

## The Internal History of Dale Abbey.

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OF the internal history of Dale Abbey comparatively little is known beyond the names of its abbots, and their share in adding to its buildings, both of which are recorded in the fifteenth-century list of abbots, until in 1475 the first of Bishop Redman's visitations opens a series which provides much information about the internal state of the convent during the last quarter of the fifteenth century.

Of WALTER DE SENTENEY, who was abbot from January 1199/1200<sup>1</sup> until April 1231, little can be gathered, though his rule must have been one of rapid growth and increasing endowment. He is commemorated in the obituary roll of Beauchief Abbey<sup>2</sup> as "Walter, canon of Newhouse, formerly abbot of Stanley Park."<sup>3</sup> His successor WILLIAM was elected abbot of Prémontré and head of the Order in October, 1233, after only two and a half years at Dale.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For the foundation and early history of Dale Abbey see *D.A.J.*, n.s. xiv (1940).

<sup>2</sup> Printed by S. O. Addy, *Beauchief Abbey* (1878), chap. iii.

<sup>3</sup> Stanley Park was the formal title of Dale Abbey. Walter de Senteney occurs as a witness to a grant by Peter de Sandiacre (*Cal. of Anc. Deeds in P.R.O.* vi, c. 5855), and to a declaration by Philip Marci (Jeayes, *Derbyshire Charters*, No. 1544); he is also party to a covenant with Nicholas, proctor of *dom.* Octavian, papal chamberlain and chancellor of Southwell, concerning an exchange of lands near Dale for others in Notts. (Dale Chartulary, Cott. MS. Vesp. E. xxvi—edited by Dr. Cox in *D.A.J.* XXIV (1902), ff. 133-4); and is the grantor of lands in Moorwood, Ashover, to Richard Venator (Jeayes, Nos. 108, 2284, 934).

<sup>4</sup> For his career as abbot of Prémontré see the accompanying paper on the "External History of Dale Abbey."

William's successor at Dale was JOHN GRAUNCORTH, over whose virtues the Dale chronicler<sup>1</sup> pours a characteristic eulogy:—"a venerable father, worthy of love from God and man, who was the particular associate of the blessed Augustine of Lavendon.<sup>2</sup> These two in those days shone forth in the Order as Lucifer and Hesperus in the height of heaven. At that time there were men of this holy monastery spending their days without complaint before God, wearing the splendid robes of the virtues, having the countenance of angels, glowing with mutual charity, and serving devoutly the Lord Jesus Christ. Who could tell all the virtues of brother Geoffrey de Guwell, of brother Roger de Derby, and of the others? It became such a father to have such sons. If I had the fluent eloquence of Homer or Maro I do not think I could describe the greatness of their virtues."

It was during the rule of Abbot Grauncorth that—as he himself tells us—Thomas de Musca, or Muskham, the chronicler just quoted, first took the habit. He was almost certainly a member of the family of de Muskham or de Muschamp, which made many benefactions to Dale Abbey,<sup>3</sup> and which took its name from the village of Muskham near Newark. There was another branch living at Stanton-by-Dale,<sup>4</sup> and it was probably to this latter that Thomas belonged. He is doubtless the same "brother Thomas de Muskham, canon," who occurs in the chartulary (f. 79) as paying, on his abbot's behalf, 10 marks in silver to William de Morteyn for ingress and warrant of lands in Stanton, and a canon of the same name appears among the witnesses to the abbot's composition with the prior of Dunstable in May, 1286.<sup>5</sup> In the

<sup>1</sup> See below.

<sup>2</sup> Augustine, or Austin, abbot of the small Premonstratensian house of Lavendon, Bucks., occurs 1233, 1236, 1237 (*V.C.H. Bucks.*, I, p. 386; *Collectanea Anglo-Premonstratensia*, ed. F. A. Gasquet, III, p. 32).

<sup>3</sup> Chartulary, ff. 103<sup>b</sup>-137 *passim*.

<sup>4</sup> Chartulary, ff. 74<sup>b</sup>-86 *passim*.

<sup>5</sup> Jeayes, No. 387.

chronicle he does not give his name, but states that "it can easily be known by the capital letters," and it seems clear that the initial letters of the paragraphs are intended to spell TH<sup>1</sup>OMAS DE MVSCA. Much of the material for this invaluable chronicle<sup>2</sup> was derived from the abbey's foundress, the Lady Matilda de Salicosa Mara, and among his informants was one Humfrid, who claimed to have been a neighbour of "the Gome of the Dale."<sup>3</sup> "What I am about to relate," he says, "I have learnt from our predecessors and others who knew these things well, and I will briefly and carefully set them forth with a faithful pen, that those who come after may tell of the praises of the Lord and His virtues, and the wonderful works which He did in this place. But I pray thee, whosoever readest these pages, not to blame me because I venture to attempt this little work . . . . . but to interpret it in the spirit in which I write it. For it is not with light assurance or rashness that I commence it, but with true humility and pious good will . . . . . Read therefore patiently, and when you have read this little work through, if you have found it in certain things worthy of censure, be I beseech thee, a charitable corrector and not a presumptuous perverter, because he who always singles out the unfavourable parts can in no wise be a good corrector. But since there are many who delight gratuitously to detract from the writings of the pious, I will invoke the grace of the Holy Spirit, and like Ulysses pass by with a deaf ear, not fearing their railings."

After a rule of nineteen years, John Grauncorth was succeeded by HUGH DE LINCOLN in August, 1253.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The actual word is *Onorificum*.

<sup>2</sup> Cott. MS. Vesp. E. xxvi, published by Sir W. Hope in *D.A.J.* v (1883).

<sup>3</sup> An early inhabitant of the place; she was godmother to Serlo de Grendon, its feudal tenant.

<sup>4</sup> The original charter, with conventual seal attached, of a grant by J[ohn Grauncorth], abbot of Dale, to John de Lokintone of two bovates in Breaston for his homage and service is preserved in the Derby Museum. There is a *facsimile* and transcript in *D.A.J.* xxiv (1902), p. 150; (Jeayes, No. 483). See

Except that in 1263 Robert de Ferrars issued a charter<sup>1</sup> taking the abbey under his protection nothing is recorded of Hugh's rule of nearly fifteen years, which came to an end in May, 1268.<sup>2</sup> His successor SIMON is spoken of as suffering from an infirmity in a deed of 1269.<sup>3</sup> His obit was kept at Beauchief on September 27th, and his rule came to an end in June, 1273.<sup>4</sup>

The rule of abbot LAWRENCE<sup>5</sup> is distinguished principally by the number of disputes and lawsuits in which he was involved,<sup>6</sup> but this was probably the abbacy which saw the extensive reconstruction of the abbey church which took place during the latter part of the thirteenth century,<sup>7</sup> together with additions to the claustral buildings and minor alterations to the Dale chapel. Abbot Lawrence surrendered his authority, in September, 1289, to RICHARD DE NORMANTON.<sup>8</sup> Shortly

also Jeayes, No. 2195 (grant to the abbey of a well in Stanton) and *Cal. of Ancient Deeds in P.R.O.* vi, c. 5898 (grant by J. abbot of Dale to Geoffrey the clerk of Strelley, for his homage, of land etc.). Abbot Grauncorth witnesses a covenant 2 Feb., 1238/9 (Jeayes, No. 548), a quitclaim, 1241/2 (Jeayes, No. 1504), and two undated deeds (Jeayes, No. 1487, 2194).

