

Sussex Archæological Society.

THE PRIORY OF SHULBRED.

BY E. L. CALVERLEY.

IN tracing the history of this small monastery there have been difficulties to contend with, which are not encountered when dealing with more extensive foundations. The house was buried in a thickly-wooded tract of country, and lying as it did at some distance from the main roads, which in that part of Sussex were notorious for their bad condition even in later days, it must have been almost unapproachable during a large portion of the year; indeed, the monks themselves at one period ascribed the poverty of the house partly to the fact that it was away from the routes frequented by travellers, and, therefore, was not visited by great men, and consequently it must have come but little under public notice. But the greatest difficulty lies in the fact that either at the time of the dissolution in 1536, or more probably when the house was partially suppressed some years previously by Bishop Sherburn on account of the irregularities of the monks, on which occasion the Bishop appears to have stripped it of everything valuable, all the records belonging to it seem to have disappeared, and I have been unable to find the slightest trace of them, though I have made a strict search through the Bishop's registers at Chichester, the Lambeth registers, and the charters and deeds in the Record Office, British Museum and other places; this is an irreparable loss, as the details concerning the house which these records would have supplied cannot be gathered with any real completeness from other sources. In the whole

of the Feet of Fines for Sussex previous to 1536—numbering considerably over 3,000—through which I have gone, there are only two entries relative to Shulbred, whilst with regard to other documents in which notices referring to grants of lands, &c., might be found, their number, and the absence in so many cases of calendars to them, render an exhaustive search impossible. In every case where mention is made of Shulbred in the various county histories and other printed books, as well as in the collections of Sir William Burrell and others, I have verified the statements by comparison with the original documents, except in a few cases where they could not be traced, and I regret to say have found in many cases such inaccuracy that I have been obliged to trust solely to the originals, Dallaway's *History of Sussex* particularly being quite untrustworthy. The *Collections* of the Sussex Archæological Society, however, are notable exceptions, and I beg to gratefully acknowledge my indebtedness to them for various references which have materially assisted me. My best thanks are also due to Mr. Salisbury, of the Record Office, for the interest he has taken in the work and the help he has given, as well as to the other gentlemen who have so kindly given me every facility for inspecting the documents under their charge.

The Priory was founded for Black Canons of the Order of St. Augustine, and was under the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary, to whom in later years were added St. Eustache and the Holy Cross. It was called indifferently the Priory of Wlenchemere (Woolynchmere) or Shulbred, both of these names exhibiting considerable variety of spelling. The actual date of foundation is uncertain; it is not included in the Great Roll of the Pipe of the first year of Richard I.'s reign, by which time its neighbours, Tortington, Boxgrove and Dureford, had already been founded, and the first mention of its existence that I have been able to find is in 1207-8, when the Close Rolls¹ state that "Ralph de Arden has the Priory of Wlenchemere with all its belongings during the King's pleasure, and he

¹ Claus 9 John, M. 2.

shall answer for it henceforth." Ralph had previously bought two hides of land in Wlenchemere, in the year 1200, for 75 marks of silver, from Brian, son of Ralph and Gunora his wife, as we find recorded in the Feet of Fines,² and therefore it is very probable that he was the actual founder.

This Ralph de Arden was a man of some importance, and appears to have been the same man who was put in such an awkward position by King John, who, after divorcing his wife Hadwisa, we read in the history of Ralph de Diceto³ in 1200, "proposing to marry the daughter of the King of Portugal, whose fame had allured his mind, sent from Rouen to ask for her illustrious and noble men, namely, the Bishop of Lisois, William de Stagno, Ralph de Arderne, Hubert de Burch and others, both English and Norman. But he himself, while they were still on the way, without forewarning them, wedded Ysabel, the only daughter and heiress of the Count of Angoulême" (who was already betrothed—if not married, as some authorities say—to the Count de la Marche). Ralph also possessed other lands in Sussex, as the result of a law suit with Evinger, son of Francus de Bohun, in 1199,⁴ including the manor of Fordres (Ford) and Clyppinges (Climping), and a moiety of the town of Yllesham, the service of Ralph Sansaver and Ilbert de Rakinton for his tenements in Rakinton (Racton), and £10 sterling of land in Lovinton (Lavant), as we find from a suit between Thomas, his son, and Evinger in 1212 concerning the former agreement, in the course of which the Prior of Shulbred stated that Ralph gave him land in Lavant. This statement by the Prior occurs with startling abruptness in the middle of the terms of agreement between the two principals, as if he had stood up and interrupted the case only to be ruled out of order, and no further reference is made to it.

² Feet of Fines, Sussex, 1 John [18].

³ Radulfi de Diceto, *Opera Historica*, edit. W. Stubbs, 1876, Vol. II., p. 170.

⁴ Franco de Bohun was, in 1 Ric. I., Lord of Midhurst, Ford, Clyppyng and Rustington. Arms, or a cross azure. (Dallaway, *Hist. of the W. Division of Sussex*, Vol. I., p. 282.)

In the octave of Trinity, 14 John.⁵

Ivinger de Boum gives the King 100 marks to have a writ of mort d'ancestor against Thomas de Arderne concerning a knight's fee in Fordres, and against the Prior of Shelebrede concerning half a knight's fee, with its appurtenances in Lovinton, except 7 virgates of land, and the sheriff is commanded to take pledges therefor.

The case when it came on for hearing proved a long one⁶ and was described as an assize to recognise whether Francus de Boum, father of Evinger, was seised in his demesne as of fee of one knight's fee in Fordres which Thomas de Arderne holds, and of half a knight's fee, except 7 virgates in Lovinton, which the Prior of Selebrede holds.

Thomas stated that Evinger, after his father's death, held the said knight's fee, because he held two Honours, one, namely, the Honour of Bohun, in Normandy, which he held in Barony, and the other in England, which he held in Vavassery, and Ralph de Arderne, the father of Thomas, impleaded him in the Court of King Richard in Normandy concerning both the Honours, but Evinger made the essoin of being taken ill on the way and afterwards of being ill in bed; an agreement, however, being finally made in the valley of Rodoly before the Seneschal of Normandy, by a deed dated Wednesday before Palm Sunday, 1199, and bearing the seal of Evinger, which Thomas produced, by which Evinger quit-claimed to Ralph and his heirs the lands and services aforesaid, while the residue of the lands in dispute should belong to Evinger. In answer to this Evinger stated that he was never seised of the land, nor did he make the agreement.

The result of the suit was that Thomas remised to Evinger all his right and claim to the Manor of Fordres, while Evinger remised to Thomas all his right and claim to Lovinton and gave him £12 of land in Prescinton (Preston), to be held by the service of half a knight, as well as other privileges. "But the Prior comes and says that Ralph de Arderne gave him the land which he

⁵ Curia Regis Roll, No. 66, Rot. 6d. Trin. Anno 14 John.

⁶ *ibid.*, Rot. 23d.

holds by his charter and the King confirmed it to him, and he vouches Thomas to warrant thereof and Thomas says he was not summoned [on that account].” It is probable, however, that the Prior kept possession of his property.

This agreement was also entered on the Feet of Fines for Sussex,⁷ but the Prior’s claim is not mentioned.

Some years later the Priory obtained the appropriation of the “Church of Shelbrede,” which introduces a curious difficulty, as I cannot find any trace of a separate Church of Shulbred. Since, however, in much earlier times, Lynchmere or Woolynchmere contained a church, and the Priory here is called Wlynchmere, I can only suppose that the writer made a mistake and transposed the names of the Church and Priory. The date of this grant must be between 1227 and 1243, as it was made in the time of Ralph, Bishop of Chichester and Chancellor to the King, which points clearly to Ralph de Neville, who held these offices during the period mentioned, and the confirmation of it is in the Bishop of Chichester’s Registers.⁸

Confirmation of the Charter of Ralph, Bishop of Chichester, concerning the appropriation of the Church of Shelbrede to the Prior and Convent of Wlynchmere, made by the Dean and Chapter of Chichester.

The Dean and Chapter of Chichester to all, &c., greeting. We have inspected the Charter of Ralph, Bishop of Chichester, Chancellor to the King, namely, Ralph, &c., greeting, whereas the Abbot and Convent of Sagio, by Divine intent of love, have granted to the Prior and Convent of Wlenchmere their right of patronage in the Church of Selebrede, we having seen the charter which the said Prior and Convent of Wlenchmere have, therefore, in consideration of their poverty, grant them a warrant for it with all its belongings, so that they deal honestly by that church in providing a worthy secular chaplain and sustaining all the usual burdens of the church, saving to the Church of Corkyng its accustomed and ancient pension in it, and saving to us and our successors the pontifical and parochial rights. We therefore confirm this concession and place our seal on it.

