

WIGMORE ABBEY

By SIR HAROLD BRAKSPEAR, K.C.V.O.

In 1906 Mr. Henry Weyman of Ludlow, having obtained permission from the then owner, Mr. Roger Salway, and the assent of his tenant, Mr. George Hall Green, for excavations to be made on the site of the abbey of Wigmore, invited the late Sir William Hope and myself to direct the work. For two weeks in September of that year excavations were made on the site of the church and some of the conventional buildings. It was hoped to continue the investigations at a later date and when such were completed to incorporate the result in a joint paper by Sir William Hope and myself. Sir William wrote an historical sketch of the abbey for this purpose and gave a lecture upon what had been found to the Institute.

So many years have passed away and so many changes have taken place that it is felt that, unless what was discovered is now recorded, it may be lost altogether. Therefore I am putting together an account of the ruins and the excavations, fully realising how incomplete is the result. I am prefacing this account with the historical sketch that was written many years ago by my old friend Sir William Hope.

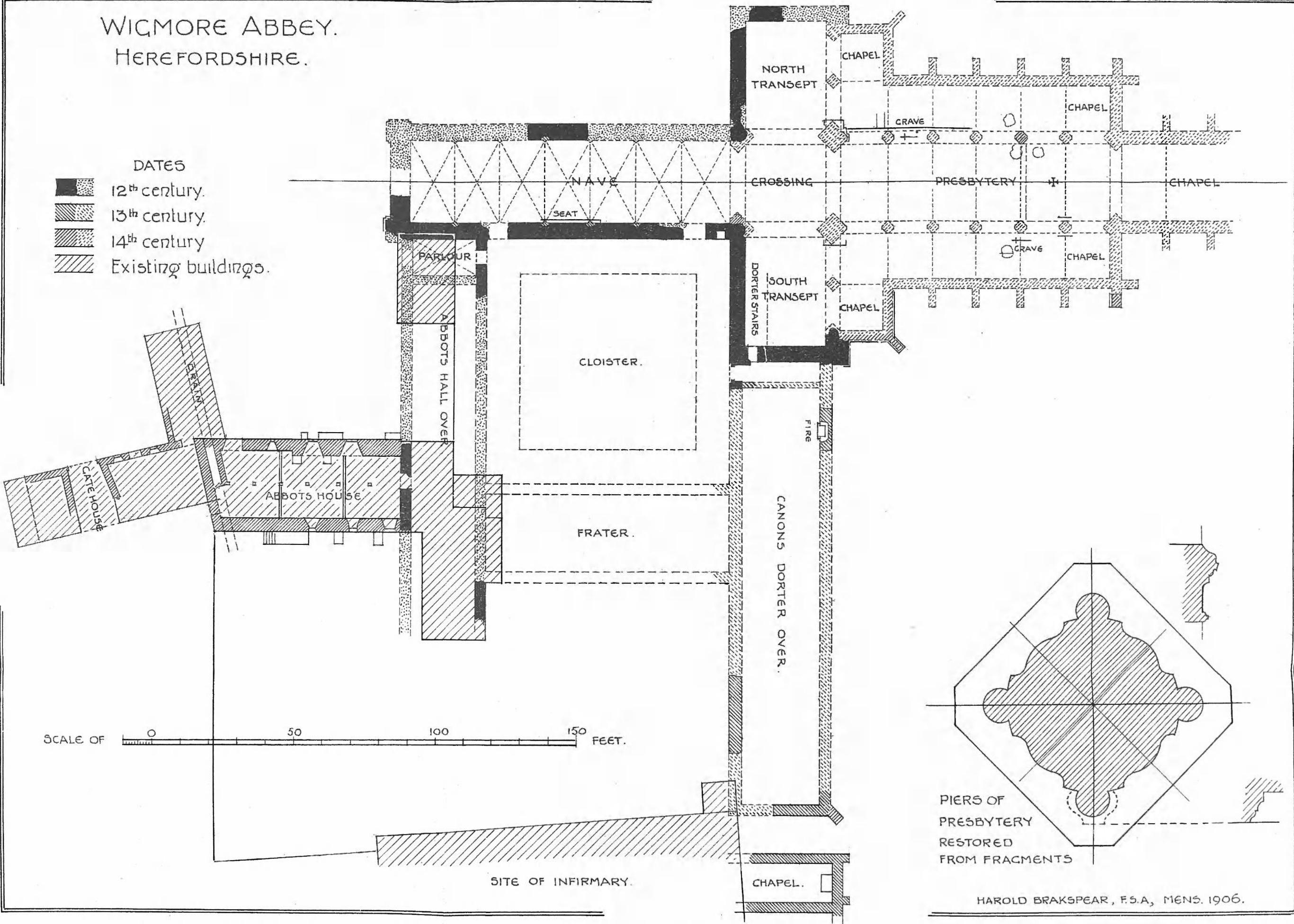
I. HISTORICAL SKETCH

The abbey of Wigmore is situated in the extreme north of the county of Hereford, about eight miles west of Ludlow and about half way between Wigmore and Leintwardine, close to the old line of the Watling Street.

Though now but a village of comparatively small importance, Wigmore still gives name to one of the hundreds of Herefordshire; and besides having an interesting parish church, is noteworthy for the ruins, hard by, of the once famous Castle of Wigmore. This

WIGMORE ABBEY.
HEREFORDSHIRE.

DATES
 ——— 12th century.
 —— 13th century.
 —— 14th century
 // Existing buildings.



was one of the great strongholds built on the Welsh border for William the Conqueror, between 1066 and 1072, by William Fitz Osberne and the custody of it was entrusted to Rauf de Mortimer, who thus became the first of the long line of Mortimers, all Lords of Wigmore in direct descent.

According to a history of the foundation, printed by Dugdale in his *Monasticon Anglicanum*¹ from a manuscript in French now in the Wrest Park Library, Wigmore Abbey had its beginning in a small priory of canons of the order of St. Victor of Paris, founded at Shobden by Oliver de Merlimond during the episcopate of Robert de Betun, bishop of Hereford (1131–1148). Oliver de Merlimond was chief steward of Hugh Mortimer, the second lord of Wigmore, and had received from him the vill of Shobden by way of gift. Before founding the priory he had built the first stone church at Shobden, a building now pulled down, but the fragments of it that have been preserved, are amongst the most remarkable examples of twelfth century architecture in this country.

For a time this church seems to have served both for the parish and the few canons who formed the priory, but owing to a great quarrel the founder left the service of his lord, who thereupon seized all his possessions and gave the canons notice to quit the place at the end of a year. After sundry vicissitudes the canons moved first to Aymestry, and then, by compulsion of Hugh Mortimer, to the village of Wigmore, where ‘they found the ascent to the church very disagreeable and the language of their neighbours vulgar and coarse.’ They accordingly obtained leave to go further afield and finally chose the spot where the abbey was eventually established.

The site was readily granted by Hugh Mortimer and hither they moved, building for themselves little dwellings of wood, by the aid and counsel of their lord. Not long after, Hugh Mortimer, who had already given them several churches and other possessions, came to visit the canons at their place. Thereupon by the request of his people, and particularly of his

¹ Mon. Ang. vi. 345.

neighbour Brian of Brampton and his son John, he sent for a monk of Worcester, who, when he had marked out the site of the church, caused the foundations to be put in. Of which foundations Sir Hugh Mortimer laid the first stone and promised the canons 10 marks in aid, but afterwards finished the building at his own cost. Brian of Brampton laid the second stone and promised 100 shillings, but he gave them nothing in money though he granted them all easements in his lands in wood and field which easements aided them greatly in their work. John the son of the said Brian laid the third stone and neither gave nor promised anything, but what he did not then in promises he performed fully after in deed, for by him was the church of Kynleth given to the abbey.

