

## INTRODUCTION

Beauchief in Sheffield is a beautiful hillside at the foot of which, near the river Sheaf, and on the still wooded south-western fringes of the city, are the remains of the medieval abbey that housed, from the late twelfth century until the Henrician Reformation, Augustinian canons belonging to the Premonstratensian order. Augustinian canonries were generally modest places, although for reasons that have been persuasively advanced by the late Sir Richard Southern, this fact should never obscure the breadth of their significance in the wider history of medieval urban and rural localities:

The Augustinian canons, indeed, as a whole, lacked every mark of greatness. They were neither very rich, nor very learned, nor very religious, nor very influential: but as a phenomenon they are very important. They filled a very big gap in the biological sequence of medieval religious houses. Like the ragwort which adheres so tenaciously to the stone walls of Oxford, or the sparrows of the English towns, they were not a handsome species. They needed the proximity of human habitation, and they thrived on the contact which repelled more delicate organisms. They thrived equally in the near-neighbourhood of a town or a castle. For the well-to-do townsfolk they could provide the amenity of burial-places, memorials and masses for the dead, and schools and confessors of superior standing for the living. For the lords of castles they could provide a staff for the chapel and clerks for the needs of administration. They were ubiquitously useful. They could live on comparatively little, yet expand into affluence without disgrace. Consequently there were many who were willing to contribute their crumbs. In return they satisfied many modest requirements. For the moderate landowner they provided a religious house where he was received as lord and patron. For the smaller benefactor they provided a place of burial and masses for his soul. They ran many small schools, many hospitals and places of retirement for the sick and aged, for pregnant women, for the blind, for lepers. In an increasingly busy and practical age they appeared to give more than the Benedictine monks.<sup>1</sup>

Most Augustinian canonries were independent but Premonstratensian canons belonged to an order that brought together, under a common observance, religious communities found in almost every

<sup>1</sup>R.W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages*, The Pelican History of the Church, 2 (Aylesbury, 1970), ch. 6.ii: 'The new orders', p. 248.

part of western Europe.<sup>2</sup> The order had a monastic character that made it less likely that an abbey such as Beauchief would be founded in a town or that it would not be primarily a place of strict religious observance. But, with these differences noted, the charters found in its Cartulary, which we edit for the first time, amply illustrate the many functions of an Augustinian community in England between the second half of the twelfth century and the end of the fourteenth, serving and being served by its local and neighbouring communities in the ways that Southern describes.

## Foundation

Beauchief was one of only three abbeys in medieval Derbyshire, all of them houses of Augustinian regular canons, the other two being in the south of the county at Darley and Dale. Nor was the county well served by friars, the Dominican friary at Derby being the only one in the county, whereas Yorkshire's towns had nineteen, including two in Doncaster and one at Tickhill. Darley abbey was founded by Robert Ferrers, second earl of Derby, c.1146. Very little of the buildings survives but its charters do and they have been published.<sup>3</sup> Like Beauchief, Dale abbey (which was sometimes referred to as Stanley Park) was a Premonstratensian house, founded about the year 1200. The site has been excavated and some architectural fragments survive, as do the abbey's charters, which have also been published.<sup>4</sup> The endowments of both these small abbeys were concentrated in the southern half of Derbyshire. Beauchief abbey, on the other hand, was founded as a daughter establishment of Welbeck abbey in Nottinghamshire upon the gift of land by Robert FitzRanulf, formerly sheriff of Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, and lord of Alfreton and Norton in Derbyshire, Edwalton in Nottinghamshire, and Wymeswold in Leicestershire. Two versions of the foundation charter have survived: the first dates from the reign of Henry II (3);<sup>5</sup> the second, which gives a more detailed description of the boundaries of the estate, is known from a royal confirmation of the reign of Edward II (4). The canons of Beauchief always responded to visitations by giving their

<sup>2</sup>If we take an extensive view of the communities living under the Rule of St Augustine, it must be judged the most prolific of all medieval religious Rules. The number of communities in the thirteenth century which acknowledged this Rule as their guide is beyond any certain calculation, but it would run to many thousands' (*ibid.*, p. 249).

<sup>3</sup>R.R. Darlington, *The Cartulary of Darley Abbey*, 2 vols (Kendal, 1945).

<sup>4</sup>A. Saltman (ed.), *The Cartulary of Dale Abbey*, Derbyshire Archaeological Society Record Series, 2 for 1966 (London, 1967).

<sup>5</sup>Numbers in bold type indicate charter numbers in the Cartulary.

foundation date as the feast of St Thomas the Apostle, 21 December 1183. However, Richard, Bishop of Coventry, to whom the original charter was addressed, had died by that time, and Albinus, Abbot of Darley, who witnessed both documents, had died by 1176. The likely explanation for these discrepancies is that, although land had been granted for the use of the proposed abbey by 1176, the ‘official opening’ was late in 1183. The abbey was dedicated to St Mary and St Thomas the Martyr, who was canonized in February 1173. The original grant must therefore have been made between 1173 and 1176.<sup>6</sup>

The Premonstratensian order had been founded in 1120 at Prémontré, in a secluded and marshy valley near Laon in northern France, as an order whose communal life and organization was modelled on that of the Cistercians while being supportive of preaching and parochial work outside the cloister. The White Canons, as they were popularly known, were regular canons who lived under a rule that was less strict than that of the monks, but they sang the daily offices in the abbey church, shared a common dormitory and the frugal diet of the refectory, and were obliged to follow the statutes of their order. Regular inspections by visitors, who were appointed by an annual general chapter, ensured common standards of liturgy, accommodation, dress, and conduct. The first English abbey of the new order was established at Newhouse (Lincolnshire) in 1143; Welbeck abbey was founded ten years later. More than fifty successful Premonstratensian communities were established in Britain, mostly between 1150 and 1210, but the order failed to expand subsequently.<sup>7</sup>

Beauchief is the Norman French name for the ‘beautiful headland’ that lay on the north-western edge of the parish of Norton, just inside Derbyshire. The Latin version of the name was *Bellum Caput* or *Abbatia de Bello Capite*.<sup>8</sup> The foundation was of modest size compared with the great Benedictine abbeys of northern England. Visitations during the fifteenth century regularly named the abbot and twelve to fourteen canons. The surnames of the abbots and canons suggest that most of them came from the neighbourhood of the abbey.<sup>9</sup> The number

<sup>6</sup> See H.M. Colvin, *The White Canons in England* (Oxford, 1951), pp. 103–106 for the background. It is not clear why the foundation date should be that of Thomas the Apostle and not that of Thomas Becket. See also Janet Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders in Britain, 1000–1300* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 56–60.

<sup>7</sup> R. Harte and C. Merrony, ‘Two way traffic: the importance of Beauchief abbey as a case study for the Premonstratensian order in England’, *Review of Archaeology in South Yorkshire, 1994–95* (Sheffield, 1995), pp. 81–88.

<sup>8</sup> K. Cameron, *The Place-names of Derbyshire*, II (Cambridge, 1959), p. 208.

<sup>9</sup> S.O. Addy, *Historical Memorials of Beauchief Abbey* (Sheffield, 1878), p. 136; see also Claire Cross and Noreen Vickers, *Monks, Friars and Nuns in Sixteenth Century Yorkshire*, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, 150 (1995), p. 3.

of lay brothers and other assistants and servants is not known, but as the abbey church was 200 feet long they probably far outnumbered the canons. When the abbey was dissolved on 4 February 1537, it was valued at only £126 3s 4d, thus bringing it well below the threshold value of £200, under which the smaller religious establishments were dissolved according to the Act of 1536.

Robert FitzRanulf's original grant of an estate in Norton extended from the river Sheaf, which formed the boundary of Derbyshire in the north-west, as far as Abbey Brook and Chancet Wood in the north and the spring and stream by the present Twentywell Lane in the south-west. (Twentywell is a corruption of St Quentin well, which was named after the abbey of St Quentin, not far from Prémontré.<sup>10</sup>) The estate consisted of uncleared hazel scrub beyond the clearances that had recently been made by local peasant farmers on the border of the manor. By charter 6, the founder extended his original grant of land to the south as far as the border between the hamlet of Greenhill in Norton parish and Birchitt in the parish of Dronfield. Later grants enlarged the estate on the northern side of Abbey Brook as far as the river Sheaf, beyond Hutcliffe Wood and towards Woodseats and the abbey's new water mill on a site that became known as Norton Hammer. After the Dissolution, the compact estate of 780 acres around the abbey was known as the extra-parochial Liberty of Beauchief; much of it is shown on a map of Strelley Pegges's estate drawn by William Fairbank in 1762.<sup>11</sup> The parish of Norton and the adjacent chapelry of Dore and Totley in the parish of Dronfield both lay just within Derbyshire and the diocese of Coventry and Lichfield, on the border with the parish of Sheffield, the county of Yorkshire, and the Archbishopric of York. The river Sheaf and its tributary the Meersbrook both have names that were derived from this boundary.<sup>12</sup> Norton mill, small properties in Norton Lees and by the Meersbrook, and the advowson and tithes and so forth of Norton church were given to the canons by the first charters, as were similar rights to the churches of Alfreton (Derbyshire), Wymeswold (Leicestershire),

<sup>10</sup>Cameron, *The Place-names of Derbyshire*, II, p. 285.

<sup>11</sup>Sheffield Archives, Fairbank collection, BEA 1. The acreage is given in J.M. Wilson, *The Imperial Gazetteer*, I (London and Edinburgh, 1870), p. 135. The foundation charters refer to Beauchief as being in 'Doreheseles', i.e. the hazel woods of Dore, though the abbey's estate was actually across the Dore boundary (formed by the Limb brook and the river Sheaf). The adjoining Ecclesall Wood was known as Hazlehurst when Sir Robert of Ecclesall enclosed it within his park in 1319 (J. Hunter, *Hallamshire*, ed. A. Gatty (London, 1869), p. 342). Hazels therefore seem to have been characteristic of this part of the Sheaf valley.

<sup>12</sup>A.H. Smith, *The Place-names of the West Riding of Yorkshire*, VII (Cambridge, 1962), pp. 131–132, 137. Sheaf is an Old English word meaning 'boundary'. Meersbrook is from 'mere', also a boundary.

and Edwalton (Nottinghamshire), and part of the demesne land at Wymeswold. Later members of the FitzRanulf family granted further land at Wymeswold.<sup>13</sup> Robert's grant of the tithes of his parish churches was of vital importance in supporting the canons, especially in their early years.<sup>14</sup>

Norton, Alfreton, and Wymeswold (but not Edwalton) formed part of the Honour of Tickhill, Roger of Busli's great Norman estate centred on Tickhill castle on the Yorkshire–Nottinghamshire border. Domesday Book records that Ingram (an Old French or Old German name) held Norton and Alfreton of Roger of Busli. We do not know whether he also held Edwalton and Wymeswold because no tenants-in-chief were recorded in the Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire folios of Domesday Book (Wymeswold lies just across the Nottinghamshire boundary in Leicestershire, a few miles south of Edwalton).<sup>15</sup> Ingram's son, Ranulf of Alfreton, was the father of Robert FitzRanulf, the founder of Beauchief abbey.<sup>16</sup> Ranulf was sheriff of Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire for many years and was succeeded by his son, who held the same offices between 1165 and 1170.<sup>17</sup> Beauchief abbey also received grants of land from the lords of other manors within the Honour of Tickhill: Beighton, Dore, Pleasley, and Rowthorne (Derbyshire); Billingley, Goldthorpe, Kimberworth, Scholes, Swinton, and Thorpe Hesley (South Yorkshire); and Bilby, Eglington, Marnham, and Perlethorpe (Nottinghamshire). The chief religious houses within the honour were the Benedictine priory at Blyth and the Augustinian priory at Worksop (both in Nottinghamshire).