About this time also, namely, in November, 1239,⁹ Ralph de Arderne—I suppose the son of Thomas—sold the advowson of the Priory of Sylebrede to William de

⁷ Feet of Fines, Sussex, 14 John [115].

⁸ Reg. Chic., C., f. 66d.

⁹ Feet of Fines, Sussex, 24 Henry III. [69].

Percy for 65 marks of silver, "with all the service and homage of the Prior and his successors for the whole tenement, which the Prior held on the day on which this agreement was made in Wlenchemere, Wildebrug and Midlovinton," for which William should do to him the service of one-third of a knight's fee in Wlenchemere and of half a knight's fee in Midlavent. The Percies, in consequence, seem in later years to have been regarded as the actual founders, and are referred to as such during the period of trouble which befel the Priory shortly before the dissolution.

In July of the next year William de Percy marked his assumption of the patronage of the house, here called Wlenchemere, by endowing it with a mill in Cutersho (Coultershaw),¹⁰ "with all the suits of his men of Pette-wurth and Tulinton (Tillington), saving to himself and his heirs the free grinding of all kinds of corn which shall be used in his house at Pettewurth, of whatever kind they may be, for ever." He also granted them the right to take earth on his land at Petworth, near the mill, for repairing the millpool when necessary, "by view of his bailiffs," and granted that all his villeins at Petworth and Tillington should give the Prior three days' aid each year in repairing the millpool, if repair should be required so often, "without victuals of the Prior," reckoned on the scale that each villein holding one virgate of William in those towns should do three days' aid for one man and that those who held more or less land should give aid according to their holding. And the Prior should pay him two marks of silver yearly for the mill till such time as William or his heirs should have given him ten librates of land in a suitable place in Sussex or Yorkshire, and then the mill should revert to William or his heirs and the Prior should hold these ten librates free from all secular service.

In return for this grant the Prior undertook to provide and keep five Canons in the church "to celebrate Divine service for the souls of William and his ancestors and his

¹⁰ Feet of Fines, Sussex, 24 Henry III. [71].

heirs for ever," and whenever one of these Canons should die a worthy clerk should be provided in his place at the presentation of William and his heirs, so that the requisite number should be kept up for ever.

William does not seem, however, to have exercised his right to resume possession of the mill, for in 1274-5 we find it belonging to the Priory.

Rape of Arundel.

Hundred of Rutherbrugg.¹¹

William de Percy, in the time of King Henry, father of the present King, gave the religious persons of Sulebred a certain mill called Cutersho, belonging to the Manor of Pettewurth, which is held in capite of the Castle of Arundel and is worth yearly £10.

And it was still among their possessions when the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* was drawn up in 1534; whether it is the same as the mill of Catesstowe or Codestowe, mentioned as their property in 1291 and 1380, I cannot be certain, but it seems most probable.

In 1242 John Prior, of Wlenchmere, and William de Rakington, a Canon of the Priory,¹² are mentioned as witnesses to a charter of William de Percy, giving lands to the hospital of Sandown, in Surrey, for the maintenance of six chaplains in the hospital, quoted in Dugdale's *Monasticon Anglicanum*, where the authority given is a "MS. lately in the possession of Henry, Earl of Cumberland, fol. 152," but I have not been able to trace the original document. It is, however, very possible that he was the same John, Prior of Wlenchemere, who in 1248-9, by a charter which is included in the Chartulary of the Priory of Dureford,¹³ granted to Valentine, Abbot of Dureford, "all the land with messuages, meadows, buildings and other appurtenances which we have of the gift of Lord Philip de Brembre, in the Manor of Herting, of the tenement of the brethren of St. Lasar of Jerusalem," in exchange for all the land which the Priory of Dureford held at Stanligh, of the gift of Lord Alan de St. George. There seems to be no record of

¹¹ Hundred Rolls, Sussex, 3 Edward I.

¹² Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, 1st Ed., Vol. II., p. 442.

¹³ Cott. MS., Vespasian E., xxiii., f. 107. Brit. Mus.

the original grant in Harting by Philip de Brembre, nor is the land which they obtained in exchange mentioned as their property at any later period.

In 1255 Henry had succeeded John as Prior and the property of the Priory was increased by one acre of land in Falgham, the gift of Alicia le Kokes; there is no mention of this gift in the records belonging to the period when it was made, but the date is fixed as the fortieth year of King Henry III. in later documents of the reign of Edward III., which will be referred to hereafter. This land, however, was taken away from them in the time of Edward II., under false pretences, as Sir John Walewayn, the King's escheator, accusing them of acquiring it after the passing of the Statute of Mortmain and without the King's leave, sequestrated it, and it was not restored to the rightful owners till the third year of Edward III. The documents to which I have alluded state for the first time who was the patron saint of the church, which is expressly mentioned as the "Church of the Blessed Mary of Shilbred."

The tax on temporal property held by religious bodies granted by Pope Nicholas to Edward I. in 1291¹⁴ gives us a view of the possessions belonging to the Priory at this time, which were valued at £10. 15s., namely:

	£	s.	d.
At Shilbred.....	2	8	4
At Middlewent	4	8	4
At Skepesele	1	18	4
Mill of Catesstowe	2	0	0

And this valuation seems to have formed the basis for the amount to be contributed by them for future clerical subsidies, without taking into account any further land they acquired, which must have been considerable, as we can see by reference to the roll of their property contained in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*. The next Prior we find in authority is Thomas de Henton, who was unfortunate enough in 1299 to get into serious trouble owing to his excessive destruction of the surrounding woods. This was probably done in order to obtain fuel for iron

¹⁴ Tax. Eccl., 1291 (Record Series, 1802).

smelting, though there is no direct statement to that effect, but the neighbourhood abounds in traces of old workings, one of which—situated near Lower Lodge Farm and worked nearly up to the end of the last century—is less than a mile from the Priory, and, moreover, in 1342, the Nonæ Roles record that the Vicar of Fernhurst received 10s. for the tithe of iron ore,¹⁵ showing that forges were established in this part of Sussex at a very early date.

The Prior may have reckoned on the remote situation of the house to shield his operations, but doubtless some ill-wisher gave information of his depredations, for Robert, Archbishop of Canterbury, in his visitation (made by the Archbishop for some reason that I cannot trace, as the See of Chichester was not vacant at the time, Gilbert de St. Leofardo, or Leopaldo, filling it from 1288 to 1304) issued a solemn inhibition to him.¹⁶

Robert, &c., to our well beloved son Brother Thomas de Henton, Prior of the Conventual Church of Schelbrede, of the Order of St. Augustine.
 On our visitation to your Priory it was clearly found that the said Priory, among other things, had been excessively wasteful in the consumption of its woods at the time of your administration as Prior. We strictly inhibit you from cutting trees, sticks or firewood of the woods belonging to your Church without having asked the consent of your Convent and having obtained it after due deliberation, and then only for the clear need of your Church, and for granting, selling, pledging or otherwise alienating your title to do so in any way, under pain of greater excommunication.

In this connection it may be noted that in the time of Queen Elizabeth the amount of timber used for iron smelting in Sussex was so great that she was obliged to restrain it by Act of Parliament.

The reign of Edward II. was not a happy one for Shulbred; the King was preparing for his Scotch expedition of 1311, which resulted in such failure, and had to raise the necessary funds for it. Accordingly in June, 1310, the Prior received a letter from him,¹⁷ requesting the house to aid him “by way of loan” with victuals,

¹⁵ *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, Vol. II., p. 178.

¹⁶ Lambeth Reg., Winchelsey, f. 76b.

¹⁷ Claus 3 Edw. II., M. 5d. (French).

“to be paid for at Candlemas next out of moneys to be levied of the tenth or other issues of the realm.” The amount requested from the Prior of “Shelebrugg” was twenty quarters of wheat and twenty quarters of oats, and we may reasonably doubt whether it was ever repaid by the King, since Candlemas next may have served only as a synonym for the Greek Kalends. In addition to this demand, in 1317¹⁸ one Reginald de St. Albans was sent to them for his sustenance, “according to the requirements of his position,” an elastic term, as the requirements of a man under Royal patronage may have been excessive when they had to be satisfied by a house whose foundation was not on a large scale.

A list of the Lords of Manors in the ninth year of Edward II.,¹⁹ compiled by Sir F. Palgrave, late Master of the Rolls, which is now in the British Museum, gives the Prior of Shulbred as Lord of the Manor of Midlavant in that year.

It was in this reign also that they were so unjustly deprived of their land in Falgham, as I have already described. But not for long, since Edward III.—very soon after the commencement of his reign—directed Simon de Bereford, his escheator, to enquire into the actual facts of the case, and ascertain whether Sir John Walewayn was right in his action or not, and also to send a detailed statement with regard to the tenure and value of the land in question.

