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THE PUBLICATIONS OF THE BEDFORDSHIRE
HISTORICAL RECORD SOCIETY
VOLUME XLIII

THE CARTULARY
OF
NEWNHAM PRIORY
PART I

Edited by
JOYCE GODBER

"E vus ne poez ren fere outre
le record ke est vostre garant."
Louthur: Hereford Eyre, 1292.

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IN MEMORIAM

FREDERICK JOSEPH MANNING

The sudden loss in July 1962 of the Society's Treasurer of 34 years' standing is still too recent to be assessed by his fellow-members and friends. He served Bedfordshire so faithfully that his Wiltshire origin was unknown to many. As Dr. Fowler's close friend and executor, he revived the Society after the war of 1939-45, and to the present generation of members he was the repository of the Fowler tradition. His standards were high, and not alone in technical competence: few members can have been more sensitive to good writing or the lack of it in the Society's publications; and when he met a contributor he expected of him or her a breadth of outlook not always found. His own interest and ability were greater than his one contribution to the Society's series (vol. xxxiv, *The Williamson Letters*) suffices to show, for he postponed scholarly work to a retirement which never came; but, by his sound management of the Society's finances, and in spite of the demands of a busy professional life, he made possible the work of others. In 1944 he wrote of Dr. Fowler: "He gave to [the Society] what no one man will again ever give". What "F.J.M." gave to the Society was something different, but it was all his own: will any man give quite that same contribution again?

C.F.

J.G.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I tender my grateful thanks to Patricia Bell, whose help and support in the preparation of this edition have been considerable, especially in the section relating to Bedford.

J.G.

SYMBOLS USED IN TRANSCRIPTION

Insertions	() ⁱ
Cancellations	() ^c
Additions by the transcriber	[]
Illegible parts of the MS.	—	
Folio	*

ABBREVIATIONS

<i>B.H.R.S.</i>	Bedfordshire Historical Record Society.
<i>C.R.O.</i>	County Record Office at Bedford.
<i>Fasti.</i>	MS. clergy lists compiled by F. A. Page-Turner.
<i>L.R.S.</i>	Lincoln Record Society.
<i>R.H.S.</i>	Royal Historical Society's Handbook of British Chronology.
<i>Subsidies.</i>	Two Bedfordshire subsidy lists, 1309 and 1332 (Suffolk Green Books, xviii).
<i>V.C.H.</i>	Victoria County History (of Bedfordshire unless otherwise stated).

INTRODUCTION

THE MANUSCRIPT

The cartulary (British Museum Harl. MS. 3656) measures 10 x 7 in. It has two sets of numbers. The medieval numbers, which are used in this edition and begin on the eighth folio, run to 230 ff.; but ff. 7-17 (apparently containing papal charters) have been cut out; part of f. 18 is deleted; there are no ff. 53-4; half of f. 135 is deleted and f. 136 is missing; there is no f. 163; and there are two ff. 192. The italic numbers 1-224 run straightforwardly throughout, and some published references to the cartulary use these.

On the folios preceding the medieval numeration (italic ff. 2-7) is an incomplete list of 219 charters, the purpose of which is not clear. It does not serve as a table of contents, since the order is not that of the cartulary; nor as an index, as it is not in alphabetical order. It seems to have been a false beginning which was discontinued. On the first folio (italic f. 1) is an undated medieval deed entered in a late medieval current hand, of Simon Fowkes of Wootton to William Crips (?) relating to a messuage in Bedford.

The arrangement, after the false start, is systematic. The date is early 15th century: the latest document is 1409 (67). The prior from 1395 to at least 1435 was William of Wootton. Some years previously Stodleys manor, Wootton, had been acquired; perhaps he had a new cartulary made in order that this and other late 14th century acquisitions might be entered. Over 20 documents are recorded in duplicate, apparently deliberately as a kind of cross reference, and it seems likely that this represents the canons' archive storage, for it is said of one document (811) "one part remains in the treasury of the house of Newnham among the charters of Harrowden and Fenlake". The system however was not foolproof, for more than once documents of earlier date than the cartulary are entered in the margin as if they had escaped notice at the first compilation; and only one or two marginal documents are of later date and entered in an obviously later hand. The impression is given that the copying was done by a rota of scribes: some documents are given in full, some abbreviated, some (145 or one-seventh of the whole) merely noted, on no very apparent

system. There are a number of copyist's errors, and, taken as a whole, it cannot be said that the standard of exactitude is high. The thorn is sometimes used (here given as th); the initial v is usual; initial J is here given as j.

The late Dr. Fowler possessed a transcript made by a professional searcher for him. A new transcript has been made from photostats and compared with this.

EDITORIAL METHOD

In view of the cost of printing so large a cartulary there had to be some austerity in editorial method. The prime need was to print the unpublished text, especially as past references to it have produced one or two misinterpretations.¹ This austerity has taken two forms. Documents already in print in full or in summary (e.g. entries in the patent rolls) are here only given in summaries, with a reference to the existing publication. An exception has been made for William de Beauchamp's "great charter" (1), printed in Dugdale, which is given here because of its importance. Seven late documents are also summarised,² and rents are abbreviated.³ The other economy has been restraint in footnotes. This has been possible because so much material for 13th century Bedfordshire is already in print, and with it studies of many leading families. It would have been feasible to construct thumbnail sketches of many families of more modest station, but this would have added to the cost of volumes which are already large. The minimum reference is given, either to a known date for the grantor or someone occurring in the grant; or for those known to be their contemporaries. The great majority of names in the cartulary are to be found in the published eyres of 1202-47,⁴ and especially in that of 1227. In a few cases however no clue has been found. Marginalia which merely repeat a few words of a document and add no fresh information have not been reproduced. Where the beneficiary of a grant is not stated in the summary, the canons of Newnham should be understood.