Within a generation, the abbey attracted grants of large stretches of moorland for grazing cattle and sheep in adjoining manors a few

<sup>13</sup> A pedigree of the family is given in S. Pegge, *An Historical Account of Beauchief Abbey* (London, 1801), p. 20.

<sup>14</sup> The database of Pope Nicholas IV's *Taxatio*, prepared by the late J.H. Denton and others and showing the valuation of English and Welsh parish churches and prebends listed in the ecclesiastical taxation assessment of 1291–1292, gives the following assessments: Norton £8, Alfreton £10, Wymeswold £25 13s 4d (<http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/taxatio>). There is no entry for Edwalton. Dronfield, which was appropriated in 1399, was valued at £40.

<sup>15</sup> P. Morgan, *Domesday Book: Derbyshire* (Chichester, 1978), p. 16; W. Page (ed.), *Victoria County History of Nottinghamshire*, I (London, 1906), pp. 259–279; *idem* (ed.), *Victoria County History of Leicestershire*, I (London, 1907), p. 325. Roger of Busli had few possessions in Leicestershire but held an extensive estate in Nottinghamshire and many manors in Derbyshire and South Yorkshire. Edwalton formed part of the lands of Roger of Poitou in 1086.

<sup>16</sup> Pegge, *An Historical Account of Beauchief Abbey*, pp. 20–23; Robert FitzRanulf witnessed the foundation charter of Welbeck abbey and gave his church at Osberton to Worksop priory. He also had property in Derbyshire at Monyash, Rowsley, Calver, Hassop, Blackwell, and Dronfield, and in Nottinghamshire at Nuthall, Thurgaton, Watnall, Woodborough, Bramcote, Markham, Ollerton, and Bilby.

<sup>17</sup> Colvin, *White Canons*, pp. 103–104.

miles south-west of Chesterfield, halfway between the FitzRanulf manors of Norton and Alfreton. Serlo of Pleasley, the great-grandson of his namesake who was the Domesday Book owner of Ashover and Glapwell, granted a bovate of land with a toft and croft and common rights in the parish of Ashover; his neighbour, Robert Brito (or the Breton) of Walton, gave a wood up to the Ashover boundary; and Warner (otherwise Warin) of Beeley donated the site of Harewood, where the abbey built a grange. Warner's son Serlo soon gave the canons extra land there.

### **Further endowments**

In the early decades of the thirteenth century more grants were made by the same families and by some new ones. The founder's son donated nine bovates and another 24 acres in Wymeswold, as well as smaller acreages at Beauchief and Troway (Derbyshire); the lords of Beeley continued their support; and Richard of Glapwell allowed the canons to rent three bovates on his manor, with pasture for a plough team and 160 sheep. The abbey's Obituary commemorated John Rocester, lord of Dore, 'who gave us all his land in Dore', but his charter is not included in the Cartulary. About the same time, at least three more granges were established: by Walter Barry, lord of Teversal (Nottinghamshire), at Stanley; by Robert of Furness at Birley, within his manor of Beighton (Derbyshire); and by Gerard of Furnival at Fulwood, within his lordship of Hallamshire (South Yorkshire). Furnival's gift was an especially significant new donation, for the previous lords of Hallamshire, the Lovetots, had granted the large tithes of their extensive lordship to the Benedictine abbey of St Wandrille, near their place of origin in Normandy, and the small tithes and other properties to the Augustinian priory that William and Emma of Lovetot had founded at Worksop (Nottinghamshire).<sup>18</sup> At Sheffield the Furnivals had inherited a castle and a thriving market town that the Lovetots had established at the confluence of the Sheaf and the Don; and in the 1270s Thomas of Furnival III built a formidable new stronghold there that dominated Sheffield and the lordship of Hallamshire for nearly four centuries. Another foothold in South Yorkshire was established in 1227 when Adam of Saint Mary, lord of Rawmarsh (which he subinfeuded from the Deincourts, an East Midlands baronial family who witnessed many Beauchief charters), made a modest gift at Upper Haugh. The abbey also acquired some

<sup>18</sup>D. Hey, *Historic Hallamshire* (Ashbourne, 2002), pp. 27–29.

urban property, notably in Chesterfield, where the present rectangular market, once surrounded by burgage plots, had been laid out at the edge of the old town in the early or mid-twelfth century. However, the bulk of its estate was in village fields or on the Derbyshire moors, within or immediately across the borders of the wapentake of Scarsdale, which covered north-east Derbyshire around the market town and minster church of Chesterfield.

### The Chaworths

The FitzRanulf line ended in 1242 with the death of Thomas of Alfreton, when his two sisters became co-heiresses. The elder sister, Alice, married Sir William Chaworth, lord of Marnham (Nottinghamshire); the younger, Johanna, married Robert, the son of Richard of Lathom (Lancashire).<sup>19</sup> William Chaworth's son, Thomas, who came of age in 1247, is usually regarded as the co-founder of Beauchief abbey because of the substantial nature of his gifts. His surname was written in many different ways in medieval documents (but not in the Cartulary) and is thought to have been derived from Chaurces (now Sourches), near Le Mans.<sup>20</sup> The Chaworths, too, were prominent knights in the Honour of Tickhill. The oldest extent of the honour shows Robert Chaworth holding half a knight's fee in Marnham and a third of a knight's fee in Wadworth (South Yorkshire). Thomas Chaworth I was active in promoting his Derbyshire properties: in 1252 he and Robert of Lathom obtained a royal charter for a Monday market and a three-day July fair at Alfreton, and five years later he created deer parks around his manor houses at Alfreton and Norton.<sup>21</sup> Upon his death in 1315, he was succeeded by his grandson, Sir Thomas Chaworth II (*d.* 1347), who in turn was succeeded by his son, Sir Thomas Chaworth III (*d.* 1370). The Chaworths were benefactors to and patrons of Beauchief for several

<sup>19</sup> Pegge, *An Historical Account of Beauchief Abbey*, p. 20; R. McKinley, *The Surnames of Lancashire* (London, 1981), p. 55.

<sup>20</sup> A pedigree of the Chaworths is given in Pegge, *An Historical Account of Beauchief Abbey*, p. 110. The first four generations spelt their name Chaurces, etc. See the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* entry on the Chaworth [de Cadurcis] family (*per. c.1160–c.1521*).

<sup>21</sup> J. Hunter, *South Yorkshire: the history and topography of the Deanery of Doncaster*, II (London, 1831), pp. 249–250; an effigy in Wadworth church is thought to be that of a Chaworth; the branch there was succeeded by the Fitzwilliams. A branch of the Chaworths lived at Rawmarsh (South Yorks) after George, the third son of Sir Thomas Chaworth, married the heiress of the Rawmarsh estate in Henry VI's reign; the Chaworths remained there until the reign of James I (*ibid.*, II, p. 47). Another branch was seated at Harthill (South Yorks) from at least Edward IV's reign until 1674 (*ibid.*, II, pp. 140–141). For the grants of a market and parks, see *Calendar of Charter Rolls, Henry III*, I, 1226–1257, pp. 400 and 472.

generations and were buried within the abbey precincts; for example, Thomas Chaworth, who died in 1483, was described in the Beauchief Obituary as ‘our advocate’.<sup>22</sup> Most of the charters numbered 17 to 91 relate to grants from the Chaworths.

### Other benefactors

Other benefactors, some of whom were also buried in the abbey, are listed in the abbey’s Obituary, though their gifts are not always recorded in the Cartulary. For example, each year on 18 June a Mass was said for ‘Radulph Musard, our canon and assistant brother [...] for he gave us Hanley and Wadshelf, and a golden chalice with a golden cross’.<sup>23</sup> Some of the Furnivals, lords of Hallamshire, were buried in the choir, including Sir Gerard of Furnival I, who gave valuable pasture rights to establish the grange at Fulwood and ‘20s rent from his mill at Sheffield, to maintain light in our church’,<sup>24</sup> and Sir Thomas of Furnival I, who enlarged the grange and confirmed all the donations of his ancestors in Hallamshire.<sup>25</sup> The good will of the Furnivals’ successors, the Talbots, earls of Shrewsbury, was essential because the lords of Hallamshire were the canons’ most powerful neighbour. Thus we find that in 1466 the abbot granted an annual fee of five marks to the earl for life in return for his ‘very potent counsel, support, protection and aid’.<sup>26</sup>

The minor lords who were neighbours (and often retainers and kinsmen) of the FitzRanulfs, Chaworths, and Furnivals appear as benefactors in the Cartulary and sometimes in the Obituary. Some made grants with no strings attached; others asked for a rent, or imposed a time limit. In the latter half of the thirteenth century, Sir Ralph of Ecclesall (son of Sir Robert and one of the knights of the

<sup>22</sup> Addy, *Historical Memorials of Beauchief Abbey*, pp. 28–29; Obituary, 3 March. The Norton and Alfreton branch of the Chaworths ended with the death of Thomas Chaworth in 1483, leaving his sister Joanna, the wife of John Ormond, as his heir. Alfreton church has a wall monument to John Ormond and Joan Chaworth (who died in 1507), though the brasses are missing. The north transept of Langar church (Notts) in the Vale of Belvoir contains the sixteenth-century tombs of the Chaworths of Wiverton and later tablets to the Chaworth-Musters of Annesley.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40. These grants are not recorded in the Cartulary, but are listed (except for the golden cross) as nos 30 and 31 in the *Insipeximus* of 1316; see also nos 32 and 33. At the Derbyshire eyre of 1281, the abbot of Beauchief showed a charter concerning the vill of West Handley ‘which Richard Musard held in chief of king John grandfather of the king’; see A. Hopkinson (ed.), *The Rolls of the 1281 Derbyshire Eyre*, Derbyshire Record Society, 27 (2000), p. 181 and n. 2.

<sup>24</sup> Addy, *Historical Memorials of Beauchief Abbey*, p. 53.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

<sup>26</sup> Pegge, *An Historical Account of Beauchief Abbey*, pp. 226–227.

Furnivals and also lord of a sub-manor within Hallamshire that lay on the opposite bank of the river Sheaf to the abbey) made a significant commitment when he granted the canons his corn mill on the river Sheaf, at an annual rent of four marks, in order to maintain a canon to celebrate Mass in his chapel. He went on to grant other properties in Attercliffe, Sheffield, Dronfield, and Mattersey (Nottinghamshire). His example was soon followed by the Hauselins, the principal tenants of his sub-manor, and by the Costenoths of Wadsley, another sub-manor of Hallamshire. Meanwhile, the granges at Fulwood and Strawberry Lee benefited from grants of moorland pastures from the lords of Hathersage and Padley and, later, from William of Meynell Langley and William of Dronfield.

