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The Story of the Two Lantonys

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THE STORY OF THE TWO LANTONYS.

By W. ST. CLAIR BADDELEY.

IN the wake of mediæval military conquest invariably followed ecclesiastical invasion, usually under the patronage of some great noble. In the track of the barons and knights, with sword and spear and flights of arrows, came, without fail, the priest and the monk; and the castle-building often handed on its workmen to the rising abbey or priory. It would be difficult to find more ready or more conspicuous illustrations of this characteristic movement—so familiar to all students—than are to hand in Welsh border history. The fierce Robert de Belesme typifies the ruthless ravager, and William Fitz Osbern the more usual one; while Walter de Laci, and particularly his gentler second son, Hugh de Laci, and Walter, the third son, Abbot of Gloucester, typify the wealthy religious patron and enthusiast. They are all equally Norman nobles and great landowners; but they represent the two different arms of mediæval civilisation—the military and the religious. Sometimes it is a bishop who, in his own person, unites both, and goes into battle like a baron; at others it is a prominent baron, who takes profound interest and action as a patron of spiritual things, and becomes the renowned protector and encourager of ecclesiastics. It is, in fact, the Age of the Crusades: the birth of militant monasticism!

It is chiefly, however, with their relation to the far-reaching foundations of the two Lantonys—one in the vale of Ewias, and the other here in Gloucester—that this paper will be concerned with the De Lacis; and here it may be as well to remark that neither of the two Lantonys, in spite of the locality of Lantony Secunda, in any way owe their origin to the town of Gloucester as a parent. Their religious centre and diocesan mother was Hereford. The Order to which they pertained was not Benedictine, but Augustinian.

How it came about that Gloucester supplanted Hereford as their head-centre, and remained so until the Dissolution, will presently, I hope, be made evident.

The period in which their combined history is contained just exceeds 425 years; and it commences in 1103-4, a little before the time when King Henry I. wrote to Anselm (with whom he was gravely disputing over the Rights of Investiture) to the effect that he had decisively defeated his brother, Robert, Duke of Normandy, at Tinchebrai (September 28th)—in fact, when that great and faithful archbishop was at sore straits to defend the rights and liberties of the Church from the masterful, but reasonable, brother and successor of William Rufus, who desired to feudalise it.

At any rate, at that date two individuals, apparently wearied of the burdens of Court and military life, agreed, with one mind and heart, to live together in God, at Lantony in the great secluded vale of Ewias, among the Hatterel Hills, and in the immediate neighbourhood of a small shrine already dedicated to St. David. The names of these were: William, a knight attached to the De Lacis (if not a kinsman), who must have fought under, and perhaps may have suffered from the despotism of, William Rufus; and the other was Ernisi, who had been a large landowner in Gloucestershire, Shropshire, and Worcester, but had lost his possessions and become chaplain to Matilda, the King's pious and charitable consort. If we may so far trust the 14th century Chronicler of the Priory (used by Dugdale), we must regard William, the knight, as the first-comer to the place. Having lost his way while out hunting, and, being fascinated by the sanctity of the retired and convenient spot, he became a hermit. That is all that is told us; and we are not told his other name. Afterwards he was joined by Ernisi, a manifestly important person, with unusual influence at Court—*'vir iste Ernisius in Curia Henrici Regis primi, inter primos palatii, nominatissimus, Cappellanus Venerandæ recordationis, Matildæ Reginæ,'*—who seems gladly to have renounced the

burdens and perplexities of his favoured position in order to embrace the hermit-life. This would have meant doing as St. David is related to have done in the same spot—namely, ‘feeding on leeks,’—had not Hugh de Laci, the then lord of Ewias, a favourite of both King and Queen, and, probably, the intimate friend of both William and Ernisi, come to their assistance with a noble scheme for constructing there a Priory of Austin Canons. The fame of the hermit-knight and Ernisi spread apace, and good Queen Matilda herself, a little later, paid them a visit,—attracted, it seems, by the peculiar sanctity of William.