The date of the foundation at Wigmore is given as 1179. Within a year or two afterwards the church was finished and hallowed by Robert Foliot, bishop of Hereford, in honour of St. James: while shortly before his death the founder himself was professed canon and, when he died in 1185, was honourably buried before the high altar.

Through their various benefactions and the patronage of the powerful and wealthy Mortimer family, the abbey continued to flourish, but in 1221, if the Latin chronicle may be trusted, a sad calamity befell the house. In that year Ralf Mortimer, the step brother of Hugh, the fourth lord of Wigmore, a warlike and strenuous man and beyond all his predecessors successful in keeping the Welsh in order, was taken prisoner by the King of France. Whereupon the Welshmen, full of glee, pitilessly attacked the abbey of Wigmore on the first Sunday in Lent, and having carried off everything they could lay hands on, set fire to the buildings. The fire was first lighted by these sons of iniquity in a chamber below the dorter and went out, but being afterwards carried up to the dorter itself it gathered such strength from a contrary wind that the whole of the monastic buildings were reduced to cinders and ashes. But the great church, by the mercy of the Lord and to the ineffable comfort of the canons, escaped the fire altogether.

The next chapter in the history of the abbey takes us on about 160 years to the rebuilding of the church. In 1379 Edmund Mortimer, the third Earl of March, who by his marriage with Philippa the daughter of Lionel, Duke of Clarence, became also *jure uxoris* Earl of Ulster and Lord of Clare, was appointed Lieutenant of Ireland. The Wigmore Latin chronicle of the Mortimers says¹ that, before he left for Ireland, Earl Edmund gave lands in Radnor and elsewhere to the value of 2000 marks a year 'for constructing the fabric of the new church of the said abbey because the old one was decayed and ruinous.' Clad in all the ornaments of his dignity, with his own hands, he laid the first stone, and by the time of his death in 1381 the new building had been carried up complete as regards the walls and only lacked its roof.

Before leaving to take up his appointment Earl Edmund also made his will, bearing date 1st May 1380. By it he desires to be buried in the abbey church of Wigmore to the left of the high altar (that is to say in the place of the founder). He also left to the work of the abbey church the sum of £1,000 and likewise his best 'chapel,' that is to say, a celure, two beaten curtains, three albes and amices, two stoles, three fanons, three girdles, two tunicles, three copes, two frontels, a towel with a frontlet of cloth of gold, a case with a corporas, a long towel for the altar and cords for the said chapel (also) a great cross of gold set with stones with a relic of the Cross of our Lord and a pillar of gold with a piece of our Lord's pillar with nine pearls and a sapphire on the top, the bone of St. Richard the Confessor bishop of Chichester, the finger of St. Thomas of Cantilupe bishop of Hereford, the relics of St. Thomas archbishop of Canterbury and all his other best relics, save those that shall be hereafter devised, also a mitre of gold with pearls, the ring with the sapphire which was in his treasury, a great cross of silver gilt with a large foot standing upon lions and with the images of St. Mary and St. John, two candlesticks of silver enamelled, a great chalice of silver gilt with the foot enamelled, a paten and two cruets,

¹ *Mon. Ang.* vi. 353.

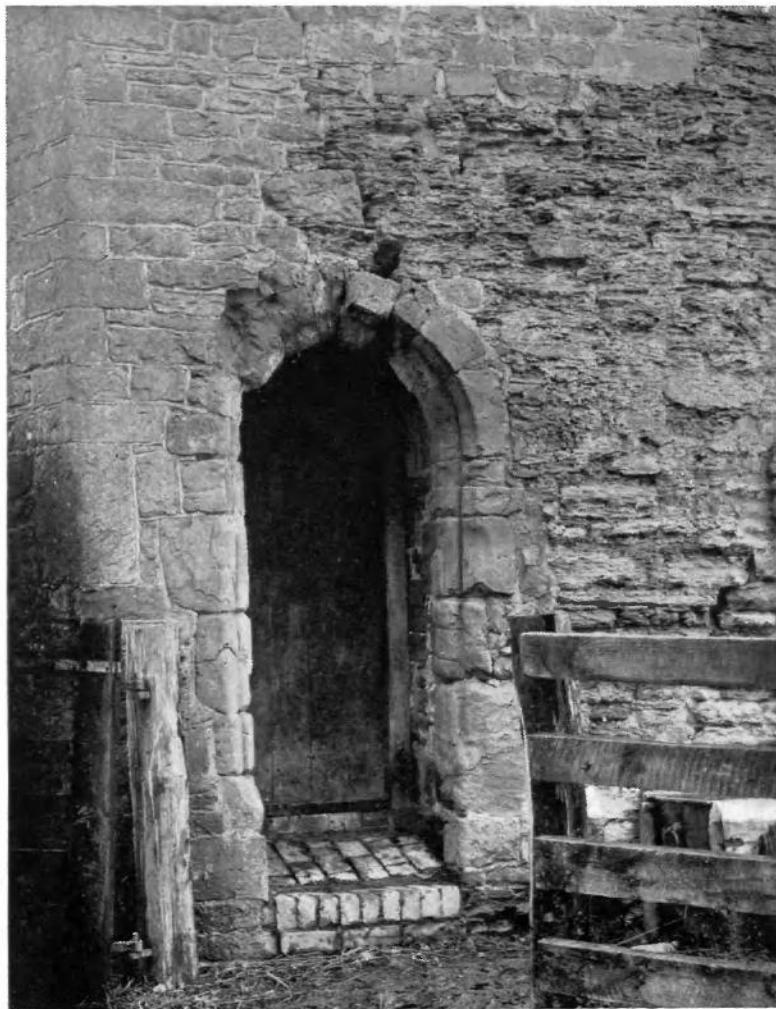
a . . . silver gilt, a table for the pax of silver and enamel, a censer of silver gilt, a stoup with a sprinkler and two basins for the altar also of silver gilt.

He also devised to his chantry in the abbey his best cross of silver gilt with the images of St. Mary and St. John, an image of St. Edmund of silver gilt, a double porthose, his greater mass book and his 'chapel' of blue with rays of gold, that is to say, two frontals, a towel with a frontlet, two curtains, an entire vestment for a priest of the same suit, a corporas with a case, a silver gilt chalice with two cruets and a pax, and a . . . of silver: also an entire black vestment for a priest with two frontals, a towel with a frontlet and a corporas, and its case.

The Latin chronicle aforesaid adds that Edmund Mortimer also obtained from the pope, at his own cost, the rare and special privilege for the abbot when celebrating to use the mitre and staff, the dalmatic and other episcopal ornaments.

In the reign of King Henry VIII the annual net value of the abbey was £302 12s. 3½d., or after deductions £261 2s. 10½d. in the clear. It was surrendered to the King on the 18th November 1538 by John Smart, bishop of Pavada, who held the abbacy in commendam, the prior, the subprior and eight other canons. The great part of the church and other buildings seem to have been immediately pulled down to furnish materials for the repair of Wigmore and other castles and the remnant was converted into a farm house.

When we visited the place last September (1906) we found that there were still standing in the stack-yard parts of the walls of the aisleless nave of the church and of the south transept, but the site of the rest of the church which lay in a field beyond, was marked only by deep hollows and lines of trenches. The cloister was partly occupied by a kitchen garden, and partly by a lawn, which continued eastward and southwards over the sites of the monastic buildings. Of these not a trace was to be seen, but part of the western range remained incorporated in the present farm house.



DOORWAY TO EASTERN BUILDING OF GATEHOUSE



A. SOUTH SIDE OF WESTERN BUILDING OF GATEHOUSE



B. ABBOT'S HOUSE FROM THE SOUTH-WEST

2. THE PRECINCT

The boundary of the precinct is nowhere clear except along the road on the north where a short length of the boundary wall remains.