<sup>1</sup> Jeayes, No. 938. Grants by the Ferrars family to Dale Abbey are summarised in *D.A.J.* xl (1918), p. 6 (from the Pole-Gell MSS.).

<sup>2</sup> 'Dom. Hugh, abbot of Park Stanley,' appears among the witnesses to an undated grant from Hugh f. Radulf to Hugh de Muschamp of two bovates in Stanton (Jeayes, No. 2196), and "Sir Hugh de Lincoln, abbot of the Dale," among those to a grant from Hugh f. Ralph to Robert de Meulond, Bishop of Lichfield, of the service of Nicholas de Wermundesworth for the manor of Wilsthorp (*Staffs. Colls.* (1924); *The Gt. Register of Lichfield*, p. 294). See also Chartulary ff. 55<sup>b</sup>, 79<sup>b</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Chartulary f. 16<sup>b</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> For the grant to this abbot by Geoffrey de Dethek of his lands in Stanton see Jeayes, Nos. 2197-2200. See also Jeayes, Nos. 45, 1632 and Chartulary, f. 10<sup>b</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> His name appears as Laurence Teuren or Tewren among the witnesses to Jeayes' charter, No. 2202. See also chartulary ff. 87, 140<sup>b</sup>, 157.

<sup>6</sup> See accompanying paper on the "External History of Dale Abbey," in this *Journal*.

<sup>7</sup> The surviving arch of the abbey quire is of this period.

<sup>8</sup> An *inquisitio post mortem* of 1303 refers to Richard de Normanton, abbot of Dale, as having in 1282 participated in the baptism at Stapleford of Richard, son and heir of Hugh le Heryz (*Cal. Inq. post Mortem*, P.R.O. iv, p. 109). This, it may be added, was contrary to the statutes of the order (see *C.A.-P.* No. 304).

after his retirement Lawrence received a letter from Robert de Derby, one of his canons, begging him to reconcile an apostate but repentant lay-brother, Edmund Pouche or Zouche by name:—

Reverend father, it begins, it is written in the Scriptures that the hardest judgment is given against those who are in positions of authority . . . Accordingly I rejoice with you if it was at the persuasion of your conscience that you gladly brought about your resignation, and put off from your shoulders the staff of a pastor, and the sceptre of a secular judge, but at the same time I shall always rejoice in the Lord that the decision came not from yourself, but from the Holy Ghost. For though Martha was deservedly praised by Christ for her solicitude, yet Mary chose the better part. [He goes on to beg his former abbot to bring about the reconciliation of the lay-brother, or at least to procure his admission to another house of their Order].

For the rest, I have found in a desolate region<sup>1</sup> a man after my own heart (*viz.* the Lord abbot of Cockersand), who showed (*exhibuit*) me many things for your sake. I said I knew you well. May you, if you will, give him great thanks on my behalf in your letters.

In all my prayers I desire to hear of your prosperity, which will come to pass, as I hope, when you give me your gracious reply to what I have written above. As for myself, your son and brother, know that I am well, as my health goes, though I should be even better if I could have the pleasure of conversing with you and enjoying your company. *Valete.*<sup>2</sup>

The list of abbots refers briefly to the new abbot as “a squanderer in his time and very burdensome to his successors.” Of the short rule of his successor JOHN DE LINCOLN<sup>3</sup> (Sept., 1297-Sept., 1303), there is nothing to record, and we pass on to the second term of office of RICHARD DE NORMANTON, who in June, 1305 was in his turn superseded by JOHN DE HORSLEY, a far abler man, although his activities as a Premonstratensian abbot

<sup>1</sup> “The abbey of St. Mary in the Marsh upon the Cockersand” was situated in a desolate position overlooking Morecambe Bay, Lancashire.

<sup>2</sup> *C.A.-P.*, No. 350.

<sup>3</sup> This abbot is party to a covenant dated 1300 respecting common pasture in Alvaston (Chartulary, f. 46).

relate rather to the external than to the internal affairs of his abbey. In May, 1332, "worn out with age," he voluntarily resigned. He is commemorated in the Beauchief obituary roll on November 9, 1333, which was no doubt the date of his death.<sup>1</sup> His successor, JOHN WOODHOUSE, who ruled for only fifteen weeks, resigned<sup>2</sup> in August, 1332.

The election of the new abbot, by the method of compromise, took place on August 14, 1332, and was put on record by the deputies of the abbot of Newhouse.<sup>3</sup> After hearing the customary celebration of the mass of the Holy Spirit, the abbots of Langdon and Hales Owen, who were representing the abbot of Newhouse, took their seats in chapter in the presence of the assembled brothers, and began the proceedings by giving formal warning for all excommunicated persons to leave the assembly. The section of the statutes of the Order regulating elections was then read out, and the grace of the Holy Spirit was invoked. After these preliminaries the canons gave five of their number, Walter de Thikhill, prior, Thomas de Tikhil, subprior, and Robert de Barton, Simon de Bredon and William de Horsley, canons, full power to choose the new abbot, within a fixed period of time. The five *compromissarii* then withdrew, and, after considering many candidates without coming to a decision, requested WILLIAM DE HORSLEY to leave the room. After a careful consideration of his character they finally voted unanimously in his favour. Their choice was announced

<sup>1</sup> The remains of a Purbeck marble slab with a marginal inscription of detached Lombardic letters inlaid with brass are preserved at the Abbey Museum. The surviving fragments read HIC: I . . . . . DE: HORSE . . . . . PICIETV. The entire inscription was perhaps HIC: IACET: DOMINUS: IOHANNES: DE: HORSELEY: QUONDAM: ABBAS: HVIVS: ECCLESIE: CIVIVS: ANIME: PROPICIETVR: DEVS: AMEN, but it may equally well have marked the grave of Abbot William de Horsley (*ob.* 1354).

<sup>2</sup> His "voluntary resignation" is referred to in the record of the next abbot's election.

<sup>3</sup> C.A.-P. No. 353: it is given in full by Cox, *V.C.H. Derbyshire*, II, p. 72.

in Chapter by the subprior, and received the formal assent of the two visiting abbots. After solemnly chanting the *Te Deum* the canons led their new abbot into the church, where the visitors placed the bellropes in his hands as a symbol of his authority, and installed him in the abbot's seat in the quire. For the final part of the ceremony all returned to the chapter-house, where the seal of office was handed over to the abbot, and the canons in turn came up and did him homage. The proceedings closed with the drawing up and sealing of an official record by the two visiting abbots. The election had been carried out strictly according to form, and the subsequent preservation of the document was doubtless due mainly to its value as a precedent.