The abbey continued to attract valuable property gifts in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. The Chaworts were staunch supporters who made several new grants in the neighbourhood of the abbey and in their manor of Alfreton, some of which supported a canon to pray at a new altar within the abbey church. The services of serfs were transferred to the abbey, and revenue was boosted by grants of corn and fulling mills and coal mines. The Reresbys, lords of Ashover, and other neighbouring landowners, including Walter Chauz of Brampton, extended the canons' pasture rights across the moors near their grange at Harewood. Meanwhile, in South Yorkshire, more grants came from the Hallamshire sub-manors of Ecclesall and Wadsley and from further afield at Scholes, Thorpe Hesley, Swinton, Billingley, and Goldthorpe. This generosity declined swiftly in the 1320s, however, after the nation had suffered badly from harvest failure and livestock plagues, long before the catastrophe of the Black Death. In the second half of the fourteenth century, new donations came only in a trickle until Ralph Barker's generous gift of the rectory and advowson of Dronfield church in 1399.

Derbyshire was of little strategic or economic importance under the Normans, and so few castles and no Benedictine, Cistercian, or Cluniac monasteries were established there. The income that might have supported the foundation of abbeys and priories within the county was diverted instead to cathedrals and monasteries beyond the county's borders. In 1093, for instance, the large parishes of Ashbourne and Chesterfield, with their chapelries, were granted by the king to the new cathedral at Lincoln. Soon afterwards, distant monasteries established granges in many parts of Derbyshire in order to farm the properties that they had been granted: for example, the Cistercians of Louth Park (Lincolnshire) and the Cluniacs of Lenton Priory (Nottinghamshire) set up granges on the edges of Barlow. Even when preaching orders became popular, few religious houses were sited within the county.

It seems that Beauchief was regarded as the ‘home’ abbey for the wapentake of Scarsdale, which, as has been mentioned, covered north-east Derbyshire around the market town and minster church of Chesterfield. The grants of property that were received from within Derbyshire were confined there or were from immediately across its moorland border, and no other religious house was established within the wapentake. The founder’s manors of Norton and Alfreton lay at the northern and southern edges of the wapentake respectively. Other grants to the abbey were of properties just across the Nottinghamshire border near Alfreton, or within Hallamshire and other parts of South Yorkshire to the north of Norton. The more important Beauchief charters were witnessed by the leading landowners in the neighbourhood, even though only a few of these lords donated land themselves. The 1312 confirmation of charters was a particularly well-orchestrated event, headed by Thomas of Furnival, lord of Hallamshire, and Edmund Deincourt, lord of several Derbyshire manors, including Morton near Alfreton and Holmesfield near Norton, and the head of the junior branch of the Deincourts of the barony of Blankney (Lincolnshire). They were followed by the leading knights of Scarsdale and Sir Robert of Ecclesall.

### Personal names in the Cartulary

The founder, who called himself Robert son of Ranulph, and his descendants did not possess an hereditary surname; indeed, charter **64** (dated 1210–1225) names his granddaughter as ‘Alice daughter of William son of Robert of Alfreton’. By the thirteenth century, however, the other barons and knights who appear in the charters either as grantors or witnesses had Norman or Breton surnames that were already fixed and hereditary. The Furnivals came from Fourneville, the Deincourts from Ancourt, the Chaworts from Sourches; while other landowners who made fleeting appearances in the charters included Barry, Bullon, Chauz, Jorris, Picard, Pierrepont, Normanville, and Wasteney. In other families, nicknames eventually became surnames: Bret or Breton, Cade, Foljambe, Herries, Musters, and Rufus. We might suspect that some knights who adopted the names of their English properties, such as the four generations of the Ecclesalls, were also Norman in origin.

Nearly all the deeds in the Cartulary date from before the 1330s, so it is unsurprising that grantors and witnesses from lower down the social level did not possess hereditary surnames. Instead, they were recorded by such names as ‘Hugh son of Adam at the spring in Greenhill’, ‘John the swane son of Adam of Greenhill’, ‘Adam son of John of the

Cliffe', 'Richard son of Adam the cook of Sheffield', or 'Simon son of Henry son of Gunnild of Sheffield'. Others were recorded by their occupation: 'Richard the ditcher', 'Ellis the carpenter', 'William the tanner', 'Peter the weaver', and so forth. Clerks and chaplains naturally served as literate witnesses, and a group of men from local farmsteads were often called upon: 'Thomas of Norton Lees', 'John and Peter of Birchitt', 'Peter of Barnes', 'Thomas of Dronfield Woodhouse, clerk', and 'John of Stubley, clerk'. Their names reveal that the pattern of settlement that is first shown on Peter Burdett's 1767 map of Derbyshire had been created by the thirteenth century.

Although the personal names recorded in the Cartulary are overwhelmingly Norman French, some Old English or Old Scandinavian personal names were still in use in the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The peasants who had cleared the assarts near the site chosen for the abbey included Clebern, Gamel, and Hacon, though others had names that had been introduced by the Normans: Gerard, Gervase, Hugh, Peter, and Robert. The Old English names Uchtred and Weremund were still in use soon afterwards, but 'Robert son of Godric of Darley' shows how a father with an Old English name chose a Norman one for his son. Likewise, an Ashover man with the Old Welsh name Madoch christened his son John, once the saint's name had become popular; Gunnild of Sheffield chose the Norman name Henry for her son, while Gunnild of Chesterfield chose the Breton name Alan for hers; and the Norman names of Robert, Richard, and William were chosen for the sons of Edwin of Chesterfield, for Thoke, the serf of Hugh Hauselin of Little Sheffield, and for Gamel of Ecclesall respectively. The low status of pre-Conquest personal names is revealed by their rarity among the witnesses; they occur few and far between when compared with the names that became hugely popular under the Normans. In the Beauchief Cartulary, the most popular personal names were William, Robert, and Roger, followed by John (which was rising fast in popularity throughout the land), Thomas, Hugh, Ralph, Adam, Henry, Walter, and Peter. Other Norman personal names included Ellis, Gilbert, Giles, Lambert, Odo, Philip, Reyner, Serlo, Warin, and Walter, with Alan and Brian from Brittany. The twenty-one women's names in the charters were all Norman and were spread thinly, with no favourite choices.

## Parishes and other churches

Robert FitzRanulf's original grant (3) included the churches of Norton, Alfreton, Edwalton, and Wymeswold, and canons from Beauchief

served as vicars at each of them. Thus, the vicars of Norton included Thomas of Alfreton, canon of Beauchief (1325); William Kychyne, who was at the visitation of the abbey in 1475; John Croke (1490), former sub-cellarer and sub-prior of the abbey; and John Sheffield, alias Greenwood (1510), the last abbot.<sup>27</sup> FitzRanulf may have been responsible for the Norman south doorway and the arches of the north side of the nave at St James's, Norton, and the carved heads that frame the great Perpendicular east window seem to represent an abbot and a canon. In 1524 the Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, Geoffrey Blythe (who was born at Norton Lees), provided the vicar of Norton with a 'chantry house' in a croft on the west side of Norton Green, where ten dairy cows were to graze; the vicar also received a coroddy or grant of ale and bread each week.<sup>28</sup> The medieval work of the large church of St Mary, Wymeswold dates from the early fourteenth century onwards, that at Holy Rood, Edwalton from a few decades later.<sup>29</sup> At St Martin's, Alfreton, the earliest architectural remains date from the thirteenth century.<sup>30</sup> The visitation of 25 May 1494 named one of the canons as vicar of Alfreton and another as chaplain of Alfreton chantry, which may have stood on abbey property at the Riddings.<sup>31</sup>

The visitations of the second half of the fifteenth century regularly name beneficed canons at Norton, Alfreton, and Wymeswold, but not at Edwalton. The *Valor Ecclesiasticus* (1535)<sup>32</sup> likewise makes no mention of Edwalton. The abbey's connection had been broken long before. The *Valor* does, however, record the church of St John the Baptist, Dronfield, which was not included in FitzRanulf's original grant. The witnesses in the Cartulary include Sir Henry of Brailsford,

<sup>27</sup>H. Armitage, *Chantrey Land* (London, 1910), pp. 2–3. Armitage gave no source for this information. He also wrote that Thomas of Dronfield (1380) later became abbot of Beauchief. 'Thomas de Dronfield, formerly vicar of Norton, who died A. D. 1425' (Addy, *Historical Memorials of Beauchief Abbey*, p. 41) is commemorated in the longer version of the Obituary (20 June; see pp. below) but is not listed in D.M. Smith (ed.), *The Heads of Religious Houses: England and Wales, III, 1377–1540* (Cambridge, 2008), p. 563. For 'John Grennwood (Greynwod) alias Sheffield', who was confirmed as abbot of Beauchief in 1519 and died in 1536, see *ibid.*, pp. 563–564.

<sup>28</sup>Addy, *Historical Memorials of Beauchief Abbey*, pp. 129–132; Armitage, *Chantrey Land*, pp. 32–36; Sheffield Archives, Norton parish church deeds, 21.

<sup>29</sup>N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Leicestershire and Rutland* (2nd edn, revised by E. Williamson and G.K. Brandwood, Harmondsworth, 1984), p. 430; *idem*, *The Buildings of England: Nottinghamshire* (2nd edn, revised by E. Williamson, Harmondsworth, 1979), p. 119. The chancel for which the canons were once responsible at Edwalton fell down in the seventeenth century.

<sup>30</sup>N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Derbyshire* (2nd edn, revised by E. Williamson, Harmondsworth, 1979), p. 155.

<sup>31</sup>R. Johnson, *A History of Alfreton* (Ripley, n.d.), pp. 36–37.

<sup>32</sup>J. Caley and J. Hunter (eds), *Valor Ecclesiasticus Temp. Henr. VIII. auctoritate regia institutus*, 6 vols (London, 1810–1834); the entry for Beauchief abbey is in vol. III (1817), pp. 172–174.

former patron of Dronfield church, and his younger son, Roger of Brailsford, whom he appointed as rector; they seem to have been responsible for the building of the fine chancel there in the early fourteenth century. The abbey did not own the rectory and advowson until 1399, when Ralph Barker of Dore and Dronfield Woodhouse donated the advowson and Pope Boniface IX appropriated the rectory to the use of the abbey. On 2 December 1399 the rector resigned and the canons appointed John Wykwall as their vicar; four years later, they built him a vicarage.<sup>33</sup>

## Granges

As we have seen, most of Beauchief's endowments were received in the first century and a half of the abbey's existence. During this period, granges were established to supervise the farming of the abbey's properties, but in the later Middle Ages the abbot and canons of Beauchief followed the common practice of leasing their lands to tenants. Pegge quotes a large number of leases from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The Glapwell charters show that some lands passed to Darley abbey, but the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* indicates that the main body of endowments remained intact until the Dissolution.

The lands that were granted by benefactors may have been farmed at first by lay brothers whose outlying farmsteads, or granges, were similar to contemporary farmhouses but sometimes also distinguished by the addition of a chapel.<sup>34</sup> The charters provide few definite references to granges, except when grants were confirmed or new lands were donated. Seven granges can be identified but it is possible that one or two more existed. Even when the abbey leased its lands to secular farmers, the word 'grange' was retained, but the nineteenth-century fashion for calling houses 'grange', with no historical justification, causes some confusion; neither Bradway Grange Farm nor Norton Grange is named in the Cartulary, though the abbey did possess two properties at Bradway<sup>35</sup> at the time of the Dissolution. The predecessor of a Georgian house known as 'The Grange' at Dronfield was referred to in 1738 as 'the Grange house or parsonage'.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>33</sup>Pegge, *An Historical Account of Beauchief Abbey*, pp. 97–99; Addy, *Historical Memorials of Beauchief Abbey*, pp. 115–116. See charters 218–219.

