

The Alien Priory of Minster Lovell¹

By A. J. TAYLOR

FROM the twelfth century until the final seizure of alien priories in 1414 the church of Minster Lovell was attached to the abbey of St. Mary of Ivry, in the diocese of Evreux. The abbey was founded for Benedictine monks by Roger d'Ivry, butler to William the Conqueror, in 1071;² in 1074 he shared with Robert d'Oilly in endowing the chapel of St. George in Oxford castle with two-thirds of the tithe of his demesnes.³ At the time of the Domesday Inquest his Oxfordshire estates included the manors of Asthall and Fulbrook,⁴ and as at a later date Asthall church and the chapel of Fulbrook are among the possessions of Ivry,⁵ it is likely that they formed part of Roger's original endowment of the abbey.

In 1183-4,⁶ or very little earlier, Maud Lovell⁷ with the assent of William her son (who added his seal to the deed) gave for the good of their souls to the church of the Blessed Mary of Ivry and the monks serving God there the church of Minster, with all things known to pertain to the right of the same church, so that one or two monks of the aforesaid monastery might be able to serve God there also. At the petition of the donors the gift was confirmed by Walter de Coutances, bishop of Lincoln, by whose charter the abbot and convent were granted the rectory of Minster in frankalmoin for ever. It was laid down that the lands and revenues of the church were henceforth perpetually to be divided

¹ I have to acknowledge my indebtedness to Dr. Salter for reading this paper in draft, to Dr. Rose Graham for much help and advice throughout its preparation, and to my friend the Rev. D. A. R. Keen for valuable suggestions and criticism.

² *Les Archives de la France monastique*, xvii, 177. For the abbey's history see Mauduit, *Histoire d'Ivry-la-Bataille* (Evreux, 1899), pp. 415-482.

³ *V.C.H. Oxon.*, II, 160.

⁴ *Domesday Book* (Rec. Commn.), I, 158b.

⁵ P.R.O. *Chancery Miscellanea* (C. 47), 1st, No. 10 (1337).

⁶ The date is indicated by the deed's confirmation by Walter de Coutances who was consecrated to the see of Lincoln in July, 1183, and dethroned in 1184 (*Dictionary of National Biography*, xii, 351). There is no suggestion of any previous episcopal confirmation.

⁷ Her husband was William, son of Waleran d'Ivry, whose father William was the first to take the family name Lupellus. For the early history of the family see Doubleday and Howard de Walden, *Complete Peerage*, viii, 208 f. There is no evidence to connect the Lovells with Roger d'Ivry, who, if he was related to them at all, was certainly not their direct ancestor.

A. J. TAYLOR

between the abbot and convent and a vicar¹ whom they were to present to the bishop for institution, and Walter de Coutances duly received and instituted to the vicarage Henry the clerk, son of Richard, son of Alan.

These two charters, preserved in an abbreviated form on the Curia Regis roll of Michaelmas term, 1206,² demonstrate the nature of the connexion between Minster Lovell and Ivry. There was no 'priory' in the ordinary sense of the word, no founding of a new convent, and, consequently, no monastic buildings.³ The rectory was appropriated to the abbey, a vicarage was ordained, and one or two monks from Ivry—not more (the Latin is *unus vel duo*)—were to be able to come and live there; and, as will be seen later, it is abundantly clear that the number of two monks was in fact never exceeded.

Ivry's English possessions were not extensive and the gift of Minster church was not a very valuable addition to them. But, as a result of the provision by which a supply of French monks might be sent over to reside and perform their offices there, Minster became the centre from which the rest of the abbey's property on this side of the channel was administered, for administration was the business for which the monks were originally sent.

The abbey's endowments consisted of churches and tithes in three counties, Oxfordshire, Norfolk, and Wiltshire, and, apart from Asthall, the churches were all those of Lovell manors. In the absence of early deeds⁴ it is only possible to guess at the source from which they were obtained, but it seems likely that they came from the first William Lovell, who received considerable grants of land in England after 1124 and who was assessed to danegeld in each of these counties in 1130. His son Waleran d'Ivry gave to the abbey the churches of Ivry with their tithes.⁵ The list of English properties is as follows⁶ :—

¹ *Rolls of Hugh De Welles* (Canterbury and York Soc. III), p. 15; 'Consistit autem dicta vicaria in medietate totius ecclesie. Monachi vero de Ibreio, tenentes aliam medietatem illius ecclesie in propriis usibus, et vicarius predictus omnia onera ejusdem ecclesie tam ordinaria quam extraordinaria quilibet scilicet pro sua portione sustinebunt.' In 1291 the rectory and vicarage were each assessed at 7 marks. In 1838 the tithes were commuted for a rent charge payable in two equal portions to the vicar and the Provost of Eton.

² *Curia Regis Rolls*, IV, 260. See Appendix A.

³ This was pointed out as long ago as 1921 by Dr. Salter in his introduction to *Newington Longeville Charters* (Oxfordshire Record Society, III), pp. xv–xvi.