In accordance with these instructions an inquisition²⁰ was taken at Yapton on April 27th, 1329, “on oath of William Sartylor, John Stigaunt, Roger atte Wyke, James le Kyng, Richard le Burgeys, John de Boys, Richard Torald, John Dale, Gilbert Freman, John atte Donne, Ralph de Ybourghdene and Robert Covert,” who gave evidence to the effect that Henry, the late Prior, had acquired the land by the King’s writ long before the Statute of Mortmain, and that it was taken by Sir John Walewayn into the hand of the King for the reason

¹⁸ Claus 10 Edw. II., M. 14d.

¹⁹ Addl. MS., 26,098, Brit. Mus.

²⁰ Inquis. post mort., 3 Edw. III. Second numbers, No. 86.

contained in the King's writ, and no other. Also that it is held of the Prior and Canons of Shelbred by the service of three pence yearly at the hand of the Prior of Wildebrugge, and is worth yearly, in all outgoings beyond the said rent, twelve pence.

On receipt of this evidence,²¹ on 28th March, 1330, the King directed his escheator to hand over, without delay, the outgoings of the land, if any, to the said Prior free. They must, however, have parted with it shortly after, as it is not mentioned later among their possessions.

In 1335 one of the Canons allowed his love of sport to lead him into trouble on a charge of poaching,²² for we find a Commission of Oyer and Terminer, dated 30th March, to certain justices on a complaint of Richard, Earl of Arundel, "that Thomas Child, Druet Fauferghe, Thomas de Westdene, Thomas le Fynch of Bunderton, Henry Waleys, Adam de Bradeham, John, his son, Walter Shortfrend, Walter Crochon, Joseph atte Brugge, William le Chanoyne of Shelebrede, Henry le Provost of Bybeton and other evildoers broke his parks at Eseden, Stanstead, Arundel, Downlegh, Dunhurst and Brunscombe by force of arms, and without leave entered in, took and carried off deer and inflicted other enormities on him, to his grave hurt and against the King's peace." There seems to be no record of any punishment having been inflicted on the culprits.

In 1340 they obtained another addition to their property,²³ as John de Warren, Earl of Surrey, and Henry de Percy obtained the King's license to allow the Prior to receive the advowson of the Church of Upmarden from the Prior and Convent of Lewes in perpetuity, "without molestation or impediment of us or our heirs, justiciars, escheators, sheriffs or other bailiffs or ministers of ours whatsoever," notwithstanding the Statute of Mortmain.

In the next year the King levied a subsidy of one-ninth—recorded in the Nonæ Rolls²⁴—for the purpose of

²¹ Claus 4 Edw. III., M. 37.

²³ Pat. 14 Edw. III., Part 2, M. 27.

²² Pat. 9 Edw. III., Part 1, M. 28d.

²⁴ *Nonarum Inquisitiones*, 15 Edw. III.

carrying on his wars, and from this we gather information with regard to the property belonging to the house, in Lynchmere, Easebourne, Yapton, Walberton and Midlavant.

It is stated on the oath of "Thomas Schotere, John atte Hurlond, Richard Poppehale and William de Lenchemer, all of the parish of Lenchemer," that in Lynchmere the ninth of the sheaves is worth 22s. and of the fleeces 3s. 8d. and of the lambs 12 pence, in all 26s. 8d., and the church is taxed at six marks and a half. Also they say that the said ninth does not appear and cannot be touched for taxing the said church, because the Prior of Schulebrede has in that parish arable lands which are of the foundation of the said Priory, and the ninth of the sheaves is worth 4s. and of the fleeces eighteenpence and of the lambs twelvecpence, and because the Prior held the King's writ superseding the assessors and pays tenths therefor. Also they say that the ninth of the pannage is worth 13s. and of the honey 2s. 6d. and of the hay 5s. Also they say that the Prior has a watermill, of which the ninth is worth 3s. Also they say that the lesser tithes and oblations are worth 4s. Also they say that the rector of the church has a messuage with a curtilage worth 2s. and arable land worth 5s. as glebe. In Easebourne the Prior of Shulbrede held a certain portion of the tithes, which was worth 3s. a year. In Yapton he had sown land, of which the ninth was worth 18s., and fleeces and lambs, of which the ninth was worth twentypence.

In Walberton he held twelve acres of land, for which he did not pay the ninth to the King.

In Midlavant the church is taxed at seven marks and a half, but the ninth does not appear and cannot be touched on taxing the church, because the Prior of Shulebred has arable land in the parish belonging to his Priory, and the ninth of the sheaves, of whatever kind of corn, is worth 30s., and of the lambs 4s. And since the Prior held the King's writ superseding the taxing assessors, since he pays therefor the tithe he does not pay the ninth.

In 1354 Edward St. John granted them the advowson of the Church of Midlavent, taxed at one hundred shillings a year,²⁵ the grant being confirmed by the King's writ, but this gift caused them a great deal of trouble before they were able fully to enjoy the benefits of it. Four years after the advowson had been given to them they discovered that there was not any charter or evidence in existence to prove that Edward St. John had purchased it from the Convent of Lewes, who were the patrons, and consequently they were obliged to re-acquire it direct from Lewes. The charter for this second grant is contained in the Register of the Charters of the Monastery of Lewes, now in the British Museum,²⁶ whereby "Hugh, Prior of the Monastery of St. Pancras of Lewes, and his Convent grant to John, Prior of the Priory of the Blessed Mary of Shulbrede, and the Convent of that place the advowson of the Church of Midlovente with eleven acres and a half of land and one rood of meadow, the glebe of that church, and all other its appurtenances in Sussex, to be held of the chief lords of that fee by the service which belongs to it; saving to the said Prior and Convent of Lewes the annual pension of twenty shillings sterling owed to the same religious men of Lewes from that church from time immemorial. And the said Prior and Convent of Shulbrede grant the said annual pension of twenty shillings to the Prior and Convent of Lewes as aforesaid, when they shall desire to release the said church by appropriation, resignation or concession, the feoffment of the advowson of that church made above notwithstanding." The witnesses to this deed included Richard Earl of Arundel, John de Bohun, Andrew Peverell, Michael de Ponynges and Henry Tregoz.

The document by which the Bishop of Chichester gave his sanction to this appropriation is most interesting, from the light which it throws on the condition of the Convent at this time, which seems to have been in a state of great distress, and it also illustrates the ravages made by that fearful plague the Black Death of 1349 among the

²⁵ Pat. 28 Edw. III., Part 2, M. 1.

²⁶ Cottonian MSS., Vespasian, F. xv., f. 138b.

agricultural community in this part of the country. It is dated January 5th, 1358, Robert de Stratford being then Bishop.²⁷

Robert, Bishop of Chichester, greeting. At the petition of the Prior and Canons of the Priory of the Church of the Blessed Mary of Shulbrede, of the Order of St. Augustine, we allow that the foundation of the house is not sufficient for the support of the Canons. The buildings also, which by the industry and magnificence of its founder were originally sumptuously arranged, for the greater part are ruinous and placed in case of ruin, and for the repair of them the rent and goods will not suffice on account of its poverty. The house is so far distant from habitation that magnates or other men very seldom on their travels come there for hospitality. Moreover, the serfs and coloni of the Prior who were useful in carrying out their business have been taken away in the last wonderful pestilence²⁸ which fell on the lands of the Prior, nor can more be got. So that the lands which used to be tilled by them, and by the fruits of which the Prior and Canons for the greater part ought to be sustained, are made waste and lie useless. And the said Priory, by the loss of the advowson of churches, by no fault of theirs, by the power of greater men whom no faculty of the Priory is enough to contradict and resist, to the inestimable loss of rents, by these and other insupportable burdens exacted and collected from day to day, is so depressed and weakened in its faculties by promises and the burdens imposed on the said Prior. . . .

Wherefore they humbly beg us license on this account, so lately sought and obtained from the King, to be delivered from poverty. We, being willing to annex, acquire and incorporate the Parish Church of Midlovent to them with the rents belonging to it for their use, struck with compassion by their manifest necessity, give, &c., &c.

In their anxiety, however, to make sure of the advowson of this church they had omitted to obtain the King's license to receive it from the Convent of Lewes, perhaps thinking that the confirmation of the grant from Edward St. John was sufficient, and they now found it liable to forfeiture under the Statute of Mortmain, so that it was not till 1385,²⁹ when Richard II. consented to overlook their mistake and confirmed the grant to them, that they were able to feel secure of its possession.