The reigning Pontiff, Paschal II. (1099–1118), and Gelasius II., his successor, distinguished themselves by enacting that henceforward all Canons were to affiliate themselves exclusively to the Rule of St. Austin; hence that Order is found to have been the most popular during Henry’s reign. The first house belonging to it in England had just been inaugurated at Colchester: then followed Holy Trinity, London. Hugh de Laci, the patron of the Priory of St. Peter at Hereford (which his father, Walter, had built and endowed), now perceived a favourable opportunity of proving his religious zeal, and (not without regret, we gather,) the two devoted hermits found growing up beside them a cœnobium, or cloister and church, and they knew the silent, gloomy valley invaded by architects, masons, and builders, and quarrymen with creaking waggons. Even after this Priory had arisen, and been taken possession of, the sense of unwelcome fame and public attraction did not leave the brethren. Their chronicler tells us that, for further endowment, King Henry offered them ‘the whole country of Berkeley’; but the Canons prayed Heaven their house might not become opulent, and politely refused that rich possession, whose final destiny has proved to be in quite another direction.¹

¹ The churches of Berchalei-hernesse were, however, given by Robert Fitzharding to another Augustinian House, that of St. Augustine, Bristol, in 1154.

As Ernisi was already a man advanced in Holy Orders, he not unnaturally became nominated the first Prior. The first Canons regular were drawn from the before-named priories of Colchester, Holy Trinity, and St. Martin, London. No doubt they occupied a portion of their time in teaching the rule of the Order to novices who joined them from Hereford, Gloucester, and elsewhere. Under such powerful protection as that of Hugh de Laci and his wife, Adeliza, and of Walter Fitz Roger, Constable of Gloucester (who, a little later, himself retired from public life to this new cloister and took the black habit), it may be surmised that the Priory started in thoroughly favourable circumstances.

But these circumstances were due only to internal conditions. It is difficult to imagine that De Laci and the rest forebore to entertain a certain amount of misgiving, inseparable, it would appear to us, as to the security of a monastery thus endowed with rich lands and revenues situated among the wild mountains of the never-forgetful and rightly-resentful Welsh. Such a community, in some respects, would have resembled a fortified island in a hostile environment. For the inmates were, for the most part, belonging to the race of hated Norman invaders and their workmen were of the race of the only less-hated Saxons; in fact, though they were religious settlers,—to whom on the one hand was due a certain spiritual respect, on the other their presence and their settlement was a substantial token (like a banner planted in the ground) of the sure advance of the conqueror; for the prior of this monastery would in almost all respects presumably act as would a feudal Norman lord in respect of his vassals and neighbours. At any rate, it might be surmised that in the event of such an occurrence as a civil war in England (such as had been long threatening owing to the quarrel of Robert, Duke of Normandy, and his brother, King Henry, but now, owing to the Duke's defeat and capture, warded off), the position of the monks of Lantony might become precarious in the extreme. That within five-and-twenty years of their founda-

tion their straits did become severe, will be shown. At present, no doubt they made haste to finish the conventual buildings and consolidate their tenure.

The priory and church, which bore, as if a missionary venture, the dedication to St. John the Baptist, were consecrated in 1108, by Ramelin, Bishop of Hereford, and Urban, Bishop of Llandaff. And thus the hermitage of a Norman knight evolutionised into a priory of Austin Canons. For their supplies, the mountain-stream, the Hodenay, the haunt of the dipper, which flowed purling a little below their dwelling-place, abounded with trout and other fish; and in the great forest that folded the flanks of the Black Mountains above them they could hunt the boar, the wolf, the deer, badger, and marten-cat; while below these stretches of timber clearings were made in which they could rear their stunted cattle; and in the vale itself the Canons could both raise their corn and grind the grain in their own mills along the Hodenay. The wolf was an enemy, and so was the boar, while the foxes doubtless raided their geese; but at all times, it is clear, they had most to fear from Cambrian man, who, like the beasts, went usually shod with darkness, although occasionally he raised perilous quarrels at the hospitable board of the monastery itself. For the Canons could not prevent their guests quarrelling except by refusing to entertain them, and this they dared not.

At any rate, we find that about 1134 the monks of Lantony became so constrained by the evil behaviour of their neighbours that they could neither procure food nor celebrate divine service. This must have proved not a little tantalising to the men, of whom Giraldus Cambrensis wrote, fifty years later (1188), that, sitting in their cloister and looking up, they could descry the deer in plenty browsing on the heights which bounded their horizon.