<sup>34</sup>For monastic granges, their buildings and staffing, see C. Platt, *The Monastic Grange in Medieval England: a reassessment* (London, 1969).

<sup>35</sup>Pegge, *An Historical Account of Beauchief Abbey*, pp. 67–68.

<sup>36</sup>Sheffield Archives, Ce R/64.

A home farm or grange was built close to the abbey on the site of the later Beauchief Hall. Pegge wrote that, after the Dissolution,

The Strelleys never made use of the abbey as a house to live in, but dwelt at the Grange. And after Edward Pegge [his ancestor] began to erect his present mansion, the walls of the abbey and its enclosures were mostly carried away for the purpose of accomplishing that, and other buildings.<sup>37</sup>

Two inventories of Beauchief abbey mention the contents of this grange and list the livestock. The first, dated 21 November 1393, notes the foodstuffs ‘in the manor and storehouse at Beauchief Grange’ and lists 41 cows, bullocks, and heifers, 172 wethers, ewes, and lambs, 8 horses, mares, and foals, and 17 pigs and young pigs.<sup>38</sup> The Dissolution inventory, taken on 2 August 1536, includes ‘Household stuff at the grange’ and lists the livestock as 12 oxen, 13 cows, 2 bulls, 17 young beasts, 120 ewes, hogs, and other sheep, 2 horses and 1 mare, and 20 pigs, and the farm equipment as two corn wains, three dung carts, three ploughs, one sled, and some yokes.<sup>39</sup>

Three miles up the valley, just in sight of the abbey, a grange was built in a clearing on the edge of the moors at Strawberry Lee.<sup>40</sup> A farmhouse stood on this site until 1936 but now only some ruined walls remain. An extensive green grazing area is surrounded by moorland on all sides: a deep gulley provides a natural boundary with the moorland of Brown Edge to the south, Blacka Hill rises to the north, and Totley Moss stretches away to the west. By an undated charter (159) the canons acquired common of pasture for goats and other animals at Strawberry Lee. The first mention of a grange (161) dates from the middle decades of the thirteenth century,<sup>41</sup> when Matthew of Hathersage made a grant of common pasture on Hathersage Moor for the livestock at the canons’ granges of Fulwood and Strawberry Lee. The canons received similar grazing rights for their livestock at Strawberry Lee on the adjoining Padley Moor in 1285 (163). The stump of the Lady Cross, mentioned in 161, survives in its original position on the moors, over a mile away from the grange.<sup>42</sup> In the later middle ages the grange was leased by the canons: in 1461 to John

<sup>37</sup> Pegge, *An Historical Account of Beauchief Abbey*, p. 207.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, appendix 5.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, appendix 10; Addy, *Historical Memorials of Beauchief Abbey*, pp. 138–143. A small, late medieval barn was sited close to the abbey: see S.R. Jones, ‘A king-post barn of late medieval origin at Beauchief Abbey House, Sheffield, NGR SK 333821’, *Transactions of the Hunter Archaeological Society*, 23 (2005), pp. 11–18.

<sup>40</sup> OS ref. SK 285799.

<sup>41</sup> Cameron, *The Place-names of Derbyshire*, II, p. 265. A William Fairbank field-book survey of 1812 is difficult to interpret but shows that the cultivated area was smaller before the parliamentary enclosure of the surrounding moors (Sheffield Archives, FB 126, p. 70).

<sup>42</sup> OS ref. SK 273783.

Faunchall, for sixty years; and in 1530 to Thomas North, for seventy years.<sup>43</sup> Upon the Dissolution, Strawberry Lee was sold to Sir Nicholas Strelley, who also acquired the main estate at Beauchief.

The present Fulwood Grange Farm,<sup>44</sup> three and a half miles north of Strawberry Lee, is the successor to the grange mentioned in 161. The Beauchief Obituary names Sir Gerard of Furnival, lord of Hallamshire, as the man who gave ‘sufficient pasture in his forest of Fulwode for 30 cows, with young under three years old, and one acre of land to build our lodges upon’. Gerard had become lord of Hallamshire in the 1190s upon his marriage to the heiress Maud of Lovetot; he died on the fifth crusade in 1218 or 1219 and was buried in Normandy.<sup>45</sup> His descendant, Sir Thomas of Furnival, ‘gave land to enlarge our grange in Fulwode’.<sup>46</sup> In 1514, William Holland took a forty-year lease of the grange.<sup>47</sup> Upon the Dissolution, Fulwood Grange was acquired by Francis, earl of Shrewsbury, and so it once more became part of the lordship of Hallamshire.

The abbey’s largest grange beyond Beauchief was sited on the eastern edge of Beeley Moor, where a farmhouse still bears the name of Harewood Grange.<sup>48</sup> Warner or Warin of Beeley, in the late twelfth or early thirteenth century, made the original grant of Harewood, with pasture on the moors for 100 oxen and cows, 20 horses with their young, and 100 sheep (164). Further grants (165–190) by Warner’s descendants and by neighbouring landowners extended the grazing area to the western side of Beeley Moor and into the parish of Ashover and the chapelry of Walton. Some of the boundary stones on these moors probably date from the times of these grants. By the fifteenth century the grange was being leased: on 29 September 1431 it was taken by William of Stone of Harewood for thirty years but, as Stone was described as already ‘of Harewood’, the lease was probably a renewal.<sup>49</sup> In 1507 Sir John Blackiswalle, the chantry priest of Dronfield, took a lease for eighty years,<sup>50</sup> and in 1524 Christopher Blackwall took an eighty-year lease to keep 120 wether sheep.<sup>51</sup> William

<sup>43</sup> Pegge, *An Historical Account of Beauchief Abbey*, p. 197.

<sup>44</sup> OS ref. SK 284854.

<sup>45</sup> Addy, *Historical Memorials of Beauchief Abbey*, p. 53. S. Lloyd, *English Society and the Crusade, 1216–1307* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), p. 102.

<sup>46</sup> Addy, *Historical Memorials of Beauchief Abbey*, p. 37.

<sup>47</sup> Pegge, *An Historical Account of Beauchief Abbey*, p. 157.

<sup>48</sup> OS ref. SK 312680. The name means ‘boundary wood’, for it stood on the parish and wapentake boundary (K. Cameron, *The Place-names of Derbyshire*, I (Cambridge, 1959), pp. 44–45).

<sup>49</sup> British Library, Wolley charters, i, 14 (I.H. Jeayes, *A Descriptive Catalogue of Derbyshire Charters in Public and Private Libraries and Muniment Rooms* (London and Derby, 1906), no. 258).

<sup>50</sup> British Library, Wolley charters, i, 15 (Jeayes, *Derbyshire Charters*, no. 265).

<sup>51</sup> Pegge, *An Historical Account of Beauchief Abbey*, p. 137.

Blackwall held the lease at the Dissolution, when the estate was sold to Sir Francis Leake of Sutton.<sup>52</sup>

Less is known about other granges. Robert de Furness, lord of Beighton, was commemorated in the Obituary because ‘he gave us our grange of Birley with the adjacent lands’, together with a meadow in Beighton and common of pasture for 200 sheep in Westwood.<sup>53</sup> The place-name means ‘byre clearing’<sup>54</sup> and the site may be identified with Birley Farm, two and half miles south of Beighton and a mile southwest of Killamarsh.<sup>55</sup> Pegge mentions an eighty-year lease dated 1468 to John Austin of ‘the grange at Barley [sic] beneigh [i.e. within] the lordship of Beighton’.<sup>56</sup> The grange may have included the lands at Beighton, Hackenthorpe, Handsworth, and Woodhouse, which were mentioned in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*.

By charter 222 (dated 1190–1225), William Barry, lord of Teversal (Nottinghamshire), granted a bovate in his demesne and two tofts and crofts in Stanley, the ‘stony clearing’ on the Nottinghamshire–Derbyshire boundary. The grant provided sufficient pasture for 300 sheep, 20 cows, a bull, 8 horses with their young, and 16 oxen, on a compact estate that extended to the county boundary at Frankbridge in the north and Biggin Farm in the west. It is now cut in two by the M1 motorway immediately south of Hardwick Hall. Barry’s charter refers to a ‘land ditch’ and to ‘the house of the canons’, so his grant was not the first in this area. The grange that was clearly necessary to run an estate of this size can be identified with the present Stanley Grange Farm on the western edge of the hamlet (OS ref. SK 459623). Pegge quotes ‘the grange at Stanley’, held from 1525 by Thomas North on a ninety-year lease, at a rent of 40 shillings, in order to keep 120 sheep.<sup>57</sup> (North also leased the grange at Strawberry Lee and two messuages with two ogangs of land at Bradway.<sup>58</sup>) In 1537, the grange became

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 83.

<sup>53</sup> Addy, *Historical Memorials of Beauchief Abbey*, p. 60. The grant does not appear in the Cartulary, but the *Insipeximus* of 1316 (no. 34) records a substantial gift by Walter the son of Robert of Furneus of three bovates and one acre of land and two tofts in Birley, with a piece of meadow in Beighton and another two acres.

<sup>54</sup> Cameron, *The Place-names of Derbyshire*, II, p. 216.

<sup>55</sup> OS ref. SK 444791.

<sup>56</sup> Pegge, *An Historical Account of Beauchief Abbey*, p. 152. In a survey of 1604, Birley was a compact estate within Beighton, with a sheep walk for 200 sheep (D.V. Fowkes and G.R. Potter (eds), *William Senior’s Survey of the Estates of the First and Second Earls of Devonshire, c.1600–28*, Derbyshire Record Society, 13 (1988), p. 1.)

<sup>57</sup> Pegge, *An Historical Account of Beauchief Abbey*, p. 143. Biggin Farm is at SK 445626. This Stanley should not be confused with the one by Dale abbey. The place-name means ‘stony clearing’; see J.E.B. Gover, A. Mawer, and F.M. Stenton, *The Place-names of Nottinghamshire* (Cambridge, 1940), p. 136.

<sup>58</sup> Pegge, *An Historical Account of Beauchief Abbey*, pp. 74, 97.

the property of William Bolles, one of the government's receivers of dissolved monasteries.<sup>59</sup>

In 1278 (**70**), Sir Thomas Chaworth allowed the canons to 'enclose their assart where their sheepfold is in the parish of Alfreton with all its woods'. A further grant by Thomas Chaworth (**77**) gave the canons permission 'to enclose their lands, wastes and their grange at the Cotes'. This grange, which probably included a barn to store the tithes of Alfreton, can be identified with Cotespark Farm<sup>60</sup> on the south-eastern edge of Alfreton. It is probable that it was included in the purchases of Sir Francis Leake of Sutton after the Dissolution.

No evidence of a grange has been found at Wymeswold, although the Beauchief canons received considerable grants of land there and, as they were rectors of the church, they would have needed a tithe barn. In 1393 it was reported that the abbey's barn there was full of grain.<sup>61</sup>

## Farming and industry

Farming was the mainstay of the abbey's economy. The narrow ridge-and-furrow patterns on the present Beauchief golf course and near Beauchief Hall attest to the importance of arable farming at some late stage in the estate's history, but it is clear from the charters and inventories that the abbey's granges specialized in rearing livestock. A clause in an agreement in 1524 to provide the canon who served as the vicar of Norton with ten 'kye' (dairy cows) insisted that the cows should be marked with the brand ('bryn') of the abbey; this suggests that other cattle at the abbey's granges bore the same mark.<sup>62</sup> The charters contain many references to villeins' services,<sup>63</sup> assarting,<sup>64</sup> enclosure, and common rights. Two charters (**21** and **34**) mention the abbey's park, which was presumably used for rearing deer, and the ponds to the east of the abbey are probably successors to medieval fish ponds. Fairbank's map of 1762 shows 'Beauchief Old Park' as a wood (now Old Park Wood) high on the southern boundary of the estate, and fish ponds by the abbey alongside a field called 'The Damm'.<sup>65</sup> The fine woods that enclosed the Beauchief estate provided both timber and

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 67, appendix 10. Bolles also got Felling abbey (Notts).

