

# Sussex Archaeological Collections.

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## BATTEL ABBEY.

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BY THE REV. EDWARD TURNER.

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IN whatever point of view we may look upon this once celebrated Benedictine Abbey, whether in an historical or an antiquarian, it is unquestionably one of the most interesting and, at the same time, most important of our Sussex monasteries. It was founded by the Conqueror himself, after the battle which he fought with Harold, October 14th, 1066, and which is historically known as the battle of Hastings, in accordance with a vow which he had made with his Norman troops previous to his going into action, that if he succeeded, he would erect on the battle-field a religious house, not only as a token of gratitude to God for thus blessing his endeavours, but also as a standing memorial to after ages of his signal triumph over his opponent upon this memorable occasion, and his own subsequent attainment of the throne of England; a circumstance from which, by his own special appointment, it derived the name of "The Abbey of Battel." He spared no pains, nor did he regard any expense, to make it one of the largest and most richly endowed of the Abbeys established in this kingdom. Its extensiveness, and the superiority of its architecture, is clearly shown to this day by what still remain of the Abbey buildings. Not only did Duke William piously determine to erect a church on the

spot where the battle between the forces of himself and his Danish adversary was fought; but in carrying his determination into effect, he designedly raised its high altar on the very place where the fallen standard and lifeless body of Harold were found after the victory over his troops had been achieved.

This church he is said by some of the Chroniclers to have dedicated only to St. Martin, who lived for some time the life of a soldier, previous to his becoming an ecclesiastic, and being made Bishop of Tours, in France; and whose banner, anciently carried before the French soldiers, was supposed to inspire them with courage, and to ensure to them victory. Others assert that its patron saints were St. Mary and St. Martin; while the Abbey Chronicle declares that it was dedicated "To the Holy and undivided Trinity, the blessed Mary, ever Virgin, and Christ's confessor, St. Martin." This discrepancy might possibly be easily reconciled. Sufficient, however, for my present purpose is it to state that the Abbey is almost invariably described as that of St. Martin's, Battel.

Around this Church, then, the Conqueror, upon its completion, erected suitable residences for a considerable number of monks, whose appointed duty it should be continually to offer up prayers for the salvation of the souls of himself and Harold, and of the countless number of those who were slain in this severe conflict.

Robert of Gloucester, in alluding to the origin of this Abbey, says, in the quaint poetic language of the period in which he lived—

"King William bythoughte him alsoe  
 Of the volke that was verlorne  
 And slaine eke th' row him  
 In the battayle byvorne;—  
 And there as the battayle was  
 An Abbeye he let rere  
 Of Seynt Martin, vor the soules  
 That there a-slayen were;—  
 And the Monks well enough  
 He feffede without fayle,  
 That is ycleped in Englonde,  
 Abbeye of the Battayle."

For twelve months after William I. had obtained possession

of the Crown of England, he was too much taken up with state affairs to find time to enter on the fulfilment of his vow, and after these were a little arranged, the application of all his energies was for some time longer too much required in quelling the continually arising outbreaks of the people against himself and his aggression, and in securing the stability of his sovereignty, to allow him to think of the preparation requisite for the erection of this Abbey. So soon, however, as the subjugation of his rebellious subjects had been in a great measure accomplished, and he found himself freed from the cares and anxieties which intestine insurrections and disturbances were perpetually occasioning him, which was not until some time during the year 1071, he no longer delayed to enter on the fulfilment of his pious intention. And this he is supposed, in the first place, to have done by erecting a temporary church, and residences for four monks, under the walls of the Abbey precincts; who would thus be able to carry out his designs while the more permanent buildings were in course of construction; the completion of which would necessarily be a work of two or three years. These temporary buildings, then, were not finished for use until about the year 1076; in which year we find the founder appointing Robert Blanchard to preside over the infant Abbey as its Abbot. That such preliminary accommodation was provided seems quite evident from the authorities quoted by the editors of the last edition of the *Monasticon Anglicanum*. We learn, too, from the *Battel Abbey Chronicle*, that previous to the erection of the Abbey, the monks built within the intended circuit of the Monastery "mean dwellings of little cost as residences for themselves."

At what time the Conqueror commenced the permanent Abbey buildings we are not informed; it probably was not until a few years after the completion of these temporary structures. A considerable period of time would necessarily be consumed in the erection of the boundary fence; and delay would take place after his plans were matured in providing materials for carrying them out, and in preparing them for the different parts of the work. But whatever might have been the date of the commencement of the Abbey, certain it is that he laboured anxiously and earnestly in its

construction during the remainder of his life, but left it unfinished at the time of his death. It was at first proposed to provide accommodation for one hundred and forty monks; but whatever might have been the founder's intentions, had he lived, we have no record of so great a number as this having at any time been resident within its walls. After his death, his son, William II., carried on to completion what his father had so religiously and zealously begun; so that, in the year 1094, its spacious and magnificent church was in a sufficient state of forwardness for consecration; and its other buildings far enough advanced to accommodate about one-third of this number.

The great promoter of the erection of this Monastery, and eventually the architect employed in building it, is generally stated to have been a monk of the Norman monastery of Marmoutier, called William Faber; though Leland gives a different account of it. He tells us that A.D. 1085, "Suadente Remigio Episcopo Dorceastrensi qui prius fuit Monachus de Fescamp, Gul. Magnus fundavit Abbatiam de Bello."<sup>1</sup> To Faber was also committed the further task of selecting the first four monks, who were required, by direction of the founder, to be men of great reputation for their learning and piety. These he brought over from the same Norman Benedictine Abbey of which he himself had been a member. Of these four monks, Robert Blanchard, the first Abbot, was one. His abbacy, however, was of very short duration. For, having gone back to Normandy after his appointment, to make arrangements for entering on his office (a needful step at that time), he was accidentally drowned in returning to this country. The remaining three monks were increased from the greater abbey of Winchester,<sup>2</sup> and other sources, to the number I have already stated, as soon as accommodation could be found for them.

This Faber had, as the name implies, been a smith previous to his entering into Duke William's service. In the Chronicle of Battel Abbey his metamorphosis from a mechanic to a monk is thus accounted for. While hunting one day in Normandy, he and his companions, who were probably monks

<sup>1</sup> Ayloff's ed., vol. ii., p. 390. Dugdale's Monast. Anglicanum.

<sup>2</sup> Rapin's History of England, vol. i., p. 168—note.

of the same Abbey,<sup>3</sup> found themselves short of arrows; and applying to a neighbouring smith for some, and finding him unacquainted with the art of making them, Faber took the tools, and soon fabricated a supply. His ingenuity displayed on this occasion brought him into so much notice, that he determined to abandon his craft as a smith, and to lead from that time a monastic life.

Before the buildings were commenced, a difference is stated to have arisen between these monks and the founder, as to the eligibility of the site which he had determined to build on. Of this site the soil was, in the opinion of these monks, far too sterile, and too deficient in the supply of water, for the requirements of a large establishment; on which account they strongly recommended its abandonment, and the adoption of a spot in the valley below, as in all respects more suitable. To these suggestions the King listened, but refused to accede; replying to them and their objections, that so liberal should be the provision which he intended to make for them and the house generally, that the sterile places about it should become fruitful, and wine be more plentiful in it than water in any other of the larger Abbeys in the kingdom. Other objections were advanced, and among them the woody nature of the surrounding district, and its deficiency in the supply of stone fit for the purposes of building. But these he also over-ruled; telling them that wood was easily cleared away, and that his ships had no longer anything to do, so that with these he would fetch stone from his own country for the purpose; the stone dug in the neighbourhood of Caen being for building purposes far superior to any other. And regardless of the great expense thus necessarily incurred in obtaining it, he began to bring some over. Before, however, he had provided any very considerable quantity, "it was," the Chronicle of this Abbey states,<sup>4</sup> "graciously revealed to some religious matron resident in Battel, or its neighbourhood, that by digging at a particular spot, which had been supernaturally indicated to her in a dream,<sup>5</sup> plenty of good building-stone would be found." This was done, and a

<sup>3</sup> The Norman monks were much addicted to field-sports.

<sup>4</sup> Page 11 of Lower's translation.

<sup>5</sup> In the Anglo-Saxon times much faith was placed in dreams, and the revelations they brought about.

sufficiency of this material of a quality fit for the purpose, obtained ; thereby giving rise to the belief, that it had been placed there at the time of the creation, for the special purpose of facilitating the erection of this Abbey. Whatever might have been the means which led to its discovery, it is quite certain, that in the construction of its main walls the stone of the country was principally used.

With regard to water, of which a deficiency was apprehended, there was found to be no lack of this. The Abbey buildings were abundantly supplied with it by means of a conduit situated on the land of John Tamworth, called Feldreslond, through the middle of which the conducting pipe passed. This, we learn, from a deed to be found among the muniments of the Abbey, by which the owner of this land covenanted to allow at all times ingress and egress to it for the Abbot and monks, or their servants, for the purpose of altering and repairing this pipe when needful, "according," as the deed states, "to custom out of mind." This deed is dated Battel, February 11th, 1435.

The home territory of the Abbey was probably at first enclosed by a wooden paling, timber being plentiful in the surrounding district, and continued to be so fenced in until the 12th of Edward III. (1338), who granted a special grace under his privy seal for the Abbot and monks to fortify the site of their Abbey, founded by his predecessors, Kings of England, with a wall of stone and lime, and krenellate the site.<sup>6</sup> This deed, which is also to be found among the Charters of this House, is dated Lopham, June 9th. The home territory consisted of a very considerable tract of land, assigned to it by the founder, and lying around the site. It was called "The Leuga," a term which appears, from a table showing the adaptation of ancient terms of admeasurement to modern computation, given in the Battel Abbey Chronicle, to have been a space of twelve roods linear measure, or, as Mr. Lower, in his translation of this Chronicle<sup>7</sup> explains it, 7920 feet; making the area thus enclosed to comprise a circle, the radius of which would be one mile and a half, and the diameter three miles. This Leuga was sometimes called "Lowy," as at Pevensy and Tunbridge, where, for about a league round these towns and their

<sup>6</sup> Sussex Arch. Coll., vol. xiii., p. 112.

<sup>7</sup> Page 13, note 19.

castles, the district is called the "Leuga," or "Lowy." Dr. Harris thinks that Leuga, Leuca, or Leucata, were the same as the ancient League, by which the old Gauls measured their journeyings, as the Romans did theirs, by the term "mille passus." This Leuga, or Leuca, was 1500 paces, or about one mile and a half in length. Spelman, in his glossary, under the word "Leuca" or "Leuga," states, that such a distance was frequently called by the name of Leucate, Leugate, or Lowy. Such a Lowy usually had very great and peculiar privileges attached to it.

In fencing in the Abbey Leucate, or district, around the buildings of which the Abbey consisted, and in the subsequent erection of the Abbey itself, many hundred workmen, both British and Foreign, were employed. For the accommodation of some of these, dwellings were built within the Leuga; but the greater part were provided with residences erected just without the enclosure, which possibly might have been the origin of the town of Battel; for, that there were no houses where the town now stands previous to the building of the Abbey, but that the country close around was a wide and desolate waste covered with heath, with here and there a bushy thorn, and perhaps a stunted tree, seems not to admit of much doubt. Every early allusion to it tends to show that this was the case; that, in short, it was a wild uncultivated forest tract. The district seems to have been called Herste in Anglo-Saxon times, from its sylvan nature.

The arrangement of these edifices appears to have been from a very early period in regular streets, a very curious list of which, with the names and occupations of the tenants, and the rent which each paid, is given in the Chronicle before alluded to. One hundred and fifteen artizans of different kinds were thus provided for, who were called Burgesses. Upon the election of a new Abbot, these Burgesses paid him, upon his coming into office, one hundred shillings. All their causes were to be tried by the Abbot and monks. The arrangement of these houses, Mr. Lower considers<sup>s</sup> to correspond generally with the arrangement of those of the present town. Upon this point, however, a difference of opinion exists; some of our historians imagining that there

<sup>s</sup> Chronicle of Battel Abbey, p. 15, n. 31.

was a town here previous to the foundation of the Abbey, called "St. Mary's in the Wood,"<sup>9</sup> the church of which was dedicated to the Virgin Mary. Parry speaks of a village here, antecedent to the establishment of the Abbey, called Epiton, which Mr. Lower<sup>10</sup> thinks to be a misinterpretation of the word Epitoneum, which Odericus Vitalis uses in the sense of a field. This argument then tells against Parry's hypothesis rather than in favour of it. In the allusion to this Abbey, in Domesday, it is called "The Abbey of St. Martin of the place of the Battel," and, "The Church of the Battel;" Ecclesia, in this latter designation, being evidently intended to be taken in the sense of a monastery, or religious house. Had there been a church here at the time this survey was made, it would certainly have been noticed in it.

This town possessed from an early period three Guild-halls, one of which was in Santlache, and called the guild of St. Martin; a second on the west side of the town, at a place called Claverham; and the third out of the town. This, which was near to the Park, below Quarriere, is represented to have been "ad opus rusticorum," for the special use, that is, of the lowest grade of freemen. These three guilds the Abbots patronized; and, as ex-officio members, were bound to contribute towards brewing the ale of each, and to be present at their customary meetings, but not personally; this part of the Abbot's duty he might discharge, and did so, by a deputy, who drank his share of the ale for him. A forfeiture was attached to any violation of the rules of drinking upon these occasions; which, if it happened within the pale of the guild, belonged to the members; if without such pale, to the Abbot for the time being. The Abbot was exempted from the customary payment for the interment of deceased members. It was obligatory on these guilds to offer tapers at stated periods upon the High Altar of St. Martin in the Abbey Church; towards the expenses of which the elders of each guild were bound to levy the customary contributions of the different members.

In a deed of this Abbey, the boundary of the Leuga commencing at a place called Bodeherste, on the east side of

<sup>9</sup> Sir William Burrell's MSS., Sussex, Donat. B. M., 5679, p. 67.

<sup>10</sup> Chronicle of Battel Abbey, p. 32.



Battel, is stated to have passed onward from thence near to the lands of Robert Bos and Roger Moin, until it arrived at Hecilande, which it enclosed. To the south, it passed near to the land of Fitz Robert-Fitzwido, and from thence to land in Crowherste, called Peter's. To the west, it passed by the land of Cattesfelde, and by Puckehole, as far as Westbece, and near to the land of Itentune. From Itentune it extended past the land of Westlingtune and Wicham; returning from thence to Bodeherste, the point from whence it started. The greater part of these names are still to be identified in Battel and its vicinity.