⁴ There are no deeds relating to the abbey's English properties among the Archives du Département de l'Eure at Evreux. According to Tanner (*Notitia Monastica* (1744), p. 429), Minster Lovell charters were still preserved among the Eton College muniments in the eighteenth century, while there were others in the possession of Henry Farmer of Tusmore, Oxon. The Eton deeds had disappeared by 1907 (*V.C.H. Oxon.*, II, 163).

⁵ *Complete Peerage*, VIII, 212.

⁶ The figures in the first column are those printed in W. E. Lunt, *The Valuation of Norwich* (1926), pp. 308–9 and 405–6, those in the second in the *Taxatio Ecclesiastica Papae Nicolai IV* (Record Commn.), 32, 44b, 88b, 89 and 190. Figures are given in marks throughout.

MINSTER LOVELL PRIORY

<i>Pertaining to Ivry :—</i>	Assess- ment of 1254	Assess- ment of 1291	<i>Valet</i>	Farm
NORFOLK				
Spiritualities—	Marks	Marks	Marks	Marks
Docking rectory	40	46	} <i>a</i>	40 ^d
Southmere, abbot's portion ..	5	5		
Titchwell, abbot's portion ..	2	1		
Heacham, abbot's portion ..	2	— ^c		
Abbot's temporalities in Norwich diocese	<i>a</i>	(16½) ^e		
Total	49 ^b	68½		
OXON.				
Spiritualities—				
Asthall rectory	7½	10	} 30	10 ^d
Burford, abbot's portion ..	6	6		
Total	13½	16		
<i>Pertaining to Minster :—</i>				
OXON.				
Spiritualities—				
Minster rectory	3¾ ^g	7	} 15 ⁱ	7½ ^k
Burford, prior's portion ..	—	1 ^h		
Clanfield, prior's portion ..	1½	1⅔		
Prior's temporalities in Asthall and Fulbrook	<i>a</i>	1⅔		
Total	5¼ ^b	11⅔		
WILTS.				
Allington, ^l pension in	<i>a</i>	3		

POSSESSIONS IN ENGLAND OF THE ABBEY OF ST. MARY OF IVRY.

For Notes to Table, see foot of next page.

A. J. TAYLOR

The list shows that while the properties belonging to Ivry were not large those annexed to Minster could never have been fully adequate for the maintenance even of two monks and their servants, for provision had also to be made for the rector's share of the upkeep of the chancel and for repairs to the priory house and barn. If we may take as a fairly correct figure the 15 marks given as the average annual value of the vicarage in 1337 and add to it the pension of 3 marks from Allington, the gross income of the priory was only 12li. A monk's annual maintenance allowance was reckoned by the Crown in 1302 at 4li. 10s.¹ If twice this amount may be taken to represent something like the normal cost of living of the prior and his fellow, only 3li. is left for other contingencies. From this there must be deducted 16s.² for payment of the tenth in the diocese of Lincoln and a further 4s. for the tenth of the pension in Allington in the diocese of Salisbury. Thus the balance available for travelling expenses (journeys to Norfolk and London must have been a frequent part of

¹ P.R.O. *Exchequer Miscellanea* (K.R.), E. 106, 78; Graham, 'Four Alien Priors in Monmouthshire,' *Brit. Arch. Assn. Journal*, 1929, 111, 'The food allowance was 1s. 6d. a week for each monk and an allowance for clothes and shoes was fixed at 10s. a year'; this gives a total of 4 li. 8s.

² This was the amount given in 1302; if calculated on the assessment of 7 li. 14s. 8d. (11½ marks) it would be slightly lower.

* No figure available.

^b Spiritualities only.

^c Heacham was appropriated to Lewes priory. There is no mention of a portion belonging to Ivry in the *Taxatio*, and it may already have been alienated or exchanged. In 1383, when the abbot's portions in Southmere and Titchwell are expressly mentioned, there is no reference to any portion in Heacham (*Pipe Roll*, 228).

^d These are the figures at which the churches of Docking and Asthall and all their appurtenances were being let to farm by the abbot of Ivry immediately prior to the seizure of the possessions of alien religious by Edward I in 1295 (P.R.O., E. 106, 78). The farm remained the same in the case of Docking throughout the fourteenth century (*Cal. Patent Rolls*, 1408-1413, pp. 86-7), and in the case of Asthall at least until 1358 (*Cal. Fine Rolls*, vi, 364).

^e This figure is calculated on the sum of 21s. 8d. due for the clerical tenth of 3 Richard II for the temporalities of the abbot of Ivry in the archdeaconries of Norwich and Norfolk (*Pipe Roll*, 228).

^f This was given as the *valet communibus annis* of Asthall church with the chapel of Fulbrook in 1337 (C. 47, 18, No. 10).

^g The figure of 100s. (7½ marks) represents the total assessment of the church, from which half must be deducted for the vicarage.

^h Probably indicating a diversion of part of the abbot's income to augment that of the priory.

ⁱ The figure can only be taken as approximate; it is based on the *valet* of 10 li. given for the Vicarage in an Extent made in 1337.