No means are available for proving the date of the death of Ernisi, but we know for certain that he was succeeded as Prior, by Robert Betun. Much against his will, Betun was soon elevated in 1129 to the See of Hereford. Neither

is the decease recorded of the original hermit 'Sir William.' It is probable, however, that Betun had been elected Prior some years before he quitted Lantony, and that the choice of the Canons in electing him, had been guided by the desire of their first Head, whose sanctity had shed the light of spiritual fame on the community—'Creber in oratione: strenuus in vigiliis: assiduus in remissis: in suscipiendiis hospitibus devotus: quod sibi docuit, operibus corroboravit.'

Betun's reluctance to accept promotion must be partly attributed to his affection for his Convent, and perhaps to a brave desire to pilot it through evil times. But it must be admitted that as a Bishop of Hereford, his promotion provided a powerful friend for it within convenient distance, one who would never be found wanting if called upon for aid. His advancement may have been due to the interest taken in him by Hugh de Laci, by Milo, the Constable of Gloucester, and by Pain Fitz John, (who had married the daughter of De Laci (*circa* 1120-1), now High Sheriff of Shropshire, and enjoying the dower-lands of his wife, both in Gloucestershire and Herefordshire. Above all, the King and Queen favoured the Augustinians.¹ Nevertheless, a great crisis in the fortunes of Lantony was not long delayed. This was not unconnected, probably, with the solicitude of the sonless monarch to secure his kingdom to his daughter, the Empress Maud, and the war to which it led. In 1134, under the rule of Robert de Braci, the third Prior, the Welsh ('ob innatæ feritatis improbitatem') made life so intolerable to the Canons that most of them (though not all) fled to Hereford, and besought relief from the Bishop. There they continued to remain for nearly two years. Meanwhile, Hugh de Laci (if alive) effected nothing for the fugitives: the Bishop, therefore, turned to Milo, the Constable of Gloucester, recalling to him the devotion of his father toward Lantony; and so effectually did he work upon him, that Milo (whose father had been buried with the Canons),

¹ Dunstaple, Cirencester, and Southwyke Priors were Henry's foundations, and he gave Carlisle a chapter of Augustinian Canons in 1133.

granted the Convent a piece of land, called the Hyde, or Castle-mead, close to the Castle of Gloucester, and just outside the city, upon which to build another monastery. Having brought away considerable moneys with them, work was at once commenced there, and with marvellous celerity a convent arose on that site, the donations of the faithful being eagerly invited for its maintenance. The Canons even brought the bells, we are told, from Wales and hung them here. Meanwhile Robert de Braci, the third Prior, died, and was buried at Lantony in Wales; and William of Wycombe, formerly Betun's chaplain, author of a life of that prelate and predecessor, became fourth Prior of Lantony Prima, and first Prior of Lantony Secunda, at Gloucester.

In his priorate, in May, 1136, the new convent was here dedicated by Robert Betun, Bishop of Hereford, and Symon, Bishop of Worcester, in honour of the Virgin and St. John the Baptist, in the presence of Milo, the Constable, and his eldest son, Roger, and his wife, Cecilia Fitz John, and (probably) of her parents, Pain Fitz John and Sibylla de Laci, and Walter de Laci, her uncle, then Abbot of St. Peter's, and others. Roger, Milo's son, having suffered from a malady (measles?) which the Canons had cured, his father presented them with a precious chalcedony.

At this time Milo had espoused the cause of King Stephen, and, as Constable, he received his master at Gloucester on May 10th, 1138 (Flor. Wigorn); and the newest and most freshly-interesting edifice King Stephen saw from the castle was the fair Priory of Lantony Secunda, in the green mead below.