Abbot Horsley was several times visitor of the Premonstratensian Order in England, and played a not unimportant part in its affairs, but of the internal state of his abbey it can only be recorded that when, in 1345, Bishop Norbury of Lichfield appropriated the half rectory—that is, half the great tithes—of Egginton to the abbot of Dale and his twenty-four canons, he stated that he was chiefly induced to do this in order that they might the better exercise hospitality, for numbers flocked to the abbey every day for food on account of its considerable distance from towns.<sup>1</sup> It may be added that there used to be a tradition that all travellers and strangers were entertained and lodged at the abbey for one night, and in the morning given supplies for their journey, which suggests that the monastic obligation to provide hospitality was not neglected at Dale.<sup>2</sup>

During the first half of the fourteenth century the great piers of the crossing were strengthened by a partial recasing, and this work may perhaps be attributed to

<sup>1</sup> Cox, *Churches of Derbyshire*, iv, p. 185 (Lichfield Episcopal Registers, III, f. 147<sup>b</sup>).

<sup>2</sup> Pilkington, *View of Derbyshire* (1789), II, p. 218.

Abbot William de Horsley "in whose days the stone chamber at Stanley Grange was built and many other strong edifices."<sup>1</sup> Whether this was done in connection with the construction of a stone spire, such as so many midland churches were building at this time, or whether it was designed merely to strengthen the central tower, it is now impossible to say. To this period also belonged the chapel of St. Werburgh, separated by an arcade of three arches from the earlier chapel of St. Margaret.<sup>2</sup>

The first visitation of the Black Death descended on England in 1348, reaching Derbyshire in the following spring. The papacy was generous in granting people permission to choose their own confessors under these conditions, and among them was "William, abbot of Dale."<sup>3</sup> How great was the mortality among his canons there is no means of knowing, but one of them, William de Rempstone, obtained a similar privilege.<sup>4</sup> Dr. Cox states, on the evidence of the episcopal registers at Lichfield, that the abbot of Dale was one of the victims of the plague, together with the abbots of Darley and Beauchief and other Derbyshire prelates,<sup>5</sup> although the list of abbots would not terminate his rule until 1354.

His successor, ROGER DE KYRKETON, remained abbot only until 1358, when he was succeeded by WILLIAM DE BONEY. In the year 1400, after a long rule of forty-two years, during which he had "reedified many ruinous tenements," William de Boney was succeeded by HENRY

<sup>1</sup> List of Abbots. It may here be noted that Add. Charter 21181 is a quitclaim by Alexander de Vilers to William, abbot of Dale, of lands in Bargate, Nottingham (2 Feb. 1337).

<sup>2</sup> The identification of these two chapels is Sir W. Hope's ("Excavations on the site of Dale Abbey, *D.A.J.* II (1880), p. 129). St. Werburgh's was apparently a rebuilding, for a thirteenth-century deed in the Chartulary (f. 148<sup>b</sup>) bestows a rent of 4s. on the convent "to assist in sustaining a lamp burning night and day before the altar of St. Werburgh," and the arch leading to it from the S. transept was apparently also of the thirteenth century.

<sup>3</sup> *Papal Letters*, III, p. 411.

<sup>4</sup> *Papal Letters*, III, p. 535.

<sup>5</sup> Cox, *Churches of Derbyshire*, IV, p. viii.



MONYASH, an abbot "excellent in all honesty of manners," who had been ordained subdeacon in 1379, deacon in 1381, and finally priest in 1383.<sup>1</sup>

In 1423 the dean of Lincoln permitted the abbots of Dale and Darley to appoint vicars for that turn to the vacant livings of Matlock, Edlaston and Fenny Bentley, which were in his patronage.<sup>2</sup>

In January, 1425 the abbot and convent of Dale undertook to celebrate in chapter an obit for the sisters and brethren of Syon.<sup>3</sup>

Henry Monyash was succeeded by JOHN SPONDON (1439-1472) "of memory to be cherished," who "ruled laudably the flock committed to him thirty-three years. And he built the roof of the body of the church [*i.e.* the low-pitched roof of the nave, together with its range of clerestory windows<sup>4</sup>], and the roof of the chapel of the Blessed Mary, where the Antiphon is sung [*i.e.* the vaulted roof of the Lady Chapel projecting from the N. transept]; and very many good deeds did he, and slept in the Lord."<sup>5</sup>

The next abbot was JOHN STANLEY (1472-1491). It was during the early part of his rule<sup>6</sup> that some industrious

<sup>1</sup> *Staffs. Colls.* n.s. VIII, pp. 79, 347, 363, 387. Abbot Monyash witnesses an acknowledgment of 8 Henry VI (*Cal. Anc. Deeds in P.R.O.* III, c. 3761). Jeayes charter No. 943 is of his rule (lease by abbot and convent of property in Radcliffe; March 25, 1404), and so probably is Sheffield City Library deed No. 236 (grant to abbey by Henry de Melton of Alvaston of one acre of land; early fifteenth century).

<sup>2</sup> Cox, *Churches of Derbyshire*, II, p. 526, III, p. 156, IV, p. 518.

<sup>3</sup> G. J. Aungier, *Syon Monastery* (1840), p. 525.

<sup>4</sup> The remains of these can be seen in Buck's view of 1727 (facsimiles in Trueman's *History of Ilkeston and The Reliquary*, VIII (1867-8)) and in an unpublished sketch of the abbey ruins by Dr. Stukeley, probably taken in 1730, and now in the Bodleian Library (Gough Maps, IV, f. 25<sup>b</sup>). They are of three lights with flat soffits, and closely resemble the cloister windows now at Morley church.

<sup>5</sup> List of Abbots.

<sup>6</sup> The first sixteen abbots are recorded in the same hand, the last entry being *Dom John Spondon . . . ruled 33 years*. The additional notes of his building activities are in the later hand which records also the seventeenth and eighteenth abbots. The original list was therefore written in the rule of John Stanley, and not, as Dr. Cox asserts (*D.A.J.* xxiv, p. 149), in that of John Spondon.

canon compiled the List of Abbots<sup>1</sup> now bound up with the chartulary. "It must be recorded, and committed to the perpetual memory of our successors," he begins, "that this is the true and perfect number and order of all the abbots of this place from its foundation, in order of succession." His claim is justified, for except for a slight discrepancy in the length of rule his continuator has allotted to one of the fifteenth-century abbots, the list proves to be remarkably accurate. The notices of abbots Senteney and Grauncorth are obviously taken from the chronicle, even to the rather strange comparison of the last-named to "Lucifer in the height of heaven": those of abbots Stanley and Nottingham, together with the account of Abbot Spondon's building activities, are added in an early sixteenth-century hand, whose author, if less precise in giving the length of their rules, is more liberal in his account of their good works.