^k On its seizure by the Crown in 1295 and 1324 the priory was leased to the prior for an annual payment to the Exchequer of 7½ marks (E. 106, 78 and 80). In 1339 the payment was raised to 10 marks (*Cal. Fine Rolls*, v, 133), the farm remaining at this figure as late as 1408 (*Pipe Roll* 253). For the purpose of a grant to Joan of Navarre in the following year and to Duke Humphrey in 1437 the farm was put at 13 marks (8 li. 13s. 4d.), the amount being given as 8 li. 13s. 8d. in the grant to Eton College in 1441 (*Rolls of Parliament*, v, 47).

^l Near Devizes, in the deanery of Cricklade.

MINSTER LOVELL PRIORY

the prior's duties), repairs to buildings, payments to servants and the like was only 2li., and it is therefore hardly surprising to learn from the returns to more than one royal enquiry that the finances of the priory were in fact extremely precarious. Whether or not the prior was required to pay an *apport* to Ivry is not clear.¹ It seems hardly credible that so small an income could be made to bear this additional charge, and the wording in which the payments from the priory are recorded on the Pipe Rolls during the fourteenth century in no case suggests that the rent demanded by the Crown took the place of any annual render to the abbot in time of peace.

The value of the endowment proportioned the size of the establishment, and the details as to buildings and movables, stock and produce, revealed by inquisitions held preparatory to royal confiscations of alien property during the French wars, tell the same story of meagreness and poverty. In 1293² the whole of the stock was valued at 23s. 4d. and consisted of three horses, a draught animal, a cow and six sheep. Of 32 acres of arable only four were sown, the remainder lying unworked (*sterilis*). Goods and chattels, valued at 8s. 10d., are given as two large copper pots (*olle eree*) and one small one, a small pan (*patella*), two washing basins, and a light (*debilis*) plough. Our only information about the buildings is derived from an inventory drawn up in 1324,³ which shows that there was simply a dwelling-house and barn (*grangium*), the former consisting of the usual hall and kitchen, with pantry and buttery. The hall contained two tables and two pairs of trestles, worth 6d. in all, and a washing basin (*lotor cum pelvi*) also valued at 6d. The pantry and buttery contained a barrel, a tub (*tina*) and two other vessels (*cuna* and *cunaria*), worth in all 12d. In the kitchen there was a leaden vessel valued at 2s., two copper pots and a pitcher worth 2s. 6d., and a pan worth 6d. The only stock mentioned is a cock and three hens, valued at 1½d. each. In the barn there was four quarters of wheat in sheaves, valued at 4s. a quarter; three quarters of mixed wheat and rye worth 2s. a quarter; two quarters of mixed corn worth 2s. a quarter and one quarter of oats worth 16d. The total value of the movables was thus only 34s. 9d., a figure which may

¹ Graham, *op. cit.*, 107. The *apport* was not necessarily a money payment. Thus in 1340, 'Frater Johannes de Wareng', Prior de Boxgrave (Boxgrove, Sussex), qui Prioratus est cella Abbatie de Exaquo in Normannia, debet j frocum pro Abbate et stamina pro monachis ad festum sancti Egidij per annum de apportu eiusdem Prioratus, dicte Abbatie per annum debito, Regi reservato, et xij frocos pro Abbate et stamina pro monachis de annis preteritis' (*Pipe Roll* 185). It is possible that some such service as this was due from Minster or that the prior may have been required to send to the abbot any balance that might be left after the payment of all necessary expenses. An *apport* is only once mentioned in connexion with Ivry, and the word is then used simply to denote the farm due to the abbey for Asthall church: 'Magister Gilbertus Lovel (debet x marcas) de apportu ecclesie de Esthall, Abbati de Ybreyo per annum debito, et Regi reservato. . . .' (*Pipe Roll* 187).

² E. 106, 2. See Appendix B.

³ E. 106, 2. See Appendix C.

A. J. TAYLOR

be compared with a similar total of 16*li.* 12*s.* 11*d.* at the neighbouring small priory of Cogges, whose buildings, in addition to those mentioned at Minster Lovell, included a granary (*granarium*) and a brewhouse.

The personnel of the priory consisted normally of the prior and one other monk. On one occasion servants are mentioned, but we are told nothing of their number or their services. The prior's chief function was undoubtedly to act as the abbot's representative and agent, although it is seldom that a given prior is also named in the records as proctor.¹ He was sent to represent the interests of the mother house, to maintain its lands and goods, and to collect and transmit its revenues. Usually he acted for the abbot in presenting to Ivry livings.² There are, however, cases of the proctorship being held by one who was not also prior. In the period following the outbreak of war in 1337, these could perhaps be explained on the ground of a vacancy in the priory, but there is an earlier instance when no such explanation is possible. In 1277 William de Ychinton was presented to the vicarage of Minster Lovell by Fulk Lovell,³ proctor of Ivry abbey⁴; there was certainly a prior at this time, brother John of Ivry having been appointed to Minster in 1269 and remaining there until his death in 1291⁵, and it is therefore not easy to account for the appearance of a second proctor. The solution may be that Fulk Lovell was acting by virtue of a special *ad hoc* mandate from the abbot directed to him because of his kinship with the abbey's benefactors. There is a doubtful case in 1318-19. According to the Pipe Roll for that year⁶ the prior of Minster accounts for a moiety of his spiritualities and temporalities in the diocese of Lincoln, while the moiety of the abbot's spiritualities at Asthall and Burford is said to be rendered by the proctor. The names are not given, but it is not necessary to suppose that we have here a record of two separate officers. The apparent duplication might simply be the result of the exchequer clerk entering payments specifically due from the priory against the prior and those from the abbot against the abbot's proctor, it being no concern of his if the offices were in fact held by one and the same person. But there is evidence that this is not the true explanation. One