The Abbey Leuga was at first divided into four, but afterwards into five boroughs, called Middleborough and Uckham, (which two were originally but one borough, called Mydylborough) Santlake, Monjoye (within which were parts of Whatlyngton, and Sedlescombe), and Telham. It had also belonging to it five out-boroughs, called Barnhorne, Glazye, Buckstepe, Whatlington, and Seddlescombe; which Mr. W. D. Cooper tells us,<sup>11</sup> were within the hundred and jurisdiction of the Leet. Belonging also to this Leuga, according to the Domesday survey, was land called Bocham, consisting of half a hyde, less one virgate, which was situated in Crowherste, without the Leuga, and obtained by exchange from Walter Lambert for a wood within it; also three virgates of land in Bece, held by Osbert of the Earl of Eu; one virgate in Wasingate, which, though the quantity is thus described, is supposed to have been half a virgate only; and six virgates in Wilmint, which, though so called, measured but five, and are stated in other documents to be no more than this; six virgates in Nidrefeld; half a hyde in Peneherste; the same in Hou; one virgate in Pilesham, three virgates in Cattesfelde; two hydres in Bulingtune, less one virgate; one virgate in Crowherste, one in Wiltinges, and one in Holingtune; making a total of six hydres and half a virgate, or about six hundred acres of land, reckoning one hyde to be equivalent to one hundred acres. These lands the foundation charter exempted from all episcopal and other ecclesiastical jurisdiction; and from all temporal exaction and service whatsoever.

<sup>11</sup> Sussex Archæological Collections, vol. vi., p. 59.

That the tenants of the newly appointed Abbots and monks were all dependant upon, and owed suit and service to them, and to them only, is manifest from the customary services they were required to perform; which were as follows: the tenant of every house, besides the rent which he paid for it, was required to find a man for one day to work in their meadows, and to assist, when needed, in the reparation of the mill, which stood within the Leuga; in return for which each of the tenants, when so employed, was to receive as a remuneration one loaf and a half of wheaten or rye bread, with the usual accompaniment of fish, cheese, or the like. Each tenant was also bound, when required so to do, to make a seam of malt. They were not obliged to fetch the barley of which the malt was to be made from the Abbey granary; but a servant of the Abbot and monks, with a horse taken from their stables, was accustomed to deliver the proper quantity at each house; and after it was converted into malt, it was then the duty of the tenants themselves to deliver it by measure at the Abbey, and to receive in return the customary number of loaves, together with the quantity of companage<sup>12</sup> due to them from the steward. When their assistance was at any time needed in the meadows or at the mill, they could not be compelled to give it oftener than was convenient to them; still, if there was no reasonable hindrance, they were expected at once to comply; and whenever they were prevented from giving their attendance by a pre-engagement, or some necessary occupation of their own, they could not be sued or fined for their non-compliance; and the same rule applied to the making and delivering of their malt.

The tenant of certain lands in Telleham was bound to go with his horse, accompanied by a monk, or any other person the Abbot might appoint, whithersoever the Abbot and monks might order him. For this, the tenant, upon any such journey, was entitled to receive an allowance of provisions from them, both in going and returning, for himself and his horse; and if the horse died or was injured on the journey, a compensation for such death or injury. And the tenant of lands in Beche was bound, during each year, to find the

<sup>12</sup> Companagium; anything eaten with bread.

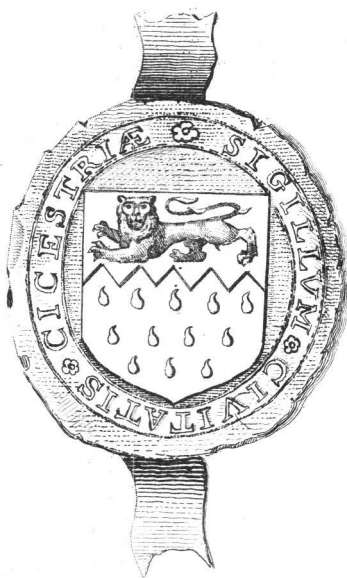
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# Memorials of Chichester

BY

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Chichester:

MASON AND WILMSHURST.

m.dccc.lxb.

Abbot, or one of his monks, a horse to ride, whenever he was required to do so; the Abbot and monks in both these cases supplying the horse with shoes and nails.<sup>13</sup> For these services each of these tenants was exempted from the payment of the Earl's penny.

Owing to the erection of the permanent Abbey buildings not being commenced until after the Conqueror found himself securely seated on the throne of this country, but being unavoidably delayed for four or five years, so that they were not finished by his son and successor until about the year 1090 (that is, three years after his death), the dedication of the Church was also delayed until the month of February, 1095 (the 8th of William II.), when it took place, and was carried out with the greatest pomp and splendour. The King himself, and the principal part of the Barons of the kingdom, were present at the ceremony; as well as the following eight spiritual lords: — Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury; Walkelin, Bishop of Winchester; Ralph, Bishop of Chichester; Osmund, Bishop of Salisbury; John, Bishop of Bath; William, Bishop of Durham; Roger, Bishop of Coutances, in Normandy; and Gundulph, Bishop of Rochester. A large concourse of clergy and laity of this and the adjoining counties was also present.

We learn from the Saxon Chronicle<sup>14</sup> that the King was staying at Hastings at the time, on his way to Normandy; and, as will be presently seen, he availed himself of this opportunity of conferring on the Abbey the advowsons of several churches situated in the counties of Essex, Suffolk, and Norfolk; and also of carrying out his father's dying request, that he would give to the Abbot and monks the Pallium, or royal robe, in which he was crowned, and which was not only beautifully wrought in gold, and adorned with the most costly gems, but further ornamented with three hundred amulets, set some of them in gold, and others in silver; besides which it had attached to different parts of it chains of the same metals, to which were appended a considerable number of relics of the saints. He also handed over to them upon this occasion, as an additional bequest from

<sup>13</sup> Ad ferra et clavos atque expensam  
Abbatis et Monachorum.

<sup>14</sup> Saxon Chronicle, A.D. 1084.

his father to the Abbey, the feretrum,<sup>15</sup> or portable altar, which he had brought to this country with him, and on which he was accustomed, during his expeditions, to celebrate mass. This, also, was studded with precious stones. He also gave to them, by his father's further desire, the sword which he used at the battle of Hastings. This sword, and the pallium, the monks would very naturally preserve, as long as it was in their power to do so, with religious care and veneration; the former as the weapon to which they in a great measure owed their existence as a conventual body; and the latter as an emblem of the success of William's daring enterprize in order to obtain the supreme rule of this country. He also besought him to take the Abbey under his especial care; and to increase its endowment by every means in his power, so as to make it in wealth and greatness what he from the first designed it to be; and would himself have made it had he lived to complete it. Some of the silver and gold of this pallium, however, Abbot Henry was obliged to sell, to satisfy an unwarranted demand made upon him by the King for ten pounds, to furnish a casula for the Abbey of Flagi, in Normandy. And at a subsequent period, finding that many of its amulets, as well as of the precious stones of the feretrum, were either lost or fraudulently taken away, Abbot Ralph, and the monks over whom he presided, were induced to sell the remainder, with the gold and silver chains, and to invest the money thus obtained in the purchase of land. That the relics which they retained might not be without a suitable receptacle, they caused, a reliquary of the choicest workmanship to be made for them. This, too, was enriched with much gold and silver, and adorned with many valuable jewels. When finished, it was consecrated by Ralph, Bishop of Chichester; after which he deposited the relics with great ceremony in it, and granted a seven days' exemption from penance to all such as should annually visit them.

This king afterwards conferred upon the Abbey the manor and church of Bromham, in Wiltshire. Thirty days' pardon was granted by the common consent of all the bishops to

<sup>15</sup> Mr. Lower supposes this to be the feretrum, on which Harold is represented in the Bayeux tapestry as resting his

right hand, when he took the oath in 1065, not to oppose Duke William's designs on this country.

such penitents as might, in the course of their pilgrimages, attend the anniversary of the day of its dedication. A suitable banquet was prepared for them upon the occasion at the expense of the house. The church, thus dedicated and endowed, enjoyed all the privileges and immunities of a royal chapel. In it he designed to have been buried, had he died in this country. Subsequent kings, too, were liberal in their donations to this Abbey.

This Abbey, as it was originally constructed, must have been an immense pile of building. Brown Willis, in speaking of its magnitude, says, that "the extent of the edifices may be better measured by the compass of them, than in any other way; they being computed at no less than a mile about." It is supposed to have been quadrangular. Of its four sides three may still be very satisfactorily traced by what remains of them. The ruins of the fourth side are said to have been taken down after the Abbey was converted into a private residence, for the purpose of obtaining from its windows a view of the park and country around, which they impeded. This was probably done when it became the residence of the Montague family.

The Abbey precincts are entered from the town through a handsome gateway of three stages and two arches, a larger and a smaller one; the larger arch being for carriages proceeding to the Abbey, and the smaller one for persons on foot. This entrance gateway consists of a square tower, at each angle of which is an octagon turret, and on each side a wing; the eastern one terminating with a corresponding tower. One part of this eastern wing was for many years fitted up and used as a sessions house, while another part was used for a school, and the remainder as a prison. The carriage arch is groined; and at the points of intersection of the groins are two rudely sculptured heads, which are supposed to represent those of William the Conqueror and Harold, the head of the latter being crowned. The lawn front of this gateway has a row of small arcades over the entrance arches, and another row of still smaller ones just under the battlements. This gateway is of the fifteenth century, and among the latest work of the Abbey. Over a doorway, leading out of the larger arch into a small courtyard, is a piece of timber

projecting from the wall, which is known by the name of "The hang-man's post." Connecting this post with the sessions house and prison, the conclusion at which we should naturally be disposed to arrive, would be that the Abbot and monks possessed the power of executing criminals tried and convicted by them of capital offences, had not Mr. W. D. Cooper assured us,<sup>16</sup> that he cannot find any authority for such a supposition. "Their power," he adds, "never at any time extended beyond holding pleas of their tenants before their own steward, and taking cognizance of all trespasses committed within a certain limit of the Abbey precinct." In speaking of this gateway, Browne Willis says that "it is a noble pile, and entirely preserved;" and in it were held all the meetings for this peculiar jurisdiction, which still has great privileges belonging to it.<sup>17</sup>

Opposite to this gateway, as you enter the Abbey grounds, is a range of low parallel walls, terminating with two beautifully ivy-mantled turrets. The space between these walls is now converted into a terrace-walk, but was originally a range of chambers occupied by the monks as sleeping apartments. These walls were strengthened by a considerable number of low buttresses, having in the spaces between them a small aperture for the admission of light to each cell. The lower portions of these buttresses now remain. The two turrets are supposed by some to have been the ornamental parts of another gateway leading to these chambers. But to me they have more the appearance of having been angular turrets, which originally finished off this wing of the building. They are evidently of the same date as the entrance-gateway.

At right angles to this, and fronting the south, is the part of the Abbey now used as a dwelling-house; and the only portion of it not in ruins. This consists of the entrance-hall, which is a lofty and spacious room, 57 feet long and 31 feet wide; having an open roof, which rises considerably above the rest of the buildings. The windows are in the Flamboyant style, not usual in Sussex, but seen to good effect in the Church of the Austin Friars, London. This roof is of

<sup>16</sup> Sussex Archaeological Collections, vol. vi., p. 60.

<sup>17</sup> Stevens' additions to Dugdale, vol. i., p. 511.

oak, and said to be an exact copy of the original, which was removed in 1812.

To the left of this hall, and communicating with it by means of a doorway, is a large room fitted up in the Gothic style as a saloon, having a double-vaulted roof, supported by a range of three round centre-pillars, the groins of which are richly gilded, and by beams supported by corbels on the walls. This room is 50 feet long and 22 feet wide. Judging from present appearances, and the position of this room with reference to the situation of the Abbey Church, these arches were, it is not unreasonable to suppose, a part of the cloisters of this church. Connected with this saloon are some of the original parts of the Abbey, now used as offices. On the north side of this range of the Abbey buildings, are nine elegant arches, now filled up, but which appear to have been a continuation of these cloisters. Among the many improvements made in this Abbey by that most liberal-minded and excellent man, Abbot Walter, during the time he so ably presided over the establishment, the re-building of the cloisters is stated to have been one. They were at first but meanly constructed, on which account he removed them, and erected others in their place; the slabs and columns of which are represented to have been of smooth and polished marble. These cloisters enclosed a square of 80 feet. As soon as the cloisters were completed, the same Abbot commenced making a lavatorium for the benefit of himself and his brethren; but this he did not live to finish.

Eastward of this part of the ancient Abbey, is its noble Refectory, which stands on elevated ground, a little detached from the portion in ruins. It is now roofless, and is of the middle of the 12th century. The dimensions of this spacious room are 150 feet long by 36 feet wide. It had twelve handsome early English windows on the eastern side of it, eight on the western, and six on the southern. The appearance and proportions of this state-room are much spoiled by a stable having been taken from it, for the accommodation of the stud of the occupant of the mansion. Under this room is a crypt,<sup>18</sup> the roof of which is supported by a double row of arches. At the west end of this crypt, and communicating with it by a doorway, is a

<sup>18</sup> In monastic houses a crypt is not unusually found under the refectory.



smaller crypt, the two together occupying nearly, if not quite, the whole area of the refectory. To what use this grand room, with its two crypts, was appropriated by the Abbot and monks, it would now be difficult to discover. That it was not their usual dining-hall is, I think, plainly shown by the appropriation of another room to this purpose, now the entrance-hall of the present house, but which was then called "the dining-hall." The refectory was probably their state dining apartment, and used only on festal days; such as the occasions of royal visits, or entertainments provided for their tenants and retainers; or the feasts given on the anniversary of the patron saint of the Abbey, when a much greater number of guests would be assembled, than could possibly be accommodated in their ordinary dining-hall. This refectory was approached by a flight of steps. Gough states, that the roof which once covered it in was made of what he calls Irish oak, beautifully carved; but in this he was mistaken, for it was constructed of the English *quercus pedunculata*, then common in Sussex, and of which the roof of Westminster Hall is formed. Gough adds, that this roof was taken down by the first Lord Montague, and removed to Cowdray; where it was probably destroyed by fire with the house.