There is a roll of the taxable value of the possessions of Shulbred between 1369-85 in the Chichester Registers,³⁰ and the roll of a subsidy collected in 1379-80,³¹ both of

²⁷ Reg. Chic., C., f. 67.

²⁹ Pat. 8 Ric. II., Part 2, M. 3.

²⁸ Black Death, 1349.

³⁰ Will. Reade's Reg., f. 294d.

³¹ Cler. Subs. 3 Ric. II., 17^ad.

which, as regards temporal property, are based on the taxation of Pope Nicholas, while the former gives in addition, as a spiritual possession, the Church of Wlenchmere, valued at £4. 6s. 8d. But the subsidy levied in the year 1380-1 gives much more interesting information, as a letter of William (Reade), Bishop of Chichester, to the Prior and Convent of "Cor . . ." ³² appointing them collectors of the clerical subsidy granted 4 Richard II. in the Archdeaconries of Chichester and Lewes, has attached to it a schedule of the names of religious persons, in which appears :

Names of religious persons in the Priory of Schulbrede taxed there
£13. 18s. 4d.

Sir Will. Harethorn, Prior of Schulbrede.

Sir John Lovente.

Sir John Bridham.

Sir Rodert Nyte.

James Clanefeld.

John Dene.

John Guldeforde.

This Prior, William Harethorn, is evidently the same as William Harewell, quoted by Dallaway as Prior, though he is not mentioned anywhere under the latter name.

In 1402 Robert Reade, Bishop of Chichester, ³³ gave directions for a visitation of the Priory on February 9th, but the result does not appear to have been recorded. The Bishop, however, did not confine his interest in them to inquiring into the state of the house, but stretched it to the length of obtaining a pension for them, on the strength of his predecessor's confirmation of the grant of the Church of Midlavent. ³⁴

William Harethorn, Prior of Schulbrede, of the Order of St. Augustine, &c., greeting. Since the Parish Church of Midlavent has been granted to us, with all its belongings, William Mayn, the late rector, having resigned, the Prior and Convent, in consideration of loss to the Bishop and Dean and Chapter of Chichester by that gift, agree to pay to the Bishop a yearly pension of 6s. 8d., and to the Dean and Chapter a pension of 2s., and to the Archdeacon of Chichester 2s. 10 April, 1402.

³² Cler. Subs., 4 Ric. II., 17.

³³ Reg. Chic., R., f. 39.

³⁴ Reg. Chic., R., f. 176d.

In 1404 William Harethorn resigned,⁸⁵ his resignation being presented on November 5th by brother Henry Hamond, Canon of Shulbred, under the seal of subscription of Sir Adam Symond, notary public, and the Canons elected John Coldell, the Sub-Prior, to the vacant post.

The confirmation of this election by the Bishop⁸⁶ states that a letter was sent to him by the brethren and Canons of Schulbrede, declaring that "for the last three months there has been danger of a ravenous wolf breaking in on the flock by reason of the want of a shepherd," and stating that since the last Prior, William Harethorn, has resigned, they have asked and have leave from the most noble Lord Henry Earl of Northumberland, their patron, to choose another Prior. It goes on, "And afterwards, on November 18th, 1404, we, the brethren, John Coldell, sub-prior, William Harethorn, James Clanefeld, Henry Hamond and Richard Mydhurst, priests, and Thomas Morys, of the Order of St. Benedict, sitting in that Priory and being present, some however being absent, namely, Robert Newtymber and John Dene, who many years ago apostatised from our Priory without license, proceeded to elect a Prior." And on the 19th November, having shut out all secular, lay and profane persons, except Sir Thomas Southam, Rector of the Church of Dunsfold, Wynton Diocese, and Adam Symound, notary public, and Thomas March and William Hook, who were accustomed to assist in all business of the election, they elected John Coldell sub-prior, who took the oath. The brethren vouch that he is free and lawfully born, of more than 30 years of age. There are also letters from the Bishop appointing Robert Neel and John Pedewell as commissioners to examine the election, and finally confirming it.

This document specially mentions the Priory as being dedicated to St. Mary, the Holy Cross and St. Eustache. Various Canons of Shulbred occur in the record of "Ordines Celebrati"⁸⁷ at this period, namely, we find on September 20th, 1404, James Paresfeld officiating as

⁸⁵ Reg. Chic., R., f. 104.

⁸⁶ Reg. Chic., R., f. 80.

⁸⁷ Reg. Chic., R., f. 103d, 123d, 139d, 141d.

acolyte at the Parish Church of Horsham, while Richard Putteworthe and William Langston officiated as acolytes in the Parish Church of Stoughton (Storrington) on March 2nd, 1408, as sub-deacons in the Parish Church of Handefeld on September 20th, 1410, and as deacons on December 20th of the same year.

For many years the Priory seems to have gone on without any changes worth recording, as the only notices of it occur in the clerical subsidies,³⁸ in the lay subsidy levied in 1411-12,³⁹ which says, "The Prior of Sulbred has the Manor of Rawmere, which is worth yearly beyond reprisals £20. It is unknown whether it pays the tenth or not," and in the lay subsidy of 1427-8,⁴⁰ where we find two entries of his possessions in the Rape of Arundel, namely, "In the Hundred of Bourne of half a fee in Midlavent, the subsidy thence nothing, since the Prior of Shelbrede holds it, and it pays tenths," and "In the Hundred of Demford and Estbourne [Easebourne] of the fourth part of a fee in Wellenchemere, which the Prior of Shelbrede holds, nothing, because it pays tenths."

In 1431 the Priors of Tortington and Shulbred were collectors of the subsidy in the Archdeaconry of Chichester,⁴¹ and their accounts are mentioned in the clerical subsidies of 23 Henry VI.⁴² as forming the basis of the accounts of the Prior of Tortington in that year, while the Prior of Shulbred also acted as sole collector in 1435-6.⁴³

In 1441, by command of Bishop Praty,⁴⁴ the Convent was visited by Richard Eston, his commissioner, whose report was very brief :

Nothing there was found out worthy of correction, except that the house is burdened with old debts. It is hoped that by the industry of the Prior it will be free in a few years.

³⁸ Cler. Subs. 3 Hen. V. $\frac{1}{3}$ $\frac{1}{4}$; 5 Hen. V. $\frac{1}{4}$ $\frac{1}{8}$; 12 Hen. VI. $\frac{1}{8}$ $\frac{1}{8}$; 14 Hen. VI. $\frac{1}{8}$ $\frac{1}{8}$, $\frac{1}{4}$ $\frac{1}{4}$; 18 Hen. VI. $\frac{1}{8}$ $\frac{1}{8}$; 24 Hen. VI. $\frac{1}{8}$ $\frac{1}{8}$; 27 Hen. VI. $\frac{1}{10}$ $\frac{1}{5}$.

³⁹ Lay Subs. 13 Hen. IV. $\frac{1}{8}$ $\frac{1}{4}$.

⁴⁰ Lay Subs. 6 Hen. VI. $\frac{1}{8}$ $\frac{1}{8}$.

⁴¹ Cler. Subs. 9 Hen. VI. $\frac{1}{4}$ $\frac{1}{4}$.

⁴² Cler. Subs. 22 Hen. VI. $\frac{1}{8}$ $\frac{1}{8}$.

⁴³ Cler. Subs. 14 Hen. VI. $\frac{1}{8}$ $\frac{1}{8}$, $\frac{1}{4}$.

⁴⁴ Reg. Chic., E., f. 80.

The accounts of the Prior of Sele, collector of the subsidy in 1449-50,⁴⁵ furnish a more detailed statement of their spiritual and temporal possessions, agreeing with the earlier taxation, "8s. 8d. for this tenth of the spiritual goods of the Prior and Convent of Shulbred, namely, the Church of Welenchemere, in the Deanery of Midhurst, which is taxed at £4. 6s. 8d. yearly, namely, 2s. of each pound; and 21s. 6d. for this tenth of the temporal goods of the said Prior and Convent, which are taxed at £10. 15s., namely, 2s. of each pound."

The Chapel of Lynch—shown in the Valor Ecclesiasticus as their property⁴⁶—cannot have been very profitable to them, as in 1463-4 and again in 1467-8 and 1473-4 it had to be excused payment of the subsidy on account of its poverty.

In 1478 Bishop Story visited the Priory on July 27th⁴⁷ and had to arbitrate between the Prior and brethren regarding the custody of the common seal, which unfortunately has disappeared, and I have not been able to discover any impression of it. This dispute, however, did not blind the Bishop's eyes as to matters requiring correction.