¹ For instance, *V.C.H.*, iii, 216, where the Flanville family is misplaced by 200 years. In previous *B.H.R.S.* volumes the great charter of William de Beauchamp (No. 1) has been used for dating persons occurring in it; but this must now be treated with caution (see below).

² The documents not in print elsewhere and here given only in summaries are 54-57, 61, 63, 65.

³ Where details of rent payments are given at length (e.g. "ad festum sancte Marie in Marcio vij d . . .") the rent days are given in brackets in English.

⁴ *B.H.R.S.*, i; iii; ix; xxi.

THE SECULAR CANONS

In 1086 St. Paul's church, Bedford, was a collegiate church served by secular canons, that is, canons who lived independently and not as a religious community. Two, Osmund and Ansfrid, held between them 4 virgates in Biddenham, given by Ralf Tallgebosc and by Leviet the priest; and in Harrowden "the canons" held 3 hides of Countess Judith.¹ They no doubt had endowments in Bedford, but the Bedford entry in Domesday Book is imperfect. Almost certainly a number of grants were made to them between 1086 and 1153; but in the latter year the canons' charters were lost when St. Paul's church was damaged by the future Henry II, who gave them compensation (48). Several grants which are mentioned in the cartulary but for which there are no actual charters probably belong to this period, among the grantors being Payn de Beauchamp and his sister Elena (5); also Richard and Ascanius Campion in Stagsden (582). It appears (1, 5, 6, 83) that in the middle of the 12th century there were six canons, William, Gilbert, Philip, Ralph, Richard and Nicholas; Nicholas being at the same time Archdeacon of Bedford; and that their prebends (or land which each canon had for his maintenance) totalled 37 tenements and about 130 acres, mainly in Bedford, also in Goldington, Biddenham and Harrowden.² There was too a school connected with them (196), as was St. Mary's or Herne chapel.

REGULARISATION

On the continent the 11th century had seen the beginning of the regularisation of secular canons, i.e. of their adoption of a corporate life; and the 12th century saw a great extension of this movement in England and the general adoption of the Augustinian rule.³ In Bedford a particular case brought matters to a head in 1164—the killing of a knight by Philip, one of the canons, who belonged to the de Broy family of Bletsoe.⁴ The case is national history in that it affected the

¹ *V.C.H.*, i, 230, 260.

² See Simon de Beauchamp's foundation charter (5), which gives the prebends' lands outside Bedford as follows: William, Philip and Gilbert, 6 virgates in Goldington; Richard and Ralph, 3 hides in Harrowden; Philip and Gilbert, 1 hide in Ford; Archdeacon Nicholas, $\frac{1}{2}$ hide in Renhold.

³ J. C. Dickinson, *Origins of the Austin Canons*, 59–60.

⁴ Fowler, *Prebends of Bedford*, 8; *V.C.H.*, i, 377–8; Ralph de Diceto, *Ymag. Hist. (Rolls Series)*, i, 313; *Materials for the Life of Thomas Becket (Rolls Series)*, i, 12–3; iii, 45.

dispute between Henry II and Archbishop Thomas Becket as to whether clerks accused of criminal charges should be subject to the royal courts. Locally the incident must have been a matter of concern and have expedited the movement towards life under a rule, which was adopted in 1166.

Four names are prominent. It must have been among the last acts of the widowed Countess Rose de Beauchamp to confirm several Stagsden gifts to the new regular canons (34-6, 599), perhaps while the required formalities were in progress. Soon afterwards, the young son and heir of her second marriage, Simon de Beauchamp, who came of age *c.* 1164-5, publicly in St. Paul's church before clergy and people confirmed to William, the first prior, its prebends and possessions; and this he did for his mother's soul, and with the consent of Henry II, Archbishop Thomas Becket, and the Bishop of Lincoln, probably in 1166 (7); the approval of Pope Alexander III came through shortly afterwards (5). The endowments recited include gifts by Simon himself, and confirmation by him of other grants especially in Goldington and Stagsden; for most of which no entries are found in the cartulary and some must be years earlier. Archdeacon Nicholas, who did not take the rule, stood their friend on several occasions (196-7, 916), and soon resigned to them the school and St. Mary's chapel which he at first retained with their consent. Henry II also granted them privileges (39-45).

The wording of the founder's grant and of Henry II's confirmation (5 and 40) may mean that the change-over would take place gradually, that regular canons would succeed to the prebends as the secular canons died. On the other hand it is noteworthy that the name of the first prior, William (7), was borne by one of the secular canons; and that he had died or resigned by 1170 (140). Some help and advice was obtained from another Augustinian priory, Merton in Surrey, which had Bedford connections at least as early as 1170 (140) in St. Peter Merton; but Merton explicitly stated that Bedford owed them no obedience on this account (141).

NEWNHAM

The regular Canons are described as of Bedford in a number of documents up to 1178 (139). Buildings of a different type and environment suited to the new life were necessary. Perhaps the choice of a site was influenced by the nearness to Bedford

of Newnham in the parish of Goldington, the recent grants of land in that area, and the fact that the prebend of William of Gorham, secular canon and perhaps the first prior, lay in Goldington (316). The move must have taken place soon after 1178, and at latest by 1181, since it was in the time of Archdeacon Nicholas (197); for dating purposes "c. 1180" has been used. In 1182 the founder gave tithes of his assart for the fabric of Newnham (8; see also 14). A few years later he confirmed his own and other grants to Newnham (6 and cf. 10, 12, 13, 21); and continued his benefactions (11, 15-17), also defending the canons as occasion arose (22-3, 29). Probably now, as certainly was still the case much later, a chaplain was appointed to serve St. Paul's church at Bedford.¹