Of the Kitchen of this house, not only does nothing now remain, but even all knowledge of its actual locality has passed away. This is extraordinary; as, judging from the size of the refectory, to which, doubtless, if it were not actually contiguous, it was somewhere very near, and from the numbers daily to be catered for in it, it could not have been a small and insignificant part of the Abbey buildings. The arched doorway in the side walls of the crypt is supposed to have been the means of communication between it and the kitchen. Some, from finding no other room adapted to the purpose, have imagined the crypt itself to have been the Abbey *culina*. Among these was Browne Willis, who, in his account of this Mitred Abbey, observes, "that though it be in a great measure demolished, yet, that some notion of its magnificence when in a perfect state, may be formed from what remains of its offices, and from the largeness of its kitchen, hall, and gatehouse." As to the kitchen, it was, he

says, so large as to contain five fire-places; and was arched over at the top. Here he evidently alludes to the crypt; not being aware that the kitchen was a separate building, and that it was taken down in 1685; as appears from an old account-book of the steward at the time, in which he gives a statement of his receipts from the sale of the stone and other materials of which this kitchen was constructed. In the years 1686, '87 and '88, these statements are of frequent occurrence; and the sale of the materials "of the old kitchen" appears, from the entries there made, to have realized a considerable sum. The stone was sold sometimes at four, and at other times, five shillings a cart-load; and the lead with which it was roofed over, at twelve shillings and sixpence the hundred-weight. On the 27th of February, 1685-6 there was received, as the memoranda state, upon account of money due for lead, £10, and on May 15th, £20. In 1686, forty cwts. more were sold to other persons, and large quantities in the two following years; showing that the destruction of this part of the building for the purpose of sale must have been of large extent. The materials seem to have been in great demand, and, consequently, the quantity disposed of very considerable; so that for the sake of the money thus attainable, the old Abbey kitchen was probably razed to the ground. Many other parts of the conventual buildings suffered demolition while they were in the possession of the Montagues.<sup>19</sup>

The situation and form of the splendid CHURCH of this Abbey was left very much to conjecture until its foundations were completely explored by excavations carried on for that purpose, at a very considerable expense, by Sir Godfrey Vassal Webster, in or about the year 1817. Its position and size were then clearly ascertained. All that now remains of this church are the walls and piers of a crypt at the east end of it, in which were three chapels; the piscina and niches of each of which are still well preserved. The walls of the high altar, which, as I have before stated, stood on the spot where the ill-fated Harold fell, are still open. Its shape

<sup>19</sup> Thorpe's Battle Abbey Charters, &c., p. 163.

is oval,<sup>20</sup> and the steps by which it was approached from the church remain. The foundations of the Chapter house, which stood to the south of the church, and to the east of the cloisters, are all that are now to be traced of this important part of the Abbey buildings. As this church was not consecrated until nearly thirty years after the conquest of this country by the founder of the Abbey, it is probable that it occupied the site of the temporary church; at all events, of an older, and far less costly structure. In the tower of this church was a good peal of bells; which, according to the Abbey Chronicle, were cast in early Norman times.

Among the embellishments around the portrait of William the Conqueror, by Vertue, given in Rapin's History of England, and which are doubtless intended to represent some of the principal events and consequences of his invasion of this country, he is represented beneath his bust sitting in a chair, with Britannia humbled before him. On the right, within a frame-work of stone, his ships are represented as anchored off the coast of Hastings; and on the left, in a corresponding frame-work, are his troops disembarked; obscuring a part of which is a tablet, on which is represented the cruciform ground plan of a building headed "BATTLE ABBY," but which is evidently intended to represent that of the church only; issuing from behind which is a scroll partly unrolled, which probably is intended as an allusion to the foundation charter of the Abbey, or perhaps its far-famed roll. Beneath this is an open folio volume, at the top of the right hand page of which is "DOMESDAY BOOK," resting on another volume of the same size, which is closed, but which may, without much stretch of the imagination, be supposed to contain the Battle Abbey Charters.

The residents within the Leuga, and in many other parts of the parish without its limits, were at first in the habit of attending divine services in this church, which were performed by a chaplain and his clerk appointed by the Abbots; who, for their remuneration, were entitled to their maintenance in the Abbey with the monks. All the ministerial duties of this church were subject to the Abbot's control.

How the church was first healed in does not appear; but

<sup>20</sup> For a view of the remains of this altar, see Suss. Arch. Coll., vol. vi., p. 33.

# Sussex Archæological Society.

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## NOTICE TO MEMBERS.

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In making their payments to the Society's Clerk, Members are respectfully requested to send *Post-office Orders*, and not Stamps, as the latter are found to accumulate in Mr. RUDWICK's hands to a very inconvenient degree.

Abbot Ralph, who was a considerable benefactor to the Abbey, and during whose governance it rose to great popularity and success, is stated to have put, in the year 1120, a leaden roof upon it, and otherwise to have greatly embellished it. He also enlarged the accommodation of the house over which he presided, by the addition of many new buildings, and completed its unfinished boundary walls. His successor, Abbot Warner, was also a great benefactor to the church. He first completed the leaden roof, which Abbot Ralph had begun, but left unfinished at his death; after which he provided many costly vessels of gold and silver, as well as vestments, and such other necessaries for its altar-services, as were suited to the dignity and high position of the house.

The roll of receipts and disbursements of Dominus Richard, Sacristan of the Abbey, for the year 1423, shews, that extensive repairs and decorations were done to the Abbey Church in that year.

So strictly was the anniversary of Saint Martin required to be kept, not only at Battel, but in all the parishes, the churches of which were in the patronage of the Abbot and convent, that William Bottoner, of Ixning, in Suffolk, was compelled to do penance in the chapel of that parish, for daring to plough on that day. The year in which this happened is not stated. And whenever a new incumbent was appointed to Newmarket, the chaplain of this chapel was obliged to meet him at the entrance of the town, with the cross and banners of his chapel, and conduct him in procession into it.

One of the many privileges possessed by the Abbey Church was that of Sanctuary. Any person guilty of an offence, however heinous it might be, and taking refuge within it, was protected from all harm, and escaped entirely free of punishment.

The ALMONDRY, or place from whence the monks distributed their daily alms, is frequently alluded to in the Battel Abbey deeds; and had its own separate endowment. Among its benefactors were William de Bec, who, for the salvation of his soul, gave to this Almondry rents in Win-

chelsea, and lands in Snelham. Eustace Cook also gave to it a croft in Battel, called Allarde's croft. Robert Foster gave to it the third part of the Lordship of Mexfeld in Guestling, with the lands which Levota, widow of Robert de Haye, held, and the reversion of which he had sold; and John de Popyngton six acres and seven virgates of brookland, and two acres of land near to the brook, extending northwards to the place called, "the Old Mill." Olyva de Wickham, with the consent of her son, gave to the same Almondry meadow-land in Trandelie; and Agnes, the wife of Walter Boner, the meadows and other lands of Sandele in Wychem. One of the monks usually held the office of Abbey Almoner.

Although the Abbey was, as I have already said, originally designed to accommodate one hundred and forty monks, there appears never to have been more than sixty resident in it at any one time; generally the number was even fewer than this. Great as its revenues were, they were, owing to the unexpected death of the founder abroad, never adequate to the support of the complement of monks originally designed by him.

In 1445, Sir Thomas Hoo, lord of the manor of Hoo and Hastings, founded a chantry in this Abbey, to which he attached two monks, for the purpose of "syngynge in perpetuite at Sainte Benynguy's Altar in the saide Abbey for hymselfe and his awncestors, and for such other persons as his executors might ordeyne." For their support, he left to his feoffees and executors, lands of the value of twenty marks per annum, which he directed them to give in mortmain to the Abbot and convent of Battel, and their successors, or to pay to them the same sum in money, whichever might be most agreeable to them.<sup>21</sup> And by a deed dated 1480, his half-brother, Thomas Hoo, Esq., gave to the same Abbot and convent, rents, lands, and tenements, in the manor of Roughey, and in the parishes of Horsham and Ruspar, and other properties in and about Horsham, which he had purchased of John, Duke of Norfolk; and lands in the parish of Farleigh, for the maintenance of two

<sup>21</sup> MS. Col., Armor, 1—7, fol. 61.

monks within the Abbey, whose duty it was to be to celebrate at the obsequies, and at all future times to pray in the Abbey Church for the soul of Sir Thomas Hoo, Knight, late Lord of Hoo and Hastings, deceased; for the good state and health of the souls of the donor, and of Alicia, his wife; and of the souls of Walter Urry, Esq., his wife's father, to whom the manor of Ruspar previously belonged, and of Willme (Wilhelmina) her mother, then deceased; and also of all parents, friends, benefactors, and kin of the same Thomas Hoo, and Alicia his wife.<sup>22</sup>

Battel Abbey was one of the British Mitred Abbeys, of which there were twenty-six only in the whole kingdom. From the time of the first regular Parliament<sup>23</sup> until its dissolution, its Abbots were invariably summoned to the upper house as spiritual peers. Of these twenty-six Abbeys that of Battel ranked the third, the Abbeys of St. Alban and Edmondsbury taking precedence of it. The Abbot's insignia, like those of a bishop, were a mitre and crozier; but with this difference, that the Abbot's crozier was always carried in his right hand, while the crozier of a bishop was borne in his left.

The chaplain of the CHAPEL of St. Mary's, Battel, is often alluded to in the Abbey charters. This chapel is stated to have been built during the time that Ralph presided over the house as Abbot, namely, from 1107 to 1124, for the accommodation of the inhabitants of the town of Battel, whose attendance, as their numbers increased, at the Abbey Church, was a source of some inconvenience to the monks. So intimate was the connexion of this chapel with the Abbey, that it was looked upon as a part of it; and its altar was treated as an abbey-altar. Although at first the chaplain was not a monk, he was considered a member of the establishment; and so well acquainted had he the opportunity of becoming with the affairs of the convent, that the incumbency was never bestowed on any one, that would not

<sup>22</sup> For an account of the Hoo family, by W. D. Cooper, Esq., see Sussex Archæological Collections, vol. viii., p. 104.

<sup>23</sup> Lower's Battel Abbey Chronicle, p. 203.

engage to reside upon it, and to take the duty arising out of it himself. Like the Abbey Church, it was exempt from episcopal jurisdiction and control. This chapel stood just without the Abbey walls, and at a later period was served by a priest of the house, under the direction of the Abbot and monks. After a time it probably became the parish church. A few years after the erection of this chapel, its revenues, much to the annoyance of the inhabitants of the town, were seized upon by the Abbot and monks, and by them appropriated towards the expense of finding lights for the Abbey Church; but principally in supplying wax tapers to be kept continually burning before the High Altar and the Host, and the relics of Saints there deposited; this altar having previously been lighted by lamps supplied with impure and fœtid oil. Upon complaint made to him, this misappropriation of the chapel endowment Abbot Odo put a stop to. Ample funds being shortly after supplied from other sources to meet this item of expenditure, there was no longer any need for the monks to have recourse to such a system of spoliation to obtain them; for, towards supplying tapers to be kept continually burning before the Altar of St. Mary, we find Robert Cementarius giving, about the time, land in the town of Battel described as extending from the Plessett to the street of the mill leading towards Robertsbridge; Eustace Cook, land in Battel; Angelus de Dudilande, rent arising from land in Breggeselle, near to the great street leading to Hecklonde; Thomas, the son of Thomas de Haremere, rents issuing out of land contiguous to the land lately demised to Robert de Yewherste by Helewisa, daughter of Rengerus; Luke, the son of Richard Savage, an annual rent due from a tenement occupied by Alexander de Swineham; Warner de Someri, rents in Battel; and Thomas de Whatlyngton, rents payable by William, son of Joshua de Haremere, out of lands in Whatlyngton, held by Alexander, the son of Hugh de Forde.

Among the disbursements of John Hamond, the last Abbot, during the time he held the office of sacristan of the Abbey for the year ending Michs. 1512, are payments for



two silver candlesticks for the tapers directed to be kept continually burning; and for two glass lamps for oil, to hang perpetually before the High Altar.

Among the Records at the public Record Office, is a full and well kept Register of the Abbey and its possessions.<sup>24</sup>

The office of SACRISTAN, or sexton, of the Abbey Church was one of great trust and importance. To him belonged the charge of the church; and the vessels and furniture of the convent generally were under his care. The duties, however, of the sacristan, or sacrist, differed in different monasteries, according to the order the monks professed. In some houses he had to lock up every night the different altars of the church, and to place the keys in the almy; and to unlock them again in the morning between the hours of seven and eight, that they might be ready for the monks. At Battel the office was held either by a priest or deacon, and was very considerably endowed. In Sir Thomas Phillips's collection of Battel Abbey Charters, Casley's copy of those referring to the endowment of this office occupies more than half of a thick folio volume.

It appears also to have been a part of the duties of the sacristan to take charge of the charters, &c., of the Abbey, and to keep a register of them. For Thorpe, in speaking of the register of all the grants, feofments, &c., relating to lands and tenements situated in the different manors belonging to this house, &c., says, that it is "in the hands of John Waller, sacristan of the said monastery;" and that it "contains transcripts of the original grants from the time of Odo, the Abbot, to the year 1511, the additions being in the autograph of Waller's successors in

<sup>24</sup> Exch: Court of Augm: Misc: Books, Nos. 56 and 57, charters, royal grants, and donations, many of them with their seals in fine preservation, as well as a copy of the Monastic Chartulary, and the official, manorial, court baron, court leet, and rent rolls, registers, and other documents constituting the muniments of Battel Abbey, are now in the possession of Sir Thomas Phillips, Bart., of Middle-hill, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire; having been purchased by him of Thorpe, the

bookseller, in Bedford Street, Covent Garden, into whose hands they fell in or about the year 1834, by purchase, of the then possessor of the Battel Abbey estate. In the Descriptive Catalogue of them, which Thorpe published in 1835 (8vo., pp. 221), he describes them as "the whole bound in ninety-seven volumes, folio, uniform in Russia." The price he asked for them was Twelve Hundred Pounds.

the office of sacristan." This register is on parchment, of a folio size, and consists of 270 closely written pages. Its date is 1409.