Sir Thomas Clune, the Prior, made his obedience and says that the common seal is in his keeping and has been since he was made Prior. Item, he says the house can expend yearly £46. Item, he is making an inventory of all goods and the state of the house, and has fixed the festival of the birth of the Blessed Mary as the time for it to be given in. Item, they do not keep silence well. Item, John Stanney has by fee as seneschal 26s. 8d. by common seal. Item, Master Vyncent and his heirs by common seal 6s. 8d. Item, the church belfry and chancel are very ruinous. Item, the books do not agree in chant and are wanting in divers books. Item, the house is not in debt more than £4 and there is owed to the Prior and Convent by divers creditors 104s. Sir John Barowe says that the common seal is in the Prior's keeping, and they have not a key, as they are bound to have. Item, Sir John Stanney has 26s. 8d. by office of seneschal. Item, Master Vincent has 6s. 8d. Item, they do not eat together in the refectory as they ought. Item, they do not rise in the night till the fifth hour. Sir Henry Offerton says they do not keep silence. Item, the Prior has the common seal in his keeping.

Sir John Goddard makes his obedience.

⁴⁵ Cler. Subs. 28 Hen. VI. $\frac{13}{10}$ d.

⁴⁶ Cler. Subs. 3 Edw. IV. $\frac{12}{17}$; 7 Edw. IV. $\frac{12}{19}$; 13 Edw. IV. $\frac{12}{22}$.

⁴⁷ Reg. Chic., D., f. 32d.

Injunctions—First to the Prior and Convent that they do not frequent taverns. Item, that they keep silence. Item, that the common seal be kept under two keys, of which the Prior shall have one and the senior Canon the other.

The troublous times which England endured during the reigns of Edward V. and Richard III.—though they may not have affected the affairs of a house so far removed from the world—must naturally, in consequence of the general, social and legal dislocation involved, have thrown it very much into the background, and it is not till the next reign that we find mention again of it as paying subsidies in 1489 and 1497.⁴⁸ About this time also, some of the Canons are mentioned as officiating,⁴⁹ namely, Richard Burgeys and Henry Chambyr, as subdeacons at Aldyngborne, on March 16th, 1493; Richard Burgeys, as deacon at Aldyngborne, on May 24th and December 20th, 1494; Richard Rooke, as acolyte at Aldyngborne, on March 31st, 1498; and Henry Chamber, as priest in the Palace of Chichester, on the vigil of Easter in the same year.

In spite of the large amount of property belonging to the house at the dissolution, as set forth in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, the dawn of the sixteenth century seems to have found Shulbred in pecuniary difficulties, for in 1513⁵⁰ it is expressly included on no less than five occasions among those poor Priories which “by inundation of water, fire, ruin or other cause of fortune are so diminished that they are excused payment of tithes by Robert, Bishop of Chichester.” During the next three years, however, matters must have improved, as the accounts of the Abbot of Dureford, collector of the subsidy in 1515-6,⁵¹ show that the Priory paid 20s. 1d. for spiritual and temporal property, namely, 4s. 4d. for the Church of Wlenchemere and 5s. for the Church of Midlovent, “which churches belong to that Prior, as is contained in the certificate of John Blounham, returned

⁴⁸ Reg. Chic., D., f. 119, 143d.

⁴⁹ Reg. Chic., D., f. 187d, 188, 188d, 192d, 193.

⁵⁰ Reg. Chic., C., f. 141, 142d, 143d, 144d, 145d.

⁵¹ Cler. Subs. 7 Hen. VIII. $\frac{1}{15} \frac{2}{2}$.

to the Treasury in the fifth year and now in the King's keeping," as well as 10s. 9d. for temporalities.

In 1518 the Priory was visited by Bishop Praty,⁵² who issued a long list of injunctions to it, nearly the same as those addressed to the Convent of Boxgrove, which are printed at length in the *Sussex Archaeological Collections*,⁵³ the variation being due to the fact that one was under the rule of St. Augustine and the other under that of St. Benedict; that injunctions prohibiting, among other things, dice and cards and drinking in the church or cemetery should be necessary would seem to indicate a very lax rule.

In 1519 Sir Nicholas Fensham resigned his post as Prior⁵⁴ and was succeeded by John Yonge, Bishop of Callipoli, who was collated to the Priory on June 12th by Bishop Sherburn, the Archdeacon of Chichester being directed to instal him.

This new Prior was a man of very different position to his predecessors⁵⁵ and can only have exercised a nominal rule over the house, as during his two years' headship he was constantly engaged on the duties connected with his other preferments in London. He was born at Newton Longville, in Buckinghamshire, in 1463, and entered Winchester as a scholar in 1474.⁵⁶ In 1480 he obtained a scholarship at New College, Oxford, and became fellow in 1482, which appointment he resigned in 1502, being then Doctor of Divinity. Wood⁵⁷ says that he was then Rector of St. Martin's, Oxford, but by the help of Bishop Kennett's collections in the British Museum⁵⁸ I have been able to prove this erroneous, as Wood has confused him with his more eminent namesake, John Yonge, LL.D., subsequently Master of the Rolls, who died in 1516.

He next became Rector of Allhallows Church, Honey Lane, in London, the date of his induction being uncertain, but he resigned the living on October 30th, 1510,⁵⁹ in consequence of his appointment on the previous 15th

⁵² Reg. Chic., C., f. 159.

⁵³ Vol. IX., p. 61.

⁵⁴ Reg. Chic., C., f. 29d.

⁵⁵ *Dict. of National Biography*.

⁵⁶ Kerby, *Winchester Scholars*.

⁵⁷ Wood, *Athenæ Oxonienses*, Vol. II., p. 727.

⁵⁸ Lansdowne MSS., 979, f. 45.

⁵⁹ Reg. Lond., Fitzjames, f. 23.

September as master or warden of the Hospital of St. Thomas of Acon, in the Cheap, London, on the nomination of the Bishop of London.⁶⁰ The hospital, when he took charge of it, was in debt to the amount of nearly £719, but so zealously did he set to work to improve its condition that in eight years he not only cleared off the debt, but raised over £1,431 to carry out the repairs which he found necessary. On the 18th August, 1510, we find him named in the will of Edmund Dudley⁶¹—executed for treason—together with the Bishop of London, Dr. Colet and Sir Andrew Wyndesore, as guardian of Dudley's son Jerome, until he should be twenty-two, and in furtherance of this charge the four guardians, in 1514, obtained from the King the grant of Dudley's goods and chattels.

The Bishop of London now proposed to make him his Suffragan, and though at first he was doubtful whether his acceptance of the post might not interfere with his work on behalf of the Hospital, the promise that the Mercers' Company should have the long-desired right of appointing the Master of the Hospital in future turned the scale, and accordingly he was consecrated on June 13th, 1513, in the Church of St. Thomas of Acon, as Suffragan Bishop of London,⁶² under the title of Bishop of Callipoli in Thrace, making his profession of obedience to the Archbishop of Heraclius, his titular superior. (Le Neve is in error here in giving the date of his consecration as 1517.) He appears to have regularly acted as Suffragan, until he took up his permanent residence again at Oxford in 1521. He had already, on January 26th, 1513, been given the living of St. Christopher le Stocks,⁶³ which he resigned on April 28th in the following year, having succeeded William Horsey, on March 28th, as Archdeacon of London.⁶⁴ In connection with his election as Prior of Shulbred on June 12th, 1519, it is interesting

⁶⁰ *ibid.*, f. 18. Watney, *History of the Hospital of St. Thomas of Acon*.

⁶¹ *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of Hen. VIII.*, Vol. I., 1,212, 5,427.

⁶² Reg. Lond., Fitzjames, f. 41.

⁶³ Reg. Lond., Fitzjames, f. 49d, 51.

⁶⁴ *ibid.*, f. 50d.

to note that in the Bishop of London's register—among the “Ordines Celebrati” at the end—it is stated that on June 18th, in that year, “offices were not celebrated, either by Richard, Bishop of London, because he was blind, or by John, Bishop of Callipoli, because he was absent, as they say, in Sussex,” and his absence must have been for the purpose of being installed at Shulbred. As I mentioned before, he cannot have devoted much of his time to his duties as Prior, nor is it likely that a man who had taken so active a part in church matters would be content to bury himself in a small and secluded convent. He continued during 1519, 1520 and 1521 to act constantly as Suffragan, the last entry of his doing so being on May 25th, 1521, when he was no longer Prior, having resigned before March 21st previously. After leaving Shulbred he became, on April 23rd, Warden of New College, Oxford, where he died on March 28th, 1526. He had been given the living of Colerne, in Wiltshire, on November 14th, 1524,⁶⁵ and was also Dean of Chichester, an appointment he may have owed to the friendship of Bishop Sherburne, himself a former fellow of New College, while Wood⁶⁶ says that he was a friend of Cardinal Wolsey, to whose favour his appointment as Bishop of Callipoli was due, and that he assisted the Bishop of Lincoln, in 1520, to draw up the privileges which the King granted to the University of Oxford two years later. He was buried in New College Chapel, where a brass representing him in the habit of a Bishop was placed to his memory, the inscription on which has a blank space left where the date of his decease should be. This, according to Wood, is due to the fact that he put up the tablet in his lifetime and his executors omitted to complete it.