The site of the great gateway was apparently where the present gate from the road stands, but nothing of it remains above ground. In an old picture which was in the possession of Mr. Alfred Salway, the owner in 1871, this gate is shown flanked by two square towers, of three stages surmounted by conical roofs and it is possible that these towers were the flanking turrets of the medieval gate-house.¹

On either side of the gate are fragments of buildings of the fourteenth century. The building on the west (Pl. iii. A) has in the south wall a large four-centred arched doorway of two members and had a pentise along its west gable. That on the east has a small doorway in the south wall (Pl. ii) and the remains of the jambs of a large doorway further to the east.

Outside the monastery, presumably near the great gate was a chapel hallowed in honour of St. Anne, but there is no tradition of its existence nor any traces of any remains.²

The principal buildings of the convent were immediately to the south of the gate-house and as usual were arranged around a cloister. On the north side was the church, on the east the south transept and the dorter range, on the south the frater, and on the west the guest-house and abbot's lodging, part of the latter projects towards the west and is continued in a lesser range containing a gate-house. Southward of the claustral buildings was the infirmary with a chapel,

¹ Arch. Camb. vol. ii., fourth series. 286.

² Register of Bishop Malling (1474-92). On 22nd April, 1480, an indulgence was granted for the repair of St. Anne's chapel by Wigmore.

Register of Bishop Mayew (1504-1516), 17, xii, 1514. Indulgence to Griffin Wentcote collector for the repair of St. Anne's chapel near Wigmore Abbey. 20 days.

Register of Bishop Bothe (1516-35).

In March 1530 was on ordination by John Bishop of Pavada in St. Anne's chapel near Wigmore Abbey and, possibly the same event, John Bishop of Pavada ordained three deacons to be priests in St. Anne's chapel by Wigmore Abbey. One of the complaints against the abbot was that he gave orders (ordained persons) by night within his chamber and otherwise in the church early in the morning and now and then at a chapel out of the abbey.

and to the south-west was formerly a great timber barn and a dove-house.

Nothing remains above ground but two fragments of the nave of the church, part of the south transept, and the abbot's lodging and adjoining gate-house.

The excavations were made on the site of the eastern part of the church, the dorter range, and a building that was the infirmary chapel. The site of the frater and kitchen were not able to be examined, as they lie under the lawn of the house.

3. THE CHURCH

The church, said to have been set out by the monks of Worcester, consisted of a presbytery, transepts, and aisleless nave. The nave was vaulted in the thirteenth century. At the end of the fourteenth century the church was enlarged to the east, and the transept chapels and crossing were rebuilt.

The completed church then consisted of an eastern chapel, a presbytery with side aisles, the transepts with an eastern chapel to each, and a long aisleless nave.

Though there is no documentary evidence of any work here before 1179, there is most certainly earlier work, especially in a doorway southward of the transept, which clearly shows that buildings had been begun sometime before. The chronicle is very indefinite about dates, though probably the sequence of events is accurate, therefore by the evidence of the buildings themselves the first foundation cannot have been much later than 1140.

The Presbytery. The foundations of the outer walls of the presbytery and the eastern chapel had been completely grubbed up and little evidence of their existence remained beyond the trenches they occupied, but the sleeper walls of the arcades, the western part of which were doubtless the foundations of the original presbytery, remained on either side.

The eastern wall of the eastern chapel could not be traced but the chapel was apparently of the same width as the main span of the presbytery.

The presbytery was 98 ft. in length by 28 ft. and divided into six bays. The lowest course of the second pier on the north was found resting upon the sleeper wall and there was a step across the presbytery slightly to the east.

No remains of Lord Edmund Mortimer's tomb on the north side of the alter were found ; but there was a burial under the fifth arch on the north, and another in the south aisle opposite the second pier.

Various patches of tile paving were found, which were formed of tiles of a very interesting pattern (Pl. vi). They were all wasters, that is to say the yellow slip had run over the tiles so that though they were stamped for patterns the slip was not confined to the pattern. This use of wasters was obviously due to economy as they were possibly obtained from the makers at a cheap rate.

Considering the number of monuments of the great family of Mortimer that was contained in this church it is extraordinary how they have so completely disappeared, as not a single fragment of any work in connexion with them was discovered.

Sundry fragments of the arcades were found, which, had the documentary evidence of the erection of this building not been so definite, might have been of work a good fifty years later (Pl. i). The piers consisted of large cylinders, with three quarter columns on the cardinal faces and the space between worked into a double wave moulding, with a fillet on the curve of the cylinder next the columns. No complete fragment of the base was found but the plinth was octagonal. In the arches the wave mouldings were continued but the columns were finished with moulded capitals and the arch mould above had an ogee on either side of a flat surface. The walls above the arches were decorated with flat panelling with cusped hands.

The high altar was presumably in line with the first pair of pillars so as to allow a procession path behind.

The side aisles were 16 ft. in width and appear to have had large buttresses, of which that facing south, at the east end of the south aisle, was found. The deep

buttresses indicate that the aisles were vaulted but not a vestige of any ribs were found. At the east end of each aisle would have been an altar.

The Transepts. The transepts were of the first work and were unusually long in proportion to the church, each being 40 ft. from the crossing to the end gables.

Of the north transept a portion of the west wall and a fragment of the north end remain but time did not allow the eastern chapel to be searched for.

Of the south transept a portion of the west wall is standing to a considerable height as is also the south end, but in 1906 the walls were so covered with ivy that no architectural features could be seen. Against the west wall was a flight of steps that led up to a doorway in the south wall, which had lost its dressings, and were the night stairs to the dorter. At the south-east angle was a large turret which had a plinth of two chamfered orders.

The foundations of the eastern chapel, which was of the later rebuilding, were traced. It measured 14 ft. from east to west and was apparently 17 ft. wide. It had a large diagonal buttress at the south-east angle.

The Crossing. The crossing presumably supported a central tower but the arches were rebuilt with the late fourteenth century work. The lower part of the south respond of the west arch was found and is of peculiar design. It was of three orders, the inner being carried by a large three quarter column 15 inches in diameter, the other two orders were chamfered and continued down the jambs. All the orders stopped without any base at 7 inches from the ground.

The Nave. The nave was of the first work, it was 116 ft. in length by 29 ft. wide, and aisleless. In the thirteenth century it was vaulted into seven bays, the added vaulting shafts are triple columns, of which the middle one is ribbed, and they rest upon a bench-table which had a chamfered seat.

The west wall is $7\frac{1}{2}$ ft. in thickness and was flanked by large square turrets formed of pilaster buttresses

with double offsets in the angles. The wall is finished by a bold chamfered plinth of three courses which mitres round the buttresses. There were probably vices in one or both of the turrets but the accumulated rubbish was not cleared from the southern one to ascertain this.

In the first bay on the south is a gap in which was the doorway from the cloister and some of the facing stones on the outside remain that abutted upon the arch of the doorway.

4. THE CLOISTER

The cloister is 87 ft. from east to west and was probably about the same from north to south. It was surrounded by covered alleys, but nothing was found of the inner walls, nor are there any visible indications against the church walls to show their nature. In the nave wall, between the procession doorway and the transept, is a round headed cupboard 3½ ft. in width, and in the north west angle is a gap for the western processional doorway.

5. THE EASTERN RANGE

Southward of the transept was the eastern range, which was 157 ft. in length by 27 ft. in width.

At the north end was a passage 8 ft. wide which was entered from the cloister by the early doorway already mentioned. This doorway was 4 ft. 10 in. in width, of two orders, the inner with a small chamfer and the outer carried upon attached jamb shafts, with deep and flat moulded bases and a chamfered plinth.

Nothing was found of the chapter-house which probably stood within the range, but in the eastern wall, where the chapter-house should have been, was a fireplace 3 ft. 10 in. in width with a chamfered curb.

A length of the west wall of the range was found at the south end but it contained no features nor had any buttresses. Most of the south end was also found, and at the south-east angle was an added diagonal buttress.