The sacristan, too, of this Abbey seems to have acted occasionally as steward, or perhaps the steward's deputy; for in the same collection of deeds are several rolls of accounts of John Colwell, sacristan, dated March, 1460. These accounts shew that the Abbot and monks were in the receipt, at that time, of rents from lands in Middleborough, Mountjoye, Sandlake, Briggeselle, and Helmyngfold; and from tenements in Romsey, Agmersherste, Becke, and Popynoth in Seddlescombe, Whatlyngton, Swyneham, Glasye, Hawkherste, and Cranebroke, Willyngdon, Clopham, and Charleton; from lands called Redewishe; from Pithyngdon in Kent; from Anglyngle; and from a messuage called Stokers in Middleburgh. He also accounts for pensions received from the rectories of Hawkherste, Leinsfeld, and Warbilton; for the tithes of Boreselle in Tyseherste, and of Alsyston; for the rent of a meadow and other lands in Buckholt; of lands in Bekle and Pevensey; of the Moorhouse, the grange of the Abbey, in Hawkherste; for tithes in Enam, Oldcourt, Hoop in Saleherste; of Glasié in Bekle; of Gestelinge, Westfelde, Battel, Monfelde, Whatlyngton, and Seddlescombe, and for the profits of the fair at Hawkherste. The incumbency of Hawkherste was in the patronage of the Abbot and monks. The church was founded by them in the reign of Edward III., and they appointed the incumbent as vacancies occurred, until the general dissolution, when it was granted to Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, and shortly before the death of Henry VIII. regranted, strange to say, without this Duke's consent, or even knowledge, to the dean and chapter of Christ's Church, Oxford, in whose patronage the perpetual curacy still continues. Other livings in the Abbey patronage were those of Alcyston, Bromham, Brychwalton, Burcholte, Cycester, Eylesham, Ikelsham, Ixning, Kyngeswode, Ledes, Mildenhall, Norton, Sandford, Trillawe, and Westfelde. It is worthy of notice that with Westfelde Church, William Fitz-Wibert, the donor, gave all the customs appertaining to it. Among these was that singular one,

Ordeal by Water.<sup>25</sup> Ralph, Bishop of Chichester, (1091 to 1123), in his deed of confirmation of this gift, adds, "et Judicium Aque, quod quadam jure ad illam ecclesiam pertinet, concedo. Volo autem, et firmiter precipio, ut, de predicto Judicio Aque, . . . nullus se intromittat, nisi Abbas de Bello, et Monachi ejus."

Among the many extensive and valuable Manors possessed by this Convent were those of Wye, in Kent, and Appledram, in Western Sussex. According to Domesday, the Manor of Wye was rated at seven solins<sup>26</sup> or hydes. Its arable lands were computed to be fifty-two plough lands; its meadow thirty-three acres; and its wood to yield pannage for three hundred hogs. The profits of this Manor, in Norman times, were estimated at £125 10s. 0d. Appertaining to it were twenty hundreds and a-half.<sup>27</sup> This Manor the Abbot and monks held as freely as the King himself had previously done. The original parish church is supposed to have been founded by them. Its site is not now certainly known; but the tradition of the neighbourhood is, that it stood just at the entrance of the town, on the river side, upon a little hill, called Bolteshill; and that it was taken down and rebuilt in its present situation by Cardinal, afterwards Archbishop Kempe, a native of Wye, on land which he purchased of the Abbot and monks of Battel. To it he attached a college for secular priests, whom he directed to be called prebendaries, of which the rector of the parish was always one. At the general dissolution of monasteries, and monastic institutions the revenue of this

<sup>25</sup> Water ordeal, as a test of innocence or guilt, was practiced by means both of hot and cold water. In the former of these two ordeals the accused, standing before a vessel of boiling water, was made to plunge his bare arm into it; and he was pronounced innocent or guilty according as the arm, when withdrawn, was found to be scalded or not. In the latter, the accused was thrown into some deep part of a pond or river, where, if he struggled in the least to keep himself floating on the surface of the water, he was accounted guilty; but if he swam without effort or motion on his part, he was honourably acquitted. Swimming people suspected of witchcraft is a remnant of this barbarous

custom. Water ordeal was usually applied to the commonalty: the nobility were tested by the fiery ordeal. Both kinds are of Saxon origin; and are founded on the notion that God is always ready miraculously to interpose, to save the innocent and punish the guilty. A full account of these and other ancient ordeals, will be found in Hollingshed's Chronicle.

<sup>26</sup> Sulinga, or Swolinga terræ—a soling or hyde of land—was called in Saxon Sulung; from Sul, a plough. In the West of England a plough is still called a Sul.

<sup>27</sup> Lambarde considered the Royal Manor of Wye to comprise a fifth part of the County of Kent.

college was valued at £93 2s. The benefice was originally a rectory, the profits of which the Abbot and monks at first applied to their own use—but in the course of time a vicarage was ordained and endowed, at what particular date I have been unable to discover, but there is evidence of its having taken place previous to the year 1384, for it was then taxed at the yearly value of £6 10s. The town is supposed to have stood in early times in the valley between the Wyedown and Crundale, called Pett-street, where Dr. Harris states several deep wells existed in his day.

The manor of Appledram also belonged to the Abbey. Of the way in which it became a part of its possessions two equally plausible accounts are given. One states that it was by donation of the founder, and that, being resumed by Henry I., he subsequently restored it to the Abbot and monks in exchange for the Abbey of Reading in Berkshire, which was found to be too distant from Battel to be of much advantage to them; while the other states that this King, having determined to build an Abbey at Reading, selected as most convenient for its site, land belonging to the church, which had been given to the Abbot and monks of Battel by their founder. In exchange, then, for this the King gave to them the manor of Funtingdon, near Chichester, which afterwards, at their request, he exchanged for the manor of Appledram.

The manor house, which is an ancient stone structure, was probably built by the monks. This manor was for many years leased to a family named Wakehurst. A record in the Tower of London states, that “Ricardus Wakehurst, tenet unum messuagium et centum acras terræ in Appuldram de Abbate et Conventu de Bello.” From Blunt’s Tenures we learn, that by the custom of this manor the tenants were bound to harrow, with one man and one horse, the lord’s land for one day, as long as any part of it was left unharrowed, both in winter, and also during the Lent seed time; and that every man so employed was entitled to receive for each day a meal consisting of bread, pottage, meat, and a pennyworth of drink; and for the refreshment of each horse so employed and provided by him, as much corn as could be taken up by his two

hands put together, and commonly called a "double-handful." He was also further bound to find a plough for the Abbey plough-lands two days, if he possessed a whole plough; and if not, as much as he could do from morning till noon; the man holding the plough, and the man driving the plough-horses being entitled to a substantial meal after each day's ploughing was completed. These were called "*dies precariæ*," which sometimes consisted of a certain number of days-work, which the tenants of some manors were bound by their tenure to render to the lord in harvest time. The manor of Appledram was afterwards held by John Aylmer, subject to a like service. "*Johannes Aylmer tenet hydam terræ in Appuldram; et debet inter alia servitia venire quolibet anno ad duas precarias cum carrucâ suâ, et tunc arare a mane ad meridiem.*" "*Precariæ*," Spelman says, "*fiunt tam equis, curru, et carrucâ, quam manopere, juxta Domini consuetudinem; et tam a libero aliquando tenente quam nativo.*" The Nonæ roll of the parish of Appledram states, that the ninth part of the sheaves of the land of the Abbot of Battel under plough cultivation was valued the year the account was taken (1341) at forty shillings.

Other manors possessed by the Abbot and monks, according to the same Norman survey, were Alcyston manor, which they held of the king, and which was assessed at forty-three hydes and a half, the arable land being computed to be twenty-eight plough lands. This manor paid geld for forty-four hydes in the hundred of Totenore. At the time Henry I. confirmed the Conqueror's gift of this manor to the Abbey, he made it "quit from shires and hundreds, and all other customs of earthly servitude," as it had been in his father's and grandfather's time; himself adding exemption from contribution towards the works of London Bridge and Pevensey Castle. Here the Abbots had a manse, now converted into a farm-house. In Totnore hundred the Abbot and monks held of the king four hydes; in the rape of Hastings they had six and a half hydes, including Bocheham, which they held in demesne; in Bece, Wasingate, Wilmente, Ninefelde, Penherste, Polesham, Cedesfelde, Bolintum, Crowherste, and Holington, all then in the same hundred, they held portions of land, amounting upon the whole to three hydes, and twenty-nine

rood lands. Of these, two and a half hydes were held in demesne, and exempt from land-tax. They had also the manor of Liminesfelde, or Limpsfelde, in Surrey, which was once the property of Harold, and assessed with its dependences, at twenty-five hydes, including its liberties and royal customs; its value, at the time of its transfer to the Abbey, was £24. In Berkshire they had the manor of Bristoldestone, also formerly a part of the possessions of Harold, and rated in his time at ten hydes. In Wallingford they had three hagæ or shops; and five hydes of land in Craumaries, which also had belonged to Harold; one hyde at Atahow; and one at Hersa in Essex. To these Domesday adds the three following churches, with the quantity of land attached to each; viz., the church of Reading in Berkshire, with eight hydes; the church of Colintune in Devonshire, with one hyde; and the church of St. Olave in Exeter, with seven hydes.

The Abbot and monks also possessed seven Burgesses in the town of Lewes.

In 1310, John de Whatlington, Abbot of Battel, gave toward the expenses of the war in Scotland one hundred marcs, which he directed to be expended in the purchase of victuals, and ten marcs in aid of carriage.<sup>28</sup>

In 1158, Abbot Walter de Lucy attached a Hospital to this Abbey, in which pilgrims were received and entertained, on which account it is sometimes described as "the House of the Pilgrims," and the poor and needy were relieved in sickness. Upon such as were afflicted with leprosy in it he himself often attended, nursing them with a watchful and unwearied care; and administering to their wants, both spiritual and temporal. This Hospital appears not to have formed a part of the Abbey buildings, but to have stood somewhere in that part of the town which was adjacent to the Abbey gateway; possibly just without the walls of the Abbey grounds. In one of the Abbey deeds, land called Capernore in Battel, is described as "situate in the street leading from the Hospital in Battel towards Telleham on the south; the lands of Thomas Staple towards the north; and of the Almerly of Battel towards the east." And two acres of the lands of the Abbey, called Herste, are stated to lie on the other side of the road, by the

<sup>28</sup> Sussex Archæological Collections, vol, iv., p. 115.

orchard adjacent to the Hospital, and near to these were two acres of land, where the vestments of the monks were washed.

The Abbot and monks also possessed an Infirmary in Battel. Thirty-seven acres of land belonging to the Abbey are described as lying between the Infirmary and Capernore; and as extending from Bodehurst and Hechilande as far as the land of Telleham; and thirty-one acres in Sandlacke, called Dune, are represented as reaching as far as the Infirmary.

Among the properties demised by the Abbot and monks was the Dairy of the Abbey, from which we are enabled to form some notion of what it consisted at the commencement of the sixteenth century. It is described as situated at East Kingsnoth; and included in the demise were fourteen cows and one bull, which are stated to appertain to the same Dairy, with the houses and lands called Barnes-croft, the Cowlese, Pyxside, Castylmerle, Lawdeans, Baldwyns-brokys, the Fleyden, and sixteen acres of meadow in Stakinmede, and pasturage in Fryth-wode, &c. These were demised to Thomas Assheherste and Simon Tewsnth for a term of eight years, commencing Sept. 20th, 1502.

Sir John Pelham, Knight, Lord of the Rape of Hastings, gave, in 1427, to Thomas Ludlow, Abbot, and the Convent of Battel, for the salvation of his own soul and the souls of Sir John Pelham, Knight, his father, and of all his ancestors, all his lands, tenements, and rents, within the Rape of Hastings. And that powerful West-Sussex Baron, William de Braose, was also a benefactor to the Abbey. Besides three messuages in the Borough of Bramber, where his castle was situated, and three others, with one hyde of land in Shoreham, to be held by the Monks freely and without molestation, he also gave to them 400 bushels of salt and ten casks of wine<sup>29</sup> annually, which he received from the Abbey of Fescamp, in Normandy, as a consideration for land which that Abbey held of him at Warminghurst, near Storrington; and Ralph, another Knight, 400 bushels more; and Osborn, who is described as residing near the Abbey, gave to the same monks, for the salvation of his own soul and of the souls of

<sup>29</sup> "Decem modii vini."

his ancestors, two salt-pits, and land near to the sea at Rye for another, if they were disposed to make it. This Osborn had previously given to the Abbey thirty acres of well-irrigated meadow land, in his manor of Bodiham, free of all challenge, exaction, and charge; being induced to do so, the deed states, by the great dryness of the soil around the Abbey. This land was watered by the Rother. Anselm de Fraevilla, from a similar pious motive, gave to the same Abbey land, the position of which is not stated, for the purpose of enabling them to add to their number of salt-pits; and Reginald de Eshburnham, in pure and perpetual alms, lands in Hoo-marsh, with two salt-works. The Abbot and monks had other salt-pits on the Sussex coast, at which, in the course of the year, a considerable quantity of salt was manufactured.

The Abbot's Townhouse, or, as it was usually called, Inn, was in St. Olave's-street, opposite to the Church of St. Olave's, Southwark. The district in Southwark called Battlebridge, formerly "Battailbrigg,"<sup>30</sup> is supposed to have derived its designation from this circumstance: Stowe, speaking, in his "Survey of London," of this Inn, or London residence of the Abbot (which in his time was a common hostelry for travellers, and bore the sign of "The Walnut Tree,"), says that it was situated "between the Bridge-house and Battlebridge, on the banks of the River Thames." "The walks and gardens," he continues, "appertaining to it, were on the opposite side of the way. The gate of the said house was formerly called the Maze, but now the Fleur-de-lys. Battlebridge is so called on account of its standing on the ground, and over a watercourse flowing out of the Thames, belonging to that Abbey." This bridge was built and repaired by the Abbots of Battel: it being close to the Abbot's lodgings.<sup>31</sup>

Among the Abbey possessions, held in and about London, was a mill, in Southwark. "Abbas de Bello habet unum

<sup>30</sup> See *Suss. Arch. Coll.*, vol. i., p. 163.

<sup>31</sup> An account of the Abbot's residence in Southwark, is given by Mr. C. E. Gwilt, in the *Archæologia*, vol. xxv., p. 604. The Norman stone building, described by Mr.

Gage Rokewood in the same work, vol. xxiii., p. 299, was not the Inn of the Prior of Lewes, but probably a mansion house of the Earls of Warren and Surrey.



molendinum in Suthwerk, quod taxatur ad £3 6s. 8d." In 1363, John Vinour, of Southwark, gave to the Abbot and monks of Battel a chamber, situated in the Abbot's garden, and called "Le Stywarde's Chamber." It is described as annexed to that of the same Abbot and Convent. The Abbot had also an Inn at Winchester.