I have experienced much difficulty in tracing his career, as all the authorities have confused him with others of the same name, two of whom were also scholars of Winchester and fellows of New College. One of these was the Master of the Rolls and Ambassador for Henry VII. and VIII., who died 1516, and the other probably a relation, as he

⁶⁵ Reg. Cant., Warham, f. 309d.

⁶⁶ *Antiq. Oxon.*

was born at Newton Longville, and became Rector of that place in 1525.

During John Yonge's rule the convent acquired a further grant of land in Midlavent by a patent of Henry VIII.,⁶⁷ giving to "John, Bishop of Callipoli, Prior of the Priory of the Blessed Mary and St. Eustache, of Shuldrede, the custody of two parts of a messuage and sixteen acres in Midlovent, which Master Robert le Coke, the bastard, who died without heirs, held on the day of his death, and the custody of six acres of land in Midlovetta (Midlovent in Pat. 13 Hen. VIII.), which are parcel of a certain tenement called Iremonger tenement, to be held by the Prior and his successors from Michaelmas last for a term of forty years, paying therefor annually to the King for the custody of the two parts of a messuage and sixteen acres 5s. 4d., for which it is answerable to the King, and fourpence besides of increase, and for the said six acres 3s. 6d., for which it is answerable, and two shillings besides of increase." That grant is also confirmed by a patent of the next year.⁶⁸

In 1521, as I mentioned before, John Yonge resigned, and on March 21st William Burrey—a monk from the neighbouring Priory of Tortington—was elected in his place, the confirmation of the election being among the Bishop of Chichester's registers.⁶⁹

On the 21st March, 1521, the election by Shuldrede of William Burrey, a regular Canon of the Order of St. Augustine, belonging to the Priory of Tortington, as Prior, was laid before the Bishop by John Stilman, notary public, sealed with the common seal—William Lawley presiding in his Chapter House of the Priory of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Holy Cross, and St. Eustache of Shelbrede, to the Bishop—since the Priorship is vacant by the free resignation of John Young, Bishop of Gallipoli, late Prior; we sought of our noble patron, Henry, Earl of Northumberland, founder of the Priory, to choose us a Prior, we wrote thus: "We, William Lawley, president, Henry Selwode, John Stanney, Nicholas Dunk, Laurence Gold and Laurence Boys, Canons and Brothers of the said Priory, on March 4th, 1521," &c.

The document goes on to say that they elected William Burrey, with his oath on election, and the confirmation was signed by the Bishop on March 31st, 1522.

⁶⁷ Pat. 12 Hen. VIII., Part 2, M. 20. ⁶⁸ Pat. 13 Hen. VIII., Part 1, M. 19.

⁶⁹ Reg. Chic., C., f. 40.

On July 6th, 1524, John Northiall visited the Priory by command of the Bishop.⁷⁰

The Commissioner having read his commission, Sir William Burrey, Prior of the said house, stood up and certified that he had cited all and singular his brethren to comply according to the tenor of the mandate. Sir William Burrey, Prior of the said house, answered in person, as did Sir Nicholas Dunke, Regular Canon and Clerarius, and Sir John Henton and Laurence Boyes, Regular Canons. Sir William Lawley, Canon regular, did not answer, Sir Henry Selwode was absent, Sir John Stanney did not answer.

The Commissioner then proceeded to examine them to find out matters requiring reform.

Sir William Burrey, Prior, Sir Nicholas Dunk, Sir John Henton and Sir Laurence Boyes, being interrogated, said, "All well." The Commissioner, when this examination had been finished, commanded the Prior to show a faithful account of his administration there, together with a statement of the goods and ornaments of the said Priory, before him at the Feast of St. Andrew next.

Three years later, on May 12th, 1527, the Bishop gave directions for a visitation of the Priory,⁷¹ which was carried out by John Northiall on the ensuing 3rd of July. The members of the house then were William Burrey, the Prior, William Lawley, Nicholas Dunk, John Stanney, John Henton and Henry Selwood, and on being examined as to the state of the Convent, Sir William Burrey and Sir John Stanney said "All well." Sir Nicholas Dunke, Sir John Henton and Sir William Lawley said "All well, except that the Prior is too remiss in paying the stipends of the Canons and too sparing in giving them victuals." The Chancellor commanded the Prior and brethren to eat together in future at breakfast and dinner, unless they be prevented by infirmity, and when they had consented to this, he directed the Prior to "honestly provide the Canons with good and healthy food for each of their meals according to the exigency of the times and feasts."

Nothing in the report of this visitation would lead one to suppose that there was anything radically wrong with the house, but the Canons must have been masters of the art of deception or have deteriorated in their moral character very rapidly, as we can hardly reconcile the

⁷⁰ Reg. Chic., A., f. 93.

⁷¹ Reg. Chic., A., f. 99d, 102.

report with the state of things apparently existing in the house very soon afterwards, which led to its partial suppression by the Bishop of Chichester.

A letter—which I give in full in its proper place—written in 1535 by Richard Layton, one of the chief Commissioners appointed by the King to inquire into the state of the monasteries at the time of the dissolution, states that the Bishop “deposed the Prior and purposed to have suppressed the house some ten years since,” but this cannot have been earlier than 1527, and I am inclined to put it about 1529-30, as in that year, in a list of persons summoned to the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury,⁷² we find among those from the Diocese of Chichester “George, Prior of Shelbrede, personaliter, and by the Prior of Holy Trinity, London;” and as we find William Burrey again as Prior in 1532, it seems probable that on account of the irregularities permitted by the latter, this George was set over the few remains of the house as Prior by the Bishop until William was able to bring sufficient influence to bear for his reinstatement.

He may have been George Walden, who succeeded William Burrey as the last Prior of the house, but there is no direct evidence to show it. It is interesting also to note that of the brethren mentioned at the visitation in 1527, the Prior and two Canons, at least, must have been among those thus stigmatised by Layton, for Speed⁷³ states that at the final dissolution there were in the house “George Walden, Prior of Shulbred, John Standney and Nicholas Duke,” the last two being evidently Sir John Stanney and Sir Nicholas Dunke, who appear in the visitation. It may have been through the influence of the Earl of Northumberland, the patron of the Priory, that William Burrey was restored to his position as Prior, but certainly in 1531 we find the Prior of Shulbred, who from later evidence in connection with the negotiations would seem to have been William Burrey, endeavouring, through the mediation of Richard Bedon, to obtain

⁷² *Letters and Papers, For. and Dom., of Henry VIII., Vol. IV., Part 3, p. 2,701, Convocation 6,047.*

⁷³ Speed, *Hist. of Great Britain*, p. 1,027.

security and tranquility for himself and his house by granting a pension to Thomas Cromwell, and so coming under his protection.

An abstract of Bedon's letter and also of one from the Prior is in the *Foreign and Domestic Letters of Henry VIII.*,⁷⁴ but I insert the letters in full on account of their interest.

Master Cromwell, yn my right hertely wise I comend me unto youe. Sir Gylys Covertt and I dyde move youe of a howse yn Sussex called Shulbredde, wiche is of Chanonse. Sir, synse that I spake withe youe I dyde send my servantt unto the pryor and enformed hym by my letter what offree and promyse that I dyd make youe yn Westminster Hall. Syr, the pryore is rerey well contentedd to performe my promise so that youe wyl be so good master unto hym that they maye be kept owte of the boke and dwell att rest with owte trowbill and contynue styll yn ther howse and that you will make Master Hennege w^t youe yn this mater and this doune youe shall have every of youe xx sh. by the yere by patent duryng your lyffe. Sir, make your patentts and send them to me by this berer and I will surely gett them sealed and send them to youe agayne. Sir, I praye youe lett Master Hennege knowe that this mocyon comythe of me, for I truste that he wylbe the better master onto me. Sir, I do occupie a stuardshype of the Bysshoppe of Sarum under him. Sir, if that youe do opteyn thys purpose for this pore howse I dought natt, butt I shall gett youe a patentt or ij more yn these parties and then I truste that youe and I shalbe better acquayntted. . . . Sir, I praye youe that I maye have some answeere yn wrytyng from youe by this berer that I maye shewe ytt to the priore and coventt to comfortte them withall for do assure youe they are yn great feare and trowbill as Jesu knyoth who ever preserve youe. Scrybeled laysorles att Godalmyng the thursdaye next after Seynt Valentyne by your assured to his lytill poer. Rychard Bedon.