Simon was succeeded about 1206/7 by his son William, who died in 1260.² It would be natural to have Newnham's possessions confirmed soon after this. But William presents a problem. His very long charter (1) confirms over a hundred grants to Newnham in many parishes. From internal evidence it cannot be earlier than 1254 (cf. 780); yet two of the witnesses appear to be dead by 1225. This charter therefore seems to be a conflation of two or more originals. It was probably drawn up in 1391 for the purpose of confirmation by Thomas Mowbray, Earl of Nottingham (2); it is notable that the same slight errors by the copyist which occur in (1) in the cartulary are found in Mowbray's original which was known to Dugdale.³

It appears, from the fewness of Simon's confirmations, and the number of grants confirmed by William, that it was early in the 13th century that the possessions of Newnham and its position in popular esteem greatly increased. This was in spite of trouble in John's reign during Fawkes de Bréauté's occupation of Bedford castle, when Fawkes used stone from St. Paul's church for his fortifications⁴ (cf. however 857), damage which Henry III tried to repay.⁵ This growth would appear to have taken place with William de Beauchamp's approval; and he, like his father, more than once made representations

¹ St. Paul's vicarage was ordained in 1528; Linc. R.O., Reg. 26, ff. 202-3. I am indebted to Mrs. Varley for this reference, and that in n. 6 on p. xviii. The first vicar was John Berde (Reg. 27, f. 263v.).

² *B.H.R.S.*, i, 10-14.

³ *Mon. Angl.*, vi, 374-7.

⁴ *Mat. Paris, Chron. Maj.*, iii, 87.

⁵ *Cal. Pat. R.*, 1216-25, pp. 29, 173. Henry's grant of Finedon church does not seem to have taken effect, for he granted it elsewhere in 1241 (*Cal. Ch. R.*, i, 262).

on the priory's behalf (25-6, 28), though in 1254 he or his steward exceeded his rights at the election of a new prior.¹

William de Beauchamp the younger (d. 1262)² made a grant to the priory (31), and with his brother's death in 1265 the male line was extinct. The only further traces of the patron in the cartulary are two charters by Thomas Mowbray, Earl of Nottingham, in 1391 and 1392 (2, 37).

There is a little fresh light on the priory's internal affairs. William the first prior (master William of Gorham?) is mentioned only four times. If it was indeed he who first conceived the move, it was certainly carried out by the second prior, Auger, the only prior not already appearing in published lists. Auger occurs more than any other prior, 21 times in all (9 at Bedford, 12 at Newnham). It seems that he held office for about 20 years, that he organised the move, planned the first buildings there (8, 14, 849-50), and did much to establish the priory in its early years. Ralph, Eustace and Hervey (the last died or resigned in 1238) all occur several times, Hervey almost as often as Auger. In their time many modest gifts were received, and a high proportion of the occasional causes of friction which arose with older religious houses were ironed out. While Eustace was prior an Augustinian chapter was held at Bedford in 1220.³ In 1228 Hervey (with the prior of Dunstable) was appointed visitor for Lincoln and Coventry dioceses.⁴ Up to the time of Stephen (d. 1264) there seems to have been a consistent policy of exchanging lands in Goldington, no doubt to improve the priory site and consolidate lands in its neighbourhood (316, 295, 324, 281, 292-3, 325-8, 312, 332). Negotiations to eliminate common right in the area took a longer period (285, 266, 284), and priors John of Bedford (1283-1300) and William of Biddenham (1300-7) are especially mentioned as having enlarged the priory garden which, even in the founder's time, extended eastward as far as the river (15). The great gate is mentioned (251, 285, 440). Perhaps building in the time of prior John of Astwick accounted for the priory being in debt to Italian merchants in 1320,⁵

¹ *V.C.H.*, i, 379; *Ann. Mon.*, iii, 172 (1247); 191 (1254); *B.H.R.S.*, i, 13.

² *B.H.R.S.*, i, 19.

³ D. Knowles, *The Religious Orders*, i, 58, citing H. S. Salter, *Chapters of the Augustinian Canons*.

⁴ *Ann. Mon.*, iii, 112.

⁵ *Cal. Close R.*, 1318-23, pp. 223, 327, 329.

about which time, incidentally, Newnham had more than one extra inmate at the royal request.¹

Among canons whose names occur in the cartulary are three cellarers, Adam of Broughton, Robert and Walter. There is no evidence of the number of canons. The acknowledgement of supremacy in 1535 was signed by the prior, sub-prior, fourteen canons and two lay brothers.² A lease of 1537 is signed by prior, sub-prior, and fifteen canons.³

POSSESSIONS: SPIRITUALITIES

In 1166 Simon de Beauchamp confirmed to the regular canons the church of Bedford St. Paul, and gave them also twelve churches (5): Aspley Guise, Gt. Barford, Cardington, Goldington, Cockayne Hatley, Ravensden, Renhold, Southill, Stagsden, Turvey, Willington and Wootton; and confirmed two gifts by others: Lower Gravenhurst given by William son of Robert (938), and Salford by Nigel of Salford (954). A little later the canons received All Saints, Bedford (172). Wrestlingworth was added by Elias Taillebois (925, 927-8).

Other claims existed for some of these. Missenden Abbey surrendered any right it had to Bedford All Saints (174). Aspley Guise was claimed by Dunstable Priory (23, 29); Cockayne Hatley by the Port family (911-23); and over Wootton there were complications with Hugh Dossel (25-6, 97, 104). Trouble over Southill arose between Simon de Beauchamp and Walter de Trailly (14), and seems to lie behind the three grants or quitclaims each of one-third (856-8). Wrestlingworth was disputed by Roger of Hereford (936-7). The Bishop himself instituted an enquiry into seven of the churches (Gt. Barford, Cardington, Goldington, Renhold, Stagsden, Willington and Wootton), when William de Beauchamp upheld his father's gifts (28).