¹ In 1352 brother Peter Urry is described as 'prior of the priory of Minsterlovell, a cell of the abbey of St. Mary, Ivry, in Normandy, and proctor in England of the abbot and convent of the said abbey' (*Cal. Fine Rolls*, vi, 329); in 1360 prior Matthew de Villa Nova is named as 'monk of the abbey of St. Mary, Ivry . . . and general proctor of the abbot and convent in England.' (*Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1358-61, p. 474).

² e.g., *Rolls of Robert Grosseteste* (Canterbury and York Soc., x, p. 486); *Roll of Richard Gravesend* (*ibid.*, xxxi, p. 219).

³ King's clerk, archdeacon of Colchester, canon of York, rector of Leatherhead, Surrey (*Cal. Pat. Rolls*, *passim*).

⁴ *Roll of Richard Gravesend*, 232.

⁵ *V.C.H. Oxon.*, II, 163.

⁶ E. 372/164.

MINSTER LOVELL PRIORY

of the rolls of payments made by the alien religious in the time of Edward I records the sums due for Docking and Asthall as being paid by Master Gilbert Lovell¹, 'proctor of the abbot of Ivry'; this roll, though now without its date, almost certainly belongs to the period (1299-1305) when John de Monte Calneto was prior². It appears therefore that the *firmarius* of Docking and Asthall, who, if we are right in believing there was no apport from Minster, was the only person in England charged with sending a regular contribution to Ivry, was for that reason sometimes held to be the convent's true agent and referred to as its proctor. Indeed, from such time as the abbey's chief revenue-producing properties were first let to farm, their lessee must inevitably have been a person of more consequence than the poverty-stricken prior of Minster Lovell.

Gilbert Lovell was succeeded as farmer of Docking and Asthall by Master Edmund Everard³, who likewise appears as proctor in 1337. At this time there was probably no prior at Minster⁴. We do not know how long this state of affairs had been going on. It seems that Bertrand or Berthold,⁵ in spite of the difficulties he was experiencing in 1324,⁶ was still prior at any rate in 1332.⁷ He had then been at Minster since 1309 and was presumably not a young man. If, as is probable, he was recalled, his age, the difficulty of making ends meet at Minster, and political tension may all have contributed to the decision, and the appearance of Edmund Everard as proctor may even indicate that at that time the abbot and convent did not intend to appoint another prior. Edmund died before 20th August, 1337, and early in the following year his executor Gilbert Everard, who succeeded him as rector of Tichmarsh and keeper of the English properties of Ivry, was ordered to restore the latter to William Trussel and brother Berthold, who, perhaps significantly, is not again called prior.⁸ If, as is possible,

¹ Canon of Salisbury and rector of Tichmarsh, Northants., at this time the Lovells' principal manor. He was already holding the farm of Docking and Asthall of the abbot for 50 marks a year for life in 1295 (E. 106, 1st).

² E. 106, 1st; this roll, which has suffered from damp and is badly torn, is only legible with difficulty.

³ Rector of Colsterworth, Lincs. In 1330, during the minority of John, third Lord Lovell, he was presented by the Crown to the rectory of Tichmarsh, vacant by the resignation of Gilbert Lovell. He is named as an executor of Gilbert Lovell's will in 1332 (*Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1327-30, p. 261; 1330-34, pp. 24 and 350).

⁴ Prior alias dimissus fuit . . . propter paupertatem (P.R.O., C. 47, 1st, No. 10).

⁵ According to the Lincoln Register, he was instituted as Bertandus (Matthew Hutton's Extracts, B.M. Harl. MS. 6951, 128). On the few subsequent occasions when his name is given, records emanating from the exchequer use the form Bartandus, those from the chancery Bertoldus. There is no reason for thinking the two forms represent separate priors.

⁶ P. 111, below.

⁷ *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1330-4, p. 350.

⁸ *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1337-9, p. 132, where he is styled 'brother Bertoldus, fellow-monk of the abbot'; he also appears as 'brother Bertoldus, canon of the abbot of Yvery, in Normandy' (*ibid.*, 336).

he did not return as prior, it may be that Gilbert continued to act as proctor until the appointment of Richard de Hanningfield, parson of Sutton Valence, Kent, who appears as 'proctor general of the abbot and convent of Ivry' in February, 1341-2.¹ In the following May,² William de Rouge, a monk of Ivry, was appointed prior by the bishop of Lincoln, the abbot having failed to make any appointment 'for more than six months,' and thereafter Richard de Hanningfield, though remaining joint keeper with the prior and John Darcy le Fitz of all the Ivry properties, ceases to be styled proctor. The two priors who followed de Rouge are themselves both mentioned with the additional style of proctor.³

But for the French wars, so small and impoverished an establishment would probably not have been even remotely involved in political affairs and would therefore have had no history to relate. As it is, however, the records of the confiscation of the property of the alien religious afford a considerable amount of information about the fortunes of the smaller priories between 1295 and their suppression in 1414, enabling us to trace the various grantees who benefited from the successive seizures and giving us interesting evidence about the properties themselves.