Sir, the howse is of my lorde of Northumberlonde fordacyon and if he can do eny good theryn I thynke my lord Percy wyl helpe you the best he can. . . . ytt is nott above $\frac{xx}{iii}$ li. lande and kepithe vii. chanonse and kepithe the howse and Servythe god barely well.

I praye youe send me master hennage patentt and your.

Hol. To his right well beloved M^r. Cromwell.

Bedon's kind offices, for which no doubt he received some substantial reward, as well as that of "better acquaintance" with Cromwell, brought about the desired result, as the Prior wrote a letter of thanks to Bedon asking him to conclude the arrangement.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ *Letters and Papers*, Vol. V., p. 106 (16).

⁷⁵ *Letters and Papers*, Vol. V., p. 107 (abstract).

Master Bedon, we grete you well and thankyng you off your grete kyndnes sertyfyng you we ar all contentt to the tenowre of your letter yff so be y^t we may have a trew certyffycate that we be yn no more trobulle or dowthe off howse goods or lands. Thus donne lett them make ther wretyng resenablye after dew consyons for hyt schall be celyde. Syr, we desyer you as hartely as we came all that ye wyll do for us in thys trobylle as we schalle for yeu. In specyall unto all myghty god for that we may be abyll to fulfille our promes thys done ye bynde us nomore to you at thys tyme, but Jesu preserve you

By our pour oratorys M prior
for the bredene off Shullbrede.

Hol. To Master Bedon at Schakyllforde.

The formal grant of this annuity to Cromwell—finally settled at 26s. 8d.—has its date fixed as 1533 by the Cromwell Papers,⁷⁶ among which is the Patent stating that “we, William Burrey, Prior of the house or Priory of Shulbredd and the Convent of that place, have given and by this our deed confirmed to Thomas Crumwell, gentleman, an annuity or annual payment of 26s. 8d. to be had by him or his assigns to the end of his life out of our manor of B. in Co. S.” Where this “manor of B.” was I cannot determine, as the only property belonging to them beginning with the letter, according to the Valor Ecclesiasticus, was Bramshott, the rent of which was only 12s. 9d. The annuity, however, must have commenced earlier, for in a document of September 2nd, 1532,⁷⁷ entitled, “The true pie or catalogue of all my master’s obligations, bills obligatory and all other escripts, remaining in the custody of John Williamson his servant,” there is an entry of “a patentt made to my master of . . . another of 26s. 8d. by Will. Burrey, Prior of Shelbrede.” This annuity is also mentioned in 1535⁷⁸ in the “view of the account of Henry Polstede, receiver of the possessions of the right honourable Thomas Cromwell from Michaelmas, 25 Henry VIII., to Michaelmas, 27 Henry VIII.” A letter which is among the Lisle Papers in the Record Office,⁷⁹ written by “your pour bedman

⁷⁶ *Letters and Papers*, Vol. VI., p. 1,625-7.

⁷⁷ *Letters and Papers*, Vol. V., p. 1,285; Vol. VI.

⁷⁸ *Letters and Papers*, Vol. IX., p. 478.

⁷⁹ *Letters and Papers*, Vol. VII., p. 283 (abstract).

William Waytte," to Lady Lisle on March 3rd, 1534, does not throw any fresh light on the history of the Priory, but dealing as it does with one of their minor worries, so trivial that even their most faithful chronicler would scarcely have recounted it, it forms an amusing contrast with the heavier details of their troubles and the sober record of history.

The writer, addressing Lady Lisle as "my singuler gud Lady," recommends his "cosyn Leonar," himself and his wife to her Ladyship and then proceeds:

Gud Madame, I was so bolde to wryte to the Prior of Schelbred for a littell blacke brache⁸⁰ in your ladeschype's name and my lorde's, bothe the whyche wold not be delyveryd on my first bill. But that I was so bolde over my lorde and your ladischyp to cause Rauffe Reggisby, your servant, on my seyde gud lorde's name and yours to carry annother letter to the seyde prior, and he had conveyd the said brache⁸¹ to one Master Dawtre, the wyche was very lothe to deperte wythe here. I schal desire your ladischyp to be so gud lady unto me as let my lord to have some knowledge of thes my bolde lettere in hys name, lest my lord schould take unny displeasure herin, the wyche y wold be very sory to here of.

The dog-fancying Prior may have been either William Burrey or George Walden, who succeeded as the last Prior of Shulbred. William Burrey resigned in 1533 or 1534 and retired to his own Priory of Tortington, which, it will be remembered, he had left in 1521 to take up the reins of government at Shulbred. The troubles which had befallen him must have made him glad enough to resign and take refuge in a less responsible position, though perhaps under stricter rule than his own. A letter, written by Sir William Goring to Cromwell on June 26th, 1536,⁸² contains a mention of him:

I received your letter by Re. Foster 22 June, 28 Hen. VIII., that I should resort to the Priory of Tortyngton. . . . I have sent unto you a bill off the Prior's hand, the which he sent to Sir Wylyyam Bery, dwellyng at Tortyngton, and late Prior of Schelbred.

He retired, however, on a pension, as in the "List of the yearly pensions of every religious man of the late

⁸⁰ Mastiff, greyhound, mongrel, grim,
Hound or spaniel, brach or lym.

—SHAKESPEARE, *King Lear*, Act iii., Scene 6, line 71.

⁸¹ Brach, a scenting dog, a lurcher or beagle (*Nares Glossary*).

⁸² *Letters and Papers*, Vol. X., p. 1,207.

dissolved monasteries within the counties of Surrey and Sussex, in the receipt of William Saunders, Esquire,"⁸³ we find, among others, "Shelbrede two, one at 12l. (Will. Burreys) and one at 40s. (George Dealden);" the last-named seems to be meant for George Walden, but there is a discrepancy in the amount of his pension to which I will refer later. This list is included among the papers of 1538 in the *Foreign and Domestic Series of Letters*,⁸⁴ but is stated in a foot-note to be of a later date.

A Prior quondam with a pension of £12 is also found in the survey of this house among the Suppression Papers in the Record Office quoted hereafter.

George Walden, under whom the Priory, after a chequered career of over 300 years, ceased to exist as a house of religion, was Prior in 1534, for in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, that great record of the possessions of the Church in England, the compilation of which heralded the destruction of the monastic system, he is shown as Prior of Shulbred. In this survey we find a full list of the possessions of the Priory, while a summary of it is also in the Record Office, in the Rents and Surveys Roll, 659,⁸⁵ which is of great service, as it supplies an item among the reprisals of 4s. 1d., "Alms to the poor for the soul of Candeller," the omission of which in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* causes a discrepancy between the aggregate of the items enumerated and the sum total as recorded. From these two documents we learn that the annual value of the property then belonging to Shulbred consisted of:

	£	s.	d.
Profits of lands in the hands of the Prior for the use of his house	106	8	
Rents of lands and tenements at Wellyncherner	17	6	5
Rents in Yapton and Rustyngton	6	15	2
Rents in Chichester		30	4
Rents in Midhurst		3	0
Farm of a mill in Cowtershall		53	4
Rents in Lavant	23	10	0

⁸³ Rot. Harl., I., 11, Brit. Mus.

⁸⁴ *Letters and Papers*, Vol. XIII., Part 2, p. 1, 196.

⁸⁵ Misc. Aug. Office 77.

	£	s.	d.
Profits of the court there in fines and ameracements in ordinary years	12	0	
Rents in Petworth	16	0	
Rents in Perham	5	0	
Rents in Bramshott	12	9	
Rents in Glynde	6	8	
Rents in Lewes			10
Rents in Haslemere	2	4	
Rents in Lurgashall	10	6	
Rent of a mill in Lowdell	2	0	
Rents in Tullyngton			12
Rents in Almodyton in le Manwood	13	4	
Rents in Fernest			6
Rent of a chapel in Lynchess	3	4	
Farm of the rectory of Lavant appropriated to the Priory	14	17	6
Profits of a chapel in Lynchmer belonging to the Priory	66	10	

Total of the temporalities and spiritualities, £79. 15s. 6d.

From which reprisals deducted in accordance with the form of instructions.

To the Bishop of Chichester for sinod for the churches of Lavaunt and Wellenchermer, 3s., and for procurations of the same churches, 3s. 4d.

To the Archdeacon of Chichester for procurations of the same churches, 13s. 4d.

Payment of Rent.

To the Mayor of Chichester as rent paid for lands within that city, 6½d.

Pensions and Indemnities.

To the Prior of Lewes as annual pension, 20s.

To the Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral of Chichester for the indemnity of the church of Lavaunt, 2s.