Newnham also had, but was unable to sustain claims to some other churches. Those to Holcote and Eynesbury (3, 87), the origin of which is not clear, were settled by agreement (Eynesbury, 92-3, 144-5; Holcote, 94, 96, 952-3). The royal

¹ John de la Sausery, who had long served the king and his family, 1318; and a canon of Newburgh priory, 1322, as a result of the Scottish wars; *Cal. Close R.*, 1318-23, pp. 97, 683.

² *V.C.H.*, i, 380.

³ *C.R.O.*, TW 241. Similar numbers sign grants of next presentation in 1538: *Linc. R.O.*, PD1545/12 and 1550/14.

gift of Finedon, Northants., apparently did not take effect.¹

In some cases gifts to the priory's churches for lights or other purposes are entered in the cartulary, for instance Cardington (many between nos. 770 and 824), and Stagsden (576). The endowments of Welbury hermitage, Renhold, passed to Newnham (396).

Vicarages for most of the priory's churches were ordained by Hugh of Wells, Bishop of Lincoln, but more than once there was uncertainty with the incumbent, sometimes giving rise to friction (Cardington, 826, 109-10; Gravenhurst, 197, 945, 99, 943; Salford, 958-9); and Wootton seems to have been involved with Marston (97, 104, 158, 157). Bishop Hugh's arrangements for Gt. Barford were revised by Grosseteste, but subsequently restored (108). Both the founder and others had given tithes of mills or of assart, or parts of tithes, in various places (see 5); and this also led to complications (Stagsden, 156; Goldington, 340-1; Ravensden, 427; Holwell, 90, 123-5; Sharnbrook, 692).

There were already other religious houses holding similar rights in areas adjacent to those of Newnham; and a number of documents settle queries which arose with these or with other churches, sometimes amicably, sometimes as the result of protracted lawsuits. Such documents relating to Bedford are 140, 154, 146, 163. The chief difficulties arose with Warden Abbey; there was a complication about a gift in Tilwick, Ravensden (133-4); but the main trouble was in Southill where friction began in the founder's time and continued over a long period (127-38). With Elstow Abbey (148-9) relations were usually good;² as also with Cauldwell Priory (153); but there were disputes with Chicksands Priory (159-61). Religious houses outside Bedfordshire were also involved in the priory's arrangements; thus Newnham had the tithes of Joel's mill, Bedford, which belonged to Bermondsey (see, *inter alia*, 162); Pipewell Abbey had a fulling mill at Gt. Barford (155, 745); and there were agreements with Leicester Abbey over Sharnbrook (150-1), Huntingdon Priory over Wrestlingworth (147), St. Neots Priory over Stagsden (145); with the Hospitallers over Wootton (152) and the Templars over Sharnbrook (696);

¹ See n. 5 on p. xi.

² See an article by H. Johnstone in the *Church Quarterly Review*, 1941, p. 50, about a disputed election at Elstow in 1315.

and with a leper hospital at St. Albans over Southill (143). With Newnham's original sponsor, Merton Priory, there was trouble over Hunsdon, Herts. (139, 142).

POSSESSIONS: TEMPORALITIES

Most of the Bedford property derived from the secular canons (83 and cf. 48), and thus is not covered in the cartulary. Further messuages, rents, and small amounts of land were obtained during the 13th and early 14th centuries, the largest being 44 selions and 15 acres. Newnham's claim to hold Trumpington mead in severalty during the summer was sometimes infringed; but after an action by prior William of Woodford it was acknowledged in 1359 (234 and cf. 167). The extent of Newnham's property in Bedford, including over 400 acres of land, is given in a published rental of 1506-7.¹

Those of the priory's estates in the county round which afterwards became known as manors were at Goldington, Biddenham, Cardington, Sharnbrook, Ravensden, Renhold, Stotfold and Wootton.² These were built up as follows.

The Goldington grants, where Newnham inherited 6 virgates from the secular canons (5), are the most numerous and are also early; hence probably the decision to move to Newnham. Ten acres were given by Wigain before 1166 (5); and his son William and also Roger Wigain later followed suit. Other early donors mentioned by the founder, for whom original grants are lacking, are Hugh of Goldington, Ralph son of Ascelin, and Nigel and David Malherbe. In the 13th century donors include the families of Pippard (251-65), Triket (267-72), Falconer (286-91); and one taking its name from Goldington (277-82, 337-9). Many grants are very small, there being several of 1 rood only.

In Biddenham Newnham inherited 4 virgates from the secular canons, and these are described by the founder as a hide in Ford [End] (5). Apart from the tithes of the mill from Simon de Beauchamp, few if any additions were made in the 12th century, but from about 1200 the Passelewe family made several small grants (600-13), and in this century there were

¹ *B.H.R.S.*, xxv, 15-81.

² Goldington, *V.C.H.*, iii, 203; Biddenham, *V.C.H.*, iii, 37; Cardington, (Fenlake Barns), *V.C.H.*, iii, 236; Sharnbrook (Toft), *V.C.H.*, iii, 90; Ravensden, *V.C.H.*, iii, 210; Renhold (Salphobury), *V.C.H.*, iii, 216; Stotfold, *V.C.H.*, ii, 301; and Wootton (Canons and Stodleys), *V.C.H.*, iii, 331.

other benefactions ranging from a rood to 33 acres and from $\frac{1}{4}$ d. to 5s. rent. A survey of this property in 1505-6 has been published.¹

Cardington again was connected with the secular canons (3 hides at Harrowden; see 5); and there are grants before 1166 for which originals are lacking. The numerous donors are people of modest standing, among them the families of Cotes (790-4, 799) and Young (815-6, 828). The amounts of land are small, the largest being $\frac{1}{2}$ virgate. Some grants to Cardington church entered here are by the Boinon or Bunyan family (796-8).