It is somewhat singular that, large as the annual revenues of this House were, its disbursements, so far as they are discoverable by us from various printed rolls of accounts, invariably exceeded their receipts. In these yearly statements of receipts and expenditure, both sides are not always given. Sometimes the sum total of receipts is given without that of the expenditure; at other times the sum total of expenditure is stated without that of the receipts. For instance, the earliest of these rolls that I have met with gives £625 9s. 1½d. as the total amount of the disbursements for the maintenance of the household for the year: what year is not mentioned; but it was probably towards the close of the thirteenth century. The receipts for the same year are not stated. It concludes, however, with the remark, that this expenditure exceeded that of the preceding year by £11 18s. 1d. In 1370, the expenditure is called £404 4s. 10d.; and in 1372, £389 16s. 5d.; but no sum for receipts is, in either case, given. In 1383, the receipts amounted to the extraordinary sum of £1244 3s. 6d.; but no sum is given for the amount of expenditure. In the following schedule, however, the sum total both of receipts and disbursements are clearly shown at different periods for about a quarter of a century:

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
1387—Received.....	235	7	6	Expended.....	265	14	6
1389       "	310	4	3	"	331	19	5
1390       "	302	13	2	"	305	12	9
1393       "	272	18	7	"	277	9	11
1402       "	271	8	5	"	301	5	3
1410       "	283	5	5	"	288	11	0

The management of everything connected with the supply of meat and drink for the Convent was vested in the Cellarer. He had the sole charge of the cellar, the kitchen, and the refectory. Looking, then, to his accounts, we find, in the year

1385, besides moneys expended in "sackcloth, shoules, and mattokkes," the following items of provision supplied: fish, bought in London, eels, stockfish, and salmon, both red and white; and, not unmindful of the declaration of the founder in adhering to the site which he himself had selected for the Abbey, a considerable quantity of wine—two pipes having been bought that year at Canterbury, and one in London. Besides the fish mentioned above, the Abbot and monks had a liberal supply of fresh water fish from their own stew-ponds, which are frequently alluded to. They had also extensive vineyards in Battel; and, in 1365, the receipt of moneys from "the Wyneyarde of the Rectory of Hawkerste," occurs as an item.<sup>32</sup>

In the deeds of this Abbey, reference is made to three parks belonging to it, which were severally called "the greater," "the middle," and "the lesser" parks. The Abbot's park, too, called "the Pleshet,"<sup>33</sup> is several times alluded to in the same Abbey deeds; but this might have been another name only for one of the three I have just mentioned. A portion of "the greater park," if not the whole of it, was possibly so called, as some of the houses in Battel are described as being near to the Plesset. One in Middleburgh is said to extend from the King's highway to the park of the Lord Abbot of Battel, called the Pleshet; and I have before alluded to land in Battel given to the Abbot and Convent, which is said to extend from the Plesset to the street of the mill, which led to Robertsbridge. These all imply the Plesset to have been near to the Town and Abbey.

"The greater" park, which, probably, was that in which the Abbey stood, was of very considerable extent, and "the middle" and "lesser" parks were adjoining enclosures, which had been fenced off from "the greater" for the convenience of pasturage. The three together might have been co-

<sup>32</sup> Vineyards were common in this country at this early period. Almost every convent appears to have possessed one or more. The Bishop of Rochester's vineyard, at Rochester, was very extensive, and produced, Somner states, great quantities of grapes, of which was made excellent wines: and the Bene-

dictine Monks, of the Priory of St. Andrew, in the same city, had also within their enclosure a large plantation of vines, which is called to this day "The Vinesfield."

<sup>33</sup> From the Norman-French *Plesseiz*, a park. For the etymon of this word, see "Plessetts," in Lower's *Patronymica*.

extensive with the Leuga. Few of the noble trees, which once graced and dignified these parks, now remain; the greater part having been cut and carried away some years ago.

These parks appear to have been disparked about the middle of the seventeenth century; as land amounting to nearly three hundred acres, situated in the parishes of Battel, Cattesfeld, and Penherst, were leased by Francis Viscount Montague, in the year 1651, to John Atkins, of Brightling, yeoman, and are described in the lease, as "part only of the 'great park' of Battel Abbey, lately disparked."

Several Royal visits were made to this Abbey. Rufus' visit to it, on the day of its dedication in 1095, I have already alluded to. King John visited it at several different times. He was here in 1200, when he gave to the Church a small piece of our Lord's Sepulchre, which his brother Richard had brought, with other relics, from the Holy Land. In 1206 he was again at Battel, when he offered, upon the same altar, "a fair vestment, or casula." He paid a third visit to the Abbey in 1212; and a fourth on 26th April, 1213, on his way from Lewes to Rye.<sup>34</sup> Of the visit of Edward II., in August, 1324, we have notices, by Mr. Blaauw, in the sixth Vol. of our Collections, p. 44. Henry III. was at Battel Abbey, both before and after the Battle of Lewes. On his way to Lewes with his army, he levied large contributions on the Abbot and Convent. So merciless was his spoliation of their goods upon that memorable occasion, that a contemporary poet thus describes it:

"Namque Monasterium quod Bellum vocatur,  
Turba sævientium, quæ nunc conturbatur,  
Immisericorditer bonis spoliavit."<sup>35</sup>

The Abbot and monks' independence of the Bishops of Chichester, and their exemption from all ecclesiastical jurisdiction, granted to them by an early deed of the founder, led, as it might be expected to do, to serious disputes be-

<sup>34</sup> Sussex Archæological Collections, vol. ii., pp. 134, et seq.: Lower's Battel Abbey Chronicle, p. 199.

<sup>35</sup> Wright's Political Songs, published by the Camden Society, from Harl. MS., 978.

tween these Prelates and some of the earlier Abbots, which could only be settled by the interposition of the Crown. A narrative of one of these dissensions, which occurred in the year 1148, between Hilary, Bishop of Chichester, and Abbot Walter de Lucy, and which was carried on for some time with considerable rancour on both sides, and at last decided in favour of the Abbot by a reference to King Stephen, occupies many pages of the Abbey Chronicle. In 1157 they were again renewed, when a Synod was held at Chichester, and the Crown again appealed to; the result of which was another decision in favour of the Abbey, and a cessation for a time,<sup>36</sup> of all further attempts on the part of the Bishops of the Diocese to obtain jurisdiction over it. So jealous, indeed, was the founder of any approach towards Episcopal interference with the affairs of the House, that the Abbots were even restricted by him from exercising hospitality of any kind, either towards the Primate or the Diocesan; nor could the Diocesan hold ordinations in the Abbey Church, or in any of the Churches within the Abbey manors, without first obtaining the Abbot's permission to do so. All their Churches were to be as free from Ecclesiastical jurisdiction as any of the Royal Chapels belonging to the founder.<sup>37</sup>

The Incumbent of Battel is usually styled the DEAN; why, it would now be rather difficult to say, the Church never having been considered as Collegiate; nor are we very accurately informed at what period the title commenced. This Dean claims and exercises the same exemptions as those accorded to the Abbey Church. Horsfield states<sup>38</sup> that he is privileged to hold his own visitations of the Clergy within the Deanery. He had also a Court for the probate of wills, &c., and for the transaction of other Ecclesiastical business occurring within the same district. These rights were exercised by the Abbot himself until the dissolution; and then passed to the Dean: for the earliest register of wills preserved in the Battel Registry is, Mr. W. D. Cooper tells us,<sup>39</sup> of the date 1531; but before the establishment of the general Court

<sup>36</sup> Wilkin's Concilia., Tom., ii., p. 52.

<sup>37</sup> Lansdowne MS., No. 82, fol. 49.

<sup>38</sup> History of Sussex, vol. i., p. 530.

<sup>39</sup> Sussex Archæological Collections, vol. vi., p. 63.

at London, the probate and administration business had fallen off, and suits had ceased.

With regard to the origin of the title, "Dean of Battel," it appears to have been conventual. Hughes,<sup>40</sup> in speaking of the four kinds of Deans to be met with in our Ecclesiastical Establishment, refers to the Dean of Battel, in Sussex, as one of them—a Dean, that is, without a Chapter; which office, he says, was established by William the First, commonly called the Conqueror. This office, he adds, is presentative, and the Dean has a cure of souls, and a spiritual jurisdiction within the liberty of the district to which he is appointed, which, in the instance before us, is the Liberty of Battel.

The office of Dean, then, is as old as the foundation of the Abbey itself. Kennett,<sup>41</sup> in treating of the origin of the institution and of the duties of these dignitaries, considers that they bear so strong a resemblance and relation to the methods and forms of civil government which obtained in the early ages of the history of this country, that the one must have given rise to the other. For, as in this Kingdom, he argues, for the better preservation of the peace, and more easy administration of justice, every hundred consisted of ten districts called Tithings; every Tithing of ten friborghs, or free pledges; and every free or frank-pledge of ten families; and in every such Tithing there was a Justice or Civil Dean appointed for the subordinate administration of justice; so the like office of Dean began very early in the greater Monasteries, especially in those of the Benedictine Order. The inmates of these Convents were divided into deaneries, or sets of ten, of whom one was chosen Dean, whose duty it was to preside over and keep peace among the other nine. His office of Dean was no sinecure: for it was, Kennett tells us, his duty to keep an account of all the manual operations of those under his charge; and to suffer none to leave their station, or to omit their particular duty without his express leave. He was also obliged to visit their cells, or dormitories, every night; to attend them at their meals, to see that order was kept and decorum observed at the table; and to guide their consciences, direct their studies, and regulate their conversations. For the purpose of taking cogni-

<sup>40</sup> Chapter 11.

<sup>41</sup> Parochial Antiquities, pp. 603-4.

zance of their irregular practices, frequent Conventual Chapters were held, and lesser penances imposed; but not until the proceedings of the Chapters had been submitted to, and the penances decreed sanctioned, by the Abbot or Prior, as the case might be, to whom the Deans were amenable for the due discharge of the duties of their office. In the larger Monasteries, where the number of monks amounted to several deaneries, and there must necessarily have been many Deans, the senior Dean had a special pre-eminence amongst and supervision over the rest.

The origin, then, of the title of Dean of Battel is thus satisfactorily accounted for; and as he was—as we shall presently see—sworn to pay over to the Monastery all emoluments from “causes or matters” before him, it is clear that he was the person who presided in the Local Spiritual Court; and as he was the Incumbent of the Parish Church, it is certain that as such he continued to exercise the rights of the Deanery when the Abbey itself had been dissolved. That the Chaplain of the Chapel of St. Mary, which is supposed to have been the precursor of the Parish Church, was called Dean as early as the year 1250, is clearly shown by a deed of that date among the Battel Abbey Charters, and which is headed “*Professio Decani de Bello.*” The deed records the fact of Ricardus, “*Decanus Capellæ Sanctæ Mariæ de Bello,*” having taken the oath doubtless customarily imposed upon such Deans upon their appointment to the incumbency of this Chapel, that they will observe canonical obedience and fealty to the Abbot and Convent; that they will submit to all their rules and regulations; and diligently and faithfully abide by the composition made between the Church of Chichester and the Chapel of St. Mary “*in omnibus articulis.*” And he further engages to pay over to the same Abbot and Convent fully and entirely all the emoluments arising from any causes or matters that may come before him by virtue of his office, and which may be their due. This oath, the deed states, was administered to him in the Abbey Chapter-House, before Abbot Walter and the Convent, in Chapter assembled, and in the presence of Walter de Dicton, Clerk. From this memorandum, then, we are led to infer that the Chaplaincy of the Chapel of St.

Mary de Bello was not an independent office, but was probably filled at the date of the transaction here recorded by a Chaplain of the Abbey. But whether he became Dean by virtue of this appointment, or whether he held the office of one of the Deans of the Abbey previously, and so carried the title with him to the Chapel, is not very clearly shown, as he is called "Dean of the Chapel of St. Mary." I incline to the opinion that he became Dean by virtue of his Chaplaincy. But though the Incumbent of Battel is usually called Dean, he is sometimes designated Rector, as is the case in a deed, dated 1304, in which a messuage in Battel is described as situated between King Street and the flower-garden of the Rector of the Church.

The Dean, upon his appointment, received institution and induction from the Abbot, and also a licence to enter on the cure of souls.<sup>42</sup> He is frequently mentioned as dependent on the Abbey in the Battel Abbey Charters. Six closes of land, measuring about two acres each close, adjoining "the Little Park," are represented as the Deanery lands. The exemption of the Dean from Episcopal jurisdiction is fully set forth in the same Charters.

The Parish Church, which was independent of the Church of the Abbey, is dedicated to St. Mary, and has two side aisles; that on the south side having the Altar dedicated to this saint, and that on the north, the Altar of St. Catherine, whose image, in stained glass, still remains in the window. A document among the Burghley papers in the British Museum, in alluding to the independence of Episcopal authority enjoyed by the residents within the Deanery of Battel and its effects states—"that the jurisdiction of this district is in the Deane;" and that it is "wholly exempt from the Bishop's Visitation," and is "altogether neglected by him, so that they do what they list."

Receipts of money for apples and pears sold in considerable quantities are items of not unusual occurrence in the Treasurer's Rolls of Abbey accounts; from whence we may infer the Abbey orchards to have been extensive. Three are distinctly mentioned in the Abbey records, one as adjoining the Abbey to the south; another near the house called the

<sup>42</sup> Sir William Burrell's MSS., Brit. Museum, Donat., 5679, p. 67.

Hospital; and the third by the Chapel of St. Mary on the north side of the Abbot's and monk's garden. A garden in Sandlake, Battel, is described as adjacent to the Convent Perrygarden. Nineteen acres of land near to the Abbey, and the property of the Abbot and monks, are represented as planted with cherry-trees, and called "the Cherry-gardens." The pomarium, too, of the House is frequently alluded to in the Abbey documents.

The privileges and immunities enjoyed by this House by grant from the Founder were very great. Among them we find the power of holding their own courts, and of transacting their own business in all matters connected with the Abbey, and the property with which it was endowed.<sup>43</sup> Within the limits of the home territory of the House the Abbot and monks were supreme. The Abbot was held to be "Judex et Dominus," no other person having any authority or control in the settlement of anything arising out of it. "Sitque Abbas," are the words of the Charter, "suæ ecclesiæ, et Leugæ circumjacentis, Judex et Dominus." The Abbey Church was freed from every kind of territorial exaction and earthly servitude which the human mind could suggest. "Ecclesia S<sup>ci</sup> Martini de Bello" (ecclesia must here be taken as comprehending the whole of the Abbey), "libera sit et quieta ab omni servitute, et omnibus, quæcunque mens humana cogitare potest." All treasure-trove belonged to them that might arise on their own lands, as well as the right of free warren within the Leuga, and over all their lands, wherever they might be situated within any of their manors; and all lands bestowed upon the Abbot and monks at any time by private persons were to have the same privileges and immunities as the lands bestowed upon them by the King himself. The Abbot and monks, and their tenants, possessed in common the same exemption from the payment of tolls in any market they might attend throughout the kingdom, as the King's-men of Hastings. From an early period the Convent enjoyed the privilege of holding a market at Battel every Lord's day throughout the year, and for so doing they were declared to be responsible to none but God,

<sup>43</sup> For the customs of this manor as enrolled in 1772 see Suss: Arch: Coll: vol. vi., p. 60.



and the attendants at the market were to be amenable to the Abbot and monks only. The discontinuance of this market on a Sunday took place in 1566. A general act had passed, the 27th of Henry VI. (1449), prohibiting fairs and markets from being held on Sundays and on certain festivals therein named, except for the sale of necessary victuals, and during the harvest season: but on the 3rd December, 1566 (9th Elizabeth), a private bill was introduced into the House of Commons, and engrossed on the 21st, for changing the market of Battel from Sunday till Thursday.