This brings us to a peculiarly complicated period in the history of Lantony; *i.e.*, there was now a well-endowed Daughter established in an important city, while the denuded Mother-monastery was left starving in the wild wastes of Wales. It must be confessed that the responsibilities of the Priors would, instead of becoming lessened by this duplication of their property, be seriously increased;

for they had now to govern and direct the destinies of two houses, instead of one only, and was not the less comfortable of these suffering also, in addition to its difficulties, under a sense of grievous wrong, inflicted upon it by its own children? The Chronicler leaves us in no doubt that all the Canons did not forsake the Mother-convent. It is manifest that if the governance of even a very able Prior was thus fraught with special difficulties, that of an idle, feeble, or luxurious one would be fraught with something like absolute ruin.

The temptation held out to the Canons was doubtless in favour of living in the new monastery, at Gloucester; but, in order to equalise matters, Clement, the third prior at Gloucester, is related to have left but thirteen out of twenty-one (?) Canons there, at one time, and to have compelled all of these in turn to reside in the vale of Ewias. It is probable that William of Wycombe, his predecessor, had done likewise. But here it becomes fitting to advert to a dangerous quarrel which now arose between the Bishop of Hereford and Milo, the Constable, his former close ally and friend,—in fact, between the two founders of Lantony Secunda. This resulted from the exigencies of the civil war raging between King Stephen and his cousin, the Empress, whose cause Milo had now in turn espoused, and from whose hands he had received the earldom of Hereford; for Milo, being hard-pressed for money wherewith to pay his troops, levied new exactions on the Bishop's estates and diocesan possessions. Betun at once refused to meet the demand, claiming exemption, and requiring Milo to withdraw his claim. The earl reiterated his demand, but was met with the threat of excommunication. Inflamed to the utmost, he seized whatever goods belonging to the Bishop his followers could lay hands upon, and laid waste his lands. Upon this the prelate solemnly assembled his clergy, and formally pronounced a terrific anathema, laying his Interdict upon the entire territory belonging to his enemy. Milo perished, unabsolved, by the arrow of one of his own men, while hunting in the Forest

of Dene, on December 24th of the same year, 1143, and was succeeded in his earldom by his son Roger.

Now, it was unfortunate for William of Wycombe that, in addition to being unpopular with his Gloucester monks, on account of his austerity, his admiration for Bishop Betun, his spiritual patron, caused him to publish an unsparing account of the tyrannous doings of Earl Milo. The news of this presently reached his son, Earl Roger,—whether purposely conveyed to him at Painswick, where he was lord, by the canon of Lantony, who was Vicar there, or by some other manner,—and he thereupon swore a violent oath that he would not enter the Priory of Lantony, as its patron, while that Prior ruled it. The end of this was that the Prior quitted his place and office, and retired with one of his brethren; and the sub-prior was elected by the Chapter in his stead.

As William of Wycombe is stated, in the 14th century MS. *History of Lantony*, to have presided over the convent for many years anterior to this serious rupture with Earl Roger, we may take it this did not occur until *circa* 1150. The unpleasant condition of the two Convents during these years of the anarchy of Stephen's reign must be imagined. Earl Roger, meanwhile, had built, or finished, three or four small castles, including those of Winchcombe, Painswick, and Haresfield, in Gloucestershire. In 1144 he had endeavoured to overawe the King's party at Winchcombe, and his castle surrendered to the besieging force. Meanwhile he fell out with Gilbert de Laci, the successor of Hugh in his Herefordshire Honour. When, presently, King Henry II. succeeded Stephen, A.D. 1154, Roger made war on him, and made a treaty with William, son of Robert, Earl of Gloucester, of a hypocritical nature, directed especially to disinherit De Laci. King Henry put the earl down with a strong hand. Roger then retired to the cloister of St. Peter's, Gloucester, not to Lantony, and there died in 1155. The King cancelled his earldom, although he had left several brothers. These are reported to have been one more wicked than the other, which may have had not a little to do with the King's decision in the matter.

Of Prior Clement, Giraldus, his contemporary, tells us that he liked Lantony in Wales as a place of study and prayer—"yet after the example of Eli, the priest, he neither reprov'd nor restrained his brethren from plunder and other offences," and died of a paralytic stroke. His successor was Roger de Norwich, "more of an enemy to this place than either of his predecessors, and openly carried off everything which they had left behind, wholly robbing the church of its books and ornaments and privileges." He was likewise afflicted with paralysis "long before his death, and resigned his honours, and lingered out the remainder of his days in sickness."¹

This Roger de Norwich, the sixth Prior, was ruling at Gloucester in 1181, as a contention between him and Roger Fitz Alan, concerning the Chapel of Harescombe, shows,² and another earlier document shows him to have been prior in 1178. In 1192 Geoffrey de Henelawe was Prior.