In Sharnbrook among the earliest donors was the family of Druel; William Druel was steward to Simon de Beauchamp (15). Another family was that of Triket, tenants of the honour of Boulogne (see 82). These were followed during the earlier part of the 13th century by a number of smaller donors from $1\frac{1}{2}$ roods upwards.

For Renhold and Ravensden there appear to be no benefactions before *c.* 1200. Donors of about this date include the family of Avenel (364-71); Nicholas, clerk and dean (404-7), apparently not the Archdeacon; the Frankeleyn family (394, 399-400); and the Engaynes (408-13). There are also benefactors with Cople connections, Geoffrey Rufus (342-3, 348, 385, 443), and Simon son of Arnold (382-3). Most grants are small, the least being one selion; the largest specified seems to be a virgate.

In Stotfold the Newnham holding seems mainly to derive from the Malherbe land (869-71) and from Robert le Rus who gave 60 acres (876).

For Wootton there are a few early grants (483, 465-6, 470, and *cf.* 478, 488). Hugh de St. Edward gave 30 acres (467) and Simon of Wroxhill 29 acres (485); and there are smaller benefactions.

Newnham had considerable property in Stagsden. Leading donors are the families of Campion (*e.g.* 581), Broy (549-56), Goldston (578-80, 597-8), Burdelys (576 and Gemys (590-4); while Adam son of Drew gave 77 acres (559). Gt. Barford, Willington, Southill and Edworth complete the other main properties round Bedford. There are a very few gifts outside the county.

¹ *B.H.R.S.*, xxv, 82-103.

Thus by 1300 the main endowments had been received. The part played by the Beauchamps was not extensive. The great majority of the grants are quite small, some of them very small; moreover they come from small people—few donors are even lords of manors. In date range they cover about 150 years, but the majority are early 13th century.

The 14th century however saw some extension. The Statute of Mortmain had made the acquisition of land more difficult, but not impossible, and, at the instance of Queen Isabel, Edward II in 1310 agreed to further acquisitions up to the annual value of £20 p.a. (58). Land in and near Bedford was acquired in the next hundred years (60–66), and this licence was still being quoted in 1409 (67). The main extension was in Wootton. The St. Edward lands here passed by 1318 to an heiress, Joan, wife of Thomas de Stodley, and the Wootton section is largely made up of acquisitions by Thomas (495–548). He left a son Thomas (516), who seems to have been short-lived. The property is then found in the hands of Elizabeth (perhaps by birth a Stodley), widow of Richard Bonyngton of Finedon (489–91, 535); and by trustees it is conveyed to Newnham by 1390 (64–66).

Estate management is not prominent in the cartulary. If the eight grants of villeins, mostly in the 12th or early 13th centuries, are considered as property, there are only about 30 leases or similar documents, nearly half of them being for Bedford and Cardington; the majority are 13th century, but there are some for the 12th and 14th centuries. The canons themselves had on lease Joel's mill, Bedford. Some late supplementary material is found in the County Record Office: an account roll, a lease, and some court rolls, rentals and surveys.¹

LATER HISTORY

The cartulary does not throw light on the quality of the religious life lived at Newnham, except in so far as the many gifts of the 13th century reflect the esteem in which it was then held. It may be questioned whether any human community can consistently live on the highest level for nearly 400 years, and what gets into the record is the occasional lapse from a

¹ The account roll is 1519/20 (TW 797); the lease 1536/7 (TW 241); and the court rolls are Biddenham, 1415–1538 (TW 713–6); and Stotfold, 1461–1538 (X 17/10). Except for one of 1427/8 for Stotfold (HA 508), all the other documents are between 1488 and 1539: HA 510; TW 770, 772–3; AD 328–9; PO 70; W 2623.

high standard. One such is known for Newnham, and this occurs at the end of the 40-year term of office of the aged prior, William of Wootton, in 1435: there was a violent incident apparently between two canons, John Rothwell and William Thornham, and there appear also to have been inadequacies in management,¹ so that a few years later in 1442 the new prior had not yet restored a good footing; there seems also to have been at this time in John Kempston at least one case of mistaken vocation.² The Bishop wrote thus: "Having compassion with fatherly kindness upon the venerable old age and hoary hairs of our beloved son, brother William Wottone . . . and balancing in the scale of our mind the praiseworthy and protracted toils which for very many days and years he had laudably endured in the governance of the said priory in things both spiritual and temporal, we straitly enjoin and command you . . . that you treat the said brother William your prior, who is now set almost at the uttermost bounds of his life, with reverence and courtesy, and, according to the requirement of his state, that you minister and cause to be ministered to him everything if it be necessary, whether in victual or clothing and other things requisite, with humanity and without complaining or offence".³

Several years later, in the earliest surviving local wills, bequests such as the following seem to show that Newnham had a high place in local regard: "to the prior of Newnham 13s. 4d., and to the cellarer 6s. 8d., and to each canon and novice in the place 3s. 4d."⁴

As might be expected, the last prior to serve for a considerable term, John Ashwell, was conservative in outlook, and not receptive to the new trends in doctrinal thought, for in 1527 he apparently urged upon the Bishop of Lincoln action against the reformer, George Joye.⁵

It was a new prior, John Burne, who surrendered the house in 1541. The site, including a meadow called the great garden, was granted to Urian Brereton.⁶

¹ *L.R.S.*, vii, 87-92.

² *Ibid.*, xxi, 231-9.

³ *Ibid.*, vii, 91.

⁴ *B.H.R.S.*, xxxvii, 28; and other examples in the same volume.