<sup>60</sup> OS ref. SK 425547.

<sup>61</sup> Addy, *Historical Memorials of Beauchief Abbey*, pp. 145–147.

<sup>62</sup> Sheffield Archives, Norton parish church deeds, 21.

<sup>63</sup> Serfs are referred to in charters **16**, **33**, **46**, **51**, **52**, **53**, and **54**.

<sup>64</sup> Charter **32** mentions 'the ditch of the assart'.

<sup>65</sup> Sheffield Archives, Fairbank collection, BEA 1. See also Sheffield Archives, Fairbank collection, FB 19.

coppiced underwood. Ladies Spring Wood may have been named (like Lady's Cross on the moorland boundary of the grange at Strawberry Lee) from the abbey's dedication to Our Lady; a springwood was a coppice wood and the name was spelt Lady's Spring on the 1762 map. A lease to Nicholas Longford in 1463 exempted 'a spryng that is called Hudclyff banke'.<sup>66</sup>

The Cartulary is not very informative about the working of minerals, but charters **37**, **81**, and **83** show that tenants mined coal on the abbey's estates, while charter **84** suggests that the coal mined in the manor of Alfreton was at Swanwick. No charter mentions lead smelting, but the presence of bole hills in areas where the canons had pastures – for example by their granges at Strawberry Lee and Fulwood and at the northern edge of Norton Park – suggests that they benefited from this lucrative activity. Unfortunately, the everyday accounts of the abbey do not survive. The Beauchief smelting house, which probably stood on the Ecclesall side of the river Sheaf to the north of Hutcliffe Wood, was, of course, a post-Dissolution foundation once water power was used for smelting.<sup>67</sup>

The possessions of the canons included mill sites on the river Sheaf, which are included in a modern survey.<sup>68</sup> The furthest mill upstream was Bradway corn mill (charter **35**),<sup>69</sup> which was leased in 1503 to Roger Barker for forty years. After the Dissolution the mill was granted to Sir Nicholas Strelley; nothing of the mill site survives. The Walk Mill nearby<sup>70</sup> was the Ecclesall fulling mill (charter **116**), erected on the river Sheaf c.1280 by the abbey on land given by Sir Ralph of Ecclesall, with leave to turn the course of the river towards the mill. Subsequently, Sir Ralph relinquished all claims on the mill. It was named 'the walke mylne' in 1516 in a lease to John Calton of Totley,<sup>71</sup> but after the Dissolution it became a cutler's grinding wheel. No traces of the mill survive, for the site is occupied by Dore railway station.

Further downstream, the Ecclesall mill at Millhouses<sup>72</sup> was already in existence as the manorial corn mill when it was granted provisionally to the abbey in the mid-thirteenth century by Sir Ralph of Ecclesall (**111**). In return, the canons celebrated Mass at Ecclesall chapel. In 1299 Ralph's son Robert released to the abbey all claims of

<sup>66</sup> Jeayes, *Derbyshire Charters*, no. 242; Pegge, *An Historical Account of Beauchief Abbey*, p. 189.

<sup>67</sup> D. Kiernan, *The Derbyshire Lead Industry in the Sixteenth Century*, Derbyshire Record Society, 14 (Chesterfield, 1989), p. 121.

<sup>68</sup> C. Ball, D. Crossley, and N. Flavell (eds), *Water Power on the Sheffield Rivers* (2nd edn, Sheffield, 2006), pp. 148–193.

<sup>69</sup> OS ref. SK c.320807.

<sup>70</sup> OS ref. SK 324813.

<sup>71</sup> Sheffield Archives, Beauchief Muniments 1013, fo. 5.

<sup>72</sup> OS ref. SK 336833.

rent from the mill (**119**). In 1529 the abbey still owned ‘a milne called Ecclesall Milne lately in the holding of James Oattes’, for which a forty-year lease was granted to Thomas Greenwode and family. After the Dissolution it remained part of the Beauchief estate. The site is now occupied by a building that was erected as a steam mill in the nineteenth century. A large weir survives by the children’s playground in Millhouses park and the site of the pond can be traced.

The New Mill on the river Sheaf that was granted by Hugh Hauselin of Little Sheffield was another corn mill (**156**). In 1513 the ‘New Milne’ at Woodseats was leased for sixty years to John Blyth of Norton; after the Dissolution it passed to Robert and William Swyft. There too, or immediately downstream, the canons had built a smithy where the Sheaf flows past Smithy Wood. The lease to Nicholas Longford in 1463, quoted above, exempted ‘smythees’, and another lease in 1496 allowed Roger Eyre to make charcoal in the abbey’s woods at Hutcliffe and by the broad meadow, and to work a bloom hearth by the smithy dam.<sup>73</sup>

The lease in 1463 shows that by then the canons were not directly involved in industrial enterprises within their own grounds, for it referred to ‘all lands, etc. within the precincts and bounds of the said Abbey in Beauchief’, though with specified exemptions, which included not only the smithies and Hutcliffe Wood but also the walk mill, a barkhouse (to store bark for tanning), and a launderhouse (or wash house), for these were run by other families. Eighty years earlier, a lease from Hugh of Barkhouse to Ralph of Dore and William of Barkhouse specified ‘All goods and chattels which he had in the tannery from Beauchief, and all his dues in the tannery’; one of the witnesses was Adam Lawnder.<sup>74</sup> Clearly, these industrial activities had been, to use a modern phrase, ‘contracted out’ to local families. The Barkers of Dore seem to have acquired their surname from their long association with the barkhouse and tannery.

Charters **7**, **42**, **45**, and **91** relate to the canons’ windmill at Coal Aston and the watermill situated near Hazelhurst Farm<sup>75</sup> at the junction of the parishes of Norton, Eckington, and Dronfield, where a tributary flows north–south into the Moss Beck. The canons also had the rents of mills at Beeley and Hathersage (**161–162**, **168**, **173**). The abbey therefore benefited from the usual range of economic activities that were available in the North Midlands during the Middle Ages. The Obituary commemorated Robert Bele, ‘our miller’, William of

<sup>73</sup>OS ref. SK 382811. Jeayes, *Derbyshire Charters*, no. 242. Water-powered bloomeries were in use in England from the fourteenth century onwards.

<sup>74</sup>Sheffield Archives, Bagshawe Collection, 3184.

<sup>75</sup>OS ref. SK 382811.

Radeford, ‘called “the tanner”, our assistant brother’, and Henry the mason of Ecclesall.

### The abbey and local society

The Cartulary is a collection of deeds that, for the most part, formally record the grants made to the abbey by holders of property, many of these grants being recurrent. Not all benefactors were knights and lords, as is clearly shown by the entries made in later parts of the Cartulary. The appearance in the Obituary of the names of benefactors whose gifts do not appear in the Cartulary but who were in some cases parishioners in the churches staffed by the abbey is evidence of their desire to give thanks to the canons or to express good will. For example, John Moor of Greenhill donated two silver spoons, William Dolphin of the parish of Eckington gave two marks and seven quarters of wheat, and Michael of Hathersage, who became a brother, gave three wain-loads of lead. The Cartulary sheds only a limited amount of light on what the abbey was asked to do by its friends and patrons. It records agreements with the well-to-do for their burial at the abbey (7, 17, 93, 122, 123, 165, 166, 168, 173, 174, 175), for their commemoration during services (107, 111, 112) and at Masses for their souls and for the souls of their families (18, 22, 33, 39, 40, 57, 162, 191, 192), for confraternity (164),<sup>76</sup> and for spiritual aid or prayers (63). But the Cartulary is clearly not a full record of gifts received or of work undertaken by the canons. The Leake copy of charter 166, for example, goes further and records, as the Cartulary does not, that around the year 1200, when the abbey was still relatively new, Warin of Beeley made a series of grants to the poor and the sick, to nuns, and to churches spread over a wide area of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. Running the parishes of Norton, Alfreton, Edwalton, Wymeswold, and later also Dronfield was clearly important work for the canons, and Pegge records a deed of 1490 by which the abbey appointed Christopher Haslam, a secular chaplain, to instruct boys and novices in singing and grammar at a stipend of 26s 8d a year, with board and lodging at a school in Dronfield.<sup>77</sup>

The Obituary sheds some light on the communal life of the abbey. For example, it records that Sir Roger of Chesterfield ‘gave us a new

<sup>76</sup>Confraternity, which could be granted to both lay and religious people, brought with it the spiritual benefits, including commemoration after death, that the canons themselves enjoyed. For arrangements within the Premonstratensian order, see Colvin, *White Canons*, pp. 258–259.

<sup>77</sup>Pegge, *An Historical Account of Beauchief Abbey*, pp. 67–68.

vestment of green colour, embroidered with gold, and a hundred silver shillings', that a canon who came from Sheffield gave a vestment costing 20s, that Sir William of Gringley (Nottinghamshire) built a chamber and made a causey by the 'great pool', and that Robert of Edensor, a former prior, bought the great bell and paid for the erection of 'the great belfry' (unfortunately no date for the belfry was given).<sup>78</sup> At various times the visitations record the abbot, sub-prior, circulator (who was responsible for discipline), deacon, cellarar, sacristan, novices, acolytes, and licentiates; twenty-six or twenty-seven abbots are known by name.<sup>79</sup> The Obituary also commemorates Sir Henry Stafforth, parson of Treeton, 'our assistant brother, who gave us a silver cup'; Sir Hugh, formerly rector of the church at Handsworth; Sir Richard Oxley, formerly priest of the Guild of the Holy Cross at Chesterfield; and Matilda of Ashover and Margaret of the Brom, two assistant lay sisters.

In the commemoration of Sir Robert Rivers, a former rector of Eckington, the Obituary defined the fraternity of the abbey as:

that he may be a partaker in all the good things and spiritual benefits which now belong, or which hereafter may belong, to the monastery of the said church, as in masses, psalms, hours, vigils, prayers, fastings, afflictions, disciplines, works, charity, hospitality, and all other works of mercy and spiritual benefits. Adding, moreover, that the day of his anniversary shall be celebrated with a solemn service and a mass in the convent, every year, for ever.

## Visitations

The visitations usually reported that all was well.<sup>80</sup> On 28 April 1475, for example, the visitors found brotherly affection, a regularity of discipline beyond all praise, and buildings whose condition was 'everything which could be desired'. Previously, however, at the 20 October 1472 visitation, a complaint was made that 'in the evening,

<sup>78</sup> Addy, *Historical Memorials of Beauchief Abbey*, pp. 57, 136.

<sup>79</sup> The abbots are listed in D. Knowles, C.N.L. Brooke, and V.C.M. London (eds), *The Heads of Religious Houses: England and Wales, I, 940–1216* (2nd edn, Cambridge, 1972), pp. 193, 288; D.M. Smith and V.C.M. London (eds), *The Heads of Religious Houses: England and Wales, II, 1216–1377* (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 493–494; Smith, *Heads of Religious Houses, III*, pp. 563–564.