A market and fair were granted to the Abbot and monks by Henry III., at Hawkherste, in Kent.

When travelling the Abbot and monks had the free use of all the roads passing through the King's lands, and more especially the way leading from Battel to Hastings; and of all other ways around Hastings and Battel. They had also the farther privilege of taking venison for the use of the Abbey as it was wanted, from any of the lands in the Rape of Hastings, and generally throughout the forest district of Sussex when passing through; and of capturing, by means of dogs or in any other way more convenient to them, for the use of themselves and their attendants, any kind of wild animals that might chance to come in their way, without let or molestation from the forest officers; nor could any claim to compensation be made for damage sustained to the King's fences while the monks were so engaged; nor had any of the crown officers the power of entering for any purpose the woods of the Abbot and monks that were situated within the limits of the same forest. The tenants of the Earl of Eu, when called upon to do so by the Abbot and monks, were bound to find a car for the King's use in any journey he might take through the Earl's lands for the purpose of visiting the Abbey, or to answer to the King for their refusal. They had also the power of taking from the Earl's woods as much wood for fuel as they might need, and as much timber as they might require for the reparation of the Abbey buildings; and for every three hogs turned out by the King in his woods of Botfielde or Beckle-parioc for pannage, the Abbot and monks were entitled to turn out one; and where the pannage was let to others, of the money thus received they

might claim a fourth part; for every three oaks felled by the King in the same woods they had the power of felling one for the use of the Abbey; and from the profits of the lands belonging to these woods they were entitled to receive the fourth penny, and twenty-five eggs at Easter. Whenever any of the ships of the tenants of the Abbey were driven by the violence of the wind or the raging of the sea to land their crew or cargo, or any portion of either, on any part of the coast belonging to the Abbey, they and their cargo so landed were to be free from all molestation. The Abbot and monks also received from their founder the same maritime rights and privileges as he himself possessed; viz., all wrecks cast on shore, and all sturgeons taken within the limits of the manor of Dengemaries, on the Kentish Coast; and two thirds, with the tongues,<sup>44</sup> of all such fish caught between Blathway and Withburne. In the time of Henry III., a lease was granted by the Abbot and monks to Richard de S<sup>t</sup> Leger of all wrecks that might take place, and of all whales and sturgeons that might be cast on shore between the port of Winchelsea and Hamelewedford, and from Hamelewedford to Wanesmere. Henry also appointed for the daily use of the Abbot and monks a kind of bread called Simnel-bread, that is, made of the very finest wheat flour, and such as, at that period, was only found at the royal table. Of this, each of the monks was to have thirty-six ounces daily, except during the season of Lent, when, for charitable purposes, one-fourth more was allowed. This privilege is stated to have been granted to the Abbot and monks of this house as "a memorial of his love for them." He also granted to them the further privilege of electing, in case of vacancy, a member of their own establishment as Abbot. But, as this could only be done with the consent of the reigning Sovereign, they were seldom able to exercise it. The Abbots were for the most part appointed by the King from other religious houses, without the Battel Abbey monks having any voice in the matter.

The Abbots of this House had their separate privileges. Besides sitting in parliament as Spiritual Lords, they tried all those accused of minor offences committed within the Leuga,

<sup>44</sup> The tongue of the sturgeon was deemed a great dainty, and was often served up at the Royal Table.

and punished such as were found guilty; and the Abbot had the power, whether summoned to do so or not, of attending and giving evidence in any cause or matter, in which his own affairs, or the affairs of the Abbey, were at all implicated. Next to the King's, the Abbot's authority was paramount within his own extensive domain. His ecclesiastical jurisdiction included the rights of visitation of all the churches in the patronage of the Abbey; and, as we have seen, of holding Courts in as ample a manner as the bishop himself could do. He could not be compelled to attend Episcopal synods. The coroner for the Liberty of Battel was appointed by him up to the time of the dissolution, and the right of appointment, Parry tells us, has since been exercised by the Lord of the Manor of Battel, at his Court Leet; and that the coroner so appointed was usually styled the Abbot. The residents within the Leuga acknowledged no other authority than his. No one dwelling within the precincts of the Abbey, or any of its possessions, could implead, or hunt, or exercise any business or calling without his special permission; and all waifs, or strays, or things found upon the Abbey lands by chance, were held to be his, and he could not be again dispossessed of them. Whenever the Abbot was summoned to Court at either of the three great festivals of Easter, Whit-Sunday, or Christmas-day, he was entitled to claim for himself and two monks in attendance upon him, two loaves made of fine flour and a sextary<sup>45</sup> of wine, at the expense of the King, and the same at the expense of the public; together with three dishes of fish, or whatever else might be provided for the use of the Court; and two whole, and ten pieces of wax candles; and whenever the Abbot visited any of the churches in the patronage of the Abbey, which he was in the habit of doing once in every year, each incumbent, besides the pension which he paid, was obliged to receive him into his house, and to entertain him and his suite for two days. At the death of an Abbot, the administration of the affairs of the Abbey, and the custody of all its goods, were vested in the Prior and monks until a successor was appointed. For this privilege the Abbey paid to King John the sum of 500 marks. But the

<sup>45</sup> A sextary was an ancient measure, containing about a pint and a half.

most extraordinary of the privileges possessed by the Abbots of Battel, was that of pardoning any condemned criminal they might meet with when on a journey in any part of the kingdom, and setting him free, even though he might be on the way to execution. An instance of the exercise of this prerogative is recorded in the Chronicle of Evesham. It is there stated, that the Abbot of Battel (which must have been either Robert de Bello, or his successor, Hamo de Offington, but probably the former), while on his way to London, in the year 1364, met a felon condemned to be hung, within the liberty of the King's Marshalsea, possibly near to his town residence, and liberated him from the penalty of death. At this act of the Abbot, the King, Edward III, and some of his nobles, took great exception, but upon plea, the Charter giving this power to the Abbot was produced, and the right confirmed. Other peculiar privileges enjoyed by the Abbot and monks of the Abbey will be found in Mr. W. D. Cooper's account of the Liberties and Franchises of Hastings.<sup>46</sup>

The rights of the Abbot and monks were, as might be expected to be the case, sometimes disputed, if not positively transgressed. Passive obedience was not at all times likely to be yielded to the arbitrary power which they claimed to possess. And hence it is, that among the Battel Abbey Charters there are many rolls of proceedings taken at different times against parties rebelling against any of such rights and privileges. In Hilary term anno 1368, proceedings were compelled to be taken by the Lord Abbot against William de Echingham, to enforce the performance of a claim for services in the Manor of Whatlington, which were due to the Abbey, by grant, from John Plantagenet, surnamed of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, to whom they had previously belonged.

During the time that Gausfrid was Custos of the House, many attempts were made to subjugate it to the rule and governance of the Norman Abbey of Marmoutier, of which, previous to his appointment to the custody of this House, pending the appointment of an Abbot, he had been a monk, but without success. Though his endeavours were, to some extent, favoured by Henry I., it remained a free and independent Abbey to the period of its dissolution.

<sup>46</sup> Sussex Archæological Collections, vol. vi., p. 57.

Curious and interesting as are the contents of many of the Charters of this Abbey, and tending, as they are calculated to do, to throw light on its history at different periods of its existence, and to reveal to us the habit and manners of monastic life, as they were displayed in the larger Religious Houses, it is impossible for me to give them here. Were I to do so, they would swell my paper to the size of one of the many folio volumes in which, I have already said, these Charters are now bound up.

One or two of them, however, may be noticed. The first has reference to the obnoxious, but, at the time, tolerated, mode of disposing of the occupier of land, together with his family and goods, with the land he occupied. It states that Robert de Summery gave to Michael de Beche, Gerald de Sutheton, with all his goods, and the full liberty to dispose of his body as he liked; together with the land which the same Gerald held of Simon de Warner, his elder brother. Two other deeds give us instances of property acquired by exchange, for the annual payment, during the life of the donor or donors, of a stipulated quantity of land produce. They are as follow:—Pavia, relict of Elye de Bernehorne, quit-claimed to the Abbot and monks of Battel, all her right by way of dower, to the land held by her late husband of them, upon their covenanting to give her, so long as she lived,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  seams<sup>47</sup> of corn in the ear; 1 load of hay; 1 load of broom; 1 load of rough faggots; and pasture on their land for 1 cow. Hamo, the son of Elie de Dune, of Bernehorne, quit-claimed to the same Abbot and monks, the tenement with its appurtenances, which Elye, his father, held in Battel, they engaging to give him in return, annually, so long as he lived, 1 seam of wheat; 1 ditto of barley; 1 ditto of marsh oats (*Avena marisci*); and half a seam of rye. An agreement of a similar kind was made between the Abbot and Monks and Samfred de Summery to the following effect:—in consideration of this Robert giving up to them the whole of the land which he held in Bernehorne, in the hundred of Nivenefeld, called Keyworth, “le grene and la felde,” with all its appurtenances, in demesne, men, &c., they engaged to find him and his wife lodgings in the vill of Battel, with a

<sup>47</sup> A seam of corn is eight bushels, which was supposed to be a horse load.

reasonable quantity of fuel; and each month half a seam of wheat, and half a seam of barley and oats mixed in equal quantities; and each year one seam of beans, a cow in full milk, a pig from the sow at the time of weaning, and twenty shillings in money: and should the wife survive her husband, a third part of this quantity was to be paid to her for the remainder of her life. These deeds are without date. In the year 1300, Gilbert, Bishop of Chichester, paid one hundred marks to John de Taneto, Abbot, and the monks, for the purpose of obtaining corrody in the Abbey for Alan de Melton, his Chamberlain, when business took him into the neighbourhood of Battel. For this sum he was to receive every day, for the term of his life, two simnels (this is explained above) of the larger weight; a gallon and a half of Convent beer; a dish and a half of flesh or fish, whichever might be provided for the monks in the hall; a decent chamber within the walls of the Monastery; sufficient litter for his chamber; wood for his fire; and hay for his horse; and, once in a year, a furred robe of the same kind of cloth as the esquires of the Abbey were accustomed to wear. His attendant was to have two black loaves; a gallon of beer; and his other food the same as the servants of the House. And this provision he was to receive whether he was present at or absent from the House, with the exception of the hay, litter, and wood.

The following list of the Abbots of Battel is supposed to be complete. It is taken, for the most part, from Mr. M. A. Lower's Battel Abbey Chronicle, a few additions only having been made to the biographical notices—

ROBERT BLANCARD, Monk of Marmoutier, was appointed Abbot in 1076, and drowned in returning to this country from Normandy, where he had been for the purpose of having his appointment confirmed, the same year. A similar misfortune befel the first Prior of Boxgrove.

2.—GAUSBERT, also a Monk of Marmoutier, was elected in 1076. He died in 1095, and was buried in the Abbey Church before the Rood. As Robert Blancard, though elected and confirmed, never entered on the presidential office, Gausbert is usually called the first Abbot.

3.—HENRY, Prior of St. Augustine's, Canterbury, was elected in 1096; and is stated, among other improvements, to have been the first to introduce instrumental music into the choir service of the Abbey church. He died in 1102, and was buried in the Chapter House of the Abbey, before the seat of the President. After his death

the affairs of the Abbey were committed for a short time to the care of one of the King's chaplains, named Vivian, who, finding the House in a very disorderly and desolate state, and himself not courteously welcomed by the monks, contrived by his sagacity, prudence, and habits of business, to remain until Gausfrid, a monk of Carileff, was appointed Custos; who, during the three years he had the management of the affairs of the House was able to restore it to its former greatness. He died in 1107, and was buried in the Abbey Chapter House by the side of Abbot Henry, after which

4.—RALPH, formerly a Monk of Caen, but at the time of his appointment Prior of the Priory of Rochester, was elected. He died in 1124, and was buried in the north transept of the Abbey Church, before the altar of the Twelve Apostles. More than sixty years of the life of this pious Abbot were passed in different monasteries as a monk. Under his able management the Abbey attained to so flourishing a state, that it was considered to be second to none in the kingdom for hospitality, piety, and charity.

5.—WARNER, a Monk of St. Augustine's, Canterbury, was the next Abbot. He is stated to have been a man of great modesty, ability, and learning, and to have written many excellent books. He was installed in 1124; and by the advice of his influential friends, among whom was the Pope's Legate, he resigned the Abbacy in 1138, having brought himself into disrepute with King Stephen by espousing the cause of Maud against his usurpation. He is stated in one of the Abbey Charters to have been, previous to his appointment, "*Monachus de Lumlegio transmarino.*" Upon his resignation, he retired to the Priory of St. Pancras, Lewes, where he continued to reside until his death.

6.—WALTER, brother of Richard de Lucy, one of the most powerful barons in the kingdom in his days, was elected in 1139. He died in 1171, and was buried in the Abbey Church before the larger crucifix, and the altar dedicated to the cross of the crucifix, June 22nd.

7.—ODO, Prior of St. Augustine's, Canterbury, was elected in 1175, and consecrated by the archbishop of that province in the Collegiate Church of Malling, near Lewes, the same year. He died in 1200, and was buried in the Abbey Church. Leland,<sup>48</sup> in speaking of his interment, states that he was buried in the lower part of this church; and that the tomb placed over him was constructed of black or Lydian marble.

8.—JOHN DE DUVRA, or of Dovor, was also a monk of St. Augustine's, Canterbury. He was elected Abbot in 1200, and died in 1213.

9.—HUGH, the next Abbot, was elected Bishop of Carlisle in 1218, and died, according to Willis, abroad in 1223. He must have held the Abbacy only for a short time, as Wm. de Brewere had the custody of the temporalities committed to him on 30th Jan., 1214. *Rot. Lit. Cl.* The writ for the election of the successor to Hugh, is dated 16th January, 1215. *Ibid.*

10.—RICHARD, Almoner of the Abbey, was thereupon elected to the Abbacy, and on 22 Jan. the Precentor and two other monks applied to John (then at Knepp Castle) for, and obtained his approval, of their election of Richard. *Rot. Lit. Cl.*, and *Suss. Arch. Coll.*, ii., p. 136. He died in 1235.