Meanwhile, however, a new and splendid patron had arisen in Hugh de Laci II., son of Gilbert de Laci, who lived to enjoy his father's estates and to add to them (1166—1185), as the King's Lieutenant in Ireland, territories in that country, including Dublin Castle and the greater part of Meath. This he held by the service of fifty knights' fees. As we find his donations, both in that country and in England, were directed to the enrichment of Lantony Prima, in Wales, as distinct from Secunda, it must be from his date that the fortunes of the parent foundation began to rearise. So that Hugh the second must be understood to have felt that the elder of the two convents owed its being to his immediate ancestor and had prior claims to his interest, whereas Lantony at Gloucester could not be regarded in that light, but rather as the religious stronghold of the descendants of Milo Fitz Walter, its chief patrons. For though Milo's sons had no issue by their marriages, his daughter, Margaret, had married Humphrey de Bohun III. (d. 1187), in whose

¹ Giraldus, *Camb.*, p. 70.

² *Trans. Brist. & Glos. Arch. Soc.*, vol. x., p. 88.

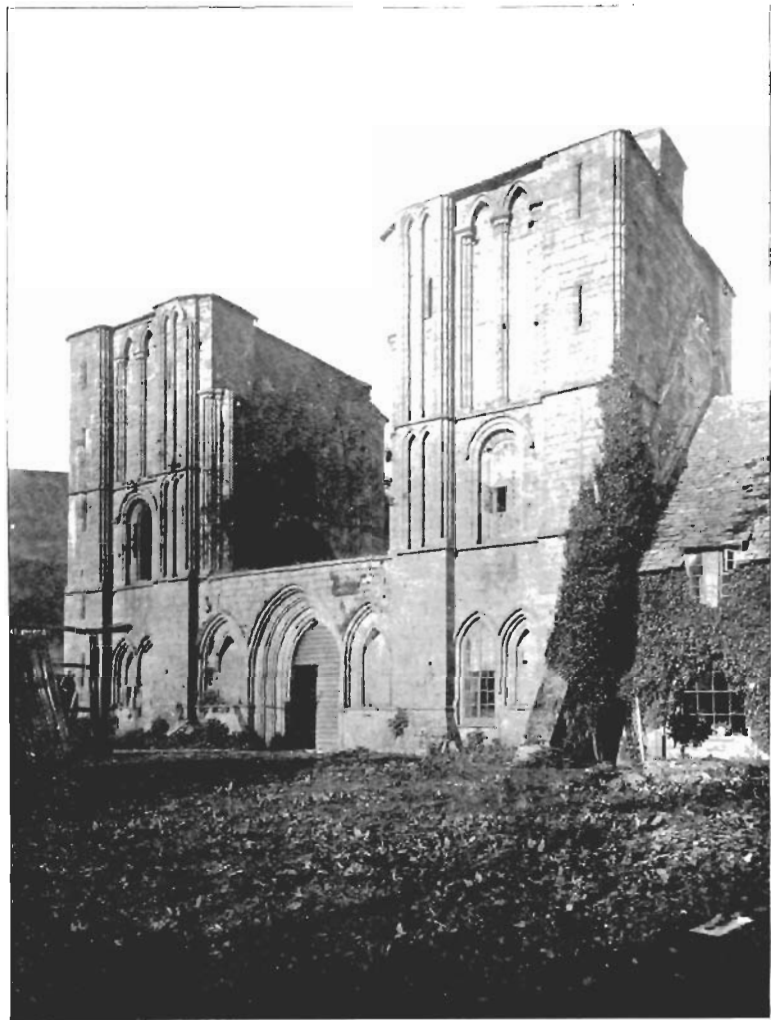
favour the Earldom of Hereford was revived. She became matron of Lantony at Gloucester, was buried therein, and her honours devolved on their son, Humphrey IV.¹