When the possessions of Ivry were taken into the king's hand on the outbreak of war in 1295,⁴ the churches of Docking and Asthall were committed to the keeping of Master Gilbert Lovell on payment to the Crown of the rents (40 marks and 10 marks respectively)⁵ at which he had hitherto farmed them of the abbot. Brother Ralph de Montfort, who had been appointed prior in 1293, was allowed to remain at Minster Lovell on payment to the king of a rent of 100s.⁶ This rent was soon heavily in arrear, and by Michaelmas 1302 the prior owed as much as 36li. 10s. 8d. In that year matters came to a head and the whole question was reviewed before the barons of the exchequer.⁷ It was said that the prior had given his annual assessment as 8li., though an assessment of the bishopric of Lincoln, produced in the exchequer, gave the figure of 7li. 14s. 8d.⁸ By the original agreement the prior should have been rendering

¹ *Cal. Fine Rolls*, v, 206

² *V.C.H. Oxon.*, II, 163, n. 15.

³ Above, p. 108, n. 1.

⁴ There is reason for believing Minster Lovell may have been previously confiscated under John. An assize of darrein presentment was initiated by William Lovell against the abbot of Ivry in 1206 to settle the question 'quis advocatus tempore pacis presentavit ultimam personam ad medietatem ecclesie de Minstre' (*Curia Regis Rolls*, IV, 260). For John's confiscation of lands held in England by Norman ecclesiastical lords, cf. Powicke, *Loss of Normandy* (1913), p. 425.

⁵ E. 106, 75.

⁶ E. 106, 75.

⁷ E. 106, 75.

⁸ 11½ marks, the assessment of the spiritualities and temporalities of the priory according to the *Taxatio* of 1291, if we exclude the pension from Allington.

MINSTER LOVELL PRIORY

to the crown 5*li.* a year for the past 7½ years. To have paid it, however, would have left only 3*li.* for the yearly maintenance of himself and his fellow monk, when their proper allowance should have been 4*li.* 10*s.* apiece.¹ Consequently if the prior had regularly paid the full 5*li.* the debt would have been on the king's side and he would have owed the prior and his colleague 6*li.* towards their prescribed yearly allowance of 9*li.*, or 45*li.* for the whole period of 7½ years. The matter was settled by the exchequer releasing the prior of his whole debt of 36*li.* 10*s.* 8*d.*, an easy way of escape which on the figures left the Crown the gainer by nearly 10*li.*

The priories were seized again in 1324. At Minster Lovell the precedent of 1295 was followed and prior Bertrand was to be allowed to remain there on payment of the old rent of 100*s.* a year. On this occasion the prior appeared at the exchequer and said he could not find surety for so large a sum, because as it was the resources of the house were scarcely adequate for the sustenance of a prior and one fellow-monk. He further complained that the allowance ordained for them had in any case not been received from the keepers appointed to manage the properties in Berkshire and Oxfordshire, and prayed that 'ordinance be made for their sustenance in this respect and that other charges on the said priory be duly provided for.' On it being learned that 'the payments ordained for the said prior and his monk, together with the charges touching the said house, of necessity greatly exceed' the priory's income, reference was made to the case that had arisen in 1302. There it was found that prior Ralph had been virtually allowed to retain the priory rent free and also that 'he ought to have had for payments of this kind the balance of a certain great sum,' implying that in 1302 the prior should by rights have been allowed his full claim of 45*li.* The keepers were therefore ordered, on his finding surety for loyal conduct to the king and his realm, to deliver to prior Bertrand his house and its revenue and not to intermeddle further therein.²

The alien priories were again seized into the king's hand in 1337 and in July of that year Robert de Hemmingburgh, a clerk of chancery, was appointed keeper of their lands and revenues in Oxfordshire. At Minster Lovell the income was still 'scarcely sufficient for the sustenance of the prior and his servants' and, as we have already seen, the prior himself had gone elsewhere because of the priory's poverty. The bishop's eventual nomination of William de Rouge as prior in 1341 secured the continuance of the connexion with Ivry at a time when it seems to have been in danger of lapsing, though we have no evidence as to whether or not de Rouge ever came and resided at Minster. Within six months of his being granted part custody of the property it passed

¹ Above, p. 106, n. 1.

² E. 106, 112.

by a new commission to John Darcy and Geoffrey de Sautre, parson of Syresham, Northants.,¹ and there is no further mention of him in the surviving records.