From 1475 onwards the visitation registers of Richard Redman, already Bishop of St. Asaph (1471), afterwards of Exeter (1495), and ultimately of Ely (1501-5), abbot of Shap, and vicar-general in England of the abbot of Prémontré, a prelate of great energy and unusual administrative ability, furnish many details of Abbot Stanley's rule and that of his successor.<sup>2</sup>

This is not the place to discuss the value of visitation-registers as historical material, but it must be remembered

<sup>1</sup> Cott. MS. Vesp. E. xxvi, ff. 178-9; published by Sir W. Hope in *D.A.J.* v (1883). His list of abbots and their dates should be checked by the dates given in this paper.

<sup>2</sup> Edited by F. A. Gasquet in *Collectanea Anglo-Premonstratensia* (Camden third series, 3 vols.), which should be used in conjunction with Dr. G. G. Coulton's detailed criticism and list of blunders in his *Medieval Studies*, first series, appendices I and III (edition of 1915). Redman was, of course, visiting in his capacity of Vicar-General nominated by the Abbot of Prémontré, and not as a Bishop. When in 1497 he visited Torre Abbey in his own diocese of Exeter, he called in a doctor of laws and registered a declaration that he was acting solely in virtue of his delegated authority in order not to prejudice the convent's exemption from episcopal visitation. Although Bishop, Redman continued to hold the abbacy of Shap *in commendam* (*C.A.-P.* II, p. vii).

not only that they were compiled primarily as precedents and *aide-mémoires* for the use of the visitor himself and not for the benefit of the ecclesiastical historian, but also that the medieval visitation system had its own inherent limitations.<sup>1</sup> The abbot and convent received notice of visitation beforehand, so that there was ample opportunity to arrange a conspiracy of silence or at least a superficial covering up of irregularities. The fear of scandal which was so strong in the medieval mind was responsible for a spirit of hushing-up which made it illegal to disclose "hidden crimes," and only in the most exceptional circumstances were the canons put on oath. But much depended upon the character of the visitor, and in Bishop Redman the Premonstratensian abbeys had a vicar-general who was remarkable for the regularity of his visitations, and vigilant and conscientious in the carrying out of his inquiries. Indeed the frequency of his complaints is the measure not only of the extent to which the abbeys he visited were in need of reformation, but also of his own zeal for their welfare, and it was the business of a visitor to punish crime and expose irregularity, not to extol the piety of the righteous. And so in Bishop Redman's visitations of Dale Abbey, it is the inevitable failings rather than the possible virtues of its canons which we must expect to find recorded, and only in the mind of the reader can the balance be readjusted.

Something of the usual preliminaries to a visitation may be learned from Bishop Redman's premonitory notice to the abbot of Dale in 1474. The abbot was to call together all his brethren, whether living within the monastery or serving cures elsewhere, and inform them of the date of the visitation, so that there should be no excuse for non-attendance. The day before the visitor was due to arrive the abbot was to send someone to meet him at Ashby with

<sup>1</sup> These are critically discussed by Dr. G. G. Coulton in *Five Centuries of Religion*, II, chaps. xvi-xxiii.

money to pay for his dinner and lodging, and next day he was to be brought by the shortest route to his destination.<sup>1</sup> On arrival he was received with the pealing of bells and a procession to the high altar, where mass or vespers was celebrated, and a sermon was preached. The convent then adjourned to the chapter-house, where the visitor made an address explaining the regulations governing visitations. After reading the "articles of inquiry," asking the name and dedication of the abbey, its date of foundation, the number of its appropriated churches and other such details, and inspecting the list of canons, the visitor came to the real business of inquiry. The chapter-house was cleared and each canon came before the bishop in turn and was asked questions about the state of the abbey and the conduct of his brethren. These depositions were taken down by Redman's scribe, Robert Bedall, the prior of Shap, forming what were known technically as the *detecta*. If necessary further particular investigations might be made before the drawing up of the *comperta*, or matters established by the bishop on the basis of the *detecta*. Then the canons against whom accusation had been made were summoned before the visitor, and given the opportunity of proving their innocence by finding compurgators. If they were found guilty the visitor enjoined some suitable penance, or in serious cases arranged for their detention in another monastery. Injunctions were given to the abbot to prevent further breaches of discipline or cases of mismanagement, and the visitation was at an end.

The first record of a visitation of Dale is not, as it happens, a regular one. It consists of Bishop Redman's premonitory notice, announcing a visitation for October 26th, 1474,<sup>2</sup> and stating that this was made necessary

<sup>1</sup> C.A.-P. No. 98.

<sup>2</sup> C.A.-P., No. 98. The text as published by Gasquet is very corrupt, and Dr. G. G. Coulton has kindly suggested the emendations indicated below.

because "public ill-fame<sup>1</sup> and the clamorous report of guilt through outside brethren<sup>2</sup> and our own fellow canons have often cried aloud." He goes on to ask the abbot to send someone to meet him at Ashby the day before (see above). There is, unfortunately, no record of the actual visitation, and we are left to conjecture the nature of the misdeeds which were causing such scandal. The one fact that does emerge is that in 1474 the reputation of Dale Abbey was gravely stained.

On June 6th, 1475 Bishop Redman arrived at Dale for his regular visitation, but only the list of canons has survived.<sup>3</sup> It is as follows:—

Dom. John Stanley, abbot. Richard Nottingham, cantor.  
Brother Richard Draykott, William Blakburn, circator.

prior.

Nicholas Grentham, John York, *alias* Wytton.  
subprior.

Richard Nottingham, vicar Thomas Stanley, sacrist.  
of Ilkeston.

John Monyash, vicar of William Langley, sacrist's  
Hallam. assistant.

Richard Bredon, subcellarer. John Wghtbrygh.

John Grene, chaplain of William Lammas.  
Stanton.

Richard Blackwall, novice. Henry Haukeslowe, novice.

To this list must be added William Tykhill, the vicar of Heanor,<sup>4</sup> and almost certainly a canon of Dale, and John Middleton, who succeeded him on his resignation in 1477,<sup>5</sup> and who occurs as vicar in the 1478 list. In September,

<sup>1</sup> Reading *infamia et* for *infame*.

<sup>2</sup> Reading *fratres extraneos* for *prius extrafontibus*, and dropping the *s* of *conclamantes*.

<sup>3</sup> *C.A.-P.*, No. 356. There are eight of these lists of Dale canons, one for each of Redman's visitations. Only two of them are printed in this paper, but the careers of individual canons may be followed in "Dale Abbey—a List of Canons," *D.A.J.* n.s. xiv (1940).

<sup>4</sup> Cox, *Churches of Derbyshire*, IV, p. 235.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

1466, John Middleton, canon of Dale, had been granted a papal dispensation enabling him to be given any preferment in his Order notwithstanding the defect of his birth, he being the son of a priest and an unmarried woman.<sup>1</sup> Probably both canons were away at Heanor at the time of Redman's visitation.