Nevertheless, it is not to Hugh de Laci II. (1165?—1185), I think, that we can attribute the present magnificent remains of Lantony Prima, which still fascinate the wanderer, whether poet or archæologist, in that grand vale of Ewias. Although these remains (consisting of two massive western towers, cellarium, nave, chancel-arch, choir, and south transept, together with portions of the main conventual adjuncts, the infirmary and chapel (now the parish church), and a gate-house), are undoubtedly of the Early English character, and are not all quite contemporaneous, still, they are none of them sufficiently early in that style to warrant their ascription to even the latter days of Henry II. Their features, such as the collared shafts in the angles of the piers of the nave, conventional foliage, the mixed round-headed and pointed arches, direct one rather to the turn of the century and onward, and we should feel safe only in ascribing the rebuilding of the monastery to the reign of King John.

This coincides with the life and doings of Walter de Laci III. and Hugh III., his son, whom we find granting charters and many more lands to the ancestral convent. Walter married Mary, daughter of William de Breose, of Brecknock, and died in 1241. We therefore become, first, aware of the tendency to a great revival of Lantony Prima; next, we find ample evidence demonstrating a magnificent rebuilding and re-endowment of it; and the Cottonian MS. tells us that in the time of the eighth Prior, *i.e.* Mathew (or perhaps at his accession in 1203), there really occurred a "Repartitio utriusque Llanthoniæ," or "Renaissance" of the elder Convent on a basis of complete independence of the daughter at Gloucester.

This is a most critical point in the history of both Convents, and the student of Gloucestershire History, (if I may venture to judge by my own humble experience,) has

¹ Cf. Ashe's *Collection*, fol. 56.



THE WEST FRONT OF OLD LANTONY



OLD LANTONY FROM THE SOUTH SIDE.

hitherto been obliged to suffer some inconvenience, if not confusion, in consequence of their apparent complication. If it should prove that any light has been shed on his path by this part of my paper, I trust he will take my assurance, as his fellow-student, that he will be able to find plenty of opportunities of vastly improving upon the quality of that light. Additional details will, I hope, be discovered which will tend to correct any "shallow spirit of judgment" I may have shown in the matter, and so narrow down with more exactitude the date of this great crisis; for, to my thinking, there must have occurred some very serious business transaction, involving a multitude of individual interests, in connection with this great repartition of the Convents. There must have been formidable debates and settlements as to which of the original "Donationes" of properties in various counties and county-towns to Lantony Prima, but which had until then been enjoyed by Lantony Secunda, should remain to the latter, or go to the former. For it has been made evident that Lantony at Gloucester must have impoverished the decrepit Lantony in Wales, and rehabilitation could have been no easy matter. This is proved by documents in the "Registrum" at Cheltenham. Moreover, it is easy to shew that, having done so, she held hard and very effectually to her plunderings. Painswick is a case in point. Hugh de Laci I. had granted the Advowson of Painswick (or Wyke) to Lantony Prima. If we turn to the Registers of Worcester and to those of Lantony Secunda, we find that this advowson never went back to the Cambrian monastery, to which it had been given; but remained, throughout just four hundred years, the appanage of this Lantony at Gloucester—in fact, until the Dissolution. Again, the number of tenements in the town of Gloucester which, in the 13th century and onward, can be shown to have been the property of Lantony Prima, is proof that such a redivision of properties between the two Convents must in all probability have taken place.

Another point, however, seems significant as to the date of the Repartition. In the catalogue of the priors of Lantony

in Wharton's *Anglia Sacra*, and also in Willis, the respective accessions of the priors flow on without a hitch until Mathew, or, rather, until the preferment of Geoffrey de Henelawe to the See of St. David's, in 1203, when he was succeeded by Mathew. These writers take no note of the Repartition of the two Convents, and they consequently give but a single file of Priors to Lantony generally. We are given no list of the Priors of Lantony Prima after that "repartition": and this forms a difficulty of itself; for how can we feel certain that the list supplied by Dugdale and Wharton from 14th century records is reliable, or that it is not a mixture made up of the two respective sets of 13th century Priors? That is what it probably is.