⁵ *The letters whyche Johan Ashwell priour of Neunham Abbey besydes Bedforde sent secretly to the Byshope of Lyncolne 1527*, Strasburg, 1529.

⁶ *V.C.H.*, iii, 205. Sir Robert Catlin, chief justice, resided there in 1559 (*Northants. R.S.*, xix, 50-2).

THE CARTULARY OF NEWNHAM PRIORY

1. Confirmation by William de Beauchamp of grants made or confirmed by his father, the founder (5-21); with confirmation of grants by himself and by about a hundred other donors of property in Goldington, Cardington, Wootton, Willington, Cople, Southill, Stagsden, Renhold, Ravensden, Gt. Barford, Roxton and Stotfold; and laying down procedure to be followed in a vacancy; apparently a later conflation of two or more originals of approximate dates 1220-60.

Magna carta de omnibus prebendis et possessionibus.

Uniuersis sancte matris ecclesie filiis presentibus et futuris Willelmus de Bellocampo salutem. Nouerit uniuersitas uestra quod ego pro salute anime mee et omnium predecessorum et successorum meorum dedi concessi et hac presenti carta mea confirmaui deo et ecclesie sancti Pauli de Newenham' et canonicis meis regularibus ibidem deo seruientibus et eorum successoribus ecclesiam sancti Pauli de Bedeford' cum omnibus prebendis et possessionibus et libertatibus eidem ecclesie pertinentibus in puram et perpetuam elemosinam liberam et quietam ab omni seculari seruicio et consuetudine et exactione.

Iste autem sunt possessiones: ecclesia de Kerdington', ecclesia de Wyliton', ecclesia de Southgiuel', ecclesia de Hatteleia, ecclesia de Wutton', ecclesia de Stacheden', ecclesia de Aspeleia, ecclesia de Goldyngton', ecclesia de Rauenesden', ecclesia de Ronhale, ecclesia de Bereford', ecclesia de Turueya cum omnibus decimacionibus et aliis pertinenciis predictarum ecclesiarum.

Item concessi eis duas partes decimarum in molendinis et pannagiis et in ceteris dominiorum meorum de Stotfald', de Haunes, de Kaysho, de Lincelade, de Eueresholt, de Hunesdon', de Puttenho, de Calworth', de Aspeleya, de toto feodo meo in Holewell', et unam marcam argenti per annum de molendino de Lincelade, et duas partes decimarum unius hide et dimidie in Chikesand' de terra que fuit Ricardi Monachi, et decimam dimidie hide in Houton' de terra Nigelli Malerbe, et decimam quam Jordanus presbiter tenuit in territorio de Haunes, et decimam molendini monachorum de Bermundesheye in Bedeford', et decimam molendinorum de Bideham', de Risingho, de Ranhale, de Wyliton', de Kerdington'. Item concessi eis totum molendinum Golde, et molendinum quod dicitur de castello Bedeford', cum nouo molendino quod pater meus ibidem construere fecit, cum locis et stagnis in quibus dicta molendina construuntur et cum toto stagno a molendinis castelli Bedford', cum salicibus et arboribus in eodem crescentibus usque ad stagnum Joelis ad plantandum et assartandum et emendandum quociens et quandocumque uoluerint, liberum et solutum* ab omni seculari seruicio.

Et concessi eis pratellum illud quod iacet ad orientalem partem

molendinorum de castello quod vocatur Castelham', et totam aquam cum piscacione et cum omnibus libertatibus et commoditatibus eidem aque pertinentibus a molendinis castelli Bedeford' ex parte le Sele et campi de Goldyngton', et totam aquam a molendino Joelis de Bedeford' ex parte prati de Fenlake usque ad caput orientale gardini dictorum canonicorum et iuxta campos de Goldyngton' ex utraque parte Swinholm, et ipsum Swinholm cum quinque acris terre que iacent iuxta Inland a via de Fenlak' cum insula latitudine eiusdem terre usque ad stagnum dictorum canonicorum cum omnibus pertinentiis suis libere et quiete ab omni seculari seruicio et exactione; ita ut illam aquam ad piscandum nullus habeat ingressum absque eorum licencia petita et optenta. Et concessi eis liberum ingressum et regressum in dicta aqua mea cum nauiculis et batellis eorum ad carianum quicquid voluerint de grangiis de Fenlak' apud Newenham' et de Newenham' apud Fenlak' pro voluntate eorum cum necesse fuerit. Item concessi eis ad recreacionem canonicorum infirmorum licenciam piscandi bis vel ter in ebdomada cum retibus vel cum aliis ingenis si voluerint in tota aqua mea a capite orientali gardini eorum usque ad caput orientale ville de Fenlak'. Habebunt etiam prefati canonici cignos suos errarios quantos voluerint natantes et nidificantes cum pullis et cineolis eorum depascentes et errantes in omnibus aquis meis communibus et separatis per Ousam a dominio baronie ed Eton' usque ad dominium baronie de Wahull' absque calumpnia et contradictione mei vel heredum meorum inperpetuum.