Sixteen was, nevertheless, the regular number of the canons of Dale during the last twenty-five years of the fifteenth century, and remained so up to the dissolution. Numbers had declined since 1345, when there were twenty-four brethren besides the abbot,<sup>2</sup> and of this small complement four were normally absent serving the appropriated churches of Stanton-by-Dale, Kirk Hallam, Ilkeston and Heanor.<sup>3</sup> Those of Stanton and Kirk Hallam had been acquired in the thirteenth century, soon after the abbey's foundation,<sup>4</sup> but Heanor was a more recent gift, having been appropriated to the abbot and convent in the year 1473 by Henry, Lord Grey of Codnor. Royal license was granted for this alienation, "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." In order technically to avoid infringement of the statute of Mortmain the transference of the rectory was not made direct to the abbey, but in the first place to a body of twelve trustees, who then handed it over to the abbot.<sup>5</sup> The yearly value of the church was found by inquisition to be fourteen marks:<sup>6</sup> the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* of 1535 assesses its value as £26. 13s. 4d., out of which sums were due of

<sup>1</sup> *Papal Letters*, xii, p. 511.

<sup>2</sup> Cox, *Churches of Derbyshire*, iv, p. 185.

<sup>3</sup> No special permission was needed for a Premonstratensian canon to serve a cure outside his monastery. In the thirteenth century the abbot of Dale held the patronage of the double rectory of Egginton, but he lost this in 1344, although in 1345 he was granted half the great tithes (Cox, *op. cit.* pp. 183-5).

<sup>4</sup> See H. M. Colvin, "The Foundation of Dale Abbey," *D.A.J. N.S.* xiv (1940).

<sup>5</sup> *Cal. Patenti Rolls*, 1467-76, p. 410; Cox, *op. cit.* p. 234.

<sup>6</sup> *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1467-76, p. 479.

£9 to the vicar, of 6s. 8d. each to the Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, the chapter of Lichfield, and the prior of Coventry, as an indemnity for their loss of jurisdiction, of 20s. to "the deacon of Heanor," and of 7s. 7d. to the archdeacon, reducing the clear annual profit to the still considerable sum of £14. 5s. 9d.<sup>1</sup>

The rectory of Ilkeston had been acquired a century earlier. In 1385 Lord Zouche of Harringworth had died, and on Feb. 13, 1385/6 his son William, now third Lord Zouche, came to Dale and obtained from the abbot a grant of participation in the prayers of the abbey for himself "their very honoured lord" (he was their patron<sup>2</sup>), and for Dame Agnes La Zouche his wife, with requiems on their anniversaries and on those of several of their ancestors, including the deceased Lord.<sup>3</sup> This was evidently in return for the grant by Lord Zouche of the rectory of Ilkeston, for whose alienation in mortmain license had already been obtained on July 21st, 1385, after it had first been transferred to a body of six trustees.<sup>4</sup> The transfer of the advowson was completed by October 12th, 1386, when Lord Zouche formally released his right to the abbot of Dale.<sup>5</sup> An annual pension of 6s. 8d. was granted to the dean and chapter of Lichfield, who had for many years laid claim to the rectory.<sup>6</sup> In 1394, when the papacy issued a mandate to provide one John Aston to the vicarage in defiance of the abbot's rectorial rights, it was valued at 40 marks.<sup>7</sup> The *Valor Ecclesiasticus* of 1535 gives its annual value as £19. 6s. 8d., but this includes the profit from the half-rectory of Egginton, and out of it sums were due to the Bishop, the chapter of Lichfield

<sup>1</sup> Equivalent to something like £425 in modern values.

<sup>2</sup> *Inquisitiones post Mortem* (Rec. Comm.), iv, p. 203.

<sup>3</sup> Jeayes, No. 942. (Cox, iv, p. 258 says the second Lord Zouche died 1381).

<sup>4</sup> *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1358-9, p. 21.

<sup>5</sup> Jeayes, No. 1488, where the date is erroneously given as 1388.

<sup>6</sup> *Staffs. Colls.* (1924); *The Great Register of Lichfield*, p. 364, No. 766; Trueman, *History of Ilkeston*, pp. 278-9.

<sup>7</sup> *Papal Letters*, iv, p. 473.

(6s. 8d.), the prior of Coventry and the archdeacon of Derby for their loss of jurisdiction, thus reducing the clear annual value of the two rectories to £11 19s. od.<sup>1</sup> In 1338 Nicholas de Cantilupe obtained a license for the alienation in mortmain to the abbot and convent of Dale of 100s. of rent in Greasley, Notts., together with the advowson of the church,<sup>2</sup> in return for which the abbot was to find chaplains to say daily masses for his soul at Ilkeston.<sup>3</sup> The north quire aisle of Ilkeston church, of which only the arcade, with its strangely-carved capitals,<sup>4</sup> now remains, is considered to have been built as a chantry-chapel for the purpose,<sup>5</sup> but it is not known whether the chaplains were canons of Dale or merely secular priests supported by the abbey.<sup>6</sup>

With these four vicarages to fill out of their complement, almost every member of the convent had his conventual office, and it must often have happened that a mere junior

<sup>1</sup> Equivalent to perhaps £350 to-day.

<sup>2</sup> There seems to be no evidence that the abbot ever exercised his patronage over Greasley church, and it was not served by his canons at the end of the fifteenth century, nor did he possess the tithes in 1535.

<sup>3</sup> *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1334-8, p. 392.

<sup>4</sup> Illustrated by Cox, *Churches of Derbyshire*, iv, plate viii.

<sup>5</sup> Trueman, *History of Ilkeston*, p. 271, Cox, *op. cit.*, p. 260. Glover (*History of Ilkeston*, 1831) says that the chantry was for five priests, but he gives the date of its foundation as ca. 1360, and its founder as Nicholas de Cantilupe's widow Joan.

<sup>6</sup> Towards the end of the fourteenth century the presentation of the priests serving the semi-collegiate chantry in Chaddesden church near Derby, was placed in the hands of the abbots of Dale and Darley alternately, but none of the presentees seem to have been canons of either house (see Cox, *Churches of Derbyshire*, iii, pp. 304-5; *V.C.H. Derbyshire*, II, p. 17). It may here be noted that in 1368 William de Wakebridge founded a chantry at the altar of the B.V. Mary in Crich church, Derbyshire, stipulating that in the event of a default of his heirs, the advowson should pass to the abbot of Dale, a contingency which never in fact arose (Cox, iv, pp. 41-2); also that the will of John Daubriggecourt, knt., dated July 25th, 1415, provided for one chaplain celebrating divine service "wherever I am buried, whether in the church of Alvaston or in the abbey of Dale" for a hundred years following his death (*The Registers of Henry Chichele*: Cant. and York Soc., II, pp. 53-4). Another will of this period, that of Alice, widow of John Tannesley, of Nottingham, dated June 8th, 1439, contains the clause "to the abbot and convent of Dale 13s. 4d. and to pray for me 6s. 8d." (*Thoroton Soc's. Trans.* xxi (1917), p. 77).



found himself in a responsible post. Indeed, as a subsequent list shows, the sacrist and his assistant, who were responsible not only for the provision of lights, wine and other necessaries for the services, but also for the safe keeping of the valuables of the abbey and for the ringing of the bells which regulated its life, were actually on one occasion both novices.<sup>1</sup> In a small house like Dale there could be only the skeleton of the fully-developed organisation of the great cathedral priories, but all the essential officers are here—prior, subprior and circator to enforce discipline, cantor (and sometimes succentor) to supervise the singing in quire and the proper ordering of processions,<sup>2</sup> sacrist and attendant subsacrist to care for the church and its furnishings, and finally the cellarer to attend to the economic side of the convent's life. An infirmarian and a master of novices each occur at two visitations, and Abbot Stanley allowed himself the luxury of a personal chaplain, brother John York, in his declining years.