That these lists are sadly imperfect must be admitted. The first instance of the imperfection of the list of Gloucester priors in Browne Willis (vol. 2, p. 86), occurs in the reign of King John, about the year 1203. For I find a "Charter, by Gilbert, the Prior, and the Convent of St. Mary of Lantony at Gloucester, to have a canon to officiate in their convent for the soul of their patron, Henry de Bohun, Earl of Hereford, and for the soul of Matilda, his wife, Humphrey, his father, Margery, his mother, the Earl Milo, Margaret de Bohun, and others." Gilbert does not appear in the list given.

Henry de Bohun was created Earl of Hereford¹ by King John in 1200, on his giving up his claims to certain lands which had been given to Milo by his father-in-law, Bernard de Newmarch, at Newenham, Aure, Dymoke, and Cheltenham. He died in 1220. Now, as Geoffrey de Henelawe was raised from the Priorate of Lantony to the Bishopric of St. David's, in 1203, Gilbert must have succeeded him for a short time only: for in 1213 the prior's name was Mathew, who became Abbot of Bardney, co. Lincoln, in the following year; and in 1218 John de Norwich was prior, and King John had been dead two years. The rebuilding of Lantony Prima, as we now see it, must have taken place at this

¹ Close Roll.

period; yet Gilbert is not mentioned in either list of the Priors referred to.

It is possible that Mathew, called eighth Prior in the MS.¹ used by Dugdale, may have been Prior of Lantony Prima. As yet it is not possible to determine. Anyhow, from this time until the reign of Edward IV., some 250 to 260 years, the two Lantonys were most assuredly independent; and whereas the De Bohuns continued to act as hereditary patrons to that at Gloucester, so did the De Lacis to that in Wales. Probably the richest period of both convents included the reigns of Henry III., Edward I., and Edward II. In possessions and importance the Gloucester convent, in all probability, at all periods, surpassed its parent; though it is impossible, owing to the fire which burned it to the ground, together with its tower of early bells, in 1301, under Prior Thomas, to state whether architecturally that of the city compared well with so stately and massive a pile as that we see in the green vale of Ewias. If we admit that the convent so destroyed in Gloucester was the Norman priory of 1136, it is not likely to have been so beautiful nor so large as its Early English namesake in Wales. It, however, housed forty Canons, and in time was destined, by curious fate, to once more govern the rehabilitated mother-House.

Nothing is more striking in the life of a properly-constituted 13th century monastery than the boundlessness of its appetite, and the quarrels and lawsuits resulting therefrom. Lantony at Gloucester, if remarkable, in its youthful years, for the successful aggression toward its mother-convent, actually supplanting her, is not less remarkable for the skilful and prosperous manner in which it swallowed up Gloucestershire parishes and manors, including fields, pastures, quarries, woods, rivers, fisheries, mills, in and out of towns 'cum omnibus pertinentibus suis.' The list of its possessions is quite formidable. But let us glance at the second decadence of the parent House, for it would take up too much space here to catalogue them.

To Lantony Prima belong the following charters and confirmations :—

Patent Roll	- - -	12 Edward I., m.
Patent Roll	- - -	20 Edward I., m.
Cart.	- - - - -	12 Edward I., No. 38.
Cart.	- - - - -	18 Edward II., No. 11.
Patent Roll	- - -	2 Edward II., p. 2.
Patent Roll	- - -	3 Edward II.
Patent Roll	- - -	16 Edward II., p. 1, m. 23, 24.

Also there is a charter of Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March, reciting and confirming Walter de Laci III.'s Charter, "de valle in qua ecclesia de Lantonia sita est," a. 2 Edward III.

I have found the name of one of the unknown priors who lived at the end of Edward's reign, from 1365—1376; but it cannot be said that the discovery throws a pleasant light on the conditions of the ill-fated original convent. As matter of fact, the moment in History was one of the worst for all its monastic establishments in our plague-stricken land. I find that Nicholas de Trinbeye resigns his office of prior in 1376 (February), having had both his eyes torn out by John de Wellington, one of his canons, with whom were accomplices John Poding and Robert Bolter, likewise canons. They were presently excommunicated. Wellington was absolved and reinstated, in March, 1391. (Cf. *Papal Letters*, iv. 223-355, Rolls Series.)

