henry III (1235), m. 6.

The constable of Devizes is commanded to give five oaks in the forest of Chippenham to the abbot of Stanley.

Close Rolls, 19 Henry III (1235), m. 3.

Henry de Lamclegh, warden, is commanded to give to the abbot of de la Dale 4 oaks out of the hay of Willey, and 3 oaks out of the hay of Lindeby, to make shingles, of the King's gift.

Close Rolls, 21 Henry III (1237), m. 1.

The bailiffs of Richarde de Munfichet in the forests of Chippenham and Melkisham are commanded to give two oaks for making beams out of Chippenham, and two out of Melkisham to the abbot of Stanley, to be used in constructing a bell turret by the gift of the King.

Close Rolls, 22 Henry III (1237).

The warden of Chippenham forest is commanded to give four oaks to the abbot of Stanley for timber to make the tower of his church, by the gift of the King.

Close Rolls, 24 Henry III (1240).

Two more oaks given to the abbot of Stanley out of the forest of Chippenham.

Close Rolls, 28 Henry III (1244), m. 14d.

The King writes to the sheriff of Derby to permit the abbot of Dale to cultivate and sow two bovates and 30 acres of land in Sandiacre and Hallam which are of the sergeanty which Richard de Sandiacre held of the King in chief.

Close Rolls, 30 Henry III (1246), m. 10.

The King commands the constable of Nottingham to find 20 bacons (*bacones*¹) which he has of the King's bacon within

¹ The best Latin *baco* is diversely interpreted in Martin's *Record Interpreter* as:—"a hog; a salted pig's carcase; a flitch of bacon; a ham."

the castle of Nottingham to the canons of la Dale.

Close Rolls, 21 Edward III (1397), part i, m. 15d.

The King sends letters with privy seal to the abbot of Dale asking him for the loan of wool to further the war with France.

CHARTER ROLLS.

22 Edward I (1274), m. 3.

Grant to the abbot of Dale and his successors free warren in all his demene lands of Stanley, Okebank, Boyhagh, Alderwasley, Kirkhalum, and Grif in the co. Derby, and of Bothelegh, co. Nottingham.

There are five stout volumes of *Papal Letters* put forth since 1911 from the stores at the Vatican so far as they relate to England.

Vol. iii, p. 411, 9 Clement VI (1351).

Office of notary conferred on William abbot of Dale.

Vol. iii, p. 535, 7 Innocent VI (1353).

Indult granted to choose his confessor to William de Newport, canon of Dale.

Vol. iv, p. 291, 6 Boniface IX (1395).

Dignity of papal chaplain conferred on Matthew Leche, of Nottingham, canon of Dale. See also p. 328.

Vol. iv, p. 314, 10 Boniface IX (1398).

A like dignity conferred on John Kirkeby, canon of Dale. See also vol. v, p. 117.

These extracts as to Dale shall conclude with two from that good friend of mine, the late Professor James Gairdner, who was kind enough to explain to me the mysteries of the Public Record Office as long ago as the 'sixties and 'seventies of last century.

Letters and Papers of Henry VIII, James Gairdner (1542), vol. xvii, p. 387.

By the Crown to Francis Poole of Redbourne, Derb., 5 July, 31 Henry VIII, of the grange then in the tenure of Robt. Nesse, in Dale, Derb., lands called Sheperdlande and Granland in Dale, and tithes in Stanley in Spoudon parish, in tenure of the said Robert, all which belonged to the dissolved abbey of Dale; with reservations for 21 years at 5^{ll} 1^s 3^d rent.

Letters and Papers of Henry VIII, James Gairdner, vol. xix, part i, p. 81 (1544).

Francis Poole, the King's servant. Grant in fee for 489^{li} 0^s 10^d of the site, etc., of the late abbey of Dale, Derby; and numerous closes and meadows (names and extent given) in Dale parish; a grange called Okebank and lands (named) in Elvaston parish, Derby; a coal mine in the field of Stanley in Spoudon parish, Derby; certain fields (names and tenants) in the parishes of Dale and Ilkeston, and a wood of 60 acres called Hygherwood and other smaller woods in Dale parish. Also a house and close in Dale parish, in tenure of John Pendylton.

Same vol. p. 495.

Grant in fee to Thomas Powtrell of Westhallam, for 102^{li} of the grange called Stanley grange, Derby with its appurtenances in Dale, Stanley, and Spoudon, in tenure of Robert Nesse.