This range should have contained, besides the chapter-house, the parlour, the day stairs and the

warming-house on the ground floor, and the great dorter of the canons above. Adjoining it must also have been the reredorter. It is possible that further excavation would have revealed the arrangement of these buildings.

6. THE FRATER

The frater invariably occupied the side of the cloister opposite to the church, it was sometimes on the ground level but more often over a subvault. Adjoining the frater was always the monastic kitchen but the site of both these buildings was not examined.

7. THE GUEST-HALL AND ABBOT'S HOUSE

The west side of the cloister was formed by a long range of building 23 ft. in width, which was apparently of the first work.

At the north end, next the church, was the outer parlour which was the main entrance to the cloister. This was covered by an unribbed vault of which the springing remains in the north-east angle, and its line indicates that the parlour was vaulted in one bay 13 ft. wide. In the east wall are the jambs of the opening into the cloister 5 ft. in width, perfectly plain without any moulding or rebate for the door. The west wall is under a farm-building and could not be traced, but in it must have been the entrance to the outer parlour.

The rest of the range had doubtless a basement, and above was usually the abbot's chapel, over the outer parlour, and the abbot's hall over the remainder.

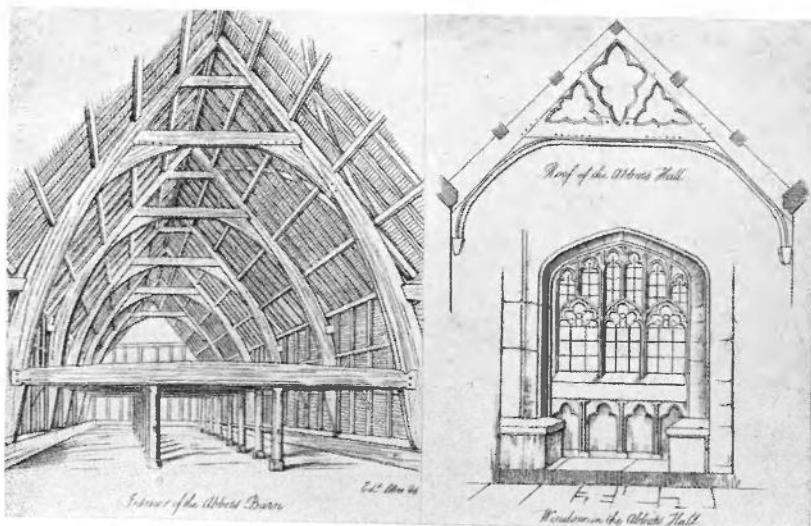
The south end of the range is partly occupied by the later house (Pl. iv) which has been mostly rebuilt in comparatively recent years but still retains some of the monastic walls. A considerable length of wall in line with the east wall of the range remains beyond the site of the frater: there is another thick wall across the range in line with the south side of the abbot's house, and a vast chimney-breast projects to the north which may possibly have been one of the fireplaces of the monastic kitchen.



VIEW OF THE HOUSE FROM THE NORTH-EAST, BEFORE REBUILDING



A. NORTH SIDE OF GATEHOUSE TO ABBOT'S COURT



B. INTERIOR OF BARN

C. ROOF AND WINDOW OF
ABBOT'S BEDROOM

Part of the west wall of the range remains to its full height, for a length of 32 ft., at 72 ft. from the church, and forms part of the present house. From this wall, projecting westward, is what was the abbot's house, which remains more or less complete, and dates from the fourteenth century (Pl. iii, B).

The ground floor is a cellar 60 ft. long by 22 ft. wide and the west end is much out of square with the rest of the building owing to a pre-existing water course which has been made use of for a drain. The cellar is divided into six bays with square wooden posts 10 in. square down the middle, these have cross pieces on the top supported by curved braces from the posts, and on these cross pieces are longitudinal beams on either side of the posts, which carry heavy joists to support the floor above.

In the north wall, opposite the third post, is a two-light contemporary window, in the fifth bay there is a small single-light window, and a large doorway at the extreme west end. There seems to have been a doorway in the middle of the east end to the basement of the western range. In the south wall no original features remain. The west wall contains for half its length the pit of a wardrobe, over a drain 3 ft. wide, but the southern end recesses back over the drain and was probably a wardrobe on the ground level.

The first floor of the building was divided into five bays by roof couples. The first three bays were occupied by the abbot's great-chamber and the two western bays by his bedroom. Most of the roof over the great-chamber is said to have been destroyed by fire in the last century, but the moulded cornice remains on the south side. The roof over the bedroom is perfect together with the dividing partition.

Of the great-chamber little of the original features remain, but there is a two-light window with ogee heads to the lights in the second bay on the south, and the remains of a very tall two-light window with transom, opposite it, in the north wall. There is an external thickening of the north wall outside the third bay, which is now stopped at the floor level by weathering, that obviously carried an added fireplace. There

are two added buttresses on the south side of the great-chamber with the indication of the weathering of a pentise between them.

The bedroom has, in the south wall, a large early fifteenth-century window of three lights, with a four centred arched head filled with tracery. Beneath the window internally are four cusped panels and a window seat to each jamb. The inner jambs are moulded and carried up as a rere-arch (Pl. v, c). In the north wall, opposite this window, is a pointed window of two-lights with a transom which is now blocked up. In the north-west angle is a small moulded doorway 2 ft. 2 in. in width, now blocked up, that led to a wardrobe over the drain. The roof is in excellent condition, the middle couple has arched principals with a cambered collar, and above two diagonal struts ornamented with feathering which is repeated on the principal rafters and the collar. There are two purlins, with arched wind-braces, on either side. Against the west wall is another couple with a tie-beam and collar but unornamented. The couple between the bedroom and the great-chamber is similar to the last and forms part of the partition between the two chambers.

Westward of the abbot's house, but set square with the drain, is an interesting building of which only the northern side remains complete (Pl. v, A). The lower part is built with stone and the upper is half timber and all dates from the fourteenth century. In the middle is a large pointed-segmental arch 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ ft. wide forming the outer doorway of the gate-house to the abbot's court. On either side are low cellar-like rooms of which that to the east is lighted by two small windows, but that on the west has no openings in the north wall. Just above the windows, on either side the archway, but lower than the springing of the arch, is a wooden sill-piece carried by corbels, from which spring a series of curved brackets to support the half timbered story above. This projects some 18 in. and is formed of square framing having curved braces across the angles; but the western half has been covered with weather-boarding. The projecting timber

work is carried over the archway at a higher level and is merely supported by joists. There are no obvious remains of any original windows.

The southern face of the building has been mostly destroyed and is now covered by a lean-to shed, but in the old picture, already referred to, it had then a stone wall to the lower story and plain timber work above.

8. THE BARN

Inside the abbot's gateway and on the west side of the court was a great timber built barn of the fourteenth century. It was destroyed by fire in the last century, but a drawing of the interior by Edward Blore has been preserved by a plate of Le Keux (Pl. v, B).

This shows that each couple was made of great arched pieces of timber, springing from the ground and meeting at the apex, with collars near the top having arched braces below, which took up the line of the curved principals to form an arch. At some 5 ft. from the ground there were large cambered tie-beams each of which were supported by two round posts. There were four purlins on each side of the roof with arched wind-braces across each bay.

This in 1871 was thus described : 'The abbot's barn is still standing, with the exception that a floor has been made in it for the better convenience of storing grain and thus taking off from the height of the interior, the barn is probably now in the same state in which it was at the time of the dissolution. The timbers of which it is constructed are of unusually large size and being gradually curved upwards in one length from the base till they meet at the top, a section of the interior presents the form of the hold of a large ship turned bottom upwards.'¹

Southward of the barn was a circular stone built dove-house which, when the old picture was made, retained its access for the pigeons on the top of the roof in the form of a small lantern with a conical top, but nothing of this dove-house now remains.

¹ *Arch. Camb.* fourth series, vol. ii, 235.