Alms to the poor for the soul of Candler, 4s. 1d.

Fees of the Seneschal, bailiff and receiver.

To the seneschal of the court of the said priory for his annual fee, 26s. 8d.

To John Bell, bailiff of the priory, for annual fee, 26s. 8d.

To William Brym', receiver of the rents of this monastery, for annual fee, 40s.

Total of the reprisals and deductions, £6. 19s. 7½d.

And it is worth clear £72. 15s. 10½d.

The tithe therefrom £7. 5s. 7¼d.

The chapel of Lynch has also a separate entry to itself, which mentions the pension of 3s. 4d. shown in the valuation of Shulbred as rent of the chapel.

Chapel of Lynches.

John Perkys, clerk, the chaplain there is worth clear 72s. 8d. a year, besides 5s. paid to the Archdeacon of Chichester for procurations, 18d. to the Bishop of Chichester for synod and 10d. for procurations, and 3s. 4d. to the prior of Shulbred for annual pension.

The tithe therefrom 7s. 3¼d.

The near approach of the dissolution caused those in charge of the religious houses to put forth their utmost endeavours to escape the common fate, and George Walden seems to have endeavoured, like his predecessor, to gain the assistance of Dr. Layton, and to have been sent by him to see Cromwell at Winchester and there plead his own cause, as the letter from Layton to Cromwell in 1535, which I have already alluded to in connection with the partial suppression of the house by the Bishop of Chichester about 1529, mentions "the prior of Shelbreds this bringer."

The letter of Dr. Layton is in a very mutilated condition, and an attempt at a complete reconstruction of it is in the *Sussex Archaeological Collections*,⁸⁶ but I insert it exactly as it is in the original, the jagged line showing the torn edge of the sheet, as I do not entirely agree with the reconstruction.

The letter has two endorsements, one of which states that the letter was written by Dr. Layton, "declaring that the Bishopp of Chichester had suppressed the priory of Shelbred for the wickedness of the monks," and gives some extra details of the charges against them, which are not adapted for reproduction, and the other runs, "To the ryght honorable M^r Thomas Crōwell, Cheffe Secretarie to the Kyng's hyghnes, at Winchestre, w^t spede."

The state of morals, or rather the want of them, which it reveals is extraordinary, and though some apologists for the monasteries claim that the general dissolution by Henry VIII. was only carried out to enrich his treasury and was mere robbery without any justification, the fact that this house was in so disreputable a condition as to necessitate such strong measures being taken, not by the

⁸⁶ Vol. VII., p. 219.

King, but by purely ecclesiastical authority, may show that the existing state of things—in some cases at least—necessitated reformation.⁸⁷

Hit may plase your mastershippe to underst
the prior off Shelbrede this bringer to com unt
religiouse man. he hath for hymself but vij
two other v a peisse the fyfft and laste iiij
yet he is made over mydsummer mone
as many as his felowse if his right myn
hym. The bisshope of Chicestre put out all
about x yere sens and deposede the prior
purposed to have suppressedd the howse f
howse iiij hundredth shepe LX oxen v
swyne he hade the barnes full of corne
he made his suppression. he pulled down
made w^t pilers of marbull. he pully
fratre much of the churche he cow
upon the howses / the leyde under the
pypes. all the payment of the frat
ther chalesses w^t all ther howshold s
bare walls / and kepede the londe thus
and towke frō them a goodly In in the
them of XL shelyngs goode rent / wiche
Erle of Northumberlonde caused hÿ to put
he was fownder and now the Kyng ys for
and joineth to the mañ of petworth h
Lorde / the Kyng me thynketh were be
beyng almost downe and yo hit d
for they be all as ye se bawdy knav
the bisshope of Chichestre fere ye n
of hys whereunto he hade no suche
willyng be somewhat plaine w^t
spoile and robry / if I may know your pl
the premisses this bringer the bawdy prior
from Shelebrode prior this Monday by your s

Whether the charges refer to the actual time at which this letter was written, or to the period of its previous reform, I am not sure, but incline to the latter supposition, as the list of residents given in the survey next quoted would seem to point to this conclusion.

The manner in which Dr. Layton spoke of the Prior in this letter was not likely to have furthered his cause, and the Commissioner seems to have counselled the entire suppression of the house, but, except in its landed property, it cannot have benefited the King's exchequer

⁸⁷ *Letters and Papers*, Vol. IX., p. 533 (abstract).

much after Bishop Sherburne's wholesale annexation of everything valuable. Still it would seem from the Survey in the Suppression Papers⁸⁸ to have somewhat recovered from its destitute condition. This survey, returned with those of other monasteries, was based on a form of enquiry into the actual condition of each house under nine chief subject headings, and was made in the latter part of 1536. It is entitled, "The brief certificat of the commysshioners appoynted for the Survey of the Monasteryes and Priories w'in the Countye of Sussex as herafter shall appere," and is printed in full on p. 64, Vol. XLIV., of the *Sussex Archæological Collections*, while another inventory⁸⁹ of the jewels, ornaments, goods, stock, bells and lead, &c., of Shulbred Priory is printed in the same volume, p. 60.

The house was dissolved on or about the 25th March, 1537, and the King assumed possession of all the property belonging to it, while the monks had to leave their old home for whatever refuge they could find. The Prior, however, was given a pension by Henry VIII., the grant being contained in a Royal letter, dated March 17th, 1537, which is in the Record Office,⁹⁰ setting forth that since by the authority of Parliament the late Priory of Shulbrede was dissolved, where one George Wallden was Prior at the time of the suppression and long before, "We, wishing to grant the same George a reasonable annual pension or fit promotion for his living, and that he may sustain proper state," grant him an annual pension of £10 for the rest of his life, or till he shall have been promoted to one or more ecclesiastical benefices, or other suitable promotion of the clear annual value of £10.

The five Canons also receive pensions, and the servants were given rewards.⁹¹

The lands belonging to Shulbred, together with those of many other houses, were granted in October, 1537, to Sir William Fitzwilliam, K.G., Great Admiral of

⁸⁸ Q.R. Suppression Papers, ⁸³³/₃₀.

⁸⁹ Ministers' Accounts, 27-28 Hen. VIII., No. 172.

⁹⁰ Augmentation Office Books, 232, f. 51.

⁹¹ *Sussex Arch. Coll.*, Vol. XLIV., p. 64.

England, and afterwards created Earl of Southampton,⁹² and are specified as "The house and site of the late Priory of Shelbrede, *alias* Shulbrede, Sussex, the church, the belfry and churchyard of the said Priory, a field called 'le Westfeld,' a meadow called 'Beriesmede,' a small croft of land adjoining the said meadow, a piece of land called 'Newland,' a piece of pasture called 'William at Redes,' a piece of land and wood called 'Okeredes,' a piece of land and wood called 'Crokener,' and a moor, a piece of woodland and marsh called 'Lyvermershe,' a croft of land called 'le condyt Crofte,' a piece of land called 'Grenehills,' a piece of land called 'Welchys,' and the land called 'Rodelond,' 'Bushopps Hurste,' 'Courtland' and 'Condit Meadowe,' all of which lie in Schuldbrede, *alias* Shelbrede, and Wellynchmere, Sussex, and belong to the same Priory. Also the Rectory of Lavant and advowson of the Vicarage thereof, and the Chapel of Lynchmere, belonging to the same late Priory, and all manors, messuages, &c., in the vills, fields, or of Shelbrede, *alias* Shuldbrede, Wellynchmere, Yapton, Rustyngton, Chichester, Midhurst, Petworth, Lavant, Parham, Bramshott, Glinde, Lewes, Hasilmere, Lurgashall, Lowdell, Almodyngton in le Manwoode, Fernehurst, Tullynton and Lyncher, Sussex, which belonged to the said Priory, or which George Wallden, the late Prior, held in right of the same on the 4th of February, 27 Henry VIII."

LIST OF PRIORS OF SHULBRED.

1242	John	1519	{ Nicholas Ffensham
1248-9	John		(resigned)
1255-6	Henry	1519 June 12	{ (elected)
1299	Thomas de Henton	to	{ John Yonge
1258	John	1521 Mar. 21	{ (resigned)
1380-1	} William Harethorn	1521 Mar. 21	William Burrey (elected)
to		1524	do.
1404 Nov.	} (resigned)	1529-30	George
1404 Nov.		John Coldell (elected)	1532-3
1478	Thomas Clune	1534	George Walden

⁹² Pat. 29 Hen. VIII., Part 1, M. 21. *Letters and Papers*, Vol. XII., Part 2, p. 1,008 [19].

NOTE.—The Editors hope to publish in a future Volume an Architectural History of the Buildings of the Priory, together with a Plan of its original state as far as can now be ascertained.