<sup>80</sup> For the visitations of Beauchief and other Premonstratensian houses in the English province by Bishop Richard Redman from 1459 to 1505, see J.A. Gribbin, *The Premonstratensian Order in Late Medieval England* (Woodbridge, 2001); D. Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England, III: the Tudor age* (Cambridge, 1959), pp. 39–51. For Beauchief, with lists of the canons, see F.A. Gasquet (ed.), *Collectanea Anglo-Premonstratensia*, 3 vols, Camden third series, 6, 10, and 12 (London, 1904–1906), I, nos 220–247.

after compline (the last service, at 7 p.m.), the brethren go outside the cloister, stay up so long, and get so much to drink that at midnight, when matins should be said, they cannot keep awake.' Some canons also left the monastery alone, instead of in small groups. In 1500 the visitors ordered that the canons should not be allowed out to 'see common shows' or to visit any inhabited place. Occasionally, individual canons were disciplined. Thus, in 1491 William Widdowson was 'pronounced rebellious' and was suspended.

The most sensational event occurred in 1461, when Abbot John Downham was found guilty of 'solemn perjuries'. He and seven canons 'rose in insurrection with armed men and defensive arms, with swords and with staves and departed the monastery, despising altogether the legal process of our order'. John Swyfte, a Beauchief canon, was appointed abbot in Downham's place. The seven apostate canons eventually returned to the abbey and Downham retired to Wymeswold, where he was commemorated in a window.<sup>81</sup>

The visitation reports also provide some information about the arrangements in the abbey. On 25 May 1488 the visitors noted that 'In this monastery they consume every week 10 bushels of wheat, 16 bushels of oats, and four bushels of barley. They have 20 oxen, 28 sheep, and 12 pigs.' The visitation on 25 August 1498 reported that: 'Owing to the extent of the buildings and the great repairs they are undergoing, the debts of the house are increased, and, at the present time, amount to four score marks [£53 6s 8d].' The visitation on 20 October 1472 mentioned a chantry of eight priests within the abbey, but its founder and purpose are not known. Brief references to other arrangements appear elsewhere. The altar of the Holy Cross is mentioned in charters 18 and 39–41, the altar of St Katherine in charter 33, and the altar of St John the Baptist in the Obituary.

## Dissolution

The *Valor Ecclesiasticus* of 1535 provides a valuation of the lands, glebe, tithes, and dues belonging to the abbey on the eve of its dissolution. If we accept this record at face value, the abbot and canons appear to have sold off some of their outlying possessions, for there is no

<sup>81</sup> Pegge, *An Historical Account of Beauchief Abbey*, pp. 217–218. The inscription read: 'Orate pro anima Johannis Dounham, abbatis de Beauchiffe'. See F. Donald Logan, *Runaway Religious in Medieval England, c.1240–1540* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 25–34, on the meaning of apostasy as abandonment of the religious life and return to the world.

mention of the properties that had been donated in Nottinghamshire (including, as we have seen, those associated with Edwalton church) nor in those parts of South Yorkshire that lay beyond Hallamshire. On the other hand, the entry for Dronfield parish includes not only properties in the townships of Dronfield, Coal Aston, and Unston, but also some at the minor settlements of Apperknowle, Cowley, and Povey, which are not in the surviving leaves of the Cartulary.

Beauchief abbey was dissolved with the other minor religious houses on 4 February 1537, ten months after the death of the last abbot, John Greenwood, alias Sheffield. The abbey was surrendered ‘without giving any trouble or opposition’, and Thomas Cromwell’s commissioners had found no scandal. The inventory of the copes, vestments, plate, and so forth that was taken on 2 August 1537 is printed in Addy’s history.<sup>82</sup>

The abbey and all the land in the Liberty of Beauchief were bought by Sir Nicholas Strelley, who at the time was lord of Ecclesall, and for nearly four hundred years the core of this estate was to remain in the same family.<sup>83</sup> In 1648 Gertrude Strelley, daughter and heiress of the last male of the line, married Edward Pegge of Ashbourne,<sup>84</sup> who used a good deal of the remaining stone to build Beauchief Hall, seven bays wide and three storeys high. The lintel of the main door of the hall is carved with the date 1671 and a Latin inscription. Pegge also made alterations to the tower of the old abbey church in order to form a private chapel, with Nathaniel Baxter, an ejected non-conformist minister, as his chaplain. The interior is still arranged as it was in Pegge’s time, with box pews, pulpit, reading desk, clerk’s pew, psalm board, and Strelley and Pegge heraldry.<sup>85</sup>

The rest of the abbey’s estate was split up and sold to local landowners. Harewood Grange and the Alfreton possessions went to Sir Francis Leake of Sutton, Fulwood Grange to Francis Talbot, 5th earl of Shrewsbury, and Strawberry Lee to Sir Nicholas Strelley. Stanley Grange was acquired by William Bolles, the receiver,

<sup>82</sup> *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, III, pp. 172–174. See Addy, *Historical Memorials of Beauchief Abbey*, pp. 123–128 for the 1563 Exchequer Commission, which reported that the chancel of Dronfield church had been neglected for many years both before and after the dissolution of Beauchief abbey, so that the great east window had collapsed and the roof and other windows were in decay. The parsonage house, which had also been the responsibility of the abbey, was ‘in great ruin and decay’ because it had not been inhabited during the previous sixty years.

<sup>83</sup> G.R. Potter, ‘Beauchief abbey after the Dissolution of the Monasteries’, *Transactions of the Hunter Archaeological Society*, 11 (1981), pp. 46–51.

<sup>84</sup> R. Meredith, ‘Beauchief Abbey and the Pegges’, *Derbyshire Archaeological Journal*, 87 (1967), pp. 86–126.

<sup>85</sup> M. Chatfield, *Churches the Victorians Forgot* (Ashbourne, 1979), pp. 155–157; N. Pevsner, *Yorkshire: the West Riding*, revised by E. Radcliffe (Harmondsworth, 1967), p. 476.

Wymeswold passed to Trinity College, Cambridge, and Edwalton to the Cavendish family. The Chesterfield and Brampton properties eventually formed part of the Duke of Portland's estate, the Foljambes got Walton, the Fanshawes bought the Dronfield, Eckington, and Newbold lands, and Sir William West acquired the Staveley, Woodseats, Greenhill, 'Little Lees', and Little Norton properties.

### The site of the abbey

In March 1931, Frank Crawford of Beauchief Hall, a local businessman and councillor, gave the site of the abbey to Sheffield City Council. He had previously encouraged the excavations that had been carried out during four successive summers, from 1923 to 1926, by W.H. Elgar, a master at King Edward VII Grammar School, Sheffield, and his pupils.<sup>86</sup> The remains of the church (except the chapel-of-ease), parlour, refectory, chapter house, cloister, and storerooms were uncovered and shown to follow the normal pattern of Premonstratensian foundations. They date from the late twelfth century to the fifteenth century. The present church tower has lost its top storey, which was there when Samuel Buck drew it in 1727. The large west window of the tower (now re-glazed and with its tracery restored) is early fourteenth-century work.<sup>87</sup> The east end of the abbey church is believed to have contained an alabaster altarpiece of the martyrdom of St Thomas of Canterbury, now in the possession of the Foljambe family.<sup>88</sup> A recess in the wall to the north of the altar may have been the tomb of the founder, Robert FitzRanulf. Other benefactors were also buried in the church: for example, at least three members of the Chaworth family were buried before the main altar.<sup>89</sup> The church had a large nave, 78 feet long and 26 feet wide, crossed by transepts of the same width. Several floor tiles from the two chapels to the east of the south transept were well preserved. The remains of a small chantry, and of the newel stair to the dormitory, were found in

<sup>86</sup> The results were never fully published. See W.H. Elgar, 'Beauchief Abbey', *Transactions of the Hunter Archaeological Society*, 3 (1929), pp. 162–164.

<sup>87</sup> For architectural details of the church and other built remains see Pevsner, rev. Radcliffe, *Yorkshire: the West Riding*, pp. 475–476; English Heritage, 'Beauchief abbey', <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1271291>.

<sup>88</sup> Perhaps carved locally during the 1370s. For a colour photograph and description, see J. Alexander and P. Binski (eds), *Age of Chivalry: art in Plantagenet England, 1200–1400* (London, 1987), pp. 210–211, pl. 26; also, but not in colour, in Pegge, *An Historical Account of Beauchief Abbey*, pp. 246–247, pl. ix, and in H. Kirke, 'The Praemonstratensian abbey of Beauchief', *The Reliquary*, 7 (1866–1867), p. 205.

<sup>89</sup> Addy, *Historical Memorials of Beauchief Abbey*, p. 135.

the western part of the transept. The cloisters were sited to the south of the church, with the refectory on the south side of the cloister and the chapter house to the east. The plan of the chapter house consisted of a square and a semi-octagon, with two columns supporting the ribs of the vaulting. A few faint remains of the painting that decorated the columns supporting the chapter house roof and most of the vaulting were found. The two stone coffins containing human bones that were found outside the chapter house doorway were probably those of abbots. Further digging in 1953–1954 by Mr Peter Stiles produced a fine carved head of a mid-fifteenth-century canon and pieces of a Dutch majolica altar vessel of about 1500, both from the vicinity of the south transept.<sup>90</sup>

New investigations in the 1990s showed that the abbey was larger than the walled enclosure suggests and that much more remains to be discovered from modern archaeological techniques of resistivity, surveying, and excavation, as well as from documentary research. Tony Smith used surveying methods and material from the Fairbank papers in Sheffield Archives. Colin Merrony undertook a geophysical survey in April 1993, and he and Rhiannon Harte placed Beauchief in its wider context.<sup>91</sup>

Some of the boundaries of the original estate at Beauchief can still be traced on the ground, but in the south modern housing has encroached at Greenhill and Bradway and to the north similar buildings cover the land between Abbey Lane and Hutcliffe Wood. It is not clear how far the estate extended to the north. The 1762 map shows that Abbey Lane came from Woodseats down the hill to just beyond the abbey but it did not continue north of the river through Ecclesall Woods. Nor was there a route along the river valley through Abbeydale to Totley before the turnpike road was constructed in the early nineteenth century. These busy roads and the railway have destroyed much of the former sense of isolation and peace but, despite the continuous hum of traffic in the background, Beauchief still has much of the character that it possessed in 1789 when Viscount Torrington found ‘a most happy situation for beauty and retirement’.<sup>92</sup>

<sup>90</sup> Now kept at Weston Park Museum, Sheffield.

<sup>91</sup> A.V. Smith, *Beauchief Abbey: notes on the layout and remains – the abbey and surrounding area* (Sheffield, privately printed, 1993); C.J.N. Merrony, ‘More than meets the eye? A preliminary discussion of the archaeological remains of Beauchief abbey and park’, in *A Review of Archaeology in South Yorkshire, 1993–1994* (Sheffield, 1994), pp. 60–67; Harte and Merrony, ‘Two way traffic’.

<sup>92</sup> C.B. Andrewes (ed.), *The Torrington Diaries*, II (London, 1935), pp. 25–26.