9. THE INFIRMARY

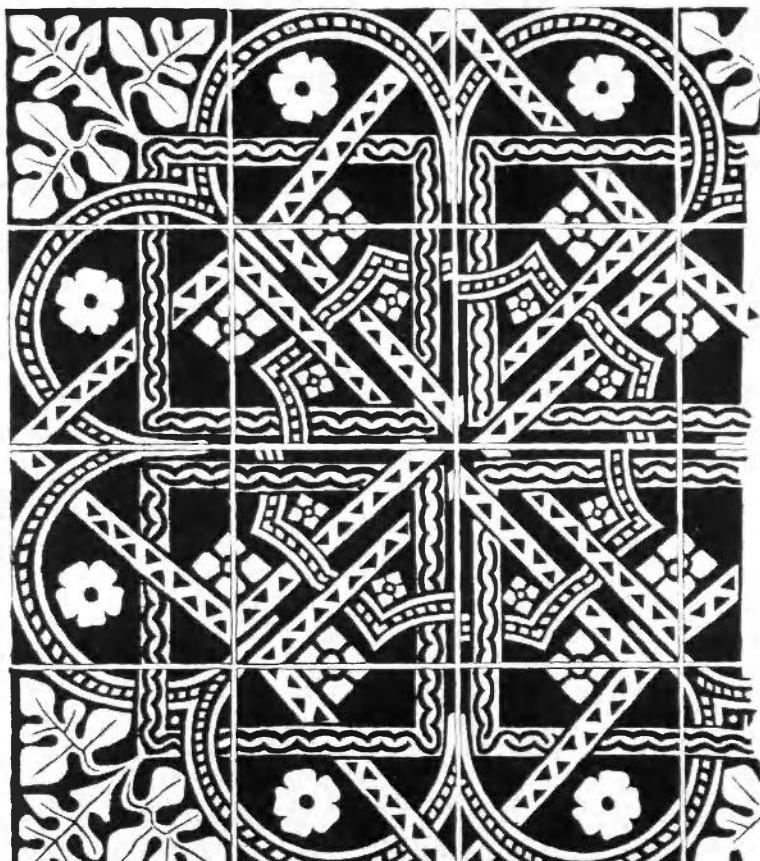
At the south end of the dexter range were found the north, east and south walls of a building that was certainly a chapel, as against the east wall was the base of an altar, 5 ft. 10 in. long by 3 ft. 10 in. wide. The chapel was $13\frac{3}{4}$ ft. in width and the side walls were traced for 31 ft. Externally there was a buttress in line with the north wall and another not quite opposite the south wall. The east wall continued for a short distance to the south and may have been part of a small vestry.

This building was without doubt the chapel of the infirmary. The infirmary itself would extend to the west in the form of a great hall ; but no excavations could be made on its site as it is covered with farm buildings.

In the article already referred to is the following : ' About two years ago an underground passage was discovered which was by some thought to be only a drain ; the width of the passage, however, which was about 14 ft., and the character of the arch leading into it, as well as the fact of its being well paved with tiles, so far as it was examined, would seem to indicate that it must have been something more than a drain. Should it be possible at any time to examine it farther without injury to the building the matter might perhaps be cleared up.'¹

There is no indication where this chamber was but the reference to the ' injury to the building ' suggests that it was near the dwelling house.

¹ *Arch. Camb.* fourth series, vol. ii, 237.



WIGMORE ABBEY : TILES FROM THE PRESBYTERY

APPENDIX I.

THE ABBOTS OF WIGMORE

Dugdale gives an incomplete list of abbots, but owing to the publication of the registers of the bishops of Hereford a number of other names can be added. There is still a gap of a hundred years in the thirteenth century and another gap after 1424. I am indebted to Mr. Weyman for extracting the references from the registers, and other matters included in the following list.

HENRY Prior of Shobden.

ANDREW Prior of Shobden, and came with the canons to Wigmore.

ROGER One of the canons.

SIMON Son of Oliver de Merlymond, the founder of the priory at Shobden, was prior of the abbey.

RALPH Was sacrist.

On the 2nd February, 1287, bishop Richard Swinford held a visitation at Wigmore and among the irregularities requiring correction were, that the abbot allowed some of the brethren to engage in secular trading, that the house was burdened with useless attendants, the relations and friends of the canons were maintained within the abbey, that the sick and infirm were not supplied with necessaries, that the seats in the cloister for the brethren were not sufficient or suitable, but owing to their awkwardness the brethren became weary of looking into their books and were driven to stroll about.

ADAM complained that he was worn out with age and infirmity, and resigned upon the 14th July, 1293. A chamber was to be allotted to his use with all provision for his comfort.

JOHN OF ERLESTON was elected on the resignation of Adam, but he resigned on the 13th April, 1296 and was to have a chamber, next the chapel of the Blessed Mary, in which the conversi formerly lodged, together with the use of a little garden adjoining called the Herbarium, and one of the canons of his own choosing to bear him company : they were each to have as much as two other canons in food and clothing, to be under no obligation to attend quire and to have a servant to wait upon them. The late abbot was to have a cresset burning at night in his chamber with firing and candles, he was to be allowed the costs of repairs to the walls and roof of his chamber, and after the death of Adam 40s. a year.

JOHN OF EYTON or Wyton was then elected abbot and the election was confirmed by the bishop on the 24th April, 1296. He is mentioned in 1299 when certain matters were in dispute between the convent and the bishop and six councillors were appointed by the bishop to help the abbot. Afterwards he also resigned and had a certain chamber called the Black Camera for his dwelling.

WALTER OF LUDLOW was elected abbot on the 3rd May, 1302, but refused to act, whereupon,

PHILIP LE WALEYNS was elected and the election was confirmed by the bishop on the 6th June. On the occasion of a visitation by

bishop Adam of Orleton on the 28th December, 1318, Philip (then called le Galeys) resigned 'in the abbot's camera in the presence of those noble men Roger de Mortimer of Wigmore, Roger de Mortimer of Chirk and others.' He was to have servants and a pension of 100*s.* a year and for his habitation the camera that John of Erleslonde had, or the Black camera that John of Weston (*sic*) the late abbot had, or one of two cameras under the high infirmary.

JOHN OF CLEHONGER was thereupon presented by the bishop to the same lords and was appointed abbot, but the bishop engaged that this appointment by himself in no way prejudiced the future election of the abbot by the convent. In Dec. of the same year the bishop issued injunctions for the guidance of the convent: silence was to be maintained in the places ordained, namely the church, cloister, frater and dorter. He ruled the house for fourteen years.

RICHARD OF TURPITONE was elected by the convent, the election was confirmed by the bishop on the 14th August, 1332 and, what was a new proceeding, the King was notified of the fact, in consequence perhaps of Mortimer's possessions being in his hand on account of the attainder of the first Earl of March in 1330.

Richard occurs as abbot in 1335 (Tanner).

JOHN OF STAPLETON was elected abbot in 1350.

In 1379 Edward Mortimer, Earl of March, gave money for rebuilding the church and procured from the Pope at his own cost the right for the abbot to wear a mitre.

RICHARD OF BROMPTON, elected in 1388 (Tanner), died in 1390 and on the 7th July licence was given by the King to the prior and convent of Wyggemore, the patronage of which is in the King's hand by the minority of the heir of Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March, to elect an abbot in the room of Richard de Brompton deceased.¹

GEOFFREY COLLYNG was thereupon elected and signification was sent to the bishop of the royal assent by reason of the minority of the heir of Edmund de Mortimer.² He died in 1398.