The next visitation took place on May 23rd, 1478, when for the first time some insight into the state of Dale Abbey is possible. Richard Draykott, Nicholas Grentham and John Wghtbrygh disappear from the list,<sup>3</sup> and there are two new names in Edward Hampton the subsacrist and Robert Aston the infirmarian. Except that John Middleton was now at Heanor the four vicars were the same as in 1475. William Blackburn, subprior, appears as the senior canon, and there was apparently no prior. William Lammas, "without voice or stall" had no doubt forfeited his privileges on account of some misdemeanour. Bishop Redman's report<sup>4</sup> is on the whole favourable: "we found good fame, charity and peace in head and limbs, and nothing criminal worthy of correction by us or the general

<sup>1</sup> *C.A.-P.*, no 364.

<sup>2</sup> In the excavations of 1878-9 the tile-pavement in the nave was found to be laid in bands for the guidance of the Sunday processions.

<sup>3</sup> *C.A.-P.*, No. 359.

<sup>4</sup> *C.A.-P.*, No. 358.

chapter." He forbade certain prayers which had been introduced contrary to the custom of the Order, and regulated various feasts and ceremonies. He had to insist on the strict observance of silence, the better performance of genuflections, and the maintenance of discipline after compline. He commended the plentiful supply of provisions, while enjoining the abbot not to stint food and drink and so provide an excuse for grumbling. For the same reason he was to make his canons adequate allowances, for strict poverty was no longer maintained in the Order. A blank follows the statement of debts, but at the last visitation they had amounted to £10. Bishop Redman found much to commend in the new cloister which the abbot was building, part of which may now be seen forming the north aisle of Morley church.<sup>1</sup> He arranged for the return, after 80 days, of brother John Saunders, who as circator of the abbey of Hales Owen had recently been convicted of incontinence and apostasy and had been ordered to Dale for punishment.<sup>2</sup>

Bishop Redman conducted his next visitation on July 16th, 1482. The abbot was evidently absent and the list is headed by Richard Nottingham, the subprior (there was still no prior).<sup>3</sup> The four vicars were still the same, although Middleton is again omitted from the list;<sup>4</sup> there had been no changes in personnel, but the conventual offices had, as usual, been changed about. Brother John York had apostatised, but had been induced to return by the circumspection of Abbot Stanley. The visitor prohibited games of chance under pain of excommunication, and insisted on clearness of utterance and lack of haste in the singing of the offices. He again praised the

<sup>1</sup> See H. M. Colvin, "Medieval Glass from Dale Abbey," in *D.A.J.* n.s. XIII (1939).

<sup>2</sup> *C.A.-P.*, Nos. 432, 433. He was back at his house in 1482, and held the office of prior and vicar of Hales for many years (*C.A.-P.*, Nos. 437, 438, 440, 442, 445-6).

<sup>3</sup> *C.A.-P.*, No. 361.

<sup>4</sup> *C.A.-P.*, No. 361.

abbot's administration and the abundance of provisions, and was able to record a favourable balance of debts of £17. The cloister was all but finished and other additions were contemplated. The atmosphere is one of efficiency and prosperity in temporal matters, and decency, if not zeal, in things spiritual.<sup>1</sup>

At a provincial chapter of English abbots held in May 1485 arrangements were made to transfer Henry Haukeslowe to the abbey of Titchfield in Hampshire, while his place at Dale was to be taken by Robert Mumby, a canon of Barlings in Lincolnshire:<sup>2</sup> in actual fact neither of them appear in the lists of the monasteries to which they were ordered, nor can they be traced elsewhere. Another canon who disappears is John Grene, the chaplain of Stanton, whose charge had been taken over by Richard Bredon. Richard Nottingham the subprior had succeeded Middleton at Heanor in 1485, but his namesake was still vicar of Ilkeston in 1488.<sup>3</sup> William Blackburn was absent in 1488, presumably because he was serving the chantry for which he had obtained a license from Redman on March 19, 1482/3.<sup>4</sup> There were now two novices, Ralph Stanton and Robert Brounslowe, sacrist and subsacrist respectively.

Arriving for his visitation on May 20, 1488, the vicar-general found the abbey free from debt ("they owed much less than is owed to them") and plentifully supplied as usual.<sup>5</sup> The canons had evidently been disregarding some of the minor points of their rule, and Redman enjoined them to observe silence in the customary four

<sup>1</sup> *C.A.-P.*, No. 360.

<sup>2</sup> *C.A.-P.*, No. 86.

<sup>3</sup> *C.A.-P.*, No. 364.

<sup>4</sup> *C.A.-P.*, No. 362. There is no reason to assume, with Gasquet, that this chantry was Stanton-by-Dale.

<sup>5</sup> *C.A.-P.*, No. 363. I have not been able to trace Dr. Cox's statement (*V.C.H. Derbyshire*, II, p. 73) that at this date "the abbey was using ten measures of corn and two quarters of barley a week; and they were killing 20 bullocks, 20 pigs, and 60 sheep a year."

places (church, cloister, refectory and dormitory), to confess three times a year to their superior, and not to remove their cloaks, belts or shoes when going to bed:<sup>1</sup> they were to buy nothing but clothing unless ordered by the abbot, and vicars were to be prompt in paying tithes to the mother-church. There was one case of a more serious nature. Richard Blackwall, the succentor, was “ ‘detected’ of crime, disobedience, and open rebellion against his prelate and prior, and of many other enormities and excesses, of which he could in no wise purge himself, but rather confessed that he was guilty.” The visitor sentenced him to forty days *gravioris culpæ* at Alnwick Abbey, and ten years detention there. This punishment entailed sitting on the bare floor at meals and feeding on coarse bread and water at a table apart, lying prostrate at the gate of the quire as the canons took their places for service, and denial of communion or the kiss of peace. On hearing his sentence Blackwall broke down, expressed contrition, and begged for mercy. His petition was supported by the abbot and convent, and Redman decided to defer sentence until August; if there was any relapse in the meantime, he was at once to be put in prison. He evidently justified the lenience thus shown him, for in 1491 Redman restored him to his place in quire and chapter.