11.—RALPH DE COVENTRY, Cellarer of the Abbey, was elected, and his election confirmed in 1235. Whether he vacated by death or resignation is not known.

12.—REGINALD, Prior of Brecknock, was elected in 1261, and died at an advanced age, but in what year I have not been able to ascertain. It is, however, certain that

13.—HENRY DE AYLESFORD was Abbot in 1281. He died in 1297.

<sup>48</sup> Collectanea vol. iv., p. 68, ed. 1770.

14.—JOHN DE TANETO, or of the Isle of Thanet, a monk of St. Augustine's, Canterbury, was elected in 1297, and resigned in 1307.

15.—JOHN DE WATLYNGTON, Senechal of Abbey, was elected in 1307, and died in 1311. The name implies that he was a native of the adjoining parish of Whatlington.

16.—JOHN DE NORTHBURNE was elected in 1311, and resigned in 1318.

17.—JOHN DE PEVESENE, or of Pevensey, was elected in 1318, and died in 1324.

18.—ALAN DE KETLYNG was elected in 1324, and died in 1350.

19.—ROBERT DE BELLO, or of Battel, was elected in 1351, and died in 1364.

20.—HAMO DE OFFINGTON was elected in 1364, and died in 1383. To this Abbot and his successors was granted, by Pope Gregory, the privilege of using the Mitre, Ring, and other Pontificals; and also the Sacerdotal Vestments, and the Palla, which had been specially blessed for their Church. For an account of his gallant and successful defence of Winchelsea, at the head of his retainers,<sup>49</sup> when it was attacked by the French in 1377, see Lower's translation of the Battel Abbey Chronicle, p. 204.

21.—JOHN CRANE was elected in 1383, and died in 1397.

22.—JOHN LYDBURY was elected in 1398, and died circa 1404.

23.—WILLIAM MERSSHAM, or MERESHAM—for the name was spelled both ways—was, when elected, Cellarer of the Abbey. His election took place in 1404, and he died in 1417. Mr. M. A. Lower states his election to have received the Royal assent in 1405. But a Halimote Court Roll for the Manor of Bernehorne, dated "Friday before the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary, March, 1404," is stated to contain "the entries of the first Court held in the time of William Merssham, Lord Abbot of Battel." His election, then, must have taken place as I have stated above. Does not this make it probable that his predecessor's death took place in 1404-5?

24.—THOMAS DE LUDLOW, Cellarer and Prior of the Abbey, was elected in 1417, and resigned in 1435.

25.—WILLIAM WALLER was elected in 1435, and died in 1437.

26.—RICHARD DERTMOUTH was elected in 1437, and died in 1462.

27.—JOHN NEWTON, Cellarer of the Abbey, was elected in 1463, and died in 1490.

28.—RICHARD TOBY was elected in 1490, and died in 1503.

29.—WILLIAM WESTFIELD, Steward of the Abbey, was elected in 1503, and died in 1508. In the Roll of accounts of this Abbey, of the date of 1509, an account of the expenses attendant on the obsequies of this Abbot are minutely entered. The disbursements, distributions, and rewards on the day of his sepulture appear to have been very considerable. His grave, however, was not by any means a costly one, 8d. only being debited for it.

30.—LAWRENCE CHAMPION was elected in 1508. How, and what time he vacated the Abbacy is not known.

31.—JOHN HAMOND, Sacristan of the Abbey, is supposed to have been the next Abbot; but I have been unable to discover any record of the date of his appointment. All we know of him is that he was Abbot in 1533, and that he resigned the Abbey into the hands of the King's Commissioners in 1538. His appointment could not have taken place until after the year 1531, as the Roll of Abbey accounts for that year shews that he was at that time still Sacristan.

Upon his surrender of the Abbey he received a pension of £100 per annum; and

<sup>49</sup> For a metrical legend of the Abbot's conduct on this occasion, see Lower's Contributions to Literature, pp. 139 to 145. Martineau, in his History of the

Church in England, considers Bishops and Abbots leading their retainers to the field, to be the natural consequence of the feudal system.



the sixteen monks then belonging to the House, sums each varying in amount from £6 13s. 6d. to £6. One half of the monks received the former, and the other half the latter sum. To one, a novice, no pension appears to have been assigned. This last Abbot died in the year 1546, and was buried by his own desire in the Chapel of St. Catherine, in the parish Church of Battel. Mr. W. D. Cooper gives us a copy of his Will from the Battel Registry in Vol. vi., p., 65, of the Sussex Archæological Collections.<sup>50</sup>

The Abbey of Battel once possessed a very extensive and valuable collection of books and manuscripts, the selection of its different Abbots, who were some of them very learned men. Leland gives, in his *Collectanea*, a catalogue of a few of the most rare and costly of these books. In it were two works of Odo, the seventh Abbot. This library was generally considered to be one of the best in the kingdom. But at the dissolution it was of the most miserable description.

The revenues of this Abbey had been much diminished before its dissolution. Still, according to Dugdale, the annual income was even then £880 14s. 7½d., but, according to Speed, £987 0s. 10¾d. Possibly Dugdale's was the net, and Speed's the gross income. With such an annual income as this—each hundred pounds then being equal to about a thousand now—at their command, it is astonishing that the “vestments of the Abbey Church,” and “implements of the household,” should have been suffered to become, by neglect, so utterly worthless as they are described to be by the Commissioners employed to report on the state and value of the effects of the Monastery at the time its dissolution was first contemplated, and can only be accounted for upon the supposition that the establishment foresaw their approaching end, and were not, therefore, so careful and frugal in the

<sup>50</sup> In the Rent Roll of the possessions of the Abbey, rendered by Brother John Dallington, Almoner in 1414, Allan, Abbot of Battel, is mentioned as releasing land in Cranebroke, to Matilda, the wife of John Draper. Of this Abbot, if such Abbot there were at this date, I have not been able to find any other notice. I should have been disposed to think that the date in this case is incorrectly given, and that the Abbot referred to is Alan de Ketling, who presided over the establishment from 1324 to 1350,

and who was the only Abbot named Alan, if there had not been ample proof among the Abbey records of John Dallington having been the Almoner of the house in 1410, and from that year to 1415. Possibly then Allan is a mistake for William, the preceding Abbot. A feoffment of land from Thomas Seintleger, and three others in Herstmonceux, in alms to William Meresham, Lord Abbot, and the Convent of Battel, dated August, 1414, seems to warrant my conjecture, if not to show that it is right.

management of their concerns as they might, perhaps, otherwise have been. In their letter to Secretary Cromwell on the subject, the Commissioners say—

“My Lord, These shalbe to advertise your Lordeshyppe, that we have taken thassurance for the Kyng, and have cast our bowke for the dispace of the Monkes and Householde, which amounttith at the leaste to on hundreth pownds. The implements off householde be the worste that ever I se in Abbaye or Priorye ;—the vestyments so old and so baysse, worn, raggede, and torne, as youre Lordeshyppe wolde not thynke ; so that veray smale money canbe made of the Vestrye. If your Lordeshyppe send us a hundrethe powndes by this bringar, we shal make up the reste, if it be possible, of this old Vestrye stuffe ;—iff we cannot, we shal disburse hyt till our retorne to your Lordeshyppe. The Church plate, and plate of the House we suppos by estymation wil amounte to cccc marks (£266 13s. 4d.), or more. There is no great store of catell. This day we be makyng an inventory. Thus our Lorde continewe yowe in honoure. From Battell Abbaye the xxvijth of May.

“Your Lordeschyppe’s to command,

“JOHN GAGE.<sup>51</sup>

“Your Lordshype’s most humble Servant,

“RIC. LAYTON, prest.”

And this same Richard Layton, in a letter to Mr. Wrynsley, whom he addresses as “the Right Worshipful,” enters a little more particularly into the neglected state in which he and his brother commissioner found the vestments of this once magnificent Abbey. He says of the House, “so beggary a House I never see;” and of the furniture—“nor so filthye stuffe. I assure you I wilnot [give] xx<sup>s</sup> for all manner [of] hanggyngs in this House. Here is one cope of crimosyn velvet somewhat embroderede; one of grene velvet embroderede, and two of blewe, rowsty and soylled. If ye will have any of thes, sende me worde. The best vestment I can fynde ye shall have; but I assure you so many evill [ones] I never see.” He then proceeds to speak of the members of the establishment. “The stuffe,” he says, “is like the persons;” but enough of this. The letter is also dated “from Battell, xxvijth May.”<sup>52</sup>

Sad is the account which both Fuller and Burnet give of the moral condition of these houses shortly before they were suppressed; but more particularly do they speak disparagingly of Battel Abbey; against the Abbot and monks of

<sup>51</sup> This Gage was Sir John Gage, Constable of the Tower, K.G., whose monu-

ment, with the effigies upon it, in Firlie Church, is one of the finest in Sussex.

<sup>52</sup> Ellis’ 3 Series iij., 204.

which they brought charges of the most atrocious and flagrant nature ; which, perhaps, though they might not be wholly without foundation, the prejudices and feelings of the times might have led them in some measure to exaggerate. For, surely, it may fairly be assumed, that Henry VIII. would not have granted life-pensions to them upon their surrendering this far-famed Abbey and its revenues to him, if they had been as profligate in their conduct as these two historians represent them. He is much more likely to have exulted in the opportunity which such a state of things would have offered, of discharging them unprovided for, and in disgrace.

The deed of surrender of this Abbey, which is still extant among the Cottonian manuscripts, in the British Museum, and which is dated May, 1538,—the editors of the *Monasticon Anglicanum* erroneously making its date a year later—enumerates very explicitly all the properties, possessions, rights, liberties, and privileges, which thus passed to the King, in the Counties of Sussex, Kent, Southampton, Devon, Worcester, Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Berks, Oxford, Wilts, Cambridge, and elsewhere in England and Wales. The bulk of these the King granted by Letters Patent, dated 15th August, 1538 (30 Hen. VIII.), to Sir Anthony Browne,<sup>53</sup> his Master of the Horse, and his Majesty's special favourite, who had married Alice, the daughter of the Sir John Gage, one of the Commissioners appointed to report on the state of the Abbey, and to obtain its surrender. He, it probably was, that first converted into a residence, for himself and his family, the part of the Conventual buildings now occupied as a dwelling-house. At his death, which took place in 1548, the Abbey Estates passed to his son Anthony, the first Viscount Montague. From him, who died in 1592, the estates and title passed to his grandson; and they continued in this noble family until the year 1719, when Anthony, the sixth Viscount, sold the Abbey and its estates to Sir Thomas Webster, an archæologist of some repute in his day, who, dying in 1751, was succeeded by his

<sup>53</sup> Browne Willis, in his "History of the Mitred Abbeyes," says—that the King bestowed the site of the Abbey, with several of the lands with which it was

endowed, on one Gilmer, by whom the buildings were partially pulled down, and the materials sold. But this is a mistake.

son, Whistler Webster, who died without issue, and the title and estates passed to his brother, Godfrey. He dying in 1780, they passed to his eldest son, Godfrey Vassall, who died in 1836; his eldest son succeeded him, but he too dying without issue in 1853, the title and estates passed to his brother, Augustus Frederick, the present Baronet, who sold the latter to Lord Harry George Vane, now Duke of Cleveland, the present possessor.

I have said that the first possessor of the estate, after the dissolution of the Abbey, probably converted a portion of the conventual buildings into a suitable residence for himself and his successors, because it appears from one of the Battel Abbey Rolls of accounts, of a date a little subsequent to the King's grant, that considerable works of some kind, either in the shape of building or repairing, were going on shortly after the Abbey came into his possession. There is, too, of the same date, a letter written to Sir Anthony's steward, in which the writer, who had evidently been communicated with on the subject of such building, strongly urges upon him the necessity of his "retaining the services of such rough-layers as he should send to him for employment at Battel Abbey;" as he, the writer, had been informed, that "such as were sent by Mr. Bartlette had returned home to their own country." Whatever these works were, they were put out to some builder to be done by contract; on which account he goes on to advise the same steward to see them "well handelyde in their wages; for yf men feell no gayne by their labours and travell, hyt were no goode that they hadde gone, for they woll worke none thereafter. As I understonde, the worke is takyn in greatt by one mann, and he doweth give but small wages, bycause his own gayne should be the morre." The name of the writer of this letter is illegible; but from some expressions in it, we are led to infer that he was one of the Crown officers. He goes on to tell the steward, that, "as soon as their pay was done, he should send a substantial man to him as mortar-maker."

It is impossible to make a survey of the Abbey buildings without at once seeing that a different date must be assigned to different parts of them. Bishop Lyttelton, when Dean of Exeter, visited this Abbey, July 17th, 1752, and has left upon

record among the manuscripts of the Society of Antiquaries, London, the following opinion of its architecture :—"The Abbey House of Battel, in Sussex, seems in all parts to have been built considerably later than the first foundation in William 1st's reign. The oldest part is a large bay of building, now used for a coach house and lumber room, but supposed to have been the refectory, and under it crypts and vaults of fine freestone, divided by elegant pillars and springing arches, that form a curious vaulted roof, now converted into a stable. This I suppose to be of the age of King Stephen, or Henry II. As to the gateway, with the adjoining buildings, which Buck in his engraving of it affirms to have been part of William 1st's structure, I cannot allow it to be older than King Henry VI's time."

Of the additions and alterations made since the dissolution to adapt it to the purposes of a private residence, the Duke of Cleveland has, since his Grace's purchase of the Abbey, done many works to make it more commodious. In reply to a letter which Mr. W. Durrant Cooper wrote to the Duke, to enquire whether he had among his Abbey documents any ground plan of the Abbey buildings, previous to its destruction as a monastery, his Grace was good enough to give him the following account, not only of his own improvements, but also of the state of the Abbey when he took possession of it. His grace says—"I am not sure whether I can find such a plan" [the ground plan of the ancient Abbey buildings]; "but I may mention that though I took down some part (which was not old, but added by Sir Godfrey Webster, and built very badly of brick cemented over to look like stone), and have re-built it of stone, with a slight alteration, so as to render it more in character and architectural, yet that the ground area of this is the same. In like manner the present library, which is 76 feet long, is substantially the same building as the former one erected by Sir Anthony Brown, after the dissolution of the monastery, and its cession to him. I pierced in the walls (which are three feet thick) the windows to the west; took down one of the bay windows to the west, re-built it in an almost similar manner, and threw out also another bay window to the west to correspond, which did not exist in the old building. I took

down also ten feet to the south (the original building being oblong), and made the south window; re-building in the form of a bay in the same way above, I raised the whole building above its former elevation, and made some architectural alterations. When I first went to Battel there were merely the walls with a bad roof. It was not fitted up; it was simply an empty area within walls. It is uncertain whether it had ever been finished by Sir Anthony Browne."