## The charters

The Beauchief Cartulary is housed at Sheffield Archives, with the call number MD 3414. It dates from c.1400 and is found on 114 vellum folios, now numbered 1–114. The manuscript is bound in contemporary oak boards that once had a clasp; they measure about 220 mm by 152 mm, the leaves themselves being of a similar measurement although they are unevenly cut. Two preliminary leaves, now numbered II and III, contain fragments of an Anglo-Norman French legal treatise. From a microfilm dated 1953 it appears that there was once also a first leaf, now missing from the manuscript but largely illegible on the microfilm as the result of staining. The charters that follow in the Cartulary are bundled into twelve quires (one missing), some of them with a contemporary signature in the lower margin of the last leaf, as follows:

1. 18 leaves (1 missing): fos 1–17, with the signature *a* at 17v. Between fos 13 and 14 one leaf has been excised without interruption to the text of charter **22**. Fos 7 and 8 have been added with string between 6 and 9 but without causing any break in the text.

The Cartulary begins on fo. 1 with a header in red: *Previlegia nostri ordinis*. Fos 1–4 contain two documents concerning the whole Premonstratensian order: the papal bull of Lucius III and the circular letter of Abbot Hugh II of Prémontré. Fo. 5r is blank, except for miscellaneous notes written in Latin at a later date and including the confirmation of a debt for £20 owed by one Richard Massye to one Nicholas Dunson. Fo. 5v contains the foundation charter of Robert FitzRanulph (**3**); other Beauchief charters follow, beginning with the *Insipeximus* by King Edward III (**4**) on fo. 6r.

2. 12 leaves: fos 18–29, with the signature *b* at 29v.
3. 12 leaves: fos 30–41, with the signature *c* at 41v.
4. 12 leaves: fos 42–53, with the signature *e* at 53v. This signature is a mistake: there seems to be no interruption in the text of charter **61** between fos 41v and 42r.
5. 12(?) leaves missing through excision.

Between the quires 4 and 6 (between fos 53 and 54) a whole quire – perhaps of 12 leaves, like its neighbours – has been excised, with a consequent loss of text; only the stubs show. At the bottom of fo. 53v charter **91** lacks the names of all but one witness; fo. 54r begins with a mere fragment of the end of **92**. It is not possible to determine from the confirmations of 1312 (**38**) and 1316 (Appendices II and III) what might have been written on the missing leaves.

6. 12 leaves: fos 54–65, with the signature *d* at 65v. There are no quires signed *f* and *g* but there seems to be no loss of text in charter **114** between fos 65 and 66.
7. 12 leaves: fos 66–77, with the signature *h* at 77v.
8. 8 leaves (2, 1 missing, 1, 1 missing, 3): fos 78–83, with the signature *i* at 83v. A leaf has been excised after 79, and again after 80, without loss of text. There is no quire *j* and there is loss of text from the beginning of the next quire between fos 83 and 84 (charter **158**).
9. 12 leaves (5 missing, 7): fos 84–90, with the signature *k* at 90v. The strings visible between 84 and 85 show that this quire had 12 leaves; only the stubs remain of the first 5 that have been excised. A new charter (**159**) begins at the head of fo. 84r.
10. 8 leaves: fos 91–98, with the signature *l* at 98v.
11. 8 leaves: fos 99–106, with the signature *m* at 106v.
12. 8 leaves: fos 107–114, with no signature at 114v. The final charter (**226**) is unfinished, although, as is sometimes the case elsewhere in the Cartulary, only the witnesses are lacking.

Since each charter in the Cartulary occupies one side of a folio on average (226 charters: 114 folios), some twenty-four charters may have been lost from quire 5. If quires *f*, *g*, and *j* did once exist, and if they comprised twelve folios each, perhaps a further sixty-two charters were included in the Cartulary, but this is not certain. Five leaves have been excised from quire 9, with loss of the text of perhaps another ten charters. Leaves are also missing after folio 114 where the text of the last charter found in the Cartulary (**226**) is unfinished; and, if the Royal Confirmation of 1316 is a guide, the Cartulary may have lost four more charters from here onward. In total the original Cartulary perhaps contained over 270 charters and possibly more than 330. The Concordances in Appendix III also show that some charters confirmed in 1316 are not present in the Cartulary.

More than one Anglicana hand appears to have been at work but the Cartulary seems to be the product of a decision, presumably taken within the abbey, to make a collection of all the available documents that showed its privileges and possessions. The rubricated headings seem to be the work of a single head scribe, who wrote with flourishing ascenders and large rectangles. The initial capital of each entry is given a very simple decoration. Pegge rightly observed that ‘There are not many dates in the chartulary [...] and the witnesses, towards the end of the volume, are almost perpetually omitted.’<sup>93</sup>

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Cartulary was in the possession of a Welsh antiquary, Robert Davies of Llanerch

<sup>93</sup>Pegge, *An Historical Account of Beauchief Abbey*, p. ix.

(Denbighshire).<sup>94</sup> Samuel Pegge, the antiquary of Beauchief Hall, used it for his *An Historical Account of Beauchief Abbey* (1801), but he did not publish his transcript, which is now kept in the Library of the College of Arms and which contains many inaccuracies.<sup>95</sup> When Sidney Oldall Addy used the Cartulary for his *Historical Memorials of Beauchief Abbey* (1878), it belonged to Philip Bryan Davies-Cooke, Esq. of Owston, near Doncaster. In the twentieth century, Major P.J. Davies-Cooke of Mold presented the Cartulary to the National Library of Wales, who sold it in 1959 to the Sheffield City Libraries Committee.

Some copies of Beauchief abbey charters appear in other collections and some originals also survive. Four original charters are found among the deeds of Norton parish church, now in Sheffield Archives. They were known to Pegge and to Addy, the latter of whom reproduced their seals in his book.<sup>96</sup> A typewritten calendar of these deeds, made by T. Walter Hall, is available in the Archives. Copies of three of these Norton charters are found in the Cartulary: **41** is a copy of PR<sub>2</sub>/16; PR<sub>2</sub>/20A and 20B, both dated 11 November 1312, are the same as **44** and its duplicate **61**, and are themselves duplicates, not indentures or chirographs.<sup>97</sup> Each of these has a small seal with the arms of Thomas Chaworth II. The fourth Beauchief charter, PR<sub>2</sub>/18, is not found in the Cartulary. It was written, like the others, c.1400 and is very comprehensive, being a release and quitclaim to the abbey in free alms by Thomas de Chaworth, knight, of all the lands, rents, mills with watercourses, ponds, ways, suits, services, rights, customs and liberties, tenements, pastures, woods, closes and new enclosures, fishings, easements to such lands, rents, mill, and tenements that had belonged to the abbey within his fees of Norton, Alfreton, and

<sup>94</sup> Either Robert Davies (1658–1710) or his son Robert Davies (1685/6–1728); both were antiquaries, as were their ancestors and descendants. See the entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

<sup>95</sup> Pegge (on whom also see the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*) published eight of the charters from the Cartulary, but not fully. These are, in sequence, nos **3**, **4**, **33**, **46**, **37**, **164**–**166**. Pegge, *An Historical Account of Beauchief Abbey*, also printed two documents not included in the Cartulary: a grant by Gilbert of Salmonby, abbot of Beauchief (1236×1247), to Robert son of Walter of Brampton (p. 226, viid), and an indenture of 1237 made between William, dean of Lincoln, and Gilbert, abbot of Beauchief, concerning lands in Brampton (pp. 227–228, ix). He also used (p. 250) two charters with their seals that were in the possession of Mr John Reynolds, Jr. Reynolds' copies are: 1 = **164** (= British Library, Wolley charter I, 13; copy in Leake 1), 2 = **188** (copy in Leake 12), 3 = **187** (copy in Leake 11), 4: not in the Cartulary (copy of a similar charter in Leake 8), 5 = **183** (copy in Leake 10), 6: not in the Cartulary (= British Library, Wolley charter III, 35; copy of a similar charter in Leake 5).

<sup>96</sup> Pegge, *An Historical Account of Beauchief Abbey*, p. vii; Addy, *Historical Memorials of Beauchief Abbey*, pp. v, 150–151.

<sup>97</sup> Addy, *Historical Memorials of Beauchief Abbey*, pp. 63–64, printed one of these. He also printed PR<sub>2</sub>/16 (on pp. 61–63).

Wymeswold, and of all charters, deeds, concessions, and muniments that the abbey had received from his ancestors. The witnesses are Sir John of Heriz, Sir Nicholas Wake, Sir William de Staynesby, William and Giles of Meynyle, Robert Sauccheverel, John de Anesley, knights, Robert le Gaunt, John of Brimington, Hugo de canoniciis, Hugo de Lynakyr, and others. The seal of Thomas Chaworth – either I or II – is suspended by red laces; its circumscription is not legible. PR<sub>2</sub>/21 (mentioned above on p. 12) records an agreement made on 3 November 1524 between John, abbot of Beauchief, and Thomas Gylbert, one of the canons, who was vicar and curate of Norton parish church; it shows that the bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, Geoffrey Blythe, had built a chantry house in a croft on the west side of Norton Green.

Another six original copies of grants made to the abbey are known to survive. They are British Library, Harley 83 E 2, Wolley I, 13 (Cartulary 164), Wolley II, 45 (see 175), Wolley III, 35 (copied in Leake 5), Wolley III, 92 (184), and The National Archives, CP 25/1/36/2/10 (see 189). Harley 83 E 2 (Jeayes, *Derbyshire Charters*, no. 2556) is a chirograph confirming a grant, not entered into the Cartulary but made to the abbey in 1280 by Thomas de Camera son of Roger of Birley, of 21d from land in an otherwise unknown place called Dunstorhes. The abbot's brown wax oval seal is attached: the obverse shows a crozier clasped by a hand, with five stars and a crown in the surround, and what remains of the circumscription is ABBATIS DE BELLO-CAPITE; the reverse shows nothing.<sup>98</sup> Three of the witnesses, Adam de Bosco, Robert de Brom, and Roger Hauselin, also appear in the Cartulary and usually together; the others – Henry Wylte, Adam le Blunt,<sup>99</sup> John of Rosinton (Rossington) in Rotherham – do not.

William Dugdale, in his *Monasticon Anglicanum*, printed two charters of Sir Thomas Chaworth I in the possession of the antiquary Samuel Roper of Lincoln's Inn (d. 1658), as well as the general confirmation of

<sup>98</sup> Kirke, 'The Praemonstratensian Abbey of Beauchief', p. 202, prints an engraving of this or a similar seal. For an engraving of two oval seals of the abbey, one representing Our Lady and Becket with a half figure below of an abbot with his crozier, the other representing the murder of Becket with another half figure of an abbot, see Pegge, *An Historical Account of Beauchief Abbey*, pl. xii (followed by W. Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, ed. J. Caley, H. Ellis, and B. Bandinel, 6 vols (London, 1817–1830), VI, p. 883). The circumscriptions according to Pegge are: SIGILL ABBATIE DE BELLO CAPITE and COM (*recte* E(CCLES)IE?) (SANC)TI THO(ME) MARTIRIS DE BEAVCHEF. For all three seals, the first two not located, the third said to be in the possession of J.H. Hill, solicitor of Hull, see also *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of London*, 17 November 1870 to 3 April 1873, 2nd series, vol. 5, pp. 175–176.