The date of the next visitation was August 22nd, 1491. The list of canons<sup>2</sup> shows that William Langley was no longer at Dale—probably he was dead—and that there were two novices, John Bebe and George Slee, under the charge of brother Thomas Stanley. Ralph Stanton (or Makarelle, as he is now called) had risen to be deacon and sacrist, but Robert Brounslowe was apparently absent at this and the subsequent visitation, although he later became vicar of Ilkeston (1497-1510),<sup>3</sup> and occurs as such in the

<sup>1</sup> The Rule required them to sleep fully clothed, in order to be prepared for the Second Coming.

<sup>2</sup> C.A.-P., No. 366.

<sup>3</sup> Cox, *Churches of Derbyshire*, IV, p. 259.

1497 and 1500 lists. Bishop Redman brought with him William Gyll or Gylling, a former subcellarer of Coverham with a bad reputation,<sup>1</sup> who was to stay at Dale as a punishment for his sins. However the abbot and convent begged Redman to suspend his punishment in the hope that he would mend his ways, and the visitor agreed, though he afterwards had to send him permanently to Sulby Abbey.<sup>2</sup> It was, perhaps, as well that Gyll did not remain at Dale, for the convent was already burdened with the presence of George (*alias* William or John) Littleport, once subcantor of West Dereham Abbey in Norfolk, who had been convicted of theft and other crimes, punished and warned not to "return like a dog to his vomit" but to mend his ways, ordered at a provincial chapter in 1489 to be sent to Dale for detention, and whom Redman now found to be "living laxly and irreligiously," and ordered to be sent to Beauchief Abbey, where he still was in 1494.<sup>3</sup>

Bishop Redman found discipline at Dale in a bad state.<sup>4</sup> The canons were lax and careless in the observance of their Rule, kept dogs and puppies, played games for money, performed divine service without due reverence, ate in secular houses, and ignored the rule of silence. Laurence Lowe, a Derbyshire gentleman, told Redman that he had borrowed some of the treasures (*jocalia*) of the house from the abbot, and promised to return them by the Feast of the Assumption.<sup>5</sup> Financially all was well (the abbey was owed £20, and itself owed only £6), but the general

<sup>1</sup> In 1478 he was 'detected' of introducing a woman into the dormitory to satisfy his lust, although he was able to persuade his abbot to swear to his innocence (*C.A.-P.*, No. 312).

<sup>2</sup> *C.A.-P.*, Nos. 90, 568, 569, 570.

<sup>3</sup> For his career see *C.A.-P.*, Nos. 662, 665, 668, 669, 89, 365, 90, 244.

<sup>4</sup> *C.A.-P.*, No. 365.

<sup>5</sup> Eight years before Abbot John Stanley had witnessed a grant from Laurence Lowe, Lord of Denby, to George Lowe and others, of the manor and lordship of Denby (Jeayes, No. 957). Other charters in which Lowe appears are Jeayes Nos. 2417 (1463), 2637 (1477), 958 (1513), 959 (1514). See also Cox, iv, p. 248.

state of the house was deplorable. This Redman attributed to "the imbecility and impotence" of the abbot, now too old and feeble to rule the community of which he had been the head for the last twenty years. Two months later he surrendered his abbacy to RICHARD NOTTINGHAM, the vicar of Heanor, a canon with a past record of steady promotion. One of his first acts as abbot was to provide for his aged predecessor, and a lengthy deed was drawn up in these terms:—

Since the venerable father Dom. John Stanley . . . feeling himself too weak and infirm to rule the aforesaid monastery . . . has of his own will lately resigned his abbatial dignity: know that we, the said Richard now abbot . . . having first asked and obtained permission from the reverend father in Christ Dom. Richard . . . our Visitor, have given . . . the said venerable Dom. John Stanley an annual rent of twenty marks . . . for the term of his life . . ., and all those chambers, both upper and lower which he now occupies, formerly called Chaddesden Chamber, with the storehouse and the woodhouse, during his lifetime . . ., wood-billets and coal with their carriage for fuel . . ., and sufficient candles for his lights, and . . . one of our fellow canons as chaplain, to say divine service with him daily, as is proper. Moreover we have given . . . to the same John Stanley, for his sustenance, weekly during his life, sufficient loaves of the best paste made in our monastery and victuals wholesome for him . . . from our kitchen, namely dishes of meat and fish and other victuals according to the requirements of the day, and weekly, eight gallons of the best beer for his drinking, to be provided at our expense and supplied to him whenever such beer can be obtained . . . in the towns and neighbouring places near our abbey. We have also conceded to the said John, bread, drink and victuals . . . sufficient for two servants for the said John, whom he shall be free to choose as he pleases, namely one man and one youth or boy, and that he shall have pasture and hay for keeping his two horses in summer and winter, and the necessary stabling for the custody of the same within the site of the said monastery. And because we wish that the said John be honourably treated we have conceded to him . . . two silver salts called *saltsellers*, one with a cover, one silver bowl with a cover, two mazers bound round with silver-gilt, six silver spoons, all the furniture of his chamber called

Koosters,<sup>1</sup> and clothes, woollen and linen, and other necessaries both for his own bed and for another bed to be occupied by the aforesaid servants: and in the same way that the same John shall repair the aforesaid cloth assigned to him for the aforesaid beds at his own cost as he may please . . . : provided always that it shall not be lawful for the aforesaid John to . . . alienate or pawn the aforesaid salts, bowl, mazers, spoons, cloths . . . but that immediately after his decease they shall . . . revert to us, our successors, and our monastery. . . . Given in our chapter house, on the twenty-eighth day of the month of October in the year of our Lord 1491.<sup>2</sup>

With his usual regularity Redman arrived on May 31st, 1494, for the next visitation. The list of canons was now as follows:—<sup>3</sup>

- Dom Richard Nottingham, abbot.  
 Brother Robert Aston, subprior.  
 „ John York, circator.  
 „ William Lammas, cantor.  
 „ Thomas Stanley.  
 „ Richard Blackwall, sacrist.  
 „ Edward Hampton.  
 „ Ralph Porter [*alias* Stanton or Makarelle].  
 „ Richard Nottingham, vicar of Ilkeston.  
 „ John Monyash, vicar of Hallam.  
 „ Richard Bredon, at Heanor.  
 „ William Blackburn, chaplain of Stanton.  
 „ John Bebe, subsacrist  
 „ George Slee, infirmarian } Deacons.  
 „ John Spenser  
 „ Geoffrey Glossop } Novices.

Canon Edward Hampton was accused of being the father of a child, and was unable to purge himself of a crime to which his offspring bore living witness. He was

<sup>1</sup> In a copy of *C.A.-P.* in the London University Library annotated by Dr. G. G. Coulton it is suggested that this word may be meant for *costers* (hangings), in which case it alludes to the 'furniture.'

<sup>2</sup> *C.A.-P.*, No. 65.