A new prior, brother Peter Urry,² was appointed in 1352. England and France were still at war, and he had to petition the king before being granted the keeping of the priory and the other Ivry properties. The grant was made on condition that he paid an annual rent of 40*li*.³ to John Darcy, who had hitherto been holding them as an equivalent of that sum.⁴ In less than a year Darcy was complaining to the king 'that neither the prior nor his mainpernors have troubled to pay the agreed 40*li*. or any part thereof,' and on the prior's failure to answer a summons to appear at the Chancery custody was restored to Darcy.⁵ In 1356 it was granted, for the duration of the war, to the king's daughter Isabella.⁶ Before October, 1360, Peter Urry was succeeded as prior by brother Matthew de Villa Nova, who was granted the keeping of the abbey's possessions on his finding sureties for paying the 40*li*. rent to the princess.⁷ The signing of the Peace of Bretigni in May, 1360, was followed in February, 1361, by the formal restitution to the French monasteries of their English properties, and, as the abbot's agent, prior Matthew received back the possessions of Ivry.⁸ He died in 1368, and was succeeded at Minster Lovell by brother Vincent de Coueour.⁹

When the war was renewed in April, 1369, the Ivry properties were let to prior Vincent for a rent of 10 marks.¹⁰ This did not include the issues of Docking, which were leased to William de Gunthorp, clerk, at the old rent of 40 marks¹¹; it must, however, have included those of Asthall, and the assumption is that a rent of only 10 marks was taken for Asthall church and Minster Lovell priory together, the priory thus being virtually retained by the prior rent free as in 1324. The wording of the grant is interesting for it seems to indicate that the royal clerks no longer regarded the attachment of these revenues to a foreign abbey as being either effective or important. No note is taken of the fact that they belong to Ivry: instead they are all grouped together as possessions of

¹ *Cal. Fine Rolls*, v, 242.

² *V.C.H. Oxon.*, II, 163, gives the name as Curry, but the form Urry occurs twice on the Fine Rolls.

³ i.e., 60 marks; Docking 40 m., Asthall 10 m., and Minster Lovell 10 m.

⁴ *Cal. Fine Rolls*, vi, 329.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 364.

⁶ *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1354-8, p. 361.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 1358-61, p. 474. He was not instituted till the following year (*V.C.H. Oxon.*, II, 163).

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 559.

⁹ *V.C.H. Oxon.*, II, 163.

¹⁰ *Cal. Fine Rolls*, viii, 26.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

MINSTER LOVELL PRIORY

Minster Lovell, grouped with their English and not with their French centre. Traditionally Docking and Asthall had been farmed quite independently of Minster; it is even possible that their revenues had been sent direct to Ivry by the farmer and not through the agency of the prior at Minster—we have no knowledge to the contrary. But since 1341¹ it had been the policy of the exchequer to convey the issues of Docking, Asthall, and Minster and the revenues annexed to them as a single grant, with the result that barely thirty years later it has become natural to refer to 'the church of Dockyng, parcell of the priory of Munstre Lovell,' which of course historically it had never been.²

Vincent de Coueour was prior only for a short while, for in May, 1370, we find the keeping of the priory committed to brother Peter Corp,³ the last prior of whom we have any record. In December, 1373, custody was granted to John Lovell, knight, 'for as long as the priory shall remain in the king's hand on account of the war with France, rendering 10 marks yearly at the exchequer;' he was to 'support all the ordinary and extraordinary charges incumbent on the priory, maintain the houses and buildings of the priory, and leave them in as good a state as he found them in or better.'⁴ This provision for the priory's continued existence seems to imply that the prior and his fellow monk were to be permitted to stay there, though the prior was no longer to be responsible for the direct payment of the rent to the Crown.

We have no information as to how long Peter Corp was prior, but he is in any case unlikely to have had a successor. At Newington Longeville, where the records are exceptionally complete, we do not hear of a prior after 1375.⁵ As the war dragged on and the days of normal relations between French abbeys and English cells grew more and more remote, the reason for sending over monks to represent the mother houses' interests gradually lost its force. It was of no value to Ivry or Longeville to appoint proctors, when any rents they collected would only go to the Crown and when the rights of patronage they should have exercised were being usurped by the same authority. Monks

¹ *Ibid.*, v, 226.

² The process is carried a stage further in the period following the suppression of the alien houses, when there is a tendency to give the name priory to any church that had formerly been appropriated to a foreign convent. Thus the foundation charter of Eton College (*Rolls of Parliament*, v, 47) includes a grant of the 'alien priory' of Docking, a use of the term which has given rise to more than one misleading account of Docking church (e.g., the late Dr. J. C. Cox in *V.C.H. Norfolk*, II, 462, and the references there given).

³ *Cal. Fine Rolls*, VIII, 82.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 225. The grant must be taken to have included the revenues of Asthall; according to the return to an enquiry made in 1403, 'Prior de Ministre et Abbas de Brewes [i.e., de Ibreis] alienigeni habent terras et tenementa in com' Oxon' apud Burford, Claneefeld, Esthall et Fulbrook. Et Johannes Lovel, miles, dominus de Lovell et de Holand ea tenet et occupat.' (P.R.O., C. 47, 1st, 28).