From this time onward Lantony Prima continued to decline, until we meet with a peremptory charter of Edward IV. (10 May, 1481), stating that, owing to the evil conditions into which it has fallen, due to the squandering of its revenues by John Adam, the prior, and the five canons,—the Convent of Lantony Prima, in Wales, is to be handed over to Lantony at Gloucester.

This occurred during the priorate at Gloucester of Henry Dean, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. The maternal monastery, therefore, was, for the second time, made entirely subject to the daughter. It continued to have Priors, but

they were all chosen by the Prior at Gloucester. William Ambrose was the last of them, and the declared value of the Lantony of the De Laci's in Wales at the Dissolution was £89 19s. 0½d., while that of its daughter at Gloucester was valued at £748, whose Prior was granted a pension of £100 a year. The surrender made was the first in this county, and took place May 10th, 1539. The site of it was presently granted to Arthur Porter, Esq.

In much later days, the ruins of the grand old priory in Wales became the property of Walter Savage Landor, the poet; while the ruins of Lantony at Gloucester, after suffering severely from the Royalist and Parliamentary gunpowder during the siege,¹ in 1643-4, were wantonly cut through, church and all, by the Gloucester and Berkeley Canal (1816-1826)—the ruins of one convent realising, for a short time, a poet's dream; the other ultimately the very different dreams of dock-companies! And when the canal works made their way through the Priory-church, the tombs, effigies, and even the bones of Milo, the founder, of Roger, Earl of Hereford, and some ten generations of the De Bohuns, Constables of England,—were scattered helter-skelter to the winds and waters, so that not one now remains.² For, just as Tewkesbury may be considered the Westminster Abbey of the De Clares and Despencers, so might Lantony at Gloucester be regarded as that of the De Bohuns and the earlier Lords of Brecon and Hereford.

Sic transit Gloria Mundi!

¹ Sir Robert Atkyns states that in his time the ruins of Lantony were only "heaps of rubbish in the open air." (Cf. *Trans. Brit. Archæol. Ass.* for 1846, p. 339.)

² Except Humphrey, 4th Earl, and Eleanor, his lady, who are said to have been removed to the Cathedral, where Mr. John Clarke says "they may yet be seen reposing under a canopied altar-tomb on the south side of the Nave." (Cf. *A popular Account of the Interesting Priory of Llanthony, near Gloucester*, 1853.) Some were recognised in 1852.

LIST OF PRIORS AT BOTH CONVENTS.

Ernisi, 1108.

Robert de Betun, 1118 (?)—1131.

Robert de Braci, 1131—1137; LANTONY II. FOUNDED.

William de Wycombe, 1137 (?)— .

Clement, 1150 (?)— .

Roger de Norwich, 1170 (?)—1191.

Geoffrey de Henelawe, 1191—1203.

Gilbert; REPARTITION of the Convents.

Matthew, (?)—1214.

John, (?)—1240.

Godfrey, (?)—1251.

Everard, (?)

Martin, (?)

Roger Godestre, (?)—1282.

Walter, (?)—1288.

John de Chandos, 1289—(?)

Stephen, }

Peter, }

David, }

Some of these probably belong to
Lantony Prima.

Thomas de Gloucester (resigns), 1301; Lantony Secunda
burned.

John, (?)—1315.

Simon de Brockworth, (?)

Edward St. John, (?)

William de Tendebury,¹ 1348.

William Cheriton (living), 1358.

Nicholas de Trinbey, 1364—1375, at Lantony in Wales.

¹ A Papal Indult was granted to William de Tendebury, Prior of Lantony by Gloucester, on May 30th, 1348, to choose a Confessor who should give him plenary absolution at the hour of death.—*Papal Letters* (Rolls Series), iii. 307.

John Wych, (?)

Thomas de Elmham, (?)—1415.

John Gerland, (?)—1428.

John Heyward, (?)

John Adam, at Lantony in Wales, 1476.

Henry Dean, 1461—1494. [Builder of remaining Gateway.]

Edmund Forrest, (?)—1513.

William Ambrose, at Lantony in Wales. }

Richard Hart, (?)—1539. }