Item concessi eis omnes terras tenementa et possessiones cum omnibus suis pertinentiis et libertatibus quas habent in villa et parochia de Goldyngton' de feodo meo ex dono domini Symonis de Bellocampo et comitisse Roys, videlicet: sex virgatas terre que fuerunt de prebenda Willelmi et Philippi et Gilberti canonicorum, et unam virgatom terre ex dono Dauid Malerbe, et dimidiam virgatom terre ex* dono Radulphi filii Ascelini, et decem acras terre ex dono Wigaeni, et quicquid habent ex dono Rogeri et Willelmi et Hugonis Wygayn et Hugonis de Goldington', et ex dono Willelmi et Nicholai filiorum predicti Hugonis, et ex dono Michaelis de Goldyngton' et Willelmi fratris eius, et ex dono Ade Pippard' et Roberti et Walteri Pippard', et ex dono Nicholai vicarii de Goldington', et ex dono Henrici et Symonis et Willelmi Tryket, et ex dono Rogeri [rectius Reginaldi?] Haliday et Radulphi Brid et Galfridi et Radulphi Koker', et ex dono Ade filii Walteri et Roberti Mauger et Nigelli Falcanarii et Walteri de Rysle, et ex dono Ade filii Roberti et Gilberti Finche filii Hugonis Finch', et ex dono Hugonis de Goldington' et Willelmi filii eius, et quicquid habent ex dono aliorum tenencium de feodo meo in eadem villa et parochia. Habebunt etiam prefati canonici taurum et aprum liberi et vagi per totum dominium meum ex parte de Goldington' a ponte de Bideham' usque ad dominium baronie de Eton' absque calumpnia et contradictione mei vel heredum meorum inperpetuum.

Item concessi eis unam hidam terre in Forda que fuit de prebenda

Philippi et Gilberti canonicorum, et quicquid habent in terris tenementis redditibus et possessionibus ex dono omnium tenencium de feodo meo in villa et parochia de Bideham' et de Bruham'.

Item concessi eis quicquid habent in Colworth' in parochia de Scharnebrok' de dono Willelmi Druel', et ex dono aliorum tenencium de feodo meo in villa et parochia supradictis.

Item concessi eis ecclesiam de Grauenhurst' quam habent ex dono Willelmi filii Roberti, et ecclesiam de Salford' quam habent ex dono Nigelli de Salford'.

Item concessi eis tres hidas terre in Harudon' et Cotes in parochia de Kerdington' que fuerunt de prebenda Ricardi et Radulphi canonicorum cum omnibus pertinenciis et libertatibus suis, et terram quam pater meus dedit eis in Kerdington' in escambium illius terre quam Elena de Bellocampo dedit in Stotfold' que iacet iuxta ecclesiam de Kerdington', et unam virgatam terre in eadem villa ex dono Pagani de Bellocampo, et dimidiam virgatam terre in eadem villa ex dono Johannis Pincerne, et totum boscum quod vocatur Brendewode cum frankbordo* duorum pedum et dimidii per circuitum illius bosci cum libero introitu et exitu cum equis et carectis eorum per boscum meum de Kerdington' quociens et quandocumque voluerint et necessitatem habuerint. Habebunt etiam prefati canonici triginta porcos singulis annis quietos a pannagio in toto bosco meo de Kerdington' et concessi eis quicquid habent ex dono Thome et Roberti Beynoun et Galfridi filii Gilberti et antecessorum eius, et ex dono Roberti de Cotes et Ricardi filii Aylwyni et Johannis de Kerdyngton', et ex dono Ade filii Radulphi de Hereford' et Willelmi capellani et Johannis Haryng' et Roberti coci de Cotes, et ex dono Rogeri et Bartholomei le Joefne de Harudon' et Hugonis Panel' et Willelmi filii Walteri [rectius Willelmi?] de Puttes et quicquid habent in terris tenementis redditibus et possessionibus et in omnibus aliis rebus ex dono aliorum tenencium de feodo meo in parochia et villa predictis. Habebunt etiam prefati canonici taurum et aprum liberi et vagi per totum dominium meum ex parte de Fenlak' a villa de Bedford' usque ad pontem de Gretteford' absque calumpnia et contradictione mei vel heredum meorum inperpetuum.

Item concessi eis terram quam Jordanus camerarius dedit eis in Londoniis que vocatur Achisbiria.

Item concessi eis omnes terras tenementa et possessiones cum omnibus pertinenciis suis quas habent de feodo meo in villa et parochia de Wutton' in puram et perpetuam elemosinam, et quicquid habent ex dono Daud et Ricardi le Loring', et ex dono Willelmi et Hugonis de sancto Edwardo et Johannis fratris Symonis capellani et Willelmi sacerdotis de Kerdington', et ex dono Cecilie [rectius Juliane?] relicte Hugonis Engayne et Claricie filie Hugonis Engayne, et ex dono Johannis filii Fulconis et Willelmi filii Symonis et Johannis [rectius filii?] venatoris et quicquid habent ex dono aliorum tenencium de feodo meo in terris tenementis redditibus et possessionibus et in omnibus aliis rebus in villa et parochia predictis.

Item concessi eis omnes terras et tenementa et possessiones cum

omnibus pertinenciis suis quas habent in parochia et villa de Wyliton', videlicet decem acras terre que sunt de gleba ecclesie eiusdem ville, et quatuor virgatas terre quas habent de dono meo per concordiam factam in curia domini regis inter me et predictos canonicos, et quicquid habent ex dono Walteri filii Mauricii et Symonis Balle de Wyliton', et ex dono Symonis Pikot et Roberti Marchaunt* et Symonis le Rotur de eadem, et quicquid habent ex dono aliorum tenencium de feodo meo in eadem villa et parochia libere et quiete ab omni seculari seruicio, saluo michi et heredibus meis redditu trium caponum per annum ad festum natalis domini quem dicti canonici et eorum successores soluere debent et saluo mihi et heredibus meis forinseco seruicio pro duabus virgatis terre tantum in eadem villa quod similiter prefati canonici facere debent in perpetuum absque omni seruicio seculari.

Item concessi eis quicquid habent de feodo meo in villa et parochia de Cogepol ex dono Roberti Lismorensis episcopi et Willelmi capellani, et ex dono Symonis Anglici et Henrici filii Henrici le Heyr, et quicquid habent ex dono aliorum tenencium de feodo meo in eadem villa et parochia libere et quiete ab omni seruicio seculari.