⁵ *Newington Longeville Charters*, p. xlvii.

already living at the priories may in many cases have remained there ; but prevailing circumstances were no inducement to the parent houses to send others to replace them, and in the space of a generation natural causes must have left many of the smaller priories entirely without inhabitants. Such was the position when in 1414 the Commons petitioned the king in the Leicester parliament to make final confiscation of the properties of the alien religious.¹ Some of the priories had by then already been sold by the mother houses ; others, like the great Cluniac priory of Lewes in Sussex, had obtained charters of denization from the Crown. The great majority, which included Minster Lovell, were seized into the king's hand in 1414 never to be restored.

Five years earlier Henry IV had granted Minster Lovell and other alien priories to Joan of Navarre, the value of the property being raised from 10 to 13 marks.² The grant was confirmed in 1414³ and the priory remained in the queen's possession until her death in 1437. In the following year it passed to Humphrey, duke of Gloucester,⁴ and in 1441 was included in the grant which formed the foundation endowment of Eton College,⁵ in whose hands the living still remains. At the time of this last grant the former Ivry property was leased to William, Lord Lovell,⁶ in all likelihood a continuation of the lease conveyed to his father in 1373. He may have built the present church, which must be very nearly contemporary with his great new manor house close by. With so poor an endowment the fabric of the earlier church had probably received little attention since the time it was given to Ivry, which may help to explain why it was necessary to build an almost completely new church in the fifteenth century.

The tradition of the priory long survived the departure of the monks. In 1634 a meadow in Minster Lovell was still called Priory Mead,⁷ and less than a hundred years ago another field was still known as Monk Ham.⁸ The actual site, however, is lost. It is most likely that whatever buildings there were lay somewhere near the present vicarage on the land which is still retained by Eton College to the west of the church. The whole of the area to the south-east of the church is occupied by the ruins of the fifteenth-century manor house ; this replaced an earlier manor house for which there is documentary evidence,⁹

¹ J. H. Wylie, *The Reign of Henry V* (1914), I, 337 ff.

² *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1408-13, pp. 86-7.

³ *Ibid.*, 1413-16, p. 165.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 1436-41, p. 189.

⁵ *Rolls of Parliament*, v, 47.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Bodley, *MS. Oxf. Archd. papers*, C. 142, fo. 175.

⁸ *Tithe Map* (1838).

⁹ *P.R.O. Chancery Inquisitions* (C. 139), 11.

MINSTER LOVELL PRIORY

and foundations recently discovered underlying those of the fifteenth century lay-out must belong to this earlier house and not to any buildings of the priory.¹

Note.—A full list of the priors of Minster Lovell is given by Dr. Salter in *V.C.H. Oxon.*, II, 163. To it the name of Peter Corp, monk of Ivry (c. 1370–c. 1373), must now be added.

APPENDICES

A

CURIA REGIS ROLLS, IV, 260.

Assisa venit recognitura quis advocatus tempore pacis presentavit ultimam personam ad medietatem ecclesie de Ministre, que vacat etc., quam assisam Willelmus Luvel tulit versus abbatem de Ivry: qui venit et dicit quod assisa non debet inde fieri, quia non est vacans, quia abbas et conventus de Ivry inde sunt persone et ex dono Matillidis matris predicti Willelmi Lupelli et per ejus assensum et consilium; et carta sua confirmavit, quam ostendit, que testatur ipsam Matillidem per assensum Willelmi Lupelli filii sui, cujus sigillum appositum est, dedisse ecclesie Beate Marie de Ibreio et monachis ibidem Deo servientibus ecclesiam de Ministr' cum omnibus que ad jus ejusdem ecclesie pertinere noscuntur pro animabus etc., ita quod unus vel duo monachi de supradicto cenobio ibidem Deo deservire valeant. Ostendit etiam cartam W. de Custanc' quondam episcopi Lincolniensis, in qua continetur ipsum ad petitionem Matillidis quondam uxoris Willelmi Lupelli et Willelmi Lupelli, filii ejusdem Matillidis et predicti Willelmi, dedisse in perpetuam elemosinam abbati et monachis de Ibreio personatum ecclesie de Ministr', ita quod ad presentationem Rogeri² abbatis et monachorum Ibreci recepit et instituit Henricum Clericum filium Ricardi filii Alani ad ejusdem ecclesie vicariam, ita scilicet quod abbas et monachi haberent medietatem omnium que pertinent ad eam tam in terris quam in obventionibus universis et Henricus aliam medietatem sicut vicarius; et continetur in carta episcopi quod hoc fecerat idem episcopus salvo jure Lincolniensis ecclesie de institutione vicarii semper facienda ad presentationem abbatis et monachorum.

B

P.R.O. EXCHEQUER (K.R.) MISCELLANEA, E. 106, 3.

Extent and Inventory of Minster Lovell priory, 1293

Minist' Prior habet ibidem in dominico j mesuagium, xxxij acras terre ijs. viijd. pretie acre jd. Item xij acras prati xxiijs. pretio acre ijs. Item habet medietatem ecclesie de Ministr', qua Vicaria, que valet per annum lxxvs. viijd. Summa iiiijl. xijjs. iiijd.