About the year 1420, a new Sword of maintenance was obtained for the Abbey, which, at the time of its dissolution, fell into the hands of Sir John Gage, one of the commissioners; it remained with him and his descendants until about thirty years ago, when the present Viscount Gage gave it to Dr. Meyrick, of Goodrich Court. Upon the pommel of this sword are the arms of Battel Abbey, viz., *a cross, with a crown in the first and fourth quarters, and a small sword erect in the second and third*; with the Abbot's initials, **T. L.**, for Thomas Ludlow. This is considered to be the oldest weapon of the kind in this country. It is figured and described in the *Archæologia*, vol. xxii., p. 414.

Other arms ascribed to the Abbey are—

1. *Argent on a cross gules, a mitre in the centre between two orbs, or mounds, in fesse, and two crowns in pale, or.* (Tanner)

2. *Gules, on a cross, or. the text letter x, azure, two crowns in the first and fourth quarters, and two swords, with the points upwards, in the second and third*; (Tanner) Le Neve considers the letter to be intended for a mitre.

3. *Gules a cross, argent; in the first quarter a mitre with labels; in the second a crown, or.* (Procession Roll of Lords to Parliament, 1512.)

Of its seals, the oldest of which we have any knowledge, is that which Mr. M. A. Lower has engraved on the title page of his translation of the Battel Abbey Chronicle. The design is a temple, surrounded by a label, with the following legend:—"Sigillum Conventus Sancti Martini de Bello." A deed of Reginald, who was Abbot from 1261 to 1281, and numbered 994 in Thorpe's Battel Abbey Charters, &c., has attached to it a seal, on the obverse of which is a representation of the Abbey portal, its turrets, &c., with an

inscription, of which the following words only remain. . . .  
 . . . "Sancti Martini de Bello;" and on the reverse is a figure of the Abbot, with the inscription, "Reginald Dei Gratia." . . . . The rest is wanting, about a third of the seal being broken away.

Among the pen and ink drawings of seals in Sir Elias Ashmole's Museum at Oxford is one described as of Roger, Abbot of St. Martin's, Battel; on which is a representation of a Monastery, or Religious House of some kind, having the portraiture of an Abbot within a small arch. In his right hand he has a pastoral staff, and in his left a book, probably the Bible. The reference to the folio on which it is to be found is "Ash. 833, folio 401." Sir Elias has added in a marginal note to this seal—"Rogerus dei gratia Abbas de Bello." He states the date of the deed, from the seal of which the drawing is made, to be "20 February, 1319." This Roger is usually called *John de Pevenese*.

In one of the north windows of Watlington Church are, according to the Burrell Manuscripts, confusedly glazed together, some fragments of glass, on which are, *argent, a hilt, pommel, and cross bar, or. passing through a ducal coronet, or;* which Sir William considers to have been a device of the Abbot of Battel, who built the Church, borrowed from the arms of Battel Abbey.

Subordinate to Battel Abbey were the two Priors of Brecknock, or Brecon, in Wales, and of St. Nicholas, Exeter. The former of these stood just without the walls of Brecknock Castle, and was established for six Benedictine monks, at the suggestion of Roger of Battel, a monk, who was Confessor to the founder. The Priors of this House were always summoned to the elections of the Abbots of Battel; and in case of the decease or resignation of a Prior, it was customary for the Abbots of Battel to nominate and present the Prior selected to supply the vacancy to the Bishop of St. David's for confirmation. The north part of the cross aisle, at the west end of the Parish Church, is called the Chapel of the Monks of Battel; but little of this Priory now remains. The latter was also founded for six monks. Dr. Oliver, who gives, in his *Monasticon* of the Diocese of Exeter, a very full account

of this Priory, says that it was erected at the expense of Battel Abbey, and was very justly regarded as the most ancient as well as the most considerable Religious House in the City of Exeter; and that, at its first foundation, it was supplied with monks from Battel Abbey. A crypt, with massive Saxon arches, is all that now remains of this Priory. These cells the Abbot of Battel was in the habit of visiting triennially.

I am well aware that in the Episcopal Registers of the See of Chichester, entries are occasionally to be met with referring to this Abbey. None of them, however, are of sufficient historical importance to make them worthy of being cited here. So far as they have at different times fallen under my observation, they have reference principally to such official transactions as took place between the Diocesan and Abbot for the time being; and will, in my opinion, be more suitably introduced into an account of the parishes to which they more immediately belong, than into a history of the Abbey itself. To the parochial historian, then, I shall leave them; and shall now proceed, in conclusion, to point out from the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* of Henry VIII., what portion of their property the Battel Abbey monks were able to retain until the dissolution of their establishment, and its money value at that period.

The profits of their manors in Sussex are stated at that time to have been—

Alcyston, £61 17s. 0d.; Alfryston, £3 13s. 4d.; Lullyngton, £16 11s. 8d.; Clopham, £6 13s. 4d.; Appuldram, £29 8s. 0s.; Barnehorne, in Bexhill and Hoo, £27 12s. 10½d.; Brerehurst, in Tysehurst, £2 13s. 4d.; Mexfeld, in Gestelyng, £5 6s. 8d. In Kent—Wye, £48 12s. 4d.; East Kingsnoth, £22 5s. 5d.; West Kingsnoth, £5 0s. 0d.; Byddynden, £9 13s. 4d.; Anglyngle, in Cranebroke, £7 7s. 0d.; and Morehouse, in Hawkehurst, of which no value stated. In Essex—Hoton, £22 0s. 0d. In Hampshire—Ansty, in Alton, £10 6s. 8d. In Berkshire—Brightwalton, £32 0s. 0d. In Oxfordshire—Crowmarshe, near Walkyngford, £13 6s. 8d. In Wiltshire—Bromham, £9 0s. 0; Clenche, near Wyke, £3 13 4d.—Total, £336 10s. 11½d.

Ditto of Parcels of Manors.—In Sussex and Kent, Rents of divers Manors, with 8s. rent paid annually from Highfields parcel of the Manor of Northey, in Bexhill, £4 19s. 6¾d.; ditto parcel of the Manor of Dengemershe, £53 9s. 5½d.; profits of grain arising from the Manors of Alcyston and Bernehorne, £2 0s. 0d.; ditto within the Manor of Marley, £9 11s. 4¾d.—Total, £70 0s. 5d.

Ditto of Lands.—Rent of 14 acres of land in Pevensey marsh, 14s. 0d.; of lands



in Wadhurst called Snapes, 6s. 8d.; of a meadow called Battell-meade, with other meadows annexed to it, £3 6s. 8d.; of lands called Eastlonds, £2 0s. 0d.; of lands called St. Mary's Croft, and other lands adjoining, £3 12s. 0d.; of a meadow called Amery's Meade, including the houses upon it, £3 3s. 0s.; of divers parcels of land in Battell and Worth, £2 1s. 11½d.; of Beron's land in Pevensey marsh, and of lands called Snaylham, in Gestelyng, £3 8s. 5½d.; other rents from the Vill of Battell, and the marsh of Rye, 8s. 2d.; and of lands called Chaunter's land, in Cattesfeld, 10s. 0d.

Ditto Houses.—Rent of a tiled house in Alfryston, £12 0s. 0d.; of a house in Echyngnam called Stretings, £1 0s. 0d.; of many houses in Battell, £50 11s. 3d.; of houses called the Setry, and lands called Calbeck and Lydcock, and the tithes of the Vill of Battell, £9 6s. 8d.; and of houses in the parish of St. Olaves, in Southwark, near Battell-bridge, £28 6s. 0s.

Ditto of Rents not otherwise particularly described.—Annual rents received from the Manor of Northy, in Bexhill, 12s. 0d.; from the Bailiff of Battell, £5 13s. 4d.; collected by the Abbey Bailiff, £9 9s. 0d.; customary rents paid by the tenants of Selham and Uckham, £6 10s. 4d.; from the Vill of Battell, £4 5s. 0d.; from other parishes in Sussex, £1 9s. 4d.; collected by the Abbey Bailiff, £102 3s. 2½d.; from Southwark, £12 13s. 4d.; from Hoton, £13 17s. 4½d.; and from Bromham, £23 10s. 8d.

Ditto of Mills.—Rent of a mill on lease to John Barker, £1 13s. 0d.; ditto in the tenure of Hamon May, £5 13s. 6d.; ditto of a water mill in Southwark, £3 6s. 8d.

Ditto of Townesbarne.—Rent of this with its appurtenances, and rents in Crophill-Nacholt, £7 14s. 8d.

Ditto of Charges on Rectories.—Ikelsham, £17 6s. 8d.; Westfield, £6 6s. 8d.; Ixning, Suffolk, £31; Bramford, ditto, £2 13s. 4d.; Aylesham, ditto, £20 6s. 8d.

Ditto of Annual Pensions.—From the Rectory of Mankesey, 16s. 0d.; from the New Priory of Warbleton, 2s. 0d.; from the Rectory of Walberton, £1 0s. 0d.; from the Priory of Robertsbridge, 4s. 0d.; from the Rectory of Brame, Suffolk, £1 0s. 0d.; from the Vicarage of Trillowe, due from the heir of Thomas Lucas, 2s. 0d.; from the Rectory of Norton, £1 0s. 0d.; from Monshall and Gromeshall paid by Queen's College, Cambridge, £2 0s. 0d.; from Mildenhall, paid by the Abbot of the Abbey of Bury St. Edmonds, £13 6s. 8d.; from the Rectory of Brightwalton, Berkshire, £3 6s. 8d.; from Hempsted, £8 6s. 8d.; from the Rectory of Lymesfeld, 2s. 0d.

Ditto of Tithes and Oblations.—The tithes of Whatlington, Seddlescombe, Hollyngton, Brede, Udimere, Gesteling, Ore, Bexhill, Wartling, Beckley, and divers other lands near Battell when sown, 12s. 0d.; oblations, one year with another, 13s. 4d.

Ditto of Assize Rents.—Arising from different sources, £19 8s. 9d.

Sum total of Spiritualities and Temporalities, £987 0s. 10¾d.

From these the Reprisals to be deducted were—Pensions and portions paid by the Abbot to the Prior and Convent of Fordham, Suffolk, for the Rectory of Ixning, £5 6s. 8d.; to the Vicar of Ixninges, £4 0s. 0d.; to the Bishop of Norwich for the Rectory of Bramford, £13 6s. 8d.; to the Rector of Samford parva for a portion of the Tithes of the Rectory, 12s. 0d.; to William Culpeper, the founder of "Alard's Chantry" in the Vill of Winchelsey, £3 6s. 8d.; to the Vicar of Pevensey for a portion of the tithes called "Le Mershe," 10s. 0d.; to the Vicar of Westfeld, £5 0s. 0d.; to the Vicar of Iklesham, £3 6s. 8d.; to the same Vicar, £1 13s. 4d.; to the Dean of Battell by composition, £5 6s. 8d.; to the Rector of Cattysfeld, 3s. 4d.

Annual Procurations.—To the Bishop of London for the Church of Stamford

parva, 7s. 6d.; to the Archbishop of Canterbury for the Church of Wye, Kent, 7s. 6d.; to the Bishop of Chichester for the Churches of Westfield and Ikelsham, 2s. 0d.

Rents.—To the Lord Burrowes, for rents paid to him for the manor of Lymesfeld, £2 11s. 0d.; to Roger Lewknor, Knight, and the Lord Dacres, for rent paid to them for the manor of Alceyston, £3 10s. 8d.; to the Bishop of Chichester for rents paid to him for tenements in Bexhill, 6s. 0d.; to the Vill of Pevensey for the rent of land called “Le Mershe of Pevensey,” £5 1s. 0d.; to John Yelding, Gentleman, for a rent of one pound of wax paid to him for the mill of Pypering, 6s. 0d.; to the Dean of Dallyngton for rent due to him, 18s. 0d.; . . . . . for the rent of Maxfeld, £1 1s. 0d.

Perpetual Alms.—Alms bestowed annually on the feast of St. Martyn and at the Lord’s Supper. in silver, bread, and allec, for the founder of the Abbey, but particularly for Sibilla de Ickelsham, Durand de Sutton, Hugh de Martyn . . . . . Henry Faber, and others, by the ancient foundation deed of the Abbey, £5 2s. 10d.

Fees.—To Thomas, Earl of Wiltshire, Steward of the manors, lands, and tenements of the Abbey, £13 6s. 8d.; to Edward Baynton, Knight, Steward of the manor of Bromham, Wiltshire £1 6s. 8d.; to . . . . . Tyrrell de Heron, Gentleman, Steward of the manor of Hoton, Essex, 13s. 4d.; to Nicholas Carne, Knight, Steward of the manor of Lymesfeld, Surrey, £1 6s. 8d.; to John Baker, Attorney of the Duchy of Lancaster, and Steward of the manor of Wye, Kent, £1 6s. 8d.; to Richard Sackville, Steward of the manor of Dengemershe, ditto, £2 0s. 0d.; to Christopher Wigsell, Receivour of all the manors, lands, and tenements in the counties of Berkshire, Wiltshire, Oxfordshire, and elsewhere, £2 0s. 0d.; to Edward Affeld, Receiver of all the manors, lands, and tenements in the counties of Suffolk, Norfolk, and Essex, £1 6s. 8d. To John Chilton, bailiff of Wye, £9 0s. 0d. To John Comport, bailiff of Lymesfeld, £2 0s. 0d. To Ambrose Comport, bailiff of Battell, £2 6s. 8d. To John Gore, bailiff of the Fraunches of Bromham, 16s. 4d. To Christopher Wygsell, auditor of the Abbey, £2 13s. 4d. To John Adam, receiver and collector of the rents of Dengemershe, £0 7s. 6d. To John Abroke, receiver and collector of rents of Lullyngton, £1 10s. 0d. To William Denke, John Siman, Thomas Clarke, John Sykyll, and others, receivers and collectors of different Abbey rents, amounting upon the whole to £63 4s. 3½d., issuing out of hereditaments situated in Bernehorne, Battell, Whatlyngton, Seddlescombe, and other parishes adjacent to them in Sussex, and also in Wye, Romney, Byddenden, and Hawkhurst, in Kent, £2 1s. 0d.

Total of Reprisals. . . . .	£106 6s. 2½d.
Leaving a clear balance of . . . . .	£880 14s 7½d.

For a list of some relics of this Abbey, exhibited by the Dowager Lady Webster, on the occasion of the Annual Meeting of our Society, held at Hastings, in August, 1861, see Vol. XIV., p. xii.