THOMAS ASTELYTH, one of the canons, was chosen abbot and on the 16th December, 1398, signification was sent to the bishop of the royal assent to his election to be prior (*sic*) of Wiggemore, by reason of the minority of the heir of Roger late Earl of March.³

In 1405 licence was given to the prior and convent of the monastery of St. James Wiggemore, which is of the foundation of the ancestors of Roger, late Earl of March, and in the King's hands by reason of the minority of Edmund his son, to elect an abbot in the place of Thomas Astelith deceased.⁴

JOHN BORREY, one of the canons, was then elected abbot and on the 15th December, 1405, signification of the royal assent to his election was sent to the bishop.⁵ Dugdale says he died 11th December, 1411.

JOHN BURY was elected and the bishop confirmed the election on the 24th December, 1411. In 1418 the bishop conceded forty days indulgence to all who gave to the repair of the chapel of

¹ *Rot. Pat.* 14 R. II. p. 1, m. 38. ⁴ *Rot. Pat.* 7 H. IV, p. 1, m. 26.

² *Rot. Pat.* 14 R. II. p. 1, m. 26. ⁵ *Rot. Pat.* 7 H. IV, p. 1, m. 25.

³ *Rot. Pat.* 22 R. II. p. 2, m. 28.

St. Julian next Wigmore. Bury was still abbot on the 13th February, 1424, when bishop Spofford ordered an inquisition to be made into the irregularities, excesses, and mismanagement of the abbey, as to the abbot John Bury, and into the dilapidations of the abbey and its manors. The abbot deposed that he had been abbot for twelve years, that all the brethren in regular form lie separately in the dormitory, that a certain old man, near the gate, has a wife who has the custody of cows and other animals, he admitted that their houses and manors require repair and that the condition of ruin was well known. On the 12th April the bishop himself visited the abbey and again examined the abbot and brethren. John Trilley, the prior, said 'that the court (pomerium) of the cloister was defiled by reason that the laity pass across it and use it as a common urinal,' Thomas of Hereford said that 'there were many dogs in the house defiling the cloister, the church, and the chapter-house,' John Hore said that 'the cloister doors are open day and night and dogs intrude, defiling the church, the cloister, and the chapter-house, and that the abbey and certain of the manors belonging to it are ruinous.' An inquiry was made as to the election of the abbot and brother Baxter said that, four brethren, commissioners of the convent, entered the chapel of the Blessed Mary and elected John Trilley as abbot, that afterwards John Bury and Thomas Aston came in, that lots were drawn and the lot fell on John Bury. The rest of the inquiry is lost and it is not known if Bury continued as abbot.

In 1436 the bishop made another visitation and ordered the abbot to correct the abuses found in the monastery.

JOHN WHITTON was elected abbot and the election was confirmed by the bishop in 1455. In 1458 an indulgence was granted for the repair of St. Anne's chapel by Wigmore. No record is known of when Whitton ceased to be abbot.

THOMAS LEOMINSTER died in 1486.

WILLIAM STYCHE died in 1508.

WALTER HOPTON. On the 22nd November, 1508, the chapter petitioned the bishop to confirm the election of Walter Hopton as abbot in the place of William Styche the late abbot who had died. On the 15th November the chapter met in the chapter-house and gave notice of the election, on the 22nd, after celebration of mass at the high altar and ringing the bell, they met in the chapter-house and after roll call, and the retirement of those who had no voice in the matter, they elected Walter Hopton; they then proceeded to the high altar, having affixed a notice to the folding doors (valvis) of the chapter-house, the proctor then notified the election to Hopton 'in a certain low camera situated within the precincts of our monastery.' The election was confirmed by the bishop on the 27th January following. A visitation was made by bishop Mayew and an order was sent on the 20th July, 1513, to the abbot and convent to reform the abuses disclosed at the visitation, but apparently no heed was taken for on the 10th March, 1514, the bishop commissioned the archdeacon of Salop to visit the abbey where his injunctions have not been obeyed. On the 12th August, Sir Peter,

canon of Wigmore, is instituted as claustral prior. On the 17th December an indulgence was granted to Griffin Wentcote of twenty days as collector for the repairs of St. Anne's chapel near the abbey. Walter Hopton resigned in 1518 and had a pension of £23 a year.

JOHN SMART. In November, 1518, the bishop ordered the convent to proceed with the election of John Smart as abbot, in the place of Walter Hopton, and notice was to be made on the folding doors of the chapter-house. Smart was duly elected and on the 20th of the same month the bishop admitted him 'at the altar in the quire of the conventional church.' About 1523 Smart was made bishop of Pavada, suffragan to Hereford, but retained the abbacy in commendem. In March of 1530 he ordained persons in the chapel of St. Anne by Wigmore Abbey. On the 17th January, 1530-1, a commission was directed to John Cragge and John Lee, two of the canons, to keep the sequestered revenues 'by reason of the ruin of the church, houses and buildings, and the cancellation of the appropriation of the churches, and alienate them for the great requirement of the same monastery to repair the buildings and pay the abbey's debts.'

A formidable indictment was made against the abbot by this John Lee, and sent to Cromwell. This indictment consisted of twenty-eight articles of objections of the most scurrilous character and has been taken more than once as conclusive evidence of the iniquities of monastic orders. The second article complains that

The said abbot promoted to orders many scholars, when all other bishops did refrain to give such orders, on account of certain ordinances devised by the king's majesty and his council for the commonweal of this realm. There resorted to the said abbot scholars out of all parts, whom he would promote to orders by sixty at a time, and sometimes more, and otherwiles less ; and sometimes the said abbot would give orders by night, within his chamber ; and otherwise in the church, early in the morning, and now and then at a chapel out of the abbey. So that there be many unlearned and light priests made by the said abbot, and in the diocese of Llandaff and in the places afore named (there are no places aforenamed in the statement). A thousand, as it is esteemed, by the space of this seven years he hath made priests, and received not so little money of them as a thousand pounds for their orders.

In a postscript to Lee's complaints he says, there is in the said abbey a cross of fine gold and precious stones, whereof one diamond was esteemed by doctor Bothe, bishop of Hereford worth a hundred marks. In that cross is inclosed a piece of wood named to be of the cross that Christ died upon, and to the same hath been offering ; and when it should be brought down from the treasury to the church it was brought down with lights and like reverence, as should have been done to Christ himself.¹

¹ *Arch. Camb.* ii, fourth series, 223 and 227.

On the 26th March, 1537, the bishop visited the abbey for the last time and gave strict injunctions to John, Bishop of Pavada, perpetual commendator of the abbey of Wigmore, and the brethren there as to their conduct.

In spite of the indictment by John Lee this wicked bishop remained in his abbacy until the suppression, and to show how little the commissioners thought of it, though they were ever only too willing of an excuse to penalise a monk or a canon, he was awarded a pension of £80 a year.

In 1538 Roland Lee, bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, lord president of the council in the Marches of Wales, obtained the commission to suppress Wigmore Abbey and had a warrant for stones, iron, lead and glass to be taken from it for the repair of the King's castles.¹ On the 19th November he wrote to Cromwell that 'Mr. Sulyard and I have taken the surrender of Wigmore monastery and committed the custody to my cousin John Bradshaw beseeching your remembrance of him for the farm.' The demesne was valued at £8. On the 8th December he wrote that 'he had executed the King's commission for the suppression of the monastery of Wigmore. I send the books of the state of the same with such jewels and money as remained after the dispatching of the canons.'²

Cromwell apparently remembered the request of Bishop Lee for his cousin John Bradshaw to have the farm of the premises, for on the 3rd August, 1540, the King under letters patent granted to John Bradshaw of Ludlow the house and site of the late monastery of Wigmore with all the houses and buildings within the precinct and all the lands belonging to it, and the tithes of all the parish of Leintwardine, for twenty-one years, in consideration of the sum of £60, and for the annual rent of £28. 13. 2. to wit, for the house and lands £12. 17. 8. and for the tithes £15. 15. 6.

On the 8th June, 1544, the King granted the reversion to John Core, citizen and mercer of London, for thirty-one years upon the same terms.