<sup>99</sup> For le Blunt see Jeayes, *Derbyshire Charters*, nos 353, 684, 2491.

the abbey's possessions made by Edward II in 1316.<sup>100</sup> The first of these two Chaworth charters is similar to 18 in the Cartulary; the second is 38; for the confirmation of 1316, which is not found in the Cartulary, see Appendix II. Folios 357–362v of the British Library manuscript Lansdowne 207B contain excerpts from Beauchief charters made by the antiquary Gervase Holles (1607–1675). These reveal three that are not in the Cartulary. One of them (fo. 359) is an agreement over property, dated 1229, between Robert of Bella Aqua and Amitia, formerly the wife of Nigel de Stokes. Four witnesses are named: one, William de Cressy, appears in the Cartulary (120, 124); the others (Nigel de Lisurs, Simon de Crumwell, Robert de Grendun) do not. Another is a lost charter, undated, of Ralph, son of Robert of Ecclesall; Holles names the witnesses (see 111). A third is the grant of a vill in the thirteenth century by Ralph Musard (see 222); this is also recorded in the abbey's Obituary and in the Royal Confirmation of 1316 (Appendix II, no. 30).

Jeayes's *Descriptive Catalogue of Derbyshire Charters* (1906) includes summaries of seven of the Wolley charters at the British Library, four Foljambe deeds, and four other documents. Some of these are dated later than the Beauchief Cartulary and are not noticed here. The charters from Glapwell Hall edited by R.R. Darlington include twenty-two charters relating to Beauchief abbey that were unknown to Jeayes; most of these probably come from Darley abbey, which received properties from Beauchief abbey in the thirteenth century.<sup>101</sup> These documents overlap but do not entirely coincide with the charters in the Beauchief Cartulary. The three charters in the Darley Cartulary that relate to Beauchief abbey can all be linked to counterparts in the Glapwell charters. Thomas Tanner, in *Notitia Monastica*, records that the collections of Sir William Haward (c.1617–1704) included copies of Beauchief charters that were once in the possession of Peter Le Neve (1661–1729), together with three charters with the seals of the abbey.<sup>102</sup> They have not, however, been identified.

Copies of the twelve Beauchief charters among the Leake family papers at the Derbyshire Record Office (reference D1005 Z/EI) may have been made from originals and include some that are not found in the Cartulary. Like the Glapwell charters, they provide the names

<sup>100</sup> Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, VI, pp. 883–886. On Roper see the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. For these two Chaworth charters see the notes to 18 and 38; for the confirmation of 1316 see Appendix II.

<sup>101</sup> R.R. Darlington (ed.), *The Glapwell Charters*, *Journal of the Derbyshire Archaeological and Natural History Society*, Supplements to vols 56–57 (Kendal, 1957–1959).

<sup>102</sup> T. Tanner, *Notitia Monastica* (reprint with additions, Cambridge, 1782), unnumbered page at *Derbyshire. I, De Bello Capite*; also in the 1744 edition, p. 82. On Sir William Haward and Peter Le Neve see the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

of witnesses that were truncated in the Beauchief Cartulary and that are now included in the footnotes. Copies of six Beauchief charters, two of them not found in the Cartulary and four of them also copied in the Leake papers,<sup>103</sup> were made in 1777 by John Reynolds, junior, in the course of transcribing a total of thirty-one charters concerning religious houses in Derbyshire. These copies survive in Cambridge University Library, Add. MS 3897, pp. 1–19. Reynolds' exemplars were original charters since five of them still had their seals.

Some earlier antiquaries found their way to the Cartulary itself (*Registrum evidentiarum* or *Registrum chartarum*). In 1581, Robert Glover (a genealogist and from 1570 Somerset Herald) and his friend Thomas Talbot copied from there and from other sources materials to illustrate the history of the Chaworth and other families, such as the Bassets, the Deincourts, and the Furnivals; they are found on fos 44v–90r of the Ashmole manuscript 799 in the Bodleian Library in Oxford. Glover's many journeys had taken him to Derby in 1569.<sup>104</sup> An interest in genealogy also led another sixteenth-century antiquary to turn to the abbey's *Registrum* to reconstruct the descent of the lords of Alfreton and Norton from Ranulph father of Robert: the Oxford manuscript The Queen's College 117 contains on folio 26r–v abstracts of five Beauchief charters (4, 7, 11, 14, 64).<sup>105</sup>

## Other documents

Sheffield Archives house other unpublished material relating to Beauchief. A commonplace or note book, which has the call number MD 3500 and consists of 71 folios measuring 6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches, has

<sup>103</sup> **164** (Leake 1), **188** (Leake 12), **187** (Leake 8), **183** (Leake 10), Leake 5.

<sup>104</sup> See W.H. Black, *A Descriptive, Analytical and Critical Catalogue of the Manuscripts Bequeathed unto the University of Oxford by Elias Ashmole* (Oxford, 1845), columns 426–437 for Ashmole 799. Items 70–96 (Black, columns 430–431) summarize the Chaworth and related material. For Beauchief abbey see especially nos 77, 81–83, 96. There is an entry for Robert Glover (1543/4–1588) in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

<sup>105</sup> The family tree presented on fos 26–27r is this: (1) Ranulf of Alfreton; (2) Ranulf's two sons, Robert, lord of Alfreton, Norton, and Marnham, the founder of Beauchief abbey, and William, the younger son, who died childless; (3) Robert's son, William, lord of Alfreton in the time of King Richard I; (4) William's daughter, Alicia, and his sons, Robert, lord of Alfreton, Norton, and Marnham, who married Agnes, and Ranulf of Alfreton; (5) Robert's son and heir, Thomas, lord of Alfreton and Norton, who died childless, and Robert's three daughters: Alicia, the eldest daughter and heiress, who married Sir William de Cadurcis, Amitia, the second daughter and heiress who married Robert de Lathum, son of Sir Richard de Lathum, and Letitia, the third daughter and heiress of Sir Thomas of Alfreton, who died childless. According to charter **57**, Robert also had a daughter, Lucy. We are grateful to Professor David Smith for informing us of this find by Professor Nicholas Vincent and to the Librarians of the College, Jonathan Bengston and Amanda Saville, for sending us copies.

explanatory notes on Greek words arranged in alphabetical order, together with notes on theological subjects including the Apostles' Creed.<sup>106</sup> Two dates are given in this small book – 1490 (fo. 55) and 1500 (fo. 1). Deeds relating to property in the locality but not belonging to the abbey, dated 1280–1407, form part of the Bagshawe collection, reference numbers 3174–3185.<sup>107</sup> Some persons named in these deeds also appear in the Cartulary, as do names found in Jeayes, *Derbyshire Charters*. The Norton church deeds include copies of Thomas Chaworth's grants and confirmations, from the early fourteenth century; these are all copied in the Cartulary, and their seals are reproduced by Addy, as mentioned above. The Beauchief muniments, which are mostly post-dissolution, include leases and rentals. Material in the Jackson collection has been published in T.W. Hall and A.H. Thomas, *Descriptive Catalogue of the Charters [...] Forming the Jackson Collection at the Sheffield Public Reference Library* (1914), which lists, with summaries, a number of post-dissolution charters referring specifically to land once in the ownership of Beauchief abbey. Although none of the pre-dissolution charters in the Jackson collection refers to the abbey, a number were issued by one or other of the Chaworths in respect of property in Norton, and some of their witnesses also occur in the Cartulary.<sup>108</sup>

A rare survival among the usual range of monastic archives is the Beauchief Obituary, which was begun in the thirteenth century and continued to the Dissolution. It recorded the names of departed abbots, canons, and benefactors, whose souls were prayed for on fixed days. A short version is kept among the Dugdale manuscripts at the Bodleian Library, Oxford, as MS 39, which formerly belonged to the abbey and which also has a copy of the *Rule* observed by regular canons.<sup>109</sup> The longer version in the British Library (MS Cotton, Caligula A. viii, fos 4–27) was reproduced in translation in chapter III of Addy's history.<sup>110</sup> In the present edition, we have indicated entries in

<sup>106</sup> Listed, with a title given in the manuscript of *Explanatio verborum*, in Andrew G. Watson (ed.), *Supplement to the Second Edition* of N.R. Ker (ed.), *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain: a list of surviving books*, Royal Historical Society Guides and Handbooks, 15 (London, 1987), p. 3.

<sup>107</sup> Nearly all of these were printed, not altogether accurately, by S.O. Addy in the *Journal of the Derbyshire Archaeological and Natural History Society*, 3 (1881), pp. 100–106.

<sup>108</sup> For examples, see T.W. Hall and A.H. Thomas, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Charters [...] Forming the Jackson Collection at the Sheffield Public Reference Library* (Sheffield, 1914), pp. 108–111, 117–123.

<sup>109</sup> *A Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford* (Oxford, 1937), 2.i, no. 6527. Printed in Tho. Hearnus (ed.), *Johannis [...] Glastoniensis sive historia de rebus Glastoniensibus* ... 2 vols (Oxford 1726), II, appendix 5, pp. 557–566, and in Kirke, 'Praemonstratensian Abbey of Beauchief', pp. 196–202. Samuel Pegge used it in *An Historical Account of Beauchief Abbey*.

<sup>110</sup> Addy, *Historical Memorials of Beauchief Abbey*, pp. 22–60. Cotton, Caligula A. viii, and Lansdowne 207B (mentioned above, p. 30) are among the sources used in listing the abbots

the Obituary that record deaths of benefactors whose names appear in the Cartulary. Gifts made by other benefactors recorded in the Obituary were often of cash or precious metal. Addy also printed (in chapter VI) the surviving documentation from the second half of the fifteenth century of the visitations conducted by senior members of the Premonstratensian order. This information was taken from Ashmole's manuscript 1519 (Bodleian Library) and Peck's manuscript (British Library, Additional MSS 4934). These documents form the basis of chapter IV on the Premonstratensian Canons in Knowles's *Religious Orders in England, III: the Tudor Age* (1959). The Obituary and the visitation reports are important records that complement the Cartulary. Together, they allow us to reconstruct much of the history of this small religious house on the northern border of Derbyshire.

## The edition

The only marginal notes in the manuscript that are included in the present edition are those that are clearly written in the same hand as the main body of the text. Other marginal notes, perhaps most of them, were added after the dissolution of the abbey. Our own notes on the text appear at the end of each charter. Square brackets enclose any letters or words that we have added to the transcription and that do not appear in the manuscript; these include expansions of abbreviations and the insertion of words whose omission from the original affects the meaning of the document. The cartulary for the most part lacks punctuation; thus the punctuation in this edition is largely our own. Place-names have been transcribed as written, despite some inaccuracies; however, we have added initial capitals where these are not found in the manuscript. Most but not all of the charters are undated. For these we offer approximate dates, largely based on evidence from other sources. They range from the late twelfth century to the end of the fourteenth, the latest dated charter being from 1382 (82).

of Beauchief in Knowles, Brooke, and London, *Heads of Religious Houses, I*, p. 193; Smith and London, *Heads of Religious Houses, II*, pp. 493–494; and Smith, *Heads of Religious Houses, III*, pp. 563–564; also in Colvin, *White Canons*, pp. 396–397. The Cotton manuscript is listed in N.R. Ker, *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain: a list of surviving books*, Royal Historical Guides and Handbooks, 3 (2nd edn, London, 1964), p. 8, where Ker also lists one other Beauchief manuscript of the early thirteenth century containing a work (*Adversus Judaeos*) by Petrus Alfonsi, now Cambridge, St John's College, MS 86 (M.R. James, *Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of St John's College, Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1913); also available on-line at the college's website).