Item concessi eis omnes terras tenementa et possessiones cum omnibus pertinenciis suis quas habent de feodo meo in villa et parochia de Suthgiuel', et quicquid habent ex dono omnium tenencium de feodo meo in eadem villa et parochia libere et quiete ab omni seculari seruicio.

Item concessi eis omnes terras tenementa et possessiones cum omnibus pertinenciis suis quas habent de feodo meo in villa de Stacheden' et Dilewyk' in puram et perpetuam elemosinam, videlicet quicquid habent ex dono Roberti de Broy et Anselmi heredis eius, et ex dono Ade filii Dru et Nicholai et Willelmi Golston' et Roberti filii Nicholai de Stacheden' et Nicholai de Boeles, et Thome filii Hugonis et Ricardi heredis eius, et ex dono Thome de Stacheden' et Henrici Blundi et Mathei filii eius et Pagani Campionis et Stephani filii eius et Ricardi filii Roberti de Bruma et Stephani le Bel, et ex dono Johannis Pincerne et Roberti Mareschalli et Herlewyni in Dilewik', et bosculum quod Rogerus [rectius Reginaldus?] clericus vendidit eis quod vocatur le Hoo, et bosculum quod vocatur Estey cum tota terra subiacente et bosculum quod vocatur le Frith, cum omnibus pertinenciis et libertatibus suis cum sepibus et fossatis et cum omnibus aliis pertinenciis tam in viis quam in semitis cum libero introitu et exitu cum equis et carectis eorum siue ad assartandum siue ad crescendo quociens et quandocumque voluerint. Et* sciendum est quod ratum et gratum habeo escambium quod Henricus de Boelis fecit cum prefatis canonicis super tota terra sua in territorio de Stacheden' de feodo meo, et totum tenementum quod fuit Ricardi Parent' filii Auenel cum mesuagio et crofta cum omnibus pertinenciis suis iuxta ecclesiam de Stachedene, et ratam et gratam habeo donacionem et vendicionem quam Willelmus filius Ricardi de Stachedene fecit predictis canonicis de tota cultura terre sue cum toto prato quod vocatur Hokeseth' in territorio de Stachedene cum toto fossato quod vocatur Grededich, et quicquid

habent ex dono aliorum tenencium de feodo meo in eadem villa et parochia libere et quiete ab omni seculari seruicio, saluo mihi et heredibus meis tamen redditu unius denarii et oboli per annum quem predicti canonici et eorum successores soluere debent ad duos anni terminos in perpetuum.

Item concessi eis dimidiam hidam terre in Ronhale que fuit de prebenda Nicholai archidiaconi cum omnibus pertinenciis suis in liberam puram et perpetuam elemosinam ab omni seruicio seculari et exaccione, et omnes terras et tenementa et possessiones cum omnibus pertinenciis suis quas habent de feodo meo in villa et parochia de Ronhale Rauenesdene et Saluho, et quicquid habent ex dono Nicholai clerici de Rauenysdene et Willelmi et Odonis Engayne, et ex dono Willelmi Thuaud et Symonis et Roberti de Broc, et ex dono Roberti et Johannis Sauuage et Johannis filii Willelmi de Eton' per confirmationem Willelmi Engayne, et ex dono Hugonis cementarii et Nicholai de Boeles filii Symonis de Boeles, et ex dono Galfridi filii Radulphi de Ronhale et Willelmi Rufi de eadem et Symonis filii Galfridi de eadem, et ex dono Galfridi filii Symonis filii Galfridi de eadem et Alexandri fratris eius, et ex dono Symonis filii Arnaldi de Cogepol et Walteri filii Willelmi carpentarii [rectius capellani?], et ex dono Agnetis de Wylden' per confirmationem Willelmi de Ronhale, et ex dono Willelmi et Symonis Rufi de eadem, et quicquid habent ex dono et vendicione Galfridi Rufi de Cogepol per assensum et confirmationem heredis sui de omnibus terris tenementis et possessionibus suis et cum manso suo in Saluho et cum omnibus aliis pertinenciis suis que habuit in villa et parochia de Ronhale de Rauenesdene et Saluhoo, et unam acram* et dimidiam prati in Goldington' de dono eiusdem Galfridi et totum tenementum Symonis hermite, et quicquid habent ex dono eiusdem Symonis, et bosculum de Saluhoo et de Maydengroue cum haiis sepibus et fossatis pratis et pasturis circumiacentibus cum libero introitu et exitu siue ad crescendum siue ad assartandum, et quicquid habent ex dono Walteri et Gilberti et Rogeri Auenel, et ex dono Cecilie relicte Abel per confirmationem heredis eius, et ex dono Symonis de Cogepol et Willelmi Wanbaken et Huberti filii Owayn et Daudid mercennarii et Willelmi filii Geruasii, et ex dono Willelmi et Roberti le Frankeleyn de Ronhale, et quicquid habent ex dono aliorum tenencium de feodo meo in terris tenementis redditibus et possessionibus cum omnibus pertinenciis suis in villa et parochia predictis libere et quiete ab omni seculari seruicio, saluo mihi et heredibus meis tamen redditu duodecim denariorum per annum quem predicti canonici et eorum successores soluere debent in perpetuum.

Item concessi eis quicquid habent de feodo meo in villa et parochia de Berford' et de Rockesdon' ex dono Willelmi Longspeye et Henrici et Humfridi de Berford' et Walteri vicarii de eadem, (etⁱ) ex dono Radulphi et Roberti de Broy et Willelmi de Bruteuile, et quicquid habent ex dono aliorum tenencium de feodo meo in villa et parochia predictis libere et quiete ab omni seculari seruicio.

Item concessi eis omnes terras tenementa et possessiones cum