On the 2nd December, 1552, Bradshaw sold the remainder of his lease to William Thomas, apparently agent for Sir Thomas Palmer, who shortly after being attainted of high treason in connexion with the claim of Lady Jane Gray the lands and tithes reverted to the Crown.

In spite of the grant in reversion to Core, the Queen on the 30th May, 1554, granted in consideration of 6os. 8d. and 'by the advice of our dearly beloved kinsman and councillor William, Marquis of Winchester, our treasurer' the abbey upon the same terms to 'our beloved servant William Cockes, one of the gentlemen of our pantry, in recompense of his good services.' He seems to have died in 1556 when a new grant was made.

This was given by letters patent on the 7th January, 1556-7: this first recited the foregoing grants at farm and after that to Bradshaw states that 'the said father of our said Queen had there from thenceforth ordered that the monastery should be pulled

¹ Gairdner *xiii*, ii, 736.

² Bishop Lee's letters.

down and taken away,' it then goes on to grant to Philip Cockeram and Joyce his wife and their heirs for ever, in consideration of the sum of £309. 4. 0., the site of the house and all the lands belonging to the abbey 'as fully, freely and entirely and in as ample a manner and form as any abbot or other Governor of the said monastery' to hold in capite for the twentieth part of a knight's fee for all rents, services, dues, and demands, whatsoever from them to us belonging.

The lands belonged to the Cockram family until the death in 1744 of Salway Cockram, who bequeathed the abbey to his relations the Salways who possessed the same until a few years ago.¹

APPENDIX II.

THE MORTIMER FAMILY

As the abbey of Wigmore was the burial place of the great family of Mortimer it may not be out of place here to give a brief sketch of this powerful house. The following account of the family has been abridged from Dugdale's Baronage (1. 138-152) and the author regrets that it has not been possible to verify all the facts. It will be seen that no fewer than ten heads of the house are definitely recorded to have been buried in the abbey church and it is probable that four others, whose burial place is not stated, were also interred there. Four other members of the family are recorded to have been buried in the abbey and it is reasonable to suppose that many others were buried there that are not specified. The eastern part of the church must therefore have contained a pedigree in stone of this great family who ruled the Marches of Wales for nearly four hundred years.

RALPH is said to have been the founder of the Mortimers, he is claimed to have been related to the Duke of Normandy and fought for him in France. He came to England with his kinsman, and about 1080 was sent into the marches of Wales against the rebellious earl of Shrewsbury. After a long siege of the castle of Wigmore, which had been built just after the conquest by William Fitz Osborne, he overcame the earl and delivered him up to the king. Whereupon Ralph received a grant of all his lands.

Dugdale makes this Ralph the father of Hugh who died in 1188, which is obviously incorrect, for, if he had been only twenty years of age at the conquest, he must have been over a hundred when he is said to have died about 1140. Therefore it is evident that he was succeeded by a son Ralph and that his death is unrecorded.

RALPH the second, 'ordained the foundation of an abbey at Wigmore, constituting his son Hugh heir to all his lands in England as also his sole executor, and committed him to the education of Sir Oliver Merlimond, a sage and worthy Knight. The structure of which monastery was first begun at Schobdon by the same Oliver,

¹ *Arch. Camb.* ii, fourth series, 233.

but afterwards removed to Wigmore, near to a collegiate church of secular canons which this Ralph had there founded with three prebendaries, by the consent of Gerard, bishop of Hereford'. Ralph left two sons, Hugh who succeeded him, and William, and was presumably buried at Wigmore as the first founder.

HUGH came into the estates about 1140 and was a staunch supporter of king Stephen. On the death of Stephen, he, with Roger earl of Hereford, opposed king Henry II and strengthened his castles of Cleobury, Wigmore, and Bridgnorth. Whereupon the king besieged the three castles simultaneously and forced him into subjection : but he seems to have been pardoned. Hugh 'perfected the foundation of the abbey of Wigmore begun by his father. He likewise transferred thither the prebendaries which had been placed in the parochial church of Wigmore by his father ; and in 1179 largely endowed it ; namely, with the manors of Kayham and Schobdon, the moiety of Mottre wood and divers other lands ; together with the churches of Wigmore, Cleobury, Lentwardin, Nene, Hugley, Burley, Lidbury North, Schobdon, Almondestrey and Chelmershe and all their chappels'. Hugh was married to Maud, daughter of William Longespee, duke of Normandy, and left four sons, Roger, who succeeded him, Hugh, Ralph and William. He afterwards became a canon, professed in the abbey of Wigmore ; he died at Cleobury the 26th February, 1185, and was buried at Wigmore where a special mass was daily celebrated at his tomb.

ROGER the son of Hugh, after repeated conflicts with the Welsh brought them to order, by which he 'much enlarged his territories and drove away thieves and robbers from these parts. And being once present at the solemn anniversary of his father confirmed all his grants to the canons of Wigmore, adding of his own gift a spacious and fruitful pasture lying near the abbey called 'the Treasure of Mortimer.' He first married Millicent, daughter of the earl of Derby and had by her a son Hugh, and secondly Isebel, daughter of Henry of Newburgh earl of Warwick, by whom he had three sons, Ralph, Robert, and Philip. He died the 8th July, 1215, but it is not definitely recorded that he was buried at Wigmore.

HUGH the son of Roger strongly supported king John in the wars with the barons. When the pope's legate pronounced excommunication against all who had taken away anything from the king, Llewellyn, the prince of Wales, came to Wigmore and acknowledged that all the territory of Melenth to be the rightful inheritance of Mortimer. Hugh was wounded in a tournament and died without issue on the 18th November, 1227. He was buried in the abbey of Wigmore.

RALPH, the half brother of Hugh, succeeded to the estates and was taken prisoner by the French. When the Welsh heard of this they came to Wigmore, plundered the abbey and burnt it to the ground, except the church. He married Gladys, the daughter of Llewellyn ap Iorworth, and by her had four sons, Roger, who succeeded him, Peter, John, and Hugh. He died on the 22nd August, 1248, and was buried, with his ancestors, in the abbey of Wigmore.

ROGER the son of Ralph, paying the sum of 2,000 marks, had livery of his lands, save those reserved in dower to his mother. He attended the king on various expeditions and had a number of encounters with the Welsh. He was with the king at the battle of Lewes, and, seeing the day was lost, retreated to the marches of Wales hoping that by a victory there over the Welsh he might turn the scales in the king's favour ; but Montfort came with a strong army into the marches and wasted the land of Mortimer. Roger by a cunning subterfuge obtained the escape of the prince, from the castle of Hereford, and brought him in safety to Wigmore. He was the chief mover in raising the army that secured the victory for the king's party at Evesham on the 4th August, 1265. Later he instituted the famous tournament at Kenilworth with the knights of the round table, and in consequence of the fame of this the queen of Navarre sent him certain wooden bottles bound with gold which purported to be of wine but in truth were filled with gold. For ages after these were kept in the abbey of Wigmore. He married Maud, the eldest daughter of William de Braiose and by her had five sons and one daughter : Sir Ralph the eldest died in his father's life, Edmund who succeeded him, Roger lord of Chirk, Sir William who afterwards became a canon of Wigmore, Sir Geoffrey who died before his father, and Margaret who married Robert de Vere earl of Oxford. He died at Kingston on the eve of St. Simon and St. Jude 1282 and was buried in the abbey of Wigmore with this epitaph :—

Hic est sepultus, qui mansit laude refultus,
Rogerus mundus, de Morte marina secundus
Cui fuerat gratus, dominus Wigmoræ vocitatus
Hunc dum viverat, vi Wallia tota timebat
Et sibi donata permansit Wallia tota
Militiam scivit, semper tormenta subivit.