<sup>3</sup> *C.A.-P.*, No. 369.

sentenced to forty days *gravioris culpae* and five years detention at Dureford Abbey in Sussex. After this he disappears from the Dale lists, but does not appear on those of Dureford or any other house. John Bebe confessed to a similar lapse, having had a child by one Margaret de Halle: it appeared that he had already been accused of this by his abbot, but as the latter had not seen fit to punish him, Redman enjoined forty days *gravioris culpae* and seven years banishment to Hales Owen Abbey. This, however, he suspended until the next provincial chapter, when it was arranged that Bebe should be sent to Sulby Abbey instead.<sup>1</sup> Otherwise there was nothing to correct, and Redman was full of praise for the abbot's administration: there were no debts and the monastery was "wonderfully well stocked with animals and grain."<sup>2</sup>

August 26th, 1497 was the date of the next visitation. Richard Nottingham, the vicar of Ilkeston for over twenty years, had died earlier that year, and his place was now taken by Robert Brounslowe, who retained the living until his death in 1510, when he was succeeded by Robert Aston.<sup>3</sup> There was one new canon, Richard Geynesborough, and Robert Bredon, formerly subprior of Sulby, was at Dale for correction.<sup>4</sup> John Bebe was away serving his punishment at Sulby.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> C.A.-P., No. 92.

<sup>2</sup> C.A.-P., No. 368.

<sup>3</sup> Cox, *Churches of Derbyshire*, iv, p. 259.

<sup>4</sup> He was prior of Sulby in 1475, subprior from 1478 to 1491. In the latter year he was found guilty of bringing the object of his desire into the dormitory, with further charges of apostasy, etc. For these crimes he was sentenced to 10 years detention at Alnwick and Shap abbeys, yet in 1494 he was still at Sulby and found guilty of repeating the same crime with the same woman, besides various forms of rebellion. Redman repeated his sentence of 10 years banishment, this time to Easby abbey, but it was evidently not carried out, and at the 1495 chapter it was decreed that he should be sent to Dale, where he does in fact appear in this 1497 list. Yet on the same day as this Dale visitation he obtained from Redman a license to serve a chantry for three years, and later in the same year he appears back at Sulby as *licentiatus*, having served less than two years detention in a monastery with not too pure a reputation itself (see C.A.-P., Nos. 558, 560, 562, 564-8, 92, 370, 674, 569, and G. G. Coulton, *Five Centuries of Religion*, II, p. 502).

<sup>5</sup> C.A.-P., No. 569.



Redman found the abbey in unusually good order—“on the abbot’s part, everything is honourably performed, and well ordered and maintained; and on the convent’s part they are bound to their prelate equally by love and by obedience, so that no complaints were brought to our notice by either party; however in minor observances we saw certain things which needed reform [namely that they should bow and not kneel at the elevation of the host]. We found no debts in the same house, though the said abbot has in the past been burdened with certain heavy obligations; after the custom of his predecessors he has an abundant supply of grain and livestock.”<sup>1</sup>

Bishop Redman made his last visit to Dale on May 15th, 1500.<sup>2</sup> The list of canons shows that John Bebe was back from Sulby, where he had served at least part of his seven years sentence. Owing to an outbreak of plague “which the Lord had lately sent among them” there were only twelve canons including the abbot, and one of these, Robert Irlande, was an ex-Augustinian. The names of Henry Monyash, John York, George Slee, Thomas Stanley, Richard Blackwall and Ralph Stanton have all disappeared (one of them, however, was probably vicar of Heanor),<sup>3</sup> and there were four novices under the charge of William Lammas. John Nottingham, a new canon, had succeeded Monyash at Kirk Hallam,<sup>4</sup> and William Blackburn was still chaplain of Stanton. Owing to the fewness of the brethren Redman left no precepts, but was

<sup>1</sup> C.A.-P., No. 370.

<sup>2</sup> C.A.-P., No. 371.

<sup>3</sup> Richard Bredon, the vicar in 1494 and 1497, was now “chaplain of Ockbrook.” In 1535 the abbey held the “profit from the chapelry of Ockbrook.” According to Cox (*Churches of Derbyshire*, iv, p. 206) the tithes of Ockbrook were appropriated to the monastery of Shelford, the chaplain being appointed by the vicar of Elvaston. If, as it would thus appear, the chapel was for a time in the gift of the abbot and convent of Dale, this would explain why in 1535 they were paying an annual pension of £3 to the prior of Shelford out of their rents in Borrowash, Spondon, Twyford and Griff (*Valor Ecclesiasticus*: Rec. Comm. 1817, II, pp. 155-6).

<sup>4</sup> According to Cox (*op. cit.* p. 213) Monyash had been vicar since 1458—a period of over forty years.

sure that the abbot would restore the full complement as soon as possible. Abbot Nottingham produced no debts for the visitor's inspection, and there was the usual plentitude of grain and cattle.

Turning to the vexed question of monastic morality, we find that at Dale, during the 25 years covered by Redman's visitations, there were some 30 canons, of whom five, or 16 *per cent.*, were guilty of serious offences—that is, one apostate (John York), two incontinent (John Bebe and Edward Hampton), one rebellious (Richard Blackwall), and one unspecified (William Lammas).<sup>1</sup> It happens that this is the same percentage as that worked out by Dr. Coulton for the whole English province during the same period,<sup>2</sup> so that Dale may be regarded as a typical Premonstratensian abbey of the late fifteenth century, neither better nor worse than the average. Such a proportion of black sheep is far from negligible, but the remaining 25 canons must not be forgotten, some of them, it may be, successfully concealing crimes as serious as those of their less fortunate brethren, others, like Henry Monyash or Richard Nottingham, serving long and steadily as parish priests, and not least the ordinary canon, content to take his place in quire and chapter, to obey his abbot and perform his duties to the community, pious without excessive enthusiasm, and grateful for a life spent in the comparative tranquility of the cloister.

Bishop Redman died at Ely House, Holborn, in 1505,<sup>3</sup> and was succeeded as vicar-general of the English abbeys by Thomas Wilkinson, abbot of Welbeck. He is known to have been "at Dale, at supper time" on May 13th, 1506. The following day was occupied by the visitation,

<sup>1</sup> Henry Haukeslowe may be given the benefit of the doubt, although Redman ordered his transference to Titchfield Abbey in ? 1485.

<sup>2</sup> *Five Centuries of Religion*, II, p. 492. His figures are derived from the second volume only of *C.A.-P.*, comprising about half Redman's visitation register, but they are no doubt representative enough.

<sup>3</sup> His effigy lies under a magnificent perpendicular canopy in the quire of Ely Cathedral.

of which there is no record, and on the 15th he departed for Hales Owen Abbey in Worcestershire, staying the night at Lichfield, "at the expense of the abbot of Dale."<sup>1</sup>

On March 10th, 1510 Abbot Richard Nottingham sealed in his chapter-house a bond to which John Kniveton of Bradley was the other party.<sup>2</sup> That is the last record there is of him, and according to the list of abbots his rule must have come to an end the same year. He continued the architectural work of Abbot Spondon by adding a clerestory and low-pitched roof to the quire, alterations which can still be traced on the surviving eastern arch of the church.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> C.A.-P., No. 102.

<sup>2</sup> Jeayes, No. 946.

<sup>3</sup> The jamb of one of the clerestory windows can be seen in Buck's view of 1727, and fell only quite recently.