¹ For an explanation of the confusion of the two sites, see Salter, *Newington Longeville Charters*, p. xvi; the confusion still persists, the Ordnance Survey marking the ruins as those of a 'Mansion on site of Priory' (O.S. 6-inch Oxfordshire XXXI, ed. 1922).

² Mauduit (p. 462) gives the succession of the abbots as Roger I, named in 1168 and 1172; Raoul, named in 1175; Roger II, named in 1185; and Hubert, named in 1195 and 1200. The confirmation of the gift of Minster Lovell by Walter de Coutances as bishop of Lincoln shows that this was the second Roger and that he was already abbot of Ivry before the election of Walter de Coutances to the archbishopric of Rouen in 1184.

A. J. TAYLOR

Forinseca Item de forinsecis, scilicet de dominico domini Ricardi de Sancto Walerico et tenentium suorum xls. et iiijqr. frumenti. Item de Abbate de Ainesam et de Abbissa de Elnestouwe apud Clanefeld domino Johanne de Norle' (?) et Magistro Henrico de Bray xljs. iiijd.

Summa huius iiijli. xvjd.

Summa tocius extente viijli. xiijs. viijd.

Bona inventa in prioratu eodem, tres equi pretio j marc'. Item j affrus pretio ijs. Item j bos pretio vs. Item vj agni pretio ijs.

Summa xxiijs. iiijd.

Item ij olle eree pretio ijs. Item j parvus pretio xd. Item una patella parva pretio xijd. Item ij lavatores cum pelvi pretio ijs. Item j carruca debilis pretio ijs.

Summa viijs. xd.

Quatuor acre de dominico fuerunt seminate ad medietatem, quarum medietas valet ijs. et residua terra jacet sterilis. Item medietas garbarum quam percipiunt de parochianis estimatur ad xls. Item fenum dimidium marce.

Summa xlixs. viijd.

Summa tocius inventarii iiijli. ijs. xd.

C

P.R.O. EXCHEQUER (K.R.) MISCELLANEA, E. 106, 8.

Extent of Minster Lovell Priory, made on Wednesday next after the Feast of St. Edmund the King, 18 Edward II (1324)

Extenta personatus quondam Prioris de Menistr' Abbacie de Ybreio alienig' facta die Mercurij proximo post festum sancti Edmundi Regis anno regni Regis Edwardi filij Regis Edwardi decimo octavo coram Henrico de Pentelawe et Johanne de Brimpton', custodibus tenementorum et bonorum Religiosorum qui sunt de potestate et dominio Regis Francie in Com' Oxon' et Berks', per Robertum le Rous, Johannem ate Thurne, Johannem Gerard, Rogerum Downes, Johannem ate Mille, Gilbertum le Longe, Johannem Bale, Willelmum ate Forde, Robertum de Draytone, Willelmum le Longe, Johannem le Cartere et Henricum Hammond, Jurati, qui dicunt per sacramentum suum quod capitale mesuagium dicti personatus valet per annum xijd. Item quedam Impensio debetur eidem personatu provenient' de Clanefelde que continet xxiijs. per annum. Item vjs. viijd. provenient' de Haddone. Item de Abbate de Keynesham provenient' de Boreforde vjs. viijd. Item de Magistro Thoma de Esthalle iijs. per annum. Item iij. quarteri frumenti provenient' de Folebroc' per annum. Item dicunt quod sunt apud Menistr' xxxij acre terre arabilis et valet quelibet acra per annum ijs. Set dicunt per sacramentum suum quod omnia supradicta continentur infra taxationem veri valoris Ecclesie dicti personatus, que taxacio continet vijli. xvs. In cuius rei testimonium supradicti Jurati presentibus sigilla sua apposuerunt. Datum apud Menistr' die et anno supradictis.

MINSTER LOVELL PRIORY

Inventory of the goods and chattels in Minster Lovell Priory, made by Henry de Pentelawce and John de Brimptone, Keepers of the lands, tenements and goods of the alien religious in Oxfordshire and Berkshire, on Sunday the Feast of St. Simon and St. Jude, 18 Edward II (1324)

Invenerunt ibidem in Aula ij mensas cum ij paribus trestallorum pretio vjd., j lotorem cum pelvi pretio vjd.

Summa xijd.

Invenerunt etiam ibidem in Panetaria et Botelaria j barillum, j tinam, j cunam et j cunariam, pretio omnium xijd.

Summa xijd.

Invenerunt etiam ibidem in Coquina j plumbum pretio ijs., ij ollas ereas et j urciolum pretio ijs. vjd., j patellam cream pretio vjd.

Summa v solid'.

Invenerunt etiam ibidem in Grangia, per estimacionem, in garbis iiij quarteros frumenti pretio quarteri iiij s., iiij quarteros mixtilionis pretio quarteri ijs., ij quarteros dragii pretio quarteri ijs., j quarterum avenagii pretio xvjd.

Summa xxvij solid' iiij den'.

Invenerunt etiam ibidem de stauramento j gallum et iiij gallinas, pretio capitis jd. qr.

Summa v den'.

Summa summarum xxxiijs. ix den'.