EDMUND, the son of Roger, in the year of his inheriting encountered the Welsh in battle, at which Llewellyn ap Gryffidd was slain ; but the war was continued and Edmund himself was mortally wounded at an encounter near Builth. He died at Wigmore and was buried in the abbey with his ancestors, 1304. He married Margaret, daughter of lord William de Fendles, and by her had seven children ; Roger who succeeded him, Maud married to Theobald de Vernon, Joan a nun, John killed in a tournament at Worcester and buried at Wigmore 1318, Hugh rector of old Radnor, Walter rector of Kingsland and Edmund rector of Hodnet.

ROGER the son of Edmund, was 16 years of age at his father's death. He was in the Scotch wars and in 1316 was constituted governor of Ireland. Two years later he was again in Scotland, and was made Justice of Ireland. In 1320, with Thomas earl of Lancaster, Humphrey earl of Hereford and other discontented barons, he marched towards London, when, finding the kings' power greater than theirs they yielded to the king ; but he not trusting them, they were committed to the Tower. After being there a year Roger escaped and got over to France, and afterwards in memory of this

deliverance caused a chapel of St. Peter to be built in the outer ward of Ludlow castle. After hue and cry was made against him, without result, his wife was imprisoned in Skipton castle, and he, with the queen, the prince, and other nobles were sentenced to banishment and a reward put on their heads. After which the queen sailed for England, with the aid of the earl of Ainhalt, whereupon the king with the Spencers fled into Wales. Mortimer was then made governor of Denbigh castle, but later he obtained pardon for breaking prison, and in 1324 was reinstated to his other possessions. In 1328 he was made Justice of Wales, and was created the earl of March. The king, the following year, made a progress into the marches of Wales and was treated to lavish entertainment by earl Roger at Ludlow and Wigmore. He became such a person in the land as to be a menace to the crown when he was secretly secured and his lands were seized. Divers accusations were brought against him in parliament, including that of connivance with the murder of king Edward II, whereupon he was found guilty and sentenced to be drawn and hanged. He was executed at Smithfield 1330 and buried in the church of the Grey Friars there, but many years after his body was transferred to Wigmore abbey. He married Joan, the daughter and heiress of Sir Peter Genevill, and by her had four sons and seven daughters ; the former were Edmund his heir, Sir Roger, Geoffrey, and John who was killed in a tournament at Shrewsbury.

EDMUND, the son of Roger, never came into the title as the sentence upon his father was not reversed in his life-time. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Bartholomew of Baddesmere, by whom he had Roger who succeeded him, and John who died in infancy. He died 1331.

ROGER, the son of Edmund, was three years of age at his father's death. In 1342, though not of age, through the influence of the earl of Northampton, who had married his mother, his homage was accepted and he had livery of the castle of Wigmore. After attending the king to France in 1346, he had livery of other of his lands. In 1352, he obtained a reversal of the judgment against his grandfather, Roger, as being erroneous and utterly void, whereupon he regained the title, and other lands of which his grandfather had died, seized. He was again in the French wars, and died on the 26th February, 1360, in Burgundy, where he was in command of the English forces. He was buried in Wigmore abbey, but there was also a solemn obsequy kept for him in the chapel of Windsor. He married Philippa, daughter of William de Montagu earl of Salisbury, and had issue, Roger, who died in his lifetime, Edmund who succeeded him, and two daughters.

EDMUND, the second son of earl Roger was born on Candlemas eve, 1351, and, though under age, was employed to treat with the commissioners of France for a peace with that country, and had a like commission to Scotland. He married Philippa daughter and heir of Lionel, duke of Clarence, and in 1372 had livery of all his lands. In 1375, with the earls of Warwick and Stafford, he was in an expedition to Brittany for the assistance of John de Montfort, the

duke. In this year, bearing the titles of earl of March and Ulster, lord of Wigmore, Clare and Connact and marshal of England, he gave his manor of Chelmarsh to the convent of Wigmore, to find a secular priest continually resident in the church of Leintwardine to sing mass daily for the souls of Roger his father, Philippa his mother, and those of his children and ancestors, to be presented by the bishop of Hereford and by him instituted, paying him 10 marks by the year for his salary. In 1379 he gave that part of his manor of Chelmarsh called Nethercourt to the convent of Wigmore, to find two secular priests to celebrate divine service daily in that abbey for the souls of Roger his father, Philippa his mother, Philippa his wife, and also for the welfare of himself during his life and his soul hereafter. The same year he was made lieutenant in Ireland and 'so tamed the barbarousness of that rude people, by destroying ten or eleven of their petty Kings within the space of half a year ; that he regained almost all his lands in Ulster'. By his will he bequeathed his body to be buried in the conventional church of Wigmore on the left side of the high altar, appointing only five tapers to burn about his body at the time of burial. He died at Cork, on the feast of St. John the Evangelist, 1381, in the twenty-ninth year of his age and by his direction was buried in the cathedral there, until his flesh should be consumed, when his bones were to be transferred to Wigmore and honourably entombed with lady Philippa his wife. His epitaph was to be :—

*Vir constans, gratus, sapiens, bene nuper amatus ;
Nunc nece prostratus, sub marmore putret humatus.
Hic jacet Edmundus moriens Corke corpore mundus ;
Sisque pius Christe sibi, quem lapis apprimit iste.*

And that of his wife :—

*Nobilis hic tumulata jacet comitissa Philippa.
Actibus haec nituit larga, benigna fuit.
Regum sanguis erat, morum probitate vigebat
Compaciens inopi, vivit in arce Cœli.*

He had issue, Roger his heir, Sir Edmund who was taken prisoner in a skirmish by Owen Glendwr, and two daughters.

ROGER, the son of Edmund was born at Cork of the 18th of April, 1374 and 'at his father's death, being but 11 years of age ' his wardship was sold by the king to Richard earl of Arundel to the intent that he should marry his daughter, but it was later transferred to John Holland earl of Kent for the like purpose with his daughter Alianor. Roger in 1385 by reason of his descent from Lionel, duke of Clarence, was declared heir apparent to the crown. He, with the duke of Gloucester and the earls of Northampton and Rutland, led a force into Ireland and was instituted Lieutenant of that realm. ' But the year following, too much relying on his own valour, he adventured himself before his army in an Irish habit and was unhappily slain at Kenles upon the feast day of St. Margaret the virgin. Whence being brought to Wigmore he was there buried with his ancestors '.

He left two sons, Edmund then six years of age his heir, and Roger who died without issue, and also two daughters, Anne married to Richard duke of York, and Alianor married to Edward Courtney earl of Devon. Alianor his wife survived him and became later the wife of lord Powys.

EDMUND, the son of Roger, was born in the New Forest on 24th November, 1391 and delivered to the ward of Henry prince of Wales out of whose custody he was stolen by lady Despencer, but being found again in Cheltenham woods he was kept under stricter guard as he was the rightful heir to the crown. On the rebellion of Owen Glendwr in 1402, his uncle Sir Edmund headed the shire-levy of Hereford against him, but was taken prisoner at the combat of Pilleth: he then took sides with the rebels, married Glendwr's daughter, and acted as his chief lieutenant. This Edmund died of privations while defending Harlech Castle in 1409 against the royal forces. His nephew, the younger Edmund, not being implicated in his uncle's treason, was restored to the earldom of March in 1413, and in 1414 he was with the king in the French wars and was made Lieutenant of Normandy. In 1421 he again attended the king to France and in 1422 was made Lieutenant of Ireland. He married the daughter of Edmund earl of Stafford and died on the 19th January 1425, being then about twenty-four years of age, without issue, whereupon Richard duke of York, son of Anne his sister, was by inquisition found to be the next heir.

This Richard was great-great-grandson of king Edward III. He was the son of Richard, duke of York, who being implicated in a plot against king Henry V was executed at Southampton in 1415, and his mother was lady Anne Mortimer through whom he inherited the Mortimer estates. He married Cecily, daughter of Ralph Nevill, earl of Westmorland, and had by her eight sons, of whom the second became king Edward IV and the youngest king Richard III. He was killed at the disastrous battle of Wakefield in 1460.